



## Russ Yamada Oral History Interview, August 17, 2015

### Title

“A Science Alum Looks Back with Gratitude”

### Date

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### Location

Valley Library, Oregon State University.

### Summary

In the interview, Yamada discusses his family background, including his mother's experience of being interned during World War II, his father's service in the United States military during the war, and his father's memories of viewing the devastation of Hiroshima following the atomic bombing of August 1945. He then reviews his family history during the post-war years, noting his father's education in dentistry as a GI, small town life growing up in Newberg, the family's connections with OSC during those years, and his own experience of attending Boys State on the Oregon State campus.

From there, Yamada turns his attentions primarily to his years as an undergraduate at Oregon State University. He recalls his decision to study pre-dentistry and the influence of his advisor, Darwin Reese, before providing a long aside on his near-enlistment in Navy Officer Candidate School following his graduation from OSU, and his subsequent schooling and work in Canada.

Returning to his OSU tenure, Yamada recounts his fraternity experiences, the relatively placid atmosphere on campus during the late 1960s, and social events that were of particular importance, including football games, school dances, and concerts performed at Gill Coliseum by major musical acts of that time. Of special note are Yamada's memories of a performance at OSU by The Doors and his perspective on the 1965 Rose Bowl team and the 1967 Giant Killers team. He concludes this series of reflections with additional thoughts on the lack of a strong counter-cultural element at the OSU of the late 1960s and his sense of why that was the case.

As the session nears its conclusion, Yamada provides an overview of his career in dentistry and endodontics. The interview concludes with notes on family, activities in retirement - including work with the Japanese Cultural Society of Salem - and advice for college students of today.

### Interviewee

Russ Yamada

### Interviewer

Mike Dicianna

### Website

<http://scarc.library.oregonstate.edu/oh150/yamada/>

## Transcript

**Mike Dicianna:** *Konnichiwa*, today we're—

**Russell Yamada:** Yeah, that's a little bit of the Japanese language that I understand.

**MD:** You grew up with, yeah.

**RY:** Well you know, we didn't.

**MD:** Didn't speak it, yeah?

**RY:** No, during that period that I was growing up, my folks didn't speak Japanese at home. My grandparents spoke it.

**MD:** Yeah, because that generation would, yeah. Well today we're adding a new life story of a member of the class of 1968 to the OSU Sesquicentennial Oral History Project. Today is Monday, August 17th, 2015. Dr. Russell S. Yamada, Russ, is with us today in the Valley Library here on the OSU campus. My name is Mike Dicianna; I'm an oral historian for the OSU Special Collections and Archive Research Center. So Russ, basically what we like to do is start out with a short biographical sketch, kind of where were you born, stories of early family life, childhood experiences.

**RY:** Well I pretty much like to consider myself an Oregonian, and I graduated from Newberg High School, class of 1964, but I was born in Nampa, Idaho. And I come from kind of a mixed family, because my mother's family is from Troutdale, Oregon. My mother grew up there, she is a class of I think 1940 or '41—I think 1940—Gresham High School, and then my dad went to a small high school outside of Nampa called Middleton. And so they met during the war years when my mother's family was actually relocated back to a—it was called a labor camp. It was kind of like an internment labor camp in Nyssa and Adrian, Oregon. They were put into a place in Adrian that was a former CCC camp.

And my dad's family, if you lived east of Baker City, they drew kind of an imaginary line in the eastern part of Oregon and Washington and California. So if you lived east of that, you were free - you were, as Japanese Americans, you were not interned. So his family was, yeah, they farmed, he farmed with his brother and his mom and they were essentially free to come and go. But my mom's family, they weren't really behind barbed wire, but they were really limited as far as where they could go with transportation, and they couldn't have cars there and they were pretty curfewed and so forth.

But they actually provided work around that area in the crops, like sugar beets was a main crop. Nyssa had a big amalgamated sugar plant there that produced sugar for alcohols and other processes that were helpful in the war effort, not just food. And so I was born in Nampa in 1946. Let's see, I've got to consider, because my dad went into the service in January of 1942 right after Pearl Harbor. He went down and volunteered and they took him. So he was in during that whole period and then he actually didn't get out until, I think, December—or no, it was January of 1946. So I was born in December of '46, just like a lot of Baby Boomers after World War II, so I'm in that real generation.

**MD:** What did he do in the war?

**RY:** My dad went; he was in early enough that—there was some really interesting things that happened to Japanese Americans. Right after he became enlisted and joined, then they cut off enrollment, or taking the Japanese Americans into the Army, or the Navy, I guess. And for a certain period, I don't know, maybe six months or something like that, but if you were already in, you were in. And then they opened it back up again when they found that they needed them.

[0:05:27]

But he was in MPs I think, during part of the war, and he used to shuttle German and Italian prisoners of war from back east up to Fort Lewis. And then he was on the Island of Tinian at the end of the war. Tinian is next to Saipan, Guam, and so there were a lot of—they really had a lot of major battles there to take those over, because they were the next stop-off. Tinian is just a big airfield, and they ran a lot of the bombing raids on Japan out of that island. And then the major one that they had, he was stationed there when they had the Enola Gay, which is the airplane that dropped the atomic bomb over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. And he didn't—he said they didn't, when they were there, they didn't know anything about it until they came back. It was highly secretive even to the regular GIs who were there.

He was a staff sergeant, and he didn't really talk about it that much. But he just, I'm not sure what department he was in exactly, but then right after the—well they were just like anybody else waiting to see how that bomb would go, because I think they'd only exploded one before and it was almost on an experimental basis. And then finally the surrender and so forth. So everything was up in the air. I think they were all gearing up for the invasion, an actual land invasion of Japan, just like they did D-Day.

**MD:** And he would have been probably in the first wave of that.

**RY:** He probably would have been right there. So history kind of takes you around different turns, and twists and turns, but my dad actually ended up being in the first occupationary forces that went into Hiroshima. Now I don't know why they went there, but there's a small island outside of Hiroshima where there is a Japanese naval academy, kind of like Annapolis, and they took that over. So he was stationed there for four or five months. But he came in, and this is a very interesting story; my dad's parents were from Hiroshima.

**MD:** Oh, wow.

**RY:** And his mother was still alive. His father died in 1920 after World War I and the influenza epidemic, but his mother was still alive and she—my dad really didn't have a lot of formal Japanese language training, so he wasn't like an interpreter or anything like that, but his mother wrote a little note for him as an introductory when he was over there to give somebody if anybody was curious. And there were some Japanese people that were curious about "gee, you look like you're Japanese, but you're in an American Army." And he gave them this note and then a little while later actually a cousin of my dad's came down, and they could tell where his family was, and said that his grandparents were okay, they evacuated. They didn't know about some other members of the family, but they evacuated about thirty miles outside of the city and they survived.

