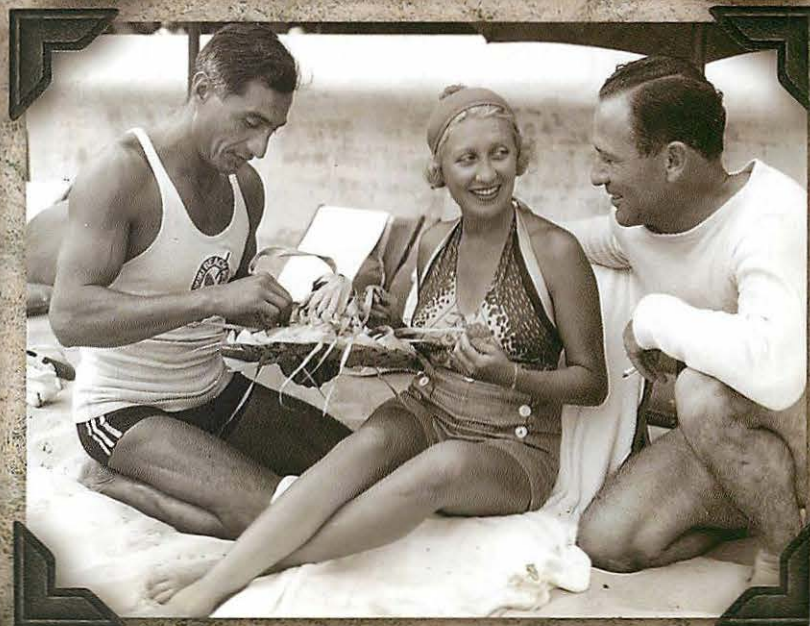
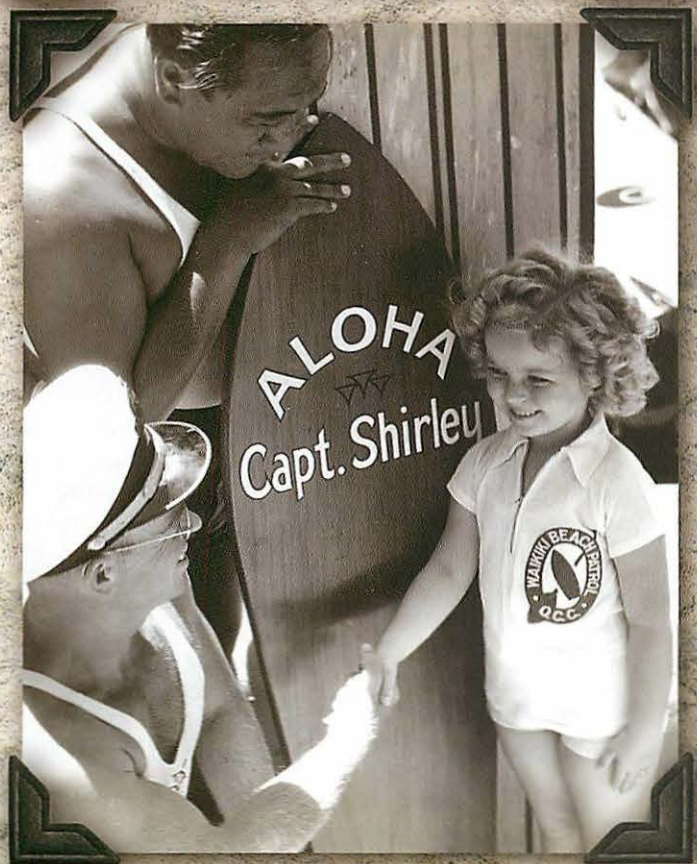


# the Outrigger



# The Beach Boys of Waikiki and the Outrigger Canoe Club

By Barbara Del Piano

It's late one afternoon back at the "Old Club" and the beach office has closed down for the day; the canoes and surfboards have been put away. Most of the swimmers and sunbathers have packed up their belongings and headed back to their hotels. But do the beach boys even think of going home after a hard day's work of giving swimming and surfing lessons, and steering outriggers filled with tourists through the waves at Canoes Surf?

Of course not! They gather on the beach in front of the Club with their guitars and ukuleles, and joined by a group of people, including millionaires and celebrities, they start to sing. Their musical talents rival their athletic abilities, and their charming ways enchant all who come in contact with them.

Yes, those were the old-time beach boys, and although they're gone, their memories linger on. Most of them were full or part-Hawaiian and were lured to the beach as youngsters, drawn by a magnetic force that remained with them throughout their lives. And with that love of the ocean was an innate sense of the spirit of aloha and love for the Hawaiian way of life.

This special charismatic crew of beach boys, associated with the Outrigger Canoe Club, comprised the Waikiki Beach Patrol, formed in 1934, with Bill Mullahey as its head. It came about because commercial activity at the beach was getting out of hand, and there were no rules or regulations in place to control it.

The Patrol paid rent to the Club for the beach-front office from which it offered all types of beach services. It provided everything from chairs and umbrellas, learning or just enjoying Hawaiian water sports, or simply relaxing under the hau trees for a good lomilomi provided by the supple hands of Earl King, called the "Oil King," for the generous application of coconut oil he massaged into the tight, tense muscles of mainland tycoons.

