

JAPANESE CULTURAL CENTER OF HAWAII

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Jane Katamoto Matsunaga [JM]

and

Jean Katamoto Kawamura [JK]

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Interviewer: Mel Inamasu [MI], Jane Kurahara [JY]

Note: Comments in brackets [] are by the transcriber. Inaudible words or sections are identified by ((?)) in the transcript. This transcript has been lightly edited for readability.

- JY: Could you tell us your names, date of birth and where you were born?
- JM: Jane Yukie—Katamoto is the maiden name—Matsunaga, on June 8, 1927. It's Star Road in Pauoa, Honolulu. We were delivered by a midwife and I will insert this information: my mother had my brother first. He was a 9 pounder so she just thought she was going to have another big baby. Then the midwife said at the time of birth, "I hope you have plenty clothes ready, 'cuz you have another one coming!" So it was a surprise.
- JK: Well, I'm Jean Katamoto Kawamura. I thought she said that she wondered why the midwife didn't clean her up. Then she said, "You're going to have another one." We must have been rascals because she said it took so long to fold up the diapers and put them on the shelf. She and I would go and pull out all—I guess we were about double trouble. (Laughter)
- MI: Now how did the midwife know there was another one coming?
- JK: I guess she must have felt a heartbeat because those days, they don't have a doctor.
- JM: Prenatal care or whatever it is.
- JY: Oh yeah.
- JK: You know, you were kind of on your own.
- JY: Were your parents—you want to say who your parents were and were they from Japan or from here?
- JK: They're both from Ehime-ken, Shikoku. Matsuyama is the capital city and they came from a small island called Mizuki where I think grandpa, our grandfather or great grandfather...
- JM: He came from Nakajima, father's side and then they moved to Mizuki, which is smaller.
- JK: But they were boat builders? I'm not too sure where the boat building part came in.
- JM: Oh, the father learned on his own by swimming out to the boats and measuring and figuring out...
- JK: Oh, our grandfather, father's father.

JM: And my mother was the youngest of...

JK: Three brothers.

JM: Four. Four brothers. Anyway, she was a tomboy from what I gathered. Playing baseball too.

JK: Playing baseball too.

JM: Yeah.

JK: And one of the uncles came to Honolulu, a bachelor. And he was a taxi driver from what we know, and he used to send her dresses and shoes which was unheard of.

JM: Western too.

JK: How about the hat?

JM: Oh!

JK: She went to the beach which was really close to her home and the wind came and blew her hat in the ocean and she cried 'cuz she couldn't retrieve it. I guess she didn't swim then. Women didn't swim in those days, I guess.

MI: What was your mother's maiden name?

JK: Noguchi. But then her brother...

JM: I get confused because the brother got *Yoshi*-ed [*mukoyoshi*: an adult man is adopted into a family and takes the family's surname] and his name is Hayashi. So we have cousins that are Hayashi and not Noguchi.

MI: So, I want to ask a little bit about your family before we get started. When did your parents come to Hawaii, roughly, and why did they come to Hawaii?

JK: Well, I guess it's in the book but I don't recall the dates [referencing the publication *Japanese Eyes, American Hearts, Vol II*].

MI: If you don't know, that's okay.

JM: The year *oneesan* [older sister] was born?

JK: That's when they were married, but father came early on, maybe when he was about twelve with his father. Because his father had opened up a boat shop in Kakaako where Restaurant Row is right now.

JM: Federal Building, the Prince Kuhio Building.

JK: He came and he went to school at Royal Elementary.

JM: [He attended] night class because during the day, he would help his father. He had a British teacher so he spoke with a British accent. So whenever he speaks, you can tell, it's a little different. And even if we graduated from the university, he would correct us in pronunciation.

MI: So he had a British accent?

JK: Slight British accent. But after that, he worked with grandpa and he was sent back to Japan. I forget the reason.

JM: Because World War I broke out and his [father's] mother didn't want to be stuck here in case anything happened so she wanted the family back in Japan, Japan family. So he went back.

MI: When was this?

JK: 1917?

MI: So he was about how old when came here? He went to school and then after high school or something?

JM: Oh no. I don't think he graduated high school. Royal School, night class. No, but must have been before '17 because...

MI: Before the war?

JM: Yeah, because if he was born in 1896, must be about 1914, yeah? Anyway, because of the war, they went back to Japan.

MI: Okay, so he wasn't here. What about your mother? What's her story? How did she get to Hawaii?

JM: Because, after they got married...

MI: Oh, so they got married in Japan. They met...

JM: And they came back to Hawaii. There was not much of a future there [Mizuki]. It's a small island. I think they raised oranges.

MI: About when did they come back? What year was that?

JM: 1920.

MI: 1920.

JM: When they had the Spanish flu [epidemic]—when was that? '20 or '21? Because she was pregnant and she almost lost her baby. When she [their older sister] was born, she was really dark because of the [mother's] high fever. But she survived. But then people my father knew from his previous visit, they really helped. So they lived in Moiliili with friends and he was looking for jobs. They ended up in Kakaako because he started the boat business where his father had left off.

MI: He started all over again.

JM: Yeah. Apparently he had the same customers 'cuz lots of Japanese fishermen.

JY: Yeah.

JM: I guess we were not wealthy because, according to the story, the fishermen couldn't make that big a living out of fishing so he [father] couldn't collect about \$30,000, thirty thousand dollars. That was a big amount fifty, sixty years ago.

JK: More than that, eighty [thousand dollars].

JM: Well, anyway, he claims he tried to go and they would give him maybe a few dollars at a time but it just didn't work out. But, he never was a financial guy anyway. (Laughter) We did a fine living because, well, we lived in Pauoa. After he moved here and got settled, he bought a house in Pauoa. That's where most of us were born. He was the first one to buy a washing machine, electric washing machine, so all the neighbors would come and look at it. It was a marvel. It

wasn't that ringer type, it was the spinning type so it was kind of advanced. And he could hire somebody to help her [mother] because we were the fourth and fifth children. We have an older sister and two brothers. And there was another one. He decided after a while that his wife should learn English. His friend was giving up a neighborhood store so he thought that my mother should do that so she could learn English. It was in a camp with Hawaiians, Filipinos and Portuguese. Anyway, that's how she picked up English. So when the war came and he got interned, she was fortunate. She had a choice of going with him to the internment camp or staying back because she was self-supporting, even with four kids. Our older sister was married and an older brother was in Japan going to school. They told her she could stay back because she can support the family. And she was able, with her limited English, to manage. I marvel at that. Because, really, you have to be buying from the wholesalers, paying your taxes and all that.

JK: Oh, you forgot that from Pauoa, we moved to Ala Moana, near the Kewalo Basin where the store is.

MI: What's the name of the store?

JK: The Katamoto Store with the big Coca Cola sign.

MI: Oh, that was your mother's part. Your father meanwhile was working...

JM: Was working at boat building. There were four boat builders right in that area, on Ala Moana Boulevard.

JK: I mentioned that the store was near Kewalo Basin because that's why Bishop Estate owned the store and the camp where there were how many families?

JM: Thirty.

JK: There were about thirty homes, I think. So she collected the rent and Bishop Estate would get it. Oh, my oldest sister would deliver the money to the bank or wherever it should go.

JM: Well, later it was a Schuman Carriage manager, Mr. Alice, [who] used to collect the fees. I don't know how come. We used to pay the money there and we were barely in high school, barely high school. (Giggles) I guess, they were very trusting. [We were] very dependable kids. (Laughter) No, I'm kidding.

MI: So, where did you go to school?

JK: Oh, Pohukaina.

JM: You want us to sing the alma mater?

JK: Ahh!

JM: The words still come to me.

JY: Oh, yeah.

JM: The school is no longer there; it's a library collection place now.

