Interviewee: Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa
Interviewer: Su Yen Chong
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Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa: -Sticking up?
[All laugh]
Su Yen Chong?:No, you look fine. [quietly] Okay, I think it's recording.
Constantin Dutescu: The light is okay here for you to read? The paper?
RN: Yep, yep. I don't have to read it too much but there's some I have written.
CD: Yeah. Absolutely. Take your time and just- I know you-
Su Yen Chong: Yeah, take your time.
CD: I know you- you're easy to- to speak and to bring all those memories, so-
RN: Yeah, like, you know, like my kids, they were born in Toronto, they went to school in Toronto, and they got jobs in Toronto, but for us, you know, in our generation, a lot happened to us.
CD: Yeah.
RN: Yeah, we- we had to leave our homes, and the government said, "Hey, you have to leave your home," and we went to Vancouver from a small town, not knowing what's going to happen to us for four months before we went to into a camp. They called it internment camp, but really, it's a concentration camp.
CD: Yeah.
RN: Yeah, the Japanese are all concentrated.
CD: [unclear]
RN: Yeah. Kinda hard to believe, eh?
CD: Yeah, and, having this, is so important for your kids and for future generation.
SC: Mm-hm.
RN: Mm-hm. Mm-hm.
CD: Because nobody can- So, even then, you guys, you are describing exactly the same
RN: Yeah, yeah.
CD: -Situation, but it's different point of views.
RN: Yeah.
CD: Different feelings.
RN: Yeah.
CD: And of course, there are different situations that you are unique on that.
RN: Yeah.
CD: So, this is treasure.
RN: And I hope that such a thing was- is not gonna happen again in Canada.

CD: Oh, yeah.
RN: Like, you know, we were born in Canada, we were Canadians, and-.
CD: Yeah.
SC: Okay.
CD: Okay.
RN: [points] So, you're gonna put that sign on the door?
CD: Yeah, I will work from outside. Yeah. So, you don't need me here?
SC: No, I don't think so.
CD: Yeah, so what I will do, I will just go out, print on my computer for on, the door the signs, okay, and yeah, that should be- okay.
SC: Thank you so much. Thank you.
RN: Yeah.
CD: Thank you for sharing with us. [door opens]
SC: Okay,
RN: We're starting now?
SC: Yes. Just for the record-
RN: Oh, I mean the thing is that at the beginning don't I have to fill in the forms with all the family informa- ?
SC: We can do that later.
RN: Oh, okay.
SC: But, just for the record, today is July 24th, 2019. At 10:50. And we have Roy Nakagawa here and the interviewer is Su Yen Chong. Shoul- Should we start?
RN: [nods] Sure.
SC: Okay. Roy- Well, Roy [chuckles slightly], can you tell us your full name?
RN: My full name is Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa.
SC: Perfect. Did you ever change your first name?
RN: [nods] Yes. I was born Kazuyoshi Nakagawa, but during the war we were removed from Ocean Falls, and we ended up in Regina, where there was hardly any Japanese. And the teacher won't be able to pronounce my name, Kazuyoshi. Well, a lot of people called me Kaz and had a nickname and so on, but the family friend said, "Well, you should adopt another name because Kazuyoshi is kind of difficult to pronounce for teachers who's never seen Japanese before, in Regina." So, he says, "Well, why don't you call yourself Roy?" And I said, "Oh, okay." And then, ever since I called myself Roy, when I graduated from high school, my high school certificate said Roy Nakagawa. And I went to university, I graduated as Roy Nakagawa. But then when I graduated, I got a job with a company, and we were designing jet engines for fighter planes and so on, where I had to get security clearance. And Roy Nakagawa didn't exist legally. You know, like in any record. So, I legalized my name. I changed my name to Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa. And then I got the documents in Regina, and I sent it to Victoria, B.C., where my birth certificate was registered, and I

sent the documents there, and they sent me a new birth certificate as Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa. So, the- For the- for the first birth certificate, it was about the size of this paper [holds up paper]. But now I have a birth certificate- birth certificate which is wallet size [demonstrates size with hands].
SC: Mm-kay. Did you ever have a nickname, or-?
RN: Ohh, I had a nickname [chuckles slightly], but I really don't like to use-. They used to call me Kabo, but the thing is, a lot of people called me- called me Kaz. Yeah.
SC: Is there a reason for that?
RN: Well, Kazuyoshi's difficult to say.

[5 minutes]

If you had a name, Kazuyoshi, you know, kinda- It's kinda difficult to say. Especially the schoolteachers who were- who were not familiar with Japanese to say. Kazuyoshi's kinda difficult for them. And they didn't want to call me Kaz. That schoolteachers. When they called me, they would call me Kazuyoshi.
SC: Oh, okay. Do you have a middle name?
RN: Well, like, my middle name now is Kazuyoshi, like that was my first name when I was born. So, now my legalized- my legal name is Roy Kazuyoshi Nakagawa.
SC: Great. Where and when were you born?
RN: I was born in Ocean Falls, British Columbia, in- on April the 14th, 1928.
SC: Was it at your home or in a hospital?
RN: No, it was in a hospital. As I understand. Of course, I can't remember that [laughs].
SC: [laughs] What generation Canadian are you?
RN: I'm second generation.
SC: Do you know where and when your parents were born?
RN: Yes, my- my dad was born in Yamanashi-ken, near Kofu City, in Japan, in 1890.
SC: Do you know where and when your grandparents were born?
RN: All I know is that my grandparents were born in Japan, but I don't know the birthdate or anything.
SC: What was your family's line of work?
RN: Well, my father- [stammers] But, my- First, before we go on to that, can I tell you where my mother was born?
SC: Of course! Yeah.
RN: My mother was born in Ehime-ken prefecture in Japan, and she was born in 1901.
SC: Okay.
RN: Yeah. And as far as my grandparents are concerned, I- I have a little history about my grandfather. Maybe I can talk about that.

SC: Yeah, of course.
RN: Okay. In Japan, when you're born, your name is registered at the temple. And one day, one of the Nakagawa's went to the temple and found out that there was another Nakagawa from the same village, but he had moved away. So, he was curious. So, he went to the prefecture of Ehime-ken to see what he was doing or whether he was still there, and he did find him, and found out that- Well, he was not a relative, but he just happened to be another Nakagawa in the same registry in the- in the village. And found out that this Nakagawa had changed his name to Terashima, and the Terashima family had- Oh, there were half a dozen kids in the family. But they didn't have a male heir. So, this Nakagawa changed his name to Terashima. From Nakagawa to Terashima. And he- he sort of married into the family. And that's how my mo- So, he married into my mother's side of the family. Well, like, he wasn't a relative, as I said-
SC: Right.
RN: -But his name was Nakagawa, but he changed it to Terashima. I'm kinda repeating myself there, but-
SC: Oh no, no, don't worry [laughs].
RN: [laughs] You gonna edit this out?
SC: Oh, yeah, of course. Is there more that you want to talk about your mom's family?
RN: Well, my mom's family, as far as I know, the- My grandfather was a carpenter and they- some of the kids were fooling around, and there was a fire, and the home was destroyed. So, they went to Hokkaido, which was like a homestead, and they went ha- farming, but they couldn't- Well, like, they weren't successful in farming. So, they came back to the village where- where they- where they had the original house. And I guess that's about all I know about my grandfather and grandmother. I- I didn't even know- I haven't even seen pictures of my grandmother. But I have a picture of my grandfather.
SC: Do you know- Was it your parents that were issei?
RN: Yes. Yeah, they're both issei's.
SC: Do you know when they moved to Canada?
RN: My- my dad left Japan at age 16. So, he would be- in 1906, and he went to Hawaii for one year because at that time there was a labour shortage in Hawaii and they're looking for a lot of Asians to move to Hawaii and work in the sugar plantation, but after one year, they weren't getting much money, it was very hard work, and 1906-1907, he left Hawaii to come to Canada.

[10 minutes]

And that year, hundreds of Japanese who were in Hawaii came to Canada, all at once. Well, like- well, like in several boats, but as I understand, that boat carried about 1000 Japanese. And yeah, like in, all in one trip there.
SC: Wow.
RN: But there's- Many more came that year. In the following year, there was a riot in Japan- I mean, like, in Vancouver. Because so many Asians were coming in.
SC: So, that was your father. What about your mom?
RN: Well, my mom came to Canada in [pause] 1920, I believe. Yeah.
SC: Mm-hm. Do you know-
RN: No, no, I'm sorry. My mother came to Canada in 1924.
SC: Oh, okay.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Do you know why they moved? Like, either your mom or dad, do you know why they moved to Canada?
RN: Mean why they moved to Canada? Oh, okay-
SC: Well, I guess that, or-?
RN: -Okay. My- my dad first came to Canada because he was the second oldest son in the family, and going through Japanese custom, if you're the second oldest in the family, you haven't got much future because the oldest son sort of takes over the family. So, on that basis, at age 16 he- he left Japan for Hawaii. Yeah.
SC: Right. What about your mother?
RN: Well, my mother, as- as I said that- Like, where my dad was born, this other Nakagawa went to this village to see where the Nakagawa was. The form- this person, Nakagawa, who changed his name to Terashima, and then- My- my- my mother was born under the family. Like, her name was Terashima. It happened to be that family. And then, when they found out that they were having a difficult time feeding everybody in the family, there must have been about six or seven children, and so they decided that my mother would move to the other prefecture where my dad was, and- and she was kind of helping around the house, and so on. So, one day, when Dad came back from Canada to Japan to visit, at that time, it was decided that my mother would marry him. And then, she didn't follow him right away, she followed him about four years later, and she came to Canada. And then, at the time, when she came to Canada [clears throat], my dad was working in a logging camp. And the next day, as I understand, you know, when she came to Canada, she went to the logging camp. And then she stayed at the main base with the owner of the logging camp while my dad went to work.
SC: Wow.
RN: And before my mother came, when my dad was working at the logging camp, one of his jobs was to handle the horses to- to haul the logs down the mountain, to

the river. And he was- he was in an accident and his leg was kind of injured. And he had a huge scar on his leg. But he was able to walk without a limp.
SC: Oh, wow.
RN: Yeah, it was a tough job. So, my dad just had- So, when my mother had, my dad- my dad just had seasonal jobs. He was either in the fishing industry or in the logging camp.
SC: Right.
RN: In the wintertime, he didn't do anything, he couldn't get any work. Yeah.
SC: Do you know where this logging camp is?
RN: Oh, no, but it's- it's somewhere in B.C., can't be too far from Vancouver.
SC: Right. Do you know- Or can you tell me about your father's family history?
RN: Yeah, my father's family history, [sentence redacted] And then, like, his cousin was a doctor. And in those days, in Japan, if you're a doctor, you own your own hospital, ah, yeah, so. But my father was the second son in the family, he didn't have much future there, so that's why he left Japan. Or- For Hawaii.
SC: Was it your father that has six siblings?
RN: No, that's my mother's side. Yeah, that's my mother's side.
SC: How many siblings did your father have?
RN: I didn't know too much about- because my dad didn't tell me too much about his family.

[15 minutes]

But most of the information about my relatives came from my mother.
SC: Right, yeah.
RN: So, all I know is that Dad's older brother was a schoolteacher, as I said, and the cousin was the doctor.
SC: Do you know what was his educational level?
RN: My dad?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Well, he left Japan when he was age 16, he was able to read and write Japanese, but he didn't have much education, you know.
SC: How would you describe your father's personality and what can you remember about him?
RN: Well, he was pretty good to me. But he didn't do much talking. It's my mother who really taught me a lot of things. My father didn't say much. It's my mother who said that, you know, when you grow up, like, education is very important and this and that and all the good things and the bad things you shouldn't do, this and that. But my dad never said anything like that to me [laughs].
SC: [laughs] So, it sounds like your mom did tell you a lot about her family-

RN: Yep, yep. Yeah, her family and then my father's side, too. Yeah.
SC: And she did tell you how many siblings she has- Six? Do you know their names?
RN: Oh no, I don't know their names, no.
SC: Was your mom-?
RN: Yes, well, like, there's one. My mother's sister, her name was Katsuyo. And she had a couple of boys. And I never got to meet them- Yes, I did, get to meet them when I went to Japan many, many years after I was born-
SC: Right.
RCN: -And I did meet those two. And also, I did meet- I did meet another cousin as well, too. Yeah.
SC: Oh, that's-
RN: From my mother's side. Yeah.
SC: Was your mom the oldest child, or was she the middle child, or the youngest?
RN: Well, I don't know too much about it, but I know she had a brother, one son, and the rest were all girls. Yeah, but- but she wasn't the oldest, no.
SC: Do you know her education level at all?
RN: Well, she was able to read and write. But I don't know how far she went through school. But she was able to read and write. And then, all the correspondence after we came- after they came to Canada, my mother looked after all the correspondence. You know, with Japan, with their relatives.
SC: Right.
RN: But they were both able to read and write in Japanese because I remember my dad used to take Japanese language newspaper when we were in B.C. And- and then, also, he learned to read and write English on his own, my dad. Because he was [into?] the stock market and so on.
SC: Wow!
RN: And- Like, I'll come to a- Well, like, maybe I can mention it now, when he came to Toronto, eventually, he worked in a bakery, here in Toronto. Canada Bread. And he said it was the best job he ever had because being able to read and write English, he was the guy who made the pie fillings, because with pie fillings, you have to read the recipe and you gotta do the figuring how much- [stammers] how big a batch you need for a hundred pies- hundred pies, and so-. And the reason why he got the job was just after the war, when he came to- when we moved from Regina to Toronto, there were a lot of people working in the bakery, came from the Europe, right after the war, and they- they may have been well educated but they weren't fluent in English. But my dad was able to read and write in English. So, he got the job of making the pie fillings [laughs].
SC: Back to your mom, do you know what her parents did for work?
RN: I really don't know much about it. No, I didn't know what they did- Well, like I said, yeah well, like, her father was a carpenter when the house burnt down, and

they went to Hokkaido, they tried farming, but they weren't successful, they just came back to where they used to live before. And I didn't know what they did after that, but- And because they were having difficulty feeding the family, my mother, you know, moved over to where my- where my dad's home was.
SC: Mm-hm.
RN: Helping my dad's cousin when he had a hospital.
SC: What do you remember of your mom's, like personality?
RN: Yeah, well, she taught me a lot of things and she was telling me that- about the importance of higher education and so on. And she went to church- Well, she didn't go to church regularly. We lived right next to the church, but- You know, she was a devout Christian.

