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Title: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi Interview  
Narrator: Chiyoko Chiyo Omachi  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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<Begin Segment 5>

- AT: 00:21:36      Going back to life at Terminal Islands. So let's see. Were there-- at the time when you were growing up-- were there-- what were, I guess the, the demographics around there. And were there other Japanese American families?
- CO: 00:22:03      Oh yeah. Well, you know, the, there was-- the island was divided into two parts and, the one part was-- they used to call it fish harbor and that's where the ships came in with the fish and the were canneries there. I think there was Starkist tuna was there and a couple of other fisheries. And, most of the Japanese fishermen lived over there and the wives used to work in the canneries, and when they had-- when the fish would come in-- and I guess they would cook them however they did that-- they would blow a whistle and the women would go to work and you could hear it all over the island except our part. It was a long island and, our part of the island was called Brighton beach and close to Long Beach. There was a bridge on our side and there were a lot of old but nice looking old homes. Some were dilapidated because, you know, the white people would-- from long beach-- would come to Terminal Island in the summer. And, because there was this nice expansive beach-- and would spend the summers there. And when we were growing up, we had one of these homes, my father being a carpenter, a shipbuilder and a contractor for homes. He fixed up the old home and it was wonderful with French windows. And, it was two story. And, some of our friends from other parts of California would come to visit us and stay for weeks. And, it would seem months, and we would go to the beach and the popsicle man would come every afternoon. It was, you know, quite, quite wonderful living on Terminal Island. And the fishing village was way on the other side where, you know, the, the tuna canneries were, and it was congested and smelly and-- but our side of the island was a totally different place. We had trees, palm trees, date trees, palms. Very pleasant. We were the

only ones on the block that had a telephone, as I recall. People would come day and night to use the telephone.

- AT: 00:25:32 And, as far as school, and I guess your, your peers as a kid, and, and growing up-- were folks, mostly Japanese American or--
- CO: 00:25:47 [overlapping dialogue] Then the school I went to was called Banning High School in Wilmington and we used to take a bus to get there. And I don't know how that happened. Perhaps part of the island was in their district. So we-- the bus would come in the morning and we would get on the bus, and there were white children, not so many Asians, not so many Japanese. I don't know that we had-- I don't think we had Chinese friends. I think we were all Japanese, and white friends and they would put us on the bus and we'd go to Banning High School. And that's where-- oh, what is his name?
- AT: 00:26:49 Sam Ozaki?
- CO: 00:26:51 Yeah, Sam Ozaki was that part of the-- well, they were from a farming community near Wilmington and they used to bus in I think. But we would be coming from, you know, Terminal Island was way over yonder. And we knew Ozaki-- my uncle knew the Ozaki's because they were about the same age. I was much younger, I think than Sam would have been. And Lilly, yeah.
- AT: 00:27:28 So you would've been in high school when the war broke out--
- CO: 00:27:33 Yeah, I was 15
- AT: 00:27:33 Sophomore year of high school.
- CO: 00:27:37 Pardon?
- AT: 00:27:37 Were you at-- in your second year of high school then?
- CO: 00:27:40 I was there-- well we-- they had a junior high there-- junior high and senior high. And so I was going to Banning already, and my uncle who lived-- well for a while they lived in San Pedro over-- they lived in Wilmington and those in Wilmington went to Banning High School. And my uncle was I think six years older than I. My aunt, who was his younger, the youngest sibling was, I guess she was five years older than I and he was-- would have been Sam's friend or about the same year. Uncle Yas just died. [turns to 2nd interviewer] And he was in his nineties, wasn't he?
- I2: 00:28:39 Yeah. Yeah.

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