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Title: Jane Kaihatsu Interview  
Narrator: Jane Kaihatsu  
Interviewer: Anna Takada  
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<Begin Segment 1>

Anna Takada: 00:00:00 Can you please just state your full name?

Jane Kaihatsu: 00:00:02 Yes, my name is Jane Beth Kaihatsu.

AT: 00:00:06 And then where and when were you born?

JK: 00:00:09 I was born on June 2nd, 1957 at Chicago's Wesley Memorial Hospital on the North Side and unfortunately it was torn down and part of the greater Northwestern University hospital campus.

AT: 00:00:24 Okay, so that's North Shore?

JK: 00:00:28 Um, it's on the North, near North Side of Chicago.

AT: 00:00:30 Okay. And, um, and where did you grow up?

JK: 00:00:34 Well, uh, initially I, I understand, um, when I was born, my parents were living in the Old Town area near North Avenue in North Park Avenue, which is just, um, uh, west of Well Street. And then, uh, we moved to, um, when I guess I was about two years old to the far Northwest side of Chicago, an area called Jefferson Park. And I lived at 5131 West Ansley. And we lived, um, in Jefferson Park. Um, my older brother Donald and then I had um anoth, another brother, Eddie, another sister, Nancy and another sister. And so there's five of us all together, until 1965, until I was eight years old. So I went to Chicago Public Schools in Jefferson Park, will be in school from kindergarten until second grade.

AT: 00:01:27 And where are you in the birth order?

JK: 00:01:29 I'm the second oldest. I'm the oldest daughter.

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<Begin Segment 2>

AT: 00:01:33 Um, and so like I mentioned, um, I'd love to hear a little bit more about your, your family's story and background. And how your parents ended up in Chicago. So, um, can you just start by telling me what you know of, where your parents are from and kind of how they ended up here.

JK: 00:01:56 Okay. Um, let's see. Um, I'll start with my father's family. The Kaihatsu side. My father is Omar Kaihatsu and he's also one of five children. He's the middle child and his parents, um, are um Issei who came from Japan. My grandfather, Masajiro Kaihatsu, came from Japan, um, in 1905 and 1906 to San Francisco. And then settled in Los Angeles. And, um, his wife, my grandmother Kuwa Kaihatsu came in 1919 and she, uh, was a picture bride, as they, they called them. But actually, uh, Masajiro Kaihatsu had an unusual occupation. He worked in silent films as a silent film actor and Kuwa had seen him in Japanese movie magazines back in Nagoya where she was from. Um, Masajiro is from the Hyogoken area of a city called Akashi. But anyway, the story goes, she wrote him fan letter's. Uh, by this time he had been in the U.S. about 15 years and needed to be married. So they exchanged letters and he brought her over as his bride to Hollywood, where they were living. And uh, they were very unusual people. She was sent to English lessons. She was taught Western cooking and Western sewing. And so my dad and his siblings were raised not in a completely traditional Japanese manner in Hollywood. And, um, so they lived there, uh, until the war. Um, Masajiro unfortunately died in 19, uh, 38 of tuberculosis and my grandmother and family really struggled. And I understand that then she went back to Japan to sell some land in, what is now Tokyo area, and I always think about, boy, if they hadn't sold that land, our family would be quite different. But in any case, the Kaihatsu's were ah evacuated at first to Santa Anita Assembly Center. And then they ended up at Heart Mountain, um, Relocation Center. My father, Omar was, uh, one of the first to leave. Uh, he was actually about 15, 16 years old at the time of evacuation, internment. And, um, being a young man, very restless, he was anxious to get out. So I understand he worked, uh, as a farm laborer picking vegetables for a short time, but eventually made his way to Chicago, probably about 1943 and stayed at the Lawson Y. And it was in Chicago where the selective service caught up to him and he was drafted into the segregated unit, the 442nd, um, RCT where he served in France and Italy. And then, um, in the meantime,

while the other Kaihatsu's were in Heart Mountain, the other, the next person to leave was my Aunt Martha and she was the oldest. She had actually gotten everybody to camp, um, you know, got rid of the house, the possessions, and she found a job in Chicago and got an apartment in Hyde Park. And then as the camps closed, uh, she brought her mother and the two youngest brothers from Heart Mountain to Chicago. Another one of Omar's older brothers was in the military intelligence service, the MIS. And when the war ended, my Uncle Art from the MIS, and then Omar from the 442, ended up coming back to Chicago where Martha had established the family and she was working in, in, at the Chicago Sun at that time, she had been a journalist at the Rafu Shimpo in Los Angeles. And as soon as she saw the family was settled, she decided to move on to New York where she had a career in advertising and Omar and his mother and the rest of the family stayed here. Um, now my mother's family

- AT: 00:06:09 Can I ask a question?
- JK: 00:06:09 Oh, oh, sure. Of course.
- AT: 00:06:13 So, uh, your dad is serving and then do you know about what year he actually came to Chicago?
- JK: 00:06:20 Um, 1945 or 46, I guess. Yeah.
- AT: 00:06:26 And then do you, do you know, um, like the ages of his eldest? Was Margaret the eldest?
- JK: 00:06:38 Yes, mhm.
- AT: 00:06:39 Do you know about how old she was at the time of the war?
- JK: 00:06:43 Um, let me see. She was born in 1920s, so she was 22, years old.
- AT: 00:06:49 And do you know, um, you said that she kind of, um, was charged with taking care of organizing the family. Um, was there a particular reason for that?
- JK: 00:07:02 Well, I think,
- AT: 00:07:05 With their father gone?
- JK: 00:07:05 Yes, I think when, uh, their, their father, he was ill for two years. So I, I think essentially, he was not really involved with the family since 1935. So she was like, uh, 15, 15, um, I guess kids

grew up a lot quicker in that age. And I know she had worked as a domestic in Beverly Hills, um, for some wealthy families there. And the other brother Arthur was at UCLA, he was in college and I think, um, the family really wanted him to succeed. So that's a, that's an interesting question, why it was Martha and not Arthur that was put in charge, but Martha had already been out working I think. And she's a very strong willed person, probably even back then. And um, just kind of took charge.

AT: 00:08:00 Um, thank you, yeah. I just wanted to clear that up before.

JK: 00:08:06 Of course. Uhuh.

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**<Begin Segment 3>**

AT: 00:08:06 So your, your mother's family?

