

Interviewee: Kathryn ‘Kay’ Honda (nee Yamamoto)

Interviewer: Lisa Uyeda

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**Note that this interview contains outdated terminology regarding Asian people*

Lisa Uyeda: Okay, can you tell us your first name please?

Kay Kathryn Yamamoto Honda: Kathryn.

LU: Kathryn or Kay or-

KKYH: My husband calls me Kay for short.

LU: Oh okay. Do you have a Japanese name as well?

KH: Kazue.

LU: Kazue, very nice. Tell us a little bit about when you were born and where you were born?

KH: What year?

LU: Yeah, when’s your birthday?

KH: 1927, November 20th.

LU: And where were you born?

KH: I was born in Steveston. I was one of those babies, they tell me that I was born in the famous fisherman’s hospital or something.

LU: Oh, so you weren’t born in a home?

KH: No, something like that. I was told that. You know because father was a fisherman. Did you ever hear of those- that first hospital that the Japanese built in Steveston?

LU: No.

KH: That’s a heritage place too, I hear. It was written up, you know, one time.

LU: Do you know where it was in Steveston. Where-

KH: It’s in this Steveston book, there’s about three issues published, I think.

LU: Oh, wow. Oh, wow. So, you were born there?

KH: I got it in the library. Huh?

LU: So, you were born there.

KH: Yeah, well, I know. Just like you were [laughs]. Didn’t you say you were born in Steveston?

LU: No, no, Etobicoke!

KH: No, oh yeah- yeah!

LU: My grandfather.

KH: Yeah, your grandfather, that’s right.

LU: And tell us a little bit about your parents and where did they- where in Japan they came from.

KH: They came from [Tanimura] Wakayama-ken. Wakayama.

LU: Both of them together from the same-

KH: Same place. Yes.

LU: Oh, wow. And did they meet there and then get married, or-

KH: No, my father came first with his father to Hawaii and then from there, he came all this way. He lost his mother at- when he was quite young, I think. Cause when he came over, he was about 14 years old. I didn't know that. I just saw the- what you call it- the citizenship paper. Naturalization paper of that era and it's in a closet somewhere.

LU: Yeah. Do you remember when he was born? Or when he came to Canada?

KH: 18-something. When he came here, what age?

LU: Or what year it was when he first came to Canada?

KH: Well, he said he was around- No, on the paper, it says 14. Fourteen years of age. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. And he was traveling with his father. What happened to his father in Hawaii?

KH: I think he got sick. He was working in the pineapple fields, and in those days, they were more or less like pioneers too. They were like slaves, so I understand. If you read a book about Hawaii and the early days of Japanese Americans there, it's- I think it's pitiful.

LU: How long did they stay in Hawaii for?

KH: You know, I really don't know, but I would say a couple of years.

LU: Oh yeah.

KH: Yeah. I think so.

LU: So, did he travel with his father to Canada, or- or-

KH: No, 'cause he lost his father in Hawaii. And his father entrusted him to a good friend of his and the friend brought him over to Canada.

LU: Oh, so your grandpa-

KH: 'Cause he didn't- Yeah. 'Cause he didn't want to go back to Japan neither. 'Cause he had a stepmother there.

LU: So, your grandfather must have been buried in Hawaii?

KH: Yes. That's right. And when the war ended, he- my mother- no, not- Wait, a minute, now. When we came out this way, and she had the opportunity to go to Japan, she went to Japan to find out where he was buried. Apparently, she had a nephew in Hawaii who was quite an adherent of the Buddhist religion, so they keep track of everybody, you know, and the family and all that. *Koseki* or whatever you call it. And so, she inquired all around, but they couldn't find him.

[00:05]

KH: They couldn't find his grave. So, she said, when she went to look at all the pineapple fields, she, you know, surmised that he was buried there somewhere.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: In the pineapple fields. Well, that's what she assumed. But he is buried somewhere Hawaii. Now that you mention that I recall her saying- Yeah.

LU: Yeah, yeah. Oh, isn't that neat.

KH: Yeah, when they were allowed to go back to Japan. Or, when she was able to go back to Japan, and then my brother-in-law, Joe [Laury?], was married to my sister. My only sister. He was quite, you know, worked for JTV and he knew where to go and all that. So. He led a lot of groups to Japan. Yeah. From the company, you know.

LU: So, tell us a little bit about when your father tried to make his way over to Canada.

KH: Tried to make his way?

LU: Didn't he get stopped in San Francisco? Or tried to, or-

KH: Oh, he- They tried to get off at San Francisco. I think, in those days, immigration wasn't very strict, that's what I gathered. And he tried to, but they couldn't, and so, they sailed onto Victoria? And I think they got off in Victoria, and then travelled across, and ended up in Vancouver. Yeah. It wasn't-

LU: Oh, wow. And he was 14?

KH: He was 14. By the time, he come over this way, I think he was going onto 15 or 16. I recall seeing 16 years old somewhere. Yeah.

LU: Yeah. And what happened when he landed in Victoria? And, you know, how did he find a place to live or-

KH: I think he lived with his friend, whoever it was. I don't recall. There is a name in his little black book that he always had, and he left behind. And I read it once- You know, what I could see, and what I could read. I only read a smattering of Japanese and there is a name there. But- What did you ask me? My memory just floated away right there [laughs].

LU: What happened when he arrived in Victoria? Or Vancouver?

KH: Oh, Vancouver. He boarded at a rooming house. I think it was quite a famous rooming house, where a lot of Japanese immigrants landed there. And they- I remember him saying it was a Suzuki- Suzuki Boarding House or something. And then he stayed there. And then I don't know what happened. I'm a little bit scanty, but- Then, from there, I think he was just doing odd jobs. And then, course it was the fishing industry that he was interested in. And I think this *ojisan*, whoever it was, took him somewhere out in Steveston and that's where he got interested, on a boat, and- Although he didn't have a boat or anything, he helped as a deck hand, you know. And every- He told us that every winter, he had a place to go because he befriended an English couple- A Caucasian couple I should say, and they took him in as a houseboy. And he didn't know anything about how to speak English or anything- She taught him, the missus. Taught him how to cook and how to be a good servant, I guess. And he learned a lot there. And then from there- I think he even went to school, 'cause he was young then. You know, they thought that he should learn English, you know, he's so young. And then, from there, every spring, he would go fishing industry and work with the fisherman. And then, when winter came, the cold weather came, he came back as a houseboy. So, he had a- He said it was ideal. Yeah. And he was single too. And then, when he married my mother, he went- They went on their own. Went to Steveston together. But-

LU: You had a story with your dad and how he would chaperone the young boy.

KH: Oh! Well, that's because- He used to tell us about the discrimination that he faced, when- Even in those days, how bad it was. The missus had an only son, a boy.

[00:10]

KH: And when Saturdays came along, and he didn't have to work that hard, Saturdays, like, he had days off too. And his job was to look after the little boy. Well, I remember him telling me that he took him to the movies, and discrimination was so bad that he couldn't go in with him. He paid his way in for the boy, and he just stayed at the doorway there and sat there on the chair- He just watched until he came out. Once in a while, they would let him in at the very, very back seat. And he would sit there, and he knows where he was sitting, and he waited for him. But after a while, the boy- even at that tender age, he realized that there was something wrong, and he refused to go to the movies anymore after that. After a couple of times they sensed it. And I remember my father telling me, he used to tell me a lot of stories. He said if- He told his mother, "If Yama can't come in, I'm not going to those shows. I don't have to go." That was it.

LU: Oh, yeah. Oh, wow.

KH: He'd rather play with him at home.

LU: And what about when your father decided to start a family, and- How did he meet your mother?

KH: Well, he knew here from when he left, like, as a young kid- teenager, I guess, you know. It's a picture-bride. I remember, she had a- she sent a nice picture. Like I said I told you that I can't find any of the pictures. Someone's got them, but I don't know who has them. But I remember seeing a real nice picture of my mother in her younger days. She used to be a pearl diver at her village, she said.

LU: A pearl diver?

KH: A pearl diver, yeah. And we have pictures like that, of her diving for pearls. And my father was of course looking really nice in his Canadian suit, you know. The picture was there. They still have those pictures.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, I thought it was quite amazing. Yeah, it was a picture bride, yeah.

LU: So, do you know when your mother was born? Do you remember?

KH: I know she was born January the 1st, something.

LU: Early 1900s? Late 1800s?

KH: 19.

LU: 19? So, she was a lot younger than your dad.

KH: No, she was- A lot? I think she was about eight years younger, that's all.

LU: Eight years, yeah.

KH: Yeah, somewhere around there. Usually, I notice they were all around eight years, or ten years. I'm looking at the gravesite, you know. But- Isn't it funny that I- I don't remember when they were born but I know when they died.

LU: Mm-hm. So, when did your mom first come to Canada? What year was that? Do you know, have any idea?

KH: I think it must have been about 1925, somewhere around there.

LU: And were they married in Japan or were they married here in Canada?

KH: I really don't know the procedure of how they get married as picture brides, to tell the truth. But I know- I have a red book. The Church gives it to them. The [bunkyo?] Church, Buddhist Church, or city hall somewhere, where they live, the village. And it's all written there, the clerk writes it out, and that's the official census for them. Or whatever you call it.

LU: Oh, like a marriage certificate? Or-

KH: Yes. What happened to the family, who died, when they died, and if there's a new wife, then put it down, and first child, second child, third child. It's all listed on there. I think they had- Oh, it must be the city hall.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. But, you know, going back to my working days, there were certain countries where we do not- that we didn't accept birth evidence. You know, in certain countries. But of the Asian countries, the Japanese- They call it *koseki*, they were recognized by the Canadian government here. Amazing. So, they do- That's really official. But there were a lot of countries over in Asia there, that they were not officially recognized. They had to have two evidence of their birth. Yeah. Working for the pension department, I know that.

[00:15]

KH: So, I really don't know the procedure over there, but I know they had- She had a red book. And we- I still have it here.

LU: Oh, wow, yeah.

KH: Yeah. I take it to the *obon* when they have the celebration of the dead.

LU: Oh, wow. So, you were born not too long after they were married. And they were living in Steveston at the time.

KH: Mm. And then we moved out of there.

LU: What about the rest of your family? How about your brothers and sisters?

KH: They were all born in Eburne.

LU: Eburne? Where's Eburne?

KH: Eburne is on the outskirts of Vancouver. It's on- It's on Lulu Island. An island called Lulu Island. Steveston is one Lulu Island. And we were- Steveston was on one end and Eburne was on the other end, closer to Vancouver.

LU: So, how long did you live in Steveston for?

KH: I think until I had to go to school.

LU: Oh, so just a few years.

KH: Yeah, a few years. Well, I was born there, so-

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: I think I must've been there- We must've been there for about five years. The five- Isn't it five, when we start?

LU: I think so.

KH: Yeah, I think so. Yeah. Even at that time.

LU: I think so. Yeah.

KH: Well, four or five years.

LU: Where was your dad working at the time? I can't remember if you mentioned. In Steveston.

KH: He was a fisherman then.

LU: Fisherman in Steveston?

KH: Yeah, yeah, yeah. He was going- Branched out on his own by that time. Yeah.

LU: And do you know why they decided to move from Steveston?

KH: Because I was ready to go to school.

LU: Oh, so there's no schools in Steveston?

KH: No, no, the school years were coming for me, I was getting older. And like I said, five years, perhaps, we stayed here.

LU: So, there was no-

KH: I'm just guessing because of the, you know, what I did, like. It was school time.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: They had to get me in school.

LU: So, there was no school opportunities for you in Steveston? You couldn't go to school there?

KH: Well, I guess I could've, but that's the only reason that I thought, more or less. I don't- You know, that's a good question. I wonder why they moved out of there [laughs].

LU: I don't know.

KH: Better opportunity, maybe. Because when we moved out of there, my father had a friend who lived upstairs in his- We built a new home.

LU: Oh.

KH: Yeah. But it wasn't a home like you would think that- home like here. They were all wooden houses over there. And ours was a little better house than the average fisherman's house. 'Cause when they lived in Steveston, I think they were cannery owned. You know. So, when they lived in Eburne, they were- It was their own house.

LU: So, did you have running water in the house as well or was it-

KH: Mm-hm, yeah, running h- water, and all that. But we didn't have flush toilets or anything. Yeah.

LU: No? And the bathhouse outside too?

KH: It was attached.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, but, you know, like a shed- out- Attached to the house from the kitchen. I remember that.

LU: Where was your dad working at the time?

KH: Well, he was a fisherman.

LU: Oh, he still was a fisherman after you moved?

KH: Yeah, yeah, he became a fisherman, and he left the- the household where he was going every winter. Once he got married, well, he went out on his own. Fishing- fishing was his vocation. His livelihood, I should say.

LU: Can I- Sorry, I just noticed that there's a glare on your glasses.

KH: Is there?

LU: Can I close the window-

KH: Oh, maybe it's the way I'm wearing it. That way?

LU: No, it's from the windows, I think. I don't know. I didn't see it outdoors, maybe it's-

KH: Well, of course it would- Well, maybe it's the way the sunshine.

LU: [unclear] just a little bit. Yeah, I don't know. I didn't even recognize till now.

KH: It's alright?

[Roy Honda]: Still glares, doesn't it?

LU: Still does. A little bit.

KH: Do you want me- do you want me to start all over again? [laughs] That could be better.

LU: That might be better, yeah. Thank you.

KH: Well, you know, talking about schools and all that. I could tell you a story that really irked me. You know, they have parent-teacher meeting?

[00:20]

KH: You know, here, when we came here, and we had to go to parent-teacher, I was in the Parent's Federation here and all that, I don't know what they call it. And- But over there in B.C., because the Orientals didn't have any voting rights, we couldn't vote or anything and the teachers... and, you know some of those teachers didn't know that, eh. They thought we had the same privileges, not realizing that we didn't. So, when they- We used to get this sheet sent out, our parent-teachers meeting, you know, for the whole room, like, you know. And it was such and such a night. And so, one day my father decided that he was going to go. And he knew that he couldn't vote or anything. But our teacher- homeroom teacher, said, "Now Kazue, you know when your father or mother come, they cannot vote." And I remember questioning that teacher. And I was in about grade 3 or 4, and even at that age, I knew why. Because they were Japanese.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. And that's the first instinct I had that there was a difference. The kids didn't know, yeah. But that teacher told me. That- They really wanted my dad and our neighbour. Like do you know Peter Yuno? He's an artist in Toronto, West Hill. And they were our neighbours and his father and my father, both of them went to the meeting. And I went too. Yeah. And that was my first taste of there is something wrong here. Even at that age, I knew right away.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah, so you became aware of it. Yeah. Until then, I didn't.

LU: So, what was it like going to school in Eburne? Is it Eburne?

KH: Oh, most of the time I really enjoyed it, you know. But I wasn't a sports girl. I never was. And when into races, I participated and everything, but I always came in last, [laughs] I did. That didn't faze me. I had fun.

LU: What about your school friends? Were there other Japanese students there as well? Or was it mostly-

KH: Not many, no. I think the Ito's and us and Kimori's. There was Kimori's I think that they were quite active in Vancouver Cultural Centre and all that. But that's about it.

