

Mrs. Rena Maile-Mahoe Apo Ching

Rena Ching

Helen Apo Hanu

When I was four years old I was pushed into it whether I liked it or not. My grandmother ~~Mymmothian~~ was one of those old ancient olapa dancers. She came from Kona originally. Her name was Annie Kalaau. My auntie, ~~Healena Kohalu~~, was the oldest daughter and she was taught by my grandmother. She was one of my earliest teachers. But there was also a lady named Alice Ma'i who was teaching for the Alexander Howell Silverman's in Wailuku. And she was the only teacher here originally as far as we were concerned. She was amember of the Latter Day Saints Church. And she became well-known to ~~mugh~~ our church group. She would put on concerts ~~frommthannhurnhm~~ at the county church right here. My mother offerred our home to Alice Ma'i because she needed a place to teach, and we had a big house with a big lanai. So she would teach at our house and I would sit down and watch. So Alice Ma'i was actually my very first teacher.

After Alice Ma'i left Maui, I went back to my auntie. She taught mostly haoles back then because the Hawaiian kids at that time were not interested. My auntie taught me olapa and modern but she was very strict and I think she took advantage of me being her neice. She used to sit on the floor because she was very big and she used to play her ukulele. She would have at her side a long ~~puili~~. Everytime you made a wrong move on your footwork she would slap you with the puili. You couldn't complain or cry or you'd get another one. So you'd just have to dance and keep the tears from not falling. I uniki'd with both Auntie Healena and Auntie Alice. ~~fhm~~ The uniki was held at their homes and was on the level of a presentation.

Afterwards I used to dance professionally for ^{Eddie Tam} Trinidad? the mayor of Maui who passed away. Emma Sharpe would do all the comic hulas and I'd do the ^{future} classicals. So wherever the mayor went, Emma and I would go along. I can remember sitting at New Year's Eve parties having to sit on the side watching everybody have a good time. When I got married my husband refused to have me dance professionally. So I had a daughter and I used to train my little girl. After a while I told my mother I ^{then} wanted to learn olapa, so my aunt Mrs. Hano recommended Henry Pa. But my mother told me that she wanted me to take from Manuel Silva. She figured I could get results from Manuel Silva because he was really strict. So my husband and I went down Honolulu for one week, and we stayed at a hotel. I went to see Manuel Silva. He was living in the back of the Honolulu Star-Bulletin at that time. I told him who I was and he said he knew my mother. He told me straight that if my mother didn't send me he would have sent me on my way because he didn't take anybody. So he took me and I tell you I wanted to quit. His basics were really hard. You had kneel on the floor, squat, and he would be walking all over you and bending your body to make it flexible and he was a big man. I can remember being in his bedroom and my husband couldn't stand it because I was crying and screaming and he kept on telling me if I ~~wantadmtunthearn~~ didn't want to learn to get up and get out.

Mary Elizabeth Aikan,

② It was my mother who encouraged me to become a kumu hula and to become a good kumu hula. She was ^{my} inspiration, she would watch me dance in front of her and she would be my critic. She made sure everything was correct. She was the one

He put ~~me~~ ^{me} flat on ~~my~~ ^{my} stomach and bent
my legs ~~flat~~ back. My husband kept
asking me if I wanted to leave. When
he finished, I couldn't stand up, I couldn't
sit down, my husband had to carry me
back to the car. He couldn't start me
off dancing so he first trained me to
pai the ipu. My olopa were kapu. I could
only dance them in a certain area and
my dancers had to be trained in certain
duties. I did not take the kapu because
Uncle Manuel did not want me to get
hurt if my students kapu their duties.
Unfortunately he would be the one to get hurt.
Everybody has different interpretations to a chant
or a song but I think it's important
to try and keep the motions as close to
how you were taught them. There are
basic steps only associated with the ~~trads~~
oloa but today I see ~~steps being added~~
~~and~~ basic steps being changed. I had
never heard the word ~~trads~~ before, oloa
had been the word always used. The hula
oloa that is being danced today is totally
different from the oloa of my day. They
are borrowing all over.
I began to teach ~~with~~ ^{when} my daughter was seven
and I began to teach w/ the permission of
my mother.