

Washington County Museum  
Oral History Interview with Akira Iwasaki  
At Mr. Iwasaki's Home  
October 6, 1998

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Interviewer: Linda Dodds  
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L: Linda  
A: Akira

Third session

L: Oral interview with Ike. Now Mr. Iwasaki when we had our last interview we talked about your experiences with World War II. So let's start today and I want to ask you about your discharge from the service and what you did when you came home.

A: When I came back from the service I was kind of lost. I didn't have any goal in mind and of course I was single at that time. And so my concern probably was more with girlfriends and getting married than pursuing life in my career. But however, we did come back to the farm and I wanted to help my dad re-establish the farm. So to that end, my brother and I both came back about the same time so we directed our efforts to try to recapture our farm. So we continued to raise farm crops and rented ground outside of our home and...

L: You rented ground from neighbors?

A: Yes and expanded and of course we were able to create a market for our vegetables so we felt that was the best thing at the time.

L: I was about to ask you what kind of crops you....

A: Principally strawberries and that was a very successful venture. It was quite the, it required a number of other strawberry farms in the area so. And so we all ? local processing company called BE Mailing Company (spells it out). And so we had a market for crops and so after the war that's what we pursued.

L: Why did you choose strawberries over other crops?

A: Before the war we raised strawberries here and I'm not sure in our previous interview whether I mentioned the fact that there were quite a few families that - Japanese background that came to Washington County and found that strawberry raising was quite rewarding. So when we came back after the war, after the evacuation and returned four years later we pursued that endeavor and found it rewarding.

L: Were you able to get the necessary supplies that you needed to grow your strawberries?

A: At that time, right after the war, everything, supplies and material things were in short - the country was trying to recover from the war effort so it was more difficult to get established and

we couldn't buy some of the things that we needed to do our farming. But it was not a big problem but we did have to live with shorter use.

L: Where did you market your strawberries?

A: It was all processing companies and very little on the fresh market. It was all through canneries and I guess it was just about that time, 1946 and 1947 that frozen foods was becoming a popular preserving method, marketing method. Up until that time **so many principally** kept in a bulk, in barrels and I think, I'm not sure, distributed to restaurants and hotels and commercial. But at about that time especially this cannery where we marketed they were packaging strawberries into retail frozen food. And I think this company, I've heard, Mailing Company was sold off to Birds Eye and Birds Eye was a big company from back East that started all this small frozen food packaged for the retail market.

L: Were there other processors that you used in the area as well?

A: Well I think there was but I really don't remember.

L: How did you harvest the strawberries? Did you have....

A: Well that was an effort. We had to get a lot of, well it was all hand labor so we had to recruit families and kids. But through the years we use to go after well what I term as skid row bums off of Birds Eye Street in Portland. They were quite prevalent at the time. And so we would send in buses and get these, referred to them as winos because principally that was their interest. They get a bottle of wine, they go after it ? pick strawberries. And they would come home and buy a bottle of wine and whoa.

L: Were they reliable?

A: Well not really. They were not consistent. In other words, they would come one day and then have a beer celebration or so and then after they recovered they would come back maybe two or three days later. So there was enough of them that kept our cycle of supply of pickers. They kept coming so we struggled along having them help us. But it was kind of an interesting experience because that was all they were interested in, was to get something to drink.

L: Did you have to manage from or did they work...

A: No, they were, as I remember, they were very docile. They're not belligerent or lazy, well some were lazy. It was a good source I would say because to get families to pick it wasn't that lucrative and so family people tended to drift more.

L: We, as a child, I picked beans and there were usually transient families that would follow the harvest all over. Did you ever have any families like that.

A: We did but not that many. They were not a very good **stayful** source of help. They would be very anxious to make enough for their survival and so they were not stable. We could not rely on them. So we felt that these men from Birds Eye Street in Portland actually were more helpful to us.

L: How long did you have them do that; how many years?

A: Over the years or – well I'm going to guess it would be six to eight years possibly.

L: Interesting. So what happened after that when you didn't have skid row people.

A: Well for awhile we had strawberries. We raised strawberries on rented property and we built a camp, kind of a camp, labor camp for our own help. It was quite an investment. We had cabins that were, I'm going to guess that were 12 by 16 which wasn't a big cabin but that would be enough to house families. And this was principally designed for Mexican foreign labor who were here legally but there was quite a few coming in from California and moving this way. So during the season we built, I don't know, must have been about a dozen. I don't remember how many but we built these and provided a shower and laundry facilities and this kind of thing in the camp. And this was the source of our labor in the '60s, 1960s.

