

INTERVIEW # 1 JANUARY 11, 1988

AT THE HOME OF FEDELIA SWEEZEY  
KALAPANA, HAWAII

E= Ehukai  
F= Fedelia

E: Hello, Aunty Fedelia. How are you?

F: I am fine, thank you. Please come inside.

E: As you know we are interested in getting information on what life was like in Kalapana from the early 1900's through the 1950's. I will be asking you to recall what you can remember of your growing up years here. Today I will be getting just general information from you, a little genealogy, how you were raised, etc. I will not be taping our conversation this time but if it is okay with you I would like to tape our future conversations so that I will not miss out on anything.

F: Oh, that's fine.

E: On this project there are several students who have been interviewing different people of Kalapana. What we hope to do is combine all these interviews and have it published and available for the people. I will give you a copy of our interviews for yours to keep and look over. If there is anything at all that you do not want published or available to the public we can arrange to have it deleted. If there are any funds made from these publications, they probably will be used for the people of Kalapana through the Kalapana Community Organization. If you have any questions at all please do not hesitate to ask me. I will try my best to answer them or to find someone who can answer them.

E: Okay, Aunty, I guess I should ask you a few questions about yourself. Could you give me your full name, when and where you were born and who were your parents?

F: My full name is Fedelia Kalehuloa Sweezy. I was born Sept. 26, 1924 in Volcano. I am young, yet.

E: Yes, you are.

F: My mother's name is Nancy Ka'imi<sup>o</sup>ola Makua. She was born in Kalapana on March 14, 1880 and died in Kalapana around 1959 at home. My father's name is John Kanoelehua Kalehuloa. He was born March 5, 1880 in Pūlama and died in the hospital about 1962. I was an only child and I was adopted.

*1 can go further*

E: Do you anything about your "real" parents?

F: No, not really. I was adopted from baby. I was adopted through my father's sister. My parents used to take care of other relatives' children before I was born. They were all older than me. After I was here, they did not take any more children but sometimes some of the children they took care of would come back and visit or stay for awhile.

- F: As I said my parents raised my mother's brother's children who were all older than me. They were Lucy Makua, Becky Makua and Gabriel Makua. I attended Kalapana School in about 1930 up 6th grade then I went to Pahoehoe after that. My first teacher at Kalapana School was Mrs. Ho'opi'i. Had only 2 teachers that time.
- E: What was your first language?
- F: We spoke only Hawaiian at home. When I go to school, I speak English. However, I was not allowed to speak English to my father but I could to my mother.....My parents took care of relatives because the relatives had hard time. However, no more children stayed here for a long period of time after I was adopted.
- E: Is this the same house from your birth?
- F: No, this house was built in 1953. Our old house was built before I was born.
- E: Do you have pictures of your old house?
- F: I had some pictures somewhere but I don't know where they are. But, I can tell you what our house looked like. There was 1 bedroom, 1 living room, 1 smoke house where all the cooking was done including the cooking of taro and regular cooking. In the kitchen we stored the food and dishes. We did not have an 'au'au house. We bathed in the open. We also had an Auntie that stayed with us. One side of the house where Auntie stayed was the room we ate in. We ate on mats on the floor. My mother wove mats and sold them to people from Hilo. I remember weaving mats with her.
- E: What would you have for breakfast, as an example?
- F: We had pancakes which was made from flour that came in a 49 pound sack and maybe coffee. When making poi flour was added in water over the fire then mixed with poi. We got taro from the poi shop or from what was planted which was about a mile away. We also raised sweet potatoes as well as vegetables such as tomatoes, cucumbers, watermelons and dry coconut which were sold to stores in Hilo.
- E: What did your father do for a living?
- F: He worked for the County on the road gang. Those days everything was done by hand, nevah have machines. My father folks used to break boulders by hand then wheelbarrow them away. He also used to go fishing. They used to fish for opelu. That time 1 ka'au (40 fish) used to be 50¢. 2 other men went fishing with him, too. One of them was Kini Aki. When the ocean was good, they used to go. Sometimes a canoe was brought from Kona and they would go get ulua. There was lots of opihi that time. We also used to go catch ohua (baby manini) and 'ala ihi (red fish). There was a lot of sharing going on too. People used to hapaiwa'a ( help take fish off canoe and out of net).
- draw floor plan  
Auntie!*

- E: Aunty, did you attend any one church?
- F: Yes, I used to go to the Catholic Church. Now I am not a Catholic, though. I remember the minister of the Protestant Church. His name was Gabriel Pe'a. There was more people before than now.
- E: What kind of celebrations did you have? Why would people have parties in those days?
- F: Oh, for the same reasons they have parties today. If there was a marriage or a first year baby lu'au. Actually there are more lu'aus today than back then. If it was a birthday or marriage lu'au, no shame go even if not formally invited because you take gift. If anything else, you hold back.
- E: What kind of foods was served at these parties?
- F: The usual....kalua pig, sweet potato, poi, opihi, limu. For entertainment, you just sit at the table.... sing.... do the hula or whatever.
- E: Were there alcoholic beverages at the time?
- F: I think so. I remember we used to make this alcoholic beverage at home. It was made out of this stuff called "home brew" which was a syrup like liquid that was poured into boiling water... let ferment...age. We also made stuff with sweet potatoes and strawberry juice.
- E: Was there any one family who had more lu'aus than another?
- F: Oh, we always used to go to Konanuis for parties. My parents went and wherever my parents went, I went. *at Kapa'ah*
- E: Did you go into Hilo often?
- F: We went into Hilo one time a week. It was on Saturday. We would purchase can stuff like sardines, corn beef, spam.
- E: Did many friends come to Kalapana to visit you folks?
- F; Oh yes.
- E: Did they bring anything with them that maybe you had a hard time getting in Kalapana and did they take home any thing with them?
- F: Oh, when they came to Kalapana maybe they would bring meat or kerosene and when they returned they would go home with young coconut or opihi which my mother would go pick while the guests waited.
- E: Aunty, were there a lot of Chinese down here?
- F: I remember two Chinese kids used to get teased a lot but basically we got along well. The Chinese parents spoke Haw'n but pidgin Haw'n. For instance when asking "Where are you going?" the Chinese would say "'Oe mahea hele?" where in Haw'n it should be "Hele ana 'oe ihea?"
- E: That's really interesting. Maybe I will come back to that subject at a later interview.

- E: Aunty, can you tell me a little bit about yourself as far as how many children you have and when you got married, etc.?
- F: I have 6 children, I was married on December 24, 1945 in Kea'au. I met my husband here in Kalapana. He was a service man and used to pass our house to go to the outpost located by the ocean behind our house. When I first met him, I was feeding the chickens some coconut.
- E: So the Military used to bypass your property?
- F: Yes. They asked us permission to bypass our property and it was alright with my father.
- E: Did the military ever give you folks trouble?
- F: No. I do remember some of them maybe taking bananas and leaving cigarettes in return. During the War we were not allowed to go to the ocean. That was difficult because we loved our food from the ocean and we also depended on the ocean to provide us with fish, etc. which we used in exchange or to sell.
- E: Being that you married a service man, was it harder for you as far as your parents are concerned?
- F: No, my parents had consented to the marriage and had no objections. However, there might have been a lot of gossip about me in the community being that there were not many inter-marriages at the time in this small community.
- E: Well, Aunty, I do feel that I got to know you a little bit and will be looking forward to future sessions. I will recap what transpired this time in our next session. I thank you very much for your information and for this time. I will call you to to make arrangements for our next session.