

THE
STREET
THAT
DREAMS
ARE
MADE
OF

EXCERPTS
NUMBER 1

Editors note:

The following pages* are excepted from the book, *The Street That Dreams Are Made Of*.

The book commemorated the 100th anniversary of Aldersgate United Methodist Church in Palo Alto, CA, not far from Stanford University and was released in 2009. The church began in 1909.

Because it was written from a church centric perspective, I often refer to ‘our church,’ etc, as if you, the reader, are from Aldersgate.

The book began as the usual laundry list of names, dates and places but quickly morphed into much more. It turned out the history of AUMC was the history of the Palo Alto Japanese, Methodist and to some degree, Buddhist.

The church could not be separated from the neighborhood, hence the book is filled with feature stories and photographs concerning not just the beginnings of the Palo Alto Methodist Church, but how local businesses, friendships and death connected everyone together. Just one block from the church, old man Kusaka (page numbered 1) sold tofu to anyone who would buy it...for 10 cents. When Nisei youth Soyo Takahashi or Rose Kimura (pages numbered 3-5) played with friends, it didn’t matter what religion you were. In order to impress a bride back in Japan, men would do just about anything (pages numbered 15-16). Then there was tuberculosis (page numbered 18).

So this 25 page excerpt has very little to do with the church. Instead, it establishes the neighborhood that contributed to the need for a church. I thought that would be of greater general public interest.

USAGE: If you wish to use the photos or text from this book, I’d appreciate it if you contacted me first. I have high resolution versions of most of the photos that I may allow you access to, depending on your project. This PDF is designed to not allow editing.

Thanks for taking a look.

Brad Shirakawa • September 2015
Author

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[email: bradaumc@yahoo.com](mailto:bradaumc@yahoo.com)
(if you email me, put “Aldersgate history book” in the subject line)

**the first 25 pages of the book are here, although the first five are not numbered. They are meant to be seen as double page spreads...better to see this PDF on a large computer screen. These pages constitute part of chapter one in the book. The hardbound book is 11x13” at 194 pages long and was originally published at Blurbs.com.*

THE
STREET
THAT
DREAMS
ARE
MADE
OF

THE 100TH
ANNIVERSARY
OF
ALDERSGATE
UNITED
METHODIST
CHURCH



4243 MANUELA AVENUE, PALO ALTO, CA. 94306

1909

BUILDING BRIDGES ACROSS TIME, GENERATIONS AND CULTURES



PALO ALTO, CA

2009

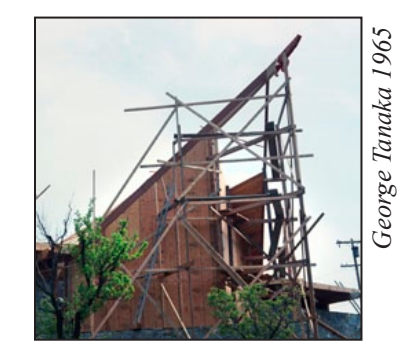
CHAPTER 1:
THE STREET THAT DREAMS ARE MADE OF

CHAPTER 2:
THE CRYSTAL BALL OF HISTORY

CHAPTER 3:
PAGE MILL

CHAPTER 4:
ALDRSGATE

CHAPTER 5:
THE MODERN CHURCH



George Tanaka 1965

PHOTOGRAPHY • WORDS • DESIGN
BRAD SHIRAKAWA

• HISTORIC PHOTOGRAPHY BY GEORGE TANAKA • ADDITIONAL RESEARCH BY PAM HASHIMOTO
• COPY EDITING BY MACK LUNDSTROM

LIFE TIMES REPRINT SECTION COPY EDITING ASSISTANCE BY BRYNN SAITO

MINISTERS & LOCATIONS

Nov. 1909
Otoye So
Sept. 5, 1910
Tokuji Komuro
Sept. 12, 1916
Shigeo Fujii
Sept. 8, 1917
Kaminosuke Tanaka

1919
Shigeo Fujii
Sept. 10, 1922
Ernest S. Fujinaga
Sept. 6, 1925
Shigeji Sato & Stuart Nakano
Sept. 11, 1928
J. Tantesuga Fukada, then Rev. Yotsuhashi & Juhei Kono

Sept. 9, 1929
Satsujo Kotsuji
June 8, 1931
Taro Goto

June 6, 1932
Juhei Kono
June 11, 1933
Sozaburo Watanabe
June 10, 1934
Yasuharu Osuga
July 9, 1939
Yasuharu Osuga, John Kitasako assists

Shigeji Sato

1909 • 827 Ramona St. - the Okazawas' University Hotel
1910 • We enter the Methodist Conference & the Pacific Japanese Mission Conf.
1912 • 733 Ramona St. - the Sato Boarding House, then to 435 Bryant St.
1915 • 637-647 Emerson St. - \$12.50 a month for a rented house

Rev. Fujinaga shows movies as a part of fund raising efforts
1925 • 260 Homer Ave. – Rev. Sato, a licensed local preacher dies in 1928 and is buried at Alta Mesa Cemetery

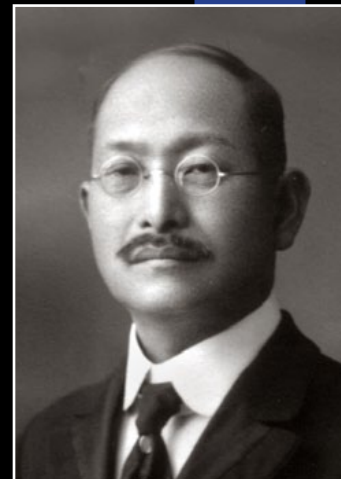
1930 • 472 Sheridan Ave., the Nichi Bei Kyokai (Japanese American Society Building) About 30 adults members & 25 children*

1935 • Old cottage at 306 Page Mill Rd.
1939 • 35 members in Epworth League, 35 Sunday School children

** Historian Hideo Furukawa states we moved to 472 Sheridan in 1929, but photographs and city directories locate us at 260 Homer Ave. until 1930.*



Taro Goto



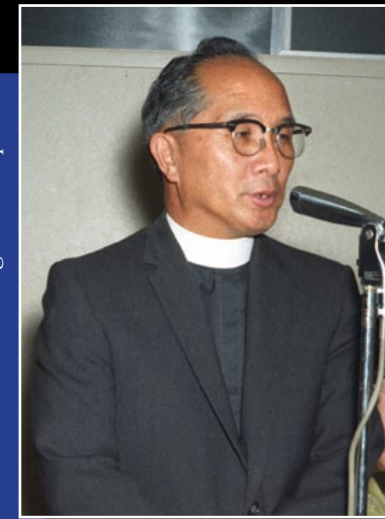
Shigeo Fujii

Yasuharu Osuga and family



Courtesy Dr. Stephen Yale • PSR

George Tanaka photo



Masaji Goto



Sadao Masuko

Courtesy Peter Sano



James V. Martin

1940 • Page Mill Church dedicated, about 60 adult members

1945 • Joined by Mtn View Japanese (see page 33)
1952 • about 100 adult members

1964 • Merged with United Methodists
1965 • Aldersgate United Methodist
1975 • 303 members

2009 • About 250 members



Alpha Takagi

June 8, 1941
Yasuharu Osuga & Masaji Goto
May 1942
Internment Camps
July 4, 1945
Y. Osuga & James V. Martin & K. Nagai
June 30, 1952
Sadao Masuko & James V. Martin
June 27, 1955
Tetsuo Saito
June 24, 1956
Thomas Nakagawa
June 28, 1959
Masaji Goto
July 5, 1970
Alpha Takagi
July 8, 1984
John Fujimori
July 1986
Shiro Kazato
July 1990
Mariellen Sawada Yoshino
July 1996 to June 2000
Gail Nakamura Messner
October 2000 to June 2001
Bill Marx
July 2001
Roger Morimoto



