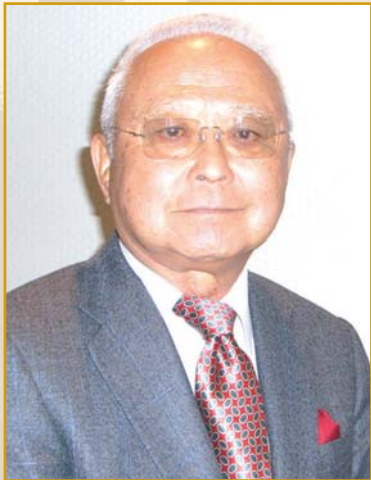


75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE 1830 SUTTER STREET BUILDING  
— 1932 - 2007 —

## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### HATSURO "HATS" AIZAWA

While a student at Lowell High School, I remember attending dances with my friends at the 1830 Sutter Street building. Those happy days ended when World War II began, and my family and I were sent to Tanforan Assembly Center and then to Topaz Internment Camp in the Utah desert.

I am proud that Nihonmachi Little Friends is carrying on the tradition of the 1830 Sutter Street building. Its commitment to children and the community are the reasons why I have long been such a staunch supporter.



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MULTICULTURAL CHILDCARE FOR 33 YEARS

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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# MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



## HARU BABA

Along with my club, the Little Echos, I participated in many activities at the Japanese YWCA in the 1930s. With our leader, Sumi Miho, we attended cooking classes, put on plays, and had dances. I have many fond memories of attending YWCA conferences at Asilomar (in Pacific Grove). We also went on a camp trip to Nevada City. Sometimes distinguished guests came to the Japanese YWCA – I especially remember Helen Keller coming to speak to us.



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MULTICULTURAL CHILDCARE FOR 33 YEARS

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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# MY PERSONAL MEMORIES

## JOAN ISHIHARA

I remember being in the 1830 Sutter Street building several times during the early 1960s. I recall marveling at the fact that the building was designed by Julia Morgan, of Hearst Castle fame, and was particularly enthralled with the beautiful and unique stained-glass windows around the doorway at the top of the staircase. Later learning about art deco in college, I'm sure that was the style of the beautiful entry that I had admired.

I have fond memories of attending dances in the building as a teenager, including at least one dance where the music was provided by a combo led, I think, by Michael Mathis of Washington High School, younger brother of Johnny Mathis.



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MULTICULTURAL CHILDCARE FOR 33 YEARS

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### MASAKO AMEMIYA MACFARLANE

(NÉE MASAKO AMEMIYA)

I have delightful memories of being in the Little Echo Club at the Japanese YWCA during my junior and senior high school years. Toshi Koba was our leader, and we did things together once a week. We enjoyed singing many songs and putting on plays. At Halloween, the downstairs area was decorated like a haunted house. It was something I looked forward to every year. I also remember having overnight outings to Hunt Lodge in Mill Valley.



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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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# MY PERSONAL MEMORIES

FUSAE MITOMA

(NÉE FUSAE INOUE)

Along with Martha Suzuki  
(née Nozawa), I was a member  
of the Japanese YWCA Silver  
Echo Junior Club in the late  
1930s. Although it has been  
many years since I was there,  
I do recall that I always had a  
lot of fun at the Japanese YWCA  
with my friends, and specifically  
remember making jello with  
my club.



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MULTICULTURAL CHILDCARE FOR 33 YEARS

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### MICHI OKA ONUMA

As a child in San Francisco in the very early part of the 20th century, I remember that there were places where Japanese Americans were not permitted to go, such as local public swimming pools. However, the Japanese YWCA was a safe haven for young girls to gather after school – a place where we could assemble without being subject to the racism of the times.

As a young adult, I was on the board of the Japanese YWCA when we decided that the organization needed a building of our own. With the help of other dedicated immigrant mothers and their daughters, we raised funds from the community to buy the 1830 Sutter Street building. Even my father, Shigeki Oka, printed flyers for the campaign. But because the Alien Land Laws prohibited us from owning the building, the San Francisco YWCA held it in trust for us.



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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### TOMI SASAKI

I have fond memories of the Japanese YWCA Y's Echo meetings with other young Japanese American girls on Friday evenings at 1830 Sutter Street before WWII. The Y's Echo Club was a very important part of my life, as it introduced young Japanese American women like me to outside speakers, and featured a wide variety of classes and outdoor activities. I especially enjoyed the fellowship of the other girls.

From 1937 until the evacuation in 1942, the Japanese YWCA at 1830 Sutter Street sponsored Echo Club activities for girls ranging from elementary school age through and after college: Baby Echo for elementary school girls, Little Echo, Silver Echo, Y's Echo, Blue Circle, and Golden Echo. Each group had about 15 girls or young ladies. *Ikebana* was taught by Professor Baba and we learned Japanese ladies etiquette (*saho*) from Mrs. Kasai. There were cooking, sewing, and stitch work classes; hikes and camping trips were also organized. I remember the Business Girls Conference held in Idyllwild, California in July 1940 where young women delegates from California, Hawaii, Nevada, and Arizona gathered and enjoyed horseback riding and swimming. There were also Japanese American women living in the dormitory in the 2nd floor.

