

Past Life

This chapter is a glimpse of my days living in the tropical paradise of Old Maui in the early 1970's. It was a mellow place with a friendly vibe off the beaten path. The resorts, shopping malls, subdivisions and direct flights of "Mauiland" were still in the future. Uncrowded and inexpensive, Mother Maui provided more than enough to go around. This slideshow contains a taste of the Past Life chapter from my book Maui Tales. There is a short description of the tale and a few photos of each tale . The complete tales in the book are much more far out with better photos.

"Old Maui, Before Times" is a tale about exploring beautiful old Maui after moving there in 1972.

"Haiku House" is about life in our funky old Hawaiian style house in Haiku. If walls could talk.

"Philosophy 150" tells about the far out experience of going to Maui Community College in 1972.

"Endless Summer" looks at discovering and surfing Maui's untouched waves back in the day.

Today, throngs of people from all over the world land at the Maui International airport looking for the empty beaches, tropical waterfalls, jumping whales, and friendly people of Mauiland. They're usually not disappointed as Maui is still one of the best places to escape a planet going to hell in a hand basket. But the Maui today is very different from the Maui in these tales. Like Disneyland, Mauiland is designed to wring as much money out of its brand as possible, which is not a totally bad thing. If you have to sell out, charge as much as you can. Maybe I'll make some coin sharing a different side of Maui, before "Mauiland", that few know about.

Mother Maui had this kind of free energy that was open to anyone when the photos in this chapter were taken. You had to have lived there back then to understand how much we gave up for the shopping malls, monster trucks, smart phones and cable. I don't know how to put a price on those spectacular beaches we used to camp on for weeks that are now closed at 7pm or covered with five star resorts and luxury homes. Today locals must compete with the rest of the world for a place on Maui, no more just cruisin. Remember, Hawaii is a group of very small island in the middle of a huge ocean. Without the long line of ships bringing Hawaii everything it needs we would be fighting for survival in a few weeks. Mother Maui is harder to find now, but it's still there for those that know her.

Living on Maui "before times" opened up a whole world that would affect the rest of my life and give me some great tales to tell in my old age. This chapter represents the lost paradise of old Maui that I was lucky enough to be a part of and is now a part of history.

Old Maui, Before times

This tale is about the Maui I found when I moved there to work at Kula Sanitarium in 1972. For my young wife and I, Maui was a perfect place to start over after our son's death after birth the year before on Oahu. My life has always revolved around big, sudden, ups and downs. These radical life changes have given me a unique perspective on many different lifestyles and places on our planet over the years.

Maui was a big UP! We soon blended in with the other escapees who were living under the radar on Maui. Many were also refugees from Oahu, some of them I knew. We all lived close to nature on "Maui time" doing just enough to get by. Some had trust funds, some lived off welfare and others worked where ever they could. We still had to deal with the highs and lows of life, just in a totally bitchen place. I'd accidentally lucked out.

Many locals were moving off Maui looking for the modern world we were trying to escape. We had seen that movie and found the peaceful, simple life, on unspoiled Maui way better. Before times, you could drive up to the beach where the Four Seasons is now and not see another person all day. We camped on Big Beach in Makena and swam naked in the ponds along Hana Hwy. To us, Maui was a undiscovered tropical paradise waiting to be explored. It's hard to imagine today how slow and empty Maui was. Empty roads, empty beaches, empty land. Everything moved slowly on Maui time and people were more happy and friendly without the pressures of our modern day life.

