

George Takasuka

By Sean Klinkam and Nina Mullins

Yohei Takatsuka and his wife Aya Taki arrived on Vashon Island in 1911, and established a successful strawberry farm¹. Yohei and Aya started a family, welcoming seven children¹ - Harry, George, Kimiko, Rose, Miriam, Augie, and Margaret⁵ - of which George K. Takatsuka was the youngest, born on November 12, 1926².

George followed his older siblings into Vashon High School in the class of 1945. In his Freshman Year, George was a member of the basketball team⁷.

On May 16, 1942, George Takatsuka's Family was forcefully removed from Vashon Island alongside other Japanese-American families and residents. They were escorted off the island by armed guards, taken to a train, and transported to the crowded and unfinished Pinedale Detention Center in California^{3,4}.

Pinedale was a temporary detention facility; after two months the Takatsuka Family was moved to the Tule Lake Concentration Camp in Northern California.^{3,4} It was at Tule Lake where George's older brother, Augie, decided to enlist in the 442nd Infantry Regiment⁵.

George and his family were relocated to Minidoka, a concentration camp in Southern Idaho⁹. While Minidoka had a reputation for being a "good camp" due to high rates of loyalty and enlistment, conditions were still difficult because much of the facility was unfinished⁶. After continuing his High School education in the camp, George Takatsuka also enlisted into the army⁸.

After being interned at Minidoka for 3 years, the Takatsuka Family returned to Vashon Island and worked on a berry ranch until Augie was able to purchase land^{5,9}. During this time, George was waiting to join the Army.⁵ He was later inducted into the Army and served as a Technician (TEC 5)¹⁰.

George K Takatsuka died on November 1, 1999², and was buried in Vashon Cemetery¹⁰. There are no records of George Takatsuka relating to marriage or any children, but he was survived by his siblings, nieces, and nephews¹.

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