

**Reflections  
of  
Pālama Settlement**

**Volume I**

**Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**August 1998**

Copyright © 1998  
Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

These are slightly edited transcriptions of interviews conducted by the Center for Oral History, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The reader should be aware that an oral history document portrays information as recalled by the interviewee. Because of the spontaneous nature of this kind of document, it may contain statements and impressions which are not factual.

People are welcome to utilize, in unpublished works, short excerpts from any of the transcriptions without obtaining permission as long as proper credit is given to the interviewee, interviewer, and the Center for Oral History. Permission must be obtained from the Center for Oral History for published excerpts and extensive use of transcriptions and related materials. Transcripts and cassette tapes may not be duplicated or reproduced by any party without permission from the Center for Oral History, Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2424 Maile Way, Social Sciences Building 724, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822.

**Reflections  
of  
Pālama Settlement**

**Volume II**

**Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa**

**August 1998**

Copyright © 1998  
Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa

These are slightly edited transcriptions of interviews conducted by the Center for Oral History, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa. The reader should be aware that an oral history document portrays information as recalled by the interviewee. Because of the spontaneous nature of this kind of document, it may contain statements and impressions which are not factual.

People are welcome to utilize, in unpublished works, short excerpts from any of the transcriptions without obtaining permission as long as proper credit is given to the interviewee, interviewer, and the Center for Oral History. Permission must be obtained from the Center for Oral History for published excerpts and extensive use of transcriptions and related materials. Transcripts and cassette tapes may not be duplicated or reproduced by any party without permission from the Center for Oral History, Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, 2424 Maile Way, Social Sciences Building 724, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96822.

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Volume I

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
PROJECT STAFF .....	vii
PHOTOGRAPHS .....	ix
INTRODUCTION .....	xxvii
TRANSCRIPTS	
Janet Nakashima .....	1
Bettie Witzel Burner .....	35
Bertha Lee Nahoopii .....	59
Robert H. Rath, Sr. ....	89
John E. Sharp .....	145
Barbara Paresa .....	165
Jack T. Nagoshi .....	189
Masato Sugihara .....	219
Martha Hohu .....	245
Kenneth K.M. Ling .....	261
Harry Fujinaka .....	279
Jennie Lee In .....	303
Moses W. "Moke" Kealoha .....	347
APPENDIX	
Glossary .....	A-1
Index .....	B-1

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## Volume II

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS .....	v
PROJECT STAFF .....	vii
PHOTOGRAPHS .....	ix
INTRODUCTION .....	xxvii

### TRANSCRIPTS

Francis Sing .....	397
James Koo .....	423
Kiyoshi "Knuckles" Matsuo .....	453
Fituina F. Tua .....	479
Alma Watanabe .....	497
Don Snyder .....	519
Bertha K.Y. Char .....	543
Wai Sinn Char .....	565
Jerry Tarutani .....	589
Karel A. Ling .....	617
Lorin T. Gill .....	641
Jeff Yamashita .....	703
Earlene Piko .....	759
Edward "Skippa" Diaz .....	825
Harry Mamizuka .....	847
Margaret Iizaki .....	851

### APPENDIX

Glossary .....	A-1
Index .....	B-1

## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

In addition to the interviewees, who contributed long hours and much expertise to the project, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals:

Bill Chambers  
Masuto Fujii  
Calvin Fujioka  
Michael P. Hamnett  
Winifred Ishimoto  
Bobby Kau  
Brooke M. Mamizuka  
Robert T. Omura  
Paula Rath  
Jacqueline J. Rath  
Sam Saffery  
Yoshito Sagawa  
Clarence Sugihara  
Henry Yoshino

This project was funded by grants from Pālama Settlement and the Hawai'i Committee for the Humanities.

## PROJECT STAFF

Center for Oral History  
Social Science Research Institute

*Director and Principal Investigator*  
Warren S. Nishimoto

*Research Coordinator*  
Michi Kodama-Nishimoto

*Research Associate*  
Holly J. Yamada

*Publications Specialist*  
Cynthia A. Oshiro

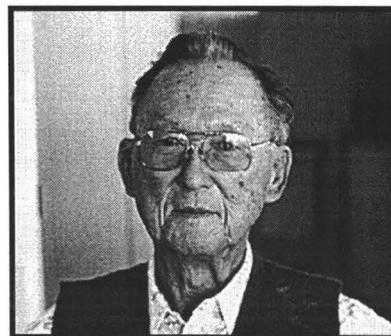
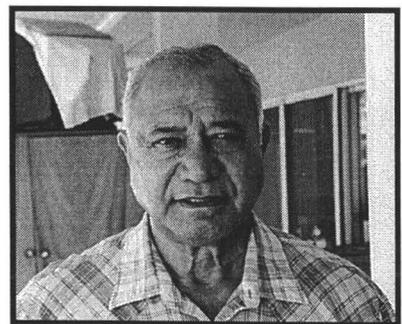
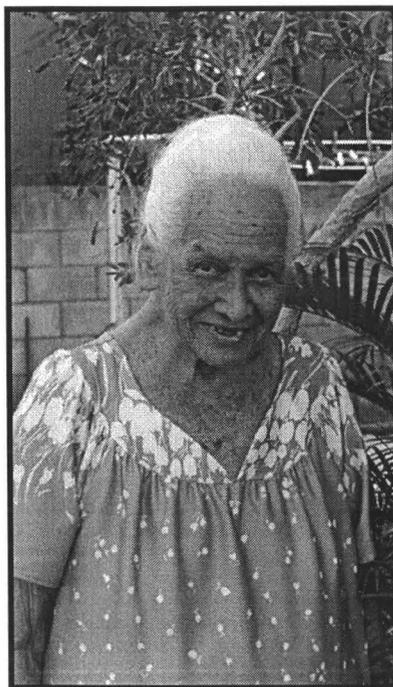
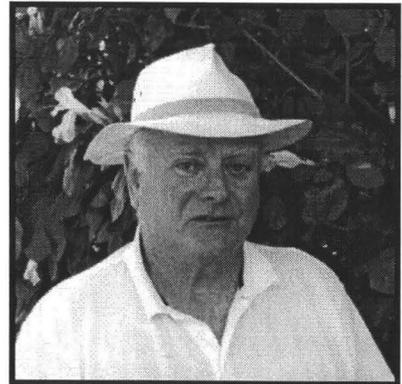
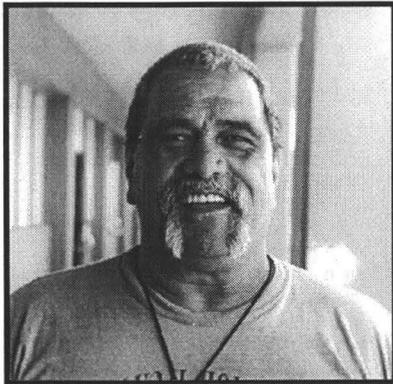
*Transcript Editor and Indexer*  
Karen N. Matsuda

*Student Transcribers*

Raenelle Bras  
Mirasol Budiao  
Rachelle Dang  
Kimberly Dewey  
Jona Goong  
Randall Hironaka  
Stephanie Kuroda  
Karen N. Matsuda  
Joni Miyagi  
Lindsay Nishii



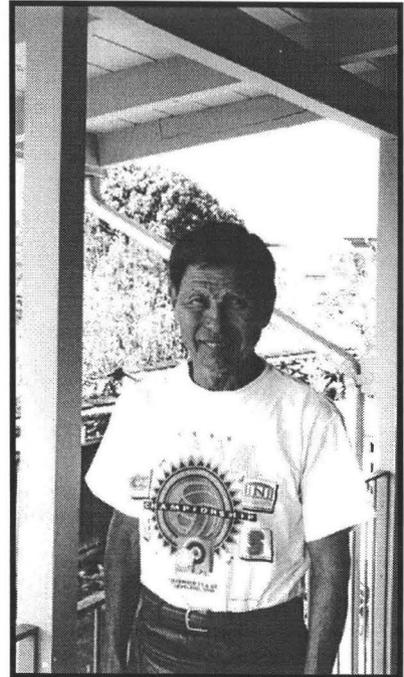
*Above, left to right, Bettie Witzel Burner, 1997; Wai Sinn and Bertha K.Y. Char, 1998 (COH photos).  
Below, left to right, Edward "Skippa" Diaz, 1998; Harry Fujinaka, 1997; Lorin T. Gill, 1998 (COH photos).*



