

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Charles T. Arizumi (CA)

April 28, 1994

Manoa, Oahu

By: Fred Ditzel (FD)

SUMMARY

Charles T. Arizumi has lived in Manoa Valley over seventy-nine years. He was born in Honolulu September 19, 1906, while his family was living on Piikoi Street across from Kaahumanu School. His mother, Yoshi Yoshizaki, and father, Takejiro Arizumi, both came from Yamaguchi, Japan. His father came as a contract laborer on a sugar plantation. His mother came independently and they met in Hawaii. Mr. Arizumi is the oldest of four sons, the others being Richard [deceased], Robert and Paul. After his father left the plantation he became a cook, then a carpenter, building the two houses on Kahaloa Drive where Mr. Arizumi still lives.

Mr. Arizumi attended Manoa School, Kaahumanu School and McKinley High School, going to work for the post office after graduation. During the war he worked with Navy Intelligence. He married in 1932, is now a widower, and has two children, a son residing in Manoa and a daughter in Los Angeles.

During this interview he talks about the Valley - the taro and vegetable farms, Manoa Stream, the mountains, the Village and its shops and monthly Japanese films with narrator, riding the Manoa Trolley, the new Manoa School, working summers in the pineapple cannery, his work at the post office and meeting his wife, their wedding and life together. He also comments on the changes he has seen in Manoa.

INTERVIEW

FD: For the Malama O Manoa Oral History Project this is the interview of long time Manoa resident Mr. Charles T. Arizumi, who resides at 3036 Kahaloa Drive. The date is April 28th, 1994. The interviewer is Fred Ditzel.

FD: Oh we finally have our equipment properly set up and I think this is our third attempt, Mr. Arizumi, to get this oral interview completed. So we'll start now and I'd like to begin by asking you when you were born.

CA: I was born in Honolulu, on Piikoi Street across Kaahumanu School -- those days they had camp-- September 19, 1906.

FD: Did you say camp?

CA: Yes. Those are olden days. They had camps, just like apartment but more worse than apartment because they had community bathroom and everybody was, of course they had partitions, but we were living separately.

FD: All in one building with walls between the families?

CA: Yes, and so many family was living over there.

FD: And that was called a camp?

CA: Camp.

FD: What was the name of this camp? Did it have a name?

CA: No, no name.

FD: Did most people live in that fashion in those days?

CA: Yes and then another camp, further toward east, on Kinau Street.
It's

FD: You were on Piikoi you said, yeah?

CA: I was on Piikoi and South Beretania Street.

FD: So that was all residential in that very area at that time.

CA: Yes, Kaahumanu School was opposite.

FD: Kaahumanu School was opposite, oh uh huh. Isn't that where once there was a Buddhist minister who ran a school for, no a dormitory...

CA: No, no. That's Makiki Japanese School.

FD: Oh yeah, I see.

CA: Makiki Japanese School.

FD: Yeah, so how many children in your family?

CA: I have two.

FD: As a child, when you were a child?

CA: I have four brothers including myself.

FD: And their names please.

CA: First one is my name, Charles, next one is Richard, he passed away two and a half years ago, stroke and he died about ten days later. He cannot speak to his wife or his son. And then the third one lives by Manoa by the Triangle Park, and then the fourth one is a real estate broker and he was working with The Board of Transportation Department and he retired, he was Airport manager for the State of Hawaii and the Harbors for thirty years, and he retired and he's knowledgeable. And today he's the President of the Buddhist Church, Shingon Mission. That's on Sheridan Street.

FD: Oh. So many people know his name. He's a well-known individual.

CA: Yes. He's well-known, well liked because he's very knowledgeable and what he says is true. And what he doesn't know, he always asks a lawyer what is this and what is that.

FD: Yeah, yeah, yeah. I want to ask you about your parents. When you were a child, what were your parents doing for a living?

CA: My father was a cook for the rich family and then, those days the wages were very cheap, about six or seven dollars a week. And then he figured that's too cheap a pay. That's why finally he was working for a colonel on Terrace Drive, Manoa, and he [colonel] was in charge of Fort Armstrong and then my father ask him to help him become a carpenter and he became a carpenter, which is better wages.

FD: How did your dad learn to be a carpenter? Did he go to school for that?

CA: No, from Fort Armstrong.

FD: So he worked as a carpenter at Fort Armstrong and learned by doing.

CA: Yes, and later on he was a carpenter all through his life. And he and his friend build two houses we live in on Kahaloa Drive. At that time I was working for L. N. Robinson, the lumber yard.

FD: Oh you worked for the lumber yard and the connection was because your dad was in the construction business by that time so....

CA: Well, I got the lumber all right. (laughing) Those days lumbers were very cheap you know.

FD: So tell me about your mom. She worked in the house of course those days.

CA: Those days, the old time, she was working for some family, the

laundry. That's about all. And then we used to push cart.

FD: You used to push cart and help her with the laundry?

CA: Yes, to deliver the laundry or collect the laundry.

FD: So your parents were both actually producers of income for the family. In comparison with others in your area, people you knew were the others doing the same sorts of ...

CA: No, no others, were all ex-farmers or

FD: They worked in the Valley, taro...

CA: Yes, horse and buggy days, I can hear when we're sleeping on East Manoa Road by the Fire Station, I can hear, four o'clock in the morning, with a horse and buggy, they going down to River Street.

