

# The AACCP Newsletter

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## Summer Trips for 2006

By Leonard D. Chan

Continuing with the theme from last June's article "*What did you do on your summer vacation?*" here are more suggestions for some places to visit this summer.

### Tule Lake Segregation Center - Newell, California

On July 1-4 there will be a pilgrimage to the Tule Lake Segregation Center in Northern California. This is the first pilgrimage to Tule Lake since the site was designated as a National Historic Landmark.

For those that are unfamiliar with Tule Lake, it was the site of one of the Japanese American Internment camps during World War II. After the infamous camp loyalty surveys were given Tule Lake became a specialized segregation camp for individuals that were classified as disloyal and for those original internee of the camp that did not wish to leave to another camp or could not leave for other reasons.

Registered pilgrimage attendees will be bused from various locations in California, Oregon, and Washington to the event and will receive full room and board in Klamath Falls. The late registration price is \$435, but note that space is limited. If you're interested in going to this year's pilgrimage, please go to the Tule Lake Pilgrimage contact web page (<http://www.tulelake.org/contact.html>) and contact one of the listed individuals as soon as possible.

For those of you that can not attend this pilgrimage, but are still interested in visiting Tule Lake Segregation Camp, I highly recommend that you read "*Tule Lake Revisited*." In this book you will find lots of information about the history of Tule Lake and what you'll find there on a visit today.

- **More on Tule Lake History**

<http://www.tulelake.org/history.html>

- **Map of Newell**

[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=&csz=newell%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=&csz=newell%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)

### First Recorded Landing Site of Asians in America - Morro Bay, California

On October 18, 1587, 33 years before the pilgrims arrived in New England and 20 years before the founding of Jamestown in Virginia, Filipinos were a part of the Spanish Unamuno's Expedition that landed on the coast of California. There is some debate as to the exact spot of their landing location, but there is no debating that they were here.

During their short exploration of California, one the Filipino members of the expedition was killed by Native Americans. The history book that I was using for this research makes no mention of whether this person was ever retrieved or was left at the spot where he was killed. So perhaps this individual was one of the first non-Native Americans to have his remains permanently reside in California.

In 1995, the Filipino American National Historical Society (FANHS), California Central Coast Chapter, spearheaded the installation of a plaque in Coleman Park at Morro Bay to commemorate the first recorded arrival of Filipinos to what is now part of the continental United States.

Eloisa Gomez Borah, UCLA librarian and life member of the FANHS, informs me that, "The Morro Bay plaque is mid-way between the Morro Rock and Embarcadero Road, in the waterfront area of Morro Bay. At this mid-way point along this land bridge, you will come upon a small grassy area, which is Coleman Park... When you are at this park, look right by the roadway and you will see a large angular rock (about 4 ft H x 5 ft W x 4 ft D). The Morro Bay historic marker is imbedded in this rock."

- **Eloisa Gomez Borah's Filipino American FAQ page**

<http://personal.anderson.ucla.edu/elioisa.borah/filfaq.htm>

- **Map of Coleman Park, Morro Bay**

[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=Coleman+Park&csz=morro+bay%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=Coleman+Park&csz=morro+bay%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)

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## Conversations with the Author and Illustrator of "*A Place Where Sunflowers Grow*"

The following two interviews were conducted by Children's Book Press

Thank you Children's Book Press for allowing us to use these interviews for our newsletter.

### A Conversation with the Author Amy Lee-Tai

**Q:** What inspired you to write *A Place Where Sunflowers Grow*?

**A:** I had been toying with the idea of writing a children's book about my maternal grandmother Hisako Hibi, whom I view as a pioneer in her own right. After surviving the internment and my grandfather's passing, she was left alone and poor to raise two children. Yet she continued to follow her calling to be an artist. I wanted more people to know about her courageous story as well

as her artwork. Then I was approached by Children's Book Press to write a manuscript centering on the Topaz Art School, which my grandfather helped establish; he and my grandmother both taught and painted there, and my mother and uncle were also students. What resulted is a work of historical fiction inspired by my family's internment experience.

