

**TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008**

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Kanaka Ho‘opa‘a Mo‘olelo (Videographer)	Gene Kois
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QUEENIE VENTURA DOWSETT

Tape #: HPS 0948

Date: October 17, 2008

Location: Waimea, Kohala, Hawai'i Island

Subject: Oral History Interview

Interviewer(s): Maile Loo

Videographer: Gene Kois

(01:04)

QVD: Groups—I danced with groups. I danced with um ... with uh, Mrs. Joshua. I danced with um ... Big Auntie Guerrero. I danced with ... who did I dance with in La Hula Rhumba?

UTT

QVD: Gosh; I can't even remember. I think Auntie Mary Ho. Right there from Kaka'ako. Uh ... and who did I dance with in Hula Town? I think I danced with the Joshuas in Hula Town, too. Um ... at Leroy's, Hula Town. And then ... and then I went ... went to Auntie Io. And then we went to Don the Beachcomber's.

ML: So all of those nightclubs um, that you danced in were prior to your training with Auntie Io?

QVD: Yes.

UTT

QVD: Yes.

ML: So you were still ... y—you were in high school, then?

QVD: High school.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Uh ... middle school.

ML: Yeah; right.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: 'Cause you went to Auntie Io in high school.

QVD: Right.

UTT

ML: How'd they let you into nightclubs, Auntie? You was too young. [CHUCKLE] Sneak you in the back door?

QVD: That's what I'm saying. Leroy's; my god, I must have been fourteen years old.

UTT

QVD: But you know, I—I just don't think that they were ... they were really concerned about ... the—the entertainers, like us indulging in drinking. Yeah? Because we were under the wings of these ... these big aunties, these big women. And it was like, Okay, girls, in the dressing room. You all have your leis? How's your tī leaf skirts? You know? Everything ... ready, ready to go. You have to change your numbers quickly. And how are your lava lava's? Yeah. My mom hated that. Um ... and the little ... brassieres. The same fabric, of course. Um ... and that's when she really got upset, I think, and she said, Okay, no more of that, pau. Um, she says, You wear ... your pahu top. What's a pahu top, Mom? [CHUCKLE] She says, It's two pieces of fabric. You sew the ends, you put elastic through it, and that's your top. And you stick in the tī leaf skirt. And I used to laugh at her. And I said, Oh, Mama. And she says, No; from now on, you will now. Okay. Not very glamorous, but okay. But I'd already hit, as a young girl, a very glamorous part of entertaining for ... the word wasn't even tourist. The word was not tourist. The word was um, all of the visitors, the haole's that—the—the rich haole's that come and stay here, or uh ... they entertain military. Military. That's what it was. La Hula Rhumba was military, a lot of military. Um ... I don't think there were then very many local people in places like La Hula Rhumba, like Pago Pago. Pago Pago?

ML: M-hm.

QVD: Um ... when I danced with the Joshuas ... then, we started to get ... the local. But they were not local ... what you might call middle class. They were local upper class. Yeah?

(05:00)

ML: So—so the nightclub scene, these clubs that you've mentioned, they were ... really not a local audience when you first began.

QVD: No; no.

ML: But that—

QVD: No.

ML: --started to change—

QVD: That started to change.

ML: --during the time you—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --were there.

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QVD: Yes. It started to change when I—when I went down to Leroy's. And um ... from Leroy's, I went to ... um ... we went to Don the Beachcomber's. And then I part-time at—at um ... then I went to—to do shows with Sterling at um ... what do you call ... puh ... you know, the one that's on the beach. Alice—Auntie Lei Collins—

ML: Halekulani?

QVD: Halekulani.

UTT

QVD: We did that ... every Sunday. I think it was Sundays. With Little Joe, with Hilo Hattie ... Sterling. And it was me and Kanoe Cockett.

UTT

QVD: We were his dancers.

ML: What was Little Joe's last name?

QVD: Oh, gosh. I should remember that because we're related. Oh, my; I don't remember. Little Joe; I don't remember.

ML: It's like Big Auntie. You know, people can't remember her real name—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: They just know her—

QVD: Guerrero.

ML: --as Big Auntie.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: But Little Joe ... I want to say Huihui, but he's not a Huihui.

UTT

QVD: Oh, gosh. Oh ... my goodness.

ML: Well, if it comes to ya.

QVD: And I tell you as another soloist is Kealoha Kalama.

UTT
QVD: She danced.

ML: So she was around ... then, or was it a more later?

QVD: Later.

ML: 'Cause you were—you were probably, in your understanding, the—the oldest of the—the solo dancers around.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Now, when I soloed, um ... I did the—the big—the big hotels. I did the—the Royal, uh, I did the um ... and then I did the Beachcomber's. And I—I—I'm talking about actually being announced as a soloist—

UTT
QVD: --dancer, yeah? Um ... when I did the show for Halekulani, I was on the line. And—and then Sterling would call me up to do a solo.

UTT
QVD: Emma Veary was with us.

UTT
QVD: She was also with us.

UTT
QVD: Um ... gosh; she was so skinny. She was really. I thought you were skinny; she's more skinny than you.
[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Uh, she's ... she was incredible. Just a beauty. Just lovely to talk with. And um ... just a wonderful person.

UTT
QVD: Really, truly, a wonderful person. Uh—

UTT
QVD: But we never, ever danced or did a show together until—until the Hawaii Theater.

ML: Oh. You mean, since back then?

QVD: Since back then.

ML: Wow.

QVD: Never did a show together. Yeah.

UTT
QVD: Um ... I did shows with Haunani Kahalewai at the Royal.

UTT
QVD: I did a couple with her. And ... now, who was her soloist, now? Who was her soloist? Gosh, I can't remember.

ML: But you also were her soloist for—

QVD: She called me. Just like Ed.

UTT

QVD: They called me.

UTT

QVD: I was ... I did more mainland shows with Alfred and with Alvin Isaacs. And this is why I was gone most of the time. I was doing the big shows up there. Um ... you know, I'd come home, um ... if somebody was not at the show, and they needed someone, they'd call me.

UTT

QVD: And I would go. Uh, sometimes I would be feeling like, I don't think so. [CHUCKLE] Why didn't you call me before? You know? That kinda—You should have called me before. But my mom would say, Hey, don't do that. You go.

UTT

(10:00)

QVD: When your hula calls, you go. So—and that was—that was very good advice. Because then I learned to know the different musicians, and we became great friends. And I think part of my success was due ... to the music that those musicians played for me. You know. It—it um ... for me, it was—it was the magic that they created that could bring this out of me. Yeah.

ML: So these musicians [CLEARS THROAT] that you mentioned a few of, and Alfred, and—

UTT

ML: I mean, they were—they were *the* musicians of Hawai'i at the time.

QVD: At the time.

ML: So they weren't just your average—

QVD: No.

ML: --guys playing—

QVD: No.

ML: --in a hotel.

QVD: Yeah. Like Alvin Isaacs and his group. Uh ... and—and then Alfred ... brought aboard um ... Alvin Isaacs. And that was the program, the package that went to—to the Huntington Hotel.

UTT

QVD: Um ... also, um, my dear friend. And we did—we did shows together. Oh, he was so good. Falsetto. Went to LA; stayed in LA. Then came home, went to Kona. He has a gold tooth. Oh, gosh.

ML: I'm sorry; not much help there. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Very famous.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Oh; very famous.

ML: He's not around anymore?

QVD: No.

UTT

QVD: Went to LA; came back here. Went back to LA with all his talent and became a taxi driver. And I was appalled. I was just, Oh, what are you doing?

ML: Oh, my goodness.

QVD: He could have stayed home; but he decided to go back. He and his family, his wife. How could I forget him? Oh; maybe I'll remember. Oh. Anyway. But ... um, these were the kinds of people that really made me the dancer.

UTT

QVD: You know? I think without their different ... musical backgrounds and teaching me different tempos—

UTT

QVD: --to retard in and where I should I do this and what I shouldn't do here. I mean—and I—and I welcomed that. A lot of hula dancers wouldn't.

UTT

QVD: They say, You just play my music, and I dance my dance. Excuse me. What do you think I sh—I always asked that. What do you think I should do? Should I do two-one-one, two-two? Uh, and they would tell me, you know. An—an—and—and the last ha'ina; I'm gonna give you slow ending. That makes all the difference in the world.

UTT

QVD: All the difference in the world. Oh.

UTT

ML: So—

QVD: Oh, it just--

ML: So for your [CLEARS THROAT]—your—initially, you were um, very young. And you were ... had been taking hula, and kinda got called out to dance with these different studios, like um—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --Mrs. Joshua and then Auntie Mary Ho.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: In shows that they had going on in the nightclubs, which were primarily for military or these long-term haole visitors that—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --you know—

QVD: Yes.

ML: Not like our visitors of today. So um, how did it happen, an—and when, that you became, you know, by name, you know, being a soloist—

QVD: Soloist.

ML: --by name, and you know, gaining that recognition? Like what—was that after Auntie Io? Was it during that time? Like, how old were you then? You know, how—how did that—

QVD: After Io.

ML: --transition come?

QVD: After Auntie Io. After Auntie Io. Um ... let's see; after Auntie Io ... while I was dancing with Auntie Io, I'd gotten my first big contract to go to LA to do the show with Alfred Apaka, Alvin Isaacs ... soon after I made the movie, Bird of Paradise.

UTT

QVD: Like ... my name was there, right?

ML: Right; right.

QVD: And I had been dancing. And I guess for them, it was an opportune time—

UTT

QVD: --to ... to showcase me.

(15:00)

UTT

QVD: Which—which I was very lucky, very fortunate to have them take me under their wings. And that's when it started.

ML: Oh. So—

QVD: Um—

ML: --Bird of Paradise—

QVD: I-wait a minute now--

ML: --gave you ...

QVD: Bird of Paradise. But you know what? I—I started to hula, soloist, when I was with Don the Beachcomber's. With Auntie Io's. That was with Alfred. Ah, I'm trying to think. That was with Alfred, and that was before the movie, Bird of Paradise.

ML: Okay. So Alfred Apaka had a show—

QVD: Had a show.

ML: --at Don the Beachcomber's.

QVD: At Don the Beachcomber's.

ML: And that was when you were in high school, 'cause you—

QVD: I was in high school.

ML: --were with Auntie Io.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Now, she was involved in the show, like she had the contract to have her dancers at—

QVD: Everybody—

ML: --Alfred's show? Or—

QVD: Every—she was—she was our 'ōlapa dancer. Yeah.

ML: So she was in the show as well?

QVD: She was in the show. She was—she was the featured hula dancer. Rosalie Stevens was our ... vocalist. Yeah.
UTT

QVD: Songbird. Alfred Apaka ... was the ... you know ... we called him the man of the hour. And the—and the orchestra was ... was um, Lyons; Eddie.

UTT

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QVD: Eddie Lyons; Eddie. Mel; Mel on the guitar. Oh, I can't remember his name. Four of them. And Alfred was the singer. Alfred was not part ... of the group, yeah? He was—he was the singer; he was the star of the show, so to speak. Auntie Io, Rosalie Stevens, Alfred Apaka. And Lani and I were the line dancers. Then Don the Beachcomber realized that the ancient was going nowhere ... with the audience. So he dismissed that. And now, we're—we are in tī leafs, Lani and I. Auntie Io was no longer in the show. We're just the hula girls; the two of us. We're dancing with Alfred. And Rosalie, the singer. Not too long after that, Don brings ... Anna Gobrait in. She's the Tahitian dancer. And the hula line is gone. [CHUCKLE] We are gone, but I come back as a soloist.

UTT

QVD: Only to dance with Alfred. That's how I started.

ML: And uh, that was before Bird of Paradise?

QVD: That was before Bird of Paradise.

ML: So we're talking late 40s?

QVD: Late 40s. Yeah.

ML: 'Cause—

QVD: '48.

ML: --you started shooting that back in—

QVD: In '50.

