

Interview with Mrs. Yoshihara by Donna Carbone
October 17, 1988
#1091

*Mrs. George off
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before Goshakawa.
They sell garden
plants.*

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Los Angeles, California. What date? October 17, 1914. October
17? Huh, huh. Then today is your birthday. Happy Birthday.
Well, thank you. My gosh, well that's unusual.

Okay, what was your father's name? Hisakich Ishii. Okay, and
your mother's name? Matsu Ishii. What did your dad do, Mrs.
Yoshihara? My father had a pool hall and barber shop in Los Angeles
with my mother. How many brothers and sisters did you have? I
have six brothers and two sisters. Okay, so eight children all together.
Then at that time, 1914, my brother, one of the brother is one year
older than I am. Then here comes us, twins. Twins. So my mother
couldn't take care, so she sent twins to Japan, see, and then my
mother and father didn't take us, his friend took us to Japan on
the boat. And this friend is, he was looking for wife, and there
wasn't very many Japanese girls in the United States so my fathers
says, I have a niece in Japan so you go see and if you go see her
I do the fare for the boat to Japan. So he decided to take us to
Japan when I was three months old. Oh my gosh. There was lucky,
there was a young couple in the boat, they helped him with the
babies. Both of us was breast feeding so didn't take no milk bottle
so just had to let it go for overnight and then finally they took
bottles. My gosh. Two three month old babies? And then one went
to, my brother went to my father's side's grandma and I went to my
mother's side and it's about ten mile apart. I don't know when my
brother died. He died when he was little. They never told me any-
thing about it so my grandmother raised me until I was 13 years old.
Now when I was six years old, and my brother was seven, and I had
my younger brother was three years old, they all came, the whole
family came to Japan one year for vacation and my mother and father
decided, oh instead of just playing around, let's do some business
so they bought the fish market and they had a fish market down about
oh, five miles from my, see I used to live in the country, so about
five mile from my home. I used to like a lot of seaweed, so my
mother says come on and we'll give you seaweed, so I go over there
and spend overnight and next morning I sneak out from the house and
waiting outside for somebody. Once a day somebody go shopping and
go back to the country so I followed them and went back to the farm.
My gosh. My mother was looking all over for me. I told my grandma,
I says, why that lady won't go home to the United States, why don't
she go home to America. I used to call my grandma my mother. Why
sure, that's who you knew as your mother. Yes.

So, when I got thirteen years old, I mean, they went back. Then they
wanted me to go back with them because she knows I'm not close to her.
So she asked my grandfather for the birth certificate so I could go
back and my grandfather says, no, you don't have to take her back.
He don't want to fight with me. No, that's right.

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So, when I got thirteen years old, I mean, they went back. Then they wanted me to go back with them because she knows I'm not close to her. So she asked my grandfather for the birth certificate so I could go back and my grandfather says, no, you don't have to take her back. He don't want to fight with me. No, that's right.

When I got thirteen then, my grandfather died when I was about twelve years old and I got thirteen and my grandma getting old so she write to my mother, she says I think you better take your daughter to America because I'm gettin' old and I have no responsibility for a teenager. So they decided if I don't come back in a year why I've lost my citizenship because I was born in United States. Oh, that's right. So they decide to come. So before, when they come for vacation, they leave my brother in Japan because they wanted him to have a Japanese education. So, he was seven years old when he came back to Japan and he went to high school. He graduated high school when he was fourteen years old. Then we both came to the United States. I cried every night. Oh, I can imagine. I cried every night. Why I came, I don't understand, I can't speak, I don't even understand ABC at that time, now they have class for that. But at that time there was no English. Oh, that had to be terribly hard on you. Besides missing your grandma. I had to work so hard when I came over here, right away, next day because my mother was expecting baby see, I came in May and the baby came in July. Then my father had the flu or something, he was sick for a long, long time. I have to take care of him and then I had to take care of the baby and you know. In Japan I never even had to boil the water. Right. That had to be a really hard transition for you. And this was in Los Angeles that you came to? Yes, right.

So then when, two, three years, I had to go to school. Start from the first grade with the English and then arithmetic is the same as the United States so I go sixth grade and then when it comes to reading I had to come down to first grade. That was hard. Yes. You bet. I would get so nervous, I didn't want to go. Oh, sure, I don't imagine. With the littler kids, you being older. Yes, yes. The little kids make fun of me, you know. So, I wanted to quit school when I was sixteen, I wanted to quit school and a no, it was not even sixteen and the school says that I'm under age so you cannot quit. But I had excuse, I get sick quite often because of nervous I think. So I excused for that and then they send school teacher for two hours every morning. To tutor you, to kind of work with you. Yes, that's right. Then when I get a little bit older, my mother says go find a job because she don't want to keep me in her shop because there was pool hall and barber shop, see. The pool hall is a lot of Mexicans, young people come. So she was afraid, so she says go find a job, so I went to find a job. Supermarket. I used to work for a Japanese small place and then pretty soon I had another job, bigger market, supermarket and the owner is Greek people. So I have to use English, no matter how, you know. That's the way I learned more and more and then I could read, you know. Not in school, outside I learned. Just were forced into it. Yes, yes. My gosh. And sometime a customer would say something different and I couldn't understand them and I would come home and asked my brothers what this means. That's the way I learned. And you were only about sixteen or seventeen years old? Yes, huh, huh. My goodness Mrs. Yoshihara, that's a story right there. Yes.

