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Elizabeth "Liz" Tana interviewed by Meleia Simon-Reynolds

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Elizabeth “Liz” Taytayon Tana interviewed by Meleia Simon-Reynolds

Speakers: Elizabeth “Liz” Taytayon Tana, Meleia Simon-Reynolds

Date: April 30, 2022

Scope and Contents: In this interview, originally recorded in person, Elizabeth “Liz” Taytayon Tana speaks with Meleia Simon-Reynolds, a member of the Watsonville is in the Heart team. Liz shares memories of visiting the Philippines with her family, the various homes and neighborhoods in the Pajaro Valley that she and her family lived in, gatherings with her families’ extended kinship network which included the Tejada, Taytayon, and Cawaling families, and Filipino dances organized by the Filipino Women’s Club of Watsonville and the Caballeros de Dimas-Alang. She talks about the relationship between father, Clemente Vargas Tana, her mother, Estelita “Lita” Taytayon Tabios, and her step father, Dioscoro Tabios. She also explains their work as strawberry farmers in Watsonville and Lita’s job in the canneries. Throughout the interview, she discusses the ways in which her family, most notably her mother, cared for the manong and integrated them into their family as “uncles.”

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:02

This is Meleia Simon-Reynolds. I'm here with Liz Tana on April 30th, 2022, at her home in Capitola. Alright, so let's get started on this. So, I was hoping that you could tell me a little bit about what you know about your dad, Clemente's, early history. Possibly in the Philippines, if you ever heard any stories about that from anyone.

Elizabeth Tana 00:36

I really didn't. I don't know a lot about his history. Although, when I was 12, we went back to the Philippines. It was the first time for my mom to go back to the Philippines since she'd come to Watsonville, and so I did meet his parents. They lived to be over 100 years old.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 00:54

Wow.

Elizabeth Tana 00:54

Yeah, but they were bedridden. So I met his parents. I was fortunate enough to meet—yeah, my grandparents, and one of his brothers.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 01:03

Wow, what was it like for you to go back to the Philippines?

Elizabeth Tana 01:07

Well, you know, it was—back then, it was very primitive. You know, whole outhouse and stilt houses and I was just really surprised because we landed at the airport, and there're just flying

cockroaches [unintelligible]. Yeah, I'm like, oh, I want to go home now because, you know, it's the things that you take for granted, the conveniences. Yeah, I was 12 so I was kind of rebellious, and I'm like, Oh, I don't want to be here, but it was really a benefit to be able to meet, you know, my grandparents on both my mom and my dad's side.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 01:39

Wow and what—where did you travel to when you were there?

Elizabeth Tana 01:44

Well, you fly to Manila and the first time we went, there were several stops. We stopped in and stayed overnight in Japan. So, we landed in Manila, and then you have to take a domestic flight, which is about an hour to the province that my parents are from.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 01:59

And where where is that?

Elizabeth Tana 02:01

It's Aklan.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 02:04

And are they from the same area? No. So, you went to two different—

Elizabeth Tana 02:09

They're from the same—they're still from the same province, Aklan, but I think the towns that they're from, my mom's from Makato and my dad's from Calimbajan, are probably half an hour to an hour apart.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 02:23

And your—both your sets of grandparents still lived in those—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 02:30

Um, areas? Wow. What was it like to be in their homes? Did your family—did your parents share any stories about like being children when you visited there?

Elizabeth Tana 02:39

Yes.

Elizabeth Tana 02:40

No, not really, it's kind of like they let us experience what it was like to be in the Philippines and, you know, it was like, this is what we, you know, we grew up with so, but it was all new to us. You know, it's it was all completely different.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 02:45

Right, does anything stand out in your memory about the trip at all?

Elizabeth Tana 03:01

Going to my grand—my grandparents house on my dad's side. I remember this rice field, and it was just, all this water and just having to to travel through this, you know, it was kind of weird. And they were in a stilt house, you know, but like I said, my grandparents were bedridden, and they don't have your typical regular beds. They just have the hard beds with the mats and so that's what I remember about my dad's side. On my mom's side, my my grandparents, my mom's parents were divorced. And my grandfather would pop in once in a while, but the thing is, they didn't speak English, so—and we understood a little Filipino, so, they would talk to us and we would answer in English.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 03:53

Okay.

Elizabeth Tana 03:53

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 03:54

Wow.

Elizabeth Tana 03:55

So, there was a communication thing there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 03:57

I know, a lot of families didn't—never got the chance to go home, back to the Philippines and meet their family.

Elizabeth Tana 04:05

Yeah, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 04:07

Did you—did you have a sense that your grandparents were really happy to see you all? I mean, I imagine it was hard for them to not have their grandchildren. So—

Elizabeth Tana 04:20

I think they were very emotional because through letters, that's all they knew about us and when we got there, I remember my mom's mom, Margarita, I remember her crying. And the la—the the next couple of times, I went back, you know, she just cried because it's like, this is my granddaughter, you know, and I don't get to see her all the time and so, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 04:41

Yeah. How many times did you go back?

Elizabeth Tana 04:43

So, the first time was when I was 12. I went again when I was 18. My mom wanted to go back after I graduated from high school because I had enlisted in the Army. So yeah, she wanted to go back and and do that one more trip, and then, we went back again—my mom wanted to go back again in 2016. I can't remember which year, but we ended up going twice that year.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 05:11

Okay.

Elizabeth Tana 05:12

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 05:12

So pretty recent, fairly recently.

Elizabeth Tana 05:14

Fairly recent, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 05:16

How was that trip, that recent trip?

Elizabeth Tana 05:21

It wasn't as primitive as it used to be, and as a matter of fact, I—my brother, Alvin has been several times. I mean, he still lived with my parents, so, they went back quite often and I don't know if my mom shared that with you, but they went, I think, probably once every two or three years. So, Alvin got to go along a lot, and even after he married and had kids, he went with his ex wife and and the kids. I mean, the third time I went, my nephew came with us and I had asked him, how many times have you been to the Philippines, and he said, 10. Like, oh, my gosh, this is my third trip and he had been there 10 times. So, he's really connected with a lot of the relatives, also, but anyway, I had asked my brother, you know, do I need to bring a

converter, you know, yada yada, he says, well, you know, they do have running water and electricity in the houses now, so yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 06:16

Wow, that's really unique. I haven't met anyone from Watsonville, who had been back to the Philippines as many times as your family.

Elizabeth Tana 06:24

Yeah, yeah. My mom went back quite a bit. You know, a lot—and a lot of times what they were doing, they're sending money back there to improve their homes. So, she has a house there and she has relatives that live there, and they take care of the house, but she has a place to go when she goes back there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 06:42

Yeah, that's really cool. So, it must have been very important to your mom to go back all the time.

Elizabeth Tana 06:51

Oh, yeah. Yeah, I think the last couple of times I went—I can't remember—she always made it a big deal to want to go back in January, because that's when they have that big festival, the Ati Atihan, in the province. I guess it happens everywhere, but being that was always a big deal that we went around that time that festival was happening. Yeah, and then and then she wanted to go back another time right around All Souls Day, because that's a big thing culturally where it was—you know, we went to the cemetery, and it was just wild because there were so many cars lined up along the streets. There were vendors selling flowers and candles, I mean, it's—and snacks. You know, it's a big thing for the families to go out and visit their deceased loved ones.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 07:36

Your mom mentioned something in her interview that I thought was really interesting. She said that it was really important to her to help some of the uncle's—

Elizabeth Tana 07:48

Oh, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 07:48

return to the Philippines. Can you tell me a little bit about what that might have meant? I didn't get to ask her.

Elizabeth Tana 07:56

I don't know what—I think she helped in getting their papers. I know she w—she would take them up to San Francisco and do whatever they had to do about getting, you know, their papers, passports, visas, and all that kind of stuff, but I didn't get—I mean, I knew she did a lot of traveling or she would take some of them up to San Francisco. Some of them I remember she also had living with us, too. I have remember one uncle that, he was single and, you know, he lived with us until he passed away, and I remember waking up one morning and the funeral home was coming in and removing his body.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 08:33

Oh, my.

Elizabeth Tana 08:33

Yeah. So, she helped a lot of people. I think she also helped one family that she happened to be up at San Francisco airport, and there was one family there and she ended up helping them, you know, get settled and find a job here in Watsonville.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 08:50

Yeah, she seems like she must have been a real anchor for the community.

Elizabeth Tana 08:55

I think she was, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 08:56

Helping new migrants coming in, were those folks, family members or like folks from the same province, maybe?

Elizabeth Tana 09:04

I think that might have been from the same province. I really don't know. I think it's just that, you know, she recognizes people, she spoke the same language, you know, she helped them as far as an interpretation.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:13

Yeah and she helped the uncles too. Do you remember any of the uncles names who were around?

Elizabeth Tana 09:19

I don't.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:22

And she really sounds like she—it was really important to her to help those.

Elizabeth Tana 09:28

Yeah, you know, there was a couple of them and I think they lived out at the camps. And I don't know if you've interviewed anybody, but there was one camp that's out in Upper San Andres Road, and I know there was another one on Swanton Road in Davenport that we used to visit, and they were just the camps where they were the single Filipinos, and we'd go and visit them. I remember—and we all ca—we all call them uncles. I mean—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 09:56

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 09:56

Everybody's uncle or auntie. There was one Discoro Moises that I think he was single and at the time—and I'm sure immigration has caught on to this about the whole trying to sponsor somebody to bring them over. He had sponsored—and I don't know if she was really a relative, I think my mom calls everybody relatives. Um, he had sponsored one la—lady to come over and she was, you know, much younger and, and on paper were married so that she could come over kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 10:31

What, what do you remember about the labor camps?

Elizabeth Tana 10:39

That they were just the men that were very hospitable. You know, they cleaned up—I mean, a lot of them were field farm laborers, you know, and so they—it was just a communal living. And it's funny how Filipinos, you know, when the kids come over, they're always giving them money and it's like, the parents are like, no, no, no, but they're always, you know, you come home and you've got, you know, cash and I think, my mom kind of does that the same thing now. You know, it's like, you visit somebody, and they've got kids and she's slipping the money, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 11:13

What, how often did y'all go to visit the uncles at the labor camp?

Elizabeth Tana 11:18

I don't remember, but that—those two camps I do remember, like I said, one was off of San Andreas or—no, it was Beach Street. There's one off a Beach Street. There's three of them, there's one on Beach Street, and then another one off of San Andreas, and the one in Davenport.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 11:35

Do you remember what they looked like?

Elizabeth Tana 11:38

They were just regular houses. You know, it's like, it was communal living.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 11:43

How many folks do you think would have lived there?

Elizabeth Tana 11:50

I don't know, three or four?

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 11:54

Yeah. I I've heard some stories about folks who grew up at the camp areas, and I really hope that we can get a sense of, really get a rich sense, from interviewing lots of people about what they were like.

Elizabeth Tana 12:11

What they remember, yeah. Yeah, we were really—I was really young, so I don't really remember. I just remember what you know, we went for a ride and we—this is where we ended up and we stayed in visited for a while.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:23

Would you have meals there?

Elizabeth Tana 12:25

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:26

Yeah. What kinds of food would you have?

Elizabeth Tana 12:28

Oh, typical Filipino food.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:30

Yeah, like what?

Elizabeth Tana 12:32

Um, rice, adobo.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:35

Do you remember any of the uncle's cooking? I have heard that they were cooking at the labor camps a lot.

