

BIOGRAPHICAL SUMMARY: Joe A. Joseph, 71, retired Pearl Harbor Shipyard worker and dairy helper

*"I used to wash bottles. In fact, I'd have to do that because I was delivering milk. That's my job. Filling up the bottles of milk and checking my customers, know their routes, and everything else. . . . Know how many quarts to fill up, pints to fill up. Who they were. Because I remember, I take care the books. And then, time for collection, my dad and I would go together collect the bill."*

Joe A. Joseph, Portuguese-Hawaiian, was born in Kalihi on March 10, 1913. His father, Antone Joseph ("Antone Joe") owned a dairy located near the present site of Kalihi Shopping Center. As a youth, Joe helped his father at the dairy.

Joe attended Kalihi-Waena Elementary School and completed the ninth grade at Kalakaua Intermediate. In 1932, he began work as a surveyor at the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard. Just prior to World War II, Joe moonlighted as a nightclub bouncer. Until 1945, Joe, along with his brothers, helped at the family-run dairy.

Joe retired from Pearl Harbor in 1968. He presently works as a security guard at Kalihi Bowl. He and his wife, the former Victoria Gomes, live in Kailua. The couple has four children and numerous grandchildren.

Tape No. 11-36-1-84

ORAL HISTORY INTERVIEW

with

Joe Antone Joseph (JJ)

February 16, 1984

Kailua, Oahu

BY: Warren Nishimoto (WN)

WN: This is an interview with Mr. Joe Joseph at his home in Kailua, Oahu on February 16, 1984.

Okay, when were you born and where were you born?

JJ: I'll give you the exact date. March 10, 1913 in Kalihi.

WN: What part of Kalihi?

JJ: Well, near around Kam IV Road. Kam IV Road and King Street. I still remember the address. I think was 1117 North King Street, but it's not there anymore.

WN: What's over there now?

JJ: That's the Foodland area right now. It's the Kalihi Shopping Center, rather.

WN: What did your father do?

JJ: As far as I know, my dad was a mounted police. Probably when I was, well, maybe eight years, then I would understand what my father was. He was on horseback. Regular mounted police, that's what his first job was. There used to be four mounted police officers in this town. One used to take a beat at Kakaako, one in Kalihi, one in Palama, and the other someplace on River Street or Liliha Street someplace. Times get hard, they sent my father down Iwilei red [light] district, up there, see, and whatnot. So, they send my dad up there. 'Cause he's a little dark, he can handle those dark peoples out there. You know, there were colored people up there. They have prostitution and all that at that time. Then after that, he became a waterfront cop. All these Matson boats coming and going. It was a big thing, those days. Boats. Would be the Hawaiian band. Every boat coming in, they would be out there directing traffic and everything. He would be there. Then, from there, I think he became a motorcycle cop. And in between he was

taking care the pound. You know, pound master, see.  
Like holding two jobs.

WN: Where was the pound?

JJ: Right in our dairy. That was down Umi Street in them days, right there. There used to be a railroad track. You'd have to go over the railroad track to get into our father's dairy. There's a sort of a big hump like, you know. But the road go over there. And right alongside of that was the pound master's, where we keep the animals. My father catches on the street and hold 'em for thirty days. If the owner comes, he tell 'em, well, the charges are so much. He have to pay and everything else. If they don't come, then my father would auction 'em off.

WN: This pound was owned by the city? The city pound?

JJ: It was called, yeah, City and County. Could be City and County. That's way back. I think they had everything City and County. There was no State, then. It was City and County, right?

WN: Your father was a City and County policeman?

JJ: Mm hmm, right. Regular police department. Honolulu Police Department. That's what it was, you know. But anyway, I think the Honolulu Police Department handles everything in fact. Might as well say it's the county, you know. He didn't get paid for that job. I mean, you know, he didn't get paid for that job. He was a policeman then, but that was his side job. Suppose, say, if they call Antone, "You go to so-and-so area, there's cows on the street and horses." My father would just come back home, get onto his horses, get couple of 'em. Like Honey and Mike, they were small. Used to go with my dad, bring the cows down to the pound. Sometimes late at night. Then, later on, we used to get a truck. We used to go pick 'em up on a truck before.

WN: And at the same time, he had the dairy, yeah?

JJ: Yeah, the dairy was all the way through. He was policeman and everything else. We had a Portuguese guy, fellow by the name of Joe Souza.

WN: Joe. . . .

JJ: Joe Souza. Was way back, way back, way back. He milked the cows. He was sort of a manager. He'd direct things. But my father was directing all the things. But he was the head boss. He was the head boss there.

WN: How did your father acquire the dairy? How did he get into the dairy business?

JJ: That (chuckles), that's impossible. Like I said, all I remember when I began to start looking at things, I was eight years old then, see, maybe, when I realized some of that. In fact, I didn't know I was living in the back, where I said I was born. But I remember after I get old--like that picture, I was twelve years old--we used to live in the back there. Them houses there, that was all Yamane's houses then. See, all Yamane's houses. And then, from there, then we moved to the dairy after some bigshot from the Grace Brothers moved out. We went in. My father took the big house. That was a huge mansion, big house. Upstairs, downstairs.

WN: So, when you were born, you were born away from the dairy?

JJ: Yeah, we were born away from the dairy. Yeah.

WN: And then, later on, you moved to the dairy?

JJ: Yeah, yeah. I still can't remember. There used to be a Hawaiian village there. I think that's how my father married this Hawaiian woman way back, see? There was a lane down there. It used to be Hawaiians. They used to have luaus and everything down there. I don't remember after that, but my father divorced her, see? And she went to Kona and married this other Portuguese. That's how my other brothers came in. That's the only two, just me and Dole, with my father and Hawaiian mother.

WN: So, you're half-Portuguese, half-Hawaiian?

JJ: Yeah.

WN: And you're the oldest?

JJ: Yeah.

WN: What did your father's dairy look like? How many cows did he have?

