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Title: Joe Takehara Interview
Narrator: Joe Takehara
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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- AT: 00:02:04 And can you tell me a little bit about what it was like growing up in San Diego, what kind of neighborhood you grew up in?
- JT: 00:02:12 Well, we lived right across the street from the Westgate Cannery. That's where my mother worked. And just on the other side of it was it train tracks. In Santa Fe, we used to look at the train, it was a big thing, we saw the new train called the Zephyr. I remember that. And so we grew up playing ball. We did a lot of fishing, it was very unusual. My father passed while he was killed in a hit and run accident when I was three. And so basically my mother brought us up eight kids and so it was pretty tough. So she worked at the cannery and then at the cannery when the fishing boats came in with mackerel, mackerel, mackerel would come around to the neighborhoods and then she would, no matter what time of day it was night or what, she would go there and they would, they would prepare the mackerel. What it did was it cut the head, chop the head off and gutted the macro and that was piece where it needs to put them in boxes and that's where she did. My father was a fisherman. He lost his boat and the Depression and he had a couple of boats. So and my older brother's telling me when he was a kid about might have only been eight, nine years, he used to go with my dad sometimes short trips, it wasn't a big boat, it was smaller one. He tells me that he used to have to take an oil can, and oil the pistons, because those days you had to do it and he said it was terrible because the smell, the odor. But that's, that's the early part, my brother.
- AT: 00:04:05 Would you mind just putting that? Thank you.
- JT: 00:04:10 Okay
- AT: 00:04:10 Um, and what was the, the age range between you and your sib? How old was the oldest, compared to the youngest, or to you?

JT: 00:04:20 This was surprised. It was only about ten, ten years apart between the eight of us. I think the biggest gap was between myself and my sister right above me. In fact, uh, my older sister and brothers were born the same year. Yeah. My brother was born end of December, I think just before Christmas. But he was a premature baby and so yeah, he didn't develop too much in this physical thing because at that time my parents were farming and those days they would just leave them in the crib. So he never learned how to walk. All he did was stand up. So we used to kid him about that. That's why we would say he's a little slow. But anyway, yeah, that was the first part and then later on. Funny story is my dad, I don't know if you can believe, I was almost three. He took me to the boat, to the canneries there and they have a wharf where all the fishing boats are, the dock. And one day they were the Japanese fisherman would fix their nets, they were sew their bamboo, a needle, large needle and a pair of fishing nets. That they would catch bait fish with, anchovies. And so he took me there and I guess he decided to go fishing, I mean swimming. So he went swimming and left me there. And the story is, I don't know if I remember it now are they just keep telling me, but I'm, I'm only about three years old. I picked up his clothes and I came home and I brought it home and it wasn't far, it was just right across at that time it was highway 101 right across that area where we live is not, it isn't there anymore. They fill, it's all filled in. And that was just, just one side of Lindberg, Lindberg Garfield, which is the very large standing. And that's where we were.

AT: 00:06:34 Um, when you were growing up and I'm going to school, um, what kind of school did you go to? Were there a lot of students?

JT: 00:06:45 I can't recall. The school was Washington School. Yeah. Before that, my sister, just a little older than me, after my father passed, we didn't care for the babysitter. So we used to go across the street. Now that's how we went around. It wasn't a busy highway then, but we'd go see my mom at the cannery and I guess the foreman knew our family and knew about our, we had no father and all these kids, I don't know, if you could believe it, they would bring a little box and the tools and sit there all day, not move, very disciplined kid until my mom finished and we'd come home. The other thing is, unfortunately, when my sister started kindergarten, there was no one babysit me. So I was one of the pre, first preschoolers, I went to kindergarten with my sister. So I flunked first kindergarten. Right. I did it twice, but I was pretty good kid discipline and I would get a piece of paper and draw and I spent the whole day there.

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