

JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Carolyn Shizuko Izumo (CI)

May 16, 2007

BY: Florence Sugimoto (FS)

FS: Please give us your name in full, your birth date, and the place of birth.

CI: I'm Carolyn Shizuko Fujisawa Izumo. I was born in Yamato City, Miyagi Prefecture, Japan, May first, 1926.

FS: Please give us your parents' names, the year and place of birth, and why they came to Hawaii.

CI: Aiko (Atsumi) Fujisawa is my mother. She was born on May 16, 1904. Shunan (Hideo) Fujisawa is my father. He was born on November 30, 1896. I also had a brother, Hiroyuki Fujisawa. They were all born in Miyagi, Japan. My father came here as a resident minister and Japanese schoolteacher, and so was my mother. She taught Japanese school.

FS: Why did your father come?

CI: He was called by the Soto Mission Temple here to assist at the Waipahu temple because that was the biggest rural Japanese school there. There were a lot of Japanese plantation workers there and they had the largest church membership. They wanted to start a Japanese school to continue on the Japanese traditions.

FS: When did he come here?

CI: 1928 probably.

FS: When did your mother come?

CI: My mother must have come about... My brother was born in 1928 so she came here about 1930 – my mother and my brother.

FS: And they came to join your father?

- CI: My father, yes. So they stayed in Waipahu.
- FS: Why were you left behind?
- CI: Well, I was told I had trachoma so I was left behind. Since I was too young to travel by myself they waited until I was seven and then finally they got a passage for me. Probably financially they couldn't swing it too at that time. That I don't know. But anyway, that was the reason why I came late.
- FS: With whom did you live while you were in Japan?
- CI: My grandparents and aunty and uncle; they were going to school in Sendai. I grew up with my grandparents and my parents didn't seem like my parents because I didn't see them as a child.
- FS: Where did you say this was in Japan?
- CI: Sendai.
- FS: So that means your father is from Sendai?
- CI: No, he's from Miyagi-ken, Oshika-gun.
- FS: And your mother?
- CI: My mother is from Yamoto. And anyway my father comes from a line of priests so they had an ancient temple in Ayukawa...
- FS: Which is in...
- CI: Miyagi-ken. They were sent out like missionaries and were later sent to Korea. Not missionaries exactly but something like that. For *shugyo* [training] *no tame ni*.
- FS: That means you were left alone for how long in Japan, with your grandparents?
- CI: Probably about four or five years.
- FS: What was school and home life like for you living with your grandparents in Japan?
- CI: Well, I was a spoiled brat because I was the only granddaughter living with my grandparents, so they really took good care of me. Although the school was far away, you know the Japanese they *oppa* [carry piggy-back] you up and take you to school, so I was one of the spoiled ones. It was enjoyable.
- FS: Is there anything else you remember about school or home life as a little girl?

CI: Well, at home my grandmother used to teach me *reigisaho* [etiquette], not so much *oshuji* [calligraphy], but *odori* [dancing].

FS: Now why did you... When did you get sent to Hawaii?

CI: It was August; I think it was mid-August 1933 because after I reached Hawaii, it didn't take too long, then they put me in first grade. I had Mrs. Matsuno as a first grade teacher and she spoke Japanese. She wanted to learn Japanese but I wanted to learn English. But I had her for two years so going to first and second grade was easy for me but I didn't learn much English. (Laughs.)

FS: Where was this?

CI: Waiahole School.

FS: Oh, I see. Did you come alone by ship?

CI: Yes. There was one young couple that was coming to Hawaii too so they were asked to sort of see that I'm okay. Not a guardian. They weren't employed or anything but they said they would keep an eye.

FS: Did you travel by ship?

CI: Ship, yes. *Tatsutamaru*, one of those old rocky boats.

FS: Do you remember how long it took you to get here?

CI: Ten days, I think. Between seven to ten days, the boats were so slow then. I had fun running around because I was a rascal.

FS: Now that you came here, or you're here in Honolulu, where did you settle as a family?

CI: Waiahole.

FS: What was family life like?

CI: Well, it was fun. Our family is very *yasashii* [thoughtful] people. Like my mother when she's busy, my father would do the cooking and he'll make that *tororo no imo* or he'll make udon for us, so we had fun. And of course he started kendo, judo, and all those things at Waiahole Japanese School and we were busy.

FS: When you say Waiahole School are you talking about...

CI: ...the Japanese school.

FS: The Japanese school. Oh, okay.

- CI: So they ran the Japanese school there too.
- FS: I take it then the spoken language at home was all Japanese.
- CI: All Japanese. Mostly Japanese.
- FS: What about things that you observed as a family as far as Japanese traditions were concerned?
- CI: Well, my father is a zen priest and zen priests are very strong in discipline, so when we sit to eat of course we have to say “*itadaki masu*” and after you eat, we cannot leave one drop of rice in the bowl. That’s a zen teaching. You have to finish everything you’re served. That’s why today I don’t like sashimi. I had to eat the sashimi otherwise I cannot leave the table, so I don’t eat sashimi at all anymore.
- FS: How about other cultural traditions?
- CI: For instance, what?
- FS: For instance *obon*, *oshogatsu*...
- CI: Oh, yes, we had *oshogatsu*, regular traditional services. We had the new year services at the temple, *obon* [lantern festival], *ohigan*, *haru* [spring] and *aki* [autumn] *no higan* services, and then he’ll do *kuyoo* [memorial service]. And my mother and father were on the psychic side so they used to help sick people too -- to transport them because they didn’t have cars. He’d take his car and pick these people up and drive all the way up the Pali to come to Dr. Mori’s office and then to take them to Kuakini Hospital when they were sick; those detailed things that nobody would do, but he was one of those.
- FS: What do you mean by “psychic”?
- CI: He had six senses. He’s the kind that can see spirits. You know, people that have family problems, he’d go there and bless the place. I’m on the psychic side too, but not that powerful and I don’t want to train myself to be one.
- FS: What was the relationship between you and your community like?
- CI: Very close. Very, very close.
- FS: In what way?
- CI: In living, sitting the children when the parents are out. Oh, it’s hard to explain; just like one big family.
- FS: How big was the membership?

