

HELEN HASEGAWA

MR. BOETTCHER: Today is February 28, 1980. I, Keith Boettcher, am privileged to interview Mrs. Helen Hasegawa of Fresno, California, in the Fresno County Public Library.

Mrs. Hasegawa, for our records, would you please give me your full name, your date and place of birth, and your place of longest residence?

MRS. HASEGAWA: My full name is Helen Keiko Kazato Hasegawa, and I was born on October 20, 1912, in Fresno where I have resided for most of my life. Now, I do recall being shocked to find, during my elementary school years, that the birthdate I had been using was incorrect. For some reason or another, my parents had to go down to the Hall of Records, and found that I had been recorded as having been born on the 20th instead of the 25th I had always been using. So, they explained that in those days, the young Japanese families that were coming along had to be first reported to the Japanese Association, and the secretary there, when he had collected several notices of births, went to the City Hall to record them. This was the usual procedure, mainly because of the language difficulty, and partly I think, because of dual citizenship which was the usual situation. Many of the families of that time had hoped to go back to Japan, and so this ensured the children's citizenship in both countries. But in our family, my parents said that they did not want us to be confused by a dual allegiance, so we always had the single American citizenship. They explained that it would be up to us to make the change should we desire to do so when we grew to be of age.

MR. BOETTCHER: But, the Japanese Association was notified in any case.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, that's true. And so, in the course of going through several hands, the birthdays for many children have shown discrepancies.

MR. BOETTCHER: Could you tell me a little bit about your memories of your parents or your earliest days at home?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I remember living on "B" Street at the corner of Kern and "B", and that house is still there. There was a gnarled old fig tree in that backyard which my brothers and I used to climb, or play beneath it.

I don't recall what my father did for work. He probably was a gardener, because I do remember my mother coming home after an appendectomy, and she had to take a sponge bath in one of those galvanized tubs 'because although we did have a bathtub in the bathroom with curved legs, that old-fashioned type, you know, I can still see her and this tub in the large kitchen area and taking her bath there because she had to be very careful about the incision. And then, I learned later, that in order to help pay for her operation that Dr. J.L. Maupin performed, that my father was working as a gardener for him. J.L. Maupin and his father were early pioneer doctors here, and I believe they were among the charter members or founders of the Burnett Sanitarium, which is a fore-runner of our Fresno Community Hospital.

MR. BOETTCHER: I don't know Fresno history that well, but in any case, it's good for me to be ignorant and you tell more so we'll get the story, okay?

MRS. HASEGAWA: So, I have concluded that he was doing some gardening for Dr. Maupin and then for several of the other people who lived within the vicinity, for instance, he mentioned Dr. Trowbridge., I think his son is still practicing here. And a congressman, Henry Barbow who lived on Tulare Street not far from there; Miss Bell T. Ritchie, Rowell, Meux, Helm, Lisenby--all pioneer families lived near this area of "S" and "T" Streets, Fresno, Mariposa, Tulare Streets.

MR. BOETTCHER: Could you tell me how your name was chosen?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mother had read about Helen Keller just about that time, and she was very much impressed with this deaf, dumb, and blind young woman who overcame tremendous obstacles to pursue a successful life. She thought it would be an inspiration for me.

MR. BOETTCHER: Could you tell me your parents' names?

MRS. HASEGAWA: My mother's name was Toyo Ota, and my father's name was Jisaku Kazato.

MR. BOETTCHER: And you gave me your maiden name.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, Kazato. My mother was from Iwakuni, in Yamaguchi-ken. Iwakuni was the location of a United States Naval Base during World War II or after. My nephew Ernest was stationed there for two years in the Navy as a doctor.

MR. BOETTCHER: Was your father from Yamaguchi-ken, also?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, he was from Chiba-ken. My parents met here in Fresno which was a little different from the usual.

MR. BOETTCHER: She wasn't a picture bride?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, she wasn't. She came to study.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: She told us that she was 19 years old when she left Japan. She wanted to learn more about Christianity and to be able to teach English literature when she returned to Japan. She had gone to a mission school and had been introduced to Christianity. It had given her hope. She had lost her father when she was three years old and had seen her mother struggle raising silkworms to supplement the rice allotments samurai families received.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you know what year that might have been, or when they were married, or some dates?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, she came over in 1906 with some missionaries who were returning to America. She was supposed to come and live with Dr. and Mrs. William Ritter in Berkeley, whom she had met in Japan. They were both on the faculty of the University of California, and she (Dr. Mary Ritter) was also one of the first women doctors in California.

But the earthquake had disrupted all plans, and when she crossed the San Francisco Bay and arrived, there was no one to meet her. She finally found her way to the campus, and she recalled later that she sat on the library steps wondering what to do. She was in a kimono and carried a doll she said. It was getting dark, too. Soon she saw a cigarette light coming toward her from a distance. It was a young man. She got up and went toward him to let him know where she was supposed to go. But the light started to move away. To make the long story short, she managed to catch up with him and to have him understand that she needed help to find Dr. Ritter. They went to what she thought was the library. By studying a map, she located Dr. and Mrs. Ritter's home. But, the Ritter's weren't in any position to keep her, because the earthquake had damaged their home, so Mrs. Ritter sent Mother to Fresno to live with her sister Mrs. Warner. She was a widow, a very active person in the community, and one of the first presidents of the YWCA. Her husband was the founder of the Warner Jewelry Company, which is still operating on the Fulton Mall.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So, then she moved in with that family, and she helped Mrs. Warner's daughter, who was Mrs. Cockrill, whose husband was a dentist. Mrs. Ritter had this family understand that my mother had come to study English, and so they were very careful of the way that they talked to her.

MR. BOETTCHER: So she would learn proper English.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. Proper. And so she tried to go to school here.

MR. BOETTCHER: At what school?

MRS. HASEGAWA: It was the Fresno High School which later became Fresno Technical School, then Fresno Junior College. It is no longer there; I think a Chevrolet company is there now. I was sorry to see that impressive building with a large clock tower torn down! And she remembered, or often talked about; a Mr. McLane, Mr. Olney and his daughters, Ruby and Bernice. Bud Gearhart was in her class who later became a congressman.

MR. BOETTCHER: The old timers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Edwin Einstein of the Fresno Guarantee (the family is now Eaton), Gundlefinger, and Mrs. Louella Forkner Swift (Fig Garden). Anyway, she became acquainted with many of the Fresno old-timers, the pioneers. She used to tell me about it.

MR. BOETTCHER: How did your parents meet?

MRS. HASEGAWA: The family thought that she should have some Japanese friends, and somehow or other they found out that there was a church being started, so they saw to it that she got to the church meetings.

I imagine there were a few other Japanese ladies attending the church and in town.

MR. BOETTCHER: Not too many.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. She often talked about how five year old Warner

Cockrill was sent along as a chaperone. His brother Robert, who was born just after she came to the family, is still living in Fresno. He always made a point to visit her, especially on her birthday, and they talked of his childhood days. They kept up their friendship all these years, and it was warm and touching.

MR. BOETTCHER: That was nice.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Anyway, she met my father there at the church.

MR. BOETTCHER: Would this be the Japanese Congregational Church?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. In the meantime, she was finding it very difficult to work and go to school, so after about four years decided to get married. I believe it was one of the first weddings in that church. They were married in 1910.

MR. BOETTCHER: What about your brothers and sisters? Where are you in your family?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I'm in the middle. I have an older brother Henry and a younger brother Hugo. By the way, Henry's name came from Henry Wadsworth Longfellow, and Hugo from Victor Hugo. You can see Mother's interest in literature!

MR. BOETTCHER: What about your first time in school? Was English spoken at home or did you learn English at home or in school?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I must have learned some English at home, because my mother spoke English from way back. But, I do remember playing with my next-door German friend Frieda and talking in Japanese... and she answered in German!

MR. BOETTCHER: This wasn't always true in the other Japanese families.

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, so I think from that standpoint, we had an advantage, except that my father never talked very much. My mother was the one who did most of the -

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you think your father spoke mostly Japanese?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, I know for sure, although he knew bits and pieces of English. He tried to study English after the war, and he was really diligent, but it was very difficult for him. He continually said the learning process was slower when you are older, and that's why he stressed the importance of learning while you're young.

MR. BOETTCHER: Did you speak Japanese at home much, did you learn any?

MRS. HASEGAWA: We must have spoken a few phrases, a few words.

MR. BOETTCHER: So, if I'm not getting too personal, it would be hard for you to communicate with your father.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right.

MR. BOETTCHER: That was common.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, he was a very kindly father, I know, but we didn't say much to each other.

MR. BOETTCHER: Hard to communicate in words.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Words, but he was never a harsh, domineering type of a person. He was very warm and loving, as I recall, and very thoughtful and understanding. Going back to my first time in school, I vaguely remember our minister taking me.

MR. BOETTCHER: Was the minister Caucasian?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, Japanese.

MR. BOETTCHER: Maybe he knew this school or this society better, for an introduction?

MRS. HASEGAWA: That might have been so. Perhaps, for the records, she thought it would be better if he registered us. I went to Lincoln School. I went to kindergarten, first grade, and part of second grade.

MR. BOETTCHER: Any memories you want to share of that time?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, I was scared.

MR. BOETTCHER: Scared going to school.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I was scared. I didn't say much of anything, except when the kindergarten teacher asked me to sing something, I did sing, "Bye Lo Baby Bunting," with my arms folded into a cradle and swaying from side to side.

MR. BOETTCHER: Was the school a mixture of different groups, different races; why you were scared, or were you just a young child and the experience of going to school was frightening?

MRS. HASEGAWA: It must have been just going away from home, And it was only about two blocks away that we had to walk!

MR. BOETTCHER: I bet other children have memories of being frightened.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think so. Isn't it strange that I only remember my first-grade teacher for her being an older woman, somewhat bent over and clapping her hands two or three times sharply to gain our attention. The part that really impressed me was that she couldn't straighten out her fingers to clap. She must have had rheumatism.

