

HISTORY OF HAWAII AND HAWAIIANS

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Aloha to All.

All honor and respect is offered to [a] the Great Spirit who has made this day and everything and everyone under the sun and moon; and [b] to this land, this place, and to the sacred sands of your birthplace; and [c] to our ancestors who have passed on, who now sleep the long summers and winters too, and who await our reunion with them on the other side; and [d] to our elders who yet live to bless us with their presence and to guide us with their wisdom; and [e] to the great chiefs and other dignitaries and leaders present this evening; and [f] to my countrymen and all guests, who honor us with your attendance this evening; and [g] to all others within the sound of my voice, from wherever you have come, whether it be from that place my Polynesian ancestors referred to as *Tahiti Ku*, where the sun rises at Heaven's eastern gate...or whether you hail from *Tahiti Moe*, where the sun sets into the red sea at the western gate...or any land in between. My humble greetings to you all.

My difficult task is to complete --- in a few minutes --- a broad overview of milestones of Hawaiian history beginning, say, from the dawn of time to the present. I am expected to be brief yet complete, historically accurate yet interesting, factual yet somewhat conversational. The very nature of this assignment has led some, including me, to the doubtful premise that it can actually be done, and that it can be done by me. So, undaunted by a contrary reality and with an apology to my countrymen for such brief retelling of the history of so great a people, I now begin at the beginning.

THE BEGINNING

In the beginning, there was the great darkness called *po*. So say my Hawaiian ancestors, and they told of this time in a chant called the *kumulipo* (the deep darkness where life began). This Hawaiian epic poem, which is over 2,000 lines long, tells of life forms evolving from simple forms to the sea creatures to mammals. Eventually, Hawaiian lore tells of gods who begat demi-gods who spawn human ancestors. But life began in the sea, and we Hawaiians are still salt-water people.

The God of the Heavens mated with the Earth Mother and she eventually gave birth to the islands of Hawai'i. Another ancient story, deemed by many non-Hawaiians who hear it to be a quaint Hawaiian legend, tells of the demi-god Maui who goes fishing with his brothers, tosses his magic fishhook into the sea, and with it raises the islands. Fanciful? Perhaps...perhaps not. The story of Maui is a common old tale told and retold throughout Polynesia for ages, long before long-distance technology could account for the commonality of the story. Maui was a real voyager who traveled throughout the islands of the Pacific, a sailor of great renown deified for his deeds; hence, the commonality of the tale. He raised the islands the same way sailors have

always raised islands, by sailing towards it until the land rises from the sea above the horizon. And in Maui's case, he guided by the magic fishhook of the heavens, the constellation Scorpio, known as *Ka Makau Nui o Maui* (The Great Fishhook of Maui). The story of Maui is a tale of discovery, not creation. But it's neither the first nor the last time that our native stories or history has been misunderstood or trivialized.

So we have Hawaiians and the Hawaiian islands. We, the people of the sea, and Hawaii, islands of the sea. How did we Hawaiians come to inhabit our fair islands? It took three (3) Cs: courage, competency, and canoes. Our ancient ancestors from the Africa and Asia to the west pushed eastward into Oceania and island-hopped into the South Pacific. Eventually, they ran out of islands when they reached French Polynesia and then Easter Island. Then a brave, intrepid soul named Hawai'i-Loa turned his eyes north and gazed into the vast reaches of the mid-Pacific, towards the most remote islands of the globe: the Hawaiian Islands.

These early Polynesian explorers built sturdy voyaging canoes and sallied forth into the Pacific, guiding by the stars. The first migration to Hawai'i occurred about 400 or 500 A.D., when sailors who were likely from the Marquesas Islands populated the islands. Around 1100 or 1200 A.D., there was a second migration of voyagers, perhaps from Tahiti. Imagine the courage and competency that was required to sail voyaging canoes to these tiny islands, without sextants, or compasses, or other such navigational devices. Our ancestors did it because they were people of the sea, island people. We still are.

Once settled, Hawai'i became handful of island kingdoms, ruled by kings who were sovereign. The sea provided a surfeit of food; the land was rich and fertile; and there was plenty of fresh water. The people cultivated their taro fields and fishponds, and dutifully honored their chiefs, who managed the resources and cared for them. Priests established the taboos of the society, which were strictly observed. Wars were occasionally waged between island states, but on the whole, from about the 12th or 13th century until the 18th century, Hawaiians enjoyed an isolated but relatively stable life.

