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At left, a young girl arrives at Tacoma's train station with "all she can carry" to the Pinedale Assembly Center. Notable acts of kindness toward internees occurred throughout the war. To the right, military guard Private Nat Schwartz befriended five-year old Toshiyuki Hattori who was being prepared for transfer to the Pinedale Assembly Center - May 17, 1942. Both images, Tacoma Public Library



**"Only what we could carry" was the rule; so we carried Strength, Dignity, and Soul."**

Lawson Fusao Inada, former Fresno Assembly Center internee and Poet Laureate of Oregon, from *Only What We Could Carry* © 2000 Heyday Books

Pinedale Assembly Center, located on the former site of the Sugar Pine Lumber Mill, was one of several temporary facilities where persons of Japanese ancestry were held as prisoners while permanent internment sites were being built at the start of World War II. From May to July, 1942, more than 4,800 people from Sacramento and Amador Counties in California and the states of Oregon and Washington were confined at this hot and dusty location.

Each family was required to live in a single, hastily-constructed, tar-paper barrack room. Often, the heat was so intense that the legs of the cots sank into the bare asphalt floors. This was especially difficult for the internees from the Pacific Northwest as they were not accustomed to sweltering Valley summers. All aspects of daily existence were conducted in a communal fashion, from dining to showering. Even toilets were no longer private. Because of the "camp-life" atmosphere and the lack of privacy, family unity diminished.

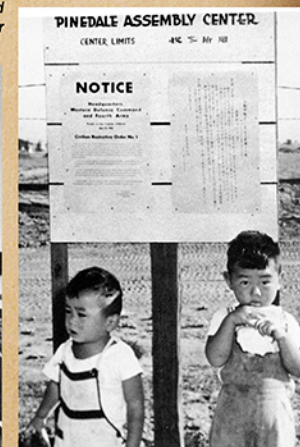
In July 1942, the Pinedale Assembly Center internees were sent to permanent camps in Tule Lake, California, and Poston, Arizona. The difficult living conditions were endured throughout the internment period, which lasted several years for most Japanese Americans.

Daily life at the Pinedale Assembly Center quickly fell into a routine. Meals were served in the mess hall, women washed clothes side-by-side, and nearly everyone had a job for which they were paid a fraction of what they would have earned outside of camp. Physicians received a mere \$19 per month for their work. War Relocation Authority



Behind barbed wire at the Pinedale Assembly Center: Barracks, seen in the background, were constructed as living quarters for the internees who had no idea how long their imprisonment would last. Library of Congress Archives

Pinedale internees prepare to leave and two youngsters anxiously await transfer from the Pinedale Assembly Center to their new "home" at one of the Internment Camps sprinkled across the southwestern United States. Many went to Tule Lake where they would remain for the duration of World War II. Library of Congress Archives



*"The size and number of packages (which evacuees may take to the Pinedale Assembly Center) is limited to that which can be carried by the individual or family group."  
Instructions to All Persons of Japanese Ancestry, issued to Japanese Americans living in Sacramento, El Dorado and Amador Counties, California, on May 23, 1942*

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