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# MANZANAR LIBRARIES

(AND VISUAL AID PROGRAM)



WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY  
MANZANAR, CALIFORNIA



THE MANZANAR LIBRARIES  
AT THE  
MANZANAR WAR RELOCATION CENTER

A Report Prepared by

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## INTRODUCTION

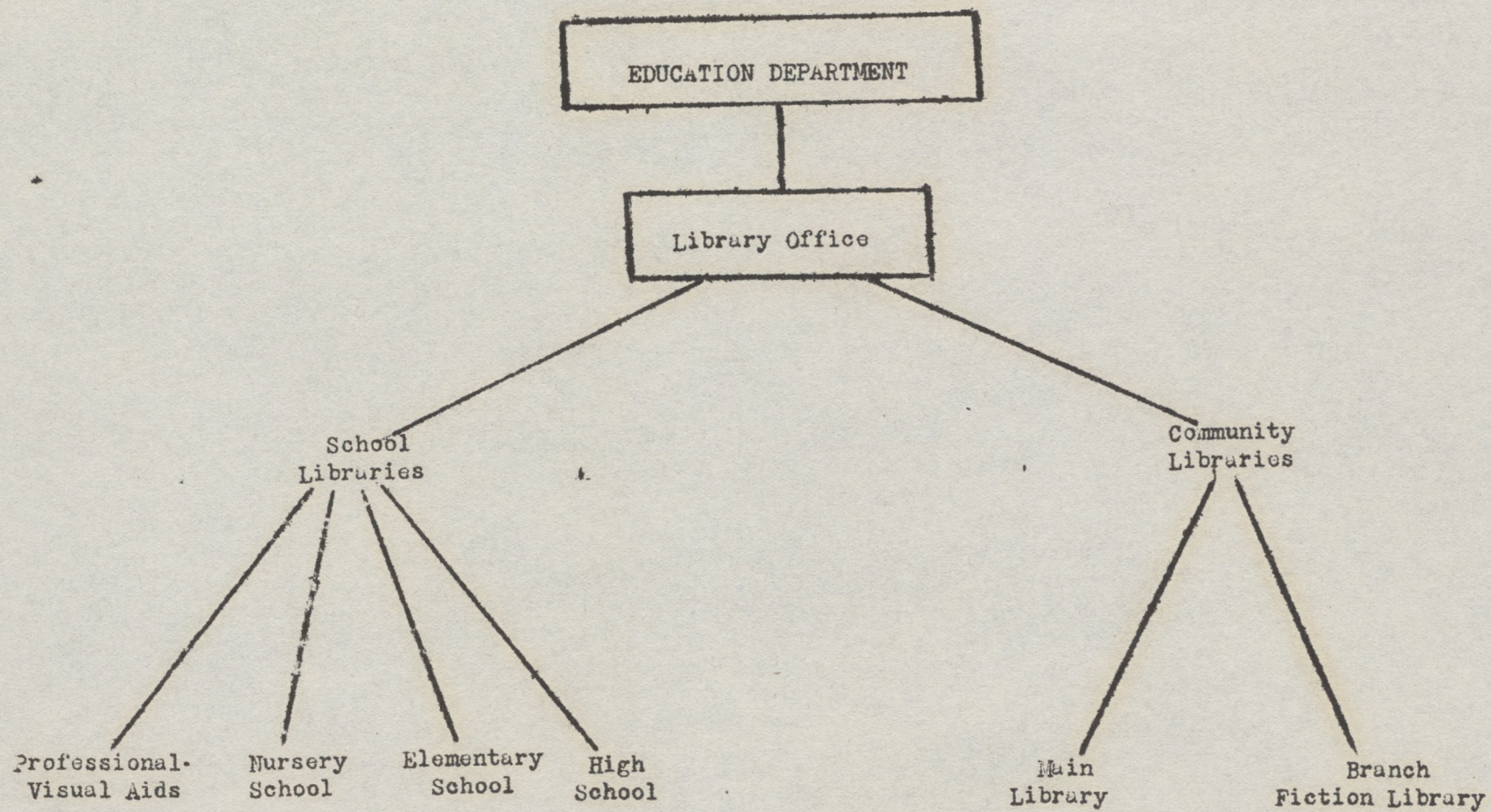
On May 21, 1942 when I first arrived at the Manzanar Project I visited what was the beginning of the Manzanar Library system. There was a long barrack with bare rafters and open cracks in the roof where the hot sun poured in, while gaping slits in the floor let in streams of dust and wind. There was an apple box for a checking desk and stacks of books lined along the floor against the wall. The books were the first of a group that had come as discards from the Los Angeles County Library. Several library visitors were seated on the floor propped against a vacant place on the wall, intent in their reading. The startling thing about the library was the vast expanse of empty space in the center of the building between the peaked roof and bare plank floor.

