1990
NISEI WEEK
JAPANESE FESTIVAL
50th
ANNIVERSARY
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Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
Greetings and Salutations!!!

On behalf of the Board of Directors, it is my great pleasure to welcome you to the 50th Anniversary of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. From its simple beginnings to attract business to Little Tokyo, Nisei Week has grown to become the largest Japanese festival in the United States.

This commemorative booklet has been produced, not only to celebrate the 50th Anniversary, but to reflect and acknowledge each of the past festivals and to pay tribute to those who have supported and participated in its growth. As these pages will reflect, Nisei Week is the fusion of many organizations. From the Board of Directors, made up of hardworking volunteers from businesses, community and civic organizations, the cultural groups who have tirelessly carried on the rich traditions of our Japanese heritage, the sponsoring community organizations from diversified areas, to the many supporters who have generously donated to preserve and carry on the festival, Nisei Week has matured and blossomed.

Today the Nisei Week Festival plays a unique and rewarding role in furthering the understanding and awareness of the traditions and beauty of the Japanese culture. By highlighting our heritage, the Nisei Week Festival has the opportunity, not only to preserve, but to introduce the numerous cultural traditions to future generations.

I sincerely wish to thank the many volunteers, participants, and exhibitors for their tireless, continuous efforts and the many sponsors and donors for their generous contributions.

I invite each and every one of you to join in making this, our 50th Nisei Week Festival, a most exciting, memorable celebration!
THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

June 29, 1990

I am delighted to extend warm greetings to everyone gathered for the 50th Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Our Nation was built through the determination and hard work of individuals who came from around the world in pursuit of political, religious, and economic freedom. As in years past, Japanese Americans play a vital role in upholding and defending that great ideal. Through your proud devotion to the traditions of your ancestral homeland, as well as your unwavering dedication to the principles upon which our Nation was founded, you strengthen and enrich the fabric of our society.

Barbara joins me in wishing you a memorable and enjoyable celebration and every future success and happiness. God bless you.

GEORGE BUSH

OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
State Of California

I am pleased to extend my warm regards to all those participating in the 1990 Nisei Week Japanese Festival on the occasion of its 50th anniversary celebration. California is privileged to count among its people citizens of diverse ethnic background each making unique contributions to the growth and progress of our state. The Golden State's distinctive character and unparalleled prosperity are a direct result of the hard work and dedicated commitment of the numerous people who have come from foreign lands to make California their home, and the endeavors of our state's Japanese community have helped to continue this outstanding tradition of excellence.

Please accept my best wishes for a most memorable celebration and every continued success.

Most cordially,
GEORGE DEUKMEJIAN
As Mayor of the City of Los Angeles, may I extend my congratulations to all of the volunteer participants in the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, past and present, for this year's celebration, the 50th anniversary of the colorful and exciting event. The Nisei Week Japanese Festival is one of the oldest and longest continually-sponsored events in the history of the city, interrupted only during World War II, when the Japanese Americans and their parents were forcefully and wrongfully evacuated and interned in concentration camps.

Los Angeles is one of the great multi-racial cities of the world, and its rich history of racial harmony is continually enhanced by such events as the Nisei Week Japanese Festival. I understand that the floats of the Nisei Week parade held in 1935 featured the agricultural products of the Issei pioneer farmers.

Therefore, let me take this opportunity to thank the Issei pioneers for their unheralded contributions to the City of Los Angeles, and congratulate their descendants who celebrate the 50th anniversary of the festival, which manifests the Issei spirit.

Sincerely,
TOM BRADLEY
MAYOR

I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations on the occasion of the 50th anniversary celebration of Nisei Week Festival, the grandest among all of the Japanese American festivals in the United States and one of Southern California's most colorful highlights of the summer season.

May I also take this opportunity to convey my deep admiration for the invaluable contributions over the years by all of you in building a solid foundation from which so many of the cultural and educational exchanges we enjoy today have come about. It is truly commendable that the same spirit of dedication and commitment present when Nisei Week Festival first started is as strong as ever, as is evident in wide community involvement and volunteer support.

I am pleased to take part in this most memorable occasion and, as we look forward to the next fifty years and beyond, I send my warmest wishes to the continued success of the Japanese American community.

Sincerely yours,
KIYOHIKO ARAFUNE
Consul General of Japan
It is my distinct pleasure to have the opportunity to join with you in celebrating the 50th Nisei Week Japanese Festival. As you celebrate this auspicious milestone in the long and colorful history of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, you do so with gratitude and respect of the entire Japanese-American community. The city of Los Angeles has long enjoyed close ties with the Japanese-American community and to have such magnificent festivities taking place in the city will be an enriching experience for those participating.

It is truly fitting that this cosmopolitan city will play host to an event that bridges the long gaps between East and West. This 50th celebration is not only a celebration of Japanese-American culture and heritage, but also of friendships and mutual cooperation.

As I join you with the Japanese-American community in celebrating a most memorable 50th Nisei Week Japanese Festival, I send my personal best wishes to all in attendance.

Sincerely,

Pete Wilson

Assembig

California Legislature

It is my distinct honor to join you in celebrating the Golden Anniversary of the Nisei Week Festival.

The Japanese American community has greatly enriched the ethnic diversity of our city, and our state. It has maintained its cultural identity and helped individuals fulfill their own destiny.

For a half of a century, the Nisei Week Festival has been a showcase of the Japanese community's strength and beauty. This festival has become a great cultural event in Los Angeles by showing the world the richness of the Japanese legacy in California.

I commend the Japanese American community and proudly join you in celebration.

Sincerely,

Lucille Roybal-Allard
Assemblywoman, 56th District

Board of Supervisors

County of Los Angeles

It is a privilege and pleasure on behalf of the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors to extend my sincere congratulations and very best-wishes on the occasion of the 50th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival. Once again, I look forward to joining with you and my friends in the Japanese community to help celebrate this “Golden Annual Year” of the Festival.

The Japanese community should be especially proud of this celebration which I know to be one of the biggest and best festivals in Los Angeles County and the Southern California area. As in prior years, my colleagues on the Board of Supervisors join with me in officially declaring the week of August 18 - August 26, 1990, as the 50th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival throughout the County of Los Angeles and urge all citizens to join in the festivities.

Good luck and best wishes for an outstanding 50th annual celebration.

Sincerely,

Edmund D. Edelman
Supervisor, Third District
I am pleased to say CONGRATULATIONS and express BEST WISHES on the 50th Anniversary of the Nisei Week Festival.

I look forward to joining with you and my good friends at the many activities during the week. I am honored that this cultural event takes place in the Great Ninth District.

It is my pleasure to further extend congratulations to the 1990 General Chairperson, Ms. Frances K. Hashimoto and to the Board members, community organizations, businesses and volunteers for all their dedication in making this such a successful festival celebrating your cultural heritage.

Sincerely

GILBERT W. LINDSAY
Councilman, 9th District

Welcome to Little Tokyo's 50th Anniversary Nisei Week Japanese Festival! In this special year we have made renewed efforts to present the best traditions of our culture to further mutual understanding among all peoples. We are indeed pleased and grateful to see the interest and good will generated by all who join in our celebration. We honor our Isseis by sharing our heritage with our friends.

The businesses of Little Tokyo are deeply appreciative of the efforts of the many Niseis, Sanseis and Yonseis, without whose countless hours of dedicated volunteer service this Festival would not be possible.

Sincerely,

YOSHINORI TAKAMINE
President
Little Tokyo Business Association

It is a pleasure to welcome you to the 50th Annual Nisei Festival and extend warm greetings and best wishes from the Japan Business Association of Southern California.

Over the past half-century, this Nisei Week Festival has been an important vehicle in promoting cultural awareness and understanding. Offering local Japanese-Americans the opportunity to renew and understand their heritage, the festival also provides knowledge and insight of the Japanese culture to everyone in attendance. I truly hope that many Southern Californians will experience and celebrate the Golden Anniversary of the festival this year.

On behalf of JBA, I congratulate the many people whose united efforts and valuable contributions guarantee the success of this year's Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

Sincerely,

MASAHIRO SHIMIZU
President

It is my honor and pleasure to extend my sincere and warm congratulations to the 50th Annual Nisei Week Festival on behalf of the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California.

The Nisei Week Festival has grown to be not only enjoyed by the Japanese community, but it has become one of the exciting summer events of the city of Los Angeles.

This year is especially significant in celebrating the Nisei Week Festival because it marks the culmination of 50 years of the tireless efforts and enthusiasm of countless people to keep our proud cultural heritage alive.

Nisei Week is uniquely Japanese and represents a bondage between young and old, and present and past. It stands as our proud symbol of unity.

Sincerely yours,

AKEMI MIYAKE
President
As the years go by, the outstanding achievements of certain men and women begin to call attention to themselves whether in career or personal achievement or as examples of dedicated service to the community. The Grand Parade of the Festival allows us to give special recognition to these individuals who come from all walks of life—business, government, education, entertainment, arts, medicine and sports—and who have served our community so well.

This year we honor three men. One, a long time member and achiever in Little Tokyo, another, a corporate executive who represents a new presence in our community. The third marshal represents the cultural side of life in his dedication to his family tradition and craft.

The Nisei Week Japanese Festival honors Katsuma Mukaeda, genro of the community, who will be 100 on November 19, 1990, as its Golden Anniversary Grand Marshal.

Born in Kumamoto, Japan, he emigrated to the United States when he was 18 years old. Unlike the majority of Issei pioneers, Mukaeda was able to attend school. He studied for the bar at Western University, but could not take the examination since Japanese immigrants were prevented from becoming naturalized at that time.

Involved briefly in exporting American films to Japan (1920-1022) and in managing a lettuce farm for an American corporation (1923-1927), he later attended American University, School of Law, and earned his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1932. Still unable to practice law, he worked with established lawyers to service their Japanese clientele. In 1933, he was elected president of the Central Japanese Association, the most powerful organization in the Japanese community before World War II.

In 1934, when Japanese farmers in Arizona were subject to terrorist attacks by white competitors, with little or no protection from police but rather harassment, Mukaeda accompanied then Consul General Shintaro Fukushima to Arizona to calm and reassure the victims as well as to help lay the basis for winning lawsuits against the terrorists.

Fukushima's respect for Mukaeda later helped the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center to win his material support for their $4 million fund drive in Japan.

Long convinced that American ignorance of Japanese culture was one of the basic reasons for worsening relations between the U.S. and Japan, Mukaeda helped organize the Oriental Studies Society at Claremont Colleges in 1935 and served as advisor of the Japanese Studies Department there from 1936 to 1941. In 1937, he became executive director of the Japanese Cultural Society of Southern California, serving until the war.

He was interned in Santa Fe, New Mexico, during the war and returned to Los Angeles in 1936. He helped the post-war Japanese community get back on its feet by organizing the Japanese Welfare Association in 1947, which was absorbed into the Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California in 1949. He served as president of the JCC in 1950 and 1951, and again in 1965 and 1966. For more than 15 years, he also headed the Cultural Division of the JCC.

In 1952, he became executive secretary of the Japan America Society, an organization whose office was located in Mukaeda's office for many years, until his retirement.

He was first decorated by the Japanese government with the Fourth Degree Order of the Sacred Treasure in 1960, which was advanced to the Third Degree in 1970 and to the Second Degree in 1976, the highest of any Issei pioneer in America.

He and his first wife, Minoli, were married in 1916. Their son, Lt. Col. Richard K. Mukaeda, is stationed with the U.S. Army in the Presidio in San Francisco. Mukaeda lives with his second wife, Tillie, in Van Nuys.
Tokui Wakasa is Chairman of the Board of Japan's leading airline and the eighth largest passenger carrier in the world—All Nippon Airways.

Born in 1914 in Toyama Prefecture, Japan, he received his Bachelor of Laws degree from the University of Tokyo. Upon graduation in 1938, he entered the Ministry of Transport, serving in a number of capacities until his appointment as Vice Minister in 1965.

After serving the Ministry of Transport for 29 years, he joined All Nippon Airways Co., Ltd. as deputy president in 1969. He was appointed President in 1970 and Chairman of the Board in 1976.

Mr. Wakasa and his wife Sumiko have five children and reside in Tokyo, Japan. He likes to play golf and is a ranked player of "go," a Japanese strategy board game.

Bando, Mitsugoro IX was born in 1929 as Morita Mitsunobu making his stage debut at the age of three in 1932. Following the death of his real father, he became a live-in trainee under famed kabuki actor Onoe, Kikugoro VI. After his death, another famous kabuki actor, the late Onoe, Shoroku became his substitute father.

He married the eldest daughter of Bando Mitsutoshi VIII in 1955 and in May of the same year, assumed the name of Bando, Yasosuke IV.

He assumed the name Bando, Minosuke VII in 1962 and from 1969 on, he has regularly held recitals of his Minosuke-no-Kai.

At the death of Bando, Mitsugoro VIII in 1975, he took on the dance name of Bando, Mitsugoro IX and has continued to hold dance recitals periodically, calling his group "Tobu-no-Kai" n 1980.

In 1987, he assumed the Bando, Mitsugoro IX name as a kabuki actor, making his debut as Matahei in "Domomata" (Stuttering Mata) and as Kisen, Hoshi in "Kisen."
COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARD

The Community Service Award is given to honor those individuals whose efforts benefit the Japanese American community. This commitment is demonstrated through the time and effort spent working voluntarily with many of the different organizations serving the community. However, this is the first time that the award has been given to an organization. This reflects an appreciation for the ongoing efforts of the Japan Business Association of Southern California to promote better relations between the community and the member Japanese firms.

JBA

The Nisei Week Japanese Festival Committee would like to recognize a long-time member of the Little Tokyo community in this 50th anniversary year. The Japan Business Association of Southern California will be the recipient of the Community Service Award.

The Japan Business Association of Southern California (JBA) is a non-profit, mutual-benefit organization made up of Japan-based corporations doing business in Southern California. It was established in 1961 with 48 founding member firms.

The primary objective of the association is to promote two-way trade between Japan and the state of California. In the process, the JBA hopes to cultivate mutual understanding and goodwill between the people of Japan and the people of California. In representing the interests of its member firms, the JBA also wishes to establish and maintain good relations between the member companies and the community at large.

Currently, corporate membership of JBA includes over 650 Japan-based firms operating within the five-county area of Southern California. It is the largest Japan-related business organization located outside of Japan, whose members represent nearly every major trading, banking, manufacturing and service firm in Japan today.
Madame Fujima Kansuma has been teaching Japanese classical dance in the Los Angeles area for the past 50 years. Since opening her studio in Little Tokyo in 1939, she has had 40 students attain the professional status of natori.

Madame Kansuma was born in San Francisco but moved to Los Angeles where she danced with the Los Angeles Shojo Kabuki, a well-trained amateur kabuki troupe composed of young girls.

Advanced studies in Tokyo, Japan with Grandmaster Fujima Kanjuro enabled her to earn her professional title of Fujima Kansuma. She was also one of the few students from overseas admitted to the Onoe Kikugoro VI’s Kabuki Acting School.

Returning to the U.S., Madame Kansuma was interned at Rohwer, Arkansas, where she participated in the War-Intercamp Communications Program, sharing her dance with those relocated to Arizona, Colorado, Illinois, Kansas, Ohio and Texas.

In 1970, Madame Kansuma celebrated 30 years of teaching with a dance concert at the Music Center. She was chosen as a delegate to the historic Meiji Centennial Celebration Observance in Tokyo. The Kansuma School has participated in Los Angeles Unified School District’s special cultural awareness program for elementary schools as well as presented dance concerts and cultural programs in cities nationwide.

In 1985 she was bestowed the Order of the Precious Crown, 5th Class, by Emperor Hirohito of Japan for her contribution toward the understanding and cultural exchange between the U.S. and Japan. In July, 1987, she was invited to Washington D.C. to be recognized by the National Endowment of the Arts as one of 13 recipients nationwide of the National Heritage Fellowship. At this time President Reagan designated her “Master Artist Kansuma.”

This June, Madame Kansuma attended the President’s Dinner by special invitation from President and Mrs. Bush.

Married to the late Robert Wilson Kurata, she has a son, Dr. Ray Ichizo Kurata, and a daughter, Mrs. Miyako Tachibana.

At the age of four, Madame Sanjo Kanya began her training in classical dance with Mme. Kiyomura, kabuki acting with Nakamura Tomofuku and nagauta (vocal and shamisen) with Kineya Yasoyo I.

At 10 she moved to Tokyo, Japan, studying under Bando Mitsumi and receiving the name Bando Miharu from Bando Mitsugoro VII at age 14. While in Tokyo, she also studied percussion at the Fukuhara School, continued nagauta with Kineya Eizaemon and Yoshimura Itoju and was granted the name Yoshimura Itsuji from the iyemoto of the Yoshimura School of Nagauta, Kineya Eizo.

In 1940, she returned to the U.S. and began teaching classical and kabuki dance and nagauta. 1953 saw her return to Japan for further studies where her abilities were recognized by kabuki actor Nakamura Kanzaburo XVII when he bestowed upon her the name Sanjo Kanya V (grandmaster status) in 1955. She has been the only iyemoto residing and teaching outside Japan. Earlier that year Madame Kanya received the name Kanzaki Hideharu from Kanzaki Hide II, principal of the Kanzaki School of Jiuta-mai. She was the only recognized natori of jiuta-mai in the U.S.

She appeared with the late Onoe Shoroku II in a newly choreographed lion dance at the National Theater of Japan in 1969.

Before her death in 1989, Madame Kanya had appeared in commercials promoting the Grand Kabuki of Japan for the 1982 Knoxville World’s Fair and in David Bowie’s “Man Who Fell to Earth.” She produced kabuki dance programs in Northern and Central California as well as 34 years of annual spring programs in Los Angeles, starting in 1956. For 12 years she created “Kayo-Buyo Series” every October in which light, modern buyo choreography was set to popular Japanese music.

In pursuing dance excellence, she made annual study trips to Tokyo accompanied by students and dancers from her company.
Madame Hanayagi Tokuyae has been involved with classical dance for over 50 years. She was born in Los Angeles and started studying buyo and shamisen from Kineya Eikimiyo at the age of seven.

