

KALA MOSSMAN

INTER. 4

3/15/88

2/16/88

INTERVIEW 4 WITH HELEN LEEHONG 3/15/88 BY KALA MOSSMAN

K.M.: ALOHA MRS. LEEHONG  
H.L.: ALOHA KALA HOW ARE YOU?  
K.M.: FINE AND YOU?  
H.L.: SAME AS USUAL  
K.M.: I WANTED TO ASK YOU SOME QUESTIONS ABOUT KAIMU.  
H.L.: SURE  
K.M.: WHEN DID RICE START BEING USED IN KALAPANA?  
H.L.: OH, WHEN THE IMIGRANTS CAME THEY BROUGHT THE RICE. THE IMIGRANTS CAME TO WORK. THE CHINESE, JAPANESE, PORTUGESE, AND OTHERS. THE JAPANESE OR THE CHINESE WERE THE ONES THAT BROUGHT THE RICE. THE PORTUGESE BROUGHT THE BREAD.  
K.M.: WASN'T THERE A PORTUGESE FAMILY WHO LIVED IN KALAPANA?  
H.L.: YES, A BAKER PAULINO WAS HIS NAME. HE WOULD BAKE AND SELL BREAD IN KALAPANA.  
K.M.: WHEN WAS THIS?  
H.L.: OH, I BELIEVE IT WAS IN 1920  
K.M.: WHAT ABOUT THE CHINESE WHO WAS THE FIRST CHINESE FAMILY IN KALAPANA?  
H.L.: LEE'OE WAS THE FIRST CHINESE FAMILY WHO CAME TO KALAPANA.  
K.M.: RIGHT, THEY WERE THE ONES WITH THE STORE YOU TOLD ME ABOUT.  
H.L.: YES  
K.M.: DID YOU FOLKS USE TO EAT RICE VERY OFTEN?  
H.L.: YES OCCASIONALLY, BUT MOSTLY WE ATE POI. THE YOUNGER FOLKS LIKE TO EAT RICE, YOU KNOW THE KIDS NOW DAYS, BUT NOT ME I LIKE TO EAT POI.  
K.M.: DID YOU FOLKS SITCH OVER FROM MAKING POI TO BUYING IT?  
H.L.: WELL MY PARENTS WOULD ALWAYS POUND POI AND WE WOULD, THE CHILDREN WOULD HELP POUND ALSO.  
K.M.: DID YOU FOLKS HAVE TARO ALL THE TIME TO MAKE POI?  
H.L.: WELL SOME TYPES OF TARO ARE READY TO HARVEST QUICKLY LIKE THE LEHUA AND THE 'ELE'ELE TAKES ONLY SIX MONTHS TO MATURE. SOME ON THE OTHER HAND TAKE LONGER LIKE THE KU'O TARO TAKES ONE YEAR. WE WOULD POUND OTHER FOODS TOO NOT JUST TARO BUT THE SWEET POTATO ALSO. WE WOULD PUT THE SWEET POTATO IN A TI LEAF AND WRAP IT UP AND COOK IT THEN WE WOULD POUND IT. ITS REALLY DELICIOUS.  
K.M.: WHAT ABOUT THE ULU?  
H.L.: YES WE WOULD POUND THE ULU ALSO. IF IT IS RIPE WE WOULD COOK IT AND MAKE PA'I'AI'ULU.  
K.M.: WOULD YOU FOLKS EAT ULU OFTEN?  
H.L.: NOT REALLY, SOMETIMES WE WOULD MIX IT WITH THE POI TO STRETCH IT. HAVE YOU EATEN ULU POI BEFORE?  
K.M.: NO I DON'T LIKE ULU.  
H.L.: YES IT IS KIND OF DIFFERENT BUT YOU SHOULD TRY IT.  
K.M.: YES I SUPPOSE I SHOULD.  
H.L.: WE WOULD ALSO USE THE PU (PUMPKIN) TO MAKE PA'I'AI.

WE WOULD POUND IT ALL UP JUST LIKE THE ULU.

K.M.: CAN YOU TELL ME ABOUT THE GAMES YOU FOLKS PLAYED AS CHILDREN.

