

FOOTPRINTS

Impressions from where we were to where we will be

The Newsletter for the Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego

SPRING 2002

VOL. II NO. I

MEMORIES OF MISSION VALLEY

by Chieko L. Moriyama

Moving to Tierrasanta in 1976 seemed a very wise thing to do. It was an eight-mile round trip between my place of employment and home with no freeways or heavy traffic to contend with. Perfect bliss!

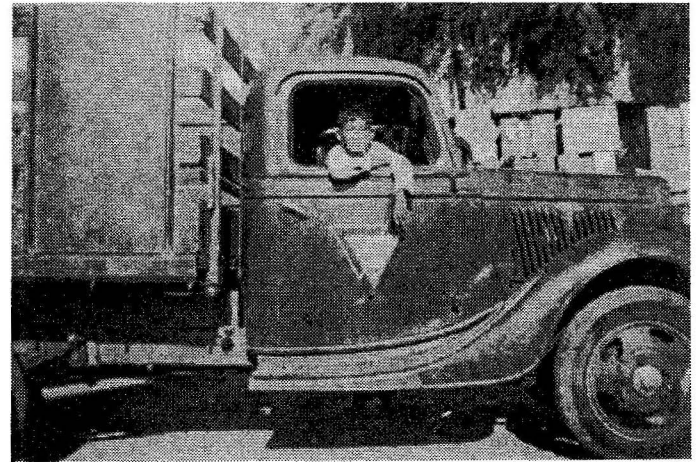
Several years later, my daughter's friend Patty came to visit and commented, "If you walk about a quarter of a mile east, you will be able to look down on the area that your family farmed years ago." It never occurred to me that my new home was so close to my childhood home in Mission Valley! It was almost like returning home again, accidentally of course. The area is now the Admiral Baker Park and Golf Course. Incredibly, farmland had become a golf course!

Grantville School

Great memories are conjured up whenever I go to the Kaiser Permanente Hospital on Zion. Several blocks away at Vandever and Decena Drive, the old Grantville Grammar School stood during the 1920s through 1982, when the school was closed forever. When that happened, the students attending Grantville were transferred to Foster Elementary School, and Vista Hill opened an Education Center at the Grantville site in 1983.

When I attended Grantville, the school was surrounded by fenced-in pastureland with a herd of cows browsing lazily in the greenery and a most aggressive bull tenaciously guarding his herd. The wild flowers grew abundantly in the fertile fields. Before the school bell rang, while keeping a wary eye on the bull, we would try to pick the bluebells, wild sweet peas and all the other wonderful wildflowers that grew there. We presented the bouquets to our teachers. I can still remember their names: Mrs. Ellis (white-haired and very matronly) was the principal and upper class teacher; Miss Fredericks and Miss Rickey taught the first through fourth grades; Mr. LaFond was the janitor and maintenance man.

Grantville Grammar School had two classrooms, with Grades 1-4 in one and 5-8 in the second. I attended Grantville until the completion of the fourth grade when half of our family moved to Nestor.



George Yamada, September 1937

My classmates at Grantville during Grades 1-4 were Chiyeko Akiyama, Tomoye Hosaka, Kazuko Ito (the Itos had moved to Nestor before us), Sadako Kubo, Akira Tanaka and George and Ayako Yamada. Shizuo and Hidetoshi Akiyama, Hideko Hosaka, Hisami and Atsuko Hatauye, Charley, George and Frank Torio, Willie Yamada, my brothers

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DATES TO REMEMBER

APRIL 4 – Golden State Meets Gem State: Californians at Idaho's Kooskia Internment Camp, 1943-1945. San Diego Public Library, 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 13-14 – BTSD Jr. YBA Reunion. For details call the Buddhist Temple, 619/239-0896

APRIL 14 – Hanamatsuri Service. Buddhist Temple of San Diego, 10:00 a.m.

APRIL 18 – Day of Remembrance: Commemorative Ceremony. San Diego Public Library, 6:30 p.m.

APRIL 21 – Japanese Coordinating Council Keiro Kai Luncheon. VFW Hall, National City

APRIL 27-28 – Hanamatsuri Bazaar. Vista Buddhist Temple, 120 Cedar St., Vista

MAY 5 – Benefit Luncheon Fund-raiser. Buddhist Temple of San Diego, 11:00 a.m.–3:00 p.m.

MAY 7 – Una Storia Segreta: The secret History of Italian Evacuation and Internment During World War II. San Diego Public Library, 6:30 p.m.

MAY 27 – Tri-Church Memorial Day Service. Mt. Hope Cemetery, 9:30 a.m.

JUNE 2 – 2002 Buddhist Bazaar. BTSD, 11:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m.

Note: The events at the San Diego Library are being co-sponsored by JAHSSD.

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

by Vernon Yoshioka

As of January 2002, I have accepted the challenge to become a credible leader for your fine organization. Our membership is now over 360 individuals or groups and is slowly growing. In a ten-year period, the JAHSSD has proven its viability and worth to the community through its many successful activities and projects. In April, the Board of Directors will hold a planning session to consider where the organization will go next. Robert Ito has consented to be our facilitator, helping us firm up our goals and objectives.

I am at a little disadvantage in that I didn't come to San Diego until 1960, and thus have had to learn second-hand its early JA history. Because of this, I will need a lot of input and help from you to do a good job. When I was a student many years ago, history was a boring and uninteresting subject. Now that I'm a little older, my interests have changed and I am fascinated by the events that have happened in the

past, especially those which have affected my life. We still have a few openings on the Board of Directors, so if you would like to learn along with me, or to contribute your expertise—give us a call.

We are currently thinking of ways to locate a permanent site to display our many artifacts, or in other words, essentially to create a Japanese American Museum in San Diego. A lot of groundwork has been laid toward this effort, and it may soon lead to fruition. One possibility is to build a Cultural Center which would be a joint venture with the Japanese Friendship Garden in Balboa Park. When our plans become definite, we will be looking for a lot of volunteers to help us make these dreams become a reality.

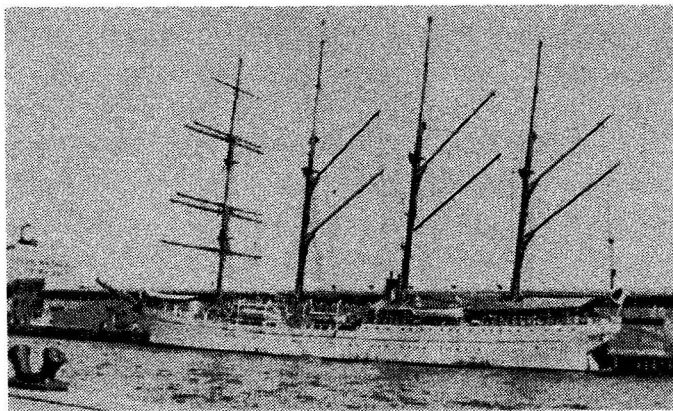
There is one note of negative news to share with the membership. Because of the increased costs of conducting our business, we will be increasing the Annual Membership dues. During the planning session, we will be determining how much this new rate will be. The trigger for this increase is not only the expected increase in postal rates, but also the realization that the dues have not been reviewed for over ten years. Now is the chance to renew at the old rates as the new and as yet unknown dues will go into effect with the next issue of the *Footprints* newsletter.

A MOMENT IN TIME:

Photos from the JAHSSD Archives

by Don Estes

On February 27, 2002, a tradition that began in 1909 was renewed when the *Umitaka Maru* tied up at San Diego's Broadway Pier. The sleek ship, launched in the year 2000 and visiting here for the first time, is designed to train fishery and oceanographic students attending the Tokyo Fisheries Institute.



The Taisei Maru tied up at the Broadway Pier, August 1935

The first of these Japan-based training ships to visit San Diego was the *Taisei Maru* which tied up at the same Broadway Pier on August 23, 1909. The four-masted vessel carried 83 merchant marine cadet officers and was commanded

by Captain Tadazo Furuya with Morikichi Sasaki serving as the Senior Instructor.

The local papers reported that the ship and her company were warmly welcomed both by leaders of the San Diego Chamber of Commerce and members of the board of the San Diego Nihonjin-kai, including their president, **Kichisaburo Nakamoto**. Some of the other board members in attendance at the welcoming ceremony included **Kaichiro Masuda**, **Masaharu Kondo**, **Yoshio Arakawa**, **Takeji Tsumagari**, **Hachisaku Asakawa**, and **Uichiro Obayashi**. Also in attendance was a delegation for the Los Angeles Nihonjin-kai headed by their president **Ginnosuke Yuasa**, who presented each cadet with a set of postcards picturing scenes of—you guessed it—Los Angeles.