JJ: Let me see. That's one, two, three, four. Those days, they're called "stanchions." You know, the cows come in, they put their head in, and you block 'em in. We had eight. We milk two. . . . Eight at a time. I think there was eight stanchions. And all these cows go in one time. Then we'd feed the grain. Then you going to start milking the cow. Milk that cow, put the grain in the other one. Then you ready to put grain here, this cow. They stay there and eat. When the whole eight of 'em is finish milking, take 'em out, then they bring another batch. That's the milk for that day. Then we put the milk away in the cooler, see? And ready to deliver in the morning, next morning. Well, we had lot of cows. Plenty cows. I know we had plenty cows.

WN: The cows were milked by hand?

JJ: All by hand. Never one time on machine. All was by hand. They

used to wash 'em with a cloth. You know, with a bag, bucket of water. They used to wash the tits and everything else, and you wash your hand, and start milking the cows. (Chuckles) I never did milk that much. But my brothers did.

WN: How come you never did?

JJ: Oh, I don't know. I was washing bottles. That was my job, you know what I mean. They more adept to it than I was probably because they was always with my dad. I was working and doing something else. But washing bottles, I used to wash bottles. In fact, I'd have to do that because I was delivering milk. That's my job. Filling up the bottles of milk and checking my customers, know their routes, and everything else. Delivering. That was my job. Know how many quarts to fill up, pints to fill up. Who they were. Because I remember, I take care the books. And then, time for collection, my dad and I would go together collect the bill. He would sit down. He'd have the change in his pocket. I'd go over there, so-and-so. If the bill is \$5.19, they give you a ten dollar. Count that ten. My father get the change, I take 'em back to him, see? That's how I learned to go do it my own later on. Then my father leaves me change. Say, he gives me about fifty dollars when I'm going. I come up from---I was [working] Pearl Harbor then, maybe, see? Still the dairy was going on. I go collect and he'd do something else. I was collecting my own self. Then my dad bought me a car to go around collecting. Some people don't pay. You know, they tell you so-and-so date, you mark 'em down.

WN: You used to go on the horse and buggy, too?

JJ: Horse and wagon. It was not a buggy. We call it horse and wagon. Well, could be a buggy. Was small, yeah.

WN: Where did you go delivery? What was the. . . .

JJ: The delivery was, let's say, when I leave Umi Street, we'd first head up to Kam IV Road. Go all the way Kam IV Road up to the pigpen area. Way up, you know. Then come down. We never did go to Kalihi Uka side. Come down. Then, let's see. Then we come back King Street again. We deliver Gulick Avenue, all around Beck's place. Beck used to buy milk from me. Come down. Then we'd go Kalihi Kai. There's Puuhale Road. Not much way down. We never did go over that main highway. Puuhale Road, and then we come back. That was our deliveries. That's all. Later on, we had one well known Tip-Top Cafe in town. I think was close to the post office. They used to buy, like I said, the big gallons of milk. Just one delivery. Sometimes my father would go to work, he'd take 'em with him. When he's going to work to police department, he drop 'em there and take off. Early in the morning, we'd get the milk ready. That one, he collect that, see? That's his special, you know. We never know how to go in town. (Chuckles)

WN: What sizes did you folks bottle the milk in?

JJ: That's just--the one I showed you?

JJ: Yeah. Two of 'em every time. We had to take two. That's the eight or the twelve gallon, I think, that's what it was. Two of 'em, every morning.

WN: What about gills?

JJ: No, no. Just take 'em. No bottles. Just from the milk can right there. And they'd put 'em in the ice. When they go there, they put 'em in ice. Anybody want milk in their restaurant, they take it out, put 'em in the pitcher. And they'd serve milk. No bottles, see? There was no bottles.

WN: So, like one family would take one big gallon?

JJ: Well, it wouldn't be a family. That'd be a place of business, that's all. A place of business.

WN: What about families?

JJ: Families never did take it from those. Everything would be bottles.

WN: And you folks would bottle at the dairy?

JJ: Yeah, we bottled, everything. Fill up the milk and cap 'em right over there. We had a regular capper, see, and everything else.

WN: And was straight from the cow? I mean, no pasteurization?

JJ: No pasteurizations. Comes from one strainer. When he gets through from milking the cows on the bottom, he puts it into one of the big ones [was] there, see? All right, there would be a strainer there. He'd pour it in there. Okay. When that fill up, they bring it to the milk room. That's where I'm at now. Bring it to the milk room. And we'd have a trough. Ice. And [pour] put it in there. So, when I'm ready to start, if I have enough milk for fill up all my bottles, I would take 'em from there, and we'd have another cooler like. See, we had a cap on 'em. Has another strainer again, cheesecloth strainer. Pour it, go through in there. That's the last. Only about two strainers. Then from there, fill 'em up in the bottles.

WN: How do you fill it up in the bottle? You had nozzles?

JJ: Yeah, we have a regular small, little hose, you know. Like a cap. From the pipe, you'd put attachment on. With your hand, you stop 'em here. You go there, you stop 'em here. Then you cap 'em. Had a machine.

WN: So, about how many gallons of milk a day did you . . .

JJ: Ah, my God, I couldn't say. I can't remember. It was a small dairy. Wasn't too big of a dairy, see? I can't remember how many gallons. I couldn't say. Maybe one. . . . Let me see. Sometimes we'd have four of those big ones [cans] there. Four of those. That milk, if we can't . . . . We know just how much for the next morning. Still fresh yet, see. We save it for the next morning. Because one milking, the cows would give you so much milk. The next milking they come on, they'd be dropping down again. So, you'd have to have another bunch to come in to refill 'em. We know just what it is come out, the amount.

WN: And it was your job to do the collecting, you said, yeah?

JJ: Yeah. Delivering and collecting, that was my job. I never did cut grass, no nothing. You know, those days, you cut grass, you feed 'em. My brothers do that. Milk the cows and everything else.

WN: You had any problems with people not paying?

JJ: No. No way. They were good, very good. They'd go back one, two, three months, but we'd get 'em.

(Laughter)

JJ: Or we stop 'em. But we never did. Those days, you don't stop. You just give 'em. You know they pay later on.

WN: You would deliver every day?

JJ: Yeah. Every day.

