

Interview with Kaumana group at old Japanese School 5/17/96

Participants:

Chuck Langlas (CL), interviewer
Rita Pregana (RP), interviewer
Masa Nishida (MN), facilitator
Tomoichi Fujii (TF), informant
Kiyomi Omoto (KO), informant
Tadeo Tanoue (TT), informant

TT: 1939, so this person [Tomoichi Fujii] has a lotta knowledge cause he was station up there, Humu`ula, Waikii area. So how shall we start this thing out?

CL explains project (tape-recorder off)

We look at map and talk about rerouting saddle-road.

KO and TT: Describe earlier plan for bypass road to avoid sugarcane & join SR at Country-Club junction; new one goes up farther
(Gentry--subdivision south, prob. on Wilder Rd.)

KO: This [south alternative] is out by Gentry. But here (points to southern route) I don't think going have any environmental impact, in fact, because I think the 1890 [1881] lava flow flows right to Hilo, eh? all just a lava flow area, this.

CL: Well, here [toward west], but the way I look at, it looks to me like this is pretty much soil down in here [toward east].

TT: Yeah, there's a lotta soil in there.

KO: But, you see where the soil is on the lower end, there was all cane, cane land. So whatever was there is all gone. You know. Because they bulldoze everything down.

TT: As far as I can remember, well, this whole village where it's located today, it's actually sitting on the 1881 lava flow. And of course on the sides, like this end and that end used to be where the deep soil, you know. And that's where we had our cane. But to my knowledge, I've grown sugarcane from about 1958 to 1985, this area. And my dad had been in sugar from about 1920 to until I took over. But, in our case, I have never come across any significant, you know, whatyoucall, heiau, anything that nature. Even Kaumana Cave, when we were young, we used to go in there, spend whole day, but there was no remains, nothin in there. We haven't come across any. We spend whole day in that cave, we haven't come across anything. Because probably because the cave was relatively new, like I say it's 1889-81, see. It doesn't go way back. And to my knowledge, I don't think there's any kind of shrine or heiau. I don't think there's anything.

KO: Well, if there was anything in there, I'd be long gone. Because, you know, the plantation those days they had no such thing as environmental, just go and clear up everything right. So, if you have any soil... and further up where the country club was, you know where the golf course was? that's another soil area. But apparently, I think, whatever is there is also gone too, they made the golf course, right? And on this side, on the Hamakua side of that, it's all rock, and that's part of the lava flow.

TT: The first golf course was built about, in the very early 1920's. I made a research a number of years ago. And the original clubhouse burned down. So the one that stood there is rebuilt golf course [clubhouse].

KO: It says 1928, no? I think said outside, no?

TT: Ahh, I went up there and look at that, I saw the year there. And the original one burned down, eh? And I asked some of the old-timers, like S. Miyamoto, you know. The late S. Miyamoto, but I did interview him back in 1990 relating to the golf course. I asked him, was that sugar cane land? He say, no, no, it was not a sugarcane. Although it's all deep soil, but there were a lotta trees and everything growin. And the reason they could not raise cane was there was no water there. The flume was goin underneath the golf course, see, right under, so there's no way they can flume that down.

KO: You know what he's talkin about, flumin cane? What we used to do is take the water from the Lyman watershed, eh? And run in permanent flumes, run water. And that'd be the permanent flume that would take the sugarcane all the way to Wainaku, okay? Then, run this water into the different areas the cane may be harvesting. And we call that portable, you see? And in that we'll throw the sugarcane and then we'll flow it down. But that Country club area was below the Lyman watershed, you see, so the water couldn't go up that way. That's what he's trying to say there. That's why you couldn't use that for cane growing.

TT: So that area was never in sugar cane. Although its soil and the flume was actually all buried underneath, was covered by the golf course.

CL: You mean there was a flume there but they buried it when they made the golf course?

TT: Yeah, yeah, they buried it.

KO: There was also this Olaa flume, spring like you said earlier, eh? But that water was primarily used to feed the sugar plantation, it's called Olaa those days.

TT: That's why we called that Olaa flume.

CL: Do you know what they did with the water down there?

TT: Drinking water I think mainly was. This was a metal, shaped like half-moon, you know. It was metal, all. Although the sides and the legs were built with wood, redwood. But the inside was all metal. And then they had, every so often, reinforcement, you know, of wood? And then on the top they had the walkway, so you could walk and repair that flume. And if my knowledge serves right, I used to think that that flume was roughly about 18 miles, from way up here [Olaa flume spring] all the way. And the watchman that used to be, not by the main stream, but further down, where the saddle road is just going through right now, right there they used to have a watchman, by the name of Mr. Victorine. Manuel Victorine. He was the watchman there. The reason I know, because when we were kids, we would like to go up to that spring water. But every time he see, he catch us, you know he chase us out, because that was for drinking water, you know. So we were never able to get up to the spring you know. But the lower one, the one that we used to call Square flume--and the reason that we used to call square flume, because the flume was square you see--and this one (KO: That's from the Lyman watershed.) is the one that the Kaumana cane growers was using for water power to flume the cane down to Hilo Sugar. So we had several lines running in Kaumana which were called permanent lines--these lines are running permanent. Then whenever they harvesting, they put temporary line. Soon as the harvest is over they take it all away. But the permanent line is always there. You know. So to take the water is much easier. That's the way it was, until 1957. In 1957 we went into mechanical harvestings. This is when we built all these roads into the cane land, and then it went into mechanical harvesting. So up to 1957 there's no more flume today, none.

To my knowledge, there was probably a wagon trail up to today's Saddle Road--about what mile--oh where Kaumana City. Right below Kaumana City, that's where the Olaa flume used to cross over, right by the hill there it used to cross over there to. And right at the crest of the hill, that's where the watchman. He used to live there. But during the war years, 1942, when I was working for the USED, we built number of military barracks right below the Olaa flume, the area there, for the troops. This was about few months after the war broke out, 1942.

So up to that point we were able to go with the bus and trucks, you know, to come in and out of work. But beyond that I cannot remember whether they were already working on the road or whether it was already done quite a bit. But I think was U.S. engineers they made the saddle road.

TF: Civilian.

counter starts at 146

TF: U.S.E.D., they call em Job Corps or whatever that but these

days they used to call em.

CL: Yeah, U.S. Engineering Division I think is U.S.E.D. yeah.

TT: Yeah I know, you know below Country Club, you know the junction there? All the way down to you know where I'm living now, that road was built about 1936 by.

KO: FTRA, during the depression days, eh?

TT: They had that program that NRA or something.

KO: No, FTRA, Federal Reserve Relief something.

CL: Federal relief or something.

TT: Was when President Roosevelt was...

CL: So coming from, where did they start it?

TT: They started from about

KO: The bottom of the hill yeah.

TT: No no way below.

TT: Way below. Our place is all built up already. See but where I'm living. So probably about where, yeah quite a ways down you know.

TF: They were clearing but

TT: Yeah started to build and go up see. So

KO: Yeah at least, probably above this store here. That road used to go around by the, there's a graveyard inside that used to go around.

CL: On the north side of the graveyard.

KO: Yeah on the right side, the Hamakua side.

TT: And what they did they made a stream, they cut that, you know lava and made it straight.

TT: Yeah I remember I think yeah back about 1936, '37, somewhere around there yeah.

CL: And they went up to about the flume road?

TT: No that road only join as far as the Country Club Road. Country Club Road, up to that point they worked on the road. And

from Country Club Road further on to this place where the Olaa flume has crossed over would be several miles yeah. But I would think that one probably had a wagon trail or something. But the trucks were able to go because if off season from Puna sugar they used be lotta workers see. And then they used to transport these workers. And we used to see these workers go up with their truck and then they would go up there and then they would clean the, and maintain their flume, that Olaa flume. Every year off season they used to do that. Number of people used to come. And I imagine they must have had a road at least up to that Olaa flume. From there beyond I'm not too sure what it was. They may have had trails for people to go...

TF: Trails, horse trails. They had telephone line go right up to Shipman Ranch to what they call it Puu 'O'O. So they had communication back and forth. So every so often somebody would check the line go up or come down. That's where they followed more or less on the Saddle Road coming down. Along that trail.

CL: Did you take that trail?

TF: Uh uh. But when I drive on the Saddle Road I used to see more or less around where it wasn't pavement. Whatever they were using was cinder with oil. They were grade em back and forth then haul em over there, then leave em down then they rode back and forth.

CL: Um hum, when they first made it.

TF: They first made it on cinder. So all the way coming down. So we used to catch Shipman Ranch truck. We used to call him Tom Bell. He was the foreman of the ranch. Tom Bell. He had the dump truck. So whenever we want to come down we hitchhike him come down. But when we came down, that used to be military road so they had a guard up there as you say by the flume. You had to get a badge, I still have the badge, with picture on. You have to show that in order to pass.

