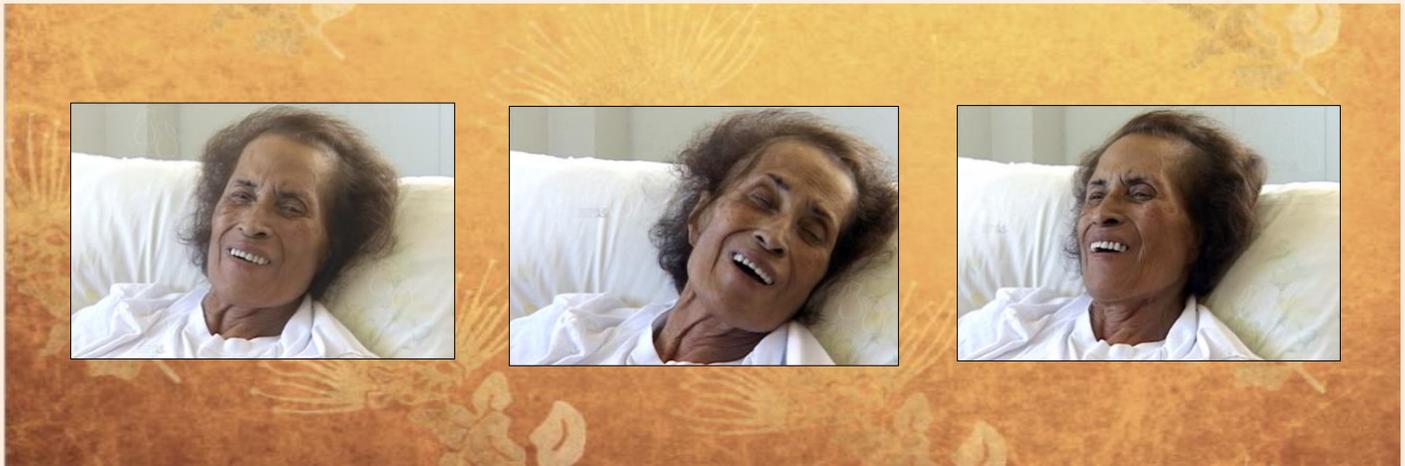


TRANSCRIPT: Puluolo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004

Ke ‘Ano Wikiō (Type)	Oral History Interview
Nā Helu Wikiō (Tape #s)	HPS 0370 (pg. 2), HPS 0371 (pg. 18), HPS 0372 (pg. 42)
Lā (Date)	July 23, 2004
Wahi (Location)	Hau‘ula, Ko‘olauloa, O‘ahu
Kanaka Nīnauele (Interviewer(s))	Maile Loo
Kanaka Ho‘opa‘a Mo‘olelo (Videographer)	Gene Kois
Nā hoa kipa (Others present)	Pumehana Park



<p>Nā Loina Ho‘ohana (Access & Use)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ <i>This Transcript is provided as a research tool; Each document represents one (1) multi-hour session</i> ➤ <i>HPS does not include Hawaiian diacritical markings in peoples’ names, mele titles, or commercial names/locations that do not historically use them (i.e. Halekulani Hotel)</i> ➤ <i>Information in brackets reflect physical movement, background sounds, censored content, clarifications, colloquialisms, and "sic" terms (words likely intended by the speaker)</i> ➤ <i>DISCLAIMER: Please be advised that this transcript may contain content of a mature nature that may not be suitable for youth</i> ➤ <i>When citing this resource, please use: “Hula Preservation Society”</i> ➤ <i>For questions regarding use of content contained herein, please contact archive@hulapreservation.org or call (808) 247-9440</i> ➤ <i>We acknowledge there may still be corrections needed. If you find items of question (content, spelling, etc.), please take note and kindly contact us at archive@hulapreservation.org We appreciate your kōkua!</i>
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PULUELO NAIPO PARK

Tape #: HPS 0370 (MV503)

Date: July 23, 2004

Location: Hau'ula, Ko'olauloa, O'ahu

Subject: Oral History Interview

Interviewer(s): Maile Loo

Videographer: Gene Kois

Also present: Pumehana Park (daughter)

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(01:42)

ML: So this house, you were telling us the last time, was built by your husband?

PNP: Fifty years ago.

UTT

PNP: And the police department—

UTT

PNP: --The boys all came to do the foundation with him. After the foundation, then they built the sidewalk up to you know, the level, and we hired a-one Japanese man. He did all the top.

ML: Wow. So was this family land, or is it—this a plot that you purchased?

PNP: We—we bought it.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: Okay; sorry about that. So this was something you folks bought?

PNP: We bought the land.

UTT

PNP: There was nothing here.

UTT

PNP: And then the police—my husband and the policemen built the foundation. And then we just hired one carpenter and he did all top.

ML: Wow; so there weren't any houses around on either side of you or anything?

PNP: No.

ML: What made you folks buy out here?

PNP: It was this girl; she was desperate. Her mother was dying of cancer. And they didn't have the money. This is all they had, so they sold it to Tom.

UTT

PNP: That's how come we have this place.

UTT

PNP: But we used to always camp out here in Hau'ula, bring the children on weekends. And they used to enjoy it; you know, they were little.

UTT

PNP: I had eight little ones.

ML: How far apart are your kids in age- how far between the ages?

PNP: Very close.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: Robert is the oldest; then comes Russell; then comes Kimmie; then comes uh, Soonie; then Soo Sung, who passed away. And then comes Radford; then comes uh, Soo Whan then Kaulana.

UTT

PNP: And I raised them all over here. They were my joy. I trained them music, hula, you name it; everything out here. And when I was ready to go out, Kaulana got uh ... was six years old—five years or six years old ... then I became uh ... uh, administrator for Hawaii Business College. And I would only take Kaulana to work, 'cause I had an office.

UTT

PNP: The rest of the children were in school. My mom or my dad would pick them up 'cause they—they stayed out here with me.

(05:00)

ML: Wow. I remember you telling us um, how that—when you started having your—your children, how it really made you want to become a kumu and be able to pass on the hula.

PNP: Yes; uh, because I had gone to Lokalia way before that. And I never used it. So when my children came along ... I went to finish with her.

UTT

PNP: And I was teaching my own children. When I got out, all my—I began to open a hālau. That was down in uh, Kapiolani; the first hālau was at Hawaii Business College. Then I wanted to teach children, 'cause I only had adults. So I changed my hālau up to King Street. I rented at uh ... a brand new building. So I took two—two uh, big rooms; one for hālau and one for office.

UTT

**TRANSCRIPT: Puluelo Naipo Park
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PNP: And I taught there for about three years. Then I found a home in Kailua. 'Cause most of my students came from Kāne'ohe.

UTT

PNP: We found a home then I moved to Kailua.

ML: And that was the house we were in with you? Oh, that's historic—

PNP: But it was bigger, though.

UTT

PNP: It—it extended way out. And I had uh, like a hundred students.

ML: Wow; at once in that place?

PNP: Yeah; inside, outside, and to the side.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: I used to have big—uh, the—if my husband didn't sell that property, it would have still been a hālau. But I thought he was building me a hālau; he was building a house to—to sell. Oh, I was so mad.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: That old man, he never tells me anything.

ML: Oh; so he had another—another plan for the—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: --house, yeah.

PNP: He—he sold it to Filipinos.

UTT

PNP: That's what made me mad. He—you know, Korean style—I don't know if you know.

UTT

PNP: Their wives don't do the business. They're the ones do the business. But if the wife has no husband, then the wife does all her own business.

ML: So his parents were from Korea?

PNP: His mom—

ML: Oh, his mom.

PNP: --and dad; yeah.

ML: And dad. So that was what he was raised as?

PNP: He never saw his dad.

UTT

PNP: Just his mom.

UTT

PNP: Until he grew up to a man, still—he was never raised by a man.

UTT

PNP: All the Filipino workers, because they have carnation farm. They owned Koko Head, about twenty acres of carnation, and in Wahiawā about twenty acres.

UTT

PNP: She was a very businesswoman.

UTT

PNP: Yeah; her children was never taken care of by her. It was all the Filipino workers. But when I—when I met them ... she was so upset. She immediately told Tom, I no like kanaka's. Oh, wow, she got me so mad. I took one look at her, I says, And I don't like Koreans. And I walk out of her house. [CHUCKLES] Oh, my husband chasing me. I said, Get back over there; you belong with the Koreans. [CHUCKLES] Oh, no, no. He didn't want. [CHUCKLES]

ML: He wanted you. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: He said, I don't want to go to—you look at your mother. Oh. And my parents treat him so good. [CHUCKLES]

UTT

PNP: Then after a while, he went back, talk to her in Korean. Who is she to tell him who to marry? Oh. She wouldn't come to the wedding.

ML: Really? Wow.

PNP: She was so Korean; everything is Korean. I was never included in the family. And it didn't bother me.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause I loved Tom, and Tom loved me. We had our own family, we were happy.

ML: What year did you get married?

PNP: '42.

UTT

PNP: No; I'm sorry. Can I think uh ... nineteen forty ... yeah; 1942.

ML: Where was your wedding?

(10:00)

PNP: In a Baptist church on uh ... what you call that place going down to Kaiser Hospital?

UTT

PNP: That street.

ML: The one—Kaiser in Moanalua side?

PNP: Downtown.

ML: Oh, Downtown?

PNP: Pensacola Street?

ML: Oh, Pensacola.

GENE KOIS: Pensacola.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: The Baptist church over there.

UTT

PNP: May I have some water?

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: So if you got married in '42, that means you've been married sixty-two years?

PNP: Wait a minute; I might be wrong. I think I was married ... 1948.

ML: Oh; coming up on sixty years then.

PNP: What's that?

ML: Coming up on sixty years, then; fifty-six years? Is that right?

UTT

PNP: What date did I give you?

ML: Forty—forty-two. So forty—you think 1948 was when you got married?

PNP: '48.

UTT

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: So did you ever hold your ha—hālau classes out here in Hau'ula?

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PNP: Yes.

UTT

PNP: I brought them out here. Oh, they were—they didn't want to leave. And I think I had—at that time, I had about ... fifty students. So I brought them all. Oh, was so nice just to see them all hula. I wish I took pictures. You know, you never think about those things until ... way later. Everybody ask me the same question. Yes, all my hula students come out here.

UTT

PNP: And when they comes out here, Oh, we don't want to go home.

