CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

Japanese American Oral History Project

An Oral History with JEAN YAMAGUCHI

Interviewed

By

Bob Harker

On May 17, 1994

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CENTER FOR ORAL AND PUBLIC HISTORY
CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, FULLERTON

NARRATOR: JEAN YAMAGUCHI

INTERVIEWER: Bob Harker

DATE: May 17, 1994

LOCATION: Long Beach, California

PROJECT: Japanese American

BH: Okay, this is an interview with Jean Yamaguchi by Bob Harker for the Japanese American Project of the Oral History Program at Cal State Fullerton. The interview is being held at Mrs. Yamaguchi's home. The time of the interview is approximately 9 a.m. The date of the interview is May 17, 1994. Okay Jean. How about if we start off by talking about your Japanese origin. Did your parents come from Japan to Hawaii or how did that happen?

JY: Yes, both my parents came from Japan. And I wasn't the first born from my mother. I was the second. My mother became a widow at twenty-seven and she remarried my dad. And I was the first born then for my parents. And I had three brothers and two sisters below me.

BH: And were you born in Hawaii?

JY: Yes, I was born in Hawaii?

BH: Okay, Honolulu?

JY: Um-hm.

BH: And you grew up on Honolulu?

JY: Yes, until after the war. In early 1949, I left for New York. I moved there for five years.

BH: And so, how did your mother and father come to be in Hawaii?

JY: Well, my dad, I really don't know his history that well. But (pause) I wished I could have taken oral history from him. And my mother, we were kind of late on taking it. She's still healthy. We're celebrating her hundredth birthday this year in June. We'll be going to Hawaii to celebrate her life.

BH: Oh, so she still lives in Hawaii?

JY: She still lives in Hawaii.

BH: In Honolulu?

JY: Yes.

BH: Boy, would she be interesting to interview.

JY: Huh? But then she remembers all of the old stories of herself. But the present, she kind of sort of sways. She kind of forgets. But considering her age, oh, she's still very alert. She can remember telephone numbers, which I can't. I'll ask her what my cousin's telephone number is and she'll just rattle it off. She calls my sister all the time at work. Bothers her. And so, my mother came as a young bride. Her husband came first to Hawaii. And then I think she joined him later.

BH: Was she a photo bride?

JY: No, not really. They were married in Japan.

BH: Oh, I see.

JY: He had to come first, but I really don't know why.

BH: Okay, and when did her first husband die? Do you have any idea?

JY: (pause) My dad married her when my older brother must have been about four. And we had another one but he died and was about one.

BH: And what did her first husband die of, do you know?

JY: I have no idea. And in those days, in fact the old Japanese women, they tend to keep it to themselves. It's not like us here, right now. We're so open. But with her, she kept a lot of stuff. And how I learned about her was through my aunt. Her sister that lived in New York. And we started talking and she told us how she was growing up. She, my mother, their sister—the three of them and their brother. And she said how my mother married. Oh, she must have been eighteen when she got married. And it's really my aunt that—right now, even if I ask my mother she won't. The thing just kind of fades away with her.

BH: And this is just the Japanese way?

JY: I think so. They really keep a lot of secrets to themselves. They're not open and they won't show their emotions either.

BH: I have heard that.

JY: Yeah, I think the younger generation, even myself—I'm a second generation—I try to, as I grow old with my children—the third generation—you tend to get Americanized. More Americanized because the third generation is completely Americanized.

BH: Right. I was going to say, I mean, you're American. You were born and raised here.

JY: Yes, I am American too. But in Hawaii, it's sort of backwards. Especially the second generation.

BH: Really?

JY: Because the first generation, we follow, we obey. And whatever they say, we never argue. Not my children.

BH: (laughs)

JY: But that's the difference. I think it should change.

BH: How many children do you have?

JY: I have four.

BH: Four. And their ages?

JY: Thirty-eight, thirty-seven, thirty-five, and thirty-one.

BH: And if you don't mind—if you do, you don't have to—how old are you?

JY: I'm seventy-two. No, I will be seventy-two.

BH: Wow. Wow, for the record, Mrs. Yamaguchi does not look seventy-two.

JY: Thanks. (laughs) That's a compliment.

BH: (laughs) So—

JY: I really had a good time in New York. I didn't want to get married, until my father and my mother—my father is the typical old Japanese man. And he won't say anything to me but he'll tell my mother. And my mother would be the one to relate to me. "You got to hurry up and get married because you're not getting younger." And dad says, he just

can't die in peace. So I used to say, "Oh, that's better than. At least if I don't get married, he'll still keep on living."

BH: Oh, boy. So he did actually get to see you marry?

JY: Oh, yes. I married in New York and so he was in Hawaii. There's no way they came over.

BH: Oh, yeah. What was I going to say, I had something on my mind.

JY: Coincidentally, my oldest son is a Cal State graduate too.

BH: Oh, really? What did he major in?

JY: Psychology, but he tried for a school counselor. Just at that time it was very difficult. So he went into business.

BH: Have any of your children gone back to Hawaii or—

JY: Oh, yes.

BH: —moved back to Hawaii?

JY: No, no never. They're all born here.

BH: They never had a desire to live in Hawaii?

JY: No, visited. In fact, all four of them have visited.

BH: I just visited for the first time about a month and a half ago on my honeymoon.

JY: Oh, really? Oh, how nice.

BH: Yes. Now what did you mother and father do?

JY: My dad was a carpenter but he also went to a tailoring school because he was very good with his fingers. My dad—even with carpentry, with cabinet work. He did some unique [work]. He built us a record player. In those days, he had records.

BH: Right, I even remember those.

JY: He made a beautiful cabinet for us and these kitchen cabinets. We never bought any of these. He made them himself. And tailoring, he'd help—my mother would have to supplement the income. She had taken in tailoring. Like, she would have families come over and said, Oh, September. My children will be going to school. Can you make their trousers, their shirts, and things? And my mother used to whip them up but towards the

end she'd get swamped. My dad was right there. And she didn't have this button hole machine so my dad did the button holes. Everything was manual. And he did the button. And he hemmed the pants. So he really helped my mother. That was one trade that really paid off for him.

BH: Now was that something that was pretty usual in the Japanese American community?

JY: In Hawaii?

BH: Yeah. Well, in your community, was craftsmanship—

JY: Oh, yes. Yes.

BH: Yeah?

JY: Um-hm. We had a lot of carpenters.

BH: I mean, well I have read about a lot of the Japanese American communities were the field laborers that worked in the sugar cane fields. But I haven't really heard as much about the craftsman.

