

## ITS TIME HAS COME

It's been sitting quietly in our back yard for 23 years. Before that it sat in the back yard of House No. 92 in Skill Village, Pā'ia, though likely not as quietly.

A Portuguese oven was a magnet around which families and neighbors gathered to share and enjoy baking and feasting traditions. While bread is still being baked in a few Portuguese ovens today, they are of recent construction. Most of the originals have either crumbled or are left partially standing, abandoned and overgrown in fields or isolated in somebody's backyard.

This Skill Village Portuguese oven was built by Maui Agricultural Company (MACo) in the 1920s and what has remained is still considered to be an excellent specimen. Not all Portuguese

ovens were constructed exactly alike. This one is larger than many and its dome is remarkably intact, with much of the intricate interior brickwork still in place.

Moving this oven to the Sugar Museum took three days of arduous work to get a steel plate under it, digging the way ahead of the plate by hand literally inch by inch. Since moving a Portuguese oven is not your everyday occurrence, no one could accurately guess just how heavy it would turn out to be. After the first unsuccessful lift attempt, it became clear that it weighed between 12 and 15 tons.

A 15-ton forklift was loaned by HC&S and with another 6-ton forklift, the oven was loaded onto a lowboy for its journey to the museum. The move would not have been possible if Sniffen's Express had not undertaken it as a public service. Company head David Sniffen personally spent a lot of time on this project. His uncle, Samuel Sniffen, once lived just down the street from House 92. The crew was mainly made up of his sons and daughter, as the

company is largely a family business.

The oven had some cracks in it prior to the move, so to minimize further cracking and crumbling it was wrapped with sheet metal and banded to hold it together. And that is the way it has remained, awaiting restoration, until now.

Its time has finally come. Word that the Sugar Museum was looking for someone to restore the oven had been circulating throughout the Portuguese community for a couple of years when Pauahi Lozano called. Herself of Portuguese descent, Pauahi knew that Rico Labang, a successful artist working in ceramic tile, had helped with the masonry work on the Portuguese oven at Kepaniwai Park. Rico, who was born in Pu'unēnē Hospital and grew up in Camp 5, very generously volunteered his time to reconstruct the museum's oven, and together the two of them have given new life to the project.

Reconstruction is scheduled to begin this March.



Mary Vares used a "pa" or wooden paddle to load and remove bread loaves from the Portuguese oven in this photo from the 1940s.



The Skill Village Portuguese oven, pictured as it sat in the back yard of House No.92 in Paia, prior to being moved to the Sugar Museum in 1984.

## Claus Gets a Lift . . .

It hauled cargo and passengers for 47 years, but the museum's historic steam locomotive – known as the "Claus Spreckels" – recently got a lift itself.

The Claus rode in last year's Maui County Fair parade in celebration of Hawaiian Commercial & Sugar Company's (HC&S) 125th anniversary. The good folks at ILWU and HC&S dressed up this float with cane stalks – symbols of its past history hauling sugar from the plantation – in honor of the occasion. Shown here is Willie Kennison admiring the finishing touches. Willie, along with Keith Goto, John Arizumi, Jason Medeiros, George Bugarin and Steve West, were joined by all the business agents and a host of retirees in the project.

The Claus – officially Locomotive No. 1 – was in the service of Kahului Railroad from 1882 to 1929. It is the oldest authentic, fully restored locomotive in Hawaii from the state's historic railroad days, and it's only brought out for display for special occasions.



# A FESTIVAL FAREWELL

Happy New Year! As the year turns over once again, we are reminded of how many good years we've had here at the museum, including the past five, which have been highlighted by our Maui Sugar Plantation Festival.

We'd like to thank everyone once again for their help during the annual event. We owe its success to the help of many volunteers and participants, without whom it really would not have been possible. Special big mahalo to everyone at HC&S!

Even though it's been a lot of work, we've enjoyed doing it, and had fun in the process. So it's with some regret that we let you know we will not be doing the festival again this year. It is being suspended until further notice.

Why? The festival accomplished its purpose. It was a good event for the museum and the community. It brought people together to celebrate and perpetuate our multi-cultural heritage brought about by the sugar industry.

We always tried to make each festival a little different, with something new to keep it fresh and interesting. It's time to refresh ourselves with new and different activities that will enable the museum to be an active part of our community. So look for us – we'll be out there. Mahalo!



## *Me Ke Aloha Pumehana*

**In memory of these honorees of our past festivals:**

**Audrey Roselani Kekahuna Daniels** was raised in Pā'ia Town and started work for Maui Agricultural Company in 1945, after graduating from Maui High School.

**Louis De Cambra** was a paniolo who started work for the plantation as a Haul Cane Foreman in 1930. He held various supervisory positions until retiring after 51 years of service.

**George Tsutomu Ito** started out at HC&S in 1932 as a "crib boy" in the Pā'ia factory machine shop, doing clean up work. After several promotions & transfers, he retired after 49 years.

**Emiko Marjorie Fujimoto Okinaka** had a 38-year nursing career and spent 22 of those years as a plantation nurse.

## GET YOUR DIRT SHIRTS HERE

You've seen the red dirt shirts around but the ones you want are the ones we've got.

You'll only find the Pu'unēnē Mill and Pā'ia Mill dirt shirts exclusively here in the Sugar Museum's gift shop. Original artwork of the mills is depicted on the back, and "Pu'unēnē" or "Pā'ia" is on the front. (Back view shown here.)

These are the original creations of Peter Cannon who offered them for sale at our festival last year. If you didn't get yours then, you can still get your hands on them in our shop, open during regular museum hours from 9:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. Monday through Saturday. And you don't need to go through the museum to get to the shop.

Nice looking shirts, yeah? Good gifts, too.



# Mahalo Nui Loa

Mahalo to our generous donors who have supported the Sugar Museum with their personal contribution. All those who have contributed since 2004, when our donor program began, are listed here. If we have listed your name incorrectly or neglected to add your name, we extend our apologies and request you please notify us.

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Our Mission: To preserve and present the history and heritage of the sugar industry, and the multiethnic plantation life it engendered, for residents and visitors.



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Alexander & Baldwin  
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 P.O. Box 125  
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