

**Jackie Kahula**



Tape No. 36-12-1-98

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Jackie Kahula (JK)

Hāna, Maui

April 24, 1998

BY: Jeanne Johnston (JJ)

JJ: Okay, this is an interview with Jackie Kahula, at the Hāna . . .

JK: Community Center.

JJ: The date is Friday, April 24, 1998, and the interviewer is Jeanne Johnston.

Okay, Jackie. Can you tell me where you were born and when?

JK: I was born in Hilo, Hawai'i, 1935. July 26.

JJ: Okay. Can you tell me a little bit about your parents?

JK: I really don't recall much of my parents. Both of them were deceased [when I was] at the age of six months, so I really don't recall my birth parents.

JJ: So at six months of age, did you leave Hilo?

JK: Yes. At six months, I was brought to Maui by my uncle, who was my dad's brother, anyway. Brought here to Hāna, Maui, and then adopted later at age of maybe eight months or nine months.

JJ: So did you spend your childhood in Hāna?

JK: Most all of my childhood was spent in Hāna.

JJ: And who did you live with?

JK: I lived with my adopted parents, James Kalehua Kahula, and my adopted mom, who was Mary Ki'i Kahula.

JJ: And where did you live in Hāna?

JK: I lived in a small village at Hāmoa in Hāna. It was a small little village with about a dozen or more homes.

JJ: Can you describe your house when you were a kid?

JK: Well, we had three homes on this property that we lived. The property was about two-and-a-half

to three acres. And we had three homes on there. And we had those houses built with one-by-twelves and corrugated roof, and red-and-white trim, red paint and white trimming. And the other two were made out of one-by-twelve and would shake. . . . The outer shell of the house was like a shake house with shingles. The third house was also a house built with one-by-twelves and a corrugated roof. And as far as I remember, we also had a big old cook house where we cooked our taros and do your *lau hala* drying. My mom used to do a lot of *hala* weaving, so that's where we boiled our cooked *hala* and dried our *hala* in this big old cook house we had. And we also had a big old garage that we do all our ironing, and . . .

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

JJ: Okay, Jackie, you were telling me about the cook house and the *lau hala*.

JK: And I also mentioned we had a big old garage where we do all our *hala* weaving, and the prepping for all the *hala* leaves that Mom used to weave. So we prepped all our *hala* leaves in this big old garage and do all our weekend ironing in there, with that old charcoal iron. So that's what I remember about our home on this property.

JJ: Did you have electricity down there when you were a kid?

JK: No. There was no electricity. We had the *kukui hele pō*, which is a tin lantern. And course, in those times, there was Luxury lights with the glass balls and glass shades. So we had a few of that. But no electricity. Of course we had some gas. . . . It's not a gas, it's a kerosene refrigerator. And that's what we used to chill our food. Most of our food was either dried or salted.

JJ: What did you do when you were a kid, before you went to school? What kind of games did you play?

JK: Well, we lived next to a landing field for airplanes. It was right in the back of our property. And I remember the community getting together playing softball. I remember we had softball, with a tennis ball, in this open lot where the planes used to land. There were small Piper Cub planes, they were seaplanes with the boat-shaped plane that lands in there. Well, anyway, that's where we used to play our games. Either play tag—that's what we called Master before—or play dodge ball. There's lot of other games we played, either as a team or individual games. That's, I think I can remember, that's about the games I can remember when growing up at that time.

JJ: And then where did you go to elementary school?

JK: Right here in Hāna. In this building that we are having this interview. It's right down the hall, maybe about fifty feet down the hall. The last room down the hall where—I mean, you can see that, Jeanne, just right down the hall here.

JJ: Can you describe the class to me, how big it was, and your teachers?

