

**Interviewee: Harry Yoshida**

**Interviewer: Lisa Uyeda**

**Date: September 10, 2010**

**Location: Thornhill**

**Accession Number: 2010-060**

**\* Note that this interview contains casual references to mental health, suicide, and mildly graphic descriptions of burn injuries.**

**[Start Interview]**

Lisa Uyeda: And action. And we're all set. So-

Harry Yoshida: The light is on, yup.

LU: Wonderful. So today is September the 10th, 2010. And this is an interview with Harry. And, um, would you like to start off by telling us where you were born and when you were born?

HY: I was born in Vancouver Island place named Chemainus.

LU: Chemainus?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: And that was 23rd of March, 1924. So actually I'm 86 now.

LU: Oh, wow. [inaudible] Perfect. So, did you spend most of your childhood growing up in Chemainus, or-?

HY: Until 14 till I went to Japan. I was 14 years of age when I went to Japan.

LU: And what do you remember about Chemainus and growing up in —

HY: Well actually it was really cozy, nice, small little town. It was very quiet.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah. And very, you know, friendly place. Actually it was—

LU: Were, were there a lot of other Japanese people in the area?

HY: Oh, there was, I think about- Because in Chemainus, there was a big lumber company. Most of the people worked in there, so I think we had about 200 Japanese there.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: In total. Yeah. At that time.

LU: That's a lot.

HY: Yeah, it was lot. Because most of 'em worked in the lumber company.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm. And were you working at the time, or I guess you were 14, you're too young.

HY: Yeah, I wasn't working. I was still in, uh, grade eight, I think it was.

LU: And what do you remember about going to English school? Do you remember what school?

HY: Well, there was a discrimination in a older age person, but I wasn't that sensitive. [chuckles] You know, too young to, you know, be like that I think, yet not much mature enough to, you know?

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: As long as I can enjoy yourself. But I think that was it.

LU: Mm-hm. And did you have a lot of friends from the school that you had, had?

HY: Oh yeah, I had a lot of friends. Yeah. Not only Japanese, but, uh, Caucasians, most of 'em in, uh, English.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah, that part was all English.

LU: Yeah. Were there any other groups in that area as well?

HY: Well, there was, a few other nationality in there, but I was not aware of it, you know what I mean to say? We were just a kid, eh? Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. Yeah. And what kind of activities would you do? At school?

HY: Well, we were doing the, what you call soccer before, but now, but it's a football you used to call it.

LU: Oh yeah.

HY: We used to play, most of the school activity was football. Other than that, we didn't have any sport activity other than that. We used to have a adult baseball team and go and see that. And every time they hit the fall, foul ball on the background in the bush, we used to go and find it and get 5 cents. [both laugh] That kind of thing was one of our, my young- Kids like us was a hobby.

LU: Mm-hm. [laughs] Did you do anything else that were—

HY: No, not that kind of a drastic physical thing at always.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Just you know, just a kid.

LU: What about other ways to make a little bit of change?

HY: For, what do you mean change?

LU: Like, like money.

HY: Oh, money.

LU: Yeah.

HYL Well, that's about the only way that we used to get our money, I think. Other than that, I dunno how I got the money, maybe from my dad or mom. I don't know. I can't remember that.

LU: Would you have chores that you would have to do to help around the house?

HY: No. Never did. I was my youngest in the family, so I was a spoiled brat, maybe you could call it.

[0:05]

LU: How many people were in your family?

HY: Seven.

LU: Seven.

HY: Three brothers. Three sisters.

LU: And you're the youngest?

HY: Yeah, I'm the youngest.

LU: Oh, wow. That's the reason. Yeah. So how, how old was the oldest child?

HY: Oldest is Shige Yoshida, he's a lone Scout, and he's in the mural on the Chemainus- What do you call it? Mural. Yeah, he's in there. He's a lone Scout. He's a one of the highest ranking Scoutmaster in British Isles.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah, I got a picture of that too.

LU: Yeah? [chuckles] And how, how old was he? Or how much older is he?

HY: He's [thinking] six I think he's- How old is he? I made his when I was 14. He's the oldest out of the whole-. Everybody is between only about three years difference almost. So, you could calculate by that.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: How much of it, but, but about 18 years different.

LU: Oh, wow. Yeah. So, do you know when your parents first came from Japan to Canada?

HY: Well, see, actually before coming to Canada, my father was a student in the United States. He was studying there. And in, around that time, the Japanese that was in California, they couldn't hardly speak English, and they didn't have enough Japanese education either. So, my father was a handyman to write the letters and everything like that for them. And, while he was doing that, one of the, raisin farms that makes from grape, found that out. And he said, "Why don't you come to my farm and be a supervisor to supervise all the Japanese that's working there?"

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, he got that position and he said he was making money, like all of the stars.

LU: Wow.

HY: So soon as that happened, and when he was 28, I think, he came back to Japan to get a wife. And he went back there, but they didn't accept to land there because my mother actually had trachoma [?]? You call it. That eye disease.

LU: Oh?

HY: So United States didn't accept that, but my father found out that Canada's okay. So, from there she went to Victoria to enter into Canada. That's how he came into Canada. And that's where my eldest brother was born. In Victoria.

LU: Oh.

HY: Vancouver Island. Yeah. That's the capital of British Columbia.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's how he entered.

LU: So did your father come over first? And then your mother came over, or?

HY: Yeah. They got married and brought her in, but they couldn't land in the United States, so they found out that Canada was the only place to accept that.

LU: Wow.

HY: You call that tohoma, what do you call that?

Third Person: Trachoma?

HY: Trachoma or something like that eye disease. [hand gestures]

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. But that was quite tough in Japan.

LU: Oh, wow. And how old was your mother when she was married?

HY: [Chime ringing in background] I think she was around 25, I think. Maybe. TP: I don't know. [chuckles]

HY: I, I can't,

TP: I dunno

HY: You know, otherwise it's very, very hard. After 86 years, you lost, you lose track of it, you know.

LU: So, she was only a couple years younger than your father?

HY: Yeah, I think.

LU: Oh. Okay. Okay. And what part of Japan was your father's family from?

HY: Yamanashi Prefecture. That's next province from Tokyo.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. First from province, I think.

LU: And was your mother's family from the same prefecture?

HY: Yeah. Yeah, same prefecture.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Same prefectures. In Japanese you call it prefecture.

LU: Prefecture. Oh wow.

[00:10]

LU: And what do you know about your father's family back in Japan? Did he have brothers and sisters? Or-

HY: Oh. Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah. But my father had three brothers and two sister, I think.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: And all died young. And one of the eldest was second to my father. He was a student in, you call it Tokyo University?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Akamon [?]. Around that time, taking that kind of education is a high class education. You know?

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: And, uh, you know, the first, uh, after the war is Prime Minister. Yoshida Shigeru? Maybe you don't remember. He was his classmate. Yeah.

LU: Really?

HY: Yeah. But my, uh, uncle died by pneumonia. He was a very good athlete. On the *kendo*, he had a black belt, and swimming was his main, so he was ran from, mainland to Yokosuka, and that's where he called caught pneumonia and kicked the bucket. Died.

LU: Oh, wow. How, and he was young, so—

HY: Yeah, he, he still was a student another year to go in Tokyo University.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So next brother was, what you call that, over here. You hired him to be their employee, but they spent- Paid all the education system. That's how he was doing at the present time. And he died early too, before graduating.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: How did he pass away?

HY: Well, that side didn't know because my father didn't tell me how he died. But I think it's, too much pressure. I don't know, it's kind—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And mental, maybe illness, I don't know. And the next sister is a elementary school teacher. He survived. He was-He lived for quite some time, I think, till about age 80 anyhow. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So that was about the family that my father had.

LU: And he had two sisters?

HY: He had two sisters, but other sister, I don't know what kind of history, background history is, yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. And was your father the oldest or one of the?

HY: Yeah, he was the oldest. The oldest, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. And do you know why he came to- left Japan? First to go to America?

HY: Yeah, America to study. He was a student.

LU: Oh.

HY: He was studying in University of California or something like that. He was studying.

LU: Did he plan on returning back to Japan after his,

HY: Well, actually he was, I think, but he got a good job there. So, he stuck with it.

LU: Oh, yeah. Yeah. Wow.

HY: So, there was a lot of people after the war visited him, that he was working for in United States for him. See, because he was a manager and supervisor—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: On that part.

LU: Oh, wow. And what was his family line of work back in Japan?

HY: Education. He's my father's father was a high class. He was a prefecture's head of the education.

LU: Really?

HY: Our background is based on education.

LU: Wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Unlike like me. So, what wasn't so good, [chuckles] but I didn't like study too much. Well, I study one year is-See, I was planning to go to Manchuria. There's a big Manchurian airline air, air, I mean, not, I mean, uh, train place.

[00:15]

HY: And I was trying to go there and I studied a-What you call that- Economic dynamic, economic education. So, I was, I was specialized in the, locomotives wheel is to balance, because that has to be balanced there because the weight has to be balanced so that, that train—

LU: Oh wow.

HY: Go faster. You know, that's, that's the kind of education I was doing. And one year later the war started and I said, "Well, you're gonna draft me in anyhow." So, I didn't like infantry, 'cause I hate walking because my knees [?] are flat foot.

LU: Mm.

HY: So, I said, "Okay, I volunteer," and goes to the navy, that's how I entered volunteer into the navy.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, Wow.

HY: That was in 1942, or May the first.

LU: And before we start talking about your navy experience what do you know about your mother's side of the family?

HY: Oh, they're well educated. They're very, they're one of the mayor of that small town, their family.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. At that time.