And when I got promoted to second grade, I finally had the teacher with a wondrous name--Garlinghouse! That name fascinated me more than her being tall and younger.

I often wondered what I studied and learned. Maybe I had language difficulties I wasn't aware of.

Going from a small separate building for kindergartners to the large main structure for the rest of the older, and therefore, taller and bigger students, in itself was an experience. The fire drills, suddenly announced by three loud clanging bell rings always jarred me, and sent my imagination running wild.

You asked if the school was a mixture; I think there must have been many Germans, Russian.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, the Volga Germans.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, right.

MR. BOETTCHER: I understand that your family moved to Bowles then?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. We spent almost a year there. But that was quite a change.

MR. BOETTCHER: About how old were you when you moved to Bowles?

MRS. HASEGAWA: About seven.

MR. BOETTCHER: Why was that?

MRS. HASEGAWA: The Ishii family, who were quite well to do, went to Japan. Just the other night, I met one of the sons who is visiting from New York, and he recalled my mother and father. And he said, "Oh, yes, that 100-acre ranch which was quite large for a Japanese family to be holding at the time. Of course, we lost all that after the war." They lost all that during the Depression, as so many others did. But, anyway, they needed someone to stay on their ranch while the whole family went to Japan. Since Dad had gone to an agricultural school in Japan, and since he had worked for Mr. Kearney and also had a try at farming in Sanger, he thought he could manage the farm. My mother had to cook for a big crew, which must have been very difficult for her. I remember having to go from our house to the ranch hands' bunkhouse to let them know that the lunch, or dinner, or whatever, was ready. So, that was the experience there.

MR. BOETTCHER: Anything more about the ranch life, or the time in Bowles?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I was impressed with the vastness of the vineyard. I couldn't see to the other end of the rows. It was so huge. I had gone to meet my father, and came upon an owl sitting atop a post. He turned his head completely around. It startled me. Those eyes stare at me yet, occasionally.

MR. BOETTCHER: Is that what was grown there, you think, grapes?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, also they had some peaches and apricots. We had to help with the cutting of peaches and they were all laid out on wooden trays to dry. And later there was the smell of burning sulphur.

My first experience with a Mexican worker impressed me. I don't know how he got to the ranch, but he said, "Me Fresno, me Chabacani." He wanted to take some home with him, I believe it was apricots. And he walked all the way home to Fresno from Bowles after a long day's work!

I can still feel the sticky mixture of fruit pulp and dust oozing between and on my fingers, and blood from occasional slash of the curved knives--the itch and the humidity in the orchard!

Oh, I remember that Japanese bath that you mentioned. I had my first experience of seeing it--it was a separate building. Black with smoke on the outside. But there was this opening, like a fireplace, underneath. And, it was my mother's duty to have the bath all ready.

MR. BOETTCHER: Have the water hot?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Hot, yes. There was this burning blaze in the opening of the little bathhouse. And, to me, it was always a miracle that the whole house did not catch on fire.

MR. BOETTCHER: A wood building?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Wooden building, at that with a rectangular tub, oh, maybe about three by four, or something like that, no not that big. Just big enough to get in.

MR. BOETTCHER: One person at a time.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. And when you sat down in the water, the water came way up to your chin, or I don't think I ever really sat down, but there was a wooden rack that kept floating up unless you stood right in the middle. And you know how they do take baths --

MR. BOETTCHER: They clean before.

MRS. HASEGAWA: --they clean and wash themselves thoroughly with soap and warm water scooped up with a wash basin from the tub, and then just go into the tub for a final warm-up. Oh, yes! The floor was made so you could splash all you wanted.

MR. BOETTCHER: So, that bath was available then for the ranch workers as well as family?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Strange, but I don't remember that part. I should think that everyone would want to get cleaned up after a day's work!

MR. BOETTCHER: You must have been in second and third grade? Do you remember anything about the school experience there?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I was amazed that one teacher could handle eight grades.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, a one-room school?

MRS. HASEGAWA: One-room school. It was the Alvina School. There was a girl who played the piano. She played for our group singing on Friday afternoons. It was just a short period, but it was so nice to have the whole school, first through the eighth grades singing together. There was a pretty eighth grader, and our favorite song, of course, was "'Nita, Jua--nita." It was fun.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you remember if there were any other Japanese

children there?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I don't remember any other Japanese. I don't remember being Japanese; I don't remember being different. I felt that the other students looked out for me. One frightening experience--a rancher filled in a ditch that cut through his land, and when the water ran in the spring, the road for what seemed like an endless stretch, got flooded. We walked through once and the boys told of snakes, and I was scared. So the next time we walked around the area, it totaled at least four miles. But one person remained in my memory, Mrs. Tingey, Katherine LaRue.

MR. BOETTCHER: Katherine LaRue Tingey?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes.

MR. BOETTCHER: She was a student at the school?

MRS. HASEGAWA: She was a year or two ahead of me. And she was so pretty--had curls that intrigued me. Years later, I met her again in college!

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And since "K" and "L" are fairly close, and we sat alphabetically in the classroom, all of a sudden, there she was. Somehow her name had stuck in my mind. Even to this day when we see each other we greet each other.

MR. BOETTCHER: Old-time friends?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Old-time friends. Oh, I remember one incident that really shocked me, and of course, it shocked the whole school. One girl, I don't know what she did, but she must have done many things many times to irritate the teacher, because I thought she was very calm and patient. One day, she sent all the children outside and from listening to students gathered around in groups, came to the conclusion that the teacher strapped this one poor child. I can still see that leather strap hanging in the corner. That one incident really scared me.

MR. BOETTCHER: Maybe the other students were disturbed and angered by it, too.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, they were. Very much so. And so whenever you talk about discipline in school, that picture always comes to mind.

MR.. BOETTCHER: How bad it can be. When you moved back to Fresno, perhaps, your father started as a gardener?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. We are---I think while they were in Bowles, they began looking for a place to move to. Probably they were thinking in terms of having to become independent; not having to depend on others for work. And so, they found this place on Olive Avenue; it was a five-acre place with a friend from Chiba, who had come to America about the same time. They had both gone to the same agricultural school in Chiba. And this man was a bachelor yet, but, then) since they were such good friends, they more or less looked out for each other, you might say. And, so, I guess, they talked about buying a place, and it

was bought in the name of my brother because aliens could not own property.

MR. BOETTCHER: About what time did you or how old were you at this time, do you remember?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, I remember going into the third grade. So, I was around eight years, 1921 or so.

MR. BOETTCHER: Whereabouts on Olive Avenue was this, do you remember?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes. It's East Olive, near Millbrook.

MR. BOETTCHER: Near Millbrook. That's interesting for local history. That was farmland then.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, it was. We--if we took the streetcar, it ran to the end of the Fresno Street line, which was at Olive Avenue. Then we would have to walk from Fresno Street to First Street to Millbrook--it was only a mile, but it sure seemed long!

MR. BOETTCHER: That seemed out in the country or out away from town?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, very few houses. There was on our block, from Millbrook to Eighth, only a chicken ranch and our place which extended south (now it would be two blocks). A five-acre rectangular place.

MR. BOETTCHER: You father wanted that place to be independent. Independence was important, wasn't it?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, both Father and Mother. I think he did stress many times after that, it didn't matter what you did to--the important thing was to do it to best of your ability, and to use all of your own resources. This independence part was no matter how small, no matter how modest. The important thing was that it was your own, and that you had pride in it. He said he grew the best carrots in Fresno.

MR. BOETTCHER: Right, I see. Is that what he raised--carrots or vegetables?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mainly vegetables, right. It was less than the two and a half acres, because I remember he set aside a large area in front of the house, facing Olive Avenue and along the side, for what he called our little park, our garden in which we had a fish pond and all kinds of trees and plants. What fun it was digging that pond and trying to agree on the final shape it should take--and when we finished, it was deep enough so we could all take a splash in it and cool off! It's not very large, but still it was--our house was not set right on the street and walled about with an orchard or a vineyard or a vegetable garden. But he did have this little spot where we could sit back and enjoy. And, he planted many kinds of trees and shrubs from starters, cuttings from Dr. Maupin's "park." This is where I got started in my interest in botany. It helped me in college, I recall!

MR. BOETTCHER: What was his friend's name?

MRS. HASEGAWA: His name was Mr. Ohara.

MR. BOETTCHER: And did he live at the same place? Was there room for him to live on that land?

MRS. HASEGAWA: He lived right near there on the other half of the five-acre section. So, he did his own and planted whatever he wanted.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you remember the man you bought the land from?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mr. E.W. Lindsay. He was a very kind person-- to me he seemed elderly. He was very gentle, kindly, and very understanding, and I found out that there was a school named for him out on East Belmont in the Sanger District. He was retired; he used to go to New Jersey to visit his son almost every year, and he would drop in to see us. Then my mother would mention having to get the interest money to Mr. Lindsay. That was, how shall I say -

MR. BOETTCHER: Important?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Important. Yes, but it was a burden, I'm sure, because imagine trying to eke out a living on less than two and a half acres. When we think of it now, it's just amazing.

MR. BOETTCHER: At that time, was that it, or did your father do gardening still for other people for a little cash?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think he did keep up just Dr. Maupin's place. That was all, because I remember going with him once in a while, as did my brothers, to help water the place. And, of course, with truck gardening the work goes on full-time, year round.

MR. BOETTCHER: Would he bring the produce down to a market in Fresno?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, most of the time, he went to the neighborhood stores. Small grocery stores. He, somehow or other, contacted many of those stores from our place on into town and managed to get orders, which was a continuous type of thing. He built his own route. He delivered mainly carrots, sometimes a few other vegetables; green onions, peppers, radishes, beets, turnips, and maybe eggplant. I enjoyed feeling around the young beets and turnip roots to see if they had developed enough to pull up!

