

Finding Aid

to

**Interview with Violet Hashimoto**

**By Chipper Wichman**

**January 19, 2001**

Kauai Historical Society

**MS46-CC**

MS46-CC Memories of Kauai  
1 folder; 49 typed pages

Interview with Violet Hashimoto  
By Chipper Wichman

Scope and Content:

The 49 page transcript of the interview centers around Violet Hashimoto's recollections of her childhood growing up in Heana. Wichman asks questions beginning with her family history: ancestry, marriages and children who were raised on Kauai. It continues with family life, work, play, school and events unfold – providing an interesting read – a first hand account from childhood memories to adulthood.

This transcript was submitted to the Kauai Historical Society by  
Chipper Wichman on August 21, 2017, and is available for research.  
Processed by Marylou Bradley, September 2021  
with funding provided by the Rise Up program  
Kauai Historical Society Accession Number 2017.010

MS46-CC Memories of Kauai

Interview with Violet Hashimoto  
By Chipper Wichman

Summary of transcript:

January 19, 2001 interview transcription. “Auntie Vi” is a lifelong resident of Kauai, with a large family and extensive knowledge handed down from older relatives. She still lives in the family home.

Information can be found about the early ways discussed by her parents, her father – Thomas Hashimoto, who was born in 1902. As a youth, he often stayed with the “older generations” and had contact with his Hawaiian aunts and uncles. Due to tidal waves and hurricanes, birth certificates and other family documents are no longer in existence. Since Thomas was born in South Kona, the family graves are located there.

When Thomas moved to Kauai, he stayed with kupuna, learning about the old days and old ways, first in Kalalau, later in Hanapepe, moving with the family. His knowledge of the land expanded with each new location. Later he would be called upon to discuss the kuleanas of Haena. He planted taro in Wainiha, and did so again during the war; as well as worked for Dora Isenberg, taking care of her yard. Thomas died April 9, 1976.

Violet’s mother was Dora Poe – her father was known as the Sheriff of Waianae. Violet discusses many family relationships over the years, aunts, uncles, marriages, and her numerous cousins. She attended Haena School where Mrs. Ho taught grades 1 through 4 and Mr. Ho taught students from fifth through eighth in another classroom. Violet attended Kauai High School leaving in the dark and returning home in the dark. Students were transported by truck early on and later by bus.

Chipper questioned Violet about the burials on the property, it was normal in those days to bury relatives close by. Violet relates that a number of relatives, some who died while visiting from Hawaii island, are also buried nearby. The property is located near Violet’s home but is no longer owned by her family.

Violet answered Chipper’s questions about other folks who lived in the area, where their houses were located, and their family names. The community would hukilau as akule were plentiful. Almost everyone fished either by net, spear, or line. Gardens were often fenced as open areas would encourage foraging by loose cattle.

Hawaiian was still spoken by the older folks, English was the language at schools. Some families still used Hawaiian at home to keep their children fluent in both languages.

Violet relates her story of the 1946 tidal wave – riding to school on April 1 stopping to pick up students in Kalihiwai (the road was along the ocean front then) and Kilauea and upon reaching Kealia found that the tidal wave had arrived. Kalihiwai was “gone” it was time to turn around

MS46-CC Memories of Kauai

Interview with Violet Hashimoto  
by Chipper Wichman

Summary of transcript: continued:

and walk back home. Wainiha was also devastated only half of the old black bridge was still there. Hanalei had a wooden bridge, the water was high so they climbed to the top and back down the other side. Their home was damaged, they stayed with grandma.

People were only slightly more prepared for the 1957 tidal wave. With radio announcements and the new sirens, folks got the word out to almost everyone. The Hashimoto family packed up food and blankets and headed for Grandma Wichman's. The family stayed for several weeks while repairing their house – like so many in the area, it was pushed off it's foundation. The County helped with equipment for repairs.

This small community, cut off from easy access to the rest of the island, banded together to help each other. Familiar names during the tidal waves include Kaipo Asing, Emma and Bungi Ouye, Tutu Hailama, William Chandler, Julia and her husband Tutu Hanohano. Countless others are mentioned in this part of the interview.

Violet was curious so she went down to Hobie's place "near where the surfers all park". She climbed up on the big rock and watching the ocean come in and recede and seeing for the first time the ocean floor past where the reef protects the bay. The surge never reached Hobie's property. Violet describes the area from the Morange's to Hale Pohaku in detail, the aftermath, where folks stayed, and the help received from the County and Red Cross as well.

Following the 1957 tidal wave, the monk seals became regular visitors; Violet remembers that her father's home at Maninihola did have a seal on the beach regularly. She feels the seals might have been following a large number of aweoweo "the red fish". This was noticed and mentioned by Wendel Goo at Anini.

Violet remembers the Limahuli Valley from her childhood, where they picked purple lilikoi. The valley was uninhabited during these years with cows running loose and many areas overgrown. Sam White was hired by Grandma Wichman in the 1960s to open up the area,. Violet says they had loi's, she remembers pulling the weeds in the taro patches and then going for a swim in the stream. She also remembers the wet cave, though she never entered it's waters.

Chipper questions Violet about the Hawaiian ways. She recounts her father's stories of the last Makana fireworks in 1928 – that Tutu Kila and maybe Kalei set them off. The Heiau at Ke'e was unused and overgrown, including the pathway. She helped her father clear this once, then it fell back into disrepair. Ke'e Beach at that time was still owned by Mr. Brown and Allerton,

MS46-CC Memories of Kauai

Interview with Violet Hashimoto  
by Chipper Wichman

Summary of transcript: continued:

some time later they had Fred Fuji take care of the area. Violet recollects the yellow and orange day lilies, as well as the coconut trees in that area. She remembers hearing Tutu Kila chanting when he was in his 70s. Next Chipper asks about place names: Hauwa, Pauweaka, Koonohi, Kookea, Kanonohi, Kanaha and she responds to his requests, sharing many of the locations.