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Leilani Miller 02/25/90 Interview with Rebecca Pau

The 28th of February and this is Sunday, visiting with Aunty Becky.

RP She came from/and she Hula.

LM I know - you the music and she the Hula.

 \cRP I can tell you about the music but not the Hula.

LM What was her maiden name? Now it is Marta Mederios. > daws her of the person

RP No, her name was Marta Waipa. > HMIA M.

(6) \ John LumHo is a cousin. John LumHo's mom is the oldest. No, no, wait, her Dad is the oldest. Marta's dad is the oldest in the family. Then John LumHo's mom is the oldest among the girls. | So, she would be the one with the authority to tell you about the Hula.

iM What school did you go to?

RP Kalapana. She went to Kalapana School.

We are talking about the same Martha? Martha Keawe.

She teaches. So to talk about Puna, she was raised in Puna. She lived above me. The mauka side - the mountain side. That was the first part of the land that was - our home was covered and the second time the lava came it covered over the other property. We had property on mauka. They lived in Paradise Park for a while though. Who? Martha and John. I don't know, I think they live his dad's house doesn't he and she

Yea, they do. In Keaau? Umhum. Because the last time I saw them they said they were living in Keaau. Because that's his Dad's home.

She is the one - You talk to her about the Hula. She will tell you about her life in Puna. She knows a little bit about there because her parents gradparents were raised in Puna. Talking about her you came on the right source.

Talk about Hula, I am not the authority on that, you know the olden ways when they have parties like that you don't. People, you know, it's just in them they just feel the rhythm and they just stand up as long as they they just dance - they're just happy. She went to Oahu and I don't know who was her teacher, but she had good hula teacher without She had several teachers and with those old teachers, some of them died,

you know. Hula masters she learned under them.

Side 1 (continued)

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That's where they live now - and I believe my grandmother wanted to come back. -

Annie's mom was raised in Kapaahou?

But she had a family estate there, so that is where Annie's family is from then.

Yea. That's where Annie's family is from then.

- When she got married then she moved to Ka'u. Is that how she got to Ka'u, because of marriage?
- P I'm pretty sure.

Then she moved to the family estate. That makes sense.

So Annie and Tomas had 11 children, 2 of which died. Rebecca then spoke of the naming of some of the children. 4 of the children were named through dreams, 2 of which died. Rebecca expressed a great deal of superstition around naming children through dreams. In this family's case its names were dreamed by the grandmother and mother children that lived were Joseph Pele and Starlight Hoku Malamalama.

At that time when they moved back to Kapakahou were there any relatives living in Kapakahou?

- RP Yes, my grandmothers' sisters were living there. Her sisters and her nieces and nephews were living in Kapalahou.
- For the children whose names were dreamed, they were given a a vision and a purpose they were born into to live up to. These children's clothing needed to be washed separatly and the mothers' were electing to give names that were dreamd since there were also many kapus surrounding these names.

That's true?

P Yes.

Since there was a great deal of superstition Rebecca shared that the kapus were abused the child often became sick and died. Only through prayer and herbs can these children's health be regained. Each dream name was considered sacred and special. The Both of the children of Tomas and Annie's that died the belief was that a kapu had been broken. Do you remember as a child, hearing more about that - that a kapu had been broken?

Ah, I don't know, I don't know what specific event was given, but I remember she said, like you mentioned, that if you broke any part of the kapu, then they get sick and then they die, so what part of it, I

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You were saying that back in those days they married very young.

RP My grandmother was 15. My grandfather was over 20 or so years. See,
he was married first. I don't think he had children with his first
wife. She was married before, so he had step-children before he
married my grandmother.

- It says my grandmother and my grandfather lived with us in our Ka'u plantation home. When you were in Ka'u, your grandmother and grandfahter lived with you?
- Well, I was young, I don't know. I think my grandfather and my grand-mother owned that home. My mom lived with them, right? Then my dad married so I guess he did right in the same house.
- But then when you moved to Kapaahou, your grandmother died when you were in third or fourth grade. So your grandmother and grandfather moved with you to Kapaahou.
- Yea, yea. They have to because that is their estate.
- LM Then your grandmother died when you were in third or fourth grade?
- PI'm pretty sure. My grandfather died two years prior to my grandmother.
- LM So you were in first or second grade?