This was also the time I fell in love with Hana, which exist in its own reality separated from the rest of the world by a long, slow road. We would camp next to what was then known as "Seven Sacred Pools", surf at Koki, and go to wild parties with the rich and famous out there. Hana was even more relaxed than the rest of Maui if that was possible. My mother bought a cheap piece of remote land just outside of Hana, sight unseen while visiting me. Hana would eventually become a major force in my life, but, that's another chapter,

Tourism was not a big thing on Maui then. There was only one resort out in Kaanapali, few rental cars and only inter-Island air flights. But, the powers that be knew that the spectacular beauty of Maui was a gold mine. Within a few years they began extending the airport runway, building multi-hotel-condo resorts on every beach they could, and turning the whole island into a very up scale tourist trap I call "Mauildand". Within 10 years the old Maui I found in this tale was gone. Local people got jobs, the rich and famous moved in and the tide of Mauildand washed over old Maui. Like Oahu, the change came real quickly. They paved paradise and put up many parking lot, Hotels and swinging hot spots and you really don't know what you got till it's gone. The local folks were told development was a good thing. It would bring jobs, nice houses, new cars. the American Dream, and it did. But it cost us the peaceful paradise of old Maui that I found here 50 years ago. I wonder how long todays Mauildand will last.

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



Lost In Paradise

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



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Cruisin on Big Beach

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



Mother Maui

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



Valley Island

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



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Birth of "Mauiland"

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



Hana Airport Before the Land Rush

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



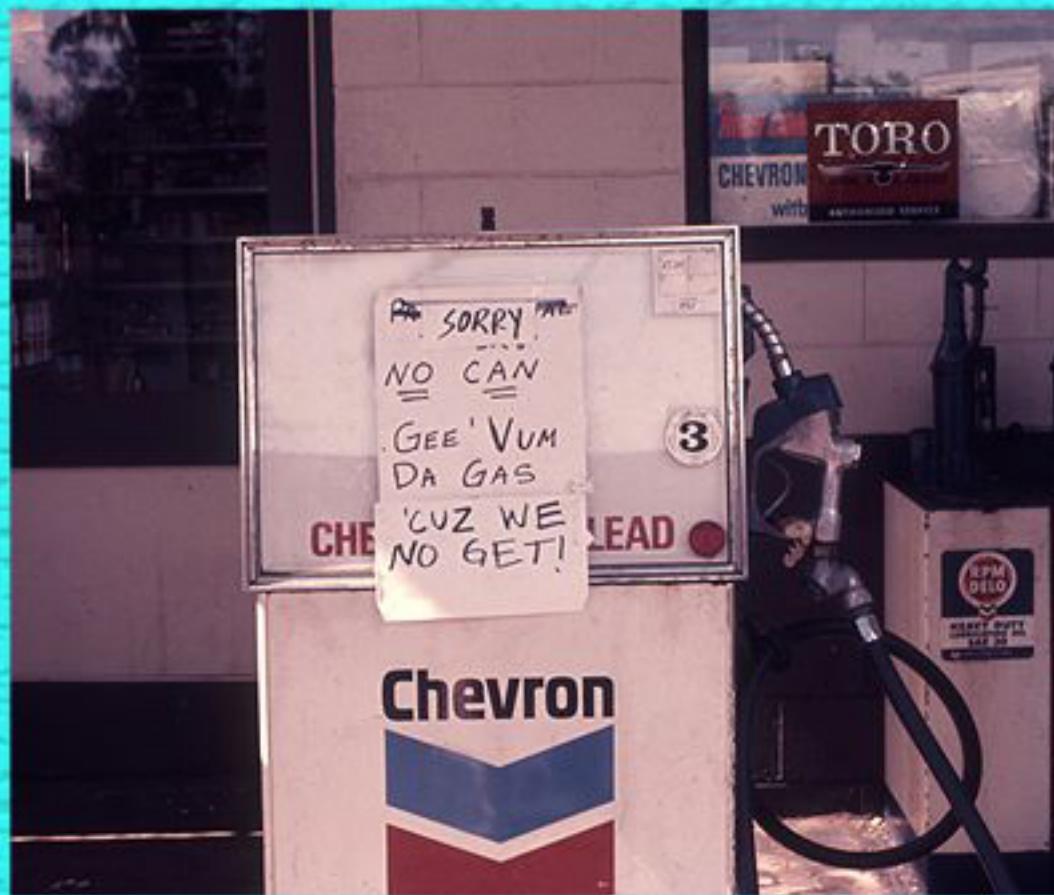
Escapees Above Hana

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



Heavenly Hana, 1972



1973 Gas Crisis At Hasegawa Store

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"Old Maui, Before Times"

