

Linda Beech
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This is the 2nd of October 1981 and Meeting of the Manoa History group and we are starting out by having a conversation with Linda Beech. I think you should tell us a little about yourself. Not your age of course.

Linda: Never!----will have great difficulty to disguise. Not that I don't make every effort. I really don't qualify as a Manoa until about the age of 5 because we lived on Kewalo Street for my first 5 years, on Tantalus. Then moved up to Huelani Place when I was 5 and lived there until I was 12, then down the valley to Judd Hillside where my parents still live as most of you know. Yes Peg?

Peg: Now I know why, go ahead.

Linda: Okay, okay. Was it the war?

Peg: Heather Webster.

Linda: Yeah, okay. I spent a good deal of my childhood, infact, most of my playing time was at Dorthory Agee in this house down there and so my Mimi(?) and I canvassed ? this whole area. Naturally. Because we were both into Tarzan so heavily, we had a good part of it above ground. Coming here to Ed Comes house was something I remember vividly. This is the same spot isn't it?

VoiceS: Yeah.

Linda: So then as you know with some of you know, I grew up and went to live in Japan where I became what we say in Japanese--Kokoro no i noko which means that Eurasian of the emotions. So I'm Japanese on the inside. But no one seems to recognize it. And then I got my doctorate in clinical psychology in California at Berkeley, which helped. I'm back here now to live and to practice. So that's my history in brief.

Bea: Let's take turns in asking Linda specific questions. I mean someone will ask about her school days, what they played at as children besides Tarzan, and what the valley looked like then and things like and things like that. Margaret do you want to start off? Then just go down the line.

Peg Robb: When were you at Punahou. I remember.

Linda: I was the class of '42.

P. Robb: Class of '42 but you started way back.

L. Beech: I started at Lincoln and

P. Robb: I was sitting in the office.

L. Beech: I thought so. You look so familiar.

P. Robb: I look different in some spots. Your class was the one disrupted by the war.

L. Beech: Yes, but by that time, I had been transferred by my parents to Roosevelt. So I disrupted at Roosevelt, never graduated actually. I still don't have a high school diploma.

P. Robb: That happens every once in a while with a Ph.D. We know several, Dr. Bernard Sherman doesn't have one, Eleanor O'Ryan never had a high school diploma

L. Beech: It still reminds me of that comment "It's the school", when you ask a PH.D. where that degree came from where he or she got the degree the answer will be Punahou. Where did you go to school-Punahou. And it's true.

P. Robb: Did your family, your mother, stay on here during the war? I'm trying to remember.

L. Beech: Yes, we were here during the war. And I was in the military defense, at Fort Shafter.

P. Robb: All those nice uniforms.

L. Beech: Oh those gold wings.

P. Robb: A great group of people. They were the outstanding women who participated in that group out there in Shafter.

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L. Beech: Yes, occasionally I'd see Gwen Williams on the Big Island, and she reminds me.

P. Robb: Does she remember?

L. Beech: Of course, but she comes to see my parents when I see them there, but when I saw Gwen she said, "Do you remember that you were the only person who was ever confined to quarters in the Women's Air Raid Defense for going to a formal dance barefoot?" I was fine, I was great. I just happened to move and my toes peeked out from underneath and I was caught. I remember the first time I wore a pair of tabis to a party. Were my feet looked at as fins!

L. Beech: That was very chic. Originally way back in the thirties.

L. Beech: Oh yes, child in the forties.

P. Robb: When did you go to Japan?

L. Beech: '49

P. Robb: And you have done considerable writing from there?

L. Beech: Writing and I had the television series for seven years. I've written for most of the Japanese publications, major Japanese publications.

L. Beech: It feels that Hawaii is the only place where that background can be integrated for me. I find it hard to live in Tokyo now, which was my home for so long. I find the mainland alien for me, although it's very pleasant; professionally it is great for me, but Hawaii is where my Japanese background can be helpful.

P. Robb: When did you move from Japan?

L. Beech: I came here and put the boys here in H.P.A. in 1965, but I went back to Japan and sold my house in '73 and went into graduate school in '74.

Miss Krauss: How about you Peg?

