



# Kawaiaha`o Church

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## **MORE QUESTIONS & ANSWERS ABOUT THE MPC PROJECT**

*(Many of the questions below were asked at the Kahea held on Feb. 8, 2011)*

*Q: Who built the old Likeke Hall and when, and why was it built?*

Likeke Hall was built in 1940 under the leadership of Kahu William Kamau, Kawaiaha`o's second Hawaiian minister. It was built to accommodate Kawaiaha`o's growing congregation who needed a social hall. It was designed by famed Architect C.W. Dickey and constructed under the direction of Theodore Richards, an enthusiastic church member, for whom the hall was named. The site selected was adjacent to the Administration office which was built in 1929 to house our first Hawaiian minister, Kahu Akaiko Akana. The site chosen and approved by our kupuna, the members of Kawaiaha`o Church, was known as Section B of the cemetery. During construction, 117 burials were disinterred and relocated to Kamoiliili cemetery ... later to be returned to Kawaiaha`o in 1968.

*Q. Why did Likeke Hall need to be demolished and replaced?*

After nearly 70 years of use, Likeke Hall was showing signs of deterioration. In addition, the Administration Office was not able to house all of the church staff so that some functions had to be remotely located. The old kitchen was suffering major electrical and plumbing problems and its use was limited. The church archives, which contains many old and valuable documents, was no longer adequate and a new home to store and secure those documents was needed. Demands for classrooms and conference rooms could not be met. Therefore, to provide the types of services and functions required by the church to carry out its mission, Likeke Hall needed to be replaced. Fortunately, the new building can be built in the same location as the old one.

*Q. What would happen to Kawaiaha`o Church if there were no MPC building?*

Many of us know or have heard of the many good things that have taken place at Kawaiaha`o Church and Likeke Hall. Nearly 100 different organizations used Likeke annually for various functions. In 2006, when the homeless left Ala Moana Park, Kawaiaha`o was able to feed and house them in Likeke Hall for four weeks. We have also housed youth groups of sister churches from other islands, held quilting classes for kupuna, lauhala weaving, ukulele lessons, hula halau practice, provided a meeting place for several societies, and much more. Kawaiaha`o cannot perform as a living church without a "Likeke Hall". Without a new facility, therefore, the Church will be unable to realize its mission to spread the Gospel. The site selected by the Ali`i for their church will simply become a visitor attraction for tourists.

*Q. Can't the Multi-Purpose Center be built elsewhere on the property?*

Like the kupuna of yesterday, the church members of today faced the same problem of where to put their "parish hall". Certainly the MPC building cannot be where the rest of the cemetery is nor at the school or Punana Leo sites. It also cannot be on the King Street side of the sanctuary. That brings us back to the same location as the old Likeke Hall. The new building will be in the same footprint as Likeke Hall, except approximately 10 per cent larger, with most of the expansion occurring on the non-cemetery side of the Likeke footprint, between the sanctuary and where Likeke stood.

*Q. Where were iwi found during the recent excavations?*

Although there was no expectation of encountering any iwi, while trenching for the utility lines discoveries were made in the roadway next to the schools and also in the small parking area behind the Likeke Hall kitchen. These were paved areas which had been used for many years. There was no indication of any burials. A few more iwi were encountered within the Diamond Head – Makai foundation corner of the new building's floor plan and in the area known as Section C.

*Q. Who authorized the disinterment of iwi and who was notified of the discoveries?*

In accordance with the approved Archaeological Monitoring Plan, each discovery was immediately reported to the SHPD by the archaeologist on site. A representative from SHPD reviewed the report and examined the find, if necessary, to determine the appropriate disposition. If known, families of the burial plot nearest to where the iwi were discovered were notified by Kawaiaha`o to inform them of the intended action.

*Q. What is the purpose of disinterring the iwi? Why can't they just be left in place?*

It is our understanding that if the iwi could be exposed to future damage, disinterment is preferred. However, if they can be kept safely in place, they can remain in the ground. The decision on whether to disinter or not is made by SHPD in accordance with appropriate laws and in consultation with the archaeologists. Disinterment of human remains is done with the best interest of the iwi in mind and performed with utmost care and respect.

*Q. What was done with iwi that were disinterred?*

First of all, all iwi are disinterred only by the archaeologists following strict procedures in their handling. All discoveries are numbered, catalogued and observations are recorded. Each set of iwi is placed in a container which is then given to a member of the Na Iwi Committee (NIC) of Kawaiaha`o Church for safe storage. A copy of the archaeologists notes is also provided. Curation is performed by a trained member of the NIC. During curation, a pule is said over each set of iwi.