In 1931 she was an honorary member of the Welcoming Committee for Prince and Princess Takamatsu’s visit to Los Angeles, receiving a letter of appreciation for outstanding dance performance in the presence of the Royal Imperial Family. In 1935, she performed at the California Pacific International Exposition held in San Diego.

During one stay in Japan, she studied under Bando Mikiji but upon graduation from high school, she returned to Japan to study with the following masters: Hanayagi Tokutaro and Hanayagi Jusaburo (dance), Kineya Sajiro (shamisen) and Master Yaochi (Tokiwazu singing).

She received her professional name Hanayagi Tokuyae from Headmaster Hanayagi Jusuke and during the same period was recommended for membership in the Nihon Buyo Kyokai (Performing Arts Federation of Dance in Japan), the only nationally authorized association for dance, supported and managed by renowned performers. Madame Tokuyae was the first Japanese American permitted to recommend future natori in the United States.

In 1942 her family voluntarily evacuated to Glendale, Arizona where she taught buyo and performed periodically for the Gila and Poston concentration camps. She reopened her studio in Los Angeles in 1946.

She has been a regular performer for 30 years at the annual International Folk Dance Festival held at the Music Center and was honored at the 25th anniversary for her dedication to the event.

Madame Tokuyae has received numerous awards and citations through the years which culminated in 1989 with her being awarded the Order of the Precious Crown, Apricot, from Emperor Akihito for her work in furthering the traditional arts of Japan.

Born in Sacramento, California, Madame Bando Mitsusa began her dance training at the age of 7 under Yamamura Toku of the Yamamura Juutai School of Osaka. She was dancing with the Sacramento All-Girls Kabuki when she was scouted to join the Los Angeles All-Girls Kabuki on their tour to Hawaii.

With encouragement from noted Japanese dancer Bando Mitsumi, Madame Mitsusa traveled to Japan upon graduation from high school to study with her and with the late distinguished kabuki star Bando Mitsugoro VII. She also studied nagauta under Yoshimura Itoju and narimono under Fukuura Tsurue.

In 1940, she was invited by NHK to perform nagauta in a first-time live broadcast to the U.S. from Japan in what was known as “Southern California Evening.” She was also chosen to dance in a ten-day production in the Toho Meijikai at the Toho Shogekijyo in 1939.

Upon earning her professional title of Bando Misa, she returned to the U.S. in 1941 and made her official debut/recital at Yamato Hall in Little Tokyo. Shortly thereafter, she was interned at Tule Lake, where she continued to teach dancing to children in camp.

After the war she returned to Los Angeles and opened her school once again. In 1957, she was promoted by Bando Mitsugoro VII and appointed official representative of the Bando School in the U.S. with a new professional name, Bando Mitsusa.

Madame Mitsusa has choreographed 20th Century Fox’s “The Barbarian and the Geisha,” and Pasadena Playhouse’s “Teahouse of the August Moon.” She has participated in University of California dance workshops, Disneyland’s “Holiday Festival,” and nationally televised half-time performances for the Los Angeles Lakers. Also to her credit are her group’s selection to appear on award-winning Rose Parade floats in 1981 for Unocal (Sweepstakes winner), 1982 Avon (Grand Prize winner), and 1988 Unocal (Sweepstakes winner).

In addition to teaching in Los Angeles, Madame Mitsusa commutes to San Jose where she also conducts classes.
PIONEERS

The 50th anniversary of Nisei Week has a special meaning for the community. That it has been reached reflects our collective strength and the vision of many individuals who struggled to keep the community and Festival alive and thriving. We have managed to survive in what was originally a hostile environment—racial discrimination, financial hardship (Great Depression) and the consequences of a world war with a homeland only one generation removed.

The pioneers, through their drive, ambition and dedication to their beliefs, forged a new beginning for Japanese Americans in Los Angeles and Southern California.

We seek to call attention to the Issei and Nisei seniors who stand as examples for younger generations to follow by virtue of their service and commitment to their community. They are the stalwart supports for the community and are being recognized by their peers.

The honorees are nominated by various members of the community, such as the Nanka Nikkei Fujinkai, Pioneer Center of Southern California and the Japanese Chamber of Commerce.

The Pioneer Luncheon will be held August 22 at the New Otani Hotel at noon.
Hiroshi E. Hishiki, better known as Hiro, was born in 1918 in Los Angeles and graduated in 1940 from UCLA School of Business Administration with a Bachelor of Science degree in marketing and accounting.

He was evacuated to Heart Mountain Relocation Center, Wyoming during World War II and served there as hospital business manager. He then relocated to Montclair, New Jersey and worked for the United Hospital Fund in New York City until the end of the war.

He returned to Los Angeles in 1946 and worked for Kashu Mainichi as business manager from 1947 until he became the publisher in 1956. He has remained the publisher since then.

Hiro is active in the Japanese American community organizations such as St. Mary’s Episcopal Church as its senior warden, Japanese American Optimist Club, Japanese Chamber of Commerce of Southern California and Little Tokyo Business Association. He is a member of the board of directors of the Japanese Overseas Newspapers Association and a member of the Los Angeles Press Club.

His hobbies are golf, fishing and photography and is a member of the Asahi Golf Club and Biltmore Health Club. He and his wife Bessie have a married daughter, Patricia Abrams.

Ethel Kohashi, born in Honolulu, Hawaii, attended the Honolulu Business College and the University of Hawaii with a major in Business Administration. She subsequently moved to Sacramento and studied advanced accounting after which she moved to Los Angeles where she worked at a securities firm.

In 1942 she was interned at the Rohwer Relocation Center in Arkansas, but in 1943 relocated to Chicago and worked for a wholesale laundry and linen company in its accounting department.

In 1953 she moved to Los Angeles and worked for a market research and public opinion firm.


In addition to the aforementioned organizations, she has been on the board of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center, Little Tokyo Service Center, Little Tokyo Centennial Committee, Los Angeles/Nagoya Sister City Affiliation; Nisei Week Japanese Festival, and Japan America Society of Southern California.

She has received community service awards from the Little Tokyo Service Center and Nisei Week Japanese Festival and was awarded the "Order of the Precious Crown, Apricot" from the Japanese government in 1986.
Tsutomu Maehara was born in a suburb of Portland, Oregon in 1919 and moved with his family to Hiroshima, Japan in 1923. He graduated from Matsumoto Commercial High School in 1937 and in the same year returned to Portland to join Teikoku Shokai, an import firm where he worked until 1941 when war broke out.

He was interned at Tule Lake in 1942 and in September of the same year was freed to farm with his sister's family in Ontario, Oregon.

Maehara then relocated to Los Angeles in December, 1945 and in the following year established the Anzen Hardware and Hotel Supply Company in Little Tokyo. He has operated the same business in Little Tokyo for nearly 44 years since then.

Envisioning how Little Tokyo would evolve in the coming decades, he devoted himself to a successful campaign in 1961 to change the zoning law from manufacturing to commercial and light manufacturing mixed use.


His association with the Nisei Week Japanese Festival spans over thirty years, starting in 1961 as its general chairman and receiving a congratulatory telegram from then President John F. Kennedy.

Maehara and his wife, Tsuneko, have 2 sons, 2 daughters and 7 grandchildren.

Tetsujiro Nakamura was born in 1913 in San Francisco and graduated with honors in 1939 from the University of California at Berkeley. The family was interned during the war at Tule Lake Relocation Center where Tetsujiro worked in the Legal Aid Office.

Nakamura successfully organized the Tule Lake Defense Committee to defend the rights of those Nisei who renounced their U.S. citizenship out of anger for U.S. government misconduct or from fear that their families would break up if their Issei parents were deported to Japan. The Committee raised funds and conducted litigation to prevent deportation of the renunciants and to restore their U.S. citizenship. They were able to obtain an injunction against deportation.

The case for the renunciants lasted for about 20 years during which Nakamura attended night school at Southwestern School of Law in Los Angeles and was admitted to the California bar in 1956. He relocated to Los Angeles and has practiced law in Little Tokyo ever since.

He was appointed a commissioner to the Community Redevelopment Agency of Los Angeles by former mayor Sam Yorty, and has contributed his services to numerous community organizations including: the Los Angeles Honpa Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Hiroshima Kenjinkai of Southern California, Japanese American Cultural and Community Center and the Sozenji Buddhist Temple.
Fumiko Takei was born in Florin, California but at age seven relocated with her family to Hiroshima, Japan. After graduating from Shintoku Girl’s High School and Futaba Sewing School, she taught at her alma mater for two years.

She returned to the United States in 1935 and married the late Takekuma Takei of Yamanashi Prefecture. Her husband was active in the Japanese American community and served as the president of the Japanese American Hotel and Apartment Association of Southern California as well as the Japanese Community Pioneer Center. He was also a director of Little Tokyo Towers and an officer of Hyakudo-Kai.

Fumiko Takei has served the Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple Women’s Club, the Japanese Community Pioneer Center and its Senior Citizens Hot Meal Project.

She has received numerous awards and commendations from both private and public sectors of the community. They include the City of Los Angeles, 1981; County of Los Angeles Senior Citizens Affairs Department, 1984, 1986, 1988; and the State of California 24th Senatorial District, 1986. She was honored by the Japanese Community Pioneer Social Service Center in 1984 and was named The Mother of the Year in 1987 by both the Downtown Los Angeles Chapter, Japanese American Citizens League and the Japanese Women’s Society of Los Angeles.

Her oldest son, famed actor George Takei, was the 1989 Nisei Week Parade Marshal. Henry, her second son, is a periodontist and daughter Nancy is a teacher.

Yuichiro Yamaguchi was born in 1913 in Kagoshima Prefecture where he graduated from Kaseda Agricultural High School. After immigrating to the United States, he engaged in landscape gardening from 1931 to 1949, except for the years 1942 to 1946 when he was interned at Manzanar.

In September 1949, he opened O.S. Nursery with Kinjiro Nishi and operated it with his partner until 1964, when he established the Yamaguchi Bonsai Nursery which he runs to this date.


He has received numerous awards from organizations such as the Sawtelle Japanese Language Institute, Dai Nihon Nokai, Nanka Kagoshima Kenjinkai, the governor and state assemblyman of California, Kagoshima Ken governor, Nanka Kenjinkai Kyogikai and the Japanese Consulate in Los Angeles.

He was married in 1951 and has a son and three daughters.
TRADITIONAL EVENTS

50TH NISEI WEEK
OPENING CEREMONY
July 8
1:30 PM
Noguchi Plaza / JACCC

50TH NISEI WEEK
AWARDS DINNER
Aug 20
6:00 PM
Bonaventure Hotel

50TH NISEI WEEK
CLOSING CEREMONY
Aug 26
Following Ondo Street Dancing
San Pedro Street between 2nd and 3rd Sts.

NISEI WEEK CARNIVAL
Aug 25 & 26
12:00 - 5:00 PM
San Pedro Street Parking Lot between 2nd & 3rd Sts.

CORONATION BALL
Aug 18
6:00 PM
Century Plaza Hotel

FASHION SHOW
July 15
12:00 PM
Beverly Hilton Hotel

SPECIAL EVENTS

50'S DANCE
June 16
6:00 PM
L.A.P.D. Academy

BANDO MITSUHIRO,
EVENING OF CLASSICAL DANCE
Aug 17
8:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

BEIKOKU KARAOKE
KOHAKU UTA-GASSEN
Aug 18
7:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

ESSENCE: URBAN TOP-40 MUSIC
Aug 18
12:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

NISEI WEEK GRAND PARADE
Aug 19
3:00 PM
Streets of Little Tokyo

JAPANESE POPULAR TRADITIONS
EXHIBITION
Aug 21
6:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

ONDO STREET DANCE
Aug 26
5:00 PM
San Pedro Street

PIONEER LUNCHEON
Aug 22
12:00 PM
New Otani Hotel

PRINCE AND PRINCESS PAGEANT
Aug 11
9:00 AM
L.A.P.D. Auditorium

JAPANESE POPULAR TRADITIONS
EXHIBITION
Aug 21
6:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

L.A. KOREAN FOLK DANCING
Aug 25
4:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

MME. ROKUMINE HANAYAGI
DANCE GROUP
Aug 26
12:30 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

NISEI WEEK SHIGIN-KAI
Aug 24
7:00 PM
Zenshuji Temple
Me. Bando, Mitsuhiro, the official parade choreographer for the 1990 Nisei Week Japanese Festival, became a permanent resident of the U.S. in 1969. Within a few months, she established the Bando Mitsuhiro-Kai.

The group held its first recital in 1972 at Koyasan Hall. In 1975, Madame Mitsuhiro established a branch in San Diego, holding their first recital a year later at the Balboa Recital Hall. In 1976, she had her first natori title granted to a student from her grandmaster in Japan. That same year, she established her Oceanside class.

She celebrated her 10th anniversary in 1979 with a performance at El Camino College Theatre, receiving certificates of appreciation for her contribution to promoting Japanese American cultural exchange from the cities of Los Angeles, Gardena and Torrance.

In 1982, she established a class in Monterey, California, the same year she first served as official choreographer for the Nisei Week Japanese Festival.

The following year she introduced Japanese classical dance at a “Japan Day” performance in St. Louis and presented her eighth annual public performance in San Diego, receiving a commendation from the San Diego Japanese American Cultural Center.

In 1984, she introduced Japanese classical dance in Vancouver, Canada, held her first Monterey recital and introduced Japanese dance at Canyon College.

She celebrated her 15th year as a teacher in 1985 with a performance at the Japan America Theatre.

In 1986, she held the San Diego Mitsuhiro-Kai's 10th anniversary recital at the East County Performing Arts Center in San Diego.

She led a group of school members to Japan to attend the name-assuming ceremony of the present grandmaster of the Bando school, Bando, Mitsu-goro IX, in 1987.

In 1989, she made a special appearance with the Azuma, Ichiro Show in Washington, D.C. and in September of that year, celebrated her 20th anniversary as a teacher with a recital at the Japan America Theatre.

She has participated in “Japan Day” celebrations at Disneyland from 1977 to 1984, and has continued to perform in the Monterey and St. Louis areas. To date, she has sent 25 natori and two shihan into the Japanese classical dance world.

**ODORI: MME. FUJIMA KANSUMA**
Aug 18
4:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

**PLAZA DE LA RAZA**
**STUDENT PERFORMING GROUP**
Aug 26
3:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

**POLYNESIAN DANCES BY ARIETA'S POLYNESIAN PRODUCTIONS**
Aug 19
5:30 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

**SO. CALIF. FOLK DANCE GROUP**
Aug 19
12:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza

**STREET ARTS & CRAFTS**
Aug 25 & 26
11:00 - 6:00
Weller Court

**TAIKO FESTIVAL**
Aug 19
12:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

**TOKUISHI KARAOKE DOKO KAI**
Aug 25
12:00 P.M.
Japanese Village Plaza

**ZENSHUJI ZENDOKO**
Aug 25
3:00 PM
Japanese Village Plaza
Choreographers Historically

Ever since the beginning, one of the main attractions of the Nisei Week Grand Parade is the appearance of the various schools of Japanese classical dance. Representative of many styles, the leaders of the schools have trained and studied intensively, both here and in Japan before earning their professional names. Some have been involved with the Nisei Week Festival from the start, while others have participated later, yet no less enthusiastically.

