



I ulu no ka lala I ke kumu
 The branches grow because of the trunk.
 Without our ancestors we would not be here.

issue #2

AHA's Bimonthly Newsletter

July 2025



MAI KA PELEKIKENA..

Aloha mai kākou,
 As we find ourselves at the midpoint of the year I want to take some time to reflect on the path we walk together as stewards of memory, community, and justice.
 Recently, I came across an academic journal that challenged me to think more critically and hopeful about our work. It offered a framework for transforming traditional academic archives into inclusive community-centered spaces. Essentially, the author argues that archives must go beyond collecting records, they must actively repair harm and reclaim stories that have long been silenced or overlooked. That vision resonated deeply with me. Many of our institutions were not built with Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Filipino, Japanese, or other local and immigrant communities in mind. The histories of kūpuna, working families, 'ohana displaced by development or diaspora primarily sit outside the formal record in shoeboxes, in mo'olelo, in the hearts of elders.

The authors proposed a three-part approach: *acquisition* of community-centered collections, *advocacy and outreach* that returns people to their history, and *utilization* that invites students and future archivists into the process. That roadmap could just as easily guide our work—from documenting the oral histories of plantation families, to digitizing church records in partnership with congregations, to co-creating metadata in 'ōlelo Hawai'i with fluent speakers. At its core, this is not just about documents, it's about relationship and accountability. As we navigate our own kuleana in this profession, I encourage us to ask:
 Who is missing from our collections? Whose voices haven't been invited to the table? How do we help our researchers? And how can we build archives that truly reflect our diverse communities? Let us continue to learn from each other, uplift each other, and honor the deep, complex, and beautiful histories of Hawai'i.

In this newsletter you can expect:

Organizational Updates

Committee Updates

Featured Exhibit

Reminders

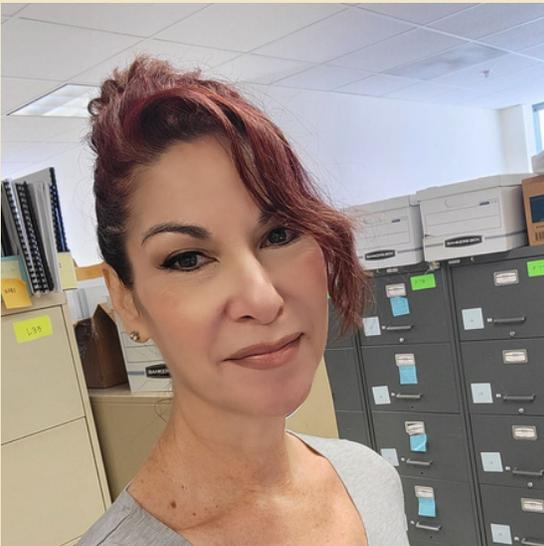
Next Issue: September

Hinano Tangaro

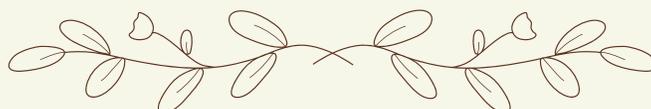


WELINA MAI E

Stacy Naipo



We are honored to welcome our new Vice President-Elect who brings a wealth of expertise and a heart rooted in servicing Hawai'i. As the librarian and archivist with the Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division, Stacy demonstrates a commitment to stewarding Hawai'i's archival heritage with care and integrity. Mahalo nui e Stacy, we look forward to these next several years with you.



Keynote: Patrick Hart, Kapua'ala Sproat, Kaulu Lu'uwai
IASA–SEAPAVAA 2025 Conference
September 10, 2025 - 11:00am - 12:30pm
Keoni Auditorium

We're excited to share that the IASA–SEAPAVAA 2025 Conference is right around the corner, taking place September 8–11, 2025 at the East-West Center's Imin Conference Center in Honolulu.

We're also excited to announce that AHA will be sponsoring the session with Dr. Patrick Hart on Tuesday, September 9. His talk on the intersection of AI, Hawaiian mele, and native bird conservation is inspiring and deeply relevant to our work.

[[Link to Dr. Hart's research here](#)]

All AHA members are warmly invited to attend.

