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No. k-kp-4

Oral History Interview for the Kalapana Project

with  
Kini Pea (kp)

october 8, 1987

Kalapana, Hawaii

By: Johnnie Jovanovich (jj)

Interview # 4

jj: Today I'm trying to clear up some questions that I had from previous interviews and question further on these and try to have Kini elaborate more on some of these subjects.

jj: There was two ponds at Wai o kolea a upper and a lower, do you know the names to those two?

kp: ~~kp~~: NO I don't, I haven't seen it on the maps either so I don't know there was a mauka one and one on the ocean side of the road, but to me it was all one pond with a road in between. they made a fill in and then laid ohia logs then put the road on top of that.

jj: So you refer to it just as one pond? Did you have any name you would give it as a kid?

kp: No it was just Wai o Kalea thats all we ever called it.

note: He mentions here about how it is now Harry k Brown park and that he feels the name never should have been changed to give a persons name to a piece of land.

jj: You mentioned that you had two houses, one Mauka was that a?

kp: No Waihulakui

jj: Taht was the mauka one and the one makai was at Kalapana?

kp: Yeah

jj: Do you remember how often and for what time you spent at each one

kp: Well most of the time we spent at least monday to wednesday (Mauka come down here and eat them go back up thursday morning till someti

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Saturday, sometimes friday evening depending if there is any thing coming up for the weekend down here.

jj: So if there was something going on during the weekend you would come down here?

kp: Yeah like preperations for the church thing luaus things like that

jj: So who lived in these two houses then?

kp: Well there was my adopted father and mother and her brother.

jj: His name ?

kp: William Pele iho lani that is my adoped mothers brother.

jj: Did you call him uncle?

kp: Yeah uncle william well he was I guess close to the mid thirties.

jj: So it was you four that lived in the house and would your father spend more time at the one and your mother more time at the other?

kp: NO a well my uncle never did go up with us the only place he would go is up to the taro patches back well he goes up ther when were not here either to go get taro and things like that.

jj: So basically if your father went up to the mauka farm you..

kp: we all went.

jj: So the purpose of the two houses exactly?

kp: Well the one up there (Mauka) was just for the truckfarming see it wasn't our own property but was leased property.

jj: So was it a smaller house?

kp: oh yeah I don't think it was any bigger than 15 by 30 and cooking was done out on the porch and eat out on the porch and the r was just living room bedroom combination.

jj: so was it sort of a raised porch?

kp: the house was up off the ground I would say it was about 3-4 feet off the ground was on even.

jj: How would you cook?



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kp: Well with wood then we got modernised down here we had karoseen stools  
up there we finally got a small karoseen stove.

jj: So you had both house stocked like a real house?

kp: yeah

jj: Your house down here what were your memories of that house?

kp: Well it was a two story and a big stairs ran up the front of almost  
the center of the building itself and you get up on the porch and  
behind the porch is the living room. and there is a bedroom on one  
side and another bedroom on the left side. and then a kitchen off to  
one side, but it was part of the house. the bottom section of the  
building was all open space and no rooms, my adopted mother use to  
make lauhala mats. In kaimu the residents used a big open hall for  
making mats ; Sometimes the mats were so big that as they made them  
they would roll them up because the post is in the way that was part  
of the work in those days going out and getting the leaves to make  
the lauhala mats.

jj: Would you do that for your mother?

kp: Well I went out to kaimu over there or right here in between, Waiholokai  
but the best lauhala was in Waiholokai, it has always been the best it  
has better texture and a lot more pliable and still tougher than the  
ones down here, I don't know why because of the ocean maybe that  
has something to do with it?

jj: Was it common for people to have two houses or were you sort of the  
exception?

kp: Well no it is well sometime like my real family, I mean you know the  
peas, they had the kaimu house then they had one up Waiholokai kaimel ?? then  
had one up in Wailuku. Well see originally the family started from  
kai??? way then because the family coming up why build the kaimu  
house for the school time because all my older brothers and sisters

used to come parnell??/ way if they walked or rode horse i don't when I knew them they were staying in kaimu. Well some of them the respn they were staying in one spot that when the king had given all the property to the people they get ten arces each well my family got their ten arces and when they got a chance they put a home there and when my brothers and sister were younger my real mother was a school teacher over in kahina. Sometimes they start in one spot and then they get a grant from the kingdom well they build a home there. Still a lot of them do that. (gives an example of this some where in more recent times) A lot of people had two homes.

jj: You refer to your oldest brother took up truck farming, that was your blood brother?

kp: Gaberial he lived in kaimu well at that period of time he was more or less the bread winner for the family, because my real dad couldn't work he had astmatic problems.

