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Title: Joe Takehara Interview  
Narrator: Joe Takehara  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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<Begin Segment 1>

Anna Takada: 00:00:00 To start. Can you just state your full name?

Joe Takehara: 00:00:03 I'm Joe Takehara.

AT: 00:00:05 And uh, where and when were you born?

JT: 00:00:08 I was born April 2nd, 1942 in San Diego, California. Exact street is 1118 West Cannery Street. It was right across from the West Gate Cannery.

AT: 00:00:21 And what did your parents do?

JT: 00:00:24 My father was a fisherman. Came as a farmer first. He came, became uh, uh, fishermen lost his boat in the Depression. He's pretty much of an entrepreneur.

AT: 00:00:40 And um, did your parents, where were they from originally?

JT: 00:00:45 They, both parents were from Japan Wakayama, Shingu.

AT: 00:00:52 Umm and then, do you know when they came to the US?

JT: 00:00:59 My grandfather came to the US first, I don't know, if they, and the two sons followed him. He went back and the two boys stayed. Since my father I think was 16, 17 years old and supposedly I think he went to high school here, night school.

AT: 00:01:18 And was that in San Diego?

JT: 00:01:20 Yeah. That was it. I assume or San Diego or Chula Vista or one of those. It was San Diego I think.

AT: 00:01:27 And how about your mom?

JT: 00:01:29 My mom came later. She was 18 years old and it wasn't really a war bride picture bride rather because they were from the same hometown. They knew each other. So it was a little bit unusual. A lot of them were picture brides, so.

AT: 00:01:50 Um, do you, do you have siblings? Did you grow up with siblings?

JT: 00:01:56 I'm the youngest child of eight. There's four boys and four girls.

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**<Begin Segment 2>**

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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**<Begin Segment 3>**

AT: 00:07:58 Yeah. So, um, and so with your, with your father's death, um, you said it was a hit and run?

JT: 00:08:12 Yes,

AT: 00:08:14 So did anything come of it?

JT: 00:08:14 No, just my, one of my nephew was found that later in the archives in San Diego, this paper and I just had a little bit, little blip, saying that Jap fishermen or someone was killed. That's all. There is no follow up with police or anything. And I think that happened that night when, I can't remember it, but that's when somebody came in, woke up my mom. My brother, remembers that. But that was how, that's why I ended up, my mother brought up eight of us. And at that time, being from Japan, she didn't, she didn't trust the government I guess, so she wouldn't take public aid at that. Anyway they would come and say, want to help her and she, she wouldn't accept it. And so, so that's why she worked hard and we were little kids when she come home from work all day, cutting fish, we would take turns massaging her back and we use our hands and pound her neck and all the kids would take turns. So basically I grew up without a father and my mother was hardly home, she was always working over home. And so I kind of grew up, uh, with my brothers having to babysit me, so I matured quite rapidly because they had take me every place, they went, they had to take me. So I grew up, you know, and they were playing ball and they were pretty athletic and so all was, I was a gofer, you know, chase the ball and do all of those kinds of things. I had better, friends named Oliver, he, I think he was part Indian and Mexican or anyway, his father when he was 16, he quit school. And so it's thing about it, that's when I'm still very young, three, four years old. And uh, he was a big, strong guy, but his father had a, uh, this is spear fish, sword fish fisherman. The tip of the boat had a long, I don't know what you call a [inaudible], where you spear the fish. He was strong and feared. He had a pole, and so he used to get me by the ankles and hold me over the wharf like this I was a scared that he's going to drop me. But that's how I grew up so you can see how, how I grew up. So I was kind

of a rascal because I was always, the older kids were always teasing me and so I grew up and matured fast.

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**<Begin Segment 4>**

AT: 00:11:04 Did you, besides, so you went to school and you started early, because you're going with your sister.

JT: 00:11:15 Yeah.

AT: 00:11:17 Um, what kind of, did you do any activities outside of school?

JT: 00:11:22 I was always playing around. I learned how to ride a bicycle that was too big for me. I put my feet between the, not, I couldn't get on the seat or handlebar, so I would get between my legs through and put that bike at an angle and pump. And that's, I learned myself that way. When I got older, I was riding the bike, you know, I got older and I see people all over the place. I used to go to Balboa Park, come home, go to the Navy ship yard and boats and come home. And I was always pretty scared, but still, I used to do that. That was all by myself, I guess at that time I was probably nine, ten years old when I was doing all this so.

AT: 00:12:09 As far as the people that you're spending time with it, um, in addition to your family, were there other Japanese American families in San Diego at that time?

JT: 00:12:24 Yes, there were, but they were, a lot of them were in downtown San Diego. There was a restaurant, I don't know, Sunshine, Favorite Sun, something. We never went there. And so we were always back in the neighborhood and we did fishing in the bay and uh, my brother just have two rowboats, we used to call them skiffs. They have along, that we used to go to the bay and we used to net fish, cork on the top, sinker on the bottom. And made two circles and pull them in and that's how we were catching fish. And apparently my brothers were selling some of the fish and there was sharks and thing like that was to a cut the tail off. I remember there was some kind of warehouse close, and we used to cut the tails warehouse line em up. So that's how I grew up. He's a fish underneath the wharf and the fish used to come in the cannery and they cut mackerel, they threw all the heads and stuff into the water so all of the fish would come. So we'd be out on little planks fishing underneath the cannery and put 'em in gunnysacks and bring them home.

AT: 00:13:46 And um

JT: 00:13:46 The netting was illegal. I think the coastguard just let us kind of turned, I mean they kind of let us do it. I think they just knew the family. It's a small community, so I think they would just turn, what's the word? Just letters. Turn. Let us go, I can't, I don't know the right word, but anyway.

AT: 00:14:20 Um, so the, the war broke out and 40 of them.

JT: 00:14:26 Right.

AT: 00:14:27 Um, and I, I'm sorry, what year were you born again?

JT: 00:14:34 '42

AT: 00:14:36 So you were born in '42

JT: 00:14:38 I was 11, I guess. Huh?

AT: 00:14:41 '32 or?

JT: 00:14:43 '32

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**<Begin Segment 5>**

AT: 00:14:44 '32. Um, do you remember like the day that Pearl Harbor was attacked?

