Could I get the full name and spelling of your name, Mrs. Ono? O-N-O. I go by Ruby, but my given name is M-i-s-a-o.

Is there a second name? No.

Your birthdate? March 29,1924.

Where were you born?

Tommy[T]: Acme Cannery Sea Island, Eburne, BC

Ruby[R]: Vancouver Cannery, Eburne BC Sea Island. But there is no Sea Island anymore.

T: There is a Sea Island, but it's the airport now.

What was it called when you were^born?

R: Vancouver Cannery. But there isn't such a place anymore.

Where would it be today?

T: At the end of the airport strip!

R: That's 82 years ago!

T: There was Acme Cannery, Vancouver Cannery, Celtic Cannery, Terra Nova. Celtic is now south Kerrisdale on the river.

Ruby, what is your father 'sfull name?

R: T-o-k-u-j-i-r-o. Tokujiro.

And his last name?

R: M-a-i-k-a-w-a

His birth date and place?

R: Furuta, Wakayama-Ken, Japan. I don't know the birth date.

And your mother 's full name?

R: K-o-y-o-s-h-i

And her maiden name?

R: H-i-g-a-s-h-i

And she was born in Japan too?

R: Yes. Koza, Wakayama-Ken, Japan.

Do you know her birth date?

R:No!

T: I don't think even if they were alive today that they would remember.

Do you know how your parents came to come to Canada? What brought them to Canada?

R: Well, my father came first because his brother was already in Canada and with his help I think that's how they came. They came by sea freighter. It took them one month one-way and they landed in Victoria, sea sick!!

T: Well, they all came for a brighter world.

R: Yes.

T: Easier to make a living. It was so crowded in Japan.

What work did he do when he first came here?

R: He has always been a carpenter in Japan. But then he came here and he started a boat building.

T: No, he had to start fishing.

R: Yes, he did the fishing first.

T: And then he start the boat building.

R: Yeah.

T: You can't get away with the boat building. You couldn't have a trade then.

Do you have siblings?

R: All deceased.

Could I get their names?

R: Oh! I don't think it's necessary. They're all deceased.

Tommy, your full name?

T: T-a-m-o-t-s-u Thomas Ono. They call me Tommy.

Your birthdate? T: January 4,1924.

Your place of birth? T: Same place.

Your father 'sfull name? T: S-h-o-h-e-i

And his birthplace? 1: Okayama, Japan.

Do you know the date? T:No.

And your mother's first name and maiden name?

T: She was M-a-t-s-u-n-o Yasutani! Y-a-s-u-t-a-n-i She was born in Nima, Okayama-Ken, Japan

How did you two meet?

R: Oh, we went to school together up to about grade 4. And then, the war broke out, so we met again in Alberta!

T: Taber, Alberta. And then she trapped me.

R: I did not!

What was your parents occupation [Tommy]?

T: As far as I know...

R: When you were younger, a fisherman, I suppose. Your dad.

T: No, he farmed.

R: Farmed? In Acme Cannery?

T: No, no, no. Queensborough. We left Acme Cannery twice.

So he started out as a farmer? T: A farmer and then a fisherman. R: And a fish collector. T: Then a fish buyer/collector.

Was this out of Vancouver? T: Marpole.

When was the place and date of your marriage? T&R: Taber, Alberta, January 29, 1949. T: What a long jail sentence!

And your children's birthplaces and dates?

R: The oldest one was Diane, and she lives here. She's married. Her married name is Allen.

And her husband's name is?

R: Graham.

And her birth date?

R: February 3, 1950. Born in Taber, Alberta.

The next one?

R: The next one is deceased. Rita Johnstone.

When was she born?

R: She was one year younger than Diane. She was born in St. Vincent's Hospital in Vancouver in 1951. One year difference. And she died in 1997.

And the next one?

R: Gayle (G-a-y-1-e)

The birth date?

R: April 28, 1958. She's eight years younger than Diane.

Is she married?

R:Montgomery.

Her husband's first name?

And they have children. Diane's older one is Glenn. He is apprenticing carpentry. His wife is Tina. Her second child is and Kiomi (K-i-o-m-i) Davis. Her husband is Matt (Mathew). And Kiomi has a son, Myles (M-y-1-e-s) Shohei Davis.