The *Taisei Maru* was a Japan-built schooner launched at the Kawasaki Shipbuilding Company of Kobe in 1904. Immediately after launching, the ship was brought into service as a supply ship for the Japanese Navy, which was then fighting Tsarist Russia. At the end of the Russo-Japanese War, the *Taisei Maru* was returned to the Imperial Nautical College as a merchant marine training vessel. In 1912, an Australian newspaper described the ship as "the finest and most up-to-date craft yet constructed for the sole purpose of training officers for the merchant marine."

On August 30, 1912, the *Taisei Maru* arrived for a second visit to San Diego. During the 45-day voyage, the Captain, Morikichi Sasaki, suffered a nervous breakdown and it was feared that he might attempt to take his own life. As soon as the ship arrived in San Diego, the captain was taken under the care of officials from the Japanese Consulate in San Francisco and sent to recuperate in Santa Maria. While the ship awaited the arrival of a new commanding officer from Japan, the leaders of the San Diego Nihonjin-kai and local Issei hosted and housed the cadet officers until the arrival of their new captain, Sanpei Ozeki.

Throughout the 1920s and 30s, the *Taisei Maru* and her complement of cadet officers made San Diego a regular port of call. Many local Nikkei remember going with their parents to visit the tall, graceful white sailing ship and hosting cadet officers at community picnics and dances.

In February 1965, the oceanographic survey ship *Shoyo Maru* tied up at the Broadway Pier for a brief visit. One of the crew was **Kinichi Ohga** whose father had visited San Diego 53 years earlier as a cadet officer aboard the *Taisei Maru*. Ohga told the *San Diego Union* that his father had spent two months in San Diego while the crew awaited the arrival of their new captain. Ohga also told the *Union* reporter that he had written a 200-page history of the 1912 voyage which he had dedicated to the memory of his father.



A Curtis bi-plane piloted by Motohisa Kondo soars above the *Taisei Maru*, 1912

He presented the history to then Mayor Frank Curran. Ohga explained to the mayor how his father had told him many times about his San Diego experiences and the kindness shown the cadets by the local Nikkei community.

One of Mr. Ohga's father's most vivid memories was watching as the *Taisei Maru* was "buzzed" by a bi-plane from the Glenn Curtis Flying School located off North Island. The pilot of that aircraft was **Motohisa Kondo**, the first Japanese to be granted an international flying license in the United States.

IN GRATITUDE

The membership and Board of the JAHSSD gratefully acknowledges the following donations to the ongoing work of your Historical Society:

Dr. and Mrs. FRANK KASTELIK
of Encinitas for their generous donation
to the Society's historical photo preservation work.

Ms. TOSHIKO KAWASAKI
for her generous support of the Society.

Ms. KIKU KAWAMOTO
for her generous support of the Society.

ONE STEP AT A TIME...

Same Path, New Shoes

It's with some trepidation that I assume production of *Footprints* from this issue, taking over the publishing duties of that truly awesome twosome, **Mich and Naomi Himaka**. Together they have put out an incredible 24 quarterly issues over the past six-plus years. The Society is truly beholden to Mich and Naomi for the countless hours they have devoted to informing and entertaining the membership.

Fortunately, Mich will continue to write stories for us, as the newsletter would be a sorry thing indeed without his "voice." He'll also be making sure I don't do things like go astray with local family names, confusing this cousin with that, or linking up Mr. X with Mrs. Y, inadvertently starting some juicy rumors in these very pages! And should I occasionally stick foot into mouth, he will be nearby to help pull it out.

I am grateful to those who have been helping me during this transition period of learning new publishing software as well as creative use of the scanner and photo printer. Besides Mich and Naomi, they include President Vernon Yoshioka, Yukio Kawamoto, Chieko Moriyama, and Don and Carol Estes. I appreciate their support and patience... as well as those of you who've been wondering if the Spring Issue would ever arrive!

I will be aided and abetted in my new duties by my main man Bill, a longtime professional editor and publisher; daughter Jaime, who learned PageMaker years ago as editor-in-chief of her weekly high school paper in Ft. Worth; and future son-in-law Asa Enochs, Computer Wrangler. In this case, nepotism is a good thing: all will be trying to keep me on track as I ride that learning curve.

As always, your comments, suggestions, but especially your stories are needed and welcome. If you're reminiscing about "the old days" with a friend, jot down the experiences to share with us. Maybe an idea for a story will be triggered by something you read in this issue. Each person is full of unique tales to tell. Don't worry about spelling and punctuation; that'll be my job. You can snail mail your letters or articles to the Society or e-mail them to me at <teague-family@att.net>.

Please keep us apprised of what is going on with your families and in your lives. While it's important to preserve our past, we also want to celebrate new achievements as they occur. After all, what we think is just plain ol' everyday living today becomes our history tomorrow.

~Joyce Teague

IN MEMORIAM

JAHSSD notes with great sadness the passing of San Diegans and former residents of our community. We extend our heartfelt condolences to their families and friends.

Takio Muto - December 1, 2001
 Anna Elenora Keegan - December 6, 2001
 Akiko Hirase - December 6, 2001
 Ronald K. Nakano - December 20, 2001
 Nobue Nishii - December 23, 2001
 Akira Jack Nakano - December 28, 2001
 Timothy S. Regan - December 31, 2001
 Rev. Kakue Miyaji - January 4, 2002
 Tsugio Imoto - January 5, 2002
 Masu Swanson - January 11, 2002
 Jack Satoshi Takagi - February 1, 2002
 Shie Hagio - February 13, 2002
 Misuko Tanaka - February 20, 2002
 Misao M. Umekubo - March 3, 2002
 Hideo Nose - March 4, 2002
 Masahito Clint Iwanaga - March 6, 2002
 Kiyoko Hazelbaker - March 10, 2002
 Toyomi Sanchez - March 12, 2002
 Hajime Tashiro - March 15, 2002

TOKYO: A WORLD CLASS CITY

by Michio Himaka

April 12, 2001 — After visiting the sumo stable, the Edo Museum, Asakuna Kannon Temple and the Imperial Palace, our tour group, led by **Rev. Jim and Patsy Yanagihara**, got some free time to roam the Ginza areas. What a trip! Everybody looked like me! Well, most looked better but what the heck do you expect.

We spread out looking for a place to eat. We wound up in a small hole-in-the-wall where we had *donburi mono*. Then we walked around getting lost in the crowd. In one store and out another. Wall to wall people who looked like me. Well, never mind.

That night, I met my cousin **Echiyo Hiraishi** and her three sons. We walked several blocks to Tokyo's World Trade Center. It was a long walk but my 81-year-old cousin did it with hardly a deep breath. We took the elevator to the top floor. I think original plans were to eat in the Chinese restaurant side but they said it was full, so one of the boys suggested the French restaurant side. It didn't matter to us because we planned to pay for dinner for all of us anyway.

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MEMBERSHIP NEWS

A warm welcome to our new members: **George and Sakiko Sekiguchi**, **Ronald Hidinger**, **Ken Miyamoto**, **Mrs. Steven Ralph**, **Henry and Mary Yamada**, and **Henry Mukai**. We are pleased to have all of you as members of our Society.

A big thank you to **Don and Carol Estes** for providing gift memberships to **George and Sakiko Sekiguchi**; to **Trace and Mildred Kawasaki** for upgrading their membership to Life; to **Holly Hidinger** for including her husband, **Ronald Hidinger**, in her membership renewal; and to **Judy Miyamoto** for including her husband, **Ken Miyamoto**, in her membership renewal.

We also thank the following individuals for renewing their memberships: **Rose Watamura**, **Jean Okazaki**, **Masayoshi and Grace Tsuida**, **Grace Seki**, **Kenneth Uyeda**, **Eiji Kiya**, **Jon and Carrie Kawamoto**, **Kuniko Nishimura**, **Chizuko Shinzaki**, **Shirley Omori**, **Sud (Ruth) Morishita**, **Ruth Fujimoto**, **Roy Kubo**, **Kiku Kawamoto**, **Harold and Kuniko Kuhn**, **Taka and Beverly Sawasaki**, **Todd Himaka**, **Yoshio Matsumoto**, **Kenji and Carol Ii**, and **Kimie Kaneyuki**.