- CI: The whole village was church members, and we had lot of people, but they were really nice people.
- FS: Does that mean you had classes, some kind of Japanese, besides Japanese classes?
- CI: Regular Japanese school, and my mother would teach them *saihoo* [sewing] and craft work.
- FS: Does that mean you played a lot with your neighbors?
- CI: Yes, we played (and slept over?) at each other's house, we eat at their house, they come and take a bath at our house. That's the kind closeness. Very close.
- FS: Now what English and Japanese schools did you attend before December 7th?
- CI: Well, later on we moved to Honolulu because we had problems with one family. He was a womanizer. My mother couldn't stand it so they finally moved to Honolulu and we were against it. We wanted to stay in Waiahole and we were supposed to go on to Benjamin Parker if we did, but it's far from Waiahole to Benjamin Parker. But anyway we... When I came to Honolulu we stayed at Soto Mission, the present Soto Mission, and under the tamarind tree you see there was the cottage that we lived in, so I went to Central Intermediate and then Wakei Gakuen by Borthwick Mortuary. Now it's the freeway, was a big original temple there. So we had *jo-gakko* [all-girls school] and that's where we had Japanese school all day Saturday and two hours every day after school, Japanese school.
- FS: You said you went to Central Intermediate?
- CI: To school. Two hours Japanese school and all day Saturday, then we had from *shugei* [crafts] to *ohana* [flower arrangement] to *chanoyu* [tea ceremony]. We had *kakikata* [writing], history and everything else that goes with it.
- FS: Do you have any special memories of that period in either English or Japanese school?
- CI: Not really. George Akita was our president, I remember. We had lot of fun though.
- FS: President of what?
- CI: Student body president and I think George Ariyoshi was one above me. So that group, we have lot of doctors and attorneys. And like Bert Tokairin; he's an attorney too. We're all in the same class.
- FS: On December 7, 1941, how old were you, what do you remember of the attack, and...

CI: That was a Bodhi Day, *oshakusama no nakunatta toki ni* [when Shakamuni Buddha died] so they had Sunday services. My father went to, I think, one of the bodhi services and my mother had the *ryojikan no* [Japanese Consulate's] two children; they came to Sunday church, but she had to take them back, so we stayed home and I saw the zero flying right over Tantalus (punch bowl) and of course the anti-aircraft shell had burst up there and those are the things and I would tell my mother, "Oh, *senso ga hajimarimashita* [the war has begun]." But at first we didn't know it was *senso*, but I then said, "*Hinomaru no are ga mieta kara tabun Nihon no* "attack" *shini kitan desho to omou* [I saw the insignia, so it's probably a Japanese attack]..."

FS: Then you had already finished your Sunday services?

CI: We didn't even start because that was seven in the morning.

FS: So there was no service that day?

CI: Everybody went home.

FS: Oh, everybody came and then went home?

CI: The people that went. But the service don't start until eight so...

FS: What did your father think?

CI: Well, we didn't have time to talk too much because as soon as he got back and then we talked a little bit about Japanese attack and then "*Sonna koto nai* [Impossible]", he insists. I said, "*Sonna koto aru* [It is]." That night, after dinner, and then he wasn't in the bath yet, right after... that was about *yuugata* [evening], no, seven o'clock, five FBI people came. They're not all FBI, but I guess police and one FBI agent who came to the house around seven o'clock. And they said, "Can you dress?" And "We're going to take him for questioning and then if it's all done, we'll bring him back." But they never did. That was the last we heard or saw him until later. But many people were yanked out the *ofuro* [Japanese bath], you know, *hadaka* [naked], you know. And they wore *nemaki* [sleepwear] and then they hauled them out. But when the agents came, because we live next to the Soto Mission dormitory and a lot of young men were outside, they may have been afraid that they might get attacked too, those agents were very polite. Nice, you know. "So don't worry, they'll bring him back as soon as everything's done." I said, "Okay."

FS: Was your father surprised to see them?

CI: I don't think so. He kind of expected it. Because *Nihon and Amerika ga akkashite kita kara chotto* [relations between Japan and America had worsened] and, you know, he said...

FS: Now after he was arrested and taken away, how did the family manage to...

- CI: Well, my mother is good at sewing. All the time that we were in Honolulu she used to go to Kimata Sewing School. She did a lot of sewing for her friends too, so she got hired by Shaheen's and she worked there. My brother would deliver paper and I'd go and if there's any babysitting, like at Central Union Church, I used to go and babysit the children for fifty cents for one hour.
- FS: And all during this time you never heard from your father at all?
- CI: Nothing.
- FS: No word from the government either?
- CI: No, because we're next to the Japanese Consulate, at night it was terrible because you hear "Halt" and the gunshot every night.
- FS: From where?
- CI: The guards, the U.S. Army guards that watch the Japanese Consulate. They had guards watching them, so kind of scary yeah? You hear the word, "Halt" and then bang! They shoot anything that was moving! Panicking, on the U.S. side.
- FS: So you heard all that. But nothing serious came out of those incidents?
- CI: Nothing.
- FS: So in other words, guards were placed outside the consulate.
- CI: Yes.
- FS: Now, there was no communication with your father then until, what happened?
- CI: The following year they requested for us to unite with him, come to... because there gonna be an exchange, Gripsholm exchange. That was not the first exchange, the second exchange, so the U.S. government wanted so many of the families moved, the ones that had already requested, to come together and they shipped us over to the Mainland to join with him.
- FS: Let me back track a little bit. You actually heard one day a year later? When?
- CI: That was also in August.
- FS: So this is about eight months, ten months after December 7th?

CI: About eight months because that was August. Middle of August about the 17th or the 18th. Well, prior to that, earlier than that, must have been the 15th or 16th, we had 48-hour notice to pack and leave the islands.