JT: 00:14:54 Not really. I had, there was a lot of commotion. I remember that because in the cannery and there were two barracks and in between the two barracks where we lived, there was kind of like a deck. We lived on one side, we had, I guess half a barrack. And then, yeah, two rooms, two Issei fishermen used to live there too. We used to share the bathroom. And then the neighbor across the way, was a well known captain of a fishing boat called called West Gate that was the West Gate Cannery. It was one of the better captains for fishing tuna. And so we, they had most of one barrack and on the end they had a one room we had, we had a Japanese ofuro that's where we took our bath, I guess redwood and how you heat up the water by the tank underneath and you put water in it. It was big enough that we used to kind of play in it. And so that's, so the commotion

was a lot, when that happened, they first came to their house and ransacked it, the way I understand.

AT: 00:16:21 The FBI?

JT: 00:16:21 Well, I guess, yeah. Yeah. Because they were at that time in the war, broke out. My oldest brother was fishing. He was on a tuna boat down toward the Gulf of Mexico, I guess. That's when the war broke out. And uh, of course those days, those boats don't move that fast. So it took a while for them to get back to port in San Diego, I guess. My brother was taken in and uh, I guess they're interrogated. I mean they feed them or anything. So I guess it came home the next morning and the way he tells me he came home barefooted. And so that's the way they treated him. So he's, he's an American citizen. The War I think affected my older siblings, because they were just out of high school and stuff. They knew what, you know, that their rights were taken away. So at that age I was smaller and I didn't know, but I remember in the school we went to school, there was a teacher, Mr. Brown, I remember that he treated us very good. And so when that, because we lived across the bay and the cannery was close, you know, the Navy shipyard with all the boats were and, and so we had to move inland. So I can't remember why, but right away we had to move in-land and then we moved to a town called Sunnyside, I guess the next to Chula Vista and we stayed there for some while until the Evacuation when we had to leave and that

AT: 00:18:19 So was that, um, I imagine that wasn't just your family then of folks

JT: 00:18:29 So that's why we left. That's the date.

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**<Begin Segment 6>**

AT: 00:18:36 How far is Sunnyside, San Diego or from where you were

JT: 00:18:42 At that time it's far right? Today, distance is nothing, but I can't remember where it was. Picture Chula Vista, close to Chula Vista so. So I got to the date here that uh, it was April 8th when we went to Santa Anita. That was the date we left San Diego. But our family unit, so we have to move.

AT: 00:19:12 So did your mom leave the cannery then?

JT: 00:19:15 Yes, she had. Everyone was, we had to go to Sunnyside. They want to work, late around that's when we, the order came out. We'll go to the Santa, Santa Fe Depot. We didn't know where we were going. So we were on a train and lines were drawn and you can only take what you can carry. I remember as a little kid that we had a little suitcase and they were packing it, with different things weight wise to see how much I can carry. I was eleven years old I guess. So at that time you can only take what you can carry. Supposedly, but I guess it wasn't that way. We got there, they couldn't see how many bags you had or that's my interpretation. They couldn't inspect all the bags that were there. They just took them and threw them into the baggage compartment, what I understand. But uh, one of my older brothers, he was a second, second brother and the third, third sibling, sibling. And he was very good in high school. He could, he won contests in making sail boats and dressers and things like that. And so he kind of, he kind of knew what was going on, I guess, what would happen. So the way the story goes, he would, he took was a, since my father was also a carpenter, he took all the carpenter tools, Japanese planes and saw like that, which is, and it wasn't confiscated so, so he, so he was, he was thinking pretty good but more than most people, and he was shocked. He was good man I think. He was, my brother was a Southern California wrestling champion.

AT: 00:21:22 What was his name?

JT: 00:21:22 Keo, his name was Kiyoshi. And I, the way I understand that we lived among a lot of Mexican workers and some Italians, there weren't Jap, that many Japanese in West Cannery that lives in the cannery barracks. But uh, so he, yeah, he's the one that took the tools and he did well in school, but all my brothers were pretty athletic.

AT: 00:22:04 Um, so do you have any idea how long you all were in Sunnyside before going to Santa Anita.

JT: 00:22:14 I can't recall. It must have been a few months.

AT: 00:22:19 Do you remember, do you remember Sunnyside, what it was like?

JT: 00:22:24 Yeah I remember Sunnyside. The first thing that I remember doing, there were some pecan trees, I guess we don't want supposed to go there, but you know, it was like everybody had a big yard and it was an orange grove over there. So I remember taking the oranges, good oranges, navel oranges, and the pecan trees. We used to go up there and shake the trees and get the

pecans. That's the only thing I have to, I think the owner, the, the home that we stayed in, I think was, I think there's a dairy there. And I think that was where we lived.

- AT: 00:23:02 There was a?
- JT: 00:23:02 Dairy, cows. But anyways I, I'm not sure, but it wasn't much of a building right as, I guess it was buildings like for migrant workers that we ended up in.
- AT: 00:23:17 How did that can compared to the living situation and the Cannery Barracks?,
- JT: 00:23:25 Well, the Cannery wasn't bad and before we knew it, when we went to Sant, we ended up in Santa Anita, Santa Anita Racetrack. And I have, found it. And we were in district 54 unit 20. And those were, I guess set up part, sections of the horse stables. That's what we lived in. So the horse stables were separated too. Nothing, no wall. The wall was, you know how you have a horse stable, you get, they have a height and you can just see where the head comes out. Well, that's, that's that kind of a gate was, what I called the dividing of the room. We just have one room with that said. There was eight of us, and so.
- AT: 00:24:26 Nine with your mom?
- JT: 00:24:26 Yes.

