

Friday

Dec. 14, 1975

Star-Bulletin & Advertiser

Home Edition

Storm claims Hawaii-bound replica canoe

By HUGH CLARK and KEN KOBAYASHI

Advertiser Staff Writers

HILO — The Spirit of the Nuku Hiva, the double-hulled canoe modeled after ancient Polynesian sailing vessels, has been lost at sea, a victim of a savage Pacific storm, The Advertiser learned yesterday.

The 75-foot canoe, skippered by Robert L. Griffith, was crippled by a gale and then ripped from the escort yacht Awahnee 900 miles east southeast of Hilo 11 days ago.

The canoe was on a journey from the Marquesas Islands to Hawaii, following a path Griffith thought the ancient Polynesians took centuries ago.

Griffith and the canoe's three crew members—none reportedly injured—arrived in Hilo Harbor Friday night aboard the 53-foot Awahnee.

Yesterday, Griffith described the disaster which included a daring sea rescue and a futile effort to save the canoe he built.

Griffith said the canoe ran into trouble during a three-day gale which he termed nonseasonal and atypical.

AS HE AND THE crew members were bailing out water on the dawn of the ninth day at sea, he said the cross members linking the two hulls broke, causing both hull to tip over.

The four were dumped into seas with 25-foot swells, he said.

Griffith credited his wife, Nancy, who skippered the Awahnee, with saving him, Frazier Beauchamp and Jeffrey Cogswell of Sacramento and Daniel David Baldwin of San Diego.

Griffith said his wife spotted the broken Nuku Hiva from a mile away and maneuvered the yacht for a pickup.

HE SAID THE rescue was "very difficult," taking from daybreak until 10 a.m.

"We'd lost every stitch of clothing and we worried about exposure if we would have had to remain out there," Griffith said.

After the rescue, Griffith said the Nuku Hiva's hulls were lashed to the Awahnee, but the next night the ropes broke and the remnants of the canoe slipped away.

Griffith's five-year-old son and four-year-old daughter were on the yacht. "They worked and helped," Griffith said with one of his rare smiles as he told his story.

"We lost everything in that storm," said Mrs. Griffith, who along with her husband was deeply tanned and burned from sailing the Pacific.

THE AWAHNEE, built by the Griffiths 11 years ago, was also damaged by the storm. Its "topping

See REPLICA on Page A-5.



Crew members cling to battered Nuku Hiva during three-day gale.

DOCUMENTS CAPTURED AS RECEIVED



Advertiser photo by Gregory Yamamoto

Kalolaine, with husband at left, receives kiss from one of thousands of well-wishers.

Wedding fit for queen— Tonga friends feel she is

By KEN KOBAYASHI

Advertiser Staff Writer

They call her the "mother" of the family, the woman who welcomed relatives from Tonga, who helped them find places to live, who helped them get their jobs.

Kalolaine Mataele was married yesterday and the more than 100 members of her Tongan family whom she helped for almost two decades prepared for her and the groom one of the biggest wedding feasts ever in Hawaii.

"Everybody's been waiting for this day because she's been so unselfish," said one of family.

THE WEDDING was at the Wai-kiki Ward of the Church of Jesus Christ of Later-day saints on Beretania Street.

The reception was at the Honolulu International Center exhibition hall.

More than 1,000 attended the feast to dine from the afternoon and into the evening on 1,000 suckling pigs, 50 huge "puka" (full-sized pigs), 28 steers and mountains of yams and sweet potatoes.

The cooking, the serving and the preparing of the feast were all done by the Mataele family, considered the largest Tongan family in Hawaii.

"THEY'RE ALL on their feet now," said the gracious and beautiful Kalolaine, who came to Hawaii to attend Brigham Young University-Hawaii in 1957. "Everybody can now help themselves."

The groom was Harry Soukup, a pilot for Canadian Pacific who was born in Holland but lives in Vancouver, B.C.

"I don't think anyone ever in Hawaii has seen anything like this," he said as he and his bride sat at the

head table with 32 others.

Among those seated at the head table were the Princess Fusipala, her husband and their two children, who came from Tonga to attend the wedding.

ACCORDING TO Mulikihaamea Matekitoga, president of the Tonga Trading Company in Hawaii, who arrived in Hawaii about the same time as Kalolaine, the two came here nearly penniless.

Now the talented dancer, who is a headliner at one of Ala Moana Hotel's Hawaiian Hut shows, has extensive business interests in condominiums, gift shops, land and a dance studio, he said.

Yet during her climb to success, he said she helped hundreds of friends and relatives.

"Kalo," Matekitoga said, "is kind of like a queen to us."

