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WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY

CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT

TOPAZ, UTAH

DEDICATION OF TOPAZ CIVIC AUDITORIUM

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DEDICATION OF TOPAZ CIVIC AUDITORIUM

With an appropriate program and impressive ceremonies, the new Topaz civic auditorium was dedicated on the evening of Wednesday, December 22, 1943.

The massive new structure stands in the middle of the plaza occupying the central area of the resident section. The building faces north and the main entrance consists of four doors banked together and leading directly into the big auditorium, which is 96 by 80 feet in area with a stage recessed at the south side.

The dedication ceremonies were the culmination of months of work on the part of faithful and conscientious crews of resident mechanics who brought this fine civic structure to completion from the blueprints which were laid out for the ground breaking ceremonies on Washington's birthday, February 22, 1943.

Under the general direction of Henry R. Watson, senior engineer, and Lawrence Taylor, superintendent of construction, the building was erected under the direct supervision of George Shimamoto of the engineer staff.

Originally authorized as a part of the school construction program, the auditorium became more than a school undertaking. As its foundation began to bear the weight of the heavy walls and the huge struts, the residents of Topaz began to look upon it as symbolic of the whole center, a civic auditorium building which would be the focal point for all center-wide activities, drawing the residents closer together, giving them a better understanding of each other's problems -- a place where they might meet on a

common ground, to enjoy cultural and entertainment features.

With the theme of the dedication being the unity of Topaz and the successful future of the residents, the program was planned to reach every phase of community life.

Certain that the ceremonies dedicating the building would be the focal point for community-wide interest, plans were laid to accommodate representatives of every block in equal number, representatives of various center organizations, the appointive staff and a special reserved section for the crews of workers who had participated in the construction of the building.

The normal seating capacity of the auditorium is 1350 but for this occasion extra seats were crowded in so that over 1400 persons could be accommodated. Tickets were issued and admittance was by ticket only. Thirty tickets were issued to each block manager who in turn selected that number of persons from his block to attend.

In addition, all members of the high school senior class were given tickets together with a representative group of the appointive staff.

As an indication of the favorable reactions of the center residents to the dedication, during the afternoon several blocks sent in requests for additional tickets, which were not available. The doors were open at 7 o'clock and there was already a considerable number of residents waiting to enter as seats were not reserved, except for the section where the construction workers were assembled.

By 7:30 o'clock the auditorium was three-fourths filled with the program not set to start until 8 o'clock. Well before the appointed hour practically every one of the 1400 seats was occupied.

L. G. Noble, superintendent of schools, served as general chairman of the dedication program and saw to it that it started exactly on the minute set, when the Topaz Boy Scouts' Bugle Corps, standing near the stage, sent forth stirring strains as the three color bearers marched down the main aisle and onto the stage, while the audience stood at attention. Then all repeated the pledge of allegiance to the flag. This was followed by the singing of the Star Spangled Banner by the audience.

An unusually interesting feature of the program was a tableaux expressing "What the Auditorium Will Mean to Topaz". Young boys and girls of the high school posed in this tableaux which represented athletics, the dance, worship, the drama and assembly.

There were two deviations from the set program, which is herewith attached as Exhibit A. Private Toshio Thomas Suzuki, an Army volunteer from Topaz who was recently inducted into the Army at Fort Sheridan and arrived in the center to visit with his family over the holidays, is an exceedingly talented artist on the harmonica and accepted an invitation to play two numbers.

The other deviation was the addition of Henry Watson to the list of speakers and he in turn brought to the platform George Shimamoto who spoke briefly of the effort which had been

put into the construction of the auditorium, and then called upon the superintendents, foremen and workers of the various construction units who arose and took bows.

The two principal addresses were made. The first was by Saiki Muneno, Chairman of the Community Council, who, before he spoke, accepted a large key symbolic of the key to the auditorium from Mr. Shimamoto. Mr. Muneno likened the auditorium to the heart of a human being with life pulsating from it to all of the center. His talk is attached to this document as Exhibit B.

The other talk was that given by Charles F. Ernst, Project Director, and is attached as Exhibit C. Mr. Ernst used as his theme "Preparation For the Future" and emphasized strongly the hope which should be in the minds of all residents for speedily reestablishing themselves as family units in the normal American way outside of the center.

The program concluded when the lights were turned out and the Boy Scout Bugle Corps played taps.

A suggestion of the urgent need of the new auditorium is found in the fact that as soon as the dedication date was set a flood of applications were filed for use of it for various center-wide programs and activities. From the dedication night through the middle of January practically every night has already been booked, with a number of afternoon meetings scheduled.

The Buddhist Church has ask for its use once each month for special programs of center-wide interest.

The earlier bookings were handled under the direction of the Education Department but at this time a Board is being established with representatives of the Administrative staff, the Community Council and other representative organizations, which will handle all scheduling of auditorium use to make certain that there are no conflicts and that it is being used to the best purpose.

The earlier bookings include such events as school plays, church meetings and the outstanding event of January, the induction of the new Community Council which will take place on the evening of Friday, January 7, with the oath of office being administered to the new councilmen by Judge Will H. Hoyt of the Central Utah Circuit Court.