JY: I don't think my dad ever worked in a cane field, no. As far as I can remember, he was a carpenter. And he used to go to work on his bicycle.

[00:10:13]

BH: Oh, really?

JY: He used to pack his lunch in the front in the basket. My mother used to pack lunch for him. And he would go to work and he comes home. But the thing is I remember, he always left, he made sure there was leftovers. Because we were waiting for the leftovers. It tasted so good. We used to fight for his leftovers. And that was his joy to bring home. And he was never a big eater. He was a small frame man. I think about 5'3"—

BH: So did your father do well economically, were you—

JY: No, not really because his health. He wasn't a very strong, healthy man—

BH: And you said your mother worked also? Your mother—

JY: Yeah, but at home. That's all she could do at home.

BH: Oh, okay.

JY: And she used to take in laundry. His friends used to ask if they would take in some laundry.

BH: Oh, okay.

JY: As I got older, I used to help her but she had to have it her own way. She was meticulous in her—

BH: Right, I think all mothers are that way. (laughs)

JY: Yes. And she cooked and she did everything.

BH: Well, tell me about the community that you grew up in. The community that you lived in, was it primarily Japanese Americans or was it Koreans too?

JY: *Yes*, all Japanese.

BH: All Japanese.

JY: Japanese, um-hm.

BH: What was it like, you grew up in Honolulu or around?

JY: Yes, right in Honolulu.

BH: Right in Honolulu. I imagine it was different then it is now?

JY: Not in town though. More in the residential.

BH: But there was a Japanese American section or was Honolulu primarily Japanese?

JY: I think as far as I can remember, it was more Japanese families. And we got along well. The homes were close. It wasn't huge like this. It was like a bungalow.

BH: Right. What was life like in the community? Do you remember liking Hawaii or thinking Hawaii was unique at all?

JY: Well, we didn't know anything other than how we were living. And my dad went out to work. And he got brought home his meager salary. And my mother did all the whatever saving she could. Because we seven children.

BH: Wow.

JY: And then we have to go to school. So other than that, we got along very well with the neighbors. We helped each other. We didn't have washing machine so we all had to hang outside. And we'd be talking. Its' almost like seeing the movies where they hang their clothes outside and then you can talk to the neighbors at the same time.

BH: Yeah.

JY: You know, now come to think of it, we really had a good life. We were deprived of all the luxuries but we really had a good life.

BH: Sounds like you were also insulated from all the junk also?

JY: Um-hm. Yeah but we had to eat was all good food. I mean we didn't have to go out to buy. People used to give us vegetables. Chicken used to be a delicacy. It's a luxury. And I've never eaten a drumstick because my younger brother always got the drumstick.

BH: (laughs)

JY: And then of course the chicken too. My mother had to cut it in small pieces, so we can all—but she used to put lots and lots of vegetables. So we were healthy kids.

BH: I was going to say that's how my child here and the children these day eat.

JY: Until we went to school, we didn't have any shoes. We didn't need [any]. We'd walk around in those tall boots. To get in the house, you have to clean your feet. She won't let us in if it's dirty. So there was always a hose outside. We have to wash. (both laugh) And the bathtub too was made. You saw the one at the museum? That wooden bathtub downstairs.

BH: Oh, yes, yes, yes. I do remember seeing that.

JY: That's what we had too.

BH: Wow.

JY: When I was a little kid, we all had to take turns heating the bathtub. And there's little, what do you call it, we have to heat up. And my younger brother and I were supposed to. And we'd have to fill that thing with water because the bottom was copper. And then we had the wooden, what do you call that, so you don't burn. He had a wooden thing on top of that. And the only thing I know is in Japanese is that's how I learned from my father. Some days we even were playing [and] we have to heat the water. So before we can put the water in sometimes we're heating it and we burned the copper. Oh, did we use to get it from my father.

BH: (laughs) So what was school like? Did you go to an integrated school?

JY: Yes.

BH: Yeah, it was an integrated school?

JY: No problem. We had no problem. I don't know about the Lord's prayer but we said the prayer. And before we had our lunch, we all had to put our head down and say, Thank you, God, for this food. And here we're Buddhists. My parents never made any

compliant about that. So right now, when I hear these parents saying, Oh, I don't want the word God used in this and that. And here I'm thinking, My parents were just regular Buddhists. They didn't have any other religion. But they never said anything. My dad's philosophy was, he sends his children to school, we don't learn anything bad. He leaves it up to the teacher. The teacher have to spank us? He used to say, "Go ahead. You have my permission." And that's how it was. We used to get whacked in the hand. (laughs) The boys used to get it on their—

BH: Hi.

ANON: Hey.

JY: George, this is—

[recording paused]

BH: Well, let's continue.

JY: Yeah, so in school, the first thing we did was we pledged allegiance to the flag. We never changed any word, nothing.

BH: I was going to ask you about that. Do you remember, I mean Hawaii was a territory at the time. Do you remember?

JY: We still did just like if we were in America.

BH: Okay. But you remember the association with the United States then so it was just like you were a state? (clears throat) Excuse me.

JY: You know, we never really did associate. But you see—

BH: I mean, but did you feel like you were a part of the United States? Was that always the feeling?

JY: Yes, yes. That's how we were. And in fact, I had an aunt. My mother's sister, who lived in Seattle, Washington. So we knew that we had [family]. Of course, it was mainland. And so, we knew but we all knew that we were United States.

BH: Do you remember, were you near any of the military bases, like—?

JY: No, no, no. We were right in the city so we were kind of far away from the military bases.

BH: Okay, you don't remember seeing the planes or—?

JY: Oh yes, we saw. During—on December 7?

BH: Well, yeah, then.

JY: *Yeah*.

BH: And I've heard stories of people seeing planes and they apparently did war games and stuff over the islands. Before even December 7.

JY: That's what you call maneuvering.

BH: Right.

JY: Maneuvering, yeah. So that's the reason why on December 7, when the thing was actually bombing, everybody was so calm they didn't even realize it was war.

BH: Wow.

JY: For myself too. I was outside. I looked at the aircraft. The thin black smoke billowing. And I said, "Oh, they're really having a good maneuvering today, huh?" And here, the cars are going by. Back and forth. And then the military trucks. It's always been that way so it was no different.

BH: Okay. Well, let's get into the World War II part of it then. So you definitely remember December 7. I mean—

JY: Oh, yes!

