

# the Outrigger



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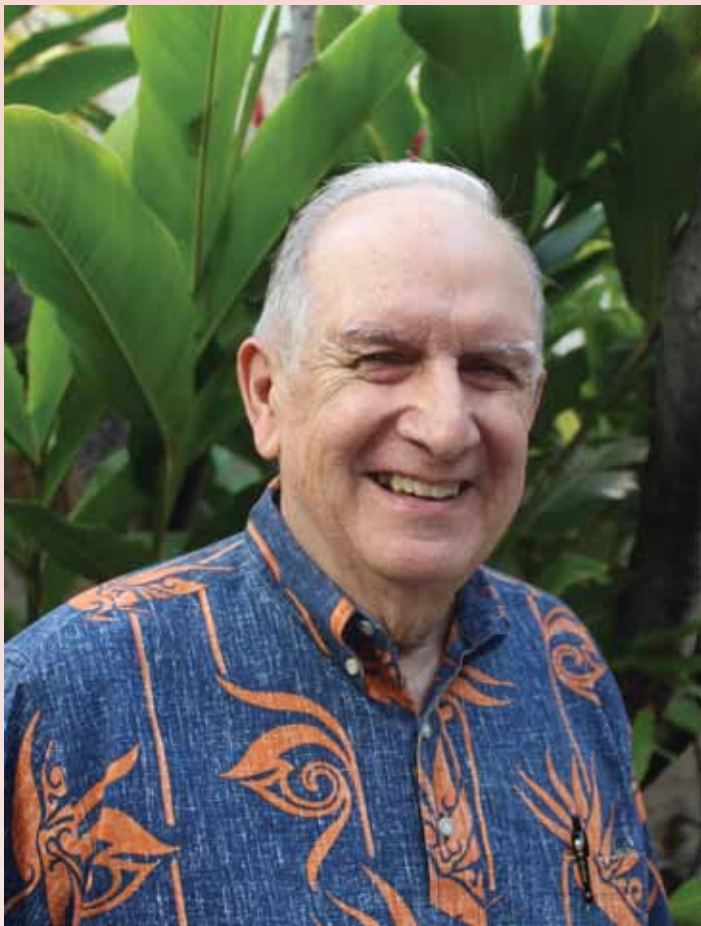
# Three Elected to Life Membership at the OCC

By Barbara Del Piano

Three long-time members of the Outrigger Canoe Club were elected to Life Membership at the 2016 Annual Meeting. They were honored for their service and significant contributions to the Club over the length of their membership.

Congratulations to Wendell Brooks Jr., Harold Henderson and Gerri Pedesky.

Read on to see why their fellow members selected them for this honor.



Wendell Brooks Jr.

## WENDELL BROOKS

He hasn't paddled the Molokai Channel or participated in the Daddy Haine volleyball tournament. He hasn't even officially paddled on an Outrigger crew. But in other ways Wendell Brooks has contributed so much to the Outrigger Canoe Club that he has been awarded the most prestigious honor the Club has to offer: Life Membership.

A true kamaaina, Wendell's ancestry in Hawaii goes back to his great great grandfather who came from Germany to settle in the islands in 1869. His grandmother was born in Honolulu in 1881 and was about twelve years old at the time Liliuokalani was overthrown in 1863.

His grandfather graduated from Harvard Law School, practiced law in Hawaii, and later became a judge. Wendell's mother, who was forty percent Tahitian, was born in Los Angeles, raised in Tahiti, and came to Hawaii in 1934, where she met

and married Wendell Sr.

Wendell grew up in the family home on Diamond Head Circle and attended Punahou School. He joined the Outrigger in 1977 where he became life-long friends with Peter and Tom Balding and Jack Mattice. He hung-out at the Club long before he joined, accompanying his mother who was a member.

Wendell cherishes one very vivid experience when, as a teenager, he was at the Club on the Fourth of July in 1951 to watch the Macfarlane Regatta. A young member of the Boys 17 crew didn't show up and in desperation, he was asked to paddle. He agreed and was thrilled when they came in second. Then to make it even more exciting, the winning canoe had touched the flag and was eliminated, boosting Wendell's crew into first place.

Wendell never tires of telling the story, the first and only time he competed in a regatta and boasts of being undefeated. Actually, the sports Wendell enjoyed most were water skiing at Keehi Lagoon and sailing from the Waikiki Yacht Club.

After attending Oregon State College and the University of California, Wendell followed his father into the real estate business where he had an extremely long and successful career. His first position was with Bishop Trust; he then went on to develop large scale real estate projects including the 3,500 acre community, Mililani Town, the 5,000 acre Sea Ranch in Northern California, and the 1,400 acre resort, Wailea, on Maui.

