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Interviewer: Lisa Uyeda
Date: April 14, 2011
Location: Toronto, Ontario
Accession Number: 2010-005

SEDAI PROJECT
THE JAPANESE CANADIAN LEGACY PROJECT

[Start part 1]

Lisa Uyeda: So, today is April 14, 2011.
Pat Adachi: It goes so fast [chuckles].
LU: I know. [laughs]. Would you like to start off by telling us your full name?
PA: My full name is Patricia Sumiye, and my maiden name was Kawajiri, and Adachi.
LU: And can you please tell us a little bit about your parents?
PA: Well, I guess I'll have to start with my grandfather, because he came to Canada in the year 1900. And, uh, at first they were fishermen, and then a group of their countrymen moved to Main Island, which is one of the Gulf Islands, south of Victoria, and, uh, there they set up a chicken farm. A poultry farm. Anyways, my father, Iwai Chi Kawajiri, actually, he was born a Sasaki, but he was a second son, and in Japan at that time, the eldest got everything. And because he was a second son, he thought he'd have more opportunity if he came to Canada. And so, my grandfather, my mother's father sponsored him. So he came to Canada when he was seventeen, he was born in 1897, and, um, he worked for my grandfather at his poultry farm.

And then my grandmother came in 1907, I think. By that time, my mother- I think she was about eight years old, because she was born in 1899-they came to Main Island and lived there, but my mother - there was no schools at that time, so they sent her back to Japan, and she studied in Japan and lived with relatives, and she always resented that. I guess all children feel that way, if they're left on their own - so, it was an arranged marriage for my mother and father, because my grandfather sponsored my father, and so he [father] took on the name of Kawajiri, which was my [maternal] grandfather's name. So, it's a bit complicated, but anyways, so my father came when he was 17, so they must have got married very young, and a few years later my mother came. And, I don't know if my father became allergic to chickens [chuckles], but he moved to Chilliwack [British Columbia], to a dairy farm. And there, he was very fortunate in having this family, the lady of the house taught him English every night after work, and he even learned penmanship. His penmanship was better than mine! And he used to laugh at my children because they no longer use penmanship; they use computers, so it's not necessary. He really had lovely

penmanship. So, he learned to read and write, in English, so that later on-oh, I'm getting ahead of myself, after my mother came, then they moved to Kitsilano [Vancouver neighbourhood, British Columbia], Second Avenue, and I was born there in 1920. August 8th. We didn't stay there very long, there weren't many opportunities.

And, uh, my father was asthmatic, and he didn't think he could work for anyone. So he started his own rooming business, on Cordova Street. And that was near Woodward's, which is no longer there, but it was a large department store. There were many downtown, it 66 Cordova [Street]. So I grew up there, until I guess I was about five or six, then we moved to Powell Street, to 134 Powell Street, which was a larger building, and for five years I was the only child, and so my father took me everywhere. [Smiles] And that's where I learned to love baseball! [chuckles]. Anyways, my sister Toshiko [Kawajiri] arrived October 21, 1925. And that's the same birthday as my father, we have a strange coincidence in my family, there's several people who have the same birthdays. Anyways, I went to Central School, which is- the school's no longer there- but it used to be across from the Daily Province [newspaper], the province newspaper there, and, uh, then, as I said, I went to this kindergarten at Holy Cross [Church], and there I met Hideo Iguchi, who lived not far from us, and her father had a rooming house, too, on Water Street. Which is now called Gastown, I guess. So she and I went through kindergarten, right through public school, and through high school, and even Japanese language school, we were in the same class, right through. Most of our lives, you know, we were really close friends. And, uh, well, public school, we finished early because, for some reason, they promoted the, uh, Japanese students, so we skipped a year. So, I wasn't quite 13 when I went to high school.
LU: Did they say why they were skipping a year?
PA: No [shrugs], for some reason, but I guess it wasn't only our school, we only had a few Japanese, but some of my friends went to Strathcona, and they went through the same thing. Maybe Japanese kids started harder? You know, I really couldn't say. They never told us [chuckles]. And then, we went to King Edward High School, which was on Oak Street, and that was quite a large high school at that time. From there, I guess, I always wanted to become a nurse. My Sunday School teacher was my mentor. But, I graduated too early, I guess- when I applied, they said, "You can't be registered until you're 18 years old, you'll have to wait another year and a half." So my father said, "Why don't you go to university?" But, you know, there was a Great Depression at that time, and, uh, he was having a hard time keeping his business going, because he had leased the downstairs, the ground floor, to a restaurant and two barbershops, but they couldn't meet their rent. So, you know, I knew he was struggling, and besides, in that era, even the male students, male

graduates, couldn't find a decent job. They end up going to fishing or working in a sawmill, or construction.

It happened to three brothers, the Korenaga brothers- I know them because they played for the Asahi's [baseball team]-but, they couldn't find a job, so eventually they went to Japan, thinking they'd have a better future. But once in Japan, they got conscripted into the army, so, things didn't work out. And so I thought, "Well, here the men folks can't get a job, why should I spend, you know, four years going to university, when my father really couldn't afford it?" So, I thought, "Well, maybe I should be looking for a job." Well, in the meantime, every summer, we would go up to a fishing cannery. There was a Nelson fishing cannery, and I would go with my friends and their mother, and we'd go for about a month and a half. You'd go by boat, up the coast, and I thought that was wonderful, just to get away from home, and live with my friends, nothing could be better [smiles], you know. A lot of people went to berry picking [as employment], it was quite common at that time. But I'd never been on a farm, so [chuckles] I wasn't much good at that! So, it was my, uh, after my graduation, I had gone up there for the summer, and then, one day, I got a phone call from my father, saying, "You'd better come home, there's an offer for you to work at T. Maikawa [store]." And that's how it happened. So, special arrangements were made, and a Princess Line stopped by, picked me up, took me all the way up to Prince Rupert [British Columbia], and I thought I was the greatest thing [laughs]. And [I] came back home. And that's how I got the job.
LU: Wow! Well, before we move on to the T. Maikawa store, maybe we'll talk a little bit more about your mother, you didn't mention her name? What is her name?
PA: It's Ryu, R-Y-U, and she was a Kawajiri.
LU: And what about your great-grandfather, then, so her father-
PA: My grandfather, yes.
LU: So, he was here, but do you know anything about your great-grandparents?
PA: No. But I remember my grandmother because, when I was so small, they used to take me over to Main Island, to visit them. And I thought she was the most wonderful person, and I still remember baking biscuits, baking powder biscuits [chuckles]. They're still my favourite! And my grandfather used to have this workhorse, and he would put me on it, and take me around the farm, so I was really spoiled [smiles, chuckles].
LU: [Laughs] And what is your grandmother's name?
PA: Yoshiko. And my grandfather's name is Tsunekichi.
LU: And you mentioned that your parents were married when they were fairly young, do you know if they were married here in Canada, or if they were married in Japan?

PA: No, they were married in Japan. So, that's how my father came, as a *yoshi*. As a sponsor from my grandfather.
LU: So, they were already married before he came to Canada?
PA: Yes.
LU: And what part of Japan were they from?
PA: It's Agarimitchi Tottori-ken. It's on the Sea of Japan side. Have you been to Japan? No? [chuckles] It's a beautiful place. On that side there used to be sand dunes, and they even had a camel at one time, so [chuckles] it's quite different from Tokyo and that, you know.
LU: Did your parents or grandparents ever talk about Japan?
PA: No, not very much. I don't think my grandparents ever went back. My parents went once. They couldn't wait to come back. I think it was Easter time, I sent them an Easter card, and my Dad said, "When people come back from Canada or the [United] States, they think they're millionaires, so everybody wants to come with them." So Dad said he would have to hire a bus to take everybody wherever he went [chuckles]. Anyways, he missed the Canadian way, and that was the only time they went.
LU: Wow. How long were they there for?
PA: Oh, about a month or so, I think. I guess you get accustomed to things in Canada. I think it's freer, you know, no restrictions.
LU: So, your parents never had any plans then, to return and finish their life in Japan?
PA: No, that wasn't their idea. Even with the repatriation, there's no doubt about it-my father said, "You were born here, there will come a better time." So, there was never any thought of going back.
LU: And what about the rest of their family? Where they the only ones, other than your grandparents, to come from Japan?
PA: No, from this Tottori-ken [area of Japan], there were about fifty people that came with my grandfather, they were the first ones. And, so, a lot of them ended up living in Main Island, and they set up poultry farms, and it was during 1914-1918, during the First World War, so poultry was in great demand, so they did very well. But after the war, well, the chicken business died down. And then they turned to tomatoes. And one of the people that came with them, Mr. Nagata, he was very open and broad-minded, he started a cooperation crop of tomato growers. And they would send it to all over Canada, and they really helped the island prosper. Main Island was started by elite English people, and it was named after this surveyor who had come to Main Island in the beginning, and then all these elite English people came, they were looking for adventure I guess, but they brought all their old customs with them. Like, you know, they'd have afternoon tea, dances, and tennis, and one was a great artist, and he became-he instructed all the schoolchildren to