JK: And, it was a long walk from our house. Now that I think about it, it was at least six blocks, seven. Just about a mile. Oh, is that what it is? From Ala Moana, near Ward Warehouse, from there to Pohukaina. Kind of a long walk, yeah. So, we were always late. I don't know if you remember but—just making it.

MI: So, actually the family was doing okay [in] 1941? I mean, both your mother's business, your father was working?

JK: Right. They were fine.

MI: How old were you in 1941? December 7th?

JM: Ninth graders right?

JK: Thirteen, fourteen, yeah.

MI: You folks remember the day? You folks remember what happened?

JM: Well, Mr. ((?))...

JK: Yeah, you can tell.

JM: Well, we were in Sunday school and, I don't remember the teacher, but she was talking to us. The Reverend came running in and said, "You people better go home. There's a war on." It just didn't hit me hard though. I thought...

MI: So, sitting in Sunday School, you didn't hear anything?

JK: Oh, the planes were flying by but no bombing. Just some planes, like maneuvers.

JM: So, I think the Ala Moana area wasn't hit bad, like McCully where the bombs fell accidentally [from] our own anti-aircraft [weapons].

JK: Yes, yeah. It did [hit] two blocks away, Kida side. You know, the empty lot by Tanimoto? There was, where Ward Warehouse stands now, there were like three rivers. They were named first, second, third rivers. There was an empty lot next to a boat builder and the anti-aircraft [shell] fell there. But luckily no damage, personal damage. But that was weird. We could hear—after that we could hear all of the anti-aircraft [shelling]. But, uh, like I told my son, we would, every night, would prepare to be evacuated, dress up and have everything ready because my dad wasn't taken right away. He was taken in March.

JM: '42.

JK: Yeah, February, March, later.

JM: Later.

JK: I don't remember.

MI: Why were you preparing? Why do you think your folks were told...

JM: They would tell us to evacuate. We were near the ocean. [They were] preparing for a [Japanese] invasion.

JK: Well, actually, Washington Intermediate had a typhoid epidemic and about 16-20 students were affected and I was part of them. And, well, what do you recall, nobody could diagnose it. Then Dr. Yamashita on King Street...

JY: Oh, yeah.

JK: He diagnosed other students and so they found out that [it] was typhoid so I remember the ambulance coming to pick me up.

MI: She [Jean] didn't get sick?

JK: No. It was interesting but the military had taken over the hospitals so they put us where the Pacific Rehab is today and they used to call it Children's Hospital.

JY: Yeah, yeah.

JK: We were there and my mom would come [to visit me]. And, when I was in the hospital, my dad was taken. So, she [Jean] would know more about that.

JM: Well, it's in the story, no, in the book.

JY: You don't remember that?

JM: No, don't remember, but my older sister said she would never tell Jane that our father was taken away. But she would...

JK: I kind of figured [something was wrong], because he never came to visit. You know, after a while, everyone else comes but he doesn't come. Of course, I thought he was busy with the war effort because I guess he was a good [boat] builder because with his alien status, I found out [that] he wasn't supposed to be working on American ships, but they needed his, their skills. But they took him off the job, though. One day when they interned him, he was busy fixing up the damage the Japanese did. (Laughs) It's kinda ironic.

M: And this was about when? Several months after?

JK: '42, February.

MI: Oh, February.

JK: Yeah. Because I came home [from the hospital]) after March.

MI: You don't remember the day he was taken?

JK: When my father was taken?

MI: Yes.

JM: I really don't. It's—maybe I'm just erasing it out of my mind but I know that well-dressed men came in but they didn't have hats on. They just came in and they talked to my dad. We were there. I remember my mother, my brother and I were there. I don't remember much.

JK: No, that was right after the war, December 8th, when they came. Because he was taken off the job, he didn't come home. He said, "Can I go home and get a change of clothes and a toothbrush?"

JM: Oh, when they were actually taken away.

JK: Yeah, yeah. 'Cuz the Sunday, December 7th, [when] we went home [from Sunday School], we were having lunch but you know, [O]shogatsu [New Year] was coming up so we were trying to clean the house up so the drawers were open. Clothes were scattered all over. We were having lunch when the FBI guys came. They said, "Are you planning to run away? Is that why you are getting all of your things ready?" And because they were so fast in coming, [we suspected the cause] was a neighborhood Filipino guy, bad guy. (Chuckles)

JM: The rat.

JK: He called in and said, "Oh, that Japanese family, the boy was out till after one o'clock and he didn't come home till late so maybe he was up to something." So, they [FBI] questioned all that.

But then I heard that my father was at a wedding party and he came home late so that matched, I guess. But people are so nosy about others. But that's why they were questioning us. And I thought, how rude. We're having lunch and here they come. You don't remember that?

JM: No. I guess I'm getting all mixed up.

JK: Yeah, that's why, when he was taken off the job without any warning, they told him, "OK, you can have your family bring personal clothing or whatever." So [when] my brother took it already [packed] to the place, to Sand Island, they were already shipped out. So he [brother] didn't even get to talk to him. So that was bad.

MI: He was taken from his working place?

JK: The working place, directly to [Sand Island, then to the mainland].

JM: So we didn't even get a chance to say bye.

MI: After he was taken, did the family get to see him on the island of Oahu?

JK: Not at all.

JM: He was at Sand Island for a few days, I guess.

JK: Yeah.

MI: Did you know that he was there at Sand Island?

JK: Two or three days.

JM: My mom knew.

MI: She knew?

JK: Yeah, because she tried to go and see him. It's in her story. She had to walk home all the way which wasn't too far because it was...

MI: It's pretty far.

JM: It's far.

JK: From Sand Island.

JM: Yeah.

JK: Anyway, I'm sorry. Well, I didn't know anything because when I got home, they said, "We have to tell you this. Papa's not here." I said, "Oh, I knew that." *Nishiga shirasuya* ((?)). I guessed, you know, that something is wrong. But what was interesting...

MI: But when they told you that, did they tell you where he was, or did they say they didn't know where he was?

JK: No. They knew where he was. Well, not the exact place, but that he was on the mainland. Because he was moving from camp to camp. They were all doing that.

JY: Yeah. Because they didn't know what to do.

JK: Right.

JY: Except to move them around.

JK: Yeah. But in the hospital, at night, I remember this gurney being pushed and they said, “Oh somebody passed away.” So, I think four or five students passed away and I don't know who they were because we were young. Yeah, and the nurse told my mother that she couldn't come in because it was highly contagious, I guess. Anyway, she talked to me from outside the window, there outside my bed. And I probably didn't even know they were there but the nurse said, “Don't bother coming because she's not going to make it.” (Laughs) My mother was so upset. She told me she called the doctor, and they had Army doctors, mostly *hakujin* [foreigners]. She said he was very nice and he explained, “No, nurses are overworked so she just came out with that.”

MI: So, when you came home, how long had it been since he was gone?

JK: I would say two months.

MI: Two months?

JK: Yeah.

MI: How was your family different because your mother then was in charge?

JK: Right. She was doing fine because she had been running everything anyway because my father was so busy working. Right after the war [started], everything was crazy so you just do what you have to do. I guess that was the situation.

JM: Right after the attack, when Papa was taken...

JK: Yeah, during the war period.

JM: No.

JK: When Papa was taken, how did it change the family? 'Cuz you were home.

JM: Well, we just, I guess, accepted it and did what was necessary. But all I remember is going in line to buy meat at May's Market because everything was rationed and you have to have your coupons, of course. And sometimes we were in line for a couple of hours. There's a long line and you get just so much meat. Even gasoline, but we weren't driving so I guess I don't know very much about it.

JK: You know they had to cover the headlights during the blackouts.

MI: Even the homes [were] all blacked out.

JK: Yeah, all black. That's when my mother taught us how to play blackjack. (Laughs) Right? Because we couldn't do anything.

JM: How come she didn't teach us *Hanafuda* [Japanese game of cards], yeah? Funny.

