

# AMACHE SPECIAL RESOURCE STUDY

Virtual Meeting Notes: Saturday, August 1st, 2020 | *Meeting Attendance: 29*



## BREAKOUT GROUP TOPIC QUESTIONS

**Note:** Clicking on a question will bring you to that section.

What is your vision for preserving Amache? How would you like to see the site managed? What types of activities and experiences do you want to see as part of Amache's future?

Do you have any ideas or concerns that the National Park Service should be aware of and/or address in the study process?

What objects, buildings, remaining features, values, and stories do you believe are most important and why?

What do you think differentiates Amache from the other nine Japanese American incarceration camps?

Do you have any other ideas or comments you would like to share with us?

**Note to readers:**

These notes were transcribed as precisely as possible to correspond to the participants' own words. In a few places in these notes, the meaning of a statement may be obscured or lost; this is a result of manual transcription and/or human error.

The numbering system applied to the comments and questions is for ease of identifying the comment or question. It does not necessarily represent the comment or question in the order it was received.

## THE FOLLOWING ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS MAY BE USED IN THE TRANSCRIPTIONS.

AZ – Arizona

BLM – Bureau of Land Management

CA – California

CCC – Civilian Conservation Corps

CO – Colorado

DOI – Department of the Interior

FAQ – Frequently Asked Question

GMP – General Management Plan

GPS – Global Positioning System

HMFPC – Heart Mountain Fair Play Committee

IMR – Intermountain Region

JA – Japanese American  
JACL – Japanese American Citizens League  
JACS – Japanese American Confinement Sites program  
JANM – Japanese American National Museum  
KA – Kansas  
MP – military police  
NEPA – National Environmental Policy Act  
NHL – National Historic Landmark  
NHS – National Historic Site  
NPS – National Park Service  
OR – Oregon  
POW – prisoner of war  
QR – quick response  
SF – square feet  
SHPO – State Historic Preservation Officer  
SRS – Special Resource Study  
TCP – Traditional Cultural Property  
TL – Tule Lake  
USFS – US Forest Service  
VC – Visitor Center  
WRA – War Relocation Authority  
WWII – World War II  
WY – Wyoming  
YMCA – Young Men Christian’s Association

**What is your vision for preserving Amache? How would you like to see the site managed? What types of activities and experiences do you want to see as part of Amache’s future?**

**Breakout Group 1.**

1. I would like to see it part of a national park unit. My understanding is that John Hopper has a museum in Granada, so having him be a part of it would be key.
2. I'd second that, about keeping John Hopper involved. Having site management be a cooperative thing would be great. Having high-school students as docents is great and that should be continued. That could also help mitigate trends in this country of incarcerating people without due process. We never seem to understand that the legislation that makes incarceration like executive order 9066 possible is the Enemy Alien and Sedition Acts of 1798. Having something that explores that at Amache would mean a lot. The 1988 act, which provided reparations, did not repeal the Alien and Sedition Acts.
3. It was mentioned that Amache was near Sand Creek, where Amache could build off of other messages and be part of a joint venture. Keeping John Hopper and the students involved is so key. The tours that he and his students offer during pilgrimages and at other times mean so much.

4. In terms of what types of activities, Amache is the farthest east of the incarceration camps. The activity that should be discussed is that we don't want this to happen again. I'm an international bird watcher, and I've driven right through Granada to birdwatch, having no idea that Amache was right there.
5. We have to keep mentioning the Alien and Sedition Acts because until they're repealed or rewritten, this could very well happen again. That comment about engaging with the other activities around Amache, like Sand Creek, is so important. We shouldn't mince words about what happened. It needs to be clear, concise, and on point. The whole history of the development of our country is tied up in issues that can be explored at Amache. Draw connections from Amache, to Black Lives Matter, back to Sand Creek.
6. I second what's been said about educating young people at Granada and other places. That way, when governors equate being shut in to stem the tide of COVID-19 with concentration camps, that people rise up and call out these officials who make these kinds of statements.
7. The location of Amache is really important. So many of the incarceration sites are on the West Coast. Having a site in the middle of the country reaches a whole new group of people and really influences who learns this history.
8. We have to continue what John Hopper has been doing all these years. He was the first person who wanted to resurrect and tell people what Amache was all about. Amache was also the only incarceration site that was located on land purchased from private land. The people who lost their land were very antagonistic toward the incarcerated, not just because we were Japanese but because we were on the land taken from them. That's a different situation than what existed at other incarceration sites.

