

From the Director: Tom Ikeda

Last week I did a video-recorded oral history interview with the last of the old-time Nisei oyster farmers. Giro Nakagawa was hired by Issei oyster farmers in 1939 to harvest oysters in a shack-on-stilts in the middle of Willapa Bay, Washington. It was difficult making a living farming vegetables in Kent, Washington, so Giro decided to relocate to South Bend with its steady pay of 70 cents per day seeding and picking oysters. Right after December 7, 1941, the sheriff shut down the oyster harvesting shack, sending Giro back to land. After being sent to a detention camp and then serving overseas in the army, Giro returned to South Bend with his veteran status and union membership to head the return of Japanese oyster farmers to a hostile anti-Japanese community. 75 years after Giro set foot in South Bend, he is still active there as a 93-year-old director of an oyster company.

Meeting people like Giro and his wife Miyo and listening to their stories is an incredible joy and learning experience for me. During the video interviews the viewer is transported back to times and places that only exist in the memories of these elders. Over the past 18 years, Densho has collected 750 stories which will be preserved for many generations. Please consider contributing to the GiveBIG campaign today (see below) so that we can capture even more stories.

>> See a Facebook album of photos from the trip



IN THIS ISSUE

Archive Spotlight
Densho News
Community News and Events

Archive Spotlight

Roy H. Matsumoto: Shouting Military Orders in Japanese to Confuse the Enemy

In 2003, Densho interviewed the 90-year-old Roy Matsumoto who recounted his incredible story of fighting in the jungles of Burma with Merrill's Marauders against the Japanese. Roy saved his unit with heroic actions and he was later inducted in the U.S. Army Ranger Hall of Fame. We are sorry to report that Roy passed away on April 21st at the age of 100. This clip comes from Roy's 2003 interview where he describes a mission to hold Nhpum Ga hill in Burma, in which he shouted military orders in Japanese to confuse the attacking Japanese soldiers.

>> View the interview excerpt

>> Register for the free Densho Digital Archive



[to top](#)

Densho News

Order a Free Densho Educational Resource CD

Densho created an Educational Resource CD of the materials used during our "Teaching with Primary Sources" teacher training workshops that were conducted with 625 educators over the last two years. Contained on the CD are the historic



newsreel, photographs and documents used during the workshops. Also included are video clips from the Densho oral history collection and activities about how to examine primary sources. While supplies last you can have a free CD shipped to you. Funding for these CDs was provided, in part, by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program.

>> To request your free CD

Encyclopedia Blog Posts

We continue to add new articles to the Densho Encyclopedia and new collections to the Densho Digital Repository. For updates on some of these additions, see Content Director Brian Niiya's recent Densho Blog posts which describe new articles ranging from sports in the concentration camps to the earliest children's books that reference camp. He will be regularly posting on new encyclopedia articles and other topics in the coming months.

Funding for the encyclopedia was provided, in part, by a grant from the Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. The encyclopedia will expand to over 1,000 articles when completed in the fall of this year.

>> View blog post: New Densho Encyclopedia Articles, April 5 to 18

>> View blog post: Nisei Vue and Scene Collection Added

>> View blog post: Oddball Camp Stories in Popular Culture: Early Children's Books



GiveBIG to Densho TODAY

GiveBIG is a one-day, online charitable giving event sponsored by the Seattle Foundation to benefit participating non-profit organizations, like Densho. The Seattle Foundation has created a "stretch pool" that will match on a prorated basis contributions made **today, May 6, 2014**. What this means is that the more you give to Densho, the more the Seattle Foundation will also give to Densho. Please give to Densho today through The Seattle Foundation website and your donation will be stretched further through matching funds.

>> Donate to Densho through the Seattle Foundation

>> For more information about GiveBIG 2014



Well Deserved Recognition for Roger Daniels

Professor Roger Daniels, distinguished scholar of the Japanese American incarceration, received two well-deserved acknowledgements during the month of April. In Atlanta at the annual conference of the Organization of American Historians, an entire session titled, "Historian, Teacher, Scholar, Mentor, & Advocate for Over Half a Century," was dedicated to Professor Daniels' work. Densho Executive Director Tom Ikeda presented on Professor Daniels' work with the Japanese American community, especially during the Redress Movement. And in San Francisco at the annual conference of the Association for Asian American Studies, Professor Daniels was the recipient of the Distinguished Lifetime Achievement Award, receiving a several minute standing ovation from the audience.



to top

Community News and Events

The Power of Our Nikkei Stories



Join poet Brian Komei Dempster at 7pm May 31st at Nisei Veterans Committee Memorial Hall in Seattle as he discussed the importance of storytelling for Japanese Americans. Dempster will share his experiences of helping Nisei reflect and write about their World War II incarceration experiences.

>> For more information



to top

To subscribe, go to www.densho.org/about/enews/subscribe.asp

Densho: The Japanese American Legacy Project - 1416 S. Jackson Street - Seattle, WA 98144

©2014 Densho. All rights reserved. Privacy Policy/Terms of Use.