

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW
with
Ruby Hargrave

August 14, 2009

BY: Arlene Ching (A.C.)

A.C.: I'm at Aiea's Kanda Store office of Mrs. Murakami's store. Have you done any interviews before, like this, for oral history?

Ruby: No, not particularly like this, but you know, I've done other interviews.

A.C.: Well, the idea of doing oral history for a community, is to, first of all, have recollections of people, you know, residents from their point of view because this is not easily found in, except in diaries, letters, memoirs, family stories. Secondly, if and when someone writes the stories of 'Aiea, they usually does it from those "light bulb" events, like "where were you December 7th, 1941?" But this community has so much vitality, people still living here, so this is pretty much the standard question that I have been asking (Showed her a list) but the last three are particular to you because of your family's community activism. You've been out there and busy and seen a lot of things happening. You're still on the ('Aiea) Neighborhood Board?

Ruby: Yep.

A.C.: So, if I could ask you a little bit. Your name and your family's background. Your birth. You don't have to give a day, just a birth year to establish a point of reference. Just tell me about yourself Ruby.

Childhood on 21st Avenue in Kaimuki

Ruby: Okay. I was born, I guess, in Kaimuk[̄]i. My mom and dad were living in Kaimuki.

A.C.: A certain part of Kaimuki? Harding Avenue?

Ruby: No, no. I can't think of the street, but the main road was—21st Avenue I think it was. It was just called 21st Avenue.

A.C.: All right. You were born at home?

Ruby: No. I don't know. I don't think so.

A.C.: And your parents' names?

Ruby: Calvert. My dad was Roy Calvert. My mom was Mary Laakealoha. My mom was pure Hawaiian. My dad was German-Irish. (Laughs)

A.C.: How did they meet?

Ruby: Um. I don't know. My dad was just getting out of the service, just gotten a job at the University of Hawai'i. He was a carpenter. So, that's why they moved into Kaimuki. So, actually, I grew up in Kaimuki. Twenty-First Avenue.

A.C. How many children were there in the family?

Ruby: Four girls.

A.C.: Where were you in that order?

Ruby: Number one. I was the oldest.

A.C.: Were there grandparents or other family members living in the household?

Ruby: My grandma came and stayed with us. My mom's mother who was pure Hawaiian. So she stayed with us. She was from Waiau and they lost the place. Actually, what happened was, my grandfather married a young woman and she took the property and kicked all the family out. So, my grandma came to stay with us, which was great for my mother because she helped, you know. Actually, it was very good for my mom, because my mom was crippled. My mom had her hand like this, but boy, could she pinch the ears! You didn't miss it! (Laughs)

A.C.: So her left hand was kinda like this.

Ruby: It was like this. Yeah. But she did all the washing. All the ironing. All the cooking. So, it didn't bother her. (Laughs) It bothered the kids!

A.C.: So as the oldest of four children, with a *tutu* at home, too---

Ruby: Actually, that *tutu* came and stayed with us. But the other person who came to stay with us was my mother's uncle. He had, uh, married a younger woman, who promptly kicked him out the house, kept the property in Waiau. So he didn't have a place to stay. He asked my dad if he could come and stay with us. My dad was happy because he helped. He planted the plants. He watered, you know, took care of them and things like that. So my dad was happy to have my uncle there.

A.C.: What was the house like, that now accommodated four adults and up to four children?

Ruby: Yeah, yeah! We had a basement. There were bedrooms down there. Bathroom. That was where my dad's shop was---laundry and everything else, so there's plenty room.

A.C.: So where did you go to school?

Ruby: Aliiolani...Right across from St. Patrick's Church, on the mauka side of St. Patrick's.

A.C.: How did you get to school?

Ruby: (Pause) Walked. It was great because you could stop at the park, up in Kaimuki and ride the swings. Then go buy crack seed (Laughs) at the store.

A.C.: Idyllic childhood.

Ruby: Oh, it was. We were never very unhappy. We just had a great time.

A.C.: Did you go up to the eighth grade (there)?

Ruby: No. It's only sixth grade, and then, it had an intermediate school that started there. So we were the first class. Robert Louis Stevenson when it started.

A.C.: So how did you get to Stevenson?

