Friends of the Natatorium
The Territory of Hawai‘i in World War I

- Over 10,000 people of Hawaii contributed
- Red Cross, Ambulance, British & U.S. Forces
- Record-setting bond sales and volunteers for service

“… the Territory of Hawaii stands in a class by itself among the States and Territories having already furnished nearly 2,000 men as volunteers in excess of the number required from the islands to fill up the first army.”

- Washington Post
  July 15, 1917
What Did Our Past Want To Leave To Us?
“Memorial constructed at Memorial Park, Waikīkī”
- Act 15 (1921)
“To the men and women of Hawai‘i who served during the Great War”
- Act 15 (1921)
“…shall include a swimming course at least 100 meters in length.”

- Act 15 (1921)
Construction & Design

- Design competition resulted in selection of Lewis Hobart of San Francisco
Opening
August 24, 1927

“Tonight the Hawai‘i War Memorial opens. It is highly appropriate that this Memorial to the heroes of the World War should be a public natatorium....”

“The Natatorium epitomizes Hawaii’s prominence in one of the world’s great sports. Situated at Waikīkī, it looks upon and is a part of the ocean, whereof Hawai‘i is the “cross road.”
International Center of Swimming

1954: Pacific Stars and Stripes

1928: Charleston Daily Mail

Konno Defeats Yamashita

HONOLULU, July 9 (AP) — Japan's top swimmers battled U.S. and Hawaiian stars stroke for stroke to win two out of four major events at the opening of the four-day international swim meet at Waikiki Natatorium last night.

Ford Konno, Hawaii's ace, crushed Japanese hopes in the blueplate 1500 meter freestyle, but Masaru Furukawa of Japan romped to an easy victory in the 200 meter breaststroke.

Furukawa also sparked the Japanese relay to victory in the 300 meter medley.

Richard Cleveland of Hawaii and Ohio State University won the 50 meters freestyle in 25.2 to better his American record by one-tenth of a second.

Japan's Masanobu Koga, second with 25.5, chalked up his best time yet in the event.

Waikiki Natatorium bulged at the seams as a record 4,000 fans turned out under starlit Hawaiian skies to cheer their heroes.

The Japanese swimmers won standing ovations for their efforts.

They took their loss of the 1500 meters event in good spirits but nearly all the Japanese entrants blamed the salt water pool with its unmarked ocean bottom for their defeat.

Kaisuji Yamashita, Japan's bright hope, told reporters he kept bumping the marker floats.

After his gruelling effort he said he was "very, very anxious" to meet Konno again— but Yamashita added emphatically, "in Japan."

Yamashita had beaten Konno twice in Japan last year and had been favored to beat him again.

1954: Pacific Stars and Stripes
Community

Where Hawai‘i learned to swim
What Went Wrong?

4 x 24" pipes for circulation
Those who don’t learn their history, repeat it.

- 1960s & 1970s – proposals to demolish Natatorium, ‘Iolani Palace, Royal Hawaiian Hotel, Chinatown
- The 1980-85 Study original for DEMOLITION instead resulted in an EIS for RESTORATION
By 1998:
- EIS complete
- $11.5 million secured for project
- Engineering design issues addressed
- All permits in place
- Contracted

New Design
- Ko‘olina Lagoon Engineers
- Four 24” circulation pipes now 8’ x 16’
- Natural ocean circulation
- Silicone lined
- Decreased depth
- Water quality as high as the surrounding water
So why are we still talking about this?

- **2005**: Restoration stopped
- **2008**: Army Corps of Engineers Report completed
- **May 2009**: Mayor establishes a task force to recommend an alternative; states own preference for demolition and new beach
- **Nov. 2009**: Task force majority endorses Mayor’s alternative; Mayor accepts task force recommendation; minority report forwarded as well.
Current Conditions: Demo by Neglect

“Ensuing failures are likely to occur suddenly.”
- Existing Building Structural Condition Report, prepared by Wilson Okamoto for the C&C of Honolulu, July 2004

“If the San Souci Beach side of the basin perimeter collapses, the beach will destabilize. If the north side wall also collapses, then it is likely that a dry sand beach will no longer exist along this shore.”
- Wil Chee Planners Emergency Preparedness Contingency Plan, September 2008
Current Conditions

The offices and restrooms under the bleacher section have been in use since the restoration of that section was completed in 2000.

Simple repairs such as this door have not been attended to since the restoration was halted in 2005.
Where do we go from here?

