

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Kimiko Kuwana Sakai

“ . . . by the time we got there, the water was all coming up, you see? . . . We climbed the roof of the shed next to the Quonset hut where the county band presently practices. The small warehouse, I think, in the back [of Sure Save]. . . . Yeah, that's my life-saving roof up there. [I remember] people screaming, 'Help!' And everybody screaming and whatnot. And the cows mooing away. They say the cow was stuck on the fence, they told me. The cows were mooing away, the people were screaming and the big lumber and things were floating. Watermelon, vegetables, all floating all over the place, horses neighing. I could see, when it [the wave] struck all the telephone poles, all the sparks are flying around. And then the small, drizzling rain. And then when you look at the wharf, the wave was going over the warehouse.”

Kimiko Kuwana Sakai, daughter of Japanese immigrants, Hisa Muranaka Kuwana and Jitsuzo Kuwana, was born on April 26, 1916, in Pāhoa, Hawai'i. She is one of eight children born to the Kuwanas. Her mother's main responsibility was running the household and caring for the children. Her father was a foreman at 'Ōla'a Sugar Company plantation.

Sakai graduated from Hilo High School in 1934 after completing Hilo Intermediate School and her primary grades at schools in Pāhoa and 'Ōla'a.

After graduation, she worked as a kitchen helper at Dr. T. Kutsunai's hospital in Pāpa'ikou. She also took care of the doctor's elderly grandmother until he moved to New York to further his medical studies.

In March 1943, she married Isami Sakai and spent the war years on O'ahu where he was stationed. At war's end her husband resumed commercial fishing and they returned to live on the Big Island.

The 1960 tsunami destroyed their home in Waiākea and forced them to relocate; temporarily to the Naval Air Station, then to an upstairs apartment in the railroad depot for about a year, and finally to their present residence of over thirty years.

While housed at the railroad depot, Sakai began baby-sitting for families who had lost their caregivers (i.e., grandparents). Years later when her own children had entered college she began working in the kitchen of Paramount Grill on Haili Street.

Widowed since 1990, she is now retired and still resides in Hilo. The Sakais raised six children and helped care for their grandchildren.

Tape No. 29-12-1-98

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Kimiko Kuwana Sakai (KS)

Hilo, Hawai'i

May 11, 1998

BY: Nancy Piianaia (NP)

NP: This is the eleventh of May, and I'm with Mrs. Kimiko Sakai at her home in Hilo. And we're going to be talking today about her childhood, growing up in Pāhoa, and taking us up to her marriage to the time when she was in Waiākea before the 1960 tidal wave.

So, Mrs. Sakai, thank you very much for agreeing to be interviewed.

KS: You're welcome.

NP: How about if we start by you telling me when and where you were born.

KS: My name is Kimiko Kuwana Sakai. I was born in Pāhoa. My parents were Jitsuzo Kuwana and Hisa Muranaka Kuwana. I am the third child.

NP: When were you born? What was the date?

KS: I was born on April 26, 1916.

NP: Where were your parents from?

KS: My father is from Fukuoka-ken, Japan, and my mother is [from] Yamaguchi-ken, Japan. My oldest brother is James Minoru Kuwana and my sister is Hazel Yukuko Kuwana. Shall I give her married name, too?

NP: No, that's okay. So were there three of you altogether?

KS: No, no.

NP: There were more.

KS: I have a brother below me: Henry Hiroshi Kuwana, Walter Taneo Kuwana, and Edward Masami Kuwana, and my sister is Mildred Asako Kuwana.

NP: You had a large family.

KS: I have a lot.

NP: Okay, and how did your parents meet? Did they meet in Japan or did they meet in Honolulu?

KS: I don't know how they met.

NP: You mentioned that your father was in Honolulu, though, before he went to Pāhoa?

KS: Because he was telling me he helped build the Honolulu Harbor, and he was a diver. And I don't know what my mother was doing.

NP: But they got married and they came to Pāhoa?

KS: Yes.

NP: And what did your father do there?

KS: He was working for the 'Ōla'a [Sugar Company] plantation. And he was a foreman, 'cause I remember him coming home riding the big horse. We used to live in the cane field when we were small, and I really don't remember. I must have been about six or seven because we moved to Pāhoa to a big home. Before that, was in a small cottage we had in there.

NP: Oh, okay. So you moved more into town?

KS: More into town.

NP: Is the house you lived in still there?

KS: It's still there. It was a high [two]-story; it's not two-stories now, but. They took the bottom off, and made it flat now.

NP: Is it located on the main road?

KS: It's on the main road past the post office. It's on the left as you go down. And there's Dairy Queen or something across the street, I think. I haven't gone that way for so long. I don't remember.

NP: Was it a big house?

KS: It was a huge house.

NP: How many rooms? Do you remember?

KS: About six or seven rooms, I think. Because the porch was a huge porch, so one section [of it], my father had to make a room for my brother, with more sunlight and things like that.

NP: This was your brother who was ill?

KS: Yeah, ill.

- NP: And did you folks live Japanese style or did you have beds or how did you sleep?
- KS: We had beds. And we had gasoline lantern, used to hand 'em up and put it down. Of course, other rooms, we had individual lamps with kerosene in [them], and later electricity.
- NP: Was that when you were more grown up?
- KS: I was working, I think. 'Cause Pāhoa had electricity in the late [19]30s, I think was.
- NP: So for most of your years, you grew up with the kerosene lanterns?
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: So in your home, what was your life like there?
- KS: I guess all country life. Just go to school and come back, and we had to go to the Japanese [-language] school after [English-language] school. And come home and do the chores, and help my mother with her garden and whatever we had to do.
- NP: What did she grow in the garden?
- KS: I know she had that *liliko'i*, you call 'em *poka*.
- NP: *Pohā*.
- KS: Not *pohā*. Just like *liliko'i*, the orange one. *Liliko'i* is the purple one, isn't it? We had a big vine covering our back, by the steps. And right in the back, she had carrots and *daikon* and beans, green onions, and pumpkin and all those things growing.
- NP: And she'd use those for cooking?
- KS: Yes.
- NP: What kind of food did you usually have?
- KS: We had Japanese food. Sometimes we had American food, stews and things like that. Japanese miso soup. She used to roast too, because we had those wooden stove with the oven in between, so we used to do our cooking on the top and put roast and things in the oven.
- NP: Sounds like you had good food.
- KS: Experimenting anyway. (Laughs)
- NP: Did you tell me that you used to cook outdoors also?
- KS: Yeah. We had that---bottom of the steps, we had those Japanese *kudo*. I only remember the Japanese old-fashioned rice pot with the wooden cover on. We used to cook rice in that. And certain things, we used to cook on the side with the stick, too.

- NP: And would you make a fire for that to cook it in?
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: Did it taste better that way? Do you remember?
- KS: They say rice tastes better that way, but if you don't watch out, it gets burned fast too.
- NP: I bet, yeah. It's not as easy as doing it in the rice cooker.
- KS: Mm hmm. Yeah, just press the button.
- NP: Okay, so your father was working with the plantation, and your mother was home taking care of all of you brothers and sisters.
- KS: Yes.
- NP: Where did you go to school?
- KS: I went to Pāhoā School till sixth grade, and we had homemaking that year, so we hardly did any studying. Mostly about cooking things, this and that. So I went to 'Ōla'a School to have better education, but then 'Ōla'a School was enlarging the school, so we were interrupted, too, so we didn't have a regular schedule. So I went [to] Hilo Intermediate. That's when I got stuck. I wasn't good in conjugations and all those things. I could read. I did lots of reading, but. So even to this day I tell my children, "I didn't learn the conjugations so I don't know." Minor thing, so kind of hard for me was, trying to catch up all that.
- NP: When you went to Hilo Intermediate, did you discover right away that you didn't know some of the things you should have?
- KS: That's right.
- NP: How did that feel?
- KS: Well, that's the reason why I came school. But I didn't worry too much because I had older sister and brother to help me at home. And all the country people was in the Z section, and I was one of the few in the Y section, and I got stuck because they was all the smarter ones. But I had some good friends helping me out.
- NP: They weren't smarter, they just had better teachers.
- KS: So I have to go home and nag my older brothers and sisters, "How you do this? What's wrong with this?"
- NP: So would you go home and study every night?
- KS: We had to. I used to study in the car, too. In the trailer on the way home, like that.
- NP: Tell me about the train that went back and forth.

- KS:** Oh, that's what we used to call our trailer that used to leave 'Opihikao early in the morning, and pick us up about seven o'clock, I think, and then drop us off at 'Ōla'a depot. That's where the sugar mill was. I used to walk up to 'Ōla'a School.
- NP:** And then it would come in the afternoon . . .
- KS:** We'd have to walk back. Walk back and catch the [train]. Because some of them went with the trailer to high school, too, you see.
- NP:** So the train would go into Hilo also?
- KS:** All the way in Hilo.
- NP:** And when you went to high school, did you go that way also?
- KS:** Part of the time, I think. But I didn't like it because [the] train depot, you know where that is now? I have to walk up to high school. I remember had to run real fast, about fifteen, twenty minutes walk, I think [it] was.
- NP:** Is that up Waiānuenuē?
- KS:** Waiānuenuē.
- NP:** So that was the old train depot that was down before the tidal wave?
- KS:** At the old lighthouse, you know, by the bridge?
- NP:** Yeah. Oh, that's a long walk.
- KS:** Mm hmm. So people were going to work in Hilo, so we used to go with those people. They liked it because that way, they definitely get space because we pay for our ride too, you see.
- NP:** Oh, I see. And they drop you off at the high school?
- KS:** High school. And we used to walk down to Hongwanji, and go Japanese school there, because school was out at two o'clock, and they worked till 4:00, 4:30, I think was.
- NP:** So would you go to Japanese school every day?
- KS:** Every day.
- NP:** Wow.
- KS:** Saturdays and all.
- NP:** What were the teachers like in the Japanese school?
- KS:** They were very strict. It's not like nowadays, you see. So I just tell my children too, "If you went Japanese school, you cannot be answering back, you cannot be dillydallying; the teacher

would be walking around, then *poonk*, and hit your head." (Laughs)

Yeah, one teacher used to do that, you know. Well, he used to be one kendo teacher, I think was, you know the samurai-kind style, real strict. And he used to tell us, "You know why the girls get good grades? Because they study hard. I see them before the school start, they all doing their homework. But the boys, they play football and baseball."

NP: Do you remember the name of your teacher?

KS: Mr. Uemura.

NP: Uemura-*sensei*.

KS: Mm hmm.

NP: Yes. He was a famous kendo teacher.

KS: That's right. He was real strict. I remember I had him one year. And one year, I had Reverend Teramoto. He was a very nice man. He used to tell all the time, "If you don't know, ask. You only ask one time, and you get the answer. But if you don't ask, you don't know the answer. It's a lifetime, you know, disgrace if you don't know anything."

So you ask. I forgot the phrase he used. I just can't remember the phrase in Japanese. So I always tell my students to ask once if you don't know. And if you don't know, lifetime you don't know, and you regret it.

NP: If you don't ask.

KS: Mm hmm.

NP: That's good. That's good to remember.

KS: He used to tell us all the time.

NP: So how many years did you go to Japanese school?

KS: Three, was it four years?

NP: So you did talking and writing?

KS: In Japanese, yes.

NP: Can you still read in Japanese?

KS: Forgot. Nowadays, the character is different [from] the way we used to learn. We used to get strict Japanese.

NP: So you'd go back and forth every day during the school year?

- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: What did you do in the summertime when you didn't have to go to school?
- KS: When I was young, we used to go to the plantation, starting with twenty-five cents a day working the cane field. That's when I was young, about nine, ten years, or eleven years old something like that.
- NP: What kind of work did you do?
- KS: Just, we called it, *hō hana* with the hoe. And we went because if you go four days a week, you get a free ticket for go to the movies. So that was the bait. So we all go just to get the ticket.
- NP: And that would be all you get?
- KS: No, plus the wage, how many days you work. But seventy-five cents was the first year I remembered that—because my mother told me, "You know, it costs more to get the raincoat and the *tabi* and all the things." The whole month, the whole year, summer vacation, I work, wasn't worth the amount she had to pay for the extra clothing [to work in the cane fields]. Because the raincoat, you have to stitch three, four times before you can wear.
- NP: Stitch it?
- KS: Yeah, you have to sew our own raincoat, you know. Then we had to put the linseed oil on it and takes you about a couple months to dry so it won't get too sticky.
- NP: When you say stitch, what do you mean? Was it in pieces?
- KS: Pieces. All pieces, and we had to get the front flap thick so we have to go back and forth, stitch the thing.
- NP: And this is by hand?
- KS: No, was machine. We used to do that all the time. So my mother says, better if I go to learn how to sew clothes, then at least I can sew my own clothes.
- NP: So was it a heavy raincoat? It must have been with the oil. And did it rain enough so you needed that?
- KS: We had to carry it, because those days, they used to tell you, "You can forget your lunch, but you can't forget your raincoat," because it rains a lot.
- NP: Yeah. So do you remember what the hours were that you would work every day?
- KS: We used to work, was it six in the morning or seven in the morning? And we was home about two o'clock, I think, because we were minors yet, so even those days, they have age [restrictions].