RAMSAY HONO LIQUIDAT SAL

EVERYTHING IN THE STORE AND WAREHOUSE

ALL ITEMS CARRY FULL MANUFACTURER'S WARRANTIES!!! EVERY ITEM IN THE STORE HERE TO SELL NOW!! SOME AT COST — SOME BELOW DISTRIBUTORS COST EVERYTHING MUFRIGERATORS — WASHERS — DRYERS — RANG WASHERS — IRONS — TOASTERS — PORT CLOCKS

EVERYTHING IN THE
QUALITY NAME BRANDS GENERAL
AMANA — KITCHENAID — HITACHI —
TOSHIBA — MAGNAVOX



RAMSAY HONO LIQUIDAT SAL

honolulu
calendar

1975 DECEMBER 1975						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27

Memorabilia Calendar is published by The Advertiser as a public service. There is no charge for advertisements, but notices of purely commercial enterprises will not be published. Information for the calendar should be mailed to the Advertiser at least one week before the event to be publicized. It should be in the form of a letterhead, and include the name and telephone number of the writer. The Advertiser reports that notices cannot be accepted by telephone.

DOCUMENTS CAPTURED AS RECEIVED



Awahnee Oceanic Institute

P.O. Box 272 • HONOLULU • HAWAII 96726 • U.S.A.
P.O. Box 621 • WOODACRE, CA 94973 • (415) 488-0966

Sept. 16, 1975

The Officers and Members
of the Polynesian Voyaging Society
in the Spirit of Hukua Heiwa
Today we leave for the Marquesas
Islands en route to Hawaii. We
search for and hope to learn some
of the facts of ocean sailing in a
design of vessel of ancient type.

I ask that the cooperation of
the group I represent and the
Polynesian Voyaging Society in
an effort that may set history
right and gain recognition for those
early voyagers we all admire so highly.

Sincerely
R. R. Giffith, D.M., U.S.

Chairman A.O.C.

Good Sailing and Fair Breezes to the Hukua
Heiwa.

The sailing oceanographic research vessel Awahnee was the first small boat to circumnavigate Antarctica • to cross the
Antarctic Circle • to round the Horn in both directions • to sail to windward around the world south of all continents

(10)

mail 9/18/75
X sent to
B.F. H.K.
9/22/75

POLYNESIAN VOYAGING SOCIETY

2467 AHA AINA PLACE / HONOLULU / HAWAII 96821 (808) 734 - 4910

, Honolulu, Hawaii 96821, May 15, 1974

PRESIDENT

BEN R. FINNEY, PH.D.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

PAIGE KAWILO
BARBER

LARRY A.
BURKHALTER J.D.
FRED CACHOLA, M.ED.

RUDY CHOY

KENNETH P.
EMORY, PH.D.

CHARLES THOMAS
HOLMES, M.P.H.

KIMO (JAMES) C.
HUGHO

HERB KAWAINUI
KANE, M.F.A.

DAVID LEWIS, M.D.

CLAIRE RAYBURN
FRANK TABRAH, M.D.

FRANK WANDELL

AUGUST YEE

BENJAMIN R.C.
YOUNG, M.D.

ADVISORS TO THE BOARD

BRUCE BENSON

RONALD MAKALA
DELACRUZ

WALLACE FROISETH

MOE KEALE

H. K. BRUSS

KEPPeler

KALA KUREA

CARL LINDQUIST

TAY PERRY

COLIN PERRY

GAIL PREJEAN

R. KINSAL
THOMPSON

LOUIS VALIER

DOUGLAS YEN, PH.D.

Mr Bob Griffith

Kailua, 96734

Dear Bob,

Sorry to read in last night's Star Bulletin that you feel that you have been "rebuffed" by the Society, of which you are a valued and respected member. As I've stated, you are most welcome to participate in our project and to continue to share our research and findings, with the understanding, of course, that you cannot expect to benefit by including the experience in your film-lecture tours inasmuch as by charter all earnings go to the Society to help finance research and experimentation.

The sketch in the newspaper photo of your proposed canoe appears to be the Western Polynesian design derived from Micronesia and developed in Fiji (Ndrua), in Tonga (Kalia), and in Samoa ('Alia) in the 18th Century. Your two Tahitian technical advisors would be of little help on this vessel, for it was never used in Eastern Polynesia. The ndrua was never a dugout, as your plans for hollowing a log seem to suggest. The hull was a sophisticated plank built design over strong ribs. Wooden nails such as mentioned in the newspaper story were never used, being unsuitable for a vessel which is normally kept on the beach when not in use. The book "Polynesian Seafaring" in which you first showed me your interest in this vessel, depicts a kalia, incorrectly labelled as a tongiaki (the tongiaki was the earlier form of Western Polynesian voyaging canoe and quite different from the kalia).

