

MR. KAKO MUROSAKO

MRS. HASEGAWA: Today is September 27, 1980. I, Yoshino Hasegawa, am privileged to interview Kako Murosako at 1910 Echo, Fresno, California, 93704.

Before we get into the interview proper, I would like to have you give us your full name, the place and date of your birth, and the place of your longest residence.

MR. MUROSAKO: I was born November 30, 1919 in Fresno, and I've been living in Fresno the longest time. During the war I lived in Wisconsin and I came back to Fresno in 1956.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Can you tell us about your parents, what their names were, and where they lived while in Japan?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, my real parents were from Japan from the Yamaguchi-ken, and he was a printer in Fresno. He had the Chuka Times and that was the first Japanese paper in the Valley. He passed away in an automobile accident when I was 3 years old, so my aunt took care of us, Mrs. Momose. Her husband was a tailor, and they had the tailor shop on Tulare Street, so actually I don't know my parents that well.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Your mother and father were both killed then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, my mother went back to Japan to visit, and she got sick there. And she died in Japan. Then my father was killed in an accident here.

MRS. HASEGAWA: When did your mother go back to Japan?

MR. MUROSAKO: Shortly after he was killed.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You said your father owned the Chuka Times?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. He was (Kaichi) Murosako. He was the original one who owned the Chuka Times. But now it's defunct. It changed hands so many times until the last one was Mr. Uyeoka, the fellow that as an audio sales here in Fresno. His name is Kioyoto Uyeoka, his stepfather was the last person who took over the printing shop, the Chuka Times.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You said that your father was also a photographer?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. A photographer and a printer. He did all the photography work, and he did the printing, too.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Who was the editor then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, there was another man there. I really don't remember his name.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did your dad write the news, too?

MR. MUROSAKO: I really don't know. He had the whole company with a lot of people working under him. So, actually he probably could do everything.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What area did his newspaper cover?

MR. MUROSAKO: Probably just in the Central California area; like up to Visalia to the south, Tulare, then maybe north to Livingston. But very scarce, you know, in those days there weren't that many farms. Well, there were a lot of farmers but there weren't community things. So I don't actually know what the circulation was. In fact, I used to see it a long time ago, but it was all in Japanese and I couldn't read Japanese that well.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Your dad was killed in 1922?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, '22 or '23. So I don't remember my father that well--or my mother, because I was raised by my aunt.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did you have brothers or sisters?

MR. MUROSAKO: One brother, younger brother. He's in Glendale. He's an art director for Davis-Johnson and Columbadi, it's an advertising agency located on Wilshire Boulevard. He's been with that company for about 25 years or more. He's ready to retire, I guess.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What are your memories of your childhood? Was Japanese spoken at home? And, if so, how did you learn English?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, we spoke Japanese at home because my parents couldn't understand English. When my brother and I, when we ate, the folks would be sitting opposite us, and if we spoke English our folks would say, "Speak Japanese so we can understand what you are talking about." Before we went to regular American school, they had a kindergarten at the Buddhist Church and there was a Caucasian teacher there. Mrs. Price, I think her name was, and she taught the preschool children. And we would pick up a little bit of English. You know how any nationality is, they're clannish, so the Japanese were together, Chinese were together, and we spoke Japanese because we couldn't speak anything else. That's the only way we learned English; talking to the teachers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That was kind of unusual in those days to have a kindergarten that taught you English, so when you started school you were familiar with the language!

MR. MUROSAKO: And this teacher didn't speak Japanese at all, which made it better for the children. Besides children that age will pick up language quickly anyway.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How many children were there at this kindergarten?

MR. MUROSAKO: I think there must have been about 20, at the most. All Japanese.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That many!

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. They had the kindergarten in the Buddhist Church basement.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Was that the same church they have now?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, the old part.

MRS. HASEGAWA: The old wooden one?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, not that old. That was before my time. It burned down. Then they build this brick one, there was the school, the classrooms in the basement. The Nihongakko was underneath there, too. Second story held the office, and the third story was the church chapel.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What do you remember doing when you were a child in West Fresno?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, all of us kids, right after English school we all went to Japanese school. So we'd go to the church and that was about the only place we played. You know how kids are--we used to play sword fights and acted like samurai. We'd cut these umbrella tree sticks, they were ideal for making swords. We played around the church there, and the church always had a YBA room where we could go in and play ping pong, stuff like that, a basketball court and a tennis court. So most of the time, if we were not at home, we were right there.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You lived with the Momoses?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. They didn't have any children. Mr. Momose was a tailor and she was also a tailor, did sewing. Their shop was on Tulare Street, 1416 Tulare, right next to the Hiroshima Kenjinkai. Next door, the Hasegawas used to live there and owned the building.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That was between "E" and "F" then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. There used to be a wooden front, then there was the Hiroshima Kenjinkai and in the back there were lots of wooden rentals. And Nishios used to live over there, too, you know, Dr. Nishio and the Hasegawas. In fact Tulare Street was mostly Japanese and Chinese.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You grew up there then?

