



NĀ MEA HOU

News and Stories from the Maui Historical Society

Something New

May 2021 | Wailuku, Hawaii

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E Komo Mai! Welcome to our second quarter May 2021 newsletter. We celebrate May Day is Lei Day in Maui Nei. On May 1, 2021, we were able to share our 6th annual Lei Day Heritage Festival in a virtual way. We had a virtual lei contest and featured Kamalei Kawa'a and his Aloha Lā Mei event, a two-hour live stream concert of Hawaiian music, hula and prizes. To view our lei contest submissions and winners. please visit us on-line at mauimuseum.org/events. Download our mobile app for a virtual tour. Browse the gift shop for our official 2021 Lei Day Heritage Festival t-shirt.



Lei to celebrate 100 years.

The garland is not exclusively Hawaiian. The history of the garland is as long as the story of people and their practice of adornment. But the Hawaiian lei, the beautiful, fragrant garland we all enjoy, is known the world over. The difference is in the Aloha that we couple with the lei in the islands.

The lei came to Hawai'i with the earliest Polynesians and is still a part of other Polynesian cultures. Early lei, both here and in other parts of Polynesia, were used as political symbols. They were adorned with flowers, seeds, feathers, bones and other objects, each with special significance. Lei from opposing villages or groups were tied or woven together to indicate an agreement or settlement of a grievance. They served as an early peace treaty.



Lei were used to indicate status within a group. Special flowers, shells, seeds and bones were all indicators of rank. In everyday life they supplemented the deep spiritual beliefs of the people. Flowers, colors, and materials all having spiritual interpretations were worn in the hope or expectation of pleasing the gods.

Jump forward a few hundred years and change came to Hawai'i. Generous hospitality has always been, and remains, a big part of Hawaiian culture. Making hospitality an industry really started in the mid 1800s with the arrival of visitors and lei became a significant part of the visitor experience. Their huge popularity among tourists led to the mass production of lei, and even the use of artificial lei.

To many, these lei are different from those exchanged by people living here. Hawaiian lei, when used properly, are imbued with the spirit of Aloha. Aloha made physical. They celebrate all manner of occasions, mostly joyous, but also somber and sad. They convey love, pride, support, sympathy, and all the feelings we share with, and for, each other. A lei handmade by the giver brings an extra measure of Aloha.

By the 1920s, Hawai'i was a popular tourist destination, and lei more important than ever to visitors.

But lei remained popular with locals and discussion about a celebration of the lei began. In 1928, Don Blanding, newspaper writer and poet, suggested a special day to celebrate the giving and wearing of lei.

Plans were made to create such a day with support from all sides, including Princess Kawānanakoa, who felt Hawaiian people would support the idea. Blanding's co-worker, Grace Tower Warren, coined the phrase "May Day is Lei Day". Lei Day became an official holiday and the first celebration took place in Kapi'olani Park in 1929. There was music, dancing, Hawaiian crafts and a lei contest. After the contest, the lei were placed at the Royal Mausoleum.

Continued on page 2

In this Issue:

- **The Lei**
- **Mahalo to Myrna Fung**
- **From the Archives**
- **Talk Story—Mary Kawena Pukui**
- **Nā Wai 'Ehā a ka La'i**

The Lei Continued

May Day and Lei Day merged and the celebration expanded to the neighbor islands. It found a special home in schools, all schools originally, but most often now in elementary schools. Festivities include processions with a king, queen, and princesses wearing lei symbolic of each island. Children learn about the Kingdom of Hawai'i and some of its practices. Of course, there is music and dancing. It is a high point in the school year, enjoyed by children, parents, and the whole community.

Many organizations and communities sponsor lei contests, celebrating the remarkable and ingenious ways our abundant flora and fauna can be used.

Lei are most often flowers or other plant material sewn together to be worn around the neck. This method is called kui. Other methods of creating lei are more labor intensive, and therefore less common. Kūpe'e is the term for using a base material such as bark or ti, and elaborately braiding or weaving leaves, ferns and flowers onto it.

This method is sometimes called humu, or humu humu. Kūpe'e also refers to lei made this way, and worn around the wrists or ankles. Lei made in this method, but worn

around the head are called lei haku. Lei po'o are another type of head lei, often made of feathers, sometimes replacing a hat band. Another common method involves twisting two strands of plant material together to create a kind of rope. This method is commonly used with ti leaf, which is widely available and is called hilo. A tremendous amount of creativity and talent is displayed at these lei contests.