Ruby: Walked. Sure. No problem. You walked up to Kaimuki. You stopped. You bought cracked seed. (Laughs) Then you went to the park and everything else. Then, you went home. Just going to school, you went to straight to school. We didn't stop anywhere else.

A.C.: When you came home, there were chores to do?

Ruby: Oh yeah.

A.C.: Okay. So, where did you go to high school?

Ruby: Stevenson. We were the first class at Robert Louis Stevenson.

A.C.: What year did you graduate?

Ruby: Don't ask me.

A.C.: Okay.

Ruby: I graduated from Roosevelt in '43. And then, we went to Stevenson first,

and then, directly to Roosevelt.

A.C.: Well, that brings us right into the war. So, where were you December 1st 1941 (meant December 7th, 1941)?

Ruby: Home. They just told us. News got around that we've been bombed. We kinda stayed at home, you know. Be careful. We didn't know what was going to happen.

A.C.: Do you remember family making a bomb shelter? Doing a Victory Garden?

Ruby: Well, yeah. We always had a garden because the only store we had was Waialae Store. Actually, the road cut off and went to Kahala. Right at the corner there was the store, and so, we bought our groceries there. I can remember the butcher Slim. I can still see him, and him coming and asking, "What did Mama tell you to buy?" (Laughs) I mean it was much, much easier to buy the crack seed. I remember that! Oh, shoots! We had a happy, happy life.

A.C.: What did you do for fun, next to buy crack seed? Walk to the beach?

Ruby: Oh, well. We walked to the beach. Took Kahala Beach. We walked through the golf course, and we'd look for golf balls because then, we could sell them back for ten cents and things like that! They were in the stream. There were several streams. When the golfers knocked them in there, they didn't bother to go look for them. Us kids would go find them and sell 'em.

A.C.: Did they have yasai wagons come around, or to sell vegetables and things?

Ruby: No, no.

A.C.: Everyone could just make it to the store?

Ruby: Well, we'd walk to the store, you know. Of course, I got into trouble quite often, because when I went to buy the poi, coming home, I would play and by the time I came home, the bag was open. (Laughs) Oh, my mom used to have a fit! (Laughs)

A.C.: Send Ruby to the store and----

Ruby: Right, right! Then we'd stop and we'd go look for golf balls in the stream. You know, we'd put the poi down!

A.C.: It wasn't in plastic bags like today, right?

Ruby: No, no! They were in cloth bags. Of course, we saved because---in fact, my mom used to make our panties out of the bags, you know? She'd make our panties,

and just buy elastic. That's what we wore. What!

A.C.: What was the size of the bags?

Ruby: There were twenty-five cent bags, and fifty-cent bags, so it depends. Of course, half the time, we got home, and Mama would say, "How come the bag's open?" "Well Mom, it fell, you know...." (Laughs)

A.C.: Oh good times!

Ruby: She was so good. Then my *tutu* who came to live with us, grew all our vegetables and stuff like that. You see, my dad was going to---actually, he was going to start kinda a poultry farm but he had a heart attack and died. He worked at the university, and had a heart attack, and passed away. But then, he also the guy. There was a group of them, Five of them. Four professors and my dad who had a group that had a sampan. My dad was instrumental in operating the sampan because the professors didn't know how! So he was the one who operated the boat and everything. I can remember. (Pause) My dad loved to fish, but he wouldn't eat any. I mean, he couldn't be bothered. He had bacon, eggs, beef, you know, but not fish. But my mom was always happy. And my *tutu* was happy, you know.

A.C.: A reliable supply of fish! You didn't have to go to the market to get it.

Ruby: See, there were five of them. Four professors and my dad were kind of a hui that went fishing. In fact they got a boat, the Kaihawanawana. My dad was the one who operated the boat. The other guys were there, you know; they didn't know anything about the boats so they had to find someone who knew. So my dad was there. But he wouldn't eat any fish! It was ridiculous! My mom's family didn't mind.

A.C.: No. More for them.

Ruby: Yeah! My mom actually was very haole-fied.

A.C.: So then your father would have the things that he enjoyed.

Ruby: Oh yes! Yes, yes, yes.

A.C.: Did she learn from her mother-in-law? Or she just taught herself?