RY Yea.

LM You also had land in what is now Royal Gardens.

Pohe The name of the place is Pohouka - uka means in the mountain range.

LM It is still Royal Gardens?

- RP No, no. It is still Poho. Royal Gardens is in that vicinity. It is still Poho Pou pou
- It was my grandparents that would ride up the mountain by donkey to live and plant Taro for nine months out of the year.
- No. what I said was that taro matures either 9 months to a year, but they didn't stay up there for nine months either one week or two weeks they would come down. They made the long trek down because they got to renew their supplies. They need foodstuff, otherwise what are they going to eat before the crops get harvested. They have to have food.

LM That makes more sense.

While they are planting taro above, they also plant sweet potato down below, right? So they need food - they have to get their food so they

who is speaked here?

Side 3 (continued)

then by My brothers helped a little and I studied and worked so kinda make it a little easier.

So, when you were talking in here, talking about all the little fish that was dried with salt.

RP Yes.

- Then you said my ohang was fed with the farm foods and then the food from the sea and the food from hunting. And then what was left over was taken to market in Hilo to be sold.
- Not actually what was left over. My dad, like he would raise vegetables he would take it to the market to sell and the rejects, like the cucumbers and all that, that is what we ate it is not like what was left over because he has to earn some money for the staple foods, right? so he would take it to the market and whatever money he would have he would buy staple food for us. Usually it was the rejects.

With the money, mostly canned goods were bought.

Staples like rice, sugar, flour -staple foods.

What kinds of canned goods were bought?

 \mathbb{Q} Pork and beans, Spam, sardines, corned beef - that's the kind. All the favorites.

Yea, all the favorites.

And I think at the time sardines was 3¢ a can.

M Amazing!

 $\mathcal{R}^{
ho}$ Yea, but you see the money was - when you think now a dollar is different now.

N Yea, very different.

 \mathcal{Q} Food was very simple. We used dried shrimp and made soup, mostly with the sweet potatoes

Or with papayas

Cabbage Mand did you make soup with flour and taro?

Not soup - what we did we would prepare the taro for the poi. The Hawaiians at that time, they never eat taro in its' pure state - like taro alone - they always have to mix it up with a flour - in something like a dumpling - something that consistency. What they did is boil this water and put the flour inside and then a wooden stick and then they would just mix it up in the hot water so it wouldn't get lumpy and it would get kind of smooth and that they would mix with taro and that is how they would make their poi. Every Hawaiian they did that in my time. Now it is different. Now they eat the poi in its natural state but at

nore Upla Noolar

the time, no. Because my mom I always ask her because they always had a lot of taro, my mom and my dad always planted - they did it for commercial use. Oh yea, that is how they had money - they raised it. I used to ask her, "Why do have to mix it with flour and she said it seemed like it got filled. They had the satisfaction that their stomach was filled. I guess they were so accustomed to having the poi mixed with flour, it is funny that's how the people down there learned. Hawaiians - even my cousin Maizy, you know the one mentioned in my geneology, that's how they learned. That's how they make poi. I would think they would do it to stretch, right? Now we can say we can stretch the poi by mixing it with flour, but no, it is because they are so accustomed - funny isn't it?

People don't eat it that way any more?

Not any more, not when we go to the market - we just buy poi in it's natural state and just eat it, right? I remember when I was in the Mainland that I would buy poi there and I would stretch it by mixing it up with flour.

WIt was expensive.

(Vea, it was expensive, but here now, anyway, we don't do it. We are both spoiled. We don't want to go back to the old ways. But that was what my cousin from Maui said that was how they would eat the poi also. The way the Hawaiian people did at that time - ate the poi mixed it up with the flour. That's why it was a staple food at that time - the flour. And too, we never had desert like I told you, we never had cakes and all that. We had pancakes. We never had pancakes for breakfast, we made pancakes for desert.