MR. MUROSAKO: No. We had a home up by the Danish Creamery, right next door to it. That's where we grew up. And the Buddhist Church was only a block away. Then the Congregational Church was only a block away, too. And the Methodist Church was on "D" Street. So all three Japanese churches were within a block of each other.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Were you a Buddhist?

MR. MUROSAKO: I was a Buddhist. In those days, all the kids came to play together so all religions were intermingled; even though the Christian kids had their own Japanese school and the Buddhist kids had their own Japanese school. The Boy Scouts met at the Congregational Church. They did have Boy Scouts at the Buddhist Church, but that was before my time. I think Dr. Taira used to be active in the Boy Scouts.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Were you a Boy Scout?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, I was a Boy Scout. Troop 16 at the Congregational Church.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What did you do?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, mostly at that time, we used to go camping. You know that was the fun part of the Boy Scouts. And the Jamborees and our troop at one time, Troop 16, had the most merit badges in the Valley. They used to have the Jamboree at Ratcliff Stadium every year, and we'd march and do our thing. And I remember Harry Ozaki, one of the first Japanese Boy Scouts to receive the Silver Palm. It's above the Eagle! He was one of the highest and one of the first to receive it in Fresno. So we had quite a bunch of Scouts.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I should say!

MR. MUROSAKO: And our scoutmaster was Mr. Redman. He just retired about five or six years ago from PG&E. He was the head of PG&E in Fresno. We always had a Caucasian scoutmaster.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did you have any kind of discrimination directed against you as a child?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, not really. When we were going to Edison High School, there were mostly Italians and Germans, so there was no discrimination of any kind. It was just that the Oriental kids never mingled with Caucasians, not much. In those days, it wasn't proper. So you could just feel the tension if you were the only Japanese among Caucasians, just like in the later part of my life when I was in Wisconsin, then coming back this way you could feel the tension growing as you got closer to California. You could feel the barrier of race, the prejudice. But back East it wasn't that way. Now, of course, there is no difference in the way the Japanese are treated. But in those days you felt uneasy. The kids that we grew up with, we didn't have any problem with, because they didn't know any difference. Most of my friends were German kids or Italians. There were a few blacks in our class at that time.

MRS. HASEGAWA: When you graduated from high school, about how many Japanese students were there?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, I would say maybe about 15 to 20 in our class. We had a class of 300 at Fresno High. They're all not here. Tom Saito was in class--no, just had two classes, you know, the January class and the June class. He graduated in the January class, I graduated in June. Let's see--who else was there? Jack Sakai who is in Chicago now; Frank Kebo, the youngest of the Kebo brothers, and I can't even remember most of them.

MRS. HASEGAWA: After you graduated from high school, what was the first job that you had?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, I went to Fresno State and I was going to be a pharmacist, but the war broke out. During my high school years, I was working for West Fresno Drugs, Tenshodo, off and on. I worked there while I went to school. Right before the war broke out I took up chick sexing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How many years did you go to college?

MR. MUROSAKO: Two years, then I quit and went into chick sexing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How did you get into chick sexing?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, my brother went into it first. And Saikis and Hattori had a chick sexing school here, Kik Saiki and Tai, and Mr. Hattori. Mr. Hattori brought chick sexing from Nagoya and he started a school here and then started training students. My brother went into that, so I thought maybe I might as well do that, too. It was quick money, at that time. It takes you about three months to learn it, and if you pass your test you have to pass your test with 95 percent or better, then you get a job.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What kind of test did they give you?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, you segregate the chickens, and you have 200 chickens and you have to separate them in about 10 or 15 minutes. They have a time limit. Then they check you and you have to have at least 95 percent right. Then you get your proficiency certificate that you could do that certain kind of sexing. Then they would place, you, and we received a contract, a three-year contract. The first year you got a certain percentage, the second year you got a certain percentage, the third year you got less. They took it from your gross. But they place you on your job, and I was sent to Wisconsin, a small town called Blair, which is a real small Norwegian town of about 500 Norwegians. They had a big hatchery. This was in 1941, before the war. So then I come back and the next year when I went back the war broke out. My mother advised me not to come back. We had our clearance, got all our papers and everything, but we were stopped in Amarillo, Texas. Texas was the worst state, we thought. These state troopers thought we were spies coming up from Mexico through Texas, so we were all taken to the Amarillo State Penitentiary and when we went there, there was another chick sexer who had gone the day before on Route 66, the same route, and that was Yamashiro of Parlier. He was in there. So I said, "Here we are and friends are here." But they just kept us one night and then we had all our papers, so they wired Washington. Fred Hirasuna had sent out all our papers, credentials to Washington, so they let us go. Then I went up to Wisconsin and my brother went up to Kansas. This was in 1942, January. This was quite an experience.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Were you afraid?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, not really, because I wasn't alone. Everybody else was there. There were about 10 of us in that same jail. With my group just the two of us.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Then there were eight others there when you got there?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, eight others in there, because we went the same route. Some were going to Minnesota, some to Wisconsin, Iowa and different places. Actually people around Iowa and Minnesota were all going to Mankato, Minnesota, our Midwest headquarters. Ty used to live over there.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did you make a lot of money doing chick sexing?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, in those days, in four months, a person could net \$6,000. In those days a new car only cost about \$600 or \$700--a brand new car! Of course you worked day and night, and if you netted

