



Manzanar 69 Years Later

Teachers, Park Rangers, Those Who Were There Learn Together What They Can Carry

by Ken Mochizuki

Much of America has seen the photo: 31-year-old Fumiko Hayashida carrying her 13-month-old, sleeping and bundled daughter Natalie as she walked down Bainbridge Island's Eagledeale ferry dock on March 30, 1942.

The now-famous photo by the Seattle *Post-Intelligencer*, captured a tight-lipped Hayashida with an icy gaze expressing chaotic uncertainty yet steely resolve to confront what lay ahead as she was among the 227 Japanese American residents forced off the Island and escorted by U.S. Army soldiers to a ferry and then a waiting train in Seattle.

She also had to take along a three-year-old son and was over four months pregnant with another.

The Islanders became the first of what would eventually become some 120,000 immigrants and American citizens of Japanese descent forcibly removed from the U.S. West Coast by President Roosevelt's Executive Order 9066 during World War II. Among the 10 major incarceration camps being constructed in America's deserts and swamplands—or "relocation centers" as they were called then—one was ready enough to accommodate this first group of Japanese Americans: the Owens Valley Reception Center within the arid plains and mountains of east central California, later to be known as the Manzanar War Relocation Center.

After a three-day train and then bus ride, the trip for the Bainbridge Islanders ended there, on April Fool's Day.

During April 2011, 69 years later, 100-year-old Fumiko Hayashida and daughter Natalie Hayashida Ong, 70, returned to the Manzanar site for the first time, now called the Manzanar National Historic Site and managed by the U.S. National Park Service.

On a still, sunny morning after a previous evening of roaring winds, the imposing, snow-capped Sierra Nevada mountain range to the west looked almost unreal, porcelain, like a cardboard cutout or a piece of a jigsaw puzzle, members of the "delegation" described. Upon reaching the sandy but pebble-strewn grounds of the Manzanar site, daughter Natalie helped her mother out of a minivan and into a wheelchair.

The Moment Became an Event.

A crowd composed of three other Japanese American Islanders incarcerated at Manzanar, non-Japanese American Islanders from that time connected to those incarcerated, four faculty members from the Island's Woodward Middle School, journalists and Manzanar park rangers anxiously awaited what Hayashida's reaction would be—the icon from the photo and the oldest surviving Bainbridge Islander to have been incarcerated at Manzanar.



"Nice day," Hayashida said as cameras clicked and rolled. Natalie then began the conveyor belt of questions for her mother whenever they were on the Manzanar site. "How's it feel to be back?"

"Hard to believe ..."

"Does it make you sad?"

"She [Natalie] wasn't walking ..."

"Do you remember the mountains?"

"I knew it was the mountains... This was our home... it was a long time ago... And, I came home. I remember."



"Do you remember how pretty it was—all those mountains behind you, too? Was it kind of hazy like this in April of '42?"

"We didn't have time to look and enjoy the scenery... It was all buildings, but now, it's all sagebrush."

As Natalie then wheeled her mother into the site's interpretive center with its bookstore, museum and theaters completed in 2004, Hayashida said, "I'm glad to come back here and see all this improvement—I didn't know."

"I didn't realize I made history; I'm not the only one."

"It's Not Right!"

From 1942~1945, the Manzanar War Relocation Center near Independence, California confined over 11,000 Japanese Americans within one square mile.

Before the showing of a 22-minute introductory film on the history of the Manzanar camp site, Park Ranger Carrie Andresen said, "I'm so happy you're here today and not yesterday because those high winds would have really changed the experience out on the site. With those winds really high, we wouldn't have been outside. We want to learn together—that's the most powerful thing that can happen."

Alisa Lynch, the site's chief of interpretation, said the Bainbridge

Islanders' trip, particularly with Hayashida aboard, almost didn't happen due to the possible government shutdown the week before.

"I was on a shutdown call with other regional directors," she recalled. "And, I said, 'If we shut down, this is what you are destroying.'"

Lynch, who has worked at the Manzanar site since 2001, compared the Islanders' journey to the annual Manzanar Pilgrimage sponsored by the Los Angeles-based Manzanar Committee.

"I think Carrie would agree that having you guys come is one of the highlights of the year," she said. "We love the Pilgrimage when

so many people come back for the first time—the problem is that there's 1,500 of them at once. So, it's really nice to have the intimacy of a small group of people."

When the lights came up after the film, an agitated Hayashida swept her hands like a baseball umpire calling a runner safe. "It's not right! It's not right at all! I'm from Bainbridge Island. We were the first to go out!"

