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Title: Joe Takehara Interview
Narrator: Joe Takehara
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<Begin Segment 14>

AT: 00:57:05 Um, as far as the, the apartment, so it was um, your eldest sister Eiko and her husband, your mom, you and Fumiko, is that right?

JT: 00:57:17 Yeah. So what happened is we lived in this apartment. It was red brick. And uh, it was heated by coal. Yeah, we lived down, my sister lived on the second floor and we all lived there for awhile. Then the first floor family moved out. Then we lived in the first floor, and my mom and my sisters. Then when my brothers came home from service, they also lived in that apartment. So we were all in that one apartment and the coal furnace went out. It wasn't working anymore. Radiat, it wasn't steam heat, it was air blown. Anyway, it went out. So we ended up having a pot belly stove, a big iron stove in the kitchen. It was brown and you feed it with coal. That's all we have. It was very cold. I used to go to sleep with socks, these big wool socks, sweat pants and shirt, wear a hat and I was freezing. I never did like the cold. The windows would be all frosted, iced up. That's how we had to run the water and the toilet, the bathroom, faucet or else it would freeze that was how cold it was during the wintertime. Just that one stove, by the time winter came, it was cold. Later on after my brothers came, then they started having oil stove, so we had an oil stove in the living room. Then we had two things, but then it was a lot more comfortable. But yeah, no, it was cold where we lived.

AT: 00:59:13 How long were you in that building?

JT: 00:59:13 Well, I was there from 45' until 52'. 52' we left, we moved to the North Side. My brothers were out of service then they started to work. So I guess they accumulated some money and they bought an apartment on Newport. That's just this side of a Wrigley Field, Addison. We, lived between Halsted, Halsted and Clark, Sheffield. Just a few blocks away. Yeah.

AT: 00:59:57 Um, so going back to your days at high school, these schools that you were at, what were kind of the, the demographics of the schools?

JT: 01:00:11 Well, I think at that time that was a ghetto, where we lived. It was a mixture of the Mexicans, Italians and I think there's some Irish. One of my friends was an Irish kid, he had a paper route. But most, my better friends were Mexicans and uh, like I said, this guy. And so I started school there. I was there for one semester, the reason why, in camp I used, I used to like to read. So I used to read a lot. We didn't have much out, but I used to go to the library and also read Call of the Wild. There's a books, anyway, I used to, I used to, I was a reader. So I went to school. You go to the library and I was the only one reading, everybody else's playing around. But I picked the book and this, I remember the library. I tried to get hold of it later, I couldn't. Her name was Mrs. Young and when she saw me and she saw the friends I was hanging around, what she knew and she kind of knew what was happening. So at that time you really couldn't change schools. You had to stay in your own district. Somehow she got me to go to Lakeview. My sister was going to Lakeview, my sister Sachi. Which is, um, the third from the bottom, she was going to Lakeview High School. So maybe that was a connection, how I got there.

AT: 01:01:54 Where was Fumiko?

AT: 01:01:54 She went to McKinley High School, that was on the West Side. Here's what happened. That those days, even before, in San Diego, my oldest sister was, used to call them school girl or something. She, she worked from a young age, high school. She worked at, with some family, you know, as a maid. Then from there she went to school and she used to give all the money to my mom. That was the income that she helped. So she did that. So she had a hard life. So when we went to Chicago, my older sister Sachi, while she was going to Lakeview, she did the same thing. She worked for a family as a school girl we used to call them school girls. Then she went to Lakeview. So you can see how hard that is. You go to school and your classmates are siblings of the kids that, the family you're working for. So it's pretty degrading I think. And so my sister Fumi, she's young yet I'm, I'm in first year in high school. I'm 14 so she's 16, so she also got a job there doing that. I think in the same area, Lakeview District that was uh, you know, you go out to the drive and that's where all the wealthy people live. That's where you live. I think a lot of Japanese worked at, I find out they worked at the Edgewater Beach, Edgewater Hotel in the beach. And so my sister Fumi, I think she worked for that family for a week or so

and she came home. She couldn't do it. She told my mom she couldn't do it. So that's the reason why she brought to Lakeview. I mean McKinley High School, that's where she went to McKinley.

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