



BIJAC
P.O. Box 10449
Bainbridge Island, WA 98110

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Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community

BIJAC

www.bijac.org

SUMMER 2017

Community Gathers to Commemorate 75th Anniversary of the Exclusion



Photo courtesy of Paul Dunn

“The chilly and crisp morning air did not dampen the warm spirits of more than 250 people gathered on March 30, 2017 to witness the 75th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony at the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial.”

So begins the narrative by BIJAC president Clarence Moriwaki, describing the culmination of months of planning and years of reflection on Executive Order 9066, the order enacted by President Franklin Roosevelt that would send 120,000 people of Japanese ancestry to incarceration camps during World War II. The first to go were the 275 residents of Bainbridge Island of Japanese heritage.

In the days and weeks leading up to February 19th, the day EO 9066 was signed, numerous Washington organizations ranging from the State Capitol, universities, and museums to religious and cultural groups held events in remembrance of the impact EO 9066 had on the Japanese American community. As reflected in the TV crews present at the Exclusion Memorial on March 30th, the media took notice. Earlier in the year, Bainbridge Cinemas hosted George Takei’s *Allegiance: The Broadway Musical on the Big Screen* to benefit BIJAC. In the week leading up to the 75th Anniversary, Lori Matsukawa of KING 5 News broadcast a 4-part series, *Prisoners in Their Own Land: Remembering the Internment of Japanese Americans 75 Years Later*, featuring Bainbridge Island’s own Kay Nakao and Lilly Kodama.

Several survivors from the various war time concentration camps were in attendance, as well as a roster of notable speakers, including Governor Jay Inslee, Japanese Ambassador to the United States Kenichiro Sasae, Bainbridge Island Mayor Val Tollefson, and leaders of local cultural and religious groups. BIJAC and BIJAEMA were greeted with an outpouring of logistical support from COBI, BIHM, BIMA, BI Parks and Recreation, Eagle Harbor Congregational Church, and others, making the Commemoration a true community event.



Photo courtesy of Paul Dunn

Survivors and community members listen intently. Back row (l-r): Junji Yukawa, Yasuko Mito, Frances Ikegami, Lilly Kodama, Matsue Watanabe, Doug Crist. Front row (l-r); Hisa Matsudaira, Toshi Sunohara, Victor Takemoto, Sinichi Tonooka, Eiko Shibayama, Trudy Hayashida, Mary Woodward, Kay Sakai Nakao, Mayor Val Tollefson.

Mark your calendar:

SUMMER PICNIC 2017

Saturday, August 5th

11:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Battle Point Park Picnic Shelter



Picnic 2003 – Relaxing and catching up with old friends.



2017 BIJAC Annual Membership Dues \$20/household. Thank you for your support!

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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From Issei to Today: The Takemoto Family Story

By: Bill Takemoto

My father Saichi Takemoto was born in 1885 on Oshima Island in Yamaguchi Prefecture. The island is about the size of Bainbridge and is the same island from which other Bainbridge Island families, such as the Omotos and Nakatas, emigrated.

As a young man, Saichi and his two older brothers left Japan to seek work in America. They initially pursued farm work in Hawaii. While the oldest brother stayed and put down roots in Hawaii, Saichi and the second oldest brother came to Seattle. At some point his older brother died in Seattle. After working various jobs, such as a dishwasher, houseboy and movie theater employee, Saichi acquired land on Bainbridge to start a strawberry farm. Eventually he wanted to settle down and take on a wife. Through a matchmaker from his village in Japan, he met and married Satsu Koyama, then brought her back to Bainbridge Island.

Some time before 1920, Satsu died. Saichi consulted the same matchmaker to find him another wife. The matchmaker arranged for him to marry Satsu's younger sister, Yone, who was only 18 years old. In 1921 they returned to Bainbridge Island to begin a life of farming. From that union Victor was born in 1926, I was born in 1928, Roy in 1930, Fred in 1932, James in 1934, and Teruko, the only girl, in 1938. We lived on ten acres at the southwest corner of what is now Highway 305 and NE Lovgreen Road. The land was heavily forested, so we had to cut down many trees, which we did without the help of modern equipment such as chainsaws. We relied on dynamite to blow up stumps, then used horses to pull up the roots.