JK: I think I remember my kindergarten teacher, her name was Mrs. Akana. I think it was Rosalyn or Roselle Akana. She used to live right across the street here somewhere. And I'd say we had probably about twenty-eight to thirty kindergartners. I think twenty to thirty of us in a class. I don't know, that was a time of when we learned how to, I guess, just mingle with different children from the community. Because we were mostly in the village and were only accustomed to the people that we grew up with. I mean, the children that are friends and are my age that we

grew up with. Then at that time, going to kindergarten, I guess we kind of learned how to adjust to more than a few of us.

JJ: How did you get to school from Hāmoa village?

JK: During that time, I don't remember riding any bus or truck at that time, but we used to walk to school. And during the kindergarten and on up to first grade, I think we walked to school. We didn't have any paved roads at that time from our house to the highway, which is just about a mile or three-fourths of a mile to the highway. So we used to trot in the mud during the rainy days to get to school. And then of course, up to the highway, there was what they called a tar road. When it's hot, the tar melts, and when it's cold, it's all hardened. And then, during the low tide, we could go across the beach and take maybe fifteen minutes off our walking time.

JJ: Was your house close to the beach?

JK: Was right, I'd say, about ten steps away from the ocean.

JJ: Did you do a lot of swimming when you were little?

JK: Oh yes. We looked forward for our weekend, because during the weekdays, we hardly had any time to swim or play at the beach. Most of the time—I don't remember how young I was—but there were still chores that we had to do. From my age, which was six years old, on up to the oldest in the house, each one had some duties to do.

JJ: How many people altogether lived in that house that you lived in?

JK: There were---I'd say there were Dad, Mom. . . . Six of us in one house. And there were other families living in the other two homes that was on our lot, also.

JJ: Where did you go to high school?

JK: Right in this building, too. (Chuckles) Right in this building. I went four years of high school right in this building.

JJ: Can you describe what Hāna looked like in those days?

JK: It's really different from what it is today. I remember walking to school, you could stop at the general store, that Hasegawa General Store, which is still operating to this day. Then there was stores right up the—as you continued to school, there's stores on either side of the road. You could choose which one you can go to, because there's all different varieties of candies, and all that. And at that time it was a penny a piece. So yeah, I can describe those days as different from today. There were Laundromats—no, not Laundromats, but I'd say laundry businesses. There were two or three different restaurants. There were about two different barbershops.

So, those days were—variety of different businesses than there are today. Today we only have two general stores in Hāna. You don't have as much choice as you did in the past. There was even a bakery in town. And we looked forward to having twenty-five cents to buy a warm loaf of bread. The cost of bread nowadays (chuckles) is, you know, it's not a two-bit bread now. In those days, the bread was a big loaf for twenty-five cents. Custard pie was about a dime. You have custard pies about maybe six inch, eight inch in diameter. And doughnuts was for about two cents

a piece. Those things I remember.

JJ: Then when you left high school, what did you do after you graduated?

JK: Well, after I graduated, I said that, you know, this place was not for me. I wanted to get away from Hāna. Things changed. Plantation went out of business. We had a different environment. It was different for us anyway, from the plantation days to cattle, which this different owner bought Hāna. His name was Paul F. Fagan. And then he changed it into a small little resort for travellers, and a ranch, a cattle ranch. My parents and uncles and families in Hāna start moving away because of the lack of work. And everything got shrunk down.

So I decided that I have to leave and see what's outside. The easiest way to me to get out of here was to join the service. And I did join the Marine Corps in 1953 and went away for. . . . Well, that's when I think the Korean War was, at that time. But when we went into the service then, the Korean War was over. So we were playing more war games than what I expected to be, so after three years I got out of the Marine Corps and came—and just went shopping for where I think I wanted to be. Been in the Mainland for a few months, the different states. Came back to Hawai'i and stayed in the different islands for a little while. Went overseas to---the money was plentiful when the jobs was open overseas, so I went to the Eniwetok atoll and worked there for a while. Came back to Honolulu, and still didn't find what I wanted. So I came on back. When I did come on back, I found that this was where. . . . All the things I was looking for was right in my backyard. (Chuckles) And I stayed here since then.