L: How did they work out for you?

A: Using those people was very successful. They were very hard-working and at that time there was no restriction. So the family would bring out their kids and they would help pick and so it made it kind of worthwhile for the family, man and his wife to eke out a reasonable return. But this was very seasonal. Then they would have to go to other crops like beans or cucumbers or whatever for the summer. Many of them went back again to California to the warmer climates for winter crops so that was that one era. And then after that from the '70s on we gradually diverted our efforts to our greenhouse operation and then abandoned strawberries as a business. And so then we gradually expanded our greenhouse, built more houses as our resources got better and...

L: Can I interrupt for one minute. When you got back, I forgot to ask you this – when you got back and you started engaging in farming were you accepted as just a regular farmer in the county. I mean was there any.....

A: No it was kind of gradual acceptance I guess and so after the war, 10 or 20 years after the war, we didn't experience or see any discrimination really. Maybe there was something covertly but we didn't see it or it didn't really affect us that much. We didn't find it that objectionable after the years.

L: Now, from the '70s when you diverted your efforts, why did you decide to do that at that point?

A: We found that it was more economically rewarding.

L: Did you need a labor force for the greenhouse work or how did that work?

A: No, that was not as intensive. Strawberries, principally harvest time was a very critical period. You could not wait for help you know so, it was more of a what should I say, concern to get the berries off or otherwise you lose them. So from that standpoint it was not that appealing raising strawberries. But with the greenhouse, we started with principally raising ornamental flowers. Then gradually we started raising vegetable plants to expand our market.

L: Now ornamental flowers – does that...

A: Annuals, annuals. Principally annuals.

L: Does that sort of coincide with the Oregon Nursery industry? I mean were other people doing this at the same time, going into this?

A: Well, not so much annually. There were a lot of other nurseries that raised **hardy** plants - shrubs and that kind. But there were not that many raising annuals and small plants.

L: What were the sort of .... If you don't mind me putting it this way, the bread and butter sort of annual plants that you ....

A: Well okay. Principally I'm going to say it was pansies and primroses and marigolds and petunias. Those were the main bulk of our items.

L: And what was your market for these?

A: To the retailers and that time, chain stores weren't that prevalent, I think principally we sold to **Fred Meyer** and some to Safeway and this was more local that is around the Portland area that we delivered to. And then there were numerous private garden stores that we also sold to.

L: So, after you were in the nursery business you said you also got into vegetables slowly.

A: Yes, vegetable plants. That is you know tomatoes, peppers, eggplants and onions, those kind of crops that were starter plants that we supplied the nurseries and garden centers.

L: So the public was interested in these things at the time or how would you gauge public interest in in growing things?

A: I beg your pardon?

L: How would you assess the public's interest in growing?

A: Well I think it's something at first they were not, I should not say accustomed but it's not customary that they would go out and buy plants and put it in the garden. In those earlier days they would buy seed and do their own starts. But in recent years now we noticed that more and more people don't have the time or the patience to do the seed so they'd rather go out there and have one planted so already big enough to sit out. People, their priorities I guess have changed and we're living now in a more, I'd say a faster paced world so who's going to monkey around with seeds (both laugh). You know they'd rather go out to the country boating or skiing or whatever recreation wise so actually that's where do compete with the recreation industry and the flower growing business, we were actually competing for their time.

L: So it was a pastime type of thing.

A: Pastime, yeah.

L: I can see that.

A: And more people are living in apartments and maybe they don't have access to much driving you know so that accelerates our market we'll say to provide **?** plants and say not only food products but I'm speaking of petunias or marigolds and potted plants that sit out on the deck because they live out on the third floor of their apartments you know and you have no access to ground or ground floor. So that contributes, I think to our market.



L: You mentioned that you grew tomatoes, peppers and onions starter crops in the beginning. Have you noticed any trends? I mean do people, do they prefer tomatoes and now they like cucumbers more or...?

