

## Oregon Cultural Heritage Commission Oral History Interview

Narrators: Mary Takami and Janet Takami Koda

Interviewer: Morgen Young

Location: Ontario, Oregon

Date: April 17, 2013

Transcribed by: Kimberly Haysom

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YOUNG: This is our interview with Mary Takami and Janet Koda on April 17, 2013 at the Four Rivers Cultural Center in Ontario. So, I just wanted to start out with talking about your life in Gresham and what that was like growing up?

TAKAMI: Oh we was a berry farm, vegetable farm in Gresham and busy all the time you know and um, so the whole family were, 'cause we had berries and green things you know and it was all.

MALE: Excuse me; I'm without a light. I wonder if they turned off some of our circuits. I don't have a light; I don't have a light there.

YOUNG: We're going to pause and then we'll start back up.

KODA: Might tell Mom that they grew berries, they harvested in the spring and summer and in the wintertime they had like, broccoli and cabbage.

TAKAMI: Brussels sprouts.

KODA: Brussels sprouts. So they were harvesting the winter vegetables when they heard that the bombs were dropped.

MALE: Make do with what we have.

KODA: Oh, did they turn lights out outside?

MALE: I think it's got electricity, the lights are warm, they were on, all of a sudden they went off.

KODA: Can I see those?

YOUNG: Yeah!

KODA: Oh yeah, what are they doing? See you were there Mommy with a sweater on.

TAKAMI: Oh that's me.

KODA: What were you doing?

YOUNG: Was it like a girls club or something?

TAKAMI: Could be, I don't remember.

YOUNG: On the back, I have the names and those came from Janet.

KODA: Oh these were the people that were, oh yeah that's Mickie Atagi. She kept her curlers on. Oh I guess not, they are pinned like that. We didn't know these photos were in existence until, and then my sister was living in Japan 'cause her husband is an engineer and working for the military and so her daughter had to do a talk about Japanese Americans in Japan. And so, she looked on the internet and these photographs popped up. She's the one that found these photographs and then we got the photographer.

TAKAMI: There's my brother Jack.

YOUNG: Mm hm.

KODA: Is that Henry? So somebody else must have saw these photographs? And that's Nyssa.

YOUNG: Yeah.

KODA: So they must have saw these... Uncle Jack. Nyssa.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: Yeah we had some other folks looking at them too. Like Dange and Fumi Atagi and Joe and Nellie Saito and they were able to figure out some faces.

KODA: Yeah.

TAKAMI: Nyssa.

KODA: He got his name because he worked for the Sunshine Boy, the pop bottle company; it was real popular in Wapato, Washington. So they just called him Sonny.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: So we had, what, we have, they used to call him Sunshine and Sunny and then it became Sonny. Yeah, "Hey Sunshine!" That's in Nyssa.

TAKAMI: Oh my brother.

KODA: Mm hm. Yeah Auntie Nessa just passed away a year ago.

YOUNG: I love that photo that you pointed out that she was holding the Hershey bar and I hadn't paid attention to that, that's so funny.

KODA: Mm hm, yeah. There's pictures of my, of her, of her at a little stand getting ice cream.

YOUNG: Yeah.

KODA: And then, these two were behind them and I think that's where they bought the Hershey bar at the commissary.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: And here's the animal crackers, you know, remember the animal crackers with the little string handle. Orange juice, I remember that coffee pot. We had that coffee pot for a long time.

TAKAMI: This is my whole family. My mom and... Rosie.

KODA: Uncle Benny isn't there.

TAKAMI: He's in the service.

KODA: Yeah. He became a sergeant you know.

YOUNG: So he was never at the Nyssa camp?

KODA: Did Uncle Benny ever come to the camp Mommy?

TAKAMI: I don't think so.

KODA: Yeah, I think he volunteered right away, when they relocated the people in the, in Portland. Yeah, he bragged and said he was the first one to volunteer. But we don't know if that was fact, that's what he always said.

TAKAMI: Is the picture of ...

KODA: Yeah, she'll give, she'll, we'll talk about them later. Okay.

YOUNG: So we were talking about life in Gresham and you grew summer vegetables, summer crops and winter crops.

TAKAMI: Berries, we had all kinds of berries.

YOUNG: Berries mostly.

TAKAMI: Strawberry.

YOUNG: And your parents moved from Japan... did they meet in Japan or did they meet in the United States?

TAKAMI: They met in the United States. That was always here you know, they had to work in a farm. And then, well they knew each other so but he called for her and she came.

YOUNG: And everyone worked in the farm? The whole family?

TAKAMI: Our family?

YOUNG: Mm hm.

TAKAMI: Yes. Everybody worked together.

YOUNG: What do you remember about evacuation?

TAKAMI: Mm hm. Oh yeah.

YOUNG: What was that like?

TAKAMI: Well, you just have to watch yourself, you know, don't get in an argument with anybody so, you do what you're supposed to.

YOUNG: And you had to go to the Portland Assembly Center?

TAKAMI: Uh huh, right.

YOUNG: And where did your family live there?

TAKAMI: Our family?

YOUNG: Mm hm.

TAKAMI: We all went there.

YOUNG: Did you have to live in one big room all together?

TAKAMI: Well it's, it was a formerly...

KODA: The International Stock Yard.

TAKAMI: Yeah, it's the International Stock Yard. You had a lot of little rooms you know, so it's,...

KODA: Stalls.

TAKAMI: I stayed with my mother and father and everybody was sleeping together you know.

YOUNG: And your brother was married, right? When you moved, went to...

