

410.9
L879
#16

Oral Histories

WATER PLANNING SECTION

TOSHIO MAYEDA

Interviewed by Dick Nelson

One of a series of oral histories covering the growth and development of the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power as seen by the participants - its employees.

410.9
L879
#16

Produced by

Special Projects Section
Elizabeth Wimmer, Manager
Public Affairs Division

Los Angeles Department of Water and Power

1991

WATER & POWER LIBRARY

JAN 15 1992

111 NORTH HOPE STREET
RM 518

CONTENTS

Biographical Notes iii

TAPE NUMBER: 1, Side One (August 30, 1991) 1

Mayeda's Early Years.. Schooling in the Los Angeles Area.. The Family Grocery Business.. Love of Sports.. UCLA.. World War II Begins.. Effects on Japanese-Americans.. Evacuation.. Tulare.. Gila, Arizona.. Organizing Work, Etc., at the Tulare Center.. Other Camps.. University of Wyoming.. Brother Enlists.. Working in Chicago.. Meets Kay.. OCS at Fort Benning, Georgia.. Language School.. Traveling Across Country in a Troop Train.. Drafted in 1945..

TAPE NUMBER: 1, Side Two (August 30, 1991). 26

Shipped to Japan as a Translator/Interpreter.. Duty and Golf in Japan.. Kay and Daughter Arrive in Japan.. Going to Work for DWP in 1949.. Mr. Bliss.. Emergency Draftsman.. Promoted to CE Assistant.. Kenny Wilkes.. Water Planning Section.. Sam Morris.. Peterson.. Grant.. Nelson.. Kanouse.. Phillips.. "Snake Colorado Project".. Sam Nelson.. Leval Lund.. Duane Georgeson.. Udall.. Gilmore Tillman.. Senior Planning Engineers.. Water Planning.. Trunk Lines.. 1971 San Fernando Earthquake.. Emergency Command Center.. Bob Phillips.. Emergency Planning.. Baldwin Hills Dam..

TAPE NUMBER: 2, Side One (August 30, 1991). 45

Baldwin Hills Dam Failure.. Dick Hemborg.. Max Socha..
Dam Failure Study.. 27 Years in Planning.. Bill Simon..
Sterling Green.. Roland Triay.. Leval Lund.. Assistant
Head of Water Engineering Design.. Water Operating..
Gayle Holman.. Labor Negotiations.. Affirmative Action..
Local 18.. Taylor.. Sam Morris.. William Peterson..
Burton Grant.. Goit.. Sam Nelson.. Ed Kanouse.. Bob
Phillips.. Louis Winnard.. Dan Bundy.. Itter.. Max
Socha.. Mayeda Heads Water Operating.. Ron McCoy..
Budget.. Training.. Jerry Jones.. Golfing.. Dolly
Berry..

Biographical Notes

Toshio (NMI) Mayeda

Born in Los Angeles, California -- October 3, 1921.

Parents: Minoru (NMI) and Yao (NMI) (Tamiya) Mayeda.

Three brothers and one sister.

Married: Kay K. Imai in Chicago, Illinois, October 31, 1945.

Children: Janis (Mayeda) Berges; Ron R. Mayeda, and Gary Mayeda.

Three grandchildren.

U.S. Army, April, 1945 - February, 1949.

Education: UCLA: 1939-1941
University of Wyoming, BSCE, 1943.

DWP Service:

March, 1949 - Draftsman.

November, 1983 - Division Head, Water Operating Division.

Affiliations:

American Society of Civil Engineers.

American Water Works Association.

DWP Speakers Club

Civic Center Optimist Club

This is to certify that I have reviewed this transcript and attest that it is true and accurate. Also, by my witnessed signature below, I grant the Los Angeles Department of Water and Power, or its designee(s), sole right to use this material in any way, and for any purpose, it deems appropriate.

Toshio Mayeda 12/9/91
Toshio (NMI) Mayeda date

Kay K. Mayeda 12/9/91
witness date

17925 CURT PL., GARDENA, CA. 90248
witness address

TAPE NUMBER: 1, SIDE ONE

TOSHIO (NMI) MAYEDA

GIVEN FRIDAY, AUGUST 30, 1991

AT

HIS HOME IN GARDENA, CALIFORNIA

THE INTERVIEWER IS DICK NELSON

NELSON: Okay To, why don't you fill us in on where you were born, your early years, your family, etc.

MAYEDA: I was born in Los Angeles, October 3, 1921, not too far from here in the general area of Firestone Boulevard and Compton Avenue. It's known as the Firestone Park Area. My folks were

immigrants from Japan. They came over here and settled in 1910 - 1915 period and they were involved in many pursuits, farming, import/export business and finally ended up in the grocery business.

I went to Russell Elementary School and during that period, one of the unusual incidents was in 1933 when we had a major earthquake in the Los Angeles area. The school was totally demolished and, luckily, the quake occurred at 6:00 p.m. so there were no casualties, but I spent my junior high school period in Edison Junior High where I went to school in tents for two and a half years. Only the last three months of junior high school were we actually in the buildings.

From Edison I went John C. Fremont High School and graduated there in the summer of 1939.

NELSON: To, let me go back just a second here. Russell School. Where was that located?

MAYEDA: Right on Firestone Boulevard between Hooper and Compton Avenue.

NELSON: Then your parents entered the grocery business? Where was that business located?

MAYEDA: Originally we were located on Firestone Boulevard at Compton and I think there were a theater, a dry goods store, a drug store, and a tavern in the total building.

NELSON: Did you live on site?

MAYEDA: No. We lived about two blocks from the store in a residential area. Our environment in that area was a totally caucasian neighborhood. There were no orientals to speak of within probably a mile or so. There were a couple of farming families, but almost all of my youth, growing up, all of my acquaintances and friends were caucasians so it was probably an upbringing of a typical youngster growing up in an environment that was full of play and fun and whatever else.

NELSON: You weren't called upon to help out in the store?

MAYEDA: When I started going to junior high and high school I did. That was one of the things that always bothered me, because in high school I wasn't able to go out for sports which was always my first love. The kids I grew up with all played baseball and basketball and so forth and I remember when we graduated high school, seven of the nine ballplayers of the high school team had received major league baseball contracts. They all ended up at USC on scholarships rather than going into the minor leagues and in 1941, seven of those boys were playing first string for USC. It was interesting because it was kids that I grew up with and knew so well. Unfortunately the war came along, but I think most of them would have been really major league all stars.

NELSON: Do you feel you would have been one of them if you had been able to pursue athletics more?

MAYEDA: Possibly. When I went to Wyoming University, I played one semester of baseball and played shortstop. The coach of the team happened to be an ex-major league baseball pitcher. He commented that he'd give me a letter of introduction to Phil Cavaretta, the manager of the Chicago Cubs, because I told him I was going to Chicago. He said, "If you want to go and try out, you've got a shot at it," but I never did.

NELSON: Okay you then attended Fremont High School and that's the same school and the same location as today?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: How did you get to and from school?

MAYEDA: Either walking or using the car. We moved our grocery business to the vicinity of the intersection of Slauson and Alameda. I was about 14 when I started high school, but I was able to get a special driver's permit because I was working at the store.

I had an older brother who had graduated much earlier and he'd gone to Japan to get an education and so at the time I was the oldest at home and had to work to help the family. We had a very good thriving business. We ran the whole grocery department

and the fruit and vegetable department and leased out the meat department to a private meat packing company. We managed to have a very good business. I know at the time the war broke out, we had five automobiles, a couple of trucks and three or four pieces of property and had made a good recovery from the depression period.

NELSON: Your store was more than just a neighborhood store. You were a fairly substantial business in the area?

MAYEDA: Yes, we advertised in the paper with the specials in the local paper, but I don't say we drew people from all over the L.A. area or anything. It was mostly a local neighborhood business, but it was, at least in my mind, very well run, and we were able to make a very substantial living. Not too many families had five or six automobiles in those days.

NELSON: Where were you living at that time?

MAYEDA: Still in our family home.

NELSON: Had your parents purchased that home?