[20 minutes]

Oh, you know, she had her Bible, and I have- I still have her old hymn book and there's all kinds of notes written in the hymn book, even [coughs] excuse me.
SC: So, you did say you lived near a church. Do you know- Like, do you remember what organizations or committee or groups that your family was active in?
RN: Well, I don't think my mother was active in the- in the church, but my dad wasn't too interested. He didn't go to church at all. But my mother, we lived next door, so she used to go- she used to go occasionally to the church. But she told me that you really don't have to go to church regularly to be a good Christian. So, she was a Christian, yeah.
SC: Did you meet any of your grandparents? Even from your mom's side?
RN: [shakes head slightly] No, I didn't meet any of my grandparents in person. No, no.
SC: Do you have any siblings?
RN: Yes, I have one sister. I had a sister. And she was married, and she lived in Thunder Bay. And her husband was a professor at Lakehead University. And actually, he had tenure there, but he passed away- and he's passed away, and she's passed away now, too. But I have- [pause] And then- And they have a son, and he still lives up in Thunder Bay. Yeah.
SC: Oh! Do you remember where you lived before war- the war?
RN: Who, myself?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Yeah, well, the thing is, you wouldn't believe it, but I lived in Ocean Falls, where I was born, which is about 350 miles north of Vancouver, on the coast of British Columbia. And there was a pulp and paper mill there, and the company that owned the pulp and paper mill owned all the dwellings and so on, including all the houses.

And there was no access by road there. And- I'm starting to get carried away. And then, like- I forgot the question [stammers].
SC: Oh, no, no, don't worry, I can ask again. Well, do you remember, like, what was your house like?
RN: Yeah, yeah. Okay. Now, yeah, well, like, at that time, the- the company that owned the paper mill owned all the houses because it was a company town. And there was a lot of discrimination. Japanese were segregated on one end of the town, and they all lived in cabins or shack, or whatever you want to call it. And all the houses were built exactly the same, built to the same design. And then, two families in each house. And the two houses separated by a flush toilet at the center, in between. And then, the house only had two rooms. And to get from the main room where there was a kitchen and kinda kitchen table, and a little sofa, that was about all the room we had. And to go to the common toilet, the- Well, there was- My dad fixed up the attic so that we would have more room for bedroom space, and then he built a ladder to get up to the second floor, to the attic. And this ladder had to be hinged against the wall to make room, because- because otherwise, there's not enough room from the end of the bed to the wall. So, the ladder was hinged against the wall, so that it would go through the toilet. So, that's how cramped the house was.
SC: Did you have a garden?
RN: Yeah, we had a little garden, but I don't think we grew too much vegetables.
SC: When you were growing up, what type of chores did you have?
RN: What kind of chores? Well, when the war started, I was grade eight, and up to grade eight, I didn't do too much, actually, I was too young to do many chores. I didn't have to do anything. My mother did everything in the house, my dad went to work every day [chuckles slightly].
SC: Right. So, did you- Was your mom the one who did most of the cooking?
RN: Yeah, she did most- And actually, when my dad first came to Ocean Falls as a teenager, he worked in the hotel in Ocean Falls. The hotel was there in about 1910 and that's when they're building the paper mill, so they built the hotel at- earlier, so that the workers building the paper mill would stay at the hotel. And at that time, my dad was a teenager, he worked in the kitchen in the hotel.

[25 minutes]

And that- So, he was able to- Well, he had learned a few things about how to cut up a chicken, like, you'd think that it's kinda easy to cut a chicken but now you go to a supermarket, you know, every- everything's all cut up and ready, but in those days, you had to buy a whole chicken, you had to have an idea as to how to cut up the chicken and all that. And my dad knew all that, and she taught my- I mean, he taught

my mother how to cut up the chicken and so on. And of course, at Christmastime, we always had a turkey. And my- my dad would be the guy who'd know how to cut up the turkey. And I don't know who made the stuffing. I guess my mother learned everything about cooking from my dad, actually. And- Well, of course, my mother knew how to cook the rice, and so on, and how to make the Japanese food, but she learned a lot about Western cooking from my dad.
SC: Mm-hm, wow. Like, do you remember what your favourite food was growing up?
RN: My favourite food? I don't know if I had a favourite food or not.
SC: You mentioned that, like, you were living in close quarters with a lot of different people.
RN: Yeah, yeah.
SC: Do you remember your neighbours?
RN: My neighbour?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Yeah, my neighbour, the family that we shared the house with, maybe there were two, three different- But the last one was the- the name was Wasugi. Yeah. It was a young couple that came to Ocean Falls, and they had lived in the other half of the house that we were living in.
SC: Oh, so you shared, like, one-
RN: No, no like, you know- These cabins that, as I said, the Japanese were all segregated on one end of the town. And they built these cabins. They're all similar cabins. And two families to a cabin, and it was separated by a wall. And then- and then, one flush toilet. We had to share the flush toilet. But each side was- You know, we had our own kitchen and there- And then, I don't know what you call it, not really a living room, or anything, just two rooms. And an attic.
SC: Right.
RN: Yeah.
SC: And you said that they would segregate the Japanese people.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Can you tell me what you remember about the Japanese Canadian community?
RN: Well, actually, the Japanese Canadian community was well organized. The- the Japanese community built a Japanese language school. They built it- They- they had to finance that because the company wouldn't build a Japanese language school for them. And there was- After school, each day, we had to go to Japanese language school program for two hours. And on the second floor of the Japanese language school, there was a library. A Japanese library. And- and there was also a community hall there. And we took Kendo, martial arts, and so on. And on the lower floor, there was a pool hall. And there were a lot of Japanese single men working and hey all lived in bunkhouses in the Japane- And the Ocean Falls was built on mountainside and there wasn't much flat room and so on, so the bunkhouses were all built on

stilts over the water. And I guess a lot of the men just went there to play pool. And that's about the only entertainment they had. But the- Between the white community and the Japanese community, completely separate. See, after school, we would, like, just go back to the Japanese end of the town. So, we never had a chance to play much with the rest of the community.
SC: Right. Do you remember if there were stores?
RN: Yeah. Well, being a company town, everything was owned by the company, so the general store was owned by the company. And there was a hotel, was owned by the- Everything was owned by the company, all the dwellings. And the general store, we used to buy groceries there. But the groceries, the way it was handled, it's a little different from the supermarket. The- All the vegetables were all behind glass windows. You couldn't handle the- If you wanna buy a celery, you just can't pick and say, "Well, that's the one I want," or a lettuce, you know. And everything was displayed behind glass, and you couldn't touch it. And the canned goods were all lined up against the wall, and- and then, like, as soon as you walk into the store, there would be a counter, a huge counter, a U-shaped counter, and the clerks would be behind the counter. And then you went to place the order with the clerk.

[30 minutes]

And the clerk would write down, "Okay, you, one lettuce, and one loaf of bread, half a dozen oranges." He would make a list, and he would put the- he would put the price down. And he would give you a carbon copy of that. And you'd take the carbon copy, and you'd take it to a central cashier, where you paid for your grocery. And then, while you're paying for the- the bill, the- the clerk would go around the store and gather up all the goods and put it in a brown paper bag and you'd get your groceries that way. So, it's a lot different from the supermarket you have now.
SC: Can you tell me more about the entertainment at that time? You mentioned a pool hall, did you ever see movies, or-?
RN: Yeah, well, we didn't have much money. And the movie theatre, there was a movie theatre in town. But we only got to go to the occasional movie. Like, there was a Shirley Temple movie, we got some money to go and see the Shirley Temple movie in the main part of the town. And then, oh like, maybe a movie called Young Thomas Edison, I remember. You know, and then, we would get the money to go and see a movie, and so on. And for the adults, there was the pool hall, as I mentioned to you. And then in the upstairs, there was a kind of an auditorium, and the Japanese would have- perform- have concerts. There would be oratorial contests for children and young adults. And there would be a *Shibai- [Shibaya?]* concert. And then, we would take Kendo there too. Martial arts. In the- and then there was a swimming pool in town. It's in the main part of town. And Japanese are only allowed to use it

Wednesday evenings only. Rest of the time we we're not allowed to use the swimming pool. But a couple of times our- our class from school went to the pool together. Our class. And that's the only time I swam with non-Japanese. Rest of the time, just Wednesdays, Japanese could use the pool. Just the Japanese. Rest of the time, we weren't allowed to use that pool.
SC: Just one day a week?
RN: One day a week for the Japanese. Wednesday evenings.
SC: Only the evenings? Wow.
RN: Yeah, just Wednesday evenings, Japanese are allowed to use the pool. Rest of the time we weren't allowed to use the pool at all.
SC: So, did you use the pool a lot, then? With your friends, or-?
RN: Well, in Ocean Falls, I learned how to swim in the pool. And we had some- we had some good swimmers came- who came out of Ocean Falls, and they swam for Canada in the Win- I mean, in the Summer Olympics. And some of them got medals. There's a well-known Japane- There's some well-known swimmers from the caucasian community. Gilchrist and other name was Lenora Fisher, and so on. Yeah, there were famous swimmers that came out of Ocean Falls.
SC: Right. Did you and your friends have a hangout spot that you liked to go to?
RN: Well, Ocean Falls is a small town, built in the mountainside. There're not many places you can play. But we lived right next door to the church. And in front of the church there was a small area. Oh, maybe half the size of this room here [chuckles slightly]. And there was one part of it that was- It was- I guess the ground was- Half was dirt and then half was made of lumber, out of wood. So, we were able to play basketball. And basketball, we used to- we used to get shoyu in a- in a tub or a barrel, in- in a wooden tub. And there used to be a bamboo ring that held the tub together, and we used to use the ring to make the basket for the- for basketball. For the hoop. [pause] And- and- and of course, there wasn't much room to play softball and so on because it was so tiny.
SC: Right.
RN: But we did try a few times, and since our house was right next door, by the church there, we used to get a bro- we used to get broken windows at times. But since it was a company town, we didn't have to pay for the broken windows. It was my job to go to the office in the town there to say that a window was broken, and a man would come up to fix the windows and so on. So, happened a few times.

[35 minutes]

SC: What about restaurants? Did you get to go to restaurants?
RN: Well, there was a restaurant in the main general store in town, but we didn't have the money to go to restaurant. We never did go to restaurant at all, no.

SC: Right. What do you remember about your childhood?
RN: My childhood- Well, we were quite happy, you know. There was a lot of discrimination and so on, but we- we played with our own kids and so on. And we didn't even think about discrimination.
SC: Yeah. Did you have a favourite toy?
RN: Yeah, well, like I had a favourite toy. In fact, there was a truck. And it was a toy truck. And I would- My mother would bring out the toy and put that toy under the Christmas tree. After Christmas, she would take it away and store it up for the rest of the year, bring the same truck over and over again every year. We didn't have much money [laughs].
SC: So, did you get to play with it at all?
RN: Oh, yeah, oh yeah. Yeah, just that Christmas time for a couple of days, my mother would put it away until next Christmas [laughs].
SC: Oh [laughs]! Do you remember, like, - Did you have a favourite game or activity that you liked to do?
RN: Yeah, well, what we used to do was that- We used to play marbles. We- we would buy marbles and then, like, on the dirt, in the playground in front of our place, in front of the church, we would make a little circle [makes circle shape with finger]. And then, each of us in the game would, you know, place one marble each in- inside the circle. And then, we would have a shooter marble. And then, try and shoot the marble out of the circle. And then, if the marble came out of the circle, we can- we can keep the marble. So, it's like gambling, you know. You sort of gamble one marble and hoping that you would be able to shoot out more than one marble. [chuckles and takes a drink of water].
SC: Take your time.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Well, you were talking about playing with Japanese Canadian children. Did you also play with non-Japanese Canadian children?
RN: No, like, we lived in the segregated end of the town. So, we didn't have any opportunity to play with other kids. And we were pretty poor, but most of the white kids had bicycles, like my age. And I remember there one fellow, he had a bicycle, and he came into the Japanese town, and he gave me a ride on his bike, like, I was kind of side-saddling. That was the first time I ever got to ride on a bicycle. And many years later, he lives in Oregon, he came to Toronto. And he has a brother in Kingston who's a schoolteacher, he came out this way, and- and we were able to get together.
SC: Oh!
RN: Yeah. And then actually, talking about schoolmates, I can tell you another thing. We went on Ocean Falls cruise about 25 years ago, and oh, there were about 1000 passengers on the cruise ship. Excuse me, I have to blow my nose..

