



Amache Historical Society II (AHS II) Newsletter Special 2020

AHS II's mission is to:

- preserve the Amache site (Granada, CO)
- educate about Amache's history and legacy, by gathering survivors' stories
- communicate via the amache.org website
- support John Hopper and his Granada High students, known as the Amache Preservation Society, with maintenance of the Amache site and Museum.

AHS II: HOW YOU CAN CONTRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY

In 2019 Congress directed the National Park Service (NPS) to conduct a Special Resource Study (SRS) to determine whether Amache meets the criteria to become a new unit of the NPS. This study is the first step towards determining whether Amache qualifies for such a designation.

The Special Resource Study has four criteria that must be met:

1. **National Significance:** Does the site contain nationally significant natural and/or cultural resources?
2. **Suitability:** Does the site represent a natural or cultural resource that is not already adequately represented in the national park system, or is not comparably represented and protected for public enjoyment by another land-managing entity?
3. **Feasibility:** Is the site (1) of sufficient size and appropriate configuration to ensure long-term resource protection and visitor enjoyment, and (2) capable of efficient administration by the National Park Service at a reasonable cost? Some factors to consider include landownership, acquisition costs, life cycle maintenance costs, access, threats to resources, and staff or development requirements.
4. **Need for NPS Management:** Is direct NPS management clearly superior to management by other agencies or the private sector (e.g., continued management in perpetuity by the Amache Preservation Society)?

Your input is crucial!

As a first step, the National Park Service is conducting Public Scoping Meetings to hear from interested community members. During these meetings, the NPS study team will share information about the process, including additional information about the four criteria. The team will also answer questions from those attending and collect information about how Amache meets specified criteria.

The team requires information from Amache survivors, descendants, members of the Granada community, Japanese American Confinement Sites Consortium, broader Japanese American community, and others to understand what makes the site unique compared to other sites already preserved for the public. NPS currently manages Manzanar, Minidoka, Honouliuli National Historic Sites, and Tule Lake National Monument.

What does the NPS need to hear from you?

It is important for you to help the NPS team understand how designating Amache as an additional NPS site will enhance or expand the broader history of the wartime incarceration of Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals and that there is broad public support. The more people they hear from individually, the stronger the case will be.

If Amache is judged to be a site that only replicates the history of incarceration as already represented by other sites, it will not qualify.

Your personal stories, connections, and experiences will be most powerful and persuasive. Please bring photographs, documents, or articles to the meetings to help the SRS team visualize the information you share.

Alternately, you may send responses to the five questions below directly to NPS via the online form at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/commentForm.cfm?documentID=101266>

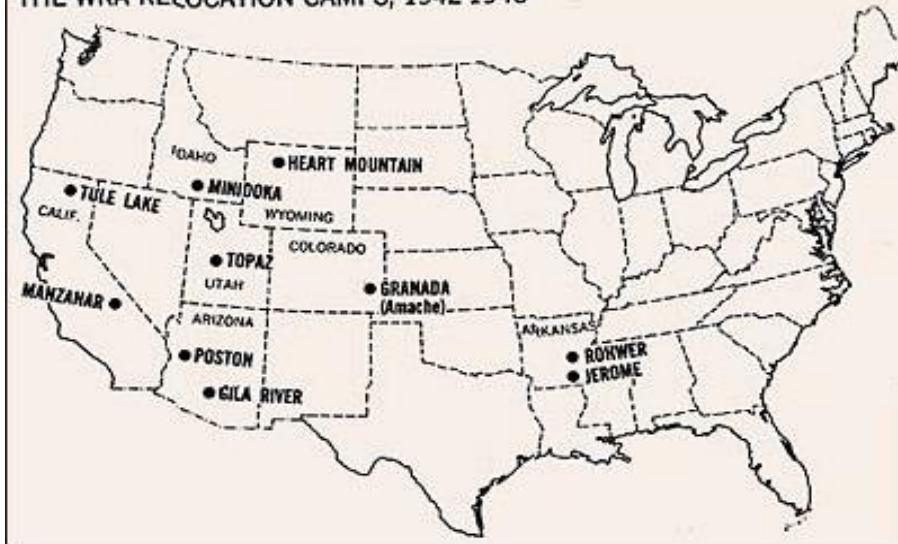
1. What is your vision for preserving Amache? How would you like to see the site managed? What types of activities and experiences do you want to see as part of Amache's future?
2. Do you have any ideas or concerns that the National Park Service should be aware of and/or address in the study process?
3. What objects, buildings, remaining features, values and stories do you believe are most important and why?
4. What do you think differentiates Amache from the other nine Japanese American incarceration camps?
5. Do you have any other ideas or comments you would like to share with us?

