

Japanese American National Library

An Historical Perspective

Hinode Tower and the Gate that leads to the Japanese American National Library



The Path that leads to JANL's Entrance



JANL's Outer Entrance The Inside Entrance

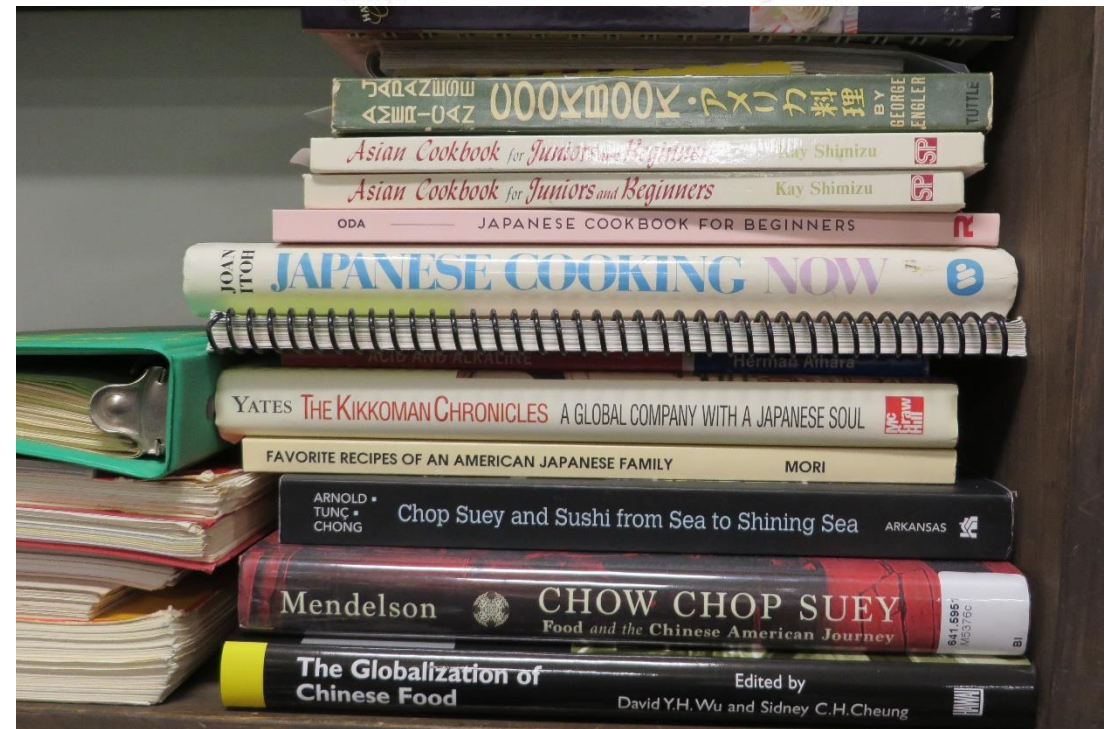


Inside the Japanese American National Library

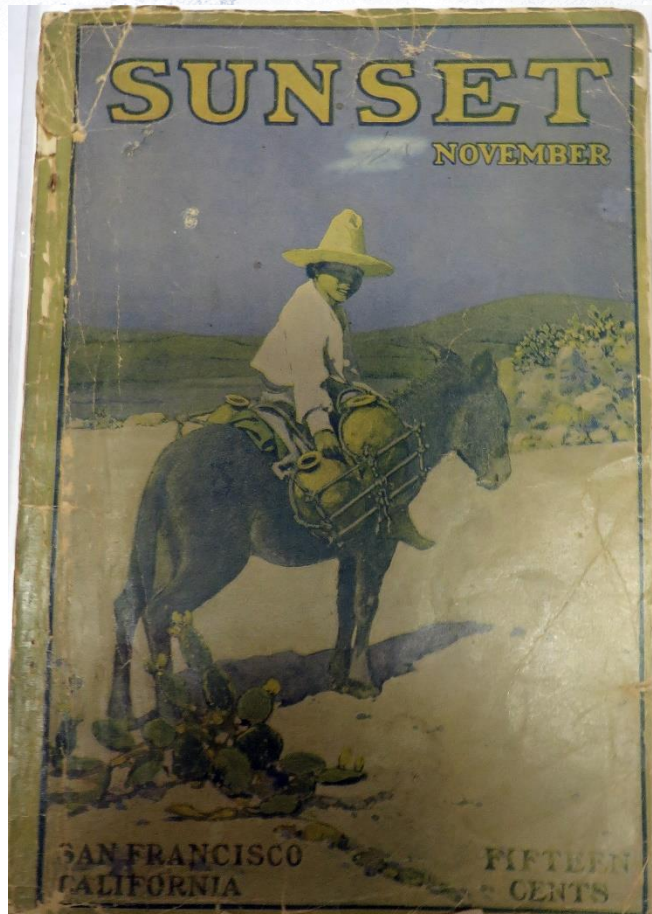


JANL has the most complete collection of books by and about Japanese Americans.

JANL has an extensive collection of Japanese American cookbooks especially those produced by Churches and other community organizations.



The JANL Collection includes gems such as this Sunset Magazine from November 1907 which features a 10-page story on San Francisco's Japanese.



SUNSET MAGAZINE
 Vol. XX NOVEMBER, 1907 No. 1

SAN FRANCISCO'S JAPANESE

SHOWING HOW NEW NIPPON HAS GROWN UP IN THE ONE-TIME CENTER OF THE CITY'S BEST RESIDENCE DISTRICT—WORKERS, HELPFUL AND AMBITIOUS

By CHARLES S. AIKEN
 Photographs by Tibbits



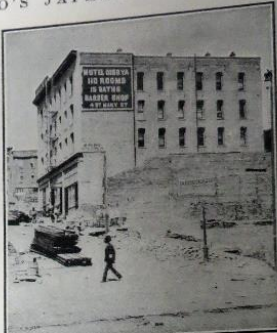
HIS tortured city by the Golden Gate woke one morning some months ago and discovered by reading the Washington dispatches that it had a Japanese problem. The average citizen, intent upon trade and rebuilding, and putting good government in the place of bad, was blissfully unaware of the gathering of a possible war-cloud. He was content to let the city school officials solve its own problems. The schooling of less than (at that time) one hundred Japanese pupils seemed to present fewer difficulties than planning for the education of twice that number of Chinese, ten times as many Italians, Spanish and Portuguese, and three times as many