BH: —do you remember the build up to it? Do you remember the conflict that the United States was having with Japan?

JY: I read in the papers and in the news. We didn't have TV, remember?

BH: Right.

[00:20:01]

JY: But radio.

BH: But you remember thinking that there was going to be a confrontation between the United States—

JY: Never.

BH: *No*?

JY: We never had *any* idea.

BH: Wow. And did you ever have any fear that there be some repercussion—well, I guess you wouldn't think there would be any—

JY: In fact, we were just simply ignorant. Or innocent.

BH: So it was a total surprise when December 7 happened?

JY: It hit us later. It really didn't hit us that day. Because I have a story for that day. I—

BH: I was going to say, would you like to talk about December 7, if you want to.

JY: That morning, I went to work because that was Sunday. I worked at the Tuberculosis Association. And she asked us to come in because the Christmas seals have to go out and we ran our time and everything. So then Sunday morning we went and we worked. Folding and checking the list. It takes a lot of work. We have to check off the names so we don't send duplicate copies. And the seals go in. We have, I don't know how many people working. So we went like an assembly line. Some were typing the envelopes. And all of a sudden, we can hear, "boom, boom" outside. So—

BH: And how far away from Pearl Harbor were you?

JY: Oh, we were fairly far. I don't know how many miles. Because right now with the freeway you can get there.

BH: (laughs) You can go all over the place.

JY: Yeah. Anyway, we used to say, We ran outside, we looked up in the sky. That's when we said, Wow, the maneuver today, it looks so real.

BH: Wow, you still just thought it was a maneuver. That's amazing.

JY: Uh-huh. And you know our office was not right in town but sort of right in the beginning of the town. So we see these military trucks going by. More than ordinary. And the manager called us and said, "Hurry up. We got to get these going." And we ran in and start doing our work. Then, we had this next door adjoining our Tuberculous Association building, was a Red Cross office. The Red Cross lady came. This was maybe around noon, I don't remember. Half way during the day she came in and she asked us, "Hey, would you both come and fold some bandages for us. We will teach you." And yet, she didn't really say, Oh, this is war. Or anything like.

BH: You still at this point didn't realize what was going on?

JY: *No*. And someone had come into the office and said, Japan just bombed Pearl Harbor. And we said, Oh, really? We didn't even get excited to go home or do anything. I stayed at work until about 5 o'clock. We worked, we cleaned up the thing.

BH: And just for the record, how old were you at this time?

JY: I was eighteen—going on nineteen.

BH: Boy.

JY: Yeah. And anyway, we went to the Red Cross. We helped. And we see these men coming in and out and we were just folding the bandages. And after that it sort of tapered off. So we went back to our office and we had to clean [and] finish up. By this time, it was around five. But anyway, I got on the phone and I tried calling my mother. And the operator intercepts and she says, You're allowed to make phone calls only on emergencies. I couldn't even reach my mother. And then still, we didn't panic. That's the strange thing. It wasn't really myself. So people, some of them in town did get the bombing—that went up, come down.

BH: Right.

JY: So anyway, five o'clock, the secretary and I—the secretary was a Caucasian girl—says, Well, we better be going home. Okay we close shop. Everybody else went home. And the bus stop was not too far from the office. So we waited. We were going home towards Waikiki. And we waited. And then we see the buses all go back to, we called it the car barn. And the car barn wasn't too far. So I told her—I forgot the secretary's name—"Gee, they're all going into the car barn, that means we don't have a bus." And she goes, Yeah. Then it just so happened, a car stopped in front of us. And it was Caucasian guy. And he says, Are you guys going home? There's no buses. And we said, Yeah, we realized that. And he said, Where do you live? So my stop was before hers. So I told him I live off Carmen Keys(?) and she said, Oh, I live further. And he says, Hop in, I'll take you guys home. There was another guy in the car. But you know the strange thing is, now I realize, we could *never*, ever do those things. Not jump into some stranger's car. No, but he was sincere and we trusted him.

BH: And you said he was Caucasian.

JY: Yeah, a Caucasian guy. He was no Japanese. And then we start talking, he's driving away, he says, Boy, God, Japan bombed Pearl Harbor. And we knew the conversation went. So I said, Yeah—because I'm thinking in terms of being an American—gee, I wonder what happened. We had our conversation. He said, Is this where you live? I said, Yes, this is fine. Dropped me off. I went home. It got dark already. And my mother says—it's strange my mother and my dad are very protective. They didn't even worry. That's how calm everybody was. And I went home and my mother said, "We all finished dinner. I'll have yours prepared." She had this huge plate and says, "Well, we can't turn on any lights because we're not supposed to have any lights showing outside."

BH: So you parents had been listening to the radio?

JY: Yeah. And so, I had my brothers and sisters and they said, Yeah, it's war. And I said, Yeah. So my mother says, "Well, we don't have any of the rooms prepared for the blackout. You have to eat on this blanket with this flashlight."

BH: (laughs)

JY: I'll never ever forget that. My mother dumped everything on that one plate. And she had my chopsticks ready and under the blanket I ate my dinner.

BH: With a flashlight. (laughs)

JY: From seven to seven. I never forgot that.

BH: So when you got home, your parents filled you in to what was going on?

JY: Yeah, uh-huh. I said, "Yeah, we were wondering why there were bombs. We saw this black smoke in the sky."

BH: Did you see the smoke from the Arizona and the other ships burning?

JY: No, we weren't that close. And they were bombing towards those military bases. But we got all the news later.

BH: So you had to eat under a blanket that night.

JY: Yes, I'll never forget that.

BH: And what was the night like, did you go up and go to work the next morning?

JY: No, we didn't. I don't think so. That part I don't even remember. I guess we were all excited from then on. But then it's called Martial Law. We were Martial Law.

BH: What do you remember about that?

JY: Six o'clock at night, that's when the curfew started, so we can't go out. So wherever we went, we had to be back by six. And we didn't go out that much either because we pretty much stayed in around home. And then my older brother was drafted.

[00:30:10]

BH: *Really*?

JY: He was drafted February that following year. December, January, February, yeah.

BH: Did he go on to become a part of the 442nd?

JY: He was drafted anyway. So the 442nd was volunteer.

BH: Oh, I see.

JY: Voluntary outfit. So they just slid him right in there. (coughs) Excuse me. And of course, we have to go and have our finger printed. And then they called in the four stage station at the elementary school nearby. And the school had personal there to finger print us. And have us issued id cards. We were all issued id cards. And then later on we were issued this gas mask.