For all the hard work, dedication and support, we give our heartfelt thanks and wish to recognize the following teachers:

パレードと街頭音頭に出演するグループ

Fujima Kansuma  
藤間勘須磨  
Since 1934

Hanayagi Tokuyae  
花柳徳八重  
Since 1934

Bando Mitsusa  
坂東三津佐  
Since 1935

Sanjo Kangiku  
三條勘菊  
Since 1949

Hanayagi Rokumie  
花柳禄美恵  
Since 1950

Fujima Chiseye  
藤間千姿絵  
Since 1965

Bando Mitsuhiro  
坂東三津拡  
Since 1969

Azuma Sumako II  
吾妻寿満子  
Since 1969

Hanayagi Rokumine  
花柳禄美音  
Since 1972

Kikuta Kyoko  
菊田京子  
Since 1973

Hanayagi Suzuyukino  
花柳寿ゆき之  
Since 1982

Kawamura Hoenshun  
川村豊潤春  
日本民謡研究会  
豊潤会小東京教室  
Since 1983
Nakaya Natsuko
中谷夏子
琉球芸能教室
Since 1984

Yonamine Keiko
与那嶋恵子
玉城流玉扇会
Since 1989

Arakaki Sachiko
新垣幸子
宮城流北米支部
Since 1990

Arakaki Misako
新嘉喜美佐子
玉城流
Since 1990

Sugiura Mitsuko
杉浦光子
玉城流扇寿会
Since 1990

Emi Hojoen
江見豊浄洲
日本民謡研究会
農漁会L.A.教室
Since 1990

Miyagi Nosho
宮城能松
宮城流能造会
Since 1990
EXHIBITS

AZUMA JAPANESE
CLASSICAL DANCE
Aug 25
2:00 PM
Yaohan Plaza

BANKEI (Miniature Landscape)
& SUNA-E (Sandpainting)
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC Gallery

BONSAI EXHIBIT (Nampu-kai)
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC

CALIFORNIA JAPANESE
CERAMIC ARTS GUILD
Aug 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 23
Weekdays 12 - 5; Sat. Sun. 10 - 5
Doizaki Gallery, JACCC

CHA-NO-YU TEA CEREMONY
(Omote Senke)
Aug 25 & 26
11:00 - 4:00
Union Church

CHIGIRI-E
Aug 18 & 19
11:00 - 1:00
Yaohan Plaza

CHIYO'S BUNKA NEEDLE CRAFT
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / Conference Room “A”

DICE & COMPANY MAGIC SHOW
Aug 25
12:00 PM
Yaohan Plaza

DICE & COMPANY MAGIC SHOW
Aug 26
12:30 PM
Yaohan Plaza

DISPLAY OF CHRISTIAN MINISTRIES
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
Union Church, Room 209

DISPLAY OF
SUIZEKI AND VIEWING STONES
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC

EXHIBIT AND DEMONSTRATION
OF JAPANESE CALLIGRAPHY
Aug 25 & 26
12:00 - 6:00
Union Church

HAMANO ORIGAMI (Paper Folding)
Aug 25 & 26
11:00 - 4:00
Yaohan Plaza

HARA-BUSEIKAN (Sword Dance)
Aug 25 & 26
1:30 - 2:30
Yaohan Plaza

IIIDA MIYUKI ART FLOWER EXHIBIT
Aug 18 & 19
9:30 AM
Higashi Honganji

IKEBANA (Flower Arrangement—
Kado Kyoju-kai)
Aug 25 & 26
11:00 - 6:00
Union Church

JAPANESE AMERICAN
NATIONAL MUSEUM
Aug 17 & 18
Fri: 1 - 8; Sat: 11 - 8
Charter Savings Bank

JAPANESE AMERICAN
NATIONAL MUSEUM
Aug 20 - 21; 23 - 24
Mon - Tue: 11 - 3; Thu - Fri: 11 - 8
Charter Savings Bank

JAPANESE CLASSICAL DANCE
Aug 25
12:30 PM
Yaohan Plaza
JAPANESE COOKING DEMONSTRATION ($2.00 Fee)
Aug 18
1:00 & 3:00 PM
Zenshuji

JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT (Nanka Kyoju-kai)
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC

JAPANESE FLOWER ARRANGEMENT (Pioneer Class / Shunyo School)
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / Room “B-4”

KAMON (Japanese Family Crest) & MYOJI
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
Higashi Honganji

KAWAI SUMI-E CLUB
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
Higashi Honganji

KIMEKOMI DOLL EXHIBIT
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / Conference Room “C”

KOTO PERFORMANCE
Aug 25
1:00 PM
Yaohan Plaza

KOTO PERFORMANCE
Aug 26
1:30 PM
Yaohan Plaza

KYODO TEMARI AIKO KAI & ROZASHI EXHIBIT
Aug 25 & 26
11:00 - 5:00
Union Church

“LOS ANGELES ON STAGE”
Aug 18
3:00 - 4:30 PM
Union Church

LOS ANGELES / NAGOYA EXCHANGE PHOTO EXHIBIT
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 6:00
Higashi Honganji

NISEI WEEK ART SHOW
Aug 19 - 26
Aug 19 - 25 (10 - 7), Aug 26 (10 - 4)
Japanese Village Plaza/Upstairs

PIONEER CENTER CHILDREN’S ART EXHIBIT
Aug 20 - 25
10:00 - 4:00
Sumitomo Bank / Union Bank

SUMI-E
Aug 18 & 19
10:00 - 4:00
JACCC / North Gallery

SUMI-E DISPLAY (Moriki)
Aug 18 & 19, 25
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / Room 302

SUMI-E EXHIBIT (Nanka)
Aug 18 & 19
11:00 - 4:00
Yaohan, 2nd floor

SWORD EXHIBIT
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / Second Floor “A” & “B”

TEA CEREMONY - SADO ENSHURYU
Aug 18 & 19
12:00 - 5:00
Higashi Honganji

THE ART OF TEXTILE DYEING (Bingata Kata-zome)
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC

U.S. 101 PHOTO
Aug 25 & 26
Sat 10 - 5; Sun 10 - 4
Union Church

WAKAYANAGI HISAMI (Japanese Dancing)
Aug 26
2:00 - 2:30
Yaohan Plaza

YUKARI-KAI KIMEKOMI DOLL
Aug 25 & 26
10:00 - 5:00
JACCC / North Gallery
SPORTS

11TH ANNUAL SAMURAI 5-K RUN
Aug 19
8:00 AM
Little Tokyo

22ND ANNUAL SHORINJI KEMPO EMBU-KAI
Aug 25
2:45 PM
244 S. San Pedro St.

50TH NISEI WEEK MARTIAL ARTS EXHIBITION
Aug 26
12:00 - 2:00 PM
Japan America Theatre

AIKIDO DEMONSTRATION
Aug 18
Noon
Yaohan

NISEI WEEK BOWLING TOURNAMENT
Aug 4, 5; 11,12; 18
12:00 PM

NISEI WEEK BOWLING
Aug 18
11:00 AM - 8:00 PM

NISEI WEEK JR. GOLF
Aug 8
8:00 AM
Alondra

JUJITSU BY ADAMS
Aug 18
2:30 PM
Yaohan

KARATE WOMAN DEMONSTRATION
Aug 18 & 19
12:30 PM
Yaohan Plaza

NISEI WEEK KENDO TOURNAMENT
Aug 26
8:00 AM - 6:00 PM
Nishi Hongwanji Gym

NIPPO ART OF SHADOW WARRIORS
Aug 19
1:30 PM
Yaohan

SCNGA NISEI WEEK GOLF TOURNAMENT
Aug 19
7:00 AM
Brookside, Pasadena

SHOTOKAN KARATE
Aug 18
5:00 - 8:00 PM
Nishi Hongwanji Temple

NISEI WEEK TENNIS
Aug 4, 5; 11,12; 18,19
7:30 AM
Long Beach City College

NISEI WEEK INVITATIONAL COED VOLLEYBALL TOURNAMENT
Aug 11; 12
8:00 - 5:00; 8:00 - 7:00
Various School Gyms
This year over 2000 runners are expected to take on the challenge of the Japanese American Optimist sponsored Samurai 5K Run. In its eleventh year, the 3.1 mile race will wind its course through the streets of Little Tokyo and the surrounding downtown Los Angeles area.

With several age divisions, the winners will be presented with plaques by Miss JA Optimist Kay Niizawa (pictured at right).

The JA Optimists provide opportunities for the youth of the community with oratorical and essay contests, as well as an extensive women's basketball program, with ages ranging from grammar school through high school.

For over 35 years, the Japanese American Optimist Club has been a progressive organization dedicated to be of service to the community. Membership is open to all that are interested in spreading "optimism" through the community.

The Samurai 5K Run will be held August 19, at 8:00 a.m.

For more information, please contact Rick Shigio at (213) 889-3069 days or (213) 327-2903 evenings.
Col. Ellison Shoji Onizuka

A Tribute to the First Asian American Astronaut

Throughout the history of human experience run two common denominators: A vision, and a fierce dedication to fulfilling that vision. This accurately describes astronaut Ellison Shoji Onizuka, a Japanese American hero in the truest sense.

Many stories and articles have been written and told about him, his determination to succeed in all of his endeavors and his compassion for his fellow men.

As a child growing up in the coffee fields of Kona, Hawaii, he had a dream to some day become an astronaut. When Neil Armstrong returned from his trip to the moon, Ellison was still a child. At the dinner table in his country home one evening he told his parents and his grandfather that some day he would like to fly to the moon. The reply from his grandfather was "bakatare!"

Ellison grew up on the mauka side of Kona—just one of the boys, but one who seemed to excel at almost everything he did. He was an Explorer Scout who earned his Eagle rank by hard work and drive. He had his frailties—his pranks, temper and quarrels. But he also liked to laugh and possessed an innate kindness. No matter what his successes, he would never forget obasan’s or ojisan’s names and always addressed them as Mr. and Mrs. He believed in courtesy. He made people feel on first meetings as if he really cared about them.

Mrs. Mitsue Onizuka, Ellison’s mother, remembers when he first came back to Holualoa. She hoped he would remember the older people when he went to a senior citizen center at Holualoa School and they came to talk to him. Mrs. Sasaki and Mrs. Nakahashi were there and he called them “obasan.” They were happy he remembered them.

The little ones who saw astronauts only in comics came to him, touching and circling him to see if he was real. One little girl said, “Oh, he shook hands with me, I’ll never wash my hand. I’m going to put a glove on my hand.” This is one of Mrs. Mitsue Onizuka’s memories.

Against stiff competition (8,000 applicants) Ellison was selected in 1978 as one of 35 astronauts for NASA’s space shuttle program. After approximately five years of intensive training, he received his first assignment as a mission specialist aboard the space shuttle Discovery on January 24, 1985. This was the first secret Department of Defense mission. He was accompanied by Capt. Thomas Mattingly, Col. Loren Shriver, Col. Jim Buchli, and Lt. Col. Gary Payton. He never talked about what his responsibilities were on this flight. His only remark was that he hoped some day this mission would be declassified so he would be able to share with his friends what he did.

Upon his return from the Discovery mission, he was honored in his hometown of Kona. It was an exciting moment when he and his family walked into the ballroom of the Kona Surf Hotel to the standing ovation of about a thousand people. The state and city dignitaries paid tribute to him and were proud of his accomplishments because he represented the best in Hawaii and the best in the Japanese Americans.

The Governor of Hawaii proclaimed an “Ellison Onizuka Day” for all of Hawaii and the Mayor of the Big Island proclaimed an “Ellison Onizuka Week.”

Ellison never forgot his roots. On his first flight he took up Kona coffee and macadamia nuts which are products of his hometown. From the coffee fields of Kona to flying in the most
sophisticated flying machine ever made by man, his accomplishments are a tribute to him.

About a year after his first flight on the Discovery, Ellison was given his second assignment on the space shuttle Challenger. His duty was to study and get a close look at Halley's Comet.

On January 28, 1986, seventy-three seconds after lift-off, the Challenger exploded. Col. Onizuka and six crew members perished as millions of people throughout the world watched the disaster on television.

In the aftermath of the horror and shock, Japanese Americans can take pride in Onizuka's courage and accomplishments. His loss falls heavily upon the Hawaiian and Japanese American population because he attained the highest achievement among these people. He did it in a world where he competed with the best and made his mark strictly on his individual merits.

In realizing his dreams, Ellison Onizuka made us all proud. For remaining Ellison, despite his fame, he made us love him.

A few weeks after the Challenger disaster, a group of concerned citizens in Southern California got together to form an organization called the Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka Memorial. The purpose of this memorial is to increase young people's interest in science, space, technology and related fields and provide the opportunity for science students and their teachers throughout the Southern California area to meet and interact together within the structure of a scholarly science conference.

One of Onizuka's favorite activities was talking to students and sharing his dreams. He would describe the opportunities before them and inspire the young to do their very best no matter what their goals. He stressed the importance of education in the fulfillment of their goals and dreams.

The first Onizuka Science Conference took place in 1986 at the Nishi Hongwanji Temple in Little Tokyo. The conference speakers included three astronauts who were crew members from his first flight on the Discovery. Joanne Ishimine of ABC-TV emceed this program.

The second Onizuka Conference took place at UCLA in conjunction with the Greater Los Angeles Teachers Science Association.

The University of Southern California has hosted the Onizuka Science Conference in 1988, 1989 and 1990. The American Honda Motor Co., Inc., has sponsored each of these conferences in cooperation with the Greater Los Angeles Teachers Science Association and the Los Angeles Unified School District High School Division.

In addition to the astronauts from NASA who have participated at the Conference, ten outstanding speakers from universities and industries covering a variety of subjects from space exploration to AIDS have been included in the programs.

The latest Onizuka Science Conference held March 3, 1990 at USC brought together not only the sponsorship of American Honda but the participation of McDonalds Hamburgers and Laura Scudder. Over eight hundred students and teachers represented an area from Fresno to San Diego. The Onizuka Science Conference has become known as the finest high school science conference in the Southern California area.

Several months ago the merchants of Onizuka Street in Little Tokyo proposed the building of a replica of the space shuttle Challenger in memory of the Challenger crew and Col. Onizuka. At a cost of approximately a quarter million dollars, the replica of the Challenger will stand 25-feet high on a five-foot granite base in the middle of Onizuka Street.

Three plaques will be placed at the base of the shuttle—one for NASA, one for the crew of the Challenger, and one in memory of Col. Onizuka.

Joanne Ishimine will emcee the public dedication of the Challenger replica which is scheduled to take place on August 10, 1990. The Onizuka family will be present as will a representative from NASA and Col. Onizuka's fellow astronauts Col. Loren Shriver, Col. Jim Buchli and Col. Gary Payton.

“At the dinner table... one evening he told his parents and his grandfather that some day he would like to fly to the moon. The reply from his grandfather was “bakatare!”
VISITING ROYALTY

To help celebrate the Nisei Week Festival’s 50th Anniversary will be several representatives from various festival courts. Among this year’s delegates will be representatives from Nagoya, Japan, South America and the following U.S. courts: Miss Cherry Blossom of Hawaii, Lani Sakamoto; Miss Cherry Blossom of Northern California, Kana Enomoto; Miss Hawaii of California, Luana Kapualani Alvarez; Miss Nikkei of Chicago, Catherine Takeuchi; Miss New York Nikkei, Marie M. Leahy; and the Greater Seattle Japanese Community Queen, Tomoko Hirayama.

Miyuji Sato
Miss Nagoya
Yuko Teramoto (left) and Yuko Nagase (right)

Lani Sakamoto
Miss Cherry Blossom of Hawaii

Tomoko Hirayama
Greater Seattle Japanese Community

Marie M. Leahy
Miss New York Nikkei

Catherine Takeuchi
Miss Nikkei of Chicago

Kana Enomoto
Miss San Francisco Cherry Blossom

Luana Kapualani Alvarez
Miss Hawaii of California
1990 CANDIDATES

This year's candidates are a talented and diverse group of young women. Comprised of students, newcomers to the business world and professionals with experience already under their belts, only one will shine as the Nisei Week Queen.

We present the Court for 1990: (front) Kathy Oshima, Kathie Honda; (second row) Sandra Posey, Carolyn Osato, Ann Asaoka; (back row) Kazuko Igawa, Dawn Gotanda, Denise Higuchi, Diane Tanaka.
Ann Mieko Asaoka

Age: 22  Birthplace: Granada Hills, California  High School: Granada Hills High  College: UCLA  Major: B.A. Design
Ambition: Expand her experience in the graphic design field and to participate in programs abroad to gain an international perspective in design and culture  Hobbies: Hiking, fishing, swimming, and bicycling  Parents: Lyle and Mitsu Asaoka  Sponsor: San Fernando Valley Japanese American Community Center and Coordinating Council
Dawn Midori Gotanda

Age: 23  Birthplace: Pasadena, California  High School: Mark Keppel High  College: California State University, Los Angeles  Major: B.A. in Speech Communications  Ambition: To be able to educate students on the importance of cultural awareness. Will be starting her teaching career with the Montebello Unified School District  Hobbies: Membership in California Association of Student Councils; teaching swimming; performing with Moving Dance Images  Parents: Lionel and Rose Gotanda  Sponsor: East L.A. Japanese American Citizens League
Denise Masako Higuchi

Age: 21  Birthplace: Anaheim, California  High School: John F. Kennedy, La Palma  College: California State University, Long Beach  Major: Speech Communications; Interpersonal/ Organizational Development; Minor in Human Resources Management  Ambition: To own and operate a training facility for sales representatives  Hobbies: Playing piano, reading, dancing, horseback riding, listening to music and spending time with family and friend  Parents: Diane Yuriko Higuchi  Sponsor: Little Tokyo Lions Club
Age: 21  Birthplace: Orange, California  High School: El Modena High  College: Rancho Santiago College  Major: International Studies degree and promoting and marketing international real estate  Hobbies: Basketball, volleyball, tennis, snow skiing, dancing, being outdoors and watching sunsets, spending time with family and friends  Parents: Gary and Linda Honda  Sponsor: Little Tokyo Lions Club
Kazuko Julie Igawa

Age: 21  
Birthplace: Los Angeles  
High School: Alhambra High  
College: California State University, Los Angeles  
Major: Japanese, Minor in International Business  
Ambition: Receive teaching credentials and teach, eventually pursuing a career in business  
Hobbies: Japanese classical dancing, hiking, snow skiing, cooking, working out, spending time with family and friends, traveling, theatre, going to nursing homes and spending time talking and visiting people there  
Parents: Kiyoshi and Wakiko Igawa  
Sponsor: Westside Optimist Club
Carolyn Kimie Osato

Kathy Lyn Oshima

Age: 25  Birthplace: Chicago, Illinois  College: California State University, Los Angeles  Major: B.S. in Business Finance
Ambition: To obtain a Master's Degree in business and pursue a career in the investments field  Hobbies: Snow skiing, basketball, volleyball, biking, traveling, reading, visiting museums and learning about different cultures, tea ceremony  Parents: Eichi and Yoshiko Oshima  Sponsor: East San Gabriel Valley Japanese Community Center
Sandra Alice Posey

Age 23  Birthplace: Harbor City, California  High School: Downtown Business Magnet High School  College: El Camino College and California State University, Long Beach  Major: Comparative Literature with emphasis on Japanese and Asian studies  Ambition: To become a published author/illustrator  Hobbies: Camping, bicycling, cooking, reading, writing, illustration and storytelling  Parents: Calvert and Akiko Posey  Sponsor: Gardena Valley Japanese American Citizens League
Diane Hanayo Tanaka

Age: 23  Birthplace: Los Angeles, California  High School: North Torrance High  College: California State University, Long Beach  Major: Journalism/Public Relations; Minor in Marketing  Ambition: A career in the agency public relations field and eventually opening my own public relations consulting firm  Hobbies: Aerobics, snow skiing, tennis, roller skating, writing, reading and spending time with family and friends  Parents: Prentice and Hazel Tanaka  Sponsor: South Bay Chapter Japanese American Citizens League
SANDRA FUKUSHIMA, 1989 NISEI WEEK QUEEN
Taking Chances, Finding Friends

Being the Nisei Week Queen is not easy when you're still in college and juggling a busy schedule of Queen and Court appearances, classes, studying and exams. Yet the opportunities for rich experiences offered by the year-long reign as Queen is well worth the effort.

By SOJI KASHIWAGI

For Sandra Akemi Fukushima, winning last year's Nisei Week queen title was beyond her imagination. She had never participated in a queen pageant before, was uncomfortable with speaking in public and took one look at the other participants and concluded that she was the least qualified. And then the unexpected happened. She won.

