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Title: Junji Sarashina Interview
Narrator: Junji Sarashina
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 16>

NW: Now, you must have come back to the States pretty shortly after the war.

JS: Yes, I went to the Dōshisha for a while.

NW: Oh, no kidding? So you were in Kyoto?

JS: Yeah, just for one year or so.

NW: So, what, it must have been right after the war, then?

JS: Yeah. 194 . . . I don't remember the exact year when I came back to the United States, 1949?
Or so. Let's put it, 1949. I think it was '49.

NW: That's early though.

JS: Yeah?

NW: Yeah, well, comparatively speaking. So, where did you go?

JS: Okay. I decided to come back, and then got on *President Wilson* and went to Honolulu. And then that's when I said bye-bye to some of the friends and they all went to the stateside, United States side. And I went to Lahaina Maui, Oahu Island.

NW: So you went to Hawai'i?

JS: That's where my dad had built the church.

NW: Yeah, wait a minute, though. So your father was already back in Japan, but did he go back to Hawai'i?

JS: No, no, no.

NW: He stayed in Japan.

JS: He stayed in Hiroshima-ken. They called it Akitakata-shi. Now, it's a *shi*, see, it's not *gun*, Takata-shi.

NW: So he was in Japan, but you decided to come to Hawai'i.

JS; Yeah, all by my self.

NW: Well, how, why did you decide to do it?

JS: I think, I was looking at the situation in Japan, and what I know about the United States, I said, probably it's much more comfortable to go to Hawai'i and make living. Talked to my father, and he says, if you feel like going back to Hawai'i, I can make an arrangement for you to go back to Maui, Lahaina. So, I was, I went to Lahaina, and then I was determined to go to Lahaina Laguna high school, which is a dormitory system.

NW: So you kinda went back in terms of your schooling because, yeah, you were already a college student in Dōshisha?

JS: Yeah, English was the main thing, see. English. And they, the people in the Laguna high school, they says, maybe it's good for you to learn English some more, something in there.

NW: Right, right. So did you get to school at the same time as working? Or did you go to school . . .

JS: Oh, okay. This dormitory system is Lahaina high school, it used to be an old King Kamehameha school. And a lot of Hawaiian blood was in there too. But they have a working system. They have a cattle field, farm field, chicken, and shops and automotive. So, you earn your living by working there . . .

NW: But you are also a school student at the same time?

JS: Yeah, yeah, yeah. In the dormitory, since I was older than the rest of the people, they gave me, sooner or later, assignments, jobs, you know, help with the kids and what not. So I was lucky, in a way, you know.

NW: You were 20 years old at that time, right?

JS: Yes, something like that. Then, when I was school, the funny part about it is, of course, you know, my main goal was to learn English. So the teachers were very helpful. They said, Junji, if you want to learn English, you can't learn Pidgin English, but I was very bad.

NW: I'm not really familiar with that.

JS: Okay, next time you go to Hawai'i, you'll hear Pidgin English. They call it Pidgin English, strong accent. The Japanese and English learned combined, they combine many words together, so it's hard to understand.

NW: So it's a mixture of Japanese and English. Okay.

JS: They use a lot of "that kind, that kind, that kind of story, you know that." [laugh]

NW: Oh, okay. Yeah.

JS: And teacher helped me, I remember, putting a candle in front of me and trying to talk English. And after a certain teacher they said, Junji come and clean up my yard for me, you know, so I did gardening work for them. And then one of the senators from Hawai'i, or congress, or senate, whatever you call it, uh, he had a summerhouse in Lahaina. The present Kaanapali where they have all the tourist hotels out there, he had a summerhouse there, so, he said, can you take care that for me? So I said, okay. So, my roommate is an older man, he is the foreman

among all men in Lahaina high school, and he had a truck. So, since I was responsible for the summerhouse for the senator, every weekend, they told, hey, you kids wanna go with me? All the kids want to leave the dormitory and go down to the beach, beach house, yeah? It's a beautiful beach house. I said no beer, no drink, but you guys can do all the work, clean up, yard cutting, trimming, cutting, all Japanese kids. They wanted to work, they helped me. So, you know, I had the good kids from the Lanai Island, Kauai Island, so that they can't go home. So, they, they wanted to go to the town. So I said, okay, I can buy all the hotdogs you want to eat. [laugh]. So they helped me clean up the place. And, boy, that place was painting job. So that was part of my work.

NW: How about the high school friends, did you, did you make friends?

JS: Oh I made a lot of friends, because even though they didn't know me, their parents knew about my brothers, or my sisters, or my father or mom. They are all used to be church members, the parents were.

NW: So they were mostly Japanese Americans, the high school kids?

JS: Yes, yes, yes.

NW: Were there any other kinds of students, ethnic groups?

JS: Oh, yeah, a lot of Hawaiians in there too, and a lot of Caucasians in there, too.

NW: So, just like before the war?

JS: Yes. And I remember, one thing is that in my algebra class, to me it's a review, you know.

NW: Right, you already know it.

JS: Yeah. And teacher, call on me during solving and x minus one times, during trigonometry and algebra and she gets stuck, and then she goes Junji, and I go up there. [laugh].

NW: [laugh] Come help me!

JS: So I had a good time, because the people said, what, Junji?

NW: "You must be really smart!"

JS: That's all I know. But they thought I was, gosh! My, you know. The teacher was proving the trick also, she knew that I already had that. Intentionally, I think she make a mistake, and said, Junji, what's the problem?

NW: That's the education. [laugh]

JS: So I go, *ehen, ehen*. [laugh]

NW: So how long did you do that in Hawai'i?

JS: I did that for about 2 semesters. And then one day I was reading a Japanese newspaper and there was ad, they opened up a new radio station, called, [laugh], I forgot, KAHU, looking for a

Japanese announcer, and must have some knowledge of English. So I got on the phone, telephone, and then said, I am so and so, interested in working as an announcer. Talked to the owner, or the president. I was talking to him, of course he was asking a lot of questions. I was still in school. So he said okay, then, as soon as you finish this semester, can you come up?

NW: Where was it located, KAHU?

JS: It was in Hawai'i, Honolulu. Can you come out, I said, I'm still at Laguna high school. So okay, as soon as the semester is over, come on over. I said, do I have the job. Yes, he says. I said, am I going to get an interview? They said no, you are hired. Oh, okay, you know. So it was over the telephone I got a job, not too many people get that. But anyway, that's what I got. And then worked in a radio station. In the morning, I said on the way to the station, because it opens 6 o'clock in the morning, and the news cast, and I did the news cast and some of the, whatever was necessary. Main thing was the news cast. On the way to school was McKinley high school in Honolulu. It was close to my working place. So I decided . . .

NW: Transfer?

JS: Yeah, so, I went in there, this is where I work, I want to . . . So they says okay, you can go in as senior. So I went into senior and I started to work there, and go to school, and met a lot of Japanese friends there. So, in fact, those people I met, I still communicate with them. We, whenever I go to Hawai'i, they have a reunion for us.

NW: It's nice to have your friends in Hawai'i.

JS: So I go there, and have, you know, good time talking, we have, we eat together.

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