Event / Holiday

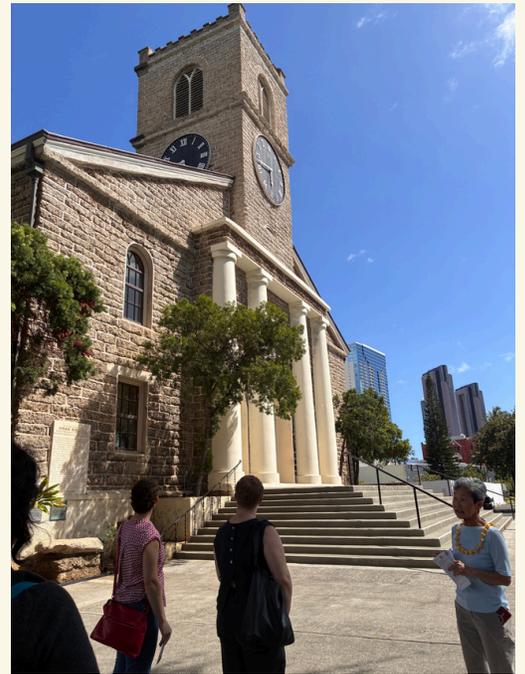
Our event and holiday committee are pleased to announce that we are in the planning phases of coordinating a 2025 holiday gathering. If anyone has any suggestions or recommendations on a venue please email us at hawaiiarchivists@gmail.com

Site Visit

Upcoming Site visit!

- Ossipoff Tour
 - Punahou School
- Date: October

Stay tuned for more information on this upcoming site visit



On May 23, 2025 members of the Association of Hawai'i Archivists were hosted for lovely tours of Kawaiaha 'o Church and the Hawaiian Historical Society. First archivist Keiko Denbeau took us through the pews of the church explaining the history, showing us the royal pews, memorial plaques, and the royal portraits.

Next we had the treat of seeing their archive collection located in the basement it features moveable shelves, air conditioner, de humidifier, and new flooring. Denbeau talked about their process of fumigating their collections for pests before moving the items back into the restored archive.





Denbeau talked about their process of fumigating their collections for pests before moving the items back into the restored archive. She then showed us their processing area and talked about their workflow of processing and scanning documents. Next we took a short walk over to Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives where archivist Cynthia Engle hosted us at the Hawaiian Historical Society Library. Engle brought us on a historical journey of the Society through items in their collection. Some of the highlights were society guestbooks, pictures of ali'i, and history of Honolulu's first reading room which became the society.



We also learned that Emma Kaili Metcalf Beckley Nakuina was one of the first wahine members and was the curator at the Hawaiian National Museum and saw a invitation to a party Princess Ruth Ke'elikolani hosted . We had so much fun mahalo to Keiko and Cynthia for hosting us. This event was organized by the site visit committee - mahalo to Stasha Gardasevic. Stay tuned for more site visits this year!

-Koa Luke

Featured Exhibit



This month, we are proud to feature the Kona Historical Society, whose ongoing work continues to preserve and celebrate the rich heritage of West Hawai‘i. We’re especially excited to spotlight their recent efforts in the Kona Beekeeper Legacy project—an initiative that honors the stories, photographs, and contributions of Kona’s multigenerational beekeeping community.

We’re pleased to share a recent newspaper article that highlights this meaningful project and the broader work of the Society. Mahalo to Ku‘ulani Auld, Archivist Assistant at Kona Historical Society, for sharing this piece with us and for her dedication to preserving these vital histories.

The Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project Celebrates Kona's Rich Agricultural Heritage and Global Beekeeping Impact

Kona, Hawaii Island (March 5, 2025) – The Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project is a vibrant multimedia initiative that documents and celebrates the vital beekeeping industry on Hawaii Island. The project highlights Kona's essential role in the global beekeeping industry through a captivating combination of a mini-documentary, a museum exhibit, and a keiki field trip program. Its mission is to preserve Kona's diverse agricultural heritage while inspiring future generations of beekeepers and sustainable farmers.