Elizabeth Tana 12:41

Um, they were I mean, because it's pretty much—it's probably pretty much like fire houses.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:46

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 12:46

You know, they're all cooking, so yeah, but I don't remember seeing any of them cook. We might we might have been just outside playing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 12:53

Yeah, wow. Alright, so I'll go back to your to your dad, Clemente, a little bit. Do you remember anything? Or do you remember being told anything about how he decided to come to the United States or why he decided to come to the United States?

Elizabeth Tana 13:17

Probably because everyone is always looking for a better life. He was one of maybe 12, I don't remember how many. I think at one time, he told me he had 12 brothers and sisters, and he had one sister that my parents helped come over here, and I don't remember when that was, but so he had one sister here that I met. And like I said, I met one of his brothers, when I went back to the Philippines, but he had a couple of other brothers that lived in Manila, but he also shared with me that his mother had suffered several miscarriages.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 13:53

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 13:53

Yeah, so I mean, I think it was just have a better life. What I remember is that he came over and there's one picture that I remembered, and I don't know where it's at, that he was in the US Navy.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 14:05

Before World War Two?

Elizabeth Tana 14:08

Yeah, right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 14:09

I think your mom mentioned that.

Elizabeth Tana 14:12

Yeah, and he was a cook. So, I remember growing up that he did a lot of the cooking.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 14:17

Oh, wow. Do you—do you know what he did when he first arrived to the United States?

Elizabeth Tana 14:25

I don't.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 14:26

Was he a farm worker, do you think?

Elizabeth Tana 14:28

Um, he did a lot of different things and I don't know in which order.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 14:33

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 14:34

And I'm sure you can tell my parents were my parents were 30 years—there was 30 years age difference between the two of them, but my dad was here and what I had heard was that he worked in the fisheries in Alaska. We lived up in Davenport for a while so I think he was working in brussel sprouts and he also did the brussel sprouts out in Moss Landing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:03

Okay. How did you find out he worked in the fisheries in Alaska?

Elizabeth Tana 15:09

He always talked about going to Alaska, and I think—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:09

What did he say about it?

Elizabeth Tana 15:13

Well, I think he would just talk about when I was in Alaska, you know, and he worked the fish. And I think it was like a seasonal thing. It's like, what the seasonal farm laborers do, they go

from area to area, and if there's no work here during, you know, the off season, they would go to Alaska.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:31

Did he—did he say anything about what it was like up there?

Elizabeth Tana 15:35

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:38

Do you think he must have done it often, like more than just one season?

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 15:44

Yeah, do you remember any—hearing anything about the other farm work, like in the brussel sprouts, that he did?

Elizabeth Tana 15:44

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 15:53

Um, I just remember, he just—I just remember that he did the brussel sprouts because—and there were a lot of fields up in Davenport. And like I said, we lived up there for a while, but I was—I must have been about four or five. And then, I remember being out in the field in Moss Landing, and we lived out in Moss Landing, too. So, I remember being out sitting in the car and it was in the brussel field.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 16:20

So he worked in the brussels sprouts when when you were born already?

Elizabeth Tana 16:26

I think so.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 16:27

Right, okay. Okay. So, before before y'all were born before he married your mom, it's kind of vague.

Elizabeth Tana 16:36

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 16:37

Yeah, and he was probably doing seasonal work.

Elizabeth Tana 16:41

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 16:42

And at some point, he joined the Navy.

Elizabeth Tana 16:45

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 16:46

Right. Did you ever hear anything about his experience in the Navy?

Elizabeth Tana 16:51

He never really talked about it. Like I said, I have this one picture that I can still see in my mind, I don't know where it's at, that he was serving one of the officers. And that's all I knew that he that he was in the Navy and became a US—and he became a US citizen.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:04

Right, from the Navy. That's probably how he was able to bring your mom over.

Elizabeth Tana 17:11

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:12

Right. Right, but he didn't serve in World War Two?

Elizabeth Tana 17:17

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:18

No. Do you know that he—if he was still doing farm labor throughout the 40s? Probably.

Elizabeth Tana 17:27

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:29

And then around the 50s, sometime in the 50s, he went to the Philippines—

Elizabeth Tana 17:36

Mm hmm

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:36

And met your mom, did you ever hear anything about that?

Elizabeth Tana 17:41

I didn't.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:41

No?

Elizabeth Tana 17:41

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 17:45

Anything about your—from your mom's perspective, about them getting married or coming to the U.S.?

Elizabeth Tana 17:54

No, they—she never really talked about it, and like I said, I just learned just from reading what she had her little information. So, that's when I learned a bit, but she never really talked about it. As a matter of fact, she didn't really talk about a lot of things. She kept a lot of things to herself.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 18:11

Right. Did you get the sense that their age difference was something that you noticed a lot growing up, or—

Elizabeth Tana 18:24

I noticed it, I noticed a lot just from comments, you know, because I remember being in maybe junior high and someone had seen my dad and said, oh, is that your grandfather? And I'm like, no, he's my dad.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 18:36

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 18:37

Yeah, and that never really never really bothered me, but I think up until that point, when somebody asked if he was my grandfather—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 18:44

Then you realized, oh, he's old.

Elizabeth Tana 18:47

Yeah, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 18:48

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 18:49

But I just had a sense that my parents loved each other up until they got a divorce and and a lot of that was because my dad ended up in a mental hospital after my brother died. I think he blamed himself, and yeah, it just kind of really shattered their relationship.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 18:49

I see. After your brother Alberto passed?

Elizabeth Tana 19:14

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 19:14

That's really hard. Did—did your mom ever tell you anything about why she wanted to come to the United States?

Elizabeth Tana 19:24

No. I think for anybody, you know, it's a better life. It's better than what's happening there, and I think it's, you know, I think that there's a sense of, there's more opportunities here, so, they come over here, and like I said, they se— send money back to the Philippines to help out their families.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 19:47

Yeah, so, it seems like it was maybe your brother, Clemente, was born pretty soon soon after—or are you the oldest?

Elizabeth Tana 19:59

I'm the oldest.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 19:59

You're the oldest.

Elizabeth Tana 20:00

Yeah, and he's 11 months younger than I am.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 20:01

Right, you were born pretty soon after your mom arrived here.

Elizabeth Tana 20:07

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 20:07

Where—where were they living when you were born?

Elizabeth Tana 20:11

Casserly road.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 20:11

Casserly road. Can you describe a little bit of where that—

Elizabeth Tana 20:14

It was almost like a commune. I mean, there were several houses there and The Tejadas lived there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 20:14

Oh, yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 20:14

Yeah, it was like there was several houses there, and I think there was a strawberry field nearby, and so, it was like they could walk to work kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 20:36

Okay, so, see, so, do you know how your family knew The Tejadas before, um, because it sounds like they were really close—

Elizabeth Tana 20:48

They were related. My dad and—oh, gosh i'm spacing out. What was Fred's dad's name? Oh, Godfredo. My dad and Godfredo Tejada, Godfredo senior, were second cousins.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:07

Okay, and your mother is a Taytayon?

Elizabeth Tana 21:10

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:11

So, that's kind of the relationship there.

Elizabeth Tana 21:14

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:14

So they must—they obviously knew each other already before, in the Philippines. Do you know if your dad and Godfredo Tejada immigrated to the US around the same time?

Elizabeth Tana 21:30

You know, they might have.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:32

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 21:33

Um, and you would know, was Fred Tejada.

Elizabeth Tana 21:37

Cause he spent a lot of time caregiving for his dad after his mom died. So, I'm sure his dad shared a lot of stories with him. His dad lived to be like 89 or 90 years old, also.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:37

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:49

I think it's—it's pretty common for the manongs to have migrated with like their cousins or—

Elizabeth Tana 21:55

Right. Yeah, they came over together.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 21:58

I wouldn't be surprised if that was the case, and I I'm just having my memory jogged right now that Loren Cawaling had mentioned that his dad had gone back to the Philippines on one of

those trips back. Possibly the one where your dad came to, and met your mom for the first time.

Elizabeth Tana 22:23

Oh, okay.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:24

And I believe Loren said they traveled together on the same.

Elizabeth Tana 22:28

Yeah, and—yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:29

So they must have been close too.

Elizabeth Tana 22:32

Yeah, yeah. I think they I think they did travel together. A lot of them did.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:36

Yeah, wow. So, it was your family, The Tejadas, who else lived up there?

Elizabeth Tana 22:43

I don't remember who else lived up there, but I want I want to say there were maybe two or three houses there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:49

Okay, and did did your parents work in the strawberry field—

Elizabeth Tana 22:54

Mmm Hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 22:55

up there? What was the arrangement with the fields, were they sharecroppers, or were they contract work?

Elizabeth Tana 23:03

I don't—yeah, I don't know what was happening when we were on Casserly Road, but my parents eventually became sharecroppers with Driscoll strawberries, and we were living on Calabasas road when that happened, so that was probably probably when, from the time I was

four years old, and they sharecropped on Jensen Road, in Watsonville. So, I remember, we had like one area near the road, and The Tejadas had another area across the field.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 23:40

Both strawberries?

Elizabeth Tana 23:41

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 23:42

Oh, wow. Do you remember anything about them working in the fi—in the strawberry field?

Elizabeth Tana 23:49

Oh, yeah because we used to go during the summers.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 23:52

What what what can you remember about that?

Elizabeth Tana 23:55

Um, well, we run around—we were running around eating strawberries all day. We helped make the, or we helped go to pick up the crates for the strawberries, and that was like across the field and they were in a shed. So, we'd have to go over and get them, but that's when my brother Albert died, because we were all on the back of a pl—paddle truck, and we had gone to go get some crates and we were coming back to our side of the field when he fell off the truck and was run over. Yeah, so it was it was during the summer, but yeah, and I remember my dad, you know, going back sometimes after we'd gone home and he had to go back and irrigate the strawberries. And it was one time we were eating strawberries and he got really upset, and he was like—they were just, they just had sprayed pesticide. So, he was concerned that we were gonna get sick and he was making us drink this concoction so that we would throw up.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 24:55

Oh my goodness.

Elizabeth Tana 24:56

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 24:59

Around what say ages were you helping out in the strawberry fields?

Elizabeth Tana 25:04

While we were in school, so during the summertime, they would take us to the fields. That was you know, no childcare, so, you come and help your parents work.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 25:11

Right, or like elementary school?

Elizabeth Tana 25:13

Yeah, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 25:14

Middle School.

Elizabeth Tana 25:16

Yeah, cause like I said, my brother was five when he passed away. I was seven, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 25:22

That must have been really hard.

Elizabeth Tana 25:24

It was very traumatic.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 25:25

For your parents too.

Elizabeth Tana 25:25

Mmm hmm. Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 25:36

Do you remember, or could you describe what a typical day might have been for your family when they were working in the strawberry fields?

Elizabeth Tana 25:46

Yeah, I really can't remember and I think sometimes we might have stayed home because I think around that time, my mom was also working for the cannery. So, she was working nights. As a matter of fact, yeah, you know, we lived out in Moss Landing, and I remember my dad—my mom didn't learn to drive until I was probably five or six, and my dad having to drive her to work at the canneries. So, he would leave us at home, but we had a neighbor that kind of watched out for us and I don't even remember their names, but um, yeah, he would drive her to work and then go and pick her up. So, yeah, that was—I was around five at that time,

and I was going to Mass Landing School. And I remember going to school and then taking the bus home and walking home and sometimes they were still like—because my mom would also help them though strawberry fields, they were out working, and it was kind of like we were latchkey kids. So, you know, we let ourselves in the back and then we'd stay there until they got home, and then my mom turned around and my dad would take her to work at the cannery.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 26:54

That's a long, hard schedule.