JK: 00:08:08 Yes, my mother is from the San Francisco Bay Area. She's from a town called Alameda, which is across the Bay, near Oakland. And her parents, Jiro Yano is her father, and he came to the United States probably about the same time as my Masajiro did in 1906. Uh, Jiro had been in the Japanese Navy during the Russo-Japanese war as a sailor. Um, he was kind of a, I don't want to say ne'er-do-well cause it's a little bit too strong. But in the prefecture Fukuoka where he's from, he came from a well to do family. They had um, they owned land and, and people farmed the land for them. So he didn't really have much to do. And so he joined the Navy. Uh, he was actually in battle during the Russo-Japanese War. And then after the war was over, he joined the British Merchant Marines and sailed around the world. And when they came to San Francisco and the ship docked up, uh, I was told that he tested the tides and I think about it, they're supposedly shark infested waters, but somehow he figured that out and he jumped ship and swam to shore. And that's how he got to San Francisco and met up with some friends and then eventually, um, was working in, in, uh, as a domestic, I understand, and then, um, wanted to get married and wrote back to his village and Fukuoka. So my grandmother was from the same, uh, town or in the same area as he was versus the Kaihatsu's were from completely different areas. And my grandmother was one of um seven girls, I believe. And she was part samurai. She had, uh, her own servant and, but she was chosen to go to America and marry this guy. And it did not go over very well. And for the rest of her life, she vowed she would never return to Japan because she felt so betrayed. But

nonetheless, she did go over and marry him. And then they had three children, three daughters. And my mother, Rose is the youngest and the um family ran a grocers in Berkeley for awhile. Um, my grandfather Jiro also worked as a cook and the chef. And so they're, I guess involved with food. And then at the time of the Evacuation, they had a, um, grocery store in Berkeley, which they had to unload, but they decided that to try and evade the evacuation, they went to the Sacramento Area. And, uh, of course that doesn't work because the Exclusion Zone became the entire state of California. So my mother always told me that as she hated that aspect of, or that decision that her parents made because it meant that she was not evacuated with her friends and other people that she knew well from the Buddhist Temple, she was evacuated with strangers and she was very shy person. But they, so they ended up um, going to Tanforan Assembly Center and then she went to Gila River, Arizona, Assembly Center. And you know, made, made friends there. I'm not sure come to think of where the Alameda people did end up. I think they might've ended up at Topaz from the Bay Area, but in any case, she went to Gila River. And in her case, uh, the first one to leave camp was her middle sister, Yuri, who got a job in Chicago in, uh, Winnetka, actually for a wealthy family working as a domestic. And when Yuri had saved enough money to get her own apartment on the North Side in Uptown, she sent for my mother and her parents and in, an already married elder sister who had two children, actually two of my cousins were born in camp. And they all came to Chicago, probably around 1945 and lived in Uptown. And my mother was in her senior year of high school and she belongs the fact that she couldn't finish, um, high school in camp. She came to Sun High School on the North Side, again with complete strangers. Everybody knew each other by the time they're seniors. And so she always felt very alone. But she graduated. And then, uh, she and my dad met at a party and I can't recall right now whose party it was, but my dad took the L from the South Side up to the North Side. So it's, um, now the red line they call it. At that time it was the Dan Ryan and the Howard L, to visit her. And they were married in 1948. Um, initially they lived, um, at that address where I was born in North Park Avenue and North Avenue. And um, should mention it was a housing project at the time. It was public, public housing and there were other displaced persons from Europe. They called them DP refugees from Europe. And they were also African Americans. So it was a very interesting mixed area for my older brother to grow up in. I think he lived there until he was about seven or eight years old.

AT:

00:13:26

And you said you were about two years old?

JK: 00:13:28 Right when I moved. I, so I don't have any memory of North Park, you know, I just remember Jefferson Park.

AT: 00:13:36 Um, thank you. That's quite a comprehensive family history.

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**<Begin Segment 4>**

AT: Um, I wanted, I want to ask you, so you, you clearly have a lot of the details of, um, your family's experiences and trajectory, um, before and during the war, and after the war. Um, would, what is that process been like in learning your family's story? Is that coming, is that information coming from your parents themselves or?

JK: 00:14:19 Yes, I, I, from my mother, I would say mostly. And then the Kaihatsu side, I probably learned most of it from my Aunt Martha. So the two women that told us stories. Um, my mother has been really important in terms of making sure that we understood Japanese culture. I believe compared to my father, she had a more traditional Japanese upbringing or her parents are more traditional that way. She went to Japanese school. Um, when she was a, I know, think that my father in his family ever did go to Japanese school. I know they wanted just to be really American and, and Western as possible. So from my earliest memories, um, I, I don't think it was, although I might have felt shame about being Japanese, it was not something that my parents felt. I think it was something that I felt shame about being Japanese in reaction to how others were, were treating me. And in particular, um, I actually, I stopped at Jefferson Park, um, but I lived there until 1965 until I was eight years old. And then we moved to Park Ridge, which is far North or Northwest suburbs, that's all white. I do remember my mom saying that, um, uh, should we really move there? Because Park Ridge was not exactly a welcoming place where minorities, Ernie Banks, the famous baseball player, tried to, uh, buy a house in Park Ridge and was turned down. There were no African Americans, there were no Jews, in Park Ridge. So it was kind of a bold move on my parents' part to move there. But I don't recall that many racial incidents. I know my brother, my older brother did. He had was going to Lane Tech until we moved and then he went to Main South, uh, High School in Park Ridge. Hillary Clinton was there, at the time, it was her senior year. And he remembers her, but he did experienced some racial incidents, especially in, I could probably say this for a lot of us Sansei's growing up in the 60s and 70s, you know, no one

liked going to school on December 7th. It was an anniversary date that, uh, uh, we all dreaded. And I know I certainly dreaded, I know my older brother dreaded too. I think some, um, kid tried to urinate on him or something. Or snowballs, I know were routinely thrown at us, at me, I know, on December 7th.

AT: 00:17:03 Oh, well I want to, okay. That's something I definitely want to come back to. Um, but, uh, first I want to hear a little bit more about, um, kind of how, um, the communication with you and your mother in theory is about, was, was she open and, and your father too, did you grow up knowing about their experiences during the war or knowing that they went to camper? How was that information kind of passed on to you as far as you remembered?

JK: 00:17:46 Okay, I think, when I first learned about what the Internment camps were, it was a junior high school, I think seventh grade. But up until that point, all the time growing up, we would hear about other Nisei friends is, I know so-and-so from camp or so and so and I were in the same camp, so-and-so, we're in the, you know, they were in that camp and we were in this camp. And the entire time I, I think, I thought it was a summer camp, you know, was something fun or enjoyable because when they saw each other from camp or talked about camp, they didn't have misery or unhappiness or pain in their face. And in middle school, it might've come up in the history book or something like that. And I said, look at this camp the Japanese Americans were in. And I think then my mother said that we were in that camp too. And I said, you were I said, Oh really? And so she tried to explain it. And then about that time in the late 60s, early 70s, there was a spate of books coming out, America's Concentration Camp. Then the author escapes me now. Then Bill Hosokawa wrote this book when I was in high school, and Nisei the Quiet Americans. Um, there was the Black Power Movement, which in the West Coast translated into the Yellow Power Movement. So our cousins in California were becoming more actively involved about identity issues and things like that. So I think by that point, at least as far as my mom was concerned, it was very easy to talk about. And I asked a lot of questions too. I eventually became a history major in college. So I was always very interested in history and current events anyway.