Rita's elder boy is Erik. He took mechanical engineering with a thermo fluid option. Her younger son, Kiel, is a veterinarian. An animal doctor.

And Gayle 's children?

R: Robert and Michael. They're not married.

What schools did you attend?
R: I just went to public school. :
That was where?
R: Sea Island, where I lived.
What grade did you go to?

R: Up to grade 8. That's it.

And Tommy?

T: I went to Sea Island, David Lloyd George in Marpole. Point Grey Junior High in Kerrisdale. McGee High in Kerrisdale. And Vancouver Technical School, east end, Vancouver.

What did you train as?

T: Motor mechanic.

Were you employed, Ruby?

R: When I was single? Oh, I did so many different kinds of work! Yeah, I worked in the fish cannery, packing the fishing in the canning, you know. And what else did I do?

T: Beet farming.

R: Oh, yeah, the beet farming, during the war that is, in Taber Alberta.

And I did lots of sewing, and that's about it. Oh, I worked in the grocery stores around here.

Which ones?

R:It used to be Redman's at that time.

T: Red & White.

R: Red & White? Was it? Anyway, it was a Mr. Redman that owned it.

When did you start there?

R: Oh, I must have worked there a couple of years. Then he sold the place, so then I went working at the hospital as a nurses aid and I worked at the hospital for seventeen years, until I was age to retire!

Did you train as a nurse 's aid at the hospital?

R: Yeah.

Do you know what year you started there?

R: I think it was 79. Was that the time I started?

T: Well, count back from 65.

R: Yes, because I retired at 65 and I worked seventeen years.

T: What year were you 65?

R: 1989. So I started in 1972.

Where did you start working [Tommy].

T: Marpole.

Who for?

T:Old man.

Your dad! Doing what?

T: In the fish packer.

Running the fish packer?

T:Yes.

R: He was underage working.

T: But I was the only youngest skipper there!

How old were you?

T:14.

R: You had to be going school at that time. Is it just a summer time job?

T: I took time off.

R: You did! Really. I bet you he just played hookie!

Where did you fish at?

T: This is Middle Arm, North Arm, South Arm and the Gulf of Georgia. Collecting fish from all over.

I'm going to return to your schooling a little. What subjects did you like best in school?

R: Oh, gosh! I don't know.

T: Physical Ed!

R: No, not physical ed! You didn't do any exercise or anything like that!

T: You didn't have to do anything. That's why I liked it. Oh, I had to take math and English and science and shops.

Which ones did you have trouble with?

T: None of them.

What was your social life like at school? What kind of things did you do?

R: In those olden days? Heck, there wasn't very much that we did.

T: You went to school and went home.

Did you have recess time?

R: Oh, there was recess time. Oh, yeah.

What kind of things did you do at recess?

T: Well in those days you can't do nothing because you couldn't leave the school yard.

R: It was a small school. How many kids were there from grade 1 to grade 8? Public school.

T: Sea Island. I don't know how the production rate was.

R: Yeah, God, it was such a small school!

And the school yard was small, too?

R: Oh, yes, oh yes. No yard. We had to go across to the fanner's land and play the baseball and things like that!

T: It was built against the dyke.

R: There wasn't a playground as such.

So you played baseball?

R: Yeah, that's about it. The younger boys they played lacrosse in those days. You must have played lacrosse.

T: Yeah.

R: Girls didn't play lacrosse.

T: In those days the oriental and caucasian couldn't intermix. So you had special friends.

R: Yeah, baseball is about the only thing I played.

Did you play marbles and things like that?

R: Oh, yeah! Marbles at the dyke. Oh yeah, we played marbles and what you call that with the

stick? You hit the stick and then you count how far you go?

T: Ogley Pogley?

R: No, no. We played lots of marbles. And jacks! We played jacks! The girls played jacks.

T: You lost lots of marbles.

R:No.

Being a small school, how many students were there? A lot?

R: No, not many.

T: If there was 25, I think it was ...

R: Like, in each class, from grade 1 to grade 8 all put together, oh I would say.… The two schools they were divided in a different building.

T: But there weren't that many.

R: No, I can't even guess how many.

T: Well, count the families that lived there and average had three or four children.

R: Yeah, three or four children. If there was five in the family, that was a big family.

T: So there can't be very many.

R: In the Acme Cannery there was a family there that had a dozen girls, remember? In one family there was twelve girls.