Natalie calmly countered: "We only stayed for 11 months, and after we left, I'm sure they made lots of improvements..."

"That's all made up!" Hayashida insisted.

Andresen interjected that "a lot of the film footage," some in color, "was taken in '43, '44, '45," after those from Bainbridge Island were allowed to transfer in February 1943 to the Minidoka War Relocation Center in south central Idaho to be with those from the Pacific Northwest.

"We could only take what we could carry," Hayashida continued. "We didn't have freedom like that, at all!"

What got her riled up was that the film didn't portray the Manzanar when the Bainbridge Island contingent arrived. In the footage, children happily played on slides and swings. Japanese mess-hall cooks served restaurant-quality Japanese food.

Natalie said of her mother's reaction to the film: "There was no playground for the children. And you would see them [in the film] being served food like at a regular cafeteria and she said it wasn't like that—we had 'K' rations. They were still building the barracks."

Lilly Kodama, 76, Fumiko Hayashida's niece and seven years old when she and her family were removed with those from Bainbridge Island, added, "I remember standing in line with Army mess kits and it wasn't Japanese food at all, but spinach out of a can that was an awful green mess."

Lynch said that, when the Islanders first arrived, there weren't even guard towers and barbed-wire fences yet. The Army enforced confinement with its military police patrolling the perimeter on foot or in vehicles. The latrine was portable even, Andresen said.

"For those who first arrived, they were getting food from the Army Quartermaster Corps," Lynch said. "The first people here were boiling their water in garbage cans to wash dishes." By the first summer, she said, those incarcerated started growing vegetables in camp.

Eventually, there was a chicken ranch, hog ranch, cattle ranch for Japanese American cowboys. But most of that was after you were gone.”

After Hayashida and her daughter later walked through replicas of camp barracks, Natalie recounted that her mother thought the replicas looked too good and she “was rather agitated that it wasn’t anything like she remembers. There was lots of sand, lots of gaps [between the boards], not only on the floor, but on the walls and ceiling. Very little privacy.”

Lynch said her staff has conducted over 350 oral history interviews over the last 10 years with those incarcerated at Manzanar.

“While people had common experiences at Manzanar and Minkidoka, no two people had the same experience,” she said. “We find from those interviews that people are all over the map as far as what they remember. Some people will say, ‘I met my husband, I learned my career—it wasn’t so bad.’ Other people will say, ‘This destroyed our lives, it destroyed our families.’ But, no matter what people say, this place changed their lives. Those of us who work here, this place changes our lives in a much more positive way.”

As part of a staff of 16, Lynch said about 80,000 to 90,000 people visit the Manzanar National Historic Site every year. “The reason we do the work we do is to tell the stories of the people who were here and help visitors today connect,” she said. “People are very excited to connect with people who lived this history.”

Lived Experiences

The “delegation” visited the Manzanar site as the result of a brainchild of Jonathan Garfunkel, managing director and founder of Global Source Education, a nonprofit Bainbridge Island organization with the motto “bridging classrooms and communities.”

“Our programs are grounded in the firm belief that educators can only facilitate the sort of learning in their students that they actively experience themselves,” Garfunkel, 46, said. “We believe that lived experiences inform a more lived curriculum.”

A world traveler before becoming a teacher, Garfunkel spent 1988 in Tibet.

“That was my first true experience being face-to-face with injustice,” he said, “with oppression, human rights, civil rights—from my own personal experience with the Chinese police and army and what I witnessed happening to Tibetans and what Tibetans told me while I was there. To a certain extent, it mirrors all the dynamism of the Japanese American experience with exclusion.”

Applying his travels to teaching, Garfunkel was “asked to teach a more global approach to the traditional curriculum,” he said, and taught grades five through 12 for eight years as a “global social studies teacher” in Rye, N.Y. and the greater Seattle area.

“I lived, worked and traveled through Asia and the Pacific, so I was able to comfortably expand the curriculum beyond the Western Civilization focus,” he said. “I made Western Civilization ‘world civilization.’

“I had been getting a lot of calls from teachers as to how to bring the topic to life. The simultaneous experience of pushing the edges of the curriculum of my own classroom, but yet being asked to help others, led me from teaching secondary students to

teaching more teaching professionals and graduate students.”

Garfunkel ended up in Seattle, earning his master’s degree in education from Antioch University. In 1994, he started the Tibet Education Network (TEN) in Seattle, providing educators with curricular resources on that country. In 1999, Garfunkel founded Global Source Education in Seattle’s Greenwood neighborhood.

