

Transcription: BV023.16.19

Interview with Harry Toy, Beverley Babey and Christina Toy

Audio Recording: 2023_0016_0019_002.mp3

Interviewer: Denise Fong (INTVWR)

Interviewees: Harry Toy (HT); Beverley Babey (BB); Christina Toy (CT)

Date of Interview: September 15, 2023

- 1 INTVWR: Today is September 25th and I am Denise Fong, the interviewer. I'm at the residence
2 of Harry Toy. And we are here with Harry, Beverley, and Christina Toy, and we are here to
3 conduct an interview about their oral history and their family connections to Burnaby. Thanks a
4 lot for welcoming me into your home. I have some questions for you, Harry. You can just look at
5 me when you answer and just give me what comes to mind. When and where were you born?
6 HT: When and where?
7 INTVWR: When and where were you born?
8 HT: I was born in February 9th, 1936.
9 INTVWR: And where were you born?
10 HT: In China. Name of the place is Taikong.
11 INTVWR: Taikong?
12 HT: T-A-I-K-O-N-G
13 INTVWR: Okay. What part, what county is it located in?
14 HT: [inaudible] 00:01:00 I don't know how to say it, but they have different names for county or
15 district. I'm not sure what they use in here. Is a, it still exists.
16 INTVWR: It still exists, okay.
17 HT: Taikong is a city built by mostly overseas Chinese.
18 INTVWR: Okay. What language was spoken in that area?
19 HT: [Hoisan]
20 INTVWR: [Hoisan]
21 HT: [Hoisan-wa]
22 INTVWR: [Hoisan-wa] And when did your family come to Canada?
23 HT: My grandfather was here I think in the 20th century, 19, between 1905, 19-0, 00:02:00
24 around that area. He was a teacher, when he came over here, I guess he learned and do different
25 things and made some money. I guess, I don't know what he's doing. He's doing English too, I
26 suppose. He managed to, he worked quite hard [inaudible]. In those days, they went back to
27 China every 3, 4 year, go back to visit the family. Anyway, my grandfather, my great grandfather
28 was also here, either here or in the States a long time ago, before my grandfather 00:03:00 was
29 here. He must have been with the gold rush, I guess. I'm not too sure. I got a picture of him over
30 there. Great, great grandfather.
31 INTVWR: What's his name?
32 HT: My great grandfather? Let's see how his, his name is, in Chinese is [Pak-sun, Pak-sen]
33 00:03:26 That's his title name [Pak-sen]. You know the Chinese name, that the, they have a

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34 certain category. Now, from way back, the Toys, Toy has a certain thing, [Sen] what they called
35 - before him, had about two more category in the 13th century. **00:04:00** I can show you, I can
36 show you that in Chinese. I can't remember. **[Pak-sen] 00:04:12** is my great grandfather. There's
37 another one on top of that who's **[Zak-koi] 00:04:21**, that's his father. That's the father, that's the
38 father we know, but there's two more on top of that, that's on the 13th century.

39 INTVWR: Wow, okay. You know your family history very well.

40 HT: Anyway, he was, he was my great, great grandfather was the controller for the whole Toy
41 family. And, he had seven, seven kids I think

42 INTVWR: Okay.

43 HT: Seven, seven boys.

44 INTVWR: Seven boys.

45 HT: And his son **00:05:00** is, my great grandfather is number four son. He had, six, six boys and
46 one girl.

47 INTVWR: Okay. How about your...

48 HT: Great grandfather is number four son.

49 INTVWR: Your grandfather is number four son?

50 HT: Great grandfather.

51 INTVWR: Great grandfather, was the number..

52 HT: Four son, yeah.

53 INTVWR: Okay. And then how many children did your great grandfather have?

54 HT: Great grandfather, he had, he had two. One was my grandfather, another one, is half-brother,
55 half-brother - had two wives.

56 INTVWR: Okay, yeah.

57 HT: From same father but different mother.

58 INTVWR: And then your grandfather, how many children did he have?

59 HT: He had **00:06:00** one son and one daughter, one adopted daughter, the side of, my father's
60 right over there.

61 INTVWR: Oh, that's your father's photo?

62 HT: He came over here when he was 9, when he was 10 years old.

63 INTVWR: 10 years old, okay.

64 HT: That's in 2000...1920, '21, around there.

65 INTVWR: Okay. So where did your father live in, in Canada?

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66 HT: Well, my great grandfather at the time had a business in Manitoba. He was in Neepawa,
67 Strathclair.

68 INTVWR: What's that?

69 HT: Strathclair, a town called Strathclair.

70 INTVWR: It's a town?

71 BB: Strathcona?

72 HT: Strathclair.

73 BB: Is it near Neepawa?

74 HT: Strathclair, S-T-R-A-T-H-, Strath-clair **00:07:00**

75 INTVWR: S-T-R-A-T-H- okay, I'll look that up.

76 HT: Yeah, that's a town, small town. Neepawa is a town also up there, in there. And my father
77 was also there, so. I was there myself when, when I came over.

78 INTVWR: Oh okay. Yeah, when did you come?

79 HT: 9th, September the 9th 19, 1970.

80 INTVWR: September the 9th, 1970.

81 HT: 1970, when I landed in Vancouver. I left Hong Kong on Friday, September the 9th, 1970 -
82 no, 19, 1950, 1950 sorry. 1950. And then landed in here also September 9, 1950 in Vancouver,
83 **00:08:00** got on a flight in Hong Kong. He flew, I flew, and I took the airplane because I was
84 young - my father, sometimes they're by boat, but I flew by plane, and we landed in Okinawa in
85 Japan. I think they refuel, and then supposed to go to Hawaii. My great, my grandfather was
86 there, my mother's side, but they changed their route again for some reason. And they bypassed it
87 and went through to, I think, goes to Alaska and Guam probably, **[inaudible]** maybe the wind,
88 the flight, I don't know what happened. They flew over there and they came back to Vancouver.
89 Landed in Vancouver September the 9th, 1950.

90 INTVWR: I see.

91 HT: So I stay overnight here. One of my **00:09:00** uncles picked me up from one of the, uncles.
92 My great grandfather's uncle picked me up from the airport and bring me back to Chinatown,
93 B.C. Royal, that's one of our relations. Our uncles and - but they are closed already. They all
94 went home, and nothing to eat, so they make some toast for me.

95 HT: And afterward, he took me to another uncle, Uncle Jimmy, who runs the, his rooming house
96 down in, what's the name of the street? **00:10:00**

97 INTVWR: Is it Pender or Keefer?

98 HT: **[inaudible]** way downtown.

99 INTVWR: Way downtown, okay.

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100 HT: Oh gee, next to Main, north of Main.

101 BB: Union?

102 HT: North on Main. I kind of forgot , I don't remember that.

103 INTVWR: Powell? North of Main. Powell Street?

104 HT: What is it?

105 INTVWR, BB: Powell, Georgia?

106 HT: Georgia, no.

107 BB: North.

108 HT: Powell?

109 INTVWR: Cordova?

110 HT: Cordova, that's right, Cordova [inaudible]. He's ah, he had a rooming house there, rooming
111 house and I stayed overnight there with along with other people [inaudible]. A rooming house,
112 you know.

113 INTVWR: What kind of people lived in it?

114 HT: I think they are - **00:11:00** the way right now, they're very... I don't say skid row but they are
115 poor, poor people, and kind of a, it's a cheap, very cheap rooming house. My uncle Jimmy, well
116 his father owned it, he passed on him, so he runs the rooming house and just very cheap housing.
117 I stayed overnight there. Next morning, my other uncle picked me up, took me back to the
118 airport, put me on the plane and talked to my father in Winnipeg. Well he was in Winnipeg, in
119 Neepawa, and they said to him, they told him that I was on the plane to Winnipeg so he picked
120 me up, my father in Winnipeg.

121 INTVWR: Okay. How long did you live in Winnipeg?

122 HT: **00:12:00** Oh we just stayed, I think we stayed there just for a very short time, and we flew
123 back to my father's hometown, Neepawa, that's where he had a business.

124 INTVWR: Okay, what business?

125 HT: A restaurant.

126 INTVWR: Do you remember the name of the restaurant?

127 HT: It's called Royal Cafe.

128 INTVWR: Royal Café, okay. What kind of food did it serve?

129 HT: Oh. They had, they had ordinary food in those days. Like, they have, they had Chinese food.
130 They have, also the English food they serve normal people, like sandwiches and hot sandwiches,
131 hot type of thing. So what else, they make **00:13:00** beef stew, roast beef, turkey, normal
132 restaurant plus the Chinese restaurant, Chinese food too as well.

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133 INTVWR: Oh okay. Did you get to learn how to cook as well?

134 HT: I watched them. I know how to eat. I was waiting on tables.

135 INTVWR: Okay, so you also helped out?

136 HT: Yeah, I also helped out, I was working as cashier, waiting on tables, go to school at the same
137 time, just learning the language and so on. I was the only Chinese boy there at that time.

138 INTVWR: What was that like?

139 HT: Oh, very interesting because they are very nice to me. I was an oddball, only Chinese guy,
140 boy, there were two Chinese girls there, this belongs to my **00:14:00** father's business partner.
141 Well, you have to learn fast, that's all. You pick up the language. And fortunately, I had a very
142 good teachers. You know, they are very, they are very good, excellent, encouraged, they helped
143 me out, and in one year, I read 4th Grade, this one teacher by the name of Lena Mackenzie. I
144 went to the, the, she's teaching grade four. I had no **00:15:00** language, no nothing, A-B-C. So
145 she had a dictionary, Chinese dictionary, showed me this, pointed to me, and said, "Okay, you
146 remember this, and this, and so on, and you go down and see [Ms. Kelington]" **00:15:17**. Was a
147 kindergarten teacher. She's the one that very, really teaches kindergarten, teaches children how to
148 pronounce very, very slowly, pronunciation. So you listen to her in the morning, come back here
149 afterwards. And so I went to Ms. Kelington in the morning, "Morning, children." Very good,
150 very good, so. Anyway, I went back to Ms. Mackenzie, and she tried to show me a certain thing.
151 She taught me there alone, and she's, "Okay, from now on, after work, **00:16:00** every, days and
152 at night time, you come to my place, you read to me."

