

## William Matsumoto

By Kaiya Van Brost and Jonas Wahanik

William Yoshi Matsumoto was born in 1927 on Vashon Island and lived with his parents and siblings<sup>1</sup>. His parents immigrated to Vashon in 1911 where they owned and operated a farm on the Island up until 1942<sup>2</sup>. His father was Bunsaka Matsumoto and his mother was Tokiye Matsumoto<sup>3</sup>. He had six siblings: Frank, Bob, Don, Martha, Grace and James Matsumoto<sup>3</sup>. In 1931, Tokiye married Yoshinaga Usai<sup>4</sup>, following the death of Bunsaka in 1930<sup>5</sup>. William attended school in Vashon into the ninth grade<sup>6</sup>.

On May 16th 1942, along with all the other Japanese families on Vashon, William and his family were forced to leave the island due to the executive order 9066<sup>2</sup>. At first he and his family were sent to the Pinedale Assembly Center in Fresno, California<sup>2</sup>. The Pinedale Assembly Center was only operational from May 7 to July 23, which was only 78 days<sup>7</sup>. They were then sent to Tule Lake relocation center, which was located in Modoc, California. The Tule Lake camp expanded over 4,685 acres including farmland; the actual camp itself was only 1,100 acres. The Tule Lake later became a camp where Japanese Americans who were labeled as disloyal were sent, which was determined from a questionnaire<sup>8</sup>. Since William and his family were determined as loyal, they were sent to Minidoka camp in Idaho, where they would spend their remaining time interned<sup>2</sup>. The actual camp was 33,000 acres of land, but only 990 acres used for housing with the rest being used for agriculture. It had harsh weather conditions, being located in the high desert of Idaho<sup>9</sup>. While interned, he was allowed to work on a farm near the camp named Chase Produce<sup>10</sup> and would later join the army.

William's time interned would come to an end as he joined the army in 1945<sup>10</sup>, a year after his brother James joined<sup>2</sup>. After the war, he returned to Vashon Island along with most of his family, but would not start a family of his own and remained unmarried. He remained on Vashon for the rest of his life where he died in 2005. He is buried in the Vashon Cemetery<sup>1</sup>, where the rest of his family is buried<sup>2</sup>.



# Basketball

## FRESHMAN BASKETBALL

First row: Sam Sakamoto, Eugene Jenn, George Takatsuka. Second row: Willie Matsumoto, John Van House, Mr. Ostrom, Jens Pedersen, Gilbert Bostain.