BH: (laughs)

JY: Canister on the bottom. And then it was, oh, about that long and that wide. And we had to carry—

[recording cuts out]

BH: Okay, you were talking about having to carry gas masks.

JY: And-uh, you know—

BH: What a frightening thing for a teenager to have to do. An eighteen-year-old. You're just coming in to feeling like an adult and this sort of stuff is happening.

JY: In school, my sisters all had to take to school the gas masks, it was mandatory. And they used to test us too. Sometimes when we got off the bus the military men would be there and you'd have to know, because we were trained to take that gas mask off and slip it on. It was the must uncomfortable thing.

BH: (laughs)

JY: They didn't do that too often.

BH: They would surprise you with tests?

JY: Yes.

BH: Wow.

JY: Not very often.

BH: At school?

JY: At school we had to too, but they didn't do that in school. The only thing we did was put the mask on. Oh, it was something. And on the crowded bus. Oh, when you have your mask on your shoulder and then you're going and coming through and you have to get

out. Sometimes your gas mask is back there and you *yank it*! (both laugh) I'll never forget that part.

BH: So after the bombing and when Martial Law started, did you notice a difference at all in the attitudes? What I'm getting out is, did you notice any type of racism or heightened racism that wasn't there before the bombing?

JY: No.

BH: No?

JY: Not really, there wasn't anything really serious.

BH: And your parents were evacuated?

JY: No. There were rumors saying that they'll have to evacuate all of the Japanese. I don't know how true this was, but everyone was saying they had about three boats. Huge, military boats waiting for us. Because Hawaii was a majority Japanese. So they need—

BH: They were about a third of the population.

JY: And my dad, they were saying, the men folk will be separated. You know how rumors float. And my dad used to tell us, Well, if anything happens and we're separated—I was the oldest but my brothers gone already—I had to take care of my other five. So and just the thought of him saying those things, that was the only time I really seriously thought that wow this is so sad that we have to do this. But other than that, it kind of fizzled because in Hawaii there's a thing called the Big Five. The Big Five companies—the Lewis and Clark—the pioneers that built Hawaii. Castle [& Cooke] and the Cooks, and the Brewers, and the Dillingham's, and there's another one. And they more or less controlled the island. And the pineapple field and the sugar plantation were all controlled by these big companies. And I understand they were the ones that said, You take the Japanese away from this island, we're going to starve. We won't be able to live. So we stayed and we—

BH: I've read documents I think one was from General Evans which said he wanted to evacuate all of the Japanese Americans from the island. But that would have been disastrous.

JY: Um-hm. For the people, yeah, that's right. And they said, We'd starve. Which is true because the plantation was run primarily by Japanese. The pineapple and what little farmers we had. The majority were Japanese.

BH: So did you know anybody that was interned?

JY: Yes, my minister.

BH: Oh, really?

JY: Yes, in fact on [whispers] December 7, my minister was—he had six children, I think. They rounded up the ministers and anybody that had to do with the Japanese consulate. And school teachers. And anybody that had to do with the Japanese government. The FBI came and took them. With my reverend, he had heard that one of his members of the church had a drug store. That store was bombed and that drug store is the first. And then they had some kind of sandwich store and so on. They must have had about five rows of stores and that was bombed. But I don't think, I'm maybe wrong but from what I've read and from what I've heard, it was ours that came down.

BH: Probably, yeah. Probably any aircraft that missed.

JY: Yes. So when the reverend heard that one of the member's home, the store was bombed—the home was upstairs. He rushed over. He drove his car. He rushed out and he took them to this—they didn't have a Red Cross—it was a Japanese group. And he put them in the shelter. And after everything was settled he came home late. Oh, about seven or eight o'clock, I may be wrong. And the family was just eating. And they eat on the floor. You know, on the low table. And they had about six children. The last one was oh, just a few months old. And the oldest was maybe six, because they had the children. And he just sat down and he came home, parked the car. He still had his keys in his pocket. Sat down and he was just eating with the family [and] he was telling what had happened. He situated them in this shelter and everything. And then the FBI came and just took him. They didn't have the car key. And then the reverend's wife didn't know what to do. She was lost with all the little kids. And she didn't even know where he went. Where he was. And later on, I think they contacted her. But she—

BH: Did you ever find out where he went, did he go to Staten Island—

JY: Staten Island, I think

BH: Staten Island.

JY: I think he went to Staten Island. And the next time I found out he was Bismarck, is that one of the Dakotas—South Dakota, North Dakota. Bismarck. And then he was transported to Mexico. So obviously different. So then they said, we can write to him and they gave us the address. So I wrote to him. And he said it was the best thing because nobody wrote to him. And I wrote. And when he came back he thanked me and he thanked me. And *every* sermon I swear, I was embarrassed. *Every* sermon that he gave, he spoke in Japanese to all these older people. And he *always* mentioned that letter. But it made me feel good that at least I did something for him. He said he kept that letter. He said he read it over and over again. And in the meantime, the reverend's wife and the family, but then the members—

[00:41:00]

BH: So you, the congregation pretty much took care of—

JY: Yeah, took care but she almost had a nervous breakdown with the little children.

BH: So how long was he gone, how long was he interned for?

JY: It was (pause) soon after the war.

BH: Probably until the war was over?

JY: I think so, uh-huh.

BH: Wow.

JY: In fact, the mainland ministers all were taken, because if they weren't then they went with their family to all the different relocation camps.

BH: Did you ever ask him about his experiences in camp afterwards or did he—

JY: He did speak about it but he said he was more or less with all the reverends. And they had their picture taken and they really couldn't do anything. So I guess they did their own services. But I don't know why, we didn't really ask him how. I wish I had oral historied him. It would have been something

BH: (laughs) Well for one thing, it might have been a touchy subject with him too.

JY: Yeah, because he didn't speak too much about camp.

BH: Oh, really?

JY: The boys used to ask him. And then I'd ask him. And then friends would come and ask him, Well, what camp were you in. He'd say, Manzanar. Someone would say, Oh, I was in Manzanar also. And then they'd say, What block were you in. And then we found his friends that were living closely. Plus, he was drafted while he was in camp.

BH: George?

JY: Yeah.

BH: Oh, really?

JY: Um-hm. And they drafted him and he went out from camp.

BH: Did he object when he was drafted?

JY: Nope. He was as American as can be.

BH: When did you meet your husband?

JY: In New York.

BH: So this was after the war.

JY: What's the question next?

BH: Well, I just wanted to continue you the war time.

