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# Uncle Peter Park



An amazing and creative

Kumu Lauhala.

A Living example of Hawaiian

values, integrity, compassion,

diplomacy, manners, humbleness, enthusiasm, wit and humor.

Named Master Weaver

by The State Foundation

**UNCLEPETER AT 26 YEARS**

A friend to all....

May 10th 1913 - October 9th 2007

Ooma North Kona Hawaii

Mother: Agnes Kalai Apele Kahananui

## **As a recognized expert in Lauhala weaving,**

Uncle Peter was active in helping with the creations of new weaving clubs that perpetuate Hawaiian art and culture through workshops, demonstrations and conferences. He is also known for his story telling and understanding of Hawaiian legends, his

Father: Park Kee Hong



fish net making and teaching, the tools and hat blocks he creates, his machines to roll lauhala and his overall knowledge of the land. He was invited regularly to participate in cultural events put on by Bisop Museum, Amy Greenwell Ethnobotanical Garden and Pu'uuhonua O Honaunau. Uncle Peter was named Master Weaver by the State Foundation for culture and the Arts and received grants from them that included establishment of a program to include students.

Uncle Peter is founding member and Vice President of

'Ohi Lauhala. A puhala preservation organization.

The Weavers meet every Wednesday at Hulihee Palace and demonstrate their Hawaiian Art of Ulana Lauhala to visitors. Sharing their art with one another and having a very, very good time.



Uncle Peter traveled the islands sharing his knowledge. He and his family have a long history in the art form and several of the family hats are in Hulihee Palace.

Since 1994 Uncle Peter has been teaching at Ka ulu Lauhala O Kona and he has been sharing his weaving talent with Hulihee Palace Weavers since 2002.

THE PALACE WEAVERS



*After winning the Golden Award for Outstanding Older American., Uncle Peter catches a dance or two..*



OUTSTANDING OLDER AMERICANS AWARDS

More than 450 seniors and well wishers from around the island celebrated at the county Office of Aging's



Outstanding Older Americans Awards Luncheon held May 11 2007 at the Hapuna Beach Prince Hotel.

Golden Years Award: Presented to older nominees, who in their "Golden Years" continue to be extremely active in community and/or volunteer activities. This year's honorees were Lorraine Highkin and Peter Park of Kailua-Kona.



*ARRIVING AT THE PRINCE*

**KING KAMEHAMEHA DAY PARADE**

**KAILUA-KONA JUNE 9TH 2007**



In is Own words.....

***Born in a little shack constructed of ohia, guava and rose apple logs.***

***Amau and banana leaves for siding .***

***Binding ropes were made from sisal fiber, roof was tin.***

Rain gutters were made from sisal stock. split directly in half, soft center core routed out to form the gutters. They came in lengths of 8 to 16 feet long. Containers were 50 gallon wooden barrels, where dragon fly and mosquitoes had easy access for laying their eggs. We shared the water with the mosquitoes and the dragon fly. They used it to lay and hatch their eggs and we used it for drinking and cooking . When we wanted water, we would chase the wigglers down to the bottom of the barrel, then we will scoop a pail of water.

There were crawling insects, roaches, mosquitoes, rats all over. In spite of all the unhealthy conditions both sister Lily and I survived to tell our story.

Grandmother Kahanawale delivered me in this shack, She was known as a midwife of our times.

Both sister Lily and I were adopted or hanai by tutu Kahanawale and Kupuna Kane Kaawa from birth. We both lived together with these two foster grandparents until they both passed away.

We lived on a raw farm land containing an area of 10 plus or minus acres in Ooma North Kona Hawaii.

Later while growing up Grandpa Kaawa constructed a regular wood home made of 2x3's 2x4's, 1x12's and ohia



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logs for post and braces. Life then got better. Although crawling insects mosquitoes, flies, and rats were still with us. There were no insect sprays to rid them, slaps and smashes was the only method used.

Sleeping pads were made of mattress material sewed like a big bag and it was filled with the waste lauhala leaves, which gave a comfortable cushion to lay on. We used horse back blankets for cover. The width of the mattress was big enough to accommodate one big person and two kids. Floor was always available. It was covered with lauhala mat from wall to wall woven by tutu Kahanawale.