P. Robb: Somebody mentioned you remembered swimming in the Carter Pool?

L. Beech: Oh yes. We have to think about the, it's so strange to see the overlay of buildings of this place because I haven't been back here much, but looking out from here I remember those days when Dee-Dee and I would be restless and bored with the brook and what we were doing and the Tarzan and our forest, we had our Tarzan area pretty well staked out, about where that village is, the ethnic village section of Paradise Park, which got to grow into a bamboo grove. And when that got tiring and the games got tiring, then Dee-Dee's mother would always suggest a trip to the Carter Pool, which was for us most exciting thing to do. The Calms had impressed on us vividly how special it was for us to be allowed to hike up there. Other people couldn't but we had free excess in forest reserve land and we were never allowed to forget that nothing could be picked, that nothing could be dropped, that we were there as privileged people. And it gave it a magic, and of course going to that house which was at the end of the trail seems to me it took us, small feet time, it seems to have taken us over an hour to get there; it might not be true. We'd come through the trail and suddenly it was there, it must have been the way the Frenchmen discovering Anekor Wat. Each time I saw that place, I felt like an explorer who had found the lost city in the jungle, and there it was, a little house, sitting there; there is no anticipation to it, it was suddenly just there. And there was this concrete pool, which to me was Olympic size, and I now realize about 210 feet from there to there. It couldn't have been more than 20 feet. And of course it was fed by the stream, and it was always icy cold, and that wonderful brown water that I loved

so much. You hold it up in your hands, and all the delicious little specks are swimming in it. And the smell of guava and in the ginger season it was terrific.

P. Robb: The place was deserted wasn't it?

L. Beech: Yes. It was deserted. But Ed Compt kept it up. Kept up the trail. ?

C. Bouslog: What years would this be?

L. Beech: Was in the late thirties. And the house didn't have the abandoned look- it looked as if someone had shut it up for the season.

B. Krauss: May I interrupt a minute? H.S.P.A. was given the duty to keep it up, that's why Compt kept it up. ?

L. Beech: I see.

B. Krauss: And the cottage was made available to H.S.P.A. staff members to come up over the weekend or something. It was later that it did become abandoned and vandalized. At that time, when you would have gone, the H.S.P.A. had the duty to take care of it.

L. Beech: I never saw anybody though, out there. I never had the feeling of a house that was just left.

P. Robb: How was the pool formed? Was it formed so that the stream went through it?

L. Beech: Yes. I don't know why, it must have been that way; I still don't know why it wasn't totally clogged with weeds. But I guess Ed must have kept it free.

P. Robb: Is that area accessible to the public now or is that forest reserve?

L. Beech: I have no idea.

B. Krauss: You can get into it, you can get into any forest reserve but you aren't supposed to be there.

Wesley: There is a trail going right to the house.

L. Beech: You go up across the bridge and then you turn left.

P. Robb: Is the pool still there?

Wesley: I can't tell, only the foundation is left.

Miss Krauss: Of the house.

Miss Krauss: It burnt down, because when it was reported, the fire engines could not get only to the Agee house; so it burnt down completely. They found vandals, vandalism there; people would sleep there and the thought is among some people that have lived here a long time, that it was burnt down deliberately to stop that kind of thing. They were worried if they didn't burn it down under controlled conditions, the forest would catch on fire. I mean that's only rumors.

M. Young: Did you ever swim at the Single pool? Which was built the same way but down here on the other side of Paradise Park?

L. Beech: Oh yes, of course.

M. Young: The Shingles were living there in the thirties.

L. Beech: Yes. We were taken there. Dee-Dee and I went down there several times and that was another kind of an experience, yes.

M. Young: The stream went through it the same way.

L. Beech: It was lovely, it didn't have the feeling of being _____ ?

I was so influenced by that experience and by this valley, that the way it has manifested in my adult life has been that I have made it a point to go to ruins all over the world. Like Angkor Wat and Persepolis, Ephesus and places like that. And I also have a tree house in Waipio Valley on the Big Island! And I know it's because of all of this. Because at Waipio the configuration is identical to that of a young Manoa.

P. Robb: Did you go out to the falls much?

L. Beech: Yes, that was sort of the standard trip that we went, but we never ever went without putting a rock on the leaf. That had to be. Sometimes we went up the trail, and sometimes we went up the stream.