ML: So would they da—be dancing underneath the lanai or on top, or ...

PNP: On the top.

ML: On the top; oh.

PNP: I never take them downstairs, 'cause too many.

UTT

PNP: Uh, might injure their feet. You know, I'm so particular with their feet. Even down here, I used to look at the board and I told my husband, Can't you sand this down? It's dangerous for the hula dancers to dance. 'Cause had—they had to do all the kneeling and what. Oh, that's why I used to tell them bring their lauhala mats and uh, you know, hula on there. Don't cut the feet. It was nice. They all liked to come out. I could only bring them on certain days.

UTT

PNP: Everybody work.

ML: Did you ever do uh, hi'uwai out here at sunrise?

(15:00)

PNP: Uh, yes, we did. We had an 'ūniki here. In fact, two 'ūniki's. I just had one recently about two years ago. And I brought all my kumu hulas out here. And um ... and that was Malia and ... well, I had all—many of my kumu hulas come out for the blessing. And we hold our lū'au here.

UTT

PNP: Yeah. I hire you know, musicians, big lū'au, and ... oh, they like that. Nobody want to go home. [CHUCKLES]

ML: [CHUCKLES] I can understand why.

PNP: Yeah. They camp night time. Yeah; good fun, we have. Uh-huh.

ML: So Alexis' um, 'ūniki, the actual ceremony and everything was held out here for, what Alexis and ...

PNP: Alexis—

ML: Pumehana or—

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PNP: First was for Pumehana. Or was it—was Alexis first. Then came Puamehana, then Leimomi—or Malia and Leimomi.

UTT

PNP: So those were the ones that I brought up from babies. I—I'm only interested in those, 'cause are the ones that know what the whole thing was about. Yeah. Uh, I need to be propped a little bit more.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

PNP: Uh ... where were we?

ML: Oh, just talking about your—your graduates and being out here in Hau'ula and-.

PNP: You know, when I started I couldn't believe I had that much students. Babies; and I love babies. They're the cutest little ones. I had uh like... six and five ... and four. I always put those three together. 'Cause the six-years-olds seem to help. And then I had sevens, eights, and nines. It was that much. Wow, I can't believe I taught that many children. I'm sitting here thinking, just imagining them in class.

ML: Where did your students come from? Like, did you ...

PNP: I had—

ML: --advertise, did you—

PNP: Yeah. I did—

ML: This was back in the '50s when you started?

PNP: I advertised for Downtown when I was there. And I—I don't know where these students—eventually I found out most of them came from Kāne'ohē. 'Cause they go to McKinley High School; you know, the high school kids.

UTT

PNP: When I found out they were from Kāne'ohē, I said, Why you folks coming over here? Oh, 'cause we have to wait for our parents. You know, after work. Oh; then that made sense. But uh ...

UTT

PNP: --eventually I told them I had to move. And then all the Kāne'ohē's started to come over to Kailua. So I had mostly Kāne'ohē students. 'Cause Bella was right next street. Bella.

ML: Bella Richards.

PNP: Uh ... uh, Richards; yeah. So she had most of the students. Eventually, I heard that they were quitting her and coming to me. So I felt scared, you know; I didn't want to barge in on her. So I called her

(20:00)

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I said, Oh, um, Bella, this is Puluelo, you know, ne—your next street hula kumu. She said, Oh, aloha. And then we start talking. I said, Is something wrong? Your students are coming over here, and I don't want to be uh, you know, enemies with you. She says, No, I kick 'em out. I was so shocked. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Wow. [CHUCKLES] I heard—

PNP: She's a mean teacher.

ML: Yeah, I heard she was uh—

PNP: She hit 'em with the—with the bamboo too. [CHUCKLES] I didn't know this. But anyway, I—I asked her if something was wrong, why was her student comes to—coming to my hālau. She said, I kick 'em out. And I was silent for a while, and I said, Oh, was there a reason? She said, Yeah; I tell 'em do something, they no do nothing. I whack 'em with the bamboo. I said ... well, I heard that before, but I never believe it. I said, Oh. She said, Anyway, you get dead heads. That's what she told me.

ML: Oh, my goodness.

PNP: Well, that dead heads, she saw on the—on the—on my program. She was shocked. All the ones she called dead heads [CHUCKLES] were darn good dancers. [CHUCKLES]

ML: [CHUCKLES] They just needed the right teacher. [CHUCKLES] Who would love them.

PNP: And she gave me a dirty look. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Oh, boy. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: I told her, Oh, Bella, those were your students. She turned her face away.

ML: Oh, my goodness..

PNP: Oh, that Bella; she was something else.
[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Nobod—nobody like go to her, 'cause she always hitting them. Ah.

ML: We've been talking with her sister who lives in Keaukaha.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: Lauae Yung.

PNP: Oh, yeah. And how is she?

ML: She's fine. Yeah; but she's been telling us um, about her sister. 'Cause their mom was a famous kumu in Hilo, yeah—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: Yeah. So that's why we're documenting, you know, the—that line. But I, you know, never had a chance to meet Bella, because she had passed away already, but—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: I heard about her through her sister. Yeah. And how she was strict. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Yeah; so strict. She make me laugh too, sometimes.
[CHUCKLES]

PNP: She always said, You're gonna get it. And even the boys; she grab the boys talking back to her. She grab her purse, she throw it across the stage. Shut your mouth; I'll come over there! And we're all laughing; what a kumu hula. [CHUCKLES] And the boys listen. [CHUCKLES]

ML: [CHUCKLES] They knew she was serious, huh? [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Oh, jeez.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: She just scream.
[CHUCKLES]

PNP: I'm going back over here.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: When you were um, over on King Street, was there—were there other hula studios around you?

PNP: Uh, Maiki Aiu; she was right around the corner.

UTT

PNP: She was on Kekaulike. Was it Kekau—yeah. Right on the corner. And I was ... um, well, yeah, you could say a block away. But my hālau was the whole building.

UTT

PNP: Because it was brand new.

UTT

PNP: So they let me rent the whole top.

ML: Oh, that's nice.

PNP: Yeah; that was—

ML: So Ke—Keeaumoku or Kekaulike?

PNP: Keeaumoku.

ML: Keeaumoku; okay.

PNP: That's where Maiki was. I was on King.

UTT

PNP: Can you hear me?

GENE KOIS: Oh, yeah.

UTT

PNP: Okay.

ML: So were there others? Like where was Uncle George Holokai? Was he around yet, or—

PNP: Oh, he was gone—

ML: This was before—

ML: He was—oh.

PNP: He was—he was by that theater.

ML: The Cinerama?

PNP: The one on King Street. King and ... close to Kalakaua Avenue. There used to be a famous theater there.

(25:00)

ML: Is that Cinerama? No.

GENE KOIS: I know the theater; I don't know the name of it. I can see it in my head.

ML: On the mauka side of the street? Oh.

PNP: I—I—I can't remember that theater.

ML: Yeah; but he was down more then.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: Way-way down from you folks—

PNP: More down by Pauoa.

UTT

PNP: That's—that's where he first started.

UTT

PNP: And then I never saw him again, until I went to Hilo.

UTT

PNP: And I said, Wow; he's up here.

[CHUCKLES]

oooooooo

ML: He's been very—yeah; he's been great. He looked a little tired when we saw him in April; but he—but he'd been in Japan all winter, and maybe he was just rundown. You know, he looked kind of frail.

PNP: He gotta take it easy.

ML: [CLEARS THROAT] Yeah; yeah.

PNP: He's been going, going, going.

ML: Yeah; 'cause you saw him last summer. Remember, we were at the—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: --Sheraton? Yeah; and he looked really ...

PNP: Yeah, good.

ML: Then when we saw him in April, it was like, h-m, he looked kinda tired.

PNP: Weakly.

ML: Yeah; so we got a little worried. But I guess he—he was just—maybe just really tired at that time and-Yeah.

PNP: The wrong time, yeah?

ML: Yeah. 'Cause he'd been in Japan from like ... I don't know, October to ... March.

PNP: Wow; that's a long time.

**TRANSCRIPT: Puluelo Naipo Park
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ML: A long time. Yeah. And winters in Japan are not the funnest thing. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Oh; no.

ML: It's so cold. So—

PNP: Thank goodness for when it's summer.

ML: Yeah. [CHUCKLES] It's so hot, though, in the summer, though. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: It wasn't that hot.

ML: Oh, wasn't that hot? Oh, good.

PNP: Well, because they shift me from one place to the other, so I don't feel it.

UTT

PNP: All in taxis.

ML: Oh; wow.

PNP: Even a short ride, taxi.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: I said, No, I can walk. No, no, no; taxi. Okay. Short ride [CHUCKLES]. One block up. [CHUCKLES]

ML: You must have been ... 'cause you're tall, you must have really stood out over in—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: --Japan, yeah?

PNP: Oh, when they see me—and oh, they—I have to say one thing. Those hula dancers there, they respect a kumu hula. So respectful that when I say, Okay, we're gonna learn a new hula, everybody's in line. You don't need say get in line or what. Everybody—ch-ch-ch-ch-ch; and they move slowly, but—I mean, they move fast, but they're talking very soft. I said, Whoa; so quickly they get in place. Okay, then I start drumming, you know. Boom-boom-boom-boom. And I tell them how to come out. They so attentive. I finish one song like ... in twenty minutes. And they don't sit down. They pract—if I go in the office, they practice and practice. When they get perfect, then they say, Kumu, Kumu. I said, Yes? Girls ready. Okay. Oh, I can't believe it. [CHUCKLES] They're that good. I said, Wow, I don't even get this in Hawai'i. [CHUCKLES] And I just stare at them; I said, Wow. And I clap my hands and they ho, ho, ho, and they—they all looking at each other. So one more time; perfect. Perfect dancers. I don't know if I'll ever get to teach them again.

UTT

ML: What's the—when did you first go to Japan? What year was that?

PNP: Last year.

ML: Oh, that was your first time? Oh, I thought you had gone early on. Oh.

PNP: I uh, I had gone to Japan for entertainment.

ML: Right; that's right. Okay; but not to teach, not to teach. Oh.

PNP: I was an entertainer when they hired me.