paint, and the two of them were great people, and they sponsored the Japanese children to become baptized-in fact, most of the school was made up of Japanese students, so, when the war started, and they had to be evacuated, they had to close the school down, because there weren't that many children.
LU: Wow.
PA: Yes, so a few years ago, we were invited- sorry [coughs] I'm getting out of sequence-
LU: No, no, that's fine!
PA: We were invited back to Main Island, all the descendants, so I went too, and the Lieutenant Governor of B.C., she dedicated a plaque to all these Japanese people that had lived there. And, uh, we had a big picnic, so, my son was living in North Vancouver at the time, so he and my granddaughter came, and it was a marvelous time [smiles]. Anyways [chuckles].
LU: Wow! Trying to think now, where's a good spot to continue on with that one-
PA: [Chuckling] I keep getting off track!
LU: That's okay! That's quite alright. Um, you mentioned your father went to the dairy farm, did your mother go along with him?
PA: No. It was called Chilliwack, it's quite a large place now, but at that time it was a dairy farm.
LU: And how long was he there for?
PA: I really don't know, because, by the time I was born, he had moved to Kitsilano- so, maybe five years?
LU: What was your mother doing during that time away?
PA: She lived with her parents, who was on the island, Main Island.
LU: So she was helping there, at that house?
PA: Yes.
LU: Oh, very interesting.
PA: [Chuckles].
LU: Did your mother ever learn English?
PA: [Nods] Yes, while we had a rooming house, so you had to learn to speak. She never went to school, but enough to get by, yeah, you know. Because all the lodgers were, strangely enough, when we went to 134 Powell Street, they were all Irish! And that's how I got my name- see, my name was Sumiye, even going to public school I was Sumiye, but all the residents used to call me "Pat", and so, when I got married, I had to have it officially changed to "Patricia" [chuckles]. Funny family [laughs].
LU: And, when we were speaking just a few moments ago about your parents, and how your father was a yoshi, now, was that something common?
PA: Yes, it is in Japan. Because quite often there are families that don't have any boys to carry on the family name, so, you know, the second or third son might be adopted by another family. Not necessarily married to, but say like an uncle would provide

for the second or third son, and they would carry on their name. It was important that they carry on the family name, you see.
LU: Now, somebody has mentioned to me quite a while ago, that some families have a family crest.
PA: Yes, I never came across ours. I think they were poor village people [chuckles], I don't think it went back that far.
LU: Your parents, were they religious at all?
PA: Well, they believe in Shinto. But it was only after they came to Toronto that they became Christians.
LU: Would they practice the religion in British Columbia?
PA: Shinto? Not to any extent. It was like Buddhism in a way, they celebrated certain days, but we were never drilled in any religion. We all went to the Holy Cross Church, and when I went to kindergarten, we went there for Sunday School. So we were Anglican at that time, as children.
LU: Did your parents attend the church ceremony while you were in Sunday School?
PA: Well, once in a while. I tell you, they were wonderful people, these missionaries there, that ran the church. They taught the isseis English, etiquette, and the way of Canadian life, and my father said he even learned how to carve a turkey. So every Thanksgiving, he would do the carving.

Not only that, I would like to mention these wonderful people because all through our growing-up days, they made sure we learned not just religion, they would take a group of us, and we would learn to play badminton, dumbbell exercises- dumbbell is current today! But back then we had it - and we had gym, and then they would create little plays- because you know how Japanese are, they never speak up- they want us to be able to learn to meet the public, so we'd have these little plays, I guess that's how we learned to speak in public. At least I'm grateful for it, because [chuckles] it's helped me a lot.

But, not only that, during evacuation, these people came and lived with us, in Ghost Town[1] [Slocan group of internment camps]. One was, Miss [Peggy] Foster was a kindergarten teacher, so the first thing she started was kindergarten, in Bay Farm and Pop-off, and Miss [Grace] Tucker became welfare manager for the B.C. Security, and so, there were a lot of women there with no husbands, having to raise their children, so she was really wonderful. And these two- she was only five feet tall, but she was dynamite. And she would fight her own church, or the government, if they couldn't help the Japanese people. And they fought for them, not only these people,

[1] Throughout the interview, Mrs. Adachi uses Ghost Town to refer to all internment and self supporting camps.

but, I guess, other missionaries in different religions- they fought for the Japanese people so that their husbands and men folks could come back from road camp and from internment, and they made sure that we had sufficient help. And we never forgot them- this is getting ahead of the story- after we came to Toronto, they came with us, to make sure we had a place to stay, and jobs, and those that needed to go to school. And we wanted to repay them in some way, and so we applied for the nomination for the Order of Canada, for these two ladies. And Miss Peggy Foster, she declined, but she certainly deserved it. But Miss [Marguerite Grace] Tucker received hers in 1987. And we had a really wonderful time celebrating that. That's how much they meant to us. I should get back to where we were [chuckles], I keep wandering all over the place, you're going to have to do a lot of editing.
LU: [Laughs] Oh, wow, that's wonderful! There's still wonderful missionaries out there now, working very hard, but, stories like that, you don't hear about every day.
PA: No, and the thing is, we don't want people to forget about them, you know, so, every year. Miss [Peggy] Foster died in the end of November, and, um, years later, Miss Tucker died, in December the 4th. So, every year, at the end of November, we have special prayers for them, at church. But there's not too many of us left now [chuckles], of that generation [chuckles].
LU: Wow. Can you describe to me, a little bit, you were mentioning how the missionaries taught your parents proper etiquette, so, what was the difference between their [Canadian] etiquette and the Japanese etiquette?
PA: Well, they-first of all-no chopsticks, they need to use the forks and knives. Remember, they're just here from Japan. And, which forks to use, which knives to use, you know- how to handle [a] cup and saucer- all those things. And, you know, you have to learn the greetings, "Good morning", "Good afternoon", and, so, I think it meant a great deal to them, because, you know, some didn't even speak English, they're just off the boat. And, uh, Miss Tucker had been in Japan, and I think a couple of other missionaries had gone to Japan, to study for a while. So they really appreciated the Japanese people, and their customs- it was, um, a great beginning, and they became godmothers to all the children that came along. Future generations [chuckles].
LU: And how were your parents typically Japanese?
PA: Well, I think- I wouldn't say my parents were. My father was quite broad-minded, you know, because back in those days, girls didn't play sports. I loved it [chuckles], our school wasn't public school, it wasn't far, you could walk there. So, he [father] would come watch me play baseball, or track and field, and he'd encourage it. Now, after public school, we'd go to Japanese language school every day, right after school. But I played baseball for the team-for the school team-so I would be late, and of course that was unheard of in Japanese school at that time. So, if I knew there was going to be a game the next day, my father would sit me down, we'd learn