WN: How often would you collect?

JJ: Every end of the month. For collection, would take me about, oh, maybe about a week. (Chuckles) Oh, they not home. I got to go a certain time. You catch those who were home. You come back. Next day you go, they home, the others not home. About a week, that's when I get through collection. Sometimes five days, six days. Yeah, that's about a week.

WN: So, you started with the horse and wagon, and then you started going by car, yeah?

JJ: Yeah, then I started . . .

WN: About when do you remember going by car?

JJ: Shee, you have to go by my age now. Let me see. That picture, when I said, was twelve years old or fourteen years. So, what year would that be?

WN: About 1925?

JJ: Twenty-five, yeah, okay. And then, say, about '32. Let me see. Oh, yeah, when I graduate Kalihi-Waena School, there was a Model-T. Around 1930. That's when I start driving a Model-T Ford. I got my license on a Model-T Ford, anyway. We call it Model-T Ford. You want to get license those days, I was only fifteen years old. Yeah, that's right. Fifteen years old, I was. My dad was a policeman at that time. He had something to do with traffic work. Then they had the regular license examiners. They had two of 'em--Charlie Barboza and another guy, I forget his name. But you get on the car. You know, you just trying to cut it. Take you to Punchbowl, they call "Perry Hill." It's one hill like that. You go up with your car. You go and you stop. And those days, you only get the gas here, brake there, and one clutch. And he says . . .

WN: The gas on the. . . .

JJ: On the right hand, eh?

WN: On the right hand side?

JJ: Right on the steering wheel, like that.

WN: Yeah?

JJ: Yeah.

WN: And the brake and the clutch . . .

JJ: The brake, you hold the brake, you stop. And you get ready for shift. Only one shift, you know. The clutch here, put 'em in. He says, "Okay. Let the brake loose, go." (JJ pantomimes.) You pass that test, you get a license. That was all.

(Laughter)

WN: You passed first time?

JJ: Oh, yeah. I'd been driving on that Model-T Ford. Then, later on, we got a new car, different one.

WN: The land on which the dairy was on, who owned the land?

JJ: Like I said, when the war break out, Grace Brothers told my dad, "You have to move, Antone." So Grace Brothers must have been the boss of that place. I think they owned the property at that time.

WN: But the house that you lived in was owned by Yamane?

JJ: No. Yamane had no strings at that end there. No, Yamane never even owned those property yet at that time. Never. All he owned was up

in King Street side. This open space where we used to let our cows after milking, we had kiawe trees, beans. We'd send the cows in the evening. They go eat kiawe trees, beans. And I used to watch cows, too, across the street, the St. John's Church. The streetcar used to pass by, see. And I used to watch cows. Yamane didn't own that yet. It was owned either by McCandless or maybe John Grace yet. Then when my father moved out, then, well, that's when Yamane had chance to buy the place. I think that's how he bought 'em.

WN: Your father moved out in 1945?

JJ: Somewheres around there. Right, right.

WN: The people that lived in the area of the dairy, what kind of people were they? What nationality?

JJ: Okay. I would say, Portuguese, Hawaiian, Japanese, Chinese. We had a mixture. We had a mixture, everyone. And when I deliver, I had a mixture. All sorts. The same thing, my customers were all mixed, different nationalities. Around there where we lived was Portuguese, Hawaiian. Mostly Portuguese and Hawaiians, and a few Japanese. More Japanese than Chinese there.

WN: Besides working in the dairy, did you have any other kind of job when you were young?

JJ: No, just dairy. I was going to school, then, anyway. Still working, I was going Kalakaua School. That would be 1930, '31, '32. And I got a call to Pearl Harbor. When I went to Pearl Harbor, I still was working with the dairy. I'd come home. Then that's when I was just collecting. I would do just the month's collecting. Then I'd go on the route with the delivery boy. I had one Puerto Rican guy. He used to go with the horse and wagon. I'd come back, I know just the. . . . The customer's house, he'd go with me. Because he didn't know how to make change. See, these houses, I'd walk in. I give 'em the bill maybe. Some houses, I would go, the horse would stop there. I says, "Why you stop here?"

He says, "I don't know. They don't take milk."

The horse don't move. I told 'em, "You sure this?" I went over there.

He [the customer] said, "Yeah, I been taking milk from you plenty months ago."

They was paying the driver on the side, you know. Selling milk. These people get it, you know. Because we have extras, we give 'em away, you know. He was selling it. So I caught him. (Chuckles)

WN: You fired him?

JJ: We kept him, we kept him. (Chuckles)

WN: When did they start having laws that you had to pasteurize the milk or anything like that?

JJ: That's way back. Really back. I don't know. I can't remember. They used to come down. The regular cattle inspectors. They're from the Board of Health. In fact, the Board of Health ran the whole damn thing. They go to a cow, and then they test 'em. They got to give 'em some kind of serum or what, they would test 'em. The next day they come, they do it again. And if they're sure that this cow had this, this milk wouldn't be good. So, they'd attach some kind of ear tag. This cow cannot be milked till later on. Those are the cows that we don't touch. We just keep 'em. They had regular. It was pretty strict, though. You couldn't fool around. And then, cows that milk is no good, then you can't leave 'em around there, so we bring 'em in the barn again. Their milk wasn't good. We had plenty of 'em, had to do that. Till later on, take 'em out in the pasture. They come back again, they come back good again. They pass the test, they come back again. But the Board of Health, that means they strict. They very strict.

WN: Did you folks just do dairy cows?

JJ: Yeah.

WN: No beef cows?

JJ: No beef cows that time. No more. But like I said, when Grace Brothers told Antone, "You move down to Nanakuli, take care my ranch down there. You bring your cows. You go into beef cattle." That's when my dad, whatever cows we had, took 'em over there. And then we begin having calves. We could milk. There was beef. Every two years my dad would take a trip to the Mainland. Him and my mother. This makes money. And all my brothers start working different outside jobs. But we still had cows back home there, with milk. Nanakuli [residents], to my father, they said, "Oh, Antone, I like some milk."

"Okay."