There was a market by the Courthouse. There was quite busy type of activity there. Many farmers from all around used to come with vegetables, fruits, and live chickens! I remember walking up and down through the stalls or rows, and rows of trucks and pickups and little wagons, too. The different types of people who sold their produce interested me as much as their wares.

MR. BOETTCHER: So sometimes he participated there, maybe?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, markets where big firms pick up larger orders.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, delivered to a wholesale market.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's the word I want, wholesale market. Because he has mentioned some of the large produce market owners, and the large

scale growers and their problems. I recall a few times when he came home with his vegetables still piled on the back end of his truck.

MR. BOETTCHER: When you lived in this area on Olive, you were eight years old to junior high. That's where you lived for several years.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, through high school, through college. Until evacuation.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So this was a very stable type of life we lived in that we did not move about.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you have any other things you want to talk about besides the family business and home? As we bring you up through your school years, perhaps?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I can't recall.

MR. BOETTCHER: How far was school from where you lived?

MRS. HASEGAWA: It was very close, very close.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you remember which school that was?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Chester Rowell School had just been built. I remember my parents talking about this doctor Chester Rowell. He was a very kind physician of that time, and maybe it was practice in those days, but when people couldn't pay for services, they would give chicken or eggs or whatever, you know.

MR. BOETTCHER: Carrots?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Carrots, all right! They often used to mention Dr. Rowell. My father must have worked for one of the Rowells, because when Milo Rowell, or one of his brothers, was kidnapped when he was just a youngster, and I remember seeing the headlines in the paper, and remember my folks being very much affected because they had this personal connection with them. That was another pioneer family that they had known. But the school was named after Dr. Chester Rowell.

MR., BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And it had only four grades. So I went there the third and fourth. My third-grade teacher lived almost kitty-corner from our place in a two-story house with her two sisters. She was a nature-lover, had us paint several times a week and read to us at the close of the day. The class listened attentively, but for the life of me, I couldn't follow the story. I only remember being touched by my teacher weeping when she read Heidi to us.

And my fourth grade teacher was young pretty, who spent a period daily in drilling us the fundamentals of music. I can still see that "ladder" as we went through the "do-re-mi." I enjoyed that! And we learned to read music. I think I had started piano lessons about this time, so it helped.

Then, I had to go to Webster School for my fifth grade, where I met many of the friends that I again met at Fresno High School. But, here we are, I went to Webster for one year, had to walk almost a mile every day' to get there. And then, Chester Rowell expanded to sixth grade. So, in the interest of time and all, and, of course, being in the neighborhood, I imagine it was more or less compulsory, but that was not stressed. Anyway, I went back to sixth grade at Chester Rowell. Then the junior high that was closest to us was Washington Junior High which was near Angus, between Belmont and Olive. I think it's moved elsewhere now. So, again, walking from Millbrook on down Olive.

MR. BOETTCHER: That's a little more of a walk.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Webster was on Angus Street, I believe. Getting by locations I'll have to think about that. It was farther, I know I rode the bicycle once in a while. So, I went there three years. I sang in the chorus and was fascinated by the sounds from the school orchestra. Mr. Will Hays was brother Henry's violin teacher, and so he gave me a little attention though I wasn't enrolled. Nevart Shamgochian was a whiz at sight-reading at the piano--and she let me play once in a while. Marion Kalajian was a beautiful violinist; she won some kind of honor. I remember being interested in art, always sketching, even wrote a career paper on becoming a cartoonist.

Then I went three years to Fresno High School which is on Echo near University, near there. Though I took college preparatory courses, I still kept my fingers in some music classes.

MR. BOETTCHER: Any memories about the high school or junior high years? You mentioned in your notes that Halloween party when I asked about discrimination.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, that was the first time I really felt it. I began to realize that some of my classmates were talking in their own circles about this and that, but I got very little drift of that. But then when my so-called best friend said, "I'm having a party, and I'd like you to come, but don't tell anybody that I'm inviting you." I thought, "hm." I was a bit shaken, I don't think I would have gone anyway, because it would have meant asking my dad to take me and come after me late at night, and knowing that he worked, well, we just didn't have time for play. She wanted me to come, and she felt that she should ask me, which was very sweet of her. In that respect, I felt that she counted me as a friend. But something told her that --

MR, BOETTCHER: I am assuming, of course, she was Caucasian.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, she was. She was a very intelligent girl. I admired her a great deal. She read voraciously. She was about two years younger than the rest of us. And I remember her saying if she had stayed with her so-called age group -

MR. BOETTCHER: She skipped a grade?

MRS. HASEGAWA: She must have skipped at least two grades, because she was in the same class as her brother. And, of course, that made her brother feel a little uncomfortable, too, I think because she was very, very bright scholastically. He wasn't quite as gifted. But he was a fine fellow, though. And I remember having a big crush on him. But,

anyway, she said that if she had stayed in her own age group she would have a lot more fun. And I remember that they stress now not pushing children ahead of their social age groups. She was experiencing that. She was an outsider in her way, because others were more emotionally mature and having boyfriends, and having all kinds of parties, and she was not included, I'm sure. She felt that discrimination. Here I began to be aware of discriminations of different kinds.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: For a long time I don't think I really realized that I was Japanese, that I was different, because everyone was so good to me.

MR. BOETTCHER: And children don't think that way as much. It takes time to learn those things. Do you want to talk about that a little bit more?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, I guess the very first time I was made aware of my difference, I was on my way home from piano lessons. I was going home on my bicycle along First Street north of Belmont. There was a youngster about 12 years old who was standing in front of the small houses along the street who began saying, "Ching-Chong Chinaman," and poking fun. I said, "I'm not a Chinaman," I told him. This time I really felt strongly. I said, "I'm just as American as you are. I was born here and am an American citizen just as you are," and went on my way. That was my first confrontation, as I remember.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, about my music lesson. See, I was around eight years old, and the year was going on, and I was approaching my ninth birthday, and I suppose it was generally understood that when a girl reached her eighth birthday, it was time to start music lessons. Evidently, my mother had picked that up by living with the Cockrills, because certainly in Japan, pianos were not that common.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So, probably, our living here with all these so-called, affluent families of their day, and so it was time that I begin. And I imagine that this Mrs. Cockrill, who kept in touch with my mother throughout the years. In fact, she took my mother and father to Clovis the day of the evacuation. So, they were friends for many years. Anyway, so there was one teacher who taught many of the children of these pioneer families here in town. She lived on "T" Street, right off Mariposa, on "T". Her name was Martha Frances Sprengle. I imagine it was through Mrs. Cockrill that arrangements were made for me to take lessons. But we didn't have a piano. That was important! Our next-door neighbor, however, the couple who had the chicken ranch, had a piano, but no children; only chickens, cats, and dogs. She adopted practically all the stray cats and dogs! I remember that. And feeding them good ole hamburger and good liver. And always telling me she didn't want any children; kept lavishing affection on all those strays, however. Anyway, but she worked in town at the Wonder Department Store, a lady's apparel store where the Guarantee is now at Fresno and. Fulton Mall, so she was gone most of the day until later years when she finally stopped working and helped her husband with feeding chicken

and sorting eggs. Some way or another, they said that I could go over there to practice.

MR. BOETTCHER: When they heard your family hoped to give you lessons.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So, I went over there every day.

MR. BOETTCHER: You practiced every day?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Every day. For 30 minutes. I watched that clock!

MR. BOETTCHER: Good for you!

MRS. HASEGAWA: My mother started out with me at first. She wanted to see that I understood what I was supposed to do. She'd had some organ work in Japan, was able to play reed organ. She went to mission school and helped to teach in Mission School. So she had some knowledge of reading music, so she went with me in the beginning. And I guess she thought I was independent enough to go every day on my own. So, anyway, I practiced there every day for I don't know how long, whether it was two years, three years. Finally, they decided to sell their piano, and so, we bought it. I kept that piano until 1936. So, from, I was eight, going on nine, so 1921 must have been when I started music lessons.

MR. BOETTCHER: How long did you continue music lessons from Miss Sprengle?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I kept up until I entered college. So, in 1930 I graduated Fresno High School, and then after that, I started taking music at Fresno State; that filled my need for musical training. It's difficult to keep up.

MR. BOETTCHER: Private lessons, as a music student.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, and I was taking piano at college, too. That was my major instrument while working for a credential in music education.

MR. BOETTCHER: Anything more about that particular time, we're up to your high school years. Whatever you want to talk about.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Always being afraid of those recitals.

MR. BOETTCHER: Miss Sprengle's recitals?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Every year, in June, she held recitals in her home. We'd all wait in the kitchen, and she always had a dish of fudge. I remember older ones always wringing their hands. The younger ones being more or less carefree. And I must have been that way when I was young. And for several years, she put me into some sort of "tryouts." They're like festivals that they had. I remember playing duets with another girl. Her name was Ruth Jowett. I think she became a nurse. Every once in a while I see that name, I wonder if that is the girl I played with.

MR. BOETTCHER: At this time period, you mentioned Girl Reserves and YWCA. Were you involved with those? I don't know what Girl Reserves is at all.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Girl Reserves was an organization within the YWCA's

activity, as I understand. It was for high school age girls. It's like the Y-Teens now, I think. They change the name to fit the times, I think.

MR. BOETTCHER: A club.

MRS. HASEGAWA: We had that through Fresno High School with each other. Miss Ida C. Moodey who was our advisor. A very kind, outgoing person, and she gave so much of her time to us. And there were Armenian girls in the group, several Japanese girls. I think they stressed the interracial background, or maybe it just happened that they began to get more comfortable.

MR. BOETTCHER: Right. Maybe they ignored racial differences.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I remember that in Fresno High School they had a couple of social clubs, for instance, the Portias. I think girls from the more affluent families were selected, you might say.