I came to the United State in 1927 and since then my husband came to the United States in 1927, November and I came in May. My husband used to live about, oh, probably 10 miles from my mother's place and he used to have a farm and my father and him was good friends, you know, they know each other. So once in awhile he used to come and visit us. That was when I was fourteen or fifteen, I was young yet, he always tells me, he always used to tell me, when I come and visit you, you had pigtails and your nose was running. He used to make fun of me all the time. He was teasing you. Then after that, I was still working, I wasn't interested because he was a little older than I am. He was about eight years older than I. But pretty soon when I get seventeen, eighteen, he used to come around and, you know, wants to visit me and then we got friends and so I knew him about seven years before we got married. I got married when I was 20 and he was 28 and we got married. So I just stay with my mother about, I would say about six or seven years, that's all. And then you were married? And did you live there in Los Angeles after you were married? Yes, huh, huh.

He had a big dance. When he came to my place and was going home at midnight and on the way, he had a brand new Buick, used to have a Buick, a big one with spare tire in the back and a black one. I still remember. He had a brand new car and he was going home, he have to go home about fifty miles, he used to have a farm in Orange County. Used to be a, right now is Disneyland. Is that right? Huh, huh. He used to have a strawberry farm, so he hired a lot of people, and the strawberry farm you have to give boarding and sleep over then. Right. So he used to have a lot of single people and his father used to work for him. Anyway, he got accident, he was I guess asleep, he run into that underpass. Oh my gosh. I don't know how many times and he cut his, he really damaged his insides and then, so, he was getting out from the car and here comes the Japanese old truck with a lot of produce, he had a, and he helped him in this old car and he took him to the nearest hospital, so he was in the country hospital and then the doctor and nurse bandaged up him. He says he won't live till morning, he's very bad, damaged inside. So they call his father to come and see him because he might not live long. They called relatives. So my father-in-law came and relatives come and they says, let's get another doctor and we know this doctor died a long time ago but he's really good on operations. So let's call him so they called this doctor and the doctor came and see my husband, he's got all bandaged up and doctor says, cut this all off, this bandage off tonight, I'm going to operate on him right now. Oh my gosh. I don't think he'll live if you leave it that way. They operated, two more doctors came and helped. So doctor give him a transfusion for the blood and he got well. Boy, you were lucky that he called in the second doctor. Yes. That's something we have to do now too. He had stitches from here to here. Oh my. He was a very lucky man.

Before we go any further. What is your husband's name? Oh, yeah, okay. My husband's name is Yasuparo Yoshihara. That's amazing. So he lost the farm and everything because he was gone. Sick. So he came into my place and my brother used to have a produce business so he helped us all that time. Even before we were married.

Well, my mother kind of forced me to marry because it had been to long to be friends that way and I think somebody else was trying to come and asked for me. You know what I mean, they wanted me. So my mother was worried. So I told him, he said go tell him we're goin' get married. I told him and he says well I was waiting for till we get enough money, you know, he says I don't have money because my brother never pay him. He just worked for nothing. We both worked for nothing. I told 'em, I says since we got married, we need some money so pay us and he says yeah, yeah but he never pay us. So, we didn't have money but he says okay we're going to get married. So we told my mother that we're going to get married and then you know what he did? Everybody knows that we don't have money, all our friends, he invite 300 people in the restaurant, it was a fancy restaurant, Japanese restaurant and we borrow our wedding gown and flowers, everything. Flowers were plastic. My husband rented a tuxedo and everything and that time I think he pay about \$10 for tuxedo, shoes and everything. Yeah. We got married, not in the church, by the judge. We asked how much and the judge says anything you could donate like -----. Five dollar. We give him five dollar. Then we go married and we were still staying with my folks and keep helping them. Then one day my mother got mad. See the Japanese people supposed to be, see the father is the head of the house. Right. So father goes in the bath first, usually, and then the other kids go in. But the father wasn't in the bath first, see my husband didn't know and he went in first. Oh, oh. So she got mad, we got in a fight that night and then my husband says, it's your mother so you could stay if you want to, if you want to come with me fine, if you want to stay over there fine. I say, I'm going to go with you. So I went with him and we went to Los Angeles and stay over night in the hotel and then next morning, I don't know why it happened. Next morning, well this car belongs to my brother and he's got overcoat that belongs to him too. We come down and crossed street, in front of theater, we parked the car over there and there was two Mexicans standing over there. We didn't know and we never thought about it. My husband took the marriage license and money and put it in my brother's overcoat and put it in the car and then we went and had coffee. And my money, the license and the overcoat is gone. Oh boy that fast. Yes, that fast. Well my mother or nobody knows because we just stay.

