

The Tradition of Wind Band Music in Hawaii: The Hawaii County Band

by
Grace D'Angelo

A THESIS

submitted to
Oregon State University
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the requirements for the
degree of

Honors Baccalaureate of Science in Microbiology
(Honors Associate)

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Robert Brudvig

The Hawai'i County Band is based in Hilo, Hawai'i and was founded in 1883 by brothers Joaquin and Jules Carvalho. After the Kingdom of Hawai'i was overthrown in 1893, the band became known as the Hilo Portuguese Band and after the United States made Hawai'i a territory, the band became known as the Hawai'i County Band. This band has seen twelve different directors, many paid musicians, and even more volunteer members. This paper compiles county records and utilizes interviews with band members to explore the tradition of wind band music in Hawai'i, by discussing the history and future of the Hawai'i County Band.

Key Words: Hawaii County Band, Band, Music, Hawaii, Hilo

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Honors Baccalaureate of Science in Microbiology project of Grace D'Angelo
presented on August 18, 2017

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I understand that my project will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University, Honors College. My signature below authorizes release of my project to any reader upon request.

Grace D'Angelo, Author

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Thank you to my committee for your work with me on this thesis and throughout my time as a student and performer in the OSU music department. As a trained scientist, the style and structure of this project were outside of my comfort zone, so I'm thankful for all the feedback I have received along the way.

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PREFACE

In an unassuming Quonset hut at the Waiakea Recreation Center in Hilo, Hawaii, bandmaster Paul Arceo gears up to lead a two-hour rehearsal for an upcoming monthly concert. The repertoire includes a Sousa march, a classic Beatles song medley, traditional Portuguese tunes transcribed for wind band, and of course the “world famous” Hilo March. The Hawaii County band has held rehearsals for two hours every Tuesday and Thursday, along with monthly Saturday concerts, for over 130 years.

I had the privilege of earning a recommendation to join the Hawaii County Band as a volunteer flute player during my Sophomore year of high school. I had previously attended concerts to watch a close friend, and another high school volunteer, perform with this professional community ensemble. Music has always been a family affair and soon after I joined, my brother earned a spot in the trombone section.

For my fellow young volunteers and me, the Hawaii County Band served as an outlet to make music together in a more challenging setting than high school band. We had previous interactions with band members as they were directors of the local honor band, judges at the solo/ensemble festival, and clinicians at band camp. Joining the Hawaii County Band gave us the opportunity to play alongside these professional musicians and learn more directly from them. Some of the members are local band directors themselves, which allows aspiring band directors the opportunity to network. Many of the members have other jobs within the community and play in the county band as an outlet to keep up their musical practice.

The Hawaii County Band serves as an example of the vitality of wind band culture in both the Hawaiian Islands and the United States. America has a long history of developing the culture and repertoire of the wind band. Though many historians focus their attention on professional or military wind ensembles, community bands provide an important role connecting musical culture to local culture. Since concerts are local and often free, community bands provide entertainment that may not otherwise be available.

As an entity founded and maintained by both locals and migrants, The Hawaii County Band serves as a microcosm for the cultural identity of Hawaii and especially that of the Big Island. The purpose of this thesis is to define the importance of the Hawaii County Band and to advocate for its continued funding and support within the local government. This paper will utilize interviews with current and past members, directors, and audience members to gain an understand of the history, public perception, and future of the Hawaii County Band.

INTRODUCTION

Wind Bands in America

Music is an integral part of human existence. Music can also help us achieve a cultural connection. As with any topic of historical analysis, our current understanding of the history of bands and wind ensembles is shaped by our own personal perspective. The Americas present an example of the way musical influences are drawn from different cultures throughout history to comprise what we define as band music. The Americas were rich in musical diversity prior to the arrival of Europeans, with different groups of indigenous people expressing themselves through dance, vocal, and instrumental music (Hansen, 2006).

The tradition of wind bands in the United States was built upon the contributions from many different musical cultures; the adaptability of the American wind band continues to be influenced by compositional and performance innovations, cross-cultural collaboration, and education. When the band tradition was first developing in the United States, the majority of wind band musical literature was transcribed orchestral pieces and marches (Battisti, 1995). During the first half of the 20th century, composers began to write original works for band. These works varied in their instrumentation (Battisti, 1995). The wind band had a pretty loose definition as to its instrumental composition until Fredrick Fennell established the Eastman Wind Ensemble in 1952 (Battisti, 1995). In recent decades, the wind band has grown in popularity worldwide and international composers are contributing to the diverse range of repertoire by drawing from their own cultural experiences and traditions.

It is important to accurately document the history of wind bands in all forms. In the words of Fredrick Fennell, in a keynote address to the World Association for Symphonic Bands and Ensembles, “Wind band scholars must prepare opportunities for growth by reviewing the past, recount past failures and achievements, and project future necessities.” (Fennell, 1999) The well-documented history of wind bands allows for a better understanding of the significance of this tradition and the continued role participants play in the musical cultures of their society.

A topic in the field of wind band research that is lacking in its historical documentation is community/county ensembles (Hansen, 2006). Wind band research has primarily focused on instrumentation, repertoire, and education with regard to professional, military, and school ensembles. It is fairly difficult to find historical information about community bands as they generally have a smaller, more local following. Hansen also points out that there is a need for analysis of the relationship among professional, military, community, and educational ensembles in addition to the documentation of individual ensembles (2006). While this paper will focus primarily on the individual entity of the Hawaii County Band, there will be anecdotal discussions of the relationship between the Hawaii County Band and its members.

The Music and Politics of Hawaii

Modern day Hawaii represents a society born out of the mix of many different cultures: Native Hawaiian, Pacific Islander, Asian, Hispanic, and U.S. western culture. Beyond the sharing of food, languages, religious practices, and cultural values, Hawaii has also been the birthplace of unique styles of musical expression. Many different musical styles have come out of Hawaii including Oli (chant), Hula (dance), slack key guitar, a falsetto singing style, Jawaiian, Hawaiian swing/jazz, and wind band traditions shaped from the various cultural influences (Kanahele, 1979).

The first major wave of Polynesian explorers set out on the Pacific Ocean around 300-600 AD, bringing their musical traditions with them as they populated the Pacific and eventually made it to the Hawaiian Archipelago (www.hawaiihistory.org). The people of Hawaii did not have a written language, so their history was passed down through chanting, music, and dance (Schweitzer, 2006). For hundreds of years, society in the Hawaiian Archipelago was built upon a hierarchy of roles and the people were ruled by succeeding chiefs (hawaiihistory.org, accessed 2017) King Kamehameha united the islands in the late 1700s and established the Hawaiian Monarchy that would last 98 years and see seven succeeding monarchs (hawaiihistory.org, accessed 2017). Kamehameha intended for his son, Liholiho, to take the throne upon his passing. However, when King Kamehameha died, his wife Queen Ka'ahumanu saw her opportunity to gain control and continue in her lifelong effort to challenge the ancient Hawaiian kapu (taboo). Ka'ahumanu encouraged Kamehameha's son, Liholiho, to join her in breaking the kapu by allowing men and women to share a table during a meal. In contrast to ancient beliefs, Liholiho was not

struck down by any angry gods. This breaking of the kapu with no dire consequences rendered society's long held belief system useless without providing an alternative (hawaiihistory.org, accessed 2017).

In the following years, the Hawaiian Monarchy was punctuated by major reforms to the laws of the land; missionaries and American businessmen took advantage of the growing instability. Protestant missionaries arrived in 1820 with a stable religious alternative for the Hawaiian people, many of whom were left reeling after the kapu was publicly broken. Throughout the 1800s, businessmen made their way to the islands and began advising the monarchs (Tate, 1968). King Kalākaua, the penultimate reigning monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom, was nicknamed the “Merrie Monarch,” for his love of Hawaiian chant and mythology and for his work in establishing the Hawaiian Renaissance and working to revive the traditional music and dance styles (hawaiihistory.org, accessed 2017). Queen Lili'uokalani was the last monarch of the Hawaiian Kingdom before the overthrow in 1893. She was a scholar, a musician, and a composer; Queen Lili'uokalani was well versed in Western musical traditions and she composed over 165 original songs in her lifetime (Lewis, 1995).

The sugarcane industry dominated the economy of the islands by the 1840s and the primary drivers of the industry lobbied and eventually succeeded in overthrowing the Hawaiian Monarchy. This industry was dominated by Caucasian businessmen who brought in people from China, Japan, Puerto Rico, Portugal, Spain, Korea, and The Philippines as cheap labor. The plantation workers and their descendants who remained in the islands shared their own languages, customs, and music with one another, which led to the current multicultural society of Hawaii

(hawaiihistory.org, accessed 2017). One remaining example of musical expression during the sugarcane era is the body of Japanese folk songs called *hole hole bushi* (Kingsbury, 2008). The lyrics of these songs describe the perceived financial opportunities in Hawaii and the reality of the harsh conditions and low wages on the plantations. A translation of one *hole hole bushi* reads as follow:

Wonderful Hawaii, or so I heard / One look and it seems like hell /

The manager's the Devil and / His luna are demons. (Kingsbury, 2008, p. 53)

These songs have been passed down through the generations as a historical reminder of the plantation conditions met by the Japanese laborers who were often unable to return home as they had intended (Kingsbury, 2008, p. 51).