2021 Virtual Lei Contest First Place Lei created by Miki Poaipuni from Kula, Maui.

Mahalo Nui and A Hui Hou to Myrna Fung

Myrna has been a volunteer for the Maui Historical Society since 2008. She always extends aloha and kōkua to other volunteers, staff and to museum guests. We will miss her bright cheery disposition but wish her well on her big move to O'ahu island to be closer to her 'ohana. Myrna please come back to visit us!

Volunteer Today!

Available Volunteering opportunities at Maui Historical Society include: Docent, Gift Shop Attendant, Marketing, Garden & Maintenance, and Archival. If you are interested please visit our website mauimuseum.org or email info@mauimuseum.org

Shell lei, especially those from the island of Ni'ihau, take the skill level up a few notches. Some of these lei, made of tiny shells available only on the beaches of Ni'ihau, are works of art and priced as such, selling for thousands of dollars. Other more available shells are strung or woven into beautiful and more affordable lei.

Seeds, though less common than flowers, are also used in lei. They are a little harder to string, many needing drilling, but they last longer than flowers, sometimes forever. They can come in vibrant colors, but more often are in natural, earth colors.

The lei as a symbol of caring, love, pride and celebration is used and enjoyed at festive occasions all over the world. You cannot attend a school graduation anywhere without seeing a lei or two. We in Hawai'i believe that the Aloha that goes with those lei is our greatest export.



From the Archives



'Ohe Kāpala

These are fine examples of 'ohe kāpala (bamboo stamps) used in Hawaiian kapa patterning. The designs were many and varied, predominantly straight line geometrics with the occasional leaf or round shapes. The fine craftsmanship is evident in the delicate intricacies of these stamps.



Photo of Myrna Fung and Executive Director Sissy Lake-Farm. Myrna was the MC for our 2019 Lei Day Heritage Festival.

Talk Story



Photo of Mary Kawena Pukui courtesy of the Bishop Museum

‘Ōlelo No‘eau Hawaiian Proverbs & Poetical Sayings, first published in 1983, is an eloquent collection of sayings full of Hawaiian wisdom. This article attempts to capture highlights found in the book’s Introduction about author, Mary Kawena Pukui (April 20, 1895 - May 21, 1986) widely esteemed as the Kumu of Hawaiian language and culture.

She began collecting, translating, and interpreting the oral traditions of the Hawaiian culture around 1910 at the age of 15. Most of the sayings were collected before the 1957 publication of the Hawaiian Dictionary, one of several books she coauthored. **‘Ōlelo No‘eau** was given life as an expression of Kawena’s kuleana to preserve and maintain the essence of the Hawaiian people, their language abundant with kaona (*hidden meaning*) of Hawaiians, as well as all people. With aloha, Kawena readily incorporated Hawaiian sayings into her conversations which provided people the opportunity to hear the Hawaiian language and the translation in English.

Born Mary Abigail Kawena-‘ula-o-ka-lani-a-Hi‘iaka-i-ka-poli-o-Pele-ka-wahine-‘ai-honua Na-lei-lehua-Pele Wiggan, Kawena was the only daughter of Mary Pa‘ahana Kanaka‘ole of Ka‘u, Island of Hawai‘i, and Henri Nathaniel Wiggan (in Hawaiian, Hale) of Salem, Massachusetts. As translated by Kawena, her Hawaiian name means “The rosy glow in the sky made by Hi‘iaka in the bosom of Pele, the earth-consuming woman. The

crimson lehua wreaths Pele.” “The first part of the name reveals ancestral ties with Pele, the volcano goddess who lives in ageless chants. The last part of the name commemorates the first-born daughter of Pa‘ahana (from an earlier marriage) who had died in infancy.”

An experienced midwife, Nali‘ipo‘aimoku (Po‘ai), Kawena’s maternal grandmother, who was present at Kawena’s birth, asked permission to hānai her granddaughter as her punahele (*favored child*). Henry and Pa‘ahana, Kawena’s father and mother, both recognized and acknowledged the importance of Kawena’s mixed culture heritage and agreed to Po‘ai’s request to hānai Kawena in the traditional old Hawaiian ways. To the original Hawaiians, the essence of their culture is a dynamic creation that is alive, vital, and practical. Their culture whose ways, beliefs, and values still carry the mana (*power*) can continue to serve Hawaiians well today.