UTT

PNP: And we stayed there three months. When we came back, we kissed the dirt.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: No kidding. We all got off the plane and kissed Hawai'i.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: We were so sick of Japan.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: [CHUCKLES] And Wendell was with me, I remember. Wendell and five of my girls; Kim, Soo Sung, Soonie. Three of my girls. I couldn't take Soo Whan 'cause she was too young.

UTT

(30:00)

PNP: And then we had Ellen. Ellen is the one that gave us trouble. She walks out the night without even let us know it.

UTT

PNP: When I go bed check, she's gone. I panic. I panic, because if anything of my girls get in trouble, I'm in trouble. So all hours of the night, we're looking for Ellen. And where is she? Walking the streets. More worse. If she got pick up by Russians or something.

UTT

PNP: Uh, we had to catch taxis to go find her.

UTT

PNP: So I said I took the wrong girl. She looked like a very behaved one, but ... Then after that, she joined Maiki's studio. And Maiki thought she had a good girl. [CHUCKLES] She finally found out what Ellen was. Oh, no wonder, Puelo [CHUCKLES]. I mean, it's not that I didn't like her. It's just that she thought she was ... uh ... going to a better hālau. But she said Maiki found out about her after all.

UTT

PNP: Oh, well; that's how the life is.

UTT

ML: So this last one, when you went last year, what was it a part of? A special thing just for you to teach or was it a bunch of kumu that went or ... what was—

PNP: Just me; I was hired.

ML: And which hālau or... did you teach?

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PNP: Uh, Hokulani. Hokulani Halau. She's here too.

UTT

PNP: She opened up a hālau in uh ... uh, hula s—all kinds; hula, jazz, over in uh, Hawaii Kai. I opened her up uh, her hālau.

UTT

PNP: Yeah. It was very nice.

ML: Wait; she's a Japanese lady?

PNP: Oh, no.

ML: Hokulani ... what's her last name?

PNP: She's—her real name is Catao.

UTT

PNP: She's Filipino. But when she went to Japan, she married this millionaire; Japanese. Then she divorced him, 'cause he was coming home with all kinda women. That's how Japanese are. She divorced him, so she made her millions through him.

UTT

PNP: Yeah; she won the case. That's how come she's a millionaire.

UTT

PNP: She can go anywhere in the world, open up anything she like. But she—her daughter—they had one daughter. She fought for that daughter. Intelligent, good hula dancer. And little one; she look like four years old, but she's six. Speaks good English and speaks good Japanese too.

UTT

PNP: Her mother speaks Japanese to her. Yeah.

ML: So she took you over to Japan last year?

PNP: She made me go teach two hulas. She paid me a thousand dollars for one.

UTT

PNP: I was shocked. I said, Ooh, I never made this kind money.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: I said, Oh, uh, are you sure this is mine? She said, You deserve it. Thank you.

UTT

PNP: Wow. When she comes to the airport, she picks me up with this fancy car. What you call those fancy cars?

ML: Like a Jaguar or—

PNP: Jaguar; she has one. So everybody go, wow. And the guy said, Gee, what a good looking Jaguar. She said, Move over; my auntie coming in. [CHUCKLES] I said, Ooh, I feel so honored. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Yeah. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: She call me Auntie. But I've known those kids since baby times.

ML: And she has uh, a bunch of students over in Japan, then, that she teaches? Wow.

PNP: She don't go back teach. She—she hires her main ones. And she make them teach.

UTT

PNP: And when it's time to bring them to Hawai'i, she bring the whole group. That kind.

UTT

PNP: They were here for the Japanese festival.

ML: Oh; they just had that. yeah.

PNP: And I wasn't—yeah; and I—I wasn't even there. She knew I was in the hospital.

UTT

(35:00)

PNP: Oh, yeah; she brings them over. Like I said, she's wealthy, so ...

UTT

PNP: She can afford it.

UTT

PNP: Young too.

ML: Oh, yeah?

PNP: You look at her, she's ... she look like eighteen, nineteen years old. Very slim, very uh ... outgoing.

UTT

PNP: And always looking for new things. She put her baby in the 'ukulele class; her baby can play that 'ukulele. She put 'em ballet, the baby can dance ballet. Anything she puts 'em in. So talented.

UTT

PNP: She always say, Dance for Auntie. What a beautiful dance. She—I look at her, I said, Oh my gosh, she dance like an adult. And with—with expression, you know.

ML: How did you meet her?

PNP: She hired me.

UTT

PNP: I met her through her sister. Her sister is my student.

UTT

PNP: From baby time. And one day she wanted her sister go Japan. The sister said, no, she couldn't go. She said, You gotta go. She said, I can't go. She said, Wait, I go ask my kumu. And uh ... I said, Go Japan? She said, Yeah;

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Hoku needs a teacher over there. I said, Oh, well ... where's Hoku? She's here; she want to meet with you. That's how I met Hoku.

UTT

PNP: And ... Hoku told me, yeah, Would you mind going Japan? I looked at her, I said, Mind? No; I would love to. And I was thinking of my grandson over there.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause he teaches school. And he teach English to Japanese children. I was so happy when she told me I going get to see my grandson. That's Soonie's son, yeah? And oh, when they made the plans, I was happy. Ah; I think I'm getting out of breath.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: That's um, Leimomi's sister?

PNP: Yeah.

ML: Oh, I think I met her.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: At that—that tribute at Luana Hills.

PNP: Yeah; that's her.

ML: She was there; oh, okay. Yeah; I did meet her before.

PNP: Yeah; she's uh ... uh ... she's a very businesswoman.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: In fact, she put up half of that Luana Hills.

ML: Oh, okay.

PNP: She wanted to.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

[END]

PULUELO NAIPO PARK

Tape #: HPS 0371 (MV504)

Date: July 23, 2004

Location: Hau'ula, Ko'olauloa, O'ahu

Subject: Oral History Interview

Interviewer(s): Maile Loo

Videographer: Gene Kois

Also present: Pumehana Park (daughter)

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(00:57)

ML: Okay; so you were just telling me while you were eating lunch about where you were born. I wanted to make sure we knew all the details.

PNP: Yeah; Kohala, Hawai'i, in Puerto Rican Camp. 'Cause my dad was the police luna, and they—whenever they shifted all these foreigners, he was to check 'em out and tell them where they live and where they're gonna stay.

UTT

PNP: And that's what I knew about my dad.

ML: Do you remember how long you lived there as a—I mean—

PNP: Oh.

ML: --do you remember it as a child, or ... 'cause you were born there, but—

PNP: Yeah. As a child, I came away ... my mom brought us over when I was only ... five.

ML: M-m, to O'ahu?

PNP: Because my grandfather [CLEARS THROAT] ... hated my dad. He didn't want my dad to marry my mother. 'Cause she come from a good home. Well, so did he. They were the first Naipo Soda Works in Kohala. Did you know that?

ML: No.

PNP: I even have the bottle in my safety deposit.

UTT

PNP: I went back there and this haole man says, Whose daughter are you? From the Naipo's, I said. The youngest? I said, No; the oldest. The oldest? He never met any of us. I said, Yeah; my—my dad was Robert, the oldest son of my grandfather. He said, Oh, he thought Hiram was. I said, No. Then he went in this glass case. And I said goodbye to him. Momi Lum took me there, 'cause she's my cousin. And uh, he came out with this bottle. He

TRANSCRIPT: Puelo Naipo Park
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said, I want you to have this bottle. And I looked at it, one empty old bottle, yeah? So I looked at him kind of funny, why did he give me one old bottle. He said, Turn the bottle over. When I turned it over, it said, Naipo Soda Works. Oh, I was so grateful.

UTT

PNP: He said, Because you're the first one came to see me. You can have it. So it's in safety deposit box.

UTT

PNP: So we were the first—so we were the ones that—my grandfather was the first ones to make the soda works from Kohala to Hilo. And every day my dad was a postman, he would deliver. He would deliver uh, soda water, mail, plus he makes his own 'ōkolehao and he sells it.

ML: [CHUCKLES] Boy.

PNP: Along the way. 'Cause Hawaiians love 'ōkolehao. Worse than whiskey; that's what my mom told me.

UTT

PNP: But everybody buy. You know those days, they ...do nothing but drink.

ML: Do you remember the um, time—I mean, since you were so young when you left, do you remember um, the Puerto Rican Camp at all, or ... yeah; what do you remember about that?

PNP: They fight.

UTT

PNP: There's some good ones. The ones who fight, my father put them off. They have—you know, the wives, they fight each other. And first thing you know, the husbands get. But according to my dad, he had 'em quite controlled, yeah. 'Cause Puerto Rican are little hot-headed, so-- But he was able to control them.

ML: How big was the camp? Like how many people are we talking?

(05:00)

PNP: Well ... we're talking about like eighty.

UTT

PNP: To a hundred.

ML: So each different ethnic group had their own luna?

PNP: Yeah; their own luna and ... and—uh, no, no, no; I'm sorry. My dad was the only luna at that time. Because he was a policeman. So they—they all, you know—[CLEARS THROAT]—they uh ... they respect the policemen over there. So uh ...

UTT

PNP: Don't mind me if I'm going in and out, 'cause—

ML: Oh, no, no, no.

PNP: --the voice is getting weaker. [CHUCKLES]

ML: That's okay. It's time for a nap, I think, that's why, yeah? [CHUCKLES] It's afternoon.

PNP: [CHUCKLES] No. Uh ... uh ... where was I?

ML: Talking about your dad being a policeman and a luna.

PNP: Over in the Puerto Rican Camp.

UTT

PNP: That's Hō'ea; that's where I was born. And after that, um, my mom moved up in Kōha—Kapa'au.

UTT

PNP: Uh, we lived up on the hills for a while.

UTT

PNP: Kapa'au. And then one—one day my dad was walking down ... and the uh, he heard my grandfather on my mom's side calling; Naipo, Naipo. So when he looked up, he came down and he cracked my gran—my dad's head from ear to ear. And that's why my mom left Kohala.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause he hated my dad, he didn't like the Naipo's at all.

UTT

PNP: That's how Germans were.

UTT

PNP: So she brought my father and all of us to go to Honolulu.

UTT

PNP: When we came here, we starved.

