United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Continuation Sheet

Name of Property

County and State

Section number _____ Page _____

Name of multiple property listing (if applicable)

SUPPLEMENTARY LISTING RECORD

NRIS Reference Number: 15000684 Date Listed: 10/5/2015

Property Name: Honoka'a People's Theatre

County: Hawai'i State: HI

This property is listed in the National Register of Historic Places in accordance with the attached nomination documentation subject to the following exceptions, exclusions, or amendments, notwithstanding the National Park Service certification included in the nomination documentation.

Signature of the Keeper

10-7-2015
Date of Action

Amended Items in Nomination:

Section 1: The MPS cover under which this nomination was submitted was not accepted. The nomination, though, stands on its own. Delete reference to the MPS.

Section 8: Area of Significance: Communications and Performing Arts are hereby deleted as areas of significance. Neither of these is justified in the nomination.

Period of Significance: The period of significance is hereby changed to **1930-1965**, reflecting the construction of theatre and carried up to the current fifty year cut-off, based on continued use and importance as a center of local entertainment culture. Exceptional importance is not warranted.

Significant Dates: 1988 and 1993 are hereby deleted as significant dates.

Section 9: There has been no previous determination of eligibility or submission under 36 CFR 67 for this property.

The Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Office was notified of this amendment.

DISTRIBUTION:

National Register property file
Nominating Authority (without nomination attachment) SHPO

684

National Park Service

National Register of Historic Places Registration Form

2015.02354

This form is for use in nominating or requesting determinations for individual properties and districts. See instructions in National Register Bulletin, *How to Complete the National Register of Historic Places Registration Form.* If any item does not apply to the property being documented, enter "N/A" for "not applicable." For functions, architectural classification, materials, and areas of significance, enter only categories and subcategories from the instructions.

RECEIVED 2280
AUG 21 2015
Nat. Register of Historic Places
National Park Service

1. Name of Property

Historic name: Honokaa People's Theatre

Other names/site number: TMK: (3) 4-5-016:011 and 56

Name of related multiple property listing:

Historic and Architectural Resources of Honoka'a Town, Hāmākua, Hawai'i Island, Hawai'i

(Enter "N/A" if property is not part of a multiple property listing

2. Location

Street & number: 45-3574 Māmane Street,

City or town: Honoka'a State: Hawai'i County: Hawai'i

Not For Publication: ☐ Vicinity: ☐

3. State/Federal Agency Certification

As the designated authority under the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended, I hereby certify that this ___ nomination ___ request for determination of eligibility meets the documentation standards for registering properties in the National Register of Historic Places and meets the procedural and professional requirements set forth in 36 CFR Part 60. In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register Criteria. I recommend that this property be considered significant at the following level(s) of significance:

___**national** _X_**statewide** ___**local**

Applicable National Register Criteria:

_X_**A** ___**B** _X_**C** ___**D**

7.30.15

Signature of certifying official/Title: **Date**

State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government

In my opinion, the property ___ meets ___ does not meet the National Register criteria.

Signature of commenting official: **Date**

Title : **State or Federal agency/bureau or Tribal Government**

Honokaa People's Theatre
Name of Property

Hawaii/Hawaii
County and State

4. National Park Service Certification

I hereby certify that this property is:

✓ entered in the National Register

__ determined eligible for the National Register

__ determined not eligible for the National Register

__ removed from the National Register

__ other (explain:) _____

Signature of the Keeper

10-5-2015
Date of Action

5. Classification

Ownership of Property

(Check as many boxes as apply.)

Private:	X
Public – Local	
Public – State	
Public – Federal	

Category of Property

(Check only **one** box.)

Building(s)	X
District	
Site	
Structure	
Object	

Number of Resources within Property
(Do not include previously listed resources in the count)

Contributing	Noncontributing	
1	0	buildings
		sites
1 (billboard)		structures
		objects
2	0	Total

Number of contributing resources previously listed in the National Register _____

6. Function or Use
Historic Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater

Current Functions
(Enter categories from instructions.)
RECREATION AND CULTURE/theater
COMMERCE/TRADE/restaurant

7. Description

Architectural Classification
(Enter categories from instructions.)

VERNACULAR "PLANTATION STYLE" WITH CLASSICAL REVIVAL STYLE INFLUENCES____

Materials: (enter categories from instructions.)
Principal exterior materials of the property: Foundation: Both concrete and post and pier/Exterior Walls: Wood (Front)/Iron (Back and Sides); Roof: Iron

Narrative Description
(Describe the historic and current physical appearance and condition of the property. Describe contributing and noncontributing resources if applicable. Begin with **a summary paragraph** that briefly describes the general characteristics of the property, such as its location, type, style, method of construction, setting, size, and significant features. Indicate whether the property has historic integrity.)

Summary Paragraph

The Honokaa People's Theatre fronts on Māmane Street, the main street traversing Honokaa, a town with a population of almost 3,000 people. The two-story, clapboard clad building sits on a 14,105 square foot lot, which slopes downward to the rear. The building's 50' x 134' rectangular footprint occupies a little over half of the parcel, with the area to the Waipiʻo side being vacant with a dirt driveway leading down to a one story, gable roofed garage. The classical revival building is characterized by its symmetric facade with pilasters, cornice, and false front parapet. It sits on a concrete foundation, which is raised toward the rear, and has a corrugated metal, front facing, gable roof with overhanging eaves and exposed rafter tails. A corrugated metal monitor with wood slats traverses a portion of the gable roof's peak above the auditorium. The external auditorium walls are of corrugated metal. The building retains its integrity.

Narrative Description

See Section 7 Continuation Sheets

8. Statement of Significance

Applicable National Register Criteria
(Mark "x" in one or more boxes for the criteria qualifying the property for National Register listing)

- [x] A. Property is associated with events that have made a significant contribution to the broad patterns of our history.
- [ ] B. Property is associated with the lives of persons significant in our past.
- [x] C. Property embodies the distinctive characteristics of a type, period, or method of construction or represents the work of a master, or possesses high artistic values, or represents a significant and distinguishable entity whose components lack individual distinction.
- [ ] D. Property has yielded, or is likely to yield, information important in prehistory or history.

Criteria Considerations
(Mark "x" in all the boxes that apply.)

- [ ] A. Owned by a religious institution or used for religious purposes
- [ ] B. Removed from its original location
- [ ] C. A birthplace or grave
- [ ] D. A cemetery
- [ ] E. A reconstructed building, object, or structure
- [ ] F. A commemorative property
- [ ] G. Less than 50 years old or achieving significance within the past 50 years

Areas of Significance
(Enter categories from instructions.)
ARCHITECTURE
COMMUNICATIONS
ENTERTAINMENT/RECREATION
ETHNIC HERITAGE, EUROPEAN (Euro-American, Portuguese), ASIAN (Japanese, Chinese, Filipino) PACIFIC ISLANDER, HISPANIC (Puerto Rican)
PERFORMING ARTS
SOCIAL HISTORY

Period of Significance
1930-1988

Significant Dates
1930-Construction
1947-ILWU Strike and Harry Bridges visit
1988-Closure of the theater
1993-Theater reopens

Significant Person
(Complete only if Criterion B is marked above.)

Cultural Affiliation
N/A

Architect/Builder
Unknown

Statement of Significance Summary Paragraph (Provide a summary paragraph that includes level of significance, applicable criteria, justification for the period of significance, and any applicable criteria considerations.)

The Honokaa People's Theater is eligible for the National Register of Historic Places at the State Level under Criterion A (Events/History) and Criterion C (Architecture).

Criterion A (Events/History)

The Honokaa People's Theatre is significant at the State Level under Criterion A because it has been a center of community life since its opening in 1930. The building's ability to accommodate both live and moving picture entertainment has meant it has been used extensively as a multipurpose facility. Generations of audiences and performers have here experienced ethnic dances, music festivals, plays, and cultural exhibitions. The theater has provided a venue for political/economic speeches and rallies. It has been the scene of children's programs. American, Japanese and Filipino films have drawn audiences. The size and facilities, as the largest theater on the island outside of Hilo, attract people to Honokaʻa.

Criterion C (Architecture)

Criterion C (Architecture): Remove present wording and replace with: "The Honokaa People's Theatre is architecturally significant at the local level under Criterion C. This structure was designed to accommodate both live and motion picture entertainment. It amalgamated elements from both vernacular plantation architecture (partial concrete floors, post and pier floor supports, false front, corrugated iron walls and double hung windows) and classical design elements (symmetrical facade, rhythmically placed pilasters, architrave, frieze, denticulated cornice and parapet). Not only does the building's size reflect the prosperity once enjoyed by the Honokaa community, the structure is one of the few remaining early 20th century free standing theaters remaining and functioning on the island.

Narrative Statement of Significance (Provide at least **one** paragraph for each area of significance.)

See Section 8 Continuation Sheets

9. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

1. Major Bibliographical References

Bibliography (Cite the books, articles, and other sources used in preparing this form.)

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Previous documentation on file (NPS):

____ preliminary determination of individual listing (36 CFR 67) has been requested
____ previously listed in the National Register
__X_previously determined eligible by the National Register
_____designated a National Historic Landmark
____ recorded by Historic American Buildings Survey #_____
_____recorded by Historic American Engineering Record # _____
____ recorded by Historic American Landscape Survey # _____

Primary location of additional data:

__X_State Historic Preservation Office
____ Other State agency
____ Federal agency
__X_Local government
__X_University
____ Other
Name of repository: _____

Historic Resources Survey Number (if assigned): _____

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of Property 0.3539

Use either the UTM system or latitude/longitude coordinates

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates (decimal degrees)
Datum if other than WGS84:_____
(enter coordinates to 6 decimal places)

1. Latitude: Longitude:
2. Latitude: Longitude:
3. Latitude: Longitude:
4. Latitude: Longitude:

Or
UTM References
Datum (indicated on USGS map):

[ ] NAD 1927 or [X] NAD 1983

1. Zone: 5	Easting: 241911.32	Northing: 2222154.02
2. Zone: 5	Easting: 241919.02	Northing: 2222188.92
3. Zone: 5	Easting: 241953.72	Northing: 2222182.02
4. Zone: 5	Easting : 241936.97	Northing: 2222142.79

Verbal Boundary Description (Describe the boundaries of the property.)

Consists of two parcels. (3) 4-5-016:011 and (3) 4-5-016:056. The first is a rectangular plot containing most of the property. It is 149.68ft x 109.00ft x 148.95ft x 88.10ft. The second is an undeveloped right of way with an irregular makai end, 153.80ft x 3.88ft x 9.93ft x 8.38ft x 149.68ft x 12.26ft. (The latter lengths for both parcels reflect their frontage on Mamanae Street.) The two parcels abut each other, with parcel :056 to the immediate west of :011.

Boundary Justification (Explain why the boundaries were selected.)

These are the historic tax map parcels that reflect the construction of the building and its period of significance.

TMK (3) 4-5-016.

11. Form Prepared By

name/title: Ross W. Stephenson, PhD
organization:
street & number: 38 South Judd St., Unit 24B
city or town: Honolulu state: Hawai'i zip code: 96817
e-mail rwaylands808@aol.com
telephone: (808) 679-9060
date: September 10, 2014

Additional Documentation

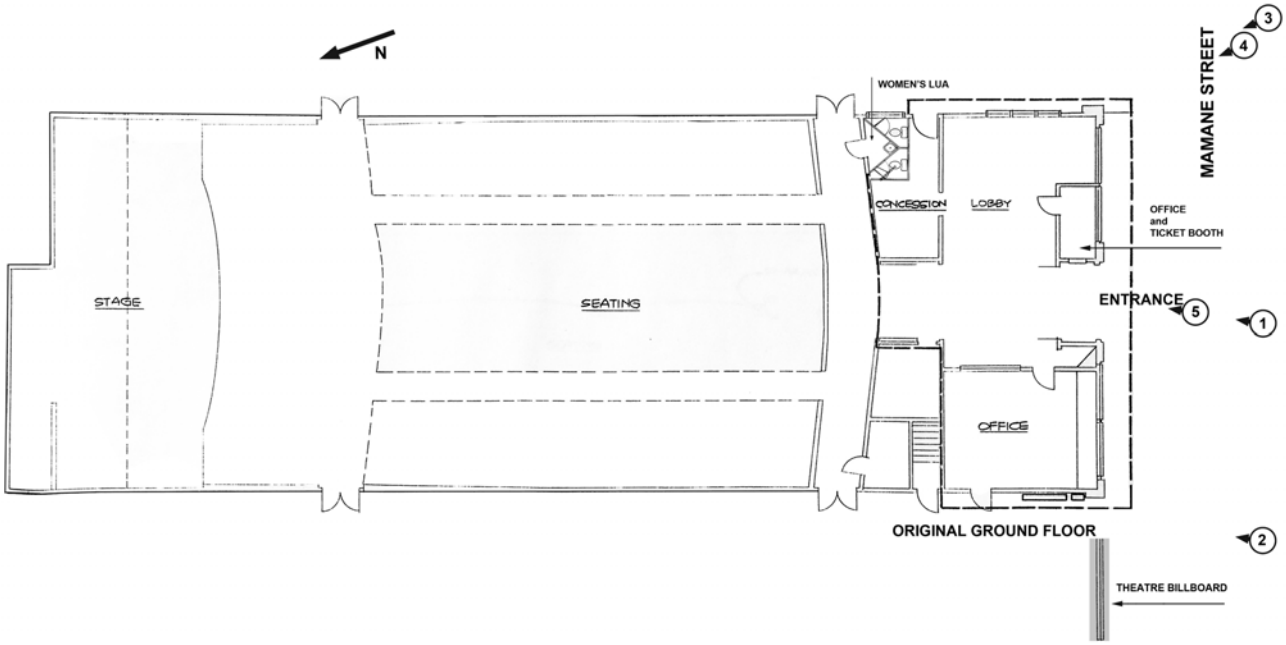
Submit the following items with the completed form:

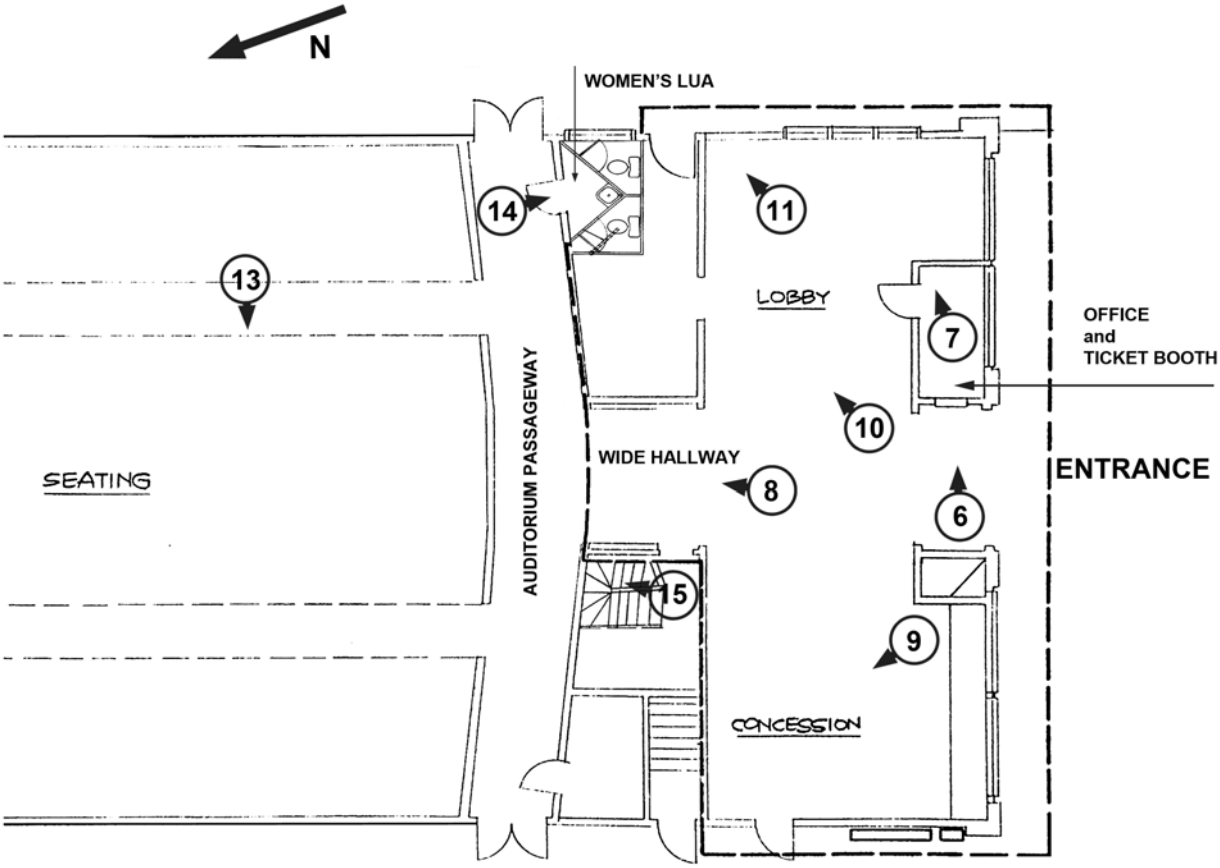
- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.
- See Section 8 Continuation Sheets
- **Sketch map** for historic districts and properties having large acreage or numerous resources. Key all photographs to this map.
- **Additional items:** (Check with the SHPO, TPO, or FPO for any additional items.)

Photographs

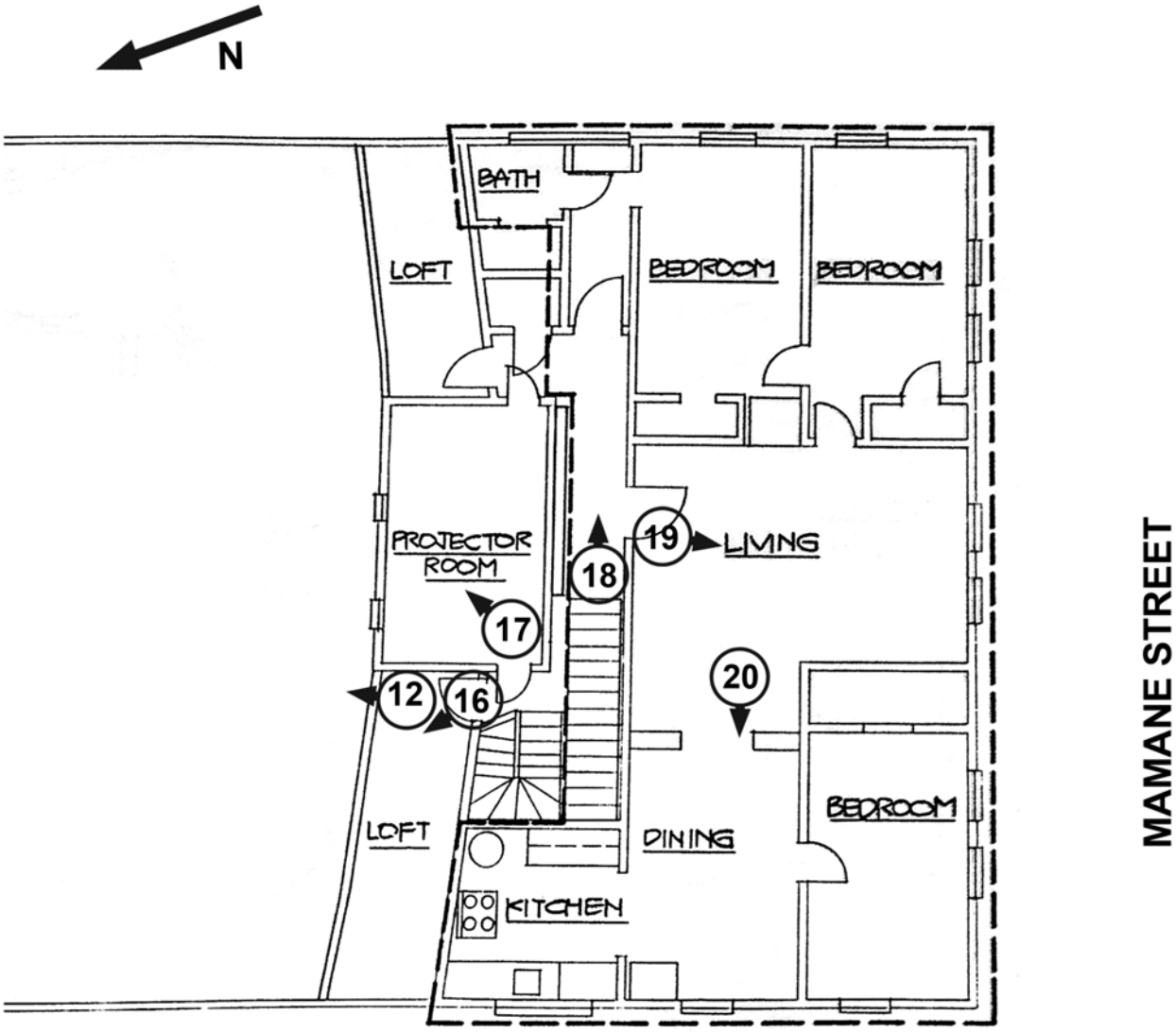
Submit clear and descriptive photographs. The size of each image must be 1600x1200 pixels (minimum), 3000x2000 preferred, at 300 ppi (pixels per inch) or larger. Key all photographs to the sketch map. Each photograph must be numbered and that number must correspond to the photograph number on the photo log. For simplicity, the name of the photographer, photo date, etc. may be listed once on the photograph log and doesn't need to be labeled on every photograph.

Photo Sketches





CURRENT GROUND FLOOR



ORIGINAL 2ND FLOOR

PHOTO LOG
Name of Property: People's Theatre
City or Vicinity: Honokaa
County: Hawaii State: HI
Photographers: Annalise Kehler, Laura Ruby, Carol Stephenson
Dates Photographed: 2013 and 2014
Location of Original Digital Files: Ross W. Stephenson, 38 Judd Street, 24B, Honolulu HI 96817

Job# Historic and Architectural Resources of Honoka'a

Photo #1 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0001)
Mamane Street façade, (mauka side) camera facing northeast

Photographer: Annalise Kehler

Photo #2 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0002)
Mamane Street façade, (mauka side), billboard, and Waipi'o side façade, camera facing northeast

Photographer: Annalise Kehler

Photo #3 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0003)
Mamane Street façade, (mauka side), Hilo-side façade, camera facing north

Photographer: Annalise Kehler

Photo #4 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0004)
External detail: corner pilaster, camera facing north

Photographer: Annalise Kehler

Photo #5 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0005)
External detail: frontal entrance to lobby
Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #6 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0006)
External detail: box office window, camera facing east-southeast

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #7 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0007)
Interior detail: box office safe, camera facing east

Photographer Laura Ruby

Photo #8 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0008)
Interior: lobby entrance to theatre, camera facing

Photographer: Carol Stephenson

Photo #9 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0009)
Interior: concession counter, camera facing

Photographer: Carol Stephenson

Photo #10 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0010)
Interior: lobby, camera facing east

Photographer: Carol Stephenson

Photo #11 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0011)
Interior detail: 1930 Simplex film projector, camera facing east

Photographer: Carol Stephenson

Photo #12 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0012)
Interior: theatre seating (originally 525 seats), camera shot taken from mezzanine facing northeast

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #13 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0013)
Interior detail: theatre seats, camera facing west-northwest

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #14 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0014)
Interior: women's lua, camera facing south-south-west

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #15 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0015)
Interior: stairs to 2nd floor, camera facing northeast

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #16 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0016)
Interior: mezzanine loft sofa, camera facing north

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #17 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0017)
Interior: second floor projection room film splicer, camera facing northeast

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #18 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0018)
Interior: second floor residence hallway

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #19 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0019)
Interior: second floor residence living room, camera facing southwest

Photographer: Laura Ruby

Photo #20 (HI_Hawai'iCounty_Honokaa People's Theatre_0020)
Interior: second floor residence dining room, camera facing northwest

Photographer: Laura Ruby

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City or Vicinity: Honokaa
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Photographers: Annalise Kehler, Laura Ruby, Carol Stephenson
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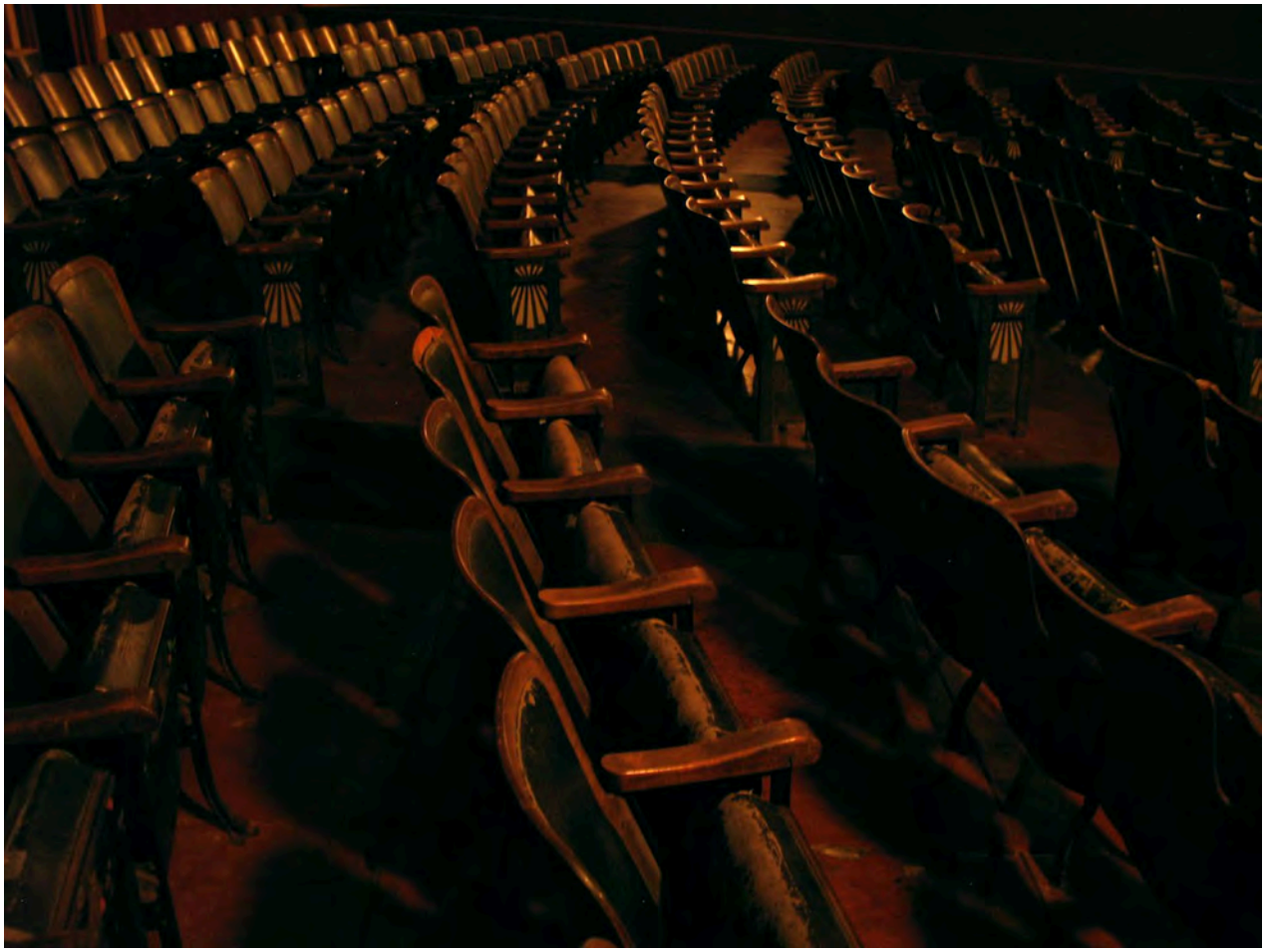

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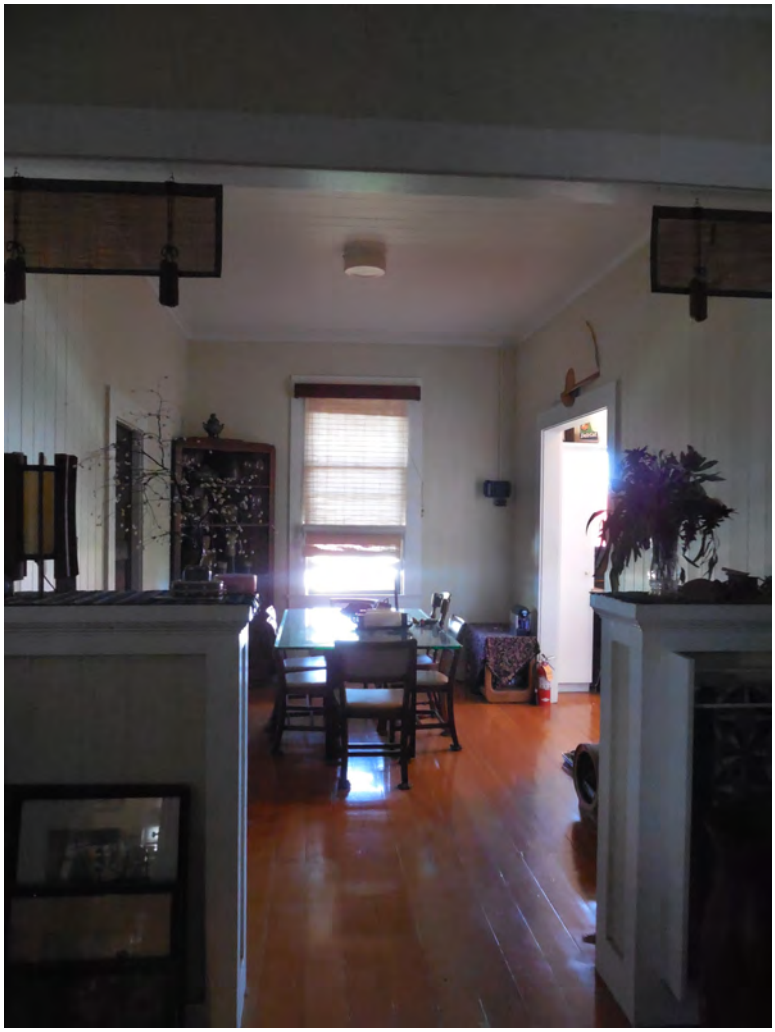


Paperwork Reduction Act Statement: This information is being collected for applications to the National Register of Historic Places to nominate properties for listing or determine eligibility for listing, to list properties, and to amend existing listings. Response to this request is required to obtain a benefit in accordance with the National Historic Preservation Act, as amended (16 U.S.C.460 et seq.).**Estimated Burden Statement**: Public reporting burden for this form is estimated to average 100 hours per response including time for reviewing instructions, gathering and maintaining data, and completing and reviewing the form. Direct comments regarding this burden estimate or any aspect of this form to the Office of Planning and Performance Management. U.S. Dept. of the Interior, 1849 C. Street, NW, Washington, DC.

