

Washington County Museum
Oral History Group Interview
At Washington County Museum
Nikkei Event
September 13, 2011

Informants: Group

Interviewers: Group

Transcriber: Jeff Millen

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): . . . have a picnic. And this was really a big gathering. Play games. Everyone brings food. We used to hold it at Balm Grove on the Gales Creek. You know where that is? Also at Roamers Rest on the Tualatin River. We used to swim in those rivers – in the Tualatin. It was clean at that time [everyone laughs].

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): I've canoed in the Tualatin. I sometimes wondered.

[Rustling of papers- permission to record...]

Questioner 2 (Gary Imbrie): Did you have a bathing suit on?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): When we were kids we would learn to swim in Gales Creek. You know, at that time the river was clean. You could see trout fish swimming around. There was a big waterhole that we used to always go to. And, of course this was below Balm Grove. It was free, whereas at Balm Grove you had to pay to get in. Yeah, we took swimsuits though.

Questioner 3: Sure you didn't skinny-dip.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): See we lived at a place called Hillside, and you had to go over the mountain to the other side to Gales Creek. Of course, on a hot summer day we'd climb up the hill – it was all gravel road, go down in the valley at Gales Creek, swim, cool off, and by the time we got home we were hot and sweaty again.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): How long did you live out there?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh, we lived there from '31 to '34.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Did you go Gales Creek Elementary School then, too?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): No, not school. The school was at Hillside which is a one-room schoolhouse. One teacher. First to eight grades.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): From there you moved to Laurel?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Uh-huh.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah, I remember when you moved to Laurel.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): Did you live out there, too?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah, we lived in Hillsboro.

Questioner 4 (Masako Hinatsu): Did you farm? What did your family do?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): We did farming . . . truck farming, and then also raised strawberries . . . beans We also raised crops in Sauvies Island.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): In Helvetia, too.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah, in Helvetia.

Speaker 4 (Masako Hinatsu): Did your folks go to early market then?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Oh, yeah, Truck farming.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara) : But the Iwasaki farm first started out as a dairy.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Right.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Just outside of Hillsboro. On Minter Road.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Minter Bridge Road.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Who started the dairy?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Our folks.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): How long did they operate it as a dairy?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Well, I don't know how long they operated the dairy.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): The kids can get up and milk.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): We never did learn. [laughs]

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): I don't remember the dairy, but I remember we had at least one cow. [everbody laughs] We had a couple of horses, we had one pig that we, you know, slaughtered. And then we had chickens.

Speaker 5 (Rom Iwasaki): Ji-chan [grandfather] bought a farm. He bought an existing dairy farm. Then they said this is not something to do.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Whenever I hear dairy farm my ears pick up because my family was involved with the dairy industry. My grandfather helped start the dairy program at Oregon State University. They brought him out from Wisconsin. He advised them on how to get a dairy sanitation program.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): So the Shogrums [sp?] in the 1900 census are your family?

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): They're a branch of my family.

Q: It was the Oregon Agricultural College.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): The Shogrum sisters in Portland were dressmakers. The Oregon Historical Society sits on the dormitory that the Shogrum sisters had for the seamstresses that worked for them. That's a different story.

Questioner 4 (Masako Hinatsu): Did you all go to the Japanese school that they had then – the classes on Sundays?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Uh-huh. We were the studious ones. But his family, they had four or five boys and they were very naughty. They were very naughty.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): He said they played baseball.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah. It was one day a week. It was long trek, because we went from Hillsboro. We picked up our teacher in Hillsboro and took her to Banks. It felt like it took us a whole day to get to Banks. We were in school for how many hours?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): It was an all day school – till about 4 o'clock. . . . But just one day a week on Sunday, and the kids are not too interested

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): They were very naughty.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): So can we get some specific examples?

[laughing]

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): But we had to learn the Japanese language, and we had to learn how to write it and read it. Just before the war, right across T.V. Highway, there was a big house there, and they rented that house for a Japanese school. And Dr. Nakata taught it. Did you go to that one? Since we lived so close, we had to go down there and light this big pot belly stove with wood, and it would burn so hot that it was red on the outside. I remember just before the war, for summer vacation he told us to write a diary of our summer vacation, but we were in school for maybe two months when the war began. So that was the end of that. But we had to write everything in Japanese.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): You said the teachers came from Portland. Is that right?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Yeah. One was . . . she was from Japan, wasn't she – Fukuda Sensei. She came from Portland, and the Tsugawas had a food stand right across Shute Park, and that's where the bus dropped her off, and we picked her up and drove her all the way to Banks. She taught school, and we dropped her off there, and she took the bus back to Portland, It was a long day.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): There was a bus from here to Portland? Like a Greyhound or something?

