Some Firsts in Island Leisure

Robert C. Schmitt

Leisure time activities have always excited great interest and enthusiasm among Hawaii's residents. Long before Captain Cook's arrival, the ancient Hawaiians danced, sang, fished, played sports and games and produced works of considerable artistic merit. Since 1778, the range of recreational, entertainment, and sporting activities available to Islanders has greatly increased. It now encompasses parks, zoos, museums, and libraries, plays and movies, concerts and recorded music, radio and television, comic strips and crossword puzzles, and numerous participant and spectator sports, from professional baseball to snorkeling and hang gliding.

To the social historian, the origins of these pursuits is a matter of considerable interest. It is impossible, obviously, to assign a date to the first Hawaiian konane game or holua sled, the first hula, or the earliest recreational fishing. More recent developments, however, can often be traced. When did Hawaii have its first community theater? Its first camera club? Its earliest basketball game? Information on such subjects frequently exists, but in widely scattered and poorly documented form.

The following pages stem from an effort to pull some of this fugitive material together, to footnote it, and make it available to a wider public. The choice of items for inclusion was inevitably somewhat arbitrary and idiosyncratic, and their miscellaneous nature precluded any rigorous organizational format. Designating any event "first" is moreover a risky business: a compilation of this kind can hardly avoid occasional incompleteness and inaccuracy.

With this caveat, then, here are the "firsts".

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Libraries and museums. The earliest libraries in Hawaii appear to have been reading rooms provided for ships officers and crews. In Lahaina, the Seamen’s Chapel and Reading Room was built in 1834 (and rebuilt two years later) following an appeal by William Richards and Ephriam Spaulding. In Honolulu, the Sandwich Islands Institute, organized in November 1837, fitted up a room at the Seamen’s Bethel as a library and a museum of natural history and Pacific artifacts. A newspaper article in October 1840 referred to this as a “Public Library, three to four hundred volumes” and also listed a “Reading Room for Seamen,” presumably at a different location.\(^2\) A decade later, in 1850, residents of Honolulu organized the Atheneum Society, which for a year or two maintained a reading room and library. The Atheneum was succeeded in 1853 by the Honolulu Circulating Library Association.\(^3\) From 1879 to 1912, library service was provided by the Honolulu Library and Reading-Room Association.\(^4\)

The first true public library in the Islands, the Library of Hawaii (now the Hawaii State Library), was authorized and funded by the 1909 Territorial Legislature and was opened February 1, 1913.\(^5\)

The largest museums in Hawaii today are the Bernice P. Bishop Museum, devoted to the natural history and ethnology of the Pacific, and the Honolulu Academy of Arts. The Bishop Museum was founded in 1889 and informally opened to the public in 1892.\(^6\) The Honolulu Academy of Arts, the only large art museum in the State, was incorporated in 1922 and formally dedicated and thrown open on April 8, 1927.\(^7\)

Parks. The first public park in the Islands was Thomas Square, in Honolulu. The Privy Council records for January 22, 1850 noted the approval of “Wyllie’s suggestion to set apart a day for marking out the boundaries of the square on the Plains of Waikiki, to be called by the name of Admiral Thomas.” The square remained unimproved until 1873, when plans to fence the area and plant trees were announced.\(^8\)

Emma Square has been described as “the first cared-for park in Honolulu.” The land was donated by Kamehameha IV at the time Emma Street was opened, sometime before 1863, but development did not take place until 1871.\(^9\)

The first park with extensive recreational facilities was Kapiolani Park, chartered by the Kapiolani Park Association December 22, 1876

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\(^2\) Entrance to Kapiolani Park, circa 1890. Frederick G. Eyton Walker, photographer. Hawaii State Archives.

\(^3\) Thomas Square, circa 1900. Frank Davey, photographer. Hawaii State Archives.
and formally opened June 11, 1877. Originally a private venture, the park came under the jurisdiction of the Honolulu Park Commission in 1896 and since that time has been one of Oahu's most popular spots.\(^\text{10}\)

Hawaii National Park, the earliest under federal jurisdiction, was established August 1, 1916, with acreage on both Maui and the Big Island. On July 1, 1961 the two sections were split into separate parks, Hawaii Volcanoes National Park and Haleakala National Park. On the same day, the National Park Service created the City of Refuge National Historical Park.\(^\text{11}\)

The earliest Territorial parks—in fact if not in name—were Akaka Falls, Kokee, and Waimea Canyon, all of which were developed and maintained by the Division of Forestry of the Board of Agriculture and Forestry in the years before World War II. In 1949 the Division of Territorial Parks became a separate unit in the Board. Formal designation of the first Territorial parks—the 4,541-acre Kokee Park and 801-acre Waimea Canyon Park—took place March 27, 1952, followed by others (Manuka Park, April 25; Akaka Falls Park, May 19; Kaumahina Park, May 27) a few days later.\(^\text{12}\)

Zoo. Honolulu Zoo began as a modest collection of birds and animals in Kapiolani Park, purchased through public subscription beginning around 1914. Two years later an elephant was added, but the zoo remained something of a municipal stepchild until 1947 when it was given its first director.\(^\text{13}\)

