

Interviewee: Margaret Suyuko Adamson (nee Kimura)

Interviewer: Lisa Uyeda

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*Note that this interview contains outdated terminology regarding Asian and Indigenous people and reference to an Anti-Japanese slur

[Start interview]

Lisa Uyeda: Wonderful, so today is March 10th, 2011, and can you start off please by telling us your full name?

Margaret Adamson: [nods] I'm Margaret Suyuko Adamson.

LU: And is Suyuko your maiden name or is it your Japanese name

MA: Oh no, that's my Japanese name. My maiden name was Kimura, very common [chuckles]

LU: And do you know what your Japanese name means, or the meaning behind it?

MA: Yes, 'child of the morning dew', which is very pretty. Everybody, *hakujin*, love to hear that? [laughs]

LU: [Laughs] That's a very pretty name.

MA: [laughs]

LU: And when and where were you born?

MA: Uh, I was born on July 12th, 1931, in Seattle, Washington.

LU: Oh, Seattle. And do you know why your family migrated from Japan to Seattle, or is that the route that they came through?

MA: Uh yes, my father originally came to the United States to California, in the early 19 hundreds. And then he earned lots of money for those times and went back to Japan and then he married my mother there. And then, he needed more money, so he came back to North America and this time he came to Seattle, Washington. And then in a few years, mother and my brother followed. My brother was four- five years old when he came, he immigrated.

LU: Wow

MA: Mm-hm, and of course it was a matter of economics [nods] his family in the good old days, had fishing rights and so they used to get a certain percentage of the fish that were drawn in by the community, but then the fish died off, and probably that kind of fishing wasn't sustainable.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: And in my mother's case, her family had a mine. I'm not sure what it was, copper, or some- anyway, the seams started getting narrower and narrower [laughs], and they ran out. And so, the family was very upset and- anyway they were- samurai attached to a temple after that and anyway, so they fell on hard times. So, my mother went from being a *ojou-sama* I think they- a little- I suppose in

modern day parlance, a princess [laughs] to having to sit and pour tea for her father's visitors and quotes. They were probably people coming to collect money because the mine wasn't producing [laughs]. So, there she sat in her beautiful clothes pouring tea for them [laughs]

LU: Oh my

MA: So that was a difficult time for her, I'm sure. Mm-hm

LU: and what was your mother's maiden name?

MA: [Unclear] Shigenmune?

LU: And as far as you know, they were always in the mining industry or business, or were they ?

MA: Uh, I don't know. Oh, no, no, no, they were samurai on the losing side [laughs] and the reason my great, great or great Grandfather survived being on the losing side was because he was too young and he was a drummer or something like that [laughs], so he didn't have to commit suicide. [laughs]

LU: Wow, that's quite the story [laughs], it's very difficult to trace back so far but-

MA: yes, and I didn't hear too many stories perhaps if I'd been a boy, I would've heard more stories from my parents, but, mother didn't [clears throat] talk very much about her childhood except for stories about serving tea to all these people who came [laughs] and, but, I gather that she was- that there was another daughter in the family, but that daughter was- didn't serve tea and she didn't have the pretty kimonos that my mother had. So, there must have been some kind of tension in the family there too.

[00:05]

LU: Was she-

MA: But of course women were, were- didn't have the choice in those days [chuckles]

LU: Mm-hm, that's right. Was she younger than your mother was, or?

MA: [looks down] No I think she was older. But coming from that kind of social situation I think my mother was particularly, sensitive to inequities in society and she talked about before coming to North America, that she thought it was- the militarists were terrible in Japan, how they were so cruel to people on the train and they would brusksly push aside people so they could sit and she thought that was outrageous. But every once in a while, I hear people of my generation talk about that kind of thing. So, it's interesting that that form of militarism and their dominance was already being felt in the late 18 hundreds.

LU: Mm-hm, yeah, wow and what part of Japan were your parents from?

MA: They were both from Yamaguchi-ken. And my mother was from Yamaguchi Shi, I think that's what it's called, the city. And my father was from a rural area, Toromiyo? [unclear] I think was where he was from. And they had fishing there and a certain number of farmers.

LU: And was your father's family always in the fishing industry?

MA: Um [looks down] I don't know, my father- my father's uncle, didn't have any children, so my father was given to his uncle and aunt. So, he was an only child in that family [nods] and my father was always very sad about that, "children shouldn't be given away to other people" he used to say "even if its family" [chuckles] and of course that's understandable. If he'd been given away as a very small infant, he probably wouldn't have known the difference, but I think that caused both of my parents to take a certain stance apart from the average person, who was raised in a normal family. [smiles]

LU: And what about the education background of your parents? Do you know how high their educational levels went to?

MA: No, I don't. I know that my mother was taught at home, there were people who came in to teach her as a very young child, but other than that I don't know. But my father, he never talked about it- he talked about going to school, but he didn't- I don't remember him saying to what level he went to school. He was a great history buff though. I remember [laughs] he used to sit on winter nights with his nose buried in books and then he'd try to tell me all the stories about Genghis Khan, who- that's Genghis Khan. [laughs]

LU: Yes, I've heard much about him through some of the other niseis as well.

MA: Oh, really? [laughs]

LU: So, it must've been quite the popular history topic.

MA: [chuckling] Oh, of course I used to think "oh there goes father, it's so boring" [laughs]. That's too bad.

LU: And when were your parents born, and when were they married?

MA: Ah, my father was born-my grand-uh, yes, my father [grabs paper] was born in 1881 and he died in 1975, he was 94. And my mother was born in 1892, and she died in 1954.

LU: Oh, quite young.

MA: Yes, she had breast cancer, which is quite unusual amongst, uh, Nihonjing women, I understand [wipes nose]

LU: Wow. And you said your father came over to California in the early 19 hundreds.

MA: Mm-hm.

LU: and do you know if he, uh-

MA: He was a work- worker, a laborer.

LU: And do you know if he had any family that was here?

MA: No, no.

LU: He just came out on his own?

MA: He came on his own.

LU: Wow

MA: Mm-hm

LU: Did he ever speak about why he decided to come other than to make lots of money, or

MA: Oh, he just thought it would be an interesting opportunity, and to make some money too.

[00:10]

LU: So, when he went back to Japan to get married, do you know if he knew your mother previous to that?

MA: I don't and it's sad that I never had a chance to talk to them about that, but after I finished university, I moved to New York City and I had a job there, and there was a boyfriend, of course, whom I married [laughs], and it was too bad that I didn't get to know more about my parents' background in Japan. It was uh, had I lived a little longer, I probably- had they lived a little longer, I probably would've had a chance to talk more about their early years.

LU: Mm-hm, and when you mentioned before that your older brother was born there.

MA: Yes.

LU: Was your father back in California at the time when he was born? Or was your father- do you know if your father was still in Japan at that time?

MA: I- oh he was still in Japan [nods] and my mother had gone to live in the country where my father lived and so my brother has memory- had memories of a wonderful time running around with the country boys. [laughs]

LU: He would've been quite young.

MA: Well yes, because he was there until the age of five, so I don't know how many years, they were- they were apart when my father decided to come to North America again, I had the feeling that it was just a couple of years before he- I guess he must have earned enough money to send passage, money for passage for the two of them.

LU: Mm-hm

LU: And did your mother ever speak about her time when she first arrived to California and what she thought about?

MA: Oh, she never came to California.

LU: Oh, did she?

MA: When my father came back to North America, he went to Seattle, Washington

LU: Right.

MA: And then he went to a small community north, an island, north of Seattle, Bainbridge Island.

LU: Oh [chuckles], and did your mother ever speak about her time arriving in

MA: Oh yes, that she did speak about, and how difficult it was. Oh and it's funny because you know how *hakujin* say "oh I can't tell Chinese apart" or "I can't tell, um, people apart from Asia, because they all look the same" well, my mother said when she first came to North America, she had a terrible time differentiating people [laughs] because she said "everybody looked the same except for"- she'd guess their

hair or eyes, but I don't think Japanese placed much emphasis on eye color, because there was such homogeneity in Japan, everybody had brown eyes right [laughs] I thought that was funny. And of course, the fact that she didn't speak English when she first came, so it was difficult for her. Although my brother went to school immediately, and he learned very quickly. He learned in the school yard and in the classroom. He didn't have any special classes or anyone to tutor him; he just learned [chuckles]. So, I guess children are fast at picking up languages.

LU: So is your brother fluent in, both Japanese and English?

MA: He was, yes, although he always retained, some anomalies in his speech of not being quite clearly- he was fluent, but he did sound a little Japanese.

LU: Mm-hm, so in the household growing up then, was it predominantly English or Japanese language.

MA: In the household I spoke Japanese to my parents and English to my brother and English with all my other friends so

LU: oh

MA: So, I grew up with two languages, two mother tongues in effect. [chuckles]

LU: [chuckles] And did your father learn English as well, when he first came?

MA: Uh, he learned rudimentary English and so did my mother, but um, my father was never comfortable in English, but I noticed that he read the papers. So, for some reason he must have been able to read, but he wasn't very confident in speaking.

[00:15]

MA: And I'm jumping ahead, but my- there was a Libby McNeil's Canning man who would come to the farm to buy cabbages and I don't remember whatever else, and my mother was the one who did the dealing with the Libby man she was the one who [laughs] organized and made the arrangements for the contract of how much she- the family was willing to accept. [laughs]

LU: Wow

MA: So that was curious.

LU: That is curious. And so, when you were growing up, what do you remember about where you were born, and where you grew up?