Lites; were kerosene lanterns and kerosene lamps.  
Cooking stove; outdoor wood stove. Toilet....in the bushes.  
Water 8 gallon red wood tank.

Kitchen utensils: poi bowls are of gourd calabashes, and a few modern dishes, plates, cups, and spoons, iron pots and fry pan etc.

Of course hand and fingers were the most useful tools to eat with.

Grace was said in Hawaiian at every meal before commencing to eat.

Some of the house rules were, no sweeping of the floor out of the house after sunset. No spitting to anyone at any time, no whistling in the house at anytime. No English language be spoken before grandmother and grandfather except the Hawaiian Language, which today I'm proud of. Sweeping broom was made of coconut leaves stems called ni'au.

Disciplinary punishment ordered by kneeling on the rock or cross one leg to the other and stand on one leg until ordered to be released. Grandfather was the only one who does this kind of punishment. Grandmother never allows this kind of punishment when she's around. She was our savior.

Current events by the Hawaiian Herald called , Ke Hoku O Hawaii. Local events by grape vine or by the mynah birds, that gossips about the chronicle of the common place.

Tutu Kaawa farmed, by hand, daily from Monday to Saturday planting taro for poi. It took one year for maturity before the plant can be harvested to process into poi. It was a very hard and slow method of clearing the farm land before planting can be done. No modern equipment just pik and bar. This was the way of life to survive by planting taro year round. Banana breadfruit, sweet potatoes, are supplements.

Flour was also essential to increase the poi volume, cooked and processed.



Weaving of lauhala hats were very essential means to our way of life.

We exchange hats for groceries at the grocery store. The price of hat is 50 cents each. You need to prepare 10 hats to be able to purchase \$5.00 of groceries.

Weaving of hats was part of my chores. I was made to weave the crown and sister Lily and tutu wahine, would complete the hat worth 50 cents. Everyday was the same routine, no playing until I had several crowns done. It was part of a team work for survival. This was the way of life for me while growing as a youth.

Other responsibilities for me were moving the donkey and sheep to grassy areas daily and feed the pig, run errand to the store when needed.

Best of all of the animals was the sheep I enjoyed the swift ride.

It was a one way ride every day, where ever he was tied, when he was released to go home for the night for his safety from being attacked by stray dogs during the night hours. The donkey was a temperamental animal. He can kick or bite. He signals by his ears. When he folds his ears backwards, you beware, it might be a swift kick or a painful bite. So I keep a close watch on his ears every time. That's the way he communicates.



In 1928 we had an earth quake shake that lasted for a long time, days and weeks, that scared us that we slept out doors during the night in tent. It was shaking about every 10-15-20 minutes. I was at the age of 10 Although no major damage except stone walls falling here and there.



Some of the sports we played during kid day were shooting, marbles, like inner inner hole, ring square, fish, guess hand and also other games like steal eggs, hipio, kite flying, slingshot, volley ball, indoors ball etc which are some of the games unheard of today.

Sunday we always went to church unless very ill, there's no excuse for being out of church.

I held several positions in church during my youth years, which was pushed on. Not intelligent enough to know and to realize the true religious values of the position held.

Curfew was always reminded, get home before the sun sets, where ever you are fun for your dear life.

Food we ate, raw fish and poi when available, boil or pulehu, chili pepper onion, salt, oily sardines and tomatoes, sardines codfish. Beef or pig liver, lungs, loko, donkey meat once in a great while when available. It would be certainly a treat for us.



For starch, flour was the main ingredient, Fried pancakes or rubber pancakes, palawa lulu, palawa mokumoku, palawa popo, palawa pulehu, taro and sweet potatoes, no rice--- never heard of.

Meat or beef was a treat, the affordable cuts of a cow that can be purchased were, the flank, the lower half of the legs, with hoofs, opu and lungs, though they tasted real good and ono.

Pork: only when hunters came by, we would be given a hunk of pork.

We had couple pigs to help with the garbage. Usually we kept the pigs for the great holidays, Christmas or new year. A few loose chickens for eggs and chicken long rice.



For snacks, sugar cane, mangoes, roseapple, peaches, figs, papayas, guavas, and kukui tree sap which oozes out on the kukui tree trunk that jells and hardens. The Hawaiian name for it is pilali.