After Pearl Harbor was attacked on December 7, 1941 and President Roosevelt issued Executive Order 9066, our family was among the 227 other Bainbridge Island families that were forcibly removed from our homes and sent to Manzanar internment camp located in California's Owens Valley at the foot of the Sierra Nevada. After about a year we had the choice of going to the Minidoka camp in Idaho where many Seattle area Japanese-



Saichi Takemoto and Yone Koyama Takemoto passport photos upon return to the U.S., March 12, 1921

American residents were held, but decided to stay at Manzanar along with a few other Bainbridge Island families. After about three years at Manzanar, we were finally permitted to travel outside the camp and eventually leave. In April 1945, my father decided it was time to return to Bainbridge Island because it was strawberry planting season. Our family was the first family to return to Bainbridge Island. We found our home completely ransacked, windows broken and anything of value gone. The fields were overgrown. With the help of friends and also people we did not know, we were provided with some essentials and help to return the fields to farmable condition. My brothers and I worked on weekends and in the summer on the Moji farm run by Nick Bucsit for extra income.

Saichi died on October 1972 at the age of 87. Yone died on January 2003 at the age of 100. She was probably the last of the original *issei* from the island to pass away.

When Victor, the oldest sibling, returned from Manzanar, he enrolled at the University of Washington. After he graduated in 1949 he worked in the medical service area for 49 years and retired in 1998. Vic, his wife Lily, and three children, Vicki, Stanley and Jon, all live in the Seattle area.

After my graduation from high school I enlisted in the U.S. Air Force in January of

Photos courtesy of Takemoto Family



1948. During my tour of duty in Tokyo, I met Nobuko and we were married in 1963. After I retired from the Air Force in 1968, I relocated to my current home in Kent, Washington. After retirement, I was hired by Boeing as an instructor in flight training. I worked for 24 years and retired in 1992. After our children finished high school Nobuko worked for United Airlines and retired in 1998. Our son Paul graduated from the University of Washington and is a homicide detective with the Seattle Police Department. He and his girlfriend, Kate, live in Seattle. Our daughter Susan graduated from Yale College and Georgetown Law Center. After working for twelve years as an attorney, she retired, and she and her husband, Dave, are raising three children.

Roy also enlisted in the U.S. Air Force after graduating from high school. He met and wed Toshiko while stationed in Tokyo. After more than 25 years of service, he retired. Roy, along with his wife and two daughters, moved to Sun City, Arizona. There Roy worked in civil service until he was diagnosed with cancer. He passed away in September, 1991 at the age of 61. Toshiko still lives in Sun City West. Kathy, their oldest daughter, lives in San Jose with her husband Richard and their daughter. Patty, the other daughter, lives in Riverside and has a son who has graduated



65th Anniversary of BIJAC

By: Joyce Nishimura

On our 65th Anniversary of the founding of BIJAC, we are initiating an effort to record the history of the events and accomplishments of our community using the extensive files of Frank Kitamoto, our collective memories, and the vast library of information available on our website (www.bijac.org). Take a trip down memory lane and let us know if we have overlooked anything. We welcome additions and corrections to our work-in-progress.

Bainbridge Island Japanese
Community Club
Founded April 25, 1952



Bainbridge Island Issei ca. 1964

Non-Profit
Bainbridge Island Japanese
American Community
Founded March 10, 1987

Remember When?

Community Social Events

- Sukiyaki Dinner—Commodore School
- Strawberry Shortcakes/Sundaes—Rotary Auctions & 4th of July
- Teriyaki Dinner (Mar 1990) —Commodore School
- Teriyaki Dinners (Mar 1997-Mar 2004)—Woodward MS
- Annual Matsuri (Sep 2002-Sep 2008)—Woodward MS
- Teriyaki Dinner, exhibits, flower arranging, sumi-e, judo demonstrations, Kokon Taiko drummer, Odori dancing
- Summer Picnic at Strawberry Hill Park (Aug 1990)
- Summer Picnic at Battle Point Park (Jul 1997-present)

SUMMER PICNIC 2017
SATURDAY, AUGUST 5th, BATTLE POINT PARK



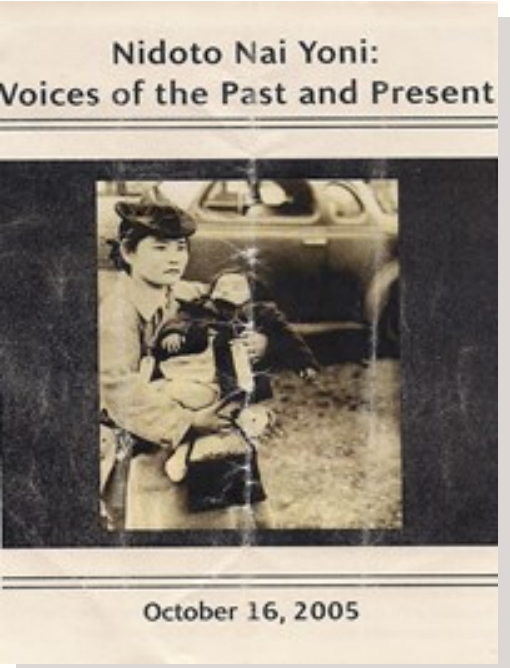
Getting ready to serve at our Matsuri/Teriyaki Dinner March, 2003