Thanks also to the following for their renewals: **Kathleen and Robert Lui**, **Tetsuo and Sasako Himaka**, **Tomi Morimoto**, **Kenji and Satoko Sato**, **Fusa Shimizu**, **Martin Lloyd and Emiko Ito**, **Michael Okuma**, **Joe and Elizabeth Yamada**, **Mitsue Tanaka**, **Connie Taniguchi**, **Frank and Tami Kinoshita**, **Louise Iguchi**, **Iwao and Mary Ishino**, **Takeko Wakiji**, **Sue Tsushima**, **Kathy Nakayama**, **Don and Hanako Konishi**, **Calvin Koseki**, **Yoshie Nakashima**, **Kenneth and Katherine Koba**, **Vernon and Shinobu Yoshioka**, **Jeanette Dutton**, **Isamu and Pauline Nakamura**, **Elizabeth Hatashita**, **Shinkichi Tajiri**, **Fudo Takagi**, **Kikuo and Beni Takahashi**, **Tom and Elizabeth Ozaki**, **Tomiko Kozuma**, **Jay and Mari Sato**, **Robert and Edna Ito**, **Kiyo Uda**, **Karen Kawasaki**, **Bruce and Sharon Asakawa**, and **Umeko Kawamoto**.

CAUGHT DOING SOMETHING NICE

Our thanks go to **Ms. Jan Tokumaru** for the donation to our collection of the framed proclamation from the San Diego County Board of Supervisors recognizing February 19, 1981 as a **Day of Remembrance in San Diego County**. In the citation, the supervisors reaffirm that "we have learned from the tragedy of that long ago experience that this kind of action shall never again be

repeated." Our appreciation also goes to **Dr. Miyoshi Ikeda** who saw to the safe delivery of the plaque to our archives.

We would like to acknowledge with gratitude the donation from **Mrs. Michiko Delaney** of a framed 8x10 color photograph of Emperor Hirohito and Empress Nagako standing beside President Gerald Ford and First Lady Mrs. Betty Ford in front of the White House during the Royal visit on November 19, 1974.

Our thanks also go to **Mrs. Jean Boyd** who has graciously allowed us to make copies of four photographs from her collection of Nisei members of the World War II Women's Army Corps (WACS). The permission to copy these personal photographs of Nisei women in uniform is especially welcome since we have so few in our existing collection. Two of the photographs have informative identification citations on the back of the photographs.

We would like to acknowledge the story on life in early Mission Valley in this issue by **Chieko Moriyama**, who thoughtfully provided the beautiful photographs that accompany the article. Thank you, **Chieko**, for a terrific job.

Our gratitude also to **Ruth Voorhies** for providing the life history of her late friend, **Taro Matsui**, which inspired an appreciation of Mr. Matsui in the *Chanko-Nabe* column this issue. The photo of Taro's Watch Shop, along with additional period photos, watch repair tools, and books and equipment used at the shop, are being given to the JAHSSD collection with the consent of Taro's brother, **Jack Matsui** of Seattle. Buddhist *onenju* and other daily faith-related materials which belonged to the late **Ms. Fusako Matsui**, a nationally-recognized Dharma School teacher of 50 years, are also included in the gift.

Taking time out of their busy schedules to talk to **Karen Kawasaki's** U.S. History class at Mount Carmel High School last February were **Jeanne Marumoto Elyea**, **Yukio** and **Mits Kawamoto**, and our Board President, **Vernon Yoshioka**.

On March 21, **Dr. Ruth Okimoto** spoke on the current status of the **Poston Restoration Committee** at the San Diego Public Library. **Ruth** was kind enough to bring a number of Poston artifacts and photographs which were donated to our **Poston Restoration Project** down from Northern California with her. Thanks so much, **Ruth**, for the extra effort.

Mr. Hideo Ochi has graciously donated the United States Army uniform he used during World War II. Part of Hideo's Army experiences were recounted in the Volume 3: Number 3 (Fall 1994) issue of *Footprints*. **Hideo's** gift is especially welcome as we are in need of World War II Nikkei military memorabilia for our public program displays. Thank you, **Hideo**.

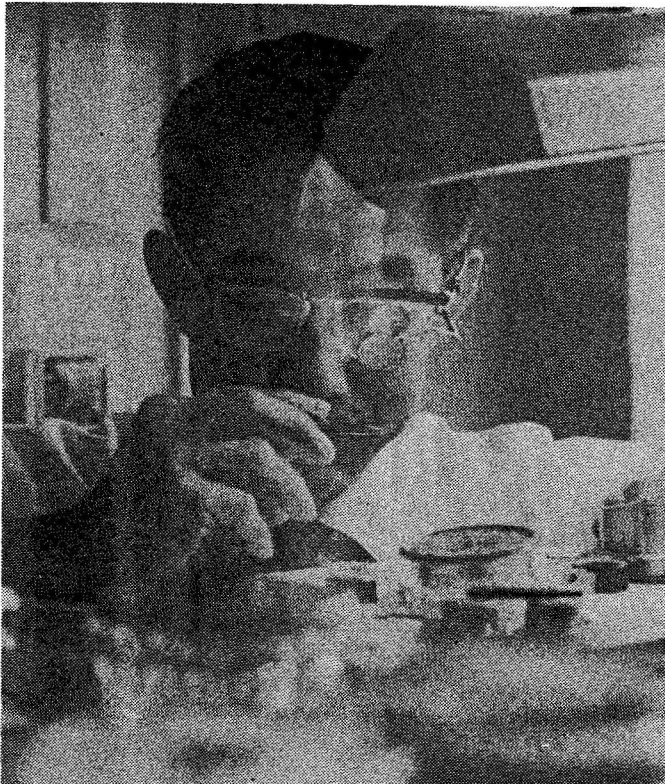
CHANKO-NABE

by Joyce Nabeta Teague

Be Good to the Good Ones

This March, a number of us attended the one-year memorial service for Taro Matsui, a long-time member of the Buddhist Temple who passed away April 29, 2001, just a few days after his 82nd birthday. He had followed his older sister Fusa Matsui in death by only five months.

Many long-time San Diegans will remember him as the proprietor of Taro's Watch Shop which he opened at Broadway and Ninth downtown shortly after moving to San Diego from Des Moines in 1949.



Taro at work in his shop at 911 Broadway, circa 1960

Taro was born in Hanford, California, one of four children of Akito and Hanano Matsui. His father died during the Depression years and the family made ends meet by running a restaurant. After the outbreak of WWII, the Matsuis were evacuated to Fresno Assembly Center and eventually to Jerome Relocation Center in Arkansas.

When Jerome closed in 1944, the family transferred to the Rohwer Relocation Center, also in Arkansas. There, Taro and his good friend Maco Satoda made plans to attend the Bradley School of Horology in Peoria to learn the art of watch making and repair. Upon graduation, Taro got a job in Des Moines where his mother and sister Fusa joined him in 1945. The three of them ended up in San Diego four years later, influenced by the assignment to

the Buddhist Temple here of Rev. Tetsuro Kashima, to whom Fusa was devoted.

The Matsui family adapted to life in San Diego, becoming active at the Buddhist Temple, a source of many of their social activities. Taro and Fusa attended regularly and taught Sunday School (Fusa for most of her adult life). Taro was the first YABA (Young Adult Buddhist Association—now called ABA) President at its founding in 1959.

Outside the Temple, Taro served on the JACL scholarship committee. He enjoyed playing bridge, learned to golf, became an avid Chargers fan, and eventually a season ticket holder. Neither he nor his sister married. Both lived with and supported their mother till she passed away in 1983.

Bill and I had worked with Fusa as Sunday School volunteers for several years prior to our move to Texas, but did not get to know Taro well until we moved back to San Diego three years later. We bought a house in Oak Park, the same neighborhood where the Matsuis had lived for decades, so we had occasion to ride-share to a Temple event with Fusa or Taro. Because of our proximity, we would get an occasional visit from Taro delivering tomatoes or lemons from his garden. He was too shy to come inside, satisfied to hand over the fruit with a few words, a smile and a wave.

During this period, Fusa became extremely forgetful and less and less sure of her feet. When Fusa fell and broke her hip, Taro, who had his own health problems, realized he could no longer care for her himself and she was moved into an assisted-living home in Mira Mesa.

For the 2½ years that Fusa was at the care facility, Taro visited her at least twice a week, taking her manju or special treats or the Japanese-language weekly, *Rafu Shimpo*, which she enjoyed reading until her mind was unable to follow a story from start to finish. Often they simply watched TV together.

As much as Fusa longed to return home, Taro's life must have been lonely as well. He ate most of his meals by himself at Coco's in College Grove where, during one meal with him there, I learned all the waitresses knew him by name. But he worked in his yard when he felt up to it and occasionally fixed a clock or a watch as a favor for someone who requested it. He maintained good relations with his longtime neighbors and they watched out for one another. Good friends like Ruth Voorhies and Mits and Sally Ishihara would stop by for a chat and to see how he was doing. Ruth always invited him to holiday dinners at her house, too.

Taro's younger brother Jack, who lives in Seattle, would fly down as often as he could to check on his older siblings. Also a good-humored and generous man, he took



Taro Matsui (right) enjoying lunch at Reubens, one of his favorite eateries, with Aki Tomiyama and Bill Teague, February 2001

Taro to favorite restaurants or whisked him off on a road trip for a welcome change of pace. Taro especially enjoyed a visit to the Grand Canyon which included his long-time friend Maco.