\$6,000, that's pretty good money! People who were thrifty kept the money and put it in something else, but at that time kids would think it's fast money so they would play the horses, and have no money by the time they got back. The only thing they had to show for was their new car. Then they'd go back and work for a market in Los Angeles.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Was this seasonal work?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, at that time, it was all seasonal. I think now it is year round in certain areas. Some hatcheries have breeding chickens and also during the season they have broilers and stuff like that. So it depends upon the hatchery. If they have a capacity of over 300,000, you know, eggs, for hatching, they hatch 30,000 chicks every day practically. So they need a lot of chick sexers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Was that an exclusive Japanese occupation?

MR. MUROSAKO: At that time it was, because the Japanese were the only ones who knew how to do it. But there were some Caucasians who could do it. In fact, the people in the United States didn't know there was such a profession except in the areas where there was poultry business. I talked to some Canadians, and they said they knew that was going on, but in the United States, especially in the cities, they didn't know there was such an occupation.

MRS. HASEGAWA: It's kind of an unusual job!

MR. MUROSAKO: It was. There were only 10 of us in Wisconsin.

MRS. HASEGAWA: At what stage do you sex the chicks?

MR. MUROSAKO: When the chick is just hatched out of the egg is when we separate the rooster from the hens. See, at that stage, baby chicks have a yolk attached to them so they can survive on that yolk for three days, so they can be shipped anywhere in the United States. So we separated them, then they were shipped by train. At the time we had to schedule the hatching of the chicks to coincide with the train schedule. The chicks had to be separated and labeled before they were sent by express. We were working against time.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did you keep the female or the male chicks?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, your Leghorns which were used mostly for laying purposes, they just kept the female. Then the male was either raised for the broiler or they were killed. Lots of times all the chicks that were killed were fed to the pigs. Mixed with corn and stuff like that.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How long did you do chick sexing?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, I did chick sexing for about 10 years. And in between seasons, since I couldn't come back to California, I worked in a photography studio. I liked photography and I used to be a Student Life editor when I went to high school. It was my hobby.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You told me once before how you became interested in photography?

MR. MUROSAKO: My dad had all these enlargers, old style enlargers in our basement, and my aunt never told me about that. You know kids, they rummage around the basement, California basements are kind of sandy, you know, not regular basements. I was looking around there one day and I saw this big old thing. I didn't know what it was, so I took it out and it looked sort of like a projector. I asked my aunt what it was and she told me it was an enlarger. Then I found these beakers and stuff like that and I got kind of interested in it at that time. In those days candies or gums came with this negative and red proof paper. We put the negative in this red proof paper and put it out in the sun and it showed a print, except that the red proof would disappear if you left it out in the sun. So I wondered how in the heck you would make that permanent, and they told me about the stuff called HYPO which is sodium thiosulphate, a fixer. You put it in there and it would become permanent. So when I put it in there, instead of the red, it became yellow; faded out looking color, but still it was permanent.

Then I got interested in how to make black and whites. And when I was working at West Fresno Drugs, Lewis Toshiyuki, my boss was quite interested in photography, so we two learned together. He had an enlarger and I'd go over to his place and we'd print. There was another guy Hiro Yamamisaka, his father used to be an attorney--one of the oldest Japanese attorneys. Then there was Ernie Takahashi. His brother was a professor from the University of California. They're from Berkeley. He used to live here, and we used to fool around with photography at that time. So Lewis would make all the pictures with the fine-grain developer. He'd look in the book and since he had all the chemicals he'd shoot all those things, just fooling around. That's how I got into photography.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And that is what you are doing now for a livelihood. A hobby turned into a profession! In Wisconsin when you worked for a photographer, was this photographer Japanese?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, Irishman. He took pictures of 54 high schools in Wisconsin and Illinois, and I started out in the darkroom and then later after I worked there for a few years, they sent me to a professional school in Indiana, - Winona Lake. After that I started taking pictures at the Wisconsin schools and the other fellow took care of the Illinois schools. So I would go out early in the season, then by October, I would go back to the studio and take care of the darkroom. We did all the printing for Christmas.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You got lots of experience then.