T: A baker's dozen.

R: And she passed away after having the baker's dozen. She had it as the war broke out. They were all girls, all beautiful girls. And the oldest girl I think she is living on the island right now.

What happened to them after the mother died?

R: Oh, they were all together.

T: The father had a tough time, I think.

R: Where did they go during the war.

T: They had to be in the camp.

R: Yeah, in the camp, somewhere.

T: Internment camp.

R: There was lots of places that they had the chance to go. There was Kaslo and Greenwood.

T: Yeah, but they were all internment camps.

R: Greenwood and Slocan. Different places. We were classed as enemy aliens.

Did you have a choice as to which one you'd go to, or did you just go where they sent you?

R: You had to go wherever they sent you. We didn't have to go.

T: We had no rights. They took away our citizenship and listed us as enemy aliens.

R: At that time my Mom and Dad had to make a choice as to where you were going when the war broke out. So to keep the family all together they picked Alberta and then we ended up in Taber.

And your Mom and Dad did it a little different. They went to …

T: Self-located.

R: Yeah, self-located.

T: Two years.

R: Yeah, two years to Trout Lake.

Where was that at?

T: It was about fifteen miles south of Revelstoke. Twenty-five miles south of Arrowhead on Upper Arrow Lakes.

So, how old were you when the war broke out.

R: 17.

T: And we got shipped out when I was 18.

So you had already done your mechanics training by then?

T: Not yet. I went through schools taking auto mechanic courses. I was hired as an apprentice in Taber and got my licence in 1948.

You did that when you came back from Taber?

T: No. In Taber. Apprenticed in Taber and got my licence in Taber.

R: You worked under Johnny Malenski. That was his boss. He came visited us.

Is that M-a-l^e-n-s-k-i?

T: It was a European name. M-a-1-i-n-s-k-y.

He had a garage in Taber?

T: No, he didn't. Nels Purdue had the Chrysler dealership and he was the shop foreman.

When you were at Taber, you were able to live in your own houses?

R: On a sugar beet farm. A house.

T: In the wintertime it froze inside the house.

R: You could see the icicles coming down. And poor Diane's hands would be all red and ice cold!

T: So we had to put her in our bed and warm her up.

R: It was tough in the wintertime. Very tough.

T: You had to buy water. You had to buy coal. And you had to borrow the tractor or truck from the farmer to haul it. Go buy it about eight miles away.

R: No electricity when we lived on the beet farm.

How about running water?

T: You bought your water. Hauled it in a water tank. You'd make two trips each time.

R: There was a great big cistern. You filled it up with water and then you could bucket it up! Put a long rope on the bucket and you had to bucket it out.

What kept it from freezing? *

R: It was underground. So it didn't freeze. I used to keep the watermelons and stuff stored in there.

That was a real hard life.

That must have been a real shock for you. Did your parents go to Taber, too?

R: Oh, yeah.

T: We lost everything. The house, the car, radio, guns, camera, whatever you have they took it all.

R: Oh yeah, my Dad lost everything!

T: All you could take was what you could carry.

R: Yeah, Dad had to leave everything. He didn't have a chance to sell or anything. Who would buy in those days?

You must have been feeling a little shell-shocked.

T: Oh, yeah. We didn't know what's gonna happen.

R: Yeah. All the machinery that Dad had to leave from his boat building.

Must have been heartbreaking.

R: (sighs) Yeah.

How did they pull through it?

R: Well…

T: They came out here to Sechelt to live out their lives.

R: They came out again after the war. And my Dad started fishing after the war. And he built maybe a couple of boats. That's about it. He built a great BIG one, though, at the very end.

What was it called?

R: Oh, God. That was Mr. Asari's second boat that he built.

T:S-A

R: S-A! And that was the last boat he built.

T: When they retired they came up here to retire.

To Sechelt? Is that how you came here?

T: No, we came first. In May 21,1956, and took over Standard Motors the next day.

What made you choose mechanics?

T: Well, I liked tinkering.

What were your responsibilities at home?

R: Before when we were single?

When you were children.

R: Well, it was normal. Help Morn with the kitchen and a little bit of cleaning. We helped a lot at home.

T: Chop the wood and mend my brother's fishing net every weekend, and bluestone the tank overnight to kill the fish slime, and load the net into the boat every Sunday evening.