LU: Oh wow. Your siblings were born in Eburne. And when were they born?

KH: We are all about two years apart. Yeah. We're all- 27, 25, 2- what? 22, 23. No, what am I- It's the other way around.

LU: Other way. It's 27, 29.

KH: 27, yeah. 29.

LU: So, how many siblings do you have?

KH: Well, right now, I only have one brother. And I had four- three brothers and one sister. And she died quite early. She was the one married to Joe Laury. Yeah. And my brother was working for Matsushita? You know, the television people. They make Panasonic out in Toronto.

LU: Oh yeah.

KH: Yeah. Where you live. Around Etobicoke. Didn't they have a plant in Etobicoke? And then my next brother, Art, he's the one that doesn't live too far from here. He's a machinist. You know, makes from steel, he makes something, whatever it is. And my youngest brother, was- What was he, Roy? Sam.

Roy: Sam?

KH: Yeah, what was he? He went to Ryerson.

Roy: Well, he was um...

KH: Mechanical something.

Roy: Pumps or something.

KH: Pumps or something, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. And they were all-

KH: And they both- They both went- Art and my brother, Sam, the two youngest ones, they went to- Both went to Ryerson. To Toronto. Yeah.

LU: And they were both- Everybody else was born in Eburne. So, they went to school in Eburne?

KH: We were all born in Eburne.

LU: Except for you.

KH: Except for me.

[00:25]

LU: Yeah. Mm-hm.

KH: Wasn't Sam...? Yes. 'Cause when the war started, when he came out, I think he was only about five or six years old. 'Cause I was only about 11 or 12, somewhere around there, when the war started. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. And was Eburne a big community? Like, was it a lot of people living there?

KH: No.

LU: Was it a small population?

KH: Small population. It's just a- What you call- Like in Japan, you would call it a prefecture. Like a municipality. You know.

Roy: Isn't it part of Marpole, Vancouver?

KH: Marpole is a part of Vancouver.

Roy: Oh, Eburne isn't a- Marpole-

KH: Eburne, was, uh, Richmond.

Roy: Right next to Marpole, wasn't it?

KH: Mm-hm. See, if you picture in your mind, Lulu Island was a big island, okay, and then there was a bridge, and then it was Sea Island. And Sea Island is where the Vancouver airport is. You could see the airport from our place. And Marpole was right between Lulu Island and Sea Island and across the other way was the- was Marpole. And that's Vancouver.

LU: Oh, okay.

KH: It took one hour on the tram to get to center of Vancouver.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow.

KH: So, right now, where we were, is a- it's called- Richmond is called a Chinese bedroom city now. To speak a little bit of slang there.

LU: And your father was a fisherman.

KH: Uh-huh, he was a fisherman.

LU: And did he have his boat or-

KH: Mm-hm, yeah, of course, when he got married, he had his own boat and everything.

LU: Do you remember the name of the boat?

KH: I have no idea. I don't remember that.

LU: Yeah.

KH: I had a picture of that too, you know.

LU: Oh, somewhere.

KH: Yeah. But, you know, when you say fisherman's boat, now that reminds me of a story too, you know. Would you like to hear it? Anyways, he needed a new engine and course in those days, they weren't making that much money, but it's a lot of money, and- he went- There used to be a store in Vancouver where most of the Japanese went to buy their engine or what they wanted for the fishing gear and all that. Well, he was paying- I remember him telling me when the war started, that he was paying monthly payment. As soon as he got money, you know, he pa- he was paying for this new engine that he was going to get. And- I remember the war started. So, I said, "Well, what happened to that engine?" And- Because they got their boat confiscated, and he says he went to the store and the gentleman, the proprietor returned all the money that he put in there. I think he got interest on it too. And I said, "He didn't, did he?" And he did. He didn't have to, you know. Well, he could have kept it, right? But no, he gave it to him.

LU: Wow.

KH: And I said, well that was nice. And he says, "Yeah. He was a dec- He was an honest, decent proprietor." That's why all the Japanese went to him. 'Cause they knew they would get a fair shake.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. And in those days, that was a lot of money. Yeah.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Memories just come back, just like that, 'cause I remember!

LU: I know!

KH: 'Cause my father used to tell me a lot of stories. And I used to listen to him. And I was fascinated.

LU: Do you remember any other stories about him talking about fishing and being a fisherman or-?

KH: No, I really don't know. Well, that was his profession- He was always a good fisherman. He got the highest [holds up two hands, indicating size of fish]- I remember that. You know. Fi- catch, you know.

LU: What would he catch?

KH: Well, it would be spring sal- It was salmon, mostly. But twice a year, he used to go into the ocean. I don't know how they did it, but I guess you get into the ocean, and he'll be gone for one week and we wouldn't see him. Yeah, and then they wouldn't even know if he was okay or not. I don't know how my mother stood it. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And then, when he came back from the ocean, then we loved it because he had crabs and everything that we couldn't get in the inland, you know, freshwater.

LU: Yeah.

KH: It was fascinating. Of course, Roy comes from the ocean, you know. He used to- They used to go raking and they got clams and shrimps and everything. Or whatever it is.

LU: What is raking?

KH: Well, they have a rake, like a garden rake, and they go over the sand and rake and you- And certain sizes of oysters or whatever it is, you rake it.

LU: Oh, you uncover them.

KH: Yeah, uncover them.

[00:30]

KH: And that's how they got it. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow, isn't that neat.

KH: And he used to tell me the story, I don't whether he told you, but he said that when Vancouverites came to White Rock, and over there to have picnics- They have picnics every summer or something, and they will come and rake. Rake the thing. And they cleaned up- cleaned them out. At a certain size, they would throw it back, but they didn't throw it back or anything. They just [mimics throwing motion].

LU: Oh wow.

KH: Maybe I shouldn't say that. [laughs] Cut it out.

LU: It's fine.

KH: I remember them telling me that. [LU: That's funny] For them, it was an everyday affair. Like, they could get it anytime. But, for them, you know, it was fascinating.

LU: Oh yeah. Oh, that's neat.

KH: That's about the only thing I remember. But we all enjoyed the- where we lived. It's a kid's way of living, I guess. Yeah

LU: And did your mom just stay at home and help out with the house-

KH: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

LU: And children and she didn't work at all?

KH: Well, she worked at home.

LU: Yeah.

KH: She- Well, in those days, my mother canned, canned all the fish, and they salted- When the dog salmon season came, they used to salt fish. And they used to- I remember my father making a box. And they just salted one fish after another, and that was winter food. So, they could have winter food, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. But we were like- I don't know, I guess it must have been Depression years when I was born and all that, but I still remember when food was scarce, and jobs were scarce. I guess there were out of jobs too- We never felt it on our end, like, where we lived. Because I don't think the island people suffered, but we used to see these Japanese ladies, with their little bags, their *furoshiki*. I guess that's their lunch. You know, they didn't have bags, but they had these scarfs, like, squares, and they put lunch and everything in the box and they would have it in there and they'd tie it four ways and they carry it. The Japanese people do that in Japan. And they used to have that and some of them would have at least two children, or one children, with them. And they- They walked all the way from the tram station. And they're walking in front of our road, and I used to watch, "Gee!" You know, it used to be a surprise when we see another Japanese face. And they would talk Japanese, so we knew they were Japanese. And t- They were looking for a Chinese farm. And they used to go there, and the Chinese people, they would have tomatoes, and- They're a farmer's market, I guess. And they can't sell those because they got little blotches in them or something like that. And they used to have hills of tomatoes, just to rot. They used to go there and pick those. And fill their thing up, *furoshiki* and then, they used to take it back and I guess, they went to the tram station and went home to Vancouver.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah. Because it was free, eh. The Chinese people- the farmers were very generous. You know, you could take it anytime you want.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, so we- I can't remember starving for food or anything like that. But I remember, my father used to- We used to wonder, and we used to talk to our father- our mother about that. No, they come because they haven't got any food.

LU: Oh, wow. Did you have a garden at your house?

KH: Yeah, we had a garden. We had a garden, too. Yeah. And- and there were Japanese farmers there too. And they used to give us, food. You know. And then we had neighbours that- They were all fruit farmers or farm farmers, you know. And the people who had fruit trees, they used to give us buckets of apples. Many fruit.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: So, we were- we were lucky. We realized now, you know, after- when we moved into the ghost towns after the war- during the war. We realized how lucky we were. And lo and behold, if- if we wouldn't meet that lady that went by our house every so often to get food. Yeah.

LU: Yeah.

KH: In Sandon. In one of the ghost towns in Sandon. We met her.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, we recognized her as kids, even.

LU: Yeah, isn't that neat.

[00:35]

KH: Yeah. I remember that.

LU: And so, how old were you when the war started?

KH: I think I was about 11 or 12, somewhere around there. I must have been about 12 because I had just started junior high school.

LU: Hm.

KH: Somewhere around there. They had junior high school and senior high school. And junior high school was grade 7 and 8.

LU: Oh, okay.

KH: Yeah. I think. Like I told you, my memory is a little [laughs]- I start talking and I'm talking about, thinking about something else, now I forget what I was talking about! [laughs]

LU: What do else you remember about your school days and growing up? Or your family home and, you know, what kind of activities would you do on the weekends? Or for fun?

KH: Well, we didn't do too much activities. I don't know. I guess- ordinary games, skipping rope.

LU: Did you play games? Hide and go seek?

KH: Hide and go seek, yeah. The usual things like hopscotch.

LU: Oh yeah.

KH: And tags and all that. And we had chores to do. Well, we had to do it because there were five of us. Yeah. But our neighbours had a big family too.

LU: Oh, who were your neighbours?

KH: Like, Peter Yuno's family. Yeah, they were our neighbours, yeah.

LU: And they have eight- eight children?

KH: That- that was a big family there, yeah.

LU: Oh, yeah. And-

KH: But Peter was always an artist. Even as a kid. You know how it was popular to go around asking for autographs? And when we left- when we all separate- go our separate ways, they wrote a farewell note. You know, on the note- I still have that.

LU: Yeah. Yeah. Oh yeah?

KH: And, he drew- Instead of writing a note, he wrote- drew a picture. Even at that age. And he was only- He's one year younger than me. Even at that age, he was drawing.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. He's- he's an art- he's quite an accomplished artist right now. He-

LU: Yeah, I remember people showing me. You know, they'd have photographs, and everybody would sign them and trade them with everybody.

KH: Yes, that's right! Yeah.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah, I remember that.

LU: So, do you remember having non-Japanese friends that you would trade cards with too?

KH: Oh, yes. We- My friends, like at home, we- It was Japanese, okay. Just our neighbours and neighbours around us. But when- At school, there were hardly any Japanese there. Bridgeport Public School. That- They were all Caucasians.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: We all got along. But- We all got along, but you knew that there was, uh- what do you call it? I wouldn't say discrimination that really showed, you know. But subtle.

LU: But there was a difference.

KH: Oh, yeah. You- you could sense it. Even as a kid, you could sense it.

LU: And do you remember, for lunches would you ever take bento boxes or Japanese food with you and-?

KH: No, we came home.

LU: Oh, you went home for lunch.

KH: 'Cause it was close enough. Yeah.

LU: So, your friends never asked you what you are eating or what is that?

KH: No. But, when I went to junior high school, we used to take- We wanted to eat rice, eh. So, we used to take it and my- I had a friend from Steveston who came. And she had *onigiri* too. And we used to love taking that. And so, we would go out in the fields, like, you know, soccer fields, and all that. We would go out there and we would just sit in the fields and eat during lunch hour, so it was nice. But it's not that they asked you, we were kind of embarrassed. I don't know why!

LU: Really?

KH: Because you know why, nobody ate rice balls or anything. You know, they would stare at you. No, we knew that we were different from the *hakujin*, eh. We took peanut butter and jam sandwiches, but- But once in a while, we would take on- I remember my mother making *onigiri* for us because we wanted it. Yeah. But, you know, you get kind of shy like- You know you're different. But it's nothing now.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: Oh, yeah. Yeah, but- Oh, I think during those younger days too it was a good-good- I thought it was a good life. We had no worries. I mean, your parents worried for you, just like when our children were small too. They didn't have to worry. They knew we were here. Yeah.

LU: What do you remember about hearing for the first time about the war? Was it on the radio or in the newspaper?

[00:40]

KH: It was on the radio. My father had a real good radio. It was one indulgence that he had. And I remember, December the 7th, it was quite a chilly day. And I remember I was helping him; he was chopping wood. And I was help- We used to pile it up on the deck there, for the winter, really neat. And that's when we heard it. Yeah.

LU: Did you remember him saying anything?

KH: Well, he knew things were going to change. He knew. And he read the English paper, too, because he read- He was a little different in that he could read and speak a little English. But he could read, too, 'cause Mrs. [Lanten?] showed him how to, you know. And then he- She sent him to, I don't think know- I don't think he said night school, but she sent him to school.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: Yeah. And so, you know, he wasn't as if- It wasn't as if he didn't know how to read or write. But he wrote too, but really simple. And I remember him practicing how to sign his name.

LU: In English?

KH: Yeah, yeah. Good writing, too.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And that's why I remember when we went into the ghost town, you know, some of the parents wouldn't let their daughters go to dances. Well, he let us go. And like me and my brother too. Well, my brother didn't- thought it was a sissy thing so he wouldn't go. But I was really interested in dancing and all that. And he let- He let me go. And then he said to one of my friends who the father wouldn't let her go even if I went. And so, he went over, and she wanted so badly to go too, and because I wanted her to come too. And so, I asked my father to talk to her father and he did. And then, he- she- Finally, he agreed, and he let her go. And it was a nisei father too.

LU: Oh, really?

KH: Yeah, it was an older nisei father. Imagine.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, so. My father wasn't an older nisei, he was issei. He was kinda- He was very broadminded and modern-minded than a lot of the other fathers that I knew. Some of the fathers were so strict, I recall that.

LU: Oh, yeah. So, was she a sansei then, I guess?

KH: Yeah, I guess so. Because if he was Canadian born, she has to be a sansei.

LU: Oh, isn't that neat. Oh, yeah.

KH: Yeah. She lives in Vancouver. And I don't know, things didn't turn out. She got married and all that, but when I was there, I looked her up, and they told me that- Oh, well, I think she had a nervous breakdown. Like war and everything, eh. A lot of people did you know. Except we didn't know.

LU: Oh.

KH: Yeah.

LU: What else do you remember about, you know, before you had to leave your house for the camps? What else do you remember? Did your parents try and prepare to get ready or-

KH: Well, my father- No. My father went first.

LU: What happened to him?

KH: Although he was a naturalized Canadian, he was sent first to build the road camps. I don't know why he had to go but they were all separated, the- the isseis who were nationals, you know, they didn't take out their naturalization papers. But

to be a fisherman, they had to be naturalized, you know, Canad- Naturalization papers, yeah.

LU: Oh, really.

KH: To be a fisherman.

LU: Why's that?

