



# PACIFIC CITIZEN



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**JANM Reveals Big Facelift Plans.**

The current view from the street of the F.M. Hall building at 2700 Larimer St.

PHOTO: DEAN K. TERASAKI

# Announcing October as JACL Membership Month



By JACL National

Join us to appreciate the heart and soul of our organization — our dedicated members. JACL is proud to announce October as “Membership Month,” a monthlong celebration of our members.

“Our members are the backbone of our organization. Their tireless efforts, passion and dedication allow JACL to make a positive impact on the Japanese American, AAPI and civil rights communities,” said JACL VP for Membership Dominique Mashburn.

“When I first started here, Bridget Keaveney (our previous membership coordinator) remarked how our members have hearts of gold. I couldn’t find that to be more true. From decades-long members to our newest and youngest advocates, I am so grateful to have such passionate, courageous and kind people on our side,” said JACL Membership Manager Ashley Bucher.

“Working at JACL for seven years, I’ve been thinking we need a dedicated time and greater creative spaces to honor our members because we wouldn’t be JACL without them. We decided on October to commemorate the founding history of our organization,” said Director of Membership and Fund Development Phillip Ozaki.

October is a significant time for JACL, as it is the founding month according to Vol. 1, No. 1 of the *Pacific Citizen*, the national newspaper of the JACL. One can view 94 years of the *Pacific Citizen* on the newspaper’s website under its Digital Archives tab or visit [www.pacificcitizen.org/newspaper-archives](http://www.pacificcitizen.org/newspaper-archives) directly.

**Membership Month’s highlights include:**

- 1. Member Spotlights:** We will feature the stories and achievements of our members and volunteers.
- 2. Member Benefits:** We will refresh and remind you of your perks and surprise you with a few new ones. For one, we have new 2023 Membership Cards for you — both digitally and physically. Check these out at our new webpage at [www.jacl.org/benefits](http://www.jacl.org/benefits).
- 3. Member Surveys:** Look out for these so we can learn how to better serve you! Plus, all survey-takers have a chance to win a \$20 gift card (we’ll draw five winners). For the survey links, please visit <https://jacl.org/blog/membership-month>.
- 4. Special Events**
  - Oct. 15: Membership Drive Day** — We proclaim Oct. 15 as Membership Drive Day to invite more friends and family to join our community. This day is significant because on Oct. 15, 1929, we launched the first issue of the *Pacific Citizen* (then called the *Nikkei Shimin*).
  - Oct. 19: New Member Orientation** — How can you make the most of your JACL membership? Join us with special guests Garrett James of Ryoko Rain (a

fashion all-star and community advocate!) and returning artist Sam Hamashima. Hear from JACL leadership, meet other new members and find out all JACL has to offer. This is for new members since 2022, but all are welcome to join. We will have prizes!

- Nov. 4: 50th Anniversary of the JACL Headquarters Building (virtual event info TBD)** — In 1973, JACL bought the land at 1765 Sutter St. in San Francisco to build its National Headquarters building. Join us to celebrate this momentous occasion. More information TBD.
- 5. Free streaming for all of October brought to you by “Tadaima: A Community Virtual Pilgrimage.”** We work in collaboration with the Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages to feature three films with JACL

connections as part of its digital film festival. The films are:

- “Removed by Force” from the JACL Honolulu chapter, streamable from Oct. 17-31.
- Shorts from Mitchell Matsumura, JACL member and collaborator, for the whole month.
- “Hito Hata,” a film from Visual Communications, our National Convention sponsor and film fest partner, from Oct. 23-28.

The link for streaming these films can be found at [www.jampilgrimages.com/films-2023](http://www.jampilgrimages.com/films-2023).

Membership Month is a time to reflect on our shared journey to foster a sense of belonging, pride and unity at JACL. Thank you for being an essential part of our story, and we can’t wait to celebrate with you in October! ■



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## PACIFICCITIZEN 2023

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The *P.C.*'s mission is to 'educate on the past Japanese American experience and preserve, promote and help the current and future AAPI communities.'

\* Your donations will help build and preserve a cohesive library of the *Pacific Citizen* to educate future generations.\*

*"I'm glad to see the Pacific Citizen growing and evolving with its website, and especially LOVE the much easier-to-navigate digital archives. It's a treasure trove for JAs to learn about our community's history, and for scholars and journalists looking to connect the past with the present. Thanks for the improvements, P.C.!"*

— Gil Asakawa

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# 'OMOIYARI': A Search for Modern Harmony From Past Dissonance

Documentary tracks musician Kishi Bashi's journey to understand an inherited history.

By Gil Asakawa,  
Contributor

**K**aoru Ishibashi is a musician known by his stage name, Kishi Bashi. But since he was 13, most people have called him "K." He composed the music for and co-directed "Omoiyari," a film that follows his journey learning about the World War II incarceration of Japanese Americans, with co-director Justin Taylor Smith.

Ishibashi is a Japanese American of the generation that is not connected via family to the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans. He was born in Seattle in 1975, but raised in Norfolk, Va., by his shin-Issei parents, who were both university academics. So technically, he is a shin-Nisei or new Nisei, and raised both very Japanese and very American.

"Well, I mean, initially there's a lot of, you know, like you, you know, having this kind of bicultural identity of being American, but also having a deep connection with Japan, like speaking Japanese, you know, something I was always exploring throughout my life," Ishibashi said about his identity.

Ishibashi was inspired to look into his JA roots initially by the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and the Japanese American incarceration that followed. "A lot of people were talking about Pearl Harbor and what happened after, you know, and then I was reminded of that and then Trump was just in office and there's a Muslim ban."

Ishibashi saw the political climate as a civil rights issue. "As an artist, it was a challenge, an artistic challenge," he said. "But it was something I really cared about. I read a lot, met a lot of people who were concerned. I've met a lot of people who were like me, shin-Nisei, and learned you don't have to be connected to it to really care about an injustice."

Ishibashi's exploration of the injustice both then and now led to "Omoiyari," which means compassion or consideration in Japanese. It's a reflection of his immersion in the Japanese American history of eight decades ago, visiting concentration camp sites and reacting to them on the spot with music.

He improvises haunting melodies in the documentary on violin, like standing in an empty barrack and

creating "Arrival," imagining the families who came to such cold, barren places. In other scenes, he improvises melodies standing in the desolate landscape of Heart Mountain with the wide-open skies above him.

The film follows Ishibashi as he travels to places to speak with both camp survivors and non-JAs, like former Wyoming Sen. Alan Simpson, who struck up a lifelong friendship with Norman Mineta — who would himself become a U.S. representative and then commerce secretary and transportation secretary (during 9/11) — when he was imprisoned with his family as a boy at the state's Heart Mountain War Relocation Authority Center. Ishibashi also performs a "Japanese Incarceration Awareness Concert" in the film in a barrack in Powell, Wyo., for curious locals.

In the concert, he starts strumming a Dobro guitar and sings the one Japanese song that many Americans (especially older ones) know: "Ue O Muite Arukou," better known in the U.S. by the nonsensical title "Sukiyaki." The song was a No. 1 Top 40 hit in 1963, and the audience claps and sings along.

Ishibashi weaves that spirit of a musical bridge between Japan and America throughout "Omoiyari."

The documentary opens with a concert in New York City in a packed theater of young people who cheer as he and his band take the stage. Ishibashi begins playing a pretty melody on his violin, then says "New York City, how are you tonight? It's so good to be back," like any bigtime rock performer to his hipster fans. The crowd applauds as he and the band dive into a dynamic, raucous version of "Marigold," one of his songs inspired by his visits to Heart Mountain.

Ishibashi narrates the movie and

explains how the rise of hate speech, anti-immigration policies and anti-Asian hate crimes led him to his journey. When people referred to Japanese American incarceration as a model of how to treat immigrants today, he knew about it from high school, but wanted to learn more.

The film intercuts a lot of historical images and archival film footage of JA history with contemporary scenes of protests by leaders like Satsuki Ina of Tsuru for Solidarity, speaking out against repeating the history of incarceration. (JACL members will likely get a kick seeing an appearance by since-retired Midwest District Regional Director Bill Yoshino.)

"Omoiyari" premiered at South By Southwest Film Festival in Austin in 2022, and then was signed up for distribution by MTV Documentaries. The past year has been spent editing and polishing the film for a new wider release.

"The past six years that we worked on this movie was a big transformation for me," Ishibashi said. "I went from just being a selfish musician. There's been a lot of growth for me, and I just don't make music for music's sake anymore. I realize that I have an audience who would listen to what I put out, so I have an

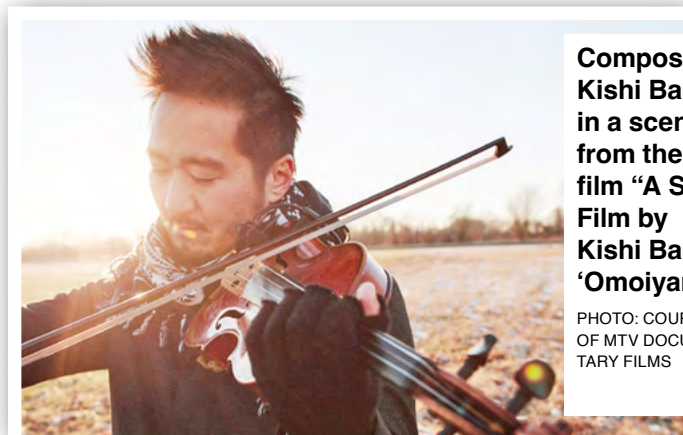
opportunity to maybe change some minds or create new perspectives."