ML: --'50; and it came out in '51.

QVD: '51; yeah. Yeah. '48. Yeah.

ML: Any thoughts on—or did you know how Auntie Io felt about, you know, the 'ōlapa being given the ax?

QVD: No; no.

ML: She understood.

QVD: She—she understood.

UTT

QVD: She understood. As a matter of fact, she thought that ... that um, because there was no one to translate.

UTT

QVD: Yeah? To do the translation, storytelling. She says ...

ML: So they didn't understand it.

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QVD: Didn't understand it. Yeah. It's like going to an island, you see the natives dancing, so you see the natives dancing, where—that's their thing. Right? But what is the interest, if you don't understand it? So—but that's—that's how it all just happens, you know? It—it's like um ... this part of hula comes in, then it fades out. And now, you have the hapa haole comes in. And it stays, and it stays. Right? Simply because they understand it. And who's bringing the money in? They are. So therefore, it continues. And now, we have a wonderful revelation of our culture. And now, that's taking off. Big time. And that is ... incredible.

UTT

(20:00)

QVD: It's wonderful. But for me ... and I know for Lani ... even then; 'cause I used to say to her, Your mom speaks Hawaiian at home? No. Really, Lani? She says, No. She said, We all sing it, and then she translates it.

UTT

QVD: But that's it. But ...

UTT

QVD: I don't know; our ... at least for my time, it was—it was wonderful. It was a wonderful, wonderful experience. Because I had the opportunity of—of um, not just going places, but to be able to see how I—that was my goal, is how do I come across. How can I make people gravitate to me—

UTT

QVD: --and for what I'm doing? My—does my Hawai'i ... get to them in—in a simple hula? Can I get to them? Yes. Many times. So for me ... I look back at my—

UTT

QVD: --my—my kumu's, my masters, and uh ... um, ever so blessed. I don't know how many—how many hula people can say that, or had the opportunity. Um, and I come from an average Hawaiian family. Our livelihood was stringing leis, selling leis. So ... what was I, really? I was a marketer. I could market my flowers and my leis. So I had that experience behind me. So with my hula ... it was like, I love my hula; can I sell this like I sell my leis? You bet, I can. And I'm gonna make it sell, whether it be 'ōlapa or anything else. Can I call? Yes, I can. Can I sell my leis? Yes, I can. So—

ML: Sa—yeah, same kind of role—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --yeah?

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Promotion.

QVD: It wasn't just ... it wasn't just growing up ... um ... to be a lei seller's daughter or to be Kaleohano's ... mo'opuna in the 'ōlapa, Auntie Io's. But for me, my whole life was a challenge. And I thrived on that. I thrived

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on that. And uh ... and it wasn't—it wasn't the money; it wasn't the money that—that made me pursue this. It was the joy—

UTT

QVD: --and the spirit, and the—what I felt. When I come away from a conference, I'm on Cloud nine. You know, I just feel like I've done something; I've given back. Hopefully, I've shared something. And that ... they can do it out there. You know, after that conference when we had those people line up talking to me. Queenie, do you think—I've been in hula this long; do you think I could become a soloist? Why not? I says, the problem here is, there is no stage. That's the only problem. But don't stop. Don't you stop your hula. If you do it for your family, and you can see that joy, your friends and whatever; hey, what else? What are you looking for? What else is there?

ML: Was it something new that, when you became a soloist, that you realized to have that direct connection with the audience? Was that something new? Or did you have—find that when you were in the line? You know, in your younger ... middle school and ... you know.

QVD: I was that way in the line.

ML: So it's something that had always clicked with you—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --with hula.

QVD: If I could—if I could get somebody's attention in the audience, I'm gonna work that person. [CHUCKLE] I will.

UTT

QVD: You know? Um ... and a lot of that had—had to do with Auntie Io. I watched her. I watched her. I mean, I was like, right ... right behind her, watching her. And, and some people will accuse me of dancing like Auntie Io. I says, You know what? If I am ... she is here with me.

(25:00)

And she's always said that. I pick you five because I expect you to be like me; we are one. We are one. When we hula ... I expect you to be that. I said, you watch Joseph. He's the same way. The only person that had reservation was Lani. And only because she was very conservative.

UTT

QVD: Very conservative. She was wonderful; she—she was perfect, but she was conservative, and you could see that. You could see that. Even when we did that—that concert for that guy at Mamiya.

ML: M-hm. Hopkins.

QVD: Hopkins.

UTT

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QVD: We all got up, and we ... did that big ‘ōlapa thing with Auntie Io there. What was there, there was, I think eight of us. The two redheads, the Spencer girls were there, Lani, and me, and ... and three others. And when we hula [TELEPHONE], you could tell.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: You could tell. Mahi [TELEPHONE] ... Mahi came to us [CHUCKLE] with—and Keola, back stage. Tons of maile leis. Tons of maile leis. And I thought to myself ... You know, Auntie Io ... you have left us with a legacy. She really has. So when they say, Wow, you dance like—I said, No. I said, I have studied with her. I says, like her daugh—like the daughters, huh, Edith Kanakaole. You think that’s her. Right; same thing. No difference. No difference. I said, But how many of us can do ... like she does? I never spent enough time. I got married. I got married, and my job was to take care of my children, take care of my husband. So I did that, while everybody went and did whatever they had to do. Right? All the rest of the women. So today, we all have ... our lives, our way of life. With me, they call me the cowboy, the rancher. That’s okay.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: That’s wonderful. Queenie, your children, you and the cowboy and the ranch. I love it. Love it. Bev, now, Bev’s—they call her, and they say, Hey, how’s your son’s restaurant? Are you still working there? She says, And I love it, Queenie.

UTT

QVD: I said, Yeah, we can all be hula dancers, but what is our plan in life? H-m? We have to make a choice. We all make a choice. But never forget who we are, and what we became, and ... what we are now.

ML: Did you—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Did you aspire—like when you were dancing in shows um, from such a young age, they must have had soloists in those shows, although you were in the line.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: Did that inspire you to want to be a solo dancer?

QVD: No. No.

ML: So it wasn’t something you set your sights on?

QVD: No. There wasn’t a solo dancer that I really ... that’s why I’m—it’s so hard for me to think of who they were. Uh ... I think most of the—the dancers that danced, an—and I would say were soloists were the grand ladies, like Flora Hayes. I watched her dance, and it was somebody that was in her own ... she was—she had her own space. This was Flora Hayes. Why? Because like Auntie Io, this is Auntie Io. So if I had to think—and she was not a soloist; she was a hula dancer. But there was no title, right?

ML: Right.

QVD: But when she danced, it's like my mother when she danced. She was my soloist.

UTT

QVD: Because she could dance [SINGS: NANEA KO MAKI I KA LEALEA] Nanea kō maka i ka le'ale'a. What! I don't think there's anyone that could dance it like her. So was there one in my time that I looked at, that I thought that's who I want to be? No. No.

(30:00)

I wanted to be a soloist, but I had it in my head ... and in my energies ... as to ... who I was going to be, what I was going to be.

UTT

QVD: And um ...

UTT

QVD: And all the talk, and all the competition, all whatever there was out there, um, didn't matter to me. It did not matter.

ML: So um ... the showrooms that were—you got into—Don the Beachcomber was the first showroom that you—

QVD: The big showroom; yeah.

ML: That you played in. What were—and that was around the late 40s?

QVD: Late 40s.

ML: What were the others at the time that—not necessarily that you were in, but that were just on the scene, that you can think of, that had someone like you in them?

QVD: Um ... I te—I tell you who danced, and I thought was wonderful, was Noenoe Hopkins. Noenoe. She was wonderful. And a lot of people will say—who'll dance with will say—she's not a soloist. Well, you know what? When she can bring the crowd to its feet, that's what you call a hula dancer. You bet. And that was Noenoe Hopkins.

UTT

QVD: I remember Noenoe.

ML: Was that—do you remember what hotel that would have been in?

QVD: Halekulani.

UTT

QVD: Halekulani. Um ... and you know, it's so sad when I think of her, because she ... she had such a hard life.

ML: Oh, really?

QVD: A lot of entertainers ...

UTT

QVD: --had hard lives. You know? And—and Mama used to say to me, Just you remember, now, and this is entirely up to you; you have your hula, but you must, must understand what it is that you really want. She says, I want you to know that all those masters I sent you to, uh, every one of them is without a spouse. Okay. Without a family. Okay. You know why?

UTT

QVD: It is dedication ... and they worship something different. So I don't want you ... I know you've been to the heiau's; I don't want you to get involved. She says, I want you ... I want to have grandchildren. I want you to be a happy person. I said, I am happy, Mama. She says, Well, you decide what you want.

ML: 'Cause what she was saying was, these folks are really married to the hula.

QVD: Yes.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: They are.

ML: And it wasn't uh, time or room for anything else.

QVD: No time. They couldn't, even if they wanted to; they were so deep—

ML: Right.

QVD: --already.

ML: Right, right.

QVD: No. What was their—

UTT

QVD: What was their out? Inu. Yeah. And it's a sad thing. But ... I—I think the commitment at the time ... um ... and what they knew in their lives ... was ... that's who they were, and you're committed to that. Well, you know what? I come from—from Laaumakahiki; I know that kinda—all of that. But I'm today. Yeah? I'm today. And so ... I made a choice. And even Lani, when I got married, she said, And you gonna leave? I said, You know, Lani, I thought I married a Honolulu boy; he turned out to be a cowboy, and he's taking me to the Big Island. And I'm not so sure I want to go to the Big Island, but I'm going. I'm going. And so I came. And there were many times I regretted that. I did. I thought, you know what, I could do without this. I just have my hula. I'm doing great, and—and I've got notoriety now. I don't need anything else. No. Not so.

ML: What year did you get married, Auntie?

QVD: 1951.

UTT

QVD: So that wasn't too much longer—

ML: Right after the movie, then.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Right after the movie, and—

ML: Hi.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

GENE KOIS: I'm wondering uh, just from an academic, you know, an outsider point of view, an academic view. I mean, when you say she was a hula dancer, but not a soloist. Is there a working definition of what is a solo dancer?

(35:00)

QVD: Yes. Uh, when you—so I was—always been told. When you are a soloist ... you get your own program. Uh, you get your own—you select your own songs. You have a fat contract in front of you that tells you you're different. [CHUCKLE] The dollar signs tell you, without a doubt, that you are different. Um ... you are ... not only ... that you—you are probably in demand for many other hotels, or many other showrooms. Um ... then you get all this—this write up in the newspaper, and they call you, and they tell you, you are a soloist. But Auntie Io will tell us that. They will tell you that. Um, Alfred Apaka ... will announce it; This is my soloist, my hula dancer. Yeah.

ML: So you get um, billing, basically.

QVD: You get billing.

GENE KOIS: Identity; yeah.

QVD: Identity; right. You're not just another gal in the show. Yeah. Yeah.

ML: You're featured.

QVD: Yeah; you're a featured dancer.

ML: By name.

QVD: Right; by name, by billing.

ML: Yeah. H-m.

QVD: And I like those big, fat contracts.

ML: [CHUCKLE] Who wouldn't.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: And when they—when they give you a contract for the mainland ... everything is paid for.

UTT

QVD: Everything is ... I mean they take good care of you. I used to go to winter shows for um ... what's his name ... he owned the Racquet Club, and he was the star in My Little Margie. That movie actor. Old ...

GENE KOIS: I know Ann Sothern; I don't know the male.

QVD: Yeah. Well, he would call Alfred and say to Alfred, This winter, I want you to bring Queenie. She will be the soloist. And—and I did three winters there. And Charlie ... Charlie, Charlie ... handsome man. Anyway, he owned the racquet club in Palm Springs. Second trip I was there, he said to me—and that was—that was the only club in Palm Springs. He said to me—he took me to the back of the kitchen. Come on, baby doll, let's go in back of the yard; I want to show you. Opens the back door; it's nothing but desert. Sand, desert. And he says to me, [CLAP] I think you should invest. I said, What's investing? Local girl. What's in—what do you—what in—what's investing? He says, I think you should buy five acres—three acres behind me. And I said to him, Of sand? [CHUCKLE] I said, I don't think so. I don't think so. He says, I think so. I think you should do that. 'Cause he was writing the checks; big money, he was writing the checks.