ORAL HISTORY PROJECT
2006-2007

In 2006-2007, an ambitious effort was undertaken to interview Bainbridge Island survivors of the WWII incarceration. The Oral History Project, which was produced by Stourwater Pictures of Bainbridge Island, resulted in a collection of first person narratives of the experience from Bainbridge Island to the concentration camps in Manzanar, CA and Minidoka, ID. Clips by topic can be viewed on the bijac.org website. Full DVDs are archived at the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum. The oral histories include:

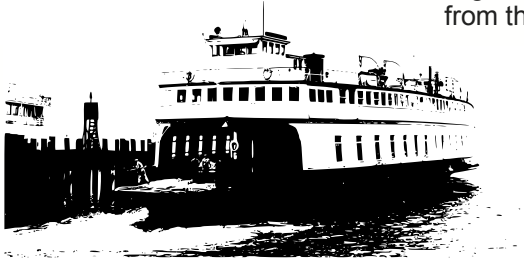
Brooks Andrews	Michi Noritake
Tomi Egashira	Nobi Omoto
Earl Hanson	Sada Omoto
Junkoh Harui	Taketo Omoto
Frank Kitamoto	Eiko Shibayama
Sally Kitano	Yuki Takahashi
Lilly Kodama	Vic Takemoto
Tats Kojima	Iku Watanabe
Hisa Matsudaira	Matsue Watanabe
Kay Nakao	Mary Woodward
Sam Nakao	Isao Yamashita
Jerry Nakata	Yae Yoshihara

Let It Not Happen Again



Pre-BIJAC
1890's-1920's
Village of Yama,
home to Japanese
Blakely Mill workers

Pre-BIJAC
March 30, 1942
Ferry *Kehloken* carries
Bainbridge Island Japanese
from their home



April 25, 1952
Bainbridge Island
Japanese Community
Club



October 2004
Memorial Gate built at
Winslow Post Office
site

1984
Visible Target
public television
documentary

September 1997
Dedication of
Haiku No Niwa
BI Public Library Garden

October 2005
Voices of Past and Present
Nidoto Nai Yoni
conference at IslandWood

1988
Kodomo No Tami Ni
Historical Photo Exhibit
opens to the public



July 30, 2011
Bainbridge Island Japanese
American Exclusion Memorial
opens to the public

VIDEO DOCUMENTARIES AND PUBLICATIONS

- ◆ *Visible Target* (1986), produced by Cris Anderson and John de Graaf
- ◆ *After Silence* (2003), produced by Foxglove Films, directed by Lois Shelton
- ◆ *The Red Pines* (2003), produced by IslandWood, directed by Franklin Odo
- ◆ *My Friends Behind Barbed Wire* (2007), produced by Stourwater Pictures for OSPI
- ◆ *Civil Liberties in a Time of War* (2007), produced by Stourwater Pictures for OSPI
- ◆ *Japanese & Filipino Americans on Bainbridge Island* (2007) produced by Stourwater Pictures for OSPI
- ◆ *Fumiko Hayashida, the Woman Behind the Symbol* (2009), produced by Stourwater Pictures
- ◆ *Honor and Sacrifice: The Roy Matsumoto Story* (2013), produced by Stourwater Pictures
- ◆ *The Sakai Family* (2015), Snow Productions
- ◆ *In Defense of Our Neighbors: The Walt and Milly Woodward Story* (2008), book by Mary Woodward

MEMORIAL BENEFIT EVENTS

1995—*Snow Falling on Cedars*, by David Guterson, event at Commodore

2006—*Naomi's Road*, a Canadian Opera for the Children of War, Vancouver Opera production

2007—*The Cats of Mirikitani*, Film Premiere and Art Exhibition, Director Q&A and reception

2015—*Snow Falling on Cedars*, a Bainbridge Performing Arts theater production

2016—*An American Dream*, Seattle Opera

2016/17—George Takei's *Allegiance: the Broadway Musical on the Big Screen*, hosted by Bainbridge