For fifteen years, Wendell co-managed Chaney & Brooks Company, one of Hawaii's largest property management and commercial brokerages. He also served as Chief Investment Officer for Kamehameha Schools (Bishop Estate) and was responsible for the Trust's six billion dollar portfolio and real estate assets. Wendell has managed many large companies, and has provided services to clients in Hawaii, Australia, Hong Kong, Japan, Philippines, and the mainland U. S. A most impressive resume to say the least! But only a partial one. He is now a real estate and business consultant.

For the past 38 years, Wendell has shared his vast knowledge with the Outrigger Canoe Club, first serving on the Building and Grounds and Finance Committees. He has been a member of that committee on and off throughout the years and continues to this day. His forte being in the realm of budget and finance, he has made invaluable contributions in these areas, helping to guide the Club through difficult times. Wendell has served three terms on the Board of Directors, working his way up through various positions and until serving as President in 1995.

Farsighted, knowledgeable, and possessing good judgment are some of the qualities that Wendell possesses and has generously shared in the many positions he has held on the Board or the various committees on which he has served.

Quiet and unassuming, Wendell says he was very surprised when he was approached by Historical Committee Chairman Tay Perry and quietly informed that he had been nominated for this most esteemed honor of Life Membership. He considers it an honor to have received the distinction.

Aside from his active participation on the Long Range Planning Committee, Wendell continues the long tradition of Sunday breakfast on the Koa Lanai with his "old buddies," although the number has dwindled over the years. Nevertheless, each week it proves to be a special event.



Hal Henderson

## HAL HENDERSON

Hal Henderson was looking forward to a special evening as he and Gloria stood in line to check in at the Club's annual luau. But he had no idea just how special it would be! Tay Perry, Historical Committee Chairman came along and took him aside. In a low, soft voice, Tay informed Hal that he had been nominated for Life Membership. "Don't tell anyone," Tay cautioned, "because the Board has to approve it before the Annual Meeting."

The Board did approve the nomination and Hal is now one of eleven living members who have been granted this distinctive honor awarded members who have served the Outrigger with "long and faithful service."

"I was totally stunned," said Hal when asked how he felt, "it had never even crossed my mind...with all the time spent away." Indeed, Hal's work took him away from the Islands for several years but for the last nearly thirty years he has been constantly involved in some manner of Club operations.

Hal and his brother Charlie grew up on Noela Drive along with other Club members such as Peter and Tommy Balding and Bonnie Purvis (Eyre). Hal recalls great times walking with neighborhood pals up the Diamond Head trail and climbing the ridges in the front of the crater rim, much to the dismay of their parents.

Hal joined the Outrigger as a junior member in 1946 at the age of 13. He loved the ocean and soon learned to surf. He later paddled on various Outrigger crews with Sarge Kahanamoku as steersman. He spent a lot of time at the "Old Club," as one of the kalohe kids who was frequently reprimanded by the Club's manager.

Hal attended Hanahauoli School through the 6th grade before transferring to Punahou. High school years were spent at Deerfield Academy, a boy's boarding school in Deerfield, Massachusetts. He attended Stanford University where he learned to play polo and played on the Stanford team for four years. (Hal was a natural for polo as a member of the Dillingham family who dominated the Oahu teams for years.) After college Hal served in the U.S. Navy after graduating from Officer's Training School in Newport, Rhode Island. He then spent two years on active duty in Japan.

Hal has had an interesting career. After a year at Hawaiian Electric, he went to work for Oahu Railway and Land Company, which in 1962 merged with Hawaiian Dredging to form Dillingham Corporation. In 1964, he returned to Stanford for two years to acquire an MBA degree, then came back to work for Dillingham Corporation. He currently has a part-time job, Hal says, "just to keep the old gray cells working."

During his tenure with the company, Hal spent time in Singapore and as Director of Corporate Planning before moving to London where he remained for twelve years. What was Dillingham Corporation doing in London, you may ask? They were partners with a Norwegian firm in a dry bulk shipping company. Dillingham sold its interest in the company in 1980 and Hal stayed on working for the Norwegian firm for five more years. While there he played polo and on the same team as Prince Charles.

Before his time abroad, Hal served on the Outrigger's Building and Grounds Committee in 1972. After his return, he has not missed a year of service on either a committee or the Board of Directors. The Long Range Planning and Finance committees are two that have immensely profited from Hal's business experience in property management and corporate development. He has served three terms on the Outrigger's Board of Directors, serving as Treasurer, Vice President, and taking on the demanding job of President in 2001. In each capacity, his contributions were outstanding.