KH: I don't know. Some kind of a- To restrict them, I guess. 'Cause not every one of them were of a naturalized mind, eh. I think a lot of Japanese people there, the issei people that were there that were Japanese nationals, and they didn't want to give up national- their Japanese citizenship. Or would they lose their property in Japan. Yeah. And well, my father had- had to be a naturalized person to stay in Canada and to be in the fishing industry. That's what it was, I think. But anyways, he never regretted it. And- What was I saying now? What were we talking about? [laughs]

LU: When your father first had to leave.

KH: Yeah, well, he had to leave. And the nationals, and the naturalized people, and then the nisei people went too. Yeah. And they were- We were all separated.

[00:45]

KH: And so, I couldn't understand why my father had to go when he was a Canadian. Even at that age, I knew, "Why should he go when he's a Canadian?" I could see the nationals who didn't have any citizenship. I could see them going because they didn't give up their Japanese citizenship. But my father gave up everything! So, I just thought to myself, "That's strange," but he went anyways. But then they- He was with all the other niseis; you know the sec- like us. Like Roy is. And he- When he went to camp, the first time he wrote back, he said that- And he wrote it all in English, too, 'cause he knew that we weren't too good in Japanese although we knew how to write. And he said that he was a camp cook. Camp cook. There was not many camp cooks but he could make pies and breads and everything. 'Cause he learned all of this. While the others didn't know how to make it. So, anywhere they had to open a new camp somewhere, my father was first one to be sent. Yeah. And so, when- when we had to move into the camp, road camp- Not road camp but the ghost towns, my father was the first to go. Because they had- They needed a cook. For the carpenters and all that. So, he was there first. Yeah.

LU: So, did the RCMP come to the house and get your father, or did he go?

KH: We had to go to the Japanese language school in Marpole and they registered us. I still remember that, yeah.

LU: Wow.

KH: Yeah, I still remember that. Yeah, the sh- And that's how we all got registered-

LU: With your Canadian-born-

KH: Yeah, Canadian thing. And- and we didn't get any because you had to be 16 or 18 or something like that.

LU: Oh, so you didn't get one.

KH: No, I didn't get one. But- 'Cause I wasn't 16 or 18, then. But my mother got one as a naturalized Canadian, and I think- I- It was a different colour, it was orange. And

my father had one too. And it's funny, I got my mother's card, but we never found our father's. I don't know where it went.

LU: Hm. Isn't that interesting.

KH: It was interesting. Now that I look back, you know, I wish I had kept a lot of those things.

LU: You didn't keep your mother's card?

KH: Well, I kept my mother's. It's a good thing. And it's in a box, and I have a feeling, that if I could look really think and go look at that upstairs on the garage there, I'm sure I'll find it. I think they're all in that one box. 'Cause I don't throw away- I'm like my mother. Hoard everything. That's why, you know, my mother, when we came out this way, there's papers, I know, and I don't know who has it. I said now- I said now- I told 'em, if you have it, just give it back to me. I know it came from my mother's house. Now, I'll take pictures of it- You can take pictures anytime, you know it's so easy now. And I'll return it to the person who wants it. I says, I'm getting old now, why should I be keeping those things. So, I'll give it back to you. But I want copy for my kids.

LU: Yeah, well it's important.

KH: Yeah. And I'm the eldest too. But in- Like, in every race, the eldest son is more important, you know, but he passed away, eh. Yeah. Well, my father depended on me a lot. Yeah. I don't know why but he did. 'Cause I guess I'm- He knows that I'm stubborn sometimes [laughs]. I take after him.

LU: And what about your parents when the war started, and they were still living at home? Did they try to prepare? And what happened to your dad's boat?

KH: They confiscated it right away.

LU: So, did he have to take it and-?

KH: Yeah, yeah.

LU: Or did somebody take it for him?

KH: No, he took it.

LU: Oh.

KH: Yeah. I think- And he took it to the station, somewhere. And all the boats in that Marpole area, like the RCMP were there. And I think there was a- People from the armed forces were there, too. Yeah. 'Cause there wasn't enough RCMP. I guess they thought they might get attacked, but you know, the Japanese never- People never attacked. They didn't do any sabotage or anything. You know, anything like that. They were very cooperative. Yeah. But knowing the- the- the discrimination in B.C., they were noted for that, you know.

[00:50]

KH: And they had two aldermans who were really, really bad. Anything that happened then- Because you know why? We didn't have any vote. We didn't have any voting privileges, that's why we were the scapegoat for everything that happened there.

LU: Mm-hm. So, did your parents try and you know, sell some of their furniture, or-
KH: No. Well, we didn't have ritzy furniture like- Well, we're all comfortable furniture here. Because we were fish- fisherman. Yeah. So, we just, like- And then it wasn't as cold as it was here, so nobody- not many people had brick houses, they were all- Even the white people, they all had, you know, wood houses. If you go down there, you see the difference.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: Yeah, you can see the difference right away. Yeah. So, it wasn't being prepared. My father went first. And I don't know why my father's friend stayed behind. But he was a carpenter, that's why he helped build the house for my father, you know, and for our family. And he stayed behind, and- He made all the boxes real fast, I remember him getting lumber and everything. And before my father left, he said, "I'm going to depend on you for my wife and children." And he did. And he made boxes and a storage box 'cause we didn't have things like that, you know. And so- Although we had a trunk and suitcases that my father came over and my mother came over with. Wicker baskets and all that. And I still have it as a souvenir, you know. Old, leather suitcase.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: They said- They told me, "Don't throw that out! That's really historical."

LU: Yeah.

KH: I said, "Yeah, is that right?" So, whoever wants it can have it. So, none of the kids want to have it, but they said when they get settled, they're gonna take it to their basement. But, a-no, he prepared us for. But at that, you were only allowed so many pounds. And I remember where my father worked when he first came to Canada. They gave him a lot of household dishes and bed- Like, he had a beautiful brass- We had- In a rickety- rickety, you know- It wasn't a rickety house, it was a solid house, but we had a brass bed. Somebody would have really loved that as a souvenir. We left it behind. All that. Yeah. And just left it as is. 'Cause we were only allowed to take so much. So many pounds.

LU: So, do you remember leaving any-?

KH: All those dishes. I still rem- As a wom- I guess I was a- We were all women, you know. So, you cherish those beautiful dishes. And I still remember my mother hated to leave it because it was all gold rimmed, eh. Yeah. 'Cause when they died, when they were sick and dying, you know, they told my par- my father to take anything he wanted. And he wanted those dishes for us 'cause we needed dishes. And he never realized how precious they were. Yeah.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: I still remember. Beautiful cups and all. I used to say to Dad, "Where did you get these?" That's where he got it. They gave it to him, they made him take it, 'cause they knew that we didn't have- Just the bare essentials. Cups and saucers and what you want and all that, eh. They were very, very generous. Yeah. They were good to him. You know, for a person like that to come- They're well off and they come to make sure that you're okay. I'm sure if we weren't, they would've given us something, you know. I bet you they would've given us even monetary gifts. But we were doing

okay, so. But I still remember that I thought, "Gee, how kind some people can be." So, they're not all evil, you know. When you get to know them, they're all good.

LU: Mm-hm. So, you mentioned before that you had a family radio-

KH: Family radio, yeah.

LU: And you had to leave that behind-

KH: We- we- No, he took it with him. We had it in the ghost town.

LU: Oh, you snuck it in?

KH: Yeah. Snuck it in. [laughs] I told my father- Well, he had that short wave radio 'cause he- he can't- A lot of people couldn't listen to it. They would say it in Japanese, eh. And then they understood. See, my father could understand but he has to figure out what they're saying. You know, like, trying to figure out French, yeah. Like, we would- But in Japanese, of course, it's more of his mother tongue, so it's more fluent for him.

[00:55]

KH: And they- And I remember the neighbours used to come, they used to listen to the radio because it was getting very intense, eh. Yeah, I still remember that before the war really started. Yeah.

LU: Listening to the radio?

KH: Listening to the radio. And the way that they talked in Japanese, too, you could tell, it was very important.

LU: Oh, really.

KH: Yeah. But they understood and they were all listening.

LU: The people talking on the radio, were they in B.C.?

KH: No, it was- It was short waved. They called it short waved. Short waved meant that you could get language from- official language from Japan. It was beamed out of Japan somewhere to the States. Like the States beamed a lot of their propaganda over to Japan. Well, they did the same thing. They beamed it over this way. You know, they did all those things. In those days, I guess it was quite a thing.

LU: Oh, wow. So, they would actually be able to listen to the updates from Japan.

KH: Yeah, because they could understand it quicker. And then after that, my father would just turn it off and have English music and all that. That's why I think- We were quite musical too, in our own ways. We used to go- In school, we used to go- I used to belong to the choir. We would go around Abbotsford- I don't know, if you know your- little cities around there. And we'd go into competition. We always came out first or second.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: I still remember that, yeah. So, that's something that we used to do. And you don't have anything- Since it's British Columbia, it's British, right, we used to have Maple Leaf- Maple Dances, May the 24th, was quite an event over there. And we used to this Maple Leaf dance or something. Maple dance, they called it, around the pole, with ribbons.

LU: Oh, wow. Oh, with the ribbons?

KH: Yeah, with the ribbons.

LU: Somebody told me that before, that they were-

KH: Oh, is that right?

LU: They'd construct a big pole- I think it was [Mike Chi-chen?] Construct a big pole, have the ribbons tied up there, and then they would weave-

KH: We all had a ribbon, and we'd go in and out, in and out, and different dances.

LU: Oh, yeah. Isn't that neat. What happened to the pole after that? Would they leave it up?

KH: Yeah, I guess. Yeah, yeah, they just left it up. They used it for a lot of purposes.

Yeah. And I remember we all had to learn how to do the Highland Fling. 'Cause you see, everything was British.

LU: Oh yeah. What is the Highland Fling?

KH: You don't know the Highland Fling?

LU: Is it a dance?

KH: Yes, it's a dance.

LU: Are you gonna do it? Oh-

KH: [stands up and demonstrates]. Like this, you know. And then you go like this, and you go like this, twirl around [twirls] with a skirt on, you know. Even the men did it too. Yeah, you know. You don't know the Highland Fling?

LU: No, no.

KH: It's funny that our daughter-in-law is Scottish. Yeah.

LU: Oh. It is funny.

KH: I said to Janice, "I bet I can do the Highland thing better than you." 'Cause she knows how to do it too. They learn it just like most of the Japanese girls knew how to dance, Japanese dances. Yeah.

LU: I'm just gonna move this over. One sec. [camera noises]

KH: Yeah, those were the years. But ghost town days were very nice too. I mean, not very nice but as a teenager's eyes, you know, it was different. Different being in the countryside and being- not having too many Japanese friends. But then we got smothered in Japanese only.

LU: Oh, yeah, only speaking Japanese.

KH: Yeah. It was quite a thing.

LU: Hmm. Let me just switch the tape and then we'll talk about the ghost town.

KH: Yeah, the ghost town. No, we left everything behind. And I don't know what my mother was thinking of, but if that was me, I would have taken my best things with me. But she left all her good things behind. 'Cause she was afraid it might break and all that. And she didn't think we would be gone forever. Or gone for four years or anything like that. She thought it might be just a year or few months, imagine, then we'll be back. I said, even in my own mind, I knew that it would be a long time before we came back. I don't know, we sensed it.

LU: Yeah. Okay, one second

KH: I don't know. Does your mother and dad talk about that? Or your grandparents?

LU: No, not much.

KH: I bet ya- I bet you they didn't think that- Maybe they had the same feeling too.

LU: They were-

[01:00]

KH: I don't know. I never felt it that way. I figured that we were gone for good, and we lost everything, I did.

LU: Okay. So, when your father left, went to the road camps. And what happened to you and your family?

KH: We stayed like with a- with my father's friend. And he made this boxes and everything. And my mother started to start putting things in there. Yeah. And then, they told us to come and register, and this and that. Well, the- What they do, I don't know. Then the time came for us to move. And they sent out a school bus. School bus, or something like that, and we all had to climb in. And- All we had was a suitcase and some bags, you know. And then, we got on that t- bus, and then we went to Hastings Park. And I still remember. When I was telling Pam- Pam's students, you know, about this, you know, I- All of a sudden, I burst out crying and said to the girls, I said- So, she says- they snapped it right off, and said, "Don't worry that will be all," and they gave me about half an hour to compose myself. And I said, jeez, I don't what happened to me. And I was thinking of my dog.

LU: Aw, what happened to your dog?

KH: We had to leave him behind. And he was just panting and panting and chasing after the bus. And the bus stepped on the gas. He had to go, eh. He couldn't stick around, eh. Yeah.

LU: So, how come you weren't allowed to bring the dog?

KH: We weren't allowed to bring pets. Yeah. But they said- They couldn't understand, 'cause they're all dogs, obviously. Yeah. And Janice is a veterinarian. Our daughter-in-law. I said, "Isn't it how- The circle changes." You know. That was one incident that as a child- Well, I wasn't that old, still. I remember all those things. But my siblings, too, they all remember. Yeah. It was sad.

LU: Mm-hm. Did they give you a lot of notice before you left for Hastings Park? Did they tell you, you know, you're going to be leaving on this day?

KH: No, no. Yeah, you're going to be leaving in about- So that's why we had to be prepared, more or less. And it was about- I don't know many notice- One week? One week, maybe. Or five days, or something like that. I just can't remember, but it wasn't very long. We thought we just got the notice and then we had to go. But I remember going to school, and it was June. We moved- We had to go around June. And it was just at graduation time, so I had to go to the principle and get my papers for school, like what grade I completed and all that. They told us to get it, the Japanese organization. Get all those things before you leave. And we- And Mr. McNeil, well, that's the principal's name, and he knew that we needed it too. I guess they were all warned too. And so, he gave it to us. And I remember he stood up and he shook our hand and, "Good luck, it won't be like this all the time." And I remember saying goodbye to my teachers and one of them was a French teacher. And I shook hands with her, and she came out of the classroom, and she shut the door, and she bid us goodbye, and: "Don't ever give up your education." And all this.

And so, we said goodbye, and then, one was another social teacher. And her name was Mrs. Black, that's why I remember all those teachers that were so kind to us. And to me, I should say. And so, I went to say goodbye the teachers I was being taught by, and they all gave me a good recommendation too. And one of the teachers even wrote a note for me, too. But the French teacher- I don't know what happened, but years later, you know, after I came out this way, they had the school reunion of that class, of our class. And I went back to it, and I just went there the first one, and I never went back again. Something in there saddened and I didn't want to go back and see every one of them. And, so, I came back and- And you know why I didn't want to go back? That teacher, French teacher, got ostracized for saying goodbye to me. And, you know, one of the girls in that class told me about it. I said, "What do you mean by that?" And they said that they called her a Jap-lover.

[01:05]

KH: Or something like that. That's how bitter the feelings were, you know. Now, they wouldn't say that to me in front of me. But this was what I heard after, and I said, that's it. This was after the war, I was told. After all of this had passed.

LU: Poor teacher.