Among the 12 past or ongoing Global Source Education “Initiatives and Projects” are TEN and “The Burma Project.” The latter provides resources and focuses on the struggle for human rights in that country—“Rights have become the fourth ‘R’ in a growing number of K-12 classrooms and schools,” the project description states. There also are the “Sustainable Schools Project” and the “EduCulture Project,” which provides elementary school students with the opportunity to learn and work alongside Bainbridge Island farmers.

“Teachers on Bainbridge Island teaching about the [Japanese American World War II] internment, outside of what they had done on their own, had never been offered a professional development experience, let alone a trip to Manzanar, to really bring this topic to life,” he said. “We on the Island are very familiar with life before the war, a little bit during the war, a lot after. But, this is really sort of a missing piece: where did our Japanese Americans go? It didn’t happen on the Island. It’s important for us as an island community to see that as a Bainbridge Island story, not a Japanese American story.”

By 2008, Garfunkel conceived the program to pair Island educators with Japanese Americans who were removed from the Island during World War II and called it the “Only What We Can Carry (OWWCC) Project.” The next year, he received an \$8,200 grant from the Washington Civil Liberties Public Education Program—a statewide initiative to teach about the Japanese American World War II incarceration—and assembled the 2009 OWWCC Project contingent of educators from the Island’s Wilkes Elementary, Bredablik Elementary in Poulsbo, Washington and four of the Island’s “elders” to go to Manzanar.

“I call them, in the most honorific way, elders from our community,” Garfunkel said.

Along with the Hayashidas, the “elders” in the 2011 OWWCC Project delegation also included Frank Kitamoto, Fumiko Hayashida’s nephew and president of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community; Kitamoto’s sister Lilly Kodama; Karen Beierle McCormic, a lifelong friend and former Island classmate of Kitamoto; and Mary Woodward.



The 2011 pilgrimage to Manzanar in front of the “Soul Consoling Tower.”

Woodward is the daughter of the late Walt and Milly Woodward, publishers of *The Bainbridge Review* from 1940~1963. During World War II, the *Review* was one of the few media outlets in the country that protested the removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans. The Woodwards are also credited with making the return of the Island's Japanese Americans after the war possible by publishing articles about the Islanders at Manzanar.

"They did feel a responsibility as the voice of Bainbridge Island to do it right, to be as objective as they could with news reporting, but also to use their voice in what were, over the years, sometimes unpopular positions," Woodward, 65, said at the "Voices of Bainbridge Island" public program at the Manzanar interpretive center. "People on the Island were informed—I think in many communities only one side was presented."

Kitamoto, 72, Kodama and Woodward participated in the past three OWWCC Project delegations. For the 2010 delegation, Katy Curtis joined the group and is currently the OWWCC Project co-director. She led this year's delegation along with Garfunkel.

A native Bainbridge Islander who returned to the Island five years ago, Curtis, 50, is also the education outreach coordinator for the Bainbridge Island Historical Museum. While attending Humboldt University during the '70s, she attended a meeting of the university's fledgling Black Student Union and was invited to become its secretary "because they didn't have anyone else to do it," she said.

"I looked at my white arm and said, 'I don't know if I qualify.' They said, 'Anybody who wants to help qualifies.'"

A certified mediator, she spent 10 years as a diversity awareness facilitator on the University of California's Berkeley campus and also worked in multicultural mediation and divorce mediation in the San Francisco Bay Area. In 2008, she met Garfunkel while both served on the Bainbridge Island School District's Multicultural Advisory Council and discovered he was "great to work with."

"When Jon approached me about this project, I was drawn in

completely, immediately, because of the combination of social justice issues," Curtis said. "Jon is a consensus builder. I really wanted to make a difference in the community and in the schools. OWWCC was a place where my passion for healing racism could contribute. I believed in this concept that, through building individual relationships and storytelling, we gain understanding. For me, this is the most meaningful type of learning experience."



April Fool

Ted Kitayama drove six hours from his home in San Jose, Calif. to join the Manzanar delegation.

Growing up at the southern end of Bainbridge Island near Pleasant Beach, "we didn't have much transportation" and another town three

or four miles away was "someplace else, in the next world," Kitayama, 81, recalled. His family operated a small nursery, growing tomatoes, cucumbers, and cut flowers during the winter, in a greenhouse. When all of Japanese descent were forced off the Island, he can still remember the train ride to Manzanar:

"We came first class, and for us it was an adventure because I think it was the second time I'd seen a train. We were able to board Pullman cars with bunk beds, black porters, tablecloths for dinner and breakfast, observations cars" and eating food "definitely better" than he had ever eaten before, he said. Anytime the train passed through a city, the soldiers on board "told us to pull down the blinds."

