

## ZOOM 0036 Transcription

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B: Oh, I was just a fisherman.

S: ANd you guys were headed to Tahiti?

B: We were headed to Tahiti. And the other thing was, the other crazy thing was we didn't have a companion vessel like now we have Gershon 2. WE didn't have a companion vessel, they had all this communication gear on board that leadership within the society thought that was more than accurate to stay in communications in case of emergency, or hell, good thing it all happened right there right? In the channell right between Oahu and Molokai, actually between Oahu and Lanai, bc it was in that hull and it all swamped and it was underwater and it was useless. Anywya

S: YEah, huh. So that was a very short, but big on learning?

B: Big on learning, Big! It was a fatal you know thing loss of Eddy Akau but huge on learning and moving and since then, so here's a little statistic is you know up to that point the voyage to Tahiti one way is 2500 miles so the first voyage in 1976 was 5000 miles and then all the interisland training you could probably add another 2000 miles so up to that point the canoe had sailed let's say 7000 miles but after all of that refit and the redesign she saileid over 150000 miles over the years up to this point. So, all those little thigns the watertight bulkheads, we raised the hatches, the comaings coming up, and the standpipes get the water out. And so that's all helped. To keep safe.

S: SO after the 78, after that voyage it didn't turn you off from sailing

B: Oh no, I was still stoked about it. Couple guys, most of us came back and sailed, actually from that voyage thee are about 3 4 guys that never came back but most of the guys all came back to continue on.

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B: K, ALoha.

S: Yeah and so, so you stayed on with Hokule'a, you've been did you ever go to your own thing and come back to Hokule'a or have you been with Hokule'a the whole time?

B: YEah. Hokule'a. WEll at that time I mean this was the only canoe in the 70s. And all through the 80s this was the only canoe. In the 90s is when other canoes were started to being built. Yeah. And actually it wasn't it was 95 when some of the other canoes that were travelling throughout the Pacific were built so theres one on the big island Maka Liki, was built in 95 and did her first voyage then. Actually 92 they built the Teodede in NZ, and Teoded sailed in 92 and then I think she was the only other one. And in the Cook Island they built 2 canoes, one was 92 they built the takitumo and 95 they built the teotonga. And then we built another canoe in 95 back home called the HAWaii Loa, it was built from native materials, yeah.

S: It that still afloat?

B: Yeah, it's still afloat. There's a group that takes cre of her, she's not oding a whole lot of sailign, but she's still afloat, she's a great canoe.

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S: So, out of all of the, it sounds like you surf you fish you sail, you paddle, so out of all of it does it feel like this is where my heart really is?

B: Yeah, I mean that's what I enjoy.

S: I mean out of all of it, is there something in particular. I mean is it when you're on your canoe or is it when you're surfing

B: oh

S: Is there one or the other where you're like oh man this is the

B: Well its when I'm paddling actually esp. when we're doing ocean races interisland, I really enjoy that. I do enjoy this, but I, the thing I like about the paddling is it keeps me stronger and healthier, but with this theres not a lot of, it's more mental than physical , it's more mental and spiritual than physical. the paddling is all of it. So i really enjoy that

S: And so what's the point, I mean what's the point of getting on a boat and smacking yourself around in teh waves to get from one place to the next when you could fly you could take a car, so whats the point?

B: The major thing, I'm glad you asked me that question, someone asked me that question yesterday. You know, so, one major thing is that you know the Hawaiiin culture and the HAwaiian people were just crushed by a bunch of Western force, colonization, you know missionary stuff, religion the whole thing and it got ot a point where if you ask anybody, anybody, if anybody on this planet was able to look at things taht they held dear to themselves, spiritual beliefs, religion, family values and you got that just crushed, even your own language, how you express yourself, crushed to the point where it was like invalid and you using it is like shameful and invalid you become like a second rate citizen in your homeland then the cultural aspect of who we are just went down, almost died, so my grandparents, my parents, they had very little if any affiliation or connection to the culture so in teh 70s, so that was a point in the 70s when a lot of it was coming around, a lot of those questions; what is a Hawaiian? What is a HAwaiian culture? What is this?