From these beginnings, Manzanar Libraries have been organized and expanded to meet the reading needs of the population of 10,000 evacuee persons of Japanese ancestry. Miss Ayame Ichiyasu was our first trained librarian who began organizing the library immediately after the first group of evacuees arrived in the center. After she relocated to secure a position as Japanese Language Instructor at Ann Arbor, Michigan, Miss Ruth Budd arrived to take over the responsibility of completing the library organization. The library then expanded into a well organized system with a Professional Library, Community Library, High School Library - Studyhall, Elementary Library, a Neighborhood Fiction Library and several small branches at the Fire Station, Police Station and some of the block offices. In March of this year Miss Budd left to accept a position in Honolulu, Hawaii and Mrs. Doris Abel, one of our secondary teachers, took over the libraries. She will bring them to an eventual closing at the time when a sufficient number of evacuees have left the Center and it seems no longer essential to maintain libraries.

At all times the main work of the libraries has been done by evacuees who have taken their training in library science as regular part of their weekly work schedule and who have responded so well to in-service training and supervision.

*Genevieve W. Carter*  
Genevieve W. Carter  
Superintendent of Education







## THE MANZANAR LIBRARIES

### History

In the planning of educational and recreational programs of the relocation centers, libraries were included from the beginning. As Manzanar was the first of the relocation centers to be established, the Manzanar Library was probably the first of the center libraries to be organized. The library started in April, 1942 with a gift of seventeen books and eighty magazines made available for use in a part of someone's living quarters. In December 1944 it included a total collection of 24,000 volumes (20,000 of these were donations from other libraries) and a magazine subscription of 157 periodicals.

Originally organized under the Recreation Department, the Library was transferred to the Education Department in the middle of July, 1942. By fall the several branches of the community library were consolidated into two units, the main library in the center of camp and a branch fiction library in the southwest corner of camp.

In October of 1942 the school libraries were organized. The high school library was established first. Books from the community library were transferred to the mess-hall in the high school block which was being used as a study hall, and the study-hall library was thus established. The supervisor of student teaching organized a small professional library of about 200 books in her office. These were classified and loaned to student teachers and to the regular teaching staff in the elementary and secondary schools. In November, children's books were ordered for an elementary school library. When these books arrived, they were placed on shelves in the teachers' study room, and teachers borrowed them to use in their classes.

In June, 1943 following the arrival of<sup>a</sup> trained librarian on the appointed staff the libraries were reorganized. A central library office was established in the high school block and the cataloguing of books for all of the libraries was begun. All supplies, periodicals and new books were delivered to the libraries. New books were catalogued at the office before the libraries received them. A centralized union catalog was started. The professional and elementary school libraries, originally independent units, were placed under the direction of the community librarian. The two book collections were moved into the same room and two evacuee librarians were added to the staff to help with the new library.

With this organization the Manzanar Library has tried to give effective service to both the community and to the schools.



