

Switzer, Donna

From: Estanislau, Robin
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 3:30 PM
To: Switzer, Donna
Subject: FW: Thank you - Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month
Attachments: Civilian Exclusion Order No. 61_Wintersburg_snip.PNG

Please include in Supplemental Communication

Robin Estanislau, CMC, City Clerk
City of Huntington Beach
714-536-5405



Please consider the HB City Clerk's office for your passport needs!

SUPPLEMENTAL COMMUNICATION

Meeting Date: 5/17/22

Agenda Item No.: 5(22-426)

From: Joyce, Sean <Sean.Joyce@surfcity-hb.org>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 2:39 PM
To: Estanislau, Robin <Robin.Estanislau@surfcity-hb.org>
Subject: FW: Thank you - Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

FYI

From: Mary Urashima <mary.adams.urashima@gmail.com>
Sent: Thursday, May 12, 2022 2:16 PM
To: Delgleize, Barbara <Barbara.Delgleize@surfcity-hb.org>
Cc: Joyce, Sean <Sean.Joyce@surfcity-hb.org>
Subject: Thank you - Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Dear Mayor Delgleize,

Thank you for recognizing Asian American Pacific Islander Heritage Month at the May 17 city council meeting. This is an important 80th anniversary date directly related to Asian American history here in Huntington Beach.

I have some background regarding the significance of the date you are making the proclamation. Eighty years ago, May 17 was the mandatory deadline for all persons of Japanese ancestry--citizen or non-citizen--to be forcibly removed from Orange County, per Civilian Exclusion Order No. 61. This included people in the Wintersburg Village and Huntington Beach areas (map attached).

They reported to the Pacific Electric Railway station on May 17, which at that time in 1942 was located next to the Huntington Beach pier. From there, they were transported to Poston, the Colorado River Relocation Center near Parker, Arizona.

Like today, there were mixed opinions, some reacting to war hysteria and some realizing this was an injustice. There are inspiring stories with this difficult history:

- Nellie Wardlow of the Wardlow family--one of the prominent pioneer families in early Orange County history, arriving in 1896--made the very long drive to Tuna Canyon Detention Station (Tajunga in Los Angeles County) and provided testimony at an FBI hearing vouching for Kyutaro Ishii. Kyutaro Ishii was one of the founding elders of the Wintersburg Japanese Mission. Based on her testimony and agreement to be his sponsor, Kyutaro Ishii was allowed to return home to Orange County until all Japanese Americans were required to leave on May 17. When Talbert incorporated as Fountain Valley in 1957, Kyutaro's son Charles Ishii became one of its first city council members, along with James Kanno whose family also were members of the Wintersburg Japanese Mission.
- Miss Margaret Bliss, a Latin and algebra teacher at Huntington Beach High School, tried to keep some of her Japanese American students under her sponsorship. This was remembered in more than one oral history, including the oral history of Aiko Tanamachi Endo in 1982. Endo recalled Miss Bliss saying, *"You girls shouldn't have to leave. I'm going to find out if I can keep you with me. I'll be responsible for you. She was a dear. We realized there was just no way. I told her I was sure that there was no way she could keep us."*
- Ray Elliott, the vice principal of Huntington Beach High School watched his Japanese American students--who he had known on an almost daily basis--leave for Poston. Huntington Beach High School administration and teachers worked with senior students--who would have graduated in June--to qualify them for graduation while at Poston by writing an essay. One of Ray Elliott's students continued to correspond with him while at Poston.
- Ladies from the local Baptist Church (possibly the First Baptist Church at 6th and Orange) provided coffee and donuts to Japanese Americans waiting at the Pacific Electric Railway station on May 17 to provide comfort.

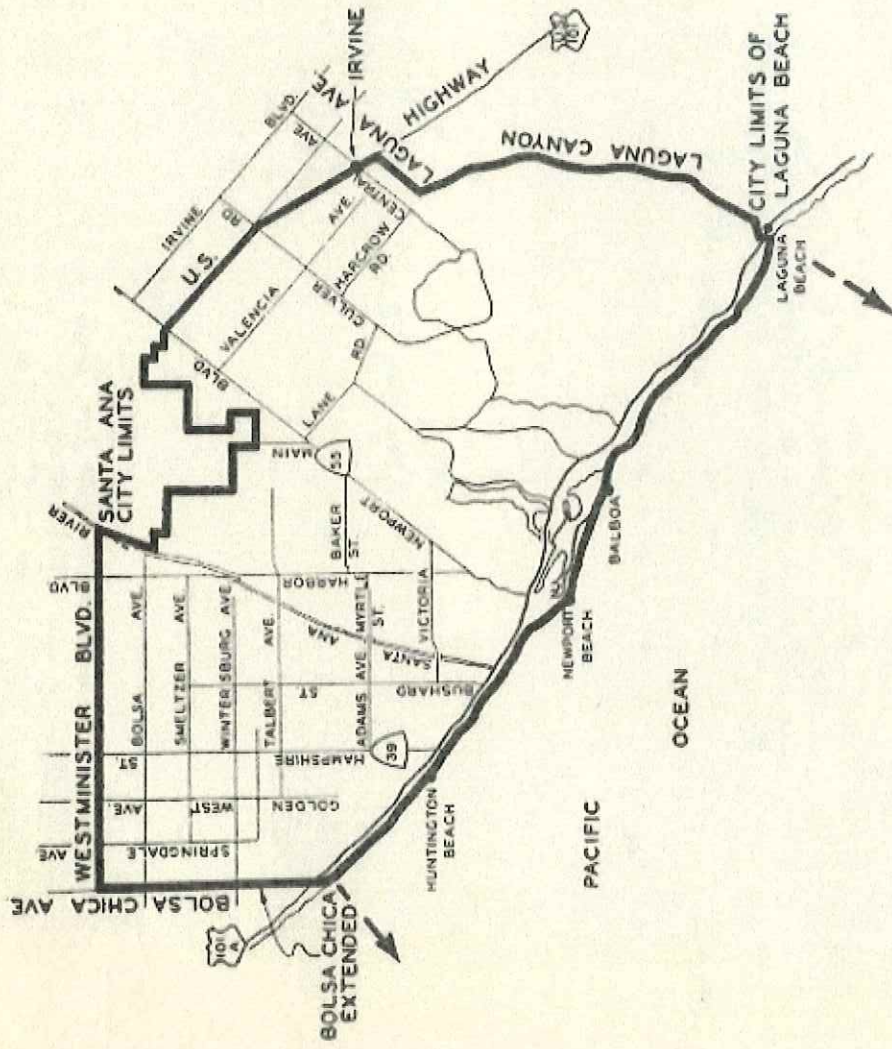
You can read what happened here on May 17 eighty years ago in this piece I wrote in 2017, <https://historicwintersburg.blogspot.com/search?q=moving+day>

If I may suggest, you can reference this monumental history on the date of your proclamation by recognizing what happened eighty years ago on May 17, referencing local people who tried to make a difference, that the federal government formally apologized for the forced removal and incarceration of Japanese Americans in 1988 (Civil Liberties Act of 1988 signed by President Reagan), and that today in 2022 you are glad to see this community recognized for its many contributions to Orange County.

Again, thank you for recognizing AAPI Heritage Month. It is very appreciated.

Best,
Mary Urashima

PROHIBITED AREA
EXCLUSION ORDER No. 61
WESTERN DEFENSE COMMAND AND FOURTH ARMY



This Map is prepared for the convenience of the public; see the Civilian Exclusion Order for the full and correct description.