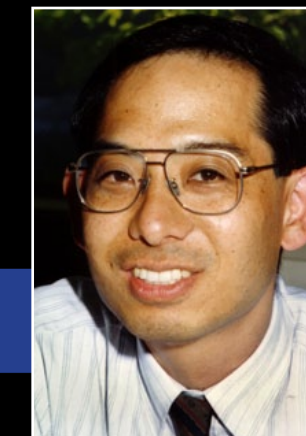
Gail Nakamura Messner



Mariellen Sawada Yoshino



Roger Morimoto



John Fujimori



Shiro Kazato

Courtesy Dr. Stephen Yale • PSR

Gordon Honda photo

SOYO OKAZAWA (TAKAHASHI, AT LEFT)
AND HER YOUNGER SISTER SADAOKO
OKAZAWA POSE IN THE RAMONA
STREET NEIGHBORHOOD IN 1934

Brad Shirakawa photo



Soyo Takahashi in 2008

Some Issei came to America to earn their fortunes and then return home, but not Genshichi Okazawa. “He liked America better than Japan,” said daughter Soyo Takahashi. At the time, there were no laws that kept Japanese from owning property, so he bought a house rather than rent. “When he came to America (in 1904), he said, ‘This is my place.’”

The neighborhood that made up Ramona Street in the early century was an unusual place to live. This community of Japanese and other immigrants insulated itself from the outside world, although racism certainly existed.

It was a good place for Issei, and in particular, their Nisei offspring to make their lives seem normal. It didn’t hurt that between 1910 and 1920, Japanese were the dominant minority in Palo Alto.¹

“There were enough Japanese,” said Soyo, who was born on January 19, 1917. “So every night we would get Kiyo and Riyo (Sato), the Sakakiharas* and Saitos.

We would play cops and robbers, hide and go seek. There used to be a gravel and sand hill, and we used to go there and climb the sand and jump. We never associated with American children.”

“They led a very nice, happy life,” Soyo said, looking back at her parents. “We were all healthy. We had a house; we didn’t have to worry about rent. Sunday’s my father always had something planned for us. We took a lot of friends, who didn’t have a car, to picnics. We’d go to Santa Cruz, Monterey.”

Saturdays at the hotel were work days for Soyo. “We did laundry. Mother and I boiled our sheets at 7 a.m. We scrubbed them by hand. By 1 p.m. the sheets were dry; I would iron them.”

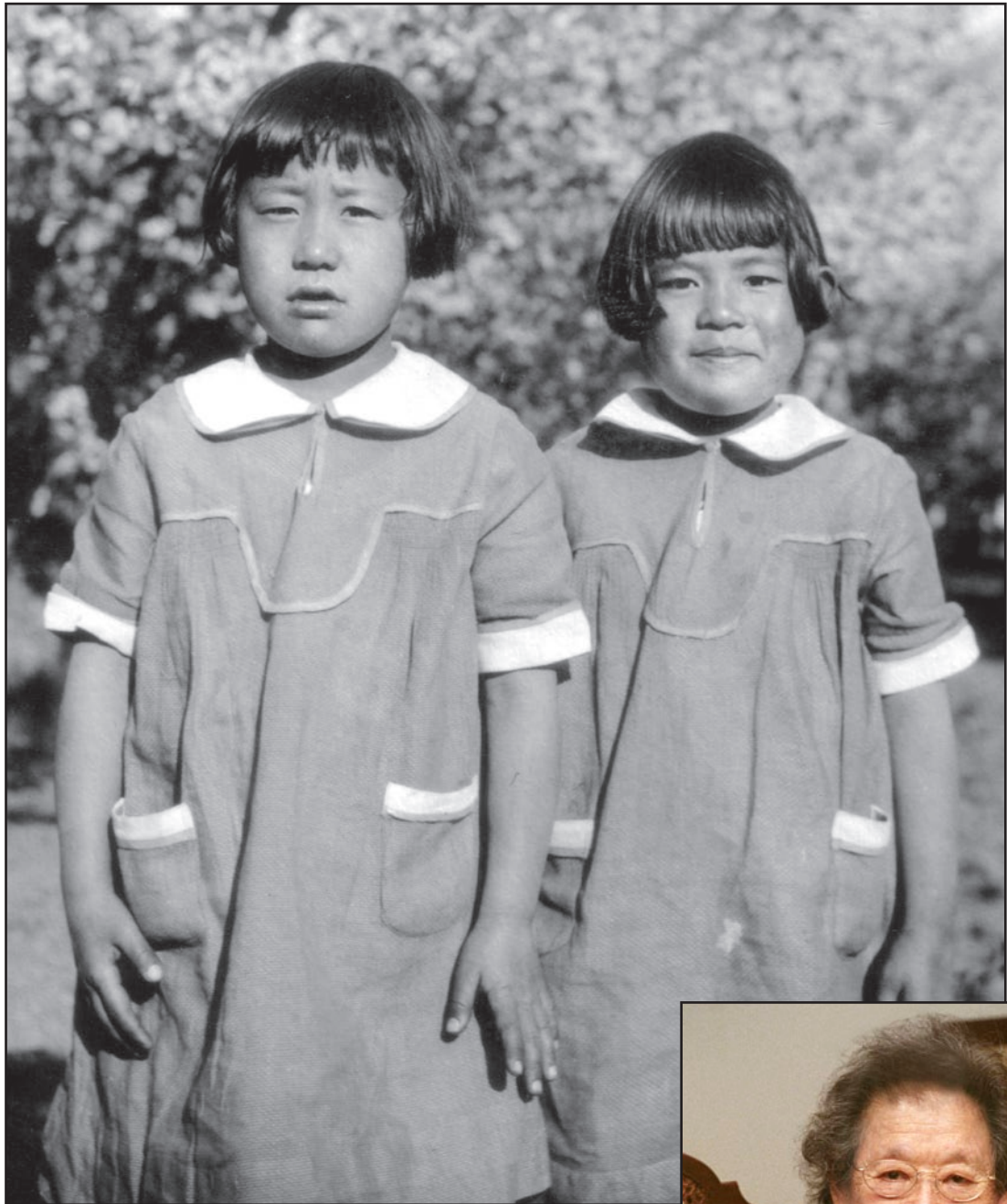
Like most youngsters, Soyo imagined what kind of life she might have someday. “I wanted to be a banker. Whenever we’d play house, I was the banker.”

**There has been plenty of debate over the correct spelling of the name Sakakihara. It finally ended when a signature in Hiroshi Sakakihara’s handwriting was found, courtesy of Taro Yamamura.*

1: FROM “PALO ALTO: A CENTENNIAL HISTORY”
BY WARD WINSLOW.

Soyo (taller) and Sada collect Warabi ferns to eat, a tradition Page Mill minister Masaji Goto would continue decades later. Photos courtesy Soyo Takahashi





Above: Rose Kimura (at right) and her sister Lily. Photo courtesy of Rose Kimura



Rose Kimura in 2008

Rose Kimura has memories similar to Soyo's of growing up on Ramona. "We had nothing to do," she said. "We'd go through a board in the fence to go looking around for something to play with. We went through a trash bag; there was a cup with a broken handle. That was a treasure. We didn't have toys in those days."

"There was no discrimination that we were aware of, we kept to ourselves," Rose said. Perhaps life was simpler for the young Nisei children growing up on Ramona compared to their Issei parents, who certainly dealt with life's daily issues, including a lack of English skills.