After seventy years of being a member of the Outrigger, the Club remains an important part of Hal's life. In addition to serving on the Finance Committee, Hal and his wife, Gloria, regularly attend social functions at the Club and frequently dine on either the Koa Lanai or Hau Terrace. Until two years ago, he continued to surf and still works out and swims regularly. The Outrigger has been fortunate to have Hal as a devoted member throughout the years, offering invaluable service to an organization dear to his heart.

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## GERRI PEDESKY

When she was just eight years old, living in Sunnyvale, California, a Hawaiian friend of Gerri Golick's mother asked if her daughter would like to take hula lessons. After taking classes, she developed a love for Hawaii and its culture that continues to this day.

Gerri graduated from Notre Dame High School before attending college at San Jose State where she made friends with fellow-students from Hawaii and joined the Hawaiian Club, which further motivated her desire to live in Hawaii. Her parents, however, would not let her leave home until she was 21 years old.

So she saved her money and after her 21st birthday party in 1956, her ticket already purchased, her parents drove her to the airport and her wish came true. Although she was a real malahini, she already knew about popular places such as Kau-Kau Korner, the "Old" Stadium, and the Outrigger Canoe Club.

It wasn't long before Gerri joined the Outrigger and started paddling on the novice crew along with other newcomers to Hawaii: Marilyn Haine, May Balding, Mary O'Conner, and Lynn Heilbron, with local girl, Kathy Muller, steering and George Downing as coach.

Not only did Gerri take to the ocean, but her desire to learn about Hawaii's culture lured her to the Bishop Museum where she became a docent and eventually served on the Board of Directors. She went to work for Transcontinental Airways where she met her future husband, Jack Pedesky; they married in 1960.

Once Gerri got into paddling, she never stopped, except for the few years when she and Jack lived in Tokyo, New York and Los Angeles due to his job as a pilot. When they returned she plunged into the water again and never missed an Outrigger paddling season for the next 33 years. Over time, she continued on up the scale from Novice A to Master's 65. She paddled three times in both Na Wahine O Ke Kai and the Dad Center.

Gerri still keeps in shape, paddling three times a week throughout the year. She and her husband were also on the OCC running team for many years and completed several Honolulu marathons.

In 1978, Gerri decided to get involved in other phases at the Club and joined the Entertainment Committee. She has continued her service ever since and is presently an active member of the Historical Committee.

Gerri served three terms on Outrigger's Board of Directors from 1984 through 1989 and became involved in the Outrigger Foundation, formed in 1983, to raise money to support the Club's athletic programs.

In 1985, as Coordinating Director of the Outrigger Foundation, she was instrumental in the merging of the Outrigger Foundation with the Duke Kahanamoku Foundation, an organization whose mission was to perpetuate Duke's name by providing financial support for individuals and organizations which perpetuated Duke's spirit and legacy.

Gerri remembers meeting OCC member Tom Lalakea, a member of the Duke Kahanamoku Foundation, at Bishop Museum where they were both members of the Board. Gerri says Tom called her one day and offered to donate some of his organization's funds to the Outrigger Foundation. Instead, Gerri says she suggested merging the two foundations since both had similar goals.



Gerri Pedesky

The merger eventually happened in 1986 and was a great success. Gerri was on the original Board of Directors and was the heart and soul of the ODKF in its early years and is still deeply involved. She served as president in 1989, secretary, and vice-president. She has watched the Foundation grow over the years until, in 2015 more than \$175,000 was awarded for grants and scholarships to Hawaii athletes.

Since 1985, she has chaired the Macfarlane T-Shirt Committee, each year selecting the color and design of the shirts, with the invaluable assistance of Vik Watumull. She has also been responsible for rounding up volunteers, mainly her fellow masters women paddlers, each year to assist.

Despite her long involvement on boards and committees, Gerri jokingly says one of her favorite jobs has been as Chair of the Judges of Election. When asked why, she replies, "With an experienced team, it takes just one day to count the votes and another to announce the winners at the Annual Meeting."

Since the late 1970's, as far as the Outrigger goes, her name has always been followed by a designation, either as a committee member, Board member, or some part of ODKF. Gerri's selection for Life Membership is a fitting reward for her long and dedicated service to the Outrigger Canoe Club where she continues to offer her talents and ideas.

When Gerri serves on a committee, she totally involves herself and wholly enjoys it. She puts her heart and soul into every job she has held at the Club and has no intention of retiring. Like the Energizer Bunny, Gerri just keeps going.