### Staff Training Program

In order to maintain an efficient library staff, a continuous staff training program has been carried on. The class has been meeting once a week on Saturday mornings for two hours. The course consists of three units of work in library science:

Unit I. . . . . Classification and arrangement of books

Unit II . . . . . Cataloguing

Unit III . . . . . Reference work

The course of study lasts six months. As a librarian finishes, he is classified as a trained assistant. New persons added to the staff start in with whatever unit the rest of the group is studying. When a person has completed all three units, he has finished the course. The relocation program has meant that there is considerable turn over in staff and many do not work long enough to finish all three units. Altogether thirty-nine persons have entered the class at one time or another, but only fourteen have completed the course.

### The Library Office

The library office has been the central receiving and processing office. The accessioning, cataloguing, and processing of new books are done here, and all supplies are received at the office and distributed to the libraries. A union catalog, which gives the location of all catalogued books, is located in the office. Donated books already at the libraries were catalogued at the branches if they were classified. Author, title and shelf list cards only were made. The libraries kept one set of cards and sent a duplicate set to the office. Only classified books already at the libraries were catalogued there. All other books have been received at the office, and have been classified and catalogued before going to the libraries.

### Inter-Library Loans

Inter-library loans with the California State Library and the Los Angeles Public Library have been negotiated through the library office. Books which have been requested have been chiefly technical books in chemistry, physics, and radio. There have also been a number of requests for books on education, oriental history, English literature, and art. The guayule research experiment station has requested very specialized material which has been furnished mostly by the California State Library.

The following figures are on the number of inter-library loans during the past three years. Requests during 1944 dropped off constantly, partly because the Manzanar Libraries were able to build up



their book collection, but more because the university students and people interested in research relocated as soon as they could.

Libraries	1942	1943	1944
California State	148	137	52
L. A. Public	34	7	4
Others	3	3	
TOTAL	185	147	56

#### Loans received from other Libraries

#### The Main Library

The main library has had an ideal location in the center of camp. Up until November of 1944, it has contained both fiction and non-fiction for adults and children. In November all easy books were sent to the elementary school library. In January, 1945, the juvenile non-fiction was divided between the elementary school and high school libraries. Fiction for junior and senior high school students is still to be found in the main library, which, of course, contains both adult fiction and non-fiction. This library also contains a Japanese language collection of 994 books. An entire barrack 100 by 20 feet constitutes the space of the main library. It is now equipped with plenty of shelving, six mess hall tables and benches and a camp-made charging desk and card catalog cabinet. The seating capacity of the library is fifty. It is always crowded at night, for with movies only once or twice a week in camp, our library does not have quite the competition in camp that other community libraries have. Mending of all library books is done by Mr. Takechi at the main library.

The main library is not yet completely catalogued. The work of cataloguing the main library has progressed slowly, partly because of the large number of volumes, and partly because of the problem of weeding out several thousand worthless books that were placed on the shelves at the time when hundreds of donated and discarded books were sent into the center.

#### The Hilltop Library

A branch fiction library located in the ironing room in the southwest corner of camp contains 1,433 catalogued books of fiction.



Half of these are adult books; the other half are books for young people and small children. Two mess hall tables for adult and two small painted tables for little children give a maximum seating capacity of eighteen persons. This is a favorite spot for young people to gather on a cold winter evening, for the two librarians of this branch have made it into a very attractive place.

#### The Professional-Visual Aids Library

The Professional Library had its beginning in the office of the supervisor of student teaching. From there it was moved into the teacher's study room which also contained the elementary school library books. In June, 1944 the professional library of 350 volumes and several hundred pamphlets was moved once more, this time into the Visual Aids room which contained over 3,000 mounted pictures, maps, models, exhibits, films, charts, and phonograph records. The combination of audio visual aids with the professional library has been very successful. The scheduling of the victrolas, microphone and motion picture projector is centered in this room. This library also subscribes to education periodicals. The librarian has also had technical supervision over the Education Museum at 8-15.

#### The High School Library

The High School library is located in a mess hall (a double-roofed barrack eighty by forty feet). This library which is used as study hall, seats almost 300 students. Unlike most high school libraries, it is open at night since the students, living in one-room barrack apartments, have no adequate place for home study. The library now has about 3,000 volumes which have been catalogued. The room has been painted yellow and ivory and is now quite an attractive place for students to come.