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**<Begin Segment 7>**

- AT: 00:24:38 So you went to Santa Anita and you're living in one of the horse stalls. Do you remember as an 11 year olds your own reactions to the move?
- JT: 00:24:49 Yes. I remember.
- AT: 00:24:49 For the orders?
- JT: 00:24:49 Yeah I remember, because you know, I was little kid, but I remember filling up the mattress with hay. I guess we had our cots and it was an asphalt for cots sinking into the asphalt. I remember stories about people saying, well they got a knot hole,yYou can see it across the way. Because the barracks are

back to back, the stalls. We used to kid that about, you could see the other side. I know, right? Yeah. The old people talking like that. As a kid I used to go up to the grandstand, San Diego, San Anita Racetrack grandstand. We used to go around climbing the, up the stairs, things like that. And those days they used to have the uh, conduits, I guess the little pipe like things. The older kids would make a little arrow out of it and twist it and shoot him. I always wanted one but I can never get it. That's what we used to do. Or try to do, we were just playing. And at that time, one of the things that we did, you know, we used to do sumo, we used to have sumo contests. So we used to have sumo in our block. That's the main thing I remember was doing sumo and just playing in the grandstands. And I have at home, a meal ticket, which is punched that says number two. And I have a red button with a two on it. So I guess you went to that mess number two, red mess hall number two was the time you go in that period. So I actually have that card that was punched so that the meal ticket that we went.

- AT: 00:26:48 Yeah. Um, and do you know anyone from back home? Um, that was also in Santa Anita folks your age?
- JT: 00:27:03 No. I didn't know anybody.
- AT: 00:27:06 And did you have to go to school at Santa Anita?
- JT: 00:27:09 I can't remember going to school. I really can't. I don't think we did. I can't remember going to school. They probably had school but we didn't stay there long. It was only about four months. That was in April. I can't recall. I think he went to Poston in August. August the 8th.

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**<Begin Segment 8>**

- AT: 00:27:30 August 8th, you went to Poston?
- JT: 00:27:44 I think so.
- AT: 00:27:47 Do you remember how you got there?
- JT: 00:27:48 Went by bus.
- AT: 00:27:54 And um, how did Poston, compare to Santa Anita?

JT: 00:27:58 Poston was very hot. Poston was, is in Arizona. I think it was, Poston was an Indian Reservation, the tribe Poston. It was close to the Colorado River, which is a few miles down, I guess about a mile or so from camp. It was very hot and I was in Poston and I had as a kid I had a lot of fun. We play basketball, they had a hoop. We played softball. And I was one of the few that used to go to Colorado River and fish and swim. Just a couple of us because my friend who lived right across the street and the barrack next to us, was an old Japanese farmer that lives with the family. He was an Issei, I guess he was a bachelor, so he was kind of a outgoing guy and I guess. Along the Colorado River he made a mud hut. He made a hut. And most people didn't go there, so we as kids, we used to go there and into the stay there and in that area of fish, swim. We used to catch carp.

AT: 00:29:26 Did you leave camp to do that?

JT: 00:29:26 Yeah, we were leaving camp. We kind of walked. Sometimes they used to have, I kind of remember, they used have a tractor with a little trailer behind it. Box, it used to be a trash truck, I think. Sometimes they used to take people that are swimming there, group. But most people didn't go by themselves. We used to go there all the time. I used to go out to the, I guess you can't call it a forest, it was the desert. And we used to make slingshots and use the, with the marbles, we used to try to hit birds and things like that. And a

AT: 00:30:20 Did your mom take up work while at Poston?

JT: 00:30:20 Yeah, at Poston she did one at one stage, she worked at the mess hall. I think she was cooking or washing dishes. And then one day Poston, when they were building the Poston school, we made Adobe bricks. So then she went to work there, doing basically put I guess hay and clay, Adobe and they put them in boxes and that was how they was the blocks for doing the school. And so she did that for a period.

AT: 00:31:00 So your older siblings, were they, they were out of school?

JT: 00:31:02 Yeah. Well, I don't know. My older sister did. I think she worked in a mess hall, I can't recall. But uh, uh, brother older brother worked for the fire department, it seemed like then he was also working as a haul trash and the brother be, beneath him I don't know what he did, he passed away. I said we couldn't really talk to him, but all the rest are too young to work. But my older sister while she was in camp. She got married, then she left camp early, as soon as they could leave. She left because you had to get a sponsor and some physician in the north suburbs

out of nowhere, probably Keniworth or the bank where she worked. Husband, they both work there as I guess he's house boy and he's, he's and she's a house girl or maid.

AT: 00:32:05 What's her name?

JT: 00:32:05 My oldest sister's name is Aiko and her husband was Utaka Kida. And he was, he's one of these kids when they're young their parents sent them to Japan for schooling, so he was in school in Japan. He graduated high school. So he was fluent in Japanese reading and writing. So when he came back, I guess they used to call them Kibeis. Right? I think at that time is almost a derogatory term. You're a Kibei. So they used to group together more than the others. They weren't treated too well.

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**<Begin Segment 9>**

AT: 00:32:52 You and your siblings, did you all speak Japanese with your mom?

JT: 00:32:57 We spoke Japanese with my mother. She couldn't speak Jap, English very little. I think she knew more Spanish than English because there was a lot of Mexican workers too, so I grew up knowing more Spanish than, than English. I think when I was at before school started, but we all went to school, we learned how to speak English. So as we got old, we were speaking English at home. We didn't speak Japanese among ourselves, just with mom. But yeah, so we went to Japanese school.

AT: 00:33:36 In San Diego?

JT: 00:33:36 Yeah, it was a Japanese church, they had a Japanese school. Used to go there and somebody from the school used to pick us up, take us to school, who was associated with the church as Christian Church. I think that's how they get you to go to the church, I guess is where is the Japanese school is. And there's a funny story about that too. My father, I guess I don't know what he was Shinto or not, those days, I don't know. But everybody called them Buddhists today. I guess he didn't go along with the program. He's against that's what my brother tells me. One day we all came home and the door's locked. We couldn't get in. You know, he locked the door and left. And so he says you had to crawl to the window to open up the door to get in. Then we said go to school. And I was a kid that used to play hooky all

time. Saturday's we went to school, we had to. But on Tuesdays after school program is at the school grammar school, they used to have program, you know you could do sports. I always wanted to do that. So a lot of time on Tue, it was Tuesday's I would play hooky and I would come home about the time that the school was from home. But yeah. So I wasn't a very good student.

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**<Begin Segment 10>**

AT: 00:35:16 And when you were in Poston, you had to go to school there?

JT: 00:35:22 Yes. Went to school. I did okay.

AT: 00:35:29 What was school like in camp?