the lesson the night before, so that I wouldn't fall back, you see. So the school principal never reprimanded me, and I got through Japanese school okay [chuckles]. And mother, I guess, she just went along with whatever he [father] said. I know he [father] didn't like us going dancing, but we'd go anyways [laughs]. But he'd be waiting for me to come home! [chuckles] But the funny part of it is, years later, when they [parents] came to Toronto, he was taking dancing lessons, he was a better dancer than I was [chuckles]! And, you know, because I was the only child, he would take me to ball games or whatever, and so there wasn't that holding back on anything.
LU: What kind of dances? Or, where were the dances?
PA: Well, it was called Happy Land, in Hastings Park. And you could go roller skating there, too. We'd go in a bunch, so it didn't matter, a group of us would go together. Nothing [like] in this modern age, you know, where you pair off everywhere [chuckles]. And then there was Fuji Chop Suey's on the map [Powell Street Map], they used to have dances there. And upstairs, they had a big hall.
LU: And what kind of dance moves would they be?
PA: Well, like waltz, foxtrot- they had the big bands at that time. I wasn't that great a dancer, and my husband never learned to dance [chuckles].
LU: So, did you learn how to dance while attending these dances? Or, were there classes that you could take beforehand?
PA: Yeah, there were such thing as classes, we taught each other [chuckles]. It didn't matter, you know, I know in Toronto, everybody goes to dance classes, but there weren't things like that then [chuckles].
LU: And, would the girls pair off together? So it wouldn't be typical-
PA: No, the girls would go together to the dance, maybe, you know, but everybody would partner off with the guys. Didn't want to be a wallflower [chuckles].
LU: [laughs] They still use that term, too! "Wallflower"!
PA: [laughs] Yes!
LU: So, what other aspects of your parents' daily life would you say was, um, "Japanese" or more "Canadian", what about the food and cooking?
PA: Well, the food, uh, we had mostly Japanese, but breakfast was toast and coffee, that sort of thing…but, you see, because our residents were Caucasian, there wasn't too much Japanese atmosphere, except when people came from the country to stay at our place, because they needed my father to take them around town, to Dr. Boyer and my father could translate for them. Then they would stay at the lodging house for a couple of days, or a week or so. So, in general, you know, it - I guess it was just an ordinary life, though my father was very active in the community. He was always running to meetings and what have you, so my mother was left to run the business, even when I was twelve years old, my father had days that he couldn't get out of bed, because of his asthma, so he wanted me to learn the business. So, every night, you

had a ledger, and you had to write down the names of every person that stayed there that night. Well, our people were long-term, so it was the same people, but I'd copy these names on the ledger every night, and I thought, "Here are all my friends are outside, having a good time [chuckles]." They used to have, like thirty people used to get together and have parties, things like that.
LU: Was that considered a *kenjin-kai*[2] group?
PA: Yes. And I think most other kenjins did the same thing. You come to a strange country, most of them come together, the country people. And, so, they'd have parties, or go and visit each other, and I had an uncle, his name was Shigeru Sasaki, he was my father's oldest son-oldest brother- and, uh, he was a gardener, and he used to grow the most beautiful sweet peas. So I loved going there. And, they lived on 7th Avenue, which is near Kitsilano, and he had a lot of children, so I loved going there because my sister was too young to play with [chuckles]. So, I'd go there. That was the only uncle I had, except my mother had a cousin, and his name was Adachi. But his oldest daughter was sent to Japan, to be brought up. And she didn't come back to Canada 'til quite- I guess she was about a teenager. And I think this was very difficult for her, because she had siblings, but you see, they're brought up differently, and she spoke Japanese and they didn't speak Japanese, so, it took her quite a while to, uh, get adjusted.
LU: Why would the family send one-one or two children- to Japan to be raised there?
PA: Well, I guess they thought the schools in Japan were superior, and learning Japanese, because we only had about an hour and a half every day, in Canada. And then we didn't use it because we'd all be speaking English, even to our parents! And I guess it happened to a lot of, even the - um, I think Fred Sasaki, I think he was brought up in Japan - quite a number of them - fortunately, I wasn't sent there [chuckles]. Though, when I graduated from, um, Japanese language school, my principal asked me if I wanted to go to Japan, to become a teacher, but see here, I had always intended to become a nurse, so I said, "No, thank you," I didn't even ask my parents [laughs]. But, one of my classmates went, Akiko Koruta, and she died when Hiroshima was bombed. She was- at that time she just started to teach primary grades, and in protecting her children, she died. But, even today, the school has a ceremony every year, to remember her. You never know where things happen, and for what reason.
LU: I had a question-
PA: [chuckles] Where were we?
LU: I should have written it down, um, let me see if I can jog my memory-it was just before-nope, can't remember now.
PA: [chuckles].

[2] Referring to prefectural organization.

LU: I know it was something important.
PA: Sorry, I go off the track every once in a while-
LU: Those are important stories! Very important- Um. Oh, I remember now! So, you've mentioned that you would correspond with your parents in English, would they respond back to you in Japanese, or English?
PA: No, not necessarily, sometimes it would be mixed, that's why so many niseis in their conversation, even today, we're mixing Japanese and English. I don't know if you notice that, but that's what we do. So sometimes out of that, you get strange words [chuckles].
LU: Do you think the language might have influenced a change in the relationship between the isseis and the niseis?
PA: Well, I think in some families, you were told, "You don't talk at the table. You just eat." And father had- he'd say whatever he had to say, and that was it. But it wasn't strict like that with us. And I know this is a saying because, um, they had a hard time communicating, but when it came to baseball, everybody knew what a strike was, and a home run, so even the mothers would get involved and that was the only time when they connected, you know- the sort of things I hear [chuckles].
LU: What other aspects of your daily life, growing up, and your house, would remind you of maybe, Japan or a Japanese style- so, did you have to take your shoes off, or did you have tatami floors?
PA: Oh no, there was none of that, no. I think we were strictly Canadian, you know. There weren't too many Japanese students in our public school, but we had Chinese friends, Caucasian friends, and so we never had any problems. I had two, three very good Chinese friends, they were called Phoebe and Rosie Wong but in 1930, they said they had to go back to Japan [China?]. But they still wrote to me, you know, until 1933, when the war started, between China and Japan, and then Rose wrote to me and said, "I'm sorry, I can't correspond with you anymore, because of the war." The other friend I had was Xuang Wong, and, for some reason, she would come with me everywhere I went to play baseball. Like, you know, she'd be there just to hang on to my clothes or she found it great, I guess, she came everywhere. And then we lost touch when we went on to high school. But, when we came to Ontario-Toronto- one day I met her, she remembered me, and she was running a jewellery store, out on Dundas Street. And, uh, we saw each other for a while, then she got married, and her husband had a big Chinese restaurant, down in Chinatown. But after that, you know, we got busy with our own families, but she became - received the Order of Canada for her community work with the Chinese people - and I never got to talk to her after that. Then I noticed an obituary in the paper, and so she had passed on. So, you know, amazing where you find friends - anyways, I'm getting off the track again [laughs].
LU: [Laughs]. Did your family often correspond with the family back in Tottori-ken?

PA: Yes, well, my father still had a sister there, so he used to write to them. Frequently.
LU: Do you know the sister's name?
PA:I met her - because my husband and I went to Japan once. It was because he worked for a company called McNaught & Brooks. But they had a franchise all over the world. And he would be sent to train the people, and that's when he was sent to Japan, I was supposed to be the interpreter [chuckles]. So I got to go, too! These were all chemists, so, you know, they'd be travelling around, so they could speak English, and besides, Japanese people, after a couple of seconds, [smiles] everybody's a friend! [Chuckles]. And my husband was good at that [laughs]. But, I met my aunt, and we met my husband's oldest sister, [whom] he had never met, and she was, um, you know, so it was really old-homely. And in Agarimichi, a small plane lands there, so, uh, we went from Osaka to Agarimichi, and the whole clan came to meet us at the airport [smiles, laughs]! But somehow you know you're related to them, I don't know that we'd look alike, but you know, we had a wonderful visit. So I used to write to them for a while. Gradually, my Japanese deteriorated [chuckles], and once my father was gone, you know, we didn't use Japanese that much. When the [Japanese Canadian] Cultural Centre was first built, we had a lot of isseis, so at that time, you know, we spoke Japanese. But, gradually, you use it less and less, I'm sorry to say.
LU: Were there any other stories or comments you wanted to tell us about in regards to your parents? Or your family history? Is there anything I missed?
PA: Well, I don't know that's anything unusual, you know, uh, they kept close contact with all of their kenjin people. And sometimes we'd have picnics. I remember a three-legged race I went in with my Dad [chuckles].
LU: Where would they host the picnics?
PA: I know there's a place, I've forgotten what it's called, between Hamilton and Toronto-
LU: Burlington?
PA: No, it was a park-
LU: Oakville?
PA: No, and once there was Saul Kadonaga, he had a Danforth Cleaners here, and he had a large property, so they would meet there. They'd use his, ah, had a beautiful garden, so they would get together there. And of course, any weddings or- yeah. And back then, New Years' Day, they celebrated for a whole week so, everybody would go visiting. So, that sort of died after a while, but -
LU: Do you remember that, growing up in Vancouver? Celebrating New Year's Day?
PA: Yes. I guess my mother did most of the cooking, you know. And then we'd go visit family, especially my uncles' place, but it wasn't anything spectacular, it was just a time to sit down and have dinner, that sort of thing. And I remember all these

