

Albert E. Minvielle, Jr.

OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB: Member since 1917.
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Biography - Albert E. Minvielle, Jr.

Albert E. Minvielle, Jr. was born in Oloa, Hawaii in 1903. He graduated from the University of Hawaii in 1925. He has been a structural engineer and surveyor for many years and has owned his own firm since 1948.

He has been a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club since 1917 and has been on the Board of Directors.

He married Florence Mildred Tummonds, July 1948.

His interests are canoeing and swimming.

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OUTRIGGER CANOE CLUB - ORAL HISTORY

A.E. Minvielle Jr. (Toots) Feb. 23, 1979

P. This is an interview with A.E. Minvielle Jr. better known as Toots, who has been a structural engineer and surveyor for many years. Toots has owned his own business firm since 1948. He has been a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club since 1917. This interview is being conducted on Feb. 23, 1979 at the home of Ken Pratt 4817 Aukai Ave. The interviewer is Ken Pratt representing the Outrigger Canoe Club Oral History Committee.

P. Toots, before we get into your early days at the Outrigger Canoe Club could you tell me something about yourself?

M. Well, Ken, let's see, I was born in O'laa, Hawaii, in 1903 and when I was three or four years old we went back to New York and stayed there for a couple of years. But then the cold, wet winter up there-- the doctor suggested we get out of there and get back to a warm climate, so we came back to Hawaii and we've been living here ever since. So this has been home to me - of course I've been travelling about quite a bit - but this is home to me.

P. That's great, Toots. Now in 1959 the first canoe racing competition started between the West Coast teams and Hawaiian teams - could you tell us something about this, Toots?

M. Well, see, one thing always leads to another, you might say; and having started the Oahu-Molokai race back in 1952 the next idea I had in mind was to see if we could get the people in Southern California interested in a similar event. It would be fine to get the kids up there interested in canoe paddling. So I wrote to Tommy Zahn who had been down here previous to that time and who had paddled from Molokai to Oahu on a surfboard when we had the canoe race. I wrote to Tommy and I asked him what he thought of the idea of trying to get the people - kids up there-interested in a canoe race from Catalina Island over to the mainland. He wrote back to me and said "Yes - fine idea but get the right people interested" - so he got some people up there interested. A Mr. Ira Down of the Newport Dunes - he brought up the subject and said that they would sponsor the first race. I tried to get the Outrigger Canoe Club interested to run the event with the idea that the club would get the credit for starting such an event, but I couldn't get the directors to back me up - so we went on our own. And we started the first year in 1959 with two or three canoes in the race up there.

P. Yes, let's see now, our team from Hawaii was made up of what kind of a group?

M. Well, we were made up of boys that were available and could make the trip. It's not easy to get a definite or set crew or club to go

as some of them cannot get away from work - some of them, perhaps, cannot get away from school and so forth. And so the first year we took sort of a pick-up crew. One boy, I think, was from Kona - one boy was Molokai - and we tried to get one from Hilo. The general idea was that if we started the races up there - the thought was if we could get those people interested to come to Hawaii also. And, we weren't particularly interested in winning the race - we wanted to win a lot of new friends. And, I thought that the team that went from Hawaii could be selected by a committee to represent Hawaii - not with the idea of sending the best team to win every year - No - it was to give the kids a chance to go to California and California kids to come to Hawaii. In that way we'd win a lot of new friends - and that's a lot more important than winning a race.

P. Yea, that's right - now the mainland competition - were these just Newport boys? or over the West Coast?

M. Boys from the Newport - Balboa area - And I told the boys up there - in the beginning it's quite natural that we should win - you know the old expression some kids are born with a silver spoon in their mouths - we in Hawaii were probably born with a paddle in our hands. But, I told the boys up there if you take to this sport - you stick with it - the day will come when you will win, too. And the result is they have won several times - they have actually beaten us; which makes it interesting all the way around.

P. Now, have we sent teams to the mainland since this time?

M. Yes, we've sent teams to the mainland off and on but not every year because of the "old" financial restraint - the necessary finances to do it.