The pool was always a little bit smaller than it should be. You know that feeling. It should have been like Waimea or like Sacred Falls.

P. Robb: Did you go to any other falls or just the ones at the end of the valley?

L. Beech: No, I have hiked around the whole valley but I've never gotten, oh yes I have, I got to the fall, whatever the falls is to the right.

L. Beech: The tall, tall one. I don't know the name of it.

Miss Krauss: We have to get out the map. Winikekua. No, it's not Waikeakua. It's ? before.

L. Beech: Big tall one, you can see from down the valley. From where down where are is Waikeakua. It's the one.

M. Young: The Carter's place was in the second valley.

L. Beech: I'm talking about river over that way.

B. Krauss: Did you go over the other side on the thing that we used to call Motorcycle Hill? Did you go over this one.

L. Beech: Yes. I forgot about it.

B. Krauss: Well, that one is Puupuao. Was it on the other side of that ridge?

L. Beech: I can't remember, I'm sorry. I'd have to look. I can tell by looking.

P. Robb: Motorcycle Hill is at the end of Woodlawn Terrace.

B. Krauss: When I was young, Motorcycle Hill was Puupuao.

P. Robb: Up Woodlawn?

B. Krauss: Between Woodlawn and this side of the valley. You can see it if you get down here.

P. Robb: Then it's left.

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L. Beech: Yes we had pretty much carte blanche to play within a certain limit. And the limit was, we were never allowed to go above the bridge which we crossed and we were never allowed too much pass, beyond the "Paradise Park" boundaries. But within those ranges we could play, and we would always have to say, state your name and purpose, and place, and we'd go off and do this concentrated Tarzan number. Dee-Dee's tarzan suit had hand-painted spots I remember.

P. Robb: Can I ask something about Huelani?

L. Beech: Yes please.

P. Robb: Do you remember a spring?

L. Beech: That is what I wanted to talk about. It was over the hau tree. The time I was not over at Dee-Dee's I was over in that hau tree. I still can remember every move to climb it, and the spring, I'm sure it was the spring with which Princess Huelani had her _____ at least so we believe. ?

L. Beech: This is on Huelani Drive. It's between Huelani, where you turn off Huelani Place and the top of Rainbow Drive, approximately, right in the middle on the Woodlawn side. It has now been filled in.

P. Robb: What happened to the spring?

L. Beech: They must have diverted it; all I can say is that house is there; maybe they have still have swampy land in the back. That spring is very precious to me. And the hau tree was a prime and primeval mover in my life.

P. Robb: We keep hearing references to the spring story and we keep hearing references to the spring in Kaahumanu. I keep wondering if that isn't the area.

B. Krauss: Well, you know after all these different places, you see there are so many varied designations of where Kaahumanu lived. When I was a child I was told she lived on the top of Puupua'o and I just accepted it. I don't know who told me, but that's what I accepted. Then it says where the Henry Cooper house is, that it was there. And also it was way up the valley. I think we pretty much come to the conclusion that's it was in, near one of those hanging valleys. You see, none of the pictures show enough of the background to identify it, but it must be, and this could easily be it.

L. Beech: Did anyone talk about a hau tree?

B. Krauss: All the talks mostly about Ohialehua, mostly about them, and gingers I think and that's about it. And the pool that she went swimming in.

L. Beech: When was the hau imported?

B. Krauss: The Polynesians brought it with them so there's no problem there; time-wise it could have been here. And the Hawaiians thought so much if it, that is would be very easy, that she would have one by her.

P. Robb: Thank you, I kept wondering where that spring was and I couldn't see it anytime that I was up there. You say that a house has been built over it.

L. Beech: Yes, if you are interested, afterward we can drive by there

and I could pinpoint the spot for you.

Miss Krauss: Could you do that Peg?

P. Robb: I'd love to.

Miss Kruass: I think we might go back to some geologist who might remember that there was a spring there. If you could get the number of the house.

L. Beech: I think that spring was just thrilling to me. I loved it.

The water just kept coming. In our Huelani house, we had a stream that ran only when it rained. The magic of the water that was bubbling up was some thing that impressed me during my days as a child.

