

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Question: First thing I'd like to do so I can get it on tape is just to get your first and last name, so if you can give me that.

Answer: ok. My name is JunkOh Harui.

Question: And your family has been here for many, many years.

Answer: Well, my father arrived in the United States in 1908.

Question: So he was Issei.

Answer: He was an Issei, yes.

Question: What was your father's name?

Answer: Zenhichi Harui.

Question: Do you know how come he ended up on, did he come to Bainbridge first, or did he travel around before he

Answer: Well, he arrived actually by ship in San Francisco, but his brother had preceded him to Bainbridge Island, and the reason there was quite a contingent of Japanese citizens on Bainbridge is because of the Port Blakely Mill, which hired a lot of the Japanese people. In fact, there was such a contingent there that they actually two small villages on the Port Blakely Mill property.

Question: Really. I hadn't heard that.

Answer: Yeah. There's one small village called Yama, because yama means hill, and it kind of escapes me what the other village, but anyway, what they built there were little sundry stores and a bathhouse, and some other little sundry places for the citizens of Japanese ancestry.

Question: Did they design it with Japanese type architecture, or just western?

Answer: No. They just took what was left over from the lumber mills. They're basically shacks, but they did the job.

Question: so your father then came here in the early 1900s and did he...

Answer: He worked at the mill for a short period of time. He and his brother worked at the mill for a very short period of time. Became disenchanted with the working conditions and the wages, so they started a small farm on New Brooklyn Road, which is only about couple miles from here.

Question: So was that the beginning of, when you say a farm, was it a

Answer: It was an actual farm, yes. They raised, their principle money crop was a blackberry called the Olympic berry, and but they raised vegetables and produce for sale.

Question: Would they have to

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Answer: They'd take it to the Pike Street Market.

Question: Oh, really.

Answer: Yes.

Question: So did they sell it to somebody to sell it, or did they go in and

Answer: No, they went in themselves. It was an arduous thing. They would get up very early in the morning and work till late at night and sell their wares. I don't think they did it for very long though, because they progressed well with other ventures, and they didn't need to go into sell their produce anymore.

Question: Boy, just getting there and back takes half a day back then.

Answer: In those days, yes, it did.

Question: So when did he, you said he had other adventures that, business ventures that did better.

Answer: Yes, they started a grocery store, and that kept them busy, and then they branched into a greenhouse operation, and a nursery operation as well as a produce operation, so they made. Well, they raised cut flowers and seasonal plants and vegetables, so it sustained them for a longer period of time than just going to the produce market.

Question: The grocery store is the one we saw

Answer: Yes, that's correct.

Question: Which was out on Miller Road.

Question: Did, and you said he didn't marry until he was a little bit older.

Answer: That's right, yeah.

Question: So at this point is he still the bachelor out there building, or had your Mom come along at this point?

Answer: Well, he was a bachelor, yes, at the time. And then I think it was 1925 that he got married. He was 40, well he was almost 40 when he got married.

Question: He couldn't own the land, right?

Answer: No, that's correct, yes.

Question: So who, did he rent?

Answer: Well, they had put it in the name of a young Japanese-American who was a she, and she placed it in her name, because obviously she was born in the United States, so she was a United States citizen.

Question: So when your father started there, it was raw land with timber and

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Answer: Yes, that's correct, yes.

Question: Boy, I just admire somebody like that, who could come, and a lot of people at that time did that, but

Answer: Well, it wasn't exclusive to Japanese. There's Norwegians and Swedes, and a lot of Scandinavian, not Scandinavian, but Yugoslavians. They made up a great part of the community, because they were fishermen, and that was another industry that was very popular in those days, and most of them at that time were doing well, because they owned their own boats, etc., but as you know in the last few years fishing has not been very good economically.

Question: It sounds like your father must have been pretty well known in the area. I mean, these beautiful flowers and nursery developed, a store he had running out there.

Answer: Yes, it was a very popular organization, yes.

Question: So did people call the store by a name? I mean, in town, we had Reiders' store when we were kids.

