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Title: Susumu Mukushina Interview
Narrator: Susumu Mukushina
Interviewer: Anna Takada
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<Begin Segment 5>

AT: 00:15:12 So, you took the train ride to Chicago in '51?

SM: 00:15:15 '51.

AT: 00:15:16 '51. And then where did your family settle in the city?

SM: 00:15:20 Well, we lived in--I know the address--it's at 4450 South Oakenwald Avenue in Chicago. That place no longer exists, you know, something else is there, but it was a roach infested ghetto building. Our neighbors are mostly cockroaches, you know...But there were some Japanese living there, but back back in '51, '52, people could reject your application to rent based on race. So they'll say we don't rent to people, your type, that kind of thing. And there was no legal recourse.

AT: 00:16:06 And which neighborhood?

SM: 00:16:11 It was on South Side. There was a little Japanese community from the lakefront. Oakenwald Avenue was on the eastern part of Chicago, probably about a block block and a half or two blocks away from Lake Shore Drive. And there was a Japanese store on 43rd street called Star Market and Star Market, it looked big to me as a child, but it's probably maybe one half or two thirds the size of a 711 today. But that's the only place in Chicago, that I knew of, that a person could buy Japanese food, you know, like, uh, like sukiyaki meat and fish and rice, you know. I don't think Jewel food store was around back then, but there were some other food stores and, and one thing that always stuck in my head was we were um, we were not rich, you know, my mother was very good in saving money and, and I knew that she could go to a American food store and get milk and products at a cheaper price. And my mother always said that, well, we have to support each other because if Japanese don't support each other, who will? Long before food stamps,

long before welfare, no medicaid. So we had to support ourselves. And so a Japanese community in 19 in the early 1950s supported each other. And um, is there, I remember even as a kid growing up age seven, eight, nine, I had pretty happy memories.

AT: 00:17:54 Where were you going to school?

SM: 00:17:56 We went to a school called Shakespeare Grammar School. Shakespeare, is no lon, the building is still there, but the school has, it's not a school anymore, it's something else. And I was, I was there in a very overcrowded rooms, were, um, I think there was like 45 or 50 in a room.

AT: 00:18:19 And what did your father end up doing in Chicago?

SM: 00:18:23 He worked in a factory first it was called a Paul Paul revere. They made pots and pans and then, um, uh, uh, they made cameras, Revere now, Revere camera, and then it became Woolen Stock. Woolen Stock was a German company that, that made tape recorders. And so, so he was on the assembly line. Uh, uh, that's how he supported the family. Interesting, was uh, maybe, well, it's interesting, that has a bonus he got a turkey for Thanksgiving and he didn't know what a turkey was. He brought home a turkey and my mother thought it was a big chicken, you know, so, um, so, um, uh, she had to ask our neighbors, how do you cook this bird? You know. And um, so we had our first Thanksgiving dinner. Um, my mother was really worried about that. It wasn't not overcooked or undercooked. And those are some fond memories I have of my or dinners with my family.

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