With Fusa unable to accompany him to Sunday services, Taro continued to attend by himself. He helped the printing and mailing crew for the Temple's monthly news-

letter, only missing those months he was hospitalized for a serious lung condition or kept away by the recurrent pain of shingles. He was exceedingly generous of both his time and donations to the Temple up to the very day of his passing.

At the memorial service, friends acknowledged Taro as an example of a true Buddhist Nembutsu follower. By this was meant he did not preen or preach, nor did he seek acknowledgment of his generosity. He simply lived and enjoyed a modest life, mindful of his responsibilities, helpful and good-natured, and always aware of others before himself.

In a time when cynicism reigns and our leaders near and far are often self-serving and duplicitous, a man like Taro is sadly rare. When we lose such a person, it seems to me we are seeing a way of life pass, too. Therefore our deepest gratitude goes to the quiet people who teach us without knowing they are doing so, through their daily actions. We appreciate them too late because we take them for granted. But because they are so special, we miss them most when they are gone.

SHINKICHI TAJIRI: Truly, A Man For All Seasons

PART V in a Series

Shinkichi George Tajiri is a renowned artist and distinguished professor who lives in Baarlo, The Netherlands. Prior to World War II, Professor Tajiri and his family lived in San Diego and, like the other members of the local Nikkei community, were forced into exile in 1942 by Executive Order 9066. With his kind permission, we reproduce here an edited portion of Professor Tajiri's autobiography.



*The 442nd leaves for the Italian front.
Shinkichi Tajiri is third from right.*

The day I got wounded was hot and cloudless. We had fought brutally throughout the night near the village of Castellina to take Hill 140, known as "Little Casino" because of its fortifications and the determined troops of the Nazi SS.

Besides our normal equipment of a blanket, a half of a tent, mess kit, canteen, shovel, a .30 caliber carbine, ammunition and K rations, our platoon sergeant gave me a 100-yard roll of telephone wire without telephones, and a walkie-talkie without batteries. He ordered me to deliver a message to another company resting somewhere out there... "to the West." An hour later I found them and delivered my message.

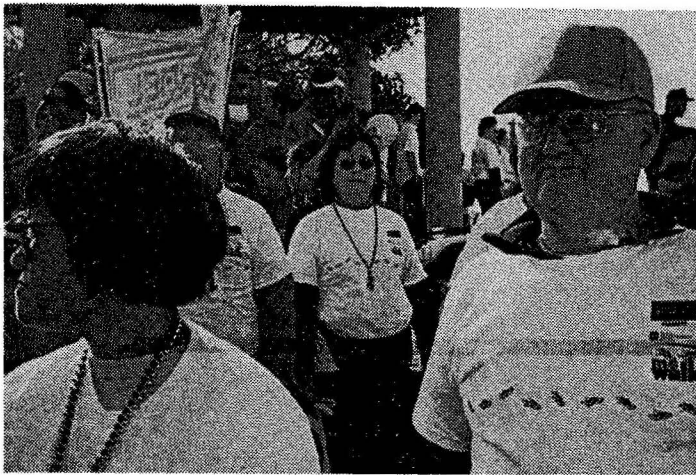
I flopped down to rest—I hadn't slept the night before—and opened a K ration. I was just biting into a piece of hard concentrated chocolate when someone yelled, "On the double." Everyone jumped up and started rushing off. I grabbed my things and ran after them. It wasn't until I had gone a half of a mile that I realized that I had forgotten my carbine. I mentioned this to one of the guys who pulled out a .45 semi-automatic pistol complete with holster and belt and handed it to me. I was enchanted. A .45 was only for officers. It was after I had it securely strapped on and asked for the ammunition that he told me he didn't have any.

When I got back to my squad, the lieutenant told me to follow him. The Lieutenant was a tall gawky white southerner a couple of years older than myself. Unknowingly, he led

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*Bob Batchelder (left) with some of his Walkathon Buddies:
Kira Batchelder (facing left) Hisae Batchelder, Virginia Loh,
Jeanne Elyea, Karen Kawasaki, Yuki Kawamoto*



Virginia Loh, Naomi Himaka (background), Bill Elyea



Kristina McCauley (center), Naomi Himaka (right)



Michael, Yuki and Mits Kawamoto



Mich Himaka, Kira Batchelder, Virginia Loh

JAHSSD TEAM RAISES \$3,800 IN MS WALK

by Michio Himaka

Bob's Buddies, the JAHSSD team formed for the 2002 Multiple Sclerosis fund-raising effort, raised about \$3,800 this year for the MS Walk on St. Patrick's Day.

Fifteen members or friends participated in the walk along Harbor Drive from Seaport Village to almost the Coast Guard Station. The guys wore green plastic derbies and the gals wore green shamrock antennas so we at least looked good!

Our team captain, Don Estes, was unable to make the walk, but he and wife Carol raised the most. It was our team's second year participating in the walk and we managed to raise more than last year. In fact, though we didn't quite reach the level Qualcomm's employees reached, we were in the level just below them, which isn't bad for such a small group.

Those participating or raising funds as Bob's Buddies included Bob, Hisae and Kira Batchelder; Kira's friend, Virginia Loh; Yuki, Mits and Michael Kawamoto; Karen Kawasaki; and Jeanne and Bill Elyea.

Also participating were Linda Marumoto McLemore; Allyne Marumoto Tachiki; Mich and Naomi Himaka; Don and Carol Estes; Katie Laughlin; and Kristina McCauley. We thank them for participating in our effort.

Along with the team, we thank those of you who contributed by sponsoring the walkers. You were the **Big Kahunas** in this effort. You made the whole walk worth participating in.

Thank you all. Hope we can call on you again next year!

TOKYO continued from page 4

We sat and ordered. The menu was unlike any other we had seen in the U.S. It listed the food but no prices. Strange, I thought. I guess that's the way it is here. I probably couldn't read it anyway.

Whatever the price, what we had from the top floor was a beautiful sight! From where we sat, we could see Tokyo Disneyland a few miles away.

Echiyo-nesan and I sat and talked. We talked about our mothers, who were sisters. (Yes. Surprisingly, I could understand what they were saying in Japanese. Fortunately for Naomi, a couple of the brothers spoke English so they carried on their own conversation.)

Echiyo-nesan told me a little of our family history on Mama's side. Mama was the last of seven children born to Yahei and Haru Taka. Echiyo's mother, Sueno Seko, probably was closest to Mama because both lived in San Diego before my aunt returned to Japan.

As we ate, we could see in the distance fireworks at Disneyland. The waiter promptly dimmed the light so the fireworks would look better. This was class! We are going to get our money's worth tonight, I thought. (It must have felt like this to our guests attending the 1991 Poston III Reunion here in San Diego...that the fireworks that week-end were all for them, when actually it was for the America's Cup celebration.)

I waited for the bill, but my cousin's sons got the waiter to give them the bill. (Really! I had every intention of paying for the dinner! Really! Honest.)



*With the Hiraishis outside the World Trade Center restaurant.
Left to right: Ritsuro, Tatsuro, Echiyo, Mich, Naomi, Tetsuro, Yuki*

After dinner, we walked back to our hotel, the Shiba Park Hotel in Tokyo. We sat in the lobby and talked some more. I introduced them to the Yanagiharas before we parted. I was hoping that we might see the Hiraishis again, but our tour ended in Kyoto so we bade our farewells and parted. Hopefully, it won't be the last time I see them.

