



May 21-24, 2025
Little Rock, AR
Program Highlights

WEDNESDAY, MAY 21

- 10 am-12 pm**—Optional tour of Little Rock Central High School
1-5:30 pm; 8-10 pm—Registration, **Razorback**
3-6 pm—"Six Families" exhibit—Six Japanese American families remained in Arkansas, courtesy Plantation Agriculture Museum, **Razorback**
3-5 pm—Ireichō Stamping (Appt. required), **DeCantillon**
6-8 pm—Welcome Dinner, includes short presentation by Duncan Ryūken Williams, **Silver City II, III, IV**
8-10 pm—Optional activities to encourage interactions amongst Pilgrims
- Bon Odori Practice for Thursday, at McGehee, **Silver City V, VI**
 - Survivor, Sansei, Yonsei, Gosei Generational Groups, **Silver City II, III, IV**

THURSDAY, MAY 22

- Breakfast is served 6:30-9:30 AM
Pilgrimage to Jerome, Rohwer, and McGehee
7-7:20 am—Board Buses
7:30 am—Buses Depart for Rohwer
9:30 am—Arrive Rohwer Memorial Cemetery
10-10:30 am—Buddhist Memorial Service, Introduction, John Nishio; Service, Rev. Duncan Ryūken Williams
10:45 am—Group Photo
11:15 am—Buses depart for McGehee
11:45 am—Arrive McGehee
11:45 am-1:00 pm—Multiple Activities
- Jerome Rohwer Interpretive Museum, **RR Station South Bldg.**, provides a glimpse into the lives of incarcerated
 - Ireichō Stamping (appt. required), **RR Station South Bldg.**
- 12-1:00 pm**—Lunch, prepaid boxed lunches, beverages and water available
1-2:15 pm—Program, **Commons in front of Jerome Rohwer Interpretive Museum**
- Introductory Remarks, Ross Harano
 - Central Arkansas Taiko
 - Guest Speaker, Richard Yada, Rohwer Survivor, w/ introduction by McGehee Mayor Jeff Owyong
 - Bon Odori, Marsha Endo Johnson introduces Rev. Patti Nakai and Central Arkansas Taiko to lead everyone in celebrating & honoring our ancestors
- 2:15-3:15 pm**—Continued visits to Jerome Rohwer Interpretive Museum
3:15 pm—Buses depart for Jerome
3:45 pm—Buses arrive Jerome Concentration Camp Memorial Monument
4-4:15 pm—Buddhist Memorial Service, Introduction, Glenn Yabuno; Service, Rev. Patti Nakai
5 pm—Buses depart for Little Rock
7 pm—Buses arrive Wyndham Riverfront Little Rock
7-8:00 pm—Dinner, Benihana (advanced reservation required); explore local restaurants on your own.
8-10:00 pm—Ireicho Stamping (appt. needed) **DeCantillon**
- Multiple Optional Activities**
8-9:30 pm—Workshop on Personal Archiving. How to digitize and archive family (historical) artifacts, Joshua Youngblood, **Silver City V**
8-10 pm
- Taiko Drum Clinic, **First United Methodist Church**, 723 Center St., Little Rock, AR. Central AR Taiko Group. Hands on workshop. Please arrange your own transportation
 - Survivor, Sansei, Yonsei, Gosei Generational Groups, **Silver City VI, Razorback**

FRIDAY, MAY 23

Breakfast is served 6:30-9:30 am

8:30 am-9:30 pm—Artifact Digitizing, Manon Wilson & team from University of Arkansas will be digitizing family articles throughout the day. **DeCantillon**

8:30 am-10 pm—“Six Families” Exhibit available for viewing, **Razorback**

FRIDAY GENERAL SESSION, SILVER CITY V, VI, VII

8:30-9:30 am—Life at America's Temporary Detention Sites—Sharon Yamato & Evan Kodani. A new short film will be featured as part of the launch of their new website, <https://forcedassemblycenters.com>, that features a detailed look at the 16 temporary detention centers.

9:30-10:45 am—Rising Above in AR—Angelina Payne, Kimball Erdman, & Joshua Youngblood will provide an overview of their archive that includes about 2,500 items, interactive maps, and a 3-D model of a barracks block at Rohwer, followed by an update on new directions.

10:45-11 am—Break

11 am-12 pm—Jim Crow Virginia—Marsha Endo Johnson moderates as Regina H. Boone discusses her search for her Issei grandfather. On her journey Boone uncovers the traumatic history of her family's life in the segregated South during and after WWII.