LU: And did she have brothers and sisters as well? And—

HY: Yeah, he had. She was the only woman I think in that family. I can't trace that much it because I wasn't in their city that long. It's not a city, it's a small village. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. So, who were you living with when you moved out to Japan?

HY: Well, actually, I was living with my father's, home. That is at what you call the Enza that is, in the early-Closer area of Tokyo in, Yamanashi Prefecture, you call it Enza, that's the name of the city. Enza means 'Salt Mountain.' [laughs] *En* is salt. *Zao* is *yama*. You know.

LU: Salt Mountain. Oh, wow.

HY: That's where I was living, yeah. It's my father. I was adopted by anyone [?]. You know how it is, eh? When you are 14 and calling my adopted [area?], my mother, but she was very nice. She visited me when I came back to Canada a couple of times. Yeah.

LU: Oh, Wow.

HY: But his husband died while I was there. Yeah.

LU: Wow. How did he pass away?

HY: Who?

LU: How did he pass away?

HY: Oh, pneumonia too, I think.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, pneumonia is quite, quite popular around that time in Japan.

LU: Mm-hm. So, you're adopted into the other family?

HY: Yeah. Named Hirose. Yeah.

LU: Hirose. Oh.

HY: Wife, Hirose. My father's brother. But still Hirose because the Hirose family didn't have a man, so they adopted him to take the household. See, that's the reason he went as a *mukoyoshi*, you call it eh? Adoption. Yeah in Japan, you call it *muko*.

LU: *Muko*?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: See, because they have to, traditionally, they have to be somebody that takes over their house because they going traditionally, they keep that house. You know, that's the system that Japan had.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So that's where I was adopted, and I never lived with that family because, you know, it's, it's awkward for me to—

LU: Oh, it'd be very different.

[00:20]

HY: Yeah. Very. So that's the reason when I joined the, navy, my name was Harry during the navy career.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And in 1949, I think it was the Canadian start giving citizenship in 1949. So, I applied and I had to submit a lot of application, the, war activity and everything like that. But see in the passport around that time, you know what they say,

wherever you are residing, you have to obey that country's law. See, that's the reason, in my case, that applied. So, I didn't have no choice.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: To be a Japanese and was to Japanese military.

LU: Right.

HY: It was on a passport, you know. Now passport is mutual. Right. Never seen that kind of a statement written in the passport.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: In that time they have.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See.

LU: Wow. So, they didn't mind that you're a Canadian born and as long as you're—

HY: Well, I didn't say, because, you know why I didn't say it? Because a lot of people that spoke English was sent to the, what's it called? Prison camp.

LU: In Japan.

HY: As an interpreter, you know, you American prisoners, that's where the bad thing happens. So, I didn't speak English. I never said that when I joined it that I could speak English. Only once I spoke English, because during the trip, on my ship Maya, we found the one junk boat. You call it a junk, you know. So, we captured that and start asking question, but they can't understand the Japanese. But to me, it looks like they could speak English. So that's when I spoke English, you know, and found out that they, they weren't spies or anything like that.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So, the captain of my ship told me, "Where did you learn English?" "Oh, in school." That's all. I didn't say that I was born in Canada, and that's the reason I spoke English. I didn't say that.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Because if I say that, I might be sent to as an interpreter in a prison camp. See like one prison camp that Canadian- Gee, where was he from? Somewhere in Alberta. He was a Canadian born, and he went into prison camp, as an interpreter. And they treated so bad. He was war criminal. And he was hanged by American military.

LU: Really?

HY: Oh, yeah. What was- Gee I forgot his name. Some kind of- He named himself. Some, some, some, some, some kid or something like that. See? So, you know, when he goes to prison camp, he, that kind of thing could happen. So, I didn't see I say I spoke English or Canadian born or whatever.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, yeah.

HY: I was smart enough to avoid that.

LU: So, when you had to enlist in the military or in the, the naval army, did you have to give them identification on who you were? Or?

HY: No, I, identity is adopted, adopted home. So, nothing background that say that I was a Canadian born, unless they looked at my family register.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: They don't ask for the family register.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See, so. [laughs]

LU: Oh, wow. So how long were you going to school in Japan first, before the war started? You-

HY: Only one year.

LU: Only one year.

And what was school like in Japan?

[00:25]

HY: Well, quite, quite- The education level is quite, high I think you know? Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. Did you have a hard time when you first came over and—

HY: No because I was in a Japanese school in Chemainus.

LU: Oh.

HY: They had a Japanese school. Yeah. And so as soon as English school is over, we used to go from 3-3:30 to Japanese school.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: For how long?

HY: Well, they had all graduate one till grade six, I think. Education. Oh, yeah. In every small town in Canada, they had that Japanese is Japanese, so.

LU: Oh, wow. So, did you finish all the way up to grade six, or?

HY: Yeah, I was in grade eight when I went back to Japan.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Not back, but went to Japan.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So that's about the age grade eight. Yeah.

LU: And would you have Japanese school every day or?

HY: Every day

LU: And weekends?

HY: Yeah. No, not, not on the weekend. Yeah. Weekends are pretty, yeah. [laughs]

LU: And what other activities would you do on the weekends?

HY: Oh, weekends, swimming and in Japan. Swimming over here. Well, swimming was the most- Other than that. And then I don't think I had any specialized activity at all.

LU: Mm-hm. Did you ever play carts or jacks or go fishing?

HY: No, fishing we went.

LU: Yeah?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: But that wasn't that hobby though, you know. That's for home food, because, you know, we are quite tight on the financial, eh? You know, all the Japanese at that time, it's not wealthy like we have in Canada right now, you know?

LU: Mm-hm. And the house you were living in, was it a rented house or did you, did you own it or?

HY: There was, there was a house in there. I'll show you afterwards.

LU: Okay.

HY: No, no. My father bought that house.

LU: Was it a big house or?

HY: Oh, a big, it was a barn. [laughs]

LU: Oh my goodness.

HY: So, the wind comes. We used to rush out, soon as the wind comes, looks like it gonna collapse because big house with no main support, [laughs] that kind of house, it was.

LU: Oh my goodness.

HY: Yeah. I show you the house, afterwards. Just in the picture. Yeah.

LU: Was there an upstairs or was it just all one?

HY: No, it's upstairs. Yeah.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow.

HY: The heating system was, stove, chimney goes to various places.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That's how the heating system was.

LU: Mm-hm. And did you have electricity or bathroom?

HY: No, in my house. Didn't have electric.

LU: Nothing.

HY: When I left, it didn't even have it yet. [laughs]

LU: So, what would you use?

HY: Candle.

LU: Candles, yeah.

LU: What, what about, gas lamps? Or did you have those?

HY: No, I don't think we had.

LU: Just candles. Oh, wow.

HY: Candles.

LU: Mm-hm. And what about in the kitchen? Was there, you know how we have fridges?

HY: Well, they had a stove. Wooden stove.

LU: Wooden stove.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And what would you do to keep the food fresh and cold? Did you have an ice box or anything like that?

HY: No. At that time, the ice box is so expensive, you can't afford it.

LU: Yeah.

HY: And even the ice boxes right now -- at that time is not electric anyhow. It's ice you put in it.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. That's how we did. Later time when I got married, we had a house. We borrowed the money from the government and build a house and all [unclear] the house. I said, no? She could remember.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: I used to close the refrigerator, a recent refrigerator.

LU: And what else do you remember about the town that you grew up in, in Vancouver, and, you know, the general store, or?

[00:30]

HY: Oh, yeah. There was a company, general store, like my father used to get a coupon from the working place. And that is all coupon is all for that, the, lumber companies' operation. And it's a community shop.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. That's how we used to go to that store. So actually, it's you know, all around store is about only one that, that the, lumber company operated.

LU: Oh. And do you know what your dad was doing in the lumber mill, or?

HY: No, he was a driver.

LU: Oh.

HY: See, like just small buggy type car. But there's a rail that haul the lumber to the ship that come to pick up the lumbers. There was a lot of Japanese ship was coming in or other countries too, to get a lumber.

LU: Oh.

HY: And he used to just push that thing through that wherever the rail is connected, that's all he did.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Fish car you call it. Fish car. [laughs]

LU: Fish car. [laughs] Oh, wow.

HY: He was called though Japanese Henry Ford. [both laugh] Yeah. His nickname was Henry Ford.

LU: And did he work anywhere else, or that was it?

HY: No, that, that's the only place.

LU: Oh, wow. Did you have any nicknames when you were growing up?

HY: No, I don't think so.

LU: No. And did everybody call you by Harry or your Japanese name?

HY: No, they called me by Nori.

LU: Nori, oh. So-

HY: My name in Japanese is Noriyuki.

LU: Oh. So where did Harry come from?

HY: Well, uh, right after the war, I was called- I was working with his [points to his right], brother-in-law's factory making electric items small. And then my brother-in-law, my sister's husband, was working in the automotive regiment under the United States. And I was, called to work there. And I became the maintenance supervisor there. I worked there for a half years. And then I was called to the dealership that was selling Renault. You know what the Renault is, eh?

LU: No.

HY: That's the Italian- A French, French car.

LU: Oh, oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: No, I've never heard of it before.

HY: Is that right?

LU: Yeah. Huh.

HY: And then that company became, joined with Hino. Hino Company, you know? No. It's a big automotive company factory. Joined with them because of France Renault company wanted to expand their automotive into Japan. And we had a five years negotiation with plans to complete that in Japan. So, bit by bit, we were adding this part first, and then within five years, we were gonna complete the Renault in Japan.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That was a place we joined. So, I was called into that company, Hino that was a big company.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And I was a maintenance, a service department and parts department supervisor. And I got all the certificate too, so.

