



The internees found Arkansas weather harsher than California's.

The scars of 'relocation' are lasting

FROM/D1

out talking much about the camps. We did not want them to grow up with chips on their shoulders. We did not want them to grow up feeling sour toward the United States."

However, the pain of the experience was never purged from her, and in August of 1981, when a congressional committee conducted hearings in Los Angeles on the matter, Mrs. Seki was spurred to activism.

She testified before the committee and adopted a new policy of outspokenness on the issue.

"Now, I try to educate people, particularly our children and grandchildren," Mrs. Seki said.

The Fourth of July reunion, which she conceived in January with several of her friends — Chiyo (Ogata) Nakahara, Kay (Tagami) Sato and Sally (Kirita) Tsuneishi — is part of that education.

Although publicity has been limited mostly to fliers, small newspaper articles and word of mouth, nearly 200 people have responded with reservations.

Among those who will attend are women and young girls who worked with the USO and Crusaders in Jerome mounting a supportive letter-writing campaign for the 442nd and 100th



Sumi Seki was a junior at San Pedro High School when she and her family were "evacuated" on April 4, 1942.

infantry divisions; Kimi Sugiya, who was a chaperone for the USO women at Camp Shelby; and Bert Nakano, director of the National Coalition for Redress/Reparation.

Mrs. Seki also believes in rep-

aration for victims of the biggest forced migration in American history, but as much out of ethical considerations as financial.

"The American way is to make people pay for damages," she said. "In America, if you

"Everything would probably be alright if the government would even just apologize."

—Sumi Seki

don't put a price tag on this it will happen again.

"But everything would probably be alright if the government would even just apologize. That has never happened, either."

Mrs. Seki leafed through a scrapbook of old photographs picking out friends who, in a few weeks, she will see for the first time in nearly 45 years.

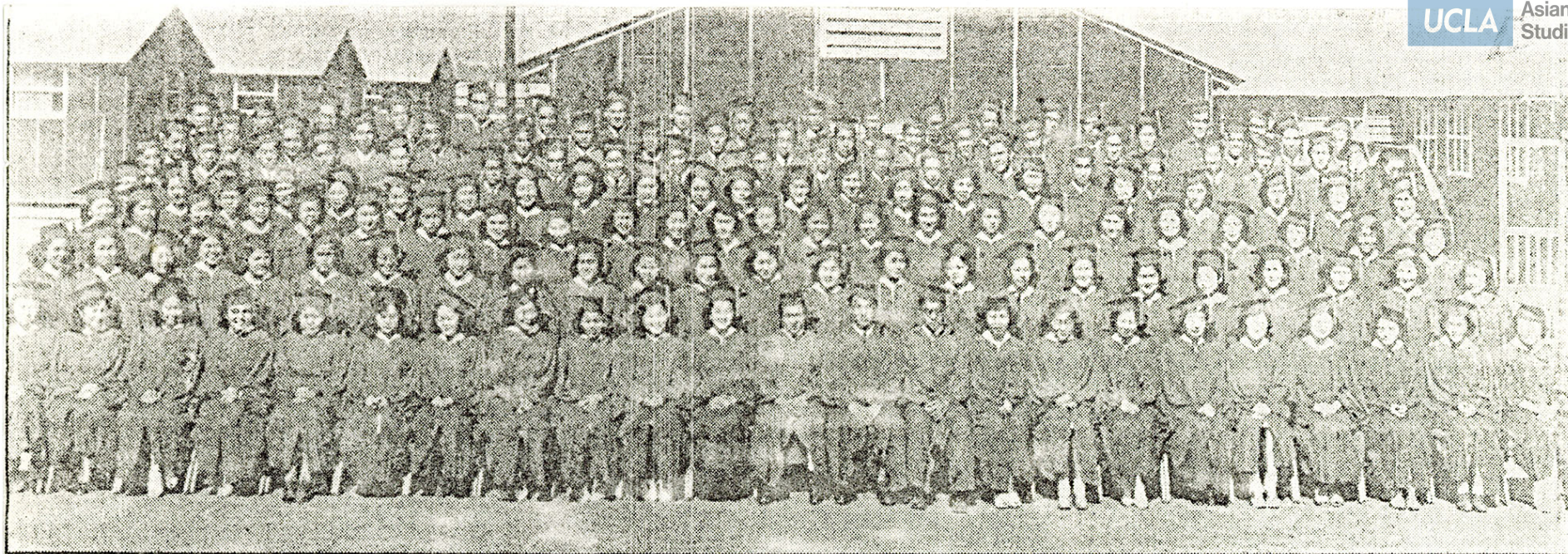
"All this may seem kind of late because we're kind of old now," she said. "But the young people should know."

The Jerome Relocation Center Reunion will be held July 4 at 5 p.m. at the Sambi Restaurant in Downey. Tickets are \$17.50. For information and reservations, call 427-0862, 283-5642 or 832-0631.

