



John Cline Mann

JOHN CLINE MANN & the Kapua Channel

By Gerry DeBenedetti

The Club is situated on the land of Kapua which is a large sand dune extending on the north from the Kaimana Hotel, on the south to Coconut Avenue, and to the limestone cliffs where the old heiau is, at the La Pietra boundary at the end of Kapiolani Park.

All of this sand is below a foot and a half layer of dirt, and OCC ended up with 11,000 cubic yards of beautiful beach sand from the excavation of the property at Kapua.

When it rains heavily, water pools in Kapiolani Park. This is due to an old water course that opened up the reef and the lagoon. This is currently known as the Sans Souci lagoon and channel. On ancient maps this was called the Kapua Entrance.

When fresh water exits you have a channel because coral cannot grow in fresh water. Cline knew this would give us a good beach and easy access to the open ocean.

At 2909 Kalakaua Avenue, every single tree except the Monkeypod tree on the left hand side of the entry driveway was removed. On April 1, 1963, the Club was a one tree site. And, of course, they held a party first, so members could come and park on the cleared site under a tent, have refreshments, see the surf and canoes in the Kapua Channel and have a good idea what would be there at Christmas.

In a timetable which could never happen in current time, a building and fully landscaped yard was created in less than a year.

The conventional way of planting a coconut tree is to put in a 3 to 4 foot sprouted coconut in the ground and wait 25 years. In order to make our Club looked lived in, they brought in tall coconuts, 80 of them, creating a Clubhouse in the middle of a coconut grove.

Hau trees were transplanted in "slip" form from a member's home on Round Top Drive. These were called "Cline's Folly" because it took them five months to get any leaves. They created the Hau Terrace as we now know it.

It seemed like building and landscaping and decorating all occurred simultaneously instead of sequentially. The furniture came in September both from San Francisco and the Orient, on two freighters that arrived in Honolulu a day apart. The contractor was instructed to bring everything to the partially completed Club Dining Room, and assemble everything on site.

The Kitchen was in, the Bar was substantially complete, and the Christmas party was on, drinks and pupu at the new Club for Christmas. On New Year's Eve 1963, the old Club had fireworks and everybody said aloha to the Waikiki site. The first week of January 1964 the Club officially moved from one site to the other and the Club site we are now on was open to the members.

Thanks to Cline Mann.

Editor's Note: The above information was taken from a 1982 OCC Oral History given by John Cline Mann to a member of the Historical Committee. The reader should be aware that an oral history portrays the information as recalled; it may contain impressions that are not factual. The OCC magazine plans to periodically print portions of Oral Histories for the benefit of the membership. Comments are welcome.



Flagging in the winners of Club paddleboard races, was one of Cline Mann's duties on the Paddleboard Committee.

The Cline Mann Memorial Paddleboard Race is scheduled for Saturday, July 9 from the Makai Pier to the Outrigger Canoe Club. Many may wonder who John Cline Mann was.

Oldtimers know, but younger members, Nonresidents, and our Junior 'Riggers probably do not. His picture is in the Ka Mo'i Lounge, and it would be real easy to dismiss this as some old timer who drank Budweiser. Well he was, and he did, but there is more to what he represents for Outrigger that is memorable.

Born January 11, 1923, he died September 16, 1996, at the age of 73. He was a Life Member of the Club, a member of the Winged "O", instrumental in starting the paddleboard race that was later named for him, a former member of the Board of Directors, and one time President of the Club.

Cline was responsible for reviving paddleboard racing in Hawaii. He instigated the design for the 12-foot paddleboard that is most often used in today's paddleboard races, and as chairman of the Paddleboard Committee, scheduled and directed three paddleboard races each year: the Summer Surf Race in June, the 5K in August, and the Winter 10K each December.

He never missed a race. He set the turn buoys early in the morning, so he could be on the beach by check in time to lend his encouragement to the participants. He hand drew a map of the course which he clearly described before the race started. He insisted on a photograph before the start of the race, with the boards on their tails pointing toward the sky. Then, with megaphone in hand, he started the race.

At the end of the course, he stood in the water, welcoming each paddle boarder back onto the beach, signaling to the timers each participant's official finish. After giving out awards to the winners, he joined them on the Terrace to talk story and enjoy a "cool one" with his friends.

In the early years, the race participants were mostly Outrigger members and lifeguards. Today, it is not unusual for more than 100 people to enter. In addition to the three paddleboard races that Outrigger sponsors, Cline's influence has been felt and there are other paddleboard races around the island.

At his death, monetary donations to the Outrigger Duke Kahanamoku Foundation provided for a fund designated for water sports. His sister, nieces and nephews are still members of the Club. His father was also a former President of the Club.

Cline was an engineer and a surveyor, and what he knew about our present OCC Club site is probably not equaled by any other member previously or subsequently. The information that follows was taken from an Oral History Cline gave in 1982 to the Historical Committee.

Did you know the Channel in front of the Club out towards the wind sock has a name? Read on.

Cline joined the OCC in 1946. Active in many committees, he was Board Secretary and chair of the 1962 Planning Committee, responsible for entering into a 99-year lease with the Elks Club that got us to the Kapua Channel, site of our present "new" Club.

This committee was instructed to get the OCC moved out of the Waikiki old Club and into the new Club site in time for the 1963 Christmas party.