JK: I don't know.

JY: Do you know what happened about your father's boat building?

JK: Went down the drain.

MI: Was it his business or was he working for somebody?

JK: Both. For a while it was his business, then he worked for Hawaiian Tuna Packers.

MI: At that time, he was the owner, fixing the boats?

JK: Right.

MI: Oh.

JM: You mean when he was taken?

MI: Yes.

JM: Oh no, no.

JK: He was working for the Tuna Packers.

MI: Oh, I see.

JK: It was interesting that he worked for Honolulu Iron Works, like she said. Highly classified area but still I guess they needed...

JM: Not Honolulu Iron Works. He worked for the Interisland.

JK: Oh, the Interisland Dredging Company, or whatever, where they fixed up tugboats that go among the islands. Not tugboats but interisland shipping. But he was also working for the military.

JM: Yeah.

JK: Because they needed repair work down, ASAP.

JM: No, but what Mel is asking is when Papa was taken, how was the family surviving? 'Cuz I don't know.

JK: We had to survive so we just carried on, went on with our daily...

MI: How long before you heard from your father? Or, when did you hear from your father? It must have been when he was on the mainland somewhere.

JK: Right, travelling.

MI: When did he contact the family or when was he able to contact the family?

JK: Good question, yeah. I don't remember. I had letters, but dated from '42, '43.

JM: But I couldn't find my letters. I told you. I had kept everyone of 'em. I hunted high and low. (Laughs) I don't know what I did with them.

JK: And I thought that they had censored them but none of these are censored, though.

MI: Oh, really?

JK: Yeah. I thought I had some that were cut out, portions.

MI: Would you remember those later on?

JK: Oh, yeah. It's kind of repetitious because he cannot write about the doings, yeah.

JY: Yeah, cannot. They would cut it up.

JK: Yeah. I remember seeing *pukas* [holes], yeah?

JM: The holes, here and there.

JK: But these [referring to the letters they brought], none of them have. That's what I was trying to find out. Yeah, you can look at them. I just brought a picture of what he did. I mean what he made for the three youngest daughters while interned. Because like the film showed, they had

time on their hands. ‘Cuz my Japanese name is crane, he made three sets of boxes. [Photo of a stacked set]

JY: Oh! Look at that!

MI: So you have these things?

JK: I have it.

JY: Oh, that’s wonderful!

JK: And my sister has her turtle because...

JY: Yeah. Oh!

JK: Because the Japanese name, *Nagai* [To live long], crane and turtle. She said it got smashed when they were moving. So she regrets not having taken good care of it.

JY: Yes, yes. It’s wonderful!

MI: Was he skilled at knives? I mean on the boats and stuff he would...

JK: Yeah, he worked on the boats.

MI: But he would draw?

JK: Oh, no, no.

JM: Fishing boats you don’t embellish. (Laughs)

MI: On any of the boats?

JM: Oh well, painting them. (Laughs)

MI: So, you’re not sure how long it was before you folks heard from him? What’s the oldest record you have, the dates?

JK: This was ‘42 or ‘43. ‘43, July ‘43.

MI: Is it possible that that’s the first letter?

JK/JM: No, no.

JK: We had others. But like I said, we had cut outs. I don’t know what—maybe I gave it to my son ‘cuz he’s into MIS [Military Intelligence Service]. Not into this so much. He may have it. I don’t know.

JM: You have letters that have come out.

JK: I don’t remember. It’s all in a box. I don’t remember what the first one was.

JM: Hopefully. (Laughs)

MI: So, from the family’s standpoint, you folks just, I guess, you decided, you’re gonna just keep on working and wait for him to come home?

JK: Yeah, doing whatever to survive.

MI: There was no discussion about family joining him or anything like that?

JK: Not at all.

JM: My mother made the decision and we just stuck to it.

MI: From the beginning?

JK: Yeah. I think she did the right thing because I don't think it would have been a pleasant experience for us. Not necessarily good. But then, ah, you know they gave compensation. What did you call it?

JM: Twenty thousand [dollars].

JY: Yeah, mm hmm.

JK: So, I said, "Shucks! We should have gone!" (Laughs)

JY: Oh.

JK: We could have paid our college expenses. (Laughs)

JY: That's right, you know.

JK: Yeah. Because I have friends who were interned and they said they all reacted differently, yeah. Some splurge on themselves, go to Vegas and some dole it out to the family.

JM: Oh, I never thought of that.

JK: Because I have friends who did it, so...

JM: But, I remember Papa saying they really took good care of him so it was not a very bad experience for him. The government...

MI: Now, where was he? Do you remember?

JK/JM: Santa Fe.

JK: He ended up there.

MI: Did he go anywhere else before Sant Fe?

JK: Texas. Before that Lordsburg, New Mexico.

MI: Crystal City?

JK: No.

MI: Where in Texas did he go?

JY: Kennedy?

JK: I don't remember exactly.

JY: Kennedy?

JM: Maybe it's in the book.

JK: I'm not sure but..

MI: But that was just for a little while. Most of the time, he was in Santa Fe?

JM: Yeah. The bulk of his time, you know.

JK: But I remember him saying that the Indian girls that are working—you know after a while, they got passes to go into town so they could purchase personal stuff and he said he thought he was in Hawaii, 'cuz [Indian girls] looks like Okinawan girls.

JY: Oh.

JK: Big eyes, yeah, and black hair and all that. So he felt comfortable.

[Discussion of photo boxes]

JK: Yours came out good, yeah.

JY: He painted that too?

JK: He carved it and painted it.

JM: I guess a lot of men did that, yeah?

MI: Yeah, yeah. The boxes.

JK: 'Cuz mine has the wing and the turtle but my boxes are not in that good condition. (Laughs) The termites got into some of them.

JM: Oh, no kidding?

JK: But, my kid sister is *Mitsue* [Third blessing] so *manzoku* [being satisfied], yeah.

JM: Hers was the flowers.

JK: Yeah.

JY: Flowers?

JK: But, she said it got destroyed, I mean it got injured, smashed when they were...

JM: Oh, moving?

JK: Yeah.

JM: Oh.

JK: So she regrets not having taken good care of it.

JM: I had my father's letters all in the last big box but I transferred it out.

JY: Oh.

MI: So, you were away in the hospital. You came home, your father was gone. How different was the family without him? A lot of things changed, right? Because you had to live without your father. The children, I guess, had to do a lot more.

JK: We managed.

JM: But then, he was gone a lot of nights because he was very active in community affairs and he went to Japan because of his injury to go to the *onsen* [Japanese spa] to get better. I guess...

MI: What injury was this?

JK: Industrial accident.

JM: A machine flew and hurt his ankle area and it never healed but...

MI: He had an open wound. The bone got infected.

JK: Right. Exactly. It never cured.

JM: Oh, you remember from the story?

JK: Yeah.

MI: I remember, it didn't say that but I was kind of guessing.

JK: Yep, yeah.

JY: He's [MI] a doctor.

JK: Yeah, I'm sorry. I forgot that you were.

MI: So, for the rest of his life, the bone never healed?

JK: No. So he finally had to have it cut.

MI: Oh, he did have it cut?

JK: Amputated.

MI: Oh, amputated?

JK: Yeah.

JY: From where was it?

JK: Below the knee.

MI: What age was that?

JK: Yeah, probably 80.

MI: Oh.

JM: But he was determined to...

MI: Did it get much worse while he was in the internment camp?

JM: Oh no.

JK: He lived with it.

JM: No, I don't think so.

JK: He worked for the hospital in the admin. Because he could speak English and Japanese.

MI: Oh, you mean in the camp?

JK: Yeah, at the internment camp. And so, he was in a favorable position. He ate with the staff and, you know, he got paid. I forget how much.

JM: Ten cents a day. (Laughs)

JK: Minimal. (Laughter) But because of his ability to speak English, yeah, he had it pretty good.