AT: 00:19:32 And uh, so your, your mom is on, like, she was pretty open talking about those experiences?

JK: 00:19:39 Mhm.

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<Begin Segment 5>

AT: 00:19:39 Um, what are some, some, are there any memories or stories of either hers or your father's that kind of stick out to you or you know, when you think about, um, Kaihatsu, like your, uh um, I guess collective camp experiences. Are there any like?

JK: 00:20:02 Well, certainly. Things that, um, I've been told, um, by some people, but my mom told a lot of these stories too. Uh, Omar Kaihatsu was notorious. He was larger than life and uh, apparently and the long train ride to Heart Mountain, um, where the shades were drawn and it was very uncomfortable. Uh, there was an Issei man that kept picking on him for some reason in, in what manner, I'm not sure. But apparently when they got to fart, Heart Mountain, Omar got in a fight with this Issei man and punched him out. And this man fell and hit his head on a rock. And, uh, got Omar arrested for attempted murder. So they had to hire an attorney. Um, um, Issei man by the name of Mr. Fuji, who I believe resettled in Chicago too. But other people who I've met, like when I used to live in, in San Francisco and, or visit California and even, and even in Japan, I met a man that knew my dad in camp. And they used to call Omar the gangster. When he walk in the dining hall with his gang, he kicked open the door. Um, just things like that. He ended up in the Army boxing and, um, was just an, and then when he got out of the Army too and came to the Chicago before he was drafted, he was a, um, boxer at the Golden Gloves Gym and boxed in the Catholic Youth League. And we found, I found a little article where he actually won a, um, an award. We had, have the little medal, and he was written up in the Tribune about it. So that's, um, Omar Kahaitu's reputation in camp. Uh, he didn't really talk about any of the times there except it was boring. Uh, my Aunt Martha spoke a little bit more. She just said she remembers Congressman Norman Mineta who became Secretary Norman Mineta at Heart Mountain is a little boy and they would call him little Normy running around all over the place. Um, as far as the Kahaistu's his life in camp, I mean, I have pictures of my Uncle Gordon who was the Omar's youngest brother. He was a Boy Scout. And he had learned to play the bugle and he actually loved jazz music and, and that followed him the rest of his life. Oh, my mom, Rose, she was in middle school when she was at Gila River and she thought it was, it was really hot. Uh, there, there was a lot of sand. They did try and see if they could fry an egg on the

board. But, um, she doesn't have any unpleasant memories except for it being very hard to make friends. But she did make some friends and she's still talks about some friends from Gila River even today. Uh, coming to Chicago, oh, neither one of them really talked about what that experience was. And when I think about it now, out of all the relatives I had, you know, no one ever talked about what it was like, that transition, they just somehow they were in Chicago. Ah my father, I know, after the service, um, found some interesting artifacts in his drawer. He came home from Italy via Egypt via, so he was in Cairo, then he went to Sao Paulo, Brazil and then landed in New York and then went to Chicago via that way. And that was kind of interesting. He said if it weren't for the Army, he would've never seen the rest of the world at that young age. Um, so Omar was not really in camp very long. Um, I him, why didn't you resist, once, like the No-No Boys said and he said, because I didn't want to go to prison. I said, okay, that's a good answer. And my mother, um, yeah, again, she just, as a young teenager, she just, and a female, I guess just did what she was told and, and really didn't have to worry about anything. That was her older siblings concerns.

AT: 00:24:11 Well,

JK: 00:24:11 Oh, I, there is one story I do remember about my grandmother, which is kind of interesting. Um, my grandmother when she came to Chicago, ended up working as a maid at the Edgewater Beach Hotel cleaning and housekeeping. And this is a person that I mentioned was part Samurai, had had a servant, didn't want to be in the U.S. in the first place, right? And now is ended up working as hotel maid. Well, at one point during the early 1950s, I think just after my brother was born in 51', um, she had a psychotic episode. Where, um, she was brandishing a knife and she had locked my grandfather, uh, I believe he was also working in the Edgewater Beach Hotel in the kitchen as a chef. Um, she locked him out of the apartment and then finally, um, they had to, they called the doctor and in those days, men in white coats came to take you away, which was a stereotype. And she had to be taken away in a straight jacket. And she was hospitalized in inpatient psychiatric for by the week. And my mom said that she was very quiet when she saw the men in the white coats. Um, my mom felt that she felt profound, embarrassment, my grandmother. So she became very docile at that point. And after which she was fine. The doctor felt that she was just tired, tired from the war, tired from the Evacuation, the camp, to moving the Chicago, the harsh winter, working as a maid in the hotel and she just collapsed. And ever since then she's never, you know, had any incidents. But I kinda

think, you know, looking back of it, it's a wonder that more people didn't really, you know, crack up. When you think about it.

AT: 00:26:10 I think, I would argue that a lot of people have. But you know, It's just not really talked about.

JK: 00:26:17 Right. I do remember my mom saying that someone did. I said, when she told me that story about her grandma, her mother having a psychotic episode, I said, um, were there anything else she said? One man hung himself in Lincoln Park. And I don't know if it was an Issei or Nisei, but there was that notorious incident. But then she said, but everybody else was in the same situation. Everybody that we knew, you didn't have time to go crazy, you know, you just had to get back on your feet and keep going.

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**<Begin Segment 6>**

AT: 00:26:53 Are there in, in your own life, in your own experiences, has there been any, um, have you seen any like impacts of the Incarceration or Resettlement kind of, shape your own experiences in a way? Or any kind of legacies from these experiences play out in your own life?

JK: 00:27:23 Well, I think, um, being a Kaihatsu and knowing Omar's ah reputation. On one half of me I think, and then growing up in Park Ridge on top of that, far, far from the community, we did not see the Japanese community everyday, but my mother made sure that we went to a Japanese Christian Church. And she herself was raised Buddhist, but she maintained ties with both Buddhist Temples of the North Side and, and the Midwest Buddhist Temple. Um, so in on sense we, my brothers and sisters and I were not raised, uh, in a traditional Nikkei, now, if you can call it, manner. We were more outspoken. We were around, uh, Caucasians all day long. So, you know, that's how I think our, our personalities were formed. But yeah, and the other side, I think there is a, a shred of legacy in that we did not pursue, um, we were not out there too much. We were out, we were more perhaps outspoken or even aggressive than other Japanese Americans, but not to the extent of non-Japanese Americans of Caucasians, for example. I always felt more reticent, um, they had to measure up. And then another, uh, impart to the family, which is more Japanese, I don't think it was, has anything to do with the internment, but the concept of

shame and not embarrassing your family. And so, we're, I know, I felt very conscious of my actions. I was not going to do anything to cause, uh, unwanted attention to anything I did. So I didn't stand out. But, um, but I wasn't a failure, either. So.

