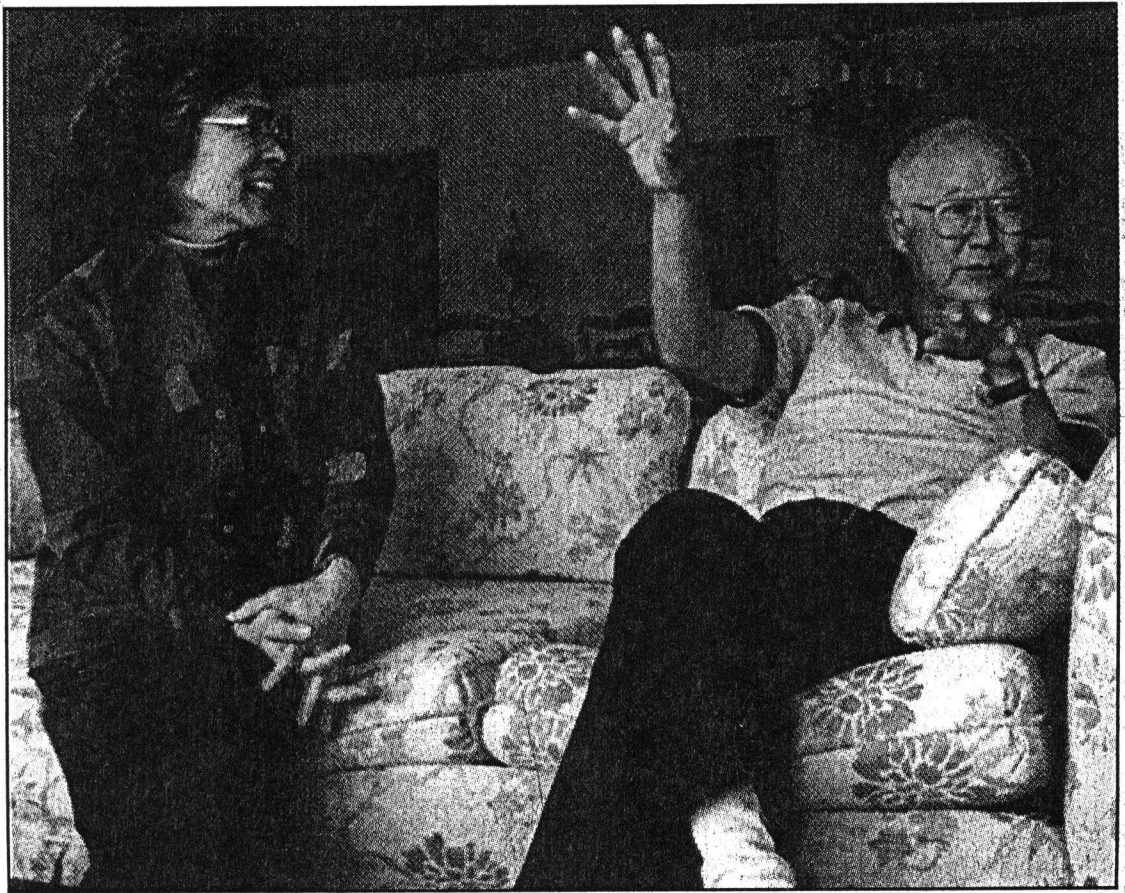


# Remembering an injustice

"The most important part of the program is to finally, after 60 years, acknowledge our friends who stood up and supported us. We are so grateful to have the opportunity to acknowledge them."

— Marcia Hashimoto



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

At their Watsonville home Mas Hashimoto and his wife Marcia discuss their internment and their plans for the "Liberty Lost . . . Lessons in Loyalty" re-enactment of the 1942 evacuation of persons of Japanese ancestry from Santa Cruz County.

