

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. Write the address hereafter at a station on the San Antonio River. House numbers on East First Street and house numbers on West First Street, house numbers on East Second Street, house numbers on East Third Street, house numbers on East Fourth Street in the area of

Manzanar, 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.

If a family, or in case of grave emergency, is affected by this evacuation to the

major or other disposition of area lands, including public lands, minerals and

property.

Do not take any action.

Do, as the person in whose name most of the Civil Control Administration is named, War Relocation Authority, Manzanar, May 3, 1942, or hereinafter.





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.

GRACE KATO IZUMI**Family # 29420****Camp: Jerome, AR****Address: 46-9-C**

*Grace Izumi*

My dad Kinjiro Kato was a 13-year-old schoolboy when he came from Hiroshima, Japan to Seattle, Washington in the early 1900s. He used to read the comic strip, "Winnie Winkle," and he enjoyed cowboy music, I remember. My mother Kuma Kato came to the United States about 1914.

My parents settled in the agricultural community of Fowler, near Fresno. My father was a foreman at a large operation that grew grapes and fruit. He was responsible for hiring workers and taking care of their time sheets, etc. There were three boys and two girls in our family.

I graduated Fowler High in 1940 and helped around the ranch before we went to camp.

On December 7, 1941, my brother George, who had enlisted in the army, was home on a weekend pass from Camp Roberts, near San Luis Obispo, when the news broke that the Japanese had

bombed Pearl Harbor. All members of the armed forces were immediately called back to their post.

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It gave me an uneasy feeling to see signs on storefronts around Fowler, stating “No Jap Trade Wanted.” We saw other oriental groups trying to distinguish themselves from Japanese Americans by wearing buttons stating, “I Am a Chinese-American.”

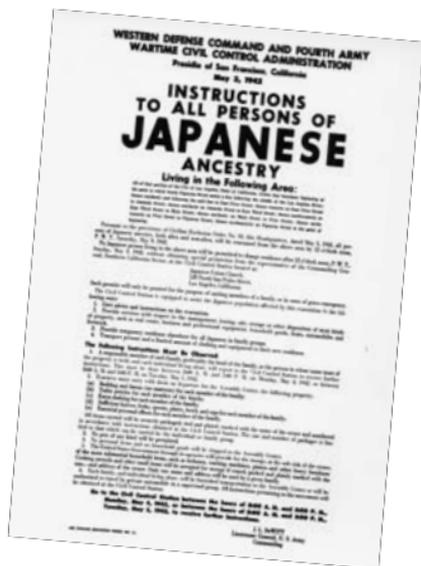
We obeyed the government’s orders to stay within the five-mile restricted area and observe an 8 P.M. to 6 A.M. curfew.

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When we learned we were to be evacuated, the Feavers family that my dad worked for stored our possessions. Another lady friend took care of my pet Persian cat. But within one week after evacuation, I received a letter from her saying my pet died from a broken heart.

During spring, 1942, our family of six was sent to the Fresno Assembly Center, located at the Fresno County Fairground, where we lived in a barrack room. Two months later, we were transferred by train to the relocation center in Jerome, Arkansas.



That was my first train ride, and what an adventure it was. The furthest I'd ever traveled was to Los Angeles or San Francisco.

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The camp was located in a desolate part of Arkansas, but through the efforts of the internees the place was made livable. When we arrived, I was surprised to find the latrine facilities were not completed. There were no partitions between the showers. No privacy whatsoever. Later, they installed partitions to create a sense of semi-privacy.

The pesky chigger bug bites stand out in my mind.

I worked in the hospital as a diet aide, and met Japanese Americans who had come to Jerome from different areas of the West Coast.

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I enjoyed the positive aspects of camp; being with friends at social gatherings, and attending and participating in various sporting events. I got the opportunity to meet new people who became life long friends. I was able to leave

camp on day trips to the neighboring towns, and also take a trip to Little Rock.

I believe camp gave my parents their first opportunity to relax and make use of their long lost manual skill in handicrafts such as crocheting, knitting and making flowers with paper and wires, and mounting them on a picture frame. In camp, the ladies got together with their circle of friends, which was quite a change from their pre-war lifestyle.

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Normally they were so busy working side by side with their husbands they hardly had time for socializing.

I left camp with a girlfriend in 1943 and relocated to Chicago, where I worked in a candy factory for six months with other Japanese Americans. Traveling from Arkansas to Chicago was a memorable experience. I remember seeing separate drinking fountains and rest rooms for blacks and whites, and blacks having to sit in the back of the bus. That is what I call injustice.