153 INTVWR: Okay.

154 HT: So that's why I go through all the reading, all the school reading, 4th Grades in one year.

155 INTVWR: Wow, you had some very good teachers too.

156 HT: Yeah, she's very good.

157 INTVWR: Wow. So you lived in Neepawa for how long?

158 HT: Well, I went to school in Neepawa Elementary School, and afterward, they changed school a
159 couple of years later, it was just a guy by the name of [Wesley McCalman] **00:16:45** was the
160 principal. And he skipped, I skipped schools and they said, "Well, you have to go through one
161 year, Grade 4 to Grade 5, Grade 6 **00:17:00** combined, next year go to the next one." They just
162 pushed me right through so. By the time I go to Grade 8, he said, "You ready to go to high
163 school?" I go, "No, no. I'm not ready." "You know". I said "My English" what do you say,
164 "Composition is not good enough." "Well, you try your best, whatever you can." He put me
165 through to try out for high school, and basketball. I was playing basketball, doing sports, and I
166 joined, joined the team in high school. Anyway, Mr. McCalman, I've got a picture of him, matter
167 of fact.

168 INTVWR: Oh [inaudible]. So did you keep living in Neepawa after high school?

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169 HT: Yeah, I finished high school in Neepawa, and afterwards, I went to university.

170 INTVWR: What's the name of the university?

171 HT: **00:18:00** I went to U, University of Manitoba.

172 INTVWR: What did you study?

173 HT: I was taking science. And I end up, I think, at a pre-medical school, I changed my mind and
174 afterwards because it takes too long. I decided, my father was able to put me through – kind of
175 independent, to my own, so I want to make some money. So I try to - everywhere you go, they
176 try to give you an issue, put you to some summer program, **[inaudible]**. I went and I said,
177 "What's the way to do it, make some money, and put me through school financially?" **00:19:00**
178 **[inaudible]** I said, okay, teacher, college about a year and a half or two years. I said, "I can do
179 that, I can continue." That's what I did, went to teacher's college.

180 INTVWR: Okay. What year did you graduate?

181 HT: Teacher's College? Let me see...19, oh let me see. Was it 1958... **[inaudible]** highschool,
182 19-, went to university in 19 - . I think **00:20:00** 1962, teacher's college. In 1963, I was teaching.

183 INTVWR: What were you teaching? What subjects?

184 HT: I was teaching, science, I was teaching business, business practice, physical education, and I
185 was doing some kind of health and guidance, I suppose, the first year there. This is math I think.

186 INTVWR: Okay.

187 HT: Now, the second year, **00:21:00** they, the guy was doing the physical education. He left,
188 didn't left, he didn't want to do it so they asked me to take over. So I took over the next year for
189 physical education, and the second year, the first one I taught them was volleyball, children, for
190 boys, volleyball. It wasn't too popular at that time. Nobody wants to join only a few people. So
191 we work on that. We got nine people to work, and second year, we got a championship for
192 district championship and everybody wanted to join. So I was teaching physical education for the
193 boys and the girls for the school.

194 INTVWR: **00:22:00** What's the name of the school?

195 HT: It's Minnedosa.

196 INTVWR: And what grades did the school offer?

197 HT: Grade 9 to 12, yeah, I was teaching, coaching, volleyball, basketball (laughing), you know
198 the track and field, some football (laughing).

199 INTVWR: Yeah. So how did you change from being a teacher to owning a store in Burnaby?

200 HT: Oh. (chuckles to himself) I was teaching there in Minnedosa, and afterward, I moved to
201 another district of a high school called the **[inaudible]** in Gladstone, Manitoba. **00:23:00** I stayed
202 there. I taught also physical education, track and field, all that stuff, and as well as some science
203 and so on, geography, history. And afterward, I think I went to the, what they call the Tri-force:

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204 INTVWR: Tri-force?

205 HT: Yeah, like, Air Force, Navy, and Army, military force, military school, military school
206 called [inaudible] Rivers camp, it's a military camp no longer exist anymore. I taught there.

207 INTVWR: And then how did you end up coming to Burnaby?

208 HT: **00:24:00** Well afterwards, and I have to, let's see... I came out here because we want to
209 move on to the West Coast, she was like - and when I came out here, and the view - and there are
210 a lot of places for teachers, some in the lower mainland, or northern part of BC. Some of them,
211 kind of, what they call, they won seniority, "You're well qualified, we but we got somebody that
212 have seniority over you. We don't need - thank you." **00:25:00** So they tell me go for another
213 field. So the only place open is up north. At that time, the children were small. I was okay, but I
214 said, "Oh, not so good. I don't think it's a good idea." So I didn't go, so I stayed looking around
215 for something to do. I got a family. So my uncle was here already and he was running a store.
216 You'll be able to do something. You can't do nothing, so I was looking for him to show me
217 around or looking for a place to do business. And checked out a few places, some in North
218 Vancouver [inaudible] and they're pretty good. **00:26:00** But the one they show me on Canada
219 Way, but already, somebody's already there. They had the, they had the, what they called, the
220 first proposal already, and they're, "Well, we don't know yet whether he can come up with the
221 finance or not." Salesman, "We will wait for them to come out with whether they've got finance
222 enough to take over or not. If not, we'll let you know." So I said, okay. In the meantime, check
223 around and 1 month later, he said, "Oh, are you still interested in the one in Canada Way? It's
224 open. The guy didn't come up with the cash, finance." I said, okay. So I ended up seeing Mr.
225 Jerry Moreau, I think Moreau [inaudible] M-O-R-E-A-U. **00:27:00**

226 INTVWR: M-O-R-E-A-U (spelling together with Harry Toy). Okay.

227 HT: Jerry Moreau.

228 INTVWR: I'll fix that.

229 HT: He's the one that runs the [inaudible] market, they call it, [inaudible] market. He's at that
230 time, the address was 51- some Grandview, I can remember exactly, 5,100-something
231 Grandview Highway, that's Grandview Highway, one time. He bought it from couple of people
232 before.

233 INTVWR: When you took over the business, what did you find most challenging about running
234 a store?

235 HT: When I took over? Well, I didn't know how to run a store before. **00:28:00** So he's, well,
236 Mr. Moreau is pretty good, his son David, he kind of taught me, showed me around, what to do,
237 where to get supplies and so on. And he's a good, a very good teacher, so. He showed me what
238 to do and stuff, so I picked up from there. Any question, my father's still here, next door, he ran
239 the butcher shop next door. He still had the butcher shop. He sold the grocery department to me.

240 INTVWR: I see. So you had help if you needed to?

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241 HT: **[inaudible]** He's still there, more or less, but he doesn't live there. He lives somewhere else.
242 He lived in the back before I took over the back as the resident.

243 INTVWR: So you lived at the back of the store?

244 HT: Yeah, we always lived in the back of the store.

245 INTVWR: Alright. **00:29:00** So by then, I guess you had three daughters, and they were all there
246 helping out in the store as well?

247 HT: Yeah.

248 INTVWR: What was it like to run the business day to day? What time did you start and close?

249 HT: Well what time? Oh god, it depends. We have to, it was, when you're young, you're full of
250 energy, it doesn't matter. You start early in the morning, take them to school, and drive them to
251 school sometimes, and come back and open the store, morning until night. I had somebody
252 working there for me too as well.

253 INTVWR: Is that someone **00:30:00** that you knew from your family?

254 HT: No, there's someone that had been working with him, Moreau before.

255 INTVWR: Okay. So you had a staff person working there?

256 HT: Well, they had a pretty good worker, and she told me she's very good, so I retained her as a
257 worker, part-time, **[inaudible]** - well, sometimes during the daytime, part-time. **[inaudible]** I
258 also have a couple of students weekends. So -

259 INTVWR: Who are your regular customers?

260 HT: My regular customers? They are different kinds of people around the area. Some of them
261 passing by. We got a lot of **00:31:00** what do you say, ethnic groups around the area, like
262 Ukrainian, Polish, Italian, a lot of Italian, Portuguese, from Finland, from Italy, a lot of them
263 from Italy too, yeah.

264 INTVWR: Any Chinese?

265 HT: There's some Chinese around. Not too many.

266 INTVWR: But when you stock the store, did you try to look at what the different customers were
267 looking for? And did you like, change your stocking strategy over time?

268 HT: Well, I had - Mr. Moreau had to set up - they had to order some **00:32:00** merchandise from
269 different companies the Hudson's Bay, different companies, look after certain things, they come
270 in, make orders and so on. And they come in each day, every day differently. I order also from
271 H. Y. Louie, process sales from, **[inaudible]** actually its warehouse is close to my place, a couple
272 of streets down, **[inaudible]** wholesale, and they still come here and ask for orders every certain
273 day coming in. "What do you need?" Check it out for you and they deliver it. H. Y. Louie, I fill
274 in the order myself, they give you a book to order, and when you finish, you drop the order off
275 and they deliver a couple of days later or something like that.