"She was 20 when she came to America," Rose said, speaking of her mother, Umeko. "Never heard English in her life." Umeko would go to local stores to buy goods, but was unable to communicate with the Caucasian proprietors. "She would hold out her hand and the man would take the money. They would count it out for her."

Rose's father, Tsunesaburo, came to the states in 1899 and lived at various locations on Ramona, Forest, and then Bryant before settling at 850 Ramona. "He decided Palo Alto was the best place to live," recalls Rose.

Rose's younger brother Robert recalled the Arrouzets, a French family who lived across the street and ran the Exclusive French Laundry on the corner of High Street and Homer. As a grammar school kid, he would drop in at the laundry/house with good friend Johnny Salabert, and they both learned one of life's lessons early.

"That's where I learned to drink wine as a kid, because after school, they would leave a half of glass of wine and sourdough bread," he said with a grin. "That was our brunch."

Decades later, Rose's brother Masaru would become the landscape architect for Aldersgate church when it was built in 1965.



Umeko Kimura

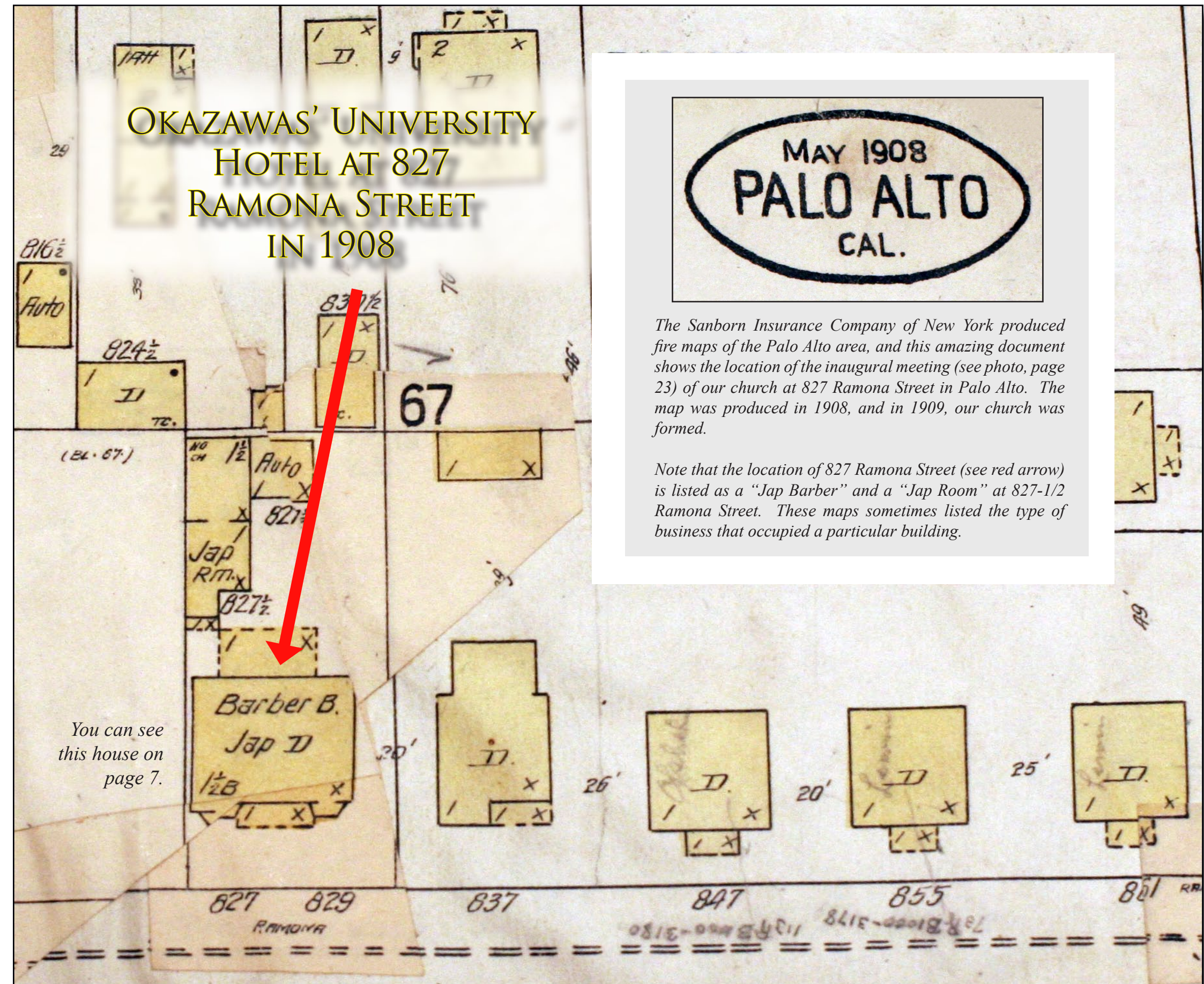


Tsunesaburo Kimura*

**According to Rose, her father, Tsunesaburo, rarely photographed well, hence his rather dour appearance here.*

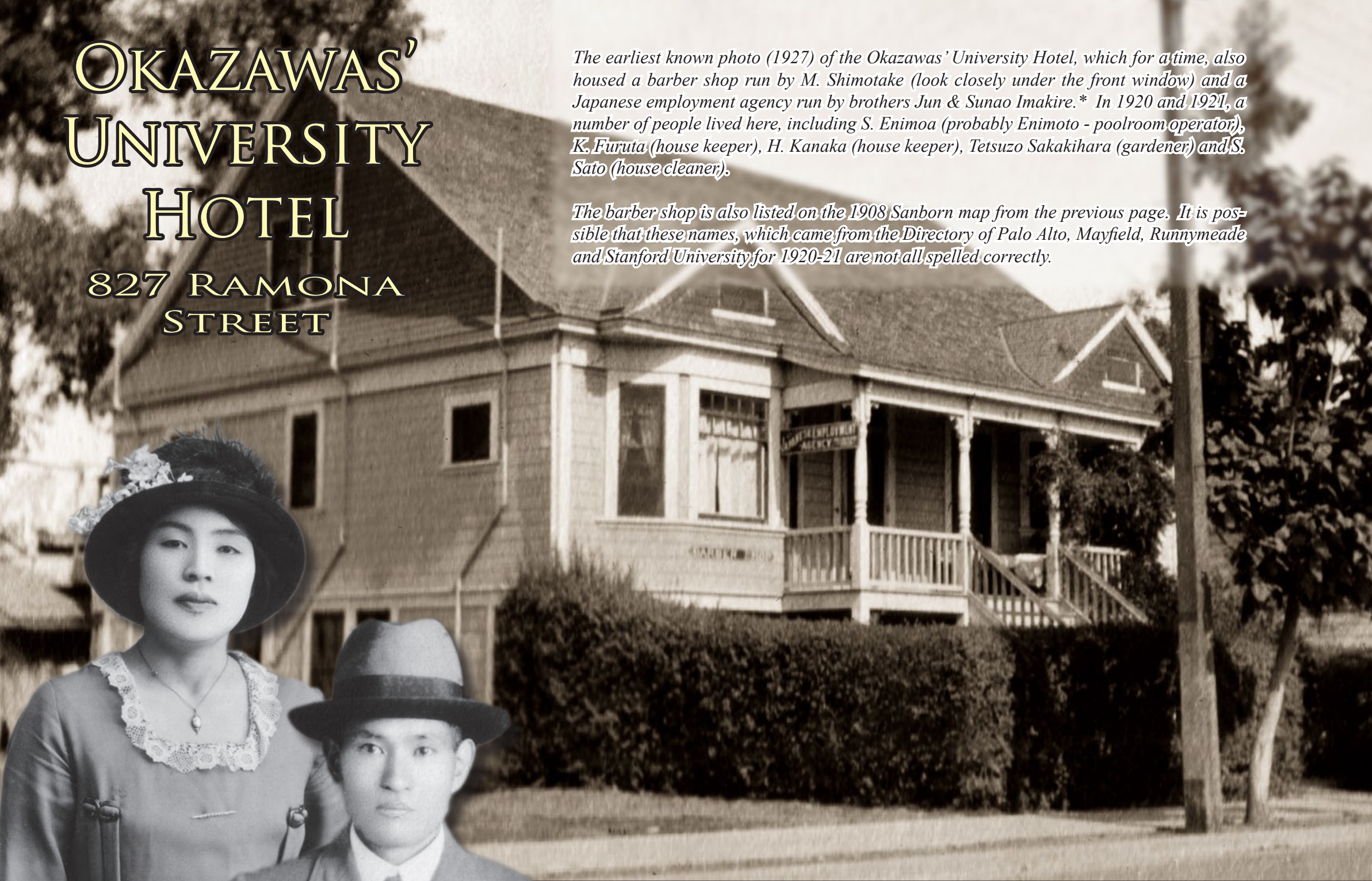


Robert Kimura 2009



OKAZAWAS' UNIVERSITY HOTEL

827 RAMONA
STREET



The earliest known photo (1927) of the Okazawas' University Hotel, which for a time, also housed a barber shop run by M. Shimotake (look closely under the front window) and a Japanese employment agency run by brothers Jun & Sunao Imakire.* In 1920 and 1921, a number of people lived here, including S. Enimoo (probably Enimoto - poolroom operator), K. Furuta (house keeper), H. Kanaka (house keeper), Tetsuzo Sakakihara (gardener) and S. Sato (house cleaner).

The barber shop is also listed on the 1908 Sanborn map from the previous page. It is possible that these names, which came from the Directory of Palo Alto, Mayfield, Runnymede and Stanford University for 1920-21 are not all spelled correctly.

Left: Riye Okazawa, who ran the University Hotel with her husband, Genshichi.

Right: This item from a Palo Alto newspaper makes you wonder just why Jun Imakire's poolroom license was suspended.

*Depending on which document you were looking at, Imakire is spelled as Imakira, and Imakiri. The correct spelling of Imakire was obtained from living relatives.

The license of J. Imakira, a Japanese conducting a poolroom at 827 Ramona street, which was temporarily suspended by Police Chief Noble on Tuesday, was definitely suspended by the Board of Safety this afternoon for the balance of the quarter ending September 30th.

Palo Alto Daily Times • August 15, 1918