P. But actually in the Molokai race teams from the mainland have been coming almost every year.

M. Yes, they've been coming almost every year, I believe, - until they finally won last year.

P. Now to get away from canoe racing just for a moment here - Now in 1952 the Castle Swim⁽¹⁾ was renewed as a Club event at Thanksgiving time - could you tell us something about earlier races? I know you won several of these years ago, but I've forgotten just when that was.

M. The first Castle long distance race, I believe, was in 1917. Course at that time I was just a boy and I didn't feel that I was up to swimming in such an event - but I remember Duke Kahanamoku⁽²⁾ and "Stubby" Harold Kruger swam and I believe Stubby Kruger won the race. Then they had races every Thanksgiving day after that. I remember one year I came third - the next year I came second - and creeping up the ladder I finally won. I was fortunate enough to win it four times, I think. In 1924 when I beat Gay Harris - then in 1925 he turned around and he beat me - then I won it several years after that.

P. Well, that's interesting - can you recall any outstanding teams that the Outrigger Canoe Club has produced? Or is this pretty difficult - over the years it's pretty hard to remember that detail?

M. Well, in 1921 I remember the Yale University Swimming Team came down here, and there were some swimming races held. And that year it was just the first year that the swimming pool up at the old University was open. And we didn't have the Natatorium and the place where we had the races was down at the harbor between the piers. The first set of races was at the University tank - the final race was a 200 yard relay race between the Yale University team and Outrigger team - the Duke swam the number four man - he had a slow start and he was behind but he caught up with the other fellow by the name of Binney and passed him and won the race. Then a week or so after that we had the races down at the harbor and there again the final race was a 600 yard - men - each swimming a hundred yars. It was quite interesting - cause the first and second men, Bill Harris and Gay Harris, they gained the lead - the third man on the Outrigger team - I don't remember who it was - wasn't one of our best swimmers at all - we were short of swimmers. We had to take the best we could of the Outrigger members - so the third man lost the lead - I swam fourth and I was lucky to gain the lead - the man that swam fifth lost the lead and finally the Duke swimming last had a slow start and was behind, but again he passed the man and won. It was interesting in that respect. That was the swimming team. But the Outrigger also had the championship football team in 1920 in the Senior League, here. And through the years the Outrigger has had volleyball teams.

P. Toots, could I interrupt just a minute. You mentioned a champion football team in 1920, can you recall some of the names - for instance would Atherton Gilman be one of the fellows?

M. No, I don't think Atherton Gilman was on the team that year - "Doc" Withington, Paul Withington was the captain of the team that year - and the picture at the club here doesn't show Gilman on the team - I don't believe he played on the Outrigger team that year. - I way be wrong, but I don't believe so.

P. O.K. Now you've been a member for about half a century - could you give me some names of individuals, not necessarily members, who contributed to the Club's development?

M. Well since 1917 when I first joined the Club - the few that were very instrumental in bringing up the Club in importance and notoriety and all that - one, of course, was old Dad Center (3) and Dad Center spent many hours on his own - he never got any financial remuneration - but those were the days we thought of athletic amateur sports, and Dad was the Captain and the Coach of the team for many, many years. I owe a great deal to Dad because he showed an interest in me - he took me - he helped me out. I remember we had three big canoes at the Club in the old days - sailing canoes. And I remember No. Three canoe

was sent out with the sail on. He told me to go out and steer that boat - and I was only a kid of about fifteen at that time - but he let me steer the canoe. And of all the years that I've been a member of the Club there - I remember in the old days when dues were only 50¢ per month - that was a terrific amount; but that hardly paid for the water we used in our cold showers at that time. Plus using the Club facilities like in the old kitchen - the canoes and all that - I certainly feel greatly indebted to the Club all these years.

P. Well, you've paid them back many times with your contributions to the canoe competition. Do you recall Alexander Hume Ford? (4) Was he around the Club a lot in the early days?

M. Well, Alexander Hume Ford was the one who was the originator of the Outrigger Canoe Club. Oh yes - he was around the Club quite often during the early twenties. Oh yes, he was the one who started the Outrigger Club. We all owe him a great deal of gratitude.

P. Did you know Walter "Mac" - Walter MacFarlane (5) fairly well? He did quite a bit in the late thirties.

M. Oh yes, Walter Mac was very much interested in the Club - and did a great deal for the Club, - to the extent that the July 4th Canoe races have been named in his honor. There was a time there when the Club was really "down in the dumps" as they say - He managed to pull the Club together and pull it out and keep it going.