CAPTAIN COOK (1778-1779)

All of this changed on January 18, 1778, when unfamiliar apparitions appeared off the shores of the westernmost island of Hawai'i, and landed on the island of Kaua'i. They were "floating islands," with towering masts and vast sails, manned by strange, pale, alien beings dressed in loose cloth skin who puffed smoke from their mouths and spoke gibberish. Those "floating islands" were named the Resolution and the Discovery, the ships of Captain James Cook, who had "discovered" Hawai'i in the same fashion as other explorers before and since "discover" lands which are already inhabited.

Shortly after he first found them, Cook left the islands to sail north. But he returned in November, 1778, during the festival season when war was banned, and he visited Maui and Hawai'i island. He was hailed as a god when he arrived, but he overstayed his welcome. Visitors tend to do this, you know, and English sea captains are no exception. By the time Cook left Hawai'i, the festival season had ended, there was a simmering resentment among his hosts, due

in no small part to the indiscretions of his crew and disrespect for the chiefs and for local customs.

Cook attempted to leave Hawai‘i early in February, 1779, but storms and a broken mast forced him to return to Kealahou Bay on the island of Hawai‘i. When a native stole a skiff, Cook went ashore to retrieve it, took the king as a hostage and attempted to kidnap him to ransom him in exchange for the stolen skiff. His poor judgment resulted in a skirmish in which he and some of his men, badly outnumbered, lost their lives in the shallows of the Bay, where today a monument now stands to commemorate the event.

The winds that brought Captain Cook's ships to Hawai‘i were winds of change. And Hawai‘i would never be the same again.

KAMEHAMEHA (1779-1819)

One of the young chiefs who came to trade aboard Cook’s ships at Kealahou Bay was a fierce warrior named Kamehameha. He was described then by one of Cook’s men as having "as savage a looking a face as I ever saw." Tall, strong, fearless - he was an imposing warrior chief. So skilled was he in the art of warfare that it is said that he lifted enemy soldiers above his head and dashed them broken to the earth. He stood among a shower of spears and parried them so artfully, that those who observed this feat stated that "spears were like bath water to him." He traded for iron knives while aboard Cook’s ships, and eventually adopted modern cannons and firearms as part of his arsenal.

After the death of Cook in 1779, Kamehameha began his political and military campaign to conquer the several sovereign island kingdoms to unite them under his rule. By 1795, he had conquered Hawai‘i island, Maui, Moloka‘i, Lāna‘i and O‘ahu. In 1810, he acquired Kaua‘i by a peaceful treaty of annexation. So by the beginning of the 19th century, the islands were united under Kamehameha’s rule.

Thereafter, he ruled with a strong but fair hand. Under his law, the persons and property of commoners as well as chiefs were safe. He was a nationalist - he protected his land, his people and his culture from excessive incursions from foreigners. He was also realist who understood both the growing influence and needs of foreigners, so he had his people cultivate food to sell to foreigners and regulated commerce within the islands.

Under Kamehameha's reign the Hawaiian people were secure, industrious and well-governed. Some boarded foreign ships as sailors and sailed abroad to seek adventure, and often found it. The Owyhee River, a 200-mile long tributary of the Snake River, runs through northern Nevada, southwestern Idaho, and southeastern Idaho. Its name, "Owyhee," is the old spelling of "Hawai‘i." It is named for three (3) Hawaiian trappers who were members of Donald McKenzie’s Expedition and who were killed by Indians in 1819. Due to their courage, hardy nature, and water skills, Hawaiians were important workers in the success of the fur trade in the Northwest. Their descendants still populate these areas.

Another example: in November of 1819, the Presidio, a Spanish settlement in Monterey, California, was captured by a mercenary sea captain who employed a platoon of naked Hawaiians armed with battle pikes to overrun the Spanish defenses. After the battle, the victorious Hawaiians paraded about in captured Spanish garments. We Hawaiians have always relished a good fight, and we like to look good, too.

When Kamehameha died in 1819, the Hawaiian people lost a great leader, the likes of which we have needed and sought for nearly 200 years - but have not yet found.

