

EXCERPT from Rearview Mirror Insider 57 by Bob Sigall - August 14, 2019

French Wrench

Last week, I mentioned the French Wrench was on the site that's now Kaiser Honolulu. **Elton Kagimoto** told me about his client, Rosaire Pierre Lanctot, a Frenchman, whom he helped get a green card about 1978.

"He was the "French Wrench". It's funny that I never forgot his name although it has been over 40 years ago. He had his first shop on 1st Avenue and Waialae Avenue where the Midas Muffler is today. I had a VW until 1981, so Frenchy was fixing my car at his old Waialae shop and also at King & Pensacola St. gas station.

"He only had the King & Pensacola gas station for a short while, before he had to move to make way for the Kaiser Clinic standing there today.

"He then moved to a shop on Cooke St. and Kawaihao St. Again, he had to move, and really wanted the George Maeda Shell Service Station on Ward Avenue. George Maeda wouldn't entertain any discussions with Frenchy since he had no money and only talent to fix German cars.

"Frenchy came to see me about helping him to get the George Maeda Service Station. Just so happens, Mrs. George Maeda was my English teacher at Roosevelt HS, and I once dropped her off at the service station. Bingo ! I made the connection between the Service Station and my English teacher.

"I helped Frenchy and his partner, Mai Frascarelli get a loan commitment from Liberty Bank across the street from the service station. (It's currently ASB bank). I was able to get Frenchy and the Maedas the terms that were satisfactory to both. Both walked away happy. Frenchy and Mai worked hard every day and made it work. Unfortunately, Frenchy had emotional problems and committed suicide about 1989 or 1990.

“The last time I saw Frenchy, he gave up fixing cars, and was a fisherman. He called me from Sand Island to come and pick up a bag of lobsters that he caught. I quickly went to pick them up and thanked him. Had 1 beer with him and left. This was the last time I saw him.

“Mai kept on working hard, and still today, she is the owner of the French Wrench Shell Station.