H.L.: WELL LETS SEE (PAUSE)

K.M.: YOU SPOKE ONCE OF THE GAME KAMAPIO WHAT IS THAT?

H.L.: YES, KAMAPIO IN THIS GAME YOU WOULD GET TWO STICKS ABOUT TWO FEET LONG AND YOU WOULD WIDDLE OFF THE END OF ONE STICK TO A POINT. YOU LAY THE STICK, THE ONE WITH THE POINT ON THE GROUND AND WITH THE OTHER YOU STRIKE THE POINTED AREA ON THE STICK AND THE STICK WOULD JUMP IN THE AIR. YOU WOULD THEN COUNT HOW FAR THE STICK WENT, THE ONES WHO GOES THE FARTHEST WINS

K.M.: WHAT KIND OF STICKS DID YOU FOLKS USE?

H.L.: WE WOULD USE OLD BROOM AND MOP HANDLES. YAH THATS HOW WE PLAYED KAMAPIO. WE PLAYED PE'EPE'E ALSO.

K.M.: WHAT IS PE'EPE'E?

H.L.: A GROUP OF CHILDREN WOULD GO HIDE AND THEN ONE OF US WOULD TRY TO FIND THEM.

K.M.: OH! JUST LIKE HIDE AND GO SEEK.

H.L.: YES JUST LIKE HIDE AND GO SEEK. LETS SEE WHAT ELSE DID WE PLAY? OH STEEL STONE! WE WOULD HAVE TWO TEAMS AND WE WOULD ALL STAND IN A CIRCLE ONE TEAM ON ONE SIDE AND THE OTHER TEAM ON THE ONTHER SIDE. EACH PERSON WOULD HAVE A NUMBER. THERE WAS ABOUT EIGHT ON EACH TEAM. SOMEONE WOULD CALL OUT YOUR NUMBER AND YOU WOULD RUN ONE FROM EACH OF THE TEAMS TO THE CENTER OF THE CIRCLE AND TRY TO STEEL THE STONE. THE TEAM THAT STEELS THE STONE THE MOST TIMES WINS. WE WOULD USSUALLY PLAY THIS GAME AT SCHOOL. WE PLAYED UMA ALSO DO YOU KNOW WHAT UMA IS?

K.M.: OH YAH THATS THE ARM RESTLING ONE YAH?

H.L.: YES ARM RESTLING WE WOULD PLAY MAPALA ALSO. WE WOULD USE THE KAKALI'O YOU KNOW WHAT IS THAT YAH THE ONE WITH PLENTY THORNS ON TOP. WE USED TO USE THE SEEDS INSIDE AS MARBLES. WE WOULD MAKE A CIRCLE AND TRY TO HIT EACH OTHERS MARBLE OUT OF THE CIRCLE.

K.M.: IN SEEMS LIKE IN THOSE DAYS YOU FOLKS MADE YOUR OWN TOYS YOU DIDN'T BUY LIKE NOW DAYS.

H.L.: YAH NOW DAYS HAVE ALL KINDS OF TOYS FOR THE CHILDREN.

K.M.: DID YOU FOLKS PLAY CHASE MASTER ALSO I REMEMBER JAMES AHIA TELLING US THAT YOU FOLKS RAN AROUND CHASING EACH OTHER AT THE CHURCH.

H.L.: YES WE CHASED ONE ANOTHER

K.M.: DID YOU FOLKS PLAY GAMES IN THE WATER TOO?

H.L.: NO WE JUST SWAM

K.M.: JUST SWAM?

H.L.: OH WE WOULD RACE IN THE WATER. THE STRONGEST SWIMMER WOULD ALWAYS BE THE ONE TO REACH SHORE FIRST.

K.M.: CAN YOU THINK OF ANY OTHER GAMES YOU FOLKS PLAYED?

H.L.: NO THATS ALL I THINK.

K.M.: THANK YOU, I WANTED TO ASK YOU A FEW QUESTIONS ABOUT YOURSELF NOW. WHAT YEAR DID YOU GO TO HILO FOR SCHOOL?

H.L.: 1927, I WENT TO INTERMEDIATE 7-9

K.M.: OH I SEE. THEN YOU WENT TO HILO HIGH YAH?