UTT

PNP: We ate mangoes from Palōlō. And uh ... all the dates, whatever they had. That's what we had for breakfast, lunch, and dinner. My brother and I would go up the mountains and bring home mangoes and whatever. We uh, fill up our clothes with the food and bring back. And my mom would prepare it. Until this one day uh, my dad was gonna come home and kill all of us, because he couldn't find job. And while he was on his way home, this uh, Hawaiian Dredging fellow came, 'cause my father had put application. And he asked, oh, Is this the home of the Naipo's? When my mom opened the door, he saw mangoes and salt. And he looked at us three—three of us, we were eating the mangoes like it was breakfast. [CHUCKLES] And he went, Oh, my god. He says—he says—and my mom was so shame. She was trying to, you know, close the door. He said, Wait a minute; is this the home of Robert Naipo? She said, Yes. Where is he? He's out looking for job. Just then he was coming up the street. And like I said, he was coming home to kill all of us because no food, yeah? Here was this haole man standing by the door. So she said, Oh, here he comes. And when he turned around, he said, Are you Robert Naipo? He said, Yes. He said, Oh, Hawaiian Dredging wants to hire you. Oh, it was like a blessing in disguise. Imagine what he had in thought in mind. And uh, and I bought food for your family. I want to buy food for your family. He took my dad down to the store and got one bag flour. You know, my mom used to make her own breads. Everything she needed. Two cans—cases of corned beef, two cases food. We never saw so much food in our life. [CHUCKLES]

UTT

PNP: And especially the bread; when we saw the bread, we all dived for the bread. [CHUCKLES] You know how kids are. I never can forget that all my life.

UTT

PNP: I don't think I even told my grandchildren that.

ML: I haven't—yeah, and you haven't told that to us before either. Yeah.

(10:00)

PNP: Yeah. Oh, we lived in poverty when we came here. And then um, through Hawaiian Dredging, we became well taken care of. For one month, they bought food.

UTT

PNP: And they didn't let us pay any house rent. Those days, only eighteen dollars for three bedrooms. We couldn't afford it. But when he got the job, he paid it off. Oh, they were happy. And then they moved us—my mom wanted to move to Kalihi. So we stayed on Kopke Street for long time. Until I grew up, I went to St. Anthony's. And uh, my Auntie Helen Parker used to live behind St. Anthony's, and that's where I got my voice training. My first song on radio was Akaka Falls.

UTT

PNP: That's why when I sing it, I don't have the voice, but at that time, oh, I could sing. My range could hit whatever she wan—wanted. She would go on the piano and ... I would hit it. So that's why that night when I was singing it uh ... I just—I had tears.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause she was my first teacher.

UTT

PNP: I know I didn't sound like what she wanted me to be, but ... I tried.

UTT

ML: She was your—actually your auntie from your mom's side or your dad's side?

PNP: My mom; she was a Lindsey.

UTT

PNP: From Kohala.

ML: How lucky that you had time with her to learn from her.

PNP: Her training was hard, but, in the end, I became somebody on the radio.

UTT

PNP: And everybody thought I was Lena. Well, be—because she trained Lena. They—in fact, Lena called in and she asked the uh ... what do you call, KGMB if that was Lena. He said, No, it's an eleven-year-old girl. She couldn't believe it. Then she called, she wanted to talk to me, who trained you. I said, My Auntie Helen Parker. She said, She's your aunt? I said, Yes.

UTT

PNP: I didn't know Auntie had trained her too. So I went back; I said, Auntie, who is he—uh, Lena Machado? And then she told me, That was my student. And she said um, She do things without my permission; she always gotta

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Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004

go back and that's why I'm training you. Oh, I didn't want to hear it. [CHUCKLES] I was too young.
[CHUCKLES]

ML: Yeah; only eleven, you don't want to know all that stuff. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: I don't know that, yeah.

ML: Your dad was a singer, yeah, you said?

PNP: Oh, he was a high tenor singer. He opened the first Kress Store in Honolulu. He, Lena, and one more—George Kainapau.

UTT

PNP: They were all top tenor singers.

UTT

PNP: Oh, my dad had a voice.

ML: Did he ever get to record anything? No.

PNP: That's the sad part.

UTT

PNP: George did uh, Reverend Keala did; they were all pals. Not Papa.

UTT

ML: What about you?

PNP: Oh, yes, I did. Uh ... I think the school ... I started off at Kalakaua School.

UTT

PNP: I became a top singer for the school. And I think the school uh ... taped me. But when I went to the mainland, I heard the same voice, so I asked uh, my sister-in-law, Who's that singing? She said, It's you. I said, What? She said, It's your record. I said, How did you get that? You know, they got it and I don't have it. She said, Baby. Baby's my oldest brother. We call him Baby.

(15:00)

I said, Oh, can I have it? She said, No. It with—now it's with the Makaiwi family.

ML: And you still never got a copy of it? Wow.

PNP: I couldn't believe it.

ML: Maybe they—when's the last time you asked? Maybe they would change their mind now.

PNP: I don't know where they're at.

UTT

PNP: My brother died. And I know they won't give it to me.

UTT

PNP: I—I never thought I could sing that high.

ML: Was it—would—

PNP: I wish I just had that one tape.

ML: Yeah; I was gonna say. Gosh, I wish we could track them down and ask them again. If they have it.

PNP: I don't know where they live in the mainland.

ML: Oh, they're all up there, huh?

GENE KOIS: But the school is Kalakaua Elementary?

ML: Kalakaua; yeah.

PNP: Kalakaua Elementary.

ML: Intermediate, yeah?

PNP: Intermediate.

ML: Yeah. They're still there, but I don't know about their—their uh—

PNP: Records.

ML: --archives.

PNP: School. Yeah.

UTT

ML: What about when—the one that came on the radio? Would KGMB still have that?

PNP: Uh, you never know. They should, yeah?

ML: Yeah; maybe.

PNP: I—and my—

ML: Try find out or ...

PNP: And uh, another song that I made popular was None.

- UTT
PNP: I was the first singer to bring None out in Kalakaua School. It was a big affair. And uh, I was put into this hall to sing. I was the top singer at that time. And then they gave me this song for one week, I had to practice and practice. And I sang it. And wow, the people just came; want my autograph and what not. I was so young then. [CHUCKLES] I said, Oh, autograph; what's autograph? Sign your name here and put your song, None.
- UTT
PNP: Yeah; I—I started that song, None.
- ML: And who wrote that song?
- PNP: I think it was ... was it uh, Helen Parker?
- ML: So she would have asked you to—to sing it for her? Or ...
- PNP: No, I got it from the school.
- ML: Oh, from the school. Oh. H-m.
- PNP: They made me sing it and I said I ... it's a high song.
- ML: Have you heard it—
- PNP: [SINGS: NONE HULA] He aha nei hana a e none nei, none ana mai, i ke kumu o ka hana ... That one.
- ML: Oh, I've heard that.
- PNP: That was None.
- UTT
PNP: I had a high C voice. Ugly voice now. [CHUCKLES]
- ML: So did you um, intend to take up singing? Is that why you started taking lessons or how did you end up going into singing as a youngster?
- PNP: Auntie Helen.
- ML: So she kinda saw you and took you?
- PNP: 'Cause she heard me at my house.
- UTT
PNP: I used to sing all Lena's songs, on the radio. She said, Who's that singing? Oh, it's Pulu; she's in her room. So she goes, she said, Will you let me have her? I'll train her.
- UTT
PNP: So Auntie Helen Parker trained me.

ML: And did you think when you were eleven and singing so—being so popular you would do this for a long time, for a living? I mean, what were you thinking?

PNP: Just that it was for singer. [CHUCKLES]

UTT

PNP: I wasn't thinking of money. [CHUCKLES] I wish I did; I'd be rich, yeah? [CHUCKLES]

ML: Maybe. [CHUCKLES] Wow. Well, we can try and check and see maybe KGMB and ... Kalakaua School—all we can do is ask.

PNP: Oh, good.

ML: I mean, if they don't have it—

PNP: See if you can find anything.

GENE KOIS: That guy too—

PNP: My name was Alice Naipo.

ML: Okay.

PNP: N-A-I-P-O.

UTT

GENE KOIS: And you were how old? Eleven?

PNP: Eleven. But I had a voice like an adult.

ML: So eleven years old; that would have been 1935, then, yeah?

PNP: Yeah; about that.

ML: Around there; okay.

GENE KOIS: Check with that Harry Soria, I guess.

PNP: '34 or '35.

ML: Okay. Yeah; wouldn't that be amazing if we could find it?

PNP: Oh.

[CHUCKLES]

(20:00)

PNP: I wouldn't believe it. [CHUCKLES]

UTT

PNP: Oh; that would be so nice.

ML: Well, we'll—we'll give it a try.

PNP: Okay.

ML: And see; all we can do is ask around and see...

PNP: Yeah.

ML: --if anybody knows anything.

PNP: Uh, they should have it on their records, right?

ML: You would think so. 'Cause it was cut on a—on vinyl at that time.

PNP: Vi—yeah; those big things.

ML: The 78s, was it at that time? The real thick ones?

PNP: Well, mine was a big one. Reels. You could put it up on the walls and run the reels.

ML: Oh. Reel? So you're not talking LP kind? In the '30s?

GENE KOIS: It wasn't a piece of wire, was it? They had these things called wire recorders.

PNP: Yeah; it was in a ... sort of like a box.

UTT

ML: And it was a reel, like a movie—movie reel—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: --kinda thing?

GENE KOIS: It might have been a wire recorder, they call those.

ML: From the '30s?

GENE KOIS: Yeah.

PNP: Yeah.

GENE KOIS: There's that collector guy in town.

ML: Who's that?

GENE KOIS: What's his name? He does the radio show; Harry—

ML: Oh, Harry B. Soria?

PNP: Oh—

ML: Because he's—

PNP: --Harry B.

ML: Harry B. Soria.

GENE KOIS: He collects uh, things.

PNP: He does?

GENE KOIS: Yeah; he's got—supposedly he's got a big music collection of—

PNP: Wow.

GENE KOIS: --just stuff that he's found.

PNP: Ooh; I—I wonder if he might have.

ML: Yeah. Well, he might know where to—where to look too.

PNP: Where to look; yeah.

UTT

GENE KOIS: And the people on the mainland that had it, who were they?

ML: Her—

PNP: My sister-in-law.

GENE KOIS: Your sister-in-law.

PNP: Selfish, selfish. That was my voice. She wouldn't let me have it.

UTT

PNP: And my brother died; she wouldn't even give it to me.

ML: Yeah; I remember you telling me about that before.

