



d i s t r i c t i o n s

Tommy Travels

A Deaf, Dumb and Blind Travel Guide For The Debutante Traveler
by Murray Thorpe

The Sandwich Islands offer a tropical paradise within the confines of the United States and all the conveniences of home.

Well, I had just come back from living in Indonesia and I had not seen my sister, Alison, for some time. She lives in Prince Rupert, British Columbia on the West Coast just below Ketchikan, Alaska. Instead of making the twenty-five hour drive from Southern B.C. to see her, I agreed to meet her in Hawaii so that we could both catch a little sun. After all, Prince Rupert gets around an average rainfall of 300 centimetres of rain a year

After four months of cloud and rain, a trip to Hawaii is what one needs!

and to top that, between November 1 and March 1 of that winter, Prince Rupert had about four hours of sunshine (yes, that is written correctly - four hours). So Alison was ready for some sun.

This was my first time to Hawaii which was formerly known as the Sandwich Islands. On January 18, 1778, James Cook discovered Hawaii and named them the Sandwich Islands in honor of the Earl of Sandwich who was the first lord of the British admiralty. Yes, this is the same Sandwich who was first reported to have had a sandwich. The Earl of Sandwich was an English nobleman of the 1700's and while playing cards ordered his servant to bring him some roast meat in between two slices of bread.

Captain Cook also landed at Vancouver Island, the largest island on the Pacific Coast of North America, but it was not discovered that it was an island until one of his crewman, George Vancouver, sailed around it in 1792. James Cook was killed at Kealahou Bay on the Big Island of Hawaii in a dispute between his crew and the natives in 1779.

In the 1820's, the Hawaiian Islands were first visited by missionaries. These Boston congregationalists came from Boston by sailing vessel. The Panama Canal only opened in 1914 so the journey took them around Cape Horn. If the Cape of Good Hope has the roaring 40's, then I guess Cape Horn should have the roaring 60's. The movie based on the book *Hawaii* by James A. Michener certainly portrayed this part of the journey as a test. The Panama Canal would have reduced

the journey by 12,600 kilometres and avoided the dangerous winds around Cape Horn.

Honolulu is on the Island of Oahu and is just under 4,000 kilometres from the US mainland. The big island of Hawaii has an area of 10,458 square kilometres which is almost twice that of PEI (5,660 square kilometres) but just over a third the size of Vancouver Island (31,284 square kilometres). The other islands of the Hawaiian chain are considerably smaller.

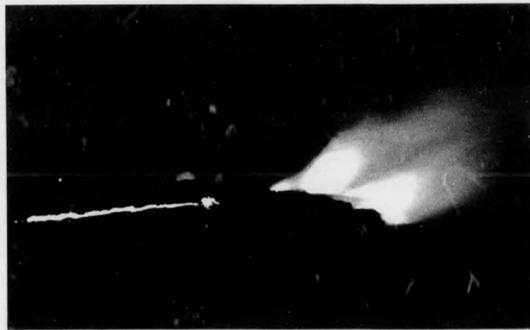
Hawaii became a US possession in 1898, a territory in 1900 and the fiftieth state August 21, 1959. The television show, *Hawaii 5-0*, was named for this fact. It is the Aloha State or the State of love. The state motto "Ua mau ke ea o ka ahi i ka pona" means the life of the land is perpetuated in righteousness. This doesn't seem to fit with all the tourists floating around, so maybe it's just something to strive for. It is the only State to have had a monarchy. It also has its own language which only has twelve letters (a e h i k l m n o p u w). Mohalo, meaning thanks, is a

wettest spots with an average annual rainfall of 1,168 centimetres. So a cloudy day there was practically like a sunny day anywhere else. It was only logical to think that the rain came and went with Alison.

Alison and I landed at Honolulu and got onto a connecting flight to Kona on the big Island of Hawaii. We arrived at our hotel to discover that they were overbooked. They asked us if we would mind giving up our budget room a mile from the beach and take an apartment on the beach with balcony, kitchen and more household appliances than we needed. In

The tropical beauty of Hawaii with its waterfalls and lush foliage was very apparent

spite of the rain, we could not believe our luck. Our time on the Big Island went quickly. We visited Volcanoes National Park and saw the Kilauea Crater, old lava tubes and lava flowing into the sea at night from the Mauna Loa volcano. The tropical beauty of Hawaii with its waterfalls and



Mauna Loa Lava Flowing into the Sea and a Trail of Flashlights

handy word to know.

Alison had a week and I had ten more days after she left to enjoy the magic of Hawaii. Except for the day we arrived and the last eleven days of my stay, it was cloudy and rainy. Some days the rain was so heavy, we got wet under an umbrella from water bouncing off of the pavement (or so it seemed).

