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Title: Yukiko Llewellyn Interview
Narrator: Yukiko Llewellyn
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 2>

- AT: 00:03:48 And what were the circumstances for them ending up in the L.A.? And do you know anything about their life there?
- YL: 00:03:55 No, except, uh, where we lived was where I was born. I was born in the apartment that they lived in. Um, there are pictures of me with my mom as a baby on the rooftop of the apartment building. And you can see the L.A. Towers, you know, from downtown, from the pictures. They uh, split up sometime before the war because when the war came, she was with me by our selves and he was not in the picture at all. She told me as I was growing up that my father had died in the war. So there was no reason for me to look for him. Had I known that he was also in Manzanar, which I found out much later, I probably would have looked for him. But at three you're not, you know, you're not good to do that. So the, everything in the records that I could find in Manzanar was that, you know, there was Mikiko Hayakawa, Okinaga, they did attach that last name to hers on one record and then it was Mikiko Hayakawa. And then Yukiko, Helen Okinaga, which is on my birth certificate and then Yukiko Helen Hayakawa. So of course, I said, oh, does that mean I get twice as much money because I'm listed twice? No. So I'm listed both ways and they let her choose the government, let her choose what you and she said Hayakawa because I have more papers with Hayakawa on it from when I'm moved from Japan to the United States.
- Karen Su: 00:05:54 When did you find out that your father was not dead? That he was still alive?
- YL: 00:06:02 I was married and working at the University of Illinois and I'm trying to remember, there was a company and I don't know, the company's name was find people fast and they came to the radio station in Champagne. Well, the guy said, I can find anybody for you, you know, I have all this data. And my friend Nancy called me, I was at work, and said call the station and just

give your father's name because we thought, I think somewhere along the way my mom said something about he, she didn't know if he was dead. And I said, well why did you tell me? It was easier. Then you know you're not going to fight your mother for having that lie to a child. So then I start, but I was grown woman, you know, with a child and called the radio station and Okinaga was such an unusual name. He said, oh, uh, I don't think there are many Okinaga's. And I said, what? And there was only like half a page and they were dates from, oh, I don't know, a few years and of current people and where they lived. And then the people who have just died and my father had just died, just died. Imagine that. But at least his last address was on there. And so I got the address. I mean they were nice enough to send me what they had. Uh, I wrote to my father at that address saying, if you received this, and I enclosed my, birth certificate that had his name on it. So people wouldn't say, why is this person writing to me about this guy who had died? His widow answered my letter and she said, by your, the copy of your birth certificate, that is my husband, who was your father. Said, I did not know he had a child before he married me in Manaznar. They had three children in Manzanar and if it weren't for her kindness to filling me in what she could, she sent me a picture, you know, of the children, picture of herself and my father at you know, his seventy years old or whatever he was, I would have nothing. I would have just that blank space. So it's real hard for me to tell the story of my parents because I don't know it. Uh, the kindness of this woman who I don't think I would have done it. I don't think I have that in my heart to do it. She must have been distraught to know that this child was looking for her father who was married to her. He never said he had a child. He said he had been married before. Didn't say any names.

AT: 00:09:41 Did you continue to be in touch with her, after that exchange?

YL: 00:09:45 I tried, but it's really hard. Um, I heard from her children and they were very nice, but there was nothing a hook to get, you know, there were no interests. There were, our kids were different ages, you know, I mean it was just really hard and I didn't, I've, I've heard kids, you know, who had like second families, but they were right there. These people lived in New Jersey, you know, when I lived in Champagne, Illinois. Um, but they know my name, you know, of course I know their's, cause it's Okinaga. And when it was, it was known that the child in the picture, you know, named at birth was Okinaga, this woman said, my children said, isn't that fascinating? It's our name and our name is so unusual. Are we related? And at the time it was like, well, no, I'm sure we would have known. So it was a little

strange, you know, and I didn't fault them for not contacting me. I tried later, I think it was too little, too late. Uh, the letters came back, you know, the address was not correct and I don't know where she is. I don't know where the children are. The, there was one boy and, uh, two daughters. And the boy was a police officer in Tennessee. And I thought he would be the easiest defined, but then it was also probably easiest for him to find me, you know. So I, I just let it, my son really want me to find him. And, and he, when he wrote to me, said, hey, great to have another boy in the family because he was a boy with two sisters and that sounded promising, but you know, I didn't hear anymore. And um, Chiyeko was, her name was, I mean, isn't that fascinating to have somebody with that much heart? This letter comes in the mail.

- AT: 00:12:14 Well, thank you very much for sharing.
- KS: 00:12:18 Do you want to hold the picture?
- YL: 00:12:21 Of?
- KS: 00:12:21 Of you. It's interesting that they saw the photo of you and noticed that you had the same name.
- YL: 00:12:30 This is the picture you know, and, and one of the newspaper stories, you know, they said, oh, we found the little girl and her name at birth was, you know, Okinaga. But she's been known as Hiyakawa until she got married and she's now a Llewellyn, who knew? I mean there are some college friends where they knew me as Hiyakawa who don't know about this cause I never talked about this when I was in college. Hm.
- AT: 00:13:05 When, when did you start talking about that photograph or that
- YL: 00:13:10 Probably not really until I came to the University of Illinois because when I was in grad school, I was in theater. And nothing about historical background of our lives ever. I mean I didn't know the background of my colleagues in the theater department and they didn't know. And at the time, of course my name was still Hiyakawa cause I got married, uh, end of my grad school year.

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