



BIJAC

Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community

FALL 2018

www.bijac.org

New Venue for 30th Anniversary of Bainbridge Island Mochi Tsuki

By: Carol Reitz



Photos courtesy of Jim Reitz

Those of you who have lived on Bainbridge Island for many years may remember the Bainbridge Dry Cleaners located on Lower Madison Avenue. In the early '70s, the Okano and Nakata families would gather to make *mochi*, a traditional rice cake, to welcome in the New Year. Steaming the rice over a 30 gallon garbage can filled with water was easy when it could be hooked up to the steam line used in the dry cleaning process! Fifty pounds of rice would be steamed, pounded by hand, and turned into hand-formed rice cakes to be eaten with soy sauce or filled with *an*, a sweetened red bean paste. A family tradition to welcome in the New Year was an important ritual to help ensure good life, crops, health and fortune.

Through the years, what started as a family tradition in the 1970s has become a beloved Bainbridge Island Community celebration. With the founding generation working side-by-side with a new generation, this coming January marks the 30th Anniversary of Mochi Tsuki.



Old-timers may remember the first community event was held at Island Center Hall, then moved to the Filipino Hall. For the most recent 15 years BIJAC has enjoyed the support of the

staff and facilities at the beautiful IslandWood campus, where large crowds have gathered to learn about the tradition of mochi making. The entertaining and energetic Shoichi "the Master Turner" Sugiyama has engaged the attendees, inviting them to try their hand at pounding the mochi in the large granite mortar or *usu*. The wood mallets, or *kine*, are hand-made and supplied each year by Mike Okano, a member of one of the original families who started the tradition on the Island.



BIJAC is excited to announce the date and NEW location for the 2019 Mochi Tsuki celebration. Most importantly, there will be NO tickets required to attend the event or experience the popular Seattle Kokon Taiko performances.

Through the support of Town & Country Markets and the City of Bainbridge Island's Cultural Funding Grant, the public will again be welcome to attend at no cost.

Mark your calendars!

30th Anniversary Mochi Tsuki

Date: Saturday, January 5, 2019
Time: 11am-3pm
Place: Woodward Middle School
9125 Sportsman Club Rd NE
Events: Seattle Kokon Taiko
12:00-12:30 and 2:00-2:30

Mochi-making, origami, t-shirt and merchandise sales, educational displays, new trivia contest, and more!

Visit www.bijacevents.org for details.

2018 a Busy Year of Events and Progress for the Memorial Site

UPDATE

By: Clarence Moriwaki

“Day of Service and Community”

On February 19th, the 76th Anniversary of FDR’s signing of Executive Order 9066, the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association (BIJAEMA) hosted volunteers who provided early spring cleaning of the memorial site. Braving a chilly morning, scores of volunteers donated hours of gardening, weed removal and other necessary maintenance to spiff up the site in preparation for our annual ceremony on March 30th commemorating the first forced removal of Japanese Americans during WWII.

76th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony

This year’s ceremony highlighted and honored our partnerships and support from the greater community, recognizing that without them, the very existence and creation of the BIJAEM site would not have been possible.

Our distinguished speakers shared heartfelt and informative stories about their organizations’ roles in the development of the memorial site. In order: Commissioner Ken DeWitt, Bainbridge Island Metropolitan Park and Recreation District; Joan Walters, President of the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum Board of Directors; Washington State Senator Christine Rolfes; Tom Leatherman, Acting Deputy Regional Director, National Park Service; and Darlene Kordonowy, President of BIJAEMA.

Several new National Park Service outdoor interpretive panels were unveiled. They are featured at the parking lot entrances, under the pavilion and along the pathways of the memorial site.



Photo courtesy of Joyce Nishimura

Survivors bearing golden shovels break ground for the new Exclusion Departure Deck. (l-r): Reiko Kino Nishida, Lilly Kitamoto Kodama, Shinchi Tonooka, Yasuko Hayashida Mito, Tomi Hayashida Egashira, Junji Yukawa, Eiko Suyematsu Shibayama, Hisa Hayashida Matsudaira, Island Visitor, Frances Kitamoto Ikegami, Hiro Hayashida, Victor Takemoto, Kay Sakai Nakao.