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): There used to be a trolley from Forest Grove to Portland.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): It was a blue bus. I remember that. . . . We had a car or kind of a panel truck that had a tarp on both sides and two benches we had to sit. . . . The fumes from the truck was something else.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): We got car sick by the time we got to school.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Do you remember how long it would take to get from Shute Park to Banks?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): It seemed like it took an hour – at least an hour, or more.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Who drove the truck?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): I think George and . . . and Arthur. I think they did. . . . I do remember getting car sick.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Was there a larger community of Japanese in Banks than in Forest Grove

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Oh, yeah. They did have an organization of the Washington County Japanese. . . . They got together to discuss what to do in the Japanese community – like the picnic and things like that.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): A cultural association?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Well, I don't know about cultural, but it was just an organization or something to keep all the Japanese informed about each other, each of the families and stuff.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): As I say, the *isseis* were fairly close knit. They supported community interest. They had meetings. They had outings, of course. And they hired three teachers for the Japanese school. They were all educated in Japan. One was the man by the name of Tom Tatsui. He was probably in his sixties at the time he was teaching us, and he lived right in Banks or right outside of Banks. The other was Mrs. Fukuda that came from Portland – she mentioned. And the third was Dr. Nakata who was the dentist. He was brought up in Japan, and so he was certainly bilingual. He taught us. So there were three different teachers that used to come out.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): There was another one. You know. We had that Buddhist minister.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh, yeah. Who was that? I didn't have him, so I don't remember.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): We had the Buddhist minister, didn't we?

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Are those the classes you skipped?

[laughing]

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): I think he got kicked out.

[more laughing]

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): How many students were at the Japanese school?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): There were quite a few. Don't you think there was about fifty?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yeah. Forty, fifty I was going to say.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): In one room?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): It was in one room, wasn't it?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): No, they had two rooms. They had three rooms actually.

(1300)

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): Did they separate the boys?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): No, no, no. By age and grade level.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): They taught Japanese and writing. Did they teach anything else?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): That was primarily.

(1400)

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Reading, writing.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Gosh, I don't even remember the bathrooms.

[laughing]

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): That's where they did all the pranks.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Was it inside?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Yes, it was.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Taka, tell us about the ken parties.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Our parents came from different parts of Japan, like our parents came from Shiga-ken, which is a . . . prefecture near Kyoto. So we'd get together as . . . we called it *kenjinkai* party, and once a year around New Year's, we'd get together with people, in Portland too, that were also from that same prefecture. Like Masi's husband . . . his family was from the same ken, so we'd go to a Japanese restaurant in Portland and have our get-togethers that way. I don't know if you did. Did your . . .

. . .

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): No. My parents are from Gifu Prefecture, and there was only one other

family here from the same prefecture. So we never had an association.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Now, who was that family?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Kagas.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Well anyhow, when she was saying, when the group got together of the same people from the same prefecture, her husband's family were all boys, and we were mostly all girls. These banquet tables were long, and the boys would sit on that side, and the girls would sit on this side, and the soda pops were lined up right in the middle. That's all we remember, was about soda pop – orange soda pop. . . . It was a treat. It really was a treat.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): I think the boys looked at the girls differently then.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): At that age.

(17:12)

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): I live just northwest of Hillsboro, and my father told about two young single men that came and they raised celery and various things in the And he called them . . . Tom Tatuui was the one, and the other gentleman's name was Tanaka. And they built quite a lovely little trim house, and it still stands. It's on the Ed Saufield 's farm. Their little residence has a rather unusual roof line, but they built it themselves to live in. They lived there a number of years in the late '30s.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): We lived out on Minter Bridge Road.

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): Yes. That was the other family. Joe lived out there, and on this side of town was Ed, but they were the same family.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Yeah, I remember Sowfeld's [sp?].

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): I always admired that little house, and Ed Saufield's kept it and made quite a keen tool house out of it. And it's well kept and still there. But you didn't know anything about these two fellows.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): No.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Well she said Tom Tsutsui. Isn't that what she said.

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): Tsutsui.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara) : That was our teacher.

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): I don't think . . . well I don't know. But he was a farmer at that point. And the other name was Tanaka.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): He must have been a different Tsutsui then.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): I think so.