We didn't make pancakes like we do now, we used to make what we call cowboy pancakes. You don't know that kind?

\ N UhUh

 \mathbb{Q} It's more like the rubbery kind.

MThe kind you throw across the room?

R Yea, Yea, the rubbery kind . We used to cook on the wood stove, right? You put them in a fry pan, put oil in - Just flour, a chig of baking powder and water. No eggs, no milk, all those things, and then you just heat up the oil and pour in and the pancakes are just crispy on edge, you know what I mean?

MYea, yea.

igg(igg(Roll it up and then we have honey. We don't use fork - we just roll it

up like a jelly roll and then we just eat it with the honey. So that is desert. Of course if we go to the bakery we can buy bread or cracker, but most time, because my dad had to go shopping all the time, so sometime we kids like desert so that is what we do - and it tastes good!! Sometimes we don't have butter, and I guess I told you - Honey. Very seldom we had butter because butter costs a lot of money.

yes

But then my uncle who lives across the street he has a cow milking so he would milk the cow and he would give us milk. Fresh milk. It's not every day thing because sometime the cow give milk when the cow has calf, right? and so he has milk and he has extra and he gives it. Nice huh?

So when - clothes Your clothes were made of the rice and flour sacks. Home kind. Home use and later on, of course, it was grandmother time Sleeping But later on we had hand-me-downs. I was one of the oldest and we handed down whatever we had. They started using pants and fresh shirts, and my mom used to sew clothes for us and buy yardage material. She would sew a simple dress for us to go to school. That was when I was younger. Of course when I was in my teens I started working for Victorian Corp of course that was during the war years every Friday and we would work in a plantation. We say Victorian Corp because they inducted the young men, right? to go into the service and they didn't have enough men to care for the plantations. They had age, I don't recall how old we were at the time, but I think I was intermediate when we would work in this plantation field and earn a little money there and that is how we would get a little extra spending money we saved and we would buy materaial At that time I would buy my material and I would have regualr dressmakers make them. At that time, as I recall, I had only five change of clothing. We were very careful. We don't change every day because we wash by hand and this iron was like a half a day thing to iron. At that time the clothing that we use was mostly cotton. Most of thekids that I was growing up with would wash, starch and iron their clothes. No Niagra Starch. We use starch. The way my mother showed us how to make starches you make a thick paste - put a lot of flour in the water and put a little kerosene - the way my mother used to teach us to make starch. You put kerosene in the starch so it comes shiney. But you don't smell kerosene on the clothes. That's how they make the starch.

MSo those clothes that your mom made were really special, school clothes RY Yea.

The other kind of clothes from the flour sacks were work clothes

That was when I was young. Became good later on, store Kind.
But you don't have any memory of Jeans as a kid.

We did not wear jeans - my brothers did but the girls did not.

I think we did - we did. Not the fashion jeans we have now, but the man kind. Man pants I think we call it. I think some of my uncles, anyway some of my rela tives. We did use pants before, I remember I don't know how I got these Army pants but they are brown color, Kakai. But this was during the war years. Oh, now I recall, it was after the war years when the Army - they throw - they had these surplus things they had to throw away. They had a place - they throw them into the ocean. During the war years now when you think about it it was really wasteful - there was good mattresses they would throw away and it would be on the beach - wash up from the ocean and they had all this Army clothing. We used to run there and get it before they would throw it into the ocean.

ouen? LM Why did they throw it in to the - Who was it that was throwing it? People that - new troops would come - they would be called to go to the frontfront-the new company would come in A the barracks would be cleaned - they would throw it away and I remember the HaNALII you know the Hovalii Pali? Well that is where they would come with a big armoured truck that used to dump all the mattresses and that is where we got all our mattresses and clothing. Now I remember the Army shirts and the pants. Army blankets. So we made it ours because they throw it away. Even food stuff. would throw away like cheese, and at the time I didn't know how to eat cheese because you are so used to your own kind of food, and we didn't know how to eat cheese, how to eat hamburger, but we learned how to eat that during the war years. Army people - they would throw away this food - so whoever is there they bring it home and you know, we would acquire a taste.