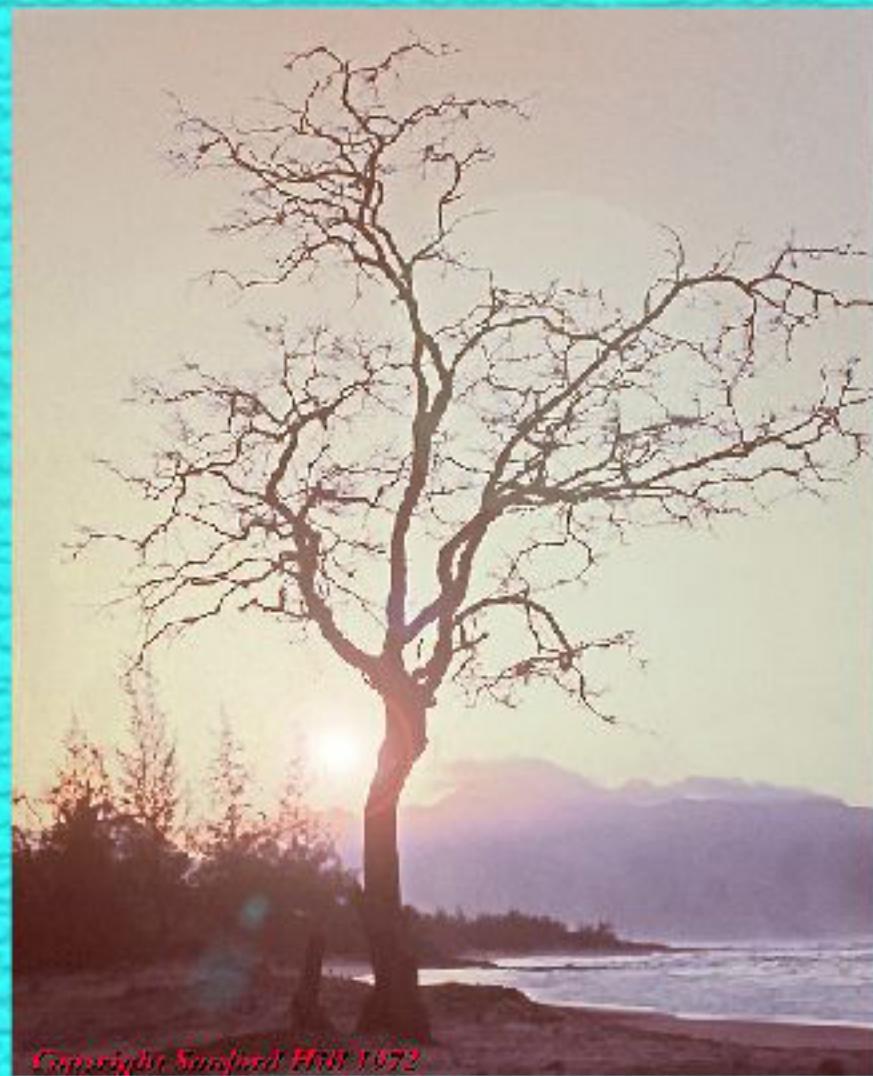


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Trippin At Seven Pools

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



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Holding on

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



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My Ohana at Baldwin Beach

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



High over Old Maui

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"Old Maui, Before Times"