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, it was fun. A lot of people that work there were old-time photographers. In fact, we had a lot of European people, so I learned a lot about European style and methods of photography. They were a lot older than I am. At that time I was 21 or 22 years old, so you can learn a lot if you listen, especially from the old people. If you listen to them, they'll teach you something. If you think you know everything, they won't teach you a thing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, I'm sure that they recognized a real interest there.

MR. MUROSAKO: I liked it. I was there about 10 years. Off season they let me go to chick sexing. Then after a while I quit that place and

went to another studio in Milwaukee. In fact I worked for three different studios while I was there; Morrison Studio, Roob Studio, and the Cavello Studio. Now, I understand that the Morrison Studio has bought out the Cavello Studio and they also have another studio in the suburb. Three studios. But my boss passed away; he was only 50 years old when he passed away.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What did you do there? Was your family there or were you there by yourself?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, when first I went there, I lived in a Lutheran Boardinghouse, men's boardinghouse, and it was right near the Marquette University Medical School. So I stayed there, and I was going with my wife at that time. So right after that we got married in camp, then we went back to Wisconsin!

MRS. HASEGAWA: Where was your wife?

MR. MUROSAKO: She was in Gila, then she came over to Rowher where my folks were, and we got married there. Then we went up to Milwaukee. I was never in camp; I just visited the camp.

MRS. HASEGAWA: When did you get married?

MR. MUROSAKO: 1943, in August. Then we went to Wisconsin and stayed there and both of our kids were born in Wisconsin.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What was it like in Wisconsin? Was it different than California?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, yes. You have your seasons, and it is cold in the wintertime and it gets as cold as 30 degrees below zero. One time we had 16 inches of snow in one day so all the streetcars and buses stopped, so I had to walk home. Luckily I only lived about three miles from the studio. So I walked through the snow. Of course, you have your galoshes, you know, and your coat. I used to have these aviators hats--furlined--like the Russians wear, so you could walk. I could have gone to the "Y" but they were all filled up. At that time, Dr. Jitsumiyo was going to Marquette Medical School, Dental School. I could have stayed and bunked with him, but I walked home. The next day we couldn't go to work because the streetcars were all stopped. Most people didn't go to work that day. At that time it was a severe snowstorm and they didn't have any snowplows. They had to import some from Iowa. Iowa always has big storms, so they are prepared. So they had to ship all the snowplows then they started plowing, and about two days later they started digging out. In fact, the day before the storm I bought a new car, and I had it in the parking lot and that was just covered up, couldn't even find it.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did it hurt your car?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, it didn't. It laid there for about a week before they cleaned up the snow. It's really rough winters, but you have your spring and summers. The summers are nice, although you have some humid days, you know, just like the East. Maybe about three or four days would be very humid.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How old were your children when you came back to California?

MR. MUROSAKO: My daughter was 10, and my son was 8.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So they must have started school in Wisconsin. How were the schools in Wisconsin?

MR. MUROSAKO: I think at that time the caliber of school was much higher than California schools. Because a lot of them were in competition with the Catholic schools, Milwaukee had a lot of Catholic schools and their standards were pretty high, so the public schools standards were pretty high, too. But the Catholic Schools were higher. And when they came back everything was easy for my children.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What year did you return to California?

MR. MUROSAKO: Latter part of 1956.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You were gone quite a while then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, since 1941.

MRS. HASEGAWA: When you heard about Pearl Harbor, were you in California?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, at that time, I was in California. I was with my wife--that was before I was married--at a basketball game. Fowler or someplace, YBA. In fact my friend Tito Okamoto was in the service already, right after the first draft, and he was in his uniform. They announced over the radio that Pearl Harbor was attacked, and Army personnel had better report to their respective places. So I had to take him to the bus station to get him on the bus. I think he was stationed at Camp Roberts.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Then what did you do?

MR. MUROSAKO: I can't even remember what I did. War wasn't declared by the Army yet, so we could go anyplace we wanted. Right after that, I left for Wisconsin so I didn't stay around here very long. Actually I didn't know what was going on!

MRS. HASEGAWA: Then after you came back to California with your family in 1956, what did you do?

MR. MUROSAKO: I helped Paulo Takahashi do some printing, do some of the darkroom work and some of the wedding photography and things like that. And then I got a job with Frigulti Studio which was in this building. He was an Italian. He did about 10 high schools, so it was just in my line, so I did all the photography for him. Then at nighttime, once in a while when Paulo got behind on his printing, I'd go over there and help him. As a friend. I helped him out that way. But I don't think Mr. Frigulti liked it very much. You know how some people are. Of course, they were doing entirely different kinds of photography anyway, so it didn't bother me too much. But it kind of bothered him, my Italian boss. So after a while I went on my own and I got a contract with Fresno State for their yearbook, and at that time I quit both studios. I quit Paulo; I told him it became a conflict of interest so I couldn't work for him. He got another man and I had this trailer; it was my studio. I had it set up at the Fresno State campus

and I'd do all my work in the trailer. And I had a darkroom at home in my garage, and I did all the processing there and then just took it to school. Then finally I moved in here.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mr. Frigulti sold it to you?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, he just closed up. He went in with two other persons who started another studio, and this place was open for the longest time. So I thought maybe I'll go in here. This was an ice cream shop. Dr. Papagian owned the building and that's the way I got in here. They were fixing the inside, so they fixed everything just the way I wanted it.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How long have you been here?