In responding to the questions above, please address the four criteria used to evaluate the site for inclusion in the National Park System. See further information below.

Additional details about Amache and the four criteria:

1. **National Significance.** Amache meets this criteria as it is already designated as a National Historic Landmark.
2. **Suitability.** The SRS team needs to determine what makes Amache unique compared with other NPS sites. Some topics and questions are listed below to help recall personal memories or family stories that would contribute relevant and interesting details to submit to the NPS. You may also have your own ideas.

THE WRA RELOCATION CAMPS, 1942-1946



Existing National Park Service Managed Sites

- Honouliuli National Historic Site, Hawaii (Not open to the public yet)
- Manzanar National Historic Site, California
- Minidoka National Historic Site, Idaho
- Tule Lake National Monument, California

Preservation of multiple sites is needed to tell the full history of incarceration. Many families were dispersed among confinement sites, or moved among them at various times; each site had its own unique characteristics. If you lived at another site, how was Amache different? If your family had a choice between moving to Amache or another site, why was Amache chosen?

Amache is one of the few sites east of the Rockies. People who are familiar with the history of incarceration often associate confinement sites in California and on the West Coast. Amache is located near well-traveled roads and could educate visitors who will not be traveling to the Pacific coastline. Were those of you not incarcerated at Amache surprised to learn that it was in Colorado and near the Kansas border? Why is it important to have a site that represents incarceration in the middle of the country?



1945 photo of Amache from the water tower



Photo of Amache with the restored guard tower, barrack, water tower, and original roads and foundations. circa 2012.

Amache is one of the better preserved WRA locations. Visitors can still experience the full layout of the site, including the roads and blocks of barracks. Many other locations preserve only a portion of the living area and barracks built with post and pier supports. Amache barracks, by contrast, were built on a full cement foundation so that doorway thresholds would have been lower than the rest of the foundation. Some early arrivals helped finish the construction of Amache. Did your family help with construction?

- If you have visited Amache, how did the integrity of the site in its present form affect your visit?
- What was it like to be able to follow the original roads on the map and stand in the doorway of your or your family's barrack or classroom?
- Would the experience have been different if you could not see the outline of the barrack or infer where the door was located?

An ongoing commemoration at the cemetery. Amache is one of only three sites, including Manzanar and Rowher, where human remains are still interred at the cemetery. Amache has benefited from multiple generations of Japanese Americans and Granada communities working together since the 1970s. The Denver Optimist Club, Friends of Amache, and the Amache Historical Society I led by Min Tonai replaced wooden markers with headstones, installed sprinklers, and planted trees in the 1990s. The annual pilgrimage has begun with a ceremony at the cemetery since 1975.

- Were any of your families involved in building the initial memorial using Amache bricks?
- Did you participate when the Denver Optimist Club added the new Honor Roll monument in the 1980s?
- Were you involved in updating maintenance that led to sprinklers, trees, and new headstones?

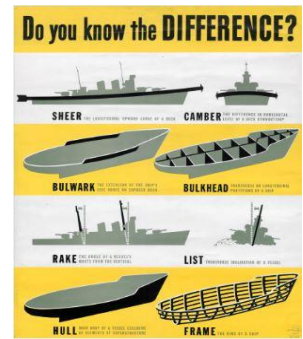


Left: Original 1945 three-piece Amache Memorial. Center: Present day graves. Right: Amache Pilgrimage 2016. Council General and Wife paying homage to those who were incarcerated and died at Amache. Photo by Amache Preservation Society.