JJ: Did you get married in Hāna when you came back?

JK: Yes, I did meet my wife right after she got out of school. And then in [19]57 we had our first child, and in [19]58, I think, we got married.

JJ: What was your wife's name?

JK: Shirley Carvalho, at that time.

JJ: And how many children do you have?

JK: I have four children. One son and three daughters. And in 1996, I adopted two beautiful children, one girl and one boy. I know their parents well. We talk about---I talked to them about letting me adopt these children. And these parents of this boy and girl are so close to our family, so the children know their birth parents and they visit their birth parents every day or the days that they can. They live close by, so they spend couple nights with them during the week, or one night. But I enjoy those two, because mine's are all grown up. I just enjoy the two beautiful children I adopted.

JJ: Do you have any grandchildren?

JK: No. That's the reason (chuckles) why I adopted, too. No, my daughters and son—my son has his own business, and he bought his own business. He has his own home. And my three daughters, the three girls built their own home and live together and share the payments or whatever you might call it. They built their own three-bedroom home and they're doing okay, so.

JJ: Okay. And what are your hobbies?

- JK: Hobbies? It's mostly fishing. Growing up, my hobbies was hunting and fishing. And now, at this 1998, I do mostly fishing and then hunting. In fact, my hobby also was baseball. I just loved the game, baseball. In fact, all different sports. I participated in almost every sport there was in Hāna. And my children grew up with me and they're all athletic. One of my daughters has been recognized as a surfer, an outstanding surfer. She's been recognized as a softball player. . . . I think she went to the Pacific University in California, I think it was, or is it in Oregon? Pacific, she's been up there and she's been recognized for being an outstanding softball player, volleyball player, and then she went to be a handball player. So she---you know, I have a pretty athletic family, and this one girl of mine is outstanding. She's been winning awards. She's almost thirty years old, or she's thirty already. And she's still active in all those sports.
- JJ: Now you told me when you were younger that you spoke Hawaiian in your home.
- JK: Yes, we did at that time. At six or seven years old I remember being called to dinner in Hawaiian. Pick up your clothes, in Hawaiian. Take a bath, in Hawaiian. Everything. Feed the animals, in Hawaiian. So it's been something that we missed after my adopted mom died. We missed because Dad was mostly trying to put pieces together, trying to keep the family afloat and fed. So he was away most of the time. With us going to school, and everything was in English. So we kind of lost track of our Hawaiian language.
- JJ: Do you speak Hawaiian now?
- JK: Yes. I speak, but it's not as fluent as I would like to speak it. So I can understand it, and I can speak it, but I have to really take my time or I'll miss some words in there. But yeah, I'd just love to be really fluently speaking the language. I understand it a lot, but to speak it real fluently, I kind of just, you know, speak to people that I know that understand what I'm trying to say. But there's lot of different nationalities now that speak Hawaiian fluently. It's kind of embarrassing, as a Hawaiian, not to know the fluent language of your nationality or your race.
- JJ: Do you notice a lot more people speaking Hawaiian nowadays?
- JK: Yes. I have a niece who speaks fluently Hawaiian. She's in this Hawaiian-language school, and my adopted girl, I'm encouraging her to---whatever language, I mean, every word that I speak to her and try to make her understand what that word means, and if there was a Hawaiian-language school here for kids or for children, I'd be the first one to put her into it.
- JJ: Okay. Can you kind of describe Hāmoa, and what it looked like just before the tidal wave in 1946?
- JK: It was, to me, it was a beautiful village. Like I said, there was a dozen or more homes that just blend in with the coastline. There's red homes, green homes, white homes, all with that big trimming. And the community or the village, the people are so close. We have days of gathering where the village gathers on a Saturday and do fishing for the whole village and share a catch. Then there's days when we all go to the mountain. We used to have dry land taro patches up in the hills. And we alternate weeks---fishing one week, mountain another week, play games one week. Yeah, and parties, of course. I remember some good parties we had. The children just running around. Mom and Dad preparing all this---you know, in those days we'd pound our own taro, we'd cook our own. And that was one of our chores every other weekend maybe is to boil taro, peel it, pound it, make your *poi*. Different days, everybody goes to the beach and gather all the fish that you can. *Mahele* what we says, just share it with all the neighbors.