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- 276 INTVWR: **00:33:00** What were the best-selling products in your store?
- 277 HT: We sell everything, your regular milk supply, your vegetables, fruits, plus household items,
278 some even some medication, health needs. You name it, we have it. (chuckles)
- 279 INTVWR: Did you get a lot of school kids?
- 280 HT: We did have lots of school kids. (chuckles) Interesting. A lot of kids, some kids are very
281 good. Some are very rumbustious. You have to be, well, you have to deal with them, sometimes.
282 But most of **00:34:00** the kids are pretty good, except a few odd ones giving you difficulties.
283 They're pretty good, most.
- 284 INTVWR: So other than your store and the butcher shop next door, were there other businesses
285 in your area?
- 286 HT: Well, there are businesses in the area. They changed quite a bit right now. There were some
287 clothes warehouses, Hudson's Bay wholesale, what's the other one, carpet.
- 288 INTVWR: Carpet?
- 289 HT: Yeah, furnitures, flowers, flower shop, we have also the, what else is there. **00:35:00** We
290 had so many. I can't remember all of them right now.
- 291 INTVWR: Oh, okay. And these were around when you first started taking over the business in
292 '70?
- 293 HT: Yeah.
- 294 INTVWR: Like did you do business with any of them?
- 295 HT: Well, we have businesses like, some businesses deliver. Like the bread and milk items, they
296 deliver to you. We have different bread companies, Italian bread and **00:36:00** Canada white
297 bread, Wonder Bread kind of thing.
- 298 INTVWR: Okay.
- 299 HT: They deliver to the store, and there are people bakeries, confectionery people bringing stuff
300 in, everything, the doughnuts type of thing.
- 301 INTVWR: So you mentioned –
- 302 HT: They bring in magazines, newspapers and everything. We had a post office, yeah post office
303 as well too.
- 304 INTVWR: You were a Post Office?
- 305 HT: Yeah we have [inaudible]
- 306 INTVWR: Oh okay. Did you have lottery?
- 307 HT: Yeah, we did.
- 308 INTVWR: You were providing many different services.

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309 HT: Whatever the people need, probably.

310 INTVWR: Okay, good. Your uncle was also **00:37:00** in the grocery store business?

311 HT: Yeah. He was.

312 INTVWR: And was there anybody else in your family that was involved in the same industry or
313 something that's food related, like running a restaurant? Like in Burnaby?

314 HT: So relations, I have a cousin in you know, restaurant business and so on, downtown, down
315 Chinatown.

316 INTVWR: Okay. What's the name of the restaurant?

317 HT: B.C. Royal. That's my aunt and uncle.

318 INTVWR: Oh, okay.

319 HT: Very famous.

320 INTVWR: Yeah, okay, I see. Anything else in Burnaby, like your uncle's business? Where was
321 that?

322 HT: Well, he had a business in other side of Burnaby, close by Edmunds, Oasis.

323 INTVWR: Okay. **00:38:00** When did that close down? Do you know?

324 HT: Oh, he sold it. I think. Let's see when he sold it... I can't remember right now.

325 INTVWR: Roughly.

326 HT: Quite a number of years ago. He retired. Somebody bought the business and they are from
327 Hong Kong.

328 INTVWR: Okay.

329 HT: I have to think back when exactly, when they sold it. Right now -

330 INTVWR: So you started this business in 1970, right?

331 HT: 1970.

332 INTVWR: And when did you **00:39:00** close?

333 HT: I think I took over October 31st, Halloween night.

334 INTVWR: Okay. You took over on Halloween night?

335 HT: That's when we took stock.

336 INTVWR: Interesting. And you ran the business for how many years?

337 HT: Oh, I ran the business, I think if I remember correctly, I think 2010 or '11. Kind of afterward
338 I slowed down off and on type of thing because a lot of things happening. So I was not running
339 full time, a little bit of time. I slowed down because at that time, the children are grown up, and I
340 was by myself more or less **00:40:00** anyways. And he's pretty, a business – kind of very

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341 dangerous to run, and also the business down because a lot of competition from chain stores like
342 7-Eleven - what else is there? I can't remember some other business. 7-Eleven - and what's the
343 other one? There's another...

344 INTVWR: Max?

345 HT: Yeah, Max is a competitor too. So a lot of competition coming in, and then they make it
346 very difficult to, it's not tough, but very, very competitive. And you know, you don't make a
347 heck of a lot, very marginal. Besides, very dangerous, a lot of people, you know vandalizing, and
348 robbery, **00:41:00** and threatening, everything else. Really, it's not worth it, I should say. It's very
349 dangerous. I've been encountered many times. I got shot even.

350 INTVWR: From the robberies?

351 HT: Yeah.

352 INTVWR: So did that, I guess have any role in shaping your involvement in the Fraser
353 Merchants Association? Like why did you get involved?

354 HT: Oh when I got involved with, I was a, association itself, it was a, [inaudible] there's a
355 Grocers Association Lower Mainland already they started that. But somehow, they have people
356 disagreement among the people, power struggle, I don't know what happened, I wasn't at that
357 time was there. And one of the members **00:42:00** didn't like it for some reason. He broke away
358 from it. That's what he said, "Let's get another one away from them because these guys are too -
359 whatever they do, they don't agree on everything." They control, and so on, and harassing, and
360 bullying type of thing. I don't know, I wasn't too sure, but he, along with the other people, tried
361 to set up a different association. So he, and there's a lot of people, talking to people, and one of
362 the guys approached me to join. That was in 1971, so he asked me to help a little bit. Afterwards,
363 we got together and he had - I think whoever put it there in Graham Store, Graham Grocery,
364 **00:43:00** that's the place the guy owned. Well, he's not the only one, but he used that as a
365 meeting place, we go there and have meetings. That's Gary Lee Ling.

366 INTVWR: Who are all the other members in the association? Because I think the other one you
367 mentioned, there's a lot of Chinese store owners. Is this one the same, or...?

368 HT: The other one, yeah, mostly. The other one is Chinese owners, but this one, no, we had
369 mixed everything else. We have not just Chinese, we have Caucasian. And not that many, but
370 quite a few. We also have some East Indians involved. There's different ones, from Iranians and
371 so on, nationality, **00:44:00** Middle East, and we also have later on Afghanistan. We have some
372 Korean join us.

373 INTVWR: Yeah. It's like people are spread out in many different places.

374 HT: Yeah, we did. We have all the area - so when it started, Gary asked me to help him, so I
375 said, "Okay." So we had a meeting and okay, I said, "You can speak English" and so on. So he
376 asked me to help. I said, "Okay." I join in and meet him and so on. And what we did was try to
377 form an association, so I have a mass purchasing, so to speak, set up, join together the purchase
378 from, by, **00:45:00** through the wholesaler at a lower price again and get a better, better profit.

Transcription: BV023.16.19

Interview with Harry Toy, Beverley Babey and Christina Toy

Audio Recording: 2023_0016_0019_002.mp3

Interviewer: Denise Fong (INTVWR)

Interviewees: Harry Toy (HT); Beverley Babey (BB); Christina Toy (CT)

Date of Interview: September 15, 2023

379 And also, yeah later on we set up a warehouse and some people would run it, different way of
380 doing things. Anyway, sometimes it works okay, but people, you encounter a lot of people,
381 different people, you know, different types and so on. And if, what we tried to do was to try to
382 get together, get a lower price for our members and a little more profit, I suppose. In the
383 meantime, also establish a social gathering for the people, for the members' type of thing, so.

384 INTVWR: **00:46:00** Do people have to pay a membership fee to join?

385 HT: Yeah, we have a low membership, very low [inaudible] very low membership. But after we,
386 a lot of people joined, different areas, I know I mentioned, not just in Burnaby but Vancouver,
387 Richmond, Delta, Surrey, Coquitlam, Abbotsford, Langley, Chilliwack. We have some in Hope.

388 INTVWR: How do you find all these people?

389 HT: Fort Garry, Fort Langley... I don't know, somehow it was spread and they joined.

390 INTVWR: Okay, and then how often do you guys meet?

391 HT: Well we tried to, **00:47:00** first we tried, to get together at a Christmas time celebration, and
392 we try different methods and different ways, one time PNE,] try the location there, try different
393 things and different locations [inaudible] and so on. Sometimes, it doesn't work too well. So
394 many things going on at same time, so you postpone till later on after the New Year or before the
395 [inaudible] New Year mostly.

396 INTVWR: I see. Does everybody bring their families, their kids to those...?

397 HT: Yeah, they normally do, it does depend on what it is.

398 INTVWR: Okay. There must be a lot of people.

399 HT: A lot of people, yeah. But we try to – we have, whenever we have an annual, we try to invite
400 different **00:48:00** people like Chinese dignitaries. And we also did a one time with an embassy,
401 invite them to our banquet, and different company would join in, so they try to set up some
402 incentive for them, lower prices and so on.

403 INTVWR: Where did you have your banquets?

404 HT: Well, depends on the restaurant, mostly. One time, we tried the PNE. It's like a picnic. It
405 doesn't work out too well because - well, it's okay. Sometimes, we try in a park, picnics, and so
406 on. But we have mostly annual banquet in a restaurant. One time, we're **00:49:00** quite a bit - we
407 used to be Pink Pearl restaurant, number of years over there. And of course, we have to try also
408 the food [inaudible]. Also, another place right now is called the Flamingo.

409 INTVWR: So how did you end up being president?

410 HT: Oh, well, Gary was the president, and he was asking me to assist him. But then [inaudible]
411 he said, "I'm, I'm stepping down. I want to retire. You take over." I said, "Oh, take over? What
412 for?" "Well, you and so and so." But he had different things in mind. So I said - well, he set it up
413 such a way that we have a certain division in our **00:50:00** association. There's a grocery
414 division, restaurant division, farming division. That's why he didn't set up. So, so he did it that

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Date of Interview: September 15, 2023

415 way. I guess he wanted me as an - I can take the grocery division. So he, well, anyway, I don't
416 want to go into that. And the people, remember, doesn't agree with that same idea. So we have to
417 find out what it is, what's happening. So we have a general election. So he figured, "Hey", they
418 vote for me instead. So I took over. You know -

419 INTVWR: Do you remember the year when you took over?

420 HT: Let's **00:51:00** see, 19 - I think '92, I believe. 1989, 1990-, yeah I think 1992. 1989 was an
421 election and [inaudible] I think.

422 INTVWR: Okay. So you joined in the 80s?

423 HT: Pardon?

424 INTVWR: You joined in the 80s?

425 HT: 1971.

426 INTVWR: You joined in '71?

427 HT: In the beginning.

428 INTVWR: In the very beginning, and then you became president in 1992.

429 HT: Well, 1991, '92 around the area. It takes, well after elected by the members and so on, and it
430 takes time to transfer over all the legality, all that stuff. It takes time **00:52:00** to do it. So after
431 that, I became the president. I still am more or less, even though some of the functions we kind
432 of postponed for the time because of COVID, so.