OPTIONS
OPTION #1:
STATUS QUO
(DEMOLITION BY NEGLECT)

- Collapse Containment
- Install additional Warning signs
- Fence Pool
- Cover pool with Geo-net
- Apply bleacher coating
OPTION 2: RETURN TO THE NATURAL SHORELINE

- Complete demolition of all structures
- Return to natural state & location
- Eliminates 87 parking spaces

Photos courtesy City & County of Honolulu
OPTION 3: RESTORE AND REDESIGN

- Reengineer the pool
- Cosmetic fixes to the bleachers, restrooms
- Highest annual costs because of additional management, maintenance and safety positions created.
OPTION 4: DEMO & BUILD BEACH

- Demolish all structures
- Construct new beach with parallel groins
- Rebuild arch in different location
- Create additional beach area in Waikīkī
- Eliminates 46 parking stalls along the access drive and 31 Natatorium parking stalls now reserved for safety personnel.
- Safety Station relocated
- Restrooms rebuilt
CHOOSING THE BEST OPTION

Considerations and Evaluations
ESTIMATED COSTS

Status Quo
Rehabilitation & Redesign
$4 million

Natural 1927 Shoreline
Demolition & Build Beach
$9.2 million

$16.5 million
$17 million

Photos: Wil Chee Natatorium Task Force Presentation
What Makes it Historic?

• State & National Historic Registers
• Association with historic events, people
• Setting
• First “Living War Memorial” in the U.S.
What is not preservation...

- Moving and replicating
- Authentic arch cannot be moved
- Demolished and imitated
Mementos and Recreations Don't Work
Shoreline & Kaimana Beach

Restoration

- The Natatorium has allowed San Souci beach to form
- Protected San Souci for over eighty years.
- The ONLY proven way to keep Kaimana Beach is to restore the Natatorium
Environmental Concerns

“The loss of the perimeter sea wall would pollute the surrounding ocean areas through the release of the debris, resulting from the partial collapse of the pool deck slab.”
- Wilson Okamoto 2004 Structural Report

- Beach building will require shipment of sand from international sources & Continual sand replenishment
- The impacts on the marine life and ocean water quality from the full demolition and construction of an artificial beach are unknown.
PERMITTING

ALL OPTIONS ARE SUBJECT TO THESE LAWS AND PERMITS

1. FEDERAL: Section 106 Review (National Historic Preservation Act)
2. FEDERAL: Section 10 Rivers and Harbors Act
3. FEDERAL: National Environmental Policy Act
4. FEDERAL: Clean Water Act Section 404
5. FEDERAL: Endangered Species Act
6. FEDERAL: Magnuson – Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
7. FEDERAL: Permit for Marine Protection, Research and Sanctuaries Act
8. State DLNR Environmental Impact Study
9. Disability & Access Board Review
10. State DLNR Conservation District Use
11. DLNR Executive Order for Construction Right of Entry
12. City & County Special Management Area
13. City & County Shoreline Setback Variance
14. City & County Building Permit
15. State Dept. of Health 401 Water Quality Certification
16. Hawai‘i State Coastal Zone Management Program
Legal Issues

• The State of Hawai‘i: Owners have not consented
• City County Ordinance 90-1: Specifies that the City will operate it as a Natatorium
• Hawai‘i Supreme Court Ruling barring demolition
SIMILAR PROJECTS

Miami Marine Stadium being restored

Richmond, California rehabilitating 1927 salt water natatorium

Newcastle Baths in Australia

Photo: Robert Strauss, Courtesy of the Save the Richmond Plunge Trust
December 2009: Georgian Government demolishes WWII memorial to make room for new parliament building.

The Russian foreign ministry denounced an "act of state vandalism which offends the feelings of every civilised person." - BBC
Other World War I Memorial Restoration Projects

New Jersey War Memorial Restoration: $33 million+ (1999)

Washington D.C.’s WWI memorial (local memorial) received $7.5 million in Federal money for restoration

$102 million for restoration and expansion in Kansas City for their memorial (reopened 2006)

Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Restoration cost under $1 million vs. $2.2 M for replacing with replica. (2009)
Other Salt Water Pools

- Hundreds exist around the world
- Considered safer than ocean
- Pools without pumps safer
- Pool water quality = Ocean water quality
Save Our History

“The commitment to restoring the authentic monument is consistent with the best of American traditions: we do not discard our national treasures”
- Senator Daniel Akaka

Referring to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier
From Here…

• natatorium.org
• HistoricHawaii.org
• Sign up for alerts
• Environmental Impact Statement comment
• Share the information and educate others
• Join the preservation cause: HHF and Friends of the Natatorium
• Memorial Day Weekend: Sunday May 30