men, they used to love to dance and sing Japanese songs [chuckles]. But, they're all gone now.
LU: Did you ever see them making the *mochizuki*?
PA: Uh, yes, though I guess, you know, girls weren't too involved in it, the boys were. But I remember the men getting down and I often wondered how they never got their hands smashed. Yeah, we used to watch that. I loved the ones with the *anko* in it [smiles, laughs].
LU: [Chuckles] Me too. So, I know my grandparents made the *osonae* [two stacked mochi with mikan on top] for every batch of mochi that we make, so, um, was that something that your family did as well?
PA: No, I remember there would be, you have three layers, and you'd give it to Hotoke-san [Buddha] first, you would have sort of a little alcove where you'd have, um, sort of a haiku and a flower arrangement, and a little shelf, where you always offered to Hotoke-san first, I remember that with an orange on top [chuckles]. Nothing too much, you know.
LU: Would you leave the osonae there for-how long would you leave it there for?
PA: I really couldn't tell you. I think you'd eat it before it got too bad [chuckles].
LU: You must, yeah [laughs].
PA: See, because of this restaurant below my father's, we used to go there for Christmas dinner, so that was a high point.
LU: Just to jump back to the kenjin-kai group quickly, you mentioned previously that your father would go to many meetings, was it specifically just for the kenjin-kai?
PA: No, we worked for the Japanese Canadian community, they called a dodo-kai [sic], which is a labour movement, at one point, and he even studied Marxist, he read the book- I found the books-but, uh, eventually he left that. But, he was very good friends with Mr. Kamioka [unintelligible], they were newspaper people. And they would, uh, I guess they were concerned with the economy with the Japanese people, they would meet quite often. So, when we were in-after we were in Toronto, he was the president of the NAJC [New Association of Japanese Canadians], the Japanese section, and then they had a group called Saragi, which is a more social group. And, like even when they ended up at Castleview [Wychwood Towers]- you know where that is? It's a senior's home, it's part of Momiji the sixth floor is all Japanese, and that's when my mother got quite ill, she was moved there from the hospital. And we didn't want her to go, but it ended up [that] there were a lot of Tottori-ken ladies there. So she loved it. Now, mother wasn't one to go out much, but once she got there, she'd go and get her hair done every week, get her nails manicured, always want to be dressed up, you know. It became a competition among the ladies [chuckles]! And my father moved in there, just before she passed away. He taught *shigin;* it's a form of poem-like, there sort of a verse to it, and the ladies, they used to come from outside to come and learn. So Ron Kanashiro, you see him around here,

he was working for Momiji at that time, so he found a room for my father in the basement, where he could teach these people. So he enjoyed that. My father lived to one hundred and three.
LU: Wow!
PA: Yeah, and still mentally alert, but see, all his friends had gone by that time. So he said, "Well, I think that's enough now," he said - anyways, I'm getting off track again! [Chuckles]
LU: [Laughs] Oh, that's okay! One of the questions that I have here about the kenjin-kai says, "Was your father part of a kenjin-kai? If so, which one, and what was the role of the kenjin-kai?"
PA: A kenjin-kai, it started with, um, see, when they first came, nobody had any money. And the first incident was somebody drowned. Like, they were fishermen, mostly, and so the family couldn't afford a funeral, so everybody pitched in. And that's how this doshi-kai, they called it, started. So, uh, whenever one of the kenjin people had a death, or bereavement, they supported, everybody chipped in to help. And that's continued, we continued it 'til about two years ago. But, today, you know, most people give it to charity, or something like that, so it's no longer necessary. And so, that continued for a long time.
LU: Did you or your family ever benefit from your father being a member? Of the Tottori, or the doshi-kai?
PA: Well, we followed suit, I guess, you know. My sister never did, because she was married to another -ken, like her husband, Hiseki, he came from Sendai. So, she never did, but I used to go to all the funerals and all the gatherings, so we still keep it up today. DianeHota, her in-laws are Tottori-ken. So, she comes too, so we still keep it up. And, uh, two years ago-uh, last year- we published a book on Tottori-ken, for the people that came to Canada and what their lives were like. I don't know if you've seen it.
LU: No. I remember Peter [Wakayama] mentioning it, but I haven't seen it. Maybe - we'll just take a quick break here.
PA: Okay.

[End of part 1]
[Start part 2]

LU: Okay, so, which shops do you remember? In Powell Street?
PA: Well, I remember along the north side, besides Maikawa, there was a bookstore called Uchita's, and then there's Suzuki's, they used to sell *okashi* and books, and origami things like that. Then there was a couple of drug stores, Taishodo [sic] - on the south side, I know farther down there was Fuji Chop Suey, and then, come along, there was Akima Hardware store, and Shibuya, they were ladies' and menswear, too.

But not on the big scale. And near that was Sumiyoshi, I remember Mrs. Shimada because she was such a doll, and then there was World Hotel at the corner. Then, of course, there was Powell Grounds [public park] [chuckles].
LU: Sumiyoshi, I've heard, had a bit of a gambling parlor behind it.
PA: Sumiyoshi?
LU: Was it Sumiyoshi that had it?
PA: No, she had a coffee shop and a bakery, and she was Mrs. Shimada. She was one of my favourites. And, on the next block, further, was Hiyashi, they had *sembei*-ya - and then, uh, Mr. Sasaki was a judo teacher. And he's quite high up, he and his friend made sembei. They made sembei there. And then, behind that was Wakabayashi, they had tofiya around.
LU: What is tofiya?
PA: Tofu.
LU: Oh, tofu!
PA: [Chuckles]. They made tofu [laughs]. Tofu is a house, yeah -
LU: What do you remember doing in some of these shops, were there specific shops where you would go to get a certain item, or, what do you remember?
PA: Well, I guess, you know, we would tend to go to downtown, or to the Caucasian stores, but like isseis, it was their neighbourhood, so they would do most of their shopping there. Of course there was a fish store, and Nakano- Nakamura Florist that we used to go to - course, see, back then, mother did the shopping, so we wouldn't go unless we wanted something special. The books are Japanese, so we didn't need it [chuckles]. We were supposed to be studying Japanese, but, you know - aside from the restaurants, and along Main Street there was a new pier. Mrs. Hiraishi was the mother of my friends, so we'd drop in there for her lemon pie. And across from them, on the other side of Main Street was Columbia Studio, and we had a lot of our photos taken there. My father used to go there all the time, because every time we had company, he would take them there, in commemoration, and have their photo taken. I remember one sailor came, and I'm in there, they're all men, but I'm still in there because I used to go with my Dad everywhere [chuckles]. And then next to that is Tanabe's, it was a jewellery store, and their son Luke was my classmate. He ran the, um-what do you call, the dress shop. Luke Tanabe. Not, uh well, that too, the better one. Anyways, the name escapes me. But he did very well. And then there was, on the corner was a confectionary store, called Wakayama. But he changed his name to Wake, because it was too hard to pronounce. And then across on the other side was Ernie's, which was an ice cream shop, and it was very popular.
LU: Was it always busy?
PA: [Nods] Mmm-hmm. Well, all the young people used to gather there. And above that was Dr. Shimotakahara, he was our doctor. And I know there'd be a lot of *ofurus*