However, his adventure abruptly changed upon arrival at Manzanar.

"First thing I noticed was the sand, glowing sand," he said. "And, in the middle of the field, they had a bunch of straw. They gave us the mattress covers, and they said, 'Fill it with straw, and that's your mattress.' The wind was blowing. All I remember is that, as a 12-year-old kid, I thought somebody would say, 'April Fool's and go home.'"

Like Hayashida, Kitayama recalled the camp's primitive conditions when they first arrived.

"I think they had just pounded in their last nail in our barracks the day before we came," he said.

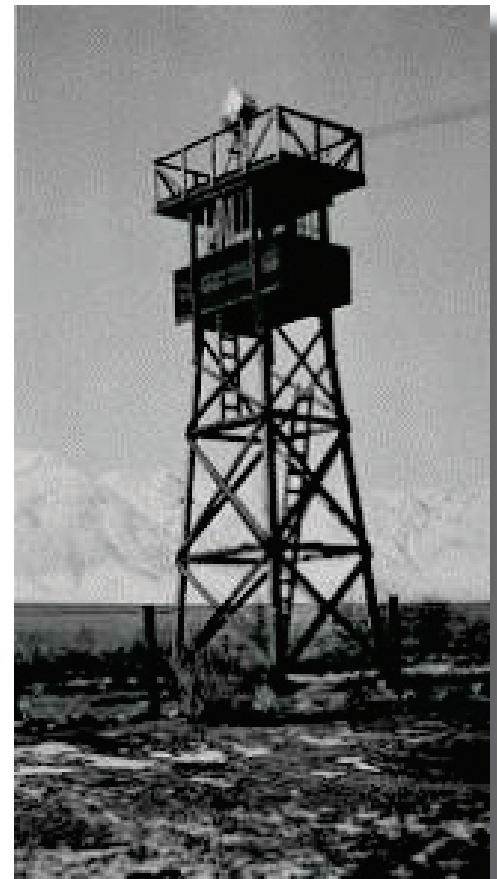
Kitayama had returned to this site for the first time two years ago as part of the Manzanar Pilgrimage when "all you see is people," he said. He accepted an invitation from Garfunkel to join this year's delegation.

"I was a resident here a few years ago, but not by choice," he said. "I'm going to see what I missed the first time I was here."

Lilly Kodama grew up on a 20-acre Bainbridge Island truck farm operated by her grandparents. Her father, Yoshito Frank Kitamoto, worked for Friedlander's Jewelers. As a traveling salesman,

he sold watches and other wares, sometimes to farmers in eastern Washington. After the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, the FBI swooped down and arrested Japanese American community and club leaders, aliens with suspected ties to Japan, and those who possessed items declared "contraband" including any kind of weapons, guns, cameras and shortwave radios. The Kitamotos became one of 34 Japanese American families on the Island with a father taken away.

"He was arrested because he couldn't prove his citizenship," Kodama said, "and we had dynamite in the barn—ironically issued by the government to help the farmers clear the land. But, that's still



weapons, I suppose. And he had a rifle—he used that to shoot deer and pheasants for food.

“People ask me if I missed my father. I probably didn’t because he was away as a traveling salesman. I was the oldest and my youngest sister was nine months old, so my mother had to look after four of us without her husband, my father.”

When her family was forced to leave the Island, “my mother told me this was going to be like a vacation,” Kodama said. “In those days, if my mother said we were going to Seattle, I couldn’t sleep the night before because that was such an exciting event. When I got on the train, I was really excited about that, too, because I had never been on a train.”

Rhubarb

What Kodama remembered were her and her siblings arguing about who got to sleep on the top bunk in the Pullman car. After the Islanders were transferred from the train to buses at Mojave, Calif., and as the busses neared the Manzanar site, Kodama also remembered spotting the barrack buildings in the distance and thinking, “Oh, look, there’s a rhubarb shed.”

“The shed my uncle grew rhubarb in, it was shaped exactly like that—it was long, covered with tar paper,” she recalled. “When we did arrive at Manzanar, my mother had told me that one day I said, ‘What kind of vacation is this, anyway?’”

A couple of episodes at Manzanar also stayed with Kodama:

“There was an amphitheater, a makeshift stage, and it must have been some event because I was in charge of Frank, my younger brother, and you sat on the ground to watch a movie or something. A dust storm came up and everybody got up to leave and we were more or less just trampled because I was just seven and Frank was three or not even that. Frank ended up on the ground and we ended up at the clinic, and they were removing particles of stone and grit from his face.”