At the conclusion of the moving commemoration ceremony, BIJAEMA President Darlene Kordonowy invited the dozen incarceration survivors present to gather at the end of the memorial wall, where they shared golden shovels and commenced turning dirt for a ceremonial groundbreaking of the future Exclusion Departure Deck.

Exclusion Departure Deck Update

The new Departure Deck will be built where the historic Eagledale Ferry Dock once stood beyond the end of the BIJAEM Wall. Cantilevered over the cliff, the 45-foot long deck replaces the wood railing at the end with a cable railing, which from a distance cannot be seen, thus giving the illusion of no railing. For visitors, it appears that there is no security or safety to protect someone from falling off the end, evoking the same feelings of danger, uncertainty and fear that were experienced by our community during the forced removal.

Being near the shoreline, the deck project was required to undergo special permit reviews and approval which have pushed back construction, but it is possible that the building of the deck could begin in early Summer of 2019.

National Park Service “Senior” and Junior Rangers

For the third summer in a row, the National Parks Service has provided a seasonal park ranger to staff the memorial site, typically serving after Memorial Day to Labor Day, Friday through Monday. This year’s ranger was Kevin Mahé, who hails from New Orleans and began his NPS career as a volunteer with the New Orleans Jazz National Historical Park. When Kevin moved to the Pacific Northwest, he immediately sought volunteer opportunities with Klondike Gold Rush National Historical Park in Seattle, which led to five years’ experience with regional NPS parks.

Along with greeting hundreds of guests from around the nation and world to the memorial site, Kevin and NPS staff have been working with BIJAC and the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum to develop a NPS Junior Ranger program specifically for the memorial. The popular Junior Ranger program is offered at many National Park sites, encouraging young people to learn about the respective site and earn a commemorative Junior Ranger badge. Progress is being made to have the program ready when the 2019 seasonal NPS ranger reports for duty at the memorial.

The Legacy of Frank Kitamoto

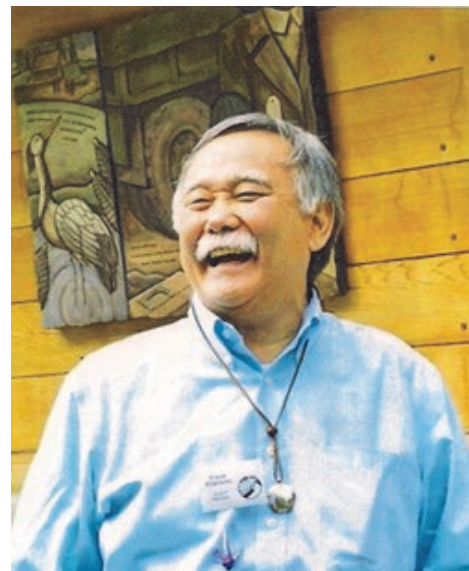
By: Joyce Nishimura

The legacy of Frank Kitamoto lives on in the Bainbridge Island community. Although he left us more than four years ago on March 15, 2014, his spirit continues to inspire us today. The current U.S. political environment has sparked a renewed interest and concern for social justice and human rights, which Frank worked tirelessly to achieve throughout his life. We thought it would be appropriate to rekindle his flame and share how the community continues to remember him.

"...Americans of Japanese descent on Bainbridge Island will live on through Frank's work and the efforts of others to create oral history projects, presentations and monuments about the history and lessons learned from one of our nation's greatest injustices.

I am proud to be Governor of the great state of Washington because of people like Frank and am truly humbled to have known a man with such strength, courage, and patriotism."

- Governor Jay Inslee



>> CONT. PAGE FOUR

Only What We Can Carry Continues Its Mission

By: Jonathan Garfunkel

The "Only What We Can Carry Project" (OWWCC) is an educational and community development project that models the study of World War II, the Bainbridge Island Japanese American experience, and its impact on Bainbridge Island. For nearly a decade, OWWCC has provided educational programming support and learning experiences that explore exclusion, inclusion, and citizenship to Bainbridge Island students, educators, and the community.