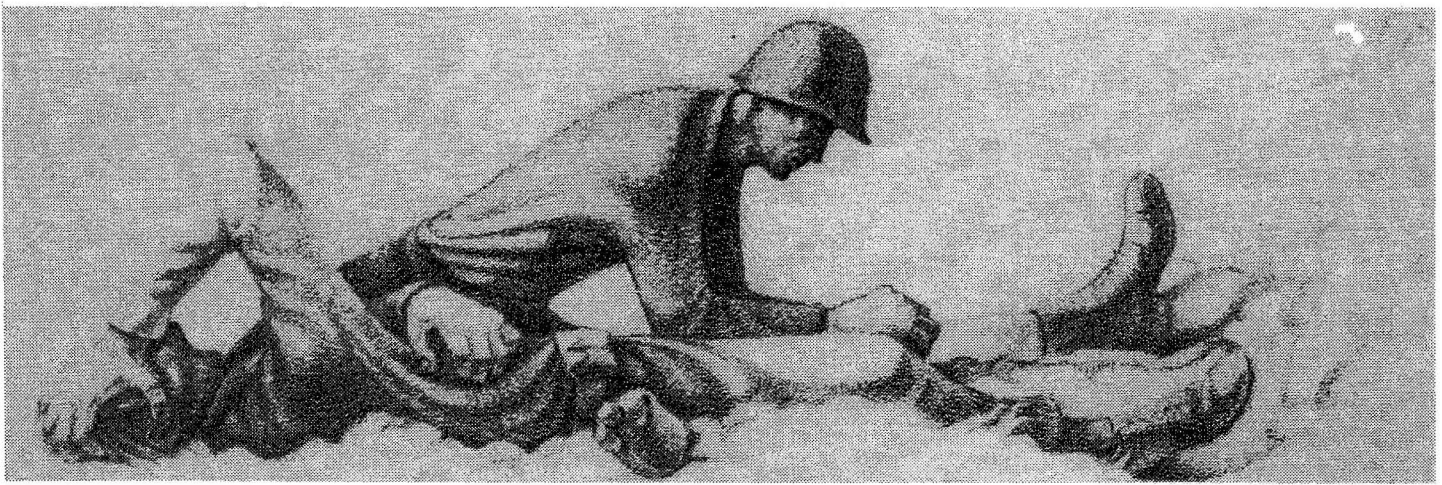
Naomi and I talked to the Yanagiharas later and told them of our experience at the restaurant. We said it was strange that the menu did not include the prices.

Both looked at us and said: "Oh! That was an expensive restaurant! They *never* show their prices!"

We gulped. Actually, almost choked because there were seven of us and if each meal was over \$100...well, you get the picture.

Patsy said it probably was closer to \$200 each.

I promise, if they ever visit here, I will pick up the tab. Honest.



TENDING THE WOUNDED IN ITALY by S. Tajiri, 1944

SHINKICHI TAJIRI continued from page 7

me through our own lines, and we found ourselves in a dry riverbed in "no man's land." To mask his confusion, he told me to go back and bring up the squad. I turned back and soon found the squad walking single file into enemy territory. I called them over and started back. As we approached the bend where I left the lieutenant, we came under German small arms fire. We lay on the large stones in the river bed until we could figure out where the firing was coming from.

Immediately I heard someone behind me yell, "I'm hit" and a second later I felt a terrific impact on my left thigh, as if someone had hit me with a baseball bat. I yelled for the medic, but he was dead. Someone crawled over, cut my pants leg open, poured sulfa powder into the wound and wrapped it up. We lay there for hours, pinned down under the July sun waiting for darkness, while the Germans lobbed in mortar shells on us.

I thought how absurd it all seemed. I was an immature 20-year-old in the middle of nowhere with a punctured, bleeding leg that looked like mincemeat, 100 yards of useless wire, a dead walkie-talkie, a .45 without bullets, and my family in a concentration camp. I was one of the millions of boys sent out to kill each other for a dollar a day. Until then I hadn't fired a shot in the war. Now, I threw everything, plus a stream of four-letter words in the direction of the enemy.

The next morning in a field hospital they operated on my leg. The bullet struck the stone on which I was lying and ricocheted upward, bringing with it about fifty small fragments of stone. Some of those lodged against the bone; then the bullet passed upward through my thigh. Later, I was flown to the 6th Army General Hospital where my wound was reopened as the surgeon made an incision from the top of my thigh to the knee and deep down to the femur. They

dug out the pieces of stone and put my leg, from the hip to the toes, in plaster. It was six months before they took off the cast and I was allowed to walk again.

~ To be continued next issue ~

STATE HONORS FOR TOKI OCHI

by Michio Himaka

It took us four years to recognize one of our own but it's an honor that all San Diego Nikkeis can be proud of.

It happened in 1998 right in our own backyard when the California State Athletic Directors Association at its annual meeting here named **Toki Ochi** the California State High School Athletic Director of the Year.

Toki is the daughter of **Kosaburo** and **Kayoko Ochi**. Toki has been a coach, teacher and administrator at La Puente Bassett High School for more than 28 years now and has been a teacher in the Bassett Unified School District for more than 34 years. The Association board of directors selected her from nominations from more than 1,100 high schools in the state.

Toki told the *San Gabriel Valley Tribune* that having the honor bestowed on her in her hometown before her parents, her sisters and a niece provided her an emotional high.

"It's one of those things that, of course, is always an honor, but it's really the people around you that make things special," she said. "There have been so many people who have been supportive and helped me along the way."

Toki attended San Diego State and earned her Bachelor's Degree in Physical Education from Cal State Los Angeles. She earned her Master's Degree in Education from U.S. International University in San Diego.

She has coached most girls sports, including softball,

volleyball and basketball. She has served on numerous CIF Southern Section advisory committees, including the Athletic Administrators Committee.

Her colleagues at Bassett consider Toki a special person who has touched the lives of many students.

"She seems to put that extra special something that makes her different from other ADs," said one of her AD colleagues.

Our belated congratulations to Toki for a most deserved honor.

DEMOCRACY UNDER PRESSURE Video and Teacher's Guide

IAHSSD still has copies on hand of its award-winning documentary, *Democracy Under Pressure: Japanese Americans and World War II*, which debuted in May 2000.

Production of the film and an accompanying teacher's guide were made possible in part by a grant from the California Civil Liberties Public Education Project (CCLPEP) and the generous support of IAHSSD members.

Democracy Under Pressure tells what happened to 2,000 people of Japanese descent living in San Diego after the outbreak of World War II. To most Americans, they were indistinguishable from the enemy, and thus treated as if they were the enemy. U.S. citizens and resident aliens alike were given a few days to sell or abandon their property and businesses, packing only what they could carry, and were removed en masse from the County. There was no due process as guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution. Law-abiding families spent the duration of the War behind barbed wire in concentration camps hastily built in desolate desert areas.

IAHSSD made the film for local students of American history who may be unaware of this period during which Constitutional rights were ignored by otherwise reasonable men, and the lives of innocent people were forever altered. The film focuses particularly on the experiences of San Diego natives Ben Segawa and Ruth Voorhies who were students at the time.

In the Fall of 2000, the video and curriculum guide were distributed free to all public and private secondary schools and colleges throughout San Diego and Imperial Counties. It is also currently available for loan through the San Diego Public Library system.

Copies may also be obtained at IAHSSD-sponsored events or by mailing a check for the suggested donation of \$20 (\$15 for IAHSSD members) plus \$5 shipping to: IAHSSD Video, P.O. Box 620988, San Diego, CA 92162-0988.

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HUNG WAI CHING: A EULOGY

by Ted Tsukiyama, 442nd RCT Vet.

Editor's note: The following is excerpted from a eulogy given by Ted Tsukiyama, a lawyer and 442nd veteran/historian in Hawaii. It was sent to us by Yo Takehara, formerly of San Diego, now living in Hawaii. Mr. Ching was very helpful to the Japanese Americans in Hawaii after Pearl Harbor, as evidenced in the first half of the eulogy, which has been edited for length.

Hung Wai Ching was a true and great hero of the Hawaii home front during World War II. He was the last of a few wartime leaders who believed in the loyalty of the Japanese in Hawaii and who courageously spoke out in the face of racial animosity and wartime hysteria to give the Nisei the opportunity to demonstrate their loyalty to America.

Hawaii was fortunate that Mr. Ching was appointed to the critical morale section of the Military Governor's office, which served as liaison between the military government and the civil population to maintain and preserve the morale, peace and stability of a community at war.

One of the main jobs of the morale section was to stabilize and prevent possible explosive racial situations. Reprisals against the Japanese had to be prevented. Roughneck whites and blacks among the thousands of defense workers pouring into Hawaii had to be kept in line working in harmony. When news of the "Bataan Death March" reached Hawaii, Mr. Ching rushed out to the plantations to find Filipino workers sharpening their cane knives. He told them: "Hey, you sharp da knife, eh? Good! You be ready. But no use da knife until I give you da signal, OK?"

Mr. Ching's "cane knife army" waited patiently throughout the entire war, because Mr. Ching never gave the signal!

Mr. Ching reported directly to FBI Chief Robert Shivers and to Army Intelligence Col. Kendall J. Fielder, who had unlimited authority to detain anyone deemed a security risk to Hawaiian internal security. There were any number of Japanese in Hawaii who, unbeknownst to the two officials, were released early from detention or were never detained at all because of Mr. Ching's intervention.

When Gen. Emmons arrived in Hawaii, he called in Fielder and asked: "How many Japs did you take in today?" But after consulting with Mr. Ching, Fielder refused to make blanket quota arrests, even at the risk of court martial and his future military career. The tragic wartime mistake of mass evacuation and internment of mainland Japanese was not repeated by Hawaii's military and intelligence leaders, largely because of calm, reasoned, behind-the-scenes consultation from advisors like Mr. Ching.

