

Given to GHB
by Alex 12-4-89

Honolulu (12/10/86):

On November 29th Alice and I went to the Mauna Kea Hotel at Kawaihae on the Big Island; stayed two nights. We found it physically beautiful and architecturally fascinating. Too bad the food was mediocre. However, that did not stop us from having a good time. Two noteworthy incidents:

1) At night the hotel turns on two very strong lights that are aimed into the ocean at the rocky shore of the hotel grounds. Plankton are attracted by the light. Manta rays come in to feed on the plankton. First night: Three! Second night: Four! All at the same time! Such magnificence has rarely been my experience. The way they swam and plowed into the plankton was done in the smooth manner reminiscent of a skilled window washer cleaning a store-front. Smooth, continuous, effortless. On the second night a girl went down to the water's edge and tried to pet them. Her friends said she did this all the time. She was not successful. I still see the manta ray swimming back and forth; huge, silver-grey, sleek, effortless, timeless.

2) On Sunday Alice and I went for a walk on the trail at water's edge heading toward Hapuna. Brought camera and took pictures of the water, rocks, water and rocks, sky and water, Alice, Alice and rocks, me, etc. On the way back we detoured on the hotel grounds to visit a rock that looks like a giant sea turtle and reputedly

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was an Hawaiian shrine; it was garlanded with flowers and leaves. When I photographed the rock the shutter of my indestructable Leica made an unusual noise and the camera jammed. After fiddling around for a few minutes I took off the lens to look at the shutter and saw that the curtain was jammed open. In dismay, especially since I loved that rock and was photographing it in homage, I rewound the film and returned to our room. Subdued to say the least.

Later that day we checked out of the hotel, drove to Hawi and then Kamuela, met our flight at Kailua-Kona airport, and returned to Honolulu; all without incident.

After we returned home I took the film to Long's Drugs for them to send it to Kodak for processing. When I received the film back it was blank: there were no pictures. The film however, was exposed up to where I had stopped and rewound it into the cartridge. Thus, the leader was exposed, the next couple of inches were not, then about twenty frames were totally overexposed with even the frame lines obliterated; the balance was unexposed. The shutter had jammed open and malfunctioned from the first frame, contrary to what I had thought.

This turtle-rock had not caused the problem after all. Rather, it alerted me and prevented me from compounding it. It seems then, that I owe this fine rock an apology.

HAWAII, HONOLULU *