jj: Did Gaberial learn truck farming from your adopted father?

kp: Yeah my adopted dad helped him out showed him how and any time he had problems he would come to see him. He did pretty good for himself ofcourse like i said he had that ophi picking and lauhala making business and of course he got modernise after he got a few philipines working for him (laugh) He got to the point that he needed help because he was involved with church work quite a bit. In his latter years before he passed away well he had three churches, he had this church here ophikau church, and kau church. (He was a minister) He used to take turns at each one of them.

jj: so is Gaberial the one that had the model t Ford?

kp: Yeah banana wagon (laugh) I remember that when my dad brought it home

jj: Your real dad?

kp: No my adopted dad found the car the model t was a high car and the

*model T = banana wagon?*



touring car were higher than that banana wagon it only had two seats

jj: You mentioned earlier at one time that during the early twenties that there was only three vehicles in the lower puna area.

kp: Well first was us and second was the kainas and then third was Gabriel (laugh). So everybody before the weekend or wednesday they used to come and ask if they could get a ride to town. (laugh)

jj: Not down here it was only in Hilo.

jj: Would the people come to your father and ask for rides quite a bit?

kp: Well yeah they would, but I don't think we were charging them you know it is not a handicap but an inconvenience, no car they can't help that they can't afford it.

jj: How would the other people get around?

kp: Walk mostly

jj: So you can remember people walking from here to Pahoa?

kp: Well that they didn't they would always try to bum a ride.

jj: Were they still using the horse and buggy in those days?

kp: No we never did have those at least as far as I could remember,

③ no never had my sisters told me <sup>that</sup> at, my mother used to ride horse and buggy from Kaimu to Kahena to teach every morning well she was a real farm lady anyway raised on the big Island she liked animals she had that front yard in Kaimu just loaded with everything; pigs, cows, chickens, ducks, peacocks, they used to call her the peacock lady she always had peacocks. they used to get up in the big plumeria tree in the front yard and crow and sing out.

jj: there were really no horse and buggy by the time you first can remember

kp: No well of course a lot of the families that were living here had family in Pahoa or Hilo and they come down and pick them up to take them

*3 Kamlamulas had jobs - big family down here*

jj: Sometimes you had surplus fish and you said they would sell them out of the trunk of the car so would most of the fishermen have your

father sell the fish from his car?

kp: I don't know the transaction of money but see he owned the canoe, he owned the net so he owns everything (laugh) ⑦

jj: He was quite a business person?

kp: Well yeah he was a china man, chinese man, not only that he was good in composing sounds. Church songs and a few Hawaiian songs, in fact one of his songs is used down here by the Puna people.

jj: there were about eight canoes out in the pond area here?

kp: NO no, the canoes were up there (a pile of rocks on the far side of the pond behind the church) well that is the canoe landing I will have to get up there to show you exactly where it is. Rocks have been moved around quite a bit and the subsidence of two feet it is quite a difference now. About eight canoes were there and we had two up there it was real flat up there I don't know what it looks like now.

jj: How would they bring the canoes in, <sup>kp:</sup> right in the surf here, no right close to the cliff there where the water is coming in not on this side of the rocks but on the ocean side actually people would be down close to the edge and ready to pull it up. But you always try to make when the wave come in, same thing in kaimu, wait till they think they have a good wave that could push them all the way up to the beach, but of course there would have to be someone there to stop it from going back it is kind of hard for three or four men to jump off the canoe and hold the canoe.

② jj: How many men would be on the canoe at one time?

kp: Usually three.

jj: So the canoes were quite big?

kp: Oh yeah well not of course as big as the racing canoes are today.

jj: Were they a little bit wider since they were used for fishing then?

kp: Yeah the haoles widened them



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jj: what were the canoes made out of?

kp: Koa, well my dad, when he was making canoes he used to go up and get koa and bring it down here and put it in the ocean and put rocks on it to keep it under water for a long period of time. That is what they used to do now a days they just bring it out in the morning and start ----- at it. They left it in the water till they thought it was ready to be brought back up.

jj: What would be the next step?

kp: Well used to take it and put it up where the canoes landing is that is where we hued (cut it out) all the canoes all by hand, I used to help him too. Adz were pretty well it was steel edge like a round curve chisle.

jj: And how would you use it?

kp: you chop like (keep chopping all the main section out) then of course you finish off with the smaller finishing tools.

jj: So it was all hued they didn't cut with the saw much?

kp: No it is all hued out by hand (laugh) I used to do that to.

jj: How would they put the seats in?

kp: Well that was fashioned afterwards see the seats are removed and tied in so, I don't think it was nailed in, no it was nailed in secured in with brass ones.

jj: what did they make the outrigger out of?

kp: There is a little place down here just this side of hkb park it kind of is an extra round part leaf just this side on the mauka side and that is the hau which they made the outrigger from. It is a Hawaiian balsa, it is real light, soft too. It was tied on to the koa part of the canoe. and so is the ama??/ the other section of the canoe.