M. Young: Wouldn't the Board of Water Supply have records when it was boxed?

P. Robb: I went up the other day trying to find where they are going to dig this second well in Manoa. Nobody knew anything about it.

B. Krauss: At the Waterworks.

P. Robb: No, I went up to an area close to where it suppose to be dug. People around there didn't know.

Miss Krauss: How about you Lou, would you like to ask some questions?

Louise: Well, I've seen about the taro patches, I remember in the late thirties, we were able to look down over the floor of the valley. And it was always such a thrill after, well, with the taro leaves waving in the wind. You got your contrast of greens. But when the taro was harvested and the areas they were built in patches, with the little dikes in between and water was filled in and we got the reflections of the sky and the cloud. You had your perfect sky, right in the floor of the valley, I remember that.

This is in the late twenties.

M. Young: Did you ever have contact with the Loosie youngsters? ?

They all lived across from Paradise Park, outside of the road?

L. Beech: I remember the name, but I don't remember

M. Young: Pat, and Ted, and Avis, mostly they were all one generation. Frank had part of the property on the other side, up the road, just as you get into Paradise Park. I thought more or less they are the same age. I thought you may have had contact with them.

L. Beech: Dee and I didn't play with others; mostly we would play with each other.

Voice: If you came up as often as you did with Dee-Dee as you remember, this whole valley, from Lowrey on up was inhabited by little farming.

L. Beech: Of course. I remember going to visit our maid's house, kind of down the middle there, walking through their farm to get to the house, which was dominated by the shrines.

Louise: Some of them grew nothing but gardenias.

L. Beech: Oh yes, that is what they grew, gardenias.

Louise V. And other had anthuriums.

L. Beech: Yes, that's what I think mostly of when I think of the farms.

Louise: You could come up along the road way anytime during guava season, and pick your guavas for the jelly for the year.

or tears, gingers,

L. Beech: You had plenty guavas for guava fights too.

Louise V: Swat ginger, you remember?

L. Beech: Oh yes, and shampoo ginger.

B. Krauss: When you went to Punahou, where were you living at? Huelani or Judd?

L. Beech: Judd Hillside.

B. Krauss: Did you walk down to shcool?

L. Beech: Yes, I walked to school past Rocky Hill.

B. Krauss: Linda, Did you know of the existence of Manoa School?

L. Beech: Yes, but very vaguely at that time,

B. Krauss: Because you were very young.

Louise: You went to Lincoln first?

L. Beech: Yes, I did. Now a school for the retarded, I understand.

Louise: A special school there in that building, but there is a new Lincoln School on the side of Punchbowl across from Roosevelt.

B. Krauss: Do you remember what you would play at Punahou mostly? Did you go through jacks, what grade were you and when you went?

L. Beech: I started 7th.

B. Krauss: Festivals?

L. Beech: Yes, Punahou was a magic experience, not only was it an enormous

campus from the small confines of Lincoln, but also because I had to move between buildings. I remember feeling totally bewildered, but yet very, very, happy. I just loved the school. All the traditions, the lily pond, and the excitement of the football season and the antiquity of the buildings to someone who was 11 was just thrilling. Going to old school hall to take my music lessons.

Louise: Do you remember Arbor day at Punahou? That was a very special festival with Charlie Judd.

Louise: He came always to speak to the children. How it took thirty, forty years to grow a tree and you could cut it down in a matter of minutes.

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Miss Krauss: How about anybody else?

Van Dyke: One thing for the record, you should tell who your parents are, and where they lived because I don't think that's gotten in there-just as early residents around here.

L. Beech: My father is Dr. Albert J. Magelsdorf, and they live at 1964 Judd Hillside, and he was head of the genetics department for the H.S.P.A., and is now a consultant.

Voice: And a man I greatly admire.

B. Krauss: All of us do.

M. Young: And your mother is?

Louise: Made wonderful doll clothes when I was in the volunteer service. She used to dress the dolls that had no clothes.

L. Beech: She dressed my dolls very nicely.

B. Krauss: Are there any more questions? We're going to be sorry after Linda goes.

L. Beech: Can I say something about the Chinese funerals?

B. Krauss: Please, this is all part of our interest.

Van Dyke: Somebody the other day asked me if I knew when the cemetery was built?