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**<Begin Segment 7>**

- AT: 00:29:10 Um, but, and I, I think now I've kind of want to connect that to your experiences growing up in, in Chicago. Um, so, um, so at first your, your parents were in Old Town Area and then moved to Jefferson Park. And you said in 65' is when you moved to Park Ridge? Um, so that you would have been a little bit less than ten years old. Can you tell me about um, your, probably your first memories in the Jefferson Park area?
- JK: 00:30:03 Yes, um, Jefferson Park, at that time, was, um, not very city, like when you think about it, that is, for example, in this area of Lincoln Park where it's very dense. It was, it was more like a suburb. Now when I go there today, I think, wow, the houses are close together except for our house because we had a side yards. So we didn't have people really right next to us except on one side. And it was a very happy time for me because we could walk anywhere. Um, I remember when the expressway, the Kennedy Expressway was built and we watched it being built and being inaugurated and the school was nearby. We could walk to school and there's a school store that we could go to and buy candy. Um, my brother went to cub scouts, at the nearby by Church and, uh, there's was a firehouse I know we used to visit with a real Dalmatian dog. My younger sister Nancy used to play with the dog, so it was very pleasant. Now when I grew up later I found out that, um, uh, it was a very, uh, racially segregated area. There's a lot of, uh, whites to, didn't take kindly to African American's. And my mom said there was a Black police officer, young man who tried to rent the apartment cause he was stationed at the Jefferson Park station and he was nearly run out. He couldn't. And I, I wanna to say there was a anti-Martin Luther King demonstration but, I can't be sure completely. But anyway, there's a lot of unpleasantness going on and racial hostility. But I don't recall feeling any of it. And again, my older brother may have had a different story.
- AT: 00:31:51 Were there other, um, Japanese American families or even Asian?

JK: 00:31:55 Yeah, actually there was, and maybe I wonder if that was the reason why we moved to Jefferson Park. There was one family, the Katahira's who lived close by and they were members of our church, Christ Church of Chicago. And up until fairly recently, Mrs Katahira lived there, I think until two years ago. Yeah, but they were the only ones I don't. Oh, and there was a Chinese family. We used to get Chinese food there, from the Moi's.

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**<Begin Segment 8>**

AT: 00:32:24 And, um, what kind of, besides school and church, were you involved in any of their activities with as a kid?

JK: 00:32:34 Um, once I grew up in, we moved to Park Ridge. Yes. Um, oh, I, myself, I uh, from about middle school, I guess when all my interests in the camps in Japanese things came about. Um, we, uh, went for Japanese dancing, odori, through the Shizako Imbei Dance Troupe and Ms. Imbei was a member of the Buddhist Temple of Chicago and so all the instructors and other members who are, um, primarily members from there. So we took that every Sunday. My sisters and I, and even my brother did classical dancing for a while. My young, my younger brother had, um, well in birth order, my older brother, Donald, uh, I don't think he took judo, but he was involved in the Nisei Ambassadors Drum and Bugle Corps for several years. And they were based out of the Buddhist Temple of Chicago. And I was a color guard in the junior corps for awhile. But I know that was a big part of our growing up, going to all his practices and then parades and exhibition. We follow the corps all summer long and still have lifelong friends from that experience. My parents did, and even, I do via my brother, Don. A my younger brother Eddie went to, um, well, we all went to Japanese school. Um, me, Eddie, Nancy, and Anne and that's how I know your grandmother Takada Sensei through Japanese school. Um, Eddie went to judo and he also, um, play kendo. And it was actually from kendo that he, uh, acquired a love of, of fencing, foil fencing, and he became an accomplished fencer in high school, uh, in college. And then in university, um, he became, uh, the assistant women's fencing coach at Northwestern for awhile and he's still fences today. So that was from BTC. Nancy and Anne uh, and Eddie too, they, um, played ah softball and basketball in the Chicago Nisei Athletic Association. I because I have bad eyes, and I played the violin, was not doing any sports. I wasn't involved in that. But I would go to their games and when I learned to drive, drive them around, so I was a part of it

too. And my peers at Tri-C were involved in those sports, um, activities too, but I couldn't participate in those or I chose not to.

AT: 00:35:07 Hmm. Um, can you tell me a little bit more about the drum and bugle corps? Maybe what, what they did? You said they met out of BTC?

JK: 00:35:18 Mhm, okay. They, were, as I understand it, it was, in those days and it still might be, the drum and bugle corps were sponsored by the American Legion is a, as a youth activity and this includes non-Japanese communities, all communities had these drum and bugle corps throughout the country. And this one, um sponsored by the Nisei Post was open to youth. I think he had to be 13 from 13 until 21 years old. And then you aged out. So they formed themselves as the Nisei, Nisei Ambassadors. And it was kids from all over. And then I understand there were some Chinese kids, although Chinese, Chinatown had their own band. And then there are some African American kids that came from the South Side. And I don't to this day, I was wondering how did they find out? But they, but they did come and uh, practiced music too. That's where some, you know, learned about music. But it was, uh, a youth activity in supposedly to keep kids busy. So they would meet for rehearsal either at BTC. And when the corps got too big, they used to meet at the Broadway Armory over on North Broadway. I think it's near Granville. And have practices there. We had fundraisers, fundraising for uniforms and at the beginning, all the mothers, sewed the uniforms, except for the pants. They used to wear purple satin blouses. And I remember my mom, sewing my brothers and making sashes and things like that. And then finally they had, um, enough money, um, to buy real uniforms, band to look like band uniforms and of course instruments were purchased by the corps. So it was a huge enterprise. They'd start off with a small van and eventually got a big truck. Um, people would cook, make um onigiri, rice balls, and chicken teriyaki. And my older brother Don told me that one of the, uh, African American boys when he got married to an African American woman, he made her learn how to make onigiri and chicken teriyaki because he loved it so much. So I thought that was very, uh, cute. Uh, but it was just a wonderful time. Everybody had a lot of fun. Everybody got along and then as the corps grew and became better, they would win competitions and then they start competing on a national level. I remember going to Washington D.C. and New York for competitions. It was very exciting. It was a family vacation for us. They performed on the capital, steps. Um, was, you know, Inouye must've been in Congress, Senator Daniel Inouye must have been in Congress at that time, and also

ah representative Spark Matsunaga from Hawai'i I think was there too. To welcome and. I remember we did get a tour of the White House and tours of other places in Washington, D.C. through that corps, drum corps trip.