- NP: Well that's good. What would you do when you weren't working, for fun?
- KS: I used to do lots of embroidery. I never tried crocheting till later, but embroidery and knitting. I had to knit sweater for my father all the time because he always used to wear pullovers. So I was pretty good at knitting.
- NP: So you'd do a lot of knitting and embroidery. What would you do with your brothers and sisters in Pāhoa for fun, like outdoors?
- KS: As we grew older, we all used to go to the park and play baseball and volleyball or things like that.
- NP: And is that park still there in Pāhoa?
- KS: It's still right by the school. Because when were growing up, Japanese school used to be where the post office is, down side. Then they moved to where the school is. I think---I don't know whether it's high school or intermediate. They're using that now.
- NP: I think it's intermediate. I think they go into Hilo for high school.
- KS: No, they have their own high school and everything up there now [Pāhoa High & Intermediate School].
- NP: Did Pāhoa look really different back then? The town?
- KS: No, not much I think. So far, I haven't seen—about a couple of years, I haven't gone that way because they have a new highway when you go to Kalapana. You can go the other way and go.
- NP: So you can just bypass it?
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: Was it a nice town to live in?
- KS: I guess so. We had everything there. Post office was there, the theater was right there, too. The bakery was there.
- NP: The what?
- KS: Bakery.
- NP: Bakery. What did you used to get at the bakery?
- KS: We used to have two bakeries. One bakery, we used to go for the bread and the other bakery, we used to go for the pastry because the son was in the [U.S.] Army, I think. And he came home to learn to make all those fancy kinds of things, so we used to go there for those fancy things. But it's a long, long time ago.

NP: That would have been the 1920s or so that we're talking about.

KS: [Nineteen] twenties and [19]30s.

NP: Did the depression affect your family very much? Do you remember?

KS: I know when I was going to school, my teacher said we living in the world's biggest depression [i.e., the Great Depression]. That's the class of '34. So the [19]30s, I remember the teacher telling us that "You folks don't realize that, but this is a big depression."

NP: Did your father lose his job at all?

KS: By that time—in the [19]30s, my father had contract with the plantation, I guess, to cut the firewood and send the firewood out.

NP: So he still had plenty of work to do 'cause the plantation kept on going?

KS: Mm hmm [yes].

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 29-13-2-98

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Kimiko Kuwana Sakai (KS)

Hilo, Hawai'i

May 11, 1998

BY: Nancy Piianaia (NP)

[NOTE: Warren Nishimoto (WN), director of the tsunami oral history project, recorded the introduction to this interview for tape identification purposes.]

WN: This is an interview with Kimiko Sakai for the tsunami oral history project. The date is May 11, 1998 and the interview was conducted in Hilo, Hawai'i. The interviewer is Nancy Piianaia.

KS: They took the bottom off and somebody else brought it down. After my father died my brother built his own home and he sold the (big house) [that the Kuwanas lived in, in Pāhoa]. Was some kind of an office I think they told me. Because I haven't gone Pāhoa for the longest time.

NP: So the house had several bedrooms in it?

KS: Several bedrooms, that's right.

NP: Do you remember how many?

KS: We had (five) bedrooms, (kitchen and dining) [rooms], I think was. And I had one brother who was sick with osteoporosis. He fell down and they call 'em TB [tuberculosis] of the bone at that time, I think. So we had a big veranda so they split the veranda and made a room for him with lots of sunshine and air.

NP: And did you live Japanese style mostly or. . . .

KS: We were more half-half because my mother used to work as a maid for *Haole* family so she used to do those roasting and soups and things.

NP: And she would make those foods at home also?

KS: Yes.

NP: So what would a typical meal be for you folks?

KS: Well, sometimes would be just Japanese food because I remember, I think the butcher used to

slaughter their cow once a week or something. So we had to stand in line and buy the whole chunk of meat. And she used to tell us to buy those shin bones for make soup or something. And we bought big chunks so we can make roasts. She used to cut it up in different pieces. And then since we didn't have those refrigerator, everything had to be cooked that day. A big roast goes in the wooden stove. The roast go in the stove and the top we have stew going.

NP: Wow, it must have been wonderful. Good food memories.

KS: Then down the steps we had the Japanese big fireplace for cook the Japanese rice and things, you see.

NP: This was outside the house?

KS: Yes, outside.

NP: Oh, okay. And did you have a garden?

KS: Yeah, my mother used to have a garden in the back.

NP: And did you help with the garden?

KS: We had to do lots of things, not like nowadays children.

NP: Like for example?

KS: We had to help weed the garden and clean the yard and help them sweep the house too. All those things had to be done. Laundry had to be done with the hand, this was before washing machine so I had to do it by hand.

NP: With the washboard kind?

KS: And we had the big tub to boil our laundry.

NP: So you must have been busy growing up then, helping out.

KS: That's right.

NP: Tell me about where you went to school and what that was like.

KS: I went to Pāhoa [Elementary] School till, was it sixth? Still sixth grade Pāhoa, I think it was. Then my brother told me, "It's not good to go at Pāhoa." Because then we started having homemaking and farming, all those things came in. And this one lady teacher would teach us, most of the time was cooking, I guess because she was a homemaking teacher. And we didn't have enough of those math and English. That's why I tell my children, "Oh, I cannot conjugate those verbs because I didn't learn that." Was so busy with how to cook things, this and that. Of course, as they would say, when you cook you have to learn the fraction of this and that. But then it's not complete math. And hardly had any geography and things like that.

NP: This was all in your elementary school?

- KS: Mm hmm [yes]. So I went to 'Ōla'a School for the eighth grade. And ninth grade went Hilo Intermediate.
- NP: Going back to 'Ōla'a School, did you have a choice of staying in Pāhoa or going to 'Ōla'a?
- KS: We had either choice of staying—lots of them stayed back in Pāhoa School. But I remember my older brother teaching me most of the math and the English because I didn't have enough of that in school, you see.
- NP: Now why did your brother know more than you did?
- KS: Because he was going to Hilo High by that time.
- NP: Oh, I see, okay. So who decided you would go to 'Ōla'a rather than . . .
- KS: Well, my brother must have told my father to do that because—well, just only three or four girls went 'Ōla'a. Half a dozen maybe in all, I think. And most of them dropped. After sixth grade they dropped and they worked in the plantation, things like that. Because those days, education wasn't important.
- NP: Was this just for the girls or for everybody?
- KS: For boys too.
- NP: For everybody, okay.
- KS: But those who wanted to stick with homemaking, they stayed back for another year I think was. Because they didn't have anything higher than eighth grade I think. So ninth grade was either intermediate.
- NP: Okay, so you went to 'Ōla'a and did you walk or, how did you get there?
- KS: I rode the trailer.
- NP: Oh, you rode the train.
- KS: And then walked to school. But about a mile I think was. The train goes by the—over the sugar mill, you see.
- NP: Did it have passenger cars on it that you could get on, or how was . . .
- KS: More like a big bus, you see. It wasn't high train that days. Before that they used to have this big train but in the end, lots of people don't ride the train to go work, back and forth, you see. Most of them have their own cars.
- NP: How did it feel to ride the train every day?
- KS: Oh, we used to have lots of fun.

(Laughter)

KS: "Chug-a-chug-a-chug." Shaking all the way.

NP: Was it hard to make the connection? I mean was there one train that would go each way that you had to . . .

KS: We had to just catch one that goes to Hilo and make sure that we there by the time we can get back to Pāhoa. Because stuck, we get stuck. No wheel . . .

NP: How long did it take to go from Hilo to Pāhoa?

KS: Really don't---those days we never carry watches, so I don't know how we used to time 'em, I guess the mental watch is real good when you get used to it.

NP: Mm hmm, you just knew when it was time. So would you say maybe half an hour or it would take an hour to go?

KS: About an hour I think. Or forty-five minutes maybe.

NP: Yeah, 'cause if you travel fast by car from Hilo to Pāhoa, it still takes about . . .

KS: Now the road is good. It's half an hour. But those days the road was bumpy too.

NP: Did you ever go back to Pāhoa to see the town?

KS: I used to go back all the time when my parents were living. And then when I was working I couldn't go home all the time anyway. And lately my leg not so good so I don't drive to Pāhoa but I have my sister-in-law living in Pāhoa yet. I have family there yet.

NP: In Pāhoa, were all your neighbors Japanese or were they different nationalities?

KS: No, had these Hawaiian people living across my street. Maybe just the reason why they used to tell me when I got married I used be friendly with my Hawaiian neighbor. They said, "Oh, they Hawaiian!" This and that, you know. So to me, was nothing because I was born and raised among the Hawaiian people. And the Filipinos used to live in the camp and I had a good friend who lived in the camp, they were Filipinos. So to me, I had no racial discrimination like some people do have. They say, "Oh, they Hawaiian, they're this so don't talk!"

NP: Many people used to talk like that, even those days?

KS: That's right, in the country. Even when I got married, then it happened that my neighbor across the street was Hawaiian. My neighbor wasn't—[Lily] Erickson, so she's a Norwegian or something—she used to be a schoolteacher. Then I had the Carters, the neighbors, so all was mixed nationalities. Then across other side was this Japanese family and they used to tell me I was not to be so friendly with the different nationality. But the neighbors are like that, and across the street was a Portuguese lady too.

- NP: Wow, you really had a lot of different people together. Did you used to share food amongst the different people?
- KS: We used to do that all the time.
- NP: So you had a chance to taste different foods as well as what your mother was cooking. So your mom actually worked as, you said as a maid and as a cook, it sounds like also.
- KS: No, my mother was actually a babysitter for this—I think she was watching one doctor's son or something. Because she used to tell me to travel if you can because she used to travel all over the place with the doctor family. See, better than certain things.
- NP: Better than just staying in one place.
- KS: Because my aunties are all cooks, good cooks, my mother's sisters.
- NP: And how did they learn all of that?
- KS: Well, I guess when they small, you just worked with the *Haole* family as they call them. And they gradually learn how to cook this and that.
- NP: Now you said your mom's sisters were here . . .
- KS: They were in Honolulu.
- NP: . . . did they come together or did her parents bring them over?
- KS: My mother actually is a stepdaughter, "stepsister," they used to call her because they left her in Japan and she [KS's grandmother] came back, Hawai'i, and she got married to Morita.
- NP: Your mother?
- KS: My grandmother.
- NP: Your grandmother, okay. Oh, I see, so Morita was the second husband of your grandmother. And these girls were her stepsisters?
- KS: Yes, her stepsisters.
- NP: Okay, and they lived in Honolulu? And why did your mom come over? Did your grandmother call for her?
- KS: Must be.
- NP: Must be, okay. So you went to Pāhoa Elementary, 'Ōla'a for intermediate, and then you went to Hilo High School?
- KS: Hilo Intermediate.

- NP: Hilo Intermediate, okay, and Hilo High School.
- KS: Hilo High School.
- NP: Was that normal for Pāhoa kids to do?
- KS: Mm hmm, that's right.
- NP: So would a lot of you go together on the train into town and back?
- KS: Even then I think there were some people that worked in town. So we used to ride this person's car and go to school. And then in between we used to walk down to the Japanese[-language] school because we had two or three hours to wait for the man to take us home because he's a workman. So we used to go Japanese school after that.
- NP: And then where was the Japanese school?
- KS: In Hilo Hongwanji.
- NP: Oh, the Hongwanji, yes. In the back?
- KS: No, across the Hongwanji, you know where that? They used to have the Japanese school there. Now it is all behind, together. But when we went, was across the street, that's where the Japanese school was.
- NP: Now, was the Hongwanji building the same back then?
- KS: That's the buildings, the temple is same.
- NP: The temple is the same. So you did that and then you graduated from high school. Do you remember what year you graduated?
- KS: Nineteen thirty-four. Almost sixty years.
- NP: And you still have reunions?
- KS: We still have reunions, yeah.
- NP: Fantastic. Mr. Goya said he's your classmate.
- KS: Oh, you mean . . .
- NP: You know, "Square?"
- KS: Square.
- NP: Yeah. I'm interviewing him also.
- KS: Oh yeah, he's classmate.

NP: He said to say hello to you.

KS: Because we always go to the class reunion.

NP: Did you enjoy high school?

KS: Well, we had our fun. But as I was telling my grandchildren, "When Grandma was going junior, senior prom, we never bought roses, we never bought expensive corsages that cost a mint." It's a fortune to be going the senior prom. So last year both of my grandchildren went, one from Kaua'i. She said she couldn't find the dress she want so we—my son-in-law told, "You like go Kona, go try Kona?" Last minute we drove over to Kona and bought one dress for her.

NP: Yeah, it's really different now.

KS: Cost so much money.

NP: Yeah, you have to do dinner as well and have a car. It's crazy.

KS: I know, my Hilo [grand]daughter, the boy she invited said, "I get only truck."