I attended Kalaoa elementary school nearly 10 years and continuing to Konawaena intermediate and high school 1936. Graduating at the age of 21.

It was a fun days for me. Playing huki from school with my friend David Smythe and at the same time playing around with the girls. ( School grades were average to poor.)



Sister Lily had flew the coop after Tutu Kahanawale's death. By now both foster parents have already pasted away. They were really good tutus to both of us. Except I was not happy with the method of disciplinary used by Grandfather Kaawa.

Tutu Kaawa's sleeping spot in the home was near the front door, He always had this polished guava stick about 18 inches long with a diameter of about 2 ¾ to 3 inches round with a slight curve. It served 2 purpose, one for elevating his pillow to the proper height for his comfort and the second purpose as a weapon for intruders if anyone dared to break in the home. Fortunately we have never ever saw him using this stick on anyone until up to his death. Thank God.

He was known as a very strong man in our little community, as per hear say. I also understood that he served as a guard during King Kalakaua's reign. Much more was said about him on the unpleasant side, so I will not elaborate on. (I intend to make a research at the archives.)



He did not use drugs except chewing tobacco, pipe smoking. He drank awa root pounded and diluted with some water and also swipe which he made and fermented. Sometimes fermented sweet potatoes. This was his liquor that he home brewed to make him feel high. Grandmother joins him once in a while, perhaps when she's in a romantic mood.



Though we have never seen her sleeping with grandfather at any time while growing up “strange”.

Sunday was a day of rest for him. He worship's the Sabbath day by meditating, grooming his mustache and reading the paper and stayed home.

I started school at the age of 5 Kalaoa elementary. My teachers were Mr. and Mrs. Smythe. I was in grammar school nearly 15 years old, finishing in the 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Then continuing on to Konawaena Intermediate and high school. Graduating from the 12 grade in 1939 at the age of 21. It was a fun years for me, being naughty and good. Playing "huki" from school sometimes with my friend David Smythe and learning to play around with girls. Which all teenagers and men enjoys the most in their life,, the thrill that can never be forgotten. "You know what I mean!"



I drove on of the school buses to school during my junior year to get a free ride to school "Cheap Yeah?" My senior year I rode with my friend David Smythe on a old 1928 Chevrolet touring sedan which was converted into a bus by his parents to travel to school.



In the beginning during our freshmen year. We walked from Kalaoa School to Palani Junction to catch the bus, rain or shine. This made it easier for us to play "huki" from school when ever we wanted. Just tell our parents that we missed the bus. excuse granted.. School grades were average to poor.

Upon graduation from Konawaena High School. An attempt was made to take up automotive which of course was my great interest. With the financial support from Mrs. Smythe, my elementary school teacher, who encouraged me to enroll in the Honolulu technical school, which I did.

Unfortunately, automotive classes were not ready when I arrived to start school Sept, 1940. I was assigned to refrigeration classes for the time being.

With lack of interest for refrigeration plus waiting for automotive classes to start. The frustrations of waiting grew greater and greater, that I decided to leave school and go home. By then it was Dec. of 1940 "disappointed"



Dec. of 1940 before Christmas I was employed by Kona Inn, a subsidiary of inter Island Steam Navigation Co. as a buss boy at the hotel with a salary of \$25.00 a month. I worked there for over 2 years.

Dec 7, 1941 we were engaged in world war 2, we were attacked by Japan (sneak attacked) things began to change, my life was so uncertain. My mother was lying in a sick bed the grandchildren were so young and needed so much care & supervision. Being the only oldest child left home and the





possibility of a draft candidate to the us army. I felt some sort of obligation to the family. I asked the draft board for a deferment to the draft because of the hardship at home.

**Courtship:** I met Anna Lee Sui in 1941. Can't remember the month & date when we first met. Anna was a former Kailua Kona girl who was employed by Mutual Telephone Co. as a telephone switchboard operator. Perhaps through a wrong connection she accidentally put the plug in the wrong "puka" on the switchboard, so she landed on the Kona Inn switchboard where I was employed. This is how our love connection began. Dating Game started.