SUMMER SALE

Marriage odds poor a second time around

From Redbook



Graduation day

These few paragraphs, titled "The Real Test," were included in a small, hand-drawn pamphlet that served as the yearbook for the members of Denson High, the Jerome Relocation Center school where Sumi (Seo) Seki completed her high school education in 1943 after her removal from

San Pedro High because of the "evacuation" of people of Japanese ancestry.

THE REAL TEST

In these trying and perplexing times accompanied by adverse conditions, the initial graduating class of Denson High School has proven beyond a doubt that they possess courage and determination.

Having completed the degree for high school requirements, the real test now lies in applying the degree of their ability when opportunity arises. It is without a doubt that skepticism as to what the future holds is in the minds of many seniors. However, let us note these are times when each must grit his teeth to seek enlightened opportunity — for in the end it is he and he alone who will

find success and happiness. Finally, we hope those unexpected moments spent at Denson were memorable for the seniors, as we who are left behind will sorely miss those who are leaving.

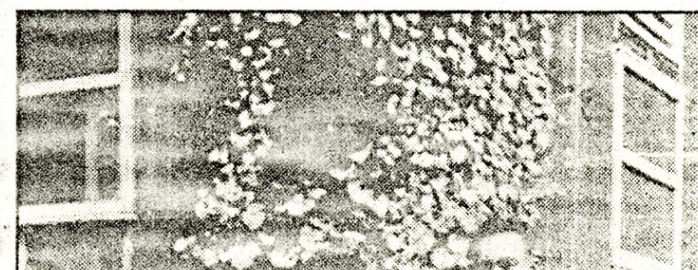
We are proud of the high ideals established by the first class of '43 and subsequently will endeavor to live up to those principles.

They'll never forget the memories, the scars of

'RELOCATION'

By Dave Wielenga
Staff writer

Their shared scar has become a bond, a badge of survival. Their painful memories have hardened into a resolution never to forget. That is why — on the Fourth of July, the ultimate celebration of American freedom and independence — more than 200 American citizens of Japanese ancestry



into a resolution never to forget. That is why — on the Fourth of July, the ultimate celebration of American freedom and independence — more than 200 American citizens of Japanese ancestry will gather for a reunion to commemorate their incarceration in the Jerome, Ark., Relocation Center during World War II.

"When it happened more than 40 years ago I was only a child," said Sumi (Seo) Seki, 63, of Long Beach. "I went because my parents went. But today I wouldn't let them take me. And I won't let it happen to anyone else again, either."

Mrs. Seki was a junior at San Pedro High School when she and her family were "evacuated" on April 4, 1942, as part of Executive Order No. 9066.

They were held in a huge assembly center at Santa Anita Race Track until October, and then were included in a group of 10,000 people transferred to the Jerome Relocation Center, a sweltering outpost in the swamplands of southeastern Arkansas.

At the time, Mrs. Seki wasn't precisely certain where she was.

"I knew it was near Louisiana, because when we graduated from high school, the photographer came from Monroe (La.)," she said. "I knew it was near Mississippi because Ft. Shelby wasn't far away."

But Mrs. Seki has never forgotten where she has been.

"They called the places 'relocation centers' instead of 'concentration camps.' They tried to tell us it was for our own protection. But we all knew better," she said. "We were confined behind fences of barbed wire. The machine guns in the towers surrounding the camps were facing inside, not outside."

"At Santa Anita, I remember standing with my friends at the fence watching the cars go by on Huntington Avenue and talking about what we were going to do when we got out. That's the phrase you heard most of all: 'When I get out...'"

Although approximately 120,000 Japanese-Americans were interned, they contributed to the U.S. war effort.

"At Santa Anita we worked making camouflage nets," said Mrs. Seki. "After I graduated from high school, I was



The internment at Jerome, Ark., included all ages as evidenced in these 1943 pictures of a Japanese-American

asked to relocate in the Midwest. I went to Chicago, where I worked making condensers for the War Department until Aug. 25, 1945, when I lost my job because the war ended. I was given \$25 and a train ticket back to Southern California."

Americans of Japanese ancestry also sent men into the battlefields. Mrs. Seki's own husband lost his left arm fighting with the 442nd infantry division in France. The 442nd division and the 100th division were composed of Japanese-Americans and were highly decorated.

Mrs. Seki's life was not ruined by her incarceration, but it was damaged.

"At first, I felt ashamed," she said. "When we were released we were told not to make an issue of it, that it would only hurt us, that we would be victims of retaliation."

"Most of us raised our children with-

CONTINUED/D5



woman and grandchild, left, and of a young Sumi Seki and three of her friends, right.



Tom Shaw/Press-Telegram

These days Sumi Seki, 63, of Long Beach, has become an activist concerning the World War II internment and human rights.