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Oral History Excerpt from Bainbridge Island before World War Two

Jerry Nakata was 19 years old when his family was forcibly removed from Bainbridge Island in March 1942. He was the second youngest of six children. Jerry's parents both owned a barbershop in Winslow and farmed strawberries. In the late 1930s his older brother John started a small grocery business. Before the war Jerry was working for his brother. Jerry graduated from Bainbridge High School in 1941. Following the war, the Nakata family returned to Bainbridge Island and re-built their grocery business in partnership with Ed Loverich. This interview was recorded in February, 2006

...growing up at the barber shop, mostly Caucasian trade, and I grew up with more Caucasian kids than I did with Japanese kids. I joined the Boy Scouts when I was 12 years old. . . Our class was fifty kids, eight, like I said, eight Japanese kids. I really had fun in high school. I didn't study much, and I got to be good buddies with a couple of kids, like this Reese Moran, he was probably my closest, and then Earl Hanson, I got involved with him, and Hal Champness. We were a real close-knit class, even after 65 years, we still get together, and I think that's, it's nice. It's nice when you get in your eighties and you hash out all, all the world problems. [Laughs] I didn't like working on the farm, so I went to Japanese school, I think it was about four to six. But then when sports, basketball, just forget Japanese school. I didn't care to learn Japanese at that time. Of course, the war came along, it changed all that.

Source: Bainbridge Island Japanese American Community,
https://www.bijac.org/index.php?p=HISTORYPre_LifeBefore