And there was one point where he and my dad's brother-in-law, his sister's husband, was in the military intelligence. He actually did the interpreting and worked for MacArthur, but they were both able to get over to the boat over to the mainland and see the epicenter. And then at one point, this person who took the note got a message to his grandmother, and his grandmother was able to come down to the base where he was at and take a ferry over there and meet him. So that's, I think, the first and only time that he had ever really met his grandmother.

[0:10:30]

**MD:** Wow.

**RY:** And once he had met them he found out that a lot of people were, you know, because of the damage and so forth, there was a lot of shortage of food. They weren't really that heavily exposed. They probably were exposed more than normal. But so what he ended up doing was he ended up just giving them a lot of his...

**MD:** His regular rations, yeah.

**RY:** Paycheck.

**MD:** Oh.

**RY:** Whatever they got in the service. But my mom and dad got married in 1944, so my mom was still on the home front, and he just didn't send it home. And my mom was still in a camp. Well they weren't released.

**MD:** They hadn't released them yet.

**RY:** No. So she could have been released and gone to live with my dad's mom, but she didn't want to because she had to help her parents. They had younger kids in there and everything. So yeah, she did that, but my dad had kind of a very unique experience to go over there and meet his relatives like that.

**MD:** Yeah, especially in the devastation of Hiroshima, I mean that's just incredible.

**RY:** Yeah. We have one very—you know, you don't have very many pictures from that era. And back around that time too, as the GIs, I don't think you could just go and shoot pictures all over, especially on the Island of Tinian, it was top security. Most of the letters that he wrote back, big parts of them were cut out so you couldn't have any classified information of location and so forth. But he ended up having one picture taken on this tourist island just outside of Hiroshima in the bay where they have that big wooden arch in the background. It's still there, it's a religious kind of Shinto religious symbol. But he had a picture of him taken where it shows the city in the background if you really look close. You can't see it that distinctly. But I've been over there and I've seen that now, because you can look back and you actually see how built up the city is. It's just like a modern new city now. But then I can go back to that old picture and I look at it and I can just see what it would look like back then.

So anyhow, my dad came back, went to school on the GI Bill. My mom's family came back to Troutdale. My grandfather in Troutdale had rented their farm out, or not rented out but basically he had some good neighbors who were Americans - the Cunningham family - moved into the place and looked after it for that amount of time. You hear a lot of stories about Japanese American families that lost all of it.

**MD:** They just sold it, yeah.

**RY:** Or sold it for pennies for the dollar.

**MD:** People sold it out from underneath them.

**RY:** Right, right. Just gone. So they were able to come back to it, and then my dad went back farming with his brother, did that for a few years and realized that "you know, maybe I've got this GI Bill"—which changed America.

**MD:** Yes.

**RY:** You know, Franklin Roosevelt, I was watching that thing on FDR and he was thinking, you know, before he died he was thinking, "what is America going to look like after the war? What are we going to do with all these people coming back? We don't want to go back into depression again." And he was thinking ahead about doing the GI Bill. Well, the GI Bill just transformed our family.

**MD:** Oh big time, yeah.

**RY:** My dad was able to go - he graduated from high school in 1938 and he hadn't had any education after that except for the service, but he came back and he went to the College of Idaho; it used to be called, back then, the College of Idaho. I think it became Albertsons College, and then they may have changed, I think they changed it back to the College of Idaho. But he went there for a couple of years in pre-dental, and I'm not sure why he picked dentistry, but he did that. And then we came out to the coast in Oregon in 1950 when he started at the—it used to be the old dental school in downtown Portland.

[0:15:19]

**MD:** Oh, okay. Before OHSU.

**RY:** Before OHSU. It used to be down there on the east side of the river. It used to be Sears, Roebucks used to—right next to Sears. There used to be an old Sears, Roebucks; that was before they maybe moved out of there. I think it was a Sears, Roebucks. Anyway, it may have—what I think was down there or somewhere like Hawthorne and 12th, or something of that nature, yeah. But it was an old school, it needed a change, and it did after that; they moved it up to OHSU. But he graduated in '54. So we moved out to Newburg in '54 and he went in with a guy that he knew that had been a little—few years before him that had practiced there, set up a practice. So we actually grew up in Newburg back in the days when it was only 4,000 people. And it stayed 4,000 people for a whole decade. From '54 to '64, that's when I came to Oregon State.

**MD:** It was basically the same town.

**RY:** It was. I think it grew fifty people. And back in the early sixties, that's when my dad became affiliated with Ken Austin when Ken actually, he didn't have a dime to squeeze between the fingers. I think that he had a great idea; he had worked for some company in Denver that had a dental product idea, and he just happened to elaborate on that and make it into a much more usable type of device. What it was, Mike, was a high-speed hand piece. You know dentistry used to be those old, on the pulley system, like that type of - really slow speed. Well the high-speed hand piece ran on a compressed air rotor, so instead of a hand piece feeling like it was just an old train coming to a stop, it would just be a nice quiet whirl and much more efficient in cleaning dental teeth and doing fillings and so forth.

And then he devised that suction system, which was a major thing, because before in dentistry everybody had to, if they filled up with saliva then they had to stop and they had a spittoon and they had to spit that out. You could just go and just keep suctioning. And a lot of people in dentistry did most of the work by standing up and bending over like that, peering in there and doing this, and now you can kind of sit down and sit in a better, or a more improved ergonomic position to do what you needed to do. So Ken had this great idea, but it just hadn't come to fruition yet. And Ken just sent us a letter, sent me a letter, and he had recently written a book and he sent me a copy and he said "hey, I got to thank your dad, your dad's mentioned in here a little bit but I got to thank him for the little seed money that we started with." And he goes, "that got us over the hump, got into it and so forth." So he was a, my dad was a lifelong friend of Ken's.

But my association with Oregon State; when we first moved to Newberg—no, I may have; this is why I'm saying, Michael, I may be getting a little subliminal education—but when we first moved to Newberg, the people that we moved next door to were Ron Finley and his family. And they weren't there that long because he had just finished high school; I was just starting the third grade. And of course he was a state champion wrestler at Newberg High. And his dad worked for US Bank, and then I think his dad transferred to US Bank in Corvallis the same time that Ron came to Oregon State. So I remember as kids we would all follow his career at Oregon State, and then he went on to the Olympics in 1964, and then coaching at the University of Oregon. And then there were just a number of people on that street.