[Japanese bathhouses]. I know there were lots of those, they'd be in the back part of the buildings.
LU: So how would you get to the ofurus?
PA: From my place?
LU: Do you have to walk- I mean, um, would it be like you'd have to go through a building first, or was there an alleyway that you would go through?
PA: No, just a walk on the sidewalk. I lived at 134 Powell Street, so we just would walk along Powell Street to go to Japanese school or go to the ball game. I'd forgotten there had been a streetcar on Powell Street [chuckles].
LU: How much was it to ride on the streetcar?
PA: I couldn't tell you [chuckles]. Because I guess the only time - you know, money was scarce, so we walked everywhere. And we never thought anything of it. I'd walk from Powell Street right down to Kitsilano Beach, which is miles away, we'd go across the Granville bridge, and we wouldn't think anything of it. So, I really couldn't tell you how much it was [laughs].
LU: So, let's talk a little bit more about the bath houses, the *ofurus*, would you go every day?
PA: No, we had a lodging house, so we never did, we had our own bath. But I think a lot of isseis, and especially these ball players, they were always invited after a game. So I've never- I think I might have been once. It might have been in Ghost Town [internment camp], you know, you have to wash yourself first, before you go in. And of course, men and women were segregated, but it was a hot bath [chuckles]!
LU: So, when you were living on Powell Street, you didn't have a typical Japanese bath and you didn't have- just a regular-
PA: Yes, we just had a regular [bath], at home, you see. So there was no need to go.
LU: Very interesting!
PA: [Chuckles]
LU: Do you know if there were a lot of ofurus in?
PA: Mickey Maikawa told me. He's related to this, and he was a baseball player. So he was always invited to them, he said there was around Powell Street, there were five [chuckles]. And there were a lot of restaurants, Japanese restaurants, at the time.
LU: What were some of your favourite restaurants?
PA: Well, see, we had a restaurant downstairs, so we didn't go eating out anywhere except with my friends, I guess Fuji Chop Suey we would go to most often. The real Chinese food was down in Chinatown. We didn't venture there too often [chuckles].
LU: How close was it to-?
PA: Well, that's Pender Street, I guess it wouldn't show on there- oh, you could walk there- I think it would be past-around this way [gestures to a Powell Street Map off screen]. See there's Hastings, maybe around there?
LU: Ah, okay.

PA: Yeah. And the Japanese Language School was on Alexander Street.
LU: So that is this street?
PA: Yeah. [Examining map 10:30 to 11:21]. Yeah, Yoshina restaurant was quite famous.
LU: Mmm, what was it famous for?
PA: Pardon?
LU: What was it famous for?
PA: Oh, Japanese food, sushi, you know, sashimi, things like that. Tempura. But it was mostly men that went- trying to find a Japanese restaurant [studies map]-
LU: Maybe it's not listed?
PA: I have a picture of the school but I've forgotten what-
LU: Oh! [Points on map] There it is! 439 Alexander Street- right by Jackson.
PA: Well, after we left, you know, it was so run down-. But now it's doing very well, now, isn't it?
LU: Mmm-hmm, yeah, they are doing very well. So, when you were walking down Powell Street, either with your father or with your friends, what kind of- what was the atmosphere like?
PA: Well, everybody knew everybody, so there'd always be greetings, you could smell the restaurants [chuckles]. It was a nice atmosphere, I think- I guess we were always too busy talking with my friends to notice anything different [chuckles].
LU: Was it busy, when you were walking down the street, were there certain days-?
PA: [Nods] Oh, yes.
LU: Days that were busier than others?
PA: No, there were always people around and the ladies liked to visit each other. There was a lot of activity.
LU: Was it mostly Japanese individuals? In the community?
PA: [Nods] Oh, yes.
LU: So, did you ever see non-Japanese people in the area?
PA: No, not unless there was a ball game on, they would go to Powell Grounds…we had a lot of Caucasians to watch a ball game.
LU: And how old were you when you first saw, I guess, your first ball game?
PA: I was about eight.
LU: And what do you remember about that?
PA: Ah, I remember my father taking me, and he would buy me a bag of peanuts, they used to come in little brown bags, and he'd leave me sitting there, on the bench, while they watched the ball game. I didn't understand the ball game at that time, but I soon caught on [smiles, chuckles]. And back then, I think it was about ten cents admission. But it was just, um, open benches, but left field and right field; there were no barriers, no benches. So people just lined up there, oh, about ten deep. And when the Asahi [baseball team] played, it was always packed. And the funny part of it is,

this is Frank Shiraishi used to play left field, he was always a chatterbox [smiles]. And he was very fleet-footed, he even had a scholarship to go to American college, for track and field, but he said he couldn't afford it, so he didn't go, but, he played for the Asahis anyways, but anytime the ball came his way, all the people would scatter to give him room. Now, if the Asahis are up to bat, and they hit a home ball over that way, they'd all close hands and not let them get in, so the Asahis either get a double or a home run [chuckles]. That's the way they played it [laughs].
LU: What was the atmosphere like at those ball games? I imagine it must be very exciting-
PA: Oh, yes, especially if they won [chuckles].
LU: Were people always, you know, hooting and hollering?
PA: Oh, yeah! You'd be surprised, a lot of Caucasians rooted for the Asahis. And this is one wonderful thing about the players, why I felt they needed to be recognized; not just because they were a good ball team, there are a lot of good baseball teams, but what they meant for the Japanese people. At that time, Japanese were discriminated, they were considered second-hand citizens, but when they play baseball, they were even better than the Caucasian [teams]. They weren't very tall, small stature, yet they played against longshoremen, firemen, often referred to as "David against Goliath." [chuckles] And, um, there was only one umpire, and my father always said, "Today, if it's a playoff, it's six umpires." Because this poor man had to do all the ruling, and if he made a mistake, everybody got down on him, but he said that wasn't quite fair, because how can you cover all the areas by yourself?
LU: Who was the umpire; do you know who it was?
PA: There was a Caucasian, he was always Caucasian - I don't remember any names - so, even the mothers used to get involved in it, you know. And my, um, Japanese school principal, see, a lot of these players were former students, from the Japanese language school, so he would come and watch them. He and his wife, they were always in the bleachers. And if he'd see one of his students going up to bat or out in the field, you could hear his voice- he had a high-pitched voice-he'd say "Shitari-ari-oh!"[chuckles] You know, and call their names, and there was Kaz Suga, George Ishido, I think Frank Nakamura, a bunch of them.
LU: What were some of the chants or cheers that you would, I guess, holler in support of the Asahi or what were some of the crowd chants?
PA: Well, they'd cheer- well, I don't know that there was any special cheer, but they'd root for the person that's up to bat, or, you know, getting the ball, Roy Yamamura was the great favourite, he was a short-stop. He was only five feet, but he could catch the ball, run and steal bases, do anything. And so even the Caucasian teams wanted to hire him. And he did play off-season, when the Asahis were finished, and if they were going for a championship, he would play for them. So he was very well-known, and even after his baseball days were over, he would teach

the youngsters, and the Toronto Star [newspaper], every year they would have a Peewee Championship, he was the umpire. He did that for 24 years, so, at his retirement, they, you know, honored him- so people remembered them a long time. Gradually those people are disappearing, we only have three Asahis left now. And Mickey Maikawa was one of them, he's 99 years old [chuckles].
LU: My goodness. So, do you remember some of the things that, when you were cheering, were there certain- ?
PA: No, a lot of it was in Japanese. Like I said, "Shikari-ari-oh" or "donbure" chuckles]! And we would root, you know, call them by name. I don't think there was any special cheer.
LU: So, what else do you remember about the Asahi baseball team? I guess, you know, they were quite popular and-
PA: Well, like I said, they were graduates of the Japanese Language School, and we formed an alumni, after each club [class] graduated. So, we knew a lot of the players, like they were part of the Akio-kai. And, um, some of them would teach us basketball, badminton, you know, they'd coach us. Then they had picnics and concerts, one of the great ones was Sally Nakamura, he was a big guy, but he had such a wonderful voice. So, he and Roy Kumano, they would dress up as Mexicans, and sing a duet, play the guitar, they were always a hit, you know. So, this Sally, he was invited to Japan by the Fujiwara Opera Company, and it was just before the war started. And, uh, he did very well, I think he was in "Carmen", and then he was in two- uh, international movies, he did very well. Then, he couldn't come back, because of the war, so he stayed there and was an interpreter. And then, once the American soldiers were stationed in Japan, he would go around dressed as Al Jolson, and entertain them.[3] So when he passed away, there were telegrams, you know, all kinds of condolences from all over the world, because people had met him. So, his son came to visit us- I don't know, maybe ten years ago? And he was supposed to write about his father, write a book [chuckles], but so far he hasn't done it [laughs]. There are people like that, yeah. And, uh, when we came to Toronto, a lot of them came here, though they were scattered, and when Roy Yamura passed away, I read about his obituary, I thought, "It's a shame somebody doesn't write about them"- Terry Watada, Frank Moritsugu - and so, what's a girl going to write about? You know, they weren't that broad-minded [chuckles]. But I knew the guys, so, I said, "Well, what do you think?" And they said, "Sure, we'll help you." And that's how that got started [chuckles]. But, they were great guys.
LU: So, what other events would take place in Oppenheimer Park?