This was not, however, Honolulu's first encounter with exotic fauna. A circus—Rowe's "Olympic"—had entertained Islanders as early as December 1850.\(^\text{14}\) Even earlier, in 1841, a Kamschatka bear had been brought to Honolulu for exhibit. Proving too fractious for local tastes "Major Ursa" was eventually bludgeoned, shot, stripped of his coat, and converted into bear steaks. Five years later a visiting ship presented some townspeople with a grizzly; this bear likewise encountered a lack of aloha, winding up as the chief participant in a barbecue. Bears fared badly in Hawaii well into the 20th century: in 1921, a bear in the Honolulu Zoo bit off the little finger of the City and County Veterinarian, died the next day, and soon thereafter became a rug in Mayor Wilson's office.\(^\text{15}\)

Aquarium. The Waikiki Aquarium, in Kapiolani Park, was formally opened March 19, 1904. The Aquarium was initially built and operated by the Honolulu Rapid Transit and Land Company, but on July 1, 1919 the City and County of Honolulu assumed control.\(^\text{16}\)

Theaters and plays. The earliest recorded performance of a play in the

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Old Royal Hawaiian Theater, corner Hotel and Alakea Streets, 1871.  
Hawaii State Archives.
Islands took place during the stay of Archibald Campbell, who was a Honolulu resident from January 29, 1809 to March 4, 1810. Campbell wrote: “A theatre was erected under the direction of James Beattie, the king's block-maker, who had been at one time on the stage in England. . . . I was present on one occasion, at the performance of Oscar and Malvina. The piece was originally a pantomime, but here it had words written for it by Beattie. . . . The audience did not seem to understand the play well . . . .” A melodrama of Scottish life, the play starred the Hawaiian wife of Isaac Davis in the role of Malvina.17

On January 17, 1834, some young Americans established the Oahu Amateur Theatre, an organization subsequently described as “Honolulu's first community theatre.” Their first production, Raising the Wind, opened at the royal palace on March 5, 1834.18

The first “regular theater at Honolulu,” according to The Polynesian, was the Thespian. This 275-seat structure opened September 11, 1847 at the corner of Maunakea and King Streets with a melodrama (The Adopted Child) and farce (Fortune's Frolic). The Thespian closed in January 1848. Five months later it was succeeded by the Royal Hawaiian Theater, which in 1853 was joined by Foley's Varieties.19

The earliest theatrical performance by the College of Hawaii was a comedy, The Revolving Wedge, given in Punahou's Charles R. Bishop Hall on November 27, 1912.20

The first public performance of the Footlights Club occurred April 28, 1915 in the Hawaiian Opera House. The play was Pinero's farce, The Amazons. The Footlights were reorganized as the Honolulu Community Theatre in December 1934. The following March the new group offered its first production, The Mikado, at McKinley High School Auditorium.21

Magic lantern. The earliest known magic lantern show—a precursor of the photographic slide show and film strip—was presented by Lord Byron of H.B.M. Blonde at the home of Billy Pitt (Kalaimoku) on May 28, 1825.22

Photography. The earliest photographs of Hawaii residents were the daguerreotypes made of Timoteo Haalilio and William Richards when the two men were in Paris on a diplomatic mission in 1843. Copies can be found in the Bishop Museum.23

The first Island photographer was Theophilus Metcalf, whose advertisement, offering “to take likenesses by the Daguerreotype method, at his Rooms, over the Polynesian Office” for “$10 a picture,” appeared in The Polynesian for a five-month period beginning May 17, 1845. No known examples of Metcalf's photographs have survived. Metcalf, an Island resident from 1842 until his death in 1866, was a
civil engineer, superintendent of public works, marshal, legislator, and plantation owner as well as a daguerreotypist over his long and varied career.  

Hawaii’s pioneer pornographic photographer was Joseph W. King, who early in August 1870 was arrested for making “indecent and obscene pictures . . . of a most disgusting assortment.” King was fined $100 and soon thereafter disappeared from the Islands. So, apparently, did his naughty negatives.

The first use of half-tone engravings to reproduce photographs of Island scenes apparently was in *The Honolulu Almanac and Directory, 1886*, which included a portrait of King Kalakaua and views of Iolani Palace and other local sights. The earliest half-tones used in Honolulu newspapers were those which appeared in the *Pacific Commercial Advertiser* on January 1, 8, and 24, 1900.

Amateur photography began to flourish in the late 1880’s. The first retail establishments with camera counters were two Fort Street drug stores, Hollister & Co. and Benson, Smith & Co., both in 1887. The first business establishment to advertise “printing done for amateurs” was the studio of Theo. P. Severin, on December 17, 1888. The first camera club was the Hawaiian Camera Club, organized January 10, 1889, with C. Hedemann as its president.

**Motion Pictures.** The earliest motion pictures to be shown in Hawaii were seven brief scenes screened by Edison’s Veriscope at the Opera House on February 5, 1897. “The first one was a familiar home scene, in which a father, mother, and infant appeared.” The others were *A Watermelon Contest, Arrival of the Empire State Express, The Ferryboat Chicago Arriving at the Slip in New York, The Great McKinley Parade, The Spanish Bullfight, and New York Fire Department on Active Duty.*

The first movies actually filmed in Hawaii were *Honolulu Street Scene, Kanakas Diving for Money* (two parts), and *Wharf Scene, Honolulu*, all made by two Edison photographers, W. Bleckyrden and James White, on May 10, 1898 while in transit through Honolulu. These short scenes, none of which exceeds one minute in screen time, were registered for copyright by Edison on June 22, 1898; prints are on file in the Library of Congress and, since 1972, at the Hawaii State Library. Later in June 1898, Burton Holmes and his cameraman, Oscar B. Depue, visited the Islands and made a travelogue.