433 INTVWR: So it's still an active association?

434 HT: Well, we have, we don't any right now because, because the situation is very touchy. So we
435 don't, a lot of members are getting old, some are no longer there, as I said, the stores, some of
436 them no longer exist. And some of the members, like from Korea, they joined their own, have
437 formed their own. And some members from the Southeast Asia was only there for the benefit
438 after they **00:53:00** kind of come in and stay for a while. They saw the cut off for - I don't know
439 what for, for status and immigration, I suppose. So, so a lot of members [inaudible]. The
440 regional members, as I told you before, very few still alive. Still some, still some kicking around.
441 But they no longer operate the store anymore. Most of them retire, and the reason we postponed
442 because of COVID, and I don't take responsibility if something happened to them, who's going to
443 be responsible if something happened. So we put on hold until a better time. We'll function
444 anyway.

445 INTVWR: Yeah okay. It sounds like you're more or less kind of independent **00:54:00** in
446 organizing. Did you get any support from government at any point in time?

447 HT: Support?

448 INTVWR: Yeah.

449 HT: No, I don't think so.

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450 INTVWR: So it's just basically business owners kind of run and operate?

451 HT: Yeah.

452 INTVWR: Okay. Is this how your store looked like when you first opened it, or does it change a
453 lot?

454 HT: No, that's not what I look like at the beginning. I built that one. It was, this part is still there.
455 Also, the other part is split half. And afterward, because my children, they're growing up so I
456 thought I need some room for residence. And what I did was that I was thinking **00:55:00** all the
457 way around. But at that time, next door still a butcher shop, but **[inaudible]** no longer there. He
458 sold his share, he went to the **[inaudible]**. He went to Whalley, Whalley Automotive. He sold his
459 butcher shop business to another guy, his butcher. And well, anyway, ended up - he did a lot of
460 things he's not supposed to do. He kind of, I don't want to go into it. He hired people that are
461 very not trustworthy and do all kind of underground... **[inaudible]** The police is investigating,
462 but nothing you can do. So what they did is he didn't pay his share of the rent, the tax, and so on.
463 **00:56:00** So I have to give him notice. So finally, what he did, he kind of vacated. And after he
464 vacated, I had to do something. What I did is I asked architect Mr. Yip to take a look, and he
465 suggested knock the wall, expand the whole thing and work from the downstairs, connect the
466 upstairs for the - room for upstairs for residence. So that's why I built afterward.

467 INTVWR: Oh, so this is the top part, this is residential?

468 HT: Residential, yeah.

469 INTVWR: And then who was living here? Did you just rent it out?

470 HT: No, we were living there.

471 INTVWR: Oh, you guys were living on the second floor. And then how about - was this the
472 whole store or the back of the store was used for anything else?

473 HT: Well, this is the whole store right now. The whole thing from here to here, and instead it
474 used to be a butcher **00:57:00** shop outside. And he used to call the cows slaughter, the cow
475 slaughter, that's the cow butcher shop. And they, this side they still keep it for flowers, and let's
476 see flowers and type of thing, and here for vegetables. Before was dairies. Dairy used to be on
477 this side, and the milk, and so on. But instead, I took the whole wall out and extend the other
478 side. So the dairy, the other side, this side is for a lot of other things, this place and so on, flower
479 and so on, the other side for dairy, and meadows, magazine, post office. **00:58:00**

480 INTVWR: You pack a lot into this space.

481 HT: Pack **[inaudible]**. Upstairs we, for ourselves. One time, I even leased out to some students
482 from BCIT and you know that type of thing. Just one room type of thing. They want to stay, so
483 when they're independent. Right now, the way it is, - that's when we built it up afterwards.

484 INTVWR: I see. How many years were you guys living there?

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485 HT: How many years? (chuckling) Let's see... Well, they've driven off and on. She was out for a
486 while, she came back any time she wanted to. And Christina, let's see **00:59:00** Christina let me
487 see, she was there. Well, they are all there one time after they've grown up, they are on their own,
488 but they are welcome back anytime they want to. But when they're not there, because I try to
489 lease out to the children from the BCIT or what you call, art, art, art school...

490 CT or BB: I think I left last. I left last for sure.

491 HT: What was that?

492 CT or BB: I was the last one to leave. I was in my late 20s, 27, I think.

493 HT: Because Melinda, she's married. She stayed there for a while. The kids were born there, or
494 they were born in Neepawa - **01:00:00** my grandchildren are born in Vancouver, in Vancouver I
495 guess, yeah. They, they after, they moved out to Coquitlam and they moved all over the place.
496 They work in and they come back whenever they feel like it. Whenever they want to, they're
497 welcome back. They helping out so. And Melinda was, they were here, and they moved to the
498 States.

499 INTVWR: And she's your eldest?

500 HT: My eldest, yeah.

501 INTVWR: Okay.

502 HT: Melinda went to school, Simon Fraser, then went to East Trois-Rivières on scholarship. And
503 then McGill. Beverley also went to Simon Fraser, and Christine went to UBC. Anyway,
504 **01:01:00** a long history.

505 INTVWR: You raised very smart kids, all three of them. Can you tell me a bit more about this
506 picture? Who's in the picture?

507 HT: Oh, yeah, I do. (chuckles) Am I in the kitchen? Yeah. That's Melinda, Christina **[inaudible]**.

508 INTVWR: Who's this?

509 HT: My father.

510 INTVWR: What's his name?

511 HT: William, Bill, Bill Toy, William Toy.

512 INTVWR: How old do you think he was when this picture was taken?

513 HT: 64, 65, around there, '65 yeah.

514 INTVWR: **01:02:00** Did he live in Burnaby with you guys?

515 HT: No, he was in Neepawa, but he came out here.

516 INTVWR: Just to visit?

517 HT: Just to visit.

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Interviewer: Denise Fong (INTVWR)

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518 INTVWR: How about this one? Was it taken the same day?

519 HT: I think the same day. That's my mom.

520 INTVWR: What's your mom's name?

521 HT: **[Yuen Shen 1:02:32]. [inaudible] [Yuen Shen]**

522 INTVWR: Okay.

523 CT or BB: You're wearing the same clothes, so definitely the same day.

524 HT: **[inaudible]**.

525 INTVWR: **01:03:00** Oh, fresh meat market. How about this one?

526 HT: Myself? Oh boy, I haven't seen that for quite a while.

527 INTVWR: How old were you when you took over the store?

528 HT: 30- what was I? 30 something. 35?

529 CT or BB: 34. If you bought it in 1970, you'd have been 34.

530 INTVWR: You were still quite young.

531 HT: And had a lot of hair (chuckling). **01:04:00**

532 INTVWR: Do you remember taking this picture?

533 HT: I remember, I remember the place. I haven't seen that for a long time.

534 INTVWR: Was it just a regular day in the store, or do you remember if it was something...?

535 HT: Yeah, it's a, it's a regular day type of thing. Pretty busy.

536 INTVWR: Yeah. It looks like you're packing something, looks like you're packing something,

537 looks like you have a paper bag.

538 HT: No I was, it was chicken **[inaudible]**. You **[inaudible] 01:05:00** yeah. Check out.

539 INTVWR: How about this one? This one, you have a tie.

540 HT: This one has a tie, yeah. Oh, before, I didn't have the flower. Nowadays, I still have flowers.

541 INTVWR: Oh, okay. So this was taken later?

542 HT: Later, yeah.

543 INTVWR: Did you dress like this every day?

544 HT: Let's see. What the heck was that? I can't remember now. **01:06:00** No, it wasn't every day.

545 No, because I had a tie on. I must've had a gathering of some sort.

546 INTVWR: Okay. I wonder what year this was taken. Let me guess, **[inaudible – hushed voices**

547 **in background]**

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Interviewer: Denise Fong (INTVWR)

Interviewees: Harry Toy (HT); Beverley Babey (BB); Christina Toy (CT)

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548 CT or BB: [inaudible] upstairs. Dad built that when we were probably in grade 10.
549 HT: The floors down in here, [inaudible] an alarm system at that time already.
550 CT or BB: [inaudible – hushed voices] dad built upstairs when we were on grade **01:07:00** 9 or
551 10. I think it was grade 11, I can't remember. [inaudible].
552 HT: It'll take me some time to recall.
553 CT or BB: You probably would - well, if you bought the store when you were 34, you probably
554 have been about 40, about 7, 10 years after would be my guess. I don't think there's a date on
555 there, dad. I don't see a date.
556 HT: I have the thing back, I get it - I can't remember offhand. I told them I had - because at that
557 time, I had flowers stand here. I didn't sell flowers before until after, after **01:08:00** until
558 [inaudible] a flower shop, he's closed down, "I'm closing, I'm retired." I said, "Oh, what?" You
559 had to get some here, and, "I helped you out how to do it." A lot of people asked me to sell
560 flower. I didn't sell it before. "Oh, the other guy do it" so I didn't bother. And so finally, we had
561 to go-to auction and so on. But he has - oh God, I can't think of it at the moment.
562 INTVWR: It's okay. You'll remember next time looking at it. How about this? Who are the
563 people?
564 HT: Oh that's some of the, oh I see, okay, this was, our member, our directors, some directors of
565 the **01:09:00** association. Behind me, that's Jim Howe, Keith Chu, he's the secretary treasurer,
566 Keith Chu.
567 INTVWR: Who's the secretary?
568 HT: He was the secretary.
569 INTVWR: Jim?
570 HT: Yeah. He's the, he's the treasurer, I'd say.
571 INTVWR: Treasurer. Okay.
572 HT: He's a great guy. Really fantastic guy. He passed away already, so is Keith Chu. He's also
573 passed away five years ago. Oh, this is [Benny Kwok **1:09:59**]. He's in the **01:10:00** homes right
574 now. I talked to him a little bit. [inaudible] This is Howard Lam, Howard, Howard Lam. He's
575 the secretary. He's Michael Chow. He's still around. Henry Lau, anyway, you and you can see
576 [inaudible] here. You can see this one. **01:11:00** It's funny (speaking quietly).
577 CT or BB: Going back to this, that photo, going back to that photo of this - that you were asking
578 - my dad standing in front of the former store, and the flowers - my, from what I, just from the
579 notes I took from my dad at one point, he didn't start chain or whatever - he didn't do the
580 changes, the addition of the second floor. I think that started around the early 80s and it was
581 finished '82 to '84, somewhere in there. So I would say that's pre, the latest, is 1980, but probably
582 prior to, just slightly prior to that.
583 INTVWR: Okay, that's helpful.