MA: Well, I was born in Seattle, Washington which was the closest city and there was a Japanese midwife there, a Mrs. Waino, and so that's where my mother went to have me. And I came along very late, my brother was 18, and he was at the University of Washington, and that's when I was born [chuckles], so I was a big surprise. And I don't remember very much about my early childhood. As far as I remember, everything was enjoyable. I have pictures of me sitting on my father's shoulders, you know the way little kids perch [laughs] oh, and I also remember I had a wagon- a red wagon, that I used to ride on to the fields because my parents were farmers. And that was- and they farmed across a highway and then for some reason that house was no longer available to the family, so the Japanese community got together, and they built a house for my family across the road from where I was raised as a very young child. And I think by that time, anti-Japanese feeling was

growing and that was probably why the lease wasn't renewed on the house where they were living. So, my parents, provided the lumber and all the supplies, and all the Japanese came, and they put up this little house for us. It was- and one hears about that here in pioneering communities too, so it's the same kind of thing.

LU: And were there a lot of Japanese families at that time in the area

MA: Not a lot, but there were a number. There were some people at the end of the next country road, I think there were two families on that road, but they were from different ken [chuckles], in those days the Japanese, allied themselves with people from their own ken, in other words, their own provinces. And there weren't any people from Yamaguchi-ken [laughs], so the people down the road were from Shiga-ken [laughs] and they were different, of course.

LU: And I'm sure the dialect was different too.

MA: Well, that- yes, that's true, yes, my mother used to talk about their Japanese being "quite different" from theirs [laughs] but they did have another, there was another family, in the same community, with whom they had a good friendship. And they would have *mochitsuki* together, they would pound *mochiko* to make *mochi*.

LU: Oh, for New Years

MA: For New Years, that's right, yes. And the mother in that family was very superstitious and I was told, "now when we go to the Itabashi's you mustn't say the word" what is it? [looks around] anyway, the Japanese word for monkey "because that's bad and Mrs. Itabashi will feel that that's bad luck" So of course when I went, I was such a mischievous thing, I immediately had to ask her "why don't you want to hear the word?" [laughs]

[00:20]

MA: Oh dear, the funny things that popped into one's memory. [Laughs]

LU: Mm-hm That's right. And what were other Japanese children in the area that you corresponded with and-

MA: The, the children, on the next road from whose parents were from Shiga ken walked to school every morning, and they had huge numbers of children in those families, well, one family in particular, and they must have had about 10 children. And, they would stop by for me and I would walk with them to school. But I was the last one in the group The big kids were first and,

LU & MA: [laughs]

MA: And, I always felt uneasy being the youngest. I guess I must have walked along with one of their youngest too. And anyway, we walked to the small-town school over in Auburn, Washington, in the town.

LU: And how far was the walk?

MA: It seemed a long way, but it was probably not that far.

LU & MA: [laughs]

MA: But, Auburn was situated so that we could see Mount Rainier, which is, are you familiar with that part of- mm-hm okay [Head Nod]. It's a mountain like Fujiyama. It's very tall and it has, it's sloped with snow on it, and it was very pretty in the nice weather. So, I do remember watching, looking at Mount Rainier as we walked to school.

LU: Oh.

MA: But, the Pacific Northwest has a lot of rain, so I also remember wearing boots and carrying an umbrella and walking to school. [laughs] we didn't get chauffeur in those days. [laughs]

LU: That's right. Yeah. [laughs]

MA: The family had a truck, but that was for carrying vegetables and crates and things like that. [laughs]

LU: And was there a Japanese language school as well that you were able to attend?

MA: Yes. Mm-hm. Yeah. Was it two or three times a week? I think it may have been three times a week. We would all go together from this grade school and high school to the Japanese language school. There was a Buddhist temple with, it was a wooden structure with lots and lots of stairs leading up to the second level where the temple was. And on the ground floor was where the Japanese school was.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: So, there was a Japanese teacher who was brought in from Tokyo, and he spoke with what the Japanese in Auburn thought of was a lisp.

LU & MA: [laughs]

MA: I don't know if he spoke with a lisp or not, maybe it was his Tokyo accent.

LU & MA: [laughs]

MA: But anyway, we used to go together and it was just a one room school. And the teacher had to go from group to group, and I think, I think the older kids probably had to set the chairs and tables up too before classes began, while the little kids ran around and played outside. And, but afterward, after our classes were over, everyone had to help in cleaning up. The brooms came out and the dust pans and, and the chalkboards were cleaned, and the whole school had to be cl- Oh. And I think the older kids had to clean the toilets too.

LU: Oh, Wow [laughs]

MA: Mm-hm

LU: That's quite different.

MA: Yes. Mm-hm. Yep. No caretakers there. [laughs]

LU: That's right. But it's very similar. I've heard too, the schools in Japan.

MA: Oh, really? Of course.

LU: And they start off by cleaning the classes before classes begin.

MA: Oh, before, interesting

LU: Mm-hm

MA: Ah

LU: Yeah. so I've been told,

MA: Ah, mm, I didn't know that.

LU & MA: Mm-hm

MA: Yep. So we used to do that. And, then we would be walked home. Now, I can't even remember. No, I think we used to walk home. And by the time we went home in the winter, it was dark.

LU: [whispers] Wow

MA: Mm-hm

LU: And was it just yourself and your brother in the family, or did you have a-

MA: In our family, yes.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: So, I guess I was spoiled.

LU & MA: [laughs]

MA: Three adults and me. [laughs]

LU: And what university did your father go to?

MA: The University of Washington.

LU: And what did he study there?

MA: Chemistry

LU: Oh, And did he just complete his mas- Or bachelor's degree in Chemistry?

[00:25]

MA: No, he had a year to go when the war broke out. Oh, no, no, no, no, no sorry. He had a year to go. And then my father had appendicitis. And so, my brother had to leave university to look after the farm.

LU: Oh, wow.

MA: Until my father recovered. In those days, surgery was much more serious than it is now with all the antibiotics days before penicillin; it was quite different.

LU: That's right.

MA: So, yeah. So, my- after, during the war, my brother got a job. Oh, I'm jumping ahead.

LU: That's okay.

MA: But he got a job in Chicago out of, we were in camp in Tule Lake, California. And of course, with the man going off to war, there were, there was great need for all kinds of workers. And so, my brother got a job as a chemist, and then he called us out to Chicago, and that's how we got to the midwest. But anyway, so after, after a few years, my brother went back to the University of Chicago to complete his degree.

LU: Oh wow. And what was the feeling like in the community that you grew up in before the war started when the anti-Japanese feeling started to arise? Did you recognize it when you remember?

MA: Oh, yes, absolutely. Because there would be kids, for example, walking to school. There was one little boy in particular I remember, who used to come riding up on his bike, and then he'd spot this group of Japanese walking to school, and he would call us Japs, and I don't remember whatever else. But anyway, it was ugly.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: But then there were other people who were quite rational. My brother was a friend of the editor of the local paper, the Auburn paper. And he was very sympathetic to the Japanese. My brother did very well at, in school. And I guess that's when they got to be friends. And my brother also had a man who lived next to the library, who was a, a distinguished old man, who was probably retired. And for some reason, he spotted my brother and kind of acted as a mentor to him. So, there were kind people, and then there were, there was ugliness too.

LU: Mm-hm,

MA: So it was a mixture. But of course, the papers on the west coast drummed up this anti-Japanese feeling, yellow journalism.

LU: Yellow journalism. Mm-hm

MA: And, of course, the, the party, the ruling parties bagman, wanted to get hold of the property that the Japanese had, although the first generation, the issei weren't allowed to own property in, in the United States before the war. So, as the children grew older, the sons would, owned the property found by the whole family.

LU: Wow

MA: But in my, in my fam- in my family's case, the, my brother couldn't hav- get American citizenship. And he was born in Japan. So, the family simply leased land in order to farm.

LU: And what were they farming?

MA: Oh my, it was called a truck farm in those days. And they grew all kinds of vegetables. They had strawberries and green beans and peas and squashes and celery and broccoli. Oh, and my brother brought boysenberries into the valley. He was the first one he, decided that he wanted to have something different that would have market appeal, of course. [laughs] And so he read about boysenberries being grown in California. And he wrote to some wherever in, I don't know if it was some kind of agricultural business. Anyways, he got rootstock for boysenberries. So boysen, do you know what boysenberries are? They're not that common to this day.

LU: Not really.

[00:30]

MA: Well, they were kind of a cross between blackberries and raspberries, or loganberries. Anyway, they were a huge berry, about an inch long, or three quarters of an inch long with big, pulpy, lovely juicy seeds. Not seeds, but the pulp surrounding the seeds.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: And, it seems to be quite a crop from that valley now. But Shooty, my brother was one who brought [laughs] boysenberries to the valley. So that was a specialty. And what else?

LU: and what activities do you remember playing, in your spare time when you didn't have to worry about going to school in Japanese language school.

MA: Oh, we used to play kick the can. [laughs] We used to jump rope, hopscotch, hide and seek, of course, being in the country, we had barns to hide in and greenhouses. And [laughs] oh. And then we used to sit by the side of the road watching the cars go by. We, there was a, the main road between Seattle, [clears throat] Renton and Auburn ran by, our farm. so in

those days, they were, there would be a ditch, there would be ditches on both sides of the road. So, the water would run off, and the- [clears throat] there would be lots of butter cups growing there and long grasses. And we would sit by the road and watch the cars go by, we would say, wow. "That car went by like 24!" [laughs] No, I'm sorry. "That car went by like 60. Like 60." [laughs] That was considered outrageously fast.

LU&MA: [laughs]

MA: No, 24 was the regular speed that,

LU&MA: [laughs]

MA: They used to travel at.

LU: And that's 24 miles an hour?

MA: Yes. [Nods head]

LU&MA: [laughs]

MA: But like 60, I'm, I'm amused that [laughs]

LU: Yes [chuckles]

MA: That would be considered a creeping these days.

LU&MA: [laughs]

LU: And did you have any chores back at home? Or who looked after the house?