R: Yeah, chopping the wood! It was the small wood though!

Why was the wood small?

R: Because they bought the end cuts, so it was small. But people had a chance to get the loose log that

comes floating along. And they would try and get that. So I think Tommy's Mom and Dad they did a lot of those type of wood they cut with a big saw and then chop it. But my Dad was a boat builder, so there was always the odds and ends, end cuts that we used a lot.

What was your house like as a child.

R: It was a cannery home. It wasn't a home like ... we didn't have to pay anything. It belonged to the cannery.

Was it a nice one?

R: Well... it's better than a shack, but!

Two storeys?

R: No, no , just the one level. Oh, yeah there was an upstairs in the one place we were living. But my Dad was a carpenter so he fixed the cupboards and he laid the nice floors and things like that and varnished it and all that. So it looked pretty good. Yeah. It wasn't rough or anything like that, but in those days you never had any carpeting or anything like that.

Did you ever go on holidays as a child?

R: Not really. No. No holidays in those days.

T: You knew where our garage was.

Yes at the light.

R: You know, I think we were lucky if Father would take us down to the P & E. Or, going to the circus. Once or twice a year there was a circus that came along close to our place. It was on the Grauer Field. And we would be really lucky if we were able to go there.

That's about it. Or, go to the shows on the Saturday afternoon. But we walked four miles to go to the show! Get about a quarter and it would pay for the show and maybe a bag of popcorn or ice cream cone. That was it!

When you went to a show was it a theatre that both Asians and Caucasians could go in? It was not segregated?

R: No, no.

And you never had any problems like that?

R: Oh, no. No problems.

T: It was just the up and ups that was anti-Japanese Canadians. The ordinary people, they didn't care. Just the government.

What would you say was your most difficult time as a child?

R: Difficult time? I don't know. I didn't know anything better.

If nothing stands out, it might not have been really bad.

R: Oh, it wasn't bad. We thought it was normal as we were growing up.

T: I think in your family it was losing all of your brothers and sisters.

R: Oh, that was hard. Just me left alone.

When was that?

R: During the war.

How did that happen?

R: Well, my sister-no, that was not during the war. My oldest brother and my older sister they died of TB. The oldest brother he didn't go to the hospital. He died at home. Father had built a little house next to the boat shop and that's where he died. And my sister died at the sanatorium in Vancouver. And my other brother died in an accident. He was shot in the head with a gun as a kid.

T: Russian Roulette.

How did that happen?

T: You put one shell in the gun, twist the magazine, and pull.

R: He was the unlucky one. I think he was about ten years old.

Were you the oldest?

R: No, no. I was second from the bottom. I must have been about eight years old and he was ten. I think there was two years difference between him and me.

And your brother and sister who died ofTB. How old would they have been?

R: In their teens.

T: All died young.

R: And my younger sister, she died in Taber, also with TB. And I'm the strong one that's still alive! (Laughs)

T: You're the butcher, that's why! Taking it out on me!

How about for you, Tommy? What was your most difficult time?

T: When the girls used to chase me!

R: I think he had an easy life, you know. Because he had three sisters older than him. And he didn't have to do anything around the house because the girls did it all. So, he's not very good in looking after the inside of the house, I'm telling you that! (Laughs) I said, if I went before he did, he won't know how to use the stove. He won't know how to use the washing machine or the dryer. He's never done it So, I said, "I'm gonna teach you how to use it." But to this day he doesn't know.

T: I have no memory of a bum day.

When the war came, do you remember the day that you had to decide to leave?

T: No. The war came December 7,1941 at about 11 o'clock in the morning and that's when all of the jibber-jabber started. We were just sitting down for a late breakfast when the neighbour jumped in and said, "They bombed Pearl Harbour!"

We were all called into the RCMP building at 33rd and Cambie and had to get I.D. cards with our picture installed and register every month as an enemy alien. They could demand to see your card pronto. No picture-you were taken to RCMP precinct to be checked out.

R: I don't know when Father decided. How late after the war broke out.

T: He got the notice. We didn't see the notice. Our parents got the notice. We were too young to see those things.

R: Yeah. We couldn't leave everything in the house. We had to move whatever belongings, whatever we can't take it with us, to the cannery I think. It was all taken to the cannery.

Did you ever see it again?