- JJ: Was the village all pure Hawaiians that lived down at Hāmoa? Did different families live down there at that time?
- JK: Yes, I'd say yes. I mean, the names may not sound Hawaiian, but the people were. There were Collins. That family is a Hawaiian family. But the name Collins was, I guess, was brought in through marriage. Filipino [names], through marriage again. But, yeah, I'd say everybody in the village were Hawaiian. You know, English [names]. But yeah, I'd say everybody down there were Hawaiians.
- JJ: What were the different things that you all did in the ocean at that time?
- JK: Well, we, for pleasure, as young boys growing up, one of our activities, I'd say, is building these boats, what we called tin boats, out of corrugated iron, and then race it in a . . . There was a little pond. In fact, the pond is still there. But the wall is down right now. But we used to race it in these ponds. Every one of us had a different name for your tin boat. And of course, the girls had other games to play. But that's one of the ocean activities we used to do.
- JJ: How did you make the boats?
- JK: Well, the corrugated roof, as you know, it's that corrugated roof. It's a humpy type tin. What we'd do is just smash it down level, you know, just so it's flat, and then we shape it into a canoe type with tin nailed to boards and it's shaped like a canoe. And then to ride that, you need to be balanced, almost like a bicycle, until you learn how to keep the thing balanced. [If] not, you'd keep tipping over. So you kind of learn how to balance first before you start doing anything else with them.
- And of course, we loved—we used to do a lot of fishing. At that time, I remember, I could go in this local fish pond and gather fish with the hands, because we just know where they go into the hiding place. So what we do is stick our hand in it and pull one out at a time. Sometimes there's three, maybe four, sometimes there's one. And we can gather these with our hands and have enough for dinner.
- JJ: What kind of fish did you get?
- JK: Those ones I mentioning taking out of the rocks is mostly *manini*, they call that. It's a striped. . . . I can't tell you the English name for it right off the bat, but we call it *manini*. It's greenish, striped with little black in it.
- JJ: During the 1940s, was there any military presence here in Hāna?
- JK: Yes, there were. I think it was in 1944—'43 and '44—there were military camps. In fact, there was one right down at our village, just a few—I'd say maybe a block from our home. There were a camp there, with servicemen. I think it's most like one observation camp. There was couple here, and there was one observation post here on the top of Ka'uiki Hill just right in the back of this building where we're at. And of course, there were others, along the coastline, going out towards Wailuku area, in Kīpahulu and Kaupō. There were other different observation posts, too. But yes, there were a lot of military people here in town during the [19]40s.
- JJ: So, now, on the day of the tidal wave, April 1, 1946, can you tell me what happened when you first woke up that morning? How old were you, first of all?



JK: I was eleven years old at that time. And I remember doing our chores early in the morning, and noticed that. . . . If we wake up, we would get up and we walked out in the yard, that you can see right out in the ocean. The pond—we had a fish pond, and the wall was about maybe a foot or two above the high tide. And when it's low tide, it's a good three to four feet above the pond, the water area. . . . in the middle of the *loko*, which we blocked off for fishes that we want that's going out, or block it off for fishes that's coming in. Well, anyway, standing from where we were at that time, feeding our pigs and chickens, rabbits, goat, cows—we had almost every animal you can think of—and it just was a calm . . .

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JJ: Okay, we're going back now, for a moment, to—Jackie's going to tell us a little bit about how his family got from the Big Island to Hāna.