CL: Going both ways?

TF: Yeah. And they had one way down by Waiki'i, Mana Road. It was control by military.

KO: One of the things they said that, I don't know how true that is but, is the reason why Saddle Road is so crooked is that they did that purposely. The reason being that if they ever get invasion the planes couldn't land, if they made a straight-a-way. But I don't if that's a tall story or fabricated but.

TF: They took the easiest place. Those days didn't have no bulldozer or whatever. So they chose whatever is easiest

TT: They probably took the easiest place I think you know, place

crooked or whatever.

CL: So you folks don't remember seeing the Saddle Road made in the '40's?

TT: You see because the military had control, many of us were not allowed in there. In fact just about a mile above here we have a cemetery there and that area used to be all ammunition dump you see. So they used to have guards there. In fact my dad folks you know to go to work in their own cane fields they could not go through there because they had the pass but you know you have to show the pass you know it go in and out. So this the way it was you see. So not too many of them would be too familiar with the Saddle Road area because like I say, the military had pretty much control and it was all martial law too you know.

TF: I think the Saddle Road started from up come down. Because they using more on the cinder. You see you ever took notice that the road going up Mauna Kea, you see the cinder hill over there? They took all that, further out on some over here and they used to haul em come down.

CL: Haul it down. Yeah. During the time it was built, were you working up at Puu 'O`_ then?

TF: I was working Parker Ranch. Up there but.

CL: So later on you came to Puu 'O`_.

TF: Uh uh. I'm still at Parker Ranch.

CL: Oh, you just caught a ride down.

TF: Um hum. You just have to pass over there come down right?

KO: Well you know how he used to go down to Mauna Kea though eh? He used to go all the way this way go to Ookala and ride a horse in That's how he used to go to working place. In the early days before the Saddle Road.

TF: So when we want to come down, like in the morning, had to leave about 4:30, 5:00 you know to catch the bus down at Ookala, where we used to leave the horse. Because the bus would be coming about 6:00. So we had to lease the pasture land, overnight so much they charge us.

TT: And going back how...

TF: Then we catch the bus coming down and come home Then when we go back, we catch the bus again go back. They used to go about in the afternoon. So that's the only way I could have gone up. Otherwise, the other way they had trail long ago. So they used to

haul wool going down Waimea, going down Kawaihae. When they had sheep, shearing eh, you ever heard about that? Parker Ranch had sheep.

CL: Up at Humuula.

TF: Right. Until they had, this road then they used to come down, haul down Hilo pier eh. Otherwise they had to go the other way. Because up there the road originally was they had a wagon trail up there before the Saddle Road.

CL: Yeah, over toward, up to Humuula from...

TF: Yeah because from Humuula to Pohakuloa, you know where is the military, these are go into the pasture land. But it goes inside the trees going down. You can see it on here [USGS map] you see the telephone line going down there? That's where they started come down. They had a camp, Pohakuloa. Then they used to commute.

CL: Who did?

TF: The U.S.E.D.

CL: Oh U.S.E.D. when they built the road.

TF: They didn't start on the lava I think they started more on the pasture land first, come to Humuula then they go down and go start building the road. You know that part they saving the time eh. Eventually they make it in the lava go. For communication at least we had from Waimea to Humuula, you know that line coming down. Cause no matter what you had to get communication. Somebody get hurt.

CL: The telephone you mean.

TF: Telephone line. Just single telephone line. Then we had one telephone line going over toward the other end of the Parker Ranch. Where they call Keanakolu. Yeah, we had a telephone line. Then on the way they had the line go down to Shipman, Pua `O`_.

CL: Yeah, from Pua `O`_. From...

TF: From that mountain road telephone line.

CL: Oh, from Humuula?

TF: Um hum. But we didn't have no connection from Humuula to Hilo direct. Had to go Waimea way. That's the only way they had the communication.

CL: So you could call Pua `O`_? Or not. From Humuula?

TF: Yeah. What kind communication was let's say Puu `O`_ was one long one short. You know you got long and you get short and you know where you calling.

CL: But from Humuula you couldn't call Hilo?

TF: Had to go the other way. Shipman can, Puu `O`_ can yeah. They had the line anywhere. No matter what communications is very important. So every so often we had to maintain the line going over because sometime the trees going fall on the line, no more communication so you had to go fix it up.

CL: I've done this sort of backward but let me stop for a minute and ask you guys to introduce yourselves, each of you. Tell me your name and your parent's names and where you were born and raised and a little bit of your history in Kaumana. And you [TF] can tell me that your work history cause I know you worked at Parker and then we can get that straight.

TF: If it's anywhere up that area, he should be really knowledgeable because I think that's the ninth grade no already. Yeah, around there. He started to work for Parker Ranch you see so he's been in there. And his dad was before him.

CL: So you go ahead first Tom. I think this mike will catch you wherever you are. It's suppose to so just go ahead.

TF: My name is Tom Fujii or shall I call it Tomoichi?

CL: What you like?

TF: Tom will do. I was born and raised at Kaumana. Went school on Kaumana School and Hilo Intermediate till the ninth grade and during the summer I used to go cane field, cut cane or whatever they got to do with the cane. And here I was staying with my auntie. My mother passed away while I was young, about let's say about five or six, I was six or seven maybe. Then my father used to work, Miyamoto had a lumber yard like for make charcoal I guess, that Gentry area. Then my mother got sick. She had a pneumonia was Maui. When she pass away we used to stay with my auntie right next. Then my father started working up the ranch. His name is Tomokichi, just add a K inside. I have two brothers and one sister. Two brothers are in the military, they retired. One pass away, one still living. He's in San Antonio. He's served about a minimum of thirty years I guess, Arthur. His name is Arthur. My other brother is Bobby. He used to live until about twenty-five, twenty I think, twenty, twenty-five, someplace around there. He wanted to serve more but military was strict so he had heart problem so he had to retire by hisself. Then after he retired about two or three years came back, stayed with us. Oh he had apartment too then he pass away. So his wife, he got married in Japan and she was over here together and lately about year or

so she went back to Hokaido to stay with a sister. So I have only one brother living. My sister passed away a couple of years already. Then I started working at the Parker Ranch when I, summer time I used to go up cane field then after about September no, the sugar mill close up yeah, September, October, and they used to clean the machine, so November, December was shut down already eh. Then hard to get job yeah. So I thought oh I try go up with my father and stay. He was working Parker Ranch already, repairing fence and more fence line yeah. Then I went up there for the summer then I thought oh I might enjoy over here. At least I get steady job. So I stopped going and I came back and oh I think I better start go up there. So I started up in October, October 1, 1939. At first we went up there was just a greenhorn to ride horse so you know. Although they gave us a old horse so you know too tame and don't have to worry.

CL: But still you get sore eh.

TF: Well the beginning yeah. Although we didn't do cattle much beginning part. There was, what we did was clearing the pasture land. They call that Waipunalei. When I went up there, Parker Ranch has a strip going right down yeah. To almost the plantations yard, almost to the plantation Ookala not the mill but plantation land I think. They still have it. That's up mill. Then we used to go in the pasture land, clean the fern, in other words hapuu. That was hard work you know. You got used to it. Blister our hand. Cut the fern then planted grass, kikuyu pack it on the horse while you going down, on the side of your horse, one on each side. So what we do is one, when take em down there, What they did or one person will dig the hole with a pick and you just grab little bit, cover it with your feet and stamp it and go until it clear pretty good the land over there. They were hiring Filipino, some of Filipino gang. You know for clean the land and they used to stay. What they did was, as they go work down there, they build one shack for them. And what they had to do was they had the military from Waimea Parker Ranch had more control of almost all the material from (end of side A)

Cut the ply board 4X8, cut in half, pack it on the side of the mules well some of the 2X3 we had to drag it down. No as you going down then found a place where they get water, where this take a bath, drink that water whatever. No other water hole so they did stay down there couple of months. In fact over a year, couple of years I think.

CL: The Filipinos.

TF: Filipino gang. And when first time when we went down there build the place, we built part way, at least had the roof, then we slept down there but we used Army cot but Army cot you have to get something, not cannot sleep direct, it's very cold. In the beginning it's kinda warm but that later part it's really cold. At

least you gotta get boxes or you know something else. Solid yeah. At least you wouldn't slip through. Tough time up there. Until you start riding horse. Then I moved to Humuula where they were shearing. Shearing time they used to be about May, April, May. They used to shear about the beginning had so many, I don't know, about eighteen to twenty thousand herd or head or sheep. So the shearing man came from Waimea. They give em a contract. One head let's say was the pay was about 5¢ I think per head.

TF: So whatever you shear that's your days work already. Where they used to shear two hour in the morning, let's say they start 7:00, they take a break 9:00 then they start again till 11:00 and they stop shearing again for another two hour. So actually it was only about short time only about six hours.

CL: Yeah. How many could they shear in that six hour period?

