

From the Director: Tom Ikeda



After more than fifteen years of interviews, digitization, and education, Densho stands today as the undisputed leading electronic resource on the Japanese American World War II experience. We will continue to do interviews, build our archive and encyclopedia, and train teachers and provide them with resources.

But with all that information we have gathered, we feel we need to expand our efforts to increase public knowledge about this part of our history beyond the internet. That's why we are so pleased to announce plans for Densholand.

What is Densholand?

Densholand will be a 160 acre "edumusement" park in sunny Bellevue, Washington, where the Japanese American concentration camp experience will be brought to life. We already have a tentative deal in place to secure the land, and a crew of "interneers" are hard at work planning some incredible attractions in the park.

A couple of the highlights:

Escape from Manzanar: a thrilling high speed ride that takes you on a slow tour of the prewar Japanese American experience before plunging into the barbed wired, guard towered abyss of incarceration and out again. With state of the art technology, any of 10,000 endings is possible -- you could end up in college in Chicago, a trailer park in Lomita, a shelter in war ravaged Japan, a shallow grave in Lone Pine, or anywhere in between.

Mr. Furuya's Wild Ride: follow the zany adventures of an Issei community leader as he goes from camp to camp to camp in this wacky recreation of those crazy times.

The Jive Bombers Canteen: enjoy authentic period cuisine such as weenie royale and bootleg sake while dancing to big band music as played in the camps.

Look for more on Densholand in the weeks and months to come. Do you want your own named "land," Densho character, or attraction in Densholand? (Or named brick, broom, or urinal if you are on a budget?) Since we'll need to raise approximately \$1.5 billion to finish it, you may have that opportunity! Look out for news about our upcoming campaign soon! Feel free to contact me about this exciting new idea at tom.ikeda@densho.org.

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Densho News

New Dating Service Announced

Have you seen a potential love match come to naught when it was revealed that your grandparents were renunciants, but the grandparents of your significant others were lifetime JACL members? What a bummer!

Given the still sometime bitter divisions in the Japanese American community stemming from the World War II era, dating within the ethnic community can be difficult.



Led by dating coordinator Nina Wallace, Densho is starting a new pilot dating service to eliminate the possibility of such historical mismatches.

"We have a thorough questionnaire that we ask all applicants to fill out," said Wallace. "Each answer is given a positive or negative number value based on conformity to ideal answers based on generation and family history."

Though all of the questions on the questionnaire are important, the most significant -- the make or break questions -- are questions 27 and 28, our special "compatibility questions."

"History can be a key to understanding the present," said Wallace. "Why not help us help you sift through history to find your perfect match?"

Eleventh Camp Found

At first, I thought it was a mistake.

"No, I'm sure it was in Nevada," Sue Ikemori told me about the concentration camp she and her family were held in during the war in an interview I did with her a few years back.

I didn't press the point, and the camp she described -- barracks arranged in blocks, communal mess halls, unpartitioned latrines -- sounded like any of the other War Relocation Authority camps. I assumed she just got the location details mixed up and went on with the interview.

In succeeding years, a number of others -- Sus Takamori, Michi Yamasaki, and Sarah Tokuda -- also mentioned a camp in Nevada, and a name -- Profaillos. All were from the same general area in California's Central Valley and had gone to Turlock Assembly Center. Sus mentioned that the camp had closed early, like Jerome, and that those who remained had been transferred mostly to Manzanar. Could all of these people be mistaken?

This past month, the incredible story of Profaillos has been confirmed by archeologists Jeff Burton and Mary Farrell, who have uncovered evidence of the forgotten camp in the Nevada desert. Sneaking onto the still classified land under the cover of darkness, Burton and Farrell found barracks foundations, mess hall refuse, and latrines. "While the layout of the foundations could be interpreted to be the remains of any old prison camp, the presence of rice bowl fragments, old Coke bottles, and marbles clinches the identification as a Japanese American concentration camp," said Burton. "The reason the camp closed early -- and the reason it was virtually stricken from the historical record -- is that the land the camp was built on became part of the legendary Area 51, where top secret research on atomic weapons and spy planes were conducted," continued Burton. "The federal government still refuses to acknowledge the existence of Area 51 -- or of Profaillos."



Happy April Fool's Day!
We hope this edition brought a smile and laugh.

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