JK: I recall my parents—when I say my “parents,” it's my uncle who I was adopted by, and he had five brothers. And when we have family gatherings, they used to talk a lot about their time in Nā'ālehu Ka'ū, on the Big Island, what they used to do at the time. Bragging that they could break a horse in less time than the other, and the other one would brag that his horse was faster than the others, and they could shoe one horse in so many minutes flat. There was a lot of bragging about that, so I assume they were ranchers at that time. They were great horsemen. They do anything on a horse. They're good ropers, and they're good horse trainers. I had an uncle that could train a horse in about a week, and have one of us sit on it.

So they came here because of the plantation wages, I'd say, maybe the jobs. Was a good-paying job at that time, so they all. . . . One who was a mechanic came first. Then he brought the blacksmith over—his brother, who was a blacksmith. At that time, plantation time, they had a lot of mules that they used to transport the sugarcane from one field to another. So horses and mules were a lot in Hāna at that time. So he brought his brother, who was a blacksmith, down. Then they brought the other brother, who was a horse trainer. So they all moved here and got decent jobs in the business plantation time.

JJ: What was the plantation called?

JK: Used to call Hāna plantation. Ka'elekū Sugar Company, I'm sorry. It was called Ka'elekū Sugar Company. Although the mill was in Hāna, the name Ka'elekū was about five miles—what's this? East, west—north. It was about five miles north of Hāna. And in that Ka'elekū there was camps, above and below what we called the main road. There was only one road out of town to Wailuku, Kahului. So there were Korean camps, there were Japanese camps, there were Filipino camps, there were Hawaiian camps. Almost every—Portuguese camps, Puerto Rican camps. There were all people that were brought into Hāna to work at Ka'elekū Sugar Company. And they brought them in, different nationalities. So when one group came into town to work, they were maybe fifty or twenty families that came together. So they speak their language, and their culture, so they all stayed in one camp. So we had different camps in town with different nationalities. But they were all friendly people. You know, there was. . . . I can remember going to school at that time—although the people was living Hāna, but I remember the different nationality, different boys and girls of different ethnic groups that we grew up with was. . . . It's one big family. Not because you're Portuguese or you're Hawaiian. We didn't even know what the meaning of segregation was at that time. Maybe there was; I didn't know. But we grew up knowing that we all were one.

JJ: So they spoke their own language and had their own culture at home, but what did they speak when they came to school?

JK: English. Everything was in English. And the thing I grew up as graduated from school, and learned about my culture and my *ali'i*, you know that kind of. . . . I got real angry about not knowing the history of our people because there was nothing in school from kindergarten through twelfth grade that gave us—gave me, anyway—any notion how the United States got Hawai'i. So as I grew up, I kind of find out what really happened, and then the history of our people that I got angry. All we knew in school was the making of—our culture, how taro was grown, what taro was made of, to *poi*. And how the *poi* pounder was made and what you do with it. But all the other deep history, I had no idea.

JJ: Did your mom and dad or your other family members ever talk about . . .

JK: Yes, they do, but they do it all in Hawaiian, deep Hawaiian. They speak---after a while, we kind of picked up a little bit of what they were talking about. The name Lili'uokalani comes up quite often in their discussion . . .

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

JJ: Jackie, let's go back to the day April 1, 1946.

JK: April 1, 1946. Well, I mentioned that morning we got up, it was a morning that everything was quiet. I wouldn't say unusual, but it was a day, it's just calm. And we didn't notice anything at that time, but it was just a morning that was somehow different from all the mornings that we experienced getting up. Why, I don't know. But we were all doing our chores, what we were supposed to do. Like I said, we had almost every animal you can imagine. You know, pigs, chickens, rabbits, cows-cows, I say, we just had two milking cows that we used for our use, and my dad always alternates when each one has a calf, spread out, where we continuous have milk. And there were horses, and rabbits, dogs (chuckles)—like I said, almost everything—ducks, whatever. We had chores to do every morning to feed these animals before we go to school.

So when we're done with our animals, we jump in our school clothes, which we had, I'd say, two sets or three sets of school clothes, and one set of Sunday clothes, which we go to church with. And off to school. And after we got dressed, like I said, when our daily routine—yeah, every morning, get up, do our chores, change our clothes, kiss Mom goodbye, and off to school we go.