JM: I guess, in working at the hospital, his foot was taken care of. But after he came home...

JK: It got worse, yeah?

JM: He never let my mother do it, though [cleanse the wound]. He took care of it, all by himself.

JY: Oh, my goodness.

JM: It was open, [it required] bandages.

JK: It never healed. It was always pussy. I wonder if today they could do something, yeah?

MI: There's something they could do. Well, we have better antibiotics.

JK: Techniques and all that.

MI: But sometimes even, what you call, hyperbaric oxygen, concentrated oxygen in a tank could do it.

JK: Oh, wow.

MI: Sometimes it could help those kinds of things to heal.

JK: Oh, really?

MI: Sometimes.

JK: Well, anyway, so he had a prosthesis, which he hated. He said the phantom pains really bothered him.

JM: But that wasn't internment.

JK: No.

JM: The ailment.

MI: So, as far as school and everything, the idea was that you folks just kept going to school?

JK: Right. Yeah.

MI: Okay. Then when did he come back?

JK: In 1945, when we were freshmen at UH [University of Hawaii], November. Right before Thanksgiving.

MI: So, for about three and a half years later?

JK: Yeah. And you know what impressed me, I tell her, is that they [parents] were really young when they were, you know, going through this war experience. I thought they were in their fifties or sixties but actually, [they were in their] early forties.

JY: Yeah.

JK: So, I'm thinking, at that age, I wonder if I could have handled it? I guess, coming from Japan, that's a whole big trip, yeah. Because they had to go from Shikoku to Kobe to catch the liner coming here and that was quite a bad experience. It took over a month to come to Hawaii.

MI: Really?

JK: Yeah, those days. And she was *hapai* [pregnant] so she wasn't feeling good.

JY: Oh,

JK: Yeah, that wasn't fun, but yeah. But she was very broad-minded in the sense that we could talk to her about anything, you know. And she never said, "Oh, no, not over this trip." But not too lenient either. Why do I say she's broad-minded? Anything you gave her, new ideas, she would think about it and she was very receptive. Although, when we were going to college, she wanted

one of us to go to business school, and one to go to UH. But we both wanted to go to UH so she said, “Okay, it’s up to you folks.” But, we worked at the cannery during the summers. Whatever money we had, we gave to her. So, she took care of that, yeah. Kinda paid our way ‘cuz it was fifty dollars a semester compared to thousands [now]. (Laughs)

JY: It’s a big difference.

JK: Right.

MI: So, when the war came, was the store business affected, like people wouldn’t come because she was Japanese?

JK: Not at all.

MI: Nothing like that? The neighbors still came?

JK: Yeah, in fact, they were all local, so *mama san*—they used to call her, yeah. And like I mentioned in the book too, that the military sailors especially would come, young kids. They would befriend her and make a surrogate mother out of her. I know a couple of them left their money with her, so they wouldn’t spend it all.

MI: They trusted her.

JK: Yeah. But because too she would tell them, don’t go in the camp, ‘cuz they were selling illegal...

JM: *Okolehao* [moonshine liquor].

JK: Yeah, liquor.

JY: Oh.

JK: And they’re always looking for something to drink. But luckily, they didn’t have too many brushes among the locals and the military. Because [in] some areas, they were really bad, yeah, with haoles and locals. But the one bad reaction was a guy who lived in the camp who called [to] my older sister, “You Jap, you dirty Jap. We know we got it in for you.” And all that *kine*. But he was really one of the only ones, yeah.

JM: The others were okay.

JK: They were fine. It didn’t make any difference.

MI: Just one time or over and over?

JK: Couple of times and that was it.

MI: Not to you folks?

JK: Oh, not to us young ones. Because she used to play with the kids more than me, she was more tomboy. She would get into fights with them, hold her own. (Laughs)

MI: How about the other Japanese families, being that your father was taken away. Did they treat your family differently?

JK: No. There was one family, Tomimatsu. He used to own Kakaako Cafe Restaurant. He used to periodically come, make sure my mother is okay, at least visit. But most families, unless they’re talking on the phone, they didn’t come too much. You’re kinda looking out for yourself, yeah. But then, maybe we have a bad memory but do you remember?

JM: No, oh well.

MI: Like in school, did they treat you differently?

JK: Differently?

MI: Wouldn't play with you?

JK: Oh, not at all. No.

JM: You mean at Washington [Intermediate School] where we were ninth graders already? No, there was nothing, unless we were insensitive. (Laughs) But, no.

JK: I don't think so. Who else was interned? Do you remember?

JM: Of our friends?

JK: Yeah.

JM: None that I can think of.

MI: So, was this for a fact or that you were aware of?

JK: Oh, no. I take it back. Kakaako had a lot of Japanese fishermen. So, they either all went, mostly, none of them just the father. The whole family went. Yeah.

MI: I see.

JK: So, there weren't too many, yeah.

JM: I don't remember them.

JK: Nakanishi.

JM: Oh.

JK: And Uyemoto.

JM: I didn't know they went.

JK: 'Cuz a lot of fishermen were taken. But, no, although the Kida family, whose brother lost his boat because the government took it—he just had it built too and, um, they were half a block up. They were in close touch, similar business, fishing supplies. So, my dad and he had a close relationship. So they would kind of keep track [of us]. And the other family, Soranaka, they kind of kept in touch. But not the—'cuz we weren't exactly a camp. You know, we didn't have that...

JM: We were [like] the landlords...

JK: Yeah.

JM: And the others were...

JK: Tenants.

JM: And they were all mostly non-Japanese. Only one family, Yamashina family.

JK: They came later though, yeah?

JM: But, ah, they were there.

JK: Before the war, yeah.

MI: So did some of your father's fishermen friends end up with him in New Mexico? Santa Fe?

JM: No, I don't think so. I know the doctor from Oregon was with him. I guess because being a doctor...

JK: Hospital.

JM: Yeah. He [father] was working at the hospital so they became good friends.

MI: Who was that?

JM: Dr. Tanaka. I guess he's long gone but they used to write to each other after the war and Dr. Tanaka would send oranges from Oregon.

JK: I don't remember that. (Laughs)

JM: But, um, and my dad had a painting, I think the same doctor had painted in watercolor, the camp.

JK: Oh, the camp. Yeah.

JM: What happened to it?

JK: I don't know. Good question. Yeah.

JM: It was a nice painting. I was thinking—yesterday, I visited my brother. I should have had him come and talk to you people. His memory is really good. He's ninety, yeah, but he remembers a lot of stuff, things that happened.

JK: I don't know if he would come out, though.

JM: He lives in Kahaluu. Well, anyway, all I remember is that he had homing pigeons, about ten or twelve. And, of course, when the war started, they couldn't keep the homing pigeons, so we had to eat them. At first, he wouldn't eat them but to me, it tasted like chicken. (Laughs)

MI: About how many pigeons did he have?

JK: About ten or twelve.

MI: Ten or twelve you had to kill?

JK: Quite a bit because the coop was big. Sad, yeah.

JM: And, well, one thing I wrote that we haven't mentioned yet, we had—what do you call them? A place to hide?

JK: Bomb shelter. We built one.

JY: Yes.

JK: Oh, that was Willy Okubo that helped. Kakaako dirt is coral mostly, so it was easy to dig, but we tried a Victory Garden. It didn't work.

JM: The vegetables didn't grow. (Laughs)

JK: The soil is so bad. It didn't grow at all. But, yeah, we had a bomb shelter.

MI: So you dug a hole. Did they hit water or anything?

JK: No. Amazing, yeah. It wasn't very deep. But what happened is the store was in the front building and then there's the second store. I mean house, home building, and we lived in the back.

MI: And the store was in the front.

JY: Mm hmm.

JM: So we built the bomb shelter between.

JK: Yeah, between.