PNP: I-I never heard the sweetest voice, until I heard that. And it was early morning too, she was playing it. And I listened to it and said, Ooh, Eliza, whose voice is that, who's singing that song? And she said, You don't—you don't know who it is? I listened, I said, No. She said, It's you. What? She said, It's—it's you. I said, No, I didn't. That's what you were singing, and I recorded you. I said, Oh, can I have that recording? No; that's mine to keep. So I really never got it. So—

GENE KOIS: You re—

PNP: Huh?

GENE KOIS: You recorded it at the radio station? Is that ...

PNP: KGMB recorded me.

GENE KOIS: --at the station? Yeah; I see.

PNP: They should have it. I hope so. I don't think they throw their files away.

UTT

GENE KOIS: Oh, some—it's—I don't know. The people are real sloppy with things. I remember I contacted my elementary school to find a f—my class photo from second grade, and they told me everything was in a giant warehouse.

UTT

GENE KOIS: And they couldn't get it. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Is that awful?

GENE KOIS: Yeah; well, at least they had it, but ...

PNP: No, but they—they should have alphabetically ...

UTT

PNP: I can't believe schools would do that.

UTT

GENE KOIS: Yeah; well, maybe they do, maybe they would.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: We're gonna try and find out. So—

PNP: Okay.

ML: --we'll let you know.

PNP: All right.

ML: So we'll inquire and see where it goes.

PNP: Where it goes.

ML: Maybe it'll end up at this recording of you when you were eleven.

PNP: Oh, that would be sweet, yeah?

ML: Yeah.

[CHUCKLES]

ML: Gosh; I would love to hear you sing those songs.

PNP: Oh, you couldn't believe that would be me. [CHUCKLES] My high C voice.

UTT

PNP: Oh, and my—Auntie Helen used to balance it when I sing it. No. Stop. Try again. She would—and she would smooth. Okay, raise it. You know, like that.

UTT

PNP: She was so ... uh ... after me for my voice. When she finally got me on t—uh, KGMB, nobody believed that was me. Everybody believed it was Lena. And uh, and that's why they called the station. No, it's an eleven-year-old girl. Even Lena called.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Eleven-year-old, and she's Helen Parker's niece. Oh, my gosh; she got a voice like a adult.

UTT

PNP: That's how Auntie was so ... to the tee.

UTT

ML: Did you keep singing, like when you got into high school and everything? Where would you sing at?

(25:00)

PNP: All around. People would hire me. And I would go, I'd make a few dollars. [CHUCKLES] McCandless family always hired me.

UTT

PNP: For their big lū'au's, for big parties. And I would go to their immaculate home. Sit on the steps with my musicians in the back, and I would sing. Oh, the people don't want to let me go. They'd throw money like water. McCandless was wealthy, yeah? Lived up by—by Diamond Head.

- UTT
PNP: And all night, they want to keep us on. My uh, leader said no, they have to go home, their parents waiting.
- ML: Did you have—get to sing with your dad, perform with your dad at all?
- PNP: He lost his voice.
- UTT
PNP: So he never could sing again. I don't know what happened.
- UTT
PNP: Uh, he had a high tenor C voice. When I went out to sing, he didn't even have a voice.
- UTT
PNP: So I was taken by people who hired me; gave my mom money. And that's when I was taken to sing at all these places.
- UTT
PNP: Then I'd make extra money for me. They would give me only.
- ML: Oh, that's nice. Hm. Was your—was your dad's tenor kind of like uh, Uncle Mahi Beamer kind of tenor, or was it more of a ...
- PNP: Higher.
- ML: Like with that pure—that pure tone, not that sort of um, what do you call it, like falsetto-ish, yodeling kind of style? It was—'cause Uncle Mahi almost sounds like a woman, it's this pure, high tone voice. Is that the kind of voice your dad had or—
- PNP: Almost—he was almost close to Lena Machado.
- UTT
PNP: I think.
- ML: So just a real—
- PNP: Tenor, high tenor.
- UTT
PNP: But he can sing. Oh. And uh ... he was a saxophone player. When he finished singing, he'd play that sa—oh, people would just clap, clap, clap. And the only child in my whole family is Soonie's son, who picked up the saxophone and can play just like my dad. So young as he was, when he got up on that floor for my daughter, she couldn't believe that was her son. She looked at him, and he was dancing with his [CHUCKLES] saxophone. That was only intermediate school. Oh. Then when she came home, she says, I don't know where Louie learned his saxophone from. When I heard that, I said, From his grandpa. [CHUCKLES] She said, What grandpa? I said, My dad, he was a saxophone player. She said, What happened to his saxophone? I said, I don't know. I don't know whether Grandma sold it or what. He had a nice gold one, too.
- UTT
PNP: We don't know where it's at. Gone. When Papa died, we didn't find it.

- UTT
PNP: Yeah, that's the story of the Naipo side. [CHUCKLES]
- ML: [CHUCKLES] No, it's interesting.
- PNP: Yeah.
- ML: Oh, I'm glad things got better for you folks after your dad got that job.
- PNP: Oh, yeah.
- ML: What a terrible thing to think of harming your family and—
- PNP: Starvation.
- UTT
PNP: You know, two of the children that's next door neighbor's like that. They'd come out at breakfast time and we'd see them eating bread. We run out there; Can we have some? [GASPS] My mom would about died. She'd give us good spanking. Get back in that house.
- UTT
PNP: She's too proud. And the kids go, Go away. You—you know, she ... she'd lock us up in the house.
- UTT
PNP: Until my dad came home.
- UTT
PNP: He was a blessing. [CHUCKLES] Oh; I went through a hard life, but I also had some good ones. Yeah. With Auntie Helen, it was good. She worked on me.
- ML: And you have fond memories of Kohala too, yeah?
- PNP: I have very fond memories of Kohala.
- (30:00)*
- PNP: If I ever go back there, I look for my—my birthplace, my aunties.
- ML: Is the house that you remember still there?
- PNP: It's all in shambles. I wanted to buy that place; my husband don't want.
- UTT
PNP: He said, No; there's a tree about hundred twenty feet in the air. It's going cost like ten thousand to twelve thousand to cut it. And then the place has to be cleaned; he said not worth it.
- UTT
PNP: And I'm sad, because that's where my grandfather.

ML: Can you describe where it is in Kohala?

PNP: It's going up to the Hospital Road.

UTT

PNP: It's on the left hand side.

ML: And what does it look like?

PNP: Show f—

ML: Well, I mean now, but—I mean, not now, but from before. Like what's your memory of Kohala home—

PNP: Oh; it was a ... king's palace grounds. My grandfather liked to carve chairs. So he'd carve a king's chair, a queen's chair, queen's little table that they have. It was pretty. Oh, the yard. I can remember good things of my grandfather, 'cause he was German. Kept his place so clean. People used to come to admire his place. Today when I go back there, I look at, I turn away. I can't believe that's the same place. All in weeds, tall trees.

ML: So it hasn't been lived in for a long time? M-m. Who owns it?

PNP: And my—my mom, but she's doesn't want it.

UTT

PNP: She don't sign it over to anybody.

UTT

PNP: Oh, she did, but my brother died. We couldn't do—we cannot do nothing, unless we go back there.

UTT

PNP: I don't know.

UTT

PNP: Sometimes the family gets so mixed up.

UTT

PNP: It's a nice place, but ... nobody seem to care for it.

UTT

PNP: I asked my husband. No. 'Cause we have Waimea, and we have ... uh ... ko—uh, here, Hau'ula.

UTT

PNP: And I rather come to Hau'ula.

UTT

PNP: I like Waimea, but ... lonely.

UTT

PNP: My children not there.

ML: Kinda cool up there too, yeah?

PNP: Nice.

UTT

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Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004

PNP: I don't mind stay little while, but then I miss the children and I want to come back.

UTT

ML: Just wondering if I—if I go up to Kohala if we could find your—you know, where your house is.

PNP: Was.

ML: It was; yeah.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: So it's on Hospital Road?

PNP: Hospital Road.

ML: And then is there a particular address, or what is the landmark or ...

PNP: Uh ... before you go up the Hospital Road, the property on the left. It's full of weeds.

UTT

PNP: All the way 'til the end; there's a ... sort of like a ... a riverbed at the end. You'll see it. It's cemented. And then there comes the hospital.

ML: Oh; so it's right next to?

PNP: It's right next.

ML: Oh, okay.

PNP: Not hard to find.

UTT

PNP: As long as you turn the corner, the property on the left is Grandpa's.

ML: Did you ever get to go back there after you moved to O'ahu?

PNP: Oh, yeah. Was nice home. That's why sad; nobody take care. It's turned over to my mom. She didn't want to go back home. So the whole home went to shambles. You gotta take care a big home like that. She didn't have the means.

ML: Did you ever get to take your kids there to see it or ...

PNP: By the time I had children, the whole thing was gone.

UTT

PNP: None of my children went to Kohala. Or did they?

(35:00)

PUMEHANA: [INDISTINCT] For a visit. To drive around.

PNP: For a visit?

PUMEHANA: M-hm.

PNP: Yeah, I guess they did.

UTT

ML: You were saying that the—you were—at the time when you were born your hou—the house was like for ali'i to come visit and things.

PNP: Oh, yeah. That's my grandfather's home, the German side. He was the only one that had the palace there. Well, I say palace because he's got the biggest home. Queen Liliuokalani visited, and she was there. Prince Kuhio slept in the house, 'cause his bed was here. All the ali'i's came when they'd come to Kohala; it was at my grandfather's home. So that's when I—I have to tell you, I used to dress like a ... like a rich girl, yeah? They dress you from top in hats and everything. And we had to meet the Queen, meet the Prince. And the Prince slept ... in my uh, in one bedroom. The Queen slept in another bedroom. And—and then all the entourage would sit in—sleep in the back. 'Cause we had bedrooms in the back. It was a big home. And then you—early in the morning, you would smell bread cooking. They cook their own bread. My mom would be up there delegating the cooks. They had the whole veranda set, all the food from pig to steaks, to—when you would make the day ahead. And then they all were called to the table. What a big feast. To me, that was a feast, but that was only breakfast.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Wow. But they ate good. Oh, that—that's why they were all—my mommy was a roly-poly. She was so big. They eat well up there. [CHUCKLES] And when we went there, my grandfather almost died. He'd yell at my mother. Eva—that's how they call in German. Eva. Uh, and she turn, she says, What the hell, you starve my granddaughter. [CHUCKLES] 'Cause I wasn't fat. [CHUCKLES] And I'm looking at him, what he talking about. [CHUCKLES] So he tell 'em, Look these kids, skinny, scrimpy. Feed 'em. [CHUCKLES] Feed 'em. [CHUCKLES] Real German. [CHUCKLES] Oh, when I f-- [CHUCKLES] I told my mother, Oh, you poor thing. He always say, Feed these kids, so scrawny. [CHUCKLES] Oh.