ML: So this was in Palm Springs, you said?

QVD: Palm Springs. And I didn't. And how lolo is that? Huh? Henry J. Kaiser; I was his soloist.

UTT

QVD: With Alfred. I was only his dancer. He offered me six hundred acres in Lafayette, with a purebred herd, to move to Lafayette. Called Jamie and the attorney. Boss, Henry J. Kaiser's on one side of the phone, and Fitzsimmons is on the other, and I'm sitting down in—in the um ... in the dining room and they're making these calls. And they're calling Jamie. Will you let Queenie ... I will give you, right now, move the children to Lafayette, and I will sign over six hundred acres to you. This is—he's talking to Henry J. e—every now and then when he gets real stupid, he talks about it. Uncle Jamie. He says, I will sign six hundred acres over to you and Queenie if you will allow her to do the Ed Sullivan Show and tour the country for Hawaiian Village. That would have been ... about five months. And Jamie said no. I wanted to die. [CHUCKLE] I wanted to die. He said, No. And he always regret—but these are the kinds of things happens to you. You know, I—I say, my hula—

UTT

QVD: --because that's what I was. No monkey business, no funny business; I was their hula dancer.

(40:00)

UTT
QVD: And I was very proud to be their hula dancer. Because they played the kind of music I wanted them to play. They surrounded me with people with a lot of just integrity, class.

UTT
QVD: And ... and so was I fortunate? Yes; I was very fortunate. I was blessed.

UTT
QVD: So ...

ML: What—what other um, showrooms did you play in, besides ... or after Beachcomber?

QVD: I went to the Royal Hawaiian.

UTT
QVD: I went to ... the Halekulani.

UTT
QVD: I went to ... let's see ... Royal Hawaiian, Halekulani ... as a soloist ... and that's it. Those—those three, I think.

UTT
QVD: That was it.

UTT
QVD: And the rest of the time, I was always on the mainland.

UTT
QVD: I did all the shows. I did the Rose Bowl ... Queen. I think 'til today, Alfred and I are the only ones that are Hawaiians that ever performed for her coronation.

ML: Wow.

QVD: Coronation. Which was wonderful. You know. Um, events like that make me ... believe ... that there is, without a doubt, done with love, done with beauty, the hula is the greatest thing you could do. It really is. I mean, to be a ballerina is, I'm sure, the ultimate.

UTT
QVD: But to be a hula dancer, in that—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --soloist—

UTT
QVD: --staging, is um ... is unbelievable. 'Cause you have contact—

ML: Right, right; right, right.

QVD: --with your—with your audience.

ML: Right, right, right.

QVD: You can see what they're feeling, what they're thinking. Um ...

UTT

QVD: I did—I did a lot of that.

ML: Were you unusual in—in that you toured?

QVD: I think so.

ML: Okay.

QVD: I think so.

ML: And it was probably because of the movie, that you had the exposure beyond Hawai'i.

QVD: Perhaps.

UTT

QVD: Yeah.

ML: 'Cause it didn't happen—

QVD: In my dancing.

ML: --until after. The touring.

QVD: No, I did; I did that before. I went—I told you, I went with—with Alfred.

ML: So that was before—

QVD: Before the—

ML: --Bird of Paradise?

QVD: --Bird of Paradise; yeah.

UTT

QVD: But when I did the movie ... wh-h-ow.

ML: Oh; you had a lot more...offers.

QVD: I mean, gee, I—I had a small, little part in the movie. [CHUCKLE] I mean, it's like, god, she was ... you know.

UTT

QVD: Which was—which was ... wonderful.

UTT

QVD: Which was wonderful. To think that our people of Hawai'i ... actually ...

UTT

QVD: You know, know me.

UTT

QVD: I think that's ... that's unbelievable.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: You know? But ... but then, you know, I was flying too.

UTT

QVD: So ... um ... I was doing little promotions for Hawaiian Air too. Small kind. It—it was like ... you know, spontaneous. You're here to—let's do it. You know. That kinda stuff.

ML: Right, right, right.

QVD: But um ... my hula ... uh ... my hula is me.

UTT

QVD: It is me. It is me. I'm Mom, I'm Tūtū, I'm Honey. But my hula is me. I am that. Yeah. And I think a lot of soloists too know, know where they belong.

UTT

QVD: You know. They don't need notoriety. They don't need all of this. But when they hula ... you know they belong.

UTT

QVD: You know. I was telling Bev; I don't care what you think, you belong with us, you are here with us. Whether you think so or not. Well, Queenie—

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: I said, Well, Bev, that's okay. That's okay.

ML: She was after you, you were saying, yeah?

QVD: Yes; after me.

ML: And so how did you folks get to know each other?

QVD: We were schoolmates.

ML: Oh, so you did know her—

QVD: Go to Farrington.

ML: --from Farrington. Oh.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: So then, when did she rise in her ... popularity as a soloist?

QVD: You know, I don't know when she did that.

(45:00)

ML: Okay. We'll talk to her—

QVD: Yeah; yeah.

ML: --about that.

QVD: I don't know.

ML: Well, you were kinda pau with your ...

QVD: Oh, I was—

ML: --things--

QVD: --already—yeah.

ML: --in Hawai'i.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Or in the showrooms.

QVD: In the showrooms; yeah. Yeah.

UTT

QVD: She and Emma—

UTT

QVD: --were Ed's featured ... stars. And he was at the Halekulani; they were at the Halekulani.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Gorgeous; just beautiful.

ML: Oh, I bet.

QVD: Oh; beautiful. And um ... we were song leaders together.

UTT

QVD: Um ...

ML: So Farrington.

QVD: [CHUCKLE]

ML: Farrington High School.

QVD: Farrington High School. Eddie Kamae.

ML: You guys were all classmates?

QVD: Colon.

UTT

QVD: Augie Colon.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Oh, yeah. They never went to class; they always was in the music room. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Thank goodness. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: But the entertainers in '47, '48, '49, Farrington High School, were really the young and up-and-coming stars of Hawai'i.

UTT

QVD: They were.

ML: Wow.

QVD: Yeah. I think Arthur Lyman went to McKinley High School. I'm not sure; I think he did.

ML: I'm not sure. I'm not sure.

QVD: Of course, Don, he went to ... to uh, Kamehameha. But ... he was—he was a buddy, that guy.

UTT

QVD: He um ... now, who was his soloist? I don't know.

UTT

QVD: I don't know.

ML: So you were mentioning one gal, uh, earlier, Kanoe Cockett.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: When you folks were both the dancers at the—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Halekulani. So she then became a soloist like you?

QVD: She was a soloist; yeah.

ML: And so who was her affiliation with? Like, how you had ... Alfred?

QVD: I don't know. I don't know.

UTT

QVD: I just knew that she was—you know, Cockett; he just died not too long ago.

ML: Kawai?

QVD: Kawai Cockett.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah. They're cousins.

UTT

QVD: Yeah. They're cousins, I'm sure; yeah.

UTT

QVD: But she lives on Kaua'i.

UTT

QVD: I saw her maybe about eight years ago; and she looked wonderful.

ML: So maybe we'll try to see her when we go over there next month.

QVD: You're going to Kaua'i?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Oh.

ML: So she still goes by Co-Co—

QVD: No.

UTT

QVD: No, she goes by another name now. She's been married, I don't know how many times. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Do you happen to know what the latest is?

QVD: I don't know. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Let's see; how can we find her? [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Oh, you know, uh ... let's see. How are you gonna find her? Let's see. Who do we know—

ML: Did she—

QVD: --on Kaua'i?

ML: Did she continue in hula? Like, did she teach?

QVD: No.

ML: Or—

QVD: No.

ML: So she wouldn't necessarily even be known as a—

QVD: No.

ML: --hula person.

QVD: No; she wouldn't.

ML: Oh; that's gonna make it hard.

QVD: You know, I think—I think Kent Ghirard knows her.

ML: Yeah?

QVD: Yeah. You know, she's not a Cockett. She was married to a Cockett.

UTT

QVD: Jimmy Cockett was the—the cop.

UTT

QVD: The handsome guy on the solo bikes. Jimmy Cockett.

ML: So she—so she may have been one of his dancers? But before she got married?

QVD: I don't know. But I know she became a soloist. We were on the line with ... with Skinny [INDISTINCT], with Monkey, uh, I mean, Sterling. And uh, yeah.

ML: We'll have to ask about her uh ... if we could find her on Kaua'i.

QVD: Find her on Kaua'i.

ML: Did she go into a certain career? I know she would be retired by now, but—

QVD: I don't know.

ML: Okay.

QVD: I think everybody kinda just went—went their ways.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah, yeah.

QVD: Yeah. I'm the only one who became a cowboy. [CHUCKLE]

ML: But yeah, that's true.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Oh, gosh.

ML: Oh. And so ... in terms of the songs that were popular, um, at the time when you did become—you know, kind of went from line to solo—

QVD: M-hm.

ML: --what were—can you think of not necessarily hapa haole songs, but the songs that were popular for Alfred to sing, and for you to dance, and um—

QVD: Actually, they were all—they were all hapa haole songs.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Alfred. And the reason for that was because of his audience.

ML: Okay.

QVD: And the people we played to, yeah? Uh ...

ML: So can you name a few of—of the ones he would—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --sing, you would sing—uh dance?

QVD: Um, Mapuana, uh, Lei of Stars ... um ... gee, how many more?

ML: Were they new songs at the time?

QVD: Lovely Hula Hands.

UTT

QVD: Mapuana was a new one.

ML: Okay.

QVD: We introduced that song, Alfred and I, uh, for Henry J. Kaiser.

UTT

(50:00)

QVD: Down on the ... next to the um ... Queen's Surf. I mean, he had a big production there. I didn't even know what was really—I thought we were just going to introduce the song. But—but Henry J. had a whole bunch of people, all dressed up. You know, they were sitting at tables. [CHUCKLE] And I come there, and Alfred said, You know, we—it's gonna be a mock thing, like a—like a dining room.

UTT

QVD: And we're going to be introducing this new song. [HUMS] I never heard it before. So the two of us are behind by the—by one of those long trailers. And he's singing the song to me.

ML: That night of the show? [CHUCKLE]

QVD: No; afternoon.

ML: Oh, afternoon. Oh, gosh.

QVD: Afternoon; we're doing this in the afternoon.

ML: Rehearse—oh.

QVD: And he says, What do you think? I said, I don't know; sing it to me again. [CHUCKLE] And you know ... for songs like that, it was a piece of cake.

UTT

QVD: I mean, after what we learned, it's a piece of cake, you know?

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: So we get up, and we're out there, and I do it. Henry J. Kaiser, just one take, and he is just ... pleased.

UTT

QVD: Pleased as punch. And he says to—to Alfred ... She's gonna be our hula dancer. Alfred says, Good. And then from then on, the checks were very big.

ML: Oh, great.

QVD: Called me up, and I'd fly. We'd do this, and I'd fly to Tahoe. We'd be all over the place—

ML: Wow.

QVD: --for him.

UTT

QVD: Yeah. Which, I think ... brought me um ... to a place in the US ... um ... because I was introduced to ... Charlie Farrell was his name, the movie actor.

UTT

QVD: Charlie Farrell.

UTT

QVD: He owned the Racquet Club up at Palm Springs. So we did shows for him, and we did shows for a couple of very wealthy people, the Isenbergs. And he was supposed to have been the inventor of the bomb site or something or other. But so, just—just making this one connection—

ML: Right.

