

## The Blackened Canteen

### Supporting resources and guiding questions

#### Overview

Students will study resources related to the history of the Blackened Canteen to **identify** important events and people related to the story, **discuss** themes of peace, courage and reconciliation, and, ultimately, **evaluate** the importance of honoring the past with events such as the Blackened Canteen Ceremony. Additionally, these activities and discussions will prepare students to be knowledgeable and active participants in the Blackened Canteen Ceremony and Symposium on December 6<sup>th</sup>, 2017.

#### Learning Outcomes

- Using the resources described in this document, students will summarize the historical context of the Blackened Canteen and the importance of preserving the story for future generations.
- Students will examine themes of peace, courage, and reconciliation through group discussions.

#### Historical Context

On the night of June 20<sup>th</sup>, 1945 while on a bombing raid over Shizuoka, Japan, two U.S. Army Air Forces' B-29s from the 314<sup>th</sup> Bomb Wing collided and crashed killing 23 crewmen. In the same raid, over 2000 Shizuoka citizens also died.

Dr. Hiroya Sugano, a child at the time, and his family lived through the raid. He visited the crash site the next morning but found no crewmen alive. He has never forgotten the death and destruction that surrounded him.

Another person at the scene was Mr. Fukumatsu Itoh. Mr. Itoh pulled two American airmen from the wreckage. They were still alive but died shortly thereafter. Mr. Itoh also retrieved a mangled, blackened canteen from the wreckage, which appeared to bear the handprint of its former owner.

Being a devout Buddhist, Mr. Itoh gave the American crewmen a proper burial alongside the local residents who had also died. For his selfless act of compassion, Mr. Itoh was roundly condemned by people in his community. He bore the hatred silently.

Instead, Mr. Itoh began conducting a modest annual ceremony to honor those who had paid the ultimate price that war often exacts. A silent prayer was offered and bourbon whiskey was poured from the blackened canteen onto the crash site memorial as an offering to the spirits of the fallen, both Japanese and American. Eventually, he erected two monuments in their memory and the annual ceremonies continued. Dr. Sugano witnessed Mr. Itoh's display of courage and benevolence, which affected him deeply.

Before his death, Mr. Itoh passed the blackened canteen to Dr. Sugano, who promised to carry on the tradition. Since 1972, he has personally funded and hosted the annual ceremony at the monuments, which are attended by many Japanese and American dignitaries, both civilian and military. He has also conducted similar ceremonies at other locations both in Japan and the United States.

2016 marks the 16th year that Dr. Sugano has attended the December 7th commemoration at Pearl Harbor. When the occasion has permitted, he has sometimes conducted an unobtrusive, semi-private ceremony at the Memorial in the company of close friends.

## **Supporting resources and guiding questions**

### **Section 1 : What is the Blackened Canteen Ceremony and why is it important?**

Resources:

Hollar, Denis. "The Blackened Canteen" Air and Space Magazine: Pearl Harbor 75 Collector's Edition

AFN Tokyo- [Shizuoka B-29 Memorial Ceremony 2015](#)

[3D Scan of The Blackened Canteen](#)

The Mainichi- [Doctor Invited to Pearl Harbor memorial after decades of work in honoring war dead](#)

National Parks Service- [Peace and Reconciliation Emphasized at Annual Blackened Canteen Ceremony](#)

1. Discuss the significance of having representatives from both Japan and the United States at the Blackened Canteen Ceremony in Shizuoka City and Honolulu.
2. In your opinion, how did Mr. Itoh's Buddhist beliefs influence him to bury the remains of the American B-29 crew members rather than turn them over to the authorities? How did Fukumatsu Itoh demonstrate courage when burying the American airmen who died in the B-29 crash over Shizuoka City?

### **Section 2: What circumstances contributed to the attack on Pearl Harbor, and how is that incident related to the story of the Blackened Canteen?**

Resources

[Castle Films: "Bombing of Pearl Harbor"](#)

[Japanese film footage of Pearl Harbor Attack](#)

1. Conflict and war are sometimes viewed as exciting and noble activities. How did your viewing of film footage of Pearl Harbor support or disprove this idea? How would you describe the feelings and reactions of the Japanese and American military men to this event?
2. How well did a majority of Japanese citizens understand American's during World War II? Does not knowing an opponent make it easier or harder to hate them? Why? How might these feelings affect wartime decisions? How would it affect peace making?