FD: This is the farmers going down to sell their stuff...

CA: Sell their produce. Majority of the Orientals were living more toward upper Manoa which is near the mountains and they were farmers. And all the haoles, or white people, was living below, toward Oahu Avenue or Kamehameha Avenue or Atherton Road.

FD: Middle part, down by the Punahou end, opening of the Valley.

CA: Yes, every house.

FD: And therefore their house and the middle part, lower part, were larger houses because they were...

CA: Yes, maid's quarters and larger houses. But when the war came all haoles moved to the Mainland and all Orientals buy from...

FD: Came over and bought the...

CA: Yes, they were living in Kakaako or Pawaa or Kalihi or Palama. They all move up Manoa and then few years later, after I was transferred inside, we wanted to help during the Christmas

season. Come to find out each house had about three families living. Maids' quarters were enlarged and some were living in the basement. About three families. That how they pay their houses.

FD: And that's so long ago when property was so cheap yet.

CA: Yes, during the war years.

FD: That's when you could buy a house and a lot for fifteen thousand dollars I think or less even, cause I only paid twenty for this place.

CA: You know the white people had big houses you know and good yard too.

FD: Well those were the people who were what, managers and supervisors, plantation people and so on, where they were brought in to big jobs I guess. That's where they had better incomes, that's why.

CA: Yes, think so

FD: Let's go back. I want to ask you about your own household as a child. Something maybe about the kind of food you folks would eat. Your mom was of course, and your dad, from Japan, immigrants. They both came from Japan yeah? What area were they from?

CA: From Yamaguchi.

FD: Yamaguchi.

CA: Iwakuni and Kenjin Kai and until today I still belong to the Kenjin Kai for many years, since my father's days.

FD: Is that a church? What is Kenjin Kai?

CA: No, it's area people from Yamaguchi.

FD: I see, I see. Group of people got together who came from there.

CA: Yes, who came from there. They have several in Hawaii right now.

FD: So you still belong to this group. And these are people whose ancestors came from the Yamaguchi...

CA: Iwakuni...

FD: Iwakuni area. So of course your mom would have cooked food that was typical of the food back there in Japan. The food that she would have learned as a young person.

CA: No, not exactly. Of course they had rice but they used to buy rice by hundred pound bags in those days. And then they had chicken sukiyaki and meat sukiyaki and pickled cabbage and ...

FD: Maybe teriyaki, beef teriyaki?

CA: No.

FD: That wasn't popular those days?

CA: No, no.

FD: I think that's a haole invention. (laughing)

CA: Yeah, yeah, think so.

FD: Let's go on to ask about schools. First if you could say what schools you attended.

CA: I attended Manoa, originally Manoa School, four years, because those days Manoa School had only one teacher and one big classroom and all included, first grade, second grade, third grade, all way till sixth grade and so I attended Manoa School four years and then I transferred to Kaahumanu School and I graduated from Kaahumanu School and I went to McKinley High School and I graduated 1927.

FD: From McKinley? Ah great. Now at the time when you went to

Manoa School that location was where exactly?

CA: Right by the --- Waikiki side of the Fire Station and then we were living by the Fire Station, and they condemn our place and the school took over, so we moved up Kahaloa Drive, 1929. And then Dr. Devereux and the wife was very active in the Manoa School PTA and they asked the Board of Supervisors those days, Board of Supervisors to acquire the bigger land and they got the present one from Manoa Road to the stream and they didn't expect such a big chunk of land

FD: Oh, such a big piece of land in wonderful Manoa Valley.

CA: In those days, those days land was very cheap.

FD: Yeah, but for them those days at their standards, it wasn't cheap. For us today it's cheap when you think of the prices. So Mrs. Devereux had a lot then to do with the...

CA: Very active, very active

FD: the location of Manoa School and the wonderful ...

CA: Those days they used to have farmers, Japanese farmers, raising taro, vegetable, from Manoa Road to maybe halfway, halfway down.

FD: Most of the valley was agricultural way back and ...

CA: Upper Manoa.

FD: Upper Manoa at the foot of the mountainside, yeah?

CA: And once a month - may I add on - once a month was Japanese movies down by, those days they didn't have Safeway but they had one empty lot, and that's where it was. Once a month they used to come from downtown to show movies and they didn't have talkies. One man had to sit on the side and then talk all the time.

FD: Oh he would explain the movie, what's going on.

CA: Yes.

FD: And then there was outdoors.

CA: Was outdoors, and no illumination or nothing.

FD: Oh yeah, so you folks all went out into this empty lot ...

CA: And the whole valley turn out.

FD: Yeah, yeah, once a month.

CA: Once a month. That's a history. (Laughing)

FD: How long did that go on? Until when about? After the talkie movies started then?

CA: Until the talkie movies started.

FD: And then they stopped doing that yes. Well you've seen Manoa from the very, very---from what I would call the beginning until today and so many changes. Do you remember businesses that are now no longer here in the valley. Do you remember Suburban Pharmacy? Manoa Pharmacy?

CA: Yes, I remember that.

FD: Used to be called Suburban Pharmacy, that I can remember.

CA: But before that where the store by Huapala and East Manoa Road, Chinese store, and ...

FD: Oh yeah, Goo.

CA: Goo yes, right by Huapala and East Manoa Road.