JY: Oh, that's right.

BH: Did your father have any trouble with work during the war?

JY: Nothing. He had an old Model T. I wish I had those pictures now. He had an old Model T truck. He used to travel with that. He used to have a lot of nice American people that wanted—because they knew how meticulous his work was. So they used to call and say, Would you come and put up my cabinet for me, or build a cabinet and I want my kitchen fixed up. That's what they used to do. They called it the day work. He never really did have something so when people called he went. And we had a family doctor that used him quite often. Because in his office he'd say, I want my new prescription shelf built. He used to go and help them.

And of course, we have gas ration. That was about the only thing that we had rationed. And he had his share because his was a truck you know regardless of the size, he had a regular share of his portion. They gave a little bit more for his truck. And we had another passenger car. And after the war, my brother didn't get drafted until February so he was still home. So he had a car and he needed gas, because he ran around all over. And so, he used to ask my dad if he can give him his extra. My dad didn't use that much. But other than that, my dad had to build the air raid shelter which was mandatory in our backyard.

BH: Oh, really? You had to build an air raid shelter?

JY: Yeah, in the backyard. He built it good. He put in a trench and he made a bench where we can sit. And we had some food stored. Canned goods stored under. And he made a mound with some wood so no dirt comes. And he made a pretty high ceiling for us so we can stand. And it had some dirt on it and then before you know it we had some real nice grass to camouflage.

BH: So what was your teenage impression of all that? Didn't you find that frightening?

JY: The only thing that was frightening was the air raid siren started.

BH: And they would test that every once in a while?

JY: No, you don't know whether it's testing or not—especially when it's the middle of the night. And you think, *Oh*. And Hawaii isn't cold, not that cold. But we used to shake. And then I used to tell everyone, "Okay everybody, we have to go in." And the air raid shelter is damp and musty. And we all let them go in. And I made sure the all clear. They had a signal for all clear. And I listened for all clear.

BH: So as the war progressed did you, was there ever any fear that Hawaii would be next in the chain of islands that the Japanese—

JY: You know what, I wasn't aware of that. I don't know why, none of us, business as usual. Everybody went to work and did their things. But they said, Oh, there's a lot of job openings now because the defense jobs and the military bases had openings for clerks. Office jobs were just abundant. And I had a friend. She was Japanese American. She was about three or four years old than myself. She was always in government. She was working in that military office. And when I asked her, she says, Oh, why don't you come down. I'll ask major or lieutenant or my boss. I don't think they have any problems so come on down. So I went. Excuse me. So I went and he came—

BH: Wait, this was during the war?

JY: During the war, yeah. And I went and he said, Okay. I filled out the application. And there was one question that said, Are you a dual citizen. And I was. You see up until, my brother was and the one below, my sister was. After that it was cut off. And they had them back in Japan. I filled out and he said, Oh you have good qualifications. And I was so confident that I was going to get that job because that friend of mine, I knew that she put in a good word in for me. Even she said, You won't have any trouble because we need more workers. I was so confident. And when he interviewed me the first thing he said was, You're a dual citizen? I said, Yes. And he says, I won't be able to hire you. And I said—but then when the war broke out, they said there's no such thing as dual citizen. So I questioned that. But he said, No, but you still are. I was so disappointed. I really was. That was the only thing that I really felt.

[00:50:13]

BH: See, that's the whole basis of the problem.

JY: But see right now we can think that but then we don't, we accept it.

BH: Right. (inaudible)_____

JY: And my parents always told us, "Don't make any waves." They always told us that. "You just bite your tongue and don't make any waves."

BH: And why was that?

JY: It's just an old Japanese tradition. We never say anything. But then I did find different jobs. Until—when was it—1940, early 49'—my brother came home from the war. And my other brother who—my older brother went to Italy with the 442nd. My younger brother, he was drafted and he was sent to the military language school.

BH: Oh, I'm sorry. You said your older brother went to Italy with the 442nd?

JY: Yeah.

BH: Oh. He must have definitely seen some action there.

JY: Yes. He had some story to say but he's not the type—you know the fish story. Usually he's very dramatic. My dad used to love to listen to him and he knew that.

BH: (laughs)

JY: And he fabricated the stories. My younger brother was sent to Japan. He was an interpreter and he was sent up north. He comes home. And one thing my father, stubborn, quiet, very private person. But privately he kept saying, "Japan isn't going to lose." That was his—

BH: *Really*?

JY: You know these old—

BH: Did he say this fearfully or did he say this—

JY: No, he just said it openly. And these older people would gather and they'd come over to the house. We call them *Issei*. The *Issei* men would come and they'd say, What do you think how the war is going on?

BH: So they were speaking objectively. They weren't—

JY: Yeah, they were saying, I don't think at the rate it's going, I think Japan is going to win. Because so far, Japan never lost. You know, with the Chinese, with the Russians, everything. So I guess they were pretty confident. We didn't have whichever way to pick and my dad would say, [speaks low] I think Japan is going to win. Not so much in the way I say it. You know, in the Japanese way it gets to be a little bit more subtle.

BH: Right, so he wasn't afraid that Japan might win the war?

JY: Unh-uh. Because he was a Japanese national. We're both ways. I remember—

BH: Boy, (laughs) what a position to be in.

JY: Huh? Yeah. But like I said, we weren't even aware. Every day was just a daily routine for us. So there's a war going on and then they'll say, Oh, Japan sunk so many ships and all that. Oh, my father used to say, *Oh*. They'll say, [speaks low] *Oh*, I think they're doing alright. You know, one of those sayings. And of course, the shortwave radio then was all confiscated. We had one but my father just took the wires and things off so we won't get any short wave. (clears throat) Excuse me.

But you know when we were eating, see we never had like I said rations. Food. Except for gasoline. And one day we were all seated at the table and we were eating. We can have all kinds of fruits coming from the mainland because we were considered combat zone. Hawaii was a combat zone. Everything just came free. And we went out and we didn't have to stand in line for anything. We just went and bought our food. We can have meat, chicken, rice was the only thing they didn't ration that. But we used to buy by the hundred pound bag because we had such a big family. And maybe we had to cut that. We had that, we had fruits. And one day my father, he sits at the head of the table and he looked at the table before we all started and this is one thing I'll never ever forget. He always gave his own blessing before he ate. Then he looked up and he said, "Look at all this food. We're really lucky. Mom and I are considered enemy aliens and look at all this food that America, just if we buy it we can have it. If this were reversed, I bet you in Japan, we won't be able to have this kind of food." Which is true. Japan didn't. So he kept saying, "I'm considered an enemy alien but we have all this food to eat. We don't have to suffer. I say, only in America this will happen." And he said he was so thankful for America for being so good to him and our family. That was one thing that always stayed in my mind. And I thought, Oh, that's really nice. My dad he didn't have that much formal education in Japan but at least I think—

BH: So did you father ever become a citizen?