[0:20:23]

We had another person I just saw too, Mike Douglas, who did pharmacy and finished in '65 here at Oregon State. And his dad was the superintendent of schools in Newberg, and Mike just finished retiring from a forty-year career of his own, Mike's Pharmacy in Newberg. It's just been an iconic place there and I know he's been a big fan of Oregon State and contributor and everything like that. And I just saw him this past weekend at that Newberg reunion and he was telling me, oh yeah, in little leagues he had the Casey brothers there as little league players when he coached Little League baseball and everything like that. So he had quite a history of that with some of these folks like Pat Casey and Scott Rueck, who actually coached there at George Fox College for a while, women's basketball.

**MD:** Yeah, we find this all throughout our interviews that OSU is just kind of a statewide family, really. And so there's really no—when you were deciding to go to a school, there was no chance that you could go anywhere else? Did you look at other schools? Or was OSU the—

**RY:** No, back then - you know, nowadays kids are looking at so many different schools. One thing that—you know we had a school right in town in Newberg, George Fox, but George Fox, it wasn't at the level that is right now. It had only about 200 students and it had the background, it was really strongly affiliated with the Friends church, the Quaker church, which at that time became fairly prominent because as the Vietnam War era became more and more involved, the Quakers became a very involved source from all—and they weren't just coming to it just right at that point; they had been long-time peace workers for generations and decades, centuries. So George Fox grew, but it wasn't really the big school that offered a lot of diverse curriculum back then.

You know, people came to Oregon State because—like my aunt Aya, who graduated in '49; she came here because she was interested in home ec and food and nutrition. So she had a thirty-year career as a dietician at Woodland Park Hospital after that. And I had another uncle that came here in the early fifties, Tom Fujii. He did agricultural engineering and he worked for the state, the Ag Department, for many years. And so I guess I just have a lot of, like I said, subliminal input from Oregon State. But I also had from Oregon. And when I was a junior in high school, I had the really interesting privilege of being able to, in the first—in 1963, the summer of 1963, there was an organization called Boys State, and they probably still have that now, but I'm not aware of where it's at. It used to be at Willamette or something.

**MD:** Yeah.

**RY:** But they used to hold it at Oregon State every summer for quite a long time. I mean, I'm talking about 500 students. So I think there were four or five students from my high school that were chosen to go, and I was a student body vice president, so that is probably why, but my mom and dad were in the American Legion, and the American Legion sponsored there. And my mom was in the American Legion Auxiliary and my dad was in the American Legion, so that may have been—I can't remember filling out an application that said "were your parents in the," you know, I don't remember if that was the case, but yeah. So I went to that and it was really quite an eye-opener, because I actually got a chance to live in Poling Hall on one of the floors. And each floor was a county and each county voted for representatives; they eventually had a state governor of Boys State that went back to Boys Nation. That was the year that Bill Clinton became the president of Boys Nation and was able to shake...

[0:25:37]

**MD:** JFK's hand.

**RY:** JFK's hand. What a picture that turned out to be. But I also got to go to U of O at that time too, in the summer. I went to another thing; it was a student council workshop there. So I had a good chance to see both schools. And like I was saying, I think I probably picked Oregon State because I had a lot of that in the background already. And getting a little background knowledge of Ken Austin working with my dad and knowing that he actually—I probably was aware that he went to Oregon State as an engineer and became what he did. And then knowing two people down on the street where we had moved to, like the Finley family and Mike Douglas as well, and then coming to Boys State, I think I just fell into coming here.

**MD:** Yeah, it just became part of the family.

**RY:** Yeah, well I—we didn't have a good football team when I was playing at Newberg High, but we had some coaches that played at Oregon State. And so our coach used to bring us down to these Kiwanis Kids Days for the football games, and then I remember coming down and he would have a whole group of us together, and before the game we maybe had a chance to pass by Tommy Prothro one time. And one of our coaches, his name is Jim Brackens, he played guard on the 1957 Rose Bowl team, one of the last times Oregon State went.

And he was a real lighthearted, easy-going, liked to joke around type of guy. And I remember he happened to be going by Tommy Prothro and he's going, waving at the coach, "hello, Coach, Tommy," and Tommy Prothro back then liked to—you know you could smoke on campus then—he had a cigarette like this [mimics being about to smoke] and he looks over to this going; he didn't even crack a smile. I mean here it is pregame time for a game; you've got some guy who was a former player, with a bunch of kids, yelling at you, and our coach Jim says "I want you to meet my team here." And so anyway, he said "team, this is the man, Tommy Prothro," and Tommy, he just went, goes like this [mimics salute], just a nice wave, kind of courteous, and moves on. But he was going, "boy." I was thinking he was probably so glad to get this guy out of his way so he can get on with the game.

So I came the fall of '64, I started out in—you know I think I just took the General Science background, which was pretty much pre-dental. I think my fallback thing, because I used to work, I did a lot of agricultural work, labor growing up, I started working when I was ten years old picking strawberries for a family farm out in St. Paul, Oregon. At that time they used to have buses go around and pick kids up. We picked strawberries, I went out and I picked pole beans for another family, I strung pole beans, I bucked hay. I helped build—I had a job helping to build silos. I worked doing the berry crops, I worked in a cannery - they used to have a cannery in Springbrook right about where A-dec is now. I worked in that cannery, I canned food, I did that all the way through dental school. I worked in a cannery in Sherwood. And so my fallback thing was actually Food Tech. I think, had I not gotten into dental school, I would have gone in with Food Tech.

[0:30:14]

**MD:** Now did you originally plan, coming in as a freshman, that you were going to develop your curriculum around being a dentist, pre-med, pre-dental?

**RY:** I did.

**MD:** That was what your goal was?

**RY:** I think it took me about a year to really sort of formulate all that, but for anything, all the basic sciences were pretty basic anyway. We had to have a term of math, we had to have the English sequence for the whole year. I probably took math for a whole year all the way up to, gee, I probably took math for two years. And we had the basic physics to begin with, something like zoology or a biological science, and then we also had a lot of chemistry. Starting out from basic chemistry, qualitative, quantitative analysis, I think we might have even had a term of organic chemistry before that. In fact my advisor, very, very nice—can I mention names and so forth?

**MD:** Oh yeah, definitely, definitely. It's history.

**RY:** Very nice person that was very helpful and a great person was Darwin Reese. I don't know if that name—

**MD:** Oh, they named the advisor award for advisors after him.

**RY:** Oh did they? Well you know, I probably was fortunate enough to have him as an advisor, because at the end of the third year I put in an application to go to the University of Oregon dental school. And I thought they weren't the greatest, but they weren't the worst. If they were more outstanding maybe I would have been more confident in it, but they were what they were. So I had an application and I applied for one school, Oregon, and you had to have your application in by December, and you kind of knew maybe by mid-spring. And I think I still have this letter, because it just goes to show anybody that you can't get disappointed when you get turned down at certain points in your life. At a lot of times in your life you have to just sort of keep moving on. And mind you, I probably should have applied to a few different schools, but I didn't.