Answer: Well, no, they called it Bainbridge Gardens. Yeah. They, communication was a little difficult in those days, because he not only talked to the Asian people, but he'd talk to the Swedes and Norwegians, and, it must have been kind of a fun thing to communicate with, but they seemed to get along and understand each other. So it worked out.

Question: I envision this store where they, you didn't always have to pay in cash, that your Dad ran a tab for people and

Answer: That happened, yes.

Question: What are your first memories of Bainbridge, 'cause you were born here on the island, right?

Answer: That's right, yes.

Question: What year. I don't mean to be so rude to ask age, but what year?

Answer: Well, I was born in 1933. I was born pretty much in the height of the depression, and 'course when you're young, you don't remember too much about what happened, but I barely, barely remember what happened. Well, in fact, I wasn't even aware of Pearl Harbor until several years after it happened, because I was sheltered from that type of news, so, in fact, when I went to school one day at Pleasant Beach, which is a few miles away from our home, that's where we went to school. I was surprised because I was taken out of the classroom and I thought I had done something wrong, but it was just our departure time. Our forced departure time.

Question: So how old were you then? What grade?

Answer: I was 11 years old.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Question: So your parents, I assume that's who was sheltering you, your parents, from the news of Pearl Harbor and,

Answer: Yeah. 'scuse me, I was 9, not 11.

Question: Oh, 9 years old.

Answer: yeah, but anyway, my parents did shelter us. I wasn't fully aware of what was happening. It must have been a horrendous thing for them to be forced to move.

Question: That seems like, again, you were a child, so you hadn't seen anything different to that point, but here your father and your mother are here, they'd worked so hard, and then they come and say we're taking away your citizenship, and

Answer: Well, they didn't have citizenship.

Question: Oh, that's right. 'Cause they were Issei, so but were taken away

Answer: Their rights.

Question: You're going to have to leave, and

Answer: Right.

Question: So you were at school the day that you, the evacuation day?

Answer: That's right.

Question: What was that like as a child? Scary?

Answer: Well, no, I have very few bad memories about that era. I think when you put yourself into that age of 9 or 11 or whatever it may be, your basic, and you had responsible parents, the parents screened or sheltered you from all the bad things. They absorbed all of it themselves, and so I wasn't really aware of even what happened. I mean, I wasn't aware that we were being forced away. You know, in those days when you're at that age, you kind of more or less wonder what you're going to do today and what are you going to eat, you know. You're not aware of the political situations or any adverse things. Basically, because responsible parents sheltered you, so I have no memories or experiences that were real negative.

Question: How many children were in your parents' family?

Answer: 5 including myself.

Question: And where do you fit into the

Answer: I'm second from the youngest.

Question: Second from the youngest, and so you had older that may have perceived it differently.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Answer: That's right.

Question: Do you remember, so when you were taken out of class, did your parents come and get you?

Answer: I don't remember.

Question: Do you remember going down to the dock and leaving?

Answer: Well, ok, I have another story there. I never went to camp.

Question: Oh, that's right.

Answer: The government decreed that those who lived east of the Cascade Range did not have to go to camp because it was a non-military vital area. Most of the vital areas were all west of the Cascade Range. You know, the airports and the manufacturing, shipbuilding, etc., were all on the West Coast, so for instance, those people who lived in Spokane didn't have to go to camp. So what happened was somebody found out about that and said, let's move to Moses Lake, so 3 families from Bainbridge Island moved to Moses Lake prior to the date that was scheduled for evacuation to camps. And we missed it by 2 days. We left 2 days before they did.

Question: So 2 days before the evacuation,

Answer: That's right.

Question: so you missed

Answer: Yeah.

Question: So what... the store and the nursery and the garden, what happened to all that?

Answer: Well, fortunately, the store was leased to some very responsible people. The grocery store was, and so they paid the rent, so we were able to pay the taxes to prevent somebody taking the property away. It was a very fortunate thing, because a lot of the citizens did lose their property also because they weren't able to keep up with the taxes. And they unfortunate part was that the garden part, the nursery and the growing operations were leased to some very irresponsible people, and most of it was destroyed through neglect or through pilferage or whatever happened. So they basically came back to total devastation as far as the nursery and greenhouse operation was concerned.