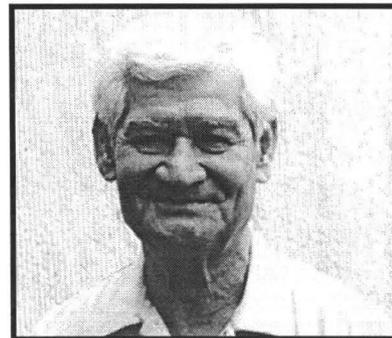
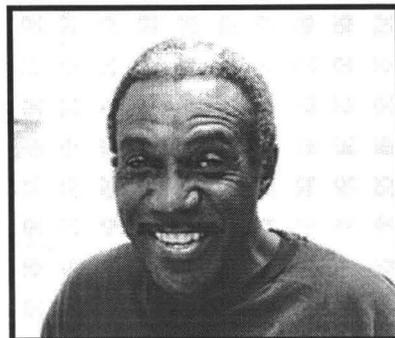
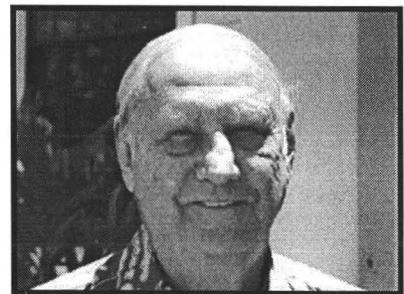
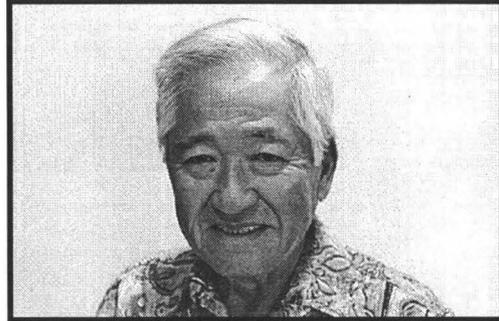
*Far left, Martha Hohu, 1998 (COH photo).  
Top left, Jennie Lee In, 1997 (Photo courtesy In family).  
Above, Moses W. Kealoha, 1997 (COH photo).  
Left, James Koo, 1998 (COH photo).*

*(Not pictured: Margaret Iizaki.)*

**Right top**, Kenneth K.M. Ling, 1998 (COH photo).  
**Far right**, Kiyoshi Matsuo, 1998 (COH photo).  
**Right bottom**, Jack T. Nagoshi, 1998 (COH photo).

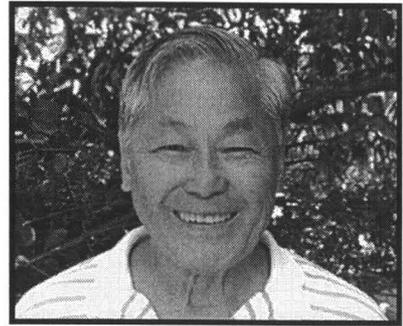
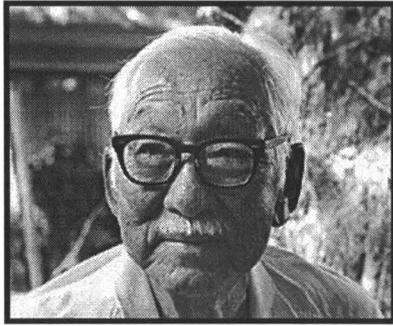
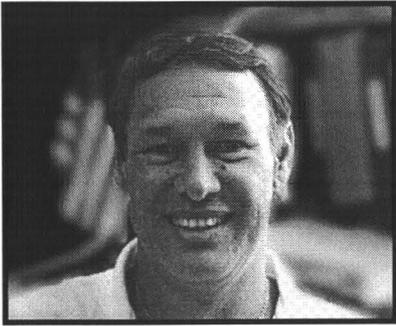


**Below**, Bertha Lee Nahoopii, 1997 (COH photo).  
**Below middle**, Janet Nakashima, 1997 (COH photo).  
**Below right**, Barbara Paresa, 1997 (COH photo).



**Above middle**, Earlene Piko, 1982 (Photo courtesy Bill Chambers).  
**Above**, Robert H. Rath, Sr., 1998 (COH photo).  
**Far left**, John E. Sharp, 1998 (COH photo).  
**Left**, Francis Sing, 1998 (COH photo).

(Not pictured: Karel Ling, Harry Mamizuka.)



*Above left*, Don Snyder, 1998 (COH photo).

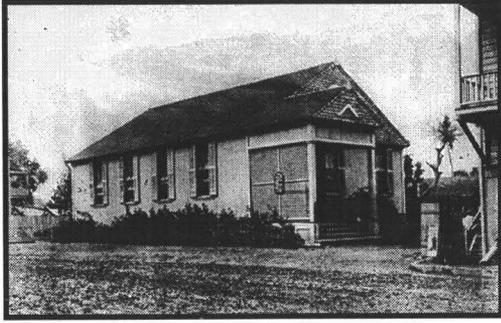
*Above middle*, Masato Sugihara, 1998 (COH photo).

*Above right*, Jerry Tarutani, 1998 (COH photo).

*Far left*, Fituina F. Tua, 1998 (COH photo).

*Left above*, Alma Watanabe, 1997 (COH photo).

*Left below*, Jeff Yamashita, 1997 (COH photo).