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): Anyway, they made an impression on my father as being very good farmers. The only people I heard of raising celery in our area.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): And you lived down that . . .

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): I still live in that. It's northwest of Glencoe High School. . . . My maiden name was Gates. . . . And Connell is my sister-in-law.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Right. Jean?

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): Constance . . . Connie.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Connie. Yeah, she's our sister's good friend. Dorothy.

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): Yes. High school.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Did you know Shirley Ray?

Questioner 5 (Judy Goldman): I didn't. No. They were not in my class. In the mid '50's, I was.

Questioner 7 (Adam Mikos): So how did everybody come to settle in the Banks area?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Wasn't it because of the land, where they could grow strawberries, and they always had to raise strawberries on the south side.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yes, that was the preferred area – south exposure with good drainage. . . . Strawberries, you know, lasted for three years and sometimes a fourth year. But the plants begin to fail. And the thing is, you farm the same land three or four years, and it kind of depletes the nutrients. So that's why they had to move from one place to another. And so we moved . . . we farmed four different areas.

Questioner 7 (Adam Mikos): All strawberries?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): All strawberries.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): So you weren't rotating crops?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): You see, the land was always rented, so we never had a chance to rotate crops. So we would raise berries, and after three or four years we would have to move to another location.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): In some places, there were laws about property ownership about Japanese not being able to own land. Was that part of it also in terms of having to rent field space?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): I don't think there were too many families that owned the land, except for like the Osakis and the . . . I don't know who else owned the farm. . . . I think most of them are renting.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Were the crops of berries sold mostly locally, or were they taken into Portland to market, or did they go to the . . .

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): I think we did a little of both. We sold it in Portland as fresh berries, but the bulk of the berries went to . . . Banks to a company called Bodle. At that time they had a packing plant in Banks. And how they processed the berries were, they would of course wash it, sort it, and a conveyor belt would empty into a barrel, wooden barrel, about fifty gallon, and they would pour sugar into it the same time. And then they would put it in cold storage. That was the preservation back in the '30s. But when it got into the mid '30s, we began selling it to Ray Mayling [sp?] here in Hillsboro. And shortly after that, Birdseye came in, and they began freezing berries. And that was the beginning of frozen berries by Birdseye. But up till then it was preservation only by sugar.

(23:40)

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): That sounds like the kind of strawberries that you put on shortcake. Did some of them go into jams and jellies?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): I don't know what happened after they preserved it, but I imagine they went mainly into jams. What else can you do with strawberries?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): I'd like to tell you a story. I'm not from Hillsboro. When we came back, the war was still going on, and we went to pick berries. That's what a lot of us did – pick berries. . . . There was still a lot of prejudice going on, and they would not take the berries at the cannery. So this family the Katos and Iwasaki's started their own, and, after we worked all day in the field, we worked and separated berries, and then they took them, because they wouldn't take the berries at the cannery. That was because of prejudice. So there was still a lot of prejudice going on that the farmers faced and that the people faced.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): And that was during the war?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Yes. We came back in May before the war ended, and the war ended August of '45. So the war was still going on. They had lots of different kinds of berries.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Do you recall how long that went on when the canneries wouldn't take the berries?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): That was the only year they didn't, because the berries don't go into the winter anyway. The following year they were able to take it to the cannery.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): I thought it was interesting during Arthur's interview he was [asked] where did they get the workers for picking berries, and he said that they all came from the Midwest and that they built tents for the workers. Do you remember that?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Uh-huh.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Gosh, I didn't know that.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh yes. We put up at least a hundred tents for pickers. I remember the time when we were in Helvetia – that was in the late '30s – the pickers were mainly people from

Portland and locally. They were college students, people that were . . . ordinary, maybe teachers. They were all people like that. Kids, a lot of kids, grade school kids would come out and pick. One year, the year my father had ninety acres, we knew we would have problems with picking – laborers, so I was sixteen at the time, I went down to the U.S. employment office to find out how I might be able to get enough pickers. And I think they suggested to me that I try to get an Indian tribe. So somehow I got lined up, and I went up to Vancouver Island, a place called Nanaimo. I contacted the local Indian chief there, a fellow by the name of Mike, and I arranged for him to bring his whole tribe down to our farm. I was sixteen at the time. I made arrangements for railroad passage down to Victoria. I made arrangements for them to ferry to Seattle, I made arrangements for them to pick up the railroad down to Portland. Then we came out the station with our trucks and took them out to our farm. We had the camp all set up for them. And that worked out beautifully. They were really hard workers. The only condition that they would come was that they had to have their salmon. So I knew that there was a cannery at . . . Camas, and so I went over the fish cannery there and arranged to get salmon for them weekly. The part they wanted most of all was the salmon heads. They said that that was the best part of the fish, and they were really happy to get all of the salmon heads. After the season was over, I arranged for them to go back the same way. But that was one of the ways to solve the labor problem at that time.