HAWAI'I IN THE 19TH CENTURY (1820-1893)

In about 1817, two years before the death of Kamehameha I, an oracle named Kapihe made a prediction to him. Kapihe prophesized that the traditional taboos would be abolished, that God would be in the heavens, that the chiefs would fall and the commoners would rise. He was right. In 1820, the year after Kamehameha's death, Protestant missionaries arrived in Hawai'i. They had sailed for five (5) months aboard the brig Thaddeus, traveling 18,000 miles from Boston around Cape Horn to the islands. When they arrived, Hawai'i was ruled by Kamehameha's son, Liholiho (Kamehameha II). Liholiho was not his father. He was young, impetuous, and intemperate. Under his rule, the old taboos fell, Christianity rose, and there was great uncertainty among the people. Late in 1823, Liholiho and his wife, Kamamalu, sailed to England, where they contracted measles. They had no immunity to the disease, and they died of it in London in 1824.

Liholiho was succeeded by his younger brother, Kauikeaouli (1813-1854), who became Kamehameha III. He was only 11 years old when he became king, so like Liholiho he was much influenced by the older female regents of his court. He reigned for thirty (30) years. During his tenure, Roman Catholicism was legalized under a French threat of war. One must admire the missionary zeal, if not question the method and the message: "God loves you and you'll be saved if you accept our religion; we'll blow you up if you don't." During this time, Hawai'i also gained its first Constitution. In 1848, an act was passed that abolished the old system of land tenure based upon chiefly management of its use. In its place was established a system of land ownership whereby land was redistributed between the government, kings, nobles and commoners. However, most commoners were unaware of the program or didn't understand it, so they lost out. For the first time, foreigners were allowed to own land in Hawai'i. They acquired land with such an appetite and so strongly asserted their ownership that the Hawaiians of that time said, "Hana 'i'o ka haole" (The foreigners do it in earnest; "it" refers to the aggressive assertion and practice of rights associated with land ownership.) Hana 'i'o mau ka haole - foreigners still do it in earnest.

The missionaries continued to do their work in earnest, and they had much work to do. The Pacific whaling industry expanded greatly in the 1840s, and Lahaina, Maui became the whaling capitol of the world, with hundreds of ships registered in that port. Sailors generally, and whalers particularly, were a wild bunch, and they were a great challenge to the good works of the missionaries. Eventually, a system of laws based upon Christian principles was enacted to curb ungodly behavior. Besides whaling ships, American warships began to visit Hawai'i with regularity, as did foreign military vessels. They still do.

By the time Kamehameha III had taken office in 1820, the Hawaiian population had already been halved by epidemics of foreign diseases. Only 150,000 Hawaiians remained of the 300,000 or so who had populated the island at the time of Captain Cook's coming. During the reign of Kamehameha III, the number would be halved again due a smallpox epidemic and other ravages of disease.

However, when the Swiss immigrant John Sutter stopped in Honolulu in the late 1830s, he found several healthy Hawaiians who sailed with him to California. They helped build Sutter's Mill, near which in 1848 occurred the discovery of gold that started the California gold rush. Hawaiians help to originate the city of Sacramento, helped build San Francisco, and were renowned for their loyalty, industry, and congeniality. We still love to visit California; like our ancestors, some of us visit, stay and never return home.

In 1843, a rogue British commander forced Kamehameha III into surrendering his kingdom to Britain, but his actions were subsequently rejected by the Crown and overturned. When the monarchy was restored, Kamehameha III declared the words which became Hawai'i's motto - "Ua mau ke ea o ka 'āina i ka pono" - now translated to mean "The life of the land is perpetuated in its righteousness." Given the circumstances, the King probably meant "The sovereignty of the Kingdom lives on thanks to justice."

Upon the death of Kamehameha III in 1854 at the age of 41, he was succeeded by his nephew and adopted son, Alexander Liholiho, who took the name Kamehameha IV (1834-1864), ascending to the throne at the age of 20 years. He ruled only nine (9) years, dying of chronic asthma at the age of 29. That disease still affects Hawaiians in disproportionate numbers today. Kamehameha IV and his wife, Queen Emma, are best known for bringing the Anglican religion to Hawai'i, and for their efforts to improve the health of their Hawaiian people. Together, in 1859 they established the Queen's Hospital to serve the health needs of the citizens of the Hawaiian Kingdom, as well as foreigners.