*Above*, Original Pālama Chapel (King and Liliha streets), 1896

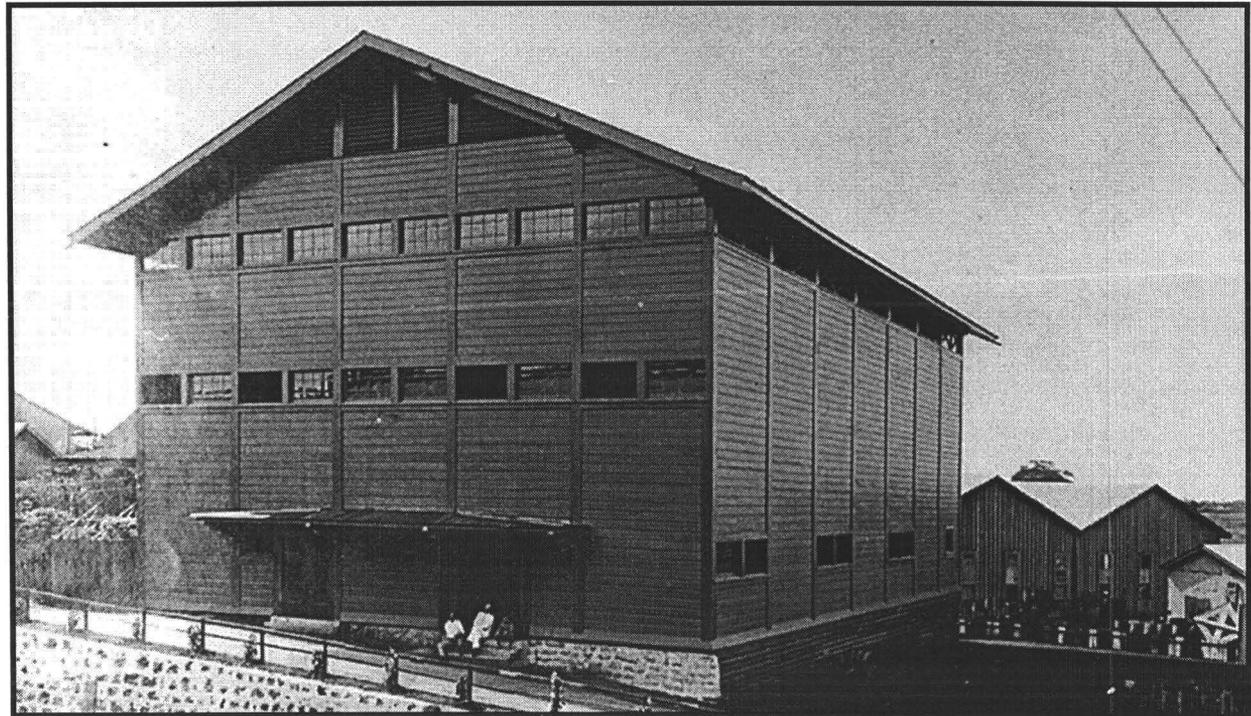


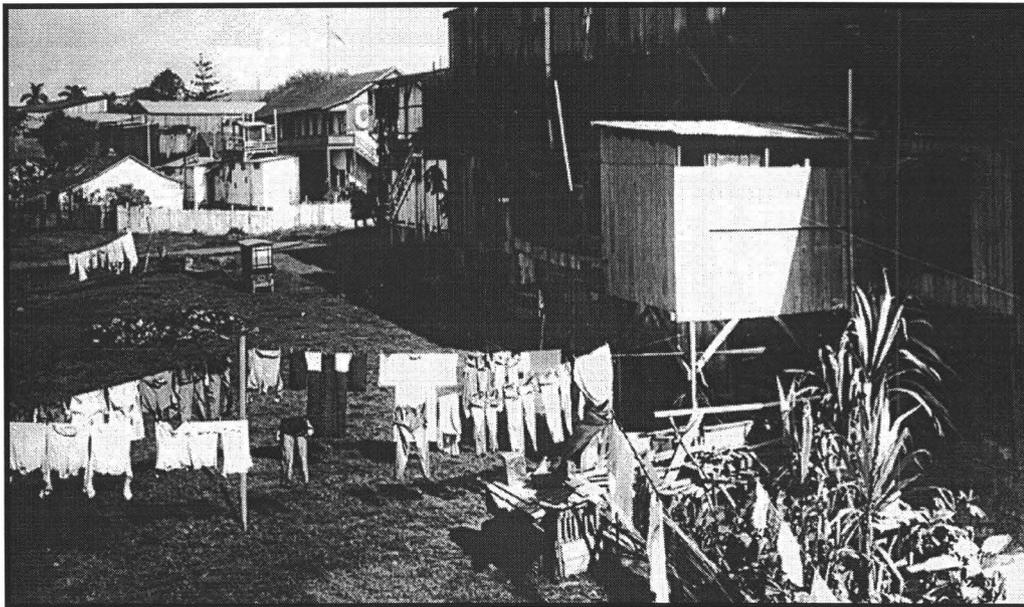
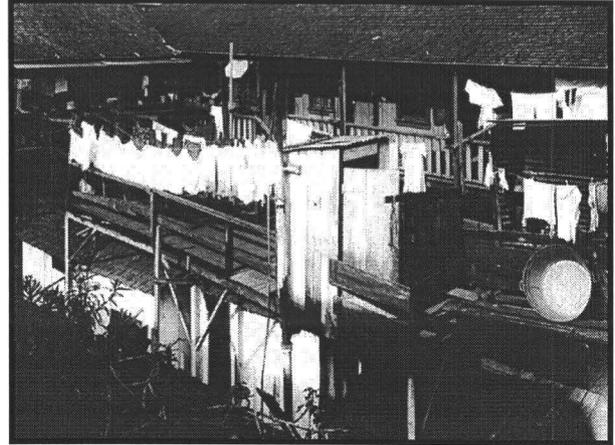
*Right*, Original Pālama Chapel (King Street at left), 1896.

*Below left and right*, Pālama Settlement low-income cottages, which were rented out, 1912.



*Below*, Original Pālama Settlement, King and Liliha streets, floor 1: swimming pool, club rooms; floor 2: gym; ca. 1912.



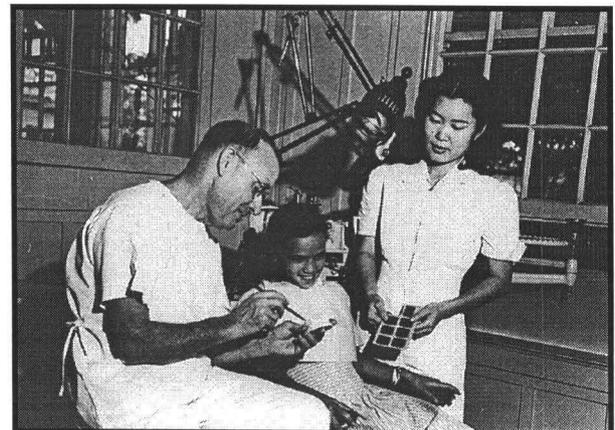
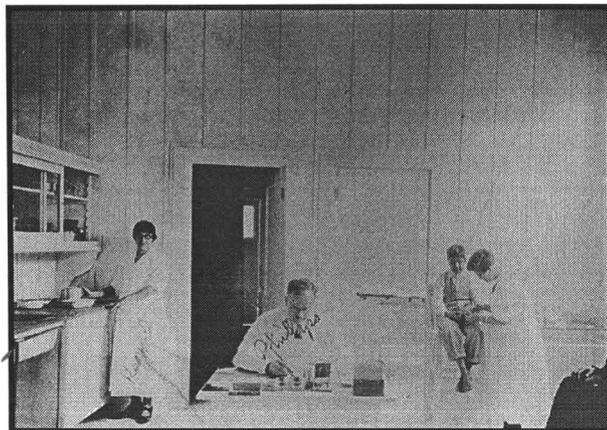


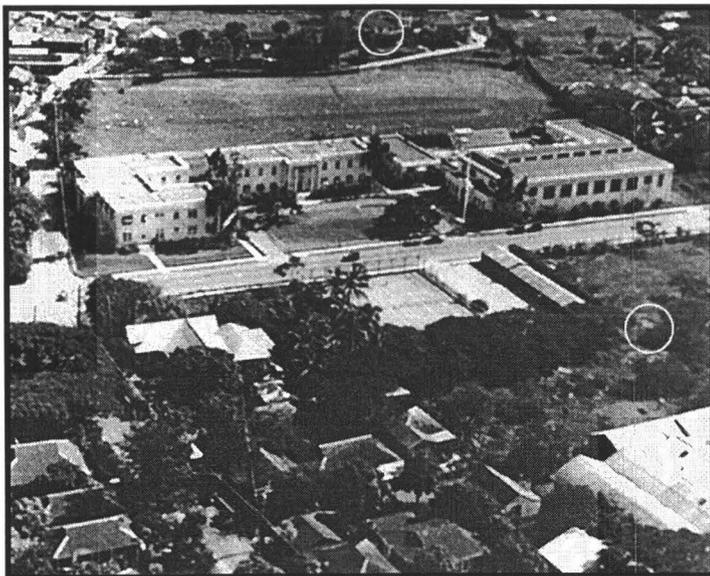
*Above left,*  
Chinatown fire,  
1900.

*Above and left,*  
Pālama tenements  
built after the  
Chinatown fire for  
those left  
homeless, 1912.

*Below left,* original Pālama Settlement Medical Clinic, 1925.

*Below right,* Dr. John H. Dawe, director of Strong-Carter Dental Clinic at Pālama and Joyce Yamashita, dental assistant, ca. 1946.