KH: And I couldn't believe it. Poor teacher. And so that's why, when I went back, I said, where's Ms. So-and-so, I couldn't remember her name. I'll probably recall it. And they said, "Oh, she left. Soon after you people left, she left too." She was such a conscientious teacher, she couldn't- she couldn't fathom it, maybe. And she spoke French, maybe she was from Quebec. It was a Quebec premier there that hastened the redress for us, you know. With Mulroney, yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. And what about Hastings Park? Tell us about, you know, what was your first impression on Hastings Park?

KH: Yuck. [laughs] Yeah. But it was okay, because you know why? We didn't stay there very long. We were the last to go there and first to go out, because you know what happened. My father was building homes for us. You know, for the Japanese to come before the winter set in. And so, people who were building the homes, they had the privilege, at least- This was fair, anyways, to call their families first. So, we got in first.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, so we didn't stay very long. But-

LU: So, was it a few months in Hastings Park or-?

KH: Yeah. I don't remember if it was even a few months. So, we were lucky that way.

LU: What was it like living in Hastings Park? What do you remember about- Oh, you had a story about how you were very close to-

KH: Oh, yes. Well, we were the last- So, they must have squeezed us in somewhere. And if you see pictures of where we lived and slept and all that, of course you had to go and have food and all that, communal food, certain times, you go there and have it. Oh, the same old food, oh it was sickening. 'Cause we weren't used to food like

that. But I remember, like I was telling you, we were camp- Well, I say camp because that's just what it was, blankets just hanging. It was pipes and no privacy. Just that thin commission blanket. And on the other side, was TB patients. All the TB patients. I think from- I don't know where, but it must have been from the sanatorium- They were all there on the half of it, where we were. And mothers and parents, like, where we were, 'cause there was hardly any men there. Because they were all gone, we didn't have our husbands- My hus- Our dads were not around. And so, we had to go where- I don't know why they stuck us in there. But that's the way it was. Yeah. And even in my childish thinking, child thinking, 12-year-old thinking, I knew it was wrong. You wouldn't do that all. You were supposed to be quarantined, not with them. That's how close they were. And we could hear them coughing, too. Yeah. That's the part I didn't like. And Hastings Park, too- Lots of times- I used to sleep on top bunk bed. And my mother and two little ones were sleeping on the bottom. And I remember one night I couldn't sleep with all that noise around and everything. And the guards go round and round. And around- I knew when the guards came around to check on everybody. And some of those- It was lady guards too. And they were really kind. They would cover the kids and cover my mother up and all that. They thought I was sleeping; I wasn't sleeping one time. And I was watching them, you know. But the sly ones, you know what they did, they had their fingers under the pillow. Hand under the pillow, thinking there's money or something. And I saw them do that too. And instantly, I didn't wake up, but I just moaned, and I just turned around like this. And she just went- pretended, then she walked out.

[01:10]

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: I witnessed that! I tell you with my own eyes. And I told my mother that. And my mother was so glad that I was awake. Whatever they were trying to do, I don't know. But I figured they were looking for money. 'Cause it's not as if they didn't have money or anything, but, you know, its pocket money, right. We all have some pocket money, of course.

LU: Yeah. Oh wow.

KH: I still remember that.

LU: And was Hastings Park closed in?

KH: It was cattle stalls. You know, have you ever seen a cattle stall? Cement, and the troughs, are like- Say this is the stable right here. Well, all the horses are all lined up and cows are in there and each one has their own stable and they are all cement made. And just before you go in, there's a trough there. Like a ditch. A little trough there, that's where they do all their poops and everything. And all they did was let the water run. Like, you know. I guess they had a button somewhere. That's what they did with bathrooms too. I couldn't believe- We used to go to the bathroom, you know. And there's no flushing thing when we first went there. And I don't know whether I should even- I think these are things people don't talk about, I just say it to you. There's nowhere to flush, so you wonder where the water's gonna come from. They said, "Don't worry." There used to be an attendant since you couldn't let

little kids go in there by themselves. And sometimes- At a certain age, you don't let them. And so, they used to say, "Don't worry, it'll flush in a minute." And sure enough, every so many minutes, water comes from way up there, gush up.

LU: Wow.

KH: Well, that's the cattle. That's what they do with the cattle, right. If you- If you read some of those stories- You should read some of the stories that were written by the Japanese nisei authors. Life in the Hastings Park and all that. And I thought to myself, "How true- How do they get this into a printing book?" I thought.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: Yeah, and you won't find me printing- If you find one, you should for your future reading or anything like that. Because I was interested in all these things, you know. I picked it up. When you know, you pick it up. And I remember, you know, when we went to Los Angeles for the American Big League. Like us. Like the JCCA- NAJC. We went to the American one and met a famous reporter. And he got attracted to us too because we had the same name. Honda, we were Honda too. We had our tags- And so, he came over, he spotted us, so he came over, and talked to us. And he gave us- He only had twelve editions of his book. And he was a reporter for one of the American newspapers. One of the big Japanese newspaper. And he wrote the story about all the camps in America. Japanese American camps. They had camps too, you know. But I think they were- The camps were much harsher than ours. And he gave us that book, and he wrote Kay and Roy and all that. And somebody came over and I just can't remember who it was, and wanted to read the book and I said, "Sure, go ahead." But I thought, "Surely, it says Kay and Roy. So, we don't have to put- stamp our name on it or anything." So, we gave it, and as time went on, I forgot about it. Because it- Lots of other books, eh. And I asked a certain person, whether we had lent it to him. Can you- If we did, can he return it because we want to keep it for keepsake. He didn't- He said he didn't have it. So, I said, we got the wrong person, we just had to ask, and everyone didn't have it. And so, Roy says, "It was one of your friends." He remembers that, but- I can't find it. If ever you lend- book share, you got to put your- Stamp your name on a good place. And you know what I was told? When you lend books, if you're going to keep it, treasure it, you know on the side, there's lots of page- Side here, like that [demonstrates]. Get a pen and put Honda right on there. There's no way they could rub it off. Honda. It'll say Honda there. Yeah, you know, on the pages there. I'd? say, "Well you'd ruin the book."

[01:15]

KH: Well, do you want to have the book returned or what? [laughs] I said, well there's only twelve editions. And then, lo and behold, about 20 years later, I met him in Toronto. He recognized us!

LU: Oh yeah?

KH: Yeah! By that time, his first wife had died, and he had another wife. Yeah. And so, I asked him, "Have you ever got that book? That book that you gave me?" And he forgot that he had given us his book. And he says, "No, I only had about twelve

editions of that, and they are all gone." He said, "Even I haven't got it." But he remembered what book I was asking him. So, I said, "Well, that's too bad," I said.

LU: So, what else do you remember about Hastings Park?

KH: Oh, it was an experience. But I didn't stay- Like I said, we didn't stay there as long as other some people did. But it was an experience.

LU: So, where did you go after Hastings Park?

KH: We went to Sandon.

LU: Sandon. Mm.

KH: We only stayed there not even a month I don't think.

LU: Oh really?

KH: Yeah, because there was a slight mix-up and we ended up there but- whereas my father was waiting for us in New Denver. Which isn't too far. So, around I think a week later we moved to there- to New Denver, and we stayed in New Denver.

LU: What was New Denver like?

KH: Oh, beautiful. It's like a city up north. Beautiful lake, pristine lake. And mountains, nice mountains, it was a regular town. Yeah. That's where the Ghost Town Heritage is now. You know, the ghost towns that they had there? They call it the Orchard and that is the- One of the homes is there as a heritage now, in B.C. It's a designated- In fact, they're having a celebration there of some sort.

LU: Yeah. Yeah.

KH: In November, yeah. So, there's quite a few Japanese living there. And that's where I had my high school education. And everything, yeah.

LU: So, did you go to school right away when you got there, or did you have to wait?

KH: No. I think we- I think we wasted one term. Because the nuns weren't there.

When we went, there was hardly anything there. The town was getting used to us.

LU: So, did they-

KH: And we had a nice hospital there, nice doctor.

LU: Stores and everything?

KH: Stores and everything, yeah.

LU: And who was running the hospital and the stores?

KH: Oh, the city. That town was. Yeah. But I guess, I don't think- I never heard of them getting subsidized, but I guess we did, I don't know.

LU: So, I guess there weren't many job opportunities in New Denver, since-

KH: No, but you know, when the Japanese came, the stores had to have help, eh. The people who spoke Japanese and older competent people. Not teenagers because they had- They needed people to serve and all that, sell and all that. So, a lot of older Japanese got jobs. And when they had- Then they had to set up a school system. At the Orchard for the kids. And they set up one, too, a good school system. Yeah. And then the nuns came, and the Protestant Church High School wasn't run properly. Not run properly, but- I don't know why the Protestant, the ordinary- Oh yeah, the B.C. government refused to teach them. Like, the public- There was a public school there, but the Japanese couldn't go, no, you couldn't mix with them. Because we were enemy aliens, don't forget.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: It's during the war. Maybe after the war you could've. See, we still didn't have any right to vote. No voting or anything. No, see that- that was the downfall of our race because the discrimination. And anything that they did, they knew that they could get away with it because we didn't have any voting rights. In other words, we weren't citizens.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: That voting- So, when we got our votes in 1949, oh, that was a lot of work on our old nisei's who went after that. The people who had the education, they really went after the government. Even the government, they were ridiculed too. Sure, they thought they could get away with it, I guess. But they're persistent and all the well-thinking people, and people who were fair-minded, they knew that you can't keep on like that.

[01:20]

KH: Yeah. And so- JCCCA- They were known as the JCCCA then. Same thing. And they all went after- And then, the nisei boys, joining the armed forces during the war as interpreters more or less, yeah, yeah. They couldn't- they knew that as time went on, they were on the losing end, the government, to have us thinking like that. So, they finally got it. And after that, things were- And that's how I got into civil service, too. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: I got into civil service, and I was looking for a job and I didn't have any trouble. First- But the first job that I went to was the Veterans Affairs. And they were all coming back from the war, eh. Oh, I felt a little bit antagonistic feeling from some of them. But I- I knew how to, yeah. When they understood, well heck, they didn't know- realize that. There's a famous story of a nisei that went to war. And when he came back, he didn't have anything. The house- his house was sold and everything and he went fighting for Canada. Nisei person, he died now.

LU: Oh, can you imagine?

KH: Can you imagine? Well, that's the way it was.

LU: Yeah.

KH: He had a voting- I- So I said, "You mean to say he didn't have a right to vote?" Yeah, well he had. But only one vote among all the Japanese, you know. Your parents didn't tell you all that, eh?

LU: Uhh...

KH: Well, I'm sure that- You must've had a kinda jist of that.

LU: Um, before we move on though, let's talk a little bit more about New Denver.

KH: Oh, do you wanna know?

LU: Yeah, tell me, what else do you remember-

KH: Ghost town?

LU: Yeah, let's talk about ghost town.

KH: Oh, we had our- Well, I grew up there, more or less, our teenage years. And I really enjoyed it. Yeah. And I got my- I graduate- We were the last ones to graduate.

The war ended in what, spring? No, in summer, was it in August or something? That's right. And we got our diploma and everything, and we had a nic- All the nuns were good to us. They really drummed the lessons on us. And then- Oh, yeah, decision time, I don't think they knew what to do with the Japanese people. And so, it was decision time, whether you wanted to go to Japan, or go out east. If you don't go out east, you got to go out to Japan. You can't stay in B.C. But some diehards said they can't get away with that. You have to- They all want to go back to their home. But where? They were all sold. Their farms were sold, they had nothing to go back to. See, they were smart, eh, the politicians. And so, what can we do? So, we- At first, you know, my father, thought, "Well..." - My mother wanted to go back to Japan because she had never been to Japan. You know- I mean, after she came out. And she told- And her mother had already died; I think her father was dying- Dad had died, and her sisters weren't all that healthy, either. And so, she wanted to go back to Japan. And then- But somehow or another our application was stalled. You had to decide yourself. And my father was the one that stalled it, you know. I don't think he wanted to go back and neither did I. And neither did my br- eld- Next brother, you know, the eldest son. And he didn't want to go back, neither. But the rest of them, they're too young. They didn't care. They'll go wherever the parents went. I said, "Are you crazy?" And then, my sister's friend went back to Japan because they didn't- Because they were nationals. You know, they didn't have Canadian citizenship. And so, they went back to Japan, and she wrote a very, very sad letter to my sister. And in that was a Japanese letter, too, from her mother to my mother. Don't ever come back. Don't ever come back. "You- you-" In Japanese, "You really don't know what the conditions are. It's not what you think." And they wrote that way. And she wrote it in Japanese. And Yoshiko, her name was.

[01:25]

KH: Ide, I think it was. And she wrote to my sister, and my father read it, my mother read it in Japanese, and he read it the Japanese part, too. And that decided- That was their decision. We didn't go back. And we were able to cancel it.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, and then, at that time, what do you know, lo and behold, this missus- Mr. and Mrs. [Landtman?] came down to see my father. You know, the person that befriended him, the house boy. Job. So, she came, they came. And we wondered where they were, you know. And they said they bought a hotel in Trail, you know, Trail, B.C. And that was pretty close where Slocan is. And New Denver is, and Kootenays. And so, they came all the way down to look for my mother and father. Imagine! Just turned up. And they went straight to the- We told them what happened and then we said we- My father told- 'Cause they liked me, 'cause I talked more. And they- Even at that time [laughs]. And so, they went straight to the Commission head, and they told the predicament that we were in and what our

feelings were, we wanted to cancel. And if it comes- it if comes worse, you know, they will take me into Vancouver, and she could stay with their son- that son- and be a maid. And I thought to myself, "Like heck, I don't want to be a maid!" [laughs]. No! Well, even at that stage, eh, I used to hear a lot of stories about, a-no, a lot of niseis being maids in rich homes. And I thought, "The heck I'm gonna be a maid." [laughs]. I had a feeling like that. And so- But everything worked out good. And we didn't have to go back, and- But we had to move to Rosebery. Because there was a little- Lots of Tashme people coming in. Because they want to go out west- I mean east. So, we had to move out. 'Cause we had already signed- signed that- No, my father had signed that we would go back to Japan. But if it wasn't for that letter coming through, you know, through the Red Cross, I think we would've maybe ended up there. Because I thought to myself, even at that age, you know, I thought to myself, "Well, why should we go back? Why should my dad go back?" But a lot of Japanese didn't have their naturalization paper. You know, it's going to get one like that again. So, let the nationals go back. So, they went back first.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: Yeah, and that's how we stayed. That's how- The first opportunity too, when they said- when they asked us- We were one of the first to leave there, too. They said, "Would you like to go out east?" And we said, "Yes." And where are we going? We ended up in London. Yeah. And over there, there was a rooming house for transients like us. We came over, and the government more or less looked after us for the first week or so, before we got transferred into farms or something like that.

LU: Oh, so they organized it?