FD: That was what, a grocery store or something, changed into a restaurant?

CA: No, no, before that, way back, way back, they used to have one

store. They used to raise ducks and chickens and the son was very intelligent and I used to go over there when I have hard homework to do. And then he enlisted in the Army and then we lost track of him. (Laughter)

FD: Oh I see. And then there used to be a restaurant or a coffee shop across that, right across that where, you know, next to the church, where the church used to be. The Manoa Church now is the theater. Right next to that, the cemetery, was a little coffee shop restaurant. Do you remember that ?

CA: That was run by Nancy Higa. That was later on, later on, many years later and that was built by my brother.

FD: That place was built by your brother?

CA: My third brother and then that's where he met his wife because the husband committed suicide.

FD: The wife's first husband?

CA: Yes.

FD: So well, what I can remember is already too modern for you. You have to remember some real old stuff about Manoa. How did you get to school? When you went to McKinley, or no before that, when you went to Kaahumanu, how did you get there?

CA: Kaahumanu, I went with a bicycle.

FD: Oh, yeah. Now how about, what they had trolley cars in Manoa one time?

CA: Yes, we trolley cars and then end of the car line was corner of Anuenue and Oahu Avenue, where Heaton Wrenn is living now or was living.

FD: That was the end of the line.

CA: That was the end. They had a switch way down by Lanihuli and

Kamehameha Avenue. That's where one bus passed by and one waited. That was a switching point, by Frank Atherton's home. Today it's President of University of Hawaii.

FD: But then you had to walk if you lived in the valley, from there.

CA: From where?

FD: From Anuenue, where the trolley stopped, you had to walk in.

CA: From the Fire Station. During the summer months thousands of high school students were working at the Hawaiian Pineapple or California Packing and then we had to walk early in the morning and catch the first bus. First bus was six o'clock in the morning and then we had to walk from the Fire Station all the way to Anuenue and Oahu Avenue.

FD: I see, I thought that's where you had to get on.

CA: That's the first bus, six o'clock.

FD: This was electric, trolley car?

CA: No, trolley car. And then I used to get off by Aala Park and then we had to walk down to Iwilei Road.

FD: And you did pineapple cannery work in the summer?

CA: Yes. Thousands of people, thousands of students were working and we used to make, you know, money to buy school clothing and shoes.

FD: All the kids did that. Even my wife was telling me she used to do that too, pineapple cannery. I'm wondering if today if we asked our kids to go to the cannery to work, I wonder what they would say today (laughs). I don't think they would like that very much.

CA: Well I don't think pineapple is making money now. They all closed up.

FD: I was wondering how the kids of the modern generation would take having to go to work like that. Then after Kaahumanu and you went on to McKinley. Do you remember any of your teachers from elementary school? Like say Manoa School?

CA: Manoa School was Mrs. Brown. I don't know her first name, but she was living on East Manoa Road, opposite Beckwith Street. That was many years ago. That was about seventy-five years.

FD: Almost near Punahou Street, by the Triangle.

CA: Right across Beckwith Street on East Manoa Road, Mrs. Brown.

FD: She was a good teacher, you can remember her.

CA: She was teaching from first grade all the way up

FD: Oh, she taught everything.

CA: In one class you know.

FD: And she taught all the subjects?

CA: All the subjects.

FD: Everything. That was a hard job.

CA: Those were the days (laughs).

FD: Was there anything about school that you liked especially well in those days? Do you remember much about what went on in school?

CA: No, I don't, I don't. Students used to come to McKinley from far places like Aiea or Waipahu and they have to catch the train. They used to get off by Aala Park.

FD: Oh, so they took the railroad train then?

CA: Yes.

FD: Aala Park, yeah, where that Dillingham Boulevard and King Street, yeah, I know.

CA: At Iwilei Road.

FD: That old train station place.

CA: Yes.

FD: And they had to take a train.... There was no high school in between?

CA: No, no high school in between. No more Waipahu High or.... Only McKinley was the main one.

FD: They had to get up real early to get to school. Lucky you were kind of close by.

CA: Yes (laughs).

FD: Take your bicycle, otherwise you have to get up an hour early.

CA: Then when I went to McKinley, my parents were good enough to buy me a Chevrolet touring car (laughs).

FD: Oh yeah, wow, I bet you were one of the only ones in school with a car.

CA: Very lucky, yes. I had to take many friends to their home and all kind functions.

FD: Well as kids what did you guys do?

CA: We used to go hiking up Tantalus and pick liliko'i, you know those passion fruit, pink one. And then we used to go hiking up Manoa Valley and pick mountain apple. And we used to walk up by the waterfall and all kind. During the summer months I used to go to Waikiki. My Kaahumanu School Hawaiian friend was there and we used to scoop up shrimp and all kind, by that, well those days was Niunalu Hotel, but today is Hawaiian Village.

FD: Hawaiian Village, where Kaiser...

CA: Those days it was Niumalu Hotel.

FD: Niumalu, that's where I first saw Danny Kaleikini Show.

CA: At Niumalu?

FD: At the Niumalu, back in, oh, 1955, '54, '55 maybe. That was when Alfred Apaka was popular still in that big hotel, but Danny was a young kid trying his.... Now he's running for political office.

CA: Yes, I notice that.