MAYEDA: Yes, they had purchased it, but during those periods they had those laws about aliens unable to own land so to circumvent that the oldest son was listed as the property owner, and in that way the family was able to get title to property.

NELSON: You graduated from Fremont High School in 1939. Did you have an idea at that point of what you wanted to do, what you wanted to be?

MAYEDA: Yes, I wanted to go to college. My folks had sent the oldest son to Japan for an education and figured that they didn't want to do that for me. I guess from the time I was a youngster, my first thought was that I'd like to become a doctor in medicine. So when I went out to UCLA to enroll, there were thousands of youngsters seeking enrollment.

It happened to be a heat spell in that particular September and I can never forget it, because it must have been 107 degrees to 112 degrees for one solid week. I don't know if you are familiar with UCLA, but between the two gyms there was a huge concrete walk area, located at a low level, and steep steps that went up to the upper campus. The students were lined up in this grassy, steep area waiting to get to a counselor to get their program approved for enrollment. It seemed like everybody and their brother wanted to get enrolled in medicine.

I can recall going out there at 4:00 a.m. sitting there in that grass, waiting the whole darn day and never getting up within a hundred feet of the counselor's table. So finally on about the fourth or fifth day, sitting out in that hot boiling sun I decided well, I'll take math and sciences and transfer later on. That's how I got into engineering.

NELSON: You started at UCLA in math and science?

MAYEDA: Well they called it pre-engineering.

NELSON: You could have gone, I guess, either way later on.

MAYEDA: But they didn't have a total four year engineering program. They had a two year program and then you would transfer to Berkeley to finish. Same way in medicine. They didn't have a med school or anything so if you did get your four year pre-med training, then you'd have to go to some other higher branch of the university to finish.

NELSON: Did you attend the two years? Did you get the two years in at UCLA?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: Where did you stay? Did you stay at home and commute?

MAYEDA: Yes, I had to commute.

NELSON: What happened next? You got your two years in, that would have been by June of 1941?

MAYEDA: Yes. Both years I went to summer class to take some extra classes as well so I guess it would be September 1941, I was to transfer to Berkeley, but the store was so darn busy and my folks asked would I mind maybe waiting a semester or a year before

I went to Berkeley. I agreed and I was working at the time when the war broke out in December.

The panic and everything that took place with the outbreak of the war, all the rules and regulations regarding the handling of the Japanese on the West Coast created a lot of chaos. I guess it was around February the first Japanese families were being evacuated to temporary assembly centers in Santa Anita, Pomona and all up and down the coast. There were about 15 or 16 of those temporary centers and our particular area was called on to move out around the early part of May of 1942. In the interim we sold the store business to a Chinese family and got rid of the automobiles for ten cents on the dollar, or whatever.

We hung on to the three properties, our family home and the two properties next door and one of the tenants that was staying in one of our units said that they would be glad to try and manage it and take care of it while we were gone.

NELSON: Everyone remembers, I guess everyone who was old enough. How did you hear of the attack on Pearl Harbor?

MAYEDA: I was at work in the store when the news of Pearl Harbor flashed on the radio at about 11:30 in the morning. Well it was confusing, never having been really brain-washed about Japan and it's history and all this Bushido (Japanese Samurai spirit). The old folks, some of them were quite upset because they didn't know what their status was going to be and right away the FBI came around and in many families the father was whisked away to special

detention centers because they had some affiliation with a Japanese school group, some kind of a social group, or judo or Kendo activity. Maybe some of them were ex-war veterans from Japan.

There were a lot of upsetting events that took place within individual families and, as an individual, you wondered why are they doing this? There were incidences of people filing class action suits regarding constitutional rights as American citizens, such as curfew, martial law, removal of Cameras and radios. Since the President had signed the so-called "exclusion order" and gave the authority to military commanders to execute them, the orders of the evacuation were posted as military edicts. So the courts said they had no jurisdiction; many of these cases went all the way to the U.S. Supreme Court, but it wasn't until way after the war many years later that the Supreme Court ruled finally that the U.S. was wrong and that individuals and others were exonerated from earlier guilty judgements. I guess you know that in late 1980 Congress voted to award \$20,000 and a formal letter of apology to those Japanese internees who are still living. Of 120,000 + who were interned, approximately 66,000 were living at the time Congress passed thus bill.

I guess in my instance I'll be getting a notice and check in the later part of this year.

NELSON: You say that a tenant managed your properties while you were out of the area during the war. Did they do it fairly competently?

MAYEDA: I would say fair. Because of the war and everything, there were a lot of shortages and repairs that might have been done, like screens or painting, that could have been done were neglected. But over all it was alright. When my folks finally came back in August, 1945, there were a lot of things that needed to be done.

NELSON: But the property had been protected? They did have the property when they got back?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: When did you learn of the date that you were to be evacuated? Was that through the mail, through the media or..?

MAYEDA: No, the military posted big signs on telephone poles throughout the area that said on such and such a day at 6:00 a.m. assemble at the train stop and you were allowed to bring one grip and one duffle bag. But when we closed the store, my mother brought food stuff and other things and stored them in the garage. When it came time to make this move, we said, "Well if they take it away from us, okay, or whatever, but we might as well take some of this stuff with us." So we'd fill boxes and boxes of this and that. I made a big tool box and hammers, tools, saws and planes plus nails and screws and everything else were jammed in this box.

One of our family friends and their neighbor brought a truck and hauled us to this railroad site on the morning that we were to

leave. The few military police that were there, could care less. We just dumped all our belongings on the train and took off. We ended up in Tulare, near Fresno, in the San Joaquin Valley.

NELSON: Where did you get on the train? Not at Union Station?

MAYEDA: No, they brought the freight and passenger train close to our home.

NELSON: So it was down here at some siding?

MAYEDA: Close to home, about three blocks away. A lot of neighbors were there apprehensive of what was happening since we were the only family in that immediate area, but many others from more distant areas assembled at this site. When we got to Tulare Assembly Center, people who had lived in Guadalupe and Santa Maria and other adjacent areas were already settled having arrived a week or so earlier. We were brought into this central camp area, and all the materials and clothing and packages that people brought were unloaded. Young boys from the Guadalupe area had their slick Boy Scout uniforms on and they would load up each family's goods in wheelbarrows. In a family of four, they'd have about six or eight pieces of baggage and they'd take off as the Boy Scouts would take them to their barracks where they were going to stay.

When it came to our family and all the boxes were unloaded with the name, Mayeda, the scouts remarked what a big family

they've got. We had about seven to ten Boy Scouts with wheelbarrows to cart our stuff.

NELSON: How many were in your family at that time?

MAYEDA: Six of us. My sister passed away much earlier from a drowning incident so there were just the four boys and the parents.

NELSON: So you were helped by a Boy Scout?

MAYEDA: Yes, we were in an enclosed guarded camp. We were assigned to an area and our barracks were horse stalls used during the annual fairs. Each stall was about 200 feet in length and it was divided up into about seven sections. The floor of the horse stall had a very thin layer of asphalt and in the walls they tacked tar paper, but straw and dust and everything came right through the cracks. We had Army spring cots with a canvas mattress cover. We had to take the mattress cover out to a big pile of hay and fill it up with hay and stuff which served as our mattress.

NELSON: Was this the fairgrounds at Tulare?

MAYEDA: Yes. Most of us were quartered in these horse stalls and in one sector they did build some barracks to accommodate the total population expected to be interned in this center. A week

or two after we arrived, another group from the Pasadena/Glendale area, also arrived. I don't know why they moved us from Los Angeles to Tulare and moved other people from San Francisco and San Jose to the Los Angeles area.

NELSON: Sounds like the military. Tulare area was a staging area then similar to Santa Anita? It was a reception center so to speak and from there then at some point your family was sent to one of the relocation camps?

MAYEDA: Yes. The people in Tulare were moved to a relocation camp located in Gila, Arizona, just outside Phoenix. The move took place about November, 1942 and as I mentioned when I first went into camp, everybody volunteered for some kind of work to help maintain the center. My older brother was elected or chosen as one of the five administrators to oversee all the centers services, supplies, and operations. His main chore was the mess hall operations, making sure that the food was properly prepared and distributed.

