



Amache Historical Society II (AHS II) Newsletter Spring 2021

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.

UPDATE ON THE NATIONAL PARK SERVICE'S AMACHE SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY

As we know, Amache was one of 10 sites where Japanese Americans and Japanese nationals were incarcerated under the authority of the War Relocation Authority in the Department of Interior during World War II. Due to its importance to Japanese-American and wartime history, Congress passed the John D. Dingell, Jr. Conservation, Management and Recreation Act in 2019. The act mandated a resource study to evaluate Amache for inclusion in the National Park System under the Interior Department.

Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic last year led to the cancelation of public meetings scheduled on the West Coast last year to solicit input for the study. Still, three virtual meetings were held last summer. Now three additional virtual meetings to continue public outreach will be held this May.

As this effort continues, the NPS welcomes you to submit comments about your personal experience and Amache's significance. The deadline has been extended to June 30, 2021.

Please check websites such as parkplanning.nps.gov and amache.org for further information.

Virtual Meetings Schedule:

1. Saturday, May 22, 2021

10:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m. PST (11:00 a.m.–1:00 p.m. MST)
Online: <https://brown.zoom.us/j/92961369737>
Phone: (877) 369 0926
Meeting ID: 929 6136 9737

2. Wednesday, May 26, 2021

2:30 p.m.–4:30 p.m. PST (3:30 p.m.–5:30 p.m. MST)
Online: <https://brown.zoom.us/j/94315127736>
Phone: (877) 853 5247.
Meeting ID: 943 1512 7736

3. Thursday, May 27, 2021

5:00 p.m.–7:00 p.m. PST (6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m. MST)
Online: <https://brown.zoom.us/j/95324800472>
Phone: (877) 853 5247
Meeting ID: 953 2480 0472

Written comments may be mailed to:

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

Comments can be submitted online at:

<https://parkplanning.nps.gov/document.cfm?parkID=415&projectID=92521&documentID=101266>

New NPS Amache SRS Project Manager:

The NPS announced that Mr. Charles Lawson, who has a background in archaeology and cultural resource management, has been appointed as the new project manager of the resource study and is looking forward to working on this important issue.

Amache Virtual Pilgrimage on June 11-13, 2021

Due to the continuing Covid-19 pandemic, the annual Amache pilgrimage will be held this year in a virtual format on June 11-13. A schedule of events will be published shortly. Please check the Amache.org website for updates. Also, the "All Things Amache" Facebook group will post information about pilgrimage events. The Amache Historical Society 2 hopes to see you at the pilgrimage soon!

University of Denver Amache Research Project Field School cancelled for 2021

Due to stringent safety protocols, Denver University has postponed its field school until 2022 when a return to Amache for a seventh session will again focus on historical archaeology and museum studies. Dr. Bonnie Clark is still working on a grant-funded project to render data in various formats from the last six years of field work more compatible and accessible. If you have questions, please contact her at bclark@du.edu.

Support the Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497/S.1284)

Introduced by Congressman Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Ken Buck (R-CO) and Senators Michael Bennet (D-CO) and John Hickenlooper (D-CO), the bipartisan Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497/S.1284) would make the Granada Relocation Center (Amache) a National Historic Site managed by the National Park Service.

The proposed act honors survivors and descendants as well as the legacy of those who are no longer with us. Several of the older generation who suffered at Amache died believing that they were not wanted in this country and did not live to see an official government apology as well as reparations mandated by the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

While the legacy of Amache belongs to Japanese Americans, it is also the story of the Town of Granada and our nation as a whole. And it is part of the heritage of southeast Colorado with its links to Cheyenne and Arapaho tribal nations. As a narrative to be preserved for future generations, Amache's story will be told by the National Park Service acting as America's storyteller.

If you have questions about the bill, please contact Carissa Bunge in Congressman's Joe Neguse office at carissa.bunge@mail.house.gov. And please consider writing to your representative in the House and your two senators to ask them to support the bill.