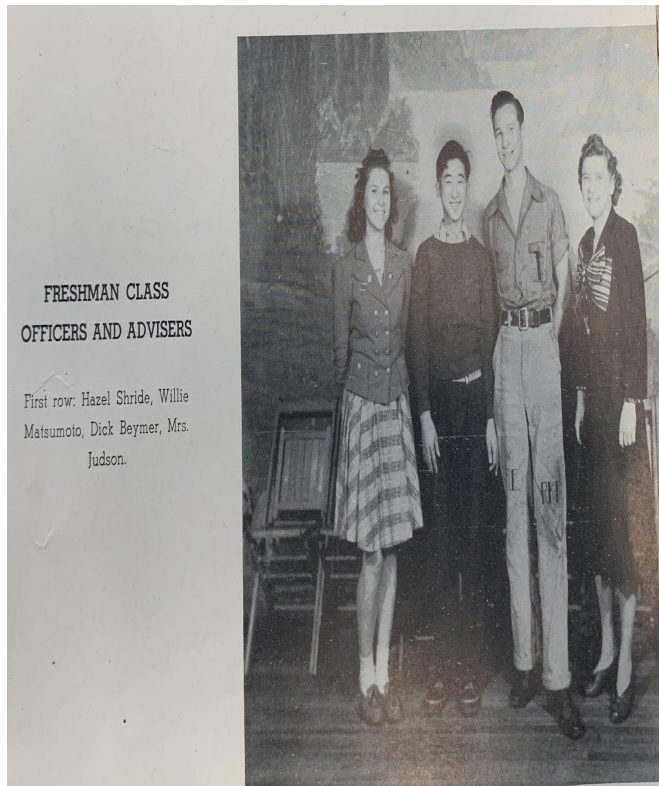




First row: Marjorie Mallum, Dorothy Johnson, Beverly Wick, Marian Fredricks, Beatrice Amundsen, Linda Wax, Gladys Hubbard, Avril Thurston, Kathleen Tingly, Peggy Olson. Second row: Francis Landers, Howard Wheat, Raleigh Courts, Fugi Kunugi, Margery Robinson, Hazel Stride, Mary Ann Erickson, Shirley Wilson, Gerry Collier, Helen Magers, Betty Brammer, Sumi Sakai, Ardis Wilson, Kiyoko Yoshida, Charlie Woo, William Mann. Third row: Dick Beymer, Robert Humula, Jens Pedersen, William Little, Harold Rose, Arnold Hestness, Gilbert Bostain, Edward Poultney, Clinton Harrington. Fourth row: Charles Mason, Mr. McElvain, Elmer Ellison, Norman Sovold, Sam Sakamoto, Gordon Nelson, Eugene Jenn, George Takatsuka. Fifth row: Lawrie Walls, John Van House, Walter Hopkins, Norman Jacobson, Bill Jenn, Willie Matsumoto.

## *Freshman Class*





<sup>1</sup> "Willie Matsumoto (1927-2005) - Find a Grave..." Find a Grave. Accessed February 7, 2022. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/81638056/willie-matsumoto>.

<sup>2</sup> "Japanese Presence Project." Vashon Maury Island Heritage Museum, n.d. Accessed February 7, 2022.

<sup>3</sup> "Willy Matsumoto in the 1930 United States Federal Census." Ancestry Classroom. Accessed February 7, 2022. [https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/112195079:6224?tid=&pid=&queryId=ec8ef164654e6f32bfd37e611569f15b&\\_phsrc=Qgb53&\\_phstart=succ](https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/112195079:6224?tid=&pid=&queryId=ec8ef164654e6f32bfd37e611569f15b&_phsrc=Qgb53&_phstart=succ)essSource.

<sup>4</sup> "Tokiye Matsumoto." Ancestry Classroom. Accessed February 8, 2022. [https://search.ancestryclassroom.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2378&h=2495589&tid=&pid=&queryId=dba8f6987c35065aac4cc40037283c64&usePUB=true&\\_phsrc=Qgb54&\\_phstart=succ](https://search.ancestryclassroom.com/cgi-bin/sse.dll?indiv=1&dbid=2378&h=2495589&tid=&pid=&queryId=dba8f6987c35065aac4cc40037283c64&usePUB=true&_phsrc=Qgb54&_phstart=succ)cessSource.

<sup>5</sup> "Willie Matsumoto in the 1940 United States Federal Census." Ancestry Classroom. Accessed February 8, 2022. [https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/59992129:2442?tid=&pid=&queryId=8ac78f485b690985c7ef30fcdd6f2e15&\\_phsrc=Qgb56&\\_phstart=succ](https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/59992129:2442?tid=&pid=&queryId=8ac78f485b690985c7ef30fcdd6f2e15&_phsrc=Qgb56&_phstart=succ)essSource.

<sup>6</sup> “Bunsaku Matsumoto (1870-1930) .” Find a Grave. Accessed February 8, 2022. <https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/80411504/bunsaku-matsumoto>.

<sup>7</sup> “Pinedale (Detention Facility).” Pinedale (detention facility) | Densho Encyclopedia. Accessed February 8, 2022. [https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Pinedale%20\(detention%20facility\)](https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Pinedale%20(detention%20facility)).

<sup>8</sup> “Tule Lake.” Tule Lake | Densho Encyclopedia. Accessed February 8, 2022. <https://encyclopedia.densho.org/Tule%20Lake>.

<sup>9</sup> “Life at Minidoka.” National Parks Service. U.S. Department of the Interior. Accessed February 8, 2022. <https://www.nps.gov/miin/learn/historyculture/life-at-minidoka.htm>.

<sup>10</sup> “William Y Matsumoto in the U.S., World War II Draft Cards Young Men, 1940-1947.” Ancestry Classroom. Accessed February 8, 2022. [https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/12779372:2238?tid=&pid=&queryId=c88a42ca0c79d30b2ff0b92637386d0f&\\_phsrc=Exw34&\\_phstart=successSource](https://www.ancestryclassroom.com/discoveryui-content/view/12779372:2238?tid=&pid=&queryId=c88a42ca0c79d30b2ff0b92637386d0f&_phsrc=Exw34&_phstart=successSource).

<sup>11</sup> Vashon Island High School, Vashonian (Vashon, WA: 1942), Vashon Maury Island Heritage Museum.