Amache boasted the only successful silk screen shop within the War Relocation Authority (WRA). The shop, which was the only one of its kind in CO, began at the request of the U.S. Navy Department and produced more than 250,000 posters for the navy as well as countless prints for Amache residents and staff. It was in operation from June 1943 to May 15, 1945.



Dillon S. Myer Visits Silk Screen Shop
AMACHE, COLORADO



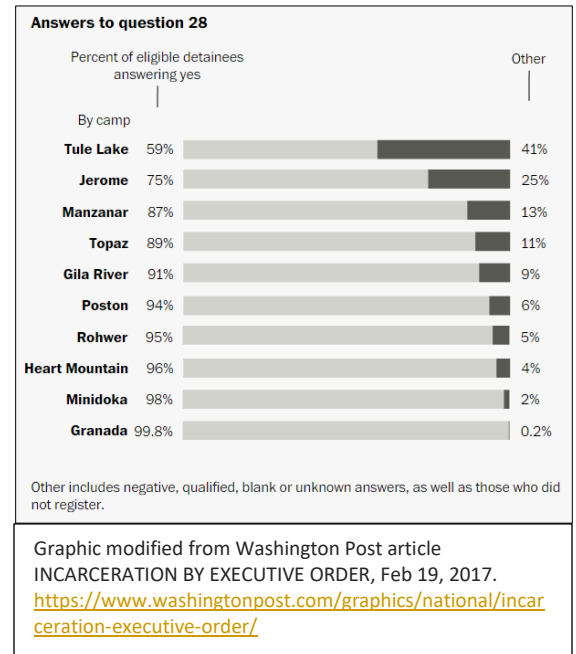
Amache silkscreen

Amache had the lowest percentage of “no” responses to the loyalty questionnaire and highest percentage of military volunteerism.

Some believe that this result is a consequence of Amache being the only incarceration site where the state governor, Ralph Carr, welcomed inmates and argued for their respectful treatment. Only 125 from Amache were transferred to the enhanced segregation center at Tule Lake, whereas over 1,000 from Tule Lake were transferred to Amache. Photos of “Welcome Tuleans” banners and articles about dances held as part of the festivities appeared in Amache newspapers. Were any of your families separated or reunited as part of this process? What was it like to be among the incarcerated remaining at Amache? And how did the atmosphere at Amache change after Tuleans arrived?



Welcome for the Tule Lake transfers



Ten percent of the Amache population volunteered for the military. In total, 953 men and women from Amache served in the famed 442nd Regimental Combat Team, Military Intelligence Service, and Women’s Army Corps. Thirty-eight of them earned combat decorations for exemplary conduct under fire; 31 were killed in action.

Amache was less than 1.5 miles, a short walking distance, from Granada. Newman's drug store and soda fountain and the fish market founded by incarcerated Frank Tsuchiya were among two locations often mentioned as places frequented by Amacheans. What memories do you have of going into Granada and interacting with residents? And if you lived in the town of Granada, what do you remember about people from Amache coming to town? What was it like to have a wartime confinement site so close to town? And what was it like to be the first town in Colorado with sushi?



Left: Amacheans walking around Granada's Newman Drug Store, next door to the fish market. Right: Present day downtown Granada.

The ties between Amache and Granada continue today. The efforts of John Hopper and the Granada High School Amache Preservation Society (APS) are largely responsible for the preservation, maintenance, and tours of the site. A number of buildings have been donated by the town to house museum collections and a research center. Significantly, the University of Denver's Amache Archaeology and Heritage Management Field School maintains places in its enrollment for high school interns who are descendants of incarcerated or residents of Granada. Did you play a role as an APS participant? How did you get involved? What was your most memorable experience? And how does the preservation of Amache affect Granada today?