Ruby: I guess she just---I don't remember. I don't remember my grandma. Just the *tutu* who came to live with us, after the wife (Laughs) kicked him out, you know! Between him and Mama, after my dad died, I think my dad was only forty-two. He had a heart attack and died, up at the university. He was going to go on vacation and had this heart attack over there. So, between my mom and *tutu*, they managed. Fortunately, my dad and them had bought houses. They were the first houses on the highway. Actually,

we were just below---what you call---it was a reservoir. Actually, above my house, were Hawaiian burial grounds so we were constantly reminded that we were not to touch the things in there, you know. Of course, kids would love to go up there. (Laughs)

A.C.: This was on the hilly part?

Ruby: There was a reservoir right above us. So we weren't far out. We were actually a short ways from Waialae, because beyond that, there was either---I want to say plantation but it wasn't plantation. I guess there were farmers who were out that way.

A.C.: So your father and mother had some houses built?

Ruby: Oh, my dad was a carpenter, so he was building our house. He built our house, and our neighbor, who lived next to us. They had the lot next to us. My dad helped him build, and fortunately, when he passes away, he and his wife helped my mom. Made sure she had things from the store and things like that.

A.C.: It must have been hard to be a young widow.

Ruby: Very. Yeah.

A.C.: So your family was able to continue living in the house. Did your mother have to go to work?

Ruby: No. Mama didn't go to work. My *tutu* would make laulau and sell laulau. So, he did that. Mama. What did Mama do? Mama took---Oh! The welfare department found out that my mom liked kids and everything. So we were constantly having new brothers and sisters in the house. I guess they paid Mama, you know, to take care of them.

A.C.: Like room and board?

Ruby: Yeah!

A.C.: Wow. Lively household.

Ruby: Oh yes, yes, yes. We always were happy to have these kids. Most of the time, we ended up with boys. You know, here were the four girls. No brothers. We were always happy to take care of these little boys. (Laughs)

A.C.: Was there music in the house too? Did anyone in the family sing?

Ruby: No.

A.C.: Did your grandmother speak Hawaiian?

Ruby: My mother spoke Hawaiian, but not to us! She was very strict about teaching us, and wanting us to learn English. She knew that if we were to get a job, we would have to get a job being able to speak English and not the Hawaiian.

A.C.: So weren't Stevenson and Roosevelt English Standard schools?

Ruby: Yes, yes. They were the first. Yeah, and you know, and we were very fortunate to have gone to them.

A.C.: So was that someone's idea that you go to the English Standard schools?

Ruby: I think it was my dad. He wanted to be sure that we'd get an education and insisted to my mom that we had to go to school. We weren't gonna stay home and pick kiawe beans at ten cents a bag to Waialae Ranch for the cattle there.

A.C.: So there was this expectation that you would all get an education.

Ruby: Oh, very much. He was---very, very sure that we were going to get an education. And of course, we enjoyed it.

A.C.: Were the schools harder for an English Standard curriculum?

Ruby: I don't know. They weren't harder, but we also had a Japanese school. We were real good friends with the kids who went to the Japanese school right there on Waialae.

A.C.: Good snacks.

Ruby: Yeah! Of course, of course. You know. And then, we went to work in the pineapple fields. Because---

A.C.: Out at Waialae?

Ruby: We would go to school. The bus would be there. They would pick us up and take us out to the pineapple fields out in---I can see the place. Dole Cannery out there in Wahiawa. They would take us all the way out there.

A.C.: Was this after '41?

Ruby: Yeah!

A.C.: Wow. Oh my.

Ruby: And the best part was, I had sandwiches, but the little girl next to me had

musubi! (Laughs) So we'd trade and ride.

A.C.: So, mixed plate on the bus!

Ruby: I never regret it. I always enjoy. I remember how great it was. You know?

A.C.: So when you graduated in '43, did you know what you were going to do next?

Laboratory Technician at Pearl Harbor Shipyard in 1943

Ruby: Yes...In fact, the person who took me in hand was my chem. teacher. So she wanted me to major in chemistry, which I started. And that's how I met Vernon because Vernon was the head chemist at the shipyard. So, you see, all the boys had been drafted. So here we were, five girls from Roosevelt. They needed these kids to do jobs that you know; there weren't any people around. I mean men were all drafted and so, we ended up, my chem. teacher collared the five of us, and we started working, you know?

A.C.: What was your chemistry teacher's name? You recall?