TAKAMI: Yes, I think he was.

KODA: About a year.

TAKAMI: Yeah, uh huh.

YOUNG: Do you remember how your parents and your brother heard about the Nyssa camp?

TAKAMI: Nyssa camp?

YOUNG: Mm hm.

TAKAMI: Oh we had to move out when we were in Portland; we had to move to make move for the government so they recommended to go this camp to do more farm work. It's about, you know.

YOUNG: How did you get here?

TAKAMI: I think it they provided transportation.

KODA: What kind Mom?

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: What kind? How did you come?

TAKAMI: I really can't remember, I think we must have come by train because everybody didn't have their cars. And since they needed labor, they ask if, if we wanted to go to another camp in Idaho. And we told them no, we'd rather go to one, so they sent us to Nyssa.

YOUNG: Do you mean Minidoka? Instead of going to Minidoka you wanted to go to Nyssa?

KODA: Hunt Camp, wasn't it, Mom? Hunt Camp? Hunt?

TAKAMI: I don't know.

YOUNG: Yeah, that's what, that's the name for Minidoka. Hunt Camp, mm hm. So, and you lived in tents in Nyssa?

TAKAMI: Mm hm, for um, yeah. Until it got too cold and then in October and they built the CCC camp. Which you know, it was cold there but there was at least more protection, the weather you know was getting cold.

YOUNG: Did you meet Sonny Takami in the camp?

TAKAMI: Yeah, later on, uh huh.

YOUNG: In the tent camp or at Cow Hollow?

TAKAMI: Cow Hollow. Or was it at the tent camp? I think it was at the tent camp. Because all the people were in tent camp there.

YOUNG: Did you make friends when you first moved to the tent camp?

TAKAMI: Yeah I made friends, but not too much. Mm hm.

YOUNG: And you had graduated high school?

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: Tell her about your teacher, Mom, the day you left.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Tell her about the teacher you saw at the school when you left Portland.

TAKAMI: Oh, she rushed me out of the house and I didn't know where we were going.

KODA: Oh sorry. Tell her about your teacher, she felt bad.

TAKAMI: Yeah, the teacher at the high school, left and sort of cried and felt bad for us, sorry for us that we were being evacuated.

KODA: They loaded them out on trucks.

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: They, you said they loaded you on trucks and took you to the International Stock Yard. And the teacher was there, the teacher was saying, see you, see you leaving.

TAKAMI: Oh, yeah, we had to meet at Gresham County Fair first, and then Gresham High School was the, nearby and so, she seen us go by.

KODA: Tell her about the day you had to leave your house.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: The day that you left your house...

TAKAMI: Oh, the day we were leaving our house; people were waiting for us to get out so they could move in.

KODA: They were honking their horns.

TAKAMI: We couldn't take with us, so, actually they probably, they took our, whoever took us up there, 'cause the only thing we take with us is what we could carry.

YOUNG: So you lost everything?

TAKAMI: Huh?

YOUNG: You lost everything during the war?

TAKAMI: Mostly, we didn't have much. We didn't take very much to winter camp and after that, what was left, what we wanted to keep, couldn't take everything so, you know.

KODA: Tell her about your German neighbor.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Your German neighbor, the neighbor, German neighbor.

TAKAMI: Oh, yeah. What about them?

KODA: Well tell them about what he did.

TAKAMI: I forgot most of the things that happened.

KODA: Oh, your dad gave him the what? The family cow.

TAKAMI: Oh, if we had an animal, we couldn't take them with us so, we had, we gave the horses to one neighbor and then we gave the cow to another neighbor. And because we couldn't leave them, you know, my dad brought the animal up and so

he felt kind of bad just to leave them but at least he give to the people that will take care of them.

KODA: Tell them about your dog.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Your dog?

TAKAMI: Oh yeah, my dog, he waited and waited, he didn't eat, he just starved himself.

YOUNG: Because you left him, he was waiting for you?

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: His name was Spot.

TAKAMI: We had to leave, so.

KODA: He was a cow dog, I think.

TAKAMI: He was a...

KODA: Border collie, I think.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Was it black and white Border Collie?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Yeah.

YOUNG: What did you think the first time you got to Malheur County, it must have looked very different from Gresham?

TAKAMI: Yeah because, in order to do this and that so they asked what we wanted to do. Do we want to work on a field or what, you know. So, we wanted to work on a field. Weed onions.

YOUNG: And you worked on the fields?

TAKAMI: Mm hm, we all worked in the fields.

YOUNG: And didn't, wasn't your brother in school and he had to leave school? Tom?

TAKAMI: (Inaudible) working, at the time he was, when he act like, he got moved over and then later on he joined us and worked in the field.

YOUNG: Janet, can you tell me a little bit about your dad's history?

KODA: Um, my dad, he came from Wapato, Washington and they grew casabas and cantaloupe and melons and stuff and they would, some of the family members would take a truck load to the, I guess it would be maybe Pike's Market, but they would take it to Seattle and all the young guys sometimes got together and lots of fun. But anyway, they also, did they raise strawberries there too Mommy?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Yeah and asparagus too, I think. And all I know that he relocated and went to the International Stock Yard near Jantzen Beach and they asked the people here were worried because all the men had left and joined the war. And they were worried that the sugar beets would be frozen in the ground. This is what Daddy said. And he said, that, because they needed the sugar to make hydrogen bombs, I guess, and so, so they started out with, I don't know, thirty men, I don't know and then he was, his family told him he was crazy, that you know, why would you go there? People will string you up, you know, that sort of thing. But he said, "Well at least we get to do something and we can work and we can make money." And I think it was like ten cents an hour. And so, um, they were relocated here and it worked out really fine, really good because the people, it was documented in the Ar... in the Argus Observer, paper that they had meetings prior to that and says, "Well we don't know it we should bring the scallywags over here or not, you know because our crime might go up or that we don't know about them or anything." And when they came, it worked out fine. Because they couldn't get the best workers so they asked for more men. So my father's family went to Heart Mountain and my mother's, her family went to Minidoka. So they started to ask the family, workers, starting asking, "Can we join, have our families?" So my dad went to Heart Mountain and got the pe,... his family to come to Nyssa so they could be together.