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## Give Us Your Feedback

Please feel free to send us your reviews, comments, and book suggestions. You can contact us at -  
aacpinc@asianamericanbooks.com

### Up Coming Events

Here are some events that AACCP will soon be attending. Invite us to your events.

Date/Time	Event	Location
July 8-9 1-6pm	San Jose Obon Festival Japanese Story Telling Su 1pm Book Signing with Felicia Hoshino Su 2:30pm	San Jose Buddhist Temple San Jose, CA
July 9	Monterey Obon Festival	Monterey Peninsula Buddhist Temple Seaside, CA
July 22-23 Sa 1-10pm Su 11-8pm	Ginza Bazaar & Obon Odori	Buddhist Church of SF San Francisco, CA
<b>Other Event of Interest that AACCP May Not Attend</b>		
June 29 7pm	Li Keng Wong discuss her memoir, <i>Good Fortune: My Journey to Gold Mountain</i>	Foster City Lib. Foster City, CA
June 30 - July 2	The 8th Annual KAAN Conference (Korean Am. Adoptee Adoptive Family Network)	Seoul, Korea
July 1-3	Tule Lake Pilgrimage	Klamath Falls, OR Newell, CA
July 8-9 12-9pm	Lotus Festival	Echo Park Los Angeles, CA
July 15-16	Mountain View Festival	Mountain View, CA
Aug. 10-13	OCA's Annual Convention	Philadelphia, PA

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### Filipino Americans Heritage Mural - Lompoc, California

Approximately 71 miles away from the Morro Bay plaque, in the town of Lompoc, you will find a mural, completed earlier this year (dedicate in March 2006), honoring Filipino Americans in California. Lompoc and the central coast region of California were well populated by Filipino immigrants at one time. Among the better-known Filipino residents of Lompoc was the poet and author Carlos Bulosan who lived there for a short time after he first arrived in the United States.

- **Lompoc Record - Newspaper Article on the Mural**  
<http://www.lompocrecord.com/articles/2006/02/28/news/news01.txt>
- **Mural location corner of J St. and Ocean Ave.**  
[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=J+Street+and+Ocean+Ave+nue&csz=lompoc%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=J+Street+and+Ocean+Ave+nue&csz=lompoc%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)

### Wakamatsu Tea and Silk Farm Colony - Gold Hill, California

On May 27, 1869 a group of Japanese immigrants sailed into San Francisco Bay aboard the SS. China. This was the first recorded

## Editor's Message

Hello Everyone,

I'm late as usual. My apologies for getting this out to you with only a few days left in June.

There are a couple of things on the schedule that I wish to highlight. This week June 29th, the author of *Good Fortune*, Li Keng Wong, will be speaking at the Foster City Library. On Sat. July 1 to 4th, award-winning author (for *Swimming in the American*) Hiroshi Kashiwagi will be on hand at the Tule Lake Pilgrimage. On Sunday July 9 in our booth at the San Jose Obon Festival, illustrator Felicia Hoshino will be signing her new book *A Place Where Sunflowers Grow*. Also in attendance will be a member of Leaf Moon Arts publishing doing traditional Japanese story card reading or kamishibai. Please come out and meet these wonderful people.

Lots of people to thank this month. First of all, thank you **Lori Low** and Children's Book Press for allowing us to use the interview of Felicia Hoshino and Amy Lee-Tai. Thank you, **Barbara Takei** for your help with getting information on the Tule Lake Pilgrimage - my apologies for not getting the information out sooner. Thank you **Eloisa Gomez Borah**, for your help with supplying me the exact directions to the Morro Bay Plaque and all the other interesting bits of information. Thank you **Mark Gibson** and the other at the California State Park service who helped me with research on the Wakamatsu Colony. Lastly, thank you **Susan** and **Jean** for your help with the book descriptions.