Greeks. Even the schooling of young America was a problem then—as it had been ever since the great fire—and the busy citizen went on about his affairs with the same philosophy that had come to all San Franciscans since the destruction of the city—that things, educational and otherwise, would right themselves somehow, and all in good time. "Trust in the Lord, and keep your powder dry," seemed more than enough working philosophy, for the only evident need for powder was in blowing up menacing ruins. Then came the protest of Japanese against being put into a school with Chinese or by themselves, the alarm of Washington statesmen and the holy horror of the unknowing altruists of Boston. A Cabinet officer crossed the continent on the dead run to see what was going on. The President dictated a few fiery paragraphs in a message to Congress, while the San Francisco school officials were summoned to Washington and had a pleasant visit of the all-expenses-paid variety.

It was at about this juncture, when all the jingo editorial writers from Kennebunkport to Kankakee, began printing comment on the relative naval strength of Japan and the United States, and all the yellow journal narratives blossomed with imaginary narratives of the bombardment of San Francisco or the storming of Monterey, that Californians began to realize that they were on the axle of the world's storm-centering wheel. Before that, little heed had been given the steady incoming of the Japanese, except by labor union leaders or mission teachers. Every steamer crossing the Pacific had been bringing its steerage

The page on the left shows Benkyodo Candy Factory on Geary Street.

