

DRAFT

Kunisawa Farm

Kunisawa Farm was located within the City of Culver City from approximately 19?? - 1950.

At age 10, Henry Tokuyoshi KUNISAWA (1894-1950), originally born in Shikoku, Japan, immigrated to northern California with his family with high hopes for a promising future. As an adult, Henry settled in Culver City, honing his skills and knowledge of Japanese agriculture and horticulture. As a family of farmers, Henry, his wife Yiaime Ikeda Kunisawa, and their six children flourished by growing vegetables: celery, cucumbers, cabbage, lettuce, barley, and beans year round.

The Kunisawa home was originally located at 4475 Elenda Street and the farm made up much of what is the current site of Farragut Elementary, Culver City Middle School, and Culver City High School.

Kunisawa Family and farm: life on the farm (to be added...)

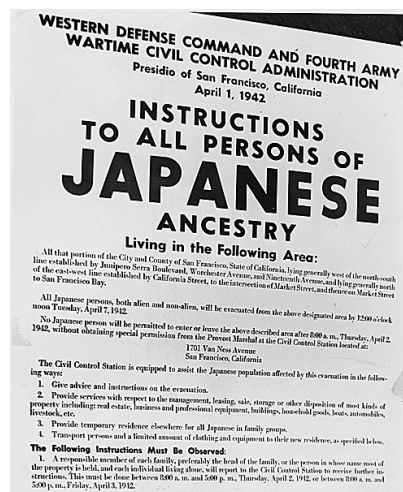
Prior to the 1940s, the Kunisawa were part of a rich Japanese American network of families throughout Los Angeles who participated together in yearly gatherings and festivals. As members of the Higashi Honganji Buddhist Temple, once located near Boyle Heights and later relocated to its current location in Little Tokyo, the Kunisawa celebrated community with other families, often bringing people together through shared food and regional Japanese cultural performances and activities.

One such festival was the yearly Obon Festival (officially in August) which commemorates deceased loved ones and ancestors through the traditions of rituals, chochin lanterns, bon fires, and traditional Bon Odori dances that vary from Japanese regions. These large yearly gatherings were quite elaborate, often including the sharing of a wide variety of foods, such as various types of sushis, kai fish, orange lobster shell, carrot salad, fried chicken, and tamales. The Kunisawa would bring ---- grown from vegetables and legumes grown on the farm and the children participated in the activities.

[include picture of grandchildren in kimonos; [kimono picture from left: Carolyn, Judy, Barbara, Nancy, Linda]

Life in the United States changed significantly after the bombing of Pearl Harbor by Japan, creating fear in Americans of Japanese ancestry. On February 19, 1942, President Roosevelt signed Executive Order 9066, which led to the incarceration of anyone of Japanese ancestry in

internment camps located throughout the United States. This included Henry, his wife, and the five children, who were interned at Manzanar. Linda, their sixth child was born at Manzanar.



With losing their freedom, the Kunisawa also lost many of their possessions and their daily way of life. The family was finally released on January 11, 1945. Much of the farmland was appropriated by the City and began constructing schools while the family continued to live at the farm house until Henry's death in 1950. Shortly after, Farragut Elementary and Culver City Junior High School, opened in 1950, and Culver City Senior High School, opened in 1951.

[include old photos of schools]

On May 18, 2018, Culver City High School honored the Kunisawa grandchildren by dedicating a vegetable garden within the school as "The Kunisawa Garden." Several grandchildren attended the ceremony and shared stories and scarce memories of life on the farm.

The Kunisawa family is remembered today as a family who endured hardship and injustice, persevering nonetheless. The Kunisawas inspire us to rise above discrimination, unfairness, and fear - to learn the lessons of their sacrifices - and to affirm that Culver City's past continues to lay the foundation of its rich cultural diversity. [This paragraph will be revised as needed]

[include snippets of Kunisawa family interview]

[include Kunisawa family photos]
sites in LA]

[include short list of Japanese American history
sites in LA]

[include photos of current location]

[include link to CCHS' Kunisawa Garden article]

[include special thanks to ...]