



NĀ MEA HOU

News and Stories from the Maui Historical Society

Something New

Autumn 2022 | Wailuku, Hawaii

VOLUME III, No. 3

Welina me kealoha my MHS `ohana,

August marks a close to our 2021-2022 fiscal year and the autumn is the beginning of a new year of activities and supporters so be on the look out for exciting happenings here at Hale Hō'ike'ike at the Bailey House. The museum has extended its visiting hours; we are now open Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday 10am-2pm. In conjunction with the agricultural focus of this newsletter we are excited to extend a recipe contest. See below for details and we invite you to send in one of your favorite recipes! Mahalo and Aloha,

Sissy Lake-Farm.

Executive Director of the Maui Historical Society

Canoe Plants and Animals

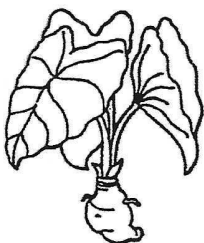
Enjoy a tropical breakfast on the lanai of a fancy hotel, or go to a lū'au (tourist or local) and you will find a sumptuous array of sweet and savory treats. Some of this deliciousness might trace its heritage to "canoe plants."

A canoe plant is the name given to plants brought to Hawai'i by Polynesian settlers. During the period between 900 and 1200 Hawai'i was found and settled by Polynesian voyagers, first from the Marquesas, and a few hundred years later, from Tahiti. On arrival, they would have plentiful fresh water and bounty from the ocean, but very little in the way of edible vegetation. In their canoes they came prepared with planting stock for some essentials they would need to establish themselves in a new home.



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Over the next few hundred years many voyages were taken between their old and new homes carrying a full range of essential plants. Hawaiians were exceptionally competent horticulturists, though the topography in their new island home was different, and so



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was the climate. Land preparation, irrigation methods, and choice of plant varieties were all skills that they excelled at.

Further, their engineering in the management of water using terraces, flumes, dams, and ditches was without parallel in all of the Pacific allowing the plants they brought with them to thrive.

So, what were these plants that came by canoe, and were so skillfully cultivated? Here are 14 that most people agree on:

- 'Ape-elephant ear (medicinal use)
- 'Awa-kava (narcotic ceremonial drink)
- lpu-bottle gourd (food/water containers)
- Kalo-taro (important food source)
- Kī-tī(medicinal and many household uses)
- Kō-sugar (food source)
- Mai'a-banana (food source)
- Niu-coconut (multitude of uses)
- 'Ohe-bamboo (multitude of uses)
- 'Ōlena-tumeric (spice, dye, medicinal use)
- Pia-arrowroot (food, medicinal use)
- 'Uala-sweet potato (food source)
- Uhi-yam (food source)
- 'Ulu-breadfruit (food source)
- Wauke-paper mulberry (used to make kapa)

Indigenous plants too, were important to the success of early life here. Among these, the large forest trees: hau, milo, koa, and kou.

Also, growing here when Polynesians first arrived were: māmaki, used for a coarser grade of kapa, hala, used to weave matting and olonā, a source for cordage used to tie everything from canoes to houses together. These indigenous resources made starting out a little easier, but they are not edible. The survival and success of the early settlers depended largely on the canoe plants.

Early Hawaiians were not vegetarian. In addition to their harvests from the ocean, we need to mention the pigs, dogs, and chickens that made the long voyage with them.

These, in combination with the canoe plants, and abundant fish and seaweeds, gave them a diet on which to thrive.

We must remember that this period of travel between their old and new home lasted several hundred years. These are years that we know about through legends, chants, and



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stories passed down in communities. Today ethnobotanists are adding to our understanding of those early days, but much remains unknown.



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After 1778, Hawai'i's isolation came to an end. Today there are thousands of plants thriving here, some beneficial, others not so much. All of this started with the canoe plants.

Recipe Contest

Now that we are all enlightened about canoe plants, MHS is having a contest. The rules are simple:

1. Submit a recipe using at least two (2) canoe plant ingredients,
2. Submit your recipe at maimumuseum.org/newsletters by October 14th.

The winner will receive a swag bag from our gift shop and canoe plant treats. We will post the recipe on our website and are looking forward to seeing how far these basic life sustaining ingredients have come.

Talk Story: Farming on Maui

By the early 1700's, Hawaiians had created a sustainable and complex agricultural system that reliably fed just under an estimated one million people. These mahi'ai, or farmers, grew canoe crops, like 'awa, kalo, 'ōlena, and 'ulu, introduced to the Hawaiian Islands between 900 to 1200 A.D. by the early Polynesians. Using stone and wooden tools, the mahi'ai planted and harvested acres upon acres. Farming was not only a practical reality but entwined with Hawaiian culture. From praying to Lono, the god of agriculture, fertility and peace, or following the kapu system which specified rules based around eating and planting, food was a central part of the Hawaiian community.