12-1 pm—Lunch on your own

1-2 pm—Bitter Sacrifices: Art and Writing from Rohwer and Jerome—Heather Register Zbinden The CALS Butler Center for Arkansas Studies holds the single largest collection of art and writing from the US American concentration camps. Heather discusses the dark chapter in US American and Arkansas history and shows some of the creative works left behind.

2-3 pm—Research Genealogy—The Chimata Sumida Story—Marsha Endo Johnson discusses her journey to locate documented information about the details of her grandfather Chimata Sumida. She will discuss the illegal loyalty hearings experienced by Issei prisoners and INS detention centers. She will explore resources and research techniques for gathering governmental information and discuss preparing her Family Collection for Densho's website.

3-3:15 pm—Break

3:15-4:15 pm—*Starting Over: Japanese Americans After the War*, film by Dianne Fukami—The film features interviews Japanese Americans, mainly Nisei, who returned to the San Francisco Bay area after their wartime incarceration. Interviewees provide insights into their return to “freedom” and the problems and trepidation encountered. The film ends with some positive developments of the postwar years. There will be a Q&A session moderated by John Nishio w/ survivor, Marielle Tsukamoto.

4:15-5:15 pm—Chicago, Life after Camp—Ross Harano, Patti Nakai Chicago was a major destination for families leaving the camps. Ross and Patti will tell the story of resettlement, perseverance, and overcoming obstacles to build a thriving community.

FRIDAY GENERAL SESSION, CLOSED

5:30-7:30 pm Dinner on your own

Multiple Optional Activities

7:30-9 pm—*Not Your Model Minority*, film by Jon Osaki, **Silver City VII** The film explores the origins of the Model Minority Myth (MMM) and intersections with past and present anti-Asian violence. The film reveals how the MMM has been used to create a wedge between people of color and perpetuates divisive narratives. John Nishio will be joined by Jason Finkelman and Rachel Watanabe-Batton for a discussion and Q&A after the film.

8-10 pm

- Survivor, Sansei, Yonsei, Gosei Generational Groups, **Silver City V, VI**
- “Six Families” Exhibit available for viewing, **Razorback**

SATURDAY, MAY 23

Breakfast is served 6:30-10 am

8:30 am-10 pm—"Six Families" Exhibit available for viewing, **Razorback**

SATURDAY GENERAL SESSION, SILVER CITY V, VI, VII

8:30-9:30 am—Exploring and Understanding Multicultural JA Identities. Rob Buscher leads a panel discussion focused on expanding our understanding of Japanese American (JA) history, multicultural JA identities, and the legacies of incarceration, by highlighting Yonsei and Gosei voices. With Becca Asaki, Jason Finkelman, and Rachel Watanabe-Batton.

9:30-10:45 am—Tsuru for Solidarity—Emily Yoshioka, KC Mukai, and Becca Asaki will update us about current concerns and actions of the nonviolent, direct-action project. Tsuru for Solidarity stands on the moral authority of JA's, who suffered in US concentration camps during WWII, and shouts, "Stop Repeating History!"

10:45-11 am—Break

11 am-12 pm—Generational Sessions—One's relationship to incarceration and JA identity looks different depending on when one grew up. John Nishio, Rob Buscher, and others will facilitate group sessions to share experiences and observations specific to their generation. Understanding both what is common and what is unique within each generation can help build and educate our community to provide a foundation going into the Intergenerational Session later in the day.

12-1 pm—Lunch on your own

1-2:15 pm—Is This Deja Vu All Over Again?—David Inoue will summarize the many policies that have come into being to stimulate discussion on how we as a JA community, and in concert with other movements, can respond and react to increasingly potent attacks on our communities. For JA's, the words "executive order" evoke strong feelings and reactions because of EO 9066. Unfortunately, many of the President's new EO's hearken back to underlying and overt themes that drove racist policies of the 20th century, backtracking policies to what many thought were relics.

2:15-3:00 pm—Where Do We Go From Here?—Ross Harano will facilitate a summary session of Saturday's presentations focused on how to meet the resurgent challenges of the current socio-political climate. US American WWII xenophobia inflicted unconstitutional detention and incarceration centers, deportation, and civil & human rights violations against People of Japanese descent. Resurfacing societal prejudices and political actions indicate that the US is following a historically repetitive backwards path. How does the WWII experience affect JA responses to the current resurgent challenges? The session asks us, "Where do we go from here?"