A: Well, not really. No I have not noticed any particular trend that way. Now it's interesting we would raise melons, different kinds of melon like and I'm referring to squash and cucumbers and watermelon, cantaloupes and this kind of thing. And you know those things don't require a lot of time to develop. You can drop a seed in the month of May or June, that will become a plant in nine days. But people are funny. They don't want to spend that time so they will go out and buy a little container of a melon plant that's uprooted. But we market that from, I'm going to guess inside of a week from the time we drop the seed we market it. So it's a very lucrative item coz it has very little shelf time at our place and yet we turn it into money. So the margin of profit on that is, for the time that we're involved with watering and this kind of thing is minimal.

L: Do you do those outside or inside?

A: No it's all in the confined area in the greenhouse, in our hothouse. So that's a profitable item versus petunias or other things that take a long to nurse and nurture before it's ready. Or even corn. You know corn you drop the seed in and that thing jumps up in three days and inside of a week it's ready to market.

L: So the consumer will buy anything that appears above the soil, is that it or does it have to be ???

A: I think there's a certain appeal to things that pop out of the ground and human nature they like to see – oh gee that corn's up. I think I'll buy some type of thing. They don't realize that if they took that seed which is a lot less expensive and drop it in there they'd have the same thing in a week. But people are funny. They got, they have to have instant gardens on their mind I think.

L: Instant gratification. But there's also a certainty that it did sprout. I mean you didn't get bad seed or you didn't plant it in the wrong spot. You've got something you can nurture when you can see it.

A: Yeah, yeah. That's right, that's right. So...

L: So right now then how would you characterize your endeavors, I mean in terms of vegetables and flower? Are you both or more one than the other or which is more profitable?

A: Well I think one series of crops complements the other and so not one or the other the augments would say well let's bring in someone else to supply us on this. And so they'd rather have one supplier bring in a fuller line of items so they don't have to go out and buy vegetables from this person and flowers from this person and this kind of thing and so they tend to buy a full line of items.

L: So do you plan out what you're going to grow ahead of time and contract for it or how does that work?

A: They get items and I'm referring to chain stores now, and they feature (tape off) eggplants, special whatever price. And so they contract. We have an agreement and so on day 15, I'd like

to have 100 of these flats of beans or whatever. And so they give us a contract anticipating a sale item. So that's something that is good for the producer because we know there's a market for that so we will raise the item in quantities to meet that contract. So during the season we have many contract items like that in addition to daily supply that we would furnish.

L: I see. So you know ahead what people are needing and expecting from you to supply. I guess you sign your contract you know this.

A: Through the years we kind of learn what is popular and we raise things proportionately. And of course we refer to our records from year to year and see why we raised this many of this item this year and see if it was not popular so may be we should cut back on that inventory. So I guess we learn as we go and market does change. Popular items do or say some petunias that were very popular this year will next year another kind of a product will become very popular. And these garden magazines and the media print feature some things and that's what appeals. So it's really important we watch what magazines and newspapers feature and inevitably those are the ones that house wives, those that remember that will try to seek out that particular kind of petunia or that particular kind of ? and you have that and so you multiple that by many stores and many people and it becomes an item that we have to provide to to be popular.

L: So if Martha Stewart is using a certain kind of vegetable or flower, that's what your market is.

A: Yes, that's right. So those garden people what they write is quite influential. Yeah.

L: Where do you get your seed for your plants?

A: We have commercial seed suppliers. By name, if you want name, one is Vaughn Seed and Volve Seed. But I don't know whether those companies have a retail line. I'm not sure.

L: Do you get particular varieties of things that are suited to our climate?

A: Well, I suppose we do. I'm not the buyer. We have our (tape off). He has a graph showing the 12 months of the year and then it shows the temperatures of the Pacific region or the temperature of the Midwest or wherever and so that graph kind of tells us what product would be good for this time of the year for the climate for let's say the coast. In a general sense that's what we kind of refer to.

L: Well if you knew for example ahead, that we have an El Niño winter ahead of us, would **that** affect the way you choose your plants or the way you have the nursery?

A: Well, I don't think we're sophisticated enough in our operation to foresee that or to study that as a marketing strategy. And no, I don't think that's really, in our case a consideration. However it's a good thought. Maybe we should consider that.

L: Well I was just thinking about all the environmental impacts while you were talking about the weather conditions especially this year. And we've had so many more insects for example and you know maybe we need to, I mean I would or it would be possible to grow crops that were more insect resistant if that's possible. I have no idea but...