So relations with your neighbor families. Before you said "neighbors down in Kalapana were family. Whatever you had you traded and shared. You helped one another."

RQ Yea.

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IM He helped you build that home?

My dad knew carpentry because he was working for Glover. He was working as, I believe it was a carpenter helper but he knew carpentry so he built the home and my brothers helped him also. And I had one of my relatives, he knew how to build homes, came over and helped. It was more of an ohana thing. We never, not like today, you have to hire a carpenter. That's why homes were cheap, because owner-builder.

LM So the home you are talking about building down in Kapaahou is different than the one your family moved to from Ka'u.

RP UhHu.

MSo how come you had to move out of the home you originally moved to down in Kapaahou from Ka'u.

RPOh, I told you. Didn't I tell you?
That's how the roof leaked and --

LM Yea, Yea.

The design of the house. The house in Kapaahou was from the wood from your plantation home in Ka'u.

Yes.

The kitchen was a seperate building in from the house. Seperate - but it was connected by a - let me draw you a map - A picture.

Here was the main building (description)

Covered walkway - then there is this building - in other words, you can just go from here to there. You had a door, you can shut the door - and of course we had the door in front of here so we just come in here

so we just go in this building and this is our kitchen. The walkway is not down on the ground, it is up like the rest of the house.

We had a verenda all the way here.

The kitchen is a fairly big kitchen. We had a big long wooden table whith bench.

The kitchen was a seperate building $\mathbf{X}\mathbf{X}\mathbf{X}\mathbf{X}$ from the house, our first

wood stove was the iron kind, then we got the kerosene.

Do you remember when you got the kerosene? Can you remember how old you were? What grade?

RPI think it was during the war.

The house had four big bedrooms and a big living room. We had no furniture and slept on the floor on lahala mats.

Wait, wait, no. My dad had mattress.

Later on the kids had beds, parents still slept on the floor. Yea.

Back when I was a kid there were no diapers, so the kids,,,

Wait, wait. There were no diapers but my ma used to make the kine out of rice bag or flour bags.

But once in a while the kids were allowed to run around without diapers? Yea.

When they did it it wasn't any big deal, yea?

It wasn't any big deal. They didn't intend for them to mess up - but it just happened. It caught them unawares.

So when that happened it was no big deal and then the dogs just came in and,, $\boldsymbol{\cdot}$

Yea. We call the dogs to come in the dogs don't just come in. The dog was trained not to come in the house, but we would have to call the dog to come in the house. See, the poor dog did not understand he had to be - when we call him in the house when we need him and then after he did his duty we would have to shoo him out. So he was a well-trained dog. He would stand by the door and look. He know that was food for him but he gotta wait.

So you would call the dogs in and they would eat the mess and you know back in those days there was no such thing as dog food. So there were little, very few table scraps so this was like a treat in the dogs eyes. For them to eat what the kids left behind. The mess the kids made.

But that wasn't a normal thing, that was just once in a while that accident happened.

So the roof started to leak real bad, when I was a kid and Dad kept patching it, but still it leaked. Eventually he had to break the house down. So when he broke the house down is when he built your new house.

Meause you used a lot of the wood and things from the old house for the new house.

K No, Never.

Mok, maybe you could clarify that.

 \mathcal{RP} What had happened before he built the new - what I told you -About the tub being used to catch the water -

Yea, yea, yea - and then we had a lot of pans to catch the drips, right The water would come down through the roof, yea - so we used to have all you know a lot of pans inside the house. Then I remember also, no more clothes dryer - rain like here - for days. My mom used to hang the clothes. My dad used to string a line out on the porch - this verenda and we would hang the clothing there. And, with a lot of kids, that's a lot of clothing. She would put in the living room. She would put string across, I mean rope across, and then she would hang clothes in the living room.

When that new house was being built, because the old house was leaking

M Yea, right.

