

Outriggers, Poi Dogs and Pigs

By CHARLES E. HOGUE

Aquatic sport at Waikiki was an alluring admixture of adventure, recreation and vicissitude forty-two years ago when the Outrigger Canoe and Surfboard Club was getting its start.



HOGUE

Placid "Moana" stream flowed gently down to the beach, to be halted there most of the year by a sandbar that formed a lagoon in which canoe raders and surfboard riders could take a fresh-water plunge after they came ashore. When a storm blew up it brought pilikia in plenty along with it.

Rice farmers occupied the mauka flatlands now devoted to dwellings. Flood waters from the Koolaus would rush down Manoa and Palolo Valleys bringing with them everything from pigs to poi dogs. "Moana" stream would be transformed into a ranging torrent, sometimes sixty feet wide at the mouth. Waikiki beach would be strewn with litter and filth that required weeks to clean up. This janitor work was the heritage of the amateur "beach boys" of those days; the skilled canoeists and surfboarders who were the pride of the local gentry and their guests, the formal habitués of the club.

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Some of these "beach boys" were listed as junior members of Outrigger. Others were not given that recognition. Upon all of them, however, depended in large measure the success of the institution. For they manned the club's canoes in races with Prince Kuhio's Kona Club and with Kalihi's two formidable organizations, the Kalihi Aquatic Club and the Kamehameha Aquatic Club.

Cash prizes in considerable amounts were posted for races among these four associations. Being amateurs in fact, as well as in official standing, the Outrigger boys turned in their winnings toward a clubhouse fund. It was in this way that much of the money was raised for the wooden pavilion and bathhouse, which replaced the club's original grass shacks around 1909.

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Honolulu's Chief District Magistrate Harry Steiner was one of the leaders among those pioneer "beach boys." Alfred C. (Pete) Young, first vice president of the Cooke Trust Company, was another. Among their associates were Architect Guy N. Rothwell, "Dad" Center, Newt Cottrell, Lionel Steiner, Ather-ton and Arthur (Chip) Gilman, Vincent Genoves, Ted and Francis Cooper, "Rusty" Brown, Ted Melanphy.

These boys and others whose names do not come immediately to mind manned canoes that became famous in Waikiki history, among them the craft loaned by Dr. Wall, mentioned here not long ago. Prince Kuhio's fine outrigger "A-No. 1" still is in use at the club.

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Organized primarily to serve local aquatic enthusiasts, Outrigger Club quickly became celebrated on the Mainland and abroad as a meeting place of famed travelers from far places. Today it is an institution with which other clubs gladly exchange guest courtesies. Its senior and associate members already are entitled to visitors' cards at the Waikiki Club, Lima, Peru; Multnomah Athletic Club, Portland, Oregon; Jonathan Club, Los Angeles; Santa Monica Swimming Club; Club Del Mar, Santa Monica; Balboa Bay Club, Newport Harbor, California; Kauai Yacht Club, Lihue; Hilo Yacht Club, Tattersall's Club, Sydney; New York Athletic Club, the latter two for senior men only.

The dream that goateed Alexander Hume Ford had on the Kalakaua avenue boardwalk forty-two years ago of a Waikiki aquatic club unique to "the only Islands in the world where men and boys ride upright on the crest of the waves" has become a reality.