H.L.: YES

K.M.: WHAT YEAR DID YOU GRADUATE?

H.L.: OH IN 1931

K.M.: AND YOU GOT MARRIED IN WHAT YEAR?

H.L.: 1932 RIGHT AFTER I GRADUATED I GOT MARRIED. MY PARENTS DIDN'T WANT ME TO GET MARRIED THEY DIDN'T LIKE MY



HUSBAND. THEY WANTED ME TO MARRY SOMEONE WITH PLENTY MONEY BUT WE WERE IN LOVE IT COULDN'T BE HELPED. FOR A LONG TIME MY PARENTS DIDN'T LIKE MY HUSBAND AND HIS FAMILY BUT AFTER A WHILE THEY RESOLVED THEIR PROBLEMS

K.M.: OH WELL THATS GOOD

H.L.: YES IT IS NOT GOOD TO HAVE PILIKIA FOR SO LONG. SOME PEOPLE TAKE THIS KIND OF PROBLEMS TO THE GRAVE THIS IS NO GOOD.

K.M.: YAH I AGREE. SO WHEN YOU WERE MARRIED YOUR HUSBAND WORKED WHERE ?

H.L.: HE WORKED ON THE SHIP WAI'ALE'ALE AS

A BOAT SWAIN (SWING) UNTIL 1941 WHEN HE BECAME A POLICE MAN IN HILO UNDER SHERIFF SAM PUA. HE RETIRED BECAUSE THE DOCTOR TOLD HIM HE SHOULD TAKE IT EASY, HE HAD HIGH BLOOD PRESSURE. IN THOSE DAYS BEING A POLICEMAN WASN'T AS STRESSFULL AS IT IS NOW. THEY DIDN'T HAVE THE KINDS OF CRIMES LIKE TODAY. MOSTLY IT WAS JUST GAMBLING, CHICKEN FIGHTS AND THINGS LIKE THAT. LATER AFTER THE DAYS OF THE SHERIFFS CAME THE POLICE COMMITIONER, ANTONY PAUL WAS THE CHIEF OF POLICE DURING THIS TIME.

K.M.: WHAT YEAR WAS THIS?

H.L.: I'M NOT SURE BUT HE PASSED AWAY IN 1971.

K.M.: WHAT ABOUT YOU, DIDN'T YOU WORK AT THE NATIONAL PARK?

H.L.: YES

K.M.: WHAT DID YOU DO THERE?

H.L.: I WAS A LECTURER AT WAHAULA. I WOULD TALK ABOUT THE WAHAULA AREA.

K.M.: DID ANYBODY MAKE CANOES IN KALAPANA?

H.L.: I DIDN'T SEE ANYONE MAKE CANOES IN KALAPANA, NO. USUALLY THEY WERE BOUGHT OR GIVEN. KALAPANA DIDN'T REALLY HAVE THE MATERIALS, KONA WAS WHERE ALL THE WOOD WAS.

K.M.: WHEN DID FISHING END IN KALAPANA?

H.L.: OH IN THE 1950S I SUPPOSE. WHEN THE OLD FOLK DIED THEY TOOK THEIR FISHING TECHNIQUES WITH THEM. THE YOUNGER GENERATION DIDN'T LEARN TO FISH SO IT DIED OUT MY HUSBAND LEARNED HOW TO FISH FROM HIS GRANDFATHER. HE WOULD GO OUT ON THE CANOE AT THAT TIME THEY USED LINE TO GO FISHING. SOON THE LAWAIA WA'A PA MOTOR BOAT FISHERMAN CAME IN AND THIS IS WHEN CANOE FISHERMAN STOPED FISHING.

K.M.: OH THATS INTERESTING EXCUSE ME AUNTY HELEN BUT I HAVE TO GO TO CLASS.

H.L.: YES GO TO YOUR NEXT CLASS.

K.M.: THANK YOU SO MUCH

H.L.: THANK YOU FOR MEETING WITH ME TODAY

K.M.: THANK YOU I WISH I COULD TALK ALL DAY BUT I HAVE TO GO

H.L.: OK GOOD BYE

K.M.: GOOD BYE.