



EMPLOYEE UPDATE

Polynesian Cultural Center □ June 20, 1980

PCC: a teenager that has really grown up

In terms of age, 16½-year-old PCC is still a teenager. But we've grown a lot during that time and today, our South Pacific paradise in Laie ranks close to such "oldtimers" as Diamond Head and Waikiki Beach on the list of the most popular visitor sights in the islands. Here's a bit of PCC history for those of you who are new in our family.

The Center's beginnings date back decades ago to a man named Matthew Cowley, who had served as a missionary in New Zealand for the Mormon Church.

Cowley felt a special kinship with the Polynesian people and was disturbed by the decline of their cultures. He

hoped that he could "live to see the day when my Maori people down there in New Zealand will have a little village there at Laie with a beautiful carved house...the Tongans will have a village, too, and the Tahitians and the Samoans and all those islanders of the sea..."

Cowley did not live to see his dream come true, but it had been planted in the hearts of others who nurtured and shaped it into reality. More than 100 labor missionaries volunteered their skills and energy to build the Center-- a mammoth task begun in April 1962.

A year and a half later, on October 12, 1963, the Polynesian Cultural

Center opened to the public. It then covered 12 acres.

During the first five months of operation, when there was no public transportation to Laie and the Center had limited publicity, visitors numbered less than 5,000 a month. Having to travel 40 miles to PCC from town seemed a bit too far for visitors and the lure of Waikiki was almost inescapable.

PCC had only about 200 employees at that time. And the evening show was only presented on Friday and Saturday. Even then, our performers had to stand along Kamehameha Highway and entice passing motorists to fill up the theater seats.

But no one lost faith in what PCC stood for and was trying to accomplish. And the Center grew. It has nearly quadrupled in size since that time, now spreading over 42 acres (including 12 acres for parking alone). Presently, we have about 1,000 employees.

Turn to page 2

Center sponsors Summer Fun program

PCC, in conjunction with the Honolulu Community Action Program will sponsor free Summer Fun activities for Laie community children and teenagers from Monday, June 23, through Friday, August 15. The program will take place at Laie I Ward Chapel, near the Hawaii Temple, and will be led by Recreation Department personnel.

The youngsters' program, for those aged 6 through 12, will go on from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. Activities include "play" periods, workshops and instructional periods covering such topics as Polynesian arts and crafts, Polynesian dancing, first aid and recreational games such as basketball and volleyball.

The teen activity program, for those aged 13 through 18, is scheduled from 3 to 9 p.m. This will include such activities as group rap sessions on a variety of subjects, movie and disco outings, and arts and crafts workshops.

In addition to providing an opportunity for us to share our Poly-

nesian craft skills, the Summer Fun program is PCC's way of showing its support and interest in community affairs. Those wishing to enroll their children in the program should pick up registration forms at the Recreation Department near Hale Kuai sometime today.



PCC photographer Earl Millham, on the other side of the camera lens this time, finds an unusual "wall" to lean on. For the intriguing story behind this giant piece of timber, turn to page 2.

Looking back on 'sweet sixteen' years

From page 1

A major construction project undertaken in 1975 included expanding our Hawaiian and Tahitian villages and building the Marquesan village. In 1976, several new buildings were added -- a 2,600-seat theater, larger box office and entry buildings, and an orientation pavilion the size of a football field (since remodeled into The Gateway restaurant).

Expansion in other areas was needed as well.

● The Center's growing popularity and subsequent demand for evening show tickets necessitated increasing the theater's seating capacity to 2,750 in late 1978.

● A larger dining area was needed to accommodate lunch and dinner guests, who number about 2,000 each day. Along with this came the realization that the dining facilities needed

to be upgraded. Work began in July 1979 to remodel the orientation pavilion into a new restaurant. The Gateway, which opened in January 1979, can seat 1,200 guests at one time in a comfortable and relaxing atmosphere.

● Also due to PCC's growing popularity, the "Pageant of the Long Canoes" was choreographed in January 1979. The show previously was presented in only two areas of the lagoon. Visitors may now sit anywhere along our waterway to catch a "front row view" of the performance.