Of course, Dad already left to work earlier. And at that time he had a job with the county on a road crew. After the plantation closed at that time in 1940—I think back in 1940—that time when the plantation were slowly closing down, they start releasing people. And the camps all start spreading, getting less and less different people staying in town.

But anyway, we were at—where were we at now?

JJ: You were talking about getting ready, you went to school. You were going to school.

JK: Okay, well, we all got dressed. There was three of us that was walking to school—it was myself and two brothers. And then *honi* Mom, and say goodbye, and off we went. Down the road we started meeting the children. In fact, some of them live past our home, so they come by, meet us, and then we go to the next house, and the next house, and before we know it we had about twenty

of us going to school.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

JK: . . . different ages so we walked out of the yard and then we didn't notice anything and this was—oh sheesh, I cannot even remember the time that the tidal wave hit, but anyway, we usually leave home about seven, so we get enough time to get to school at eight. So I'd say maybe around seven A.M. that we all left to school and walked all the way. And until we came to the middle of town that we were told that there was unusual wave action in town.

(Telephone rings. Taping stops, then resumes.)

JK: And then we all rushed down to the bay. On the top of the hill at that time, there was train tracks so we took the track trail all the way down to the bay where the wave, the first wave that came in. So we went down and noticed that the water was receding outside from the bay, and then it went all the way out past the pier. And the pier, I'd say it's a good twelve, fourteen feet to the bottom of the ocean. And we could see the bottom, all the way down to where the water went out.

Then I was told, my brother told me, that we better get home because our house was gone. So we ran home, ran on the side of the road as fast we could, and then hitched a ride with one of the police cars that were going down towards Hāmoa, where we lived. And as we got to the top of our road, where we can see our home, there was nothing. There was nothing there. It was just flat. When we went down, we were looking for our parents; then we found Dad, who was wrapped around with a blanket. He didn't have any clothes; the clothes was just ripped off him when he was in the water. We found him, and we started hugging each other. There was so much lumber and debris around that he stepped on a nail. Of course, he was suffering from that nail poke, but his most concern was hugging us and saying, he cannot find Mom. At that time, we also did not know where Mom was. Said the last they seen of Mom walking back to the house to—why she was going back to the house, he didn't know. But he noticed that as soon as she went back in the house, the first wave hit. It just moved everything inland. No, the first wave had come in, it just came over the wall, he said, just came over the wall and then hit the house. And she went into the house to get something, while the second—the thing receded back, and then. . . .

(Taping stops, then resumes.)

JK: As I recall, then he mentioned that the water went back, and then the second wave that came in, it just rushed in and took the house with her in it and him. The house was, I'd say, maybe about five, four hundred. . . . Maybe three to four hundred yards from the line of coconut trees we had in the back of our property. So he recalled that the wave picked him up, and with all the debris that was going around, roofing iron, tin iron, was just cutting through the water with the waves that's going out. So he couldn't see anything. All he did was just stay underwater, and just went with the flow until he hit a coconut tree. And he hung on the tree and went up with the tide, with the water that went out. So he said when the water went back down and took almost everything there was around, he was about twelve feet up in the air. And then of course when the water went down, he got all scraped up and everything. But went down and it kind of tore every piece of clothing that he had on. And then he came down and started looking for Mom.

Then the second---and the waves kept coming back in, so they moved the back up and I said,

from the beach inland, I'd say maybe a thousand yards inland, that the water went. It was where he was, about four hundred yards from the beach. It was all filled up—you know, the water was still inland about another four or five hundred yards more.

My cousin Henry, who came down also, was looking for the family members. My cousin James, who also was down there looking for family members. Henry, I think, had one lady that was at the edge of the beach that he helped up. There were families that lost their—that lost everybody. I know one family, the Ai family, that lost—I forgot how many children that he had—but he lost his whole family except his wife.

