



# The Spies of Lanikai: Oahu 1941

*Donald L. Crandell*

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The Spies of Lanikai is a memoir written by Donald Crandell, based on his experiences living on Oahu in the months building up to the Japanese surprise attack on December 7, 1941. His father, Commander Donald Crandell, was the Skipper of the USS Gamble, stationed in Pearl Harbor. They lived in Lanikai among other Navy families, but spent summers on the Honolulu side of the island. Don and his pals were young teenagers, hanging out on the beach on weekends when they weren't in school. They were not aware that the friendly man with the lovable dog who approached them on the beach was actually a German spy looking for information about their dad's ships or that Don's pal Roger was living in a house owned by a family of German spies. The boys heard rumors of war. There was even the story of a Lieutenant vanishing on a hike in the nearby Koolau Mountains, but Don and his pals were busy starting a fishing business and earning good money selling their catch to local housewives. Then disaster struck in the form of a ten foot hammerhead shark which ended their fishing business; and the friendly man with the lovable dog wanted pictures. Sitting on the beach a few weeks later, Don watched a man walking along casting a net into the water. Curious, he approached and asked him what kind of fish he was after. His response made it clear that he did not want any questions. Wary and startled, Don set aside the incident for the time being. It was November and there was still school, but years later this encounter would lead to the writing of The Spies of Lanikai. Six weeks later, on the morning of December 7th, the unthinkable happened. Don recalls the events of that day and of the experiences of families living in Lanikai and the men who were caught in the action at Pearl Harbor. Part Two of the Spies of Lanikai was sparked by the memory of the encounter with the net fisherman on Lanikai Beach. It is the story of Kazuo Sakamaki, who was assigned to pilot one of five midget submarines, armed with powerful torpedos, into Pearl Harbor to sink United States Battleships. He was the only one known to survive that day. He was captured on the morning of December 8, 1941 as he swam ashore from his sub which was grounded on Bellows Field Reef, close to Lanikai Beach. He became the first U.S. prisoner of war in World War II. Was he the same man who spoke to Don on Lanikai Beach? Why was he there, and how did he get there six weeks before the attack? How did he end up on Bellow's Reef? The clues to this mystery are there, and Don Crandell has connected the dots. The book contains photos, maps, diagrams and documents, including first hand, eyewitness accounts from sailors on duty at Pearl Harbor during the attack.

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