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Title: Ryoko Kobayashi Interview
Narrator: Ryoko Kobayashi
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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- AT: 00:27:46 And um, do you remember your, your first impressions of Chicago when you moved here?
- RK: 00:27:53 When I first came from the camp out, I say, gees, this is dirty city. You know, was thinking. When I said, you know, my father came to pick us up and he came home and not care, but I think it was, if I remember correctly and then, um, we went up second floor. And I said, oh gosh, there were a lot of cockroaches and my mother's oh my Gosh, you know, and then, uh, but that's the best he could do it at that time. And uh, but there was a Hyde Park neighborhood in the, a lot of Jewish people were there, and then there was a convenience store uh, on a, 41 or 3 or something like that. And I went into it one day, and they took me under their wings. They taught me about classical music. They taught me about the, they told me to get this workbook, the music, they told me what place to go to get dresses, and they said that. So they made me feel welcome. And then when I went to the Hyde Park Delicatessen, oh, I loved the cadeshas, it was big, and then hot when they made it. So they, therefore they see me come in, they give me the hot ones and I learned to like the Jewish food. And then I began to like the Jewish people, they were so kind to me. And then, uh, then later on I found out that about the Holocaust. So I said maybe that, maybe that's the attraction they got because they found out that I was incarcerated. So I have many good friends now of Jewish people and, um, they've been very good to me. And there was one that's working at the zoo, Lincoln Park Zoo, as a volunteer. Every Tuesday I see her, we exchanged bag. I give her books and magazines and, uh, medical, um, medical things, uh, written datas. And she gives me this, um, her magazine and we exchange. So, um, but I really enjoyed them. The Jewish people.
- AT: 00:30:11 And um, what were the demographics of Hyde Park at that time when you first moved there?

RK: 00:30:18 Pardon me?

AT: 00:30:19 What were the demographics of the neighborhood at the time? Um, in Hyde Park when you first moved. Who were living there?

RK: 00:30:28 Oh, it was uh, before the Blacks came in, it was a Jewish, and uh, I don't know, Caucasian, anyway, I don't know who they were, but, uh, and then they, um, then I don't, um, across the street. Uh, Hyde Park, a center opened up and the people who go in there and they could join the club and so forth. And uh, there was um, oh remember. There was a Japanese gift store. And I helped the lady out. And, uh, and my friend, she's Italian, she came and, uh, helped the lady out, she took photographs and the lady liked to shift. I'm going to give you a Japanese name. I'm going to Daniel Terumi meaning shining from with them. You know, Oh, and she liked that. She said, I'm Terumi. So even to now she calls me Terumi. Okay.

AT: 00:31:33 Where, where was that shop?

RK: 00:31:34 Huh?

AT: 00:31:35 Where was the shop?

RK: 00:31:37 Oh gosh, I was on 50. I can't remember. No, it was about a block away. So 4115, so it would be, well, anyways, blocks south of 4115.

AT: 00:32:04 Uh, and what, what kinds of things were sold there?

RK: 00:32:08 Oh, Japanese products plus uh, ladies scarves. Neon Uh, dishes and, um, I can't remember. Cause I didn't stay too long, you know, I just help as a temporary help because she needed somebody to, when she was in the back doing something. And, I guess like what a gift store would be, you know, narrow coin purses and things like that.

AT: 00:32:41 And uh, in Hyde Park at that time, were there other Japanese American families?

RK: 00:32:47 Yes. Yes. There was quite a few. Those uh, oh, let's see. Japanese food stall, And, uh, but I can't remember where they were at because my parents went to the shop. And, um, let's see what else we, I guess there was a restaurant too. But uh, we didn't have money so we couldn't go eat at a restaurant. But, uh, I don't know too much around the surroundings too much. And uh, because I had to start going work and I know 51st street

was a, a little rumble there. You know, all kinds of stores there, you know, was a bookstore I remember, it's still there yet. And uh, they had a tree trunk and the people put signs up. I think they still do that. I haven't been down to for ages. So.

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