JM: Home buildings.

JY: Did you help build it?

JM: I guess we were nuisances more than help. (Laughs)

JK: But actually, there was a friend, my father's friend's son who stayed with us.

JM: From the Big Island.

JK: Yeah, from Koloa, Kohal(?), and he kind of helped us during the war.

JM: Yeah, that's right. I forgot about it.

MI: So, what is a bomb shelter? You dig a square hole?

JK: Rectangular.

MI: Rectangular hole.

JM: And enough for about six people to just sit.

MI: You line it with something or...

JK: No, just a wooden...

MI: Cover?

JK: Trestle. You know.

JM: It's like mine, digging for gold or that kind of...

JK: But very crude.

JM: But there was a roof to it, right?

JK: I don't think we took any pictures.

MI: And after the war, you just filled it back in?

JK: Yeah. Leveled it up because that's where the clothes line went up. (Laughs) I told her [during] war years, we were becoming teenagers, so your mind's not on big issues, right? (Laughs).

JY: That's right.

JK: Yeah. Personal, proms, schools, and whatnot.

MI: So, when your father came back, how was he different? Did he look different? Did he act differently?

JK: Well, to me, he was the same. Not even much older. Yeah?

JM: Mm, hmm.

JK: He still had the moustache. Yeah. I don't think he had more gray hair. Not that I remember. We were just so happy to see him. But we didn't go down to the pier, yeah?

JM: No.

JK: Only Joe went. My brother, he drove so he went to get him. I don't know why the family didn't go. We just waited at home.

MI: So, you knew when he was going to be arriving?

JK: Right, yeah. But, interestingly, they [internees] sure took a long way to come home. They went on the train to the East Coast and back to the Northwest and then came home because they didn't have any boats coming back to Hawaii. I don't understand, yeah.

JM: So, he said he appreciated getting to see the United States, owing to the government. (Laughter)

JK: Thanks to the government.

JY: Yeah.

JM: So, he really had no hard feelings and I guess we learned to accept things so we never were—I don't feel like any of us were bitter.

JK: Yeah, oh not like on the mainland where their experience was a lot worse. Yeah, [except] for the isolated “you Jap” thing, nothing serious. By the same token, when my father came back and they were doing reparations, my older sister told him you should try because you lost your business and all this. He said, “No, because I'm an alien and they had to do what they had to do. It's their business.” They treated him well so he's not going to fight for reparations. So he never got anything.

JM: He was an alien too, so...

JK: He never got his citizenship but my mother got it at 92.

JM: Six.

JK: Oh, 96. One of the older ones. (Laughs) Because, she said, “I'm never going back.” My father always wanted to go back [to] Japan. She said, “All my kids are here. Why should I go back?” But I remember she always said, “I'm not going to Japan because they have snakes. Hawaii is ideal, no snakes.” But I never saw snakes in Mizuki, yeah.

MI: So in her 90's she decided to become a citizen or she just was trying but could not?

JK: No.

JM: I guess she just decided. But funny that she learned all that she had to learn.

MI: Study?

JK: In fact, I think she knew more than me! (Laughs)

JM: That was exciting, the day she got her citizenship. That I remember. But, going back to our school days, she said we always used to wake up late. We went to Washington Intermediate, then to McKinley during the war years. We would miss the bus and so we would have to run to school.

JK: A couple of times.

JM: Oh, and the bus strike—so when the bus [workers] struck, we had to walk to school. And those are the things I remember but...

JK: That was a long walk. (Laughs) Huffing and puffing when we were late, running to school.

JM: I guess, because of my mom's temperament, we just took things. Really, nothing negative stands out throughout the war memories. And, I guess, everyone else was doing similar things and maybe that's why I just don't think the memories are exceptional.

JK: We went through all that, you know, *ho hana* during high school, plantation work, the war effort. Did you do that?

JM: Yeah, yeah.

JK: That was fun, though.

JM: Getting up early in the morning when it's dark. (Laughter) More play than work. But that was free labor, *ne [yes]*?

JK: No, we got, I got...

JM: You got paid?

JK: I got paid. I got twenty-eight cents an hour.

JM: I don't remember that.

JK: Oh, really?

JM: I don't remember that.

JK: My check was [a] dollar sixty-five.

JY: Oh!

JK: Well, she's younger than us.

JM: Wow, no kidding? But did you ever have to pack candies instead of going to the plantation? I don't know how we got...

JY: No. That sounds like fun.

JM: Yeah, that was a fun job. The pineapple cannery converted to candy packing, temporarily, for the military, for the GI's.

MI: What kind of candy?

JM: Hard candies, a variety.

JK: I believe it was CPC. I don't remember doing that.

JM: Yeah, CPC, not Libby's.

JK: California Packing Company.

JM: They had the gallon cans—we'd have to pack it all in. It beats being out in the sun. (Laughs) Getting up early.

JY: That's true.

JM: But that was once or twice, not too often.

MI: I guess everybody was working hard, that's why, yeah.

JM: And then working at the cannery was a rite of passage.

JY: Yes.

JM: Everybody had to go through it. So, too bad, today's kids don't have that, yeah?

JY: No, but they could work at McDonald's.

JK: Oh, that's french fries.

JM: But that's not the same, yeah.

JK: Is there anything else on your yellow pad there?

JY: The list.

JM: No, well, she covered quite a bit so like I said, everything gets kind of confused with the earlier years so I don't think, um, well, I don't know if it was during the war. Must have been. After we worked at the cannery, we used to walk to Ala Moana Beach, yeah? And swim to get rid of our tiredness.

JK: Waikiki I know we used to go. Where Hawaiian Village is now.

JM: No, we used to walk to Ala Moana.

JK: With Betty Miyamoto? Oh, you never did go.

JM: Oh, that's right. We used to go...

JK: Where Hawaiian Village is now, they had a pier that extended out into the ocean. I forget what they call it though and because we were night shift, after work we would go by bus.

JM: By bus.

JK: Yeah, by bus. Those were fun days though.

JM: So, you know, they talk about war stories but there's a pleasant side to it as well as the negative but...

MI: So, your father, after he came back, what did he do? How did he get back working?

JK: He started his own business, yeah.

JM: Yeah, he tried.

MI: What kind of business?

JK: Boat building.

JM: 'Cuz I remember...

JK: Boat building. Because I remember after college classes, I would go to the shop and help to answer the phone and file stuff, but I never did the physical things.

JM: Oh, we did caulking.

JK: Oh, you did?

JM: Yeah.

JK: Mr. Bell did that.

JM: I remember caulking the boats. Not all the time but...

JK: Not the finishing part, I think. (Laughs)

JM: No, not professional.

MI: So, that's what he did for the rest of his life?

JK: No. He lost his—what do you call—lease there so he built another one at Mokauea, Kalihi. But then the place was too small. Then he built a big fishing boat. That was the last one. And then, he kind of retired.

JM: He became a gentleman farmer.

JK: He bought a house in Kaimuki, then he bought a place in Kahaluu. So, we moved back. But he had one of those sampan cars [a modified Ford Model A that could carry 8 passengers], the kind Hilo Taxi [used] and I would be so embarrassed riding in that, yeah. You know what that is?

JM: Sampan car is open.

JK: Oh, you don't know? You do, yeah? You ride along the edges of the car.

JM: Sideways.

JK: I don't know where they would have it today, Big Island maybe, but to me, it was so embarrassing. (Laughs) We would commute because my mother still had the store. She maintained it after he came back. And, finally, Bishop [Estate] decided to sell out so we had to move. That's when they stopped [working] and that was in '52, I think. '52 or 3. So, that's when we moved to Kaimuki and then he bought the Kahaluu place. In between, we finished college, got married, and all that. So yeah, by the time they moved to Kahaluu, we were out of there. She [Jean] went to Kauai to do her intern[ship].

JM: No, to teach.