YOUNG: What were, he had brothers?

KODA: Uh huh.

YOUNG: What were their names?

KODA: Um, he had, Dad, and there's Auntie Sally, Auntie Toshay, Uncle Harry – who had worked for Ore-Ida for gosh, over thirty at least thirty years. Um, Uncle Jim, and Uncle Ted and Albert.

TAKAMI: Albert and the younger brother.

KODA: Albert.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: Yeah, he's the one in that one photograph. That... yeah he was the only one that married a Caucasian. Everybody else married Japanese.

YOUNG: So Albert is in one of the photographs?

KODA: Mm hm. He went to school, Uncle Albert and Uncle Ted, and Uncle Jim went to school in Nyssa High School.

YOUNG: Did they ever talk about that?

KODA: Um, I guess Uncle Jim was on the track team and he ran, I don't how, he made a record, a school record and as of 1970, the record wasn't broken. Yeah, so.

YOUNG: And he was, your father was um...

KODA: The oldest one.

YOUNG: The oldest one and he was like a police officer, security at the camp?

KODA: Uh huh, security.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Of the camp, yeah.

TAKAMI: Nyssa Camp.

YOUNG: And the tent camp too.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: He must have got the job there first but there were German, he said there were German soldiers living at the CCC camp and once they were evacuated Japanese people came and lived there.

YOUNG: Everyone has spoken very, very highly about your father and how he kept order in the tent camp, and uh, we interviewed Yas Teramura today and he was saying that, no one wanted to mess with Sonny Takami. He was so tall and...

KODA: He only got his brown belt in Judo. He tried three times with his teacher in Portland, I mean, in Wapato and the teacher said, "If you beat me then you get to have your black belt." And he could never, he was so disappointed, he never got

to get his black belt. But, yeah, um but, Mom prior to that, they had a Japanese community in Portland and they had like a, parent co-op because they had to go to Japanese school after... was it after school or just on weekends, Mom? Japanese school, you had to go.

TAKAMI: I really don't know because I didn't go.

KODA: Japanese school?

TAKAMI: Well, yeah I did go.

KODA: Yeah but you don't remember when?

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: She took... they had like sumo wrestling...

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: Sumo wrestling...

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: ... and they had kendo moun... kendo...

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: ... with a stick and um they had Japanese theater.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: She said, 'cause we saw, my uncle Jack had lots of photographs of that but I don't know if they are still in existence or not at that time. And um, they had um Japanese dancing and Japanese school and the parents took turns taking the kids to school. Yeah and, do you want to tell your kendo story? Huh?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: I can tell your kendo story? Anyway, a teacher would come in and would take the stick and hit the student on the back or shoulder and on the stomach and supposedly you anticipate the blow and it doesn't hurt so much, you know. Well, Mom, the teacher came in and hit Mom on the stomach...

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: ...you know and she broke wind and so, she tried to keep her composure and was shaking and the teacher was trying to keep his composure, because it's supposed to be a serious martial art.

YOUNG: Mary, did you grow up speaking Japanese at home?

TAKAMI: Mm... not regular Japanese but we, that's why we went to Japanese school too.

YOUNG: Right.

TAKAMI: To learn at Montevilla, uh,... Japanese, sometimes Dad would take the different Japanese kids with us and go to school. Go to Montavilla.

YOUNG: That's where the school was in Montavilla in Portland?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: Did you ever go to downtown Portland? Did they have a Japan town in downtown Portland?

TAKAMI: Not very much, it's special, very special... uh huh. Montavilla went to school there.

YOUNG: And, how do you, what do you remember you husband, the first time you saw him or met him?

TAKAMI: What?

YOUNG: What do you remember about Sonny the first time you met him?

TAKAMI: Hmm, I said, oh he's pretty tall and you know, and very talkative, real friendly very unusual for Japanese people.

YOUNG: Did you ever go to dances at the Hashitani farm?

TAKAMI: No I didn't.

YOUNG: And what can you tell me about working in the fields with onions or sugar beets?

KODA: Did you work in the fields, Mom?

TAKAMI: Yeah we worked on sugar beets and...

YOUNG: Did you have to use a hoe with the sugar beets?

TAKAMI: Yeah. Oh, sugar beet, I think we took a, butcher knife and we pull them out and cut the stem off of them, throw it over the side of a truck, throw them in a truck.

KODA: One by one.

YOUNG: Did you ever go into town, into downtown Nyssa?

TAKAMI: Yeah. We go and stay together, we don't go out on the town too freely you know.

YOUNG: Did you ever experience any discrimination?

TAKAMI: Hm?

YOUNG: Any discrimination in Gresham or in Nyssa?

TAKAMI: Oh, we just watch ourselves...

KODA: Tell her the story about the bus, Mom, you were getting on the bus.

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: In Portland, you were getting on the bus...

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: In Portland, you were getting on the bus in Portland, when you were a young girl. You don't remember?