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**<Begin Segment 9>**

AT: 00:38:19 Oh, so it sounds like your, your family is very involved with, you know, the greater Japanese American community in the city, at that time. Um, a lot of this was happening while you were, you all were living in Park Ridge?

JK: 00:38:36 Yes, mhm.

AT: 00:38:38 And so would you be commuting to different places in the city?

JK: 00:38:43 Yes, um, Monday through Friday we were Park Ridge people going to school and Saturdays in the evenings, Saturdays and Sundays we were in the city going to church, going to these sporting events. Um, one reason I think that was responsible for the Kaihatsu kids getting, um, spread around different places. My father, Omar ran an insurance agency. He had his own insurance agency, so he insured just about everybody and everything. And that's how he got to know people, not from just Tri-C, but the Buddhist temples and the other Christian churches, as well. And uh he also had another side business, the Japanese cinema, which he ran at Francis Parker school. Um, he rented the auditorium on Saturday and Sunday to bring, uh, films from Japan, um, which at that time, the only place you could probably see it was at an art movie house. And even then they weren't showing Japanese films very much. It was mostly from Europe and, um, but he would show a modern film, a contemporary film and uh, the called chanbara or a period film, samurai film. Each time there would be three showings, a Saturday night, uh, Sunday matinee, a Sunday evening show. And at first it was mostly community, but then as word got out, we have all kinds of film lovers. And my mother took the tickets and we also served ah Japanese tea and rice crackers uh free of charge at intermission. But my mother said that she remembers, um, she called him a fat kid with glasses coming in and to watch movies. And we think it was probably Roger Ebert. Cause eventually Roger Ebert called Omar and he wrote a story about, you know, this guy showing, uh, Japanese films. And later, um, I ran into Roger Ebert maybe about 15 years ago and he was so funny. I said, hi Roger, you know, my father used to

run a Japanese films I wanted to thank you for, and he goes, "Wait, wait! Don't tell me, Omar Kaihatsu!" Like that. And he just said. Oh, I just wanted to say thank you for the publicity. But he, he was telling the guy who's there from facets, multimedia. He said her dad was a voice in the wilderness showing foreign films when nobody else would touch it. So we were grateful to Roger Ebert for that. And then when John Belushi on Saturday Night Live, had his samurai gig, my mom remembered him coming in to watch the movie. Second City was not far away from Francis Parker and he must've sat in those horrible. His character we believe is Toshiro Mifunae, um, and my dad loved Toshiro Mifunae and we should probably just about every film that Mifunae ever made. So I think that's where that samurai, um, character comes from. So again, another reinforcement of Japanese culture that's, you know, very unusual that I'm sure other Japanese American kids did not get. Um, so in one sense I, I didn't feel shame about being Japanese American well, I loved the culture, but yet I, I did do want to fit into that Park Ridge culture, community life style. And I always did feel different. So in my own personal case, I feel I've always been an outsider. I've been an outsider in the mainstream world because I was Japanese, but within, in my own Japanese American community, I felt like an outsider too. So it's just maybe why I went to Japan for nine years.

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**<Begin Segment 10>**

AT:	<u>00:42:33</u>	Can you tell me more about, um, why you felt like an outfit or even in the Japanese American community?
JK:	<u>00:42:39</u>	Uh, because I, um, I felt like an outsider in the Japanese American community, um, for a couple reasons. One because I'm physically a lot taller than everybody. I'm five, five and everybody was, was small and thin and I felt enormous. The other thing was we did not live in the city. So a lot, particularly Tri-C a lot of the people um the other Sansei, saw each other during the week at high school or school, and then they'd see each other in church. And so they were all really good friends. I'd only see them once a week at best. And the other thing was I did not have that natural reticence that I see in a lot of Japanese Americans. I, again, I was used to dealing with Caucasians with hakujins every single day for sur, to survive. And it was just a part of who I was. And my, my mother not as much, she's very shy. But my father was not shy about anything, about dealing with anybody. So, um, he was like a big role model for me. So

that's why I felt, um, outside. It wasn't that anyone was mean to me or anything like that, but I think that's how, uh, the Japanese psyche is, it's not what they say, it's what they don't say. It's not what they do, it's what they don't do. And it was pretty clear to me.

AT: 00:44:02 When, when you would make these trips into, into the city, um, were your, your friends and your connections here was mostly everyone, Japanese American or?

JK: 00:44:15 Yes, mhm, I would say. Yes.

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**<Begin Segment 11>**

AT: 00:44:19 And uh, I also want to just ask a little bit more about the, the Japanese cinema program.

JK: 00:44:25 Sure.

AT: 00:44:26 Um, so how do you know how your dad got involved or interested in doing that? And, and around what time was that, also?

JK: 00:44:43 Okay. In the early 60s, I want to say about maybe 63' or 1964. The Buddhist

AT: 00:44:51 Like before [inaudible]?

JK: 00:44:52 Right. The Buddhist Temple of Chicago, BTC, was showing Japanese movies in their social hall. I don't know how that came about, but I do remember going to that. And then for some reason, oh, it was, it was a fundraiser, I believe, at the Uptown Theater. This movie called Samurai Rebellion was shown, on the big screen. And it was the first time that I had seen a, a Japanese film on a big screen like that. We had seen it in the social hall and I was just blown away. And I think because of my father's own upbringing as the son of an actor in Hollywood and for all the, the older, the Nisei Kaihatsu's, the interest in film never left them. And so probably seeing what was going on at the BTC gave him the idea, well, why not do this? So he needed a venue. And then, um, he contacted a woman named Mary Sabusawa who was, uh, working at Francis Park, Parker School. Mary Sabusawa's sister was Pat Suzuki. Pat Suzuki's real name is Sabusawa. And so with this kind of showbiz, uh, angle, I guess,

Mary Sabusawa was supportive and went to the board at Francis Parker School to allow my father who did not have a child attending the school or anything, uh rent the auditorium. Now how he got the connections to the, the Japanese studios, I'm not sure. He might've, um, contacted why I'm thinking the most logical thing is he contacted people, in Los Angeles, his hometown, because Los Angeles, New York, San Francisco, all had up and running Japanese movie theaters. It was called the Toho La Brea at the time. But the major Japanese studios, Toho Studios and Sochiku Films had freestanding movie theaters near Little, Lil' Tokyo. And that's probably where he got, uh, in touch with the studios and talked with negotiations for them to ship, uh, the films, the films used to come, um, via air freight to our house in Park Ridge, these giant films. And then my father, um, set up a projection, projector in our basement and screen them to make sure, cause some of the films were a little bit more liberal in terms of sex than, uh, American standards towards. So he would actually edit those parts out and splice it together and then put it back together when he shipped it back to, uh, California or Japan.

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**<Begin Segment 12>**

AT:                    00:47:31            Do you, uh, when you came into the city, did your family go to oh, any Japanese American or businesses or do you remember any restaurants or kind of the, the fabric of the, geographic neighborhood too?