JK: Oh, to teach.

JM: First time teaching.

JK: The first years, you don't get a choice.

JY: Yeah.

JM: No. I chose Kauai.

JK: Oh, you chose Kauai?

JY: Why?

JM: To get away from home. (Laughs)

JY: Oh.

JM: To show independence.

JY: Yes.

JK: But, during the war years, we managed to go to the proms. Only in the senior year, they had it at night. All the rest, during the war years, they had it after school at the cafeteria. Cafetorium today, yeah, they call it. So, we were happy that we could dress up at least once, the prom. That really dates us, yeah. (Laughs)

MI: So after he came back, your mother just kept the store going until then.

JK: Yeah, because we moved.

MI: Did your father ever, after he came back, keep in touch with some of the people he knew in camp or anything like that?

JK: Just Dr. Tanaka. Not locally, yeah.

MI: Locally, nobody else?

JK: Not that we know of. Yeah, because I know there was a Kurokawa family and I knew the daughter because she worked at UH while I was there. But, they were at the same camp, I think, but maybe not. I don't know. No, he didn't keep up with the local families.

JM: I guess it's because he didn't really work within the camp with the rest.

MI: Oh, because he was working with the medical?

JK: That's a good question.

JM: He didn't have too many close relationships with the others.

JK: Yeah. Because the rest used to have clubs of singing and games, yeah, *go*.

JM: Baseball and that kind of stuff.

JK: Well, from what I'd read—he didn't tell us that—he rarely spoke about what he did do, just this kind of stuff. Now, what else did he make? Pens? Oh, *hashi* [wooden chopsticks]. I don't know what kind of wood that is though, [boxes]. I don't think it's cedar.

JM: No, it's not. It doesn't have that smell.

JK: But he notched it.

MI: Yeah.

JY: Yeah, I noticed that. Very nicely.

MI: But, just because of his skills in making boats and stuff.

JK: Right. He could do that, yeah.

JY: How did he do the crane on it?

JK: Right. Yeah. We never asked how he did it.

JM: I'm trying to think of the older brother who was in Japan when the war broke out. He served in the Japanese Army. But during those times, there were dual citizenships so he tried to regain his American citizenship and he lived in California for a year waiting for the judge to make the decision.

JK: San Francisco.

MI: How did he get there, to California?

JM: Pardon?

MI: How did he get to San Francisco?

JK: He was married with [a] family already.

JM: Oh, no.

MI: But he was in Japan.

JK: Yeah, yeah. But he came home.

MI: He could come...

JK: Yeah, after the war.

MI: After the war?

JK: But I remember going to Art Academy to—that's where the Red Cross was stationed—trying to figure out how to get a hold of *niisan* [older brother].

JM: Oh.

JK: You don't remember that?

JM: During the—right after the war?

JK: Yeah. Right after the war. 'Cuz we couldn't get a hold of him. We didn't know what was going on. So I went to the Red Cross and they were trying to help. I don't know how we finally got a hold of him but he was okay. He went to the country to teach English. (Laughs)

JM: During the war?

JK: Yeah.

JM: But he was also a translator. Oh, when he was in the Japanese Army, bilingual so he was a translator for a general and so, I guess...

JK: Oh, after the war.

JM: Right after the war.

JK: For the American general, yeah?

JM: Oh, yeah.

JK: So that was after the war.

JM: But he regained his citizenship anyway, 'cuz he was working for the United States Steel, an American firm. What was his job? I forget.

MI: He gave up his citizenship?

JK: No.

MI: He was an American citizen?

JK: No, they took it away.

MI: They took it away?

JK: Because he was in the Japanese Army. He was drafted into the Japanese Army.

JM: He lost his American citizenship when they did that.

JK: But because he was a Home Guard, he wasn't in actual battle. I think that's why they reinstated [it] and it wasn't a voluntary thing. He was drafted so...

JM: And while she was talking about the Academy of Arts [Honolulu], I recall now, bits and pieces come back, but during the war, to the war effort, we went to church, Kakaako Mission, and helped roll bandages. You remember?

JK: No.

JM: Some of the older ladies and we went to help. But not that often. I remember going just a couple of times. We weren't called back regularly.

JK: But I remember going to Pohukaina School to register and get an identification card and doing the fingerprint.

JM: I wish I had kept that ID card.

JK: I know we carried gas masks.

JM: Oh, of course, no.

JK: That big can with me.

MI: What happened to—after the war everybody threw their gas masks away?

JM: No, they recalled them, yeah?

JK: Yeah. I think we had to return it.

MI: Oh, they recalled them?

JK: But, before the war, making *senninbari* [1,000 stitch sash which a soldier wore for good luck] . Did you do that? We used to go to the Japanese neighborhood and if you're sixteen or something, you can get extra stitches [women sewed little red knots on pieces of white cloth]. That's for the *senninbari*. It's protection for the Japan soldiers not to get harmed. (Laughs)

MI: For the Japan soldiers?

JK: Japan soldiers. (Laughs)

JM: You would sew on a white...

JK: Gauze-like [material].

JM: Yeah.

JK: Yeah.

JM: That they would wrap around themselves and you would use red thread to sew crosses...

JK: Yeah.

JM: Or some kind of stitches.

JK: Knotted.

MI: Oh, this was to protect the Japan soldiers?

JK: Yeah, but this was before the war.

JM: Yeah. Before...

JK: You know, they used to send help to Japan.

JM: Before the United States entered the war. (Laughs)

JY: There's one in the [JCCH] gallery.

JM/JK: Oh, there is?

JM: Oh, I don't remember seeing it.

JY: Yeah.

JK: 'Cuz I know, we had to go to all the Japanese camps. But you never heard of that?

MI: No.

JK: It's a protection.

JY: It's in the theater, in the back.

MI: I see.

JK: Oh, you should go check it out. It was enjoyable. You meet people. Certain aged people could do extra so that was great. Otherwise, you only do one, one stitch per person.

JY: Yeah, that's right.

JM: Did you want us to mention some of the things that happened to my siblings too?

MI: Yeah.

JY: Sure.

JM: Because like the brother that was here, he volunteered because he was Fudge Matsuda's age, that bunch, Fujiya. And he was—what's that word? He couldn't get in because of a heart murmur.

MI: What was your brother's name?

JK: Masaru.

JM: We call him Joe. So he was classified as 4F.

JK: But he volunteered and he went to Schofield. They took him there and they said, "Katamoto, Masaru, out. You cannot go because of the spot on the ((?))".

MI: Oh, I see.

JK: And he felt so awful because all of his friends were going.

MI: Mm, um.

JK: But interestingly, my mother—Japanese people, I guess, believe four-year-olds tell the truth 'cuz she asked this little boy in the camp.

JM: What nationality?

JK: Joe. I mean Tanaka. Hawaiian Japanese boy. She asked him, "Is my son going to be in the Army?" He said, "No." So he came home and she thought, "Ee, that's right. It worked." 'Cuz the other brother is in Japan so no men around, yeah. So, maybe that's why.

JM: God took care of us. (Laughs)

JY: Yeah.

JM: We had a male figure. (Laughs)

MI: Well, the one in Japan was also fortunate too.

JK: Yeah. That he wasn't [going] to, yeah, fight his brother.

JM: But then because he got rejected, he worked for the United States Engineering.

JK: USED.

JM: Department and he earned enough to buy a car. But, poor thing, um, he didn't get to finish at the University because he had just started and then he got married and had a child, so he started working at the Board of Supply.

JK: Water Supply.

JM: And, we really felt he was very bright but he started at the very bottom and he ended up retiring as the supervisor of the Windward projects. Well, I don't know what you call them but anyway, the Windward area. So, it proved that he was able to succeed in life without his education because my kid sister said, "Oh, even if you're married and have a child, I'll pay your way. Go back to school."

