

Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko Papers

1940-2002

2 linear feet

Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center

4427 N. Clark Street

Chicago, IL 60640

(773) 275-0097 x224

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Prepared by Deborah Mieko Burns, Archivist

2002

Overview of the Collection

- Creator:** Kaneko, Dorothy Morita, 1920 -
Kaneko, Hiroshi, 1917 -
- Title:** Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko Papers
- Dates:** 1940-2002
- Abstract:** The Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko Papers include booklets and articles on the redress movement, magazine and newspaper clippings, letters, newsletters, flyers, press releases, postcards, photo-cards, travel booklets, pamphlets, broadsides, receipts, clippings from the *Congressional Record*, programs from community events, internment camp reunion booklets and pamphlets, a map, a theater program, a menu, a guest-book, black and white photographs and negatives, and color photographs. The collection dates from 1940 to 2002 with the bulk of the paper records dating in the 1980s and the bulk of the photographs dating in the 1940s. A very small portion of the material is in Japanese. Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko collected this material documenting their lives in Hood River and Salem, Oregon; Tule Lake Relocation Center, Tulelake, California; and Chicago, Illinois. The collection consists of two main parts: newspaper clippings and publications documenting the movement for Japanese American redress and reparations from the U.S. government during the 1980s, and photographs of Oregon and Chicago dating from the late 1930s through the 1940s.
- Quantity:** 2 linear feet (5 boxes)
- Accession:** 1999.009, 2001.005, and 2002.004

Acknowledgements

The JASC Legacy Center acquired this collection from 1999 through 2002 through the generosity of Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko.

The JASC Legacy Center gratefully acknowledges the Chicago Japanese American Council, Japanese Chamber of Commerce & Industry of Chicago, National Historical Publications and Records Commission (NHPRC), and the Woods Fund of Chicago for generously supporting the preservation, processing, and care of this collection.

Deborah Mieko Burns, JASC Archivist, processed this collection in 2002.

Provenance

Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko collected this material from 1940 to 2002 documenting their own activities and those of family members. The Archivist removed approximately 3 linear feet of material from this collection and integrated it into the JASC's library and archival collections. Removed to the library collection: *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1948), *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1949), *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1950), *Camp Notes* by Mitsuye Yamada (1976), and all complete issues of the *Chicago Shimpō* (1984-1988) and the *Pacific Citizen* (1969-1990). Removed to the JASC's Record Group 8, Series 2 (Adult Day Services), Box 1, Folder 1: Tuesday Group lists and notebook. Removed to the JASC's Record Group 9, Series 2 (Publications): JASC Newsletter (Spring 1988). Removed to the JASC's Record Group 10 (Audio-Visual Resources): three albums of color photographs and loose black & white and color photographs.

Access and Restrictions

This collection is open without restrictions except for:

Menu (Box 1, Folder 1)	Use photocopy (Box 1, Folder 1)
History of Japanese Embroidery (Box 1, Folder 4)	Use photocopy (Box 1, Folder 5)
<i>Scene Magazine</i> (Box 3, Folder 5)	Use photocopy (Box 3, Folder 5)

Records will be administered in accordance with the *JASC Legacy Center Access & Use Guidelines* provided to all researchers. Researchers assume full responsibility for following libel, privacy, and copyright laws as they may apply to use of this collection.

The preferred citation for this collection is: [Item Name, Box Number, Folder Number]. Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko Papers. Japanese American Service Committee Legacy Center, Chicago, Illinois.

There are two container lists (one sorted numerically by box and folder numbers and one sorted chronologically by date) available upon request. Please contact archives@jasc-chicago.org or (773) 275-0097 x224.

Brief Overview of Japanese American History

The vast majority of Japanese Americans were settled on the West Coast of the United States and in the kingdom of Hawaii in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Many people came from Japan to Hawaii and the United States as contract laborers and migrant workers. Japanese immigration to the United States changed course in 1907 when President Theodore Roosevelt signed an executive order barring re-immigration of Japanese people from Hawaii to the mainland. In 1908, the Gentlemen's Agreement between the United States and Japan restricted new immigrants from coming from Japan to the United States. The agreement was intended to stop Japanese immigration, but it left a loophole for returning immigrants or people married to a Japanese alien already residing in the United States. Thus, the number of Japanese women who immigrated to the United States in the 1910s increased significantly. Many of these women came as "picture brides." Following the Japanese tradition of arranged marriage, the bride and groom's parents agreed upon the marriage through a go-between with the woman in Japan and the man in the United States. Then the woman would sail for Hawaii or the West Coast and would meet her husband for the first time upon her arrival.