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No Pressure

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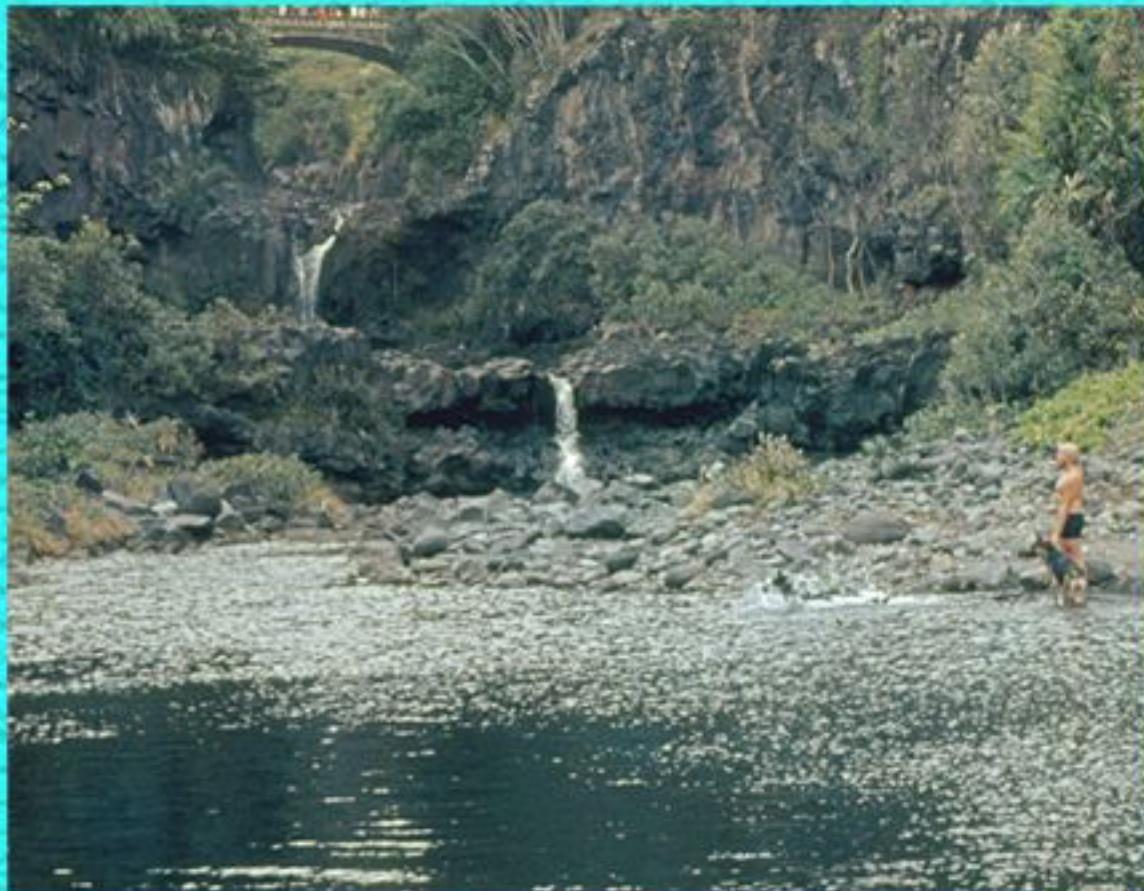
"Old Maui, Before Times"



Hawaiian Crane lands in Wailea

Past Life

"Old Maui, Before Times"



Looks Sacred to Me

Haiku House

In 1972, my wife and I moved from Kula to this funky old Hawaiian style house in Haiku. It just oozed Maui mana. The large kitchen and living room with the homemade river stone fireplace was the center of life during good times and bad for many years. The bounty from the large garden, mature fruit and avo trees gave us too much to eat. At one point we even grew root ginger to sell. At that time, Haiku was still an undeveloped, agricultural community made up mostly of the descendants of emigrant families. Our place was surrounded by empty pasture and pineapple fields with only one neighbor. There was plenty of room for our dogs and other animals to run free. In fact, running free was pretty much what we all did as we didn't have much stuff that owned us. Not having a lot of things allows more time to check out the world around you and experience reality directly. There was plenty of time to be still and wonder.