## Re-enactment to revisit WWII internment of Japanese-Americans

By KATHRYN GILICK  
REGISTER-PAJARONIAN STAFF WRITER

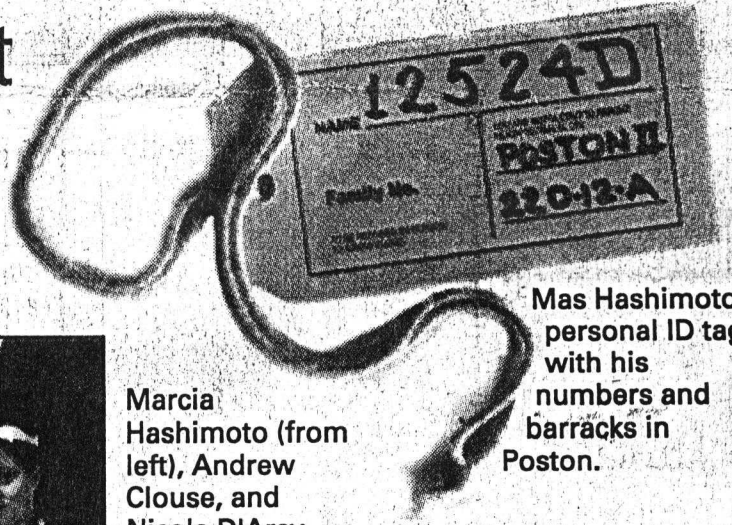
On the last Saturday in April the streets of downtown Watsonville will be transformed into a scene from six decades ago: the round-up and transportation of Japanese and Americans of Japanese descent who were sent to detention camps throughout the western United States.

Sixty years to the day, hundreds of people will walk from the city's public library to Watsonville's Veterans' Memorial Building on East Beach Street carrying suitcases and escorted by police just as they were on April 27, 1942.

In Watsonville, 725 Japanese and Japanese-Americans were rounded up and shipped off to the Rodeo Grounds in Salinas where they were held until being sent off to more permanent camps Poston, Ariz. In all, of the 120,000 Japanese and Japanese-Americans internees, 1,160 people were from Santa Cruz County.

Many lost their homes, their businesses, their family heirlooms. They were forced to leave furniture, cars and even pets behind. Friends who offered to take care of homes and pets, who paid the property taxes and bills for the interned Jap-

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Mas Hashimoto's personal ID tag with his numbers and barracks in Poston.



Marcia Hashimoto (from left), Andrew Clouse, and Nicole D'Arcy, pose for a photo in front of the Veteran's Memorial Building, 215 East Beach St., during a recent dress rehearsal for the re-enactment

Photo courtesy of Mas Hashimoto



Photo courtesy Mas Hashimoto

A photo from a yearbook created inside the Poston internment camp shows the fourth grade class with Mas Hashimoto of Watsonville (fourth from lower right).

### AT A GLANCE

Schedule for "Liberty Lost . . . Lessons in Loyalty" on Saturday, April 27

**11:00 a.m.**  
Watsonville Public Library parking lot

**11:50 a.m.**  
"Only What We Could Carry"  
• Walk, carrying suitcases escorted by city police officers

**12 p.m.**  
Watsonville Vets Hall:  
• Families at Vets Hall, check in at desk for family tags  
• Sandy Lydon, master of ceremonies

**1 p.m.**  
1942 Greyhound Bus

**1:30 p.m.**  
Mello Center Program:  
• Sandy Lydon: Philosophies of Cooperation  
• Internees arrive at Salinas Assembly Center  
• Life in Poston, AZ  
• Military Question (Loyalty) Stories  
• Re-settlement Stories

Redress: Norman Mineta  
(Invited Key Note Speaker)