But after that happened, Dr. Reese had me apply to a few other schools. And by this time now the application processes for a lot of schools were pretty late, and had it been a normal time I probably would have waited another year and reapplied into the next year. But with Vietnam and so forth going on, you didn't have that time where you could actually sit out a year and do that type of thing, because your draft status changed. So at that point, I applied for one school in Cleveland, Ohio, it was called Case Western, and then I applied for another one in Vancouver BC, University of British Columbia, which I had a little bit of a kinship to, because my grandfather on my mother's side originally came to BC and lived there for some years doing logging in the late 1800s.

But as it turned out, I wasn't expecting anything to happen and I happened to—I knew one of my high school teachers, Tom Fulton, who was my math teacher in high school, was on the draft board out of Yamhill County. And so every now and then I would write him a note and say "what's my status here?" and he'd say "well, you're going to be ready to go right after you're finished in '68, when you graduate, we're going to take you." Well it wasn't him that was going to take me, but it was the process, because they did it by alphabetical order. This was before lottery numbers.

And so I went down and I applied for this organization called Navy OCS, and I took a test, and it was at the federal building in downtown Portland. It was in spring term and I'd been taking a lot of mathematics, and fortunately this test was pretty much all mathematics. I guess that you need a lot of that in the Navy. You know, trigonometry and so forth. And out of about fifty people I was fortunate enough to pass that, but on about the last six or seven questions I ran out of time and I had to do a nice little pattern on the multiple choice thing to do some guessing. I must have done some really good guessing, because I passed it.

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And I got into Navy OCS. I was rooming with a friend of mine up in Portland and he was in Army ROTC. He was supposed to report at the end of the summer back in New Jersey. I was going back to Providence, Rhode Island - I had my car packed and I was ready to drive back - and I got a telegram from the University of British Columbia Dental School, the dean, that said somebody has dropped out. Our classes are starting in about another five weeks and you are on the alternate list and we wanted to know if you could fill a spot? And I'd never been there before, so I drove up with this friend, kind of looked at this school and talked to a few people, and then I went "you know, I have a commitment." It wasn't easy to get into this Navy OCS thing and everything was kind of coming together at the same time. I was going to be drafted in September and I was going to go to Navy OCS and I had this other thing, so I went to the Navy and I asked

them "gee, you know, something's come up, I'm ready to go with you guys but honestly I just want some advice." And they said "you know what, why don't you just go, because we'll take you when you get out."

**MD:** Yeah, and you can be a dentist in the Navy.

**RY:** You can be in the Dental Corps, yeah. And so I did that. And a complete—you know, there are certain things in life that you never plan for that just happen, and you wonder why. You know, that's just the way it goes. And just like my mom and dad, if it hadn't been for the war my mom's family would have never been relocated back to eastern Oregon and they would have never have met back there that way—

**MD:** You wouldn't be, yeah.

**RY:** Well, that's just the way everybody's life is.

**MD:** Yeah.

**RY:** And so I keep on telling at least my kids, or other kids that I know, if you have some disappointments or if there's something you have your heart set on and it doesn't happen, hey, don't quit. Just keep in there, keep pitching, because something is going to turn around, there's something that's going to happen and you don't even know yet what it'll be, and that's part of the excitement in life. And so that happened, and as it turned out, going to school up there, I met my wife up there, who is still my wife after all these years. And she is a Canadian but she grew up in Germany until she was twelve and then immigrated over to British Columbia. So we're both believers in you just have to follow one foot in front of the other, and something seems to work out.

As for the Navy, I finished my dental degree and I went down to Seattle, down to the other federal building, the headquarters again, and I said "I'm ready to go in," because I thought that it might be good just to take a commission in there and that way get some practice and so forth, experience. But you know, in 1974 they were really winding out of—they just didn't need anybody in the corps, the Dental Corps.

**MD:** Yeah, the reduction of force.

**RY:** Yeah. But they said, if it changes that you'll—because things were uncertain, they don't know if they have to ramp it up again. So I stayed on Selective Service for another ten years after that, and I would just keep tabs with them every year. And I got into situations where I really couldn't, if they didn't really need you full time. There's a lot of people, after that, you could have gone in and made a little more of a career out of it. But just at that one time everything was just pulling back.

[0:40:41]

**MD:** Yeah. It's timing, yeah.

**RY:** It is timing. It is timing. And then had it turned out the other way, had I not had that communication with Dr. Reese to say that, I wasn't even going to put any more applications in. That's where I was. I was just going to go with Navy OCS.

**MD:** Yeah. Well let's talk a little bit more, let's focus in on your time here as a Beaver—

**RY:** Yeah, okay, this is—

**MD:** Because your time at OSU, from 1964 to '68, is just this real magical time. You know, the United States was changing, Vietnam was going, and you started out at a college that was a little more civil and ended with, as much as we were, the raging 1960s in '68. Now what was your living arrangements when you were here? Did you pledge a fraternity?

**RY:** Well, can I just speak frankly about those times, because—

**MD:** Oh, you just go, yeah, that's what we're here for.



**RY:** I had a roommate from that time that passed away about a year and a half ago and I wrote a little thing about him to—I was in a fraternity and I wrote a little thing to the newsletter. And one of the things I said about it, I said that there were, you know, we were different people then, a lot younger, and there were some things that we all know but I can't really discuss on paper, and so I just left it at that. But we had some exciting times, yeah. Some things were so interesting; we did pranks, we had fun. I came into school when there was peacetime, the fall of '64, and Oregon State actually had a very good football team that year, so we were all caught-up in football mania and so forth. That was the last year that we went to the Rose Bowl.

**MD:** Yep, Rose Bowl in January '65.

**RY:** That's right.

**MD:** Against Michigan.

**RY:** That's right. And I came into campus, and actually that first year, or first couple of quarters, I lived in Poling Hall. And on the same dormitory floor was a guy that I went to high school with, about three years older than me. He was a brother of a classmate of mine, Alan Smith, and I just saw Alan at the Newberg reunion. And then on that same floor there was another, in my profession anyway, another man named John Fawcett, was the dorm—was the floor president. And he became a long-time dentist in Newberg, Oregon after that. And then another man that is in the same field I'm in—because I eventually became an endodontist, which is a root canal guy—Steve Murata from Ontario, Oregon, and he was a sophomore in Pharmacy. And he came out, went into the Air Force, pharmacist in the Air Force, and after about five years they put him through dental school and then he also became an endodontist. So I've made some connections from way back then that I still know in the same field that I'm in.