The morale section concentrated its efforts on the Japanese because after the Pearl Harbor attack, Mr. Ching knew everyone who was of Japanese ancestry, alien or citizen alike, were "behind the eight ball." Pearl Harbor was still in smoking ruins. A Japanese invasion of Hawaii was expected any day. Rumors of Japanese disloyalty were rampant. Nisei Soldiers of the 298th Infantry had their guns taken away. The draft status of all Nisei changed to "enemy alien" (ineligible for military service). The president of the Mutual Telephone Co. proposed that all Japanese be evacuated to Molokai. There was widespread fear and distrust against the Japanese in Hawaii and grave questions as to their loyalty to country.

Mr. Ching, however, had no doubt as to the loyalty of people he grew up with and went to school with all the way up through the university. But he also knew that people in Hawaii and the general American public would never be fully convinced of the loyalty of Japanese Americans until they could get back into the armed services, bear arms, fight and even die for their country. So the most significant contribution Mr. Ching made during the war was the direct role he played in helping Japanese Americans regain the opportunity to bear arms and to prove their ultimate loyalty to country. This is that story.

On Dec. 7, 1941, the University of Hawaii ROTC cadets, who had been called to duty, were converted to the Hawaii Territorial Guard (HTG) and were assigned to guard vital buildings and installations on Oahu.

On Jan. 19, 1942, the War Department discovered to their horror that "Honolulu was being guarded by hundreds of Japs in American uniforms!" All HTG soldiers of Japanese ancestry were discharged. Most of them returned to UH where Mr. Ching met, consoled, counseled and inspired the group of confused, bitter and disillusioned Nisei to offer themselves to the military governor as a labor battalion. The military governor's key pitch was: "So, they don't trust you with rifles, maybe they'll trust you with picks and shovels."

"Picks and shovels?" the Nisei replied incredulously. Here Mr. Ching was asking guys trying to get a college education to escape a future of plantation labor to volunteer to go back to manual labor! But considering the desperate situation they were in, Mr. Ching made sense. So, 169 Nisei signed a petition offering themselves as a labor battalion.

Mr. Ching took that petition to Col. Fielder to assure that the petition would be accepted by the military governor. The group, called the "Varsity Victory Volunteers," was assigned to the 34th Construction Engineer Regiment at Schofield Barracks to perform essential defense construction work for the next 11 months.

As the acknowledged "Father of the VVV," Mr. Ching took a paternal interest in his VVV Boys and showed them off at every chance. In December 1942, Col. Fielder asked Mr. Ching to escort the Assistant Secretary of War, John J. McCloy, the most powerful man in the War Department, on a field inspection trip. Mr. Ching made sure that McCloy saw the VVV Quarry Gangs cracking rocks and operating the quarry at Kolokole Pass and told him, "Those are all Nisei university boys who gave up their education to do their part for the war effort."

Could it have been a mere coincidence that five to six weeks later, President Franklin D. Roosevelt announced the volunteers? This was exactly the ultimate objective of the VVV and the chance they had been working and waiting for. The VVV voted to disband Jan. 25, 1943, so they could volunteer for the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Thus it was the VVV, inspired and initiated by Mr. Ching, which was a key factor leading to the formation of the all-Nisei 442nd RCT.

Mr. Ching adopted the 442nd in place of his disbanded VVV Boys and used his connections with the War Department to assure that the 442nd would be given fair treatment and every opportunity to succeed. When Hawaii's 442nd volunteers sailed out of Pier II, the Lurline troopship, Mr. Ching was one of the few persons allowed on the pier to see them off. Five days later, when the troopship sailed into San Francisco, there standing on the piers to greet the 442nd boys was Mr. Ching. He had flown to California to meet Gen. John DeWitt and request these volunteers be treated with dignity and to withdraw any armed guards along the route because "these were not Japanese POWs, they were American soldiers."

Then Mr. Ching asked Gen. DeWitt if the 442nd could be given overnight passes so that they could eat chop suey in San Francisco's famous Chinatown. Imagine Mr. Ching asking the very same man who had ordered 120,000 Japanese-Americans evacuated from the West Coast and imprisoned them into American concentration camps, to allow 2,452 "Buddahead soldiers" to roam around the City of San Francisco. Crazy it was, but it showed just how much Mr. Ching tried to "take care of his boys."

When the troop trains pulled into Camp Shelby, Mississippi, the boys were greeted by the comforting sight of Mr. Ching standing at the train station. He had just returned from a War Department visit where he tried to get the training site of the 442nd moved out of the South to a more racially tolerant Midwest. Secretary McCloy told him the decision already was made but authorized Mr. Ching to go down to Camp Shelby to oversee the organization of the 442nd. At that time, the City of Hattiesburg was in an



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uproar over the news, "Jap Regiment to train at Camp Shelby." The first thing Mr. Ching did was to meet with the editor of the Hattiesburg *American* and the police chief to tell them that "these were not Japs, these were American soldiers who had volunteered to fight for their country." Thereafter, the "Go Home, Japs" editorials ceased and the "Japs Not Wanted" road signs disappeared. Ching saw to it that the 442nd got its own USO and that it was located on the white side of a still segregated Hattiesburg.

An old-fashioned Southern Baptist minister had been appointed as the first 442nd chaplain but Mr. Ching got the Army Chaplain Corps to replace that chaplain with Hawaii's own Revs. Masao Yamada and Hiro Higuchi. These are some of the reasons why Mr. Ching was one of the first to be named an Honorary Member of the 442nd Veterans Club.

Earlier, in May 1942, Col. Fielder had assigned Mr. Ching to observe and monitor the formation of the Hawaiian Provisional Infantry Battalion, predecessor to the famed 100th Infantry Battalion. Mr. Ching was instrumental in assuring the 100th would be staffed and led into battle by Hawaii-born officers like Col. Turner, Maj. Lovell, Capt. Johnson and Capt. Kometani. Mr. Ching monitored the progress of the 100th through its training, maneuvers, and overseas Italian and French battlegrounds. Everywhere he went and spoke, he extolled the exploits and distinguished records of "The Purple Heart Battalion." And this is why Mr. Ching is named as one of the exclusive Honorary Members of the 100th Infantry Battalion Veterans Club.

~ To be continued next issue ~

George and Tad, and my sister Dorothy were in the upper classroom. I never knew the names of the schools that the other kids living in Mission Valley attended.

All those attending Grantville would go to Wilson Junior High, then on to Hoover High or San Diego High. I specifically remember Charley Torio who was the nicest, gentlest person we knew. He would let the smaller children climb on the tops of his shoes, and he would give us "rides" around the playground. It didn't matter that we were traveling backward—we simply enjoyed his time and attention.

Most of the kids who attended Grantville walked to and from school. Many lived more than two miles away, and it was a very, very long walk every day!

I will never forget the year that the upper classes presented Dickens' "A Christmas Carol" for the Christmas program. My brother Tad was Tiny Tim and our friend Bob Rickard played Bob Cratchit. Bob valiantly carried Tad around on his shoulders during the play except for the times when Tad was supposed to walk around using his crutches (props). What a great year that was! Animosity didn't exist between nationalities nor were there differences of any kind. We were all country kids going to school and having a great time.



Left to right: Mrs. Tanaka, Mrs. Tanaka (elder), Mrs. Torio, and child, March 1934

Our Nikkei Neighbors

At that time, a number of Japanese families lived in Mission Valley: the Hosakas (Ayako, Sayoko, Masato and George), their cousins the Hosakas (Kiyoji, Roy, Hideko, Tomoye, Jimmy, Tsuruko and Teruko), the Nakagawas (Kiyoshi, George, Misao and Shizue), the Sumiyoshis (Aishi, Masako, Miyeko and Mary), the Tanakas (Akira), the grandparents Tanaka (Fusataro) and the Torios (Kimie, Charley, George and Frankie).

Those living closer to the school were the Hatauyes (Nobuko, Hisami and Atsuko), the Hondas (Yukie and Shigemi) and the Tanakas (Masashi and Kiyomi). Later, Mrs. Honda married Mr. Ogawa (daughter Yoshiko) and left Mission Valley.

To the west of the school lived the Kubos (Sadako). The Sakamotos (Min, his brothers and sisters) lived up on the hill overlooking the river valley. (The Sakamotos raised strawberries while the other farmers raised vegetables.) The rest of us lived from two to four miles north and north-east of the school.



The Ito Family

The Akiyamas (Shizuo, Hidetoshi and Chiyeko) lived to the east by the Daley Sand Plant while the Itos (Kaoru, Fumiko, Hisaye, Kiyoko, Kazuko, Emiko and their brother Taro), the Yamadas (Matsue, Willy, George and Ayako), and my family, the Yanos (Toki, George, Tad, Hatsuyo, Dorothy and Chieko), lived north of the San Diego River. We could see the hill where the Sakamotos lived and I often wondered how they got up there. I never did figure it out or see any roads winding up the hill, but they were there; I just wasn't looking in the right places.