TAKAMI: I forgot.

KODA: She has, she had a high nose and stuff and she got on the bus and he asked her, "Are you Japanese?" Well he asked, he had more vulgar language and he asked, "Are you half and half?" And she said she was half and half and so he allowed her on the bus.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: And then, what about your classmates?

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: Your classmates... the guys in your class, what did they tell you they were gonna do?

TAKAMI: I don't know.

KODA: They said they were gonna give you a necktie party.

TAKAMI: Oh yeah.

KODA: Yeah.

TAKAMI: One of the classmates, when we came back, he would give us a necktie party. Classmates, in grade school for all those years, we knew them well, you know, different things occur too you know. We didn't get into any trouble with him, but, we just walked home you know, and didn't bother or stop or get near there.

YOUNG: What can either of you tell me about some of your brothers, about Jack or Benny or any of them?

TAKAMI: Oh they worked on a farm, so steady working. Either of them worked on a field for the crop to grow or harvest a crop, they always kept busy.

KODA: What did Uncle Benny do eventually, Mom?

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: What did Uncle Benny do eventually?

TAKAMI: Well I think he went to work at mechanic school so, he did it with permission from the parents to go or not because you sort of gotta watch yourself you know. So he did go and he was able to go and Tommy went to radio or school, he was fine nothing happened.

KODA: Where did Uncle Henry go?

TAKAMI: The same thing, I think. Mechanic.

KODA: And Uncle Robert, he went to high school in Nyssa, right?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Yeah. And so did Auntie Rosie, went to grade school.

TAKAMI: Business school.

KODA: But Uncle Benny eventually became a sergeant in the Army?

TAKAMI: Yeah, first Japanese to join the service.

KODA: That's what he says.

TAKAMI: Everybody watches their steps you know.

KODA: And then Uncle Tommy went to OSU but eventually he got into another tech school, didn't he?

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: Go to another school and he worked for Cargo. How long did he work for Cargo?

TAKAMI: I don't know.

KODA: He worked for Cargo and Benco Chemical and got called out of meetings many times because he had expertise in linseed oil. And then, Uncle Benny, I mean Henry became a postmaster in Portland and retired.

YOUNG: Mary, did the family all live in one tent together or in several tents at the Nyssa Camp?

TAKAMI: Nyssa camp?

YOUNG: Mm hm.

TAKAMI: No. I stayed with parent... no I stayed in another tent that was separate.

YOUNG: Where was Rosie, the littlest one?

TAKAMI: Oh, she was with me. Uh huh.

YOUNG: What were those tents like?

TAKAMI: It was a tent so, a big tent.

KODA: Was it dusty?

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Was it dusty?

TAKAMI: Not bad you know.

YOUNG: Was it hot?

TAKAMI: Yeah the days were sometimes hot but usually you got to go.

YOUNG: And then in around October you moved to the CCC camp at Cow Hollow?

TAKAMI: Uh huh because it was getting colder and that we, the weather and so, camp over there because they had a little more shelter.

YOUNG: And then you lived in the barrack building, right?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: What do you remember about that camp; your family lived there for quite some time.

TAKAMI: Uh huh, then we did the best we can, sleep, I was sleeping in a bed or something and if we made a bit of money we would buy something, so made ourselves felt...

YOUNG: Did you have a curfew at that camp?

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: What time was the curfew, Mom?

TAKAMI: I think it was ten.

KODA: Yeah.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: And you had, which brothers were in the service?

TAKAMI: Oh, second brother.

KODA: Uncle Benny.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: And Uncle Henry.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

YOUNG: And then after the war, um, you stayed at Cow Hollow?

TAKAMI: Hm?

YOUNG: When the war ended, you stayed at Cow Hollow?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Yeah 'cause you got married to Daddy.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

YOUNG: What year did you get married?

TAKAMI: I don't know that.

KODA: You have to write that down. When was... '45?

TAKAMI: Too many things going on.

KODA: Uncle Henry was eventually, worked under General McArthur as an interpreter in Tokyo. Um, yeah.

YOUNG: Did your parents stay?

TAKAMI: Hm?

YOUNG: Did you parents stay in the area or did they move back to Gresham after the war?

TAKAMI: They went to Gresham.

YOUNG: They went back to Gresham?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: And what did they do? The farm, I'm assuming.

TAKAMI: The farm.

YOUNG: Was the farm still there?

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: Did they live at the farm, Mom?

TAKAMI: Yeah, they lived, they farmed our, I don't know where they stayed in before that, the building, but I know we had a house there, parents used to live in and go out and people's place to work, yeah.

KODA: Was that the same farm?

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Did they go back to the same farm or was it a different farm?

TAKAMI: Oh, depend on where the work was at.

KODA: Oh.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

YOUNG: And then um, when were your children born?

TAKAMI: Huh?

YOUNG: You had, you're a twin, is that right?

KODA: Identical twin.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

YOUNG: When were the children born? You were living at Cow Hollow when you had children.

TAKAMI: Cow Hollow was it?

KODA: Yeah, yeah we lived in camp until fifth grade.

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: Wayne was probably born in what, um... '48? And we were born in '54. And Carol was born in '54? Or '53, '54?

TAKAMI: Uh huh something like that.

KODA: Yeah.

YOUNG: Were you born in a hospital?

KODA: Uh huh. Portland Rosary Hospital.

YOUNG: Oh okay.

KODA: All of us were born, everybody was, yeah.

YOUNG: Do you remember who the doctor was?

KODA: Dr. Augustus Tanaka's father.