FS: And this came from the Department of Justice? Were you even told why you were going to be removed?

CI: They said that we gonna be together with our father, but I think that was my father's request – to join him.

FS: So now that you've gotten your 48-hour notice, how did your mother and you manage to get everything ready?

CI: That was a terrible mess. And we were allowed only \$200 per family and I think two luggages. I can't remember if it was two luggage for the family or one luggage each, but to get things in the luggage, even to find the luggage was a problem. To get rid of the household things was a problem. And so we had to give away the piano, give away this, that, you know.

FS: So you disposed of your assets by giving them away?

CI: Right. Most of them. And then when they took us in, they took all our important papers like the passports and the bank passbooks. We never got them back.

FS: Now who came to take them away?

CI: The inspectors. I mean, after we went to, I guess we all gathered at the immigration station. People got on the ship. Even some infants, 8 months old baby all the way to people older than we were, about three years older.

FS: So you were all taken aboard a ship?

CI: Right.

FS: And what was the information they gave you at that time?

CI: That we're going to the Mainland to join our fathers and then we are going on the convoy, USS-something. I guess it was the name of the vessel. They converted the liners into Army ships and of course we had I don't know how many in the convoy. Fumi (a friend) says six. But it was more than six. There was a whole line of boats going together, zigzagging all the way to San Francisco.

FS: I take it the convoy was to protect you people?

CI: Yeah, but they also had their own sailors in the boat too, yeah? They were transporting in groups. We had destroyers first. We're here. There were destroyers two sides and in the back, and a chain of battleships.

FS: Oh, I guess that would be pretty memorable for you.

CI: Yeah. People went on deck every morning when we had "abandon ship drill". We saw them all, and we stayed on deck, because even on deck we had guards watch over us. So like some people, like my girlfriend like the Miyamotos, we never know they existed because they never came out of the den, they were so sick. They stayed there until we landed in San Francisco, and so we said, "Where did you come from?" I said they were so sick they couldn't come up. But three of us, we were tough, you know. My girlfriend, Michiko Okaji, she went back to Japan and she lives in Japan, she's a Japanese national now. And I have two more other girlfriends; they're all tough. So we helped the mothers with children, three years old, the youngest was eight months, and then five. And Rev. Miyao's children, his three children. Their parents were interned earlier so the two boys and the girl, we had to watch them. We had all these children. You know, we see to it that they had their meals and everything because you know, the ship would just rock like that. The cups would slide down and they come back up again. It was rough sea! It was so rough. But anyway, we made it. So to keep alive, we suck lemon because oh, we get nauseated too, you know, trying to help everybody else.

FS: And the food and other conditions were acceptable?

CI: The food, oh yeah. Everything was okay. We were supposed to be *eraihito* according to the report that the State Department said...

FS: Important people?

CI: Important people because we're supposed to be exchanged with the diplomats and whatever important people in Japan, Americans in Japan. So they had to treat us royally. So we had really nice treatment no matter where we went.

FS: So you were going to be exchanged for the important people -- Americans -- in Japan. Then I guess you would get treated very well. Now, how long did it take you to get from here to San Francisco?

CI: Kind of long. About ten days? Longer than usual. Usually one week was the travelling time for those ships at that time, but because we zigzagged... And then you'd hear depth charges, I guess they were so nervous, anything moving, they gonna shoot on sight. That's why depth charges on the ship too.

FS: So the government was afraid of...

CI: Submarines, Japanese submarines. It was an experience, but we were young, yeah, so it was not too bad.

FS: And then when you got to San Francisco, what happened then?

CI: We went on the ferry and we went to Oakland. And from Oakland, we went on to the train. We went to the train station and we went onboard the train. I don't think we stopped in a hotel; I don't remember. We went directly to the train and we were going to go all the way to New York for the second exchange.

FS: So in other words from the West Coast you were going all the way to the East Coast without resting?

CI: Yes. Non-stop. Pullman, we went all the way.

FS: Does that mean that the whole group took several cars on the train?

CI: Yeah. A lot of cars. And then at night they pull the beds out for us, and they come and make the beds for us.

FS: Did you have guards even then?

CI: Oh, yeah. They had border patrolmen watch us from that time on—the special guards that they had.

FS: Were there any incidents?

CI: No. No incidents. So wherever we slowed down they drew the shades, but no use, we can see. I know we made a short stop at Utah, and there were some Japanese people waving on the other side, but they draw the shades so they make it so you cannot see but we still can see; we sneak and we look, “Oh, there's *nihonjin no hitotachi, asoko de... te wo futteru yo* [Japanese people there, waving their hands]!” And that's the only funny thing I remember about the Mainland. And then as soon as we got to Chicago they said the exchange was called off so they diverted us to North Carolina. We went all the way up there and then go down again to North Carolina. We stayed at Grove Park, in one of the exclusive hotels in the Blue Ridge Mountain area of North Carolina. Beautiful, you know.

FS: So you were set up there for... When was that?

CI: It was still in 1942. That was about September, I guess. Because we took about five days to go across the country.

FS: And you said with stopping only at Utah?

CI: We slowed down. I don't know whether we stopped. Maybe we did. A short stop, though. In Chicago I think we had maybe a longer stop but we weren't allowed to get off the train, so when the word came around that we were not going to Japan, that we were

going to be shifted to another place. And they don't say where we're going to go, yeah, we just go. Dr. Murai accompanied us from Hawaii all the way to the Mainland.

FS: Oh, I see. What was his position?

CI: He was one of those men working for the U.S. Government, the spy network. (Laughs.) I shouldn't say that but, you know.

FS: But he was supposedly there to help you or...

CI: To escort us and to assist us in many ways but he wasn't that much of an assistant.

FS: So he accompanied you all the way from Honolulu to North Carolina.