Being a little on "the shy side," she says she probably would not have run for the title if no one had asked. But a representative from the Orange County Japanese American Association approached her parents and asked to sponsor her. She was very hesitant at first, but after considering the opportunity again, she changed her mind.

And since that moment, Sandra Fukushima's life has not been the same. As Nisei Week Queen, the 20-year-old Yonsei from Placentia has served as the Japanese American community's goodwill ambassador, traveling to San Francisco and Seattle and has been around the world to places such as Japan, Singapore, Hawaii and Brazil—all before her 21st birthday.

She is currently a junior at UCLA, majoring in Psycho-Biology, and is tackling head-on such courses as chemistry, physics, biology and psychology.

She entertains many thoughts of what to do after graduation. She's interested in attending optometry school, has just finished taking a Japanese language class and is looking forward to taking more courses with an eye toward possible usage in business. Eventual marriage and kids are in the future.

But wait. Those plans will have to hold for now. When you're Nisei Week Queen, duty calls often, and when you're a full-time student and Nisei Week Queen, you do double-duty. But Sandra doesn't seem to mind. In fact, she says the best part of her whole experience has been the people she has met, and the close friendships and camaraderie she has gained from her Nisei Week Court. For that she says, she will be forever grateful.

"Everywhere I've gone, the people have been so nice to me. I'm thankful to the Orange County Japanese American Association for their support and giving me the opportunity to participate in so many different experiences. Plus my court
has been very supportive and I want them to know how much I appreciate what they’ve done for me.” Sandra and her Court, Joyce Arakawa, Helen Ota, Stacy Yamato, Jennifer Sugimoto, Kimberly Yoshida, Sharon Wada and Jacqueline Borja, start missing each other if too much time goes by without any contact so they get together periodically to see each other and stay in touch.

And together, they have done a lot. Guest appearances at dinners, restaurant openings, cultural and religious ceremonies, parades, bowling and golf tournaments have kept Sandra and her Court very busy throughout the year.

“Just about every weekend since the beginning of the year there’s been something for me to do for Nisei Week,” she says. “So if one day I have to go somewhere, the rest of the weekend I’m usually doing homework.”

Meeting and talking to new people is the most enjoyable part of her public appearances, she says. But it wasn’t always that easy. She remembered her first speech as a queen contestant.

“I never gave a speech in public before. I was so scared my knees were hitting each other really hard.”

But after much practice, and after many more speeches, speaking became less frightening, until finally, it’s now as if she were talking to someone on a one-on-one basis. And when you talk to her one-on-one, you see a young woman who truly comes across as a real person—not someone who was molded and shaped into the image of the perfect queen—but someone who is open and talks about the way she and her brother used to fight over petty things, or how she’s not quite sure what direction she wants to take in life.

Because she’s open to talking about the silly things in life as well as her doubts and fears, you can relate to her. She’s down to earth. She’s the kind of person who will not only listen to your troubles, but will genuinely care about them and you.

The people she cares the most about are her family—her mom, dad and younger brother, Glenn, 18, also a UCLA student. Her boyfriend, George, and a pool of other close friends also provide valuable support. They are her foundation, the people she calls on when life gets rough. She has also found other effective ways of coping when the pressure is on.

“She’ll either play the piano (she took lessons for ten years) or racquetball, a sport she has just discovered. When all else fails . . .

“Then I go shopping.”

It wasn’t until Sandra visited Japan as Nisei Week Queen that she wished she had learned more about Japanese culture when she was younger.

“I felt sad because I couldn’t speak Japanese,” she says. But as Nisei Week Queen, “I’ve really developed an appreciation for being Japanese.”

As her year as Nisei Week Queen comes to an end, Sandra Fukushima can look back to an exciting and memorable year, full of friendships, personal growth and a new appreciation of herself as a Japanese American—all because she cast her doubts aside and took a chance of a lifetime.

What a difference a year makes.
(Above) Governor John Waihee wishes "aloha" to Sandra and her Court, Kimberly, Helen, Sharon and Jennifer; (right) Queen Sandra with Miss Nagoya, Yasuko Niimoto and Harumi Ichiyanagi; (below) The members of Pure O2 in Nagoya put on a welcome dinner party for the Little Tokyo Business Association.
Queen Sandra joins local dignitaries in the 100th Nagoya Festival Parade; Sandra poses with Nisei Week Chairman, Uncle Joe Hashima during the visit to Hawaii.

While touring Japan, the Queen and some of her Court visit Nagoya Castle; Queen Sandra with Mayor Nishio of Nagoya.

Visiting Mr. Hagino of Meiji Seimei in Tokyo.

(Above left) Queen Sandra joins local dignitaries in the 100th Nagoya Festival Parade; (above, right) Sandra poses with Nisei Week Chairman, Uncle Joe Hashima during the visit to Hawaii.

(Above) While touring Japan, the Queen and some of her Court visit Nagoya Castle; (above right) Queen Sandra with Mayor Nishio of Nagoya.
(Right) Visiting Mr. Hagino of Meiji Seimei in Tokyo.
1989

CORONATION BALL

Queen Sandra Fukushima is surrounded by (from left) grandparents, Jun and Toshiko Fukushima, brother, Glenn, mother, Barbara, father, Dan and grandparents, Yoshio and Bobbi Kono.
The Japanese American community in Los Angeles has had a long and varied history. By the time the first Nisei Week Japanese Festival was organized, a large community had settled around the First and San Pedro Street area. Originally organized to stimulate business during the Depression, it has grown into a lavish annual event. But the passage of time is not noticed as people go about their day-to-day business and now the Nisei Week Japanese Festival is celebrating its 50th anniversary.

How did the time fly by? What was it like in the beginning? What about the war years? How did it start again?

In the following pages, we present the past 50 years of the Nisei Week Japanese Festival, highlighting the Queens and their Courts, Marshals, Pioneers, Community Service Awardees, the Parade and choreographers, shows, exhibits, sports and carnival activities. Interspersed among the chronologies are features which give an overview of the events that affected the community during the different decades and probe the possibilities for the future.

Before we start though, let’s listen in on a conversation held recently among some longtime residents of Little Tokyo, who remember when...
Participants:
Tak Hamano:
President of Umeya, Inc., manufacturer of senbei, rice cakes, including the famous fortune cookies.
Masaye Hosoi Inamura:
Sister of Yoshiko Sakurai and wife of Shig Inamura.
Shigeo Inamura:
Retired from shoe repair business in Crenshaw area. Parents owned hotel in Little Tokyo before the war.
Archie Miyatake:
Owner of Miyatake Studios, which will return to Little Tokyo as soon as their new building is built on the old site on East First Street.
Frank Omatsu:
Senior vice president of Sumitomo Bank of California, chairman of Nisei Week Booklet Committee.
Yoshiko Hosoi Sakurai:
Retired former secretary of Yasuo Clifford Tanaka, stockbroker. Father owned Mansei-an restaurant in Little Tokyo before the war.
Kats Kunitsugu:
Executive secretary of the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center and convener/recorder of this zadankai.

ZADANKKAI:
Talk Goes Around

Nisei Week zadankai (round-table conversation) held at Hotel Tokyo restaurant in May, 1990.

Kats: Most of you grew up in Little Tokyo and are old enough to recall what some of the Nisei Week Festivals were like in the good old days.
Yoshiko: Times were really bad then, when Nisei Week started.
Frank: When did 379 (Koyasan Boy Scout Troop 379 Drum and Bugle Corps) first start marching in the parade?
Yoshiko: From the first year. (To Shig) weren't you Scoutmaster then?
Shig: I'm old, but not that old. (To Tak) I got stuck with you guys around 1938. (Laughter) (Inamura served as Scoutmaster of Troop 379 for three-and-a-half years).
Archie: In 1938 or '39, Kathy Yoshizawa was the majorette. She marched in front of the 379. Didn't her mother have a sewing school?
Kats: Yes. Modern Sewing School. I went there a short time.
Tak: (To Frank) We used to see you guys (St. Mary's Episcopal Church Troop) all over the place. Camp Hollywood.
Frank: Brighton Beach, too.
Tak: I used to go watch all those basketball games — the Olivers, Mustangs, Cougars, Bears, Shamrocks. Remember the Shrine Skating Rink? I used to go every Sunday. When you're young, you always leave a half hour early, 'cause there was going to be a fight. (Laugh).
Frank: The ondo and 379. What else was in the parade?
Tak: They didn't have those big floats like they do now.
Yoshiko: The ondo had a lot of participants. We used to practice in back of the place.
Archie: Yeah, the Safety Auto Park.
Yoshiko: Around three times a week, people used to come out. There was nothing else to do. No TV... It was THE hotel in those days.
—Yoshiko Hosoi Sakurai

I used to go watch all those basketball games — the Olivers, Mustangs, Cougars, Bears, Shamrocks." —Tak Hamano
wear those formal kimonos. Did you know Kiyomura, Shisho? (Madame Kiyomura was one of the earliest classical dance and music teachers).

Tak: When I think of those guys who were leaders in those days — Masao Satow, Eiji Tanabe, Kay and Roku Sugahara — they're all gone now. They really hustled to make it work.

Yoshiko: They used to come over to our house for extra ondo practice. So we could lead the others.

Frank: All I remember from the first Nisei Week were those kendo-ists. They all had balloons on their heads and they separated into Red and White teams. The team that ended up with the most unbusted balloons was declared the winner.

Yoshiko: The Coronation Ball was always at the Biltmore Hotel. It was THE hotel in those days. I don't think the Times ever carried those stories.

Archie: Paul Bannai used to be emcee of the Coronation Ball... at the Palladium.

Shig: And the Zend Ballroom, before the war. South of the Statler Hotel.

Archie: Yes, and remember the Talent Shows at the Yamato Hall? And didn't they also have a Hobby Show?

Masaye: Where?

Archie: Most likely in the basement of the old Union Church, huh?

Masaye: The highlight of the Yamato Hall days was the Seno Brothers singing. They were the tops.

Kats: I remember the Talent Show at the Koyasan Hall after the war. Reiko Sato, the dancer? She was good. She did an Apache number with Don Takeuchi that was really a production number. She had sex appeal.

Tak: Nisei on the average are shy. It took guts to go up on the stage.

Yoshiko: Wasn't Alice Watanabe the first queen?

Masaye: They sold tickets... I mean, you had to buy tickets to vote for the queen.

Yoshiko: Well, they gave you tickets for buying things in Little Tokyo. One ticket for $1's purchase.

Frank: Did they make any money?

Yoshiko: Muri shite katta no yo. (You made it a point to buy in Little Tokyo).

Archie: If you bought a refrigerator, you got a bucketful of tickets. (Laughter) I think it was my father (Ed. note: the late Toyo Miyatake) who suggested having a grand marshal. I think the first one was Sessue Hayakawa.

Frank: Did the ondo just go around in circles, or did they parade?

Yoshiko: We paraded. We went down First St. from Central Ave. and turned at Weller St. (now Astronaut Ellison S. Onizuka St.)

Masaye: Then they had the Carnival in those days, too.

Shig: In the parking lot (now a part of the Japanese Village Plaza).

Kats: Remember the street dances?

Yoshiko: They used to close off the street. Was it Central Ave.?

Masaye: It could have been San Pedro St. ... You know, I wonder if we had gangs that erupted during Nisei Week?

Yoshiko: If they had fights, they were clean fights. They weren't mean, like gangs are today.

Tak: In the old days, if you can't fight your own battles, don't fight. But I saw some mean fights. I watched from the top of the car. I grew up on Weller St., you know.

Frank: Do you think Nisei Week will survive?

Yoshiko: I can't predict the future. It seems to be run by businesses now.

Kats: No, it's still run by Nisei and Sansei volunteers. But we are getting more funding from businesses... Well, it's getting late. I know we can go on for hours reminiscing like this so thank you very much for taking time to join us tonight.

“I think it was my father who suggested having a grand marshal. I think the first one was Sessue Hayakawa.”

—Archie Miyatake

“Ondo was not professional. Everybody had a good time.”

—Frank Omatsu

Masaye Hosoi Inamura and Shigeo Inamura

“I remember... Reiko Sato, the dancer. She was good. She did an Apache number with Don Takeuchi that was really a production number.”

—Kats Kunitsugu
NISEI WEEK
1935

QUEEN COURT
Alice Watanabe
Miye Fujioka
Fukiko Hori
Kay Okamoto
Mary Ota

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Clarence Y. Arima
NISEI WEEK
1936

QUEEN COURT
Renko Oyama
Terue Miyake
Mitsuko Tamari
Yukiya Yamaguchi
Frances Yoshihara

AMERICAN SUZUKI MOTOR CORPORATION
Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
NISEI WEEK
1937

QUEEN COURT
Clara Suski
Toshiko Ikemura
Haru Shiwo
Mary Sasaki

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Sam Minami

ANZEN HARDWARE, Tsutomu Maehara
Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
NISEI WEEK
1938

QUEEN COURT
Margaret Nishikawa
Haruko Fujita
Yoshiye Sato
Lily Arikawa
Mary Watanabe

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Saburo Tani

Dai-ichi Kangyo Bank of California
QUEEN COURT
Shizuko Narahara
Emiko Hino
Mary Kubota
Peggy Tsuchiya
May Tomio

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Fred Tayama

PIONEERS
Matsutaro Hiraishi
Chiyo Abe

EAST WEST EYE INSTITUTE, Fred K. Kurata, M.D.
NISEI WEEK
1941

QUEEN COURT
Reiko Inouye
Masa Fujioka
Dorothy Iijima
Shizuyo Ishino
Maye Noma

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Eiji E. Tanabe
Part of the indomitability of the human spirit has to do with man’s domestic instinct. Despite the situation, despite the crisis, despite massive injustice, people will create a household out of ashes within 24 hours of their arrival. Plane-crash survivors, for example, will set up housekeeping within the wreckage if they are there long enough.

With that in mind, it is not surprising that amidst all the tragedy, anger, anguish and chaos of the evacuation of the Japanese and Japanese Americans from the West Coast and their heartless trek into desolate concentration camps, Nikkei traditional arts not only survived, but even thrived. Even among barbed wire and armed guards, the Japanese could take solace in the ancient and gentle arts of their heritage.

Amazingly, it was not just the harmless-looking arts that were allowed by the War Relocation Authority officials, like odori (Japanese dancing) and wood carvings, but even sumo tournaments and kabuki were activities. Kabuki to the uninitiated, after all, can look fierce and threatening, what with the makeup and elaborate costumes. But, in Heart Mountain, Wyoming, camp kabuki was a mainstay form of entertainment, held in most of the mess halls at one time or another. And sumo tournaments were contested in Poston, Arizona.

Sadako Ishizaki, who was interned in Heart Mountain, said that Japanese forms of entertainment were being practiced in the assembly center, like Santa Anita Race Track or at the Pomona Fairgrounds. “We started in Pomona (Assembly Center),” noted Ishizaki, who today helps run Yamato Restaurant in Century City. “It was hard to put something together.”

Ishizaki recalled that besides Japanese traditional dancing, the internees put together their own band. At Heart Mountain, a kabuki teacher from Japan (Tomofuku Nakamura) was among those interned, and he set about teaching anyone interested the finer points of this Japanese theater. Everything was not necessarily makeshift. After a while, the kabuki group managed to utilize a Montgomery Ward catalog and sent away for fabric to make their costumes. Ishizaki said that once the kabuki company got organized, they were literally performing every night at the different block mess halls.

In fact, Ishizaki’s performances were such a big hit with the Issei audiences that people, years later, would stop her on the street in Little Tokyo to thank her. “All the Issei appreciated it,” Ishizaki said. “They all wanted to thank me.”

For many of the Issei, this was their first opportunity to see or practice some of the traditional Japanese arts. Prof. Yuji Ichioka, author of “The Issei: The World of the First Generation Japanese Immigrants,” pointed out that most of the Issei were not familiar with such things. “If you take the average Issei, they came from farms,” Ichioka said. As he explained, the Issei knew nothing about ikebana and other such arts, but they suddenly “had all this time to kill.” Many of them were farmers in the Central Valley, working 16 hours a day, with no leisure time. For these people, practicing any of the arts was out of the question. Ichioka noted that probably the biggest event for these people was to “see a Japanese movie.”

For that reason, plus the accessibility of trained teachers, many of the Japanese took advantage of the situation and learned how to make paper cranes, sing shigin or how to arrange flowers. As Ichioka said, “Those kinds of things flourished.”

Probably no one was as surprised at the interest level for Japanese dance as was Kansuma Fujima. Kansuma found herself in Rohwer, Arkansas, certainly not a hotbed of dancing of any kind. She had been shipped there from Santa Anita, and had no idea that anyone would be interested in learning the traditional Japanese dances.

“But letters began coming in,” she said, “from Salt Lake City, Colorado, Manzanar, asking to study Japanese dance from me.” Kansuma had just spent five years in Japan learning the many traditional Japanese dance steps and techniques. She had opened up a studio in Little Tokyo, but Pearl Harbor came and that career appeared to be put on hold.

Surprisingly, the WRA officials allowed Kansuma some freedom of movement to enable her to teach. After everyone realized her talent, the internees built a theater at Rohwer, and they actually opened the theater to the outside public, charging 75 cents to see a traditional Japanese dance show. At one point, Kansuma was even allowed to travel back to Los Angeles to pick up her records and costumes. Certain individuals from other camps even managed special passes to visit Kansuma at Rohwer to learn from her.

Because of her work, work for which she had trained many years, Kansuma said the camp situation did not seem so bad to her. “To tell the truth,” she said, “I was
so busy, I didn’t have time to think about it (the situation). I feel guilty.”

Kansuma herself took advantage of other people’s talents and willingness to teach. “I went to sewing school,” she said, “I got a diploma in sewing. We learned a lot.”

Kansuma’s old studio was in the Tomio Building on Weller Street in Little Tokyo. She had about 50 students in those days, and she recalled the first Nisei Week Parades as if they were yesterday. In those days, the parade was held at night, so Little Tokyo was lit up by the lanterns.

