

## Topaz Stories Contributors

Utah Division of Arts and Museums' Traveling Exhibition Program



Ann and son John

### **Ann Tamaki Dion** (*Kiku's Angel*)

Ann's parents, Min Tamaki and Iyo Yamashita, were married in Topaz in 1943. Ann was born in 1948 in Massachusetts, where her father served as an Army pharmacist. After the War, the family returned to California. Ann grew up in Oakland and received a BA and teaching credential from UC Berkeley. She taught in the Oakland Public Schools before she retired. Ann was one of the founders of the Friends of the Topaz Museum.



### **Amy Morizono Eto** (*Dancing to Duke*)

Amy was born in Soledad, CA in 1924. She was raised in Oakland, where her parents owned a grocery store. Amy graduated from University High School prior to being sent to Tanforan, then Topaz during World War II. After camp, she lived in Chicago, where she met her future husband, Frank. They married and relocated to Berkeley, where they raised their daughter, Susan. Amy was a secretary for the Berkeley Unified School District before retiring in the 1980s.



### **Senba (Tamesuke Harada)** (1889-1968) (*Horses, Shadow, Moon*)

Tamesuke Harada was born in Fukuoka Prefecture, Japan. He was a student of free-style haiku poetry founded by Ogiwara Seisensui. Incarcerated in Topaz during WWII, he was a member of the Topaz Poppy Poetry Club. Some of his free-style poems have been preserved and translated by his stepson, Taneyuki (Dan) Harada.



**Taneyuki (Dan) Harada** (1923-2020) (The M.P. Building — Topaz)

Dan was born in Los Angeles in 1923. Between 1931-1938, he lived in Fukuoka, Japan with his grandparents. He returned to Oakland, CA in 1938 and was incarcerated in Tanforan and Topaz with his mother and stepfather. There, he attended art school and studied with Matsusaburo Hibi. A “no-no boy,” Dan spent five months in Leupp Isolation Center, AZ before being transferred to

Tule Lake. After the War, Dan studied at the California College of Arts and Crafts. His works are in the permanent collections of several California fine arts museums.



**Norman Makoto Hayashi** (Every Little Moment)

Norm’s grandfather and granduncle opened the Hayashi Nursery in Oakland, CA in 1906. His grandfather was President of the California Flower Market in the early 1930s. The family was incarcerated in Tanforan and Topaz when Norm was two years old. After the War, they returned to find most of their property sold, so they began again. Norm’s dad Henry and Uncle Warren re-established the Hayashi Nursery in Union City in 1949. Norm took over the management

in 1964 and ran it for almost 30 years.



**Ruth Hayashi** (Separation)

Ruth grew up on the Berkeley estate called “Cedars,” where her father worked as a chauffeur-gardener and her mother helped in the household. She was in the second grade at Topaz. After the War, she and her mother returned to Cedars, where her mother became her former employer’s caregiver. Ruth graduated from Berkeley High in 1951.



### **Jonathan Hirabayashi** (The Proposal)

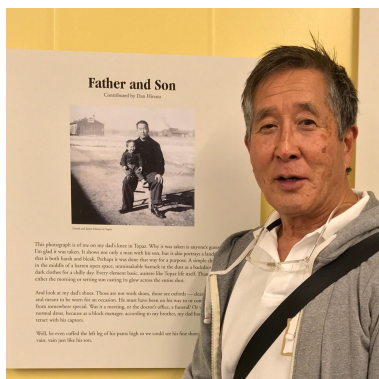
Jonathan was born in 1946 in American Fork, UT. His parents, Toby and Sugar, farmed and later opened a produce store near Pleasant Grove before returning to the San Francisco Bay Area in 1956. Jon graduated from UC Davis, served in the Army, and got an art degree from Cal State Hayward. He worked as a graphic designer at the Oakland Museum before establishing his own business as an exhibit designer and fabricator. He volunteers as the Topaz Stories

Exhibit designer and lives with his wife, Susan Kai, in Oakland, CA.



### **Nancy Hirabayashi** (Alternating Currents)

Nancy was born in Cotati, CA in 1939. Her family was relocated to Merced, CA before being sent to Amache, CO. After the War, they returned to the family egg ranch that had been entrusted to the care of a friend. Nancy met her future husband, Irvin, at a Buddhist Church mixer. They married in 1959, moved to South San Francisco, and raised two daughters. Nancy worked for JFC International until retiring at the age of 72.