**3:30 p.m.**  
Concluding Statements

**4 - 7 p.m.**  
Reception at PVHA and YWCA for participants, volunteers, and sponsors



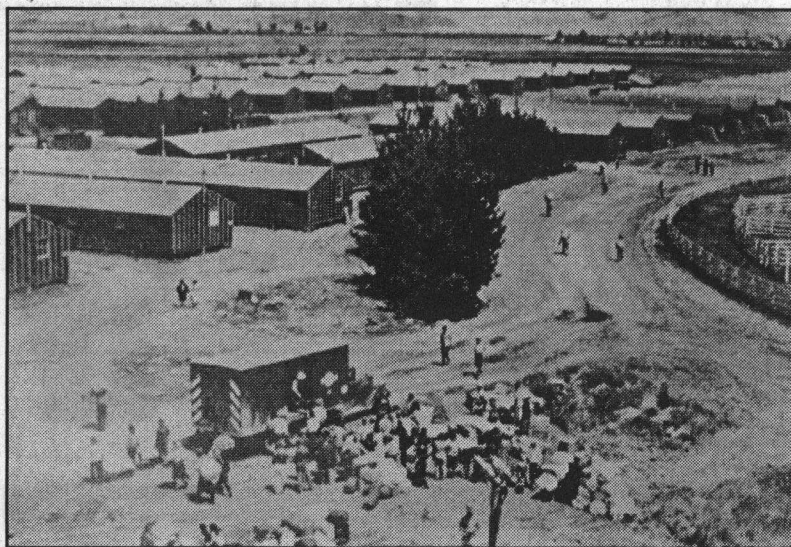


Photo courtesy Mas Hashimoto

The assembly center at the Rodeo Grounds of Salinas in 1942. Japanese-Americans from around the Central Coast were forcibly evacuated to the Rodeo Grounds soon after Pearl Harbor was attacked in 1941.

## INTERMENT

From page 1

Japanese-Americans so they would have a place to come home to, were turned away from the Salinas Rodeo Grounds when they tried to visit and criticized for supporting the "enemy."

"The most important part of the program is to finally, after 60 years, acknowledge our friends who stood up and supported us," said Marcia Hashimoto, one of the re-enactment organizers. "We are so grateful to have the opportunity to acknowledge them."

Supporters and their children will be honored after the re-enactment of individual stories.

Jane Borg of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association researched the families of the supporters.

"I think it is very timely because we've barely been able to find the families of the supporters," she said. "If we'd waited just one more generation we would have lost even more."

Period clothes and uniforms used in the re-enactment were donated by a number of people, Marcia Hashimoto said, including a number of WWII military uniforms on loan from an Azusa High School student who collects the uniforms. The high school student will be part of a re-enactment of Transportation Secretary Norman Mineta's story. Mineta was taken to a camp as a young child, and the high school student will play a military officer who took Mineta's baseball bat from him before he boarded the train for the camps.

Marcia Hashimoto was born af-

ter her family was released from the camps, but remembers stories her parents and siblings told, including how her mother's labor was induced before entering the camp.

Her mother was one of seven or eight pregnant women held behind at the Merced holding area while the rest of the group was sent to camps. They were held behind, Marcia Hashimoto said, because they were too far along in their pregnancies to make the harsh trip to the camps. Instead, they were held in the holding area until giving birth.

When all the other women had given birth to their babies, officials got antsy to move the women out, Marcia Hashimoto said, so they ordered an officer to put her mother on the back of a truck and driver her around a field until the bouncing of the truck induced her labor.

"The officer cried the whole time, my mom said," she remembered. "He apologized to my mother for having to do that."

Everyone at the re-enactment will be given a ticket, just like the interns wore in the camps.

Mas Hashimoto, who spent his childhood in a house near the Buddhist Temple of Union Street, said that despite making the interns look like tagged luggage, the tickets served one good purpose.

"I would get lost in the dust storms and when the bad ones hit I would go into the nearest shelter, so matter what it was, and they could look at my tag and see Mas Hashimoto, Block 220, Barrack 12, Room A, Poston Camp 2," he said. His personal identification number in the camps was 12524D.