Two other fellows and myself, since we had some engineering background were made field engineers for the whole camp and we had to oversee the water and sewage operation to make sure that everything was working. We also were in charge of all kinds of construction. Originally, the mess halls had a bunch of wooden pallets for flooring instead of a poured foundation and each day the mess hall workers had to take those darn pallets outside and soap and scrub them, dry them out, and replace them. It was a

huge job day after day. We finally were able to order sand, gravel, and cement and during the night hours, we had a large crew pour concrete floors in all of the mess halls.

This improved the mess hall operation greatly and a lot of odds and ends were built to make things a little more comfortable. Everything was kind of centralized. There were centralized laundry rooms, centralized bath areas and rest rooms and other similar facilities. There were many things done to make the camp a little more comfortable and more livable.

NELSON: Was the camp operations run by the detainees?

MAYEDA: Yes, there was a very small Caucasian administration group and they almost immediately turned it over to the detainees. So the detainees volunteered to do any kind of work to keep busy and improve conditions. They were paid \$12 a month for what they called "common labor" like people who worked in the mess halls and simple construction. Cooks, construction foremen and other semi-professionals were paid \$16 a month, and others considered to be professionals received a total of \$19 a month.

NELSON: Were you actually paid or was that on account?

MAYEDA: No, we were paid. Many people went to camp with just a bare handful of clothing or other items so almost immediately there was mass business with Montgomery Wards and Sears Roebuck as people were ordering catalog items in abundance.

NELSON: Oh it was the catalog business?

MAYEDA: Yes, the catalogue business. That was a big activity.

NELSON: You were not considered a threat to Sears or Montgomery Wards? They took the money.

MAYEDA: The camp was almost laughable because they put up barbed wire all around the perimeter and at each strategic corner they had a tower. They had Army personnel on guard with machine guns. I don't know if they were more afraid of people from the outside trying to get in or the people from the inside trying to get out, but there were never any incidences of people trying to get out that I knew of.

NELSON: How many people were in your camp?

MAYEDA: I think eventually there were about 5,000 in this particular camp.

NELSON: Smaller than Manzanar?

MAYEDA: Yes, most of the relocation centers had 10,000 to 12,000 detainees. The people in the 16 so-called "assembly centers" ultimately transferred to ten relocation centers.

NELSON: Did that camp have a name? You said there was a

MAYEDA: It was known as "Tulare Assembly Center."

NELSON: Then when you went to Arizona?

MAYEDA: It was called Gila Relocation Center. There were two in California, two in Arizona.

NELSON: What was the other one in Arizona? Do you happen to remember?

MAYEDA: Poston.

NELSON: That's what I was thinking of.

MAYEDA: There were two centers in California, two in Arizona, one in Colorado, one in Idaho, one in Utah, one in Wyoming and two in Arkansas. They were spread out all over.

NELSON: So how long did you spend at that camp?

MAYEDA: Well, as I mentioned, when I went into Tulare, almost immediately I began to figure, "Well this isn't the way I want to spend my time during the war." I started writing to colleges. First I started writing to the big schools on the east coast, the Yales, the Harvards, and all those and also the "Big Ten" schools, Ohio State and others, but they all had these huge Army/Navy programs where they were training people in, I guess, academic

areas. So most of the schools said they were full because they had such a huge compliment of Army/Navy people.

It kept boiling down to the smaller schools and Nebraska, St. Louis University, Colorado at Boulder, responded that they would accept me. I went to the camp administration and stated that I wanted to go to the University of Colorado, Boulder. At least I had heard of the University of Colorado and they said, "Well we're working on a program for student relocation but has not been totally organized as yet. You seem to have taken care of the preliminaries and I am sure you'd be one of the first ones given consideration.

So I kept bugging them and finally they got someone who was supposed to be a student relocation coordinator or something. So he went through my papers and said, "Well you've got everything done. Where are you going to live, at University of Colorado?" I said, "Well when I get there, I don't know whether it will be in a dorm or an apartment or whatever, but I'll notify you." So he said, "Well one of the bottom lines is that you have to have a forwarding address." I said, "Well put it in care of the university and as soon as I get there, I'll give you an address."

He fussed and fumed and sputtered and a few days went by when I happened to get a postcard from a young fellow who was actually a friend of my youngest brother. He and his father had voluntarily left the west coast, settled in Denver and then went to Wyoming. This young fellow was going to enroll as a freshman and he said if I was still interested in going to school, that maybe I would want to come to the University of Wyoming because

it's so nice and quiet. So I quickly wrote a letter to the University of Wyoming and they wrote back, "That's fine, we'd be glad to have you," and so forth. I went to the office and said, "Look they are accepting me at Wyoming," and I have a forwarding address. The coordinator said, "Fine," and a couple days later I was on my way to school. I left the center in the later part of August of 1942 to attend the University of Wyoming.

The University had a quarter system and they had an accelerated engineering program in which you could carry as many units as you could handle. I took an average of 20 - 22 units to graduate from school in four quarters.

NELSON: My gosh. When did you graduate?

MAYEDA: December, 1943. So in theory, even though I stayed out almost a year, I picked it all up in that accelerated program.

NELSON: Where is the University of Wyoming? What city?

MAYEDA: Laramie.

NELSON: Did you stay on there or did you come back or what did you do then?

MAYEDA: No, after I finished, I came back to camp in Gila, Arizona, to visit my parents and others. In the meanwhile, my older brother had volunteered in November, 1942 and was supposed

to be an instructor at the Military Intelligence School in Camp Savage, Minnesota. When he reported, there was such a demand for prisoner of war interrogators in the South Pacific, that he and a team of specialists were sent to the South Pacific immediately and he ended up in Australia. Their function was that in each invasion that took place, they would go right in behind the invading troops and as Japanese soldiers were captured, they would interrogate them to find out how many troops were there, kinds of equipment and other military information.

He was involved in many D-Day landings in the Phillipines, Guam, Tarawa, and Guadalcanal. He received a battlefield commission and was very highly recognized for their team effort. There were quite a few Japanese American soldiers involved in the South Pacific in intelligence activity.

My younger brother volunteered and went into the 442nd Regt. Combat Team that trained at Camp Shelby, Mississippi. He went to Italy and France and Germany and was involved in many battles. He, luckily, came back in one piece. His first exposure to combat was the invasion of Naples. His rifle company went on the line, and they fought furiously for five days; when it was over, out of three hundred soldiers in his company, only a handful walked back and he was one of them. It was amazing!

NELSON: Somebody was looking over his shoulder. So you came back to Arizona to visit your parents?

MAYEDA: Just for a couple of weeks.

NELSON: That was the first time you were at that camp then?

MAYEDA: Yes. Then I went to Chicago and settled down there. I was in the Enlisted Reserves while at UCLA and Wyoming and they kept notifying me every so often that I was going to be called in, and then when I graduated Wyoming, the professors talked me into trying to get a commission in the Civil Engineer Corps of the Army. Nothing ever took place so I went to Chicago and started working at a tool and die design company where they made tools, dies and fixtures and things like that for the war efforts. Many, many kinds of military parts were engineered, designed and produced for the war effort. Among them were parts of the B-29 engine, submarine torpedoes and the M-7 tank.

NELSON: Were you doing the engineering on that or design?

MAYEDA: Yes, design of tools, dies and fixtures to handle the rough casting of parts and enable lathes, mills, drilling operations and cutters to finish the part to its ultimate shape and function. This activity was not really my specialty, but there wasn't really any civil engineering work going on so I just learned it by exposure.

NELSON: On the job training.

MAYEDA: We had a big machine shop where they actually did the physical work as well as engineering, so you could go out into the

plant and look at this machine and that machine and get an understanding of what you were working with. That was good experience. I was there for about a year and a half before I went into the service.

NELSON: And you went into the service on what date?

MAYEDA: April the 6th of 1945. I went in as a draftee and was sent to Camp Robinson in Little Rock, Arkansas for my basic training.

NELSON: Well now Kay came into this picture here sometime, didn't she?

MAYEDA: Yes, I met her in Chicago. She was in Heart Mountain Relocation Center.

NELSON: Where was Heart Mountain?