Do you know anything of the origins of it, how long it has been there?

L. Beech: No, I just remember the site.

B. Krauss: Back in the 1800's

B. Krauss: We have someone working on that, but please tell us.

L. Beech: Well, first I want to tell the most amazing thing that ever happened to me in Manoa Valley. I was walking along Oahu, going up to Rainbow, I was walking up Rainbow Drive and you won't believe this, but ice fell out of the sky. Do you remember that?

L. Beech: I could not believe it. My whole world was upside down. I kept looking up there and there was ice coming down. It was 1934.

Vicars: And Mary Lou picked up the hailstone and we all ran and put it in the freezer, and brought it to school the next day.

P. Robb: I thought someone was throwing rocks on our house roof.

L. Beech: Oh that was fun, what a miraculous day! I still remember going to sleep, and thinking this is the day that the ice fell out of the sky.

M. Young: What about the Chinese funeral?

L. Beech: The Chinese funeral we could hear from oh it must have been above Punahou Hill, and we could look from our Huelani window and look down at this magnificent procession with a dragon at the head with red scraps of money being thrown, the drums being bonged and the snake-like movement of this long queue of people. And going up to the cemetery and leaving the food which we always dared each other to go and eat, and never got up the nerve because we knew it was really kapu to do that. But it was just the fascinating resonance of the Chinese music--the whole procession and of course the mystery of death. One time we all went down, the whole neighborhood gang, we jumped on the little mounds in front of the headstones and felt suddenly "sinful"; we knew we were about to be struck dead.

P. Robb: And the fireworks?

L. Beech: Of course the fireworks. What a magnificent display it was.

P. Robb: How long a time did it take from getting from the top of the hill to the cemetery?

L. Beech: Seems to me it was about an hour, but it could have been less, I think it was about an hour. It went quite slowly.

Van Dyke: Everyone is walking?

L. Beech: Yes, everyone is walking.

Van Dyke: No, dragon.

L. Beech: No, and of course the dragons had to go this way, dragons never move in a straight line, or didn't you know that.

Then I also wanted to talk about how thrilling it was to be in Mr. Agee's chess room you know he had a chess room that looked out into this valley and he named it as what Jack London had used. And he taught me how

L. Beech: to play chess in there. And I went on and played some tournament chess after that in years later. But I remember seeing in that room, and by that time I had read some of Jack London's thrilling stories that he wrote and the intricacies of the game seemed so, in some way contrapuntal to the very primitive and primeaval feeling toward the back of the valley had. It was like the overlay of world and differences. I remember feeling it even as a child.

Van Dyke: I don't think Jack London would have played in that house though.

L. Beech: No, he didn't play in that house, but because he played chess with Mr. Agee once.

Mr. Agee kind of, I don't think he formerly named it the Jack London Chess room, but he kind of referred to it.

Van Dyke: Because they use to have chess games in a house on Beachwalk, in Waikiki, Mr. Baker, and Yolanda, Joseph Platt Cook and Lauren Thruston.

L. Beech:

Van Dyke: Not that I remember, but I know that from Mr. Baker, because Mr. Baker would often describe, because he'd go in take pictures or be there for lunch or whatever. They were all socialist so they much what we could do for the working man, etc. etc.

: Was that Lauren Thruston senior?

Van Dyke: Yep.

: That would have been much older than Hamilton Agee.

L. Beech: Yes. But he must

Van Dyke: He was born in 1880, and of course Thruston was much other than that.

B. Krauss: This isn't the only place that Jack London probably played chess. He may have played in at the old University Club or something like that.

L.V. : Did you ever hear Mr. Agee play the xylophone?

L. Beech: Yes.

L.V.: I was always fascinated by this man of many talents.

L. Beech: Speaking of noises, the noise I most associate with my childhood in terms of special noise is being taken to Dr. Lyon's house for Christmas, to see his toys. He had this great toy collection, and it was only out at Christmas time. And he had this toy which was a little house and a dog in it named Rex. And you said Rex, and the dog jumped out of the house. Of course it was P.E., pre-electronics, Oh Rex, it was a big deal for Christmas. And finally we got Rex, and by that time you could voice control a robot. Some of the mystery had gone.

