

ELIA AUSTIN LONG
An interview by Paul A. Dolan

April 23, 2002

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I am Paul Dolan, a member of the Outrigger Canoe Club's Historical Committee. For sometime the Committee has been conducting oral interviews of prominent members of our Club. Today, it is my pleasure to interview Elia A. Long, a long time member of the Outrigger Canoe Club. We are in the boardroom of the Club on this beautiful Hawaiian day.

PAD: Good afternoon, Elia.

EAL: Good afternoon.

PAD: Tell us about your family, mother, father, siblings, etc.

EAL: My father's name is Carlos Appiani Long. My mother's name is Lizzie Maunakapu Whiting.

PAD: They were born where?

EAL: Both of them in Honolulu. My father was born on March 4, 1874 and my mother was born on September 27, 1885.

PAD: So you come from a long line of Kanaka Maoli.

EAL: Yes. My father was half-Italian and half-Hawaiian and my mother was English and Hawaiian.

My paternal grandfather, Charles Long, was from Milano, Italy. He married Julia Naoho of Maui, whose uncle, Samuel Kamakau, was one of the first Hawaiian Historians.

Julia Long had five children with Charles Long, namely: Giovoni, Carlos, Antonino, Katarina (Wright) and Elia.

After Charles died Julia married John Colburn and had nine more children. So I have many relatives other than Longs.

Four of five of the ships that first flew under the Hawaiian flag were his. After his death in 1880, the Dowsett Shipping Company bought his ships.

My maternal grandmother, Nakanealoha, was a close friend of Queen Liliuokalani and was credited with keeping the Queen apprised of daily happenings by smuggling the newspapers to her when she was imprisoned in Iolani Palace. Nakanealoha would wrap flowers from her garden in Pauoa Valley in newspaper, which adjoined the Queen's home there.

Her husband, William Austin Whiting was an attorney from Boston and was the judge in the Queen's treason trial. Nakanealoha's loyalty to the Queen caused their separation.

They had three children, my mother, Maunakapu Whiting, Ethel Whiting and Austin Whiting

My mother was at least a quarter Hawaiian. She attended St. Andrews Priory and Mills College in California. She became a homemaker after marrying my father.

PAD: What did your dad do?

EAL: My father was educated at St. Louis College and Punahou. He later attended and graduated from Santa Clara University in California. He began his law course at Stanford and later received his law degree from Georgetown University in Washington D.C.

He was admitted to practice law in the courts of the District of Columbia and Hawaii. He entered politics and was twice elected to the Territorial House of Representatives in 1903 and 1905.

He was later appointed tax assessor for Kauai and served for eight years before returning to Honolulu in 1929.

For several years he was administrator for estates. He engaged extensively in the real estate business.

He was prominent in athletics in his school days and played football on the Punahou, Maili, Town Team and other football elevens.

At Georgetown University, he was captain of the varsity football team in 1901, being one of the first Honoluluans to be honored in that manner in the mainland.

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PAD: How many children?

EAL: There were three of us. I'm the youngest. My sister Leslie Long Pietsch is five years older than I and then there was my brother Carlos "Sonny" Long is nine years older than I. I was born May 23, 1924 in Honolulu. I then spent the first four years of my life on Kauai when my father was the Kauai Tax Assessor.

PAD: Did you all go to Punahou?

EAL: Yes, we all went to Punahou. My brother "Sonny" first attended St. Louis College and then transferred to Punahou. (Laugh)

PAD: What about you?

EAL: Punahou, class of '42. I attended from first grade on. After Punahou I went to Stanford where I played freshman football. That was during World War II. At the end of my freshman year I joined the Marine Corps and they sent me to the University of California, Berkeley, in the V-12 Program. The V-12 Program enabled us to continue our education to become officers. While at Cal I made the varsity boxing team.

I attended Quantico, VA where I went through platoon commanders school and graduated as a second lieutenant just as the war ended. I was assigned to the 5th Marines, First Division.

They then sent me overseas to Guam for six weeks as a replacement officer. From Guam the Marine Corps sent me to Peiping (Beijing) to replace the marines who had just finished the battle of Okinawa. I spent a year in China (1945).

I joined the Marine Corps in 1942 and was discharged as a first lieutenant in the fall of 1945.

PAD: So you graduated from Stanford in what year?