SC: Oh, no, no worries.
RN: [blows nose in handkerchief] There were about 1000 passengers on the cruise ship, which about, this is the S.S. Rotterdam, and about 125 were former Ocean Falls people of which about 25 came from the Japanese community. So, I met some people there and got a clue as to where some of my friends were, from the white community. Be- because I- because we had to leave Ocean Falls when I was grade 8 because the war. And then, I found out where one of my classmates were. This girl, her name was Shirley Simon, and she happened to live in Sarnia, I got her phone number. So, I phoned her, and, "Oh yeah,"- I told her my name was Kaz, "Oh yeah," and she says, "Yeah." And then, we had a nice conversation. And she has a daughter in Toronto. So, she comes to Toronto every Christmas, and we go out for lunch together. And then, another thing is that when she finished the- I left Ocean Falls in- when I was grade 8, but when she finished high school in grade 12 in Ocean Falls, there was another lady from my same class, they both went to Vancouver, and they took nursing. So, they kept in touch. Couple of weeks ago, Shirley called me, and she says that, "Kathleen is coming up this week."

[40 minutes]

She lives in Calgary, but she has a son here in Toronto, on the east side. So, she- So, this lady who came from Calgary, her son made arrangements for us to get together in a restaurant in Toronto, so we all had lunch together with our- our kids. And I haven't seen this other lady who lived in Calgary since 1942 when we left Ocean Falls, but Shirley, I see her every Christmas [chuckles].
SC: Wow, that's nice. You were talking about the first time you got to ride a bike.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Do you remember your first car ride? Or your first boat ride? First plane ride?
RN: Yep- The- Well, the- And then like before about the bicycle, about a year before we left Ocean Falls, my dad was able to afford to buy me my first bicycle. And my first car ride? The first car ride, I would say that, in Ocean Falls, there weren't many cars. The only car in Ocean Falls was the ambulance. And they had a delivery truck that delivered their groceries. And first car ride was when we were- we moved from Ocean Falls, when the war started. And we came by ship to Vancouver. And then, from the ship, we were to stay with our- our family friend who owned a rooming house in Vancouver. So, I got into a taxi, and we took a taxi from the station where the ship was docked to the rooming house. So, that was the first time I ever rode on the, a car.
SC: As a child, did you ever work? At all?
RN: Yeah. Like, in a way- I left Ocean Falls when I was in grade eight, and we didn't have much money, but there was a bowling alley there. And we were able to work at

the bowling alley. And we got five cents from each bowler per game in flag pins and something like seven cents from each player for ten pins. And oh, I used to make about 50 cents or 75 cents for the afternoon.
SC: Do you remember how old you were?
RN: Yeah, 'bout- that was about grade eight, yeah.
SC: Can you tell me about your school days?
RN: My school days- Well, we had a pretty good public school in Ocean Falls. And in those days, all the teachers were very good even if it's a small paper mill town. And in those days, if you're a married woman, you couldn't teach. Only single women can teach. So, most of the teachers I had in public school were all women. And they- they would come in during the school term and you know, live in the hotel there. And after the school term, they would go back and live in Vancouver because there's nothing to do for two months. And- and they were very good teachers, I would say. For a small town like that. For paper mill town.
SC: Do you remember your school name?
RN: Ocean Falls Public School, I suppose.
SC: Oh [chuckles], Was there a Japanese school?
RN: Yeah, there was a Japanese school. The Japanese school was- The building was built by the Japanese with their own money because the company's not gonna build a Japanese school [chuckles slightly]. And after public school, every day, we had to go to Japanese language school for another year or year and a half. And to learn Japanese. To read and write Japanese. And we had oratorial contests and so on. But that really came in handy for me. Because after the war, when we moved east, my- my mother was staying up in Thunder Bay with my sister and I was living in Toronto in the-in- Since my- In Ocean Falls, my mother always stayed home, and the neighbours were all Japanese because we were segregated because of discrimination, so she never learned how to speak English after all these years in Canada. So, when she lived in Thunder Bay, the only way I could communicate with her was in Japanese, so- And- and then, to keep her mind active, I wrote to her- I wrote a letter to her every week, and she sent me a letter to me every week in Japanese. And then, also, another thing, that came in handy, was- I've been to Japan about five times after the war. And I have one cousin who used to be working for a trading company.

[45 minutes]

He- he worked in different places around the world, like Brazil, and Iran, and so on. Of course, the working language is English, so he was able to speak English and so on. But I have a couple of other cousins who can only speak Japanese. And when I worked, or visit Japan, I would send my cousins, you know, a letter in Japanese that

I would be coming to Japan, would like to meet them, and I would name the hotel and the time and date and everything. And sure enough, they were there [chuckles slightly]. So, they were able to read my simple Japanese.
SC: Right.
RN: Well, well, like in Japanese, you have the *Katakana*, the simple alphabet, and you have the *Hiragana*, which is- it's another alphabet. And then, you had the *kanji* with the Chinese characters. Now, I've forgotten most of the Chinese characters, but I can still read and write *Hiragana* and *Katakana*, so I could still correspond with my cousins [chuckles]. In Japanese.
SC: Yeah, that's really good. Yeah. How many children were in your class?
RN: My class?
SC: Like in the public school.
RN: Oh, public school, I have a class picture, there must've been about thirty kids. But by the time I got to grade eight, oh, maybe about half as many. I don't know what happened in between, but- In fact, I was talking to these two ladies that I was talking to earlier, they went to grade 12 in Ocean Falls and they said there were only about three or four in grade 12.
SC: Out of all the children in your class, do you remember how many were Japanese descent?
RN: Japanese descent. Well, in my grade eight class, I think there was only about one or two, yeah. And maybe in grade one there were more because, you know, people keep moving and so on.
SC: Were there a lot of different ethnicities in your classroom?
RN: I didn't even think about that in Ocean Falls, when I was a kid, about where the parents came from and so on. But when I- When the war came, when they moved to Vancouver, I went to Strathcona Public School which is probably the largest public school in the world [chuckles]. There were five grade eight classes. That means that on the average, we'll say, there were 30 in the class, so five times, there was 150 students just in grade eight. And this school was located just between Japantown and Chinatown. And about 40 percent were Japanese origin, and possibly about 20 percent or 30 percent were Chinese origin. And the rest were all a mixture from all parts Europe and England, and so on. Yeah.
SC: Right. And the Ocean Falls public school, how were you treated? And did you get along with everybody?
RN: Oh, yeah, we got along with everybody. There was no problem, actually.
SC: How long were the Japanese classes in language school?
RN: Pardon?
SC: Like, how long were the classes when you were in the Japanese language school?
RN: Oh, about an hour, hour and a half.
SC: Oh, okay.

RN: Yeah, and after public school, we would come home, and then go to Japanese language school right away.
SC: Right.
RN: Yeah, and then learn to read and write Japanese every day during the school year.
SC: Did you find it difficult?
RN: Well, I didn't find it difficult because in those days, we had to speak Japanese at home because my mother never spoke English. And my dad had to learn to speak English because he was working and so on, but I can't remember ever speaking English to my father. We all spoke Japanese at home.
SC: So, you got a lot of practice.
RN: Yeah [laughs].
SC: [laughs] Do you remember how many children were in your class in the Japanese school?
RN: Oh, I can't remember exactly. Not very many, no. Not very many.
SC: 20?
RN: Oh, no. Well, like in my class?
SC: Yes.
RN: Well- No, no, we didn't have that many Japanese, no.
SC: Like-
RN: Because the whole- the whole Japanese population in Ocean Falls was about 200.
SC: Oh, okay. What grade did you complete in the Japanese school?
RN: Oh, Japanese school, they say [speaks Japanese] which would be about grade seven. And then like, in the English school, in the regular school, I was grade eight. And I was about seven years- seventh year in the Japanese language school.

[50 minutes]

SC: Did you go back to Canada- Sorry, did you go back to Japan to learn Japanese at all?
RN: No, you don't say I went back to Japan. That's- [stammers] Because I was born in Canada, so I wouldn't "go back" there [chuckles]. Pardon?
SC: Did your siblings also attend Japanese school?
RN: Yes. Yeah. I just had one sister, yeah, she was four years younger than me. But I did go to Japan about five times.
SC: Five times, yeah. Did you learn Japanese there at all?
RN: Where?
SC: Like, in Japan. Did you learn Japanese there?
RN: Well, I had to use a bit of Japanese with my cousins because they didn't speak

English at all. And then, the last trip I made was- I went with my daughter [chuckles]. And then when I was speaking Japanese with my cousins, my daughter didn't understand anything because my kids don't speak Japanese at all.
SC: Right. I think you mentioned earlier that you took Kendo?
RN: [nods] Yeah, I took Kendo.
SC: How long did you take the classes for?
RN: Well, most of the time when I was in public school- I don't how old you'd be when you first start, but I just can't remember, maybe about grade three or four, we start taking Kendo. And we lived right next to a church, and then they- And the Japanese minister was the- He ran the Kendo classes. And he was pretty strict and just about all the boys had to go to Kendo classes. And then every kid, Japanese kid, had to go to Sunday school as well [chuckles].
SC: [pause] Sorry. I'm just looking over this. Do you still practice Kendo today?
RN: Oh, no, no. [laughs] At my age?
SC: So, you were saying your mom was a Christian.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Was religion a big part of your life?
RN: Well, not that much, but the thing is that I went to Sunday school every Sunday when I was a kid. And then, when the war started, we moved to Vancouver, and I sorta had a habit of going Sunday school, so in Vancouver, I even went to Sunday school for the short time we were in Vancouver. And I met a friend there. There were only about four or five in our grade eight class in Sunday School, Japanese language school. And one became a very good friend of mine. Yeah.
SC: Do you know what your- either of your grandparent's religion?
RN: I would have to guess at that because I really didn't know. I really don't know. They were probably- I don't think they were Christians, that's for sure. Japanese, they're mostly Buddhist or Shintoist or so on. I don't know too much about it.
SC: Was there special occasion or activities that your family would celebrate as part of your religion?
RN: Well, Christmas is about the only time I could think about that-. Yeah, we always had turkey. Ever since I was a kid. Every Christmas, yeah.
SC: Did everyone go to church on the weekends?
RN: Well, when I was a child, I went to Sunday school every Sunday because the church is right next door. And my mother was a Christian, but she told me that you really don't have to go to church to be a good Christian, but she did go occasionally. But she was a real Christian. She- she was always reading the Bible and so on. But my father wasn't too interested in religion.
SC: Do you remember how non-Japanese people treated you at the time? Compared to, like, say, today?

RN: When I was going to public school?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Well, we didn't get to play with them very much because we were segregated on one end of the town.
SC: Right.
SC: But there was one fellow who came to Toronto, as I mentioned to you, he lives in Oregon, has a brother in Kingston, he came here. And we got together with him, and we're really good friends. And then, the couple of ladies that I told you, they were non-Japanese, and we got together with them two or three weeks ago.
SC: Right.
RN: Yeah. But when you're in public school, when you're a boy, you never talk to any girls.

[55 minutes]

I never talked to them at all when I was in public school. But we were really good friends, and we had a real good lunch a couple of weeks ago. Yeah.
SC: Oh, nice, yeah. So, do you remember how you first heard of World War II?
RN: World War II?
SC: Or, like, Pearl Harbour.
RN: Yeah, yeah. My dad was always interested in current events and war was ongoing already between Japan and China. And I remember it was a Sunday, and Japan bombed Pearl Harbour. I remember all these neighbours coming out of their house and talking to neighbours, and so on. I was kind of afraid to go to school the next day because Pearl Harbour- I still remember, it was a Sunday. And I went to school on Monday. It was just another normal day.
SC: Right. I think I'm gonna switch the tapes on this. Maybe take a few minutes break.
RN: [drinks from water bottle]
[electronic beep]
SC: Sorry.
RN: So, you learned all this in the last month or so from Elizabeth, eh?
SC: Yes, Elizabeth is like really good with all this.
RN: Oh, yeah. She's busy now, eh. Changing diapers [chuckles].
SC: Yeah, with her baby.
[long pause]
RN: Is that just the video? This is the audio here, or-? [points in front of him]
SC: Yeah.
RN: Oh, I see.
SC: Two videos and one audio.

[long pause]
[electronic beep]
Do you want to have, like, more water?
RN: I'll just have another sip [sips from water bottle].
SC: Oh, okay [pause]. So, we just talked about how you heard about Pearl Harbour and the next day was like-
RN: Just like a normal day. Yeah, just like a normal day.
SC: Do you remember how your parents reacted to Pearl Harbour?
RN: I- I really can't remember, but it must've been a real shock to them. But yeah.
SC: Do you remember, like, the curfew that was imposed?
RN: Yeah. I still remember the curfew that was imposed. The- As soon as the war started in- in December, and we left Ocean Falls in March, and I remember when we were in Vancouver, my mother went to visit her friend, about three blocks away. And they were having a good time talking until she realized that she had to come back to where we were living in the rooming house. And she found out that- I may not be able to make it before the curfew came into effect. So, she stayed overnight with her friend. Just in case she couldn't make it back to where we were staying. Yeah.
SC: Right. How old were you at the time?
RN: At the time when the war started, I was in grade eight. So, I must've been about 13 years old.
SC: Was your family able to stay together?
RN: Yeah, my family was able to stay together. Some of the families, I understand, were separated. Men had to go to road camps and their wives and children were moved later. But my dad was naturalized. So, he was able to get deferment. But at the same time, my mother wasn't feeling so well. And- and we stayed in Vancouver for four months, not knowing what's going to happen, and of course he wasn't working, and savings were- You know, we had to use the savings to live in Vancouver.