I remember annual performances organized and rehearsed at 1830 Sutter Street. An annual play was directed by Mr. Tamaki Matsuno, for which we made the costumes. Another time, there was a puppet show where the elementary school girls used paper mâché to create the puppets. My older sister also starred in a *kabuki* play and I remember her studying very hard to memorize her lines.

At this time, Ms. Kimi Mukai was Secretary and Mrs. Fujita was on the Board. I have memories of my mother taking me with her to sell donuts to raise monies for the purchase of the 1830 Sutter Street building.

Other ladies in the Y's Echo group with me included: Chie Watanabe (née Tatsuno), Chie Honda, Chiyo Yoshihashi (née Nonaka), Daisy Tomizawa, Grace Kanzaki, Mary Kusumine, May Morioka, Nobu Omori, Tane Nishii (née Amemiya), and Toki Morioka (née Miho).



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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### MARTHA SUZUKI (NÉE MARTHA NOZAWA)

Before World War II, from approximately 1937-40, I was a teenager attending the Silver Echo Junior Club at the Japanese YWCA, with friends like Yulie Kiyasu, Midori Shimanouchi, Shizu Fujiwara, Alice Abe, Takiko Nonaka, Chiye Nao, Kiku Kato, Masako Amemiya, Margaret Nakayama, and Fusae Inoue. Our group met at the 1830 Sutter Street building on Friday nights, with our advisor, Miss Koba.

Our Silver Echo Junior Club did many activities together. I remember a hiking trip to Mount Tamalpais, where we almost got stuck in the park overnight. But my strongest memory is an evening spent sleeping on the rooftop of the 1830 Sutter Street building – just because we wanted to do something different!



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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### TOMOYE TAKAHASHI (NÉE TOMOYE NOZAWA)

I have some memories of the Japanese YWCA and the 1830 Sutter Street building, both before and after World War II.

I recall going with my mother door-to-door to the Japanese homes in our Haight-Ashbury neighborhood, explaining the reasons why we needed a YWCA building of our own, and encouraging community members to contribute. Although my mother was neither a Japanese YWCA member nor a member of the Christian churches whose members had originally founded the Japanese YWCA, she understood the importance of the building to the community.

A relative of ours, Miss Fumi Hayakawa, was a full-time staff member (House Mother) of the Japanese YWCA when she returned to San Francisco after attending college in Japan. I recall Miss Hayakawa showing my mother and me the second floor of the Japanese YWCA building, where the girls' dormitory was located. It was a large room with two rows of cots. The Japanese girls who lived in the dormitory had often been sent to the City by their parents from farm towns to enroll in sewing schools, beauty schools, business colleges and so on, to enhance their marriageability.

The Founders of the Japanese YWCA were wives of the *Issei* (first-generation) doctors, dentists, lawyers, and interpreters. They were self-sacrificing, sincere, diligent, loyal, hardworking society ladies who were influential models of *Issei* society. The Japanese YWCA rightfully belonged to Japanese community, because of people like my mother, who, though not even a member, was recruited to raise funds. Everybody pitched in to make the building a reality.

The Japanese YWCA had great ideals and big ambitions. It was a very valuable organization for the community as a safe, secure, and absorbing center of recreation for teenagers and young women. Parents whose daughters went to the Japanese YWCA did not need to worry about their children associating with bad influences.



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75TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
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## MY PERSONAL MEMORIES



### ALBA WITKIN

After having received my graduate degree from Stanford in 1942, I began working with the American Friends Service Committee (AFSC) to help get college age Japanese Americans out of the internment camps and into colleges in the Midwest and East. I worked with the AFSC at the 1830 Sutter Street building, and remember beginning each day quietly, as is the Quaker custom, in the front room on the first floor. I then worked on my duties at one of the desks placed in the large theater room.

In order to get a Japanese American student released from an internment camp, we had to obtain seven different clearances, including a college acceptance, community acceptance, church sponsorship, and War Relocation Authority approval. It was difficult work, but the experience had a profound influence on me – as I was introduced to concepts of Quakerism, conscientious objection, peace, and the brotherhood of men.

The 1830 Sutter building represents much good. Not only was the community spirit in its inception inspiring, but after the Japanese Americans were sent off to camps, the AFSC came into the vacated building to pursue the cause of mutual respect. After the War, the YWCA took over the building for other community purposes. Now the facility houses Nihonmachi Little Friends. I think one has to be proud that 1830 Sutter has served so many people, so well, and for so long.



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