

Fundraising events replace annual gala

A new series of fundraising events in the museum is expected to start in April.

Instead of our traditional annual gala, we invite you to join us for interesting and informative monthly gatherings that will showcase various aspects of our unique museum, including our permanent exhibits, student-created exhibits, our treasured collections, and more.

see Annual gala, page 2

"Pay it 4ward"

Longtime employee awarded KOB-4 certificate



"Twenty years ago, I landed right where I belonged," she said recently.

That's museum employee Lyn Berner speaking with volunteers Peggy Shurban and John Cornish. It was Peggy who suggested Lyn as a candidate for KOB's *pay it4ward* honor and it was John who wrote the winning narrative. They checked with and had the full support of the rest of the staff: Camelia Caton-Garcia, Alexander King, and Lewis Twite.

So, one Thursday late in December, news anchor Trevor Thompson, with cameraman in tow, presented a certificate to a "supposed-to-be surprised" 79-year-old who sounded like a broken record. "I'm still here because of the mission," she said repeatedly when too tongue tied to answer Trevor's in-depth questions.

Actually, Lyn's time at the museum now surpasses her 19 years as a school public relations practitioner in Pennsylvania. In earlier jobs, she was a newspaper reporter in Reading, PA and Staten Island, NY. In her next life, she threatens to be a standup comic.

Respecting the concept of paying it forward, the \$400 check that came with the honor was immediately donated to the museum.

*The
Herald*

Finding its way to you four times a year from staff, volunteers, and board members.

Excitement in the air

Major museum improvements on horizon

by Regina Turner, Board President

I'm pleased to share that the City of Albuquerque has approved a proposal from Ideum, a renowned experience design firm, to partner with NMHIM on a series of major improvements.

Over the next 18 months, the Corrales company will work closely with museum staff and stakeholders to deliver immersive and interactive experiences that will help us reach a wider audience and have a greater impact across New Mexico.

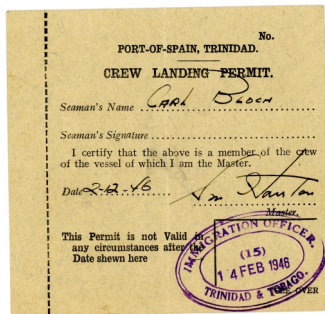
The planned updates include:

- ◆ Designing and developing a digital exhibit platform
- ◆ Creating a framework for traveling exhibits
- ◆ Designing both core and traveling exhibitions
- ◆ Fabricating, producing, delivering, and installing the core and traveling exhibitions

This ambitious project is funded by legislative capital outlay received by NMHIM, with the City of Albuquerque acting as our fiscal agent.

Archives *Alive!* Small packages yield lifelong stories

Sometimes even the smallest documents have a story to tell. This landing permit was issued to Carl B. Blake (Bloch) on February 12, 1946 and listed Carl as a crew-member of the coffee freighter he and his family were aboard on their immigration journey to the US from Brazil.



exact circumstances of Carl's trip onto the island, we do know that the ship he, wife Lita Heiber Blake, and daughter Yara Blake (later Pitchford) were traveling on was headed to Ellis Island. It was here that the family would begin the process of becoming US citizens, adopting their new name Blake.



Lita & Carl in Brazil

The Blakes were an Austrian Jewish family who fled Vienna in 1938 at the beginning of Nazi occupation. They spent the remaining war years in Rio de Janeiro. They immigrated to the United States in 1946 and this document was part of that journey. Carl was not a crewmember but a passenger and this permit allowed him to disembark at Port of Spain, the capital of the Caribbean nations of Trinidad and Tobago. It is franked with an "Immigration Officer. Trinidad & Tobago" stamp dated February 14, 1946. Although we don't know the

Carl continued his work as a chemist, holding positions at international printing companies and patenting new types of ink. He retired to Florida where he died in 1973. His wife, Lita Heiber Blake, would later move to Santa Fe to be near her daughter, Yara, who gifted NMHIM the extraordinary collection that contains this and many more documents related to their journeys as survivors.

Find out more about the Dr. Carl B. Blake and Lita Heiber Blake Collection here: <https://nmholocaustmuseum.catalogaccess.com/archives/5113>

(Do you have something to share? Are you interested in setting up a research visit to our archives? Email nmhim-collections@nmhim.org)

Annual gala fundraiser replaced by fundraisers continued from first page

Each event will feature delicious bites from local restaurants. Our goal is to bring our community together, encourage meaningful conversations, and support NMHIM.

