



FRIENDS OF THE EASTERN CALIFORNIA MUSEUM

Preserving Inyo County's Past for the Future

P.O. Box 33 • Independence, CA 93526

NEWSLETTER

Fall 2020

UPDATES: WHAT'S NEW

Update from the Museum's Administration: The Eastern California Museum is currently open weekdays, Monday through Friday, from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. The Museum is following Inyo County and State of California Covid-19 guidelines, thus masks are required of all visitors in the Museum and visitors are asked to practice safe social distancing. The outdoor Historic Equipment Yard and Mary DeDecker Native Plant Garden are open to visitors. For updates and more information, call 760-878-0258. Thank you for your patience and support.

In this issue, FECM is delighted to share an article by Mr. Takamishi (Taka) Go, writing from Yokohama, Japan. Mr. Go did significant work on the ECM's Manzanar Buddhist Directory and here he shares his observations. In addition, we highlight a special photograph from a wedding at Manzanar, and we begin our "Eastern California Stories" series of selections from local oral histories.

Our Charcoal Kilns Preservation Project fundraiser is ongoing. Please see the insert for levels of giving. We are very grateful for your contributions, donations, and memberships received since the last newsletter. In some cases, members both renewed and also made a donation, whether unrestricted or restricted to our Charcoal Kilns Preservation Project, so you will see some names listed more than once. A note about our donations list: in each newsletter, we publish the names of donors who contributed in the period between the dates the previous newsletter and the current newsletter go to print. This list is not published on the publicly-accessible newsletter posted on our website, www.fecm.org. If you have any questions, please email us at info@fecm.org. Thank you!!

Correction: In the last issue of this newsletter, we inadvertently credited the County of Inyo Planning Department for assistance with the Charcoal Kilns project. The correct credit goes to the County of Inyo Public Works Department. Our apologies, and our thanks to those who flagged it.

**“All Roads Lead to ‘Manzanar’”:
My Internship and How I Became a Historian of the Japanese Ethnicity and Diaspora**

September 20, 2020

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Japanese American Living Legacy
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Yokohama, Japan

1. An International Student from Japan to Learn the History of Japanese Americans

When Ms. Manuela Cerruti, FECM’s vice president, recently asked me to write an article in regard to my internship in Manzanar for FECM’s newsletter, I felt not only honored but also obligated to share my experiences with American readers. Up until the fall of 2020, I have never shared anything related to this topic in English, and this is in fact an exciting opportunity for me to share what I learned and experienced in relation to Manzanar, particularly at the Eastern California Museum (ECM).

I came to the U.S. as a typical international student in 2002. Like a lot of new international students, I barely understood English and knew very little about the nation’s history. While taking ESL and other courses at OCC (Orange Coast College), “Farewell to Manzanar” (written by Jeanne Wakatsuki Houston) and “Through Harsh Winters” (written by Dr. Akemi Kikumura-Yano) were among the required texts, and I visited Manzanar National Historic Site (MNHS) and ECM for the first time in 2003. Then, the late Dr. Gloria Bogdan, a former anthropology lecturer at OCC, strongly encouraged me to study the history of Japanese Americans and kindly introduced me to several faculty members of CSU (California State University) Fullerton’s Asian American Studies Department (Dr. Arthur Hansen, Dr. Craig Ihara, and Dr. Thomas Fujita-Rony). After earning my associate degree at OCC in 2005, I transferred to Fullerton. There, my mentors strongly encouraged me to participate in an internship program with NPS (National Park Service). From December 2005 to January 2006, I spent four weeks in Manzanar. Not only was I the first student intern of Japanese background, it also turned to be a great start for my career as a historian of the Japanese Ethnicity and Diaspora.

2. Digitization and Translation of Manzanar Buddhist Directory at ECM

My major project during my internship was to digitize and translate the Manzanar Buddhist Directory (MBD). MBD is one of the most important documents in regard to the wartime experiences of Japanese Americans and has been kept in the Manzanar exhibit at ECM. I started digitizing and translating MBD in the beginning of my second week. With enormous help and support from Ms. Beth Porter, ECM staff, and NPS staff, I was able to complete the project by the end of my internship.