The first regular motion picture theater in Hawaii was reportedly Joel C. Cohen’s Orpheum, a 945-seat house at 1234 Fort Street, beginning in 1906. Sunday performances remained forbidden until May 23, 1915, when the “first moving picture ever shown in Honolulu on a Sunday as
a regularly legalized show was thrown on the screen." The movie was *Cabiria* and the theater was the Bijou.\(^{31}\)

The first Hollywood productions made on location in Hawaii were two single-reel, hand-colored films, *Hawaiian Love* and *The Shark God*, filmed on Oahu in February 1913. These pictures, starring Virginia Brissac, were directed by John Wray, produced by World's Fair Stock Company-Universal, and shown at the Bijou in September 1913. The first feature-length Hollywood film made in Hawaii was Vitagraph's *The Nation's Peril*, screened at the Popular Theater on September 18, 1914.\(^{32}\)

Talking pictures arrived in 1915, but required another 14 years to become established. Their first local showing was at the Bijou on August 5, 1915, by way of Edison's primitive kinetophone process. On November 28, 1928, modern talking pictures were introduced at the States Theater. Finally, on July 13, 1929, the regular showing of sound movies began with the presentation at the Hawaii Theater of *In Old Arizona* and a Laurel and Hardy short.\(^{33}\)

Natural-color travelogues of Hawaii were first shown shortly after World War I. On December 30, 1918, the *New York Times* favorably reviewed *Kilauea-the Hawaiian Volcano*, made by the Prizma Color process. Later Prizma Color shorts included *Hawaii*, reviewed by the *Times* on April 28, 1919, and *Oahu and Its Pineapple Fields*, first presented locally at the Liberty on July 17, 1921.\(^{34}\)

In 1947, the Consolidated theater chain installed its first candy counters. On August 14, 1949, the same company opened its 750-car Drive-In Theatre on Kapiolani Boulevard, the first such theater in the Islands.\(^{35}\)

**Music.** Hawaiians were introduced to Western instrumental music when Cook's men played the French horn, violin, and 'german-flute' for them in January 1779. Concerts were presented by visiting ships' bands at irregular intervals throughout the 19th century.\(^{36}\)

The earliest resident musical group appears to have been "the King's Oahu Band," which performed for some foreigners as early as January 1, 1816. A similar group, the King's Band, was active in 1837. The present Royal Hawaiian Band was organized in late 1870, and presented its first concert under its long-time leader, Captain Henry (or Henri) Berger, on June 11, 1872.\(^{37}\)

An Amateur Musical Society (also called Musical Amateur Society or just Musical Society) was formed in 1853 and met monthly for a number of years. On December 29, 1859, the Society joined Mssrs. Hasslocher and Waldau in a "grand vocal and instrumental concert" at the Fort Street Church. The program included "The Heavens Are
"Telling" from Haydn's *The Creation*, apparently the first oratorio music heard in the Islands.\(^3\)

On March 8, 1861, an invited audience, including the King and Queen, heard what *The Polynesian* described as "the first operatic performance in Honolulu." According to the review published the following day, "A number of ladies and gentlemen having associated themselves for an Amateur Operatic performance, met last evening and performed at the R. H. [Royal Hawaiian] Theater, a part of *Il Trovatore*, by Verdi, and two acts of the opera, *Marthe*, by Flotow, before an invited audience." Direction and piano accompaniment—there was no orchestra—were provided by Mr. Hasslocher.\(^3\)

The first *professional* operatic performance in the Islands took place April 4, 1862 at the Royal Hawaiian Theater. Signor and Signora Bianchi, Miss Herrmann, Signor Grossi and Mr. Gregg, en route from Sydney to San Francisco, presented selections from Verdi's *Il Trovatore*, followed by "a concert of select musical pieces." On succeeding nights they offered selections from Donizetti's *Lucrezia Borgia* and Verdi's *Ernani*, "accompanied on pianoforte by Major Hasslocher and Dr. Hoffmann, who also play the overtures."\(^4\)

Neither the 1861 nor 1862 performances included more than some of the highlights of specific operas, and it was not until 1871 that Honolulu audiences saw an opera presented in its entirety. Between October 7 and November 11 of that year, Madame Agatha States' Italian Opera (apparently a small group of professionals aided on occasion by local talent) performed *Ernani*, *Lucia di Lammermoor*, *Il Trovatore*, Sicilian *Vespers*, *Don Pasquale*, and *Barber of Seville*. Some of these were severely cut, but others appear to have been offered in full-length form. The musical accompaniment was still limited to a single pianist.\(^5\)

The earliest Hawaiian operas were two works first performed in 1925. The first was *Pele and Lohi‘au*, written by Fred Beckley and performed at the Hawaii Theater on April 16. The second was *Prince of Hawaii*, by Charles E. King, which was performed at the Liberty Theater on May 4. "Both were described as either opera or operetta, although *Pele and Lohi‘au* was perhaps less an operetta than a tableau . . . "\(^6\)