KH: Yeah, they organized it. The government did. So, if you came out east, they would help you. So, we came out this way and- and I remember that rooming house was a- the [unclear] was a- It was an ordinary house too- It was Kumagai. John Kumagai. And do you remember- I bet you, your parents might. John Kumagai- Or grandparents. But anyways, they were running it. But they were running it with the government, like, you know, just so that the people- Family with kids and all that, they come over there, and they all- And then, the people who hired us, will go. And then, my father and mother- Oh, and from there, we couldn't go anywhere. I think we were kind of stuck. But there were other families, too, ready to go somewhere. So, from there, we went to Fingal Station- Army Station or- Training Station. But it wasn't an army station, it was an Air Force station where they trained the Canadians to fight for the- to go join the Air Force. And then- then, when the war ended, it was dispersed, and that place was changed into a prisoner of war camp for Germans. And we didn't know that. But, soon as they left- Went back, repatriated back to Germany, then we came. So, they were making- The government was making good use of all those kitchens and everything. And so, my father got sent there. And, of course, when he got sent there- Because he was a cook. That's what the advantage was.

[01:30]

KH: No- I forgot to tell you, before we ended up in London, we were- ended up in Nays, that was another prisoner of war camp.

LU: Oh, for the Germans?

KH: Well, yeah, up in Neys. Thunder Bay, up there. Yeah. And that-

LU: Who was the prisoner of war camp for?

KH: For the Germans.

LU: Germans.

KH: Yeah. It was German. But they- they- Like, they had to have camps, eh, and there were camps here. Well, we never knew- I don't think the Canadian population knew, but, at all, since we were being transferred there, we knew where we were going.

And so, we stayed there. And then, it got cold up there, and we had to get going. I think they had to move us from there. And from there we came to Fingal- Or London. Or Fingal. I can't remember. I'll have to look at my book.

LU: Yeah. And then from Fingal, where did you go?

KH: From Fingal, I went to London, and this is where I got into a real nice family, too. Scottish family too. And he was quite well off. He was governor of University of Western Ontario at one time. He was a very kind man. And-

LU: So, you're separate from your family?

KH: Yeah, I got- Well, my parents agreed. And we went there- I went there. And they came to Stoney Creek. They got hired by a farmer in Stoney Creek. And they were in an apple orchard. And then- Then, my brother had to go to school, you know, they were all high school, I think- Yeah, they were high school. And so, they moved into town. Hamilton. And that's how we ended up in Hamilton.

LU: And so, what were you doing in London? Working-

KH: I was a nursemaid. And she was ill; the wife was ill. And she had two adopted children. And they were- The eldest was about 7, girl. And the boy was about 5, he was just started school. And both of them were adopted. And so, I looked after her, but it got too much and so they got a private nurse for her. And I was like a nursemaid to two kids. Yeah. More or less. Looking after them and taking- You know, helping them with school. And because the girl wouldn't take piano- Oh, no, it was really good. The girl wouldn't take piano lessons. So, the Mrs. Haye? said, "Well, Kay's gonna take piano lessons." I said, "I am?"

LU: What are panel lessons?

KH: Piano lessons. Piano.

LU: Oh, piano.

KH: Piano, yeah [laughs]. And she wanted Mary to take piano lessons, and she wouldn't take it. So, I had to take her down. And she learned how to play piano at the same time I learned too. Because I had first- second grade piano at nun's school, you know, at Notre Dame in New Denver. And I was- You know, I like the piano too. And so, I learned too. I learned another year while she's learning too [laughs]. And so that's how she learned. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: But I couldn't- I couldn't do- How can I do piano lessons and do housework and all that?

LU: So, how did you get that job? Was it set up by the government or- 'Cause-

KH: Yeah, yeah.

LU: Did you have any experience before being a-

KH: No, no, no. No, I was just a high school graduate.

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: But the thing is, Mr. Hays was a very Christian man. And he came down, and he was in the- He was a real staunch liberal, eh. I didn't like liberals, I don't know what you are [laughs]. They were the ones who did all that crazy- Mackenzie King, eh? You know, discrimination and all that and shoving us out of there- out of our homestead and all that. So, I- At an early age, I knew- NDP wasn't NDP or whatever it was- I can't remember. CCF. At that time. And Liberals, and I can't remember- I don't think it was Conservative. But I always remember that Liberal, that name. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: And so, that's how it started [laughs]. And he was a really nice man. Yeah. And- Then, I stayed there two years. I beared it. Because, you know, it's a nice place. Nice place and they paid me pretty good, you know, so- 'Cause they knew that I had to help my parents, too. So, I used to send them money too. And time went on, and before I knew, it was two years. Yeah. And then I thought to myself, "Well, I can't stay here." I started to think for myself, like- And my parents were- had moved into Hamilton and all that. And I thought, "Gee." You know, you get kinda homesick and then you want a steady job, but you didn't-

[[01:35]]

KH: I knew I didn't want to be a maid, eh. Well, that's- Nursemaid is just about the same. And then, she got progressively worse. And I couldn't leave her, 'cause she had a heart condition where it was really bad, angina or something like that. And she- And I- I used to go with her to cottage- They had a beautiful cottage in Grand Bend. And for two years. And I think she died at Grand Bend when we were there. And she- Before I knew it, she had come back to London, and in the hospital, and we came back quick- rapidly to follow her. And I had- I sensed that she had died. But they didn't want us to know. Yeah. And I was really sta- And then, at that time, I made up my mind. I've got to leave, because I'm getting too attached to the kids. And the kids were getting attached to me. And so, I made up my mind, I said, "I have to leave." And so, I left them. And oh, that was another, you know, sad occasion, you know. And so, I went through a lot. I mean, I think I did because I couldn't take it for a while. But I can't- I was determined- With my parents, and they needed my help too. So, I came out this way. And then, because they had no room for me at home, and- I went- I saved my money, too. I'm telling you my whole history. I went to Park Business School.

LU: Mm.

KH: Yeah, I thought, "Well, might as well get into the business world." I was told that, too. And so, I did. And by the time I got into the business world, I had taken the business course, and I took the executive secretary course, that's the highest you could go over there. And I got good marks for it, and I was all ready to get- find a job. And I couldn't find a good job. And then, lo and behold, it's 1949, it was around

there. And voting came. And we all got our vote. Well, they had to open the civil service. So, I went to the post office there and that's where they all had the test- You had to pass through a test. And I studied and I practiced and everything and I came up on top, so they had to give me a job. And so- That's how I got into the Veteran Services. And I stayed there 25 years.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, yeah. And I had a good job at the hospital, too. Patients- patients' accounts. At St. Joe's. And I liked that job too. You know, when- Then, I needed- Because, like- And then, I took medical technology when I was home with the children, and I thought, "Well-" No, I had stayed home, and the children came, and I got married and all that- No, I got married and the children came [laughs]. And then, I thought, "Well, I got to prepare myself for something again, you know." And so, I brushed up on medical terminology and typing and all, shorthand and all that. And lo and behold, I got a part-time job while the kids were growing up. But then, I thought, "Well, I better get myself a more permanent job." So, when I came up, I just jumped into there and.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: And then, lo and behold, doing the CPP and all these departments really opened up. Well, I just transferred over. It was a good opportunity. You gotta take an opportunity- You gotta take a chance and take an opportunity when it opens. Otherwise, it's too late. By the time some of my friends got in there, it was too late. Yeah.

LU: Did you ever face any discrimination when you were working?

KH: No.

LU: No. Even at the Veterans?

KH: No. Well, oh, the veterans, they had just come back from the war, and they all had bitter memories, too. Like, we did, eh. Over the ghost town business and all that. But the thing is- Not ghost town but my evacuation, leaving everything, leaving my dog and- But, you- They adjusted to it when they found out what had had happened. 'Cause they never had an inkling of what happened to us. Because- What made me- I thought to myself, "Some of the soldiers didn't-" You know, they had this one- When the soldiers came back, some of those soldiers didn't have any place to go to. You know. They had soldier settlement. I don't know if you know that or not. But that's where they- Land Act. Veterans' Land Act. They had a special legislation.

LU: Oh.

KH: And they could buy land with their service or something like that, and-

LU: Wasn't it buy land or go to school?

KH: Yeah, something like that. And school, too, we were right in there, too. And clerk- It was clerical job, then. And yeah, Veterans Land Act and all that.

[[01:40]]

KH: And so, what they didn't understand was, some of the people that got good lands and all that, they had really just taken the Japanese ownership land in B.C. That's how the land- That's how it was in B.C. Yeah. They didn't realize that.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And- and- and I thought, "Well, you know, it's not only the Japan- sansei or yonsei that's didn't know all this. Even the Canadian soldiers who served didn't know all that." And they were upstairs of us, in the federal building there. And one day, a-no, I was told that from one of the JCCA people. When it was known as JCCA, it's the same thing. And I said, "What? You mean to say I was working there- Working there and some of those veterans were taking veterans' land?" [laughs] You know, our own veterans' land. Like, the Japanese people- Like Buck- His name was Buck Suzuki, I think. The- the Japanese soldiers that came back, you know, the nisei. And he came- When he went back- Was going back to his home, he didn't have a home! Somebody else was living there. Because-

LU: Oh, my.

KH: Because the- I guess, well, I didn't know what happened, they say it was a big shemuzzle. Here's a veteran, a Canadian going to war, a veteran, and coming back and all that, and his whole home is sold. Can you believe that?

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: That was a real slip up, I think. No matter what. Doesn't do the people in our country any good to have a reputation like that. That's why, you know, this War Measures Act and all that- that got us all moved out of this- our homes and all that. You know, when this G20 issue came up, you know, this- whatever, it was, recently in Toronto. And they're yelling about this G20- War Measures Act and all that. And I said to Pol- Was it Polly? I said, "I don't understand this this War Measures Act. I thought that was thrown out. I thought we had a big meeting at McMaster and the NAJC people and all that, and they threw that legislation out. So, how come they still got it?" Well, you know, in anything- They can do anything. So, don't ever be lax and sit back, yeah. For the sake of the- We're a multicultural country, now. And you- Like I said before, like when we had that [sake sushi?] thing, and history, in Jackson Square, these people were astounded. These foreign people, you know. They were.

LU: Well, you were part of redress.

KH: Mm-hm.

LU: Weren't you? Why don't you tell us a little bit about that?

KH: Well, in the Hamilton section.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah. Well, we had to because we- we were in a- You know, this area.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: Well, we were JCCA here, you know.

LU: How did you participate in the redress?

KH: Oh, well, getting names and getting papers. And- oh, lot- in a lot of ways.

LU: Well, if you're-

KH: Getting them hyped up and signing petitions. That's how we got them marching and going to Ottawa and march on the- at the Parliament Hills, there.

LU: Mm-hm, you were marching.

KH: We were brave. [laughs]

LU: Yeah, yeah. How many people went and marched in- on the Parliament building?

KH: Oh, a busload from here, I think, went. And then there were busloads from Toronto, Montreal, Ottawa. Like, you know, they- And they all got together.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: You had to. Yeah. It was a big thing. Yeah.

LU: If you're trying to explain redress to somebody who doesn't know anything about it, how would you explain it to them?

KH: Mm. Well, I don't know, I would- I would- They don't- They wondered how we were the ones to get redress. And well, I tell them about what happened to us in- when war started. And, you know, you have to be brief. Like Roy says, I get drag it on too long. Well, maybe I do, but sometimes- sometimes, you know, what you didn't tell them, they come back and ask again. So, you have to tell them in the first place. Well, maybe some people understand, yeah, you're right. Maybe I am dragging it too much.

[01:45]

KH: But I do tell them about the discrimination and what they all suffered, and- Especially the fisherman story. My father being a fisherman. And then, the short story of what happened during the redress and what- And then, of course, they want to know how it happened personally with us. "How did you happen to be thrown in there?" and all that. Well, I tell them. And: "What made you aware?" Like, not angry, but so upset over that. Being land and all that. Well, I says, "You know, the worst thing that could have happened was that my father was a naturalized Canadian since he was 14 years old." Or 16 years old, I think that you had to be 16 or something. Well, I've got the papers. When I find it, I'll send it to you. You know, archives. And that's where I- what's the use of having that if- Either you are naturalized Canadian and you have all the privilege and to think they couldn't get a vote until 1949. I couldn't believe it. And we couldn't get a job in civil service. And my father used to say, "That is the reason why they were treated like dogs, more or less. They had to have a scapegoat for anything. And the Japanese were the ones, the Asians were the ones." They started to say that we took their job, and my father took their job, and they worked day and night. And they don't know how to rest. And- That's what they used to say. My father told me all these things as- you know, as time went on. And I remember all these things and some things I forget but some things you kinda- I think that's the reason why I was always interested in the political movement. Polly and I were. Yeah.

LU: So, how did you first get involved with redress? Did someone approach you and say, "This is what we're doing, come help-"

KH: Yeah.

LU: Or did you learn about it, and you went-

KH: No, no. Oh, oh- Oh, that part. Now that you- I just didn't quite catch on there, but at first, you know, we were just- just women doing nothing. You know. And we weren't interested in joining the JCCA, or any group, we were kinda having- kinda

having good fun with a bunch of girls and all that. And, one day, they start talking about, um, Norm Morikawa, did you ever- did you ever hear of him? Well, he was a staunch redress man. And he- He was a very staunch NDP and NDP was really going for this redress for- with us. And I remember Art Miki and they were- they were starting- The sanseis were reading, learning in the history, and they start: "Well, why should our parents suffer like this and all? Why should they get all their property taken away?" And they started it too. And then Norm was a- I don't know if he was a veteran or not- But he was quite a staunch, political man. And we saw him struggling with old-fashioned methods, eh. And he's going down from Chatham, and he's going through the telephone book, taking every Japanese name.

LU: Oh, really?

KH: And all that. Such tedious work. And Polly and I saw him doing it, we were at the Cultural Centre there one day. And we were staunch Cultural Centre supporters, too. And so, we saw him doing that. You know: "What are you doing, Norm?" And that's how it started. And this is what he was doing. He was- He has to get the petition going, yeah. And to- to get this redress. And somebody has to start it. Support the sanseis who are doing it. And so that's how I started. And so, I said- And so we said, "Give me that list that you have." Polly and I were there. And we said- 'Cause we were both secretaries, eh. So, "We will do it for you. And tell us what you want, it's done." And we start doing it for him.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: 'Cause lo and behold, I'm telling you- Um, I shouldn't say names, but that's how a lot of-

LU: It's okay, we can take out last names. Yeah.

KH: Hm. Well, anyways, there was a person there that saw him doing that and they saw us helping him too and all that. And so, after we typed it and give it to him, you know, this person was still around, you know. I guess- I don't know why he was hanging around. And- This is another meeting that we had. And you know what he did? Right in front of our eyes: "Give me that, Norm. I'm gonna take a copy. You don't mind me getting a copy. I'll take a copy; I'll give it back to you."

[01:50]

KH: And off he went before- [mimics shock, gasping] Polly and I are going because we knew he was opposition, eh?

LU: Ohh.

KH: Yeah. I think Norm knew, but he- But I don't think he had any chance to get it back. And so, he took it! And we were so mad, annoyed. I get mad, you know [laughs].

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah, yeah.

LU: Did he ever give it back?

KH: He gave it back, but after he took copy. That's why- He wanted it. And so- so, they started listing all the donors for the Cultural Centre too. I shouldn't say that. But that gave us a really- Not a very good feeling.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: Well, that's why we stuck with Art Miki and them. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm, oh, wow.

KH: But we believed in it. And I believed in it too. And before my father died, you know, he didn't get his redress, and neither did my mother, and they were the ones that needed it. They were the ones who suffered more.