So my grandson says, "Okay, I'll polish my car for you folks." So the brother had to polish the car for them to go with. Because I know some of them borrow U-drive and limousine and things like that.

So we told the boy, "Save your money because you going college." Why spend money on corsages and things like that? So foolish!

NP: So what was it like for you, prom back then?

KS: We used to sew our own clothes and then we used to go to school with this boy. So the whole bunch used to go to that. I don't think so we had dinner and things like that. And we had the prom at the gym, high school gym.

NP: Not at a hotel or something like that.

KS: No.

NP: And you're saying you went more in a group than boy and girl, and boy and girl?

KS: Yeah.

NP: Would everybody dance?

KS: Well, there's dance, this and that, we'd just talk stories. Some of them say, "No, we're not going dance. I'm not going." Just went because we wanted to talk story, to get together, this and that.

NP: So if you went to a prom like that, it would be too far to go back . . .

- KS: No, we used to commute.
- NP: You would still come back to Pāhoa? And how would you get back home then?
- KS: With the same car.
- NP: Somebody would stay and bring you home? No staying overnight in Hilo?
- KS: No.
- NP: Did you ever stay overnight in Hilo or spend the weekend?
- KS: No, we never did things like that. Lots of my friends that came from the country used to work for some people. They worked there, went to school from there. Instead of commuting a long distance.
- NP: What kind of work would they do?
- KS: I know my girlfriend used to work for this schoolteacher. She said she cooks breakfast for them and then clean the house and do laundry, odds and end, like that.
- NP: And in return she would have her meals there and a place, a bedroom, or . . .
- KS: Small spending money when you come think of it. I think was only ten dollars a month or something like that. But that's the only way she could. The family would send her to school, I guess.
- NP: Yeah, she must have been lonely sometimes. Okay, so you graduated from high school, and then what did you do?
- KS: I went to work for Dr. [T.] Kutsunai.
- NP: Who was Dr. Kutsunai?
- KS: He was one of the best doctor in Hilo for the time being, you know. It was so busy and one of my friends asked me, so I went and I was working as a kitchen helper.
- NP: Was it in his home or . . .
- KS: He had a big hospital in Pāpa'ikou.
- NP: Oh, a hospital.
- KS: Japanese hospital. And just before the war broke out he closed the hospital and went back to school in New York. So I stayed home for a while and then I got married, I think was. I used to go---I was going to learn how to sew clothes, stay home.
- NP: So let me backtrack. You worked in the kitchen of the hospital, making meals for the patients?

KS: Patients, un huh.

NP: How was that? Did you enjoy doing that?

KS: Well, we had to memorize it, different patient had to have different kind. Diabetic patient was the worst one, you had to measure by the grams and all those things, you know? So the doctor was telling me, go—was it Queens or Kuakini? One of the hospital to study dietician. But that was before the war actually broke out. So when the war broke out, no way I didn't want to go anyplace because you don't know what was going to happen next.

NP: How long did you work in the kitchen? About?

KS: Three years, I think.

NP: Oh, a long time.

KS: So he told me since I was studying more the diet, he told me to study the diet. It's better to have a trade, he used to tell me.

NP: So you worked there for three years, then Dr. Kutsunai went to New York. Did you meet your husband during this period?

KS: No, when I was home.

NP: In Pāhoa?

KS: Mm hmm. And I used to help Mrs. Kutsunai because she had Dr. Kutsunai's (grand)mother with her. So I used to help her take care of the grandma for a while.

NP: At the hospital?

KS: No, at their home. It's right by the bridge, you know, have a nice home with a swimming pool. Dr. Kutsunai had the swimming pool.

NP: So did you live with them then?

KS: I used to live with them for a while.

NP: Oh, that must have been nice. But then you went home and you met your husband. Tell me about your husband, what was his name and where was he from, and what was he doing?

KS: His name, Isami Sakai. He was a commercial fisherman but because of the war, they confiscated his boat. So he was working for the county.

NP: What was he doing?

KS: He was working as a--he used to patch the roads and things. What you call, he used to—what do you call those?

- NP: Maintenance?
- KS: Maintenance. Road maintenance.
- NP: Okay, so before they confiscated his boat he had been a commercial fisherman for . . .
- KS: For his own self.
- NP: For himself. For many years . . .
- KS: Yes.
- NP: Was this something his family also did?
- KS: His family too. So he and his, the brother below him, used to go out together and the younger brother used to go on the *Skipjack*, the *aku* boat.
- NP: Yes, out of . . .
- KS: Hilo Harbor. But just because of the war, everything got changed, you see. Then my husband got the draft notice so he had to go in the army.
- NP: So was he a Hilo boy?
- KS: Hilo boy.
- NP: And he was born in Hilo?
- KS: Yeah, born in Hilo.
- NP: His parents were from Japan.
- KS: Japan.
- NP: So he grew up fishing, you met him. . . . Now how did he happen to be in Pāhoa? Can you tell me how you folks met?
- KS: Somebody introduced him to me, I think.
- NP: A friend of yours?
- KS: Yeah, my parents' friend.
- NP: So was it almost like a matchmaking?
- KS: Something like that.
- NP: Did you know that was happening, that they were going to do that?

KS: They were, yeah. So I wasn't interested but I figured, with the war and everything else, life wasn't the way you wanted.

NP: So can you tell me a little bit more about how they worked this out and how you met?

KS: Well, since I was working in town, so we used to go movies and things like that off and on. And we decided to get married in the end.

NP: Okay, so your parents arranged the initial meeting.

KS: Yes.

NP: Was it just the two of you or were the families there or other friends?

KS: This other man was there, a family friend.

NP: And did you folks like each other when you first met each other?

KS: I guess so.

(Laughter)

NP: He seemed okay then? And then you began going out together. And this must have been---if it was after the war it must have been in 1941 or so?

KS: [Nineteen] forty-three. I was just talking with my friend and she told me, "You was married in Holy Cross?"

I say, "Yeah."

She told me she got baptized at Holy Cross and she was telling me the pastor's name was Sagawa. But she gave me a different name. She told me she got baptized at Holy Cross too.

NP: Okay, and this is a wonderful certificate. It's great that you kept this. (KS shows NP her marriage certificate.)

KS: This is a duplicate]. The original is in the safe deposit I think.

NP: Oh, in a safe deposit box for safety?

KS: Because I lost most of my other things, you see, because the tidal wave.

NP: So at least you have this. So you were married on March—it says "March 14, 1943 at the Church of the Holy Cross in Hilo, Hawai'i." And the witnesses were Chikatada Sagawa . . .

KS: He's the pastor.

NP: The pastor, okay. Tadashi Ikeda . . .

- KS: He was one of my brother's friend, I think was.
- NP: And James M. Kuwana.
- KS: That's my brother.
- NP: Okay. So 1943. And then you said your husband got a draft notice.
- KS: Yes.
- NP: To be drafted into the army.
- KS: Army.
- NP: And do you know which part of the army he went into?
- KS: That's the paper I lost. I mean my daughter-in-law have it, I think was.
- NP: Was he in the 100th [Infantry] Battalion or . . .
- KS: No, no. He was in the different one. He was in---what do you call---he was stationed Schofield Barracks all the time [with the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion]. And he was just about to get sent to Japan. He said they would tell him to get everything straightened up because he was going Japan. Then they say, "Ho, lucky thing I don't have to go."
- I said, "Go where?" It's the end of the war.
- NP: Oh, so he almost went to Japan to be part of the occupation. So he went to Schofield Barracks and what did you do?
- KS: I was at home with my aunty in Honolulu. I have an uncle and an aunty in Honolulu so I stayed with them.
- NP: Whereabouts in Honolulu?
- KS: Middle [Street], Fort Shafter. So it's easy for me, catch the bus, the bus pass right at the house. The army used to have the food [at the pier] with the army coupon.
- NP: At Schofield or at Shafter?
- KS: No, not Schofield. At the pier, I forgot what pier it was, they had all the army---all the wives used to go pick up the food from there.
- NP: Like at the PX [post exchange]?
- KS: Something like PX, yeah.
- NP: Okay, so you had coupons because you were married to someone in the army?

KS: Mm hmm [yes].

NP: Did you see your husband very often?

KS: Oh, he used to come back every weekend.

NP: That was wonderful. And how much time would he get off when he would . . .

KS: Usually weekends he used to get off.

NP: Boy, that's a lot better than people whose husbands were sent to Europe or Pacific or something.

KS: That's right. So they used to call them [those in the 1399th Engineer Construction Battalion] the "Pineapple Soldier" because (laughs) just running up and down the pineapple field.

NP: What kind of work did he do during those two years?

KS: I really don't know, you know, because he used to tell me that he didn't want to do something so he say he couldn't swim, he put up his hand and they told him to swim. It was the hardest thing to do is not to float. Because he say he could swim because when he was young he used to swim along Coconut Island and came in second place or third place or something, swimming around the island. I had the trophy but I lost it in the tidal wave. So [he said], "Ho, everybody trying to float and they cannot, they sink. And here I trying to sink but I . . ."

(Laughter)

KS: He said, oh, marching every day was hard on him, he used to have blisters and things on his feet. So swimming was one of the best thing he ever did, you know? He said [it was difficult] trying [to pretend] you don't know how to swim, and dog swim like that, just dog swim like everybody else.

NP: And he probably wanted to just take off and really swim.

KS: That's right.

NP: So you were---you spent two years---no, actually, you spent longer, but during the war years in Honolulu, what was it like?

KS: Well, I had the house next to my aunty, she rented to us so we stayed there. And my brother moved to Honolulu, his family moved in so I was living with my brother for a while, rented one room, stayed with them. So whenever I wanted food I go to the PX. You cannot buy too much because those things [coolers] was just ice, not the kind electric kind ice refrigerator.

NP: So it was a real icebox.

KS: Real icebox. So you just have one big---so I used to buy a big pork loin like that and roast it and then split the food with my brother folks.

- NP: Did you have more food than other people because you had the PX that you could go to?
- KS: Mm hmm.
- NP: Was it easier for you?
- KS: Yes, because my aunty used to rent out to the farmers so we had all the vegetables we could get. Some man used to give me all the rejects and things like that, you see.
- NP: Did you like living in Honolulu then?
- KS: Yeah, I enjoyed it. You could just catch the bus and go here and there.
- NP: Different from living in Hilo or Pāhoa, I bet.
- KS: I guess so, because everything was right—so on his weekends, we used to catch the bus, make our own sandwiches and go catch the bus [to the] end of the line to Kuli'ou'ou was, we used to go right there. Then later we go across, catch the bus, a train, and go to Wahiawā. We used to travel all the lines. Something different with the family.
- NP: So you'd go all kinds of places it sounded like. Were the people in Honolulu different?
- KS: Well, they were nice to me because I was staying with my aunty. I had two aunty actually, you see. So I stayed with my other aunty for a while because they opened one laundry shop. So they wanted me to help them baby-sit so I was help baby-sitting their baby for a while too.
- NP: Did you start to have children while you were in Honolulu?
- KS: My second boy was born in Fort Shafter.
- NP: And your first child, you had how many children? We'll do that.
- KS: Kenneth was the firstborn, I had in Hilo. Then I had my second boy in Honolulu.
- NP: His name is. . . .
- KS: Theodore. Then I came home, I had my third, [a] daughter, Christine.
- NP: Christine. In Pāhoa?
- KS: Hilo.
- NP: In Hilo. Okay, when did you come back to Hilo?
- KS: Let me see, forty-nine years ago, I think was, when Christine was born. I forget what happened to my children's birth certificate. I was looking for it but I must have taken that all with me to the safety deposit box.
- NP: Last time you told me you came back in 1948.

- KS: [Nineteen] forty-eight? Must be '48, I don't exactly remember, my mind not so good sometimes.
- NP: That's okay. But you did come back. After 1945, did your husband work in Honolulu?
- KS: No, after he got his discharge we came home.
- NP: So 1946, maybe you came back.
- KS: Maybe.
- NP: And then you had your daughter, your third child. And then after that, how many more children did you have?
- KS: Three more after that.
- NP: And their names were. . . .
- KS: Ian, Cheryl, and Susan.
- NP: Okay, and you had all of your children by the 1960 tidal wave, yeah?
- KS: That's right. Because Susan was just kindergarten, I think.
- NP: When you came back to Hilo, did you move back to Waiākea right away or where did you move to?
- KS: Yeah, we moved to Waiākea right away. And when the house was on sale, we bought the house. And before that I think my youngest brother-in-law made a home. So that's where my mother-in-law moved to live with her youngest son and the youngest daughter.
- NP: And your mother-in-law before had lived . . .
- KS: Together with us.
- NP: With you.
- KS: Or rather, I lived with them. (Laughs)
- NP: You lived with them. How did you find the place in Waiākea?
- KS: My mother-in-law folks was renting that home. The house was under trust, I think was, so they couldn't sell it. So they were renting out to us. So when they all decided to sell, I told them we'll buy that right away. It's easier to stay there than looking for someplace else.
- NP: Was it a big house or a small house? Could you describe it to me?
- KS: It's a three-bedroom home, [big] porch. Anyway, it's larger than this home, you see. And in that old-fashioned way, the dining room and the [parlor] together. Got the curtain in the center

so it separate the dining room and the parlor, the real old-fashioned way. And then the kitchen in the back and a bathroom, the side. So I told 'em. . . .