MR. MUROSAKO: 1956. Just shortly after I came back I opened up the place.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Then you didn't work very long for Paulo or Mr. Frigulti?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, one time when my mother was sick, before she passed away, I was in California in '55. I used to help Paulo when he was on the West Side there. Then I went back to Wisconsin and when I came back I got in here. So I felt the best thing to do was to quit both places.

MRS. HASEGAWA: When you began this place, how long did it take you before you really got going?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, one thing, I really had the Fresno State business, so it wasn't too bad. Then most of my work was referrals. You know in this area you don't get too many walk-ins, and to get school contracts in this city, or maybe anywhere else, I don't know, there's too much politics involved. Even though I went to Fresno High and both of my kids went there; and I used to be Student Life editor when I attended school there; and my daughter was senior editor for Senior section; I still couldn't get their business. So I figure you have to know certain people to get the contract. So I always told them, "That's really a democratic way of choosing a photographer." I told the kids to invite all the photographers so they could examine their photographs. The kids liked certain ones, and they tried to decide, but it was not the ones they pick, it's the guy up there that decides who gets the job. So I said if that's the way they are going to do it, I don't want the job. I never did go for under the table deals or favoritism just to get a job. For as soon as that person dies or moves away, you've lost all your business. If you can do a good job for the whole school, you'll be remembered. And they can't take that away from you.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Do you have other schools now?

MR. MUROSAKO: I just have a small country school; Laton High School. I've had that school about 20 years. And last year they changed to some other photographer, and that photographer did a terrible job for them, so they came back to me again. So I hope I have it for a long time.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And you take pictures for the Fresno State yearbook?

MR. MUROSAKO: Fresno State does not have any more yearbooks. I had it for about six or seven years, and after that they decided they wouldn't have the yearbook. I think what they have now is like a catalog, like the city colleges. It tells you what kind of curriculum and a picture here and there, but no yearbooks. It's too bad. It's one of the nicer schools in Central California, and it's a big school. I don't know why they don't.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Our son graduated from UC Davis this year, and they didn't have a yearbook either.

MR. MUROSAKO: The thing is, though, at the University of Washington, the tuition and everything is sandwiched in before the yearbook, so the yearbook staff already had a certain amount of money; whereas at some colleges, the staff and the yearbook staff have to go out and make money to publish it. It is not appropriated in the budget. On top of that, the colleges do not have advertising in their books; whereas the high school has advertising in the back, and they go out and get advertising and sell it to make money. Besides they sell each kid a yearbook. But what happens, is they just break even or make just a little bit more. If they make a little bit more, it stays in the treasury for next year, and it goes back and forth. In college now, they don't have any advertising, but what they have is donors. Put your name in for a certain amount. It doesn't say how much, but you get your name in there. That was the way to make up for some of the money they needed. I heard that the University of Washington has allotted so much money for yearbooks.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What other kinds of photography do you do?

MR. MUROSAKO: Portrait and occasional commercials. Mostly portrait. For the business, we do executive type portraits. A lot of people who are at the head of a business want a business picture; that type of thing. So it goes right in with the portraits.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's your specialty?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, my specialty. Then I do all my colored printing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yourself?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, I have a lab with an automatic processor. Of course you have to do all the thinking into the automatic processor, your analyzer. You have a negative then you have all these instruments. You analyze the color to get the correct color. And you have an analyzer where you put a negative in there and you have the information in the analyzer already. And you put this probe underneath the negative and you change your filter and everything. And then the end result is the correct color. Lots of times when you change film, you have to change the analyzer and the paper. And it depends on the chemistry, so you are constantly making tests every time you have a new batch of paper. Just like a yarn, you want to match a yarn you have to match a number and look at the right number. Even if they have the same number, sometimes the batch is a little bit darker than the other. The dye batch makes a lot of difference. So you make the correction. That's the same way with color printing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How many color printers are there in Fresno?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, there is the Gallery Lab on Olive and Swiridoff on Belmont, and there's one guy out there by the airport, but he must send it out to Los Angeles or someplace. There aren't too many who do their own. Paulo occasionally does his own, 16 x 20 enlarger, but he sends most of his stuff out, I think. Then Mr. Tidyman, he does his own, but they're all 16 x 20 size.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How many Japanese photographers are there in Fresno?