So that's when you had friends come over and help you to build that new

It was only one of the relatives.

And who was it that came and helped? Do you remember the person's name? Yea. Kini AKi Knu Lei Pavao's

MFamily?

Yea, family. He married into the family. He came over because he knew how to build home because he build his own home also.

He built it next to you guys?

Yea, close by.

So, the reason why he come over because at that time the style of the home, the roof, the island roof, I don't know if you know this in Hilo, it is almost like a compass, it is almost like oval type, it is not only one, maybe one, two, three of them. There is a certain way, a certain angle that you have to cut the island roof. He knew how to do it, so that is why he came. You see, the new house, it is not the plain type house that you put the two roofs, no, it was fancy. The way they had cut the island roof was more like, oval like

hip-roal?

But if you go to Hilo, you see there are some of the roofs - old style homes. Especially by Hiroso's Nursery on the right, you see some of the homes, the old - that's the kine.

mother from Texas came. I was, oh you know, kind of a little embarrased because I didn't want her to know that we were using Mongomery Ward paper. So I bought toilet paper. But other than that the normal thing we do was just what ever paper magazine we had we just used. Of course no you don't use it. They say the ink is not good for you. But at that time it didn't bother us. We had to use whatever things we had available, right?

Back then, too, things were different.

O MM Yea, yea, exactly.

There was a big change after the war in 1942. Life was so simple and loving before that time. Kids studied nature, not like the stuff on TV now. Where everything is so fast, but we were out/for hours and days, played and watched stuff. The kids played card games and played with things we made from the coconut tree. Things like a coconut ballgame and life was so much simpler in those days. And very different.

Is there anything that you would like to add to what we have covered tonight?

I have to think about it. I forget like the name of my brother and sister - which one now.

I think you are right which one you put in.

One of the things we talked about for doing with the music was talking to Chuck about the idea of doing a music and he wondered if we could do a little bit of talking, like we are doing right now, about the music in that period of time. What was happening. He was wondering if, like he played music with Emma Keawe an G girl(?), mostly Emma Keawe, (Cauhi)

Not that - that was just visiting. I didn't play with them. But is the music that you sing with them like the song like back then? Yea, the same.

What we were wondering is if maybe we could plan a time when you and Emma and G girl (?) and video tape it with you folks interacting and talking about the music from that time and what it means and have it on a video tape with the sound.

Ahh

And that would be part of the special library that would be part of this Kalapana as a part of the resource. Becuase what you know is so very special and unique.

OOH -

I know that Spectrum Hawaii. She and her family Kalapana. They had a - they were playing music, you know. But,

What this would be for is for the research project, something for the University. It wouldn't be made public or shown without your permission or understanding of what this is for, and it certainly wouldn't be anything used to make money or anything like that. It would be used as an educational

. You could think about it, Aunty.

You mean about videoing it? I think that the best thing is that when we perform some place, you know what I mean, that you can video, but you see why, cause to come up for that. She live in Kalapana. We live here already, this is why, so h_{ard} . You mean it is hard to all get together. Is that the part that is hard?

You mean it is hard to all get together. Is that the part that's hard? Yea.

If I was living in Kalapana, then maybe that wouldn't be that hard, but for her to come all the way up here,

Would you, perhaps, want to go down to Kalapana? Not really.

How would you feel about maybe just you and Emma REXING together and just real small play and then we could talk back and forth a little bit?

Oh - see, I don't know her schedule too.

Why don't you think about all those ideas - how like next time we can get together and talk about the music and share the music of that time. Whether it is something you would like to share with just you or yourself and Emma Keawe and how you would like to do that. If you would like to do it just with this tape or I could get a video camera and we could video tape it. Then you think about what you want.

Well, I don't care for video tape.

OK.

Maybe one day whenever we entertain you can just like maybe I'll tell you. Because when you video tape at home and you play it it is different and when you go out you give it your all. So you do good but, you know, when you are in a small group you know the camera is on you - It is very different.