P. Toots, in 1952 the Outrigger Board approved entry of the Outrigger Canoe Club team in the Molokai to Oahu canoe race. (6) Were you involved in this decision?

M. Well, I originally broached the idea of having such a race even before the war. I tried to even get George Cooke Sr. on Molokai interested in it since it was starting from Molokai, but I couldn't get very far with him. I tried to get the Outrigger Club to back me up so that the Club would get credit for starting such an event. The first year we had three canoes in the race - the Outrigger Club was not involved in any way - handling the race, starting the race, or having any representation. It wasn't until a year or two after that the Club finally allowed a team to go in. The amazing thing was that the directors thought it was a dangerous event. Yes, I said it's dangerous just to be alive - no telling when you're going to get bumped off just crossing the street. So, that was it.

P. Very good, Toots. Finally it got off to a start around 1952. Toots, do you remember the old Hanakeeki Canoe? Could you give us some of the history?

M. Well, I don't know a great deal about the canoe other than it was sent up to Seattle in 1909, I think, when they had the World's Fair up there. I guess it was sent up for a matter of publicity and advertising

to Hawaii. The canoe Hanakeeki used to belong to a Dr. Ormond E. Wall, a dentist in town, and it was kept at the old Outrigger Club for many, many years. It was low and shallow in depth but quite wide in the four and number five seats - especially - and originally it was very thick and heavy. Eventually the Outrigger Club obtained the canoe and kept it at the Club for many years. Back in 1917 and 1918 or so Dad Center used to get a bunch of kids at the Club on Sunday and we used to paddle two or three canoes like that down to Fort DeRussy pool and do our training down there on a Sunday afternoon. The canoe was used in another race down at the harbor somewhere around 1923 or 1924 but that particular canoe was so heavy we put seven men in there and six in the other two canoes. One was the Whitehorse which was paddled by the Hui Nalu boys and "Tough" Bill was the stroke - the AA which had belonged to Prince Kuhio -- and the Outrigger Team paddling the AA in the race down at the Harbor on Regatta Day, when the other races were the usual rowing races -- and all three canoes came across the line "bang-bang-bang" and it was fortunate and lucky the AA won the race.

P. Well, that's great. Now for years Toots you have been the recognized expert in Outrigger Canoe design and building. It would be interesting to hear how a canoe is constructed. Could you give us a run-down on the process from the cutting of the tree to the finished product? That's a pretty big order, but perhaps you can give us some of the dope on it.

M. Well it's just like any boat - you design it for a purpose. If a boat is just being used for an oar boat, or an oiler, or a tanker, or used as a passage liner or it's being used as a racing boat - you have to design it for your purpose. The same thing with the Hawaiian canoes in the olden days - they built their canoes for the purpose they needed them. Course they were limited to some extent in the tools that they had at their disposal. They were limited to the size of the tree up in the mountains and they were limited to get that log down to the seashore - so they had a pretty tough time of it. However a canoe that was made for fishing would be anything that would be wide -- wide and deep so that it could be loaded up with fish. On the other hand, the racing canoe could not be used as a fishing canoe or a freight boat could not be used as a racing boat. Because there is a principal of hydraulics involved in the whole thing. The canoes that we have there now - they have made the rules that the canoes should weigh 400 pounds. Well that means that as long as the canoe weighs 400 pounds dead weight it's going to settle and displace 400 pounds of water. Now in case of a rowboat, you understand, a rowboat is rather wide - four or five feet wide and only about sixteen to eighteen feet long - it may weigh 400 pounds. But it's going to take a lot more power to move that rowboat the same speed that a canoe can develop. Why? - the reason is that it's a principle of hydraulics. At the water line you've got the skin friction across the beam of the boat and the rowboat being so wide you've got more skin friction than you have with the canoe although you displace the same amount of water. Now the canoes that we've been