COMMEMORATION CEREMONIES

March 30, 2002—60th Anniversary (granite marker)

March 30, 2007—65th Anniversary (Pritchard Park)

March 30, 2011—Names are on the Memorial Wall

March 30, 2012—70th Anniversary (BIJAEMA)

March 30, 2017—75th Anniversary (BIJAEMA)

MOCHI TSUKI

Dec 1996—cancelled due to winter storm

Dec 1997—Island Center

Dec 2002—Filipino-American Hall

Dec 2003—Jan present—IslandWood

EDUCATION/PARTNERSHIPS

“Leaving Our Island,” the Sakai 6th Grade Program, 2004-present.

“Only What We Can Carry”, Jon Garfunkel, annual educator delegation to Manzanar.

BISD Multicultural Advisory Council sponsors educational programs and launched the Frank Kitamoto Legacy Award for Inclusion, Civil Rights, & Social Justice.

75th Anniversary Commemoration Ceremony

FROM MY VIEWPOINT

By: Clarence Moriwaki

I began the ceremony and welcomed all of our guests at precisely 11:03 a.m., the exact moment 75 years ago when the ferry *Kehloken* arrived at the Eagledale Ferry Dock in this tragic chapter in American history, the forcible removal and exile of the first of 120,000 Japanese Americans during World War II.

On my wrist I wore a watch that belonged to Leonard Hayashida, the first Bainbridge Island baby born in the Manzanar concentration camp to iconic Fumiko Nishinaka Hayashida. Before introducing each speaker and musical performance, I glanced at Leonard’s watch and announced the time, imagining what was happening at that very moment to the 227 Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans on that fateful morning. I also wore the one suit that my father—whose relatives were incarcerated in the Minidoka concentration camp—owned when I was born.

Reverence and Inspiration

Since the creation of the Exclusion Memorial itself may not have happened without the support and encouragement of the North Kitsap/ Bainbridge Island Interfaith Council nearly 20 years ago, our first speaker was the current president of the council, Tiffany Weighall.

Weighall spoke with passionate purpose, and she focused on a key element that was likely on the minds of everyone present: “Fear is a constant. Since the dawn of time a survival instinct. But throughout time its branding has evolved...In recent human history we have institutionalized fear and followed leaders in response to it. Even in our own nation of which we love and hold dear, which was founded in liberty, fear has led us to the edge of evil.”

In her remarks, Weighall posed a question that many Japanese American parents may have raised during World War II: “How do you teach children to love a nation that sent you away?”

Because for many thousands of years prior to any Asian or European pioneers, Bainbridge Island was a gathering place and seasonal home for the Suquamish Tribe, Leonard Forsman, president of the tribal council, was invited to speak. Forsman noted that the unconstitutionality of President Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s Executive Order 9066 was nothing new to the native peoples of America. “We are familiar as tribes about federal policy. It was federal policy that was implemented here, and we understand the impact of federal policy upon our lives,” he remarked.

Forsman thanked Governor Jay Inslee for respecting and working with the tribe on policies and memoranda that improved relationships between the state and the sovereign tribe, and he recognized and thanked all U.S. veterans present – and those no longer with us – for their service and sacrifice to our nation.

Speaker Rabbi Paul Moses Strasko continued the theme, raising concerns about the world’s – and our nation’s – current political atmosphere of intolerance.

“As anti-Semitism over the last year around the world has risen, and in this past year, what we thought would have been unthinkable, we had politicians in this country talk about the Japanese American Exclusion as a positive thing.”

Echoing Tiffany Weighall’s cautionary words, Strasko added, “Exclusion is the beginning of annihilation.”

The Amabile Choir sang the song “This We Know,” based on a famous speech given by Suquamish Tribal Chief Sealth, namesake of the City of Seattle.

Honor and Respect

“The voice of Fumiko Hayashida is alive and well, and her voice is pretty spectacular,” Governor Jay Inslee said as he passionately described his successful recent efforts to oppose presidential executive orders targeting Muslims and other immigrants.

As our former congressman, Jay Inslee spent years working to successfully establish the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial as a National Historic Site, and he said during that lengthy process Fumiko Hayashida’s voice carried the day.

“You need to understand something about the members of Congress – they never listen,” Inslee said as the crowd erupted with laughter.