MR. MUROSAKO: Gee, there's quite a few. But right now I think there's only two Japanese photographers in Fresno. Paul Takahashi and Hishida are here. Old Mr. Hishida does mostly copy and portrait work. We have conventions every year, and at meetings we have to get everything organized. I was print chairman for our association, then you move on up and become the president, and so forth. I was up for vice-president one time, and I said "I have to devote all my time to the association and don't get any work done because I'm a one-man studio," so right there I quit. It gets too involved. You have to think about your health, you know.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What organization was this that you were involved with?

MR. MUROSAKO: That was the Photographers Association of Central California. I was the print chairman. My job was to have each photographer bring in his best print once a month and we would judge the picture and give him a merit. And at the end of the year all the pictures which received a certain amount of merits were returned to me, then I took them to some other town. I used to go to Pasadena, and have a person who had a Masters Degree in Photography, a member of the National PPOA (Professional Photographers of America) judge the pictures, look at the prints of all the prize ones and decide which was the print of the year. Then we would have our annual banquet and awards. I think they still have the award banquet, but I don't know where they take the prints. That was a lot of work to get those photographers to bring their award-winning print each month and sometimes they'd forget.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did you participate, too?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, I did. The National also has a merit system. At that time, in order to be a Master Photographer, you had to have 15 merits. Ten merits for print competition and five merits was supposed to be for some demonstration. You go to another organization and give your talk and demonstration, then you receive a merit from that club. The requirement was 15 when I was in there, then it went up to 25 merits, and I think it is more now. And you have to have a certain type of a picture, so it's getting harder and harder. Well, it should anyway.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, with all the new technology -

MR. MUROSAKO: Nowadays they know more. But you still have to do your own printing and retouching, everything.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, it seems to me that you are kept very busy in your work.

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, I'm kept pretty busy for one man. I don't try to hustle too much. You try to do two or three jobs and you can't do any of

them well. So I turn down orders when I can't do a decent job.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You didn't have any problems getting into this field when you came back?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, I didn't have any problems.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Would you like to tell us about your family, your children, and your wife? How you met her?

MR. MUROSAKO: My wife I met at a Buddhist Conference. In those days the only time we had any kind of gatherings were church gatherings. And that's how I met my wife. We were at Visalia at a conference. She was from Exeter and she belonged to the Visalia YBA.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What was her last name?

MR. MUROSAKO: Mori. She had four sisters. One sister Betty is married to Ben Nakamura, the accountant. Bonnie is married to Yoshigo Kawaguchi. And her brother married a girl who was American born, raised in Japan, then came back here; they are cousins to Dr. Mori at Fresno State. He's a professor of sociology. There's another younger one who is not married. She works for the Hanoians, in the home, does the cooking and stays over there. The oldest is a brother who has a ranch out in Biola and he takes care of the mother. The mother is still living and the father passed away in Japan after the war. He used to help Ben Nakamura when he had the Cal Theatre. They used to have Japanese moves every Tuesday, and Ben used to run that. So my father-in-law worked there, as a janitor. He was kind of semi-retired.

Then I have two children. My daughter is the older one, and she's a dietician at St. John's Hospital in Santa Monica. She's not married. In fact, she's going back to school now and getting her Masters; working and going to night school. She'll finish getting her Masters sometime next summer.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Good for her!

MR. MUROSAKO: And my boy went to MIT and he stayed out in Massachusetts. When he applied for scholarships, I told him, don't just apply for MIT,--he always wanted to go to MIT--apply for at least three schools. So if you don't get accepted at one school you might have a chance from the other schools. So he applied for Cal Tech and Cal, and he got accepted to all three of them! Cal had the best scholarship; he received the regent scholarship. Cal Tech had year-to-year and MIT had year-to-year. If you make good grades that year you get your scholarship for the next year. So he decided he was going to MIT, and that's where he went. One of his friends was going to MIT, too; Dr. Steinberg's son from Fresno here, he's an ophthalmologist, his son went over there. And Ross and this boy were pretty good friends in high school. So he went there early in the summer and stayed at the fraternity house where this fellow stayed, then he went to school there. At that time Mikio Suo from Caruthers was one of the instructors at MIT so we knew somebody in case my boy got homesick or something he would at least know somebody there.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Did he go directly from high school, then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. Just as soon as he got out of Fresno High, he

went directly to Massachusetts. Oh, he also got the JAACL Scholarship. They had \$250 or something, so he had just enough plane fair to go to school, too. That came in handy there, too.

MRS. HASEGAWA: He's graduated now?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, yes, he graduated in 1970.

MRS. HASEGAWA: What does he do?