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I returned to my family at Jerome, and a short time later they closed Jerome and we moved to the Rohwer camp. Two of my brothers were in the U.S. Army. Roy was stationed in the U.S. and George served in the Military Intelligence Service in the Philippines, Australia and finally in occupied Japan. He went to Hiroshima just a short time after the atomic bombing, and found an uncle who had radiation sickness. Our grandmother was killed in the blast.



Jerome War Relocation Center

A younger brother also served in the military stateside.

We returned to Fowler after we left camp. We were happy to return to familiar surroundings, but I still missed my friends I met in camp. The friends who stored our belongings welcomed us with open arms, and father went back to work for them until he bought his own grape ranch.

Coming from a small, tightly knit community and returning was a relief, but eventually it was rather confining. Most of my hometown friends relocated to Los Angeles, where they worked as housekeepers and I soon followed. I got a job taking care of the children of a Hollywood producer, and eventually met my husband George, who was working in Beverly Hills as a baker. We

borrowed money from my parents to open up his first bakery. We've had an exciting life with a lot of great adventures.

I was not miserable or bitter about my camp experience. I tried to make the best of whatever situation I encountered. Before World War II, I lived a rather passive life in a small community. The experience of going to camp was puzzling at first, but recalling those anti-Japanese storefront posters I came to the conclusion that going to the relocation center was for our own safety.

After settling down to my daily camp life, working in the hospital, meeting new friends and relocating to Chicago, I saw my life in a much broader sense with an open mind. My favorite song was "*Que Será, Será.*"



Grace and George Izumi, 2002

JEROME

Location: Chicot and Drew Counties, Arkansas

Environmental

Conditions: Jerome War Relocation Center is located 12 miles from the Mississippi River at an elevation of 130 feet. The area was once covered with forests, but is now primarily agricultural land. The Big and Crooked Bayous flow from north to south in the central and eastern part of the former relocation center.

Acreage: 10,000

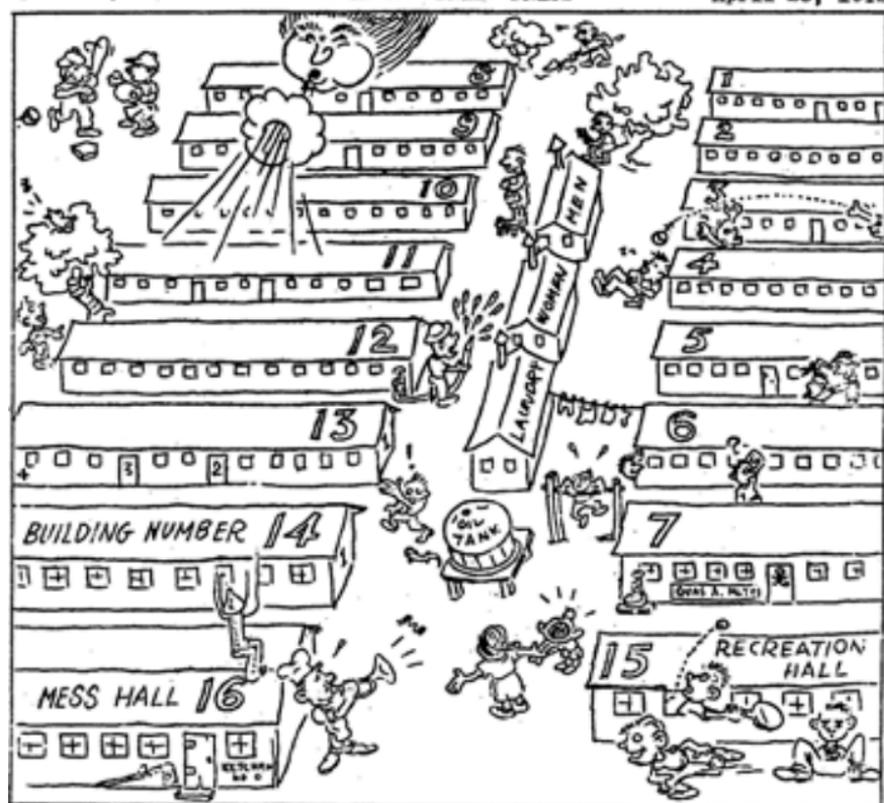
Opened: October 6, 1942

Closed: June 1944

Max. Population: 8,497 (November 1942)

Demographics: Most people interned at Jerome War Relocation Center came from Los Angeles, Fresno, and Sacramento counties in California. Most came to Jerome via the Santa Anita and Fresno assembly centers. 811 people came from Hawaii.





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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