Questioner 8 (Ruth Holland): You were sixteen, and you did that?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): We had to take over and do a lot of business for my father, or *isseis*, because they had a hard time with the language. By necessity, I was doing things from age ten on up until I graduated from high school.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Didn't you negotiate a loan for your dad when you were ten.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh, yes. We were always in debt, of course, and always have to go with him to the bank or to the company, the Bodle company to arrange loans for the coming year. We would pay back the loan with a crop and then go into debt again for the following year. And this continued on yearly.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): Were you ever able to get ahead?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yes, we finally got ahead in 1937. And up to that time, my father had purchased the 1930 Model A Ford four-door sedan. We ran that Ford from 1930 to 1937. It was a sturdy car. But in 1937 we were able to buy a new car, and I tell you that was really a luxury. [laughing] We got a 1937 Oldsmobile four -door sedan. I tell you we really babied that car. [laughing] That was really wonderful.

(30:48)

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): That's the thing about farming, you're at the mercy of the weather and the birds and the slugs, so those red letter years don't come around every year. It's usually in cycles where you get a really good bumper crop. My father-in-law was a strawberry farmer. Your story relates to stories I've heard from my husband's family about growing strawberries. But that was down the valley in Albany. So do you recall or know why your father came to America?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Well, I think it was because of his older brother. He was here working in the sawmill up in Eatonville, and my father followed him, I don't know how much later. He also came via . . . I think via Hawaii, Mexico and then up the coast. I think he was probably on some kind of

transport ship. And he stayed and worked in that same lumber mill as my uncle. I don't know how long he stayed, but he eventually went back. After he back . . . he came in 1907 . . . and after he went back he returned in 1919, married, and decided to come back and stay. By then he was trained . . . he took an apprenticeship in Japanese confections, and he opened a store in Tacoma. He was very successful at it.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Where is Eatonville?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Eatonville is somewhere east of Tacoma and Seattle.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): How about your families? Do you remember why they came?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Our parents? Well, I think dad came . . . did he come as a stowaway, Aia [sp?]?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): I don't remember.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): I think he did.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): A stowaway? On a ship?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Uh-huh. He landed in Seattle but he worked in Montana. He was in Montana, and he worked in the . . .

Speaker 5 (Ron Iwasaki): No, he came to Vancouver, B.C.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Oh, did he come to Vancouver? And then he went to . . . well he was in Montana, too.

Speaker 5 (Ron Iwasaki): Then came across the border somehow.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah.

Speaker 5 (Ron Iwasaki): Possibly as a stowaway.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): But he never went back to Japan.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): But he wrote a diary every day in Japanese till the day he died. He was writing a daily diary.

Speaker 4 (Masako Hinatsu): Did he ever get his citizenship?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Oh, yeah, he was one of the first to get his citizenship.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Because they were not allowed to get their citizenship until the '50s.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Our mother was a picture-bride.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): But he knew the family before they were married. And my mom's older sister married my dad's younger brother. They knew the family before. Although she was a picture-bride.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): There was a lot of picture-brides at that time. Our mother was a middle daughter. She must have been very gutsy, because when she heard that some women were coming over, she wanted to be the first one to come. She was eighteen at the time.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): Wow. That is gutsy.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Raised eight kids

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): That's gutsy, too.

[laughing]

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): What did your dad do in Montana? Do you know?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): I don't know what he did. He worked in the railroad. He lived in a boxcar. And then he came to Seattle. . . . But when they moved to Oregon, they lived in Farmington. I remember he was telling us that he lived by Farmington Road and . . . what is that crossroad, Ronny, off of River Road?

Speaker 5 (Ron Iwasaki): Rosedale Road.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Well, around there they had a house. But I remember he was saying that in order to go to the grocery store, he had to go over the . . . not a mountain, but it was . . . it was quite a long trek. But he had to go quite a long ways to the grocery store and get groceries. I remember him telling us stories like that.