With the Alien Land Laws of the 1910s and 1920s, state governments on the West Coast passed increasingly restrictive laws barring the *Issei* or immigrant generation who came from Japan (and other Asian countries) from owning, leasing, or sharecropping land on the mainland United States. The purpose of these laws was to prevent Japanese immigrants from controlling their own land and relegating them to the status of migrant laborers. However, with the arrival of many more Japanese women, families grew with the birth of the *Nisei* generation (second-generation Japanese Americans or the first generation born in the United States). Many *Issei* registered land in their children's names to circumvent the restrictive Alien Land Laws.

Japanese Americans remained an important part of the agricultural economy throughout the 1930s and anti-Japanese sentiment persisted. Tensions between the United States and Japan grew in the 1930s, especially when Japan invaded Manchuria in 1931. In the 1930s, the United States military compiled lists of Japanese Americans who it thought would be potentially dangerous in the event of war with Japan. Many of these people were the leaders of the Hawaiian and West Coast Japanese American communities.

War between Japan and the United States came after Japan attacked the United States at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on December 7, 1941. The following day the United States government began rounding up leaders of the Japanese American community many of whom had been under surveillance for years. The U.S. government questioned and released some people, but most were incarcerated without due process throughout World War II. On February 19, 1942 U.S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 authorizing the forced removal and incarceration without due process of more than 120,000 U.S. citizens and legal aliens of Japanese ancestry from the West Coast to inland internment camps. The U.S. government first incarcerated

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most Japanese Americans at temporary assembly centers along the West Coast in the spring and summer of 1942. Then the government moved Japanese Americans off the West Coast into inland internment camps.

The U.S. government had two types of camps for Japanese and Japanese Americans. The U.S. War Relocation Authority operated ten internment camps in Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Idaho, Utah, and Wyoming. It forcibly removed 120,000 Japanese and Japanese Americans from the West Coast into these camps. Among the internees, roughly two thirds were U.S. citizens and the remaining one third were Japanese immigrants who were legally barred at that time from obtaining U.S. citizenship because of their race. The U.S. Justice Department had separate camps for "enemy aliens" including Japanese, German, and Italian nationals. Within these camps, there were approximately 7,000 Japanese held. Many of these people were immigrants from Japan (who unlike German and Italian nationals were barred from U.S. citizenship because of their race) or U.S. citizens sent to Japan for their education. Generally, they were leaders in the Japanese American community (such as church or organization leaders or newspaper editors) who the government deemed particularly "dangerous." The Justice Department camps also incarcerated Latin American (mostly Peruvian) citizens of Japanese ancestry whose governments sent them to these camps in the U.S. The U.S. government planned to use them in P.O.W. exchanges with Japan.

The U.S. government closed these internment camps at the conclusion of the war and Japanese Americans could return to the West Coast or move elsewhere. Internment caused a major shift of Japanese Americans eastward. Before World War II, over 88% of Japanese Americans lived on the West Coast. By 1947, only 55% lived on the West Coast. During this resettlement era of the late 1940s and the 1950s, nearly 30,000 Japanese Americans settled in Chicago. Approximately half eventually returned to the West Coast. People of Japanese ancestry have comprised between 15,000 to 18,000 members of the metropolitan Chicago area's population from 1960 to 1990, respectively.

Political activism in the Japanese American community reached its height in the 1980s with the movement for reparations and redress (compensation and an apology) from the U.S. government for internment. The Japanese American Evacuation Claims Act of 1948 attempted to provide a way for Japanese Americans to be compensated for their material losses during the evacuation and internment of World War II. However, numerous restrictions prevented the act from being effective. For example, there was an unrealistically low ceiling of \$2,500 per claim.

Within the Japanese American community there were three initial approaches to attaining reparations and redress: monetary payments to individuals supported by National Coalition for Redress and Reparations (NCRP), a class action lawsuit versus the U.S. government supported by National Council for Japanese American Redress (NCJAR), and a community trust fund to distribute redress payments supported by the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL).

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In 1979 the U.S. Congress established the Commission on the Wartime Relocation and Internment of Civilians (CWRIC). This commission was controversial in the Japanese American community because many people wanted redress immediately, not the establishment of a commission to conduct a long, drawn-out study of the issues. The CWRIC researched the evacuation and internment thoroughly including conducting public hearings throughout the country to hear directly from survivors. The commission published its findings in *Personal Justice Denied*, originally published in two volumes by the U.S. Government Printing Office in 1982 and 1983 and then reissued by the Civil Liberties Public Education Fund and the University of Washington Press in 1997.

