

### Excerpt from the 2012 Waimanalo Beach Master Plan Final EA

North of the rocky Makapu'u point, wet taro was thought to have been extensively cultivated in the Waimanalo ahupua'a as evidenced by remnant terraces running to the back of the valley. Native varieties of banana were also planted in small protected gulches in Waimanalo because they did not withstand wind as well as introduced varieties. The agricultural terraces throughout the valley were fed by the area's well known springs. In the book, **Native Planters in Old Hawaii**, Mary Kawena Pukui translated the following from the Hawaiian language newspaper, Hoku o Hawaii, There are two peculiar springs at Waimanalo...The one called Kupunakane [Grandfather] is away up in the mountains. The spring called Kupunawahine [Grandmother] is a spring way down on the level land. The strange, strange thing about these ponds was that on calm, sunny days they begin to cry out to each other. Their voices are soft and sounded very much like a woman mourning her husband. On days that were overcast with clouds in the sky, then the water of the mountain spring changed. The water of the mountain spring became warm and when you drank the water in the lowland spring it was cool, according to their legend. Another spring was known to be across Kalaniana'ole Highway from Bellows Air Force Reserve. This area was heavily populated and known as Maha'ilua. Further east, across from Waimanalo Beach Park, Charles Alona recounted for Native Planters in Old Hawaii that there was a small village, populated with people from Moloka'i, giving the village its name, Pu'u o Molokai. Continuing east, at what is now Kai'ona Beach Park, Both Clark and Handy et. al. tell the story of a turtle pond that was kept well stocked with honu for an ali'i with great fondness for their meat (Handy et al.).

Historic Period: A description of the decline of traditional agriculture in the year 1847, Puku'i translates the following from Ku'oko'a, October 26, 1906: At that time it seemed that the valley was filled with breadfruit, mountain apples, kukui and coconut trees. There were taro patches, with banks covered with ti and wauke plants. Grass houses occupied the dry lands, a hundred of them here, and sweet potatoes and sugar cane were much grown. It was a great help toward their livelihood... The whole ahupua'a of Waimanalo was leased to white men except the native kuleanas and because the cattle wandered over them, they were compelled to build fences for protection. The taro patches that were neatly built in the time when chiefs ruled over the people and the land, were broken up. The sugar cane, ti and wauke plants were destroyed. The big trees that grew in those days, died because the roots could not get moisture. The valley became a place for animals.

Captain Thomas Cummins is known for his early establishment of western-style agriculture in Waimanalo. In 1840, he began grazing beef, dairy cows and sheep. With the rise of sugar in the late 1800's, Cummins initiated the Waimanalo Sugar Cane Company. Vast areas of the lowland ahupua'a were put into cultivation of sugar cane for the plantation.

A 1916 survey map of Waimanalo documents the extensive cane plantation as well as some rice cultivation associated with Kahawai Stream. The same map documents the location of the Waimanalo Sugar Company mill located mauka (mountain) of the project site (see Figure 18, Hawai'i Territory Survey 1916).

---

### Excerpts from the early Mormon missionary history as described by Leda Kalilimoku

The early history of at times well-meaning competition for the souls of Native Hawaiians by Christian religious groups that subsequently decimated them with the white man's diseases is documented by Mormon elders for Waimanalo starting in 1853. After the Mormon elders were first rebuffed in their original missionary attempts to only convert white people in Hawaii, they then concentrated on Native Hawaiians

“Waimanalo was once a beautiful and peaceful Hawaiian settlement heavily populated with grass huts dotting the valley floor. In the olden days Waimanalo was a very secluded area. There were no easy roads in and out of the valley. One trail was the Makapuu Saddle; horses could be led but not ridden, it was so steep. The other was a trail from Nuuanu Pali, through the winding roads of Manawili, and up over the ridge to Waimanalo. This path was called “Aniani Ku” which means “Standing Mirror”, and this trail was impassable during winter months. Waimanalo was a favorite vacation spot for our ali'i, and members of the Royal family were frequent visitors at the Cummins estate.”

---

After June 1853 the first narrative pertaining directly to Waimanalo reads as follows: “After a visit to Honolulu in the later part of July 1853, Elder Bigler went to Waimanalo to visit a branch of the church. On his arrival there July 28, he visited several houses where the former occupants had either died from Smallpox or fled to other places, leaving their household goods, hogs, dogs, and fowls to take care of themselves (There was a widespread smallpox epidemic throughout the islands at this time). At another place there were six houses, or families close together, all the inhabitants had died except three, who had fled. It appeared to Elder Bigler that many died for lack of care and proper nursing.

He writes: *“On Friday, September 2, I was called to visit a sick boy who was down with smallpox. His condition was so critical that I had hitherto seen nothing so awful. The stench was unbearable and the poor boy seemed one mass of corruption. His mother was a member of the church. I administered to him and told his father to rub him with consecrated oil, give him some ginger tea, and keep him out of the wind.*

*When the smallpox first broke out, I dreaded to go near it, and that fear soon left me, and I felt that, provided I had plenty of oil, I would visit the sick fearlessly, anoint them with oil head to foot in the name of the Lord, and command that they should not die. Sometimes afterwards, on September 19, I saw the little boy who had recovered. But he told me his father had died.”*

Another notation regarding the situation on Monday, November 28, 1853. *“Elders Bigler and Hawkins arrived in Honolulu from the other side of the island. The smallpox had made sad havoc among the people, and many of the Saints had been carried off; in two or three branches nearly all the members died with the dreadful disease.”*...