And then there was an incident at Bairs Creek, which cut diagonally across the southern corner of the camp.

“I think I saw trees and I walked over there and I found the creek. And, I was so happy to play in this cold water and it made me think of home, because on our property there was a creek. But then, I happened to look up and there was the guard tower with a soldier up there with a gun. I always said machine gun, but it might not have been. That alarmed me and I ran back to the barracks. I never went back there after that.”

Slightly Overwhelming”

After the introductory film and session, the delegation scattered to all the exhibits in the impressive interpretive center—constructed on the site of the camp’s former auditorium which was built in 1944 by those incarcerated. Some found their names in camp records from back then. The elders surrounded an enlarged photo, trying to identify Islanders being marched to the waiting train along Seattle’s waterfront in 1942.

Natalie Hayashida Ong continued questioning her mother.

“Is this what your room looked like?” she asked when in a replica of a barrack room.

“You got slivers from walking on the floor.”

“Did you feel this?” Natalie asked, touching the re-creation of a straw-filled mattress covered by a U.S. Army blanket. “Is that what it felt like?”

“I can’t remember.”

Natalie learned that her brother, Leonard, was brought “home” in a cardboard box after being born in the camp hospital. Fellow Islanders later made a crib for him.

And when approaching the mess hall replica for the first lunch on site, Ted Kitayama quipped, “They sure used a lot better lumber on this one than the one I remember.”

At the lunches, and during the first morning gatherings of the day, Garfunkel asked each member of the delegation for comments on their Manzanar experience thus far.

“I think it’s the whole contrast between the incredibly beautiful surroundings and the ugliness of having been here and trying to piece that together,” said Patti Schlosser, 64, librarian at Woodward Middle School. “The other thing for me is that it’s so moving to be here together.”

“I am actually walking in the steps that people walked,” said Jessica Bender, a Woodward seventh-grade social studies/language arts teacher. “Emotions are difficult, I think,” Bender, 30, continued. “Watching the movie in the interpretive center made me angry, then being out here in these beautiful surroundings. But it’s really hard to see the beauty in a historical perspective.”

Stacie Munoz, also a humanities teacher at Woodward, passed when being asked to share at first. “At this point, I just feel like it’s so slightly overwhelming, so much to take in, I haven’t had a chance to process this,” Munoz, 38, said. “For me, being a mom with little kids at home—thinking about Fumi coming with two little ones and being pregnant—I keep thinking about the little kids from a parent’s perspective, and how you explain it to your kids so they wouldn’t feel the impact anymore than they had to.”

“I was talking with Fumiko about what it was like giving birth to Leonard while at Manzanar,” Bender said later. “And, she regularly just said that she ‘just did it,’ which I took as there was no time to think about the conditions—you just had to do what you had to do to survive and with three little ones.”

Woodward Middle School Principal Mike Florian had attended a pilgrimage to the Idaho Minidoka camp site before with some 160 people there. He had also attended the OWWCC Project annual Summer Institute, where educators are invited to learn more about the Islanders’ incarceration experience. There, Garfunkel approached him about taking a group of teachers to Manzanar.

“I think Minidoka was very emotional for me,” Florian, 55, said. “But, it’s a different experience here because we’re with a smaller group.”

“I keep thinking that I want to go back to Minidoka when they have a similar exhibit as well,” he continued. “I think it’s really powerful when you can see it, touch it, feel it.”

Walking Encyclopedias

The OWWCC Project delegation soon became acquainted with the park rangers’ reference-section knowledge of the former Manzanar War Relocation Center. When the delegation arrived at the site of the camp’s former park, Park Ranger Richard Potashin, who conducted most of the oral history interviews with those incarcerated at Manzanar, spoke about the history of Pleasure Park, later to be named Merritt Park after the camp’s administrator, Ralph Merritt.

Keichiro Nishi, an Issei (first-generation immigrant from Japan) was a landscape gardener and nursery owner in Santa Monica, California before the war. Arrested by the FBI and imprisoned at Ft. Missoula, Montana, he was paroled—mostly on the strength of letters written to the Department of Justice by his former Caucasian

customers—to rejoin his family in Manzanar.

“Instead of being bitter and angry, he started creating gardens here,” Potashin said. Nishi created a rose garden at first, then assembled a crew to create a larger, Japanese-style garden completed in spring of 1943. It included a bridge over diverted water that created a creek, and a gazebo constructed out of native black locust and cottonwood trees.