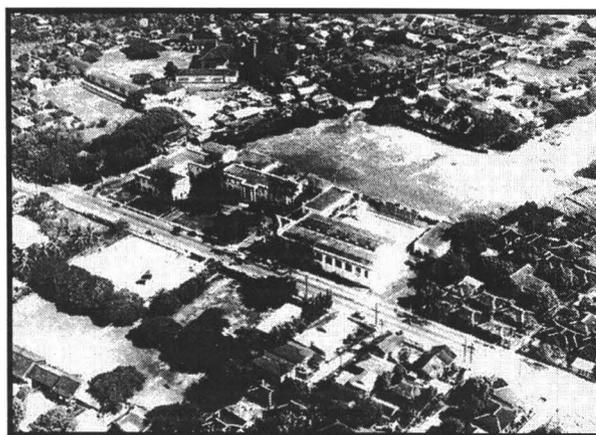
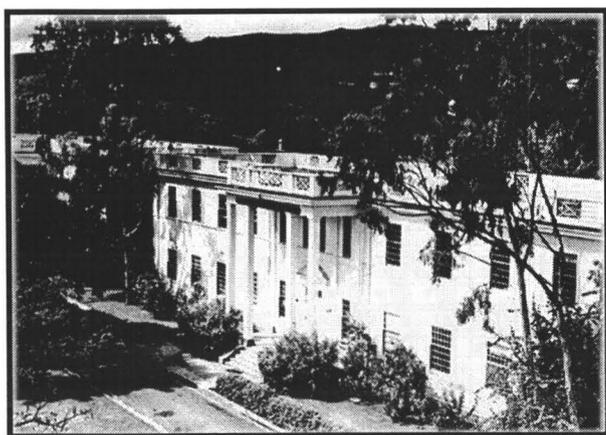
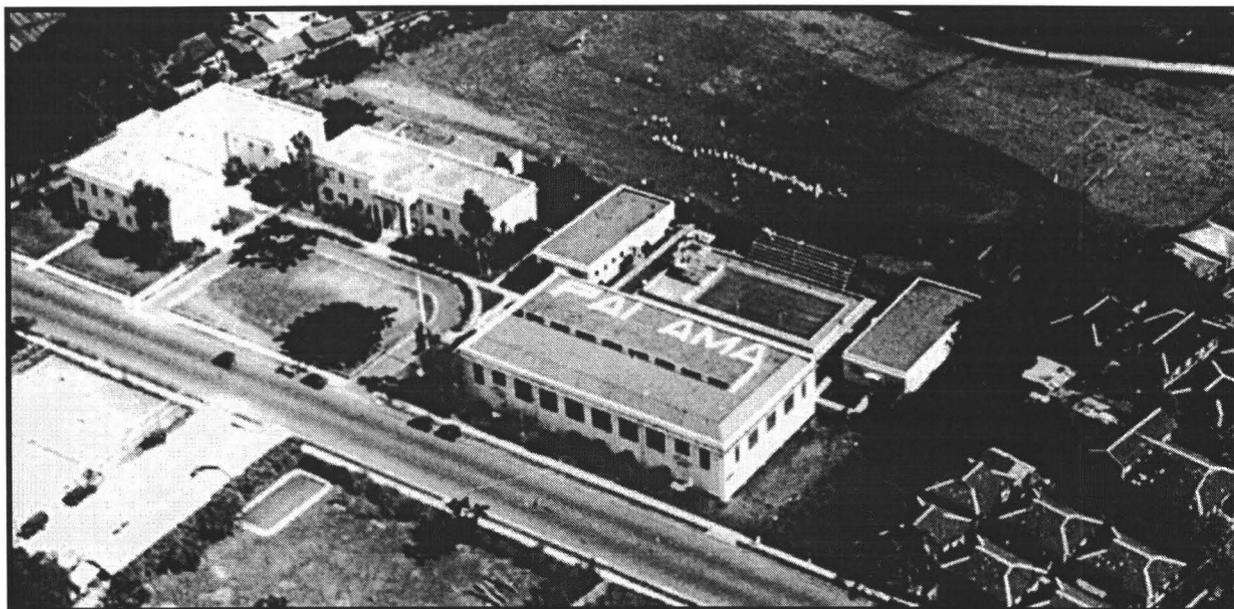


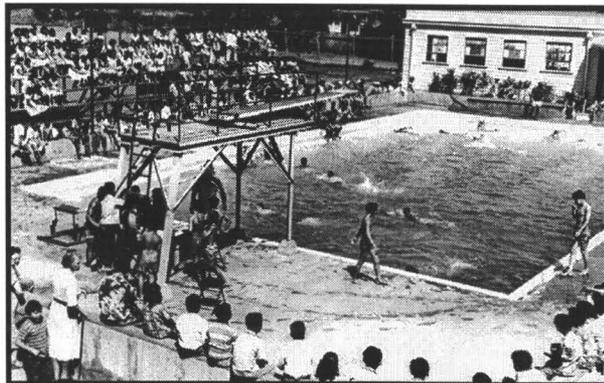
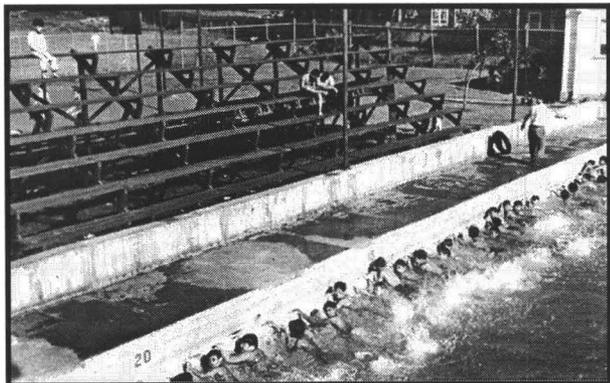
*Left*, Newly-built Pālama Settlement at Vineyard Street and Asylum Road (today Pālama Street), 1932. *Top circle*: Rath home and obstetrical and prenatal nurses home. *Bottom circle*: Pālama preschool.

*Below*, Newly-built Pālama Settlement complex, 1932. *Clockwise, from left*, medical building and Strong-Carter Dental Clinic, administration building, men's lockerroom, swimming pool, women's lockerroom, gymnasium. Across Vineyard Street, wading pool and playground. Athletic field at top of photo.

*Bottom left*, Closeup of administration building, 1932.

*Bottom right*, Aerial view. Part of athletic field was eliminated by construction of H-1 Freeway in 1960s.





**Top left,** Learn to Swim, 1932.

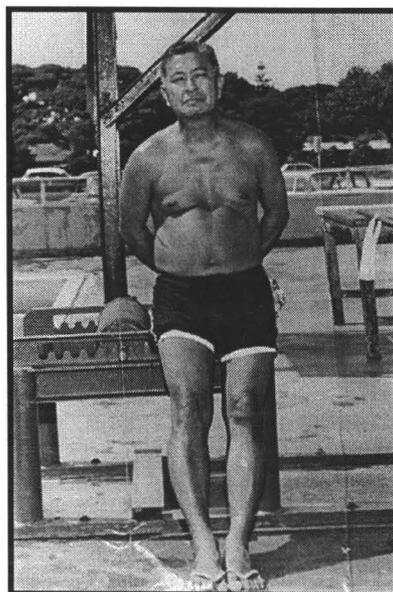
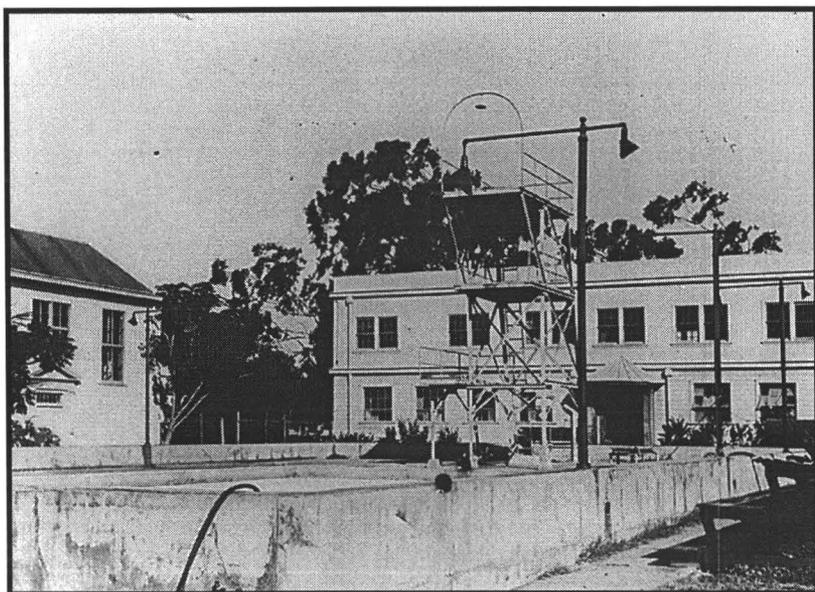
**Top right,** Girls' Aquacade (water ballet), 1932