EAL: 1948. Stanford lists you as being from the class you should have graduated with if WW-II had not intervened. I'm with the class of 1946.

PAD: That would have been under the V-12 Program?

EAL: No, that V-12 program was during the war and I had to go back and finish my senior year at Stanford. Sports-wise, I continued my boxing career and was undefeated as a light-heavy weight at Stanford.”

PAD: What was your degree in?

EAL: A Bachelors of Arts in Political Science.

PAD: Your working career started where?

EAL: I started off joining Hawaiian Title Company in Honolulu.

PAD: You're a long timer in the business. You are presently?

EAL: I'm still in the title business as Chairman of First American Title Company, Inc., which is a subsidiary of First American Title Insurance Company, with headquarters in Santa Ana, California.

PAD: And you're still working?

EAL: Yes, if I don't work who's going to pay Betty's bills.

PAD: So all of these years you've been in the title business. Were there any interesting events that happened in the business during your tenure?

EAL: There was nothing unusual here or throughout the United States.

PAD: How did you get introduced to the Outrigger?

EAL: My father was a member. I was eleven years old when I joined the Club.

PAD: That was in 1935. What kind of activities did you get involved in?

EAL: It was wonderful in those days. Older members taught you how to steer a canoe, starting with a small canoe.

I paddled for the Club. We raced against Queen Surf and Hui Nalu.

There were about five or six races, going out to the surf and coming back in again, just as they are doing in the Macfarlane races now.

PAD: Have you ever had any catastrophes with the canoes, pearl diving, etc.?

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EAL: Oh yes, pearl diving and getting too close to the curl and the canoe broaches “going Diamond Head” and you’re in the water. Lots of swamping, but no real serious damage to body or canoe.

PAD: I remember you out surfing, too. In those days there was a lot of discipline out in the surf. If you didn’t know how to handle your board the kupuna or old guys would tell you to go inside to “baby surf,” the one in front of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. Now, the kids run the surf and one can get beat up with “surf rage.”

EAL: We had redwood boards and stayed clear of the good surfers.

PAD: How about volleyball?

EAL: Played a lot of volleyball and did a lot of swimming.

PAD: Did you do any sailing?

EAL: No sailing, but a lot of fishing from a canoe.

PAD: What recollections do you have of the Club in the 1930’s?

EAL: Lots of fun! Watching all these guys like “Lex” Brodie, the Dolan Brothers. They were all good players.

PAD: Yeah, at one time all four of my brothers were members.

EAL: I remember Bobby and Phil. They were good players.

PAD: Yes, but as they got married they dropped out of the Club. (Laugh) Of course, the girls were always there too.

EAL: The thing I loved about the Club was the snack shop where one could buy rice in a paper container with gravy for 5 cents or two scoops of rice for 10 cents. It was run by May Wong, whom I remember well.

PAD: Rice and gravy! Gosh, after coming in from surfing that was a treat.

EAL: I kept my surfboard over at the Hui Nalu group, at the bathhouse (Moana Hotel bathhouse) and the surfboard I used was a redwood board called “BABE” that Joe Akana owned. It was the right size for me at my age.

PAD: Where did you surf?

EAL: I learned at Canoe Surf and Queens.

PAD: Do you remember at any time the older surfers telling you to go inside, because the waves were too big or you were not good enough to surf with them?

EAL: No, they never bothered me. I had enough sense to stay out of their way.

PAD: Guys like Willie Whittle and several other kupuna surfers used to tell the servicemen or novices to go inside. How many surfboards did you own?

EAL: I owned two surfboards. The first one was a redwood plank that Francis Wai made for me which was eight feet long and four inches thick. He used to play football at Punahou School with my brother "Sonny." The other was a hollow board twelve feet long with tapered rear end.

When it came time for me to have my own board, my father sent me down to Lewers & Cooke to the lumberyard to pick out the redwood plank that I needed. I was told to go through the 4-inch redwood planks to find the lightest one. The plank was taken home and the design drawn out and then cut down to size. I never did the work. I didn't know what I was doing. Francis did it all.

PAD: What about your immediate family?

EAL: Betty and I have three children. Betty Barlow was born on December 9, 1927 in Fort Worth, Texas, but lived in California. I married Betty on January 7, 1950. She and Margie Stone graduated from Stanford in 1948 in journalism. Both of them came to Hawaii and became reporters. Betty and Margie were reporters for the Star Bulletin at that time. That's when I met her and married her.