MAYEDA: That's in Wyoming. She and some friends relocated out of Heart Mountain and came to Chicago to find work. They settled down just within doors of where I was staying and that's how we met.

Then at basic training, I was interviewed and they said, "Well you're a college graduate and everything, why don't you apply for post graduate work in the Army Specialized Training Program, because we're looking for people in that area." They

gave me tests and a couple of weeks later someone called and said, "When you finish basic training, you'll be going to Ohio State for post graduate training." I said, "Okay, fine," but about three weeks before training ended, there was a big change because the war was tapering down.

They said they were cutting down on all specialized training programs and the company commander called me in and said, "They're still looking for officers for Fort Benning. Are you interested in going to OCS?" They gave me many other tests and I ended up going to Fort Benning, Georgia for Officer Candidate School.

Before I went to Fort Benning, I came back to Chicago for one week's furlough and we were married on Halloween day and never even knew it was Halloween until after we were married.

I went to Fort Benning and graduated, received a 2nd Lieutenant's commission and from there I went to Minneapolis to the Military Intelligence Language school. That was another kind of goofy thing. I primarily went to OCS hoping I could get a commission and go to Europe and get out of the service sooner. I knew if I went to the Military Intelligence Language School, being an officer, I would spend three years in Japan which is what I was trying to avoid. But I think I was the first one to have orders cut at OCS because they were hurting for officers at the language school.

NELSON: Did you speak and read Japanese?

MAYEDA: I could speak, read and write to a degree I think a little more than the average Nisei. When I reported to Ft. Snelling, Minnesota, the first thing they did was give me a test and the instructor said, "Well you're knowledgeable enough to go to Japan right now, do you want to go?" And I said, "Well I'm not in that big of a hurry."

Then a large troop movement was scheduled and the language school was transferred to the west coast to the Presidio, Monterey, California. The troop movement had to be one of the humorous, comical and tragic things you ever saw because here we were supposed to be a top notch, top secret move and a total of about 3,000 troops were involved.

They broke the troop movement into two groups. There were about five of us officers that were in command of this big troop movement. The morning of the movement, everybody is in their fatigues, duffle bags and gear, we were waiting down at the railroad siding, and here comes this train that you could not believe. It must have been pre World War I vintage. They had these old "Forty and Eight" box cars with welded bars with 48-60 capacity, and kerosene lamps for lights. In the middle of the train they had a big mess kitchen unit and half of the troops were in box cars on either side of the mess kitchen. During meals, you'd have to take one group and march them all the way to the far end, bring them back, give them their food and they end up back at their car. When they were through eating, you had to march them all the way again, bring them back so they could wash their mess gear. Then you lead the other half and repeat the process. This

was repeated three time a day so you can imagine the chaos. It was crazy.

NELSON: Keep the troops occupied.

MAYEDA: At every little train stop, every other train in the country had a higher priority than we did. What should have been about a three and a half day trip, would drag and drag and drag. We ran out of food and we would telegraph to the next Army post trying to get some food brought in, the Army kitchen went haywire, the stove wouldn't work and it was terrible.

Finally at some of these little stops, we'd let one guy out of each car run into the local store or whatever and buy cookies, crackers and drinks or whatever which solved a little bit of the problem. It was about the fifth or sixth morning, we ended up about 4:00 a.m. outside of Sacramento just at dawn. Everybody woke up after bouncing around and the train was putting on water or whatever. The troops looked out the window and on one side of the train was a huge peach orchard. The peaches were ripe for picking and before you could say, "Wait a minute," the whole troop personnel was gone and in about 15 minutes everybody came back with a shirt full of peaches. I guess that saved the day.

We finally arrived at Fort Ord. The train didn't go all the way into the city of Monterey. It was about a four mile hike from Fort Ord into the City of Monterey. We had to get the troops out, with duffle bags and gear and go marching down the road into the city of Monterey. Then the damn place wasn't open. We had to

look around, find somebody that had keys to the locks. The barracks were all boarded up, so we had to knock down the boards, break down the doors with dust and grime all over the place. It took about a month to just clean the place up before it looked like we had something we could settle into. That was quite an adventure, though.

TAPE NUMBER: 1, SIDE TWO

TOSHIO (NMI) MAYEDA

NELSON: How long did you stay in language school?

MAYEDA: I guess about four or five months. I took a "crash accelerated course", with a few of the enlisted men. The school administration figured that we didn't need much orientation and in December of that year, 1946, I went to Japan. In Tokyo I reported to the Allied Translator and Interpreter Headquarters. I got an immediate phone call from a lieutenant that I had known in Fort Snelling, Minneapolis. He was stationed in Sapporo, Hokkaido, Japan, with the 11th Airborne Division. His language training was not too solid and when he had heard that I was in Japan, he asked if I would be willing to come up and assist him in his work with translations and interpretation duties. I said, "Okay, fine. It was alright with me." Almost within a day or two I had orders cut and I reported to Sapporo to the 11th Airborne Division.

We had an intelligence unit of three officers and about 15 enlisted men and two or three Japanese nationals. We did translations of newspapers and letters, things of interest to the

military and also providing interpreting service to the Army personnel as well as the local military government and other agencies that were located there.

Initially we were located in town and then we built an Army post on the agricultural farm of the University of Hokkaido. This was a large area and enough offices, units and quarters were constructed for both the division headquarters staff as well as the 187th Regiment. The Army post was well constructed and had a central heating system to accommodate severe winters. We had many amenities for the enlisted personnel as well as the officers. They had equipment for bowling alleys shipped over, and built huge field houses. They also had marbled lined horse stables. The Commanding General loved to play golf so they even built an 18 hole golf course on the facilities. That's when I was exposed to an awful lot of golf.

The Army duty there was very interesting. I was the interpreter for the commanding general so I was always involved whenever Japanese VIP's or people came to the general's office for either just normal discussions or business activities. In addition, I was involved in coaching the division baseball team as well as the division basketball team. So I was quite busy in that regard, but I also had a chance to travel all over Japan with these sports activities.

I also had a unique experience because of my language proficiency. I was placed on the prosecuting staff of the general court martials because they figured with the ease that I had in talking to witnesses, it would make it simpler to put them at ease

when they were asked to make depositions or being interviewed in the courtroom. During the two and a half year period there, we had a number of cases that involved murder, assault, arson, rape, and AWOL, just about everything you could think of.

I think the difficult part of this activity was the system they used for court martials. The prosecutor was the "work horse" of the whole operation because he had to prepare all the trial briefs, interview all of the witnesses, assemble all the material together and have it reviewed by the Judge Advocate General's staff who were professional lawyers, but for some reason they were never called upon to actually get involved in the case itself other than as advisers. I spent an awful lot of time learning the "tricks of the trade," preparing trial briefs, documentation, witness examination, and presenting the trial. To introduce all of the salient points to prove guilt and the violation of various Articles of War was a big challenge and rewarding.

It was a very good experience. I think the exposure to something like that, particularly if you hadn't done it before, gave you an insight that there is an awful lot of work involved in being a lawyer.

NELSON: Where did Kay stay while you were overseas?

MAYEDA: Well when I moved to Presidio, Monterey, she moved with me and we lived at Fort Ord. When I went to Japan, she stayed in Los Angeles with my mother. My daughter was born while I was in Japan and after I had been there about a year, she received

priority to join me in Japan. We were together living in dependent quarters with a number of other officers families. We had two or three maids and we lived "high off the hog" while in Japan.

NELSON: Was your second child born over there?

MAYEDA: Yes. Our son was born in Japan. That was quite an experience. We came back in February, 1949 and after I had been home a couple of weeks, I went downtown to have lunch with a couple of fellows I went to college with. One of them was working with the State Highway Department and the other was working in a private engineering office. As we were eating lunch, they were asking me what I was going to do and I said, "Well I hadn't made up my mind yet." The fellow working for highways said, "Well if you're going to work in any government job, go to work for Water and Power, they pay better than anybody. I guess the rates of pay and things were vacillating between the various agencies at the time. I said, "I don't even know where Water and Power is located or what the ramifications of seeking employment are at Water and Power." They said, "Oh it's just down the block from here. Why don't you go there and see somebody in engineering and see what you can find out. Maybe meet some people." So after lunch I said, "Well I'm here, I might as well stroll down there and see what's going on." I went in the office at Second and Broadway. I saw a name on the directory of some senior engineer of the water department. I went to the water

design section and I talked to one of the clerical persons and he said, "Well why don't you come in and talk to Mr. Bliss, he does the interviews for employment. I went in and talked to him for about a half hour and he said, "Why don't you come to work?" I said, "I don't know anything about civil service, what I have to do, and other details." He said, "Well I can sign you as a temporary employee as an emergency draftsman. In fact, there is a test coming up this Saturday and I think I can pull some strings and get you eligible to take the test."