Ana and Steve Phillips

This is partially true in modern Hawai'i. Food brings friends and family together and to unite a community, but much less of it is sourced locally. Actually, the islands are only around 15 to 20% food secure. Steve Phillips, co-owner and creator of Local Harvest, a multi-faceted company focused on local produce distribution, said while there has definitely been an uptick in interest in local farming within the last five years, the vast majority of produce is shipped in from out of state. He believes, "all of our local needs should be provided on a basic level" and we "shouldn't be dependent on anyone thousands of miles away to get what we need to live." Since food "is the most basic need we have" that should be the starting point.

Steve grew up on a farm that was almost completely self-reliant where they "grew their own food...and even had our own fuel supply." This went on to influence his decision for him and his wife, Ana, to create Local Harvest and promote a sustainable food distribution system.

They work "with about 100 growers on the island [of Maui]...and distribute

[produce] to over 100 accounts – restaurants, stores, farmers markets, and food hubs on Maui, O'ahu, and Hawai'i Island." They even created their own packaged product business of cultured mac nut spreads. They even created their own packaged product business of cultured mac nut spreads with flavors like Gracious Greek and Incredible Italian and distribute those products at several stores around the island. It is a growing and expanding business.



From left to right: Winsome Williams, Jakke Aoga, and Whitney Cunningham

As co-founder, Jakke Aoga, of Lā Kāhea Community Farm, put it, "to make a livable wage on Maui, you need to be entrepreneurial." Like the founders of Local Harvest, this is the attitude of the three founders behind Lā Kāhea Community Farm – Winsome Williams, Jakke Aoga, and Whitney Cunningham. Not only are they farming ten varieties of taro, kasava, 'ōlena, and other crops on their 10-acre plot, they offer weekly tours, internships, workshops, and the group even vendors at the Saturday farmers' market upcountry with their Āina Taco Stand where all ingredients are sourced from their farm.

A rather rare aspect of Lā Kāhea Community Farms is not only commitment to sustainable farming but to regenerative farming. They do not use fertilizers or plastic. As Winsome explained, there "is a network of life in the soil. With fertilizers, plants become weak because it destroys a plant's microbe," while at the same time making the soil and by extension, the farmers, dependent on continued use of said fertilizers to see any further growth. By removing the plastic, Winsome said they try to "recreate the natural Hawaiian ecosystem with the given resources...and farm with as much aloha and respect as possible to the land." Going forward, Whitney, Jakke, and Winsome hope to continue connecting the community to their food and finding simple ways for people to get involved.

Getting the local community active is one of the stumbling blocks to modern farming in Hawai'i. Vincent Mina, the president of the Hawai'i Farmers Union, said the union "tries to encourage chapters to create value [for farming] in the community through agricultural outreach and chapter activities," to promote sustainability in bite-sized ways. Vincent originally got involved with the union because he wanted to bring attention to the importance of soil health and his involvement deepened from there.

The core of the Hawai'i Farmers Union members is "farmers, gardeners, and foodies," said Mina, who emphasized the importance of the average resident getting involved at least on some level. One thing everyone agreed on was that there are many ways someone can easily start. The first, of course, would be to grow your own food. Whitney from Lā Kāhea Community Farms, said to "start with kitchen herbs," as they are an easy and practical foray into growing what you eat. She added that "composting and learning to use scrap foods while cooking in the kitchen" is another simple way to start. For those of us with less of a green thumb, Steve from Local Harvest said "you can buy local food at farmers' markets, you can get home delivery, you can request it [locally grown produce] where you shop or when you go to a restaurant." These small changes can have a big impact long-term. The more local people incorporate sustainable agriculture into their day to day lives, the more likely larger companies who are currently importing the majority of their produce will be forced to buy locally. As Steve put it, "people have more power than they might realize."

To find farmers markets or local food distributors on Maui, go to <https://hfuuhi.org/find-your-farmer/>. Also, you can subscribe to the Hawaii Farmers Union Newsletter to get the most up to date information about various farming areas on the various islands.

From the Archives



Photo Credit- Baldwin Farmworker courtesy of Hale Hō'ike'ike archives at the Bailey House Museum

Pono Practices and Farming
Before the plantation era in Hawaii native Hawaiians harnessed vast wisdom and foresight in managing their natural resources, recognizing the importance of balanced stewardship toward the land and ocean to ensure abundance for themselves and future generations. Reviving and re-implementing pono (rightful, proper) practices is a positive step to go forward.