CI: Yes. To Grove Park Inn. So he says, "Oh, these people, you don't have to let them select from the menu; just give it (meals) to them." So I heard this guard say to the other patrolman taking a nap, "Isn't he a Jap?" "Yeah, he's another Jap." And they started talking. "How come he said that?" But he was *honto no inu* yeah; I hate to say it but... Instead of helping, and then he told us, "Eh, you folks, make sure that you thank the Red Cross for helping you." What did they do for us? Only gave us sweaters!

FS: Were you prepared for that kind of weather?

CI: Not really. We had some, of course, warm clothing. We were little bit better off than our father. He said, "They did a lot for you." I said, "They did?" I don't remember any Red Cross before helping us anywhere!

FS: So now you're in North Carolina. And what kind of information did you get about what was going to happen next?

CI: They said, until further notice we are to stay there, but then they didn't get the notice for a long time so instead of keeping us in a first class hotel, they shifted us to the Assembly Inn. That's in the Black Mountain region. There was a girls college across the lake but they didn't want to send us to school there.

FS: This was in North Carolina. How long did you stay there?

CI: Maybe about six months. Grove Park Inn was two months, I think, and Assembly Inn was six months, for a total of eight months. Then they said they cannot keep us there anymore, so they decided to send us to Crystal City. And the Germans and Italians were already there. That's spinach country, you know, Crystal City.

FS: What were the facilities like, and the conveniences for you, in North Carolina?

CI: North Carolina was beautiful. Of course Assembly Inn is just like a regular hotel, plain hotel, with all the conveniences. So we had areas that we can walk around, and the

winter season was so beautiful. You know, when you see the ice on the dead branches and the sun shines on, and the melting ice glistening! Oh, it's so...it sparkles, the snow! Those are the things. And the dogwood flowers in bloom. It was so nice.

FS: Is that how you spent your time? Just walking around?

CI: Yeah. And then there were people from Peru. Dr. Sakaki. His wife was so talented so she started preschool for the little kids. So we, the older ones, we had to teach them all the songs and dances together because she'll teach us to do. So we kept ourselves pretty much amused and then at night of course we're the older ones so this guy, Fumio Tatsutani, Rev. Tatsutani's son, he was the oldest, nineteen, so he taught us how to play bridge. So we were playing bridge all night until three in the morning. But it was nice because nobody does bad things around.

FS: And your mother in the meantime...

CI: Living there.

FS: ...had no problems adjusting?

CI: No.

FS: Then you were really quite comfortable.

CI: We were comfortable all the way until we got to Crystal City, Texas. That's when we moved into the barracks. But it's like camping. Was good.

FS: And during this time you still had not heard from your father?

CI: After we went to Crystal City we met him for the first time.

FS: How did your brother like the circumstances he was in?

CI: It was okay because there were about three, four of them about the same age. So they did their own thing. They played baseball, and all those things.

FS: You were still as a... one big group of...

CI: The same group, yes.

FS: ...people who were going to be exchanged for these Americans in Japan.

CI: But as soon as we got to Texas, they pulled numbers for who's going to be exchanged. Then the word came through that they gonna have the second exchange, and I tried to remember who and who was exchanged on that ship. I know the Asami family, the newspaper one. Dr. Takahashi. The Nakayamas went. The Tatsutanis went.

FS: And this was done by pulling straws?

CI: I think so.

FS: Okay, we're getting ahead of ourselves actually. So now from North Carolina, how did you get to Crystal City?

CI: Back on the train on the Pullmans. Yeah, I'm positive we were on the Pullmans because we were very comfortable. Not the regular train that people there rides on, so we had our berths. Then it's a shock, right, they throw us right into the... barracks.

FS: So it was quite a shock for you after all the relative comfort.

CI: A little too much comfort.

FS: It was a letdown then, yeah?

CI: A little bit. But we got over it soon.

FS: Now when you got to Crystal City, what did you see as you got off the train?

CI: Just sand and more sand and high fence. I don't know how high that was, but it was pretty high. They had guards every so many feet. They had that tower. So I know where we moved into the barracks. There was orchards, orange and grapefruit orchards, on the sides. And that's about it. The rest was all barren. They were still building barracks there, so we were the first Japanese to get there. And then the other people, the Mainland people, came in. Like Cherry Matano folks came just before... one year before the war ended.

FS: Please tell us about your barracks.

CI: It was right in the center of the desert. They had tall wire fences and guards, but the Germans and Italians were already settled there. And so we were the first Japanese to come too, and we had regular school they built the year after we got there. They opened English school but we continued on with the Japanese school but then we had a market, they started a hospital. They had a bake shop. We had all kind of things going on and we had an auditorium that they built and we had dancing instruction.

FS: American dancing?

CI: Japanese, all Japanese. They had American after the school came on, the social, you know. Then we had... I think we had everything. Classroom and all was built. One side was Japanese section; the other side was American, and they started Girl Scouts and Boy Scouts. Real Japanese militant type of Girl Scouts, so we're the older ones and became the leaders. And so we supervise the young ones. We had almost everything

yeah, that we had outside but it's just to get used to the sand. We had sandstorms. It's really a no-no.

FS: What was it like?

CI: Sandstorms? Oh, it hurts when the thing hits you! But we really didn't have that severe a storm there. Now they may have, but not in those days.

FS: Were the barracks built to withstand all that?

CI: Yeah. It's not violent type of sandstorm. Of course now you'll be blown away, I think. But those days everything was so mild so was pretty good. And we got adjusted really well. And they'd start gardening in the front, make their own front yard nice. We planted flowers. We had some farmers too... We even had meat cutters. But after we were settled over there, then we had all these people from Poston, Gila, Tule Lake, some people from Tule Lake, from all over bit by bit started coming in. Heart Mountain. Poston. All those places.

FS: And were you all able to get along?

CI: Yeah, we did.

FS: You don't know of any incidents among the internees?

CI: None that I know of. The younger "kotonks" (Mainland Japanese), what they did was organize baseball teams, and they had basketball, all the ones that kids like. With us, we even had bon dance, I think, over there.

FS: It was just like one big community, then?

