

Greenbrier Hotel (White Sulphur Springs,
West Virginia)
December 19, 1941 - June 1942
German and Japanese diplomatic families and
diplomats.

Grove Park Inn (Asheville, NC)
April 3, 1942 - September/October 1942
63 Japanese and 155 German diplomats, busi-
nessmen and families, some who were serving
at posts in Latin American countries at the
beginning of the war with the United States.

Assembly Inn (Montreat, NC)
October 29, 1942 - April 30, 1943
138 Japanese women and children of businessmen, diplomats; 126 German busi-
nessmen, diplomats, wives and children. One State department representative and
25 Justice/INS guards.

Some other hotels holding small numbers of diplomats temporarily during
WWII included:

Ingleside Hotel (Staunton, Virginia) - German diplomats
Cascade Inn (Hot Springs, Virginia) - diplomats
Shenvalee Hotel (New Market, Virginia) - Italian diplomats
Bedford Springs Hotel (Bedford Springs, Pennsylvania)

February 14, 1944 — Justice Department closed the last of its program housing
special war non-combatants such as diplomats, businessmen and families in
confinement hotels.



*Some Special Axis Non-Combatants
at Grove Park Inn just before
coming to Montreat's Assembly Inn.*



Presbyterian Heritage Center Diplomats, Missionaries & Montreat: WWII

With the sudden involvement of the United States in World War II due to the
bombing of Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, by the Japanese, military,
diplomats and businessmen from both
sides were caught in what were then
enemy countries.

International protocol urged above
average treatment of such diplomats,
businessmen and their dependents
while awaiting repatriation (exchange),
as well as provisions for non-combat-
ants to ensure their safety.

The Special War Problems Division
of the U.S. State Department operated
a small number of detention facilities
during WW II — not to be confused with
Japanese and Japanese-American internment
camps, generally out West run by the U.S. War Department.

“Special war problems” included diplomats, consular corps staff and their families,
as well as a few executives of Axis-owned businesses located pre-war in the U.S. or in
Latin American countries (Western hemisphere). These diplomats, businessmen and
their families were housed in hotels, pending repatriation. The same was done in
Germany for American diplomats and families, for example in Marienbad. The
American diplomats in Japan were housed at the U.S. embassy and camps.

In the U.S., these Axis diplomats, businessmen and families were housed inland
for short periods of time at Appalachian hotels and resorts, such as the Greenbrier
Hotel, the Homestead, the Grove Park Inn, Ingleside Hotel, Shenvalee Hotel and
Montreat's Assembly Inn. These diplomats and families began being transferred to
these hotels on December 19, 1941. Everyday operations of these facilities were han-
dled by the Immigration & Naturalization Service. One present-day author



*Special Axis Non-Combatants
loading bus outside Assembly Inn.*

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described the treatment afforded these diplomats and families as provided in "a regal manner... the United States hoped its diplomatic officials would receive similar treatment."

A State Department memorandum in 1942 reported that 785 people were interned in these hotels. Additional people were later added during 1943. Exchanges of diplomats, businessmen and families were made numerous times during 1942 - 1944 through neutral country ships at neutral ports. The U.S. used Swedish ships Drottningholm and the Gripsholm for repatriation on 33 voyages. The last detention hotel operated by the U.S. State Department closed on February 14, 1944.

Montreat — Axis Diplomatic & Businessmen Confinement

In October 1942, State Department officials contracted with Montreat to house businessmen, diplomats and families for a short period of time. The Montreat Retreat Association (MRA) agreed to house these civilians until April 1st (later



Japanese young girls at Montreat, left-to-right are: Michiko Okaji, Shizuko Carolyn Fujisawa, Shigeko Okaji, Taeko Carol Miyamoto, Kiyoko June Kiyohara, Miyeko Ella Ohta, Michiko Jane Asami, Sugako Isobe, Toshiko Marianne Matsumura, Nobuko Saito, Sumie Betty Ohta, Mariko Mary Kojima and Satoko Isobe. The young girl in front is not identified.

extended to April 30), 1943, due to a planned General Assembly meetings planned for Montreat in May 1943 by the Presbyterian Church in the United States. On October 29, 1942, 264 businessmen, diplomats, wives and children started to be transported to Montreat.



The German contingent was housed on the two lower floors of Assembly Inn, with the Japanese women and children on the upper floor. There were NO bars or gates either on windows or in the lobby.

The MRA placed a Japanese language New Testament or German-language Bible in the appropriate hotel rooms. The diplomats and dependents could exercise in the parking areas of Assembly Inn, and roam territory from the hotel to the lake, between the dam and the upper concrete bridge at the head of the lake.

At Christmas time, presents were provided by the MRA to the Japanese and German children — and paid for by contributions from the Sunday School of the First Presbyterian Church of Spartanburg and others.

Reportedly at Christmas 1942, young people from Black Mountain gathered at the bridge and joined in singing Christmas carols — "Joy to the World" and "Holy Night" — with the families. All businessmen, diplomats, wives and children were transferred from Montreat on April 30, 1943.

From the State Department revenues received by the MRA, \$25,000 was held in reserve and used when the Historical Foundation building (Spence Hall) was constructed in 1954.

U.S. State Department Camps for Diplomats, Businessmen & Families

Homestead Hotel (Hot Springs, Virginia)

December 19, 1941 - April 4, 1942

159 German, Italian, Hungarian & Bulgarian diplomats and family members from Washington, DC.; plus 335 Japanese diplomats and family members from Washington, DC; Havana, Cuba; Mexico City, Mexico.