Kamehameha IV was succeeded by Lot Kapuaiwa (1830-1872). He was Kamehameha V, the last of the Kamehameha line of monarchs. He took office in 1863 and ruled 9 years until his death in 1872. He spent much of his reign trying to increase the powers of his own office and trying to restore the absolute monarchy that had existed at the time of his grandfather, Kamehameha I. He was not successful.

During his reign, the sugar industry rose to economic prominence. The American Civil War (1861-1865), chilled the whaling industry in the Pacific. Sugar from southern plantations in America was not available in northern states, with resultant high prices. Prices were so high that importers of sugar could still make a tidy profit after paying import fees. Between 1860 and 1866, the number of sugar plantations in the island rose from 12 to 32. During this same period, the poundage of exported sugar rose from a million and a half pounds to nearly 18 million pounds.

When Kamehameha V died without an heir in 1872, the legislature held an advisory open election, in which the people chose Kamehameha V's cousin, William Charles Lunalilo. The legislature confirmed the people's choice, and Lunalilo took office in 1873.

During his short reign, Lunalilo tried to make the government more democratic. He worked to help Hawaiian sugar planters gain access to the American market. Lunalilo's tenure only lasted little more than a year, for he was in poor health. He died of tuberculosis in 1874. His will provided for the establishment of a trust to care for elderly Hawaiians. The trustees of the trust had sold off most of his vast landholdings, which once amounted to over 350,000 acres of Hawaiian land. Today, the care home, Lunalilo Home sits on a small parcel of land, the sole remnant of Lunalilo's once-vast holdings, and despite limited resources continues to strive to serve the needs of elderly Hawaiians.

When he died 1874, Lunalilo also had no heir. The legislature elected David Kalākaua as his successor. Kalākaua was a nationalist, who was concerned about the loss of the Hawaiian race due to disease, and also about the erosion of Hawaiian culture. He believed in the hereditary right of the monarch to rule. Members of the "Missionary Party" wanted to reform Hawaiian government to emulate the British model, where the monarch was the titular head of government but had no real power. Merchants and other foreigners worried about their business interests, for Kalākaua opposed cession of Pearl Harbor to the United States.

Beginning the mid-1800s, the demand for cheap labor in the sugar industry had resulted in an influx of Asian workers, mostly Chinese and Japanese. Many adopted Hawai'i as their home, and their descendants still live there.

During this time, the Hawaiian population continued to decline. Kalākaua and others sought to ensure that those who survived had the best chance of success in a rapidly changing world. In 1885, a Hawaiian princess, Bernice Pauahi, became concerned that Hawaiian youth lacked sufficient education. So she left her estate to a trust to educate young Hawaiians. In 1887, a school was built for this purpose.

That school has evolved into a complex of schools on different islands, called the Kamehameha Schools.

Kalākaua traveled extensively. He built 'Iolani Palace, the only royal palace that exists on American soil today. He tried to build a Polynesian confederation, but his efforts failed. In 1887, an armed group called the Hawaiian League who favored annexation to the United States forced Kalākaua to sign a new constitution that deprived the monarch of his executive powers, and deprived most native Hawaiians of their voting rights. It allowed non-Hawaiian citizens to vote. This was called the Bayonet Constitution of 1887, referring to the duress under which it was promulgated. Kalākaua lived under the constant threat of armed insurrection by foreigners.

By 1890, in failing health, Kalākaua traveled to San Francisco. In January of 1891, he died there at the Palace Hotel. His final words were, "Tell my people I tried."

QUEEN LILI‘UOKALANI & THE OVERTHROW (1891-1893)

Kalākaua’s successor was his sister, Lydia Kamakaeha, known as Queen Lili‘uokalani. Those who thought she could be more easily controlled than her brother were mistaken. The Queen was intelligent, educated, and well-spoken, a world class composer who read and wrote music of great beauty, her lasting legacy. She was also high-principled, tough-minded, and idealistic, with a resolve that sometimes bordered on stubbornness. She believed, as her brother did, that as a Hawaiian chief with a heavenly mandate it was her right and duty to really rule.