LU: Oh, wow.

[00:35]

HY: And then during that period, I was I was teaching young people that want to be a mechanic. I was a teacher for them. I did that for about-I got certificate on that too.

LU: Hm.

HY: So right through, I was involved in the automotive area anyhow, somewhere or another.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So that was my life till I came back here. And final place that I worked before coming back to Canada, I was called, is- You know Zama eh now?, That's the main American headquarter. I was called there as a manager of the repair shop.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, from my house in Kita[?] area, I used to go to the final stop sign, and they came to pick me up as a jeep every time into that place. So, I was treated quite good. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Where were you living after the war? Were you, like in Japan?

HY: In Japan, in Tokyo.

LU: Were you in Tokyo.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Were you living with your father still? Or did he go back?

HY: No, I was independent, yet, I wasn't even married yet. [laughs]

LU: Yeah.

HY: Till I met her at his father-in-law's factory where I was working, she came as a secretary to that factory after graduating high school. That's when I met her.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And then did you get married in Japan, or?

HY: Yep, in Japan.

LU: In Japan. Oh, wow.

HY: So, my two daughter that is here right now was born in Japan.

LU: Oh, really?

HY: Yeah. But they're considered as a Canadian because they're before 18 years of age. And under my Canadian citizen automatically application, if you put it on, they become Canadian.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So now they was born in Japan, and they came with my wife, and one was five years old, one was three years old. Now, they don't know how they speak Japanese. Not hardly. So they can't understand. So funny part is, it benefits me and something that we have to seriously talk, we speak in high class Japanese, they can't understand it. [laughs]

LU: Well, that certainly works—

HY: Co- common Japanese, they understand the words.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But they prefer English now.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And they're blaming on me that I wasn't, I didn't teach them Japanese.

LU: How old were they when they came from Japan?

HY: Five and three.

LU: Five and three. Yeah. And did you move out here first and then your family came?

HY: Yeah, Toronto. Toronto first because all my other relative was in Toronto because everybody moved from Pacific to right to the Toronto area. Nobody went back to their own place.

LU: No.

HY: No.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Because every was evacuated beyond the Rocky Mountain into Alberta, or-

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That's how the, all the evacuation was done.

LU: So, was your father in Japan during the war as well?

HY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

LU: And your mother, mother was over here and all, all the other children?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Well, my, one of the other one sister was there in Japan.

LU: What was she doing in Japan?

HY: Well, actually she was married to the one that was working in the American outfit. I told him that that's where I went to work.

LU:Mm-hm.

HY: It, his wife. So, and they were living in the one of the generals house. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. So, they, their living was okay, great. Yeah.

LU: And what was your father doing when he was in Japan?

[00:40]

HY: Well, he went back to his own Enza, called, where he was born. And he was a union's chief clerk. There's a union that takes care of all the farmers. There's a office there. She was a-He was a manager there.

LU: Oh, Wow.

HY: Yeah, right through, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Because he's well educated in Japanese too, so.

LU: Was that area of Japan harmed during the war at all? Was it ever?

HY: No, I don't think there was any bombing.

LU: It was pretty safe

HY: Or anything like that? No.

LU: Oh, wow. So, when you were in Japan, and it was your first year there, and they started talking about the war, what do you remember about the beginning of the war before you enrolled?

HY: Well, I wasn't very much interested in what was happening because I was still actually young. And before that, it was a Manchurian boy, and Manchuria came as a, one of the called coal, what's it called? Coal country of Japan, eh. They made a Manchuria, and brought in the Chinese emperor's backbone person in there to be the head of the Manchuria. Yeah. Yeah. That's how the Manchuria came into existence.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: I didn't know that. Oh, wow.

HY: Oh, yeah. See, if you studied history, it's quite interesting how the world is changing by politics.

LU: Oh, yeah. Mm-hm.

HY: Recent, now is quite bad in Japan

LU: Recently?

HY: Oh, yeah. They're all mixed up.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. And so when the war started and you went and—

HY: Yeah, I volunteered.

LU: You volunteered.

HY: Yeah. Because navy's all volunteer drafting is not done by—

LU: Oh.

HY: Not many drafting. No, all volunteers. Navy is all volunteer.

LU: Why is that? Do you know?

HY: Selective.

LU: Hm.

HY: See if it entered in drafting. All kinds of people come to, they don't, they don't like war, they don't like anything. Parliament as a military or something like that, they see it buries it.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Naval, it's all volunteers. So, they're committed. As you know, or maybe you don't know what, like my ship 1,100. What they say first is, "Never get serious with your friend in there, because we don't have no extra."

Everybody got, everybody got a position, you know? So, he could be friend, but not more than that. You know, sometimes people get serious, eh, "Oh, if he's not there, I'm—" you know, "But what can I do or something." No, they won't do that because they will be educated individually. If it's a- What's it called? A main rifle, if there's a four in there, only four, no extra.

LU: Ah.

HY: So that, if, you know- So anyhow, it's when we lose one, it's bombing in something like that, it affects quite a lot of activities out there ship itself. So that's the reason we, every time we are trying to go back again in, and we could at the same time fill that position. So, funny part of it is I was- Every time we go back like that, I used to get a holiday to go back to my Yamanishi prefecture, my dad's place.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But I cannot say why I'm here.

[00:45]

HY: It's a secret, top secret because we are injured, eh? Ship itself, you cannot say that, "oh, he's still just a holiday." So that's the reason naval's up. "What is that guy doing? Every time he gets a holiday visit us," other people won't likenot only navy, but even army. They don't have no time to, we used to go to their one place, eh? I was getting quite, quite often. So, they said, "Oh I think he's not doing anything." He said, but it's not because of, you know, injury on the ship has to come back and fill that position again after repair.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's how the navy is.

LU: How long would you be back for at certain times?

HY: Well, it depends on how big the damage is.

LU: Oh. So, what was your shortest time there and your longest time back?

HY: My shortest time is about two months, I think.

LU: Two months. Oh, wow. And what would the longest time?

HY: Longest? About four to five months.

LU: And what would you do when you came back?

HY: We were doing nothing. Fooled around with the women. [chuckles] Well, that's a book, what I need to say [well that's a quote I am saying?]. So, it is a free time anyhow.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Til the ship is completely fixed and completely filled with the necessary position.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's when they go back again.

LU: So, when you're out on sea, were you, at your position every day, all day? Or would you—

HY: No, no. When the- You get at call, eh? If the enemy comes with, they call through the micro[?], then you all go to your position. That's all.

LU: Oh.

HY: Other than that, you know, we have a position to look and all kind of, those kind of things, we take turns.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: It doesn't matter which division it is, we take turns.

LU: So, what would you do on your free time when you weren't taking turns or-

HY: Well, most of the time they're very good to fill the position.

LU: Yeah. They kept you busy,

HY: Kept you busy. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And what was the food like on the-?

HY: Oh, food is good.

LU: It was good.

HY: See, like we have three months provision already in that ship. See, that's part of the fulfilment of the whole ship when you leave Japan.

LU: Oh.

HY: Three months. But it's all dried. And, why the food is good is in the, infantry. The soldier do the cooking. But in navy cooking department is separate. Cook is cook. That's one position.

LU: Oh.

HY: So that's the reason it's a food is good.

LU: And what would you eat? What was normal?

HY: Well, every day is different. So-

LU: Was there a lot of rice, or-?

HY: Oh yeah, that's- Oh, rice never disappears.

LU: Yeah.

HY: That's the main in Japan.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow. Because I know during the war time in Japan, it was hard to find rice sometimes, or it was very expensive.

HY: Yeah.

LU: So—

HY: Navy had it.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Navy had everything.

LU: [overlapping] Yeah, that's where it was all going.

HY: Yeah. Navy had anything, everything. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And would you have fresh fish, or-?

HY: Well, we don't have a fresh, everything frozen or dried, but only time that you have a fresh food is when catch a fish.

[00:50]

HY: See when in the port, and the ship is not out the sea. We do fishing.

LU: Oh. And if you catch that, they make that the food.

HY: Yeah. That's the only time that you eat the fresh food fish.

LU: Mm-hm. You'd have to do a lot of fishing if there's limit.

HY: Well, yeah. Well, fishing is limited too, because everybody can't do it. You know, you have to take turns, you know what I need to say.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Because otherwise they have other position too, so.

LU: But there are so many people on the ship to feed.

HY: Oh yeah. And that's the reason the cook is separate. Yeah. Cook is a cook. That's the one department.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's a good part of it.

LU: They've probably never stopped cooking.

HY: Oh, yeah. Never stopped cooking. Same thing. Yeah. They take turns too. This shift and this shift to- They got maybe about three shifts or four shift. I don't know how they organize there, but—

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: So how would they organize everybody coming in and eating would-

HY: Well, you got their own bunk place. One area, my area was here. And see, even in a torpedo, there's four torpedo. This is a four different room. And there's always ahead of that department too.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow. Oh, wow. So, do you wanna talk about when you first went on the ship and, and what do you remember thinking, or did you have to take classes first before going on the ship?

HY: No, no. In the freshman when I got injured, I was just sent to the position that I was, they decided, that's all.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And then after that, I was specialized as a torpedo because I was in torpedo school.

LU: Mm-hm. And how long were you in torpedo school for?

HY: Four and a half years, I think. Four and a half years. You learn everything.

LU: Oh, wow. And where was the schooling?

HY: Well close to Yokosuka and naval base. You know, Yokosuka, it's on the—

LU: Kind of.

HY: That's a, that's a naval base, even now that all these American ship is in Yokosuka.

LU: Oh hm. And would you be living there as well? And the school was there and was it living with all the other students, or-?