using for a number of years like the celebrated Malia canoe which belongs to the Surf Club was taken as a standard measure you might say - a unit of measure to go by. It weighed about 400 pounds. But those canoes were averaging about 39 feet long and twenty inches or so wide at the water line. Now it makes no difference what the canoe looks like above the water line as long as it weighs 400 pounds it's going to settle and displace 400 pounds of water. It depends on how that 400 pounds of water is shaped or displaced that determines its efficiency for speeding. Now the canoe we've been using for a number of years has been averaging 20 inches wide at the water line. After we got the Tahitian people into the act and we get their canoes up here and we've been down to Tahiti we find that their canoes are averaging about sixteen inches wide at the water line. Their canoes have been used in the smooth waters of the lagoons. Well that difference of four inches - between sixteen inches and twenty inches wide makes a big difference. Furthermore their bows are quite sharp whereas our Hawaiian canoes are round at the bottom which means as that canoe goes forward it's pushing some of that water in front of it instead of cutting it and throwing it to the side. All those little peculiarities or you might say efficiencies determine what is the better type of racing canoe. Herbert Kane has stated in some of his articles appearing in the Outrigger Canoe Forecast - it mentions about how different canoes are made for - a purpose of fishing, surfing, war canoes, and the racing canoes. But the racing canoes have gone out of style in Hawaii because for a number of years no racing was carried on.

P. Fibre-glass canoes are very popular now. Could you tell us, Toots, how these are made?

M. Well up until 1959 or so, I believe it was, we didn't have any plastic canoes in the islands here. And when we started having the races up on the mainland I tried to get the Hawaiian Canoe Racing Association in this project because the Association was made up of all the different clubs around here and all the clubs had different boys and girls paddling. My thought was if we started the kids up there interested in canoe paddling and got them to come down to Hawaii it would be fine to have an exchange of visitation. And it would be like a reward to be selected on the team each year to go to California from Hawaii. It wasn't going to be a case of sending a team which was going to win, win, win. No, it would be giving all the kids a chance to get away from Hawaii - go to California - and get the kids from California to come to Hawaii. Well, I tried to get the Canoe Racing Association interested and I sent my letter explaining two things. One was to get interested in the development of this canoe racing up in California from Catalina Island to Newport Beach. The other thing I had in this letter that I sent to the Association was to start making and using fibre-glass canoes. And I explained why. You see it takes so long to go up in the mountains to select a tree suitable for a racing canoe - knock it down - bring it down - work it out - Oh it takes a couple of years for that thing to season out to the point where it wouldn't crack, you might say. And you're depriving a lot of kids

that want to paddle but don't have the facilities. Now these plastic or fibre-glass canoes can be made up jig time in the course of a season either from a mold of an existing canoe or they could make up a brand new plug mold to the standards that they want to adopt. And they could make them so fast that it would be possible to furnish the canoes for the kids to paddle in. Well, through all these years the Canoe Association never showed any interest in helping to send a team up to the Mainland and never even answered my letter. But that's it - so eventually, I forget when it was, but I had a 28 foot canoe made when my office was down on Ward St. by Craig & Co. And I told the people on the beach - this canoe will look a little different from what we are accustomed to seeing but I guarantee two things. I guarantee it will surf better and it will steer easier; which it did because of the way the hull was made. Yes, these fibre-glass canoes are a great thing nowadays - you can make them up in short order and lots of them. I understand they have canoe clubs up on the mainland from San Jose down to the Bay Area and way down to Southern California as far as San Diego.

P. Yea, now actually the upkeep on the plastic canoes is a great deal cheaper, isn't it?

M. Yes it is. The plastic canoes will stand much more buffeting around - knocking around. Whereas with a koa canoe - if it gets a blow on its side it could develop a crack. In my canoe that I have at my home now - up on the bow on the right side there is a crack where another canoe hit it on the side when they were going around a turn in a race. A plastic canoe will stand a better blow - furthermore, a plastic canoe could be damaged, say one day before the race and patched up that night and made ready for the next day. Whereas if a koa canoe got a bad blow to it and damaged badly it wouldn't be ready the next day for the start of the race.

P. That's great. Now, Toots, the Outrigger Canoe Club Waikiki Beach Services (7) was started in 1948 under "Sally" Hale's management. Do you recall what effect this had on the Club?