The project was more fruitful than I had expected. I was able to learn the power and significance of personal accounts for studying and analyzing history by going through and typing the names of those who were in Manzanar. Unfortunately, due to the size of the task, there was extremely limited

time for me to think and imagine how each of those people felt about his or her wartime experiences. However, after the internship, I began paying attention to the personal accounts of history when working on the community-based research project at Fullerton with Dr. Hansen. In fact, I still value what I learned through the project as extremely crucial. I was fortunate enough to learn the most important aspects of preserving and sharing history in such a short period of time.

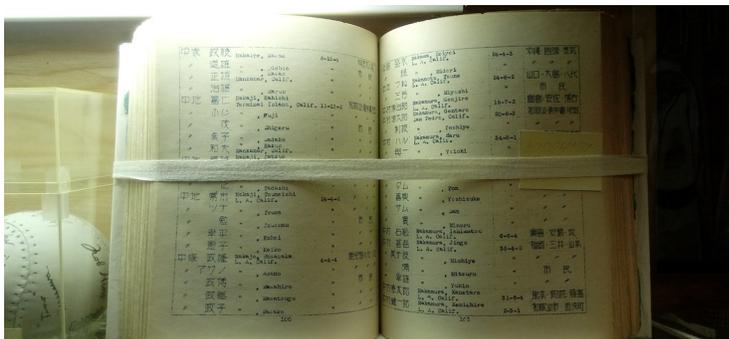
I would like to add something unique in regard to the project. I was thinking of the presence of the future generations of Japanese Americans and people who have Japanese American friends. Some of them may utilize my digitized and translated MBD in order to find their family's ancestral towns or villages. So I wanted to do something good or beneficial for them. In the original MBD, there are hundreds of names of villages, counties and cities of Japan. Those names indicate where in Japan Issei (first generation) were from. Unfortunately, due to the recent reunification of cities and towns in Japan, some of those names no longer exist in Japan. I referred to the latest maps of Japan and provided the latest names of towns and cities so that it would be easier for those who seek their family roots to find where in Japan their ancestors lived.

Despite the fact that I was literally concentrating on MBD, I still remember what I did and talked about with ECM staff. I loved the old music box in the museum so much. It was usually played when we had visitors, and the music "Carol of the Bells" still reminds me of the faces of ECM staff and what I experienced there.

3. "All Roads Lead to 'Manzanar'"

The outcomes of my internship were enormous. It was literally like the water fountain show at Bellagio in Las Vegas. The community-based research project, which I mentioned previously, eventually led me to my current project, the Supplemental Japanese Agricultural Workers Program (a part of the post-WWII Japanese American community experiences). Moreover, during the final semester at Fullerton, I joined Japanese American Living Legacy (JALL), a non-profit organization founded by Ms. Susan Shoho-Uyemura. Through JALL's support, I have conducted dozens of oral histories with both Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals with different backgrounds. Furthermore, I have been a volunteer of Japanese American Citizens League's (JACL) Japan Chapter for nearly a decade.

I cannot still imagine the fact that my internship changed and shaped my life and career, both academic and professional. Everything started from Manzanar in 2005. It paved a road to become a historian of the Japanese Ethnicity and Diaspora. It also shaped who I am and what I think. For me, though it may be a little exaggerating, "All roads lead to 'Manzanar.'"



The Manzanar Buddhist Directory in the ECM's Manzanar Display Case

Photograph courtesy of the Eastern California Museum

MANZANAR CORNER

On display in the Museum's Manzanar exhibit is a lovely and delicate bridesmaid's bouquet and veil. We believe the bouquet came from the Manzanar Flower Shop.

In the photograph below, the bridesmaid is Clare (Harada) Nakashima, and you can see her holding the bouquet and wearing the veil. The bride and groom are Anna Marie "Aiko" Miyamoto and Mark Makoto Nakamura.

The photo, taken by Toyo Miyatake was sent to the Museum by the bride's daughter.



Photograph copyright Toyo Miyatake, courtesy of the Eastern California Museum

EASTERN CALIFORNIA STORIES

Welcome to FECM's newest newsletter column "Eastern California Stories," highlighting oral histories and assorted archival materials available through the Museum's *California Revealed* On-Line Archives collection.