The neighborhood was becoming a good place to live and work. Local banks were paying four percent on savings accounts, and a whole box of Pippin apples cost 75 cents. Well known Band leader John Phillip Souza was coming to town to play at Assembly Hall on University Avenue in November of 1909, the same month and year our church was formed.

You could also attend a Japanese language school, held at the home of the Saitos on Ramona Street. Mr. and Mrs. Saito were teaching there, and later, a Mr. Adachi would take over. Hideo Furukawa, Tom Saito, Soyo Okazawa (Takahashi) and Fred Yamamoto all attended.

The one thing the neighborhood didn't have was a Japanese church. There were other churches nearby, including Congregational, Baptist, Episcopal and Catholic.

"I'm sure they needed a church," Soyo Takahashi reasoned. "We already had a church going before the Buddhists. We had no other social life. The church was everything."

But why did our church begin at the Okazawas' and not elsewhere? Housing a barbershop, employment agency and poolroom, their hotel may have been the center of activity in the neighborhood. It was also a fairly large structure compared to other houses nearby.

Perhaps most important, one of our 13 original founders, Iwajiro Inoui (seen on page 23), lived at the Okazawas' in 1910 and probably in 1909 as well. He may have suggested to the group that his place was as good as any to meet.

Left: Sporting a white dress shirt and bow tie is Genshichi Okazawa. His work crew is building another room in their backyard as an addition to his hotel. This is likely the 827-1/2 Ramona Street address listed on the Sanborn map seen on page 6.

There were two Japanese grocery stores on Ramona Street; the Satos' at 733 and the Yamamuras' at 714. It's easy to imagine that they were a place for Issei to occasionally gather while shopping for a taste of home. At some point both families would attend our church.



Taiichi Yamamura stayed at home and worked at his grocery store. His wife, Sode, cleaned rooms in the Stanford University dormitories, according to daughter Mitsuko Nara, 92. We know little of the store itself, as both Taiichi and Sode returned to Japan before the war.

Taiichi and Sode's grandsons Bob, David and Nick Yamamura attended Aldersgate in the late 1970s. Decades before he would become our current minister, Roger Morimoto grew up with Bob in kindergarten and roomed with him while they both attended the University of California at Berkeley.

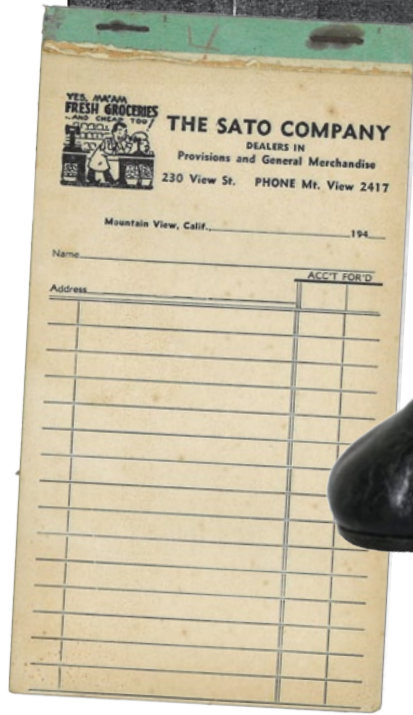
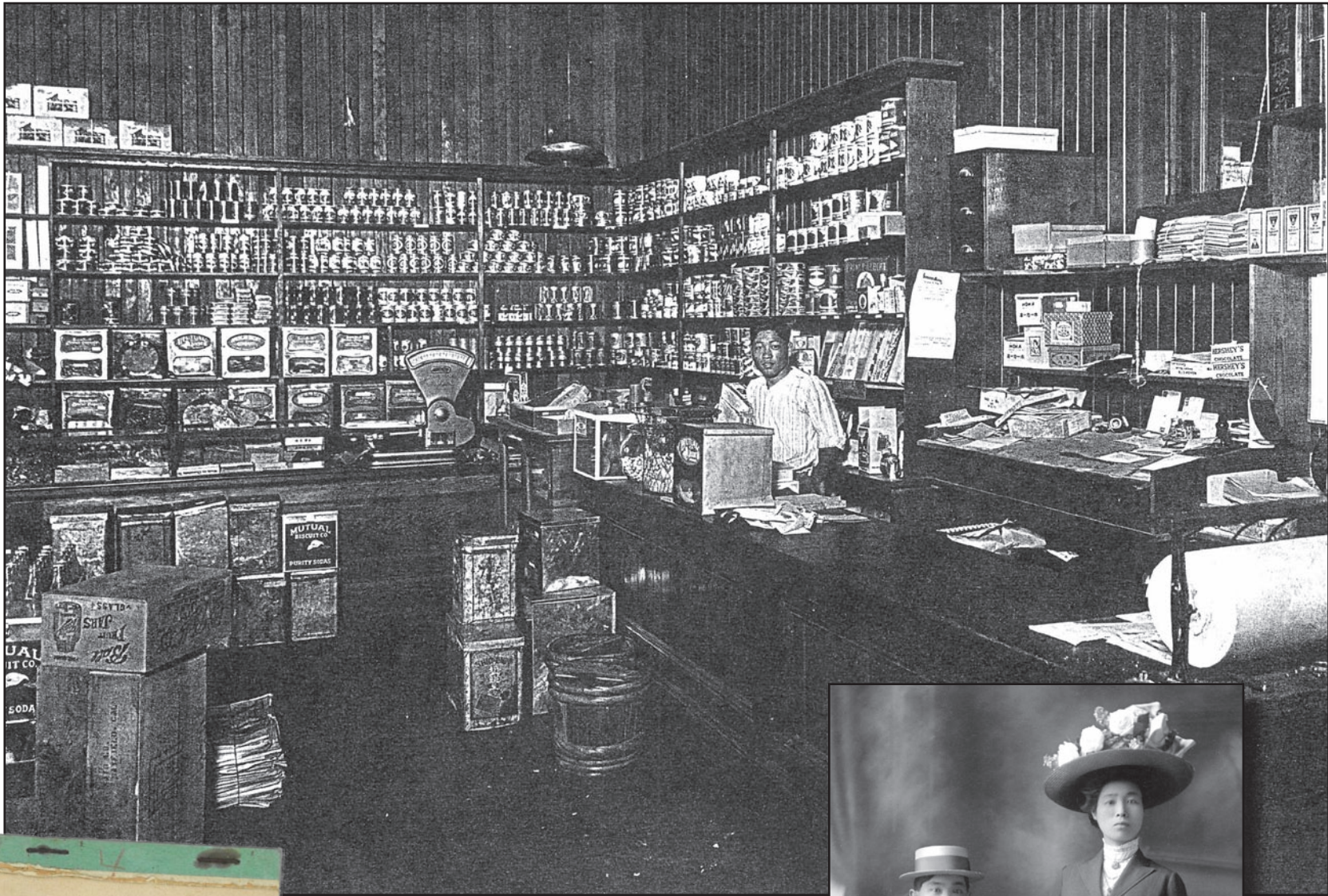
Taiichi was also one of the founding members of the Palo Alto Buddhist Temple in 1914, but he rarely, if ever attended there, according to his son, Taro. Taro first attended a later version of our church, Page Mill, with his mother, Sode.