Although the Royal Hawaiian Band and other early groups often played operatic overtures, concert waltzes and similar light classical compositions, serious symphonic music was virtually unknown in the Islands before the 1880's.\(^7\) Marques wrote that "a small organization created by the writer, composed at one time of 14 pieces, under the name of 'Symphony Club,' has been the only attempt at orchestral symphony music." Founded in 1881, this group performed in public only a few times before it broke up in 1884.\(^8\)
The first full-scale symphony orchestra in the Islands was one formed by members of the Honolulu Symphony Society. In the summer of 1900 a brief newspaper notice announced the formation of the Society and invited "any professional or amateur musicians of good repute" to join. Sixty persons—half of whom did not play instruments—eventually did so, and in 1902 a constitution was drawn up. The orchestra made its first appearance at a smoking concert given at the club house in October 1902 in honor of the officers of the German cruiser Cormoran. The principal number on the program was Mozart’s Symphony in G Minor. On December 27, 1902 F. A. Ballaseyus conducted the orchestra in a concert featuring Haydn’s Military Symphony. This concert, like the earlier one, appears to have been a private affair before other members and specially invited guests. The Society’s first public performance took place at the Hawaiian Opera House on the evening of May 2, 1903 with W. F. Jocher leading 29 musicians in Schubert’s Unfinished Symphony and shorter works by Bach, Mozart, Mascagni, and Wagner. The orchestra performed at irregular intervals for a decade but then lapsed into inactivity. Reorganized on May 29, 1924 the new Honolulu Symphony Orchestra presented its first public concert October 29, 1924 at the Princess Theater. Alf Hurum, a Norwegian composer, conducted the orchestra (described the next day as “ragged and wavering at times”) in a light-weight program of Sibelius, Hurum, Svendsen, and Grieg.

Phonograph. Recorded sound first reached Hawaii in 1879, when a Mr. Kohler arrived in Honolulu en route from San Francisco to New Zealand with an Edison phonograph in his possession. Early in February 1879 he demonstrated it to Kalakaua’s court at Iolani Palace, and on February 22 he exhibited the instrument to the public at a benefit performance at the Hawaiian Theater, assisted by various volunteers including the Hawaiian Ministrels and Captain Berger.

The first Honolulu newspaper advertisements for home phonographs were placed by Wall, Nichols Co. on December 12, 1898. The earliest known records of Hawaiian music were two cylinders listed in a 1901 Columbia Records catalogue, Aloha Oe (30200) and Kuu Pua i Paoakalani (30201). Labeled “Vocal Solos in Hawaiian,” these listings carried no indications of the name or sex of the singer. There may also have been some Edison cylinders of Hawaiian songs at the turn of the century.

The first commercial recording by the Honolulu Symphony Orchestra was Music from the Majestic Islands, on a 12-inch LP (Decca DL 9104) released in September 1962.

Radio. The first Island radio broadcast took place in 1900. This pioneering effort, like most radio broadcasting during the first two
decades of the century, involved telegraphic impulses rather than spoken words and music.\textsuperscript{55}

What is thought to have been the earliest broadcast of music and speech in the Territory occurred around October 1920 when M. A. Mulrony and T. C. Hall transmitted nearly an hour of talk and records from the Electric Shop in downtown Honolulu to the Pacific Heights home of their only known listeners, Tong Phong and his family.\textsuperscript{56} Such broadcasts from the Electric Shop became relatively frequent beginning in April 1921.\textsuperscript{57}

Also in 1921, Wah Chan Chock, who had built his first radio set in 1915 at his home near The Queen's Hospital, became Hawaii's first licensed amateur ("ham") operator.\textsuperscript{58}

The first commercial broadcasts took place on May 11, 1922 when both KGU, owned by the \textit{Advertiser}, and KDYX, owned by the \textit{Star-Bulletin}, went on the air. In what was described as a "hot race," both newspapers claimed victory. The first spoken words appear to have been a few "hellos" uttered by M. A. Mulrony into the KGU microphone and "distinctly heard by the Electric Shop" at 10:57 a.m. Fifteen minutes later, at 11:12 a.m., Gov. Farrington inaugurated programming over KDYX with the greeting "aloha." This was followed by several talks and musical selections. The first scheduled program on KGU was a concert aired from 7:30 to 9:00 that evening. It began with a violin solo by Kathleen Parlow, \textit{Ave Maria} (the composer is unidentified), and closed with selections by Johnny Noble's jazz orchestra.\textsuperscript{59} Despite changes in ownership, frequency and power, KGU has survived to the present time. The \textit{Star-Bulletin} station, KDYX, discontinued operation on January 5, 1924.\textsuperscript{60}

Automobile radio sets were first sold in the Islands in April 1930.\textsuperscript{61}

The direct transmission of mainland sports events to Hawaii was first undertaken in the fall of 1930. On November 22, KGU experimentally broadcast the first quarter of the California-Stanford football game.\textsuperscript{62} Two weeks later, on December 6, KGU aired the entire Notre Dame-USC game from the Los Angeles Coliseum.\textsuperscript{63} Both accounts were carried by short wave to Honolulu, where they were immediately rebroadcast on the standard radio band. Previously, Mainland games had been "re-created" by Honolulu announcers from telegraphically transmitted reports.\textsuperscript{64}

On Christmas morning, 1930, KGMB originated a ten-minute segment of an international holiday program on NBC. The Honolulu portion, announced by Riley H. Allen and featuring four Hawaiian singers (Rose Tribe, Joseph Kamakau, Joseph Ikeole, and Andrew Poepoe), was transmitted by short wave to California and thence by wire
to stations affiliated with the network. The event was hailed as “the first
time that an Hawaiian program has thus been transmitted to the
mainland,” “Hawaii's first entry into the N.B.C. hookup,” and “the first
time Hawaii has ever participated in such an international program.”

