

President's Report 1982-83

FILE

Achievements Reflect "Can Do" Attitude

by Richard A. Coons

As we moved into the '80s, preservation continued to change dramatically from an attitude into an economic reality.

This last year has brought greater focus on the economic potential of saving older buildings as an investment and as a way of meeting the housing, social and cultural needs of our diverse community.

Perhaps the best illustration of commercial revitalization is Honolulu's Chinatown where more than half of the historic buildings are being rehabilitated by our members. This work is providing construction jobs, creating interest in learning rehabilitation skills and producing interesting space for tenants.

HOUSING

We have seen remarkable interest in home remodeling and renovation in the past year. Our Maono Valley house and neighborhood tours sparked a great deal of interest in older homes.

The rehabilitation program we are working on with the Kahuku Housing Corporation will affect 200 plantation homes. These homes, some inhabited by third generation families, provide affordable housing for the thousand residents who would not be able to afford new, market-priced homes. With government monies stretched thin, the practical solution to housing, which is totally supported by the Kahuku residents themselves, is the self help fix-up program we have worked on to allow the Kahukuanas to continue to use their older homes for shelter and as a way of life.

One of our notable achievements this year was the real property tax amendment allowing total tax exemption for homes listed on the State and National Registers of Historic Places. The minimal reduction



A highlight of May was passage of a Honolulu City Council resolution supporting Historic Preservation Week. Shown are (l-r) HHF President Richard A. Coons, Trustee Robert H. Gerrell, Councilwoman Welcome Fawcett, HHF Exec. Dir. Phyllis Fox, and Preservation Week/Parade Chr. Vance Borland, Jr. (Honolulu City Council photo)

in real property tax revenue to the counties will maximize the home owner's ability to repair, maintain and save older homes which provide needed shelter and a sense of heritage for all of us to enjoy.

"CAN DO ATTITUDE"

This tax exemption reflects the kind of positive "can do" attitude which you will see reflected over and over again in the work of Historic Hawai'i.

Recently a developer proposed a housing project in Wahiawa on property that held an older residence. The first thought was to demolish the home and build new units in its place. After discussions with the county Department of Land Utilization and Historic Hawai'i trustees and staff, the developer agreed to save the older building and in return, was granted permission to construct additional housing units which will provide added profit to the project.

TOURISM-PRESERVATION PARTNERSHIP

There is another project we have been working on which has unlimited potential for Historic Hawai'i and the travel industry.

Last July, we successfully served as administering and coordinating agency for the first Cultural Heritage Conservation Seminar, attended by 46 students from 14 Pacific Basin countries. Faculty was recruited from Australia, Japan, Macao, Hawai'i and the mainland. Evaluations were so positive, a second seminar will be held this September.

The spin-offs have been even more rewarding. We have approached the faculty at the University of Hawai'i and are enthusiastically working to establish a curriculum at the undergraduate and graduate level using a multidisciplinary approach.

We also established communication with the staff at the National Trust for Historic Preservation's resource library and will coordinate with them on establishing a resource center here on all phases of historic preservation.

MEMBERSHIP-PLANNING A FUTURE FOR THE PAST

Historic Hawai'i was honored to be chosen by the National Trust to receive a Challenge Grant this year to strengthen our existing membership and to further expand our base.

We are now at the half-way point in recruiting major donors of \$1,000 or more as Charter Members in the Hawai'i Heritage Associates, approaching leaders in our community to share information about our programs and our positive approach to preservation.

We will be launching a major general membership drive June 9.

In the fall, we will be reaching out to preservation-related organizations to establish a network that will

CLARIFICATION ON PU'UPUEO

Recent research by the members of the Maono Valley History Project has definitely located Pu'upueo as the hill upon which the Cooper family built their home (see *Historic Hawai'i News*, May 1983, "Cooper Home One of Valley's Oldest," p. 4, and "Author's Note," p. 9).

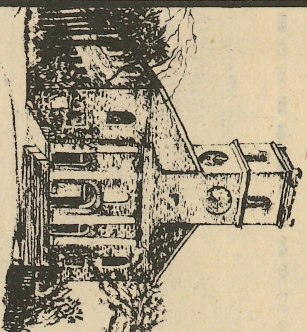
CORRECTIONS

On page 4 of May's *Historic Hawai'i News*, the hotel at the corner of Punahou and Beretania streets should be spelled "Courtland," Mr. Peck's first name is "Tenney" and the postcard photo caption should have read "Cooper Home (far right)..." instead of "left." On page 5, the Frazier family moved to Lanikai in the 1930s, not 1930.

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Richard A. Coons was re-elected President of Historic Hawai'i at the May 12 Annual Meeting.

(Mark Williford photo)

reach from the grassroots to the county, state and national levels providing an interchange of information and constituency geared for achievement.

We are also studying broader financial considerations being given to preservation on the mainland using sophisticated arrangements for rehabilitation joint ventures between private developers and nonprofit organizations as an additional inducement for private sector funding for historic preservation. Government leasing of historic properties to organizations which will fix up the buildings and maintain them benefit the public.

Historic Hawai'i has a proven track record of success in our programs. We have been cited as one of the outstanding preservation organizations in America. We want and need the continued support of our members, old and new — and we will continue working to earn that support.

HISTORIC HAWAII NEWS

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