Narrative Description

The Honokaa People's Theatre is a two-story, classical revival style building which is three bays wide. Each bay is demarcated by a pilaster, with the 12' wide center bay narrower than the two 20' wide side bays. The pilasters, like the remainder of the façade, are clad in clapboard; however, at some point they were encased with corrugated metal above the first story to give a fluted appearance. The center, entry bay is recessed approximately 5' on the first story, while the side bays each contain a pair of single pane display windows. These display windows have paneled kick plates below and four pane transoms above. Coming attraction display cases are affixed to all four pilasters. A flat roofed, metal canopy runs the length of the façade between the first and second stories and projects 7' to protect the sidewalk, which extends only in front of the theater. On the second story each bay features two 1 x 1 double hung sash windows, which are rhythmically spaced. The façade terminates with a false front adorned with an architrave, diminutive frieze, denticulated cornice and a parapet which steps up in the center bay. The parapet is defined at its ends by a continuation of the building's pilasters, and contains the wording, "Honokaa People's Theatre" as well as the date 1930. Originally the theater had finials atop the two corner pilasters and a central ornamental parapet which were removed at an unknown date. To the left of the theater, in line with the façade, is a free standing announcement board with a lateral running gable roof used to proclaim the current program.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, BOTELHO FAMILY COLLECTION

The early years of the Honokaa People's Theatre with the ornamental upper façade of the building, ca. 1930.

The recessed front entry has a scored concrete floor and 6" tongue and groove walls and ceiling. A modest, quarter round molding transitions the wall and ceiling. A ticket window with a semi-circular wood counter and a metal screen is to the right side of this entry space. On the opposite wall is a boxed bulletin board. The entry consists of a pair of bi-fold doors. The doors are original and each has a bottom panel and two sets of windows, the lower one being four panes and the upper one, six panes. A pair of new screen doors follow the design of the doors and were added to comply with Department of Health regulations. A historic four-pane transom sits above the entire doorway.

The entry doors lead into a lobby, which runs the width of the building. The lobby has scored, brown, acid-stained, concrete floors. The ceiling and walls are of 6" tongue and groove paneling. An approximately 6" high baseboard transitions the walls and floor, and a simple molding serves a similar function at the junction of the wall and ceiling. While retaining much of its original materials, the lobby no longer maintains its original configuration. Previously a concession area was located to the right of the entry. To the left a floor to ceiling wall demarcated the approximately 18' x 20' manager's office, later a game room. Prior to these uses, the area to the left was a sweet shop with a soda fountain.

Today, the lobby to the right side of the entry serves as a lounge area. An original set of three 1 x 1 double hung windows in the building's Hilo (right) side wall provide air and augment the natural light from the front wall's end display window. In the front corner closest to the entry an approximately 6' high partition wall separates the 6' x 10' ticket booth from the rest of the lobby. This wall is made of 6" tongue and groove boards, and a swinging door accesses the ticket booth from the lobby. The ticket booth is graced by the other display window on the right side of the façade.

To the Waipi'o side of the entry is the present concession area. The two display windows in the front wall provide this area with natural light. The concession stand projects out into the space from the rear wall. A new, wood, approximately 4' high counter defines the new concession stand. An original five-panel door in the building's Waipi'o side wall exits from the concession stand directly to the outdoors and a 116' long concrete sidewalk which runs along the side of the theater to accommodate exiting patrons.

Makai of the lobby is a 12' x 15' wide hallway. This hallway is flanked by two five-panel doors. The door on the Hilo wall formerly accessed a concession booth but currently holds concession supplies. (A five-panel door further at the Hilo end of the enclosed hallway portion of the original concession area exits to the outdoors.) The door on the Waipi'o wall of the wide hallway opens on a winding dogleg stair that leads up to the projection booth and living quarters on the second floor.

Further *makai* is a centered 12' wide, 8' high, flat arched opening framing a pair of single panel, swinging, double doors; these, in turn, lead to the passageway within the auditorium. Curtains open onto the aisles of the 525-seat auditorium with its sloped floor declining down toward the stage and screen. The tripartite seating arrangement has a center section of seats with narrower sections to each side. Aisles separate the three sections, with side aisles running down either wall of the auditorium. The theater retains its original seats with their art deco, cast iron end plates. The auditorium has a paneled

and lattice ceiling and concrete floors. The walls also feature solid and lattice panels. A simple, denticulated cornice transitions the walls and ceiling. The ceiling's latticework conceals a ventilation system with wood ducts and eight fans to draw the hot air up to the monitor and out of the building. Behind the walls' lattice panels, on the exterior of the building are plywood sheets, set at an angle with an opening at the bottom. This bottom opening is enclosed by a strip of wood with holes in it. This entire construct serves as a Helmholtz resonator to eliminate low frequency sound in the auditorium.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HAWAI'I STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION COLLECTION

Monitor built atop the Honokaa People's Theatre to vent hot air from the theater's auditorium, ca 1970s.

Double doors exit the auditorium at the base and top of the seating area on both sides. At the rear of the auditorium are the women's and men's rest rooms, with the women's room on the Hilo side and the men's on the Waipi'o. In the women's room the two stalls are splayed at a diagonal with the sink at their intersection.

The front of the auditorium is dominated by a large movie screen. The original, 4' high wood stage also remains intact, with the screen 15' behind the stage's lip. A historic gold curtain, sewn by Momi Tanimoto, the original owner's wife, can by drawn to close the movie screen from the audience. The roof at this end of the building is elevated to accommodate mechanical equipment for the stage. This elevated area is also clad in corrugated metal on the exterior and has its own front facing gable roof. Behind the stage a single story, 6' x 16' dressing room projects from the building. This has been remodeled.

Above the lobby is a second floor. It may be accessed from two stairways: the winding dogleg stair off the concourse to the auditorium and a straight run stair which is accessed from a door on the Waipi'o side of the theater. The former has a wood handrail and leads up to the projection booth. A small, one seat deep, balcony area is to either side of the projection booth and overlooks the auditorium. The latter stair has twenty treads which leads up to a lateral running hallway. This hallway services the residential unit on the second floor. The entire upstairs is finished with 6" tongue and groove walls and ceilings and Douglas fir floors. A five-panel door immediately on the right at the head of the stair leads into a living room. Two 1 x 1 double hung sash windows are in this L-shaped room's Māmane Street wall. On the Waipi'o side the living room flows into a dining room, with only a 4' high, paneled, partition wall demarcating the shift in functions. The dining room extends to the Waipi'o sidewall and has one 1 x 1 double hung sash window. Off the dining room, towards the rear of the building is the kitchen, which is accessed through a 4' wide, flat arched opening. Opposite the kitchen, a five-panel door leads from the dining room into a front bedroom. This room has two 1 x 1 double hung sash windows in its front wall and one in its sidewall. On the Hilo side of the living room are two bedrooms, entered through five-panel doors. The front bedroom has a pair of 1 x 1 double hung sash windows in its front wall and one in its side, while the other bedroom has one in the Hilo side wall. A five-panel door exits this room out to the hallway. Across the hallway is a bathroom. There is a pair of two-pane casement windows at the end of the hallway, as well as in the bathroom. A five-panel door closes this end of the hallway off from the stairway end.

At the Waipi'o side of the theater property a dirt driveway leads down to a single story garage building. The garage is constructed of corrugated metal and has a shed roof which slants down toward the rear of the property. A pent roof awning runs across the front of the structure and wraps around its Hilo side. The rectangular shaped building's long side faces the street, and it contains three distinct sections. In the middle is a dirt floor room for the parking of automobiles. To the Waipi'o side of the garage is a room with a concrete slab floor, which formerly housed a generator, but is now used for storage. To the Hilo side are two small rooms, also with a concrete slab floor which served as bathrooms. The one bathroom has a pair of two-pane sliding windows, while the other has a fixed two-pane window.

The Honokaa People's Theatre retains a high degree of integrity, despite several minor changes. The exterior remains intact other than the recladding of the pilasters on the upper story to give them a fluted appearance. The recladding appears in itself to be over fifty years old and significant in its own right. Only the interior of the lobby has been reconfigured, but maintains the same functions. Almost all of its original fabric, including the walls, ceiling and floor, remains intact, allowing it to be readily recognizable as a historic space. Likewise, the only major alteration to the auditorium has been the removal of some seats to allow for more space between the stage and the audience, and to allow for more legroom between the rows. While seats have been removed the historic tripartite configuration has been retained. Still functioning as a theater with the owner's residence upstairs, the building very much retains its historic character.

Narrative Statement of Significance

This nomination for the Honokaa People's Theater is based upon Criteria A (Events/History) and C (Architecture)

Criterion A

Background of Plantation Entertainment in Hawai'i

The turn of the century (1800s-1900s) brought swift changes to Hawai'i. The Native Hawaiian Monarchy had been overthrown in 1893, annexation to the United States had occurred in 1898 and the fundamental laws of the islands were undergoing revisions through the 1900 Organic Act.

Key to such changes were the rapid rise of the sugar plantations and further integration of Hawai'i into the world cash economy. The declining Native Hawaiian birthrate combined with the insatiable appetite of the plantations for inexpensive labor led to waves of immigration from overseas, particularly Asia. This appetite for labor frequently conflicted with international politics: the fear of dependence on Chinese labor in Hawai'i, much like that in the United States, led both political entities to turn to the Empire of Japan for new workers. The abolition of the Kingdom's Masters and Servants Act upon annexation provided a "loophole" in the Gentlemen's Agreement with Japan that allowed the immigration of Japanese and Korean spouses and children into the islands (Ogawa and Grant n.d.). Predictably, this led to population increases, especially in the new cane growing areas. In 1890, the population of the Kingdom stood at 89,900, by 1900 it was 154,011 and 1910 191,874 (Data Book, 2013) Between 1900 and 1910 the population of the Hāmākua District grew from 6,919 to 9,037 (The Hawaiian Annual, 1912 p. 18).

Coupled with the rise in population was increased investment in infrastructure and technology. Included were construction of the Lower and Upper Hāmākua Ditches which provided more reliable irrigation supplies than simple rainfall; introduction of new cane types to raise sugar yields; improved mill equipment that extracted more sugar from cane; and development of railroads, highways and port facilities.

While the plantation railroads and Hilo/Hawaii Consolidated Railway brought activities to the mill themselves, an otherwise initial dependence upon horses and walking had forced workers to live immediately adjacent to the locus of work. The introduction of the truck allowed workers to travel to their employment sites; most importantly the truck allowed consolidation of residential units (bigger camps) and facilitated efficient provision of services (such as piped water and electricity) that could not otherwise be economically provided to isolated sites. Independent vehicles also facilitated travel off plantation to new shopping and entertainment venues.

The more diversified employment opportunities provided by the towns and the new vehicular mobility provided the nucleus for residential and commercial growth outside the hegemony of the plantations.

The composition of "urban" populations in Honolulu and the larger neighbor island towns reflected a number of historic circumstances, particularly the length of residence in the islands for particular immigrant populations. Plantation labor contracts were usually of three to five year lengths, after which the laborer could return to the homeland, continue to work for the plantations (much desired by the plantation management), or remain in Hawai'i and look for improved employment opportunities off the plantation (least desired by plantation management). Individuals found in the towns by 1900 were generally of four employment backgrounds: a small merchant class from the homeland who had come to Hawai'i to perform the same function for their countrymen here, skilled workers (such as carpenters, blacksmiths, livery personnel) who had performed these functions on the plantations, those with previous homeland farming experience and unskilled laborers.

As Honokaa boomed in the period 1900-1930, the building names reflect those ethnic groups that had amassed sufficient capital to conduct small family businesses and erect structures to house them. These were predominately Americans, British, Chinese, Portuguese and Japanese. Generally, these stores operated every day of the year, with proprietors living above or behind the businesses.

Evolution of Theaters on Hawai'i Island

At Honokaa, the original village had developed along a portion of the coastal Government Road above the Haina sugar mill, near the fork between the Waimea and Kukuihaele Roads, and close to the Rickard residence (plantation manager's house). By 1914, the town had a significant Japanese retail contingent, mostly on the Waipi'o side of town. (Stephenson: Honoka'a Context Study 2014). The increase in population, ingress into town, combined with the advent of Prohibition in 1920, set the stage for new forms of recreation. Previously, entertainment in the town had been geared toward single men, drummers (traveling salesmen) and plantation workers in the form of the Hotel Honokaa Club, other ethnic clubs, bars, and pool and billiard halls. Family entertainment consisted of *shibai* and bon dances at the local Hongwanji Buddhist temple (Conaty 2004), as well as movies screened in open-air venues by traveling "movie men." The word *shibai* was introduced into the common local vocabulary of Hawai'i by way of Japanese immigrants and literally translates as "a play" or "a dramatic performance" (Masuda 1968). A resident of Waimea recalls paying 10 to 15 cents to see silent cowboy films, early talkies and samurai movies narrated by a *benshi* who spoke the actors' lines and explained and elaborated the action to the audience (Kurisu 1995 p. 47).