(See Diagram, Plants of HNP, p. 122 both ama & iako usually of hau)

jj: How long would it take you to make a canoe?

kp: Well I don't know it is hard to say. Sometimes if I remember right he was huing out a canoe in kaimu and the people needed the canoe for

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fishing and all that but other people came in and helped too. the small one that we had made out of monkey pod we done ourselves, well (he and his father) it was a small, Kaimu family house just the other side there was a big monkey pod tree and the people wanted it cut down because it was shading the house too much. We cut it down and made a canoe out of it.

jj: so they weren't all koa then?

kp: Well a majority of the canoes were koa, very few, well monkeypod people couldn't believe it could be made into a canoe, but he did it. Like in Kona that is a funny part Kona has a lot of koa wood up in the forest, but I guess they (the people of Kona) were just too lazy to go up there. They used to make canoes out of boards one by one you know just square bottom. All the canoes here were Koa except for the one my dad made out of monkeypod.

jj: Was it usually sort of a group effort to make a canoe?

kp: Well some times it depends how the work is like, like I said I remember the one time in Kaimu the canoe was kind of an urgent material for the <sup>owner</sup> ~~kahuna~~, he wanted it so a lot of the people chipped in and helped.

jj: Were there different size canoes?

kp: Oh yeah there was a standard size (somewhere from 16- 22 feet)

I 'm not so sure you just see a big canoe and a small canoe, and measurements weren't in those days (for kids) although the men folks did talk sizes, people as a whole didn't know what size.

jj: So you would actually help out with the building and would you go out fishing in the canoes?

kp: Well I would go out fishing I used to be the bait man, I would throw the bait into the big net.

jj: Did the canoes have sails on?

kp: No they never had sails on, I guess they could have



jj: How would you use the canoe?

kp: what do you mean?

jj: You would use them only for fishing or were there any ragattas? <sup>(4) sp.</sup>

kp: Well we never had races, well when I was young. When it was opila <sup>opela</sup> season go out and get opila and come in and that was it. Then at night <sup>sp.</sup> hipaci <sup>mempache</sup> season, then we would go at night.

jj: Can you explain like you want to go fishing and what would you do to prepare the canoe for a fishing trip?

kp: Well the only thing is during the day, if your going to go opilo fishing you make the preperation the night before and the day before you get all your bait, well the nets you get them all ready and tie them up to the outriggers, across the outriggers and make sure check for for paddles and things like that. Them the bait, we go shrimp in and catch shrimps and then the day before we use to take the papaya and prepare that for bait, it makes good bait.

jj: So then when you would actually go out to the canoe were they real heavy?

kp: Slide it in the water from the land on a flat platform of rock and on there is five to six feet these runners of ohia logs, they have posts down underneath and the logs are nailed to it and the canoe slide on those.

jj: So he canoes would always be right side up, you would have to bail water out if it was raining.

kp: No it was covered, everybody covered their canoes.

jj: what would you cover them with?

kp: Well at that time it was just board cover made out of redwood or dou less fir infact a lot of canoes, like I said those square ones were redwood.

jj: So you would slide the canoes down the logs into the water?

kp: Well just before they are ready to hit the water a couple of guys on  
*A couple is already in + a couple more to go is push*  
land help pushing jump in the steers men is allready in ready to go.  
Those day s if you notice on clm days how good the water is about the  
same wasy after the subsidence the water is higher than it use to be  
It makes a difference in the ocean.

jj: Where would you sit in the canoe?

kp: ~~it~~ you used to be behind, <sup>a</sup> the number 2 man (in the middle) 1 is in  
*bow man + no. 2 man + no. 3 is the steersman*  
the bow.

jj: Did you paddle then?

kp: No never except when maybe were are out in the ocean and they are  
busy doing something I might be doing (paddling) just to keep them  
canoeing in place or position, either back water or push water away.

jj: So do you know who else had the canoes down here you said there was  
eight of them?

kp: to be honest I quite can't recall, who owned canoes..... *Kaokoas* koakoas or  
*Kaheikis* kaiikis had canoe, ofcourse my dad and I believe the *Kamilamila* were  
*Kamelanela* the other one. (hard to remember all)

jj: did the pea family have a canoe?