One of the outcomes of the multicultural nature of Hawaii has been the similarly multicultural nature of wind bands in the area. The Royal Hawaiian Band and the Hawaii County Band were both formed before the overthrow of the Hawaiian Monarchy, the former by a monarch, King Kamehameha III, in 1836, and the latter by migrant brothers, Juaquin and Jules Carvalho, in 1883, who wanted to contribute to the music and culture of Hilo. The Royal Hawaiian Band offers full-time paid positions to its members and thus is a professional ensemble as opposed to a community ensemble. The Hawaii County Band is unique in that it is chartered with the state and offers part-time paid positions to its qualified members. As a professional ensemble in a small community, this group relies on volunteers and thus exists as a relatively unique combination of paid and non-paid members, both a community ensemble and professional musical group.

METHODS

Interview Methodology

A large portion of the following discussion is based on information gathered from the records of Hawaii County Council proceedings using an archival search engine. Interview questions were developed by Grace D'Angelo under the mentorship of Dr. Robert Brudvig with the goal of piecing together an oral history of the Hawaii County Band. Another goal of these interviews is to start a conversation about how the role of audience members and the community of Hilo and the Big Island can continue to support the band. These topics were selected based on personal experience in the ensemble, information gleaned from Hawaii County records, and through the vast community support following attempts aimed at eliminating the Hawaii County Band from the local government.

An oversight determination form was sent to the Oregon State University Office of Research Integrity. The Institutional Review Board determined that the interview questions (Figure 1) used for the sole purpose of an oral history project with no other motives does not constitute research and a review is not necessary.

Members of the band were contacted privately and via the current band director and those who were willing to participate were given the option of a phone or in-person interview. Sessions were recorded on a personal recording device and subsequently transcribed. The results serve to supplement previously limited documentation on the Hawaii County Band; the following sections of this paper are comprised of a combination of county records and interview results.

1. Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?
2. Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?
3. What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?
4. How many different directors have you played under?
 - Do you have any specific stories about... (Director)?
 - How has management of the band changed with the different directors you've performed under?
5. What do you know about the history of this band?
6. How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?
7. What is your opinion on the various threats of defunding that the band has faced throughout recent years?
8. Some county ensembles on the mainland have a more casual, unpaid, system. Would you still want to be a part of the Hawaii County Band if it were solely a volunteer organization? Why?
9. How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?
 - Do you have any ideas regarding how community members could support the band other than concert attendance?
10. How has political support of the band changed with different local administrations?
 - Were you a participant in any of the protests aimed at securing/maintaining current funding for the band through the Parks and Rec department?
11. Do you have any hopes or visions for the band moving forward?
 - Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?
12. Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the band or any questions for me?

Figure 1: Interview questions approved by OSU Office of Research Integrity.

DISCUSSION

A Musical Piece of History

The Hawai'i County Band is based in Hilo, Hawai'i and was founded in 1883 by Joaquin and Jules Carvalho (Appendix B) as the Hilo Band. After the Kingdom of Hawai'i was overthrown in 1893, the band became known as the Hilo Portuguese Band. When Hawai'i was forcibly annexed to the United States, the band was chartered under the Parks and Recreation Department of Hawai'i County and became known as the Hawai'i County Band. This band has seen twelve different directors over 134 years of existence. Joaquin Carvalho founded and directed the band from 1883-1924. Paul Tallett held the position for one year followed by Frank Vierra who directed the band from 1925-1933, before moving on to direct the Royal Hawaiian Band. Frank Wrigley directed the group from 1933-1938; Gabriel Wela was director from 1938-1943; Urban Carvalho, the son of Jules Carvalho, directed the band from 1943-1963. Andres Baclic directed the group from 1963-1974. Armando Mendoza directed the group from 1974-1981 and again from 1983-1984 before moving on to become the band director at Hilo High School. John Hursey held the position from 1981-1983, between Mendoza's two terms. David Lorch directed the band from 1984-1993; Wayne Kawakami directed from 1993-2001 and the current director, Paul Arceo, has held the position from 2001 to the present.

Each director had their own style in regards to running the Hawaii County Band and strengthened the group in different ways. Along with adapting to different styles of conducting and musicianship, long time band members have seen changes in concert location and audience turnout. The founding bandmaster, Joaquin Carvalho,

arranged Hawaiian music and wrote his own compositions for the band that remain in its music library today (Lorch, 1979). Carvalho also earned the approval of the governor of Hawaii to perform patriotic and religious music at Sunday concerts in 1901, establishing the monthly concert format (Lorch, 1979). During Frank Vierra's tenure, 1925-1933, the band grew to 56 members and the group was said to have "rivalled the Royal Hawaiian Band in excellence." (Lorch, 2017, p. 127). Urban Carvalho, the son of Jules Carvalho, was the band director of Hilo High School and the Hawaii County Band at the same time so he used his position to recruit more young volunteer players (Wendell Leite, Personal Communication, August, 2017). Following Urban Carvalho's term, the job of bandmaster was given the county classification of a full-time politically appointed position and the band members were classified as part-time county employees (Wong, 2004). Sean Sewake, who has been in the band for 31 years and played under the three most recent directors, described how they each brought different strengths as far as musicianship, outreach, public relations, and general management of paid and volunteer members (Sean Sewake, Personal communication, August, 2017).

As a part of the county charter, local administrations also have an impact on the continued success of the Hawaii County Band. Under the Akana mayoral administration (1988-1990), there was a large downtown rejuvenation effort in Hilo. The County Band had previously played concerts in Liliuokalani park on Sundays at 2pm but the Akana administration encouraged the band to move back to the Mo'oheau bandstand and to host monthly concerts on Saturdays during the farmer's market to draw a larger audience (Sean Sewake, Personal Communication, August,

2017). Mayor Harry Kim (2000-2008, 2016-present) and his first administration were responsible for establishing the status of band employees as exempt from civil service under the control of the bandmaster rather than any other members of the county. Wendell Leite, who has been a member for 72 years, recalls that “way back in the past you could just cut the band. Now you have to go through a long process to cut it, like any other state employees.” (Wendell Leite, Personal Communication, August, 2017). Today, band members are especially thankful for the protections placed on the positions by Harry Kim because the Keno administration (2008-2016) continuously threatened the band’s funding and status in the charter. Bandmaster Paul Arceo and band members have continuously fought against these threats up until the re-election of Harry Kim in 2016.

The musical programming at the monthly County Band concerts is reflective of the cultural makeup of the band and the community. The annual 4th of July concert was cited by a few of the band members as their favorite gig because of the programming of patriotic music, the larger audience turnout, and the honoring of current and former servicemen. In August, the band often highlights both Japanese Obon season and Hawaii statehood with music composed by Japanese and Hawaiian musicians. Rodney Wong, a former music teacher and trombone player in the county band, transcribed traditional Portuguese folk tunes for band that were often played at monthly concerts to honor upcoming Portuguese holidays. In an entry to an encyclopedia entitled Hawaiian Music and Musicians, Allie Lorch writes that “Although the band has a standard Hawaiian repertoire, it has in recent years expanded its music to include Filipino, Japanese, Portuguese, Spanish, Puerto Rican,

and Mexican songs.” (1979). Today, it is commonplace for a monthly concert to feature classical American marches, movie score arrangements, and pieces reflective of various cultural holidays or celebrations.

The Hawaii County Band is known for playing at various cultural events throughout the Big Island as well as ceremonial gigs at local cemeteries and churches. One member recalls an infamously long performance at Rizal Day, a Filipino Holiday that was being celebrated in Kohala, a town about 2 hours from Hilo.

We went out there early afternoon and we had to play all the way until 10 or 11 at night, all the way in Kohala.... from the time we started playing to the time we finished was about 3 hours. Anytime you bring up Rizal day everyone goes “Ah Rizal day.” That’s the longest gig we’ve ever done. (Jenifer Tsuji, Personal Communication, July, 2017).

Although Rizal Day serves as an infamous memory for some, Kim Springer noted that it was one of the many opportunities to learn about different cultures and traditions that had lasted since the plantation days (Personal Communication, August, 2017). Many interviewees expressed their appreciation for the range of performances accompanied by cultural music that they would never have had the opportunity to study and perform outside of the Hawaii County Band.