NP: Was it off the ground . . .

KS: Off the ground. Mm hmm.

NP: So there was ventilation like this house is too?

KS: Mm hmm [yes].

NP: And how old was it do you think, when you moved in?

KS: I really don't know how old that house is. I had the deed and things and I don't know where I put that thing. Yeah, so trying to sort it out this and that. I think some of that I just threw 'em away I think. I was thinking I'd just put them all together one day.

NP: Let's backtrack a little bit. When your husband was discharged, did you talk about whether or not you'd stay in Honolulu or was it . . .

KS: Well, my husband was determined to come back because his trade was fishing. So he said he could make more money that way because that's his trade. He knew just where to go in.

NP: Did he get his boat back at the end of the war?

KS: He got it back.

NP: And was it okay? Could he still use it?

KS: Yes.

NP: Do you know what had happened to the boat, where it was stored and . . .

KS: Well, I know Martin Pence was the lawyer, he handled all the cases. But I have nothing to say because the sister was the one, head of the family who knew more things than anybody else.

NP: But all those boats that were confiscated were kept somewhere?

KS: Yes.

NP: Were they stored somewhere in Hilo?

KS: I don't know if they sold it this and that again, but I don't know which is the same boat we bought or not but we bought two boats after that.

NP: Was that with money that he was able to make with fishing?

KS: That I wouldn't know because those days—Japanese style—woman get nothing to say, bad luck if woman got on the boat, this and that, so I never bothered.

- NP: So you just kept your mouth shut and listened and did what you did in your part of the family? So your husband came back and he resumed fishing with one boat at first?
- KS: I don't know how he got two boat, had two boat anyway. One was *Kimo* and one was *Ka'ala*.
- NP: *Kimo* and . . .
- KS: *Ka'ala*.
- NP: And if he went, he would go out on one I assume, who would go out on the other boat?
- KS: The other brother.
- NP: Oh, I see. What was his brother's name?
- KS: Shigeru.
- NP: Shigeru. And they worked together, basically?
- KS: That's right. And they go long distance then they go to get the one boat. Certain times they go with two boats.
- NP: What would they typically do when they would go fishing, where would they go?
- KS: Well, depending on---if the season is *akule* then they would go for *akule* mostly. Then it would be '*ōpelu*. But when they go '*ōpelu* two of them go together because they spread the big net. And when they go to *menpachi*, that's the kind red fish . . .
- NP: The little ones, yeah.
- KS: They go individual. Because with the line, I guess was.
- NP: And how far would they go off?
- KS: And I remember they used to leave one boat at Kawaihae.
- NP: Oh wow, that's all the way around the island.
- KS: And then they used to come back, come in with the truck. They'd bring the fish home and then go back with the truck and leave the boat there for a couple of months, I think, then they'd come back to Hilo again.
- NP: That would be during a season---particular season for fish? Do you know what season that was for?
- KS: I know *menpachi* was mostly for Kawaihae. And like, '*ōpelu*, they used to go in Hilo because they used to go early in the morning and come home, eat lunch and rest for a while and then they go again in the afternoon, twice a day.

- NP: That's hard work.
- KS: Mm hmm, but that's the life they wanted.
- NP: Was there any time when there weren't that much fish?
- KS: Yeah, had with the weather and this and that.
- NP: What would be the bad times?
- KS: When the weather was bad and you cannot go out, no fishing at all. So then he decided he'd apply for this school custodian job and he got it. So for the last ten years before he retired he was custodian for the school.
- NP: But this was after the tidal wave.
- KS: After the tidal wave.
- NP: But before, when he was doing the fishing, would he pretty much fish every day or . . .
- KS: Almost every day.
- NP: Including weekends?
- KS: Sunday he used to go out, Saturday he might stay home. Because the fish market is not open on Sunday.
- NP: Which fish market was that?
- KS: They only have Suisan those days.
- NP: Still the Suisan. And was Suisan in the same place as it is now?
- KS: Just the same place.
- NP: So could you tell me what it was like, would they fish during the day and bring it to Suisan in the evening? What was the typical day like for them?
- KS: Usually he goes out evenings unless it's 'ōpelu, like that. Then he goes in the morning and sell it when everything come back and then he goes back again. And in the morning he sells what he caught the night before.
- NP: And then he would come home and rest.
- KS: Mm hmm.
- NP: Or sleep.
- KS: That's why we had the home right by Coconut Island.

- NP: So that was really good for you then, it was real convenient. And your job was to keep the whole family going and cook and clean.
- KS: So when he's sleeping during the day, make sure the children quiet. I think that's the reason why my children habit of reading books all the time. "Shh! Don't make noise, Daddy is sleeping!" So they just cuddle up in the corner, not one peep. If they want to play baseball, they have the whole park to play in. All the trees, that's where my children grew up in. Play baseball and run around the park.
- NP: Can you describe what that area was like, what Waiākea was like? You talked about the park and your house was near Coconut Island. Because we can't see it anymore, can you try to describe what it was like?
- KS: The trees are still there, the triangle. The coastline and then the Lili'uokalani Park and there's a road there. And there was a road going toward—there's a golf course [Naniloa Country Club] now, that's where my house was, right where the golf course is.
- NP: At the, on the *makai* side of the golf course? Towards the water? Near the clubhouse where that building is?
- KS: It's more inside, but right between there, you see. So the children can see everything, the trees was all small so they could see. I don't know, to me, all boat look alike. The children say, "Daddy boat coming in!" And they used to run to it.
- NP: Would they run down to the pier to . . .
- KS: No, not to the pier but to the corner and they want to go swimming, fishing, Coconut Island was right there. So till today, they just love to go fishing, swim.
- NP: It must have been a beautiful place. Were there lots of houses there?
- KS: No, not too much because the houses were more on this section. Used to have a Japanese bathhouse, I think was. And the park is all open, and some homes by our side. Not too many houses. And the hotel was right on the corner.
- NP: This was the Naniloa [Hotel]?
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: Now, was it very different, the old Naniloa than the one that we see today?
- KS: Basically same. They just build it up.
- NP: Was that a very high-class, fancy hotel or could anybody stay there?
- KS: I guess everybody could stay there. The people we knew was working there so . . .

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

NP: What about back then, would you ever go out to eat there?

KS: No, we never cared to go out, eat there. We rather make our own picnic lunch and they used to swim there, catch fish in the evening and then walk home.

NP: Would you go out to Coconut Island a lot?

KS: We used to go Coconut [Island], every day, in fact. For swim and catch fish and things like that.

NP: So you'd take the kids out there?

KS: Mm hmm. And the pool was real nice. Lately I haven't gone there but it's real nice.

NP: Looks like there's still . . .

KS: Oh yeah, the big tower.

NP: The tower is still there?

KS: I don't know, I haven't gone there for how many years already. Three, four years? My daughter-in-law's father came from Korea so we had picnic lunch there one day.

NP: So going back to Waiākea, there were many people living there in homes, were there also stores and . . .

KS: We had Waiākea Theatre there too. And Sure Save was right across there too, the first Sure Save.

NP: And that's the one I know we'll talk about later because you ended up on top of that Sure Save, didn't you, during the tidal wave? But you had a theater, Sure Save, is that where you used to do all your shopping?

KS: Yeah.

NP: Were there other markets and stores?

KS: Yeah, we used to have a Taniguchi Meat Market. He used to deliver my meat. And then have [K.] Suzuki [Store], Hilo Products—the vegetable was at the side.

NP: Oh, the Hilo Products that's now back here.

KS: Mm hmm, used to be the front street. Cafe 100. Chock's [Chock Pharmacy] used to have one near the corner [of Haili Street and Kamehameha Avenue]. They had building there too.

NP: Would you say it was a good place to live?

KS: To me was real nice, walking distance anyway. Those days I was young, too, so. (Laughs) I could walk to the theater and walk by my—because bakery was there too.

NP: Do you remember the name of the bakery?

KS: What was the bakery name now? [Dan's Bakery] I don't know, the poor baker [Ichijo] got killed in that [tidal wave], he was so nice. The first wave came, he thought the wave was over so he told everybody, "Come drink coffee." He was making coffee and pastries for them to eat. Then later the big one came and carried him, so he drowned (in) the tidal wave.

So everybody was saying, "If he didn't mind about the coffee, if he had gone home he would have been saved."

So whenever I see the mother I used to feel so sorry for her because I used to pick up my bread there all the time. So many people just living upstairs, some people were living too, you see, the big building.

NP: Were there apartment buildings there also?

KS: There were something like apartment building because downstairs was all the stores and things, but upstairs they used to live.

NP: Oh, I see, I see. So by the time when you moved back there, some of your children were going to school, which school were they going to?

KS: We used to go to that Waiākea [Kai] Elementary, right by where the clock is, right behind, there's a school there.

NP: Now the clock was—I know was at a . . .

KS: Corner.

NP: At the corner? And just the clock by itself or was it . . .

KS: Used to have a---was that YW[CA, Young Women's Christian Association] or something was in the building in the front [Waiākea Settlement]. More like a gym, I think was. I forgot what it was. Because Susan was to go in there, Ian was going. Because as school started, my daughter went to the new Waiākea Intermediate. My two sons went to Hilo High, I think was. Ian, my third boy, went Hilo Intermediate.

NP: In your family, what kind of holidays would you celebrate and . . .

KS: We used to celebrate Christmas and New Year's and as Ian would say, "Not fair." Because his birthday is December 31, you see. Everybody would eat New Year cake, so. My neighbor always gave me New Year cake. So what I going do with two, three cakes? So Christine was on December 18, Suzy is December 17, we going to be eating cakes and cakes forever, and Christmas, you know what I mean?

NP: So that Christmas, New Year's period must have been a very excitement-filled time for your

children. What was Christmas like for you?

- KS: Well, we always had Christmas tree and decoration, this and that. But then my husband would be busy so he wouldn't be around on Christmas. He had to get the New Year's fish.
- NP: So he would be out at sea a lot.
- KS: Most of the time.
- NP: Where would you get the tree from?
- KS: We used to buy at the farmer's market, I mean the Suzuki's. They would sell.
- NP: And what kind of trees would you have?
- KS: What do you call, the pine trees, whatever you want, yeah?
- NP: The Norfolk?
- KS: Mm hmm. Sometimes the children would choose which kind they wanted.
- NP: Would they make the decorations, a lot of them?
- KS: The girls used to enjoy making the chain, yeah.
- NP: And your husband would be fishing probably day and night, yeah. For 'ahi.
- KS: No, they go for *menpachi* and then *uhu*, the big, red fish. That's why they go deep-sea. So they wouldn't be home for two or three days, sometimes, you see. They say that's when the deep-sea fish is in demand.
- NP: So back in those days, did people want like *menpachi* and *uhu* more than the 'ahi at New Year's?
- KS: My husband never went for 'ahi. 'Ahi is for the sashimi crowd. My husband was for the red decoration kind.
- NP: Oh, I see. And would you do the decoration? Would you have it at New Year's?
- KS: Yes, for the one that Japanese, in the altar, the Shinto shrine.
- NP: I don't think people do that as much anymore, do they?
- KS: No, very seldom.
- NP: But back then everybody wanted that?
- KS: Right, like my husband's a fisherman so my mother-in-law insisted we have one red one for that. And being so open-hearted that he used to give everybody the fish so my mother-in-law

say, "Where the fish for us?"

He say, "I go!" Run to Coconut Island, catch the fish. (Laughs)

NP: Oh, so he'd give away all the fish then he'd have to go catch for you.

KS: So some of them would tell, "Where my fish? I want this and that!" So he used to give them away. And every year you start giving certain, you have to keep giving that every year, tradition, that's why. Some of them demand, I notice that. So every year, he and his brother used to run Coconut Island, catch, and come home.

NP: How do you prepare that fish so that it curls like that?

KS: You have to tie up the two end, put them in ice too, so it curls up like that.

NP: Oh, and then the cold makes it turn.

KS: Yeah, it keeps it fresh too. And it makes them red. The icy cold makes 'em nice and red.

NP: So you don't cook them?

KS: We used to decorate the fresh one up there. Then later on we might cook but we used to decorate them when they're fresh.

NP: Do you like *menpachi*?

KS: Yeah, *menpachi* is good. But there's two kind, the hard meat and the soft meat so you have to know which one you . . .

NP: How do you tell the difference?

KS: The real colorful one, with the yellow tail and all, they usually hard meat. The meat is real hard. And when you cook it, the fish curls up like that. But the nice soft one has got one dull color.

NP: Oh, so now when I go to the store I know what to look for. So what was New Year's like for your family?

KS: Well, we used to cook for that. . . . When you're in the country, neighbors used to come, this and that, but after I got married, we hardly went anyplace, we always stay home, celebrate by the family. The night before, they throw all the fireworks all night long.