Have a wonderful 4th of July.

Bye.

Leonard Chan

**Executive Editor**

group of Japanese to travel to the continental United States with the intent of staying.

Rather than for purely economic motives, these individuals departed Japan for political reasons. When the imperial family regained power of Japan, followers of the losing Tokugawa Shogunate were faced with elimination or marginalization.

A European advisor named Henry Schnell, living in the fiefdom ruled by Katamori Matsudaira, lead a group of Japanese refugees, including his Japanese wife and family, out of Aizu Wakamatsu and on to America. Their hope was to start anew with a tea and silk plantation in the New World.

When they arrived in San Francisco Bay they eventually moved on and located their plantation north east of Sacramento in the Sierra Nevada foothill region near the towns of Gold Hill and Coloma.

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The colony was unsuccessful because of crop failure and most the members disbanded and left the area after two years. However, three of the original colonist remained close by and had documented histories.

One of the individuals was Okei Ito who died at the age of 19 and is buried near the original colony site. Another individual by the name of Matsunosuke Sakurai befriended Francis Veerkamp, who was the matriarch of a long-standing pioneer family in the region. The Veerkamp family was entrusted with some Japanese artifacts from the colony and in 2001 descendants of Francis Veerkamp turned over the artifacts to the California State Park Service. The third known colonist named Kuninosuke Masumizu moved to Sacramento and started a family there.

On June 7, 1969 a state landmark plaque was place near the original colony site. The plaque sits in what is currently Gold Trail Elementary School, at 889 Cold Springs Rd. in Gold Hill (note: some websites say the address is 1336 Cold Springs Rd.). Okei's gravesite is approximately 100 yards away on private property owned by the Veerkamp family. Sakurai's gravesite may be found in Pioneer Cemetery at Marshall Gold Discovery State Historical Park ([http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page\\_id=484](http://www.parks.ca.gov/?page_id=484)) in near by Coloma.

The Marshall Gold Discovery State Historical Park's museum is hoping to display the artifacts from the colony when funding for phase II of their renovation is acquired and the remodeling is done. Please contact your state representatives to let them know you're interested in seeing this State Historic Park receives their renovation funding.

- **Veerkamp family website on Wakamatsu Colony**  
<http://www.directcon.net/pharmer/Wakamatsu/Wakamatsu.html>
- **Map of Gold Trail Elem. School - 889 Cold Springs Rd.**  
[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=889+Cold+Springs+Rd.&csz=Gold+Hill%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=889+Cold+Springs+Rd.&csz=Gold+Hill%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)

- **Map of Coloma**

[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=&csz=coloma%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=&csz=coloma%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)

### Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum

For you home bound vacationers, check out the Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum's website section (<http://www.cpr.org/Museum/Chinese.html>) on the Chinese contribution to the building of the Transcontinental Railroad. I was trying to find more information on several of the actual sites described on this page - namely, the monument along Highway 174 at Cape Horn, near Colfax, California or tunnel #6 near Donner Summit. Unfortunately I ran out of time and couldn't find any more detailed information about these sites than what's listed on the museum's website.

For adventurous individuals, the description of Summit Tunnel #6, described by Dr. Alvin Louie on this page, sounds like a must see. This was the site of the longest (1659 ft) and hardest tunnel dug out by Chinese laborers for the Central Pacific.

If you know any details about these places, please email me. For now you can wander the streets of Colfax or go hiking around Donner Summit.