But after that period I did go into a fraternity, and of course I didn't know any better. And that was what a lot of kids from small towns were doing, just because it was a way of meeting people and getting involved with a more diverse group and so forth. But I went into a fraternity called Kappa Delta Rho, which has recently been revitalized. And I get together now - we still have some of the people that we get together with from way back then.

[0:45:08]

But that was at a point when taking somebody who was non-white may have been kind of dicey, because there were fraternities back then where, I remember there was one guy who was a Japanese American kid that went into, I think it was Sigma Chi or Sigma Nu or something—

**MD:** Kappa Sigma, I think?

**RY:** Something like that. And what had happened was that it presented a real challenge to their national, and as it turned out, the local organization here wanted to keep him in there, but the national didn't. And it ended up that hey, he stayed, you know, he was in it.

**MD:** And it was a huge, huge deal, because it was in our—I've researched that, and big, big, big controversy.

**RY:** You know, it may have been bigger than I ever knew about, because when you're going through the history you probably see the headlines and you see what's going on but you don't see the undercurrent of what happened after that. Now I've heard some things after that, after being—I've been fortunate enough, Mike, to live in the community for many years now, so I run into people who were; I remember some woman who was like a professor and on the faculty council or something like that, and she was actually telling me about this. Well they actually had quite a discussion on this, this whole process, and about whether they were going to disenfranchise the fraternity locally or not for doing that. You know, and some type of censure on them for if they would have kept this guy out of their house, follow their national, then the campus was ready to do something different.

**MD:** Wow.

**RY:** This was right at the, boy, here we are right at the peaks of so many changes, socially. I mean the women's movement, you know in 1965. As unpopular as he was, LBJ, for the Vietnam War situation, LBJ put through some of the major civil rights legislation in history.

**MD:** Yeah.

**RY:** Voting rights, civil liberties, the war on poverty, public radio and television; I mean, in the undercurrent in the Vietnam War he was in there actually accomplishing a lot of the things that JFK had sort of started in a way, but LBJ was the guy that got it done. We had these currents; we had the women's liberation movement, and then following that the anti-war movement. Society changed on a dime almost. It was almost like—I can remember when JFK was assassinated when I was a senior in high school, I remember kind of going "gee, this is really interesting on a timescale-wise," because that was almost like the end of an age of innocence, where now, after that happened to JFK, then everything started to change. The Vietnam War wrapped up, Martin Luther King was assassinated, Robert Kennedy was assassinated just the Sunday before—the Sunday, I think, that I graduated from OSU; that Saturday night. And then we had the news that he had died on Sunday, I believe. And then I had to go on Monday morning and go for my final draft physical in downtown Portland. Wow, what a crazy period.

And so it wasn't just issues like that, but society changed quite a lot. But there was still a lot of, you know, you're still young people, there was still a lot of fun to be had here. I remember a good friend of mine was a great prankster. They had a contest called the Ugliest Man on Campus Contest. Has that ever come up?

**MD:** Yep, I've seen it in the *Barometer*, yeah.

**RY:** His name was Larry Morris, and I've got a picture of him. He got all made up and he won the Ugliest Man on Campus, I think in 1966 or 7. And then about a week or two or three later, he entered the Most Kissable Lips Contest. They had these things. And I think he took third or something in the Most Kissable Lips. You had to put lipstick on and then kiss a postcard or a couple of them and send them in, and they did that.

[0:50:16]

But there were all kinds of things like—oh, I came from, coming from Newberg; Newberg back then was a dry town. There was not a liquor store in town; restaurants didn't serve any liquor, wine, beer. Now, hey, that's changed, the wine industry has changed the whole thing. But I remember coming here, and this fraternity that I went into—I don't know if I should say these type of things—

**MD:** Oh, the statute of limitations has probably run out, yeah.

**RY:** Right, right. But I remember that they had a big kegger for their pledges out on, I don't even remember where it was; I think it was out in some field on some farmer's property that they knew, or that they knew of, and we'd just go out of town and not disturb anybody. Probably seniors or somebody would drive out there. But I never really drank beer before, and wow, you know. So I really am not a beer drinker, but I just marvel at how much beer people could drink. And as it turned out, that was mostly what Oregon State was about.

I mean, a lot of other schools at that point were having sit-ins, were having demonstrations, were having a number of different things, but I don't ever remember there being anything like marijuana on the campus back then. Maybe I was pretty naïve. But beer, just let's—wine, hard beer and a keg. Well that was about the biggest vice that we had available to us. I mean, I don't remember things like cocaine or methamphetamine or anything like that. And you know, to all of us back then, beer, that was good enough. That was good enough. And I remember there being things like a panty raid on Snell Hall. I don't know if that ever came up; I think that happened.

**MD:** There's a photograph in the *Barometer* of a panty raid, girls, yeah.

**RY:** Right. I don't know how that all got started but I think a bunch of living groups just started calling around and seeing if hey, let's just do something crazy. I think it was before homecoming or something of that nature?

**MD:** It was a college tradition nationwide, panty raids were.

**RY:** Right, I mean we used to go—

**MD:** And they made them here, yeah.

**RY:** We still were holding true to a lot of traditions that were coming out of the fifties and the forties. Yeah, I think they still had things like the Sophomore Cotillion, and they used to have these more formal type of dances in the MU ballroom downstairs.

**MD:** But yet by 1968, at the height of the protest and stuff, we had the anti-military ball at the MU.

**RY:** Yeah, I know.

**MD:** That it was basically to counter the military ball that the ROTC put on.

**RY:** Right. I think I recall that.

**MD:** Now one of the things that I find interesting is that during this period of time, sixties and seventies, is the concerts that were put on campus. I mean the who's who of popular music in the day. They played the college; they played Gill.

**RY:** Yeah they did, yeah.

**MD:** But the people that came here changed between 1964 and 1968; in 1964 you had the Smothers Brothers, and in 1968 I read that The Doors—

**RY:** Yeah, I remember I was at—I belonged to this group called Encore and it was an organization that you volunteered at these concerts to be an usher. And so I had a chance—not only could you go in to the concert, you got your ticket paid for, but you actually got to meet some of the people backstage, if you had to get them some water or whatever.

[0:55:08]

And yeah, well he's not that popular now, but back at that time, this was when Bill Cosby was young, and he was an up and coming comedian, and I remember him being there. I remember The Beach Boys, and of course The Doors came in later on, but early on there were, you know, the groups were like The Association, Herb Alpert, Petula Clark, I mean just really clean-cut type of things, but then things changed. Jim Morrison was a real eye-opener on this campus, because I don't think this campus was ready for him yet, at that point. But things just changed on a dime after '68. I think after I left, things were completely different.

