

Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Camp Interpretive Planning and Exhibit Development

Rohwer, Arkansas



The history of Japanese American internment during World War II is a controversial part of our nation's history. The Rohwer Japanese American Relocation Center was one of ten camps across the nation and one of only two east of the Rocky Mountains. Today, only two physical reminders of the original camp remain: the cemetery and a brick smokestack from the hospital grounds. The barracks, buildings, schools, and watchtowers are all gone; the camp has disappeared beneath cotton fields. The site is unstaffed and the cemetery continues to be vulnerable to ongoing vandalism. The 106 Group developed an interpretive plan and is working with a large group of stakeholders to develop exhibits for this significant site. Among the goals of the interpretive planning process is to foster site preservation, build a cohesive group of partners and stakeholders who can effectively preserve, manage, and interpret the site, and convey different perspectives on the effects of the camp. The former camp serves as a thought-provoking reminder of the meaning of liberty, how insecurity can dramatically affect people's lives, and how fear can impact our country. The camp's stories are beginning to be told through an initial site tour, a website, and brochure which will all start to reveal what is now largely lost to history.