Kawena had no playmates her own age when she lived alone with Po‘ai. This immersion with her grandmother instilled a deep knowledge of Hawaiian language, customs, beliefs, religion, and family history. After the death of her grandmother, when she was only six, Kawena returned to live with her parents. To continue and support Kawena’s path in understanding and knowledge of traditional Hawaiian ways and culture, her mother, Pa‘ahana, spoke to her only in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and taught Kawena the traditions she had learned. Her father, Henry, spoke only English to his daughter. From her father, Kawena learned about the world beyond the Hawaiian Islands and the New England traditions of this family.

She had painful academic experiences of being prohibited from speaking ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i in some schools. On Hawai‘i Island, Kawena’s education included a school at which classes were taught in English and ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. At another school, speaking in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i was forbidden. Her family relocated to Honolulu when her father became a guard at O‘ahu prison. Kawena was enrolled in a boarding school where classes were taught in English. When trying to help another student who was struggling with English, she spoke in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and was punished, a memory that was not forgotten. Her parents did not have Kawena return to that school the following term. Being bilingual, fluent in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i and

English, was important to them.

Kawena was always eager to learn. A Honolulu neighbor, Laura C. Green, recognized her gifts and talents and encouraged Kawena to write. Drawing on her hānai upbringing, Kawena began to write recollections of her grandmother and her parents’ teachings. Around 1910, Kawena intentionally began to collect Hawaiian proverbs and sayings. Thus, began what would become her life work.

‘Ōlelo No‘eau is a collection of Hawaiian sayings which carry the sense of presence of the spoken word. The spoken word is valued as the highest form of cultural expression. The sayings, individually and as a whole, offer an opportunity to help one form a basis for understanding the essence of traditional Hawaiian values. These 2,941 sayings are arranged alphabetically in ‘Ōlelo Hawai‘i. As noted in the preface, “The sayings are given first in Hawaiian and followed, in most cases, by Kawena’s literal or near-literal translation into English. The vast majority of the sayings are clarified through her explanation and commentary. A few of the sayings have no translation but are explained within the commentary, and a small percentage to require no explanation beyond the translation.”

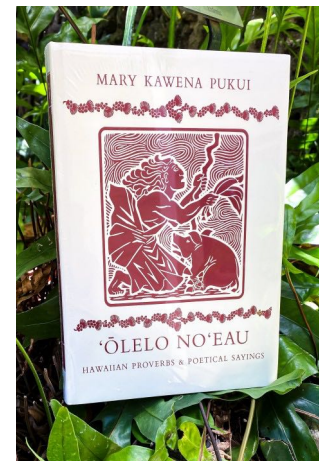


Photo of ‘Ōlelo No‘eau Hawaiian Proverbs and Poetical Sayings by Mary Kawena

SPRING SALE 2021 UPDATE

Our 2021 Spring Sale and Archival Book Sale was a success! Mahalo to all our volunteers and Board of Directors who helped to coordinate and provide support. The sale is over but you can continue to shop by visiting our on-line gift shop. Buy local and support Maui Historical Society and the

Nā Wai ‘Ehā a ka La‘i

Nā

Wai ‘Ehā a ka La‘i is a four part series that honors the unique cultural history of the four great waters and ahupua‘a of Waikapū, Wailuku, Waiehu and Waihe‘e, poetically known as Nā Wai ‘Ehā. Located in the moku of Wailuku, Nā Wai ‘Ehā was recognized as the largest contiguous lo‘i kalo (taro) growing region in Hawai‘i. The vast water resources of Mauna o ‘E‘eka (West Maui Mountains) supplied these four streams and rivers with the life giving waters of Kāne, in turn, allowing this district to be the primary ritual, political and population center of Maui. In this newsletter, we will explore Wailuku i ka malu he kuawa – Wailuku in the shelter of the valley.

The name Wailuku refers to the destructive nature and raging waters of Wailuku River that occur in abundance as well as to the Battle of Kepaniwai, in which Kamehameha I slaughtered the Maui warriors in ‘Īao Valley during his pursuit to conquer Maui. It was said that the river was dammed with the fallen near the ‘ili of Māniana, turning the water red with blood. The wind name of Wailuku is makani lawe mālie or the gentle breeze.