3-3:15 pm—Break

3:15-5 pm—Intergenerational Group Discussions—Pilgrims to be assigned rooms. The purpose of the small group discussions is to foster dialog between generations to better connect our community. Learning about the WWII experiences directly from survivors is priceless. We have the duty of sharing our story with the world, which is ever more relevant today. The torch must be passed, and preparing the next generation to receive it is a vital task. A unifying theme may be, "How do we get the Yonsei and Gosei generations to take interest and action in preserving our families' rich histories?" The friendly discussions were highlights of past pilgrimages.

SATURDAY GENERAL SESSION CLOSED

6-8 pm Closing Dinner, **Silver City V, VI, VII**

7 pm Survivor Acknowledgement & Tribute—Marsha Endo Johnson and Mary Ishimoto Morris recognize and honor Jerome and Rohwer survivors

8-10 pm Multiple Optional Activities

- Sake Tasting for Adults, **DeCantillon** Origami Sake highlights Arkansas' first and only sake brewery. Sourcing Arkansas Rice and Hot Springs Water, Origami is giving a new spin on US domestic sake.
- Survivor, Sansei, Yonsei, Gosei Generational Groups, **Silver City V, VI** Generational group gatherings to talk, join in activities, and say farewell.
- "Six Families" Exhibit available for viewing, **Razorback**

SUNDAY, MAY 25

6:30-10 am breakfast is served

8:30-10 am—Jerome Rohwer Pilgrimage Planning Committee Meeting, **Silver City I** Meeting for current committee members and individuals interested in serving on the committee for a future pilgrimage

Independent Optional post-Pilgrimage tour of National Civil Rights Museum and Lorraine Hotel, Memphis, TN (Please note: Private transportation required.)

The site visits to Memphis are not a part of the official 2025 pilgrimage, but the Jerome Rohwer Committee recommends and encourages all pilgrims to independently extend their journey to include Memphis, Tennessee to learn more about US Americans' struggle to advance human and civil rights for all people.

Please note all travel to/from and site visits in Memphis will be the pilgrims' responsibility. A group caravan departure for Memphis will begin at 8:00 AM. For caravan and ride coordination please contact Mari Carpenter at mari3606@yahoo.com.

In addition to its civil rights history, Memphis also reflects US America's multicultural heritage and is an internationally recognized center of musical and culinary significance.

Recommended Memphis, Tennessee sites include the following.

National Civil Rights Museum At The Lorraine Motel - 450 Mulberry St., Memphis, TN 38103 The National Civil Rights Museum was established in 1991 at the former Lorraine Motel, where civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. Through its exhibits, collections, speakers and special events, the museum offers visitors a chance to learn about the tumultuous and inspiring period of human and civil rights change in US history. <https://civilrightsmuseum.org/>

I AM A MAN Plaza - Hernando St. at E. Pontotoc Ave., Memphis, TN 38126 Built in 2018, the I AM A MAN Plaza, a large-scale experiential public sculpture, pays tribute to members of the 1968 Sanitation Workers' Strike and the legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The tragic deaths of Echol Cole and Robert Walker, who were crushed to death by a malfunctioning truck on February 1, 1968, caused 1,300 Black men from the Memphis Department of Public Works to go on strike due to the city's lack of response to the latest in a long series of neglect and abuse cases of its Black employees. During the ensuing state of martial law and unrest, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated at the Lorraine Motel on April 4, 1968. The strike and its "I Am a Man!" slogan came to represent the struggle of the working poor and racial inequality in Memphis and beyond. For more information on the strike please see The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University's website, <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/memphis-sanitation-workers-strike>.

Stax Museum of American Soul Music - 926 E McLemore Ave, Memphis, TN 38126. The Stax Museum of American Soul Music is located on the original site of the Stax Records studio in Memphis, Tennessee. The Museum honors the artists who recorded there, as well as other American Soul Music legends, through exhibits, films, stage costumes, musical instruments, vintage recording equipment, records, photographs, permanent and temporary exhibits, and a collection of more than 2,000 rare and important memorabilia and artifacts. The Stax Museum is an entity of the Soulsville Foundation, which also operates the Stax Music Academy and The Soulsville Charter School on the same campus. <https://staxmuseum.org/rebirth/about-stax-museum/>