MA: My mother looked after the house. Yep. [nods head]

LU: Wow.

MA: Mm-hm

LU: And was it a very big house or do you [?]

MA: No, it was a small house. It only had two bedrooms and a living room and a kitchen.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And a small bathroom, but the bathroom wasn't complete. Yeah. [nods head] And, and before it could be complete, we were moved away, so.

LU: Mm-hm. So, what-

MA: And also, money was scarce. This was during the depression, you know, I was a depression baby, so, there was very little money, and it was just- Well, that's the next thing we're going to put in. And instead, my brother used to use it as a dark room for his [laughs] photographic activities. Now, it's interesting, he was all this- Now come to think of it, he had all this photographic equipment.

LU: Wow.

MA: Which must have cost a pretty penny

LU: Mm-hm

MA: But we didn't have a bathroom, a complete Hmm. [laughs] This poor Japanese son eh.

LU&MA: [laughs]

LU: And would you have the- i-i I guess the outhouse facilities outside [unclear]

MA: Yes

LU: what about the Japanese bath? The *ofuro*.

MA: No, we didn't have a Japanese bath. We had a wash tub.

LU: Oh, metal ones?

MA: Yes, yes. Yeah

LU: Did other Japanese families in the area have the typical *ofuro* bathtub?

MA: Oh, yes. [clears throat] The people down the next road with 10 children, they had a proper Japanese bath, of course with that many children. [clears throat] And so they would- They had a fire that they would light, that would heat the, the bath. And a place to wash before they got into the bath. And, and there I learned that the, the men washed first and then the childr- boys and then the woman had to wash. And so, they were very angry about that. Unfair. [laughs]

[00:35]

LU: That's right. Wow. [chuckles]

MA: And, you know, we didn't even have a refrigerator, in those days, but we did have a piano. [laughs]

LU: Really. And so, what would to do to substitute not having a refrigerator? Was there-

MA: We had a box outside, with a, with a screen on it. And in the winter, of course that was fine, although the milk used to freeze. And, in those days, it wasn't homogenized milk, so the cream would rise to the top. And this frozen cream could be mixed with a bit of sugar, and that was delicious. [laughs]

LU: Really? Much like ice cream then?

MA: Yes [chuckles]

LU: Oh wow [chuckles]

MA: yeah

LU: And what other activities around the household did you have the chance to watch your mother cook? And did she focus on more Japanese style cooking?

MA: She did in those days. [clears throat] She- and the- we had lots of wonderful vegetables from the farm, of course. So, despite the depression, the family did the food- they had enough food. But [clears throat] my mother and brother used to talk about how difficult it was during the depression. And my mother [clears throat] was the president of the Japanese woman's club. And she also was their treasurer. And so, they had this little bit of money, which they used; they knew that there wouldn't be a meeting until such and such a date. And they used a little bit of that money, and she always felt so guilty about it. But then by the time they met, the money had gone back into this little, well into the treasury. But that was something that really bothered her, that they were so poor that they had to do that.

LU: Mm-hm. and

MA: [laughs] so that left an indelible memory of, of her feelings of guilt.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: Yeah,

LU: And what did she organize for the Japanese women?

MA: They, I don't remember how frequently they met, but it was a women's club, and they would get together and talk. I don't know what they talked about. And what they organized. But anyway. [laughs]

LU: Wow.

MA: I was too young to be interested.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: Yeah

LU: But interesting to know that they're able to pool together, and much like a support group, I guess. Cause it would've been quite different coming from Japan to, to the United States.

MA: I should think so, yes, yes. It is interesting that they did organize themselves into a women's group. They must, as you say, it must have been some kind of support group.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And, but I don't remember what it was all about. I guess either I wasn't paying attention, or it just didn't concern me being a child. [chuckles]

LU: Mm-hm. Did your mother ever speak about going back home to Japan?

MA: No. No.

LU: Did your family know that they're gonna stay in the United States for the rest of their lives? Or did they-

MA: I don't know; I don't remember those discussions. Well, for one thing, I, being so young in compare- with three adults and me, I'd go to bed before serious discussions cropped up, and if they did crop up, I probably fell asleep. I don't know, I used to go to bed around 7:30, so there was plenty of time for them to talk. And so, I don't remember those discussions, but probably, all Japanese on the West coast thought of amassing enough money to go back to Japan to live comfortably. That was why they came to North America, but, as time went on, I think my brother was very comfortable being in North America, and he loved the U.S., and I guess he loved the potential there was. And he did very well in school. He was touted to be the valedictorian because he did so well.

[00:40]

But then just before graduation, there- something happened. And he wasn't made valedictorian. He was made- given the second spot.

LU: Oh.

MA: And so, there was- there were whispers about "that was racism". Which it probably was.

LU: And that would have been at his time in Chicago?

MA: No, no.

LU: [unclear]

MA: No, this was from high school.

LU: Oh, high school.

MA: [Nodding] In Auburn, Washington. Mm-hm. But he was very popular. And he was a cheerleader. And [laughs] I have some pictures of him. [Points at her chest] Big "A" on his- his shirt- not shirt, sweater. [Giggles]

LU: Oh my. And what happened when the war started? Do you remember when the United States first- first began with World War Two, before Pearl Harbor happened?

MA: [Nods] Oh, yes. There was talk about the danger of war happening. Because there was an article in the New York Times by, uh- I can't remember the name of the General. But some American General having reported American- Americans bombing Japanese ships on the high seas. And this General had been outraged that

this was happening. So, I guess there was some kind of very big commercial war going on. I don't re- I don't know the economic history of that period at all. But the Japanese in Auburn were very concerned that war could happen. And of course, sure enough it did.

LU: Mm-hm. And do you know if your mother and father had a radio that they could listen to?

MA: Oh, yes. [Nods] Yes. Sure. They listened to the radio quite carefully.

LU: It would have been quite different to watch the growing hostility of the anti-Japanese feeling.

MA: [Nods] Mm-hm.

LU: And start to immerse. Did your mother and father ever express any concerns about the family's safety in the area?

MA: Uh. Well sure. There was anxiety. There was a curfew imposed on Japanese once the war began. And so, the Japanese were instructed to lower their blinds. So that no light would escape from their homes. It was- there was a worry that Japanese would be sending some kind of light signals to spies. [Giggles] And so the Japanese had to be in their homes by eight o'clock, or something. I don't remember what time it was. But my brother would go visit old Mr. Moffitt, who was his mentor. And they would talk about history and literature. And anyway, he had a wonderful time having, having wonderful conversations with him. And he- they wouldn't notice the time. And then my mother- I remember my mother peering through the edge of the blinds looking for my brother.

LU: Oh, yeah.

MA: Because, she was afraid that he would be caught by the police and put into jail. So, there was a lot of anxiety.

LU: Oh wow. [Giggles] And that was- how long was the blackouts established before Pearl Harbor?

MA: Oh, this must have been after Pearl Harbor. Before we were evacuated and put into camps.

LU: Mm-hm. And were you still able to continue with Japanese language school?

MA: In the camps, yes. [Nodding]

LU: But not during the period before the- immediately before the camps? During the blackout time, after Pearl Harbor?

MA: I think the Japanese language schools were closed. Now, I don't know if there was some kind of official edict that made them close. Or whether the Japanese on their own closed the schools. I have no idea.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: [Nodding] It's just that- and I have a feeling that they closed quite a bit before. It may have been that there were hostilities against the Japanese. And the Japanese were sensitive to that prejudice. I'm- I don't know.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: I- it's- I was too young to be aware of any of the politics. I wasn't very smart about that thing- sort of thing. [Giggles]

LU: And how did your parent prepare for moving? Or did they know that they were going to move?

[0:45:00]

MA: Well, there was a military order that all the Japanese had to be ready for evacuation on such and such a date. I think we were given like- something like two weeks' notice, I'm not sure. But it was a very short period of time. And so, when the announcement came and there were knocks at the door, you know. "Do you have- do you have a refrigerator to sell?". "Do you have a piano?" And somebody wanted to pay my mother five dollars for the piano, and she said, "no". And so Japanese put all their things into a barn. And put a padlock on the barn. And walked away, of course, knowing very well that the barn would be broken into, and everything stolen. And that's exactly what happened.

LU: Wow.

MA: But it was a matter of pride, I guess. I'm not sure that's the right word. But, I talked about this already in our- in the session upstairs. But that- to steal from people who were in unfortunate circumstances was such an indignity. And so, mother and father felt that to be subject to this kind of injustice was so wrong that they would rather these people who stole to have the indignity of stealing rather than selling to them at an impossible price- at a ridiculous price. But I'm sure you've heard that from many, many people.

LU: Mm. Not quite as often.

MA: Really?

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: Oh. Of course, other Japanese left their homes intact. Asking their neighbors to look after things. And everything disappeared. So, there were those sad stories too.

LU: Mm-hm. That's right.

MA: Yeah.

LU: And do you remember what you packed to take with you?

MA: No, I don't. Uh, my Japanese *kimono* that was sent to me when I was born.

[Laughs] And my Japanese doll, which I still have. With its beautiful *kimono*.

[Laughs]

LU: Oh, wow.

MA: And other than that, I don't remember. Because something mother did.

[Giggles]

LU: And where did you-

MA: Oh, and then- oh there was a wonderful vase. That mother and my brother had bought at *Fujiya*, which was a Japanese store in Seattle. My brother was interested in *Ikebana*. And there was a flower arranging teacher who would come once a week. Or once every two weeks from Seattle to Auburn. She came on the bus, bringing all her scissors and whatever. And she would teach a class every Saturday morning. And there were Ja- mostly Japanese women, and my brother-[Laughs] who learned *Ikebana* and my brother just adored this wonderful teacher. [Laughs] So, the vase that- his favorite vase, they took along.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And other than that, I don't remember whatever they took.