Across the street, and inside Kihachi and Riki Satos' grocery store you could find shoyu, pickled and canned goods, rice, unagi, shoes and American items like Hershey's chocolate.

Daughters Riyo and Kiyo Sato (who can both be seen in the 1934 Epworth photo on page 11) recalled that their mother, Riki, was the heart and soul of their store. She encouraged her husband to fix their building so it could also serve as a boarding house (see photo next page). Riki worked extremely hard to cook, clean and

continued on the next page

Kisaku Sato, Kihachi and Riki's son, works at the 733 Ramona Street store circa 1919. Photo courtesy Pam Hashimoto.



A receipt book from the Mountain View Sato grocery store and these tasseled baby's shoes are the only items that still remain from the Sato's three stores. Courtesy Marilyn Murata (Sato)



Kihachi and Riki Sato Photo courtesy of Pam Hashimoto



For a time, the Satos' place housed the Japanese Employment Agency (occupied earlier in the Okazawas' Hotel) and also a boarding house, as witnessed by the prominently posted 'Sato Ryokwan' sign. Unseen to the left would be the Sato residence, at 727 Ramona, which was set back from the street perhaps 100 feet. Photo courtesy of J. Steve Sato, who is Kihachi and Riki's grandson.

SATO CO., 733 Ramona, telephone 1312; branch at Mayfield.*

do the laundry there. Unfortunately, she was just 41 when she died in 1929 of cancer. Riyo was 15 and Kiyo was 14.

That left the store to be run by the two daughters and their brother Jack. When it proved to be too much for them, the store closed. The Satos also owned grocery stores in Mayfield and Mountain View.

Kihachi married again, this time to Yumi Yamamoto. They had a son, Fred, who worked for a time at the grocery store, and later joined the 442. Fred's story can be seen on page 53.

Kihachi died at Heart Mountain Internment Camp in 1943. His second wife, Yumi, died in San Jose in 1978.

The neighborhood provided other delights, including a place to buy tofu. You could go around back of the Kusakas at 728 Ramona, where a barn-like structure was their place of business. Kanichi and Chiyona probably sold their product for 10 cents.

The Kusakas later sold out to the Takeuchi family, who would take over the tofu business. The Kusakas lived in the Okazawas' hotel for a time and would later move to Colorado.

"It wasn't even a store. It was a little shack that had a huge iron kettle," Soyo Takahashi said. "Mr. Takeuchi used to deliver the tofu to all the country farmers. In those days, no one locked the doors, he just walked in and left it."

*This telephone and address listing is from the 1920 Polk city directory.



1934 CHURCH EPWORTH LEAGUE

Just how important was the Ramona Street neighborhood to the development of our church? Compare this 1934 Epworth League photo above to the casual photos (next two pages) from the Ramona neighborhood. Most of the Nisei “kids on the block” were members of the church youth group.

The league’s purpose was to promote gatherings of the church youth and its name comes from John Wesley’s birthplace in Epworth, Lincolnshire, England.

It was in 1926 that the Palo Alto Epworth League had its unofficial beginnings, with Clara Wheeler at the

helm of 12 Japanese youth. The league formalized in 1929 and had 36 members.

As the Nisei grew older, they found jobs. Masaki Sakakihara worked a summer in a fish cannery in Alaska. Furukawa brothers Hideo and Toshio labored on farms and Fred Yamamoto spent time at the Koda Rice Farm in Dos Palos. Kiyo Sato and Emily Kiya worked as “schoolgirl” cooks and domestics for Caucasian families.

Kiyo also worked in a fruit cannery as did Fred Yamamoto’s sister, Mitsuye. According to Kiyo’s daughter,

Pam Hashimoto, Kiyo once said that “They could never eat fruit cocktail because they knew it was in it.”

“Back in those days, it was 25 cents an hour,” Rose Kimura said, referring to baby-sitting. Rose would sometimes accompany her mother or father as they went to work, and help them clean or baby sit. Her sister, Lily, spent a summer in Lake Tahoe baby-sitting for a family.

Sometime after the Epworth League photo was taken, Billy Sasagawa (see page 36) was herding cattle in Montana, Utah, and Wyoming.