“It was so romantic,” she recalled. “The moon would be out. All the dancers (from the different groups) would get together (at the parade’s end) and dance together.

The Rev. Mas Kodani of Senshin Temple in Los Angeles was just a boy when he was interned at Poston, Arizona, but he has distinct memories. One of them is that the camp held its own sumo tournaments. “They didn’t allow any of the martial arts at first,” he recalled.

But, there was sumo.”

Kodani said that there were sewing and cooking classes available and many of the internees spent their time carving wooden brooches, that often looked like birds. “They were pretty little things,” he said.

The Rev. Kodani could not recall if ikebana was practiced and he doubts if anyone got to play a koto at Poston, but he does remember dance classes (Nihon buyo).

Things were restricted only insofar as they might be construed as militaristic or dangerous, Kodani noted.

Most of the martial arts were not practiced at first, although there were eventually judo tournaments in some camps, but kendo was not allowed at Poston.

“I think after they got us all into the camps, they (WRA) didn’t care what we did,” Kodani speculated.

At Poston, the internees managed to build two huge swimming pools. The water came from a canal that was connected to the Colorado River. The only drawback was that rattlesnakes often prowled along the pools’ edge. The internees also built gardens and ponds to brighten up the landscape.

For all the evils involved in the camps, Kodani noted that the Japanese made the most of their time. They practiced traditional Japanese arts, along with sports and other hobbies to fill the time. They were able to turn something terrible into something worthwhile, although that certainly was not the WRA’s intention.

“It (relocation) reinforced Japanese traditions,” Kodani said.

So it was that the spirit of the Japanese and Japanese Americans remained strong in the face of tragedy beyond their control. They took a situation where a government penalized them for being Japanese and they didn’t run away from their heritage, they amplified it.

In the face of desert camps, they created gardens and ponds. In the ugliness of barbed wire and armed guards, they learned elegant dances and made beautiful objects. They were strong when they could have been weak and the reward was loveliness and souls filled to the brim.
NISEI WEEK
1949

QUEEN COURT
Terrie Hokoda
Fumi Iketani
Margaret Kikuchi
Joan Ritchie
Yukie Sato
Tami Shimahara
Susie Shinohara

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Eiji E. Tanabe

PIONEERS
Riichiro Nobe
Shige Matsuba
Kotsura Tawa

J-E-M ASSOCIATES

66
As it still does, the first Nisei Week in 1934 brightened Little Tokyo for seven days and nights. That was fifty-six years ago, August 12 through 18.

A global war disrupted its unbroken sequence. Its Golden Anniversary would have been, not 1990, but George Orwell’s fateful 1984.

In the depth of the Great Depression, Nisei college graduates worked for Susumu Hasuike’s 3-Star Produce chain for $80 dollars a month. Little Tokyo merchants catered mostly to Issei patrons. Even then Little Tokyo was the hub of the largest Japanese American population on the U.S. mainland, but it was an unpromising retail area, stable but not expanding.

The Issei controlled it completely, as they did the community. We respected our elders, but their ideas were getting old.

Exuberant Nisei came up with the idea of Nisei Week to lift the gray cloud of the Great Depression. They urged the Issei to cater more to Nisei patronage both in hiring and retail practice. That done, they would bring the customers. The JACLers sold the idea to leading Little Tokyo Issei merchants.

Enough Issei merchants believed them to help fund the early effort. The Nisei went to work. They organized. It was a milestone in Little Tokyo community cooperation.

WHO WERE THESE NISEI?

First general chairman of Nisei Week was Clarence Arima, his co-chairman was Kay Sugahara. Arima was the Nisei manager of the Issei-owned Union Paper Supply Co. Sugahara was owner of Universal Foreign Service, a customs brokerage firm. Names in the first Nisei Week program identify the nucleus of the organizing team: Seiichi Nobe, John Ando, Tetsu Ishimaru, John Maeno, Sue Ando, Ruby Sakai, Etsu Sato, Masao Igasaki, Yogoro Takeyama, John Yahiro. They were more than 10 years older than most Nisei. Established in their vocations, they were a Little Tokyo Nisei leadership group. John Maeno, who became chairman of the third Nisei Week, wrote in his program:

“The Nisei is a new American. Racially of the Orient, he is a true and loyal citizen of the United States, his native land. Young, ambitious, hopeful, though at times oppressed, he seeks to take his place in civic development and community progress.”

This JACL message became a fixture. It was interspersed with the commercial marketing thrust of Issei shopkeepers. Nisei Week became an instrument not only to revive and revitalize Little Tokyo’s economic base, but to expose the non-Japanese audience out there to the Nisei’s message that the successors to the Issei were a generation of Americans.

That mainstream community outside Little Tokyo was not terribly interested in, nor receptive to Nisei offerings of their Japanese cultural inheritance. But from the outset, the Nisei organizers planned their attractions around the best they could offer in ondo dancing, Japanese floral arrangements, tea ceremonies, martial arts, fashion shows, kimono-clad queen and attendants, calligraphy, art shows, and talent programs, in the hope that the transpacific cultural bridge would somehow flower and bloom.

In the ensuing half century, Nisei Week’s format has undergone surprisingly little change from its basic original. The ondo dance parade has continued to be a crowd-drawing spectacle.

Joseph Shinoda, Nisei graduate of Pomona who built San Lorenzo Nursery Company into a leading national grower and distributor of roses and floral products, wrote an occasional column for The Rafu Shimpo. About that First Nisei Week’s ondo parade, he observed that some Issei, surprisingly, were out there in the streets with the dancers:

“They gyrate in those pigeon-toed steps with the seriousness of cogitating jurists; when not lost in the contemplation of the next dance step, they smile with the same ingenuous smile they use in business — a little sheepish but still a smile more than a grimace.”

Were the founders, Issei and Nisei alike, of Nisei Week satisfied with the results? I believe they were. It has become a tourist institution. As Southern California’s population continues to explode, Nisei Week draws visitors from around the globe as well as participation from the third, fourth, and fifth generations descended from its founders.
Postwar Nisei Week

By HENRY MORI

Although we are observing the 50th anniversary of the annual Nisei Week Festival this August, the time span between the program's inception in 1934 and today had lost a few additional years.

Half a century actually labels the aging Nisei as survivors through the archaic period of the 1930s Depression; the struggles and longing for better jobs and opportunities for good life; and the subsequent Evacuation in early 1942.

This will be the backdrop of the changes which have occurred since the revival of the festival in 1949. Just remember there was the complete "wipe-out" of Little Tokyo when the government's mass evacuation of 110,000 persons of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast took place.

The faint dream of even a revival or a return to Los Angeles to resume one's livelihood was nonexistent.

Then, in early 1946, when former businessmen on First and San Pedro Streets began to reopen the once devastated shops in the area, up popped small talks about the Nisei Week Festival. Another three years were taken by the merchants to bring it to fruition.

The first postwar edition was an abbreviated ten-day affair, highlighted with the crowd pleasers: the coronation ball, the food/games carnival and public participation in the ondo parade. A few cultural exhibits and events which did not involve financial drain were offered by kind sponsors.

The 1949 show was the end of long, behind-the-scenes hard planning, coupled with a spirit of challenge and a new outlook for the future and community pride.

The festival overcame the shikataganai syndrome of the 1940s in more ways than one. It opened new avenues for growth. The celebration erased even quiet murmurs of possible financial fallout should such a large undertaking be held only thirty-six months since the return of merchants.

Among the Nisei leadership mustered to get the festival "off-the-ground" were Joe Ito of Joseph's Men's Wear; Kiyu Yamato, Insurance; Roy Hoshizaki, House of Photography; Archie Miyatake, Toyo Miyatake; Taro Kawa, Enbun Co.; Mitsuhiko Shimizu, Asahi Shoe Co.; Eiji Tanabe, Travel; Tosh and Ich Nakajima, Empire Printing Co.; Soichi Fukui, Fukui Mortuary; and Willie Funakoshi, Funakoshi Insurance Co.

The list hardly covers the names of other volunteers and business firms which came forth to assist in the programs.

Yaemon Minami of Guadalupe won the 1949 title of "Issei of the Year." The choice was made by a ten-man committee composed of members of the Japanese American Chamber of Southern California.

The Reverend John Misao Yamazaki of St. Mary's Episcopal Church was recognized the following year. Gongoro Nakamura was given the coveted Pioneer Award in 1951.

Terri Hokoda, wife of Tug Tamura, became the first Sansei to win the Nisei Week Festival crown in 1949, a milestone of sorts. The previous prewar titlists were second generation Japanese Americans.

It may have been a brief period of time but between 1946-1949 there mushroomed countless numbers of mom-and-pop eating houses in Little Tokyo, more often than not, operated by onetime relocation camp cooks.

They were a blessing in disguise for the number of returnees trickling back, who once had very few places to enjoy Nihonshoku dishes. The World War II victims now would find warm greetings and a "haven" in the town once called Bronzeville.

For a brief moment, it seemed the people had never left Little Tokyo. However, underneath it all, there were many individual and community problems ahead of them. Family housing was scarce, as were employment situations for the middle-aged and the elderly. Help-each-other policy then prevailed.

Will the community celebrate its 100th Nisei Week anniversary?

In rekindling memories of the first resumption of the Nisei Week Festival four decades ago, we cannot help but recall a fictionalized story by one young Nisei writer who silently lamented on what lies ahead for his generation.

"Whither Are We Bound?" he asked in the article published in The Rafu Shimpo in mid-1930. The title is rather haunting as we face the second fifty years of the community-sponsored annual Nisei Week Festival.

We pray the Sansei and Yonsei carry on the tradition.
NISEI WEEK
1950

QUEEN COURT
Sachi Kazunaga
Grace Aoki
Ruby Ushijima
Grace Mayemura
Emy Miya

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Frank Okada

Japan Airlines
NISEI WEEK
1951

QUEEN COURT
Aiko Ogomori
Susie Yamashita
Kikuyo Fujihara
Tazuko Yamamoto
Florence Wada

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Kiyo Yamato

JAPANESE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE
During the Evacuation (1942-1945) Little Tokyo was called "Bronzeville," populated by blacks from the Deep South living in the storefronts in the small hotels and tiny apartments. A man from Hong Kong ran the chop suey house from prewar days, through World War II and after on the north side of East First Street. He remembered Little Tokyo had deteriorated physically and looked like a slum during this period.

In 1945, the Japanese American evacuees began to return and with infinite patience and hard work, slowly restored Little Tokyo to its prewar color and style. S.K. Uyeda opened the first Nikkei business "Bronzeville 5-10-25 Cent Store" (246 E. 1st St.). Situated at the popular East First and San Pedro intersection were Club Cobra (prewar Ichifuji), a nightclub catering to returning GIs and evacuees, the Taul Building (prewar New Tomio Building, 312 E. 1st St.) with Civic Cut-Rate (Iwaki) Drug, back in Nikkei hands and Miyako Hotel (258 E. 1st St.). Kataoka Jewelers did not come back.

When the prewar Nisei Week Festivals were cosponsored by the merchants with the Downtown Los Angeles JACL, proceeds were used to maintain the JACL office at 1245 San Pedro Street. When the Festival was revived under the leadership of Taro Kawa and the late Kiyoharu Yamato in 1949, the traditional orei was omitted and net profits were placed in a Japanese community center building fund. After three years, in response to some accusations that Yamato and Kawa were "monopolizing Nisei Week," they relinquished their voluntary role and made the fund independent of subsequent Nisei Week Festivals. The trust fund which had about $9,000 from the three postwar festivals had grown in 1974 to $20,000 which was donated to the Japanese American Community Center, then under construction.

In the early 1950s, a quarter of Little Tokyo was razed to make way for Parker Center, the headquarters for the L.A. Police Department. One of the well-known Nihonmachi landmarks on the block which had to relocate was The Rafu Shimpo to South San Pedro in 1951. Toyo Hotel and Olympic Hotel quit altogether and First Street from Los Angeles to San Pedro Streets was widened considerably.

With the demise of the street cars in the 1960s, City Hall planners wanted to widen East First Street between San Pedro and Alameda to facilitate the motor traffic patterns in and out of the civic center area. It also meant tearing down the last vestiges of Victorian and pre-World War II Little Tokyo's north side. Two church buildings—Union (118 N. San Pedro) and Nishi Hongwanji (119 N. Central)—and the shops and hotels in between were all doomed on paper.

But Little Tokyo business and community interests, and non-Asian friends balked. "We have to hang on to what's left of Little Tokyo history," they cried. What was to be a grandiose alteration in the 1970s was changed to conservancy in the 1980s, preserving the area which is now designated the Little Tokyo Historic District—the culmination of a persistent campaign that lasted two decades. Little Tokyo is now undergoing another renewal.

Union Church, where the Little Tokyo Players staged their productions in the late 1920s, is being converted to the home of the East-West Players. The end of this year, the vacated Buddhist temple built in 1925 at East First and Central Avenue is reopening as the Japanese American National Museum.

We owe those farsighted citizens our gratitude for conserving a tangible piece of Little Tokyo, a neighborhood which the Issei developed and the Nisei nurtured with its annual midsummer Japanese festival with an American accent.
Early Years

When Empire Printing Company closed its shop for good this past April, Ich and Tosh Nakajima shut the doors on a business started nearly 80 years ago by their father. His sons turned over to the *Pacific Citizen* a box of Japanese telephone books they had published, the oldest copy being a 1926 directory, through 1965.

The first Japanese telephone book, all *Nihongo* format, was printed by Empire in 1910 (Meiji 43). The list ran vertically, with names in alphabetical order, followed by the phone number, name or street and the house number at the bottom. In 1927 (Showa 2), the phone book changed to typesetting a horizontal format. From 1932, names were in both Japanese and English. As the Japanese population grew, so did the size of the directory. From 1958 there was a book for the city and another for the rest of Southern California.

Incidentally, the first appearance of “Nisei” in the phone books must be shared by a refreshment stand (Nisei-do, 336 1/2 E. First) and a furniture store (Nisei Trading, 256 E. Second—still in business though not at the same location) in the 1937-38 edition.

The final two editions, all English, were printed by Wimp Hiroto of *Crossroads* for Keiro Services in 1970 and 1973. The recent Japanese phone directories published by Japan Publicity omits addresses entirely except in its classified yellow pages.
NISEI WEEK
1952

QUEEN COURT
Emiko Kato
Sally Gushiken
Louise Kawasumi
Mickey Yamamoto
Barbara Abe

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Eiji E. Tanabe

JAPANESE VILLAGE PLAZA, David Hyun, Chairman
QUEEN COURT
Judy Sugita
Jeanne Yokota
Jeanne Inouye
Ruth Fujimoto
Yae Marumoto

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Bob Uno
NISEI WEEK
1954

QUEEN COURT
June Aochi
Florence Ochi
Tomiko Baba
Michi Masukawa
Takako Yamada

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
George Kuniyoshi

PIONEERS
Mr. and Mrs. Tamajiro Eto
Mrs. Shinsaku Hogen

Kajima International, Inc.
Pick up the box scores of any present day Japanese American event and one will find the line-up sprinkled with names like “Jones,” “Smith,” “Johnson,” and “Evans.” And in most cases, they are the stars of the games.

It wasn’t always like that.

During the era referred to as the “good old days,” sports in the Japanese American community were contested strictly between one all-Nisei team against another.

Sports was one of the activities which helped to polarize the numerous communities in Southern California where Japanese Americans were living.

Although sports really did not get the recognition it deserved as an important asset of the community, it was one of the key activities which helped the Nisei to grow and mature and go on to become some of the leaders of today’s Japanese American society.

Unlike today, when groups of young men get together and form teams just for the purpose of competing, sports in the old days was played by kids who grew up together and shared common interests both on and off the court.

Lifelong friendships were developed as the result of these young men playing together for their club or community teams.

And, while the present day gladiators may think that they are the superior competitors when compared to the yesterday’s athletes, history would not seem to support the analysis of today’s athletes.

Surprisingly, some of the most gifted athletes produced in the Japanese American community, came from the past.
In an era when the opportunities to become a professional athlete were very few, most agree that there were more Nisei who had the potential to become professionals.

However, priorities were much different than they are now and most of those who might have gone on to professional sports stardom, chose another road.

A name that quickly comes to mind is George Aratani, who was recently selected to become a member of Santa Maria's Sports Hall of Fame.

Those who saw Aratani, now a successful businessman, say that he could have played in the Major Leagues both with his hitting and defensive play.

However, like many young Nisei of his day, Aratani chose to continue his education and went off to Japan.

He was not forgotten by those who witnessed his abilities when they singled him out to be inducted into his hometown's Hall of Fame.

For Japanese Americans, the sports eras can be divided into four parts.

First, there were the '30s. Most of the great athletes of this era are lost to memory, mainly due to the events of the '40s which thrust America into war and Japanese Americans into relocation centers.

In many cases, teams formed in the relocation centers were offshoots from the groups which participated together on the "outside," prior to camp days.

An added ingredient to the competition in relocation centers was that it was no longer restricted to, say, the Westsiders of Los Angeles playing against the Eastsiders.

Since internees in most camps came from widespread geographic locations, competition was centered between teams from cities or in some cases from other states.

In Heart Mountain Relocation Center in Wyoming, for example, internees from Los Angeles, the San Francisco Bay Area and from the state of Washington, were thrown together. The provincial pride of each area prevailed to make the competition as keen as seen anywhere.

This, then, was the era of the '40s.

Some of the greatest athletes of the Japanese American community came out of this time period. Who can name two greater all-around athletes than Babe Nomura or Tosh Asano?

Both Asano and Nomura were outstanding in four sports, with Nomura going on to stardom in football at San Jose State University. He also excelled at baseball and barring a football injury, could well have been a Major League prospect.

Asano is still rated as the best softball pitcher ever to play the game at not only the Japanese American level of competition but at any level. He also starred in football and track and field as well as basketball.

The '40s also produced some outstanding basketball players such as George Goto, who led Placer Junior College to the national JC championship. He later matriculated at Stanford.

In the '50s, most of the attention seemed to focus on basketball.