JK: She said that? No, momma told him. She kept telling him, "Go back to school." But he said, "It's kind of embarrassing," because everybody else is in the Army and like he's a reject, yeah, 4F. He didn't want [to]. Oh, I didn't know Bea offered that.

MI: So, when your father was taken away, he had to become the father of the family?

JK: I guess, yeah. He really did.

JM: But he was only eighteen. Seventeen?

JK: Eighteen.

JY: So your mother had the store right through the war?

JK: It was a life-saver for us.

MI: Yeah.

JM: And my kid sister was four years younger than us, so she doesn't remember very much either. Oh, I don't know if we mentioned that right after the war broke out and we were preparing to evacuate, in the meantime, a group of family friends, I don't know, Tomimatsu, Motonaga and Matsuda, we tried, they tried, the fathers tried to find a home in Manoa so we could all move there. But somehow, it fell apart so we went to...

JK: They did rent a house, close.

JM: Oh, but we went to stay with the Ikeda's. The three girls, the youngest of [the] girls, lived in Manoa for how long? About a month?

JK: At least. Couple of months, yeah.

JM: With a family friend while the two older children and my mother stayed at the store. That I remember.

JK: Oh, they did rent the house in Manoa though. In case of evacuation, all the families could go there.

JM: So, they were really prepared, I guess, to a certain extent, for whatever would come but fortunately, I know it says they put up barbed wires.

JK: At the beach.

JM: Oh, the beaches.

MI: On the shorelines.

JK: Right.

JM: But I don't remember that.

JK: Ala Moana had.

JM: Oh. I don't remember that.

JK: Ala Moana Park.

JM: I guess we didn't go near the beaches too much.

JK: But, boy, the Army dug up all that beach so we couldn't find any more shells after the war. You know, you would take a walk, look for shells, but they dug up all that and the debris came up, I guess. So no more shells. That was sad.

JM: And so, that's why we're against Howard Hughes doing all that condominium stuff along the water line to ruin all our memories. But anyway, that's a side [story]. (Laughs)

JK: Yeah, I think Kewalo Basin goin' be a marina for all the rich and wealthy, the way it's going. When is enough, enough? You know, we keep building.

MI: The whole island is doing that.

JK: Yeah. Like right now, Ho'okipa? I don't want them developing there. 'Cuz the majority of the homes are going to be kind of luxury style. We don't need any more.

JM: We're getting off the subject there.

MI: No, no.

JK: Yeah.

MI: But people are buying them.

JK: Yeah.

MI: But no matter how expensive these things are, people are still buying them.

JK: Yeah. But they're out-of-towners, right?

MI: Yes. Yes.

JK: That's where they should be like Japan. No foreigners can buy land.

JM: You know, because they are very limited too.

JK: Yeah.

JY: Yeah.

JK: But a few of my Japan friends say they are looking to move away from Japan ‘cuz it’s going downhill. Not economically so much as physically, I think. With the tidal wave and volcano—Nagano side, yeah. And I said, “Where would you go?” Australia is first choice and then America. Don’t you hear that?

JY: Yeah.

JK: Because they all speak English now so their horizons are expanded. But we all should speak up more. Look, all our—I have twelve grandchildren. Only one is here. All the rest are on the mainland because of jobs or school. So, it’s kind of lonesome. But that’s the way it is.

MI: Well, last weekend we interviewed someone from the Sumida family, Pauoa Valley. You remember that sake brewery?

JK: Yeah, yeah. Oh, they were in Pauoa?

MI: Well, that’s where the brewery was. You remember that?

JK: Yeah.

JM: At the bottom of the hill.

JK: They had two in Kaka’ako, yeah?

JM: The one by the Aloha Shoyu.

JK: And one by Fuji.

JM: Oh, that I don’t remember.

JK: Where Star Market used to be. Oh, you were interviewing them?

MI: That was your childhood, yeah? When you folks were young.

JK: But actually we lived more in Ala Moana.

JM: We were three years old when we moved to Ala Moana because we both got asthmatic and the doctor recommended we go to the seashore. So, the store then came up so I guess it worked out in our getting over our asthma.

MI: So it did help your asthma?

JK: Besides the *yaito* [healing method using the burning of moxa to affected parts of the body]. You heard of *yaito*? Some kind of moss, yeah.

MI: Oxy...

JK: Yeah. Not acupuncture, but. (Laughs)

JM: Although actually when we moved, tonsillectomy was very popular then so we had our tonsils removed and, boom, asthma stopped completely.

JK: That wasn’t because of the *yaito*. (Laughs)

JM: No. I don’t think so. (Laughs)

JM: One very minor point: I remember Dr. [Miles] Carey, our McKinley [High School] principal, was a really caring, empathetic guy. He really took good care of his students. I remember St.

Louis College students coming to join the campus because St. Louis was being used as a hospital. So, we had a lot more boys than ordinarily.

MI: Do you remember any stories about Carey, Mr. Carey?

JM: Dr. Carey. All I know is that he was always smiling and friendly and greeted the students. I did not have much direct contact with him. I was a good girl. (Laughter)

JK: We went our separate ways.

JM: I don't think we had classes together at all except for attendance.

MI: Deliberately, they separated you?

JK: Because I was out of school so long.

MI: Oh, you [were] left out because of the typhoid?

JK: No, same year but I got in at the lower class level. They didn't know where to put me but after a while, they kind of raised my standard. I liked the lower grades. Kids were nicer. (Laughter)

JM: Those days, high schools were classified as X, Y, Z, R. There were three levels, I think. I don't know.

MI: Not A, B, C?

JK/JM: No.

JY: That was the elementary grades.

JM: Right, but so I guess the more commercial, business people were in the YZR classes or the college bounds were in the XYZ.

JK: That's right. We never were in any same class. Not even co-studies.

JM: No. Which was good, I think for the teachers.

JK: Well, she was the one, junior year, we [as identical twins] were always dressing alike. She decided, emancipation. We're not going to dress alike.

JM: That was due to, well, we dressed alike so long that people would say, "Why don't you dress differently so maybe we can tell you apart?"

MI: Whose idea was it to dress the same?

JM: My mother. Poor older sister had to sew two sets.

JK: Plus the younger sister. So she would stay up late, the night before the first day of school to sew us new dresses.

JM: So we really admired and really loved our oldest sister. She was about seven years older than we are but she was very accomplished in making things. She was sent to Japan for finishing school but she wasn't such a dainty person. (Laughs)

JK: Very aggressive.

JM: She had a rough bunch of friends. When I say rough bunch of friends, they were just boisterous. But she really sewed well for us and cooked very well. Because the friends kept on saying try dressing differently, so we started dressing differently. But then, you can't please everybody all

the time. When we started dressing differently, other people would say, “How come you don't dress alike? You're twins! You're privileged!”

JK: Oh, nobody said that.

JM: Oh, they've told me that. But we got so used to dressing differently. And we had a lot more different clothes we could exchange. So, that's a part of the war story. (Laughs) That's how it was in high school when the war was on.

JY: You have a teenager's view of the war.

JM: Yeah, right. It was more [about] self than the world picture, I guess.

MI: Do you have any more questions?

JY: No, I think...

MI: Could we have a look at your letters?

JK: Oh, yeah, if it's of interest. It's very mundane.

JM: I want to read one too because I don't recall...thank you.

JK: His spelling wasn't the greatest. You get the idea.

JM: Because he went to [school] for only two or three years, huh?

MI: Did this come like this?

JY: You had to use a stamp?

JK: Well, some of them later said, “No stamp.” I don't understand why the difference. I remember some with the thing cut off, you know.

JM: Yeah, *pukas* [holes] huh.

MI: Can we copy these somehow?

JY: Would that be all right?

JM: Sure.

JK: Oh, yeah.

JY: Oh, that would be wonderful.

JK: In fact, you know, I should ask you maybe, if my father had a lot of certificates, do they want those? I don't know what to do with some of them...