CI: Of course we were just enclosed in a fenced area, yeah, and when Italy surrendered they took the Italians out of the camp right away because the Germans and the Italians never got along. And Japanese and Italians don't get along, you know, funny yeah? And then we have some, well, we were good friends with the Germans because from Grove Park Inn we had Germans, and we had a lot of Peruvian Japanese and Germans that came.

FS: I wanted to ask you about the length of time you were in Crystal City.

CI: We stayed there until the war ended in September 14, 1945 and so...

FS: Now during that time, what did you do to help your family?

CI: Well, they had all kinds of jobs for the people that was in camp. The butchers become butchers. We get ten cents an hour pay. Everybody was equal whether they were doctors or not. They still got ten cents an hour. We were the older teenagers so we... Dr. Takahashi wanted only the Hawaii girls to become trained as nurses so we went to the

Army nursing training. So we worked in shifts. So during the day we go to school, so nighttime we go to work from three o'clock on duty until eleven, and sometime we go from eleven to seven shift nighttime to work at the hospital. Night shift is good because you can study. Nobody bothers you except... we didn't have emergency patients. All I remember there was one leprosy patient. She was such a nice person. But it's not contagious so didn't have to worry. Then so emergency delivery, you had to go deliver. I think I can still deliver babies if I want to. But surgery, we have to assist surgery. But you know after that we had lot of girls come in, they're trained but you know what happens, when they see blood, one by one the girls fall to the floor and black out. They cannot stand the blood you know. But we stayed, the kind of girls that can stand the blood, we went into assisting surgery too.

FS: Were there any deaths among internees or serious injuries from assaults? Please describe any memorable cases.

CI: [No response.]

FS: Your training. Was it formal training?

CI: It's not. It's Army training. Army nurses. Real fast training.

FS: You were all excellent students then...

CI: I don't know.

FS: ...to be able to go into the regular hospital in camp and tend to the needs of the patients.

CI: Yeah, we had to inject intravenous, everything, blood tests, you know.

FS: And for that your pay was...

CI: Ten cents an hour. We got eighty cents a day. And that money we saved and we go to the canteen and we buy things.

FS: What were some of the things you bought?

CI: I can't remember, but they had all those panties, underwear and make-up stuff, like any other store but not in abundance, just a few that you can select. And then they had bakeries and you can buy pastries if you want to. But most of us baked. We had the stove top oven, the old-fashioned type. So we used to make pastries and whatever, and we always had parties. Can you imagine us, we always had parties. So my sixteenth birthday party I had a big one. The whole group, the camp group. We invited all the young ones. That's the kind of fun we had. Was clean fun and it was fun.

FS: You said you baked. Does that mean you baked in the barracks?

- CI: Yes, in our so-called barracks or apartment. Some people they live in duplex or triplex. Triplex is only the kind that don't have families, only couple kind. And we stayed in duplex, so we can do anything we want to. We can go to the market and buy flour, everything you can think of.
- FS: Oh, I see, so the barracks were really like an apartment.
- CI: An apartment style barracks so each family had their own stove, you know the old-fashioned kind, I think it was kerosene stove. I can't remember. But the oven is the kind oven, square kind, that you put on the top of the stove. I mean we got used to because we did that in the country over here when we were young.
- FS: What did your mother do during this time?
- CI: What did my mother do? She used to teach sewing, dressmaking, and she may have taught kimono sewing, and they used to crochet a lot. For the first time in her life she learned how to crochet; I taught her how to crochet.
- FS: So she didn't work other than...
- CI: She didn't work. So my father worked in the *henshuujo* [print shop]. You know, they didn't have books so the old steno kind, ink-blocking type of copies they make. They make textbooks for the kids to study.
- FS: Now this is after he joined you.
- CI: Yeah, yeah, because he joined us as soon as... I think he was there already and then we went into the camp.
- FS: Oh, he was already at Crystal City.
- CI: Yeah, I think so. So each person had duties to do, you know people who can teach, if they want to teach they can be teachers, people that want to work in the office, they can work in the office. So he went into printing, but more old-fashioned mimeograph kind.
- FS: Your father was a minister so did they have also regular church services within the camp?
- CI: You know, I don't remember because they all different denominations, yeah. I don't remember. Yes, as far as religion go, I don't remember anything. But anyway, my father is a Zen priest so Zen priests, according to this person, the little baby that we took care of going from here to the Mainland, now he works for Hawaiian Beauty Products, Ronald Okura, and he said my mother was the worst mother. I said, yeah. "Your mother was the most awful mother you had. After the baby make *shishi* [urine] you know, she didn't know how to change diapers and all, you know. The poor kid was so *shishi darake* [covered with urine] you know, top to the bottom, so we helped take care of Ronald and

so he said, “Oh, you the one that took care of us.” I said, “Yep.” So we have so much fun. He always comes every Tuesday to visit with us.

FS: This is which child now?

CI: Rev. Okura.

FS: The one that you helped take care of coming from Japan?

CI: Going to the Mainland.

FS: Oh, going to the Mainland from Honolulu?

CI: Yeah. And going back to Japan, both ways we helped.

FS: Did your father explain to you why he wanted to go back to Japan?

CI: Yes. Just prior to the war, his father was very ill so he said he wanted to go back to Japan in June, 1941, but the Bishop said, “No, I want you to stay.” So when he stayed the war came. But in the meantime during the war, his father passed away, so he said he had to go back and take over the temple. That’s the reason why we went back to Japan.

FS: Now, when was this that you actually prepared to go to Japan?

CI: When Japan surrendered everybody had to, I guess they had to, submit something—who was going back to Japan, who was going to stay, who was going to Hawaii, so we must have filled up a form to go back to Japan, and so, according to that, we had to adjust the packing. The only thing I’m sad is you know my mother, my father had his savings passbook. He never got his money. Of course he died before the redress also, so he missed that one. And so in the ‘60’s I think my brother wrote to the State Department that he saw that if they had any possessions to make claims and he tried, but they said, “Sorry, you know, cannot.” Those days it was still anti-Japanese but now if they tried, probably we can, but we don’t have any proof because the government took away the passbook.