R: No. All the dressers and things like that. Tables and chairs. We couldn't take all those things.

How did you travel to Alberta? In the train?

R: Train.

It must have been a horrendous time, yet you laugh about it.

R: Yeah.

T: Yeah.

Was there a point at which you felt bitter and it took a while for that to get over?

T: No.

R: When we were kids you know, you never think of those things, I guess.

T: You look forward to something.

R: And then just do with what you've got.

Tape 1, Side B

When did you come to the Sunshine Coast?

T: I came here May 21,1956. ;

What prompted you to come here?

T: The offer was on commission to run the garage for Jackson Brothers Logging for two years. And I could take off at the end of two years. But, people were so good here, treated us like kings, and we started making money, so we stayed. We bought the place. And we're still here!

What was Sechelt like when you moved here?

T: Between Egmont and Port Mellon, there were under 6,000 people. And hardly any buildings.

R: When we came here, the roads were not even paved.

Not any of them?

R: Oh, some of them.

T: It was paved to the Shell Station.

From Gibsons?

T: Yeah. They started that summer of 1956.

Was it paved to Pender Harbour?

R: No way.

T: It was paved to here and they started that summer that I come, widening and paving the road from here to Earls Cove.

R: When we came to the peninsula, we lived in Roberts Creek for a year. Then we moved to the house on Cowrie-same street, four houses down towards the school. Just a small house. Then we moved to the house next to what used to be the Senior Citizen's Hall. We lived next to that hall, then we came here.

T: Now it's all business there.

And you liked it here when you came, Ruby?

R: Oh, yes. I like Sechelt.

Where were you living before that? Were you living in Taber Alberta?

R: No, we were in Steveston and then went to Marpole for a short time.

When did you leave Taber, Alberta?

R: In 1951. Diane was almost a year old. Diane started walking on the train.

T: And I went fishing for a year and lost my shirt.

Where did you go when he -was fishing?

R: Stayed home. Did a little bit of alterations for the people, and that was it. Watched the kids.

What would you say was your most difficult time as parents?

T: Not understanding things. The old Japanese way, which we didn't understand.

How was it different?

T: Oh, there was a big difference. They were very strict.

R: Your Mom and Dad wasn't that strict, were they? I don't think Mom was that strict! Not your Mom.

T: Well, they had their own way.

R: They all have their own way. Even you have your own way.

T: I'm a chicken.

R: No, not your Mom.

What would you say was the greatest difference in their customs from yours?

R: When you were brought up as a Japanese-like Mom and Dad, a Japanese Japanese ….

T: You didn't question it.

R: No. You just thought I guess that's the proper way to do things.

T: I questioned myself, did they do that in Japan.

R: We thought nothing of it. If I think about it now, it was a little different, eh?

Was it customs around eating or doing what your parents said, or?

T: In how things were done. They were more strict with everything. There was no slack.

Could you give me an example?

T: You were told to do something you better do it and don't argue about it. Because you're gonna get it done. Whether you like it or not, you're gonna do it.

What would happen if you didn 't do it?

T: You didn't eat.

R: No, I never had that problem!

T: You weren't a boy.

R: No, I don't think so. I just never had that kind of problem. Maybe it was because I was a girl, I don't know.

T: That's right.

R: Yeah, Mom and Dad was pretty good to me. Otherwise, I'm the only one left. They better treat me okay! (Laughs)

I know the war probably had the greatest effect on your life. Were there any other historical moments that had a big effect on your life? That altered the way you thought or looked at things?

T: No, we didn't run into any discrimination.

R: No.

What about things like the moon walk and Kennedy being shot?

T: It was just news, that was all. We didn't have no radio or nothing to listen to.

How about when the bombs were dropped?

R: We heard the news, but it was so far away,.

T: That was a foreign country to us. All I said was "Hurray! The war is over!" But it wasn't over.

R: No it wasn't over.

T: No for another four years. *

It was four years before you were allowed to leave?

T:Yeah. 1949.

R: When they dropped that bomb on Japan-

T: August 5th

R: We didn't know. In those days, we never knew too much about Japan. Only thing we know is hearing from the parents. We thought it was pretty bad ...

T: Well, you wouldn't hear about it unless you went to town and saw the paper. Because you couldn't hear nothing.