In January of 1893, she proposed a new constitution to restore the liberties of the Hawaiian monarchy and the Hawaiian people. When they could not dissuade her, a group of businessmen (nearly all of whom supported annexation to the United States) declared that the Queen was committing a revolutionary act by promulgating a new constitution. Within a few days, on January 17, 1893, with the support of United States Minister John L. Stevens who ordered a contingent of U.S. Marines ashore to support the revolutionists, the Queen was deposed. A Provisional Government was established. The island nation, the Hawaiian Kingdom, was no more.

On July 4, 1894, the Republic of Hawai‘i was proclaimed, which was immediately recognized by the United States. On July, 7, 1898, Hawai‘i became a territory of the United States, and became self-governing in 1900.

As for Queen Lili‘uokalani, she spent a year under house arrest after a failed counter-revolution by her supporters. After her release in 1896, she worked tirelessly for years, appealing to the U.S. government to restore her kingdom, then to the courts for reparations. All of her efforts failed. In 1909, she established a trust, the Queen Lili‘uokalani Trust, to care for orphaned and destitute children. Queen Lili‘uokalani died on November 11, 1917, due to complications from a stroke.

THE 20TH CENTURY

Since Hawai‘i has become a Territory and thereafter a State, its history is better known. So I will speed through the 20th century. In 1902, after Hawai‘i became a U.S. territory, Prince Jonah Kūhiō Kalaniana‘ole became Hawai‘i’s territorial representative to Congress. He served nearly twenty (20) years, until his death in 1922. He helped to institute local government at the county level, creating the modern county system still used in Hawai‘i today. He obtained millions of dollars in federal funding to improve Pearl Harbor and other harbors, won the right of females to vote in Hawai‘i, and founded Hawai‘i’s national park system.

Prince Kūhiō was the author and proponent of the 1921 Hawaiian Homes Commission Act, which provided homesteads to Hawaiians. On his deathbed, he implored his closest friends to commit themselves to his lifetime efforts to rehabilitation of the Hawaiian people.

The 1920s and 30s passed. On December 7, 1941, the Day of Infamy, Hawai‘i was thrust into the international spotlight when Japanese planes bombed Pearl Harbor. The ensuing wrought more changes in Hawai‘i. The economy boomed as both legal and illegal commerce flourished. The

strategic importance of Hawai'i in the Pacific and the international arena was established beyond doubt. The population swelled as soldiers, sailors and airmen and women poured into the islands. Transportation became more efficient. Thousands who would have never visited Hawai'i but for the war discovered Paradise.

And the blood of many a soldier from Hawai'i was sacrificed upon the altar of freedom. In times of war, Hawai'i does its part. We always do our part.

After WWII, the balance of political power in Hawai'i changed. Sons and daughters of first generation plantation workers took over political leadership of Hawai'i. For over a half century, they led Hawai'i into the modern world. Some, like our senior Senator Daniel K. Inouye, took office at that time and still continue to serve the people of Hawai'i with undiminished dedication and vigor. We salute you, Senator.

After the war came the passenger jets. In 1959, Hawai'i became the 50th state in the Union, and tourism exploded and kept growing. Last year, over 7 million - yes, 7 million - tourists (guests) visited Hawai'i. Most stopped in O'ahu, where nearly a million locals live. Imagine the impact of 7 million visitors on an island like O'ahu, only 45 miles by 30 miles in size!

During the third quarter of the 20th century, the military, agriculture and tourism remained important industries in Hawai'i. However, in the last 20-25 years, industrial agriculture (sugar and pineapple) has waned and disappeared, due to prices and cheaper production costs overseas.

In 1976, modern voyagers sailed from Hawai'i to Tahiti and back, using the ancient method of navigating by the stars. This singular achievement galvanized the people of Hawai'i and the world and inspired a cultural powerful reawakening. Among the several positive impacts were a focus upon new and renewed programs to assist Hawaiians in the fields of health, education, social welfare, employment, housing, etc. In 1978 the Office of Hawaiian Affairs was created at the state level, while our congressional delegation created and funded several federal programs to help our people.