California Revealed is a State Library initiative, in partnership with other local heritage groups, to help California's public libraries and museums digitize, preserve, and provide online access to archival materials - books, newspapers, audiovisual recordings, photographs, and more - telling the remarkable stories of California.

So, sit back and enjoy this moment in Eastern California history from the Museum's unique oral history and audiovisual collections. To explore more fascinating stories related to the people and communities of our Golden State, check out California Revealed at <https://californiarevealed.org/>.

Pine Creek Mine—Union Carbide Corporation

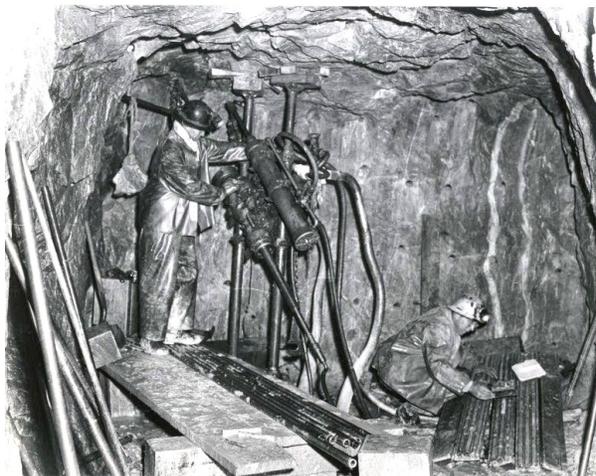
In 1916, after discovering outcroppings of molybdenum and the mineral scheelite, prospectors Billie Vaughn and Arch Beauregard filed mining claims on the high-elevation slopes near the headwaters of Pine Creek, located in the Eastern Sierra, northwest of Bishop, California. Needing more capital to support their operation, Vaughn and Beauregard secured additional partners and in 1918 opened what eventually became known as the Pine Creek Mine.



Pine Creek Mine Complex

Photograph courtesy of the Eastern California Museum /Kilgore Collection

From the beginning and into the early 1940s, the mined scheelite concentrates were packed down the steep 3,000-foot mountain slopes on the backs of mules and horses, then transported by road to the Laws railroad station. Tungsten was extracted from the scheelite and used to create steel alloys that were in high demand during World War I.



Miners at Work – Pine Creek Mine

Photographs courtesy of the Eastern California Museum/Kilgore Collection

During World War II the mine once again became a significant player in the war effort, supplying tungsten to create armor plating for tanks and armor-piercing projectiles. The Pine Creek Mine became the largest tungsten producer in the United States. In its heyday (1940-1990), the mine produced 162,000,000 tons of ore and 8,350,000 20-pound 'units' of tungsten oxide with a total value of more than \$400,000,000. As well, Pine Creek produced approximately \$30,000,000 worth of molybdenum and silver. The Pine Creek Mine was a major contributor to the Eastern Sierra economy for approximately 54 years prior to its closure in 1991.

Online Resource:

California Revealed, Pine Creek Mine—Union Carbide Corporation [Moving Image]

<https://californiarevealed.org/islandora/object/cavpp%3A18235>

References:

Kurtak, Joseph M. (1997). *Mine in the Sky*. Anchorage AK: Publication Consultants, 1997.

Lemmon, Dwight M. (1941). *Tungsten Deposits in the Sierra Nevada, Near Bishop, California: A Preliminary Report by Dwight M. Lemmon*. Report prepared for the United States Department of the Interior, Geological Survey, Bulletin 931-E

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FECM is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization

Join the Friends of the Eastern California Museum

The Friends of the Eastern California Museum work to promote, preserve and protect the important collections and memories that make up Inyo County's only regional museum. The Friends raise funds and contribute time and work to help maintain and improve the Museum's buildings and grounds. We support special exhibits and arrange for speakers, field trips, and programs that inform and entertain Inyo County residents and visitors who come from far and near. We have partnered with the Carson and Colorado group to display and promote the restored Slim Princess steam engine. We also provide funds to maintain the Museum's collections and enhance its permanent exhibits. Every March we hold our Annual Meeting, with a potluck dinner, silent auction and guest speaker. We invite you to join with us to support the Museum. FECM is an all-volunteer 501(c)(3) nonprofit. Members receive a newsletter, email invitations to special events, programs and field trips, and a 10% discount at the Museum Bookstore.

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