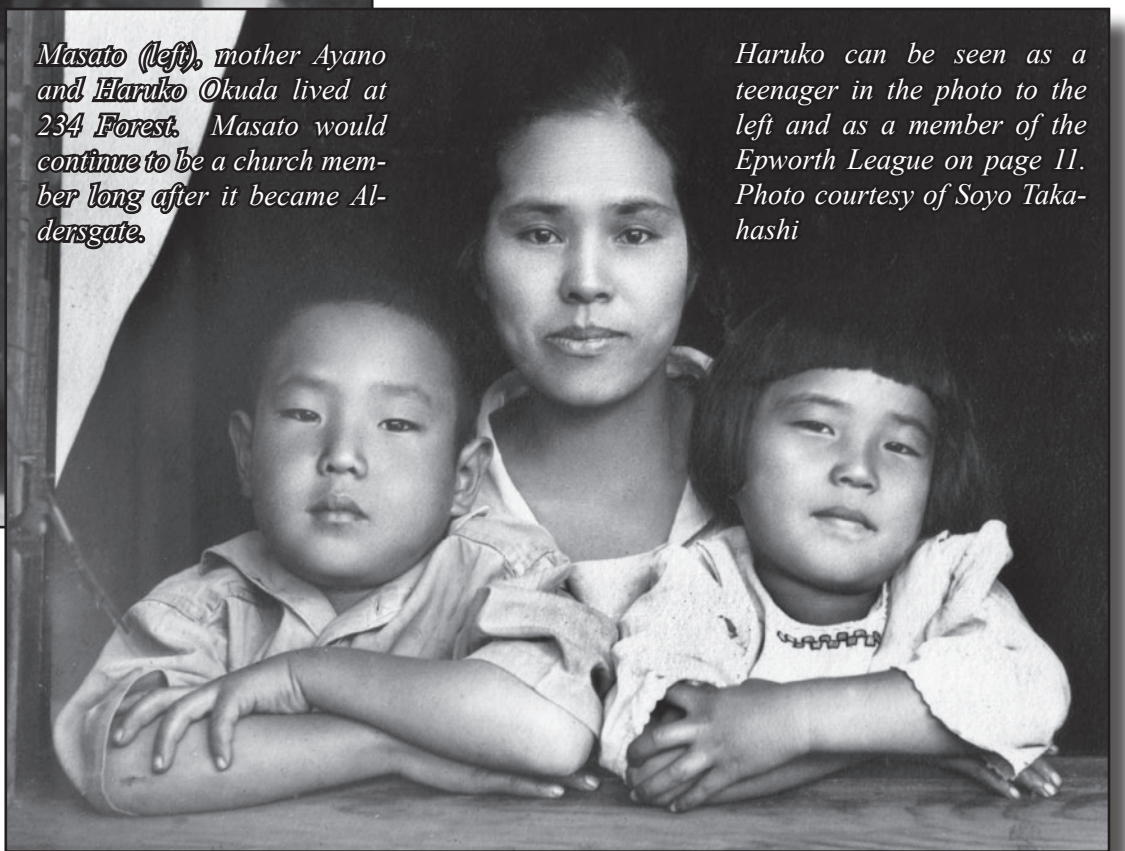
Back row from left: Haruko Okuda, Riyo Sato, Grace Yoshida and Sada Okazawa.
Front row from left: Tanaka Kanibara, Emily Kiya and unidentified.
Photo courtesy of Pam Hashimoto 1938

Below: The connections from Ramona Street even reached Aldersgate, as seen in this 1974 photo. Front row left: Sada Tawara, Kiyo Sasagawa, Riye Okazawa and Kiyo Sato. Kiyo married Shig Hashimoto (Fred’s father) who is at back left. Rev. Alpha Takagi is standing next to him. Photo courtesy of Pam Hashimoto



Masato (left), mother Ayano and **Haruko Okuda** lived at 234 Forest. Masato would continue to be a church member long after it became Aldersgate.

Haruko can be seen as a teenager in the photo to the left and as a member of the Epworth League on page 11. Photo courtesy of Soyo Takahashi



GROWING UP IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD

JACK & THE GANG



*Jack Sato's Ramona Street neighborhood friends all attended the early version of our church and Page Mill, too.
You can see them all in the Epworth League photo on the page 11.*

Pictured are Tom Saito (far left), Masaki Sakakihara, Jack Sato (sticking out his tongue), Hideo Furukawa, Tosh Furukawa and Hiroshi Saito.

Photo courtesy of Marilyn Murata

MOCHITSUKI ON RAMONA STREET



In this rare photo, Umeko Kimura and an unidentified man pound rice for Mochitsuki on Ramona Street. Umeko would remain a member of the church as it progressed from Ramona Street, to Page Mill, and eventually to Aldersgate. She died at age 78 in 1977.

Photo courtesy of Rose Kimura

Life for the Issei was certainly difficult, but they also knew how to enjoy themselves, as witnessed by this extraordinary image of Hideo Kaneko, Naoharu Aihara and Ushitaro Takasuka posing in front of “old” Mr. Seikichi Kimura’s home at 837 Ramona, virtually next door to the Okazawas’ University Hotel, circa 1912-1915.

• KANEKO •

How Hideo Kaneko obtained this Indian Motorcycle is a mystery, but it was not out of character for one of the original 13 founding members of our church. Soyo Takahashi recalled that he was the first to buy a Ford Model T car on the block, so why not a motorcycle, too? Used Indian motorcycles were available in Palo Alto for \$60 around this time. Another neighborhood man also owned an Indian and used to give Soyo rides in the sidecar when she was young.

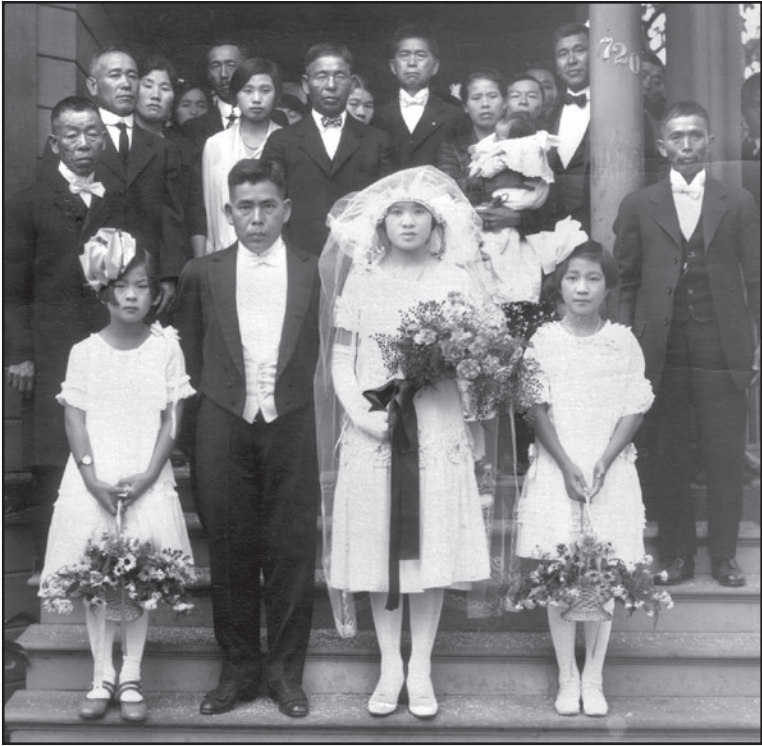
Hideo lived at the Okazawas’ University Hotel before moving next door (After the Kimuras had returned to Japan). There is some evidence that he worked for Leland Stanford Junior University President David Starr Jordan, but it is unclear when. The families must have been close, for when the Kanekos went to Tanforan during World War II, Mrs. Jordan would deliver the Sunday newspaper to them every weekend.

Hideo came to Palo Alto in 1904 because he wanted to be near a university town, perhaps because he was not that well-educated. He was just 16 years old. A brother died of the 1918 “Spanish flu” pandemic in Colorado. Hideo had no other relatives in the United States until he married Misao Yamakoshi in 1926, a ceremony held on Ramona Street. Many local Issei and Nisei attended the wedding, including next-door neighbor and flower girl Soyo Okazawa (now Takahashi), seen below.

“He treated me like a baby sister,” Soyo recalled of Hideo. “He used to take me (with him) when he was cleaning house.” He also worked for the Peninsula Creamery and a local bookstore.

Hideo Kaneko marries Misao Yamakoshi at 720 Ramona Street, (across the street from the Sato Grocery Store) on August 29, 1926.

Flower girls are Shizuko Takeuchi at left and Soyo Okazawa at right.