Budget Cut Threats and Community Responses

The Hawaii County Band is under constant threat of defunding; the band has been a part of the Hawaii County Parks & Recreation budget since the early 1900s and within the last decade there have been multiple budget initiatives calling for drastic or entire cuts to the band funding. My inspiration for this project comes from the years I spent performing with the Hawaii County Band and the people I met who have worked tirelessly to support the band to uphold the tradition of wind band music that has grown in Hilo, Hawaii. With this project, I wanted to speak with current and former members of the band as well as community members who support the band as audience members and advocates about what the Hawaii County Band means to them and how we can all continue to support the ensemble.

On February 25, 2010, during rehearsal, the Hawaii County Band members were notified of a budget proposal to completely defund the band for the following fiscal year. This proposal was made by Mayor Billy Kenoi in an effort to cut costs during an impending budget crisis. The County Parks and Recreation department budget for the previous FY 2010-2011, set aside \$213,309 of the total \$14,915,210 for the Hawaii County Band; the band budget made up 1.43% of the total P&R department budget. This and other cuts to the budget were meant to ease the budget crisis but members of the band and the community of the Big Island immediately responded with overwhelming support for the band. Bandmaster, Paul Arceo, utilized the March monthly concert to reach out to the community and express the continued

need for support. A video¹ of the traditional concert closer, “Hilo March,” features multiple displays about the history of the band and a “Save the County Band” banner that hangs behind the ensemble.

In an email sent the night the band received news, February 25, 2010, Chihiro Sasaki (2010) reached out to councilman Yoshimoto in an effort to gain his support as an advocate for the Hawaii County Band in upcoming budget negotiations. Sasaki reports that she was recruited in 2004 as a high school volunteer during her freshman year; she volunteered for four years and applied for a paid position when one opened up in 2007. In an email, Sasaki expressed how the band had touched her own life, “Music means so much to me, and now that I have graduated from high school, the County Band is the only way I can continue making music with others. Since the University of Hawaii at Hilo Orchestra is no longer funded, I have nowhere else to play my instrument with other musicians... Music has always been a part of my life.” (Sasaki, 2010, p. 1).

In a letter to the Hawaii County Council on February 26, 2010, Sasha Payao (2010) explained how her children benefited from the competitions, performances, and clinics that Hawaii County Band members attend and teach. Payao exclaims, “The Hawaii County Band members are not just performers, they are mentors! Please consider saving the Hawaii County Band for our keiki (children) and don’t let monetary needs end a program that has been with our community for more than a

¹ YouTube: The Hawaii County Band – Hilo March
<<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8OII0tDIJp4>>

century!” (Payao, 2010, p. 1). As someone who experienced a similar path as both Sasaki and Payao’s children, the sentiments they expressed in their letters to the county council resonate with me. In all my middle and high school years participating in the local solo/ensemble festival and honor band, I had received musical mentorship from many long-time members of the band. Like Sasaki, I was recruited as a high school volunteer, which immersed me in the world of a professional performance ensemble and provided me with experiences that were otherwise not available in my high school band.

Payao and Sasaki were certainly not alone in reaching out to the county council. Kelvin Sewake, a trumpet player who had been with the band for only 18 months at the time, wrote up a petition highlighting the historical, cultural, symbolic, educational, networking, dedication, and low cost benefits of the county band and received 4006 signatures from people in the community. He gathered these signatures in under a month and submitted his formal petition to the county council on March 22, 2010. Following the public outcry, Mayor Kenoi’s proposed budget cut for FY 2010-2011 was rejected but this was not the end of the financial threats faced by the Hawaii County Band.

On May 18, 2011, Councilwoman Brenda J. Ford proposed a memorandum to the operating budget for the 2011-2012 fiscal year that read as follows:

From Council Member Brenda J. Ford, dated May 9, 2011, transmitting a proposed amendment increasing Police Adm. Div. – Equip. by \$35,000, decreasing Hawai’i County Band by \$262,089, decreasing West Hawai’i

Band by \$23,167, and increasing Post-Employment Benefits (GASB 45 Provisions) by \$250,256. (p. 1).

As opposed to Mayor Kenoi's citation of a budget crisis, Ford used her memorandum to propose a cut to the band that was tied to an increase in Post-Employment Benefits. This memorandum outlined a complete cut to the Hawaii County Band's budgeted for fiscal year 2011-2012 that would have essentially halted band activity. Below is a pie chart that outlines the Parks and Recreation budget for the 2014-2015 FY. The Hawaii County Band accounted for at or just above 1% of the budget from 1998-2012; in FY 2013-2014 and FY 2014-2015 (Figure 2, Appendix) the budget fell below 1%.

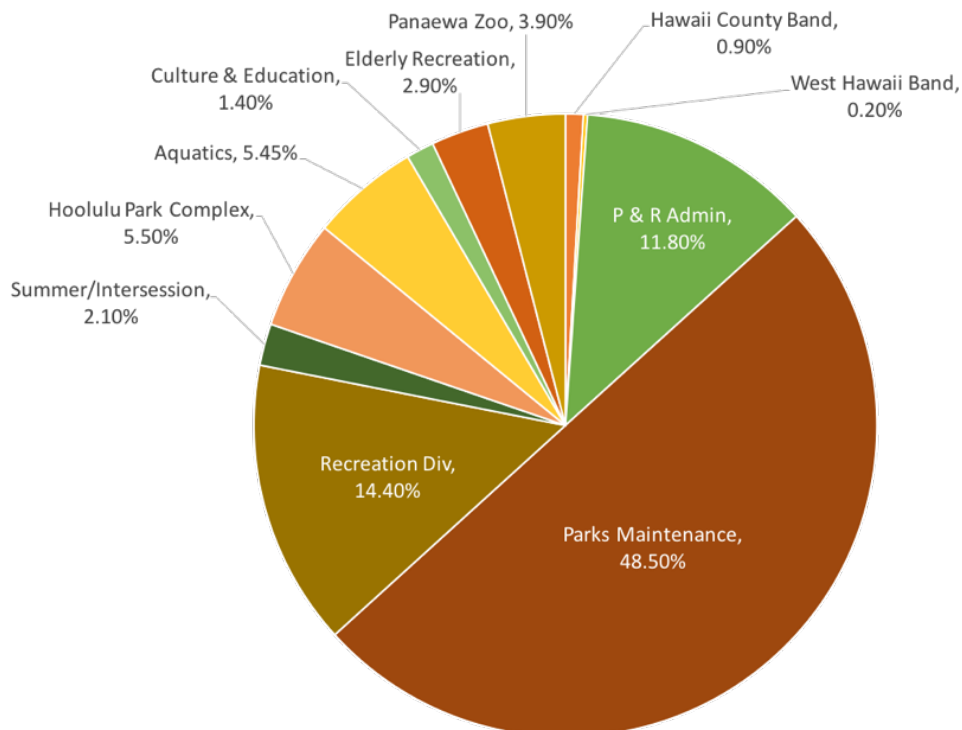


Figure 2: FY 2014-2015 Parks and Recreation Budget for Hawaii County

Besides paying the members of the band, this budget includes subsections for bus transportation, music arrangement, office supplies, timpani/bass drum heads, and percussion repair (Figure 3, Appendix). The band members and the community were all too familiar with the threat of budget cuts at this point and once again, people protested in Hilo, lobbied at county council hearings, and wrote letters to their representatives expressing their support of the band.

Proposed Budget Amendments				
General Fund				
<u>Account No.</u>	<u>Account Description</u>	<u>2011-2012 Estimate</u>	<u>Add/ (Reduce)</u>	<u>Revised 2011-2012 Estimate</u>
010.500.5501.01	Hawai'i County Band S&W	258,014	(258,014)	0
	011 Hawai'i County Band S&W, Regular S&W	227,514	(227,514)	0
	1 - REGULAR S&W	227,514	(227,514)	0
	021 Hawai'i County Band S&W, Overtime S&W	25,000	(25,000)	0
	1 - OVERTIME	25,000	(25,000)	0
	099 Miscellaneous S&W	5,500	(5,500)	0
	1 - NIGHT SHIFT	5,500	(5,500)	0
010.500.5501.02	Hawai'i County Band OCE	4,075	(4,075)	0
	102 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Telephone	460	(460)	0
	1 - TELEPHONE	460	(460)	0
	109 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Equipment Repair	100	(100)	0
	1 - PERCUSSION REPAIR	100	(100)	0
	115 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Misc. Contract S	1,400	(1,400)	0
	1 -BUS TRANSPORTATION	1,400	(1,400)	0
	225 Hawai'i County band Oce, Educ-Recr-Scent	1,075	(1,075)	0
	1 - MUSIC ARRANGEMENT	1,075	(1,075)	0
	227 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Computer & Offic	200	(200)	0
	1 - PRINTER SUPPLIES	150	(150)	0
	2 - OFFICE SUPPLIES	50	(50)	0
	341 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Misc. Charges	840	(840)	0
	1 - SPECIAL PERFORMANCES	250	(250)	0
	2 - TIMPANI HEADS	350	(350)	0
	3 - BASS DR HEADS	240	(240)	0

Figure 3: Memorandum no. 6, proposed Amendment to Bill 29, Draft 2. This table shows the complete slash to Hawaii County Band funding, including employee pay and all band resources, proposed by Brenda J. Ford.