LU: Do you remember if you were allowed to take a lot with you? Or-

MA: Um, no. No. Just a couple of duffle bags of personal things for each person I think it was- it was very little. My brother's camera and camera equipment, that was all confiscated, he had to take them to the police station. So, they disappeared from the police station, of course. [Giggles] Gee, "We don't have any record of them".

[Laughs]

LU: Oh, geez. And, did your family have a car? Was that taken away?

MA: They had a truck. They had a series of trucks. They were always secondhand trucks. [Giggles] And I don't know what happened. It must have been sold.

LU: Yeah.

MA: It was an old international truck. And it was- that was a brand. I think it's still around- that brand. [Giggles]

LU: And where did your family go? [Unclear]

MA: We were sent- we were put on a dusty old train. And we were sent to Southern California, to Fresno. It was a desert area with palm trees.

[00:50]

MA: We hadn't seen palm trees before. And there was lots and lots of dust. Sand everywhere, that got into everything. It was called an Assembly Center. And I think people who lived near Seattle, or in Seattle were sent to barns- the fair barns. And put into stables, which was pretty ugly. And this happened in BC too. I found out that they were sent to stables in exhibition grounds. And of course, stables are not exactly pleasant places to spend any time. But anyway, we were sent to Pinedale Evacuation Center- Assembly Center. And then after the American government got things better organized, we were sent to Northern California, to Tule Lake. I'm sure you've heard of Tule Lake.

LU: Mm-hm. And what was it like when you first arrived in Fresno? What were your feelings towards it?

MA: Fear. Because we didn't know what was going to happen to us. And the first impression of course was barbed wire around this camp. And guard towers, with soldiers holding rifles, watching us all. And it was very dry, and there was dust everywhere, and rows and rows of camps. And it was a fearful place to go.

LU: Do you know how many people were in the camp?

MA: I don't know. My guess is that there were five or 600. I'm not sure. But there were people from California as well as from Washington state. And, again, I don't know. But it was- there were these barracks were put up very quickly. They had asphalt floors and then just the frames and the roof. So, they were- and very flimsy doors with the kind of handles where you have to lift up- there's a round piece where you put your index finger and lift up the latch. And so, it's- [Laughs] it's like- well I guess a camp, a summer camp. Kids have that kind of experience. That kind of very flimsy structure. And there were partitions between the rooms that were moveable. But they weren't- they put- every family had a room. And in our case, we were a small family. But I don't know what they did for people with large families, if they had ten children. I mean, they must have had to have several rooms. But anyway, we had cots and we had to go and stuff our mattresses, cotton mattresses with straw. And that was the first thing we had to do.

LU: Wow.

[Both giggle]

MA: And it was very hot. Well, Southern California, palm trees, date palms. So it- and then there was a lot- when there was a lot of wind, there would be huge dust storms. And the dust would get into everything. Into our eyes and noses [laughs] and-

LU: Oh my.

MA: But I guess, in other circumstances, it would have been nature, and people would accept it. But simply because it was a camp, and we were forcefully put there, it made it seem so awful. And of course, there were- toilets were in the- in the middle of the blocks. And washing facilities were all communal.

LU: And what was your reaction to seeing all of these Japanese people?

MA: I don't know. I- it was just that, well there were a lot of people and we were country- I was a country child, so.

[0:55]

MA: It was just a new experience. And I was shy. [Laughs] And probably spoiled because being an only child. So, it took a bit of adjustment to get to know other children and play with them.

LU: And how long did you stay there before you moved to Tule Lake?

MA: I don't remember. Maybe it was- I don't know, four or five, six months. And then again, we were put on trains, and we went to Tule Lake- or was it a bus? I can't remember.

LU: And did everyone from the same area move to Tule Lake? Or did they branch off into separate camps?

MA: I don't know how they decided who was going to go where. But some went to Tule Lake, and others went to Gila, Montana, and other camps from that Assembly Center. And it's curious; one would have thought it would be sensible to take them to the closest relocation center, but that wasn't how it worked. But I have no idea what the thinking was.

LU: Do you remember how long the train rides were?

MA: I don't remember that trip at all. I remember being on the train. We eventually went to Heart Mountain, Wyoming. And I remember the- being on the train from Wyoming to Chicago. And then from Chicago to Oak Park, where we eventually landed. But the trip from Pinedale to- I have a feeling it might have been a bus that we went on. So, from Southern California to Northern California wasn't that long a trip, I suppose. It must have been hundreds of miles, but I don't- I don't remember it.

LU: Just gonna pause these ones here. [Camera beep noise] And- [Recording paused]

[End Part 1]

[Start Part 2 - 00:57]

MA: Oh, so what is this one? [Points at camera]

LU: Oh, this one is a digital one. So, it works the same way, but it's more just a backup for this one-

MA: Oh. [Nods]

LU: -because this one runs on the tapes.

MA: Oh, yes.

LU: Mm-hm. There. [Giggles]

MA: [Smiles and gestures towards the camera] Do you mind turning it the other way?

LU: Oh, yes. [Giggles]

MA: It makes me self-conscious. [Laughs] Thank you.

LU: Not a problem. There we are, great. And so, your travels to Tule Lake, we were just speaking about. And what was it like in Tule Lake when you arrived there?

MA: Oh, it was a huge camp. Thousands and thousands of people. I don't know how many thousands of people. But it was the largest camp of the relocation centers. [Laughs and puts up air quotes] "Relocation", Evacuation Centers. And it was- they were still building while we were there. And some people arrived after we did, but we were one of the late arrivals. So, we were far, far away from the administration building, and the hospital and the power plant and things like that. But it was all organized, it was a functioning community and camp by the time we got there. So- but being so large they had designated facilities for classes. Well, schools and classes of all kinds, not only for children but for adults as well. But I guess it wasn't completely organized. As time went on, Japanese are very good at organizing themselves, I think. [Giggles] And not wasting time. So, there were all kinds of exciting things happening in that camp. And my mother had a good time going to classes. She learned to draft patterns to make clothes, and she gathered shells and made flowers. And she learned to make crepe paper flowers. And she went to English classes, so. [Laughs] It was the first time my mother had leisure. So, I'm sure many *issei* women said the same thing about their camp experience because they worked alongside their men and then they had the house to look after. And in the winter, of course, my mother used to make quilts, for example.

[01:00]

MA: I remember her having spread out material- Japanese material on the living room floor. Huge piece of material and putting down silk, batting, and wool. I can't remember all the different kinds of materials that she put down and then she quilted using silk thread to make the knots, and all that kind of thing, so summer and winter, the women were very busy. So, in the camps, they had time to do things they enjoyed because they didn't cook for their families, they didn't shop. Of course, we had terrible food [Giggles]. But anyway, so, and it was nice for my mother. So, and my father had a job, he joined a work crew. And, at first, he helped with building barracks for new evacuees to inhabit. But again, these were not very nice tar paper barracks. And, but anyway- the income was very low. My brother got a job as a lab tech, and so he worked at the hospital, and he had a great time too, talking to young people. Half the night away, they would talk, compare experiences, and there was time for - to learn painting for example, and all kinds of things. Oh, there was even a theater group that formed. So, there was a lot of creative activity going on in those camps.

MA: And then, some of the men talked to the camp administration to ask if there might be some farmland where they could grow Japanese vegetables. So sure enough, there was some land, some distance away, about half an hour by bus-or by truck. And so, the men went there, they were taken there and they prepared the soil-and got crews together, and they planted *nappa* and all kinds of vegetables. And so that supplied the camp. It was wonderful.

And, they got to be so proficient at growing on this desert soil that- it must have been an area where there was better soil than where the camp was. That's why it took a bit of time to get there, but they were so successful that they were able to supply another camp- another evacuation camp with Japanese vegetables.

LU: Wow.

MA: So that was nice.

MA: So, you know, it was nice that it spoke of the industriousness and the spirit of the Japanese people to want to do these things and make their lives better despite being shoved into camps.

LU: Mm-hm. Wow. Isn't that interesting?

MA: But then there were scary things being a desert- There were rattlesnakes that would sometimes come into the camp, and so, young men would go out into the surrounding desert area-looking for rattlesnakes to kill them, so they wouldn't come into the camp. But even so, there would be talk sometimes, "oh, do you know-what happened to so and so? There was a rattlesnake that came into the camp", so people who lived around the edges were always very wary of rattlesnakes.

LU: Oh, yes, you know? Oh my.

MA: But it was nice that somehow women were able to find these very small shells they use. Have you ever seen the things that women made in the camps?

LU: No.

MA: Oh, really? Oh, gosh, I have some put away, some put away someplace. My mother wasn't as artistic as some women who did a lot of *ikebana*, but Japanese women are quite meticulous in the way they work. They made some very sweet little bouquets, and in those days, people wore broaches. So, they had a little lily of the valley, you can imagine, Lily-of the valley made with very small white shells. Oh-they used to use bleach to bleach the shells all white. They would pick the shells out of the sand and ball them to clean them and bleach them.

[01:05]

MA: And then, I guess they use nail polish to color them. [laughs] And, wire, to string these shells together and made flowers, and clam shells were used to make leaves, but they had to be painted. But the clamshells were very dense-and they had a very slick surface, hard surface, so they didn't take very much paint very well. So that was

something that didn't work too well. But people made all kinds of, hangings and pictures and all kinds of wonderful creative things.

LU: Oh, Wow. [Giggles] And what was it like going to school there?

MA: Well just, another classroom that was set aside for school. So- but the camp administration wasn't able to provide very much in the way of books, but there were many Japanese who were teachers, especially people from California.

MA: And, then teachers were brought in as well. I think there were Quakers and the American Friend Service committee sent in teachers, -and then there were teachers, who simply volunteered because they felt it was the right thing to do.