QVD: --just took me ... to the biggest—

UTT

QVD: --circle of the wealthiest people, ever. I was supposed to go to New York. And um ... my Mealani got sick. And I told Henry, I said, I can't go. He said, Why? I said, My daughter's very ill. You know what he did? Called the maid, packed my bags, called the—Fitzsimmons, got the limousine out. We were at Tahoe; we were supposed to fly from there straight to New York. He—and he says—called the jet, put me on the jet, flew me home. He says, Soon as she's well, you come back. In a week, I was back. But what is that—

UTT

QVD: --all about, huh?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: How wonderful. How wonderful.

ML: Don't hear about that kind now.

QVD: Yeah. And you know what it is? It's, I'm his hula dancer.

ML: Right; just take care of you.

QVD: Yeah; take care of me. And I would have breakfast with him, lunch with him. And all we'd talk about is just the plans for Hawaiian Village. He had such great plans. And when I could not ... I could not go to do the promotion ... I said, I think it's time for me. He says, No, just do one more promotion. I said, Boss, I think I should go home. I—I'm feeling very bad. He said, Okay.

ML: 'Cause you were already here, in the Big Island.

QVD: Yes.

ML: Yeah. So—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --it's not like—and then—

QVD: No.

ML: --Hawaiian Village is on—

QVD: No.

ML: --O'ahu. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: No. I was here.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: And so ... uh ... we called Pauline Cockett. There's a dancer.

ML: Pauline—

QVD: Pauline—no; Pauline ... oh, gosh ... She's a soloist. She became Alfred's soloist.

ML: Is she still around?

QVD: Paul—she's still around.

ML: Oh, I'll have to find her.

QVD: She's still around. Oh—

ML: She was after you?

QVD: She was after me.

UTT

QVD: But she did the Ed Sullivan Show.

UTT

QVD: She went up and did that. She did Hawaiian Village.

UTT

QVD: For a long while. Uh, and then they hired Jo Flanders to come in, and that's when Lani came in. Yeah. But she and Alfred did Hawaiian Village; they opened Hawaiian Village. Um—

ML: Well, if you think of her um—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --name, or what she goes by now, I guess...

QVD: Pauline Cockett, Pauline Cockett.

ML: --you have—do you know where she is or ... what island or anything? [CHUCKLE]

(55:00)

QVD: She's on O'ahu.

ML: She is?

QVD: Yeah.

UTT

QVD: Let me see, how ... how we—can we contact her ... Pauline ... gee ... gosh. All the rest of the hula dancers are all done,

UTT

QVD: --gone, that knew her.

UTT

QVD: She's on Alfred's—a couple of Alfred's uh, albums.

UTT

QVD: Big 78s.

UTT

QVD: Cover.

UTT

QVD: Yeah. Oh, gosh; Pauline ... pretty.

UTT
QVD: Pretty girl; pretty. And nice.
UTT
QVD: Lovely. Good fun; good fun. Sense of humor.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Sense of humor. And she can dance. She can dance.
UTT
ML: And uh—

QVD: She and Lani are a lot alike.
UTT
QVD: Lot alike.

ML: What was—do you know her—who her training came from? Pauline.

QVD: I think—

ML: Or even Kanoë.

QVD: Pauline; I think ... h-m ... gosh ... I don't know. I don't think I remember. [TELEPHONE] I don't—I don't know.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

QVD: Pauline.
[CHUCKLE]
QVD: Gosh.

ML: It'll come to you in a flash.

QVD: It'll come to me.
[CHUCKLE]

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

[END]

QUEENIE VENTURA DOWSETT

Tape #: HPS 0949

Date: October 17, 2008

Location: Waimea, Kohala, Hawai'i Island

Subject: Oral History Interview

Interviewer(s): Maile Loo

Videographer: Gene Kois

(00:53)

QVD: -- Barney Isaacs, I think.

UTT

QVD: I think. I think she married Barney.

UTT

QVD: Oh, that was another thing, too. Oh; gosh.

ML: What? [CHUCKLE]

QVD: I don't know. Um ...

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: You know ... I guess—I guess a lot of it ... the hula dancers, friends of mine, would get very upset with me, because I never stayed ... to hang out.

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: I never did that. Um, not because I thought I was any better. I had too much to do. You know, get up early in the morning, get to school, and—and do all these things. An—and the one that used to really come after me for that was Marlene Sai.

UTT

QVD: She'd say to me, What; you're leaving again? And I'd say, Yeah. What, you cannot hang out with us? No; I've gotta go—

UTT

QVD: I've just gotta go home. You know? And I—and I think that was just part of the M.O. When you're done with the show, you go together and—

ML: Go eat...

QVD: --go eat or whatever.

ML: Inu; yeah.

QVD: Yeah; and inu, you know.

UTT

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: And they used to always end up at the Palms, Palms Bar down in Waikīkī. [CHUCKLE] Right across of Lau Yee Chai's. And ... an—an—and I just ... I love 'em all. I'd just say, You know, I love you guys, but I just gotta get home. Just gotta get home. And a lot of that had to do with my dancing. I wasn't about ... I'd seen too many masters.

UTT

QVD: Too many. And I wasn't gonna have that—

ML: Right.

QVD: --happen to me. I love my hula too much.

ML: It—yeah; it was too sacred to you.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: To taint with—yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Um, did the—the solo ... the soloist, I guess, even after you kinda got out, but you were still in the know of, you know, what was going on; was there a prevalence of um, schools that—uh, that they came from? Like ... you know, or was it just all over? 'Cause Auntie Bev, of course, studied with Beamer.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: And she kind of became—made her own, you know—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --stylized after that.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Where you were from Auntie Io. I don't know where these other ladies were from, but—

QVD: M-hm.

ML: Was there any kind of prevalence of ... what line kinda blossom—blossomed soloists, or was it really just ... the person?

QVD: I—I just—I believe that you either had a uniqueness about yourself, you had a profession ... just a professional uh ... what'd you say, an attitude.

ML: M-m. Like the—

QVD: And there was. We did have an—we did have that, you know. The poise, and that—you know, not tita stuff.
Excuse me; we just ...

UTT

QVD: We just went that way. And um ... but I think ... I think ... those that didn't go to masters, that became soloists—and they—an—and there were a few, um ... were—were those that ... was just good.

UTT

QVD: They were just good. They didn't need to have to have this certain person or that certain person. Uh, they were good. But they did not reach that stardom. And I think a lot of that came from people like Auntie Io, Nona. Because, why? Because they ...

UTT

QVD: --are who they are. They came from that.

(05:00)

QVD: You know.

ML: So the student could see—

QVD: The students you see.

UTT

QVD: And if you had it as one in a group or what, they'd pick you out.

UTT

QVD: I don't know that they do that today. They do a Miss Hula—whatever.

ML: Uh, Miss Hula Aloha; yeah.

QVD: Aloha Hula; but after that, what? You know? Are they—are they good enough so that ... somebody will see them and say, I'm taking you to Japan. You're gonna be my soloist, because we got six hundred students that will be watching you. I don't know that they do that anymore. Is there such a person? Do they ... hand pick? Well, they did then.

ML: M-m. Yeah, I—I—I don't know if they do that now.

QVD: And it was—

ML: I think it's through hālau now, you know.

QVD: Through hālau's.

UTT

QVD: Yeah. And how difficult is that? How many parents can pay for something like that?

UTT

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: All the costumes, and all those kinds of things. I've had many women that came through the line at our conference who told me that.

ML: Yeah. Well, and that's the difference. You know, you look at a—a group uh, of professionals, like Kent Ghirard.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: They were professionally paid dancers. They were not a hālau; they were a hula studio.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: And he pulled the ones he wanted for the line that got paid.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: So same thing with you folks, you know.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: You guys were paid.

QVD: M-hm.

ML: This was your job. Now, it's like, the hālau gets the job.

QVD: Oh, I see; yeah.

ML: So you know—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: The group will—

QVD: I see.

ML: --go.

QVD: Go.

ML: And there's a soloist in the hālau, but it's the hālau that gets the job.

QVD: The hālau; yeah.

ML: You know.

QVD: They get the jobs; yeah.

ML: So it's not—it's not even the same thing.

QVD: Not the same thing.

ML: You can't even compare. So I really—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I can't even think, besides Kanoe and—well, Debbie Nakanelua, 'cause she also dances at the Halekulani when Kanoe's not dancing. But I can't think of ... you know, an employed dancer. I mean—

QVD: Others. Yeah.

ML: --I used to dance solo with the—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Royal Hawaiian Band.

QVD: Ooh.

ML: But—and I considered it a great—great honor, you know, to—

QVD: M-hm.

ML: --do that. But it wasn't um ... there were a handful of us, you know. It wasn't like I did it six days a week, like Kanoe does, and that's her—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --job.

QVD: That's her job.

ML: I did it—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --when they called me, kinda thing.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: And I got paid thirty dollars, you know, that kinda thing.

[CHUCKLE]

ML: I was like, Oh, okay.

QVD: Oh. [CHUCKLE]

ML: That covers the leis, you know. I mean—

QVD: Don't even clean my holokū.

ML: I know.

[CHUCKLE]

ML: Seriously. So it was, like, really for the—you know, the historic—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --value of it for me. It wasn't for anything else—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --but that. You know, it was an honor to be a—

QVD: To be there.

ML: -affiliated. But it wasn't a job.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: So I just—it's so hard to imagine that, you know, you folks were—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --so ... treasured, and you know—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --taken such good care of. I just—you know, there's just nothing like it today.

QVD: That we were; truly were.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: I don't know about Bev. I know she had a difficult time.

UTT

QVD: You know, with Ed. But um—

ML: Yeah; and I want to make sure she's comfortable that we're not gonna ...

QVD: Yeah; do that.

ML: --go places that she—

QVD: You-no need.

ML: --doesn't want to go.

QVD: No need.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Talk about her—her—her ... just her dancing.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: It's superior.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: You know. She is.

ML: Did she have other—did she solo with other people too? Or just with him? Just 'cause I want to make—I want to make sure I don't ...

QVD: Yeah. I don't—

ML: You know.

QVD: You know, I don't—I only know ... of that sensational—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --twosome.

ML: Just the duo, you know.

QVD: The duo.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Those two ... are legends. They really are. And he's living in the mountains.

ML: I know; on Kaua'i, yeah?

QVD: Kalaleo.

ML: Where; Anahola?

QVD: Anahola; yeah.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: Yeah. He's up there; it's his mother's house.

UTT

QVD: And when he was here, he was miha 'ole.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: And he says—I said, Ed—

ML: Oh, he came here?

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Oh. I never heard of—of him leaving the [CHUCKLE]--

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --leaving the island.

QVD: He came to do that concert that was for Jo Flanders.

UTT

QVD: We did a big thing here for Jo. Yeah. And um ...

UTT

QVD: Bev came.

UTT

QVD: Uh ...

ML: How long ago was that, Auntie?

QVD: God ... six years.

UTT

QVD: Six years ago. Yeah; we did a big thing here.

UTT

QVD: And so Bev came. I had—I invited all of them to come breakfast with us. And um ... that's the thing. And I had ... I have um ... um ... I have so many mem—Barney them; they came.

UTT

QVD: All on the lānai, like you folks.

UTT

QVD: And Mom; everybody. Irmgard. Irmgard was doing a song for me before she died, for this place. I know.

UTT

QVD: So I asked um ...

ML: Mihana.

QVD: Mihana.

UTT

QVD: If—if Mom—and she says, No, Queenie, I don't think she finished it.

ML: Oh, shucks.

(10:00)

QVD: I don't think anything was done; yeah. But they were all here. And I have pictures of all of them.

UTT

QVD: All on the lānai. You know, so this is a bl—blessed place.

UTT

QVD: With all of you and Mom.

UTT

QVD: It's a blessed place.

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Good memories—

QVD: So—

ML: --for us too. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: So you know, uh ... I don't know. An—and I am so ... I just—I'm so grateful that ... I can still share. And they still look at the hula, at my hula as something that is ... to ... to know that if I in any way can make them know the master that I come from, then I have done my job. That I have certainly, surely done my job. You know. Um ...