The most recent threat to the band came in the form of a proposed revision to the county charter in 2016. This revision called for an elimination of the Hawaii

County Band from the Parks and Recreation section of the charter as it had formerly read:

Section 6-3.4. County Bands. The county bands shall be a part of the department of parks and recreation for administrative purposes. The bandmasters shall be appointed by the mayor and may be removed by the mayor. The members of the bands and other employees connected therewith shall be appointed by the bandmasters and may be removed by the bandmasters with the approval of the managing director, and all positions in the bands shall be exempt from civil service laws and classifications.

Councilmembers intended to use this charter revision to clear up the provision that exempted the bands from civil services (Lauer). Rather than amending the charter, it was proposed that all references of the bands be taken out of the charter. The amendment was passed by the council in three hearings between August and September 2015 and was slated to be added as a ballot measure in the 2016 election (RES 548). The councilmembers stated that this was a “simple housekeeping measure,” but as Nancy Lauer of West Hawaii Today reported, “band supporters – and they were legion – worried the simple housekeeping measure would have dire consequences for the 133-year-old county band.” During the council hearing regarding this ballot measure, band supporters were joined by former Mayor and longtime advocate for the band, Harry Kim; together they were able to persuade the councilmembers that the “housekeeping measure” would make it easier for budget cuts or complete program cuts to occur in the future and the councilmembers voted it down 7-2.

Preserving the Hawaii County Band

The Hawaii County Band plays an important role in the lives of the band members as well as those of the greater community. DC, a local radio disc jockey and active member of the Big Island community, expressed that, “an event in the community doesn’t feel complete unless they’re there.” (Darrin Carlson, Personal Communication, August, 2017).

One of the more apparent roles of the Hawaii County Band is providing entertainment for the community of the Big Island. While all interviewees agreed that the Hawaii County Band is a valuable cultural entity, citing low concert attendance, some were surprised at the outpouring of support following the budget cut crises. Monthly concert attendance varies throughout the year and is generally comprised of a core group of older supporters, younger students and community members, and visitors to the Big Island. Nathanael Friday summed up the importance of the monthly concert tradition in saying, “it fills that niche of quality band music that is public and free for anyone to come listen to. Sometimes band and classical music can be restricted to people who can pay for tickets.” (Personal Communication, August, 2017).

The performances that reach the most community members around the Big Island are the parades. The Hawaii County Band performs in a range of parades from the Merrie Monarch to a 4th of July parade in a town of less than 900 people. Multiple interviewees shared stories about the benefits of these performances. Wendell Leite shared the importance of the band’s presence in other community gigs besides the monthly concerts.

When you hear a band coming down the street it's very inspirational, I feel that way when I'm playing and I look at people and I think that the people on the side watching feel the same way as when I was young listening to the band march by. (Personal Communication, August, 2017).

Parades give the band members the opportunity to travel to towns that they would not have otherwise visited (Kim Springer, Personal Communication, August, 2017) and they provide music and entertainment for people in the more remote parts of the Big Island who cannot easily attend monthly concerts and who may not otherwise experience wind band music.

Another large portion of the community engagement of the Hawaii County Band is the education and leadership roles many of the members hold. In an essay written in 1998, Frank Battisti highlights the important role music educators play as music leaders. Battisti concludes that when students are given the opportunity to “study and perform excellent music literature” rather than focusing on competition or technical excellence, they “become ‘music lovers.’ [and that] Later in life, ‘music lovers’ become advocates for the Art of Music in all aspects of society.” (Battisti, 2002, p. 258) Many of the members of the Hawaii County Band are music educators themselves; they engage in musical leadership with the community by running clinics, judging competitions, and offering private lessons.

Along with the direct musical leadership provided by the professional members of the ensemble, there is an element of indirect leadership in allowing young musicians to participate as volunteer members with all the same duties as the paid members. This volunteer system is based on audition and/or a recommendation

from a private instructor who also performs in the ensemble. One paid member whose children volunteer, highlights the importance of allowing young musicians into the ensemble:

It's good to have that outlet of a challenge, playing with adults, playing with professionals... This gives the kids here, who by geographical discrimination don't have the same opportunities, a little taste of that so that they're prepared to go on [to college]. (Jenifer Tsuji, Personal Communication, July, 2017).

A former student volunteer member of the band supports Jenifer's point in stating that the aspect of the band that he liked the most was playing alongside professionals because, "everyone was already a skilled musician so we didn't spend as much time on the basics and got a greater variety and higher difficulty level of music." (Nathanael Friday, Personal Communication, August, 2017).

These comments about providing young musicians with a challenge and inspiring them to continue in music resonate with another point that Battisti makes. Battisti states that, "The rehearsal room should be a place where students are involved in collaborating, discovering, creating, re-creating, and growing in their understanding, appreciation, and love of the Art of Music." (1998). Where this mentality is unfortunately lacking in many Big Island school band rooms, it can be found in the Hawaii County Band. A former volunteer member recalls a time in recent months when he returned to the ensemble after attending a year of college at a music education institution. In returning, he realized the importance of the Hawaii County Band as an inspiring alternative to the struggling high school band program

he experienced (Grayson Mento, Personal Communication, August, 2017). The Hawaii County Band provides the aspiring musicians of the Big Island with the opportunity to perform repertoire they do not normally see in their high school programs alongside those who are continuing their lifelong appreciation for music.

The education received from playing in the Hawaii County Band is not only musical, but also historical and cultural. Kim Springer, a long time and recently retired member of the band, echoes similar sentiments about the value of the county band as an educational institution but in a slightly different way.

People in the band are quite encouraging of the younger players. It's nice to see it span the ages. A lot of times you're stuck in your generation you don't get to see or talk story with older people... they're just so willing to share their knowledge. (Personal Communication, August, 2017).

Many of the interviewees shared personal stories of times spent traveling around the Big Island to the more remote towns that they never would have visited otherwise. Long drives provided band members with the opportunity to “talk story” with one another, receiving cultural and generational education.

Looking to the Future

A theme that presented itself in interview responses was the unspoken nature of community support for the band. The community has a history, especially in recent years, of supporting the band only under the threat of budget cuts. Work needs to be done in fostering a more verbal community support towards the band at all times. County council people responsible for supporting the cuts have been quoted that they did not realize how strong the following of the Hawaii County Band was until everyone reached out in opposition to the various budget threats.

Documenting the history of Hawaii County Band as a cultural icon of the Big Island is important in moving forward with its continued preservation. Wind band historian, Hansen, points out that in regards to American wind band culture and traditions, “Conductors must reexamine those traditions, identify the historical elements that made them valid and continually seek new inventions to impart American musical culture to the public.” Hawaii has a unique history and cultural make-up that is reflected in its professional and community ensembles. The Hawaii County Band has thrived under the direction of individuals who are constantly embracing the different traditions of those in the band and in the community. This is accomplished by the excellent range of programming and a willingness to adapt to the various cultural performances requested of the ensemble.

Publicity and collaboration are also areas where the Hawaii County Band could improve to gain more recognition and support within the greater community of Hawaii. Wendell Leite noted that in personal conversations with Big Island residents they express an interest in the band but do not know where or when the monthly

concerts are held. A stronger effort needs to be made within the band and the Hawaii County offices to advertise concerts and bolster audience attendance. The Royal Hawaiian Band (RHB) is well known on Oahu in part due to their extensive efforts to reach out and collaborate with other professional ensembles in the mainland U.S. and other nearby countries. The Hawaii County Band does have limited funding compared to that of the RHB but they could collaborate on a smaller scale by traveling to neighboring islands for performances or by inviting directors of other local/educational ensembles to guest conduct. Guest conducting efforts have been made in the past but if more emphasis was placed on musical collaboration there would be the potential for more statewide recognition.

Band members play an important role in the education of young musicians as role models and clinicians but local school band directors could do more to encourage their students to interact with the Hawaii County Band. Sean Sewake expressed his frustration in seeing dwindling audience turnout over the years and suggested that local band directors do more to encourage their students to participate as audience members or audition to join (Personal Communication, August, 2017). Kim Springer reflects that as long as the bandmaster continues to open up the ensemble to volunteer members and local band directors open up to more collaboration, then fostering new generations of audience members and supporters will continue (Personal Communication, August, 2017).

The Hawaii County Band serves as an example of a functioning community ensemble with a unique history and a promising future. Through the interviews conducted in this project and evidence in the county records it can be concluded that

Hawaii County Band has a strong following and value within the community of the Big Island. Though the band faced a tumultuous eight years under an administration that continuously threatened the band, the band members and the community of the Big Island stepped up to show their support for an ensemble that serves as a historical icon. This thesis serves to fill the gap in community band documentation by compiling newspaper articles, interviews, county records, and photographs into a history of the Hawaii County Band.