Mas Hashimoto was 6 1/2 years old when he was taken with his fam-



Tarmo Hannula/Register-Pajaronian

Mas Hashimoto reviews photograph albums at his Watsonville home in preparation for the April 27 re-enactment.

ily to the Salinas Rodeo Grounds. There, the family lost the first of two sons to die during the war. Mas Hashimoto's 14-year-old brother was killed in a freak baseball accident when a fly ball hit him in the head when he was approaching first base.

Another of Mas Hashimoto's six brothers died fighting for the Jap-

anese Army. Like many young Americans whose parents moved here from Japan, the eldest two Hashimoto boys were sent to Japan for their education. For the Hashimotos, this was prompted in part by the segregated school system in place during the 1940s.

As the elder Hashimoto boys

neared their late teens, the oldest decided to move back to the United States rather than be drafted into the Japanese Army. He was interned with the rest of the family at Poston, where he contracted tuberculosis.

The second oldest stayed in Japan, where he was drafted and lat-

## TO BE HONORED

A group of friends and supporters of the internees are being recognized at the re-enactment. Among those being thanked are:

Louis Lopes, Pajaro Valley Bank  
Edward Hall  
Lucille Gluhan Brown  
Eileen Dyche Martin  
Mormon Church of Santa Cruz in general  
John McCarthy, deputy District Attorney  
Dr. Oscar Marshall  
Opal Marshall  
Police Chief Matt Graves  
George Cowles  
Henry Martin  
Rev. Henry B. Adams of Presbyterian Church  
Rev. Alfred Broccardo, of St. Patrick's  
Rev. Mert M. Lampson, United Methodist  
Phil Boyle  
Major Bert E. Phillips of Salvation Army  
Rev. William G. Batt, St. Patrick's  
Rev. Allan W. Geddes, All Saint's Episcopal  
Frank McCray  
A. C. Sessions  
Harold D. Byram  
D. Wayne Hildie  
P. C. White  
E. L. Whisler, Minister at the First Christian Church  
Rev. Mack McCray, Jr, First Baptists Church  
Joe Crosetti,  
Walter Dutro  
H.A. Hyde  
Jim Lew, Canton Market  
Mae Lord, teacher  
T.S. McQuiddy  
Karl Mehl, Sr.  
Pete Musler  
Frank Orr, Editor Register Pajaronian  
Tony Tomasello  
Dorothy Staud Roark  
Frank Osmer  
Mateo Lettunich  
Louis Bechis  
George Menasco, Ford's Department Store  
Rose Kalich  
Nick Kalich  
W.D. Loveless

er died in the Japanese Army.

Two of Mas Hashimoto's brothers went into the U.S. military. The two used their understanding of the Japanese language to interview prisoners of war for the military.

After the war, when the news came that the families would be released from the internment camps, the counties of Santa Cruz, Monterey and San Benito all issued ordinances condemning their release.

Santa Cruz and Monterey coun-

WWII Internment of



Santa Cruz and Monterey counties unanimously rescinded ordinances opposing the release on Feb. 26 and Feb. 19, 2002. San Benito County is scheduled to vote on a measure to repeal the ordinance on Tuesday, April 23.

County Supervisor Tony Campos, who introduced the resolution to the Santa Cruz County Board of Supervisors, said it was long overdue.

"This group of people have proven to be good neighbors and good friends," he said. He did not blame the board that passed the resolution, however.

"I think it was wrong when it happened," he said. "But just like anything else, when something like this (the bombing of Pearl harbor) happens, people react. I remember as a young child the resentment held against the Japanese-Americans."

Campos is attending the re-enactment and will ask the other members of the five-person board to attend as well.

"I think this teaches us a lot — whether you agree or disagree, it teaches us something," he said.

The event can also serve as a reminder to the community about what happens when people react quickly after an emergency.

"I know people are saying Sept. 11 was the worst thing that ever happened in the history of the United States," said Jane Borg of the Pajaro Valley Historical Association. "Pearl Harbor was of equal impact at that time because people just did not know what to do. When something happens that quickly, people spring into action, and that is something we have to remember with homeland security."

"When things happen, we need to remember to act quickly and wisely," she said.