JT: 00:35:29 Well, all I remember we used to have spelling bees. That's ones of the things and I, I used to be, I used to win a lot of them. They had, there was a music teacher called Teener, Miss Teener or something. We tried to play different instruments and I had, I picked up a horn. Didn't really learn how to play, I'm not musically inclined, I'm tone deaf. I keep saying that as an excuse. So the school was, we had our own chairs and stuff and I had appendicitis when I was in school in camp and so we were, there was three camp post one, two and three. Three is the one we were in. And Poston was I guess the largest camp and that's where the medical center was. So I remember going on, it was a hearse or something, it was on an ambulance and I remember telling my mom that I'm dying, I'm dying. The next time I knew it, I grew up and I saw it. I saw white ceiling and that's when they had taken my appendix out. And so I don't know how old I was there. I was probably about 12.

AT: 00:36:57 Did you have to stay in the hospital?

JT: 00:36:59 I remember staying in a hospital. I don't remember. But this it's funny, was an unfortunate thing with my incision kept bothering me and it didn't heal. So I went back and it was a physician. They put a hemostat and I remember that without anesthetic they pulled out some pieces of gauze, some thin gauze on it. And so it's kind of a strange story. Maybe I shouldn't tell them but it's true. But for years that scar bothered me. For some reason it'd swell up and look like a mosquito bite and it started

to itch. That happened. That was, that went on for about 10 years. And it finally went away.

AT: 00:37:46 Did you ever have it checked out by a doctor outside of camp?

JT: 00:37:50 No, I never had it checked out, out of camp. That was, that was kind of, I think my sister was one of my sisters was a nurse's aid or something, Poston today. That's what she did. She was in high school and so. At the west mall all we did was play cards. We used to play Pinocchio 500. My sister, sibling, used to do that. I always was running around playing ball or what not. I used go to a I don't know, an excursion or honey thing with the biology teacher. He had an old car and he was a taxidermist I guess. He used to get birds and such. So he used to take us. So you can see I was one of these kids that are always doing things one on one that somehow I got to do that. I worked, I used to go to the wood shop. They had a swimming pool in camp. They built a swimming pool in three, a cement one. I think in camp two and just wood and water. And so they had to diving boards with a one meter board, and a three meter board. I was at the pool every day in the summer. I got so dark. Anyway, I used to dive there. There's another guy named Pat Kitaharo. He lived in the next block over, we were good friends. We used to go to the river together too. But he was a terrific diver or I couldn't do what he used to. He used to dive and do one in a halves and things off the three, one meter and I couldn't do it. I could do one maybe and uh, we, we should do a swan dive. But anyways, we used to go off the, uh, the Caucasian, wood shop teacher used to like to dive too. So he would swim so he was always out there, so I got to know him. So he used to let me sneak, sneak into the wood shop. Yeah. Not knowing, I think back on it, it was very dangerous. I say use a blade, used to make tops out of mesquite. I used to make billy clubs and things, all these things.

AT: 00:40:15 Tops like spinning tops?

JT: 00:40:15 Yeah. And unfortunately I, I had them all the way until we moved in 1952 from the West Side to the, my parents had said you got to get rid of, I don't know why. But I left all those things I have made. I had one thing I made, people don't believe me-- I made a vase out of cottonwood. I cut out the center and I put a can in there and I look at my size and said that's pretty good. I think my daughter has that vase. It's about this high that round. So I used to do all that kind of things. So I was one, you will see I was a kid that was always off there doing things.

AT: 00:41:10 And do you remember at what time in camp, you got appendicitis? Cause I imagine you're probably out of commission for a little bit.

JT: 00:41:19 Well, there's another story to that too. My uncle was a good carpenter, could make things. In fact, the way it goes, my brother, the tools he took, my uncle, when he came back out of Santa Fe when the Issei were first taken up to North Dakota or I forgot where he was, Santa Fe, New Mexico. Well, then he came back to camp to meet with their families. The way I understand, he borrowed our tools.

AT: 00:41:50 So he came to Poston?

JT: 00:41:50 Yeah. When he came to Poston he was in another section of Poston, we used to call them local one, two and three. And uh, I think he lived in two. But uh, he's a guy that used to give me my haircuts. And when I had my appendicitis we built a, uh, a folding chair with a desk for me, to take to school. He used to make some chairs that, I can't remember the name of it now.

AT: 00:42:28 So you could be kind of reclined while?

JT: 00:42:28 So I can sit and have a desk there. Mostly just chairs, but this one you could flip over, one you could write on. And so, yeah.

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**<Begin Segment 11>**

AT: 00:42:40 And so you mentioned that um, your oldest sister Iko, went to Chicago with her husband?

JT: 00:42:48 Yes.

AT: 00:42:49 Um, do you know, would you happen to know what year that was?

JT: 00:42:52 I can't recall.

AT: 00:42:53 But it was, it was early.

JT: 00:42:55 One of the first, when you can leave camp.

AT: 00:42:58 And who was she sponsored by? Did they get a sponsor?

JT: 00:43:03 Yeah, they had a sponsor. I was a physician. I can't remember their name. That's how they would get out.

AT: 00:43:14 And how about the rest of the family?

JT: 00:43:18 Well, about that time my brothers were not No-No Boys. They did, I guess they sign it, but they did not volunteer for the draft. My one brother that was sharp, I think was sharp, he was probably the smartest kid in our family, but he was kind of out there, you know. He was a poker player that

AT: 00:43:42 What was his name?

JT: 00:43:42 Keo, we used to call him Kiyoshi. His name, nickname is coyote. The way I understand it, the people couldn't, couldn't pronounce Kiyoshi so they used to call him coyote. And then my oldest brother, cherry, Ichiro, they couldn't pronounce Ichiro. So they used to call him cherry. So he got the name cherry and it stuck with him, which to this day we call him cherry. My other brother, Keo, who was called coyote, we didn't call him coyote, he gave himself the name Keo, or K. E. O. He had a business and he was saying Keo, K. E. O., that's what he went by. But both of them were here in Chicago. And my brother Keo told me he was trying to dodge the draft. He was against it, you know, because he felt it wasn't fair being incarcerated. So, so he said it was moving around. He was in Chicago or Detroit. But anyway, he was drafted. He went in the service. So both of my two oldest brothers were in the service while in camp. Then my third brother, the one third down, he's about in the middle, his name was Yo. And uh, I guess he did okay in school too, Poston. So he was one of two boys that, would give scholarships. They went to, I think to Mc, McPherson college in McPherson, Kansas. And I think the other name was uh, Cor, I forgot what, and my brother was one of them. So he hadn't graduated high school. I think he hadn't finished his senior year, but so he entered, he was able to go to college there. And so he spent a couple of years there, I guess when he hit 18 or something, he was there. Then he spent a couple of years there, then he was drafted too, and so all three of my older brothers, while in camp, they were all in service.