Before that, we didn't have enough money to go on a honeymoon so my mother says, you wait for one week then I give you some money and we didn't wait so we can't go home. So we spent the night at a friend's house for four or five days then we went home and pretend like nothing happened. So my mother never knew it. My brother too. He never asked for the overcoat either. For the overcoat. So he didn't know. They're gone. You know he died already so anyway that happened and we didn't get to go no place and we just came home and then we moved out because we can't do that forever.

So we move out and then my, I had a job, works in a produce place and both of us all we know is run produce business. That's all we know. Sure. So I got a job, we used to live in an apartment, which takes me one hour to go my market and then I go East and he goes West, one hour. We didn't have no car, see, so we're lucky because the boss living near me, so he give me a ride and then my husband has a friend at the produce business he's workin' for over there so he let him use the car. So that lucky. Yes, that worked out okay for you.

Then I was expecting already, the oldest boy, and I had morning sickness and my husband came home and he says, oh you quit working tomorrow. So I says, why? I have to work because no money. No, no we're going to start business. How much you have in the bank. I says, I have \$60. So he says, draw out that money tomorrow. I asked him how much is the rent for this business place. \$60 rent. He says he goin' to start business. I say, how can you. He said leave it to me, don't worry, I could do it. So I brought the money and give to him and then he went and paid the rent and he had a friend that was a carpenter, he made a table and everything and he rent a register from the company and then he used to work for the wholesale market. So he goes and asked the boss, let me have all the vegetable and goods for one week, then I pay you by the week, see. Then next week you let me have and then I pay you the next week. Sure. That's the way we started. My gosh. It sounds like Mr. Yoshihara was the one that ----- . Yes, he never scared of nothing. He was not afraid and that's good. No, not afraid of a thing. You sound like me, oh wait a minute. No, he's not.

Then we went to Los Angeles and then we did all kinds of business. One time my husband, when I have the second child, my husband had three stores, produce stores. He couldn't make it because a, so he had to sell all three stores and we got broke. My gosh. So, my husband worked for the friend, driving truck but at that time for a whole week we had a big rain so we had a flood all over so he lost his job and then he was, he didn't do nothing, he was just staying home and playing cards with friends. I didn't have no money and I had to go borrow some groceries, you know. So I keep saying pretty bad and my father-in-law was with us, so he decides, okay we'll go to the country and we're going to go into farming. We'll find a job. So he went to his friends farm and the friend says, yeah we've got plenty of work but I cannot pay you. My husband says, that's okay, you just give us groceries for the three of us. My father-in-law, no two kids, so four of us. I got two kids so they gave us real small chicken, used to be chicken raised in there and we cleaned it up and we got in there, just one big double bed and we have stove from the city, you know, we had a stove. That's all. We used to have a stove you could a, it was a real nice stove called O'Keefe and Merriott, or something the company. This stove has a cover, after you use it you can cover it. It had a real nice white cover, you know. My gosh. You just cover it.

Then when you want to use it, you just open it. My gosh. So we made that for the table. Sure. And the beds for the chair. Oh, my gosh. We set on the beds and then we had the table. Eat off the stove. Huh, huh. But we can't cook because no gas in that house. Oh. We have a stove, nice brand new stove, but no gas. So I have to go to the bosses' house and cook my meals and rainy days I have to put the umbrella and come through oh a maybe about 20 steps. So that wasn't too bad, you know, it's close. My gosh. We didn't have no car so the boss goes, the day off was Saturday, the boss goes to the town. They had about six kids too. We stay home and read the books or something. And this was in Los Angeles but in the country? Yes, Los Angeles.

Then pretty soon, we worked about one year for them and that boss says you could do the farm, three acres, my three acres you can use it. He let us use his tractor and everything. So that was a very depression time, 1935, see. Everything was so cheap but we managed it and then next year the friend came over and he says, you want to buy a farm, seven acres he says my friend has seven acres and has everything in it but he can't pay the rent so he let it go. My husband says well how much he want for it? If it is no more than \$400 because I can't afford to buy it. And you know he says only \$150. Oh my gosh. For seven acres. Seven acres and a lot of Weeds growing. The weeds is like this. So my father-in-law and I and my husband we pulled all the weeds every day, we worked so hard. You know how much we made? \$2000. Is that right? \$2000 with \$150. We had a horse too. It was a lucky seven. That's right, that's right and hard work. That was something.