ML: Was good that—

PNP: I had some good families. [CHUCKLES] Crazy ones. Ah.

ML: Yeah; I remember you telling—telling us before how they used to wash the walls.

PNP: Oh; from the top of the ceiling down. She had us doing that too.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Every Fridays, come home from school. Scrub walls, get up there, on the ceiling. [CHUCKLES] I see one mark over there; scrub that.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Oh, gosh. I never will forget that.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: [CHUCKLES] My—my grandchildren better know it--[CHUCKLES]--what we went through.

ML: Yeah. Yeah; I remember um, I think you mentioned that when you were telling us the story about the picture of Pele and how it got broken.

PNP: Oh; yeah.

ML: That was, I think, when you were talking about having to wash the walls. 'Cause that was when it happened, right?

PNP: That's when it happened.

ML: When somebody ...

PNP: Somebody came and it was my aunt. And I had a covering on it. And I didn't see her; I was up washing the wall. When I turned, I saw her sitting. I said, No, Auntie. It was too late. The whole thing went crashing to pieces. I went, Oh! I—I didn't even know what to say. Mama, Mama; I calling my Mama. And she ran, she looked, Oh, no! And we all cried, because we know that was an omen already. And that baby she was holding, that day—very day—next day the baby died. Oh, we loved that baby too. What a beautiful baby.

(40:00)

UTT

PNP: So that's why there—there's always an omen with the things of Pele. We always ... respect it.

UTT

PNP: It's ... it's hard to ... to remember things like that.

ML: Yeah. Uncle George um, Naope, he—you know, he's from—well, he—born here, but real—really raised in Hilo where his dad was from. And he always um, tells us when we're talking with him that—he says I'm not—he says, I'm not superstitious, but I don't take any chances. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: That's right.

ML: And it's true, you know. He doesn't want to—

PNP: Of course.

ML: --you know, mess with the things like Pele—

PNP: We all don't want to mess with it.

TRANSCRIPT: Puelo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004

ML: Yeah.

PNP: Because oh, boy, it can hit us hard. Especially when you Hawaiian.

UTT

ML: 'Cause your dad had some—and you too, you have interesting experiences about Pele and being on the Big Island and all that. Yeah.

PNP: Yeah; Dad had some.

UTT

PNP: Where he picked her up. He's going home to feed his children, deliver his mail. He's traveling about 3:00 a.m. in the morning, I think; two or three. And he saw this old lady walking. He said, What the—this old lady doing out here at this time? Just thinking, yeah? And so he stopped the car. Tūtū; what are you doing out here on the street? Oh, I going home. Where you going? Down the uh ... the name starts with P.

ML: Pololū?

PNP: Yeah, Pololū, I think.

ML: Pololū Valley?

PNP: So he said, Get in this car; you'll never reach over there 'til tomorrow. And she go, Ha-ha-ha, and she jump in the car. Uh, You okay?, he said to her. Yeah. Fine. This—this is mail truck. So he put something down for Hāli'i. Oh, thank you sonny, thank you. So he's driving along. She talking to him. And so—and then he asked her a question. No answer. So he thought, uh, she's sleeping. Keep driving her back. He got up to where he—she said she wanted to go. Okay, Tūtū, you're here. He look in the back seat. No more her. [CHUCKLES] Wow, he got the goose's pimples. [CHUCKLES] Oh, he drive so fast back to Kohala. He told his father. [CHUCKLES] The father said, You know who you pick up? Pele. [CHUCKLES] Oh, he is so scared than ever.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: He said, Oh, golly, Papa. No, you're blessed. You lucky you pick her up.

UTT

PNP: You never pick her up, too bad for you. [CHUCKLES] So whenever he see old man or old lady, he pick 'em up.

UTT

PNP: Oh. What an experience my father had.

UTT

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

ML: Um ... I wanted to ask you about you know um, that—[CLEARS THROAT]—this isn't about Kohala, I don't think. But that Oli Aloha that you always um ... share when you ... begin a program or ...

PNP: Oh, Akahai.

ML: Yeah. Can you tell us about learning that, and ... you know.

PNP: Well, truthfully, I uh ... I was called in by my friend, Lani Kalama, to come listen to this lady. Uh ... Paki.

UTT

PNP: So I told her, Why should I go listen to her?

(45:00)

PNP: She has um, these oli's I want you to learn. I said, Oh, I don't want to go to people's place. Tell her to come to my hālau. She said, Oh, you don't mind? I said, No. So she made appointment, she brought Paki around ... uh, yeah, what's her name... I forgot if what I say her last name Paki.

ML: Pilahi?

PNP: Pilahi; yeah. So she came and ... she—the first thing she asked me ... that's what made me not like her ... she said, You should take that name down from your hālau. And I looked at her, I said, Ooh, this lady, maha'oi. How dare she come over here and tell me take my name down from the hālau. She don't even know why I got it up there. So I said, What?! She said, That name don't belong up there. I said, I—I beg your pardon; that name is my daughter's. And I like her name. And that's why her name is gonna be up there, Puamana. Why? Why do you want Puamana? Because she's my strength. And she was quiet; she look at me funny way. I said, You know when you have children, your children is your strength. That's how I feel. So that's my daughter, I named her Puamana for strength. Powerful flower. She turned her face away. And I told Lani, How dare you bring this kind friends to me, tell me what to do. She said, Oh, I didn't know she was gonna ask you that. So Pilahi and I really were not together. It was Lani and her. It was like a slap in the face when she told me that.

UTT

PNP: So...that's what I know about her.

ML: Oh; but you—but you ended up learning the chant from Auntie Lani, then? 'Cause Pilahi Paki wrote that chant, right?

PNP: [CHANTS: ALOHA CHANT] Akahai e nā Hawai'i, Lōkahi a kūlike. Yeah. And she shared it with me, so I took it. 'Olu—'cause it has a nice ... uh ... versing in there. 'Olu'olu ka mana'o. So I use her chant. Just to find peace between she and me.

UTT

PNP: And it has been all these years; I've had peace.

UTT

PNP: I've never tried to make my own. I tried several times, but it didn't work.

ML: You mean, to make your own oli aloha?

PNP: I—I uh ... don't want to copy anybody. That way I have my own original, yeah. So I did try. Sometimes I would sit and ... reminisce whether it's gonna happen or not.

UTT

PNP: But you know, I'm so glad I met you. Because uh ... I have so many things to share.

UTT
PNP: I didn't have too much to share, but ... my grandchildren are all young, so they don't understand.
UTT
PNP: And now they're beginning to realize that Grandma does have ... things she want to share, yeah. [CLEARS THROAT] Excuse my voice.
ML: No. We're just grateful that you—that you are so willing to share with us like this. 'Cause—
PNP: I am.
ML: --you're one of our fir—ear- first ones that we started, you know—
PNP: Yeah.
ML: --my mom and I, you know, and ...
PNP: I'm so grateful.
UTT
PNP: I'm happy someday my children can go to you and—
ML: Oh, yeah. Yeah, any time.
PNP: If they don't have info, they can—
ML: Yeah.
PNP: --ask you.
ML: Yeah. We have all—your whole section of the archives for—just for you.
PNP: Oh.
ML: And transcripts of all the times we've talked, and—
PNP: See.
ML: --all the video and pictures.
(50:00)
PNP: Any time.
ML: Any time. [CHUCKLES] Yeah.

**TRANSCRIPT: Puluelo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004**

PNP: You need to know about Grandma.

ML: [CHUCKLES] Yeah. Um, do you mind uh, sharing that—the words of that chant, the—going through the different um, lines? 'Cause I don't think we've ever talked about that before, but I've just heard you do it so many times.

PNP: Oh.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: The chant.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: [CLEARS THROAT] Let me see. [CLEARS THROAT] [CHANTS A-L-O-H-A] Akahai e nā Hawai'i; Lōkahi a kūlike; 'Olu'olu ka mana'o; Ha'ha'a kou kūlana; Ahonui a lanakila, Aloha mai e nā Hawai'i; Nā pua, nā lei, nā mamo; 'Olu'olu ka mana'o; Ha'ha'a kou kūlana; Ahonui a lanakila; Aloha ē, Aloha ē, Aloha ē.

PNP: I taught all the school children that chant. And so whenever I enter the room, they chant to me. Sounds so good when you hear the children.

ML: That's a nice one for them to learn too, just because of the—the words are so meaningful—

PNP: Yeah.

ML: And they can probably understand, 'cause—

PNP: Oh, yeah, I give—

ML: A-L-O-H-A.

PNP: Yeah; I give them the ... the uh, the translation.

UTT

PNP: And they know what they're saying.

UTT

PNP: I think I taught your class too, that.

PUMEHANA: Yeah; you did.

PNP: Yeah.

PUMEHANA: Yeah.

**TRANSCRIPT: Puluelo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004**

- UTT
- ML: How did you and Auntie Lani become friends? From Kailua, or ... before that?
- PNP: I was going to Lokalia. And she told me to go to Kailua, 'cause I told her I was moving to Kailua. Oh; I have a chanter there. I said, Oh, who? Lani Kalama. Oh, I want you go visit her. So I said, Oh, okay. I'll give you the phone number; when you go down there, you call her. I said, Okay. First day I called her, she answered. I said, Oh, may I speak to Lani Kalama? She said, Yeah, this is she. I said, Oh, Lokalia Montgomery uh, asked me to call you. I'm one of her students. So, Oh, okay; where you live? And I told her where I live. In a flash, she was at my house. [CHUCKLES] And she said—she was knocking on the door; she goes, Hoo-hoo. I opened the door, I said, Yes? She said, I'm Lani Kalama. I look at her, I thought she was a old lady. I said, Oh, my goodness; I expected an old lady. She said, Ha-ha-ha. She said, No, I'm Lani. [CHUCKLES] I said, Oh, you're young.
- UTT
- PNP: That's how we got to be good friends.
- UTT
- PNP: She came to me, and she worked with me. Many times she helped me out with my drums, with the beat; I was off.
- UTT
- ML: She was um, had graduated a long time before you? Or—
- PNP: Oh, yeah. Class, she had a class. But that was the only class that Lokalia had.
- UTT
- PNP: I was a private student. I paid big bucks. My husband made a loan, paid her off.
- UTT
- PNP: Was worth it.
- ML: Oh, yeah.
- PNP: Of all this time. Now it would cost, what, over thousands. [INDISTINCT]
- ML: Yeah.
- PNP: Those days, only couple hundred. Still had to make loan. [CHUCKLES]
- ML: Well, those days, that's a lot, you know.
- (55:00)
- PNP: Money.
- ML: Yeah. So she—Auntie Lokalia was sort of like “The” Kumu of the time. So that's why you decided to go ... take with her?