AT: 00:46:08 So that means that's four siblings who were out of camp early then, the three were drafted or the scholarship.

JT: 00:46:16 Yeah.

AT: 00:46:17 And then drafted and then Iko.

JT: 00:46:18 Well, they left camp than they were drafted when they were out of of camp.

AT: 00:46:25 Oh I see.

JT: 00:46:25 Yo was drafted while in school, so.

AT: 00:46:26 Um, and then so for that would leave your mom and then?

JT: 00:46:38 My mom and my old, my oldest sister, Ukie, she's the fourth child. She left too. She left camp earlier. We used to call them domestics. And I guess back in San Diego they used to call them school girls or something, but uh, she, she worked for some family too

AT: 00:47:08 In?

JT: 00:47:08 In Chicago because my oldest sister was in Chicago and that's how she came there. I remember she worked for a glass factory. I think it's called Bennenfeld or something. I kind of remember that name and she used to cut glass.

AT: 00:47:27 That's Ukie?

JT: 00:47:27 Yeah, U. K. I. E. So. Then my other sister Sachi left too when she was older. Yeah. And she left before us. So there were just two of us left. Myself and the sister right above me and my mom. We were the last three and we were, were probably the last persons out of camp. We had no place to go, so my mom just stayed there. Then finally we had to leave. My oldest sister moved, left the uh, her work. They worked for the physician and my brother-in-law got a job at International Harbor. A lot of Japanese worked there. And then they moved to the West Side. It was not even South Marshall. That's the West Side of Chicago. That was right close to the medical center there, right. And uh, so when they moved in, then that's where we moved. We stayed with my sister, the last three. And uh, that's where we all lived.

AT: 00:48:44 What was the name of the sister right above you?

JT: 00:48:45 Fumiko

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**<Begin Segment 12>**

AT: 00:48:45 Do you know what year that was when you left camp, for Chicago?

JT: 00:48:58 August 30th or something, '45. August 8th, I think it was.

AT: 00:49:13 And um

JT: 00:49:13 August 30th, 30th. I think next few days of school started, right? In September. That's another funny story.

AT: 00:49:23 So, okay.

JT: 00:49:25 That's what my life changed a lot.

AT: 00:49:28 All right. Um, so you, you left camp. How did you all get to Chicago?

JT: 00:49:36 We came by bus that I remember and I'm 14 and I'm the, what do you call them? You might say the man of the family. Right. You have there. So when we're packing in big crates, I was the one that was doing the packing and pounding the crate and put the lid on, stuff like that. I remember that. Yeah.

AT: 00:50:00 And can you tell me about, um, what it was like a arriving to Chicago?

JT: 00:50:08 I forgot what day it was. I think it was Friday was a few days before school started. The first thing I do is I go outside. She had, he was an Italian kid who was a little bigger than me, I was older, but I was small. He started picking on me. So we start fighting. So I grew up not taking anything from anybody. Because I was always with my older brothers and stuff. I was, I was tough. I had a chip on my shoulder I guess. So we start fighting and I got the best of him. So the problem with that is then the next guy comes, challenging me. So that's the first day, I go walk outside. So I tell my mom I don't want to go to school. I knew what was going to happen. So my sister talks to the lady who had on the first floor, had a son that was older than me and he, I don't know what he was, but I, I think he's doing some shady things because he was dressed nice all the time, nice pants, slick hair, good looking kid. So the mother told him to take me to school. So of course we get two blocks away and he takes off. He's not taking me school. So on the way to school the a big Irish kid who I became friends with, he starts picking on me too. So I pick up a rock and I said, "I'll kill you." So that ended it, but when I get into school, my gym class, who's there but him again. So he starts fighting with me too, I guess. So the

coach says put the gloves on, boxing gloves, and I'm getting better. I said I know how to box a little bit. And so if you know a little bit, there's, I mean, there's no contest, right, because most kids don't know how to box. And so, so there happen to be a Mexican kid, he was older, he was 16 and I'm 14. And the coach was Mr. Ellis. He has mentoring this kid or trying to straighten him out. He was a dropout school drop out, but he came to see the coach and he saw me. So he'd come up to me afterwards. He asked me, where you, where you learn how to box. I didn't know how to box, so I told him in camp. So there's a kid in camp. My good friend who has to go fishing with and everything, his older brother was a boxer from LA he did boxing I guess when he's in LA. And so he kind of showed me how box a little bit, you know how it is when you're in camp. Put them on. So that's how I learned how to box a little bit. So I told him, this guy to challenge me, this guy in camp. So this, this guy, his name is Peter Dias, he says, I know him. So there he used to go to CYO. It used to be the Catholic Youth Organization. It was a big thing for boxing day. It was, I don't know, some Wabash or something like that. So he knew this other kid. They were both at the CYO boxing and and so. So anyway.

AT: 00:53:40 Did you have any idea that this kid who taught you some boxing was in Chicago?

JT: 00:53:46 No, I didn't know. I kind of knew, I think he came out to Chicago, same time, my, one of my cousins came together and they were going to school together. Anyway, so that's, that's, that's how I learned. So this, this Mexican kid took on, took me under his wing. He kind of protected me. We used to, we used to go play and he, I, he used to drag me along. That's how I learned, that's how I met the other Mexicans.

AT: 00:54:20 Was he in school?

JT: 00:54:21 No, he was a dropout. I don't know what he was, he's probably doing shady things anyway.

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**<Begin Segment 13>**

AT: 00:54:29 So, and the high school you went to was

JT: 00:54:34 I went to Cregier High School, one semester. That was the school I went to when I first got out.

AT: 00:54:43 Your first day?