Then one day, that seven acres was really nice because all sand, see. Grandy sand mostly. So that one year we had a lot of rain. Everybody else's crop is going bad, bad because it gets rotten and ours didn't. No, because you had that ----. Yeah. We made money on that too, see. Then my husband says, seven acres not enough so let's have some more. Twenty acres more. So we have to, this seven acres, we have to drive about ten miles to another place for twenty acres and we grow nothing but the celery. Then one day my friend came over and this friend is or has never been married and he was about eighty something years old. He was doing a little farm so we let him, we give him a little bit of place then and let him do the farm. I think he has sugar diabetes or something because he was getting blind, he couldn't see. One morning he came over and he asked for my husband, so I says he went already to work. Then he was smoking, you know, then he went into my barn, horses, you know, horse was in there. I think he dropped a cigarette there or he throw a cigarette and you know there is a lot of hay and that caught fire, then he was gone already. Oh boy, oh boy. It started burning, I was at home with the kids, so this barn is very old so it just burned like nothing. Went fast. And somebody called the firemen and they came over and they say this is not our district so we're not going to do it. We're going back. Just let it burn down. Yeah. So the next door neighbor came and tried to help us and I hollered, you know, and my husband heard my voice for ten miles. So

he turned to run instead and he had a truck with him, he had a pickup with him. He forgot about it. He just took off. He just started running and Oh, I have a truck, he had to go back again and get that truck. Get the truck. By the time he comes home, it's all burned. Well it was lucky that nothing else went, just the barn. Yes, right by the house, too, you know and I had baby in there and I was so excited, you know, and I was scared. I hollered and then pretty soon I went down and I can't walk anymore. Just nerves. Frightened to death. Yes, huh, huh. I'm that way. Oh my gosh.

And then pretty soon, the seven acres, we're really lucky I think, in a way, you know we was very poor but we was really lucky. We had a friend that was a broker and he used to come around and buy vegetables from us and then he would sell it to the wholesale and he used to come all the time. When we was short money, my husband asked him and he give us \$2000 right away. My gosh. With his check and he was really a nice man. He used to come and tell us when to cut. He says, oh celery is going to be up this week so cut it. That's good that you had him, you know. Then next week it grow so keep it. That's the way he show us. That's good. All the way till the war start. So we made the money so we give him back that \$2000 and interest. He didn't take no interest. My gosh, just a good friend, a very good friend. Yeah. Then we all had to separate so I don't know where he went. Is that when the war started? Yeah.

Do you want to talk about that at all? Yeah. We used to live here and the other farmer lived on this street. This guy had to go to the camp. Oh, you mean where they just divided the lot. They divided you? Yeah, huh, huh, like this. Like this street, this is Sepulveda they call this Sepulveda, this is Jefferson and we used to live here and my friend lives over here. Just on the other side, just caddy corner from you. Yeah, huh, huh. So they had to go. They all have to go, their families. We are the only ones left and then after you moved to the camp you cannot, Japanese cannot pass this street. Cannot go this street so we have to go this street to go to my 20 acres, you know. We cannot go, we cannot go. It's a boundary line. They just put up a boundary line and said that's it. Yeah, yeah. So we cannot go to work, so we just have to wait till the next evacuation. So we asked that office can we now go to my farm? So we got to go with the other people. One office people says, why you people want to go so fast to the camp, that's not a good place. Why you want to go? We said well we can't go to work. Did they have armed guards there? Yes. They just set it up. They just came in one day and that was it. Yeah, that's it. They take the toughest people, you know. They hire anybody, I think and they're not policeman or anything. No, it's like when they did that here to the miners, you know, my dad said just thugs, that's what they were. Yeah, a cop, like a Japanese school teachers, Japanese Association President, and all the Japanese top heads. They took 'em. They didn't even tell goodbye to their families. Some people didn't even shave. They just took 'em to the jail, see. Up on the ----, not close to here. They went way up on the east coast. The family don't know where they are. It's terrible. Yes, it's an injustice. Bad. That's right. It was sad. So we went to ask the office to take us too and my husband was,

he was the vice president of the Japanese Association. So we was afraid that they might come after him, so I have a suitcase packed, his clothes, and put underneath the bed. Wait for everyday. But they never came, they never came to him. So we says, we want to go to the camp, so we went to the office and asked them to put us in. So they did. And we went in that Santa Nita horse races and some of my cousins had to get in the place the horse used to ---. The stall. Yes, it stinks, they clean it up but it stinks. Why sure, you can't take that out. Then we was lucky because they built like a garage like, temporary, right away, you know, put the boards on so the floor is dirt and we got in alright because it was summer time, see. It was May when we got in, so it was okay. Then one mess hall, there's ???? mess hall, and one mess hall takes care of 400 people so we have to line up so many blocks for your turn and my son, he was about seven years old, he used to cry, he didn't want to go eat and some old ladies fainted because it was July, you know, too hot. Outside you have to wait. Especially in the breakfast, like pancake breakfast, oh that's terrible. My husband used to work in the kitchen. He used to sweat and all the sweat goes in the ----- Oh, yeah.

