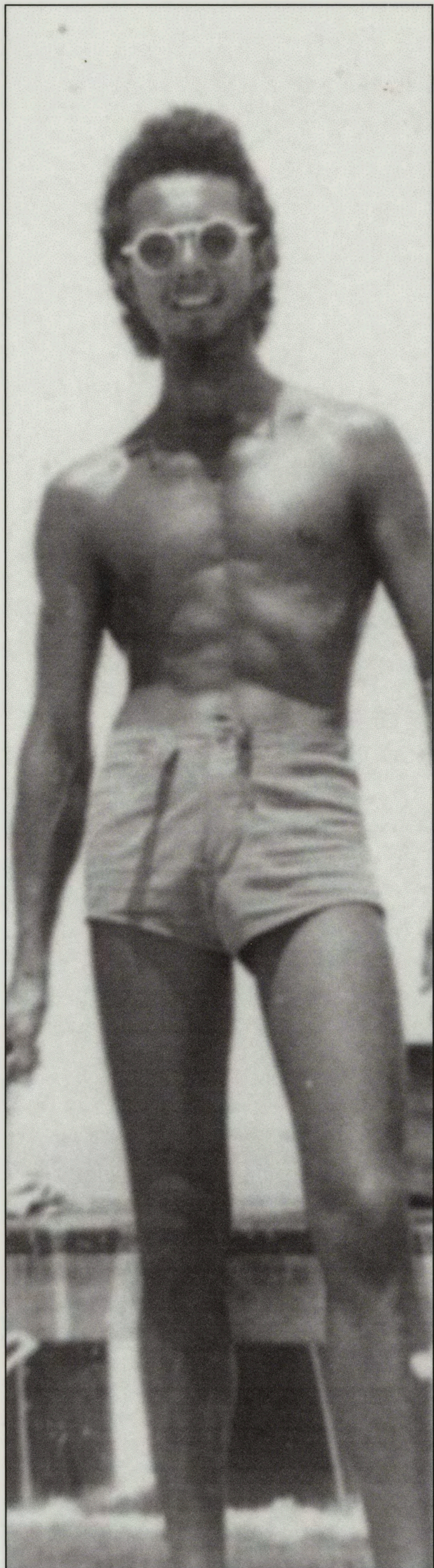




LEGACIES MODULE

Mural
(23.5" x 36")

WHEN WAR CAME...

One day after the bombing of Pearl Harbor, which marked America's official entrance into World War II, the war would arrive at the doorstep of three tiny atolls in the Pacific. In its aftermath, two young Hawaiian colonists, Joseph Keliihanani and Richard Whaley, would be dead, and the remaining survivors left to live a traumatic day-to-day existence. All the equipment, buildings and supplies on both Howland and Baker were destroyed. It would be six weeks before a U.S. destroyer would finally rescue the remaining colonists, bringing to a tragic end the eight-year saga of a South Seas occupation.



The Amelia Earhart Lighthouse on Howland after Japanese bombardment.
Photo courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives

"On Christmas and New Year's Day we had special treats. Originally there had been five chickens on the island but three of them had been killed by the bombing and shelling. We ate the other two on Christmas and New Year's to help celebrate the holidays and to remind us of what we were missing at home."

— Thomas Bederman
Howland Island remembrances,
Life Magazine, March 9, 1942

"I got up on Dec. 8 at dawn and took the flag outside to raise it. There was a Japanese submarine about 100 yards off shore. I heard a 'whang' and a shell blasted the top off the Government House... That night we sneaked back to the Government House. The shells had blasted everything but we saved some tin from the roof and made sun shades for our fox holes. We covered the tin with brush so the bomber couldn't see us."

— Eugene Burke
Baker Island remembrances,
Honolulu Advertiser, May 5, 1981

"Towards noon all four of us were down on the beach, cleaning fish and putting them out to dry. Suddenly, Joe Keliihanani looked up and saw 14 twin engined bombers flying in high from the northwest... From a height of about 10,000 ft, the bombers let us have it. They dropped about 20 bombs, then turned and came back over the islands, dropping some ten more... As we watched, three Japanese planes came in lower than before, machine-gunning the Government buildings and the radio station."