TF: Fast one they could shear over a hundred.

TT: \$5.00.

CL: Yeah \$5.00.

TF: That's some going yeah. But they were smart. You know in the old timers, they know what one to grab. You know, depends on the wool. It's soft, easier to cut. At the end I know it's going to be all ugly kine, kinda hard to shear yeah. It won't cut too easy.

CL: So you did that too, shearing.

TF: I did little bit but I was more on the baler. You know where they bale the wool. They had that box built where you put your bag. You know they opened up two side, on the side is permanent with one shack coming down. Then when you put your bag inside, you shut the door, you get the clamp, yeah with a board. Just meet it on the side so you just press it down. So you put it there on the side. And whatever they do, they pass you two at time so it hold em up until you get four and just press em down, step em down and get another two, four or five on the two side box. Because the thing was collapsible like so whatever they want 2 boxes here then you bring em up. That, then you come on (?) then the shaft boxes would drop, press it down with the handle with a long pipe.

CL: What year did you start working at Humuula?

TF: 1939, October 1.

CL: Oh okay, so pretty soon after you started at Parker than you went to Humuula.

TF: Yeah, I used to commute, when shearing time I had to commute from Keanakolu on horseback, take my blanket, sleep Humuula, you

know the beginning eh. So at least stay about three weeks. And after shearing have to ride horse go back to Keanakolu, that's where my station was. Then eventually we moved to Humuula.

CL: And you stayed there permanently. When did you..

TF: Not right through. When I was working at the ranch we used to break in horse. You know they had a wild horse. They had a herd of Mauna Kea horse. They used to be out in the fence, outside of the boundary, in the forest. So one day they drove em go down, they caught the horse in Parker Ranch then they caught em, took em home to the station and they kept one stud, you know one young, then they bred some of them with that up there. Although more of the horses came from Waimea they were breaking down there. Only thing good them is the hoof is so strong you don't have to get shoe. Good hoof. Because up there is all, not all the places is grass. Lotta lava. We used to drive sheep from way over, let's say about eighteen at the end was about twenty-four mile distance you know one station to the other, that's the distance you know when you are on a car. Then we used to go way over almost on the end of the station early in the morning for drive the sheep come back for shearing. Because if you go late, the sheep will start scattering. You know they want to eat grass. So you have to try beat em out. I started I think about when I bale about four or five years I, shearing time I used to be. Then after that what we had to do was haul water. Cause so many people what they do what depend up there was only rain water, you know catch em from the roof. So shearing time lot of boys going come up so need more water. I used to drive truck. Drinking plus take a bath. When you take a bath they say you have to boil your water. You got one can, you know hot water and you had to haul your cold water from down, bring em up yeah. And that's the water tank used to be below, couple hundred feet or so away from the shower, shower house eh. So only thing is they use so many water not, but you cannot waste the water because so hard to get the water, you had to go and haul from Pohakuloa. They had spring water from up the mountain. Until certain time you could see the pipe line coming down. And they had a tank by there. Then we used to go and get that water, 5,000 gallon tanker.

CL: Yeah. That was the only place you could get water that you knew.

TF: Yeah beginning yeah, so only thing when you get rain we had to try to check the roof, catch em all in the tank, whatever you can. So at the start I think they had hard time raising too much cattle because cattle drink lot of water yeah. Then in the meantime I start to learn bulldozer catapillar. So if you ever go up there that area you see some pond, that's all dirt, it's not rubberized like that. Then used to dig that thing. And what we did was dig, build up the bank, you know come up, and what we did was fence em around, lock up the cattle, let the cattle tamp em down. Let em work for us.

TF: Yeah that's the only way they start to raise the cattle up there. It went up to about 3,000 I think. At first they couldn't raise too much because they had depend on the stream already Wailuku River one that coming down cause they had only

CL: For water.

TF: Um hum.

CL: So how long did you work for Parker then?

TF: Forty plus.

CL: Until you retired?

TF: Yeah. I retired over ten, eleven now.

KO: He's starting his second career now. He might be able to help you one day eh. He delivers lost baggage.

TF: Good, tell you good. And you see a lot of places.

CL: Well I think we may, probably we're gonna, I have an idea that we're probably going to interview all of you again. But for now maybe lets move on and we'll have everybody talk.

KO: My name is, first name is Kiyomi, K-I-y-o-m-I. Omoto. I was born here. My parents came from, they were living out in Kaiwiki where four of my sisters were born and when my father came here, I think in 1922 I think he came here, I was the first born, I was the first boy and then after that we got, my father had six more kids. We had altogether eleven of us, three boys and eight girls. I went to Kaumana School, I was born in 1923, July 3, 1923, I went to Kaumana School, Hilo Intermediate School and graduated from Hilo High School in 1940, just a year before the war started. And I worked with my dad in the, we used to grow sugar cane, independent sugar, grower over here all independent sugar cane growers. And because of this we were exempt from the draft. And I worked with my dad, I grew cane on the side until my dad retired. Before that in 1945 a friend of mine said hey you know, lot of guys getting drafted so you wanta go work the fire station. So I tell em oh that's why I had to get fireman in '45 and lo and behold, before the year was up I was drafted. In April 1946 I was drafted but from in April '46 April, from there the big Tsunami hit Hilo so they had extend one month. So in May of 1945 I went to the Army, 1946 rather. And then I served, we were one of the last draftees so in 1947 they discharged us. Then I went back into the fire department 1949 and I served till 1975 and but in the meantime I worked in the fire station and as you know the fireman get day off. I worked my dad and I had my own cane and when he retired I started raising sugar cane. And until the sugar cane

business was terminated in this area. So after

CL: What year was it did it stop there?

KO: What year was that harvesting ended?

TF: You mean sugar cane went out? 1985.

KO: In Kaumana, yeah.

CL: 1985.

TF: 1985, eleven years ago.

KO: So 1975 when I retired I was still growing cane and in 1985 I stopped growing sugar cane. I had some land out at Kurtistown house so I grew some ginger there. First I planted macadamia nut and then I grew some ginger in Kurtistown and purchased some land and we grew ginger but after awhile I quit that. I retired and I still have the land in Puna, at Kurtistown house so I go out there. I just built a house last year.

CL: In Kurtistown?

KO: Yeah. Eventually I hope I can move up there. In 19, five years ago in August 11, of 1991 my wife got killed in an automobile accident by the airport young girl go outside and killed herself. I live by myself. My daughter lives next door. I had two daughters and one lives next door and one lives down the road. That's why eventually I hope that I can move out there. Get away from my kids.(laughs)

CL: So let me ask you one question. You said your father came to Kaiwiki in 1922?

KO: I think, because I was born 1923 and my sister above me was born 1921. That's why I'm kind of guessing that I think he must have come in at '22, the year that I was born you see.

CL: Yeah. And then you moved over here to Kaumana later?

KO: I was born right here. Right this same place, Kaumana.

CL: Oh okay. He came from Kaiwiki to here. Do you want to go ahead?

TT: Okay. My name is Tadao Tanoue, T-a-d-a-o, Tanoue T-a-n-o-u-e. I was born in Kaumana on January 5, 1923. My parents moved here, including my older sister, from Honomu perhaps about 1922 or '21. They were in, this general area was all independent cane growers. He was one of them. And he cultivated sugar cane until about 1950, '58. And I took over in 1958. I attended school in Kaumana School,

Hilo Intermediate and Hilo High School. And went into the Service in September of 1944, served in Italy for about two years as a replacement for four forty second. I came home in February of 1947 and I attended vocational school here in Hilo. And after two years I worked briefly at as a welder. But I didn't like it so I quit and I got into carpenter and I did for about five years. Was not a good carpenter. Then in 1952 I went down to Marshall Island and worked there for about five years with the (?) In 1958 I came back and I went into full time into sugar cane growing. In 1970 I diversified into anthuriums and bird of paradise and, as a gentleman before me had said, in 1985 all Kaumana cane growing has ceased. As presently I have a little flowers, not very much.

When we were growing up, the early 30's, this general area, the lava flow of 1880 and 1881 had hardly had any vegetation. There was some vegetation but very few trees. We used to run all over this place. And today it's almost like a jungle, you know. But when my dad came over from Honolulu, he told me that this place was just black, all black mass, you know. All lava, all this is p_hoehoe. And from some of the information I have, was that at one time we had perhaps about 1200 acres of sugar cane land up in Kaumana. And when we got into mechanical harvesting, many of these fields had to be abandoned, because of the rocky terrain and stuff like that, you know. And while we were farming, I think only about half of that, maybe about 600 acres. The land in this general area is either owned by Mr. Lyman, which is the father of the late Mr. Orlando Lyman who has that museum. His dad used to come up here quite often, you know, although he used to live in Wainaku. And another large landholder is C. Brewer plantation. There was some individual ownership, especial below Kaumana Cave area. And we have some Catholic land, although not very many. As far as I can remember there's about 40 acres right up above here which is under Catholic land. So all this land was leased out to the growers. Most of them. Other than the ones that they had owned privately. And that's about it as far as sugar cane growing.