SAN FRANCISCO'S JAPANESE

load of Japanese and they had been filling up the handy gaps in all lines of industry as house servants, as workers in orchard and vineyard, as railway laborers, they made places for themselves, and in most cases, were welcomed. To-day the Pacific Coast states—California, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, and Idaho, contain, at a reasonable estimate, fully eighty thousand Japanese. Of this number about one-third are in California, and over ten thousand are in San Francisco. The Hawaiian islands contain about as many as the Pacific Coast states, making the total, on American soil in the West alone, close to one hundred and sixty thousand men. And these are practically all healthy, muscular, wide-awake, pushing, aggressive young fellows with loyalty to their Emperor and their flag, their common trait and pride.



THE HOTEL OSHOYA, A MODERN HOTEL FOR JAPANESE ONLY, NEAR THE CENTER OF THE BUZZED DISTRICT

The great fire of San Francisco forced the Japanese problem to the front. But for that happening it is doubtful if the school question would have been raised, although the schools in the down town

centers were greatly crowded, owing to the city's rapid growth and the gaining



A ROW OF GEARY STREET HOMES GIVEN UP SINCE THE FIRE TO JAPANESE

SAN FRANCISCO'S JAPANESE



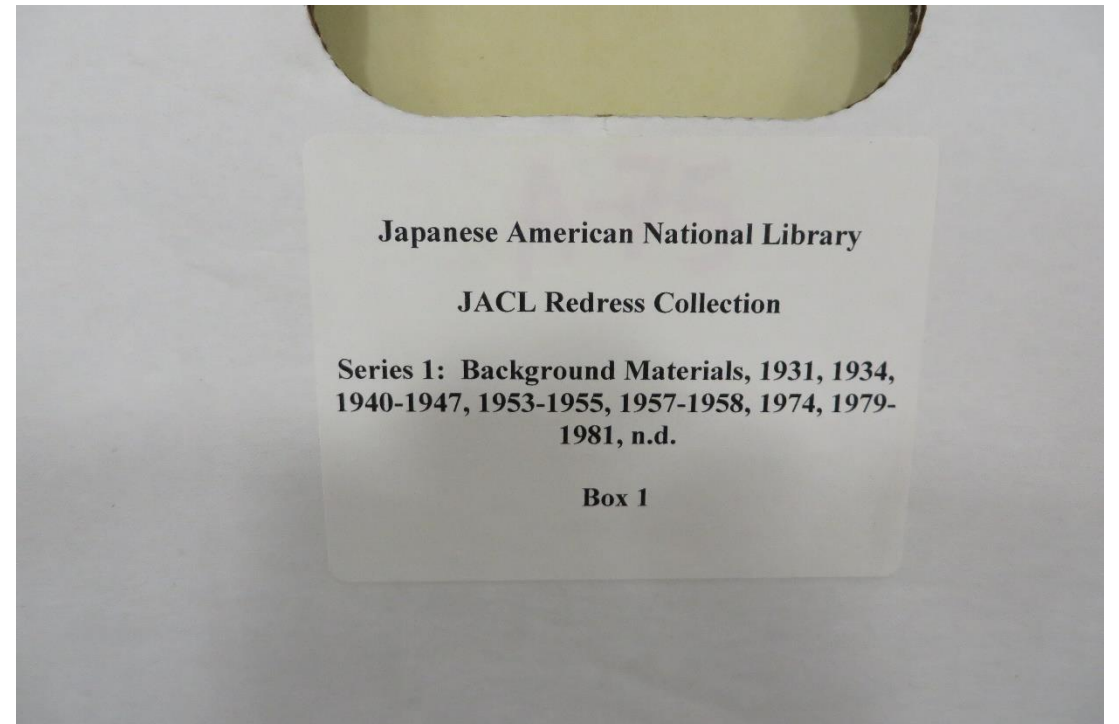
When a San Francisco housewife needs emergency help she telephones an "agency" for a "school boy," or whatever class of Japanese help she needs. For such service she pays thirty-five cents an hour, "with a white coat," twenty-five cents without, or from \$2.50 to \$8 a week. Like every other class there are Japanese and Japanese. Nearly all are

quick-witted and ambitious, but their ambitions are, naturally enough, more for the advancement of their own interests than those of their employers. As cooks they do not shine, for their ambition is beyond cooking. The study of conic sections or the reading of "Lycidas," between times, is not conducive to the making of a good gravy or the baking