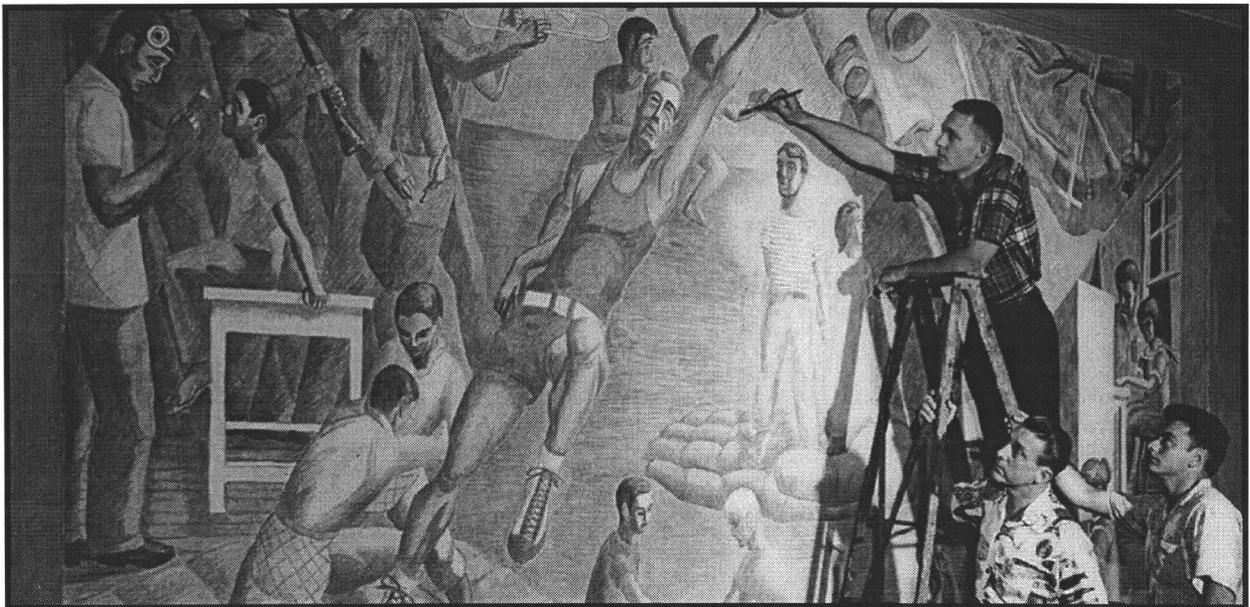
**Above left,** Swimming meet, ca. 1932.

**Above right,** Interisland Play Day, 1938.

**Below left,** Gym-pool-lockerroom-gameroom, three-level platform diving tower, 1945.

**Below right,** Nelson Kawakami, no date.



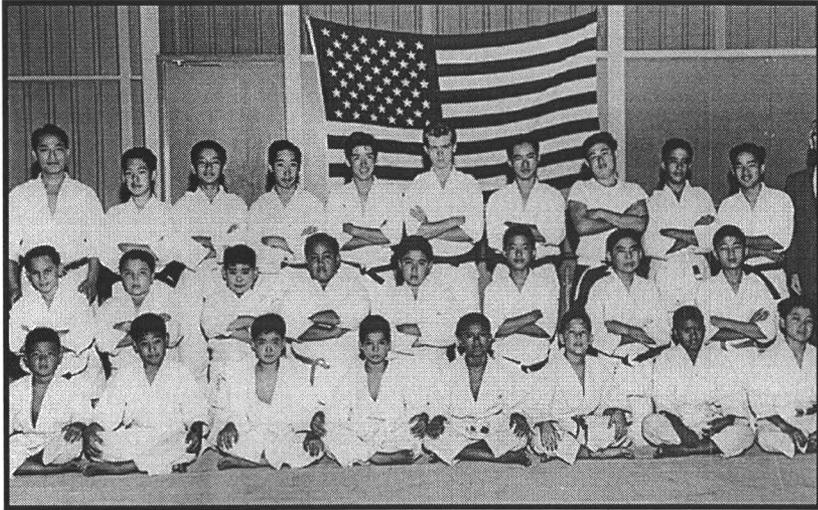


*Top left*, Pālama Settlement tennis court and garage, 1945. Vineyard Street in foreground. These facilities located on the *makai* side of Vineyard, across from the main campus, were eliminated when Vineyard Street was widened in 1957.

*Top right*, Thelma Espinda, truant officer (between boys) and Jennie Lee (In), caseworker, ca. 1945.

*Above*, Pālama Settlement Executive Director Walter Ehlers (left) and Lorin T. Gill look on as John Lochtefeld works on mural, 1955.

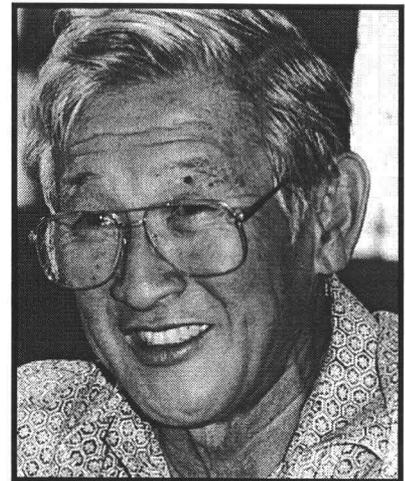
*Left*, Groundbreaking for new gym. Pālama Settlement Executive Director Walter Ehlers and Nelson Kawakami (with shovel), 1959.



*Left, Jerry Tarutani, top left, and judo students, ca. 1955.*

*Below left, 1953 150-lb. Football Championship Team. Left to right, top row, Harry Mamizuka (head coach), Robert Cabral, Louis Kaninau, William Cho, Ted Shimabukuro, "Cigar" Watanabe, Charles Choo. Middle row, Phillip Abraham, Benny Medeiros, John Hee, Albert Asada, Henry Haruki, Gordon (no last name), Melvin Likua. Front row, Tolo Atienza, Bertram Mamiya, Harry Fujinaka, John Kahale, Joe Tamai, Kats Kaneshiro, Taka Okazawa.*

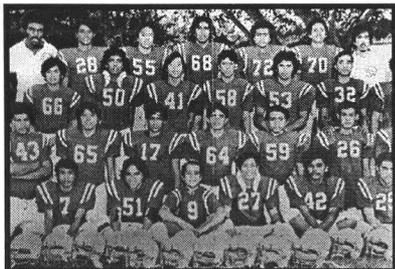
*Below right, Pālama Settlement Executive Director Robert Higashino, 1970.*



*Below, John E. Sharp, top left, and Pālama Scorpions, 1972.*

*Right, Pālama Scorpions, Washington D.C. trip, 1972. Back row, fourth to sixth from left, Kenneth K.M. Ling, Earlene Piko, and John E. Sharp.*

All historical photos are from the Pālama Settlement Archives.



## INTRODUCTION

The Center for Oral History (COH), a unit of the Social Science Research Institute at the University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, was established in 1976. Its major function is to research, conduct, transcribe, edit, and disseminate oral history interviews with persons possessing knowledge about Hawai'i's past. COH seeks to provide present and future researchers with first-person, primary-source documents with which to write history from a diversity of perspectives.

COH also produces educational materials (books, articles, newsletters, brochures, etc.) based on the interviews, presents lectures on local history, conducts classes and workshops on oral history methodology, and serves as a clearinghouse for oral history research relating to Hawai'i.

*Reflections of Pālama Settlement* is a two-volume set featuring life histories of individuals whose lives reflect the efforts of Pālama Settlement. Twenty-nine individuals recall their life experiences and articulate the significance the settlement has had for themselves and others in twentieth-century Hawai'i.

*... there are kids and young people today that will never forget Pālama. They always say the same thing I say, 'Pālama is part of my heart,' it will never leave because that was during the prime time of my life. —John E. Sharp*

*... we were on welfare and everything at that time. Growing up there [Pālama neighborhood] I met a lot of different people. We had people who would—gangsters in that area, some prostitution going on. We had a lot of things like that going on, you know, shooting. But what really helped us was athletics. I had a lot of my friends there. And they were in athletics. So Pālama Settlement was our saving grace. So we had a place of refuge. We would go there to get away from the other elements. —Don Snyder*

*I think that the youth programs [at Pālama Settlement] were significantly important to a great many people who are now adults. I think it changed a lot of their lives. And I think it enhanced a lot of their lives. I think it allowed the kids who were then kids to believe, 'Hey, maybe I can. Nobody, like me ever did this before, but now I can.' And I think that it was significant. —Earlene Piko*

*I really am grateful that I had the opportunity to play and work at Pālama. I started out really playing. The staff that I had the pleasure of working with, and playing with, and all, it was different groups of people, yeah? Through the years. But I'm very grateful for that experience. That certainly impacted on my life, and who I am today. —Janet Nakashima*

*... if you look at the history of people that went through the settlement, every single one will tell you that Pālama Settlement had made a big impact on them. —Fituina F. Tua*

### **Background and Methodology**

In 1996, as part of the 100th anniversary of the establishment of Pālama Settlement, a centennial committee was formed to commemorate the event. The committee, composed of present and former Pālama Settlement staff members and program participants, was chaired by Paula Rath, granddaughter of James Arthur Rath, Sr., the settlement's first director.