MR. MUROSAKO: He's a research engineer at Honeywell in Lexington, Massachusetts. He has a degree in electrical engineering and physics, double major. So he's in research with a physics background. In fact, he worked for Honeywell during his junior and senior year, so they had an option that if he wanted to work for the company he could. And if another company gave him a better offer, he could go. No strings attached. But he stayed with Honeywell so his thesis for his graduation went to Honeywell and he wrote his thesis on "Selenium Cell," a photographic cell. They do a lot of photography at Honeywell, mostly microscopic photography. They have the electronic microscope which they use a lot and they do a tremendous amount of work with the Polaroid camera. The camera is on this microscope, and they photograph specimen enlarged 25,000 times. Like metals, they find out what the structure of metals are. I believe some of the things they do is experiments for future use--for outer space things-- what kind of metal will work in cold climate, that kind of thing. And they have it on file. If they want to make certain things and there has to be certain specifications, they have it.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Do you think your photography influenced him on his research?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, not really, because even from grammar school he wanted to go to MIT, that's the way he felt. Whatever he did, he went through school with engineering as his goal. So he wouldn't have to be fooling around going back and forth with other courses. But, during his high school years, he used to help me with weddings and things and he could just see and understand what I was doing. He did get into photography. In fact, he probably knows more about photography than I do. At MIT he used to be on the yearbook staff and they used to do a lot of color printing. He was using film which is the copy film they use in the movies. When they make movies they have a copy film, then this copy film stays in the vault. They could make many films from that; it's a negative. They make a positive from in color and these color prints are sent to all the different theatres. The master is in the vault. They were using that before it even came out on the market for photographers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: They were very much advanced, then?

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh, yes. He had a course with Dr. Eggerton, who is the father of the strobe, which is a stroboscopic light which is so fast that you can stop a fan with that flash. That's the photography they do in stopping a bullet going through a bulb. It's so fast that when the bullet is going through the light bulb, it shatters and it shows the bullet going in. It's the strobe that this Dr. Eggerton from MIT invented. MIT teachers are pretty well up there. They have a lot of this humanities class combined with all the science.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I can see that you are very proud of your son!

MR. MUROSAKO: We are!

MRS. HASEGAWA: And you have every right to be!

Now, to go on, do you make it a point to maintain your Japanese heritage?

MR. MUROSAKO: Only thing is in our food. Like at New Year's, we make Japanese food. My wife, when she was younger, took cooking lessons at the Buddhist Church. Mrs. Nakagawa from Bowles used to teach the young Fujinkai how to make sushi, then she would teach what they call shojin-riori.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Japanese vegetarian cooking?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes. During the time of death, the Buddhist tradition advocates vegetarian dishes. Mrs. Nakamura taught them all kinds of foods like that, and my wife learned to prepare all those dishes. Then her mother used to do a lot of cooking. She came from a big family so my wife did most of the cooking, being the eldest. That's the only tradition that we keep!

MRS. HASEGAWA: Do you think that Buddhists are more Japanese than Christians?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, the custom is more Japanesy, but it depends upon the Christian and what part of the country in which they live. Certain areas, they are more Christian then Buddhist. Where there are old folks concerned, they are probably more Japanese.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How do you think Japanese-Americans should maintain their cultural identity?

MR. MUROSAKO: Gee, that's a hard question because unless you keep up the traditions and celebrate every year, and have leaders who instigate cultural programs every time it comes around, if you lose those people then the cultural programs will be lost. You go to other towns and it seems like they are keeping up the traditions and you wish you had it in your community. Just as we used to have one of the best kendo groups in Central California. But after the war kendo classes were not held. Nobody was interested in it, but now they are starting kendo again, but it's a different breed. If kendo classes had been started when I came back and all the rest of the people who took kendo had got interested in it, and had children who had an interest in kendo, it would have been all right. Right now they have an instructor coming from San Francisco. This instructor is from the Northern Division of Kendo Federation. My brother is in the Southern Division and he's continued his kendo, so he has roku dan rating. I quit when I was Shodan, the first in line of the black belt. My brother has taught and he is involved with the United States Kendo Federation. I don't know where they are practicing. Usually in kendo you have to have a wooden floor which gives. You can't use cement floors. Just like French fencing, European fencing, it's better to work on a floor that's nice and smooth with no slivers because we don't wear any shoes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think that's the problem they are having now is

that they can't find a place with wooden floors. The teacher that's coming is Chiba Sensei. His family has had Kendo Dojos in Japan for centuries.

MR. MUROSAKO: Oh! That makes a lot of difference. Whoever has dojo, they are professional in Japan.

MRS. HASEGAWA: He has a dojo in Chiba Japan and also in Texas.