At this ceremony it is also planned to dedicate a large American flag to be hung permanently in the auditorium.

EXHIBIT A

DEDICATION
New Community Auditorium
December 22, 1943 8:00 p.m.

Program

1. Presentation of Colors and Pledge of Allegiance --
Topaz Boy Scouts, Mr. Keigo Inouye, Director
2. Star-Spangled Banner -- Audience
Directed by Claude Cornwall
3. Invocation -- Rev. Shigeo Shimada, Topaz Protestant Church
4. Welcome and Introductory Statement -- Chairman L. G. Noble
5. Tableaux -- "What the Auditorium will Mean to Topaz."
Mr. E. Davis Evans, Director
6. Piano Quartet -- Pomp and Circumstances by Elgar
Aiko Takita Lily Ann Harada
Shizuko Kashiwabara Florence Yamada
7. Appreciation and Delivery of the Key to Auditorium to
the Chairman of the City Council.
8. Address -- "The Significance of the Auditorium."
Mr. Saiki Muneno, Chairman City Council
9. High School Boys' Chorus -- Stout Hearted Men by Romberg
Directed by Yosh Isono
10. Dedicatory Address -- "Preparation for the Future."
Charles F. Ernst, Project Director
11. Dedicatory Prayer -- Rev. Eiichi Suehiro, Topaz Protestant
Church
12. America the Beautiful -- Audience
Directed by Claude Cornwall
13. Benediction -- Rev. Seikichi Imai, Seventh Day Adventist
Church
14. Taps -- Topaz Boy Scouts.

GREETINGS FROM EACH TO ALL AND FROM ALL TO EACH:

"God Bless us Everyone." Tiny Tim

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

December 22, 1943

"Significance of the Auditorium"

Dedication address by Saiki Muneno, Chairman of the Topaz Community Council:

Mr. Chairman, Members of the Construction Crew; Mr. Project Director and Appointive Staff; Ladies and Gentlemen:

Today marks another highlight in the history of Topaz. For today we are assembled to dedicate what will be the most important building of the Center.

Let me liken this Auditorium to the heart of our bodies.

Our hearts are responsible for the sustenance of life. From the heart radiates the flow of food, air, and other essences for the maintenance of life. This force is also responsible for the carrying off of waste from the body tissues. In other words, life's activities are dependent on the heart.

The activities of Topaz to this day were never centered in any one place. It certainly was never centered in the Administration Buildings. It certainly was not centered in the Community Government Office. Nor did it radiate from Rec 3 or the hospital or the various schools.

Little wonder then that Topaz has been sluggish in its mental and physical attitude. For without a heart or a central radiating point a community would lack coordination and consequently grope about in a haze. But staggering around blindly is not folly, provided the results do not bring forth misunderstandings through misinformations and human sufferings through ignorance.

The significance of this Auditorium then is coordination. It means the beginning of a more perfect understanding between the Administration and residents. Far more important, it means for the betterment of relationship among the residents themselves. For in this Hall we should expect vigorous activities participated by all of Topaz. The activities will be in the form of athletics, movies, plays, general assemblies, lectures, etc. The energetic competition of physical powers, the rhythmic syncopation of dancing and music, the spirited debates during the exchanges of opinions, should be the source of elimination

of frictions and conflicts as by-products of a healthy community.

Now then, we the people of Topaz should dedicate ourselves to this spirit of coordination. And each time we look at this Hall we should remind ourselves that the concerted and coordinated efforts of a few men can build, constructively, for the welfare of our people.

Finally, in behalf of the Community Council I take this opportunity in wishing you all a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.

WAR RELOCATION AUTHORITY
CENTRAL UTAH PROJECT
TOPAZ, UTAH

December 21, 1943

PREPARATION FOR THE FUTURE

We are gathered here tonight to dedicate this splendid community auditorium which was built for the residents of Topaz through materials contributed by the Government and by the skill and industry contributed by resident workmen.

They started out from a blue-print which represented a plan for this building. It included many difficult problems of construction. One by one most of these problems have been met because the workers were determined to carry through the task.

Topaz is grateful to these workmen not only for this building but for the example that they have shown in sticking to the job until it was finished.

Now we all have a job ahead of us, both as individuals and as a community, and it will pay us to prepare blue-prints which will serve as a plan for that job. This job has to do with our individual and community future and so tonight my discussion will be concerned with the preparation for that future.

We have been here in Topaz now about 16 months. In that time we have encountered many problems in our attempt to develop a smooth running city. We have had many tests of our ability to overcome civic problems as well as physical problems.

We have also in that period seen many of our former residents leave us either by reason of relocation or transfer to other centers.

As we meet here tonight we are a city of 7254 population--

During our 16 months

172	births
59	deaths
1551	Indefinite leaves
	733 Intermountain
	720 Middle West
	98 Eastern States

2348	18 years and under
3606	19 years to 55 years
1300	56 years and over

In the period that we have been here we have seen many fine accomplishments by the workers in the various sections: Agriculture, Livestock, and Public Works. We have had faithful and capable service from our Internal Security and Fire Department. Our schools have been maintained at a high standard, our athletic and recreational programs have given our youth opportunities for self-development and our summer camp was particularly noteworthy. One could go through the whole list of the various sections and congratulate each for their devoted and successful efforts concerning the residents of Topaz.

