



estimated at about 250 people, enjoyed the fishing, the smooth seas, the fun, and the fine food and entertainment served up by the Rendezvous Committee and Lana'i volunteers. The lovely ladies of Na Hula O La'i Kealoha

Lopez, and Marc Alboro; Trevor Jones, the gravel voiced dynamo from Lahaina; and Larry Spaulding with his famous harmonica. Larry also doubled as M.C. for the night, not an easy task. Johnny Baldwin assisted with his banjo, and his wife, Debbie, was crowned queen for the day and had the dubious honor of being kissed by all of the prize winners.

Other local luminaries who assisted in making the Rendezvous a success were: Jeff and Sherry Menzie, Max Kincaid, the Maui PD, Maui Electric, Stella del Rosario,

by the Lahaina Yacht Club and the club should be commended for its sponsorship.

Bob Hall, a tireless volunteer himself, had this to say about the event:

"The success of the Lana'i Rendezvous is due to the fun-loving entrants and the willingness and experience of the volunteers, who gave freely of their most precious commodity - Time. It has never been a business. It does not appear on the domestic or international registry of tournaments, yet it is widely known and accepted."

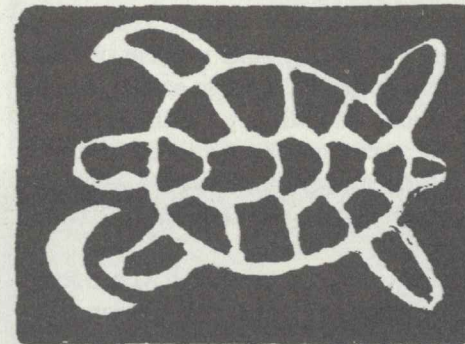
## "O Ka Honu O Polihua"

An ancient Hawaiian chant describes the fire goddess Pele feasting on the turtles of Polihua and provides a clue to the natural history of endangered green turtles in Hawaiian waters. In fact, according to George H. Balazas, Zoologist with the National Marine Fisheries Service, "the only site in the Hawaiian Islands with a well-documented history of nesting sea turtles is Polihua, a mile long white sand beach on the northern shore of Lana'i."

By combining the mythic traditions as well as more modern accounts, Dr. Balazas has pieced together a fascinating story of the famous turtles of Polihua, which has been published in "Elepaio", the journal of the Hawaii Audubon Society. The following information is taken from that article, which Dr. Balazas has kindly sent to The

Lana'i Times.

To begin with, the very name, Polihua, translated as "eggs in bosom" is the only Hawaiian location where the place name is descriptive of eggs on a beach. "The available information suggests that Polihua was an important breeding site for the Hawaiian Green turtle...until the late 1800's or early 1900's....In view of the protected status of sea turtles under the U.S. Endangered Species Act, a synthesis of historical information about Polihua...may be helpful to the recovery of the Hawaiian stock." For example", Balazas suggests, "Polihua could prove to be one of the best places in Hawaii to do experimental restocking of green turtles aimed at re-establishing a nesting colony."



"Oh! The turtle of Polihua"

"Linoleum cut by Joana Varawa"

### Hawaiian Legends

A very old story about the fishing god, Aiai, tells that he traveled around the Hawaiian islands establishing fishing shrines (koa), many of which still stand at

avored fishing places. "At Kaena he marks a stone which turns into a turtle and this explains how turtles came to Hawaiian waters and why they come to the beach to lay their eggs, and this is the reason for the name Polihua." (Ruth Beckwith, Hawaiian Mythology)

Ruth Tabra, in her book on Lana'i, recounts the Pele chant — "Ua ono o Pele i kana i'ia o ka honu o Polihua" — and translates it as "Delighted, Pele feasts on flesh of turtles from Egg-nest Cape."

Mary Pukui translates an old Hawaiian proverb "Na honu ne'e o Polihua" as "The moving turtles of Polihua".

And Kenneth Emory, who conducted archeological investigations during the

*continue on page 6 Turtles*

Lana'i Times • PO Box 650 • Lana'i, Hawaii 96763

*Address Correction Requested*

## MANELE ROAD TO BE REPAVED

Repaving of the Manele Road will begin on Monday September 21st and continue on workdays to Friday, November 16. During that time the public can expect short delays although there will always be one lane kept open. Work will be done by the paving contractor,

Hawaiian Bitumuls, with material supplied by Lana'i Rock and Concrete. So schedule your trips down and up the hill accordingly and don't cut it to the minute if you expect to get to work on time or catch the Expeditions ferry.