HY: Oh, no, no. Yeah. Within the school, there's a bunk, I need to say, you know, residential, what you call it, something like a house?

LU: Yeah.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: We don't go out down there, quite often, unless you on the weekend or something like that. Free to go out.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: They give you permission. In Japan, you call it a right and left. Divide that two into left and right. Okay. If the left goes called the outside, the bunk arm means out school. Right stays. And next is the right goes. They stay. Half is always divided.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: So, what would you do on the days where you didn't have school?

HY: Same thing.

LU: Mm.

HY: So, you don't, you don't empty at school. Even in the ship, you don't empty whole, whole thing.

LU: Yeah.

HY: While they're repairing too. Half is left. Half and half and half.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: Because they have to place that is not damaged. You know, they have to take care of that place, eh, so—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: They were organized.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Navy is very, very, no. All organized. Yeah. Not like infantries.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Quite strict.

HY: So, when you were attending school before the war started, before you enlisted did any of your school friends go and enlist with you or-?

HY: No.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Well, volunteer is independent.

[00:55]

HY: Actually. You don't have your friend, "Hey, come on." You don't say that.

[laughs] If he's not willing to do volunteer well—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: You can't force it.

LU: Was there an age range where—

HY: Mm-hm. No. Not necessary, but most of them about 15 and up. Yeah.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow. 15 is still young though.

HY: Oh yeah.

LU: He's very young.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow. So, do you wanna tell us a little bit about what happened when you got injured on your left eyebrow? You told me before, but we didn't tell it for the—

HY: Oh.

LU: Camera.

HY: Actually, that was in second Solomon Sea battle I think, I got it in there. We were attacked by the United Americans courier fighter plane. By the plane, as you know, is the first, guy in. Pilots, eh?. He came shooting towards our ship and with a machine gun, you know? So that machine gun bullet went through my, so you call it [speaking Japanese] [*so-kyo-gi?*], that is where I—

LU: Like the telescope?

HY: Yeah. Telescope. And give the message to the main, what position that airplanes coming and what height and what kind of plane it is. So, it was a fighter plane. He was coming with a machine gun right towards us. And the bullet went through that small place that, you know, and lucky enough, that bullet was the bullet that goes, you call it a [*te-ko-dun*] actually in Japanese. I don't like what you call in English, but that's the reason, went right through. And small particle of that, where I was just hit me there, there, it didn't go into the eye, it just skinned my face here, that's all. So I wasn't, you don't call it the injury, it's [chuckles] gift. So if that was a other bullet, soon as to hit something, you know, in that case, I could have been dead.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: See, so actually that's saved my life actually. That's what, scared. But because of that, he left and fire started and I think we lost about 30 something killed because of that plane, couldn't manoeuvre and hit, you know, hit our ship.

LU: So, do you think if the plane did have room to or time to manoeuvre around the ship?

HY: Well, I think he would've did it, but he didn't have enough time. He came too close, I think.

LU: Would he have come back round, do you think?

HY: Well, I don't know. It depends on how much bullet he has. I think so.

LU: Oh.

HY: He'll keep on working, I think.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Wow.

HY: Yeah. Usually Japanese navy or American navy, they're all committed, you know, actually American is quite committed.

LU: Yeah, Yeah.

HY: So, they have that same spirit as Japanese Navy, I think, you know?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And they're well trained, you know, you have to respect that.

LU: Did you see any other planes in the area?

HY: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. All over the place, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Oh, yeah, because in the naval battle, there's about other ships and everything like that. Total maybe about 10 more ships about in that area, fighting sea battle. See?

[01:00]

HY: So, I think the commander say you go against that ship when you go to that ship, but there's a commander always there to give orders, eh?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Same as Japanese Navy. That's how they do it.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: You don't go on your own. There's a order that comes up from a commander.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: There's always a leader in that kind of case.

LU: So, your ship was the cruiser Maya?

HY: Yeah.

LU: And how long were you on that ship before you were sent off to torpedo school?

HY: I think a year and a half, I think around that.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: I think I, if I look at that, I think I could tell. Yeah, probably a year and a half. That's when they found out that it's gonna take more than four months before. I think that's when they send me to the torpedo school, I think.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And they don't waste time.

LU: No. And I guess before before that, did your ship ever have to go dock and be repaired at all, or?

HY: Oh, yeah. Yeah.

LU: So how often would you be on sea for? How long would you be gone for?

HY: Well, as soon as that repair, you go back, there's always somewhere—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That is a battle.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: [pausing the interview 1:01:40] Just gonna switch this one over. [Camera noises] Okay. So, do you wanna tell us a little bit about torpedo school? What, what kind of things would they teach you in torpedo school?

HY: Well, structure was about torpedo, you call that. It's a special torpedo that we study. When the torpedo is shot, you don't see any bubbles. It is a completely energized, what you call that chemicals in there. So, they don't give you any trace. That kind of torpedo you *kyusan* we call it. Number 93 torpedo you call it.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So that torpedo, if gives me an order to shoot, we have to open the special, what you call that — [speaking Japanese] Compress.

LU: Compression tape?

HY: Compression air tank. It has to open that. And then now it's active.

LU: Really?

HY: See, okay. You have to, that has to be very careful because if you give him a little bit of a, you know, shock or friction, he might go boom. So, he has to be very careful open.

LU: Really?

HY: Oh yeah. Those kind of training he has done. Okay. And then you hit, there's a flip hits that, that opens, and the whole screw start till then the screw won't move. That's how the [unclear]. Now it's ready to hit somebody and that that's all it is.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But you have to learn how to do that. You now that, that kind of thing was training.

LU: And how would you, aim the torpedoes? Was it—

HY: Well, from the main we ordered come from the main, because they have the main structure of the enemy that they want my number four torpedo section to discharge, see?

[01:05]

HY: Okay. So, we go by that. So, they said "Left how many degrees," there's and how many degrees this way. There's a ship there. Aim for that." So, we follow that and shoot, they give you order because it is connected. [motions with hands] Something like this, you know, that thing in this is connected. Same thing.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's how they give you order.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. We just search what they say, you know? "Oh, must be that." So, we stay there. They say what direction and where and what degree it is and everything like that.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And it's our time for shoot. And that comes into the main thing because we have that thing too. That's when we shoot, so.

LU: How many torpedoes have you?

HY: There's four. Four lines. Four. And there's extra four, so there's eight.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And how many, torpedo stations would there be on the ship?

HY: Four.

LU: So four and then—

HY: Two and two. Two on the left, two on the right.

LU: Mm-hm. And, but that was it. There was only eight torpedoes for the whole ship, or was there other areas?

HY: No, one, one section has eight.

LU: Oh, okay. So how many, how many sections were there?

HY: Four.

LU: Oh. Oh, wow.

HY: There was 32 actually. See total.

LU: How many torpedoes did you, did you fire?

HY: Never fired nothing.

LU: No.

HY: That's a sad part of it.

LU: Well, I don't know. I'd be pretty worried about trying to fire one. Oh, wow.

HY: Well, not a single shot, I did.

LU: What, the people in the other sections were they firing?

HY: I don't think so far as I know. [chuckles]

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Most of 'em, the daytime is airplane.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Torpedoes doesn't do any good.

LU: Mm-hm. So it was all up above where-

HY: Yeah. So only time is most of the time was nighttime. Night sea battle was one of the best compared with America. We are very good at night attack.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But we never used it, unfortunately.

LU: Were there submarines as well at the time?

HY: No, not on- Japanese had a submarine. Oh yeah. They have, but almost nothing is left all, I think.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah, I think they discharge, discharge it very, very good. So Japanese, submarine was almost demolished.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See, another coincident, I won't say coincidence. Goodness of law. When I graduated the torpedo school, everybody takes a test for submarine. You know something? When I went to test, blood pressure was so high. [chime ringing in background] "Oh, you're no good." See? High blood pressure is no. good, eh?

LU: Oh.

HY: I never had blood pressure before. Only that incident.

LU: Oh wow.

HY: You have too high blood pressure. So, you are no good on some ranges.

Lucky, eh?

LU: Yeah. Oh my goodness.

HY: Yeah. That's how God is good. You know what I mean?

LU: Oh, wow. That's fortunate. Very fortunate that—

HY: Yeah, that's right. Yeah, that's right.

LU: Wow.

HY: And since that, after that blood pressure is normal. [both laugh]

LU: Yeah.

HY: Well, you know—

LU: Oh, is there a train? Is that right here?

HY: Raining?

[01:10]

LU: A train.

HY: Oh, yeah, train.

LU: Oh, okay. Thought I heard one. I was looking around. [laughs]

HY: So, any other question?

HY: Oh yeah, lots of I have to think of some. I don't know. So, what do you remember most about being on the ships and-

HY: I was after the war ended and traced back my naval career. I think I was fortunate to go through that kind of experience and so survive through all that, seabattle I was engaged.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And not a single injury was there? Well, I almost died one time. That was another incident. I think it was Saipan, I think battle. There was an airplane bombing. And even on the bomb, they had two type too. Right? It goes through or blast as soon as I contact it. That bomb was right close to my number four torpedo section. That's when I was- [motions with hands] With that energy that came, I went unconscious.

LU: Really?

HY: Yeah. So how I regained an unconscious was, there's a hammock, you call it the, where you sleep. See, during a war, sea battle, you rock that, all that. And they hang it between the aisle, from left to right is aisle goes through it. So to go to the right side or left side, you were hanging there to protect the - that kind of a bombing pressure that burned down on me. That's when I regain unconsciousness. And I found out I was all on fire.

LU: Really?