Ruby: Betty Steffee.

A.C.: Ah. Female, too.

Ruby: Oh yeah! And strict. Man, the boys didn't dare argue with Betty. But she took good care of us. You know, A.C., when you think, here's a teacher that was so worried about the kids. You know, she was making sure that we did things properly. Actually, the only reason I went on in education---oh well, actually, it was because of the war. The guys had all been drafted. They didn't have any lab technicians that could run water samples and stuff like that. So there were a bunch of girls. There were five of us that Betty got, and we went to work.

A.C.: Where were you working?

Ruby: At the shipyard.

A.C.: So, it's like go to school. Work at the same time?

Ruby: Yeah. It was fun. My supervisor was Chinese. Hun Yung Lung.

A.C.: He took it just fine that he had these five young ladies?

Ruby: Oh yeah. Oh yeah. There weren't any guys. He got drafted. No, not drafted into helping Betty Steffee. We ran all the water samples, and all these kind of

things that we could d because hey didn't have people to do these things.

A.C.: You were taking water samples? Fresh water?

Ruby: Fresh water. Yeah. For the community. Testing the water. Yeah.

A.C.: You met your husband right after you started work there?

Ruby: He was the head chemist. So Betty was working for him and she was the one that got all us girls and do the water sampling. Testing the water, because the rumor was that it had been poisoned. The Japanese had come in and poisoned the water, and all this kind of baloney.

A.C.: Did you have to go collect the samples?

Ruby: Oh yeah. Yeah.

A.C.: You'd drive to all the different stations?

Ruby: No. They would collect it and bring it to us.

A.C.: That's important work.

Ruby: Well, it was fun for us. But it was.

A.C.: Because, you don't grow up, oh, I want to be testing water!

Ruby: No, no, no, no. Well, actually, there were---I know Betty had five of us. I was the oldest, and the other were just one year behind me at Roosevelt. We were all placed in different areas to get the water samples to come in, and test them, to see that---you see, the rumor was the Japanese had poisoned the water. So we had to be sure that it hadn't happened. And it hadn't! (Laughs)

A.C.: How long did you work at that job?

Ruby: I can't remember. See, I was still going to school also. I don't know.

A.C.: Couple of years?

Ruby: Yeah, oh yeah.

A.C.: So what happened next? Did you get married? Did you graduate?

Ruby: Uh, no. I got married. Oh wait now. We had a tidal wave, and that was part of the problem. We were stuck working because of the tidal wave, and we had to test

the water that it was...okay to drink and things like that?

A.C.: Was this the April 1st 1946 tidal wave?

Ruby: Yes. Wait a minute now. April 6th 1946 was when my son was born.

A.C.: You already had your own little "tsunami"! (Both laugh) Sounds like a very busy time of your life.

Ruby: The kind of things that were going on---we weren't unhappy. The community wasn't unhappy. We were always helping each other.

A.C.: When did you first see 'Aiea? What came first? Marriage?

Ruby: Marriage. We were living in Kaimuki. We heard that the plantation had closed, and they were selling the property. Somehow or other, Vernon had contacts. So, we bought.

A.C.: How did you buy? Did you go to a bank?

Ruby: I don't remember.

Moving to 'Aiea Heights

A.C.: The plantation closed in 1947 and started selling lots, first to plantation workers. After that, I guess. So what did you think when you first saw it?

Ruby: I loved it. It had sugarcane and my *tutu* that had come to live with us was really happy. It was really funny because, our neighbor on the back was Japanese, and my *tutu* and the neighbor used to stand at the fence and talk to each other. My *tutu* used to be able to talk to him in Japanese! So I can still see the old man standing at the fence, talking to my *tutu*. One would speak pidgin Hawaiian. The other one (Laughs) pidgin Japanese. But you know, I guess, people were so close and were always willing to help each other. I mean, like the Japanese man that lived below us would come and talk to my *tutu* and he would say, "Well, what do you need? Can I help?" My *tutu* would say, "Well, you know, I've been growing this. How about you take some home?" Things like that.

A.C.: This is here in 'Aiea.

Ruby: 'Aiea! Um hmm. Because the plantation had just closed. It went out of business. They had this land. They were trying to get rid of it. So people that were willing to take it and grow things, and do things like that, they were happy to let them buy it. Stuff like that.