### **Dan Hirano** (Father and Son)

Dan's family was "relocated" from Berkeley to Tanforan, then Topaz, UT, where Dan was born in 1942. The Hiranos were one of the last families to leave Topaz in 1945 and settled in San Francisco's Japantown, where they lived until moving to Berkeley in 1951. Dan received a Bachelor of Architecture degree from the University of Oregon and practiced as an architect until retirement. He has been happily married to Colleen Chun for 50 years.





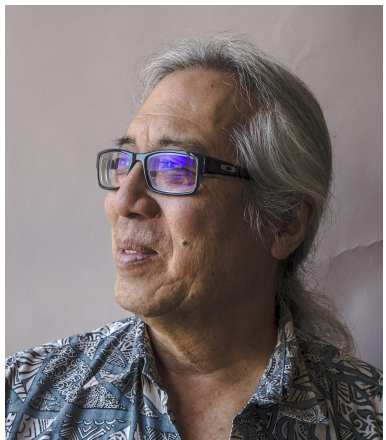
**Tracy Takayanagi Hui** (Toddy's Story)

Tracy was born and raised in Berkeley, CA in the early '60s. An Asian Studies program in the 4th grade made her realize she was third-generation Japanese American. She continued her Asian Studies at San Francisco State University and volunteered at Friends of Topaz events because her grandparents and parents were incarcerated in Topaz. She worked in retail until retirement and currently lives in San Francisco.



**Roy Iwata** (1928-2011) (Brownie, Visit to a Civics Class)

Roy Taichi Iwata was 12 when Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. Roy's family was sent to Walerga Assembly Center in Sacramento; then Tule Lake, CA; and finally, Topaz, UT in 1943. After the War, the Iwatas returned to Sacramento. Roy finished high school and joined the Army. While stationed in Japan, he married. The Iwatas settled in Sacramento and raised four children, celebrating almost 60 years of marriage. His memoir was shared with us by his daughter, Nancy Roskoff.



**David Izu** (Doll with Eight Band-aids, In the Shape of a Heart)

David Izu is a San Francisco Bay Area-based artist. His mother was incarcerated at Poston, AZ; his father escaped imprisonment in a family caravan to Utah, where he was drafted to serve in the U.S. Army in Europe. Dave has taught at Stanford, UC Berkeley, the SF Art Institute and the California College of the Arts. His work is in the permanent collection at the San Francisco Museum of Modern Art as well as other institutions.



**Eugenia “Jeanie” Takagi Kashima** (Topaz Birth)

After camp, Jeanie returned to Berkeley with her family. She later earned a BA from SF State University and an MA from San Diego State University. She married the late Tetsuyo Kashima and raised two children. Eugenia was a Resource Specialist in Learning Handicapped for the San Diego School District. She is retired and lives in San Diego.



Tom and Hana

**Tom Kawakami** (Better than Crystal City)

Tom was born in Salt Lake City, UT. His father worked in the coal mines of Utah, became the manager of the Japanese labor camp, and later, owned a restaurant in Salt Lake City. As Utah residents, Tom’s family was not incarcerated during WWII; but he remembers playing basketball against “a bunch of Topaz Nisei” (second generation) in high school. After serving in the U.S. Army during the Korean War, Tom settled in the San Francisco Bay Area, where he met his wife, Hana Abe.



Yoneo and Yoriko

**Yoneo Kawakita** (1924-2021) (Pomp and Circumstance, Topaz Trucker)

“Yon” grew up in San Mateo, CA, where his father worked for the Leslie Salt Company. He was a senior at San Mateo High School when the internment order came through, and missed his graduation. He was incarcerated in Tanforan and Topaz before joining the military. He and his wife Yoriko live in San Mateo.



**Kerrily Kitano** (Adopted by Quakers)

Kerrily grew up in Los Angeles. Her parents, Harry H.L. Kitano (professor, UCLA) and Yuriko Lillian Miyachi (registered nurse), were both interned at Topaz as young teens. Like her dad, Kerrily became a social scientist (PhD, MSW, UC Berkeley) researching HIV/AIDS and substance abuse issues among Asian/Pacific Islanders. She lives in the San Francisco Bay Area with her husband Matt and son Conor.



**Meri Mitsuyoshi** (Untitled, by Saburo Tamura)

Meri's father and mother were relocated to Tanforan and Topaz from the farming and chrysanthemum-growing communities in Irvington and Redwood City, CA. Meri graduated from UC Berkeley, where she earned a degree in Electrical Engineering. While working in Silicon Valley, she drummed with San Jose Taiko, and has recently embarked on a second career as a psychotherapist. Meri lives in San Jose with her husband, Mark Gonnerman, and their cats, Tabi and Sujata.