[3] This reference of performances to American soldiers could be related to the history of minstrel show that portrays performances of racial stereotypes. Al Johnson was known for his performances in black face.

PA: Ah, well, we never had these festivals that they have now, you know, it was mainly for baseball. And the ground wasn't that great, but a lot of improvements in the last few years.
LU: And so, when you lived on Powell Street, where were some of the places that you would go, um, I guess, to play with your friends?
PA: Well, I guess to, you know, play, we'd have to go to each other's homes, even the guys didn't approve too much about the girls hanging around the restaurants [chuckles]. Ernie's [ice cream shop] was okay, and New Pier was okay, because we knew the proprietors. Other than that, if it wasn't for parties, we wouldn't go to Fuji Chop Suey. But we had a lot of events at the school, even after we graduated.
LU: And that's where most people would get together?
PA: [Nods] Yes. We'd have picnics, things like that.
LU: Would you have themes for the picnics?
PA: Oh, yes.
LU: Oh! Do you have some examples?
PA: Oh, well, there's always relays, egg race or spoon race, three-legged race. I guess much what you do today, I don't know if they play those games anymore [chuckles].
LU: Not a lot. So, I guess, um, tell me a little bit about working at the T. Maikawa store. And, what role did you play there? And how long were you working there for?
PA: [Chuckles]. Well, I guess I was just seventeen when I started my first day. And my father told me, he said, "If you expect to get ahead, you have to be willing to give a little extra," I always kept that in mind. And, uh, course it was a Japanese company, you have to watch your p's and q's, you know. But I was so excited to get this job, because jobs are hard to get, a lot of girls went to work as domestics. So, that was very fortunate. Anyways, the first day I got there, I found some of my friends already working there, like Rose Sato, and Amy Murikami, and Bob Ito. Anyways, I had to report to this Mr. Hiyashi, and he put me in the grocery department, at the back, and so I was always dusting cans and what have you. They had a lot of salesmen that would go to take orders on Vancouver Island, the different Japanese communities, or to Marpole or New Westminster, places like that. And I worked there for about six months, then he promoted me to go upstairs to the ladies' wear. There I found another friend, Masako Iguchi, she was the sister of my classmate, and she was head of the department, she also did the dress designing and alterations, back then, you know, people used to do a lot of dressmaking. But when she got busy, I was left in charge and I loved it [smiles]. I loved to sell [chuckles]. I especially enjoyed Mrs. Shimada, I told you about before, who owned Sumiyoshi. She and her friend Mrs. Akiyama from the hardware store would come in, always so cheerful, and you could hear them, the whole store could hear them, and then they'd be laughing and talking to everybody. They were great ladies. And, uh, so I worked there and, um - everything went well. My teenage years went fast.

And then Pearl Harbor happened. By the way, I must tell you the bosses at that time, they were really wonderful, they treated us like family. They were very informal, no pressure, so it was a very pleasant place to work. Actually, the gentleman that started Tomikichi Maikawa, he came in 1897, and along with other Japanese entrepreneurs, on 200 and 300 Powell Street, he started a general store. Then, as he progressed, he invited two of his brothers to come. One became the owner of a fish store, and the other, Sadakichi, is Mickey Maikawa's father. He started the Nippon Auto, a garage. And he got involved with the Asahi because his son was playing. So he donated a batting trophy for [the] championship, for about six or seven years. And, uh, anyways, T. Maikawa flourished, and he and his wife ran it, and then they had this-two other- well, one was a Mr. Maikawa, and another was related by marriage, Mr. Oiye, and this Mr. T. Hiyashi, he had a great deal to do with the store.

And they had a son name Tokyo, he was born in Vancouver, but they sent him to Japan, like all the others - he went to Japan when he was five years old, and he was there until he was eighteen. But when he came back, you see, they have the same problem, he couldn't master his English, he had a very difficult time. And then the parents decided that they were going to go back to Japan, but they left him with the store, but he was too young to manage it. So there was an uncle named Gerald, and he was running the store. But, all of a sudden, he died. And Tokyo wasn't able to handle the store, so, this Mr. T. Hiyashi had a great deal to do with maintaining the running of the store, Mr. Bungaro Maikawa and Mr. Oiye. So they were my bosses when I first joined. But, 1936, it got to be such a big operation, they renovated and made this huge department store, two stories high. So I was quite excited because when I first saw the store, there was this beautiful building with large, you know, plate glass windows with the latest fashion, so I thought I was pretty lucky.

And everything went well, until Pearl Harbor, and - of course, we who lived in that area, along Powell Street, and went to work in that area, didn't feel the impact in the beginning. But people that had to take public transportation, I think they had pretty nasty incidents. And the children, one day they're told, "Don't come to school anymore," well, it was hard for them to understand. But I guess it was their teachers and their fellow students who were sympathetic back then. Probably it was for their own safety, because you didn't know what would happen. Anyways, right after the announcement, my father got us together and said, him being a national, would be sent away. So he wanted somebody to look after us.

Well, in the meantime, I was going around with this Harry Adachi, "going steady" as it was a term at that time [chuckles], and he said, "Well, what do you think of getting

married?" I was 21, none of my friends were married. It was kind of too soon. But, I guess time and circumstances change things. So, that Christmas, 1941, we got engaged. And we were supposed to get married in January 24th, 1942, so Miss Masako Maikawa, she designed my wedding gown, beautiful brocade, she had it all ready, and two weeks before the wedding, it disappeared. Someone had stolen it. How could it happen, you know? All the Japanese people around. But by that time, the BC Security Commission had taken over the store, but we were still employed. And so she had to stay nights and make another gown for me. So I always appreciated that. So, January 24th, I got married at this same church, Holy Cross Church, where I graduated from kindergarten fifteen years ago [chuckles]!

So, uh, in the meantime my father had been sent to a road camp, ah, that was March, and we didn't think the men, the um, Canadian-born, would have to go. But then they started bringing all these people off the islands and shoving them into Hastings Park, my husband had to go every day, to help clean up the place- maintain the park. And then they used all able men, actually, so he left, I think it was around June, so there was just my mother, my sister and I left. We'd still do the rooming house, my father had arranged that, so we were still there. Until, in August, we all had to go. So we worked at T. Maikawa up until then.
LU: How did the atmosphere in Powell Street change, when the individuals started to come to Hastings Park?
PA: Well, I guess, you know, everybody was sympathetic, but they were all worried, they didn't know where they were going to be sent. And, well, they would try and visit their friends if they could, but, things were pretty restricted; we had a curfew. But, little by little, you know, you didn't know which family was going next, the people would board these dusty old trains and set off to Ghost town. So, it was a very worrisome time. Kay Kaminishi, he's one of the younger Asahi players, he said he hid, his mother hid him from the RCMP, for a long time. She had a rooming house, so, I don't know if he disappeared into different rooms, but, he said he hid out for quite a while but there came a time [when] everybody had to leave. So, it was a very difficult time. And kids lost their school years, my sister wasn't finished yet, and- we all ended up in Ghost Town.
LU: So, what happened to your family home, then? The boarding house?
PA: My lodging house - My father managed to sell it, for a pittance. It was something like $3,000. But he was one of the lucky ones, because those that left their homes, their farms, the government took over, and eventually sold them. And they didn't get much, because, they [government] said it cost them, the government to maintain them and to sell. So, I think some went to court, to fight it. But, I guess even for $3,000, my father was lucky to get that.
LU: Did your family have a car? Or a vehicle?