APPENDIX A

1. Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?
2. Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?
3. What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?
4. How many different directors have you played under?
 - Do you have any specific stories about... (Director)?
 - How has management of the band changed with the different directors you've performed under?
5. What do you know about the history of this band?
6. How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?
7. What is your opinion on the various threats of defunding that the band has faced throughout recent years?
8. Some county ensembles on the mainland have a more casual, unpaid, system. Would you still want to be a part of the Hawaii County Band if it were solely a volunteer organization? Why?
9. How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?
 - Do you have any ideas regarding how community members could support the band other than concert attendance?
10. How has political support of the band changed with different local administrations?
 - Were you a participant in any of the protests aimed at securing/maintaining current funding for the band through the Parks and Rec department?
11. Do you have any hopes or visions for the band moving forward?
 - Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?
12. Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the band or any questions for me?

Figure 1: Interview questions used in this thesis.

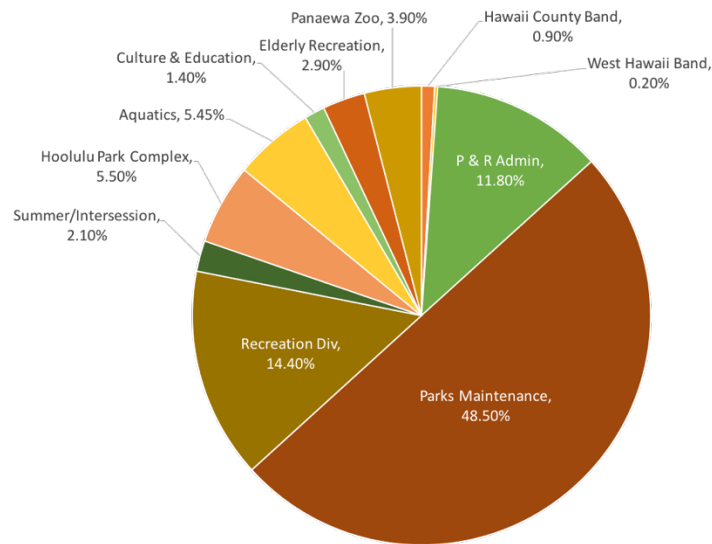


Figure 2: FY 2014-2015 Parks and Recreation Budget for Hawaii County.

Proposed Budget Amendments				
General Fund				
Account No.	Account Description	2011-2012 Estimate	Add/ (Reduce)	Revised 2011-2012 Estimate
010.500.5501.01	Hawai'i County Band S&W	258,014	(258,014)	0
	011 Hawai'i County Band S&W, Regular S&W	227,514	(227,514)	0
	1 - REGULAR S&W	227,514	(227,514)	0
	021 Hawai'i County Band S&W, Overtime S&W	25,000	(25,000)	0
	1 - OVERTIME	25,000	(25,000)	0
	099 Miscellaneous S&W	5,500	(5,500)	0
	1 - NIGHT SHIFT	5,500	(5,500)	0
010.500.5501.02	Hawai'i County Band OCE	4,075	(4,075)	0
	102 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Telephone	460	(460)	0
	1 - TELEPHONE	460	(460)	0
	109 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Equipment Repair	100	(100)	0
	1 - PERCUSSION REPAIR	100	(100)	0
	115 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Misc. Contract S	1,400	(1,400)	0
	1 -BUS TRANSPORTATION	1,400	(1,400)	0
	225 Hawai'i County band Oce, Educ-Recr-Scent	1,075	(1,075)	0
	1 - MUSIC ARRANGEMENT	1,075	(1,075)	0
	227 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Computer & Office	200	(200)	0
	1 - PRINTER SUPPLIES	150	(150)	0
	2 - OFFICE SUPPLIES	50	(50)	0
	341 Hawai'i County Band Oce, Misc. Charges	840	(840)	0
	1 - SPECIAL PERFORMANCES	250	(250)	0
	2 - TIMPANI HEADS	350	(350)	0
	3 - BASS DR HEADS	240	(240)	0

Figure 3: Memorandum no. 6, proposed Amendment to Bill 29, Draft 2. This table shows the complete slash to Hawaii County Band funding, including employee pay and all band resources, proposed by Brenda J. Ford.

APPENDIX B

Full Interview Transcripts, missing partial interviews with Grayson Mento and Darrin Carlson

Nathanael Friday:

Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?

I was born in Honolulu but I moved to the Big Island before starting kindergarten

Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?

Really I started being a serious musician in 7th grade. With 7th grade band. I started piano lessons but it didn't really click until I picked up the tuba.

What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?

Mr. Maesaka would give us extra credit for coming to watch him play and that probably around my 8th grade year I started taking lessons with Lee Ikeda who played tuba in the county band and said that it would be a good fit if I wanted to go play with the county band.

How did you end up joining?

Mr. Ikeda just gave me a recommendation. At the time he was the only tuba because Dr. Durham had recently stepped down because of his advancing age. So Mr. Arceo was happy just to have a back-up tuba. The parts of the county band that made me like joining the band and continuing to play were the fact that we were able to play alongside all these adult musicians and play at a higher level than I would with just the school band. Because everyone was already a skilled musician we didn't spend as much time on the basics and that leads to a greater variety of music and usually a higher difficulty level of music. I had that feel of what a professional ensemble could sound like.

What do you know about the history of this band?

I don't recall ever specifically learning a bunch but listening to other members of the group and every year listening to the parade announcers give the bare bones. I think a big part of the county band is the wide variety of stuff we play. Recently I went to the 4th of July concert with all those tradition American songs but even within that same concert Mr. Arceo played another Latin piece. Also, I remember among the tubas everything from playing show tunes to when I played my senior feature concert a more traditional classical tuba piece, you're doing the tuba tiger rag with a more jazz feel. So there's a wide range of different musical styles as well as like you said, especially in the Portuguese day in the park all of those looking back at Hawaii's history.

How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?

I think it is important just because it fills that niche of quality band style music and that its public and free for anyone to come listen to. Sometimes band and classical music can be restricted to people who can pay for tickets to the UH Hilo concerts and whatnot. So I think it's great that County Band provides that service in such a central location in town.

How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?

Consistently, pretty much every concert I remember going to, the stands would be packed with people both regulars that I saw at every concert but also a lot of people who would just wander over from farmer's market. So there definitely always seemed to be public showing of support.

What is your opinion on the various threats of defunding that the band has faced throughout recent years?

During the turmoil when the future of the band was in question I did hear a lot of voices pipe up both in the newspaper and around town expressing their support of the band even if they may have not been so vocal about it before. Once it came out that there was a question.

Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?

I do think there is. I think it is skewed a bit towards more elderly audience members but there always seem to be a bunch of younger audience members and families who bring their kids even if their kids aren't old enough to pay rapt attention yet. I think if they grow up knowing to see the big band is part of their childhood and upbringing they'll be able to value it more when they look back.

Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the band or any questions for me?

I think another part of the county band is the wide variety of stuff we play. Recently I went to the 4th of July concert with all those tradition American songs but even within that same concert Mr. Arceo played another Latin piece. Also, I remember among the tubas everything from playing show tunes to when I played my senior feature concert a more traditional classical tuba piece, you're doing the tuba tiger rag with a more jazz feel. So there's a wide range of different musical styles as well as like you said, especially in the Portuguese day in the park all of those looking back at Hawaii's history.

One story I have was in maybe my 2nd year playing with the band. We played a medley from the Wizard of Oz and I watched Mr. Ikeda play the tuba solo on the "If I only had a brain" and I was really jealous of him. And then just a few years ago I think probably when I was already at college and came back we played another concert and I got to play that solo. That was a lot of fun.

I always like going on the parades. I think I have a few stories of when things didn't go quite as planned. Definitely a few times running late and rushing to load the large sousaphones into the bus before it pulls away. Once the bus did pull away and Josh the drummer and I loaded up both his snare and my sousaphone to drive out to the parade ourselves. Consistently when we do the night parades we have music because we don't have to memorize it all and I have my music in front of me but I always forget that it's going to get pitch black by the end of the parade. So my level of memorization and improve goes up as it gets darker and by the end, luckily being a tuba and laying down a baseline, people aren't going to notice if there is a bit of improv going on. That gets fun, trying to play pieces by street light and by the light of the Christmas lights I've taped to my bell. The crowds in the parades always seem very excited to see the band, especially those smaller parades. I like how the county band played in everything from the Merrie monarch parade where there are 100

different entries, all the way down to these little 4th of July parades in Kona and Naalehu, and Honokaa. I don't know the numbers but not very many ensembles.

