



## Amache Historical Society II (AHS II) Newsletter Fall 2021

AHS II's mission is to:

- preserve the Amache site (Granada, CO)
- educate the public about Amache's history and legacy by recording survivors' stories
- communicate via the [amache.org](http://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.

### SPECIAL DEDICATION

We dedicate this issue to Frances Itoh Palmer, a long-time supporter of Amache's preservation and a founder of AHS2, as she has retired as a distributor. This newsletter was born during a conversation when Frances phoned Sumiko Higashi, who was then waiting to board a plane at an airport.



#### **Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497 / S.1284), Write Your Senators!**

Introduced by Congressmen Joe Neguse (D-CO) and Ken Buck (R-CO) and by Senators Michael Bennet (R-CO) and John Hickenlooper (D-CO), the bipartisan Amache National Historic Site Act (H.R. 2497 / S.1284) would designate Amache, the Granada Relocation Center, as a national park.

The 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 witness the official government apology and reparations mandated by the Civil Liberties Act of 1988.

Although 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 a meaningful 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 history can best be told by the National Park Service as America's storyteller.

On July 29, 2021, the House of Representatives passed H.R. 2497 by a vote of 416 to 2. The Senate needs to vote on S. 1284 next. **Please email, write, or phone both the Senators in your state to ask them to support the bill.**

#### **Amache Documentary Film & Educational Curriculum Project**

Colorado Preservation, Inc., in a partnership with North Shore Productions in Portland, Oregon, will make a documentary film about Japanese Americans who were incarcerated in Amache during World War II. A 2021 National Park Service Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant will provide initial funding. The film will be screened at the new Amache Museum and also air statewide and regionally on public television stations. So that the film may be readily incorporated into the social studies and history curriculum of grades 6-12, shorter accompanying films and study guides will be available for free.

The project is in the early planning stages and North Shore Productions may be contacting Amache survivors, descendants, and supporters for interviews.

### **John Tinker Memorial Scholarship by Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker**

In 2005, John Tinker, Professor Emeritus in the Department of Sociology at CSU, Fresno, visited the incarceration site at Amache in Granada, Colorado. So impressed was he with the participation and work of the Granada students comprising the Amache Preservation Society that he made donations to support their effort. Among their activities were presentations on Amache and its Japanese American wartime occupants to groups in the state; maintaining the Amache site by mowing the grass, working on the cemetery, and constructing storyboards and a kiosk at the entrance; and organizing the Amache Museum.

Starting in 2022 a scholarship of \$500.00 will be awarded, in Dr. Tinker's memory, to a senior in the Amache Preservation Society. After a review of submitted application forms, the scholarship committee will notify the winning senior of the award and present a certificate. The honored student will be recognized for his/her outstanding contribution in attaining the society's goals and must have plans to attend college and further the society's mission to educate the public about racism and wartime incarceration.

Dr. Tinker's wife, Carlene T. Tinker; his son, Dr. David C. Tinker; and daughter, Julia E. Tinker, will proudly present the first John Tinker Memorial Scholarship at the conclusion of the academic year in 2022.

### **2021 Amache Field School by Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker**

As a volunteer for the Amache Field School, sponsored by Denver University and directed by Dr. Bonnie Clark and Dr. April Kamp-Whittaker, I attended the session scheduled for July 19-31 2021. This year's Amache Field School had a different format than the others I've attended because it was only two weeks long, had half the usual number of participants, and didn't involve any excavations. The field school is held in even-numbered years, but last year's was cancelled due to the Covid pandemic and will return to its normal format in 2022.

During this past summer, the field school focused on entering data on a new app on iPads used by researchers to determine if such data entries were appropriate. Participants were directed to survey a certain area, flag and collect any artifact that seemed valuable, and enter its characteristics on the new app. The session was productive because it gave the directors a new research tool that was more comprehensive; it will probably be used in the Amache Field School next year.

I might add that our group was able to stay in a refurbished barrack that occupies the Granada school grounds and is walking distance from the Amache Museum. We met with members of the Amache Preservation Society and John Hopper. During afternoons, members of our group moved all the objects from the old Amache Museum to its new "digs" across the street, a building with more square footage donated by TBK bank. The new Amache Museum, in our proud estimation, is comparable to holdings in the Smithsonian. It's that great!