**Section 3: Peace and friendship have characterized the relationship between the U.S. and Japan for the past 71 years. How can young people use lessons from the Blackened Canteen story to perpetuate peace for future generations?**

The New York Times- *Japanese Veteran's Path to Reconciliation*

1. How do you define reconciliation? How is reconciliation related to peace and forgiveness?
2. What are barriers that prevent us from continuing to develop peace and reconciliation between Americans and Japanese?
3. Examine how the legacy of the Blackened Canteen passed from Fukumatsu Itoh to Dr. Hiroya Sugano. Do you think that carrying on the legacy of the Blackened Canteen is a calling or a duty for Dr. Sugano? Defend your opinion.



**Appendix 1: Crews of B-29s that collided over Shizuoka, Japan**



**Crew of B-29 (#42-65373)**

Barczak, Raymond E., Sgt, Tail Gunner, Maryland  
 Colli, Kenneth, Sgt, Right Gunner, Connecticut  
 Durham, Kenneth E., FO, Navigator, Missouri  
 Hopkins, Donald Q., Capt, Plane Commander, Indiana  
 Joyce, William G., FO, Pilot, Texas  
 Kuehler, Gerhard J., M/Sgt, Flight Engineer, Texas  
 Long, Maurice E., FO, Radar Observer, Indiana  
 Mose, Edward J., Jr., S/Sgt, Radio Operator, Illinois  
 Patsey, Justin J., Sgt, Left Gunner, New York  
 Powsner, Maurice J., FO, Bombardier, New York  
 Ulrich, Thomas, S/Sgt, CFC Gunner, Wisconsin



**Crew of B-29 (#44-69881)**

Arhutick, Tim, FO, Pilot, Michigan  
 Bergeron, Ernest D., Sgt, CFC Gunner, Massachusetts  
 Cameron, John W., Corp, Left Gunner, Ohio  
 Cohen, Monroe M., FO, Radar Observer, New York  
 Everdon, Waldo C., 1st Lt, Plane Commander, Michigan  
 Kellogg, Herbert A., Corp, Radio Operator, Pennsylvania  
 Morretta, Arthur J., Corp, Tail Gunner, New York  
 O'Conner, John J., 2nd Lt, Bombardier, New York  
 Puciloski, John, Sgt, Right Gunner, Pennsylvania  
 Rodeheffer, Edwin A., Jr., 2nd Lt, Navigator, Ohio  
 Stockburger, William B., Corp, Engineer, Georgia  
 Towle, Newton E., Jr., 2nd Lt, Passenger, AO, Maine

Final Resting Place of  
 Crews #42-65373 and #44-69881  
 Zachary Taylor National Cemetery  
 Louisville, Kentucky, USA



TIM ARHUTICK FLT O	RAYMOND E BARCZAK SGT
ERNEST D BERGERON SGT	JOHN W CAMERON CPL
MONROE M COHEN FLT O	KENNETH COLLI SGT
KENNETH E DURHAM FLT O	WALDO CARL EVERDON 1ST LT
DONALD O HOPKINS CAPT	WILLIAM G JOYCE FLT O
HERBERT A KELLOGG CPL	GERHARD J KUEHLER M SGT
MAURICE E LONG FLT O	ARTHUR J MORRETTA CPL
EDWARD J MOSE JR S SGT	JOHN J O'CONNOR 2D LT
JUSTIN J PATSEY SGT	MAURICE J POWSNER FLT O
JOHN PUCILOSKI SGT	EDWIN A RODEHEFFER JR 2D LT
WILLIAM B STOCKBURGER JR CPL	NEWTON EARLE TOWLE JR 2D LT
THOMAS G ULRICH S SGT	
AIR CORPS	
JUNE 20 1945	