When the planes finally left, Mattson and I walked over to where Dick and Joe were lying. They had been badly hit... We were going to fix up a place to put them but by the time we got something arranged, they were dead."

— Thomas Bederman
Howland Island remembrances,
Life Magazine, March 5, 1942

"That Christmas we had lobster for dinner. We sang Christmas carols under the moon that night. I wasn't sure we'd ever get picked up and I expected the Japanese to land at any time."

— Eugene Burke
Baker Island remembrances,
Honolulu Advertiser, May 5, 1981



Left: Colonist Joseph Keliihanani on Howland, 1941.
Photo courtesy of Elvin Mattson

LEGACIES MODULE

5.A.1 Middle Panel
(41" x 48")
When War Came...

IN MEMORIAM

During the course of the colonization project, three young Hawaiians would lose their lives. Their contributions and sacrifices were not forgotten by their fellow colonists, despite the passage of time. Incorporated in 1956, one of the purposes of *Hui Panalā'au*, the group formed by the former colonists, was to "honor and esteem those who died while in service of the United States of America as colonists of the Equatorial Islands of the Pacific."

Kahalewai's funeral was attended by 3,000 people, and the light beacon of Jarvis dedicated to his memory. Unfortunately, due to the outbreak of war and the attendant secrecy, Keliihananui and Whaley never received similar public recognition. Originally buried by their companions on Howland, they were removed in the 1950s and reburied in Schofield cemetery, with little ceremony or fanfare. In 1981, five men, all in their 60s, gathered to pay tribute to their fellow colonists. Remarked Eugene Burke, "At this time it is appropriate that we say a silent prayer for these two. They are with us in spirit. They fill our hearts with pride. They gave their lives for us." Honolulu Advertiser, May 5 1981.

Carl Kahalewai
Died, October 8, 1938
Aboard the *Taney*, from the effects of appendicitis

Joseph Keliihananui
Died, December 8, 1941
on Howland Island, from wounds sustained during a Japanese air attack

Richard Whaley
Died, December 8, 1941
on Howland Island, from wounds sustained during a Japanese air attack



Elvin Mattson, Richard Whaley, and Joe Keliihananui relax on a crude outrigger canoe, not knowing the war would soon be coming to their doorstep.

Photo courtesy of Elvin Mattson



Right, top to bottom: From Bob Krauss' Honolulu Advertiser article, "Castaways honors - 40 years later", and a notice of Kahalewai's funeral in McKinley High School's *Daily Pinion*. Kahalewai's funeral took place at the high school.

LEGACIES MODULE

5.A.2 Right Panel
(18.5" x 48")
In Memoriam

ENDURING LEGACIES

There was irony to be found in the early years of the Panalā'au expeditions. Young Hawaiian men, vilified in the national press three years earlier during the notorious Massie case, were now being secretly recruited to colonize remote islands as quintessential "Americans." The Interior Department's preferential policy of hiring unmarried Hawaiian men was based largely on a stereotypical notion that Hawaiians could "take the rigors" of a South Seas island existence. And "take it" they did, excelling equally in their multiple roles as Hawaiians, as Americans, and as Kamehameha alumni.

But beyond their scientific, commercial, political, and military contributions, perhaps the most enduring legacy of these colonists is a better understanding of cultural pride and self-identity. They found comfort, support, strength, and inspiration in each other, in themselves, and in their environment. Their foundational cornerstones were the common values instilled in them through school, family, and community – values which remained with them no matter how far from home they happened to find themselves.

"I felt that what we did there had a bearing on how this war went in the Pacific for the U.S. forces...the military, I think, were able to plan on the basis of what we prepared in terms of weather reports. And then ultimately, I would think Pan Am used these weather reports in their routes to Australia, New Zealand. Like I said, we made a contribution in what we did, I feel in my own heart."