In addition to holding a reunion luau and other festive events, the committee strongly felt that the history of Pālama Settlement needed to be documented and shared. Previous archival efforts involved the collection and preservation of artifacts, historical photographs, settlement records, newspaper clippings, promotional brochures, and monographs. However, little documentation on the personal experiences and thoughts of settlement employees and participants existed.

Inspired by the many contacts made and friendships renewed by the centennial celebration, Paula Rath and her parents, Robert H. Rath, Sr., who lived on the grounds of the settlement and served on its board of trustees, and Jacqueline J. Rath, the settlement's archivist, approached COH director Warren Nishimoto with the idea of doing an oral history project.

The Raths and Robert T. Omura, executive director of Pālama Settlement, met with Nishimoto and COH Research Coordinator Michi Kodama-Nishimoto to discuss the scope, focus, time frame, and cost of an oral history project on Pālama Settlement.

It was decided that audiotaped life history interviews would be conducted with individuals who had long and significant associations with the settlement: executive directors, staff and volunteers (i.e., social workers, clerical workers, instructors, athletic coaches, counselors, health care providers, etc.), participants and clients (i.e., children, young adults, and others who have benefitted from Pālama Settlement's dental, medical, and social services), and other key individuals with knowledge of the day-to-day and long-term operations of the settlement.

After an agreement was drawn up between Pālama Settlement and the University of Hawai'i, COH staff began culling relevant written information about the settlement.

The centennial committee provided COH with a list of potential interviewees. Interviewees and other resource persons also contributed names to the list, supplemented by those noted in written sources by COH.

Following untaped preliminary interviews, twenty-nine individuals were selected for taping. The selection was based on their depth and breadth of knowledge, their ability to articulate life experiences, and their willingness to participate as interviewees.

The interviews were conducted by COH staff: Warren Nishimoto, Michi Kodama-Nishimoto, and Holly Yamada. Interviews were conducted at the interviewees' homes, their workplaces, or the University of Hawai'i, between October 1996 and April 1998. Each individual was interviewed for at least ninety minutes, some for as long as four hours.

Interviewees were asked about: their involvement in the development of Pālama Settlement; the settlement's goals and accomplishments; daily life experiences in the community of Pālama; the settlement's impact on individuals and communities; and attitudes toward past, present and future

development of the settlement and its surrounding communities. Because interviewees were asked to comment on experiences and incidents oftentimes specific to their own lives, no set questionnaire was followed.

The interviews were transcribed almost verbatim by COH-trained student transcribers. The transcripts, audio-reviewed to correct omissions and mistranscriptions, were edited slightly for clarity and historical accuracy.

The transcripts were then sent to the interviewees for their review and approval. Interviewees were asked to verify names and dates and clarify statements where necessary. COH incorporated the interviewees' changes into the final version.

Prior to publication, the interviewees read and signed a legal document allowing the University of Hawai'i Center for Oral History and the general public scholarly and educational use of the transcripts.

### **The Interviewees**

The following is a list of individuals interviewed for this oral history project:

Bettie Witzel Burner, social worker and settlement resident  
 Bertha K. Y. Char, program participant  
 Wai Sinn Char, dentist at Strong-Carter Dental Clinic  
 Edward "Skippa" Diaz, program participant  
 Harry Fujinaka, program participant  
 Lorin T. Gill, social worker and executive director (1964–69)  
 Martha Hohu, program participant  
 Margaret Iizaki, secretary and settlement resident  
 Jennie Lee In, social worker  
 Moses W. "Moke" Kealoha, trustee and program participant  
 James Koo, program participant and student employee  
 Karel A. Ling, social worker and supervisor  
 Kenneth K.M. Ling, social worker and athletic coach  
 Harry Mamizuka, athletic coach and instructor  
 Kiyoshi "Knuckles" Matsuo, social worker and athletic director  
 Jack T. Nagoshi, executive director (1962–64)  
 Bertha Lee Nahoopii, recreation instructor and athletic director  
 Janet Nakashima, social worker and settlement resident  
 Barbara Paresa, program participant  
 Earlene Piko, social worker, programs coordinator, and settlement resident  
 Robert H. Rath, Sr., settlement resident, trustee, and program participant  
 John E. Sharp, youth counselor, athletic coach, and settlement resident  
 Francis Sing, program participant and student employee  
 Don Snyder, program participant  
 Masato Sugihara, program participant  
 Jerry Tarutani, judo instructor, trustee, and program participant  
 Fituina F. Tua, program participant  
 Alma Watanabe, arts and crafts department director  
 Jeff Yamashita, trustee and program participant

### Historical Background

On June 2, 1896, Honolulu philanthropist P.C. Jones built a chapel at the corner of King and Liliha streets in Pālāma, O'āhu. Located west of Nu'uānu Stream, near Downtown Honolulu, Pālāma was home to mostly working-class Hawaiian families. Pālāma Chapel, a part of Central Union Church, offered a Sunday school, prayer meetings, other spiritual activities, a kindergarten, and a choral society.

Across Nu'uānu Stream, east of Pālāma, stood Chinatown, where thousands of immigrants lived in crowded, squalid conditions. In 1900, as Honolulu health officials attempted to rid the area of bubonic plague, a house fire raged out of control and destroyed a four-block section. Displaced residents were forced to leave Chinatown and take up residence in newly-built tenements in Pālāma, changing the physical, social, and economic make-up of the community.

*Many of the homes that were there—I don't recall any homes there were just [single-family homes]—were community living. Lots of people packed into that area because, remember, there was panic when so many homes and so many people were displaced that things were thrown up (quickly) for people to live in. Expediency was the rule. Get something built quickly and move 'em in. Most of them, lot of them, had common cooking facilities. They didn't have their own kitchens. . . . It was a jam-packed tenement area. —Robert H. Rath, Sr.*

These changes forced Central Union Church, the sponsors of Pālāma Chapel, to rethink its original mission. After the chapel was transferred to the Hawai'i Evangelical Association, it was decided that it become part of the American settlement movement which began with New York City's University Settlement in 1886 and Chicago's Hull-House, founded by social reformer Jane Addams in 1889.

*. . . settlement houses existed in England, before they did in the U.S. and when Jane Addams saw the sweatshop conditions and the abuse and exploitations of the immigrants, it was middle-class, or wealthy do-gooders, who bought a place in the midst of the ghetto and moved in. And then sent their kids to the neighborhood schools and did their own knocking on doors. And having connections with the society structure, they could get things for the neighborhood that the local people couldn't get. And that was the settlement house deal, . . . —Lorin T. Gill*

The *Honolulu Advertiser* writer Will Hoover, in a June 2, 1996 article commemorating Pālāma Settlement's centennial, wrote:

*Unlike other charitable methods, settlement houses were regarded as independent instruments of social reform. Charities did 'for'; settlements did 'with.' Users were not 'needy clients' but 'neighbors' building a better community for themselves.*

Officials of the Hawai'i Evangelical Association searched for a resident director or "head worker" who could establish a settlement house at Pālāma Chapel for the benefit of the indigent population.

James Arthur Rath, Sr., an India-born Brit working as a social worker in Springfield, Massachusetts, was recruited to become the first head worker. Beginning in 1905, Rath and his wife, Ragna Helsher Rath, proceeded to turn Pālāma Chapel into a settlement house. Renamed Pālāma Settlement, it

became a chartered, independent, non-sectarian organization receiving contributions from the islands' elite.

*. . . they called them 'settlement houses,' the philosophy being that the head worker, as they called them, settled in the community. Instead of going in to spend the day working and coming out, they settled in, raised their families there and in that way learned, one, what the people needed, two, gained their confidence so that they could help them fulfill their needs, and then, three, went ahead and designed programs for exactly what the people needed. So they were settlers and therefore they called them settlement houses. Which is what the origin of Pālama Settlement was because my father and my mother settled there and all five of us children were born and raised in our home in the settlement. —Robert H. Rath, Sr.*

The Raths immediately went to work at the King and Liliha streets site, establishing the territory's first public nursing department, a day-camp for children with tuberculosis, a pure milk depot, a day nursery, a night school, and low-rent housing. In 1908, an indoor swimming pool was opened, and a year later, a gymnasium and bowling alley were built above it. Later, outdoors, a playground, tennis court, and basketball court were added. In 1916, the Pālama Settlement Athletic Association was formed.

