

5. Item # MANZ 7541 (fireman mascot helmet)

Arthur Yamada [AY], MANZ 1162, interviewed by Richard Potashin [RP]

Disc 2 of 3 (DVD), 10:33 – 11:08 [cut to] 13:18 – 17:30 (transcription pages 40 – 42)

*RP: After that job, your father took a job with the fire department.*

*AY: Yes. I don't know when he did that, but my best recollection is that he was a fireman. The reason, I think, is because the fire station was right out our front door. The back door of the firehouse was right in front of the barrack.*

. . .

*RP: As a kid did you hang out much around the firehouse? Can you give us a little feel for that?*

*AY: Yeah. I think there weren't too many fires. I don't ever remember a constant siren going or anything. I think they worked maybe twenty-four hours on and then maybe two or three days rest, or something like that. I don't know if they followed the same kind of routine as our city firemen here. Since it was close by, I think if my mom was busy or something, my dad would take me over there. I think my mom let me go because that way I could keep an eye on my dad for her in case—I knew they had a lot of free time, I think. I think they were always playing a lot of cards. I think that's one of the reasons why Mom let me go there, to kind of keep an eye on him. I do remember spending time over there, and I did make friends with some of the other firemen that were younger than my dad.*

*RP: Do you remember playing around on the fire trucks at all, climbing around?*

*AY: I remember that occasionally they would practice, and they would drive the engine and simulate a fire, I guess, getting to a fire event. I guess one of the guys would grab the hose, and then the truck would keep going and they would kind of strip the hose from the back of the truck. They would fold the hose in lengths, back and forth, so that when you pulled it, it would just kind of peel out of the back of the truck. So I remember that. I do remember once or twice feeling the—when they would run the water through the hose and spray it out into the fire break there, I remember trying to hold onto the hose. That thing is pretty powerful, I remember, especially for a little kid. I remember that feeling of hanging onto a hose and trying to move it. I do remember having that experience as a kid.*

*RP: Did you ever drive around on any of the fire trucks?*

*AY: Yeah. I think my dad was an engineer kind of thing. He was a little bit older, so maybe they trusted his driving. I think he did get to drive the engine, so I do remember taking rides on the engine a couple of times. Then, of course, someone in the fire department must have ordered that kind of a red army helmet and painted the Manzanar Fire Department mascot, which I got, which they gave to me, because I guess I hung around the station quite a bit.*