For the safety of your company at sea on the long voyages you propose, you might consider that this vessel was designed for voyages of not more than several hundred miles and not for use on Eastern Polynesian waters. The great speed of this vessel depends on flat water, such as the lagoons of the Fiji and Tonga archipelagos. This vessel cannot be run downwind without burying the bows or risking a disastrous jibe (this is why Bligh was able to escape them).

HAWAII

TAHITI



BICENTENNIAL VOYAGE OF REDISCOVERY
HOE AKU I KA WA'A

P. 2, Kane to Griffith, 5/15/74

The double ender rig requires greater crew strength to bring about than you plan to carry. Steering, too requires great strength. Steering sweeps on these canoes were referred to as chest-breakers.

I am designing a replica of a ndrua to be built at Pacific Harbour, Fiji, with the encouragement of the Fiji government, and my research shows that on such a canoe of 70' in length the steering sweep would be 30' long, the length of the mast would be 43'-6", and the length of the yards would be 58' - 60'. Six persons would not be able to manage this vessel in any kind of sea. The sail is not the Polynesian sail but the Oceanic Lateen, of Micronesian origin. If you plan long voyages on Eastern Polynesian seas I would urge, for your safety, that you use an Eastern Polynesian design similar to our kaulua, or to the pahi (which could best be built in Tahiti). The pahi is the result of many centuries of invention by talented canoe designers. It was plank built and does not require large logs. No reason here for "re-inventing the wheel". To suggest that the log itself will suggest the design gives little credit to the capabilities of the Polynesian designers.

For authenticity of performance, it doesn't matter what materials you use where the material doesn't affect performance. Hulls can be concrete or any material. It's the shape and weight that must be authentic. Also, to get authentic replication of performance the hulls must be lashed together of good sennit (available from Fiji) or another cord of about the same "grip" and "stretch". Nylon is a bit too slippery and elastic, as we have discovered. Rigid wood or metal fastenings used for tying the hulls together would cause dangerous stress points.

I know you will agree that without attention to authenticity of performance in hull shape, assembly, sail plan, and steering method, it would not be appropriate to describe a vessel as "polynesian" or as "authentic". Moreover, a burlesque type of replication which reveals none of the qualities of the original design is without value as an experiment; indeed, it is detrimental when, by presenting it as "polynesian", it confuses the public's vision of what these vessels were really like. The Plains Indian war bonnet being identified with all North American Indians is a case in point. Disney's erection of a Yap house on Kauai for a movie about Hawaii is another of the same type of sham. These are unforgivable injuries to the truth.

The same principle applies to the voyaging canoes. Add a rudder and it is no longer "Polynesian". Those of us who are of Polynesian ancestry have the obligation borne of self-respect and respect for our heritage to relentlessly protect and promote a clear picture of the truths of that heritage to all interested publics. We invite your help, with

Aloha,



Herb Kawainui Kane, V.P.

c.c. Directors and Advisors

P.S. The canoe you pictured would be much less expensive to build on Kambara Island, Fiji, than in Alaska.

General Delivery

96743

March 26, 1974

Ben Finney

Honolulu, Hawaii 96821

Dear Ben,

I was sorry to miss you when I returned from the East Coast, but I was only on Oahu for a few days.

As yet, I have not made a "go" or "no go" decision on the dugout canoe project, but will do so in the next month or so. What I would really like to do is arrange some type of association with the Polynesian Voyaging Society for the dugout canoe project as a "trial horse". God only knows there are so many imponderables that any factual information is much more valuable than most flights of fancy. Danger is real and easily found.

It may interest you to know that in 1960 I sailed in Awahnee from Taiohae, Nukunui in the Marquesas without knowing how to navigate. I was bound for San Francisco, a place I knew well, with the pragmatic confidence of an experienced coastal seaman. However, my unintentional experiment was interrupted when my sextant sights started to make sense about a week out, and with confidence in my instruments, I changed course for Hilo, and flew to California.

Enclosed is a proposal of my project for your information. It is being distributed only on the Mainland at this time.

As I see it, there is really no conflict. We both want the same things. I would like to hear your thoughts about it.