JT: 00:54:43 Because I was fighting. I got, it was on the West Side. That was Cregier is a two year branch of McKinley High School is, um, I forgot, it was on the Wood Street, I think it was Wood Street It was close to the medical center. Not Too far away, but that's the school I went to.

AT: 00:55:02 I'm sorry, what was?

JT: 00:55:04 Cregier

AT: 00:55:06 And um for the first one, you were just there for a semester?

JT: 00:55:13 I went to just for one semester because what happened is this, Peter and the other Mexican friends, I became friends with them. They weren't in my class. I still hang out with them and so, uh, one of them was, they're all boxers. One guy's name was Frank Lopez and the other guy was Richard Guerrero. Let me see, I think Frank Lopez was one year older than me. So I used to hang out with them and the West Side. You know in those days kids used to carry a switch blade and a roll of pennies. Switch blade and roll of pennies. It's fortunate I didn't have to use the switch blade, but I did use the roll of pennies a couple of times, fighting. My parents, my mother didn't know what, my siblings didn't know what I was doing. You know, I was very, I was pretty mature. I used to, I used to, my mom used to give me money and we used to go down to Wieboldt's, it was close to Madison Street and Ashland. I used to, when I was, from when I was 14, I was buying my own clothes. My mother wouldn't take me. I used to by my own clothes. She'd give the money, I would buy my own clothes. So I did those things, which is kind of unusual, right? She would give me money.

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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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**<Begin Segment 15>**

AT: 01:04:05 Was there ever an expectation for you to work while in school?

JT: 01:04:10 No, never, the never had me. I think I was too young but I did work in high school. I did work. I used to be a busboy at Bismarck Hotel.

AT: 01:04:25 Where was that?

JT: 01:04:29 I think that was on Randolph. There was another theater there. Oriental Theater was on the same street, I think it was, the

LaSalle Hotel was there and worked at the Bismarck at the coffee shop.

New Speaker: 01:04:43

So it was downtown?

New Speaker: 01:04:43

Yeah, downtown, coffee. I was a bus boy. How I got that job was my, one of my Mexican friends was, he worked there, a guy named Frank Lopez, I became good friends with, he was another guy and he used to be a boxer too, but he used to work. A lot of Mexican kids also had to work. And, uh, he got me the job because he worked there and that's how I got the job working there. And I was working there one time and one of the waitress wasn't giving me the tips, they get tips and they're supposed to give the bus boys so much. And she wasn't paying me. They're supposed to, you have three bucks or two bucks for the day or something. She wasn't giving it to me. She's only giving me a buck or something. So the cook, the chef, one of them was a Japanese guy and uh, we found out. So what happened is when she put the order in for the tables they were slow and she knew what was happening. So she got so upset one day she stepped literally back there and the cooks are, you go back and get the food and the bus boys, she started throwing dishes at me.

AT: 01:06:17

At you?

JT: 01:06:17

At me. Cause she knew why they were giving her a hard time. But anyway, it turned out good because she start giving me what I supposed to get.

AT: 01:06:34

And, um, can you tell me about this transition to, to Lakeview High School, you had to commute quite a bit then, right?

JT: 01:06:46

Well, it's, 900 South and the 4000th North. Used to take over an hour on the street car. I used to go there. I went to Lakeview and I first, the first few days I'm in the gym and I could do all this. I can't, I wasn't gymnasts or anything, but they put you on the rings you got, I can pull myself up and I can do most of the stuff. I see kids and that gym class, the coaches called Mr. Roth, Rothy, Rody, and he was the athletic director of the gym. And he was an old Turner. Turner was, came from uh, Europe, Germans. They used to do gymnastics and track and field. So he was one of those. So that's why we had the gymnasts apparatus there. They then have then have a gymnastic team, but he's, used to have that and he used, we used to go after school a couple of days a week and we used to, he used to call them rangers and we'd be doing gymnastics. And that's how I started once. So a good friend, who became my good friend of mine

Carl Vogel, he's been doing gymnastics since he been a kid, at the Turner Hall, and so he saw me. So he come up to me. He was, he was in, not in my class just in gym. So he come up and he says, why don't I come go to him to Turner Hall so that's how I started gymnastics. So I started doing gymnastics. Started do it with him and I used to compete with the Turner groups. Yeah, I was, I was pretty strong, pretty athletic. I became a halfway decent gymnast in high school. But we didn't have a gymnastic team, we used to go to gymnastic tournaments from the Germans, we used to go to Sheboygan, Wisconsin up there by Milwaukee, Wisconsin University. And I remember we went up, we traveled to Buffalo, I think it was Buffalo, Buffalo, New York. Gymnastics, we went on a train and we did them. A few of us decided not to come home on the train. So we ended up in New York and went onto the boardwalk and we stayed at YMCA about eight of us in a one room. We went to Radio City. That was a big thing for us. We saw the Radio City, the chorus girls and all of that. Meanwhile, one of the guy's got sick so we all had to go back and you know, we'd be most of us, we came back on the bus.

AT: 01:09:40 What year were you at this for, at that point?

JT: 01:09:45 That was probably my last year in the high school.

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**<Begin Segment 16>**

AT: 01:09:49 So when you started at Lakeview, um, did you have any of the kinds of problems that you did at um?

JT: 01:09:58 No, no the people at Lakeview, my friends, they just one guy, two of them knew how it was. They knew my background, but when I went to Lakeview I was quiet. I didn't, I didn't make any, I wasn't getting in trouble or anything, but I'd became friends with one guy, we used to play poker at recess with pennies and stuff like that. But yeah, he became a photographer. Um, but uh, the main thing, Lakeview was, I go there after school to the gym was a couple of times a week, two, three times. Then I had to have to come home late. I'd be coming home late at 9, 10 o'clock and it'd be dark and it wasn't many street cars running. I'd come home and when I come home it was about a block, two blocks away from, where I stop. Used to be on Paulina and Polk, I guess. Anyway, I used to come home and I was always watching out. I, I felt somebody looking for me or they want to beat me up. So I never walked on the sidewalk. We always, I