LU: Wow.

MA: Mm-hm. That's heartwarming, you know?

LU: And how big were the class sizes?

MA: I can't remember, but my guess is there must have been- 20, 30. But as the classrooms were, of course, made up of barracks so, in the barracks, I should say. they couldn't have very large classes. And I don't know about the high schools. That was a real problem, -because the high school students wanted to get accreditation, so they could move on to university. So, there was a lot of work that had to go in to try to get that arranged. I don't know what happened there.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: But for us little kids, it was fun. [Laughs]

LU: And would you have Japanese language school in the same setting?

MA: I guess it was, I can't remember too much about it. It's, for some reason, I don't remember.

MA: It's either age or I blocked it out, one or the other, almost.

LU: And what would you do in your spare time when you didn't have to go to school?

MA: Oh, we just played around, but we didn't have any playground equipment. And they did have occasional concerts, -and, art exhibits and things like that. And we- there were double barracks, which were used for dining rooms.

MA: And, the dining rooms in some instances were used for, if, there was a theatrical production of some kind- or an art exhibit. But art exhibits were more, in the smaller barracks, the regular barracks. But, concerts were in the-in the dining halls after the food was cleaned away. And, and-

LU: Describe the barracks. What did they look like?

MA: They were wooden structures with tar paper on the outside and probably tar paper on the roof, no insulation. So, and they were put up very hurriedly so that, in the winter when it snowed, snow would come in through the cracks.

MA: They had, pot-bellied stoves in, each of the units, and a family would have a unit so-that ,the beds. And there wasn't very much room in each of these units. So, the beds that were close-to the wall would have snow coming in on them, so people

would try to stuff rags and all kinds of things in, to try to keep the place warm. But winters weren't too pleasant in those barracks.

[01:10]

MA: And, again, it was Tule lake as- was Pinedale in a desert area. You know, all these camps were on Indian land. Did you do that? Well,-the American Indians were pushed further and further west as time went on. And of course, the government didn't give them good land,-good arable land. They shoved them onto deserts in those, in many cases. And this was the West coast as far as they could go. And so, there were some Indians on the, near the edge of Washington, Oregon, and California, who I don't know about California, I don't know if Indians got any good lands in California. Anyway, in Washington state there were some-Indians who did have land that was good. And of course they could fish, but the Indians have been pushed onto-these reservations, which were desert, and what could they grow there. So, well, you know, take some more land from the Indians, -put the Japs into the camps on Indian land.

LU: Wow.

MA: So, poor Indians, injustice piled on injustice. So, dust would blow in, of course, and in the- in the summer it was very hot. Black tar paper retains heat, so it was not very pleasant.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And of course, mother was always sweeping because of all the dust that came in, and there were no sidewalks, of course. So, every time people went in and out, they tramped in sand. And of course there was no real privacy. So, some families fought a lot, and of course, everybody could hear the fighting, and it was very unpleasant.

LU: Mm-hm. And did you have to share your house with them?

MA: It was a long barrack with, I suppose, there must have been eight or 10 units. I can't remember how many there were.

LU: Wow.

MA: But some units were larger than others because some families had to accommodate, some, there were some bachelors, for example-and, I think they might have doubled bachelors, I'm not sure. And there were small families like ours. And then there were other families with lots of children. This was the days before the pill, you know, so some families were very big.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And some families had two units because they were so big. And so, the lack of privacy even within the family was difficult and then for- to have people-able to hear the conversations from the next unit all the time was, again, very unpleasant. So,

people whispered, of course, and it created a tense atmosphere. And I think, there were some social situations that developed because of that- and jealousies and anger-and all these human emotions that crop up in difficult situations.

LU: Mm-hm. that's right. So, who would do all the cooking then? Was there a large mess hall that could you go to?

MA: That's right. There was a huge mess hall. And, everyone in that block had dinner in-their blocks, mess hall, but there was no way of checking. So, after a time it became known, "Hey, block such and such has a wonderful, they have a great chef" [Laughs]. So, people would flock to the mess halls that had better food. But I remember our mess hall wasn't good at all. I think they might've had canned meat from Argentina or someplace like that. And I would guess canned carrots and canned carrots are awful. Even potatoes didn't seem to taste very good. They may have canned too, for all I know. Anyway, I just remember the food was very not good. And of course, people got sick-because the food wasn't very good. And that was not a good experience. That was the food.

[01:15]

LU: What about Japanese food-other than the Japanese vegetables that you already explained?

MA: But, that came quite a bit later. It wasn't, initially we had all this canned food that was- probably left over from some army place. I don't know.

LU: What about rice and miso? And even shoyu, I guess those were-

MA: Yes. In the beginning even that wasn't available. And then gradually that became available. And of course, shoyu, Japanese can't get along-without our shoyu.

LU: That's right.

MA: [Laughter] Yeah. And, as time went on, food got a little better. And then of course, this competition between blocks probably served to make it better too. And then once the vegetables became available, then it was much better. Mm-hm. But, no fresh fruits initially or at all. There were-we didn't have oranges, for example, which we missed very much. We didn't have apples.

LU: "Wow."

MA: Because everything was canned.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And, I guess- I have no idea what the thinking was or whether, how much thinking went into planning. And of course, nutrition wasn't regarded in the same way in-those days as now. So, what is- my feeling was that anything for the Japs was okay.

LU: Mm-hm. And were you barb wired in Tule Lake?

MA: Oh yes, oh- wait a minute. Gosh, I don't remember.

LU: Were you allowed to leave to go visit? Well, I guess you would be close enough to go visit other camps.

MA: Oh no. There, I don't remember my arrangements to visit other camps, but surely, I, gosh, I'm sure there was some kind of demarcation, -but being in, a vast desert, where would people go if they went out? Although there was talk about someone who had gone off, and was found dead, a long time later. And I can imagine how people could be very depressed, and not get proper attention. And, a certain percentage of people, of course, are going to be ill, mentally and psychologically, so in such a large population. It could happen.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: Yeah. It, no it wasn't, I don't think. I know there was a gate there at the entrance to the camp, to Tule Lake, and there was some kind of military guard there, -and papers had to be examined going in and out. But I don't know about the rest of the camp. I don't remember.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: I guess we didn't play near the edge of the camp.

LU: Did you ever have experience with any of the guards?

MA: No, no, I just remember seeing them in Pinedale, with their guns, and we were very scared of them. There was a great open field, which was supposed to be an exercise field. I suppose, and there would be guards in their towers around this field. And there was a man who used to be a standout in this field and shout day-and night yelling, calling something. Obviously, he was unbalanced, but we just spoke of him as being crazy. But he called out about Jesus and Christ, and he was some kind of religious fanatic. But I mean, again, in a population of that size, there are going to be some.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA But it was so sad.

LU: Was religion ever a big part of your family?

MA: Oh, yes. My brother decided-that we would go to the local Methodist church in Auburn, Washington.

[01:20]

MA: So, every Sunday, I got dressed up and would go to Sunday school and sit with the other children. We had flash cards and we learned [laughs] about birds and flowers and [laughs] I guess we heard stories about Jesus [laughs]. But I was the only Japanese there and my brother I think may have sung in the choir. But, anyway, that was- it was a part of my family's- part of my family's life as opposed to going to the Buddhist church, which I suspect they went to initially, but maybe when my

brother became a part of the high school community in Auburn, he was invited perhaps to go to this Methodist church, I don't know.

LU: Was there a Buddhist church in the area?

MA: Yes, there was one, because that's where we had our Japanese school.

LU: Oh, that's right. [laughs]

MA: Yeah. [nods]

LU: And what about in the camp, in Tule Lake, were there churches there?

MA: I'm sure there must've been, but it wasn't an integral part of our life in Tule Lake.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: Of course, there were certain number of very earnest Japanese Christian ministers, but I had a feeling they translated their Japanese Buddhist culture [laughs] to Christian culture and, well, frankly I didn't like them [laughs]. They were too- I guess they were too authoritarian and it was as if one spoke of having special access to God and to Jesus, and I- [laughs] forget it [laughs]. In later years, my brother, after we moved to Chicago, he got involved with a congregational church, and- but that's, perhaps, not something you want to hear about right now [laughs]. Did you have some other questions about the camp experience, or should-

LU: Was there a general store? Or where would you purchase new items such as shoes and anything else you may have needed?

MA: Mm-hm, [unclear] a store was formed. I guess it was in the- in the same form as- what are they called, I'm not sure what they were called, PX's or something like that. The army had stores on their bases, and I suppose that's the pattern that was used that the family could buy oranges in the store, for example, and paper for making flowers and glue and all kinds of- it was a general store, and so that made life a bit more fun. [laughs]

LU: And what about treats? Such as ice cream or candy, or popsicles.

MA: Yes, we didn't have those except from the general store, and so occasionally we would get candy.

LU: [laughs] And how long did you spend in Tule Lake?

MA: Oh, it was a couple of- well, I guess it was less than two years. [clears throat] My brother left after about a year, soon after a year there and he went to Chicago as I mentioned before. And then- oh and during that period there was a questionnaire circulated to everyone in all of the camps about whether if there was an invasion, would they- would they side with the Japanese or would they side with the Americans and if they had a chance, did they want to go to Japan? Or did they want to stay in the United States? And, so, there was a lot of anger and bitterness over that kind of questionnaire as you can imagine.

[01:25]

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: There were some people who were fanatically one or the other and, so, there was very high emotion and my family decided they preferred to stay in the United States, so we were shipped out of Tule Lake, which became the centre for all those people who said they wanted to go to Japan. And, so, we were shipped out to Heart Mountain, Wyoming and after, my brother went to Chicago. And then from there, my brother made arrangements for us to live in the home of a mission- of a former missionary in a suburb of Chicago, Oak Park, and, so, we got pass- we got tickets to go to Oak Park, and very little money in addition, and off we went! And- But we lived in the attic of these former missionaries.