Don't have no worry about pasteurizing milk again. You sell 'em, they pay you. That wasn't nothing, you know. Was illegal, but. . . .

(Laughter)

JJ: They didn't complain of any sickness or anything like that. No, they were more healthy than ever. (Laughs) Ah, you drink the raw milk. I used to drink once from the cow's tits. (Laughs)

WN: Yeah?

JJ: I still love milk. (Chuckles) I still love milk.

WN: Was the taste any different?

JJ: To me, no. Same thing. Pasteurized or what, the same thing to me. I didn't see no difference, pasteurized or raw milk. Really, no fooling, I didn't see any difference at all. It's just the wording. They said raw milk maybe not sanitary like or what. You have to go through a process and all that. Later on, I think, it was getting so bad that they would take the cream. You get your raw milk, you put 'em in a bottle. And you get the pasteurized milk. This what they had, challenge with my dad's dairy. I think this [pasteurized] milk came from Dairyman's. That milk must have come from Campos. Campos delivered to Dairyman's in town. They would do the same thing. Deliver milk in bottles, too. They had regular route, too. They would come our way, too. We'd meet them. All right, they would take that pasteurized milk and they would take a raw milk, and they'd leave 'em overnight. And the next morning, you look at the pasteurized milk and the raw milk. The cream, where the bottle neck come down, the raw milk would be down almost half way. Pasteurized milk would be just about two inches. They separated the cream from the pasteurized. That's what happened. So, people wouldn't get the right amount of milk. That's why raw milk was the best thing to have. Oh, yeah, raw milk, the cream is there, you can see it, man. And we had the tops. We beat the Dairyman's. Just, you know, see where the butterfat is and all that. Raw milk was the best. And they took a test through my father's dairy.

WN: What was the name of the dairy? Your father's dairy?

JJ: Kalihi Dairy.

WN: What was the name of the brand of milk? Or was there a brand name?

JJ: No, just Kalihi Dairy. No brand milk. Just Kalihi Dairy. Doggone, I had a bottle still yet. I can't find 'em.

WN: Oh, you got to save those.

JJ: Oh, yeah. It's got "Antone Joe, Umi Street, Kalihi Dairy." And we had an emblem, see. I forgot. Yeah, gone.

WN: Did everybody call your dad "Antone Joe"?

JJ: Yeah. Antone Joe. That's how they know him. Only the Hawaiians would call him "Akoni." They know my father, you know.

WN: "Akoni"?

JJ: "Akoni." That's "Antone" in Hawaiian or something like that. "Akoni." They all respect my dad, eh? Because he was the first cop over there, too, anyway. (Chuckles) Kalihi, eh? First police

officer. Man, 1913, I was born. He was a policeman already, I think. Yeah.

WN: You told me that he was a motorcycle cop with Isaacs?

JJ: Yeah, Alvin Isaacs. Alvin Isaacs and what's the other guy? I forget their names. Alvin Isaacs and two more other police officers. They only had four. Alvin Isaacs. Oh, yeah, John Cypher, another one. Used to be at Beckley Street. And one more. Hawaiian. Well-known name. He was the best well-dressed cop in the police. His bike was shiny. He had boots way up there and here. Fancy cop. He was a good cop, too. But he died. They all died. Every one. Not one of them living that I know of. And then later on, let me see. Paul Keliikoa came later. Paul Keliikoa was later.

WN: Paul who?

JJ: Paul Keliikoa. Aiea. He was a sergeant.

Then I was a bouncer. Like I said, I [worked] Pearl Harbor. Night-time, I would go to Purple Inn. There'd be a place for drinking over there. They start drinking, eh? I used to be bouncer there.

WN: When were you a bouncer? When you started working at Pearl Harbor?

JJ: Yeah. After Pearl Harbor. Not after, during Pearl Harbor.

WN: While you were there. You started Pearl Harbor in 1932, yeah?

JJ: Yeah, yeah. Then, later on, I went in town. Joe Neves place. Joe Neves bar on Bethel Street.

WN: When you were growing up around the dairy like that, besides working, what did you do to have good fun?

JJ: Well, let me see. Well, I was playing football. We got to go practice every afternoon. That's a must. You practice football every day.

WN: For the Thundering Herd?

JJ: For the Thundering Herd that time. During the evening, we practice. When we get through practice, we'd get in our car, we go down Bethel Street, eat, and, you know, come back home again. Then Honey Richard, Mike Richard, myself and Theodore Kupau--he's dead, too--we had a little band. We used to go play music for this haoles at Pearl City. Play guitar, one ukulele, saxophone. So, I was one of the band. (Chuckles)

WN: What'd you play?

JJ: I was playing guitar. Yeah, I played the guitar.

WN: How old were you?

JJ: Ah, let me (chuckles) see now. When? Young. Very young. Let me see. About how old I was? Well, I was nineteen years. I was nineteen when I worked Pearl Harbor. I could be about thirty, thirty-one, thirty-two.

(JJ's daughter speaks to him.)

JJ's daughter: Dad, tell him that you were a bouncer.

JJ: Yeah, I was bouncer.

WN: Before that, though, when you were real small, what kind of stuff you folks did?

JJ: Just like I said. We'd be on the dairy all the time. When you work in a dairy, there's no such thing as you get a day off. That's every day, you work. Every day you work. You go to a show maybe, then your father would tell you go. The Star Theater would be right in Kalihi there. So, you went there. They had a show. Matinee or something like that.

WN: So, you stayed out of mischief, then?

JJ: Oh, yeah. I never one time got caught. Only time I got caught when I go steal candies from Yamane. (Chuckles)

WN: Steal what?

JJ: Steal candies. Me and my brother Dole. You know, they had the hardware store and the candy. On King Street. There's no more now. We used to go in the store, look around. Get a handful of candies, you know. He'd catch us. He spank us on the ass. (Chuckles) The old man [Ukichi Yamane] died, you know. Kazuo [Yamane, Ukichi's son] would know. And my brother Dole, (chuckles) he almost killed Kazuo. Throw 'em in the water and everything else. In the stream. You ask Kazuo, he tell you that. We had a stream over there, see? Right by out there at our house, they used to come swimming over there. And they scared go swim. We were together: Kazuo, Kosei. My brother Dole pick up Kazuo, he throw 'em in the water. (JJ makes sounds.) And the cow shit going all over him like this.