**TRANSCRIPT: Puluolo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004**

PNP: Yeah. Uh, Napua Stevens is my cousin; she recommended—

UTT

PNP: --Montgomery. 'Cause she knew who was her teachers. I was happy for that.

UTT

ML: Yeah. Are you okay? Your hand?

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

[END]

PULUELO NAIPO PARK

Tape #: HPS 0372 (MV505)

Date: July 23, 2004

Location: Hau'ula, Ko'olauloa, O'ahu

Subject: Oral History Interview

Interviewer(s): Maile Loo

Videographer: Gene Kois

Also present: Pumehana Park (daughter)

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(01:07)

ML: So you've seen so many changes in this area over the fifty years.

PNP: Oh, yeah.

UTT

PNP: A little more houses, uh ...

UTT

PNP: Um, sometimes these houses are terrible. They don't take care their place; looks sloppy.

UTT

PNP: Especially living next door to me; makes me sick.

UTT

PNP: You look out there; oh, golly. They getting to be a little better now, 'cause we're staying out here, they cleaning up their yards.

ML: That's good.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: You know when you were um, back in Kohala, did they ever take pictures? Do you have pictures from when you were a little girl, dressed up, all with the hat and ... everything.

PNP: Yeah, but they—I don't know what they did.

UTT

PNP: Some of my aunties took it from my mom. I used to be dressed just like uh ... one of those rich girls, bonnets ... skirt and blouse. I wish I had those pictures too. I remember them.

UTT

PNP: And my mom said she doesn't have it. But she thinks that my Uncle Hiram Naipo, they forgot their chest back there when they moved. She thinks he burned it with all my father's royal capes and what not.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause when they went back for the capes, he said he didn't see it. But she thinks he burned it.

ML: So ... the—your uncle burned your father's capes?

PNP: All in the chest.

ML: Why?

PNP: Huge chest. 'Cause my dad didn't go get it.

UTT

PNP: He forgot it. When they finally found out they didn't have it, they went back. He burned it.

ML: Oh...my goodness.

PNP: So my dad never forgave that brother until he died.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause that was his royal capes.

ML: So your father was a—is that from being a member of the ... um, Hale O Na Alii, or was that ... from being a—

PNP: He was—

ML: --real ali'i?

PNP: He was a male ali'i for Kamehameha's side.

UTT

ML: So these capes were ancient; they had been passed on—

PNP: Yeah, yeah.

ML: Oh, my gosh.

PNP: And that's why when I go to Bishop Museum and I look at those [INDISTINCT] capes, I think of my dad. How they burned his capes.

UTT

PNP: Otherwise it would be in there.

UTT

PNP: 'Cause I believe in sharing too.

UTT

PNP: So sad.

UTT

PNP: So many artifacts have been destroyed.

UTT

PNP: People don't know.

UTT

PNP: And most of them come from Kohala because they were King Kamehameha's.

ML: So your dad was a descendant from that line?

PNP: From the royal line.

UTT

ML: So you had ali'i blood on both sides of your family, then?

(05:00)

PNP: Yeah.

UTT

PNP: I always dressed as an ali'i. I was brought like an ali'i. And do you know that I brought my own children up like ali'i.

UTT

PNP: They couldn't go play with people. I built downstairs, was all rumpus room. They had their own bicycles there. And when they did go out, it was in my yard.

ML: Over here?

PNP: Never let them go to play with neighborhood kids. Where the parents would call; can she come to party. Oh, I'm sorry; my husband don't allow my children out. Oh. And when I have, I ask they come. Makes me feel bad. But I said that's how my family was brought up. Because I cannot see what they're doing. That's why I don't let them go.

UTT

PNP: I was—I was very ... strict with my children.

ML: And you just remember that being that way for you in Kohala. So the other kids you were allowed to play with were other ali'i kids, or ...

PNP: Yeah. Was only when their children came to the house. Then I'm allowed out with the ... with the—what do you call that guys? Not maids, but ...

ML: Um ... to go out, you mean? Like—

PNP: No, the ones that take care the—like ... we have maids and we have men—what the men?

ML: Butlers?

PNP: What?

ML: Butler?

PNP: Butlers.... The butlers take me out and watch.

UTT

PNP: Only certain people can come.

UTT

PNP: So I was really brought up ali'i style. So when I had my eight children, nobody saw them. They would have their own rumpus. When I do take them school, they said, Where did all those children come from? And I look at them, I says, What? Oh, you got so many children, babies too. I said, They're my children. Oh, I didn't know you had children. I thought to myself, How come, how crazy. But yet that's true because I don't go out. [CHUCKLES] And when I got to know my neighbor, she's Mrs. Lee, she goes, Oh, my gosh; you have a whole playroom in here. I said, Yeah, for my children. You never brought them out. Oh, they're cute. She was going play with them. Uh, that was my good neighbor. She moved away and sold her place.

UTT

PNP: Because the husband didn't want to come here.

UTT

ML: So the—the house um, in Kohala, that was your—on your mom's side, the one we've been talking about. And where was your dad's family's house?

PNP: Up on the hillside, Sakamoto Store. Sakamoto Store, then my dad live up on the hillside. And that was where Naipo Soda Works was.

ML: Is it still there too?

PNP: Only bottles.

ML: What's that?

PNP: Only the bottle, the memoirs.

ML: Oh.

PNP: It's all gone. They sold their place to Sakamoto Store.

UTT

PNP: I don't know if Sakamoto has ... Soda Works, but that was an ongoing Soda Works. My dad and my grandfather ... provided from Kohala to Hilo.

ML: So when they—they ended up selling it to Sakamoto, who had a store there already?

PNP: So he bought it out.

ML: Oh; and that store is still there? Wow; so we could find it. It would be right next door.

PNP: I'm sure.

UTT

PNP: You can ask the kids probably, not the old folks.

UTT

PNP: Old folks gone already.

UTT

ML: Which was—where was the um ... the beach or the ocean where you have the story about where your name came from? What part of Kohala was that? Do you know when—

PNP: Oh ...

(10:00)

ML: You were telling us about—

PNP: It was strange, that name. What did I tell you?

ML: No, just—you told us the story of—of you know, her going out in the boat and then you know, starting to have the baby. And the kahuna was on the shore; and all that.

PNP: Oh, yeah; now I remember—

ML: I was wondering where that was in Kohala for—just for reference.

PNP: Uh, that wasn't in Kohala. That was in Waimea.

UTT

PNP: I don't know what part of the beach.

ML: Oh, okay.

PNP: But they had a beach there some— I don't know where.

ML: So what, down Kawaihae side, or down Honoka'a side?

PNP: I think it was Honoka'a.

UTT

PNP: Yeah; and uh ... you have to make me recall, yeah?

ML: Yeah. Oh, the story? The one where she went out in the boat and they were gonna go fishing, and she started to have the baby—

PNP: Oh, yeah, Grandma.

ML: Yeah; your grandma.

PNP: Okay; that was—she was gonna give birth to my grandma.

ML: You—okay; so it was your great-grandma.

PNP: So great-grandma. She went out this one day, she begged her husband. He said, No, pretty soon you going hānau. No, I want to go out there. I'm okay. So she goes outside. And he said he going down, he going pick one kākā line and he come up. He did, he brought one; oh, she got excited. Fish, ooh, all kind fish. She said, Go get one more kākā line. He said, Oh, okay. So he dived down, but he forgot something; I don't know. He come up, here the baby was coming out. [CHUCKLES] He go, Oh, go—he try—he just put the rope around his neck; swim in. And when the midwife saw him swimming, they knew the baby was ... they all yelling, get hot water, get everything ready. He run with her up on the beach, get her into the bed. All he could hear was the door slam, and the baby go, Wah. He made it in time. [CHUCKLES] He sat down, he cried. [CHUCKLES] And I would too. [CHUCKLES] Then he went in, see his baby. That was so cute. I heard that story, I laugh. I said, Oh, boy, those old folks. They were something, yeah?

ML: Oh, yeah. That's the one—that's the same story, right, where the kahuna said if it's a girl, you have to name them one thing, and then if it's a boy you have—that's the same—same time, right?

PNP: Same time, yeah.

ML: Yeah. 'Cause the wave went over the boat?

PNP: Yeah. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Is that why? Yeah.

PNP: Oh, shoots.

ML: That's such a neat story.

PNP: Yeah.

ML: I was just curious where that was. I was trying to ... you know--

PNP: It was in uh ... I don't know why they say it was Waimea. Uh, I don't know where Waimea's ... ocean is. Do you?

ML: That's why it would have to be one side or the other, right? Either coming up Hāmākua, or down Kawaihae when you go down the hill, right?

PNP: Could be Hāmākua side.

UTT

PNP: Gee, I should get that story straight; where was it.

UTT
PNP: Uh, yeah, that's good to remember.
UTT
ML: Yeah, so you have wonderful family stories.
[CHUCKLES]
ML: That have been passed on. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Oh, so much, huh?

ML: Yeah.

PNP: I haven't even hit mine yet. [CHUCKLES]

ML: You—what's that?

PNP: I said I haven't even hit my family yet.

ML: What—

PNP: So much with my—my uh ... sisters, brothers.
UTT
PNP: How they—their lives.
UTT
PNP: Uh, became ... under two parents.
UTT
PNP: Uh, but ... how many is gone. My oldest brother, my youngest sister, my baby sister. Oh, gosh; three of 'em gone. And—and my youngest brother. So I got two brothers gone, and two sisters. So there's only four of us.
UTT
PNP: I'm the oldest. And then comes my uh ... third brother.
UTT
PNP: I had—

ML: I think I've only met your one sister; Leinaala. Leinaala?