R: If we think about it now. We've been to Japan. When I retired from work, Tommy and I took a trip to Japan and then we did go by where the Hiroshima bomb was.

T: It was in April of 84.

R: And we saw the area.

T: We sponged off the relatives! That's why we could stay there for six weeks.

R: It was really interesting.

T: We travelled all of southern Japan.

R: It was really nice. We met all of my relatives, and his relatives.

T: Where my parents came from and her parents came from.

R: It was very interesting to see all different places.

So the horror of it all didn 't hit you until you went there?

R:Yeah.

You probably didn't get news about it till years later.

R: Yeah.

T: The people of Japan couldn't figure out why we knew Japanese.

R: They thought we wouldn't be able to speak Japanese or understand Japanese.
T: Or know anything about Japan.
R: We had to go to Japanese school.
T: Well, you had to talk Japanese or you couldn't talk to your parents.
R: They couldn't understand. Yes or No. That's about it.
So when you went to school was it taught in Japanese?
R: Yes.
T: One hour.
R: We had two hours in Japanese.
So, then the rest was in English?
R: Yeah. Read and write.
T: After you come home from the regular school.
R: We'd just switch our books and go back to Japanese school.
T: For one hour.
When you went to regular school, when you first started school, could you speak English?
R: Oh yes!
Where did you learn to speak English?
R: Among the kids. And your older sisters.
T: And the Caucasians.
R: Yeah, there are some Caucasians.
Did you speak English well?
R: English? Yeah.
Children learn languages so much faster then adults.
T: And you don't forget what you read.
When did you get your first television?
T: We were on Selkirk. In 1954.
That must have been an event.
T: Yeah. Black and white.
Do you remember the shows you used to watch? The favourites?
R: I can't remember what shows we watched. We used to watch-
T: Jackie Gleason.
R: -and the wrestling a lot. Tommy's Mom liked to watch wrestling.
T:Yeah. She'd go nuts!
When you were in Taber and you couldn 't listen to the radio, what did you do to pass the time in the evenings and when you weren 't working?

T: Well, they had lamps and you couldn't read too much with lamps.

R: Played cards a lot. I played cards a lot. What else could you do in the evening. Nothing much. Oh, we listened to the Japanese records, because we had that record player. And we listened to the Japanese songs, because my Dad used to like the Japanese songs, the record. Old fashioned songs. And played cards a lot.

T: When you're on the sugar beet farm it was—

R: Early morning. Get up early morning and early to bed, wasn't it?

T: Pretty hard to visit the next door neighbour. It was a mile down the road.

Did you have any group get-togethers?

R: Yeah, there was sometimes. The girls got together once in a while. The ones that lived on the same road!

Could you go to theatres in those days?

R: You could. We went to the shows a lot when we were dating, and when we got engaged after that we used to go to the show.

T: Did I get engaged?

R: We went to the shows a lot. The weekend was the show time.

T: Yeah, this front here it was …. it was soggy . . .

There was a marsh here?

T: Yeah! We're talking about where the mall was built.

How did you celebrate Christmas as children? Or did you celebrate Christmas?

R: Oh, yes. From the time we were kids. We always had the Christmas and decorate the Christmas tree. And at school we used to have the Christmas concert.

So even though your parents practiced a lot of Japanese ways, they also . . .

R:Yeah.

When did you get your first telephone?

R: Ring, ring, ring (Makes rolling motion with fingers.) They had it on the wall somewhere.

T: Party line.

R: Yeah. How many on the line. Maybe four or five families, I think.

T: On the prairies there would be half a dozen or more.

R: On the prairies we didn't have a telephone!

T: There was.

R: I never remember having the telephone!

T: Not in the beet shack. The owners had it.

R: Oh yeah, we used to go and borrow the telephone.

What organizations did you belong to on the coast?

T: Kinsmen. That's about it. And I became a fireman on May 23,1956.

And you were with the fire department?

T: I still am.

R: Not active.

T: Honorary.

When did you start with the fire department?

T: May 23, 1956.

What was your position?

T: Fireman. No position.

Did you get training for that?

T: Yeah.

Locally?

T: No, the fire marshall came in.

It was already formed in 1956?

T: 1945.

Were there any major fires that you were involved in?

T: Quite a few on the reserve.

R: And West Sechelt somewhere where a child died. And the waterfront.