Life was simple yet exciting as different types of people and energies flowed through the Haiku house bringing the drama and change that is the sign of life everywhere. No one had any of the digital distractions that people can't live without today, not even a TV for a long time. Sometimes we would sit together in the living room and jam music, Kanikapila style. There could be a famous Hawaiian slack key musician jamming chicken skin music with a famous mainland rock guitarist. We also had a killer stereo with lots of great albums and tapes. Music and reading were a big part of our lifestyle. Looking back, it seems that life would have been much less alive if there had been a computer screen in Haiku house. We would have spent much less time digging in the earth, exploring nature, making music, and interacting with each other.

Our spare bedroom was always rented out, which brought different people and their friends into our life. It seems there was always someone crashing on the puunee in the living room. It was not always harmonious, but there was a live and let live vibe and enough good smoke to mellow things out. We were part of the 60's peace and love counter culture trying to find a better way to live in a world we thought was going insane. If Haiku house's walls could talk, these would be some of the tales. I wonder how they would compare to the tales of 20 year olds today. I think some could still relate, though I wonder if they could handle the scary freedom of not being digitally connected. Having lived in both worlds, I think the Haiku house was more interesting and fun.

Past Life

"Haiku House"



Portrait of a Portrait

Past Life

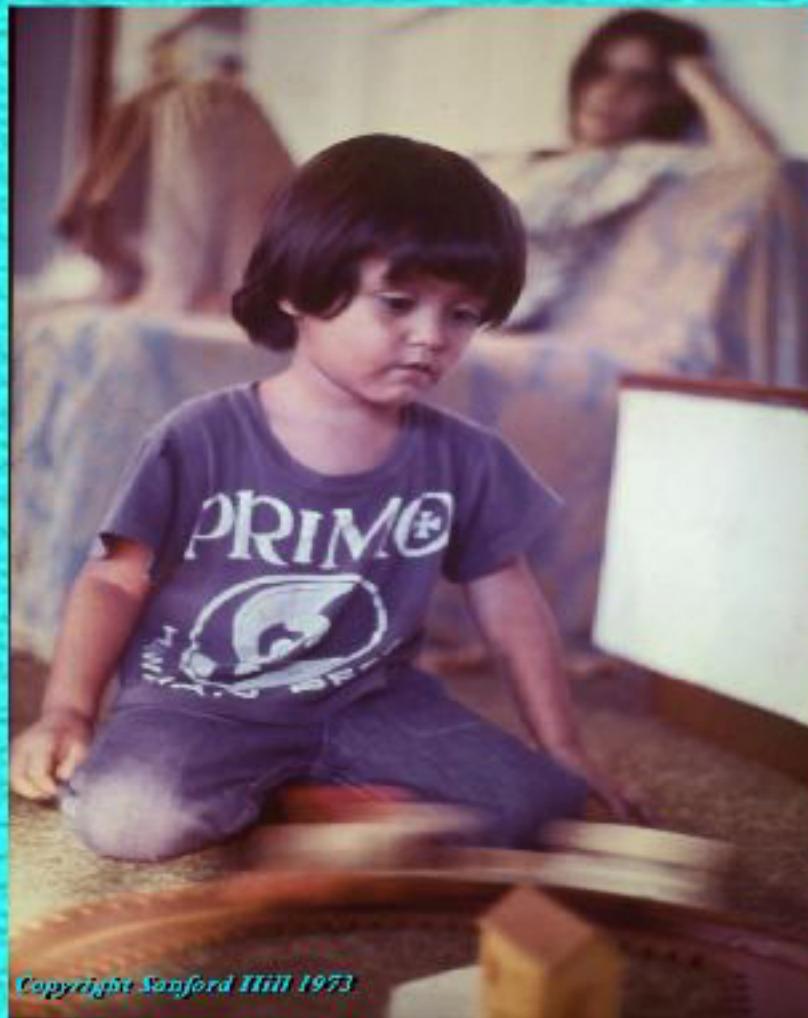
"Haiku House"