FD: So you as a kid, and your group of boys, you did outdoor activities. You didn't get into trouble, you didn't make humbug and

CA: And then we used to go swimming too, on the river, way down.

FD: You mean Manoa Stream?

CA: No, yeah Manoa Stream by University of Hawaii, inside of University. Today did you go down there and take a look? They excavated about sixty feet or seventy feet, they scraped the mountain, and they build the houses. I say you cannot fight nature in the long run.

FD: They ruined it.

CA: One big boulder gonna roll down....

FD: They ruined it didn't they. They spoiled it from what it was.

CA: Yes. I went there several times.

FD: Looks like a canyon..

CA: Terrible. It almost reach the Dole Street you know. We used to go swimming, our kid days right across in the river.

FD: That's what they call progress.

CA: Yes (laughs). And people cannot find no available space. Even my granddaughter and the husband look all around. They cannot find a place. They look for two years, and they finally move to Mokuleia, a big place, about two hundred by two hundred, or something like that. They cannot control their yard. They move over there. How do you like that? And then my other granddaughter living in Hawaii Kai, she had to move and right now they are remodeling the house. They're going to Waimea. That's this side of Sunset Beach.

FD: That's too far away for me.

CA: That's why I'm telling you, don't you sell it.

FD: I know. It's so central.

CA: Hey, when you look at a newspaper you don't see Manoa. When it's on sale, like Vancouver Highway or Huelani Street, it's over million dollars and who can afford it. (Laughter) Not like two hundred thousand.

FD: No I don't think I'll sell. I think I'll let the next generation have it after I'm gone.

CA: Yeah, I think so.

FD: I want to ask about, back to your own family. What kind of things did you folks do together as a family? Did you have usual activities that you would do together, say on weekends, your dad was off. You went on picnics or to the beach together?

CA: No, we didn't do that. My parents were very religious and today I'm the advisor of the church, Shingon Mission, Sheridan Street. I'm about the oldest member of the church.

FD: So they call you the elder?

CA: I'm the advisor. That's above the director.

FD: So you attend church a lot. But as a young boy were you also having to attend church with the family.

CA: Yes, because I did all the driving and I had to wait for them.

FD: That was your Chevrolet

CA: Yes, and next morning had to go to work (laughs).

FD: So you took them to church on Sunday and then what? You folks went to the movies together or some kind of social activity?

CA: No, we never did, we never did because those days movies was way down Aala Street, too far away, that's why we didn't go.

FD: I want to ask about your parents a little now, we're getting to this portion. Could you say why your parents decided to come to Hawaii from Japan? You happen to know the story of that?

CA: Well, my father came from Japan, work in Hawaii as a plantation laborer with a contract, you know. He had two years, I don't know how many years, two years or something, contract laborer. That was original. And my mother was originally married and then they mistreated her in Japan so she came to Hawaii and stayed.

FD: Ah, so she left her first husband.

CA: Yes.

FD: And she came by herself? They were not married, she was not married to Arizumi?

CA: No.

FD: And then they met here in Hawaii?

CA: She was living in the home up here. Those days they had different building, Castle Home. Her uncle's parents were working over

there, so she lived over there.

FD: And how did your dad come across her?

CA: I don't know (laughs). He was a cook, as I say, he was a cook for the rich family.

FD: Yeah, yeah. So they probably....

CA: That was a long time ago, about eighty years ago.

FD: And they came here because of the promise of a better way of life? Things were hard in Japan?

CA: Yes.

FD: What year, do you know, did they come, did your mom come, and your dad?

CA: No, I don't know. That was long time ago.

FD: And they didn't talk about the voyage, the trip itself.

CA: Well they had to come by boat but...

FD: Yeah, like how long it may have taken them, how many weeks?

CA: About ten days, one way (laughs).

FD: That must have been not such good conditions.

CA: Yes, those were the days.

FD: Oh yeah. My dad used to tell me those sorts of stories too, when he came from Germany. What did you do, Charlie, during the war years? You were working for the post office?

CA: I was working at the post office, inside, and then I work every department and then I was transferred to the central accounting and finance department and then during the war years, I

volunteered to the Army but I was getting too old and I had two kids that were young yet so I work for the Naval Intelligence, Young Hotel.

FD: Doing what, interpretation, code work?

CA: No, we had to find out who's spying, espionage.

FD: Oh, so you were working for the CIC?

CA: That's how so many people were interned in Mainland, Arizona or some place, I don't know. In Nanakuli. Several of my classmates were working for Naval Intelligence. They all passed away now.

FD: So Naval Intelligence was, you were like counter-intelligence corps, just like you were working as a counter-spy (laughs) investigating.

CA: Yes, I think so.

FD: Interesting, Young Hotel. Now the Young Hotel is gone.

CA: (Laughs) I think so. You know during the war years, Punahou School was taken over by the army. The army was running everything over there.

FD: And they used all the buildings for offices for the officers.

CA: Yes. So I told my brother, "You have to look for another job before the war is over." So my brother joined up Board of Harbor Commissioners, pier eleven. My next brother was a bell captain, bell hop for Royal Hawaiian Hotel but he took the exam and he passed and joined the Honolulu Post Office and became a supervisor. My third brother joined the City and County, sewer inspector (laughs).

FD: Oh, they all had good jobs.

CA: Yes, we look forward after the war years....