All the farmers had their own wells and water pumps for irrigation. The size of the water pump depended on the acreage that was being farmed. The water had a flavor that is impossible to describe; it was so delicious and I have never tasted water like that again.

Farming Family Activities

My earliest memories are of the families that came over to pound mochi. My dad turned over the mochi as others pounded the sweet rice with those odd-looking wooden pegs with handles. How my father kept his hand from being hit by the mallet was quite a miracle to me!

There were times when families congregated under the huge tree in front of our home. We would sit on crates and watch movies about farm equipment shown by salesmen



Willy and Matsue Yamada playing badminton, January 1939

trying to sell tractors and other modern equipment to the farmers who were using horses to plow their fields. The children enjoyed the cartoons but later became cranky and tired when the salesmen tried to impress the farmers with the time and labor-saving devices pictured on the outdoor screen. When a tractor appeared on the farm, the horses suddenly disappeared and I wondered what had happened to them. Our horses were white and looked like circus horses and not at all like the pictures depicting "plow horses." I like to think that they became the property of another farmer rather than residents of a glue factory.



JACL picnic, 1938

I remember the picnics that we attended along with all the other farm families. We would take our own lunches, plus there would be steaks and liquid refreshments provided and, if I remember correctly, watermelon. I also remember Richard Takashima (cousin to the Kubos), George Segawa, and Sam Itami riding around Mission Valley on their motorcycles. What bold and daring young men they were in their leather jackets and boots! At that time, motorcycle racing was very popular and races were held at the mountains behind our homes. Many people attended and to the children the crowd appeared much larger than it really was.

The Buddhist Temple and Nihon Gakko

Our nearest neighbors were the Yamadas. Matsue was the eldest of the Yamada children. While attending school, she also worked hard on the farm as well as drove their truck with produce to the market. She was really quite a gal!! We also went to *nihon gakko* (Japanese school) at the Buddhist Temple on Market Street. And since all the children did not fit in a car, we rode on the back of a truck—an old-fashioned car pool. There were no freeways then, and it was a long and exhausting trip for all of us.



Dancers in front of Buddhist Temple, June 1936.
From left: Meggie Hatada, Hatsuyo Yano, ?, Michiko Honda,
Chiye Honda, Kiyomi Tanaka, Miss Ohara

In 1936, many of the *nihon gakko* attendees performed at the Spreckels Pavilion in Balboa Park during the California Exposition. We wore Japanese costumes and thoroughly enjoyed participating in the dances during the celebration. We also participated in the *ochigo* ceremonies (children's parade) at the Temple during Hanamatsuri. I remember the *ochigo* but not the year, and also the Rev. [Yoshinao] Ouchi. He left a lasting impression on me as well as on other youngsters, I am quite sure!



Ochigo parade participants with Rev. Ouchi, 1936.
The author is second from the left.

Continued on next page

MISSION VALLEY MEMORIES continued from previous page

Shortly after that my mother passed away. She was so very young but unfortunately medical science was not as it is today and there was nothing that could be done for cancer patients. With the loss of our mother, *nihon gakko* soon became a thing of the past. We were also very young and it was very lonely without our mother. We still went, however, to see the old silent Japanese movies held at the Temple where a man sat next to the projector and recited the roles of all the characters both male and female into the microphone. Some of the old samurai movies (*chambara*) were very enjoyable though at times rather bloody. To this day, my children often wonder why I enjoy the *chambaras* so much. They often complain about the blood and gore.

Since many of the farm families did not have transportation nor time to attend services at the Buddhist Temple, once a month the ministers would go to different homes and conduct community services. This practice began sometime in 1924 and was appreciated by members of the farming community. The services were also a way of socialization for the rural community. The host family alternated each month since they also provided refreshments as well as space for the gathering. Kimie (Kay) Fukamizu remembered Rev. [Guzei] Nishii, but could not recall any other minister's name.

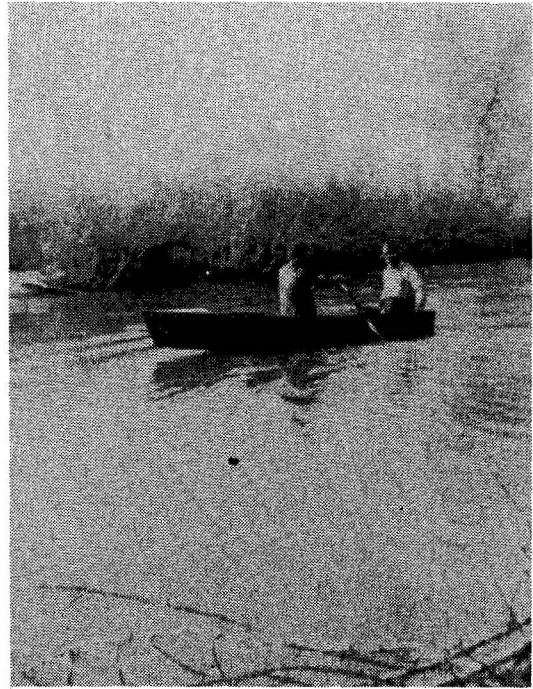


Rev. Nishii (left), year unknown

A Flood Meant Hardship

There were some very scary times, along with the good and bad. One of the worst occurred during a heavy rainstorm that caused the San Diego River to overflow and flood part of our farm. The river (actually two large channels) rose up to what is now the Mission Gorge Road and back so

close to our home that we had to evacuate the farm and stay with neighbors and friends. Fortunately for the Yamadas and others, they lived further back and did not have to leave their homes. During the flood, no one could get across the river to take produce to the markets, go to school, buy groceries or get medical care if the need arose.



Flood time in Mission Valley, 1941

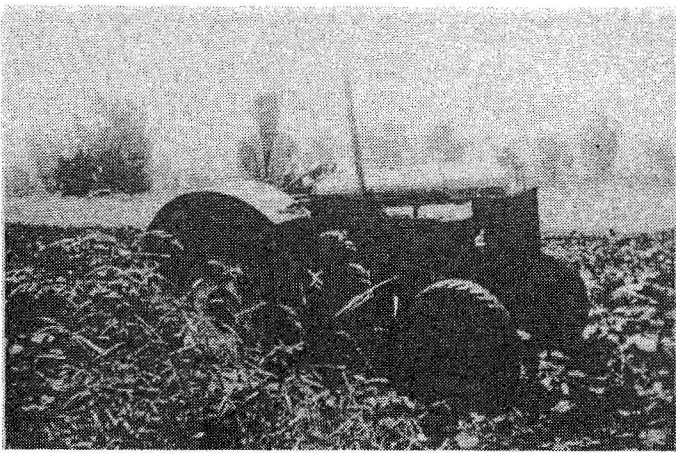
Fortunately the Summers lived just above us closer to the mountain. They operated a dairy farm and provided some of the supplies necessary toward building a bridge as well as helped plan and complete the work. Bamboo grew along the riverbanks and the larger and thicker bamboo was used for the frame. The "men" (most of them boys, the oldest being my brother Toki, who was a teenager) got together in the rain and somehow built a bridge across the swirling river even though there were places where the water rose above the heads of the boys. Granted it was not a fancy bridge and although it would sway in places, it was strong enough for all of us to walk across, with yes, even railings to hold on to. It was a joint venture with all who lived "across" the river.

Some of the young people even tried to travel across the back mountains to get to school. That was a long and dangerous trek since there were coyotes and rattlesnakes along with the mud and slush. Generally, one attempt was usually enough to discourage any further travel across the mountains. When the water receded enough for travel, we crossed the river riding on a wagon pulled by a plow horse.