This was a Tuesday or Wednesday, but I said, "Okay, I'll let you know." I guess it was a day later, I called him up and told him I'd be coming in. I went in Thursday morning, went to work as an emergency draftsman, and Saturday morning I went to Hollywood High School to take the exam; two weeks later I was notified that I was number one on the list. That's how I became an employee of Water and Power, "believe it or not."

NELSON: Your first assignment then, was a temporary as a draftsman in emergency? And that was in 1949?

MAYEDA: Yes. That was in March of 1949.

NELSON: What location were you working out of?

MAYEDA: It was the Second Street building on the eighth floor. It was the Water Engineering Design Division.

NELSON: Who was your immediate supervisor?

MAYEDA: Well I spent a couple of weeks in the so-called drafting room, but Mr. Bliss, knowing that I was a university graduate, already, moved me into another engineering section. This was a computation section where calculations were made for a coordinate system for the whole city. The water and power system used a polyconic projection system. It is a north/south direction type of coordinate system. There are many different kinds of systems. From precise triangulation measurements and calculations, and conversion to plain surveys, calculations are made into a common form of coordinate system which covered the whole city from San Pedro all the way up into the aqueduct in Owens Valley. In addition, there was another section on right-of-way work where legal descriptions and mapping for acquisition of easements and properties were prepared. It was the first area I worked in for a period of a couple of years.

NELSON: How many men were in that section?

MAYEDA: I think at the time, there were two associates and eight or so other people.

NELSON: What was your title then? Or classification?

MAYEDA: Originally it was CE (Civil engineering) draftsman, then I took the CE Assistant exam and I promoted to CE Assistant.

NELSON: During that first two years?

MAYEDA: Then I transferred over to a project design and planning section. Kenny Wilkes was my supervisor, a group of four associates, eight assistants and four or five draftsman in that one section.

NELSON: What was the function of that section?

MAYEDA: It was primarily doing a lot of planning of future water works facilities for the City of L.A. From about 1951 on, I was involved in major pipeline, reservoirs tanks, and pumping stations and other facilities that were being planned throughout the whole city.

Among other activities, we were assigned to the General Manager to provide research and resource material and looking into various activities regarding regional water programs. Many big regional water planning programs were starting to take place and they were originated by Federal and State agencies. It was an unusual and challenging assignment. I worked with almost every general manager from Sam Morris to the most recent General Manager. I worked with Sam Morris, Peterson, Grant, Nelson, Kanouse, Phillips, and others. We were always providing a lot of material for the general managers. On the state aqueduct system planning and proposals, we were involved in reviewing and analyzing, preparing information for the general manager where he would attend various legislative and commission meetings in

Sacramento and so forth to provide input from the Department, our pros and cons, regarding certain plans and proposals of major water projects.

NELSON: Were you involved in the famous "Snake project?"

MAYEDA: Yes. In fact, Sam Nelson called myself, Leval Lund, and Duane Georgeson. Duane was an associate at the time and Leval and I were both water works engineers.

NELSON: Leval Lund?

MAYEDA: Yes. Secretary of the Interior, Udall had come up with a wild scheme of taking water from Northern California and bringing it down through the proposed State Aqueduct into Lake Mead to supplement the shortage in the Colorado River. The secretary thought that his proposal was a great idea, but his methodology of doing so and arriving at the cost was, instead of being a shared cost of the facility, based only on incremental cost. In other words he said, "You guys will already have spent this much so I'm going to spend a little bit more and make the facility larger to carry a larger flow."

General Manager Nelson and all the water agencies in California were upset with the Secretary's proposal and only a 90 day period to prepare an alternative or meaningful response to this study. So Nelson called us in to talk about this proposal and he said, "Well can you come up with an alternate method to

bring more water into the Colorado River without taking it from California?" Well we looked at the big maps and documents and Mr. Nelson said, "You know above northern Colorado and Wyoming, Idaho has the Snake River with large water flow. Is it possible to tunnel from the Snake River and transport water into the upper part of the Colorado River basin and bring it on down that way?" We studied maps and drew lines and profiles of possible routes. We studied more and more and looked at the Army Corps of Engineer Studies on the use and availability of water in the Snake River. At those locations that a feasible and economical tunneling route into the Colorado River Basin seemed feasible, Snake river water was already fully utilized, or lacked capacity. We kept shifting further westerly down the river. In the area called Thousand Falls, or Thousand Springs, the Army studies of flows in the river were reported as abundant.

After additional studies which involved longer routes, pumping and tunneling, I commented, "Instead of going that way, let's look at a direct route from the Snake River and go south to Lake Mead on a direct line." We started on the Snake River at Thousand Springs where there was a surplus flowing toward the Columbia River. We developed a profile of a line that would require pumping up the hill about 3,000 feet, to an elevation of about 6,000 feet and then run directly south on a falling grade down to Lake Mead which is about 1,200+ feet in elevation.

The beauty of the plan was we only had to pump 3,000 feet and then we'd have a falling head from 6,000 feet, down to 1,200 feet so we'd have 4,800 feet or so of falling head that we could

generate power. We would end up with a surplus power capability in addition to bringing the water to Lake Mead. We prepared drawings and a profile and other details, located potential reservoir sites and power plant locations. We took our plan to Sam Nelson and discussed it. He said, "Hey this looks good. Let's write it up and make a little report of this proposal." We worked on the report diligently and the ninety days was rapidly approaching. We got the report in rough form and selected pipeline sizes, reservoir capacities, pumping plants, power plants and miscellaneous details, as well as rough cost estimates. Then Sam Nelson called Gilmore Tillman, DWP Legal Division Head, and he asked Mr. Tillman to review the proposal and seek information from people in Washington, D.C. We spent about a half a day discussing the report and Secretary Udall's proposal. Mr. Tillman got all excited and said, "God, I love showing up those bureaucrats in Washington." He started calling people, getting information and more data. We worked pretty frantically for about three weeks, finalizing things, working on Saturday and Sunday. I don't know if you know Mr. Tillman personally, but he was one who came into the office about 11:00 a.m. That was his arrival time, but he would stay until about 7:00 p.m. or 8:00 p.m.

Anyway he started coming in every morning at 8:00 a.m. Even coming in on Saturday and Sunday when we were working and Mr. Nelson said, "You know if you do this for one more week, I'm going to make you a god damn engineer."

NELSON: Tillman at that time was the Chief City Attorney for Water and Power.

MAYEDA: Yes, he had been in this position for many years. We completed the report and went to Sacramento to the Senate Water Committee Hearing where California water agencies and other interested people were to make their presentation or comments in regards to Secretary Udall's proposal.

Everybody, one after the other, said they didn't like the proposal, but no one had any counter proposal. Finally they called on Mr. Nelson and he said, "Well I had a few of my engineers do some research and we've come up with something that I think is of interest that would be worth considering as an alternate to Mr. Udall's proposal. I have copies of this report in the back of the room." Mr. Nelson is a person that if you discuss a general overview of a report or memorandum, he doesn't require notes or papers to discuss the subject. By the time Mr. Nelson finished the Snake report, the hearing assembly was buzzing with newspaper and television people coming from everywhere and all the water agency representatives were applauding this proposal. I don't know how many copies we had requests for, but it was reported in the Engineering News Record, newspapers and television reports.

Mr. Nelson pointed to Duane, Leval, and me and said, "Those are the guys that did this work. They are the ones that deserve the credit." That was really a Department highlight, I think as far as I was concerned.

NELSON: Now Duane was Duane Georgeson?