Left: APS students at the site of the new Amache Museum

<https://www.tbkbank.com/tbk-bank-donates-building-to-granada-school-district/>

Right: APS students participated in the TOMODACHI CIE Grassroots Summit in Oita in Oita prefecture, Japan in 2015.
<http://usjapantomodachi.org/2015/07/16/175/>



Communities in Livingston, CA, retained property after WW II. Residents of the Yamato farming colonies in California's Central Valley (Livingston, Cressey, and Cortez) formed a corporation headed by a European-American to hold their property during the forced removal. After being sent to Amache, they were able, unlike many others, to reclaim their property upon release and thus provided the Japanese American community with continuity after the war. Was your family from this area? What conditions did you return to? How did your homecoming experience differ from those of your friends at Amache and elsewhere who had lost their goods?

3. **Feasibility.** Amache, which is part of the historic Santa Fe Trail, is located in the same broad area as two other National Park Service sites, Bent's Old Fort and Sand Creek Massacre, presently managed under one superintendent. Sand Creek Massacre, which is related to Amache in terms of the latter being named after an Indian woman and the thematics of racism, has been assisting Amache with maintenance such as the removal of hazardous trees. Also, largely due to the volunteer efforts of the Amache Preservation Society, a strong basis of preservation and interpretation already exists and could easily serve as a foundation in the future.

The Amache study area encompasses one square mile with gridded square blocks, with five streets running north-south and seven running east-west. The site contains the core of the developed area, including intact foundations and roadways in the housing, administrative, military police, warehouse, and support areas, as well as the cemetery. The Amache Preservation Society preserves the study area for education and interpretation.

4. **Need for NPS management.** Public interest in Amache has been growing due to the tireless efforts of the APS, the DU Amache Research Project, and other important organizations. The current management of the site is due to the extreme dedication and hard work of a handful of very committed individuals. When significant personalities retire or specific restoration projects are completed, no ongoing organization and funding exist to provide needed continuity. NPS could, in fact, serve as that organization and thus ensure that Amache would be protected and preserved in perpetuity. Further, most of the restoration work undertaken thus far has been done under competitive grants funded by the NPS Japanese American Confinement Sites program (Public Law 109-441, 120 Stat. 3288), which may soon expire. Signed into law in 2006, this bill authorized expenditures up to \$38 million for the preservation and interpretation of historic confinement sites where Japanese Americans had been detained. Funding is not guaranteed from year to year so that Congress, which first appropriated funds in 2009, must authorize annual budgets. According to the JACS newsletter, in 2018 more than \$26 million of the \$38 million had already been spent. It should be noted that many individuals make donations to enable the Amache Preservation Society to pay for upkeep and repairs, but this ad hoc system does not provide a steady stream of funding so that urgent requests have to be sent out to cover emergencies.

We have created a PowerPoint presentation for an additional overview of these criteria and will be hosting a webinar for those who would like additional background to help prepare for the meetings.

The date and time are TBD.

Public Scoping Meeting Schedule

The National Park Service (NPS) invites the public to participate in one of two informational meetings and open houses regarding the Amache Special Resource Study. The first public meeting was held at the Granada City Complex at 103 South Main Street in Granada, CO, on Tuesday, February 11, 6 pm - 8 pm.

The Denver area meeting will be held on **Thursday, April 9**, 1 pm - 3 pm at Simpson United Methodist Church at 6001 Wolff Street in Arvada, CO.

Meetings will also be held in multiple cities in California on March 16-19, 2020. Locations are being secured and the final schedule will be released soon.

Sunday March 15 - San Francisco, CA

2 - 4 pm: Japanese American Citizen League Headquarters, 1765 Sutter Street, San Francisco, CA 94115

Monday March 16 - Sebastopol, CA

10 am - 12 pm: Enmanji Buddhist Temple - Memorial Hall, 1200 Gravenstein Highway South, Sebastopol 95472

Tuesday March 17 -Sacramento, CA and San Jose, CA

10 am - 12 pm: Buddhist Church of Sacramento, 2401 Riverside Boulevard, Sacramento, CA 95818

6 - 8 pm: Japanese American Museum of San Jose, 535 North 5th Street, San Jose, CA 95112

Wednesday March 18 - Merced and Oakland, CA

11 am- 1 pm: Merced County Library, 2100 O Street, Merced, California 95340

6 - 8 pm: Oakland Asian Cultural Center, Pacific Renaissance Plaza, 388 Ninth Street, Suite 290,
Conference Room #4, Oakland, CA 94607

Thursday March 19 - Los Angeles, CA

3:30 - 7 pm: Japanese American National Museum, 100 N Central Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90012

Two presentations will be offered, at 4 pm and 6 pm.