The project began in 2009 with the concept of organizing a "Delegation to Manzanar." The pilot project would pair local school teachers and principals with Bainbridge Island concentration camp survivors to explore how offering these educators the opportunity to travel with former detainees would impact their ability to more authentically and accurately bring this topic to life for students. Frank Kitamoto was an early participant, as well as Lilly Kodama, Kay Nakao, and Mary Woodward. The result was not a typical professional development opportunity, rather it was a unique way to deeply and personally connect to history.



Photos courtesy of EduCulture

The feedback from educators and survivors alike was overwhelmingly positive. Having proven its value, the "Delegation to Manzanar" became an ongoing program—the "Only What We Could Carry Project." Katy Curtis of BIHM joined as director to help connect more Japanese American community members with the program. In 2010 the Delegation included staff from Sakai Intermediate School,

followed by Woodward Middle School in 2011, and Wilkes Elementary in 2012. In 2012, a documentary team joined the Delegation and created the film "Only What They Could Carry – Return to Manzanar," directed and produced by Brenda Berry. This short documentary shares the delegates' intimate experiences while participating in the program.

>> CONT. PAGE FIVE

Legacy of Frank Kitamoto (continued from page 3)

HOW THE COMMUNITY REMEMBERS

Frank Kitamoto’s influence is visible throughout the Bainbridge Island Community today:

The Multicultural Advisory Council of the Bainbridge Island School District has established the “Dr. Frank Kitamoto Legacy Award for Inclusion, Civil Rights, and Social Justice.” This award is presented annually to students who meet the following guidelines:

- Students who, in their daily lives, improve their school community by promoting inclusion, civil rights, and social justice.
- The work should improve school culture and can be done in or out of school.
- It can be done by leading the work or by doing the hard work of consistently showing up and providing service to peers.

Students can be nominated by their peers, teachers, school staff, or an organization with which the student works. Past recipients include:

- 2017: Mara Smith for her work with SAGA (Sexuality and Gender Alliance)
- Areanna Carillo for caring for others and demonstrating inclusion
- 2018: Ethan Soltanzadeh for inclusion and reaching out to new students
- Jeanine Sheets (Red) for creating the poem “Shrug”

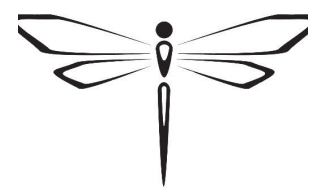
An annual legacy project continues in 11th grade American Studies classrooms in conjunction with their unit on “The Japanese American Exclusion and US Foreign Policy.” It is facilitated by Jonathan Garfunkel and features the screening of “After Silence” and a panel of Japanese American survivors and their family members.

A Bainbridge Performing Arts’ production of “Snow Falling on Cedars” was presented in 2015 in honor of Frank Kitamoto.

Frank Kitamoto’s name was added to the bronze plaques at the Battle Point Living Memorial Center. The Kiwanis Club established this Center to honor posthumously long-time Bainbridge residents who through their professional and community service have made exceptional contributions to the welfare of the community.

Get Involved!

Want to help keep Frank’s dream alive? We welcome anyone in the community who would like to be involved in supporting education and outreach that fosters a deep appreciation for diversity, justice, and the need for vigilant protection of our civil and constitutional rights. From training to be a docent at the Exclusion Memorial to teaching how to fold origami at Mochi Tsuki, BIJAC has a role for you. Our meetings are held on the first Wednesday of each month at 6:00 pm at the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum. Or, email us: info@bijac.org.



THE TONBO

(Excerpt from Frank Kitamoto’s message, closing ceremony of the Minidoka Pilgrimage 2008)

The *tonbo*, in Japanese mythology, is a dragonfly and a symbol of strength, courage and happiness.

Strength

There are two types of strength or power – external power and internal or authentic power. External Power may be my occupation, my status in my community, the hierarchy of my position in the workplace, my good looks, my abilities as a great musician, my popularity, my athletic ability, my political power, etc.