PA: No, no. Very few people drove a car. But there were two issei ladies, Mrs. Ikeda and Mrs. Sumi, they drove cars. They picked up the men folks, and they picked up the women folks to go to church. They were amazing.
LU: I didn't know that issei ladies were driving!
PA: Yes. Their husbands- well, Mrs. Ikeda was a widow, she had a beauty shop…and she was very active in the community, she did a great deal. And Mrs. Sumi, she was a dress designer. She was a tall, statuesque lady. I remember her, she was a Tottori-ken, too [chuckles]. Those were the only people I knew, except for Mr. Hota, Diane's father-in-law. He had a truck because he had a grocery store. And there were some taxis, you know, they ran the taxis. Other than that, I don't know. People that had cars of their own. You couldn't afford it. They were just managing to get by, and things were just beginning to pick up when the war came along. And then they had to give up everything.
LU: Do you remember some of the items that you had to leave behind?
PA: Well, I know my father had a lot of books. We had trunks full of books. Before that, see, we had got married in January '42, and when we knew we had to leave, we sold our things, we put in the newspaper, people came. Our wedding cards were still in the desks. Some people started to cry, you know, that we had to leave all this. So, we sold what we could. I guess the hotel things [were] left with the building. I remember there were trunks and trunks of books but we never got back. I had a secret chest that I kept, somehow I got that back. I had it until we went to a place called Stratton [British Columbia], which was a farm, near Kenora [British Columbia]. And the lady of the house was burning brush, and the house caught on fire, so my secret chest went, with everything. But, somehow my father brought some photos, so we have some old photos. See, we only could carry two suitcases, but the amazing thing was, I don't know if you know Robert Ito?
LU: I know the name.
PA: He was on television, and he was on theatre. Anyways, he was little Bobby Ito back then. And he used to tap dance, and sing and dance. Well, his mother brought his grand piano to Tashme Ghost Town. How she managed that, I don't know. She was an amazing woman. And I, years later, when we went back-1992, we went on a bus trip to cover all the Ghost Towns- Robert Ito was on our bus! He was telling us all these stories, and somebody was his classmate at that time, he was I think in grade 6 - and she said his mother would cover the cabin walls with newspapers, headlines, so he was the only one that knew DeGaulle was the President of France at that time. Amazing woman, I don't know how she did it, no wonder he got so far ahead [chuckles]. The rest of us, we just carried suitcases [chuckles].
LU: You mentioned, uh, the fire; but, speaking of fires, previous to our conversation, you mentioned that there was a big fire-
PA: Yeah, [Tsu-Yen].

LU: Do you want to tell us a little bit about that?
PA: Well, uh, [gesturing to map] that's Main Street, and it was down here - it doesn't say - Anyways, I was telling Linda about it, and she said maybe she could find information at the library or something. But I remember as kids we used to see the Prince lines used to sail out of there, and we'd always use to watch the boats going up to Prince Charlotte, they'd have streamers and music, and everything, and I'd vow that one day, I was going to get on that boat [chuckles]. And, uh, so, it was when we were playing around out there, we heard this, you know, fire, so, stupid kids, we came running under the bridge, fortunately everybody chased us out. It was a huge fire, and it destroyed the dock, so it took a while for them to renovate; I know it's back up, but I don't know what ships dock there. Yeah, I remember that one. I don't know what year it was, I guess it was still, you know, I don't think we were teenagers.
LU: Um, to talk a little bit more about the Japanese Language School, I know we touched a bit about it, but, I forgot to ask, who was your teacher?
PA: Well, I had a Mr. Akiyama- oh, Mrs. Oyama, I had in grade school. She was very strict, well, we all went because our parents made us go [chuckles]. And then, after the grade 8…all we learnt was reading, writing, and because time was so short, we had a lot of composition to write at home. And I remember writing about Pauline Johnson[4], since I was a crazy kid, I used to write about the darndest things, you know [chuckles]. And, I didn't know this, but, my principal put it in the Japanese language newspaper, my father never told me anything, but my uncle phoned me, to congratulate me, he says, "It was wonderful!" My father never said a word. For all the years I grew up with him, he never praised me. It was accepted that I do well, you know, nothing else would do [chuckles]. Anyways…and then, years later, I came across the book the other day, from when Mr. Sato visited Toronto, he gave me this book on Pauline Johnson, and just reading it the other day, it brought it all back to me, you know. We had a lot of friends, but we had to sit boy and girl at a desk. And this darned- I still remember him, Richard Nishino- he'd always pull the chair out from under me! [laughs].
LU: [Gasps]
PA: So, I've never seen him since, but his brother, Bob Nishino, "your brother was terrible!" [chuckles] But I made a lot of friends. And then, um, we went through what they call chutobo, it's middle school. It's not quite high school. But we went through that, and when we graduated, it was 1935, we all got a name, every graduating class got a name, so we were called Meiro-kai. And we formed our own club. And then we became part of Gakyu-kai, which is the alumni. So, we had a lot of close friends, so

[4] Possible reference to Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)

we still remember each other. We can't hide our age, because everybody knew how old we were [chuckles]. So, we used to have a lot of fun.
LU: It seems like there were a lot of individuals going to the Japanese Language School.
PA: We had to go. Our parents made us go. It was important that you go. I don't know how much we learned, but some became excellent students, some went back to Japan, uh - I don't know if you know Tats Ohori, but his brother was in my class, and he went back to Japan, he did very well. And I guess he did a lot of travelling, but I think he died of a heart attack in Brazil.
LU: Brazil?
PA: Mmm-hmm.
LU: And, um, one of the questions that I have is what was a typical day like when you were a child, and, um, where would you eat breakfast? Your whole family with you?
PA: In Ghost Town?
LU: In Vancouver.
PA: Oh, in Vancouver. Yes, we'd all have breakfast at home, you know. And it was generally toast, porridge, tea or coffee. That sort of thing. Nothing unusual.
LU: Now, because you were living in the lodging house as well, would you have those individuals join you?
PA: No, no. They didn't have any meals with us. It's just the family.
LU: Ah, okay. I always wondered that, if everyone ate together, or - ?
PA: [Chuckles] No, I think that would be too much of a problem.
LU: So, how many rooms were in this lodging house?
PA: Sixty rooms. And there were a few suites, like, I think there was about three that had a kitchen besides the bedroom. We had one of those when we got married, we still stayed at my family's rooms.
LU: So I imagine it must have been a very large place.
PA: It was two stories high, above the restaurant. And, you know, I'd learned how to wallpaper, because my father used to do all the rooms, and it was wallpaper in those days, we had to do the ceiling, so we'd be up on a plank, I'd hold up one end, and my father would sweep the paper, and we got pretty good at it [chuckles].
LU: It seems as if, since you were so close with your father, what about your younger sister? Was she closer with your mother?
PA: Well, no, because she is five years younger than me. So, you know, to me, I'm not playing with her [chuckles]. But, as we grew older, you know like, my husband and I, we did quite well, after we got settled, I guess, so he felt I didn't need any help. At first my parents and us, we had bought this house, but then my sister got married and she had a baby and they had no place to go, so we moved out, and they moved in. And so, my parents got along very well with them, and my sister looked after them, too, and then they moved to Runnymede Street. And she worked at the post