— George Kahanu, Sr.
Interview, March 27, 2002

"Everything that the [Kamehameha alma mater] depicts is what we did on those islands there. All we have to do is try to live up to these things that they wanted us to do, be honest, be a good citizen, be a good Hawaiian, and be proud of your ancestry...Take Abe Piianaia for instance, he was a brilliant student, and Bill Kaina, they set records, scholastically and other ways. I think they chose us because of our ability to get along. That's the advantage we had over other people. We grew up together. We went to school together."

— Arthur Harris
Interview, March 27, 2002

"Any time I get in the dumps, I start to think about the good old days on Baker Island. It gave me the ability to be in equilibrium in any kind of situation that might arise. I got into some very tight spots during the war and I'd think about when I was on 19, 20 years old and I was in another kind of tough spot and then, first thing you know, I'd settle down."

— Abraham Piianaia
Honolulu Magazine, Vol. XXIII, 1988



All the early colonists returned to Hawaii following a successful year-long occupation, March 1936.

Photo courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives

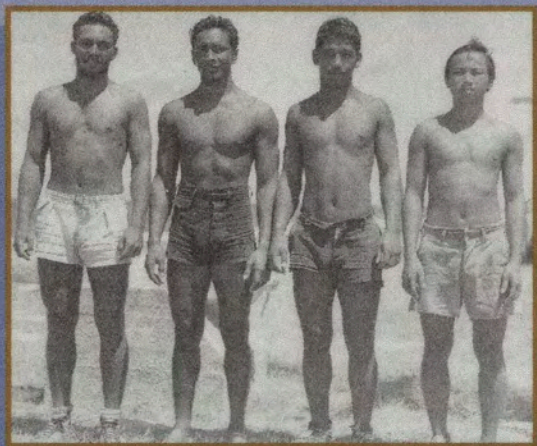


J. Kamakaiwi, J. Anakalea, F. Fauata and K. Opiopio literally lived the Kamehameha alma mater, "Be strong and ally ye, O sons of Hawaii, and nobly stand together hand in hand. All dangers defy ye, O sons of Hawaii, and bravely serve your own your fatherland..."

Photo courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives

Albert Akana, Eugene Burke, Gabriel Victor, and Ah Kin Leong after nearly three months on Baker, January 27, 1937. Burke was one of many former colonists who would later serve in the police force. According to Bill Hutchinson, "When the police department knew you went down there, boy they'd pick you up quick."

Photo courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives



George Kahanu and Stewart Markham returning home aboard the Itasca, more confident and self-reliant, August, 1936.

Photo courtesy of George Kahanu, Sr.

"And being Hawaiians and all of the same culture, in fact when you look at Kamehameha Family, 'ohana, in a true sense. Today, we hear a lot of that, but you wonder, is it true, are we really living that kind of philosophy? In the old days, we did, we practiced it."