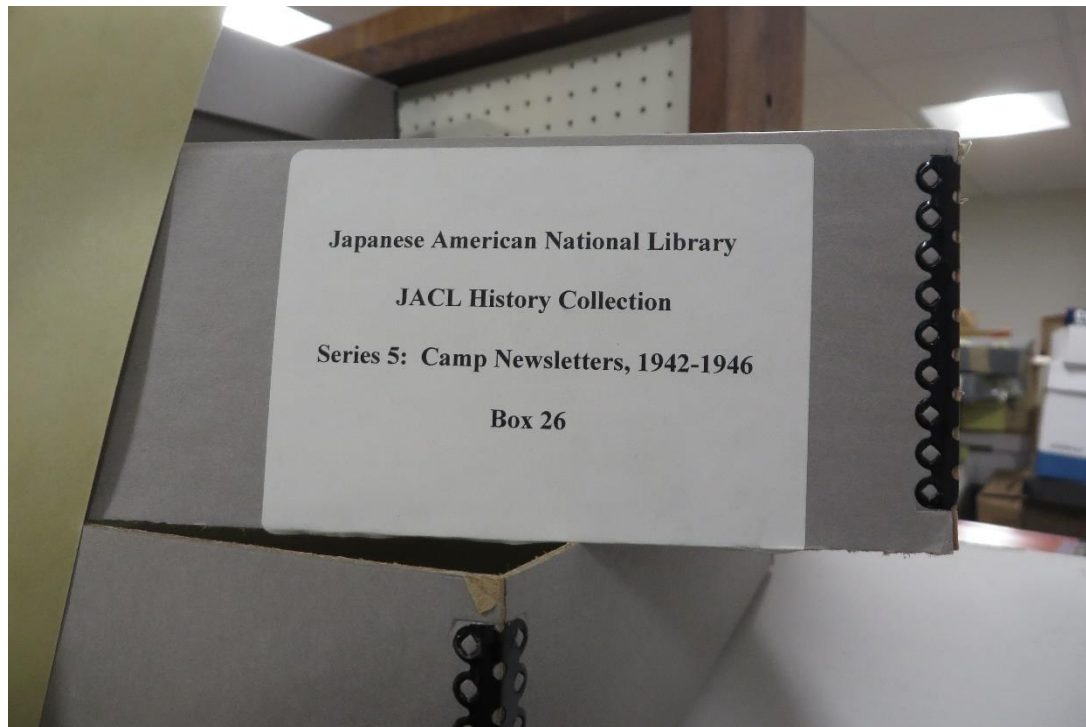
THE FOUR PICTURES ON THESE TWO PAGES SHOW THE NEW RETAIL DISTRICT OF SAN FRANCISCO'S JAPAN. NOTE MANNER IN WHICH EVERY INCH OF AVAILABLE SPACE IN THIS ONE TIME RESIDENCE DISTRICT IS UTILIZED. IN NEARLY ALL CASES THE RESIDENCES HAVE BEEN MADE OVER INTO STORES



