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Title: Lois Shikami Interview  
Narrator: Lois Shikami  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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- AT: 00:30:27 And so you entered May 10th, you said, um, the at the assembly center. And then how long was your family there?
- LS: 00:30:42 Um, it was, it was either late August or early September. When we were told ah pack up your stuff, we're going to be taking a train to Idaho and so, by then you know, you're used to being imprisoned and this is one more bad thing that was going to happen to us. We're not going back home, we're going to someplace that they think is more permanent and it might be better, you know, so I think maybe, I'm not sure, but I think the family was a little bit hopeful that things would be better. But so we, they pulled out, I think the railroad pulled out old trains from somewhere. They were really old and dirty and dusty. They took us by bus to the train station. I think I just remember it was filthy dirty. And but my sister remembers that the food we had was in the dining car. So we got to sit at a regular dining tables to eat our meals and she remembers that it was pretty nice, better than the camp food. And so I think it took either one night or two nights to get to Idaho. I would think two nights. But I remember being really dirty, dusty, grimy, yeah.
- AT: 00:32:32 And, um, and then can you tell me about what you remember? Um entering Minidoka?
- LS: 00:32:43 Yeah, this, this camp um, Minidoka, had a big canal that ran in front of the gate because I remember we had to cross the canal and this place was even more permanent. You know, they had taller fences and, and he's more soldiers and a tall century tower. It just looked more foreboding, big gate. And um, I don't know, I just thought, oh my gosh, this, this is even worse than the other place, you know. But um, they took us, um, I don't know if it was my truck, I think it was by truck to our place. Of, the camp had I think 44 blocks and we were blocked five. So it was fairly close to the gate, I believe. And um, it was, the room was larger but, and it had windows, had a potbelly stove and

this time they had cots, the kind that it was a metal cot with springs and I believe there was a thin mattress and that's all it had with eight of those and the potbelly stove and dust everywhere because they built it in a desolate place and always had seen coming there with sage brush just all over. That was it. The scenery was horrible. And the camp itself that was dust blowing around blowing around everywhere.

AT: 00:34:42 So your oldest sibling you had, it was a brother? He was the oldest?

LS: 00:34:47 We had a, my oldest sister at that time was, um, she's 16 years older than I was, so she was 26 and then six years later it was my brother. And then two years later was another sister. And then the sister that was closest to me, she was 13 years older. Masako, she and I were close and then I had one younger brother who's two years younger, so we had like a family of a, of older kids, three of them. And then there are three younger kids. So when, when the older kids did things, we were not part of it that the three kids, younger ones did things together. Yeah.

AT: 00:35:43 And the, the younger ones. Did you go to school?

LS: 00:35:48 Yeah, um in September. Maybe October uh school started right in the barracks. Not too far away, grade school and um, I think all of us kids loved going to school because it gave us structure, you know, something to do every day. And as kids we just love learning. And um, at the beginning we had a, our teachers were college graduates who sort of took over the younger grades and it was, I mean we learned, you know, we had, um, that was, I was in sixth grade at that time and I just remembered maybe there are a couple of sixth grade rooms, but I remember school, as being fun. I remember they, I got to be a patrol girl and they had a pith helmet for us and, and a wooden, a flag plywood. It was painted red and it said stop on it. And we stood on the corner when it was our turn and the truck traffic was a truck, you know, delivering something, you know, but it made me feel really important. I just loved that job.

AT: 00:37:22 Was your, was there any kind of church, in the CamC?

LS: 00:37:26 Yeah, our, our, um, our priest, our Episcopal priest actually came into camp with us and a deacon and so they carried on their Episcopal mission in the church, you know, just like I guess they, they were expected to uh, so, uh, my parents were really happy because they were very religious. Us kids and you know, I didn't really enjoy going to our church that much. But on Sundays I guess we went, my problem was that my friends

didn't belong. They belong to the Baptist Church, which was the most popular. And in those days, you know, so it was okay. I mean, yeah, we were expected to go to church.

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