

Densho Digital Repository
Japanese American Service Committee (JASC) and
Chicago Japanese American Historical Society (CJAHS)
Oral History Project Collection
Title: Sharon Seeder Interview
Narrator: Sharon Seeder
Interviewer: Anna Takada
Location: Chicago, Illinois
Date: September 29, 2017
Densho ID: ddr-chi-1-5-6

<Begin Segment 6>

- AT: 00:23:32 And do you know what year her family came to Chicago?
- SS: 00:23:38 Uh, I know I was born in '49. They got married in February '49 and I was in November '49. So I know around that, I think it was right after the war.
- AT: 00:23:56 And, um, how about your dad's, your biological father?
- SS: 00:24:00 Same. Well, he came, my, his, the rest of his family stayed in California, he was the only one who came here. He had, um, a brother and two sisters and they stayed in California. And he's the only one who came here.
- AT: 00:24:14 And what kind of work he was doing?
- SS: 00:24:17 He was doing bartending, uh at. And then he was doing odd jobs too. I remember seeing pictures of him selling, you know, like Venetian blinds. And so there he was doing odd jobs to supplement, um, the bartending. But, uh, he didn't really have any steady profession. I think when he moved out to he moved back out to California, he was still bartending.
- KS: 00:24:47 [inaudible]
- SS: 00:24:47 And then my, yeah, my second dad, he was a cab driver. Uh, he almost finished college with an accounting degree. So he, uh, he got, he became friendly with people at the American Cab Company, and I don't know that exists anymore, but it was an independent cab company owned by Italians, Italian Americans. So he became their bookkeeper, uh, after, you know, he decided not to try the cab anymore. Uh, and he became pretty close to, you know, that organization.
- AT: 00:25:29 And um, do you know what your, uh, your, your parents met your second time?

SS: 00:25:37 Okay. Well they met because my dad's were best friends and it was around the time when my, my parents are splitting and he was splitting with his first wife. I think that was around when I was um, about eight or nine. And I know they got married in '50, '59, but they, I think they started dating in '58 cause I know that they sort of waited a little while. They said they waited a year or so, around '57, '58. I think they was when the spl, their divorces were there, it was like at the same time they were getting divorces.

AT: 00:26:21 So, um, any, um, when, when your parents came to Chicago, um, what neighborhoods were they settling in?

SS: 00:26:42 They were in the Lincoln Park area, because a lot of the streets now that are very trendy like Hampton Court and Burling and Orchard, they were all in that area. We lived in a coup, on a couple of those streets. But we ended up on Vine Street, which was on North Avenue on Larrabee. And there were two, two flats that were back to back. They were not Burke, they were wood and they were connected by a porch. So we lived on the for front top. My grandmother and grandfather and my aunt lived on the bottom. And then my, my, my aunt and her husband lived on the top back and my mom's sister and her family lived on the bottom half. So we were all like one big nuclear family. And I said nuclear, nuclear, nuclear family that were, you know, all connected. Now, what had happened was the first mayor Daley was coming through with this urban renewal program and he basically tore down that whole street. My aunt was the last to leave. She was literally, it was the only house left and she was forced out of there. They gave her \$10,000 for that property. So yeah, she did not want to leave, that's Auntie Masa.

KS: 00:28:06 Sounds like it

SS: 00:28:06 Yeah. Uh, so that whole street is gone now.

AT: 00:28:12 And do you have siblings?

SS: 00:28:14 I have a sister and two brothers and my sister lives in the, the city. And my youngest brother lives in the city and my other brother lives in Woodstock. So they, and they've stayed in the city? They have not moved anywhere else.

AT: 00:28:29 And uh, everyone was born here.

SS: 00:28:32 Yes. Everyone was born here.