NP: So back then there were lots of fireworks in Hilo still.

KS: Mm hmm, even now, my house, we still have that tradition. They buy hundreds of dollars worth.

NP: Well, that's part of New Year's.

- KS: So one year we invited this family from the Mainland. And they say, "Oh, this is war zone!" Because he was in--was it World War I, World War II veteran? He say, "War zone!" Just like, with all the smoke and all.
- NP: Do your kids come here now on New Year's Eve?
- KS: Yeah, every year, that's why we have the mango tree.
- NP: Oh, and you string it from the mango tree?
- KS: My son-in-law in Kaua'i say he dreams about it. He makes a decoration, how he going to plan and what to do.
- NP: Fantastic.
- KS: That's the one [time of the] year they spend money. I keep my mouth shut.
- NP: Because everybody loves it so much. Well, your mango tree that we can see from the window here is huge.
- KS: Well, I had it trimmed couple years back, you know? But it just kept on going. So this year my son-in-law trimmed that thing down, the night before, just before he came in late that day, from Kaua'i. So he started to cut the tree branches off. I said, "What you doing?"
- He say, "I have to decorate the firework." And he's the monkey of the house, so he comes up.
- NP: Yeah, that looks like a good tree for climbing. And it looks like it's going to be, do you think it'll be a good mango year?
- KS: I had some, you want to try some pickled mango?
- NP: I'd love some. Later, when we're *pau*, oh, I'd love some.
- KS: Yeah, I'll give you some.
- NP: Okay, so you used to celebrate Christmas and you'd celebrate New Year's and all the birthdays, so December was a big month. And then your husband was also gone a lot. Did you used to make special New Year's foods?
- KS: Just the ordinary that the Japanese eat, I guess so. Plus we have our ham or the chicken or the turkey, whatever.
- NP: And noodles and sushi. Japanese New Year's food is good.
- KS: That's why my daughter in the Mainland tells, if you go Hawai'i we had to cook New Year's time because that's the only time Mama prepares all the food. Other time, she not going to do it.
- NP: Do you still prepare?

- KS: I don't prepare at all, for the last ten years I think. Since I had my heart problem. I cannot do all those things, so everybody prepares something. Because we cater our sushi now instead of making our own. So my son-in-law would usually use the Weber for roast the turkey. And my daughter would use the oven for the ham and the Japanese *nishime* and *kanten*.
- NP: Oh, makes me hungry. So any other holidays would you celebrate at Waiākea?
- KS: Well, Easter we had our own Easter egg hunt for the children, just for the family.
- NP: And your family went to Holy Cross Church? Were you Christian, or Buddhists, or . . .
- KS: We were Buddhists first, then my son became Baptist minister. Ian is a Baptist minister, you see.
- NP: He's also a teacher too.
- KS: Mm hmm.
- NP: But you and your husband were married in the Holy Cross Church.
- KS: Holy Cross.
- NP: Why were you married there?
- KS: War years, they didn't have Japanese minister.
- NP: Oh, of course! Because of the war.
- KS: They were all interned.
- NP: Now, did you wear Japanese clothes?
- KS: No. Just small kind makeup.
- NP: But you did have a picture taken of yourself.
- KS: When I was young, we used to have the kimonos, this and that.
- NP: So you still have some of those pictures somewhere.
- KS: Someplace.
- NP: That would be nice to see. How did it feel not to be able to be married in a—or to be married in a church rather than a, say . . .
- KS: Well, Japanese the same thing. But those days they said, "Oh, war years, so it's better to have the Christian church."

END OF INTERVIEW

Tape No. 29-13-3-98

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Kimiko Kuwana Sakai (KS)

Hilo, Hawai'i

May 11, 1998

BY: Nancy Piianaia (NP)

- NP: So okay, let's move ahead. Just to summarize, your husband was in Honolulu for the two years that he was in the army, until 1946.
- KS: That's right.
- NP: And then he was discharged and you decided to come back to Hilo?
- KS: Yes.
- NP: And what did he do then?
- KS: Oh, he came back and got his boat and went fishing again.
- NP: Was he glad to be back fishing again?
- KS: That's right.
- NP: And where did you live when you first came back?
- KS: 'A'alapuna, 105 'A'alapuna.
- NP: Was that in Waiākea?
- KS: That's right by---you go [toward] Coconut Island, [past] the Nihon Restaurant and you get a curve [in the road], straight through. It's a golf link now [Nanihoa Country Club]. My house was in there.
- NP: Kind of up on the hill then?
- KS: No, was all flat. That's why the water came from the back, covered all up.
- NP: Now back then, was the park there or is the park, the Lili'uokalani Park, is that a result of the . . .

KS: No, it was there from before.

NP: So your house was near to the park or more on the golf course?

KS: More on the golf course side. It used to be the second house from the corner.

NP: And was the house that you were in in the tidal wave?

KS: That's right.

NP: Because you missed the 1946 tidal wave because you were in Honolulu?

KS: I came home right after the [1946] tidal wave I think was. Was April 1, I think that. Because we went walking to see how it attacked, tidal wave. And we could see all the clawing mark [on the road]. They told me [the road damage looked] just like a cat's claw or something.

NP: This is down in Shinmachi area or . . .

KS: No, that's by Reeds Bay.

NP: Oh, by Reeds Bay.

KS: Because from my house, it's like just had couple bushes, and you could walk straight to Reeds Bay. Was shortcut instead of going all around the road, you see. So my children loved fishing because they were raised by the (beach).

NP: Was the Ice Pond there also?

KS: Yeah, Ice Pond was always there.

NP: And was it still just as cold as it is now?

KS: Mm hmm. Those days, they used to go for those *limu*, they called them, seaweed. That's what they used to go catch. Now I think--I never did get but my friends did, I think. My husband said, "Not in the cold water!" Wash 'em clean and hang 'em up and let 'em dry.

NP: So was there a railroad bridge that went over . . .

KS: They had.

NP: . . . this pond? I know you can still see pieces of it. And your kids would go down there too?

KS: They used to swim there, too, and go for certain kind fishes.

NP: And would they bring them home for you to cook?

KS: Yeah, they used to bring them home for cook.

NP: That's great. You were a real fishing family.

- KS: Yeah, my father used to like to go fishing so we used to go camping every so often. Load them up in our car and go out in the country and catch fish. And then we used to pick those *pipipi*s, big ones, the night ones. We used to pick by the bags I think. Was real heavy. So I used to enjoy going down the beach.
- NP: What would you do with the *pipipi*?
- KS: You just boil the thing and eat. Sit down and eat.
- NP: You wouldn't put them in soup or anything like that.
- KS: 'Opihi, we'd put 'em in soup. But that *pipipi*, you just boil that thing, sit down, and just eat away.
- NP: This was when you were a little girl?
- KS: Yeah, when we were small. And we still go, my daughter still goes to Coconut Island when they come over. New Year's, that's when my whole family usually comes in, you see.
- NP: From?
- KS: I have one daughter in Kaua'i and my two sons in Honolulu.
- NP: So they all come back here?
- KS: They usually all come back for New Year's, right after Christmas.
- NP: How nice. This is when you put up the fireworks in the mango tree?
- KS: Yeah. (Chuckles)
- NP: So you were living in Waiākea, what was that community like? How would you describe it before the tidal wave?
- KS: We used to be real close neighbors, with all different nationality.
- NP: Oh, that's great. So it was a good community?
- KS: It's a very nice community I was living in.
- NP: Did people do things together?
- KS: We used to do things together and they used to help me and whatnot. Because I know one year my mother-in-law and sister-in-law went Japan and my second boy had chicken pox, which I never saw in my life. All was red-like. I didn't know what was going on so I thought was mosquito bites. And I was talking to this neighbor, was long, long time ago, she used to work as a nurse's helper in the country. So I told her, "I don't know, my son get plenty red spots. We don't have any mosquitos because only he's the one getting bit."

She says, "What? What? I come over check for you." And so, "This is chicken pox."
(Chuckles)

NP: Not mosquitos.

KS: And then he had all this medicine. He said was itchy. I said don't scratch because what was those days was? The purple one?

NP: Calamine lotion?

KS: No, not that, was purple medicine just like. And they said [gentian violet] supposed to be real good. So I put that on. So my boy was so fair and so cute, nice and rosy with all the purple stuff. That was funny.

NP: So she came over and helped you?

KS: She told me what to do and not to do and certain things like that, you see. Then she told me got couple of houses down, this lady, the child had chicken pox with a fever and all and they didn't know what to do so they had to rush him to the doctor. So I told them, yeah, when your first baby have all those kind thing, then you don't know anything about it, you know. But we had nice neighbors to come help us around and tell us what to do. But that was the first time, was so funny, because can you imagine, I was supposing all kind mosquito bite.

NP: Would you do most of your shopping in Waiākea?

KS: No, KTA [Super Stores], they used to have a salesman that come over once a week, you see. And you would tell him what you want and he take 'em down and he deliver that.

NP: Oh, how convenient then.

KS: It was. So never left the house. And had this big wagon, used to come and sell those meat and things, you know. Lots of vegetables, of course, I can always walk out too, but sometime it's convenient to just buy from the wagon. So I used to buy.

NP: How often would the wagon come by?

KS: He used to come once a week. And I used to buy from him because I used to know him, down Pāpa'ikou.

NP: So would he come in from Pāpa'ikou with his . . .

KS: Truck, loaded.

NP: Truck with the vegetables and all?

KS: Mm hmm [yes].

NP: Were there people doing things like selling tofu and that kind of thing?

- KS: Oh, I used to have a man that used to ring the bell and come to sell tofu. And my dog never liked the man. I heard when he was a pup, this man came with a stick. So the man don't have to even ring the bell, my dog used to bark already. So my mother-in-law used to tell me to take the pot and buy one tofu before the man come in the house. You'd be amazed how dogs get good memory.
- NP: Yeah, once that happens.
- KS: And I told him, how come that man? You know, every time when the tofu man comes, my dog barks like crazy, you know. He say, when he was a small pup, he came with a stick and the pup never liked him. So even until he was old, old dog, but still he didn't like him.
- NP: Was the tofu different then? That they made? Fresher, or . . .
- KS: I guess. They supposed to deliver fresh tofu anyway.
- NP: I know.
- KS: So they used to come once a week, certain time. And if I want extras, I tell them bring one. Sometimes I tell him, no bring at all. Then I don't have to worry about the man coming up the street and my dog bark. So that was sort of my protection. But people never come my house because the dog would bark. But if was husband or our children coming home, he would start thumping the tail. So I say, "Oh, the family coming home."
- NP: Somebody's coming home. So was it pretty safe neighborhood? Did you have to lock up?
- KS: Actually, I never lock my house until the night of the tidal wave.
- NP: What was the house like? Was it big or small?
- KS: You know the old-fashioned houses, the parlor and the living room and the dining room, they're all connected? The big one like that. So it was like long, big living room. And a big kitchen and I had three bedroom and the bathroom in the corner. So real old-fashioned way but, and had the big porch in the front.
- NP: Did you have a *furo*?
- KS: I had the *furo* downstairs. I had an American tub too, but they never used that. Because never had heater and things, we only had the Japanese tub.
- NP: That's the best anyway. You had to heat it with wood and stuff so that would take time. Would you make a bath for your husband every day when he came back?
- KS: After lunch, I think, when he wants to take a bath he can do that. Usually he just wash his face or something. He too tired to take a bath. And when he get up he used to take a bath.
- NP: So all your kids would take a bath every night.
- KS: Yeah.

NP: They say it used to smell really nice when all the *furos* were going and you could smell the smoke.

KS: Oh, the smoke. I think so, you get used to with the smoke smell, I think. Because I had this dog, you just mention, "I go *furo* now," or "I going take a bath." The dogs going run down, check, just like the dogs, just run down and check if nobody around. And I used to tell him, sit. And he'll sit downstairs while I'm taking a bath. So when somebody start to bark, then you think, oh, somebody, stranger coming by.

NP: That's a good dog that you had.

KS: Very good. German shepherd. They stole that dog in the end, you see.

NP: Who did? Somebody?

KS: Well, we had this Japanese people to pray for us, and this lady said, "The army people took your dog." Because she's a female dog, you see, and easy to bribe her with the meat or some[thing]. So we couldn't believe it. We looked all over and call, usually comes home. Then a girl across the street used to work for Hawaiian Airline. So I told her, "Harriet, did somebody ship one dog?"

She said, "Yeah, we had one dog, looked like Brownie."

I said, "Yeah, that's our dog!"

Because they say you cannot find your dog on the island. The dog went on the plane and in the army base or something she said.

So we had a friend in the army, so we asked this person to check and he said, "Yeah, I thought was Brownie. So I called 'Brownie' and the dog stopped and looked behind." But this soldier pulled the dog in and took 'em away. They said they took 'em for breeding purpose. German shepherd that's why. Of course, she was getting old too, but then you know, just like your own family.

NP: Yeah, that's heart-breaking.