One Honokaa parade we went on early. It wasn't Mr. Arceo's fault but something in the parade got disorganized and we got off course and we were marching around through Honokaa town trying to find out way back to the parade route. I think the float in front of us either got lost or too far ahead so it was only the county band marching through Honokaa. Trying to get back to the regular parade. That's the other strength of the County band being such an old traditional institution is that we know exactly how everything goes and Mr. Arceo knows we need to get to the front of the parade because at the back of the parade things just fall apart and it's a good way to look out for the band members because he can give us a specific call time, we won't have to wait long, and we'll be done by this time and then we can eat lunch or watch the rest of the parade.

Sean Sewake:

Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?

I was born and raised in Hilo

How long have you been a musician?

I started when I was 12, so that was 1982, until current.

Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?

Initially I was going into composition but then I decided to go into social work and none of them ever happened. Life happens. I was fortunate enough to be in the band since I was 16 so 1986 I joined the band as an official member. And I've been a member ever since. I knew about the band because my sister was in the band before I was, so I was going to their concerts from before and they used to be at Liliuokalani park on Sundays at 2pm.

What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?

I enjoyed being in band you study privately, you try to open yourself up to these different venues and it was just an ensemble that I could apply for.

How many different directors have you played under?

Officially full time, Mr. Arceo is my third. Lorch, Kawakami, Arceo.

How has management of the band changed with the different directors you've performed under?

Every director has their own vision and their own likes as far as arrangements, conducting styles, of course some their strengths was the PR some their strengths was bringing out the musicianship. I enjoy working under Mr. Arceo now because I think he's a good mix between the two. He has a good balance between time management and PR.

Any favorite or least favorite gigs?

My least favorite gig, which we don't do anymore, was the Bill Fish tournament and that used to be under Lorch. It was an all-day thing, we used to do the parade, then a concert, then the opening ceremonies where we played every single national anthem from every single country that participated. Leave in the morning and come back at night and back then we were salaried and so we spend 10 hours and make \$15. My favorite gig is the 4th of July. The crowd really gets into it and we have our largest audience. Patriotic music we get to honor our servicemen.

What do you know about the history of this band?

I don't know much, it started in 1883. We're the only living entity that is tied to the Liliuokalani monarchy, we were around during that time. I think that's something very proud to be a part of. Juakin Carvalho. As far as the ins and outs I don't know.

How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?

I think it's very important just because we are such a long running entity within the county. Music always brings the community together.

How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?

I think we had a bigger following a while back. We have a very strong core, which includes mostly the elderly, I don't know if it's the timing if Saturday is a bad day, we used to have a larger crowd when we were at Liliuokalani park at 2pm. But there is no shelter there. We moved over to Moheau under Akana because they had the

whole downtown rejuvenation had the farmers market and we thought we could draw the audience. Month to month we see the core, and when we were going through the budget cut I was really surprised at the huge public support that we had. We do affect people across the whole county that are willing to show their support, testify, which I was really surprised because audience wise you don't really see it.

Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?

I would like to say I hope so, I don't really see it month to month. I kind of wish that the schools would encourage their kids to come, which I don't see or hear from band directors. I really don't see the younger generation.

Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the band or any questions for me?

It's become a job. It is a job so I just do what I need to do. I'm lucky to have a job that I enjoy that I look forward to, not everybody can say that. It makes you appreciate what band directors have to go through, I think a lot of people think that they're just waving a stick and I have to explain to my friends, of course they're not mocking but they say "what are you folks looking at?" and I say "every flick of the wrist means something else, you know, the size of the conducting, everything means something"

Kim Springer

Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?

I grew up born and raised here.

How long have you been a musician?

I started with Rodney Wong, when I was in the 7th grade. Summer band because my parents didn't want me taking band during the school year. They thought it was not a good thing, they said "take science instead." In those days they had summer band, so I was able to pick up whatever skills I needed to continue in 8th grade band.

Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?

My neighbor their 3 kids were all in the county band, so I would see them getting ready for concerts. Back then they had blue wool blazers. I would see them getting ready and then I would see them in the parades. I don't think we ever went to their concerts but parades definitely.

What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?

It's funny because, I wanted to join the County Band because my then Boyfriend was in the band. HE was playing and back then you didn't have to go through an audition process it was like "oh you can play" so what I did, like a lot of you folks, high school select band and then you play with the County Band and then you invited to play for free and then when a position opened up I took the position.

How many different directors have you played under?

There was Armando when I joined, John Hursey, Dave Lorch, Wayne Kawakami, Paul.

How has management of the band changed with the different directors you've performed under?

What I liked about being in the band is that we traveled the whole island. And I think if I didn't have that opportunity I would not have visited a lot of places. We used to do Rizal day in Kohala in the beginning of January and now they don't have Rizal day because all the plantation peoples are dying. Of course 4th of July parade in Naalehu it's a neat thing because my husband ended up teaching at Kau High school so since then we've had some close ties to Kau. Driving to Kona for kona coffee parade and bill fish tournament playing all the national anthems.

It's an educational process, it's not just playing. You learn about different things and of course making friends with different generations in the band. You learn by talking story with them about what life was like back then. When I joined I was 18, and for the longest time I was the baby of the band and then all of the sudden it's like I'm the oldest.

What do you know about the history of this band?

I know that it was in Honokaa as a community based plantation style band. So the old guys that were in the band used to travel. We didn't talk too much about their jobs but we knew that was what they did.

How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?

I think it's really important. I think it's part of Hilo, it's been here for over 100 years. The residents expect to see the county band in the parades, they expect to see the

concerts and whatnot. While you don't have all of Hilo coming to the concerts, if there were to be no county band it would be missed.

How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?

I think public support has always been there. Especially when we've had hard times with funding people come out. And you know they may not necessarily come to our concerts but when they heard that funds may be cut but the band may be done away with they came out and wrote letters.

Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?

It may not be as much as before, but I think as long as the high schools continue to have the select band activities happening and as long as the bandmaster is open to having volunteers sitting in. I think it plays an important role for the kids that do come and play. Some come just because they enjoy playing and others have gone on to major in music and make it their life. I think without the band some kids would be lost, they wouldn't have that opportunity, it's not like Honolulu where you have lots of concerts or lots of opportunities to be involved. I think once you have that interest and you have that opportunity to play with more seasoned players you realize how much better you can be. For the most part the people in the band are quite encouraging of the younger players in the band. It's nice to see it span the ages, cause a lot of times you're stuck in your generation you don't get to see or talk story especially with older people.

Do you have any other stories you'd like to share about the band or any questions for me?

It was just good fun. I remember Wendell Leite, he would make fun of some of his trombone section. Talking story with Tito Nicholas about growing papayas cause that's what he did after the plantations and they're just so willing to share their knowledge. You wouldn't do that if you were stuck on the bus for an hour going places. You would never have heard the piece if you didn't play it in the band. Back then we had rehearsals until 9pm with a 15 min break, which is when everyone just hung out and talk story. I think that is one thing that I miss because now with no break there's no socialization and we play and then leave. You kind of grow up fast when you're exposed to older people, I think it's a good thing and in a way you toughen up. Even with not so nice people around you. To me being in the band was something I would do all over again.

Jen Tsuji

Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?

I moved to the big island from Kauai and I had grown up on Kauai and when I came to college I came to Hilo in '88

How long have you been a musician?

I played from elementary school through middle school and high school

Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?

When I got to Hilo I was in the Wind Ensemble at UH Hilo back when we had wind ensemble, it was pretty good then. All of my friends at the time and my to-be husband were in the County Band. When a position opened up I wanted to join.

How many different directors have you played under?

I played under Mr. Lorch, and then Wayne, and Randy, and then Paul. 4 technically, 3 major ones, Mr. Skaggs was only the director for a few months.

Do you have any specific stories about any of those directors?

One of my first gigs we were out in Kohala, Reed didn't have to go to that gig he was working, and we had to go for Rizal day, which I guess in the Philippines is a very big thing. We went out there early afternoon and we had to play all the way until 10-11 at night, all the way in Kohala. We had to sit there, we played at the very beginning and the very end and from the time we started playing to the time we finished was about 3 hours. We had to drive out there on the bus and back on the bus. They did feed us but anytime you bring up Rizal day everyone goes "Ah Rizal day." That's the longest gig we've ever done.

The first and the last time?

Yes, we've never done it since then. I know one of the other ones that I only did once or twice that they did before I got there was the Bill Fish tournament. We sat out on the dock and it was really hot. You play all the different anthems from all the different countries that are participating so you have to learn all these obscure anthems, sitting in the sun. That's another one of the gigs that no one liked very much.

How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?

I think it's very important because I've been part of it forever. I think people think it's important and people don't really think about us until there's a threat like when we were going to get cut so it was on the news and people became aware of there being an issue and they always see us at parades; and even though we don't have a big turnout at our concerts, partially because of lack of publicity and part of just... Hilo... you know.

What is your opinion on the various threats of defunding that the band has faced throughout recent years?

When it comes down to it the community is there and willing to fight for us and really thinks that the County Band is a part of Hilo's history. I think it's not always something that's upfront because it's just something that people take for granted, that we exist. I mean all the times that we've had issues, everybody really has come out in force to protect us. I think it's just one of those things you take for granted, unless you know you're out at a parade, most people just don't have the time to go down to

concerts all the time but if it were gone it would be very noticed. And a lot of people have connections like “oh my grandpa, my uncle, my cousin.”