Island radio stations began carrying mainland programs on a relatively
regular basis late in 1931. As early as September 1923, KGU had picked
up and rebroadcast a program being aired from WHB in Kansas City.
The first high-frequency broadcast from the mainland, a description of
President Hoover's inaugural, was carried by KGU on March 4, 1929.
On August 1, 1931 KGU presented its first weekly network series,
*Split Second Tales*, transmitted from NBC on an experimental basis.
Finally, on November 14, 1931 KGU became a “regularly authorized
allied station” of the National Broadcasting Company. Less than three
months later, on February 8, 1932, KGMB affiliated with the Columbia
Broadcasting Company.

Notwithstanding this new capability for relaying network shows
brought in by short wave, Island stations continued to rely on electrical
transcriptions (special recordings for broadcasting use) for much of their
programming. Such transcriptions, which had to be sent to Hawaii by
ship, were heard by Island listeners a week or two after their actual
broadcast times, but they effectively solved the problems of short wave
static and the 2 1/2-hour time zone difference from the Coast. Electrical
transcriptions were first used by KGU in 1929.

The first frequency modulation (FM) radio stations appeared in
Hawaii in 1953. KVOK, a low-power educational station, was licensed
September 21, 1953 and survived until May 22, 1964. KAIM-FM, a
commercial station specializing in religious and classical music broad-
casts, received its license November 3, 1953.

**Television.** Television came to Hawaii late in 1952. Station KGMB-TV
was first with both a live program and televised motion pictures, initiat-
ing regular programming at 5:05 p.m., December 1. “Hello, everybody,”
said Carl Hebenstreit into the camera, as the first program, a 25-minute
assemblage of interviews, began. This live show was followed by a Gene
Autry movie, a children’s show (*Time for Beanie*), Hopalong Cassidy,
and another movie (*Meet John Doe*). KONA-TV, which had telecast
the first Island test patterns as early as November 17, began scheduled
programming on December 16.

Color television was first viewed in Hawaii on May 5, 1957 at 6:30
p.m., when KHVH-TV presented a program of color slides and movies.
Motionless slides for commercials were seen first, followed by local news
(notably Lei Day and a high school R.O.T.C. drill) and *Bugs Bunny*.
Lacking a camera, the station could present only the voices of Hal Lewis,
its executive vice president, and announcer Jack Burns. Although only 50 Oahu residents owned color sets at this time, the program was seen by many others in the Hawaiian Village Hotel lobby and the nearby aluminum dome auditorium.\textsuperscript{71}

Live television broadcasting to and from the Mainland was inaugurated on November 19, 1966, when KHVH-TV used the Lani Bird communication satellite to bring the Michigan State-Notre Dame football game at East Lansing to Island viewers. At half-time, the station transmitted some Waikiki scenes back to the Mainland. The transmission in both directions was in color.\textsuperscript{72}

The first cable television company in Hawaii, Kaiser-Teleprompter, began service April 20, 1961.\textsuperscript{73}

\textit{Comic strips.} The earliest comic strips carried in an Island newspaper appeared in the \textit{Evening Bulletin} on Saturday, January 30, 1904. Seven multi-panel strips, all in color, were printed in a weekly comic supplement. Rather simple-minded and not particularly funny, the cartoons apparently failed to attract much of a readership, and the feature was eventually dropped.\textsuperscript{74}

The first daily comic strip in a Honolulu newspaper was Bud Fisher’s \textit{Mutt and Jeff}, which made its \textit{Star-Bulletin} debut on September 7, 1916, and remained a feature of that paper until October 9, 1957 (and January 4, 1958 in the case of its Sunday companion series).\textsuperscript{75} The \textit{Advertiser} remained aloof from comic strips until April 16, 1920, when, with obvious misgivings, it began daily publication of George McManus’ \textit{Bringing Up Father}.\textsuperscript{76}

\textit{Crossword puzzles.} The earliest crossword puzzles published in Honolulu newspapers appeared on November 6, 1924 in the \textit{Star-Bulletin} and January 12, 1925 in the \textit{Advertiser}.\textsuperscript{77}

\textit{Baseball.} Various forerunners of the modern game of baseball appear to have been played in Hawaii well before 1860. In 1840, \textit{The Polynesian} referred to “good old bat-and-ball.” Frank Boardman wrote in 1910 that in Honolulu “a form of baseball had been played as far back as 1842 under the name of rounders, one-old-cat, two-old-cat and townball.” Curtis J. Lyons was quoted in 1901 as saying that the boys at Punahou were the first to play baseball in the Islands, after it had been introduced by a Boston clergyman in the early 1840’s.\textsuperscript{78} Albert Brown Lyons remembered seeing “baseball (in primitive form)” at Punahou soon after his arrival in 1857.\textsuperscript{79}

The earliest newspaper reference to baseball appears to have occurred in \textit{The Polynesian} on April 7, 1860: “Quite an interesting game of ball came off yesterday afternoon on the Esplanade between the Punahou Boys and the Town Boys. . . . The ‘boys’ of a larger growth, among
whom were some of the leading merchants and their clerks, had a game of good old-fashioned base ball on Sheriff Brown's premises . . . " This game preceded another on the Esplanade, also credited with being the first recorded game, by more than seven years.

Major league teams first came to Hawaii for exhibitions in 1889 when Cap Anson's Chicago Americans and an All-Star club stopped on a world tour, but they were not allowed to play because of the Sunday law.

Honolulu finally obtained a minor league professional baseball franchise, with the Pacific Coast League, on January 12, 1961. Three months later, on the evening of April 20, 1961 a crowd of 6,041 watched the new Hawaii Islanders and the Vancouver Mounties open the PCL season at Honolulu Stadium. This game, the first professional league game in Island history, was won by Hawaii, 4–3.