MR. BOETTCHER: Like a sorority?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Almost like a sorority is the impression I got, although I think fraternities and sororities were outlawed in high school.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes. But they tried something else.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think they tried to stress the training of the-- what is that senate group that they have at Fresno High? They tried to have the fellows learn how to conduct meetings with the parliamentary rules?

MR. BOETTCHER: I don't know the name.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think that was another similar organization. But, anyway, so, where I think the racial differences and the family backgrounds, and all those things were beginning to show up in the way we were going.

MR. BOETTCHER: Girl Reserves was open to all people?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right.

MR. BOETTCHER: But there were other clubs at the school that were not open?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. There were other interest group clubs like the Chemistry Club or the German Club

MR. BOETTCHER: So outside of the classroom your interest would be in music and in Girl Reserves?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. And we had a very good friend Mary Baker, who was the Dean of Women at the college just about that time. She had spent many years in Japan as a YW worker. And I think she must have had some influence on many of our families, too.

MR. BOETTCHER: She was a friend of your family's?

MRS. HASEGAWA: A friend of many of the families. And I think when she first came to the Fresno area she taught English to the Japanese--held classes. Then she became a dean, I believe.

MR. BOETTCHER: At Fresno State?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. And there's a hall, a dormitory, named after her, Baker Hall. The warmth that these YW people showed was always so impressive. They had outgoing personalities. And through this, I was able to attend a large (to me it was large) conference at Asilomar. First time I ever went away from home for anything like that. And girls went from all over and leaders that really made an outstanding impression on me. New York, Hawaii, all of them just so concerned about girls, didn't care about their racial background or whatever. Then, of course, at Asilomar, you saw all kinds of people, all kinds of nationalities. All on common ground, so to speak, working together to talk about problems, having a good time, having--still interested in the YW work.

MR. BOETTCHER: Anything more, memories about that time, or can we go on to college.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think, coming back to this of my father stressing, both my parents feeling, it was important to be independent is partly based on their belief that if we had something that we could do ourselves and no matter where we had to go. I think that was one of the points, too, that we would not be dependent; for instance, they were dependent prior to this piece of land.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: But, if we got an education that entitled us to carry whatever we had in our heads, our skills, what have you, then we would truly be independent. I had wondered and been impressed by the Jewish race. How they are so far advanced, as far as their intelligence is concerned, and their music artistry is concerned. Look at the list of concert artists, there are so many Jewish people.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I came to the conclusion, and this is how my parents felt; they had to develop those skills and mentality or whatever they were given--their intelligence and all, because they had to move from place to place so frequently. Take Dr. Einstein, the professor, I worked with him a short time. He had to leave Germany; he had to flee to Italy. From Italy, he had to go someplace else before he finally got to the United States. But since he had this vast knowledge about music and history of music, he carried that all with him and continued teaching wherever he went.

MR. BOETTCHER: And you see some important things like that stressed in your family to have a skill or an ability or knowledge?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. I think that is it, and that's why, if I became a teacher, if there were an opportunity, I could teach no matter where. They realized long ago that my brother had this allergy, and he wouldn't

be able to be a farmer or work in dusty areas. So they really tried to find some avenue for him where he could be independent. They more or less decided that he should be a doctor, I would say.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And my mother felt my younger brother should be a lawyer. And there was conflict for a long time, because I don't think my younger brother was about to settle down and study. He was able to enjoy many extracurricular activities in school; sports, social clubs -

MR. BOETTCHER: Would this be when they were in high school or undergraduate in college or--when the parents decided?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, I'm sure it must have been younger days.

MR. BOETTCHER: Even younger than that?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Uh-huh. I think all the way through junior high at least. This concern about what are you going to do, and what are you going to become. That question was raised.

MR. BOETTCHER: And the parents certainly gave guidance?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, right. (Laughter.) I don't think we're sorry, but it was quite a strong, shall we say, push that my mother gave. Whatever she did, I realize now, she just put her whole heart and soul into it. And only because she was that way, she was built that way. She had a goal, and everything else had to take second place. She used to write poetry. I'm digressing. I wonder how she managed to write that book of poetry. There's a copy in the library here. I think Yoshino found it among some books that she inherited. But, all along these drudgery type of work that she was doing on this little truck garden, she made time, or her mind was on something that was a little uplifting, elevating.

She saw some beauty here or there. It wasn't just working in the earth where she worked.

MR. BOETTCHER: She worked for more than that.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, yes. That was just a way of getting something else, which was to raise children who could become independent in the long run. But she wrote poetry all along. She wrote essays. And she has recorded her life in the camps, her feelings. She came out to visit me and met me in New York toward the end of the war. She has recorded all her feelings, and it's in this book. I finally read it a few years ago before she died. She and I worked together on making a rough translation in English, because she knew that we couldn't read it. But many people were telling us how wonderful that book was, and how it reflected their feelings, too.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, I'm way off the subject, but whatever she did, her whole heart and soul was in it. So, when it came to having us become whatever, teacher, doctor, lawyer, whatever, that was it. And so, I think that sometimes we felt this push going against our own desire was

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MR. BOETTCHER: Too much?

MRS. HASEGAWA: --too much, yes. But the, I guess, because we were children of Japanese people, we had the innate attitude or what would you say, where the children were supposed to obey.

MR. BOETTCHER: You knew that you had to do that.

MRS. HASEGAWA: It's a wonder there weren't--I've heard of children rebelling and not -

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I remember that once even my father or mother said, "It's a wonder you children grew up to be as good as you are, and obeyed us," or whatever. So, I guess they realized it,,too.

MR. BOETTCHER: That the pressures they put on you -

MRS. HASEGAWA: The pressure, yes, was pretty great.

MR. BOETTCHER: You mentioned one brother did go on to be a doctor and another a lawyer?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes.

MR. BOETTCHER: Okay, those are the two brothers. And you're the teacher?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yeah, I'm the so-called teacher. We had a person give the eulogy at my father's funeral, and he said he remembered that my dad always wanted these three, and a minister. He said that he sponsored his nephew from Japan who became a minister. He had all his goals or desires fulfilled. He was, of course, I'm sure, very close to the church.

MR. BOETTCHER: I think we are leading up to the college time. When did you decide to go to college? Was there ever any question that you would go and study music? It seems like that was a foregone conclusion to your parents.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's right. It was just expected. I remember my mother saying that she knew that it would be almost an impossibility for her to try to work part-time and go on to school. Because, I think the family was beginning to make more and more demands on her, the family that she was living with. They wanted her to work for them full-time.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, this is before she got married?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, and so that was one reason why she finally quit, you might say. She decided she would get married and just give up the idea of going to school. She wanted to go back to Japan to become a teacher, and teach English and so on. She did say when you get married and have children you can extend your life. I didn't realize at that time what she meant, but she felt that she was fulfilling some of her first goals, by having her children continue their education.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see. So, she was like a lot of parents, letting her

children carry on with something she had hoped for for herself.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, right. We hear of mothers who try to give their daughters many things to compensate for that lack in their own lives.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes. So, about your going to college?

MRS. HASEGAWA: "When did you decide?" "Was there ever any question?" There was no question. And study, study music. Well, about music, I had just continued all along, and I didn't feel I was especially gifted or anything. I practiced my lessons, and I thought, to the best of my ability; maybe not always, but anyway. Somewhere along there, I think, I was about a sophomore or junior in high school, different families began to ask me if I would teach their youngsters privately. I was still a high-school aged person, and so, then I said okay. And I don't think at that time there was any other person who had studied piano as long as I had, among the Japanese. I would go to what they called Japanese town on Saturdays and give lessons to various youngsters.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see. These were Japanese children?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, these were Japanese children. So, that's when my career, so to speak, started.

MR. BOETTCHER: In high school you began teaching music?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Of course, all along I was playing piano at Sunday School and all of that. Then when I got to college, teacher education came. I imagine my having taught in Sunday School gave me some experience for handling children. So when I took pedagogy class, I had to do some classroom teaching, it kind of came easy to me.

MR. BOETTCHER: I understand that Japanese-Americans were not allowed to become teachers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: No.

MR. BOETTCHER: Had this occurred to you? Because music is a different field?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Somehow or Other. I have a very close friend who was in high school about the same time, and she went into kindergarten-primary teaching. And I know she did get her credential and all that, and she did practice teaching, and she had very kind supervisors. And I imagine they recognized her ability. So far as I knew, neither she nor I were told we would never have an opportunity to teach. Because girls that we know would say, "I'm going to change my major because you'd never have a chance to teach."

MR. BOETTCHER: So, maybe, for example, the State would issue a credential, but it might be difficult to find a school board somewhere that would hire you.

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's right. Yes. That's the whole thing, I think, cracking the school board.

MR. BOETTCHER: That would change gradually from district to district.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I did my practice teaching. I did some class piano work at the lab school which I continued for a long time. Because I think the person in charge of the piano work really didn't care for it. That was partly it, I think. She found someone who was willing to do it. Which was a job that I had. It was my job to sort of supervise that end of it as other young teachers came along to do practice teaching in areas of music.

MR. BOETTCHER: While you were an undergraduate?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, as an undergraduate I did that. This happened, I believe, in my junior and senior years at college. I continued on as part-time teacher and that's where I did practice teaching of choral work, classroom music in Heaton School, chorus at Fresno High, and even helped with piano classes in college. I did practice teaching of fourth grade and then at Fresno High I did girls chorus. And then the teacher had me take over the a cappella choir once or twice, I believe, just to see if I could handle a mixed group. And somehow or other, the students were very sympathetic, and I had a wonderful time. But the reason why this supervisor teacher had me try a cappella was to see if I could even handle a rather difficult group of outspoken young people.

MR. BOETTCHER: High school age kids.