Internal or Authentic Power is my Soul; living from my Heart; how precious others are to me; who I am as a human or Humane person.

It’s been said that the opposite of love is not hate, but fear. I become so fearful for my own safety or losing my external identity – become so self-occupied – that I can’t see or even think of the other person’s welfare.

Civil Rights, Civil Liberties, Our Bill of Rights – the Law of our Land – are the legal basis for how we are to treat one another. But laws are fear based. They are made to protect us from one another.

If there is to be true change in our Country in returning to greatness, it will depend not on civil liberties nor civil rights, but human rights – putting human back into Human Rights. The purpose in life is development of the Soul - Authentic Power, not accumulating external power.

Courage

Courage is not being fearless, but being able to overcome fear, to focus away from myself to free me to help another. That’s what heroes do. Their souls override their fears for themselves so they can ‘risk’ for another.

Happiness

Happiness is the ability to forgive. To forgive all those I perceive as bringing harm to me, those who have pierced my external armor. Forgiveness is for my benefit, not theirs. It’s saying I will no longer let someone else control how I feel, my emotions, how I act or respond. I take back my own life. I am now in charge of my life. I free my soul so I no longer am focused on my external self. Allowing my soul to grow and develop is the gateway to happiness.

Thus, we have the *tonbo* or dragonfly, a symbol of strength, courage, and happiness.

OWWCC (continued from page 3)

A testament to the impact of the “Delegation to Manzanar,” OWWCC has gone on to work with the school district to design and deliver a rich portfolio of teaching and learning experiences spanning Bainbridge Island’s elementary, middle, and high school curricula. Some examples include:

- Developing a partnership program for the 4th grade with neighboring Suyematsu Farm to use the outdoor classroom to teach about the history of Bainbridge Island, the Japanese American immigrant experience, and the legacy of Island strawberry farming through the story of the Suyematsu Family.



- Developing and delivering the unique March tradition of "Leaving Our Island Day,” which offers 6th graders the opportunity to learn firsthand from and about those who experienced the events surrounding the Exclusion.
- In 2016, organizing a Delegation for a team of 11th grade teachers together with survivors Victor Takemoto and Matsue Nishimori Watanabe, who were secondary students during WWII. We were joined by Superintendent Faith Chapel, whose parents were interned at Poston.
- Subsequently, OWWCC was commissioned by BISD to enhance the 11th grade American Studies unit on US Foreign Policy during WWII through the experience of Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans and the Exclusion.

Beyond the schools, OWWCC works with BIHM, BIJAC, BIJAEMA and other local organizations to co-lead a series of Island field trips for groups from around the Puget Sound region who are studying the immigrant and Japanese American exclusion experiences. We have also been instrumental in documenting and preserving historic Suyematsu Farm as a vital community asset. Through our efforts Suyematsu Farm Homestead is now an Historic Preservation District.

Our reach extends to the broader community as well. OWWCC gave historical support and educational programming for BPA’s performance of “Snow Falling on Cedars.” We were also involved with Seattle Opera Company’s performance of “American Dream,” including helping the Opera curate an educational and interpretive display for its audiences.

Most OWWCC programs are underwritten by local donors on a project-by-project basis. OWWCC’s challenge now is to secure ongoing funding so that the “Delegation to Manzanar” may be offered annually. Not only do delegates need to cover travel expenses, but the school district must support this professional development opportunity, which potentially takes delegates out of the classroom for up to three days. OWWCC is seeking funding from foundations and individuals passionate about preserving the Bainbridge Island Japanese American story and honoring individual Islanders and their families. Past donors include the Woodward Fund, the Nakao Family, EduCulture, and BIHM.

OWWCC is a project of EduCulture, a non-profit, professional learning organization based on Bainbridge Island. Learn more about EduCulture and the “Only What We Could Carry Project” at: www.educultureproject.org.