Friday March 20 - Gardena, CA

10 am - 12 pm: Gardena Valley Japanese Cultural Institute - Rm 202 & 203, 1964 W. 162nd Street, Gardena 90247

Anyone unable to attend the meetings is welcome to send comments or questions about the Special Resource Study to the NPS. **Comments must be received by May 31, 2020 to be considered part of the study.**

National Park Service,
Denver Service Center
12795 West Alameda Parkway
PO Box 25287
Denver, CO 80225-0287

National Park Service Project Manager Tamara Delaplane stated that the “National Park Service values input from the public. Feedback from communities and stakeholders will be a fundamental element of the Amache Special Resource Study.”

This Special Resource Study will take place over the next two years. At its conclusion, the National Park Service will forward its findings to the Secretary of the Interior, who will then make a recommendation regarding the designation of Amache as a national park and submit that decision, as well as the study, to Congress.

More information about the study can be found at: <https://parkplanning.nps.gov/Amache>

Amache Pilgrimage on May 16, 2020

The Special Resource Study Team will be attending the Amache Pilgrimage, which is open to the public at no cost. Since this event is scheduled during the period allotted for public input, if you are unable to attend one of the meetings but attend the pilgrimage, you may speak with the NPS SRS team then.

The opening ceremony starts at the Amache Cemetery and will be followed by a potluck lunch and short program at the Granada High School. For more information, visit <https://amache.org/pilgrimage/>

A new remodeled Amache Museum, located just across the street from the present building in Granada, CO, will open on Saturday, May 16. The TBK Bank of Granada generously provided the new building to Granada School District.

University of Denver Amache Field School Community Open House on July 9-10

The public scoping period will officially close on May 31, but we are encouraging the SRS team to attend the Community Open House on July 10 and summarize experiences from this event in their report. If you agree that the SRS team should attend this gathering, please encourage them to do so at one of the public meetings or in writing. The more people the team hears from, the more compelling a case will be made for their attendance.

Every other summer since 2008, the University of Denver (DU) Amache project has conducted a month-long field research at Amache and contributed to the evolving Amache Museum in Granada, Colorado. Research this year is scheduled from June 15 - July 17. Mornings will be spent on archaeological research at the camp site, while afternoons involve working in the Amache museum. We are excited about helping the Amache Preservation Society draw up plans to use their new building for meetings, exhibits, and collections storage. Although guests are welcome at any time during the field season, the field school team is particularly interested in inviting former Amache inmates and their families to a special open house on July 9-10, 2020.

July 9: Activities begin on Thursday evening (7 pm – 8:30 pm) with a talk about letters to and from the camp by Amache descendant Bob Akaki.

July 10: (8 am - noon): Guests will visit with archaeologists and learn more about our findings this summer. Guided tours of family barracks, reconstructed structures, and other areas of interest will be available.

(1pm- 4 pm): Guests will visit the Amache museum to see the new exhibits and collections, research family history, investigate objects found this summer, and chat with community members to connect and share stories.

(5pm – 8 pm): Dinner for all open house participants will be cooked by the DU crew.

Megan Brown, a DU student is collecting data for her MA thesis research on play and playgrounds at Amache. If you have insight into this topic or photographs documenting play or play spaces, we would love to hear from you!

Follow the progress of the field school on Facebook! We will post regularly throughout the month when we are in the field @DUAmacheResearchProject.

To reach DU with questions or comments about any of these opportunities, send an email to: bclark@du.edu or call 303.871.2875

If you plan to attend the Community Open House, please RSVP by July 1 to Jennifer Foxcroft, DU Anthropology Departmental Assistant: (303) 871-2677 or via email at jennifer.foxcroft@du.edu

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