



Mālama Mānoa

N E W S L E T T E R

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A Landmark Reimagined: The Repurposing of the UH Atherton Building

by Vanessa Distajo

Growing up in Lower Mānoa, generations of children have been taught to find their way home using the pink Atherton building as their guide. Located on the corner of University Avenue and Metcalf Street, the landmark was appropriately named for the generous, philanthropic donor, Charles Atherton, who funded the construction. Since 1932, the building served as a dormitory for the YMCA, welcoming a myriad of students to the University of Hawai'i's Mānoa campus with the sun-kissed glow of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel. In 2017, the UH Foundation acquired the property of 43,000+ square feet, with the hopes of expanding student housing opportunities.

After years of planning by the UH Foundation and visionary UH administrators, the landmark has been reimagined as "The Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship" to serve as a mixed-use live/work/learn eco-system for the expanding number of UH programs. The primary focus will be the Pacific Asian Center for Entrepreneurship or "PACE" program, which was envisioned by Susan Yamada, the Director of UH Ventures. It will serve as a catalytic project for economic diversification and reinvention, which is critically needed for 2021 and beyond. In addition, a recent study, by Myers Research, determined unmet demand for over 5,000 student beds, so the project will begin to alleviate the university's housing shortage.

Thus, the UH Foundation, UH Mānoa, and Hunt Companies united in a true public-private partnership to address the pressing needs with this \$70 million



A rendering of the UH Atherton complex reimagined as "The Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship" (printed with permission by Michael Lam of Hunt Companies)

project, of all private, non-taxpayer funds. On the University's side, the ambitious plan is being managed by Kalbert K. Young, the UH Chief Financial Officer/Vice President of Budget and Finance. Indeed, this is a very wise assignment by President David Lassner because Young grew up in the neighborhood, and has a genuine interest in maintaining the charm, safety, and security of the area since his mother still resides close by. At the helm for Hunt Companies, Michael Lam, the Senior Vice President of Development for the Hawai'i Region, is coordinating with the talented team of architects and the consummate professional Community Outreach Consultant, Lori Lum, of Watanabe Ing LLP. Like Young, Lam and Lum are also local success stories who have stayed home to share their unique skill sets for the betterment of the community.

The project that they are collaborating on entails the former Atherton YMCA building being repurposed into academic and commercial space. To complement it, an additional six-story building will be raised where the Mary Atherton Richards House currently resides. The taller structure will integrate academic and co-working

continued on page 7

MISSION STATEMENT

Our Mission is to promote community; celebrate our cultural diversity and heritage; and preserve, protect and enhance the special qualities of historic Mānoa Valley.

The President's Corner



Linda Legrande

Stepping into this position as President, I am humbled by those who have preceded me, most recently the inimitable Thalya DeMott and her incredible ability to “lead the charge” when it comes to issues facing our community — development vs. conservation, social needs, watershed management, zoning, and educational institutions — among many others. Heading into 2021, our plate is filling up with initiatives to preserve and enhance our Valley home.

I was a founding member of Mālama Mānoa in 1992 and the sense of community in our Valley was irresistible then, as it is now. We fought the good fight to preserve pristine Wa’ahila Ridge and protect the charming, historic homes gracing our tree-lined streets, just two examples of many successful initiatives over the years. We came together with commitment and passion and that spirit continues today!

New board member, Arleen Garcia-Herbst, has worked closely with 2nd Vice President Vanessa Distajo on the refresh of our organization's website. As an archaeologist, she is also supporting our efforts to design and install signage to properly recognize the oft-forgotten and overlooked archaeological site within Kamānele Park.

Another new board member, JC Watson, partnering with our Stream Cleaning Committee, will lead Albizia identification and eradication efforts to reduce the population of this destructive, invasive, and fast-growing tree that threatens our watersheds and ecosystems.

With the expertise of Andrea Wagner, Helen Nakano and her team have created Mānoa Community Connections, a directory of relevant Valley resources. It can now be accessed on our website <http://malamaomanoa.org/>. Look elsewhere in this issue to link to the Community Needs Survey that will help shape Mānoa Valley for years to come. Results will be shared at the “Confabulous,” a public event to be announced in our next issue.