What happened to your farm? There was no one to take care of it. Just had to give up. All those people, all the farmers around there just lost it. Yeah, just lost it. But we didn't own the land, we just leased it and we have to give up our icebox, we have to give up our car, tractor and everything. Everything. I throw my new radio in the outside toilet and everything. We just had clothes, thats all. Course I had money because this young guy helped me, you know, I had \$7000 with me but my husband says take it, I mean don't spend it. No, and don't say anything. So we took 'em but we went to the horse races place, you know, this guy, manager or somebody takes care of the a, you know groceries. Well there was, he was stealing the beef and stuff. Sure, in all things like that you have that. Yeah, and he was selling. Blackmarketing. Yeah. Then we just had chicken with the bone and noodles. Chicken with noodles on a big plate and a jello with it. See. Dessert is the jello and the chicken and noodles is hot and jello melts in that. We have to eat this. Yeah.

How long did you have to stay there? I think we stayed about, not to long, about two months. That's long enough. Yes. Then they find out he got it so he put him in the jail. But anyway, he stole and the truck driver steal so we don't have anything. That's right. It's the same thing that happens with the Indians. No, really, you know. Then they move us to divide, you know, some people go to Arizona, some people go to Montana, and some people goes to Wyoming and us goes to over here, just in Colorado. They just moved you from where you were living, just moved you to another camp? Yes. Everybody have to go. So my cousin went to Arkansas. My mother went to Arizona and we came to Colorado, Amache, that's near by Holly, Colorado. Oh. What is the name of it again? Amache.

Amanti? Amache. Amache. It's near a, about 14 miles from Lamar and about maybe 10 miles from Holly, Colorado. It's hot desert. Yes, there's nothing out there? No, no nothing. Rattlesnakes. Lot of rattlesnakes. Yeah, sagebrush and stuff. Sagebrush. Yeah. And the wind blows all that dust and the sand and you can't hardly see. Then barbed wire like jail, exactly like jail and four corners have the big lights flashing all night long, 24 hours. My, my, my. And there's a guard right there in the front gate, he has a gun, you have to have permission to go in and permission to go out. See. For a crime that you never even committed? Yeah, right. Then one day. We was really lucky. One day we talked to a, somebody was talking about Colorado can raise the celery. See we had the celery farm. Right. So we went to the manager of the food, you know, and we told them let us do some farm, you got empty farm over here. Let us do the farm. Mr. Manamoto is a friend of ours, she had four kids and I had three kids, so okay you try. So they give us two farm house. When you were there at ---? Yes, huh, huh. So we moved out from the camp. That was good. Yeah. Then we're in the farm and my husband used to get paid \$18 a month and I get paid \$16 a month because I cook for a family and then I get clothes money for the clothes and money for the cigarettes and stuff. Then I get a little money for the groceries because we're separate see. You know I saved money. I saved quite a bit. Then the peoples come from the camp every Sunday and bring a little candy for the kids. They went out to buy beer for them so we used to buy a beer for them. Anyway it was nice. Then after the three months, I think we stayed nine months in there. Then they said they want us to go out. It's too much for the other men to take care of. So they want us to go out. They didn't even give us job or anything. They said go out, go out. That's it, huh? There's a job in the beet field, you go out. The Japanese people don't like to stay in the welfare and stuff, you know. They think they're shamed. So they want to go out and kids getting bad and my brother is getting bad so they want to go out, have a nice education. So, of course, you know, so we my husband went to the outside and come to Denver and went to the friends place and talk about it and he got old truck. He bought old truck and he come back to the camp and he says to me, we are going to go out to Brighton and ?????????????? farm land. We're going to help them and they're going to find us a place to farm. So we put everything ----, then we even put the camp's bed and you know, comfort and everything. Army comfort, it was a nice one. We went to the office and we says we're going to go out today, I mean tomorrow, and he says, what's the matter with this? You got bed, you got comfort, that belongs to Army, you're not supposed to take those. My husband says, okay if you don't want us to take we're going to stay here. We're not going to move out. So he says, tomorrow morning you go ----- before they, before anybody comes you just sneak out. Just go out. So that's what we did. We had everything. We had an old sewing machine they let us use, you know, that all belongs to them. Well yeah. And I got it. That's alright, you deserved it.