Ishibashi also recorded a companion album — his fourth album — titled "Omoiyari" that expands on themes from the film and expresses them in his genre-busting styles including pop, rock, folk, classical, jazz and progressive musical styles. The cover of the album may be familiar to JAs with incarceration in their family — it's a photo of beautiful bird pins crafted in camp.

Between this well-crafted and engaging documentary and album, his dynamic and stylistically diverse musical palette and the clear passion for social justice and passing on the history to younger generations, Ishibashi — Kishi Bashi, or just K — is forging new territory for the Japanese American community.

*"Omoiyari" opened in New York and Los Angeles on Oct. 6 at IFC Center (N.Y.) and the Laemmle Glendale (L.A.). To view the "Omoiyari" trailer, visit [tinyurl.com/mr2p5ajc](https://tinyurl.com/mr2p5ajc).*

*This article was made possible by the Harry K. Honda Memorial Journalism Fund, which was established by JACL Redress Strategist Grant Ujifusa.*



**Composer Kishi Bashi in a scene from the film "A Song Film by Kishi Bashi: 'Omoiyari.'"**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MTV DOCUMENTARY FILMS



## REIMAGINE EVERYTHING

# MAKING SENSE OF SAVING DOLLARS AND CENTS

By JR Fujita

**R**ising costs for everyday purchases seem to be the norm these days — making it more difficult to save money, especially when on a fixed income. Rising utility bills, high gasoline prices, expensive food (groceries and dining), clothing and entertainment can combine to create real financial hardship for many. The good news is that there are many ways to save money through a bit

of research and advance planning.

One way to save money is by shopping online, which may lead to fewer impulse purchases than in-person shopping. Brick-and-mortar stores place items strategically to entice shoppers to buy on impulse rather than need. In addition, whether shopping online or in-person, making a list and sticking to it can significantly reduce spending.

Other easy ways to save include purchasing less-expensive store-brand products as well as discount-

ed imperfect items. Additionally, planning and stocking up on needed items when they are on sale can result in lots of savings.

Checking weekly ads, signing up for loyalty programs and downloading store discount apps can help you save even more. You can also take advantage of discounts at restaurants using membership or club cards, or just asking for a senior discount. Some stores and restaurants even have special senior discount days, so make a point of finding out about these potential savings.

Another savings opportunity that is often overlooked is unused food, which is often forgotten and then must be disposed of. Freezing extra food such as bread or leftovers or placing them in a highly visible place in your refrigerator or freezer can help to ensure that they aren't forgotten. Then, instead of ordering an expensive delivery pizza for a break from cooking at the end of

a long week, you can have easy leftovers of food you've enjoyed earlier.

Making our own household cleaners is another easy way to save money. Many products such as vinegar, baking soda and homegrown citrus fruit can be powerful (and natural) cleaners. You can also purchase inexpensive items at a dollar store and make them into cost-effective cleaning products. There are numerous online tutorials and videos that provide step-by-step guidance on how to make your own cleaning products for home.

Preventive care such as maintaining and regularly cleaning vehicles and household appliances can also be a cost saver. Even simple tasks such as unplugging unused appliances can save electricity costs and help to prolong the life of household items.

Purchasing energy-efficient products such as televisions, small ovens/air fryers, light bulbs and appliances,

as well as running major appliances during nonpeak hours can also help lower electricity bills. In guest bedrooms, for example, lamps, alarm clocks and other electrical items can be unplugged for most of the year. It's also a good idea to unplug unneeded items when leaving for vacation.

Whether it's smart grocery shopping, food management or home care and maintenance, there are many ways we can all save money, even when costs are high. You can find more ideas on ways to save at [aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving](https://www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving) or refer to our recent AARP Bulletin article, "99 Great Ways to Save" (<https://www.aarp.org/money/budgeting-saving/info-2023/99-great-ways-to-save.html>).

*JR Fujita is a senior state and community engagement specialist for AARP California and is based in Sacramento.*



# TADAIMA VIRTUAL PILGRIMAGE RETURNS

An online film festival, running from Oct. 1-28, aims to foster connection, awareness and understanding within our diverse community.



By Rob Buscher, Contributor

Japanese American Memorial Pilgrimages is excited to announce the return of “Tadaima: A Community Virtual Pilgrimage,” a transformative online event that will run from Oct. 1-28. This innovative initiative aims to foster connection, awareness and understanding within our diverse community by offering a rich tapestry of livestreams, Zoom group discussions, workshops and thought-provoking prerecorded videos. The 2023 program explores themes related to monuments and memorialization, the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans and broader community history on both sides of the Pacific.

Featuring more than 40 films, this year’s online film festival program explores the topics of monument-making and memorialization related to the former sites of incarceration and other significant sites for the Japanese American community.

The online festival is organized into six distinct program sections titled “Camp and Monuments,” “Postwar Community History,” “Advocacy and Social Issues,” “Arts and Culture,” “Japan Connections” and “Japanese and Nikkei Perspectives on the Atomic Bomb.” As the curator of this program, I would like to share some of the rationale informing our programming decisions and highlights of the 2023 lineup.

The pilgrimage movement is inherently place-based by nature of visiting the physical sites of incarceration. Now that in-person pilgrimages have resumed in earnest, we can appreciate the continued importance the power of place holds in our collective storytelling. But as we navigated the pandemic with the help of rapidly improving digital communications technology, our community learned that it is possible to memorialize our shared history in the absence of physical monuments.

In this year’s film program, there are many titles that explore these topics both directly and indirectly, not just related to the former sites of incarceration explored mainly through the section titled “Camp and Monuments,” but to other significant sites for the Japanese American community.

One of the lesser-known stories one will find in this section is told through the documentary feature “Jimmy Murakami: Non Alien,” about a Tule Lake survivor who spent most of his adult life living abroad in Ireland as a result of his wartime experiences who then revisits the site for the first time since his incarceration.

Another stand-out title from this section is the short film “Blue Garden,” in which Japanese Canadian filmmaker Natalie Muraio explores

topics related to her family’s wartime incarceration in Canada through a unique blend of animation and documentary storytelling.

The section titled “Postwar Community History” includes several films that center on the lived experiences of those who returned to the West Coast and rebuilt the Japanese American community in Little Tokyo, Crenshaw and other L.A. neighborhoods.

Of particular note is the landmark film that Robert Nakamura co-directed with Duane Kubo titled “Hito Hata: Raise the Banner.” This 1980 production is considered the first feature-length narrative film made by Japanese Americans after WWII and chronicles the Issei experience from their arrival at the turn of the century to wartime incarceration, as well as the postwar struggle to save Little Tokyo from redevelopment. Thanks to the generosity of our friends at Visual Communications, the film will be available during the last week of Tadaima from Oct. 23-28.

The section titled “Advocacy and Social Issues” includes a wide array of topics ranging from family caregiving and dementia in Rea Tajiri’s gripping feature documentary “Wisdom Gone Wild” to the hitherto-unknown role that Sansei Kiyoshi Kuromiya played in bringing Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. to the Selma-Montgomery March as told in Robert Shoji’s short documentary “The Fourth March.” Another not-to-be-missed title is the docudrama “Blasian Narratives,” which shares a series of spoken word monologues by mixed-race individuals whose heritage is both Black and Asian.

The “Arts and Culture” section is another mixed bag of goodies including foodie film “Kakehashi” — a short documentary biopic about James Beard Award-winning Chef Nobuo Fukuda and a new web series titled “The Shokudo Series,” produced by Little Tokyo’s Grateful Crane Ensemble, which essentially offers a Japanese American take on popular Netflix drama “The Midnight Diner.” This section also includes films about Nisei artist luminaries like “George Nakashima, Woodworker” and “Sincerely, Miné Okubo” — a feature and short doc, respectively, exploring the works and lasting legacies of their respective subjects.

One of the smaller sections, “Japan Connections,” explores some of the unique relationships and social issues that exist between Japan and the Nikkei diaspora. A narrative feature film produced in 1959, “Kiku and Isamu” tells the story of two biracial Black-Japanese children and the issues they faced in their rural village during the postwar era. Feature documentary “One Day We Arrived in Japan” explores a more contemporary issue related to Japa-

nese Brazilian migrant workers and the challenges they face in Japan.

While less specific to the Japanese American experience, a significant section of the film program has been dedicated to “Japanese and Nikkei Perspectives on the Atomic Bomb.” In light of the recent commercial success of Universal Pictures’ “Oppenheimer,” the organizing committee at Tadaima felt it was important to create a space for our community to express our thoughts on a controversial topic that has impacted many of our distant relatives, for those of us whose families hail from Hiroshima or Nagasaki.

Through the titles presented in this section, we aim to foster constructive dialogue around the role and responsibility of Japanese Americans and other Nikkei in the fight to end nuclear proliferation. Including several propaganda films that allow audiences to see how the U.S. military attempted to control the narrative in the immediate postwar era, the bulk of this section is comprised of titles that give platform to the lived experiences of hibakusha — bomb-affected peoples who either survived the atomic bombing themselves or are descended from individuals who did.

The program includes two narrative feature films — “Hiroshima” (1953) and “Pecoross’ Mother and Her Days” (2013). The earlier film tells the story of a group of teachers, their students and their families in the years after the war. In a flashback sequence, tens of thousands of extras from Hiroshima, many of them survivors, helped re-create the hellscape immediately following the bombing, which I consider to be the most accurate live-action depiction of the horrors wrought by this unthinkable weapon. In “Pecoross,” director Azuma Morisaki, himself a native of Nagasaki, explores the topic through the memories of an elderly woman with dementia.

Unrelated to the atomic bombs, another documentary feature in this section, “Threshold: Whispers of Fukushima,” tells a different set of stories about a new generation of Japanese impacted by the radiation leak caused by the 3/11 Triple Disaster. Exploring such topics seemed fitting within a program that seeks to understand how we can memorialize the invisible remains of our own community-wide trauma resulting from the wartime incarceration.

Now that the worst of Covid-19 is hopefully behind us, it provides an opportunity to consider what we will carry forward into our post-pandemic lives. Not all of the online community spaces that were necessitated by the need for self-isolation will survive, but it is my hope that Tadaima will continue in perpetuity.

» See TADAIMA on page 9

# 'OUR PROMISE': JANM's \$65 Mil Moonshot

Japanese American National Museum reveals big plans, facelift.

By George Toshio Johnston, Senior Editor

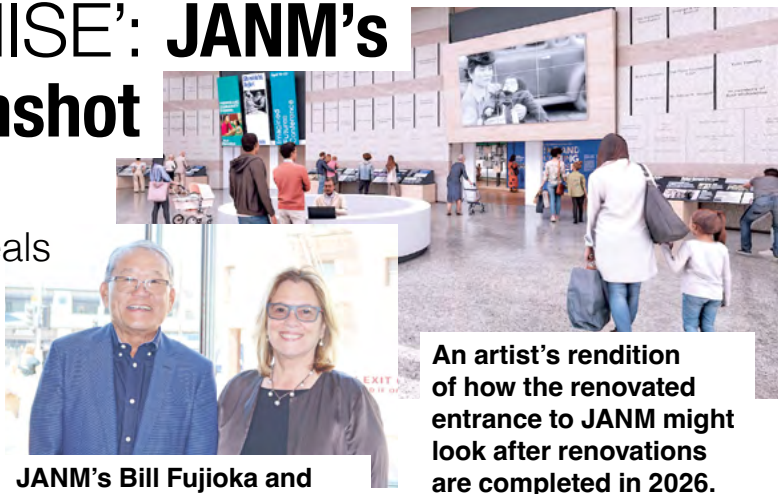
Over its nearly four decades of formal existence, the Japanese American National Museum's trajectory has met several milestones — and has had to overcome several obstacles since becoming a nonprofit organization in 1985.

As William Fujioka, current JANM board of trustees chair, pointed out in an interview with the *Pacific Citizen*, its April 30, 1992, dedication ceremony at its original site, the former Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, was overshadowed when, as he put it, “all hell broke loose” in the city and county because of the rioting that erupted a day earlier after a jury acquitted four Los Angeles Police Department officers charged with severely beating motorist Rodney King.

The museum survived, of course, reaching the next big event in its evolution, namely the multimillion-dollar construction of the Pavilion, with Jan. 23, 1999, as the date JANM moved to its modern 100 N. Central Ave. location, just across the plaza from the old Nishi, now the home of the Go for Broke National Education Center.

Since then, as the museum has continued to mature, there were several changes in its top leadership until 2017, when Ann Burroughs became JANM's president and CEO, with Fujioka — who, among his many past positions, held that of chief executive officer of Los Angeles County — becoming the board of trustees chair after his predecessor, Norman Mineta, died on May 3, 2022.

The museum's timeline will now regard Aug. 5, 2023, as the date JANM formally unveiled the next stage for it and its now-25-year-old Pavilion. Befitting such an occa-



An artist's rendition of how the renovated entrance to JANM might look after renovations are completed in 2026.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF JANM

JANM's Bill Fujioka and Ann Burroughs stand in front of what will be the future entrance to the Japanese American National Museum after renovations are completed sometime in 2026.

PHOTO: GEORGE TOSHIO JOHNSTON

sion, dignitaries present included Consul General of Japan in Los Angeles Kenko Sone, U.S. Rep. Mark Takano (D-Calif.) and Los Angeles County Supervisor Hilda Solis. Other speakers included JANM board of governors members Jennifer Hirano and Josh Morey.

It's an initiative called “Our Promise,” which among its many parts includes raising \$65 million to make the museum's sweeping vision a reality. Those changes were actually alluded to at JANM's May 13 fundraising gala (*see the June 2, 2023, Pacific Citizen*), when Burroughs referred to some “very, very bold plans” that would be revealed in a few months.

With \$48 million of the \$65 million already collected — nearly 75 percent of the goal — among the many changes that the museum will effectuate during the “Our Promise” campaign under the leadership of Fujioka and Burroughs over the next few years include:

- Beginning in December 2024, closure to the public of the museum for 14-18 months until 2026
- Beginning in January 2025, in conjunction with the museum's closure, a renovation of its entrance, with what is now the Aratani Central Hall becoming the new entrance, with some of the current first-floor space that

is now, for example, used by the Hirasaki National Resources Center moving to the second floor and the Heart Mountain barrack getting relocated to the first floor

- JANM utilizing space in its historic building and the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy during the renovation
- Greater use during the closure of its Mobile Education Lab, which will see JANM exhibitions visit classrooms throughout Los Angeles
- The renaming of the plaza between the Pavilion and the old Nishi, which will become the Norman Y. Norman Democracy Plaza
- The relaunch and the renaming of the National Center for the Preservation for Democracy, which will become the Daniel K. Inouye National Center for the Preservation of Democracy
- A significant increase in the museum's digital footprint, which will eventually include five interactive digital avatars of Japanese American community members, with June Yasuno Aochi Berk and 442nd veteran Lawson Sakai (now deceased) having already been completed

“Our Promise” is also an acknowledgement that JANM and its purpose has evolved, post-Trump and post-pandemic.

“We are increasingly being seen as a center for the arts and civil rights,” Burroughs told the *Pacific Citizen*, “and that, I think, is very different for us.”

» See MOONSHOT on page 9

# NJAHS Launches National Photo Campaign to Honor Nisei Veterans of the MIS

MIS families are urged to submit photos of their veterans to help fill a missing chapter in WWII history.

SAN FRANCISCO — The NJAHS seeks the community's help in honoring the 13,000 MIS service members and their affiliates whose covert intelligence work and operations helped speed the end of World War II and the advancement of a democratic government in post-war Japan.

Beginning in June 1941, the U.S. Army recruited Americans of Japanese descent to form the first language intelligence unit in the history of the U.S. military. On Nov. 1, 1941, the Army hastily converted an airplane hangar in the Presidio of San Francisco's Crissy Field into a school, where the first class of mostly Nisei linguists trained.

The Niseis' and Kibeis' familiarity with Japanese language and customs made them ideal candidates for specialized intelligence training for WWII's war in the Pacific. More than 6,000 MIS served mainly in the Pacific Theatre of War and were assigned clandestine duties, including translating intercepted Japanese radio transmissions and interrogating captured soldiers, actions which resulted in their saving countless Japanese and American soldiers' and civilians' lives.

In addition, more than 5,000 MIS Nisei served under Gen. Douglas MacArthur in the post-war Occupation of Japan, aiding in Japan's transition to a new, democratic form of government.

However, until a 1971 Freedom of Information Act request was granted, MIS soldiers were forbidden from discussing their covert, wartime work, and so many of their stories and contributions have been lost in history,

unknown to the public and even to their own families.

But now you can help fill this missing chapter in WWII history.

In recognition of the 10th anniversary of the opening of the MIS Historic Learning Center, NJAHS will launch the MIS Veteran Photo Tribute at the MIS Historic Learning Center. A digital photo kiosk that includes your veteran's photo will be unveiled at the anniversary event on Nov. 12, and all are welcome to attend.

The digital kiosk will be located on the MIS Historic Learning Center's existing MIS Honor Wall, which lists the names of some 13,000 MIS and affiliates who served in various capacities from 1941-52.

The task of collecting thousands of veteran photos is daunting, which is why the NJAHS seeks the community's help. Whether you are a MIS veteran family member or descendant or you know of someone who should be honored, the NJAHS encourages you to submit a scanned digital image of a vintage photo of your veteran in military uniform for inclusion in the MIS Veteran Photo Tribute.

Please email your photo by Oct. 31 to [mis@njahs.org](mailto:mis@njahs.org) and include all required information requested by the NJAHS (*visit www.njahs.org*); a suggested donation of \$100 will be used to prepare your photo for inclusion in this permanent photo display.

**Please contact the NJAHS for questions about either the anniversary event or veterans' photo at (415) 921-5007.**



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The front door of the F.M. Hall building, former home of T.K. Pharmacy

PHOTO: DEAN K. TERASAKI

# VOICES IN THE WALL

When family history is deliberately left untold, those left behind must process the blank spaces.

By Lynda Lin Grigsby, Contributor

Tak Terasaki's memory was always sharp. Mention a golfer, and he could rattle off an average score or recite the corrupt players ensnared in the 1920s Teapot Dome scandal. It was as if he had a limitless repository of information that he delighted in relaying to family members.

"He was a historian who always told us everything," said Melanie Froelich Terasaki, Tak's youngest daughter.

But deep in the recesses of Tak's memory, he kept a secret. The longtime pharmacist and shrewd

'He was a superhandsome man,' says Kiku Terasaki about her father. 'He was six feet tall, one of the tallest Japanese guys in town.'



Tak Terasaki worked as a pharmacist at T.K. Pharmacy from 1938-65.



Tak Terasaki co-founded the Mile High JACL.

PHOTOS: COURTESY OF MELANIE TERASAKI



The Terasaki Family in an undated photo. Pictured (from left) are Masayemon, Miko, Shoziro 'Saaj,' Sei, Yutaka 'Tak,' Yuriko and Saburo 'Sam' (front). Haruko, the oldest daughter who was married to Thomas Kobayashi, is not pictured.



Tak's favorite part of the job was interacting with customers, family members say.

PHOTO: COURTESY OF MELANIE TERASAKI

businessperson ran one of the few Japanese American working pharmacies in the West during World War II. From 1938-65, Tak worked alongside family members at T.K. Pharmacy, a standalone brick building at the corner of 27th and Larimer Streets in Denver. When he died in 2004 at 89, no one knew about the hidden treasure until long after T.K. Pharmacy closed its doors forever.

In 2012, the vacant brick building at 2700 Larimer St. was undergoing renovations. Hundreds of WWII-era letters from Amache to Heart Mountain and beyond were inside a wall. Some were formally addressed to "Dear Sir" or "Gentlemen." Others were more personal:

"Dear Tak," wrote someone on Dec. 20, 1943. "Is it cold there?"

The discovery of the letters set off an initial wave of intrigue. Since the discovery, the correspondences have been preserved in a digital repository of elegantly handwritten letters on sepia stationery — free for anyone with an internet connection to peruse. From the boxes, 557 objects have been digitized as a part of Densho's T.K. Pharmacy collection (<https://ddr.densho.org/ddr-densho-319/>). But more than a decade later, many questions remain. Why were these letters put in the wall? And most puzzling of all, why didn't Tak say anything about them?

"To not say anything about this is major," said Melanie, 72, a Sansei from Evanston, Ill. "It's a mystery."

### People Speaking in the Letters

Before its 2012 renovation, the

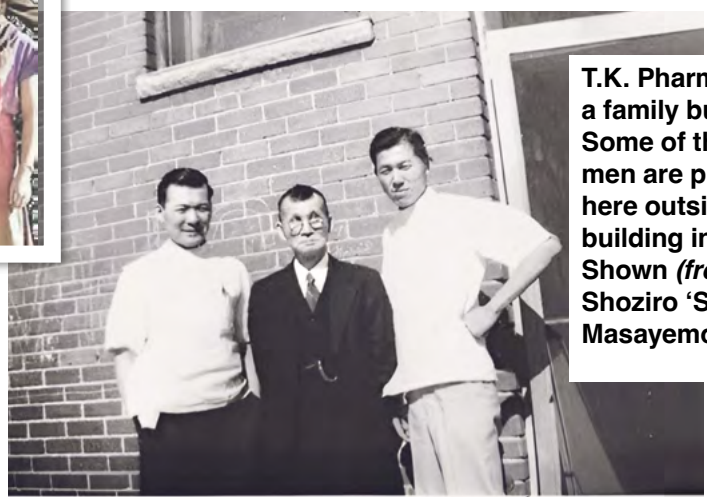
building was a ghost of its former glory. For seven years, it stood empty. In its last identity as a deli before the facelift, the building saw its doors and windows barricaded with iron security bars. Inside, filtered sunlight danced off the raised patterns of the tin ceiling tile. In the dilapidated walls lived a unique collection of letters that showed the humanity of the average person in camp.

"It's people in camp writing to an actual Japanese American-owned pharmacy requesting things," said Caitlin Oiyee Coon, archives director at Densho. "They could have ordered the same things from Sears, but it was a deliberate decision to order from T.K."

In those days, neighborhood pharmacies functioned as places of convenience — a one-stop shop for medicine, soap and maybe even a comic book or a model airplane kit. T.K. Pharmacy was one of those classic spots with a soda jerk counter, jukeboxes and a kitchen in case one needed a bowl of chili, too.

Denver was outside the military exclusion zone during WWII, so the Japanese American-owned and -operated pharmacy continued to serve its neighborhood. For Japanese Americans during this time, the camp version of a drugstore run was to write to T.K. Pharmacy.

From Tule Lake in 1943 came a request for a bottle of "Kola-Black" hair dye, a popular demand. Someone in Santa Fe, N.M., requested hay fever medication. Many were orders for sake and everyday supplies like notebooks and film.



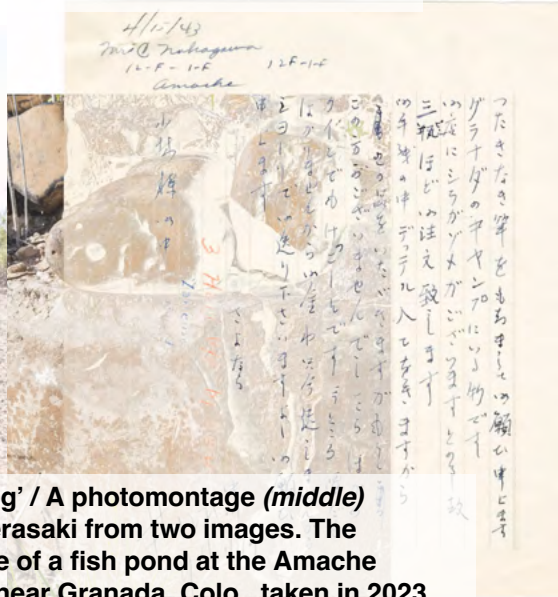
T.K. Pharmacy was a family business. Some of the Terasaki men are pictured here outside the building in 1944. Shown (from left) are Shoziro 'Saaj,' father Masayemon and Tak.



**'I saw my wife . . .'** / A photomontage created by Dean K. Terasaki from two images. The photograph is a building footer at Arizona's Gila River Concentration Camp, taken in 1997. The other is a 1943 letter written from Ward D of the community hospital of the Rivers camp. The letter appears to be a request for skin lotion.



**'Treat Me to Something'** / A photomontage (middle) created by Dean K. Terasaki from two images. The photograph is the side of a fish pond at the Amache Concentration Camp near Granada, Colo., taken in 2023. The other is a 1943 letter written by C. Nakagawa from Building 1, Block 12 of the Amache camp. The letter is a request for hair dye.



**'Of the Three Kayas'** / A photomontage created by Dean K. Terasaki from two images. The photograph is a detail of the monument for the 100th/442nd/MIS at the Rohwer Concentration Camp near McGehee, Ark., taken in 2023. The other is a 1943 letter requesting for athlete's foot medication and Ru-Ex compound for rheumatic arthritis.

The letters represent a snapshot of life under extraordinary circumstances. Sometimes, the requests were for a semblance of normalcy, like sake to commemorate a birthday or wedding. Other times, they were reminders of the cruelty of the human condition during wartime.

Some letters are so personal that Densho redacted names, especially if the correspondences had medical-related information. In a June 6, 1943, letter from Amache, someone wrote to T.K. Pharmacy asking what medication could induce an abortion.

"You can hear people speaking in the letters," said Megan Undeberg, a clinical pharmacist and associate professor of pharmacotherapy at Washington State University, who studied the collection while it was being digitized at Densho. It's a passion project, Underberg said in a video interview, that grew from her interest in WWII history. She researched and interviewed people associated with T.K. Pharmacy. What's a five-hour drive to Densho headquarters in Seattle, said Undeberg with a lilting laugh, if that meant she could hold the letters?

The letters chart the different phases of the forced evacuation and incarceration, including the first months when the infrastructure wasn't in place yet to accommodate the volume of families. One letter tersely asked for medical treatment for their children's pinworm infections. To a pharmacist like Undeberg, this makes sense. Assembly center and camp conditions were notoriously inhospitable, and sanitation was poor.

"It's not their fault," said Undeberg. "They're not dirty or unclean or unkempt, but the facilities themselves are this way. Where were the health facilities within the camps?"

Consider this: What may it have felt like to write to a pharmacist in Denver to get deworming medication for ailing children? Undeberg pauses under the weight of this thought. "They had nothing."

**Desperation Between the Lines**

Most letters have exquisite penmanship and the politeness of a bygone era. Because they were mainly Issei writing, many of the letters were written in Japanese. Naoko Tanabe is helping Densho translate the letters written in Japanese. To date, 60 of the correspondences have been translated to English.

"You can kind of feel this kind of desperation," said Tanabe. "It's a little depressing to translate those letters one after another."

The wording of the letters is often straightforward: Please send supplies. But the subtext of desperation lies in the politeness and the almost wistful mentions of upcoming holidays.

"You can tell that none of these things are available for them," said Tanabe.

An April 19, 1943, letter from

California urged T.K. Pharmacy employees to "please don't send back my check. Send me anything."

**Businessman or Hero?**

T.K. Pharmacy's slogan was a no-frills decree of what the company offered: "cut-rate drugs, liquor, prescriptions."

After the discovery, the widely accepted narrative described how a Japanese American pharmacist provided much-needed assistance to the community of incarcerated Japanese Americans. To advertise its services to the incarcerated Japanese Americans, T.K. Pharmacy placed advertisements in Japanese American newspapers like the *Colorado Times* and *Rocky Shimpō*, said Coon.

In a March 17, 1943, letter to a hair dye manufacturing company, Tak wrote that because T.K. Pharmacy was "one of the few if not the only store left in the country operated by Japanese Americans," it was getting "flooded" with requests.

"He was still a very shrewd businessman," said Undeberg. "He didn't give the stuff away for free."

An alternate narrative emerged, painting T.K. Pharmacy as using direct advertisement to target a vulnerable population.

"I don't get that sense," said Undeberg. "I really don't."

Along with pharmaceuticals and liquor, T.K. Pharmacy provided incarcerated with radios, chewing gum, lipstick, face powder and allergy tablets. These sundry items didn't make a substantial medical impact, but likely positively affected emotional and psychological health. When the world turned away, someone outside the evacuation zone cared enough to send comfort items.

"He was a lifeline," said Undeberg about Tak.

**Mystery in the Wall**

Somebody hid the letters in the wall like a time capsule. It's like someone knew the collection would be worth talking about someday. Except Tak never spoke of the letters or the services T.K. Pharmacy offered

to the Japanese American community during WWII, not during or even after redress. No one talked about what was hidden.

The absence of all primary sources makes solving a mystery like this challenging. When family history is deliberately left untold, those left behind must process the blank spaces.

"I don't think that it was like an intentional 'I'm going to hide these records in the wall' situation," said Coon. As an archivist, she's heard of people who have stuffed everyday objects in walls for insulation — a pragmatic solution that can become romanticized later when the items are discovered.

"Everybody wants it to be super cool like, 'Oh, they're going to get raided, so they hid these in there,'" said Coon. "But I don't think that is the case."

The silence may be because it wasn't a big deal.

"I don't think that he was concealing anything," said Kiku Terasaki, Tak's oldest daughter. "I think that it simply didn't come up. I think that they simply moved on with their lives."

If Tak were still with us, said Kiku, 76, of Southern California, he would say the letters represented a sad commentary on the role he had to play during WWII.

"But that he was glad to do it," Kiku affirmed.

**Family Business**

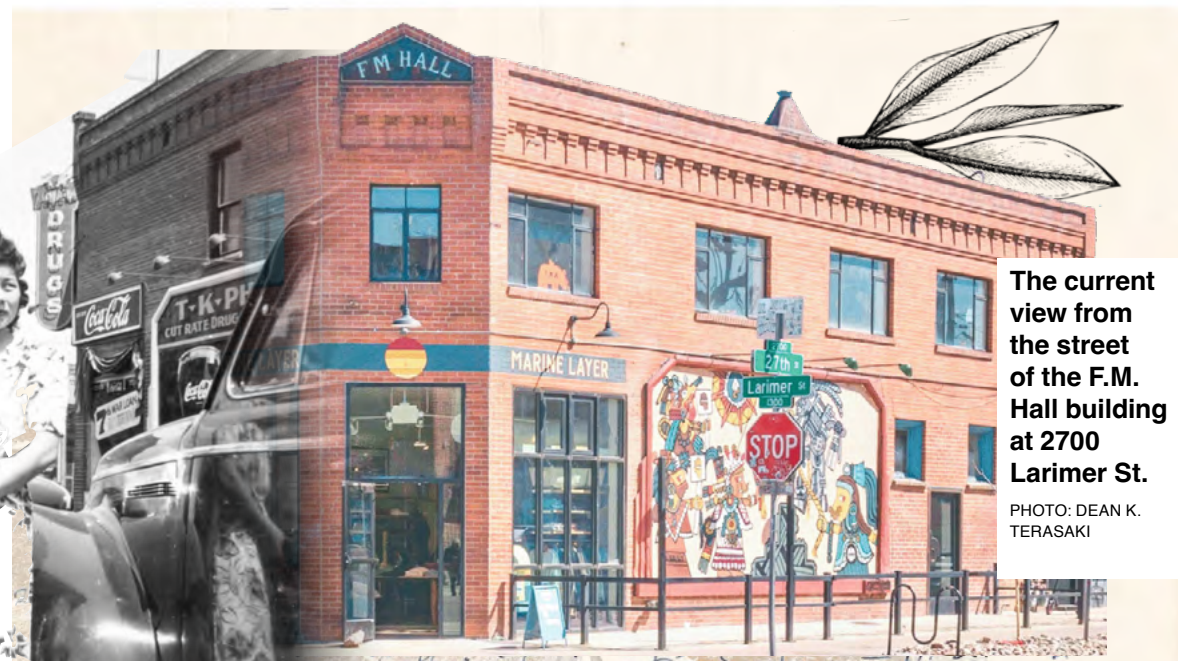
Yutaka "Tak" Terasaki was a striking-looking young Nisei with a shock of black hair. He stood six feet tall, an attribute he said in a 2001 interview he credits to the consumption of cod liver oil. Among the six Terasaki siblings, Tak was the oldest boy. Four of the siblings became pharmacists.

Before WWII, Larimer Street bustled with life.

**» See WALL on page 12**

**Fujiko Narahara stands in front of T.K. Pharmacy.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAVID FUJIOKA



**The current view from the street of the F.M. Hall building at 2700 Larimer St.**

PHOTO: DEAN K. TERASAKI



Orange County queens shine at the first Miss Orange County Japanese American Queens Reunion in 65 years. Queens from former OC queen sponsors, the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670 and the Suburban Optimist Club of Buena Park, join current sponsor the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council to hold the first gathering. Pictured at the reunion are (back row, from left) Michelle Ito Hatsushi (2005), Christine Kimoto Tanaka (2007), Dominique Mashburn (2014), Kaitlin Hara (2017), Alice Amano (2018), Kaitlyn Emiko Chu (2023), (third row, from left) Frances Shima Matsumoto (1981), Shannon Suzuki Kelliher (1991), Nicole Inouye (1998), Emily Folick Koko (2012), Megan Ono (2016) and Kristine Yada (2022), (second row, from left) James Nakamura (commander, Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670), Kent Suzuki (treasurer, Suburban Optimist Club of Buena Park), Patti Hirahara (1974), Melissa Nishimura Maekawa (2011) and baby, Janelle Hamabata (1997), Denise Higuchi Bjorn (1990), Sandra Fukushima Ninomiya (1989), Laura Higashi (2013), Stephanie Iwamasa Ichinose (1994), Judean Karimoto Sakimoto (1980), Gwen Okumura Martino (1969), (front row, from left) Carol Nishizu Matsuoka (1962), Gail Konishi Shibayama (1970), Doris Reiko Fujino Pultz (1960), Dianne Kubota Hamano (1961), Judy Sugita de Queiroz (special guest Nisei Week Queen 1953), Mary Murai Nakayama (first Miss Orange County Queen 1958), Joanna Ono Castillo (1976) and Susan High (1975).

PHOTO: COURTESY OF TOYO MIYATAKE STUDIO

## A LEGACY FIT FOR A QUEEN

The first Miss Orange County Japanese American Queens reunion and luncheon is held to celebrate a unique sisterhood.

By Dominique Mashburn,  
JACL National VP of Membership

The feeling of entering the OCBC Social Hall was as if it were a long-awaited family reunion that evoked peace and calm within me. It was picturesque in that everyone greeted each other, even if they didn't know each other prior, with grace and gratitude. The energy was welcoming, and the queens of years past modeled to the newer generation of Miss OCJA's what it truly means to be rooted in community. The day was effortless as an attendee, but it was a long journey to have the event come to fruition over the past 11 months, led by none other than

1974 Queen Patti Hirahara.

Hirahara, the first Miss Suburban Optimist Queen in 1974, wanted to have all the queens remembered for inclusion in the Orange County Japanese American Legacy Time Capsule that will be buried at the Orange County Japanese Garden and Teahouse at the Orange County Civic Center.

Her initial search found there was no official information about these past Orange County queens.

With no contact information for many of the early queens, Hirahara asked Dianne Kubota Hamano (the first Miss Orange County to become Nisei Week Queen in 1961), Christine Kimoto Tanaka, Sandra Fukushima Ninomiya, Dulcie Ogi

Kawata, Sandra Toshiyuki and Diana Ono for leads on how to find the missing queens.

The group then started to inquire to see how many queens would be interested in participating in a reunion.

The response was tremendous, and, out of the 53 living queens, 30 assembled for the first Miss Orange County Japanese American Queens Reunion at the Orange County Buddhist Church Social Hall on Sept. 9.

"The idea for this reunion came about since I was looking to compile a list of Orange County queens for the



Orange County Japanese American History Time Capsule project, which I am working on. I wanted to ensure that all the Orange County queen's history would be included. When I was talking with Dianne Kubota Hamano, she said, 'We have never had an Orange County Queens Reunion.' This sounded like an interesting idea, and since there was not an official list of all the queens, I started to find them with the help of Dianne, Christine Tanaka, Diana Ono and other OC queens. We were fortunate to find all of them, and then we started inquiring about their interest. The idea was well-received, and this reunion became a reality 65 years later," said Hirahara.

Among the 30 queens in attendance were the first Miss Orange County VFW Queen 1958 Mary Murai Nakayama and VFW queens Doris Reiko Fujino Pultz (1960), Dianne Kubota Hamano (1961), Carol Nishizu Matsuoka (1962), Gwen Okumura Martino (1969) and Gail Konishi Shibayama (1970), along

with Post Commander James Nakamura of the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670. Nakamura was in awe of the gathering and reiterated that this event "brings the community together, and it was inspiring to be surrounded by leaders of the community."

Serving as event MCs were Megan Ono and Kaitlin Hara, who welcomed attendees as well as special guest Judy Sugita de Queiroz, who was a resident of Orange County when she was selected Nisei Week queen in 1953, as bento lunches were served. In attendance to capture the momentous day was Alan Miyatake of Toyo Miyatake Studio in San Gabriel, Calif. Miyatake has taken photographs for Nisei Week for 50 years and said that "attending the event reinforces that the Queen's Program works and is going strong."

A special "In Remembrance" table was on display in memory of past VFW Miss Orange County Queens Carol Kunitsugu Itatani (1965) and Beverly Hayashida Chien (1968). Scrapbooks from 1961 Queen Dianne Kubota Hamano and 1974 Queen Patti Hirahara were on display as well.



VFW Queen 1969 Gwen Okumura Martino addresses the Miss Orange County Queens that attended the reunion.

PHOTO: PATTI HIRAHARA



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➤ The room was decorated in pink, gold and white with gold glitter crown centerpieces with fresh flowers and seating place cards with rose gold crown bases. A printed program was prepared in addition to a handout featuring the 55 Miss Orange County queens through the years. Each queen was given a gold crown with a rhinestone pin to wear at future Orange County events to signify them as a Miss OCJA Queen, in addition to receiving a personalized pink and gold pen as a souvenir of this first Queen's reunion as a gift from the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670.

A special highlight of the event was having a slideshow of all the past queens and then having each queen stand up and personally introduce themselves to the group, a special sisterhood that will forever bond us.

"I was very touched to be invited to be here at the first reunion because it's so special that we're able to continue this tradition and have this shared experience that we can all connect over," said Kaitlyn Chu. "The legacy that stretches back 65 years was alive in every heartfelt conversation and shared memory. This event, born out of the dedication of trailblazer Patti Hirahara, was a full-circle moment for all of us. It's incredible to think that there was once no official information about these past queens, and now, we stand together as a testament to the strength and resilience of Orange County's Japanese American community."

Over a span of 65 years, three Orange County organizations have sponsored 55 Miss Orange County Japanese American Queen candidates for the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. In 1958, the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670 decided to sponsor a Miss Orange County Nisei Queen in the Nisei Week Japanese Festival in Little Tokyo. It sponsored a total of 13 queens, which ended in 1970.

Suburban Optimists sponsored a

total of nine queen candidates beginning in 1974, after a three-year gap. They were Hirahara (1974), Susan High (1975), Joanne Ono (1976), Karen Takeguma (1977), Jaime Kajiki (1978), Karen Karasawa (1979), Judean Karimoto (1980), Frances Shima (1981) and Barbara Vollmer (1982). It decided to end its sponsorship in 1982.

There was a six-year gap from 1983-88. But in 1989, the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council, through its member affiliates, sponsored a total of 33 candidates through 2023, with 2020 and 2021 being open due to the Covid pandemic. Its active participation has allowed young women to raise awareness on several Japanese American community platforms and represent Orange County in many Japanese American events in Southern California.

They are Sandra Fukushima (1989), Denise Higuchi (1990), Shannon Suzuki (1991), Staci Hashimoto (1992), Kimberly Stapchuk (1993), Stephanie Iwamasa (1994), Maki Ichiroku (1995), Maggie Fukumoto (1996), Janelle Hamabata (1997), Nicole A. Inouye (1998), C. Traci Murase (1999), Erin Nomura (2000), Norie Nakase (2001), Kimberly Hayashi (2002), Kristi Higa (2003), Heather Nagano (2004), Michelle Ito (2005), Lisa Shimakuro (2006), Christine Kimoto (2007), Marissa Ishii (2008), Whitney Itano (2009), Christy Sakamoto (2010), Melissa Nishimura (2011), Emily Folick (2012), Laura Higashi (2013), Dominique Mashburn (2014), Sara Hutter (2015), Megan Ono (2016), Kaitlin Hara (2017), Alice Amano (2018), Kara Ito (2019), Kristine Yada (2022) and Kaitlyn Emiko Chu (2023).

The first Nisei Week Japanese Festival in 1934 was organized as a marketing strategy to celebrate the achievements of the Japanese American community and bring in outside shoppers to the struggling businesses in the Downtown Little Tokyo area of Los Angeles.

For about 20 years, the Queen selection process involved the community voting with tickets earned



Scrapbooks from VFW Queens 1961 Dianne Kubota Hamano and 1962 Carol Nishizu Matsuoka show what life was like for the queens over 60 years ago.

through money spent at Little Tokyo merchants. While it did help to bring new monies spent in Little Tokyo, the queen selection process was changed to a community organization-sponsored system in 1955. Prior to 1955, Judy Sugita, of Orange County, was selected Nisei Week Queen in 1953 under the old judging system. Of the 55 Miss Orange County queens, 53 queens are still living, with Orange County having 11 Nisei Week Queens, seven First Runners-Up and six Miss Tomodachi Winners.

The Queens Reunion was sponsored by the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670, the Suburban Optimist Club of Buena Park and the Orange County Nikkei Coordinating Council, with special thanks to Hirahara and Tanaka for coordinating the event, Jesse James of the OCNCC for his support, Hamano and Patti Yoshihara for the floral arrangements and the OCBC Queen Mothers Folick, Nancy Hara, Amy Iwamasa, Penny Nishimura, Ono, Joyce Sakamoto and Joyce Yada for coordinating the room in addition to preparing desserts and beverages for the event.

As we look to the future, we're excited to announce that there will be future Miss OCJA reunions starting next year. The spirit of Orange County is alive and strong, and we're thankful for the trailblazers who have paved the way for the next generation to carry on this remarkable legacy. Together, we will continue to celebrate our community, our connections, and the enduring bond that makes us Miss Orange County Japanese American Queens. ■

**TADAIMA » continued from page 4**

For the vast majority of us in the Japanese American community whose families were displaced as a result of WWII, we have struggled across generations to maintain a sense of community. Those of us who grew up in regions of the country that were isolated from the West Coast Nikkei strongholds know that community spaces are few and far between.

I have met many people living in the East Coast and Midwest who cited Tadaima as their first real connection to the broader Japanese American community. Thanks to this groundbreaking platform, we have

an opportunity to continue building together despite the geographical distance that has kept us apart for generations following the displacement our community experienced during and after WWII.

Each one of our audience members helps to create the community environment that has made these past few years so special. Whether you are returning to us from past years, or joining us for the first time — *Okaeri* — welcome home.

To view the full film program, visit: [www.jampilgrimages.com/films-2023](http://www.jampilgrimages.com/films-2023).

**MOONSHOT » continued from page 5**

Echoing what Burroughs had expressed in her remarks at the May gala, that JANM's founders had wanted it to "stand as a beacon of civil rights," Fujioka said, "We see this facility as a beacon and also a strong voice for social justice for equity and the preservation of democracy."

For Fujioka, "Our Promise" is also an acknowledgement that maintaining the status quo was akin to falling behind. "I believe any institution, if you merely keep the status quo, you're not growing with what's happening in the outside world . . . especially in the area of technology."

Burroughs concurred, adding that "using smart technology is going to be critically important for us going forward."

For Burroughs and Fujioka, manifesting "Our Promise" will be the next step in what they believe the museum's founders were aiming for back in 1985.

"Our goal is to make sure our story resonates with everyone in all communities," Fujioka said.

(To view the video of the Aug. 5, 2023, "Our Promise" campaign, visit [tinyurl.com/lythnfpf5](http://tinyurl.com/lythnfpf5). To learn more about JANM's "Our Promise," visit [janm.org/give/our-promise](http://janm.org/give/our-promise).)



Mary Murai Nakayama, the first Miss Orange County Queen 1958, representing the Kazuo Masuda Memorial VFW Post 3670, shares stories with current reigning 2023 Miss Orange County and Nisei Week Queen Kaitlyn Emiko Chu.

PHOTOS: PATTI HIRAHARA



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A NATIONAL GUIDE TO NOTABLE COMMUNITY EVENTS

# CALENDAR

## NATIONAL

**Irei — A National Monument for the WWII Japanese American Incarceration**  
Los Angeles, CA  
JANM

100 N. Central Ave.

The *Ireichō* contains the first comprehensive listing of more than 125,000 persons of Japanese ancestry who were forcibly incarcerated during World War II. Visitors can now view the book and leave a special *hanko* (stamp/seal) for each person in the monument as a way to honor those incarcerated. The project's online archive is now searchable alphabetically or by camp.

**Info:** Visit [ireizo.com](https://ireizo.com) for more information and [janm.org](https://janm.org).

## NCWNP

**Concert: San Jose Taiko Celebration — 50 and Beyond**  
San Jose, CA

Oct. 14; 2 p.m. and 7:30 p.m.

California Theatre

345 S. 1st St.

**Price:** Ticket Prices Vary

This 50th anniversary concert will feature a medley of San Jose taiko songs from the past and present, including classics and some new favorites, as well as a preview of the art/work that's ahead. The musicians will tell their story and the story of Japanese/Asian Americans in the Silicon Valley through their music.

**Info:** Visit <https://taiko.org/50th>.

**'Benign Neglect: Historic Japanese American Bonsai' by Takeshi Moro**  
San Francisco, CA  
Thru Oct. 22

Military Intelligence Service Historic Learning Center

640 Mason St.

**Info:** Open on Weekends Noon-5 p.m.; General Admission \$10; Veterans and Children Under 12 Free

This special photo exhibit by artist/photographer Takeshi Moro features photographs from his new book "Benign Neglect: Historic Japanese American Bonsai." The book contains 60 bonsai photographs that were cultivated by Issei and Kibei Japanese Americans that were started after the Japanese Americans returned from WWII American concentration camps.

**Info:** Visit [njahs.org](https://njahs.org).

**Japantown Halloween Carnival**  
San Francisco, CA  
Oct. 27; 6-8 p.m.

JCCNC  
1840 Sutter St.

**Price:** General Admission \$7

The JCCNC and Japanese Community Youth Council present this Halloween carnival that will feature games, prizes, crafts, a haunted hallway, bounce house, cultural performances and much more for the entire family. Prizes will be given for various costume categories, so come dressed in your Halloween best!