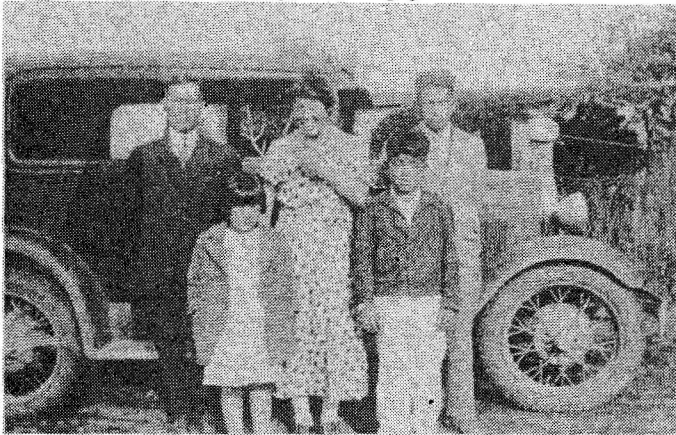
Mr. Daley Solves a Problem

Further to the west at what is now Murphy Canyon and Route 15, the turbulent flooding was wild and wide,

Continued on page 18



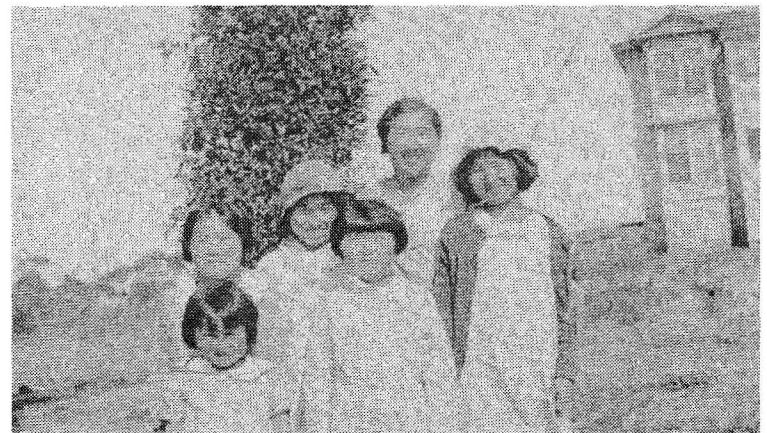
*Above: Yamada Family tractor, year unknown
Below: Akiyama Family, year unknown*



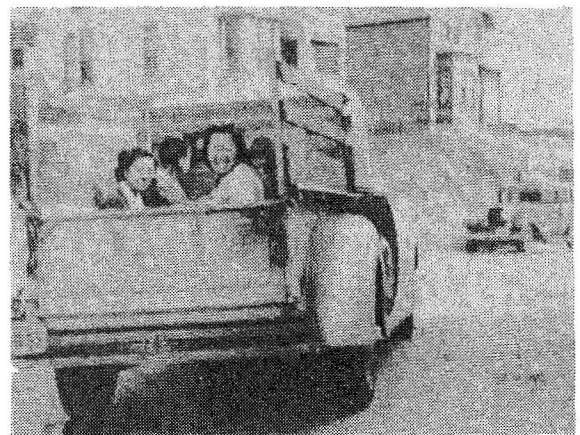
*Above: Matsue Yamada, 1938
Below: Ito Family by the Buddhist Temple, year unknown*



*Left:
Toki Yano, age 12 or 13*

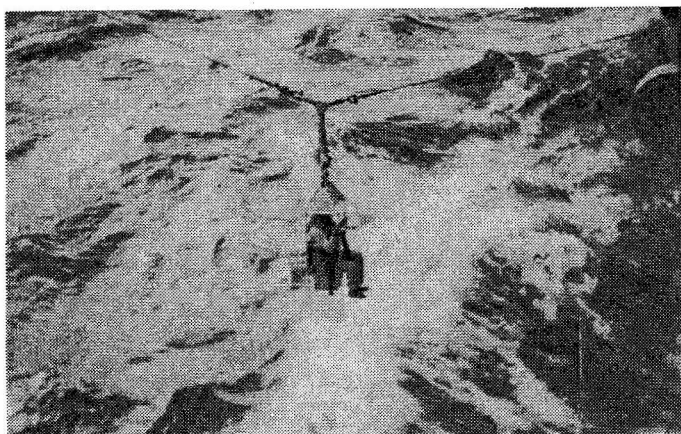


*Right:
Unidentified
girls in the
Buddhist Temple
parking lot*



marooning residents from civilization. Helping the flood victims should have been a County project. However, since no help was coming, George R. Daley of the Daley Sand Plant and Road Construction family (formerly on Ward Road and Route #1 and now with plants in Poway, Escondido and Otay) built transportation to cross the waters using a pulley and harness strap. He used his own equipment and his employees for the labor. He also owned much of the property in that area and rented or leased farmland to several tenants, one of whom was the Torios. But what a harrowing experience that must have been crossing with one's arms full of groceries above the roiling waters!

Kay Fukamizu contributed a very old picture showing a person being transported across the precarious waters. Unfortunately, we do not know the name of the individual, so if anyone recognizes him, please let us know.



Getting across Ward St. in Murphy Canyon, circa 1934

Around that time, the County started the Friars Road Extension project. Friars Road stopped at Ward Road (now I-15) and a WPA project was activated to extend the road to Grantville Road (now Mission Gorge Road). Kay Fukamizu tells of watching the workers standing in rows shoulder-to-shoulder wielding picks and shovels while dump trucks carted the unearthed soil away. They did not have tractors or other equipment, only picks and shovels. Since it was a WPA project, the theory must have been to use more manpower to keep the maximum number of men employed. They were paid only several dollars a day. It was still a part of the Depression years and men took whatever work was available. The project took many months to complete but kept many men employed.

Mission Valley Reunion

On May 22, 1994, Helen Smith Heath of the Ferrari family organized a reunion picnic for Mission Valley old-timers at Admiral Baker Park. It was incredible meeting people I hadn't seen since the fourth grade! The Bridens, the Ferraris, the Gugliemettis, the Ricards, the Rossis, the Orrs, the Rodriguezs

and oh so many more! Tom and Aya (Yamada) Segawa, Hideo and Chiyeko (Akiyama) Sugiyama, Hidetoshi Akiyama and his wife, Kay (Torio) Fukamizu, Toki and Betty Yano, Tad and Tamako Yano, Bette (George) Torio, Dorothy (Yano) Matsumoto, Harold and Doris Matsumoto (not prewar) were all there. Many others could not make it and they really missed out on a great reunion! It was all so very nostalgic even if we couldn't recognize some faces any longer. Thank goodness for name tags! Sadly, there were only two reunions. With so many people passing away or being too ill to attend, organizing a gathering was no longer an option.

A Way of Life Passes

Last year, I heard that Mrs. Takeo Kubo passed away at 98 years of age. I believe she was the last of the original Issei who settled so long ago in Mission Valley. Most of the original families returned to San Diego from Poston Relocation Camp while others sought new beginnings in other areas. So many have passed on and there certainly will never again be a farming community as we had then. I know that there are many interesting stories about Mission Valley. Families that lived there up to the evacuation in 1942 saw many changes; wouldn't it be great to have them share their experiences?

Mrs. Kimie (Kay) Fukamizu remembered many names of families who lived in Mission Valley prior to 1930. Names like the Itamis (Sam and his sisters), Otsukas (Katsukiyo), Morimotos (Sam), Hosakas (Taira), Fujimoto-Nogawas, the Segawas (Frank), the Hiyamas and the Oginos. Toward Morena Blvd. lived the Asakawas (Moto), Morikawas and the Tanis.

I am sure that names were missed, and for that I would like to apologize. Highway 8 was then Route #1, with cow pastures, dairies, farmlands and open fields. It is difficult to realize that where once were farms operated by the Nakagawas, the Sumiyoshis, the Torios and others is now the Mission Valley Mall, hotels, a golf course, other shopping malls, small businesses, eateries, car lots and movie theatres! Who would have ever imagined the fantastic change in the landscape!

Acknowledgments

Kay Fukamizu was so patient and kind spending time with me discussing the history, geography, and names of the families living in Mission Valley. I would like to thank her for her special help. She has such a wealth of knowledge that a book could be written. She also sketched a map of the area during the 1920s. I'm sorry we utilized such a small fraction of her information. I would also like to thank Mr. Arthur Triplette and Ms. Randy White of the San Diego City Schools for their input on Grantville Grammar School.

Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego

2002 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

(Membership includes *FOOTPRINTS* newsletter)

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JAHSSD
Yukio Kawamoto, Membership
P.O. Box 620988
San Diego, CA 92162-0988

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The Japanese American Historical Society of San Diego is a nonprofit organization whose goal is to acknowledge and preserve the contributions of the Japanese American community to the City and County of San Diego. *Footprints* is the quarterly publication of the JAHSSD. Subscription is free with membership. We welcome your articles, stories, letters, comments. Send them to:

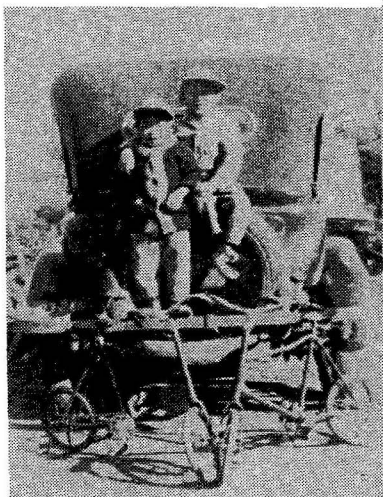
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JAPANESE AMERICAN HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SAN DIEGO

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