Question: How long was your family gone from the island, or when did you come back to the island? I guess, how long were you gone?

Answer: '42 to '46.

Question: 4 years.

Answer: 4 years.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Question: Do you remember.. did you come back with your parents?

Answer: Oh, yes, yes.

Question: So do you remember what that was like coming back, 'cause it sounds like, seeing the pictures, here was this beautiful nursery your father and family had built, and now coming back 4 years later...

Question: Well, frankly, I don't remember much of it. Again, I think we were sheltered. I would have been 11 years old by then. Let's see, it was '46. I'd be 13 years old when I got back. So I was still rather naive of what happened.

Question: What did your parents do in Moses Lake?

Answer: We farmed. We raised, we did reasonably well, because in those days it was, food of any sort was necessary for the, not only for the domestic forces, but for the armed forces, so there was always a need for food. So we raised onions and potatoes.

Question: On somebody else's land, or

Answer: Well, I can't tell you whether this land was leased or purchased, but I assume it was purchased, but I'm not sure. But we farmed it.

Question: Yeah, so you weren't working for somebody.

Answer: No, no, no. It wasn't a sharecrop or anything like that.

Question: Did, was it just your family, 'cause you said..

Answer: No, there were several families. There were actually 3 families to begin with. Our family, our uncle's family, and our cousin's family, then later on 3 more families came.

Question: So you were, you know, a child, did you go to school then in Moses Lake?

Answer: Yes I did.

Question: So in your world, it sounds like, your life your parents tried to keep "normal."

Answer: Yeah, somewhat.

Question: Somewhat? Do you remember going to school over there?

Answer: Oh, sure.

Question: What that was like?

Answer: Sure. I had very traumatic experiences in the school in Moses Lake when I first got there. There was a kid that was 2 years, 2 grades older than I was and he beat the hell out of me every day. And he wasn't pleasant, but fortunately it

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

stopped after a couple of weeks because one of the teachers got wind of it and put a stop to it.

Question: Was that a Caucasian kid?

Answer: Yes.

Question: So discriminatory, or just picking on you because he was a brat, or

Answer: Yeah, well, I'm not sure what his reason was. It wasn't pleasant.

Question: But then when the teacher got wind of it, that

Answer: mmmm, hmmm

Question: So, were there many Japanese families over there in Moses Lake?

Answer: Well, no, there wasn't any before we got there. Fact is, the, when we arrived, well, of course, you know, people are concerned about what they don't know, you know. So they, I think they had false impressions about what kind of people we were. Were we sneaky and backstabbing, etc. etc. etc? So we did not go there with very positive response from the community. It took about a half a year or so for us to melt the people down and they discovered that we are good citizens and that we work hard and there's nothing to fear. But we were still monitored, even when we were over there. We had a gentleman that checked on us every month to monitor us to make sure we didn't have rifles or cameras or radios or that type of thing. We weren't permitted to have those things.

Question: So he would come out to the house?

Answer: Yeah, that's right.

Question: Do you remember that?

Answer: Oh, yes. Yes. Fortunately, he was a heck of a nice guy. And actually he had no reason to fear us anyway. He would say, You don't have these things do you? And he'd laugh. Which we didn't have. We had no money to buy them anyway. So, it was not a caustic situation.

Question: What was your Mom like?

Answer: What was my Mom like?

Question: Yeah.

Answer: In relations to?

Question: Was she a disciplinarian, a strict Mom, and fun Mom?

Answer: Oh, Well, she was all of those things. I hardly spoke to my Dad. He was always working. This relationship existed not only for Japanese people. I think in those days the word of the man, the head of the house was, you know, something that you respected and this is the way our relationship as far as my father and I was

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

concerned. That was our relationship. He didn't have that much time for me, and I don't blame him. He was too busy working. But my mother was the one that taught me manners and discipline, you know most of the good virtues that you need to be a good citizen, and so she was the one that worked very hard. She fed me, clothed me, and taught me a great many things. I owe a great debt of gratitude for her. But there were a lot of mothers like that in those days. In mean, you know, in those days it was, she wasn't alone as far as being able to teach us proper things to do.