UTT

QVD: It's um—

ML: That's beautiful.

QVD: It's like Nona. Being with her the last few years, I—we sit—we'd talk. How come, Nona, I never ever ... our roads never ever crossed? You know.

ML: But you knew of each other.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: She says, Oh, just—she said, You know, Sweetie, I think everybody was too busy. And she says, And you, where were you? Up here.

ML: That's true.

QVD: Yeah. I was here.

ML: That's true. 'Cause all, yeah—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: All the Queen's Surf and all that, you—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: You were already here, yeah.

QVD: Here, yeah.

UTT

QVD: She says, We did so much in Honolulu. Every time you'd come, we hear you're at Halekulani with Auntie Alice; you're dancing or whatever. And then you're gone. I said, Well, that was a—just a, you know, timeout [CHUCKLE] for me from the kids. And then, I'd go home; come home. I said, But I danced here, I danced with um ... what's his name ... see; all of a sudden they're all coming back. I danced here at the hotel before it burned down across the street. And he was the manager of the hotel. And he's very famous.

ML: Oh, that one—the Waimea Ranch Hotel?

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah; that's the one when Mom was uh, doing her research, and it burned down and ...

QVD: Okay.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Oh, what's his name? He was a singer.

ML: Yeah. Uh—

QVD: Beautiful singer.

ML: Daddy Ray, Kinney.

QVD: Kinney.

ML: Yeah; Ray Kinney.

QVD: Ray Kinney.

UTT

QVD: He'd call me up. Queenie, can you get Jamie to watch the babies and you come down [CHUCKLE] and dance for me this show? [CLAP] What time?

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: And I'm there. You know? Um ...

ML: Fabulous; yeah.

QVD: Yeah. And I always used to think—and one day, and one day, when it's time for me to pau, I will know.

UTT

QVD: I will know. I will know. But meanwhile—

ML: Yeah. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Back on the ranch.

ML: Not yet. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Not yet.

ML: So when—you know, that um, dress that you uh, shared with us that was from when you danced with Ed Kinney.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Where was that showroom at?

QVD: Where was that show?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That was at the Hawaiian Village.

ML: Okay.

QVD: That was when they had that cake thing, that fight.

UTT

QVD: And the production was—

ML: That was all Hawaiian Village.

QVD: --was um, Kaiulani.

UTT

QVD: And—and um, we did the um ... [SINGS] Everything is beautiful. Da-da-da-dum. We were all in missionaries. See that picture I showed you?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That missionary; that was one of 'em.

UTT

QVD: That was part of the show. Yeah.

ML: So this was after Alfred had passed away already.

QVD: Yes. Yes.

ML: So—

QVD: Long after Alfred passed.

ML: --he had to you ... had other shows. I mean, he was the headliner.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Well, that was the plan.

QVD: That was the plan, yeah.

ML: And then he died, yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Oh; so Ed—was that kinda his home base for his show?

QVD: That was his home base.

ML: Okay. So he—

QVD: That was—

ML: --became ...

QVD: Hawaiian—

ML: --the headliner for—

QVD: Not Halekulani; Hawaiian Village.

ML: Hawaiian Village, yeah.

QVD: Hawaiian Village. Yeah.

ML: Okay. And so when you did that with him, uh, Auntie Bev was—this was even before her, then? Her being with him, or after?

QVD: She was with him the whole time.

ML: So he—she was still there ...

QVD: Oh, no, he—

ML: --when ... you came into—

QVD: When I came in, she was done.

ML: Oh; that's when they all—they all—

QVD: She was—she was out of the picture.

ML: --quit.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: And including her.

QVD: Yeah, including her. Yeah.

ML: Okay, so she had been there.

QVD: She had been there.

ML: And then they all said, Later.

QVD: She was the featured dancer. She was the—

ML: Okay.

QVD: You know, she was the star.

ML: And that didn't cause any tension between her and you?

QVD: No.

ML: Because she was—

QVD: No, she was—

ML: --just over it; yeah.

QVD: Over, pau. And—and you know, I talk with her.

ML: Yeah.

(15:00)

QVD: And she says, You know, Queenie, she says, it makes me angry to think ... that he could do this to you. I said, Please.

UTT

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: Bev, you know me better than that. She says, Well, she says, it would really upset me. She says, Because you have no idea. I says, Well, I'm gonna find out, and if it doesn't work, Bev, I will in no cer—and I told her who the singer was. She—and she knows Juliette, you know, Galuteria.

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: And she said, She's coming in?

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She's an alto. I said ... She's wonderful.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: He says, Well, you're in good hands. You're in real good hands. And I said, Yeah. So it worked out. The one that didn't talk to me is Lei Anderson.

UTT

QVD: Which was silly; which was absolutely silly.

UTT

QVD: Because I told Bev, You know, you talk to Lei; she wants to call me, I'd be very happy to talk to her. But you know, you tell her ... this has nothing to do with personalities. Okay. Personal things.

ML: Right, right.

QVD: This has to do with showmanship, and this has to do with a friend in need.

UTT

QVD: Okay. Whatever you folks' pilikia was ... that's you folks. But right now, we're doing a show.

ML: Right.

QVD: And hopeful—and hopefully, we can do it as well as you folks. 'Cause you folks ... I mean, you folks were the talk of the town. Okay. So—and I acknowledge that.

ML: Right.

QVD: Okay. So whatever we do is because ... we're professionals.

ML: Right.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Well, and you had a history with Kaiser, anyway.

QVD: Yeah; yeah.

ML: So it's not like—

QVD: No.

ML: --you were not known. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Right. Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: So you know, but she still ... she's—she's a Mormon, she's a ... wonderful Mormon.

UTT

QVD: When she sees me in church, sometime they come up here ... I say, Hi, Lei. And she goes, Hi, Queenie.
[CHUCKLE] And I'm like, Okay, that's all right.

ML: At least you tried. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Yeah. You know, sometimes they have to grow up. Sometimes there's gotta be somewhere in that heart of hers, and in that spirit of hers to say, You know what? You get over that, get over it; we're hula people. We belong to the same world. We're in the same bubble. Come on. You know. Where's your ... where's all of this; where?

UTT

ML: Well, that's what you were saying, that there was a lot of competitiveness.

QVD: Oh, yeah.

ML: So was it re—was it between—just between the dancers themselves, or was it between the shows, or how was it—where was it ...

QVD: You know—

ML: --at?

QVD: You know, uh, it—it's always, always this talking.

UTT

QVD: Gossip, all this talk-talk-talk. You know. And you hear it from the hula girls on the line. Ah, you know, Queenie, I heard-- I—I don't want to hear. I don't want to hear it. Oh, you know this-- I said, Please. An—and ... and you know, I'm gonna tell you folks right now; as long as I'm here, I don't want any—any gossip, okay? You folks want to talk about our show, there's—there's constructive criticisms, or you think we can do something better—even for me, if you think there's something I should—I should know, tell me.

UTT

QVD: Don't hesitate; come on. But bring that—all that hakakā in here; I don't want that. Don't do it. Ed used to do that too.

UTT

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: You know, Bev—I said, Don't even start. We're gonna have a wonderful evening. You know. An—and ... Auntie Io was that way. Before we puka that door, she'd make us stand there and ... right now, she says, All of that, put aside; all of it. So learning from her ... has given us ... some treasures, some of the most wonderful principles of the hula. And that doesn't come from just because today is today, and you want to be this. No; it comes from way back. It comes from ... way back. And when you do what you're supposed to do, you come in, cleanse yourself ... nothing, nothing, and no one can stop you from what you're doing and do it well. So with that, our hula girls were good. Pau; no more gossip. But I think that's how it starts.

UTT

QVD: It starts with all this ... this—at this picky, picky, picky, all this kinda ... nothing better to talk about. Yeah. You folks want to talk—you're all college kids—talk about your agendas, whatever. Don't talk about other shows, other people. But that's the way it used to go. And they used to talk about Bev to me. You know, How could she be going with a gay guy, and all this and that. I said, You know what, you guys; stop. That was her choice. She has a beautiful son. What else? Come on. You know, pau.

(20:00)

And that's ... and that's ... I think, one of the very, very unfortunate things ... of ... the hālau's. Even the Merrie Monarch. Uncle George asked me twice, even this last time, Would you come judge? No. I said, When they wear—wear tee-shirts ... huki onto you, whatever, what is that all about? How can—how can you folks allow that? There should be—there should be rules; no more that kinda stuff. Why? No more. And I'm gonna tell you one thing, George. You know what; I don't agree that everybody has to go to Halema'uma'u or whatever, and do all of this ... this ho'oku—if they don't—really. What do—what do they—what do they know? Huh? What do they know? Even Auntie Io used to tell us, You folks stay back there. Us. You stay back there. When you see all of this kind of stuff, and they leave their lepo all over the place, what is that all about? So you need to cleanse. Hi, come. Come, James.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

[BREAK IN TAPING]

QVD: I'm in awe with them; I really am. I just ... you know. Um ...

UTT

QVD: And I hope that that hakakā stuff is not going—I mean, I listen to—to Robert.

ML: Cazimero?

QVD: He—they had—they had a sh—they had a uh ... a—

ML: Oh; did you see that uh—

QVD: I saw that.

ML: --documentary?

QVD: Documentary.

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: And I think that's wonderful.

UTT

QVD: That is right on. Right on. You know. And—and ... and that's the way it should be taught, should be told.
Yeah? Um ... well—

ML: Yeah; then I guess there's always going to be uh, drama in the hula world—

QVD: Always drama.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Yeah, always the drama.

ML: Yeah. Because anything that involves ... you know, in hula, you gotta dig down deep and put yourself out there.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: And you're talking about emotions and ... ego and all that great stuff. 'Cause especially now, there's so much ...

QVD: Oh.

ML: --publicity and ... fame to be had and—

QVD: And there's so many hālau's, so—

ML: --money to be made. Yeah, yeah.

QVD: Money to be, yeah; you know, and you wonder, you know, can this be—can this be pono?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: You know?

ML: Yeah.

QVD: But you know, even Maiki; there was a time when Maiki and I sat.

UTT

QVD: We met Ala Moana Shopping Center, she was shopping; I was shop-- And we ... sat down and talked. And she said to me, Queenie ... she says to me, I worry about the hula. I worry about the hula. I said, Why? She says, Because, you know, I'm—I'm still teaching and trying to teach my daughters, trying to get them to ... to

acknowledge what the hula is all about, not who they are right now; what the hula is all about. Yeah. She says, And it's, and it's uh ... and I wonder—

- UTT
- QVD: I wonder how many ... will really stay ... with what is traditional.
- UTT
- QVD: What is—what is ... what—what you change and what you don't change. Yeah?
- UTT
- QVD: Now, they change all kinds of things. What is basic, they change. I said, Well, you know, Maiki, I said, I'm not a teacher. I used to help Auntie teach; Lani and I. I said, But ... you know, even then, even then it was hard. We had—we had our women ... they don't—because they're our age, they're not gonna really listen to us.
- UTT
- QVD: But you know what? When we turn them over to Auntie Io, Auntie Io knows that we're doing our job. But if they don't do what they're supposed to be doing, Auntie Io called them out. Right now; right now. In a nice way.
- UTT
- QVD: But ... yeah; you're right, Maiki. Because even now, there is that ... attitude. And it's generation. They have ... their lives are so complex, I don't know what they're doing. They—I—you think they—they come to hula because they want to hula. They come to hula to belong to a group.
- UTT
- QVD: They come to belong to a group.
- ML: M-hm. That's a big part of it.
- QVD: Yeah. I'm gonna wear my same haku lei.
- UTT
- QVD: I'm gonna wear my same pā'ū skirt.
- UTT
- QVD: I'm gonna ... what is that all about?
- UTT
- QVD: Yeah. And then you find—
- ML: Yeah.
- QVD: --that time where they all ch-ch-ch.
- ML: Yeah, group dynamics, you know.
- QVD: Group dynamics.
- ML: [CHUCKLE] Good and bad. [CHUCKLE]
- QVD: Good and bad. But—

(25:00)

ML: Yeah. H-m.