One of the crown jewels of our valley, the historic Mānoa Chinese Cemetery, oldest and largest in Hawai’i, may not be able to celebrate the Year of the Ox in the usual festive way due to the pandemic, but we still deeply honor the community and culture that this magnificent site provides us.

With hopes that the uncertainties of the past year will gradually give way to a more predictable future, we have an eye on 2022, when Mālama Mānoa will celebrate 30 years in the Valley! We are calling all Kūpuna to come forward so we may honor you at a celebratory luncheon for those at least 65 years of age who have lived in the Valley for 40 years or more. Details for sign-ups on the following pages.

With gratitude and my warmest aloha,

Linda

Environmental Hero Award



On February 10, 2021, the City & County of Honolulu presented an “Environmental Hero Award” to Mālama Mānoa for our decades of dedicated stewardship of Mānoa Stream led by George Arizumi. Andrew Garrett, our 1st VP and current Chair of the Mānoa Stream Clean-Up Committee, accepted this honor on our behalf.

If you are interested in watching a recording of the ceremony, you may access the video at the following link.

<http://www.honolulu.gov/dfmswq/news.html>

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Go Deeper

by Phyllis Look

For those of us who call Mānoa home, we know when we've crossed that invisible threshold on our return *mauka*. Immediately, we feel the Valley's cool, green embrace, we breathe easier, our hearts lighten. You've just experienced a little of the wellness practice of forest bathing!



Phyllis offering an invitation to forest bathing participants, 2019. Credit: Elyse Butler/*Hana Hou! Magazine*

I'm Hawai'i's first certified forest therapy guide and it's my pleasure to provide some background on *Shinrin-Yoku* (translated: forest bathing). This innovative nature therapy was created in Japan in the early 1980s to address a public health crisis of stress-related diseases brought on by the country's rapid post-war urbanization. Decades of research have confirmed the numerous



physiological and psychological benefits of immersing yourself in a forest atmosphere, including normalizing blood pressure, boosting immunity, increasing mental clarity, and easing anxiety and depression.

While still a young movement— some have compared it to where yoga was in the 80s — awareness

Forest bathing for families.



Connecting with the natural world and your inner nature.

of forest therapy has accelerated, made more urgent by the impacts of climate change, and now a global pandemic. The current approach expands on the original vision of preventative self-care for the Japanese “salaryman” to one that also addresses community building and environmental activism.

But it begins simply, with a gentle facilitated walk. As your guide, I would offer a sequence of “invitations” to encourage an embodied and empathetic connection with your surroundings. The groups are small and we find time to pause, to share what we are noticing, to connect with ourselves and with others. In the words of a former participant:

Peace, focus, tranquility. These are just a few words that describe a Forest Bath. We are fortunate to be surrounded by natural wonders in Hawai'i, but it is easy to ignore them and take them for granted. With gentle intention, Phyllis guided all of us into opening our eyes, hearts, and minds to a deeper level of harmony and healing, with meaningful and lasting results.

I invite you to deepen your connection to the wonders of Mānoa by joining me for a walk in the rain forest of Lyon Arboretum. For more, visit www.forestbathinghi.com.

Phyllis Look is the owner and founder of Forest Bathing Hawai'i, and certified by the Association of Nature and Forest Therapy. She has guided more than 200 walks, which have been recognized in *The New York Times*, *Forbes*, *National Geographic*, and United Airlines' *Hemispheres Magazine*.

Manu-o-Kū, The White Tern of Hawai'i

by Thalya DeMott

The White Tern is often referred to as “Fairy Tern,” which is the common name of a black-crested tern not found in Hawai'i, but in the southwestern Pacific including Australia and New Zealand. Manu-o-Kū, or bird of Kū, the god of war, is the more accurate name for our indigenous Hawai'i subspecies, *Gygis alba candida*, also referred to as Angel Tern or White Noddy. *Gygis* refers to an ancient Greek word for a mythical bird, and *alba* is Latin for white.