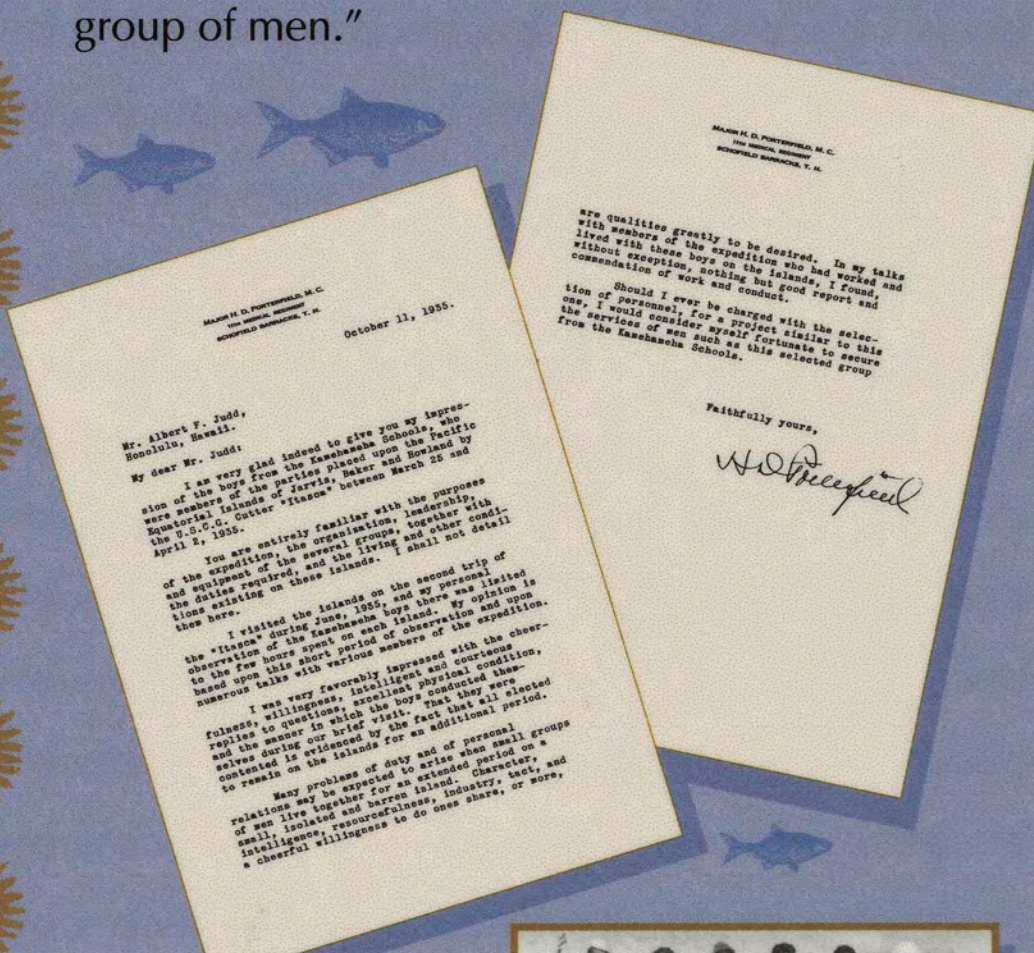
— George Kahanu, Sr.
Interview, March 27, 2002

LEGACIES MODULE

5.B.1 Middle Panel
(41" x 48")
Enduring Legacies

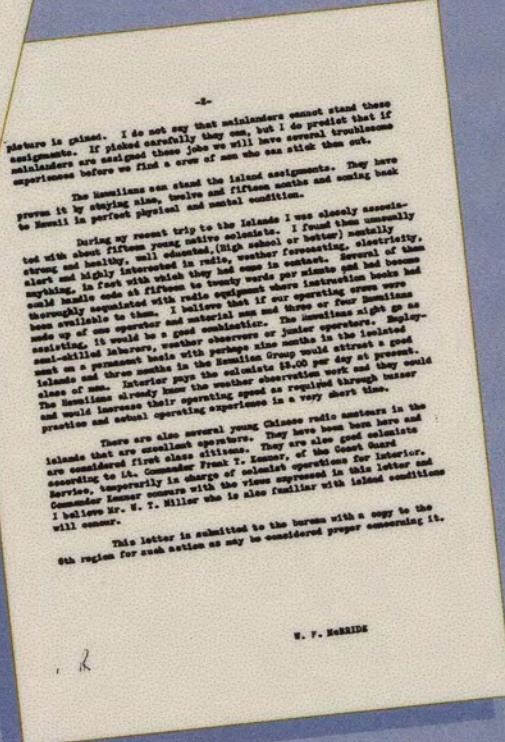
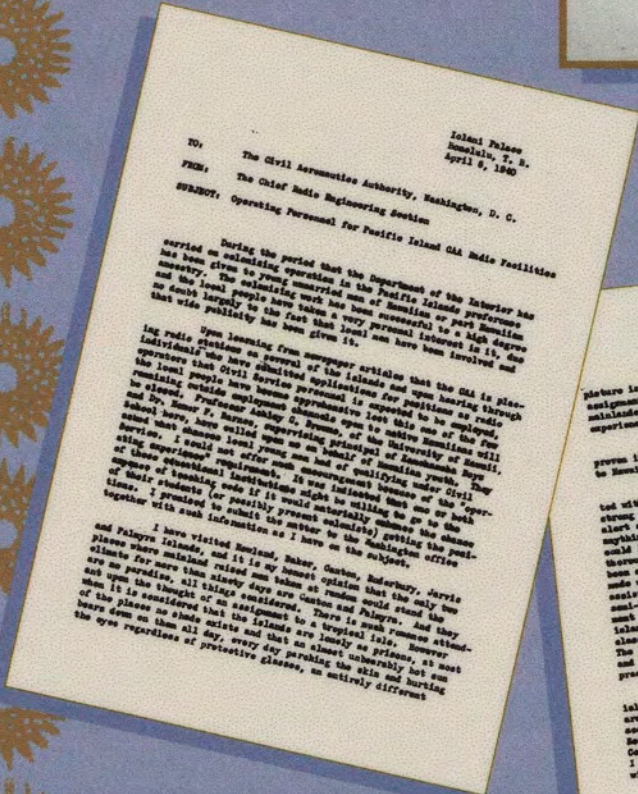
IN PRAISE OF KAMEHAMEHANS