Happy Puppies

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"Haiku House"



Haiku Fun House

Past Life

"Haiku House"



Playing with Their Pups

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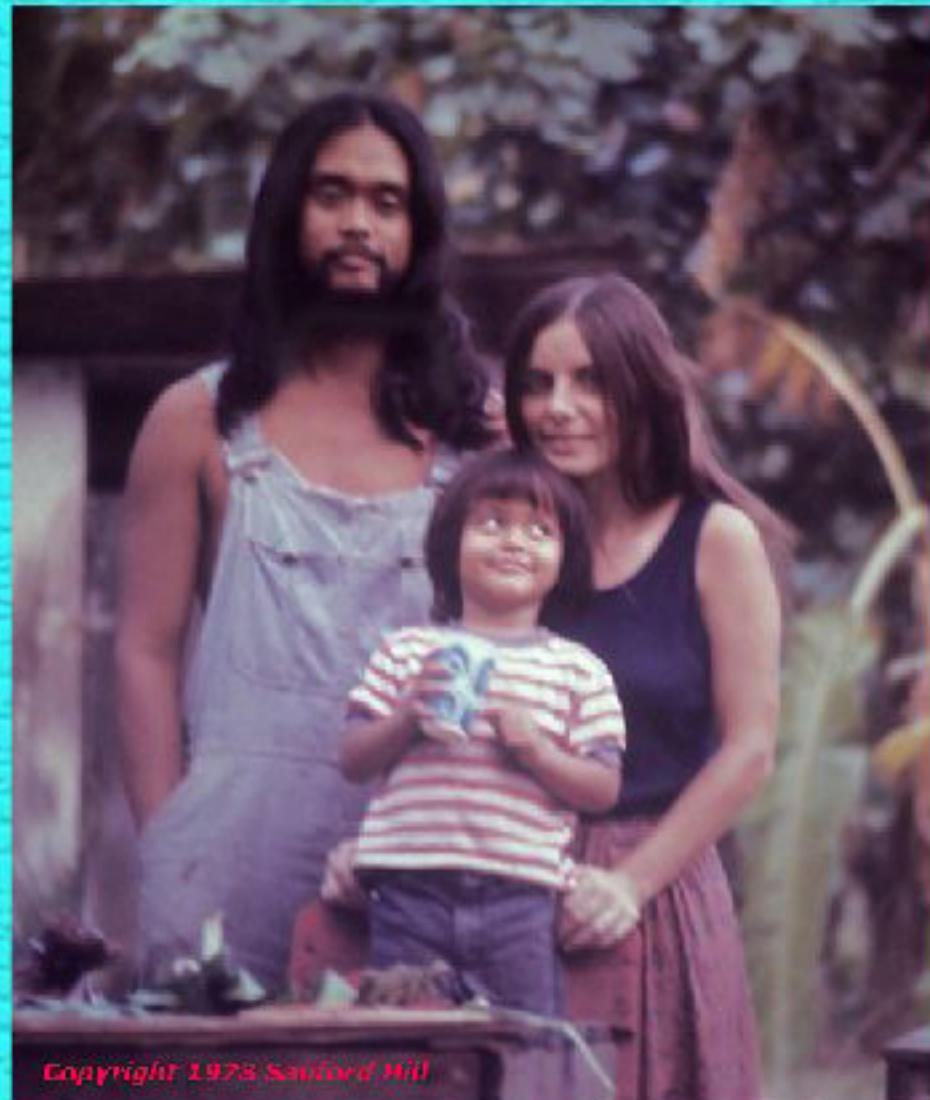
"Haiku House"



Chillin in the Garden

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"Haiku House"



Groovy Gothic

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"Haiku House"



Roommate Romance

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"Haiku House"



Root Ginger Crop

Past Life

"Haiku House"



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Backyard Rainbow

Philosophy 150

These are tales from my years at Maui Community College (MCC) that I began going to full time in 1972. It was a small, funky, relaxed college. We could bring our dogs to class and the professors liked living on Maui more than being well paid. Critical creative thinking and experimentation were more important than grades and test. It was a safe place to study the brave new world that would soon wash over us. My experience at MCC was worth much more than the AA degree I received.