- **Map of Colfax**  
[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=colfax%2C+ca&csz=&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=colfax%2C+ca&csz=&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)
- **Map of Donner**  
[http://maps.yahoo.com/maps\\_result?addr=&csz=donner%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=](http://maps.yahoo.com/maps_result?addr=&csz=donner%2C+ca&country=us&new=1&name=&qty=)
- **Map and Pictures of Tunnels 6, 7, & 8**  
[http://www.cpr.org/Museum/Sierra\\_Grade\\_8-2003/Donner\\_Pass-Summit\\_Tunnel/index.html](http://www.cpr.org/Museum/Sierra_Grade_8-2003/Donner_Pass-Summit_Tunnel/index.html)
- **Ah, I finally found some directions to tunnel #6**  
[http://www.cpr.org/CPRR\\_Discussion\\_Group/2006/01/visiting-sierra-grade.html](http://www.cpr.org/CPRR_Discussion_Group/2006/01/visiting-sierra-grade.html)

## Conversations with the Author and Illustrator of "A Place Where Sunflowers Grow"

### A Conversation with the Author Amy Lee-Tai

(Continued from page 1)

**Q:** What do you find compelling about the internment camp art schools?

**A:** The art schools, which most Americans are not aware of, offered internees an invaluable opportunity to express themselves in an otherwise oppressive environment. I decided to write a story about a young girl, Mari, whose life is changed dramatically by the internment. The art school helps her come to terms with these overwhelming changes, and provides her with support from caring individuals and the chance to express herself. Mari draws what is important to her (i.e. her old house and backyard), which gives her a sense of pride and a connection to her lost past. This, in turn, gives her the courage to speak and move ahead.

**Q:** Why did you incorporate sunflowers into the story?

**A:** While Mari is a fictional character, sunflowers really did bloom at Topaz. My mother and grandmother planted sunflowers seeds, and they grew to the top of the barrack wall. To me, there is something so lovely in that act of planting seeds in the barren desert behind barbed wire. It was such an act of hope. Besides serving as a metaphor for hope, the sunflowers also represent the internees who managed to survive-with dignity and grace-the harsh circumstances of the internment.

**Q:** What would you like young readers to learn from A Place Where Sunflowers Grow?

**A:** There is so much I'd like young readers to take away from the book, more than I have room to express here! Most importantly, I want readers to know about this chapter of American history, to know that the internment - with all its injustice and hardships -- did in fact happen. By creating a main character that readers might relate to or feel empathy for, I hope this book will plant some seeds in readers: to steer clear of racial and ethnic targeting in their individual interactions with others, and to work towards a world that will not commit other atrocities targeting entire races

or ethnicities. These are lofty goals that one book alone can't reach, but I hope this book will work towards that peaceful end.

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## **A Conversation with the Artist Felicia Hoshino**

**Q:** What do you like about illustrating children's books?

**A:** The most enjoyable part is creating a believable environment for the characters. I strive to make each spread as interesting and distinct as I can from page to page by playing with perspective, and by using foreground and background elements to create depth.

**Q:** What made illustrating *A Place Where Sunflowers Grow* different from your other projects?

**A:** The experience I had while illustrating this book differed not so much in terms of the style or process, but in my personal connection to the story. The Japanese American internment is part of my own family's history. My father, Ed Arikawa, was just two months old when he, his two older siblings, and my grandparents, Minoru and Chizuko Arikawa were forced to leave everything they knew. They were interned at the Poston Relocation Camp in Arizona, where they lived for three years until the end of the war. Although my mother, Alice, was born after the war, her parents Teruji and Dorothy Umino and her older brother were relocated to Idaho, to the Minidoka Internment Camp.

**Q:** What resources did you use to create the art for *A Place Where Sunflowers Grow*?

**A:** My family actually had a "yearbook"-like booklet entitled *Mohaveland*, which contained snapshots of internees at the Poston Relocation Camp. I also did a lot of research at the public library

and on websites such as the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History "A More Perfect Union." Living in San Francisco, I was able to visit the National Japanese American Historical Society, where they let me examine their collection of photographs on interment camp life. Other books I found extremely helpful were collections of artists' work from when they were interned, such as *Peaceful Painter: Hisako Hibi, Topaz Moon: Chiura Obata's Art of the Internment*, and *The Children of Topaz*. But the most inspiring resources came from the author's mother, Ibuki Hibi Lee, who kindly lent me photo albums of her own mother's (Hisako Hibi's) artwork, as well as a collection of actual sketches.