A.C.: Do you recall that you and your husband had various lots to look at?

Ruby: I don't remember. I know we got the one in 'Aiea that I'm living at now.

A.C.: So, was your address always 'Aiea Heights Drive?

Ruby: Yes ma'am.

A.C.: Now. It's a somewhat hilly lot. Did you have to put in your own driveway?

Ruby: Yes. Our driveway. Actually, we were getting ready to put in our driveway and the Chinese family that lived next to us, asked if they could come in with us, because he had no entrance. We had the entrance to the lot. So he was stuck.

A.C.: He was land-locked.

Ruby: Yes. So we agreed. And he's still there.

A.C.: You said it was about 9,000 square feet.

Ruby: Yeah.

A.C.: You had sugarcane growing on it?

Ruby: Oh yeah. Yeah, yeah.

A.C.: So you bought the land. You bought actually a sugarcane lot.

Ruby: Yes. But *tutu* immediately decided to plant vegetables and things like that.

A.C.: What kind of vegetables?

Ruby: Cabbage. We didn't have water so we didn't have watercress. But Waiau had water, so we would always get our watercress from Waiau. In fact, Sumida's farm? That was the watercress. And David and our oldest son are classmates. David Sumida. Actually, you know, people really helped each other.

A.C.: I can see that. People had similar circumstances where they would come to 'Aiea.

Ruby: Right, right. You helped each other. I can remember the chicken farm. The farmer gave us his feedbags. Mama would make our panties out of it.

A.C.: People just shared.

Ruby: Yes.

A.C.: Your neighbors on the *mauka* side are the Hos. The neighbors on the right. Are they still the same neighbors?

Ruby: Yeah. They still have----The neighbors on this side are the Akinas. Down below was a Japanese family and they're still there. The Hos. Then, the lot next to the Hos was smaller, but they had three. They were farmers. They sold. They're not farmers anymore. They're residents.

A.C.: So, the land was zoned for? Was it still agricultural?

Ruby: Well, no. Actually, they---Sam King Jr. (Laughs) was part of the group that developed that area. They changed it from "ag" (agricultural zoning) to residential, so they could sell the lots.

A.C.: Did they have a name for the tract that all of this was? Or was it just 'Aiea Heights?

Ruby: Just 'Aiea Heights.

A.C.: I see that down below, your living room faces ('Aiea) Park Place. Is that what it's called? It used to be a gulch with no residential development.

Ruby: Well, there's a road down below. See, that's how they harvested the cane, though.

A.C.: So it's a cane road.

Ruby: Oh yeah.

A.C.: It went down into the gulch.

Ruby: Yeah. Uh huh.

A.C.: So, putting in your road, did you also have to put in your other things too?

Ruby: Your water. Yeah. Oh yeah.

A.C.: Did you always have mail service? Or did you have to go down to the post office?

Ruby: We always had mail service. When they developed the subdivision, immediately, we got mail and things like that. Water.

A.C.: Street number?

Ruby: Yeah.

A.C.: So, when was this? What year?

Ruby: 1945. '46. That's when the tidal wave was. When our older son was born.

A.C.: So you were already in your house when your son was born?

Ruby: Yes. Yes.

END OF SIDE ONE

A.C.: Well, we were talking about moving into a home. Neighbors helping out neighbors. What was 'Aiea like?

Ruby: A bunch of young families. It provided an area for newly married couples to buy property. It became available, so we had lots of young (families). We were all about the same age. Going through the same things, so we able to help each other.

A.C.: What was 'Aiea town---what was that like?

Ruby: Well, actually, 'Aiea town was the stores, the doctors and the schools for the plantation workers. We were very, very fortunate to have all that available to us.

A.C.: So the infrastructure made the transition from plantation to supporting a small town?

Ruby: Yeah.

A.C.: That was a plantation. You still had the plantation camps.

Ruby: Oh yeah. And the plantation people were really happy to have these other people move in because they were the ones who hired them to do the laundry. Work in the yard. Those kinds of things.

A.C.: Do you recall what people were like?

Ruby: We were very close.

A.C.: There wasn't a division of "You're plantation. You're not."

Ruby: No, no, no, no, no. Because we needed to help each other. They were happy to get us to come in. We were happy that they were there for us.