I started during the summer. We were going slash cutting when were fourteen. You cannot go younger than fourteen see? You know that child labor thing, fourteen and above, you know. So summer was not a very good thing to look forward to. And this particular school we sitting right here now, this Japanese language school is not the original one.

TT contd: The original one used to be right above here. This was built about 1932, '33, somewhere in that neighborhood. And in this community we had two Japanese school, language school. One here and one down below. Like in every most Japanese community, there were a lot of frictions you know. And they always had separation, some leaders from one of the

KO: Small place, you had two stores too. They had two gangs.

TT: Most places with community they had two. We had also, or it started out as one but we split up eh. I think when I made my survey back in 1990 I spoke with Mr. Yamanouchi whose dad incidently was the second principal and teacher here.

CL: At the school here.

TT: Yeah that school, school here.

KO: When he was here, he was at the old school facing this way. And that's where he used to live, that part at that house there.

CL: The house that's still over there.

KO: Right.

TT: But that's been addition. But according to Mr. Yamanouchi he said they were not the first. He said there was another bachelor Japanese language school teacher and he said because he were having too often too many (?) they kicked him out. That's what I heard.

TT: Then Mr. Yamanouchi and the Mrs. were teaching them. Not this one but right down, along side the old school. This was built later. Then after Mr. Yamanouchi passed away Mrs. Paris moved in came in and they were here until when the war broke out. When the war broke out all the schools had to close down, all the Japanese language schools forced to close down you see.

KO: They had two, we had two schools so two teachers were interned to the Mainland. The family stayed though. The other teacher's name Sakamoto, their kids were all grown so they didn't have to go but (?) they were young but the community kind of helped them and when they found a job, then they didn't have to go. Like my in-laws, my wife's family came from Volcano. And he was also a Japanese school teacher. But when they interned him the kids were all young yet so and my mother-in-law tried to hold the kids together doing all kind of work but she couldn't do it. She had six or seven kids eh. So finally they had to go on DSS and so when they went DSS they shipped em up the Mainland. They stayed in Arkansas But that's where my wife went to school, early school up there In fact the youngest sister was born

CL: Was that with the father or separate?

KO: No the father was in a different camp. Just the mother and the kids. They had a hard time. It was real terrible. And they went later, they didn't go with the group you see so they had to go one their own. That was really, just real terrible. But they all joined together and he went to Chicago to work in the match box factory And then eventually got back together and then come back Hawaii. But they all they did okay. All went to college,

worked their way except for two, one died but.

CL: Do you folks know when the Japanese community started here? When the first people came?

TT: I wonder who were the first here though? One thing is sure though. Many of this, mauka land especially, was used to be virgin forest you know. And then they chopped the wood down and they sell that wood as a firewood too, down town. They used to have people, doing some contract business like Mr. Miyamoto you know. They had the store here. They were also in charcoal business and they were also cutting a lot of those big ohia trees.

CL: So what years, the thirties?

TT: Oh this was way, probably the turn of the century.

KO: Because like I said, my dad came 1922. And when he came, like your dad was already here.

TT: You know but my dad is kind of way behind. Like Mr. Yoshi too was there. I think about 1914, 1912 they were already here you know.

TF: So some of them I think was way back.

TT: So I notice one thing too. When we were growing up Miyamoto had lot of cane fields see. This is why I think he used to open up virgin land. But of course the land belongs to the plantation see. He open up virgin land so after he sell all that fire wood, then they would give him the lease and he would raise sugar cane. And then he would in turn later sell. Actually what they were doing, they were not selling the field itself but they were selling the right to raise sugar cane from one party to other, but it's all underneath the table kind of thing you know.

CL: Not really the lease. Not documented.

TT: And all we had to, to they do is go down to the plantation and say well, we like to change name from this party to that name. As long as the two party agree that's okay you know. That's way we, but money has been exchanged. And that's the way it was done.

KO: So it could have been I think just about the turn of the century yeah.

TT: Yeah, I would think you know.

KO: Yeah it must have been the people around here because...

TT: But they may be, there may have been a later part of

KO: Because I've never heard of any one seeing that lava flow in the 19, 1880's eh. I haven't heard of anyone and my parents talk about that. So it must have been by just about the turn of the century of 1900 yeah? I think

CL: I know that the land here, especially the soil, was opened up in 1895 to homestead. And people bought. And Lyman was one who bought, and others. Like I know the name Mutch, Mutch and a Hitchcock

KO: Yeah Hitchcock, Canario eh.

CL: And Canario yeah.

KO: And you know had that my father used to, Jo Konia you know. And I couldn't understand what he was trying to tell me but he meant Jo Canario. I remember him telling me and I used to grow sugar cane on the land and always he would refer that as Jo Canario, Jo Canario you know. And that means Jo Canario. That's why.

TT: He made this road, this Wilder Road actually. But my folks always used to go Wida, Wida Road. Then I found Wilder, W-I-l-d-e-r. And this road was built by Mr. Wilder you know. Because he tried to raise coffee. You know where Mark used to be, way in there. And if you go in the forest you still see some coffee trees you know. He tried raising coffee but apparently but not very successful. Maybe because it rains too much. I don't know but you know that's why they call Wailda road you see.

KO: You know I tell that little story about, if I tell you California grass, you know what that is right?

CL: Oh yeah I know yeah.

KO: Here we are, the old people used to call em American grass, American grass you know. And now I look at it, it's California grass. The reason why they said American grass, that means they was saying, they couldn't say California, so they said the American, which was easier. So American grass. For the longest time I couldn't understand. Then oh yeah, they could (end of side B)

Side 2

coffee break between tapes:

--independent cane growers mostly on Big island (Hilo, Hamakua, Ka'u, even Kohala) because elsewhere needed irrigation water & small growers couldn't do that

--cane grower's association: local assocn. for Kaumana, then formed group with Kaiwiki & Piihonua assocs. to negotiate with Hilo Sugar, then larger group to negotiate with C. Brewer

Tape 2

TT: ...fourteen years old, we used to go slash cutting cane, burn cane and opala cane unburned cane, and I think was probably about one cents, one cent a bundle for unburned cane, one bundle. That's seventy pounds now.

KO: Oh, easy that.

TT: Sixty came later. Seventy pound and some, because it's not scaled so you know some guys eighty pounds then. And if you get below seventy pounds, you get penalized see. One cents cut hundred and fifty bundles that's a dollar and half. And on the burned cane probably get about nine yields no, less than a cent.

KO: And when we used to cut about hundred and fifty bundles, that's pretty good. They get these Filipinos some they cut about five hundred bundles and they work like machines. But that's only about five dollars. But those days five dollars went a long ways eh.

TT: One bag rice was five dollars before the war hundred pounds. You know something about rice, rice, the price has not gone up that much, compared to bread. Because before the war bread was ten cents. We used to sell it at the store ten cents a loaf. Today that same bread probably costs about two bucks eh. That's two hundred [20] times. Rice was five dollars, today you can buy for what, twenty-five bucks, hundred pounds. See that's only four times [5] went up right?

CL: Rice always seemed cheap.

TF: Cheap today compared to other things. Well that's a main item.

TT: But this neighborhood too, before the war, we can probably count the homes that had telephone and cars.

TT: Telephone this area, like Gota had telephone.

KO: Yeah because she used to work at telephone company that's why.

TT: Telephone company, she was in she was a telephone girl eh.

TT: So that's only two homes here. So 4 mile was Ruth Fujimoto. Also Mr. Robinson. He was C. Brewer section, section luna see.

KO: He used to have what is know as, he's the guy that he's the

Scotchman. He's the one that goes and scales the cane. And that's how you get the approximate weight for each field. Because this might be slash cut every ten bundle they'll count and his father-in-law was on there. Then weigh the cane. Based on that they'll take an average and then they said okay he has X number of tonnage in his field. When that cane is processed then at the end of the month they'll figure it out. You get paid accordingly. That's the way they worked that.

CL: And so if he counts wrong you lose.

KO: Yeah, these two guys, you know it's a bar scale. They need two people and then that guy would get that metal thing, then hook it on and then he put it down you see. So he has to mark it down. The guy that counting, two guys on the side. So they make sure that they count em.

TT: That is not real net cane because the cane itself is still dirty with lotta leaves and, so every so often within a given day they clean the hole, you know all that leaves you know, then they scale em.

So maybe original was seventy but by the time they clean everything, might be sixty-three. So that's seven pound, they tare see. Tare, count on the tare, the tare because that's rubbish that. That's the way they get.

CL: So they take that off?

