

Frederick Kealoha
#45 January 24, 1985

Q: Mr. Kealoha, what was your job with the Honolulu Fire Department in 1941.

A: Before that? Before I came in the Department?

Q: Well after... when the Attack happened. What was your job in the Fire Department?

A: Before the Attack I was a Lt. firefighter.

Q: What station were you?

A: Uh, let's see... uh... Kalihi.

Q: Kalihi?

A: It's the nearest station to Pearl Harbor.

Q: How did you first find out that there was something unusual happening that morning?

A: Well uh... they called in. They call in: We been attacked by the Japanese.

Q: What did they tell you to do?

A: Oh, well a fire run. Said take your Company to Pearl Harbor.

Q: How long did it take you to get down there?

A: Oh, a fast run. About 20 minutes I think, cause it's pretty close. The road was one way, all rock. The traffic was blocked. Only one way going to Pearl Harbor side. Both side the traffic was jammed.

Q: Whereabouts did you take your fire truck?

A: Oh, went right out to the entrance of where the fire call was.

Q: Was that at Hickam Field?

A: Yes.

Q: What kind of scene did you find there?

A: Oh well the communication tower was knocked off and the fire station was burning. Oh, everything was all really... servicemen, were walking around there just like there was... they don't know what took place. When I got there I couldn't believe it. They come from nowheres and dropped the bomb. They came through Wailua side; through the back side.

Q: Where did you start fighting the fires?

A: As soon as we got there. You know, I can't believe it because the fire was all over... all over there; in the hangar, outside some planes was just come in early morning and there still was some planes coming in.

Q: While you were fighting the fire?

A: Yeah but... no, I mean our plane they tell them to land down Waimanalo side, some emergency field over there. Some of these Flying Fortress, (what a call 'em), big plane but, they had skeleton crew bring them down. So one was land down in Waimanalo. There the emergency port there...airport.

Q: On the fires that you were fighting at Hickam, what sort of fires were they?

A: Oh, well that was a shop that had several planes, and where it was burning, had storage. You know, all the parts and fuselage or whatever. That was a shop. And it's right in the facing to the entrance of the Harbor... Pearl Harbor.

Q: Were you injured during the fire fighting there?

A: Yes, I was badly hurt, so...

Q: How did that happen?

A: The stray bomb... shrapnel.

Q: What happened to you then?

A: They took me to Tripler General Hospital that morning. That morning then I stayed there until almost the next day light.

Q: Did they take you inside the hospital and put you in a bed?

A: No, it was full the beds. The hospital was full. Servicemen were hurt. Some was lying outside on the yard.

Q: Where did they put you?

A: I was in the yard too because the beds was all taken. We just lying on the floor. So I slip outside the yard. I was the only one. We don't have blanket.

Q: Did they give you any kind of treatment when you were outside there?

A: No.

Q: How long did you...

A: I stayed there till the next morning... daylight. Then the nurse that in charge left at... she's goes off at 2:00 in the morning and she was living in Waikiki side. So she had to pass the main fire station. So I told her to stop the front, the station, because they always somebody on watch, and tell them

where I'm at. So first thing in the morning somebody came and picked me up. Instead of they took me to the hospital, they took me home.

Q: How long was it before you recovered?

A: Oh, I mean from that... I mean at that time? Oh by almost daylight. But they picked me up in that morning... daylight. The Chief sent someone to find me, pick my up. Then they took me to the fire station and from there they took me home. Then from home took me to the hospital. But the hospital was all full, but somehow there were a bunk for the spare time. It wasn't, well during that Attack, seven firemen died.

Q: Of all the things that you remember seeing on that day, what's the one that you remember most?

A: Oh Lord, well dead guys was scattered all over the place you know. Because that took place daylight... in the morning... early... bright daylight. See the planes coming overhead and diving. Just look at it. Nowhere to hide. And they were already attacked... the first attack. But the second wave of planes came down and....

Q: Well, thank you very much. I appreciate your taking the time to talk to me.