After Mullahey left to begin a successful career with Pan Am Airways, Sally Hale took over, the only haole other than Mullahey, to serve as a full time beach boy. Except, of course, for the honorary captain, Shirley Temple. With few exceptions, they all had nicknames: Steamboat, Turkey, Blue, Chick, Curly, Ox, Panama, Kalakaua, Boss, Squeeze, Splash. Further down the beach by the Waikiki Tavern were Rabbit, Blackout, Mud and Scooter.

And they each had their own special brand of hoomali-mali which they lavished on their devoted fans, and for which they were often handsomely rewarded. Besides generous tips, they at various times received such gifts as a trip to New York City, or even front row seats at the World Series. At the age of sixteen, Freckles Lyons, brother of Splash, traveled around the world, the guest of an admirer he met on the beach.

Some had other jobs at night; Kalakaua (Simeon Aylett) was door man at the Halekulani, Splash (Kepoikai Lyons) had his own band which performed Hawaiian music at various night clubs, and was a recording artist. Chick (William Daniels) was a published songwriter. For most, however, the beach was their entire life, love, and livelihood. But what they got from it, they gave back with heart and soul.

Although they were well-known for entertaining the rich and famous, the Beach Boys were, in a sense, celebrities themselves, known far and wide for their charming personalities, and their musical talents, which included playing instruments, singing, and even dancing hula. They possessed an inimitable ability to entertain—all this aside from their prowess in the ocean. They were a tremendous asset to the nearby hotels and to the Outrigger Canoe Club as well.

Singers like Bing Crosby and ukulele players like Arthur Godfrey joined them in entertaining as they lazed on the beach in the late afternoon, attracting crowds of people, malihini and kamaaina, who were mesmerized by the beautiful harmony that flowed so effortlessly from their combined voices.

There were others who were not professionals, but

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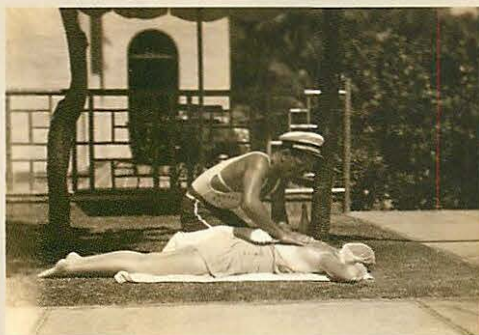
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The Beach Patrol showed off its new uniforms in 1935: Johnny Makua, Colgate, Panama Dave, Ted Waters, Chick Daniels, Curley Cornwall, Pua Kealoha, Sally Hale, Joe Miner. Photo courtesy Lorrin P. Thurston.



Joe Miner gives a lomi lomi.



who also devoted much of their life to the ocean like Duke Kahanamoku and his brothers, Dad Center, John D. Kaupiko, Johnny Hollinger, Jimmy Hakuole, and Charley Amalu.

They all coached and steered Outrigger and Hui Nalu crews for years and helped to develop many outstanding aquatic athletes among members of both organizations. They taught young Outrigger members how to surf, loaned them boards to practice on, and gave them great encouragement in their endeavors. They also helped build character, instilling values in young people that would help them grow into honorable men and women.

This idyllic lifestyle came to an abrupt halt on December 7, 1941, as World War II drastically changed the face of Waikiki, and indeed, all of Hawaii. Huge coils of barbed wire stretched down the beach and armed sentries were stationed at intervals. Access to the ocean was prohibited, blackout and curfew were imposed and martial law went into effect.

The luxurious Matson liners that brought boat-loads of visitors to the islands each week were transformed into troop ships. The Royal Hawaiian Hotel was taken over by the Navy for R&R for its submariners. Business at the Outrigger fell off significantly. Instead of wealthy visitors strolling down Kalakaua in their satins and furs, or catching tans on the beach, it was uniformed servicemen everywhere.

With no visitors coming to Waikiki, and the ocean off-

limits, the Waikiki Beach Patrol fell behind in its rent and eventually closed down for the duration. Sally Hale and other Beach Boys joined the military while many others took defense jobs at Pearl Harbor or other military bases.

When the war was finally over and the Royal Hawaiian was restored to its former grandeur, tourists again flocked to Waikiki. Most of the Beach Boys, including Sally Hale, returned to their jobs at the renamed Waikiki Beach Service, but it was not the same.

Air transportation introduced a different type of visitor to Waikiki and new hotels sprang up that catered to the middle classes. The Beach Boys found their clientele was different. Nevertheless, they continued to offer the same friendly and hospitable service with a smile as they steered their canoes through the surf, their passengers thrilled as they glided over the crests of the rolling waves.

They still gathered to entertain with their harmonious voices and their inimitable wit. Their reputation as icons of Waikiki Beach never diminished as they continued to ply their trade on the beach at Waikiki.

It was truly the end of an era when the Outrigger Canoe Club left its original site at the center of the best surfing spots on the island. Many of the Beach Boys had retired by then, and the hotels instituted their own beach services. Harry Robello became head of the Royal Hawaiian's operation. Gone, but not forgotten, the famed Beach Boys will remain legends, truly a vital part of the history of Waikiki.

Sally Hale welcomes Shirley Temple as an honorary member of the Beach Patrol.



The Beach Boys weave a hat for a visitor.



A celebrity gets star treatment from Sally Hale and another beach boy.