KO: Yeah and they had, when it goes on the mill, course there's some loss right, they lose some cane and stuff, so at the end of the month the whole plantation put their figures in and then whatever loss is taken by, I guess by the center yeah. You still have some loss there. You never go over because you gonna lose right, you never gain.

TT: So I remember those days my dad used to always say that the best time to harvest your cane would be the summer months. As it goes into autumn and later the yield drops. For example, those days they used to talk about maybe ten gross ton you get one net ton, cane. And then during the summer months when the juice is good, maybe nine gross ton against one net ton see. But tons in the autumn dropped because lot of you know the young shoots are growing so you can count eleven, you know eleven one. That's the kind of ratio see then you losing out, not actually you losing out but it's not a good time but of course you don't have that choice because you have already your schedule all set already.

KO: Actually take a loss because if it takes ten ton of cane to make one ton of sugar and you take eleven tons of cane then actually you losing one ton of cane right? So you base that on one acre now. So you have ten acres you now lose quite a bit of money. So these are, thing like he's saying that. But because it's

scheduled he can't help that. Everybody can't do the summer months.

TT: Because whether it was nine one or eleven one, expense wise it was same thing.

KO: Yeah everything is the same right.

TT: Expense wise the same. The only thing the net result. It takes nine ton raw sugar to make one ton of sugar. And eleven tons of raw sugar to make one ton. See you losing every two ton. Which all labor everything had gone in, you know. But those days too though growers used to raise better cane you know. Yeah plantation lousy. We used to go help sometime when our side we have too much cane already. Maybe Saturdays the whole crew go Wainaku and help harvest their cane. Oh you go some of the place all grass. Real poor cane they used to raise, plantation. The workers was not doing their job. But about maybe around 1960 oh completely turn around. Plantation was growing good cane. They were using a lot of technology you know all this eight ton sugar, sugar you know, eight ton sugar eleven, twelve ton.

CL: But when did they start spraying? To spray the grass.

TT: Oh first chemical I think came in about 1963. Atrazine came in.

KO: But before that they had Bennett(?) right, remember.

TT: Yeah they used to

KO: You believe we used to spray arsenic in the ground? Hard to believe eh. And when we were kids we used to, it used to come in a box about this big. My father had it downstairs and you know we used to play with the empty box. We know it's a white powder and that's how I remember. Then they used to take that in the field and then they would, initially what they used to do they put it in the container cook fire, start fire then boil it, put water in. But then they started bringing caustic soda so they put the arsenic in that and in the barrel and they pour the caustic soda, they put water. Then the caustic soda begins to boil eh, it comes to the black goo you know. And they take that and put it in a five gallon knapsack with water and they spray that. And this man back here, that's Mr. Hanagari, he went to live in Japan and died. So he was doing that and he lost his eye. The thing splattered in his eye, he lost one eye.

TT: He was transporting some gallon. Bumbye he fell down and the gallon broke eh. Then some of that, yeah got into his eye.

CL: Was the arsenic gonna, did that kill the grass?

KO: Yeah, that's the first thing that used to kill the grass. That's why I remember you know

CL: But it didn't kill the cane?

KO: No. Well you make sure that you don't spray on the cane. You spray on the...

TT: Prior to I would say maybe, probably around 1930's no, they were using. Maybe 1920's or beyond. They used to only weed and hohana. Hoe hana you know, that's with the hoe see. What they doing they scrape on the grass it's still small. They scrape that thing turn it upside-down. I used to runaway you know.

TF: I used to do that I jump back real quick.

TT: How many lines can you make in a given day?

KO: The Japan people bought that land. I don't know if you been here this long but the Japan people were going to make a golf course back here in the guavas. So there was a hearing at Kaumana School, this school here. And this Hawaiian, he must have been a activist, I don't know who he was. He say yeah you know he say I'm concerned he says that if they turn into a golf course they going use a lot of herbicides, pesticide and it's going to deteriorate the running water you know being Hawaiian. So I couldn't stand it. After the guy finish I say, well you know like the gentleman says gonna be pesticides and all that on the golf course. I tell you know I born here, I raise sugar cane up here and the plantation used you name it, used arsenic. So what ever is left in the stream is all dead. That shut him up. But that's the truth you know. We used arsenic, we used 24D We used to use 24D we used to have a lot of bananas along side you know. My father, I remember my father used to go early you know when, if we would harvest it the cane, the harvesting gang met with schedule like you said eh. Say they going to harvest in say April, he'd go maybe about March, he'd go ahead eh. Then they would cut, we used to have these Chinese banana growing just about grow wild you know. He's cut it and hide it. So by the time the harvest the banana's ripe eh. I used to get all the bananas but now you don't find the bananas down riverside because use so much 24D was a killer was on the grass eh. Oh we used to, oh he knows, we used to spray with their tractors eh. It's a wonder I'm living yet. We used to spray a lot of 24D.

TT: On the side, oh, all the bananas especially Chinese banana. You don't see that no more. You see a few of those apple bananas but not too much.

KO: Yeah we use a lot of chemicals.

TT: And the guy said something about oh you know those from the golf course, the fertilizer and everything, pesticide would go

into that stream and kill the fish. There's no fish, never had. They don't know what they, get tadpole and that's all but never, no fish. Sometime we used to have goldfish. You know that little stay in the ponds up Country Club they used to (?) they used to, you know from the green lake used to be fish. And then they used to stock em way up so once in awhile when they flood, the water go down. But that's not the fish that was originally there. Frog get.

TF: Actually though, our drinking water we had a pipeline you know, from over there. Someplace up there, where Miyamoto was.

KO: Yeah. I saw some. That's on the main flume that. Yeah where the main flume.

TT: You know where Mr. (?) now living right above there used to live you know. It was a line, our main flume was going through there. That flume they never use for flume see until you go further down. And from there they had several lines coming down.

KO: You see up in our area we had our catchment before. And we had outhouse. We never had flush toilet so the only way we could get water is through either through the roof or through the flume that we told you earlier about, the permanent flume, we put a pipe and tap into that thing. Put small box inside, wooden box, regular box and that water would fill up the box. And from there the line would just feed, all gravity. That's what he's talking about.

TT: That's 1950 see, 1950, the water line came in.

CL: They built a tank up there or something?

KO: The Lyman watershed they tapped that and then from there they put that eight inch main that you see today.

TT: This was built in 1950.

TF: Isamura contractor. Civilian contractor.

KO: Yeah, right.

CL: Why don't you guys tell again about getting the loans from the Hilo Sugar.

TT: Crop loans in those early stage, in fact, matter of fact in the '30's, people that raised cane from C. Brewer the loan was from C. Brewer itself. Fertilizer, rent, and everything, they would charge to the particular field. And then when you harvest the field that's the first thing they take away, their loan. In case of Mr., whoever was raising cane from Mr. Lyman, Mr. Lyman was the chief financier. He would make the loan to his growers whether it's fertilizer or whatever. And not only direct related with cane because I see him make loans homes, some of them even

got married they approach him and they ask for a loan and he would approve of them and I saw some of the documents at the Lyman Museum last year and I think the rate was 4% I think. And then I also saw one document that Akulea Road, I always wondered about Akulea Road, you know, who built that road first time. The County has built that road. Then when we were looking through that documents that Lyman Museum, you see they were all growers from the main Kaumana Road. All the way was, all the way into where Mr. Morris used to live about 3/4 of the way toward Piihonua It's all, both ends are all Lyman estate you see that. Lyman lands, Lyman estate okay. So to make it convenience for them too, because they gotta haul their fertilizer and all, up to that time they used to haul with those mules you know from the main road bring in two bags at a time. One horse can take only fertilizer So they thought would be lots easy if they could put one road through. And the way the assessed the road was every grower along the side pay X number per acre. That's the way they got the money. And then, Mr. Lyman, because that's his land, he put in a bigger share. And since Mr. Lawrence was going benefit greatly because he had a home way inside there and he used to work for E.M. Homes you see. So he's gonna benefit a lot because he had a lot of acreage in there with ranch land so he put in quite a bit. And Mrs. Lyman donated all the land that were taken away for the land. I saw that document which wasn't bad, only about two acres or something. And then later years the County took over.

KO: Initially over there they used to call that Lonesome Valley eh. But it ended at his place, Lawrence's place eh.

TT: Then when the war broke out they connected from, you know where that diversion ditch is now? Upside, you know where that Ota past that, Lawrence place no. From then on U.S.E.D. (CL: they built)

TT: I was with a concrete gang that time. We poured one of those culverts down there. You know that used to be serviceman for Dr. Davis, driving tractor.

KO: Oh that haole guy, yeah, yeah. He's a pain that. That's the guy because of him we had to quit growing cane here. He bought the land from the plantation and bought all the plantation. You know we used to haul the trucks all night eh. So he says all night he gotta sleep so ten o'clock we had to stop and eventually (gave up). Yeah that's how. That's his fault.

TT: Anyway, just beyond there we built the culvert there that was built during the war time so they connected the whole road.