“But when Fumiko Hayashida came to Congress, and when she spoke, there were hundreds of people packed into this room...you could have heard a pin drop. As never before, the members of the US Congress listened with laser beams. That voice was heard, that voice was enacted, and we stand...on part of the National Park System to say we will never let fear overcome us, we will never succumb to fear again, we will always stand up for the rights of everyone who lives in this blessed land.”

Inslee proclaimed March 30, 2017 as “Nidoto Nai Yoni – Let It Not Happen Again Day” for the state of Washington, and after he completed his remarks, Inslee introduced the Honorable Kenichiro Sasae, Ambassador to the United States.

Veering from his prepared speech, the ambassador remarked, “While we were working on this trip...the governor suggested to me to come here, and I was told that this is a commemoration to Japanese Americans.”

“I thought I knew (about) Japanese Americans. I’ve visited some places on the west coast and other places, but I realized after being here why the governor suggested for me to come here with him and share this moment with all of you. As I

was listening to what the people said and listening to the music and all of the moments of Japanese American suffering on this island, it has sunk into my mind and my heart, and for that I’m really thankful to you, governor, and all of the people here. I am very proud of those who left Japan generations ago, and have contributed so much to the United States and the state of Washington, in spite of the hardships they faced... On behalf of the Japanese government, I thank you for this ceremony of remembrance and reconciliation. Thank you.”

History and Community

Mary Woodward, daughter of Walt and Milly Woodward, publishers/editors of the Bainbridge Review, who consistently opposed the unconstitutional actions of our government toward Japanese Americans during the Exclusion, began her remarks by turning around from the podium and facing the assembled survivors gathered at the rear of the pavilion. “I want to welcome you and thank you for the courage, the strength and the quiet dignity that you exhibit every day. I learn so much from you. Your example is stellar. Thank you.”

Woodward acknowledged the impact of her parents’ work, but said her parents humbly thought they were just doing the job of good journalism. “They had a newspaper, and they had an obligation.”

Bainbridge Island Mayor Val Tollefson, former board member of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association – who played the invaluable role for the association by creating its by-laws and other legal requirements – authored a proclamation that unanimously passed the Bainbridge Island City Council proclaiming March 30, 2017 as “*Nidoto Nai Yoni* – Let It Not Happen Again Day” for the City of Bainbridge Island.

Kay Sakai Nakao was 22 years old when she and her family were forcibly removed from Bainbridge Island. She recalled the chaos for her family leading up to March 30, 1942.

“We had so little time to get everything all squared away, and with all of the suspicion and wanting to prove we were all loyal Americans, my dad said to destroy anything that looked Japanese...I feel very badly. All of our prized family heirlooms were all destroyed and we can’t pass them on.”

Kay married her husband, Sam Nakao, while in Minidoka, and after three and a half years, they were finally set free.

“We were lucky here on Bainbridge Island. More than half of us did come back, thanks in large part to Mary’s parents, Walt and Milly Woodward, who always reminded everyone that we were their friends and neighbors. I’m sad that the majority of people in the concentration camps were not welcome to return to where they came from...The war was hard for everyone, but I don’t want what happened to us to happen to anyone else, ever again.”

All 276 names of the Bainbridge Island Japanese Americans on the Memorial Wall were read by Ken Matsudaira and Masako Guidry, followed by Emily Groff reprising her role from the 60th Anniversary Ceremony, singing “Don’t Fence Me In.” The two-hour ceremony closed with the Amabile Choir leading the entire audience singing “America the Beautiful.”

>> REQUEST A COMPLETE TRANSCRIPT OF CLARENCE MORIWAKI'S ARTICLE VIA EMAIL: INFO@BIJAC.ORG

The Takemoto Family Story

(continued from page 2)

from college.

Fred served a short tour also in the U.S. Air Force. After his discharge he returned to Seattle to live and work. Fred is semi-retired. He works part-time and manages his rental properties.

James, the youngest brother, graduated from the University of Washington and worked as a CPA with the government and for private firms. Later in his career he had a private practice out of his home. James and his wife, Carolyn, lived in the Tacoma area until he passed away in 2009 at the age of 74. Carolyn now lives in Redmond near her daughter Annette. Annette and her husband Jason have two sons and live in Woodinville.

Teruko (Terrie) Sua, the youngest child, was employed for 54 years by American Marine Bank in Winslow, which later became Columbia Bank. When she was appointed Branch Manager, she was the first woman to hold that position in the State of Washington. Tinei, her husband of 40 years, died while they were living in Poulsbo in 2008. She retired in 2014 and is living in Kingston.