(Laughter)

JJ: He said, "Your brother like kill me!"

(Laughter)

JJ: Oh, he never forget it. He still remember my brother there. You ask him and he tell you that.

WN: You folks used to play together?

JJ: Yeah, we always play together. We had a basketball team up Kalihi. . . . That's where they call the Kalihi Union Church. We had a park there. We used to play. Peter Martin [another interviewee], we all played. Then we had baseball, football. You know, small kid time days. But we had a good . . .

WN: The park by Kalihi Union church?

JJ: Yeah. But it's no more there now. Because, you know, it's all highway through there, you see. We had a basketball team. And at night, the big church would have another basketball team. We challenged Kalihi-Uka, Kalihi-Kai, and, oh, different teams. We used to practice right in the gym over there. The church gym. Peter Martin was always on that team. Let me see. Yeah, Peter Martin, and Charlie Ornellas--ex-cop who died already--and Billy Yomes. We would challenge. We call ourselves the "Outlaws." We beat any team around Kalihi. I don't care--Kalihi-Kai, Kalihi-Uka, they had different teams scheduled there. We were champions up there. And I was the captain of the team. I was a good forward, see?

WN: You're pretty tall, eh?

JJ: I was a good forward. Peter Martin and I was forwards. Peter Martin and I. He always throw to me. And I'm good from a long shot outside, over the rim and inside there. I was pretty good. Peter Martin was playing with me. You ask him, he'll tell, you know. Then I became captain of the team. Bumbai Peter Martin. We change around, eh? But for basketball, that was my sport. Nobody touch me over there. Peter Martin, you ask. (Chuckles) And them days, when you play, that's rough. That's just like football. (Laughs) You hit one guy in the ribs, boy, I'd knock you down. (Chuckles) Now, you touch a guy, you foul.

WN: Yeah? No more referees?

JJ: (JJ pantomimes action.) Sometimes you bump into 'em, but man! Get referee, everything, we had. We had a good basketball team. Then I played Pearl Harbor basketball team for our shop, see? Basketball was my meat, football secondary. Baseball, I didn't care much.

WN: Had a gym?

JJ: Yeah. We have a gym.

WN: Where was the gym?

JJ: Right there, Kalihi Union. Regular gym. It's torn down. Was a big gym. It's high rafters. Old-style gyms, you know. Real high. And they have a basketball court in there. I mean, high. I

would shoot, from the center of the court, over two rafters. I would throw the ball, go over two rafters, and drop inside the basket.

(Laughter)

JJ: Impossible shots, you know. But I would practice, and I would get 'em. But legal shots. (Laughs) They just guard me, and I just watch 'em. Two rafters, sometimes one rafter. But I'm good for the outside shots. Peter Martin, inside, quick fast one, see?

WN: Peter Martin used to tell me that they used to play softball in there, too?

JJ: Yeah. Yeah, right. (Chuckles)

WN: It must have been a big gym, eh?

JJ: Big gym. We had a big gym, yeah. We had all kind of sports activities out there. Who else there? Peter Martin. We had Casey Rodrigues them. Oh, yeah. Go ask all them.

WN: You told me had a flood one time, about mid-1920s, where you got swept down or something?

JJ: Yeah, but couldn't be in the '20s. Can't be in the '20s. Gee, maybe around there. Yeah, someplace in that years. Maybe '25. Yeah, we had a big flood. This Gulick Avenue Stream, they had. That's across the King Street. It's still there, Gulick Avenue. Them days, the stream, the sides, was wide open stream. When they have the mountain cloudburst back in Kalihi Valley, that water would come pouring down. It cuts right through my father's dairy and everything else. Swept my father's dairy away. That's the time I almost got killed. That was the big storm we had.

WN: You got rescued or what?

JJ: Yeah, like I said, my brother. . . . I fell down. And the thing [water] went over. And they start searching for me, but I was down the beach down there already. Not Sand Island.

WN: Keehi Lagoon?

JJ: Yeah, Keehi Lagoon.

WN: Oh, yeah? How far down?

JJ: I was floating. And I passed through the Pake garden and down everything else, you know, hanging on things like that. The water was rough, eh? So, they start searching, they found me. And they rushed me to the hospital. Up there used to be Shafter Hospital. Next morning, the paper they say, oh, (chuckles) big dos about me.

WN: Your name was in the paper?

JJ: Yeah. (Laughs)

WN: Chee.

JJ: Lot of people got killed. We'd find two, three bodies in my father's dairy. After the mud and everything else, we'd find them. The people used to have a brewery. They used to make their own beer. Lot of beer was coming down. Every time we dig in the dirt, you'd find a bottle of beer. Still good. You open the bottle of beer, the beer strong as hell, boy. Good beer. Every day, after months later when we start cleaning up the stuff like that.

WN: Was home brew kind?

JJ: Home brew. People used to make 'em and it came down with 'em from all those homes, eh? Never broke.

WN: Your father lost any cows?

JJ: To be frank with you, I think we never lost one animal. We never lost one animal. I think maybe one sheep could have been dead. We had five sheeps. Yeah, maybe one sheep we lost. They would be all down the lagoon. We'd go pick them up, bring 'em all back home. They would be out there. We'd bring 'em back home.

WN: You mean, that's where they grazed?

JJ: No, that's where the water took 'em down, too. The whole barn and everything went. No more nothing. Then we had to build a new barn. That's how we got that new barn, see? The old barn, I don't remember so well. The picture you seen is the new barn. So, that's right, about that year is right, that flood.

WN: About how old were you? Do you remember?

JJ: Well, that thirteen. Nineteen what, I was fifteen, maybe seventeen, eighteen years. No, no, couldn't be. Sixteen years. Sixteen, seventeen. Because I went to work when I was nineteen. So, could be back there, see.

WN: About there?

JJ: Yeah.

WN: You mentioned the Pake garden. Where exactly was that?