[60 minutes]

So, it must've been tough for my dad, financially. But since my mother wasn't well- Many people just went into Hastings Park. Hastings Park is like the CNE [Canadian National Exhibition] here. And then there were buildings there. I- I understand it's the buildings where they kept all the animals during the exhibition, and that was converted into kind of a place where people slept. You know, they had bunk beds and so on. And we didn't want to go there. Men and women separated, of course, and then- Because my mother wasn't well, and my dad wanted to be together. So, we never did go into Hastings Park, and so on.

SC: Right. Well, when you found out you had to leave your home in Ocean Falls, how did you feel?
RN: I- I was too young, actually, you know, grade eight. But it must've been pretty tough for my dad. Knowing that, even before the government passed a law stating that Japanese were gonna be removed from the West Coast, the white community had a meeting, as I understand, and they decided that they're gonna kick out all the Japanese out of town. That they're not gonna be able to stay in Ocean Falls.
SC: Right.
RN: Yeah.
SC: What did you pack with you at that time?
RN: For moving?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Well, some families, I heard, had to leave in 24 hours. Ocean Falls was different. We were just able to move out on our own. And the war started in December, but we didn't move out until March. And we packed everything we wanted to pack. But we didn't have anything valuable, we were so poor [chuckles slightly]. We didn't have any decent furniture, anyways. But we did have a pretty good radio. Short wave radio. Because my dad used to listen to the Japanese broadcast, and so on. So, we were able to sell the radio. And we had almost 30 pieces of baggage.
SC: Oh, wow.
RN: Yeah [chuckles].
SC: [chuckles] Besides the radio, was there anything else that they have to sell?
RN: Well, we didn't have anything valuable. Actually, we didn't have any decent furniture at all. And so- No, we didn't have anything to sell. Well, the thing is, when the war started, we had to turn in our cameras. And even binoculars. And the radio, we sold [chuckles]. And- Yeah, like, I remember- You know, you have the camera here [points to camera on the table]- But I used to have a Kodak box camera that her friend gave me. And a grade eight kid, taking that camera to the, you know, police- Like, in Ocean Falls, there was one police officer for the whole town. And I took the camera to his house, and he didn't have a separate office or something, he just lived in home- at home. And I remember taking a camera- to turn in my camera to him. Because Japanese had to turn in all the cameras. And also, binocular. And I had a- the binocular that my grandfather sent me too when I was a kid, from Japan, and I turned that in too.
SC: Right. Did your father have to like, quit his job?
RN: Oh, yeah, he had to quit his job, yeah. And they- He was a millwright in the paper mill, which is a pretty good job, I would say. And then, as I said, we were able to bring out anything we wanted, because we moved out of Ocean Falls on our own. So, he brought all his plumber's tools because a millwright did a lot of- His job was to fix the machinery on the weekends when the machines were shut down, or during the

week when the machines broke down, his job was to repair the machinery. So, he had a lot of tools, pipe wrenches, and so on. We brought all those. And then, when we moved to Vancouver, we stayed at a friend who had a rooming house, for a couple of weeks. And then, after that, we moved into another rooming house, but- but as far as the baggage was concerned, we had a friend who owned a farm in Port Hammon, on the Fraser River, not too far from Ocean Falls, so we stored all the baggage there. Because from Vancouver, we just had one room and a kitchenette. And about the room that we rented out, I'll tell you, there were four of us in the room. And there was one double bed in this little room that we rented. With a small kitchenette just to do the cooking. The odd cooking. So, there was one double bed. And there were four of us. My parents, my sister, and I. So, what we did was we got the chairs lined up on the side of the bed. And we put the cushions on the chair.

[65 minutes]

And we all slept sideways on the same bed [chuckles slightly]
SC: Wow.
RN: For four months. Well, we didn't have the- Well, Dad didn't have the money because we stayed there for four months not knowing what's gonna happen, so, you know, he wasn't going to rent more than one room because he only had a certain amount of money and there was- Didn't really know what was gonna happen to us.
SC: So, when the four months was up, what happened?
RN: Well, after four months was up, a lot of people from places like Prince Rupert, they were moved directly, I believe, from Ocean Falls to a old mining town which was called Slocan City. And- It's like a old mining town which you might see in a cowboy movie and so on. There's a lot of buildings and so on. And since my dad was a millwright, he had all the tools and so on, we moved there. And his job was to install running water in all the buildings. So, that's why we moved. So, we were able to move, but then we didn't go into Hastings Park and so on. That- that was a very difficult time for my parents. And my mother being sick, and she went into hospital a couple of times while we were in Vancouver, as well.
SC: So, you moved as a family to Slocan City?
RN: Yep, yep. Into Slocan City.
SC: Do you remember what your house was like there?
RN: Yeah. Well, as I said, that Slocan City was an old mining town. Probably a silver mine or something, there were buildings there and the families were housed in buildings. And maybe if there were three stories in a building or two stories, there would be a communal kitchen. Everybody had to cook their own meals. We weren't given food in a mess house or anything. Everybody had to cook their own meals, so they had to share the kitchen and so on. And all the dwellings were all full of people.

The only available place to stay was a log cabin about a quarter mile downstream on the Slocan River. So, they put us in a log cabin. Two room log cabin. And of course, there's no running water, we had to scoop the water from the river for cooking and so on. And drinking, too.
SC: What was your daily life like at the time?
RN: Well, when we moved there, there're no schools. And, even at that young age, when I finished grade eight and I was going into grade nine, but I was really interested in going to school, and we didn't have any school to go to. And so- And Ocean Falls was small town, the Japanese town, there weren't that many- I made- met so many Japanese kids, all at once. And we all didn't have much to do except- Well, maybe we played baseball. And then, I was introduced to hockey then, too. Because in the wintertime there was an old tennis rink there- I mean, there was a tennis court there. And the kids put water on there and put some ice on there and start playing hockey and so on. But I was introduced to ice hockey at the same time, but I was never good in sports anyways, but first year, no school, no nothing.
SC: So, you spent your days just playing with friends?
RN: Just playing. Just playing with my friends, that's about it.
SC: Right. So, you said there were no running water in the houses?
RN: No, no, like, in the log cabin there was no water. You had to scoop the water. But my dad's job was to install running water in the buildings. In the old buildings. Because he was a millwright, and he had all the plumbing tools, so his job was to install running water into the buildings. And then, once- When we moved to Slocan City, it was in July, and people were all in Slocan City. But people kept coming to Slocan. And they start building some tents, put people in tents, and they start building shacks. And the first place was about quarter mile from Slocan City, and they built the place called Bay Farm. Whole bunch of cabins [motions hand to demonstrate] or shacks or whatever it is. Two families per shack. And then that got full. And the overload people were still living in tents. And then they built Popoff, which is another quarter mile away. Bunch of shacks, same way. And then the people still kept coming by the hundreds. And about seven miles away they built another place called Lemon Creek, which a pretty large housing development and Japanese were put there. And then, as far as the water was concerned. They put the water pipes in there.

[70 minutes]

Like in- And in like places like Bay Farm, they would put water pipes in there, and then- and then they all had to take the water from the pipes, standpipes [demonstrates with hand] that were built in the housing development. And then, like, you know, the way that fire hydrants are built, the pipes are buried in the

water, but the valve is underground and then you have your valve on the surface, you open the valve, and the water comes out. So, that's how the standpipes were built, so the people were supplied water that way. They had running water, but they had to take a pail to a standpipe a few feet away and bring it into the house.
SC: Right. So, where did you bathe?
RN: Well, in Japanese they have a- I don't know if you've ever been in a Japanese bathhouse. Have you been in a Japanese bathhouse? Well, you go into the- in the men's bathhouse. And then you would undress and there would be pails. And you put a little hot water in the pail, and you sit down, little stool, and then you wash yourself, clean. And you rinse yourself. And then, you step into a hot tub. And to warm up. So, they- That's what they had in the camps.
SC: Right. Did you feel that at the time you had privacy, or did you feel like you were in, like, a cramped space with a lot of people?
RN: No, well, the- When we moved from Ocean Falls to Vancouver there was Hastings Park where there's a big room where the bunk beds were made up and, you know, and there's no privacy there, and so on. But fortunately, we didn't have to go into Hastings Park because- Well, one reason, as I said, because my mother wasn't too well, and my dad didn't want to go into Hastings Park where the families were separated and so on. And the men and women would have their own quarters. Where there's no privacy [turns over water bottle] whoops.
SC: Oh.
RN: That- that's okay. Just leave it. Yeah.
SC: Oh, okay. How did you do your laundry in Slocan City?
RN: Laundry? Well, like in Slocan City, we had the log cabin first. And of course, we took the water from the Slocan River and so on, so my mother must've heated the water. But fortunately, after about a month or two, they found a little house for us. Private house. All by ourselves! And people were complaining because we just had a small family, family of four, so my dad invited one of the ladies- an old family friend- to move in with us. And- What was the question again? I'm just getting the-
SC: Like, how did you guys do laundry?
RN: About the laundry. Yeah. Yeah, yeah. So, my mother just heated the water from the stove. And she did laundry at home and just hang everything outside. Of course, in those days, we didn't have a dryer or anything like that.
SC: Right.
RN: Yeah.
SC: You were talking about how your mom found a house?
RN: Pardon?
SC: You said your mom found a house?
RN: Found a house?
SC: A bigger house that-

RN: Oh yeah, well, first we were in the log cabin for a while and it so happened that they- that there was a single-family house among all the dwellings in Ocean Falls, it happened to be empty. I can't believe it. And then they said that our family could move out of the log cabin and into this house. I really don't know how it came about.
SC: And this is in Slocan City?
RN: Slocan City, yeah.
SC: Oh, wow.
RN: Yeah. Yeah, all the houses, people were all in the different dwellings, and in the big houses, big dwellings, people shared the kitchen, so on- But I don't know it's by a miracle, there happ- Right in the center of town, there was a single-family housing-house, and we moved in [chuckles]. Can't believe it.
SC: What did you do for work?
RN: What did I do for work. Well, I was in grade nine. And my dad was, as I said he was a millwright. His first job was to install running water in all the buildings. And then, when they started to build all these shack towns, he was also working on installing the running water. And then after that was when finished, and everybody moved into the houses. Men were- And then every- All the families had to cook their own meals and so on, so they had to have income. And a lot of men were put to work chopping firewood and so on.

[75 minutes]

And my dad's job was to clean the chimneys. Because you're burning fresh wood, raw wood, and you had to clean the chimneys because the pitch would all line the stove pipes and so on, so it had to be cleaned frequency- frequently. So, my dad's job was to clean the stovepipes and the chimneys. So that you wouldn't have chimney fires. So, that's what he did.
SC: Did you get to go to school after the one year?
RN: Yeah, yeah. Well, after one year- I am for- forever grateful to the Catholic nuns who came all the way from Quebec, and they were the Sisters of Assumptions. Sisters of Assumption. And they came to Slocan, there was the old Catholic Church there, and they converted that into a school. They hired carpenters to build the desks and chairs and so on. And the sisters said you're all welcome to come to our school. So, we were able to go to school, and that was in- I was in grade nine. But during the first year when we didn't have any schools, some of the young adults said, "Well, look, you kids are- If you want to take [a?] correspondence course, we'll help you as tutors." So, I took grade nine algebra and geometry [clears throat]. And by correspondence [clears throat]. So, when I got into grade nine in Slocan in the second year, the sisters allowed me to take grade 10 algebra and geometry. And then, when we moved to Regina, I was in grade 10. And I had already taken grade

nine- No, grade 10- No, grade nine algebra and geometry- No, I mean the- now I'm getting-Grade nine when we didn't have any school, I took grade nine algebra and geometry. Sisters allowed me to take grade 10 algebra and geometry in Slocan. So, when I moved to Regina, I had already taken grade 10 algebra and geometry. [stammers] Like in Slocan, you know.
SC: Right [unclear].
RN: Yeah, so. And then, there's hardly any Japanese in Regina, and here was this Japanese kid that comes to high school, there are only about a couple Japanese in the whole high school, and in grade 10 I was- I knew all the algebra and geometry. That- you know, that's the area you learn all about the theorems and geometry and so on. And I knew all that, the kids all thought that, "Hey, here's a pretty smart kid." And there's another thing, is that in Ocean Falls, we started to take French from grade seven. So, I took grades seven, eight, and nine French in B.C. [British Columbia]. So, when I came to Regina, they started to- In Saskatchewan, they started French in grade nine. So- so, rest of my classmates would be in second year French, and I would be in fourth year French. And I was about the only kid in the- who could read comfortably from a French textbook. Because I was going into fourth year French, so I was really superior in algebra, geometry, and French, and they thought that, "Boy, here's a smart kid!" You know, but I wasn't [laughs]. But I had all this advantages there.
SC: What about, like, your Japanese language education in Slocan? Did they continue?
RN: Well, they weren't supposed to have Japanese language school. But I heard that there were secret classes now, but I didn't bother to, you know, carry on with the Japanese education, you know. But I heard some- They had some classes, I understand.
SC: Right. So, how big were the classes in Slocan?
RN: Slocan?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Well, in fact, I was just looking at some of those pic- Well, my grade nine class, it's a full-size class, so I would say there were about between 25 and 30. And in Ocean Falls, there's hardly any Japanese there. But here, all the grade eight- my grade nine class, they're all Japanese kids. And the sisters taught us, and-.
SC: Can you tell me about what you did for entertainment in Slocan?
RN: Slocan. Well, first year, we didn't have anything to do, and- Well, boys played baseball, I guess. And I was introduced to baseball, but I wasn't very good in sports. And they always put me right field because I was even afraid to catch a fly ball. You know, you catch a fly ball like that [cups hands upwards] but I was catching like that [cups hands downwards] so that if I miss it, I wouldn't hit- let the ball hit my face or anything. But I wasn't very good in sports, but.