Elizabeth Tana 26:55

Yeah, yeah, and my mom did that for a while. She worked a couple of jobs.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 27:01

How many years do you think she was doing that?

Elizabeth Tana 27:04

Um, let's see. She was still working for the canneries up until I was probably seven or eight. So, we had since moved to Calabasas and my dad was—they were sharecropping with Driscoll at that time. You know, I don't even remember, but like I said, I remember she just learned, she just barely learned to drive when I was like six years old.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 27:33

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 27:34

Because I remember one story she told us about the instructor taking her up to Mount Madonna, having her drive up that Hecker Pass.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 27:42

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 27:43

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 27:43

Oh my, your mom, she mentioned actually, in her interview, that she drove around a lot of the other ladies later in—once she learned

Elizabeth Tana 27:51

Once she learned how to drive, it was just it was just wild. I think, you know, just that that experience and just knowing that she took her driving test on Hecker Pass Road just blows my mind, but after my brother died, and my dad didn't do so well, he was—they quit work. He quit the strawberries, and I remember him being over in the hospital on Emeline Street. I mean, it really affected him mentally and then he ended up at Agnew State Hospital, when it was over in the San Jose area, and my mom driving over 17, constantly. And then, she was also taking us out of school by that time, I think. I think we lived on Green Valley Road because I was going to Amesti School. She would come and pick us up from school and, you know, it was in the 60s, at a time when you didn't talk about mental illness and it was like don't tell anybody where you're going, but she would pick us up, take us out of school, and we'd go and visit my dad.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 28:52

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 28:54

But I remember—yeah, the the car rides over Highway 17.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 28:58

Yeah, did—did your dad have to stay in the hospital for a long time?

Elizabeth Tana 29:06

Um, he was in Agnew, you know, I don't—I'm not really quite sure, maybe a couple of years. And then, he came home and and my, I want to call, my Uncle Discoro was around a lot. He was around a lot, even when they were sharecropping with Driscoll, and I don't know what work he did. I think he was also a farm laborer, but he was around a lot and so he was a support to my mom. And so, you know—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 29:35

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 29:36

I guess that's how their relationship developed, but we all ended up living together then too.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 29:44

Your mom, you you, and the kids.

Elizabeth Tana 29:48

My—yeah, he happened to be—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 29:50

Clemente

Elizabeth Tana 29:50

Yeah, he happened to be there a lot. So, he ended yeah, like I said he was really a support to my mom, but then, you know, when my mom and he—when they went to work during the day, my dad was at home and he was pretty much the caregiver.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:04

I see.

Elizabeth Tana 30:05

And so he, um, he was Alvin's babysitter

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:09

Mmm hmm

Elizabeth Tana 30:10

Or caregiver.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:10

Mmm hmm, I see. Wow, that's an interesting dynamic in the home. What what year did your mom and Discoro get married? Do you remember?

Elizabeth Tana 30:27

I don't remember. Um, 67 maybe 69.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:32

69.

Elizabeth Tana 30:34

1969, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:36

And he moved in to the house—

Elizabeth Tana 30:37

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 30:37

around that time? Interesting. Was it was it kind of like, um, would you describe it as like a co-parenting situation?

Elizabeth Tana 30:48

I don't think it was really a co-parenting. I think it was kind of like—it was kind of like helping out. You know, some of these single Filipino men were— yeah, they just got invited to live in the house too. So, I mean, we had a big enough house and I—as I recall, we were living on Buena Vista Drive at the time, and I had my own room, and I think Discoro shared a room with my brother, and then my parents had the other room.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 31:18

Interesting.

Elizabeth Tana 31:19

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 31:20

Interesting.

Elizabeth Tana 31:21

But you know what, even when we live on Calabastas road, we had two other gentlemen that were also living in our house, and I don't even remember how many bedrooms that house had, but it was like a U shaped house. And the kitchen was off on one side, and then a mudroom, and then the living room was in the middle, and then the bedrooms are off on the other side. So, my parents had a bedroom, there was an extra bedroom. I can't remember which one was my bedroom, and then maybe two other bedrooms at the end of the house. And we had a cornfield in the backyard, or my parents grew vegetables in the backyard, because I remember Albert, playing out in the middle of the cornfield one day, and he started a fire out there. He also started a fire on one of the mattresses, but we had two gentlemen that were living in the house and they were farm laborers also, and I can't even remember their names, I think one was Uncle Ricardo, but they worked with my parents, or you know, they'd go to work with my my dad, so.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:31

Do you remember like, what time they would leave for work in the morning?

Elizabeth Tana 32:36

I don't.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:37

It must have been awfully early.

Elizabeth Tana 32:38

It was early, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:41

And they'd come back around evening?

Elizabeth Tana 32:44

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:46

Do you do you remember what they would do once they would get off work?

Elizabeth Tana 32:52

You know, I don't remember.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 32:53

Yeah, what what do you think, thinking back on this experience of kind of living with so many Manong and having any up bringing with lots of different adult mentor, adult folks around, what what what are your thoughts on it, growing up in that situation?

Elizabeth Tana 33:15

You know, I just thought it was a normal, natural thing, you know, I never really thought much about it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 33:21

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 33:22

And I don't think I ever had to explain that to anybody that, you know, we had extra people living in our house. So, I didn't think it was unusual.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 33:28

Yeah, do you think that it was formative for your outlook on life or personality in any way, now that you're an adult?

Elizabeth Tana 33:37

No, I don't think so. I think that there's a lot of people that—I mean, I think like in the Hispanic culture, you get a lot of families that all live together because that's just the way you survive,

and kind of like, in my own situation, you know, I'm—I've got two other roommates. So, it's basically I'm just renting a room, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 33:53

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 33:53

It's shared living.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 33:55

Right. So, did it—do you do feel that the the uncles and folks that lived with you growing up, that they were truly family members?

Elizabeth Tana 34:04

Yeah, I think that we just consider them family and they just, and they helped out a lot. I mean, they really supported each other, but I think because we had so many growing up that I just thought—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 34:19

Everyone's family.

Elizabeth Tana 34:20

Everyone's family, and I never thought anything of it, I just thought this is just what they do. You know, they take care of each other.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 34:28

Do you know if any of the other families had similar situations? The other families you were close with.

Elizabeth Tana 34:34

I think they did. Yeah, because I think a lot of them were like, trying to bring some of their relatives over and and it was like, you'd meet a new relative and oh, they just came from the Philippines, and you know, they're living with their the other families. Yeah. So, yes.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 34:47

Um, I want to talk a little bit about the other houses. So, there's obviously a really tight knit group of people who are living together, or you living close together? Did y'all have any events or parties or gatherings together?

Elizabeth Tana 35:08

All the time.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 35:09

What were those like?

Elizabeth Tana 35:10

Well, like I said on Casserly Road, I remember a couple of houses there. And then, we lived on Tulsa Lane and the story that I heard was that my parents helped my dad's sister, Beatrice, and Ted Cesar build their house. So, they built a house up on Tulsa lane, but there were a couple of other little houses that were there too, and we lived in one of those little houses. There was a strawberry field off off in the distance, you know, on the same property, so, they worked the strawberries there. There were some other houses there too, but there was just a lot of, you know, close living. And then, when we lived on Calabastas road, The Cawalings also lived on Calabastas road, they lived down down the road, down at the end, and I remember a lot of parties at our house on Calabastas road.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 36:07

Could you share a memory of a party or something particular that stands out to you?

Elizabeth Tana 36:12

Um, I think they just all got on the phone and sometimes it was at the last minute. Hey, I'm having a party and all of a sudden you know, you got all these—The Cawalings are there, The Tejadas are there, The Taytayons are there. My other cousin, Lorna Tejada, they lived maybe a couple of blocks from us, you know, they would come over and like all of the kids we just played out, you know, I remember running around on the front lawn. The ladies were wherever in the living room gossiping, and the men were, I think in the garage drinking whiskey, you know, Johnnie Walker.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 36:47

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 36:48

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 36:51

Do you remember any of the food at the events?

Elizabeth Tana 36:54

There was always a lot of food, abundance of food. The Taytayons lived on Marchant lane, and there were a lot of parties at their house that I remember. I remember pictures and they had a

big backyard. So, there was always like barbecues, but there was always a lot of food. You know, the rice, the pancit, adobo.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:11

Mmm hmm.

Elizabeth Tana 37:12

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:13

What was your favorite food growing up?

Elizabeth Tana 37:14

Growing up, my favorite food was dinuguan, and I'm sure you probably heard—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:18

Yes.

Elizabeth Tana 37:18

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 37:19

Um, actually I think it's interesting that you say dinuguan, and I think it kind of tells me that your family was maybe a little bit more culturally Filipino than other folks because people, most other people talking about the food, they'll say chocolate meat, but I don't know what it's called. Like, I don't know what it's called. That's really common, but the fact I feel that you say that dinuguan, maybe shows—

Elizabeth Tana 37:53

Oh, for a time there. It was it was what I absolutely loved, and probably for about five years, I mean, it was like with rice. And then, there was a time when I couldn't stand eating it at all. It was just weird, but you know, we lived on Calabasas Road, we had like this mudroom. There was the garage, the—you know, they would drive in and we had this mudroom and occasionally, my dad would come in with this gunny sack and drop it on the floor. And we're like, oh, what's that? And you would see it moving, well, they had got some chickens and they were going to be, you know, killing the chickens and making Adobo.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 38:26

Oh, nice.

Elizabeth Tana 38:27

Yeah, so I remember that too. Or slaughtering pigs, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 38:33

What was that like?

Elizabeth Tana 38:35

I didn't actually see that happening. I think they went u— I think they went up to the camps to do that and then just brought the meat back, but I do remember the gunny sack with the with the moving chickens. And you know, the uncles go out in the backyard, slitting the neck and, and doing whatever they had to do to prepare it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 38:52

Do you remember any of the other things that your father and the other uncles did for fun?

Elizabeth Tana 38:58

I don't.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 39:00

Did they participate in cockfighting at all? Do you know?

Elizabeth Tana 39:04

Um, not where we would see it. Again, I think that's probably one of the things that happened at the camps and not where we would see it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 39:11

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 39:12

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 39:13

I wonder if your brothers ever saw that. Possibly a gender divide and how—

Elizabeth Tana 39:22

Yeah, it could be, I'm sure Alvin's probably seen it a lot. I remember going to the Philippines and there's like this big arena where they do it. So, you know, we just drove by and I didn't go but it was like, it was almost like this big arena and you could just see all these people—there were tears, and you can see all these people because the chickens were down below. So it's, it's legal there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 39:43

Yeah. Yeah. Interesting. Did your dad and the other uncles go gambling?

Elizabeth Tana 39:55

I remember a lot of road trips to Reno. Um, growing up that was the thing that they all a lot of them like to do. We would drive over to Reno, and I remember we had a station wagon at the time, or an Impala, but you know, the parents are driving and there wasn't staying in a hotel, it was like we would sleep in the car. They would park at the—they would park up the Greyhound bus station, the parking lot, and you know, leave the kids, we would be in the car, sleeping in the car, or they give us money and my brother would play pinball at the Greyhound station. And while they were gambling, and then come back, and you know, here's food and you know, so they would just spend the night gambling and then we'd drive back.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 40:39

Wow.