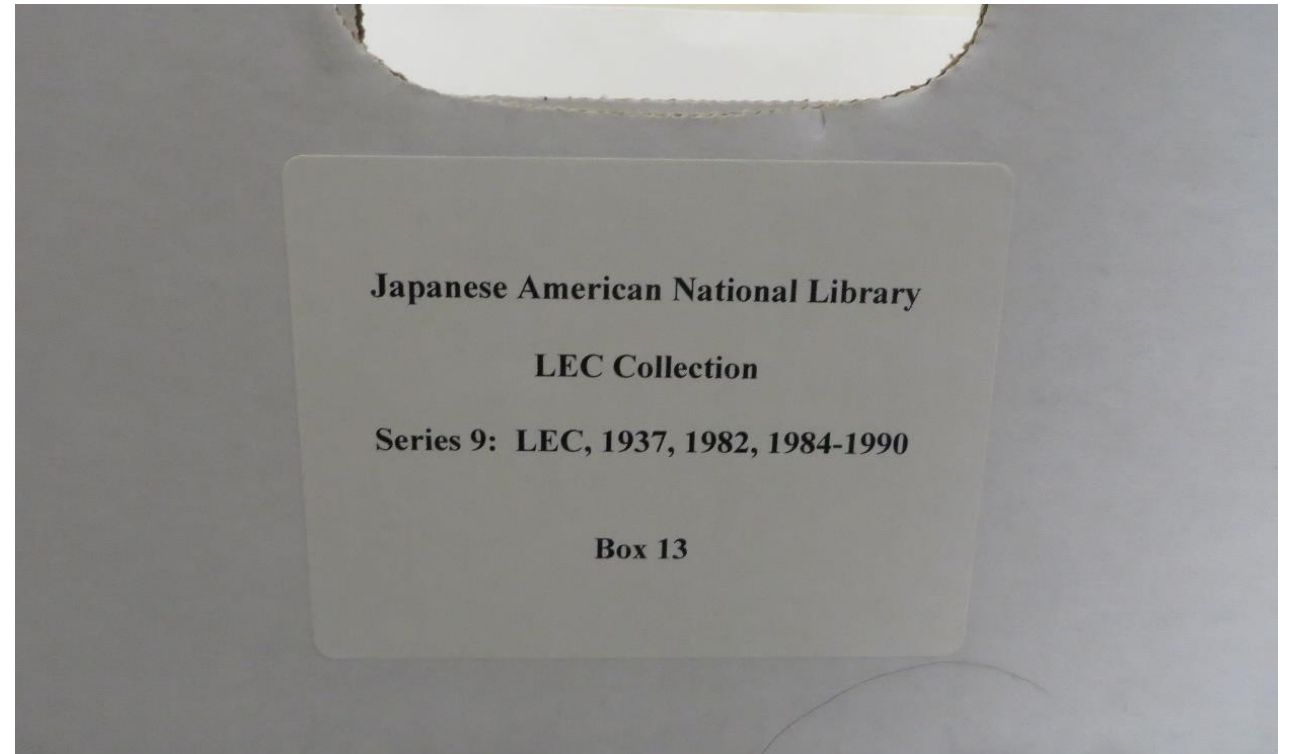
JANL has the historical archives
of the JACL.



Included in the JACL collection are all of the Concentration Camp Newspapers.