We are committed to building a legacy of understanding, empathy, and positive change, making New Mexico and the world a better place for everyone. Your participation will truly make a difference. As we finalize the details, we will keep you informed about the dates and times.

Staff reorganizes file management system and more

by Lewis Twite

From December 20 to January 22, staff closed the museum and focused on a number of internal organizational projects.

- Repairing the HVAC to regulate temperature at the front desk, shampooing the carpeting, replacing light bulbs in the exhibit gallery and installing LED fixtures in the first floor office and lunch room.
- Organizing our internal file management system and standardizing file naming conventions.
- Updating the docent handbook and exhibit guide, with help from volunteer John Cornish.
- Working with contractor Sarah Welsh, an Arizona historian and educator, on lesson plans based on the collections items in our museum.
- Holding several strategic planning meetings with board members and volunteers, discussing future programming and exhibit ideas.
- Kicking off a new semester of the student exhibit design program, this time at Technology Leadership High School.

In addition, volunteers Peggy Shurban and Melissa Loudat started sorting our large collection of VHS tapes, and Melissa started cataloguing the notes left by visitors in the *Hate in America* exhibit.

Since reopening January 22, we've welcomed over 50 visitors from New Mexico, Arizona, Texas, and Colorado, and hosted tours for Albuquerque Oasis, CNM, Sandia High School, Mountain Mahogany Community School, and Santa Fe Indian School. Seven more tours are scheduled in February.

Versatile volunteer promotes kindness

by Lewis Twite

“Be kind to one another,” says Melissa Loudat, a front desk volunteer at the museum. Since May of 2025, Melissa has been greeting visitors on Thursdays with a welcoming smile. Whether she’s sitting up front and folding brochures, helping organize school students on field trips, or sorting through piles of old VHS tapes, Melissa is always willing to lend a hand, no matter the project. Her favorite part of the position is connecting with visitors, learning about their lives and their stories.

When she’s not helping out at the museum, Melissa enjoys spending time with her “fur family,” taking long walks through the foothills, and visiting the many historic sites throughout our beautiful state.

A native of Roswell, Melissa served 20 years in the Air National Guard, retiring as a Master Sergeant. Throughout her service, she worked as a medical technician and trained for aeromedical evacuation in emergency situations. As a civilian, she worked as a commercial real estate appraiser, a job that took her throughout the state. Now retired, Melissa remains interested in history and the lessons the past holds for our current times. “After decades of considering myself knowledgeable of the Holocaust,” she says, “I was shocked after learning of all the countless genocides of various groups around the world throughout history.”

Our wonderful volunteers like Melissa keep this museum open, ensuring that everyone has the chance to learn this vital history.



NMHIM welcomes a new intern from UNM

by Alexander King

NMHIM is excited to welcome a new intern from UNM to the team. Cali Deprest is a senior at UNM and as part of her studies is doing a semester long practicum at NMHIM. Cali will be assisting Alexander (King) and Lewis (Twite) in the education department, going to schools to work with students and helping us create new curricula and lesson plans.



When asked what she would like to accomplish while she is with us, Cali said,

“I love to use resources written about the Holocaust, use the tools that I have learned throughout my time at the University of New Mexico and use that to further educate those who want to know more about the Holocaust and intolerance. I am very passionate about education, especially education of our youth, and I want to be able to help with further knowledge of the history of the Holocaust and intolerances.”

If you see Cali in the museum or at any museum events, please give her a warm NMHIM welcome. We are very glad to have her helping us this spring!

Reaching teachers across the state

Supported by funding from the Mid-Region Council of Governments, our professional development conference scheduled for Saturday, February 28 in the CNM Workforce Training Center will be attended by more than 80 New Mexico school teachers.

DIVERSE APPROACHES TO HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

Different ways to teach the vast, complex topic of the Holocaust in today’s classrooms will be highlighted.

KEYNOTE SPEAKER

The keynote speaker, Arizona teacher and historian **Sarah Welsh**, will examine the genocide of Romani people through the memoirs of two child survivors.

WORKSHOPS

Erika Lowery at the Institute for Curriculum Studies will explore how primary sources give students multiple perspectives on important topics of the past.