How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?

I know one of the guys just passed away and he was a huge supporter of the bands. He would come and he was in his wheelchair. I didn't even realize, you know we have the old people that just sit at the concerts and he had come to all these different concerts and Paul had recognized that he was ill and missing. You know we have a lot of people who are regulars that are very supportive but a lot of them tend to be older I think. And slowly by slowly we're getting some of the younger generation, but again it's people that either are parents of students in the band or you have a familial connection. It's hard to just put us out there

Do you have any ideas regarding how community members could support the band other than concert attendance?

I think it's just one of those things, we're behind the scenes at the cemetery gigs and the parades. It would be nice if we had more people coming to the concerts and being more openly supportive of us. But I don't know, but unless you have a reason to go, like you're related to someone or you really love music or you have a historical connection to it. There's so many other things going on that it doesn't become a priority for people. But you know, parades you're going to see us whether you're trying or not. And if you're at the cemetery gig you'll definitely hear us.

Do you have any hopes or visions for the band moving forward?

I think if we had more different types of publicity, we're trying to get more of an online presence now. We did have a page and I don't know if it's still on the internet. It was hawaiicountyband@mui.net. Nobody has updated it I think it was Wayne's sight. I know Richard uploaded some things on it before he passed away but I'm pretty sure last time I looked for it was still floating around on the internet somewhere.

Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?

I think even back when my husband guys were in high school that's how it's always been. We've had directors who were more supportive than others and we've had times with more students than others. When I was first in the band as a young college student we had a lot of high school kids come in. So you know it's gotten more now. We've opened up more positions and people are actually getting paid and we've invited more people to come. So it's kinda going back to that, but always throughout history a big part of it has been the kids that are better on their instruments, you know we can't just grab everyone and drag them in, but the ones that are good on their instruments as a nurturing thing we want to bring them in and help develop them as players. We've always had a steady stream of high school kids that we've nourished over time. I think that's one of the most important things that we do: Even though it would be nice to stretch it to more people. But like I said we Kind of are now, we've got a lot more young people playing than we have in a while. We're getting back positions, people are starting to regrow the positions. Especially in the recent times of band director transition for the high schools the kids who are good aren't getting enough musical stimulation and this is a good outlet for them to challenge themselves

because they're only going to be as good as whatever their band director expects of them, except for the few who just practice and do everything anyway. It's good to have that outlet of a challenge, playing with adults, playing with professionals. For the kids who do go on to major in music or continue in some way, playing in college and that kind of stuff, it's really important for them to have that. The kids who don't get access to that they aren't necessarily as ready. On the mainland and on Oahu these kids are going to all this crazy stuff that we don't even dream of here. This gives the kids here who by geographical discrimination don't have the same opportunities it kind of helps give them a little taste of that so that they're prepared to go on. The kids who've gone through county band have gone on to do pretty great things. Examples (Grayson). We're able to at least get them on the same playing field if not giving them the broad experience of being in a marching unit. At least we're giving enough that we've been able to see some of our kids overcome it and succeed. We do play a wide range of music too. We play stuff that's easy and crowd pleasing and we play a lot of grade 4/5. The 4th of July music is really hard but it's not hard for us because we've played it for the last 15 million years. 1812 for us is like "oh here it is again" but for people coming in and reading it, it's a tough piece! I think it's a good mix of that, where you have to step up to be able to handle the challenge of some of the pieces we play.

Wendell Leite:

Did you grow up in Hilo or did you move here from off island?

I was born here 1928.

How long have you been a musician?

I used to live down in Honolii, my mother was a pianist and always wanted us to get involved in music and singing. We all sat on the floor every evening and she played. We used to sit on the floor and sing.

Were you a fan/supporter of the Hawaii County Band before you joined?

I played in the Hilo intermediate school band for 3 years, then went over to Hilo high school under the direction of Urban Carvalho and he also was the director of the Hawaii County Band. He was a very accomplished musician and a very good trumpet player.

How many different directors have you played under?

I got into the county band in 1945. We had various conductors I've played under 7 of them.

What aspect(s) of the band made you want to join?

I got paid, it was big money, I made \$18 a month. It wasn't the money. You know, there's so many factors of my life in the county band. Playing parades in the country, playing parades in kona, playing for the Catholic holy ghost feast and we stay there all day. We used to start early in the morning because we didn't have good roads like today, we went down and it would take 2.5 hours. We played under some ridiculous conditions and some folks would say "you really play well" or "that was a long parade."

How has management of the band changed with the different directors you've performed under?

We played under different conductors and every conductor had his own way of conducting. The conductors of today are all dynamically thinking of the way the music should be dynamically but in the past you just blowed. Everybody just blew. Now, when you find these things out, you begin to appreciate music more.

Do you have any specific stories about any of the directors?

One of the conductors we had was so precise and so articulate. He would explain something the way he wanted and we would do what we could but it's hard to change a person's persona. When that guy would conduct we played under fear, when you play under fear you don't produce as well. The whole group could sense this. I mentioned this to Paul, "A lot of people in here, they have their own jobs, this is part time, when we make a mistake, I would appreciate that you wouldn't single people out, just say 'okay trombones play that part' that's fine, but when you go to each individual.

How important do you think the Hawaii County Band is as part of Hilo and Hawaii County's history?

The County Band is an intricate part of our community. I always remember this, I think my mother said this "when there's no music in the family it's null... in a community, when there's no band, no music, it's null there's no activity." When you hear a band coming down the street it's very inspirational, I feel that way when I'm playing and I look at people and I think that the people on the side watching feel the same way as when I was young listening to the band march by or going to concerts.

We used to go to concerts in the evening and after each selection there was no applause because there were cars circling around and everyone blew the horns as the applause.

How has public support of the ensemble been throughout your time as a member in terms of audience turnout at concerts?

People in Hilo are not really oriented to music. People who come from afar these are the people went to music in the park, attended shows because they had these things. They moving to Hawaii. The audience that comes to listen to the county band the majority is from away. A lot of people here are involved in things that their parents did.

Do you have any ideas regarding how community members could support the band other than concert attendance?

I think music is beginning to bring back people to listen to the band. My neighbor never went to the concert and I was talking to her about music. She went to the Christmas concert and told me 'this cant be real, when the band started to play I wanted to cry it was so beautiful' now she goes to every concert. You have to instill this, you have to tell people, and they get curious. I was just talking to a couple and they said where are you going and I said 'I playin the Hawaii County Band the one that plays in all the parades' and they asked "where do you folks play at?" and it's not in the paper! You have to tell people and people will hear, and they will tell your friends. Way back it was put in the paper more. I don't think it's a hardship on the county the way they spend money.

What is your opinion on the various threats of defunding that the band has faced throughout recent years?

The audience was very supportive of the band. Mr. Kenoi had to retreat on his plans to abolish the band. The budget of the band was so minute compared to his charges. Harry Kim was always in favor of the band. He was the mayor before Kenoi came in. He put the band under civil service. Way back in the past you could just cut the band. Now that we are civil service people you have to go through a long process to cut it like any other state employee. He comes to our concerts.

Do you have any hopes or visions for the band moving forward?

People have to know what the music is, have the foundation of the selections that we are playing. I look out and I see a lot of people are motivated. This is what inspires us musicians, when you see a crowd.

Do you think younger generations are invested in participating in and supporting the band? If not, how can we ensure that they become invested?

Kids have no enthusiasm about playing, we look forward to going to rehearsal and going to the concert. Hilo high we used to get up on the stage once a month and play for the school and we always looked forward to it. I think it's the teachers of the past they want the kids to produce like a mechanic. There's a problem "okay fix it!" how? First of all you have to know something about the car to be a mechanic and you have to know what you're looking for to repair. You have to get the kids involved and sometimes you have to bring the whole student body in and get someone who's inspirational who can stir emotion and try to musically translate to the kids to tell them what music is all about. There are some good musicians out there, and what it takes to be a good musician is practice. You have to get someone to motivate. You

have to motivate people to get them involved. I think the conductors today they just teach, but how interested are they to get these kids to achieve a goal? Are they just going to school as a teacher just to tell them “oh lets just go through this here” and you the kids make a mistake “how come you’re not playing that right” you gotta tell them, explain, demonstrate. You teach the individual how to resolve. In music if a person makes a mistake, teach them the process to go through and resolve it. Fear really has an effect on producing good things. You have to take away fear and let people really enjoy it and achieve a goal. There’s a passion that you really have to develop in people.

Do you have any other stories you’d like to share about the band or any questions for me?