### **Breakout Group 2.**

9. Would like to see an investment in the museum. Lots of recent publicity about the Amache Preservation Society moving artifacts into a new museum. Would be a worthwhile investment. Would be great if they could be there in that museum, collect and catalog documents that are relevant so that anyone who goes there can see artifacts and do research. Would be great if funding for that could be made available—make that museum worthwhile, to have artifacts on display, and additionally a research facility where documents are archived and catalogue[d].
10. The management of the site will be a challenge, but there is a nice relationship with the university and the local area, and the Amache Preservation Society will be a good. It's amazing that the cultural resources are still there on site and is also a concern for me; they need to be preserved and it's amazing that those features of the camps are still there when you walk around, but how long will those be there? Concerned about some of those objects that are still there on site.
11. We document things in place and leave them there so others can experience them. Power[ful] to see these on site and see things as people used them. If they disappear, they

have been catalogued so we know where they were and what they were. John Hopper's students work has led to preservation; in 2018, we went to the first block surveyed. The vast majority of items recorded from 10 years ago were still there. Now the site is completely open and that is concerning. Teenagers at night do stuff in a small town. A locked gate at night which is opened in the morning would help to keep down the casual picking up of items. If it becomes a park, with more people, it will happen. Pushing for [a] full archeological survey to prepare for the onslaught of people visiting.

12. Dr. Clark's field school has learned so much (with preservation societies); the whole atmosphere has been very revealing to us as a whole history. Without these people supporting this site, we would not know what our history is. One of the concerns I have is that the camp is so far from the museum, there should be a central visitor center so that it will tie together the site, the museum, and the town.
13. Collaborative has been built in some way; how can that be maintained? Good private-public partnerships have evolved. While we wait for the study to happen, how do we maintain that collaboration in the meantime and how [do] we preserve the site in meaningful ways?
14. It's rare in other places that some of the concrete foundations are there where activities took place.

### **Breakout Group 3.**

15. I think we should include draft resisters as a story of conscience.
16. I went to Minidoka for the dedication of the visitor center. At Amache I feel like there could be something out at the actual grounds, because of the history with Granada High School and the small building they've been working on for a number of years. How would that be balanced? Depends on unit designation. They have archives. Earlier someone mentioned oral histories. Watching oral histories on video. Build something to contrast with existing foundations. A way to blend various opportunities: the water tower, guard tower, and envisioning what could be done virtually.
17. In terms of the existing site having a lot of foundations, artifacts, the physical presence of these as a reminder of it was like to try to build a daily life there. That works in conjunction with reconstruction and possibilities for things like augmented reality and opportunities to understand the relationship to the town. I think the fact that Amache Preservation Society has done so much work with the museum in town, I don't know how that would work or if they're (the NPS) interested in that. Newman's Drugs and the Granada Fish Market buildings are still in town. Also, the site was all on private property. That had an effect on the relationship as well because the town was so close—it was only a mile and half so people could walk to town, get an ice cream, get sushi, those are just really different kinds of relationships. Granada should be part of the story. They've been so involved in the preservation to date and economic benefit to the town today.

18. The most beneficial thing for schools and senior tour groups is the contact with someone who is knowledgeable about collections. Seeing the collection and doing service learning (helping to catalog, read the valedictorian addresses and analyze them as rhetorical artifacts). We need projects and hands-on activities which involve the town. Walking tours might be difficult, so maybe driving or guided driving tours? Make the site more interactive so it's possible to visualize what was happening in each building. There are complete footprints at the site. Should continue the process of remaking buildings, and also John Hopper has a binder of where buildings went when they were auctioned off. Many in private hands around the state and area, so we could bring more of those back.
19. How would John Hopper's donations be balanced with the NPS? Public memory and oral histories—will they be online? Will they be recorded video? What is the standard? What is the balance with John Hopper's collection?
20. There are oral history collections and they aren't all kept in Amache as it is. They're in different libraries and facilities across the state and nationally; and there are also a lot of reminiscences online through different Japanese-American websites. I think you are right that it would be good to have as much of that as possible available on the site if there's an NPS center that serves the functions of a museum.
21. Already there are oral history collections around the state, nationally, and other reminiscences online. Not all are local. Have them online and in a catalog. There could also be display recollections at different posts along the walkway. Many more should be taken as well.