**Q:** The characters are so expressive and Mari's emotions are very tangible. How were you able to capture so much?

**A:** Once the thumbnail sketches were approved, a young friend of mine was a perfect model for most of Mari's poses and expressions. Even her mother was a sport, and at times stepped in to pose for me.

**Q:** What did you take away from this project?

**A:** After researching and learning more about internment life, and most especially about the art schools, I was so inspired by Hisako Hibi and others like her who continued to express themselves despite their extremely difficult and oppressive surroundings. Mari was able to turn to art during a time when justifiable emotions of confusion, uncertainty, sadness, anger and helplessness could have overwhelmed her. I am so grateful for the opportunity to practice and share my art, and hopefully it will inspire others.

The following books are discounted an additional 20% from the listed price for subscribers to our newsletter. The discounts on these books end July 14, 2006.

	<p><b>A Place Where Sunflowers Grow</b>          By Amy Lee-Tai          Illustrated by Felicia Hoshino          2006, 31 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Follow the inspirational story of Mari, a girl incarcerated with her family in a World War II Japanese American Internment camp at Topaz, Utah. Like her sunflowers, Mari must learn to cope and flourish in this harsh and oppressive environment. Note, author Amy Lee-Tai is the daughter of author Ibuki Hibi Lee who we interviewed in July 2005.</p> <p>Item #3407, Price \$16.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$13.56</b></p>
	<p><b>Snakeskin Shamisen</b>          By Naomi Hirahara          2006, 255 pages, Paperback.</p> <p>The Snakeskin Shamisen is the perfect summer read. It's a real page-turner that grabs your interest from page one. The Snakeskin Shamisen is a murder mystery novel that's filled with lots of Japanese American, Southern Californian, Hawaiian, and other culture and language tidbits that wonderfully illustrates the life Mas Arai and its other characters.</p> <p>Item #3408, Price \$12.00 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$9.60</b></p>
	<p><b>Good Fortune          My Journey to Gold Mountain</b>          By Li Keng Wong          2006, 136 pages, Hardback.</p> <p><i>Good Fortune</i> is the autobiography of Li Keng Wong. The historical account told reflects one Chinese family's experience on coming to America in the 1930s and surviving the hardships that come with adjusting to a new land and new culture. Through economic hardships and even a violent incident, Wong and her siblings persevere to become successful individuals - among them is William Wong the journalist. Li Keng Wong's writing is engaging and makes for a good summer read.</p> <p>Item #3405, Price \$14.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$11.96</b></p>
	<p><b>Weedflower</b>          By Cynthia Kadohata          2006, 260 pages, Hardback.</p> <p>Twelve-year-old Sumiko greatly anticipates a school friend's birthday party, but upon arriving is asked to leave because she is Japanese. This action sets the tone for the narrative as the family is separated and forced to relocate into two different Japanese American Internment camps during WWII. Placed in a camp located on an Indian Reservation where they don't want to be and the Indians don't want them, Sumiko finds life harsh with sand blown into their homes through the cracks in the walls, few creature comforts, and nothing to do. She meets an Indian boy who makes deliveries to the camp. Their friendship is tentative at first, but gradually builds as they help each other through trying times.</p> <p>Item #3409, Price \$16.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$13.56</b></p>
	<p><b>Naming Maya</b>          By Uma Krishnaswami          2004, 178 pages, Hardback.</p> <p><i>Naming Maya</i> is a summer journey of both the physical and personal kind. The main character Maya and her mother, spend the summer in Chennai (Madras, India), far away from their home in America, trying to sell Maya's grandfather's house. Maya must deal with issues concerning her parent's divorce, her strained relationship with her mother, growing up, and a beloved family friend's dementia. In addition, Maya's immersion in Indian culture and society is a learning experience for her and readers of this book.</p> <p>Item #3405, Price \$14.95 - for newsletter subscribers <b>\$11.96</b></p>

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