always walked in the middle of the street and those, most of those houses are gang based so we saw gang when you're walking. If I saw somebody I'd run and I always had my hand one hand with the switch blade. And I mean it's crazy, but I never, no one ever caught me. I never had a problem but one of my friends Frank Lopez got beat up once, but I was wasn't with him. So I was lucky I didn't have much, I didn't really get into with somebody's beating me up, but I moved in gym class. One guy, Black guy, they used to carry razors between their finger like this. Right in gym class he cut up a guy, another guy and just another Italian big guy beat the hell out of later. Yeah, so this, this Italian kid, I knew too, used to play football together. Sandlot, one time. So I left, I left the [inaudible] quiet, the gymnastics and everybody knew me there because I was Japanese. There wasn't many. And this kid Vogel that was a gymnast, he was, he was, he was good looking guy, nice build, popular and so he went out, I was with him. But he was always talking off with the girls and everybody and you know well liked. So they all knew me because in Lakeview during the halftime basketball game, we should do hand balancing. He was pretty aggressive and outgoing and they used to have talent show. He talked me into going to a talent show, we do hand balancing and he was beyond the bottom and I'd be on the top, you know, some Mickey Mouse, hand balance. We thought we were pretty good. But

- AT: 01:13:33 In school you said there were some other Japanese Americans did you hang out with other
- JT: 01:13:44 No, I didn't.
- AT: 01:13:48 Is there a reason for that or?
- JT: 01:13:50 I don't know. They just didn't like me, I guess is, I think there's a problem. They saw me with this guy as popular, I think that's what happens. You know, they get kind of jealous or something. I really don't know. I always had a problem with the other, the Japanese community, I had no contact with them all my high school days, my cousin was part of them, he was, he used to belong to the club named Unknown's. He took me to their to their dance or something. No seemed, you know Japanese are very cliquish. They didn't accept me and so I after a few times I just stopped going. I didn't want anything to do with that anymore. And that's how I stayed in my own group. I used to hang out with the guys on the North Side and one guy named George, he had a bike handle bars like this. We'd go down to [inaudible]. I'd be on the handlebars and drive take him down. Yeah, it was strange. Most kids didn't do that. He did in that he's

used to take me all over the place and I said, yeah. In fact, we rode a bicycle Chicago in my house all the way up to Foster we rode on a bike. That was far. Those days. That was with him. That wasn't bad going, it was coming home we had a long ride. So, but yeah, so that's what I did. So we, so I was mainly doing gymnastics.

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**<Begin Segment 17>**

AT: 01:15:45 And when did you start getting involved in Aikido?

JT: 01:15:48 I got involved in Aikido in '62, '60, I really don't know. There was a different date on it.

JT: 01:15:49 But after high school?

AT: 01:15:49 After high school. A story about, I tell you a story about my friends on the West Side, you know, I used to hang out with them. We used to go to Maxwell Street, and they used to, they used to have things to sell. But I was never with them when they got ahold of these things, you might say. Yeah we used to go [inaudible] Come on man, you want a bike? And I says, no. I knew where the bike was going to come from. And he had a bike with a motor on it. It was unusual. He had that once, so he had all these kind of things, he'd somehow picked up. But then the story when I was in college, he got in trouble. Anyway he ended up in jail. I don't know if it was him or his friend, I think was another guy, but I knew, well I didn't care for. He's, I thought he was very bad guy anyway. So anyway, he ended up in prison because he killed somebody. It was a long story, but he was a guy that used to protect me. And I remember when I was young in high school, he'd come be in a car and dad's car or something. He showed me a gun, he said look at this Joe and stuff like that. So you can see the type of people that befriended me. But uh, I felt close with him all the time because they're the one that really only, you know, were my friends, like the Mexican guy that I worked for at the Bismarck Hotel, he got me a job and we used to hang out with him. We used to go to 12th Street Beach and that time it was about early, the street car that it was called 12th Street Beach, up there, we used to go swimming off the aquarium on that side. That's if they were never paid, was a hanging on the edge of the street car until a conductor would see us and we'd get off and go on to the next one. But that's one of the things we did. We used to go swimming there.

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AT: 01:18:50 We have some time for a few more questions.

JT: 01:18:50 Okay.

AT: 01:18:58 Oh, I guess one thing I'd like to know is, uh, over time and throughout your life, in what ways have you felt connected to your Japanese heritage?

JT: 01:19:23 The only connection, which is unusual, I started to have some connection with the Japanese a few when I went to, when I graduated high school, I went to Navy pier. It was a branch of the University of Illinois. That's when I met a few Japanese. One guy was, Yukio Matsumoto He was a wrestler on the wrestling team. Then later on he became, he started doing gymnastics too. I met him. I met another guy, [inaudible] he became, I don't know, a microbiologist or something. He was in my chemistry class. He knew my cousin. He was in the Unknown's too. So I met him. At that time, I wanted to meet the other Japanese people and most of them didn't want anything to do with me. I know now later on they become friends or this at that time, no one, they all kind of knew me. Uh, I, I think a lot of the girls that they kinda just didn't like me, because, my wife was one of them, she went to Navy Pier. She used to say, you know, you thought you were too good for us or something. It was the opposite. I was dying to meet some Nisei's. And so what happened was, my good friend was a Chinese girl and another girl was a Greek girl because they were both athletic. And so I didn't see much, Japanese, but every once in awhile they used to hold, what they called [inaudible] So they used to open up the gym and guys would play badminton, volleyball or basketball and things like that. And there were the gymnastics hardly because the whole gym was taken up with other sports. And so that's how I met these two girls. So, so became good friends of mine. So I think that created another problem. They see me hanging around with them. You know they have this thing Japanese, he thinks he's too good for us and I'm dying to to met them, I met my wife later and that's what she told me too. And I said, no, it was you guys. But yeah, that's what happened.

AT: 01:22:13 Do you think it had anything to do with where you were living? Since there weren't many other Japanese Americans on the North Side?

JT: 01:22:13 There was not many, there's only one other kid named Terry Murakami, he lived there his Japanese family lived above us. He went to McKinley, but he was a quiet guy who he, he became a barber. I used to go to his barber he was on. He had barbershop by Howard, Howard Street. He was quiet. His brother was a real sports nut, but he had a bad way. I don't know what you, maybe it's not a good term to use, I guess we used to call it club foot. So he couldn't, he had to raise heel on one foot. But he was a sport nut. So he's going to the baseball games all this time. Every time he couldn't get a date or somebody else he'd take me. So that's how I became a Sox Fan. We used to go Sox games, we saw some Cubs games. Basketball games. But that was how I started to see a baseball was from him, in fact I heard my first baseball. The first week we came to Chicago in 45' that was when the Cubs were trying to make the World Series. That's, that's when they were, they lost. But that's when I remember they let us all go up to the auditorium and they put it on the radio and said listen. I didn't know what was coming off. That was my first contact with the baseball, with the good teams.