A: Well, I'm sorry I can't answer you too much on that. I suppose research is constantly trying to raise things that would ward off enemies or bacteria or insects or whatever. But for our purpose we don't do much in that we regard.



L: You were saying it was just more market-driven.

A: Yeah, you might say that.

L: Now I thought I heard you mention awhile back that you have a relationship with a grower in Japan or you have a connection with someone that you're growing, is it mushrooms.

A: Okay, I think you're referring to wasabi. This is a Japanese horseradish and several years ago a Mr. Nakagawa (spells it) from Tokyo sought us out regarding using wasabi plants because we had a greenhouse and we were familiar with raising plants from seeds. So we agreed to raise some wasabi plants from seeds that he brought from Japan. And since that time he then asked us could we find a place to raise wasabi plants, principally in water or near a creek-side where we'd have clear running water. So one thing led to another and so I agreed to build a little plastic house or houses beside a creek in Forest Grove area that I found for him. And so from there we had, I had been spending my retirement years kind of helping this person and his venture. And we had marketed some wasabi principally in California area and of course I'm not involved in the marketing but this Mr. Nakagawa has been marketing this – some in California and some also back East. While it hasn't shown a type of profit, he has continued to wanting to expand so this spring we built more houses. Let's see, say we built another 12,000 square feet of space; controlled atmosphere of space in a greenhouse. And we planted some more plants. And currently we're building another house that's about 6,000 square feet, this year, this fall. And I don't know, I'm not so sure about whether the, how the ventures going to go. This fall we're going to start marketing a considerable amount of wasabi so I can tell you better in another year.

L: Well tell me - I am interested in wasabi. What are you, how would you prepare it or how would you use it exactly?

A: Well it's kind of a tubular thing that grows above the ground; nothing in the ground. It's all above the ground and it's a tubular, ideally size wise about an inch in diameter and say maybe about four or five inches long. And that tuber, we grate it through a grater and it's eaten as a....you dip it in...

L: You said it's like horseradish.

A: Yeah cut like horseradish. It's just like meat with horseradish on it – meats or steaks or beef. On this wasabi, we grate it and then just put it on principally raw fish or we use it in soba which is buckwheat noodle type of thing. That's the way it's used principally.

L: So this is obviously a very familiar vegetable in Japan.

A: Very common.

L: And so your friend is endeavoring to introduce it to American markets? Is that ??

A: Not necessarily introduce it because it's something that is commonly found in American Japanese stores and restaurants. There is a wasabi, it's a kind of a processed paste form that's available in the market. I don't know where it comes from but it has a wasabi flavor and I think it's mixed with some mayonnaise or some other paste we'll say. It's not the true wasabi but I think the American people don't know the true wasabi. All they know is this manufactured

wasabi. But more and more I think as the growers expand why there will be more introduced pure wasabi in this country.

L: And so do you think we will see it used more extensively in our diets?

A: I think so. I think maybe they'll probably discover the taste of that and maybe use it as, not seasoning but what do you call it, as a supplement to other foods, maybe even beef. But....

L: So the goal is not to market it in Japan, it's not an export.

A: Yes, principally it's for the market in the United States. We did send some to New York, New York restaurant, yeah. But of course I'm not involved in the marketing. This Nakagawa Company satellite in L.A. that markets other imports and exports other products does the marketing. So I send the bulk to them and they in turn ship it to markets, you know back East as well as California.

L: Well it seems like the square footage you mentioned is impressive. Is that a fairly vigorous attempt...

A: I'm sorry?

L: Is the square footage of the greenhouses for growing the wasabi...

A: Well there's something inconsistent in what I envisioned here. We had sold very little in the way of dollar return but Mr. Nakagawa likes to expand without more study. And my preference and I told him, why don't we wait a year and see how our current crop grows and how it markets and how it the market acceptance will be but no, he's very anxious to get started. He wants to expand. And so it's not my way of venture but of course he has what I call deep pockets. And so that's why we continue to build. Incidentally this Mr. Nakagawa has other ventures. He has decals. He makes chemicals and makes, I'm not really sure how to describe it but it's these decals you see on buses or trucks or advertising type of thing. Not so much on billboards but these different designs or things that you see on trucks or things like that. I guess they're called decals. But that's one of his main businesses. However, in L.A. he processes lobsters, purchased from across the border in Mexico as another side business. He has a restaurant in Japan. So he has a few other ventures so wasabi growing is only one item in his line of interest

L: Why did he want to have the greenhouses by a stream?

