

MĀNOA HERITAGE CENTER

2856 O'ahu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage PAID
Honolulu, Hawai'i
Permit No. 1467

MĀNOA HERITAGE CENTER

2856 O'ahu Avenue, Honolulu, HI 96822 (808) 988-1287 contact@manoaheritagecenter.org

WINTER 2020 NEWSLETTER



It takes many hands to make dye from Kukui hili (inner bark used for dyeing). Image from a March 2020 Ma Ka Hana Ka 'Ike workshop at MHC led by Kumu Loko'ulu Quintero.



Wai 'apo
n. Water caught in a taro leaf,
often used in ceremonies as it was
regarded as pure in not having
touched the ground.
(Pukui & Elbert)

A More Inclusive MHC

MHC's strategic plan for the next few years is based on a commitment to inclusion, relevance and sustainability. Transforming into an organization of, by, for the community requires a multi-pronged approach and we are looking forward to seeing how these different initiatives take shape (we'll tell you more about our participation in the OF/BY/FOR ALL Change Network later).

This summer, MHC docents participated in a virtual training that focused on MHC's story from a multicultural perspective. Making space for historically marginalized voices to emerge is a critical part of making MHC more inclusive and reflective of the community we serve. Topics included Hawaiian cultural values, lessons learned from Hawaiian language newspapers and archives including the history of epidemics in Hawai'i, and the Chinese and Japanese immigrant experience in the valley. In many ways, this is just the beginning of an organizational shift to better understand a more complete story of Mānoa and the people associated with it.

We were fortunate to spend time with Uluwehi Hopkins, a Ph.D. Candidate in UH's History Department, during a recent Kahaukani Conversation. Uluwehi provided a provocative perspective on the popular mo'olelo of Kahalaopuna as published by Emma Kailikapuolono Metcalf Beckley Nakuina (someone every Mānoa valley resident should know about!).

Uluwehi asked: Why is the original story so violent especially when very few of Hawaiian mo'olelo feature domestic violence? Why would a Hawaiian tell this story? Why would a Hawaiian tell this story at this point in history? After going through different published versions of the mo'olelo and background on Emma Nakuina's life, Uluwehi introduced her thesis that although fluent in Hawaiian, Emma Nakuina published in English and used her skill and notoriety to criticize the aggressive maneuvering of haole in the Hawaiian kingdom through the use of kaona (n. Hidden meaning, as in Hawaiian poetry; concealed reference, as to a person, thing, or place; words with double meanings that might bring good or bad fortune).

Curious? View her *Kahaukani Conversation* on the MHC website (www.manoaheritagecenter.org) or read her Master's thesis *Mo'olelo as Resistance: The Kaona of "Kahalaopuna" in a Colonized Environment*.

Kelsey Hara Takes Us Digital

Little did we at MHC know, when Kelsey Hara joined our team as MHC's first Digital Engagement / Web Content Associate in November of 2019, that her newly created position would become so critically integral after we closed our doors (twice) to the public during the COVID-19 pandemic. This part-time position focuses on building online audiences via MHC's website, social media platforms and e-newsletters. By mid-March of 2020, as we brainstormed how we could serve educators, students and community audiences, every idea involved virtual or online communication.

Throughout 2020, she has helped launch our virtual educational resource, MHC@Home, MHC's Ka'aipū Kākou blog, in addition to taking our Kahaukani Conversations lecture series online. Visit the MHC website to see what we have been up to! A digital native trained with a Master's degree in Library Information Science, Kelsey's attention to detail has already paid

off and online engagement has gone up noticeably, and we receive many positive comments about virtual programs. When she's not exploring MHC's garden of native plants, Kelsey can be found baking incredible vegan treats (an added bonus for coworkers!) and stalking neighborhood flora and fauna with her camera.



Visit us at www.manoaheritagecenter.org



MHC Hula Camp Goes Virtual!

Taking advantage of the Hawaii Department of Education's Fall Break, MHC hosted its second hula camp. This year, due to COVID, it took place completely online, using Zoom (a web-based virtual platform). Twenty-five students between the ages of 8-12 participated, including one family based on Hawai'i Island. Each student received a "hula camp activity kit" complete with materials for hands-on projects. Thanks to generous funding, the cost of materials for each kit was subsidized so that there was no fee to participate. It was a special treat to feature longtime MHC docent and friend, Kumu Hula Kilohana Silve of Hālau Hula o Mānoa to lead the weeklong camp. We asked Kumu Kilohana to summarize the experience in her own words:

"The Mānoa Heritage Center's virtual Hula Camp was an amazingly productive fun-filled week for all. The theme I had set was "Ma Ka Hana Ka 'Ike" or to learn by doing. This old-fashioned value of taking the time to create something mindfully and with aloha was the essence of what we wished each participating Keiki to experience.

Each day we visited the lush gardens surrounding Kūka'ō'ō Heiau to view native plants that were the focus of a Mo'olelo (story). Hands-on projects involved making Kāla'au for a hula we were learning about the beauty of nature, carefully stringing graduated Kukui nuts into a lei, and braiding Palapalai or Kupukupu ferns into a lei po'o. Virtual forums allowed haumāna to share their projects and they were able to interact and contact me directly with questions."

Although the idea of learning hula over a virtual platform might seem impossible, Kumu Kilohana's kind and gentle disposition, coupled with her grace and flexibility transcended the physical distance between us all as students connected, learned and shared. We look forward to our next virtual hula camp experience!