FS: The passbook? ‘You’re talking about the bank...

CI: Bank passbook. And he mentioned in his request Yokohama Specie Bank but probably not. Could be Sumitomo. There were three banks, Japanese banks, so it’s one of the banks, you know, that he must have had money in, and of course Japan is all gone so they have no record whatsoever, so we depended on the passbook, but that was taken away.

FS: And that was taken away when you father was arrested?

- CI: No, he went without anything; only clothes, yeah. So when we joined him, we left here to go to the Mainland, that's when the immigration took a lot of stuff out and we didn't know until we got to our destination.
- FS: Oh, I see.
- CI: So you know, two thousand dollars that he saved before the war. You know how much it would be today. I know they have lot of surplus money there, unclaimed money is in Congress but I don't know whether I should still try or not. (Laughs.) But I don't have any proof that's why, only I was interned.
- FS: Now you have been designated as people who are going back to Japan at the end of the war. So, when did you leave, actually?
- CI: In December, the latter part of December, we went all the way to Oakland...
- FS: This was in 1945?
- CI: 1945, December, and that was just about *oshogatsu* [New Year's] time we reached Uruga, Japan. That's where, you know, the Black Ships went to Japan, Uruga? Well, that was open for us to land over there.
- FS: What ship did you travel on, do you remember?
- CI: Matsonia.
- FS: Oh, I see. Were there many other families going back to Japan with you?
- CI: A lot of them, yes.
- FS: What was the mood of the people onboard the ship?
- CI: Of course we had some people said, "*Nihon ga katta*" [Japan won] and other one said Japan lost. Okay, we accepted as lost, you know. So the people that *katta gumi wa* [group that believed Japan had won] I think they were so down and out, yeah? They were in depression. But for us, you know, we were young too so we can change our mind anyway, so we accepted it. I said, "Oh, my, *kore ga Nihon?*" [This is Japan?] Japan was really battered up. If they had fought another year, oh, *Nihon zenmetsu* [Japan would have been completely destroyed] though really.
- FS: Actually didn't you have any kind of information within the camp while you were in Crystal City about whether Japan had won or lost?
- CI: No, they told us. We knew. But my father said, *katte mo, maketemo* [win or lose] he's going back. Okay the funny part is... (blank tape).

- FS: Can you tell us what it was like onboard the ship that you took to go to Japan?
- CI: Actually everything seemed to be okay. We were treated royally. Just because Japan lost the war they didn't overly abuse us or anything. Nobody threatened us or anything.
- FS: No guards.
- CI: I cannot even remember the guards because we not hostile anymore, Japan lost the war, so... We were treated royally, I think, because we were still considered diplomat until we got off the ship.
- FS: Oh, that's right. You were considered important people.
- CI: So after we landed, that was in Uruga, we landed, "And everybody had gone their way...*Kyushu no hito, wa Kyushu.* [Those from Kyushu left for Kyushu.] They separated all of us. But the travelling would have been real awful for a lot of people because there were so many people going back from the war, back to their homeland. The trains were just packed! When we went to Ueno there were no trains. No, they had trains but there's no space and I wasn't about to stand in line, so I went straight to the MP.
- FS: Who was he with?
- CI: The Army. The Army had already occupied Japan so they had a section for the military, you know, it's a small section. So I went straight to him, and said, 'Oh, we came back from the Mainland. We want to go up North but we don't have any way to go, the train is so full. I'm not going to stand at the end of the line.' And so he said, 'Oh, why did you come for?' I said, 'We had to come back so we came.' You know because my parents had set their mind because his father passed away and *obaachan* [grandmother] was left all by herself, not quite Alzheimers but real senile already so. And so he made space for us and Sumi Utsushigawa, her married name always slips my mind but anyway she's the one that writes the Crystal City bulletin every three months she sends us. She was Miyagi-ken too so we had Sumi's family, us, and we had another one, Jyo family. They're all Miyagi-ken, Sendai, so I said we're all over here, so they packed us up on the train and we went! I'm not tiger [born in the Year of the Tiger] for nothing, all the guts -- young kid -- just going. Not afraid to speak up. Everybody was so afraid and that's what Fumiko had done, probably you know. And they said it was okay but I think they had a hard time getting their passage back.
- FS: So from Uruga to Ueno, you took...?
- CI: I don't know how we went there. I was trying to think. We must have had something to take us over there.
- FS: But you were all on your own?

- CI: Yeah, we're all on our own. Once we landed there we're on our own. Although I think somebody came to greet us or something but that part, I don't know, it's off my mind.
- FS: Now from Ueno, then, you went straight to Miyagi by train? Army train?
- CI: No, Japan train. But every section in the train they have for the U.S. Army.
- FS: Oh, that's what I meant. There was one section for Army. Now, when you got to Sendai, what did you see?
- CI: Sendai was just completely flat because when the bombing of the incendiary bombs, they dropped leaflets that said to get away from the city because they're going to bomb. Then what they do is they bomb around in circles outward and then the fire goes in. And then you know you're going to be dead! So everything was in ashes except the few concrete buildings like Seimei Hoken buildings they had here and there, and that's where the Army took over, renovated inside and make into office.
- FS: Anything else you noticed?
- CI: Oh, yeah. You see dead bodies. You know, even if you had money you cannot buy food. And everything is black market. It's how you get it, who you know and whatever. But anyway, I was just lucky. I met up with all nice people and so even when I went back to the country with my parents we had enough food to live on because they grow their own vegetables and everything, and the first thing that I ate was mochi that Uncle made for me. You know, in the country. Nothing like that in the city. And so that was nice.
- FS: Were you received very well by the family that you were going to stay with?
- CI: Yeah, they were happy to see us because it's an old *otera* [temple]. We went back to his *otera*, about four hundred or five hundred years old *otera*. There's a long history, you know, goes back to Minamoto... no, Yoshitsune, Yoritomo, I don't know, one of the Minamoto clans.
- FS: What did you do there?
- CI: Well, I did nothing for I-don't-know-how-many months. Then I decided I'd better to do something so I went to the city. I thought, 'Gee, is this how my life is gonna to end. This is horrible.'
- FS: You were bored, then?
- CI: I got bored after awhile. The first time around you're kind of curious. You walk around; you meet people. And *Miyagi-ken no kotoba* [the language of Miyagi prefecture] is so hard to understand, so I cannot talk their language.
- FS: But you managed to actually eat and manage a household.