Dick Nagai and Kaz Shinzato, both of whom played their high school basketball at Roosevelt High School, accomplished rare feats.

They both received basketball scholarships to USC. While they did not experience the same stardom on the Trojan varsity that they did as prepsters, it was truly remarkable that two Sansei youngsters could win basketball scholarships to a major university program.

The era of the '60s seem to reflect a change of direction for Japanese Americans.

Names began to pop up as coaches rather than as players. A number of high schools and a few colleges had Japanese Americans as head coaches.

It was during the '60s era that a new activity seemed to be catching hold of the younger generation. . . golf. High schools began to turn out outstanding golfers among both boys and girls.

As the '60s turned to the '70s it seemed that there were more Japanese Americans involved in the sport of golf than any other activity. Glamour sports such as football and basketball seemed to be losing out to golf as the number one sport as far as the number of participants were concerned.

The '80s seemed to continue in the same trend.

The one notable difference as the eras continued to roll on was the absence of the real Japanese American sports star. . . the media attention grabber and the athlete who was the focal point of conversation where Nisei gathered to rehash the events of the time.

The '90s?

Again, a new sport as far as Japanese Americans are concerned, seems to be set to take center stage.

In the winter Olympics of 1992, a gold medal is not out of the realm of possibility for Kristi Yamaguchi, a figure-skating star from Northern California.

Traditionalists among sports fans may ask, "Where have you gone, Joe DiMaggio?"
NISEI WEEK
1955

QUEEN COURT
Stella Nakadate
Aki Mitani
Margaret Fukuda
Nori Shiozaki
Margaret Ouchi
Hazel Fujikawa

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Kesanoshin Sakuda

PIONEERS
Dr. and Mrs. John Yamazaki
Queen Court
Phyllis Ono
Gail Imazaki
Helen Kobata
June Sugiyama
Phyllis Fukushima
Irene Fukute
Marilyn Ito
May Ishii

General Chairman
Jim Watamura

Pioneer
Mr. and Mrs. Gongoro Nakamura
Generations Of Honor

Little is known about Nikkei participation in early U.S. military history but the 442nd/100th Battalion has been immortalized in film and print. A closer look at history and a personalized view of actual service follows in an article excerpted from a previously published feature—in the 1988 Nisei Week Festival booklet.

By TAKESHI NAKAYAMA

Every August, the crowds that line the streets of Little Tokyo for the Nisei Week Parade observe a color guard of aging Nisei soldiers bearing the flags of the state and nation for the duration of the parade. These veterans occasionally draw chuckles from the spectators as they good-naturedly struggle to maintain precise marching formation while supporting the large unwieldy flags.

Many in the crowd are unaware of the gallant deeds performed for the United States military by these men decades ago on the distant battlefields of Italy, France and Germany. Their presence in the parade, however, is symbolically appropriate and should serve to remind us not only of their legendary heroism for the 100th Battalion/442nd Regimental Combat Team, but of the tradition of service to the nation performed on the battlefields of both Europe and Asia by Japanese Americans of every generation since the Spanish American War.

The earliest known American veterans of Japanese ancestry participated in the Spanish American War of 1898. The number of servicemen is unknown, but seven Issei were reported killed in action, and two survived aboard the U.S. battleship Maine, which was blown up in Havana Bay. There were reports of Issei in other military units in that war, including one who was wounded in action during the Battle of Santiago Bay.

No exact figures exist of Issei and Nisei who served in the U.S. during World War I from 1917 to 1919, but it is certain that Nikkei soldiers such as Tokutaro Slocum, an Issei brought up by a Caucasian family, fought in that Europe conflict. And some 803 Japanese—half of them Issei—were reported to have been in the Hawaii National Guard, which was federalized at the outbreak of World War I.

The most dramatic and best known Japanese American participation in the military occurred when 33,000 Nisei served during World War II. They were largely motivated by a desire to prove their loyalty to a hostile nation which, consistent with a history of racial bigotry towards Asian Americans, failed to distinguish American citizens of Japanese ancestry from the enemy across the Pacific. These Nisei, as President Truman stated, fought "not only the enemy, but prejudice as well."

While over 110,000 Japanese Americans were removed from their homes on the West Coast and held in remote, inland concentration camps, 694 Nisei were killed in action, mostly from the 100th/442nd Regimental Combat Team. The 100th/442nd was one of the most highly decorated units in the war, having been awarded seven Presidential Distinguished Unit Citations and 18,143 individual decorations—including one Congressional Medal of Honor awarded posthumously to Pfc. Sadao Munemori.

Lesser known are the achievements of the Nisei...
Forty-three Nikkei lost their lives fighting for America in Korea during the early 1950s, and the Korean War produced one Nikkei Medal of Honor recipient, Hiroshi Miyamura of Gallup, New Mexico.

The Vietnam War involved an estimated 3,000 Japanese Americans serving with the U.S. armed forces. Casualty figures reveal 117 killed or missing in action with two young men from Hawaii who served there—Rodney J.T. Yano and Terry T. Kawamura—awarded the Medal of Honor posthumously.

The stories of the veterans from our community during these times of war are as varied as they are remarkable and, indeed, form an integral part of the Nikkei legacy. Although Nikkei veterans can be encountered in any walk of life and social situation, having donned civilian garb, they are typically modest and even reluctant at times to share wartime memories that are often painful. The four veterans profiled here—Harry Akune, Hideo Okanishi, Sue Ogata Kato, and Vincent Okamoto—offer four distinctly different perspectives on the Japanese American tradition of military service and share with us experiences of which even many Nikkei are unaware.

HARRY AKUNE OF THE M.I.S.

The thousands of Nisei who served in the Military Intelligence Service—many of them coming out of internment camps—were in a unique and difficult position of having to fight for the U.S., the country of their birth, against Japan, the homeland of their parents.

One of those Nisei, Harry Masami Akune, now 68, volunteered for the MIS from a camp at Amache, Colorado. The MIS was recruiting people with Japanese language backgrounds, and Akune, who spent two-and-a half years of his early adolescence in Japan was accepted and sent to Camp Savage, Minnesota for language training.

Like a lot of Nisei in pre-war days, Akune was
sent back to Japan to learn Japanese ways, but, he recalls, "I didn't really like Japan. It felt like I was in a foreign country; I was not really a native. When I returned to California, I felt like I had come home."

At the outbreak of the World War II, Akune was sent with his family to Merced Assembly Center from his hometown of Turlock, then on to Amache. "I was bitter when they put me in camp," he notes. "I refused to do anything, until the Issei told me if everyone did as I did, we wouldn't be able to eat. So, to work out my hostilities, I got a job in camp washing dishes. Then I went to work outside of camp because it felt so good to get out."

When the MIS recruiters came to Amache, Akune and his friends decided to join because "we were considered suspects, not loyal Americans, and we felt we had to go show our loyalty to be accepted."

After language training at Camp Savage and basic training at Camp Shelby, Mississippi, Akune was sent, near the end of 1943, to Australia, where he translated Japanese documents. From Australia, he moved on to British New Guinea with the 33rd Infantry Division, and then to 6th Army Headquarters in Dutch New Guinea.

The Nisei MIS soldier took part in the invasion of Leyte in the Philippines, then joined the 503rd Parachute Regimental Combat Team in Leyte. From there, he participated in an amphibious landing on Mindoro Island. His combat duties included interrogating prisoners of war and translating captured Japanese documents.

Akune, who had no previous training, made his only combat parachute jump at Corregidor while assigned to the 503rd Parachute RCT in 1944. The only Nisei in the unit, he recalls that he encountered no trouble with the U.S. troops. "The best place for a Nisei was with a combat unit, because the matter of individual worth is different in combat," he observes. "Rear echelon units may have the luxury of being bigoted, but on the front line everyone depends on each other. That was the only time I really felt like an American. No one ever questioned my loyalty."

Akune is proud of his military service. "I don't have to apologize to anyone. I'm proud to be an American. The experience gave me a lot of confidence. I feel I can hold my own. I only regret that a lot of fellows who served in the rear doing work that didn't seem as important to combat—but which was important in getting documents translated and was vital to the war in the long run—did not receive the recognition they deserved."

After his discharge, Akune attended Morning-side College in Iowa and DePaul University in Chicago on the GI Bill, and returned to California where he was an insuranceman until his recent retirement.

He lives in Gardena with his wife, Barbara.

**HIDEO OKANISHI — FROM THE 442nd TO KOREA**

Hideo Okanishi, now 63, served in the famed 442nd RCT during World War II. He had the unusual distinction of also fighting in the Korean War.

"Since I was a child, I always knew we (Nikkei) were third class citizens, regardless of the U.S. Constitution," recalls the native of the Central California town of Corcoran and later Delano. "Even before (Japan's attack on) Pearl Harbor, we Japanese Americans in Delano had to sit in the Jim Crow
A short time before graduation from high school, Okanishi and his family were interned at Poston I, a concentration camp in Arizona, where he worked on a crew digging irrigation ditches and building dams. He observes that when he volunteered for the 442nd RCT in 1942, “most of the guys on the crew were pro-Japan Kibeis, led by Sam Uchida. When my friend Saburo Mochizuki and I told Uchida we volunteered, Sam told us, ‘That’s good. If you think that’s right that’s what you should do.’ I found out later, Uchida led the riots at Tule Lake. He was still doing what he believed, and he believed in Japan. I admired him for that.”

Okanishi served with Company F, 442nd RCT, during the Battle of Bruyères in France, participating in one of the bloodiest battles encountered by the all Nisei combat unit: the rescue of the 36th Division’s “Lost Battalion,” an all-Caucasian unit from Texas. He was wounded on November 5, 1944, during the Battle of St. Die, but returned to duty with the 442nd for campaigns in southern France and in Italy.

After his World War II military experience, Okanishi says, “It did make me feel I had more rights than the people who had been putting me down. I paid more than my dues.”

The feisty veteran raps members of the community who have criticized the Nisei who volunteered for military service from internment camps as being traitors to the Constitution. “These people talked like we were being deprived of our Constitutional rights when we were thrown in camps. But, hell, we were third class citizens. We didn’t have Constitutional rights before camps, and we didn’t have our Constitutional rights during or after the camps.”

However, Okanishi declares that he isn’t bitter. “If I was bitter, I wouldn’t have volunteered.”

After he was separated from the Army in 1946, Okanishi re-enlisted, “because I couldn’t find a decent job to help my family. Our family lost practically everything when we were put in Poston.”

He was in the Army’s 27th Infantry “Wolverine” Regiment during the Korean War. The Korean War was a different situation, the 442nd veteran says. “In World War II, we were fighting for all Japanese in the United States. In Korea, we were fighting because it was our job.”

Okanishi was wounded in action on November 6, 1950: “It was six years later, almost to the hour, after my wound in World War II.”

There were a number of Japanese Americans fighting in the Korean War, he reports. Most were from the Hawaii National Guard. The World War II holdovers from the 442nd were generally in non-combat roles. “At a 1950 reunion of 442 in Tokyo, only two of us were still in the infantry,” Okanishi says, “and the other kid was later killed in action in Korea.”

After nine years, Okanishi left the Army to further his education. He graduated from Woodbury University in 1955, and from the University of the Americas, Mexico, in 1957. He worked for the Los Angeles County Marshal’s and Assessor’s offices for 23 years until his retirement in 1983 because of physical disabilities. He presently lives with his wife in Rosemead.
SUE KATO — WOMEN’S ARMY CORPS

It was not only the men who contributed to America’s war effort during World War II. Many Nisei women, when given the opportunity, volunteered for duty in the Women’s Army Corps (WAC) and served honorably.

Sue Suzuko (Ogata) Kato, now 66, was an assimilated Nisei from North Platte, Nebraska—where she was born—and later Greeley, Colorado, who was “infuriated” when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor.

“It never occurred to us that we were different until the war broke out,” says Kato, whose father immigrated to Nebraska when he was 17. “The start of the war did not disrupt our lives, but I had heard about the West Coast Japanese being locked up in camps.” Her own family never suffered the humiliation of being locked up in American concentration camps.

“I joined the WACs—and this may sound like flag-waving—to prove my Americanism,” she comments.

Volunteering for the WACs in 1943, Kato was sent to Fort Des Moines for basic training. Her first assignment was at Fort Devins, Massachusetts, in the personnel office. Then in 1945, she was one of twelve Nisei women ordered to Fort Snelling, Minnesota, to set up a detachment of Nisei WACs in intelligence.

Following language and intelligence training at Fort Snelling, Kato was sent to Washington, D.C., where she helped to translate Japanese documents. “I didn’t have much Japanese background before the war, but I did go to Japanese school in North Platte—there were about 25 Japanese families there. I gained enough language training in the WACs to decipher documents.”

Kato believes she made a contribution to the U.S. war effort. “I knew they needed WACs to take desk jobs so the fellows could go to the front. We did it for all Japanese Americans. I’m proud to be an American. I’ve never had any other feelings but that.”

Her military experience was “enriching and broadening,” Kato says. “I formed lasting personal relationships, and although I never served overseas, I got to see different parts of this country.”

She came to California in 1950 and worked as a legal secretary in Long Beach until her retirement. She and her husband live in Canyon Lake, near Lake Elsinore.

VINCE OKAMOTO — VIETNAM VET

The Vietnam War was like no other war in modern U.S. history. Public support for the war was lacking, and political leadership in support of the war waned with each passing year of the long conflict. The nation was divided and anti-war sentiment in this country was strong enough to force an incumbent President to not seek re-election. The Vietnam veterans returned home as heroes without honor.

Two of Vincent Hichiro Okamoto’s brothers had fought with the 442nd during World War II and one brother had seen duty in the Korean War. After an ROTC stint at UCLA and receiving his second lieutenant’s commission, Vincent followed in the footsteps of his older brothers by serving with the
Special Forces in Vietnam.

"I wanted to go to Vietnam," states Okamoto. "At the time, I thought the country was doing the right thing. I felt we should try to maintain South Vietnam as an independent republic."

It didn’t take long for Okamoto to change his mind after he got to Vietnam: "When I first saw the napalm (fire bombing) strikes, it raised a lot of questions about whether killing innocent, non-combatant people was really a rational or effective means of saving them."

Okamoto received the Bronze Star and the Silver Star for valor in June 1968, the latter after his platoon was overrun by an assault which left him with only nine men out of the original 89. The Sansei officer from Gardena was awarded the highest medal the Army could give, the Distinguished Service Cross, for bravery in combat on August 24, 1968.

He also received three Purple Hearts.

Okamoto wants to correct the stereotype held by many that there were no Nikkei fighting in Vietnam. "People thought all Buddhaheads went to college," he says. "They are not aware that some 2,000-3,000 Japanese Americans served in Vietnam between 1965-1973."

By and large, Vietnam was a poor man’s war, Okamoto declares. "Not a single senator or congressman’s son was killed in action. The soldiers were mostly Blacks, Hispanics and poor Whites. A couple of attorneys I know got rich as draft lawyers, helping kids from wealthy families get out of the draft."

Although he was awarded many medals for his valor in combat, Okamoto observes that the Vietnam War was "totally devoid of glory. In World War II, success and victory were measured in how much territory you captured, or how many towns and villages you liberated. But in Vietnam, success and victory were measured in body counts, how many corpses you piled up. And body counts were often padded."

Despite the bad memories, Okamoto adds, "I am proud to be an American, because those troops I had under me did everything asked of them, and more. These young men were taught to fight and kill, then when they came back home, they were neglected or ridiculed."

"I feel bitterness. The war experience was similar to the Nihonjin and their camp experience. We just didn’t discuss it," says the Poston-born attorney-banker who now lives with his wife and family in Torrance. "The Vietnam War was my private demon. I couldn’t talk about it with my family for five years. It was like talking about cancer at the dinner table."

The stories of Harry Akune, Hideo Okanishi, Sue Kato and Vincent Okamoto—as compelling, insightful and inspirational as they are—do not tell the whole story. They represent only a small fraction of the tremendous contributions and sacrifices made to America by generations of Nikkei who have served in the military for this country. It is hoped that the stories of these four veterans will encourage the public to seek further information and understanding of the significant role that Americans of Japanese ancestry have played in the building and defense of this nation. Their duty, honor, patriotism—and blood—have earned them an undeniably important place in American history.