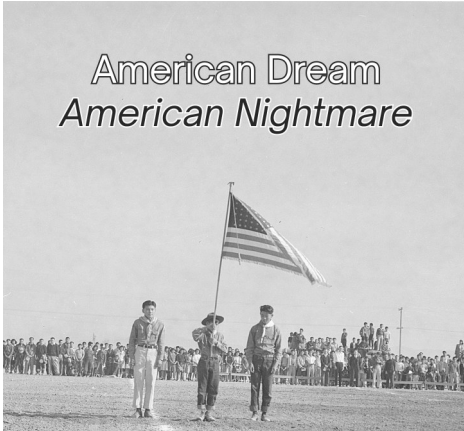
Jake Newsome with the Pink Triangle Legacies Project will equip educators with the knowledge and tools they need to confidently teach about how and why the Nazi regime targeted LGBTQ+ people during the era of the Holocaust. Participants will receive exclusive access to digital educator resource packets curated by the Pink Triangle Legacies Project.

The conference was organized by education coordinator Alexander King and research & development manager Lewis Twite.

THE MUSEUM WILL BE CLOSED
ON SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 28.

Japanese-American experience in the US: the best and the worst

**American Dream
American Nightmare**



Note on Terms:
You may see some new or unfamiliar terms in this exhibit, below are definitions.

Nikkei - Japanese emigrants and their descendants living outside Japan

Issei - The first generation of Japanese-emigrants

Internment/Confinement/Incarceration/Concentration camp - refers to the series of prison camps that held people of Japanese-Ancestry during WWII. Different organizations may refer to the camps using different terminology.

FORT STANTON INTERNMENT CAMP

Fort Stanton, located 85 miles north of Bataan and 173 miles south of Santa Fe was built by the U.S. Army in 1833. Originally constructed as a military outpost to control the Mesquero Apache, Fort Stanton had a variety of uses throughout its long history, such as a tuberculosis sanatorium and one of the locations used to incarcerate Japanese-Americans during WWII.

WHEN DID IT HAPPEN?

In January of 1942, the internment camp opened in Fort Stanton to hold prisoners of war. Initially it held captured German sailors and merchant marines. In 1945, 17 Japanese "troublemakers" were taken from Santa Fe and moved to Fort Stanton.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Fort Stanton became one of the sites for the forced incarceration of over 10,000 people of Japanese descent.

CLOVIS

Prior to WWII the small town of Clovis on the Texas-New Mexico border was home to a small segregated community of Nikkei railroad workers and their families. Shortly after the attack on Pearl Harbor the lives of these ordinary families were extraordinarily disrupted. On the night of January 23, 1942, prompted by threats of violence and vigilantes from the Clovis community the U.S. Border Patrol could remove all of the Japanese (including 17 young children) from their homes in Clovis. The Japanese families were first taken to Fort Stanton before being transferred to the nearby Old Fort Ranch (also called the Boca Ranch camp) where they stayed until December 1942 when they were transferred to WRA camps. None of the railroad workers would ever return to their jobs in Clovis. In 2004 the town of Clovis dedicated its annual Pioneer Days Parade to the Japanese-American citizens who had been driven out of town and issued an apology to the families. Roy Shibano, Fred Kimura, and Little Kimura Kyobawa, three of the children removed in the middle of the night in 1942, were invited back to Clovis to serve as grand marshals in the 2004 Pioneer Days Parade.

NOW ON DISPLAY

Researched, developed and designed by high school students of the New America Charter School, this exhibit takes a close look at Japanese and Japanese-American incarceration in World War II New Mexico.

CONNECTING DOTS

While researching, students made connections between this history and what they see happening today with ICE.

- Santa Fe Internment Camp -

The Santa Fe Internment camp was established in March of 1942 and was open until April of 1946. It was used to hold Japanese, German and Italian internees. An estimated 4,550 internees went through this camp during its operation. Many of the Japanese prisoners were fathers and community leaders. Santa Fe held the largest number of Japanese-American internees out of all the New Mexico internment camps.

WHAT HAPPENED?

Initially, from March to September of 1942, the Santa Fe camp would hold over 800 Issei internees; however, by September of 1942 most of the internees were transferred to live with their families in WRA camps. As WWII progressed and resources became strained, Santa Fe would reopen as a prison camp in March 1943. At the height of its operation in 1943 the Santa Fe camp held over 2,000 internees. After a group of "troublemakers" were transferred from the Tule Lake camp in California on March 7, 1943, conflict broke out in camp. This led camp director Ivan Williams to segregate "insolent" internees in the lower camp area and ultimately 17 internees were removed from Santa Fe and sent to the Fort Stanton camp.