JJ: Right along there, too. That's where right now is HC&D [Honolulu Construction and Draying Company, Ltd.] used to be. You know where HC&D is, right? All inside there. That's where the Pake garden was. Right inside there. And the slaughterhouse was there, too,

at that time. The slaughterhouse was there and the Pake garden. Pake garden and the slaughterhouse. Then that's where that Middle Street is. But used to be a small, little lane. That street used to come, go right into Fort Shafter gate before. King Street used to turn around over there. The Rapid Transit used to turn around over there. And they had Pacific Guano [&] Fertilizer homes there. One, two, three. Koch family. They still living. The old man died, the son's living. They had homes on that street there. And the little lane. We used to take the cars and go down King Street. You know where that Fort Shafter? Soon as you get to Middle Street, you make a right turn, go down there. Down there was all grazing land. So, we take our cows, go take 'em down there. When we didn't have enough food grazing grass at home. Take 'em down there, watch 'em, and bring 'em back home, come back. Oh, we'd take about fifty with horseback. You know, just watching. Go down, come back, bring 'em back.

WN: Anybody could use that land?

JJ: Yeah, nobody's. I think that was Army reservation, but they didn't stop. Today, it's Army stuff, see, right there. That's where Hawaiian Telephone is now, see? Down by that corner, right there. All around in there.

WN: Down Umi Street, you mean?

JJ: Middle Street. When you coming down Middle Street and you turn right. That's where Shafter is, you know. Before you go up to Shafter. Right inside. They have that communication--it's Army now. That was all grass area there. All the way down to Dillingham Boulevard way down, way back.

WN: The Pake gardens, what was that? I mean, vegetables?

JJ: Just vegetables. Any kind of vegetables, they would raise. And they would deliver, take it in town to the market. Kekaulike Market. That's where the market was, fish market.

WN: How big was it?

JJ: Big, big, big, big one. Yeah. They'd have a horse and wagon, too. The Pakes would take 'em down every morning. They take vegetables. They clean 'em. They had a big water spout. The vegetables, they put 'em in small trays, you know, like a rivulet. It would come down through them. The onions goes here, vegetables there. They'd clean 'em, sort 'em, everything else. Next morning, they deliver. Big Pake garden. That was the biggest in town. Any kind of vegetables, Chinese vegetables. Any kind of vegetables they had.

WN: And they leased the land, too?

JJ: That land, yeah. That was lease land, too. But you ask me, I think

Grace Brothers had all those lands back there, that time. Between Grace Brothers and McCandless.

WN: So, had your father's dairy, had Pacific Guano & Fertilizer Company, had the Pake garden. Anything else down in there?

JJ: Pacific Guano and Yamane Store, that's all. There's nothing else, no.

WN: So, after you went to Kalihi-Waena School, eighth grade, then you went Kalakaua, ninth grade?

JJ: Mm hmm [yes].

WN: And then, you quit?

JJ: Then I had the call to go Pearl Harbor. I was just about to graduate from. . . . Oh, next two months more, one month more. I didn't worry about no diploma. I got Pearl Harbor job. (Chuckles) Yeah. Mitsuda? He's a dentist now. He and I used to go Palama, go shoot pool and everything. Couple of Japanese boys. We never go take the music class, see? We used to skip that.

WN: What music you had to take?

JJ: Violin. I was playing violin. And he played violin, too. (Chuckles) We'd get on the railroad track and we walk down to Palama. Old Palama Theater, see? There used to be poolroom over there. We'd have our lunch, then shoot pool. Then, time when just go back, we go back there to school, probably go back home. (Chuckles) We skip that class every day. We'd be down Palama. You know, we have our fifty cents or dollar. Big money. (Chuckles) But we used to walk all the way down from there to Palama. That's to Liliha Street, eh, around there.

WN: Where did you take violin lessons? In school?

JJ: In the school. I wanted to play piano all the time, see? And later on, I played piano by my own by ear. My father got married to my Portuguese mother. We had a big piano. Roller player piano. And then, they used to teach classical music. And had this colored teacher. You close the door, you cannot even see them playing music, but quiet, you know. But (JJ makes music sounds). I used to listen every time. I pick up a chord. When we go up here, I played better than the damn instructor by playing by ear. (Chuckles) Today, I play Hawaiian music all by ear on the piano. Nobody teach me. That's by ear.

WN: So, when you got the job at Pearl Harbor, what did you do? What was your first job?

JJ: That's the only job I had, bouncer.

WN: No, I mean, at Pearl Harbor, what did you do?

JJ: I went in there as a laborer. The first thing, I got there, there was couple of---like Alex Beck [another interviewee], this one fellow, Thomas Beck--I think his [brother]. He was a leading man in carpentry shop. They would know me, Antone's boy. I'm Antone Joe's boy. So, I'd go help them deliver material, drive a truck, or something like that. Then, the survey office was open. And they say, "Joe, why don't you try the survey office. We know this guy, Mr. Wilson." Okay. I went over there. So, I started as a laborer--rod man, see?

WN: Rod man?

JJ: Rod man. You know, holding the rod. Learn how to tape. I started working with them. And pretty soon, I start running instruments back here. Running instruments, I beat them guys out. I was so fast in reading my instrument, my azimuth, everything. I became a good instrument man. Then they wen name me chief of party, I turned it down. I'd go different islands, see?

WN: What department was this?

JJ: This OICC. Officer In Charge Construction, OICC. That was the big base. District Public Works would be the Pearl Harbor guys. And shipbuilding would be different, see. But this OICC, we'd do hydrographic work, topographic work. You know, hydrographic would be the ocean, where we had to take soundings. We'd work [at] Johnston Island laying up levels for airstrips and everything else. During the war we had hard time, see.

WN: And at the same time, you were a bouncer, yeah?

JJ: Mm hmm, at night.

WN: What did you have to do?

JJ: Well, dress up, you know. Look little neat. I mean, you know, didn't have to have a tie. Sometimes, you just look gentleman like. One door here, another door here. And inside, that was big place. You got one other bouncer, then another bouncer. Because guys would get rugged and fight with one another. And I used to watch drunks coming in. I look at them, drunk, well, you out. You can't come in. If they charge me, well, the minute he go for me, then two more by the door. Boom, boom, he's down. Call the cops. They come over.