National Parks Conservation Association Presents Park Talks on Amache: "A Living History, An American Story, and a New Opportunity for the National Park Service. "

NPCA provides a series of free Park Talks or live presentations so that communities may learn about national park stories, problems, and affirmations. The NPCA's support of a new national park at Amache, Colorado, is explored, and descendants and experts affirm the importance of honoring and preserving the Amache site for future generations. The March 24 recording is available at the following link:

<https://npca.zoom.us/rec/play/J1dWgkTVIy8e-L22CGRn97DHRpiZdSzkXAiUwBTv3NvKHauGQdoWBLgdLTqOldtxk17Pv5jHb8eEWKiB.SHBN9nqxUTxZAJ9-?continueMode=true>

Art Collection Donated to Amache Museum by *Julia Shizuyo Popham*

Fukunosuke Kusumi, an Issei artist and documentarian, had produced over one hundred paintings limning the Santa Anita and Amache incarceration sites during 1942-1945. After almost 70 years, his paintings were found in his grandchild's garage and later donated to the Amache Museum. On a hot summer day, I carefully viewed each one and was disoriented by expressions of both melancholy and hope. From portraying internees celebrating the Obon festival just beyond a row of moonlit barracks to illustrating friends and family departing by train for the Rohwer concentration camp, the collection connotes complex feelings of both loss and resilience experienced under the austere conditions of institutional racism. I am working with the Kusumi family, the Amache Museum, and University of North Carolina faculty on a thesis interpreting this collection. I hope to write a nuanced narrative about the Japanese American concentration camp and our national history. If you have any information about Fukunosuke Kusumi, please contact me at shizuyo@email.unc.edu. I would be grateful to hear from you!

Amache Preservation Society: Reconstructing Amache's Honor Roll Kiosk

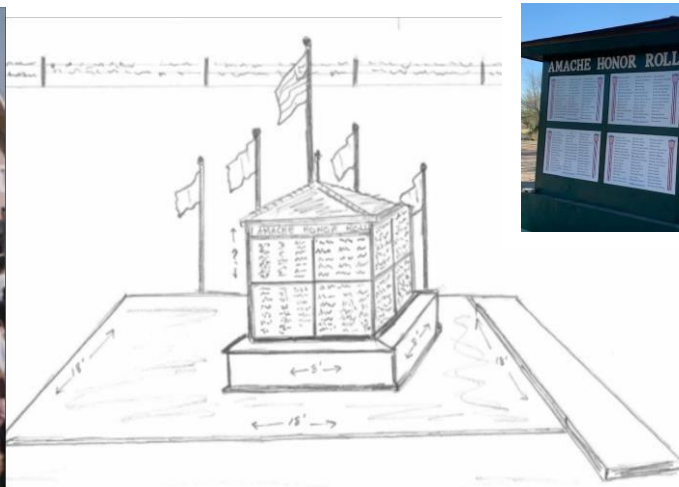
The APS continues to support periodic public visits to the Amache site as well as tours of the museum on a pre-coordinated basis with John Hopper.

An important APS project undertaken during the pandemic was the reconstruction of the Amache Honor Roll kiosk that memorializes the men and women who served in the military during the war. The names of those on the honor roll were listed in a special edition of the Granada Pioneer, dated December 30, 1944.

Another issue, dated July 4, 1945, gave a history of the honor roll as stated by Amache Director James G. Lindley: "In honor of Amacheans in the US military service, an Honor Roll kiosk bearing their names was erected on July 1, 1944 in the court of the Co-op building. On this Independence Day, let us thank God that 'Americanism is not, and never was, a matter of race or ancestry.' The outstanding record of Nisei soldiers has done more than anything else to prove this to other Americans."



Boy Scouts playing at the Amache Honor Roll Kiosk



Artist drawing of the reconstructed Honor Roll Kiosk



Book Reviews:

***Amache Remembered - An American Concentration Camp 1942-1945* by Robert Y. Fuchigami**

https://books.google.com/books/about/Amache_Remembered.html?id=otr2zQEACAAJ&source=kp_book_description

In May 1942, Bob Fuchigami, with his father, mother and seven siblings, were evicted from their 20-acre fruit and vegetable farm in Yuba City, California, by the U.S. Army and sent by train to the Merced Detention Center. In September 1942 they were again moved by train but this time to the Amache Concentration Camp (Granada Relocation Center). During their three-year incarceration behind barbed wire, they lost their farm, home, truck, and equipment, etc. *Amache Remembered* is his compelling wartime story.