SC: Can you tell me what your best memory was in Slocan?

[80 minutes]

RN: Well, my best memory in Slocan was that-[picks up the papers from the table] I met lots of friends. Ocean Falls was just a small town, you know, and- I met lots of friends in Slocan, yeah. I've never seen so many Japanese at once [laughs]. Yeah.
SC: Yeah. Were you able to stay in contact with the all of the friends that you made in Slocan? [RN flipping through papers]
RN: [stammers] The people that I made friends with in Ocean Falls?
SC: Oh, in Slocan.
RN: Oh, like in Slocan. Yeah, well- Surprising- Lot of people came to Toronto. Yeah. Maybe 50 percent of the Japanese in my class came to Toronto, actually. And some moved to different areas, but many Japanese came to Toronto, some to Montreal.
SC: Right.
RN: And some to the Prairies, but mostly Toronto, actually.
SC: Do you remember- Or can you tell me what was the worst memory you had in Slocan?
RN: Worst memory. Worst memory I had in Slocan. [pause] I can't think too much about the worst memory and so on, yeah. I guess I was too young to think about any bad things, yeah.
SC: Right, okay. Besides groceries, what else did you have to pay for in Slocan?
RN: Well, Slocan we had to pay for our groceries, and the burning wood- wood for burning, heating the house was free. The only thing we had to pay for was groceries, I suppose.
SC: Right. Did the government provide you with other things that you need?
RN: Well, firewood and so on. And then, my mother was not well and there was a hospital in Slocan, and then she didn't have to pay anything for going into the hospital in Slocan. And as a matter of fact, when they di- when they discovered what was wrong with her, she was sent to New Denver, which is about 20 miles away, and that was another relocation camp. But New Denver had a town, like, you know, from before the war. And there was a hospital, there was a surgeon, and my mother was able to go to the hospital and have her major surgery. And she was healthy for many years after that. And we didn't have to pay for any of the hospital stay or for the surgery and so on.
SC: Right. What about clothing?
RN: Oh. Well, there was a general store in Slocan. And not many people bought clothing there because they- there weren't much of a selection and so on. And many people, and even in Ocean Falls, for clothing and shoes, people bought everything by mail order from Simpson or Eaton. And the- I remember a lot of us had a lot of

patches on our pants and so on because we just couldn't afford new trousers and so on.
SC: Right, okay. [pause]Can you tell me how you or your family did to help the community in Slocan at the time? Like you said, your father was doing the water. And- Like, what else did they do to pass the time? Did they have any hobbies, or do you remember your parents doing other activities?
RN: Well. Well, she met a lot of Japanese people there. Well, Ocean Falls, we lived in a- we were segregated and so she had a lot of neighbours who were Japanese, but we met lots of friends, I suppose. But we were only there for a couple of years and- Well, the first year was very unsettling, you know, moving into a place and so on. So, you know, they didn't do too much.
SC: Do you remember what the weather was like in Slocan?
RN: Yeah, well, Slocan- Maybe about the same as Toronto, I would say. Ocean Falls, on the coast, it was a little warmer, but we had a lot of rain.

[85 minutes]

When we moved inland, you know, to Slocan, it was a little colder, but it wasn't too bad.
SC: Okay. It's 12- 10 after 12 right now.
RN: Mm-hm.
SC: Why don't we take a break?
RN: Sure, okay.
SC: Yeah. Have lunch and-
RN: Sure, okay.
SC: Okay.
RN: Boy, time really flies, eh [drinks from water bottle].
SC: Yeah, I know [chuckles]. Let's see-
[video skips]
RN: So about-[stammers] We got about another hour? Or half an hour, or?
SC: Yeah, I mean, if you feel like you need to take a break, or-
RN: Yeah, yeah, sure.
SC: -We can do that.
RN: [looking down at paper] Maybe I already talked about some of this.
SC: Mm, yes.
RN: Ok.
SC: But let's pick up from what we were talking about-
RN: How about the- how about the best memories? Have we covered that?
SC: Yeah. We already did. But if you wanna talk about it, you can.
RN: Yeah, yeah, yeah, yeah.

SC: Do you wanna talk about your best memories?
RN: Yeah, okay, sure. Can we start now?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Oh, okay, then.
SC: [laughs]
RN: About the- about my best memories is that my dad coming to my convocation when I was graduating from university because my parents made a lot of sacrifices to send me to school because we were pretty poor. And then, when my dad was able to come to my convocation, we were living in Regina at the time, and he came to Winnipeg and that's one of my best memories. And also, also one of the good memories is that even before I graduated, in the final year, I got a job offer. That I had a job in Toronto, so, I knew that soon after convocation, I have a job all ready for me in Toronto. Yeah, so that was pretty good because- Like, a lot of kids when they graduate from university, it might take a little while for them to find a job. Because they graduate, and there's so many graduating at the same time.
SC: Do you wanna tell me one of your worst memories?
RN: Yeah. Well, one of the worst memories, I would say that when Canada entered the war in 1941, we had to leave Ocean Falls, where we were living. That was quite a shock, especially for my parents. And my mother wasn't too well at the time. And we were stranded in Vancouver for four months, not knowing what's going to happen to us. And then, as I say, my mother wasn't well at the time. And- Oh, that's when I told you about- We stayed in a rooming house with one room and a kitchenette. And four of us had to sleep in the same bed, with the chairs lined up on one side and the pillows on the chair and- That- that- that was kind of a rough time in memory. Cause we were in Vancouver; we didn't even know what's gonna happen to us! And yeah.
SC: Okay. Let's talk about what happened after when the war ended.
RN: Oh, when the war ended?
SC: Yeah. Okay.
RN: Okay, now.
SC: Where were you when you hear the end of the war?
RN: End of the war...
SC: Were you in Slocan?
RN: No, actually, when my dad first came to Canada, he worked in a hotel in Ocean Falls. And there were a few Japanese working in the hotel, in the kitchen. And Dad's friend was already in Regina when the war started. And he was running a successful gas station, Imperial Gas Station. And there was a rubber shortage during the war. And so, he was busy retreading tires. And tires were scarce, and he was busy, but he couldn't get the help because all the young men and women were all in the war industry or in the Armed Forces. So, he asked Dad if he'd like to move out of the camps and come out to Regina, so that's how we moved to Regina.

SC: When did you move to Regina?
RN: When I moved to Regina, I was- I got into grade 10.
SC: Okay.
RN: Yeah. So, that's one of the- was it bad memories, did I say?
SC: Oh, right.
RN: Yeah. I'm just getting a little confused here [shuffles through stapled documents he has in his hand].
SC: Oh, no, no, no. Well- You were telling me that you were in Regina.
RN: Yeah, Regina.
SC: When the war ended.
RN: Yeah, yeah. When the war ended and- Well, the war was still ongoing when we moved to Regina.

[90 minutes]

When I went into- When I got into high school, they told me I had to join the Air Cadets. Coming out of a relocation camp, coming out to Regina, here I am going to high school and had to wear my Air Cadet uniform to school twice a week [chuckles]. And there were hardly any Japanese there. So, in June, when I was in grade 10, I was in the Victory Parade in downtown Regina, with the air cadets.
SC: Right.
RN: So, I have a book of Regina and there was picture of Victory Parade in downtown Regina, so I just put a notation there, I'm in the parade someplace with my air cadets- with the air cadets [continues shuffling through documents].
SC: How did you hear the news of the- that the war has ended?
RN: When the war ended. Let me think about that. I don't wanna-
SC: Oh, no, no, don't worry.
RN: Oh, okay. When the war ended- Gee, I can't remember. Well, the war in Europe ended when I was in grade 10. And shortly after that, the war with Japan ended, right?
SC: Yeah.
RN: Gee [pauses]. I just can't remember.
SC: Oh, okay. No worries.
RN: When the war ended, yeah, when the war ended-
SC: Maybe, do you remember if your parents told you anything about it? Or-
RN: Well, we knew that- Oh, this is the time they dropped the atomic bomb-
SC: Yes.
RN: -And then it wasn't long before the war ended, but.
SC: Yes.

RN: I can't remember too much of it, actually. Yeah. And we were already in Regina at the time. Yeah, we were already in Regina at the time.
SC: Do you have other Japanese Canadian friends in Regina?
RN: Well, the thing is that not many of the British Columbia Japanese moved to Regina. Most of them came to Toronto and so on. But we moved to Regina because my dad had a friend, and they offered him a job at a gas station. And Regina, being a small town and a small Japanese population, they did have a little Japanese association, and I met some people, with the- You know, in Regina. But I was in about grade 10, and you know of course, I didn't have a car, I couldn't drive and so on. And Japanese, you're pretty well spread all over the city. And it was a small population. I didn't get very close to anybody who were there in Regina.
SC: Do you remember how long you were- Like, how long did you stay in Regina?
RN: Well, my home was in Regina. After I finished high school, I went to University of Manitoba. And then, my family still lived in Regina. And soon after graduation, I got a job in Toronto. So, after convocation, I came to Toronto. And that was 1951. And one year later, my parents sold the house in Regina, and they came to Toronto, as well. Yeah.
SC: Can you tell me what was your experience when you go into University of Manitoba? And like, when you get accepted to go in there?
RN: Yeah, well, like, I was very happy to get accepted, going to University of Manitoba [clears throat]. I had a friend in Winnipeg, but then I- I was accepted to go into the residence. Which is a good thing because their residence was right on the campus. And it was only about 100 yards away, was the engineering building. But what occurred to me was that when I went in there in the residence, they put me into a large room with about a dozen beds in the room. And that was odd, and I was the only guy in there. In the room. And a couple of days later, maybe two or three days later, after dinner, I was going up to my room, and I met a fellow who went to the same high school with me. I didn't know him personally because he was a year older than me. But he recognized me. And he said he was in deep trouble, I said, "Well, what's the problem?" He says, "I've got no place to stay tonight because the office is closed." So, I said, "Well, Allan, hey, come to my room.

[95 minutes]

Got lots of room up there." So, I took him up to my room on the third floor and of course, there were about a dozen cots in there. And he said to me, "How come they put you in here?" Says- I said, "I don't know." He said, "This room is for the agriculture diploma students who come here after the harvest. And you shouldn't be here." And I- So, I said, "How come?" He says, "Well, in each room, there's only two students." Except for this room, which was for the agriculture diploma students. So,

next day, when the office is open, I went to see the dean admin of the residence. And he said- I explained to him the situation, "Why did you put me in that room?" And he looked at me. Not many Asians were going to university then. Maybe about- maybe about 10 Asians. And he said, "Oh, yeah, okay. Go to the room across the hallway from you." And he gave me another key. He says, "Oh, that'll be your room." And usually, in each room there's two students, I went in there, I knocked on the door, and the guy answered the door, opened the door, and I explained to him- I explained to him the situation. And sure enough, there's an empty bed in his room. And he was a former Air Force Veteran. He was a little older than me. Fortunately, he was also taking engineering, and he was in second year engineering. So, he really helped me out. And then, like, I did quite well in all the courses. I worked pretty hard. And I couldn't afford to fail because my parents were pretty poor [chuckles] and they- and they got all the resources together to be able to send me to university, and- but- He really helped me out in English. Because one of the assignments that I got was to write a comparison between two satires. Between Gulliver's Travels and Erewhon, by Butler. And I didn't have a clue, because in high school, I don't think I've ever written an essay! So, he told me about how to go about it and so on and how to write the essays. So, I wrote the essay and then I submitted it. And oh, I got a, maybe C+ or something, which is pretty good mark because my- because English was my poor subject because- If your parents are speaking English, and if you spoke English at home, you know, you're- it's- I'm sure that my marks would've been higher. Then I got a- Then I had to write a second essay during the semester. And I'm pretty sure I got something like C+. But then my final English exam, I had the- I guess I was a little naive, I said, I thought that more you write- Because there are only two questions in the whole exam. Two questions. You had to write two essays. So, I thought the more you write, the better, you might get a higher mark, so and so. So, I wrote and wrote and wrote and then I submitted my final exam. What I should've done was to write less but using good composition, good grammar, and so on, instead of forgetting about quantity, you know. I should've gone for quality. And they gave me 50 percent, which is a pass [chuckles]. But if it weren't for the 50 in the English exam, my average would've been over 80. And it's tough to get an average of over 80 in engineering, so. But I passed and I didn't have to write any supplementary exams in the university. I passed all my exams in all the four years [chuckles].

SC: So, tell me about your experience when you graduated university.

RN: Well, when I graduated university- Well, after graduation, as I mentioned, already had a job because I- Oh, did I tell you how I got my job?

SC: No.