T: The theatre burned. And the hotel.

What was the worst one for you?

T: The worst one would be the Emerson fire. Where the girl died. We knew she was in there.

What did you have for fire equipment when you first started?

T: Piece of junk. All ex-army stuff. 4 x 4 for a water tanker. An ex-airforce fire truck. And that was it.

There was a lot of townspeople belonged to that.

T: Yeah. The firehall used to be behind our garage, so I was always the first one there. Then they were the answering bells.

R: Somehow it was all connected.

T: They called them the fire bells.

It had a special ring?

T: Special phone.

Right, you were the Fire Belles. Didn 't the Fire Belles help get funding?'

R: Funding, I think the firemen went around the houses and asked for it.

T: I think you guys done some thing for yourself.

R: I don't know what we did to raise the money.

T: Not too many of them alive you can ask.

What would you say was your greatest achievement in life?

T: Not getting married! Nobody pat me on top of the head. What would it be?

R: I don't know.

T: The only thanks I got was whenever I fixed people's cars and it stayed running and didn't break down. A year or two after they'd come and thank me. Yeah, I could say I was proud of my work.

What about you?

R: Well, I was proud of my work, too. I spent 17 years at the hospital and I think I learned quite a bit. Until this day after I retired I got one extra cheque from the government! Because I put my work to it.

How did the hospital change in the 17 years you were working there?

R: How has it changed? It has changed a lot. Three or four years later, the second floor was added.

T: It's not like a hospital.

R: It's gone down now.

T: It's not a hospital. When I was in there, I was in quite often, boy if you were in hospital, you couldn't be in a nicer place.

R: I've never been in the hospital as a patient, but when you go there and visit other patients, look around. You know. I don't think... it's not as nice as it used to be.

What do you think is the greatest change?

T: Personnel.

They don't have time?

T: Time. Not enough. They try to do the work, but they haven't got…

R: I'm not really sure, but it has changed a lot since ... where is the food coming from now. It's not like before.

Since the food's been coming from outside.

R: Outside, isn't it. And they say it's not very good. Not very good. But when I was working there they had a nice cook in there and all the kitchen workers were really good. They used to serve really nice food there. But I hear now it's a lot different.

T: It's not like a hospital when you walk in. I was in to get my cataracts done a couple of weeks ago.

R: Even the housekeeping. It's not kept clean.

Who would you say had the greatest influence on your life?

T: Influence. Who influenced me? I walk in nobody's footsteps.

R: But the parents. I thought I had good parents. They taught me as much as they could teach me. Right from wrong.

What has been the greatest disappointment in your life?

T: There was nothing to shoot for. We didn't have a chance to shoot for anything.

Because of the racism?

T: Yes.

What do you think you might have aimed for if there hadn 't been that!

T: King of Canada.

R: (Laughs) Wishful thinking!

Were there any humorous moments in your life that stand out?

T & R: No.

How would you describe the Sunshine Coast, both socially and physically?

T: Well we were born near here, so to me there's no place nicer weather-wise or nicer people around.

R: Yeah. It's our home.

T: A lot better than being on the mainland!

Because of the traffic?

T: Oh, I've been here since I was 32 and I've pretty well established myself here. I don't take no back seat to nobody! Fifty years in one place is a long time. I was 32 when I come here! I'm 82 now.

What would you say is the Sunshine Coast's greatest asset?

R: I don't know.

T: No fishing. No logging. There's no big asset here. It was a going concern when I come here in the 50s, 60s and 70s. Started going downhill in the 80s.

How has it changed the most since you came here?

T: The town got full.

R: Lots of people.

T: The mall went in here.

R: How many times did the mall get bigger and bigger?

T: We used to throw our trash over there.

R: Not garbage. The garden weeds went over there.

T: But we brought it home again.

R: Yeah, after it composted.

But it was nothing but all trees in the front here. But it opened up nicely. I'm happy.

Were there cranberries in the bog when you came?

T: No cranberries.

R: No, I don't think there was cranberries.

T: I don't see how a cranberry could survive there because the salt water used to get in.

R: I know the kids used to go in there and find the frogs and things like that.

What was the name of your garage?

T: Standard Motors.

At its peak, how many people did you employ?

T: There was six and one joe boy.

R: But there was four guys in the company.

So it wasn 't a sole ownership?