KS: But in a way we thought, oh, maybe it's better life for the dog too, you know.

NP: I don't know, it sounded like she had a pretty good life with you guys.

KS: Oh, we used to spoil 'em. Just tell 'em, go here, we going down the beach. Right down the corner, waiting for us. And if I tell her, "You watch house, I going marketing, I going store," you know, catch bus. And then the dog look at me, and he won't believe me, but I show him the purse, the dog will stay and watch. And when I come down from the bus, used to run out to meet me.

NP: So where would you go when you went to the beach?

KS: Go straight to Coconut Island. And sometime we used to go—I used to shortcut to Reeds Bay.

Out between the neighbors' houses and go.

NP: How long would it take to get from your house to Coconut Island?

KS: It's only about two blocks maybe. It's real near.

NP: And you'd take the kids with you. How often would you usually go?

KS: Summertime, used to go every day. And weekends like that. Because usually, when my husband is sleeping I take the children out, you see?

NP: And what would they do at Coconut Island?

KS: Oh, they swim and fish and whatever they want to do.

NP: Did you pretty much spend the day there with them?

KS: About couple of hours. So I sit down and just make the patch quilt—I mean, yo-yo balls, I used to make. I give them and then I had to throw the whole box away. All had sand in there.

NP: Oh, after the tidal wave.

KS: I had them under the bed, all stitched together. Only a couple of places I had to arrange with the design, was all stitched together.

NP: This was going to be a quilt?

KS: Quilt.

NP: You called it yo-yo balls?

KS: Because you cut it in round and—you never saw those things? Cut into round balls and you squeeze 'em up, make 'em flat, and then you stitch four corners in whatever color you want.

NP: Oh no, I've never seen that. I mean, maybe I have I'm not sure. So you'd be working on that while they would be playing.

KS: Or swimming.

NP: And keeping your eye on them. So you were able to live in Waiākea from 1946 until 1960?

KS: Yes.

NP: So your children really grew up in Waiākea.

KS: Waiākea, that's right, all of them grew up in Waiākea.

NP: Where did they go to school?

KS: We had the Waiākea (Kai) Elementary [School] right by the clock. And then after the tidal wave, my (oldest son) went to Hilo High, they went, I think. And my (second son and oldest) daughter went to the new Waiākea Intermediate. The new one up here, was. (But) Ian (had to go) to Hilo Intermediate. I don't know why he went Hilo. I think because of his age, I think. We had tidal wave in May. And my daughter was eighth or ninth grade so she went to that new intermediate. (Waiākea Kai Elementary School was still intact after the wave. Ian, Cheryl and Susan attended there for school year 1960–61. In school year 1961–62, Kenneth and Ted were at Hilo High School, Christine was at Hilo Intermediate and Cheryl and Susan were at Kapi'olani Elementary School.)

NP: So let's talk about the tidal wave then. And then we can talk about the impact on the children after that. But tell me about the time leading up to the tidal wave. Let's say that day, what kind of warning did you have that it was coming?

KS: They say, "We have a tidal wave coming from Chile." So we waited, it was a beautiful day . . .

NP: You said, "They said." How did you know? Who told you?

KS: Coming over the radio, I think was. They're expecting tidal wave to hit Hilo. But it's coming from Chile and nothing happen, it was such a beautiful day, like this, you wouldn't expect anything to happen. So in the meantime my husband woke up and said he was going get some mullet. And he was out with the boat to catch mullet. And my children went out to swim, they were old enough to go by themselves. So they went to swim and fish and whatever they were going to do. And I promised the younger ones I'll take them swimming later on, I think. So when I heard that had the tidal wave warning [on the radio and from Suisan fish market], I had to tell my older boys, call Daddy and come. Because you can see the father's boat out in the ocean. They called Coconut Island Moku-something? Hawaiian word. Do you know that word? [Mokuola, the Hawaiian name for Coconut Island.]

NP: No.

KS: Actually, that's what they call it, Mokuola. So he said he'd be around there. So the children know where the father was going. So they say they was signaling with the towel to come home, come home. And he say, "What?"

"Tidal wave, come home! You have to take the boat out."

He said, "Oh." So he came home. He said, "Oh, the fish was biting crazy." Big mullet. He say, "Oh, I was going catch some more." He said, no tidal wave. He said, "No, cannot be because the ocean was too calm." He knows his ocean more or less, you see? But since there was the notice, he had to go home, take the boat out.

NP: So he came home and what did he do with the mullet?

KS: We put 'em in the refrigerator. So he told me, "You can cook one if you want, but I going sell for tomorrow." You know, those nylon [thread] real expensive, you know. He say, "I go make another throw net." Because he throws net too, you see? He was going buy the [materials]. That was not [for] commercial fishing, [it was] for the family. So we had that and we had

early dinner. Tried to get ready.

NP: Before he left, did he give you any instructions? Did he say, "I'll see you when I come back?"

KS: No, nothing, he always just goes out. And he tells the children bye-bye. So he tells the children, "Oh, I just take the boat out and come back." He just made coffee and my husband rather have coffee and bread than all those rice and things, you see. So they say, he's not going take some rice and something? He says, "Nah, I can cook on the boat if I want to." So he just filled his bottle with coffee and bread and some fruits I think, and went out. And he said when he was out, I don't know if he was fishing too, but he said nothing happening, the same thing happened. But [that] night, he said he could see all the rubbish coming in later on, all floating.

NP: So he left and did you both feel like if there was going to be a tidal wave it wouldn't be a big wave?

KS: Well, all this time we never had. [It was] all those false warning, yeah? They used to knock at the door, tell us to evacuate, tidal wave coming. But that day, nobody told us to evacuate. So (Christine and Ian) wanted to make cookies. And we cannot forget because they busy making cookies and then I told them, "Oh, ten o'clock, you better sleep already." I said "I'm going clean house from now." Then they went to sleep. I told them get all the clothes on because if anything do happen, have to run with me. So they went to bed and I was cleaning the house, sweep and mop the kitchen, wipe all the windows, even wash my porch. (Laughs)

NP: Was that normal for you to do? Did you do that a lot?

KS: But not in the middle of the night. When I was scrubbing my porch, my neighbors came back, they went walking down Coconut Island.

I said, "How's the ocean?"

"Calm."

Then the other lady said, "The ocean's stink. Have muddy smell." She told me.

And they went in the house and I finished washing. And I was going sweep the cement walk to the road. Then this lady [Mrs. Nakagawa] was driving past and stopped the car and told me, "Run! Because water coming out of Reeds Bay."

And I thought, oh, this [other] lady just came home and nothing. Because [Reeds Bay was on one side of the peninsula and] was Coconut Island on the [other] side. So was a Portuguese lady living the other corner, you see? So I woke up my children and we was ready to run out and (Mr.) Nakagawa stopped (his truck) and told me, "Jump in the car!"

I said, "Yeah, Mr. Ushijima had water filling up the back yard."

They said, "Yeah, water coming up from Reeds Bay, you know." But nothing from Coconut Island. Because we could see straight to Coconut Island. So we jump in the (back of Mr. Nakagawa's truck).

NP: So you said you could see Coconut Island from your house?

KS: Yeah.

NP: Was there enough moonlight so you could see?

KS: And they had the street lights too, that's why. You could see two game wardens was standing there. I said, "The game warden still standing there, he didn't say anything." But get water coming in so we better run. So we could go around but I told (him), "No, make a left turn." Because with a right, was a bridge. Going be with heavy traffic, you see? So right where the clock is standing, we made a left turn. But by the time we went there, all the houses on our side was filling up with water.

NP: Were the waves coming like high and fast or was it just rising?

KS: No, wasn't, was rising from Reeds Bay. That's what (Mrs. Kama) told me, you know. [They] were going to evacuate and grandson ran out to get the pack of cigarette. That's what she told me. But in the meantime, all the family was in the car and they were going reverse the car, when somebody yelled, "Wave coming in from Coconut Island!" So she drove the car right back to the garage. And because of the Ping-Pong table the mother said they got saved. Because the Ping-Pong [table] held back the big rush of water, you see?

NP: Did it kind of go around it?

KS: Around the house and over the garage, you see? But the place where the grandson drowned, right below the road, she had all those *hāpu'us* with anthurium in it. So they couldn't even find his body. He was buried under the *hāpu'u* and everything else.

NP: Sad.

KS: That's why she say the Ping-Pong table save their life. But she said if they had reversed the car and headed toward Coconut Island, the whole family would die because the wave came in. A couple of houses down, [a man] was sleeping in his house. The wave wash him through and he got stuck in the mango tree. Two houses above my house. That's where the fireman found him, hanging on the mango tree. He said, he don't know, he woke up, he was stuck on the mango tree.

NP: Amazing, that he could have been sleeping that much.

KS: Uh huh, before he knew what was going on. He say he didn't even know the tidal wave came. But his parents got drowned on the way (returning) home. (They thought no wave was going to hit Hilo so they returned home to sleep.) They went to visit their friend and then the friend, they say, "If they came home earlier, maybe they have chance to run away." But they stayed a little too long, so they got caught in the tidal wave.

NP: So your friend [Mrs. Nakagawa] came by and told you to [evacuate]? And were you all able to squeeze into the same car?

KS: The husband had a truck too, that's why. (We rode in the back of the truck.)

- NP: There were all six children and you?
- KS: Yeah, plus they had four children too.
- NP: Wow, that's a lot.
- KS: [They] had the truck too, that's why. She said she was waiting, the sister-in-law came to pick up her parents, you see. They went earlier. I told her, "Oh, what happened to Grandpa folks?" They said that the sister took them home. And she said, "Oh, you'd better stay with us." She said, oh, she was waiting for the husband and the husband didn't come home right away. She said that's the reason why she picked us up. Otherwise . . .
- NP: What was her name?
- KS: Nakagawa.
- NP: The Nakagawas, okay. So you went with them up to the clock and turned left . . .
- KS: And then went into Sure Save.
- NP: What were you planning to do by going into Sure Save?
- KS: Well, there's another road you can go out from behind the Sure Save, you see?
- NP: Is that the one that's there now still?
- KS: Mm hmm [yes]. But by the time we got there, the water was all coming up, you see? So he didn't want to take a chance going with the car. So we told him, "Oh, we'll climb up on the roof." That's how we climbed the roof (of the shed next to the Quonset hut where the county band presently practices).
- NP: Was it difficult to get up on the roof?
- KS: Well, to think of it now, if you tell me to do it, I won't be able to do, but those days, I was younger, I could climb up too. Didn't want to get stuck in the water anyway.
- NP: And it's amazing what you can do when you're scared.
- KS: Because he [Mr. Nakagawa] said---he first took up my bigger boy and he told him, "Climb on my shoulder and go up." And he took my second boy, "Take me come up." And he said, "I going pass on the girls so you pull 'em up one by one." So we passed all the small ones up one by one. You see, between the two [boys], they just pick 'em up, easier. "Now you climb up! Forget about my shoulder or my head, just keep on climbing."
- So I step on his shoulder but he's not too tall a man too, you see. My husband's a bigger man. He was kind of short too, the wife is taller, but. So had a hard time reach my two children so I had to step on his head. I said, "Excuse me." But I had to climb up like that.
- And then we told the wife to climb and she didn't want to climb. So then he told one of my

sons to come down and, "Push my wife 'ōkole," you know, because she didn't want to climb up. So one of my sons pushed her from the back and I pull one hand and my other son pulled the other hand. And somehow we managed to pull her up. And he [Mr. Nakagawa] climbed up. He told my two children, "Give me a hand." And they just yank him up. But you try tell me do that now, no way I'm going to do it.

NP: I don't think any of us can do that now. So you were on top . . .

KS: The small warehouse, I think, in the back.

NP: It's still there now?

KS: That's why I tell them, "Yeah, that's my life-saving roof up there."

NP: So you were there on the roof and from that place, you could hear . . .

KS: People screaming, "Help!" And everybody screaming and whatnot. And the cows mooing away. They say the cow was stuck on the fence, they told me. The cows were mooing away, the people were screaming and the big lumber and things was floating. Watermelon, vegetables, all floating all over the place, (horses neighing).

NP: Was the water making any noise? Crashing or anything like that?

KS: I could see, when it struck all the telephone poles, all the sparks are flying around. And then the small, drizzling rain. And then when you look at the wharf, the wave was going over the warehouse. They say, "The wave going over the warehouse." Mr. Nakagawa works as a stevedore so he knows the wharf section well so you can tell more or less what was happening where.

NP: The warehouse that he was talking about, was that towards Reeds . . .

KS: You know the wharf there's a big warehouse. You know where the big boats land? And on the side there's a big warehouse-like thing, like big building, you know. It's all covered, all over that thing was coming over.

NP: That was really high.

KS: That's really high. That's why I said I cannot tell how high, but I know that's the building because the wharf is in there. Because [the water] kept on coming, so it's over the warehouse wall.

