

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA CHINESE AMERICAN ORAL HISTORY PROJECT

Interviewee: Nancy Dennis Interview Number: 37
 Chinese Name: _____ Number of Tapes: 1
 Date of Interview: 1/6/80 Length: 36 Minutes
 Interviewer: M. Kwok & S. Cheng
 Others Present: ND's niece & friends
 Language: English
 Summarizer: Suellen Cheng

Contents

| Time Segment | Counter Number | Summary | Tape: <u>1</u> Side <u>A</u> |
|--------------|----------------|--|------------------------------|
| 1 | 001-013 | Introduction. | |
| | 014-021 | Nancy Dennis (ND) was born in Los Angeles. Grew up in Los Angeles until she was 15 years old. Now ND lives in Newport. ND lived in Los Angeles from 1933 to 1948. | |
| | 022-026 | Father was a policy officer with the LAPD. Mother was a homemaker. | |
| | 027-032 | Father worked in the area of Chinatown, Highland Park and other areas. | |
| 2 | 033-038 | ND's family came to Chinatown at least once a week to eat with her father's friend, who owned the Yee Mee Loo Restaurant. | |
| | 039-045 | Father knew everyone in Chinatown and introduced ND to a lot of people. | |
| | 046-053 | Parents remained in contact with friends in Chinatown. | |
| | 054-059 | ND remembers Chinese friends that grandmother did not speak to her. | |
| | 060-069 | ND's family would go to picnics with Chinese friends. Their behavior seemed to ND the same as hers except that they spoke Chinese. | |
| 3 | 070-075 | Chinese families were very kind to ND's friend. | |
| | 076-087 | ND's family went to picnics a lot with family friends. | |
| | 088-107 | ND's family was invited to Chinese friend's houses for dinner. Soemtimes mother would take ND to the Lee's house to meet ND's father. ND would play with the Lee children. | |
| 4 | 108-119 | ND's father used to drive the family around Chinatown. | |
| | 120-135 | ND always felt that everyone in Chinatown seemed to welcome her father. Chinatown was always very attractive but very mysterious to ND. She never heard any negative things about Chinatown. | |

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| 4 | 136-141 142-147 | ND never heard about her father dealing with opium. But father talked a lot about gambling in Chinatown. Father patrolled in the area adjacent to Chinatown. |
| 5 | 148-172 173-198 | ND came to Chinatown quite often when she was young but she never asked what Chinese did. They heard about gambling in Chinatown but did not understand what was going on. ND's father was involved in some cases indirectly related to immigration cases. |
| 6 | 199-238 | The old Chinese store Spring Street was just like the old mom and pop grocery store in the old days. That was the place where the family bought Chinese food. the owner, Mr. Gee, didn't speak English. ND's mother didn't speak Chinese. But somehow they could understand each other. |
| 7 | 239-256 257-294 | ND didn't remember mother cooking Chinese food when she was getting older but when she was young, mother used Chinese cups and spoons. ND went to school with Helen Chan and became good friends with Helen Lee. Father knew many Chinese restaurant owners. |
| 8 | 295-339 | ND remembers that some Chinese old ladies would dress in Chinese clothing but not many wore Chinese clothes. |
| 9 | 340-363 364-395 | ND's Chinese friends not only knew ND's family but other of ND's Caucasian friends, such as the dentist, other policemen and restaurant owners. ND didn't think that it was usual to have Chinese and non-Chinese mingle so much like ND's family did with their Chinese friends. They went out for picnics, restaurants, to the race track and the beach. |
| 10 | 396-405 406-411 412-421 | ND remembers fighting over a toy with Helen Lee in Mexico on one of their outings. ND's Chinese friends lived between Chinatown and 52nd Avenue. ND didn't know whether her Chinese friends' neighbors were Chinese or not. |

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE A

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Tape: 1 Side B

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| Time Segment | Counter Number | Summary |
|--------------|----------------|--|
| | | <u>Tape 1 Side B</u> |
| 1 | 001-010 | Blank. |
| | 011-019 | Because of ND's father, they made friends with many people including Chinese and others. |
| | 020-033 | ND remembers a Chinese owner who always screamed at people. ND also remembers that she was treated like a princess by the Yee family. |
| 2 | 034-047 | Yee Mee Loo Restaurant is probably still in Chinatown. They used a lazy susane on the dinner table. ND thought that was the most civilized way to eat. The owners were friends of ND's family. |

END OF TAPE 1 SIDE B

END OF INTERVIEW

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