He says, you can't go with that. No, if you don't let us, we're going to stay.

So after they just picked you up from Los Angeles and put you out there in Holly and then all of sudden they just told you, now you can go out? Yeah. That's all. Not, I'm sorry, just nothing, now you can go. No. If they want to let us go they should have had a job for us. That's right. They should of gone to the other farm or something and you have a job over there, you go. Yes. No, huh, huh. And to separate families, you know. That's right.

Then later, I think, we went out of camp. The people they took to somewhere, East Coast I think, they come home. But a lot of them died. That was sad. That was sad. Yes, yes. You wonder how something like that can happen, don't you? Yeah, right. I had never heard of it and then they started having it on TV and that and I would listen to it. I sat there and I thought how does that happen in a country like ours. Yeah. You know you could expect it in a communist country but you can't expect that where you're supposed to be free. Right, right. But it can happen.

Then you know, I forgot to tell you when we was in the camp my husband, they had a --. After they put us in Amache they had a mess hall, a small mess hall, lot of 'em, they say 12K, 12F and all this and then so many, I don't know how many was, it was not 400, is only I'd say maybe not even 100, you know, for the one mess hall. My husband used to be the cook and he, everybody see, everybody Japan will win, Americans going to lose. American money no good so let's spend it. Everybody spending, have nice clothes, go to the town and buy something, you know. But my husband says don't you do that. We're the only ones, we look like tramps or something see. I had \$7000 in a fruit jar, see, and then I dig the hole. There was this barrack was almost like a garage but the floor has one layer of brick. I could take this brick out and dig the hole and then put the jar in there. For nine months. You're lucky. You're lucky nobody found it or took it from you. Then I come over here and I opened the jar and that's all mold. Oh yeah, all moldy. Oh no. Yeah. But you know I can use it. I could wipe them off and use them. My gosh. Then I put that money in the Brighton farm. Then we did the farm.

Now you had Eugene. Yes I had Eugene, Joyce and Jimmy. Three kids. Then we came to Brighton and then we did a couple of years of farm over there. One year we had a partner too but we had a farm and then my friend says, over here in the greenhouse, somebody wants to sell greenhouse for \$5000 and that greenhouse was almost break down, you know. The greenhouse wasn't good, but okay, so we bought it. And when was that Mrs. Yoshihara, do you remember? 1944, I think, 1942 or '44. Then we start a fruit, no before the fruit stand, we rent a farm in Longmont and we used to go farm for a couple of years. Then after that we started the fruit stand. Now this is funny, no you didn't born that time. 1942. I was born in '42. So you was

a baby. Yeah. I think your father or mother knows. Oh, I'm sure because dad was born here. See that place was a big ditch in the front and that house, the flower shop wasn't like that. They had a great big seed house. They sell flower seeds and everything. Then sometimes they had flowers over there too. Where the greenhouse is now? Yes. They had a great big, let's see. You know the place I have parking place, that was a big seed house there. They had a big ditch and all the water from the city runs over there to the Banecks and my place. You know what my husband did? He brings loads and loads and loads of junk and fill that ditch up and put the dirt so the cars can pass, you know. The city came in and got mad. Oh, I'm sure. He did it without telling them, see. That's alright. My husband says, already done. He says to him in broken English, don't you want this place nice. City goin' be nice clean place and this ditch is so dirty so I fill it up and made real nice. The city says what this city water goes then. Where does it go. You fill that ditch up. That's city water that goes there. But it's to late. It's all done, finished. So my husband says why don't you give us a pipe and we're going to put the pipe underneath the greenhouse and we're going to do that so you bring the pipe. So they did. Great big pipe, cement type. Yeah, like culverts. Yeah. Great big culverts. Then we put it inside. So then the water ran down through there. Yeah. He says, go ahead, go ahead. You put me in jail, you put all my family in jail too. In broken English, pretty good. That's alright, he got his point across.

At one time, I think, there was a mine down in that area too. Was the mine there when you ---. The Strathmore, wasn't it? I heard the mine was on Simpson St. Oh, okay. Then you more or less just sold vegetables then? Yeah, fruits and vegetables. We tear that old building out. I think my son still has a picture. Oh, if you have pictures like that. We have a camera that we can take a picture of it and that way you can keep your picture but we can have a picture to go with your file. Oh, okay. I'm going to ask my son. Okay.