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584 CT: **01:12:00** Are there dates on those ones?

585 INTVWR: Not these ones. Just this one. This one is 1972. Do you remember this visit?

586 CT or BB: Very young. Grandpa passed when we were really young. I think he passed when he
587 was around 50, and then grandma passed when she was in her 80s. So, she survived another 30
588 years after him. Yeah, we would have been in elementary school for sure.

589 CT or BB: Yeah, passed around **01:13:00** 70.

590 HT: I couldn't recognize the face.

591 INTVWR: It's okay.

592 HT: Kind of funny, doesn't look good, the one at the end.

593 INTVWR: Yeah, it's okay.

594 HT: I can't see it. My eyes are not so good.

595 INTVWR: Maybe when the museum scans it, they can make it bigger on the...

596 HT: I couldn't see too well...

597 INTVWR: Yeah, it's very small right now, but maybe once they scan it. You can blow it up on
598 the computer and you can see better.

599 HT: (chuckles) What's the other one? What's the other one?

600 INTVWR: It's the same one, but just more further away, same group of people.

601 HT: Oh, I know who that is. I know. **[Bing Wong]** yeah. (chuckling) **01:14:00** His face is a little
602 different. Kind of funny... Well, he's still around.

603 INTVWR: Do you remember the names of the businesses that they each owned?

604 HT: Pardon?

605 INTVWR: Do you remember the names of the businesses they each owned?

606 HT: Yeah, I think I do. Well, this used to be - well, he's in White Rock, this one guy... at the
607 house market. Well he didn't own it, he owned a lot of them and he sold them. He owned quite a
608 few of the businesses in Richmond, and this one - his business also in Richmond and **01:15:00**

609 INTVWR: Howard.

610 HT: Howard and - And this one, his business on Burnaby.

611 INTVWR: Benny?

612 HT: Benny, yeah.

613 INTVWR: What's the name? Do you remember?

614 HT: They called the uh...let's see. They changed the name quite a few times.

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Interviewees: Harry Toy (HT); Beverley Babey (BB); Christina Toy (CT)

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615 CT or BB: Hilltop? Was it hilltop? Benny Kwok?

616 HT: Benny Kwok, yeah.

617 CT or BB: Hilltop? Was it hilltop? I don't remember. Maybe not.

618 HT: Hilltop, no. I don't think it's called the Hilltop. Well he's changed so many times and he sold
619 this place. What name does it go under? See, uh, I can't think of it. Well, he Michael Chow well
620 he **01:16:00** had quite a few business and he sold it, well he sold it to somebody else. He's in
621 Surrey, matter of fact, I just bought that business myself, the same business. I didn't buy it Surrey
622 it did quite well in a mall there. It's called the... Oh god, I couldn't think of it. Henry Lau is -
623 well, he's no longer there, its call the **[inaudible]** Moody Park, in New West, and he's no longer
624 there.

625 CT or BB: Cariboo, dad. Cariboo Hill Grocery.

626 HT: Cariboo?

627 CT or BB: Cariboo Hill Grocery.

628 INTVWR: That's Benny's?

629 HT: Benny Kwok, yeah. And Wong's business is called **01:17:00** the... Well, he changed it to be
630 - he changed his name because he's also doing some TV repair at the same time. Oh god, 7 years
631 gone by.

632 INTVWR: So out of all those, only you and Benny had Burnaby business, right?

633 HT: Yeah, I think so, yeah. Well, this one is... Oh, yeah. I see this is a counselor. That's Chinese
634 council.

635 INTVWR: Oh, okay. **01:18:00** Do you remember which year this picture was taken?

636 HT: This is Pink Pearl restaurant. I think the name of it.

637 INTVWR: Were you president when...?

638 HT: Yeah, I was president at the time. I was speaking with **[inaudible]**, the lawyer there, right
639 there. **[inaudible]** he's a **01:19:00** lawyer. He's passed away too.

640 INTVWR: So your president is probably 90s?

641 HT: Yes, 90s.

642 INTVWR: Do you remember this? **01:20:00** It's very interesting that there's a Chinese bulletin.
643 So you must have spent a lot of time preparing.

644 HT: Yeah, they did some **[inaudible]**. They had a fruit market here. It was around there. But
645 that's a co-op, yeah.

646 INTVWR: Did you have these bulletins regularly? **01:21:00**

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647 HT: One time, they did, and after they didn't bother because [inaudible] difficult. Nobody want,
648 some people dropped off and nobody carry out doing the work [inaudible].

649 INTVWR: Did you help prepare the bulletin? Was that part of your job?

650 HT: [inaudible]. We did a lot of work off and on, off and on all the time, so. I think Gary was
651 doing that at the time, doing the Thanksgiving, getting some members to do it, to fill in work and
652 so on. And his wife was doing it one time, but his wife passed away, so yeah. **01:22:00**
653 [inaudible]

654 INTVWR: I think we're going to take a break first because we've been talking for a long time.
655 I'm going to talk with Beverley and Christina now and interview them. You can take this one
656 with you, and maybe read over there and take a break. And then we'll come back afterwards.

657 HT: Okay. Thank you.

658 INTVWR: So, Beverley and Christina, thanks a lot for joining us for this conversation. I wanted
659 to learn a bit more about your experience of growing up in the store. Can you **01:23:00** share,
660 first of all, when and where were you born?

661 BB: So I'm Beverley, and I'm the youngest. So I was born January 23rd, 1969, and I was born in
662 Neepawa, Manitoba.

663 CT: I'm Christina Toy, and I'm the middle child or second, however you want to look at it. I was
664 also born, actually, all of us were born in Neepawa, Manitoba including my older sister who's not
665 here. And I was born January 13th, '68.

666 INTVWR: What memories did you have of growing up in Neepawa?

667 BB: Mine is very limited. I can only remember pockets of being barely - trying to walk,
668 swaddled in clothes because it was knee deep in snow, but I would have just been a baby. I don't
669 remember any of that. We moved over to Vancouver, sorry, to Burnaby in 1970. So I would have
670 been 1 years old.

671 CT: **01:24:00** I have no recollection at all. I went to Taiwan, Taipei to be with my grandparents,
672 my maternal grandparents. I think just before Beverley was born, possibly. Our parents had three
673 children, very close together. And I will say my mom for sure, but she couldn't handle raising
674 three people or three young children at the same time, even with the help of our paternal
675 grandmother and family. So I was sent to Taipei, and I don't think I came - I think I was there for
676 about a year, maybe a year and a half. And then I came back to Canada to join them once they
677 moved to the West Coast from the Prairies. So I have no recollection at all of Neepawa. **01:25:00**
678 As a child, that is.

679 INTVWR: And then how many years were you guys living in Burnaby?

680 BB: Well, my memories are only of Burnaby. We all grew up there in the store and went to
681 elementary school at Douglas Road, went to junior high at Moscrop Secondary School, and went
682 to senior secondary at Burnaby Central. So we were all Burnaby folks all of our lives. Melinda
683 ended up going to Montreal for university at Trois-Rivières. So she moved out.

Transcription: BV023.16.19

Interview with Harry Toy, Beverley Babey and Christina Toy

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Interviewer: Denise Fong (INTVWR)

Interviewees: Harry Toy (HT); Beverley Babey (BB); Christina Toy (CT)

Date of Interview: September 15, 2023

684 CT: She went on exchange in grade 12 to Trois-Rivières. Then she went to McGill for university.

685 BB: So she moved out from there. I moved out, I think I was either 18 or 19 years old.

686 CT: I think you were 18. You moved out very early.

687 BB: Yeah, moved in with a boyfriend at the time, so. When dad talks about us moving back and
688 forth, yes **01:26:00** when of course, that relationship didn't work out, eventually I did move back
689 for a couple.

690 CT: You did?

691 BB: Yeah. Yeah.

692 CT: I don't remember that at all.

693 BB: Because I moved out with Jacques, bought the place.

694 CT: No, I know that, but I don't remember you moving back at all.

695 BB: Very briefly. Yeah, yeah.

696 CT: Oh, until you bought your place.

697 BB: Until I bought him out. And then later I moved back. Yeah.

698 CT: And then Melinda, our eldest sister who's not here. She went to McGill, met her husband
699 there. They got married. They did move back to Burnaby. I can't remember when, to be totally
700 honest. But they moved back, and then they had a family. They had their family here, and then
701 they ended up moving to - he got a job offer either to basically go to the States and they chose
702 California, and then they've been there for 20... How old is Amanda?

703 BB: 26.

704 CT: Okay, so it's about 25 years they've been there roughly, 25 years.

705 BB: Melinda and Stefan, when they got married in Montreal, **01:27:00** where she met him, when
706 they came over to the West Coast, that's when they moved in with Dad and lived above the store.
707 And so, Dad helped them out to get them settled before they ended up finding a place on their
708 own.

709 INTVWR: And you grew up in the store as well.

710 CT: We all grew up in the store, all of us did. And we all grew up also with the renovation at the
711 store. But Melinda did move out shortly - or she left shortly after, within a couple of years I feel
712 she left to go to McGill University. And then once we graduated, Bev moved out with her
713 boyfriend, and I was there pretty well. I think I was there until 27 years old. I was the typical
714 Chinese person child who stays with their parents for a long time. But I never came back,
715 though, because I stayed so long. I didn't have to come back.