AT: 01:23:57 Well, and in '52 you moved not to far from Wrigley Field, what where were you living with them?

JT: 01:24:14 We lived in Newport. It was a six flat. It was three apartments on one side and three on the other side, a middle stairway. And so we lived on the first floor, my mom, my family. My sister lived on the second floor. And on the other side, my other sister lived on the second floor. The first floor there was a group of single Japanese guys, you know, mainly from Hawai'i. On the third floor on that side, was another friend of my brother-in-law. My brother-in-law was an orphan. He lived with, the Salvation Army in San Francisco. And so a lot was his friend. So they lived on the third floor, that's what happened. But then my sister, they moved first to California. So I said, well, that far away from Wrigley Field, and I was a Sox Fan. I mean, I went to some Cubs Game because some of my friends after school, we would sneaked into the Cubs. We would get tickets with people still had their stubs we'd get in there. A lot of times they would let you in. Baseball wasn't that popular. You would, game, there were a lot of empty seats. One of my friends was a good Cub fan we used to sit in the bleachers all the time, but I didn't go with them. I wasn't a Cub fan, I went a few times. Yeah.

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AT: 01:26:17 Um, and, um we are wrapping up. How do you feel like, um, the move to Chicago, um, in the, the mid-forties, how did that shape you as a, as a person?

JT: 01:26:32 It's strange. For some reason, my upbringing, I did a lot of things, but my mom and my brothers, I guess they kept me straight because my friends were doing all the things that, you know, were illegal, you might say, I was with them, but I never participated. Problem was if they got caught, I'd be part of the group, right. But uh, yeah, it's so they did those things. Not always, but you know sometimes that's what they're good selling stuff on Maxwell Street. Yeah. No, I had a tough time though. Little kids used to call me Jap and all that yellow stuff and had adults too calling me yellow Jap and crawl into your whole and all that. I went through all that. Uh, because I think more so because where I lived, there wasn't many Japanese. The other Japanese were clustered. I think a lot of the other non-Japanese, at least they had some contact or they knew, or they were around enough that it didn't happen as much. But I lived on the West Side so I stuck out a lot. And so they're always calling me names and little kids. Black kids they would call me names. I thought, well, they have someone else to step on, to dump on. But uh, my friends were Mexicans and the Mexican kids they were the best kids. And their parents, they really treated me nice. Most of the Mexican kids didn't call me names or anything. It was the others, the white kids, the Black kids in the neighborhood. And they were mostly younger kids, you know, seven, eight, nine, you know, they make these things and all that. Call me Chink, stuff, Jap and Chink and Chinatown and stuff like that. So I went through all of that. But I survived that somehow. But it was always little kids. It was old kids, they didn't as much because not the kids around because they knew my friends, right. So the Mexican friends who were boxers, in the immediate neighborhood got around. Even the immediate neighborhood where I lived, the first day, I'd be in that neighborhood, none of the other parents or adults in that neighborhood never said hello to me or anything, they just kind of, they ignored me. They didn't do anything bad to me, like throw rocks at me or something like the other people. But the whole neighborhood, the block, I didn't, I didn't, no one, none of my friends were from the neighborhood. Most of them are Italian kids. They just didn't want anything to do with me. And so that's how I grew up. And I tell another story, my friend, how

I frame me is Volvo, I used to see his grandfather, he was, they were German, his name was Wurster and I used to come over, they used to live on the second floor. My friend used to live on the first floor, on Nelson Street. And they're telling me, he used to call me [inaudible], Hey Tojo. And that used to get me so mad. I just couldn't say anything. I used to burn underneath. And I used to tell my friend that you know that your grandpa's calling me Tojo and stuff. But his parents treated me well. In fact, his father was a big shot at, I forgot the company's name now, it was I think the LaSalle. Anyway, and he was an engineer, he had kind of, was an inventor of the [inaudible] for the cars or something. But one summer, I used to, every summer I used to go to work. And I was in college and one time I went to work there, good friend of mine that was a gymnast he had got out and he got a job there. The personnel department says, come on over there and I get you a job. So he went to the red book or yellow book and found out some job California or something. Okay, this is where your work and this and that. By the time, they catch up to you, you'll be gone. Summer job. Right? So I go up to the personal department, walking in there. And I interviewed by this lady, to get the job. This guy walks by, us this guy's father. He's a big shot. There he's got his tie. He comes up and says, Joe, what are you doing here? I said, "I'm trying to get a job." And he winks at me and goes, "Why?" So I didn't, he knew, I shouldn't be getting a job. I think he kind of helped it. Yeah. So anyway, I got a job. I can't, I don't know why I can't remember the company, but it was the company. It was hard group time.

- AT: 01:32:24 So we're at time, but, um, before we wrap up, is there anything that you'd like to add or that we might've missed in the conversation?
- JT: 01:32:33 Yeah, I think the other reason why the kids at Navy Pier, the Japanese people, you know, I was, they didn't care for me, it was also because I was an athlete and I was captain of the gymnastic team. So they used to have write ups in the paper about me being a gymnast or a picture. So I think they, they were kind of, I don't know, jealous, not jealous, but they though well, oh he thinks he's something doesn't stink or something. I mean, that was there. That's the way I looked at it and they were not good friends.
- AT: 01:33:18 Well, thank you so much for taking the time and for coming in. I still have a lot more questions for you but maybe you can do another interview.
- JT: 01:33:32 Well, you can delete a lot of this stuff I guess.

AT: 01:33:32 This has been great. Thank you so much again.

JT: 01:33:37 Anyway. You're welcome. I thought I should tell, I don't know. I tell bits and pieces to my son. And uh, he turned out, all right. I said if he did half the things that I did, he'd be okay.

AT: 01:33:53 Thank you Mr. Takehara.

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