FD: Yeah, and good retirement plans too. That's good for you. The post office work, what was a typical day of work for you when you worked for the post office as a carrier.

CA: I joined the post office in 1929. I was carrier for five years. I delivered Manoa, Makiki, Kahala, Kalihi, Nuuanu, all that.

FD: You had to drive a truck or a car?

CA: Yes, motorcycle with a sidecar. We put all the parcels and bundles in the sidecar. They didn't have no ...

FD: Cars or trucks those days.

CA: Yeah.

FD: Like the old special delivery stamps, back in the '20s, '30s, they have this motorcycle sidecar picture on the stamps. I didn't realize that's what you folks had to do. So the first thing you'd do would be to go to the post office. You'd have to sort the stuff yourself?

CA: Five years I was carrier.

FD: Did you have to sort the mail then the first thing in the morning?

CA: No. Then I transferred inside and I did everything, canceled the mail and, well, sort the mail. Then I even put in the mailboxes. I work every window.

FD: Oh, for the p.o. boxes in the main post office. That same building is the same building huh?

CA: Called the Federal Building those days. That was on King Street, across the State Capitol [Iolani Palace].

FD: That wasn't what now is the Main Post Office?

CA: No, the headquarters moved down to the airport.

FD: Yeah, but I mean the one that's downtown on, what, Merchant Street or...

CA: By Merchant and King Street and Richards Street.

FD: That is not the same building where you worked?

CA: That's where I worked.

FD: The same building exactly?

CA: The same building. That was the main office.

FD: So they didn't change that building a lot. In fact when you walk around in there it really looks old-fashioned.

CA: They changed the whole thing. The customer service window was in the front at that time.

FD: I like to go there because they have a stamp collectors' room.

CA: In those days the service was very good. They have five windows open, today, only about two windows. When you have about five people in line they used to complain to the postmaster. They used to give service. But today you see fifteen people or twenty people...

FD: They can't help because it costs too much money to hire...

CA: Today no complaints. Less windows too.

FD: And only three cents for postage (laughs). I want to ask you please, if you wouldn't mind, we talk about Mrs. Arizumi a little bit. I want to ask you first how did you folks meet?

CA: Well I was carrier up Nuuanu and then I met her at Dowsett Avenue. She was working for Horner, H-o-r-n-e-r. They were rich people.

FD: Jack, John Horner, do you know?

CA: (phrase unclear) They had two maids, one was a cook and she was taking care of the small babies you know and that's how.

FD: So it was love at first sight (laughs)? It's okay.

CA: I don't know.

FD: Where were you married, in Honolulu in the church?

CA: In Honolulu, at Japanese Shinto Shrine on Liliha Street. Today they moved to way up Nuuanu by the Oahu Country Club.

FD: Oh yeah, I know that one. Sure that 's that large, big building.

CA: Daijingu they call that, Daijingu. That was depression years, 1932 you know. Then, ohhhh, we had a good wedding. Four hundred people attended, and then of course I invited the whole post office, plus the carriers and then even the postmaster. Postmaster was Chillingworth. I worked under six postmasters. We kaluaed three pigs and my uncle was the cook and he fix everything else.

FD: Big party.

CA: Big party. That was height of depression year, 1932. I still remember my mother was complaining, "We did plenty of our share." But people didn't have even twenty-five cents in their pocket. So they didn't bring anything. My mother was so ...

FD: Upset?

CA: Upset.

FD: Disappointed I think.

CA: She was repeating that over and over.

FD: Well the people simply couldn't afford it.

CA: Yeah and that was the height of depression years, 1932. Nobody had twenty-five cents in their pocket.

FD: Well who had all the money. Who paid for this great big wedding? Your parents?

CA: My parents.

FD: Oh, good for them. How nice. Now that was 1932.

CA: Yes. You want to hear the golden anniversary? We had nice party at golden anniversary in 1982 at the Salt Lake Country Club. They call that Honolulu Country Club. They had about 400 people, my son's friends, my daughter's friends, my friends all attended. We had orchestra. We had two bars set up on opposite sides. Plenty of food. We bought additional food, sushi, shrimp tempura, and sashimi. Big party.

FD: How nice. I bet you at the fiftieth the people could afford to bring some gifts (laughs) that they couldn't afford in 1932.

CA: I think so. I didn't hear about that complaint.

FD: Did you folks go away on a honeymoon when you were first married?

CA: No.

FD: Those days nobody did. How many children did you have?

CA: I had one son and one daughter. My son is a dentist at Manoa Shopping Center next to Safeway. My daughter is in Los Angeles. She's handling the real estate.

FD: Real estate broker or agent?

CA: Agent.

FD: So every now and then she comes over to visit family?

CA: Yes. Last year I celebrated Japanese-style. I'm eighty-seven last year, September, I made eighty-eight in Shinto style. You have to count one year ahead. I made a big party, karaoke, too much Karaoke on Beretania Street. It was attended by about twenty-five people. I had football ticket. I thought half a dozen people not coming.

FD: They couldn't go because it was football?

CA: They gave the football ticket away and they came to karaoke. It lasted from 6:00 to 9:30 [pm]. Everybody had good time.

FD: Karaoke, yeah, good fun.

CA: It's a fad now.

FD: You enjoy doing that, huh, singing.