Surprisingly, many government and professional organizations dedicated to protecting civil rights and liberties came out against redress payments to Japanese Americans. Organizations against redress payments included the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights, the American Bar Association, and the U.S. Department of Justice.

Finally, the Congressional redress bills (H.R.442 and S.1009) both passed, but differed so they went into conference committees. Eventually, the Congressional committees reconciled the two bills and President Ronald Reagan signed the redress bill, called the Civil Liberties Act of 1988, into law in August 1988.

Parallel to the legislative approach was the judicial approach to righting the wrongs of internment. In 1983, the NCJAR filed a class action lawsuit against the federal government seeking damages for the injustices of internment. The NCJAR case made its way through the judicial system to the U.S. Supreme Court in April 1987. In August 1988, when the Civil Liberties Act of 1988 (redress bill) passed, the U.S. Supreme Court disallowed the NCJAR case and the lawsuit died. However, many redress activists believed that without the NCJAR lawsuit, the redress bill would not have been passed.

For more information about Japanese Americans in the United States and Chicago, please see *Japanese American History: An A-to-Z Reference from 1868 to Present* edited by Brian Niiya (New York: Facts on File, 1993) and *Ethnic Chicago: A Multicultural Portrait, 4th edition* edited by Melvin G. Holli and Peter d'A. Jones (Grand Rapids, Michigan: William B. Eerdmans, 1995) in the JASC's library collection.

Biography

Dorothy Morita Kaneko (b. November 20, 1920) was born in Hood River, Oregon. She was the oldest child of Mototsugu and Masano Morita. She had eight siblings (from oldest to youngest): Fumiko (Laura) Morita Terada, Ruth Morita Hidaka, Paul Morita, Claude Morita, Mototsugu (Junior) Morita, Flora Morita Hidaka, Betty Morita Shibayama, and Diana Morita Cole. She grew up on a farm family and she graduated from Odell High School in Hood River in 1939.

Hiroshi Kaneko (b. March 27, 1917) was born in Beaver Hill, Oregon. He was the oldest son of Yagaro and Yori Kaneko. He had six siblings (from oldest to youngest): Mary Kaneko Koida, (Hiroshi), Midori Kaneko, Roy Kaneko, Harry Kaneko, Lilly Kaneko Takaki, and Rulie Kaneko Yamamoto. At the time of his birth, Hiroshi's father was working as a miner. At the age of three, Hiroshi's father took him and his two sisters to live with their grandparents in Japan after his father lost his job when the local mine closed. Ten years later Hiroshi returned to Oregon to live with his parents and by then four other siblings. He attended school in Salem. After high school, he helped his family make a living by farming near Salem as part of a farming cooperative of other Japanese American farmers.

Both Dorothy and Hiroshi were active in the youth groups of the Christian churches in their communities. In 1941, they met through a mutual friend and began dating. They married on March 15, 1942 in Salem, Oregon during the upheaval of the start of World War II. Initially, the U.S. military was going to draft Hiroshi. He secured a deferment because he was set to marry soon. After he and Dorothy married, during 1942 to early 1943, the U.S. government temporarily decided against drafting a segregated, all-Japanese Americans combat force.

In June 1942, the U.S. government removed Dorothy and Hiroshi from Salem and placed them directly into Tule Lake Relocation Center near Tulelake, California without going first to a temporary assembly center. In internment camp, Dorothy worked in the mess hall and Hiroshi did carpentry. Dorothy's family (the Moritas) was sent to Pinedale Assembly Center near Fresno, California; briefly to Tule Lake Relocation Center; and then to Minidoka Relocation Center near Hunt, Idaho.

By July 1943, Dorothy and Hiroshi had secured jobs and were allowed out of internment camp to work as domestics for a wealthy couple in Barrington, Illinois, a far northern suburb of Chicago. After Dorothy became pregnant with their first child, they decided to move into Chicago. After much difficulty finding a place to live due to a housing shortage and facing discrimination, the Kanekos rented an apartment at 6404 S. Ellis in the Woodlawn neighborhood on the south side of Chicago. Hiroshi's parents were released from internment camp and joined them in Chicago in 1944.