MAYEDA: Yes. This report was one of those things that was spontaneous and still it really caught everybody's imagination. Naturally we got all kinds of backlash from the state of Idaho. I don't know if you were in the Department at that time.

NELSON: That was in your planning days?

MAYEDA: Yes, and I think at the time I was the Senior Planning Engineer and both Val and Duane were working for me.

NELSON: What division was that in?

MAYEDA: Water Engineering Design.

NELSON: On your city planning you mentioned a little earlier a planning for future needs. What was the data that was developed there? Was that basically a population estimate?

MAYEDA: Yes. The use of water was projected on population, industry and commercial usage. Right after the war, the San Fernando Valley was a serious example of planning, design, and construction of major water system facilities.

NELSON: I think we were talking about planning and the data used and the growth of the San Fernando Valley or the transition of the

San Fernando Valley from agriculture, I guess, to residential or population sites.

MAYEDA: Yes, from 1946 right after the war there was so much subdivision activity that you couldn't keep up with it. Basically in our planning section we had one major study group that was involved in major trunk line systems. They would analyze the future needs depending on the projected growth of the areas. They had various alternative plans and a master plan of the future growth of the whole city of Los Angeles water supply system, which was developed into a so-called "master report." As times or conditions changed, the report was updated and reissued as we saw fit. We had another section within the planning section involved primarily in pumps and tanks supply facilities in the mountain areas. That's the group that Rollo Triay was the head of for so many years. Paul Lane, Val Lund and many others worked in that section and new pumping-tank systems as well as redesign of existing systems were a major program in the 1950's, 1960's, and 1970's.

We were able to keep a pretty good handle on major trunk line systems and major reservoir improvements, and over the 25 year period from about 1950 to mid 1975, most of the major trunk line systems as we know it today were planned and constructed to assure water supply operations.

NELSON: Let me go back just a second. What basically is a trunk line?

MAYEDA: A trunk line is a pipeline larger than 30 inches in diameter. For example, Eagle Rock/Hollywood Trunkline which runs from Eagle Rock to Hollywood is a 68" diameter pipeline. The Granada Trunk Line begins at Van Norman Reservoir on the north end of the valley with a 60" pipeline tapering down to a 42" pipeline.

NELSON: How long were you involved in planning at the Department?

MAYEDA: I was in the design division for 27 years from my first day of employment. I'd say almost 100% of the time was in the planning area. I was never in the "project design" section where they did the actual nitty gritty of designing pipelines and preparing plans and specs for construction by contract or our own forces. The area I was involved in was overall master planning and making the determination of what facilities need to be built next in order to meet the oncoming demands on the system. In one section daily flow chart of the whole system were studied and analyzed daily. A hydraulic analysis computer program was developed and analysis and computations would provide immediate results.

Alternate plans were included in which most of our systems were designed with a backup so that if one of the major lines should be out of service, water supply could still be distributed to the system.

NELSON: You were in planning. How long were you in charge of that?

MAYEDA: I became a Water Works Engineer where I had a major section under my supervision in 1957. In 1963, when I was promoted to Senior Engineer, I was in charge of the whole planning section.

NELSON: The late 1950's?

MAYEDA: Yes. Then I became a Principal Engineer in 1970-1971 where I was assistant to the division head.

NELSON: Still with overall responsibility for planning?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: You mentioned 1971. What happened in planning in February 1971 with the quake? That may have been two or three hectic days.

MAYEDA: Well it was more than that. We responded quickly and I was assigned immediately to the central emergency offices in City Hall in the sub-basement working directly with the police and fire

department personnel. I was the liaison between the Department and the emergency control center in City Hall. When the decision was made to evacuate the people below Van Norman Reservoir, Bob Phillips called me and said, "In review of physical conditions with Dr. Richter and other consultants, it was recommended that for safety purposes the evacuation of the people below the reservoir should take place." When that call came over and I transferred this message to the police captain that was in charge, it was total chaos. Everybody just went crazy.

NELSON: Were there really actually people evacuated?

MAYEDA: Oh, yes. Below the reservoir all the way south to about Van Owen Boulevard.

NELSON: Where, Rinaldi?

MAYEDA: From east to west, from the San Diego Freeway all the way over to about Balboa Boulevard. That's quite a big sector. Early in the morning of the earthquake some local police on their own had gone onto Balboa Boulevard actually up in the high area overlooking the reservoir and telling the people to evacuate. That caused a lot of confusion because there hadn't been a so-called "official" order, and the DWP and other departments were getting phone calls as customers and people living up there were asking, "Why should we have to be moved? We're way above everything."

NELSON: That'd be a good question.

MAYEDA: Yes. And it caused a lot of confusion. An emergency command center was established in Bob Phillip's office and a cadre of water system managers were assigned around the clock for about two weeks. I put in time there as well as at the City during that period.

In the field there was a tremendous amount of activity trying to get things back into shape again. It took about a month, to make major and minor repairs.

NELSON: You talked about the liaison at City Hall, exactly you were the department liaison, was that more interpreting to these other services, answering their questions - if they had technical questions about Department or water system operations...?

MAYEDA: Yes, calls were coming there and an example would be, "My meter's broken when are you going to fix it?" We would accumulate those reports and transmit them to the proper sectors of the Department. There were people from the Power System, as well as representatives from the Army Corps of Engineers, the Red Cross and National Guard, and all the city agencies.

An example of coordination among Agencies occurred in the Power System. They were losing a couple of towers and the power system management were asking the Power System liaison personnel to request the Army and the National Guard to loan or bring out some large helicopters for assistance. The helicopters would

attach cables and hold the towers in place until they could be reinforced. The power station representatives came to me and said, "We don't know who to get in touch with or how to coordinate these things," and so I worked out the details with the Army and the National Guard people. Three or four big helicopters were made available and it saved the Power System from losing those big towers. The coordination effort was really appreciated.

I had been at Emergency Command Center a number of times for so-called pre-planning and emergency exercises. In the immediate post war period we were involved in radiological monitoring and nuclear attack-type planning and exercises were held in the Mojave Desert and other locations. Since I had been involved in the past, as soon as the earthquake emergency occurred, I was sent to the Emergency Center.

NELSON: Did your planning take into account any of the disaster scenarios, such as how the system would operate with, say the loss of Van Norman or a major water source or supply?

MAYEDA: Yes. We'd always had, I'd say preplanning operating schemes on how we would function if there were outages, such as a reservoir or a big pipeline disaster. Some plans would not provide a 100% recovery, some would assure only minimal recovery. At least the people would have water, pending repairs or whatever had to be done. For example, some areas, when pumping to a high lift area and the pump units went out, the only thing you could do is to function off of the tank supply until repairs were done.

You cannot pick up a great big pump motor unit and get it in place in 15 minutes. In most of our pump tank systems, there are diesel units and emergency generators, as well as tank storage supply.

NELSON: As I recall, some areas out there, probably areas of elevation, required water tanks for a few days. That was, I guess, built into your plans too?

MAYEDA: Yes, in places such as the Maclay Highline or Granada Trunk Line in the northern limits of the city. Water supply was provided from the aqueduct and in an outage, the only way to provide water was to either pump from emergency units or haul it up there. If you have terminal reservoirs on the ends of the system, you could operate off the reservoir for a period.

NELSON: You were also in planning when the Baldwin Hills Dam failed in 1963. Was that a similar situation from an operational standpoint or was that completely different or did it have enough variations to make it stand out from the Sylmar?

MAYEDA: No, from an operating standpoint, it wasn't that critical. I mean you had a reservoir that went out, but you still had your inlet outlet lines that were functioning and after the reservoir itself was dewatered, the pipelines still were functioning, so you didn't have a big case of unavailability of water.

TAPE NUMBER: 2, SIDE ONE

TOSHIO (NMI) MAYEDA

NELSON: To, we were talking a little bit about Baldwin Hills. How did you learn about it that was on a Saturday as I recall.

MAYEDA: Saturday afternoon. I guess initially things started happening early in the morning around 8:30 a.m. or 9:00 a.m. when the reservoir keeper began to realize something was going wrong. I didn't get wind of it until sometime around noon, when I heard a message on the radio.