CA: I was surprised one lady did all the cassette recording from the beginning to the end. And then she gave me and I was playing that few days ago. Even my daughter sang "Tennessee Waltz" and "Nagasaki Wa Ame Da Ta" in Japanese (laughs).

FD: Oh nice party. So you had that on tape. You could listen anytime you want.

CA: Yes. My brother Paul, the youngest one, sang "I Love You Charlie" or something.

FD: (Laughs) that's great. I love those parties. Your son is now a dentist. That's expensive. He had to go to school in the Mainland to learn to...

CA: Well he went to Punahou. He went to University of Nebraska and became a dentist and he served in the Vietnam War, two years. Then he came back. He's very popular right now and people come from far places you know. I say, "What's the matter. There's a lot more places in between like Kailua or Aina Haina or way down...."

FD: He must be really good.

CA: He's very popular.

FD: Glad to hear that, that's nice. I'll ask you about, maybe, when you were a child in Manoa. I want to ask about crime in the community. Was there a problem with crime?

CA: No crime at all because when we go marketing which is downtown, in Chinatown, you know Kekaulike and King Street and all that, we didn't lock our doors, front door or back door. We used to just go out like that. Those were the times. No burglary or anything.

FD: So there weren't any major crimes that you can remember that caused everybody to worry. You could unlock your house. There wasn't any real problem then. And the young kids didn't get into real big trouble either. When you were a boy you folks didn't look for trouble. You didn't make humbug for anybody.

CA: I forgot the name. I think Jamieson. He was living on Kahawai Street. His son, was attending Punahou, was murdered by a Japanese guy in Waikiki.

FD: Would that be long ago?

CA: Yes. Across Royal Hawaiian Hotel on Kalakaua Avenue. Those days it was a swamp and somehow he took the child over there and he killed him. That was headline news those days. That was way back. I think Jamieson, and he was working for Hawaiian Trust.

FD: Was that in the 1920s do you think?

CA: I think 1920s, yes. [Jamieson kidnapping and murder took place in September, 1928.]

FD: You were still a kid.

CA: I graduated from McKinley High School 1927.

FD: Teenage. Political leaders, what do you remember about Hawaii's political leaders? I know we weren't a state but there was this board of supervisors. Dorothy [Devereux] was a member of that group or she was just influential?

CA: Later on she became a representative or something.

FD: From back in the old twenties and maybe thirties, do you remember anything about political leaders, or leaders in the community?

CA: Burns [Governor John Burns], he was very influential. He was very influential in the government.

FD: Yeah, I remember Burns.

CA: Compared to the other governors, very influential.

END OF SIDE ONE

FD: What was your happiest time? What do you remember just right off the top of your head, when you feel was the best time of your life?

CA: Well, after we were married and as I told you, we were having movies once a month at Manoa. The whole Manoa Valley community, all the Japanese, Orientals, were attending.

FD: These movies?

CA: Yes.

FD: And there was a club or something there too?

CA: Yes, the Young Men's Club, Japanese Young Men's Club, but we had big spacious lawn so they made open air theater.

FD: So what did this club do? Did they have a pool table or play cards?

CA: No, no, just a club. But I hate to say this but my wife was very pretty. She was the prettiest of all, I'm telling you. Because the whole community was out there every month....

FD: And you were happy to show her off?

CA: No, not that, but we all used to go. And then we took a trip to the Orient, six weeks. We visit Japan, the northern part, Hokaido and we stay one week and then we came back. Then we went to Nara and we went to Inland Sea and Shikoku. Then we went to Hong Kong and stayed one week. Then we went to Okinawa and then came back to Japan and then stayed...

FD: Big trip.

CA: Yeah, six weeks.

FD: That was what year? Long time ago?

CA: After we were married.

FD: In the '30s, before the war?

CA: No, no, after the war.

FD: Oh yeah, before the war there wasn't much of that kind of traveling going on anyway.

CA: It was very cheap, \$1,600 dollars per person. Airfare and kaukau. The tour guide ask us what kind meal you want, American food or Japanese food. Those were the days.

FD: That thing would cost \$5,000 or \$6,000 now.

CA: Yeah, meals included.

FD: So that was a happy time for you.

CA: My brother went Japan last year, around April. He didn't go with a tour. He had to pay about \$400 a night in a hotel and then the meals extra. He had to pay eighty dollars for two, that means forty dollars a head, just for breakfast. I thought Halekulani, is run by Japan now, I thought twenty-five dollars too much but he was paying forty dollars.

FD: That's a function of the exchange rate right now. The dollar to the yen is pretty low. That makes everything seem so expensive over there. Halekulani is not bad if you go there for brunch. They have a good buffet you know, real good buffet. Are there any extra stories that I didn't ask you about or things about...

CA: Yes. I was playing golf twice a week and then I used to go fishing too. I'm the oldest member of the fishing club, Atla Pac. It's the biggest fishing club in the whole Hawaiian Islands, Atla Pac Fishing Club. I went to the meeting last night. Many years ago I told my wife, "Quit smoking." She say, "Quit golf then." I used to play golf twice a week or three times a week...

FD: Just as though golf was addictive.

CA: Yeah, at the military courses because I had friends, you know, retired colonel and all kinds, they used to have connections to play at Leilehua or Schofield or Kaneohe Marine. That's why she say quit golf. I cannot say nothing.