MI: What kind of certificates?

JK: For community service or whatever—participating. I don't know because I cannot read the Japanese. It's very...

JM: Yeah, if you could accept Rusty. His father has so much. Some of them I took out of the frames because they take up too much space so I made a pile and if they would...

JK: Do you think they would accept those?

JY: Well, we have Akemi who would...

JK: What do we do? And the younger generation, they don't write.

MI: Interesting. Even the envelopes are interesting too.

JK: Yeah, I was surprised. No postage on some of them. That's the least they could do, right? Pay the postage.

JY: Yeah, that's what I thought.

MI: And nothing cut out?

JK: No. None of these. But I remember getting letters.

JM: But they write in here, so legible.

JY: I think if you stay away from dates and locations.

JK: I think that's probably right, yeah.

JY: I'm going to go to xerox.

MI: Is Marcia in? She might want to scan this one instead of copying.

JY: Okay. I'll go ask her.

JK: You can have it, she said.

MI: Oh, even better.

JM: Bea sent me two copies.

JK: Trying to remember if mine was three turtles, or two turtles and the moon.

JM: I thought yours was one turtle...

MI: But these are separate boxes?

JM: Yeah. I should have brought them.

JK: Stacking.

MI: I guess these two were meant to be stacked, yeah?

JM: So, like that, the top one had just one turtle but the two bottom ones connected.

JK: Oh, one big turtle?

JM: I mean two boxes with one turtle carved out.

MI: Did he do these kinds of things like at home?

JK: No.

MI: Never did that after the war or anything?

JM: He was too sociable. (Laughs) Going out with his friends or community affairs.

MI: He was busy.

JM: Yeah, he kept himself [busy], like the *haole* guy from across the street working for the State would [come] over and they would drink beer together and, oh, and this is not during the war, but my kid sister would bring out two glasses. One for her and one for her father to drink beer.

JK: Yeah, dinner time.

JM: So she was the pet of the father.

JK: The family.

JM: Oh, Mel, I'm sorry. I've got my travel days and the war years all mixed together.

MI: But he didn't talk about things in camp.

JK: Not at all.

MI: About making beer and all that kind of...

JM: No. So he really kept himself busy with work, I guess. That's where our work ethics come in.
(Laughs)

MI: And he had a job there, yeah?

JM: Yeah, so, well he—I don't know really, translating for internees.

JK: Yeah, all I remember...

MI: Sounds like he had a job, though, that kept him busy.

JK: Both parents were avid readers so I read, I mean our whole family are readers so I'm tutoring at the middle school and [to] this little boy, I said, "Don't you like to read?" He said, "No." I said, "What do you do?" [He replied,] "TV or games." So I said, "What do you want to be?" He wants to be an anime cartoonist. I said, "Okay. But regardless of what you want to be, you have to learn to read because when you grow up, no matter what you get into..." I should have said, "You don't know if someone's going to take your business away or anything if you don't know your contracts." But recently he came and said, "I went and borrowed books from the library."

MI: So, where is this you're...

JK: Middle school. Right across the street.

MI: You go there and you just read to the children?

JK: No, the kid reads to me and [I] see if he knows what he's reading.

MI: I see.

JK: Then appropriate, ah...

JM: He's sixth, seventh?

JK: Seventh grade.

MI: Are you the only one who volunteers?

JK: Oh, no! They have a whole bunch of people.

MI: I see.

JK: Once a week, one hour. That's not bad. And early on, I wanted to because they were teaching seniors how to use a computer. If you would go volunteer, the kids would teach you how.

MI: Oh, I see.

JK: So, I wanted to do that but never got around to it so today, I don't think they do that. And most of the kids, it's an experimental school where all the kids have a laptop, iPad and so they are better at it than me 'cuz right now, they want us to test, practice test. It's coming up this month to

see if they get the punctuation and grammar stuff correct. The kid has to bring it up because I don't know how. I'm not familiar with the programs.

JM: He's going to teach us! (Laughs)

JK: I know. It's a major project.

MI: It's a good thing you're doing.

JK: Well, it's right across the street. It's my daughter's classmate that's the teacher so I'd say that at least seven people I know of are doing it. I think it's good for the youngsters too and then she did make a point that it's not necessarily the reading per se but some can unload if they have problems 'cuz some of them have personal problems. The first kid I got, a girl, I said, "Do you know why you're here?" She said, "No." I said, "To help you with your reading skills." She said, "I don't need it." So, the next time I came, the teacher said, "Oh, she, that girl, is [from] a military family and that age too, yeah, 7th, 8th graders, they're finding themselves and she thinks she knows it all already so no need." So she got me somebody else. But, it's interesting that you gotta be a confidant and you know...

MI: I figure whatever you can do for them is, you know...

JK: Yeah.

MI: It's a wonderful thing.

JK: It's a neutral person that you're dealing with so for them, it's easier maybe.

JM: Oh, if you did [want] more activities (Laughs), Janice will be very happy to have you 'cuz I started but, ah, I didn't really believe in the way they were doing things so I quit.

JK: Yeah. This education system is...

MI: Different.

JK: More complicated than I thought. They wanna make uniform things for everybody.

MI: That's not good for everyone.

JK: Yeah, 'cuz people are different. Yeah. And they learn [at] different speeds and—I don't know.

MI: So everybody gets taken down to the same level.

JK: Yeah. Yeah. That's the sad part, 'cuz you see all this, I mean [education] shouldn't [be] financial but the special ed kids [get] the bulk of the attention. I don't think it's fair to the normal kids, you know.

JM: The ones that participate in citizenship. (Laughs)

JK: Well, I guess in a way, it's enlarging their experience but it's tough. It's hard for the teachers too, right? I don't know what the answer is.

MI: Well, if you have things at home from that era that the children don't want, they're going to throw it away, you know. This would be a good place to, you know...

JK: On loan, archives, yeah? They do have it.

MI: I don't think they would give away everything, you know, whatever that looks like, whatever looks significant, important, they'll keep.

JK: Oh, okay. That's a good thing to know.

MI: Yeah, and if you have friends who are having, you know, the same thing, they have things they want to...

JK: Well, they have lists savvy. She had all...

JM: That's right.

JK: Display case. She wanted to donate but she could not bring it and I don't know.

JM: They have the facilities.

JK: They went to pick it up.

JM: Do you know if JCC has somebody who could pick up things?

MI: Like how big?

JM: I don't know. She said [a] display case.

JK: For all the dolls and stuff, Japan dolls.

MI: I don't know.

JK: Yeah, I don't know how—Sally, Sally Tokunaga. She's a member of our Senior Club.

JM: She sits way in the back.

JK: And she always wins a blue ribbon for, all what do you call, the games, Olympics, Senior Olympics?

JM: Senior Classics?

JK: Yeah. She always wins first prize.

JM: No kidding?

JK: Because she's a good bowler.

MI: I see.

JK: And she's in her nineties. Today, yeah, age is not a factor.

MI: But the ones who go to these things are, you know...

JK: Pretty...

MI: Are good because they choose to be perfect, yeah. But it is the effort.

JM: So, Mel, you were there on Monday?

MI: We were there for the meeting part yesterday.

JK: That wasn't a meeting. It was an announcement. (Laughs)

MI: Announcement. Thank you.

JM: Were you there when the outburst happened?

JK: Betty? Taira.

MI: Oh, and ah...

JM: Herbert Shiraishi?
MI: Huh?
JK: Oh, they didn't mention names.
JM: Oh! Oh.
JK: It came out later.
MI: Well, about the idea? Using the money?
JK: About the bingo.
MI: About using the money?
JK: Oh, no. The bingo thing.
MI: Oh, no. I wasn't there. What happened to the bingo?
JM: No, she...
MI: I wasn't there.
JM: They were arguing about...

[Interview recording ends here]