

# That Ever Happened to the Canoe That Was Hanging in the Outrigger Bar?

By Tay Perry

The canoe that has been hanging in the bar since the Club opened in its present location in 1964 has been gone since April of this year. The name of the canoe for those of you that don't know is the *Stephanie*.

The canoe was in a state of disrepair and needed over \$8,000 worth of work done to it to bring it up to acceptable condition. This work was completed and has been paid for by the Outrigger Hotel chain in consideration of the Outrigger Canoe Club leasing it to them for a period of 10 years. The *Stephanie* is presently displayed in the lobby of the Outrigger Wailea Resort on Maui and will have appropriate credits to its being furnished by the Outrigger Canoe Club.

The intent at the time the *Stephanie* was removed was to replace it with the historic canoe *Ka Mo'i* which was recovered from the Hanalei Bay Resort about a year and a half ago. We had originally thought that all that needed to be done to it was to refinish it and patch a few holes and we had planned to have it installed by July 4, 2000. The Historical Committee spearheaded the project of recovering the canoe and is following the progress of its restoration.

## A Little History

The *Ka Mo'i* had graced the beach at the old Outrigger Canoe Club in the middle of Waikiki beach from 1920s through 1964 where it was used as a surfing canoe by the Outrigger Beach Services. It has been described as the principal canoe used for the tourist surfing canoe rides.

It was captained by most of the legendary beach boys as well as the more gifted OCC steersmen. There is a painting by Norman Rockwell showing the canoe surfing a wave with a group of tourist paddlers in the boat.

The canoe was on Kauai for over 15 years and survived two hurricanes there. We are fortunate to have it back and to be restoring it to its former grandeur.

## The Work

We started working in earnest on the *Ka Mo'i* in mid-August after the end of the 2000 paddling regatta season with our team members Allan Dowsett, Jay



Dowsett, Mike Mason, Kawika Grant and me, Tay Perry.

Member George Norcross who is the Hawaii distributor for West Systems epoxy products has donated most of the adhesives and coating to be used in the restoration. Several of the workers from Friends of Hokule'a and Hawai'i Loa organization are helping out as well.

We are all working on the canoe without pay in the spirit of *kokua* and because of our love of canoes, particularly this canoe. All the Club is paying for is the materials, supplies and rent costs for the shop. The work is being done at the Sand Island workshop occupied by the Friends of Hokule'a and Hawai'i Loa who are allowing us the use of the premises and the equipment to do the work. Thus far, we have only been working on Saturdays when there are no conflicting activities.

## Problems

Nothing seems to work out the easy way in *koa* canoe restoration. From the very onset of our work we saw the scope of our project increasing. When we stripped the prior finish from the canoe, we found a lot of problem areas that had been hidden by the old finish. It was clear that these items needed to be corrected.

It would seem that the last restorative work had been done to it in the 1950s, judging by the types of patches and fastenings used. Apparently there were new front and rear *manu* built around that time in addition to the other work done. We found termite damage and dry rot in the hull and several patches that will need to be replaced due to poor fitting. The majority of the stern section of the hull is being replaced due to these poorly fitted patches.

The *manu*, we noted, were constructed out of different types of non-Hawaiian wood such as fir, spruce and Philippine mahogany and were not aesthetically appealing. We are carving out new *koa manu* for the front and the rear. The finished canoe should be 100% *koa* and have all of the rotting brass and iron fastenings removed.

## Our Goal

Our goal is to provide the Club and its guests with the *Ka Mo'i* that is completely restored and ready for use as the centerpiece for the lounge area or for use in the ocean, should that be desired. The club members working on the canoe all feel that the job should be done correctly and should be something that they and the rest of the OCC can be proud of.

## Friends of Hokule'a and Hawai'i Loa

This group is a non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation and promotion of Hawaiian canoes. One of the founding members was the late Wright Bowman Jr. They operate on donations and fees charged for the repair and restoration of these canoes. They have maintained the *Hokule'a*, the *Hawai'i Loa*, the *E 'Ala* and many of the other voyaging canoes. They are providing a valuable service in the perpetuation of Hawaiian tradition and teaching the young (and not so young) the techniques and skills that would be lost if not for them and others like them. We appreciate their presence and support in the restoration project of the *Ka Mo'i*.

## Estimated Time of Completion

With all of the above being considered, we estimate that it will take another month to have the canoe properly installed in its new home. That will take us to end of the month as our projected date.

## For Posterity

Long after we have forgotten how much time the ceiling was bare in the Lounge will we, our children and our grandchildren be able to enjoy the "The King" in its regal splendor in what I hope will come to be known as the *Ka Mo'i* Lounge.

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