QVD: Well, if there's still something that I can offer, and I'm sure Bev will realize—

UTT

QVD: --that she has much to offer.

ML: I hope so.

QVD: She jumps in now, that would be wonderful.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That would be—

ML: 'Cause we've been working on her for a while. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: --such—such um ... she has no idea—

UTT

QVD: --what she can offer. You know? She says, What have I got to offer? I says, You've got your hands to offer. I said, You have—you have so much to offer.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: I said, Your expressions ... are incredible.

UTT

QVD: She said, I don't have expressions. I says, Well, says you. So she—

ML: Some come so naturally.

QVD: Yeah.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: I said, Because all of your translations, all of your hula, all of your interpretations is so [CLAP] right on.

ML: Right.

QVD: She says, Mine is routine. I says, See, that's you.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Mine is routine. The routine that we have never seen. Not me, but the rest have never seen. You cannot take this with you, Bev. You shouldn't. This was given to you; this is a gift, kid.

ML: Right.

QVD: And you've gotta give back.

UTT

QVD: You have to. You need to. So ...

ML: You know, you were talking about um, you know, the songs—and I'm sure she had her signature songs with—

QVD: Yes.

ML: --with Ed and all that. Hasn't the ... isn't there a recording of um, Alfred doing Mapuana?

QVD: Yes.

ML: I wonder if we could—

QVD: I think so.

ML: I mean, for the session, would it be ... meaningful to dance to the guys you used to dance to?

QVD: Dance for?

ML: Rather than having live musicians do it for you there? I mean, we could go either way.

QVD: Yeah. I don't know.

ML: I don't know.

QVD: Let me think about that one.

ML: 'Cause I've got a bunch of his uh—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --albums that—

QVD: Albums.

ML: --we could probably find all the songs that you used to—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --do with him. Like, you know, Dancing—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Under the Stars, and—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Mapuana, and ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I mean, Ed's got a bunch of recordings too, we could probably find her songs.

QVD: Her songs.

ML: I mean, live is always great. But just because these were the guys you—

QVD: She does.

ML: --you danced with.

QVD: She does an incredible Lovely Hula Hands.

UTT

QVD: That—that is her signature—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --song.

ML: Right; yeah. 'Cause we'd love-- Yeah--

QVD: And when we did the concert here ... Jo Flanders ... the—the—the orches ... orchestra ...

UTT

QVD: Who orchestrated the whole thing, was—was Donald Yap.

UTT

QVD: Don Yap.

ML: Yeah, yeah.

QVD: He's—he's a buddy of mine; he's everybody's friend. Entertainers all know him, and he calls me up and he said, Hey, babe. And I says, Who's this? This is that piano player. I says, Oh, the one that went to the mainland and just got back. And he just got back, not too long ago at the time. And we talked. And he says, You know, Jo wants ... Bev was Jo—Jo's um ... Jo's dancer.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: She was one of Jo's dancers. And she did Lovely Hula Hands.

UTT

QVD: She ... was on the album with Lovely Hula Hands.

UTT

QVD: And so he asked me; he says, um ... Danny wants to sing for you. Danny Kaleikini. And I said, Oh, okay. He says, So these are the songs. And he goes through the songs. And he says, Lovely Hula Hands. I said, No; you give that to Bev. That's Bev. And he says, Okay. And then he goes through; he says, What are you gonna do? I said, I'm gonna do Trees. [CHUCKLE] And just—just to make him laugh and smile. Because there's something about Lovely Hula Hands. So—

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: And then, so I finally did Mi Nei.

UTT

QVD: I did Mi Nei. And um ... um, Ed ... uh, Danny is there that afternoon, rehearsals. And um ... I forget; another young man is singing Lovely Hula Hands, I think. Someone is singing. And Bev comes out to dance it. Ed ... Ed Kenney; I think it was Ed. And he doesn't sing it very well. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Oh, no.

QVD: And so Bev is saying, Gee, should I dance that? I said, You know what? Get ... get um ... Danny to do that for you. So we talked to him, and I think that he said, Yeah, okay. First he said, Okay. But he ... he did not sing that for—someone else sang it for her.

UTT

(30:00)

QVD: But it was ... it was classic. It was beautiful. She just floated across the stage and back, and her hands went up, and there was an applause. That's her song.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That's—and no—no silly hula dancer—they tried to get me to do it—would say, Yes, I think—I think Bev ... Bev was a little bit touchy on that. And I said to her, You want to do Mi Nei? And she said, No. I said, Well, then just shut up. [CHUCKLE] You know. And this is—

[COUGH]

QVD: I think this is—this is what's ... this is what makes ... soloists professionals, yeah? Stuff like this. Is when you know where you belong.

UTT

QVD: Where—where you belong. So ...

ML: Hopefully, we could convince her to do that song. 'Cause she didn't mention it when I asked her.

QVD: Oh, she's gotta do it.

ML: She mentioned um, Mi Nei and Waikīkī.

QVD: Oh, really?

ML: But not Lovely Hula Hands. So ...

QVD: Well—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That's okay; she can do Mi Nei.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: But I—I mean ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --you know it'd be lovely to see her do Lovely Hula Hands too.

QVD: I can do Lei of Stars.

ML: Okay.

QVD: [SINGING] I'll weave a lei of stars for you. Yeah, I can do that.

ML: But think about if you—'cause I was gonna meet with um—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Kanoa Miller on Monday.

QVD: Oh.

ML: Because she actually just—uh, well, she dan—she used to dance with the Hiram Olsen Trio at the Halekulani.
Um ...

QVD: Hiram Olsen.

ML: --for many years. But they—they let them go.

QVD: Oh.

ML: And now they have Paahana, who are the guys who were with us last year.

QVD: Uh-huh.

ML: You know, for—

QVD: Uh-huh.

ML: --Uncle Kent Ghirard's, and—

QVD: Uh-huh.

ML: Um, but they don't know a lot of the old songs, you know.

QVD: Oh, yeah; yeah.

ML: I mean ... they should. The sound is old, but they don't know—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --all the songs. So I thought maybe it would be better to have someone like ... you know, Hiram Olsen Trio to play for you folks, than Paahana.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Um, because I don't want to get stuck where they don't know the song.

QVD: Right; right.

ML: But then if it—but I haven't talked to her yet, but I was gonna meet with her Monday.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: But if it's something where, you know, I can gather enough recordings of Ed and Alfred and all that, and have it ready, I mean, we could go that way too.

QVD: That—that would be good.

ML: You know, 'cause—

QVD: Yeah. I don't know whether she wants to dance to—with Ed's music.

ML: To Ed, though, yeah. Well—

QVD: I don't know.

ML: --there's other recordings.

QVD: What did she say? Have you—

ML: I didn't—

QVD: Have you—

ML: I didn't ask.

QVD: --suggested that?

ML: Because I was thinking of doing—it just hit me today about using—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --recordings.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: So I told her we would have a—a band there. But just—

QVD: Yeah. Just in case.

ML: --from talking, I realized, oh, Alfred, he—we have a recording of him doing Mapuana.

QVD: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

ML: Or you know what I mean? So that was a new thought. But um, we can definitely go the way of the—of the live band. Or—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --we could go with the recordings from that time.

QVD: Well, I'm gonna be there a couple days before, too. So—

ML: Yeah, yeah.

QVD: We could—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: I haven't heard Mapuana in ...

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --years.

ML: Well, I—yeah. If you—if you're game, then we could try to.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Because I guess ... I mean, the Hiram Olsen Trio has—has the sound, you know, from before, and they're more sort of old-timers. That's what, you know, Kanoe used to dance—

QVD: Okay.

ML: --with them. But um, obviously, the guys you used to dance with, are—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: You know, your singers were ... your singers. I mean—

QVD: Right.

ML: --we have the recordings, and maybe these people have never heard those recordings. Maybe some of them don't even know who Alfred Apaka is or would recognize his voice. You know what I mean?

QVD: Yeah; yeah.

ML: So maybe there's value in ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --using the recordings. I mean, in—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I know live music is always—

QVD: M-hm.

ML: --you know—

QVD: Yeah; the energy is there.

ML: Yeah. But I don't know.

QVD: Well ...

ML: It's—what do you think?

QVD: But you know ... if we're gonna do this—this—this whole segment of—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --the 40s and the 50s—

UTT

QVD: --Lovely Hula Hands was THE song.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: I mean, that was it.

ML: Well, I'll see what recordings I have of that song.

QVD: Okay.

ML: Besides Ed, you know.

QVD: And if she insists that she does something else, then fine.

ML: Okay. Well—

QVD: I'll do it, if she doesn't do it.

ML: I would say, plan to do a few of them, you know.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: 'Cause I mean, that too, I think—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Talking uh ... i—is—and giving your—your insights is—is valuable, but seeing you folks dance is—is just as valuable. So we want to make sure we have time for both—

QVD: Yeah; okay.

ML: --of you, and however we want to structure it. I talked to—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --her about um, having dinner on that Friday night before the—'cause I didn't think you were coming until Friday originally.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: So she said, Well—you know, we have dinner that night, kinda hash it through.

QVD: Oh, yeah. Yeah. That'd be—

ML: And then—

QVD: That'd be fun.

ML: --it'd be the next morning, so it'll be fresh in our minds, you know.

QVD: That'd be nice; that'd be fun.

ML: Yeah. So we can kinda—

QVD: Okay.

ML: --finalize everything.

QVD: Yeah. All right.

ML: But I'll—I'll just—I'm gonna try get with her like this—

QVD: Okay.

ML: --beforehand, and just—

QVD: Okay.

ML: So she can be ... thinking more, and then—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --talk to her about the music, and ... see if—

QVD: You know—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: I'm thinking about—

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: I'm thinking about that concert—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --with Jo Flanders because it was a big one. It was at the theater.

ML: Did anybody tape—

(35:00)

QVD: This was for her funeral.

ML: Did anybody ... document—

QVD: They did. Yeah, they did.

ML: Oh, who—

QVD: They did.

ML: Who ha—who did it?

QVD: I think that was—that would be ... that would be her daughter.

ML: Oh. Don't know—

QVD: You know what, I can ... I can ask her. I think she—

ML: Okay.

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: I think she has a tape on that. But I did—

UTT

QVD: --for Jo, because Jo's two daughters want me to do it; that was [SINGS] Somewhere over the rainbow.

UTT

QVD: La-da-da. And that was Jo Flanders's favorite song.

UTT

QVD: So, I did that. And they flew me to Honolulu for the funeral. And we did it at Punahou School. And when I did that at Punahou ... uh ... Bev didn't—wasn't asked; she didn't come.

UTT

QVD: But Nina came, Emma Veary came. Um ... Stephanie Smart came.

UTT

QVD: Um ... and there was one more singer ... one more singer ... I forget. We had a show like you'd never believe. I mean, it was ... a show. It was beautiful. Emma singing, and then—oh, Miss Hawaii. She sings all the time. She's a Miss Hawaii.

ML: Um ... from what era?

QVD: From the 70s.

GENE KOIS: Cathy Foy?

QVD: Cathy Foy—

UTT

QVD: There you go.

ML: Thank you.

QVD: She was there.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Thank you.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She was there. And she sang.

UTT

QVD: And blew us away. I mean, I was like ...

ML: She's been on Broadway; she knows how to—

QVD: Wow.

ML: --belt it out. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: Just blew us away. Anyway, so all these singers. And Nina ... and Stephanie Smart sang for me when I danced that. Um, but you know, um, there again; here's a whole lineup of singers. Gosh.

UTT
QVD: Whether it be yesterday, today ... it was absolutely incredible, to—to see these women. And we're doing this for a funeral service, and it was a celebration—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --as far as we were concerned.

ML: Right, right.