**Gail Hoshiyama Nanbu** (The Quality Market, What is an American)

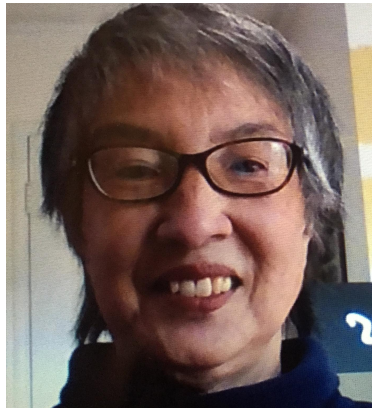
Gail was born in Chicago, IL in 1944, where her parents, Willie and Fumiko Hoshiyama, were married after an early exit from Topaz. The family returned to San Francisco in 1949, but Gail has lived in Walnut Creek, CA for many years. She and her husband, Gerry Nanbu, love to travel, especially to Japan. Gail enjoys Ikebana and making Kimekomi dolls while still helping clients with their tax issues as an enrolled agent.





**Setsuko Asano Ogami** (The Topaz Japanese Library)

Sets was born and raised in San Francisco until her family was sent to Tanforan and Topaz. After the War, she returned to San Francisco and graduated from George Washington High School and UC Berkeley. She then spent one year in Chicago and met her husband, Sam. They were married in San Francisco and moved to San Mateo, CA, where they raised four children. Sets worked as a medical transcriptionist and Registrar of Mills High School in Millbrae, CA until retirement.



**Ruth Sasaki** (Good Friends, Telegram to Topaz)

Ruth was born and raised in San Francisco after the War. Her mother's family, the Takahashis, were incarcerated in Tanforan and Topaz. A graduate of UC Berkeley (BA) and SF State (MA), she has lived in England and Japan. Her short story "The Loom" won the American Japanese National Literary Award, and her collection, *The Loom and Other Stories*, was published in 1991 by Graywolf Press. Visit her website: [www.rasasaki.com](http://www.rasasaki.com). She volunteers as the editor/curator of the Topaz Stories Project.



**Ben Takeshita** (A Star is Born)

Ben Takeshita was born in Alameda, CA, but grew up in San Mateo, where his father ran the family landscape gardening business. The family was sent to Topaz, but was later transferred to Tule Lake. After the War, Ben graduated from San Mateo High School, then served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War. With a degree from UC Berkeley, he worked for the State Department of Employment until retirement. He lives in Richmond, CA with his wife Fumiko.



**Yae Wada (1919-2023) (The Band's Visit)**

Yae grew up in Berkeley and Oakland, CA and operated a beauty salon before the war. She was 23 when she was incarcerated in Tanforan. From Topaz, she and her husband resettled in Cleveland. Yae returned to the East Bay after the War. In March 2019, Yae attended San Mateo High School's Day of Remembrance to express gratitude for an act of kindness by its war-time faculty and band members.



**Kenneth Yamashita (Kibei Cowboy, Kiku's Angel)**

Kenneth Akira Yamashita was born in Topaz on 9/11/45. His father, Susumu, was granted "unofficial" leave in New York City in June 1945 while his mother, Kiyoko Kitano Yamashita, grandmother and aunts remained in camp. He rejoined the family in Berkeley in December 1945. Ken grew up in New Jersey and received a BA and MLIS from Rutgers—The State University of NJ and a PhD from Simmons University in Boston. He retired from a 40-year career in public libraries in 2010.



**Jon Yatabe (Toy Story)**

Jon was born in Berkeley in 1937 and grew up in Redwood City, CA, where his father, Tak Yatabe, grew flowers. From Topaz, his father joined the 442nd Regimental Combat Team and fought in Europe. The Yatabes settled in Berkeley after the War. Jon graduated from UC Berkeley and received a PhD from the University of Illinois. After a long career in Washington and the Lawrence Livermore National Laboratory, he retired and lives in Bodega Bay, CA.





**Yae Kami Yedlosky** (Friends Forever)

Yaeko Kami Yedlosky was born and raised in Berkeley. Her family was in Tanforan and later, Topaz. She graduated junior high in Topaz in 1945. The family returned to Berkeley after the War, and their home served as a hostel for returning internees. After graduating Berkeley High and Armstrong Business College, Yae worked for a research station as a secretary and later, administrator. She currently resides in Oakland, CA.



**Carol Yoshimoto** (Galvanized Buckets)

Carol was born after the War in Berkeley, CA. Her grandfather, Hikojiro Mabuchi, was a master carpenter who helped design and build many of the East Bay's pre-War nurseries. Her family operated Contra Costa Florist in El Cerrito, CA for many years. Carol has an MA in classical Japanese literature from UC Berkeley and a JD from Hastings College of the Law.