***Finding Solace in the Soil: The Archaeology of Gardens and Gardeners at Colorado's Japanese American Internment Camp* by Dr. Bonnie Clark**

<https://upcolorado.com/university-press-of-colorado/item/3885-finding-solace-in-the-soil>

Finding Solace in the Soil tells the largely unknown story of Amache gardens cultivated by incarcerated behind barbed wire. Synthesizing a great many sources, Bonnie J. Clark describes the efflorescence of gardening during wartime confinement. She examines botanical evidence like seeds and garden-related artifacts, draws on the oral history and photographs of survivors, and cites archival sources such as letters and government records to recount how prisoners transformed a harsh military setting into something resembling a town. Since many of them had been farmers, gardeners, and nursery workers, they used their expertise to landscape the desolate high plains of southeastern Colorado.

Bible Ministry in Amache

In 1943, Henry Ragatz, a writer for the American Bible Society's *Record* magazine, visited Amache to speak to incarcerated who shared with him painful stories about the hardships they and their families were enduring. The society had mailed 412 Bibles to Japanese-American pastors in Amache. Altogether, the society's War Emergency Fund financed the shipment of 749 Bibles, 1,635 New Testaments, and 1,055 Gospels to eight of the 10 relocation centers.

One minister wrote a letter describing the impact of the Bibles his camp had received: We are truly grateful to the Bible Society and other Christian agencies in America which bring home to us the knowledge that Christian love is alive. Our children are being reminded that not all of America is behind this confinement of citizens in concentration camps, and that friends are truly concerned about them, and are trying to help them make life here as tolerable as possible.

See the American Bible Society full article at <https://news.americanbible.org/blog/entry/corporate-blog/bible-ministry-in-amache>

Noboru Taguma: An Amache Resister

Born to a farming family in Broderick, California, Noboru Taguma graduated from high school in 1941 and was relocated to Merced Assembly Center and the Granada Relocation Center (Amache) in Colorado in 1942. Among his family's losses were income from their crops and horses that had to be given away. The owner of the farm where they worked did allow them to store their equipment in a shed.

In 1943, Noboru stated on a loyalty questionnaire administered in Amache that he was willing to serve in the US Army if his parents were released from incarceration. Upon receiving his draft notice, he did not report for duty and, with 36 others from Amache, was arrested and sent to Englewood Federal Correctional Institution, 15 miles from downtown Denver. Although counseled by attorneys Minoru Yasui and Joe Masaoka to opt for induction, he refused and was transferred to Catalina Federal Prison in Arizona.

After serving his sentence, Noboru was relocated to Granada, where he worked in the fish market to be close to his family; he was not allowed to enter Amache itself. So, for a whole month he walked or hitchhiked at night to the camp, timed the searchlights, and sneaked inside to eat *musubi* in the mess hall or to watch a movie with his family. When alerted about the presence of MPs, he would sneak out and go back to Granada.

Noboru attempted to renounce his citizenship so that he and his family could be transferred together to the Tule Lake Segregation Center, designated for high-risk detainees. But the Department of Justice sent him instead to the Santa Fe Internment Camp in New Mexico, where he met German prisoners and Japanese Latin Americans who spoke both Japanese and Spanish. Attorney Wayne Collins prevented his deportation to Japan and arranged a transfer to a DOJ camp in Crystal City, Texas. After securing probation so that he could work on Seabrook, New Jersey farms, Noboru repaired machinery for seven months, and rejoined his family upon his release in 1947.

After contracting with the Campbell Soup Company, Noboru started his own farm in 1948. Not much is known about this transaction. As for his wartime resistance, he recalls that he wanted to do what was best for his parents and family--they had worked so hard and lost so much. As a group, resisters like Noboru were held in contempt by many Nisei, especially the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) and WWII veterans. But, the JACL passed a resolution at a national convention in 1990 to move past the acrimony and apologized to the resisters.

Help Paint the Water Tower

John Hopper needs funding to paint the water tower. Please send a contribution in any amount to:

Amache Preservation Society
PO Box 259
Granada, CO 81041-0259

Volunteer Staff:

Writer and Rewrite Editor: Sumiko Higashi

Design and Layout: Mitch Homma
Distribution: Kirsten Leong, Frances Palmer

Contributors:

Mitch Homma, Julia Shizuyo Popham

Photos:
Amache Preservation Society