Honolulu Stadium, located at South King and Isenberg Streets, was the first large sports stadium in the Islands. It opened on November 11, 1926 as 12,000 football fans watched Town Team defeat the University of Hawaii, 14–7; it was phased out in mid-September 1975.

Football. Football appears to have been introduced around 1875, when Amasa Pratt bought a ball for the boys at Punahou and taught them "a form of Association football." By 1887 they were playing St. Alban's (and losing). Modern football made its appearance at Punahou at the beginning of the 1890's, largely through the work of J. Q. Wood, and produced considerable enthusiasm among the students, alumni, and younger faculty members. As late as 1893, however, the Advertiser felt obliged to provide its readers with a detailed description of the rules in advance of a forthcoming game.

The first football game played by the College (now University) of Hawaii took place Saturday, October 23, 1909 at Alexander Field on the Punahou campus. Watched by a "good" crowd, the College defeated McKinley High School, 6–5. The team, Hawaii's first in collegiate football, finished the 1909 season with a 2–2 record, entirely against McKinley and Punahou.

Basketball. The earliest recorded basketball game played in the Islands was apparently one in which the Oahu College girls beat the YWCA, 19–17, on March 28, 1902. The first basketball game played by the College of Hawaii was held at the YMCA on the evening of February 1, 1913 when the College beat McKinley High School, 14–13. Playing without a coach, the College of Hawaii managed to achieve a 6–1 season record against high school and military teams and Palama Settlement.

Golf. In what may be the earliest newspaper reference to golf in Hawaii, the Advertiser of January 3, 1896 reported: "The growing
interest in golf in this city has resulted in the formation of a club which is composed of President Dole, Mrs. Graham, Mrs. Renjes, Mrs. McGraw, Captain Broome and Walter Dillingham. . . . The hilly ground immediately back of Punahou has been thought a good place for the links and will probably be adapted to the game of golf." There is no evidence that anything ever came of either this club or its proposed golf course.

Two years later, George Potter and A. E. Nichols asked the Minister of the Interior "for permission to play the game of golf upon the Government Land in Kapalama, lying mauka of the Insane Asylum" and "to be allowed to remove any structure that may be erected by them on the said land for use as a club house should the Government at any time desire the land for other purposes." These plans likewise appear to have failed.

The first golf course actually constructed was one opened in Moanalua in 1901 or possibly earlier. The earliest reference to this course appears to be a newspaper story published on October 2, 1901: "Not much has been said of late about golf but it really is in a better state than ever before. S. E. Damon on whose father's land at Moanalua, the links are located, said this morning: 'The course has been shortened from 18 to 9 holes because it has been conceded by the majority of players that the latter number is sufficient for a warm climate such as we have here. . . . I might say that, since the new arrangement was instituted a short time ago, there have been more players out than ever before.'" The Moanalua Gardens Association has mistakenly described the golf course as "the first West of the Rockies." A 1901 reference to golf links at the Haleiwa Hotel appears to have been premature.

Polo. A polo match, "the first we suppose ever played on these islands," took place in Honolulu on November 3, 1880.

Skiing. Winter sports in Hawaii go back at least to 1840, when J. J. Jarves, the youthful editor of The Polynesian, wrote that "in the course of his jaunt [to the Big Island] he has snow-balled on Mauna Kea . . . "

Skiing came much later. Perhaps the first evidence of this sport was an uncaptioned photograph of a skier published in Paradise of the Pacific in 1933.

"However, it was not until the winter of 1935–36 that skiing actually took place in Hawaii," according to L. W. Bryan. "A heavy fall of snow in February of 1936 and the fact that Dudley Lewis' skis were available, made it possible for the writer and his son to become pioneers in this sport in Hawaii. . . . At 9:00 a.m., on February 7th we were skiing on Mauna Kea . . . [at] an elevation of 9,500 feet near Halepohaku . . . " Lewis later referred to Bryan's son, Jackie, as the first person ever to
ski on Mauna Kea, on February 8 [sic], 1936.” On a similar skiing trip, made in December 1936, eleven-year-old Jack Bryan was frostbitten. By February 1938 two ski clubs had been formed, one on the Big Island and the other on Oahu.

**Skindiving.** The first recorded local use of modern diving equipment appeared in an 1840 Honolulu newspaper item: “Thousands have daily lined the wharves to witness the carpenter, Mr. Dibble, in his novel suit of india-rubber with a glass helmet disappear beneath the surface of the water. Air is communicated to him by a forcing pump, and by means of copper rods his wants are made known to those above. His examinations have been as yet confined to the bottom of the U.S. brig Porpoise, the copper of which he found somewhat out of repair, but by means of this simple apparatus he was enabled to renew it, and thus save the brig the time and expense of heaving out.”

For many years, glass-bottomed “look-boxes” and goggles were the only special equipment used by Island divers for hunting coral and spearfishing. Modern skindiving gear—face mask, snorkel, swim fins and SCUBA—remained unknown.

Face masks were apparently the first of these innovations to be introduced in Hawaii. In July 1938, *Paradise of the Pacific* published a photograph of two pretty girls in two-piece swimming suits, one girl wearing goggles and the other equipped with a face mask and spears. Two years later the same magazine pictured a boy swimming, carrying a spear and wearing a face mask and rubber shoes.