**Do you have any ideas or concerns that the National Park Service should be aware of and/or address in the study process?**

**Breakout Group 1.**

22. I know a man who grew up in Arkansas and used to watch trains going to the different incarceration sites. When he would wave to the people going to the incarceration sites, they wouldn't wave back. They would look down. Whereas when the German and Italian POWs went by in trains, they would wave back. In addition, there were clear-cut examples of what racism looked like.
23. We should also be looking at those families who lost their land when Amache was built. We should tell that story because there's a correlation to be drawn between the Japanese Americans who lost their land when they were incarcerated with those Americans of European descent who lost their land for the camp to be built. There are a lot of nuances that can be pointed out about the greed and genocide that are a part of this area's history.
24. I just wanted to mention that I interviewed Bob Fuchigami, whose family was incarcerated at Amache, and the oldest brother had a contract that he signed with a neighbor. They thought the contract stipulated that the neighbor would hold their property for them, but the fine print said that after a period of some months, the neighbor would inherit the property. That story, and stories like that, should be told.

## **Breakout Group 2.**

25. Because this COVID-19 has thrown a wrench into the in-person meeting process, and technology can hinder 60+ from participating, moving the deadline to another cut-off date, focused on community engagement that we try to figure out ways to provide public comments. Although the other studies that have been done (under the Dingell Act), people want to know a little bit more about oral histories and provide people more time to know more about the history of Amache. Would like to comment about how difficult it has been getting stakeholders to the table and on the public comment in this current situation. I've spoken with the Amache Historical Society and they weren't aware of the online public meetings; takes a lot of time to reach out to more people who are interested in this topic. Strategize on getting outreach out to constituents and others; find opportunities when communities, families, other gatherings get together and try to strategize on using those opportunities to connect.
26. The Amache Historical Society put out a long newsletter about the whole study process. Concern about informing more people—get email addresses that [a] newsletter could be sent out to another list. The newsletter was sent out to a large group in L.A. when the public meetings were still scheduled. NPS could reach out here.

## **Breakout Group 3.**

27. There are big concerns over water rights for Amache. The town has the water rights—it's a 99-year lease. Amache still needs to have water rights. Major concern.
28. Dr. Bonnie Clark says there are unprecedented research opportunities. None of the property was used for other purposes (after the war). Soil blows in, but once they (archeologists and students) get past the top layer, they only have to go down inches to find artifacts and footprints. There's research about how the residents used soil enhancement in order to grow gardens because the site has lain there (unused) due to water rights. Found artifacts bare also put back in place. Some were gathered into collection, but many are put back in place. The surface items need to be protected and "Please don't gather" signs installed.

## **What objects, buildings, remaining features, values, and stories do you believe are the most important and why?**

### **Breakout Group 1.**

29. I think resurrecting a full block, at least half a block, with a mess hall and the latrines is very important. People don't know how incarcerated lived in these blocks and how people, particularly the women, were upset that we didn't have any privacy. It was far different than what people had lived in before. Our parents tried to keep us from getting too discouraged and to not dwell on the problems that we had. The only way we can really understand that is to make it so that we could experience how we lived.