JY: No, they couldn't then.

BH: Even after the war?

JY: No, way later. Because you see when I was in New York in forty-nine, fifty-ish, I think, that's when I belonged to the Buddhist church there. Then the young Buddhists [said], We have to do something for the Issei group. Because we did have some Issei. And they said they want to become citizens. So we started a class for them. We provided them with reading materials. Then we went and did some format of how the test would be. You know, if they want to go and have and become citizens. So there were about four or five of us that give them instructions. And we were actually teachers and we used to have class. Then they become citizens. They were so happy. On the elevator, they'd call us teacher in Japanese. It feels so good too, what little we knew we were teaching them. Like the questions would be, who was the first president of the United States? And they memorized them in English. They have to learn in English. But then they become citizens.

BH: Now, when you were saying your father was grateful for all the food, was there any doubt before that?

JY: No, I think he suddenly realized all this food that we have and they're saying here in the United States on the mainland they have to ration meat, sugar, coffee. So what we did, we used to send my aunt sugar and coffee. I remember my mother sending it to her.

BH: I mean, what I was getting at was his loyalty to—I mean he was obviously, he lived in the United States.

[01:00:08]

JY: Yes.

BH: But he had rather dual loyalty—it sounds like you're saying he started to lean more towards the United States during the war.

JY: I don't think that is the case though.

BH: No?

JY: No, because he was a Japanese National and he wasn't going to change.

BH: Right, and how old was he when he came to the United States?

JY: I don't remember. He must have been in his early 20s. Because he wanted to leave his home when he was young to go out to the city to study. But his father said, "No. You are my oldest son. You have to take care of the family and the land and everything. You can't go." But then he finally left. So when I told him, in 49', my desire, my dream was to come to the states. That was how I [felt] from junior high, high school, I always wanted [to]. Because I knew my aunt was here in Seattle. I wanted to come. That was my dream. So after I told my father, "When the boys come home from the war, I'd like to go away." And he said, "No, no, no." But then I was around twenty-six.

Before that, all his friends would come and you know the Jewish match makers? They come around and say, Your daughter, it's time for her to get married. I know a nice boy and we can match them. My father was, he really didn't answer. He told my mother. And my mother would say, "No, she has other ambitions." I don't think my father would answer his friends and say, "No, she said she's not ready to get ready." Then rumors started flying around saying he's saying his daughter is too good for all these guys. That's when I made up my mind, I told my father, I said, "I want to go away. I'm going to go and live with my aunt." And she was living in New York then. So he said, "A long time ago when I wanted to leave, my—

[recording cuts out]

BH: Okay you were talking about—

JY: Okay when I told my dad I wanted to go away, I wanted to leave the islands. That's when he told me the incident where his father stopped him from going out to the city. And he says he regretted that day. So he told me, I don't want to experience that so you have my blessing, you should go ahead. That's when I left home on the Pan American Clipper that took nine hours.

BH: (laughs)

JY: Nine hours to Seattle Washington.

BH: Oh, I've complained about five hours on an airplane.

JY: Nine hours. And before I left the airport, my mother told me, "You want to go away. And if it's your wish to go away, don't you embarrass me by crying. Don't you even cry at the airport." And you know that was a big thing in 1949. Because all my friends—I have some pictures—and my children will say, Why are all these people coming to see you? Everybody but everybody was there. Neighborhood people, my old friends. Everybody was there. Yeah so—

BH: And you weren't supposed to cry.

JY: No, she told me not to.

BH: (laughs) Oh, boy.

JY: No, my dad too. "You were trained at home." He says, "I'm going to trust you." And that was it. So I couldn't do anything wrong in New York City. Every time I tried to do something wrong my father kept—(laughs)

BH: So how long after you left did you met your husband?

JY: Uh, 51', 52', 52'. I figured, Well, I was getting old. My mother kept saying. And so, I thought, Well, maybe I should. And just before that I had a friend that worked for John D. Rockefeller in New York. In fact, she really worked very close to him. He had a tiny interest in Japan. She told me, Why don't you come over, Japan Society. He was one of the directors, said he wanted to interview me. And I said Oh, okay. I was working at the Bank of Tokyo then in New York. I was secretary. I went and he said, We really would want to see you working right in Rockefeller's office. Oh, I *was so happy*. And he said, You worked for the Bank of Tokyo. The director of the bank and I are friends. I can't take you away. You know, loyalty. To be loyal is what came into the picture. And I was so torn up because I wanted to work because it was a good experience. And I had to get married too. And I was thinking, Oh, maybe I can call off that wedding. I don't care. I don't have to get married.

BH: (laughs)

JY: But then, this Mr.—I think—Overton(?) said, Mr. Honor(?) and I are good friends. That's my bank director. I'd be a traitor if I took you away from him. That experience I'll never ever forget too.

BH: Did you ever tell your mother or your father about this?

JY: Yes.

BH: What did they think about it?

JY: Can't help it. But I did tell the guys at the bank. We had all Japanese men from Japan. I was the only Japanese so I did interpreting. And I had to be a private secretary to that director.

BH: You were the only Japanese American.

JY: Yeah.

BH: Oh, I see.

JY: No, there was another man. He was the book keeper. A Japanese American man too. Oher than that it was all American women and men. I don't know why it was. So I really had a very good experience. Those days you could go and walk the streets and nobody even look at you. That was the best years.

BH: That's interesting because I read about a lot of racism that happened.

JY: Then?

BH: Before, during, and just after the war.

JY: Nobody cared. And our apartment also, I lived one flight up. And there was about one, two, three apartments on that floor. And there was a couple of old ladies that lived next door to us. My sister and I lived there. If there was a package for us, she'd keep it for us and when we came home, she'd just, you know. But nothing. They were nice.

BH: This is all very encouraging because I was starting to think—

JY: No, not during that time. I've never ever encountered anything like that.

BH: That's good.

JY: The people that I worked with were just wonderful. These were really nice people I worked with. And in fact, the Japanese too were really nice to me.

BH: It sounds like you had a good war time—pre and post, what a good experience.

JY: Yeah, I'm glad I left home.