Elizabeth Tana 40:39

So there was no, there was no, you know, shelling out any money for hotel.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 40:43

Right. Yeah, I know a lot of folks went went to Reno alot to gamble.

Elizabeth Tana 40:49

So, they did that a lot. There were a lot of those road trips where we slept in the car. And then, later on, as I grew older, Rosita Tabasa had the Philippine Gardens, and they had the buses that went to Reno. So then there was that, you know, dropp me off at the Philippine Gardens, so, I can catch the bus, and be sure to come pick me up, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 41:09

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 41:09

Yeah, they would leave like on a Saturday and come back on Sunday. So, it was like an overnight bus trip. Same principle, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 41:17

The uncles and the folks would do that?

Elizabeth Tana 41:20

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 41:20

Did the wives ever go?

Elizabeth Tana 41:21

Oh, yeah. My mom did that quite a bit. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 41:26

Did—do you remember the Philippine Gardens at all?

Elizabeth Tana 41:29

Um, a little bit. I was young, and I can't remember when they closed, but yeah, and it was there for quite a while. I don't remember eating there. I remember, you know, basically growing up, and the bus that would take them to Reno.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 41:45

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 41:47

As I grew older, after I had my son, I had gallbladder surgery, and I couldn't—I couldn't lift him. So—and we were living with my mom at the time on Doering—not Doering, Trembly lane, and so my mom moved my son's crib into her room. She took care of him at night, you know, I mean, so I wouldn't have to get up and change his diaper and such. And and she'd go to work during the day. My stepdad was retired, and I remember him—I see this picture of him because he was parked across the street, he parked his car across the street. I have this picture of him with my—with his diaper bag, carrying my son going to his car, and he would take him to the Philippine Gardens. My son would come back and he'd have change in his pockets, and he'd be—he was learning to just talk, and he'd be talking like an old Filipino. So, because he was, you know, spending the day at the Philippine Gardens in the back room, in the card room.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 42:50

Wow. That's so interesting, but you remember them going, but you were probably busy didn't really go and see them actually—

Elizabeth Tana 43:01

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 43:02

Playing cards.

Elizabeth Tana 43:03

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 43:03

Yeah. Wow. Do you remember any other places in like downtown Watsonville where folks would go often?

Elizabeth Tana 43:15

Not really. Maybe the supermarket, Daylight Market was on lower Main, but I don't remember any other places. My parents would take Alvin to the barber shop for his first haircut. The Ragsacs had a dry cleaners on lower Main. Ideal—Ideal cleaners. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 43:37

Yeah, lots of Fillipino businesses.

Elizabeth Tana 43:40

Yeah, and what really impressed me about that dry cleaning business was that they also did a lot of the mending. I remember some of the things coming back. I'm like, Oh, wow, you know, they fixed this whatever it was. More than just dry cleaning, they did the mending also.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 43:54

Yeah, wow. We can go back to the neighborhoods where you lived. Is there a neighborhood, I know you lived a lot of spots, that you like the best, or you feel was the most like ideal childhood memories you have of growing up in one of the houses or with the na—in one of the neighborhoods?

Elizabeth Tana 44:22

I'd have to say Calabasas road. I think that was—my brother Albert was still alive, and like, um, like I said, we had this cornfield in the back, but there's a lot of memories there. There there were a lot of parties that were held there. I remember we were the all of us kids playing on the front lawn, well into the dark. Those are more happier times. Of course that was around the same time that Albert died too. So then, we ended up moving to Doering Lane, but I think that was the place where there were more memories. We had—I had started school, kindergarten, in Moss Landing but then, first grade was at Calabasas. My mom worked for the cannery, so she worked at night. So she was sleeping during the day, and I remember my brother, Jr., and I going to school and we lived across the street from Calabasas school, so we walked to school, and Albert wasn't quite in school yet. He was supposed to be at home, but my mom would be sleeping because she'd worked the night shift. And I remember one memory where the school

constantly had to call my mom because Albert was coming across the street looking for us, and they had those windows, those rectangular windows that opened out, and he'd be like this, through the windows trying to find us. So yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 45:42

Wow.

Elizabeth Tana 45:42

But yeah, we lived right across the street from the school, so, you know, we could also run across the street and play in the playground, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 45:48

Yeah. What what do you think it was like for your mom to work in the canneries?

Elizabeth Tana 45:56

Um, she never really talked about it. I mean, I know it was hard work, but she did it for a number of years. I guess she just never really talked about it, but I know that there were a couple times there were a couple of ladies that died because they got caught up in the machinery.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 46:14

Oh my god.

Elizabeth Tana 46:14

Yeah. So there was that. I think that's where she met one of her longest relationship friendships. She had met Maria, I think, working in the canneries, and then they ended up being pregnant together at the same time. My brother and Maria's son are around the same age. When we lived on Doering lane, The Cawalings lived next door to us, and Maria's family, The Ramos', lived down the street from us. So yeah, there was always a lot of a lot of families that we knew that all lived, you know, close by.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 46:50

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 46:51

The Tejadas lived down the street.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 46:55

Yeah, your mom said in her interview that she felt like all of those kids were her kids—

Elizabeth Tana 47:02

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:02

And that she could just walk to see them.

Elizabeth Tana 47:04

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:05

Whenever she wanted.

Elizabeth Tana 47:06

Yeah, you know, it was weird because like I said, Maria's family lived down the street and the oldest son Mario was my age, and I think—I think all of our kids, they were one right after the other. The next son was the same age as my brother, Jr. and then Tina would have been the same age as Albert. And then like I said, they both had another son. Well, Maria also had another daughter, I think—well after, but at the same time, you know, Alvin and Jaime, were the same age.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 47:39

Are they—is that family still around, locally around?

Elizabeth Tana 47:43

Maria just passed away last year. She had Alzheimer's, but she worked with my mom at a lot of several several different jobs. My mom also worked at De un Amor, it's an Alzheimer's facility in Corralitos, Maria worked there also, and it was just ironic that Maria had Alzheimer's. She ended up living with her daughter. I think her—the kids kind of shuffled around because Mario, my age, is living up in Washington State, and then Jaime and Benedict are living in Southern California. I want to say Bakersfield and San Luis Obispo. Tinos in Michigan, and then their daughter was living in Tennessee, and that's where Maria had passed away. She was living in a Alzheimer's facility.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 48:35

Were they a Filipino family as well?

Elizabeth Tana 48:37

Um, yes. Maria's Hawaiian.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 48:41

Oh, okay.

Elizabeth Tana 48:42

And her husband, Benedict, was Filipino.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 48:49

Yes, I've heard of—I think someone's mentioned this family before.

Elizabeth Tana 48:53

Yeah, and they were real support to each other. When Maria's son, her first son, Bernie died in Vietnam. Yeah. So there was the mix, and then she remarried Barrientos, and that's when she had another daughter.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 49:15

And and your mom and Maria met in the canneries?

Elizabeth Tana 49:18

Yeah, so they were friends for a long—I mean, they were like, you know, lifelong friends, so.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 49:25

Yeah. Wow. Do you—so your mom had to sleep during the day from the Cannery?

Elizabeth Tana 49:32

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 49:33

She must have been must have been very taxing to work all night.

Elizabeth Tana 49:37

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 49:37

In such a physically demanding job too.

Elizabeth Tana 49:40

Yeah, yeah, but she never really talked about, you know what they did. I mean, I—to me, I think it was like all assembly line work, and I think she probably took me there a couple of times, but it was like you didn't really, I mean, you can kind of see the ladies working on the line, but you didn't get too close because you know, you know, OSHA and all the safety.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 50:01

Yeah. Do you remember any of the strikes that happened in the canneries in Watsonville?

Elizabeth Tana 50:07

No, I think that would happen probably later on as an adult, but I really didn't pay much attention to it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 50:14

Right. Right. Do you know your mom may have not been working?

Elizabeth Tana 50:18

No, she—I don't—she was—I don't think she was working for the canneries any longer by that time, because she had also worked at Dominican hospital.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 50:25

Yeah. Yeah. Did your father, or Discoro, or any of the other uncles, do you remember them participating in any agricultural labor strikes or hearing stories?

Elizabeth Tana 50:40

No, no, I don't think there were any strikes during the time that they were working.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 50:44

Right, maybe later in this?

Elizabeth Tana 50:50

Yeah, I don't remember any happening in the 60s. I don't, yeah. I don't remember them being involved in any strikes.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 51:01

Okay. Do you—let's see. Is there anything else about the neighborhoods and the extended family network that you think is important to share or other memories that stand out that are really close to your heart?

Elizabeth Tana 51:19

Oh gosh, I just remember like on Doering Lane, like I said, you know, The Ramos' living down the street, The Cawallings living right next door to us. I mean, we were over at each other's house a lot. You know, like my mom would say, you know, the kids were always around, you know. You know, it takes a village, I guess.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 51:33

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 51:40

But I remember The Cawalings mom, Aldina, she made the best pancakes, and we had a lot of fruit trees in our backyard. And they—the backyards were just connected. I mean, we just—there was no fence, so we were, you know, they were either in our backyard picking plums or apricot eating them off the trees. Or we were playing in their front yard. They had a front lawn. We had I think, rocks, low maintenance, but they also had a chicken pen and just, you know, jumping off the chicken pen and I think they had chickens back—It was a chicken coop. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 52:17

Were there um—so, The Ramos family was mixed, were there other families who were not Filipino living around you that you can remember?

Elizabeth Tana 52:29

Um, not really. I think they pretty much kept to themselves. I mean, we knew who they were.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 52:37

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 52:37

Like, Grandma Tracy lived across the street and we just thought she was a mean old mean old grandma, but I think they pretty much kept to themselves. We pretty much you know, we knew each other, so we hung out together, but um, yeah, I think even on Calabasas road, there was one family that lived next door to us, Jack and I forget what his wife's name was. We saw them quite a bit. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 53:12

Okay, so I want to ask about the different social clubs that your family participated in. So, I know your mom was heavily involved in the Filipino Women's Club. Can you remember anything that she was doing for the club or any of those events? What were they like?

Elizabeth Tana 53:34

You know, she didn't share a lot of them. Um, I just knew that they had to do stuff, but they didn't really tell us what they were doing. They had meetings to go to, you know, nothing that we ever went to. I mean, I know they had their officers and such.

Elizabeth Tana 53:51

I don't really remember what events they—the Women's Club put on, though.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 53:52

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 53:54

Right. Did they—did you ever go to any dances?

Elizabeth Tana 53:54

Oh, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 53:54

Yeah. What what club will or group would have been putting on the dances?

Elizabeth Tana 54:05

You know, it might have been the Women's Club, I don't remember. I don't remember which group was putting on—and I can't find my album, but I do remember going to the dances. I was only 12 and it was like, I guess everybody's Filipino daughter had to go to these things. A lot of a lot of the girls were older than me. I mean, Trish Ragsac, Francis Tabancay, they were all older than me. I think I was the youngest one, but you know, I remember going to these dances and then they had this social box and a lot of it was, you know, popularity, ticket sales and such. So, I was kind of forced to do it. I was resentful at the time, but I'm kind of glad that I experienced it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 54:51

Why?

Elizabeth Tana 54:53

Just because culturally, you know, I could look back on and say, oh, yeah, I was part of that.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 54:57

Right. I know what the social boxes are, but can you describe a little bit about what the social boxes were?