CI: *Tabemono* [things to eat] we had no problems. They grow their own rice too. And fish. It's a fishing village down the shore, so we always had a lot of fish to eat.

FS: So now you're ready to go back to the city and find work?

CI: First I went to stay with my mother's brother and so there was some engineer company, I mean, that's army, you know, was stationed at Yamoto, so I went to apply for a job but I didn't work over there. I went all the way to Sendai. See, Sendai is here and my parents' *otera* [temple] is on the peninsula so it's quite a distance from there, so I moved on to Sendai and I stayed with a *tofuya-san*, old family friends. But I soon found this gal, Yoko. I don't know how I met Yoko but anyway, I found her and then I stayed at her house. Her father was purged from the university. He was semi-Communist, a professor at Tohoku University. See, all my friends were like a diplomat's daughter and the other one, Yumi -- her father was Mitsubishi in New York *shiten* [branch office] president. And I had Bubbles; we gave her the nickname 'Bubbles'. Her father was a diplomat. I don't know, wherever. That's all the kind of friends I had. And they're all classical people and they're so nice. That's why I enjoyed my stay in Japan, the short time that I stayed. And I would teach Yoko typing and English. She still writes to me in English *kaiwa* [conversation]. Of course her son is now a doctor. She married a professor. She went to Tohoku [University]. I think she was a law major if I'm not mistaken. So those are my friends. Most of them have said bye-bye to Mother Earth.

FS: And your father gave you permission then to go to...

CI: Oh, yeah. My father is such a liberal man. For a Zen priest, it's very unusual. Of course when I went to Sendai, I only went to Christian school and Christian churches every Sunday because most of my friends were Christian. He said, 'That's okay. You learn. But just remember where you belong' is what he instilled in me. So I'm still a Zen member at Soto Mission. So I'm not going to switch. But I think my life was interesting.

FS: So now you've gone to the city, and what happened? Are you...?

CI: So I went to, oh, this person suggested I should work for the military government because I had no income, right? The military government, I worked under this Colonel Session. He was the CO over there, Commanding Officer.

FS: At where?

CI: At military government.

FS: In...?

CI: In Sendai. But then he was a womanizer, so I quit. And then I went to school. I took the exam. I went to Miyagi Gakuin. And so in between time I used to help the counterintelligence.

FS: How did you get the job there?

CI: Through all my friends. Once you work for the military government, we go back and forth because military government is here and the counterintelligence is there and the Communist Party building is there. And so, you know, we all become friends and our friend work over there so we start going back and forth. It's close knit. Of course, *Nihon no hito kara bakani sareta, kono...*, you know. Because we dress different and do different things. *Kono pansuke* [prostitute] *nanna no kanna no*. That was all dirty names, but we weren't like that but anyway, that's how I got to meet a lot of people, like this people that worked at the military government too. They're all professors too because they had to survive, so they worked with the little English that they know. They worked at the military government and these places and they told me, '*Asoko ni ikinasai*,' [Go there] and then I go over there. We go out and have dinner together like that, you know, so I had nice friends.

FS: So you moved on to the CIC [Counter Intelligence Corps]?

CI: I used to help the CIC because I met my husband-to-be. My present husband is who I met through that association with this group over there and over here. The military government and the CIC.

FS: Oh, I see, and actually you were just helping. What about your salary?

CI: I didn't get any pay.

FS: Oh.

CI: But they had funds, but probably Special Accounting did pay me something, I don't know, but I cannot remember that far.

FS: So you still didn't have a job when you met your husband-to-be?

CI: Yes.

FS: In the meantime where were you staying?

CI: At this Yoko's house, the professor's home.

FS: Now what did you do for your husband-to-be?

CI: Well, he helped us. When it's slow, it's hard, yeah? So he'll come and pick us up or something, then the kids don't look at you with a good eye, right? College kids? (Laughs.)

FS: Why?

CI: They don't want any Army people, U.S. Army. They were all anti-American then. Only that part was the ugliest part. Other than that, I'm fine. So I forget all the bad stuff and just remember the good stuff.

FS: And then after that...

CI: And then we did the top secret document translation and we would, like I said, wherever there's intelligence office there's a Communist headquarters right across. They're facing each other; they're spying on each other. So every move the intelligence take the Communists know, and we know every move the Communists take on that side.

FS: This is what year?

CI: 1946, '47, around there. So we would know exactly what is going to take place. Like the Korean War was supposed to be what's called the October Offense. They were supposed to start on, I think, the 20th of October, but then we had decoded their top secret documents, and they said no, they called it off. So the Korean War came after that.

FS: Say that again please. Who decoded the message?

CI: The Communists. No, the Communists said that the Americans decoded the code. Everything comes in code. That you have to know what's what. If 'flower' is something 'go,' 'kiku' is something. Or whatever. But anyway, they decoded. That's when we started being careful. In one of the documents that came through they would say... Every person in that intelligence office, they know exactly when they left the building, when they came back to the second. So with me too, they said, 'Oh, yeah, Carolyn went in the building at a certain-certain time, left certain-certain time.' And those things all came out. And then one came out and said that, oh, they got hold of my parents' address, my brother. In case there's a war, they'd come and kill us. Kill the whole family.

FS: You're talking about the Communists.

CI: Communists. Because Communism was so strong in Japan then.

FS: This is when you had a regular job with the CIC or is this still...?