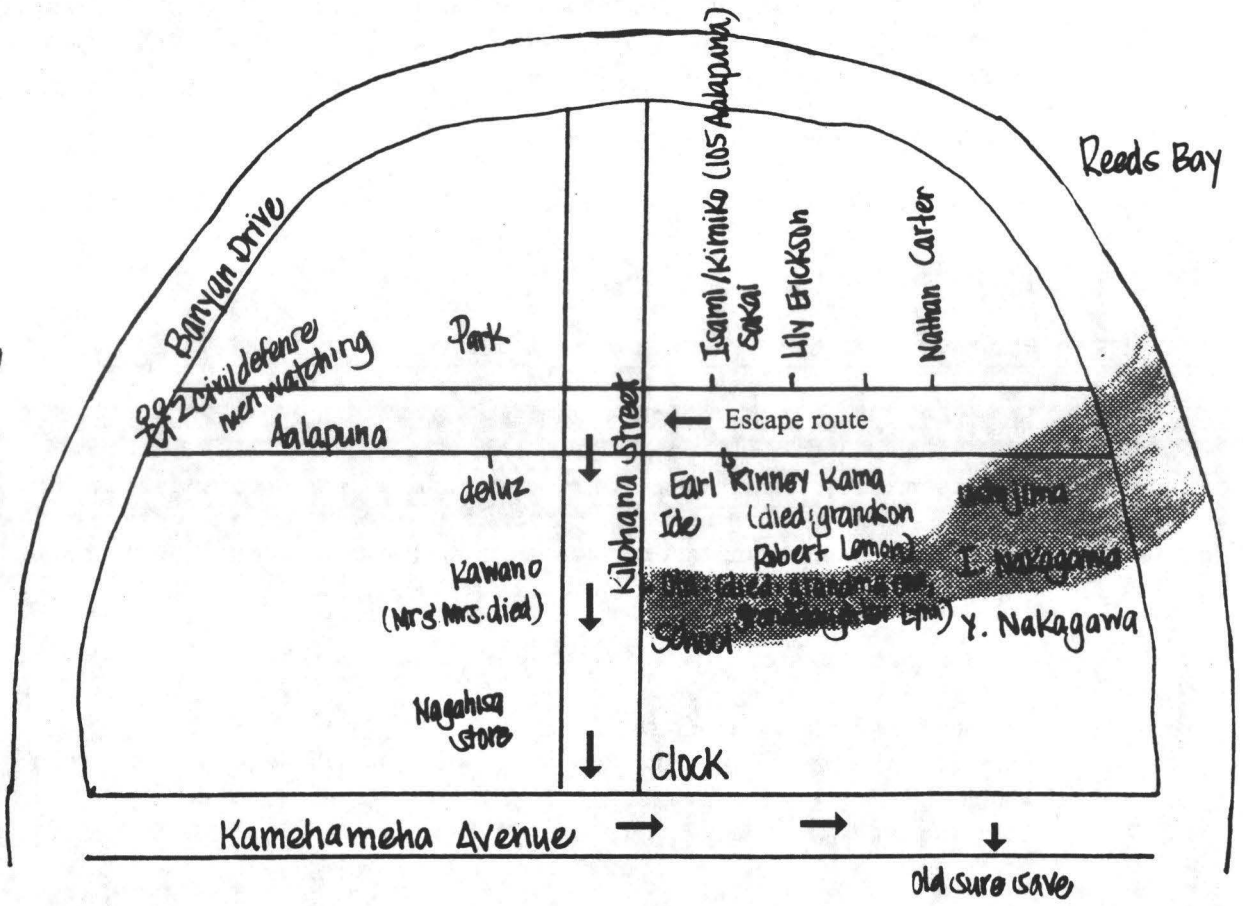
NP: How long do you think you were up on top of the roof?

KS: Maybe not too long. Because according to what they say, it just came and went and the water receded after that. But the second one, because the first one was the filling up, we didn't know when it was filling up. By that time we were climbing, must have been the first one came up, I think, because the water was up already. And then the second one was the one that just covered everything else. The electricity all went out. And complete blackout.

Naniloa (Hotel)

Reeds Bay

Water in (shaded) area



- NP: And after that there were smaller waves, weren't there?
- KS: Kept on rolling, I guess, but. So we didn't want to see anymore so we turned off the flashlight already. We thought we had to save the flashlight until people came to rescue us. Because nobody would expect us on there.
- NP: How did the kids do during that?
- KS: Oh, they seemed to be okay, I don't know. Maybe they were worried about—but we never talked about it.
- NP: They must have been terrified through this whole thing. So you were up there and then what happened? How did you get down?
- KS: Mr. Okuyama came in with the car.
- NP: The owner of Sure Save.
- KS: So was flashing it up and down. So he say, "Who's there?"
- I say, "Mr. Okuyama, [it's] Sakai!"
- He said, "Mrs. Sakai?" I say, yeah. Because he was living Naniloa side, you see, before he moved up to Pana'ewa. So we thought maybe [we were] stuck. Lucky thing, we thanked the store roof because we got saved. He said he just came to check the damage and just walked around. But he told me, "I going take you folks to Mrs. Nakagawa's sister's home first." Then he can go in and check later on, you see. He just wanted to see if the store was standing or what.
- NP: After you went to Mrs. Nakagawa's sister's, where did you go?
- KS: I went to my mother-in-law's home.
- NP: And that was where?
- KS: Right across the community college, Manono Street.
- NP: Okay, near here then?
- KS: Was right about here. Because we didn't want to go and sleep there the earlier part because the children have to go to school and my mother-in-law folks cannot stand children too much, you see. So we rather—the children, "Nah, we'd rather sleep."
- So we told my sister[-in-law], "If the tidal wave come, we'll walk up to your house, not to worry." So we went over next morning. And they was so shocked when we walked in.
- I say, "Oh, the tidal wave came and I don't think so we have my house standing."
- She says, "What?" She said they slept right through that.

- NP: They missed the whole thing. When did your husband come back?
- KS: Right after that, maybe six or seven o'clock. As soon as got light I think he came in. Because he could see where the boat was going. And he said, "Got no more house already." Our truck was upside-down too, that's why. So he walked over to check on the house.
- NP: How did you all feel at that point?
- KS: Really lost, don't know what to do. Then of course, I had my family that came to help me and salvage those things. And we had opportunity to move to NAS, the naval air station, we rented one room there.
- NP: So how did that process work? What was the process of going to NAS?
- KS: I think we applied to the Red Cross for help, I think it was.
- NP: So you went from your mother-in-law's to the Red Cross?
- KS: The Red Cross, and then they found the NAS for us.
- NP: Where had they set up an office or place?
- KS: Oh they had one. I think they had one office in the Hilo Armory.
- NP: How long was this after the tidal wave?
- KS: Oh, not too long, because Red Cross is always there, yeah. So I told them I was looking for a place to live and the Waiākea house [was a] loss. So we all, most everybody moved in there who lost their home.
- NP: Did you have any automobiles or anything left?
- KS: No.
- NP: You said your truck was upside-down.
- KS: Mm hmm. So we didn't have anything.
- NP: So no clothes, no furniture.
- KS: No furniture.
- NP: No car.
- KS: But some of the clothes we picked it up after the tidal wave I think.
- NP: Did you go back to the house?
- KS: To pick up certain things. But most of the things was either washed, as I say, full of sand and

you cannot even salvage those things.

NP: How did it feel when you went back to see the house?

KS: Real disappointed. That's why I told you I got all gray up here.

NP: Your hair turned gray?

KS: You hear about it, you read about it. You don't believe until you get your own self.

And second or third day, they said, "Mama, read about it."

I said, "What?" I went, not completely blind but I couldn't read the newspaper. So I went to Dr. Kutsunai because he was back and he look at me and [I said] I think I need new glasses, I cannot see at all. He told me, no, he checked, he say everything is okay. [He said.] "See, you getting gray hair." I never realized how gray it was each day. "Look, the gray hair you have it here. Worry and whatnot, that's why you blind," he told me. "Six months later, if you still blind, I make glasses for you but not now." It gradually came back. He told me, "Gradually when you get settled, it come back."

NP: Did it help to go and see him?

(Taping interrupted.)

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

KS: I used to (work) with the doctor, that's why.

NP: Did you feel relieved afterwards?

KS: He said because of too much stress, too much worry. Don't know what to do and where to start from. Everything, you know. Start from scratch. That's what he say, start from scratch. And look how much I accumulated, the junks now.

(Laughter)

NP: Well, it's been a lot of years in this house though. So you were saying that when you were moving, Mr. Okuyama helped you.

KS: Yeah, he help a lot. He hired my two boys to work part-time that summer. And every time we moved, he loaned us his truck and help us move the things. Because those days, was so hard to get things like that. My brother helped me salvage my lumber from my old home.

NP: What did you use that lumber for?

- KS: To addition my room.
- NP: Oh, to add, to build here.
- KS: Yes.
- NP: But before you came to this house, you lived. . . .
- KS: The railroad house.
- NP: At the railroad house.
- KS: Used to be an old railroad station and had a store there, I think was (50-B Puhala Lane, across the street from the Waiākea Settlement clock). Only the old-timers remember, I think. You know, the railroad trains would stop there, had a store there so people would buy there and—what you call, turnaround . . .
- NP: The turning for the locomotives [i.e., turntable]?
- KS: Right by the [Wailoa] River was that. And had the railroad train which goes to Pāhoa and all that.
- NP: And that was not destroyed by the tidal wave?
- KS: The railroad thing wasn't destroyed by the tidal wave. Before that, I think the 1940 or something, the tidal wave.
- NP: [Nineteen] forty-six.
- KS: I think that's when we lost the railroad and all, I think. [The 1946 tsunami forced the permanent closing of the Hawai'i Consolidated Railway, Ltd.]
- NP: But there still was the station?
- KS: Yeah, the building was still there.
- NP: And it wasn't destroyed by the 1960 tidal wave?
- KS: No, so we lived in there.
- NP: How long did you stay there?
- KS: Was it about a year until we bought this house and we fixed it? Because government bought our land real cheap. I didn't have any money and so was kind of hard, you see. So we bought this house after the government paid us for the land.
- NP: And it took about a year for that to be all worked out? But you were able to take lumber from your old house and it was still there on the property?

- KS: That's right, because some pieces were gone but some portion was still good yet.
- NP: And you built an addition on this house, make it a little bit bigger.
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: Let's go back to the NAS. You said you went to the Red Cross and they provided a place for you to stay there?
- KS: Yes.
- NP: What was that like?
- KS: It was an apartment with two stories. Upstairs was the bedroom, downstairs was the living room and the kitchen. They gave me an electric stove. NAS had the icebox too, I think.
- NP: And how many bedrooms, did you say?
- KS: Two big bedroom, I think was. Because I remember we had the two double beds all lined up. And then another small bed and the bathroom.
- NP: Your family must have been pretty crowded then.
- KS: To them, was just like camping out. It's bad [i.e., hard] to be close like that. Everybody separated, you know, with all those things, people dying, like that. I know my second boy, Ted, is more sensitive. He had nightmares about his friends, that boy that got drowned across the street. (He was a year older.) So he had nightmares and things like that. So to me was [good] in a way, everybody slept together, you know.
- NP: So that part was good because he could feel his family all around him.
- KS: Mm hmm [yes].
- NP: What would you tell your son when he would have the nightmares about his friend?
- KS: "Oh, we're all here, safe and sound, so not to worry." Because those days, I never went to those religious church, Buddhists not like that, different, you see. So those were the days. People just walk in and out, you know, all the children. This boy used to come my house, slide down the banister. (KS makes a sliding sound.) I used to get a nervous wreck. I said, "Go home!" My next-door neighbor's boy. I told him, "Don't do that! I get enough frustration without somebody falling down, broke the neck."
- NP: Sounded like everybody was really close together.
- KS: That's right.
- NP: Would you have to share a lot of things like clothes, washing, and things like that?
- KS: Like laundry, we had to go—must have been a laundromat. Whoever goes there washes

clothes first, you see, and hangs the clothes too. So I tried to go early in the morning or late at night, wash and so it can dry during the night. But so far, people never used to steal those things, you know. When you come down to think it, because you don't know who came from where. We had all kind of nationalities. But they were all nice people.

NP: These were all people from Waiākea and . . .

KS: All over the place.

NP: Shinmachi.

KS: From Keaukaha side and all over.

NP: Do you know about how many people were there?

KS: I wouldn't know.

NP: Maybe guessing.

KS: You ask, that's a big unit, you know. That's navy air base, that's why. And then you go across, they have to—you can swim there.

NP: Did they have the pool then?

KS: They had the pool, yeah.

NP: Yeah, that's such a good pool.

KS: Because that's the pool my children used to go swimming, whole summer. That's why maybe was good because they didn't have time to be afraid of the water because everybody else was going swimming.

NP: So they went right back in.

KS: Everybody was swimming. And they were so cute, those high school boys were some of my children's classmates. So they would tell my youngest daughter to "Come, swim, I'll teach you how to swim. Come, come!"

She tell, "No, I scared."

Said, "No, come, I hold on. I no drop you." (Laughs) Cute, you know, to think of it yet. But they all learned how to swim there.