YOUNG: Ben Tanaka?

KODA: Yes! Ben Tanaka. In fact we just came across our X-ray. X-ray the other day, Mom didn't know she was having twins until the last month of her pregnancy and he, and she was having problems, because she said she couldn't lay down, she couldn't sit up. She couldn't do, she couldn't stand because the pressure on the ribs was too much for her and so, Dr. Tanaka says, "Well..." you know, listened and he said, "Oh, I think I hear two heartbeats!" This was like the last month, until then, I guess he only heard one. And so he took an x-ray and there, I was in positioned, I was in the birthing position to be born and then my sister was on the side and you could see the side profile, you could see her spine, our spines. Yeah. So, yeah. He let her have it. So every once in awhile she would bring it out and we would look at it, "Look at your X-ray!"

TAKAMI: And I had a backache, bad backache.

KODA: He said, he told her that she kept, 'cause she had twins, there was ten minutes between us being born and my sister was breach.

YOUNG: What do you remember about the camp? Maybe you could show me some of these photographs and look into the camera.

KODA: Oh, I remember, oh gee, I don't know. We used to get, there was a shower house and laundry place and half of it, I remember there was just lanes of galvanized sinks with spouts and on the other side was curtains and they had like spigots on top that you turn on and it was like a public bath. And there were, I remember we would go in evening and every family will designate what time of when they would be going so we wouldn't be there when they're there, you know. Or we washed and then, it was like a playhouse for us because all the barracks that were there, people just liked left, maybe just packed up a suitcase and left, so there were beds with bedding on them and there were kitchen with all the cooking utensils and all the cooking supplies and stuff. And some of them had clothing on them and stuff, so it was like dress up, it was like a playhouse, you know. There was another building that had, um, a fire place and an old player piano and um, and, like a, that must had been the commissary, where they fed everybody because it even had uh, I think it probably was the inside of a wheel that they had hung on the outside and they had a stick, so that was the bell you know. And then there was a fountain, an outside fountain, I think that might have been the office headquarters, where they had the flagpole and then, Mom and her family lived on the house on the side of the hill and it got, it was burned down so there were things thrown out that, but they eventually got burned, huh Mom?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: So there were like dishes, some cracked dishes and stuff so we kids sifted through that. There was some buildings that had the floors caved in, so we took our bicycles and ran around, like as though we were a roller derby. I mean it was like, and then sometimes we'd fall into a hole. Our bathrooms were outhouses and

there were hanging, I remember people used to use the Sear and JC Penney's catalogue and hang it on a string on the side; we had to use that for toilet paper. I remember that, we also had chamber pots in our home that we had to empty and that was our job, my sister and I's job to empty that out every day, take it to the outhouse and dump it out and take it back in. And then, um, they had, each house had cold water but no hot water unless um, until Daddy bought a water heater that he could fill up and then put it on, electrical. And then every barrack had a wood-burning stove, I remember grandma cooking on it, in fact, my dad said that when he was born in Wapato that, that was his incubator, they put him in a shoe box, he was like a three pound baby and they put him in a shoe box, you know this story that he told us. And then, so, you know, we didn't know any different at all, the only time we felt probably, any kind of animosity is when we went to school and we studied World War II and then it was like a week of name calling and that sort of thing. But, you know, I mean we didn't know, because we all had bedrooms, we had everything, we had plenty of food. Grandma used to, um, grandma used to grow yamaimo, mountain potatoes and they were long and um, I remember she used to swear in Japanese when she'd crack them because they were long and she had to dig deep, like three or four feet, into the ground to lift them up and I remember um a bachelor making these wooden boxes and we used to play with them and pretend they were coffins and lay in them.

TAKAMI: Japanese potatoes.

KODA: The Japanese potato. And they would ship off, I remember putting um, them putting San Francisco and New York on with carpenter crayon, the blue crayon on the box and then shipping them off. So, I don't know, we always kept busy all the time. You know, playing, Grandma always had a garden.

TAKAMI: Well we all went to work too, with different farmers.

YOUNG: Would you be part of work crews and you'd go work on different farms?

TAKAMI: Some of them but like family.

YOUNG: A family work crew.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: And was your father a crew leader at any point?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: He was in the beginning and then eventually he got a job as a broker for ...

TAKAMI: Mill Roberts.

KODA: ... Mill Roberts. Yeah. I remember we only had one car, and then eventually got a pick-up and then Dad got a boat, river boat, graduate to row boat, bigger to motor boat.

TAKAMI: I had the children in the car going to work and you're not supposed to do that but then you can't go to work without...

KODA: Yeah I remember getting up in the morning and my grandma will have little bags of rice crackers for us to snack on then there would be water in the car and then, then we'd be there from what? Dark in the morning? So we saw them harvest potatoes, we used to have potato belts and they used to have hooks on them and they put the sacks on them and then they had ties hanging down in the twist, the wire twister on them and then they go and um, like, thin sugar beets and then harvest onions and stuff. So and I remember too that my dad used to recruit us later on, after a rain, we had to go to the onion field and then, uh roll the onion sacks over so they wouldn't wrought. The burlap sack wouldn't wrought on the wet ground so, I remember doing that but...

YOUNG: Can you show me some of those photos?

KODA: Um this one yes, as we were growing up, this is my twin sister and I and we're on our bicycles and then, there was ladders, I remember, each barrack had a ladder and they also had um,... sort of like a ladder on the, on the roof you know. In case there was a fire.

TAKAMI: A what?

KODA: Ladder on the side.

TAKAMI: Oh yeah.