Kaneko (far left), Aihara and Takasuka pose on Ramona Street. Photo courtesy of Hideo Kaneko’s daughters, Miyo Nakanishi and Marion Dumont.

In an unusual twist, he would also become one of the founders of the Palo Alto Buddhist Church, which began on Emerson Street near Homer on June 7, 1914. Like us, the Buddhists moved from house to house, including a stint at the Satos’ at either 727 or 733 Ramona. Although he would remain Buddhist, Hideo was important to the founding of both churches.

• AIHARA •

How about the outrageous clothing they are all wearing? We know that Naoharu Aihara’s outfit was not store-bought, since he made it himself! He was a tailor of some renown in Palo Alto, with at least five seamstresses in his employ, including Soyo’s mother, Riye Okazawa. High school educated, Riye did the drafting and designing of the horse-riding outfits for Naoharu, Soyo remembered. He was not a member of our church, however.

A very wealthy man, he specialized in horse-riding clothing for well-to-do Caucasian families in Atherton who owned horse stables, according to Soyo. His shop was at 123 University Avenue near the Alma intersection circle.

He was also descended from a family of Tokyo Imperial gardeners and was the designer of Hakone Gardens in Saratoga, Calif. About the time this photo was taken, he brought back Japanese Maples, Hinoki Cypress and Black Pines from Japan, according to the Hakone Gardens website. He died in 1940.

• TAKASUKA •



Morie Takasuka 1982

Ushitaro Takasuka may have befriended Naoharu Aihara as he was also a gardener to the local rich. Little is known of him as he was just 42 when he died in 1932, leaving his wife, Morie, to care for their son, Kazuo. “She had a rough time because Ushitaro died so early,” said grandson Brad Takasuka.

Morie became a caretaker and an excellent seamstress for wealthy families in Atherton, to the point where she was more of a friend than worker. She attended Aldersgate until she died at age 102 in 2005.

• WHY? •

The reason for the photo? It’s shot in front of “old” Mr. Kimura’s place, who was a baishaku-nin (He arranged marriages. He was unrelated to Tsunesaburo Kimura, who lived across the street) Was this photo sent back to Japan, to impress young women looking for an American life that they could not have imagined? Is that how Hideo Kaneko caught the eye of Misao Yamakoshi? We’ll never know.

HARSH REALITIES

The Chinese population dwindled around the turn of the century, and Japanese immigrants filled the demand for cheap labor. From a mere 400 Japanese in California in 1887, their numbers exploded to over 41,000 by 1910. So it's no surprise that the Ramona Street neighborhood was dominated by Japanese. Unlike the Chinese, they could own land, at least for a while.

In 1900, anti-Japanese meetings were held in San Francisco and the San Francisco Chronicle wrote editorials against the Japanese in 1905.¹

In January 1920, records indicated that more than 10 percent of all births in Santa Clara County were Japanese, mostly to mothers under the age of 20, or from large families, according to the Daily Palo Alto Times.

The California Alien Land Law of 1913 prohibited "aliens ineligible for citizenship" (in other words, all Asian immigrants) from owning land or property, but permitted three-year leases. It affected the Chinese, Indian, Japanese and Korean immigrant farmers in California. It wasn't until 1952 that the Supreme Court of California struck it down.²

The memories of Soyo Takahashi and Rose Kimura paint a particular picture of the Ramona Street neighborhood that is probably filtered through the eyes of the younger generation of Nisei. Their Issei parents lived life a little differently than their children knew.

Palo Alto, June 7, 1909

Dear Sir:

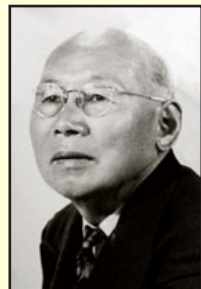
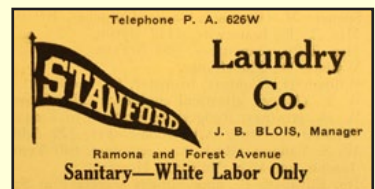
A mass meeting will be held this Thursday, June 10th, in Ostrander Hall, University Ave., at 8 o'clock p.m.

In behalf of the Peninsula Anti-Japanese Laundry League, we have the honor to cordially invite and earnestly request your presence on that occasion. Eminent gentlemen and close students of the grave and serious problem of Asiatic immigration will address us at this gathering, and we trust that you will avail yourself of this rare opportunity by being present.

Respectfully yours,
 Frank Miller, President.
 By M.J. Fairfield, Sec'y.

Speakers,
 Walter Macarthur,
 Editor Coast Seamen's Journal.
 G.B. Benham,
 Atty-at-Law.
 Hon. Marshall Black, ←
 State Senator.

Left: It may seem silly now, but it is apparent from these articles that Japanese laundries were taking business from Caucasian establishments and some people were none to happy about it, including State Sen. Marshall Black (see red arrow), who had been a Notary Public in Palo Alto. In 1920 he would propose a constitutional amendment that would deny citizenship to the Japanese.



Josaburo Okado

Josaburo Okado opened the Palo Alto laundry on Emerson near Forest in 1909. His competition from the nearby Stanford Laundry Company (above) advertised themselves as "Sanitary-White Labor

Only" in this advertisement from the Polk City Directory of Palo Alto. Years later, the Stanford Laundry would be purchased by the Nakamuras.

Left: "Am I Acting Fair" may be poorly worded, but the sentiment is clear.

Newspaper articles, notices and Polk City Directories courtesy of the Palo Alto Historical Association.

**JAPANESE SWELL
 REGISTRATION OF
 PALO ALTO ALIENS**

7/15/21

Although slow to commence their registration under the new State alien poll tax law, the Japanese of this community are now registering at the City Hall in large numbers. Out of a total of 208 alien registrants to date, 150 were Japanese. The Japanese make their visits to the City Hall in large groups, accompanied by the secretary of their local association. It is estimated that there are about 400 in the territory from Atherton to below Mayfield to be registered.

1: FROM "PASSING FARMS, ENDURING VALUES: CALIFORNIA'S SANTA CLARA VALLEY" BY YVONNE JACOBSON.

2: COURTESY WIKIPEDIA

Patience
AM I ACTING FAIR
 4/16/09

Toward my fellow men and women when I patronize a Japanese Laundry in preference to the White Race from whom I earn a livelihood?

Should the Japanese invade the industrial field that I depend upon as a means of securing subsistence; what would I think of the white person, who through his or her patronage, assisted the Asiatic in making harder my lot and reducing me and my family to privation?

Is it not suicidal policy to encourage for the sake of saving a few cents per week, Oriental competition that no Caucasian can meet unless he relinquishes those standards of civilization that are the white man's inheritance upon the white man's soil?

Ask yourself this question! From what race do I depend upon to earn my daily bread—White or Jap? Then how can you patronize the Mongolian while men and women of your own blood are walking the streets in idleness?

**ANTI-JAP LAUNDRY LEAGUE,
 483 Guerrero Street, S. F.**

TUBERCULOSIS

Ramona Street may have been somewhat insulated from racism, but it was not free of the diseases that killed Americans at the time, including tuberculosis and influenza. Toichi and Chiyo Hirano ran a boarding house at 834 Ramona, across the street from the Okazawas'. Their daughter Irene died of the disease when she was 4 or 5 years old. Seen here is their second daughter, Ethel, who died of the same disease on December 29, 1944, in Santa Clara.

In January 1920, there were 16 cases of influenza in Palo Alto, five of which were from one Japanese family, according to the Daily Palo Alto Times.

