



An anachronism in modern Waikiki, the old-fashioned Uluniu Women's Swimming Club building houses a membership that clings to many customs of another era.—Star-Bulletin Photo.

The Uluniu: Will It Survive?

The Uluniu Women's Swimming Club, which will be 50 years old next Wednesday, is believed to be the oldest swimming club for women in the United States.

However, the club is not certain how long it can retain this distinction.

The two-story clubhouse is located between the Royal Hawaiian Hotel and the Outrigger Canoe Club, on some of the most valuable beach property in Waikiki — and the Matson lease runs out in 1963.

Mrs. A. L. Andrews, who has been president of the group for the past 25 years, says, "We are counting on five more summers of swimming."

"We have applied to the Sheraton people who are operating the Matson hotels for a renewal, and so far, there has been no decision," she added.

But the ladies have hurdled many obstacles in their long history.

RULES OF CONDUCT

Conservative to the core, the club has managed to maintain strict rules regarding dress and conduct which have changed little over the years.

Though the club is virtually sandwiched between two cocktail lounges, liquor has never been served at their famed sukiyaki suppers or pot-luck luncheons.

Originally, there were just 24 members, a grass shack beach house, and a desire to encourage swimming for women.

Calling themselves the Women's Auxiliary of the Outrigger Canoe Club, they later leased a lot between the Outrigger and the then Seaside Hotel.

INDEPENDENT CLUB

By 1926, the membership was slightly below the 600 mark, according to newspaper clippings, and finances were in "fine shape."

It was then the women decided to be independent of the Outrigger, and changed the name of their organization to the Uluniu—because it centered in a grove of coconut trees.

In the next few years, a second story was added, and improvements made. When the club celebrated a silver anniversary, it was described as "one of the largest and most popular institutions in Honolulu."

Today membership has

swelled to a total of more than 800 women, and more than 35 swim teams now compete for the Uluniu bowl, which has become a well-known trophy.

Whether or not the club endures—it will long be remembered for its contribution to the pleasures of Hawaii's people.

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