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of May, 1857, the Elders Thurston and P. Richards continue their journey down the Pali to Waimanalo; here only two Saints were left of the large branch that was once there, on to Hanaka, three Saints there, to Mokapu on the 27<sup>th</sup> and so forth. They returned to Honolulu on June 12 and reported the Saints in a very weak and backward stage; many had apostatized, leaving the Church almost daily because their Calvinistic friends wished them to. Also, many were led away by ancient dancing.

---

Excerpt from [Peter T Young on Facebook, Google, LinkedIn 2014](#) © 2014 Ho'okuleana LLC



Pahonu Pond in Waimanalo

Honu ne'e pū ka 'āina The land moves like the turtle.  
(Land passes slowly but inexorably from owner to heir.) (Pukui)

From its earliest period of occupation, the Waimānalo Bay region was an extensive agricultural area, featuring taro farms that used the traditional Hawaiian lo'i (pondfield) cultivation system.

Taro was grown in the lowlands, irrigated with water from Waimānalo Stream, as well as on terraced sections that were watered by the small streams and springs flowing out of the Ko'olau Range.

These terraced sections extended for nearly 2-miles in a semicircle at the foot of the mountains around the broad base of the Waimānalo valley. By the 1850s, the area's fertile soil provided not only taro but also breadfruit, mountain apple, kukui and coconut trees, sweet potatoes and sugar cane. (NPS)

In addition to the agrarian-based economy, several fishing villages dotted the bay's shoreline. Two of the best-known villages in the area were Kaupō and Kukui. Kaupō was on a small peninsula opposite Mānana Island (Rabbit Island) and just northwest of Makapu'u Beach Park (where Sea Life Park is located.)

The village may have been depopulated during the early-1800s and probably was repopulated during the early-1850s when a disastrous smallpox epidemic struck Honolulu and Hawaiians settled temporarily in the Waimānalo Bay region to escape its ravages.

The small fishing village of Kukui was further northwest, along the bay in the Kaiona Beach vicinity near Pāhonu Pond ('Turtle enclosure') - a prehistoric walled enclosure where it is said that turtles were kept for the use of Hawaiian chieftains. (NPS)

Before we go there, let's look at some findings of Dr Marion Kelly where she speaks of three main technological advances resulting in food production intensification in pre-contact Hawai'i: (a) walled fishponds, (b) terraced pondfields with their irrigation systems and (c) systematic dry-land field cultivation organized by vegetation zones.

The Hawaiian walled fishpond stands as a technological achievement unmatched elsewhere in island Oceania. Hawaiians built rock-walled enclosures in near shore waters, to raise fish for their communities and families. It is believed these were first built around the fifteenth-century.

The general term for a fishpond is loko (pond), or more specifically, loko i'a (fishpond). Loko i'a were used for the fattening and storing of fish for food and also as a source for kapu (forbidden) fish.

Samuel Kamakau points out that "one can see that they were built as government projects by chiefs, for it was a very big task to build one, (and) commoners could not have done it (singly, or without co-ordination.)" Chiefs had the power to command a labor force large enough to transport the tons of rock required and to construct such great walls.

The fishponds just described refer to aquaculture to grow fish – they were found throughout the Islands; however, at Waimānalo, O'ahu, the only remaining aquaculture of green sea turtle known to have been carried out by the early-Hawaiians involved a coastal pond named Pāhonu that was used to maintain turtles until they were ready to be eaten. (NOAA)

The green sea turtle is the principal marine turtle species in the Hawaiian Islands. Common names used in the Hawaiian Archipelago include honu, green turtle and green sea turtle. They are herbivorous, feeding

primarily on seagrasses and algae. This diet is thought to give them greenish-colored fat, from which they take their name. (NOAA)

In Hawai'i, as throughout Polynesia and other islands in the Pacific, sea turtles have always been a traditional part of the local culture and have historically been revered as special and sacred beings. (Luna)

"There was once a chief who was so fond of turtle meat that he ordered a sea wall be built to keep captured turtles from escaping. Every turtle caught by a fisherman was put into this enclosure. No one else was allowed to partake of turtle meat under penalty of death. No one dared to eat turtle as long as the old chief lived." (Pukui; Maly)

Kikuchi in his "Hawaiian Aquaculture Systems," notes that "An early visitor to Waikiki area remarked that the ruling chief of O'ahu, Kahekili, mentioned also some others where he had a quantity of turtle."

"... We walked back to Mr. Castle's house, where we sat on a long bench outside, facing the sea. There Aiona told me the story of Pa-honu, an enclosure for turtles that was once located back of Mrs. Wall's present home." (Pukui; Maly)

Pāhonu, the offshore pond (500 feet long, 50 feet wide,) is just south of Kaiona Beach Park fronting the shoreline; a line of stones, submerged at high tide, but visible at low tide, notes its location. (Pukui)

Kaiona Beach Park, a small four-acre park at the south end of Waimānalo Bay, is a popular camping site that has also been used for many years as a community boat anchorage.

---