office, and I worked at the Bell, just down here [gestures offscreen]. But I drove a car, so, anytime they had a problem, I had to take them. And as my mother grew older, she frequently had to go to the hospital, or to the doctor, so, I'd take time off and take them. And, as they grew older, you know, my father didn't know what to do with them, so he'd be phoning my office every day, but my boss said, "Don't worry about it, take whatever time you need." I was a manager, so, he gave me a lot of leeway. So, I was able to do that, and then, 1984, my mother had passed away, and my father had moved to Castleview [senior's residence]. And my husband had grout in his legs. He never missed a day of work, but, he had to go to the hospital, and stay there until this thing got better. And one of my children had a nervous breakdown, so I thought, "This can't keep on." My boss said "Never mind, take time off." But that wasn't going to fix it. So I decided, well, I better hang it up. But I'd go another year, my pension would've been better, and my boss said, "Even after 65, we'll fight the government for you, we want you to stay." But I didn't see any way out of it, so, I quit. So they gave me a huge retirement party at Fantasy Hall, I guess it was called. Anyways, so, that's how it ended. The following year, my husband died. So, I'm glad I had that year, so, that's my story [chuckles]. We had four kids [chuckles].
LU: Where did you meet your husband?
PA: Well, see, they lived up near Campbell River [British Columbia], and that's more of a tourist place, but they worked for a Blowdale Company, it was a big lumber company at that time. But, then, his father is a Tottori-ken, too, so they used to come visit my parents. They used to bring us venison all the time. So, we knew each other well. And then, finally, they decided that maybe their boys needed to go to town and get a job somewhere. So, the two brothers came, and they worked at Powell Lumber. In the meantime, they lived at our lodging house, and this is how we started to go out together [smiles]. And the funny part of it is, we both have the same birthday-year, month, date! [Laughs]
LU: Really?
PA: Yes! Even when we went to Ghost Town, the RCMP would come around to take statistics, and we'd tell them our birthdays, they wouldn't believe us. They thought we were just pulling their leg [chuckles].
LU: Wow [chuckles].
PA: Yeah, he was born in Myrtle Beach- uh, Myrtle Island-and I was born in Vancouver. That was the only difference.
LU: [Laughs] and maybe the timing.
PA: Yeah! [Chuckles]
LU: Wow, that's incredible! Now, how did your parents feel about the concept of dating someone who's non-Japanese? Was that something that - ?
PA: Well, it never happened. At least in my generation, because there were enough young men and women, and besides, none of us went steady, really, like, we'd

always be in a group. Even after we started going steady, he'd always bring his friends [chuckles]. So, there were about four or five guys [laughs]! We'd go bowling, or whatever [chuckles].
LU: Plus, you mentioned that your father was very broad-minded.
PA: Yeah.
LU: So, it might have been something that would have been more open, then.
PA: But, I don't know about marrying a Caucasian. That would've been something else. I don't think there was anybody that I knew at the time, but it was the next generation.
LU: Oh, just checking the time, we'll just pause quickly here –

[Recording pause]

PA: I don't know where my sister inherited it, but she loved to go to casinos, playing cards- she was very sharp [chuckles]!
LU: So, what was the Japanese game called?
PA: *Gaji*. They're cards, small cards, and they're pictures. And you match them.
LU: Did you ever play?
PA: I think I was taught maybe a couple of times. Even the ladies used to play it.
LU: Really?
PA: Yeah. But no, I never had time for those things [chuckles].
LU: Did your parents play?
PA: No. My dad might've, you know, with his friends. But I didn't see much of it going on at home.
LU: So, where would they get together, to play these games?
PA: Well, I guess if you visit Tottori-ken families, the women folks would be talking and the men might play cards.
LU: And what about families making homemade sake? Did you know anyone who did that?
PA: Well, my father-in-law did. In fact, I think my husband grew up on it [chuckles]! He said [that] under the kitchen table used to be a big vat, and they'd make ama sake. So, you know, because my husband grew up on it, it wouldn't faze him, even if he had several drinks. It's just that he got talkative [chuckles]. And he was a very quiet man! So he could hold his own [chuckles]. My father didn't drink very much.
LU: Was it common for the issei ladies, at that time, to drink sake?
PA: I don't think so. You know, they might have a toast, but, I don't think it was a habit with them. I don't know, my mother never drank, so - [chuckles]
LU: And, so, what did the Powell Street community mean to you? Um, growing up there, what connection do you feel strongly with?

PA: Well, I don't know if I felt very strongly about it. I guess we just took it for granted, that it was there. There wasn't any special store I went to, when we were shopping, we did it at Woodworth's or Spencer's, that sort of thing. I think it was more for the convenience of the isseis. But I think they were always good to us, but they expected us to mind our manners, you know, that sort of thing.
LU: Is there anything that you miss about Powell Street? Or the atmosphere, the community, is there any aspect of it that - ?
PA: Well, I think the [Japanese Canadian] Cultural Centre covers a lot of that, you know, we meet our friends. And yeah, we need to get along with other nationalities, and I think the Centre does a great job. But, I can't say I would want to live in a Japanese community. See, when my kids were growing up, they didn't know any Japanese people. So, um, Kathy comes to the [Japanese Canadian] Cultural Centre, but, uh, other than that, we don't have a special affiliation. Chris, my youngest daughter, worked here for about six months, when they did the four generations [Five Generations] thing, she worked on that. I guess, other than that…I enjoy meeting my friends here.
LU: Um, how do you think your parents felt about the community, and about Powell Street? What do you think it meant to them?
PA: Well, I think it meant a great deal to them. Because it's their countrymen, they could speak in Japanese, there was [noenyo?] I think this is what they missed when we came out east, because all the families were scattered. We could travel by TTC [Toronto public transport], but they wouldn't know where they were going. So I think this is why we built the [Japanese Canadian] Cultural Centre. For their enjoyment. I remember the first Issei Day, I think it meant so much to them. Back then, we used to do all the cooking, because we couldn't afford anything else. So we'd bring our own pots and pans, and it all started even before the Cultural Centre was built. We'd find a place for them at a church or somewhere, make sushi at home and bring it, it meant so much to them to see their friends, I think.
LU: Issei Day is in September, right? Do you know why they chose that date, to honor the isseis?
PA: Well, I don't remember when the [Japanese Canadian Cultural] Centre opened. I guess it must have been, you know, once it was the Centre was presentable, and there were enough activities going on that they could show them. I don't see any special reason for that month to be chosen.
LU: Hmm. Wasn't sure [chuckles]. So, I guess, why was Powell Street so important to the Japanese community, other than to keep everyone together, was there any other aspect that made it so important?
PA: Well, because, see, no matter what profession you went into, you can't work in the general public. The only way they could be doctors, a pharmacy, is to have your own business. And that's why, all along Powell Street, these stores opened. And, too,

they needed their own business, because you were just treated as second-hand citizens, outside of that. So I think it was very important to them. And besides, a lot of people, even if they had lived here in Canada for a long time, they never learned how to speak English. So, here they were at home.
LU: Well, were there any other stories or stores that we forgot to mention about, or, um…what about outings to Stanley Park? I know when I'm going through the archive photographs, I always see the big thing to do was to go and take your car, sit in the car and take a photo in front of one of the big trees.
PA: [Chuckles] Well, the trees are huge, I never saw anything like it anywhere. It's amazing because you can travel anywhere, you don't see trees like that. And yes, we went to Stanley Park a lot, I remember the first time, Harry [Adachi] took me out on a date, and I'm all dressed up in high heels, and he takes me through the bush [chuckles]! I'll never forget that [laughs]! And Capilano [Bridge] was a favourite place. And we used to have a lot of picnics at Lemon Creek [North Vancouver], today it's all built up. But back then it was just a suspension bridge, and later on, in North Vancouver, my son and his wife had a home near Lemon Creek, so, they said, "Now we're going to take you to the Lemon Creek Park," and I couldn't get on that bridge! [Laughs].
LU: I think that was about it. So, your family was split up for a little while and, so, where exactly did you go? You were in Lemon Creek [internment camp]?
PA: No, I was in Popoff [internment camp]. We came to Slocan City [internment camp], but, the houses weren't ready then. So, we all lived in tents, and ate at the mess house. And then eventually, I guess September? October? We were moved into the shacks, and we were in Popoff, which is just a little ways away. But, I lost my first baby there. And I wasn't doing anything after that, and then Miss Hyodo had started the schools, these primary schools. So one day she came to see me and says, "How about teaching?" I said I'd never taught before, you know, but my friends have all volunteered. And she says, "I have grade one and grade three." So I said, "Okay, I'll take grade three!" She says "No, you won't, you'll do grade one." That was Hide [Hyodo] [chuckles]. Because she knew me well enough to say that. And, really, it was a marvelous opportunity. They were so wonderful kids. I had grade one, and a lot of them had missed school, and of course a lot came from fishing villages or Japanese communities, so they didn't speak English. But, they were so eager to learn. Marvelous kids. What time is it? Oh, nearly -
LU: Well, thank you very much.

[End of interview]