In the Operating Division, Dick Hemborg and his people were really involved. Division personnel were trying to sandbag the cracks in the dam and many other things that kept the Operating Division fully occupied. I guess the biggest crisis was getting the attention of the police department to evacuate the area below the reservoir. I remember that as being the crucial problem that had to be overcome.

NELSON: They were reluctant to implement the order?

MAYEDA: The police didn't want to tell the people to get out.

NELSON: How was that finally resolved?

MAYEDA: The decision by water system management to evacuate took place sometime between 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. Max Socha, Water System head talked to the police and apparently made little impact on convincing the police of the possible danger involved. Around 2:00 p.m. or 2:30 p.m. Mr. Socha was finally able to convince the police that they should order the evacuation. The police went through the neighborhood and within 45 minutes were able to evacuate the danger area. The dam break occurred about 4:00 p.m. and while property damage was severe, there was few injuries or fatalities.

The planning section had made a study of all of our major reservoirs that in case there were an emergency and the dam should fail, determine the flood water depths and the path of inundation that would take place down stream. We had, by study of topographic maps and making evaluations and guesses, determined the flood pattern and the area affected, which was the area that was to be evacuated. Following the actual events and actually tracing the path of this inundation flow on an overlay, the calculated area matched almost 100% of the actual flooded area. When this report was first made, Max Socha was upset that this study had been done and he took all of the copies of the report and put them under lock and key. He said, "Nobody's going to see these." He didn't want it to go out to the public. He was worried to death that it would be a serious public relation problem. The Operating Division and Design Division were allowed to keep one copy, but it was supposed to be kept under lock and key.

After the dam failure, the state people reviewed this report on possible flood inundation that included all of our reservoirs. The overlay of the calculated and actual conditions impressed the State personnel and they were amazed that we had foresight to prepare this report. Some people may look at the report as poor publicity, but on the other hand it's such a tool not to have it.

NELSON: Who was that study done under?

MAYEDA: In the planning section.

NELSON: Under you?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: You took it upon yourself to do it?

MAYEDA: We decided that it was a good thing to have. I'm not sure who originally originated the idea of it. Many water agencies requested our formula and methodology as the State Water Board asked all water agencies to prepare reports similar to DWP's.

NELSON: You say you were 27 years in the planning section and then you had moved up through the ranks at that time, then I guess your next assignment was as an assistant division head?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: That was in Water Design?

MAYEDA: Yes. That was in, I think, 1971. I was assistant division head for about five or six years.

NELSON: Who was that under? Who was the division head at that time?

MAYEDA: Bill Simon was the division head and when Sterling Green moved up to water executive, I took his spot. Rollo Triay and I were Bill Simon's assistants. When Bill Simon retired, Rollo became division head and Leval Lund was appointed assistant division head over the project design and dams and foundations section. I was there about five or six years and then transferred to Water Operating Division to be assistant division head to Gayle Holman.

NELSON: With him?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: You were both assistant?

MAYEDA: No, he was the Division Head.

NELSON: Well that was quite a change. This was your first time you had gotten out of the design side.

MAYEDA: Yes, I finished my last seven or eight years in the Water Operating Division.

NELSON: Did you have any feelings of trepidation as you went out of design into operating?

MAYEDA: No, not particularly. There was a different scheme of things involving mostly administrative work because the operating division was scattered throughout five districts throughout the City. There were a lot of activities that weren't really "hands on". It was more or less overseeing many of the things that were going on. At the time I made the move, affirmative action and labor negotiations became big issues in which I was very involved.

NELSON: Were those your assignments to a great extent?

MAYEDA: It was one of those "growing pain" type of periods. There were labor negotiations, "a big charade," you spent days and days and days yakking and yakking and accomplishing nothing. Affirmative action was similar where Black and Hispanic groups decided that they were going to test their strength. They were raising every kind of issue and we had to spend a lot of time trying to resolve those problems.

I don't know today how it is, but it was an adjustment period that everybody had to experience.

NELSON: You weren't in water operating at that time, but you were involved in that from the standpoint of the system or the division?

MAYEDA: These activities occurred while in both water design and operating divisions. I represented the water system and sat in labor negotiations.

NELSON: I guess the labor problems were more acute on the power side.

MAYEDA: Yes, Local 18 was probably the most boisterous and raised the most noise about getting recognition and getting things for their people. They had quite a turmoil in their, so-called leadership in Local 18, Taylor and all those representatives who followed. Different people assumed leadership of Local 18, but the sad part of it was about the same time the City Council was trying to stretch their muscles. They were trying to be more involved and trying to set policy, rate setting, salary setting and other activities of DWP.

NELSON: With your career you spent around 35 years?

MAYEDA: Just slightly less than 35 years.

NELSON: You then were under a number of general managers. Did some of those leave you with impressions?

MAYEDA: Yes. I think so. I think Sam Morris, the first one that I worked with was more of an educator. He had been Dean of Engineering at Stanford University and when Eisenhower was elected president, the rumor was that he was going to be appointed Secretary of the Interior. He had his bags packed and everything, but at the last minute, some decision because of his age or some other factor, he didn't get the appointment.

He was very disappointed, but he was named to a number of various Federal advisory commissions and he was traveling all over the world. He was the type of a person that wanted lots of data on different water and power matters both local, regional, and worldwide. We used to do a lot of search and development for him, but he never wanted anything in finished form. We prepared graphs, statistics, data and many related things. But he developed his own logic and speech material. I was impressed with him because he was very smart, very knowledgeable, and in his presentations before committees and hearings, I always thought that he had did a commendable job.

NELSON: I assume with the Stanford and the other pedigree, he had a lot of credibility?

MAYEDA: Very much so. He stayed on as a consultant for three or four years. Had a little office down on the seventh floor. And

then Bill Peterson, I think, came in after him. Peterson was a very nervous person. One that not being really knowledgeable in water, he depended on us a whole 110% to give him feedback whenever he had to give a talk or whatever. You had to prepare his paper and dot the i's and t's because he wasn't one that was quick to pick something up and be able to evaluate it and then talk from it freely. He had to almost read it.

Then Burton Grant was General Manager of the Water System. He was an engima because in the office he was the coldest individual you ever met and he seldom said, "Good morning," or "Hello." One time we were putting some material together for him, pretty important to him, and we worked a lot of overtime and finally submitted it to him on a Thursday afternoon. At the time, there was a National Water Conference in San Francisco. When we got through late Thursday, he said, "Well, you guys sure did a good job," and we told him that we were going to be off the next day because we were going to this convention on Friday and over the weekend in San Francisco and he said, "Bye, have a good time," and so forth.

On Friday, we had gone to the morning session, listened to the talks and in the afternoon about 3:00 p.m. we were in the exhibition hall looking at water equipment and things. There was a big escalator, quite wide, leading into the exhibition hall, and we were a good block away from this entryway. Anyway I happened to glance up and saw Mr. Grant coming down this escalator. I don't know how he saw us, but he made a bee line for us, I think Val was with me and maybe one or two other water system people.

He came walking directly over to where we were at and he slapped me on the back and he said, "I'm sure glad to see you. I want to thank you for all that work you did for me this week." He talked for more than 15 minutes, joking, smiling and laughing, a totally different personality than he was in the office. One of the most unusual persons I ever met. He was so disappointed when Nelson bypassed him and became general manager. And I think part of it was because of his personality.

There was another person, Mr. Goit, that was Water System Head. He was the Aqueduct Division Engineer. He was so unprepared for the job. Unknowledgeable about all the other Division activities, as he had been in Independence and Bishop most of his career. He returned voluntarily to the Aqueduct Division.

NELSON: But he also gave up a position because of health?

MAYEDA: Yes. After Sam Nelson, Ed Kanouse became General Manager. Kanouse was sharp, but he personally didn't want the job. He would have been so much happier designing and researching power lines and transmission design.

NELSON: You know he passed away a couple weeks ago.

MAYEDA: Yes. He was in our Optimist Club. Nice guy. Bob Phillips was next. He was a sharp guy, but he just didn't like politics. Then we had this character from Florida, Winnard?

NELSON: Louis Winnard.