Elizabeth Tana 55:04

Oh my gosh, it was like these men paid to dance with you, you know, so you're up there and I'm like, I think I hated it, because I didn't know how to dance. So, but yeah, that was basically what it is. You know, it's it's it's a money dance.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:25

Yes.

Elizabeth Tana 55:26

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:27

And it's the uncles primarily.

Elizabeth Tana 55:29

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:31

Do you—do you think that the uncles really enjoyed these events?

Elizabeth Tana 55:37

I think they did. I think it was a social event, yeah. The dances were.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:41

What what would you wear to the dances, the social box?

Elizabeth Tana 55:45

Um, gosh I don't even remember. I remember having a couple of the butterfly dresses.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:54

Mmm hmm.

Elizabeth Tana 55:54

Yeah, but—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:55

The terno?

Elizabeth Tana 55:56

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 55:58

What were those like?

Elizabeth Tana 56:02

I didn't have a choice in picking them out. My mom picked those out. This is what you're gonna wear, and I remember Cinderella shoes. They were like these vinyl clear shoes that were so

tight, and it was like driving to the Vet's Hall and she was like, turn on the heater, put your feet under this or they'll stretch out kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:19

Oh my gosh.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:22

Where where did you get the dresses from? I know your mom had many terno dresses.

Elizabeth Tana 56:22

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 56:23

Yeah, I don't know where she got them from.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:29

You think that they were from the Phillipines?

Elizabeth Tana 56:33

She might have gotten them from the Philippines or I don't know if she—there was a place in San Francisco. I don't know. Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 56:39

I just I don't know where she got them from, but it's just, you know, here, this is what you're going to wear.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:39

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:43

Did she go to the—to San Francisco often?

Elizabeth Tana 56:46

Oh, she did. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 56:47

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 56:48

They liked to go up to San Francisco a lot. I remember growing up, they would go up there, to go to the wharf and they would be coming back with crab and they would go to the bakeries up there and what we call the clear gelatinous, puto and all the spongy cakes.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:06

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 57:06

Yeah. So, they went up a lot to go to Chinatown.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:10

Mmm hmm, okay.

Elizabeth Tana 57:12

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:12

And probably have community with other Filipinos?

Elizabeth Tana 57:16

Yeah, yeah, cause we did have a lot of relatives in San Francisco. My dad's sister Beatrice lived up in San Francisco for a while. So, yeah. They had relatives in Stockton and Richmond.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 57:31

Did y'all visit them too?

Elizabeth Tana 57:34

Um, I remember going to San Francisco there were a couple of families, like I said, my dad's sister lived up there. There was another family, The Briones that lived up there. So, I do remember visiting them, and I know that they visited relatives in Richmond, and not Stockton so much, but yeah, I remember going to San Francisco a couple of times.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:01

Going back to the to the dances, I remember seeing a photo in your album, where you were kind of being crowned queen, I think that was at Caballeros de Dimas-alang.

Elizabeth Tana 58:11

Right. Right

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:14

Was your dad in the Caballeros de Dimas-alang?

Elizabeth Tana 58:17

Um, I think he was but I think he was—I don't think he was an active member, probably a passive, because like I said, after he got out of the mental hospital. I mean, he got involved as much as he could, but I don't think he was, it was more of a passive participation.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:34

Was Uncle Discoro in the—

Elizabeth Tana 58:37

Um, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:38

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 58:39

I think they all were, and you know, whatever they were called to do, whatever they were called to sponsor, they did.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 58:47

Right. What was that event like, where you were being the queen? Do you remember?

Elizabeth Tana 58:52

You know, that was after a combination of social dances, and the whole popularity thing, and I mean, that's what it came to is, who is going to be crowned what, and and so then there was the queen, and then all the princesses. And like I—I was 12 years old. It was kind of like, I was forced to do this, and yeah, I just went along with whatever my mom said. I didn't really fully embrace it at the time, but like I said, growing older, I can look back and say, oh, yeah, I was part of that, and this is, you know—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:21

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 59:21

The culmination, but um, yeah, getting caught up in that and maybe I guess it was a big deal being crowned by the mayor of Watsonville.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:27

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 59:28

But I, you know, at the time, it wasn't something that I appreciated.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:31

So it turns out, you must have won the popularity—

Elizabeth Tana 59:32

I did.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:32

that time.

Elizabeth Tana 59:35

Well, you know, like I said, it was a popularity, it's its ticket sales. It's who brings in the most money, and I think that there was a competition, not so much between the girls.

Elizabeth Tana 59:45

Because like I said—or maybe it was, I mean, they were older than me, they probably understood it better. I just I just showed up and participated, but I think it was more of a competition between my mom and Ben Ragsac.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:45

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 59:57

Oh, can you explain a little bit why?

Elizabeth Tana 59:59

You know, I just kind of, just an interaction that I kind of glanced at. Kind of, you know, I don't remember what the remark was made, but it was like, oh, okay, so this is what it comes down to.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:10

They're kind of trying to be—

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:13

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:14

the highest ticket sales.

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:16

Mmm hmm. Mmm hmm

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:16

I see. I see. I imagine because you had such a large extended family network, it probably was easy to sell a lot of tickets.

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:24

I think so.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:25

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:25

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:28

Do you think folks were—mostly the people who bought tickets were like the people in their families?

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:35

Yeah, I think they were just being supportive, and I can't remember I think probably, at the time, my mom worked for Dominican Hospital, so probably hit up co workers and such.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:43

Oh, okay.

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:43

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:00:44

I see. I see. What other kinds of events do you remember going to?

Elizabeth Tana 1:00:51

Um, I think when I was really young, they—and I don't know if it's, I don't know which organization it was, had the Christmas parties at the Vet's Hall, where they had Santa Claus come in, and the kids got presents. I think there were probably some picnics or barbecues at the DeL—not DeLaveaga, but Bolado Park.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:14

Can you talk a little bit about those?

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:16

I don't remember them. I just—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:18

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:19

You know, I remember going out there, but I don't remember what organization, I just went along for the ride.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:25

What—where's Balado Park?

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:26

I think it's out in Hollister.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:28

I know a lot of people went to gatherings there pretty often. Was it that like a regular thing?

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:38

It was probably a seasonal thing, probably during the spring or summer.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:42

I see.

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:43

I think like any organization they just came up with, you know, fundraising things.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:49

Yeah. Yeah, and when you say the Vets Hall tell me about the one the one in Watsonville.

Elizabeth Tana 1:01:58

The one in Watsonville.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:01:59

A lot of events were were held there.

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:01

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:02:02

Do you remember the place at all?

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:06

Um, I just know that everything was upstairs. Yeah, busy place.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:02:10

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:10

Yeah, the dance floor upstairs.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:02:13

Yeah. Did you ever participate, you or your siblings ever participate in any of the groups where they taught the cultural dances, to Filipino folk dances? Or tinikling or anything like that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:30

Yeah, no, we didn't, but I know that that was just something that was—I don't know, who put those on, or who was teaching them, but yeah, I—we remember seeing that at some of the events. I think I even saw it at somebody's hou—might have even been at our house one time too, you know, one of the parties and they were doing that.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:02:48

Right. Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:49

But we never learned.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:02:51

I think I think I've heard that it was the women's club that was maybe facilitating the teaching.

Elizabeth Tana 1:02:58

It's probably true. Yeah, but I don't—that wasn't something that I was interested in. I mean, you know, like I said, I was young. I think my mom was putting me in a lot of things that were probably meant for teenagers, but she started me off young and I wasn't really interested in that. I think it was more Chinese jump rope. I was still—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:03:17

Chinese jump rope.

Elizabeth Tana 1:03:18

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:03:19

What other things did you do for fun that you were more interested in?

Elizabeth Tana 1:03:24

Oh, gosh. I think just hanging out with friends, you know. Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:03:30

I think there was something you talked about about, you know, culturally, being Filipino and the Filipino food. I remember, one of the assignments we had at school, it was at elementary school, and it was at Calabasas. One of the things was, you know, what did you have for breakfast, kind of thing, and I was so embarrassed to say what I had for breakfast, because I didn't think it was the normal American breakfast. You know, it was like, I had rice and ha—a hamburger patty for breakfast. And I just thought, Oh, I can't s—you know, I was so embarrassed. I didn't know what to say, so I think I made something up.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:03:30

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:06

I see. Interesting. Were there other Filipino kids at your schools?

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:13

I don't remember any other Filipino kids.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:15

Really?

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:16

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:16

Because you all lived together and you—near each other?

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:19

Oh, well, that is true, but you know, um, in our age group. I mean, with all of my cousins, Fred's a year older than I am. I'm the only one that was born in my year. My brother and I think my brother and Loren Cawalling are the same age, but they might have been in the same class. I don't remember.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:43

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:43

Yeah, but but I was the only one that was born in my year.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:47

I see. I see. So it definitely could have felt—

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:50

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:04:51

like you're standing out a little bit more.

Elizabeth Tana 1:04:54

I think my brother and Fred Tejada's sister, Lucy, are the same, they were born in the same year, but she was going to a different school.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:05:04

I see. So, that was in elementary school?

Elizabeth Tana 1:05:07

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:05:09

Can you talk a little bit about what it was like to be at Watsonville High School? I've heard a lot about it, from a lot of other people.

Elizabeth Tana 1:05:16

From a Filipino standpoint?

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:05:19

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:05:19

Um, I don't think—I think I was trying to fit in with everybody else, not so much the Filipinos. I don't think there was a really cliquish group. I didn't have—I mean, I didn't have a lot of friends. I had maybe a few close friends, but they weren't Filipino. I grew up with one girl Maria, and she was Hispanic, and I think any other friends that I knew weren't full Filipino. They might have been mestizo. They were a mix because as a matter of fact, it was—I think it was surprising when people would ask me and I would say I'm full Filipino. They're like, no. They thought it was surprised. I guess it was unusual.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:06:03

Right, I think it—I think it kind of is. I mean, your family and a lot of those families are—we're kind of were more full Filipino, but most of the people we've interviewed at the project are not.

Elizabeth Tana 1:06:03

Right. They might have their dads might have married here. Couldn't afford to go back to the Philippines and find a wife there, married here, and it was either mixed white or Mexican.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:06:32

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:06:32

Whereas, I think with my dad, like going back to the Philippines, and bringing my mom back, and I think that's what happened with some of the other ones.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:06:42

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:06:43

They actually could afford to go back.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:06:46

Do you—do you have a sense of what made it possible for your dad and other families able to afford to go back?

Elizabeth Tana 1:06:54

I think they really worked hard, and they were saving their money. Like I said, sending it back to the Philippines or they saved enough money to be able to go back. I think that was their goal.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:02

Yeah. That was an important value for them.

Elizabeth Tana 1:07:06

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:08

And maybe the military service, something to do with it?

Elizabeth Tana 1:07:15

Oh, maybe. I think—I think because they traveled around a lot, that they were used to it, and there was—they weren't quite settled, and I guess they got to the point where, I do want to settle down and have a family.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:27

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:07:28

And it was a goal to work towards.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:30

Do you—so, you, you recall people being surprised that you were full Filipino?

Elizabeth Tana 1:07:34

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:07:35

Do you recall any kind of differences maybe that you could have seen growing up, or now, in hindsight, between your experience as a full Filipino and like other people, you might have known who were mixed Filipino?