A: Well that's the normal way of what is, it's kind of like watercress. Wasabi does best in water. And so in Japan there are some land grown wasabi but the majority, say 80 -90% of wasabi grown in Japan are near creek-side beds. So I don't know whether it has something to do with the taste. There are some dry land wasabi and of course in our case, the houses we build we grow them under an overhead water situation. So it's a little bit different. It's just overhead irrigation versus the constant creek-water flowing bed.

L: This is very different isn't it from other things that we grow here?

A: It's very different, yes. There's only one other venture that I know of and that is in Florence, Oregon where by this individual – maybe I mentioned this to you before but he's got a little wasabi growing venture. And he's a Caucasian. He's a former real estate developer who worked with good resources I believe and so he's established a little wasabi farm. And from my



understanding he sends a lot of it to Japan but however I don't know, I'm just guessing. I've been to the farm but I didn't want to get too private with this.

L: So it's unusual. There's another...

A: Very unusual yes it is. It's very unusual. There is one in Washington we visited a couple, three years ago – in shelter, close to Olympia. But unless it becomes a lucrative venture I don't think we'll do too much – well of course the demand is not that great. It's not like something that you use in volume. It's not like potatoes or onions. It's something that doesn't require much to – a little goes a long way shall we say.

L: So, I'm thinking you've been pretty wrapped up in this endeavor.

A: I have. In my retirement years – see I'm actually wanted to have a little more time off to myself but I guess I can tell Mr. Nakagawa I don't want to do it anymore but then certain kind of a responsibility that I assumed so I just kind of continued. But I'm hoping that I can get out of some of the responsibilities. We did hire a full-time person to do most of the cultural practices that wasabi growing requires now. We hired him in the summer. But still there's a lot of other work, paper work and so forth. And then of course I go there almost every day. In fact as soon as our interview is over I am due to go over there because we have in this new building that we're building we have some sand **meat** that's being delivered from **Tillamook**, oversee that and

L: Sand **media**?

A: Well, it's principally sand from the **Tillamook** area. It's no clay in it. It's just sand from the area. It's not beach sand, it's river sand. It's more coarse. And it comes from, I don't know if you're familiar, it comes from the Kilchis River area.

L: I see.

A: But it's **screened**. It's, sometime if you have the time I'll show you. I don't know but it's beyond your....

L: Well no I'm always interested.

A: I'm involved in that and so, because we're building this new house. And I'm involved in and the builder is coming tomorrow and he's already started to build. So, I'm busy.

L: Yes. Well not let's get back to your original business. Who's minding the store while you're retired and when you're away?

A: Initially in this business I have three brothers. I'm the middle one and my younger brother decided he no longer wanted to continue together so he ventured out on his own and so what was left was my brother and I. We were more up in years. So several years ago my older brother's son, Jim decided that he....well he decided to get involved and so he...

L: Now Jim is the son of - Jim's father is...

A: George.

L: George, your brother George.

A: Currently he is the General Manager and he seems to be doing a good job running the company. And we have been, every year we have been expanding a little so that speaks well for itself.

L: And George is retired?

A: George is retired.

L: Is it still a family operation would you think?

A: Yes, it is strictly a family operation, yes.

L: All family owned....

A: All family owned and operated, yeah.

L: So if you're going to count back in years, when would you say your family business started, what year you have it?

A: Well, on a small scale and I presume Linda you're referring to the greenhouse or the other ventures.

L: Well I'm not sure because I don't know how you would, since you kind of went from strawberries to the nursery business I don't know. But I guess as a family, let's say a family farming operation, as a business.

A: Well as a business that started I'm going to venture to guess around 1930s. Gradually we, as we made money and became able to expand we used our resources and expanded. And then of course the war came along in 1940 so there's a time period, well until about 1946 we were inactive. And then after we came back, especially my brother and I and then I had my older brother who was not in the service but then the three of us combined our efforts to expand in berry farming. And then in the '70s we gravitated towards the nursery. And then since then we have been pursuing that nursery from the '70s on we expanded and I guess that's where we are today.

L: It goes back quite a ways.

A: I beg your pardon?

L: It goes back quite a ways.

A: Yes it does, yeah because I can remember when I was going to school in the early '30s. My dad of course was doing all the work and we were just kids.