R: No. There was his brother, Butch Ono, and Sam MacKenzie, and what was his name—the old

guy?

T:Orv.

R: Orv Moscript and Tommy.

Was that partnership from beginning to end?

T: Yeah.

You opened it when you came here. When did it close down?

T: We sold out in 1980.

That's when you retired?

T: No, I went to were for Koch at the GMC Dealership. They bought it, and I worked three years for him, for them to run the business end of it. I thought he'd keep me on forever, but he let me go!

When you were running it, what kind of business did you do mostly? Private cars or?

T: Logging. I used to fly into logging camps. Go fix their donkeys.

Did you enjoy that?

T: Oh, yeah! Away from the shop.

What camps did you go into? Narrows? Salmon? Jervis?

T: All over.

How far reaching did you go?

T: Jervis.

What was your favourite job at the shop?

T: My favourite job was twiddling my thumbs! Tuneups. Overhaul starters and alternators. And tune ups.

Did you like working with people?

T: Sure. Yeah. I didn't have to joke with them. They joked with me.

Have you ever regretted your decision to live on the Sunshine Coast

R: No, never. I like it.

T: No place like it.

What do you see as the greatest difficulty facing our community?

T: Business.

R: What do you mean business?

T: There is no manufacturing. No big factories providing employment. I think the mainstay of any town is some kind of manufacturing or repairs.

So we don't have a big industry base here.

T: No, there's nothing here.

What do you think would fix that?

T: Oh, the higher ups. The little guys can't do anything. It's the guys with the money.

If you had to offer advice to a couple getting married, since you seem to have had such a

wonderful marriage, what would you tell them?

T: Let them be the boss!

R: (Laughs) That goes for either way!

T: Never hold a grudge!

That seems to be your lives, because you don't seem to have held a grudge over the war years and the internment. A lot of people would have.

T: Well, we lost everything. When we got married, we didn't have a penny to rub together. I don't know how we made it.

Not Recorded:

What advice would you give to someone starting out in life?

Tommy: Be truthful. Be forgiving. It's up to the person how much money you make.

Ruby: Yes.

And if that person starting out was a woman?

Tommy: The same. A human being is a human being.

You both seem to have followed the advice about forgiving. And though I may be speaking out of turn here, you seem happier for it. You don't seem to have any bitterness about the war.

Ruby: It was war.

Tommy: The only thing that rubs me the wrong way is we were born here. They took our citizenship away. You can't control what nationality you are born into. They take everything away from you and don't pay you for it.

In 1988, that Prime Minister ... Mulroney. He sent out a letter of apology and paid $21,000 per person.

So you both received $21,000 each?

Tommy: Yes. From 1941 to 1988.

That's not much interest for what was taken and what you went through.

Tommy: We were tied down. We had no freedom.

Were your parents alive when the payments were made?

Tommy: No. And three of my brothers were dead.

How many children were there in your family, Tommy?

Tommy: 9 kids. 3 girls and six boys. I was 2nd from the bottom. Ruby: He was the 8th child.

Tommy: My sister-in-law in Okayama Japan had tuberculosis around 1939. She got better in the 1940s.

Ruby: In those days, in the 30s and early 40s, TB was a death sentence. They had Streptomycin. When we were in Tabor I remember Tommy's mom sent Streptomycin to Japan for his sister-in-law who had TB. She survived because of it. She was born in 1911 and she's 95 now. She's gone down a lot in the last few years. Stays under the quilt most of the time.

She sent it to Japan during the war?

Tommy: She sent it from Marpole before the war. From 1939 on.

Ruby: I didn't know about that. But I know she sent it from Tabor many times.

And it got through to your sister-in-law?

Ruby: Yes. I don't know how.

How was she able to get the drug?

Ruby: From the doctor. What doctor it was I can't remember.

So one of your brothers lived in Japan?

Tommy: There were three brothers born in Japan. The third one stayed there and looked after the grandparents. I didn't meet him until he was 80. We sent him a plane ticket to come here for a visit. I thought he might say, "Why should I go there? They left me here." He must have thought about that: why did Mom and Dad leave me here?

At first I thought he might balk at the ticket and say thank you but no thank you. But he was happy he came. And then they came a second time on their own and he was sure happy to see us there.

Ruby: I'm glad we took that trip to Japan after we retired.