More recently, Hawai'i's economy has focused upon service-based industries, especially technology, start-up businesses, venture capital, etc. Hawai'i attracts medical researchers, and scientists of every ilk. Astronomers wish to study the heavens through super telescopes based on island peaks. Others study our reefs or mine fresh water from the ocean depths. And it's all happening in the place Mark Twain described as "the loveliest fleet of islands anchored in any island."

STATUS OF HAWAIIANS TODAY

So there is a brief history of Hawai'i. But what has been the impact of all of this upon the Hawaiian people? Since we Hawaiians are people of the sea, I use an ocean analogy. If you or I were simply to wade into the ocean, the impact of our entry would be negligible. However, if you or I would wade into a tiny tidal pool --- whether our intentions are good or bad --- our action could and would have a profound affect upon the denizens and ecology of the pool. And even more so if many of us crowd in, and some never leave. Hawai'i is IN the ocean, but it is not

AN ocean. It's a tidal pool. And ever since Captain Cook stepped --- sailed -- into it, for better --- and mostly, for worse --- the Hawaiian people have never been the same.

This is not a complaint, nor is it a statement of blame. It's simply a statement of the law of nature. David Malo was a Hawaiian scholar and writer of the early 1800s. In 1837, Malo wrote, "If a big wave comes in, large and unfamiliar fishes will come from the dark ocean, and when they see the small fishes of the shallows they will eat them up. The white man's ships have arrived with clever men from the big countries; they know our people are few in number and our country is small. They will devour us."

We Hawaiians are small fishes of the shallows, and though the shallows be ours, nevertheless the big waves of discovery of and migration to our land have had serious impact upon our people over the years. I will not bore you with statistics. I will simply say that although some progress has been made in some areas, generally native Hawaiians are at or near the bottom of every list of positive statistics, and at or near the top of every list of negative statistics. Of course, one cannot judge this from the Hawaiians in this room. Fed on a rich diet of education and hard work (spiced by a little luck), the Hawaiian "fishes" in this room have grown to become big fishes in a small pond. And we are proud that they are indigenous, native fishes.

However, *as a people*, in Hawai'i we Hawaiians are the least educated, and the poorest of the poor. We are the unhealthiest and we cannot afford to live in our own land. We are over-represented in our prisons and under-represented in positions of leadership within our community. And our families suffer from lack of leadership within.

IMPORTANCE OF ROLE OF HAWAIIAN ORGANIZATIONS

If there is one important lesson that can be gleaned from this, it is the lesson that the small fish cannot depend upon the big fish to care for and to nurture them. The big fish will not share their food. We *ARE* their food. They will *eat* - not *aid* - us. So we must - and we do -- accept our responsibility to rehabilitate ourselves. And we have the means to do so, in the form of the legacies left by our chiefs of old. These are the important institutions that have for so long dedicated themselves to helping Hawaiians, using their own resources bequeathed to them by our chiefs. Many have done so for over a century.

Their work is so important. The Lunalilo Home, founded by King William Charles Lunalilo in 1883, continues to care for elderly Hawaiians. Queen's Hospital, founded by Queen Emma in 1859, serves the health needs of Hawai'i's people, and is the finest hospital in the Pacific. The Kamehameha Schools, established by the will of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop in 1887, educates young Hawaiian boys and girls and helps to remedy educational deficiencies. The Queen Lili'uokalani Trust, established by the Queen in 1909, assists orphan and destitute Hawaiian children through its Children's Centers located on several islands. The Department of Hawaiian Homelands, established through the congressional enactment of Prince Kūhiō in 1921, provides housing to Hawaiians. And there many other organizations, too many to mention, that work to uplift our people.

And it's all about people. Island people. People of the sea. Native people. People like many who are here present. Those who have dedicated their lives to preserving a special place - Hawai'i -- and a special people - Hawaiians. Those, who like myself, can only hope that when we turn our eyes to the Heavens, and prepare to cast off on our final voyage at the end of our lives to raise the golden islands of heaven, can honestly say, as King Kalākaua said, "Tell my people, I tried. Tell my people. I tried."

We thank you all for your attendance and attention. May the tribe of your family flourish and your house be full of children. May your lands be fertile and your waters sweet and pure. When your time comes, may your reunion with you ancestors be a joyous one. And may you ever be guided, loved and protected by He who dwells in the heavens, He who is greater than us all.

Aloha.