Partly excerpted from a previously published article in the 1988 Nisei Week Festival booklet.
QUEEN COURT
Mitzi Miya
Joanne Miyamoto
Jean Takahashi
Nancy Nishi
Mary Yoshioka
Kay Miwa
Sumi Takemura

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Mitsuhiko Shimizu

PIONEERS
Mr. and Mrs. Renpei Tsuchiya
Mrs. Fuku Toyama
Mr. and Mrs. Tanisuke Kino
Mr. and Mrs. Tsuneshi Chino
Mr. and Mrs. Choyei Kondo
Mr. and Mrs. Bungoro Morey
Rev. Kumazo Fukushima
Mr. and Mrs. Tomijiro Sato
Mr. and Mrs. Shosuki Nitta
Mr. Hyonosuke Shima

LITTLE TOKYO BUSINESS ASSOCIATION
NISEI WEEK
1958

QUEEN COURT
Jean Yasui
June Shintani
Shirley Mizufuka
Mary Murai
Miki Tsuboi
Margaret Nakai
Janet Okamoto
Helene Yabuta
Lily Kamiya

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Noriakazu Oku

PIONEERS
Mr. & Mrs. Masumi Tajima
Mr. & Mrs. Katsuichi Kazahaya
Dr. & Mrs. Kiyohide Nakaki
Mr. & Mrs. Miyosaku Uyematsu
Mr. & Mrs. Sataro Iguye
Mr. & Mrs. Suyematsu Murata
Mrs. Toku Aratani
Mr. & Mrs. Kurakichi Kaneko
Mr. & Mrs. Yone Nagamine
Mr. & Mrs. Shunichi Kishima
Mr. & Mrs. Toshinori Yamanouchi
Mr. & Mrs. Kizo Yasukochi

GRAND MARSHAL
Sessue Hayakawa

MIKASA, INC. & Genji Aratani, Chairman
QUEEN COURT
Faith Higurashi
Rose Matsui
Irene Morioka
Keiko Tsuchiya
Diane Kimura
Midori Sunairi
June Tsukikida
Betty Sakamoto
Shizuko Nakamura
Diane Yusa

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Frank Hirohata

PIONEERS
Hiroshi Yokozeki
Eizo Maruyama
Jiro Sakai
Rev. Kengo Tajima
Yoshitaro Sasahara
Ayaka Takahashi
Denzō Kiyohara
Momota Okura

GRAND MARSHAL
Lt. Gov. Glen Anderson
NISEI WEEK
1960

QUEEN COURT
Penny Tani
Janice Mirikitani
Jeanne Ikkanda
Joan Takenouchi
Helen Amemiya
Doris Fujino
Carolyn Kikumura
Joanne Nohara
Diane Yusa

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Eiji E. Tanabe

PIONEERS
Kesajiro Urata
Tsurumatsu Toma
Gen Oshio
Kyutaro Ishii
Toyokichi Nagasaki
Zenjiro Nishio
Seikichi Aihara
Meijiro Sato
Asaemon Kitagawa
Tajibei Yamamoto
Kotaro Sakakura
Shiroichi Koyama
Yoshitaro Matsushita
Kiyomi Akiyama
Mitsuhiko Shimizu

MITSUI MANUFACTURERS BANK
NISEI WEEK
1961

QUEEN COURT
Diane Kubota
Shirley Kamayatsu
Shirley Nishimura
Gerry Uyema
Joyce Kanase
Hiromi Fujinami
Mae Ishihara

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Tsutomu Maehara

PIONEERS
Mr. and Mrs. Unyemon Miyake
Mr. and Mrs. Shinji Saito
Mr. and Mrs. Kinsuke Yokogawa
Mr. Katsuzo Matsumura
Mrs. Hamako Murase
QUEEN COURT
Frances Yanai
Kathleen Megumi Emi
Hideko Kawashima
Emiko Nakamura
Yuri Nakamura
Mitzi Nishiyama
Carol Y. Nishizu
Carolyn Keiko Sato
Lillian Seki
June Takayama

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Matao Uwate

PIONEERS
Giro Fujioka
Genjiro Ito
Yukitaro Kawasaki
Hanzo Kurihara
Rev. Sadami Mizukami
Mrs. Nami Nagata
Isojiro Oka
Chodo Okutake
Ichijiro Sakata
Toraichi Sumi
Giichi Takata

GRAND MARSHAL
Ernest E. Debs

THE NEW OTANI HOTEL AND GARDEN
QUEEN COURT
Helen Hiromi Funai
Terry Kakuda
Maureen Okada
Betty Takako Taira
Kaye Takahashi
Jayne Yumiko Tanimura

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Soichi Fukui

PIONEERS
Mrs. Kaoru Shimano
Mr. Matsunosuke Oi
Mr. Junichi Yoshitomi
Mr. Senemon Tsunekawa
Mr. Seibe Taketomo
Mr. Shingoro Takasugi

GRAND MARSHAL
Shirley Maclaine

HONORARY GRAND MARSHALS
Kiyoshi Sugito
(Mayor of Nagoya)
Sam Yorty (Mayor of L.A.)
NISEI WEEK
1964

QUEEN COURT
Sandy Saito
Janice Fujikawa
Gwen Kinuye Fujino
Flora Fukushima
Maxine Ihara
Irene Hideko Kobayashi
Jean Komai
Shigemi Matsumoto
Genia Sakai

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Roy Hoshizaki
Archie Miyatake

PIONEERS
Chiuhhe Ishii
Kiyoharu Anzai
Kenichi Shigematsu
Kosaru Uyeno
Yojiro Oishi
Kuju Fukunaga
Seiroku Watanabe
NISEI WEEK 1965

QUEEN COURT
Carol Ann Kunitsugu
Jean Toshiko Arita
Mari Hattori
Sandra Hatsuko Ikari
Barbara Shigemi Ishii
Betty Ann Kishi
Janis Mizakami
Kathy Shimotsukasa
June Takeyo Shioji

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Mitsuhiko Shimizu

PIONEER
Katsumi Mukaeda
QUEEN COURT
Ruby Reiko Komai
Barbara Patricia Endo
Arlee Eiko Morishita
Christine Gail Sanada
Marilyn Shizuye Wada
Georgiana Tetsuko Yamaguchi
Karen Hatsuye Yokoyama

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Jim Higashi

PIONEERS
Choshin Higa
Shigekichi Hirama
Yutaro Kaku
Shoji Nagumo
Masami Sasaki
Rev. Kojiro Unoura

GRAND MARSHAL
Mrs. Norman Chandler
NISEI WEEK
1967

QUEEN COURT
Joanne Sono Uehara
Fumiko Craner
Darlene Emiko Hiroto
Patricia Yoshi Kusuda
Joyce Akemi Oishi
Cathy Midori Okamura
Stella Sadako Sano

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Tad Ikemoto

PIONEERS
Toyoshige Ioki
Hiroshi Kariya
Itaro Nagai
Saichi Nakao
Shozu Ohara
Isao Toshima
Waichi Yoshimura

GRAND MARSHALS
Martin Landau
Barbara Bain

S.K. UYEDA DEPARTMENT STORE
NISEI WEEK
1968

QUEEN COURT
Clare Ruby Nonoshita
Janis Setsu Hanafusa
Patricia Lou Ito
Janice Hatsue Kimura
Frances K. Miyamura
Noriyo Shimasaki
Grace Mayumi Ouchi
Dawn Yoshi Shinmoto
Beverly Jean Hayashida

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Charles Takeo Taiyoshi

PIONEERS
Karo Hamaguchi
James Hatsumi Hara, M.D.
Kinzo Kawaguchi
Kameichi Kuida
Mimatsu Kunihiro
Manki Matsumoto
Gihachi Yamashita

GRAND MARSHALS
Mr. and Mrs. Victor Carter

PARADE MARSHAL
Gardner Mckay
NISEI WEEK
1969

QUEEN COURT
Toni Dawn Sakamoto
Deborah Yukiko Hiraoka
Eileen M. Kumagae
Diane Okada
Gwen Nobue Okamura
Linda Yuriko Okumura
Judy Reiko Tamura
Joyce Yukiko Uyeda
Anna Marie White

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Koshiro Torii

PIONEERS
Akira Mori
Keikichi Fukuyama
Yasutaro Nakaoka
Matsushi Naruse
Mrs. Saku Shirakawa
Shozo Sasuga
Tomazo Tomio

PARADE MARSHAL
Martin Milner

MARUKYO USA, INC.
Nisei Week 1990

112
二世週祭と小東京

笠間 茂

Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
NISEI WEEK
1970

QUEEN COURT
Joann Hisayo Uyemura
Candace Reiko Hiroto
Jean Reiko Kadonaga
Claudia Ikuko Kadota
Gail Nobuko Kato
Charlotte Naomi Kiyana
Joy Faith Kodama
Gail Lynne Konishi
Sally Emiko Okazaki
Joanie Eiko Nishikawa

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Harry Yamamoto

PIONEERS
Shinnojo Wada
Otokichi Kuwahara
Daisuke Iwataki
Sannosuke Madokoro

GRAND MARSHAL
Sen. Daniel K. Inouye

SONY CORPORATION OF AMERICA
QUEEN COURT
Joyce Yuri Kikuchi
Karen Chidori Kitagawa
Audre Gail Miura
Connie Nakao
Margaret Joyce Nishimoto
Lynn Harumi Shibata
Diane Emiko Takei

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Soichi Fukui

PIONEERS
Miyazo Fujisawa
Hiroji Hosaka
Masao Mitamura
Jiro Morita
Toyo Miyatake

GRAND MARSHAL
Rep. Norman Mineta

FUKUI MORTUARY
NISEI WEEK
1972

QUEEN COURT
Carol Lynn Matsunaga
Carol Akamatsu
Mary Michiko Favatella
Carol Kazuko Fujiwara
Seleste Sakato
Christine Ryoko Sumi
Carol Fumi Watanabe

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Ed Matsuda

PIONEERS
Shigetoshi Fujii
Gonsaku Ito
Mitsuyori Kawashima
Seigoro Murakami
Shichiro (Sekkei) Ogomori

GRAND MARSHAL
Mike M. Masaoka

TODA BUILDING, INC.
NISEI WEEK
1973

QUEEN COURT
Cheryl Suzanne Kawakami
Christine Taiko Fukuhara
Elaine Keiko Hosozawa
Wendy Yoshiko Kawakami
Kathy Keiko Nakata
Kristine Toyo Nikaido
Jeanne Yuri Chuman

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Akira Kawasaki
Keiichi Minami

PIONEERS
Kiyotaro Ozaki
Katsumasa Sakioka
Kango Takamura

TOYOTA MOTOR CORPORATION
NISEI WEEK 1974

QUEEN COURT
Elsa Akemi Cuthbert
Patricia Diane Hirahara
Lorraine Haruye Iida
Bessie Imada
Georgette Takayye Ishimoto
Karen Misako Iwasaki
Kim Maruyama
Diane Yoshiko Nishinaka
Marta Akiko Rivera

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Keiichi Minami
Yasuo Yoshizawa

PIONEERS
Teizo Hatashita
John Kaichiro Inadomi
Eiju Sasajima

GRAND MARSHAL
Justice and Mrs.
Stephen K. Tamura

Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
Radical Awakening, Community Strength

BY CANDICE OTA

By the start of the 60s, the Japanese American community was well on its way to recovery. The trauma of displacement during World War II was left behind and the community had built a comfortable base from which to explore all the possibilities that life could offer. The Sansei generation was poised to take a leadership role and soon found themselves in the middle of an explosion of new ideas. They wanted the equal opportunity to determine for themselves what they wanted out of life in America, educationally, artistically, and socially.

The Sansei were growing up with the relative stability of the 50s behind them. Embracing all-American values and institutions, they emulated life in mainstream America—except theirs were within the confines of their own racial communities. Asian American fraternities and sororities were founded, Buddhist and Christian youth groups and participation in the Junior JACL blossomed. They were “separate” and perceived themselves as “equal.” Yet the flip side of the situation became apparent. Not all the Sansei bought the all-American way of life and gangs became prominent, pitting neighborhood against neighborhood—with alienation manifesting itself in fights and drug use.

The southwest L.A. Nikkei community (Seinan) responded by establishing the Yellow Brotherhood organization, to provide an alternative to drugs and “street” activity.

What was the source of this alienation? What was our place and what did it mean to be Japanese American? There was a community but little sense of identity.

Political Activism and Groping for Solutions

The answers to these questions found root in a growing social and political awareness. The civil rights movement had been growing stronger and by the late 60s, many Sansei had recognized truth in what Malcolm X and others like him proclaimed: Asian Americans had a right to be proud of their heritage and to preserve their history. The battle for ethnic studies allowed Asian American Studies to become a legitimate field of research. Examining themselves and their relationship to other people and institutions opened up a variety of fields to academic study and documentation.

In demanding their place in America, the Sansei had to examine and define themselves and what it was they wanted. First, communication lines needed to be reconstructed, linking the three generations of Japanese Americans. The line between the Nisei and Sansei was already tenuous. The radical activism and outspoken attitudes of their children caught many Nisei offguard. So the Sansei, in an effort to bridge the gap started talking to their Issei grandparents.

What they found was a lack of support programs to care for and appreciate the aging Issei. The seeds of concern grew into various Pioneer Projects, in Long Beach, Gardena (South Bay) and Little Tokyo. The projects gave the Issei pioneers a place for recreation, education and health information. The Japanese Community Pioneer Center was established in Little Tokyo in 1969 when the community also raised funds to buy City View Hospital in nearby Lincoln Heights. Also in 1969, Keiro Nursing Home began operation with Minami Keiro being added five years later. The Japanese Retirement Home was established in Boyle Heights in 1975.

Taking care of their medical needs with health fairs (which are still going strong today) and organizing field trips to the beach and to view wildflowers (hanami) were two of the many recreational and service-oriented programs put together by members of community groups based in the Sun Building on Weller Street.

Entering the Political Arena

The Sun Building housed a variety of these “serve-the-people” organizations that formed in the late 60s and early 70s. They provided numerous support and service programs that affected not only the Issei, but Nisei and Sansei as well. The JACS (Japanese American Community Services)/Asian Involvement office was at the forefront in initiating many of these programs.

Tied into the concern for social welfare was a political activism against the war in Vietnam that intensified the search for Asian American identity. In 1969, Southern California Asians raised their voices against the war for the first time in a demonstration in Little Tokyo. That same year, the first annual pilgrimage to Manzanar, a World War II concentration camp, was organized. Sansei saw firsthand, one of the areas where their families had been incarcerated. In 1972, the Nisei Week Grand Parade saw over 250 Asian Americans march as part of the Van Troi Anti-Imperialist Youth Brigade contingent. The Sansei were gaining strength and a clearer idea of who they wanted to be.

Throughout that year and after, the groups in the Sun Building provided educational seminars, legal and draft counseling, and health care advocacy. Programs as diverse as establishing a women’s group similar to Yellow Brotherhood called Asian Sisters, visiting Asian Americans in prisons (Asian American Hard Core), drug abuse
Clean-up at the Manzanar cemetery (top) and pioneers on a wildflower viewing trip.

Photos courtesy of Visual Communications

(Asian American Drug Abuse Program—AADAP) and providing a hotline for those in need, also found a home in the Sun Building.

**Student Unrest and Initiative**

As in other parts of America, local universities were a source of community and campus activities. The energy on campus generated a variety of projects in the Asian American community. Initiated by Long Beach State students, the Long Beach Potluck established itself as a long-running annual community event, trying to keep students and community in touch with each other. Local jazz/rock band *Hiroshima* sprouted from the same nurturing ground, becoming an entertainment mainstay for the Potluck for many years before going on to international fame.

In 1971, the Amerasia Bookstore opened its doors, founded mainly by students from Long Beach State and UCLA. Students from UCLA started the community newspaper, *Gidra*, which will be publishing its 20th anniversary issue this year. *Gidra* provided a radically different viewpoint than the ones behind news reports in the established Japanese American papers. The first graduates of the Ethno-Communications program in UCLA's film school founded Asian American Visual Communications (VC). Formed to create Asian American related films and videos, they also hold a large collection of historical and documentary photos.

Creative Workshop sought to explore alternative educational subjects to teach children, while also providing child care.

Several groups of people came together to establish...
"collectives," an experiment similar to communal living. Each collective had its own basis for existence, but the main one was to band together for political and social organizing. The war in Vietnam and its anti-Asian racism dominated as an organizing focus. But the collective situation also showed the need to re-examine and re-define the role of women in society. Collective living meant breaking established and stereotypic behavior and challenging sexism in men and women.

Redevelopment: CRA vs. Community Interests?

Redevelopment was already becoming an issue in the early '60s when city officials began considering the north side of First Street for renovation. This spurred the formation of the Little Tokyo Redevelopment Association in 1963 to formulate a general land use plan. However, this plan remained in limbo for seven years due to lack of funds and experience in implementing them. Meanwhile, private interests were building their own highrises in the community, such as the Kajima Building and Merit Savings Building.

When redevelopment reared its head again in 1970, the original plans were enthusiastically supported by the majority of the Little Tokyo community. Senior citizen housing, a community cultural center and new shops for small businesses were planned. But after political changes of heart, both federally and locally, and frustrating twists of fate, the later Los Angeles Master Plan for central city urban renewal did not look as appealing.

When East-West Development Corporation, a 30-member consortium of Japanese corporate and financial interests announced plans for the New Otani Hotel in 1972, even more questions were raised about the direction of redevelopment. Economic growth and foot traffic in the area were lauded by some but others worried that multinational interests would change the character of Little Tokyo and drive many small businesses out of existence. Redevelopment eventually became a divisive issue in the community with the Community Redevelopment Agency (CRA) and whose interests it was serving becoming a major point of contention.

By 1976, the focus was on the Weller Street block on which the Sun Hotel and Sun Building were located. The Sun Hotel housed many long-time residents who would be displaced outside the community. The Sun Building not only contained the offices of many community organizations but the offices of many cultural instructors who would have to find temporary quarters until the...
Japanese American Cultural and Community Center could be completed in 1980.

Although the shopping center adjacent to the New Otani Hotel was eventually built, the movement against wholesale destruction of established residential and commercial buildings grew into the Little Tokyo People's Rights Organization (LTPRO). The main issue at stake was that destruction of property in the name of redevelopment and renewal should not take place without regard for the long-time residents who would be displaced from the community that they helped to establish or made their own for 30 years. Alternative offices and housing should be made affordable, considering the previous rent and income of the tenants. Redevelopment was the cause of the destruction of the large residential hotels, the last of which was the Alan Hotel in the early '80s which had over 200 rooms.

As redevelopment evolved there were positive construction projects as well. The first residents moved into the long-awaited 300-unit senior citizen housing project, Little Tokyo Towers in 1975. Higashi Hongwanji which relocated to East Los Angeles for many years, returned to Little Tokyo in 1976, when Union Church also moved into new quarters. Japanese Village Plaza, the mall which was built over the old Moline Alley, opened in 1978, even as Weller Court broke ground for its shops. Groundbreaking for the Honda Plaza shopping mall at Third and Central took place in 1979 and Miyako Gardens, an adjacent 100-unit subsidized housing development was projected for 1981.

Finally, in 1980, the new decade began with the opening of the long-planned Japanese American Cultural and Community Center. With its elegant Japanese garden put together by Nikkei volunteers and the adjacent Japan America Theatre which was completed in 1983, it serves as a cultural focal point, bringing Japanese Americans back to Little Tokyo once again.

Hope For the Future

As the 70s started to wind down, the focus of LTPRO shifted to one of its other committees, Redress/Reparations. The battle for affordable rent for tenants relocated into the JACCC resulted in a method of subsidization which would ease the transition to paying higher rent. Redevelopment was running its course and LTPRO could now divert its energies. The R/R committee had been researching and supporting redress and reparations for Japanese Americans who had been interned in concentration camps during World War II. Several committee members were the nucleus for the formation of the National Committee for Redress and Reparations (NCRR), one of the main proponents in the fight for redress in the coming decade.