RN: Oh, okay. Actually, before Christmas, some of the major companies, especially in the Toronto area, came to interview the students. They were hoping to sign up the cream of the crop. And it was pretty easy to get an engineering job if you were a

graduate. Most of the graduates had jobs. And they came before Christmas. And then, my class, 50 students in the mechanical engineering class, [stammers] it was a really tough course. We had about 450 students in first year. Went down to 300 in second year. Rest of them flunked out. And only 150 graduated. In our mechanical engineering class, there were 50.

[100 minutes]

And there were three Japanese students. And we finished in the top five. Cause I know because after, in our fourth year, the list of the students- The names were listed in order they finished the third-year exams. So that when the employers come to interview students, they would have the list, and they know exactly where you- where they stood in the final exam. Of course, there's more than just good engineering. Like, you know, the- your personality and everything else counts, but nevertheless, none of us three Japanese were invited to these interviews. And- and we finished in the top five. But then, by February, all three of us got offer for a job here in Toronto, from AV Roe. All at the same time. And there were no interviews, and they were offering jobs strictly based on the marks. And that's how I got the job, so when I graduated, after convocation, I already had a job, and I just came straight to Toronto with my friends [chuckles]. Yeah.
SC: Tell me about your career.
RN: About my career? Okay, so when I came to Toronto, as I said, I already had a job, and before I start my career, I- Right after convocation, there were three of us, friends. We took the bus for Ontario because we all had jobs in Ontario- This is the University of Manitoba, in Winnipeg. And one of the friends got off because he had a job with a structural engineering company in Windsor. But two of us had jobs in Toronto, so we came to Toronto. And I got off the bus at Bay and Dundas Street. The bus depot there. And got off the bus, it was an evening, so we said, "Well, look, we'll walk across the street to the hotel, stay there one night, and decide what to do next day." So, I walked across the street. I don't think the hotel is there now, but it's called the Ford Hotel. And I went in there, and they wanted six dollars and 50 cents to stay for the night. And I guess my dad didn't have much money. He didn't offer me, "Here- here, Roy, here's some money for you take," or anything. And my own money, I had 35 dollars cash. And there, the first night, Ford Hotel wanted me to pay six dollars and 50 cents. In those days, you didn't have credit cards. I didn't even know what a credit card was. It cost me six dollars 50 cents. So, what am I gonna do for the next two weeks before I get my first paycheck? So, we went up to the offices of AV Roe, which is up at the airport. We went in there and there were- there were a few guys there. They-they all got jobs there and they came into town about the same time, and they just went to the company. And AV Roe found us two bedrooms, at

three dollars a week each. So, there were five of us. [stammers] Well- well, like, we knew the other guys because they came from Winnipeg as well, too. So, we- They found us a couple of bedrooms around Annette and Dupont, which in- is out in the West End, handy to get to the airport. So, we stayed there at three dollars a week. And then the rest of the 35 dollars, I ate hot dogs for a couple of weeks until I got my first paycheck. And then- then we started to work at AV Roe. And I always had the notion that when I finished high school, I have to take engineering and you know, try and get a job where I would go to work with a tie and a suit and a- carrying a briefcase and all that. And they said, "Well, you guys are gonna be going in the training course first." Because, you know, you have the education, but you have no experience, you know. And you've never seen a factory, where they're making parts in the factory [chuckles], you know. So, they put me on a training course. And, so, we just wore ordinary clothes and so on. And then, eventually, ear- early on, my friend had brought a parcel from Kamloops and he said he had to deliver this parcel to a Japanese family out in the East End. And so, I said, "Oh, I'll tag along with them." So, I- we tagged along, and we mentioned to these people that we wanted to find a place in the West End, close to the airport, where we can get room and board, where we can eat rice every day [chuckles]. Because-

[105 minutes]

These days, I only cook rice about every couple of weeks but in those days, I said, "Yeah-" So, they said, "Yeah, there's a Japanese family we could recommend," and we phoned this lady, said, "Oh, yeah, you can have room and board for thirteen dollars a week. You have rice every day for dinner, or we'll even pack your lunch." Three meals a day, seven days a week, and thirteen dollars a week, I said, "Oh, golly, that's really good!" Because- It'll give me a chance to earn some money, because up until then, going to university, I just used to wear t-shirts all the time and wash my underwear and t-shirts in the shower, and hang it on the clothes dryer, and so on. So, we were looking for some extra money so we can buy some clothes and so on. And that's how we got started in Toronto. And we worked at- Yeah, we were in a training course in the beginning. And also, in the fall, since you're in a training company- They had a lot of testing to do on the jet engines. And you know how jet engines make a lot of noise. So, a lot of these testers made a lot of noise. So, there was a place up north of Parry Sound where they have- had- had test facilities. And they told me I'd be going up there for two or three months and to learn about- about testing of these gas turbine engine components. And good thing was, that the company paid the- Free room and board, was all paid through the company up there. So, I didn't have to- I saved all the- all the money I was getting because I didn't have to pay room and board. And then after that, I came back to Toronto. And I

worked at AV Roe until about 1959. And I don't know if you heard about the Avro Arrow. First- When you first start the work, we didn't have any jet passenger planes. They were all propeller driven. And we're working on jet engines. And they built their first passenger plane in Canada there. And the only other passenger plane that was built in the whole world was in England, was the Comet. But they ran into some pressurization of the cabin problem or something, so they didn't get too far. But we had to scrap the idea of building jet passenger planes because the Korean War started, 1950. [sound like a zipper off camera] And- So, we were designing the CF-100 fighter planes, and the jet engines were going to the fighter planes and so on. And then, after that, we were going to be dil- designing the Avro Arrow. I don't know if you've heard about the Avro Arrow. [zipper sound] Avro Arrow is a all-weather fighter- jet passenger plane- I mean, jet fighter plane. And we built about half a dozen of them. They flew almost Mach two, which is just about almost up to the two times the speed of sound. And in 1959, John Diefenbaker was the prime minister at the time, he said, "Jet-jet passenger planes are obsolete. Cancel the program [brings down hand in quick downward motion." He says, "We're going to build a [duel line?] up in the- all along Northern border of Canada and put Bomarc missiles there, so if the Russians ever come over, we have- we have these Bomarc missiles to shoot down the- all the Russian bombers." So, there were about 10,000 people lost their job in Toronto. All at once. Including 1000 engineers. And then, you heard about the sending the man on the moon, man- manning on the moon, recently, it's their 50th anniversary. Well, at that time, when John Diefenbaker cancelled the Avro Arrow program, we were out of a job, a lot of Canadians went to Houston, Texas, to work for NASA. To work on the program to send the first man on the moon. And also, a lot of them went to Seattle, Washington, when they were building the jumbo jets. And at that time, there was a quota of 200 Japanese immigrants into- per annum into the States. And Japanese Canadians came under the same Japanese quota. And not that I wanted to go there, but that was a case. And- and so, by then, I was just married a couple of years, bought a house, and had a huge mortgage, and had a little girl. And [chuckles] a thousand other engineers looking for jobs in Toronto.

[110 minutes]

Except for those who were gonna try and get to the States- And so, what else are you gonna do? So, I- My wife said, "Well, why don't you go to unemployment insurance office now?" So, I said, "You gotta be kidding. A thousand guys looking for a job at the same time." But I went there. Couple of days later, they said, "Yeah, well, like, there's a company, we'd like you to go for an interview." So, I went to the company for an interview. And couple days later, they offered me a job! Yeah, so, I was surprised. And my job was to design double suction centrifugal water pumps.

Now these water pumps are used to- for heating and ventilation of buildings. A lot of buildings for heating, they circulate hot water or cold water [moves hand in circular motion], depending on whether you wanna heat it or cool it. And this company had a order to supply two pumps by August. And this was al- already in early March. The reason why that they had to design new pumps was up until that time, they were importing the pumps from the U.S. and then, you know, just selling it. But this- this specification for this particular building was such that the pumps had to be manufactured in Canada. So, as I said, I've never seen a centrifugal water pump before in my life! And then, I had- This was early March, and had to get two new ones in by August, so I went and bought a textbook on how to design centrifugal water pumps. And then I took apart a competitor's pump, see how it was designed, and there was a fellow in the office- in the factory, who was quite knowledgeable about pumps. But, you know, he wasn't an engineer, you know, he didn't have the capability of designing it, you know, the curves and this and that. And I worked hard that summer. I was under a lot of pressure. And it was for the Union Carbide building that was going up in Eglinton Avenue. And we- we designed it, manufactured and tested it and we had it installed in August by- by August, on schedule. And I don't know whether it was on budget or not because it was the first pump. And I stayed with the company for two years. And I designed their complete line of double suction pumps, from inch and a half discharge up to about 12-inch discharge. Now, 12-inch discharge would be huge pumps. And I know that a couple of huge ones were installed in the Eaton Store. And, one day I saw an article in the papers about the centrifugal water pumps being in the building, so I cut that picture out, that picture that was in there, and I still have the picture of the pump. And I still have that textbook [chuckles]. And then, so, after two years when I finished the design, and they gave me a fancy title: "You were the assistant chief design engineer for this company." But I didn't have anybody else working for me. But I did have a draftsman who did all my drawings for me. And the chief engineer happened to be the son of the owner, and he was just a young graduate from the University of Toronto. But he happened to be the son of the owner, so I didn't have much hope there. So, I left because I didn't have much future there. Then- Actually, before I resigned, I found another job. This other job was that what they have on the aircraft. They were going to design an anti-submarine hydrofoil. [stammers] This would be a ship, like an ordinary ship, with a diesel engine and propeller, would be cruising around. And they would drag a sonar in the back, and they- when they detect the submarine, you have to increase the speed to go after the submarine. And- So, the ship was equipped with a gas turbine engine. So, you turn on the gas turbine engine, and the ship would rise above the surface of the water and run on foils to increase the speed. So, I worked on that. And then, after that, I found another job- Just give a minute now- Yeah [picks up documents].

SC: Yeah. I'm just gonna put in a new tape.
RN: Okay. Yeah, okay. Oh, yeah, I know what I did after that [drinks from water bottle].
[switching tapes]
[electronic beep]

[115 minutes]

I'm not a good speaker like Jan, you know, Jan [unclear] and all that.
SC: No, no, you're okay. You're a very captivating storyteller.
RN: Oh.
[long pause]
[electronic beep]
SC: Perfect.
RN: So, after the anti-submarine hydrofoil, I changed jobs again. And this time I got a job with a consulting engineering company. You heard about the CANDU [CANada Deuterium Uranium] nuclear reactors. The- And the CANDU nuclear reactors are a bit different from the other nuclear reactors. Well, most of the nuclear reactors that are built, you have to shut down the reactor when you change the fuel. But in the CANDU nuclear reactor, fuel was changed while the reactor was still operating on a regular basis, and so you need what you call a fuelling machine that puts a new fuel in on one end and you take out the old fuel on the other end and so on. And- and then the CANDU reactors use heavy water as a coolant. And heavy water is very expensive. So much a pound, I don't know what the cost is. But they came out with a new concept where they can use ordinary water for building a new type of CANDU reactor. Now, the CANDU reactor that's operating at Pickering and Bruce, and so on, the pressure tubes are horizontal. That means that nuclear fuel is put inside a pressure tube, and then in the reactor, the heat is generated by the nuclear reaction, and they- and the hot water goes into a steam boiler where it turns- and you generate steam, and the steam runs a generator. But then this new concept, instead of using heavy water as a coolant, you use light water. Ordinary water. Which is almost free. And so, they needed a new type of fuelling machine, rather than the type that they're using right now, in Pickering Generating Station and so on. So, this consulting engineering company got the contract to design this new machine. And I happened to get the job there of designing this new machine. And, in fact, the fuelling machine and the reactor was built, and it was built in [Gentilly?], which is near Trois-Rivieres in Quebec. And- But they had difficulty controlling it. I won't get into details of that, but they had difficulty controlling it. So, they had to scrap the whole program. But after the fuelling machine was designed, all the development testing was gonna be done at Atomic Energy facilities in Sheridan Park, so, after the

design was completed, they started laying people off. Like, you know, because design was completed. So, I left the- the my job with consulting engineering company. And since I was the designer of the machine, and I applied to Atomic Energy, if I can join the staff, and they accepted me. And I followed up the development there and then I spent the rest of my career there at Atomic Energy. I spent over 25 years with Atomic Energy. And I was working the fuel handling area. And then, later on, towards the end of my career, I was working on the disposal of nuclear fuel. You probably heard about, "Yeah, you got nuclear reactors, but what are you gonna do about the spent fuel?" So, my job was involved with how to dispose of the nuclear fuel. And- and they were asking for people to present papers at conferences, so I got a- In fact, I presented about- I wrote about six papers, and I sort of presented these papers. And I presented two papers in Vienna, Austria, and, you know, I was fortunate to get a free trip there and each time I was able to spend- spend one week in Vienna. And it's an international conference. And that- And one of the conferences, I met this American engineer who worked for the Department of Energy in Washington, D.C. So, after the conference, he sent me a letter. You know, the letter had "Department of Energy, Washington D.C.," and "Dear Mr. Nakagawa, we're inviting to present a similar paper in Las Vegas at the Mirage."