LU: [laughs]

MA: But they were very generous in allowing my brother's family to stay there, you know. My brother had a room with them initially, and then they found out that Shuji had a family in a camp and they said, "Well, they can come and stay in our attic until they can find something else", so that's how we ended up in Oak Park, Illinois.

LU and MA: [chuckles]

LU: And how long were you in Wyoming for?

MA: Probably about six months. Another camp on the- in the desert. [laughs]

LU: Oh wow, but much smaller scale than-

MA: It was.

LU: - scale than Tule Lake.

MA: There was a book written about Heart Mountain, Wyoming, and a girl from Heart Mountain. *Snow Falls on Cedars*, do you remember? There was a film about it too.

LU: No, I don't remember that.

MA: A Hollywood film. [laughs]

LU: I'll have to. [moves]

MA: [Looking around LU] You were sitting on- next to it before.

LU: I know, I keep- oh there.

MA: [laughs] So, Oak Park, Illinois was an upper middle class suburb of Chicago and, so- But this was during the war and there was- housing was very, very tight, and, so, I guess that's why my brother ended up in Oak Park and, on the other hand, he was smart to have looked in Oak Park because a lot of Japanese suffered a lot of prejudice against them and housing was very hard to find in the city. And the housing that was available to them was frequently in very rough neighbourhoods because people didn't want Japs.

LU: Oh.

MA: [clears throat] And of course coming out of camps, people didn't have very much money either, but Shuji had a decent job, so that- Anyway, we ended up in Oak

Park and he eventually found us a garage apartment. This was an apartment over a two-car garage, and I guess it was initially built into an apartment so that the household help could live above the garage. So, [clears throat] that's where we went to live, but my mother had to work in the big house and that was very hard on my mother. She- To be somebody's servant was quite distasteful, but they thought it would be temporary, I guess. And my father had a job in a greenhouse on the outskirts of Chicago- of Oak Park.

[video glitch 1:29:30]

MA: -suburb, further out, and every morning he would get up at five or five thirty and take his lunch and go off to these greenhouses and my brother put on his suit and took the elevated railway into the city of Chicago. And my mother had to work, not full time, but most of the- part of the day anyways. She worked as a sewing lady initially and then it got expanded to being the cook,

[01:30]

MA: But the family had cleaning help, so she didn't have to do that, but she also had to look after the little girl sometimes, but I would be hired to babysit the little girl, so, when I was home from school. But the house- they allowed [clears throat] my family to have a garden in the back of the garage, and that meant a lot to the family. They could grow all their vegetables there.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: And they had privacy, finally [chuckles]. But it was a very, as you can imagine over a two-car garage, there was a living room and kitchen and two bedrooms and my parents had the bigger bedroom, and my brother had the smaller bedroom and there was a long closet, on the other end of the closet was the bathroom. There was very cramped and then they got a sofa, and that was my bed [laughs]. So, but, anyway, that's- then- it was pleasant living there. Especially after the camp, so, there was no effort made to move into Chicago, into an apartment, and my mother, I think, felt- I guess she was- felt put upon by the family. But, you know, the men decided that they really liked it there. They did the gardening work, and I remember my mother being- getting very angry at my father because my father wanted to mow the lawn in- just in one direction, and my mother insisted the lawn should be mowed one way and then crossways. So that way there weren't any lines, so [laughs]. But I wondered later, like "why were there such bitter arguments", but I realized that it was really the frustration she felt that here she had to be a servant while the guys- the men could go off and go to their jobs.

LU: And what was it like going to school?

MA: Well, I was the only Japanese. First, it was to the local grade school, and I guess it was Junior High, grade school and junior high, in the same- it was a small local school, and the teachers were very nice. I think the missionaries had gone to the school to alert them. Went to the principle and said, "this Japanese girl was coming, and she'd been in a camp, etc.", so they were very nice to me in the school. They were very curious, of course. Everybody kept looking at me [laughs]. And they gave me a special chore of ringing the bell for when classes were to end. There was a bell that had to be pushed to alert the whole school every so many minutes so that the children in the older grades could move from class to class, and I was given that job [laughs]. So, certainly I was very conspicuous. [laughs]

LU: Was there still feelings of hostility at that time? Even though it was just after the war. [overlapping]

MA: Oh, [nodding] absolutely, absolutely. Yes, there was still a lot of prejudice, and it was a class thing too, because my mother was working in a household and, so, there was that as well. Plus, the feeling that Japanese were inferior. So, there was a lot of feeling of hostility and I remember it in high school more so than in the junior high that- and again I think I was the only Japanese. I think there was a Chinese boy, but he was- it was a big consolidated high school for several communities so, I never actually met him. And then later on there was another Chinese person who came in, but anyway. We were very isolated and there were instances of prejudice. Girls can be very mean in that age period and so, there were things that girls did that made me stick out and were done to make me feel uncomfortable [laughs]. However, one lives through these things [laughs].

[01:35]

LU: And how did your brother feel about going into work in Chicago? Was- Did he have any problems?

MA: My brother chose not to look at prejudice. He tried to ignore it, and when I would try to talk to him about prejudice, he would say "Just ignore it. Forget about it. It doesn't exist". So, that made me uncomfortable and it was sad that I couldn't- I talked to my mother about it, but she wasn't out in the world so, she didn't know how I should handle it. But we had our own world, and I guess my brother found ways to find satisfaction. He belonged to the [clears throat] church choir, and he became their librarian and he was an invaluable asset to the choir because he organized it beautifully and so for the first time, all the music for any particular work was together and it was organized and there was no end of praise for my brother [laughs]. And, I belonged to the youth group and the high- the high school group in that church met every Sunday evening and there I was very nicely accepted and I eventually became president of that youth group and I organized going to a

black church in Chicago to help people in the slums, as we used to call it in those days, and we agreed to paint a recreation room for them. but it turned out that they resented all these kids from the suburbs- white kids from the suburbs of course [laughs]. With the one [laughs] Asian face- Oriental we used to say in those days, and after we finished painting it, apparently the kids in that church trashed that room. So that was a sad lesson that we didn't understand of course at- at that time, we weren't sophisticated enough and I guess the church- the two churches too, the advisors weren't sophisticated enough to understand how to integrate the group when they worked together and instead, it was done more as a work of charity which was [shakes head] demeaning right?

LU: Mm-hm

MA: And, so, that was a sad experience, but a touch of reality [chuckles].

LU: And from all the people that you were friends with, in Tule Lake, were you able to correspond with them still, even though you had moved to?

MA: Unfortunately, I didn't. I guess it was because the friendships in- weren't all that long. We had great times together and we said we should write to each other, and it just didn't happen. Guess we got so engrossed in our own worlds, but that's something that's very sad for me, that I didn't keep up. And I guess my parents didn't encourage it either because they didn't develop close ties, and so they didn't appreciate the experi- wealth of experience that would come from an exchange of- of thoughts and emotions going through a difficult period. I think my parents felt very much under siege all the time and then adjusting to the new world outside of camp, and not being comfortable in their circumstances, wondering how long they would stay, was it going to be safe, was it going to- did they have- would they have to make other arrangements, how long would things stay the same. Anyway, it didn't happen.

LU: Do you know why your parents decided to stay in the United States, instead of going back to Japan?

MA: I think my brother had a lot of influence in that because he became the interpreter of the world to them.

[01:40]

MA: My mother's English and my father's English wasn't that great, and this happened in many of Japanese and immigrant families, that the eldest son became the interpreter of the world. And so, he exerted a lot of influence. And of course, he was quite realistic in recognizing that it wasn't going to be easy in Japan because, well, they were under siege and there was probably little food. Plus, he knew that there were aspects of the United States that were quite wonderful, and he felt he could fit in and he felt that there was a real world of promise. That democracy was a

concept that he really felt was important in his life, and he felt there was a place for us. And so, I think that was largely the reason he and the family decided to stay. Even before, when he was back from university in Washington State, it was mother and my brother who decided what kind of crops they would plant the next year.

LU: Mm-hm

MA: And I bet this happened in many Japanese families. And because my brother was more aware of the changing trends, what the market would want. That was why he brought [laughs] boysenberries into the valley. And mother, father and Shuji would have long discussions about "What shall we do next year?" because they didn't want to plant the same crops that all the other Japanese were planting because then there would be glut on the market. My father tended to be - go with the crowd of other Japanese, [chuckles] he was a very sweet guy. But he didn't like conflict and so he liked to use the experience of others. But my mother was a very strong-willed woman, so she and Shuji would make the decisions about what they would plant. [chuckles]

LU: And did your brother marry?

MA: Eventually, but it was after I left. My mother felt that I should stay home after I went to the- I went to the University of Chicago. And my mother felt that I should go home after going to university and look after my brother until he found a wife, and then I could find a husband. But being a spoiled child [laughs], I had a boyfriend from New York City who was [laughs] wonderfully rebellious and self-centered the kind of person I'd never met in my whole life [laughs]. And I went and I moved to New York City and got a job and - so then, after my mother died, my brother started seriously looking for a wife and he found a wife in Chicago and brought her out to - Oak Park - to Crystal Lake where my brother and family had bought a farm. It wasn't a - a working farm because my brother's lab moved out to the country, to the, well, far end of the suburbs. So, they bought a farm at the end of the northwestern railway suburban run in a place called Crystal Lake, Illinois, and this was on the outskirts of town. But then my brother I guess recognized "Gee" [laughs] "It would be nice if there was a woman around to look after the house and do the cooking," so he married a woman who had two children, a son and a daughter, and - so she went out to look after the house and my father and Shuji.