Elizabeth Tana 1:07:51

No. I just thought they were all the same. I mean, I don't know, but I think there was kind of like that, I don't know, mestizos thought they were better. It was like that kind of mentality, like, you know, whatever. So it never really—so, I never really put much emphasis on it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:08:10

Right. Right. What were the—so was Watsonville High School very ethnically mixed, like, crowd of students?

Elizabeth Tana 1:08:22

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:08:23

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:08:24

Yeah, there was there was quite a mix, so, but you know, everybody had all their little clique-ish groups, too. So, I didn't really feel like I fit in any one specific group. I just, you know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:08:37

Yeah. What kinds of things did you do for fun in high school?

Elizabeth Tana 1:08:41

Hmm, interesting. I wasn't really involved in a lot of different things in high school. I just kind of went to school, did my work, and and went home. As a matter of fact, I think that the last two years of high school, I only went like basically half a day, because I did work experience, and I had a job outside of, you know, after school.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:09:06

What was your job?

Elizabeth Tana 1:09:08

I car hopped at A&W.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:09:10

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 1:09:10

Yeah, as a matter of fact I think my brother too, got a job. I think a lot of it was just basically knowing that my parents were struggling financially, and you know, just to help them out.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:09:21

So you felt it was important—

Elizabeth Tana 1:09:23

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:09:24

To get a job and that was a high priority?

Elizabeth Tana 1:09:26

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:09:27

I see. What what did you do after high school?

Elizabeth Tana 1:09:40

What did I do after High School? I enlisted in the Army, because I just thought, I wanted to do something different. I want—I didn't know what I wanted to do, but I wanted to I guess travel. And so, I enlisted on the delayed entry program, but in the meantime, it became quite stressful, and I developed adult eczema. And so, every time I went up to Oakland, you know, they go through this medical exam, I still had the eczema, and I think the second time they said, you need to get a letter from a doctor, you know, your dermatologist saying this isn't going to affect you, because you'll be in—stationed in South Carolina where it's humid and it may flare up. Well, my dermatologist wouldn't provide that letter. So, I never really served back into duty.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:33

I see. I see. What year around was it when you were—

Elizabeth Tana 1:10:37

1976?

Elizabeth Tana 1:10:42

Or 1975. It was right—It was right after high school, and I remember going to the Philippines, and because my mom thought, oh, well, you're gonna you're gonna be in the army for four years. And so, this is an opportunity to see, you know, to see your relatives, and we came back and my brother had in the meantime, enlisted in the Air Force. So, it was a real surprise, when we got back, and he tells my mom, oh, by the way, I enlisted.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:42

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:10:42

Okay.

Elizabeth Tana 1:10:46

Yeah, and so he was in the Air Force five or six years.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:14

Okay, and how long were you enlisted?

Elizabeth Tana 1:11:19

Well, you know, I was, like I said, I was on delayed entry. So, I think I enlisted in September and—no, I think I enlisted right after high school. So, it might have been June or July, and going back, they wouldn't take me, they wouldn't accept my medical condition, and so I ended up getting discharged in September. So, it was only months.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:42

I see, and what made you want to go into the army? Travel, anything else?

Elizabeth Tana 1:11:48

Yeah, just because I really didn't know what I wanted to do.

Elizabeth Tana 1:11:51

I think there was some opportunities there, I can't remember. I think I looked at the brochure, and I thought, oh, you know, I might try doing this and it might help me figure out, careerwise, what I wanted to do. And then, I think at the same time, that's when Bert Nabor came back. He was going to college in San Diego, and he came back, and we started dating, and I got pregnant, and so—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:11:51

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:12:13

I see.

Elizabeth Tana 1:12:14

I ended up staying in Watsonville.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:12:15

Yeah. When did your mom—so your mom and Discoro were married, around in the 60s at some time?

Elizabeth Tana 1:12:27

Um, lets see. Yeah, si—1969, I think. 68 or 69.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:12:35

I know when you were young, y'all were living together, but how did your relationship with both he and your dad kind of progresses as you got older?

Elizabeth Tana 1:12:44

I think it was more of a caregiver. It was kind of like, you just took care of family because as a matter of fact, we lived on Green Valley Road at the time, and we lived in a house that we shared with another couple, that they didn't have kids, or she couldn't have kids, but he ended up being Alvin's godparents. So, we ended up living with them, and there was a detached garage that we converted into a bedroom. So, my dad, that was where my dad lived. I think he shared—I think he shared the garage with my brother.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:13:18

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:13:19

So yeah, it was more like a caregiver. I mean, again, communal living, you know. There were enough bedrooms for everybody, and everybody just shared in the cooking and cleaning, and such. And then, where did we move to after that? And again, when we moved again, my dad just, you know, he still lived with us.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:13:19

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:13:21

I think after a while—I think eventually he moved to live with his sister where—on Tulsa lane, where there were several houses up there. So, he ended up living up there, and when he had a stroke, she thought she could take care of them, and of course, that wasn't the case, so he ended up in a convalescent hospital, but again, you know, there was still the caregiving. My mom had to go—my mom went back to the Philippines on one one year and my dad was in the hospital at the time, and you know, she said, you need to go and visit him, and of course, I did. And I remember one thing she was saying, you know, his skin gets dry and he doesn't like having dry skin. So, you know, be sure that you use lotion and you know, just the whole caregiving. And then, when he when he got out of the hospital, he came back to live with us and that's—and then he—and then he passed away at home. So, it's I think it's the in the Filipino culture that they take care of each other in that way, which unfortunately, you know, it doesn't happen these days.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:14:54

Yeah. Your mom really sounds like a caregiver because she became—

Elizabeth Tana 1:14:58

She became, yeah, exactly. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:03

Do you think that—do you think that that her whole experience, caregiving for all the uncles and manong, affected her decision to become a professional caregiver?

Elizabeth Tana 1:15:15

Um, I don't know. I don't think that—I think it just kind of fell into place, that this was something that she could do. After—I think that all happened after she had been working at Dominican hospital, but yeah, I think that that was something that was up and coming with some of the other Filipino. I mean, you get some of the Philippine—there were some Filipino families that were opening up nursing homes.

Elizabeth Tana 1:15:36

And so I think that was just an opportunity that came up. Like I said, she worked at De un Amor, so again, that was caregiving for families.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:36

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:45

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:15:45

And then she got known in that in that community, that kind of community. So, I think there was an attorney, that for one of the families that, you know, just kept her name in mind and would call her.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:15:59

I see.

Elizabeth Tana 1:16:00

And say, you know, there's a family that needs somebody as a c—as a live in caregiver, because she had a lot of families.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:16:07

Yeah, it sounds like it. It sounds like she—she told me a lot about a lot of—

Elizabeth Tana 1:16:12

Different families that she was taking care of. Yeah, yeah. One lady that had kids and she'd take the kids to school, but the mom had cancer.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:16:19

Mmm hmm.

Elizabeth Tana 1:16:20

Yeah, a lot of them had illnesses. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:16:28

When did Discoro pass away?

Elizabeth Tana 1:16:35

I'm trying to think. 1989.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:16:40

Not long after your dad.

Elizabeth Tana 1:16:43

Yeah, no, my dad died in 81 or 82, and then, yeah, he died in 1989.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:16:47

I see. So, after you had a kid with Albert Nabor, you all stayed in Watsonville?

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:01

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:02

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:04

Except for when he was going to UCSC.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:06

Oh, yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:06

And we lived in student housing on Koshland way.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:09

How was that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:11

It was exciting. It was a lot of fun. I was working for the bank. So, I was commuting back to Watsonville, because I was working at a branch in Watsonville.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:18

Mmm hmm.

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:19

While he was going to school.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:20

And you had your child already at that point.

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:23

Yeah, Clint was—I think Clint was four or five.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:27

Wow, that's really interesting. I bet. I bet the student student apartments are still exactly the same.

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:36

You know, I think when I drove up there, I'm like, I think there's just a more of a development, but I drove up, and I'm like, oh, yeah, we lived in that apartment. It was right around the corner.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:17:45

So funny. Have you mostly stayed around locally, Santa Cruz, Watsonville, your whole life?

Elizabeth Tana 1:17:52

Yeah, I was born in Watsonville, and we pretty much—we moved several times while I was growing up. And then, I think just the one time that we lived up the university was when I was in Santa Cruz and then like, yeah, then I always lived in Watsonville. I lived in—after my daughter graduated from high school, I lived in Monterey for maybe three or four years before I moved back here.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:14

So, you've lived here for a long time, I'm sure you've noticed change. How would you describe the change of Watsonville, over since you were a kid?

Elizabeth Tana 1:18:24

It's developed a lot.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:25

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:18:26

It has developed a lot. I mean, just a lot of the, um, the shopping centers. Some of the businesses businesses that are no longer there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:34

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:18:34

I remember growing up there were just a lot of apple fields.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:37

Mmm hmmm.

Elizabeth Tana 1:18:38

And yeah, so

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:40

Yeah, and now it's mostly berries, right, around.

Elizabeth Tana 1:18:45

And I remember working in the berries during the summers. We also did strawberries, but yeah, it's it's really developed a lot.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:18:54

Yeah. Yeah. Wh—when you were working in the berries—this is kind of going backwards now. I've heard a lot actually about working in the berries. You said you would help go get the crates.

Elizabeth Tana 1:19:15

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:16

Um, what other kinds of things did you do in the strawberry fields?

Elizabeth Tana 1:19:20

Well growing up, I mean, it was my parents that were that were working the strawberry. So we were pretty much just like run around or sat in the car, and I don't know. I don't know what we did. We read a lot of comic books. I remember reading Archie comic books, and then, during the summers, my parents—my mom worked in the fields also, so we would go to work and work in the strawberries also, or pick raspberries.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:46

What was that like?

Elizabeth Tana 1:19:47

It was hard. It was during the summer it was hot.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:19:49

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:19:51

But again, it was a way to help our our parents financially because we were just turning our checks over to you know, my mom.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:00

I heard about cannery berries. People picking up the berries that would get made into jam.

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:10

Oh, yeah. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:11

They were kind of like—

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:12

The squash—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:13

Berries.

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:13

Yeah, the kind of squashier ones.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:15

Do you remember anything about that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:16

I just remember saying that, you know, these are these are—we either had to pick them for the crates, or they would—we had other cans were that we were just picking specifically for that.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:28

Right. Right. I heard from a couple of different people who worked in strawberries, but other agriculture as kids, they felt they grew a distaste for certain produce that they worked in, over the years. Did you ever feel that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:46

Yeah, raspberries.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:47

Why?

Elizabeth Tana 1:20:48

Couldn't stand raspberries. I don't know. I think we used to eat some of them, and some of them were, you know, not as juicy or whatever, but yeah, I don't care for straw—not strawberries, but raspberries.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:20:58

Yeah. It makes sense that if you had to see them, and pick them, and eat them all the time.

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:06

Yeah, I just—and I remember not always wanting to wear gloves. So, I always had scratches because you're reaching into the—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:12

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:12

bushes. So, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:14

Yeah, raspberries seem particularly unpleasant. Although they're taller, so I guess you wouldn't have to—

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:22

Yeah, you still had to pick the ones down at the bottom, too, but yeah. Those were the ones I didn't really care for.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:29

I imagined working in the strawberries was hard, too, because you had to [unintelligible] down low.

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:33

That was back breaking, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:35

Yeah. Do you remember your parents, particularly your dad, or any of the uncles experiencing any health problems from working in the field?

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:48

If they did, they kept it to themselves. I mean—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:52

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:53

You know, if they were using anything when they got home, like Bengay or something, I just, you know—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:21:59

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:21:59

We weren't really aware of it, or yeah, they didn't show it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:03

Right. It makes sense.