FD: So you told her to quit smoking and she said she would but you have to quit golf.

CA: Yeah. She died two years and ten months ago with a cancer...

FD: Lung cancer?

CA: From smoking. Dr. Gresham told me about that. So don't smoke. That's my advice.

FD: Oh, I see. Oh that's a sad story.

CA: Sad story, yes.

FD: You're now what, eighty what?

CA: Eighty-seven. I made eighty-seven last September.

FD: September 19, you were born.

CA: 1906.

FD: 1906. So then your wife was about the same age as you?

CA: Ten [1910]. My wife was a professional baker you know. She was working thirty years.

FD: Who did she work for, as a baker?

CA: For her brother, Lincoln Bakery.

FD: What bakery?

CA: Lincoln.

FD: Oh, Lincoln Bakery. It was your brother's place?

CA: Yes, over thirty years. She can make everything, wedding cake, pies, ordinary cake, cookies, Danish pastry, doughnuts, all kind. When my son was attending Mainland college, you know those days cost big money. That's why she had to work for two jobs, like Manoa School cafeteria and then afternoon in the bakery. At Manoa School she was serving so good ...

FD: Your wife was working for Manoa School Cafeteria?

CA: Yes. She used to be so good, instead of one she was serving three desserts to everybody.

FD: She was baking in the school?

CA: Yes. All the teachers used to buy those pies and cakes and take it

home so cheap. Even the higher-ups from the Department of Education came to see you know, what's the matter, what happened (laughs). She was that good.

FD: Well then she worked until she retired?

CA: No, after my son graduated, she quit and they said she can come back one year from now. But she didn't go back. Instead she was making cookies for the friends, all kind cookies you know, chocolate chip, shortbread, butter cookies, all kind cookies. The smell is so good where the sewer crew was working on the road, the smell is so good so they say, "Is your wife making cookies everyday?" So we had to give them.

FD: Oh, smart guys.

CA: By gallons. So we give them. We give our friends to give their grandchildren. No, they eat themselves. They say when they start eating they cannot stop eating. So I told them, "Why don't you ration?" That was the whole story. She was giving everybody the cookies.

FD: How did your wife learn to do all of this baking?

CA: Well, at Lincoln Bakery. Sometimes the bakers, they don't come to work, they get drunk or I don't know, something, and she was forced to learn and she can do everything from wedding cake everything down. We were in business five years at Manoa Bakery.

FD: Manoa Bakery? Over here, down on the corner?

CA: Right across Seven-Eleven.

FD: Yeah, next to the cleaner, dry cleaners?

CA: Five years. Then I received a letter from Dr. John Bell saying your wife is working too hard. So we had to quit baking. So within one week we sold the bakery. The former owner bought the bakery back. How do you like that?

FD: You owned Manoa Bakery then you folks? During what years was that?

CA: Five years. Uh, long ago, well, I don't know. I forgot.

FD: Oh you folks owned the bakery. Isn't that interesting.

CA: It was very popular. People used to come from far place you know, Kailua, Kalihi, all kind. I say, "Why you folks come? There's a lot of bakery in between." They say they went to the friends' house and it was so good. That's why they came.

FD: Right next door to you folks was the Manoa Dry Cleaners on the corner and right next to her on the other side was a little drug store, Suburban Pharmacy it was called.

CA: Yes.

FD: That I can remember, but I didn't know you folks were in that business.

CA: Yes, we were very popular. You know why? The former owner used to come around four o'clock in the afternoon to look, and then when it come 7:30 (p.m.) he's all sold out. The shelf is all empty. So he finally bought it back (laughs). How do you like that? His two sons are bakers too. Was baking for Foodland and someplace, I don't know.

FD: But their products were not as good as the ones your wife was making. Otherwise the business would be...

CA: Because the friends say they went to the friends' house and it was so good, that's why they came from far place.

FD: How nice. The most popular lady in the neighborhood. The kids probably all came up the hill.

CA: That's a true story.

FD: Well with you in the post office and your wife at the school and

the bakery...

CA: Yes, I served under six postmasters, forty-two years.

FD: Very good career. Do you remember the names of your postmasters?

CA: Yes. I started with Wooley. He was living on Oahu Avenue by --- no, Kamehameha Avenue, near Beckwith Street. Then Chillingworth, then John L. Wilson, Lino, George Hara and Hon Chun Chee.

FD: You remember them all. And you worked under all of those six. Post stamps cost twenty-nine (cents) and they want to go up to thirty-one or thirty-two (cents). Pretty soon you can't afford to write a letter.

CA: In those days you can reach Pacific Coast from Seattle to San Diego in two days, and New York and Chicago in three days, but not today. My daughter in Los Angeles takes about four days.

FD: That was by air mail then those days.

CA: Yeah, air mail stamps

FD: I think those days air mail was a five cent stamp, regular was three cents as I remember. Let's see now, I don't want to miss anything and I don't want you to go away saying, "Gee I should have said something or remembered something." I'm going to just read out the topics, the headings to see if each one may spark a little memory or story of yours. We talked about your parents, the immigration, and you as an adult, and schooling, your employment, very interesting, your marriage and your family well covered, and the house that you all lived in before and now, the kinds of food you folks used to eat, recreation, the fun you used to have as a kid, your hobbies. Your karaoke is now a new hobby of yours, I read in your information sheet. You go occasionally to karaoke clubs.