Question: Did you work the fields with your Dad some?

Answer: Oh, yes, I did. Yeah. We had indigent workers that came during the harvest time, and some of them were a little bit on the lazy side, so my Dad and my uncle would say, Hey, get out there. Here I was 10, 11 years old and I had to outwork them just to show them up, and so I remember those days. It was hard work for an 11-year-old kid.

Question: And that's it. You Dad expected you to set an example and be above...

Answer: That's it. Mmmm, hmmmmmm.

Question: Oh, at home, did your mother and father bilingual?

Answer: No. Well, no. They were, they could speak a little Pidgin English, but, you know, it's amazing, they seem to, they ran a rather successful operation despite the fact that they couldn't speak very good English. But, as I said, you know, they weren't alone, you know, there were the Swedes and the Norwegians and the Yugoslavians and whatever, you know, Italians, and Germans. They all spoke their language and they were pioneers to the United States and they seemed to manage.

Question: That's where it gets interesting, 'cause that is true. I mean there were all these different cultures. First generation, a lot of them spoke their native tongue. The kids then became... and did you end of being some of this, a go-between for them?

Answer: Oh, yeah. Yeah. For awhile there when my brother departed, I had to do all the conversations over the telephone, and I did most of the bookkeeping, because I was the only one that could read. I remember, I used to have to order all the seeds from the seed catalog when I was 11 and 12 years old, and then I did the income tax even at that age.

Question: So you Dad would do a lot of the business part of things with the store and getting things and then you had to pick up...

Answer: Yeah, well, he couldn't read. He could read a little bit, you know, he couldn't comprehend what he was reading.

Question: I've heard. I can't remember who I spoke to today but they talked about Bainbridge Island being unique and special in relation to the evacuation and the fact that...

Answer: In relation to the evacuation? Oh, yeah, well, that's kind of easy to explain. It's an isolated area. I think they were able to capture the group as a group, you know. I would be hard, for instance, to go out to Sequim or someplace

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

and do the same thing that they did here because, well, for one thing it would be utter chaos trying to get those people together, but this was a situation where there was a lot of Japanese-Americans, 227 as a matter of fact, that were evacuated, plus us who found other places to go to, but there were I guess I can say I agree then, yes, it was special. Not particularly in a positive way, but it was special. Yeah.

Question: Did you ever, was there a point in your life where you were old enough to be able to have conversations with your parents about what happened, to know their views.

Answer: Well, as a matter of fact, I did that with my brother just a few weeks ago, and because my Dad and Mom never talked about it. Yeah, in fact I, my older brother who lives in Seattle, I asked him what, how all of us drove to Moses Lake in the front of a one-ton truck. I couldn't understand, well, there was my Mom and Dad and 3 brothers. My oldest brother and sister were in Japan during the war, so there was 5 of us that would have to ride in the front of a truck, you know, in the front cab of a truck and drive, course in those days it must have took 4 – 5 hours all the way over there in a truck. I asked him if he remembers that and he said, No, I don't remember, so I assume that he went with somebody else. I'm going to take advantage of your water.

Question: So you way a brother and sister were in Japan?

Answer: Yeah.

Question: Did they go for school?

Answer: Yeah. Mmm, hmmm.

Question: Now, how come you didn't go to school? Were you not old enough? Was there a certain age?

Answer: Well, the reason behind going to these schools is very simple. The philosophy of those Japanese citizens that came to the United States was, well, I'm sure you've heard the story, Go West Young Man, Go West. Right? Well, in this case, in Japanese, for Japanese citizens, it was Go East, Go East Young Man, Go East. They were thinking about, they had heard about this wonderful country called America, where there's lots of riches and opportunity, etc. etc. etc. Right? So there idea was to come to the United States, seek their fortune and make their fortune and go back to Japan and live like kings. So in preparation of that, they sent my oldest brother and sister to Japan to get a Japanese education so they would be prepared to live there. Well, unfortunately, what happened was, they got stuck over there during the war. We had no communication with them for about 5 years to know whether they were alive or dead during that war period. Well, fortunately, it worked out that they had stayed with some relatives, but it wasn't an easy life. My sister refused to talk about it. It was a difficult time.