KO: He's talking about Mr. Lyman. My dad never grow cane on Mr. Lyman's land you see. But I used to envy those that did. They used to pay more for rent that family but Mr. Lyman every Christmas he'd get all his growers and he'd have Christmas party and us we

all left out eh. I always wish that my dad had a few acres of Mr. Lyman's land. I always remember that you know. But he, I guess being a missionary, he used to do a lot of those things for the, not Orlando but the old man eh.

CL: When did the old man die? How long.

TT: Oh I don't know, probably in the '30's because about 1933, '34 used to come up with touring car. (KO: The green Ford) One, two labor no? Those days already they were having problems with this panet(?) reaping grass.

KO: Wainaku grass.

TT: They think that started from Country Club area. And according to my mother, she said, you see that area one time Mr. Nagai, who is relative, tried pineapples see. They try raise pineapple. But when they got the seedling I heard, some of the seedling came in with that grass. That's what my mother tells me. I don't not too sure. So early part this grass you would see only on the side of the flume because when they flume the cane and it gets jammed usually take em all out see. And then later put em back after they fix the jam. So some of the grass went fall out and it started to grow so that's the way it was. Then it spread and spread and then you go down Wainaku they claim that they call that Wainaku grass. Used to call it Kondo grass-Kondo, cause Kondo brought em in you know. But the real name is panet ripping (reaping)(?) And that was a hated grass because you know that thing crawls. They didn't have any herbicide for that see.

CL: So what year do you think that came in then?

TT: Oh I would say that already growing out there, lot of them I'd say.

KO: Could have been in the '20's no.

TT: Maybe 1910, between 1910 and, that's when Mr. Nagai used to raise up there. Pineapples up that Country Club area. And they used to flume that, pineapple you know. Down to, you know where the Kaumana School is? Right there. Block em see. They block the water then they take out all pineapple and put em in the crates and then they put em on the truck and they take em down to the wharf see. From the wharf they ship em out to Honolulu because you know the cannery is in Honolulu. So they had some kind of working agreement. They were at that time.

TT: But it wasn't that good no.

KO: Too much rain eh.

TT: He tried though.

CL: Did you ever hear of anything else being grown up that side, the Kaumana Country Club side?

KO: The coffee no. But they were coffee all the time and the coffee only thing that I...

TT: As far as I know coffee was only in here.

KO: No because I see, you know when I was growing cane eh this side, I saw coffee. So I think this whole area probably had coffee.

TT: They tried coffee too. I think this road was built by Mr. Wilder. So I think he did try.

CL: I know early around 1900 they were trying coffee at Olaa. Yeah, so probably.

TT: And they tried pineapple.

KO: They went back in 1950's I think, again. My neighbor actually went broke I think yeah. That's how I bought the land. The guy he, a friend of mine, I used to drink beer with him and I wanted some land so he, hey this guy get good land. I told, he's telling me see, and I told my friend not to sell, he gonna regret selling but he was stuck you know. These guys were offering at that time here thirty-four acres and they offered him 8,000 and the most I think 10,000. So I when I offer him fifteen, boy he almost broke my hand to sign the papers eh. He had big coffee trees this kind growing in this place. The land that he was living on was part of the Furneaux estate it was on lease land.

CL: Which estate?

KO: Furneaux. Furneaux Lane yeah, you know that section there. Well this land right above him, his father had bought that in the 1920's. In 1920's they had a big strike, what you call that kind, they make a lot of money with sugar cane you know.

TT: High price.

KO: Yeah high price. My father bought this land that was right next to him but the house that he was living on was on this lease land and he had planted coffee in there. I suspected he must have hired a lot of people and he just needed the money so he had to sell the land eh. The father was already gone though. So I was lucky enough to buy that but

TT: You know where you're living now, way inside used to get road all the way go inside, way inside. That area they used to call that place Yakishe. Japanese words. Yakishe means lava rocks see.

That's why they name Yakishe. They used to use the word yeah. And used to go from your house place about two miles no?

KO: I think they must have been taking out this, what you call this train, track tile, ties, yeah. Because you remember that train that they had the engine, right there, in that

TT: Somebody told me, someone in town had told me that somebody here, I don't know who was, whether Mr. Miyamoto or what, but they had a contract with Waiakea Plantation. Cause Waiakea Plantation was train see, track train, so you know for the ties, the railroad ties, they were furnishing that. So they were probably see lot of those big ohia trees and you know they'd cut em up.

TF: That's where they have trails.

TT: Yeah. And they had that gravity run train they had.

KO: Yeah remember that train was along side no? Long side.

CL: Up here?

KO: Yeah, right across where he lives. Across the school.

CL: Oh across Kaumana School.

KO: Yeah right.

TT: And then coming down gravity flow. Then they used to load them on the truck.

KO: And then pull them back down to the mill.

CL: So the place where you're talking about where they got the tie was what, Hilo side?

KO: Kaumana and Waiakea, between there.

TT: The forest between here in 19, when I was in the fifth grade, maybe 1935, a Mr. DelaCruz was, remember Mr. DelaCruz? Was Principal they had a big fire, forest fire. The fire was started in Waiakea. They was burning their cane. Apparently that thing went jump and it burned all the way, fifteen hundred acres and reach, you know where Kaumana School is, right beyond Kaumana School. They used to have a high flume through there.

CL: Is that the fire that burned Panaewa, in there?

TT: Ah this was back in 1935 or something.

CL: Cause I know there was a fire in Panaewa.

KO: Could be.

TT: Yeah. Waiakea Plantation had to hire lot of people come here too eh, for fight the you know, fire. Cause the thing came all the way. Was so dry and all, she just burned.

KO: You know when we were kids we used to run around. The lava was still black and here and there you would find, uluhe. Those days they still had ohelo berries growing from, Kaumana now you don't see anymore because all covered eh. But those days there were ohelo berries growing here.

TT: The forest was only here and there they had some lehua tree but was tiny but then about ten, twelve feet not like today. And not too many vegetation. You know we could walk all over, run all over the place. No? When we were growing up. In fact when we were kids we used to hunt bee nest.

KO: You know what, what he said the bees, the yellow jacket would make nest they making in the stag horn fern, so Saturdays we'd take a stick eh, we pound, then when the bees come out then we know there's a nest. So when they come in we can't even take them we take all you know them actually as maggots right. And we got a frying pan and sugar and shoyu eh, oh boy you should eat that. That's real good stuff.

CL: I have eaten them.

KO: You know I have two girls and the younger one, when I gave that to my younger one my wife had a fit man. But you can tell em, eh that's real good stuff that.

TT: And frog too. Times was hard then.

CL: What about, I heard about a Serrao winery up here.

TT: Serrao winery actually way down by Kaumana 3 miles.

KO: Iwipolena Street. As you come up there's a metal building, on the road few feet inside and see a metal building. You see a paved driveway going to top of the hill you see an old house on the left side. It's kind of fixed up but that used to be the winery. That's where Mr. Serrao used to live.

CL: So it's down below Kaumana Caves?

KO: Below Chong Street. You know where Chong Street? Well it's about maybe about half a mile it's on the same side.

KO: Yeah, that driveway, you can't miss it. There's a, used to be a dairy there you know, metal building. And it's right across there.

TF: You know where Pokulau? (?) inside there.

KO: As you go in there you got top of the hill you can't miss that house. It's, the house has been fixed though. But you know it's a big house and still the original house, that's the original house I think. They kind of fixed that up.

TT: There was that old family that live there. And there were several people up this area that used to eat a little bit of those grape and they used to sell.

KO: I think have that grape growing that, purple grape. Sour, sour grape that. I still have kind of wine grape.

TF: Even had a dairy.

CL: Serrao's?

KO: No, Gamelsons Dairy. You remember the Gamelson Dairy?

TF: You know that winery road going up, it was.

TT: And then downtown he had this bar eh.

KO: Serrao Bar. Gamelson(?) used to raise, they used to have their own (end of side A)

Kaumana Group Tape 2 Side B

TT: Cane growing. Some that had to be, not have any field but they were working as laborers for others. Cause this was not a plantation community. This was not. Although we did have a few people working for the plantation but it was not the kind of case like Wainaku where primary all plantation.

CL: Was most of the people living up here Japanese?

TT: Yeah the majority was Japanese. Back in 1990 I did work on one of the census that I found here back in 1932 and I tried to trace at that time. The families was the ones, they had the records, all Japanese. Had about hundred and twenty families. Yeah at that time, back about 1932.

KO: The rest was mostly Filipino then.

TT: We had some Filipinos were bachelors you know. And perhaps about two or three Chinese no? Ah Tang, Aio and then there was no Caucasian, none.

KO: The only guy is that foreman, that boss there.

TT: The boss, plantation boss. Mr. Robinson.

CL: And no Portuguese?

TT: Portuguese not.