HY: So, I jumped into the reserve water tank. That is salt water. Oh. Then it never stung you. [chuckles]

LU: Oh my goodness.

HY: But that was good. That's the reason why I didn't lose those skin dropping lot. A lot of people, when you get burned, skin just melts. In my case, I stopped it because of jumping in there. See? So my hair was bald and, and my face was, you know, all mangled up, but nothing left. Yeah. That was because of the salt.

LU: Yeah.

HY: So it was—

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See, see there's a few people that didn't do that. So, the skin is out like that.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Drifting tighter. Melted.

LU: Mm-hm. So did you stay in the tank for very long or did you—

HY: No, not that long. I jumped out so it stung so much.

LU: Yeah. And-

HY: As long as my burning fire was gone, I just jumped out.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's when my, I lost my colleague.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah, right beside me. There were two on the, on the order. We were there, and it's a shoot if the order come. And that's when we got it. And he died. I survived because of it.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah. That was one incident. So, I nearly lost my life, but—

LU: Wow. And so, when you got out of the tank, did somebody come down to help you, or-

HY: Yeah, I went to medical section.

[01:15]

HY: They got a medical section. See, just like a mini hospital in the ship.

LU: Oh, wow. Were there a lot of other people injured as well, or?

HY: Oh yeah. A bunch of 'em in there. In the medical center.

LU: How many nurses and doctors would they have?

HY: There's no nurses.

LU: Oh, just-

HY: No woman.

LU: Just doctor or male?

HY: Yeah, male doctor.

LU: And how many would they have?

HY: I think we had three.

LU: That's it.

HY: That's it. Limited.

LU: Wow.

HY: We can't have dozens of medical doctor in there.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: They're all volunteers too, so.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: They're all officers. But- [chuckles]

LU: So how long did it take you to heal after that?

HY: Then we went back because of damage on the ship. When I went back, I went to General Hospital- Naval General Hospital and looked at it and they did something, but I can't, I can't remember what they did. And that was it.

LU: Hm.

HY: I was back to normal.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So—

LU: Oh, wow. And then, so after you were okay and the ship was repaired and—

HY: Went back again.

LU: Went right back, right back on. And you were saying before that it was very rare for people after taking torpedo school to go back onto the same cruiser.

HY: Oh, it's very hard. They, they could send to other, but I was posting it. I went back, back to the same ship.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's un unusual too.

LU: Mm-hm. Did you know anyone else who had, was on both times or-

HY: No. Maybe I'm, but the only one that went back. Well, I think I was the only student from my ship, I think at that time—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: To go to that school. Maybe other person went to the other school, like a machine gun school, or they could, there were five or six different kind of schools.

LU: Oh.

HY: Oh yeah. Not only torpedo.

LU: Oh, what other- So they had torpedo, machine gun school.

HY: Machine gun, and what you call that anti-airplane thing and main, what you

call it, that thing, like a main, what you call that, the main thing there. Front. You call it- What you call that, right? In English.

LU: I don't know. Would it be in the—

HY: [reading a document] You call it a turret.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. Yeah. You see everything that is used for battle, they have a position, they have a school too, to learn that particular thing. That's all. They don't study anything else. So, we are specialized.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That's how the navy is organized.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But I went, I was sent to torpedo school.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Other colleague, I think went to other school too, I imagine.

LU: Mm-hm. So, do you wanna tell us about the time where you went to one of the islands to go rescue the other Japanese soldiers?

HY: Yeah. Kiska did that. Kiska

LU: Kiska.

HY: Kiska is way up north, close to Alaska, way up north.

LU: Oh wow.

HY: Yeah. That's where, as I said before, it was only one hour out.

LU: Nighttime.

HY: Nighttime.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: All the rest time is daytime. So first of them, we failed because the weather wasn't fit to do any retrieve.

[01:20]

HY: So, second time we went, we succeeded and got everybody into our ship, and we sent back to their outfit. And then soon as that is finished, I was sent back to my normal outfit because I was only one that was selected to go to.

LU: Oh, really?

HY: Out of that four. Yeah, the whole thing didn't, didn't go. That regiment didn't go. I'm the only one. My ship was the only one that was sent to join Vista number five regiment.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: So, the first time you went to go rescue them and it didn't work out, did you have to come all the way back?

HY: No, no. We were just- [motions with hand]

LU: Circling around.

HY: We were circling around till that weather recovered and then we back. So, I think only how many days difference was it?

LU: I think it was 18, I saw. July 10th, I think to July 28th. Is that what I saw?

HY: [unclear] Date or something? [flipping through documents]

LU: Not like, I can read this one anyways. [laughs]

HY: Hm. What is it? That's on June, so—

LU: Oh, June. Hm.

HY: Yeah, here it is. Hm. [flipping pages] I can't even find it myself.

LU: Oh, may I see?

HY: Oh, here it is. I was sent to Ominato Naval Base aboard Maya. Maya was temporary assigned to Fifth North Fleet. Fifth North Fleet assignment was to evacuate military personnel from Kiska Island. First attempt on 10th of July. July 1943 failed. But it was because of the weather. Second attempt was 28th, so that's 18 days later, we went back and he succeeded. And he said around this time of the year, only one hour of night, and all the rest is daylight. [chuckles]

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So, this was the most scary, I think.

LU: Why? Why is that?

HY: To me, because if you get hit and sink, there's no way I would survive it. So cold. [laughs]

LU: Mm-hm. How many men were you rescuing?

HY: Geez, there was one regiment, inventory regimen, I don't know. Must be quite a lot because it was whole outside place was filled with the people. So, I don't know. We were, was not the only, see, because Fifth Fleet had about another four or five ships. So, we divide that into that. So maybe every ship to maybe about 40 or 50 person, I think. I dunno.

LU: Oh, wow.

[01:25]

HY: Yeah, it was quite a crowd.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah.

LU: How did they get up there? How did, why, why did they need to be rescued?

HY: Why? Because there's another- First island was the first place that all the soldier was died, eh?

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. So, it's a little bit up north of that place. So, America is trying to take control of that [kam-seka] too close to United States, Canada.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's the reason.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: United States was coming to recapture a place that Japanese have captured previously. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So-

LU: So, what other incidences did you have when you're on the Maya ship where you felt a little worried about your safety or? Or had close calls?

HY: You never think of for your safety, actually.

LU: No?

HY: You're educated that way. You know, dying is nothing. You don't think of dying at all. Dying is, it's not a fear at all, because how, that's how they educate navy person.

LU: Oh, really?

HY: Oh, yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: When you go to the war, it's, you're gonna die. That, you know, so why should you worry? We don't worry. And you don't even think,

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That's all. That's how the naval education is. It's not scary at all. It's- That's our duty.

LU: Were there any other times that you're injured when you're on the ship?

HY: No.

LU: No.

HY: Not a single scratch.

LU: No. Wow.

HY: The surrounding there was [unclear].

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: This is another miracle that to me happened, you know?

LU: Mm-hm. Do you wanna tell us a little bit about when the Maya ship sunk? Do you wanna tell us that?

HY: Well, actually, there's no time of thinking because the soon as the captain said disband, that was it. Because seven, seven minutes, eh?

LU: It took seven minutes to sink.

HY: Sink.

LU: Yeah.

HY: That was it.

LU: Mm-hm. So where was the, I know you've told me already, but where was the, the shots on the ship for where, where was the damage to make it sink?

HY: First is a front, middle, and the rear. Three. [motions with hands], That's all.

LU: And it came from another ship, or from the air?

HY: No, no, as, as I said before, from submarine. Enemy submarine.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Two submarine was there.

LU: Was it during the daytime or nighttime?

HY: Early in the morning.

LU: Early morning.

HY: Yeah. I think it was about seven o'clock or six o'clock in the morning, because we were having a morning train. Every morning we do the training, eh, at your position? I think it was early in the morning. What time? Seven. Seven something. I think seven something. I got a time too.

LU: Hm.

HY: 6:46 - 57.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: In the morning, because we have a training around six o'clock in the morning.

LU: So, what would you do for training? In the morning?

[01:30]

HY: You go to your position, and when the war started, what, what would you do is just pretend you're doing it. That kind of training.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah. That will keep you paid. That's about the size of, yeah. [chuckles]  
6:57. Yeah. [reading paper] It sank in seven minutes. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. That's it. Yeah. It was fast anyhow.

LU: Mm-hm. So, who is it that gives the order, the captain?

HY: Captain.

LU: That-

HY: You cannot disband your ship unless he gives the order.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And he went down with the ship though.

HY: Yeah, he has to.

LU: He has to.

HY: That navy's, what shall I say? I won't say policy but. That's his ship, he has to-  
Til he dies he has to be with that ship. So.

LU: It makes you never wanna be a captain. [chuckles]

HY: Well when you come to the position, well, what can you do, eh?

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow. Yeah. So, when you heard disband for the ship, you said you ran all the way to the one end, or?

HY: No, I was there because it is a sea battle. See, in the case of a sea battle-  
Submarine, I had to launch the discharge. Right? I went into that position. I was in a position of controlling discharge.

LU: Oh.

HY: See, every time you send that -Roll that out, you had to take the pin out and you had to measure how deep that should go. So that's what I was, I was gonna do before doing that. If I had a pin on [unclear] all the pin was still there, so he didn't go that way because didn't have a time—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: To give a, this discharge because submarine wasn't- Only two submarine there. there.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And so you just jumped off and—

HY: Yep, that's it.

LU: What were you saying about the thing that you wrapped around your stomach?

HY: Yeah, it's a *haramaki* you call it. It is cotton [speaking Japanese]. Oh, she's sleeping. [laughs]. Yeah. You wrap around the stomach because wrap around the stomach is very, very comfortable when you're quite active. Right?