The appearance of manu-o-Kū includes a pure white body, sharp black beak with a blue base, black-rimmed dark eyes, gray-blue feet and legs, and a notched tail. With an average wingspan of 30 inches, it is among the smaller sea-birds.

As year-round residents, breeding sites were exclusive to the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands until the first nesting pair on O'ahu were observed in 1961 in the Koko Head area. This year marks their 60th on O'ahu and, in that span, their urban population has grown to an estimated

2,300 as the graceful birds have become a beloved presence.

The most unusual characteristic of manu-o-Kū is their nesting habit, which is to lay a single speckled egg in a fork or depression on the horizontal bare branches of a mature canopy tree. Brooding sites may also include man-made structures and are found in populated makai areas from Hawai'i Kai to Pearl City.

Drivers along mauka Kalākaua Avenue may notice blue ribbon bands marking the center median trees as protected from trimming during the breeding season between February-June, although the birds can lay eggs throughout the year and raise up to three chicks. Mating pairs stay together for several seasons and may return to the same nesting trees.

These agile fliers dive from the air to the water's surface to hunt baby squid and small fish. The whole fresh food is fed to the chick, which grips its precarious perch with strong clawed feet.

Traditional Pacific navigators knew the manu-o-Kū as reliable indicators of the direction and distance to land, as the birds normally roam no farther than 30 miles from shore, returning at nightfall to roost.

State-listed as a threatened species, manu-o-Kū was formally designated as Honolulu's official bird by Mayor Hanneman in 2007.

Interested readers can learn more from Hui Manu-o-Kū, a dedicated local organization, at www.whiteterns.org.

Mālama Mānoa Foodland Give Aloha

Mālama Mānoa is a proud participant in the Foodland Give Aloha program, a community matching gifts program held annually through the month of September.

Donations are tax-deductible and anonymous, and can be made in person every September at Foodland locations, or when placing an online order for pick up or delivery. Mark your calendars now!

How to Donate:

At checkout or the customer service counter, present your Maika'i card (or your phone number) and inform the cashier that you would like to make a donation to Mālama Mānoa: code number 77651.

The name of our organization and your donation amount will appear on your receipt. Please save your store receipt as a record of your donation. Foodland does not reveal donor names or amounts. Mālama Mānoa would love to acknowledge your generosity and send you a Mānoa sticker for your participation! If you donated in 2020 or donate in 2021, please email malamamanoa12@gmail.com or leave a message at 988-6181.



Two Mānoa Houses Added to Historic Register

by Lowell Angell

Two houses in Mānoa have been added to the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places. Here's a summary of them. The complete Register nominations are on the Historic Hawai'i Foundation website at the links indicated.

2017 Lanihuli Drive. Built in 1925, this house is a blend of Colonial Revival and Arts and Crafts styles. It is significant not only as an example of its style, but in the development of the College Hills tract in the early 20th century. For more information: <https://historichawaii.org/2021/01/06/lanihuli-drive-2017/>.



2017 Lanihuli Drive

2848 O'ahu Avenue. The Wrenn Guest House, built in 1939, is an excellent example of early-mid 20th century Hawaiian Regional style, with a double-pitched "Dickey" roof, wide overhanging eaves and multiple double-hung windows, prevalent in Mānoa in the 1930s. For more information: <https://historichawaii.org/2021/01/06/oahu-avenue-2848-wrenn-guest-house/>.



2848 O'ahu Avenue

There are more than 125 historic Mānoa residences listed on the Hawai'i Register of Historic Places. For information about the Register and how to list your house, visit the Historic Hawai'i Foundation website at <https://historichawaii.org/resource-center-2/register-guide/#>.