LU: Yeah.

KH: And- My father said, "*Tanomu-do, tanomu-do*" like, "We will depend on you." You know. You people. Like, us younger people, generation. I remember him saying that I was shocked. I was kind of shocked. And then he died.

LU: Yeah. When did he pass away?

KH: He died in 1962; that's a long time ago.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And he had just retired. So, you can't retire until you're around 60.

LU: What about your mother, when did she-

KH: No, I mean 70. Yeah. And my mother died when she was 77, and she died 1984, I think.

LU: Aw, she just missed it.

KH: Yeah. She just missed it! That's right. And my sister missed it too. She died in 1984.

LU: Oh really? Same year?

KH: Yeah. Yeah- Wait a minute, now.

LU: Or close?

KH: My sister died- She died in 1984. So, they must have died earlier. My mother must have died- I thought she was 1984.

LU: Hm.

KH: Well, 25 years would be '09- Yeah, my sister died in 1984. She missed it. And so did my parents.

LU: How old was she when she passed away?

KH: She was in her 50s, I think.

LU: Oh, so young.

KH: Oh, yeah. The two boys had just graduated university. And the youngest is a daughter, and she had just graduated high school. Yeah. It was sad. Yeah.

LU: Why so young? Was she sick, or-

KH: She had cancer, and none of us knew that she had cancer. I blame it on that doctor. I hate to say that. But he lagged behind too long. Well, see, the specialist won't say it, but you know what he was trying to tell you. They won't come right out. It was too late, yeah.

LU: So, how else have you involved with the Japanese Canadian community? You also do-

KH: I'm president of the seniors. Of *Koyukai*, 60 plus seniors. And when I g-

LU: It's like Wynford- Wynford Seniors, right?

KH: Yeah, like that, yeah.

LU: Kyo- Kyokai?

KH: You see, I wanted to change that. Kyo- Everybody's like, what's *Koyukai* anyways? Now how do you expect younger seniors now to join when you have a Japanese name like that, all that. Ko-yu-kai. 'Kai' is always a club, eh. 'Kai' is a club. 'Ko-yu-kai' means friendship club. Well, I didn't know that myself! So, half- I think three quarters of us want to change it, but the diehards, who are older, out of respect for them- I said, "Is it that important to make them sad?" Nah. So, we just leave it. So, we could change it anytime.

LU: So, you're active in that, you're-

KH: Yeah, we're active in that.

LU: Yeah, did you say you're president?

KH: Yeah, well I'm the- You know- And I- Once you get to be a president or anything, you're *stuck*. Nobody will take it over.

LU: Oh. [chuckles]

KH: And we- In fact, we're more- The Centre people tell you, you know, "You guys are more active than we are in here." [laughs] But we always help them out. And we want to be independent.

[01:55]

KH: And the old-timers, all that, they made a few errors, and Health and Welfare looked after New Horizons, eh. I think we still do. And they were doing something, that was wrong, I says, "Oh, boy," I said, "You better get rid of this. Amalgamate into the regular treasury," I said, "Don't leave it like this or you're supposed to give that back."

LU: Oh yeah, we better-

KH: Yeah, yeah. Oh, you better cut that off. [laughs]

LU: Or it's gone. Um, so, what do you do at the *Koyukai*? What activities do you do?

KH: There are- there are no- Well, we go to casinos. And then, as *Koyukai*, you know, we help the Centre. And when the NAJC were- Chapters- Like, they might be okay in the national level but it's the national level. But all the chapters do their own things themselves. And when we were in dire straits, our chapter had hardly any money [laughs]. And membership too. But we're doing alright now. And they- We donated, you know, 100 dollars to them and whenever they're in dire straits. But you don't have to be a member of the NAJC or the Church or the Cultural Centre. Though the Cultural Centre tried their hardest to make us: "You have to be a member to join the Cen-" I said, "Are you kidding?"

LU: Yeah.

KH: You can't do that! Anything that- When you say, you have to be a member over there, it went defunct. It just went defunct.

LU: So, what other- You get together and go to the casinos-

KH: Yeah, and then-

LU: And do you do breakfast or lunch or-?

KH: And then- We have bowling.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: And then, right now, the euchre club is flourishing over there but the ones who run it are the *Koyoukai* executives. [laughs] But, we all get along.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Because we're seniors, eh. And people like the senior group because when they- When we- When I- I'm not bragging, I hope I'm not, people don't think they're bragging, but they're the ones that- who are telling me, the seniors that- "You know, before you came, Kay-" Because when I retired from Health and Welfare, they only had 35 members. It was just going down, down, down, no one was doing anything. They were so tired, or something like that. Then I came along, I retired, and Roy was already in there. And so, I used to go with him. And then, when they found out where I worked, and that I was retired, they wanted me to become president. I said, "No." I stalled it for two years. And so, I says, "Okay," 'cause it was going defunct, and I kinda enjoyed going to the casinos and going to the concerts!

LU: Yeah?

KH: We used to hire a bus and go to the concerts and all that. And they liked that, too. And before that, they had to depend on their children. Well, you know, seniors are seniors, they don't want to go to with their children all the time or be dependent on them all the time, eh. This way, they just have to pay so much for their fare, and they could just go.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: And so, they loved it. And from 35, we had 85 members. Just jumped.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And we couldn't get over it. And now, it's back to 50, around there now. 'Cause, you know why? People- The younger ones- The younger seniors- The younger ones that became seniors at present aren't that interested in joining. See, that's what it is. The Japanese thing. Because they're satisfied with their own *hakujin* things. And that's what- That's the way it's- the tendency is. I don't blame them.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: And so, I said, "Oh, with my health, and everything, you know, I was told you've got to ease off." So, I says, "I'm gonna drop them. I'm gonna drop them all." I said, "You guys look after your health." [laughs]

LU: I think I'm just going to switch this one here.

KH: Well, see, I- Now, I realize, I shouldn't have been doing this and this, like- I do that, you know. They used to tell me that, "Kay, when she talks a lot, she's so emotional like this." [waves hands in air]. And they took a picture of me making a speech and I'm terrible at making speeches, you know. I hate it. And I'm going like this, [raises one arm up], you know, and my sis- my daughter, says, "What were you trying to say? You're going like this, actually, you're hailing everybody!" [laughs]. I says, "I'm the Queen."

LU: [laughing] Hand-talker. That's what it is.

KH: And yeah, I said I didn't even know I was doing that.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: And I noticed that I was doing that too.

LU: Yeah.

KH: You have to take me off.

LU: No. Okay.

KH: But, you know, I enjoy it. At one time, it started about 25 years ago, and it was started as a club by some-, even before we had the Cultural Centre.

[02:00]

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: Yeah.

LU: So, what else are you active in? So, you do the *Koyukai*-

KH: Well, Macassa too.

LU: What's Macassa?

KH: Macassa Lodge. Where all the seniors are.

LU: Oh.

KH: And when the Nipponia Home went, you know- amalgamated- Oh, you know, they went defunct, right, something happened to them. Well, people who wanted to go to Macassa Lodge- It was some kind of arrangement that they had to take- Certain municipal- Macassa Lodge, is. Like, like lodges like the senior's home, they have to take them, they get priority before the people who are lined up.

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: You know, to get in there. Because there's another nursing home that went belly up, you see. I don't think it went belly up; it just couldn't function anymore.

LU: Yeah. So-

KH: Yeah. So, that's why we go there, and we help. But we used to go there and visit them and visit them and then we used to have Christmas things and all that. But so many people at Christmas were going there and all that. We quit going. Instead of that, we go and serve lunches. Every time there is five Wednesdays in the month, we go, because other organizations go too. Like the United Church, and I think there's a gospel church from Toronto comes. Wednesdays. And then there's a separate group comes; I don't know who that is. But when the fifth Wednesday comes, then we go there. And- During the year. And that works out fine with us. And other times we go there, like we just had a ton of other festivals, summer festivals, in Japan, and we have it at the Macassa Lodge. And there's a short programme where groups go there and dance and sing and everything, you know. It's a concert, like- And then we give them cookies and drinks and all that. And we have to help them- We got- We have a lot of volunteers to help them. The *Koyukai* volunteers all go there. And from the Church, too.

LU: What are you celebrating? Just spring?

KH: Hm?

LU: It's just a spring celebration, or-

KH: Summer.

LU: Summers.

KH: Summer festival, they call it. In Japan, they have it. Yeah. And Noriko Edmundson, she used to be coming- come in from Momiji. And Lee Mixon. But there's a new girl now. What was her name? Donna. Donna.

LU: Davis?

KH: Sato.

LU: Oh, Sato.

KH: That's it.

LU: Oh.

KH: She looks like a young girl too.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: She is- She just came last- We just had a *tanabata*. We usually have it around the 23rd and 24th of July. It's a summer festival. And they have *yukata* on and everything. And we have *odori*. You know, *tanko bushi* and all that.

LU: Did you do *odori* dancing?

KH: No- No, in my early years, I did.

LU: Oh, when was that?

KH: Well, when I was in my 50s? 50s, 60s.

LU: Oh, yeah. And did you just do it at the Centre or-?

KH: Yeah, well Mrs. Izumi taught us.

LU: Oh, yes.

KH: Yeah. We were- It was quite a big- It's a *suzuran odori* group. Yeah. So, we all danced for the fun of it. Yeah. And then most of us got older or forgetful [laughs]. So, there's a new group in there, but still, there's about four older groups, older people who've been in there since, I don't know, years. But they're still going good.

LU: And you're still with the NAJC?

KH: Oh, yes. Yeah, I'm still with them.

LU: Yeah. So, when did you start your participation with the NAJC?

KH: Well, I really, really went- We really went gung-ho when the redress started. Which was 19- A few years before 1987, wasn't it? When did we get our redress?

LU: '88.

KH: 1988. Yeah. A few years before that. 'Cause we had to do a lot of publicity, that's where they needed the help and all that. But when I was younger, before I was married, I used to help a lot under the JCCA. We were JCCA then, yeah. But then when this redress business came in, and Art Miki became the president, it was more organized and all that. Then, I joined more- with more interest, or- shall we say. Because of my father. And when the Birds Commission came, and that was a few people, who went after what they were- What had been taken away from them, and my father went after the fishing boat.

[02:05]

KH: And somehow or another that fell through.

LU: Yeah, what happened?

KH: I think he won something, but it fell through because the main thing was a lot of people wouldn't apply under the Bird Commission. Because- But my father did in Hamilton, two people did. One of them was my father. And that's how come I knew there was purchase agreement and selling agreement, the government had made up- They wanted my father to sign it. In the ghost towns. And he wouldn't sign it. I still remember in that rickety old, ghost town house, he threw it right across the living room. He just threw it. And I'd never seen him mad like this. Yeah. He was mad at the government for, you know, taking the boat and just selling it for a piddly price. I think it was only 500 dollars. And it was 500 dollars- When the Commission, and this and that- By the time he looked at it, it was 300 something. And he was so mad.

LU: Oh my.

KH: Yeah.

LU: See, I didn't- So, he actually got a little fund for the- Not much, but-

KH: Yeah. He just got- He just got a little bit. But then, that 21,000 would have made up for it, you know. Like, when we got a real redress. And the sanseis, well they're better, they know how to do it, they're- all that education and all that. You know, and- I give Art Miki and them credit. You should hear some of the stories Art Miki used to tell us. What they went through, trying to go after that.

LU: Is he still around, or-

KH: Oh, yeah, he's still around.

LU: Yeah. You should see if he wants to do an interview. Yeah.

KH: No, he- Art Miki is in Winnipeg.

LU: Oh.

KH: He's a big chief.

LU: Too far.

KH: Too far. Yeah. I think he's been interviewed a lot, but he would be good one.

LU: Mm-hm, oh yeah. So, we kind of got off topic about New Denver.

KH: Oh, well, what-

LU: Yeah. So, you went to school in New Denver, but you had to wait a little while before the school was established. So, what was it like going to school? And who were your teachers and-?

KH: My teachers were nuns. And I had a music teacher, and that's how I got interested in piano. And they were very, very conscientious. They were teaching sisters. All they did was teach. But you know- It goes to show you how narrow-minded people are. You see, this is what I have against the Protestant people. Mind you, there was a Protestant missionaries that really, really helped us too and went after redress and all that, but there were some missionaries that- a few of them who were very antagonistic. Not of the Japanese but the Catholic religion. You know. Roman Catholic. There was a lot of [*hiseki?*], eh. Even now there is among the Catholic and the Protestant. And, you know, one day- I'll never forget this, and my girlfriend was a Catholic. And one day, you know, three people, three missionaries came. Protestant. And they came to the door of the school, and they wanted to come

in during school hours. And the nuns will not be ungracious. Even if it disrupted the school. But they welcomed them in. And we were witness to it. And they welcomed them in, and they just marched right in as if they owned the place, they had every right to go in there. And they were very rude. This is missionaries, now. And they looked at the board, they looked at the textbook, they looked at the teachers. And they- they looked at everything. And they went into every classroom, they marched in there. Can you imagine?

LU: Why?

KH: Because they had- they were suspicious that they were teaching the Catholic religion to us. Catechism, or whatever it is. That's what they thought. Like, you know, in Catholic schools, if you're really Catholic, you go to Catholic school, and they teach you. You have to take those lessons, apparently. That's how the Catholic religions is- Roman Catholic religions are. But that's what they did. And it was terrible, terrible. I mean, we as Japanese- Japanese aren't that rude, eh. We were very, very embarrassed. Very embarrassed. 'Cause we knew all the goods they did for us.

[02:10]

KH: Good, good things that they were doing for us. Yeah. And you know how the Protestants- You don't drink, and you don't smoke and all that, three evils and something like that. Well, you know, we used to have- Once a month, we used to have parties there just for the sake of our social graces. You know. And we used to have pop. And we didn't smoke or anything, but we had pop and all that. And we could dance because they were chaperoning us. And- another thing we couldn't do in the Protestant thing was we couldn't dance. Yeah. And so- And then we used to play cards. We used to have card nights. You know. Not poker or anything- like bridge, and most of us knew how to play euchre and all that, cards. And then we would have a little party like some, you know, pop- Not pop, but you know, those sugar drinks. Which isn't very good for us. And cookies- And they baked the cookies. Yeah. The sister- the cook- they had a cook, and she used to bake just plain cookies, you know. But that was a delight for us. And we had a that maybe once in a while but it- quit at a reasonable hour. Like ten o'clock. Like maybe from seven to ten or something like that. And we all had a great time. And that got to- We learned how to be sociable. You know, you learn during those years. But that's one thing I had against the Protestant religion people. Even now, although I'm Protestant, it just burns me, you know. When I think that. But things have improved now a bit, you know. Well, I wouldn't say so, if the Catholic church is in trouble with all that- what's that- you know, what do you call them? Child, whatever you call them. Oh, yeah. So, I said, "Gee." I said to Joe the other day, we were talking about this at the Buddhist thing there. And I said, "Well, maybe I'll turn into a Buddhist." "Yeah, Kay!" He says, "You learn, you first learn."

LU: Well, were your parents Buddhist?