Haumāna + 'ohana voices on Virtual Hula Camp-ing

"I wish I could do this everyday and wish I could visit the gardens."

"Our kids will save and cherish their kala'au and kukui nut lei. And they're so happy that they now know how to make ti leaf and lei po'o. They're anxious to teach the neighbor kids."

"We love this program! It has an even blend of activities for our child to enrich and support the love for hula...We hope that this program will continue to be offered via online as we live on the opposite of the island and regretfully would not be able to attend should it only be offered live."



Behind the Screen! Mahalo Auntie Jenny, Auntie Ke'ala and Kumu Kilohana for all your hard work!



Kumu Hula Kilohana assisted by Auntie Ke'ala of MHC.



Virtual Hula Camp haumāna display their hand made kōka'au.



Kupu Member Samantha Nakahira.

Welcome Sami!

With great pleasure, we introduce the newest addition to the MHC 'ohana, Samantha "Sami" Nakahira of Kupu 'Āina Corps. The 'Āina Corps program at KUPU provides paid career-building employment and skill-training while directly impacting the community for young adults who find interest in environmental and sustainability fields. MHC joyfully joined the 'Āina Corps initiative for the 2020-2021 year, and

gratefully received a cheerful, kind, and 'eleu (sprightly) KUPU member, Sami!

As a line cook for the Sheraton Waikīkī Hotel, Sami was suddenly out of a job when the outbreak of COVID-19 hit. Quickly adjusting to her new situation, Sami saw this time as a window of opportunity to pursue her passion for nature. Sami owes her interest in preserving Hawai'i's natural habitat to growing up in East and Central O'ahu, *The Value of Hawai'i* book she read in

Mānoa Memories of Noboru Oda By Helen Nakano

As part of Mānoa Heritage Center's 2020 Docent Enrichment series, Board Member Helen Nakano chose to remember long-time Mānoa resident and community leader Noboru Oda and his stories of growing up in Mānoa Valley.

Noboru Oda's father was one of the early contract laborers who came from Fukuoka, Japan to work at the Hakalau Plantation on the Big Island. After completing his contract, he moved to Honolulu, near the old Dole Cannery. Noboru was the second child of this marriage and the only son of seven daughters. When he was four or five, his family moved deep into Mānoa Valley where a few Chinese families farmed bananas and Japanese farmed vegetables. His father began farming dry land taro and sold it through an agent. It took eight-months of intensive labor and sometimes they didn't get paid if the taro rotted before it reached California. Auwē! They also raised vegetables for the local market.

His family had no car, no telephone or electricity. They used an outdoor cesspool and a stove they fed with wood. There were lots of mosquitoes. His family of eight children was evicted from the two to three acres of land they lived on three times. Because education was important, all the children were sent to both English and Japanese language school at age six. When she was 12, Noboru's eldest sister went to work as a housemaid for a rich haole family down the valley. Noboru went to Washington Intermediate School until ninth grade when his father became too ill to work. By the age of 14, Noboru was driving the truckful of vegetables from Mānoa to River Street.

Life was survival in those days. Mr. Oda admitted that sometimes hidden among the daikon he delivered were a gallon or two of 'ōkolehao that they brewed in the forests. He delivered the contraband to Chinatown during the Prohibition Era.

When asked about his childhood, he recalls not playing, only tanomoshi, the forming of financial cooperatives based on a system of money pooling among friends and family. Always in debt, the farmers needed larger amounts to pay for the guano fertilizer, paying workers during harvest, and for misfortunes and illnesses. Tanomoshi was based on trust. Sometimes, if a friend you co-signed for didn't pay at the end, you ended up paying his debt to the others. But without a bank to borrow from, how could you survive?

In 1995, when he was recruited to serve on the board of local community organization Mālama o Mānoa (now known as Mālama Mānoa), Noboru not only owned his own home in Mānoa, he owned a wholesale vegetable business, and sent all three of his children to college. During his tenure at Mālama o Mānoa with Helen and Mary Cooke, he was always respectfully called "Mr. Oda," and valued as a wise kūpuna.

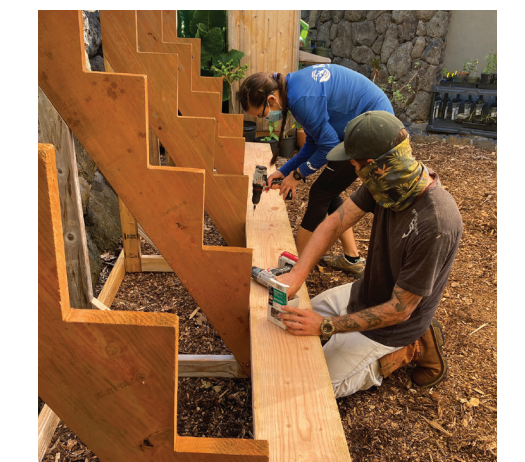


her Women Studies Course at UH Mānoa, and her eclectic palate for foods, 'āina's gifts.

So far, Sami has picked up quickly on her duties at MHC. Clearing invasive species, maintaining and propagating native plants, and assisting in educational programs, are a few of her kuleana. She most enjoys learning about the plants, how to care for them, and their cultural uses. We are so very grateful that she

accepted our request to learn and take care of this land with us!

MHC caretaker/educator/builder Kevin Prior is appreciative of her work ethic and "above and beyond" attitude when caring for the gardens: "without even asking, she went home and researched a plant that we did not know much about and came to work the next day with her newly gained knowledge."



Sami and MHC Caretaker/Builder/Educator Kevin install an awesome new propagation table!