Source: Kelson "Mac" Poepoe, Ho'olehua Hawaiian Homestead

Welcoming the 2022-2023

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Annalise Shiraki
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Linda Tesar-Amimoto
New Board Member

Officers and a new trustee were sworn in at the MHS Annual Membership Meeting on August 28, 2022. They are:

President, Kayla Shaw
Vice-President, Torie Ho`opi`i
Secretary, Annalise Shiraki
Treasurer, Scott Keolahou Hinau
Immediate Past President, Terri Gavagan

New trustee:
Linda Tesar-Amimoto

Returning trustees, not pictured above:
Kauanoë Batangan
Andree Michelle Conley-Kapoi
Cindy Lawrence
Walette Pellegrino
Elizabeth Tomoso

Message from the new President of the Board of Trustees, Kayla Shaw

It is with pleasure that I step into the kuleana (role) at Maui Historical Society as Pelekikena (President), following the lead of Terri Gavagan who has graciously led this organization with exceptional leadership and fortitude throughout the pandemic. As we holomua (move forward), I'd like to address the current Board of Trustees and staff for their commitment, service and leadership to the Maui Historical Society, as well as to all of our loyal members for believing in the mission and vision of Maui Historical Society and your resilience with us throughout the pandemic. Despite the uncertainties and obstacles that we were met with over the past couple of years, the Board of Trustees were able to be productive during the pandemic in foundational elements such as repairing the roof on our building, team building, focusing on committee activities and creating a strategic plan for the next 5 years.

Over the next year my goal serving as President for the Maui Historical Society is to share the value that we possess and portray the importance of Maui's history to our community. I plan to offer more initiatives to expand our reach within our community, communicate frequently with our current members and restore our membership count which will involve taking a more active role in our retention and recruiting plan. I am driven to move towards these goals by our mission statement, "To collect, preserve, study, interpret and share the history and heritage of Maui." My interpretation of the mission statement is that there is a duty to the generations before and the generations after that Maui is recognized for its deeply rooted, diverse and all encompassing history. I believe that Maui Historical Society is the gatekeeper to the identity of Maui and our kuleana is imperative

to the direction of Maui's identity into the future.

In order to achieve the goals planned for the next year, I'd like to share the following 'olelo no'eau as guiding 'ike (wisdom) for us as we embark the journey together, "E lauhoe mai na wa'a, i ke ka, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke ka; pae aku i ka 'aina. Everybody paddle the canoes together, bail and paddle, paddle and bail, and the shore is reached." This 'olelo no'eau expresses and illustrates laulima (cooperation) of a crew together on a canoe, paddling and bailing together with one common goal. It is a perfect expression of the vision I have for our organization and the active roles we all must take to reach those goals. The wa'a (canoe) is a sacred space that requires communication, respect, cooperation and forward movement. All members on the canoe are equipped with a paddle which represents everyone's ability to contribute, and paddling represents our active contribution as we move towards the goal. In the wa'a, the crew becomes 'ohana, each member is recognized for their unique strengths and the more diversity, the more abundant collection of ideas to further the common goal in any situation that may arise.

Maui Historical Society is more than a historical collection. It is a historical collection that is appreciated, respected and guided by a robust collective of incredible community members with outstanding skills, talents and resources. I recognize all of you for your unique strengths and believe everyone's seat at the table is valuable. I'm honored to lead Maui Historical Society over the next year. *E ola!*

E lauhoe mai na wa'a, i ke ka, i ka hoe; i ka hoe, i ke ka; pae aku i ka 'aina. Everybody paddle the canoes together, bail and paddle, paddle and bail, and the shore is reached.

Marjorie Wyland Schmiede

JUNEAU, AK & MAUI, HI
FEBRUARY 21, 1931-AUGUST 15, 2022



Members are the Heart and Volunteers are the Helping Hands of Hale Ho`ike`ike. Marjorie, or Marge (as she preferred), exemplified both of those roles for more than 30 years. Everyone who worked with her at Hale Ho`ike`ike on her annual Maui stays remembered her energy and aloha. She was very knowledgeable and committed to sharing the history of indigenous peoples of both Hawaii and Alaska. She loved the color green and was passionate about her gardening. Every Christmas she wrote a lyrical poem for her family highlighting the special events of the year. Marjorie was the consummate member and docent and she will be missed by many. Our deepest sympathy and aloha to her family. Mahalo nui loa and aloha `oe, Marjorie Wyland Schmiede, from the Maui Historical Society.



2022-2023

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The Maui Historical Society was honored to host Kepā Maly on August 9, 2022 at Hale Hō'ike'ike at the Bailey House Museum. Kepā Maly shared various mo'olelo based on his and his team's ethnographic research and his own personal experience throughout his years living in Hawai'i. As part of the Ho'opai Archaeological Apprenticeship program, Tanya Lee-Greig with Aina Archaeology, Trisha Kehaulani Watson with Honua Consulting, Kepā Maly with Kumu Pono Associates, Sissy Lake-Farm with Maui Historical Society, and Eric Gerlach with Ledcor Development Group are teaming up to train the next generation of cultural resource managers in Hawai'i. This program offers a unique opportunity for young Native Hawaiians from Maui and O'ahu to learn the skills needed to become effective researchers and resource managers. During the program, students will train with seasoned professionals in archaeology, cultural anthropology, and ethnography in Honua'ula.

Contact Us

Give us a call for more information about our services and products.




Maui Historical Society

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