716 INTVWR: What was it like growing up in the store?

717 BB: Can I go first?

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718 CT: **01:28:00** Sure, you can go.

719 BB: I would probably say it was, it was what we knew. So it was, we grew up as very young
720 kids. Ever since we were in elementary school, our parents divorced before I hit kindergarten. So
721 Dad basically had the store with his three daughters, young daughters. His mom helped us -
722 helped support during that time. So, I would say it was probably, you know, not your typical -

723 CT: Upbringing.

724 BB: Upbringing because you, you know, the store was open 9:00 in the morning until 11 o'clock
725 at night, every day, didn't close. So growing up, we would, after school, have to come to the
726 store. We took shifts to make sure so that my dad could take a rest, or make dinner, and then
727 yeah, it was **01:29:00** just - and then go to sleep and get up, go to school.

728 CT: Yeah, I think when we were like really young in elementary school, probably the most we
729 really did was we might stock the shelves periodically, or help clean a little bit. You know we
730 didn't really take care, deal with the till, the cashier, because we didn't know how. Yeah, I don't
731 remember that much. I don't remember exactly what we did when we were really young -

732 BB: We bagged groceries.

733 CT: Maybe bagged groceries or you know-

734 BB: We weren't even tall enough to even put it up. We had to put up the groceries on the ground.

735 CT: **[inaudible]** And then once we understood, we got a better, you know we understood math
736 better, and we knew, you know, how to basically count money, do change, then we started to
737 work in the store, like on top of - instead of just you know, re shelf, restocking. We would
738 actually work on the cashier and then we would give our dad, you know, breaks, and either he
739 would take a nap, you know or make dinner or whatever. But yeah, **01:30:00** then we took shifts,
740 like looking after the store, and sometimes we'd work even - we worked in pairs quite often
741 when dad was asleep, or he went upstairs or something, or in the back.

742 BB: We did? We didn't work in pairs.

743 CT: Kind of.

744 BB: We took shifts, 2-hour shifts each, 3:30 to 5:30, 5:30 to 7:30, 7:30 to 9:30.

745 CT: Sometimes, we were there together. Maybe because we just

746 BB: Out of boredom

747 CT: Maybe out of boredom we were there, so yes. Yeah, as Bev said, we didn't know any
748 different. Like that was, I shouldn't say that. I knew, we knew obviously, because we had friends
749 and they would, you know, they would have, they would like go home or have, you know - we
750 call them play dates now, but back then, you'd go over to your friend's place and you would
751 spend, you know, the afternoon or sometimes have dinner at their place. It was very rare that we
752 did that.

753 BB: We never had vacations. Never had an allowance.

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754 CT: Did not have vacations, yeah. But we didn't have an allowance for sure, but we were - our
755 dad put money aside for us, and if we needed anything, we just asked for it.

756 BB: Yeah, for sure.

757 CT: But we didn't... I don't think **01:31:00** we were raised in the traditional way where people,
758 where you did your chores, you got paid money, you got spending money that way.

759 BB: But we never got that.

760 CT: No, we just - if we needed something, we just ask and we just get it. That's all.

761 BB: Correct.

762 CT: Yeah. I think, I think as we got older, you know, definitely as we got into, I think junior
763 high, or they call it middle grade now, but junior high in Moscrop, I think we started realizing
764 like you know, everyone else is doing other stuff. We started doing more sports for sure. And I
765 can't say it was intentional. I don't think I ever thought I'm going to do sports so I can get more
766 time outside of being in the sport. To be honest, I don't even think I just followed it because our
767 older sister did sports, and we just followed suit. We're you know, pretty athletic when I was
768 younger, so I thought, yeah, you know, I was okay at everything and I enjoyed it, so. Besides,
769 you know, at that point, that's when you did sports at school. You didn't do these outside teams
770 like they do now. But no, yeah, I think we enjoyed it. And yeah, that's all we knew. That's all we
771 knew until we got older, and we realized **01:32:00** you know, that it was just... And I think part
772 of it is also just being of a Chinese culture and heritage. I think it was - not only was it expected
773 of you to help out, but we also felt that we should help out. I think that's sort of ingrained in
774 Chinese culture.

775 BB: Yeah. I don't think I remember ever going on a play date per se. They never had those
776 things. So we would never go over to other people's places, but-

777 CT: Except for birthday parties.

778 BB: Except for birthday parties or like birthday party sleepovers, but people would come to the
779 store because we were always there. So, our friends would you know, make a trip, and we'd hang
780 out and talk while we were at the store. So that was our kind of way of socializing with our
781 friends.

782 INTVWR: You had friends that also were growing up in grocery stores or had to help out in their
783 family business?

784 CT: I will say, inadvertently, we had friends - they weren't friends from school. So, there was
785 you know, there was like, Mrs. Young, for **01:33:00** example. There's another woman who was
786 part of the FMA, I believe, right., who had a store on Walker Street. I can't remember the name
787 of it, but she had...

788 BB: Young's. It was called Young's Grocery Store.

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789 CT: Young's Grocery. So, you know, I remember often at one point in our lives, you know,
790 when our dad closed the store, we would meet Mrs. Young and her –

791 BB: Three daughters.

792 CT: Three, no, one son -

793 BB: Three daughters and one son.

794 CT: One son and two daughters, isn't it?

795 BB: Coleen, Virginia, and the older one.

796 CT: Okay, I honestly don't remember the four children, but I remember three. And we would
797 meet them for dinner. Okay and then - because Chinese people tend to eat later anyways, so we
798 would often go to a restaurant, meet them for dinner. So I would say they're the only ones that
799 we kind of spent some time at one point, like a chunk of time for maybe a couple of years or a
800 year, but we would see people or see other kids close to our age, or around our age who also
801 worked in a store. And then we also met Trevor Kwok, Benny Kwok's son, and his two sisters. I
802 can't remember anymore.

803 BB: **01:34:00** [Corina] and Selena.

804 CT: Yeah, so we met them as well. That's the only time we ever met other kids.

805 BB: That had the stores.

806 CT: That had stores that - it would be through the FMA. It wasn't through basically where we
807 went to school and our friends.

808 BB: And then lastly would have been dad's uncle, Uncle Ken -

809 CT: Oh yes, and our cousins.

810 BB: Who had a store in Vancouver and had... Yeah.

811 CT: It's Burnaby, isn't it?

812 BB: Was it?

813 CT: I think it was near - I want to say Burnaby North. I can't remember.

814 BB: Yeah, they had five kids so we would always - but so they were cousins or great cousins,
815 and so we would hang out with them too. But again, not through school, so our school friends,
816 nobody had a grocery store we were it.

817 CT: And the only other person I remember whose parents did – like worked - I remember this
818 woman, this one girl, she was Korean heritage. I want to say **01:35:00** Helen Kim or Helen Lee
819 or something, but I remember her father worked, had a mushroom farm, like Money's mushroom
820 farm. So she was the only and she didn't work there much. But I do remember at one point, she
821 said she'd had to go to the field and help out. She was the only other - she was the only other

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822 child; I knew that would work at the family business periodically. I don't think there was anyone
823 else that I can recall.

824 INTVWR: Okay.

825 CT: Also, an immigrant family.

826 INTVWR: So, you mentioned like spending time with your friends, eating out sometimes. Where
827 were some of your favorite food, hangout places or food memories in Burnaby?

828 CT: You're talking about the people that we knew through the FMA?

829 INTVWR: Yeah, like your friends, or just - where do you guys go to eat?

830 BB: Oh gosh. As a teenager, this would have had to been when we were senior high, when we
831 would actually be allowed to go out and eat on our own and pay for our own food. But I would
832 say before then, **01:36:00** when we were always going out with Dad, we would always go to
833 Chinese restaurants.

834 CT: I don't recall the names of any of them, but they were always the same restaurants in general,
835 like there were two or three rotating ones. I don't remember the names or where, to be honest.

836 INTVWR: Around Burnaby or Chinatown or...?

837 BB: Gosh.

838 CT: I was too young to even understand, just like you know.

839 BB: I'm not sure.

840 CT: Yeah, the geography of the Lower Mainland.

841 BB: No, I can't really remember the restaurant names off the top of my head. But then when you
842 get older, in junior high, and senior high, you go to like the, the, you know, the fast-food places
843 that are near the school, whether it's a Subway, or whether it's - you know, I can't even
844 remember...

845 CT: It was Mr. Submarine. There was no Subways back there, Dunkin Donut even.

846 BB: It was called Mr. Submarine and it was called Robin's Donuts.

847 CT: Yeah, sorry Robin's Donuts.

848 BB: Yes.

849 CT: That was by our junior.

850 BB: Correct.

851 CT: Our middle school junior. But I don't know, you know, it's interesting, I don't-

852 BB: We never went out a lot, well just because I didn't - **01:37:00** because of money like
853 [inaudible] spend money. That just was ingrained, well, it was just the way it was. We just never
854 really spent money to go out with friends and stuff like that. That's my memory.

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855 CT: Yeah, I think, I feel, I pretty well have the same memories. The only, the only time I
856 remember we would go to this place, but I think that was after - definitely after like high school,
857 we would go to that place on East Hastings. Is it Penny's Restaurant?

858 BB: Penny's Restaurant?

859 CT: Was that after we graduated Grade 12?

860 BB: No. I remember going to Penny's with Stan, and that would have been Central, so yeah.

861 CT: So yeah, so we ended up going often, strange enough, to Chinese restaurants. Chinese
862 Restaurants. Yeah.

863 BB: I think our first jobs - I mean, my first job was - you had Marvelous Mush , Marvelous
864 Muffins.

865 CT: That's right.

866 BB: Those muffins in Brentwood Mall, and that's when I first got my first job **01:38:00** to have
867 real money to be able to spend it on food, and going to restaurants, and stuff like that.

