

A Brief History of the Yokouchi Estate Property

By Hōkūao Pellegrino (2020)

The current Yokouchi Estate Property has a longstanding cultural and historical land-use genealogy. It is situated in the the ahupua'a (land division) of Wailuku and one of the largest 'ili (subdivisions) known as Pōhakuokauhi, likely named after one of Maui's reigning ali'i (chief) Kauhi-a-Kama, who lived during the 17th century and was the son of King Kamalālāwalu and Queen Pi'ilaniwahine of Wailuku. A portion of the the 'ili of Pōhakuokauhi along with a portion of the neighboring 'ili of Kōloa where the current Ka'ahumanu Church Grounds, State and County Building are situated in, was once the royal compound and residence of King Kahekili II also known as Kahekili'ahumanu, who ruled throughout the 18th century. These lands sustained extensive lo'i kalo agricultural systems as well as having encompassing a portion of Maui's largest 'auwai (traditional irrigation) systems known as the Kama 'Auwai (named after King Kamalālāwalu). Following the infamous invasion by Kamehameha I and his warriors during and Battle of Kepaniwai in 1790, the 'ili of Pōhakuokauhi and others lands throughout Wailuku were likely put under jurisdiction of his new leadership, at which time allowed for the progression of land-use changes. Chief Auwae, who was one of the many Konohiki (land managers) of Wailuku prior and during the establishment of the Hawaiian Kingdom had oversight of this area. In 1832, Reverend Jonathan Green of the Fifth Company of the ABCFM Missionaries arrived on Maui and sought to establish a new missionary station in Wailuku. Chief Auwai greatly assisted Reverend Green in building the first thatched school (118' by 40') in the vicinity of the now Yokouchi Estate Property and Hale Hō'ike'ike Bailey House Museum property. Hoapili, reigning Governor of Maui in the early to mid-1800s and whom was a staunch supporter of Hawaiian education, allowed for the establishment of what was originally known as the Central Wailuku Female Seminary in 1837. In 1842, Edward Bailey and Caroline Bailey who were from Holden, Massachusetts became in charge of the Wailuku Female Seminary. Following the defunding of school by the ABCFM in 1848, the Wailuku Female Seminary was converted into a day school for both Hawaiian boys and girls until its discontinuance in 1849. On November 20th, 1849, Edward Bailey acquired the Wailuku Female Seminary property along with 47 acres of adjacent lands in the 'ili of Pōhakuokauhi from the Hawaiian Kingdom (Royal Patent Grant 172). These lands and former school buildings were used as the personal residences of the Bailey Family. A portion of the lands south of the Bailey compound, where the now Yokouchi Estate and Kehalani Subdivision is located, was used as one of Edward Bailey's new found endeavors; Bailey & Son's Sugar Plantation. Situated on these lands were the plantation sugar mill, boiler room, and a 14 foot waterwheel feed by the Kama 'Auwai Ditch to turn the crushers of the mill. The remnants of the plantation water wheel can still be seen on the Yokouchi Property below the home. In 1877, Edward Bailey's son William Bailey, sold their plantation to the Wailuku Sugar Company. The Bailey residence remained under their ownership until around 1890. Wailuku Sugar built their first manager's residence where the current Yokouchi home is situated in sometime in the early 1900s after which it was torn down and rebuilt in 1937 which is the current home that stands. Wailuku Sugar Manager Stafford L. Austin on December 5, 1937, was the first plantation manger to move into the company's new residence. In May of 1991, Masaru "Pundy" Yokouchi purchased the 7 acre property which included the former Wailuku Sugar manager's residence and historical grounds of Hale Hō'ike'ike - Bailey House Museum. The Maui Historical Society leased the historical structures for their museum from Wailuku Sugar for \$1.00 per year since 1956. Pundy Yokouchi eventually donated the museum lands over to the Maui Historical in 1992 along with the use of an adjacent rental unit adjacent to the museum's entrance.