MAYEDA: Yes, Louis Winnard.

NELSON: Do you have any, you had almost 35 years in, early on or at times, was there someone who impressed you, kind of a role model in your early days of your career that you admired?

MAYEDA: Yes, I think Dan Bundy who was our senior engineer in planning. He was quite a character. He had, I think, a little drinking problem. A lot of health problems. I guess he probably visited more hospitals and clinics than anyone I know. He must have had every "itis" there was. Fleabitis, bursitis, colitis, etc. I wouldn't say he was a dynamic person or a real great teacher, but a personality that fitted in where working with him was so pleasant. He always told jokes and he never tried to grab the limelight or say, "I am the boss, so when you guys do something, I'm going to take all the credit." He was always the one to pass on praise and so forth to people who did the work. Very easy going fellow. I think everybody that worked with him liked him as a friend.

Mr. Itter, who was our division head in the 50's and 60's, was kind of an enigma because he was such a defensive person. I think he felt that he should have been in water system management and when Max Socha and some other people moved ahead of him, it

just about tore him apart. He was an old Dutchman from Pennsylvania.

NELSON: Did you take over water operating?

MAYEDA: Yes.

NELSON: For how many years?

MAYEDA: A little over two years.

NELSON: You retired from this position? And you took over after Gayle Holman retired?

MAYEDA: Yes. Ron McCoy came in there as my assistant.

NELSON: By that time, in the early days in water operating with those districts, they were pretty much autonomous in the early days from my understanding. Those district superintendents kind of ran their own operations. That had pretty much gone by the wayside, I guess?

MAYEDA: Well yes, about the time I got up into water operating the question of budget, recognizing cost and overheads and all indirects become such a big issue. We felt that it was necessary to get down to basics and give an introduction and orientation to all of the superintendents, their assistants, and top level

foreman to get a better understanding on budget and costs - why their dollars become so large in all their different work activities.

It used to boggle my mind because on all of the capital programs, you put down \$1 for labor, \$1.69 was added as overhead. This figure comes from engineering and supervision, joint, Land Division and all other indirect activities and it is very shattering to these guys in the field to be told that what you think you're doing for \$1 is actually costing the Department almost \$3.

NELSON: A million dollars suddenly becomes three million.

MAYEDA: We set up training classes, reached all the way down to the first level foreman to give them an understanding of costs to look at their various activities, plan and schedule their work efficiently, short cut their time spent on the job and reduce their costs. Also cutting down on O & M activities as they were big expenses. Just going out and checking fire hydrants or whatever, it doesn't seem like a heck of a lot, but it can really add up to a lot of money.

Various superintendents, and assistants became concerned and active in trying to follow up on costs. Others took the approach that this is the way we do it, you know, and there is always going to be a tomorrow, so why worry about it.

NELSON: Did you enjoy those last two years?

MAYEDA: Oh yes, I think it was a good experience. The activities that were going on were maybe not quite as hectic during the post-war period, but there was still plenty of activity going on. One other thing was that we were streamlining manpower. When Jerry Jones was there and there were almost 1,400 people or more in the Division, gradually as time went by, we kept reducing personnel to 1,000 people. It got to be pretty rough going because we were cutting corners all over the place just to say we're saving dollars, but I think after I left, it has gradually built back up again - maybe today it is 1,100 or more.

I am sure during Jones' period, he was one of those guys that figured that "don't rock the boat, we've got a good thing going." He never was worried about trying to really look at cost cutting or anything like that, they were always living a dream world.

NELSON: Well during that period, and as you say, after the war, the objective was to try to meet that demand which was difficult to meet for a while.

MAYEDA: Yes everything grew like topsy. Even in engineering I can remember the first CE assistant exam. At that time, most of private industry wasn't really moving, the aircraft industry was kind of quiet, the Korean War hadn't really broke loose yet. When I went to Hollywood High School for the assistant's exam, 1,500 candidates were present! I couldn't believe it!

Then a couple of years later when I went to take the associate exam, there was close to 500 candidates and on the

promotional list, there were only 47 or so who passed the exam. I think I was 17. I thought I was on top of the world. I've been very fortunate on almost every exam I took after that, I was in the top four or five, and an opening would occur either where I was working or just above it. I was always in the spot to move up so whether it was just blind luck or what, everything worked out.

NELSON: Then you elected to take retirement when?

MAYEDA: 1983.

NELSON: What month was that?

MAYEDA: Well actually I left in August because the golf group was going on a trip up to Canada, but my official retirement date wasn't until November 1, 1983.

NELSON: You became quite a golfer, I guess, going back to your Army days and then carrying it on in the Department.

MAYEDA: When I came to work for the Department, I was playing a little golf now and then. A few of us started to play after work especially in the summer time when we had the daylight saving time. Then soon we started playing on weekends. A couple of guys that used to be in the Department golf club before the war, started bugging me and said, "Hey why don't you start the Department golf club." I said, "What do you mean, Department golf

club?" "Oh before the war we had a heck of a group. We used to play everywhere during the depression. We went to all these courses and played for \$1 and they were so glad to see someone come out and play. Nobody had money in those days.

So anyway this guy finally brings in some books and he said, "Here's the old books we have and the names of the tournaments and the names of the players and things. Finally I said, "Okay I'll give it a shot so I made up a little bulletin, had it sent around, posted. I guess I scheduled about 8 or 9 tournaments, about one a month and before long I had 150-160 people saying they want to play golf.

NELSON: It became more than just water, department-wide.

MAYEDA: Yes. At that time we were all spread out all over the city and we had personnel in Washington building, 4th Street, Black Building, 2nd Street and Broadway building. I ran the golf club for eight years by myself and it grew to well over 200 people.

I used to write a letter once a year to the Employee Association for assistance similar to other DWP athletic and social clubs. The Association would grant \$1 or \$2 per person usually, and one year I get a phone call and Ms. Dolly Berry called. She said, "I've been on the Employee's Association Board for years and years and I see every year you've come up with this request for some money for the golfers. Do any women play?" And I said, "No." And she said, "Why not?" I said, "Nobody ever

asked me." So she said, "Well, I want to play golf." I said, "That's fine. Why don't you get a group or if you want to come out, let me know. We'll accommodate you." "Okay, I'll sign your request," she said. And about two weeks later she sent a little note and said, "Here's four names of some girls who want to play golf. Can they come and join us?" I said, "Sure." So that's when the women started coming to play. Today, the club is well over 300 people with numerous ladies involved.

NELSON: Do you still play with them?

MAYEDA: Yes, I get to see a lot of the old timers. The club has thirty some tournaments a year, weekend trips to Monterey, Santa Maria and San Diego, Las Vegas and once a year we go on a 10-12 day trip somewhere. This year we're going to Florida for 14 days. We've been to Canada two or three times, Hawaii about three or four times, Mexico three or four times, Jamaica, down into the Bahamas, all over the states, Florida, New Orleans, Colorado, Idaho, and South Carolina.

NELSON: You've got a bunch of guys there that were playing, I mean that you've known then thirty some years you've been playing golf with probably.

MAYEDA: Yes there's probably maybe only a handful of the original group that started. There's a lot of them that joined over the years. Now there are many new young people playing golf. I don't

think I know one quarter of them. But it's good to see that the club is thriving. It's probably the most active of the extra curricular activities going on in the Department.

Bowling has gone way down, but I remember we used to play baseball, basketball, bowling and golf and the whole year was just filled with Department after work activities.

NELSON: When did you move out here?

MAYEDA: Into this place? 1962.

NELSON: In summing up almost 35 years, how was it?

MAYEDA: Well, like I say, the experience, the responsibility and the ability to promote up and become more than just maybe say "a cog in the wheel" was very gratifying. I had no qualms or complaints. I think there was a multitude of activities and challenges and responsibilities both from the technical engineering standpoint as well as working with people and other branches of the Department.

There were many involvements with city people, with council, the power system people, in state and out of state committees and activities that I was involved in representing the department. So all in all I wouldn't think that there's anything that I felt was a short coming in the time I spent there. I think I enjoyed each morning I got up and went to work, so it must have been worth while.

NELSON: Thanks very much.

MAYEDA: Okay, Dick.