Before World War II, Issei and Nisei living in California were often not accepted at hospitals due to discrimination. They died of tuberculosis, influenza and other diseases at higher rates than the general public. Tuberculosis ran rampant in Japan in the 1800s and today continues to be contracted at much higher rates in Japan than in America.



Posing on Ramona Street are Chiyo Hirano (at left) and her daughter, Ethel, before she contracted the disease.

Photo courtesy of Rose Kimura.



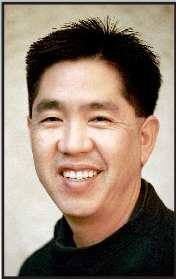
Ethel Hirano rests at the Alum Rock Sanitarium, San Jose, CA., in January 1943, after contracting tuberculosis. Because of her condition, she did not evacuate to the internment camps. "I feel more lonesome than ever," she wrote in a letter to Riyo Sato dated May 23, 1942. "I feel so left behind."

She also appears in the 1934 Epworth League photo on page 11.

Ethel grew up with Riyo and Kiyo Sato, hence Kiyo's visit to Ethel to take this photo, courtesy of Pam Hashimoto.

The local Japanese people have established a temporary hospital in their mission school on Ramona street for the treatment of influenza cases. One death occurred among them yesterday, being that of a little girl brought in from Cooley's Landing, who died a few hours after reaching here.

From a local Palo Alto newspaper • January 7, 1919



THE VIEW from MY DESK

by Brad Shirakawa

LIFE ON RAMONA STREET

AS AMERICAN AS APPLE PIE

It's a bit odd, reading someone else's diary. I wondered if it would be full of the mundane, or the stuff of romance novels. I also thought I knew something of the life of the Nisei, but the more I read, the more I realized that teenagers are teenagers, no matter what their era.

What was life like for the young Nisei growing up in our church in 1933? You could ask them and they might tell you a few things. Or you could read Kiyo Sato's diary.

I was privileged to be able to do so, courtesy of her daughter, Pam Hashimoto. Today's youth seem awfully busy with soccer, dance, music and summer camps. Not to mention school and jobs. Kiyo puts them all to shame.

From the age of 18 and for nearly four years, Kiyo wrote down everything from the existence of her everyday life, to her favorite things to do. Which included church events, dancing, sewing, eating, playing the piano and just plain socializing. I hope no one minds, but let's put eating at the top of the Kiyo list.

If there's anything Kiyo enjoyed doing, it was eating. You can't imagine how often she mentions eating in her diary. Not just any food, or even Japanese food, but that All-American-got-to-have-it food: dessert. In one 1935 entry she wrote: "Itsuye & I hungry; so ate cookies and milk shake. At Mtn View ate & ate & ate. Fred & Jack came at nite for supper." (*Itsuye Sakai was a good friend of hers. Mountain View refers to one of the Sato family's grocery stores where she often worked. Fred would be stepbrother Fred Yamamoto, Jack is her younger brother.*)

Or how about in 1936: "Had apple pie twice today." Not surprisingly, there are dozens of entries where she mentions not feeling well. "Mom always loved sweets and it was amusing to me, in reading the diary, how far back this went," said daughter Pam in an email. "Even in cleaning out the old house we lived in when we moved her to the retirement facility, I found stashes of her hidden candy, long forgotten about I'm sure."

A social butterfly if there ever was one, she would go dancing at San Jose State, or De Anza College, up to San Mateo, or as far away as Centerville. The dances were sponsored by schools, or Japanese social and athletic clubs, or the various churches in the area. She may have been a member of our Epworth League, but she certainly didn't discriminate when it came to social activities. Kiyo attended them all.

Our church Epworth League was a gathering place for many young Nisei, held on various nights, mostly at the church but occasionally at the home of the Wheelers (see page 27). There would be hymn nights, candlelight devotionals, pingpong, swim and valentine parties, games, food and plenty of fellowship. Kiyo was Vice President of the Epworth League in 1934 and John Kitasako was President.

Weenie roasts (held at the Sasagawas' and Mintons') seem to have been a favorite.* Occasionally, joint gatherings with the Buddhists were in order.

When she wasn't eating or dancing, she was sewing. She even drew tiny pictures (see next page) of the outfits she was making from patterns and meticulously included the cost of the materials. She made the clothing for herself; her sister, Riyo; and friends. It's obvious she took great pride in her work.

A typical day for Kiyo could be distilled into eating, going to San Jose State (or not...she cut classes like every college student), making time to sew, or practice the piano. There would be good friends to be found around the neighborhood, like Ethel Hirano or sisters Soyo and Sada Okazawa. She would take the train and run into Roy Tsuruda while working at her

parents' grocery store in Mountain View. On the way home, she often dropped by the Mintons' to socialize for a few hours, go to an Epworth League meeting and then drag herself home, getting to sleep well past midnight.

"Her routine sounded exhausting, but she didn't cut back for her health's sake," Pam wrote. "She was one who knew what she wanted and went for it - with blinders on. Kiyo's sister, Riyo, would say 'She ran herself ragged.'"

There are brief sentences about the birth of someone's baby, or the death of one of her Issei neighbors. She paid attention to the Cal versus Stanford football game, walked to the Stanford Theatre to watch movies and attended plenty of Young People's Christian Conferences (YPCCs).

If Kiyo's young life doesn't sound too different from yours or mine, that's because it wasn't. At least not socially. She never directly mentions the serious issues of the day, such as the Great Depression or racism.

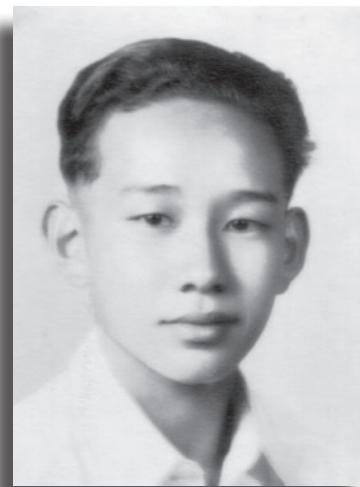
What is in her diary is the existence of a Nisei teenager, soon to become an adult. I don't know what her Issei parents thought of her life, but for nearly four years, I think she was living her version of the American dream.

**Earl and Margerie Minton lived in Mountain View and opened their home to the local Japanese. Their story is on page 33.*

Photo: Kiyo's June 1937 high school graduation picture gives little indication how outgoing and fun loving she really was. "Had apple pie twice today" is one of her diary entrees.

Kiyo, now 94 and her sister, Riyo, 96, remained in the Midwest after the end of World War II. Except for occasional visits to see friends and family, they never returned to live in the Ramona neighborhood she talks about in her diary. Kiyo currently resides in Chicago. Riyo died in Chicago in October 2009.

Courtesy Jay Sasagawa



Hideo Furukawa

REV. ASUGA spoke at League
Hideo was chairman.

KIYO SATO'S DIARY

Candlelight Devotional

8.1.92

S.S. at NEW CHURCH

Soyo Okazawa (Takahashi)

Courtesy Palo Alto High School



SOYO
SADA
HARUKO

Sewed all day

HINODE DANCE

MINTON'S WEENIE ROAST

Photo courtesy Soyo Takahashi



Shizuko Takeuchi

EP. LEAGUE'S GRAD. PARTY

PARTY AT
SASAGAWA'S

Taught first lesson

ROSE + LILY KIMURA

Lily Kimura

Just a sampling of the thousands of entrees in Kiyo's diary, many of which are described in her story on the previous page. Seen above are Epworth League Chairman Hideo Furukawa, odori dancer Shizuko Takeuchi, friend Soyo Okazawa, piano lessons for Rose and Lily Kimura and Kiyo's drawing of a dress she sewed.