MR. MUROSAKO: I'd like to go one of these days if I know where it is. If they have a Japanese teacher who has experience and background, they can teach the background of the martial arts. The way kendo is in America now, is mostly as a sport. They forget the meaning of kendo and judo; the spiritual end of it. That's the way we were taught. That's one of the reasons our parents sent us to kendo classes, so we could learn what they call Bushi Do, the way of the Samurai, the actual Japanese ethics, culture, and that's the one thing that is lost. A lot of Caucasians who take it, they take it from a Japanese teacher because they want to learn the culture, not only the sport. You take the movie Kung Fu, it has the background in it. That fellow is good at Kung Fu; he is a gentle person with lots of power. Those are the things that the United States public hasn't learned about kendo or judo.

MRS. HASEGAWA: There's more to it than just hitting?

MR. MUROSAKO: Yes, just sports, trying to hit somebody and all that.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Is there something you would like to add to this interview?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, if the Sansei could get some of the feelings the Nisei had instead of being too Americanized. Even though you are born here and America is first, we should not forget Japanese culture, because you really have Japanese background and heritage. Just like the people in Japan are Japanese, most think alike; whereas America is a melting pot. It seems to me that a lot of Americans have good heritage from Europe, but they have forgotten all that, of being Europeans. They come over here and everybody is for himself. Some people say they all came to America because of the freedom to do what they felt was right. But still they had to have some of the heritage that they brought from the old country, I keep on living. To know what's right and wrong. They don't have all the turmoil they have in the United States. But everybody is different, so they all go their own way.

Take Japan. They wonder why Japan is so far ahead in industry? Well, they all think the same way. They want to do a job. They're obligated to a company when they get the job and the company is obligated to the worker because they do the job for them. If they don't have each other, they can't get where they are. So whenever they change the product or change the style, the company would not fire them outright, but retrain them for the next job. Whereas in America, when a certain phase of a job is done, they lay them off. They go on welfare or unemployment, then they start over again getting workers. So all these unions are always fighting for security in case they get laid off. And all they think about is their own welfare.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You are saying there's no loyalty?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, no loyalty.

MRS. HASEGAWA: How do you see the economic and the social changes of the Nisei today in comparison with the past?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, they are doing much better than they used to. In our days, even if you had a college education you couldn't get a job. But, now, since the war when we were scattered all over the United States, whoever had a college education was able to use that education. And most of the people have gone into the professional fields. They are well-respected in the Midwest and the East. There are quite a few scientists, you know, where they apply what they learned. We didn't have a chance on the West Coast before the war. The prejudice is gone now.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Do you feel that being evacuated was good for the Nisei?

MR. MUROSAKO: In a way it was good. Another way, maybe it wasn't, because look at those people in Hawaii. They were able to help in the community. At first they were looked down upon because they were Japanese, but they mingled in quite easily. It was just unfortunate that they had to evacuate all the Japanese on the West Coast.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Why do you think it happened? Why do you think we were evacuated?

MR. MUROSAKO: Well, I heard one time--there is a book on evacuation--and at that time General DeWitt was the head of the war zone which was Washington, Oregon, California, and part of Arizona. He was in charge of the 9th Zone, something like that, and he ordered the evacuation of all Japanese ancestry, put them in camps. That's what I heard. Although they knew Japan was going to attack America anyway, they didn't do a thing about it. That's one of the bad things. Then I heard that General DeWitt ordered the evacuation and later on, the way I heard, it was kind of a mistake so the only thing they could do to the general was to transfer him someplace else. And he kind of disappeared from the trend of the general conversation. Instead of demoting a general, they transferred him to another place.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Then he just disappeared?

MR. MUROSAKO: I guess so. I never heard after that. But there is a whole set of books on evacuation, in volumes. I know my dad had some. I saw that book--in fact, I saw a book my brother has on kendo. It was borrowed from the University of Washington Library. It was written by a Japanese, all in Japanese. How kendo was started in the United States. I saw my picture in there with the Fresno bunch. They had a kendo school in Alvarado, up in the San Francisco area. The Morton Salt Company used to have an area where they had bungalows for the worker, and we used to go up there in the summertime for the kendo. We stayed there and went through the rigmarole of Samurai type thing-- bushido--get up in the morning, exercise, eat your food, then you do your kendo, then study Japanese for so many hours, then do kendo again. Then exercise and go to sleep.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I see. Now to go on. Have you noticed changes in the

treatment of the Japanese people in California?

MR. MUROSAKO: I guess so. Well, I'm comparing the Midwest people to the Californians. California is getting much better. It's getting to be just like the East and the Midwest. When I was living in the Midwest, there didn't seem to be any racial barriers. You didn't feel like you are among Caucasians. Whereas in California, it was different at the time. But I don't feel it anymore.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You said you belonged to the Professional Photographers Association. Do you belong to any other organizations?

MR. MUROSAKO: No, I don't. I used to belong to the church-- I probably still do, but I'm not very active. I belong to the JACL, but am not a very active member. I just go with the rest of them.

MRS. HASEGAWA: This has taken a lot of your time, and I appreciate that. Thank you very much.

MR. MUROSAKO: You're welcome!