KODA: They also had these little glass gloves by the side by the doors and stuff and I guess it's when you have a fire inside the house; you used to pick them up and throw them on the fire. There were full of some kind of.

MALE: I still have one.

KODA: Do you? Yeah I remember those in each of the houses. And then, um here's my mother, um I think she might have been pregnant with my brother in that photograph. And I brought this picture of my mother with her friends, and to show what the barracks looked like all loaded up.

YOUNG: Do you remember the names of the friends?

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: The name of the friend, Iwosi, Iwosi, what was her name?

TAKAMI: Iwasaki.

KODA: Iwasaki.

TAKAMI: Iwasaki.

KODA: Do you remember those two? This is Iwasaki.

TAKAMI: I think so. And um, I can't think of her name.

KODA: This was, this building here is for the, uh, elderly, uh bachelor lived that went back to Japan and harvested his brother's forest to build a house in Japan. That we got, went back to see in 1974. He was ninety at the time. And then, these two were vacant and we used this one as a storage where they would build the boxes, in this building here. My grandma had a garden on the other side of this barrack, because they had ditches of water that ran the perimeter of the camp you know. In the middle of the camp was a well and it was an artisan well. You know, I remember the water being really cold and they had a wooden table around it so people could go there and wash their vegetables or clean their fish or whatever. And then, this is where my grandma lived and my Aunt Thelma, and the building barrack is where our family lived.

YOUNG: How tall were the rows of trees over there now that are quite tall, do you remember those?

TAKAMI: The what?

KODA: They were, I remember um, the trees along this side were the Russian trees, but the trees that were inside, inside were sugar maple trees.

TAKAMI: Cotton wood tree or something like that.

KODA: Yeah and then there were maple trees, remember?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Because we used to cut the branches in the autumn time and they were bright red and yellow and we used to take them to our teachers in grade school.

YOUNG: And which school did you go to?

KODA: Nyssa. Nyssa Elementary School.

YOUNG: Would the bus come and pick you u p?

KODA: Um, we had to walk, we had to walk up the camp.

TAKAMI: Yeah through the store.

KODA: Yeah, to the store. We had to walk out of the camp, across the bridge, down the highway to the store to go. Where the Prices used to live right there where the Wards and Prices used to live. I don't know what that street...

TAKAMI: Uh huh.

KODA: ...was but we, yeah. But there was, our bus driver later on lived by the camp up on the hill. So, he would take us, he would take us to the camp because it would be on his way home. Take us to the camp so we didn't have to walk so far. But I remember walking and walking, but the tree, I remember walking, the trees were so old and they grew up and they looked like a tunnel of trees, you know, like, so we used to walk that and that was really pretty during the autumn time. Walking through all the leaves and the trees. Yeah, these trees look pretty young though.

TAKAMI: Yeah, the family lived around there.

KODA: Mm hm. Then here's uh, I think this is about Christmas time because, this is Christmas time probably like in maybe, '56 or '57, 1957, oh, this is 1958 and um Christmas and this is when my uncle married um, Mary Thompson and the parents are right here and here's Mary and my uncle.

YOUNG: And this is inside one of the barracks?

KODA: Mm hm, yeah, this is where my grandma lived, inside. Eventually um, the ceilings were covered with oilpaper and then last put through, because I remember it billowing and then, this one, these walls are covered but on, sometimes on some of the walls didn't have sheet rock on it, so you just saw the studs you know, I remember putting bases on the studs and stuff. And I remember getting um, all through grade school, we used to give um, it was a easy Christmas gift to give, was snow globes and I hated my snow globe. Every year I get a snow globe because it only lasts a couple days in winter because they would freeze and break. And so, I even slept with mine and I woke up in the morning it was broken and it was wet. But I could never keep a snow globe, so that's why I have a fear of them, because I'll never be able to take care of one. So...

TAKAMI: Have many people come here?

YOUNG: To be interviewed?

TAKAMI: Huh?

YOUNG: To be interviewed?

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

YOUNG: Yes!

TAKAMI: Oh!

YOUNG: We've had almost twenty. So, would families and the bachelor's keep moving out of Cow Hollow over the years?

KODA: Um, mm, well the one that lived in the corner that had dogs in the shower, I remember that, we'd go see him because he had puppies in the shower. But he eventually, his wi, his daughter came and got him, because they would get married in the family and eventually he would be. And then, um,... Mr. Satomura who was like a grandpa to us, he eventually went to Japan and um, I think Mr.... Alice, what was Alice's last name? Alice, Su,... not Suda, Suki, Alice... what's her name? I can't remember her name but I think she probably went with him and then one bachelor passed away. And so my father would take care, he felt responsible so, he would take care of the belongings or find who they might go to and that sort of thing.

TAKAMI: He overlooked the camp a lot.

KODA: Yeah and so we were the last family to move out. So, finally.

YOUNG: Do you remember what year that was?

KODA: I was in fifth grade. Um... so, what would that be, five and six, twelve, maybe twelve from '52 it would be, '64, maybe I don't know.

YOUNG: We spoke with Patty Imada.

KODA: Mm hm.

YOUNG: And she said she was there until about '59.

KODA: They moved, we moved after them.

YOUNG: Right. Were you friends with her growing up?

KODA: Mm hm, yeah because she was about the same age as my aunt, my father's youngest sister.

YOUNG: Is Imada her maiden name?

KODA: Her maiden name is Matsunaka and Imada is her maiden name. And they were going, they were in the same class in high school. Graduated in what, '51?