PNP: Pualani died.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: The baby.

ML: Yeah.

(15:00)

PNP: And um ... so you met Leinaala.

ML: Yeah.

PNP: Who's the other sister ... Keala; she died.

UTT

PNP: That was the sister below me.

UTT

PNP: And then uh ... the baby. So only leave Leinaala and I.

UTT

ML: Were your siblings in music too, or in hula like you were? Or was it only you?

PNP: I tried. The only one is Pumehana.

UTT

PNP: But she gone to Christian. So whoever my mo'opuna's will pick up.

UTT

PNP: I trained them, and ... whether they like it or not, they gotta go on their own. None of 'em showed me yet. The only one is Pumehana, Alexis, Leimomi and uh, Malia. Malia is doing a good job.

UTT

PNP: But I hope Leimomi is too, 'cause I haven't seen her.

UTT

PNP: Her place yet.

UTT

PNP: I heard she got a good place; she got a lot of students.

UTT

PNP: But they all want to come out here, visit me, show me their hulas. Okay, great. Which is better for me; I don't need to travel.

ML: Yeah; they can come out here. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Yeah. And they've danced before, so ... they know.

UTT

ML: Growing up, did—did you—did your brothers and sisters sing like you did, or did they dance like you ... did?

PNP: My brother was ... I sang the high C. My brother was uh ... in between, like bass. And my sister was the alto. We three children have made name in McCandless family, all on Diamond Head. And I—the song I used to love is ... uh ... I used to sing for them, they love it ... shoots. Do you recall Bobby Breen?

ML: No. Who's that?

PNP: He was a singer, and I loved his voice.

UTT

PNP: He sang high. Now, what was it ... Hawaii Calls ... Hawaii Calls.

ML: M-m; I love that song.

PNP: A message of aloha. To you, sweetheart, wherever I go.

ML: You are. Yeah

PNP: You are. [HUMS] That was my favorite. I sang it like Bobby Breen too. Every time they heard it, they thought it was Bobby Breen. They come out, they see one girl singing. [CHUCKLES] Sing that again. I would sing it. I'd get lot of money for singing that song. So I made that my popular hit. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Yeah. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Oh.

ML: So you and—you actually used to go with your sister and brother, and you would sing together at these—

PNP: Three of us. We made name, the Naipo Children. But then um ... my dad stopped us. My dad was ... he was a singer, he's a saxophone player. He taught us, but he was also very jealous dad ...

UTT

PNP: When people liked us, he got angry. So we couldn't go. I used to cry, because we made money. [CHUCKLES]
No.

UTT

PNP: And yet he didn't have the means.

UTT

PNP: I had a jealous—a jealous father too.

UTT

(20:00)

PNP: Uh, so—otherwise we would have been rich, the three of us.

ML: Did you folks play—play an instrument while you sang too?

PNP: I was the guitarist. And my uh, sister, I taught her how to play the 'ukulele. And my brother, he didn't know how to play any instrument. But I kept on going, and then one day this lieutenant came over. I didn't own a guitar outright. My brother owned his Martin, but he never plays it, so I played. So one night these soldiers used to be—wartime, War II ... World War II. They used to be parked outside our—our street, on the other side. I didn't know they were there; it was blackout. So I grabbed the guitar and ... I was singing that song. [SINGS: AKAKA FALLS] Malihini Ku'u 'ike. Yeah. When I got through, I heard standing; clap, clap, clap. More, more. Who's out there? We were all quiet. Oh, it's soldiers. So I began to sing. Every evening, I would go out there, sing to them. They would clap softly. [CHUCKLES] So cute.

ML: Oh; that's nice.

PNP: I get good memories of—of uh, World War II.

UTT

PNP: Of how they cut all the sugarcane in the back of our yard and built big uh ... anchors.

UTT

PNP: So we used to have Marines patrol. I'd look for the good looking Marine, and I'd throw one letter.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: I said, Hi handsome, you want to know who I am?

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Terrible kids we were.

ML: How old were you? [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Only sixteen. [CHUCKLES] Oh; the—the stone used to go over and over. [CHUCKLES] And then I dated one of those Marines too. When I hit seventeen. Oh, my mom was so upset. He came to ask me if—my mom if he could take me to the movies. No. [CHUCKLES] Who are you? Oh, I'm the Marine that guards in the back.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: No; her father won't permit it. Okay. Every time, he would come and ask. Finally, he came one day, my dad was home. He said, Oh, I'm the Marine that marches back and forth. Oh, yeah. He said, May I ask your permission if I could take your daughter to a show? What daughter? Uh ... what's her name? 'Cause I used to write my Hawaiian name, Puluolo, he get [INDISTINCT].

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: Then he goes ... Pulu? Yes. Pulu—he's screaming at me. Do you know this guy? I said, Oh, yeah, I see him going back and forth. How long this show? Oh, about ... three, four hours. Where? Tell him where it is. I'll take her and deliver her right back, sir. The word sir made him get closer to the family. [CHUCKLES]

ML: That's all it takes—

PNP: That's Hawaiians for you. [CHUCKLES] Oh, oh; sure. Okay, go get—get ready. And what time you going get her back? He count every minute.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: All right; you can go show. Ho, I jump up for joy. Never do uh, the Hawaiians let the Marines take us show.

UTT

PNP: He did. And I felt so honored walking with him, too.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: 'Cause he's all dressed in uniform. I didn't even have the proper clothes.

UTT

PNP: Skirt and blouse. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Your mom must have been mad, huh?

PNP: Huh?

ML: Your mom must have been mad at your dad for letting you go.

PNP: Oh, yeah, but—

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: --he's got the last say-so.

UTT

PNP: And he brought me right home too, right after the show.

(25:00)

PNP: Thanked my dad and mom. First thing you know, he was eating on our table.

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: He had to eat Hawaiian food. [CHUCKLES] He said, I've never tried that. Try it. Okay. [CHUCKLES]

ML: Yes, sir. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: Poor-poor thing; I bet when he got back, he's sick. [CHUCKLES] I never did ask him. [CHUCKLES] Oh.

ML: How long did he stick around the family?

PNP: Oh, up until he asked to marry me. I said, What?! I don't want to marry you. [CHUCKLES] And he was such a handsome guy too. I wasn't ready for marriage. Oh, my gosh. I never even get outside to—they allowed dancing.

UTT

PNP: Never even go dancing, and I gonna go—oh, no. And I don't want to marry.

UTT

PNP: Those days, they marry so darn young, oh, geez.

UTT

PNP: So too bad I never married 'til I was ... uh—

ML: Twenty s-s--twenty-four. Right?

PNP: Twenty-four.

ML: You got married in 1948.

PUMEHANA PARK: Yeah; twenty-four.

PNP: Yeah; I didn't marry until twenty-four. Even then, I felt like one young ...

UTT

PNP: Youngster; 'cause you only think young, yeah?

- UTT
PNP: You don't know how to keep house or anything. I had to learn the hard way.
UTT
PNP: I know how to clean my house, but ... cooking; oh. I didn't even know how to cook for a man.
UTT
PNP: But he was easy; he cook his own.
UTT
PNP: He taught me some.
- ML: What did you do after you graduated from high school, then, in terms of a job or ... 'Cause you weren't teaching hula yet, right?
- PNP: No. I uh ... work in—work in Pearl Harbor.
UTT
PNP: I uh, was a crane operator.
- ML: Wow.
- PNP: Electrical crane operator. And from there, I went down to the office. I work in the office. Then they shifted me over to uh ... administration to work as a uh ... mathematician ... uh, running—running certain things on the field. I worked under Commander Rush.
UTT
PNP: That was interesting.
- ML: So this was all during the war, then, still.
- PNP: Wartime.
UTT
PNP: We were pulled out of high school.
- ML: Oh, really? H-m.
- PNP: To work for the Navy. All of us.
UTT
PNP: That was our training for high school.
UTT
ML: So from 1941—'cause that would have been your ... your senior year? You graduated in '42, right? Or you were supposed to graduate in '42. So—
- PNP: So we didn't graduate. We had to go work in the office.
UTT
PNP: After that, then. So was kinda late. So they just handed us our ... papers. We didn't have an exercise like ...
UTT

PNP: --regular class.

ML: And what school does—did you graduate from, then?

PNP: Farrington.

ML: Farrington. Oh; 'cause you guys were right there in Kalihi. M-m. So were you Class of '42, then, or ... was it af—was it later that they gave it to you?

PNP: Later; way later.

ML: After the war; oh, wow.

PUMEHANA PARK: The nurse is here.

ML: So your whole life just changed after December 7th, yeah?

GENE KOIS: The nurse is here.

ML: Oh, the nurse is here.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

(30:00)

ML: Yes; she was a crane operator. Did you know that? I didn't know that. [CHUCKLES]

GENE KOIS: I didn't know that.

PNP: I was a good crane operator too.

ML: [CHUCKLES] I bet.

PNP: I worked the five-ton and the thirty-ton.

PUMEHANA PARK: Oh, wow; that's awesome.

ML: Wow.

PNP: My dad came. They said, Oh, you gotta come watch this girl. They didn't know who I was. He said, What girl? They said, This girl that can operate that darn thing just like a man. So then he came. He stood by the door and he watched. He said, Whoa. The way I pick up the boat plates and move it; shoomp, right into the back. He said, Eh, where did this girl come from? Not knowing I was his daughter. [CHUCKLES]

**TRANSCRIPT: Puelo Naipo Park
Oral History Interview: July 23, 2004**

[CHUCKLES]

PNP: And when the work was all done, they made me sign to come down.

UTT

PNP: And I—I took the thirty-ton in the front, and then get off on the stair. I was coming down singing. When I saw my father, oh. [CHUCKLES] He went, It's you! [CHUCKLES] Oh, he was shocked. He's shocked. They said, That's the best crane operator we ever had.

ML: Oh, that's great. [CHUCKLES]

PNP: [CHUCKLES] And that's one thing for your story too.

ML: Oh, yeah; that's definitely new information. [CHUCKLES] Lots of new information today.

PNP: Yeah.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION/BREAK IN TAPING]

[WIND/WATER: CAMERA FILMING AREA OUTSIDE]

[END]