BH: Yeah, we all were.

JY: But if it weren't for the war, I'd probably rot in Hawaii.

BH: Oh, really?

JY: Yes.

[01:10:00]

BH: I don't know if staying in Hawaii, you could consider it rotting. (laughs)

JY: I would have rotted in Hawaii, really.

BH: And you've never had any desire to go back?

JY: No, even more so now. I have no desire to go back.

BH: But you do go back and visit your mother occasionally?

JY: We do every year. In fact, next month we're going for her birthday.

BH: And she lives in Honolulu?

JY: Honolulu, uh-huh.

BH: And she still loves it there?

JY: She has no choice.

BH: (laughs)

JY: And I have a brother and a sister lives there too, so.

BH: And they don't have any desire to come, your sister or brother?

JY: My younger sister that lives there, lived in New York for thirty—she actually went as a music student. And she finished that. She had her degree but then she was working part time at a travel agency. That kind of lured her. She went around the world, I don't know how many times. But she went more for that. She went back to Hawaii after she finished her music. And her music teacher in Hawaii wanted to retire and he had two favorite students. Which was my sister and another girl. So he said he was splitting his students

between the two, so he gave my sister half of his students. But after living in New York, she couldn't stand Hawaii. But you know that's how I felt too after I lived in New York for a little bit and went home. Everything was so slow and I was simply bored. So my teacher gave up teaching too.

BH: And Honolulu is quite different since from when you were growing up, I can imagine. Now it's more like New York now. My impression of it, is kind of like a San Francisco'ish feel.

JY: Uh, Hawaii right now is just tourist.

BH: Right. That's exactly what it seemed like with mass hotels.

JY: I really don't know. We used to catch the street car. We get our towels and swim suit and go to the beach with a bunch of friends. And then we'd leave our things there. Swim, come back, your things are still there. And my son went to Hawaii when he was a teenager and they said, Oh, you have to hide your things. So he dug a hole and covered it. Even then people still—(clears throat) Excuse me. No offense to, maybe I better not put it in. Their way of living in Hawaii is maybe it's because Hawaii is such a small place.

BH: Isolated.

JY: Isolated. And the Japanese community is still very strong and they're still old fashioned.

BH: Oh, yeah?

JY: Yes. Especially the second generation because they get it from the first generation because the first generation more or less is gone. But the second generation have continued on with the traditions and things.

BH: Do you keep in contact with anybody other than your mother in Hawaii, besides your brother and sister, do you still have any childhood friends?

JY: No, I know they are there but I don't—I have one friend that went back. She was a roommate with me in New York City. And she went home. She had to go home. And she married a local Hawaiian guy. So she's completely Hawaiian now. I mean we never used to think that way. Thinking in New York and Hawaii is altogether different. (clears throat) Yeah, I don't know. The material things and the status conscious. After going to Hawaii and having listened to them, all these—how they associate with doctors or he's an attorney. Prestige.

You know a funny thing, I had to go and get an airline ticket from Delta and I went to Disneyland Hotel. And this American lady waited on me. And she said, Oh, you're going to Hawaii? And I said, Yes. And she said, Oh I used to live there too, not all my life but I used to live there. And she said she was living her too at the same time. You

know, she says, I really don't want to live in Hawaii anymore. I said, Why? You sound like me. Oh, I go to my friend's home and all they do is talk about, Oh, my son is going to this college and my daughter is going to this college and we have a dinner date with this doctor. They are so status conscious and everything. She says, Forget it. We don't have that here. I said, No. She says, I really don't care to live in Hawaii anymore. You're just like me, I told her. I hate to say it.

I don't want to sound like a brat just because I live out here long that I go home. My sister reminded me when I said, "I don't think I can live here, the way they do things." She says, "But *your root is here*, *you know*!" So was hers. She lived in New York, thirty-something years more than I did and yet she went back. She must be back about eleven, twelve years now. Right back to Hawaiian tradition. But I'm not trying to put that down, it's just there way of living.

BH: Right, and it's just not something that you want to live.

JY: No.

BH: It's like your father not wanting to go back to Japan because he liked it here.

JY: Oh, he did at one time.

BH: He did want to go back to Japan?

JY: During the war, he kept saying, Right after the war's ended, we're all going home to Japan. And my mother, she objected. So she says, I don't want to go. Well, what we're going to take the children? And he said, Yes, we're going to take everybody to Japan. And she said, What are we going to do? He says, Live in Japan. She didn't think she wanted to. She said, I'll stay with the kids. And he said, Nope we're all going. So the war ended. My brother was in Japan and he says, I have to—

BH: Your brother was just stationed there in the military, though right?

JY: Yeah, in Hokkaido, that northern part of Japan. And he wrote and said to my father especially, Dad, Japan did lose the war.

BH: (laughs)

JY: He tried to convince him. And he said, There's American flags all over. And my father would say, he did want to believe him because that's his son and he knows my mother so he quietly and my mother says, Well, let's go to Japan. And my father says, Yes let's go to Japan and visit. I wasn't home already, I was here. And my sister—I have a very out spoken sister. She passed away. She said, Dad, why don't you go to Japan and take a look and see. And he said, I don't have to take a look. I'm going to live there. And she says, Okay, why don't you go and I'll send you spending money to pay for your everyday living. I'll send you spending money. And he agreed.

And so my mother and he went on the boat. Then it was on boat. And they went and the minute they reached Yokohama and saw the American flag flying he tells my mother, Oh, he was really convinced himself then that the war was over in Japan and Japan had lost. And you know what he said on the boat before he got off, he was the one that wanted to stay and live in Japan. That was his intention. My mother had no intention. And then he turns around and looks at my mother and says, Oh, when we get off, the first thing we have to do is make reservations to go back. So she told him, Oh, weren't you the one who wanted to say here? No, no the children are there so he has to go home. He made an excuse. My mother came home and she told the rest of them, I wasn't there. And my sister wrote to me and said, This is what dad did. So after a while he visited his brother. My mother visited her sister and brother. And then came home.

[01:20:51]

BH: So what was his reasoning? Why did he want to go back? Why did he want to move back—

JY: Because that was his home.

BH: Oh.

JY: You know, he still felt that was his home.

BH: Oh, I see.