● In March 1979, a Polynesian Brass Band Concert was added to our activities. Because of our comfortable new restaurant, it was discovered that dinner guests were lingering at their tables and not getting to the theater in time for the evening show. Besides being fun and entertaining, the concert lures visitors outdoors after they have

finished eating.

● Hale Kuai, our marketplace located next to Shop Polynesia, opened in June 1979 on the site of the former Dining Lanai. And last Wednesday, The Kau Kau snack bar, part of Hale Kuai, opened with such local favorites as sushi, manapua and shaved ice for sale.

● In response to requests from Mainland U.S.A. travel agents (those important people who send visitors to PCC), the Center installed toll-free reservations service in July 1979. This assures instant ticket confirmation as well as pre-booked, pre-paid reservations which mean guaranteed visitors to PCC.

● Beginning this year, for groups of 100 or more and by special request, the Center also offers a night canoe tour. This "cruise," with special guide narration, offers guests a romantic experience in Polynesia different from our daytime activities. Lighted torches, the sharing of favorite island legends and special sound effects in the villages all add to the romance of experiencing Polynesia by night. Luaus also can be arranged.

Even though the number of visitors to PCC has increased over the years, it's still a challenge getting them to come to Laie because of the dozens of other attractions and activities vying for their attention. Being located an hour's drive from where many of the tourists stay while they're visiting Oahu is a situation we'll always have to deal with. But the key is to face these challenges and continue to work hard -- like our predecessors did. And it's important that we remember to help instill a good feeling in the guests that we have the privilege of hosting, for they are the ones who will be spreading the word about us when they go home -- good or bad.

Here's a real water-logged tale...

Wind and wave action may have carried a mammoth log thousands of miles across the Pacific Ocean to a resting place on Kakela Beach near PCC.

The log, which was discovered on the beach about a month ago by Peter Bennee of BYU--H's Development Office, is believed to be a Douglas fir. PCC's master woodcarver Barney Christy thinks the log either fell into the sea from a lumber ship or somehow washed into the water from the Pacific Northwest area, where Douglas firs are plentiful. It's difficult to pinpoint

exactly how long the log was in the ocean before it washed ashore on Kakela Beach.

According to Brother Christy, the log weighs several tons. It measures 4 feet 7 inches high and 18 feet 7½ inches long. With the help of a derrick from BYU--H, it was transported from the beach to its present "home" near the woodcarvers' hut in the Samoan village.

The log will be left there to dry in the sun for two to three months. After that, Brother Christy says, it will be cut open and carefully checked for water damage. If the wood is in good condition, he hopes that he and his carvers will be able to create another new piece for the Center -- possibly a tiki or statue of the god Maui, who legend says (and as we mention in the evening show commentary) pulled mountains out of the ocean to form the Hawaiian chain.

Volleyball teams face challenge

Our men's volleyball team currently has a record of 1 win and 3 losses in travel industry league action. Their win came last Thursday night against Inter-Island Resorts, but they lost the next night to Hawaiian Adventure Tour.

Our women's team chalked up victories over Hawaiian Adventure

last Friday and Pan Am on Tuesday. Going into their game against Rainbow Coaches/Moana Transportation last night, their record was 3-1. The result of last night's game wasn't available at press time. They will face Hawaiian Scenic Tours at 8:30 p.m. next Tuesday. All games are being played at St. Louis gym in Kaimuki.

BYU--H Calendar

Friday, June

● Graduation Banquet, Aloha Center Mall, 6:30 p.m.

● Graduation Ball themed "The Turning Point," ballroom, 9:30 p.m. "Night Flight" will be providing the music.

Saturday, June 21

● Commencement Exercises, auditorium, 9:30 a.m.

● Movie, "The Sound of Music," auditorium, 1, 5:30 and 9 p.m.

Monday, June 23

● Summer session begins.

Wednesday, June 25

● Movie, "The Man Who Shot Liberty Balance," auditorium, 6:30 and 9:30 p.m.