L: So that would be 55, 60 years of pretty much continued – well at least 60 years of continuous ??

A: Yes, you might say. This was the place in 1916 when my dad bought the place and we're still here. We haven't moved.

L: Gosh. That's fairly unusual.

A: I think I told you before in the interview my folks moved here when I was about six months old, 1916. So I've never lived anywhere else all these years.

L: Oh my goodness. Well, there are whole parts of your history that I haven't quite covered but while we're still talking about your business, what do you envision in the future (chuckles).

A: Personally or in this line?

L: (unclear, can't hear)

A: My nephew Jim, I'm going to guess probably around 52 or 53 years old so I envision him continuing until retirement, maybe around 60. And I'm not sure. There's no backup. In other words he doesn't have any boys. He has girls so there's no backup. My kids are not interested and Jim's two of the brothers. By the way, my brother George has five children – three boys and two girls and Jim is one (tape empty until 1:09:19?).

Jim's brothers have, I don't think they're interested in pursuing the business after Jim, who is the oldest, retires. I envision the nursery as folding up. I mean I think the ground here is becoming so expensive and you know it's – the migration is so intense now. Any piece of ground now has become very valuable. And we have at least 20 or 30 acres that can be utilized for housing which is a higher use than maybe than what we're doing. So I envision in less than 10 years that maybe probably be forced to move out because of taxes. The ground will become so expensive that either we ? a lot of money in the nursery house be forced out because it doesn't pay to pay that kind of high tax to continue. I don't know I'm just guessing but if we were younger of course it would have made sense to have bought further out in the country and re-establish. Of course that would be farther away from our market, our delivery market but then if we were younger that would probably be the most sensible thing to do. But then given our family conditions, I don't envision that we will be continuing to have a nursery. Of course it's beyond my life time.

L: I wouldn't say that at all but it's interesting that you are sort of out there looking for – have the vision for what you would anticipate.

A: Well I'm guessing about this but I don't see a distant future, yeah.

L: Well, that would be a loss if we don't have the greenhouse here. I'm sure it's been a landmark sort of operation.

A: Well I suppose that's true. This is 1998 so 16, 18 more years and we would be a century operation I guess. But I'm not too concerned (both chuckle).

L: Well, as I mentioned, I neglected a whole other side of your activities and that would be your social life while you were working and developing your business. I didn't ask you about your family. I know that you're married and ...

A: Yeah well, because the early years we had to really apply ourselves on the farm, my social life was very limited. And because of my ethnic background you know, most of the Japanese colonies were in Portland. Very few out in the country and so I met my wife in Portland. Japanese as a rule, it's almost a custom they have what we call a go-between for marriages and of course this is a custom in Japan but however that custom....(tape ends)



L: Tape 2 of the interview with Ike Iwasaki. The date is October 6th 1998. The interviewer is Linda Dodds.

Okay we were in the midst of talking about your social life and you said in the old days there was the tradition of a go-between in the marriage.

A: Yes, that's correct. So, however that kind of practices was not too popular especially in the States. And so I guess through a short period of, let's say courtship, I liked what I saw of my wife and so we got married. What else shall I say.

L: Is Mary a Portland?

A: She was born in Portland and she had one brother.

L: And what was her maiden name?

A: Her maiden name was Furusho (spells it). Her dad had an apartment in Portland and....what else can I say? I'm at a loss for words.

L: So you had a short courtship and then you got married and....

A: And we have three kids. I have two boys and a girl. Roger, the oldest. And you know I'm kind of stuck for ages but he was born in 1951. And Richard the second one was born in 1953 and my daughter, Ellen was born in 19....eight years later.

L: 1961.

A: I hop my wife ..... scolds me if I miss a date but that's close.

L: Well we have the dates so that's ??????

A: You're not interested in dates are you?

L: No. (unclear)

A: That's close enough though.

L: So did you move out to Hills – well you were always here in Hillsboro.

A: After I got married I lived for a short time in, about five miles away in a rented house. But then in 1953 I decided to build a house. And this is the house where we are living now – where we are doing the interview.

L: So you've been here...gosh...45 years.

A: Yes. Same house.

L: Oh, that's unusual.

A: Is it?



L: Well I think in this day.

A: Well in this day and age people are more mobile.

L: Yes they are.