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1920's... talked to some of the old Hawaiian residents, translates Poli-hua as "nest egg (descriptive). Beach. A place famous for sea turtles."

Emory also described two archeological sites on the east side of Polihua Valley which he believed might be fishing shrines (koa). Near Polihua is the great heiau (ancient temple) at Kaena -iki, the largest religious structure on Lana'i. It is nameless now, the once living ceremonies forgotten, but it might be linked to the ancient fishing culture of the island.

Exploitation

With the abolishment of the kapu system in 1819, the historic controls on natural resources were destroyed. Turtle flesh, which was once probably reserved for chiefs and ceremonial occasions became food for anyone. Nesting turtles were particularly vulnerable because they had to come to the beaches to lay their eggs and were easily hunted and killed.

Kahaulelio, a Hawaiian writing a series of newspaper articles in 1902, described the turtles of Polihua and the method of catching them. "Polihua at Lana'i was a very famous place for turtle catching. The natives catch them on the sand shore if they need meat. Strangers do too, when they want to visit and see for themselves and if they wanted some to eat. It was a good thing to see this famous fish of the birthplace of my beloved mother...This was the fish that Pahulu asked the gods not to allow it to have any irritation in its flipper or tail...Yes, when you go to Polihua to catch turtles, you need all your strength."

Charles Gay wrote that in the early 1900's "turtles laid their eggs in the sand above the high water mark (at Polihua). I have seen turtles that weighed in excess of five hundred pounds on this beach and were capable of carrying three medium sized persons."

That the turtles of Polihua were green turtles seems to be confirmed by the chant and the proverb which names the turtle as "honu"...the green turtle, as opposed to "honu'ea"...the hawksbill. In addition, the large size of the turtles mentioned by Gay and Kahaulelio is consistent with the known size of the of the adult green turtle, but not the hawksbill, which is smaller. Further confirmation is provided by the fact that the turtles were taken for food as the hawksbill was considered poisonous and not eaten.

Current Information

Dr. Balazas has accumulated a great deal of more recent information about the

pendence. He notes that "a stone image of a "turtle god" is reported to be at Polihua...there are also reports of a turtle petroglyph located at Polihua.

Two people remembered catching turtles at Polihua during the 1920's. "The sharp decline in nesting during subsequent years has been attributed to the construction of roads, increase in traffic to the north shore, and easier access for taking turtles on the beach.... Other possible adverse factors to nesting...include changes in coastal vegetation and heavy erosion at higher elevations."

However there have been reports of attempted nesting at Polihua during later years: in 1954 a nest was reportedly seen; in 1968 a turtle was seen "up on a northshore beach"; in 1971 a turtle was seen at the water's edge; in November, 1977, two large green turtles were seen mating off the northeastern shore; in July, 1981 two very large turtles were seen "20-30 yards up the beach"; in the spring of 1983 a large turtle was seen in the early morning returning to the water; and in August, 1983, a large turtle was seen in the shoreline at Awalua.

During the 1960's and early 1970's green turtles were intensively hunted off Lana'i and Molokai for the restaurants and other commercial markets in Maui. In 1968 a fisherman wrote on his monthly catch report that "This area in 1948-1950 I used to catch at least 100 in 4 to 5 days fishing — for some reason there are no turtles there now." Another fisherman noted that turtles caught in past years off Molokai could be recognized as having been ashore on Lana'i by the tar stains on their undersides.

Another factor in the decline of green turtles might be pollution. In 1978 a fisherman speared a female green turtle who "was found to have large pieces of black and white plastic bags packed throughout its intestines."

The Future

What the future holds for the ancient turtles of Polihua is up to us. Vulnerable on the beaches, the turtles cannot continue if they cannot nest in peace. Dr. Balazas suggests that systematic surveys could ascertain the present status of "ka honu o Polihua", and that the beach could be utilized for experimental restocking.

Perhaps our vision could contain an image of a sanctuary at Polihua where the great beasts could bask and play and bring forth their young undisturbed by hunters or curiosity seekers — a sanctuary in the sun and a glowing tribute to the foresightedness of Lana'i.

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