MRS. HASEGAWA: High school age kids, you know, and sometimes they can be difficult. I think they were being very, unusually kind to me.

MR. BOETTCHER: Well, that's nice.

MRS. HASEGAWA: But, anyway, those experiences in practice teaching were very enjoyable. The one thing I remember about the fourth grade, this little boy in the class that seemed to be a nonconformist. He didn't want to join in singing, he sat in his seat--sullen, but I sort of ignored him. Went on with our singing, went walking up and down the aisle. One time I noticed that he had a very lovely voice, and so I began asking him if he would like to sing a certain little passage alone, and little by little, and it was just amazing to see that sullen type of a youngster change into a youngster who seemed to anticipate this music period. The room teacher, too, noticed the change in this boy. So I thought here's music therapy. That really helped me in my wish to continue with music.

MR. BOETTCHER: There was not a great deal of change between your junior and senior year, and your first work after graduate. You continued -

MRS. HASEGAWA: I continued on and I taught some classes in the college itself.

MR. BOETTCHER: Would this be a music lab type classes, music lessons?

MRS. HASEGAWA: There are class piano lessons, group work. And, also, all along I taught privately. I had more than enough to do.

MR. BOETTCHER: You took as many private students as you had time for?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, after schools, and Saturdays. That lab school really gave me all the students I ever needed. It helped finance my schooling.

MR. BOETTCHER: These would be college-age -

MRS. HASEGAWA: No. The lab school would be little youngsters, school-age youngsters. Delightful little children, very intelligent.

MR. BOETTCHER: They don't have a lab school at the University there now, do they?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, they don't. That's true.

MR. BOETTCHER: But that would be great experience for any prospective teacher--to practice procedure with children.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think they try to send all the prospective teachers out to actual public school situation.

MR. BOETTCHER: Now, for practice teaching.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think they found that the lab school would be a little different from the regular classroom situation, you know, as it was highly selective. I had plenty of private students. My first job was with the continuance thing, and we were treated fairly. "All pioneers in any field must be patient," is what my mom said. I was getting tired of working, you know. Many, many hours that really amounted to almost a full-time job. But I was still getting what I thought was just office-boy type salary.

MR. BOETTCHER: They were treating you like a graduate assistant or student assistant, when you were doing work that the faculty was doing?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, right. I was, really. I began realizing that as, more so, as the years were going by. You see, from 1935 to 1942, that's seven years.

MR. BOETTCHER: Let's get that date in. So you graduated from Fresno State in?

MRS. HASEGAWA: 1934, and continued on as part-time teacher. Then classes were being added to my load. Of course, I was getting paid a little more, but still, it was not a professional type of salary. And I'm sure that I would not have gotten the benefits that a regular faculty member would have received; some of the benefits, yes, but not all. I do remember Miss Baker and my immediate head saying, "I wonder why the president can't appoint you as a regular faculty member." But there I think he wanted to tread lightly, because there were no Japanese on the faculty as such. I often wondered if there were any Japanese on any of the State College faculties.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes. So there were no Japanese on the faculty. There weren't that many Japanese college graduates by 1934. Were there other Japanese students in college at your time?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, there were some. But they were taking history, sociology, English, foreign languages, arts classes. There were a few taking pre-med, pre-dental, pre-legal courses.

MR. BOETTCHER: So did you want to talk about your early career and your first involvement with the MTA?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes. I began having private students when I was about 15 years of age, and charged 25 cents a lesson! I must have been the only Nisei in Fresno who had continued lessons for any length of time, so Japanese parents began asking me to teach their children.

MR. BOETTCHER: Twenty-five cents a lesson?

MRS. HASEGAWA: That fee must have continued for about a year or so, and then it went up to 50 cents, and on up. I like to talk about the 25-cent years! When I look back, I don't know how I dared to teach! I didn't have any pedagogical background. I learned a lot at the expense of my early students.

MR. BOETTCHER: What about MTA, what does it stand for?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Music Teachers Association. It is open to all who are teaching music, although the membership is primarily made up of private teachers. Someone from the MTA must have contacted me after I graduated. I became a member in 1936, I think. I do remember that most of those there at that first meeting seemed to be such old people. Just the other day I was looking around at our board members and thinking how young some of them are. I'm so happy to have so many young fresh minds on the board. Then I thought, "Good heavens, I'm in that old, old category!" There are a few of us who are still hanging on!

MR. BOETTCHER: And -

MRS. HASEGAWA: I dropped out when we were evacuated. With the pressure of teaching and all, I didn't go regularly. But after I came back from the war, there was some members who tried to contact me. I said I'm just too busy raising this family and so on. So, I did not rejoin it until just a few years ago, when I finally started teaching privately, more or less without the pressures of family. Some old friends said, "You know you come to a time in your life when it's nice to have friends who have the same interests," and that's true.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Friends who have stuck by. And this year, I'm president of the Music Teachers Association. I'm having a wonderful experience. I didn't think I could ever do anything like that, but the membership is so cooperative, except when I ask someone to be a chairman of a big project.

This last fall we put on our Pianorama. I don't know if you're aware of it, but every two years we have this great big event. It's not very professional in the sense that we have youngsters of all various levels participating.

MR. BOETTCHER: From the teachers.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. We had as many as 450 youngsters participating in this. The object is to raise money for a scholarship. But at the same time, we're giving many children of many backgrounds an opportunity to perform together in an orchestra, as it were, of just pianos.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh.

MRS. HASEGAWA: You see, it's an experience in ensemble playing which they don't get very often. Most of the time, they're in private studios playing alone. But here we have children from various teachers performing under one baton. Dr. Larry Warkentin was our conductor and the concert was in the Convention Center Theatre, so it gave many families an opportunity to go there for the first time in their lives, because we do have children from all over Fresno, as well as from nearby towns.

MR. BOETTCHER: This MTA, Music Teachers Association, is out of Fresno City, Fresno County?

MRS. HASEGAWA: It's the Fresno County Branch of a statewide organization.

MR. BOETTCHER: So the organization that you're the president of, the members that you work with here, are from the Fresno County area?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. But we have a member from Tulare, two from Hanford, Kings County, one from Madera, Oakhurst, and so on. But it is Fresno County and part of a state organization and because of this, I was privileged to go to a state convention last year in San Francisco, and this year in Los Angeles. I could see how the state officers conduct sessions and attend many different concerts, lectures, workshops, seminars. It was great!!

MR. BOETTCHER: Would you like to talk a little bit about your membership in the Fresno Musical Club?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, this is another group that I joined way back in 1936 or 1937. It was organized to foster fine music, cultural betterment here in Fresno, all entirely run by women.

MR. BOETTCHER: Because they happen to be the music teachers, or musicians?

MRS. HASEGAWA: They're outstanding musicians, though some are music teachers. I feel that this musical club is sort of an elite thing, and one has to audition to become a member. Mrs. Montgomery Thomas, a member of the Helm family, and others were members when I first joined in 1936 or '37. And some of the outstanding musicians, performers in their own field, vocalist, pianists, violinists. Bell Richie, for instance. She was one of the first presidents of the Musical Club. I never was a board member, although just a few years ago when the nominating committee was looking for new officers, they asked if I would consider becoming a member of the board. That, in itself, was a great honor. However, I declined because I still had my parents to whom I wanted to give as much time as possible, because they were both in a convalescent hospital, as well as my mother-in-law, all three. And that was all the time and energy I could spare.

There were many Musical Club members who encouraged me all through my musical life. And when I sat back to think, golly, I'm not really that worthy of all this. But people all along the way have pulled me. I am] most grateful.

MR. BOETTCHER: They recognized your abilities and talents.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Anyway, they were really wonderful people.

MR. BOETTCHER: When you dropped out of activity in the Musical Club, did that have to do with the war?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. In the hectic, uncertain conditions that followed Pearl Harbor, I just really forgot all about having to ask for a leave of absence. So, I lost my membership. So then, just a few years ago, maybe five or six years ago, one of my friends who was a college classmate, and who has been a good friend all these years, came to me and said the members would like me to reconsider and become a member again. Well, I'd been out of the club for such a long time, my lifestyle was so different from being a farmer's wife, although I did continue teaching privately off and on between babies. I just didn't feel that I cared to join, that I didn't have the proficiency of performing, and she said, "Well, those of us in our silver years don't have to perform." But she stressed that they would like me to reconsider joining again, because they "wanted to right a wrong."

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, she mentioned that specifically.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Of course, that touched me.

MR. BOETTCHER: Could we talk a little bit about the war? At this time, is there anything that you want to say? I would be interested.

It's always interesting for anybody to say, "Where were you when you heard about Pearl Harbor?" And what did you think?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Unbelief, of course, at first. I was home. I was supposed to go and help a friend serve a Japanese dinner to a group of faculty at the home of one of the faculty members.

MR. BOETTCHER: Was your friend Japanese also?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. He was a young fellow. He was born in Japan and took music courses. He had promised some of the faculty people he would prepare a Japanese dinner for them. And so he asked if I would help him, since it was hard for him to talk. Well, you'd be shocked to hear my mother's reaction when I told her. She said, "You don't have to go and be a servant!"

MR. BOETTCHER: She thought that was what you would be doing?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. This was her reaction. Once, before this, she reacted this way, too. You see, a friend and I were asked by some members of a sorority to wear our Japanese kimonos to serve punch at their dance which carried out an Oriental theme. When I told my mother about that, she said, "Why do you have to do something like that? You don't have to be a --"

MR. BOETTCHER: A servant.

MRS. HASEGAWA: We hadn't thought of it in that way when we accepted.

MR. BOETTCHER: At this time, I don't imagine the Japanese people were in the sororities or fraternities.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, no, no!

MR. BOETTCHER: No. But they asked you to help anyway.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, they asked us to serve, you know, not to become members. The dance was at the Sunnyside Country Club, and we had heard of its exclusiveness, too.