The Navy set up an Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) school on Oahu in 1943 and later moved it to Kamaole, Maui. Before the first group of volunteers at the Oahu school had completed their training, about 20 of the best were rushed to the invasion fleet on its way to capture Kwajalein. The frogmen, initially supplied only with goggles and knives, eventually were given face masks and swim fins, but breathing apparatus remained unavailable until after the war.

Civilian divers in Hawaii began using modern skin diving equipment in the late 1940's and early 1950's. One of the first was Wally Young, who in 1948 began taking underwater photographs. Flippers and face masks became common around 1950, followed somewhat later by snorkels. By 1951, oceanographers from the University of Hawaii were regularly using aqualungs.

**Bikinis.** The first recorded appearance of women wearing bikini swimming suits on Waikiki Beach, so far as can be determined, occurred on May 2, 1953. The wearers were two unidentified Caucasians, who were photographed by the author on the beach next to the old Waikiki Tavern. A third subject, likewise bikini clad, appeared in the same
location on May 24, 1953. No others were noted until April 1956. Bikinis increased greatly in popularity in the next two or three years, but it was not until 1961 that *Paradise of the Pacific*—a magazine much given to Island beach scenes—dared picture such swimwear.

Roller skates and skateboards. Roller skating was introduced in the Islands when Williams and Wallace opened their Honolulu Skating Rink in Buffum's Hall on Hotel Street on July 22, 1871. The grand opening, attended by Queen Emma, included a program featuring a march, lancers, two quadrilles, and a Virginia reel, all danced on skates. Thereafter the rink operated nightly except Sunday and Tuesday, charging spectators 25 cents and skaters 25 cents an hour.

Skateboarding was introduced much later, although the date is unknown. Homemade skateboards were presumably tried by numerous young skaters, but these amateur efforts attracted little or no attention. Skateboarding first became popular in Hawaii around 1963 but later subsided. "The renaissance in skateboarding," wrote Lois Taylor, "came about in 1973 when a young surfer, Frank Nasworthy, started fooling around with the recently developed polyurethane wheels used in expensive rollerskates." By early 1975 skateboarding had again become an Island craze. The first Hawaii skateboard fatality occurred on March 22, 1975, when a hit-run car killed 14-year old David Vannatta as the boy was riding a skateboard at night along Kalanianaole Highway.

Hang gliding. Hang gliding came to Hawaii in April 1973, and by summer approximately thirty Islanders were flying the kites. The first fatality occurred March 18, 1974, when a downdraft rammed James Michael Phillips, a 23-year old Kahaluu resident, into a rocky slope behind the Hawaii Kai Golf Course.

Tennis. Tennis in Hawaii has been traced back to the 1880's and early 1890's, when it "was confined almost exclusively to Honolulu, and in Honolulu largely among the English element," who held "‘tennis teas' . . . at the one or two grass courts then in use.” Interest was stimulated by an 1894 match between an American and Hawaiian and two Englishmen (the English unexpectedly lost), "and shortly afterwards the Pacific Tennis Club was formed, which actually started tennis in Hawaii. The first island championship was held under the newly created Hawaiian Lawn Tennis Association in the year 1895 . . ." The Pacific Tennis Club was on a site later occupied by the main Honolulu post office.
NOTES


9 Cleghorn, p. 139; HG, August 9, 1871, p. 3.


18 Hoyt, p. 14.


24 Robert C. Schmitt, "When the Big Big Question Was: Have You Been Taken?" Honolulu, Vol. VIII, No. 4, October 1973, pp. 23-28, espec. p. 23; Joan Abramson, Photographers of Old Hawaii (Norfolk Island: Island Heritage, Ltd., 1976), pp. 9-10; PCA, September 1, 1866, p. 3; HG, September 1, 1866, p. 3.

25 Abramson, pp. 31-32.


27 Ibid., pp. 412-413.


39 "Operatic," P, March 9, 1861, p. 2; "Amateur Operatic Performance," PCA, March 14, 1861, p. 2; P, March 16, 1861, editorial, p. 2; letter from E. Hasslocher, p. 612. A newspaper article published in 1964 stated: "In 1853 the Varieties Theater on King Street opened in competition with the Royal and Honolulu, with a population of 15,000, saw its first historically recorded opera, Donizetti's 'Daughter of the Regiment.' " (SSB & A, February 16, 1964, pp. D-1 and D-11; also in SSB & A,
January 14, 1968, Symphony Section, p. 34). No source was given, and I have been unable to find any other reference to such an 1853 performance.

40 "Opera and Concert," P, April 5, 1862, p. 2; PCA, April 10, 1862, p. 2; "Operatic Selections and Concerts," P, April 12, 1862, p. 2.

41 Edward B. Scott, p. 147; PCA, September 30, 1871, adv., p. 2, and "The Opera," p. 3; PCA, October 7, 1871, adv., p. 2; PCA, October 14, 1871, adv., p. 2, and article, p. 3; PCA, October 21, 1871, p. 3; PCA, October 28, 1871, p. 3; PCA, November 4, 1871, adv., p. 2, and article, p. 3; PCA, November 11, 1871, p. 3.


43 "The Hawaiian Band," in The Hawaiian Kingdom Statistical and Commercial Directory . . . 1880-1881, p. 607; H. Berger, p. 73; Albert P. Taylor, "Journal of Capt. Berger, Kapellmeister of Honolulu," PP, May 1930 (pp. 11-15, 18), June 1930 (pp. 11-15), July 1930 (pp. 27-29), and August 1930 (pp. 8-10).