QVD: And it was—Jo had a—she had tap dancers, up and down—
[CHUCKLE]
QVD: --the aisles. Yeah. The—the daughters had ... tap dancers up and down the aisles, dancing to [SINGS] I've got rhythm. I mean, you've got all the priests sitting front row. [CHUCKLE] And—and—and her urn—and her urn is up there. And we were just going to town. [CHUCKLE] You know? And—

UTT
QVD: And I'm just thinking, How wonderful is this. What a sendoff.

ML: Yeah; yeah; yeah.

QVD: What a sendoff. You know?

ML: Beautiful.

QVD: And ... we all [CHUCKLE]--after the show, we all—all of us ... Nina left early. She said, I gotta go; I have another appointment, engagement.

UTT
QVD: I said, You're lying. [CHUCKLE] You just want to leave. [CHUCKLE] She says, I know, but I gotta go. I said, Okay, goodbye. So she left. But the rest of us all sat down, and we all ... [CHUCKLE] talked about ... what a show. What a show. And I'm oh, so pleased, because ... they asked this old gal to come and participate, and I'm there. You know.

UTT
QVD: Um ... and uh ... it's like ... I haven't left my career behind me.

ML: That's good.

QVD: For me, it's that simple.

UTT
QVD: I've not left it behind me. And—and it's not just my doing; it's all of you that have—that have ... you know, come and said, Oh, I remember you. Can you please come?
[CHUCKLE]

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: I remember you; would you please come? And if that is not like ... just the most thrilling thing anyone could say to me is come, come dance. Come dance. You know, I just hope that ... all of our soloists that will participate are going to be that way—

UTT

QVD: --and feel that way. Come and dance. How wonderful.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Dance ... dance the way you always dance.

ML: Right.

QVD: Don't—

ML: Do your thing.

QVD: Yeah; do your thing. Don't be ...whatever. Do your thing.

UTT

QVD: Enjoy. Enjoy.

ML: Yeah, it's gonna be fun.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I mean, I feel like you an—and Auntie Bev could ... carry the whole thing by yourselves. But I know Uncle—

QVD: Well—

ML: --you know, really um, wanted to involve the Alama sisters, who he's very close to.

(40:00)

Um, but if we can't have them, then we'll—we'll um, maybe try to find uh—well, Mamo's on O'ahu, so that's easy.

QVD: Yeah. Oh, you gotta get her.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: She make mu'umu'u's for all of us.

ML: Yeah. [CHUCKLE] You come in costume. [CHUCKLE]

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: Oh, what would you like, Queenie? I'd like one of those—what do you call those—those mu'umu'u's that—that has all these strips? You call 'em, I think they're window wipers or whatever.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She named them window wipers. And they are incredible.

ML: Sounds like Kent Ghirard's outfit. He made it like um ... a wide waistband, and it has strips. And—

QVD: Oh.

ML: Like he was trying to simulate something he saw at the Lexington, where they were trying to make—wear fake tī leaf skirts.

QVD: Oh, oh, yeah. Yeah.

ML: But he made it out of aloha print material.

QVD: Oh.

ML: And so it swishes.

QVD: Yeah. This one—

ML: It kinda sounds similar.

QVD: This one is right here.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: Right there. And it—and it—[HANDS CIRCLE BODY] all—

ML: Oh; oh, oh, oh, oh, oh. Oh, oh.

QVD: All the strips. And I tell you.

ML: Oh. Yeah, yeah, yeah. I know.

QVD: And he has dresses, mu'umu'u's, and—and they come up a little higher. I had one of those, and they were—my high heels, and Uncle Jamie says—

UTT

QVD: [CLEARS THROAT] I don't think you should wear that. [CHUCKLE] I said I just want to know if I can still turn heads. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Oh, not a problem, Auntie. [CHUCKLE] Well, Mamo's—

QVD: But no, Mamo would be—

ML: She's a little younger, yeah? Or is she—

QVD: Not much younger.

ML: Not much younger?

QVD: Mm-mm; mm-mm.

ML: So—so even if ... okay. So she would blend in if—if the Alama's don't come, and it's you and Auntie Bev, and—and Mamo.

QVD: Mamo.

ML: Would be okay?

QVD: Oh, yeah.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Oh, yeah.

ML: So where—where was her—what was her thing, like, in terms of ... just so I know a little bit more about her when I—

QVD: She—

ML: --approach her.

QVD: She was soloist. Now, I don't know where she danced 'cause I was up here.

ML: Right.

QVD: But she was big in the newspaper.

UTT

QVD: Big time. Of course, she—you know, she was a model.

ML: Right; right, right, right.

QVD: An—an—and stepping in—an—and ... and her sister.

UTT

QVD: Lois.

ML: Right.

QVD: Guerrero. Um ... those two danced forever.

ML: M-hm. Her sister's still around?

QVD: Yeah. She's still around.

ML: Was she a soloist too?

QVD: She was a soloist.

ML: Her sister.

QVD: Yeah.

UTT

QVD: She was.

ML: Maybe we could have the—

QVD: Lois.

ML: --two of them.

QVD: Yeah. Those two—

ML: I mean ...

QVD: Those two would be great.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Because there's ... I think, four would be a good number.

QVD: Yeah. That would be—

ML: Six would be—

QVD: --better.

ML: --too much. So if—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --the Alama's aren't going to—I—'cause I need to make a—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --decision soon, you know.

QVD: Okay; all right.

ML: It's a month away.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: And I don't want to—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --you know, go last minute kine.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: So maybe I'll try to ...

QVD: But Mamo would be—

ML: Yeah; m-m.

QVD: Mamo and Bev; you know, they're—they're the closet models and the hula dancers. They truly are.
[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She used to always say to me, Well, Queenie. And I'd say, Well, Mamo. Me first, you come next. [CHUCKLE]
But you know, we always had that—that confidence, that we are who we are. You know. We didn't have to worry about you know, what you wore, and how your hair was fixed, you know. We were who we were. And there was—

ML: Right.

QVD: --no ... second thoughts about ... can she get out there.

ML: Right.

QVD: You bet.

UTT

QVD: So I think from that standpoint, that we are the soloists—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --of Hawai'i at that time, with others. But ... um ...

ML: So those—

QVD: We were known as Bev, Queenie, Mamo.

UTT

QVD: Not—you know.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: That's who we were.

ML: That's all—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --you needed.

QVD: We come from masters, but when we became those soloists, we had our own identity. Which was—

ML: Do you know who Mamo was from?

QVD: I think—

ML: And her—and her sister.

QVD: I think Mamo was from Henry, Henry Pa.

UTT

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Okay.

QVD: I think Mamo was from Henry Pa.

ML: That would be interesting, then some—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Somebody different.

QVD: I think Mamo was from Henry Pa. Lois, I think, was from Big Auntie.

UTT

QVD: Guerrero.

ML: Was Guerrero their um, maiden name? Or—

QVD: No; no.

ML: Mamo married ...

QVD: She's the—the Portuguese. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Yeah; what is their maiden name?

QVD: I want to say Souza.

ML: I—I know I—

QVD: I'm not sure.

ML: I know I used to know too, but I cannot think of it. So Guerrero is her—is Lois's—

QVD: Married name.

ML: --married name. So she's related to—

QVD: Big Auntie—

ML: --Big Auntie?

QVD: --is her mother-in-law.

ML: Her mother-in-law. Okay.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: And then—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Mamo married Howell.

QVD: Gee, I can even remember that. Wow.

ML: Okay. [CHUCKLE] All right, Auntie Queenie.

QVD: Pretty good.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Oh, let's see. See, now I'm beginning to—to remember.

ML: Yeah, takes a while, yeah—

QVD: Yeah, takes a while. Yeah.

ML: When you don't think about it for a while.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Years. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: I'm trying to think of—

ML: Okay.

QVD: --who ... who Haunani Kahalewai's soloist was. 'Cause I was just ... I—I—I just jumped in a couple times.

UTT

QVD: Yeah; 'cause they were not around.

ML: Oh, who her regular was.

QVD: Yeah. Yeah; who her regular was. Now, who was it? ...

(45:00)

ML: What hotel was that at?

QVD: Royal Hawaiian.

ML: Okay.

QVD: That was the big show at the—

ML: That was the Royal.

QVD: --Royal Hawaiian. Yeah. You know, it could have been Mamo.

UTT

QVD: It could have been Mamo; yeah.

ML: That would be nice.

QVD: Yeah; it could have been Mamo. Could have been Mamo; yeah. Uh—

ML: Mom—you and Mom talked about that when we first came to see you, the very, very first time, years ago. So Gene was suggesting ... it was right at the end, when we start looking at your pictures, I think, from Bird of Paradise.

QVD: Oh, yeah?

ML: And you guys were kinda reminiscing, yeah? Was right at the end, yeah?

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Like talking about the soloists and the—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --singers and all. So—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: It might be on that tape.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: You know, if it—

QVD: Okay.

ML: --doesn't come to you—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --today.

QVD: Um ...

ML: But that would be nice, if it was uh, Mamo.

QVD: She would be—she would be—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --wonderful.

ML: Okay.

QVD: Because she's—she's—she's known in Hawai'i.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: For her clothes.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: I told her she makes too many of one kind. Shut up, Queenie. [CHUCKLE] I said, For crying out loud, when I go to your sh—bloody shop, and there must be at least fifty of one kind. All [CLAP] smashed together. And she says—

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: --Queenie. And I says, Mamo, come on. Those things are all [CLAP CLAP] so pili. I said, You can't even get your size out.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: She said, Wow.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: I said, Well, I'm your friend; I can tell you that.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: So ... but who else is—

ML: Well, if—yeah. I mean ...

QVD: You know, a lot of the soloists, like us—

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: --have—have gone to do careers. You know.

UTT

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: Mamo has, Bev has, I have. Um ... um ... who else that I can think of ... that's out—still out there. Puanani Alama; those two have. You know. They have. And they're beautiful women.

ML: I know.

QVD: And they still dance beautifully.

ML: Oh, I know. That's why I just ...

QVD: I'm trying to think of the table we all sat at, when Joseph Kahaulelio had his—had his benefit.

UTT

QVD: And it was at the Princess Kaiulani Hotel. At—at some big ballroom. I forget—

ML: One of the ballrooms, yeah?

QVD: And all of us soloists all sat on this long table.

UTT

QVD: And there was, I swear, twenty of us.

UTT

QVD: So how do I remember? And every one of us danced with Joe on stage. Yeah.

ML: Wow.

QVD: Yeah. And then maybe a couple months later, then he died.

ML: Yeah. So that was—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --oh, at least twenty years ago.

QVD: Oh, at least twenty years ago. Yeah.

ML: 'Cause he passed away in ...

QVD: Uh-huh.

ML: Sometime in the 80s, didn't he? I forget—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --exactly.

QVD: Yeah; early.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Early 80s, yeah.

ML: Yeah, yeah, yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Wow.

QVD: And right after that, was—was Arthur Hew Len, and then mai—um ... Mendiola. Those three all sang together. They had a group. Uh ... all Papakōlea; all of them. I'm trying to think what soloists came out of Papakōlea. [CHUCKLE] I can't think of any. [CHUCKLE] Oh, I know ... Wisā D'Orso.

ML: Wisā D'Orso; oh.

QVD: Wisā.

ML: She's still around, huh?

QVD: Yeah.

ML: She lives in, oh, Waimānalo.

QVD: Waimānalo.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: At that senior—

ML: Yeah, where—

QVD: --complex.

ML: Auntie Myrtle used to live.

QVD: She's a gas.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I think I've met her before.

QVD: Yeah, Wisa. Boy, she had a ... she had a sweet deal with Richard Smart.

UTT

QVD: He sent her to New York.

ML: Right. Yeah; I was gonna say—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Wasn't she off in—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --New York for a while.

