

Gabriel Kealoha on 'Opihikao - Int. 2

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Introduction:

When I first arrived at Gabriel's house, we went over the previous interview to make sure the information I transcribed was correct. These are the things I clarified with him that were in the first interview. I asked him if his wife's mother's last name was Makua and he said yes. I then asked him if he could tell me the names of his siblings from oldest to youngest. He went on said that his sister Elsie was the oldest, then came Gabriel (he died at a young age), next came Cecilia, Emma, Gabriel, Sarah, Hazel, Ben and he forgot the brother that was before Emma. On page 5 from the first interview, I wasn't sure if he said that his brother Phillip was married there or buried there. Gabriel said he was buried there. Another thing Gabriel clarified for me was the name of the man who made that \$1,000 bet during the '55 flow. This man's last name was Iwasaki. The last thing Gabriel clarified for me was the name of the woman on page 9, her name was Mrs. Katherine Kahaloa. After this was done, Gabriel started off with picking 'opihi.

Gabriel picked 'opihi for 11 years. He would go and pick 'opihi 2-3 days at a time. He would put a lot of salt on the 'opihi so it wouldn't spoil. He would get about 200 pounds of 'opihi. When he got home, he would poke the 'opihi. Back then 'opihi was sold at 45 cents a pound or \$14 a gallon. Sometimes Cecilia Naungayan would go with him to get 'opihi. But when they went out to pick 'opihi, they would keep their 'opihi in their own bag. Because it wouldn't be fair because Gabriel would pick maybe two bags and his sister would pick maybe half bag. When they went home they took home their own bag and they would poke their own 'opihi. So if Gabriel made 10 gallons, he would get \$140. That is how his family would survive.

Besides picking 'opihi, Gabriel also went fishing for ahi on the boat. When the fish is running, that's a good time to go out. Why stay home when the price is good. Go out and make money, you have to learn to take care of the fish as well satisfy the consumer. Gabriel remembers bringing home check for about \$4,000.00. This was what he would make in a week. Other fishermen asked him how he made so much money. He told them, well when the ahi is running go fishing.

During the '55 lava flow, they stayed in Pahoa with his sister Cecilia Naungayan. They stayed with her for six months. Gabriel remembers going back to 'Opihikao side during the time of the flow. He would tell the superintendant that he was going to feed his animals so they would let him go. In 'Opihikao, there was a place that was called the "community house." This house was really big; it was two stories high. Some days Gabriel would go up and sit on the roof to watch the lava flow. He would stay until it was dark, just sitting down and watching the beautiful lava flow. When he would go back to Pahoa where they were staying, his wife would tell him, "oh you late today" but she would know why.

As for Iwasaki, the Iwasaki camp was in Kama'ili. There was also one in Kea'au side, there was an old hospital over there. The Iwasaki down in Kama'ili made a bet that the lava wouldn't cover his property. There was a cinder hill below the area where Yamada put up the gate. Mr. Yamada who was the contractor put up a gate and they said that the lava would flow through the gate to the ocean. The area where Iwasaki camp is located was a forest where hala and 'ohia grew. They bulldozed the area to plant papaya.

When I asked Gabriel if he remembers going to Waiwela, he didn't recall the name but he said there was a place where they would go swimming on Sundays. They

*afterward?
I thought it
was done before
the flow*

would go to this cave. When entering you would need a lantern. The hole that was used to enter the cave was about a three-foot circle. When you entered the hole, it was like a slope; you would walk down about 20 feet after entering the cave. The cave was low at first so you would have to crunch up when walking. After going down about 20 feet, the cave was high enough to walk in. Then you would walk maybe about 15 feet after that and then the water would be there. It was like a pool maybe 20ft.X20ft.

Gabriel then went into talking about when he got home from the blind and deaf school. He said he didn't know what he was doing at the school but when he got back home, his brothers and sisters asked him why does he speak the way he did. When he got back home, he spoke really good English.

I then asked him at what age did he first start school and he said at the age of 7. He first attended Kalapana School. He noted that he started school shortly after his dad past away. His dad ^{died} on July 15, 1935. He died from having TB. He went up until the forth grade. He was 13 or 14 years of age at the time. Most of the teachers were Caucasian and they had one Chinese who was a sub-teacher. From the Kalapana School, he went to the blind and deaf school in Honolulu in the year 1939.

I then asked him at what age did he start working. He said he started at the age of 14, he started working. He pulled grass from the canefield. He got paid once a month. *— was this on Maui?* They didn't take out taxes and social security. I asked him if it was hard getting paid only once a month. He said that on a plantation there would be things like squash and all kinds of vegetables. So they would pick the vegetables and take it home to eat.

I asked him if he remembers having the hale 'opala in the area. He said there was
and then he said that a lot of people moved away during the Depression. They moved to
places like Honolulu –Waimanalo. Plenty Kalapana boys moved to these areas to work.

whose?

Then we were on the subject of the canoe club which he was the chairperson for. He spoke of the huge ho'olaule'a they had to raise money for the club. They made about \$15,000.00 from this ho'olaule'a. But they had to pay for the food, plain fare for the musicians, most of the musicians didn't charge. They stopped by and played for maybe ½ hour and then they ate and drank. He mentioned the story of Hosting who was the president of the club, Jackie and her husband. After the ho'olaule'a they used the money that was raised to go to the mainland. He also mentioned that they changed the name of the canoe club. Some people said that it was name the one giving them all that trouble. So they changed it to Puna Canoe Club.

I then asked him at what age did he get married and he said that he and his wife got married in Hilo. He was 22 years old at the time. They got married at the Holy Cross Church by Rev. Paul Yamada. That was in 1950. He and his wife were married for 34 years.