JY: But with me, Hawaii was my home. But I have a family know and I don't need time to, you know I have no desire to. I have a good friend, her daughter went to Mills College in Oakland. And she said she had no desire to live there. After going to school for years at Mills College. Finished. She said she just wanted to hurry home and live. And I hope this doesn't get to her but she really doesn't have the—finishing the school likes Mills College, she should have a good position. But see, Hawaii is so small. And she couldn't get a government job. And so, she has a little gourmet shop. She's doing okay now. But she's—

BH: (inaudible)_____

JY: Yeah, but I know the parents will feel that way too. They don't say it.

BH: Now, did you know anybody that repatriated to Japan. Anybody who did actually go back?

JY: No, I don't but George does.

BH: Oh, really? Now you also volunteered at the museum

JY: Yes

BH: Do you have a community of Japanese Americans that you stay in contact with in California besides people from the museum?

JY: Well, yes. I have a lot. I belong to the Buddhist church here too. And I made so many friends. This goes back way more than twenty years. We're good friends. We have a good group of people.

BH: And community activities and things like that?

JY: Yeah, we do a lot of things. And I'm not afraid to voice my opinion. I used to be really shy but New York just opened me up.

BH: Well, you haven't been shy today, that's for sure.

JY: Nope. New York really did a lot of good. Because in Hawaii I would have been timid, shy. I wouldn't see you. I wouldn't say bad(?) to anybody. I wouldn't go against anybody. I'm more a rebel than anything now. But yeah.

BH: Well Jean, I guess we can tie this up unless you have anything more, you've got your—

JY: No, this is—

BH: —your pages there. If you have anything else you'd like to talk about.

JY: Oh, during the curfew, we can't have any lights shining outside.

BH: Right.

JY: If we did, the military would be right there. And in fact, I heard of an incident, I don't know how true it is but they'd shoot the window of wherever the lights—I don't think that—

BH: I actually read an interview, the only interview at the oral history project with the person from Hawaii, where she shot through her window.

JY: Oh, okay than there was—see because nobody expected war. And everybody I guess in the military mostly, they were panicking. But I'm sure they were on edge. So every little thing they have to shoot or like, the fisherman's. We had a lot of Japanese fisherman that went out to sea, this one area that all these fisherman families live. And I had a friend that her father was a fisherman. He used to go out to sea for days and then come home with the catch. And she used to tell me, Oh, my father will be coming home, hopefully because we don't have enough money. You know they depended on his catch. And December 7, there were some out there and they weren't aware there was a war. But they came. And as they came in they were shot. You didn't read about that?

BH: I have not.

JY: These are some of the things that didn't come out. But yeah, people in Hawaii all knew this.

BH: So these fisherman that were out fishing on December 7—

JY: Yes, because my friend, her dad fortunately wasn't there. I mean, he didn't go out at that time. He was home. But his friends, the family had to go identity them.

BH: As they were coming in from fishing they were shot?

JY: Yes, they were shot because they weren't taking any chances that they weren't spies coming in. But those are the things that happened.

BH: Suspicion that's for sure.

JY: Yes, well its war. So we can't blame them but you have to consider the families. And then another thing is, when the windows are shaded we had one room that we could use. And the kids used to go in there. And it as a fairly big room and it had one huge window. And my dad covered it with black material. So we were playing and my brothers were still little. Oh about seven or eight. And the younger one was about five. And we were playing with marbles in that one room and we sat on the floor and we were playing. And my mother said, Okay time to go to sleep. And we all went to bed. And the next morning my brother complained that his eye hurt. He says, I can't open. So my mother says, Oh let me see. So she washed it. And she said, Now open. He won't open his eye. So then she took him to the first state station which wasn't very far. So the doctor there in charge said, I think you need to take him to an eye doctor, optometrist. So we had one. So we took him. My mother took him on the taxi. And he said, Oh, yeah. He opened his eye exam. And said, There's a piece of that marble.

BH: (laughs)

JY: Because they're hitting that thing with all their strength. Every time he tries to open the thing kept moving, scratching.

BH: Oh, ouch.

JY: That incident I remember. Yes.

BH: Okay so, what's your perspective on the whole thing? What's your impression of—a quick remembrance of the time? The war years in Hawaii. They were apparently some decent years for you.

JY: Uh-huh. Well, you know considering the people, the Japanese Americans and the Japanese on the mainland, that were sent to camp—we had it better than them. And I really can't complain. We were inconvenienced, I won't say not a whole lot. Like I say,

because of the war, I came to the states. If it weren't, I'm pretty sure I'd still be there. And living my old-fashioned life. I wouldn't be aggressive at all.

BH: (laughs)

JY: I don't know maybe what's best, if I stayed there. (laughs) I made new friends. I do treasure my friend in Hawaii but I have no made new friends after over twenty or thirty something years. And I prefer the friends here now. We have things in common. We can go to concerts. Which they do have there in Hawaii but not as like going to the performing arts center.

[01:30:30]

BH: I was going to say, in this particular area.

JY: Oh, we really enjoy. And in fact, we'll be going to a Hollywood Bowl event. That concert just before the Fourth of July, an event (pause) July the 2.

BH: The (inaudible)_____

JY: You know, that "18[12] Overture" with the fireworks in it. We went years ago.

BH: Whose conducting it? Is it Esa-Pekka Salonen that's conducting it, I think it is—

JY: I don't—the time we went there was a Jewish Israeli conductor visiting. And I enjoyed—my oldest son does and so he has season tickets to the performing art center. So on the days he has something, he just lets us have tickets. And so, we educate him too. And if he says, Well, I don't think I want to go to this one, then I have another friend that *loves*—she and I just take off and go to them.

BH: This is the area for—

JY: Yes, I just enjoy them.

BH: Well, good. It sounds like you're enjoying your life, which is—

JY: Yes. And then we're very active in church. I've been teaching third grade, the Sunday school for about twenty years now. And every time I try to retire, Oh, we still need teachers. So I'm still hanging in there.

BH: So I guess I should ask you how you heard about the museum, the Japanese American National Museum?

JY: My older son. He was an early, early volunteer before everybody. And he said that we should volunteer since we retired. And we just went. And then we started going for the

training. But then we were in the very first training session. We went through the whole training session. We didn't mind going from Orange County to Los Angeles.

BH: Right. You did one day a week?

JY: Right now, we do. But whenever they have something special, we're there. But yeah, we enjoy it thoroughly. In fact, last night we had a meeting in Gardenia, a kick off thing that we're involved in.

BH: Well, Jean, I thank you for your candid—you've been extremely helpful.

JY: Thank you very much. Oh, I hope so. I may have thrown in other things that are unnecessary that maybe you can cut out.

BH: Oh, everything is perfect here. Well, thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW