

Manzanar



ID Card

WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY
WARTIME CIVIL CONTROL ADMINISTRATION
Presidio of San Francisco, California
May 3, 1942

INSTRUCTIONS TO ALL PERSONS OF JAPANESE ANCESTRY

Residential Area:

1. Within the Residential Area, persons of Japanese ancestry shall be permitted to reside only in the first block west of the main entrance, or in the first street, those north of the main street, or in the area of

2. All persons, dated May 3, 1942, all persons from the above area by 12 o'clock noon or earlier after 12 o'clock noon, P. M. T., representative of the Commanding General.

3. If a family, or in case of grave emergency, is affected by this restriction to the above area, or other disposition of area lands, including public, state, educational and private.

4. Do not enter any residence.

5. Do not enter any residence unless you have a valid permit to enter, issued by the War Relocation Authority, dated May 3, 1942, or thereafter.





In 1942 the United States Government ordered over 110,000 men, women, and children to leave their homes and detained them in remote, military-style camps. Two-thirds of them were born in America. Not one was convicted of espionage or sabotage.

In this booklet, you will read the story of a person who lived this history, in his or her own words.

GEORGE IZUMI

Family # 2711

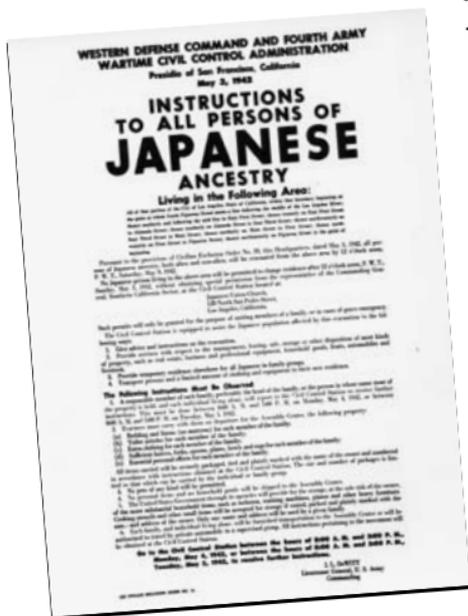
Camp: Manzanar, CA

Address: 16-4-3

My dad came here in the early 1900's. This was my mother's second marriage. My mother's first husband was killed in a hay accident. She had two children so I had one step brother and one step sister. She was born in Fukushima Japan. My father, Riozo Izumi, was born in Miyagai prefecture. He came to the U.S.A. when he got out of school. There were nine of us in the family-8 sons and 1 daughter. There were 4 above me and 4 below me. My folks were commercial florists. I was born in Hollywood in 1921.

I was working in a flower shop. Things are very, very rough as far as second generation Japanese Americans were concerned because jobs were not that easy to get and prejudice was very strong. I graduated from high school in 1939.

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I was 20 years old when Pearl Harbor was bombed. We were all at home except my brother who was in the Army. I think he was at home on furlough at the time. And he had to go back immediately.

I was still an American of Japanese ancestry. I didn't change. I think the

American people changed because they had a different attitude about us even though I tried my best to prove to the people I came into contact with that I was a real American. What do I know about the Japanese? I just grew up in a Japanese family but I went to all the schools here.

I was taught just like every other American citizen.

When the war broke out I went to volunteer for the U.S. Army but they just looked at me and told me "no, we're not taking anybody in" but I could understand that, because, after all, I looked like

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their enemy. So why should they take me, you know, but I really wanted to go in there to prove that I was a good American citizen and I wanted to do my part

I was a good American citizen and I wanted to do my part as an American citizen but they wouldn't let me do it.

as an American citizen but they wouldn't let me do it.

We were told to assemble at the Japanese school in West L.A. and that's where the buses came and then the trucks came and they loaded up the trucks with all our baggage and we all just got on the bus. I can't even remember anybody crying at the time we were on the bus. Of course there were GIs there with rifles but I just took that with a grain of salt.

I think the first job I had there was doing carpentry work, finishing up the barracks and odds and ends.



Manzanar under construction, 1942

Well then we had an opportunity to work on a farm and so the first chance that the opportunity arose, I took a job in Montana topping beets. We stayed in camp until harvest time came around again. I must have gone about 3 times. In Idaho I picked potatoes. My partner and I did real well picking potatoes.

I finally got a job in camp in the mess hall. I had to get up at 3:00 in the morning to fire up the oil stove so I could get it all warmed up for when the cooks came in, it would be ready to cook. Our mess hall, number 16,

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Manzanar Mess Hall, 1942

was known as the worst mess hall. I worked on the farm too. I used to love to work on the farm. I used to love to drive the caterpillar to plow the fields.

