



Kitaji Bibles



Said to be the most significant artifact associated to Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs, the Kitaji Bibles (left photo) were owned, transcribed, and illustrated by the late Captain Masuo Kitaji (right photo), who lived at GYHS from 1945 to 1973.

Like many family Bibles, these volumes record family milestones – births, baptisms, marriages, and death. These also note historic events (birthdates of U.S. presidents, space capsule launches, World War II battles, the atomic bomb), but more importantly, include a 1945 newspaper clipping explaining that one of the Bibles was a 10-year labor of commitment to create a bilingual resource for ministers working with bilingual followers.

Kitaji said he had to preach to worshipers in both English and Japanese while serving as the Japanese Salvation Army Corps leader in Oakland in 1932. That's when he conceived the idea of creating a bilingual version of the Bible. He began implementation in 1935, transcribing passages from the accepted Japanese translation of the time onto blank pages bound between the printed pages.

He worked daily, from 5 a.m. to noon, for ten years, announcing its completion in 1945 while he was held in the Poston detention camp in Arizona. The result is a book of face-to-face passages in each language.

Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs

In 1938, H. K. Sakata purchased the Hot Springs, which date back to 1865, and added the word “Yamato,” meaning “Japanese.” Gilroy Yamato Hot Springs became the only Japanese-owned mineral spring resort in California. Under Sakata, GYHS reminded many of similar places in Japan and thereby became a place of physical as well as moral, emotional, and spiritual healing. It provided respite from the toils of many hard-working Japanese immigrants.

Westview hopes to have a visit this summer to the Hot Springs!