The late 1920s through the1930s marked a period of growth in the construction of indoor theater venues. In fact, between the 1840s and 1970 over 400 theaters were constructed in the Hawaiian Islands (Lowell Angell, personal communication, May 11, 2014). Literally every town on Hawai'i Island, large and small, had at least one theater. They were built primarily by Japanese and Euro-American entrepreneurs, and others financed by the plantations. The first documented theater was erected at Pāhoa in Puna in 1917. The following list provides evidence of the popularity of theater venues on Hawai'i Island: Hakalau, Hāwī, Hilo, Hōlualoa, Hōnaunau, Honoka'a, Honomū, Kapoho, Kealakekua, Kīlauea Military Camp, Kohala, Kona, Kūka'iau, Kukuihaele, Laupāhoehoe, Mountain View, Naalehu, 'Ōla'a, 'O'ōkala,

Pa'auilo, Pāhala, Pāhoa, Pāpa'aloa, Pāpa'ikou and Pepe'ekeo, to name a few (Lowell Angell, via e-mail, May 11, 2014).

The initial venues consisted of live entertainment rather than films. Live entertainment consisted of troupes of acrobats, *kabuki* (classical Japanese dance-drama*), shibai*, singing and storytelling (Tomich 2008, p.179). These melodramas involved elaborate costuming, makeup, props and performances and were conducted by both traveling and local troupes. For the bigger productions, "Twice a year or so, an old bus traveled through the neighborhoods, as those inside the bus pounded drums, yelled *shibai* and passed out leaflets to advertise upcoming performances" (Okimoto 2002, p.77).

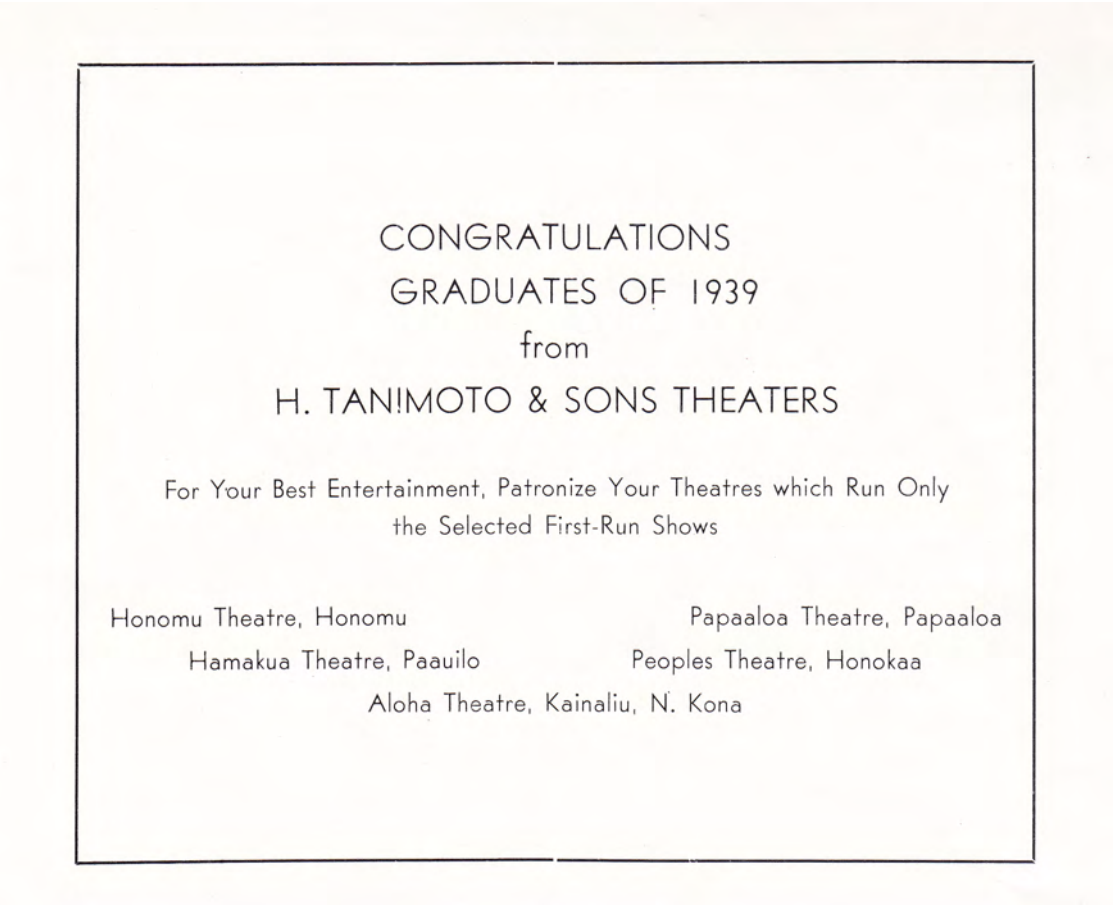
Property History

Between 1920-21 and 1939 Honoka'a boasted three theaters: the first Honokaa Theatre (1920-21), and the Honokaa People's Theatre (1930), and the second Honokaa Theatre (1939). All were owned at various times by Hatsuzo Tanimoto and affiliated companies.

The first Honokaa Theatre, now (2014) known locally as the "Old Tanimoto Theater", opened in 1921 on the mauka side of Government Road (Māmane Street). This theater was operated by Manki Harunaga and his partner J. Fujino in a warehouse-like structure on land leased from A. O. Henderson (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 580, p. 257). In 1932 Hatsuzo Tanimoto purchased three lots from Henderson, including the lot with the Honokaa Theater (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1154, pp. 484-485) The $700 sale included "all machinery, equipment, furniture and fixtures…in the said Honokaa Theatre" (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1048, p. 169). He continued the lease until 1934. Hatsuzo eventually closed this theater and leased the space to other businesses.

In 1929, Hatsuzo Tanimoto purchased the lot of the present People's Theatre for $6,000 from the estate of former Hawai'i Island Royal Governor John T. Baker (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1025, pp. 237-238). (Baker was well known as one of the male models for the King Kamehameha Statutes in Honolulu, Kapa'au, Hilo and Washington, D.C.) Tanimoto followed the fashion of the day by constructing a building specifically designed to show films as well as present live entertainment. The lot is located on the *makai* side of Māmane Street extending along R.P. 946 just Waipi'o side of the Bank of Hawaii lot.

In 1938, William "Doc" Hill purchased a lot on the *makai* side of the road, Waipi'o side of the People's Theatre, from Arthur Hall for $5,800 (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1475, p. 498). This second Honokaa Theatre was constructed in 1939. Although it sported a neon "Honokaa Theatre" sign, it was best known as the "Doc Hill Theatre," named after the influential local politician who had arrived in Hawai'i years before as a spectacles salesmen who adopted the moniker "Doc." The "Doc Hill Theatre" was informally called the "Republican Theatre," as opposed to the People's Theatre (which served as the "Democratic Theatre") in the post-war years of changing politics that led up to statehood (Gerald De Mello, interview, July 7, 2014).



CONGRATULATIONS
GRADUATES OF 1939
from
H. TANIMOTO & SONS THEATERS

For Your Best Entertainment, Patronize Your Theatres which Run Only the Selected First-Run Shows

Honomu Theatre, Honomu
Papaaloa Theatre, Papaaloa
Hamakua Theatre, Paauilo
Peoples Theatre, Honokaa
Aloha Theatre, Kainaliu, N. Kona

1939 Honokaa High School yearbook advertisement.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, BOTELHO FAMILY COLLECTION

The Honokaa People's Theatre billboard and parking area was graced with *koi* (carp) on Boys' Day. These kites and banners symbolize the strength of the *koi* to swim upstream suggesting the strength and character of the boys in the family, ca. 1937.

By 1939 Tanimoto had opened five theatres along the Hāmākua Coast, including Honomu (at Honomū), Hamakua (at Pa'auilo) and Papaaloa (at Papa'aloa) (Lowell Angell, personal communications via-email, May 13, 2014). The Tanimoto's residence also sits on the lot in Honomū. The Honomū Theater and Tanimoto's residence are listed on the State Register of Historic Places (Register Form, 1985, State Historic Preservation Division files).

In 1941 Hatsuzo Tanimoto sold all the lots in Honoka'a, Kohala, and Honomū to his sons Takaichi and Christian Yoshimi for the "consideration of $10 and affection" with each owning ½ interest (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1630, p. 18). By 1943, all the theaters but the People's Theatre had been moved

under the corporate umbrella of Hilo Theatres, Ltd. and leased to Investors Ltd. (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 1787, p. 388).

In 1963, Takaichi deeded the People's Theatre parcel to his brother Christian (Yoshimi) and his second wife, Peggy (Kikue) (Bureau of Conveyances, Tax Record for TMK: (3) 4-5-16:011). The lots became a part of the Christian Yoshimi Tanimoto Estate after Christian's death in 1969. The theater continued in operation until 1988, when the frailty of Christian's widow, Peggy, combined with the decrease in attendance due to the closing of the plantations, and the attraction of more modern theaters in Hilo, reduced revenue. The current owner, Tawn Keeney, purchased the property from Jeff and Christian Jr. Tanimoto in 1991 for $260,000 (Bureau of Conveyances, Warranty Deed, #124655).

Historical Events

The original owner and builder, Hatsuzo Tanimoto, ran the day-to-day activities and bookings of films at the theater. He is remembered as being stern, checking ages of young people before allowing them inside.

> Recently in Waipi'o auntie Alberta Mockchew (of the poi factory family) gave me an earful of stories about going to the theatre when she was in school and how it used to have plenty matinees and all kine kids all the time. Mr. Tanimoto was so strict, with his big black flashlight was always hushing the kids, and when one would act up he would scold the entire theatre so that then all the kids would then make fun and he'd end up stopping the film and turning the lights on for a few minutes. Then each time he'd threaten telling Alberta's or whichever kid's grandma (which all the aunties and uncles always did) so all the kids were kept in line because everything always got back to the family when they got home from the movies or across the street at the Hasegawa store where they sold the sweets. (Phaethon, Tawn Keeney's daughter, via email, June 19, 2014).

Later, Christian Tanimoto booked all of the films for the theater. Japanese films were shown on Mondays (average attendance 30 people), with Filipino films shown on Tuesdays (average attendance 15-20 people), and X-rated films shown on Wednesdays (average attendance 15 to 20). Thursday and the weekends were reserved for family entertainment (average attendance 50 to 60 people per night).

Ed Castillo along with his sisters (who with Helen Botelho were paid usherettes) used to work in the theater in the 40s when all the Marines were around. He used to shoe shine when he was about 10 or 11 in front of the theater marquee for the Marines and businessmen, but then he'd do regular Saturday visits to Mr. Tanimoto, Dr. Carter and Dr. Okada for 50 cents. Ed remembered Mr. Tanimoto's shoes were tough because he had a pair of fancy black and white shoes that were so difficult to shine, but Mr. Tanimoto was good friends with Ed's dad (Ed senior) and was a nice man, so Ed shined them regularly.

Ed, as the little one, had the job to ring the bell, this big Santa Claus type, 30 minutes before the movie, walking through town to Ikeuchi store and back. After he would play Hawaiian 78 rpm records in the

back of the stage for the audience to listen to, (Ed's dad owned a record store and loaned Mr. Tanimoto a record player) Ed would then pull the heavy curtain, "cartoons would come on, each time a new chapter, Batman, Green Hornet, Lone Ranger, 'Hi Ho Silver.'" (Ed Castillo, interview, April 2, 2014).

Ed was a Tanimoto family favorite. Mrs.Tanimoto loved Ed, and used to always say *"kirena kawaii"* (cute and nice). Ed remembered getting to go up to the "dress circle" (the loge balcony). He would sit up there like a VIP; regular people sometimes would buy tickets to go up there too, but Ed could go for free because he was like family. (Phaethon Keeney, interview, 2014).

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, BOTELHO FAMILY COLLECTION

Thirty Seconds over Tokyo, and other popular movies, likely made its appearance at the Honokaa People's Theatre, like other second-run movie houses, up to six months after its first release, ca. 1944.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

These lantern slides were projected reminders or announcements for the moviegoers prior to the start of the entertainment, ca. 1930s to 1970s.

Christian and Peggy Tanimoto resided in a spacious apartment on the upper floor of the theater, across the hallway from the balcony seating and the projection room. Peggy was very popular and hosted Honoka'a business people including the Kaneshiros (restaurant and general store owners) and the Ikeuchis (hardware store owners). Mrs. Kaneshiro was Peggy's best friend and they would watch films every Monday on the Hilo side balcony and talk story for hours. (Phaethon Keeney, interview, 2014).

Entertainment Events

Phaethon Keeney reminisced about Peggy Tanimoto:

> Mrs. Tanimoto presented Japanese plays (costumed Japanese folk dance with white face), as well as hula on the shallow stage. She was an active and lively community member performing in talent shows, parades, bon dances, etc., as well as doing other arts and crafts. She would watch me many afternoons when my father was working. I loved her and her colorful clothes and apartment full of crafts, paper dolls and egg carton flowers, candy leis and clippings of newspapers with all the events in town, she was so kind and funny and full of energy. Alberta Mockchew also remembered Mrs. Tanimoto had a flower shop upstairs, I guess when I was young and making all those crafts it was to sell, not just for fun! It was a good time anyways, and I hear she made great Ikebana Japanese flower arrangements.
>
> During this time I remember living behind the screen, next to all the big speakers and film equipment, and Mrs. Tanimoto would shout over the balcony to us in the dark auditorium each morning "Good morning! Breakfast!" She would make every morning for us one perfectly poached egg, half papaya, one slice toast, miso soup. She was quite gracious and a wonderful lady. (Phaethon Keeney, interview, 2014).

PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN: MIKOYO HASEGAWA MATSUO COLLECTION

Peggy Tanimoto, in moustache, performing in the Japanese folk tradition, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN: MIKOYO HASEGAWA MATSUO COLLECTION

Peggy took her theater troupes to many Island of Hawai'i locations. Here the group is performing in the Japanese folk tradition at an unknown location. Miyoko Hasegawa Matsuo is holding the parasol and Peggy Tanimoto is wearing the moustache, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Peggy Tanimoto performing a classical Japanese dance, location unknown, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Another classical Japanese dance with parasols lead by Peggy on an unknown stage, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Peggy giving another Japanese folk presentation this time at the Salvation Army theater, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

This hula presentation, organized by Peggy Tanimoto, took place at the ILWU Jack Hall building. The group likely practiced in the Honokaa People's Theatre, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER DAVID FRANZEN: HAWAI'I STATE HISTORIC PRESERVATION DIVISION
The closed up Honokaa People's Theatre, ca. late 1980s.