JK:                    00:47:50            Um, coming, well, the only place you could get Japanese food, was Star Market. And Star Market's owners, Howard and Sarah Hatanaga, were members of Tri-C Christ Church, our church. But I remember it was a tiny store front under the L tracks on Clark Street, just south of Wrigley Field. And we were not, we kids were not allowed inside. So it was a big mystery three, cause my mother said it was too small and when I finally was able to get in there, she was right. It was too small. I mean everyone was small then so you could barely get through the aisles. But it was the only place where they had, um, Japanese food. And then for our birthdays, and actually for birthday parties, the goodie bags that I always gave away were, um, little Japanese candies called Tomoe Ame. And it had rice paper wrapped on it. And we used to get that at Toguri's Store on Belmont, near Clark, uh, Toguri's Mercantile, where we would later, when we went to, uh, Obon, odori practice at the Buddhist temples, we would buy our yukata there and things, but Toguri's was the place to buy

Japanese goods. And I always remember going in there. Had a very distinct aroma, and I guess it was incense, made me think, or plana wood or something. But this always reminds me of Japan going in there. Uh, for special occasions, birthdays when we could, um, in the early 60s, there was a restaurant, I believe it was in Lincoln Park West called Nakanoya. And they actually had tatami rooms. Um, but they had a whole cutout because no one can sit that way, at that time. So we had Skiyaki and that was a very big deal. I can only remember going there two or three times. But later on, um, another restaurant we used to go to, well prior to that, but this wasn't particularly Japanese food, but it was called Crest. And it wasn't far from Star Market. What street is that? Is that, Racine? It might be Racine. And it's across the, cross away from Nisei Lounge. But, um, we used to call it Crest or Susie's, but.

AT: 00:50:07 On Sheffield?

JK: 00:50:07 Was it Sheffield?

AT: 00:50:08 Yeah, Nisei Lounge was on Sheffield.

JK: 00:50:09 Okay. No, it was, it was further west, but not far.

AT: 00:50:14 Okay that's Racine.

JK: 00:50:14 Is that Racine?

AT: 00:50:14 Uhuh.

JK: 00:50:14 And it was a diner though, run by an Issei woman and you could get rice with hamburger and gravy on it. But I always liked their hamburger with, on a toasted buttered bun. So we'd go there. And then later on in the late 60s, um, Kamehachi opened up and Kamehachi is a famous chain from Japan. But the woman Marianne Konishi decided that she was going to open up a sushi restaurant. Which growing up in the Midwest, I almost never ate. I didn't eat sushi, cause we couldn't get fresh fish here. And, and so I didn't even know what, sushi was. To me, sushi was inari sushi or nori maki, not sashimi type sushi. So Marianne Konishi, who had been recently divorced, um, decided to import some Sushi chefs here. And her daughter, Angie, who's a good friend of mine, um, and, and Marianne was a friend of my father's cause he ended up insuring the place too. But Mari, uh, but Angie and her sister thought that her mother had lost her mind and that Angie and her sister were never going to go to college because her mother had just taken their college money

to sink into this restaurant. And kind of how, she was located right across the street from Second City on Wells. And it did really well. And we used to go there for every birthday because they had yakitori, which was something else that was very unusual. We had, we were used to regular chicken teriyaki, but yakitori was something new. They had authentic Japanese food. We never did learn to like the uh sashimi, but it was okay, because we were five kids and it was too expensive anyway, so. So those were the main places who went to. Then later on, Matsuya Restaurant opened up in the Wrigleyville area f Clark Street, just south of Wrigley Field. Um, there was a time, there was a restaurant called Koto, which is now near, um, no, which is now the location of Renga Tei in Lincolnwood. Um, most recently there was the Sunshine Cafe, uh, on Clark Street. And then out in the suburbs there were a Teppanyaki restaurants, the Benihanas, um, the Ron of Japan. But we didn't really go to them very often. I think in our case because of the five kids, it was a matter of cost, but I don't know. Um, I do know we went once, to Ron of Japan, as a family and once to Benihana. And then of course Rocky Aoki, had kind of an unusual reputation I guess, too.

AT: 00:52:57 Um, I just want to make sure we're coming up on, on time.

JK: 00:53:01 Sure.

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**<Begin Segment 13>**

AT: 00:53:03 And um, just a few more questions. Uh, I wanted to, kind of take it back to, um, when you were describing your experiences kind of growing up, going through through the schools in Park Ridge. Um, I guess, could you just, um, also revisit some of the things that you saying and like kind of dreading December 7th, and things like that. How would you describe, um, your experiences growing up? You know, as a Sansei, as a Japanese American, however you identified in Park Ridge, at that time?

JK: 00:53:45 Well, in, in elementary school, um, although I was scared to death, I remember that first grade I was, I was in third grade going to that school in Park Ridge. Um, but it was fine. The teacher was very welcoming. Um, I made friends, um, with a lot of different girls. In fact, her mother, she was blonde and I had black hair, and she used to call us the salt and pepper shakers and you know, birthday parties. Everything seemed very normal. And then, um, my mom, um, uh always made sure to

introduce to my friends, um, Japanese culture too. I was very lucky. My Kaihatsu grandmother, uh, had a cousin who worked in a department store in Nagaya. And when I was born, she ordered a doll set for me the Heena Matsuri doll, the complete doll set. It was probably \$1,000 at the time or something. I can't believe it. But we would put it up every Girl's Day, on March 3rd. And then my mom said I could invite a couple of friends over for lunch and we would look at dolls. We didn't have Japanese food. We had I think grilled cheese sandwiches and soup and cake. And then we would look at the dolls and that happened every year. Um, through middle school, I don't recall being bullied. Just December 7th was touchy, again, not that anyone did anything, cept, a couple of boys would throw snowballs at me and say, you know, they wouldn't say Jap go home or anything. Uh, one guy used to call me made in Japan, but it was kind of enough, a term of endearment. He's actually still a friend of mine today from fifth grade, but I just felt that everybody was looking at me, when they ever mentioned Japan and in particular the bombing of Pearl Harbor. I just felt very uncomfortable. The war had only been over for 20 years. When I think about it in the 60s and 70s. Um, high school was not a problem. High school I was more, um, comfortable with myself and in fact, history teachers would let me take over the entire period and talk about the internment and I would show them pictures from the books, like Bill Hosakawa's book and the American Concentration book, um, American Concentration Camp book is, that's all, all we had. So that was not a problem. To be honest, I actually experienced more racial prejudice at the University of Illinois in Urbana because I was going to school with people from downstate Illinois, ah, who had never seen an Asian in person, in the flesh, before. And brought up a lot of prejudices. So I think that's when I felt more, um, overt racism was at U of I. And to this day, I, I graduated from U of I in East Asian history, but I don't have a lot of fond memories. You know, I'm not a huge alumni fan, things like that. It was, it was okay. It was a place to get a degree.