[120 minutes]

So, I showed that letter to my boss and he said, "Oh yeah, you have to present the paper there and publicize the work we're doing." So, I got a trip to Las Vegas, stayed at the Mirage for a week, and I presented a paper there on the- on the disposal of nuclear fuel. And then, all told, I- As I said, I wrote six papers. And yeah, one was in Pennbrook, and one was in Toronto. In Toronto- No, no, like, one was in Ottawa, near the Parliament Buildings, when you stay outside the Chateau Laurier Hotel, in the front of it, when you look forward, on the left-hand side, there's a conference centre there in the hotel there. And in fact, I presented a paper there. My first paper was there, actually. And I had to make a good job because probably the VIPs from the company will be there because it's pretty close to Toronto. And- Well, I think I did okay, but you know [chuckles], I was a little nervous at the beginning. But I wasn't the only one because on the way back I met one of the guys from office, he was presenting a paper, and he says, "How did you do?" I said, "Well, I survived. I think I did okay," I told him. But he said, "Hey, you know, I- This other guy said he got up twice during the night to practice his paper."[laughs] So, I thought, "Well, I wasn't the only guy that was kinda-" But I sorta got used to it, actually. Yeah, so- so, on total, I got six published papers on the- on the paper, and- and then, when I turned 65, I just left my job. Well, actually, now you can work beyond age 65, but I

thought, “Well, age 65, and then, Atomic Energy’s got a good plan, anyways, so,” and that’s how I ended out my career.
SC: Wow!
RN: Yeah, so, I’ve been retired 25 years now.
SC: That’s amazing.
RN: Yeah.
SC: Wow.
RN: So, I had a pretty interesting career, actually.
SC: Yeah. It sounds really amazing. What were you, like, what are you most proud of in your, like, really illustrious career? Do you have moments where you felt really good about?
RN: Yeah, well, like, the thing is, that was when I was growing up, Ocean Falls was a paper mill town. And there were few Japanese people, and there was a family friend too and-The UBC [University of British Columbia] students used to come up to work in Ocean Falls for the summer, and there was one good family friend. And he and his brother were both students at UBC, and- and they were telling me about the importance of post-secondary education. And my mother always- My mother didn't have much education, but she says, “Well, you know, you gotta try and,you know, go to university if you want to try and better yourself.” And so- You know, that’s one thing I was kinda proud of, anyways, and I gotta thank my mother and my friend who encouraged me to go to school.
SC: Did you ever feel any discrimination throughout your career?
RN: Well, ‘cause I told you about the residence already, you know, when I tried to get the room and so on. But as far as my career is concerned, when I started to work, no problem. No. I was just treated the same as everybody else, and for one reason, the president of Atomic Energy here in Toronto, I don’t know if he was the Vice President or President, he also used to work at AV Roe when I worked there on the gas turbine engines and he was a Chinese Canadian. Dr. George Pon. And he was the president. And then like- and then like also, one of the outstanding managers there was also a Chinese Canadian, so, really, at the- over the- over the days, I didn’t run across any racial discrimination and so on.
SC: Right. Can you tell me how the war affected your life after?
RN: Well. I mean, from the beginning, from the war started? Well, of course, when the war started, Japanese were considered as a threat to the country, and we were moved out. Well, we had to leave the town of Ocean Falls.

[125 minutes]

And that created a lot of difficulties for my parents, not knowing what to do and put in camps for a couple of years. And if you can just imagine something like that, you

know, the government would take a segment of the [unclear, video mutes for one second], because your racial origin, we're gonna put you in a camp or something when you haven't done anything wrong, well, that's what happened to us.
SC: Did the war change your family traditions?
RN: I don't- I can't think of anything that changed the- changed the tradition or anything.
SC: Okay. Did you stay in touch with any of your friends that you meet before the war? When you were in Ocean Falls?
RN: Uh, well, Ocean Falls, the Japanese community was only about 200, and then I was in grade eight. And there were no other boys my same age in grade eight. But there is a lady who was in my class, grade eight, and she lives in Lethbridge, and she and I have been good, you know, penpals for many years and we still exchange letters regularly [chuckles]. Yeah, after all these years. But then, if you're one year younger, like, when you're grade nine, you didn't associate with somebody who's grade eight or something. There was always somebody had to be the same age. Now it's [moves hands up and down], you know, a lot different. But when you're growing up, like your friends are just the guys in same age and so on, so. From Ocean Falls, except for the lady I still correspond with, you know, I don't have any friends now, but- If I were to have friends at my age, most of them would be gone.
SC: Did you get to stay in touch with friends you met during the war?
RN: Yeah, well, I did, actually. Ocean Falls, I- A small town. Every kid had to go to Sunday school. And so, we went to Sunday school, and when we were in Vancouver for about four months, I was used to going to Sunday school, so I made a point of going to Sunday school in Vancouver during the four months we were there. And I met a friend there. And when we were moved to Slocan City, during the war, in that camp, this fellow was moved to a place called New Denver which is twenty miles away, but we still kept in touch. And then, I went to University of Manitoba, one of the reasons was that he was living in Winnipeg. In Regina, there were no Japanese and I sorta still wanted to associate with some of my friends, Japanese, so we got pretty close. And he took medicine. And I took engineering. And then, eventually, he moved to San Jose, California. Well, he was practicing in rural Manitoba, but some of his associates who took medicine at the same camp- time had a clinic in San Jose, so they invited him to go to San Jose. And they still kept in touch with him. Unfortunately, he passed away a couple of years ago. So, I still kept in touch with him. And I guess that's about it. About my friends that I met after-
SC: Have you visited Japan?
RN: Yeah.
SC: Did you visit before the war?
RN: Oh, no. No, before the war I was eight years old-
SC: Yeah.

RN: -And my- my parents just couldn't afford it. And after the war, my parents did go and visit Japan a couple of times on their own, like my parents- my mother and father, yeah. But I did visit Japan on my own about five times now. And the- My wife used to be a Sumi-e artist, you know, she used to do a lot of Sumi-e. And Sumi-e society decided to take a group tour to Japan, and my wife said she was going, so I said, "Well, I'm going with you." [chuckles] "You're not going by yourself," so, that was the first time we went to Japan. It was great because we went from here to Japan, and soon as we land in Japan, we change plane, we went to Hong Kong, from Hong Kong we took the hydrofoil to Macau, we went in and out of China for one day, where Dr. Sun Yat-sen's place was. And then, the first mile from the border, Macau's paved highway, beautiful highway, all of a sudden, after one mile, was all dirt road and communes, with a little pond, and they have ducks and maybe a cow or two, you know, so on.

[130 minutes]

And then, by lunchtime, we came to a beautiful place, a Western style hotel. We had a great lunch there and I spent one day there, in China, and came back, and I- And then, we toured Hong Kong and went to Japan, and then, once- And then- and then, we took three other trips on a tour. A guided tour. And one time we went on our own. My wife's sister was not well, and as soon as the war start- At the time my wife's sister got married, my wife was just a little girl, so there was a quite an age difference. And when the war started, her sister, who was married, was moved to a sugar beet farm in Manitoba. So, she really nev- she never did really get to see her sister very much. And her husband- my wife sister's husband was a issei, and since he had to- He was really a fisherman, but he was sent to sugar beet farm in Manitoba, he was disgusted. And the sugar- the sugar beet farm, they had three children. Right after the war, he went to Japan and so on. And then later on, she wasn't well, so my wife wanted to see her sister one last time, so we went, and we saw her in Japan. And I still remember when we were leaving, you know, they cried and hugged each other, because they knew it was gonna be the last time they were gonna see each other. And yeah. But I did go thr- five times.
SC: Right. You mentioned your parents visited Japan after the war?
RN: Yep. Yep.
SC: Did they tell you what their experience was?
RN: Well, they went on a group tour, so they didn't [coughs] they didn't necessarily go and stay with their relatives for long. Yeah, just- So- They didn't say too much.
SC: Okay. Where and how did you meet your wife?
RN: Oh, how did I meet my wife. Well, I tell you- Well, when the war started, I was in

grade eight, and then grade nine, I guess, eh. And- Oh, what was the question again?
SC: Oh, like, how did you meet your wife?
[voices off camera can be heard]
RN: Oh, how did I meet my wife. Yeah, okay, so, the thing is then, I guess around grade 10, I guess the boys start to get interested in girls and so on, and then- Regina, there were no Japanese girls, and at that time- Unless you're non-Japanese, you know, it's kinda- kinda difficult to associate with them. Well, like, I've got three kids and none of them are married to Japanese now [chuckles], but- So, when I came to Toronto, oh, there were so many Japanese I met. And the people who were in my class in the- in Slocan, in the camps, they were here. And I got to meet them, so I go to know a lot of people. And then, in those days, they- there were quite a few Japanese in Toronto who just came recently from the camps in B.C. And they used to have- I joined the tennis club, badminton club, bowling league. Just to be able to meet some friends because I was going to university, I didn't have time for all this going to bowling and so on. And then, they used to have dances so frequently, organized through various Japanese committees here in Toronto. They used to have the Polish Hall, and the Ukrainian Hall, and they didn't have Japanese Cultural Centre, so they had a lot of dances. So, we used to go to dances as singles. You know, you'd go stag. And then- and then, in those days, in the dances, the boys would line up on one side of the floor, girls are lined up other side of the floor, when the music starts, you know, you have an eye on one girl and you go there, and somebody beats you to it, well, you just sort of ask somebody else as though she was the first choice and then- And we got to meet a lot of girls. Because-
SC: Was that during your university-?
RN: No, no, no.
SC: After.
RN: This is after I came to Toronto. University was- I didn't have any money, and it was strictly- Well, well like, I'll come back to dances here in Toronto, but in university, I didn't have much money and so on. And I took a girl out a couple of times, you know, but.

[135 minutes]

And then, University of Manitoba's located in the southern part of the city. And then, this girl- Well, they had a Japanese club in Winnipeg, but I didn't have much time to go there, but I knew this one girl, and I invited her to go to my- Engineer's dance. Like, it was called the Power Prom. So, I wanted to go to Power Prom with- and then, I needed a partner, so I asked this girl. And then, I asked her to go to my graduation ball, too. It was a major hotel in Winnipeg. And university was located right in the southern part of the city. And this girl lived in the northern part of the city. And after

you get off the bus, you had to walk about another quarter mile to get to her place, and I remember taking her home. And then- After the graduation ball- And I walked back and I caught the bus, and when I got back downtown, the last university bus had left. And I didn't have money to go back to the university in a taxi because it was quite far. And I spent the rest of the night, until the first bus ran to the university [chuckles]. And then, when I- I met her once when she came to Toronto- But anyways, in Toronto- Not having the time and the money also to take part in a lot of activities, back in Winnipeg. In Toronto, I had the time, and I had a few extra dollars. And they used to have regular dances, almost every month, at different places. The UNF [Ukrainian National Federation] hall. And I said, the boys lined up on one side of the room. Music starts, I don't know if you know about the Glenn Miller and Tommy Dorsey, you know, all that music. Soon as the music starts, we go across the room and ask a girl for a dance. And then, while you're dancing, you're talking to her most of the time, and then we decide, "Hey, who am I gonna take out for coffee after dancing?" And you ask a girl, "Would you like to go for a coffee? And I'll walk you home." Or "I'll take you home." So, we used to meet a lot of girls like that. And then, at this place where we were staying, the boarding house- One of my classmates from Winnipeg, we roomed together. And- Well, actually, at that time, like we wanted to eat rice, he and I, so we were getting room and board at this place, and this lady said, "Well, thirteen dollars a week. But one snag is that we only have one room and a double bed." So, I looked at him, "Ah, yeah, that's okay." So, he and I slept together on a double bed. Ah, it was okay for two guys. And yeah, we saved some money and so on, and then- Oh, we were really having a ball because they had so many da- Well, they- No- Like, my kids, they hardly know any Japanese. But in those days, most of us came from B.C. together. And they had all these dances. So, we got to meet a lot of new friends. [chuckles] A lot of girls in those days. Yeah, so, well, we were really having a ball. And then, at the badminton, I met my girl- I met my wife there. As sort of casual friends, she and her friend. And then, I used to see her at dances, and, ah, eventually after one of the dances, I used to ask her if she'd like to go for a coffee and I'd take her home. And I guess that's how I met my wife [laughs].

SC: That's sweet. When did you get married?

[voices can be heard off camera]

RN: I got married about- about- I can't remember- About 1958 or so, I think, yeah. Yeah. Yeah, because- because the other day, Monday, I went golfing with my daughter. And then, it says, "60 years old seniors. Senior rate." So, yeah, I knew my daughter was either 60 or 61. So, we- I asked for two seniors and a cart [laughs].

SC: Where did you get married?

RN: I got married at the Japanese United Church on Queen Street. Because- because I've been to the Japanese United Church pretty well all my life, and- Well, like, in Ocean Falls, we went to Japanese United Church. When I was in Slocan, they didn't

have Japanese United Church but- I guess, about age 13 you get confirmed. Confirmation.