**MD:** Yeah, in '69 the Iron Butterfly was here, all the big names. And it's one of those things where I grew up listening up to that music, but you actually were in these concerts. Yeah, there is an article in the *Barometer* about when The Doors were here; they called them a one-hit wonder because they were The Doors, and it was very controversial—

**RY:** It was very controversial, I remember, yeah.

**MD:** People were not too crazy about Jim Morrison's antics on stage.

**RY:** You know, they weren't then, because it was one of those things to really appreciate Jim Morrison and The Doors—of course you—no, I don't recall anybody that I knew smoking marijuana. And I think you would have had to really be, to like The Doors work, perhaps stoned to really appreciate how they were performing artistically, because a lot of those songs just sort of took off in a different tangent. You know, the people here were more used to, what's that group, Sérgio Mendez and...

**MD:** Brasil '66

**RY:** Brasil '66. You know, that kind of genre of music. And Herb Alpert and that genre of music. So that was pretty neutral compared to coming in, and the way music changed.

**MD:** Yeah. Now the other thing that you were here for which you already mentioned, the 1965 Rose Bowl, but the famous season of 1967 and the Giant Killers.

**RY:** Oh yeah, I remember that, yeah.

**MD:** Did you see the game with the USC—

**RY:** Yeah, I remember being in that game, at that time. It was raining cats and dogs, it was wet, it was muddy. Nobody was going anywhere on the field, because back then it was natural turf, and it was just a mud bowl at that point, so nobody could really score. I think we were really fortunate to get a field goal in and—

**MD:** And we stopped O. J. Simpson.

**RY:** We did. But it was one of those miraculous seasons, because the season started out probably looking at being a fair team, but you really didn't know how good you could be. And then they went back east and won a game at Purdue. And then they played UCLA and they actually tied; so they played some good teams and did well. And then till that USC game, and then had there been a little more room for the big bowl picture and so forth. I think Oregon State would have gone to some real nice bowl games back in that time, but they only had one bowl game for--

**MD:** Yeah, for this side of the country basically, yeah.

**RY:** I remember in the '65 Rose Bowl, where a lot of people were going, "yeah, we just got to go down there." And that was the year that I think there was a record snowfall in early December, and then right before Christmas it was 64# and they had that flood, a flood here. And I was so engrossed with final examinations back at that time; I had finals in four science courses, and math included, and so I was sort of a zombie. But then once I woke up out of that I had to get back to Newberg, and I think my dad came, my mom and dad came and picked me up, but they were kind of dodging the routes that weren't flooded to get down here from Newberg, because there were a lot of fields that flooded back then on the Willamette.

[1:00:11]

**MD:** Yeah, and basically the 99 was a big swimming pool.

**RY:** The 99, I'm not sure how they would have come down. They maybe had to go out to the freeway and come over that way, but then coming in on 34 and all the, you know; there were just odd ways to get there.

**MD:** Yeah, which it still floods there.

**RY:** Yeah, it still does. So I was thinking if I had a chance for transportation or some other way, I just didn't—I knew people from the frat I was in that all went down and piled into a car, but I wasn't thinking that way. But my main thought was, since we'd already gone to the Rose Bowl in '58, and now '64, '65, I thought we were going to be going again in the next year or two or three—

**MD:** So you'll catch it the next time.

**RY:** I thought I'd just catch it the next time. I'm still waiting.

**MD:** Now how about celebrations on campus for that season; was it a big deal, the Giant Killers, were they a big deal on campus?

**RY:** Well, it was a pretty big deal. And back then one of the big deals—I think every year they had one game up at, they called it Multnomah Stadium in Portland then, so it was a big deal to go to Portland and watch a game. It was kind of like a home game but in something different. And I'd been going to Beaver games in Multnomah Stadium since, well, the early sixties, even before I came to Oregon State. And being there, I'd just gotten used to going there. So that was always a big deal. But yeah, aside from the other things that we did, yeah football Saturday was a pretty big thing here.

**MD:** Yeah, especially for guys in the house. One of the things that I always find interesting about this period of time is the dichotomy between OSU being kind of a conservative type school and schools like the U of O or Berkeley, that type of thing. And so if you were to classify yourself, which side of the political fence did you fall on? I mean were you one of the radical hippies, or were you closer to the conservative students?

**RY:** Well I think at that time I was probably - you know, that radical hippy period really didn't hit Oregon State that much, and especially the anti-war movement, really didn't hit here that much. I know you said that they had the anti-military ball; that may have been just a forerunner of what was to come. But back then we were all pretty clean-cut students here, versus what you would see in other campuses, particularly in California like Santa Barbara and Berkeley and so forth. It just didn't seem to hit here as yet at that point.

And so myself, politically—of course, back then you couldn't vote at that time until you were twenty-one. But I probably would have, you know, I definitely at that time, because I came into high school the same year that JFK came in as the president - my folks were both Eisenhower people, it seemed like everybody was an Eisenhower person back then. But for a younger person, you know, JFK breathed a lot of new air into the minds of young people, so I think I probably got my seeds of my political life and the outlook even to this day from that period. But you know, it was all sort of turned upside down during the LBJ years and during those war years. It was really hard to pinpoint really where you feel. I definitely was not out as a—nobody here really had long hair and looked radical. I don't think there were any protest situations like in other parts of the country that Oregon State—and now your history may have brought something else up, but I don't recall any.

[1:05:09]

**MD:** Well what I understand is that there were members of the Students for Democratic Society, the SDS, that when they wanted to protest, they went down to Eugene.

**RY:** Yes, they, yeah.

**MD:** Because that's where the action was.

**RY:** That's right, that's right. And it was a little more open down there to do that type of thing. It just didn't seem to hit here. This being more of an agricultural, engineering, forestry, more tech school, and even friends and fraternity brothers of mine who did go over to Vietnam and come back and do the MBA and everything, they got to exposed to marijuana and so forth in Vietnam. Yet they came back to Oregon State with the same mindset that they left, thinking that "ooh, this is a pretty conservative place." And that's how they behaved. They just said that when they came back here, if they wanted to use marijuana or anything like that, they just had to do it under cover.

**MD:** Well, so you ended up going into this dental, you know, the whole story of going to UBC, which is a beautiful campus, I've been out there. Now how do you feel that the General Science program and your studies here at OSU prepared you for this kind of a career? Do you feel that you were well-stocked by your alma mater?

**RY:** I do, because I think when I went up there, there was a different style of the way they had the academic year set up, the testing and so forth, at least in the professional school. They do it different now, but everything was done on an annual basis. So here we had a three-trimester system, we had midterms, finals; it seemed like before you know it, you'd turn around and you're taking a midterm. Before you know it, the term is just almost done and you're taking a sort of a segment final. And up at UBC, when I went through dental, we had a basic science core the first year, pretty much, and everything was done on an annual basis. I think this is a throwback to kind of like the British educational system.