More and more dates were occurring by that time love affair were growing stronger and stronger ignorantly only to discover that a surprise had occurred, due to too much love making to Anna.



Being that my status to the draft was so uncertain, we decided a wedding date to be on Dec 31 1941. We were married in the Mokuaikaua protestant church by Reverend James Upchurch. I am still married to Anna Lee Sui, my first & only beloved loving, patient and caring wife. With the commitment we made, with health or sickness, poor or rich, in joy & sadness until death do we part.



**Babies:** Interestingly enough that Peter was born during the era of the blackout 2<sup>nd</sup> world war. When Anna was ready to deliver Peter our first son, she was escorted to the Kona Hospital by Taxi Keawe Kailikini, the only authorized taxi driver to be on the road during the curfew for emergencies, where she delivered to a son 5 lbs 6 oz. June 1<sup>st</sup> 1942 as a result of the previous surprise to Anna & I. He was named Peter Kauaokalani Park recorded by birth.

As the war continued, curfew and blackout were strictly enforced by the US government.



In the spring of 1942 I was sent to Honolulu by Manager of Kona Inn George Cherry to become an aviation mechanic perhaps of his visual observations of my mechanical activities in the back of the hotel led him to feel that I might be a candidate since apprentice been hired during that time by Inter Island Airways Subsidiary of Inter Island Steam navigation. Known today Hawaiian Air Lines. Unfortunately it did not work out very well for me. So I returned home only to find that I was back to where I left off at the Hotel.

**New Job:** I resigned from Kona Inn Aug, of 1943 to start a new career communications with the encouragement of my wife to join her with Mutual Telephone Co. Now known as Hawaiian Tel Co. a subsidiary of General Tel and Electronics Corp. Sept 23 1943 .

The Kona draft board was in favor of my choice since telephone work was essential to the war effort. My draft



status changed to essential. I had 3 deferments.

I devoted 37 of my best years to communications. Did various different jobs with the Telephone Co.. telephone operator, lineman, station installer, station repairman, pay station collector, collection delinquent accounts, and switching technician, up to my retirement, March 1980.



Great Co, to work for. Didn't get rich, but lived a normal and comfortable life with my beloved wife and 5 Children with her great and careful budgeting we managed to raise our family of 5 children and educate them all plus owning our own home in Kainaliu where everyone of our 5 children were raised in a 4 bedroom house on a half acre lot. Called Honuaino.

The world war 2 black out was strictly enforced, windows were covered with sheet of ply board to retain the light indoors so it wont be visible to out doors.



We were restricted to out door activities with lights or traveling on the highway during the nights (curfew) . So go to bed was the only thing to do blackout days. During these times bedroom activities increased, so the family started to grow.

A daughter was born only to arrive, (She survived for 23 hours) & left. She was born July 30 1943 & died July 31 1943. A name was given to her. Mary Kalai Park.



Surprises continue to increase, another girl was born on Sept. 12 1945 we named her Rosemay Kalai Park. She was born about the same situation as Peter except no taxi service to the hospital.

Another girl was born on Nov. 24 1948 we named her Violet Leimoni Park. She was born while residing at the telephone Co. home in Kealakekua.

On Sept 10 1950 patrick was born.

Anna was on duty at the Te. Co. switchboard. He was to anxious to come to this world that he cannot wait any longer. That the only option I had was to leave the switchboard unattended with the 3 kids asleep, Peter, Rosemary and Violet. It was Life or Birth.

I rushed Anna to the Kona Hospital within a couple of hours Patrick was born. It was early wee hours the great bright morning star was up above so high twinkling in my eyes, thought came to my mind, if a son should be delivered to us I will name him Kahokuloa the morning star as it is called. Patrick is know by that name and it is recorded by birth.

On Oct 17 1954, another boy was born. We named him



**Palmer James Kaina Park.**

**By now our frustrations of birth control have increased tremendously all precautionary measures were carefully exercised. Now sex was not any more enjoyable because kids or babies kept coming only to find that Palmer James was the last baby of this family of 5 children. They all turned out to be good children, holding some sort of degree of their own which we both are proud of. "Thank God" Missions accomplished. Much of the credits goes to my beloved wife. "Job well done" I could have never done it alone.**









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