- So you are talking about the story about being a kid and you remember sharing a bed with your sister and having a galvanized tub in between you to catch the water and you used to giggle about that and that is when your dad was building the new house. Do you remember how old you were when you moved into the new house?
- $\downarrow M$ What were you working doing?
- ho
 ho Fountain tables, I was working at the fountain fountain girl, like a waitress.
- What was the name of the place you worked?
- RP <u>iddic's</u> Fountain. On Mauna Kea Street.

Still there?

- No. I was working because we needed a home badly, I went there to work and then I sent the money to my dad. Every bit of money that I had I sent back to him. And so we got about enough to buy us you know the home that we had was used lumber that we had during the war years from all those Army barracks that they had they auctioned it off. It was a big building and the home that we built was big because we had enough lumber. You see it is only lumber for the side the iron roof we bought it seperate and the floor. But it was enough lumber just to build what you call the framework. My dad and I, I forget where he was working at the time maybe he was working taro patch I am not certain where he working at the time, but he, with the little money that he had and I had, the house was built. It wasn't that expensive. I believe all in all it was the new house cost us \$3,000 dollar. But it was a big home.
- You were talking last time about getting the Montgomery Ward catalog and everything looked so foreign and funny you took it to the outhouse.
- Oh yea, sure. Because we never had toilet paper at that time. Maybe they had toilet paper, but we never had. I remember when my brother-in-law's

Yea, it is. Very different.

Maybe what we could do at that point, though, to video tape you while you are entertaining and then some night you and I could get together after that and watch the video tape together and I could record your comments about the music and about the time period and where that song came from. Things like that.

Yea, that would be better.

OK. That would work better then.

That would work better. But, as I say, you know, only when people invite us.

Do you have something that's planned that's coming up? That you folks are going to perform at?

Not really, not really. I think there is going to be a party, but I don't know where it is. Either Hilo or Kalapana, I'm not too sure. They haven't called me yet. They told me, if that should but not certain so I don't know what I'm doing so -

Is that with G girl (?)?

Well it's her husband's family. They are going to have a 50th wedding anniversary. You see, his daughter married my brother. So, now that my brother is coming over she mentioned it if I could play and I said, "Yea, I would", but then have not heard from them. They have to get from them because they have a program chairman and he has all these program arrangements with musicians but they don't expect me to go down there with my ukelele if they didn't ask me. I'm not going down there if -I'm going to see how I feel. I'm not like before when party I'm going. Not when you're old you don't care. I'm tired. Like I say, I may not because of the sulphur from the volcano - the fumes. I heard that people down there say that - I have some friends down there that say it is vogy. That they are besieged chloric acid. Oh it's bad. She said that got sick because of breathing that. But you know I feel pity for people that living down there now, because you see the Kona wind. When the Kona wind come in it brings the fumes this side. The trade wind it blows to Kona, right? So, according to my sister-in-law, they will either have the party at Harry K. Brown park or . The way I look at it, the Civil Defense is already occupying the kitchen area. It has been on TV where they are in Harry K. Brown park. They have to be there because that is

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where they are working. So, that is the headquarters down there. So I doubt it said it all depends on Tutu Pele. If Tutu Pele comes downwe will have it here. So they might have it over here.

In Paradise Park?

Yea. They might have it here.

Daytime or nighttime?

Oh, that's going to be 5:00. But, as I told you, they haven't told me-They haven't asked me. Well, you see why it's because it's my sister-inlaw's younger brother that's the program chairman. It seems to have been moved from Kalapana already. They hardly get in contact with me because they think I'm this side. Before when I'm down there, they always call up you know what I mean. But since I moved here they hardly ever contact me. It is only people on the other side Hilo that

But it's ok, I enjoy it. Like the other night I sang at the funeral of . Because it is old friend. She was really good friend because when we would go over there she would give us bananas. So, I told her daughter I didn't sing for the mom's birthday party that she had so I want to show my appreciation because she always came through, no matter whatever she had, banana or eggs, or whatever she had. I wanted to show my appreciation to the family -----(end of tape)