MR. BOETTCHER: You agreed to do it. You didn't actually take it as demeaning?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, we didn't. We just thought that it was something different for us to do. Something to see and experience a different way of life. Of course, we weren't asked to dance. We were just there to serve the punch.

MR. BOETTCHER: Your mother saw it a little differently?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, she did. She must have felt this discrimination all along. And too, that there were certain areas where we were not allowed. She was aware of the "houseboy" status of Japanese, too, and wanted us to break away from that pattern.

I did not go to help with the dinner. My mother was so strong in her feelings. So I couldn't go. I had to make up some kind of an excuse.

MR. BOETTCHER: This dinner, I assume, was on Sunday, December -

MRS. HASEGAWA: December 7th, and I was thinking about not being able to help, when lo and behold, came this news about the Pearl Harbor attack! And later on, I asked my so-called immediate boss, head of the piano department, how it went. She said it was awful. It was awful, meaning that having to hear that kind of news and then the shock of it all. I'm sure that she didn't mean it was awful to have to eat Japanese dinner that was prepared by this fellow.

MR. BOETTCHER: But everyone was so shocked and embarrassed.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, embarrassed, right. And I felt relieved that I didn't have to face that situation there. Of course, I couldn't--I kept on teaching, though.

MR. BOETTCHER: What happened in the next several months?

MRS. HASEGAWA: The department just accepted me just as another member and so did the students. I didn't feel any reaction. I kept teaching until I was barred from going past a certain line. I couldn't go to college to teach. There were certain boundaries we couldn't enter.

MR. BOETTCHER: There was some line within Fresno, within the City of

Fresno?

MRS. HASEGAWA: We couldn't go west of Blackstone. Before that, you see, they evacuated all those within the city limits to the Fairgrounds. They had to go earlier in the spring into Assembly Center.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see. Oh, you weren't in city limits?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, we were outside.

MR. BOETTCHER: I see, but you couldn't go to work in the city?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, that's right.

MR. BOETTCHER: So when did you first hear about the evacuation and what did you think about that? Do you have any early memories or reactions?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Of course, I felt that it couldn't happen to us as we were American citizens!

MR. BOETTCHER: As the things built up?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Of course, there were all kinds of suspicions and rumors and talk about--well, that evacuation would never come beyond a certain area. It would not touch outside of the city limits, nor outside of the Coast area.

MR. BOETTCHER: Almost immediately on the Coast, certain people were moved out, or the people with fishing boats in San Pedro. And so it was sort of a gradual thing?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, it was except for some of the more prominent Issei who were being questioned and picked up by the FBI. Gradually, people from that area (coastal area) started to come in hoping that they would not have to be moved out of California. And so, we thought we would be free, and we got some new neighbors who came in from the Los Angeles area who thought that they would escape having to evacuate further, but gradually, as time went on, even our friends in the city had to move into the racetrack area of the Fairgrounds. We were reading about others and then gradually we just accepted it as inevitable. There was nothing else we could do, I don't think, but to go along.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes, right.

MRS. HASEGAWA: And I do remember that Miss Baker, whom I've mentioned before, and Dr. Hubert Phillips, head of the History-Social Science Department at Fresno State, were quite outspoken about the way they felt about this whole thing, that it was an injustice to the Japanese-Americans. But, then, of course, they were in the minority. But they visited us quite frequently during this period.

We went directly to a relocation camp when it was time to go. It was summertime. Yes, we could not go beyond what they called the white zone. But, we finally started getting ready. We had to leave from the Clovis railroad station. This was in the summertime, and I recall seeing a lot of church women there, serving punch or something; trying to be helpful

and friendly.

MR. BOETTCHER: Caucasian women?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes.

MR. BOETTCHER: How much notice did they give you actually when they said you have to be at the train station, 48 hours?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No. That was all the time some of the coastal people had, but compared to that we had quite a bit of time. They had told us by a certain time we would have to move. So we had a few months to get our things ready and to find someone to look over our property.

MR. BOETTCHER: Yes. What arrangements did you make?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, in our case, Dr. Phillips had been visiting us. He had a stepdaughter who was just married, and the couple was to stay in our house. And they wanted to have permission to play on my piano. After graduation, well, 1936 I had bought a grand piano. It was a second-hand one, but a large Steinway. Many times I thought what a foolish thing I did. And, of course, now I'm very happy, because I'd never be able to afford one.

MR. BOETTCHER: You still have it then?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I still have it. But, anyway, I think that they were very much interested in the piano for one thing. I had already (and this was another step that I felt I'd made a mistake), I'd already talked to the parents of one of my students. He was the manager of Gottschalks at that time. They had a very nice home, and they were very willing to take care of my piano, and he said he would even insure it, you know, against fire, earthquake, bombing --do all sorts of things to really take good care of it. And then when we found that this young couple was moving and, of course, they promised to take care of the piano and since Dr. Phillips had been a friend of the family for many years, too, we thought that everything would be fine. So, I had to tell this other family I had to change my mind. Somehow or other I think they were disappointed because they had put a great deal of thought into it, too, and I felt that I had let them down. But, I just couldn't, at that point, tell this young couple they couldn't use the piano, partly because of Dr. Phillips, who had always been sympathetic to the Japanese cause. In fact, after the war, many of us who had been students under him and who had gone to Fresno State, worked together to establish a Hubert Phillips scholarship fund. It's still there, as well as a Mary Baker scholarship fund. The Nisei students felt strongly about showing their appreciation to these two loyal persons.

MR. BOETTCHER: Those are important people.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, because they had been of such value to the Japanese group as a whole. Unfortunately, after I was in camp, a letter came from Miss Withrow saying that the young couple was moving out because the husband had to join the armed forces. And so, Miss Withrow had to find a place to put my piano. She had contacted my student's parents, but they weren't interested by then.

MR. BOETTCHER: But it was taken care of?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes.

MR. BOETTCHER: We've got about to the point of evacuation. One thing that's important to me, if you want to recap any of your experiences along the way; traveling and getting to Poston, and then how long were you there, and how did you get to Smith College?

MRS. HASEGAWA: We were on trains, I don't know how long, but I know the blinds were down all the way.

MR. BOETTCHER: Did you know you were going to Arizona?

MRS. HASEGAWA: We knew we were going to Poston. We didn't know where it was, but they told us we were going to Arizona. And I was there only about a couple months. They were setting up camp and various work groups, and so on, and they asked how many were interested in helping to start school in the fall. So, naturally I volunteered. Before that I was helping in the so-called employment office. But when the school system was going to be set up, they recruited as many prospective teachers as possible from the camp, and then told us that there were many coming from outside to help organize this educational system. So I was ready to teach, and the first day of school, I got my notice. I'll always remember the poignancy of that opening session. As song leader, I asked the students what they'd like to sing. "God Bless America," they all shouted back; and they truly sang their hearts out!

I was to go to Smith College. Okay. Now you wonder how I happened to choose this. Well, it was chosen for me. Again friends at Fresno State -

MR. BOETTCHER: Did your parents decide this for you?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, they didn't. They didn't say anything. I'm sure they didn't know where it was. As I didn't know, except I knew it was in Massachusetts.

MR. BOETTCHER: So friends at Fresno State, as soon as they learned you had to evacuate, did what?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I guess the Quakers were setting up all sorts of help. The people were concerned about the welfare of students whose work had been disrupted. Particularly, they were anxious to see these promising students continue and finish their educations. Well, the Quakers, the Friends Service Committee, I think was instrumental, they did more than just the student work, but they had committees or groups of people who knocked on the college doors to see what could be done. And there were many smaller colleges in the East who would accept Japanese students. The Smith College happened to have what they call scholarships for students from Japan. I imagine the Quakers pounced on that, "Since you can't have students from Japan, how about using it for these Japanese students who are in camps?" And even though I was 10 years out of college, friends here at Fresno State who were very much interested and who got other students relocated to do their undergraduate work, found out about a graduate scholarship at Smith College.

MR. BOETTCHER: And was it for music?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mine wasn't specifically for music. I know there was a

Japanese girl there with an art major, another one with English, but I mentioned mine was just one of the foreign student scholarships for graduate students, and at that time, I guess, it didn't matter which department.

MR. BOETTCHER: I understand that you were not in the middle of graduate studies at the time.

MRS. HASEGAWA: No.

MR. BOETTCHER: This seemed like an opportunity to continue with something in music education?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Well, it was not of my choosing, and I really hesitated going on because I had never thought of going on to graduate school.

MR. BOETTCHER: Did the Quakers let you know there was an opening and you were accepted--you, Helen? To go to Smith?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Let's say the friends here at Fresno State including Miss Baker and another person Miss Cosgrave, who was the registrar at the college at that time, and I imagine Dr. Phillips had something to do with it, too, because they were all on the Fair Play Committee and very much interested in the welfare of their students, they said here you are, we're working on it, we want you to go. It was a struggle, I'll tell you, Keith, after not doing anything academic for 10 years except teaching piano, and having to study the way I had to at Smith. Also the level of education at Smith and Fresno State were so different. One was geared for teaching, and most of my courses were geared for teaching. The music classes were more of a practical nature where the other I had to learn to write essays and things like that.

MR. BOETTCHER: More theoretical.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Theoretical, learning how to analyze things. As I recall, I never did anything like that at Fresno State. I even have nightmares now. They accepted all my credits, but I lacked a foreign language unit. They were very lenient about that, too, because they said since I had studied three years of Latin in high school. I hadn't had any foreign language in college at Fresno State. I didn't need it, so I didn't take it. So I took a year of Italian language. That was it.

MR. BOETTCHER: Did you teach, too? Were you a graduate teaching assistant?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No. I was strictly a student. It was mainly to get my master's degree. It took two years to do it, but I have a Master of Arts.

MR. BOETTCHER: This was your first trip East?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes.