LU: And was she Japanese?

MA: Yes, yes. In those days and - My brother never felt that he could marry a *Hakujin*, and he had been interested in a number of women.

[01:45]

MA: When we lived in Auburn, Washington, there was a librarian [nods] and he - who got along stupendously well, and they talked books, and they talked and talked

and talked. And she was really interested in him, I found out later, but he didn't feel that he as a *Nihonjin* could marry a *Hakujin*, that it was a complete no no. And so – And he had that feeling right up until mother died and so he felt he had to find a Japanese woman so.

LU: And did he have any children other than -

MA: No, he didn't.

LU: her two children?

MA: He wanted children, but she didn't want any more children, so that was very sad [chuckles].

LU: And, I guess, what was it like going to- to university? Did you know growing up that you would eventually go to university, or?

MA: I guess I did, because in high school we had a guidance counsellor and every kid in the junior year – I can't remember what year – but anyway, we all went to see the guidance counsellor, and I understood that I would go to university. But so did 99 percent of – or 95 anyway a high percentage of the kids in that high school; they went to university. And I did fairly well; I didn't do stupendously well, but I did fairly well. And so, I told the guidance counsellor I'd be going to university, and I remember that she poo-pooed the idea. And Eva Maria Pring, [laughs] and I felt very insulted, [chuckles] but I didn't tell anybody, and I just went my merry way and - I was quite successful in high school, belonged to the right – the debating club and this and that – anyway [chuckles].

LU: And what did you study when you went to university?

MA: Ohh, I studied liberal arts because I went to the University of Chicago at the time – well they didn't choose students on the basis of the college boards, they had their own tests, and they gave them across the United States. And if people wanted to go to the college of the University of Chicago, you had to take their tests, and they chose students on that basis. And Robert Maynard Hutchins was the president of the University of Chicago, he was a well-known American educator and he and there was a man named Mortimer Adler, developed a course of study for adults, the great books courses. And people all over even in Canada, studied the great books, so these were the leading – you know, there was Herodotus, and Thucydides, and Aristotle, and Kant, and on and on and on [waves hands]. To cover the principal ideas that formed the basis for Western thought. Anyway so, Robert Maynard Hutchins' idea was not to make students take courses where they had sufficient skills, so once we got into the university, we had a whole battery of exams and on that basis, it was determined which courses we would have to take. So, if your English lev- skills were sufficient and you had done enough reading, you didn't take first year English. And if you were good in maths – and etcetera. So, on that basis English, mathematics, natural sciences, physical sciences, social sciences, etcetera, it was determined what courses one had to take to get a bachelor's degree from the University of Chicago. So, I had courses to

fill 3 years, and some people had- went for 4 years, and other people went for 2 years, and – and after that period, then they could go into the master's program. In the history of the University of Chicago at that time there was only 1 person who didn't have to take any bachelor's level courses, and he went straight into the master's program.

[01:50]

MA: And he was the son of a diplomat, and he'd been going to international schools all over the world [laughs] so anyway that was quite innovative for that time. So – it was – it was very stimulating at [unclear], wonderful course of study. But I was - it was the first time I was away from home, and I had a good time [laughs].

LU: [laughs]

MA: Bad girl, I didn't study hard enough. The first year I lived at home and so of course I did all my homework at home. But the second year and the third year I stayed in dorm and [laughs] so there were opportunities to go on dates and [laughs] sometimes I used to go on two dates in one evening go on an early date and a late date [laughs], it was terrible [laughs], I had a very full social life [laughs].

LU: And were you part of any organizations or clubs on campus as well?

MA: Oh yes, yes, I belonged to the World Federalists, I don't know if they exist anymore. And what else did I belong to – I don't think I belonged to any other clubs other than that. But they were a very liberal group on campus. There was a frat boy who focused on me, and I wondered whether it was belong- because I belonged to that very liberal group, I think they might have thought that I was – there was already feeling building about anticomunists and socialists being dangerous. Anyways Paul Robeson – do you know that name at all? He was a wonderful Black activist, a singer, an actor, a thinker, anyway, he was to sing in Chicago, and this frat boy whom I met at the library said “Margaret would you be interested in going to hear Paul Robeson?” so I said “oh yes!” so we went to hear him, and then– he I thought he was very manipulative, and he had– there was a sofa in the frat house that was set up at the bottom of the stairs., and he started trying to– paw me, and I said “No!” [laughs], so I thought what is this guy you know he's trying to paint me as being some kind of a loose girl I suppose. There was no excuse for it whatsoever, so that really made me very leery of people [chuckles].

LU: Mm-hm

MA: Frat boys [laughs]. So, the evening came to an early end, but I wondered in later years why would someone like that- he was a very slick frat boy, and I thought I bet there's some kind of political motivation. That was my early experience with politics [chuckles] until then we weren't a very political family. [chuckles].

LU: [chuckles]. And were you working anywhere at the time while you were going to school? Or were you mainly - [overlapping speech]

MA: I worked in the summers. I worked– I started working for the Illinois transformer company. They wound coils around transformers used in electrical products. I started working there in high school in the summer and then every summer thereafter. But I guess that went right straight on into university.

LU: And after you graduated -

MA: Mm-hm.

LU: Did you go home for a little while first, or did you go directly to New York?

MA: I went to New York after that. Exciting wild world [laughs].

LU: What was it like in New York?

MA: Oh, it was really exciting [laughs] because there's so much going on in a city like that. The theatre, and the ballet, and concerts, and films, foreign films, and – so it was very exciting. And I worked for *Women's Wear Daily* – have you ever heard of that? That's the daily newspaper of the women's fashion industry.

[01:55]

MA: And they also – the same company, Fairchild Publications, owned *Men's Wear* which was a magazine, and a whole bunch of newspapers that appealed to the retailing trade and also to the wholesale market. Companies that supplied grey goods, for example, before they're dyed and yarns and materials – anyway it was quite a company. And I worked in their inquiry department, and people would telephone us or send in requests for information, and we would do the research and get back to them. It was great fun [laughs]!

LU: Yeah wow!

MA: And then after that I married my boyfriend and we went to Europe. He decided– he was a- both of his parents were physicians and at first, he rejected the idea of getting in mom and pop's business [chuckles]. But he decided yes, he wanted to go into medicine but by then– he was Jewish but obviously not religious to have gotten involved with a non-Jewish girl [chuckles]. And– So he didn't get into American medical schools because he didn't get into the Jewish quota because his grades weren't as high as some Jewish boys. So, he applied to medical school in Switzerland, in Bern in Switzerland.

LU: Yeah, wow.

MA: So, we went to Europe and we did some touring and he went to– first he thought he might go to the University of Lausanne then, but he got accepted to the University of Bern, so we moved to Bern. But then we had to learn German, at first, we went to– we stayed with some relatives of his in Paris and we went to the Ecole Berlitz, the Berlitz Foreign Language school, we studied French there. But then he

got his acceptance to Bern, and we - so he had to learn German, so we started studying German and we went to the Berlitz school in Switzerland in Bern. And so- and then we went to a school the Goethe-Institute- do you know the Goethe-Institute? It teaches foreigners German and German language and culture. And so, we went to an academy in Bonn the capital of Germany and then to Bad Reichenhall which was near Salzburg in Austria. Anyway, we went to a lot of places [chuckles] and studied German and had a good time.

LU: I'm just going to switch this one here [camera sounds]

LU: Were you married by this point? Or were you still -

MA: Yes, mm-hm.

LU: And did you get married in New York or?

MA: No, we married in Crystal Lake, Illinois, a small church, a congregational church that- my brother belonged to- brother and family belonged to.

LU: [chuckles] And what year was that?

MA: That must have been 50, 50- 53, I wrote it down, what year was that [looks at paper]. Oh no, I didn't. Let's see, I graduated- yes, it must have been 1953.

LU: And how long were you in Europe for?

MA: I was there for 2 years, but the marriage broke up after 5 years. He was- I realized that he was so self-centered that he would not make a very good father [laughs]. But when I was attracted to him, it was because there weren't any boys that I knew who were so spoiled and so demanding [laughs].

[02:00]

MA: So anyway, you know in this day and age I would have had an affair, and then it would have been goodbye. And, and it wouldn't have been marriage. But in those days, girls went to university and they, if they met somebody, they got married, and a lot of families sent their kids to girls to university to find a husband. That was a way, and because at that time, in the forties and fifties, uh, girls, most girls didn't think of having careers, and they were just there to meet the right guys.

LU & MA: [laughs]

LU: Thank-

MA: And I, I too was sent to university so that I'd get, uh, a good general background probably, so that I would eventually marry the right kind of man. Well, I didn't do things the way my paren- my family thought I should. [laughs] I did meet a Japanese man and saw him for quite some time. He was a diplomat from Japan. And, uh, we just began talking. He would see me on campus, and finally we began talking and eventually, and so we saw each other quite a bit, and he wanted me to marry him and go back to Japan. So that was a big question mark. And my family said, "No", that's not a good idea. You would, you won't be happy there. And they were right. I

was much too headstrong and too demanding as a North American woman, even from that period. [laughs] So he went back. [laughs]

MA: I went back to school, the next year and met somebody else. [laughs]

LU: And where did you go back to school?

MA: No, back to the University of Chicago. [laughing]

LU: Okay. And after you left Europe, um, did you go back home to Crystal Lake, or where did you go?

MA: No, I stayed in New York City, and, um, I worked for Yashika Cameras, um uh, then after a period of time I left them, I was mad at them because I was supposed to have gone on a trip to Japan, and I worked as, a secretary to the president of Yashika Cameras, and I was told that I would be going to Japan to visit the factory and visit Japan. And then they hired a PR man, and they decided, no, Margaret doesn't need to go. And they let him go instead. And I was furious, so I left them, [Laughs] and I went to work for a very fancy, custom furniture firm. And I was a private secretary. The man who owned it was very rich, and so I used to look after his investments as well as doing the company work. So that was enlightening.