The ahupua‘a of Wailuku is the largest of the four in Nā Wai ‘Ehā and consists of 25,000 acres from mauka to makai (mountain to the sea). The traditional palena ‘āina (boundaries) of Wailuku traverses throughout the ridges and valleys of Kalapaoka‘ilio, Kapilau, Pu‘u Lio, ‘Īao, Pu‘u Kāne, Kaweluwelo‘ula, Kaho‘olewa, Luahinepi‘i, Pu‘u o Kaupō to the central and eastern plains of Pōhāko‘i, Ka‘ōpāla, Pu‘ukoa‘e and along extensive fisheries from Kapukaulua to Kalauiki. There are 3 loko wai or wetlands and inland fishponds known as Kanahā, Mau‘oni, and a portion of Kaehu a ka Moi. Wailuku encompassed over 40 ‘ili (subdivisions) and throughout the Great Māhele (1848-1850), over 150 kuleana parcels of land were awarded to Native Hawaiians on over 3,000 acres, which were predominantly used for the cultivation of lo‘i kalo. Wailuku had over 12 documented heiau, those that spanned from the interior valley of ‘Īao to Paukūkalo and Nehe near the Wailuku River mouth. Two of the most noted heiau were Pīhanakalani and Haleki‘i, both of which stand today along the lithified coastal sand dunes. Wailuku also shares a large portion of the vast pu‘u one (sand dunes system) of Nā Wai ‘Ehā, found predominantly in the ‘ili (subdivisions) of ‘Owā and Kalua. These lithified sand dunes were used as the final resting



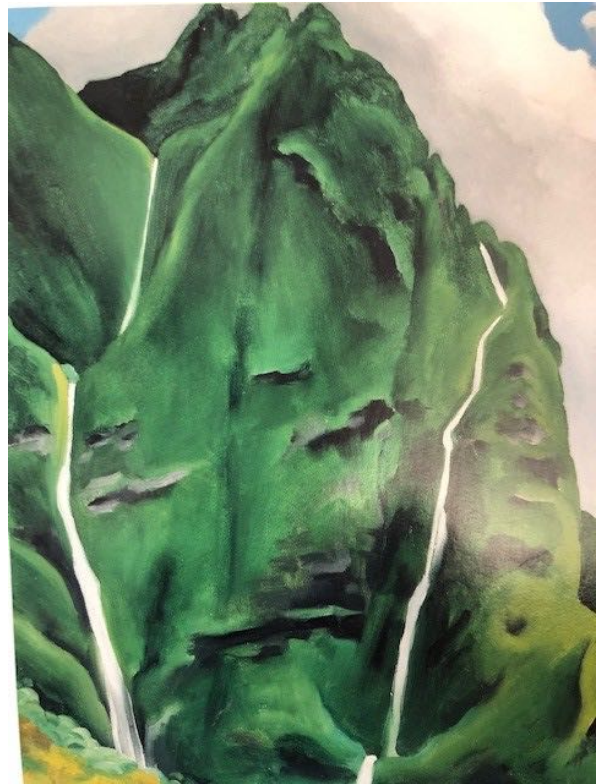
Painting by Edward Bailey: View of the central Maui plains from ‘Īao Valley and the Wailuku River , 1885

places for hundreds if not thousands of iwi kūpuna (burials) as well as a natural fortification for Maui warriors in noted battles such as Ahulua ka Pi‘ipi‘i i Kakanilua or “slaughter of the Pi‘ipi‘i warriors at Kakanilua”.

Hawaiians thrived in Wailuku for over a thousand years prior to the arrival of westerners due to the unique environmental landscape and natural resources found within the ahupua‘a. The center piece of Wailuku was and continues to be ‘Īao Valley and Wailuku River. Religious ceremonies, funerary practices and agriculture endeavors were directly tied to the engagement of these important spaces. The main interior valley in Wailuku is ‘Īao, sometimes called Nā Pali Uliuli or Nā Pali Kapu o Kaka‘e. It was kapu or restricted except for the reigning ali‘i (chiefs) and their kahuna (priests). During the 15th century, Maui was ruled by Kaka‘e, a king held in such reverence that for maka‘āinana to be amongst him could bring harm. Therefore, he lived at an elevated plateau between the two main tributaries of Kīnihāpai and Po‘onāhoahoa known as Ka‘alāhōlo. Adjacent to Ka‘alāhōlo was one of the most prominent cultural sites located within ‘Īao Valley known as Kaka‘e Moku, referred to by visitors today as “‘Īao Needle”. It was said that Kaka‘e designated ‘Īao as his own burial place as well as burial grounds of worthy ali‘i who succeeded him. In the ‘ili of Lo‘iloa which was located slightly makai and to the south of Kaka‘e Moku, was a stone platform used to prepare the iwi (bones) of countless ali‘i from Maui and beyond to be interred in caves, within the valley and rivers. It was thought that Kaka‘alaneo, Kekaulike, Kamehamehanui, Ka‘eokūlani, Keōpūolani and Nahi‘ena‘ena were buried in ‘Īao. Another noted ali‘i who reigned over Maui and resided in Wailuku was the fierce warrior chief Kahekilinui‘ahumanu, whose body was half tattooed black. His royal compound was in and around the present day Ka‘ahumanu Church area. His son Kalanikūpule, who succeeded him and whose royal residence was in

ʻĪao Valley, played an integral role in the battle of Kepaniwai.