Question: What part of Japan were they in?

Answer: My brother was in Tokyo. And my sister was on the outskirts of Tokyo.

Question: The devastation that....

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Answer: Well, they had very little to eat. I remember talking to some people who lived in Japan during the war and today they wouldn't even look at a sweet potato because that's all they ate every day. Every day, every meal, sweet potatoes. That's all there was.

Question: That's where the history that's taught in schools today forget to show both sides sometimes. You know, the talk about America coming out of the depression and went into war and how tough it was, but they never give the perspective of, I shouldn't say never, but often never give the perspective of other countries.

Answer: mmmmm, hmmmmmm.

Question: And then that was it, here was Japan facing the same thing. Japanese soldiers fighting for what they thought was right. Germany, German soldiers, Germany coming out of the same thing, fighting for what they thought was right, but for some reason, again, we're talking about one viewpoint on it and forget that there were other people and...

Answer: That's right.

Question: So 5 years your family had no contact with...

Answer: mmmmm, hmmmmmm.

Question: Boy. I just, again, the parents sheltered you, but for your Mom and Dad that just had to be, all of this had to be so hard on their generation.

Answer: Oh, of course it was. Mmmmm, hmmmmmm.

Question: So when your Dad came back to the island after the war, I guess it's different 'cause everybody else, a lot of people that went to camp, there was a certain point where they said, Ok, camp's done. You know, they started being able to go out and get jobs, but there was a certain point where they shut the camps down and you went back. Did your parents decide to come back when the war ended, or did they wait awhile, or...

Answer: Well, I can't honestly tell you what the decision was. I think people told me that we were late in coming back. A lot of the people moved back earlier, but I can't name you dates or times when that happened as far as when they departed to come back to Bainbridge. I think only about 24% of the people came back, because most of them were strawberry farmers and it wasn't great living, and they were getting into other opportunities. A great many people of Japanese ancestry moved to Chicago even during the war because of this decree....you could leave the camp with permission, but you couldn't move to the West Coast. You could move other areas, and a great many people moved to Chicago, and they were able to find lots of work there. 'Course during the war, I mean, work was plentiful. Everybody was looking for help. So they had great opportunities. If there's any way of rationalizing the good of camp life or what the decision of Executive Order 9066 is it may have gotten them off the farm and got them into different ventures. I'm not saying that's good or bad, but at least it got them off the farm, and sometimes the farm life was very meager. I'm not justifying Executive Order 9066 either.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Question: Rationalize, if you can, which is so difficult, because, I mean, when you look back now, 60 years in your mind when you think about what happened, what are the feelings that you have today about what happened.

Answer: Oh, well, it was absolutely wrong. Totally wrong. It just. It was a decision made just basically by ethnic identity, and that's why we as a community, Japanese-American community worked so hard in letting people know that it was wrong. We're not going to let it go silent, because it almost happened again, or it has happened again in the Iranian situation. People of Iranian or Muslim descent were openly persecuted, you know, and it wasn't their fault. They're probably decent, outstanding citizens, but yet they have the identity crisis, and so it's totally wrong. What happened was totally wrong. So we're making it a very big point to correct that if possible. And so there's no time for embitterment. There's time for reflection, you know. And for learning, and I think we've done. We've, we're a proud group of people and we work hard and most of us are honest, and I think we proved to the world that we're decent citizens, so I'm very proud of that, too.

Question: Do you think that it was being left out of history?

Answer: Of course it was. 'Course it was. I talked to many people who are in the age of 40s and younger. They don't even know anything about it. They can't believe it. Well, some of them don't even believe the holocaust happened. It hasn't been an issue with them, but then you can almost imagine what kind of people they are.

Question: And I'm one of that 40 group that... I wasn't taught it in history class.

Answer: Yeah. Sure, you never...

Question: I wasn't a good history student either.

Answer: Well, you weren't aware of it. You should have been made aware of it. Particularly when what happened was unconstitutional.