CA: Yes, I belong to the karaoke club, to kill my lonesomeness. At home I have karaoke TV, with a VCR and a big Hitachi cassette.

FD: You can record as well as play back.

CA: Right, record and play back.

FD: Oh great, and you have the echo in there?

CA: In there. I joined the club and every Tuesday we have singing going on. I furnish all the drinks and ...

FD: And you go to your house with your group?

CA: No, no, at the church basement.

FD: Oh at the church. And you bring the refreshments?

CA: Yes, I bring all kinds, beer, soda water, sake, and wine cooler and candies.

FD: Quite a few people go to this?

CA: Yes, about fifteen.

FD: Wow, that's nice. That's fun, good fun.

CA: I gave up golf about year and a half ago and fishing about year and a half ago because I'm getting too old, right.

FD: Yeah, it's a little active. So now it's karaoke?

CA: Yeah (laughs).

FD: Have you made any recordings yet (laughs)? Are you going to be a famous singer?

CA: One lady made the record at my birthday party, last year September and the year before that, at my home, in September she made the tape recording of all the cassette. I was playing that a few days ago. It's both sides you know. That's why it lasts about two hours. Right now I have to do all the cooking...

FD: For yourself?

CA: Yeah, and marketing and shopping and what you call, housework and laundry, all that.

FD: Completely self-sufficient.

CA: Before you take it for granted. From Friday used to come back Saturday afternoon, I used to go outer island, fishing or golf, Kauai, Maui and Hawaii, Kona.

FD: But now of course there's no way you can do those things. You have responsibilities taking care of your house and yourself.

CA: Yes.

FD: What kind of food you like to cook for yourself at this time.

CA: The doctor told me not to eat---meat is so easy to fix, Oriental dish, chop some onion and put some dressing on, fifteen minutes time it's all ready. But he say not to. I go to Dr. Gresham. He's a cardiologist. He say go take a walk everyday, don't eat meat, maybe once in ten days and in between I eat all kind lettuce and fish and...

FD: Oh you can eat chicken too, huh. He says chicken's all right?

CA: Yeah.

FD: But not beef, not pork.

CA: No, too much high cholesterol.

FD: I guess so.

CA: It's very easy to fix.

FD: Well then, you'll just have to take a little more time in preparation and watch one program less on TV

CA: Right now, I'm old you know, I'm getting old, eighty-seven years old as you know. My hearing is all right, my sight is all right.

FD: I noticed that, I notice you have no glasses. You're looking at me with no glasses and I'm a young boy with glasses.

CA: I can drive nighttime (laughs).

FD: You can, you can drive all the time then. That's great. Do you have to take driver's test nowadays? Do they require that?

CA: I think so. Two years but they didn't send me the notice. Strike is going on now. That's what they're supposed to...

FD: Oh you're supposed to pretty soon? Get your license?

CA: In September.

FD: Oh the strike is almost pau. I think it's pau already, by tomorrow.

CA: Well in a few days I might get a notice.

FD: I think so, yeah sure. Well, I think that, unless you've got more to add Mr. Arizumi, I think we have a pretty good interview here. What the process now is, this tape will go to the lady who does the transcriptions who will type all of this up. It will be in written form, then I'll check it out, bring it to you and you'll check it out to see if what is on there is okay with you. After that if it's okay then they will make permanent copy for the files. Someday a student of the University or some people from whoever who are interested in learning about Manoa's history might pick up these tapes and listen to them. You never know. This is part of history. That was an excellent...

CA: I served forty-two years at the post office. For the length of service, plus the cost of living was going up, that's why I retired. Twice a year you know. That's why I can go...

FD: Oh you mean cost of living allowance.

CA: Yes, that was twice a year, eight percent or ten percent. I'm very thankful because I'm getting --- I don't have to depend on Social Security. You have to join the Social Security so that in case your wife is sick they pay all the hospitalization and the doctor's bills.

FD: Yeah, Medicare

CA: That's what happened to my wife.

FD: So they were very helpful in covering expenses for your wife's illness.

CA: Yes. Ten days before she died, she was in Kuakini Hospital. Her blood pressure was very low, high was seventy and low was about forty. She stayed only ten days and cost \$14,000. I shake my head.

FD: Insurance covered most of that.

CA: Yeah, HMSA [Hawaii Medical Services Association].

FD: And Medicare?

CA: Yes.

FD: Oh, that's good.

CA: That's the whole story (laughs).

FD: That's sad, that's too bad. I hate to hear that but without, if you didn't have that kind of coverage, you would be bankrupt, totally.

CA: That's why I joined HMSA.

FD: Well you were a federal employee so you had a good retirement plan too.

CA: Yes, very thankful.

FD: And that they pay you the cost of living every six months...

CA: No, now it's once a year.

FD: Oh, now it's once a year.

CA: Before, just after I retire, for several years, was twice a year.
And was big too. That's why I'm very thankful.

END OF INTERVIEW

GLOSSARY

Diajingu [Japanese]	A denomination of the Shinto religion
Kalua [Hawaiian]	Cooking method using heated stones, buried and slowly cooked
Kaukau [Hawaiian]	Food
Lilikoi [Hawaiian]	Passion Fruit
Pau [Hawaiian]	Completed, finished
Sashimi [Japanese]	Sliced raw fish