868 CT: That's true, yeah. And I think the other restaurant I went to, I actually did spend time eating
869 at often, was this place that was called P.J. Burgers and Sons, which is near Brentwood Mall, and
870 it's only because I got a job there. So, then you know, you tend to like, you know, stay there
871 afterwards with your coworkers, and you would end up eating the food there. So that's pretty
872 well the only - I don't know if there's many restaurants, to be honest, besides that, that I can think
873 of. Everything that we were younger, mostly Chinese food with our dad, and I couldn't tell you
874 the restaurants. I don't even know if they still exist anymore, to be honest.

875 BB: No, I would say my memories were more Dad would cook dinner or Grandma would cook,
876 and mostly Grandma would bring, you know, fresh vegetables from Chinatown to make your
877 typical, you know, vegetables with rice. So that was just, and we'd eat in the rest -, in the store
878 because that's when, you know - but **01:39:00** we'd always keep the store open, so you'd eat in
879 the corner, and then you'd hear the doorbell ring because someone came in and then Dad would
880 get up, or one of us would get up to attend to that. So yeah, going out was a luxury. I mean Dad
881 would bring takeout, you know, McDonald's sometimes as a treat or Church's fried chicken, I
882 remember that being a big treat for us. But otherwise, it would be like or things in the store: so
883 canned, or frozen, like you know, the Swanson TV dinners, or instant. Those would be kind of
884 the memories of going eating...

885 CT: I think the only time we went out, honestly, was after the store closed. Like I said, it would
886 be late, it'd be after 9:00 and we would meet up with other store owners or families.

887 INTVWR: You guys play MJ, mahjong?

888 BB: We never did. I do remember a memory when I was little. And I think Dad must have had
889 people over at our place, or maybe it was at Uncle Ken or Auntie Linda's, **01:40:00** and they
890 played mahjong, so the adults did. But no, we never did.

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891 CT: No. We just looked at the tiles and matched them and try to understand what they said.

892 INTVWR: Okay, cool. What did you value about living in Burnaby? Any kind of stories or key
893 moments in your life that you can think of?

894 CT: That's an interesting question. That's something I don't think I'd ever think about asking
895 someone. I don't know, I mean, I think that it's suburbia. It's a suburb for sure, but it's not rural. I
896 think when we grew up, there weren't a lot of – I mean there were other Asian families, but not a
897 lot. I don't I rarely, I didn't, for me, I never felt like I was excluded, **01:41:00** if that makes
898 sense. You know, I always felt very inclusive with my friends and in general, I don't know. I
899 think it was, it felt safe to be honest, overall. When we were in elementary school, we would
900 often walk, and we would walk by the cemetery, Forest Lawn Cemetery. And it's funny, and I
901 don't know, and we had friends who lived across from there as well. But strangely enough, what
902 I do realize now, when I got older is because it was so normal to walk by a cemetery or even
903 walk through or by it, it never bothered me growing up and I think it's interesting. As I got older,
904 some people would get all freaked out. They'd go, "Why would you walk by a cemetery?" I'm
905 like, "Why not? It was a path to school." But yeah, I think I just – you know, you take your
906 neighborhood or your environment where you are and it's what you know, right. It's what's
907 normal for you. So, I don't know. I don't know if it's what would make **01:42:00** Burnaby any
908 different than if we had grown up in Vancouver, or Delta, or anywhere else. I don't know if
909 anything actually just stands out that's different.

910 BB: Yeah. I mean coming, I would probably say Burnaby was safe at that - me growing up, I
911 didn't think any different that it was unsafe, which would be different now in this day and age.
912 So, it felt safe. Our friends were there. You know, we'd go to the park, we'd be able to go
913 anywhere we wanted to go, and it would not be an issue, right. We wouldn't come home right
914 away after school. We'd hang out or – so it just is a, it was a different time.
915 And so I think our memories are just – I mean my memories are all the friends that we hung out
916 with at school and they were, they were, you know, nice moments. They weren't, you know, Oh,
917 we go to the mall sometimes. But anything from, whether it's taking a bus or - **01:43:00** I
918 remember there was a time there was a, a strike, a bus strike. And you know, well I would hitch,
919 and that was really unsafe now that I think about it. But you know at that time, you just never
920 thought about it, or we'd have our neighbors that we had a cherry tree. I remember, Miss - I can't
921 remember her name anymore. She lived across the street, and we'd have the, we'd have our
922 cherry tree. We'd pick cherries. We had a sour cherry tree, we had a regular, and we'd run them
923 across the street, and she'd make us pies and we'd bring them back, and it just - if I were to think
924 back, it feels very wholesome, for lack of a better word.

925 CT: It seemed more innocent back then.

926 BB: Yeah, yeah, but it probably wasn't. Dad had mentioned he had been burglarized a couple of
927 times or robbed. And there was that time that Christine and I both remember very well being
928 robbed at the store.

929 CT: Or attempted.

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930 BB: Attempted, robbed, yeah and we were both at the store and two older guys came in and tried
931 to rob us, and they were not successful. And you know, it's just really interesting, you know the
932 characters that can come in when you're **01:44:00** very young. And you know, they're very - it
933 can be very intimidating. It could have been probably a lot scarier than it really was, but we just
934 didn't know any different. We had some, you know, savory individuals that would come in that
935 probably - you probably shouldn't be subjected to them at that age. (chuckling to herself)

936 CT: Yes.

937 INTVWR: Interesting. Can you tell me a bit more?

938 BB: Gosh.

939 CT: How so?

940 INTVWR: Like what kinds of people?

941 CT: Characters you mean?

942 INTVWR: Like what kinds of customers would come in and like any? Because I think it exposes
943 you, like working in the store exposes you to a lot of different kinds of people at a young age.

944 CT: I mean, I think there were lots of regulars from the neighborhood, to be honest. There's a lot
945 of regulars that came in all the time. But you know, you've got lots of people, I mean, people just
946 driving by, you know, I'm sure. As you, as I'm sure, it seems like this is why you're probably
947 doing this story, is because **01:45:00** grocery stores, or green grocers or whatever you want to
948 call them are - it's becoming a dying breed in many ways. And it's not often I think about in my
949 lifetime where you know, I'm driving or going home and I'm like, "Oh, I forgot to get this." And
950 I swing by. Sure, I've done it periodically. I rarely do it I think because I think I'm a little bit
951 more organized than most. Well, at least I think I am. But sure, the odd time I will swing into
952 like a 7-Eleven, because that's really the only corner stores you see nowadays in general. And
953 you go in to like, pick up whatever you forgot, you forgot milk or something. But yeah, I don't
954 know. We just got all sorts of you know, some people, a lot of times, they were from the
955 neighborhood. Sometimes, they were our friends just coming in to visit and say hi. And
956 sometimes, they're just people who are driving and they just happen to say, "Oh, there's a corner
957 store." And they pull in and they get what they want. There's lots of - you know, we had some
958 regulars that were great. **01:46:00** We had some that were not so great and creepy even, to be
959 honest. But you know, I think we had enough whereabouts with us that we you know could - we
960 could, we knew that we had to be a little bit more cautious around some people.

961 BB: I remember there was one - so, dad sold sundries, like [inaudible], shoelaces, you name it.
962 And we'd have - like there was one specific teenager, you know, at that time, he was much older
963 than us and would always buy tubes of the model cement glue, like you know, when you make
964 models. Of course, back then, I did not know why. I'm like wow, this guy's making lots of
965 project models. And in hindsight now I realize, oh, he was using them for, you know to get high
966 or whatever it was. But those kind of things, you just, when you're little, when you're young, you
967 just don't know. And I mean, we had tons of regulars for sure. And you know, Dad was always a

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968 chatty Cathy and **01:47:00** he'd be talking to them for... It wasn't always just a quick transaction.
969 It was a neighborhood. So, you had a community there. There's also, I remember growing up,
970 because you have those adult magazines like Penthouse and Playboy, they weren't covered, they
971 weren't wrapped up at the time. So, they would easily be, you know, right at the counter and
972 people would be picking it up and going through them. And I'm just a little girl. And I'm like,
973 "Really? How inappropriate is this?" But I mean again, you didn't know what you didn't know. It
974 was just more of - and they'd buy it. You stick it in the brown bag, and you know away you go.
975 And yeah, it was a different experience growing up, running a family business. I would probably
976 say not a lot of people - it would have been very hard, very difficult for people. Like it just, some
977 people would go, "Oh, your childhood was robbed." And I don't see it that way because it's what
978 gave us a great work ethic., right. Dad gets a gold star for - like none of us are in jail. **01:48:00**
979 None of us, you know all of this, you know, we all became professionals, and you know, led
980 very successful lives and families afterwards. So, you know for someone you know, who had to
981 raise three kids on his own, you know, without the compass, without the book on how to do it,
982 you know, he did the best he could, so yeah.

983 CT: I think being, you know, working in a store and meeting all these interesting characters, I
984 think it really desensitizes you to - it made us grow up much faster than most children, I would
985 think. You see a lot more whether you want to see it or not, you didn't have a choice. I think - I
986 don't get fazed that often by many things and I haven't for a long time. I think now, I, if anything
987 now, I am, just because of social media, just because "Oh my, really? Like, Wow." If anything,
988 for me, that's why I'm just more shocked about things. But yeah, I think growing up, yeah, I was
989 not **01:49:00** fazed very much by many things. I think we saw a lot or we experienced, and you
990 just got to follow your that intuition that you have, that gut about people. You just make it - you
991 look at somebody and you make a really quick observation on who this person is and how you
992 interact with them. Yeah. So, I think we did that very early. I think we were able to do a quick
993 judge of character because of that quite quickly, I think. I'm not saying it's always right. But I'm
994 saying...

995 BB: But also, like I mean, people would - it's a corner grocery store, so people would steal. That
996 is very common. And, and you know, having to confront, you know, somebody who's bigger
997 than you or who's older than you, and you're just a kid, right, you're just you know, you just end
998 up doing it. So maybe yeah, desensitization, yeah, probably, that made us grow up fast.