*Q. Are there any iwi that were not disinterred?*

In all, 69 sets of iwi were discovered. Most were disinterred as authorized by SHPD. However, it was determined that a few could safely remain in place.

*Q. If 69 sets of iwi were discovered, why were there only 23 lauhala baskets on the shelves?*

As noted above, although 69 were discovered, not all were disinterred. All disinterred iwi were properly curated, recorded and identified by duplicate numbered stainless steel

tags, wrapped in muslin, placed in lauhala baskets, and tied with sinnet. Although only 23 baskets can be seen on the shelves, more baskets can be found behind them.

*Q. Does Kawaiaha`o not respect traditional Hawaiian beliefs?*

While Kawaiaha`o Church and its members greatly respect and honor traditional Hawaiian practices and beliefs, we are first and foremost a Congregational Church that believes and practices the Christian religion. Burials in our cemetery have been Christian burials of Church members and their families. Queen Kaahumanu herself allowed the first missionaries to establish their church at its present site, the Springs of Chiefess Ha`o. Kamehameha III subsequently deeded the land to the congregation in 1842 and the church became known as the Church of the Ali'i. Kawaiaha`o Church has a long and honorable Hawaiian history.

*Q. Why wait until the project is completed to re-inter the iwi? Why not do that now?*

It was the intention of the church to wait until all iwi were recovered so that all iwi could be re-interred at the same time. A number of requests and petitions have been received for an earlier re-interment, including a proposal that the present iwi be re-interred within the King Lunalilo Tomb grounds. These suggestions are being given serious consideration by the Na Iwi Committee and the Committee's recommendation will be presented to the Board of Trustees of Kawaiaha`o. Interested parties will be notified of the Board's decision. However, it is a deliberative process that takes time. The reinterment site must also be reviewed and approved by SHPD and the Congregation.

*Q. Why are the iwi kept in a "caged" room? (This term was used by a Kahea participant.)*

The room where the iwi are stored is part of the Kawaiaha`o Church sanctuary. The room is highly secure for the safety and protection of the iwi, which have been a part of the Kawaiaha`o cemetery for over a century. They are kept under lock and key in order to prevent any unfortunate incidences from occurring as have happened to iwi elsewhere that were not so closely guarded. It is our kuleana to be vigilant in view of today's realities.

*Q. Why does Kawaiaha`o not have good records of burials in their cemetery?*

Christian burials have occurred at Kawaiaha`o since the 1830s. As shown on the cemetery maps of 1912 and 1920, Church members were assigned family plots of various sizes throughout the property. These areas were approximate and not defined by metes and bounds (physical landmarks and distances between them). The plots were not purchased by the families and, to this day, families do not contribute to the maintenance of the cemetery grounds. This expense has been borne by the Church for over a hundred years.

In the early days, families, helped by hired "gravediggers," were responsible (with the approval and assistance of the Kahu of Kawaiaha`o) for the Christian burial of their loved ones. There were no mortuaries as we know them today. All the family needed to provide to the church was a burial permit from the Board of Health. They were also responsible for placing a marker for the grave. Some chose not to place a marker or simply could not afford one. While the church may have the burial permit of a deceased person, we do not necessarily know exactly where that person is buried, unless we are already familiar with their headstone or marker. Markers that were made of rocks or plants may no longer exist. According to a well known cemetery expert, this situation is

common to all of the old cemeteries throughout Hawaii. Kawaiaha`o's situation is not unique.

*Q. Where can I get a list of names and other information of the iwi that were disinterred at Kawaiaha`o?*

Unfortunately, the iwi that were discovered cannot be identified by name. The location where they were found did not have any markers or headstones. All the Church may know is their proximity to a known family plot.

Unless an individual can offer factual proof that he or she is a descendant of the family in whose plot or near the plot where the iwi in question were found, for reasons of privacy, the Church cannot share any information about the iwi with such individuals.

*Q. Some of my family is buried in Kawaiaha`o cemetery. How can I find out where they are?*

Please contact Mr. Tin Hu Young, the director of the cemetery at Kawaiaha`o Church. He is the keeper of our records and is very familiar with the burial locations at Kawaiaha`o. It is advisable for those making such inquiries to bring records of the deceased and proof of their relationship with them. Uncle Tin Hu can be contacted at 469-3085 or on his cell at 282-1583.

*Q. When does Kawaiaha`o plan to resume construction of the MPC?*

Because the project has been inactive for almost two years, there are a number of tasks to complete before we can resume construction, not the least of which is to develop a revised budget and schedule for the project. This must then be presented to the congregation for consideration and approval. As a Congregational church, the members have the ultimate authority in deciding Kawaiaha`o's actions on major issues.