KH: Yeah, they were.

LU: And then-

KH: Well, most of them were all Buddhist.

LU: But there was no Buddhist churches when you were growing up.

KH: There was. In Marpole, there was. Yeah. So, when we were young, we never learned anything bad from the Buddhists. We always learned good; you know. Be faithful to your- Like, it was like the Ten Commandments that we had, yeah. And- Oh, we honoured it. I mean, we thought it was a good religion. But when I- With all the things with the Roman Catholic Church in trouble and United Church, our experience in the ghost town- Well, of course if you tell any United Church people here, they would be horrified. But they know that themselves. And then, when kids graduated from school there, and came out- A lot of people came out east on their own. Well, they got accepted in schools, so- Because it was bona fide. They were- You were registered in Victoria. So, there's nothing kooky about it. You know. But a lot of people from the United Church weren't registered at all. Somehow or another, they- I guess they missed some subjects and when they took that- what do you call it- provincial test, I guess they didn't pass. But you had to have certain passes to get into the certain grade, you know. But there's not many Catholic graduates who didn't get into higher schools. Just like that.

LU: So, what else about New Denver?

KH: So, that's what I liked about New Denver. My mind was mostly all having fun and learning and making friends and, yeah.

LU: What kind of activities did you do in New Denver? Like for fun and on weekends?

KH: Well, it wouldn't be like here. We will have a- Like, our kids had here.

LU: Why was it different?

KH: We had- Because there was no place to go. We had no money to go anywhere. But they used to have Bob's Ice Cream Shop and [Boozim?] hall right beside- A hall for the village people. But we were all going there. And- Oh yeah, and every spring, we used to have a concert and the whole town came. *Hakujin* people, they all came.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. And well, of course we only charged about 20 cents, not even a quarter, you know. Just to make do to pay for that hall. And that gave us our artistic- like our art- acting and artistic talent that we never knew we had.

[02:15]

LU: So, would you do like *odori* dancing? Singing-

KH: Yeah, and we recruited *odori* teachers. And among our students, there were quite accomplished *odori* people. And they taught simple dances to us novices. And we did the Highland Fling and all that, yeah, we did that too, and little skits that the- The nuns were good. There was- Well see, French nun, Music nun, English nun, and they were very proficient in the English language. And, you know, they were different. Math teacher, and cooking teacher, and none of us- We were all growing up girls. And we couldn't learn cooking, and you know those social graces that you learn as you grow up. They taught us all those things. And how to set the table- Oh,

none of us knew how to do that. You know. 'Cause we were around 12, 13, when we got in there. So, you know, they were really the teaching teachers. Yeah. They were well known for that.

LU: So, while you were in New Denver, and you mentioned that you had to leave all your dishes behind, so, you know, did you have to buy new dishes, or did they give you dishes?

KH: Well, I don't know. No, my mother took all her old dishes with her. Yeah. And she left the new dishes because she was afraid it would break. Well, someone took it anyways. [laughs]

LU: So, what else was your house like in New Denver? What did it look like? Did you have to share?

KH: Oh, the houses were bad. The kitchen- kitchen and living area, like, was in the centre and on both the sides were bedrooms. And bunk beds.

LU: How big was it?

KH: Oh, it was small. Maybe from there to there [points to left and right] for the whole house.

LU: The whole house, including washrooms?

KH: The whole house, yeah. And there was no such thing as a furnace. And it was cold in the winter. And if I remember correctly, I got sick once- The first winter, I got sick. And I ended up not going to school for a whole month. And the nuns came to visit me and everything. And they knew how cold it was. So, the next winter, my father, knowing how bad I was, he got tar paper. 'Cause you could see the board- in between the boards, and the wind seeping through. And my mother told me that she could see the snow coming through. And the inside was warm- like, warm as could be. So, it would come seeping through, and it was melting, and that melting ice turned into water, but the ones that went outwards turned into icicles. That's how bad it was. So, in the summer, my father got some tar paper, I don't know how he got it, and he fixed it all up. He insulated it himself. And what a difference it was. None of us got sick after that. But the first year, I guess I was prone to being- catching colds. See, even now I am, you know, so I cat- I'm very careful.

LU: So, where did you sleep? Did you have to share the house with another family?

KH: No, if you had more than six people you didn't have to. Yeah, but if you had less than 6 people, you had to share it. Oh, that was bad. Yeah. Yeah, while on the whole, the Japanese got along but eventually, as time went on, some people- I don't know how they did it, but they got the whole house for themselves. That's why one of these houses is heritage now. Down there. But when we went to Vancouver, I think we went there about two or three times- We went to New Denver one day. And they were just starting this heritage thing. They were fixing it up and moving it down there. But the Orchard's still there, yeah, I was surprised.

LU: And did you have a garden at the house or-?

KH: Oh, we had a garden. Yeah, my mother spent all her time growing potatoes and cabbage and all that. Yeah. Yeah, and I remember- I don't know how she- I guess she's a farmer's daughter, too, even though it was a fishing village. And she knew how to store carrots and all that. In the bushel basket.

[02:20]

KH: Yeah. So, we had a lot of those vegetables all winter.

LU: What about things like rice and *shoyu* and *muchi* and-?

KH: Oh, they were rationed. You couldn't buy those. You know, that's how bad it was. But you know those *shoyu* and all that, the Red Cross gave us so much *shoyu*, they actually gave it to us- And you know where it came from? This is how Japan wanted to show the world they were still up there. You know. They were strong and all that when they were losing, and the country was starving. This is what this person told my mother, that letter that came. And it came through the Red Cross through the goodness of Japan. To the Japanese people. Well, we appreciated it but when we heard, we figured that- My parents figured that they were suffering over there. The people were suffering.

LU: Oh, wow. Kinda makes you feel bad-

KH: Yeah, well, you did. It did. And yet, the government camouflaged it. And- Well, they all- Other countries did the same things, too. So, that's how we got- It was rationed. *Shoyu* and all. Yeah. And in fact, in the war time, it was- Your grandfather will tell you. Sugar was rationed; butter was rationed. Something else that was rationed, I can't remember what it was.

LU: Milk?

KH: No, I don't think milk was. I know sugar and butter were.

LU: Flour? No?

KH: No, it was- I think it was-

LU: Rice, maybe.

KH: Maybe it was rice 'cause you could still get rice even if it didn't come from Japan, eh. Maybe- But we all had coupons. We all had coupons, yeah.

LU: And who gave you the coupons? The RCMP or-

KH: The Commission.

LU: The Commission.

KH: Yeah. B.C. Security Commission they called themselves. Yeah.

LU: And what did New Denver look like, other than the mountains and the lakes?

Like, were the houses close together, or-?

KH: Like, what do you mean? The people who lived there?

LU: Yeah.

KH: Oh, they were just like houses- Wooden houses, of course. But there were more brick houses there than anything else 'cause it was such a cold place, eh. And it was just ordinary houses like- You know, like you see in Stoney Creek or West Hill.

LU: And what about the- like the internment houses? Were they-

KH: Oh, they were wood.

LU: And just crammed together, or-

KH: Yeah, crammed together.

LU: Ohh. How many houses were there?

KH: I couldn't tell you. There was the orchard, and the houses were in rows like this. And I remember the bathhouse is in the center, and this and that. And I know we

lived on Nelson Ranch, there was an apple orchard. And they had houses there. So, in our place, there were about 3, 6, 9- about a dozen houses, and in the center was like a -where small families lived. Like apartment. They used to call it *apa-to*. But it wasn't really- Like a person with just one child or something like that. Or just a couple. And several families lived there. Yeah. And a bathhouse. One bathhouse. And then, they had another Nelson Ranch and what- They called it something-ranch- Harris Ranch. On the other side of the city- of the town. And it was similar, too. That's where Peter Ido and them lived. Because they moved out of Sandon way later. Yeah.

LU: Were you ever able to visit the other camps?

KH: Oh yeah, yeah. But to visit the other camps during the war, you had to get permission from the RCMP.

LU: Why would you go visit?

KH: Well, you might have cousins or relatives there. We had a cousin there. And once in a blue moon- I don't know, I thought my mother- my parents were quite generous. They let me get a perm. And the only lady who would do perm was Mrs. Akira in Slocan. So, we used to go take a bus- Or did we get a ride? I think we got a ride from somebody. And we used to go over there and get our hair done. And then, my cousin would come and meet me, and I would go to their house until it time to- bus time to come home. And I remember Naomi telling me, in a letter that, "I'm glad you came. And I told my mother that look at- look how modern Kay's mum is. She got a perm! She come all the way here-"

[02:25]

KH: And then she says, next minute, she got one too. [laughs] It was a good influence for us. Yeah. That was my cousin. Naomi Kagi. I don't know what happened to her. I think she died. Yeah. She married an American and she came to the States. And since then, I haven't heard nothing about her. So, I have a feeling she died. Yeah. You lose contact with them, you know. I lost a lot of contact after the war, and we moved out this way. It's sad, they disappear somewhere. But eventually, you find out, and it's usually death. Yeah, it is. I was glad we came out this way.

LU: And you have a couple of really good friends you met in the camp, Polly and Sue?

KH: No, I met Sue here.

LU: Oh, in Hamilton.

KH: Yeah, in Hamilton. Yeah. They're in my bridal picture. Yeah. I said, "Gee isn't that something." My sister was the youngest in that picture. My sister and- I have a girlfriend in- not Etobicoke-

LU: Mississauga?

KH: No, no. Yeah, Etobicoke. We just go there. And so, what- I can't remember Mississauga, Etobicoke, and all those towns and cities. But anyways, Helen Kumagai, do you know her? Helen Doc? Kumagai. Helen is my good friend too. And Polly- Polly's parents are old friends from way back. But I didn't know her then. But my parents are Wakayama, and her parents are Wakayama too. And they're both

fishermen. Yeah, yeah. And all those- like Mr. Shimi- Art Shimizu. Do you know Art Shimizu? He's a doctor.

LU: Yes.

KH: Kidney. Yeah, well, his father used to come here every Sunday, or he went to Polly's place. And they were- we were Wakayama too. So, Mr. Shimizu, the two Shimizu's- They're not related. And then my father. We were all Wakayama. They all died except Mr. Shimizu. And he was the oldest. And he's in his 90s now. I mean, he passed away, but when he passed away, he was in his 90s, I think. I'm sure he was. But he was- Among all those old men, he was the only one that got his redress. Yeah. And they were so happy that he lived. And right after that he died.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah, wasn't that nice?

LU: Yeah.

KH: And Polly worked for it too. And so did her brother. Jack. And Ron is quite active too. But Jack- Jack and I and Polly, oh we really slaved at it. Well, we did all the tedious, you know, all the paperwork. You need people to do that. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. What else do you remember about New Denver?

KH: Oh, New Denver? What do you want to know, more or less?

LU: Yeah, what else do you remember?

KH: Oh yes, we used to have baseball games, and there used to be a big field there in front of Bosen Hall. That was a big place, eh. That was a big- Now, it's nothing. I mean, you think to yourself, "Gee this is where we came all the time? It's run down and everything." But that's where we held all our activities, and we had lots of pictures taken there. But, you know, when you ask like that- It's the concerts now that I remember. Oh, that used to be nice. Because the whole town came, and it was because it wasn't only the Japanese. It was the *hakujin*, too. They all came. And that place was just full. Just full. Yeah.

LU: When you're-

KH: Hm?

LU: Go ahead.

KH: Yeah, and we used to have baseball, and, you know- What else?

LU: Ice skating, or, what'd you do in the winter?

KH: Well, they- The ice skating, people who were fortunate enough to- Don't forget, it was very hard to get anything- who were fortunate to have ice skates, they all knew how to ice skate, yeah. Well, my- I can't remember whether my brothers had one or not. But they were skating on the lake. But they had to be careful. You know, you could drown. If you drown in that lake, you will never be found. It's that deep, that lake.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: You never been there? Whenever you go out west, you know, you should get someone to take- The roads are beautiful, now. Wow, we thought it took hours, you know, you could get there in so many minutes.

[02:30]

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: I'm not saying it's one hour- one hour or anything, but you'll get there within half the time it took us. Yeah. And that's where I got lots of pictures of the camps that my father was in.

LU: Oh, do you?

KH: Yeah. Craigellachie, Griffin Lake. And all those places. And he's got it all written in English, too.

LU: Yeah, 'cause he went to all the different camps, didn't he?

KH: Yeah, he went to all different camps. And so, when we took a trip there, it was a trip where we all went. They had some kind of a [due?] over there. And so, we paid all our way, and we stayed at a hot spring at the same time. And we saw- And Roy saw the places where he was in the- during the war, too. The road camps. Yeah. But- But Roy- I don't know what Roy told you but, he said it was a real- What's that word? Idyllic?

LU: Idyllic?

KH: Idyllic, yeah, life. [laughs]

LU: Do you ever- When you were in New Denver or in Hastings Park, do you remember feeling really worried or really sad and you know, like, unsure about what was going on?

KH: No- I know that the older folks were worried. You know, they wondered whether we could all stay together and all that. And- But for us, we were at a stage where we- Everything was an adventure for us. I think we were too adventurous sometimes.

LU: What about your mum, was she- Did you see her worried or sad or upset?

KH: Oh, I've seen her sad, yeah. Because my father was gone. Yeah. Yeah. But I'll never forget, though, the train came at the station, my father was there, to- And all of his class of people, they had to go to the road camp. And I remember my mother couldn't go because all of the other four kids. And so, my mother said, "Well I-" She didn't want to leave the kids with me because it was in the evening. And so, when the Komori bunch went on the truck, down to the station, you know, to see my father and several other people in the area leave, eh, what they did was- My mother said that I could go, and they asked if they could take me and take care of me, bring me home. So, I went, and I'll never forget though, when my father was boarding the train, you know. There was a lone, tall *hakujin* lady watching. And I got kinda leery, and she's watching me, and- To this day, I don't know who she was. I have no fat- I can't fathom who she was. But anyways, that's the first time I saw tears in my father's eyes. And he said- Oh, I'm getting tears myself. And he said, "Take care of everything," you know, and all that. And-

LU: Aww.

KH: But it's the first time I ever saw tears. And this lady come running over, 'cause she was watching me. And I looked at her, and I went like this [mimics hiding motion]- myself, but I didn't cry, then, but I'm sentimental when it comes to those things right now.

LU: Was that when he was leaving for the road camp the first time?

KH: Mm-hm. When he was leaving, yeah. That's when he was going to- I don't know if it was Griffin Lake or where it was, but it was first time he was going. But anyways, I remember, she came over. And she didn't run over, but she walked, steady, right towards me. And she says, "You'll be alright." You know. And she just kinda shook me- Not shook me, but she just steadied me like that. And I thought, "God this lady has a big strong hand-" And I thought maybe he was a man. I really did. But she had a long coat on. And I think he was a secret police or something. I think he was just watching everybody. So, in an orderly fashion, maybe he had a gun there, I don't know. Yeah. But, anyways, my father- And then he went on a train and went. But now that you said that, you know, I remember. Yeah. But, like- like I said, my mother sent me. Yeah. She thought somebody should go.