M. Well, you can go back to 1933 or '34, I think it was, I went to the Board of Directors of the Club. At that time we kids at the Club used to take the canoes out surfing and we'd get paid by the people that we took out in the canoe - the Club didn't get anything out of that. And over at Hui Nalu - the Hui Nalu boys they went out in their canoes. So I went to the directors of the Club and put the proposition up to them to let me start this concession on the beach. I said Waikiki Beach may not be a very wide expansive stretch of sand beach and it may be full of coral out in the water, but I said this Waikiki Beach is a world famous beach. I said there's all kinds of money to be made here - I said let me start this concession on the beach here - we'll get the Hui Nalu boys in the whole thing - we'll set up a little stand on the beach - information - a daily report will be sent into the Club as to what had been done - how much had come in - the Club would

get its share and everybody would be happy. They appointed a committee of three to talk it over with me and I am waiting to this day for the committee to talk things over with me. In 1934 I left Oahu and went to Molokai for about three or four years' work - and in '36 Bill Mullahey came back from Jones Beach, New York, and they put him in charge of beach services and everything that we had outlined there was carried out. Well, that thing turned out to be a gold mine for the Club - it produced a lot of income.

P. Yea, that's interesting - I didn't realize that Bill Mullahey was involved in that. That's great.

Toots, do you remember when the first professional, salaried manager of the Outrigger Canoe Club was hired?

M. I'm not sure about that, Ken. However, I'll say this that in the good old days we were kids at the Club, the Club had a very efficient manager in the person of "old" Sasaki. Sasaki used to run our commissary over there. Those were the days we used to have icecream and double decker cones and all that. Sasaki would always be ready with our keys. In those days the Club had its Board of Directors, but it did not have a general manager. Sasaki with their help, used to run the Club. Well, after 1925 when the Royal Hawaiian Hotel went up and the Club was changed around somewhat - somewhere around 1930 or so the Club started to get a professional manager. And some of the managers we had over there - I remember there was - one was Henry de Goro - one was old "Pop" Haehnlen - another Magill - another George Cherry. And during the war for a while Gay Harris was running the Club. Of course, at that time everybody was away in service in a uniform at the war and it wasn't easy to get someone to handle the Club.

P. Well, that brings us up-to-date on the managers. Now you mentioned Sasaki. Now he was with the Club for many years. Do you remember how long?

M. No, but he was in the Club when I got into the Club as a boy in 1917 or so; and I think he stayed on with the Club at least ten years or so after that. Well he was wonderful.

P. Well, he would be more responsible for day-to-day operations?

M. That's right, yea.

P. And the Board of Directors would be sort of the managerial part of it.

M. Oh yes.

P. Well, that's interesting.

Now surfboard shapes have changed considerably over the years - could you tell us about some of the designs?

M. Well in those days we used just plain red wood, cedar, and spruce wood for surfboards. It was quite a thing; we'd go down to the lumber yard at Lewers & Cooke Lumber Yard and keep in touch with the fellow down there - And whenever he had a plank down there that was light he'd call us up - and we'd go down. Well in those days they used to bring in planks three inches thick, twenty-four inches wide and eight, ten feet long - and from those planks we'd shape out the surfboards. Of course the boards in those days were rather heavy - they probably weighed anywhere from 50, 60, 70 to 80 pounds. They probably were for surf at Waikiki because the surf at Waikiki, when it came in, in large surf, the waves were quite uniform and, you might say, far enough apart so that the influence of one swell did not have anything to do with the others. And as the wave came into the shore, it poured over - it was gradually increasing going to the left. Now those boards, you might say, were heavy and they were stable but they were not very maneuverable, Ken. These plastic or foam boards are very light and you can easily change direction from a standing position.