Sincerely,

Bob

Bob Griffith

CONSTRUCTION AND SAILING OF AN AUTHENTIC DUGOUT POLYNESIAN DOUBLE CANOE
IN ASSOCIATION WITH THE BICENTENNIAL OF CAPTAIN COOK

One result of my twenty years and 200,000 miles of world wide voyaging under sail has been my appreciation of the phenomenal but often unrecognized voyaging of prehistoric Polynesians. Observation, study and Hawaiian and Maori chants have convinced me of the reality and practicality of their great canoes, and their navigation - without instruments - over thousands of miles of open ocean to a chosen destination at the time when in Europe sailors were hugging the shores in their ships. I propose to commemorate the ancient events of Polynesian discovery and colonization of the Hawaiian Islands and their rediscovery by Captain Cook in 1778 by constructing an authentic dugout replica of a Polynesian voyaging canoe and to sail it to the Marquesas Islands, Tahiti, Hawaii, Samoa, Rarotonga, Tonga and New Zealand, navigating in the pragmatic and ancient Polynesian technique without compass, sextant or chronometer.

With the skills of Tahitian, Manihikian and Hawaiian canoe builders, construction will proceed rapidly and forceably under my personal direction. We will use two great seasoned logs from the Pacific Northwest - logs which in ancient times would have been appropriated by a chief for a great canoe had they been found, as many were, drifting in Hawaiian waters. We will build a double canoe approximately 70' long, 17' wide and with a keel to deck height of over 6'. Though we will build with modern tools, metal will not be used in the canoe. The rig will be the ancient crab-claw sail, and the canoe will maneuver in the double-ended proa method with the smaller hull always to windward. I plan to begin construction by the first of July, to launch the canoe by the end of September and to sail to the Marquesas Islands by the end of November with a principally Polynesian crew.

Polynesians had no written language. All history and knowledge was transmitted from one trained historian to the next. The last Polynesian migration from Tahiti to Hawaii may have been as late as the fourteenth century, but by the time of the European discovery of Polynesia, knowledge and use of ocean crossing canoes had been lost. It is a matter of record that in 1777 when Captain Cook inquired in Tahiti and Raiatea, no islands were known to the north. Thus the existence of Hawaii had been forgotten.* However, Hawaiians had maintained specific and unmistakable accounts of their Tahitian origins, as did the Maoris in New Zealand.

As a lifetime sailor and student of the sea and a participating member of the Polynesian Voyaging Society, I will freely share all data and opinions that result from this project with any institution or person interested. So many variations in design, construction and operation of a canoe are possible that full knowledge of these vessels cannot be regained by the construction and voyaging of one or two or ten of them.

I personally expect that this canoe will have "... a magnificent appearance, with its immense sail, the pennants streaming from the yards ... its velocity ... almost inconceivable" like the Melanesian lagoon canoe seen by Commander Wallis in 1841. And I expect that it will stimulate recognition and appreciation of the ancient arts and deeds of Polynesians.

I seek financial support to:

- 1 - defray the approximately \$8,000 cost of food, tools and material for construction of the canoe. All involved will donate their time, and I will donate use of my vessel Awahnee for transportation and living quarters.
- 2 - produce a popular and educational film about constructing the canoe and sailing it to the South Pacific

* The Journals of Captain James Cook, edited by J. C. Beaglehole, Vol III, p. 256.

Robert L. Griffith, DVM

Kailua, Hawaii 96734

phone

-or-

Honolulu, Hawaii 96726

During the past fourteen years my family and I have thrice circumnavigated the world and sailed trans-Pacific over twenty times in two cutters named Awahnee for a total of approximately 200,000 miles of sailing in command of our own vessels. We designed and built the second Awahnee ourselves. In 1972 the Cruising Club of America awarded my family its Blue Water Medal in recognition of our sailing, an international award not necessarily presented every year. On these voyages:

Awahnee was the first yacht to circumnavigate Antarctica in the high latitudes, 59° to 67°30' in a voyage that set a new all time record for a passage around the world in sail: Bluff, New Zealand to Bluff, New Zealand in 111 days (88 sailing days), December 23, 1970 to April 11, 1971.

Awahnee was the first yacht to cross the Antarctic Circle.

Awahnee was the first yacht to sail to windward - east to west - around the world south of all continents.

Awahnee is the first yacht to go around the Horn twice.

Awahnee set a record for the passage across the Atlantic Ocean from the Cape Verde Islands to Antigua, 1963: 11 days 22 hours, which to my knowledge still stands.

Awahnee set a record for the passage from the Marquesas Islands to Hawaii, 1960: 11 days 20 hours, which to my knowledge still stands.

Awahnee once sailed more than 215 degrees of longitude in 59 days non-stop, in the early antarctic winter.

1968 - I produced four half-hour television shows in Canada.

1973 - I produced the lecture film "Sailing Around Antarctica in the Wake of Captain Cook".

In production - in association with the New Film Company of Boston, "Discovering Hawaii in the Wake of Captain Cook".

In production - a 160 page hard cover book on sailing, commissioned by the SAIL Publishing Company.