**MD:** Yeah.

**RY:** So what we ended up doing; we just didn't have tests all the time. I think we had maybe a couple of practice quizzes at Christmas and then all of the grades were given, rendered by the test that you took at the end of the year. So that means that you had to have a lot of personal responsibility to keep up. You just couldn't not, you know, put it aside and procrastinate and let it go, and then at the end appear to catch up. So what it did was it made everybody just keep up with it throughout the whole year. And when you come to the end of a whole year, instead of having it broken-down into three final examinations through the year, you maybe would have a stack of notes that would be a foot and a half high, if that's

what you wanted to study. That's why you had to keep up. But I think with the background that I had here in the basic sciences, I think I was able to do okay there. So I felt comfortable enough with it.

**MD:** Now how many years was the dental?

**RY:** It was a four-year program.

**MD:** A four-year program. So it would have been, you said '74 when you got out of there?

**RY:** Well hold it, I got out in '72, I finished there, and then I actually worked in the province for—I worked up north where they really had a manpower shortage. And in fact they didn't, you know, a lot of people were pretty—a lot of the dentists were in the populated areas, like the big cities. But in places like Pendleton or Coos Bay, like here, they needed dentists up north of British Columbia. So I worked in a small town south of Prince George.

**MD:** Oh, wow.

**RY:** For about a year there. And then I eventually, my wife got a PhD at U of O, but then she eventually got a job on Vancouver Island. She's a marine biologist, so she was able to get a job there at a biological station. So we lived in Nanaimo, BC across from Vancouver for five or six years. And then in '79 I got into a graduate school, in Tufts Dental in Boston. So I spent two years there doing what one could call endodontics, which means a root canal treatment. And after that I came back and set up the practice in Corvallis.

[1:10:42]

**MD:** And that's, and you—

**RY:** Not knowing that I would come again, that was—it became one of the choices and we just settled on it.

**MD:** And decided this would be your home.

**RY:** Right, right. It offered my wife some things to do here, because she got tied-in with the Hatfield Center in marine biology, and then also with OSU, to some degree.

**MD:** Oh, okay.

**RY:** And had two kids. Actually we had a son before we went back to Boston, and our daughter was born in '82, here in town. So this town has been a very nice place to be associated with for all those years.

**MD:** Yeah. Now one of the things I was interested in, with your specialty, it was basically an extra two or three years of additional training specializing in this endodontics. Just for everybody in the Beaver Nation here, give an idea of what that type of graduate school is like and what your exact practice is.

**RY:** It was two years. And what you end up doing, if you're a general dentist, you do many things, you know. In fact, you do a little bit of everything. And there are different branches of dentistry and one of them's just a restorative dentistry where you do fillings and repair cavities and so forth. And then there's some prosthetics where you replace teeth, either with dentures or bridges, and now implants. And then there's another branch of dentistry that deals with the gums - that's periodontics - and then another one where you move teeth around to straighten them, that's ortho. But endodontics actually deals with, if you do have an injury to a tooth - like a blow, you break or fracture it off - or you have a very deep cavity that goes down and infects or irritates the inner nerve of the tooth, endodontics is involved, where once that part is injured, you clean that out, sterilize the inside of it and then fill and seal that space where it was. So actually what you do is that you end up saving or keeping the tooth there, versus back when where they would just pull it out.

**MD:** Yeah, just yank it.

**RY:** And so it does require a certain amount of technical study, research, scientific study. So two years of training involves a lot clinical training so you can perform these things and have them do that hand-eye, the treatment, coordination and so forth. And then a lot of it works with the science of doing it, like the bacteriology of those things,

the anatomy of it, where you work on different materials that actually do the filling of it. So it becomes quite a broad spectrum of a field to go into. And you had to have a couple years to be able to say that you're an endodontist, and then you can sit there and hang a shingle out to do that.

And so what I ended up doing; back at that time there were no endodontists in Corvallis at all, or Albany. There was one in Salem, probably about five in Portland, four in Eugene. But Corvallis was pretty wide open back then, and it was a good opportunity to come in and start something like that up. Now there are probably eight endodontists in Salem, three in Corvallis, one in Albany. It's a completely different world.

[1:15:04]

And so I kind of look at myself as being a pioneer for that field in town here. And I practiced there, and actually I turned my practice over to another gentleman, Glen Gerdes, he's still in there now. G-E-R-D-E-S. And then he brought in another man in with him, Kurt Frisk, and they're both still going.

**MD:** And so you actually are fully retired, or do you—

**RY:** I ended up working part time with Kaiser in Salem for six years, and I just fully retired about a year ago.

**MD:** Oh, okay.

**RY:** So—and I put about forty-two years in the field by having all of that—

**MD:** So you've earned your rest, yeah.

**RY:** Well you know, I really kind of enjoyed the whole thing overall, but especially being with Kaiser for the last few years. I know I probably could have still kept going on with them, but I kept looking around and everybody was getting younger, and I'm the only one that seemed to be getting older. And most of the other dentists that I had in there as colleagues were getting younger and younger. I just thought I was at a point where, before they came to me and tapped me on the shoulder and said "you know, it might be time for you to move on," I thought I would rather make that decision myself.

**MD:** Make a graceful exit, yeah. So you mentioned kids; where are they at now? Grandkids?

**RY:** My son is in Eugene. Both of my kids went to the U of O - I don't know why, but they did - and my son is a high school teacher. He got a masters in ed, his wife has got a masters in library sciences, and they live in Eugene, a couple kids, so I've got a couple of grandkids down there. But my son is a high school teacher and he teaches in the International High school, which is housed both in, I think Sheldon and South Eugene. And then my daughter graduated in the Foreign Language department, she studied Japanese language, she was interested in that. And she has a job with a public relations company, working in their division where she helps design and maintain websites up in Portland. So both still fairly close by.

**MD:** And so you've retired here in Corvallis, do you have any other interests, hobbies, community involvement, that type of thing?

**RY:** You know Mike, I have been purposely trying to take this past year and not make any specific commitments and just kind of get a feel for what direction, and some of the things that I want to accomplish and do in the next few years. And first of all, I really sit here and I think that I'm very thankful for everything that I have, and that I'm actually healthy enough to think about doing other things, when even now I've had high school and college classmates who've not fared that well.