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B: I mean when you ask questions like that it's like really somethings seriously wrong here, so going forward to this point when this canoe is built it was just another way to first of all bring a bit of validity and recapture the beauty of like building these canoes and navigating, just an incredible feat that there are people taht didn't believe it wasn't actually possible. Well you've been to Tawako and you see those guys I mean it's not only possible, they live that. So for those people if that was taken away from them it would be so crushing to them bc its such a big central part of who they are andgives them this inner strength to live life daily. So the reason we do it is that there's so much to learn and then like it's our responsibility at this point to get all these younger guys to feel that and learn that and to be the next wave to carry it on. SO, you really, we don't really get beat up out here, you get a little cold you get a lot of wet, but you know we grew up in the ocean its not a big thing, so that'd mainly it, I mean this is our culture and a culture has to be a living culture.

S: SO when you say that your parents and grandparents have any connection to their culture they weren't out on the water at all?

B: They were fishing, but like the language was snatched away so, I mean they had no connection to the language, Hula was kind of like snatched away so there wasn't there was just like pockets like that, it's not like celebrated worldwide like it is. The music, bc the language was snatched and the music in the music there is a language and a storytelling that whole thing was just a jumble of confusion where guys were singing Hawaiian words and not pronouncing them right and not understanding what the hell the song was about, so there's all this craziness going on. And I mean it held on, the people held on to whatever shreds of culture they could hold on to. So anyway that was just how it was, so now when I talk to my dada bout it, you can just see all this glassy eyed like what are you talking about kind of stuff.

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S: What do you mean?

B: WELL when I talk to him about all the things we're learning about the canoe and the cultures and our connection to the Maori people in New Zealand and to Tahiti and the spiritual nature and all the stories we're learning that's one thing, but the other thing that we're learning in Hawaii across the board is the illegal overthrow of the islands by a bunch of businessmen and they're aided and abetted by military, US military and learning about that and how they treated the Queen, you know, Liliuokalani at the time, and just all the bogus crazy things that were going on just in their headlong rush just to take over the islands and then so they go and do that and then after that they annex, the annexation of the islands as a territory to the US doing it w.i. the old congressional, in congress and not one Hawaiian was there to say no, stuff like that. So when you look at all of that and then from that point on just the laws, like they outlaw the Hawaiian language, you can't teach it in schools you can't use it in schools, you can't use it in any everyday usage, like in business or anything like and stuff like that. So slowly but surely it's just whittling away at that to just make the culture defunct and almost disappear. So that was the world they grew up in. so at that point in time, really for survival and for the betterment of who they are, they just go to school, learn and get as educated as you can, and go to work, put your nose down and go to work. And so that's what they did. And then along comes us guys who our heads up you know and we're listening to all the stories and then you know we're getting more aware of all the stuff that happened that they never learned about.

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B: So getting back to my dad, when I try to educate my dad and tell him about this he just sits there and goes oh that's really interesting but he never takes any step to try and learn for himself and stuff like that you know, and I guess they just resigned themselves to that's how it is.. anyway.

S: Hang on one sec

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S: I guess the airports pretty close, ldk

B: yeah

S: So my cousin actually did a film about Hokule'a for Nat'l Geographic.

B: Oh yeah who is that?

S: Wade Davis.

B: Oh yeah, I've heard of that name

S: YEAh he went out with you guys maybe ten years ago, a while ago. Anyway, OK go ahead as you were.

B: Nah, I was just explaining about that thing with my dad and with that generation, they're really resigned just to be, their american ideals are just the western way of life. Get educated, go to work, make money, take care of you family. I mean that's ok, we're all doing that anyway, but at the same time we're being apart of supporting all the different aspects of the culture that is just blossoming. For instance Kawika, he's worked with the immersion language school on Moloaki, his wife is one of the leaders on that. KAleo, walking outside witha cap, from high school, not doing anything, went on to college, he's a really good speaker, native speaker, talking in HAwaiian and stuff. And a lot of the other guys are, well even TV ? guys, Maui, basically waht they do is native televiaions, they dovument everything tcultulrea. SO it's a big support of that and every time you support it you make it stronge rnan dn stronger and stronger and the only reason you make it stronger is bc it's part of the land, and it was a part of that land in Hawaii for over 1000 years, and it became invalid just for 100 yrs, just a short time. So now it's a recovery and a bounce back so it's really pretty awesome.

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