

Mrs. Chu Fung

Interviewed May 7, 1972

Polly, daughter of Mah Bing. 5491 Elizabeth St., Vancouver

Born July 31, 1919 at home, with Dr. Lowry and Mrs. Hing attending.

Fourth child of Mah Bing, landowner.

Mah Bing farmed first at Sea Island, then at Brighthouse, rented land for truck farming - took it to Granville St. by wagon - cleared road by axe - one of his two partners went with him -

1918 bought 160 acres land bounded by Williams and Francis Road and dyke - dug irrigation ditches manually to drain.

Family of 10: Bill, Emily, Betty, Polly, Charlie, Mary, Ming, then moved to China for 5 years - came back and the three younger ones were born - Wilfred, Rose, and Jean.

Polly went to school at 6 years - walked 1 1/2 miles to Steveston - Old Lord Byng School - one room school - with snow arrived soaking wet - old stove, teacher hung clothes on metal outer band - went to China at about 6 years - returned when 12 years old, couldn't speak English - Teachers: Miss Winnie Smith, Miss Carson, Miss Menelaus, Mr. Thomas (Principal)

China: very different agriculture - all red clay except rice paddies - little vegetable patches on side of mountain - ancestral home of father Ping On Ton, Kwang tung province.

-grew peanuts, green vegetables, melons, sweet potatoes.

Childhood in Richmond:

-all children had farm chores to dusk - then did homework; ate dinner 8:00 p.m., crops, potatoes, carrots, onions, corn, tomatoes, green vegetables - later took vegetables by own truck to Vancouver, left at 3:00 a.m. for trip - partners: Mah Lim, Mah Seek on farm: no cows, had chickens, 4 or 5 horses (work)- fruit for own use.

Around 1935 - 1937 father dumped potatoes (low price) and carrots.

Home Chores: Chopped wood, cleaned lamps, up at 3 a.m. to get father up (took turns) everyone tired.

1933-34 got electricity - water recalled early - had phone.

1930 flood - had 1 ½ ft. water - house was raised - barn higher so animals okay - kids had fun riding boards in flooded area.

1st car of father 1938 - old Ford sedan - used for business -

Polly didn't need license then - got hers when moved to town -

Father hunted on farm, dyke - geese, duck, some pheasant

-rode own (earned) bikes - went to movie, Marpole 3 times - picked

berries, saved money to buy her bike - picked on Mrs. Mervick's and

Lum Poy's land - raspberries, loganbearries, strawberries, currants,

wild blackberries (bush) - paid 5¢ a basket - got 5¢ an hour working

farm - father hired 30 chinese workers - crew through winter, sort potatoes, etc.

Recreation: other children came into play - hide and seek, jin toria,

-older - walked to closest tram station: Blundell and present Granville

Ave. - transfer at Marpole to Vancouver after school years: opened own dressmaking gift shop 3 - 4 years, Moncton St., Steveston.

married April 25, 1947 at St. Anne's Anglican Church, Steveston - there

1 year - moved to Vancouver had dressmaking gift shop on 25th for 5 years.

-moved to 18th - continued dressmaking at home and taught tailoring,

advanced dressmaking, first bead course at night schools in B.C. - now working insurance office.

Her family: Wayne, Graduate U.B.C. honors math, now in Computer specialty.

Wally, 3rd year University * Marine biology

Douglas - Grade 9

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Mrs. Chu Fung (Mah Bing)

As a girl - Polly worked summers in Phoenix Cannery - also some winters
- total 7 years - as filler, clincher girl, spotter, labelling - 1st
year got 25/ an hr. - long hours sometimes til 2 or 3 a.m. - no overtime.
-hiked around dyke - fished - caught bullheads, catfish, off cannery
wharf caught suckers, small sturgeon (had to return)
-liked childhood in Richmond - lots to do - walked on parents land -
saw nature, birds, - Mother died 1937 - Mrs. Francis, Betty Skinner's
mother lived across from farm helped younger children when Mother died.
-recalls father a kind man, had progressive ideas re farming.
-as a child had lots of pets: rabbits, guinea pigs, cats and "tupcan"
-at 15 rode bike in snow to No. 5 Road to cut their Xmas tree from bog.

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