Speaker 5 (Ron Iwasaki): Well if you go to Portland you have to

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): No, it was to Hillsboro.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): By horseback?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): No, he walked.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): How about your mom, Sharon? Did she come from Japan?

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): No, her parents emigrated here. They lived in Pasadena. Her father was a gardener, and her mother worked as a servant basically . . . polishing silverware . . . as a housekeeper. And they both worked on some of the larger estates in Pasadena. I think he . . . Didn't grandpa work as a gardener on the Wrigley estate, too.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara) : Not my father.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): No, mom's dad. Didn't he work on the Wrigley estate in Pasadena.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yes, he was a gardener in Pasadena.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): And she . . . her mother . . . because she did that kind of work, a lot of

people gave her things. I think she was given a piano and a lot of linens and silver and those kind of things from these very wealthy people. And when they were incarcerated, they stored all those things, and when they came back it was all gone. Everything had just disappeared. They lost everything. Even most of their photo albums. He was an avid photographer, but when they came out I think she had three photo albums that we still have. But they lost everything.

Questioner 4 (Lisa Donnelly): It makes you wonder what people were thinking to go through those things and to take them. It's like why? What would you gain from that?

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): I think there were some people who were fortunate enough to have neighbors hold their land for them or to protect their houses for them while they were gone. But most didn't – weren't in that situation.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): This is story that . . . it's post-war, but one day about five years ago there was a reporter that came and wanted to interview my husband for his father. My father-in-law was a big man, and they had a house that bordered the county farm in Troutdale. It was right next to it. They leased the farm to the county. And so when they came back, they weren't about ready to release it. He wanted to start spring crop and everything, but they kept holding back and holding back. One day, he got his tractor out and got his boys out, and he says, "Start plowing." And here comes this man on horseback, and just stared at him through this fence. That was the end of that. As postscript, this reporter wrote and interviewed my husband . . . at Edgefield Manor right now they have this hotel, and each room has a person with the picture, and his dad has his picture, and on the wall is his story. It's quite nice. That's how it came about.

Q: It's a piece of history.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Yeah, it is a piece of history.

(41:00)

Speaker 4 (Masako Hinatsu): By the way, talking about *manjū*, my mother learned to make *manjū* from your dad. She was very well known from making good *manjū*.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): He gave away recipes?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): After my father had returned to Portland . . . well he came back to Hillsboro after the war, of course, but he had so many friends in Portland that he would drive to Portland every day. Well it got to the point that I says, "Why don't you just move to Portland?" So, I bought a lot for him, and he managed to build a house. So, he moved to Portland. And then after that, just as a hobby, he reopened the *manjū* shop on 17th and Powell. Had a store there, and he made limited amount . . . varieties of *manjū* which is a sweet confections. He had quite a few customers like she says. Her mother was a good customer there. . . . He just wanted to do something to occupy his time. Unfortunately, he had to close the store, because when the underpass went under Powell they took the building down. So he had to close.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Do you have pictures of that building?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yeah.

(42:58)

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): So, it's not all lost; there are some pictures. Now, *manjū*, I don't know what that is. Is that similar to *mochi*?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yes, he made *mochi*, too.

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): The *manjū* was different then the *mochi*.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): *manjū* is usually like a rice outside . . . it's like a pounded rice on the outside, and then like a bean . . . sweet bean paste on the inside. That's a basic one. There's lots of really elaborate . . .

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Yeah, they come in all different colors and shapes and . . .

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): All the grandchildren used to go and work December, January getting the *mochi* ready for . . . And then they'd take it to the bus station and send it off to local people who were waiting for it.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Did you have *mochi* soup on New Year's Day? I like *mochi* soup just so you know for New Year's. [laughing]

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Yes, my father . . . He had to have a commercial machine come in to make the *mochi*. What this machine is . . . it has a wooden hammer which is lifted by electric motor and then dropped into a large bowl that contains the rice that you pound. You steam the rice first, and then you put it in this granite bowl. As this hammer goes up and down it pounds and it makes the *mochi*. That's the way the commercial people do it. We still have that machine, and we use that once a year to make *mochi*.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): Oh, it still works?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh, it works fine.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): We just did a *mochizuki* in August.

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): We have a *mochi* making party.

Questioner 6 (Donna Schmidt): So you make your own *mochi* for the *mochi* soup for New Year's Day?

Speaker 1 (Toshio Inahara): Oh, yes. We make it with this machine.

