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Title: Constance Yamashiro Interview
Narrator: Constance Yamashiro
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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AT: 00:39:59 And, so you mentioned you went to St. George until fifth grade. Where did you go?

CY: 00:40:08 After that? I went to a school called Shakespeare Grammar school. Yeah, yeah. It was on the South Side.

AT: 00:40:17 And from there you said you went to Hyde Park High School?

CY: 00:40:21 Yeah.

AT: 00:40:24 Um and can you, uh, tell me a little bit more about the, the demographics of that neighborhood and those schools? At that time.

CY: 00:40:37 It was, at that time it was.

AT: 00:40:41 Okay.

CY: 00:40:42 It was a lot of Jewish kids. There were, Japanese and Jewish and I used to play with some of the African American kids that, there was more or less, color line, I would call it between 43rd and Drexel then. And there was a street called cottage grove. And on the other side there was influx of, African Americans, you know, who made the great migration, as you probably know, you know, and they were coming into the city too. At the same time, a lot of the Jewish people were abandoning the area because the Japanese came in and whatever, and lot of them moved into the suburbs and north, you know, Chicago, et cetera. So, although, you know, I have friends who, strangely enough when they came to Chicago like Jean Machine Ma, you know, we were talking about she, lived on the West Side of Chicago and, she grew up among, mostly Caucasian people was I grew up mostly it was all Japanese, you know, Japanese Americans, so to speak.

AT: 00:42:08 Okay. And, as you were growing up in Chicago, did you, besides school, did you have any other activities?

CY: 00:42:17 A lot. Yeah, the activities were centered around, the, the church actually because they provide a lot of Bible study things and I would go to summer camps and, I made a lot of friends. I used to go up and down the street going into and taking my doll buggy and, and, looking for people to play house with. And, yeah, it was nice time.

AT: 00:42:53 And, what was the name of this church?

CY: 00:42:56 You know, I knew you're going to ask that. Oh, now I remember Ellis Community Center. It was actually a church, too. Ellis Community Center.

AT: 00:43:09 Okay.

AT: 00:43:10 And.

CY: 00:43:11 There was a reverend. I remember the reverend Nishimoto. Yeah, he was very good.

AT: 00:43:23 And so there you said that there were a lot of activities through the church?

CY: 00:43:27 Yeah, well it's through that community center, we would go, we could go every day and we'll go on to the, what they call a play area. There was a pool table. Um, they participated in, you know, years are gone and they're still doing it at the Museum of Science and Industry. There's something about Christmas around the world every year Christmas we participated in that. The group from the Ellis Community Center, we got to put on a, I guess a skip. I was not really a skip so much as it was the story of the birth of Jesus, you know? And it was really very exciting that we were at the museum and we were so proud of ourselves or you know, just I guess a fourth, fifth grade kids and I to this day, I remember my teacher there named Mary Matsumoto and she, she makes watch and impression on me, you know, such a wonderful impression.

AT: 00:44:28 What did she teach?

CY: 00:44:30 Well, I don't really know. She was our Sunday school teacher, our counselor, you know, she sort of just hovered over us. She took care of everything, you know, she was actually a very young woman, but I, you know, I, of course when I'm young like

that, I think, I think she's an older lady. She must've been all of 19 or 20 and, and, going to college or something, you know, but I always remember her. She was very warm and, sort of like a mentor later. You know, I remember.

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