There was also homes that were moved with people. Anyway, this one particular house that was moved, there was a—I think she was bedridden. Just moved the house out away from the damaged area and just set it down. I understand at that time she survived the tsunami or tidal wave. At that time, we didn't know about tsunami, we know it was a tidal wave. All the time a tidal wave just comes, a big wave, and knocks everything down, but it wasn't so. It was just a big wall of water that keep moving in and just destroys everything in its path and take all the rest down. I remember seeing that wave that took cars down the property like pebbles. Just kept rolling them down as far as they can go, till the water starts dying off.

I don't know what else you (chuckles) want to know . . .

JJ: What did it look like? Describe when you got back, what you saw, what the scene was like.

JK: The scene looked like the scene that you see on TV now with—it's just lumber all over the areas. Trees just flattened down. There was nothing but rocks and trees. I mean, rocks and debris from homes. Rooftops scattered here and there. I remember our milking cow, just running around crazy, looking for her calf. But it was just like as you see on TV. A war zone. Just flattened, the whole village was flattened. The most damaged areas was about from the end of our village, which is more on the north side, until the middle of the village, which was on the south side that was mostly damaged. The rest beyond that was kind of inland, where the water didn't get it.

JJ: Were all the houses in Hāmoa village destroyed?

JK: Not all of it. Like I said, it was—I see them. I go back and count the homes. Three, four, six. . . . About nine homes. About nine homes, I'd say, that were destroyed or moved away from the foundation that had to be rebuilt.

But that's an experience I'll never forget, because there was a lot of sadness over loss of lives and. . . . I don't know, I guess there were a couple of warnings later on about tsunamis, but it didn't happen. There were, to me, they were high seas that just came on the road and went back, but there's nothing like that, you know, the '46 tidal wave that I'd seen.

When we were at school, we could see all the warehouses where they used to store sugarcane down at the bay that was just crumbled. Boats that were in the harbor, just slammed against the wall. And then running home and looking at our village that was no more. Just a flat piece of land with lot of broken boards and roofing iron and rooftops here and there.

So, I know, as far as I can remember. That's about it.

JJ: What about the cleanup? Well, first of all, where did you go—where did you stay after that?

- JK: My cousin Henry was still working with the plantation at that time. He was just starting his family, got married. He had a home in town that we moved and stayed with him for the night. And in fact we stayed there for quite some time until my Dad tried to put pieces together. We went back home, and tried to pick up whatever we had. And then we made a makeshift camp, and lived under a *hala* tree for some time, until the Red Cross got homes made for people that lost their homes.
- JJ: Did they rebuild in Hāmoa?
- JK: We rebuilt ours right on the same spot. Right on the same property we built the homes that Red Cross gave us. It was more like a barracks-type homes that they brought. I guess the army during the wartime—barracks-type home that they put up for us. In those days, to us, it was a nice house. I think we had a two-bedroom home with a long parlor and a kitchen. But we lived underneath a *hala* tree for quite some time before our house was built. Walked to school from then, washed our clothes down at the beach, although we had charcoal iron at that time. But the funny part was all we do was iron the front part of our clothes, because we're not going to hear what the people say in the back when we pass them. So the front part was the nice part of our clothes, the back was all wrinkled. (JJ laughs.)
- JJ: Now after the tidal wave, did it change your attitude towards the ocean?
- JK: Well, we had more respect for the ocean then. We had no idea that the ocean could be that mean. Of course, our fish pond was totally gone. It's still there today, but not how I remember it. The wall is gone. Before you can walk right across the wall. During the high tide then the ocean is just kind of spraying on in. But now you have three feet of water, maybe, above the wall during the high tide. You can't even see the pond. And nobody really knows it's a pond until you got the low tide and then you really can notice that. But yes, our attitude towards the ocean has really changed. Every time there's a high sea, we kind of say, oh, not today, I'll go tomorrow. But in the past, when it's rough, or calm, we were always down at the beach.
- JJ: Now, there was an airport down there at Hāmoa village, wasn't there?
- JK: Yes.
- JJ: What happened to the airport?
- JK: Well, after the tidal wave, they did clean it up and continue to use it. There was a small little rest house—what you call a rest house—is where people just wait for the planes to come in. And a couple outhouses. And they cleaned it up and they added somebody to caretake the grass, so it doesn't get real tall, where the wheels would get stuck in it. Then later on, of course, they did this airport, which is now operating, so they shut down that airport. And then when they did that, they tried to turn that into house lots. They put infrastructures in, and water lines, and the roads, and things in there, but due to that '46 tidal wave, nobody—most of them said, “Uh-uh, not over there.” So that thing just went out of the window, and then it came to be a pasture land. But yes, there was an airport there at that time, from, I remember, growing up, until after the tidal wave. They put it back in working order again.
- JJ: What would you say the changes were in Hāna, as a community, after the tidal wave? What was different?

