

Interview 10 w. James Ahia

by C. Langlas

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CL: I sort of had the impression that there wasn't so much of it happening.

JA: Yeah, wasn't. ____
They all smile.

3. Kalapana Congregational churches

[not recorded: 'Ola'a church was completed about 1930 (built by Kini Aki from 1928-1930), so if he built the Mauna Kea church too, it must have been after that.

The pews from the old Congregational church were brought up to the Mt. View Catholic church. He saw them when it was dedicated in the 30s.

He heard that the first protestant church was out where the ocean is now (from his grandparents).]

CL: But did you hear there was a second one [Congregational Church] about where the Catholic church is now?

JA: No. But then could be, no? because right in front the Catholic church is the Protestant's property too. Could be the second one there.

CL: That's what Keliioomalus thought. But they said they couldn't really find any records.

JA: Record, yeah, that's what they only knew of by mouth and all that. Could be right where the road is. That's where the boundary is, cause I think the Catholic church is only a couple of feet from the Protestant property.

CL: Oh, so where the Catholic church is right now, was that originally owned by the Protestant church, the whole thing?

JA: No. The property, I think where the stone wall was. It's not the right boundary.

CL: Oh, a little bit in.

J.A. Could have been the grass shack church, could be right on that road.

CL: But see the funny thing is...
[break in recording]

JA: ...and then ____ on the rock. He come squash em all.

CL: Just for something to do.

JA: Yeah. And then all the old folks they used to come outside, hang out on break, like Sunday school pau, they come outside, they all the Bull Durham rolled, and then on the rock. And then they keep their left over. [CL: Oh, their butts.] Yeah, their butts. After that, come back, smoke up.

CL: They take a break from the Sunday school?

JA: No, after church they pick up their own butt, and they know where they put their butt too.

CL: Well, still. There's still something funny, because Kini Pe'a, he also remembers doing some building on the Mauna Kea church before he left. With Kini Aki. He says, "I helped build it."

JA: I don't think... So he figure 1930s, about that.

CL: What Kini thinks is that—he doesn't know what date—he remembers working on the M.K. church with Kini Aki when he was young, he thought about 1925. And then, he says, something was rebuilt after he left. He doesn't know when that was.

JA: Can't be 1925, nothing was built then. The walls were the same.

CL: Maybe it had to be before 1930 then.

JA: No, I think it have to be after 1930.

CL: He left—31 he started high school in Hilo and then 32 he moved to Honolulu.

JA: He moved in Hilo, but maybe weekend he come back and help.

CL: That's possible.

[break in recording]

JA: ...he can't walk, but oh boy, when he reach to [the garden] his arm is strong, but he get hard time walking. Good farmer. Oh, he likes to work in the garden.

CL: The guy--Kaleopa'a?

JA: Yeah, Kaleopa'a. She told you about him?

CL: Somebody did, maybe you.

JA: He drag himself up and then when he reach where the ground, and then just go with the hoe, the pick.

CL: Was his legs paralyzed? From stroke or something?

JA: Paralyzed, yeah. Maybe was born that way, I think.

CL: He wasn't the actual grandfather [of Virginia Enos] I think.

JA: No, relative I think. Only just, can't take care himself, and stay with them.

CL: He probably never married.

JA: No, no.

[break in recording'

CL: After you got married, and your parents were living here, and they didn't have any kids left with them, did they hānai any grandchildren?

JA: No.

FA: They took care of these nieces for a while, [daughters of sister] Helen. But not hānai.

JA: Not hānai. Never did hānai.

FA: We got married, and his kid sister and brother were home for a year or two.

CL: Oh, Abraham and Annie.

FA: Yeah. Annie was still going to high school. She just started high school and then the war break out.

JA: My brother Bill was left before that, no? got married in August.

FA: He married before you. You're older than him.

CL: So the two kids that they took care of, those were your sister's/

FA: They were Helen's children. They were to be there for a couple of months only. In fact three, Abraham's boy too. Abraham got married.

CL: Seems like there wasn't as much children being hānai'd in those days as earlier.

JA: No, just come and stay. Well, different families different. But my father [doesn't like].

FA: My father-in-law was very, um... he's not the, he doesn't have that Hawaiian, ohh, feel [motions, clasping to her bosom], bring everybody in. Because our two nieces that they were taking care of for a while. My sister-in-law got married again, and they moved to the mainland. [JA: Her husband took up ministry.] And they came back. My sister-in-law's schoolmate, her very good friend, visited them in the mainland several times. Because her husband was Hawaiian Airlines station manager. And the kids learned to call them Auntie Louise and Uncle Ben. So when they came back, and every now and then, the two of them girls refer to them as Uncle Ben and Auntie Louise. Grampa would be mumbling under his breath. Oh, how are they related. There's no blood relations. Why call them uncle and auntie, you know, he was very finicky about that.

JA: He say, like, you're not respecting your own uncle and aunt.

CL: Oh, you call them.

FA: So, some of those things carry on. Like, in my community here, everybody just open and you can go and come. And you don't feel that you have to have an invitation. Where when I moved to the Ahia household, it's different, you know. The house wasn't that open.

JA: Yeah, not. Well, I could see why my father didn't want. He struggled for his living, eh? There's certain time the house is open. It's not every day.

CL: Well, it was different from when he was living down...

JA: Like down there, it's true too. We don't go anybody's house. We didn't do that. But I know the Hawaiians, it's always a courtesy to come eat at the house. But not to call em uncle, or aunty, or grampa and all that.

FA: Today, we go to a small church, so everybody in the small church, the kids grow up, say Auntie Francis, Uncle. Everybody's uncle and auntie in the sense of respect. They use the title, it's respect. Well, I think that's what our two nieces were doing, but grampa didn't like that. His idea was you cannot. There have to be blood.

CL: And what about you folks, you didn't hānai any of your grandchildren did you?

JA: No. Just come stay, and send em back. (laughs) The oldest grandchildren, that's the one stayed more, yeah?

FA: Yeah. Our oldest grandson we cared for more. Our kids, we had five kids and I think that's a big size family. And they each have, three of them have only one child. And then two have two. And that's it.

CL: Were you ever interested in hānai?

FA: I don't think so. Well, we didn't think of em that way. Because my youngest one had just started kindergarden, and what I had in mind was to go to vocational school, take up sewing. But a friend of mine asked me if I wanted to work temporarily at Kiliauea Military Camp as a housekeeper, and I've been workin every since. So it was kinda hard, me working and the youngest one in kindergarden. And the sister was just one grade above him. And they walk to school.

But... not we never had time to think about hānai.

[tape ends]