**Info:** Visit [jccnc.org](https://jccnc.org).

**'Takashi Murakami: Unfamiliar People — Swelling of Monsterized Human Ego'**

San Francisco, CA

Thru Feb. 12, 2024

Asian Art Museum

200 Larkin St.

**Price:** Museum Admission

Takashi Murakami's first solo exhibition in San Francisco is one that features the artist's signature combination of fun, spectacle and playful social commentary. In vibrantly colored paintings and sculptures, Murakami uses monsters to embody the hopes and fears of the digital age.

**Info:** Visit [exhibitions/asianart.org/exhibitions/takashi-murakami-monsterized/](https://exhibitions/asianart.org/exhibitions/takashi-murakami-monsterized/).

## PSW

**Poston Pilgrimage**

Parker, AZ

Oct. 13-14

BlueWater Resort and Casino and Poston Site

11300 Resort Dr.

**Price:** Registration Now Open

The weekend's activities, organized by the Poston Community Alliance, will include a newly created Poston exhibit housed within the Museum of the Colorado River Indian Tribe, pilgrimage, lunch, banquet and workshops featuring Katie Nuss, Stamp Our Stories' Wayne Osako, Janice Munemitsu, Nancy Ukai, Shane Sato, Reid Nishikawa and Kathy Nakagawa.

**Info:** Visit [postonpreservation.org](https://postonpreservation.org).

**Music for Maui Benefit Concert**

Aliso Viejo, CA

Oct. 22; 3 p.m.

Soka Performing Arts Center

Concert Hall

1 University Dr.

**Price:** All Proceeds Support Wildlife Relief Efforts on Maui Through a Partnership With the American Red Cross  
Music for Maui is a student-led fund-

raiser, spearheaded by Sydney Kiyomi Malone, to raise money to support wildfire relief efforts on Maui. The concert will feature students and professional singers, musicians and dancers from local Orange County high schools, the Hawaiian ensemble Tropical Blue and Le Polynesia dance center. All proceeds will be donated to Maui Strong Fund.

**Info:** For more information and to donate, visit [music4maui.org](https://music4maui.org).

**Grand Opening of MISE**

Los Angeles, CA

Oct. 28 and Oct. 29; 11 a.m.-5 p.m.

Toshizo Watanabe Exhibition Center

244 S. San Pedro St.

The Toshizo Watanabe Exhibition Center on the Plaza has been transformed to showcase exquisite, artisanal products from Tsubamesanjo, Niigata prefecture. Elegant metal works that range from handmade sake and beer cups to Japanese knives forged by legendary craftsmen will be featured.

**Info:** Visit [jacc.org](https://jacc.org).

**Tea Time & Shamisen Mini Concert**  
Carson, CA

Oct. 28; 11-12:30 p.m.

California State University, Dominguez Hills

Loker Student Union

1000 E. Victoria St.

**Price:** Free; Registration Required

The ever-popular "Tea Time" Japanese conversation tables at CSUDH are back and this time will feature a performance by award-winning Shamisen player Mike Penny. All Japanese language skill levels are welcome, as conversations will be held that talk about all things Japan and Japanese culture.

**Info:** To register, visit <https://events.r20.constantcontact.com/register/event?reg?oeidk=a07ejyx4ad5a8dac7a0&oseq=&c=&ch=>.

**Premiere Screening of 'The Blue Jay'**

Los Angeles, CA

Oct. 29; 3 p.m.

JANM

Tateuchi Democracy Theater

100 N. Central Ave.

**Price:** Free

Writer/director/producer Marlene Shigekawa will screen her short live-action Japanese American incarceration film "The Blue Jay," a film that depicts how her grandfather created wooden bird carvings at the Poston Incarceration Camp during WWII on the Colorado River Indian Tribes reservation. The blue jay carving, in particular, serves as a visual metaphor in her film that also follows an unlikely friendship. Lee Shore and

Ajuawak Kapashesit star. Following the screening, there will be a Q & A discussion with the director and actors, as well as a reception.

**Info:** For more information and to register, visit <https://tinyurl.com/2y-brw9mt>.

## PNW

**'A Sense of Place: The Art of George Tsutakawa'**

Portland, OR

Sept. 7-Dec. 31

Japanese American Museum of Oregon

411 N.W. Flanders St.

**Price:** Museum Admission

For the first time, artist George Tsutakawa's work will be on exhibit in Oregon thanks to a collaboration between JAMO and the Tsutakawa family. The exhibit will include examples of the artist's work in watercolor, sumi, metal sculpture and fountain design. Tsutakawa's public works can be found in cities across the U.S., Canada and Japan. An exhibition highlight is a large model for Fountain of Wisdom, Tsutakawa's first fountain sculpture, created in 1960 for the Seattle Public Library.

**Info:** Visit [www.jamo.org](https://www.jamo.org).

**'Parallel Barbed Wire' Exhibit**

Powell, WY

Now Open

Heart Mountain Interpretive Center

1539 Road 19

This new exhibit features the remarkable stories of Heart Mountain incarceree Clarence Matsumura and Holocaust survivor Solly Ganor. Matsumura was incarcerated along with his family at Heart Mountain during WWII, and Ganor was a child living in Lithuania before the Nazi invasion forced him and his family into a Jewish ghetto and then a forced-labor camp in Bavaria. Matsumura served in the 522nd Field Artillery Battalion and rescued Ganor. The exhibit details their remarkable friendship throughout their lives.

**Info:** Visit [www.heartmountain.org/exhibit-information-and-further-details](https://www.heartmountain.org/exhibit-information-and-further-details).

## MDC

**Appreciation vs. Appropriation Series:**

**Discussion 3 With Atsushi Futatsuya**

Sept. 9; 7 p.m.

Virtual Event Webinar

**Price:** Free

The Twin Cities JACL Social Justice Committee presents this continuous discussion on cultural ownership that is structured as a series of one-on-one interviews with guests speaking from their own perspectives rather than attempting to speak for entire communities or cultures. This talk will feature Atsushi Futatsuya, who was born into

a family of Sashiko artisans in Gifu Prefecture, Japan. He shares stories and techniques about Sashiko to a wide audience through his website, Sashi. Co, and Instagram. In teaching Sashiko, Futatsuya highlights the importance of understanding Japanese culture and language.

**Info:** Visit <https://www.tcjacl.org/events/cultural-appreciation-discussion-series/>.

## EDC

**Book Talk: 'Everything I Learned, I Learned in a Chinese Restaurant'**  
Cambridge, MA

Oct. 22; 6 p.m.

Porter Square Books

25 White St.

**Price:** Free

Detroit in the 1980s was a volatile place to live, but Chung's Cantonese Cuisine was a safe haven where anyone could sit down for a warm, home-cooked meal. This was where filmmaker and activist Curtis Chin came of age and where he learned to embrace his identity and navigated the divided city's spiraling misfortunes and where he realized just how much he had to offer to the world, his beloved family and to himself.

**Info:** Visit <https://www.portersquarebooks.com/event/curtis-chin-author-everything-i-learned-i-learned-chinese-restaurant>.

**'Toshiko Takaazu: Shaping Abstraction' Exhibit**

Boston, MA

Thru September 2024

Museum of Fine Arts

465 Huntington Ave.

**Price:** Museum Admission

Toshiko Takaazu was a masterful artist best known for her ceramic sculptures, which she treated as abstract paintings. This exhibit takes inspiration from her gestural style, distinctive palettes and complex layering of glazes that trace her development from potter to multimedia installation artist.

**Info:** Visit <https://www.mfa.org/exhibition/toshiko-takaazu-shaping-abstraction>.

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# In MEMORIAM

**Aratani, Roy Masashi, 80**, Hilo, HI, May 6.



**Fujimori, Miyoko, 90**, Gardena, CA, May 2; she is survived by her husband, James; children, Michael (Yuriko) Fujimori, Daniel (Maryse) Fujimori, Brian (Diane) Fujimori and Nancie (John) Fukushima; she is also survived by many nieces, nephews and cousins; gc: 7; ggc: 1.

**Fujimoto, Crystine Yuki, 65**, Gillette, WY, March 6.

**Fukushima, Irene Yuriko, 90**, Fountain Valley, CA, June 15; she was predeceased by her husband, Shigeo; son, Newton; she is survived by her daughter, Myra (Daniel) Kotani; she is also survived by nieces, nephews and other relatives.

**Fukuchi, Mildred, 83**, San Diego, CA, April 2.

**Furutani, Alan Den, 71**, Gardena, CA, Aug. 24; he is survived by his wife, Marsha; brothers, Norman (Ginny), Warren (Lisa) and Stony (Janet); he is also survived by nieces and nephew.



**Hayashi, Helen Yaeko, 92**, Honolulu, HI, May 6; she was predeceased by her husband, Gilbert; she is survived by her children, Lori and Garret; gc: 3.

**Irino, Akimi, 93**, Morgan Hill, CA, March 19; veteran, Army, Korean War (Bronze Star); B.A., San Jose State University, accounting; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Poston WRA Center in AZ; he is survived by his wife, Nellie; children, Mike, Lorraine and Jayne (Mitch); sister, Setsuko Yamanishi; he is also survived by many nieces and nephews; gc: 5.

**Ishida, Glen Keiso, 93**, Gardena, CA, May 8; he was predeceased by his wife, Setsuko; he is survived by his children, Daryl (Terri) Ishida, Jo Ann (Craig) Kozawa and Carol Ann (David) Moriguchi; sisters, Amy Matsumoto and Jean Miyahira; gc: 5.