Internees lived under restricted conditions, separated from their families and communities, and had their rights denied without due process. Despite difficult living, internees worked to maintain dignity and community through cultural, educational, and religious activities. Examples of the many activities inside the camps were sports such as baseball, tennis, and sumo wrestling. Arts and crafts such as wood carving, painting, gardening and writing were common ways for internees to escape the painful boredom of everyday life in camp. Internees could also work while at Santa Fe, although they were paid less than minimum wage for their labor. Today, the camp is remembered through a monument placed on a nearby hill, documentaries and museum exhibits.

Japanese Internment Camps in New Mexico

The Empire of Japan joined the Axis powers by signing the Tripartite Pact on September 27, 1940. On December 7, 1941 the Imperial Japanese Navy attacked the U.S. naval base at Pearl Harbor, killing 2,335 U.S. sailors and 688 civilians. Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor led to the attack on the U.S. mainland. In response to the attack on Pearl Harbor and U.S. involvement in the Pacific, Executive Order 9066, signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt, authorized the U.S. government to incarcerate people of Japanese descent in internment camps without due process.

The Start of Internment

Most Japanese-Americans were put into camps after 1942. Of the approximately 120,000 people interned, 100,000 were American citizens. For many years prior to WWII, Japanese-Americans had been under surveillance by the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) and also the Office of Naval Intelligence. Some of the agencies responsible for placing Japanese-Americans in internment camps were the Department of Justice, Department of Justice (DOJ), Immigration and Naturalization Service, War Relocation Authority (WRA), Office of the Provost Marshal General, and the Office of Naval Intelligence. While most Japanese-Americans were placed into camps managed by the War Relocation Authority, all of the camps in New Mexico were run by the U.S. Army or the DOJ.

Camp Locations

Most of the camps were located throughout the western region of the United States. The New Mexico internment camps were located in Lordsburg, Fort Stanton, and Santa Fe. Camps were placed in remote locations to isolate prisoners and make escape less likely.

Lordsburg Camp

Camp Lordsburg was the largest U.S. Army run Japanese internment camp in America. Lordsburg operated as an internment camp from June 1942 to 1943 and held about 1,500 Japanese-Americans, most of whom were from the continental United States. Internees faced difficult conditions at Lordsburg: battling insects, inclement weather, and rampant sand storms.

Camp Lordsburg Location

Camp Lordsburg was located in the southwestern side of New Mexico, near the town of Lordsburg, close to the Arizona-New Mexico border at an elevation of 4,000 feet. Lordsburg was selected for its remoteness, keeping internees isolated and away from large population centers.

Conflict at Camp Lordsburg

Shortly after internees arrived in June, camp administrator Lieutenant Colonel Clyde Lundy ordered internees to begin doing hard manual labor outside in the hot sun during the middle of the day. This order violated the Geneva Convention requirements for safe working conditions, and led to a general strike among the men. As a result, those on strike were denied privileges such as access to the camp canteen, lights after dark, and the freedom to leave their barracks. Lundy was eventually forced to rescind the order due to arbitration from the Spanish consulate. As a neutral party in the war Spain had been assigned as the protecting power for Japanese citizens and interests in the United States. Shortly after the order Lundy was relieved of command by another officer. In the early morning hours of July 27, 1942, a group of five men were transported by train to Lordsburg for imprisonment. Guards forced the men to march from the train station to the camp on the outskirts of town. Two of the prisoners, Torishio Kobata and Hirota Isomura, lagged behind the rest. Both of the men were elderly and suffered from mobility issues. Torishio Kobata struggled with complications from tuberculosis he contracted 10 years before war started, while Hirota Isomura suffered from a spinal injury he received prior to internment. As the two men slowly made their way to camp both were shot in the back by Private Clarence Burleson, the man guarding them. The resulting military tribunal would find Private Burleson innocent of manslaughter after he claimed the two men were attempting to flee.

JACL HELP & ADVICE

Nikki Nojima Louis, PhD and other members of the Japanese-American Citizens League assisted by presenting lectures, offering advice, and bringing in guest speakers to enrich the students' experience.

Visitor feedback all good

While many visitors in groups are middle and high school students, we also welcome Road Scholars, life plan and 55+ communities, book clubs, and friends. Recently *Albuquerque Oasis* brought almost 40 adults in late January, many of whom had feedback for us. We share two comments here:

"Everyone should visit this museum! Such an important part of our history to be remembered. One of the instructor's personal connection was especially meaningful."

"The museum is a treasure. Both speakers were excellent. I had studied the Holocaust but learned even more today."

SCHEDULE A GROUP VISIT ONLINE AT NMHIM.ORG