: Where was this?

L. Beech: At Dr. Lyon's house. That wonderful big Makiki house.

Van Dyke: Off of Keeaumoku. No, Matlock. All those toys were sold at his auction, big boxes for \$5.00.

L. Beech: Oh, no.

Van Dyke: We bought alot of artifacts that _____ to the rear. ?

L. Beech: My parents may have bought Rex then.

Van Dyke: What year was this then? What year did he die? I associate it with freshman year at Punahou somewhere in there.

B. Krauss: Do you remember the musical drawers under the steps that went up to that second story from that main casino room, the room where the casinos were?

L. Beech: Yes, very vaguely, yes.

B. Krauss: Each one when you pulled out.

L. Beech: Had a different sound, different melody. I remember how that conservatory was so fascinated _____ ?

And let's see what else I wanted to say. I was thinking about how the ecological balance has changed in places like this valley. Our major problem as a child was lantana. And it used to be something we just fought and we'd go, of course we went hiking barefooted, and the lantana was just awful. When we'd come back just flayed. Many years later in India, I took a domestic elephant out to observe some wild elephants in a forest reserve. And there was lantana as big as this house. And I remember the elephant going right through it, and I was thinking if I had that elephant, what a childhood I could have had in Manoa.

M.Y.: But the interesting thing is that all that lantana that was up on Round Top is gone.

L. Beech: That is what I was quite saying. It is so fascinating now that to them that was really the major problem, then that mule grass, and what is that now?

Van Dyke: Bamboo. I remember Emma Doyle. It must have been around 1949 or 50 buying a couple of packages of lantana seeds and shaking her head because they were going to be put into a pot, all over Manoa, and all over where she lived, on Dole Street, it was just wild, it was the biggest pest of her childhood.

M.Y.: A Different kind of lantana.

Van Dyke: That was more poky, taller too; the other is called lady-like lantana.

P.R.: Do they still have lantana on Maui?

L. Beech: I'm sure.

B. Krauss: It forms a gall, it's a little fly, it lays its eggs, it bores a hole, lays its egg, and when the larva comes out, it makes a gall, and then the gall breaks. So it is pretty much under control; it was such a pest in the pasture land.

L. Beech: Another thing I remember, speaking of that kind of control in the ecological shifts is the real presence of almost a plethora of centipedes, and the scorpions that we would find. The butos too.

L. Beech: We neatly managed that, but that was something. And to be stung by a centipede, ah yea.

P.R. : I had one in my bed the other night. They are still around.

: They was running on my bedroom rug.

L. Beech: My father said they lost their zip though. They know they are moribund so each leg is tired. Just wanted to say how much of our childhood was spent making leis. Do you remember that? And lots of Hawaiians. Lots of them made out of ferns, and how lovely they were. What fun it was to weave them and to put them. This really is the last. In our garden in Huelani, there is a rock that is formed like a chair; I always thought it had some significance. That might be something to look at sometime. Again this was in the lower part of the garden, an over-grown part. And it formed an obvious chair.

B. Krauss: Do you know the home, the house?

L. Beech: No it was funny because it was in this letter I got from Connie Wethers, saying that she thinks this such and such land was sold to _____ ?

L. Beech: She thinks, she is right.

: And I didn't know where it was. Apparently they owned almost from Oahu to right on up to where they built the old house. ?

: Who was it lived there?

L. Beech: You go to Huelani Place, and the Withinton's is straight ahead of you, as you go up. Just as you make the curve around to the left to Withington's, there is a very sharp angle, left turn and a narrow driveway. And the house that was below that was the Osorio's and go down this narrow driveway for several hundred feet and it is that house. I don't think you can see it from the street.

Van Dyke: Do you have an address?

L. Beech: 3120 was the old address. I used to go back there whenever I came back from Japan and the last time I went back there, a woman came to the door, and I said, I hoped with a winning smile, but was a losing smile, and I said I am Linda Manglesdorf Beech and I used to live in this house, and I said I used to live in this house, and she said oh no you didn't. And I said oh but I did, she said I can recite all the owners of this house and she left Manglesdorf obliterated from the roster.

Bouslog: How long was Manglesdorf living there?

L. Beech: Just six years, seven years, but very long for me.