YOUNG: Is that your Aunt Rosie or...

KODA: No, my Aunt Toshie, my father's side.

YOUNG: Okay and when you say your grandmother, is that your grandmother on the Takami side?

KODA: Uh huh, yeah, eventually my aunt Toshie and my grandma Takami went back, went, moved to L.A. 'cause they had um, 'cause my brother, my dad had siblings there. Yeah.

YOUNG: Where did you move when you moved off the Cow Hollow camp?

KODA: We moved to Adams Road, the, by the train...trestle which is half way between the camp and Garrison corner, right in there. Where the, right across from Fort (inaudible), across the river, because we used to have onions field that we used to weed there and the ground was so hot in the summer time, so we had all these wean boots and so we'd take them off and walk through that sand down there, the field, all the way down to the river. Sometimes you get flooded and we would come across arrowheads and one year we kept a shoebox at the end of the field, and we filled that thing, yeah. Because ... so. By Dunaway Pond, over the hill was Dunaway Pond and that was, I guess it was gravel area and they dug it out and they made it into a pond.

YOUNG: Did you ever go back to Cow Hollow and look at the camp?

KODA: Yeah we had a family reunion and the, I think one shower house was still used for the baseball players, I think. And then the other one was just the foundation because it burned down. And, um,... the old tree was there by there, I remember our dog used to run up the tree because the tree grew slanted um, grew vertically across, kind of, tree was kind of laying down, this tree here and the tree was still there. And on all the buildings were gone, huh, Mom?

TAKAMI: Hm?

KODA: All the buildings were gone, but we could see the foundation where the cem, where the cement slab with a porch in front. That's 'cause each barrack had a little cement slab for the porch. Yeah. And the artesian well was no longer there.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

YOUNG: And it looked like in photos that I've seen from the 1980s, there were columns in front of the camp.

KODA: Uh huh, I remember, there was, I remember there was two great big columns and they had two big balls and one fell down and rolled down to the creek. And you know the other one eventually did too but they had, had a metal sign across and it said, I don't know if it said compensation corps or CCC camp or CC Corps Camp. I remember it had letters, it was two, two lines of iron and then it had the letters in there in the camp. But, I would think that if someone went down there they would find the balls that goes on top or that might eventually... I would say. The neighbors might have confiscated it. So.

YOUNG: Did you ever interact with families that lived around the camp?

KODA: Mm hm, yeah. The Stevensons lived behind there and we used to all go get apples from them and we used to go to barbeque, invited through grade school go to there and have hamburgers and stuff and the Prices we would visit. Sometimes we would go to their house and wait for the bus to come and I remember the mother making pink cottage cheese you know. And we used to go to the market, where the McCoys had, and we went, it seemed ages, the daughter Moll, um, Molly, I think it was Mary, Molly, and Marcia were the McCoys and we were invited to a birthday party there one time.

YOUNG: Was there a baseball field at the camp when you were growing up?

KODA: There was uh,...

TAKAMI: Yeah there was.

KODA: Yeah there was kind of just a field they had but it wasn't real developed, you know they had um, the bases put down you know, but they had weeds and stuff and I remember somebody had cattle and stuff and we used to fly the cow pies you know, like Frisbees. But um... it was you know, it wasn't real clean or anything like that have now. So.

TAKAMI: It was kind of... they would (inaudible) or something.

KODA: Yeah they would put, they'd knock down the weeds every year but it was pretty dusty. And then it would be pretty active, especially during the weekends. Of course us young girls weren't allowed to go there. We had to stay home. All the boys could go.

YOUNG: Were your parents strict?

KODA: Not really, not really, we were always together, so.

TAKAMI: Mm hm.

KODA: Yeah, because I remember Mom getting us, the um, interior market, there used to be a market where the sporting good place, the place is now and he used to have this old grey bus that would come, I don't know, once a month or every two months. And he would, I don't know, he would attach the electrical line, and he would stay over night but inside the bus he would have all the Japanese food there and so grandma would go there and buy groceries, Japanese groceries there. And uh, so in the morning and stud we would have these little bags of rice crackers and stuff and we would go in the car and spend all day there and one time Mom put the car in the, in the service, to get serviced and so she got Walt Ford who used to own the Shell in Nyssa would lend a car to Mom to use. Just so she could go to work, well we had these row tan, rolled cigar boxed full of crayons and we left it on, we left it on the dash and hot crayons and hot glass were really pretty together. So, we, we covered the interior of that car with melted crayons. We had a garden in the front, we had the house in the middle and we had, I don't know a store in the back and we marked everything, the hides, the windows, the ceiling, and I remember Mom coming in and we telling her, isn't this really pretty? Really happy and then my mind just blanked out, I don't remember half and after that but I remember Mom spend all night using SOS padding and Dutch cleanser cleaning every pore of the car. I don't know what happened to us when she got mad, or not. I think she probably had a heart attack. But I remember doing that, the three of us girls. They would make lunch ball, our lunches with rice balls and pickles and stuff and then sometimes our blankets would be sandwiched with the rice balls, we got tired of them, yeah. Sometimes we took the chenille out of bedspreads and made balls. So I don't know if we were very strict... I don't remember.

TAKAMI: You really can't get mad because that's all the things they had or could do, so we couldn't help it... (inaudible) sit there, while working,... why we had to clean it up you know, and those two were standing there listening, so.

KODA: I remember Dad would take us fishing when he could, during the summer time and he'd always like to go fishing, almost maybe, if he could every week if he could. I remember that river boat that he bought and he got in the water and he would have us sit in certain areas and listen to see if it spouted air and he would tell us, "Okay we got to go patch it up, you know." But it was getting softer and softer, it was really scary when I was a little kid so I was really glad when he got the row boat.