**Kashiwagi, Isamu, 96**, Sacramento, CA, March 16; veteran, Army (WWII), MIS; his activities included volunteering with the Sacramento Youth Band, the Wakayama Kenjin-Kai and the Florin JAACL chapter; he was predeceased by his wife, Betty (Fujimoto) Kashiwagi; their daughter, Mary Ann; and brothers, William, Paul, Mas and George; he is survived by his children, David, Sandra and Wesley; and sister, Natsuko; gc: 2; ggc: 3.

**Lowe, Marc Darius, 52**, Aug. 16; he is survived by his wife, Jaclyn; daughter, Parker; sister, Lindsay; and parents, Wayne and Carole Takagaki Lowe.

**Matsumoto, Rona Eiko, 52**, Aiea, HI, March 27.

**Miyamoto, Bruce, 78**, Garden Grove, CA, June 21; he is survived by his brother, Dennis (Marilyn) Miyamoto; a nephew, a grandnephew, cousins and other relatives.

**Nakagawa, Gary, 60**, Hilo, HI, March 11 March 11.



**Nerio, Art, 98**, Huntington Beach, CA, June 2; during WWII, his family and he were incarcerated at the Rohwer WRA Center in AR; he was predeceased by his wife, Lily Yuriko; he is survived by his 4 children; gc: 3.

**Oka, Terumasa 'Ted,' 96**, Carson, CA, June 18; veteran, Army (Korean War) activities included Dai Ichi Bonsai Kai and the California Bonsai Society; he was predeceased by his wife, Peggy Toshie; brothers, Hajime, Isao, Masao, Don Chikara, Takeo, Teiji and Dan Hidekazu; he is survived by his son, Marc; son-in-law, JP.



**Oto, Mieko Choko, 99**, Sacramento, CA, April 15; she was predeceased by her husband, Toshio; she is survived by her children, Allan, Pam and Debra, gc: 5; ggc: 6.

**Sakata, Marjorie, 95**, Honolulu, HI, May 8.

**Sasaki, Edith, 81**, San Jose, CA, May 13; B.A., San Jose State University (religious studies); M.A., Graduate Theological Union (Buddhism); she is survived by her husband, Henry Sasaki; children, Melina (Duane) Takahashi, Walter (Eileen) Sasaki and Li (Thanatporn) Sasaki; gc: 2.

**Shigezane, Hideko Nancy, 82**, Whittier, CA, June 3; she is survived by her husband, Minoru; their son, Randy; brother, Peter (Beverly) Shintaku; sister-in-law, Yuri Fukui; and by many nieces, nephews and other relatives.

**Shimizu, Tomio, 93**, Sacramento, CA, June 30.

**Suminaga, Roy Tadashi, 80**, Torrance, CA, May 27; he was predeceased by his son, Roy Vincent Suminaga; he is survived by his wife, Kimiye; daughters, Darlyn (Robert) Uyeki and Lynda (Dean) Akiyama; brother, Don (Colleen) Suminaga; sister-in-law, Kiyoko (Tom) Sasaki; he is also survived by nieces, nephews and other extended family members; gc: 4.



**Tani, Mitsuye, 91**, Gilroy, CA, May 21; she was predeceased by her husband, Dick Tani; siblings, Jim Shinagawa; Tsutayo (Tuck) Kamine and Helen (Paul) Tokashiki; she is survived by her son, Ricky; sister, Hiromi (Bob) Sakai; sister-in-law, Kazuko Shinagawa; she is also survived by many nieces and nephews.

**Tomita, Misao, 97**, Los Angeles, CA, Sept. 2; she was predeceased by her husband, Nagao John; she is survived by her children, Stephen (Connie) Tomita and Cindy (Kenji) Oda; gc: 3.

**White, Florence Michiko, 82**, Lincolnwood, IL, July 21; she was predeceased by her husband, Michael; and siblings, Ernie and Evelyn.



**Yama, Shizuko, 102**, DeSoto, KS, Sept. 7.

**Yamada, Allen, 87**, Honolulu, HI, Jan. 7.

**Yamashiroya, Herbert, 92**, Chicago, IL, July 17; veteran, Army; B.A., University of Hawaii (bacteriology); Master's and Ph.D., University of Illinois College of Medicine (microbiology); activities included Na Kupuna Ukulele Club of Chicago and Chicago Nisei Post 1183 American Legion; he was predeceased by his siblings, Tracy Yamashiroya, Jennie Fujimoto and Gladys Naito; he is survived by his wife, Kiyoka; children, Gail Y. (James) Paskind, Eliot (Kathleen), Eric (Carmen) and Gary (Aleksandra); siblings, Roy, Victor, Jerry, Stanley, Helen Sugimoto and Betty Yonemori; gc: 5.

**Yoshimura, Julianne Sachiko, 25**, Montebello, CA, Aug. 10; she is survived by her parents, Dan and Eileen Yoshimura; sister, Jennifer (Andrew) Hyles; she is also survived by a niece and many other relatives.

**Yoshida, Harry, 99**, Lakeview, OH, Aug. 30.

**PLACE A TRIBUTE**  
 'In Memoriam' is a free listing that appears on a limited, space-available basis. Tributes honor your loved ones with text and photos and appear in a timely manner at the rate of \$20/ column inch.  
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**WALL » continued from page 7**



**T.K. Pharmacy had a soda jerk and served famous chili. The Narahara sisters are pictured outside of T.K. Pictured (from left) are Shizuko, Fujiko and Emiko, or more commonly known as Pat, Fudge and Em, respectively.**

PHOTO: COURTESY OF DAVID FUJIOKA

“That was the heart of a lot of activity, the crossroads going to north Denver,” said Tak in a transcript of a Nov. 10, 2001, interview with the Oral History Program at California State University, Fullerton.

In 1937, Tak’s brother-in-law, Thomas “Tommy” Kobayashi, started T.K. Pharmacy and helped Tak to earn his pharmacist license. Tak managed the store while Tommy, married to Tak’s older sister, Haruko, ran his medical practice upstairs in the brick building at 2700 Larimer St.

Tak describes a close relationship between him and Tommy in the interview with Art Hansen. Tak and Tommy played baseball together and worked in the same building alongside other Terasaki siblings.

Tommy grew up poor, according to family stories. He also faced his fair share of racism in the Mile High City. After the Pearl Harbor attack, a drunken assailant threatened Tommy outside the pharmacy with a shotgun, said Grant Kobayashi Hinds, his grandson. No one was physically hurt, but the psychological scars ran deep.

Tommy was an expert bridge player and an active member of the local Methodist church. He was also the community’s family doctor, so

strangers would often exclaim that Dr. Kobayashi delivered babies in their families.

For a long while, T.K. Pharmacy was a business that united family members under one roof. But the bonds that got them through the extraordinary circumstances of WWII began to weaken over time. There was an understanding that Tak would put Tommy through medical school, and then Tommy would help Tak get his own store, said Melanie. The plan didn’t work out.

Tak left T.K. Pharmacy in 1965 to start his series of independent pharmacies. He also co-founded the Mile High JACL with Min Yasui.

When the letters were found in 2012, the phone rang in the home of the only living Terasaki in Colorado.

Sam Terasaki, Tak’s youngest sibling, picked up the phone.

**Return to 2700 Larimer St.**

Sam had a wicked sense of humor. He liked to tell the story of meeting his wife, Sara, at 2700 Larimer St., where she worked in Dr. Kobayashi’s office as a nurse. While restocking the shelves, Sam cut his hand. He didn’t fret. He walked upstairs to get a tetanus shot from Dr. Kobayashi. Sara walked in when Sam had his pants around his ankles to get the shot. She liked what she saw,

he often joked.

This story was told again at Sam’s funeral in 2019 and printed in his obituary. He was 94.

Sam, a 100th Battalion veteran and a pharmacist himself, did not know about the letters, said Dean Terasaki, his son, an artist who lives in Phoenix. After WWII, Sam and Sara moved away from the Japanese American community, so Dean’s connection with this part of his family history flickers. That sense of isolation and disconnect bleeds into his art — layers of images melt into each other and break time and space barriers. He blends images of the letters with camp historical markers in a series of photomontages.

In March, Dean, 69, returned to 2700 Larimer St. It is now an upscale apparel boutique with a mood board filled with vintage images of all-American beachgoers. The bricks and bones of the building are the same.

“It was just nice to be in that space,” said Dean.

T.K. Pharmacy was the place of his genesis, where his parents met and later where he ran up and down the aisles while his family worked to supply the local community

with basic needs. He remembers the shelves of familiar and foreign merchandise — trinkets, toys and all the fun things that become a core memory in a young mind.

“When the letters were found, I suddenly realized that this story is really complicated,” said Dean. All the Nisei Terasaki and Kobayashi family members who lived through WWII and may have known about the letters are now gone. No one knows why they were put in the wall.

And before all hope is lost, Tak leaves a kernel of information in the 2001 interview transcript.

Tak told Hansen, the interviewer, that after the war, he suggested that T.K. Pharmacy get remodeled to include a restaurant — what would become the soda jerk counter and booths.

Walls may have been torn down at that point, and the time capsule hidden to await the day when the voices in the letter can be heard. ■

**HELP SOLVE THE MYSTERY**

*We need to crowdsource to solve a mystery of this caliber. Do you have any information on the T.K. Pharmacy letters? Did you or someone you know work at the pharmacy or send orders to the pharmacy? Please email information to [llgrigsby@gmail.com](mailto:llgrigsby@gmail.com).*

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