PAD: What are the names and dates of your children's birthdays.

EAL: The oldest is Lisa Maunakapu McNamarra. She was born October 9, 1953. She is married to Mark McNamarra and they have two children, a daughter, Lizabeth Maunakapu at 21, and son Markham at 19. Lisa is in the real estate business in Kamuela on the big island and also raises quarter horses.

Leslie Kahailiopua Sorenson. She was born December 28, 1957, named after my sister. She's married to Drew Sorenson and they have two boys, Kurt 16 and Tyler 14. Drew is a high school principal in Visalia.

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Leslie is a volleyball coach and official at another school. She was named the "Female Athlete of the Year" at Punahou in 1975, starring in volleyball and basketball.

Elia Whiting Long "E-II" was born January 8, 1959. He is married to Catherine Rich and has a boy Geoffre Austin Elia at 15 and a girl, Marlynn Kapukihilani at 11. "E-II" is with the Sause Brothers Ocean Towing Co. After 19 years in the title and escrow business and as President of First American Long & Melone Title Co., he decided to change careers a couple of years ago to be on the ocean.

PAD: So you have six grandchildren? No great grandchildren?

EAL: No.

PAD: Did they all attend Punahou?

EAL: Yes, they did.

PAD: Do any of them belong to the Club at this date?

EAL: Elia W. Long "E-II" is presently on leave and Leslie did when she lived here.

PAD: Besides sports, did you serve on any committees or held office in the Outrigger Canoe Club?

EAL: Yes.

PAD: You have served the Outrigger Canoe Club through the ODKF (Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation), the non-profit entity of the Club. I know that you knew Duke personally. What positions did you hold in the organization?

EAL: I was on the Board of Directors for a number of years from 1988 to 1993 and served on various committees.

One of the more important was the fund development committee where as chairman the "Duke's Gold Medallist" program was created. It required an annual donation of \$1,000 or more.

In 1992 I served a term as president.

PAD: What were the significant achievement(s) during your tenure as president?

EAL: We continued the program of raising funds for grants and aid to individual athletic members and non-members of the Outrigger Canoe Club and other organizations who were deserving of financial assistance for the Olympics and other competitive endeavors.

PAD: Are you still on the Board?

EAL: No.

PAD: What other organizations did you belong to?

EAL: I belonged to the Mamaka Aialo, a Hawaiian gourmet club, which Duke and a number business leaders were members of also. One had to be part Hawaiian with the prime purpose of learning to cook Hawaiian food. Ernest Kai had started the club after WW-II.

I served 19 years on the Board of Iolani Palace, a number of years on the Bishop Museum Board, and prior to that a number of years on the Kapiolani Hospital Board.

PAD: As you became older and matured into your lifetime occupation. Your leisure activity was spent fishing and playing tennis.

EAL: Yes, deep-sea fishing and tennis.

PAD: How many boats have you owned?

EAL: Actually, two boats, the *LINDA*, a 25-ft sampan and the *MANU*, a 36-foot wooden haole sampan, built by Sumida in 1962, and still in good condition.

PAD: It's been around awhile. Every time I see it going out of Hawaii-Kai Marina, I say: "Wow, there goes a nifty sea boat." It's a beautiful boat. How many tournaments have you been in at Kona?

EAL: At least 15 tournaments in Kona and a number here off Oahu. One year, in Kona, we ended up in 4th place with a 335 lbs marlin. The biggest marlin we caught were two at 750 lbs., each, and another one at 716 lbs, all three of them off the North Shore of Oahu. We did win a Hawaii Kai fishing tournament with a 480 lb. marlin.

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PAD: That's great! Elia, what do you think of the Outrigger today?

EAL: I think the Outrigger Canoe Club is one of the greatest clubs in the world.
It has so much to offer in the way of water sports, cuisine and location.

PAD: Well Elia, its been lots of fun sitting down here with you and conducting this oral history. Remember, at any time, we can sit down again with additional experiences and memories. Thank you for taking the time from your busy schedule.

EAL: Thank you, Paul.

PAU!



1945- 2nd LT. Elia A. Long
5th Marines, First Division
in Peking (Beijing), China



April 2002 – Elia A. Long
Long time OCC member and
past president of the ODKF.