And so I think, with that, I have tried to find some things that I—I'm getting this thing that goes through my head all the time. And I knew some people that were very interesting people, they were actually patients of mine way back, maybe twenty years ago, and they lived out in Nashville outside of town here, moved up from San Diego, they taught at Scripps. They were pretty sharp, but they just moved up here and they were living a very sustainable life. And what they ended up doing is they ended up helping their neighbors out, and from them I learned that—I used to have lunch with them every

now and then, and they got into their nineties before they died, and they just said "we just want to make ourself useful." And so I think they had certain things that they believed in, and neighbors, friends, relatives, they just ended up helping organizations that they believed in, friends and neighbors that they believed in, as much as they possibly could.

[1:20:12]

So I know that you can volunteer for anything, that the world is wide open. There are so many things that you can do. And I did some volunteer work in the dental field already, when I was in practice, but since I kind of turned my license out, and it's expired, I've just been looking at some other things to get involved with. And I want to do some things that are something that I may have some background in, or that are kind of fun. And so I have some opportunities right now where I actually belong to this organization in Portland. It's a Japanese American historical group. They are housed down on 2nd avenue right off of Burnside. And what they do is they do a lot of—they have a lot of showings of different projects, historical projects, and some of those are some of the, like my grandparents' generation, interviewing a lot of those people, what happened to them and so forth. And what they do is they have a group of speakers, or educators, that if an organization wants a little bit of that history, like a book club or a middle school—gee, they just asked me last week; they had a request to go to a group in Salem and I had an uncle that was in this Japanese American battalion that was in Europe, the 442nd—

**MD:** The 442nd, yeah, wow.

**RY:** And this group was called the Japanese Cultural Society of Salem, and a lot of them were Japanese nationals who now live in Salem, and some students and so forth. But they were showing a documentary on the Japanese American 442nd and they called this historical group and said, "is there anybody that you can have to come down and maybe have some relative in it or something that could talk about that?" So I just went down and did a little background of my uncle and his involvement in that after they watched the documentary. So that was kind of fun. And my son being a high school teacher, he said that this isn't something that's just in the run of the mill curriculum, because there's so much stuff to cover nowadays. But for special interests, when they get into some special interests things, that yeah, I may be able to go into either high schools or with some community groups and so forth, and give them a little bit of history. Not just with my uncle but the experience that my mom's family had, the experience of my dad being overseas, things like that.

**MD:** All that stuff needs to be, you know, you can't let it die. It has to be shared.

**RY:** And that's why I had some of the interest when my aunt and uncle had their sixty-fifth anniversary and I sort of caught onto the fact that Aunt Aya was a graduate here in '49, just some of the history. And thank you for digging the information up that you did. But just that history of what happened, you know, the curiosity of what happened to those people during that period.

**MD:** Yeah.

**RY:** And I think over all, in light of the fact that—I mean now we have a much more diverse society, but we still have these issues that come up. And I think we now have issues where, you know, be it 9/11, or if you even have a Jordanian or Iranian or Iraqi neighbors, which many of us do nowadays, how do you perceive them and how you maybe perceive what they're going through and all the difficulty that is going on with that. It's just not an easy dimension, to sit there and, on one hand you have neighbors and everybody's great with the individuals and so forth. But all of our attitudes and perceptions towards groups, and what happens to groups and what to do with groups, you can easily get so caught up into things that civil liberties and personal rights and so forth can be lost.

[1:25:10]

**MD:** Well, you are fascinating. One of the things that we always do is we want to give our interviewees, our Beavers, a chance to impart some final wisdom to the Beaver Nation. Do you have any final nuggets about—

**RY:** Well I would say that a place like Oregon State has so much to offer. You know, if you look at it as a younger person coming out of school nowadays, it is so tough to come out and look at paying for an education. And I tell you, I've talked with some people who are patients or friends, relatives, kids of, whatever, and I just tell these people, I'm just saying, "do whatever you can to go." And if you're not certain about what you want to do here in your life yet, just get into something



here, get started, because something is going to come up. You never can tell what is going to be around the other corner, the next corner. But I'm a firm believer that if you're going to put yourself into any position in life, that you can get lucky or you get a lucky break or whatever. I always feel that the harder you work, the luckier you get, because you have to be in that certain position to have that happen to you first.

And if you're not there—so get in there and keep trying. And I think Oregon State, in conjunction with LBCC, offers a great way for young people to start out getting a lot of the basics at LBCC, maybe at a little lower cost. Don't worry about if you have to live at home or not; you're going to have a life, you've got a life and a lot of social life thereafter. You know, maybe take a little bit of time if you want to, to travel, explore, doing the community college thing, you know, maybe not spend a whole lot of money right off the bat. But then get into something, once you get focused, then kind of how to go about that.

**MD:** Yeah, find your passion and follow it.

**RY:** Yes. And you know, I know a lot—it's very difficult to sit there, and I know many, many people who've done different things and changed, you have to learn how to become flexible. Because as much as you want to think that you're planning your life, somehow your life gets planned for you, no matter what. Nobody is going to go straight down the garden path and everything is going to be right there the way you want it.

**MD:** Something's going to take a sharp left somewhere.

**RY:** Something is going to take a sharp left turn. The main thing is that—in fact, I was reading something about it in, I think *Time* magazine, but the key thing is resiliency. You're all going to get knocked down, we all are, there's going to be somewhere along the line that you're going to have, going to get a little bruising and a little bumping. But you know, it's just a matter of how resilient people are. And you can make yourself resilient, you just have to think - be positive and think ahead.

**MD:** Yep.

**RY:** And that, from my standpoint, if you have—when there is a will, when you know kind of where you want to get to and what you want to do, somehow, somehow your subliminal mind sort of kicks into gear and gives you that extra motivation or impetus to get there and accomplish that. That is somewhat just like you going back to school, finding what you wanted to do with that, and you've got all the outside flak, saying "no, that can't be done." You know, when all that negatively is all hitting you, coming in, and there's so many reasons why you can't do it - there are many more reasons why you can't do something than why you can. And sometimes in life you can just put these blinders on, you kind of get focused, and if you know what direction you're heading, somehow your subliminal mind gets you there. It takes over.

[1:30:24]

**MD:** Well Dr. Yamada—

**RY:** And I'm a firm believer in that. If you want to call it faith, if you want to call it some type of spirituality, everybody has their own way of dealing with that. So be it.

**MD:** Well you are a true inspiration, and on behalf of the Sesquicentennial Oral History Project, we thank you for your story and your insights, it's been wonderful.

**RY:** One never knows if, you know, you look back on it and you think "well yeah, I've had a life," and maybe it's not that exciting. But gosh, if you made it this far there must have been something about it, anyway.

**MD:** You did something right.

**RY:** Yeah. Somehow you're—put it this way, I think I'll look back on the whole thing with a lot of gratitude.

[1:31:25]