WN: What was the name of the club again?

JJ: Joe Neves Place. Joe Neves.

WN: Where was that?

JJ: Right on Hotel Street. Right Hotel Street. They tore that building now. Nice parking area now. Nuuanu, that used to be a bar there. And then, there's Bethel Street. You know, King and Bethel Streets. That's where all the restaurants used to be. There're pool tables, pool right there. Inside of there, just opposite of that was the bar. Had all kind of bars there. Joe Neves Place.

WN: It was a bar and nightclub?

JJ: Nightclub, everything, yeah. That run up till late nighttime.

WN: You had any problems?

JJ: Well, you know. You have to bounce, like Naumu Brothers came in one time. They came from Hilo. I think was five of 'em. They came on the boat or something. You know, they come to town. And that time was Mel Kahuku Rodrigues and Alky Dawson, the boxer. You fool around with well-known guys, you see. And I just happen to know them. They know me, too. This Johnny Ross, my cousin, he was a boxer, too. Well, them days, I was scrappy, too. Don't fool around. No problem. They tie me by the neck (JJ makes sounds), I broke the tie, and start fighting again. (Chuckles)

WN: Rough place.

JJ: Aw, you ain't kidding, man. We had it, you see.

WN: How they paid you? Good?

JJ: As far as the payment, that's good payment, yeah.

END OF SIDE ONE

SIDE TWO

WN: So you got married in 1933, yeah?

JJ: I got. . . . [Nineteen] thirty-four or '33?

WN: I have you down as---oh, I'm sorry. [Nineteen] thirty-six.

JJ: [Nineteen] thirty-six, right. Yeah, right. Can't be '33. [Nineteen] thirty-two, I went work Pearl Harbor, so four years later I married my wife, I think, see? Right.

WN: Okay. How you met your wife?

JJ: I was bouncer down there. (Chuckles) She work---them days, what the store is beyond Fort Street? Ben Franklin? Fort Street, I don't know, still might be . . .

JJ's wife: Kress.

WN: Oh, Kress?

JJ: Kress! Kress. I met her. She was walking with some guys. They happened to introduce me to her. Then she'd come again, and pretty soon, I start making eyes at her so that was it. (Chuckles) Yeah, she met me when I was a bouncer.

WN: Did you move? While you were working Pearl Harbor, you were still living on the dairy?

JJ: Well, close to the dairy. [JJ examines photograph.] That's one of Yamane's houses. Right there. Call it the dairy because Yamane's is here. The railroad track be here, that's Umi Street coming down here, where the Hawaiian Telephone is now in there. The railroad tracks used to be there. Our dairy was here. All that land was all my father's dairy. Then the Pake garden, and then the slaughter house way down. That was all right there. It was the only things that were out there. Stayed there till when Yamane sold the place to Hawaiian Telephone, we moved out. All my kids born in there. Every one of 'em born out there.

WN: Okay. So, you worked Pearl Harbor from '32 . . .

JJ: To '68.

WN: To '68, yeah.

JJ: Yeah. Put in 34 years. In fact, supposed to be thirty-five years. See, when they had the big rift. We had a big rift. Pearl Harbor, they start laying off guys. I was no veteran. I had to take a step down or laid off one year. I took a step down, then somebody took my step down because I wasn't a veteran. Then I laid off one year. I came back. But I didn't draw no money out of my pension fund. I left it there. So, after one year, then I came back again. I built myself up to, say, 35 years. But actually I had 34 years service on my diploma. Lost one thousand hours of sick leave because I wasn't sick. They should have paid me. If they gave me a penny, I'd be satisfied. I lost all that sick leave. (Chuckles)

WN: Better to be healthy.

JJ: (Chuckles) Oh, yeah. Yeah, that's like vacation, you know. But vacation, well, if I get drunk on. . . . Say, Friday's payday. Monday we go to work again. Monday's hard day to work. Sometimes I call in sick. That's not sick leave, but they take it out of my vacation. So, it didn't touch my sick leave. The thousand hour club.

WN: What was it like during World War II when you were working Pearl Harbor?

JJ: What do you mean by. . . .

WN: What did you do when the war broke out?

JJ: I was still surveying. I was surveying then. That's how they start moving around then, see?

WN: Do you remember what you were doing when Pearl Harbor was bombed?

JJ: Yeah, mm hmm. We were building dry docks. We had dry dock number one, we had dry dock number two. We had dry dock number two, then we had the floating dry dock. Then we build dry dock number four. That's all I was doing, dry docks. Every day with my level and transit work we'd be laying out columns, and giving grades, and everything else. That's all I was doing--dry dock, dry dock. Very seldom, we'd take a trip away. 'Cause when things was looking good, then we had to go to, say, Midway, Johnston, Kwajalein. Them days, Kwajalein and Midway was our stake. Johnston Island came later. Johnston Island came in the '60s. But Kwajalein and Midway was right after the war. That's where we going all the time. Couple of trips to. . . . Well, that Samoan trip was in the '60s. Wasn't bad. We were building airstrips, too. They have a big party, go out there, surveying gang. About eight of us.

In surveying, you do anything. You check manholes, looking for this, and laying all kind of pipes, water lines, electrical works and everything else. We'd do the surveying there, and then if we had a job that was subleased--the Navy wasn't doing but it's a contractor outside doing the work--when they would get through, we'd have to go inspect, check, resurvey the whole thing for them. Then we say okay, they can be paid off. So, they don't--crook. We were the checkers like. All these housings when they would build, when they get through, we have to check their floorings and everything. Right elevations got to be and everything else. Otherwise, they don't get paid.