Together with his father, Hiroshi and Dorothy decided to lease a large apartment building and annex at 1039 N. LaSalle and 119-127 W. Maple Street in Chicago in June 1944. These buildings, called LaSalle Mansion and Annex, became a vital community

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apartment house where many Japanese Americans coming out of internment camp were able to secure housing. In addition, Hiroshi and his parents purchased a nearby farm in Argos, Indiana to grow Japanese produce. Hiroshi's parents lived on the farm in the spring and summer to cultivate the produce and would bring it into the city to sell it at local Japanese American grocery stores. Meanwhile, Hiroshi and Dorothy operated LaSalle Mansion. At the same time, Hiroshi worked for Firestone Tire Company and often returned to the suburbs to help his previous employer with their gardens. Eventually in 1945, Hiroshi's father and brother opened their own grocery store at Clark and Division Streets near LaSalle Mansion to sell their produce.

From approximately 1948 to 1962, the Kanekos purchased and lived in a six-flat building at 1020-1022 N. Clark in Chicago very near LaSalle Mansion. They rented out two apartments, two stores on the first level, and lived in one apartment while Dorothy's parents lived in the other apartment. Hiroshi worked throughout the north side of the city doing carpentry work and restoring old mansions. Dorothy worked at home raising their three children: Donna (b. 1944), Cheryl (b. 1947, called "Cherie"), and Kevin (b. 1950). Their children attended Ogden Elementary School and then their daughters attended Francis Parker High School and their son attended Lane Technical High School. Dorothy was active with the Ogden School Parent-Teacher Association. Both Donna and Cherie graduated from Oberlin College, obtained Master's degrees, and attended universities in Tokyo, Japan. Donna studied at International Christian University and Cherie studied at Waseda University.

From approximately 1962 to 2000, the couple lived at 1226 W. Argyle in the Uptown neighborhood of Chicago. Dorothy and Hiroshi were active members of Christian Fellowship Church. This church eventually merged with Ravenswood Fellowship United Methodist Church. From 1972 to 1985, Dorothy worked at the JASC. She started a program for elders in the Japanese American community to keep them active and healthy with activities such as restaurant visits and cultural outings, and with services such as home delivered meals. Presently, the JASC is regarded as offering one of the first adult day service programs for seniors in the city of Chicago begun with, among others, Dorothy's efforts and ideas.

Today, Hiroshi remains active selling Japanese antiques and is an expert kite-maker. He shares with kite-making talents at schools, libraries, and cultural fairs. Dorothy is an active volunteer at the JASC. Both Dorothy and Hiroshi dedicate much of their time to activities at Ravenswood Fellowship United Methodist Church. Because of their dedication to the community, they were selected as the Japanese American Community Service Awardees at the Asian American Coalition Lunar New Year celebration in 2001.

For a written transcript of an oral history interview conducted with Hiroshi Kaneko, see also *REgenerations: Rebuilding Japanese American Families, Communities, and Civil Rights in the Resettlement Era* edited by the Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles: Japanese American National Museum, 2000) in the JASC's library collection.

Scope and Contents

The Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko Papers include booklets and articles on the redress movement, magazine and newspaper clippings, letters, newsletters, flyers, press releases, postcards, photo-cards, travel booklets, pamphlets, broadsides, receipts, clippings from the *Congressional Record*, programs from community events, internment camp reunion booklets and pamphlets, a map, a theater program, a menu, a guest-book, black and white photographs and negatives, and color photographs.

Dorothy and Hiroshi Kaneko collected this material documenting their lives in Hood River and Salem, Oregon; Tule Lake Relocation Center, Tulelake, California; and Chicago, Illinois. The collection dates from 1940 to 2002 with the bulk of the paper records dating in the 1980s and the bulk of the photographs dating in the 1940s. A very small portion of the material is in Japanese. The collection is organized roughly chronologically. The photographs and negatives (Boxes 4-5) are housed separately from the paper records (Boxes 1-3).

The collection contains a menu and church group photographs documenting their lives in Oregon before they married. The Kanekos kept a guest book signed by visitors to their various residences including their barracks at Tule Lake Relocation Center, Tulelake, California; LaSalle Mansion at 1039 N. LaSalle Street, Chicago; and 1226 W. Argyle Street, Chicago. This guest book gives a fascinating portrait of their friends and the people that they helped over the years. The collection contains material saved by Hiroshi's father when he visited Japan 1946. These items document Japan from a visitor's perspective during the Occupation by the Allied Forces shortly after World War II.