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Conveniently located at Mānoa Marketplace!
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Mānoa Stakeholders Collaborate on a Community Needs Survey

by Vanessa Distajo

In the book, *Turning to One Another: Simple Conversations to Restore Hope to the Future*, Margaret J. Wheatley asserts, “There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.” Embodying this essence, the Mānoa Stakeholders, a coalition of eleven nonprofit organizations (including Be Ready Mānoa, Honolulu Japanese Seventh-Day Adventist Church, Mālama Mānoa, Mānoa Chinese Cemetery, Mānoa Japanese Language School, Mānoa Heritage Center, Mānoa Lions, Mānoa Neighborhood Board, Mānoa Outdoor Circle, Mānoa Valley Church, and Mānoa Valley Theatre), seek to listen and learn from our valued neighbors.

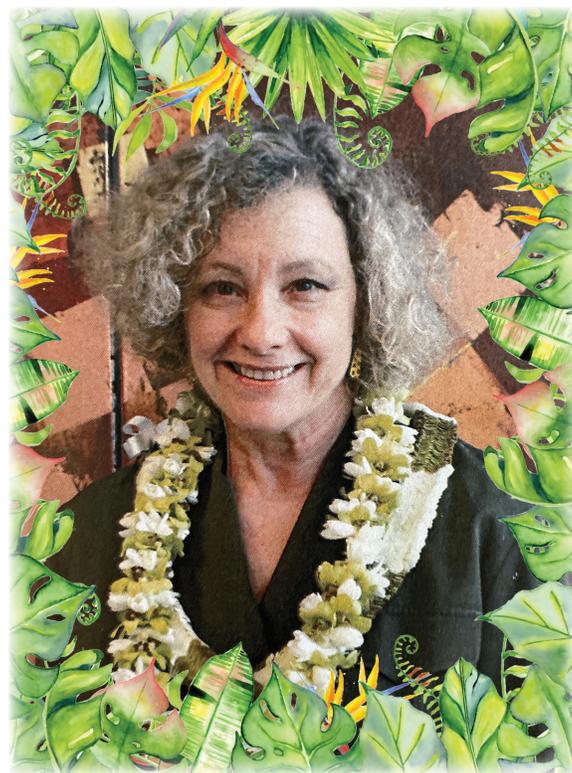
Since August 2020, a steering committee of twenty leaders, representing these organizations, has collaborated to develop a comprehensive “Mānoa Community Needs Survey.” To ensure proper methodology, the development of the survey has been guided by Faith Rex, President of SMS Consulting. Completely confidential, the results will be compiled in aggregate to inform the strategic planning of the organizations. The ultimate goal is to address the genuine needs of the community of Mānoa, while creating synergy through collaborative partnerships that produce the greatest collective impact.

Please help us by sharing your thoughts via the online survey. We greatly appreciate your participation and time.



Link: <https://survey.smshawaii.com/s3/Malama>

In Memoriam



Beverly D. Major, Mālama Mānoa Board officer, 2005-2008, passed away December 4, 2020 after a brief illness. Her joyful, artistic, talent was deeply appreciated during her years on our Board. Our deepest condolences from her many Mālama Mānoa friends.

e kala mai i a'u

The Fall/Winter Newsletter featured an inaccurate photo of Alice Ball. Here is the correct image.



CALLING ALL KŪPUNA.....

Are you 65 years or older, and have resided in Mānoa Valley for over 40 years? We would like to invite you to be our guest at our MĀLAMA MĀNOA 30th Anniversary and Kūpuna Luncheon in 2022. If you are not a kupuna, but know of one, we would like to hear from you for them. Please respond at malamamanoa12@gmail.com or call us at 988-6181. We would like the name, address, and phone number of the kupuna so that we may send an invitation with the details of the luncheon, when the time approaches.

Lyon Arboretum Re-opens to the Public

by Dale Moana Gilmartin

Less than three and a half miles, as the mynah flies, from downtown Honolulu is a place that could have been forgotten by time. Harold L. Lyon Arboretum, 194 acres nestled deep in the back of Mānoa Valley, is a nearly primeval setting. Majestic trees canopy the lush forest floor and a constant murmur of birdsong, insects and dripping water fills the moist, fragrant air. “Jurassic Park” could have been filmed here and, in fact, episodes of the once-popular television show “Lost” were filmed nearby on several occasions.