MR. BOETTCHER: What about the rest of the country compared to the San Joaquin Valley? Do you have any impressions of the country or the trip?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Vast country. The trip was slow. They said we were on the cattle train, that's what they were saying. There were a few other students who went out with me at the same time, but one by one got off to go to Michigan, Pennsylvania.

MR. BOETTCHER: Once you got your paper work from Smith and from the Quakers, was it difficult to get out of camp?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I don't think so, because other camps were sending out students, There were three camps in Poston. I'm sure there must have been other students who, I've heard through the grapevine, had left from Camp I.

MR. BOETTCHER: You were just put on a regular public train. You didn't have to go on a guarded train a certain number of miles or anything?

MRS. HASEGAWA: We might have for a short distance. I think at the first station, we were taken by bus to Poston and probably there, we had to get, or meet, an MP or something.

MR. BOETTCHER: To check you out.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Check in or something. And after that I don't recall. It was the middle of the night. All of this was hazy in my mind. It was such a new experience, having to leave everything behind and not know what was going to happen. Somehow or other, I managed to get to Northampton. I didn't venture far from the stations at all. I realized later that here I had two or three hours in Hartford, Connecticut, and I could have taken the bus, or something, to look at Yale and the campus. See what it was like in a college town. I never did. Sort of afraid to get out.

MR. BOETTCHER: Because of what you'd been through in California?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right.

MR. BOETTCHER: You didn't know what the rest of the country was doing?

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's right.

MR. BOETTCHER: So any other impressions of the rest of the country just being a Californian who went back East rather suddenly?

MRS. HASEGAWA: It was a new experience. Someone who'd stayed home for some time. I was thinking, my mother, very adventuresome for her time, to come all the way to America, hardly knowing how to speak the language. Here I could speak English, but I was afraid to venture out. However, when I got to Northampton after several train changes, there was this woman who came up to me. She sort of peered down. She was a tall person. She asked me if I was so and so. I was to live with her family. All of us students had to live with families except one, who lived in the graduate house.

Anyway, I stayed with that family one year. By then, some of us were itching to get into our own apartments, so we got together and did that. More or less independent, although I think the Dean of Graduate Students

had some misgivings, and she was afraid something might happen to us.

MR. BOETTCHER: Try to take care of you or protect you?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, they did, right.

MR. BOETTCHER: Anything more about experiences at Smith? Especially the biography of Mozart, Alfred Einstein's biography that you worked on? What was this exactly?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, I only helped him in writing the little musical examples. He had noticed my work on my thesis, and even before that, when I had to write musical examples, and probably it was talked about in the department.

MR. BOETTCHER: Was he on the faculty at the time?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, he was a faculty member, and he was already working on the Mozart biography. And somehow or other, during the war, he explained that they couldn't get the proper metal. Do they use copper plates, or something?

MR. BOETTCHER: Something like that, perhaps.

MRS. HASEGAWA: For engraving. Something like that, and they didn't have the metal, so they would have to make photographs of examples he wanted to include in his book. So he asked if I would. Of course, I felt it was quite an honor to do this.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you have any other impressions of him?

MRS. HASEGAWA: He's such a wonderful--the greater the person the more humble he is. The truly great are really so humble, and so warm, and he often had gatherings at his home, invited students who would just sit adoringly at his feet while he talked about his experience in Europe at the hands of the Nazis. Particularly it was very harrowing. So grateful to be in America.

MR. BOETTCHER: And so, then, you did finish your stay at Smith about two years and earned your master's?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, I did some library work there, too. I got 25 cents an hour for accessioning. I learned that word, accessioning. I think they wanted to pay me more, but they said that they couldn't because they had asked if I could type, I said "No" and so that's all they could pay. It was an experience. I didn't do that very long, through the summer months.

MR. BOETTCHER: Then you returned to California. What year was that?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I worked toward graduation for two years at Smith. Then after that, I went for my first job interview. That was a new experience. I really didn't want to go. The old feeling of fear coming up. I liked the security of the Smith Campus, and the friends I had made there by then, and the possibility of a job in the library if I had to. But I had to do something, I was no longer--I didn't have a scholarship.

MR. BOETTCHER: You had completed your student work?

MRS. HASEGAWA: That's right. I knew I had to do something, but there also was talk of my being given a job doing accompanying for the dance classes at Smith. So that was in the back of my mind. This faculty member had a friend Mr. Ross Finney at the Connecticut College for Girls; they called it Connecticut College. That's where the Coast Guard is stationed, I think. So, he had a friend there, and he said I've talked to this friend and there's an opening for a dance accompanist again, but there's an opportunity to teach a couple of classes in Music Department and this and that. So he said "go" for an interview. Well, I did go, but as far as playing on the spur of the moment for anything or anybody, I freeze up. And so, I know I didn't do very well and was very hesitant, very shy through the whole deal, although this friend of Dr. Phillips was very kind. He did say there was another person applying for the job. I know she got it, because I didn't get it. I was relieved because I stayed on at Smith for two years doing accompanying. I never thought ahead very much, it seems I just took the days as they came along. In the meantime, the person who became head of the Music Department at Fresno State said, "When you finish, I want you to come back and work. I want you to come back as a regular member of the faculty. And I want you to teach such-and-such and such-and-such a course. And it's talked over with the president, and it's all arranged." And so that's what I came back to. I finally had a full status as faculty member.

MR. BOETTCHER: So that was about in '46, '47?

MRS. HASEGAWA: '46. Fall of '46.

MR. BOETTCHER: I was wondering under what circumstances you returned to California.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, so here again through the kindness of friends who believed I could do something, had all this ready for me. All of these opportunities. Gee, how lucky can I be? Oh, gracious!

MR. BOETTCHER: So, you were on the music faculty at Fresno State?

MRS. HASEGAWA: As Instructor first year, then the second year they elevated me to Assistant Professor. Then I got married and I quit.

MR. BOETTCHER: Would you like to talk a little bit about that. All of a sudden you got married?

MRS. HASEGAWA: All of a sudden--oh, gosh--I guess it's something that had been going on all along, really.

MR. BOETTCHER: Had you known your husband Ray before the war?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, we were old friends. I think he was a student, and I knew him from way back, but never seriously, and he'd asked me out for a few things together. Just a casual friend, and we went to some dances and things. Of course, my mother had ideas way back, that I should get settled. I was getting on in years, and the more I seemed to get interested in my career, the more pressure. Here I was, I imagine I was about 30 or going over that, and that's pretty old for a Japanese gal. So she -

MR. BOETTCHER: So you were both in Fresno here?

MRS. HASEGAWA: He was in Sanger.

MR. BOETTCHER: But, anyway, you met the old friend and—and then you mentioned your family life replaced your musical career for a while.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, really. I thought nothing is going to take away my music career, and of course, I knew many people who had children, but who managed to find sitters or somehow get the children taken care of, and, of course, my piano department head well, said, "Why can't your husband take care of the children, or why can't you get a sitter?"

Well, she'd never had a family. She knew many career women who had raised families along with continuing their professional life. Why couldn't you do that. But just as soon as I saw that little infant, dependent on outside help, I decided, nobody is going to take care of that guy except me. That's special.

MR. BOETTCHER: Motherhood was the first thing.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, that's strange. It just came to me like that. Of course, I've had other friends say, Musical Club people and others, who've said, "I think you've made the wisest choice." I'm not sorry now.

MR. BOETTCHER: This is interesting to me, too. Could you tell a little about your children, what they're doing now? When were they born?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I used to get so aggravated when my parents would forget my birthday, but here I am in the same position, and I just saw their birth certificates not long ago.

MR. BOETTCHER: Approximately they're in their 30's now?

MRS. HASEGAWA: The oldest is about 30, the next is 28, the next is 26.

MR. BOETTCHER: Are they in the Valley still?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, the oldest has--his job takes him to various large ranches in Northern and Central California. He's with a private company called Crop Care, Fresno based. He's living in Merced. During the busy growing season, he goes out to inspect vineyards and orchards. Vineyards mainly in Napa County. He looks over sugar beet crops and cotton. They're large ranches, so he has to oversee several thousand acres at a time.

MR. BOETTCHER: So he's in agribusiness.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Agribusiness, mainly to advise on the use of pesticides or miticides for different kinds of ailments.

The second one is back in school again. He's in nuclear medicine, studying, he's still studying. He has a couple of master's degrees. One in physics and one in math, and he's going to get another master's degree, he says. Lately he says, "I think I'll continue on and see how far I can go, and I may be working on my Ph.D." So here's this old student coming out again. But in between this act of getting his degree

locally, he went to the University of Washington, in Seattle and took quite a few courses in the medical department along with other medical students to see how he could use his physics background in medicine. That's his main interest. Nuclear medicine and medical physics, right now. He talks about something--tomography, and all that comes in one ear and goes out the other. This is what he's pursuing right now. He has taught part-time at Fresno State and at City in the physics and math department and also when he went to Denver almost two years ago, he had a part-time job, so he could have the out-of-state fee reduced, which helped him a great deal. He has this teaching ability, too.

My youngest one is with National Semiconductor in San Jose.

MR. BOETTCUR: A boy also?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. All three boys. Right. He has his master's degree in physics from UC at Davis. But he did his work at Livermore.

MR. BOETTCHER: One question that has come up. Are they married, have they married Japanese people?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No. They, none of them are married.

MR. BOETTCHER: They're doing like you. They're waiting a little bit.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I'm getting a little anxious. Now, I see what my mother went through.

MR. BOETTCHER: Now, this is interesting, in our studies, to see the changes through the generations, both in career and family and social life.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, my oldest one as going around with an English-born girl for quite a while, and we thought that was going to be it, but evidently they decided to part, so I don't know what he's doing now as far as friends. He has many through business contacts. The second one seems to enjoy his friends through our church a great deal, and yet he tells me about dating so-and-so or someone coming through and going out together. They are Caucasians, although when he's home he'll take out someone from his Sunday School days.