The early "pioneering" colonists received universal praise from almost all whom they encountered. Not only did they accomplish the myriad of tasks expected of them, they excelled, causing Sergeant Austin Collins of the 19th Infantry, who served three months with the Jarvis colonists in 1935 to remark: "In my twenty-one years of service in all parts of the world I have never been associated with a finer group of men."



Hawaiian colonists on Howland. Many opted to extend their stays, living for up to two years under the most extreme of circumstances.

Photo courtesy of Bishop Museum Archives



Letters courtesy of Kamehameha Schools

H. F. BARRIE

LEGACIES MODULE

5.B.2 Left Panel
(18.5" x 48")

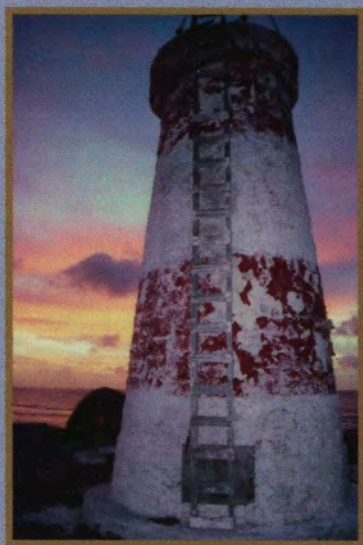
In Praise of Kamehamehans

THE ISLANDS TODAY

Sixty years after the Panalā'au expeditions began, the islands of Jarvis, Baker, and Howland continue to be a part of the United States. Following decades of exploitation, abandonment, and colonization, the federal government has embarked on a policy of restoration towards these islands, which now serve as individual National Wildlife Refuges. Canton and Enderbury are no longer under joint U.S. and British control, having become a part of the Republic of Kiribati in 1979.

The silhouette of Baker Island, visible at dawn's first light.

Photo courtesy of Scott Godwin



The beacon light dedicated to the memory of Carl Kahalewai, bathed in an evening glow.

Photo courtesy of Mark J. Rauzon



Successful cat eradication efforts on Baker, Howland and Jarvis have greatly increased the seabird populations on these islands.

Jarvis Island photo courtesy of Mark J. Rauzon



Federal laws prohibit unauthorized entry and fishing within a 200 nautical mile zone surrounding each island.

Jarvis Island photo courtesy of Stephanie Holzwarth

LEGACIES MODULE

5.B.3 Right Panel
(18.5" x 48")
The Islands Today