Politically Significant Events

The International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), Plantation Labor Strikes and the People's Theatre

On September 1, 1946, 26,000 sugar workers and their families (76,000 people in total) organized by the IILWU went on strike against 33 of 34 sugar plantations throughout the Hawaiian Islands. The strike would last 79 days. Hāmākua's plantations and Honoka'a were heavity involved (Center for Labor Education and Research, "Timeline", no date).

Labor unrest had occurred previously in Hawai'i, notably in 1900, 1904, 1905, 1909, 1920, 1924, 1938, 1941, 1944 and 1945. Initially these were often local affairs, organized by individual ethnic groups, with meager resources; however, the magnitude of strikes and violence grew over time. Most notable were

the 1924 Hanapēpē Massacre where 16 Filipino sugar workers were killed by police, and the 1938 Hilo Massacre, where unarmed unionists were hit by shotgun fire (Center for Labor Education and Research, "Timeline," no date).

The ILWU strike in the year 1946 changed history. Wages had been initially fixed under the Military Governor Robert C. Richardson, Jr. and remained so until the end of World War II. The result was pent up demand for wage increases and fundamental changes to pre-war plantation labor conditions. The leadership of the ILWU, including President Harry Bridges and Regional Director Jack Hall, was uniquely qualified to change the equation of labor negotiations. The Union had a major voice on the West Coast and Hawai'i docks, through which goods entered or exited the Islands. The Union was experienced in strike preparation and operations, including educating workers on labor law and organization techniques, stockpiling of supplies in advance of a strike, acquisition of essentials during labor actions, organizing picketing, limiting violence, providing professional legal counsel, and supporting politicians friendly to labor. Very important also was the platform that all workers, regardless of ethnicity, needed to be represented equally in the union.

A similar strike in 1958 extended for 128 days, covered 26 plantations and some 13,700 workers.

The platform of the ILWU in post-war strikes was to raise wages, conduct a union shop (a workplace "closed" to non union personnel), shorten work-weeks and put an end to "perquisites". (Perquisites, such as "free" housing and "accounts" at the plantation stores, may have seemed like benefits of employment, but they lowered actual paid wages, limited where worker money was spent, and determined where workers would live–a very paternalistic system) (Dziedbach, 2013).

Honoka'a, as the second largest town on the Big Island and the hub of numerous small plantations along the Hāmākua Coast, was a center of ILWU organizing and strike activities. The Honokaa People's Theatre was the largest indoor auditorium in town. The Tanimotos were strong supporters of the ILWU–as mentioned earlier, the People's Theatre was known informally as the "Democratic Theater" as opposed to the "Republican" "Doc Hill" Honokaa Theatre. To show their support, Christian (Yoshimi) Tanimoto, his wife, Peggy (Kikue) Tanimoto had their picture taken with Harry Bridges at the People's Theatre front under a banner announcing a speech by Bridges.

Honoka'a continues to have an ILWU hall not far from the People's Theatre in 2014.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

ILWU President Harry Bridges standing under a Honokaa People's Theatre welcoming banner with proprietors Christian and Peggy Tanimoto. Bridges had probably just spoken, or was about to speak, before a large union audience in the theater auditorium, ca. 1947.

Theater Management

The theater went through a number of management changes. After the death of Christian, Jiro Kawatachi, family friend of the Tanimotos, operated the theater. (Jiro also ran the Sweet Shoppe across the street where the Filipino Store is now in 2014). (Dr. Tawn Keeney and his daughter Phaethon, interview, April 3, 2014.) The era of Jiro ended when Mrs. Tanimoto's son went to Ikeuchi's Hardware Store) and bought a gallon of green paint for the ticket booth (for $61 dollars [today over $150 or so!]) on the theatre account, this upset Jiro, and not seeing eye to eye, the theater changed management.

PHOTOGRAPHER UNKNOWN: KAWATACHI FAMILY COLLECTION
Jiro Kawatachi inside the theater lobby, ca 1930s.

Subsequently, James Carvalho rented and managed the theater. He placed 20 leased pinball machines in the lobby and movie tickets sold for $1.50 to $1.75. During this time the facility was operated as a Consolidated Amusement Company theater, only showing films on weekends. Offerings included Filipino and martial arts films. Unfortunately under Consolidated's management, films were only made available to the People's Theatre after the first-run theaters were finished with them, causing local patrons to wait 3-6 months for a first run movie.

In the 70s George Santos Jr. became the remaining projectionist (through the Jiro, James

> Carvalho, Jay Sims, Don Mitts, and Tawn Keeney management periods) using the old carbon arc projectors, and the overhead was low. He took over from his father, George Santos Sr., at age 15 after Sr.'s back gave out. George Jr. was an active student, worker, volunteer, driving a limo taxi, auto detailing, working for the Catholic Church, volunteering at the Hongwanji, making *laulau*, (a Hawaiian meal of pork and fish wrapped in a taro leaf and steamed), etc. for the events in town. Sometimes when he was late driving the limo George Sr. would come down and start the film, or the movie would be delayed until Jr. could get back. Both Jiro and Sr. taught Jr. in different styles of projection, which George Jr. took on in a mix of techniques.
>
> Back then Mrs Tanimoto had two cats, and George had to hunt them down before the movie as they would brush up against the customers legs in the dark and people would think they were rats.
>
> George Jr. remembered *Saturday Night Fever* as the best grossing film ever for the theater, playing twice daily for three weeks to full houses. The film changed Honokaa town, the theater played it two times a day for three weeks, every night packed, thousands of dollars. Every seat up to the front was filled. The front row patrons viewing the screen had to look straight up and got sore necks viewing the screen (at that time there was no stage, and seats went right up to the screen): costs were $1.50 to 1.75 a ticket. The lobby was still filled with over 20 leased company pinball machines, jukebox, and bowling lane: the theater made good money. (Phaethon Keeney, interview, 2014).

Dr. Tawn Keeney leased the theater in 1982. His wife Yolanda managed the theater for the next seven years until the Keeneys divorced. At that time Jay Sims, a college friend, took over management, reverting operations back to those of an independent theater. By the early 1990s when the plantation operations were diminishing, many Hāmākua residents could no longer afford to attend the theater. This further decreased attendance at the Honokaa People's Theatre. The theater closed. In 1990, after the death of Peggy, Tawn purchased the theater and began renovations. Such renovations included repainting the interior, installing a new screen further from the theater seating to create more stage space, rewiring and updating the sound system, installing a new video projector and sound system (including a system for live entertainment), constructing a dance floor, replacing plumbing, erecting a new roof, and installing solar power. The theater reopened in 1993, and in 2007, Tawn Keeney's daughter Phaethon Keeney opened a café in the lobby, serving healthy fare and Hāmākua coffee.

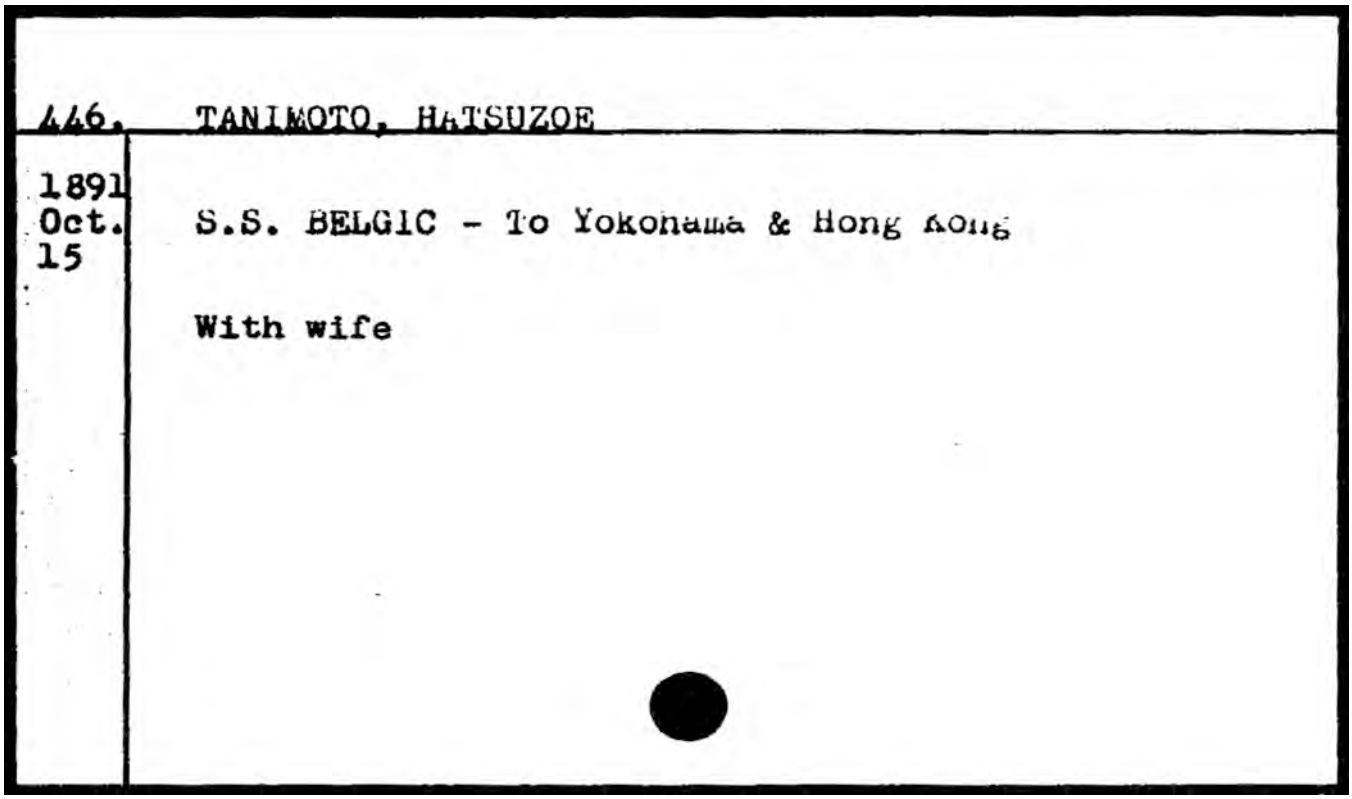
> The focus on coffee for us seems natural, as coffee shops are often locations where the community gathers to exchange ideas, and Hāmākua coffee is exceptional, we're pretty proud of it's long history here as the site of some of the first commercial coffee plantations in Hawaii (and the first wild "kope" or coffee when it was introduced into the valleys between Hilo and Waimanu by a missionary). Although Hāmākua became a vast sugar producing area, some of the original coffee trees still remain and Hāmākua coffee continues to be known for its full-bodied, chocolaty taste from some of the original coffee trees. Lots of new farmers are adding to the original tree stock and going into production. (Phaethon Kenney, interview, 2014).

According to Tawn, the event which put the theater back on the map was the production in 2009 of the independent film *Honoka'a Boy*, based on a 2007 book by Japanese national Reo Yoshida, a young man who temporarily resided in Honoka'a. Reo was introduced to Tawn through Nick Kato, a family friend and an local photographer who also runs Japanese tours to Honoka'a. Reo became a projectionist for the People's Theatre, and upon returning to Japan wrote a novel about a young college student who comes to the Hāmākua coast and develops a relationship with an older woman. In 2007, he returned to the theater to produce the film based on the book. The movie starred Japanese popular actors Cheiko Baisho, Masaki Okada, and June Hasegawa (originally from Hilo). The People's Theatre held the worldwide premier of the movie. Filmed in Japanese with English subtitles, the film was a big hit in Japan and is still shown on Japanese airline flights to Hawai'i.

People

The Tanimoto Clan

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION
Hatsuzo Tanimoto portrait, ca 1930s.


446. TANIMOTO, HATSUZOE

1891 Oct. 15 S.S. BELGIC - To Yokohama & Hong Kong

With wife

HAWAI'I STATE ARCHIVES

Ship manifest card recording Hatsuzo Tanimoto and wife arriving in Hawai'i, in 1891.

Original theater developer and owner Hatsuzo Tanimoto was born about 1864 in Japan and immigrated to Honomū, Hawai'i in 1887. He and his wife, Momi Yamamoto, were recorded arriving on the S. S. Belgic in 1891. Neither appears in the 1900 census, however, they appear in the 1910 census aged 46. The family then resided in Honomū, where Hatsuzo is the "proprietor" of a department store. Hatsuzo spoke English though Momi did not, and she was not employed in the business at this time. The Tanimoto's had 8 children; two daughters and six sons. In birth order they were Yoshio (son), Zenichi (son), Shizuno (daughter), Jitsusaburo (son), Yoshimi (son), Teruo (son), Takaichi (son), and Yoshino (daughter). All the children were born in Hawai'i, though the census records record son Jitsusaburo and daughter Shizuno, respectively 18 and 16 years of age at this time, as having been born in Japan, then immigrating together to Hawai'i in 1899. (Jitsusaburo and Shizuno may have been children adopted in Japan from a family member.) All the household members with the exception of Hatsuzo and Momi were unmarried (Bureau of Census, 1910, South Hilo District, Hawai'i).

Also documented in the census of 1910, 20-year-old son Zenichi and 16-year-old son Jitsusaburo worked as a bookkeeper and salesman respectively in the Tanimoto store. The census also records three single, male boarders in the Tanimoto household. They were Miwa Kamenoshin (36 years old), Tamesuka Tanabe (36 yrs. old) and Isaburo Okamura (38 years old). All had immigrated to Hawai'i

between 1889 and 1900. Miwa and Tamesuka were employed as salesmen in the Tanimoto Store, while Isaburo was a driver of the store's delivery wagon (Bureau of the Census, 1910, South Hilo District, Hawai'i).

In the 1920 census, eldest son Yoshio Tanimoto was listed as "preacher" (Bureau of the Census, 1920, South Hilo District). He had attended the Normal College of Marion, Indiana where he studied business. He visited Indianapolis and became acquainted with Pentecostal missionaries Estella Bernauer and Hattie Schoonover, who were instrumental in his conversion to Pentecostal Christianity. He converted in 1907 and went on to attend the Seventh Day Adventist College in Berrien Springs, Michigan. In 1910 he sailed to Japan as a missionary at the Hiroshima station and worked as a teacher, interpreter and minister until 1914 when he returned to Hawai'i (Antei Hiyane, *Nihon Kirisutokyou Shi*, 1949, p. 352). He married his wife Ohota in Japan (Lee 1939).