30. In the PowerPoint, there was an image of the fish market. Were incarcerated people able to walk to town to purchase fish?
31. The fish market was started by someone in town, but he knew that incarcerated people loved certain types of fish and he would stock the market with these fish. Granada being a mile and a half away made it the closest town to any of the incarceration sites. People in town were very suspicious of the Japanese American incarcerated people. Mr. Newman, the owner of the Newman's Drug Store, treated incarcerated people very positively. He bought a case of sake in Salt Lake City and brought it to Granada, where incarcerated people could buy it. It turned out that incarcerated people really helped the town stay afloat.
32. If a block is re-created, having a guard tower and a searchlight would be very important. The search light ties into the fish market insofar as there was a man at a different incarceration site who started working at the fish market and would sneak into Amache to visit his family. But he had to time when he snuck in and snuck out, so that he wouldn't be exposed by the searchlight.
33. At night, I would hear urine hitting the bottom of pails. The searchlight would follow you when you went to the latrine and then follow you back.
34. The fish market was something unique about Amache and something we should show. It's very different from Manzanar and the other incarceration sites. What's interesting to me is that the Japanese Americans had connections to fish. The fish market would truck fish from Los Angeles to Granada for the incarcerated people.
35. Thinking about what's at the site now, physically, the archeology at Amache is amazing. There's still great integrity. There are just archeological records that tell these stories. The ability of people to see the concrete foundations and get a sense of how big the barracks were, then see the marbles outside, is something different from the other sites.
36. The other thing that was interesting is that this is the only camp that had foundations and bricks underneath, so that they could dig and make their own cellars. Other camps don't have that.
37. I wanted to mention the cemetery. The graves that are still at Amache are a very important feature. I also think it's important to restore the cemetery, including the wooden planks that list those who died at Amache. They're in a safe, controlled site now, but maybe they could be brought back if the site is made a park.
38. Those bricks mentioned previously included brick floors. Those made things very cold in the winter.
39. I agree with the comment about the cemetery. That would be a very important thing to do. The bathroom and shower facilities really need to be emphasized, too, to lay out [how] dehumanizing they really were. They demeaned people.
40. We need to ensure that what John Hopper has done carries on.

## Breakout Group 2.

41. This point was raised last week that Amache was on Native American land and people were moved out so that the camp could be established on that site. Also consider that people whose citizenships are not recognized. In my opinion, American Citizenship has been constructed in terms of (inaudible). The rise of violence that is taking place now is part of the larger context of the symbolism of Amache. I am repeatedly asked where are you from? I'm from L.A., but they might want to hear that I'm from outer Mongolia.
42. No one has occupied the site since the internees, so whatever Dr. Clark's field school has uncovered is connected to the internees. Also, we have to remember that the people of Amache were welcomed by Governor Carr and that differentiates Amache from the other camps. He said we should not be treated as subservient; we had our constitutional rights.
43. They were against having all of us behind barbed wire. Also, the fact that Dr. Clark has studied the site so extensively and John Hopper and his students preserving the artifacts and the museum, has bolstered the image of Amache and makes it so different from the other camps.
44. Economic reasons why the Japanese Americans were welcome to Colorado because there was a national labor shortage. American farm labor programs connected with Amache; we plan to explore that further. What happened to the farmers and the folks that lived in the area?
45. What makes Amache unique: the existing cultural resources on the ground, bottles, china that has been found during surveys. There are still clear remnants of daily activity that occurred in the camps, unlike other camp sites under NPS management. At other camps, they were probably dug up or taken away.
46. Something striking: another volunteer, her family was at Amache for a couple of months, then worked for a rancher. There is a connection to agriculture, the skills of the people at Amache were really recognized by their neighbors. The first fall that Amache was open, [the] sugar beet crop came in early. [Beet products were] important for war effort. The folks from Amache came out and helped the locals bring in the sugar beet crop because of the labor shortage. Farmers helping out other farmers, helping out the local farmers helps make positive relationships. The folks at Amache changed the way that folks in Colorado farmed. Celery [was] not grown commercially in Colorado until Amache. Impacts and relationship were positive.
47. Those from central California and brought their farming skills, transferred some of that knowledge to local farming techniques.

## Breakout Group 3.

48. There are a couple things that come to mind. Amache had the silk-screen shop, which not only did printing for the capital, but also printed materials for the U.S. Navy. It was the only camp that had a shop that did things for the military. There are only two other camps that have actual remains of people in the cemetery. Those headstones represent people.