LU: Oh, mm-hm.

HY: You feel that way too?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Same thing when you are pregnant, you trying to keep it tight, same thing, it's more comfortable.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: For activity, actually. Yeah.

LU: And do you wanna tell us again about the sharks in the water and what you would do?

HY: Well, we didn't- I didn't come to see the sharks, but as I say, the *haramaki* shark never attacks anything bigger than him. Okay. And another thing that never attack, if they, they will attack you smelling of the blood. See? So you have to be careful on this area. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But before the shark came, it's so noisy. Shark won't come around because still what is going on, eh? So, they attack you when it's really quiet and it's on his own. That's, that's, how smart the shark is.

LU: Oh, Wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: So how long was the, the air raid noise going on for like the, the battle noise?

HY: Um, oh, I, I can remember that because I was already in the sea.

[01:35]

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: If you're in the sea, you'll concentrate only on the floating, so—

LU: Mm-hm. Were you holding on to anything?

HY: Yeah, I think I had some kind of small thing. I just can't remember that either, you know?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Survival instinct is very sensitively, so if you come in some position, you're not thinking anything just to float. That was my main job now.

LU: Mm-hm.

LU: Just floating on your back the whole time.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Wow.

HY: Well, not necessarily back. Oh, whatever is comfortable.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: You know what I mean to say.

That's all you concentrate on, if you go on into the sea.

LU: Oh, wow. Oh, wow. And you can't remember how long, or you don't really know how long you were in there for.

HY: I don't know. I thought about 30, 30 hours or something like that, but it's not, I think it's only about three or four hours, I think. Because my main fleet was almost into late day already, so that takes about another day and a half or something like that. So, I was rescued and went to [Musashi?], so that's so it couldn't be that long, actually. Maybe three hours or maybe four hours. I don't know.

LU: Mm-hm. Do you remember see-

HY: I know that I didn't have a watch on anyhow.

LU: Do you remember seeing a lot of other people floating around you?

HY: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. Oh yeah. My colleague.

LU: Would you talk to them or would you just concentrate?

HY: Oh, you don't, don't have that kind of a mentality.

LU: No.

HY: The only thing is, *gambare*, *gambare*, that's all.

LU: What does that mean?

HY: *Gambare* means—

TP: It's very hard.

HY: Yeah.

TP: Kind of type thing.

HY: Yeah. Wake up type thing, eh?

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. That's always say- The leader always say like, "*Gambare*." "Don't think," you know, type of thing, eh.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's about only vocal atmosphere is only when the leader always say "Ganbare." "Keep on floating," type thing, eh?

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, other than that, you don't think anything.

LU: Mm-hm. So, you're saying that when the ship sinks the current can pull under as well?

HY: Oh, yeah. Yeah. I seen that because one of the white uniform, he's from under- Below engineer, he was standing there. He went down with it because that current of what you call that, when it curls? Goes in there.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. So, I guess you were trying, when you jumped in, you were trying to swim away as far, far away from the ship or-

HY: Well, the ship is going this way, so naturally, automatically, you know, it's making a distance, so.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: I wasn't in that current area anymore.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow. And when you were rescued, did a ship come around and-

HY: Yeah. Rescued and I was rescued and went to Musashi, that's a battleship.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And then battleship was getting an airplane attack so bad. And another thing that discipline is when that ship is in danger, you cannot have other ships member in your ship.

LU: Really?

HY: Oh, yeah. That's a discipline. That's the reason they call the *kosaka*, you call it that repair ship right away. And we were transferred to that and went back to Japan. Oh, yeah that was discipline.

[01:40]

HY: You never have other ships in your ship when you are close to maybe getting a damaged major or sink or something like that.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: This is up to the captain's discretion. And that's a discipline. Why? There's two thing. We don't want to see any other ships crew die in our ship. That's one thing. And we cannot keep the other ship's person because they have their own duty when they go back. So this is two things that that's the reason they come in, take you away, never have the other ships personnel when you're sinking.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: If you do that, captain is responsible many, many times.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: See, that's another discipline. And lots of people don't know.

LU: No, yeah. I've never heard that.

HY: Because it's all based on discipline measure.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And so when you're being rescued, did they have smaller boats come around and pick everyone up and then take you back over to the bigger boat?

HY: No, no. It's a special, special ship that is on that duty.

LU: So how would, how would you get into the ship though? Would they have ladders to climb or what?

HY: Oh, yeah. There's various way of transferring.

LU: Oh.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Like-

HY: Ladder or going down that outside ladder or, yeah. There's a small boat, you know, rowing boat. They trip you down with that, and they, the other ship will rescue that and take you, there's many ways that course I can't do it. That's their duty.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: You call it *kosaka*.

LU: *Kosaka*?

HY: *Kosaka*. It's a repair ship. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. Oh, that's fascinating.

HY: I think I got that on then, too.

LU: Oh, okay. Does the Heritage have a copy of-

HY: Hm?

LU: Does the Heritage, archives have a copy of your sheet?

HY: I really don't know. I can't remember now. Well, there's a few copies, so you could take it if you want.

LU: Oh, okay. Well, I can make a copy and bring it back.

HY: No, no, it's okay. It's okay. I got a fax thing anyhow, machine to do with that.

LU: Oh, okay. So, when your ships sunk, the Maya sunk and you're on your way over to the island, and most of the fleet was there already. What was your mission to go over to what was let, let's say—

HY: Rescue.

LU: Oh, for rescue?

HY: Yeah. Kiska sent as a rescue mission.

LU: Oh.

HY: Your gonna evacuate other personnel from there, because we knew that they gonna- America is gonna come and take that island away.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, so that was your main focus is just keep going back and rescuing, or?

HY: Oh, yeah. Yeah. We have a small *kata*, you call it small thing, and row that and put them on and bring 'em back to our ship. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Back across. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, we are not the only one, because there was another four or five in that, fifth fleet. That's a northern fleet.

LU: Mm-hm. Did they make it over there to, for the rescue, or did they turn around after your ship was sunk?

HU: I don't know, because they're different fleet. See, so what they did, I don't know.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Because I was borrowed from the South Pacific, fourth regiment. I mean, you know.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So-

LU: Oh wow.

HY: In his case, he got about four or five ships that was their duty to control the northern part of Japan, actually. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm.

[01:45]

HY: You call it a Northern fleet.

LU: Oh.

HY: Fifth fleet you call it. We are First Fleet.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: South, south Pacific. Yeah.

LU: And you mentioned that another ship, cruiser sunk as well.

HY: Yeah. That's a flagship.

LU: The flagship. And it-

HY: Yeah. That is in that four. Fourth regiment.

LU: Mm-hm. What's the purpose of a flagship? What's the difference between

HY: He's a commander.

LU: Oh.

HY: The whole battle. He's a chief. He makes all the orders.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah. That's a flagship.

LU: So, was his cruiser or ship the same? It just, he was on that one? Or was it different with machines and-

HY: Well, that is selected by the mainland highest class commander. That's all.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. It is a command system, eh, actually, yeah. You don't do it on your own.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: You get ordered. And he was selected as that main commander. That's the reason you call it a flagship.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And our fourth fleet, one of the fourth fleet that was that was a flagship, it was selected, that is all selected by the main commander—

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: In mainland.

LU: Oh. What was the name of that ship again?

HY: Atago.

LU: Atago?

HY: Yeah. This one. [points to paper]

LU: Mm-hm. And do you know how long that one took to sink as well, or?

HY: I think that sank in aboutt same time. I think I don't know—

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: To be honest about it. Cause I concentrated on my end of it, that's all. So, you know what I mean to say.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: The biggest bombardment was the shell, about 450 shells in our place.

[makes sound effects] You know how you do it? It goes in a circle. If it's the fourth fleet, there's four ship eh? We go around and around soon as it comes up to the position, bango 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 10 turret 20 centimetre shell goes—

LU: Really?

HY: I shoot. And the next one comes, shoot, another one. So largest just amount that we 450. It takes whole, whole night.

LU: What were you shooting at?

HY: Yeah, their airfield.

LU Their airfield. Oh wow.

HY: Guadalcanal That used to be a Japanese area, and they captured that. So, Henderson airfield.

LU: Oh, Wow.

HY: Yeah, its- I got it in here. [reading paper] That was the biggest shelling that we did. That was before this. So yeah, it's all in here somewhere. I think that was the second Solomon burning canal. That, that was the early part of it. I think. Oh here it is.

First campaign- This is the first campaign I went, Guadalcanal, I went to bomb Henderson Air Force, see? The Henderson Air Force, they captured then named themselves, Henderson Airport- Airfield. Maya fired 485 shields from this turret, 20 centimetre turret.

[01:50]

HY: So that's quite a lot of- 70.

LU: Oh yeah. Oh, wow.

HY: Hm. It's amazing. [laughs]

LU: It really is. Yeah. How fast would the ships move? What was their speed?

HY: Well, I don't know. That's not my department. They know next one ship will be coming in, what time, and so on.

They control that from main area there.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah. Yeah. See, you could tell by this, when we started, Maya, when I went, there was only 921 sailor in there altogether. Officer and sailors in 1944, because of a moderation done on the Maya itself increased to 1,105. That much was in that ship.

LU: Wow. 1,105.

HY: 100. It's a big family.

LU: Yeah. Oh yeah. Oh wow.

HY: So, anything else?

LU: Probably. [chuckles] So when the Maya sunk and you went back to Japan.

HY: Yeah.

LU: How long were you there for until the war ended?

