

the Outrigger



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From Racing Canoes to Models OCC's

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Manu o Ku



Base of Manu o Ku showing island of Oahu, paddles and honu.



Domie Gose and General Manager Mike Ako at the blessing of the Kaoloa in 2007.



Some of the paddles he's made.

Lisa's Hokulea



The Kakina after its redesign in 2009.

You may have noticed the beautiful koa sailing canoe in the Lobby Trophy Case; if not stop by and take a look. It was a gift to the Outrigger Canoe Club from Domie Gose, OCC's maintenance supervisor and long time employee, who has become a master craftsman after decades of refining and building canoes of all sizes, crafting paddles and other beautiful works of art, all out of rare koa wood.

"I've been blessed to work at the Outrigger Canoe Club for 38 years," Domie said, "and I wanted to give something back to the members who have been so wonderful to me over the years."

Past Club President Karl Heyer IV acquired a koa log on the Big Island and gave it to Domie to craft the model, based on a photo he saw of an Ali'i warrior canoe. The log was three feet long, with a thickness of 2.5 feet and was five inches wide.

After 150 hours of cutting, shaping, grinding, chiseling, sanding and finishing, many with home-made hand tools he designed, a sleek sailing canoe emerged from

the log, complete with sails and paddles. The canoe rests on a koa base resembling the island of Oahu with a koa honu (turtle) representing the members of the OCC.

Domie, who smiles while he works, says he dreamt about the canoe and would wake up in the middle of the night with inspirations about how to make the canoe better. He also dreamed of new techniques that would shorten the crafting time.

The koa sails on the canoe are spectacular. They are made from curly koa and the wood grain is exquisite. "The grain of the wood inspires you and speaks to you about how you're going to make the canoe," Domie added.

After presenting the finished canoe to the Board of Directors in November, Controller Gordon Smith and Domie asked Kawika Grant for a name for the canoe.

"As I always do since Cline Mann isn't around for guidance, I agonized over this one wanting the name to be just right," Kawika said. "One day after parking my car, I walked into the Club via the front entrance instead

Domie Gose is a Master Koa Craftsman

of along the volleyball court. Looking up through the trees before I got to the front door I looked for our tern in the plumeria tree. That was when the name came to me. A sea bird would be most appropriate for a sailing canoe's name. Why not our very own sea bird, one that has blessed us year after year with its presence at our front door."

And thus the canoe was named *Manu o Ku*... the white or fairy tern.

Domie admits that he had little experience working on koa canoes when he launched his first project—the redesign of the Club's koa racing canoe *Kaoloa*. The canoe was built by Joe Quigg in 1986 from a log the Club won from scoring the most points in the OHORA regatta season in 1983.

After the Club paddled the canoe in the 1986 regatta and distance seasons, it was decided that some modifications would enhance its performance. The Board of Directors and Canoe Racing Committee asked Domie to take on the task. Over the next couple of decades during the paddling off-season, he straightened the *Kaoloa*, reduced its weight to 400 pounds by replacing portions of the hull with lighter wood, deepened the *hope wa'a* (stern) so it would turn more easily, widened it by two inches, and finally removed all fiberglass from the *manu* (bow) and *mo'o* (gunnels) to meet HCRA specifications, replacing the fiberglass with koa.

Domie's inspirations resulted in designing a grooved wooden rail on the *mo'o* (gunnels) so that the canvas cover can easily slide on and off during distance races. This is significant because now the canoe is completely made of koa wood. Several other paddling clubs have copied his inventive design.

In between working on the *Kaoloa* over the decades, Domie also redesigned and upgraded one of the Club's oldest canoes, the *Kakina* which was built in the 1930s and originally 38-feet long. Using wood spacers, he gradually lengthened it by nearly seven feet and added four inches to the width.

In 2008, Domie removed the fiberglass from the *manu* (bow) and *mo'o* (gunnels) of the *Kakina* replacing them with koa wood. Like the *Kaoloa*, he also added a grooved wooden rail on the *mo'o* (gunnels) for the canvas cover so it now meets HCRA's current specifications.

When Domie finished his work on the *Kakina* in 2009, he created a koa model of the redesigned *Kakina* that exactly matches the racing canoe.

While Domie was pre-occupied with thinking of better ways to work on the large racing canoes, Domie's wife Lisa made a request. She wanted him to make a canoe model for her. Thus he crafted his first scale-model canoe—a replica of the *Hokule'a* voyaging canoe. Like the *Manu o Ku*, Domie's *Hokule'a* also rests on a koa base representing the island

of Oahu. It features four honu (turtles) representing the members of his family. Lisa loved it.

Over the years, Domie has made koa paddles of all sizes, small ones for gifts to the outgoing members of the Board of Directors, paddles for friends and co-workers, and even miniature paddles and canoes that were used to decorate the Club during Christmas and other celebrations.

After 38 years at OCC is retirement on his mind?

"No. I still have things to do before I retire," Domie says.

For example, he wants to craft a model double hull canoe like the one given to the Emperor of Japan, continue redesigning and widening the *Kaoloa* and remodeling the *Leilani*.

The *Leilani* was also built in the 1930s and hasn't had much work done on it since it was repaired after being damaged in the 1966 Molokai Hoe. Many options are being considered by the Board and Canoe Racing Committee, including straightening, lengthening, reshaping and removing the fiberglass throughout the canoe.

These projects haven't been scheduled yet, but already Domie is dreaming of how he can make the canoes better and faster.

Outrigger is very fortunate to have a living treasure like Domie at the Club. He has certainly earned the title of master craftsman, as well as the admiration and respect of the canoe racing community for the work he has done on the *Kaoloa* and *Kakina*.

Mahalo Domie for the beautiful *Manu o Ku*. We'll display it proudly. We are so happy that you are part of our 'ohana.

Domie shows off the *Kakina* model he made.