Next year will be my seventh Amache Field School...incredible!



**2018 Denver University Amache Field School Community Open House participants including Amache field crew and site visitors. Eleven former internees were present, with several multi-generation families, for the evening social event.**



**Denver University Amache Field School with visitors at the 11-F recreation hall site**



**Left: Frances Itoh Palmer and family being forced to move to an assembly center**

**Right: Frances Itoh Palmer's elementary school class**



## 2022 University of Denver Amache Summer Field School and Open House by April Kamp-Whittaker

The Department of Anthropology at the University of Denver (DU) has long been engaged in community-based research at Amache. After a two-year hiatus due to Covid, the Amache Field School is back! Crews will be working from June 12 to July 9, 2022 on archaeological studies and in the new Amache Preservation Society museum. Amache descendants who are high school or college students are especially welcome to join our effort. Volunteers commit one week to do archaeological work in the morning and museum work in the afternoon. But volunteers who are solely interested in working in the new museum are also welcome.

Our community open house will begin on the evening of June 30. A full day of activities on July 1 will include tours of the archaeological site, individualized visits to barracks or other important locations in the camp, time to explore the new museum, and a group dinner.

We plan to do archaeological work this summer on Blocks 10G, 7E, and 12F and on the site of the high school. If you or anyone you know attended high school at Amache or lived in one of these blocks, please contact us before the field season or at the community open house.

Important Dates: Field School: June 12 – July 9, 2022      Community Open House: June 30 – July 1

For more information regarding internships or volunteering opportunities, please contact [Bonnie.Clark@du.edu](mailto:Bonnie.Clark@du.edu)

### This Year's Pilgrimage Was Virtual, Please Send Your Donations

Due to Covid, the annual pilgrimage this year was a virtual event hosted by former DU Field School intern Riki Ejima, whose aunt, singer Pat Suzuki, had been an incarcerated, and by survivor Carlene Tanigoshi Tinker. Opening remarks were delivered by Colorado's Congressional members Senator Michael Bennet, Senator John Hickenlooper, and Representative Joe Neguse. John Hopper conducted a tour of buildings such as the main kiosk, a reconstructed un-insulated barrack with army cots and a pot-bellied stove, and the original rec building restored to its foundation. Students representing the Amache Preservation Society introduced viewers to an exciting new museum and spoke about acquired objects such as sports memorabilia.

<https://www.jampilgrimages.com/2021-amache-virtual-pilgrimage>

As 2021 draws to a close, please consider sending your tax-deductible contributions to defray the costs of Amache's maintenance to:

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

### 2022 Amache Pilgrimage

The annual 2022 Amache Pilgrimage is in the planning stages. The date is still TBD. Unfortunately, the state of Colorado and the region around Amache are currently undergoing a COVID surge. The Amache.org website and the Facebook Group "All Things Amache" will post updates as soon as details become available.

## Summary of National Park Service Special Resource Study by Sumiko Higashi

Starting with a description of extensive efforts made to contact the public for its input, the NPS study describes virtual meetings held in Colorado and California, in 2020 and 2021. (A number of on-site meetings had to be cancelled due to Covid.) Additionally, 2,000 newsletters were sent to solicit comments from Colorado state agencies and offices, Japanese American organizations, non-profits, and the like.

A total of 5,123 pieces of correspondence—mostly electronic form letters—were submitted by individuals and organizations in all 50 states, Puerto Rico, and Great Britain. Although the study's focus was on answers to five key questions regarding Amache's resources, uniqueness, and vision for its future, there was generally overwhelming support for its inclusion as a historic site under the NPS. An important rationale was concern about the continuance of the herculean effort now made by John Hopper and the Amache Preservation Society to maintain the site.

Also significant issues were Amache's symbolism in the history of wartime hysteria and racism, the value of physical remains such as building foundations enabling visitors to recall the past, and the memories and oral history of survivors and descendants. Denver University's commitment to archaeological research at the site, led by Dr. Bonnie Clark, has been vital in preservation efforts.

