

**Alaska State Library  
Historical Collections**

Guide to Collection

**Japanese-American Internment, Juneau Families, bulk 1940s**

**MS 286**

1 box  
10 folders

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**ACQUISITION:** This collection was donated by Mary Taraga (Tanaka) Abo and Margie Shackelford on October 21, 2014. Acc. # 2014-034. The library expects to receive additional materials depending on permissions.

**ACCESS:** The collection is unrestricted and available online at Alaska's Digital Archives.

**COPYRIGHT:** Request for permission to publish or reproduce material from the collection should be discussed with the Librarian.

**PROCESSING:** This collection has been described at the folder level. Photographs were placed in Mylar, and all items placed into pH-neutral folders. Negatives have been placed in envelopes and an archival box.

## HISTORICAL NOTE

The collection is a product of the Empty Chair Project, which began as a memorial in Capital City Park to honor Japanese-Americans forcibly removed from Juneau during the war. A documentary, filmed by Greg Chaney, with interviews conducted by Alice (Tanaka) Hikido, also exists. Interviews with Juneau Japanese-Americans and their personal effects were part of an exhibit at the Juneau-Douglas City Museum in 2014.

From the Empty Chair Project website: <https://emptychairproject.wordpress.com/>

“After Japan bombed Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, the United States entered WWII. In the ensuing panic, President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066 sending 120,000 persons of Japanese descent to ten relocation camps without the benefit of due process. Over 200 pioneering Japanese men, women, and children were evacuated from all over Alaska in April of 1942. All were escorted to a military transport ship destined for Seattle and then moved by train to desolate camps where they were held for the duration of the war. Amidst this furor, a decision was made to hold a special graduation ceremony for Juneau High School’s 1942 Valedictorian, John Tanaka. Subsequently, when his class graduated in June, 1942, an empty, wooden folding chair was left to symbolize John’s absence, and by extension, an entire community of Japanese and Japanese-Americans.”

## SCOPE AND CONTENTS NOTE

Biographical narratives, b&w photographic images, and copies of documents of eight Japanese-American families residing in Juneau, when they were sent to incarceration camps during WWII. Copies and additional materials in digital format. All materials related to Empty Chair Project and City Museum exhibit, 2014.

## INVENTORY

### **Box 1**

#### **Folder 1**

Notes and papers related to the Empty Chair Memorial and event  
Background regarding internment camps

#### **Folder 2**

- 1 Copies of evacuation registration cards for Mume Fukuyama, Shonosuke Tanaka, and Nobu Tanaka.
- 2 Letters and affidavits regarding the parole of Shonosuke Tanaka and his release from Lordsburg Internment Camp in New Mexico to rejoin his family at Minadoka 3 Internment Camp in Idaho, circa 1942-1943
- 3 Letters between members of the Fukiyama family, letters regarding parole of Walter Fukuyama and his release from Lordsburg Internment Camp in New Mexico to rejoin his

- family at Minidoka Internment Camp and bill of sale for property located in the Juneau Laundry building, circa 1941-1943
- 4 Evacuation and internment lists issued by the Western Defense Command & Fourth Army, January, 1943. Images of Minidoka, from *Minidoka Interlude*.

**Family narratives and photos from museum exhibit**

**Folder 3**

Kito

**Folder 4**

Taguchi

**Folder 5**

Kanazawa

**Folder 6**

Tanaka

**Folder 7**

Fukuyama

**Folder 8**

Akagi

**Folder 9**

Komatsubara

**Folder 10**

Kumasaka