CI: I think they started paying me because... At that part I'm kind of vague. So this guy here, he came back to Hawaii to live, Nishibayashi. He and I used to translate in the office together so... my buddy.

FS: When you say translate...

CI: Japanese into English.

FS: When you say Communists...

- CI: No, not Japanese to English. Yeah, Japanese to English. Well, because all the translation was going to General MacArthur's headquarters.
- FS: Does that mean that the Communists were writing in Japanese?
- CI: Yeah, because that's Japan Communist Party.
- FS: Okay, I see. Were they spying for somebody... Russia?
- CI: They were closely working with Korea and Russia.
- FS: And now this incident about your name being on the list... Why did they want to kill you, now? Please explain that part again.
- CI: Because we doing the translation of the documents, they considered me an enemy and so in case if the October Offense goes through, to slaughter all my family, including me, so the Commanding Officer at the intelligence told us "hurry up and go back to Hawaii" because anything can happen. That's why we came back early. Otherwise I think I would have stayed in Japan long time, you know, and maybe never come back until I retire. (Laughs.)
- FS: So that's the reason for your coming back here. Did you get married before you came back?
- CI: No, we were married so the Commanding Officer said, 'Hurry up and go. Take her and go.'
- FS: And your husband is a local person?
- CI: Yes, Hilo boy. He's the third generation.
- FS: Did you have any problems trying to get back?
- CI: No.
- FS: Was he serving in the military at that time too?
- CI: Yes, active military.
- FS: How did you get back?
- CI: On the ship. *Mariposa*. And that was in December too, just before New Year's. October Offense (Korean War) first was supposed to start in October, so anyway, they told us to get out (1947). My husband doesn't remember anything like that and he was the one that had all the notes in his notebook. (Laughs.)

FS: So you came back together as a couple.

CI: Yes.

FS: ...while your parents were still in Japan.

CI: They stayed in Japan.

FS: Just the two of you, back to Hawaii. Now where did you land?

CI: Honolulu.

FS: Did you settle here?

CI: Yes, we settled here, in Honolulu. So he served, see there was no opening in the intelligence here so what he did was he went with, gee, I cannot remember, anyway it's an Army group, Quarter Master.

FS: And so you settled here and...

CI: And afterwards he retired, well, when his term was out, he got out of the service and then of course he was working for Lewers and Cooke before he got into the service, so he went back to Lewers and Cooke to work.

FS: What did you do?

CI: There was no job in Honolulu so Reverend Ohta's son said, 'Oh, 'you want to work as a sales clerk at Fair Department?' I said, 'Oh, if there's opening, I don't mind,' so can you imagine, seventy-five cents an hour, we worked for at that time. So I got a job and afterwards I went to work for a doctor. Then after that I saw, 'How *bakarashii*' [ridiculous] so I said, 'Oh, I'm going to beauty school.' My girlfriend said, 'You know, you cut everybody's hair and you perm everybody's hair in between lunch hour and everything else. When you do your hair, you have to go to the beauty shop. Why don't you go to beauty school?' So that's when I started. So I made it for fifty-something years. It's almost fifty years since I started my business. Crazy world, yeah? When I look back at my life, well, I don't know, it was very exciting. That's why I like all these samurai shows. (Laughs.) Lot of action!

FS: Then you're still active actually right now.

CI: Still working. Here's my pen and my phone number and everything.

FS: What would you like to say about your entire internment experience?

- CI: Well, among our group, the girls, we had... I can tell you anything, right? Well, anyway, there were a few families, they didn't want us to associate with this group. The parents said, 'No, no. You cannot associate with these people.' We had a little bit of differences but very mild, so we just worked around them.
- FS: When you think back to your own, entire internment experience, what can you say about it, though?
- CI: Actually, you know, I have nothing against the U.S. Government because if we were treated the other way around I probably would hate the government, but because we were treated so loyally, I feel I'm very, very fortunate to experience such good treatment. Being an alien internee, they can mistreat us in any way, but I have really nothing to say.
- FS: Then you're quite happy about receiving the redress.
- CI: So some said, you don't deserve it. But nevertheless, we were in internment camp so we got ours. I brought my mother back from Japan in 1985 because my father passed away. She built her own *hanare* [annex] herself, so she stayed with me until she passed on.
- FS: What did she think of the redress?
- CI: And then so at that time that thing was going on, so she said... I made her sign the papers too and she said, "*Oh, okane kudasaru nara morau,*" [If they're going to give it to us, I'll take it.] and so she signed it but she was waiting and waiting, and in the meantime Tanaka *sensei* [teacher] was the first one that got the 20,000 and she said, 'Oh, *Tanaka sensei dake* [only]?' I said, only few people got, so you have to wait, but she died before she got it. *Shinde kara moraimashita.* [It was received after she died.] It was made out to my brother but my brother sent the check back and I deposited it in her account.
- FS: What did your brother do? Did he stay in Japan?
- CI: Yes, he stayed in Japan so he worked for Pan American for a long time. He went to Tohoku Gakuin too. After he graduated, he worked for Pan Am and then after that he worked at Keio Plaza (Hotel) because they wanted him to handle the foreign, a liaison. Now I think he had a stroke so I don't know whether he's dead or alive but that's okay.
- FS: What would you like the younger generation to remember about your experience? Is there anything you'd like to tell them?
- CI: Well, I hope there'll be no more wars. The experiences, although I was very fortunate, for many of them, they really suffered a lot. Being moved into horse's stables, it's no fun you know. I can just imagine what took place. For me it wasn't. So I haven't told my son anything about the internment but probably he'll find out. [Laughs] Any of my other friends too, like Carol Miyamoto, Bishop Miyamoto's daughter, she said, 'Oh, I never told my sons about internment camp.' I said, 'You too? You're just as bad as me then.'

Everybody else, except Cherry Matano folks, they came from other camps and then they drifted into our place, so her version is entirely different from us.

FS: Well, thank you very much for coming and sharing your experiences with us. This concludes today's interview.