*They (coaches) had their compassion. You see, there were so many kids over there . . . he would set a time. 'Okay, all the guys that are going to practice, from here to here. Time.' He wouldn't supervise, he'd just say, 'Okay, you guys go so many laps. How fast or how slow, doesn't matter, but you go so many laps.' I mean, they had no training as coaches, so all they did was, okay, what they thought, yeah? They even had a poolroom over there. No paying, but it was well supervised, everybody orderly. And I think one thing too, that although the menfolk who were there working, weren't actually coaches, they tried to keep the young people on the right track. —Masato Sugihara*

After a territorywide fund-raising effort, Pālama Settlement in 1925 moved to its present location—with nine buildings spread over eight acres of land—on Vineyard and Pālama streets.

Over the years, a medical clinic, an outpatient clinic, and the Strong-Carter Dental Clinic were established along with annual circuses, athletic competitions, social and community-service clubs, boardinghouses for women, and a preschool. Classes and events relating to athletics, music, arts, and vocations were also offered.

*Good guys. They [Pālama Settlement's coaches] were strict. They caught us doing something wrong, they tell us. And we'd get (chuckles) our pants kicked or something. And they made us go straight. Wilder Parker, same thing. We were afraid of him, yet we respected him. And when he gave you a kick in the pants, you deserved it. So you don't want to get another one . . . Pālama used to have the emblem, winged P, sports. To earn one of those, you have to be a member of the team. When you got one, you were proud of it, very proud of it. You wore a Pālama wing P shirt, that's it, man. You made it. You made the grade. Lot of them didn't make it. —James Koo*

With committed personnel, a first-class physical plant, a holistic, family- and community-centered philosophy of helping the needy, and innovative programs, Pālama Settlement became a significant social force. Many who spent their adolescence and young adulthood there in the 1930s and 1940s remember the facilities and programs made available to them.

*In the main building, of course you had the swimming pool, we had a locker room, and most of us took shower at Pālama. You didn't take a shower at home because you go in the tub . . . . You know, get the pot, pour water over your head, rub the soap. Then get out of that, pour some more water, and then go outside the house, get the hose. Whereas if you went to Pālama, you get hot and cold shower. So most of the people went to Pālama to take a bath. And we had a playroom with billiards, we had pool table, Ping-Pong. Then in the main building we had arts and crafts. . . . the Pālama staff people, they never ran out of patience. Down to the janitor, the night watchman even. That's the kind people they had around there, and they all poor people. But the kids were first. —Moses W. "Moke" Kealoha*

*There were swimming classes, besides the free swim. There were classes in home ec[onomics], young people as well as the elderly. In the day—I was telling you about some of the immigrant Japanese women that would go into smaller groups and do cooking classes. Again, the art classes. There were some that were specially for ceramics only, or for painting only. And there was music, group singing. Across [Vineyard] Street there was the preschool. Oh, there were also groups for Boy Scouts, there were judo classes. These were staffed by volunteers, and some were paid. There was woodwork class in the back of the gym. —Jennie Lee In*

World War II and the postwar era brought about widespread changes in Hawai'i's social, economic, and political situation. These developments, in turn, led to changes in the way social agencies such as Pālama Settlement addressed community needs.

Observers noted that Pālama Settlement was departing from its original settlement house philosophy by offering programs in return for payment and catering to a broad cross section of people regardless of where they lived.

In 1962, the Pālama Settlement board of trustees commissioned a team of four consultants, chaired by Harleigh B. Trecker, dean of the School of Social Work at the University of Connecticut, to examine and report on the settlement's mission, programs, departments, staff, volunteers, and clientele. The fifty-page document, referred to as the "Trecker report," brought to light shortcomings associated with the settlement's growth and community change. It called upon the settlement's programs to be more "people-centered" rather than "activity-centered," stressing more human and community needs as opposed to uncoordinated, departmentalized activities.

The Trecker report led to the board's dismissal of Pālama Settlement's executive director Arne E. Larson. He was eventually replaced by social worker Jack T. Nagoshi whose task was to implement many of the Trecker report recommendations:

*The settlement house started off with the needs of the community, way back then . . . Mr. James A. Rath's regime. They dealt essentially with immigrants. And*

*immigrants came from China, Philippines, Japan and so on. Mostly from the Far East. And they had needs: health, welfare, education. They had many needs. The settlement house attempted to help these individuals to assimilate as they come in. That was looking at the problems of the community, doing something here at the settlement house. They can't do everything, but they can do something. Part of the pie, kind of thing. And that was great. As time went on, the needs grew in leaps and bounds, not only for kids but for adolescents and the young adults and the adults, and even the elderly, . . .* —Jack T. Nagoshi

*The Trecker report supposedly became the bible for the trustees to change the program into what they were talking about. I was on the board and familiar with the Trecker report. And a lot of it, I think, said, 'You've got to get more community oriented. You should have more trustees from the community on the board, and do a lot of outreach soul searching so you get programs that are relevant to your community. . . .' Yeah, the Trecker report became pretty much the bible in trying to rework programs.* —Robert H. Rath, Sr.

Implementation of the Trecker report's recommendations resulted in a return to the settlement house philosophy of serving mainly the needy of the neighborhood rather than the entire island.

The decades of the 1960s and 1970s were periods of re-evaluation, adjustment, and growth, thanks mainly to the recommendations of the Trecker report and the large-scale social and economic programs being implemented nationally. President Lyndon B. Johnson's social welfare platform, in the form of civil rights and anti-poverty legislation, brought large amounts of federal monies to Pālama Settlement, which in turn created local programs geared to at-risk youth and community development.

*I started working at Pālama in the 1960s through the Economic Opportunity Act at that time, the federal government money. Then, I went in as what they called an aggressive worker. In other words, those were workers who worked on the streets with the kids in Mayor Wright [Homes] and the Kalihi-Pālama area. Fortunately, because of my sports, having been able to work in that area, I did have a smooth transition to the kids there. Plus, I was big, and that always helps, working in that area. They like size. Plus I coached, and I enjoyed coaching, so I was able to work with the kids. I started coaching basketball at first, working with some of the gang kids, getting them organized. We were fortunate. We were able to be very successful.* —Kenneth K. M. Ling

*Then we came to the problem of drugs. How we going to deal with drugs? The money is out there for drug [programs], right? From federal, from state, from everybody. Okay, what kind of programs can we put together? Started first with law violations groups. This was the beginning of the in-community treatment [program]. . . . And these kids came from all over O'ahu. They didn't just come from our area. They were referred to us by the courts. This was set up with the [family] court system. . . . We had awfully good trainers come from the Mainland, or Pālama sent us to the Mainland. . . . We used our behavior mod[ification] there. We used our point system [to reward the kids for] coming in not so loaded. You can come in even if you were on your drug. You were not told to go home. You can come in if you can't function, you lay down in the corner and go to sleep, but you be there because you're court-ordered*

*here, you know. So they would come in. . . . And then they'd spend the day in the learning center doing their work. They would have group [activities] for an hour, and we would go over these things if they were able to. If they weren't, they still stayed with us. And after a while, they got to the point where they wanted to do better themselves, so they would come less and less on their drugs so that they would be able to do their work. And it was very interesting to watch that happen. —Karel A. Ling*

*I think we did make some significant breakthroughs theoretically. I think that the idea of a learning center . . . in two years everybody was having a learning center. I think the idea of the total person instead of treating an ailment, yeah? . . . And recognizing that the needs of the body and the spirit and the soul and the mind are significant precursors of behavior. I think we really did pioneer that. I think we ran with it hard. I think we made the biggest impact because of our connection with the [family] court and with the significant people who believed that it was worth taking a shot on. . . . But they believed so strongly in what they were doing and were so committed to the youth of the state. . . . Don't waste these kids. Don't waste them so we have to take care of them forever, yeah? So, I guess that's as much as we could do with a little agency. We had big history and that gave you a lot of courage because if you think way back when, people at Pālama had enough nerve to do this, this, and this, right? —Earlene Piko*

*I remember sitting back, thinking about how much hurt I put on my family, my mom dragging me to court, and my father having to take time off from work, and so forth. Something happened. I just said, 'This is it. I can't do this anymore.' . . . And that's when the changes began to occur, both in school as well as the sports. Yeah. And when I got to the Pālama Settlement, the settlement was just unbelievable. I mean, the opportunity to learn in areas of reading, math, science. Those were excellent core areas. And then the biggest thing at Pālama was the training table. I mean, if there was an incentive, other than playing sports, it was the training table. Honest. When you come from a large family the portions are always the same. Pālama was different like, 'Oh, I can't wait to get there.' (Laughs) I mean, they had a shower room, uniform room, they had everything. All you had to do was earn it. And in order to play, you had to earn your grades. And you were well fed, you had all the programs there that you needed. You couldn't go wrong. —Fituina F. Tua*

Many of the programs survive today: Pākōlea, a behavior modification program built around sports participation and academics; the in-community treatment program which aids court-referred youth offenders; and neighborhood development, an advocacy program for the community, particularly residents of nearby public housing projects, Mayor Wright Homes and Ka'ahumanu Homes.