Now did you farm any of that land there? No, we farm in Longmont. In Longmont. Then afterward we decide to do the produce so we make the house, tin house and then one day, it was summer, we was doing the fruit stand. One summer old white man came and my husband was outside and he says --, we had a stack full of orange box, and he says to my husband, would you trade me. I have a lot of apple box and would you trade me with the orange box you have there. My husband says I don't need your apple box, what are you going to do? He says well my wife used to work for the flower shop but we both retired because we're old so we want to make some extra money so we're making those little box for the bedding plants. Now plastic but used to be wood. The orange boxes make more boxes so can we change it. So my husband says no you don't have to change you can

could take these box if you want to. Then he keep saying, saying, keeps talking about and my husband says oh you used to work for the flowershop. He says yeah, he did work for twenty years. He knew how to make corsage and everything. My husband says if I make a store here, flowershop here, you come for fifty-fifty. He says you don't have to bring anything. Theres living quarters there. See we had stairway upstairs in old house that we used to have and you could live there. You and your wife could live there. You don't have to bring anything. I'm going to build a store here. That was 1949. We're going to build a flowershop, you come in fifty-fifty. So he didn't have to bring anything for fifty-fifty. My gosh. We don't know how to make anything. We don't know how to make corsage or we don't even know how to ---. Floral arrangements or anything. No, we don't even know the flowers. So he says, yeah I will. So they came in and we started and she makes corsage but she kind of hides making corsage. She don't want me to learn it. To learn how to do it. But anyway we did about six months and he got tired, that guy got tired so he say he's going to quit. So okay, we give him delivery truck, it was old truck, but we gave him that truck because we didn't make much money because we just started and he wanted to quit so he just took the truck and was gone. So from now my husband says we have to make it ourselves. So we were looking when she made the flowers so we catch on right away and then my husband ---. One day my friend has a big wedding, live near Longmont. He felt like he should order from ours instead of going to Denver because we're good friends but. First time he ordered a wedding. So my husband went to a, week before, he went to Denver and he told 'em, the flowershop, he told 'em I'm goin' to get married so make me cheapest one, what is the cheapest one? He says, the carnations are the cheapest, so okay, make me a bouquet, cheapest bridal bouquet. He bought it and he bring it home, take it all out and then he made it beautiful. Yes.

Then Christmas come, we don't know what holly or we don't know nothing. Right. So the customer comes, you got holly today. I'm sorry but I'll get you some tomorrow morning and we remembered that holly and we go to wholesale, give me holly, and they bring. Oh, this is holly. My gosh. That's the way we learned. I'm amazed the way nothing frightens him. He just went right into it. Right. That's good. It's amazing though, how you can learn to do things. Yes. If you set your mind to it.

So then it just kept building up? Keep building up. All our money goes into the store. We remodeled two times over there. All the greenhouse was broken so we fix and all this added up, you know. So everybody, a lot of customers came in and says, oh every year is different. Your place looks different every year. We put all the money into it. We don't have any---. No, you have to keep putting it back in. So that started you off in the floral business? Right.

Were you still farming in Longmont? No, we quit and then we had a produce at the same time so then we used to run both sides. Produce and ----. But at that time, there wasn't too many customers, you know,

so we could do that. Stay on top of it. Yeah. Now it's busy. Now, gee. I know, I know. There's times when I think I'll come back some other day. But I can remember as a kid going down and getting produce and that. Yeah, huh, huh.

Then in 1963 we went on a trip to Japan and in 1967 he got sick. He got stroke and was paralyzed so one year my son run the vegetable stand but it was too much for him so he decides he want to raise carnation so that's why we quit the vegetable place. And is that Eugene? Yes, Eugene did the carnations.

You lived right there? Yes, huh, huh. We used to live in the back. Hour days. How many hours in a day did you work? Oh, we worked a---. My husband had to go to Denver about five o'clock in the morning and he goes about three times a day and loaded up and come home and he goes early in the morning because of the traffic he say. He buy vegetables, certain vegetables that we needed real bad, he buys early in the morning and it doesn't matter how much he pays and he get that and then he come home and then he goes again and then sometime left over, the people left over, he buys real cheap. Sure. That's the way he goes so sometimes he goes two times and sometimes three times a day. Then we get up early, just the same time he does and then we close real late. Sometime eight or nine o'clock. A lot of hours then. A lot of hard work. And all my kids had to work before school, after school, don't have time to go ballgame or nothing. So they really worked hard. With a business, to succeed, you have to work hard don't you? Yes. But it made it nice though. You did have your family with you. Yes. You know. I'm happy now because all my kids have worked hard and they learned it so grandkids we don't have to tell them what to do. That's right, that's right.

We probably should hit on the kids now. That's something I've neglected. I'll need to know the kids' names. We'll start with the oldest and just go on down. Your first, Eugene? Eugene is the oldest, born in 1935. Two or three year later, Joyce and then two year later, Jimmy and then seven year later is Ann and five years is Don. Don's your baby. He's the biggest one though, huh. He's a big fellow. Yeah.