LU: Yeah, yeah. I'm sure your dad appreciated it. They really cared.

[02:35]

KH: Oh, I think he did. Yeah.

LU: Oh, yeah. He was probably just as terrified, and-

KH: Well, I think he was worried more than anything, leaving us behind. But right after that, I remember the postcard came. From somewhere. [laughs] But, that's the postcard I got too.

LU: Oh, yeah. What did he say on the postcard?

KH: To take care, that's he's fine. Yeah, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: You know, it's funny, you know, when Pam's two girls- I don't know whether I told you or not. When I was talking about my dog, I went to pieces.

LU: Yeah.

KH: Yeah.

LU: Well, they're so many things.

KH: It just comes like that. And one day I was talking about my sister, you know, oh, we were laughing away, and this and that, this and that. All of the sudden, I start crying in front of Alice. "Alice, I don't know what's wrong with me." [laughs]

LU: Well, it's just, you haven't thought about it in so long.

KH: So long. And it just hit me. Oh my God. I'm not a tearful person, you know.

LU: Oh, I am. I am.

KH: Oh, are you? Oh, I'm not.

LU: I'm usually teary.

KH: But I think it's because I went through this- What do you call that? Procedure and tests and all that. Maybe I'm getting old.

LU: No. [laughs]

KH: Yeah. But anyways, isn't it funny, like, you weep over things that so long- How many years ago? 60 years. Isn't it? Oh, if we've been I've been married 53 years now.

LU: 53? Oh yeah, yeah, that's right.

KH: Yeah. That was- 50th anniversary. 53 now, in 1957 we were married.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow. Yeah.

KH: But I don't get tearful like that. But this is an instance, I just have to compose myself and I'll be alright. But honest to God.

LU: Well, let's talk about your first trip to Japan then. What do you remember?

KH: Oh, that was an exciting trip. Yeah, yeah. But I remember- I remember all the nice things. And I don't think there was any unpleasant things about that. Except that some proprietors thought that we didn't understand Japanese. But we did. Well anyways, we went to a *manju* store. Isn't that- You see, Roy's forgotten that. And they have samples, you know, little samples. So, oh- And they bought sam- uh, *manju* too for snacks. And we were tasting the samples, but we weren't being hoggish. But every-, there were about 20 of us, eh. Well, 20 little *manjus* went away. And then, I guess he thought we were going to eat some more. And he said, "Oy," a-no, a-no, in Japanese, eh, "Hey, put those things away. Don't bring any more out." And he said it in Japanese. And one of the guys got really upset because he was buying them. Because it tasted good. He just dropped it. And he says- He told them in Japanese. And this guy was so startled.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: Yeah. The salesman, whether he was the boss of that place, or not, and he- And he says "*Gomennasai, gomennasai*" [bows her head] bowing his head. Too late.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: Yeah. Well, I'll never forget that. But another one that, a-no, that was really comical was we were on this ship, you know, a little boat crossing the lake. And it was a tourist ship, too. And there's students, there's always students taking holiday trips, eh, from the school. And they all got uniforms on. They're cute little things. And anyways, I don't know who, we were- three of us were watching the seashore and all that. Oh, we're saying, half Japanese, half-English: "Isn't that beautiful? [speaks Japanese] Beautiful, beautiful." you know, that's English, eh. And then, these three little girls were listening to us, and they're going like this, like this [mimics gossiping motion]. And they're giggling. And so, then they- And they thought that we weren't listening, and they thought that we didn't understand Japanese and we were talking funny language. And they said, [speaks Japanese]. You know, in Japanese, eh, said, "These people are talking funny Japanese." And they said- These little kindergarten kids, small kids, eh [laughs], they're saying. And we start to laugh. They went like this, eh, [shying away motion], because they realized that we understood what they said.

[02:40]

KH: And so, "Oh," we said, "Do you think-" You know, we- We're still half Jap- English still. [speaking Japanese] "Waahh!" They run to their teacher. [laughs] It was so funny. I'll never forget that. Yeah. It was on a ship. Polly would probably got- I don't know whether I was talking to Polly or not.

LU: Oh, that's funny.

KH: Yeah, yeah, that was really- It took us by, you know, surprise. And we laughed- We never- We didn't expect the little kindergarten kids to say anything like that, they seemed like grade one or kindergarten. Yeah, they were so cute. But that's a

good- But we had a good time, we went to the Imperial Palace. We even went to the Canadian Embassy, and at the Canadian Embassy, they had all these redress things, all on the- They had a room, Canada room.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: And it was all Japanese stuff. Where- Roy Miki's book was there, and yeah. And we were well known over there.

LU: Oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. We were really surprised. But they were- Raymond- I think Raymond Moriyama was the architect, wasn't he?

LU: Mm-hm.

KH: Yeah. I think so. But it was pretty new, yeah.

LU: That was in 1993 you went?

KH: 1993, I think it was- '93 or '94, somewhere around there.

LU: Yeah, oh, wow.

KH: Yeah. Well, see- Roy was retired six years before me- Oh, five years before me. And I kept on working until 65 and a half because they wanted me to stay longer to teach these students that were coming in for permanent jobs and just tell the meaning of what these things mean on the screen. So, that's what a few of us older ones had to do. And so-what- what they were showing us- I forgot my trail of thought now.

LU: Oh, we were just talking about Japan and-

KH: Yeah. And the Embassy there

LU: And it was designed by-

KH: By, yeah-

LU: By Moriyama.

KH: What was I gonna say? I was gonna say something about the design there. I forgot now.

LU: Then you started talking about Roy's older than you, and-

KH: Oh yeah, yeah. He doesn't- There was an incident that happened, and I forgot what the incident was [laughs]. Isn't that awful? Yeah. Tired head. Tired brains. I'll remember that what was it now? It was funny anyways; you would think I would remember something funny.

LU: What do you think it would have been like if you had went back to Japan after the war? Do you think you would've stayed there for the rest of your life or-

KH: No.

LU: -Or do you think you would've come back?

KH: Well, we had a few people here that went back to Japan. Against their wishes, but they went back to Japan. And they immediately- They couldn't get a job; there wasn't enough food. And what happened was, they got a job with the American army. American Intelligence, or something. You know, we were occupied by the Americans, eh. And they eventually came back. Yeah. First opportunity, they came back.

LU: Oh, wow. So, you probably would've come back, then.

KH: Oh, we would've probably- Or I would've died. We would've died. If we couldn't take it.

LU: From starvation?

KH: Yeah. That's what they said. I remember that letter to this day. And you know, my sister kept it, you know. That letter. To this day, when she died, I went over a lot of her old letters, and I couldn't find it. Yeah. I kind of wish I could find that. Mm. There's a lot of these I can't find it. And I asked her kids, you know. And they haven't got it. I know they haven't. They says, "No, I haven't, Auntie Kay, I gave you all the pictures and everything for you to keep- for you to go through." And they didn't want- They didn't want it.

LU: Oh, they didn't want it. Oh, wow. Well, they probably don't know who all the people are.

KH: Yeah, well, that's it. Yeah, well, we do. Yeah. Well, they were all- A lot of them were school friends. She was a popular girl, so, yeah.

LU: That's what I told my grandparents the other day, I was like, "Go through all of your old pictures and get a sticky note and write down all the names."

KH: Mm-hm, mm-hm.

LU: 'Cause once you pass away; I won't know who anyone is.

KH: Well, there's a lot of picture that Mary has- had. She's still living, of course, and so, we're keeping it for her. But I don't know who they are. And she's on the verge of dementia. And so, even if we took it to her, she might not know. I don't think she has- Even if she knew, she would have to think and think.

LU: Oh, yeah, I know.

[02:45]

KH: But I thought, all of us, at my age bracket, we all think we're getting dementia and we're getting forgetful and all that.

LU: No, you are-

KH: And my girlfriend said- She's the head of the Alzheimer's society here. Yeah. Miriam Cummings. She's not head but she's one of the top girls and she goes around to different organizations, talking. And I had her over. Every November, we have to have a talk. A talk or somebody. That's how we set it up. And so, one day I asked her to come and talk about dementia. Wow, you know, we broadcast it; we had a roomful. This is how interested the Japanese people are. Yeah, because they're all starting to forget. And so, I said to Miriam, "Hey, listen," I said, "Do you think I've got dementia?" "Oh Kay, you have- You're not even near that." Forgetfulness is what everybody does. She forgets herself. But, you know, I'll tell you an example, she gave me an example and my girlfriend, too. She says, "You know, say you lost your keys, okay, you don't know where your keys are. And you want the car keys- like, the car keys. And you look for it, look for it, look for it, and you finally find it. You will find it," she says. "You just backtrack and think. Instead of getting all excited. And when you find a key, you don't know what it's for. You know. You were looking for the car key, and you found it, and then you don't know what to use it for. That's when you say you're on the verge of dementia."

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: Yeah, that's what she said. And so: "Do you ever forget where your keys are?" I said, "Yeah. I go back to get something, and I put it down and then I walk off and I haven't got the key." "Yeah, but you go back, and you find it, and you come back, and off you go." I says, "Yeah." "When you come back and don't even know where- what it's for, that's when you have to worry."

LU: Yeah.

KH: That's what she said to me. That's an example. There's lots of examples, she said.

LU: My theory is, when you're older, you have so many memories. You're not forgetting. It just takes longer to find the right memories.

KH: Yeah. That's right.

LU: That's my theory. You're not getting dementia; it just takes a little longer to find-

KH: It takes a little longer.

LU: Yeah. That's my theory. I'm sticking to it. [laughs]

KH: That's really true. No, that's really true, you know. Like, like, I'm forgetting because when I'm talking about something and then I went off on a tangent right there, and then, I finish with that story- "Now, what was I-" I come back to it [laughs]

LU: Yeah, you have to find that memory again.

KH: Now, what did I say? I have to start the engine again. [laughs]

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: But I said to my daughter, I said, "Wait until you get to be my age." Yeah. She says, "If I live that long," she says.

LU: Is it important to you that your children learn about the Japanese Canadian history and your family and what they went through?

KH: Oh, I think so. But you know why, because my- Our niece- Uh, nephew, who is in- lives in Michigan. And it's- Roy's nephew, really. And he wrote, and he's taking the music now at one of the universities here. I don't know which one. But he's back here. And- But he's- But his parents are over there in Michigan. And he had to write something about the war years and what we went through and all that. So, I says, "You're asking me to write something that's very long, you know, if you wanna know the details." So, I just put the bare essentials down and my God, he got practically 100 percent.

LU: Oh, yeah.

KH: And he says, "I'm really-" He says- You know, it was a learning lesson for him, too. Because he didn't know at all.

LU: Mm.

KH: Yeah. So, I says, "Wow, that's a switch."

LU: Yeah. Yeah. Well, it's important to educate the younger generations because-

KH: Yeah, well, you know, there's another book, and I was kinda looking at it in there, you know. And my sister-in-law friend, he's my friend too, and my brother was in that group of friends. And each family, who- Like, if you were a couple- Like, they were all coupled. And if I knew so-and-so person, then his friend, so-and-so person, so-and-so person, and my brother and my sister were in that group. And George Kitagawa, do you know George Kitagawa? I think he's way older than- But he died anyways, recently, last year. And he wa- He- His wife is a writer, more or less, Kitagawa. And she's *hakujin*, too. And she wrote a little book, just of this little group,

you know. The little group, there's about sixteen people in there, and I had to help Alice with my brother's history too. Because she didn't know anything- 'Cause she didn't know him in the ghost town days. She met him here, you know.

[02:50]

KH: And so, there's a book about those groups-

LU: Do you want to blow your nose first? Start that over?

KH: Yeah, I got-

LU: I can edit that out.

KH: You know what it is?

LU: Allergies.

KH: Allergies, yeah. Every time around now- Around now, it hits me.

LU: So, you were saying you were helping Alice.

KH: Yeah. Write- Write my brother's, like, character and what he did during the war time and all that, you know, evacuation days. And all that.

LU: Mm-hm. Wow.

KH: And I think was very- I think it was written very nicely too 'cause she fixed it all up. I said, "I'll tell you the bare essentials." So, I emailed her and gave her- Gave it to her. And the final book, Alice- she's in that group too- And she brought it over and she said, "Here, I'll give it to you." And I read it. And I thought, "Gee, is it ever written good. Really nice." I said, "Gee, this is a treasure, you know." And she says, "It doesn't go out; it just stays in our group." Oh, I said, "What a shame," I said.

LU: Yeah, that's too bad.

KH: But one of these days, somebody's gonna want it. I said, "Oh, well, we'll see."

[laughs]

LU: Yeah. More and more people are interested.

KH: It's good to do that, you know. Yeah. But I think, you know, I think in grade four or five, I think it's grade four, our grandchildren- grandsons, they came to us, and they wanted who our parents were and all that, names and everything. And the relationship, and all that, how many- They wanted to know.

LU: Yeah, the ancestry.

KH: Ancestry, like- Yeah, they're all- they're all doing that now. And I said, "Oh, isn't that amazing?"

LU: Yeah, yeah.

KH: Because you have to now. Because there's so many intermarriages. Yep.

LU: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

KH: So, I just told them what's what and what I could remember. You know, as time goes on, if you don't have it written, you forget. You have to write it down. Your memory goes. That's when your memory goes.

LU: Yeah. Well, there's a lot of family members too, sometimes.

KH: There's a lot in his memory [points off screen]. Yeah.

LU: And they marry and have kids and yeah.

KH: And the kids- That's what they want, too. But you gotta watch that too, though. Some of them put it in the Facebook. Or something. And if you haven't got that registered, so only certain people can get in- Anybody can get in there. Yeah. That's terrible.

LU: Most people are blocked. Like, it's closed.

KH: Yeah, it's blocked. Yeah, it's closed.

LU: It's pretty safe now, but-

KH: They say it is.

LU: Before- Yeah, before, at the beginning of it, it was open.

KH: I think it's a good thing to have but I don't believe in it. [laughs]

LU: Well, it's good for- yeah- It's good for communicating. And I don't know, a lot of the younger generations, we live on this stuff, so-

KH: Younger generations like it. Oh, is that right?

LU: Yeah.

KH: Well, I don't know.

LU: It's really fast.

KH: I'm not that curious. I guess, if I was younger, I would be. I don't know.

LU: Yeah. Oh, well, thank you very much. Do you have anything else you want to share or any other stories?

KH: I'll probably- Listen, I'll probably remember a few more things that- See, when you said something, you know, it just triggered it and so I thought to myself, "Oh, that's the way to go by." But I might remember some things. Maybe if I listened to Polly, I would've triggered it in my mind. Because we lived different lives, a-no, when we were younger. Cause she comes from Ucluelet. The islands. And I don't. It's only getting to know her through our parents that, yeah- But she had a rough life, too. Yeah. But what- Sometimes when we get together, when we reminisce, and I says, "God, are we all old fogies now?" [laughs] Oh gosh, yeah.

LU: Okay, well thank you very much again.

KH: Oh, well, I rambled on too today.

LU: Well, that's okay, 'cause there- Oops [camera noises]- We can always edit out quite a bit of it, so.

KH: Yeah, I think so too.