The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, Waimanalo Ward, a mango tree, the home of Saints, abandoned old army building, to now this place where we gather and sit in comfort.

Let me begin at the backyard of Brother Julian Hookano Kamahaku. Several brethren and sisters have gathered on this special occasion, under a magnificent mango tree, in great anticipation of the beginning to formulate a branch of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. Those gathered were mostly members already. A total of no more than twenty and no less than eight in attendance, [including] Brother Freitas, with his two traveling companions, Julian H. Kamahaku, Brother Mortensen, William and Mrs. Napeahi Sr., Mary Poai, Akoa Hanawahine, Mrs. Hoopii, William and Nellie Hopeau, Mr. and Mrs. Kamahaku.

World War II is pau (over). The people of the land start to rebuild; many restrictions of the war are lifted and the people are able to move around more freely. The Saints who moved away from the convenience of the city of Honolulu, to the out-skirts here in Waimanalo to settle on their Hawaiian homestead land were now beginning to establish their permanent residences.

As their need to keep close to the gospel, the Saints would travel twenty-seven miles one way over the Nuuanu Pali, into the city of Honolulu to partake of the sacrament and to participate with Sunday activities in church. The very committed made many sacrifices to travel over the Pali and back.

I could not find any records of how many times a meeting was held under that magnificent mango tree, or who was in attendance. If there was such a record, it may have met up with the elements of time and carelessly discarded to the change from a branch to a ward. That the gathering the Saints here at Waimanalo was within the guidelines of the Church, Brother Freitas, with a companion, would come and join them frequently.

At this point and time, Julian was the branch president, James Kaonohi Sr. and Albert Akiona were faithfully carrying their share of the Church responsibility.
The Saints met in each other’s homes, useful abandoned buildings, garages, lanais, and as many places as they could find, to serve and teach one another.

As the move from down Kalanianaole to up Kalanianaole was happening, a gift of sort comes to the Saints, in the shape of a used army quonset building from the mayor of Honolulu. Well, he was not yet a civil servant then, but he had a used lumber and usable abandoned building business.

An unforgettable brother who no longer is here with us, but I dearly pray that in spirit, he is listening to my report; yes, Joseph Aruda, not a member at the time of this event, but one who, when he grabbed hold of the iron rod, endured to the end.

Joe (Joseph) knew Frank Fasi (our present mayor) very well and could swing a good deal to get the best used quonset at a good price, and have it set on this property, between this podium and the parking lot. Now the Saints could meet at a regular meeting place.

I have been informed by Sister Alma Arcia that Julian made the best kulolo (pudding), this side of Waimanalo; that was a means for (the Saints) to raise money. Today his son’s and daughters still make kulolo for their family fundraising.

1952-John Kekawa joins the Saints at the home of Sister Annie Ho. James Kaonohi Sr. is branch president; John is assistant to Gideon Kaonohi in the Sunday School program.

1955-Brother Kamm and his family has moved to the farm lot in Waimanalo. He becomes the second counselor to President James Kaonohi, Sr., and Harry Keaweehu the first counselor. Brother Kamm joined the Saints at the home of the Deguesman family. Where much is given, much is expected.

This concludes my report as to its beginning of our much appreciated chapel. May this paper be accepted in the files of the Mormon Pacific Historical Society (MPHS) and others that may and will want to add to this, our first mini-conference, is my wish and prayer, because we will all have to make a report to the Lord when he asks.

Bishop Bruce Mossman
First Counselor Michael Lindsey
Second Counselor Isaac Kaopua

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