Education, Tours, Events

PROGRAMS AND VISITATIONS 2018

A film producer from the National Park Service, a yarn-lovers club, and a group of millennials gathered for a bachelorette party--these are just a few of the visitors who have taken a tour with BIJAC this year. A dedicated group of BIJAC, BI-JAEMA, and BIHM volunteers and staff have been busy scheduling, leading tours, giving presentations, and sometimes traveling to further BIJAC's mission to preserve the history and culture of the Japanese Americans on Bainbridge Island. Is your group interested in a tour or educational program? Email katy@bainbridgehistory.org to learn more.

January, 2018

- Mochi Tsuki Exhibit & Festival – Islandwood
- HM-Library Program – C. Hartse Presents: YAMA
- Interview Regarding Minidoka Camp, Ana Lim
- Bellevue College Exhibits – Public viewing
- P.E.O. (Philanthropic Education Org.) Bainbridge Islanders

February, 2018

- Videographer Fumiko Sato Chun
- Producer Rory, NPS Film
- BIHM Annual Meeting – History Hero Awards for Lilly and Kay
- Shoreline Community College – 10 college students
- Day of Service Day of Remembrance 9066 – all ages
- Hyogo Kenritsu College/Tokyo Express Int.

March, 2018

- West Sound Academy, BIJAEM, BIHM,
- Sakai School – “Leaving Our Island,” all 6th graders
- Olympic college, Noyuri Soderland's class - Clarence
- Voyager Montessori School - 14 students
- Poulsbo Middle School – 250 7th graders – Clarence presentation
- Presidio Graduate School, 8 post graduate students
- UW FIUTS Japanese Exchange
- Seitoku High School
- BISD Ordway Elem. all 2nd graders
- Kitsap County Human Rights Conference Youth Rally - Clarence presentation
- BISD Wilkes Elem School, all 4th graders
- BISD Wilkes Elem School (Bill Covert's class), 26 4th graders
- PBS Interview of Kay Nakao, BIJAC outreach
- Seattle Univ. & Central American Univ. Managua, Nicaragua –12 students, 2 adults
- Norvell Tour Group, Kay N., Sinchi Tonooka, Mary W.

March 30 Memorial Anniversary Ceremony – Official Wayside signs, groundbreaking of open deck

March 30 - Survivors & families, Lunch from Lilly Kodama at BPA, 36 attendees

March 30, Friday – Mayumi Tsutakawa spoke about Incarceration at BIMA

April 2018

- Kumiko Ogoshi Takai, Documentary on Floyd Schmoie, NHK WORLD-JAPAN TV, BIHM
- Rod Norvell Group 12 adults

May, 2018

- Bellingham Purls Kate Grinde, 10 adults
- Student Gov. Olympic College, 20-30 students
- Kay's Sleepless in Seattle, 10 adults
- Floyd's OC student group, 20 students, BIHM, Yama site

May cont'd

- Bellevue Family YMCA- 15-20 seniors
- Hope Lutheran School, Seattle, 40 7th & 8th grades
- Student Government Olympic College, 20-30 students
- Blakely School, all 2nd graders
- Blaine Methodist Church, 40 clergy
- Rios Tour of Bainbridge – 2 adults

June

- Kingston Middle School, 50-60 students, 4 presentations
- Seattle World School, 16 students (ages 16-22), 3 adults
- Northeastern Univ. History Gr., 7 students, 4 teachers
- Ordway, Anna Fehrenbacher 4th gr. Megy's IDON lesson
- Wilkes, Bill Covert's 2nd grade, Megy's IDON lesson
- Family Group, 3 students, 3 adults
- Family Group, 7 adults

July

- Cabrer family (3 adults, 3 students)
- Tacoma Buddhist Women's Association, 40 seniors
- Jane Wakasa, 3 sanseis
- Blue Dolphin English School, Japan
- Student Gov. Olympic College, 30 students
- Blakely School, all 2nd graders
- Blaine Methodist Church, 40 clergy
- Rios Tour of Bainbridge – 2 adults
- Asian Counseling Young Woman's Leadership
- Murakami Family Reunion, 21 adults
- Momoto Igeta, Los Angeles, 29 adults