HY: Well, I was sent to the number one barracks. And there's a small, it's not a mountain, it's a mount type. And I was the chief of machine gun. And I stayed there may day and night.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. I lived there, a small shack in there. And then I was called to organize the suicide regiment of Chiba entrance of Tokyo Bay. That was it.

LU: And what would you do there?

HY: Just waiting for the enemy to land, but they didn't come.

LU: How many men were there with you?

HY: I had, under me there was about 12, I think. Yeah. About 12. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So just waiting, that's all.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: But, so if they come, off I go, that's it, that's all. That's when I had that, you know, [unclear] the sword and everything like that. So that was the final—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Duty that I did. It was ordered to [unclear].

LU: How long were you there for?

HY: I stayed there after training and I lost suicide, so I was paying about month, month, I think, and then went there. I stayed there maybe two- Year and a half, I think, or two? Around that. I think so.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. [flips through paper] Should be here. 1st of May, 1944. Promoted to petty officer second class early June, 1945. So, a couple of months, eh? June, July, August, September. War ended October, isn't it? Yeah. August, June, July, August, two months I was there.

[01:55]

LU: Mm-hm. Where were you when you found out that Japan had surrendered?

HY: Oh, we knew that before this.

LU: Did you? Oh, how did you—

HY: 'Cause of, uh, announcement that we stole.

LU: You stole?

HY: We had that equipment. Oh yeah.

LU: Was it like through the radio, or?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: That frequent. I don't know how we stole it, but there was one genius guy hear and stole it. [laughs]

LU: So, what was your reaction to, to hearing that Japan surrendered?

HY: It didn't hit me too hard. War has to end anyhow. Somewhere.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: But it was a losing [laughs] end, but- [shrugs]

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: We knew that this will come prior to this.

LU: So, what happened to all of, the volunteers after the war ended and-

HY: Well, variously they went on their own.

LU: Yeah.

HY: How they could go home. That's up to them. Because we no longer military anymore. We are regular civilian now, so—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So, it's on his own. You don't go by the order. [laughs]

LU: And all the American troops then were starting to come into Japan and—

HY: Mm. Yeah.

LU: What was that like?

HY: It didn't affect my town whatsoever, but in Tokyo it did. All of the Jeeps, you know, coming and my even friends wife was run over by Jeep and-

LU: She was run over?

HY: Yeah. Killed. Oh, yeah. In Tokyo, yeah.

LU: Really?

HY: Yeah. Well, that wife is used to work with a place that where I was first working, where his brother-in-law was operating, husband was working there, and his wife, you know, that is in Tokyo.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: I can't believe they just ran her over.

HY: They did it because it's occupied still.

LU: Yeah.

HY: So whatever they do, we didn't have no, you know?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Way to protect ourselves.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Get killed, you got killed.

LU: How long-

HY: Because we were occupied.

LU: How long was it occupied like that for?

HY: Occupation how long was it? I don't know. Quite some time. I think. I don't know how many years. It must be at least three years. Eh? [looks to his right] No? Eh?

TP: Three or four years.

HY: Three or four years, I think.

LU: Wow.

HY: Because Canada start giving up citizenship of 1949. So- War ended in 1945, eh?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So that means at that point, occupation was already finished, I think. I could not remember.

LU: Hm.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See, because Japanese not the only one about the citizenship. All Can- Person that was in Canada never had a citizenship. Regardless [unclear - what we want?]

LU: Really?

HY: Oh yeah. Not only Japanese. They think it was only Japanese that gained a citizenship for 1949. No, all Canadian.

LU: Oh.

HY: This is another thing that lots of people don't know. They think it was only Japanese. No. Never had a citizenship in Canada, because we are Dominion of England.

[02:00]

LU: Right.

HY: Right?

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: See?

LU: Oh.

HY: Citizenship developed in 1949.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: See? This a lot of people don't know, you know?

LU: Yeah. No.

HY: They should get more educated, young generation.

LU: Well, that's true.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Yeah, that's true.

HY: Yeah. So that's- So must be around that time the occupation was released, I think.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: I cannot say positively that it was, but I knew that it- I thought it was only Japanese got their citizenship. No, in Japan- In Canada, nobody had a Canadian citizenship, because we're under British eh?

LU: Oh, wow. Isn't that neat?

HY: Right.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Come to think of it.

LU: Oh yeah. Oh wow.

HY: See? So, there's another history that's beyond the war. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: I found that out not that long ago. I thought it was only Japanese, but it wasn't. It's for the whole Canadian. [laughs]

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow.

HY: Well, actually, we call ourselves Canadian now. Before that we were Canada, but it was Dominion of British, right?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Because they were sending the, what you call that representative every time. Now, from there on, we selected our own representative now. We could do that, right?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Before that we couldn't do that.

TP: [A-rio?] Canada.

HY: Yeah, [A-rio?] yeah. Because of under the control of England.

LU: Yeah. Oh, yeah.

HY: See, there's another history there.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Not only Japanese background.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So, they don't teach those kind of thing, eh? Oh, no, I don't think so.

LU: Ah, if they did, I don't remember. [laughter]

HY:: Maybe they did, I don't know.

LU: I don't know. I'm gonna switch this one.

HY: Now what kind of, like your school, you went to university or something?

LU: Yes, I went to the University of Toronto, but I didn't study history.

HY: Oh, they didn't— History wasn't in there?

LU: They have it there, but that wasn't my-

HY: Oh, subject to learn.

LU: My focus. Yeah.

HY: You have-You could- It's elective, eh?

LU: Mm-hm. Yeah. You could choose which ones you wanted to do.

LU: How many subject you have to take. You can either do one specialist.

HY: Oh, what is specialist.

LU: Specialist, it just means- It's a certain amount of work that you have to do.

HY: Oh, yeah, yeah, yeah.

LU: So, it's out of the 20 credits that you need to graduate, 15 of those have to be on your specialist field.

HY: Oh.

LU: And then if you, wanna take two subjects, it's two majors. So out of the 20 credits, I think it's either seven and seven or eight and eight, I can't remember, but it's divided up between the two. And then you have a couple extra courses.

HY: Mm-hm.

LU: Or you can do three subjects where one is seven credits and two of them are each three or four credits.

HY: Mm-hm.

LU: And then the rest are all extra. So, what I did was, first I started with two subjects, and in my final year, I decided I really liked anthropology.

HY: Mm-hm.

LU: So, I switched it to a specialist. So, because I already had my other courses already completed for psychology, I have a specialist plus another one. So, I did more school than I needed to.

HY: Oh, that's no harm.

LU: Yeah. No, I enjoyed it. So, yeah. But unfortunately, I didn't have enough space in my credits to take extra history courses, so.

HY: See, in my case, I don't have a single graduate certificate.

LU: Do you have high school?

HY: [shakes head]No cause you finished grade eight. Nothing. But only way that I developed myself was by seminar.

[02:05]

HY: There was various university or something like that. They had a special seminar, and I was working for suicide prevention- Preventive organization. I took that and I'm a member of that.

LU: Wow.

HY: And, and I was I took the seminar what you call that- Social worker. I got a certificate on that. And I got a certificate on the organization- Security guard certificate. And what else? Like a lot of certificate. That's all seminar.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: That's how I developed myself.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Never went to school, you know? So, they don't believe me that I don't have any graduation certificate, because—

LU: Yeah.

HY: I never went there, nowhere.

LU: Oh my goodness.

HY: It's all seminar. And I was in charge of a social worker for three hospitals. See why they needed a, like a lay social worker that has the seminar- What you call approval certificate, because the hospital social worker is limited. In my case, I go out individually.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: And why the Japanese, or when the Japanese trying to suicide themselves, kill themselves. They have to know their first language to understand. So, I kept coming that. So, I got a seminar the Suicide Prevention Organization. See, so I got three actually. And, guard is in my case, that seminar that I passed, well, various big organization, and he will be part of that organization supervisor. It's not the regular, what you call that sent out guard, see. That's another thing. So, I was working in the hospital with the same criteria with the employee- I'm employed with that hospital.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: As a guard. It's not a guard that will sent from- The what you call, see? So, I developed myself those kind of seminar. Now seminar, usually some of 'em know for four years, like, Bible school, two years, I took, that's a seminar too.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: See, it was nighttime. See?

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So that's how I developed my education. [chuckles]

LU: Yeah. Oh yeah.

HY: Something unusual. [doorbell ringing in background] But because I don't have a, you know, like a university for four or five years and getting involved, never went through those kind of thing at all, even in high school.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: You know? So, it's strange, isn't it?

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow. And so, when did you come back from Japan to Canada?

HY: 1943, I think. 46.

LU: 46. So right after—

HY: 46 is it? [asks TP]

TP: Yeah. [unclear]

HY: 36? When I was 33 anyhow.

LU: When you're 33. Yeah.

HY: So from 1924, you could tell by that.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. From there on, I start selling these kind of seminars.

[02:10]

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Because I was way behind on education. So, I said, "Well, this is the only way to get education." So that's what I did.

LU: Mm-hm. And your father was in Japan for the war as well with you, right?

HY: Yeah. Mm-hm.

LU: Where was- What was he working on?

HY: Well, he was working in a farmer's control office. See, every town has the their farmer's office that controls the legal things and government laws and everything like that. That kind office has to be there. So, he was working in there.

LU: Oh, so he was able to keep working, even though-

HY: Oh, yeah. Right through. Yeah.

LU: During the war. Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Wow.

HY: So-

LU: And did he come back home with you to Canada?

HY: No, before me.

LU: Before you.

HY: And he died. Lucky one of the Japanese doctor wasn't sued, even not- If it was now he's been sued because, he hit his head.

LU: Your father?