When the 1920's census was conducted, six Tanimoto children remained in the household. Thirty-year -old Zenichi still worked for his father as bookkeeper, had gotten married and divorced and added a 7-year-old grandson to the household. Twenty-six-year-old Jitsusaburo (shortened in the document to "Jita"), Teruo, and Takaichi were working as chauffeurs for a garage. At 19, Yoshimi was a public school teacher. Daughter Yoshino was 13-years-old. Tamesuka Tanabe was still boarding and was recorded as a "deliveryman" for the Tanimoto Store (Bureau of the Census, 1920, Honomu, South Hilo District).

In the 1930 census, Hatsuzo and Momi were 65-years-old and Hatsuzo was classified as a "retail merchant." Eldest son Yoshio and wife Ohota lived in Hilo with two children. Yoshio continued to work for his father in the Tanimoto Store in Hilo, and was classified as a "retail merchant." Twenty-nine-year-old Yoshimi was married and lived next door, working as a salesman for the store; 23-year-old daughter Yoshino was a public school teacher. Twenty-seven-year-old Teruo was married and employed as a salesman for a drug store. Surprisingly, Takaichi was recorded as a widower, who owned and operated a butcher shop (Bureau of the Census, 1930, Honomu, South Hilo District, Hawai'i). Zenichi, Jitsusaburo, and Shizuno had all left the household. Twenty-five-year-old Jitsusaburo was married to Helen, a Portuguese, had three children and lived in Hilo. Zenichi may have moved off island as he does not appear again in the census record of 1940. Shizuno likely married and took her husband's name and disappears from the record.

Hatsuzo Tanimoto died on July 26, 1938 (and it is believed, though unsubstantiated, that he is interred in Keei Buddhist Church and Cemetery at Hōnaunau). The date and location of Momi's death and burial is unknown, though she pre-deceased Hatsuzo. Hatsuzo and Momi's residence and the Honomū Theatre are still present in Honomu; both structures are listed on the Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places (listing title: H. Tanimoto [Ashida] Residence and Honomū Theatre (Scott Nakagawa.1992, Hawai'i State Historic Preservation Division).

Yoshio Tanimoto subsequently took over his father's store, working with his brothers Jitsusaburo and Yoshimi. Yoshio does not appear in the 1920 census for Hawai'i, however an advertisement for the Tanimoto Variety store at 202-206 Kamehameha Avenue in Hilo lists Yoshio, Yoshimi, and Jitsusaburo as owners (Polk-Husted Directory, Hawai'i Island, 1937-1938.)

By 1940, 39-year-old Yoshimi was living in a rented house in Honokaa Village with his 29-year-old wife Matsuko, and their 3-year-old son Lloyd. He was classified as the manager of a "motion picture theater." Interestingly, his yearly income is $1500 per year exceeded the incomes of others in managerial positions in Honokaa at that time (U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1940). Yoshimi and Matsuko divorced. She died in Honolulu at the age of 97 in 2007. In 1944, he fought in World War II, where he served as a Private 1st class for 8 months. His gravestone lists his name as Christian Y. Tanimoto, with Peggy listed as his wife. He is buried at Punchbowl Cemetery in Honolulu (*Honolulu, Hawai'i, National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific (Punchbowl), 1941-2011).*

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, ANCESTRY.COM

Christian Yoshimi Tanimoto lived from November 29, 1900 to September 11, 1967 (age 66). The Buddhist dharma wheel is engraved on his gravestone.

Takaichi moved to Fresno California (California Death Index, 1940 to 1997) and records show him deceased in 1966 (Bureau of Conveyances, Liber 5296, p. 417). Christian passed in 1967 and Peggy in 1991.

The Keeney Clan

Dr. Tawn Keeney grew up the in university town of Pittsburg, Kansas, located in the south east corner of that state. Graduating from Creighton University Medical School in 1975, he accepted a residency at Queens Hospital in Honolulu. He then took some time off for sailing, backpacking and exploring the islands before running out of money while in Honokaa in 1977. Fortunately, the Hāmākua Infirmary was in need of a general practitioner, and he was hired by Medical Director Dr. Paul Matsumoto. The pony-tailed doctor who wore slippers and drove a "beat-up" jeep had found a new home (Hāmākua Health Center, Inc.).

Keeney is not sure why he got involved with the Honokaa People's Theatre, denying that he is a movie buff but acknowledges his fascination with the theaters of his childhood in Kansas. He began helping around with theater activities under Peggy Tanimoto's direction, living behind the screen next to all the big speakers and theater film equipment. He took over the lease in 1980 and bought the building after Peggy's death in 1991. Now retired, he has spent his time restoring the building, including repainting the interior himself.

Contemporary Community Events

Today, the Honokaa People's Theatre is once again a place for community entertainment. The theater shows local and independent films as well as first run movies, and serves as a regional gathering place and source of entertainment. In 2014's depressed economy, the theater has kept its prices low so families could avoid the drive to Hilo to see the popular films (Phaethon Keeney, interview, 2014). The theatre now boasts the largest screen and state of the art DTS surround sound system on the island, as well as a large stage and dance floor for dance classes and live events, and Honoka'a Community Theatre Group is currently underway writing and performing original plays on the People's Theatre stage. In addition to historic and first run movies, the theater engages the Honoka'a community with the annual Hāmākua Music Festival bringing in world-class musicians offering Jazz, Classical, Rock and Roll, Country, and Hawaiian music. And the theater also presents the regularly sold out Honoka'a High School and Alumni Talent Shows, both of which support music education in the Honoka'a school system (Honoka'a People's Theater Website).

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Hula halau performing on stage, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION
Samisen musicians performing in the theater, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Japanese musicians perform on stage, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Practicing bon dances on the theater stage in preparation for the Obon season, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Contemporary informal dance on the stage, n.d.

PHOTOGRAPHER: UNKNOWN, HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE COLLECTION

Contemporary combo performing on the theater stage, n.d.

Criterion C (Architectural Significance)

The classical revival style, with its Greek temple-like form, was inspired by the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago held in 1893 which promoted a renewed interest in classical forms. Similar to the colonial revival style which was popular in the same period, the classical revival style was more formal and monumental in its design and primarily was applied to commercial and institutional buildings. Relying on stylistic details of the earlier Greek revival style, classical revival style buildings often have classical columns with Corinthian, Doric or Ionic capitals, topped by a front facing pediment. The arrangement of windows and doors is formal and symmetrical, and ornament is handled in a disciplined manner. The front door is often centered, and flanked by pilasters or sidelights and capped with a flat entablature, pediment, or fanlight. Sometimes pedimented windows are employed. The classical revival style is less ornate than the Beaux Arts style which was also popular in the 1885 to 1930 period and also employs classical details. As with the other classically-inspired styles of the period, the classical revival is closely associated with the United States and its rise to assume the role of a world power, and is considered America's national style, as is well reflected in the design of the principal buildings in Washington D.C.

Following the annexation of Hawai'i by the United States in 1898, classically inspired styles, including the classical revival, became popular in the Islands. Use of the style affirmed Hawai'i's new territorial status and proclaimed the virtues of the United States' democratic principles. During the 1920s the classical revival was a popular style applied to theater design in Hawai'i. Good architect-designed examples of the style include the Hawaii Theatre in Honolulu (1922) (Hawai'i and National Registers) and the Palace Theatre in Hilo (1925) (Hawai'i and National Registers), the work of Emory & Webb and Davis & Fishbourne, respectively.

The People's Theatre modestly reflects the classical revival style with its symmetric façade, characterized by its rhythmically placed pilasters and fenestration on both the first and second stories. The building terminates in a false front with its architrave, frieze, denticulated cornice, and parapet further conveying the building's classical spirit. In addition, the building is typical of rural theaters in Hawai'i with its use of corrugated metal in the construction of the auditorium's walls and roof, as well as its natural, ceiling ventilation system. The sloped floor seating and provision for stage, as well as motion picture, presentations also typified theater construction in Hawai'i during this period. The building is a distinctive addition to Honoka'a's streetscape, and a good example of a theater building constructed in a rural area on the island of Hawai'i. As such, the People's Theatre is a good late, vernacular example of the classical revival applied to a rural theater. Other examples on the island of Hawai'i include the Mountain View Theatre (Hawai'i Register), Kona Theatre in Captain Cook, and the Aloha Theatre in Kainaliu. The latter was one of five theatres on the island of Hawai'i built by Hatsuzo Tanimoto, which also included the Honokaa People's Theatre. The Honokaa People's Theatre is the only one of this group to continue to function as a motion picture theater, although the Aloha Theatre still is used for stage performances and as a restaurant.

Conclusion

The Honokaa People's Theater is eligible for the Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places at the State level under Criteria A and C due to its continued significance as a community center and architecture.

Criterion A (History/Events):
The Honokaa People's Theatre is significant at the state level under Criterion A (Events/History). The building physically represents the transition period between live theater and cinematography. It was constructed specifically as a showplace, with high ceilings to accommodate stage performances and a layout to project images across the auditorium onto the "silver screen." Over generations this dual purpose has accommodated performers such as country and folk singers, kabuki actors, Japanese *taiko* drummers, Native Hawaiian hula dancers, and jazz combos; community, labor and political meetings; children's Saturday morning programs; American drama and action movies; ethnic Japanese and Filipino (subtitled) films, and even "adult" movies. The facility has been and remains a center of activity, bringing people into Honokaa town. The Honokaa People's Theatre's importance to the community is illustrated by a recent 2014 fundraiser that brought in over $90,000 to pay for a new digital projection system and building repairs.

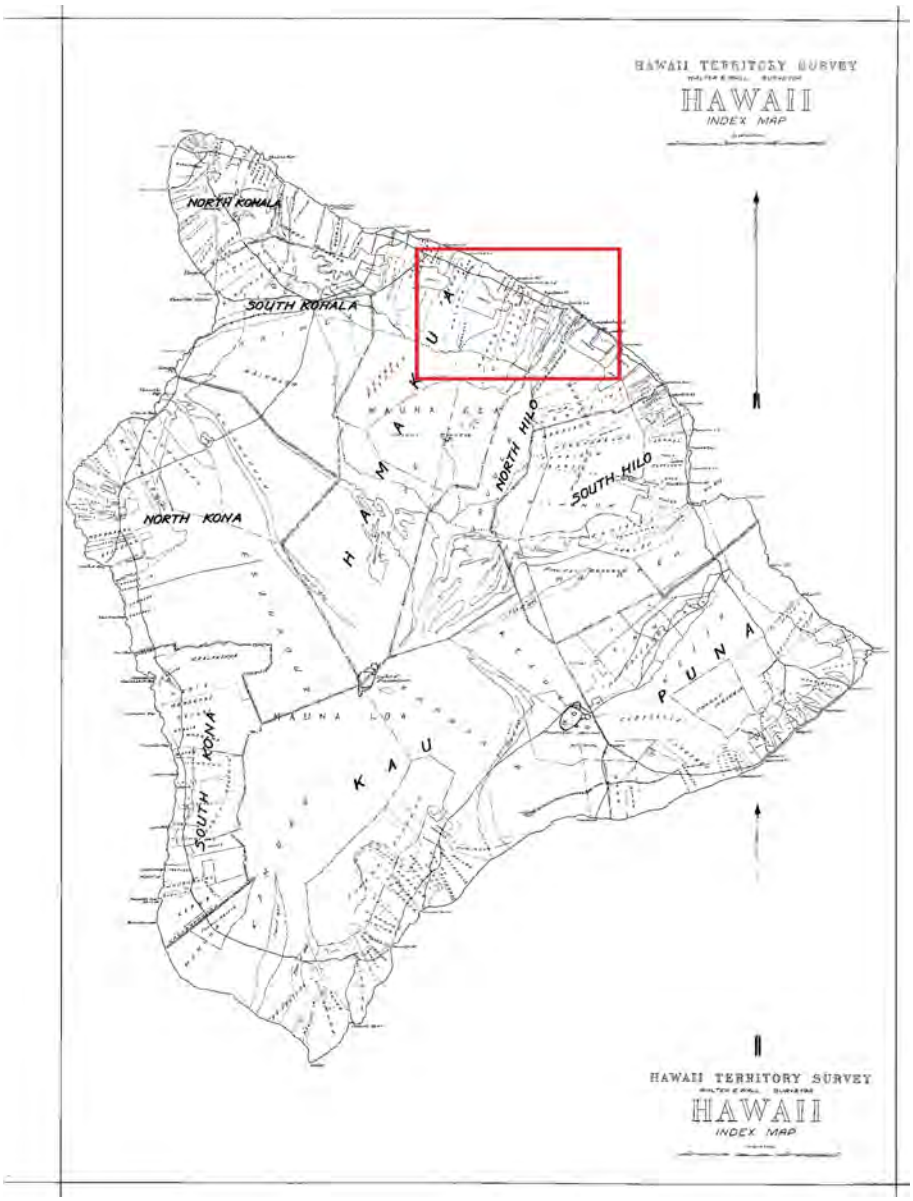
Criterion C (Architecture):
The Honokaa People's Theatre is architecturally significant at the state level under Criterion C. This structure was designed to accommodate both live and motion picture entertainment. It amalgamated elements from both vernacular plantation architecture (partial concrete floors, post and pier floor supports, false front, corrugated iron walls and double hung windows) with classical design elements (symmetrical facade, rhythmically placed pilasters, architrave, frieze, denticulated cornice and parapet). Not only does the building's size reflect the prosperity once enjoyed by the Honokaa community, the structure is one of the few remaining early 20th century free-standing theaters remaining and functioning on the island.