There are still remains in the cemetery and that's why it was one of the first things that some of the groups put money towards. In order to show respect, they put sprinklers in, and helped in changing out the wood stones with stone stones.

49. On one visit, he heard that in order to put 8,000 people on the site, they needed more water than there was. One or two wells were dug after the site was designated for use. Granada acquired the rights to the wells after the site was vacated.
50. Someone else heard that wells were dug deeper to supply the camp. The town had property taken away. It shouldn't be taken away from the town this time around. Other camps like Poston and in those in south didn't take anything away from the town.
51. Resisters of Conscience—documentation through the HMFPC. Three dozen at Amache helped the national JACL recognize them in 2002. Put them in the Sacto Museum exhibit and the Florin JACL gave them an award. Amache resisters were sent to the same camp as Gordon Hirabayashi near Tucson. They were proud of what they did and had reunions every three years. Their story was included in the kiosk there, along with Gordon Hirabayashi. Their story needs to be recognized at Amache civil disobedience and protesting. This should be a lesson for future generations and there should be interpretation at the site.
52. Amache had the lowest percentage of “No-No’s.” People from Tule Lake who answered “Yes” were also sent to Amache. The site is farthest east with much physical integrity today. People were moved between sites. How far away were they removed and dispersed? Families split up. I visited a Manhattan NHS unit; parts of the sites are in multiple places. This demonstrates breadth and scope of the story across the country. Amache demonstrates that, too.
53. Info should be gotten out there and preserved. I meant this on two levels: I want to know my family's history as well as general history. University websites and maps were exciting, especially seeing his family's house listed there, and great uncles who were also there or located close by. A lot of my family history I didn't know but everyone should learn, especially these days. Such a critical thing. We're at this period of time where we need to make sure it gets preserved before first-person accounts are lost and history gets rewritten.
54. There is an online interactive directory where you can look up family barracks.
55. The Tadaima virtual pilgrimage has had more than a handful of videos about Amache specifically, including Bonnie Clark and the field school. Go back and search their channel, there are things about botany and sports. Overview through the virtual pilgrimage, it's more accessible this summer. There are handwritten sheets of who was at camp and where they were, so you can stand at your family's (building) foundation. The best from Amache are the documents from the time. The camp newspaper and junior-high yearbooks. Things you can actually look at. Even in 2015, John Hopper's high-school kids alone have made it possible to sit and read newspapers. His mom helped typed the yearbook. These are actual items. Learned what his uncle and aunt were up to because of what he saw there. It's pretty amazing to see actual documents. Still part of the process in

2018. Should have the NPS work with existing groups who have been working on it for so long. Poke around and see what you can find.

56. You can look up your family barracks. The foundations were different at Amache. You can see the whole outline of the barracks layout. You can stand in your family's barracks. There's integrity of the layout of the site overall.

### **What do you think differentiates Amache from the other nine Japanese American incarceration camps?**

#### **Breakout Group 1.**

57. We talked about how it was the only incarceration site with brick floors. But we also had a huge farm that produced far more produce than we could use. We sent our surplus to other incarceration sites, as well to Army camps. Also, being close to Granada was a very positive thing for those incarcerated.
58. One of the huge things is the need to recognize people like Governor Carr, who resisted what Executive Order 9066 was doing. He was such an outspoken advocate of the Japanese Americans that he was voted out. We need to recognize him.
59. I'm thinking more about Amache's proximity to not just Sand Creek, but Bent's Old Fort. There's also a kiva at a nearby community college that could provide some important historical knowledge.
60. I think in anything that talks about Amache should talk about John Hopper. The things that he has done, and continues to do, are far beyond what anyone else has done. He needs to be mentioned as an important figure.

#### **Breakout Group 2.**

Note: Comments to this question were discussed holistically with **"What objects, buildings, remaining features, values and stories do you believe are the most important and why?"** Combined comments are therefore noted under this question.