MR. BOETTCHER: From church?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yeah, Church, and so--but, the youngest one seems to have now found a steady Japanese girl.

MR. BOETTCHER: Anything more about your involvement with the church? You've talked about that a little bit. It started with your parents, I guess, really.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. They expected us to go to church and even when we could not go they tried to have a little bit of Bible study or so-called Sunday school in our home.

MR. BOETTCHER: You did play music for a Sunday school, or church for a while?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, all the time.

MR. BOETTCHER: Are you still involved with that?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right. Only we have encouraged--this is all volunteer work, so as time came along I noticed a certain group that could play, so I asked if they would be willing to play one Sunday a month now have about four of us who play regularly for church. And it has eased the load on our shoulders I know. For many, many years, it was every Sunday, every Sunday.

MR. BOETTCHER: With you as the organist for church?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Organist for church and piano for Sunday School. It was a good way to sight read, I must say. I taught Sunday school for many years.

MR. BOETTCHER: Is this the Japanese Congregational Church?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. My parents were charter members of the church.

MR. BOETTCHER: Then you mentioned a little bit about the last taking care of your parents and your mother-in-law?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Mother-in-law. She just died.

MR. BOETTCHER: That's right. Oh, I remember now. When did your parents die? If I might ask?

MRS. HASEGAWA: About a year and a half ago for my mother, and my father two years before that.

MR. BOETTCHER: After the war, what did they do? Were they retired by then? Did they come back here?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, they came back to Fresno, to our old home, but they didn't do any work there. They helped a younger family with their vegetables a little bit, because they learned about Social Security, and they were encouraged to do just enough so that they could get some Social Security, so they fulfilled their requirement as far as that went. And I imagine they helped some beyond that time as this family needed help. So they were enjoying their Social Security checks that came monthly which helped them a great deal. They felt independent, and they went about doing their church work. And both my parents, my father went to citizenship classes one of the first to get his citizenship.

MR. BOETTCHER: This would be about in '53 or so?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes, something like that.

MR. BOETTCHER: Did he have to learn a certain amount of English then?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes, he did.

MR. BOETTCHER: You mentioned his difficulty learning English when he was older.

MRS. HASEGAWA: He really studied. I can see him still, studying so hard.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you think people should learn English to be citizens?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think so. I really think so, and to vote, too. I think this business of bilingual -

MR. BOETTCHER: Ballots -

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. America, I think, is catering to the -

MR. BOETTCHER: It's just a question that came up to me while we're on this topic. It's interesting to have your viewpoint.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I may be in the minority, but if they want to live here, they should have a working knowledge of it anyway. My mother took up art.

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, during the retirement time?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think she had dabbled with it in camp. She always enjoyed art, too, and of course, she was writing all the time.

MR. BOETTCHER: How about the time at camp, did they sort of like it as a retirement village? That part of it?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I think that many of them felt that for the first time in their lives they could take it a little easy.

MR. BOETTCHER: They worked pretty hard before then.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Oh, yes. Although, now, I was in college, and being more or less self-sufficient because I had all of these lessons. So they could put their energies into seeing my brothers through universities. My brother finished medical school around 1940. Because I think he was an intern at-- Valley Medical, is it? I think it was called County Hospital out on Ventura, Kings Canyon. Until then, he needed support, because he had to go to school. So, it took all their energies. It's amazing that they could do it. Send them through college on two and a half acres, more or less.

MR. BOETTCHER: The last couple of questions are about your family. Some on cultural identity. What about this? How much are you a Japanese? Or how much are you a Californian? Or how much are you a music teacher? Do you see what I mean? Do you do some things that are still Japanese culture, do you think? One person said he had the food celebration on New Year's and that was it.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Yes. Well, I try to do a little bit of that.

MR. BOETTCHER: Keeping some of the traditions?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Kind of, because the family enjoys Japanese food. It takes an awfully long time to prepare some of the dishes, because the individual doesn't have to cut each piece of food. It's cut by the cook, and it's hours and hours just even that. But it's nice to get together with family and friends.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you have some important things about your cultural identity you hang on to?

MRS. HASEGAWA: "How much do you maintain activities and ceremonies that are Japanese?" I'm afraid I'm not very good about that.

MR. BOETTCHER: Of course, Christian families are different than Buddhist families.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I guess my parents were always connected to the Christian Church. There was not too much emphasis. And another thing, they were so busy, I realize. But I think it was Girls' Day they came home with a little rice cake that was pink, and the Boys' Day they brought up the fact that the carp is strong because it can swim against adversities, against the stream, and so on.

MR. BOETTCHER: So they told you a little bit about these things?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Right, But never too elaborate. We didn't have any dolls or anything. We knew the meaning of some of the symbols.

MR. BOETTCHER: Some of the cultural things. Those are not too important to you now, at this time?

MRS. HASEGAWA: No. When I had three boys to talk about the carp--in fact, they do in the schools. They make paper carps and bring them home, so then that was the time to talk about it.

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you have anything else you might have overlooked or would like to add?

MRS. HASEGAWA: "How much of being assimilated?"

MR. BOETTCHER: You know what I mean. What do you think about the melting pot idea? Do you feel like you're an example?

MRS. HASEGAWA: When I'm in our church, I feel Japanese.

MR. BOETTCHER: Your church is predominantly Japanese?

MRS. HASEGAWA: Japanese, except that everything is conducted in English, but we do have parts of it in Japanese for our parents. When I'm at the Music Teachers meeting, conducting business there, doing what is necessary there, I forget all about being Japanese, looking Japanese and everything; just really forget all about that.

MR. BOETTCHER: You're a music teacher there.

MRS. HASEGAWA: I'm a music teacher. What else can I say? They accept me as a music teacher, not because someone who looks different and who [has] an opportunity to be, or let's have her do this, she hasn't done it for a long time.

MR. BOETTCHER: That sounds good, involved life with the music; you've done so many things.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, it has given me many opportunities. When I look back, I feel that my whole life has been on a placid plane. Of

course, the evacuation made me feel quite upset, to think that here I'm an American citizen, and we had to forego all these so-called rights that we were guaranteed by the Constitution. And how come the Italians and Germans don't have to go to camps? I felt angry, but I never was a vocal person. Like I told you the first time I finally got up beside my desk in the fifth grade at Webster, was when the teacher said, "I can't give you such-and-such a grade unless you get up and talk in 'front of the class." So, painfully, I did. And then to top it all, I had to give a valedictory in high school graduation,

MR. BOETTCHER: Oh, you gave a valedictory, that means you were a pretty good student in high school.

MRS. HASEGAWA: Well, I did what I had to do to the best of my ability.

MR. BOETTCHER: To be the best of the class.

MRS. HASEGAWA: It was a small class. And it wasn't such an outstanding class when I think of it. You know certain classes go in spurts. There are certain classes that have a [blank space] youngsters. Have you noticed?

MR. BOETTCHER: I think so. And some other classes that have -

MRS. HASEGAWA: Average. I think my class at that time was one of those. I shouldn't put down. By saying that, I mean I don't think I was that outstanding. I did what I had to do.

MR. BOETTCHER: Okay. You can say that as you like.

MRS. HASEGAWA: But then, last year, this Pianorama, this tops it all, I think. I got up in front of a vast theatre and gave a welcome. I told my son Bruce, he was in Denver, I'm going to get up and make a talk, going to give a little welcome talk to our theatre audience. So I did. I felt that was an accomplishment.

MR. BOETTCHER: Speaking to the group.

MRS. HASEGAWA: So that's something from the time I was a kindergartner having to get up, or maybe I sat in my place and sang "Bye Little Baby Bunting."

MR. BOETTCHER: And now you're speaking to the musicians group?

MRS. HASEGAWA: I have to get up there every month, and it's getting easier,

MR. BOETTCHER: Do you have anything you might tell the Yonsei?

MRS. HASEGAWA: The only thing I might tell the Yonsei or any group is whatever they do, to do it to their utmost ability, as thoroughly as possible. This has been my philosophy. You asked if my philosophy in teaching had changed. Well, I don't know if it's changed, but many times I was asked if I only took advanced students, and I said, "No, I love working with youngsters." But the main thing I get when they say only the advanced, that means the more musically advanced probably. The more talented with natural ability. So, no, I'm happy to work with anyone who is willing to work to her utmost ability. I try to get as

much as possible out of what she has, her native ability. So that she becomes musically independent, is able to use her skills, her knowledge whenever she decided to stop formal lessons, she can continue for her own enjoyment. And one of the greatest joys I get is hearing from some former students who say, "Now I'm looking around for a piano for my little girl," and she's so happy she can help her get started. One of them, I remember, had an awful time getting started in music because I swear she did not have any sense of pitch (up or down), could not read, had very little innate sense of rhythm. Really, I and even not very I complained to my mother about certain students, but this one I did. She said, "Well, you'll have to be patient." Here again, patience. Well, the parents were Salvation Army people, and we exchanged. The girls helped me with my housework, which I wasn't very crazy about and was Very poorly done. So they helped me that way, and the parents were very eager to have the daughters learn how to play the piano, so they could help in their Sunday school and also have the background. Well, the girl finally got so she could play for weddings. [Blank space] play for some wedding at one time, and she and her sister still write to me how they sit down and play for the little youngsters. This business of using music for personal enrichment to develop her own innate ability. I wish I had some really dramatic things to talk about in my life.

MR. BOETTCHER: I think your life, if you sit back and look at it, is quite a story, the way I see it.

MRS. HASEGAWA: No, it's kind of common.

MR. BOETTCHER: I don't know, how many talented musicians and music teachers are there. There's a certain talent that people don't have. Takes innate ability and work.

MRS. HASEGAWA: It does take work.

MR. BOETTCHER: I want to thank you for this interview.