JK: To me, it didn't change much, but the togetherness of the community was closer, because people of different sections of town came together to help people who were family and not family. I got to meet different people that we came to call uncles, aunties, because of the *aloha* that they had for everybody, not only certain particular families but everybody. Just—until today I guess—the community just joins together if there's anything that needs to be done. But other than that, I didn't see much change, in the attitudes of the people, anyway.

JJ: Were there many lives lost in Hāna?

JK: Well, in my village alone, there was six, I think it was. And of course, Ke'anae village lost a couple there. There was life lost, although one is too much already. But we did lose a few.

JJ: Okay. If you would give me some reflections on the tidal wave day, and how it's changed your life.

JK: Well, I think that made me realize that after the tidal wave we didn't have anything. It was clothes, food. . . . All those things that we took for granted, we didn't have anymore. We were a proud—everybody in the village were proud people at that time. But then, accepting things from different people was a different thing for us. We never did accept for—I mean, never did take things from anybody. We were proud people, we did everything ourselves. But realizing when you don't have anything, it really changes your, probably, attitude or your feeling towards your neighbors, because they're always there for support, and made me realize that you don't take anything for granted.

And whatever we had—food that we shared with each other—we made sure that it wasn't wasted. Some of us, when we had plentiful, we eat what we need, and the rest we either discard or use it for the animals. But knowing that you just have limited amount of food and clothing, that you learn how to keep your things so they can continue to be used. You kind of budget your food, that you're sure you get enough for the next day. Dad was the only breadwinner at that time, and when he leaves to work, my oldest brother, John, makes sure we have our clothes ready for the next day, makes sure we have food on the table, because Dad comes home so late. So, he was almost like a Mom and Dad to us.

So I guess that it made us grow up much faster than we wanted to. Games were the least in our minds at that time. Survival was the most important thing for us at that time. And of course, I had my sister—we were first cousins, but she was a sister to us. She had worked in town as a—I think she did some work at the medical hospital they had, the plantation hospital had at that time. She kind of helped us survive that hardship we had before our house got put together, before we can just get on our feet and kind of keep ourselves self-supported.

But yes, I think the whole ordeal just changed our attitudes towards life and made us grow faster than maybe we should have.

JJ: What would you suggest to someone if there's a tidal wave warning?

JK: I would say just to take it serious, because that tidal wave, as Dad mentioned, when Mom went to the phone, it was a ringing type phone, it's not a dial phone. You got to crank it, crank phone. She said to the operator—who was my first cousin's wife, at that time—said that tidal wave is in my yard. It was April Fools', and when the operator called the police. . . . Tidal wave in Hāna? Come on. But I think that particular day, April 1st, it was not taken serious by everybody at that time.

Yeah, I guess, that's about as much as I can remember. I mean, there's lot of things in the back of my mind, but it's not coming out. (Laughs)

JJ: Well, thank you so much, Jackie, I really appreciate you allowing me to interview you.

JK: Well, my pleasure.

END OF INTERVIEW





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