The majority of the collection consists of two types of material: redress publications and photographs. Hiroshi collected newspaper clippings and publications documenting the movement for Japanese American redress and reparations from the U.S. government during the 1980s. The newspaper clippings come from the *Chicago Shimpo*, Chicago's only bilingual (English and Japanese) newspaper, and from the *Pacific Citizen*, the Japanese American Citizens League (JACL) newspaper. The JACL is a national civil rights, civil liberties, and political advocacy group. It is one of the oldest, largest, and most influential Japanese American organizations. Hiroshi also collected newspaper clippings about redress from the West Coast Japanese American press and mainstream newspapers such as the *Chicago Sun-Times*. He amassed government publications about legislative developments and about the NCJAR class action lawsuit. Hiroshi gathered publications from within the Japanese American community about the redress movement. They are important because they describe complex issues with which the Japanese American community struggled throughout the redress process.

These papers contain newspaper clippings and articles from mainstream sources about prominent Japanese Americans and other Asian Americans. The collection contains a rare issue of *Scene* (1953), a Chicago Japanese American magazine. The Kanekos

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also attended and collected material from Tule Lake Relocation Center and Granada Relocation Center reunions.

Finally, a second large component of the collection is photographs dating from the 1940s to the 1980s. These photographs document Dorothy's life in Oregon from high school graduation until the war and life during internment camp. They also document Chicago in the late 1940s and the redress hearings held in Chicago in September 1981. Most of the photographs in this collection came from an album donated by Dorothy (Box 4, Folder 10 through Box 5, Folder 20). This album was highly acidic, so the processor dismantled it and placed photographs into archival housings. The photographs from this album provide vivid details about Dorothy's life including her high school friends, her girls club called the Mid-Columbian Apple Maidens, carefree outings with friends, her male friends who enlisted in the U.S. Army before the war, the Morita family, life during internment camp, the arrival of her children, LaSalle Mansion, and the Kaneko farm in Indiana. The collection includes extremely rare photographs of Tule Lake Relocation Center and Minidoka Relocation Center.¹

The Archivist removed approximately 3 linear feet of material from this collection and integrated it into the JASC's library and archival collections. Removed to the library collection: *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1948), *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1949), *Chicago Japanese American Year Book* (1950), *Camp Notes* by Mitsuye Yamada (1976), and all complete issues of the *Chicago Shimpō* (1984-1988) and the *Pacific Citizen* (1969-1990). Removed to the JASC's Record Group 8, Series 2 (Adult Day Services), Box 1, Folder 1: Tuesday Group lists and notebook. Removed to the JASC's Record Group 9, Series 2 (Publications): JASC Newsletter (Spring 1988). Removed to the JASC's Record Group 10 (Audio-Visual Resources): three albums of color photographs and loose black & white and color photographs.

Highlights of the collection include:

- *Chicago Japanese American Year Books*, 1948-1950, these books are directories of individuals and businesses in the community (see Library);
- a menu from Rainbow Restaurant, Portland, Oregon (Box 1, Folder 1);
- a guest book used by the Kanekos in Oregon, at Tule Lake Relocation Center, and at their LaSalle Mansion apartment house in Chicago (Box 1, Folder 2);
- material on the redress movement (Boxes 1-3);
- a 1953 issue of Chicago's *Scene*, a Japanese American magazine (Box 3, Folder 5);
- internment camp reunion material (Box 3); and
- photographs of Dorothy and Hiroshi's churches in Oregon (Box 4, Folders 1-2), Tule Lake Relocation Center (Box 4, Folders 3 and 30), Minidoka Relocation Center (Box 4, Folder 33 and Box 5, Folder 17), LaSalle Mansion (Boxes 4-5), the Kaneko farm

¹ Films and photographs of the internment camp experience are extremely rare because all cameras were considered contraband by the U.S. government. Internees were not allowed to keep cameras. When internment camps closed in 1945, the U.S. government did not enforce these restrictions as strictly as it did initially.

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in Indiana (Box 5, Folder 20), and the redress hearings held in Chicago in September 1981 (Box 4, Folder 9).

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Menu (Box 1, Folder 1)	Use photocopy (Box 1, Folder 1)
History of Japanese Embroidery (Box 1, Folder 4)	Use photocopy (Box 1, Folder 5)
<i>Scene Magazine</i> (Box 3, Folder 5)	Use photocopy (Box 3, Folder 5)

Throughout the collection, information added by the Archivist is found in brackets [XX].