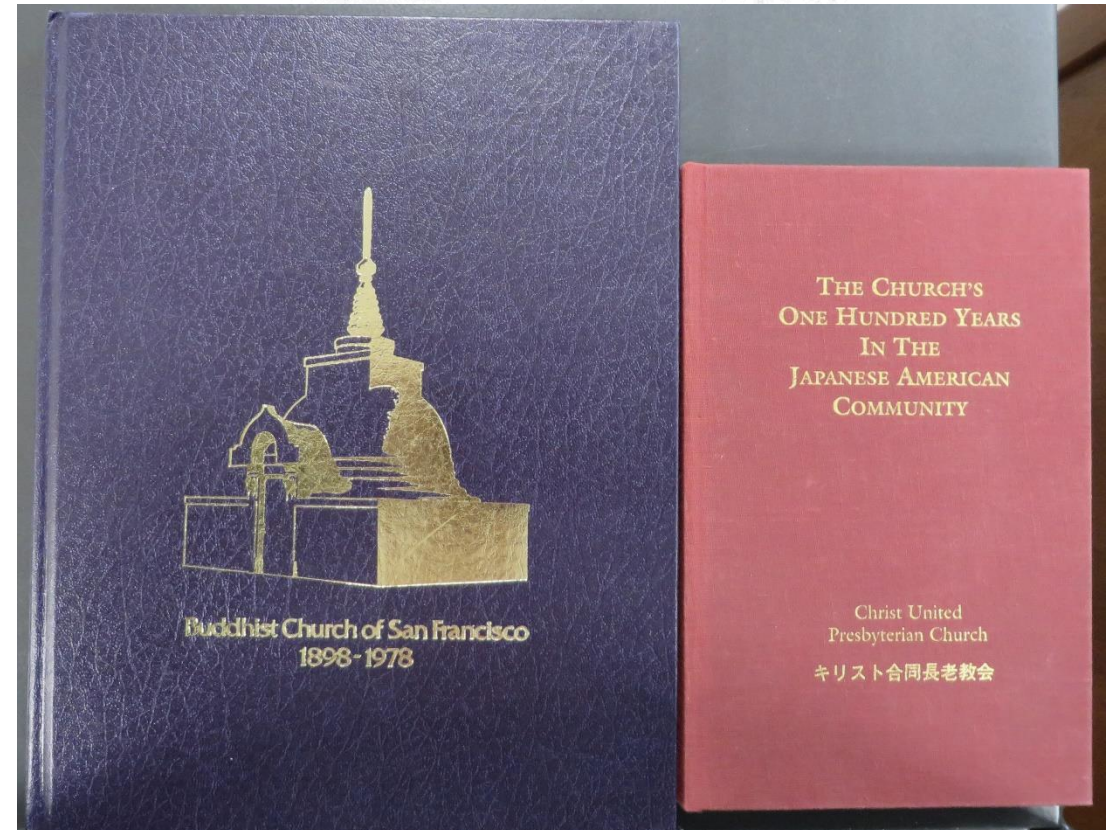
The Legislative Education Committee of the JACL was an important key to the passage of the Redress Bill of 1988. JANL is the home of the Complete LEC Collection.



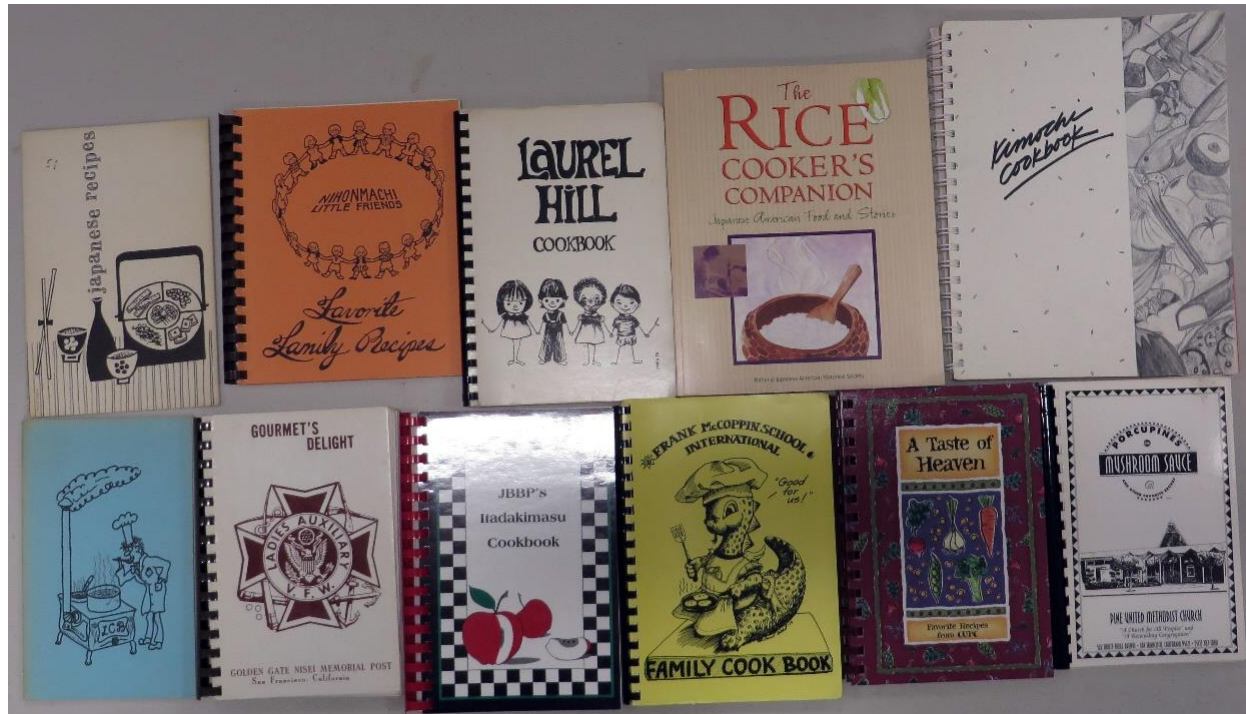
The contents of one box of the LEC Collection.