Over 65 years, the park “had been buried like the stories had been buried,” Potashin said. With excavation completed in 2009 over a course of two months, the creek bed and rocks of Merritt Park had been restored.

“Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston wrote in the iconic book, *Farewell to Manzanar* that Pleasure Park was the only place you could go and take a picture without the backdrop of barracks,” Potashin said. This is a powerful statement of not only creativity, but of working with whatever you can find, of trying to make things better for the community, as well. [There are] a lot of themes in the garden here.”

Next stop: Manzanar’s cemetery outside of the former barbed-wire fence. Less than 20 bodies were buried there; no remains are left, the park rangers said. Next to the human cemetery was a pet cemetery. How could that be? members of the delegation asked, since none of those incarcerated could take their pets. Local residents from nearby towns dropped off unwanted pets at Manzanar, the rangers said, and were adopted by those within the camp.

Next stop: the site of Children’s Village, the only orphanage in any of the incarceration camps in America during the war. Operated from June 1942, 101 children, ranging from newborns to 19 years old, lived at Children’s Village, Lynch said. Japanese American orphans were from orphanages in the Los Angeles area, unwanted babies from other incarceration camps, those who had no parents, and those orphaned at Manzanar, such as two girls whose father killed his wife and then himself, Lynch recounted.

“In talking to visitors, one of the hardest things to understand is how is it that the government went around and got children out of orphanages to put them here,” Lynch said. “Part of the rationale at the time was, in a lot of the orphanages, people cared for people of their own ethnicity—to keep them together.”

The delegation members constantly marveled at the rangers’ knowledge and how “they spit out Japanese names and words like it’s nothing.” At an emotional last session with all of the rangers present, Kodama said, “It’s really astounding. None of you are with Japanese backgrounds, but yet, you know what the whole story is. That’s the marvel to me.”

Garfunkel lauded the rangers for “rolling out the red carpet” for each year’s OWWCC Project delegation.

“The first time the government brought you here, it was perhaps a little less of a red carpet,” Lynch said. “We are also a part of the U.S. Department of Interior, same as the War Relocation Authority [the federal agency that operated the World War II incarceration camps]. Time changes everything.”

Island Voices

During the “Voices of Bainbridge Island” program the next day, the elders talked about the lesser-known postwar experiences.

Before incarceration, the Hayashidas operated an 80-acre

strawberry farm, the largest on Bainbridge Island. State laws prohibited the sale of land to noncitizens from Asia. However, since Fumiko Hayashida’s husband, Saburo, and his brothers were American citizens, they owned the land they farmed on and had a place to return to. However, “the crops were in disarray,” said Natalie. Like other Islanders who no longer found farming lucrative and too arduous, her father later landed a job at Boeing and moved the Hayashida family to Seattle in 1951.

For Ted Kitayama’s family, however, “we didn’t return to Bainbridge Island because father leased the land and no one took care of the greenhouse,” he said. “We didn’t have anything to come back to.” His family relocated to Seattle, and by 1948 his older brothers had finished college—Tom

at Washington State University, and Ray and Kee at Ohio State University—graduating in horticulture, and were looking for jobs. They asked one of their former professors “where’s a good place in California to start a business?” Kitayama recounted. The professor replied that one of his students had landed a horticulture job at Mount Eden in the San Francisco Bay Area. One of Kitayama’s brothers got a job there, another found a job in the same area, and the Kitayamas eventually bought and operated a nursery in Mount Eden.

After Lilly Kodama’s father rejoined the family in Manzanar after being apprehended by the FBI, Friedlander’s sponsored her father to leave camp and go to Chicago and attend watchmaking school. Her father later opened Frank’s Jewellery in Seattle. When Kodama hoped to go to college, her father replied that the family couldn’t afford it.

Kodama’s mother Shigeko, who only had a sixth-grade education, then took it upon herself to farm, growing a variety of crops including raspberries and Christmas trees.

“She always begrudged that she had to quit school,” Kodama said. “She always wanted to be sure that, when my father said that he needed to save money for my brother’s education—she was a feminist from way back then—she just decided that she’d find a way to earn money to supplement my father’s income so we could go to school.”

At age six, when the Island’s Japanese American population began returning in 1945, Karen Beierle McCormic was about to enter first grade. At a picnic for all parents and students before school started, she remembered her mother pulling her aside, pointing out Frank Kitamoto, and saying, “I want you to be very kind to Frank. Because he’s been gone for a long time and he’s just coming back, and he may just need a real friend.” She and Kitamoto became lifelong friends and attended Bainbridge High School’s 1957 senior ball together.