We used to get together and play pinochle all the time. We played a lot of basketball. Played softball. We used to play football there too.





There was no ill feeling about the draft. We just went. We were sworn in in camp. From camp we had to go up to Reno and catch a train and from Reno to Fort Douglas, that's where we went in. I had five brothers in the Army at one time during the war.

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We did the best we can—what we should do. If it wasn't for the evacuation the Japanese Americans wouldn't be where they are today because they were given a lot of opportunity and they got what they really wanted to accomplish in life and I think they were able to set a name for themselves. I bought

a bakery and that's how we got started and we built that business up into one of the largest retail and multiple unit bakeries in California.



George Izumi, 2002

All during that time I always tried to emphasize that if you

...if you want to accomplish anything you can accomplish it--if you put your nose to the grindstone and just go.

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Grace and George Izumi, 2002

MANZANAR Free Press

MANZANAR

Location: Inyo County, California, at the eastern base of the Sierra Nevada.



Environmental

Conditions: Temperatures can be over 100 degrees in summer and below freezing in winter. Strong winds & dust storms are frequent.

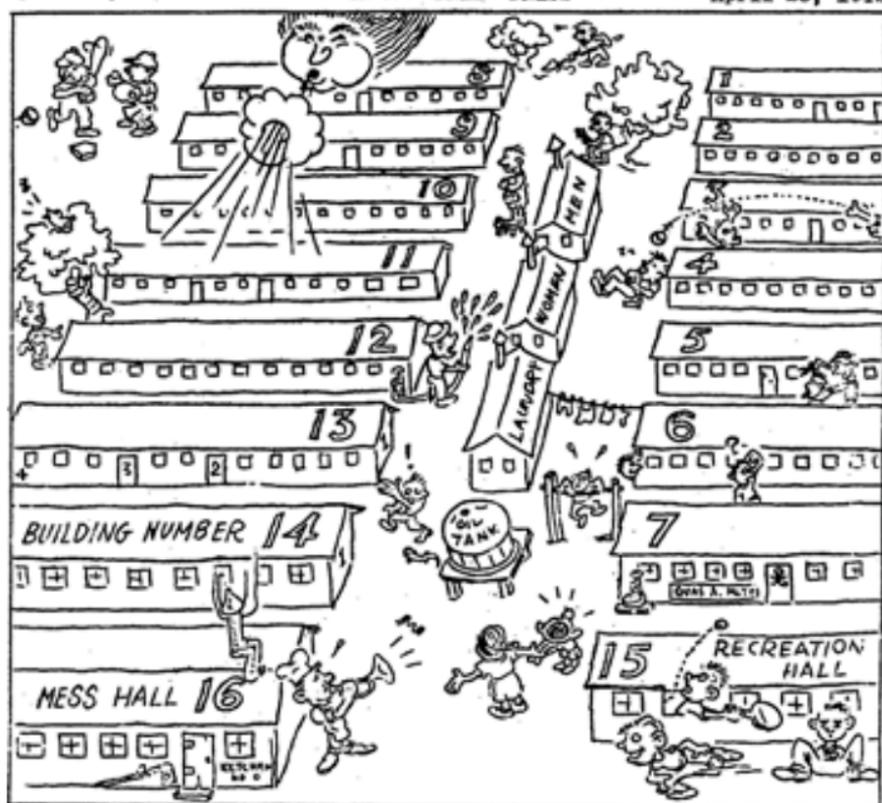
Acreage: 6,000

Opened: March 21, 1942 as a Reception Center and June 1, 1942 as a War Relocation Center.

Closed: November 21, 1945

Max. Population: 10,046 (September 1942)

Demographics: Most internees were from the Los Angeles area, Terminal Island, and the San Fernando Valley. Others came from the San Joaquin Valley and Bainbridge Island.



LIFE IN A MANZANAR BLOCK

Wind and Dust

This wind and dust I have to bear
 How hard it blows I do not care.
 But when the wind begins to blow --
 My morale is pretty low.

I know that I can see it through
 Because others have to bear it too.

So I will bear it with the rest
 And hope the outcome is the best.

-- George Nishimura, age 16 (1943)



Manzanar Cemetery, Winter 2002.

This booklet was developed by the park rangers at Manzanar National Historic Site in partnership with the individuals profiled and their families.



The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage. To learn more about your national parks, visit the National Park Service website at www.nps.gov. To learn more about Manzanar National Historic Site, please visit our website at www.nps.gov/manz.

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