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:05

And they didn't complain.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:07

Yeah, they worked really hard.

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:10

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:12

Did your dad or any of the uncles go fishing?

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:16

Um, my dad didn't, but Discoro did.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:22

Really?

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:23

He went fishing a lot.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:24

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:25

He liked to go fishing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:26

Do you remember anything about that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:28

Um, I don't because I don't, um, I don't I don't remember going out with him. Alvin might have, and I think that, um, Joanne—I know, Joanne posts pictures because she goes and fishes out at Manresa. I think that just parallels what Discoro did. He'd go out to the beach and set up, and it was fun—funny, because I think when he was at home, he was always working on his fishing gear, or developing something that was going to work, or or make it easier.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:57

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:22:57

So, that was his, you know, his hobby.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:22:59

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:23:00

My brother went fishing a lot, Clemente, when we lived on Green Valley Road, they would walk down to Pinto Lake and he'd go fishing. With I think—with The Cawalings, I think.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:23:14

Did your family go to the beaches?

Elizabeth Tana 1:23:17

Um, we might have when I was really young. I remember going, we'd drive up to the coast and go off to a beach off of Moss Landing. I think before I was five years old, there was one time we were the beach and there was a shark attack.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:23:36

Oh, my.

Elizabeth Tana 1:23:36

Yeah, so I remember somebody being hauled up and being taken care of. I mean, he survived, but I think there was a gash on his leg. So, I was young then, but I don't remember going to the beach. I mean, I think when we had relatives that came over from the Philippines, and my mom was showing them around, we might have gone out and had a picnic at the beach. Maybe gone out to Palm Beach or something. I do remember going up to Davenport one time, and we pulled over, and my mom was collecting rocks for her garden. So, it was like, you know, grab some rocks, kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:10

Did you ever collect clams?

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:13

Um, no, but again, when I was young, I remember my parents clamming, and they—they just brought back the clams or mussels.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:23

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:24

I loved mussels.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:26

Yeah, I think that's one of the special things about being here, growing up here, is you have access to—

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:32

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:33

the beaches and—

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:34

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:35

all of that sort of stuff, and I know you said your family had a really large garden in the back.

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:42

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:24:43

What kinds of things, you said corn, what else?

Elizabeth Tana 1:24:45

They might have grown other vegetables, like sayote, I don't really remember. I just remember the corn because there was so many corn stalks. What was I gonna say about that? Yeah, um, we had a really—I mean, ie just went back, even farther this.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:25:03

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:25:05

And I remember we used to have a lot of cats, and when they died, they all got buried back there in shoe boxes. So, we always gave them a ceremony. Going back to the kind of fishing things on on Casserly road, sometimes we stayed the night with the Tejadas, and there was a creek that we would go down and we collect crawdads.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:25:31

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 1:25:31

Yeah, and I remember there—the Tejadas mom one time, took us out to San Luis, and we had a picnic out there. The same thing we were collecting crawdads

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:25:40

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 1:25:41

Yeah, little mini lobsters.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:25:43

Yeah. Sounds real fun. Did your family ever in—like, share the food from the garden with other families? Would you guys like, share food or produce? Or even the uncles who were working in the field [unintelligible].

Elizabeth Tana 1:26:02

I think so. Yeah, I think I think when there wasn't abundance.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:26:05

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:26:05

They would share it. I didn't see it a lot. Like I said, I can't remember other than corn. I remember when my parents were sharecropping with Driscoll, because it was so close to the road, there would be people that would stop and ask if they could buy berries, and my parents would sell them like a crate of strawberries.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:26:21

Oh, okay. Do you know much about the arrangement with the sharecropping with Driscoll? Do you know anything?

Elizabeth Tana 1:26:29

I really don't. I remember, like the supervisor or head person was [unknown], and I think they had a house out there, but I really don't know much about the sharecropping.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:26:40

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:26:41

I just know that they had—each family had their own certain little—and I think one of our neighbors on Doering Lane, I think that family had the, the area right next to us. And then, there was a Japanese family that had an area next to us. The Tejadas were way across the other side of the field.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:26:58

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:26:58

You know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:26:59

All with strawberries?

Elizabeth Tana 1:27:00

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:27:01

Wow. It's it's so interesting. I mean, Driscoll is still like powerhouse up here in Watsonville.

Elizabeth Tana 1:27:08

Yeah, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:27:09

Berries. Yeah. Let me check my notes here. I'm gonna move to my last topic, but is there anything else you want to share about growing up, the experience with your family growing up here?

Elizabeth Tana 1:27:31

You know, it's really interesting that you've really jogged my memory about a lot of things, and I—you know, going into this, I thought, I don't have a lot to share, because I don't remember a lot, but like I said, you jogged my memory, and I think a lot of it was because I after my brother died, I probably blocked out a lot of things. I do remember, like when we lived on Calabasas tha—just struggles that my parents, they pretty much kept things to themselves. They never really talked about anything. We just kind of kind of like, okay, this is his funeral, we're all going kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:28:01

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:28:02

I remember one of my cousin's, my dad's sister's daughter, came to live with us for a while. I think more of a support from my mom, who really didn't talk about it. I mean, she kind of like internalized it, and my dad internalized it in a different way, but I remember my cousin Lolita living with us for a while, and she was going to Watsonville High, and it was kind of fun to have an older teenager in the house.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:28:26

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:28:28

Yeah, like I said, I blocked out a lot of stuff, but you really jogged my memory.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:28:32

It makes sense that you would when there's a trauma.

Elizabeth Tana 1:28:35

Mmm hmm, mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:28:39

Do you ever remember hearing anything about or experiencing any kind of like, discrimination from other folks in Watsonville, maybe white folks around, for being Filipino?

Elizabeth Tana 1:28:56

Not really, I don't think that I I, you know, point blank, I don't think I experienced any of it.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:29:03

Yeah. Yeah. Do you remember maybe ever hearing about other people experiencing it?

Elizabeth Tana 1:29:10

No.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:29:13

Yeah. I, for the most part, I've i've heard from most people reflecting on their childhood that they don't remember any kinds of experiences like that.

Elizabeth Tana 1:29:22

Yeah, I don't remember, and, you know, I mean, like I said, point blank, it might have happened, but we ignored it or—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:29:29

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:29:31

Yeah. Oh, there wasn't a real emphasis on it, it was like whatever.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:29:35

Yeah. Yeah. So, I know we looked at your scrapbooks before, and I was really enjoyed looking at that one particular scrapbook about your growing up. Like it shows your childhood kind of like going to school and these different things in school. I wanted to know like what made you interested in making a scrapbook like that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:29:35

Oh, I just got interested in doing like creative memories. So, I don't know where I was, but I got involved in doing creative memories. I met a lady that sold the merchandise, and you know, then I thought I would try to do it as a business, didn't really pan out. You know, it's like anywhere—you know, like the Tupperware kind of, or Mary Kay kind of things, where you come into the house, or you come into the house, and you show the products and stuff, but I always just wanted to get all of my pictures out of a shoebox, and I'm still working on that. And right now, I've got so many photos that I'm just collecting them all, and just collecting them, and giving them to the people that should have, because I used to take a lot of pictures, and I used to do a lot of duplicates. And I'm like, why am I holding on to all of these, and they're all in shoebox. So, I just want to be able to chronologically put them in something so that my kids would have something, and you know, a lot of times you're looking at pictures, and there's no, you don't know who's in the picture. So, um, that that's what I'm trying to do. I'm trying to put names so that later on generations will know exactly who's in the photos and—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:31:08

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:31:08

and where the event was held.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:31:10

Yeah. Yeah. I think it's really important to do that kind of work, especially with the photographs, so interesting. What what made you get involved with like, the Watsonville is in the Heart page, and kind of like meet Roy, and have an impetus to do like this interview, and share the photographs with us.

Elizabeth Tana 1:31:33

Um, you know, like I said, I was fortunate enough to meet my grandparents.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:31:37

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:31:38

And I mean, even though they live in another country, I was fortunate enough to meet them, and right now, everybody's so spread out. My kids have no sense of, you know, I tried to do a family tree. My daughter is—her dad is mestizo, and he was one of eight, Ron Mabalot, and so you know, try—she was like, grandchild number 20. On, you know, his side, but since then there are like, because like I said, he's one of eight, there are like, 50 grandkids now. And it's kind of like, where do I fit in? Fortunately, she's in connection with all of her cousins. She knows who all of them are, even though some of them are strange, she knows she's related to them and how she's related to them. My son kind of has a sense of it. I mean, he grew up and he knew his grandfather. He, he was young, when my dad died. I think he was five when my dad died, but he has pictures, and so he remembers my dad, he remembers my stepdad, and he does remember Bert's dad. So, you know, they have that sense of knowing who their grandparents are, but beyond that, you know, the family tree that, like my mom's parents—I think my daughter tried to sit down with my mom as one of her high school projects. I don't know what she did with the paper, but it was kind of like, you know, trying to get a little bit of a history, but some of the names that you throw out, like, I know, my grandparents names. Actually, I don't know, my dad's parents names, but on my mom's side, I know, you know, her dad her dad's her dad's name and her mom's name, but, you know, these are just names to my kids.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:33:19

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:33:21

My brother in Utah, he's gone—he's tried to do the genealogy thing, with the whole tree and, you know, getting dates, and I'm like, you know what, a lot of these are just names that I don't even know who they are beyond my grandparents, my immediate grandparents. So, that's kind of that, but you know, my kids are gonna grow up and they're not really going to know, you know, their heritage, and like I said, a lot of people are so spread out. My mom is pretty much she shouldn't be driving, but she does. She does, I guess when she has to, but, um, you know, my son has two kids, and I think my mom barely met her granddaughter, or her great, great granddaughter, that is it. She barely saw her great grandson. You know, I mean, when he was young, I used to take—I would tell my son, I'm gonna take Aiden for the day, you know, and I would take him to go visit my mom, because my mom just—my son's, you know, too busy, or the schedules don't click, or it's not important to him to go and visit my mom. I mean, he sees her once in a while because he drives the bus in Santa Cruz. So, he'll see her once in a while, he'll ask me how my mom's doing, but he really doesn't—I mean, as a family, they don't go out, and oh, we're gonna go see Lola today, you know, kind of thing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:34:41

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:34:42

So yeah, his his kids really don't have a sense—and even me with my schedule, you know, I have to make the time to go and visit them. You know, and they know that I'm grandma, but it's, you know, it's not—it's not like when I was growing up, where we had a lot of parties, and all the—and all the cousins came together.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:01

It's not as tight knit.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:02

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:03

In a sense of super close.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:06

Exactly. Yeah. It's not like it used to be.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:09

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:10

Yeah, and you know, like I said, a lot of these, like the Ramos family, the kids are all over the place. Even with the Tejadas, they're all over the place. And even myself, I mean, my two brothers are living out of the area, too, so—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:21

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:21

You know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:23

I am happy, one of the things that I think is really awesome about this project, is how it's kind of connecting people back together, in the Facebook group, or other events that Roy does.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:38

Right, right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:39

He's really good at bringing people together.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:41

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:35:42

That's really cool.