Then, Johnston Island, Holmes & Narver was doing all the dredging. Had about twelve dredges working for them. We were out there every day, checking them. How much coral they digging out, taking out. We would check them. You know, we'd take survey. We caught them. Had a big case in court. We caught them trying to say they took out over a million yards which they didn't. Big case in court. We found out through figures from our surveying work. Every hour, we'd check a certain spot where the dredge would move. Every time that dredge would move, if the dredge is here, you have this circle, she cleans up. We know just how much yardage of material should be going because she ought to go down to six feet. She would move to another angle, okay. When that dredge moves here, we tie this dredge in through surveying work. And she'd stay there so much and we know when pau. When they leave here, we take the soundings in here. We lay out ranges on land. Or don't have to be on land. We just can do it right on the water. We out laying ranges. Take soundings.

We know just how much they take out.

WN: You take what?

JJ: Soundings.

WN: Soundings?

JJ: Yeah. With a lead line, see. Drop down how many feet. Say, if the place was--before they start drilling--was just at about, oh, one foot of water. That's a coral head there. That was coral head. Then the dredges come in, would break that whole thing up, and go down deep. So they keep on moving here and moving there. That's how they would have these channels comes in. Then they'd run that. The coral, got to take out, throw it one place, and we build up another island. We built two islands called North and East Islands. We built two of 'em from the coral.

WN: So when you go on to the different places, how long would you stay?

JJ: The longest I would stay was about three, four, sometimes five months. I would come home with a beard and everything else. (Chuckles) Island trips, we'd go to the islands. We stay one week. But if we go away like Midway, Kwajalein, we'd stay about three weeks, one month sometimes. We come home, go back.

WN: So, your father, about 1945, moved out of the dairy and moved to Nanakuli?

JJ: Yeah. Right, right.

WN: So, today, it's mostly the shopping center and the Hawaiian Telephone Company.

JJ: Right there. Where the dairy is, it's a industrial area. You would say that. They have homes on one side, but down there is now HC&D and all the companies right down there. Yeah, that's where it is right now. The only thing about now is, Kalihi Shopping Center, that's the place where I was born. Right inside there.

WN: So, when you see the place now, it's so changed . . .

JJ: Yeah.

WN: . . . than from when you were small. What do you think?

JJ: Well, you know, as days go by, go by, years go by, just like nothing. But when you get in a bunch, a gang, say, "There, we used to play. Oh, that was a store. There was a store."

"Oh, the store was here."

"No, was here."

We start recollecting. That was all. Oh, plenty things, yeah. I can't remember, my God. Yeah, Nolle Smith used to be out there, too.

WN: Who? Nola Smith?

JJ: Yeah, Nolle Smith.

WN: Oh, Nolle Smith? Yeah, yeah. Nolle Smith.

JJ: Nolle Smith. The son is a football player, University of Hawaii, before, way back. Nolle Smith, yeah. That was another incident. He was living on King Street. Pacific Guano and Fertilizer. Then again we had another pasture land there, my father had. See, my father, big place. We had a King Street gate. Nolle Smith, he'd raise one or two cattles. We'd catch 'em, like pound master again, see? Catch his cattle, we'd put 'em in the pound there. Okay, we didn't take 'em to the Umi Street one, we take 'em through the King Street side. Here comes Nolle Smith, the son, you know. Husky, big bugger you know, colored guy. He try to take his animal out. That's only me and my brother Dole. My brother Dole's big, was husky, too, eh? So little more, have fight. "You nigger, you. . . ." (Chuckles) Little more fight, the father came, my father came. And they shake hands. After, my father told 'em, the son is wrong coming in trying to take an impounded animal. So, we all became good friends. Nolle Smith.

WN: They lived up in the valley, yeah?

JJ: Used to be in the valley, yeah. From Kalihi, King Street, that's when they went up there, I think, see?

WN: What do you think of all the changes that are taking place in Kalihi now?

JJ: Well, to me the same thing. I born and raised in Kalihi. All my life I'm in Kalihi. Every day, probably I'm in Kalihi. I still think I'm still in the same place. You know what I mean? Yeah, no fooling. I'm still in the same place. There's different change and everything. But like I say, I born there. Just like I'm going the same thing back and forth when I was young. No fooling. It's just the habit you've had. Different street. But the streets wasn't too much changed, that's all. Don't have no more the Kam IV Road, that's all. We look, no more Kam IV now because that highway going through now, see? They no more Kam IV Road. It's there, but one portion is. . . . Above is still there by the church. Oh, but we used to have a Japanese School up there, too, on Kam IV Road. Yeah, Japanese School. That's gone, too. That's gone.

WN: When the freeway came in, must have had lot of change, eh?

- JJ: Well, I was working Pearl Harbor then. You know what I mean? Sure, it's lot of change. Before they start going make the highway and I was living there, the zoning plans, they say how you going make this turn for come back [to Kalihi] from Pearl Harbor? How you going come back? Chee, [maybe] we got to go way up Kalihi Uka, come back, come home. But you know, those plans. When it came, you come Pearl Harbor the same. Just as easy. Just go up Middle Street. Or Nimitz Highway.
- WN: Yeah, actually, you lived pretty close to Pearl Harbor.
- JJ: Right, right.
- WN: 'Cause you folks were actually at the end of Kalihi?
- JJ: Right, right.
- WN: You used to be a dairy. Nowadays there's lot of controversy now in the news about the Mainland milk coming in [to Hawaii], heptachlor, like that. How you feel about things like that?
- JJ: Ah, shee. Them dairies here was doing all right. I don't see what's wrong with the dairies around here really. I mean, this time now they having. They spend so much money and they were getting hooked up with feed grains, and all this pesticide. They've been losing money, too. So, you give them chance to make money. The milk was good. I don't see nothing wrong with the milk. I don't know why the hell they want to come in with that crap. But I'd prefer, I think make it easier for the Mainland milkers. I tasted it. Tasted good as milk as ever.
- WN: Okay, before I turn off the tape, you have any last things to say?
- JJ: Well, all I can say, I says I was born in Kalihi, maybe I die in Kalihi. But I'm living in Kailua. So this is my home now. (Chuckles) But I will never forget Kalihi. I will never, never forget Kalihi.
- WN: Thank you very much.
- JJ: Okay.
- END OF INTERVIEW

**KALIHI:**  
**Place of Transition**

**Vol. I**

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