Wailuku River was the life-giving force that allowed Hawaiians of Wailuku to develop a highly sophisticated wetland agricultural system. Two large and famous 'auwai (irrigation systems), named Kalani'auwai and Kama'auwai, were constructed near the entrance to ʻĪao Valley for the purpose of feeding over 2,500 acres of lo'i kalo to the north and south of Wailuku River. Along with the main river were springs, estuaries and tributaries that sustained abundant native aquatic species such as 'o'opu, 'ōpae and hīhīwai. When sugar plantations established themselves in Wailuku in the 1860s, both the Wailuku River and well-managed ancient 'auwai systems were misused as a commodity for a growing industry rather than allowing it to flow as it had for centuries for the purpose of cultivating kalo on kuleana agricultural lands. For over 100 years, Wailuku River remained dry due to the exploitation by Wailuku Sugar Co. and later Wailuku Water Co., which dramatically changed the cultural landscape by plowing under vast acres of cultural sites and Hawaiian agricultural systems that were heavily relied on for food security and which diverted millions of gallons away from the river negatively impacting native ecosystems. Due to the perseverance of the Wailuku and Nā Wai 'Ehā community, 75% of the Wailuku River capacity was restored by 2014 allowing aquatic life to return to the stream and kalo and other agricultural production on the land.



**Georgia O'Keeffe photo of Oil on Canvas
Waterfall—End of Road—ʻĪao Valley, 1939**

Since Wailuku was the major political, religious, and agricultural food hub on Maui, it should be no surprise as to why foreigners flocked to and settled in this ahupua'a. Early visitors to Maui included Mark Twain who named ʻĪao Valley "the Yosemite of the Pacific" and the southwestern artist Georgia O'Keeffe.

Early missionary influence and the onset of foreign business interests such as the sugar industry left the Native Hawaiian population and their way of life in disarray. Many were forced to leave their ancestral lands, modify their lifestyle dramatically and work for these new industries, all the while seeing their natural and cultural landscape be forever altered. Today, Wailuku has a mixture of plantation era and art deco architecture. Market and Main Streets still look very much like they did 100 years ago except with new businesses, paved streets and stop lights. There is a plethora of historic sites still standing such as Ka'ahumanu Church, Church of the Good Shepherd, and Wailuku Female Seminary (earlier the home of Edward Bailey, artist and missionary-teacher) which now houses the Maui Historical Society (Hale Hō'ike'ike at the Bailey House). Wailuku continues to be an important political and cultural center for the County and State.



Plaque at ʻĪao Valley describing Kamehameha's battle

Led by committed organizations, kūpuna, businesses, long-standing community members and most importantly those with strong Native Hawaiian genealogical ties to Wailuku, a resurgence in reviving, restoring and preserving the native ecosystems, cultural landscape and practices, and historical towns and architecture has begun. Through the center of this historic town, the Wailuku River continues to flow from the heights of ʻĪao Valley to the river mouth at Paukūkalo.

Researched & Authored (©2021) by Hōkūao Pellegrino, Past President of the Maui Historical Society and descendant of Edward and Caroline Bailey.



View from the Market Street of the old Iron Bridge crossing the Wailuku River into Happy Valley. Photo courtesy of MHS archives



A Hui Hou

April 2021 was our PR and marketing month for MHS. Here are some of our upcoming projects; please be sure to check them out:

- **Cooking Hawaiian Style episode with Lanai Tabura:** Sissy chefs it up with Lanai Tabura and features two family tested recipes: Aunty Helen's Won Tons and Maui Style Fried Saimin. Look for the episode in June 2021
- **2021 Keiki Hula Competition:** Sissy serves as the Maui Guide for this 4-day event coming in the third week of June. Check local listing for times and channels or live stream via Keiki Hula Competition social media or website.
- **EGBN TV News (Paris, NY, and Vienna):** Sissy took the crew from EGBN TV on a tour of the museum and grounds. They are preparing a story on contemporary Hawai'i and its history.

Even though our doors are closed due to Covid-19, we are trying our best to stay current and showing Maui and the world that we are here and looking for creative ways to show our presence in the community and beyond.



2020-2021

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