[140 minutes]

So, a friend of mine and I, we walked all the way from Slocan to go to Lemon Creek where there was a Japanese United Church to be confirmed, and in Slocan there was no United Church. But there was an Anglican church there. So, I went to the Sunday school at the Anglican School. And then- Slocan. And when I went to Regina, I still kept going to church and then my first winter, and the first coldest day, I walked to church. I don't know, maybe, five or six blocks. At least a half a mile, I walked to the Metropolitan United Church in Regina. I came home and had frostbite [brings hands to ears]. Because Regina is so cold, I didn't realize that you could get frostbite, be- because I never- Like, you know, when I was young, I didn't wear long johns or wear toque or anything. And after- And I went to school, and my ears were all puffed up, and the kids were all laughing. But I found out the hard way, that when you live in the prairies, it gets so cold. And now, in the wintertime, I wear a toque, but I didn't even own a toque. But all the time, I just had earmuffs when I was going to university too, like, in Winnipeg. Yeah.
SC: How many children do you have?
RN: I have three children. Yeah.
SC: Do you have grandchildren?
RN: Yep.
SC: Great-grandchildren?
RN: No, no.
SC: [laughs] How many grandchildren do you have?
RN: I have one, yeah. He's a little older than you. He just graduated last year and got a permanent job [laughs]. He got a job right away, yeah, he says, "Oh, Grandpa," he says. And he told me he got a job, and he was writing his last exam, it was on a Wednesday, he says, "I got my last exam on Mon- Friday. And I got a job to go to on Monday." He was so glad when he phoned. Yeah. And yeah, he's been working about a year now. And he's got a Bachelor of Commerce, and I guess he's doing the bookkeeping for this one company. And I said, "Hey, do you-" He says he's always in a computers- Well anyways, he's got a- he's got a permanent job, anyways.
SC: That's great.
RN: He doesn't drive a car or anything because he doesn't have the money [laughs].
SC: [laughs] Can you tell me how you feel about the redress?
RN: How I feel about the redress. Well, actually, when you think back, when Canada entered the war and soon after that, all Japanese had to be removed from the West Coast of British Columbia, so many miles from the West Coast of British Columbia,

and- I think that was a terrible decision that the government made. And it's not really justified because a lot of us were born in Canada, and it was strictly racial discrimination. That's how Japanese were treated. Whereas if you take some of the European countries who were fighting against Canada, but they were not treated the same way. Therefore, I believe that redress was justified. That- Like [stammers], we shouldn't just let it go at that. And I hope that it's not gonna happen again to any other racial group in Canada.
[a fan can be heard]
SC: Yeah. Were you an active participant in the redress?
RN: Yeah, well, there was a- there was a fellow named Roger Obata, I don't know if you've heard of him. He- he was second generation, and he was a very active person in the organization in Toronto. And he used to have meetings at his home. Talk about the redress, how Japanese should go about this, and so on. So, I attended some meetings. And then, there was another fellow, who was- I think he was Vice President of a major company in Toronto, and he had access to a office with some telephones. So, some of us went to his office and manned telephones. And we- they would give us a list of people to phone, Japanese people in Toronto, so, we would phone them and tell them about the campaign and if they would be kind enough to make some donations for the redress movement and so on. So, I took part in some of those. Making phone calls and so on.
SC: Tell me about your life now. Like, well- What do you do for activity?

[145 minutes]

RN: Yeah, well, like, for activity, in the wintertime, I've joined two different Japanese bowling leagues. And- So, I go bowling two times a week. And then, when I got married- Well, I've been going to the church all my life and so on, and when we got married, we moved into a house in Etobicoke. And they were just opening up a church near where I live. And this neighbour of ours, oh, you know, she was very active at the time, and she invited me to go to church with her. Oh, it was only about two blocks away, so I joined this church. I joined this United Church in Toronto. And they just celebrated the 61st anniversary and I'm a chartered member of the church. Imagine, 61 years! Yeah. And then, we had- we had dinner, a special gathering, and so on. But last year or so, I don't know whether it's my age or not, I don't go as often. But until then, I've been going to church, and I said, I've been a charter member. And as you get older, you know, they- During the service, you have to stand, you know, during the service. And then during the service you gotta stand up and down at least a half a dozen times, and I thought, "Well, I'm more comfortable just staying at home." And I have a neighbour, two or three doors away, same age as me, and we're both charter members. There's only about five or six charter members after 61

years, but we both stopped going regularly. And then, summertime, the- about the activities? Now, I've been going golfing. And, as a matter of fact, I went golfing with my daughter on Monday [laughs]. And then- and then like, we're gonna be golfing in this Japanese Cultural Centre tournament in September. And, oh, she called me the other day, she wants to go again. And the reason why I went golfing with her is that my friend, who lives two or three doors away- We've- we've known each other since the AV Roe days and the Atomic Energy days. He and I go golfing regularly every week. But his arm was kinda sore the other day, so I asked Karen if she'd like to go golfing and she really enjoyed it. Now she wants to go regularly, but I still have my friend that I go golfing with. She's not really a golfer, but she's good in sports because- Actually, she was the female athlete of the year in the high school one year. And she's not a golfer, but she can drive the ball off the tee quite well. Like, she hasn't got the short game. You know, if you don't play regularly, you know, when your- when the ball is much closer, you know, ball either goes way past or whatever, but I guess she wants to start golfing. But I go golfing every week. So, that sort of keeps me in shape, anyways. And so, I do take part in some activit- but staying at home in the evening by yourself, nobody to phone, you know. It gets pretty lonely in the evening, but you don't wanna be watching TV all the time, and I try to keep busy. But it's no fun living by yourself at home. When you get older. Yeah.
SC: Yeah. Well, tell me about your volunteering time at the JCCC [Japanese Canadian Cultural Centre].
RN: Well, I don't- I'm not that active because- because one thing, I come here because I get a ride with Jan[chuckles slightly]. And I don't drive the car on the 401 or the Gardiner anymore. I just drive locally when I go bowling and this and that. So, I can't drive. So, I can't take part actively. Besides, I haven't been that active, but I do come every Wednesday to the archives because a lot of old pictures that I could put information on the pictures. And also, the group pictures, we take a Xerox copy, and they put numbers on the faces, and I take a list, and I can put names across the numbers. And just the other day, there was a lady I used to know, passed away a year or two ago, and her daughter was cleaning out the house. Her mother- her mother's house. And she came out with a bunch of photographs of her mother's and a lot of them were from Ocean Falls and so on. And Slocan. And I just brought these in. And next little while, I'll be working on those pictures, the group pictures. I'll be putting names on. And I also come in to see the people in the archives. Now, that's not much of a activity and so on, but it's something for me to look forward to every week, to meet everybody.

[150 minutes]

At least, to talk to somebody. I can't talk to anybody when I'm staying at home by myself. But I'm glad that Jan gives me a ride.
SC: When did you first become involved with the JCCC?
RN: I really can't remember. I can't remember, but I have not been a real active member at all, no.
SC: How did you get acquainted with the archival group here?
RN: Well, I can't remember exactly, but they used to have the archive group meeting on this floor, second floor, there's an office right at the end where there's windows on three sides. And I remember going there and helping to identify names of people from Slocan and so on. Just the odd time. And- I don't know how I got [chuckles] coming to this archive group but it's bene about a couple of years. About two or three years, yeah. And then fortunately, because I can get a ride with Jan and I'm not comfortable driving on the highway anymore.
SC: So far, can you tell me about, like, one of your fond memories at the JCCC?
RN: At the JCC-? Yeah, well, like, actually, as I told you, I'm from Ocean Falls. And- Oh, not really the JCCC, but I organised the Ocean Falls reunion and just the other day, this lady was cleaning out her mother's belongings and she gave me lot of pictures [on?] Ocean Falls and so- I did organize a couple of Ocean Falls reunion. And the first reunion was held at, I don't know exactly when, but it was at the old Cultural Centre. And then, I brought in the group picture today, actually. We took a picture in front of the- And I'll be working on those. I've asked Carol to Xerox them, I'll put names on the faces. And then, I organized a- Last one was at Momiji. And, in fact, I was surprised that we were able to get so many people. And some came from out of town, actually, the first one. All the way from Alberta, yeah. Alberta and Montreal, and so on.
SC: Are your children interested in learning about your history?
RN: I really don't know, but-.
SC: [chuckles] Do they ask you questions?
RN: No, not necessarily. But- I don't think they were really involved with the Japanese community and they're- All three of them are married, but they're not married to Japanese, you know. But then- But- My daughter's starting to get involved and they had a Momiji gala here. I don't know when. A couple of years ago? And my daughter was involved in organizing the gala that they held here for the Momiji. And then- then she recently told me she was on the audit committee for the Cultural Centre. And [chuckles]- So, she said, "Dad, I won't lie, I better join the JC Cultural Centre." So, she got her membership recently [chuckles].
SC: Do you tell them about the hardships that you overcame, and also the good memories that you have?
RN: I really don't know whether I talk too much about my past, you know. And then, they- Like I said, they hardly know any Japanese. Their friends are pretty well all

non-Japanese. And I don't make a effort to kind of tell them about my past or anything, but they have a general idea of what happened to us, why we're in Toronto when I was born out in British Columbia. But they have a general idea. And I purchase a lot of books on, you know Japanese Canadian history, but I've got them at home, but I don't- I don't think any of them read any of the books.
SC: Right. What would you like your children and grandchildren to learn from you?
RN: Learn from me?
SC: Yeah.
RN: I- I don't know, I- That's kind of tough question to ask, but-

[155 minutes]

Well, like, I've always emphasized to them that if you- if it's possible, you should go for higher education, post-secondary education. And they all got post-secondary education and I know some people that their families are well-off, but their children, once they finish high school, they don't want to continue the education and so on. But, you know, I pretty well told them, maybe indirectly, that post-secondary education is very important. And- So, they're all doing quite well.
SC: Yeah. Is there anything else you want to share with us today?
RN: Well, I don't really know [picks up documents and shuffles through them].
SC: Well, how about if you can tell me what your favourite story- that you can remember.
RN: My favourite story.
SC: Yeah.
RN: I don't know whether I have a favourite story or not. But there's a- It's not my favourite story, but I just want to mention one thing. That when I was going to school, in high school, when I first moved from Slocan to Regina, I was in grade 10. And the reason why we moved to Regina was that my dad had an old friend from way back when they were teenagers in Ocean Falls and he worked in a tire shop for him and so on. And then, I started to work in the tire shop for a couple of years fixing flat tires and so on. And then, I learned how to drive there, too, because I worked in a gas station. I was driving the car in and out of the garage to wash it and so on. And then, I- After that- Well, while I was going to high school and all that, you just couldn't get good jobs because jobs were kinda scarce for then- But I had to earn money to go to school. And all the jobs I had were construction labour. And that's a tough job, because you have the carpenters and bricklayers and they do the job, they don't even want you to use a hammer to pound the nails, it's against the union. But I- I really worked hard, and you can just imagine yourself on a hot summer day, you're outside. Hauling lumber from one pile to the other [video glitches], or- And getting the mortar for the bricklayers and make sure the bricklayer has enough bricks on

the scaffold and so on. So, I worked at pretty hard jobs. And then- Then when I finished- After my third year of university, I applied to get a job with the government, federal government. And they offered me a job to spend the summer up in Alaska Highway, on the survey party. And so, I- And then they offered my friend a job too at the same time, and then we were to join the same survey party. So, I spent the summer up in the- up on the Alaska Highway. And you heard in the news recently about the hot springs? I've been to the hot spring there. And when we found the hot spring, we heard about the hot spring, and oh, there was about a half of dozen of us on the survey party, we went there, and we tied the rope around one of the guy's waists, you know, and then, like, he was gonna go into the pool to swim in the hot spring water. In case, you know, you couldn't get out, you know,- We had a kind of safety rope around him, but that hot spring was in the news recently. Yeah. In fact, I've been there, and I spent the summer up on that- up on this Alaska Highway. And- And a survey party sounds like a pretty good job. But- Sort of getting technical, but they built Alaska Highway during the war, in a hurry. Then, if you were to buy land in the Alaska Highway, you had to have a reference point to know exactly where the property is, so our job was to build triangulation stations along the Alaska Highway. So, every 50 miles you have a spot, and we know exactly where it is on the- because of survey. First summer, a crew would just cut the trees and bushes all in a straight line for a half a mile. Then, you would take a tape and you would measure the half a mile. Exactly. The distance between the two points. And then, after that, we would build in stations. So, as long as you had one side [and?] angles, and then you can calculate the distance. You know, your trigonometry and so on.

[160 minutes]

And what they would do would be that every 50 miles when they build these stations, they would have a light shining, and then you could see the other station. With the light and then with the [transit?] you can measure the angles. And where the land is flat, they would build towers and put the light on top of the towers because you might not be able to see somewhere 50 miles away even it's- So, then, when we got into the- The summer I worked for the survey, [geological?] survey, we're just getting into the foothills of the Rocky's. And then it sort of gets hilly. And then we would try to find the highest spot in every location, every 50 miles. And then once we find that, we had to cut down the trees, you know, like, you know, in a straight line [clears throat several times] so that the surveyors can see the light shining at the highest spot and so on. And- Well, that's the kind of job I was doing in the summertime. It's kind of interesting, got to see the Alaska Highway, and it's in the news recently.

SC: Yeah.
RN: Yeah. So- But- The- I've had some pretty tough jobs. Well, after I graduated, I was- I had a pretty satisfying job. I had pretty interesting career. But until then, boy. My hands are bleeding [grasps hands] , you know, working as a construction labourer and so on, so. My parents gave me good advice that, "Hey, if you want to better yourself, you know, then, post-secondary education is very important. So, if you can, you know, you have to go to school, you know."
SC: What do you feel are your greatest achievements?
RN: [laughs] I don't know. I don't know if I have any great achievements or not.
SC: Oh. You have so many.
RN: But I can say that I've had a very interesting career, so I'm very thankful that I did go to school, and I had a very interesting career. And then, then, also, I'm glad that all my kids went to- for post-secondary education, and they're all doing quite well. Yeah.
SC: Okay. Well, I think that's it.
RN: That's it, oh [laughs].
SC: Yeah, we went through six [unclear].
RN: Ohh. Well, I hope I didn't make a fool of myself [laughs].
SC: Noo.

[End Part One]