

TRIBUTE TO MITCH MIYAMOTO
1994 Association Installation Dinner
January 22, 1994

Mitch was born April 29, 1920 at Peerless, Utah and moved to California in 1929. He lived in San Francisco briefly and moved to Watsonville where he helped the family grow strawberries. He attended Hill and San Andreas Elementary School in June 1938.

Mitch was drafted into the Army in October 1941 and took his basic training at Fort Riley, Kansas. After Pearl Harbor he was transferred to Camp Hale, Colorado from where he made a desperate attempt to visit his family who were evacuated to the Santa Anita Assembly Center. He was not permitted to enter California and was ordered to return to Camp Hale. In the Spring of 1943, he was sent to Camp Shelby where he served as a cadre in the formation of the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. He was assigned to the 3rd Battalion Headquarters Company and participated in all of the campaigns of the Regiment. He was awarded the Combat Infantryman's Badge, a Bronze Star Medal, European African Middle Eastern Campaign Medal World War II Victory Medal, Good Conduct Medal, the Army of Occupation Medal. He was discharged in 1945, and a few years later graduated from the California School of Fine Arts.

In June 1953, he married Martha and together were blessed with a daughter Teri and two sons, Roger and Martin.

In 1955, he returned to Watsonville and was employed for the next 32 years at Ford's Department Store in the Display and Advertising department. Mitch passed away June 5, 1987 at the age of 67.

The story of Mitchie Mitsuo Miyamoto is not much different than most of us in this room except that he was the designer of the 442 patch. Borrowing a page from the book "Go For Broke," the original 442nd patch was designed by the War Department and depicted a yellow arm brandishing a sword dripping with blood. The general reaction to this patch from the Commanding Officer Col Pence down to the privates, was "YUK". Thanks to the efforts of Tec/Sergeant Mitch Miyamoto, the 442nd came up with it's own handsome design. It showed a white arm and hand holding a torch against a field of blue surrounded by a border of white and red. It was a positive symbol of freedom and liberty and was proudly worn by the JAs and our "Haole" officers of the 100/442 Regimental Combat Team.

He also designed the Regiment's lapel emblem with a river boat depicting Camp Shelby, Mississippi.