44 A. Marques, "Music in Hawaii Nei," HAA 1886, pp. 51-60, espec. p. 59; Berger, p. 73; PCA, December 8, 1884, p. 3.


47 B. L. Marx, "Honolulu Symphony Society," HAA 1906, pp. 160-163; PCA, May 3, 1903, p. 1. The Advertiser review referred to the May 2 performance as "the first concert of the Honolulu Symphony orchestra," and a recent historical sketch described the December 27 concert as "its first formal concert" ("68 Years Ago . . . ," p. 18), but neither statement, strictly speaking, is correct.


49 "Musicians Form Symphony Group for Honolulu," HSB, May 31, 1924, Sec. 3, p. 8; Margaret Gessler, "Symphony Orchestra Given Great Ovation," HSB, October 30, 1924, p. 5; HAA 1925, p. 128.


51 Ibid.

52 Letter to the author from Martine McCarthy, Manager, Archives Department, CBS Records, New York, September 9, 1977; Pekka Gronow, "When was Hawaiian music first recorded?" Ha'ilono Mele (Hawaiian Music Foundation), January 1976, p. 1.

53 Letter from Dorothy Kahananui in Ha'ilono Mele, April 1976, p. 7; Miss Kahananui identifies these numbers as "Mai Poina 'Oe Ta'u" and either "Nani Wale Lihu'e" or "Akahi Ho'i."

54 Burton, p. 54.

55 "On Wings of the Air," PCA, June 18, 1900, p. 1.


57 Ben Holmes, "Interview with Kamaaina Radio Dealer Reveals Some Interesting Hi-lights on Radio of Decade Ago," HA, August 2, 1931, p. 6. This article reports an interview with Nick T. Teves, president of the Electric Shop, Ltd.


HAA 1933, p. 143; “‘KDYX’ Goes ‘Off the Air;’ P. P. U. Is ‘On,’” HSB, January 5, 1924, pp. 1 and 5.

Ben Holmes.

The game was described in HA, November 22, 1930, p. 8, and HA, November 23, 1930, p. 1, but without any reference to the broadcast, which was apparently first mentioned in “KGU Scores Another Radio Beat,” HA, December 14, 1930, pp. 1 and 4.


For an example of such a re-created game, see “KGU to Flash Complete Story of Hawaii—USC Battle Today,” HA, November 15, 1930, p. 1, and “Trojans Swamp Hawaii 52–0,” HA, November 16, 1930, p. 1.


Paul Findeisen, “Columbia Broadcasting System to Enter Territory,” HSB, February 6, 1932, sect. 3, p. 3.

“Improved Programs Marked Activity of KGU During ’30; Station’s Progress Outlined,” HA, January 4, 1931, p. 8.


The weekly comic supplement shows up only intermittently in the microfilm files of the Evening Bulletin, perhaps because the supplements were not always retained.

HSB, September 7, 1916, p. 13; HSB, October 9, 1957, p. 38; HSB, January 4, 1958, comic supplement. This last date was a Saturday, the day on which the Star-Bulletin ran its colored “Sunday” comics.

PCA, April 15, 1920, Sect. 1, p. 4 (editorial), and Sect. 2, p. 3 (announcement); PCA, April 16, 1920, Sect. 1, p. 4 (editorial), and Sect. 2, p. 7 (the strip itself).

HSB, November 6, 1924, p. 2; HA, January 12, 1925, p. 2.


80 “Game of Ball,” P, April 7, 1860, p. 3.
81 “Base Ball,” PCA, June 1, 1867, p. 3. This game, which took place May 25, was described as the “first recorded game” by McClellan (“Baseball in Hawaii,” p. 22).
87 “Foot Ball Game. A Few Points About the Popular Pastime,” PCA, February 15, 1893, p. 4.
88 Information provided to the author by David Kittelson, Hawaiian Curator, University of Hawaii Library, January 31, 1978.
89 Dickson, p. 104.
91 “Game of Golf,” PCA, January 3, 1896, p. 6. I am indebted to Bob Krauss for calling my attention to this reference.
92 Letter from Geo. C. Potter and A. E. Nichols to James A. King, Minister of the Interior, January 5, 1898, and reply by J. A. Hassinger, Chief Clerk, January 10, 1897 [i.e., 1898], in AH, Interior Department Letters, December 31, 1897–February 25, 1898, p. 45.
95 Anon., “Haleiwa Hotel,” PP, December 1901, p. 40. This article states: “The latest innovation at Haleiwa is golf links, which are being made superior to all others in the Territory.” Similar articles in subsequent issues, as well as advertisements for the hotel, made no further mention of the links. The first such reference appeared in PP, April 1906, p. 46. See also R. O. Matheson, “Honolulu the Home of Out-Door Sports,” in Picturesque Honolulu 1907 (Honolulu: Hawaiian Gazette Co., 1907?), pp. 69-71.
96 Editor’s Note to James Haig Mackenzie, “Pioneer Polo of Hawaii,” PP, June 1940, p. 9.
97 P, July 18, 1840, p. 23.
98 The picture illustrated an article by L. W. Bryan, “Forest Trails of Hawaii,” in PP, December 1933, p. 36.
103 P, November 14, 1840, pp. 90–91. This reference was brought to my attention by Bob Krauss.


105 PP, July 1938, p. 35.


112 The 35 mm slides of the foregoing subjects, titled and dated, are still in the author’s collection. The author lived at the Waikiki Tavern, 2437 Kalakaua Avenue, from July 15, 1952 to June 14, 1954.