P. Oh yea.

M. And, Ken, I understand that the native Hawaiians had surfboards made from Koa wood and even from wiliwili wood. Well, you see koa wood is rather heavy - about the same density as maple - it weighs about 38 pounds a cubic foot. Whereas the wiliwili wood is even slightly lighter than cork and was used. But the wiliwili was so porous that the minute a drop of water gets into it it would soak into the wood and stay there and it's hard to get it out. So in the old days the original natives must have had the koa surfboards and some of them are still up at the museum. Well, eventually with redwood and cedar and spruce coming out from the mainland - we made surfboards from that type of wood. I remember many years ago at the Club there was a surfboard that was made by somebody, I don't remember who made it - but it was in three parts - the bottom, a rim around the side, and the top. I don't remember anyone using that board - I remember seeing it in the locker. Eventually in the course of making many surfboards, in my own case, I made a hollow board. That is shaping the bottom and sides in the regular way - but then hollowing out the inside of it - putting cross pieces in it and putting a half inch covering on it. But that brought the weight of the board down to about fifty-five pounds. And then Tom Blake came here from the mainland - was interested in swimming, surfing, and so forth and he made a research on the subject and he came up with what we called a cigar-shaped board. Well, there again was the principles of hydraulics involved - And in a cigar board which is narrow and long he got more speed out of it than we could possibly get from the surfboards that we used for surfing purposes. After that came the plastic or foam boards. And they have been brought down to where they only weigh fifteen pounds or so.

P. Well, how about skegs - they came in about the time of the foam board?

M. Yea, that's right - They came in about the time of the foam board I guess because the plastic boards being so light and flimsy, you might say, and wobbly in the water, they had to have some kind of keel to give them more stability.

P. It made learning to surf a lot easier. Wouldn't you say?

M. Yes.

P. Toots, do you remember the surfboard polo competition in the ocean just in front of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel? Did you participate? Could you tell us how it was played?

M. Yea. I believe it was around the middle twenties or so - I don't remember who originated the idea, but we did have surfboard water polo games at the beach there. And, of course, it was just the Outrigger boys and the Hui Nalu boys. I think there were six to a team - something similar to water polo - and one of them was a goal-keeper. The ball was the size of a regular water polo ball, and it was played practically the same way - but we'd paddle around on the boards, toss the ball, and so forth and so on.

P. Well, that's great. - don't know whatever happened to that - do you think we should renew the sport sometime?

Toots, the construction of the Ala Wai Canal (8) was started in the twenties - completed in the early thirties - Do you recall what effect this improvement had on the Outrigger Canoe Club?

M. Well, before the canal was dredged out as it is there now the Waikiki area suffered from several heavy rains and I remember water coming down Kaiulani Ave. in Waikiki in the Aiea area - coming down knee deep - Well that was the result of the water coming down from the Manoa Valley and Palolo Valley. And before the 1920's there were all those duck ponds out there. Now somebody, I don't remember who it was, conceived the idea of dredging this canal and the material that was dredged out from this canal was pumped into these water areas where the duck ponds used to be. So by dredging the canal they cut off the flow of the streams coming down from the valleys and kept Waikiki from being flooded over. I believe the canal was started somewhere around 1922 and probably finished about 1923 or '24.

P. Well, actually they diverted the water out to the ocean many miles away from the Outrigger Canoe Club.

M. Oh, yes, yes, and up until the time the canal was dredged we had at the old Club area a lagoon. And that was just a little stream that ran out between where the Outrigger Hotel is now. And as kids we used to put the canoes in the water and paddle them up and even pass under Kalakaua Ave. in the culvert and paddle up the stream into Aiea. We'd go up there and help ourselves to the bananas in the poor Chinese farmers' patches.

P. Did they ever shoot you with rock salt?

M. No we were careful that we didn't get into that predicament.

P. Now, I recall doing skiing along the Ala Wai, at the very beginning, before the coconut trees grew up. We'd go along on our jalopies pulling a rope and use a surfboard to ski with.

M. Yea, that's right - I remember Edric Cook, he was on a board one day and piled up on top of the rocks.

P. Well we used to get going about 40 miles an hour.

M. That's right - 35 to 40 miles per hour.

P. Now they held races in the canal also, didn't they for awhile?

M. Yea - we had surfboard races in the canal - prior to that we used to have surfboard races on the beach and it started somewhere down by Gray's Beach near the Halekulani Hotel and paddle up to the Moana Hotel. Those races were usually held on New Year's morning so that meant we had to get some rest New Year's Eve - instead of going out and having a bully time New Year's Eve. Then eventually the races were taken up to the canal and I remember the Shell Oil Co. for several seasons put up nice medals and trophies.

P. And I think the Myrtle Boat Club had a boat house down at the end of the canal about where the golf club office is now. Did you ever --?