MA & LU: [laughing]

MA: I learned how really rich people handle money.

MA & LU: [laughing]

MA: And, when I worked for the Japanese camera industry, I met a man from Toronto, and then we kept up a correspondence and then phone calls, and eventually I married him and came to Toronto, and that's when I had my two children here. [chuckles]

LU: Oh. And when did you come to Toronto? What year was that?

MA: Uh, that was 1961.

LU: And what was it like coming to Toronto?

MA: Well, um, Toronto was very backward in those days. In many ways. There was still a lot of prejudice, and we were a rare mixed couple. Well I was in a- we were rare, mixed couple, even in New York City, there weren't that many Asians around in those days except for Chinese in Chinatown. Um, and so there was some prejudice, but not very much in the world that I travelled in. But in Toronto, um, [pauses to think] there were lifted eyebrows here and there, and there was, but it was okay. But felt that Toronto was very backward in many ways.

[02:05]

MA: Torontonians were rather provincial. [chuckles] But, soon after I came, a lieder singer, do you know German, German lieder? It's, an art form, [laughing] uh, a German lieder singer who had, actually, he was a specialist in German lieder, but he came from one of the Scandinavian countries. I think he was Swedish, but he decided

to retire to Toronto. And, after he recovered sufficiently, he decided to give a recital of *Die Winterreise* [?], which was a German song cycle, by Schubert. And I thought, "Wow, if Aksel Schiøtz, decided to retire to Toronto, it's gotta be okay. The level of culture has to be okay." So, I went to hear him, and I was so thrilled.

MA & LU: [laughs]

LU: So that gave me a very good taste of Toronto. But then the CBC was, even then [knock on the door] somebody looking for you?

LU: I guess, so, yeah. Just gonna pause these [camera pause]

MA: -for you.

LU: No, no, it's quite right. I'm sure we don't have too much longer to go.

MA: [laughs]

LU: Um, so we're just talking about Toronto and-

MA: Mm-hm.

LU: Let's see. Where did you start working?

MA: That wasn't until my kids were out of- well, old enough. I was a stay-at-home mom, being very frustrated. [laughs] And my husband decided that he didn't want to be married anymore. He, [long pause] how can I put it? Well, he was a very- person who was, overwhelmed, I think by his background. He was English, and the British are very class-conscious. And he was a pilot during the war and came to Canada and taught flying. And he enjoyed that enormously. And he thought he would come back. He immigrated to Canada, because he found it, a wonderful country. But, he had his strange prejudices about not doing certain kinds of work. This is from the old class structure; he didn't want to be a salesman. Oh, dear. He was a publisher for MacLean Hunter for a while. But he was in a field where the market was narrowing. He was a publisher of photographic magazines. First, it was a smaller company, and then he went to MacLean Hunter. Anyway, to make a long story short, he wasn't successful financially. And, he just had a hard time making a living. And, he just wanted to be out on his own. And, he just had emotional problems. But, anyway, I guess I was at that age when I wanted to have children, [laughing] another trap [laughing]. So that was sad. And anyway, so I, we had two children, and, um, he just couldn't cope. And so, they'd started, uh, the younger started at the Toronto French School, and she did very well. And I mean, the, the first child started the Toronto French School, and then the second started at the Institute of Child Study, which was a semi-private school, but school fees were nevertheless involved, and he just couldn't keep up with it. And, we didn't see any way of getting more income unless the children were looked after by somebody else. And I could go to work. And that didn't seem feasible at first.

[02:10]

MA: So, I stayed at home. And I guess I was also very naive about personalities and their motivations. I was very unsophisticated about people. So, by the time the children were old enough, and they could go to school on their own, then I and my husband left, then I could go out to work. And so, I got a job for- working for a trade association. And I started out as an admin assistant, and I worked my way up, and I eventually became Director of Regulatory Affairs and Standards. In the meantime, my husband, got can-, he was a heavy smoker. He got cancer in a number of different areas. Anyway, so, and then I moved on to another job as head of a National Business Association. A headhunter came and said, Margaret, would you like to come and interview for this job? And I didn't know anything about the field, but I thought, "okay", [laughs] I thought I couldn't rise any higher in the medical device association. So, I became executive director of the business associate, that particular business association. And then, I realized I couldn't hire- and I read the bylaws in the Constitution of the Society, and I realized I couldn't hire and fire. So, I said, "We have a problem." So I became president. [laughs] And, so that was kind of fun, heading an association. And we had, I had lots of wonderful help. In the way of pro bono lawyers. There were two lawyers who worked pro bono for us, and, we had use of their beautiful boardrooms [laughs] in downtown Toronto. And, we got involved in trade shows and, people came to talk to us about buying businesses, franchises. Actually, it was a Canadian Franchise Association, and I travelled quite a bit to the West Coast. There was a branch there, and to Quebec. So that was quite exciting. So that was my business background. And then I, but I was on contract, and we got a young, young man in as who became chairman of the board, and he decided I was making too much money, [laughs] so I got dumped, and I was doing very well. Thank you.

MA & LU: [laughing]

MA: So, then I had to decide what I was going to do, and then in the meantime, an old friend of, my husband, by then, my husband had died. And, an old friend of his, called to ask about him, and we started talking. He was in BC and his wife had died. And so, he would call regularly, and then he decided he didn't want to pay the telephone company so much, and he came to Toronto, and we got married, and I moved up to BC.

LU: Wow!

MA: Ah, and, uh, and we had a wonderful time together. Uh, he had, uh, he had built, designed, and built a very large uh, garden room it was 950 square feet. Excuse me, [sneezes/ coughs] it was 950 square feet which meant excuse me [coughs/ and takes a sip of water] it was that it was the largest room, excuse me. [coughs/ and takes a sip of water] It was the largest room on this small island. It was a gulf on Pender Island. And so, people, used that room for meetings. So, we had people in all the time, clubs and political groups and art. There was an art group and a crafts group, and a

theater group. And anyway, we had people coming and going all the time. And it got to be that my, my looking after the various groups, etcetera, took oh, 90% of my time.

[02:15]

MA: And also I got involved in the community, and I sat on the board of the local healthcare society. And so, I had a good time with Peter. He was a very sweet guy. But, then his early smoking, killed him. He got cancer, emphysema, a number of other related diseases. So, and people were anxious for me to stay, of course, because this was free space for them. But my daughters suggested that I should come back east because I would fly in and see them for a couple of weeks and fly back. And the kids, my grandchildren, were growing older, and of course, I realized if I didn't get to know my grandchildren when they were little, by the time they got to be teenagers, they wouldn't be interested in grandma, let alone their own parents. So, I moved back to Toronto. So that's how I came back [laughing] And I've been very- but of course, inevitably I got involved in volunteer work. So again, more and more responsibilities. And now I'm chair of the board of trustees [chuckles] of the society that I got involved in, which I thought would be for about six months, and then I'd go on to something else. [chuckles] So that's a long story.

LU: And did you work anywhere when you returned to Toronto, or just [overlapping conversation]

MA: No, no, no. I just, oh, well, I was, well past 65, so this was, what, seven years ago? Uh, I came back and, let's see, yeah, about seven years ago. So I was too old to work, I guess, although I wanted to work. I thought it would be exciting.

MA & LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

LU: But I don't think there are too many people who would hire somebody at the age of 79, so-

LU: Heh heh, And what about your grandchildren? How many do you have?

MA: I have one in Toronto, and he's in high school. He's very much involved with computers and, uh, a lot of kids that age are. And then I have two in Quebec. My older daughter has two kids, and a grandson who is 15, and he's quite a musician and he's very smart. And, a granddaughter, Oriental, who again, who's very smart and, but she loves riding, so I can't believe she's going to make that her career. I think she should be a lawyer. She loves to talk and she's making a pain in- herself into a pain in the ass because she likes to argue with people if they take a position, she takes the direct opposite just for the sake of argument.

LU: And do they call you grandma or do they call you Bachan?

MA: Oh, they call me Grandma. Oh, yeah. Now, because of the kind of life I've left lived and the kinds of communities I've lived in, I haven't been exposed to Japanese

people in the Japanese community. So, that was one of the reasons I thought that I should talk to you, because I'm sure there are many people like me out there who are not involved in the Japanese community.

[Conversation redacted from 2:18:52-2:19:42]

LU: Do you ever plan on visiting Japan?

MA: Uh, we've said in the family we should do it, but we haven't so far.

[02:20]

MA: Um, and I hope one of these days we will.

LU: Mm-hm.

MA: But being so involved in so many things. [Chuckles] So-

LU: It's difficult to find the time.

MA: Oh, I, I'm always going.

LU: [laughs]

MA: And, I thought of calling this little meeting off because I'm kind of overloaded again. [Nervous Chuckle]

LU: Oh, geez.

MA: But I thought, no, I should do it. So.

LU: Well, thank you very much.

MA: Now I hope that I've given a some kind of a picture of a different kind of Japanese.

LU: Yes.

MA: Because certainly when I go out into the world, probably a lot of people say, "oh, there's that old Ja- old Asian woman," or they may even think I'm Chinese, for that matter. [laughs] So-

LU: Were there any other stories that you wanted to share with us?

MA: Oh, I hadn't actually planned any stories. I, you said you had a list of questions, so, Well, I'm all out of questions.

LU: Was there anything else that you wanted to share or?

MA: No, I don't think so. Uh, I'm not a very good storyteller, so, uh, I I wish I had some nice anecdotes to pass on to you, but-

LU: Oh, you did a wonderful job. [laughs] Thank you very much.

[End interview]