Aiea Community Association

A.C.: Do you recall Aiea Community Association starting up about that time?

Ruby: Yeah. But I don't remember exactly when.

A.C.: You did a lot of volunteer work. Where did you think that came from?
For you?

Ruby: *Ni'ele.* (Laughs)

A.C.: (Laughs) So you'd have a question. Or you'd see a need.

Ruby: Yeah.

A.C.: You could see yourself being part of that?

Ruby: Yeah. You knew Joe Blow over here had the ability to do what you needed. So you become friends with him. (Laughs) It was good.

A.C.: Were you working at that time? Out of the house?

Ruby: Yeah.

A.C.: What were you doing?

Ruby: I was at the shipyard.

A.C.: So, was your mother living with you?

Ruby: My mom came and stayed with us.

A.C.: Did she help take care of the children?

Ruby: Yeah. Um hmm.

A.C.: Did she continue doing her foster care too?

Ruby: No.

A.C.: She retired from that.

Ruby: Yeah. She came and stayed with us. And the kids were so happy. Oh yeah. With my mom and her uncle that came to live with us, the kids just loved it, because *tutu* would go. *Tutu* would make *laulau* and sell them.

A.C.: Still in 'Aiea?

Ruby: No. He would get on the bus. I can remember him with his bag on his shoulder. Get on the bus. Going down Chinatown to sell his *laulau*s and things like that. The kids just loved it, because *Tutu* would come home with all *kine* of treats! (Laughs)

A.C.: Naturally! Things for the *mo'opuna*.

Ruby: Right!

A.C.: So he'd take the O.R.& L. buses from the 'Aiea Store?

Ruby: Yeah! Actually, the kids walked all over the place, too. From my house down to the shopping center. Yep! You never took a bus. You walked.

A.C.: Did they ever go up to the---

Ruby: *Heiau*? Oh yes, yes.

A.C.: Was it more because it was a park?

Ruby: And because they had mountain apples up there, you know?

A.C.: Nowadays the kids would say, "It's too hard to walk."

Ruby: Yes. Oh yes. Not us. I mean, you walked everywhere and you didn't think anything about it, because there would be four or five of you walking and "talking story." (Laughs)

A.C.: Do you think it made a difference for you because your family was from Waiau and you were already familiar with countryside?

Ruby: No.

A.C.: Some people would say 'Aiea was pretty rural.

Ruby: Oh yes, it was very---the workers were all plantation workers. But, you know, they accepted us and we accepted them. Gee, I can remember Pansy Asao, coming from, I don't know where, but she was a Japanese family. We helped each other. They'd call. I can remember, too, we had the poultry workers. We thought they were great, because they'd give us the feedbags. The need was there to work together. You know,

nobody thought anything about it. If the Serraios needed something, they'd call, "Eh!! You can help? Sure!! What you guys going to do?" Everybody would go and help. Things like that.

A.C.: So even though you and your husband worked at the shipyard, when you came home, there were things to do?

Ruby: And then, Mama was there. I mean, we turned around, she'd be planting this and planting that. Vernon would say, "Was Mama supposed to plant that?" I'd say, "Vernon, don't say anything. Mama planted it." (Laughs)

A.C.: Three generations. Lots going on. When did your mom pass away?

Ruby: Quite a while. Quite a while.

A.C.: But your kids?

Ruby: They were lucky. Then, Vernon's folks moved to the mainland. Dad was teaching at Punahou, but they moved to mainland, and Mother was teaching at Roosevelt. His mother was an English teacher. Actually, his mother was actually his step-mother. His mother passed away and his father remarried, and he had two brothers and a sister. But they all took care of each other. Actually, people were closer and helped each other. Someone would say, "I need this." "Okay. We're coming." You know? "You need to cut the hedge? Okay, we're coming." And things like that. We're really so close.

Outdoor Circle – Wai Momi Chapter

A.C.: When of the civic associations that you were associated with; I saw your name---was the Outdoor Circle. There was a chapter named 'Aiea Outdoor Circle. Was it called Wai Momi? Tell me about the planting of some of the trees that beautified 'Aiea.

Ruby: Yes. When I drive up 'Aiea Heights Drive, I see the trees that we planted because we were very careful to go the people and say, "Is it okay for us to plant is?" It didn't make sense to plant the tree and then have them destroy them. So if you drive up 'Aiea Heights Drive, you don't see automatic plantings. A tree here. Several houses up, then you'd see one on the road and things like that.