Pālama Settlement today—a smaller one than that of the 1950s due to the widening of Vineyard Boulevard and the construction of the H-1 Freeway—faces many difficult challenges. Immigrants from Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and the Pacific Islands have been moving into the Pālama area at an increasing rate. The population that the settlement now serves has changed from that served in previous generations. The settlement must meet the needs of these new immigrant families and continue to survive as a nonprofit, nongovernmental agency dedicated to helping needy families and at-risk youths.

*I think the complexion of the community has changed. 'Cause it's more [recent] immigrants. And the people that lived there (before), like us, all moved out. Not all, most of them moved out. So it's not like a community that was born there, born and raised. So you get people coming in—transients, immigrants . . . I guess they don't have an identity. Like when you say Pālama to the old-timers of Pālama, wow, you can talk story all day. When you say Pālama to people [today] it's just a settlement, a place to go play basketball. You know what I'm saying? It's not a home—identity. I'm not saying all, some people might have identity, but I think the majority of them don't have that feeling. So for Pālama to have programs, they have good programs, and not everybody takes part in it, or gets involved, or participates like we used to. The community before was really, well, that was the center. Now it's not the center, I don't believe it is. It's trying to be . . .* —Jeff Yamashita

*I don't know what the future of [Pālama Settlement] is, but as long as it's low income and as long as low income frequently equates with unemployment and single-parent families there's going to be a need for something within walking distance. And settlement houses are so flexible in their basic charter program that they can always be looking down the road to see the emerging need and designing something for it. This is where the creativity and social programs come from.* —Lorin T. Gill

Sixty-nine-year-old Moses W. Kealoha, still active with fund-raising efforts for the settlement, concludes:

*To conduct the program at the level of achievement that you had in the past, you gonna have to have more people. 'Cause today's people don't have the heart that they had in the old days. We did everything by heart. Today, you do everything by compensation. If big business can compensate those people, I think we could make the program go. They would be supplementing the staff. . . . Right now it's critical. . . . But we need to be assured that, yeah, we can go for another 50, 100 years. That's my really big concern. What we did no mean nothing. What we have to do in the future is everything, and I always talk about that. . . . I'm not saying it's a perfect place, but it's very commendable for a non-government-funded agency. When I look at the future, I say, well, how long will this last? How long will the memories and the teachings, the doctrines of the Rath family, how long is it gonna last? That's a big question we have to answer ourselves.*

### **Transcript Usage**

These volumes of transcripts include a glossary of all non-English and Hawai'i Creole English (HCE) words (which are italicized in the transcripts) and a detailed subject/name index.

There is a series of numbers at the beginning of each transcript. This series includes, in order, a project number, audio cassette number, session number, and year the interview was conducted. For example, 27-15-1-98 identifies COH project number 27, cassette number 15, recorded interview session 1, and the year, 1998.

The interviewees read their transcripts and were asked to make any deletions or additions they considered necessary before releasing them for publication. Interviewee additions/changes are in

parentheses ( ). Minor editing for clarification and historical accuracy was done by the COH staff. Every attempt was made to not alter the flavor and authenticity of the interviews while editing. COH staff additions are noted by brackets [ ]. A three-dot ellipsis indicates an interruption; a four-dot ellipsis indicates a trail-off by a speaker. Three dashes indicate a false start.

These transcripts represent statements the interviewees wish to leave for the public record. After reviewing and approving publication of the transcripts, the interviewees signed the following agreement:

*In order to preserve and make available the history of Hawai'i for present and future generations, I hereby give and grant to the University of Hawai'i Center for Oral History as a donation for such scholarly and educational purposes as the Center Director shall determine, all my rights, title, and interest to the tapes and edited transcripts of interviews.*

### **Transcript Availability**

These transcripts are the primary documents presently available for research purposes. The audio cassettes are in storage and not available for use, unless written permission is obtained from the Center for Oral History.

Copies of this transcript volume are available at the following locations:

#### **Hawai'i**

Hawai'i Public Library (Hilo)  
Kailua-Kona Public Library  
Kealahou Community Library  
Hawai'i Community College Library  
University of Hawai'i at Hilo Library

#### **Kaua'i**

Līhu'e Public Library  
Kaua'i Community College Library

#### **Lāna'i**

Lāna'i Public and School Library

#### **Maui**

Maui Public Library (Wailuku)  
Maui Community

#### **Moloka'i**

Moloka'i Public Library

#### **O'ahu**

Bishop Museum Library  
Hawai'i State Library  
Kaimukī Public Library  
Kalihi-Pālana Public Library  
Kāne'ohe Public Library  
Liliha Public Library  
Pearl City Public Library  
Honolulu Community College Library  
Kapi'olani Community College Library  
Leeward Community College Library  
Windward Community College Library  
University of Hawai'i at Mānoa  
Center for Oral History  
Ethnic Studies Program  
Hamilton Library  
University of Hawai'i-West O'ahu Library  
Hawai'i State Archives

COH publications include:

### **Transcript collections**

- Waialua and Hale'iwa: The People Tell Their Story* (1977)  
*Life Histories of Native Hawaiians* (1978)  
*Remembering Kaka'ako: 1910–1950* (1978)  
*Waipi'o: Māno Wai (Source of Life)* (1978)  
*The 1924 Filipino Strike on Kaua'i* (1979)  
*Women Workers in Hawai'i's Pineapple Industry* (1979)  
*Stores and Storekeepers of Pā'ia and Pu'unēnē, Maui* (1980)  
*A Social History of Kona* (1981)  
*Five Life Histories* (1983)  
*Kalihi: Place of Transition* (1984)  
*Waikīkī, 1910–1985: Oral Histories* (1985)  
*Ka Po'e Kau Lei: An Oral History of Hawai'i's Lei Sellers* (1986)  
*Perspectives on Hawai'i's Statehood* (1986)  
*Kōloa: An Oral History of a Kaua'i Community* (1988)  
*Lāna'i Ranch: The People of Kō'ele and Keōmuku* (1989)  
*Oral Histories of African Americans* (1990)  
*The State Foundation on Culture and the Arts: An Oral History* (1991)  
*Public Education in Hawai'i: Oral Histories* (1991)  
*'Ualapu'e, Moloka'i: Oral Histories from the East End* (1991)  
*An Era of Change: Oral Histories of Civilians in World War II Hawai'i* (1994)  
*Hawai'i Political History Documentation Project* (1996)  
*The Closing of Sugar Plantations: Interviews with Families of Hāmākua and Ka'ū, Hawai'i* (1997)

### **Books**

- Uchinanchu: A History of Okinawans in Hawai'i*. Published in cooperation with the United Okinawan Association (1981)  
*Hanahana: An Oral History Anthology of Hawai'i's Working People* (1984)

### **Finding Aids**

- Catalog of Oral History Collections in Hawai'i* (1981)  
*Catalog of the ESOHP Collection, 1976–1984* (1984)  
*Master Index to the ESOHP Interviews, 1976–1983* (1984)

### **Other Publications**

- How To Do Oral History* (Second Edition, Revised 1989)  
*Oral History Recorder* newsletter (1984–.)

The staff of the Center for Oral History, Social Science Research Institute, University of Hawai'i at Mānoa, believes that researching, recording, and disseminating the experiences of Hawai'i's people will stimulate further research and foster a better understanding of our islands' history. COH is responsible for any errors in representing or interpreting the statements of the interviewees.

Honolulu, Hawai'i  
 August 1998