kp: No they were strictly ranchers.

jj: Do you remember in the Taro patch would they rotate or would they  
continue to grow it in the same area?

kp: no what they do is, well they plant here, then next time they plant  
next opt it, kind of work like a four corner, like they leave an area  
for three seasons. Sometime it depend the taro don't come out to grow  
d after awhile, then they seek another patch someplace else.

jj: When they would seek another patch someplace else what would you look  
for?kp:

kp: Soil mostly, because then, oh I don't know if they determine the be  
place by the trees or what, I think they went by the trees.

jj: So after you would find it what would be next?

kp:



Well have to cut the trees down for one thing and then start cleaning it out.

jj: You would cut the trees down with saws and then a?

kp: Yeah and try to get all the undergrowth, well, just and endless job cutting and burning all the time. Some of the really big trees we never bothered with, we just would plant around the stumps (they wouldn't try to pull the roots out.)

jj: And actually how would you go about it once you had it all cleared, how would you plant it?

kp: Well like the taro it is what you call a huli??, you've seen a taro patch of the bulb well growth starts in the top of the bulb, the stock, like your ....., well where it starts then trim off the good part where the leaf starts coming out and you plant that what you call huli.

jj: So you would plant the huli in the ground that you would get from other plants.

kp: No from the taro you pull,

jj: how would you actually plant it?

kp: Well they use picks in rocky places to dig the hole and put it in.

jj: Once it was growing would there be a lot of weeding?

kp: Oh yeah, before it takes hold the weeds take as fast as you turn around so you have to keep weeding all the time, and of course when poison came out why they started poisoning it.

jj: And then how about the harvest of Taro?

kp: Just went and grabbed the stock and usually the taro is about average that size (your fist) the stock on top huli about that big (?) just grab that and pull it out, and if it is too rocky then you have to get a oo?? something like that that you loosen the ground with, or a pick.

jj: ~~The stock~~ would then pull it out, then would you cut the root off from

- kp: Yeah if it is a good patch where the stock is good looking then the cut it off to replant it some place.
- jj: Waht about swipe? do you remember...
- kp: Well it is a mash of sweetpotato ground up and kind of mushy like, they never strained it they just left it like that. That use to be one of the famous drink in the old days. Then of course when oak?? came out I guess all the people went for oak?? because you get drunk faster.
- jj: Would your father make any of these, swipe or any thing?
- kp: Oh yeah he made swipe, potato swipe all the time, well then he learned how to make home brew then he use to make home brew too.
- jj: so would you ever sneak any of that?
- kp: Oh when I was going to Hilo to school I did, take it to Hilo, one of my brother use to say when you go back bring some home brew.
- jj: So kini aki he was one of the persons that made the home brew around here, would he supply it to other people?
- kp: Oh for parties he use to make it and oak of course they bought it from Pahoa, like when I was a youngster we use to go over there especially on saturday nights, we use to go up and get some there is a way to test some have a little plate and drop some in there and put a match to it, and if it burns blue it is good, if there is traces of orange or yellow no good
- jj: What is it not strong enough then
- kp: Well I don't know if it is strong enough or what I Had a couple of drinks when I was a youngster but I never did get the taste of it until after highscool when I was working for youngbrothers we all use to drink quite a bit.
- jj: How about your father, he use to drink it.
- kp: My real dad?
- jj: No kini aki?



kp: Oh yeah, he was a big boozier, both of them my step mother too, they liked their drinking.

jj: so would they drink every day or...

kp: Well just at night for dinner that's all.

jj: How about Lee's bakery what did that place look like?

kp: It was just a, you ever been in cash and carry in Pahoa?

It is almost like that inside, but not the stuff they have now a day just a bakery, just shelves and stoves and ovens all wooden ovens.

jj: Was ther like a counter you would sit at or tables?

kp: No there was no counter they just had tables it was just like a family house infact. WE use to go down there and have coffee at night and have some kind of sweet roll or bread or something?

jj: How often would you go down there?

kp: Oh I would say once maybe twice a week.

jj: Would you pay in cash?

6 kp: No it was just like you were visting friends, sit down and have a fe beers, talkstory time.

jj: Waht kind of things would people talk about since it was a gathering place?

kp: mostly in those days it was jobs for one thing because my dad he was like a huna for people down here to work on the county roads when that comes out people around here get in on the project. the ranchers uwe to call on kalapana people for cowboys. The best cowboys came from down here. Idont know why, maybe because all the horses down here.....

jj: this has been really informative today, I have learned a lot, I didn'tknow any of this befroe so it was good that we could go back over