Finding aid for the Hannah Tomiko Holmes Papers

Collection number: 94.181

Japanese American National Museum
Los Angeles, California

Processed by:
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Date Completed:
March 2015

Encoded by:
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Descriptive Summary
Title: Hannah Tomiko Holmes papers
Collection number: 94.181
Creator: Holmes, Hannah Tomiko, 1927-1996
Collection Size: .50 linear feet
Repository: Japanese American National Museum (Los Angeles, Calif.)
Los Angeles, California 90012
Physical location: Japanese American National Museum, 100 North Central Avenue, Los Angeles, 90012
Access
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Preferred Citation
[Identification of item], Hannah Tomiko Holmes papers. 94.181, Japanese American National Museum. Los Angeles, CA.
Acquisition Information
Biography / Administrative History
Hannah Tomiko Holmes (formerly Takagi) was born on December 14, 1927 in California. At the age of two years old she became deaf. She was enrolled as a young girl at the California School for the Deaf, a school for children ages six through twenty in Berkeley, California that was sponsored by the state. When Holmes was 13 years the war broke out and she was forced to leave the school, along with 11 other Japanese American students.
Holmes and her family arrived at Manzanar in May 1942. Her parents immediately tried to find a way to get Holmes back to the California School for the Deaf. However, by the time they arrived at Manzanar the school was no longer allowing students to return. During their time at Manzanar there were no education opportunities for handicapped students and Holmes received no education or training. Holmes was extremely isolated as she was unable to communicate with other children her age at Manzanar. She was able to work at the camouflage net factory and tried to continue her education on her own through various readings.
In May 1943 the family moved to Tule Lake, where there was an attempt to start a school for handicapped children called the Helen Keller School. The school was unsuccessful and closed after only a few months. Children with disabilities and special needs were then transferred into one class under the supervision of a single teacher from New York who was not prepared to care for the needs of each child. Holmes was not permitted to use sign language in the class.
At this point WRA officials attempted to get Holmes and other deaf children into classes at the Arkansas School for the Deaf. Although the school said it would hold a meeting in regards to the children, nothing ever came of it. Attempts were then made to transfer the children to the Idaho School for the Deaf, the Colorado School for the Deaf, and the Pennsylvania...
School for the Deaf but each school would have required the families to pay non-resident tuitions.
In September 1943 Holmes and her family left Tule Lake for Chicago, Illinois. Holmes was enrolled in the Alexander Graham Bell School for the Deaf. Unfortunately, the school did not teach sign language and used only lip reading. By early 1944 Holmes had transferred to the Illinois School for the Deaf, which was tuition-free as her family was now considered Illinois residents. She studied here until graduation in 1948.
Holmes eventually became very involved with the National Council for Japanese American Redress, testifying on behalf of handicapped Nisei children who were unable to receive the education they needed during the war years.
Holmes passed away on August 9, 1996 in Los Angeles.

**Scope and Content of Collection**
The Hannah Tomiko Holmes Papers contains photocopies press-clippings, transcripts, documents, and essays related to redress and the National Council for Japanese American Redress. These materials are all reproductions. The bulk of the collection is original color photographs taken by Holmes related to Hohri vs. United States and snapshots of various pilgrimages to Manzanar as well as memorial services held at Evergreen Cemetery.

**Arrangement**
The collection is broken down into two series:
Series 1: Documents
Series 2: Photographs
Subseries 1: Hohri vs. United States
Subseries 2: Manzanar Pilgrimages
Subseries 3: Ralph Lazo
Subseries 4: Miscellaneous

**Indexing Terms**
The following terms have been used to index the description of this collection in the library’s online public access catalog.
Hohri, William Minoru, 1927-2010
Yoneda, Karl G., 1906-
Weglyn, Michi, 1926-
Okubo, Miné
Hansen, Arthur A.
National Council for Japanese American Redress
Manzanar War Relocation Center