#### The Pre-School and Elementary School Libraries

The pre-school library with 169 catalogued books is handled by the pre-school supervisor. The library office orders and catalogs the books. They are then sent to the supervisor who sees that they rotate among the nursery schools and kindergartens.

In June of 1944 Block 16 was set aside for the elementary school. The elementary school library was moved at that time from the teacher's study room in Block 1 to a room in one of the barracks in Block 16. The room was tinted a light green, and children's tables and chairs were obtained and painted an ivory color. One of the mothers made curtains and stenciled them with Dutch figures. The room was opened to the children on July 5th. On that



day 240 children came into the library. During the summer the average daily attendance was 200 children. A summer reading club was conducted during the summer with 197 children joining the club. Of this number, 120 youngsters read the ten books required in order for a child to obtain a certificate. This was a much more satisfactory summer program than the one held in the preceding summer of 1943 when the club was carried on by two branch children's stations and the main library. Even during that summer seventy-six children joined the reading club.

During both the summer of 1943 and 1944, outdoor story hours were held twice a week in the evenings. The extreme heat during the day made it necessary to hold the story hours at a time when the barracks grudgingly afforded a little more shade.

School opened in Block 16 in September, and the work of the elementary school library was closely coordinated with classroom work. Each class is scheduled for one library period a week. During the first two months of school, the librarians gave instruction on the arrangement of books in the library and the use of the card catalog. The older children have also been taught how to locate information through the encyclopedia and the index of book. Teachers usually correlate their library period with the unit the class is studying. The library contains 2791 books which may be borrowed by children, parents, and teachers.

During the school year story hours are held on Saturday mornings. Two separate story hours are held at the same time, a story-activity hour for the younger children between the ages of three and six, and a regular story hour for older children between the ages of seven and eleven.

### Conclusion

One need never question the value of the library in this community. People do read and seem to read books of better quality than in the average town of this size. We have at last been able to satisfy many more needs and requests with the new books that have come in. The books have been most popular and in greatest demand are young people's fiction, "Best Sellers," and books dealing with current affairs, the Far East, vacations, and racial minority problems in the United States.

There is, of course, great demand for material on different parts of the United States by those people who are considering relocation. The relocation pamphlet file in the high school library



is almost worn out, and the American Guide Series is serving a very important need in the main library. Material is also requested on housing conditions, rationing, price control and vocational opportunities in various American cities, for these are problems which people who are leaving for relocation must soon face.

During the three years of its existence, the Manzanar Library has found that it has an important part to play in community life, and with improved equipment and materials, it has become better able to fulfill the needs of the community.



## LIBRARY STAFF

### Directors of Libraries

Takako Saito. . . . . April - July, 1942  
Ayame Ichiyasu . . . . . July, 1942-January, 1943  
Ruth Budd . . . . . May, 1943 - February, 1945

### Assistant Directors

Chizuru Nakaji. . . . . January - June, 1943  
Mitsue Sakamoto . . . . . June, 1943 - April, 1944

### Present Staff, February 1945

#### Office

Frances Shirokawabe  
Florence Sakata  
Sanaye Sato

#### High School

Kyoko Yoshimoto  
Mariko Kaji  
Hiroko Iriye  
Fumiko Hayashi

#### Main Library

Kazuko Masuda  
Sadako Ikebuchi  
Kazuma Takechi  
Seiko Uragami (part time)

#### Elementary School

Kiyoko Matsuoka  
Kazuko Shimamura

#### Fiction Branch

Chiyeko Akahoshi  
Kiku Komatsu (part time)

#### Professional-Visual Aids

Doris Abel (part  
time)  
Shigeru Honda  
(part time)





Staff For All Libraries-January, 1945





Staff Training Program



At Work In The Library Office





The Reading Room



Borrowing A Book





Mending Books



The Fiction Branch





Helping Students Locate Information



A Third Grade Class Visits The Library





Professional-Visual Aids Library



The High School Library





Story Hour--Older Group