Additional Documentation

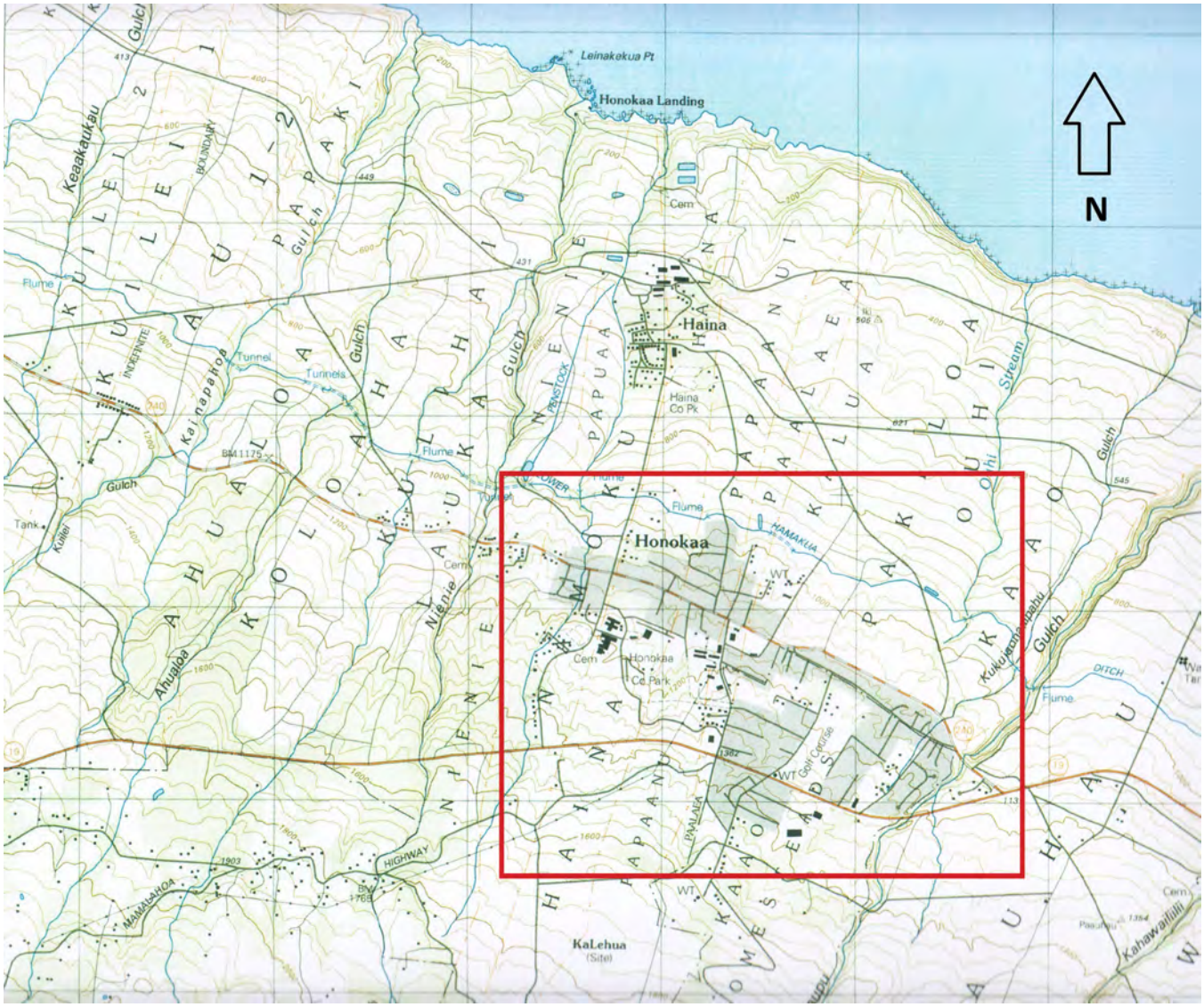
Submit the following items with the completed form:

- **Maps:** A **USGS map** or equivalent (7.5 or 15 minute series) indicating the property's location.

1. Island of Hawai'i map: Honoka'a area of significance demarked by the red rectangle



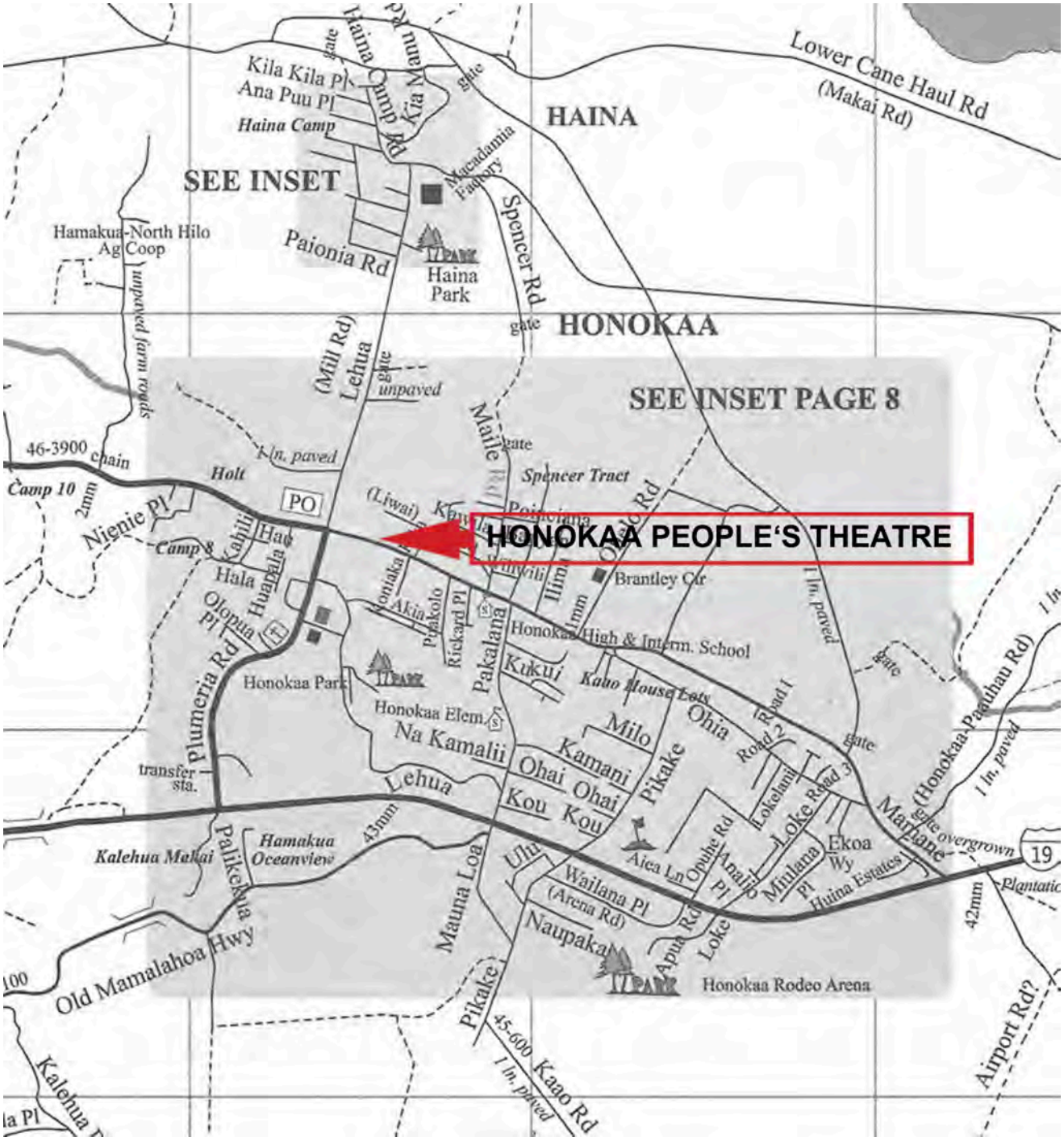
2. 1995 USGS Honokaa Quad showing Honoka'a Town on the Hāmākua Coast of the Island of Hawai'i



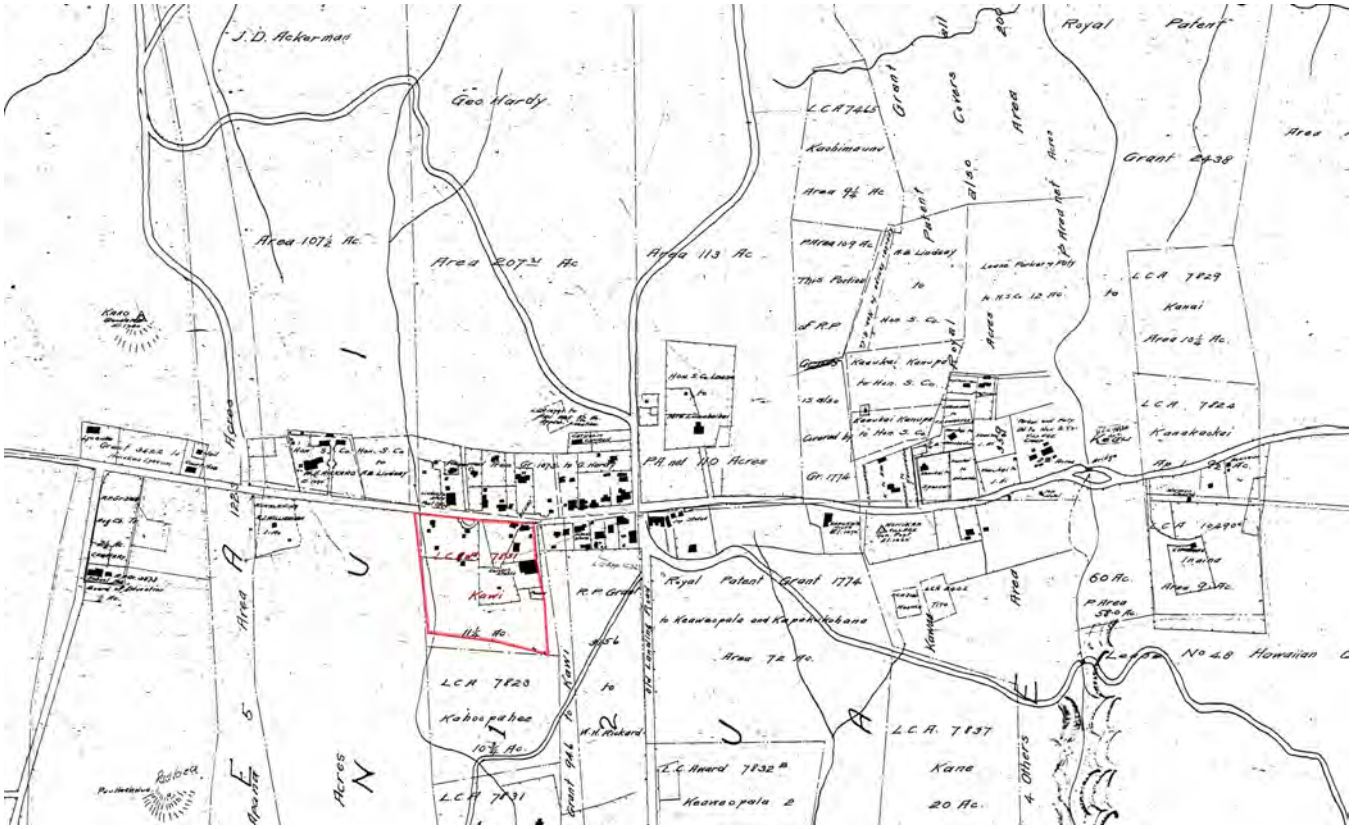
3. 1995 USGS Honokaa Quad showing the Honokaa People's Theatre