Getting people involved is a trying thing. Maesaka with the Hilo inter band. I heard the band, as young as they are they sounded pretty good. Quality wise you don’t see it. How can we work with people so they stay in band? Maybe we got to say, if you are a good musician and you work hard, there’s chances that you can get a scholarship. That is one of the basic criteria’s. You have to have empathy and look at that person and say if I was there how would I feel and what do I want. There are so many things that can be initiated that can get people to really strive for life.

APPENDIX C

Historical photographs courtesy of the Lyman House Museum archives.

78.24.1.6 Print, Photographic (sepia)



Description

Carvalho relatives. Uncle Joaquin, Band master, Joaquin Jr. and Aunt Rose

People

Carvalho, Joquin
Carvalho, Joquin Jr.
Carvalho, Rose

78.24.1.8 Print, Photographic

Lynn

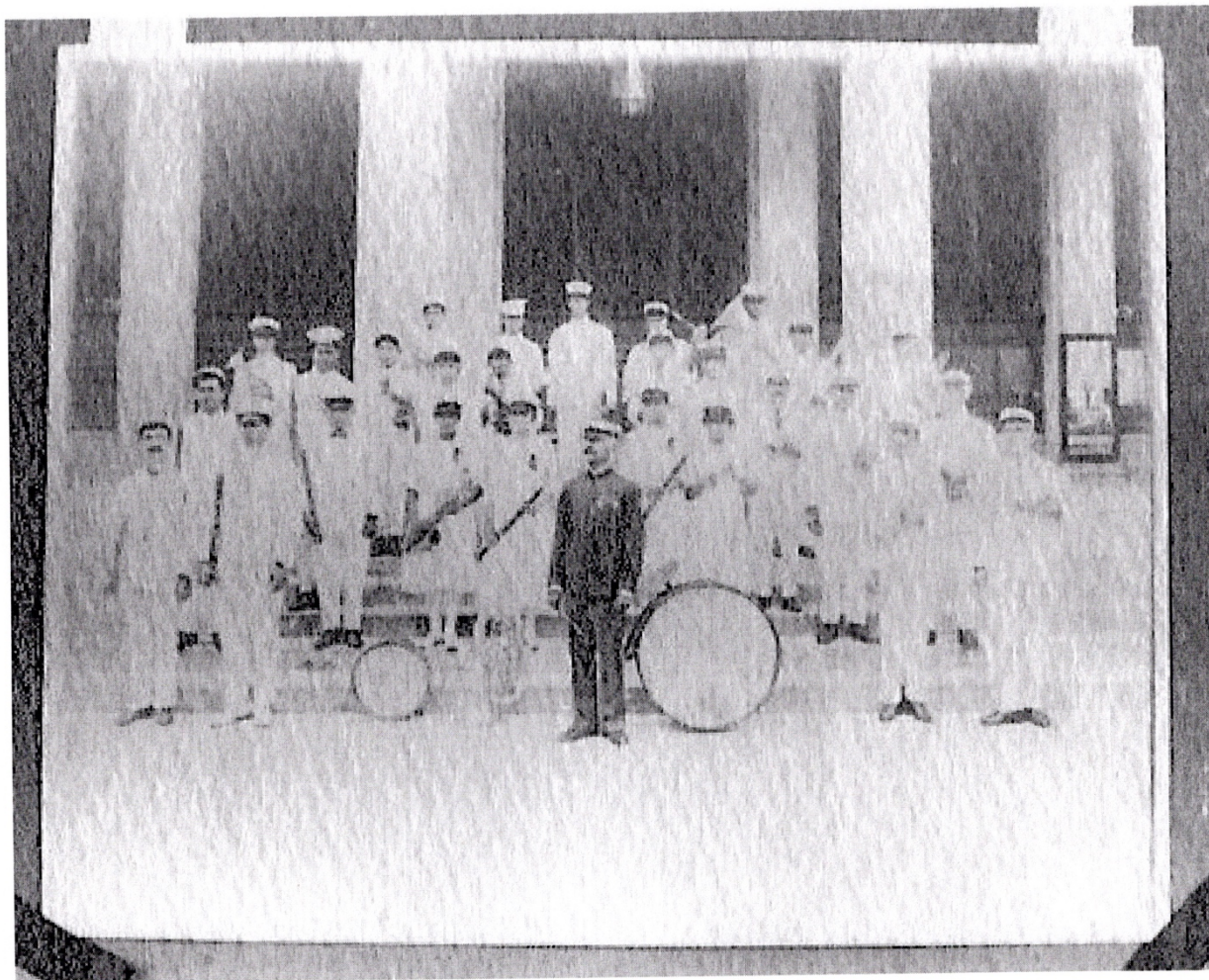


Description

Jules Carvalho after he retired from his barber shop on Waianuenue across from Holmes Store

People

Carvalho, Jules



Description

Hawaii County Band. The first one standing on steps of the Federal Building in Hilo. The building was dedicated in 1905.



Description

HAWAII COUNTY BAND IN AN UNIDENTIFIED PARADE ON KAMEHAMEHA AVENUE, C. 1910S. Some marchers in baseball uniforms



Description

Hawaii County Band playing in the Lyman House for Christmas Tradition

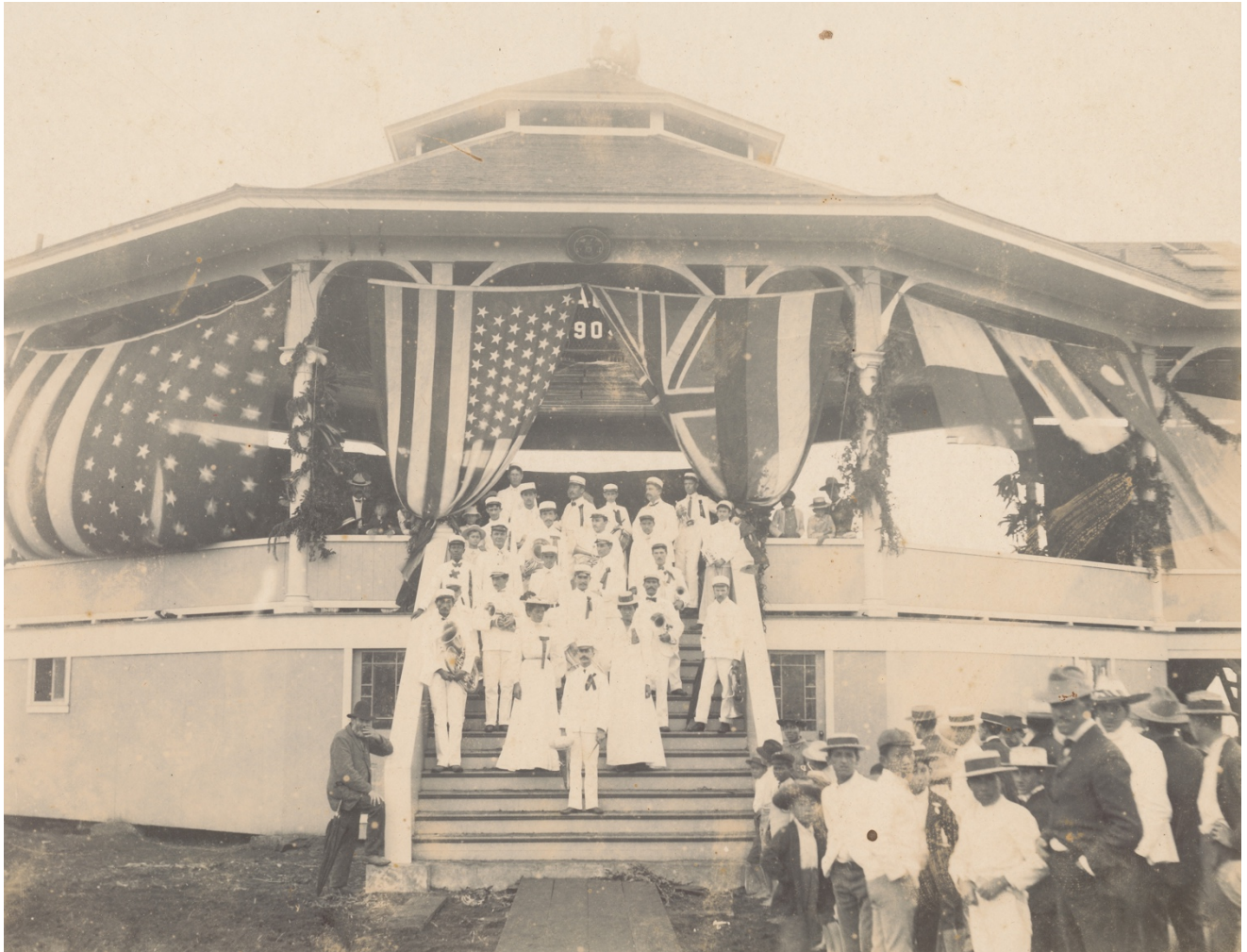


Image Source: Lyman House Museum Archives. "Hawaii County Band on the steps of the first bandstand at Mooheau park in Hilo."

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