M. No, I don't remember that.

P. It was quite a bit later, I guess - the mid-thirties, maybe.

M. I remember as far back as nineteen thirty-one - we used to row there, but I don't remember about the Myrtle Boat Club having a boat house.

P. Ah, yes. Now, Toots when the water was taken out of the lagoon they were able to fill in that part of the Canoe Club grounds. What advantage did this have?

M. Well, the old dance pavilion down at the beach where all the canoes were kept - That was dismantled somewhat and moved over to where the lagoon had been - where the water area had been - and it was about 50 or 60 feet from Kalakaua Ave. By filling in all that area the club obtained an additional area. And in the old days the old lagoon - the odor from the water wasn't too pleasant at times. We used to take some of the kids over there and give them the so-called "Punahou swing" into the lagoon. I remember in 1923 or so "Squeaky" Wehselau had swum against Thelma Blaiktrees down at the harbor in the 50 yards and they were tied for first in that race which made "Squeaky" Wehselau (9) our great girl swimmer - a champion of the world - one of the champions -

Well to celebrate that I remember a bunch of us kids down at the Club got ahold of her one day and - I had her by one leg or one arm - somebody else had hold of her and we gave her a "Punahou swing" into the pond to celebrate.

P. Now, she was Olympic calibre - but there were some other swimmers that were good locally - Helen Moses Cassidy (9) - her name at that time Helen Moses - do you remember her?

M. Oh yea. Helen was a couple of years before "Squeaky" Wehseleau's time. Helen went to the Olympics in 1920. "Squeaky" went to the Olympics in 1924 and she set the world's record at that time in the trials. But in the final race of the Olympic race she was second to Eleanor Garrity of the San Francisco area.

P. There was Dorothy Waters - or was she a little later?

M. She was a little later.

P. Well, that's fine.

Toots, in 1963 - the latter part of 1963, the new Club was finally completed and the big move from our old Club that was started in 1908 took place - I'd love to hear your reaction regarding the move. Could you give us some of your feelings?

M. Well, you know the old expression people always say about the good old days. Well there's something to that too, but on the other hand let's go back to the famous story in the Bible of the woman who was told not to look back when she was leaving a certain village or town; she looked back and was turned into a pillar of salt - Well the good old days are something of yesterday. We can't dwell on the things of the past - we've got to look forward and a club like everything else - everyone else - is in the process of progressing, progressing. New things have been revealed to us - new things have been made possible to us - so we have to be thankful for progress in all its different forms, Ken.

P. Well that's great so you feel the move was --- Well, it was something we had to do anyway so I guess we didn't have much choice. Well, Toots, on behalf the Outrigger Canoe Club I'd like to thank you for all the help you've given to the canoe competition over the years and your cooperation in making this Oral History possible. Many, many thanks.

M. Thank you, Ken.

FOOTNOTES

- (1) In 1952 the Castle Swim was renewed. (The Outrigger p. 107)
- (2) Duke Kahanamoku - Duke was an Olympic Athlete for twenty years and at four Olympiads he won three gold medals and two silver medals before his Olympic career ended at age forty-two. (Olympics and Duke, p. 4, 5, 6, 8, 9, 124, 173.). (The Outrigger, p. 58, 65, 84, 85).
- (3) George David Center (Dad). The Outrigger - p. 62, 65, 103.
- (4) Alexander Hume Ford. (The Outrigger - pp. 25-58).
- (5) Walter J. Macfarlane, Jr. (The Outrigger - p. 85, 87, 94).
- (6) Molokai-Oahu Canoe Race (The Outrigger pp. 103-106).
- (7) The Outrigger Canoe Club - Beach Services. (The Outrigger, p. 100).
- (8) The Ala Wai Canal - Width 150' - 250' - Begun 1923 - completed 1930. Delay due to lack of finances. City had 1400 acres of "new" land created with the dredged material. (Beacon July 1972) (The Outrigger, p. 71).
- (9) In the Olympic Games of 1920 there were three Punahou students, Warren Kealoha, Mariechen Wehselau (Mrs. Chester Jackson) and Helen Moses (Mrs. Charles Cassidy) (Punahou 1841-1941), p. 532.