HY: Yeah. You know, he was kind of fell and hit his head eh? So called the doctor and said, "Oh, nothing to worry about." He wasn't. Internal bleeding.

LU: Wow.

HY: See if it was now, that doctor could be sued.  
LU: Mm-hm. Yeah.  
HY: At that time, doctor was almighty.  
LU: Yeah.  
HY: Yeah.  
LU: Did he pass away here in Canada?  
HY: No, Canada. Yeah.  
LU: Yeah, in Canada.  
HY: Yeah. He went- Came back one years, half a year after we got married. Yeah.  
So.  
LU: Mm-hm. And did he hit his head here, or?  
HY: Yeah.  
LU: Yeah, what was he doing?  
HY: No, he was just living with his son, Eddie. Yeah.  
LU: Oh.  
HY: That boy scout.  
LU: Oh, wow.  
HY: He had a house in Irving Avenue downtown. He was living with him.  
LU: Oh, wow.  
HY: That's where he fell going upstairs, he? Yeah.  
LU: And when your family was in Canada during the time of the war, and they were, they evacuated into the camps?  
HY: Oh, yeah. Tashme.  
LU: Oh, Tashme.  
HY: Yeah.  
LU: Oh yeah. And why did they go to Tashme? Do you, do you know?  
HY: Well, like a Chemainus one is almost Tashme, I think.  
LU: Hm.  
HY: That's the government thing. So, they took the Canadian governments order, eh?  
LU: Mm-hm.  
HY: Where to go. I think Tashme was mostly from around that area, I think. I don't know, because I wasn't here.  
LU: Yeah, it must be.  
HY: Yeah.  
LU: Oh, wow. Did they ever tell you about what, what their experience was like in Tashme and—  
HY: Yeah. Before going to Tashme, it was awful they said, Stanley Park.  
LU: Oh, yeah.  
HY: They were at Stanley Park first, eh? And they were sleeping in a place where the horse and cow used to be.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. That's how they were treated. And right in front of there, there's a sign all the Japanese that took part in the first war, eh? And then Japanese treated that way. So that was President King. He's crazy anyway. [laughs]

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.

HY: We used to call him president King crazy. Yeah. His mentality was very-

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Awful piece.

LU: Yeah.

HY: That's what I heard.

LU: Oh, wow. And so, when they were in Tashme, they, after the war, they moved to Toronto?

HY: Yeah, mostly. Yeah.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Because my second brother was in Toronto already.

LU: Mm-hm. Now, if your siblings are older than you, so were some of them already married and off their own?

HY: Oh yeah. I'm the youngest, so-

LU: Yeah.

HY: Most of 'em are older than I am. Usually about three years different. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. So, I wonder, did some of your brothers then go to the work camps? Or?

HY: Which camp?

LU: To the work camps?

[02:15]

HY: Oh, you mean Tashme and- Yeah, I think everybody went to Tashme, I think.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: No, third brother was in London. I think at that time. That's where he volunteered to go to England to join that army there.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: During that period, all that thing is, I don't know the accurate history of how they lived and all that.

LU: Did your family know that you were volunteering in the navy?

HY: Oh, no. How could they know?

LU: Oh, they had no idea? Oh, wow.

HY: This communication was completely—

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Wasn't there.

LU: Mm-hm. So, you had no idea that your brother was in the Canadian Army?

HY: No, I don't need it. No.

LU: Yeah. Oh, wow. So, when did you find out?

HY: When I came back here.

LU: That must have been a shock.

HY: Before. Maybe before that, when I was in Japan. No, no. I found out when I came back to Canada.

LU: Yeah.

HY: Yeah. I think.

LU: What was your reaction? Did-

HY: Yeah.

LU: Because you're kind of opposites.

HY: I said that, "War does weird thing." That's all I said, you know, I was fighting with my brother. Right?

LU: Yeah.

HY: So, what can you do?

LU: So, he volunteered to go to London, or?

HY: Yeah, England. Yeah.

LU: London, England.

HY: No, well, actually he went there and was sent to the regiment of Australia and Indian Regiment and was trained in India.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah.

LU: And was he mostly a translator, or?

HY: No, no, no, no. Nothing like that. Translator comes way after.

LU: Oh. So, what was he doing? Just-

HY: He's a military guy.

LU: Oh, wow. Oh, I thought he was a translator.

HY: That's the reason. At the final place, when the Canada accepted the Japanese background, he went to the [unclear] platoon. It is not translator.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: No.

LU: Wow.

HY: He's the original fighting man.

LU: Mm-hm. What, what was your brother's name?

HY: Kume.

LU: Kume?

HY: Yeah. Yoshida.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Yeah. Yeah. That's strange.

LU: Mm-hm. Did he ever say anything about what it was like for him to be over there, or?

HY: He didn't talk too much, eh, on that, because he was living in London in distantly. So only time that I met was in the summertime. London was quite

popular with Suzuki, eh? Building construction, you know, you know their family?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: I think lots of people should know.

LU: Mm-hm. I know a little bit, but not much.

HY: Yeah. They used to organize, get together every summer. That's when I was invited every time we went. That's about the only time.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: So, all my brother, eldest brother Kume and my sisters, I officiated all the funerals because I was a interim pastor.

LU: Mm-hm. So, you don't have any more siblings?

HY: Hm?

LU: You don't have any other siblings alive still, or?

HY: Yeah. One.

LU: One. Oh.

HY: But he's in a old age home, so he start- Lost his memory.

LU: Mm-hm. How much older is he than you?

HY: Six.

LU: Oh.

HY: So he's 19. Yeah. I'm 90, 86. So, 92, 91. Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow. Yeah.

HY: He's healthy, but he lost his memory.

LU: Mm-hm. Mm-hm. Oh, wow. So, when you were growing up in Vancouver, was religion always a big part of your life, or?

HY: Religion?

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: No.

LU: No. So, it wasn't until after you came back to Toronto?

HY: After we came back, I was working at the military office, eh? As a supervisor, mechanic supervisor.

[02:20]

HY: Well actually, I was a hidden C-I-D.

LU: C-I-D?

HY: Civil Intelligent Division. Okay. That is a secret organization. You go out- I go out to various coffee shop or something like that, and there was a lot of black market going on there.

LU: Oh.

HY: Japanese trying to buy military stuffs and everything like that. That's what I was checking. And every time I find out those kind of things I report it to main of where my [?] was.

LU: Hm.

HY: Yeah, that's, you call it. C. Civil, intelligent division.

LU: Wow.

HY: It's a secret division actually. They know the name, but you don't know who it is. And then C-I-D, C-I-D, Civil Engineering- Intelligent Division, they go and arrest. We don't arrest.

LU: Oh.

HY: We search.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: I did that. See, they won't keep you that long. I think I work as a CI- CIC [sound of water in background]. Maybe two years. I think.

LU: Two years?

HY: They don't give you same duty time. They change. They know that I'm CIC [they hide - unclear?]

LU: So neat. So you would only go- So they would give you various-

HY: What to do.

LU: What to do. So-

HY: Yeah. My place was the black market.

LU: Yeah. Oh, that's neat.

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Oh, yeah. Around there, black market was going on, like all of the style, because the gasoline was scarce. Food was scarce. So, military had lots of those stuff. So military guy and Japanese get together, and that's what you call black market. [laughs]

LU: Oh, so it was the American military guys, or?

HY: Yeah.

LU: Oh.

HY: Japanese no more – no more military.

LU: Right, right.

HY: They lost the war.

LU: Oh, wow.

HY: Oh yeah. American military guy in the Japanese got together and doing those kind of things.

LU: Oh, wow. Isn't that fascinating?

HY: So, generation now don't know those kind of things, right?

HY: Mm-hm.

HY: Hidden secret.

LU: Oh yeah, yeah.

HY: Yeah. That's the name in public- black market.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Yeah. And that was going on right after the boat, and I was involved in that. So, I was very- I was fortunate that I had lots of work to do, that's for sure. Yeah.

LU: Mm-hm. Oh, wow. And so when you're living in Toronto, where were you working at the time after you did all your courses?

HY: I was working first service station because over 30 it was hard to get a job.

LU: Oh, really?

HY: Oh, yeah. Because benefit started from 30s, a system.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: So, they didn't like anybody that comes in around that age.

LU: Oh.

HY: See, there's always something like that is involved in any kind of society. So only place that I could work is nobody don't like it, but service station doing the, gasoline service.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: Because it was a self-service gasoline station never existed around that time.

LU: Oh. Yeah.

HY: See?

LU: Oh, wow.

[02:25]

HY: That's what I was doing. And then after that, there was engine rebuild company that was operated by the Japanese background. His son is in our church. He's one of the elder. I worked for his father for quite some time, and that company sold it to other was what do you call that? Well, I forgot the name. Sold it to them. And they start rebuilding engine, and they didn't succeed. So, I organized my own shop with my partner, and that went bankrupt. [chuckles] So, I went through good and bad, but still survive.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That was what I was doing. And as you know, my wife came to Canada, but she didn't have no, relative over here. I'm the only one that she had to depend on. And I was a really a bad husband during that period. She went nervous breakdown, she found the laws through one of the missionaries, became a Christian, and start praying for me. And that was when, from my Lord, I became a Christian.

LU: Mm-hm.

HY: That's how I became a Christian and served in this church for 46 years.

LU: So how old, how old were you when you became a Christian? 40?

HY: I was 39 and a half.

LU: 39 and a half. [both chuckle] Oh wow.

HY: Yeah. Excuse me. I have to go to washroom.

LU: Yeah, no, no, no. That's fine. I can pause this.

HY: I'll be right with you. Take your time.

LU: Ok.

**[Interview End]**