Question: Unconstitutional, inhumane, and unfair on top of all that. I mean, I was at a presentation and there was a teacher there and I had been talking about this and I said, Well, I said, it's, one of the people I had interviewed had gone back to where the camp was that he was at and it didn't exist anymore, and in the town they didn't talk about it. The just wanted to pretend that the camp had never been there.

Answer: mmmmm, hmmmmm.

Question: And I was talking to this history teacher and I said, It's kind of like with the holocaust, like you said, where a lot of people in want to say, in Germany, they want to say, It didn't happen. This teacher got all mad at me. She said, It's nothing like that. Nobody was killed. And that was her whole explanation of it and I was just aghast at this lady.

Answer: Well, well even the local history books that were put together by certain individuals left out the ethnic groups. I'm not just talking about Japanese groups. There's the Native Americans, and the Filipinos that were actually a part of

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Bainbridge Island history, and that part was stricken from the books. The people who wrote the books didn't even thing about it. Well, those people are just, they're different, so they don't need to be in the history books. That truly had happened. They had to publish the grade school text on history, because those people were left out. Those ethnic groups were left out, so see. And I remember, I'm not going to even hint to who it was, but anyway, I remember talking to a certain individual who was part of the writers of our history, Kitsap County history, and we questioned her as far as why these groups of people were not there, and she just simply said, Well, they're Japanese, they don't belong in American history.

Question: And this was a person of knowledge.

Answer: Yeah. She was a school teacher. Bless her heart, she's gone now, but she even went to our church.

Question: We kind of touched on this, but could it happen again?

Answer: Of course it could. It already has happened. I mean, not to the point that they were sent to camps, but I mean. How would you like to be a Muslim in an airport and become singled out for security just because you look like one. You're singled out. I mean that's happened. It's happened many times. You walk down the streets in New York and you look like a Muslim or Iranian or something and get beat up, or people throwing, you know, objects at them. That's happened. Now it hasn't happened constitutionally, but it could.

Question: That's why I think part of it is so important that this does get back into the history books, because without knowledge...

Answer: That's right.

Question: There was a class project years ago and it got out of hand back in the Midwest, and the kids said, Oh, Hitler and all of that never could have happened. How could it.... so the teacher ran this experiment and started assigning people different roles and it got way out of hand, but within a week he had shown exactly how it could happen. And this was even having told the students it happened. And so this dynamic of whatever...

Answer: mmmmm, hmmmmm

Question: I never thought about that, but now that I run pictures in my had and listen to, and you didn't go to one of the camps, so you didn't see this part of it, but when I heard people describe the camps, they describe, I mean, they were God-forsaken country, I mean it was a desert and they threw some shacks. Is this any different that was done with Native Americans with reservations? I mean wasn't this...

Answer: Well, the white people were trying to take the culture away from the Indians, the Native Americans. I mean, they sent them to boarding school and told they weren't supposed to speak their native language anymore, you know. Had to wear uniforms outside of their native culture clothing, and when you stop and think about it, how can you take culture away from somebody? I mean, it's just like saying, You can't eat sushi anymore. It's ridiculous. You don't even talk about sushi, because it's not in our American culture. Stupid. But they're taking away,

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

they're not being able to speak their native language or native clothes or even talk about their customs and their legacy and their histories and I think one of the wonderments...I think you like food, don't you? Well, one of the wonderful things we do nowadays, we can go to the restaurant and we can eat something different than a hamburger or steak or potatoes. We can go to Mexican, Vietnamese, Chinese, Japanese, Italian, whatever, you know. Well, I mean, how boring it would be without the ability to absorb somebody else's culture even to the extent of cooking, you know? I mean, I think that's magical that we can do this in the United States in a free country and enjoy all the different cultures and customs and I think all these things should be encouraged instead of discouraged.

Question: I think some of it becomes the fear of, well I think 2 things. I think it becomes the fear of the unknown, and then I also, and the fear of difference, because they've never seen it, so all of a sudden they, I mean you look at how things were picked apart.

Answer: Yeah. Yeah.

Question: When your Dad came back, the store was still had been run by some good...

Answer: Oh, yeah.

Question: So, for your Dad and your Mom, once they got back to Bainbridge, a whole new struggle? Or were they starting one step up rather than ground zero, starting all over.