Elizabeth Tana 1:35:43

Yeah it is. It was really cool. I mean, I see a lot of the people like, Modesto Tucson, who is a year older than I am. I mean, we all went to school together, and we knew who each other was, but you know, again, everybody is in different parts of the world, and you know, just to have that connection that, oh, yeah, you know, we went to school together. So, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:36:03

Yeah. Um, my last kind of question is, it's about kind of the historical project as well, so, one of the things that most people who are not from Watsonville, who study Filipino American History, know about Watsonville, are the race riots—

Elizabeth Tana 1:36:22

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:36:23

in the 1930s, and the murder of Fermin Tobera. Do you remember when you found out about that, for the first time?

Elizabeth Tana 1:36:31

It was just recently, through Watsonville is in the Heart. Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:36:34

Really?

Elizabeth Tana 1:36:34

I don't think I really did a lot of investigating or looking into, you know, the Filipino history.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:36:43

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:36:44

I think just growing up and trying to fit in, in the 60s, you just kind of, yes, I'm Filipino, but I'm trying to fit in.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:36:53

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:36:53

So, yeah. I really didn't embrace it, other than just knowing my own personal history. Not what was not what was happening in Watsonville, you know, back in the 30s,

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:37:06

Yeah. When you found out about it, what did you think?

Elizabeth Tana 1:37:10

I said, oh, well, there's a really rich history, but you know, again, I still have to go back and and and investigate it a little bit further.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:37:18

Right. When thinking back on it, that there were extreme experiences of racism and violence against those manongs, does it make it—you think differently about your Dad's experience, what it might have been like? I know, you don't know much about it.

Elizabeth Tana 1:37:35

Right. Um, you know, they didn't talk about it, so I think that they probably kept a lot to themselves, and I think we were just fortunate that we didn't experience it. I mean, there were just things that like, you know, remarks that my dad would say, you know, like, if we didn't eat our food, you know, there's some hungry kids in the Philippines. And, you know, they don't, they don't have all the modern conveniences. They don't have this abundance, and, you know, they're eating dogs. And we are like, oh, we would never do that, kind of thing, you know. So, looking back on it, I must be really tough, and I think relating it to what's happening nowadays, even with, you know, Blacks, you know, it's just the prejudice, and I think it's starting to rear its head again. If you're—if you look different, or you're a different race, you know—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:38:32

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:38:33

People just look differently. I mean, I'm pretty quiet, and you know, so, you know, if you don't say anything, people don't know really how intelligent you are. Or, you know, they just assume that you're not very intelligent or you're not from this country. I think my daughter has

experienced it. I mean, because he has shared things, I mean, she she could look Filipino or she could look—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:38:56

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:38:57

You know, Hispanic, but I think that, you know—she's living up in Sacramento. I know she's experienced it, because she has made comments about it. With me, a lot of people don't know what I am. It's like, oh, are you Chinese? Or or what are you?

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:39:15

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:39:15

You know?

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:39:16

Yeah. I think I think it's it's super telling that so many folks who grew up in Watsonville, and are children of the manongs, never knew anything about this super intense racism that their dads probably endured.

Elizabeth Tana 1:39:36

Right.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:39:37

In the 30s and the 40s, and it probably just shows that, you know, their dads just wanted to shield their children from it, and make sure that they could try to not experience the same things that they did.

Elizabeth Tana 1:39:51

I—and I think that's what they strived for. They strived to always give their kids a better life, but I find it disarming when, you know, I look back and I'm like, wow, they went through a really tough time, and when you see things like no Filipinos allowed, that's really distressing.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:40:07

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:40:07

You know, it's like you're really excluding.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:40:10

Yeah, yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:40:12

And so it's happening to a lot of other races now too.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:40:14

Yeah. I hope—we kind of started out this project thinking we were gonna learn a lot about race riots, but we—it's so hard to learn about it, because there's so many silences around it.

Elizabeth Tana 1:40:31

Exactly, that's the word.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:40:33

Yeah, I think maybe if we're—it will be super interesting if if we were able to find some, like, new information, or new evidence, and everyone in the community could talk about it and learn about it, and that would be really cool.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:40:33

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:40:33

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:40:52

Right, right. Yeah. I do remember, there were a couple of gentlemen that—and I don't know what the particulars, because my mom really didn't talk about it, but they lived in the labor camp, and and somehow they died in some sort of accident, too. I just remember that I—their headstones are buried near my my brothers, and it was right around the same time, you know, the same year.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:41:14

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:41:14

But yeah, it's like what happened? And, you know, she doesn't want to talk about, so I don't know.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:41:19

Do you—do you know of manongs who are buried around here, manongs, who were uncles and didn't really have families?

Elizabeth Tana 1:41:36

In the old Watsonville Cemetery, where my brother is buried, like I said, there's a couple of markers there, and I think two of the Filipinos, they were living in labor camps.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:41:46

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:41:47

And then there's another gentleman, Quintino Santana, who's buried a little bit farther from my brother, and I don't know if he was related to the Tabasas'. I grew up assuming that he was related to the Tabasas, I don't know for sure, but I know that he was also one of the gentlemen that my stepdad hung around with, for a long time. I don't know if they might have lived together for a while.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:42:15

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:42:16

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:42:16

Do do folks tend to or visit the graves of the uncles or the manongs? Did that happened when you were a kid? Do you remember anything about that?

Elizabeth Tana 1:42:27

I know that—I know that a lot of the funerals were held through [unknown], and there was a photographer that they hired. [unknown] photography. He used to do black and white photos, and he would take photos of—I mean, because I have eight by tens of like, all of us kids in front of my brother's casket, and all the parents behind it. He would take photos at the at the graveyard too.

Elizabeth Tana 1:42:54

And they—you would just see all these groups of people.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:42:54

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:42:58

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:42:59

So, I don't know so much that people visit the grave sites anymore. I know that for a while when I was unemployed, I would, I mean, I made it a point to go visit my dad and my stepdad because they're buried next to each other. And then, The Cawalings are buried right next to my stepdad, but they're in the cemetery by St. Francis High School. My brother's at a cemetery on Freedom Boulevard. And then, we have some people—and then I was also visiting like, Maria's son who died in Vietnam, and also my godmother, her whole family is buried out at the cemetery, at the [unknown] Hecker Pass. So it's kind of a trek—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:43:39

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:43:39

When I take a day to visit all of the cemeteries.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:43:43

Interesting.

Elizabeth Tana 1:43:43

But I don't know that a lot of people visit. I mean, I know a lot of people where I walk around and I see the headstones, and I'm like, oh, I know who they're related to, and there's no flowers. So, I know that they don't visit.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:43:55

Yeah, I was—I was very curious when you mentioned the all—that your mom wanted to celebrate all souls day in the Philippines, if it was ever any kind of customs were translated over here, celebrating all souls?

Elizabeth Tana 1:44:11

I experienced one year, I can't remember what year it was. It was maybe two years ago. I went to go visit my dad on all souls day, and like I said, he's buried near St. Fran—St. Francis High School. You could not even pull into the cemetery. I parked maybe half a block down the street, but there were cars lined up on both sides of the street. There was a vendor selling flowers.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:44:36

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:44:37

But you know, even going to visit my dad on the weekend like on Sundays, people are having picnics out there.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:44:43

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:44:43

So, for the Hispanic, mainly for the Hispanics, they go on and visit and they stay like the day.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:44:50

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:44:52

They're really celebrating their loved ones. Working for a funeral home, you see some of those cultures that just really translate over. We've had a couple of big Filipino funerals where, you know, they do the whole nine yards. They do the visitation for maybe two days, the funeral mass, and then the burial. And just Tabasas' obituary, that's an all day event.

Elizabeth Tana 1:45:17

It's like, you're going to all the visitations the night before, but you're going to the church, that's an hour. And then, they're driving and burying him in Seaside, at the Veterans Cemetery. And then, coming back for the reception at the Filipino center, so, that's an all day thing. I don't know what my mom wants to do. So, we'll probably, I mean, I don't know I might take the day off and go to just the funeral but—

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:45:17

Oh, yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:45:41

Right.

Elizabeth Tana 1:45:42

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:45:42

Did your dad or stepdad have a Caballeros de Dimas-alang regalia at their funeral?

Elizabeth Tana 1:45:50

Um, I don't think they did. I mean, sometimes I think they volunteered, but I think by the time some members are older members, and I don't know that that's carrying on because I don't know that—yeah, I know that there's always been like the stop starts movements, and a lot of times they're by families or kids that are not from the area, or didn't grow up in the area. So, and like I said, from my own immediate my, my relatives, they're all over the place now. So, yeah. But no, they weren't involved in my dad's or my stepdads. They were pretty—I know sometimes they step up or they say, oh, a certain member. I know when my dad died, he was part of the American Legion, so, they sent something, but we had planned my my dad's funeral, knowing that he was sick, and he had cancer, and my brother was stationed in England, with the—because he was still in the Air Force at the time. So, we had we planned everything so that, you know, my brother would just come back, and be able to attend the funeral, and have to go back. With my stepdad, he was sick also, but yeah, that was pretty low key also.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:47:08

Yeah. You you and your mom will go to Jess Tabasas funeral. Did your mom know The Tabasas well?

Elizabeth Tana 1:47:18

Mmm hmm. Yeah, it was funny because I think when he was a teacher at E.A. Hall school, and I think he was one of my son's teachers. I mean, I didn't go to E.A. Hall school, I went to Rolling Hills—actually there's a lot of people that, you know, remember him as a teacher, but we live—we lived on Sunny Hills in a townhouse, and the one next to us, the lady was either a teacher or a principal, and Jess was going over to visit her, but happened to—and our doors were side by side—he happened to walk into our place by accident one day. Yeah. So, he was sitting there chatting with my mom and it was it was actually our neighbor that he was going to go visit.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:47:57

Oh, wow.

Elizabeth Tana 1:47:57

Yeah. But yeah, I remember their family living on, it's off of Calabasas, because we lived on Calabasas also, and they just lived up the road, and I think Susan was friends with my my cousin Lolita.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:48:16

Okay.

Elizabeth Tana 1:48:17

And I remember the boys growing up, when we'd have get togethers up at my aunt's house on Tulsa lane.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:48:25

Yeah, we're hoping what, maybe several months away, we might interview Susan.

Elizabeth Tana 1:48:34

Mmm hmm.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:48:34

Yeah, we know she lives in San Diego too, or something.

Elizabeth Tana 1:48:37

I thought she lived in Hawai'i.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:48:38

Hawai'i, yeah, thats what it is.

Elizabeth Tana 1:48:40

I know, my I think my mom said that she lived here and the boys live in Hawai'i, but I remember Francine too, and my mom always was like, don't go to bed with your hair wet, you're gonna end up, you know, blind, like Francine. And I'm like, I don't think that's what happened, but you know, that's what we—I mean, you know, some of the taboos that parents tell you growing up, you know. So, that kind of thing, and I do remember seeing Francine later on in my adult life. As a matter of fact, she was married to one of the math teachers, I think at Watsonville High, Mr. Albert

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:49:18

[unknown]?

Elizabeth Tana 1:49:19

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:49:19

Yeah. Yeah. So, I'm at my end of questions, but is there anything else you want to share on the record now?

Elizabeth Tana 1:49:27

No, I think you pretty much picked my brain. That's about all I can remember.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:49:31

Yeah.

Elizabeth Tana 1:49:31

But a lot of good memories.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:49:33

I'm glad.

Elizabeth Tana 1:49:34

Yeah.

Meleia Simon-Reynolds 1:49:34

I'm glad. Um, well I'm gonna turn off the recording now.

Elizabeth Tana 1:49:37

Okay.