YOUNG: Well maybe we'll wrap us, is there any last memories you have of the, either the tent camp in Nyssa or Cow Hollow from either of you?

KODA: Well, Mom had told us a story that when my grandma came, she was only sixteen and um, it's, grandpa had come to Hawaii before it was a territory. Had brought his wife, I guess and then, um, work was really hard on the plantation. On the pineapple plantation because they would tax them for everything, tried to keep the workers there you know. And it seemed like he could never get ahead, eventually his wife, his first wife passed away and they had a daughter so he sent her back to

Japan and then eventually he made his way to some friends that he knew to Boring and worked on the lumber, in the timber camp and stuff. And there's a mural in the pioneer museum of, have you seen it? Of, there was a log cabin and there was a lady, uh, Japanese lady standing there with her child in a high chair and there's a team of horses going by with logs on it and there are men scaffolding around the trees, trying to cut it down and then way up on the right corner is my grandparents, standing by a tree, she has the Gibson hairdo and she has the white dress and the, black lace belt you know. And he has a handlebar moustache and he has one of those, they call them golfers cap or whatever and knickers on and stuff, standing like this. And, we've always had that picture in our family as his wedding day, but in the back of that photograph that we have, it says one year after she has, that she has arrived in the old Japanese. So we always said that was their wedding picture, you know. And, um, and so, she and so he sent for her, she volunteered to come, I think they were about sixteen years or thirteen years difference in age, but she didn't know how to use flour. So, the German neighbor taught my grandma to make noodles, bread, and pat butter and then go to... what's the store, Mom? What's the store that they used to go and trade, barter?

TAKAMI: That was in Gresham.

KODA: What was the name of the store? Five Mile? Five Mile Store?

TAKAMI: I don't remember.

KODA: And barter for rock sugar and flour and things that she couldn't make herself, because they had, you had chicken huh?

TAKAMI: Mm.

KODA: In those days they had fertile chickens so uncle used to go to the market and get the eggs and hatch them out so they had all kinds of chickens, huh, Mom? Bendies and Rhode Islands and whatever and um, and then when they, and then when they had to evacuate they had a horse that had, was going to fawn, so they gave it to the neighbor and the cow and that sort of thing. And when they came here, they said they needed a truck, somebody contacted him and said, "Could you drive the family truck over?" And he did, but, and then, we think, we think he must have had the family things in the truck, because we had,...

TAKAMI: Yeah uh huh.

KODA: ... stacking, grandma stacking lunchbox out of China and my mom said, that she couldn't have brought it with her, so it must have had all the family possessions in that truck on there and so.

YOUNG: Mary, did you know any other families from Gresham that ended up at the Nyssa Camp?

TAKAMI: Um, not too well because we were so separated. We just look for our problem you know.

YOUNG: Right.

KODA: The Yamastas.

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: What's Mable's maiden name?

TAKAMI: Who?

KODA: Mable Isuda? What's her maiden name?

TAKAMI: Takashima.

KODA: Takashimas, did they come when you came?

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: And Ka, do you know Kato?

TAKAMI: Yeah, that's our side.

KODA: Yeah.

YOUNG: Which Kato? Henry Kato that family or a different family?

TAKAMI: Yeah I think Kato come that way.

YOUNG: And you knew him?

TAKAMI: Hm?

YOUNG: You knew Henry Kato?

TAKAMI: Uh huh, we don't live close by but we go to the same school, you know.

YOUNG: Did you know the Morishitas?

YOUNG: Hm?

YOUNG: The Morishitas?

KODA: Morishita?

YOUNG: Morishita?

TAKAMI: Oh Morishita, yeah. They're from Gresham.

YOUNG: Right.

KODA: Do you know any more families, neighbors?

YOUNG: Where the Kidos...

TAKAMI: Yeah Kidos from Gresham, uh huh.

YOUNG: There were a number of Japanese farming families from Gresham.

TAKAMI: Mm hm. All working as hard as they can to survive, it would seem so. We're not together very often, just once in a great while.

YOUNG: Was there no community center?

TAKAMI: Yeah.

YOUNG: There was? What would you do there?

TAKAMI: We had, um, sometime they teach a dance a little bit and sing, and getting into things like that, you know and um... tried to make something to go and get together, but...

KODA: What about picnics, Mom?

TAKAMI: Huh?

KODA: Picnics.

TAKAMI: I don't know if we celebrated Christmas or not but.

KODA: No, picnic, we used to have a picnic.

TAKAMI: No, I don't think so. Just the New Year really.

KODA: Yeah I remember at New Year's in the camp.

TAKAMI: I thought because we don't have a car so we didn't get together very often.

KODA: At New Year's I remember all the people coming to the camp, at New Years and they would drink and sing songs and get drunk. I remember that, sing all Japanese songs and then they'd cry and they'd laugh and they'd go... and then another couple would come and the same thing over again. So us kids say, "Oh my gosh, why are they singing like that?" Because it was all in Japanese, so.

YOUNG: Well why don't we stop there?

TAKAMI: Hm?

YOUNG: We're gonna stop.

KODA: They're all done.

TAKAMI: Yeah.

KODA: Okay.

YOUNG: Thank you.

END OF INTERVIEW

**This project was funded, in part by a grant from the U.S. Department of the Interior, National Park Service, Japanese American Confinement Sites Grant Program. Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Department of the Interior.**