999 CT: Yeah.

1000 INTVWR: Also being quick to think: Like how do I deal with this situation?

1001 CT: Well yeah, I think you know, we had to figure how to navigate through these situations
1002 where **01:50:00** you know, as Bev said, we're children, like we're maybe teens or tweens at times
1003 and you're dealing with an adult. I mean, we don't know how old they are because everything -
1004 everyone looked old to us at that point in our lives. They could have only been 18, but we
1005 probably thought they were old. But yeah, you had to learn how to, sort of like figure out how to
1006 deal with this issue, and without, you know- hopefully without trying to cause too much of a
1007 commotion and it turning sideways on us. I so - I, I don't know. I don't know what else I could

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Date of Interview: September 15, 2023

1008 think, say about growing up in Burnaby. Only because it's only- I mean outside of this very short
1009 window that I was living in, Taipei, which I don't remember at all, we stayed in one place the
1010 whole time, so.

1011 INTVWR: And that the stores, like the store owners, have much interaction with each other?
1012 Like do you guys help each other out or everyone's just busy kind of?

1013 CT: I think everybody's **01:51:00** busy, to be honest. I think being you know, working in a
1014 grocery store, if it's your own grocery store, it's like, it's how you have to make a living. So I
1015 think you're working a lot. So, I don't think they had a lot of time to help. I mean, I think if
1016 someone needed help, I'm sure they would get together, I wouldn't know. I mean, my dad would
1017 probably have that - have a story with that, but no, I'd say not outside of every - I think every
1018 year around just before the holidays, there would be, like the FMA would get together, they
1019 would do a banquet. So, you'd have everybody, you know, at that point together. But otherwise,
1020 you know, outside of the - unless you had friends like you know, like Benny Kwok was one of
1021 our dad's friends, and so was Elaine Young. You know we saw them, but besides that, I don't
1022 know if we saw that many. And our uncle, you know, our uncle once removed, Uncle Ken.

1023 BB: It's Dad's uncle.

1024 CT: Our dad's uncle, so our great uncle, is that right terminology? Yeah so, and besides, those
1025 three families all had stores, that's pretty well - the only ones I knew about. **01:52:00** So.

1026 BB: I'd say it's a hard life. I'd say it was. Yeah.

1027 CT: It's hard. It's a hard life. You don't have much of life. And Bev mentioned we never, we
1028 never had vacations. The only time that I recall family vacation was we were probably, I'd say,
1029 early teens for me. And three of us went with our maternal, sorry our paternal grandmother, and
1030 we took a bus down to California, to Disneyland. (phone ringing in background) And that's all -
1031 yeah, we took a bus. And I remember we went to Knott's Berry Farm, Disneyland. That's all I
1032 really remember.

1033 BB: Yeah. I think that there was things that, until now, when I talk to my husband, he'll laugh
1034 because either I didn't know how to swim, or skate, or ride a bicycle until I was much older. We
1035 never went camping, right. All the things that in North American - most people have experience
1036 at with their families, and we just never did. **01:53:00** It was just, again, a different time.

1037 CT: Are we going to pick up the phone?

1038 BB: Trying to pick it up, trying to pick it up. But we weren't, we didn't have a lot of money. And
1039 so, because of that, I think you know, every, every penny counted. So, we just... Yeah, it was just
1040 one of those - you just didn't know. I mean -

1041 CT: You don't know what you don't know.

1042 BB: Yeah. You don't know what you don't know. So, I never felt like we were poor or low
1043 income.

1044 CT: I don't know if we were though.

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1045 BB: I don't know, like I said, I never felt it in my - so I never had - didn't ever go without - Dad
1046 always found a way.

1047 CT: Yeah.

1048 INTVWR: Anything else you want to add or tell me?

1049 BB: I don't know. I don't think so.

1050 INTVWR: Well, you have this **01:54:00** sign. And you mentioned that you guys open every day
1051 except for Christmas. How did you celebrate Christmas?

1052 BB: It would have been at home. And you know, in my head, I felt like we actually did open up
1053 Christmas, just closed during a certain time. But that might have changed over the years. There
1054 may have been times when we were much younger and we actually closed, and so we lived
1055 behind the store. It was a - and we would you know, just have presents, Dad would have like the
1056 artificial tree in the corner with a big bauble.

1057 CT: We did a Christian Christmas for sure. We'd have - I don't know if we ever had a real tree. I
1058 think it was always like you know...

1059 BB: No never, same tree every year.

1060 CT: Yeah, put up the Christmas tree, put the ornaments on the lights, put Christmas gifts
1061 underneath. You know, we would, I do think at one point, we, the store was open **01:55:00** on
1062 Christmas Day, but it would close for a few hours in the evening for dinner.

1063 BB: That's right. That's my memory.

1064 CT: Yeah, yeah and I don't - I think our grandmother often made - I feel like she was one who
1065 often cooked. I think she cooked turkey. I don't know why. I know we had turkey often on
1066 Christmas, or ham, was one of the two, from what I remember. And yeah, that's yeah- I think
1067 kind of - we would play, we had Christmas music or we would sing. I don't know, the three of us
1068 definitely would keep ourselves entertained somehow. I don't know how, you know.

1069 BB: Yeah. I feel it was very boring in hindsight. I'm like...

1070 CT: Well, maybe we played games. Honestly, it sounds odd, but yeah, it's quite embarrassing
1071 because our dad has a very good memory. I have a terrible memory. Like you know, he can
1072 remember a lot of things, but I do not remember many things.

1073 BB: That was my dad.

1074 INTVWR: Oh wow, that's a beautiful tree.

1075 BB: That was Christina and I.

1076 CT: I think it was a **01:56:00** very 70s tree.

1077 BB: Yes, yep. Yeah,

1078 INTVWR: Nice and big.

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1079 BB: These are our grandparents on my mother's side who did try to keep in contact with us. Yeah
1080 just, you know, we were just your typical, in our mind, what it should be like. Like you said,
1081 very Christian. And we didn't celebrate. We didn't go to church, celebrate any other types of
1082 religions.

1083 CT: Nope.

1084 INTVWR: So. I'm just going through these documents here. This has a date. This has a date. I'm
1085 wondering: When were these made? This 'Harry new prices' and the store hours.

1086 BB: I don't know. I don't know. We would have been in elementary school at this time.

1087 CT: I don't even know whose handwriting that...

1088 BB: This is very neat, not mine.

1089 CT: It's not mine.

1090 BB: Might have been Melinda's. That's Dad, **01:57:00** Dad's handwriting. Normally, he dates it
1091 too, which is funny enough, but the fact that I found - I thought that was pretty funny. We would
1092 have been in elementary school, so.

1093 CT: Yeah.

1094 BB: What 1970 to 1977?

1095 CT: Well, I mean, no, we would have been in high school in 1970.

1096 BB: '75.

1097 CT: Earlier than that, '73 or '74 maybe for me, you would have been a little bit later because you
1098 were a year younger. That's elementary school, so.

1099 BB: Maybe in the late 70s maybe.

1100 INTVWR: Okay.

1101 CT: Yeah.

1102 BB: And growing up, the only thing I think, thinking about in Burnaby is - and I don't know if
1103 you ever experienced it, but there was quite a bit of different ethnicities. Like racism as an
1104 example very specifically, I didn't really - if I did, I don't remember, but I don't remember
1105 feeling, like you know, out of, out of **01:58:00** what's the word I'm talking about, out of place
1106 you know in school, didn't feel that at all. Didn't really get subjected to any racism, per se. You
1107 know, I can remember some pockets of memories where, definitely, I was chastised for being
1108 yeah Chinese, but it wasn't at school, actually, it would have been when I went swimming one
1109 time at Bonsor or CG Brown.

1110 CT: I'm not saying there weren't many, there just weren't a lot when we were - at least in
1111 elementary school, I never saw a lot in our school. But like Bev said, I think we assimilated quite
1112 well, and we just never felt really - I never felt that we were different in that sense.

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1113 BB: That said, I mean English was a first language for us, versus if I were to reflect back and I
1114 have some friends who English was a second language, they, they'd had a much tougher time.
1115 For some reason, the, the more, the boys **01:59:00** more than the girls, which I thought was
1116 interesting. But that's just some reflection when you talk to friends afterwards and they have a
1117 different experience. Yeah.

1118 CT: That's true.

1119 INTVWR: So, at home, you guys spoke English?

1120 CT: Only English.

1121 BB: We did. We had learned - apparently we had learned Chinese before we hit kindergarten. So
1122 Christina could speak fluent when she went to Formosa or Taiwan. And apparently, I could
1123 speak it from what little I remember. But then when we went to school, that time was when our
1124 parents split up. It just never was a priority, I think, for, for that to be instilled in us. And so we
1125 lost the language.

1126 CT: Yeah, yeah.

1127 BB: But we always understood grandma.

1128 CT: We could understand our grandmother who spoke Toisan. And we didn't understand 100%,
1129 but we understood the gist of what she was saying. I never fully understood everything she said.
1130 Right but **02:00:00** you know Mandarin, apparently, or whatever was my first language.
1131 Probably Toisan is kind of, sort of second language, but really English was the predominant
1132 language we used and heard, and used pretty well every day. Right, yeah.

1133 BB: Dad would have had it much, much more difficult. He'd have had more challenges being
1134 older and coming into Burnaby, and like not having as much support when he first came in.

1135 INTVWR: Yeah. How are we doing for time? Well, it's 6:08. Probably a good place to kind of
1136 wrap up, I think.

1137 CT: I'm fine with that.

1138 INTVWR: Okay.

1139 CT: Unless you had any more questions?

1140 INTVWR: No, I've gone through all the questions, so I think we're good. **02:01:00** Thanks very
1141 much for your time.

1142 CT: Oh, you're welcome. Thanks for taking some time and interest, actually. I think we're a little
1143 bit fascinated that was something that somebody was inquisitive about. **02:01:13**