#### **Breakout Group 3.**

61. There is the opportunity to be more inclusive with interpretation and public memory. The area was surveyed prior to 2006 when it became an NHL. Certain parts of the site are neglected. There are five dugouts more indicative to Mexican nationals. More likely from the tenant farmers or the original homesteader before that, I'm not sure. There are five dugouts indicative of Mexican American settlements right before the 20th century or after. There are ceramics circa 1904. I don't think as early as the Santa Fe Trail. Perhaps right after. It was RMS consultants, Richard, who was the archeologist on that. He was hired through the city of Granada before the NHL. Much of what was taken away in the building or the ceiling was adobe or wood. Much has (since) been washed out. There are still some things remaining there, possibly significant. The state of Colorado or History Colorado can help out with that portion. There is significant history involving the

Hispanic community there. This should be synthesized with the history of Japanese immigrant farming in the Arkansas Valley.

62. One of the things that was important was the fact that we were originally farm people from the Central Valley. When people from L.A. arrived, we became quite concerned about the “unruly” L.A. people that would come in and that was one of the thoughts we had. We wound up getting along quite well with them. I think one of the things about Amache that was so unique was the fact that there is so much unrest in other camps; but Amache, we were all very quiet, never had much of a problem there.
63. When I went to the site for the first time in 2015, the main information that I had driving on the roads were some of the labeling posts and of the reading boards. I hope there will be a way to preserve those individual efforts. Nothing like this has ever happened. (Those who worked on Amache Preservation) can come back or come back with kids or whatever and say, here's what we worked on during my year. Whether or not they remain in the same place but if we have reserved the actual signpost somewhere else, or if it's alongside the new one, not sure what the precedent is.
64. There are two things. It is the only complete footprint of an entire site like this that exists compared to all the others. Also, the unusual support from the Governor. His story of telling Granada and the people of Colorado, “you will be friendly.” Him taking that position ruined his political career but the statue of him in Denver is on the list of must-visit sites for Japanese dignitaries.
65. Amache is perfectly placed between the Sand Creek Massacre site. When one is traveling with groups or in one's own way out into the middle of the great plains, it's good have other meaningful historic sites in such immediate vicinity and be exposed to a diversity of historical aspects.

### **Do you have any other comments you would like to share with us?**

#### **Breakout Group 1.**

No additional comments.

#### **Breakout Group 2.**

66. After this public comment period, is the summary of the recommendations going to be made for viewing by stakeholders—make public before there is a final document?
67. Regarding the policy of not sharing results of study of summary document, [I] would like to have the opportunity to have this reviewed by stakeholders in light of our current pandemic. We have to struggle now to do things in different ways so we support sharing those findings with stakeholders to make sure that all information has been represented.
68. [Refers to conversation for questions 3, 4] A conversation from earlier: how Amache was unique in terms of how the inhabitants were welcomed. Presently this community in

Colorado is very involved, and I would like to point out that this is part of their history, too.

### **Breakout Group 3.**

69. After getting released from Tucson, my dad worked at the fish market in Granada. Every night for month used to walk or hitchhike to the camp, sneak under the barbed wire, visit his family; and when they told MPs were around, he would sneak out. What would the road be from Granada to the camp that he would have walked?
70. Hwy 50? It's just a mile away. Maybe he could have also cut across the fields. Depends on which part of the camp he was going into. You could cut across the landscape.
71. Outside the exclusion zone, was there a strict perimeter?
72. I got the sense the only area that had barbed wire was around the living area. If you look at the map, there are agricultural fields surround[ing] the town. I'm not sure how that works.
73. My dad said it was around the living area. It was because they had to work in the fields. You technically had to get passes in the beginning. Wanted to leave to go to town, visit Newman's and things like that, but later on, when they started planting the trees, they got someone from the Arkansas River and brought them over.
74. This is something Bonnie mentioned. You can see all the trees because they stand up from the otherwise flat brush. Otherwise where wouldn't have been trees there.
75. I've been thinking about the question from the first meeting about whether a draft of the Special Resource Study will be shared with the public prior to finalizing the study. Even if it is not specifically required by law, it is an important step to demonstrate transparency and assure stakeholders that our input was accurately understood. According to the Civic Engagement Director's Order (75A), it is possible to go above and beyond minimum legal requirements. I would encourage you to offer us an opportunity to view and comment on the draft study findings, as is required for full NEPA actions.