

MR. HISASHI MASUDA
Department of the Army Civilian, Retired (Deceased)



Mr. Masuda served more than 44 years in the US intelligence community. He was born in 1915 in Sonoma, California. When he was three years old, his mother took him to her native Japan, where he spent the next 15 years. Educated in Japanese schools, he was an accomplished Japanese speaker by the time he returned to California in 1933. He was working in a grocery store in Los Angeles when the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor in 1941. By April of the next year, he and all Japanese-Americans were moved to relocation camps.

In September 1942, Masuda volunteered to join the Military Intelligence Service when an Army recruiter visited to the camp. He went to language school at Camp Savage, Minnesota, and then to Camp Shelby, Mississippi, for Basic Training. He departed for the South Pacific in December 1943 on a ship carrying a team of radar technicians and their equipment. SGT Masuda

spent Christmas in New Caledonia and New Year's Day in New Guinea. Eventually, he wound up in Melbourne, Australia, working for the Australian Broadcasting Commission. He served as an Intercept Operator and Translator of Japanese national radio broadcasts. Masuda's section intercepted the first news of the impending resignation of Japanese Prime Minister Hideki Tojo's cabinet in 1945. Although discharged in 1946, he continued to work in the Counter Intelligence Corps as a civilian until 1952. At that time, he began working as a liaison with Japanese civil authorities and remained a key member of the Foreign Liaison Detachment that was the foundation of the 500th MI Group.

By the time he retired in 1986 at age 71, Hisashi Masuda was a living legend, known by everyone in the 500th MI Group as "Johnny" Masuda. He was the recipient of a Bronze Star Medal for meritorious achievement during his service in the Philippine Islands and Japan during World War II. For his civilian service, Mr. Masuda received the Department of the Army Commander's Award for Civilian Service.

Mr. Masuda was inducted into the MI Hall of Fame in 1988. He passed away in 2012.