Amache, located near the Midwestern heartland, reminds us that wartime incarceration was not a phenomenon confined to the Far West. Supporters of its inclusion under the NPS point out that the struggling local economy would benefit from tourism in the area. Bent's Old Fort and the Sand Creek Massacre Historic Site (Amache was the daughter of Cheyenne Chief Lone Bear who died at Sand Creek) are nearby so that NPS administrative efforts could be combined.

Amache was unique among incarceration sites, the study points out, because it became an important part of Colorado wartime history. Governor Ralph Carr, who risked his political career, welcomed the incarcerated. Subsequently, a number of Japanese Americans moved to the state to evade forced relocation and imprisonment. Also notable was the special relationship, past and present, between Amache and the nearby town of Granada. During the war, incarcerated would shop in Granada stores and people from surrounding towns would go to Amache to see movies and exhibits. Sport teams played each other. Granada is involved in preservation efforts today and works with Hopper and the APS as well as survivors and descendants.

It should be noted that a few negative comments from individuals and organizations opposed Amache's inclusion under the NPS because it was a smaller atypical site; focus should therefore be placed on Manzanar and Tule Lake. But Amache was atypical in important ways: in terms of the ratio of military recruits to the entire population, it recorded the highest number among the camps -- about 12 percent -- and it had a silk screen shop—the only one at an incarceration site—that produced posters for the navy.

With respect to Amache's future under envisioned NPS management, commentators wished to see more reconstruction of historic buildings, staff conducting interpretive tours, a visitor's center, and so forth. Some writers raised issues such as water rights, maintenance of the cemetery, wildlife, preservation of museum artifacts, and building nearby recreational sites.

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## Grant Awards to Update Interpretation Plans by Dana Shew

The Anthropological Studies Center at Sonoma State University in California was recently awarded a Public Humanities Projects-Historic Places grant from the National Endowment for the Humanities. Dana Ogo Shew leads the team. She will be updating the Interpretive Master Plan for the Granada Relocation Center National Historic Landmark (Amache) by focusing on its site, exhibitions, and public programs. An earlier Comprehensive Interpretive Plan and Conceptual Development Plan, written in April 2007, met most of its objectives.

As preparation, Shew held a number of meetings at various sites in Denver and LA, including the Japanese American National Museum, to solicit comments from today's growing number of stakeholders. She also created a Google survey, with questions asked at the meetings, for those unable to attend but still wishing to comment. Particularly important is the urgency of sharing the lessons of Japanese American wartime incarceration and contextualizing that history in today's sociopolitical and cultural climate.

It's not too late to share your thoughts. Please visit <https://forms.gle/fMNgWB8TPvns3Xy2A> to participate in the survey. Your input is crucial to shaping the future of Amache interpretation!

### Rec Hall and Barracks Exhibits

Colorado Preservation, Inc. has received a NPS JACS grant to develop public exhibits for the reconstructed barrack and recreation hall. The project team, including Dana Ogo Shew and April Kamp-Whittaker, will draft a conceptual framework and plans in early 2022. The ideas and suggestions accumulated in the process of updating the Amache Interpretation Plan update will also be considered (see link above).

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## Amache Alliance supports Amache

The Amache Alliance was formed as a California nonprofit public benefit corporation for charitable, educational, and historic purposes and received its Federal IRS 501 (c) (3) tax exempt status in August. Why the new organization? The Amache Historical Society 2 (AHS2) could not be recognized as a CA formal organization under CA business laws due to the similarity of its name to the original Amache Historical Society. The Amache Alliance will take over AHS2 responsibilities and fill the role of the retiring nisei-led tax-exempt group. The Amache Alliance will continue to support the Colorado and national organizations with their preservation efforts. The transition from AHS2 will take time, especially with regards to publicity and support of the Amache bills and ongoing projects.

The Amache Alliance has these primary goals:

- 1) preserve and interpret the Granada War Relocation Center (Amache) National Historic Landmark;
- 2) educate all Americans about the forced evacuation, relocation, and internment of Japanese Americans by preserving Amache's historic structures, artifacts, and stories;
- 3) collaborate with other organizations to stress the moral lesson and relevance of Japanese American confinement in preserving the civil rights of all Americans today.

Again, please contact your Senators to support Senate bill - S1284.

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