KO: Not near here. Most the Portuguese were on the north side about a mile or two from Hilo. Yeah that area.

TT: But nothing this area. And we had that, Miyamoto Store was here oh as far as I can remember they have always been here. And later there was another store called Young Man's Store. Built by selling shares to the young men so they named the store Young Man's Store. That went out I think right after the war. But Miyamoto Store has been here as far as I can remember. I think Miyamoto's probably one of the first, probably could be one of the earliest ones that settled in Kaumana. I would think they would be.

KO: Mr. Miyamoto's father was there. He had the store eh?

TT: Yeah, yeah.

KO: Because he second generation. But he died. He was about ninety eh, when he died?

TT: I kinda remember him though.

KO: I think so he was born here so he must be about ninety years already. So he must be

TT: Who?

KO: Mr. Miyamoto. He must be born here.

TT: S. Miyamoto was born 1904. Back in 1990 when I made a survey, I wanted to find a person who was still living here and who was born here. And he was the only one, the oldest, S. Miyamoto he was born 1904.

KO: So if he was born here (?) was older than him see so he must have been here 1900's then already.

TT: Yeah but at that time they were living up that Country Club area. This S. Miyamoto. 1904 they were already here so it would not surprise me if in 1890 something I don't know who but if they were here in 1904 so he was considered some of the old families.

CL: Was there any, there was no churches up here right?

TT: No this Japanese school was used as a church and a language

KO: So the minister would come from Hilo. There used to be a church also right below the cave. That land was probably there owned by this Fujimoto family and they built it apparently family build their church. And same minister from this church Hongwanji would come up there. (?) or whatever service. That building standing went to Ka'u. You know where they have the Buddhist church out Ka'u. they tore it down and they built it out there. Here they have once a month last Thursday yeah. They still have service here.

TT: Bust em up.

KO: No but altar is there [in back of building].

TF: Language school was actually used as church.

TT: And most of them were Buddhists too. In fact when we had the '90 reunion here when we tried to look for some old photograph, we found some photograph, I found one that was about up at about 1918 or 1917 and they were few of the people I could recognize but also I was surprised Mr. Yoshimoto, was able to recognize, the mother and she left for Japan in I think 1919 so the picture was taken in before that. She was in the picture.

TT: I came across one picture that S. Miyamoto was in and he was a young boy yet you know. And I try to identify the picture. You know where that picture was taken?

KO: That's the one from volcano.

TT: Yeah. You know sulfur banks there the picture was taken.

TT: We found one picture of that. He was only about twelve years old I think. No more eight, nine years old you know. But we found some, he was surprised that he remembered the bus that he mentioned I think it's from Honomu you know. Yeah he mentioned the bus driver.

Those days we used to go to Hilo intermediate and we get detention ah, we gotta walk home no? Oh man, that's about hour and a half walk go uphill. Going down we can make it maybe about hour and ten minutes from town here but coming up.

CL: So when you, normally when you went to school you walked down?

TF: No, no. We had the County bus. We were one of the few people.

KO: Yeah Kaumana always had County bus.

TF: Yeah. I think because maybe Mr. Gota used to be the County treasurer that's why. Nobody had County bus you know. Kaiwiki had

no more you know. Kaumana had. Yeah and up to fourteen years old they could ride for free. So this for the County, the yellow bus yeah. Use to deliver.

KO: Yeah he get his big bus and the brakes don't work so he get this big handbrake. We didn't know any better.

TT: Used to make two trips you know. Early in the morning two trips, in the afternoon two trip with the bus.

CL: Oh get part of the kids and then go down and come down and get the rest of the kids?

TT: No he could only take half see so some of them like to go on the second trip. In the morning the first trip would be maybe about 6:15. But the second one might be 7:15 or something. So some guys like to go on the second bus. So you kinda choose which one you stay on. We like to go early and play down there. We used to take the early one. In fact we were the only ones you know. Remember, we were the only ones.

KO: They tell us the earlier guy like Mr. Gota folks, then he used to walk down when miss the bus yeah. But our generation we never walked. We always had a bus. I think when they follow yeah.

(just talking back and forth about walking)

KO: I remember they used to pave the road with black tar. They used to come up to there where Nishimoto place eh. Tar on a hot day those days all poor, we didn't have chewing gum so we take the tar, roll it up and chew use it chewing gum.

TT: I think they paved, if my memory serve correct from about, you know where Ikeda used to shine, from there to about Yamanouchi(?) Maybe till there and the first section Kaumana stay. And we were living back here then see. So this was before 1930 see, when I was living back here. And I remember my sister and I, took us down and we went to see you know they were pouring that tar and

KO: Yeah they would have this kettle and burlap and they would have shoes and they put the burlap bags so they wouldn't get stuck. And they had just like a watering can eh. Hot tar eh just like watering can yeah water that thing.

TT: Before 1930. Somewhere I would say, I was about four or five years yeah about 1928, '27, somewhere around there.

TF: Kaumana School used to go way down by the, they used to say that Serrao Dairy, I mean winery, someplace around there had boy Same class with us, I forget his name. He used to walk down to Kaumana. And used to be out there the boundary I think.

KO: I think still is that boundary eh.

TT: You know where? Sakaguchi came Kaumana School.

TF: The owner went Hilo School. So the Boundary was, you know where Sakaguchi used to but not the present but used to be this side from there up and then Honomu was right below then Union School so that was the dividing line.

CL: Where would that be about?

TF: Oh that would be about Kaumana Terrace. About two blocks below Kaumana Terrace.

TT: Right on the side. Remember used to get one sign there. City Limits. Used to have one sign there, City Limits. And from there our home is we used to walk up.

TF: Although very few.

TT: Not very many people are living down there. People that were living down there, they were not involved with sugar cane growing. Either they were working in town as a carpenter like Sakaguchis or like the Okamotos they were independent farmers. Ono man was in insurance, that's all, things like that. They were not involved with sugar cane, just the people up there from that the bridge, from there about up, used to be mostly involved in sugar cane. Either you growin or workin as a laborer or whatever you know.

CL: So before the Army came in did you folks ever go up into the forest?

KO: The hunters used to go up hunt. They walked to they call Puerto Rican camp eh, they used to walk up. Remember. I know early in the morning this Louie Balai and the guys there, they used to go, you know past the flume? They tell me about four or five miles up the road. They used to go out the place called

TT: They used to goat hunting.

KO: Yeah they call it Puerto Rican camp I don't know what they mean but they said that's why from there they used to go in to the Wailuku River hunt pigs. Those guys

TT: Mainly for hunting used to go up the Olaa flume used to be only for hunting. Quite a bit people they used to go hunt.

KO: And the Filipinos that you work, they used to go up and during the war years they couldn't use rifles. They used to use knives with they use hapu'u frond they tie the knife and they stay up in the mountain couple of days and they jerk the meat. And then they bring it down.

CL: So they just killed em with these spears?

KO: Spears yeah. Because lot of pigs eh. That's why they spear and then they stay for couple of days yeah and then they'll smoke it and then come down and they'll sell it to everyone.

RP: Do they smoke the meat up there?

KO: Um hum. In the forest.

TF: They used to call one Morita camp. You know where the tree line or whatever you call that. As you go up on the left side yeah the forestry had a road going in.

KO: Across Waiakea eh. Tree Planting road they call that.

CL: Oh, yeah I know Tree Planting road.

TF: Right below that on the right hand side, they used to call that Morita Camp.

CL: That the same one that you were talking about as the Puerto Rican camp or different.

KO: I dont' know if that's the same one. I'm not sure, but I remember they talking about that.

TF: My brother them they had, they know where they they one small shack like, smoke the pork yeah.

TT: Are you from this island or are you from the Mainland?

CL: I'm from the Mainland.

TF: What State?

CL: Iowa.

KO: Oh Iowa. Oh wow.

TT: Potato farmer?

CL: Yeah. No, no corn farmer.

TT: You have some flooding in Iowa?

CL: Yeah they had some. Different places.

TF: You know Parker Ranch we used to raise corn too you know.

CL: Yeah I heard that

TT: That's for cattle yeah? One time I thought was for eat you know.

KO: Remember one time we went down steal the corn. Nice corn.

TT: That corn rotten. That's the cattle corn.

CL: Yeah you can eat it when it's green.

TT: Night time so we don't know eh.

TF: Parker Ranch used to raise lot of thing up there.

KO: You said Keanakolu eh. When you were there had lot of apples?

TF: Oh yeah they had orchard. Also that big area. They had orchard but not as much later part.

KO: They say something had drought that's why the apple doesn't do well eh. No.

TF: No not that. They didn't take care. Eventually they start taking care and they had their own cabin and they had (?) sleeping over there. That's how they had the log cabin over there.

CL: Yeah I stayed there one time.

TF: Originally was, before they used to have a log cabin, you heard about that?

CL: I saw it yeah I saw it. But I heard it was some German built that log cabin.