Speaker 4 (Masako Hinatsu): They made a hundred pounds this year.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): We have electric machines now.

Questioner 8 (Ruth Holland): It's not the same.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): No, it isn't. It steams and it pounds and it rolls and it shapes it. There's no

work to it anymore.

Questioner 8 (Ruth Holland): You're burning the calories while your making it, and then you can eat as much as you want.

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): In the old days, you had two people pounding, you know. It was quite a deal.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): That's what's fun about going to OIA's New Year's celebration, because they . . . You got three people there. You got two people pounding it, and between every stroke somebody [has] to get their hand in there and . . . and it's all in a rythem.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Yeah, that hammer used to horrify me. "What if they hit his hand?"

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): We looked forward to it every year when we'd have it just for our family. Dad would build a little fire to steam the rice and everything. Remember? They would do it in my greenhouse. . . .

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Would the *isseis* also celebrate *obon*?

Speaker 3 (Aya Fuji): Well, that's a Buddhist . . .

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): I know that people have changed faith, but I know that Portland Buddhist temple still does it, but I didn't know if first generation folk continued that tradition once they got here . . .

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Well, we all went to the Buddhist things because our parents took us or you know. Never understood any of it. . . . went to camp. That's when we changed into Christians.

Questioner 7 (Adam Mikos): Was that part of camp life?

Speaker 2 (Taka Mizote): Yeah. . . . They had missionaries.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): That's interesting, because in Hawaii, all the Japanese celebrate *obon*, but here it's obviously not observed the same way.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): I've actually noticed that on the state calendar of events, it's still listed as a state holiday.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Right. It's a big deal over there.

Questioner 8 (Ruth Holland): I'd love to see pictures of the making of *mochi*. I love celebrations like that where it's food related.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): I'll send you some pictures.

Questioner 8 (Ruth Holland): In my family, that's how we stay connected to the past. We make certain dishes. You learn how to make it, and then it's passed down . . . the stories . . . that's how we do it, too. It's nice to hear that other families do that as well. Plus, there's a snack at the end which is

always good.

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Talk a lot about food.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): My sister, Sue, collected the recipes from our grandfather, so she still makes *manjū* in very small quantities now and then for all of us. I'm glad she had the foresight to do that. She wrote down the recipes years ago. She asked him to show her how to make a lot of them. So she has that skill now which is nice. I don't think she's as good as he was . . .

Questioner 1 (Sam Shogren): Has anybody every talked to you or talked to your sister about spending a couple of days in the kitchen and actually just videotaping her doing those recipes and making . . .

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): Oh, I'm sure she'd be interested in doing that. She's actually a professional chef.

Speaker 4 (Masako Hinatsu): Her website is brownieme.net.

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): She was trained in French pastry making in France, and she worked in some very famous restaurants in Los Angeles. So she has a lot of those skills, and she's actually done a couple of cooking shows and some classes. So she might be interested in doing something like that.

Questioner 7 (Adam Mikos): Can we tell her that you said hers weren't so good?

[laughing]

Speaker 6 (Sharon Inahara): They just aren't as pretty. His were . . . I think he was well known for his *manjū* because they were just. . . . They were beautiful. They weren't like the kind that you get from San Jose or Los Angeles that have a bean mix. They were all *azuki*. They were like all *azuki*. You know, they were like the kind.

[end]

Terms:

Agriculture

Baseball

Celebrations

Dairying

Education

Farms—Oregon

Labor

Strawberries

kenjinkai – 県人会 – association of people from the same prefecture.

Picture-bride

Japanese school

issei

obon

manjū

mochi

mochizuki – making mochi.

azuki

Gales Creek, Oregon

Hillside, Oregon

Tualatin River, Oregon

Balm Grove, Gales Creek, Oregon

Roamers Rest, Tualatin River, Oregon

Laurel, Oregon

Sauvies Island, Oregon

Helvetia, Oregon

Hillsboro, Oregon

Banks, Oregon

Shute Park, Hillsboro, Oregon

Vancouver Island, British Columbia

Nanaimo, British Columbia

Camas, Washington

Seattle, Washington

Tacoma, Washington

Montana

Eatonville, Washington

Shiga, Japan

Gifu, Japan

Minter Bridge Road, Washington County, Oregon

Edgefield, Troutdale, Oregon

Osaki family

Dr. Nakata

Fukuda Sensei

Tsugawa family

Tom Tatsui

Kaga family

Kata family

Iwata family