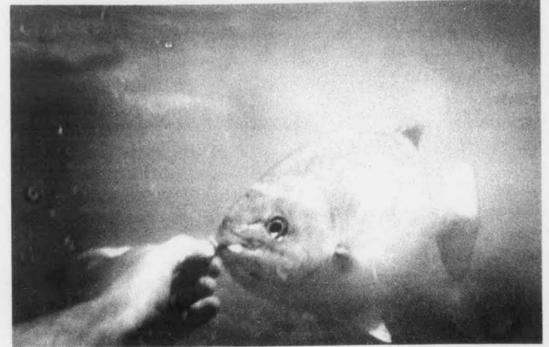
After Alison left, I got sun everyday except for half a day of cloud and that was when I was at the foot of Mount Waialeale on Kauai which is one of the world's

lush foliage was very apparent. We traded our car in for horses and had a slower look at the beauty of the Waipio Valley. The monkey pod trees, taro fields and people wearing large rain ponchos on horseback are images I won't forget.

SHARK ATTACK!!!

We flew back to Honolulu and we stayed in a hotel a block from the beach at Waikiki. That night we ordered Chinese food and got billed \$60US for greasy rice and two chicken balls. I still laugh when I think of that deal. Things are expensive in Hawaii but, in addition to that, there is always the possibility of a shark attack on land.

In Oahu, we went to Pearl Harbor and saw the tear drops of Pearl Harbor. The Arizona still leaks oil which floats to the surface in small quantities. We also went to the Polynesian Cultural Centre at the Northeastern end of the island. This centre is made of various pavilions from the various islands of Polynesia (New Zealand, Tonga, Samoa and Hawaii) in which the dances and other aspects of their culture were acted out. I enjoyed it, but in Indonesia, the locals did not have to act to recreate their culture. This was the wettest day of our trip but still the



Underwater Camera in One Hand and Banana in the Other.
temperature was very pleasant.

Since Alison's time was very limited, we fell into the trap of a Magnum PI island tour and snorkelling. By the way where is Magnum, PEI? My first reaction to the Magnum PI tour was that a tourist trap would not pick a name that sounded so blatantly like a tourist trap. Wrong. We did see the sights promised but our guide told us Magnum PI beach was much better than Hanauma Bay.

We got to the beach, and our guide sold us fish food that disintegrated in the water. The group of us struggled with the surf pushing us into the rocks and we never saw any fish. This beach was just a deserted rocky municipal beach. The day was overcast, warm and worth all of the laughs we got out of that experience.

Well, the day finally came when the rain would leave. My sister and I got up at noon and spent 3 hours on the beach before she left for the airport and I left for the youth hostel. I stayed at the Waikiki hostel for a few nights and then flew to Kauai.

Kauai, is the Garden Island and the opening scene of the television show, *Fantasy Island*, was filmed there. Hawaii gives the feel that one is not in the States except for all the reminders such as the language, US postal boxes and money. Kauai was hit hard by hurricane Iwa in 1982 and there are still signs of the damage. Kauai is very scenic and has the Hawaiian version of the Grand Canyon called the Waimea (why-a-may-a) canyon.

Back on Oahu, I stayed in the youth hostel by the University of Hawaii at Honolulu. A group of us went sightseeing on public transport. It makes you free to get lost on your own. We saw Diamond Head, the extinct volcano that typifies the scenery of Oahu and Waikiki beach and



A Rainbow and Diamond Head from Waikiki Beach

took out the 16 foot surf boards and roared the surf of Waikiki. The Waikiki side of Oahu has the tame surf perfect for the malihini (newcomer). Areas, such as Waimea Bay which is mentioned in the song 'Surfin' USA' by the Beach Boys, have

larger waves and are on the North West (windward) side of Oahu.

The next day, we skipped the Magnum PI experience and went to Hanauma Bay. What a fabulous place! So popular, it was wall to wall people. So, one good thing could be said about the Magnum PI beach: it was empty.

At Hanauma Bay, we had brought bananas for the fish which was much easier than barfing (see *Tommy Travels to Lombok* in Issue #17). We got into the water with our underwater disposable cameras and we couldn't believe the fish. The colours, the diversity and the size of all the fish left us impressed. A disposable underwater camera is cheap and is a great idea for snorkelling. The pictures close to the surface showed the diversity of colours, however, things do become blue the deeper one goes because all of the other colours (have longer wavelengths and) don't travel through water too far.

Hanauma Bay had another point in its favour over Magnum PI beach in addition to all of the fish. The bay was reef-protected so it was calm and the beach was sandy, not rocky. There were three of us, so two of us went swimming at a time while the other slept and soaked up the sun!

If a person came to Hawaii just to simply soak up the sun and do nothing else, that person should still visit Hanauma Bay. Of course, one cannot visit Hawaii without trying all of the fresh fruit such as papaya and pineapple. The taste of fresh fruit is a treat. One will also be impressed by the beauty and the smell of the tropical flowers especially those of a lei. Hawaii is a great place to visit and has all the comforts of home, however, one has to put up with all the tourists and tourist sharks.



Like an Umbrella, a Tanning Salon is a Part of Alison's Vacation

Information obtained from:
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