While the curriculum seemed normal, many of the professor were trying new methods of teaching. I had a philosophy 150 course that met off campus were we could eat, drink and toke while studying Carlos Castaneda's "A Separate Reality" late into the night. We went up to Haleakala and ate mushrooms for our final exam. Everyone got an A.

This was really great for someone like me who was very intelligent but had not graduated from high school. The professors gave us the personal attention that open my mind and gave me a thirst for knowledge. At MCC learning was more of an adventure. College should be a place to experiment, question reality and find out who you are. In 2004 I returned to UH to get a BA. UH Maui and UH, Manoa were now big, highly structured systems in the education business. They'd taken the fun out of learning. The students in 2004 couldn't believe my 40 year old MCC stories

I'm proud to have taken the first Hawaiian music course ever offered in the UH system. It was taught by slack key legend Manu Kahaiali'i in a old Hawaiian way not possible in today's Hawaiian studies courses. He opened a whole new musical world for me that was not taught anywhere else.

Many of the pictures in this book were done for MCC photography courses. The MCC photography professor made a living traveling the world as a pro photographer. He gave me a lot of personal attention and taught me secrets only the pros know. I was really torn between becoming a pro photographer and building a farm in Hana. In the end I did both. MCC was one of those great accidents that I didn't fully appreciate at the time, but made this book possible.



A Separate Reality



Manu Kahailali'i and wife at MCC



MCC Marine Bio Class



Classroom Cool



Photo Class, Modern Family



Copyright Sanford Hill 1975

Vampire Killer



Copyright Sanford Hill 1972

War and Peace Rust



Haleakala Summit Moonrise

Endless Summer

Surfing was a huge part of my life back then and Maui provided the perfect endless summer canvas for extreme stoke. Maui was a soul surfers wet dream. There were undiscovered, empty, unreal, surf breaks all over the island. I lived to surf and surfed to live, dropping everything when I felt the waves were going off somewhere.

Surfing is a intellectual, physical, and spiritual experience that comes down to searching for perfection on many levels. I have danced on those awesome waves, felt time stand still in the crystal tubes that leave every fiber of your body knowing what ultimate perfection is. Experiencing perfection is one of the few things that will drive out all other thoughts and always leave you the most stoked you've ever been. When it all comes together, it is just pure, exciting, fun. But, surfing can also teach one how to go for it, take risk, and survive the wipeouts of life. It gave me the self confidence to deal with the fast moving, ever changing, energy of life.

I have always been a old school soul surfer, slipping in and out of the shadows to drop into some unseen smokin barrel while everyone else is busy doing what they gotta do. Many of my major surf sessions are just memories because no one else was there. There is nothing like having crackin surf all to yourself and dance with nobody watching. While going deep by yourself can be a beautiful, enlightening experience, ripping with a few friends is just pure fun. There are many times when the surf is critical or unfamiliar that you WANT someone to surf with. We were very secretive with our surf breaks and careful who we showed them to, no photography allowed.

I put together some of my Endless Summer surf stories, along with a few rare old surf photos to give a taste of the primo Maui stoke back in the day. Again it's a tale of being in the right place at the right time, and totally lucking out. I still like to think that there are a few rippers sitting on a beach after a day of surfing a perfect unknown break by themselves who keep the Endless Summer feeling alive. All I can say is "You missed it brah, should have been here fifty years ago" .

Past Life



My 1972 "Endless Summer"

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Hookipa Lip

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Perfect

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Copyright Sanford Hill 1972

The Koki Glide

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Surf Naked

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Riding Freight Trains

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Gnarly Garbage Dumps

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Time Traveler

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Stoked out in Hana

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The Empty Stage

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"Endless Summer"



Free Bird