When did you move to this house? Or am I going too fast? Do we still have something in between there? No, I think that's what it is. We went into the greenhouse with the carnations and now that is really what you are well known for. There's people who come from Denver who come here to buy bedding plants and that. Yeah, we have a lot of customers from Colorado Springs and Littleton and all that far away. All over, yeah. I've talked to people when I go to meetings and they'll say where are you from and I say Lafayette and they say oh we go to the greenhouse there, you know. I'm not bragging but a lot of people say our stuff lasts longer, even the cut flowers. I don't know why. I don't know but I know that I buy all my bedding plants and I've bought other places but I prefer there, you know, to buy it. Anyway, we'll put in a plug

there. It's commercial time now.

Okay, so when did you move then? This house, well my husband got a--.
Let's see, my nephew came. We went to Japan in 1963 and nephew was
working hard because of a, they had a pig farm, so we decide to let
him come to the United States so we did and then he got married, so
he need a house so we give him that old house and then we build this
place. But we was looking for the house and my husband didn't ap-
preciate, I mean, didn't satisfy. He said it was just too far from
greenhouse. In Broomfield, no I don't want it overhere. So he
got sick and he was in the hospital so I told my son let's build a
house. So we didn't tell him. We built this place. So that's 21
years old now. I'll bet that was a surprise to him. Yeah, he came
home and I wasn't going to tell him but I couldn't wait so I told
him and everyday he wants to see. He was glad too. It's a long way
from peddling in Japan isn't it? Yeah. He deserved it. You bet he
did. He worked hard.

Okay now. You came here in when, 19--. To Lafayette, we came in about
1944. Yeah, around '43 or '44. So you've seen a lot of changes in the
town? As well as the greenhouse. Yeah, yeah. The town has changed.

There was no paved streets, was there? It was paved streets. Was it
paved? Two thousand something, I think. It seems like something like
that. My folks, I know, had to pay more because they owned the corner
thing up there, so they had to pay on both sides.

Now was the old mill still on the corner where the ---. The big mill.
Yeah, right by my back yard. Yes, huh, huh. That meant two fires
you've seen then? You seen the one with your own barn there in Los
Angeles. Yeah, right. That didn't affect your greenhouse though?
No, but I was scared too. Yes, I imagine. Mr. whats-his-name, that
we bought from him. Anyway he used to work over there. That mill.
We was going to buy for \$3000 but he got it before we did so ----.
Now we bought from him I don't know how many hundreds of thousands.
I know, I know Mrs. Yoshihara. I just bought some land up from my
folks that we could have got very cheap. I wanted to get it so there
were no homes built there. So we paid, like you say, through the
nose. Yeah, yeah. But you just don't think about things like that
when you're younger.

Okay, religion. Buddhist. I know there was a Catholic Church and
a Methodist Church. Buddhist Church is in Longmont. In Longmont.
So you went to church in Longmont. But we don't go every Sunday.

Will you repeat something for me? I don't want you to repeat any-
thing other than the story of your husband with the hat on the
shore. Okay. We won't go into anything else. Wasn't he called Sam?
No, Bob. Okay. When Mr. Yoshihara decided to leave Japan, okay.
You'll take it up from there how he told his mother---. Okay. I'll
let you start. He was working for a coal mine, okay. Go ahead and
start from there. The mother want him to go see the father. About

how old was he then? I believe he was 20. Okay. And so he decided to come to the United States so he worked in the coal mine and got into the boat that carried baskets of coal and he told the family that he's going to throw the hat in the shore, on the shore, so he'll be safe in the boat. So he did and they found it after that. That's amazing. That's quite a story right there.

When we went in 1963 to Japan, I asked his sister and she said that was true. So they actually found his hat on the shore.

I think that was really rough things that we go through. Yes, that's right. A lot of hardship and yet it seems like you had a good time. You know you were happy. Yeah. He was a very strong person. He was. So, you know, that helps when you have someone you can depend on. He was never afraid of nothing.

Now the children are grown and they all live around here. Yes, all live around here. But they're not all Buddhists because they marry more different nationalities. One is Methodist and one is well, my daughter is married in the Buddhist but they don't go. My younger son is Baptist because of her and then the second boy, Jimmy is Methodist and then my son is Buddhist and my oldest daughter is Buddhist. Just a little like us, a little bit of everything. Yes, but they're all nice people. They've been very active in the community. I think Eugene was on the bank board or something. So they've put a lot back into the community. I know with the library, we had a Christmas program last year and called Evelyn and we borrowed Poinsettias and a Christmas Tree. So they have been very active within the community.

It's too bad that you had to get to Colorado the way you did but I'm glad you got here.

Well Mrs. Yoshihara is there anything else you would like to say? I think that's about all. You've worked hard.

Well thank you very much.