TF: I guess so. Above that used to be now originally Keanakolu, Parker Ranch.

CL: And there was a house there yeah?

TF: There was a house over there (?)

CL: They're gone now?

TF: They're gone. Somebody set fire to em. Before that they made another one (?) (?) about mile or so. That's on Waipunalei piece of land. This side is all Hawaiian Homes.

KO: Keanakolu is that where that guy Douglas got killed?

TF: Yeah, yeah. They got a big stone wall like anyway. Get clearing there but some they say its above the road.

CL: Where he was killed you mean?

TF: No, they buried. They used to maintain you know that area. You know that, the pit. They call em the pit.

CL: Yeah I saw that and I think there's a plaque of something there.

TF: Yeah yeah, there is. They have a trail.

CL: Do you think there's anybody around who used to go hunt, hunt up in that area? If not where the Morita Camp and so on

KO: The only guy we know is Cowboy.

TF: Yeah, yeah, Copwboy would be the only guy.

TT: (??) is gone. All the hunters that we know is gone.

TF: You know another trail this is after Saddle Road was built.

KO: He used to go with Balai so he probably would know no?

TF: Cowboy, I don't know he was going that early no?

KO: He said, that's why (?) hunt eh.

TT: The ones used to go before the war like Balai and Susumu and Poncho no? But they all gone.

TF: Saddle Road was built I think about '43.

CL: '42 I heard. I think '42.

TF: And during the war, was all black out right? But Mauna Loa erupted.

KO: Was going full blast. Big joke that blackout.

TF: And the whole island was all black out. They had 100 guys up there you know. The sheep station, camping over there.

CL: During the eruption?

TT: I should know, I paid \$200 fine for black out violation. \$200 big money in those days.

KO: It was, hang out on the store eh, all in the dark and soon as MPs come take off. But these guys too slow.

TT: Soon as after dark nobody's supposed to be on the streets. And we were debating whether to go my house or was we going his

house. And we see the jeep coming up, too late already. Just stood by the side of the building, spotlight come and took us down they lock us up. The next day, it's the law eh.

KO: It was terrible you know, our homes were kind of old houses so you know you get cracks eh, they see the light they shoot at the lights you know. These crazy guys Military were, something else.

TT: You just say you're guilty. Captain King I remember. He was the judge. Guilty or not guilty. Guilty sir. \$200. Yeah those days was strict you know. And guys that no put in twenty days of work during the month without doctor's excuse, you gotta appear before the provost judge and then he send you to jail. If you rest, you know, you can get twenty days alright see. If you don't have to, you gotta have doctor's excuse why you could not work twenty days.

CL: Cause what, cause you were deferred from the draft or what?

TT: No, cause they want everybody to work for national defense.

KO: And weekends we had to go up the mountain cut ohia logs. They were building barricades along the ocean eh.

CL: With ohia logs?

KO: Ohia logs. Yeah we had to all go up the mountain cut logs.

TT: And you had no say, martial law.

TF: Even the headlight, we used to put um small. So just to see.

KO: And we had blue light for the hood.

TT: Small just enough to see. Ten gallon gas average

KO: "A" card they get ten gallon.

TT: "D" card you get

KO: Yeah "D" card then "C" card you

TT: The minute we got that notice to go in the Service, we go down to that Selective Service and we'd say this may be our last trip so could you give us more gas, give us more gas. So we go under laughing.

CL: So Masa, you told me maybe somebody knew something about people being forced to work on the road.

MN: Yeah somebody was telling me. I don't know who was telling me that the Japanese prisoners were

TF: He mentioned that something, you really gonna record that? Because you know why?

KO: Kulani, when Kulani was first made, they used to, they was suppose to make a road going to Kona. And the road is still there. I don't know why they stopped it but they were going to connect the roads from Hilo to Kona. So they built quite a bit of ways I heard.

TF: Above Pohakuloa.

KO: Yeah, the prisoners.

TT: You know why Masa, Saddle Road might be kinda hard for the Japanese people like I was telling you, 1941, 1942 Japanese was on the offensive see in Pacific...

TF: They made a wide road.

TT: Americans was on the defensive so they no can catch no prisoners. So they first reason I think they came to Hawaii, probably from maybe like Quaduline was about the first part U.S. went counter offense. And was about what, middle of '44? So even if they came here, it's a way far away so they did have been work other place though. But somebody told me that they had prisoner of war down here. That's why they call that place

KO: That's why we used to call it Camp Pau. You were in there, I don't know if the building is still there, big mess hall on top. The places were there. I remember they had Japanese prisoners there.

TT: Although I saw some Japanese prisoners at Angel Island in San Francisco Bay, yeah, when I went to the ah of September of '42, I saw quite a bit Jap, but they were from Marshall Island they were. See that's the early part. Before that they no could get Japanese prisoners yet because Japan was on the offensive.

KO: 1946 I went Honolulu. I was in Kailua side we watched some of them there in Honolulu.

CL: What was the story with Kulani now?

TF: They started that road from Kulani. They used the prisoners.

CL: Oh not cause there's a war but.

KO: No, no. The regular prisoners.

TF: They they wanted to join Kona from there. So they went, built one more other camp on that road where they were building. But

somehow the other the camp caught fire. So they gave up. They made a wide road, really wide.

CL: Yeah. What years?

TF: Cause when you walk to Mauna Loa, how much is Mauna Loa? Below that Mauna Kea road? There's a road on the left side, by the hill.

CL: Yeah by Pu'uhuluhulu. Yeah I took that road one time. I didn't know where it was going.

TF: Did you go off to the observatory one up there? And plus on the lower side before that there's another road going down. That's the road Kulani prisoners made.

KO: Maybe the old time policemen, I think retired policemen probably no, lot of police used to go up there.

TF: They wanted to make one road but I don't know why they gave up. I know if they went, I think the jeeps could have gone four wheel drive right through. But in one way, if they made that road, the Military would be gone. They cannot fire the big guns, right? So they just kinda give up. Now they talking about making a road above the military camp.

KO: which side, going up on the left side, Mauna Kea side? At the foot of the hill then.

TF: Yeah, yeah.

CL: So I don't really, I don't exactly understand where they're gonna go. I know they're gonna go above the airport, you know above Pohakuloa Camp above the airport. But then from on west I'm not clear where they're gonna go because...

TF: You know where the Councilman built Kawahara was from Kona. You ever heard of him?

CL: Yeah, I remember when he was here, when he was on the Council.

TF: That flat you know where they call it Pukeke, that flat as you say? Used to have more of less going up from there cut go right down. Then you no bother the Military. Then cut short. Instead going up the hill and going down the hill. Part of that belong to Parker Ranch over there.

CL: Yeah but that's one of the areas they're talking about on the west side there is going

TF: They're kinda flat yeah.

CL: Yeah going from, you know, right Kamuela, Waimea side of Pu'u Ke'eke'e and then cut down toward Mamalahoa Highway. But before that, you know when you go, the Mauna Kea side of the airport, up there, and then if you keep going sort of Mauna Kea side of where the highway is now,

TF: Above those hills.

CL: Well I'm not sure because maybe you gotta go above the hills, I can't see how you can, you can't go north any other way. You have to go above those hills.

MN: Must be where they're goin'.

CL: I haven't seen the map yet.

TF: Actually the Pukeke area belongs to the ranch, Parker Ranch I think. They lease it out something. The Military training over there.

CL: Yeah they lease part of it. I think Pu'u Ke'eke'e itself is on Pohakuloa Training area, but then makai of there is all Parker Ranch, yeah. And they do lease it out. They have cattle there too.

TF: You know where they ever fired the first rocket. You ever heard about they ever fire a rocket from up Pohakuloa.

CL: No.

TF: They did fire one rocket. Cause some of that hill they made it. From there they fired it up Mauna Loa. Cause I went to see that.

CL: From Pu'u Ke'eke'e?

TF: On the Pukeke flat and come back toward Pohakuloa Military Camp site, there's a first hill where she come down. Above road. From there they fire toward Mauna Loa. Can see em going slow then gradually cannot see em.

CL: What kind of rocket?

TF: I forgot what kind but was one big rocket, not one cannon. I tell you one good story. Before they used to get, Parker Ranch used to go up Waiki'i from Waiki'i to Humuula. Used to be wagon trail right. So they had wagon. Then war time the Military took over the road right? Then me and one other guy we suppose to, we borrowed one wagon from Waiki'i, we used to haul corn with that wagon. So we borrowed one, bring em up then we used to go in the pasture cut posts, put em on the wagon and then deliver to whatever place. Cause otherwise you have to pull with the horse,

no more, yeah? Then one day we were gonna return the wagon so we was going down the road. The Military is on Puu Ke'eke'e. Then we were looking around the side and here the jeep just came on the side was going up. We supposed to go on the right eh. We on the left side. (end of side B)