During the “Voices of Bainbridge Island” program, Garfunkel remarked that to be an interracial couple at that time was “groundbreaking.”

“We didn’t think so,” McCormic said. “We were just good friends.”

Her father was scoutmaster for a Boy Scout troop on the Island before the war, and two of his scouts were Kitayama’s brothers Tom



and Ray. Beierle McCormic later expressed amazement that her father often talked about the “Kitayama boys,” and that she finally met one of them at, of all places, the site of the Manzanar camp.

And Ted Kitayama found what he missed “the first time I was here.”

“Japanese people, with this *shikata ga nai* [Japanese for the “it can’t be helped”] attitude could survive anything,” he said. “Looking at that beautiful Merritt Park that was made, and like the auditorium—it was good to know that we could at least know how to survive and exist and keep out of trouble.”

During that same program, Mary Woodward articulated the theme of the Manzanar excursion.

“I think the mothers of the children who were sent to the concentration camps all deserve a medal,” she said. “I’ve only talked to one person who was a child in camp who had a bad experience. That was because his father was not there and his mother was very ill and he had to assume the parental role. But, every other child has good memories, and I, as a mother, really marvel at that. How do you keep your emotions under control for so long under very extreme situations? So, Fumi and all the rest of your ilk, you’re heroes in my mind.”

Can’t Replace an Event Like This

“I would say there were a couple of new things I learned that I didn’t expect,” Principal Florian said during the last morning on the Manzanar site. “Just about the size of the camp and how many buildings there were, and what it was like when they shut down the camp. But, I think those are all kind of trivial compared to the emotional experiences of those families here. So, the tidbits we picked up here, like what it was like for Fumi to take care of three children in a situation like this, were much more impactful.”

What he and the other educators learned during the four-day trip, he said, “seems to fit in pretty well with a citizenship unit that we do and the whole idea of human rights, freedom of the press, and it also fits in nicely with the history of Washington state and the different immigrant groups that came into the state at different times over the years. So, I see it as us being able to insert that little, very important piece of local history into Washington state history, as well.”

Florian and the Woodward educators had sessions with Garfunkel and Curtis prior to the trip so they could get the most out of it.

“Jon and Katy assembled reading materials, videos and discussion topics that were crucial to our preparation for this trip,” Florian said. “I am thankful for their expertise and passion about our Island history.”

“Lot of us have dreams of possibilities, but Jonathan actually works to make them come true,” Kitamoto said. “His sensitivity toward people and his ability to express himself and to put things in proper perspective is beyond approach.”

“The best way you can get kids interested in something is to be excited about it,” Bender said.

“You can’t replace an event like this, where you get to come and sit with Fumiko Hayashida and hear her story, and Lilly and Frank and all these amazing individuals that lived through this,” she said. “If I were to come here with my husband and just visit like we do typical National Parks, it’s not the same. I’m excited to go back and share my pictures, and share it with my family and share it with my parents, and my students, as well. Might be a little tired on Monday, but I think it was well worth it.”

“I heard it said that we ask our students and our own children to

stand up for others and what’s right in bullying and other kinds of situations,” Munoz said, “but, as adults, our kids don’t necessarily see us do that. If we’re going to ask our kids, who are in a more vulnerable stage than we are, we really need to be doing that, too. As we approach Washington studies and get into that citizenship unit, Mary’s parents, Walt and Milly, will be a great example of that.”

“It was very powerful,” Schlosser said of her journey to Manzanar. “I think I can think about it at a different level, and I think I can share the experience in a way that I could not have described the events without this context.”

Did this trip help the Woodward school educators to live up to who their school was named after?

“Absolutely,” Florian said. “We celebrated Walt’s 100th birthday last year, and I’ve always felt like we didn’t really know that much about Walt and Milly Woodward. As a school, we have one photograph of the two of them with their names under it, but no explanation of who they were and what they meant to the community of Bainbridge Island. When I became principal last year, I wanted to explore that relationship with Mary Woodward and Frank and others and try to make that clear to our students. I think this has definitely given us a more detailed, first-hand experience on exactly what the efforts of Walt and Milly meant.”

Expressing Gratitude

During the closing session of the Manzanar trip, Curtis had the delegation pass around a rose quartz heart and asked each member to express what they were grateful for. Voices choked up and halted as some talked of the “sense of family” only four intense days of living, learning and experiencing together could bring.