A: So, anyway, Roger. I'll just tell you a little bit. Roger, he was interested in architecture, landscape architecture so he went to U of O and got a degree there. And my son Richard was more into education. He went Oregon but he didn't complete his schooling. And he quit and then Richard kind of went into commercial photography type of thing.

L: And Ellen?

A: Ellen, she went to a nursing school, University of Oregon nursing and then she went to work as a .....let's see I have to back up. She did get her, did some more graduate work and got her masters and she is currently with Oregon Legacy Center as a nurse practitioner.

L: And they all grew up here on the property? They still live around here nearby?

A: Yes, all of my children still live within the Portland area.

L: Well, usually in an interview I ask is there's anything you'd like to add.

A: Not really. I guess my venture with this wasabi kind of - I like to go more fishing and golfing as poor as I am but it kind of restricts my activity that way.

L: Yes, are you still getting some in now and then (unclear)?

A: Yes I am. However fishing, principally this is spring Chinook salmon fishing hasn't been a very appealing thing now because they've curtailed the season and limits ???. It has not been that good. Currently I am a member of a senior - what we call Nisei - Japanese-American second generation people. So I'm in a senior golf club.

L: Where do you golf?

A: Various places throughout the Portland area. We play about 10 places during the summer. Tomorrow is the last season which I have to go to at the ? Then we have a party. That's the extent of our, however I do a lot of other social golf. We went to the Coast the other day with friends and we did stay there and I played some golf.

L: I guess in golf, we always ask what's your handicap?

A: Well Linda I was hoping you wouldn't ask me that question (both chuckle). ? embarrassing me.

L: We can leave that out.

A: Yeah. It's not that I'm proud of but it's somewhere around, I'm going to guess 130, somewhere in that area. Some days are good. Some days are bad.

L: Well I'm glad you're getting some golf in despite your busy days.

A: I started late in life so naturally I'm not very agile. But the point is that I love to get out and fraternize, we'll say and fraternize in frustration we'll say.

L: But you know one thing I didn't ask you though and this isn't a social thing – is your connections with the Nisei community of the Japanese American community.

A: Well we have what we call a Japanese-American Ancestry Society in Portland and I'm a member of that. We have our annual tournaments and this kind of thing.

L: And you have taken trips to Japan and you've also – did you not say visited with family in Japan? You said you have visited Japan a number of times, visited your family there during these trips and traced your ancestry perhaps.

A: Yes, I visited Japan with two of my relatives. I only had one direct cousin living so all the rest have passed away and I had not maintained any contact with my cousin's children so you become kind of remote. I don't want to be redundant here but I don't know what I mentioned previously during my ventures into Japan. You know I do belong to a Lions Club in Portland has many American of Japanese ancestry involved in there and we have - the Lions Club we call it **twinning**, twinning with another Lion's Club in another foreign country. And so we did initiate a couple clubs in Japan. One's in Sapporo and one is in a city called Shinono Suki (spells it), southern Japan. And so in that relationship I have been over there several times to attend celebrations and anniversaries and this kind of thing in addition to my other travels to Japan, just sightseeing. Lately because of my involvement with wasabi and Mr. Nakagawa has invited me so I have been there a couple of times as his guest and **adventured** Tokyo.

L: Is there anything else you'd like to add?

A: Well, I don't know what else. Guess I need some prompting. My mind is not that....

L: Well I was glad that you mentioned all these connections. The Japanese Ancestry Society and the Lion's Club with the twinning because that's really important.

A: Yes. And then of course, we have a national organization, the Japanese-American Citizen's League so I have contributed to that. They're building, let's see I can't repeat it but.....it's an organization. They're building a building in L.A. that would retain and commemorate the Japanese in America and so I'm a member of that. We've contributed various information to that organization. I'm also a member of the Japanese American ..... war veterans. Currently we have a center in Portland called the Oregon Nisei Legacy Center whereby we have gathered part of the artifacts of our past era. It's an organization that we support to preserve our Japanese-American legacy.

L: And you're active in that group?

A: Yes, I participate and try to support it.

L: That's great.

A: That's the end of what I want to contribute.

L: Well I want to take this opportunity to thank you for your time and sharing your history for this project.

A: Thank you very much Linda. I enjoyed visiting with you and hope what I contributed will be of some value but I'm not able to think of my feet so it's very limited.

L: I think you did very well. Thank you so much.

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