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**<Begin Segment 14>**

AT:

00:56:54

So clearly a lot of, um, people from outside the Japanese American community, have really picked up on, this history given, you know, some of the you know contemporary issues. Uh, you know, the general political climate. Um, what, what are your, what are your hopes, for, for future generations, um, especially in regards to this history? Like what do you hope

people to kind of take away or learning or, um, you know, what legacies do you hope people to understand from the incarceration?

JK:

00:57:47

I think the most important thing is that, uh, when America, the population of the United States is a diverse country. Uh, is a diverse, diverse population, there's all kinds of people from all different kinds of countries. And ways of thinking and different religion. And that the Japanese American population, at the time of Pearl Harbor, was easily targeted and it was very small and very voiceless. And I think that the, this, um, uh, the title of the exhibit at the Alphawood Gallery really struck me As They Came For Us. And I had never really thought about it that way, to be honest. But that's exactly what happened was they were targeted, they were marginalized and had been for s, you know, sometime, but in one sense, who, if you're not white, who hasn't been marginalized. And even Italians and Irish, were marginalized. Um, but knowing that they were, ah Japanese Americans were targeted, marginalized and then, um, ignored by most of the mainstream. Of course, the American Friends Service Committee tried to speak up, they were too small. Once they were in camp, the Maryknoll, um, sect tried to be helpful. But, um, most people, um, didn't speak up. The times were different. You didn't challenge authority, but now, times, you should challenge authority and people have. And that's what I hope that people, um, the legacy is that you cannot, when, when, uh, injustice is happening to a group of people, you cannot be silent cause this is the consequence. Now, of course, more people were born than died in the internment camps. But it was, it's still a terrible stain, on the history of the United States and the hypocrisy for what we all stand for. And not to mention, I will be very blunt, economic loss. I mean, my grandparents had a grocery store, Kaihatsu family had homes, you know, many people had farms, lands that would be worth millions had they stayed, I mean, my, you know, my father's neighbors on Santa Monica Boulevard today, if they still had that property in Northern California, if they still had that grocery store in downtown Berkeley. Oh my goodness, you know. So that economic loss was really never addressed. Yes, they received \$20,000. But I had heard that at the time of the moratorium during the Vietnam War when protestors were arrested, um, without, cause they were awarded something like \$40,000 in compensation for like two or three days of unjust imprisonment. Whereas people like my mother spent entire three years in internment camp. So it's, it's costly to United States when we go against our principles. And in today's climate, uh, it's getting dangerously towards that way to people of color who don't have loud voices and don't have people

advocating for them. Um, I think it's unfortunate, if every single Japanese American did advocate for these marginalized minorities, it still might not do any good, but it's good to see that exhibits like these, get exposed to other groups of people who may stand up for the others. Uh, I as a Japanese American people, um, I think that we are getting smaller and smaller in numbers. I do worry that the story will disappear, but as long as there's ah people who like put together this exhibit, think about it and these pictures and artifacts, uh, continue to exist, I would hope that the story be told again and again. And, and the descendants of the internees too, though they may be getting fewer in number. I hope they, they still keep talking about it. I know I do. I, I was at the Women's March and I made two giant posters of internment camp pictures. I said, never again. I just carried them around and got people talking about it and they said, yeah, that's right. That was such an interesting march cause there were so many issues that were brought up that, um, had that were deeply upsetting to people. And I thought, I have to make sure I have to do my part that this issue is not going to be buried. That we will continue to talk about it.

AT: 01:02:28 We are five minutes over an hour.

JK: 01:02:31 Okay.

AT: 01:02:31 Um, do you have time for one more

JK: 01:02:35 Yes I do. Yeah, actually.

AT: 01:02:37 Um, sorry, I'm just trying to cram.

JK: 01:02:39 No, not at all.

AT: 01:02:39 Everything in, all at the end.

JK: 01:02:42 It went fast.

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**<Begin Segment 15>**

AT: 01:02:45 Um, you have such a distinct recollection of the Japanese American community and, and a unique insight, just given how involved you were and your family was.

JK: 01:02:59 Mhm.

AT: 01:02:59 Um, I would love it if you could describe, um, you know, what the Japanese American community was like from your upbringing in the 60s and 70s in Chicago. Um, and then if you could describe how you see the Japanese American community today?

JK: 01:03:22 Okay. From, from what I understand, like, um, from my church, Christ Church of Chicago started in 1948 and there was, there was a lot of fear among the, the Jap, relocated Japanese Americans themselves and there's fear and suspicion on the mainstream society. And the FBI was watching people who are leaving church and people didn't think much Japanese culture, didn't want to know, and things like that. And so I think the community, um, this professor told me that kind of collapsed in on itself and was very tight. Um, and I think it goes back to what my mother said too why, you know, people didn't like lose it all over the place because everybody had been in the same situation. And I think it's part of the Japanese psyche all for one is we're all going to lift each other up and you, whatever issues that you're having, you're just going to have to pull them aside. Cause we gotta get going here. We have to become Americans. We have Sansei coming along now and we are just gonna make it and we're not going to cause trouble and we're just going to get on with our lives. So I think with the Nisei, that's exactly what they did. They didn't want to talk about camp. Maybe some felt shame and anger and hurt, but I, I didn't see it because I think my parents were of that ilk. there's an expression in Japanese, I learned, called maemuki, which means face forward. And that's what they did. You're just gonna face forward and keep going. So we followed the Kaihatsu family, my personally, family followed the same trajectory as the rest of mainstream America. In the 50s and 60s. We bought, upward mobility. We bought a house in Park Ridge. Kids went to good schools. Um, and I think in the city as well, the greater Japanese community, was trying to do the same thing. Everybody got jobs, they worked hard, but they still wanted to main, um, maintain contact with each other. And I think, um, for the, for the Nisei it was because the social ties were still very closed to them. They weren't as closed to me, but I know my, my mother, why didn't she joined the Park Ridge junior league or something like that? I don't think she felt comfortable, you know, that she still wanted to associate with her own kind. And that's what they did. Particularly since she was Buddhist too. So we had friends at Midwest Buddhist Temple, which was the sect that she was from, even though we did a lot at, at BTC too. So, um, you know, we, we, you had the youth activities with the drum corps. You had the Chicago Nisei Athletic Association with all those sports teams and you understand there's a thousand kids