A.C.: What kind of trees? It wasn't just trees, though?

Ruby: No. It went to the city. They would provide us. If we wanted trees, and we wanted to plant them, they would provide them to us. That's how we got them. We got some monkeypods. But if you look up 'Aiea Heights Drive, you don't see automatic, because it didn't make sense to plant the tree, and have the family say, "No! I don't want it." There were families that said, "I don't want it. Too much rubbish. I don't want it." So. You wouldn't plant there.

A.C.: Did most people take the trees?

Ruby: Not all. If you look up 'Aiea Heights Drive, you'll notice there aren't a lot of trees.

A.C.: But the ones there. They're just beautiful. I love it when the gold trees bloom.

Ruby: Oh yes, and that was the city providing us with those plants for us to plant.

A.C.: Tell us about the monkeypod tree that grows right at your property. It's--- It's big. A spreading tree. You said you planted it.

Ruby: Yes. It was in a gallon can. It was small. Like that. But you know, it was a matter of people helping others do thing.

A.C.: Did Wai Momi plant the shower trees along Moanalua Road?

Ruby: No, no, no. That was city property. We allowed them to take care of it.

A.C.: There's a lot of rainbow shower trees too.

Ruby: Yeah. We were very fortunate that the forestry gave us those trees. We didn't have to buy. We asked them, and they were always happy to give them to us to plant. (Discusses how Wai Momi facilitated the communication) We found out that if the people didn't want it, don't go plant it...It's going to disappear. So we didn't.

A.C.: Changing the subject. What do you think, in your opinion, were some of the hot topics that kind of got 'Aiea involved? Was the building of the H-1 with all those off-ramps?

Ruby: No. I think it was the plantation going out of business, and providing land for people to come and build their houses. Because, before that, it was all turnkey.

A.C.: Well, they had the homesteads. They had the lands up at the top.

Ruby: Up at the top. Yeah. But in between, they were able to plant the cane, because they had the cane.

A.C.: People want to buy land and put down roots. The Recreation Center was built. Having a high school where the plantation rec. center was. Do you recall any discussion or opinions about that?

Ruby: We were very, very happy. Actually, I can remember George Hasuye, who

was director at the park, being so close and willing to help. Anything we wanted to do. Like having programs for the kids. All we had to do was say, "Hey George. Can you help us on this?" He'd say, "Yeah. What do you guys want to do?" "Okay, this is what we want." "Okay! Let's do it." That kind of feeling. Always.

A.C.: Were the legislators like that too?

Ruby: Yeah. I think so. Bill Vannatta was active. You know, all we'd have to do was ask Bill.

A.C.: The (public) library. Having the library in the community.

Ruby: Oh yes, yes. It was a good feeling... Well, working, I mean. You know, you'd say, "I need this." They'd say, "I know. We can do this. We can do that." They were always ready to jump right in and help... And it wasn't, "I don't want to know. It's gonna cost money." It didn't have that feeling.

A.C.: Is there anything you miss that they used to have? Like I heard there used to be a carnival.

Ruby: No I don't. The families that are still there, like Pansy Asao and the Thomases and the different families, we're still very close and talk to each other. You know, they're family! They are.

A.C.: Do you have any recollections of the building of H-1 and then the development of Pearlridge and all those high-rises?

Ruby: Not really. I guess I wasn't interested.

A.C.: I guess it didn't directly affect you?

Ruby: No, no.

A.C.: What about the development of the golf course, where the plantation used to have their reservoir?

Ruby: I can remember them wanting to do it. We didn't---if that's what the community wanted and they felt they needed it, it was okay with us. You know, I guess we were happy to have somebody else. I don't know. It was a feeling of "Come, come, come. If we can help, let's do it."

A.C.: So, when you moved here, and you'd say, "I live in 'Aiea" were people's responses different than it is now?

Ruby: No. I don't think so. I think people to move into 'Aiea. It's a healthy

community. I mean, they like each other. No more *huki-huki* (jerking).

A.C.: And then, when you go home, you've got view. The fresh air coming off the mountains. It can't be any better than that... You have lived here since 1945. Thank you very much.

END OF INTERVIEW