Our deep appreciation to Bill Takemoto (with the help of his daughter) for contributing this very special history of the Takemoto Family of Bainbridge Island.

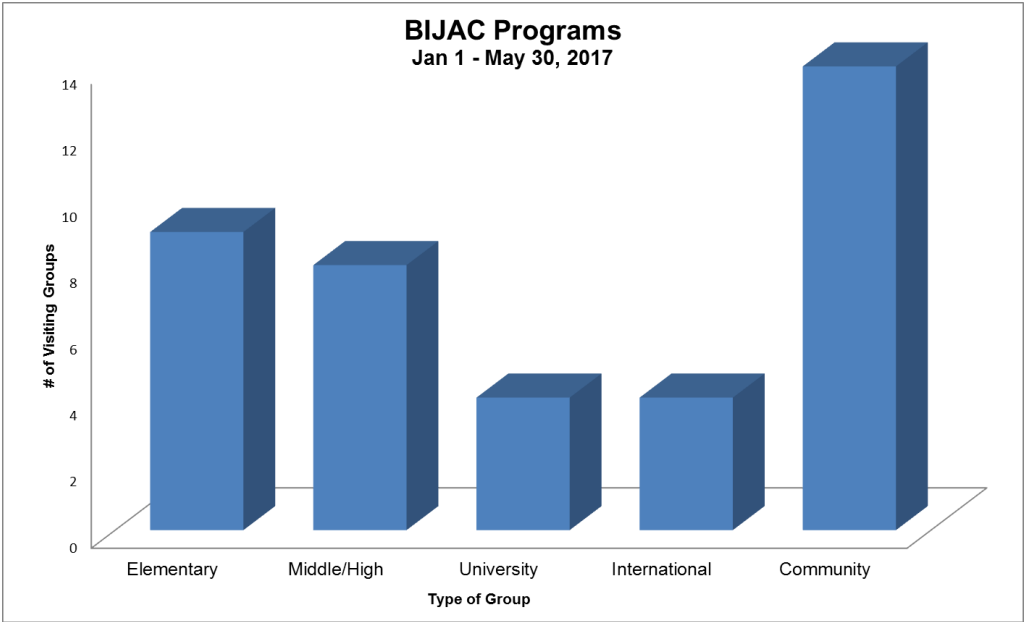
BIJAC PROGRAMS AND VISITATION

By: Katy Curtis and Mary Woodward

Working in partnership with the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum (BIHM) and Bainbridge Island Japanese American Exclusion Memorial Association (BIJAEMA), members of BIJAC, especially our local treasures like Kay Nakao, Lilly Kodama, Frances Ikegami, and Hisa Matsudaira, were busy with interviews, tours, and panel discussions to share their stories. From January through May of this year, BIJAC has helped conduct tours and educational programs for 39 groups—sometimes multiple classes from a school visiting over several days.

Local School Programs

Since 2004, Bainbridge public and private school programs have continued to grow and help children of all ages learn more about BIJAC history before, during, and after the WWII exclusion.



>> LEARN MORE AT bijac.org/index.php?p=EDUCATION_LessonPlan

Family Stories

From Past BIJAC Newsletters

Leaving Our Island – Frank Kitamoto

WINTER 2005

Strawberry Fields – Wayne Nakata

WINTER 2006 – IMMIGRANT STORIES

Zenhichi Harui

Torazo Nakao

Tadashi Sakuma

WINTER 2007

Edwin Takayasu Nishimura

Gerald Nakata

Taketo Omoto

The Koura Family

The Nishimori Family

WINTER 2008

Paul Tsutomu Ohtaki

Junkoh Harui

Spring 2009

Shigeko Nishinaka Kitamoto

The Okazaki Family

The Amatatsu Family

WINTER 2009

It's Seaweed Weather – Yoshiaki Amatatsu

FALL 2010

The Hayashida Family

The Katayama Family

The Takeo Sakuma Family

SUMMER 2011

The Yukawa Family

SPECIAL EDITION 2011

Manzanar 69 Years Later by Ken Mochizuki

WINTER 2011

The Suyematsu Family

WINTER 2012

The Daikichi Omoto Family

The Yonemitsu Family

SUMMER 2013

The Moritani Family

FALL/WINTER 2014

Frank Yoshikazu Kitamoto

The Suyematsu Family

WINTER 2012

The Daikichi Omoto Family

The Yonemitsu Family

SUMMER 2013

The Moritani Family

SUMMER 2017

The Takemoto Family