QVD: In New York. And she was on the um ... she was in the uh, oh ... one of the very famous singers, in his show.
She was on the line. When I saw her, I went ... That's Wisa.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Jamie said, Who's that? I says, Papakōlea girl. He says, You gotta be kidding. I says, No; that's who she is.

ML: Amazing.

QVD: Yeah.

UTT

QVD: Amazing. But see, you can come from anywhere.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: If you have the heart, you have the love ... and you have what I always say, that pure desire—not just the desire,
but it's got to be one hundred and ten percent—then you're gonna move. Then you're gonna move. Yeah.

UTT

QVD: Wisa; yeah.

ML: M-m; I haven't heard that name—

QVD: Wisa.

ML: --in a while. Yeah.

QVD: D'Orso.

ML: Well—

QVD: Gosh, who else?

ML: --good, good; I feel great about our ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --upcoming adventure.

[CHUCKLE]

ML: Have all my notes and ...

QVD: Oh, gosh.

ML: Yeah. Maybe I should just get a band, yeah, because ... I mean—

(50:00)

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --like Auntie Bev was saying—

QVD: Just—

ML: --the relationship between—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: You know. It's always that energy is ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I mean, I just—maybe we could have the music playing as people come in, or something, so they can hear the voices.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: But not use it as—for you folks. Have you folks with a ...

QVD: With a—

ML: --live—

QVD: --live band.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Okay. Well, I'll dig—I'll dig out some songs.

QVD: Mamo—what is Mamo's signature song now?

ML: Yeah, if you have—

QVD: She—

ML: I'll try to meet with her too.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Call and tell her, You gotta come.

ML: Yeah. Well, she came up to me—we—I was—after Mom passed, there was this big award thing for her, and—

QVD: Yeah, yeah.

ML: --Mamo was there. It was a business thing. And um ... she came up to me, you know—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --introduced herself, and all that. It was in April, but um ... I uh, I—I think, you know, I'd feel comfortable just calling her up.

QVD: Calling her.

ML: Or writing to her and trying to, you know, get in touch with her.

QVD: Yeah. Call her.

ML: Yeah. Because uh ...

QVD: Yeah.

ML: She was very friendly and, you know, I'd never really met—

QVD: She is.

ML: --her before.

QVD: She is.

ML: But she was very—she loved Mom, and she was very—

QVD: Oh, yes.

ML: You know.

QVD: Yeah, she does.

ML: Very uh, kind in her words, so—

QVD: See, all of us know Mom.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: All of—all of these people you have there—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --know Mom. And why do we know her? Because she was just one of those jewels, you know. I mean, I don't care what; you could go to her and say, Nona, can you help me with this? And if you listen, listen, you will learn. But if you go there just so that you could show something or show off whatever, you're not gonna learn anything. That's exactly what you're gonna do is just show. But if you listen, you will learn. Yeah. They all know her.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Every one of them.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: And all of this ... this very special love is because we know that we can bond with her. Like bonding with her. You know, I uh ... I'm just so sorry, it was so ... late in my years. Because we would sit whenever we went anywhere, and we'd talk, you know. And it was wonderful.

ML: Well, that—the Hula Preservation—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --Society brought us all together.

QVD: All together. Yeah.

ML: So it's just ... so grateful.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Yeah; it's wonderful.

ML: So we just keep on going, you know, and—

QVD: Yeah.

UTT

QVD: And George; I wish he was here.

UTT

QVD: 'Cause he'd have a lot to say.

ML: He would love, love—

QVD: [CHUCKLE]

ML: I know; I know.

QVD: He would have a lot to say.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: And he'd think about more people than we do.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Because he has an incredible—

ML: Yeah.

QVD: An incredible uh, uh, memory bank.

UTT

QVD: This man is incredible.

UTT

QVD: He talks—

ML: Well, he's seen and done it all.

QVD: He's—he's seen and done it all. He's mad at me 'cause I didn't go to Japan with him—
UTT

QVD: --this last time. I said, I don't want to go there.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: Why? And he says, They never paid you; they never offered you enough money, he said to me. I said, They offered me plenty money.

UTT

QVD: They offered me—I have to l—Plenty money, they offered me. I says, But you know, it was the wrong time. The timing was not good. That was why. So—

ML: Well, it's important, you know.

QVD: Yeah; important.

UTT

QVD: I said, That's—that's where I am, George. You know, I've got a family here, and ... I got—especially Jamie; he's not all that well.

ML: Right.

QVD: And I've got to make sure. Yeah. So—

ML: Well, I'm so glad that your daughter's near and—

QVD: Oh, she's a honey bunches.

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: She and Pomai; just really wonderful.

ML: And where's Pomai? She's living—

QVD: Uh, Kawaihae.

ML: Oh, okay; so—

QVD: Kawaihae.

ML: --not too far. Good.

QVD: Yeah; not too far. Not too far. So now, I have uh, an opportunity to go to Kawaihae.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Hawaiian Homes.

ML: Oh.

QVD: With a house lot.

ML: Yeah; they're building—

QVD: So—

ML: --on that site, yeah?

QVD: Yeah. So I don't know whether I should take that or what.

ML: Oh, okay. H-m.

QVD: I'm telling Pomai, you know, Maybe you should ... we go—

ML: So she's on a homestead?

QVD: She's—no.

UTT

QVD: She's on fee simple land.

UTT

QVD: She's just renting.

ML: Oh, okay.

QVD: Just renting.

ML: But you could get a—

QVD: I could—

ML: --lot there.

QVD: Right now.

ML: Oh, okay.

QVD: I could probably get one; yeah.

UTT

QVD: Yeah. I don't know; we'll see.

ML: M-m; that's a lot of--[CHUCKLE]--lot to think about.

QVD: Lot. Well—

UTT

QVD: I—I had one down here, Lalamio, and I sent it to Alika, and Alika never responded. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Oh, shucks.

QVD: I said, Oh, my goodness. I said, But you know what? It never was meant to be. 'Cause if it was, it would have been pau.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Pau.

ML: He's the one in Mokuleia? M-m.

QVD: No; he's the one in—in um ... uh, Kapolei.

ML: Oh, Kawika—

QVD: That area.

ML: Kawika's in Mokuleia.

QVD: Kawika's in Mokuleia.

ML: He's the one that was in the magazine.

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Yeah, yeah.

(55:00)

QVD: Yeah.

ML: Wow.

QVD: They—they tease me, you know. Some of these [INDISTINCT], tease me about—she loves—she loves my life. You know, she says—

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: --So you're a cowboy, yeah? I never saw you ride a horse. I says, You saw me ride a horse; I ride in the pā'ū. That's not being a cowboy. Okay. So uh--[CHUCKLE] this—this um ... what do you call this magazine?

ML: Oh.

QVD: Geographical—

ML: National Geographic.

QVD: National Geo—

ML: Yeah; had a nice article about you guys.

QVD: Jamie and I are in it.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: And so when she was here for breakfast, I said, Here's proof, I'm a cowboy.

ML: Had this picture of you guys riding. Yeah, I remember.

QVD: [CHUCKLE]

ML: You showed us that, yeah.

QVD: Good fun.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: But you know ... when we talk ... they always say, You know, Queenie ... damn, you—you—you went off and married a cowboy. I says, I didn't know he was a cowboy. So did Emma Veary.

UTT

QVD: But Emma Veary married ... bless her soul, a man that had five daughters.

ML: My gosh.

QVD: Divorced; and he kept the five daughters. He had twenty thousand or thirty thousand acres in Oregon. And she married him and went to Oregon. She's telling me the story now. She came out to Mokuleia to get some plants, and—and we sat down and talked. And she tells me ... How in the world could you stand around horses when they were pooping all over the ground—

[CHUCKLE]

TRANSCRIPT: Queenie Ventura Dowsett
Oral History Interview: October 17, 2008

QVD: --and you have to get whatever they call it and pick it up and toss it, so that it—all over, the manure is all over? I said, Why? She says, I threw up. [CHUCKLE] I said, You ever di—you did, what? She said, I threw up. I said, Emma. She says, Wait, let me tell you. I said, Did you have maids? Oh, yes. Big house? Oh, yes. I says, And the five girls? Never bothered me. Big kitchen? Oh, yes. Did you have a cook? Oh, yes. I says, And so where was the manure? She said, We'd walk into this big horse stall, and all the horses have stalls. And the manure is in the ... in the stall. I said, Did you pick it up? She says, No. [CHUCKLE] She says, The guy in the stall picked it up. She says, But I threw up because there's a smell, and my husband had to walk me outside. And I said, Oh, well, you have to give yourself some time. She says, Wait. She says, Now, he takes me to see a special paddock. And I said, Oh? She says, You know, one of these big places, plenty grass, and the fences. I said, Pasture. She said, Yeah.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She says, He stops the car, and he gets out. And we're in—I said, What are you in? She said, a—she like—a truck. Lets the back down, and he has a hammer and whatever they—those—those things you put on the nail. I says, Yeah, what?

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: She says, He's putting up the wire 'cause the wire is loose. Now, he's calling me to come and hold the wire.

[CHUCKLE]

ML: Not her cup of tea. [CHUCKLE]

QVD: I said, Emma ... that's part of being a rancher.

UTT

QVD: She says, Well, I'm not gonna do that. I said, So what did you do, Emma? She says, I went to look for a job. I says, What? She said, I went to look for a job. She says, I found a job in this little town. I said, What kind of job? She says, It was a beautiful bar. She says, And the guy on the piano—well, she—she reads music, right? She says, And I sang, and they loved me. I said, Of course, who wouldn't love you? She says, So, I sang three times a week, and my husband just loved it. I said, Well, good for you. I said, So—so what happened to the ranch? She says, The ranch stayed the ranch; my husband stayed my husband. And she says—And what about you? I stayed the entertainer.

[CHUCKLE]

QVD: I says, So what are you doing back here? She said, I'm getting a divorce. [CHUCKLE]

ML: Oh, shucks.

QVD: She's divorcing—

UTT

QVD: --this poor man because she cannot handle ... thirty thousand acres.

ML: Oh.

UTT

ML: Yeah, she's on Maui now with her daughter.

QVD: Yes, she's on Maui at the Jacaranda—

ML: Yeah, lavender farm or—

QVD: I saw her.

ML: --something.

QVD: Yeah, lavender farm.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: I saw her up there.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: And she runs that little ...

ML: Yeah.

QVD: --shop. So, I walk in, and here's Emma. And I say to her, Emma Veary. And she turns around. [CHUCKLE]
And I said, Is this your shop? She says, No, but my daughter owns it.

UTT

QVD: I said, Wonderful. And she's showing me all the lavender, and all of her tapes. And I said, Are you happy? She says, I'm very happy, Queenie; I am so happy. I said, Well, that's all that counts, right? She says, Yeah. She says, I'm home, and I'm happy.

(01:00:00)

I said, Good for you. She says, Come over here, and come stay, hang out with her. I said, I don't know, Emma; I've got all these children at home, and—I said, But you know, one day I will. But now that I have Go, I can go back and forth. You know. But she loves it; she's home.

ML: Yeah, she seems very happy—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: I've seen her several times in the last year.

QVD: Bev's happy now.

ML: Yeah.

QVD: Her son's got the restaurant; she's a great participant; she gets up there early. She does all the vegetables; she chops and she—

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ML: Oh; I didn't—

QVD: --she preps them.

ML: --realize she did that.

QVD: And I said, You do, what? She says, I prep. I says, You going—be careful of your fingers. And she says, I prep and I do all these things, you know, Queenie, and I'm so happy.

ML: That's great.

QVD: So ... you know, there's—there's always that side ... of choice. You gotta do that. You can't just stay hula. There's that, over there.

UTT

QVD: Like Emma. So every now and then, when we do meet and see—so this should be a good time.

UTT

QVD: This should be a wonderful time—

ML: Yeah; yeah.

QVD: --for us to get together and still be the soloists that we are.

ML: Definitely. It's—

QVD: Yeah.

ML: --gonna be great.

[GENERAL CONVERSATION]

[END]