JANL has a vast collection of books, booklets, pamphlets and programs from religions and religious organizations.



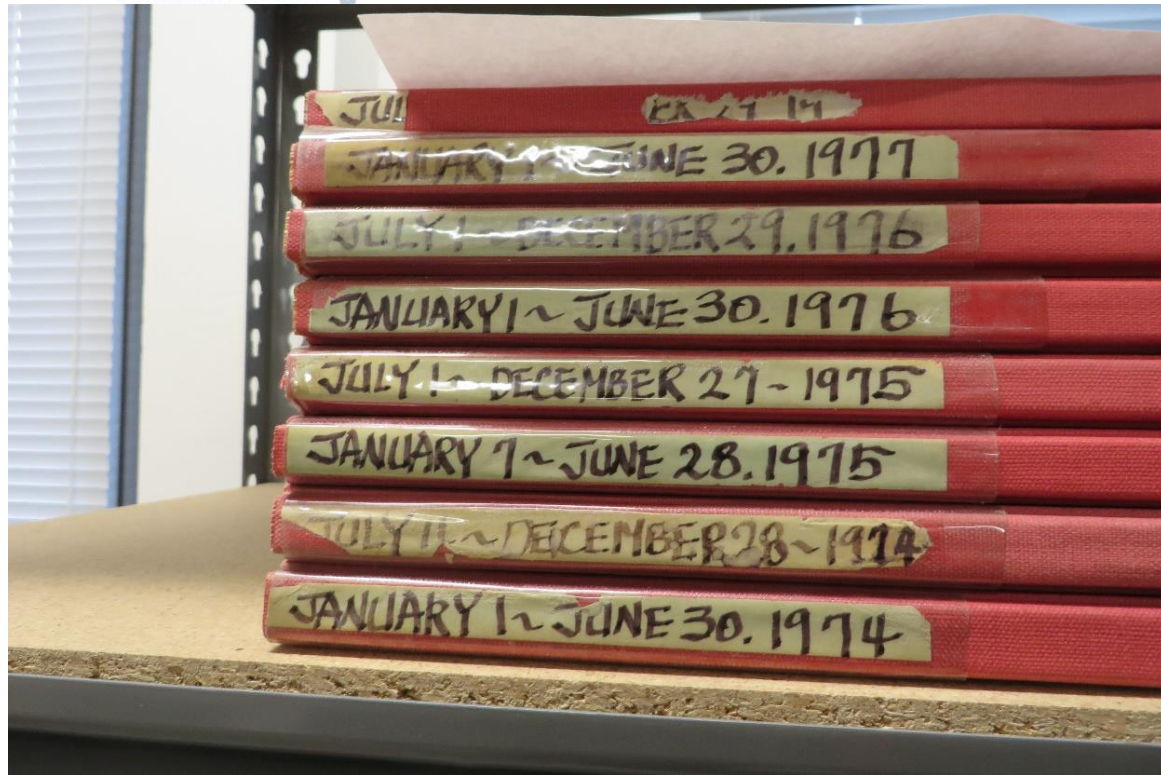
JANL has collected cookbooks published by churches, civic and social organizations plus monographs by and or about Japanese Americans.



JANL has the entire historical archives of the Nichibei Times going back to the early 1900s.



And the entire Hokubei Mainichi archives going back to its founding in 1948.



JANL has presented numerous public programs and forums on a wide range of topics.



JANL has held a mochitsuki every year, except last year, for the past 50 years.