at one time participating in all these games, especially the Softball Diamonds at Grand Park. And uh, it was, it was growth. It was positive. The older Sansei came along in the late 60s, uh, probably influenced by their cousins on the West Coast with Yellow Power and ethnic identity, wanting to know more about Japanese culture, who we are, where we came from. Uh the Vietnam, I didn't talk about the Vietnam War at all. Uh, I think that definitely had a divisive, um, aspect in the community. I know, um, it was very painful to look at pictures of the Vietnam War and see American, white American soldiers attacking and killing Asian people. You know, I know I felt terrible looking at them. My, um, older brother and my father had arguments about the war. My older brother Dan was just lucky enough that every time the lottery numbers came up, and they were printed in the newspaper, he pulled a very high number. He still had to report to the draft, but he wasn't going to get, um, drafted because the number was too high. And my father had served and, and uh against this will actually, he said he didn't really want to go, but he didn't want to go to prison. So he felt my brother and one of my cousins who was an out now draft dodger, he went to Canada. Um, um, that they should serve. That was their duty. So, you know, I didn't hear too much about the publicly, so I knew that if it was going on in my family, it had to be these kinds of arguments had to be going on in other families too. Um, between the Nisei, who you know, came from the highly decorated 442 and the Sansei who didn't want to go, who were by and large went to college, and were anti-war protesters. There are, um, Sansei Vietnam vets. I saw them. I never talked to them. I kind of regret, some of them have passed away too. They must have had really interesting stories. Uh, and in the 70s, there were a lot of, there was the Obondori, odori, the Ginza holiday. There were the, all these events where you would see everybody and then you had church picnics. Um, the JASC had a picnic and the JACL had a picnic too. And those were mostly attended by the Nisei, but the Sansei kids came along too and ran the games. And it was a time to reconnect with everybody. Now, as the 80s came along and I myself moved away from Chicago for awhile. Um, there was more, uh, interracial marriage among the Sanseis. And Sansei did not return to the city, for example, where they had grown up, they went out to the suburbs. We were already in the suburbs, actually, I came into the city to Andersonville. I did the opposite, but by and large, the other Sanseis went to the suburbs and their kids went to school out there. So by the 80s, you start seeing fracturing and, and a dissipate, dilution, I guess. The events are still happening. The churches are still there, but they're not as strong, anymore and if we fast forward to today, Christ Church there, everybody, I don't think there's a church or

temple that's really folded but we're hanging on by our fingernails and there's some doubt of well no, I guess there's no doubt that it's going to continue as a Japanese American entity. But whether these events will still happen, is probably in question and I think it, it makes people sad. It makes me a little bit sad. But at the same time, um, though when you look at the mechanics or what had happened to the community, it's natural, how could it not become this way? Um, is that a legacy of the internment? Um, it could be by being, the Nisei pounding into us, you know, we have to succeed, we have to get along. We don't make waves. And then racist mainstream society moved on to other groups and left the Japanese alone. You know, you know, so maybe that's part of the problem too. If Japan had not been rehabilitated then maybe we would still be at a tighter community. If you look at the African American community, which in the eyes of the white mainstream has never been rehabilitated despite a Black president, you know, and you will still find enclaves. You know, in Atlanta for example. Maybe when I think back now from 1948 when people were terrified of sneaky Japs and today, so sushi is sold at Dodger Stadium. Everywhere you go you can get, sushi, bento. It's really amazing how far the perception of Japanese has come. And that made me think about the Muslim community. If the Japanese community, of course it did take 75 years or so, um, can be rehabilitated and accepted and admired even among the mainstream society, wouldn't that happen to the Muslim community. It's just right now, we don't, we're afraid, people are afraid. They don't know much about them. There's not voices speaking for them. You know, I would hope so. I would like to think that America is that kind of community that because of what happened to our community, injustice, but rebirth and growth and acceptance, that it will happen to others who are marginalized too. That's, that to me, I hope is the greatness of the America in the future that I would like to see for future generations.

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**<Begin Segment 16>**

AT:	<u>01:12:13</u>	Oh, well thank you so much for coming.
JK:	<u>01:12:16</u>	You're welcome.
AT:	<u>01:12:16</u>	And sharing. Um, before we wrap up, is there anything that you'd like to add or that I might have missed?

JK: 01:12:24 Umm. Um, well I do have a detailed um, memory. I, I also was the chapter president of the Chicago Japanese American Citizen League. So that put me in a lot of contact with, with people. So I guess I was in kind of a, I was the youngest Sansei and first Sansei, a woman president, at the time, and I was the youngest uh at the time. I was 25 when I became the chapter president of JACL, 1982.

AT: 01:13:00 And, and what, um, I mean, I apologize, cause, I, I have a lot more questions, but I know

JK: 01:13:11 Oh, okay. No, it's alright.

AT: 01:13:12 Cause we're short on time.

JK: 01:13:12 Sure.

AT: 01:13:12 Um

JK: 01:13:15 I'm okay.

AT: 01:13:15 But I guess, quickly before we wrapped up, um, what, since you brought up your position, what inspired you to to go for that position?

JK: 01:13:26 Um, well, my father, Omar had been on the board. So that's how I got in involved in, in JACL. And, um, nobody else would do it. I remember we came to that point, we are at a board meeting, so who's going to be the president? Jane, why don't you be the president. I don't know how to be the president?! And he said, well, why don't you be the? I don't. We'll support you. That's what the Nisei said. And so I said, okay. I'll be the president. And that again, kind of makes me an outlier about, uh, you know, being a typical Japanese American. Okay, fine, I'll do it. You know, so, and they did the Nisei did support me here at the, at the local level. And when I went to, um, a national convention in Gardena later that year, everybody was stunned when they heard a Jane Kaihatsu, they thought I was a Nisei, woman. And they could not believe that a Sansei young woman was the president of Chicago. And I was not the first Sansei, however, but, um, and that's a huge difference between the communities on the West Coast and in, you know, east of the Mississippi. They were willing to take that chance and it was a great opportunity. I have to thank them, you know, became a poised person. I got to meet the Mayor of Chicago, Jane Byrne at the time. I sat right next to her and cause our names were Jane and uh, she was, she's was very intimidating, you know,

cause she's running this big city. But what a great opportunity. Um, and to work with different generations. Prior to that I had the Nisei were always, you know, are my parents' friends. But when I worked in, um, when I was president, JACL really gave me a unique chance to relate to them as adults and peers. And that made me grow up really fast. It was also, uh, an exciting time too, cause they had started the commission on wartime relocation and internment of civilians and they were holding hearings all over. And I was, I was the president. I was wasn't really involved in setting up the hearings, but it was really fascinating to watch the Nisei and some of the older Sansei prep witnesses and get organized for it. It was a great learning experience for me to see that kind of process.

AT: 01:15:49 So I guess what you're saying is, we'll have to get you back in for a whole other

JK: 01:15:50 I forget.

AT: 01:15:55 About those experiences.

JK: 01:15:55 Uhuh

AT: 01:15:58 Yeah, thank you so much.

JK: 01:16:00 Oh, you're quite welcome.

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