Short of the war years, the Nikkei community had never been through such a tumultuous time of change. It was a period marked by confrontation with traditional and conservative values and re-identification with our heritage. Amidst the divisiveness, mechanisms for social change and welfare were founded that continue today. The development of a new Asian American identity had paved the way into the 80s with a stronger and more focused community.
NISEI WEEK
1975

QUEEN COURT
Dulcie Chiyeko Ogi
Karen Teruko Goda
Susan Marsha High
Barbara Ann Taeko Kikuta
Mary Miyako Morimoto
Yuko Cindy Sakamoto
Ellen Tamaki
Judy Mary Watanabe
Jann Aiko Yamanouye

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Takeo Taiyoshi

PIONEERS
Isao Haga
Ryohei Iwamoto
Shigematsu Takeyasu
Takito Yamaguma
Kazuo Yano

YONEX
NISEI WEEK
1976

QUEEN COURT
Sandra Naomi Toshiyuki
Hope Lee Kobayashi
Laurie Leiko Nakakura
Karen Kyoko Tsuruta
Joanne Joni Ono
Joleen Chi-Ling New
Margaret Yuri Bow
Elaine Kazuye Kataoka

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
George Saiki

PIONEERS
Shigeru Hashimoto
Tadanori Kato
Dr. William Kato
Rev. Thomas Machida
Umejiro Okamoto

GRAND MARSHAL
Gov. George Ariyoshi

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL
Konosuke Matsushita
NISEI WEEK
1977

QUEEN COURT
Loris Toki Kurashige
Karen Sue Takeguma
Nancy Kazuko Teramura
Carol Kazuyo Tsuchida
Marie Yamanouye
Lori Tsukashima
Susan Etsuko Takei
Donna Naomi Fukuto

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Hiromichi Kume

PIONEERS
Yoshifumi Takiguchi
Yoshio Nishisaka
Mannosuke M. Nishida
Saburo Muraoka

GRAND MARSHALL
Sen. S.I. Hayakawa

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL
Takeo Atsumi

ANSHINDO
NISEI WEEK
1978

QUEEN COURT
Lisa Tomiko Yamamoto
Marsha Ann Aseka
Diana Elizabeth Dutcher
Jamie Sumiko Kajiki
Tammie Chikaye Katayama
Christine Emi Kato
Lynn Tomomi Nakamura
Victoria Frances Okada
Christine Emi Toguchi
Shari Lynn Yamamoto

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Chris Yoshitake

PIONEERS
Paul Chikara Takeda
Frank Wakamatsu Takasugi
Yukata Kubota

GRAND MARSHAL
Toyo Miyatake
QUEEN COURT
Jeanne Mariko Nakagama
Naomi Deguchi
Kathryn Kaoru Imahara
Karen Louise Karasawa
Ellen Grace Kojima
Cherylee Shizuko Kushida
Janice Reiko Sakamoto
Eileen Reiko Suto

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Frank H. Hirata

PIONEERS
Bunsuke Shindo
Frank Minoru Yonemura
Keiji Uyeno

GRAND MARSHAL
Fred Wada

PARADE MARSHAL
Sugi Ryotaro
NISEI WEEK
1980

QUEEN COURT
Hedy Ann Posey
Sharon Sumi Asato
Judeann Akiko Karimoto
Leslie Kimi Kawai
Jennifer Mariko Lee
Caren Dale Toshie Oshiro
Elaine Emiko Tsutsui
Deborah Ann Yamada

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Howard Nishimura

PIONEERS
Seijiro Inose
Frank Eiho Kagiwada
Mrs. Takayo Kato
Hajime Matsumoto
Tom Koichi Nerio
Heijiro Tanaka

GRAND MARSHALS
George and Sakaye Aratani

PARADE MARSHAL
Katsu Shintaro

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL
Shozo Hotta

DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Katsuma Mukaeda
Mitsuhiko Shimizu

Fiftieth Anniversary 1934-1990
1980s End
With Landmark Victories

By NAOMI HIRAHARA

"I don’t think my kid even knows that he’s Japanese," stated one Sansei mother who lives in a residential suburb of Los Angeles. This statement is not an isolated one. Facing less residential segregation, the Japanese Americans of the 1980s have spread out in all areas of Southern California, from the sea breezes of Costa Mesa to the dry landscape of Ventura County. Exposure to other ethnic groups in college and work have led to a high rate of “out-marriage,” and as a result, more Amerasian children whose bi-cultural identity typifies the future ethnic profile of Los Angeles.

These trends would lead one to conclude that Japanese American culture and community as a whole is dying. Yet quite the contrary, groups are mobilizing over civil rights issues, playing in Japanese-American basketball, bowling and golf tournaments, pursuing cultural arts and worshipping together. In fact, the 1980s ended on many notes of victory for Japanese Americans, reflecting the perseverance and legacy of the Issei, Nisei and Sansei.

Decentralized, Yet Still Clustered

Regarding the demographic “assimilation” of Japanese Americans, the population is less centralized than before, but still tends to be clustered in various pockets i.e. Gardena, Sawtelle, Boyle Heights/Monterey Park, Crenshaw, Venice, Cerritos, Pasadena and Pacoima. And while many children are now fourth and even fifth-generation Japanese Americans, there is also a well-established “Shin-Issei” (new Issei) population of post-war immigrants who strongly identify with Japanese language and cultural values.
An increased number of Japanese businesspeople and their families have made Southern California their temporary home, reflecting the influx of Japanese corporations into the mainland. Over the past decade, Japan's economic strength and power has conversely affected its international image. Instead of completely divorcing themselves from their heritage, Sansei and Yonsei college students have enrolled in Japanese language classes, many even choosing to spend a year or two on the archipelago.

On the other side, some Americans have incorrectly interchanged "Japan" with the Japanese American or even the Asian American community here in the United States, leading to outbreaks of racist violence and tension, e.g. the brutal murder of Vincent Chin in Detroit in 1982. Mistaken for a Japanese, the young Chinese American was bludgeoned to death by an unemployed autoworker and his son with a baseball bat. This incident mobilized the community, both nationally and locally.

Changing Face of Little Tokyo

While Little Tokyo is not the residential community it once was, it still remains as a cultural and symbolic historic core. One example is the Japanese American Cultural and Community Center (JACCC) on Second and San Pedro, which was built in the early 1980s. The center has served as the home of various social agencies and art groups, as well as the site for rallies, concerts and meetings. While redevelopment has changed the face of the compact Los Angeles ethnic community, certain areas, such as the Little Tokyo Historic District on the north side of First Street, have been preserved due to public interest and pressure.

On the far eastern corner of the district, the old Nishi Hongwanji Building will soon open its doors as the permanent exhibit site of the Japanese American National Museum (JANM). On the other end of the district, the San Pedro Firm Building will be maintained as a nonprofit low-income housing development operated by the Little Tokyo Service Center (LTSC). This structure was saved due to longtime community activists, many of whom were involved in the Little Tokyo People’s Rights Organization (LTPRO) of the 1970s, as well as the new activists, students of UCLA and other Southland colleges.

The young Asian Pacific American activists—Japanese, Chinese, Korean, Pilipino, and Vietnamese—were also key in another political struggle, the fight to achieve tenure for UCLA professor Don Nakanishi. An important scholar in Asian American Studies, the Yale and Harvard-educated professor was initially denied tenure, which set off a series of demonstrations, candlelight vigils, boycotts and negotiations. Finally after a couple of years, Nakanishi was granted tenure, signifying a victory for ethnic studies and justice in academia.

The final victorious landmark was the struggle for redress and reparations for Japanese American internees of mainland concentration camps. Sponsored by the National Coalition of Redress and Reparations (NCRR), a contingent went to Washington D.C. on July of 1987 for a last-ditch appeal for passage of the redress legislation. Meeting legislators and their aides face-to-face, these citizens, including World War II veterans and local chapters of the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL), made
Redress and reparations was an important issue in the 80s. Displays and dissemination of information supported the drive for recognition of our loss of civil rights.

an important contribution in the long struggle to remedy the unconstitutional wartime action. Japanese Americans watched "with both joy and caution" as the bill went through the House, Senate and then the joint conference committee. Then, on August 10, 1988, then President Ronald Reagan signed the bill into law. The struggle was not over, however, as groups had to lobby the next presidential administration to appropriate the funds for disbursement of funds. By the end of November 1989, it was decided—redress and reparations had been won.

Looking back at the 1980s, we see a contradictory phenomenon. On one hand, it seems as if Japanese Americans—especially fourth and fifth generations—would not strongly identify with their ethnic roots and culture. Socially speaking, intermarriage is high, creating questions in people's minds about the viability of the community.

On the other hand, young people are taking traditional Japanese cultural marks e.g. *taiko* (drumming) and turning them into something totally unique, truly Japanese American. Facing continued racism, they mobilize together, now with other Asian Pacific Islander groups. Inheriting the legacy left by older generations, this new generation exhibits a high degree of sophistication and success in achieving justice in this multi-cultural society.

The sense of "community" has changed since the early days of the Issei in farmlands and the merchant strip in Little Tokyo. The "community" now is spread out all over Southern California, and may even include those who are not ethnically Japanese, such as the non-Japanese spouses of Japanese Americans. Yet in spite of this dispersion, there still remains a common bond that brings people together.
1990s — Looking Ahead

Just 40 years ago, the pages of The Rafu Shimpo newspaper celebrated the hiring of the first Japanese American teacher and department store clerk. Since those days, we've seen the emergence of a Japanese American astronaut, baseball players, politicians, actors and actresses, award-winning playwrights and poets, filmmakers, and multi-millionaires.

From here, we ask the question—what will the 1990s hold for Japanese Americans?

Of course, there are generational issues that every person will face. Sansei will seek options for the care of their aging Nisei parents, whether it be day care, ethnic-specific retirement homes, or bringing parents into their own homes. While contending with their own aging process, these baby boomers will be replacing the Nisei in various community leadership positions. College students of the late 1980s and early 1990s will be moving from the campus to the "real" world, discovering how their gifts can be applied to the private and non-profit sectors. The youngest generation will have the benefits of increased sensitivity about ethnic issues in the classroom, while being exposed to more Asian Pacific Americans on television and the movies.

As overcrowding and other urban pressures continue in Los Angeles, some Japanese Americans will follow a general trend, and leave for parts of Orange County or further locales, such as Seattle. Meanwhile, out-of-towners will be drawn to the exciting, international flavor of Los Angeles, thus maintaining the flow to the "big city."

The demographics within the Asian Pacific American population will also change. While the number of Japanese Americans seems to have stabilized, Filipinos, Koreans and Chinese are on the rise. These trends are reflected in recent political alliances, social relationships and the formation of new groups.

In light of these changes, Japanese American organizations and leaders have the challenge of addressing "what next?" While World War II redress and reparations served as a focal point of both Japanese American identity and purpose during the 1980s, the 1990s are open to redefinition and redirection. Do we just continue to tell our story? Or do we seek to reach out to other ethnic communities in making Southern California a more equitable and better place to live? Maybe a combination of both?

What about our young people's dreams? What do they envision for their future? Will we see the rise of the first Japanese American vice president, or even president? Or maybe finally a player in the NBA?

Only the 1990s will tell.
QUEEN COURT
Frances Hiromi Shima
Patricia Diane Gehr
Angela Natsuko Kato
Leslie Akemi Matsuo
Kelly Jodene Morikawa
Stannyyvonne Michie Oishi
JoAnn Hiromi Wada
Sandra Reiko Yoshimura

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Nagahisa Ono

PIONEERS
Haru Hashimoto
Michie Nakamura
Manuel Inadomi
Rokuro Watanabe
Kanichi Yamane

GRAND MARSHAL
Masashi Kawaguchi

HONORARY GRAND MARSHAL
Ryoichi Sasakawa

PARADE MARSHAL
Yoko Shimada

DISTINGUISHED COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Soichi Fukui (posthumously)
Edward M. Matsuda (posthumously)

EAST WEST DEVELOPMENT CORPORATION
QUEEN COURT
Janet Midori Barnes
Lana Sakura Frick
Deena Lynn Akemi Hard
Gail Akemi Kirio
Jeanne Yoshiko Mitoma
Deborah Michiko Oishi
Dianne Yumi Osora
Yuri Moira Shimamoto
Barbara Vollmer

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Frances Hashimoto

PIONEERS
Tetsu Hitomi
Kakuo Tanaka
Senkichi Yuge

GRAND MARSHAL
Hershey Miyamura

PARADE MARSHAL
Rocky Aoki

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Mac Sasaki
Frank Kuwahara
QUEEN COURT
Tracy Lynn Isawa
Lorraine Midori Kuda
Geraldine Hideko Nakauchi
Robin Hiromi Oshiro
Constance Yoko Takimoto
Elva Katsue Tamashiro
Terri Sumiye Tasaka
Denise Nobuko Watari

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Steven Okayama

PIONEERS
Minoru Hori
Kazuo Mori
Don Kiyoshi Nakajima
Frank Saichi Yamashita
Tomiye Moriguchi
Kaneko Murayama

GRAND MARSHAL
Kay Sugahara

PARADE MARSHAL
Toshiro Mifune

COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Kiyo Yamato
Takeo Taiyoshi
QUEEN COURT
Tamlyn Naomi Tomita
Janet Yumi Aiso
Karen Hanako Charlton
Janis Midori Kurashige
Ellen Kinu Matsuoka
Pamela Michi Mizusaki
Lisa Ann Torigoe
Shelly Emiko Mizuhara

GENERAL CHAIRMAN
Darlene Kuba

PIONEERS
Seikuro Aiba Kurihara
Kinji Nishi
Kenji Ito
Tsuta Ito
Bishop Seytsu Takahashi
Yoshiko Tanaka

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The Nisei Week Festival Committee gratefully acknowledges the generous donations made by the following individuals and corporations. It is fortunate indeed that so many in the community are willing to step forward to help make this anniversary celebration a special occasion. In further recognition of their generosity, their names have been placed as sponsors of full-page sections in the 50-year chronology of this booklet.

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The festival mood for the 50th Annual Nisei Week Japanese Festival was made possible by the following companies and corporations who donated over 5,000 chochins:

- All Nippon Airways
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Street decorations:

- Shochikubai
- Suntory
- Tokiwa Food
- Yamaki
- Yamasa Shoyu

Street decorations: Archie Miyatake
The response to our call for help for the old Nisei Week Booklet was overwhelming. Thanks to people like Ms. Michiko Tso who loaned us the majority of the booklets of the 1950's and Ms. Yae Aihara who loaned us the booklets of the 1960's, we were able to do our research for the 50th Anniversary booklet. I want to thank all those who donated their Nisei Week booklets to the festival. In order for us to build up our library we had calls from Seattle and other places asking us if they could help by loaning their booklet. To all those who called, I want to say thank you for your interest and help.

Thanks should also be extended to Doug Aihara who went through the many photos for the 1990 Booklet at Toyo Miyatake Studios and to Mike Nakayama, Candice Ota and Miya Kuromiya for working so hard and late to help produce the booklet.

Many articles were submitted for the booklet and I apologize for not being able to use all of the articles and pictures. Our editorial staff was encouraged to include as many as physically possible in the booklet but space limited us. I hope future booklets can use these items that we were unable to use.

I want to thank the Nisei Week office staff, Ms. Joyce Wakano Chinn, Ann Chiba, Ms. Miki Himeno, Ms. Michi Obi, Sumi Shimasaki for her typing and to the rest of the volunteer staff that help collect funds, put records on computers and answer the countless phone calls inquiring about our booklet and festival in general.

As Roku Sugahara stated in the 1936 booklet, “They (Issei) bequeathed to their children (the Nisei) the rich heritage of a fine and proud Japanese heritage. They taught the right and honorable way of life to their children.” They said: “Carry on, become good citizens and develop a fine community.”

Those words written in 1936 stand true today more than ever. It is now the Nisei’s turn to say to the Sansei and Yonsei, “We have tried to teach you the right and honorable way of life; the future of our community lies in your hands.” We have laid the foundation and now we are passing the baton to you. We have confidence in you, that you will not drop the baton but carry it to higher heights. We wish you well in the future and hope the next 50 years will be more prosperous and broadening than the first 50 years.

Thank you
Frank K. Omatsu
Booklet Chairman 1990

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150 Nisei Week 1990
Toyo Miyatake Studio: Sharing a View of the Community

Until the recent past, when one walked down the south side of First Street, a familiar landmark was Toyo Miyatake Studio. Sandwiched between everchanging businesses, one could count on seeing portraits of families, weddings, Manzanar camp pictures and during the months preceding Nisei Week, the portraits of the Queen candidates.

Toyo Miyatake took over Paris Studio, located in the Toyo Hotel, in 1923. In 1933 he sold the studio to Frank Izuo who eventually renamed it Izuo Studio. When Toyo Miyatake returned with his family from Japan in 1936, he decided to restart his business and in 1937, Toyo Miyatake Studio opened. Since then, Toyo Miyatake Studio, has been a stable and continuous presence in the community. Even during World War II, while interned at Manzanar, Toyo Miyatake was able to document the events which shook the Japanese American community.

After returning to Little Tokyo, oldest son Archie entered the business. Toyo encouraged his son to take a more active role in the community and in 1949, Archie became involved with the restarting of the Nisei Week Festival.

Archie Miyatake has really taken his father’s advice to heart. Running a successful business is difficult enough, but the amount of time and effort he has given to the community is immeasurable. Through the years, the Nisei Week booklet has relied on the Miyatake resources. Archie and his wife, Takeko, have never stinted in their generosity, especially for this 50th Anniversary edition. The majority of the photos, both current and historical, come from the Miyatake archives, and the insight and information that Archie has provided is invaluable.

It is with heartfelt sincerity that we extend our appreciation and thankfulness to Archie Miyatake for all the help that he has provided.
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