Lunalilo Home reopens

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Introduction

After four years of renovations, costing \$4.5 million, Lunalilo Home, located in Maunalua Valley, reopened last summer. The aging 88-year-old structure was virtually gutted and reconfigured to enlarge the multi-bed rooms and to create private rooms, which were not previously available. Although the rooms are brighter and more spacious, the resident capacity for the home diminished from 56 to 42 individuals.

The private non-profit home, which sits on a five-acre

parcel at 501 Kekāuluohi Street, operates under a license from the Hawai'i State Department of Health as an Adult Residential Care Home II. Under this license, only individuals who are ambulatory and continent may be

accepted for residency. Only elderly individuals of Hawaiian ancestry may apply.

Besides room and board, each resident is provided staff assistance in daily living activities such as grooming, personal hygiene, feeding, and recreation. The staff also administers medications and makes sure patients get to doctor's appointments.

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Lunalilo Home is governed by a three-person Board of Trustees of the Lunalilo Trust. The current trustees are R. M. Keahi Allen, Eugene N. Tiwanak, and Stanley W. Hong. Gregg Meyer serves as the administrator.

The home is funded primarily by resident fees. These fees range from \$2,760 to \$3,260 a month, depending on the evaluated level of care. Supplementary funding comes from the Lunalilo Trust, an annual golf tournament, community organizations, and other corporate and private donations.

Future plans for the home include expanding services related to short-term respite care, adult day care, and home care programs for house-bound elderly.

Brief history of Lunalilo Home

Lunalilo Home enjoys a very rich history in Hawai'i. When King William Charles Lunalilo died in 1874, having reigned a little over a year, and having no heirs, his will

established a perpetual care trust under the administration of three trustees, to be appointed by the Hawaiian Supreme Court.

To fund the trust, the will directed that some of the

lands in his vast estate (estimated to be over 400,000 acres) be sold, with the trustees instructed "to invest the proceeds in some secure manner until the aggregate sum shall amount to twenty-five thousand dollars." The will further decreed that the trustees were to,

"... expend the whole amount in the purchase of land and in the erection of a building or buildings on the island of Oahu, of iron, stone, brick or other fire-proof material, for the use and accommodation of poor, destitute and infirm people of Hawaiian (aboriginal) blood or extraction, giving preference to old people..."

King Lunalilo, like his predecessors before him, was deeply concerned about the plight of the Hawaiian people. During his lifetime, he had witnessed a rapid decline in the population due to the devastating effects of foreign diseases to which the Hawaiian people had no

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Although King Kamehameha IV and his wife Emma, led the campaign to raise funds for the first public medical facility, The Queen's Hospital, which opened in 1859, the plight of the elderly was not adequately addressed. King Lunalilo took a special interest in this population, wanting to provide a safe and nurturing environment for kūpuna.

In 1879, the Hawaiian government granted the Estate 21 acres of land in the district of Kewalo, where Roosevelt

High School is today. The first Lunalilo Home was constructed at this location, and when the large stone structure opened in 1883, it accommodated 50 residents. An adjoining 39-acre parcel of land was conveyed by legislative action to the Estate in

1888, and was used for pasture and dairy operations.

By 1927, this home had grown obsolete. It was difficult and costly to maintain, and urban development caused concern for the safety of the residents. To address these concerns, the court approved the disposition of this property in 1927, after which it was subdivided and sold. The trustees looked for a new site in a secluded location, and found one containing 20 acres in Maunalua Valley, near Koko Head, owned by the estate of Princess Bernice Pauahi Bishop.

Part of the property was leased to the Radio Corporation of America (RCA) who operated a Marconi wireless station at the site. Other portions of the property were leased to small farmers.

The money to buy this land was donated to the trust by the John li Estate, in memory of Irene li Brown Halloway, li's daughter. John li was a close friend and fellow privy councilor of Lunalilo's father, Charles Kana'ina. Proceeds from the sale of the Kewalo site were used to purchase RCA's leasehold interest and buildings constructed by the Marconi Wireless Co.

These buildings, built in 1914, included a beautiful twostory structure with steel framing, concrete floors laid with hardwood flooring and a red-tiled roof built in 1914.

After renovating this building, the "new" Lunalilo Home opened the following year with accommodations for 56 residents. The lonely dirt road fronting the building thereafter became known as Lunalilo Home Road.

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In the 1950s and 1960s, developer Henry J. Kaiser bought up most of the rural agricultural land in Maunalua, which he sub-divided into hundreds of suburban residential lots, calling the area Hawaii Kai.

As urbanization once again pressed against Lunalilo Home, the trustees found it advisable to follow suit. In 1969, they sub-divided 15 acres of the homelands into 80 residential leasehold lots. Income was derived from leases until 1983, when the state legislature approved a controversial "lease-to-fee conversion" bill, which mandated that leases be sold. Subsequently all of the lots were sold except one, with the money going into investments to support the institution in perpetuity.

Today, Lunalilo Home is a thriving institution that looks forward to caring for elderly Hawaiians well into the 21st century.

I lohe i ka 'ōlelo a ho okō, e ola auane i a laupa i
One who hears good counsel and heeds [it]
will live to see many descendants