“What began as a small tribute to my father on his 75th birthday blossomed into a much larger community project — a chance to document the little known story of Kona's beekeepers and their remarkable global impact,” says Leandra Rouse, the project's creator and daughter of renowned Kona beekeeper Gus Rouse. “Growing up as a beekeeper's daughter gave me a front-row seat to this world, making me perhaps the perfect storyteller for this humble yet powerful community. This project honors not just my Ohana but all the hardworking Kona farmers who shape our island's agricultural identity.”

Kona's unique environment makes it ideal for raising queen bees, so much so that it has become the largest producer of queen bees in the world — a lesser-known yet essential contribution to the global beekeeping industry. Similarly, Hawai'i Island's large uncultivated and pesticide-free forests of kiawe, 'ōhi'a, and Christmas berry trees lead to the highest production of organic honey in the United States. The Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project offers an opportunity to explore how this industry took root in Hawaii, highlighting Kona's pivotal position in global beekeeping through creative storytelling, film, and archival documentation.

At the heart of the project is an original documentary co-produced by Leandra Rouse and renowned photographer and cinematographer Andrew Richard Hara, a Hilo native. The breathtaking ten-minute documentary brings Kona's beekeeping history to life through stunning views of Kona's picturesque bee yards and a look into the kokua relationship between beekeepers and landowners. This film is the first-ever professional documentary about Kona's beekeeping industry.

A four-month museum exhibit at the Kona Historical Society will accompany the film, showcasing historical artifacts, photographs, and interactive displays that will entertain and educate visitors about Kona's beekeeping heritage. Visitors to the exhibit will learn the basics of beekeeping, the history of how bees arrived and thrived in Hawaii, what makes Kona ideal for queen breeding, and “talk story” recounting beekeeping in Hawaii over the last 100 years.

“Through this project, I hope visitors will discover how our small island in the Pacific has made a major impact on national and global beekeeping. Beyond learning the fascinating history of how this industry took root in Hawaii, I want people to increase their comfort with honeybees, develop a deeper appreciation for how these pollinators interplay with our Kona crops, and gain a genuine interest in the keepers who tend them,” says Rouse. “I created this project to shine light on these hard-working farmers, celebrate their innovative spirits, and share their profound connection to the agriculture system that feeds us all.”

The project also hopes to serve as an inspiring workforce development tool, educating youth about career opportunities in beekeeping through school field trips, educational materials for the Kona Historical Society’s summer keiki program, and community lectures. “I hope this exhibit inspires

Kona’s youth to see beekeeping as a viable career path – a way to find meaningful work, remain connected to the island, and continue our agricultural legacy,” Rouse says. By focusing on both environmental and economic impacts, the project emphasizes beekeeping’s role in promoting biodiversity, enhancing Hawaii Island’s food security, and ensuring sustainable local employment.

The Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project promises to be a valuable offering for both the local community and visitors, providing a deeper understanding of the island’s agricultural history while inspiring future stewards of the land.

“I hope the next time our visitors see those dirty trucks stacked with beehives on the road, they will recognize them as part of Kona’s heritage and the essential role they play in sustaining our food system,” Rouse concludes.

The Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project exhibit opens at the Kona Historical Society on April 8th and will run through July 31st. The exhibit will be open to visitors free of charge and is available to host field trip groups. For more information on the Kona Beekeeping Legacy Project, please visit www.historyofkonabeekeeping.com.

About Leandra Rouse

Leandra Rouse, daughter of legendary Kona beekeeper Gus Rouse, was born and raised in Kealahou and returned to Hawaii Island in 2018 to raise her family. She is an entrepreneur with a diverse career creating health programs for people, businesses, and communities. With deep roots in Kona agriculture and a background in video production, since moving home, Leandra has found her kuleana advocating for island stories. She is actively involved in numerous initiatives that help preserve Hawaii Islands heritage and culture.

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Reminders

MONTHLY BOARD MEETING	FIRST MONDAY OF THE MONTH
Join Zoom Meeting https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84420156629? pwd=EGXa68Qa4PNUMkVaNla17Vh H9fDJ3t.1 Meeting ID: 844 2015 6629 Passcode: 785607	2:00p - 3:00p



If you have any news, announcements or ideas that you'd like for us to share via newsletter, feel free to send us a message.