August

- Lifelong Rec - Seattle Parks & Rec, 25 seniors
- NPS, 3 adults, Kevin Mahe leading
- Impact Travel, Seattle, 30 adults
- Holocaust Summer Institute, 20 teachers
- UW English Language & Culture, 15 students
- St. Andrews Lutheran Owlets, 10-15 seniors
- Cascades Bremerton The Willows, 12 seniors
- Kitsap Sun, History of Pritchard Park, Creosote, Clarence
- BHS Homeschool – 5 families
- Trust for Public Land, 20 adults (40+yr.)
- Schneider Electric Executive Retreat, 15 adults
- IslandWood Graduate Program, 15 adult students
- St. Andrews Phillipians Group, 14 seniors

September

- Heron's Key Retirement Community, 15 seniors
- Komai Family Reunion, 27 adults
- #PhamGoesHam Bachelorette party, 11 adults (20-35 yr.)

Seattle Kokon Taiko Brings Heart-Pounding Rhythms

By: Carol Reitz

One of the iconic attractions at the annual Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community (BIJAC) Mochi Tsuki is the appearance of Seattle Kokon Taiko. The heart-pounding, energetic and choreographed movement is mesmerizing to audiences of all ages.

As explained on the official website (seattlekokontaiko.org), Seattle Kokon Taiko has been based in the Seattle Japanese American community since 1980, merging Kokon Taiko with Seattle Taiko Group. “Taiko is a dynamic synthesis of rhythm, movement and spirit originating in Japan and evolving as a folk art over the last several hundred years. In Seattle Kokon Taiko, we try to combine the ancient with the modern; our repertoire is a mix of traditional pieces and contemporary compositions.



Photos courtesy of Jim Reitz



Through taiko, we hope to contribute to the development of a uniquely Japanese American art form—Japanese in origin, American in expression—that weaves threads of continuity between generations and builds bridges of understanding among people of all nationalities and walks of life.”

For more than 10 years, Mochi Tsuki participants have been able to experience this dynamic group. This year, with the new venue, everyone will be able to watch a performance, with NO tickets required and no standing in long lines. Be sure to mark your calendar for Mochi Tsuki 2019 on Saturday, January 5, 2019 from 11-3 at Woodward Middle School (9125 Sportsman Club Road). Seattle Kokon Taiko will do two 30-minute performances at 12-12:30 and 2-2:30. All are welcome.

Cultural Funding Grant Supports Education and Outreach

By: Ellen Sato Faust

Not all members of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community may be aware of the sheer number of programs and events that are conducted by BIJAC throughout the year. In 2017, BIJAC delivered more than 90 educational programs, tours, speeches, and events to local schools, the Bainbridge Island community, and visitors from as far away as Japan. More than one thousand school children benefit from our educational programs each year.

To keep pace with the demand for education and outreach, BIJAC applied for, and was awarded, a Cultural Funding Grant offered by the City of Bainbridge Island. According to the city, special consideration was given “to organizations and projects that involve robust community participation; encourage the well-being of the island’s significant cultural sector; strengthen organizational capacity; and foster opportunities for collaboration within the cultural sector.”

BIJAC was awarded \$18,000 to be split equally between 2018 and 2019. Funds will be used to enhance education and outreach efforts, specifically by engaging more members, developing educational materials for students and docents, and employing technology to expand our administrative and fundraising capabilities. The grant will enable us to partner more effectively with organizations like the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum, BIJAEMA, Island-Wood, and others with whom we have shared a close working relationship.

In our continuing effort to be inclusive and expansive, we have earmarked part of the Cultural Funding Grant to help fund the 30th Anniversary of Mochi Tsuki. One of the most popular annual events on the island, Mochi Tsuki will be held at a larger venue this year to welcome all Islanders and visitors who look forward to joining the local community in celebration.



BIJAC

P.O. Box 10449

Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Return Service Requested

See you at Mochi Tsuki 2019, January 5th, Woodward Middle School!

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2019 BIJAC Annual Membership Dues \$20/household.

Your donations support our educational programs and cultural events. Thank you!

Via Mail: BIJAC, P.O. Box 10449, Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

Via PayPal: Visit www.bijac.org, click on "Become a member or make a tax deductible gift" on the top right.

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