NP: How would you get all your food and your groceries and all—did you have a car then?

KS: No, my neighbor used to have a car so when we used to pick up [supplies] at the [Hilo] Armory, the Red Cross would supply us this and that. So she tell me, "Oh, Mrs. Sakai, I'm going, are you going to pick up?" So I used to go with him and get whatever they have free. And my children used to work at Sure Save so they used to buy whatever I need and come

home. So I didn't have to worry too much about shopping.

NP: Could they walk from Sure Save to where you were living?

KS: Yeah, those days, we did lots of walking anyway.

NP: Yeah, I think people walked a lot more than now. You stayed at NAS for about a year?

KS: About that, I think. I really don't know how long.

NP: And then you moved to the railroad.

KS: The railroad house.

NP: And what did you do while you were there?

KS: When I was NAS?

NP: At the apartment.

KS: Well, I used to baby-sit my neighbors' children (Audrey and Phyllis Hongo) because their house got washed away too and she lost her baby-sitter. So she used to bring them NAS for me to take care of the children.

NP: Were there a lot of people who lost their parents or people who would have taken care of their children?

KS: Lots of them did. Because when I moved to the railroad station, they lost a grandfather, you know the man I was telling, washed away to the mango tree? His sister's children, they didn't want to go to nobody. They wanted to come to me for baby-sit them because we used to go to Coconut Island all the time, you know. My husband sleeps during the morning so she used to bring her grandchildren swimming. So she said, "No, I'm going stay with Mrs. Sakai, she going baby-sit us." So I had the two boys, (Jerel and Bert Yamamoto, at the railroad station).

NP: They felt comfortable with you.

KS: That's right, and with my children. So they didn't want to go anyplace else.

NP: Do you think that because of the tidal wave, there was a need for a baby-sitter that they hadn't had before?

KS: That's right, because most of them had their grandparents to baby-sit them.

NP: So you began to work at that time.

KS: Yeah, I was baby-sitting. Then I started baby-sitting Mrs. Kuniyoshi's children and I went to Paramount Grill for a while.

NP: When did you start at Paramount Grill?

KS: Now, that's a . . .

NP: I mean, how old were your kids when you started at Paramount Grill?

KS: Susan was intermediate, I think both of them was going Waiākea Intermediate, Susan and Cheryl. I used to work in the afternoon shift, so one week one would cook the meal and one would do the dishes. My two girls. And one would do the laundry in one week and the next week, they used to alternate. So he used to tell them two do it together. Was a big fight in the house. So if alternate, then, "You like it or not, it's your week."

NP: Was your husband still alive?

KS: Yeah, my husband was alive.

NP: And did you take the Paramount Grill job to bring in extra money or . . .

KS: Because [some of] my children were going college, I needed all the money.

NP: Well, Paramount Grill was a landmark in Hilo, it was a famous place.

KS: For a while, yeah.

NP: Yeah, when it was in it's heyday.

KS: Mm hmm. Because even had in the Japanese magazine, Paramount Grill. Just like that, what that, the man just retired?

NP: Shinohara.

KS: Shinohara, that's it. Shinohara [Elsie's Fountain] and Paramount Grill used to be in the Japanese magazine. The tourists used to go come and take pictures all the time. Little old-fashioned, antique, even the fountain was old.

NP: Oh, it was a beautiful old place. I'm sad that they closed. But Paramount Grill, you worked at for how long?

KS: Well, I retired over ten years already, so before that. About fifteen, twenty, maybe. Not that long. Because I was going to retire when I was sixty-five, but those days our social security was so small. I said, "I cannot live on that kind of money they give me." So I was working and the boss sold the business to Mr. Arai. And I stayed with the Arais. And I retired ten years ago when my daughter had her second child. She told me, "Come take care of my baby."

So I thought, "Oh, good chance to retire."

NP: Who owned it before the Arais?

KS: Iko.

- NP: Iko. And what was the Paramount Grill famous for?
- KS: Fried rice. And the pies, I think was. For a while, they was selling pies. Blueberry cream cheese pie, I think it was. And in the end it was more fried rice.
- NP: And you told me that you made the fried rice?
- KS: I used to make most of the fried rice.
- NP: What was so special about the fried rice?
- KS: I don't know, I tried Cafe 100 when they first started. They had hamburger and peas and things, you know. I didn't like it. And then I tried someplace else, I don't know, tasted something different, you know. So I was experimenting and I found out that if you use oyster sauce, the fried rice comes sweeter. I was just teaching my grandson how to make fried rice. Because told me, "Ho, Grandma, fried rice Paramount Grill, so expensive now."
- NP: Did you create the recipe for the fried rice?
- KS: The lady before used to do it, you know, but then, if I tell you, you'll laugh how much a piece of bacon would cost, how much a piece of Spam would cost, how much—you have to know all that, you know. And then how much a cup of rice would cost.
- NP: To price it out so then you could multiply it? The cost?
- KS: Uh huh. But I tell, even those days, the overhead, even the bread, I used to tell her, "Anne, how come you doing this?" She said she used to count the bread by the slice and then how much margarine you need, and how much you sell it for, you know? And I told the boss one day, "Eh, how you can tell you can make a profit?" Because I had to slice the fish, *mahimahi*, like that. Actually, it's four times what it cost, you know? That's what he used to ask. If the fish cost dollar a pound, he said, one-fourth pound would be twenty-five cents. But we used to cut more than four piece. So try see how much money they making. Of course, you have to put the batter and this and that, you know?
- NP: Yeah, and there's always some wastage in the fish too, when you trim it and stuff.
- KS: That's why he said . . .
- NP: Was he a good businessman then?
- KS: He knew about it more or less I think. But sometimes I used to tell him, "Eh, who's going to buy [if] you hike up [the price]?"
- He said, "Why?"
- I tell him, "Too expensive."
- He said, "Yeah? Try sell 'em and see how far it goes." He used to laugh at me.

NP: And it would go, they would buy it.

KS: Some would buy, some would tell it's too expensive. I said, they know. I told him, "That's why when you buy the big 'ahi, it's cheaper than the small one."

He tell, "How come?"

I said, "The bones. I know it because my husband's a fisherman." So you have to know. If you can use the bones too and the meat separately, then you can price 'em up. But if you discard the bones and the head, you have to just think how much, just where the good fillet and then with that you get the price you paid for it, I told him.

NP: Did you like working there?

KS: Was interesting. Sometimes it's just maddening too. Because people all don't pull their share, you see? The waitress can wait for the tip but they don't want to pull their share too, yeah? So some of them were so ornery. I had to tell them wait, write 'em down [the orders]. Because they want to just cut in between [other orders] and they want their thing served [i.e., cooked by KS] first, yeah? If they just ornery, I tell them, put 'em down, make the order last thing. I used to get ornery too, in fact. But that's true, you try memorize about five, six order, you know, and somebody cuts in, your train of thought goes off. So you forget. So I tell them write 'em down.

NP: Did you line everything up so you knew what was coming next?

KS: Well, if one waitress would call in six order, you can hold that six order in your head. But if somebody tries to butt in in between when the one is calling in, you try calling another order, that's when I tell, "Write 'em in already."

"How come, why?"

I said, "I cannot memorize her order and yours in between." It was all stuck because this the train of thought you have to concentrate.

NP: So one at a time.

KS: So I used to tell them write 'em down in the end, you know. I tried to make as much I can with the memory and then check with it afterwards, yeah? Then sometimes, "Oh, you forgot this."

I said, "I didn't forget. You cut in. That's why the last order came out faster."

NP: And you worked as a cook? You did all kinds of . . .

KS: First I was a fry cook and then I got to do all kind of things. But I never baked. I find out too much, some people love to grumble, nothing satisfies them. So I said, no, I'm not going to take all that. I'm not going to worry.

NP: You were the fry cook then you did a lot of other kinds of prep kind?

KS: No, like small restaurant so you have to do the dishwashing and everything, cleaning up and everything.

NP: Did you get really tired sometimes?

KS: Sometimes I come all tired, yeah.

NP: And what were your hours usually?

KS: When I used to work in the morning, was supposed to be at 6:00 [A.M.] to 2:00 [P.M.] but many times I had to stay later than that. Because I have to think ahead what I have to do for next day's thing. So I used to get so mad when the afternoon cook takes [and uses] what I cut for tomorrow. So I used to tell the boss.

I said, "Your night cook took what I had [prepared] for today and you wasn't around to check that." I used to tell the boss to think of tomorrow too, you know? Imagine if I have to cook so many cup rice like that, more or less I measure, put 'em on the side. So many cups, easier for me next day.

NP: So it wasn't fair to you for them to use all your stuff. And then you have to work really hard . . .

KS: So when I'm slow, I used to cup my fried rice and things, I used to cup and throw them in the freezer. Because if we leave outside, you get slimy like, you get sour like. So I said, "When your night cook take my meat I have out, she's supposed to take mine out from the freezer. How many time I tell her that. You'd better remind her." I used to tell him that. And then Mr. Arai never believed what I tell him. Then one day he say he works early in the morning and he says, "Yeah, I know why you got your grumble. I was so mad. People come early in the morning, wants fried rice and they want their coffee to go and this and that. The coffee is not fill up, the sugar bowl is empty." (Laughs) I look at him, I started to laugh.

NP: So he finally understood.

KS: People have to understand, why I stay extra hours. I said I never asked for extra pay but it's easier for me, I going get frustrated if not, you see? I said that's life. But I told him, yeah, I had my fun too.

NP: Well, let me ask you one last question about the tidal wave that you were in. What do you think has been the effect of the tidal wave on you and on your family?

KS: Well, you may laugh. I always tell my children not to depend on anybody, do everything yourself. So I always tell them, "Never be a lender nor borrower be." Then you don't feel sorry. Because through the tidal wave I found out so many people used to be good friends but when you're down and out, they forget you. I said, "That's life." I told them. I said, "We were poor then, we didn't have anything."

So my second son would say, "Oh, Grandma [i.e., KS] and her proverbs."

"Mama enjoys saying this," I say, but that's what I learned. The hard way. You have to be

knocked around. So if you learn how to do things your way, don't borrow anything, then you don't have to repay anything. So if you want anything, study hard, work for the goal, let nothing interrupt you on the way, you know? So I say, yeah, I was determined to raise my children and give them the education.

So my son told me, "How come, Mama, you saying that?"

I say, "Your Grandma say right before she died, 'I always wanted to see my grandchildren graduate from college but I never have the chance.'" So she died without watching her grandchildren graduate, you see?

But she told me, "No matter how poor you are, try to give them education." Because that's the--she realized too, you see? Without education, especially now, no future to it.

NP: And you have managed to put your children through college.

KS: That's right, I have all of them going through college.

NP: And now your grandchildren are on their way.

KS: Yes, of my—two graduated high school in June.

NP: Is that here in Hilo?

KS: One in Hilo, that's why I'm making this silver one [cranes] for my Kaua'i [granddaughter]. I have a gold one I made, it didn't come out so good. But my Hilo granddaughter is blue and gold, you see?

NP: Oh, that's right, for Hilo.

KS: And then she cannot take too much flowers, asthmatic, that's why. And like my daughter told me, buy 'ākulikuli lei. I don't know how much that thing is now.

NP: Eighteen to twenty dollars.

KS: I told them, "I can give you a twenty-five dollar, thirty-dollar lei, but you know what? I going put it on your neck, when you go home, next morning, they going take them to Grandpa's grave. So bye-bye thirty dollars, I'm going give you cash." I told them.

NP: Yeah, and give her the cranes instead, the ones that you made.

KS: I made the gold cranes for her and making a silver one for Kaua'i [granddaughter].

NP: And you know, that's something really special, nobody ever gets that.

KS: No, I told them, put *maile lei* around it. But gold is too shiny, I found out. But this is silver, not too bad.

NP: Yeah, that will be beautiful.

- KS:** That's her [high school] colors, blue and [gold], you see? And I was trying to make mixed colors but they have only gold, silver and red.
- NP:** Well, I've taken a lot of your time and I really, really appreciate you sharing all that with me.
- KS:** I was just thinking maybe I should buckle down and write one thank you note to my children and grandchildren for the Mother's Day gift they sent me.
- NP:** Well, you deserve to rest after this because we talked for a long, long time. But I really appreciated hearing about the tidal wave and its effect on you and how your family just kept on going.
- KS:** Mm hmm. You have to keep on going anyway. I know my daughter-in-law's mother, Mrs. Morton, she used to tell to my granddaughter, Joy, the one going graduate high school. "You better get the story about your grandmother, you know, about the old plantation days and write a book about it. Because if you don't write it down, people don't remember how Hilo was."
- So she tell me, "Wait, I get time, I'll go write." Because she's a good story writer, you see?
- NP:** Well, maybe she can continue with this story now.
- KS:** So I told them, yeah, she can do it. But she's so busy with all her activities.
- NP:** Well, it sounds like they're doing really well. I'm going to stop the interview here, so thank you so much.

END OF INTERVIEW

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