“We are just so fortunate to have the staffing that we have in our school district,” Kodama said. “I’m getting older—the people to tell the story, we’re not going to be here forever. And to have the idea that teachers are going to carry on for us, and to have students who will know and learn—especially since we kept our darn mouths shut about the whole thing for all these years. I’m just grateful for Global Source and the opportunity to be here. Every time I come, I think, ‘Oh, my mama put up with an awful lot, and I didn’t appreciate her very much.’”

“I was 13 months old when I first crawled, set foot on Manzanar,” Natalie Hayashida Ong said. “So, this is a real journey of discovery for me.

“I was a little selfish, I suppose. I was thinking that I would find out stories from my mother and my family. But I learned so much more, not only from older cousins, but from the park rangers. Your stories are so interesting. And, I feel like I recaptured a little bit of that time when we were evacuated from our homes—I didn’t know what had happened. And, I think I’ve opened up the door to more conversation with my mom—wish we had done this a couple of years earlier. But, I’m also finding out that maybe it’s not too late.”

An organization like Global Source Education and the OWWCC Project “needs to be spread beyond the Island,” she concluded.

Natalie then passed the quartz heart to her mother. “What are you grateful for, Mom?”

“This is the happiest moment for me,” Fumiko Hayashida said. “It’s a good way to end your life.”



BIJAC

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Ken Mochizuki is a free-lance writer and author of the young adult novel *Beacon Hill Boys* and the picture books *Baseball Saved Us*, *Heroes*, *Passage to Freedom: the Sugihara Story*, and *Be Water, My Friend: the Early Years of Bruce Lee*. He has also been a writer/editor for the *International Examiner* and *Northwest Nikkei/North American Post* newspapers in Seattle; has written for nonfiction books and exhibits at the Wing Luke Museum of the Asian Pacific American Experience in Seattle; and wrote the performance piece, *Within the Silence* produced by Living Voices of Seattle, and the book for the musical version of *Baseball Saved Us* produced by Seattle's 5th Avenue Theater.

About Only What We Can Carry

The Only What We Can Carry project (OWWCC) uses the study of WWII, Japanese American Exclusion, and its impact on Bainbridge Island, to foster learning experiences about exclusion, inclusion and citizenship. An educational and community development project, OWWCC was founded to provide educators and citizens experiences that can inform a more lived curriculum for students, build bridges across generations, and enrich communities.

OWWCC Delegations to Manzanar

Particularly because of the Island's role in the story of WWII, Bainbridge educators are in an unique educational landscape to engage with living history locally and beyond Island shores. OWWCC organizes delegations of Bainbridge Island educators paired with current and former citizens of Bainbridge Island who lived through WWII and the experience of "internment," to retrace the 1942 journey of the Bainbridge Island Japanese American community to Manzanar concentration camp, California. The four-day journey gives delegates the opportunity to explore historic sites; walk where they and/or their friends walked seven decades ago; discover artifacts; interact with experts; and do research. With new friendships and expanded access to resources, delegates bring back extraordinary ideas for enhancing curricula and meaningful experiences to share with students and the community.

OWWCC 2011 Summer Institute

To expand upon the lessons learned by the delegation to Manzanar, OWWCC created OWWCC Summer Institute, an intensive professional development program. The unique program conceived to assist educators and schools in enriching their teaching and learning about Bainbridge Island's local experience of a global conflict and crisis, and to help educators find more meaningful ways to bridge classroom and community around local-global topics of study. OWWCC's 2011 Summer Institute, August 22~24, will be hosted at multiple sites on Bainbridge Island and is open to formal and non-formal teachers serving elementary and secondary education.

Thank You to Our 2011 Program Partners

Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community
Bainbridge Island School District
Bainbridge Island Historical Museum
Manzanar National Historic Site, National Park Service
Walt and Millie Woodward Fund
Bainbridge Island Arts and Humanities Council
Bainbridge One Call for All

Contact OWWCC

OWWCC is locally grown project of Global Source Education, a non-profit, professional learning organization serving elementary and secondary education in the Pacific Northwest and beyond for over ten years. To learn more about OWWCC and how you can support our programs, please contact us at:

The Only What We Can Carry Project at Global Source Education

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*"These conscientious educators with deep understanding
teaching the 'Internment Experience' make the community and
world a better place."*

—Kay Nakao

*We urge you all to attend our monthly meeting on the first Wednesday of the month.
Call or visit our website for time and location. There are no dues, the only obligation being an interest in Japanese
American history and heritage and a willingness to lend your support and interest to our ongoing projects.*