Particular mention should be made of the steady development of the Topaz City Council which from the very beginning has given an opportunity for the residents to develop their own leadership and to give expression to their feelings, to their thoughts and desires for the unfolding of the community. So tonight we may in a spirit of harmony and cooperation created by our life together in the past 16 months look ahead in planning for the future.

We should in the beginning realize that we have two futures to consider; the one that has to do with the future of the individual family, and the other has to do with the future of the community which we call Topaz. Obviously, any consideration of the future for a family will give principle emphasis to the future of the children in that family.

Without question, parents are more concerned about this matter of the future of their children than they are of any other single matter. We all realize that, try as hard as we may to maintain in Topaz the kinds of things which growing children require, we cannot adequately reproduce for them in this environment what children are having in the normal American community.

We could have everything that children required in the way of food, shelter, clothing, education and medical care yet we would still be depriving them of those experiences in growing up with other American children for which we can supply no fitting substitute.

The plan for families would obviously seem to be as early relocation as possible.

When it comes to men and women who do not have family responsibilities their plans for their future must suit their individual situation. In some cases, their plan will call for Vocational Training so that they may equip themselves with

a skill which will insure their future economic security.

When we turn to the consideration of the future of Topaz as a community we find that already there are about three points of view which are influencing the lives of the residents.

There is one group which is not large that seemed to have settled into the idea that "The Government put us here so let the Government take care of us.", they may not realize it but what they are saying is that they wish to be considered wards of the Government and that Topaz should be a sort of institution run by the Government, and treating the residents as if they were on a reservation. I would say that such people are temporary unwell. They have lost ambition; they are allowing the war emergency to get them down and if they are allowed to continue in that frame of mind their future is indeed empty.

In contrast with them there is a substantial group of men and women who are struggling to adjust themselves to the situation. They have always been self-reliant and they are fighting to continue to be self-reliant. They realize that Topaz has no future for them and that they must as quickly as possible reinstate themselves and their families as members of a normal community.

A third group realize that the future for themselves and their children in the United States will offer greater opportunities if they now take an active part in the present life of the country.

Up to this point many residents have been thinking only of the immediate future. Some residents have expressed themselves as willing to stay in a relocation center until the war is over; others have looked ahead and realized that between now and the time that the war is over they must introduce themselves to the people of American communities. By relocating now many thousands of former residents of the various centers have been preparing the groundwork for community acceptance for all residents.

The 20,000 men and women who are now doing that work could well be joined in their efforts by every man and woman now residing in the centers who is able to join them.

The post-war future demands such participation by all who have chosen to live in America in the post-war period.

It should be realized that the very continued existence of relocation centers serves also as a target for those who resist and object to the Government's post-war plans. By giving these critics opportunities for continually bringing up the subject of Japanese the efforts of present relocatees are hampered. No organized efforts are pointed at those who

are sharing in the everyday life of the United States.

It is the responsibility of every man and woman to consider well whether they should go out and do their part in preparing America for the post-war period or whether they should stay in the centers and let somebody else do it for them.

Whatever the individual plans may be it must be remembered that we will still have the responsibility of operating Topaz for sometime to come. We should operate Topaz in such a way that those who want to go out can be helped in their plan and those who feel obliged to stay can do so under the most favorable living conditions possible.

We should plan for a cooperative community operated in the spirit of mutual helpfulness. Everybody should endeavor to be as helpful as they possibly can and each in their own way make their fullest contribution to the welfare of everybody. We should have no drones nor parasites in Topaz. We should not think of ourselves as wards of the Government. Rather, if we are to maintain that self-respecting character which we shall need for future success then we should lean as little as possible upon the Government. We are victims of war but we are not the only victims. We like millions of others in all countries have been called upon to make sacrifices of one kind or another. It is to the credit of the residents that they have shown such fortitude and determination to go forward in spite of the injuries inflicted by war.

Let us try to catch that same spirit which a year ago today made successful our search for the young man who was lost on Mt. Topaz.

Through such a cooperative community we shall be better able to help individuals develop their own personality which after all is the chief responsibility which society owes the individual.

The War Relocation Authority was created by the President to insure that this responsibility be met to the greatest possible degree. The War Relocation Authority after studying the entire matter has considered that this responsibility could be better met if the residents were assisted back into the normal life of America as quickly as possible. It can be assured of success in meeting this responsibility when the residents understand the long-range planning and do their utmost to cooperate in the fulfillment of this plan.

This building, we have said, was built from a blue-print through the faithful application of skill and industry on the part of resident workmen using materials supplied by the Government. The plan for the post-war future will in the same way require faithful and devoted efforts on the part of

us all motivated by the urge of mutual helpfulness as we work and play and share our living together here in this community.

Let us dedicate this building with hope and confidence that it will serve through community gatherings to unite us in the common effort for the realization of a successful future to all.

Charles P. Ernst
Project Director