Answer: Well, actually, the grocery store was re-leased to somebody else, so my Dad only had the acreage and the farm to live off of. He didn't run the grocery store anymore. In fact, what happened was my uncle and father split the partnership because of the devastation of their project during the war and we got the west side of the road and they got the east side of the road. So their portion was where the grocery store was, so we had to rely on farming, and we raised produce and things in the greenhouse and, it was a difficult period for our family.

Question: so he did almost have to start over then.

Answer: Yes, he did.

Question: Now I heard a story, I don't know if I heard it accurate or not, but somebody told me there had been some stone lions and they disappeared.

Answer: Yes. Well, they're steel lions, yeah, cast iron lions. They disappeared during the war and then they came back mysteriously.

Question: How many years, a long time after the war?

Answer: 8 years ago... 8 or 9 years ago.

Question: 'Cause that's I heard the good and the bad. There were some people that helped out a lot and then there were other people that thought, Well, everybody's left. They're not coming back and they just took advantage of whatever was there.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Answer: Well, the lions were, we don't know where they originated from, but there was a pair of them in the sunken gardens. If you look at that film real closely you'll see them. But anyway, they're more of a symbol, you know, because they were part of the sunken gardens, and so they had disappeared of course during the war and all of a sudden, like I say, 8 or 9 years ago, they reappeared again, one of them reappeared again. And I think there was some mysterious reason why they appeared, that first one, but we made light of the fact the lions have finally come back in the local newspaper, and all of a sudden the second one showed up the next day, and the fellow told me, he said, Well, gee, I've had that thing in my garage for how many years and I never knew where it came from. So now they're back, both of them are back together.

Question: Have you rebuilt the sunken gardens?

Answer: No, we can't because it's wetlands.

Question: Oh, yeah. Times change, I guess.

Answer: Yeah.

Question: what you do think, or is there, for the people you and I will never meet, generations to come, is there a message that you feel from your personal point of view should be left for them from this incidents, from the evacuation, from what they did...

Answer: Well, I've talked to kids' groups, you know. I've talked to, once in awhile I'll have the opportunity to talk to youngsters who are not only interested in gardening, but in ethnic history or culture. You know, I've taught bonsai classes and talked to them about exactly the same thing I'm talking to you about, you know, what's happened during the war, but my biggest point is that, I think that a lot of them, for instance I talked to this Jewish group of kids and I said, You know, you're maligned a lot as a group, but I said, You know if you're a good citizen you should be damn proud of who you are. No matter what they say, you know. And when I was a kid, I used to be ashamed of what I was, and strangely enough, basically because we wanted to be as white as we could be, because we lived in a white culture and everybody said, Well, gee, that guy's different. He uses chopsticks to eat, you know. He's really different 'cause his eyes slant, you know that type of thing. Well, I feel that if you're a good citizen, and you are helpful to the community and then you should be damn proud of what you are. And I think one of the things we do is try to teach people our culture and it enriches them and it enriches us. I think those two points are very adamant in my mind as to what we should do to help our community. So, we do sponsor some community events like the pounding and the sukiyaki dinners and etc. etc. And we have native dancing and drums and you know, all those types of events, and some people might say, well, that might be kind of ridiculous, but it isn't. That's just expanding our community to the knowledge of our culture. And I encourage that for other groups too. I mean, I enjoy seeing native dancing. Native American dancing, and gosh, we all get a kick out of the Scottish bagpipes, and you know, all those types of things. Without this blend of culture, it'd be rather dull, I think. Our lives would be rather dull. And I think we need to be enriched by these activities and we should promote them, and I think that should be our primary goal is to teach and respect other cultures.

Junkoh Harui

Tape 1 of 1

Question: Have you ever been in Japan?

Answer: I haven't been in Japan since 1939. Actually, you know, strangely enough, my first wish is not to go to Japan, but to other countries, 'cause I already know somewhat about our culture. I'd rather know more about other cultures. We went to China, we went to Costa Rica, and we have some other things on the agenda, but it's not Japan.

Question: Well, thank you very much.

Answer: You're welcome.

Question: Let me get you unmiced.