4. 1949 4-5-016 County tax map showing the Honokaa People's Theatre in color

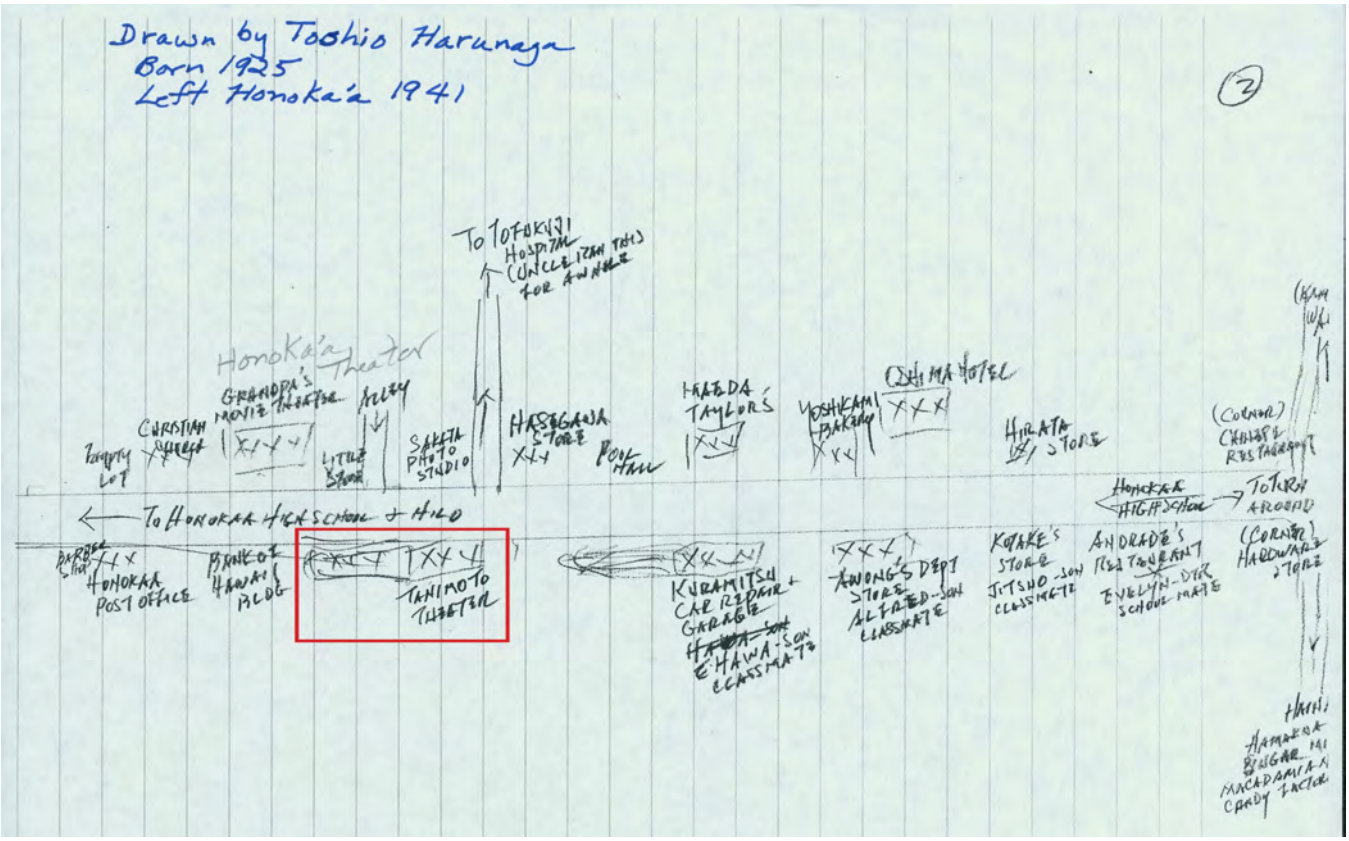
5. 2014 Honoka'a street map



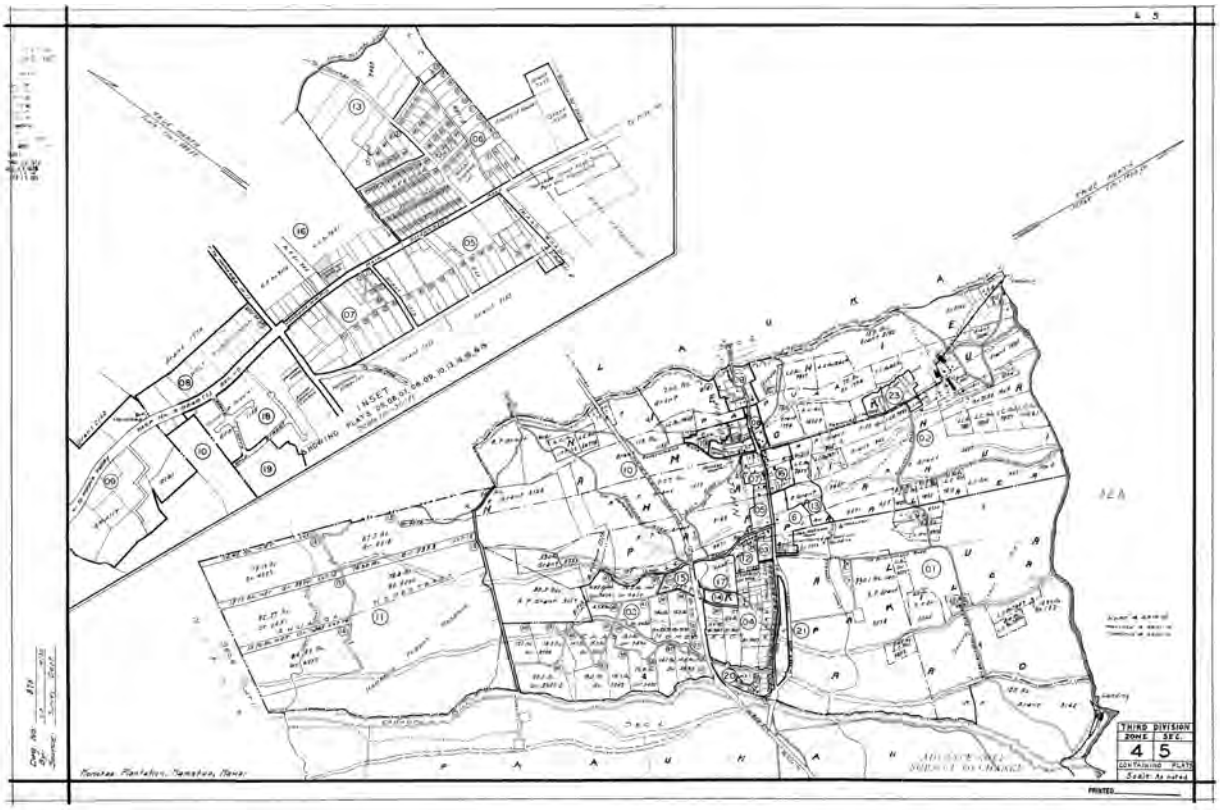
6. 1905 Māmane Street Survey showing the Land Commission Award 7851 to Kawi



7. 1925 to 1941 Honoka'a Town (map sheet 2) created by Toshio Harunaga

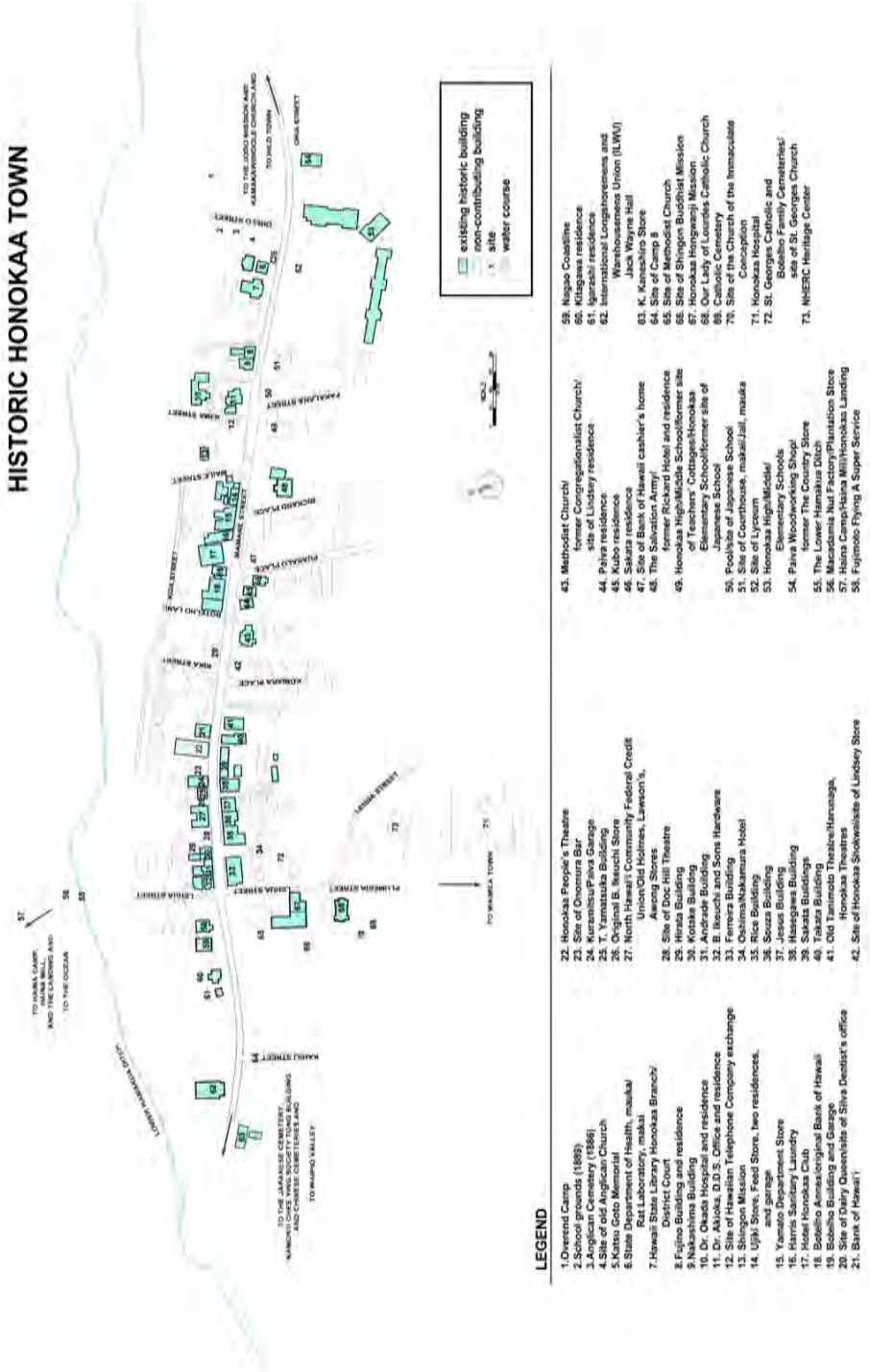


8. 1932 (3) 4-5 Tax Map whole Honokaa Town



9. 1949 Vierra Subdivision County Map showing the Honokaa People's Theatre in color

10. 2013 Honokaa map showing the Honokaa People's Theatre in contrasting color



11. Honokaa, HI 96727--People's Theatre Google Maps

Honokaa, HI 96727 - Google Maps https://www.google.com/maps/preview?client=firefox-a&channel...

ADDENDUM A
HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE TIMELINE

1887 -- Hatsuzo Tanimoto immigrated to the Hāmākua town of Honomū.

1910 -- Hatsuzo Tanimoto is listed in the *Thirteenth Census of the United States* as "proprietor" of a retail establishment in Honomū.

1914 -- Sanborn Fire Insurance Company map shows "Japanese Theater" on *makai* side Government Road on the present (2014) site of Honokaa Marketplace.

1921 -- Manki Harunaga and J. Fujino developed the Hamakua Theatre in a warehouse-like structure on the mauka side of Government Road on present (2014) site of Honokaa Family Pharmacy.

1929 -- Hatsuzo Tanimoto purchased lots for the Honokaa People's Theatre.

1930 -- Honokaa People's Theatre constructed.

1932 -- Hatsuzo Tanimoto acquired the Hamakua Theatre operation. He continued to lease it until 1934, when he closed the theater and leased the building for other commercial activities.

1938—Hatsuzo Tanimoto died.

1939 -- A new Hamakua Theatre opened on land owned by Tanimotos on the *makai* side of Government Road. This theatre was informally known as the "Doc Hill Theatre" after a local Republican politician who was involved in its operations.

1939 -- Hatsuzo Tanimoto and Sons owned five theaters: the Honomu Theatre in Honomū, the Hamakua Theatre in Pa'auilo, Papaaloa Theatre in Pāpa'aloa, the People's Theatre in Honoka'a, and the Aloha Theatre in Kainaliu, North Kona. Later, Peggy Tanimoto deeded the People's Theatre to sons Takaichi and Yoshimi Christian Tanimoto each with a ½ interest.

1943-45 -- Marines from Camp Tarawa (near Waimea) provided a boom to business patronage "for the duration" and immediately afterward.

1947 -- ILWU leader Harry Bridges gave a speech at the theater in support of the wage and workplace demands of the sugar plantation workers.

1963 -- Takaichi Tanimoto deeded the People's Theatre to his brother Yoshimi Christian Tanimoto.

1967 -- Jiro Kawatachi, a family friend of the Tanimotos, took over the operation of the theater after the death of Christian Tanimoto.

1977 -- *Saturday Night Fever* was the highest attended movie in the history of the Honokaa People's Theatre.

1982 -- Tawn Keeney leased the Honokaa People's Theatre from Peggy Tanimoto.

1988 -- The theater closed due to poor attendance.

1990 -- Peggy Tanimoto died.

1991 -- Tawn Keeney purchased the theater.

1993 -- Tawn Keeney reopened the theater reopened.

2007 -- Phaethon Keeney opened a cafe in the theater lobby.

2007 -- The film *Honokaa Boy*, based upon a book by Japanese author Reo Yoshida, was filmed in Honoka'a and focused itself around the theater. The world premier of the movie was held at the Honokaa People's Theatre.

2014 – Successful fundraiser enabled purchase of new digital projector keeping the film-going tradition alive. The vibrant live performance schedule continues.

ADDENDUM B
PROPERTY TRANSFERS TABLE

TMK 4-5-016: 011 HONOKAA PEOPLE'S THEATRE

45-3574 Māmane Street
(LCA 7851)

DATE	BOOK/PAGE	TRANSACTION	COST	LOT SIZE	DESCRIPTION
11/8/1857	Grant Book #4, p. 618	Land Commission Award	$2	11.25 acres	**From *Kalakaua* to *Kawi (also spelled Kaiwi).*** LCA 7851.
11/10/1877	53/125	Deed	$350	11.25 acres	**From *Kahala and Kauakaha, P. Kaihelemoku and Kauakaha and Keawekunahala and Kauakaha* to *Samuel Parker:*** LCA 7851.
1/25/1907	287/208	Deed	$5,000	11.25 acres	**From *Samuel Parker* to *John T. Baker.***
‡9/3/1929	1025/237-238	Deed	$6000	14,300 sq. ft.	**From *Baker Trust* to *Hatsuzo Tanimoto:*** Property where the People's Theatre is located.
*4/2/1941	1630/18-22	Deed	$10 and "natural affection"	14,300 and 11,857 sq. ft.	**From *Hatsuzo Tanimoto (widower)* to *Takaichi and Yoshimi Tanimoto (sons):*** The People's Theatre and the first Honokaa Theatre (the "Old Tanimoto Theatre").
1/4/1963	4391/498	½ interest	$1 and "love"	14,300 sq. ft.	**From *Takaichi Tanimoto* to *Yoshimi Tanimoto and Wife Kikue (Peggy).***
3/29/1966	5296/417	Quit Claim Deed	$1	14,300 sq. ft.	**From *Takaichi Tanimoto* to *Yoshimi Tanimoto.***
9/10/1969	6683/316	Trust Deed	N/A	14,300 sq. ft.	**From *Christian Yoshimi Tanimoto* to *Kikue (Peggy) Tanimoto (estate transfer).***
5/8/1991	#124655	Warranty Deed	$260,000	14,104 sq. ft. (0.3238)	**From *Jeff and Christian Jr. Tanimoto (from estate transfer)* to *Tawn Keeney.***

‡The trustees were O.A. Shipman, Adam Baker (son of John) and builder of the Palace Theater in Hilo, and Samuel Spencer, who owned the Spencer Tract.

*Takaichi was a temporary resident in Niho Machi, Hiroshima Shi, Japan, while Yoshimi resided in Hawaii. Census data reveals that Takaichi left the scene by 1940, and likely went back to Japan. In addition to selling the two theaters to his sons, Hatsuzo also sold his sons the lots on the mauka side of the street which included the Old Tanimoto Theatre (called the Honokaa Theatre), and two other lots consisting of 17,480 sq. ft. At this time the parcels were in 4-5-07: 29 & 19 later to be dropped into 4-5-16.

Yoshimi Americanized his first name.

HONOKAA
1930
PEOPLE'S THEATRE

PEOPLE'S
1930
WEST COAST SWING
DANCE SAT 7 TIL 10
THOR
FRI SUN TUE WED THUR

PEOPLE'S THEATRE

E

PARADISE POST

NO
SMOKING
PLEASE REFRAIN
FROM SMOKING
NEAR THEATRE
DOORS
OR WALKWAYS
ADULTS 6.00
SRS 4.00
KIDS 12 N UNDER 3.00
MAHALO
PLEASE RESPECT
THE NEEDS OF OUR LOCAL
BUSINESSES
AND USE THE PUBLIC
PARKING LOT ACROSS THE
STREET

SAFE CABINET

HONOKAA BOY

SMOOTHIES
COFFEE
TEA
BLENDED DRINKS
ESPRESSO (HOT OR ICED)
STEAMERS (HOT OR ICED)
OTHER DRINKS
EXTRAS
STRAW FLAVORS
POPCORN TOPPINGS
BUBBLE TEA
COMING SOON!

IT'S ON IN THE AMAZON
GIVE US YOUR EMAIL
AND WE'LL NOTIFY YOU OF OUR COMING EVENTS AND ATTRACTIONS

Peerless
IPC
Simplex
MODEL
Simplex
E-7
Super
Simplex
IPC
Simplex

WALTER PIDGEON · ANN
WARREN STEVENS
ROBBY
N · JULIA ADAMS

PLEASE
DO NOT SET
ANYTHING
ON BALCONY
RAILING
THANKS :

DeliCat