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Title: Jun Dairiki Interview
Narrator: Jun Dairiki
Interviewer: Naoko Wake
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<Begin Segment 1>

NW: So, as I said to you earlier, I'm really curious about your personal history, life history because I'm curious about Japanese Americans who had a lot of international experiences. To me, you are fascinating figure, from which I expect to learn a lot. So, I'm gonna ask you a few questions.

JD: Sure! Absolutely.

NW: Why don't we start by asking you about your parents. If you could tell me what kind of people they were, what they were doing, that's what I'm curious about.

JD: You know, it's interesting. I don't know too much about my mom' and dad's background in Japan. They both came from Kumamoto-ken.

NW: Oh, okay. From Kyūshū.

JD: And uh, I understand that my dad, you know, there is a national archive, Uncle Sam's National Archive, down in San Bruno and we did some checking down there, and we discovered that my dad came into the United States on at least three different occasions, at about 3 or 4 different ports. And my dad was a very young man, and he came out here all by himself, and I think my grandfather came with him. Unfortunately I never knew my grandparents on either side of my family. I never met them, didn't know what their names are or anything, you know. Anyway, my dad came out, and he stayed here for a little bit, then came back, so he went back and forth about 3 or 4 times.

NW: Was he doing some business, then?

JD: He was only like 16 or 17, yeah. So the last time he he went back, maybe my mom came over on her own, I don't know if she was a picture bride, I don't know any of that part about them. Or maybe it was already an arranged marriage, you know, from before. I just don't know any part of that.

NW: Even though they met in Japan or here in the States?

JD: Oh, it's over in Japan. Because my mom came over from Japan.

NW: After they got married?

JD: They got married here actually, but I think she came over to marry him. That's, that's just my perception. But my dad worked for a Japanese export-import company. He was a salesperson for that company. And his territory, I don't remember the name of the company, I'm sorry to say, but his territory was like from Central California to all the way up to Northern California, like around Loomis, Penryn, in that area, so he covered all of that territory. And he actually did business with Jack's father, grandfather.

NW: So there was a sort of family connection there.

JD: Because his grandparents ran a Japanese grocery store in Penryn. Now, his mom and dad ran a hotel in Sacramento, and so my father stayed in their hotel. That was a place for him to come back to and he would go and visit all his customers, whether it'd be in Sacramento or Penryn, or Lincoln, or wherever the business was. So that's what he was doing. My mom was basically a housewife, but she did do some domestic work, and in doing so, she did not have to cook, all she did was to cleaned the houses, you know. But she wanted to learn how to make American food, so she would ask the kitchen staff, you know, the cooks and the people in the kitchen staff, she asked if she could maybe watch them to see how they made roast beef, leg of lamb, stuffed veal, roast with potatoes, you know, cooking at the same time, roast at the same time as the meat, and so she did that. She learned how to do that and she learned how to make apple pie, lemon meringue pie, custard pie, she learned how to do all this by watching them do it, she was very good at this. So that's what she was, basically. Now, when I was growing up, I went to a regular, you know, grammar school, but I also had to go to Japanese language school after school. I hated it. I hated it.

NW: Oh, what was wrong!

JD: And the school that I went to was held at the San Francisco Buddhist Church. And the teachers were the ministers, I think, you know. I never enjoyed going to that. But I did because my mom and dad sent me there. Because when I came home from grammar school, I wanted to stay home and play. Not go to another school. So I did that, and of course, when Pearl Harbor was bombed in 1941, I was, well, I had just turned seven that year.

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