



# HUI LIMA KOKUA NEWSLETTER - 'Apelila 2024

Hawaii Club of Ventura County - April 2024

## Calendar & Upcoming Events

### 'Apelila | April

3/31 - 4/6 Merrie Monarch Festival

1 - April Fool's Day

13 - Hui Lima Club Meeting

22 - Earth Day

### [Hui Lima Meeting Location](#)

Club House of the Bonaventure  
10949 Telegraph Road  
Ventura, CA 93004

## [Next Meeting: Saturday, April 13 - 11a-1p](#)

Our next meeting is potluck and we are looking forward to a special program on vintage Hawaiian shirts. If you have a vintage or any kine Hawaiian shirt, please wear yours!

I hope you enjoyed March's program on Hōkūle'a by yours truly. I am just happy that the technological issues were resolved and the presentation worked! 😊

The club house *should* be ready for us by April's meeting; if not, we'll meet again in the main building.



## Oakland, CA's Academy of Hawaiian Arts Returns to Merrie Monarch



It's time for the 61st annual Merrie Monarch Festival, held at the Edith Kanaka'ole Stadium in Hilo! Merrie Monarch week begins March 31st and lasts until April 6th, with the opening Ho'ike (exhibition) starting on Weds., April 3rd, Miss Aloha Hula soloists on Thursday, April 4th, Group Kahiko (ancient hula) on Friday night, April 5, and finally Group 'Auana (modern hula) and the awards ceremony taking place Saturday night, the 6th.

In the hula world, it is a prestigious honor to be invited to compete in the Merrie Monarch Festival. Most hālau competing are from the Hawaiian Islands, but there have been some in years' past from California, Las Vegas, even Texas! This year, the only out-of-state hālau competing is the Academy of Hawaiian Arts (AHA) from Oakland, CA, led by Kumu Hula Mark Keali'i Ho'omalū.

The Academy of Hawaiian Arts is no stranger to Merrie Monarch, but this will be the first time in eight years that they will perform at the festival. They were slated to perform in 2017 and were present at the stadium, but withdrew at the last minute for unknown reasons. AHA had since been on a hiatus from Merrie Monarch, and announced late last year that they will be back for 2024.

Kumu Hula Mark Keali'i Ho'omalū can be considered famous or infamous in hula circles, depending on who you talk to. Ho'omalū is originally from O'ahu but moved out to California in the late '70s. With the title Kumu Hula, he is definitely a hula master, making him well-versed in hula and Hawaiian culture & traditions. Though grounded in tradition, Ho'omalū has his unique style and doesn't shy away from bending or breaking the molds of tradition. Additionally, with his signature Oakleys (worn *all* the time, even during performance) and choosing to sit on a chair vs. on the ground to play the ipu heke (see picture) - all of this combined has rubbed the more traditional community the wrong way. Kumu Mark even contributed music to the animated film *Lilo & Stitch*. He modernized an ancient chant for King Kalākaua into the song "He Mele No Lilo" for the film, which he sung with the accompaniment of the Kamehameha Schools Children's Chorus. He also wrote a song for the film, "Hawaiian Rollercoaster Ride". Again, traditionalists did not appreciate the former being adapted for modern consumption.

Despite this, Kumu Mark Ho'omalū (in my personal opinion) puts on incredible performances with his hālau, and many in the hula community are excited to see the AHA's return to Merrie Monarch.

As the Merrie Monarch performance nights approach, I can send out the link for where to livestream. Keep in mind, these nights are very long since they are on Hawai'i time!



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## Waikīkī Aquarium Turns 120



Waikīkī Aquarium celebrated its 120th anniversary on March 19th of this year! This makes it one of the oldest aquariums in the U.S., some listing it as the 2nd-oldest, behind the New York Aquarium. Originally known as the Honolulu Aquarium, it was built by the then Honolulu Rapid Transit and Land Authority, predecessor to TheBus, the public transit system of O‘ahu. A new trolley line had been established by Kapi‘olani Park, and the hope was that this aquarium would attract customers to ride out that way.

In its early years, the aquarium was considered state-of-the-art, with exceptional collections of specimens. It even boasted a couple of famous visitors, including Jack London and politician & Woodrow Wilson’s Secretary of State, William Jennings Bryan.

The aquarium was originally privately funded but after the property lease expired in 1919, it was given up to the Territory of Hawai‘i with the University of Hawaii taking over the administration and laboratory. In 1949, the Territory funded a new site for the aquarium, just 100 yards south of the original site, which then became the Waikīkī Aquarium. Since 1919 until the early ‘70s, the money from the admissions was deposited into the State General Fund, but sadly, none of the money went back to the aquarium for maintenance. At one point, there were only seven full-time employees, and the aquarium was just a building of marine collections with little purpose or direction.

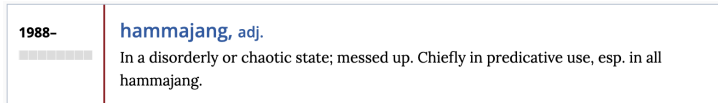
By 1975, as its third Director, Dr. Leighton Taylor essentially brought the aquarium back to life by defining a purpose, generating new revenue sources, and creating educational programs - all of which brought in the capital needed to improve and renovate the tired aquarium. Taylor was also a member of the U of H Zoology faculty. The purpose he defined for the aquarium was of conservation, education, and research.

Ever since the days of Taylor’s 11 year tenure, the aquarium has been continuously improving in all areas in which he envisioned. The only real challenge since then was when everything shut down for the Covid pandemic. The aquarium was closed for two years, which meant that no money was making its way in. Though still recovering, Waikīkī Aquarium is hopeful for the future and excited to celebrate 120 years of existence!

## ‘Hammajang’ is in the Oxford English Dictionary

Who knew a Hawaiian Pidgin word would be in the Oxford English Dictionary (OED)? Hammajang, meaning all messed up/wonky, was selected in February 2019 as a new entry to the OED.

The Oxford English Dictionary is considered the most comprehensive record of the English language, and is updated four times a year to reflect our evolving terms. Over time, words may also be marked as ‘obsolete’ or ‘archaic’ if their usage wanes.



Interestingly, ‘howzit’ also made the OED in the same month and year as hammajang, although under the contribution of South Africa and not Hawai‘i.



## HAU‘OLI LĀ HĀNAU

to our ‘Apelila birthdays:

Bruce Tabor  
Emperatriz “Queenie” Pinedo-Ortiz  
Maxwell Hannum



Hope you enjoy your day and your celebrations!

**Hope to see you at our April Meeting, Saturday, 4/13 11a-1p!**

**Comments, Corrections, Questions, Suggestions?** Feel free to reach out and let me know if you have suggestions for future newsletters, or corrections / comments on previous ones. Leah Kammeyer, [LKammeyer@gmail.com](mailto:LKammeyer@gmail.com), (805) 469-9230