The Hawaiian Sugar Planters Association established the arboretum in 1918 to demonstrate watershed restoration, test various tree species for reforestation, and collect living plants of economic value. By the time the arboretum became part of the University of Hawai‘i in 1953, what was once nearly barren, overgrazed pastureland had become the lush rainforest it is today.

Originally named Mānoa Arboretum, the current name honors the arboretum’s first director, botanist Harold L. Lyon. The arboretum is now a repository for over 5,000 species of rare tropical plants, a research facility, living laboratory and classroom, and a Zen-like oasis. But the garden’s eternal-seeming green and tranquil ambiance belies the recent uncertainty over public access during a pandemic. Happily, visitors can now once again enjoy this precious slice of Mānoa Valley. (see “Go Deeper” on page 3)

Most of the facility’s buildings, charming wooden cottages constructed in the 1920s, had suffered from the valley’s

humidity, insects and the onslaught of time. Before the pandemic, the last time the arboretum closed for any significant length of time was for five months in 2004, when significant renovations on the cottages were initiated.

Then, in 2020, the arboretum suffered the fate of so many O‘ahu destinations, and remained closed for much of the year. According to arboretum office manager Derek Higashi, there were some upsides to the closure. “We were able to implement some long-awaited renovations to the gardens during the downtime,” he said. Higashi particularly encourages visitors to visit the newly-renovated spice garden, among many other themed gardens, including the canoe and native plant gardens. As 2021 brings us a renewed sense of hope, why don’t we put a visit to the arboretum on our calendars to help cultivate that optimism in our hearts and minds?

Information on Admission to Lyon Arboretum

<https://manoa.hawaii.edu/lyon/>

Reservations are required. Admission is still free, but donations are greatly appreciated! Masks are required. Visits are limited to 2 hours, with entrance and exit times are strictly enforced. Bathrooms and gift shop are closed. Groups of more than 5 people are prohibited. Social distancing (6 feet or more between members of different households) must be practiced.

UH Atherton Building *continued from page 1*

areas with housing for up to 374 students, who may move in as early as Fall 2023.

Since the collegiate generation is more likely to utilize newer transportation modes, including car share and Biki bikes, the updated property will make the necessary accommodations. For those who drive, there will be limited parking on site; however, UH Mānoa currently plans to build an on-campus parking facility with more than 400 stalls, depending on funding. A parking structure, within walking distance on campus proper, will surely ease the parking woes felt by the surrounding neighbors.

The developers were attuned to this concern because they diligently engaged the community stakeholders in the planning process. In Fall 2019, they contacted Mānoa

Neighborhood Board Chair Dylan Armstrong, who arranged for a prompt presentation at a public meeting. After hearing overwhelming testimony in support by current UH students and faculty, the MNB members voted 9-1 in support of the project concept. Then, understanding Mālama Mānoa’s mission of historical preservation, the developers met with our board of directors and advisors multiple times. They earnestly listened to our comments, making numerous modifications to the initial plans to resolve our concerns. The project’s latest design has been informed by our input, area residents, and the board members of organizations such as Mānoa Outdoor Circle, Historic Hawai‘i Foundation, and Trees for Honolulu’s Future. Construction is slated to begin before the end of this calendar year, but don’t worry, the historic Atherton building will remain “pretty in pink!”



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Mānoa Merchandise

We have lovely Mālama Mānoa tote bags, hats, and shirts. We also have a new shipment of short sleeve, cotton T shirts! Call or email to check on inventory. All funds directly support Mālama Mānoa's community activities. Email malamamanoa12@gmail.com or call 988-6181.

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Stay Tuned for Future Events!

Mālama Mānoa looks forward to returning to our regularly scheduled events post-pandemic. Please stand by; we will return soon.

Community Calendar

Mālama Mānoa Board meetings and The Mānoa Neighborhood Board No. 7 are not holding in-person meetings until further notice.