



Report to the Board of Education
June 5, 2008

Friends of the Library of Hawai'i

The Friends of the Library of Hawai'i, originally called the Honolulu Library and Reading Room Association, was founded in 1879. Signatures on the original list of members included the names of missionary families, business leaders, clergymen, and royalty. Alexander Cartwright, the founder of baseball, was one of the founding fathers. The first honorary member was King David Kalakaua, who also attended the opening of the reading room located on the second floor of a building on Fort Street Mall. By the end of its first year of operation, the Association had close to 300 members and was raising funds to relocate to a larger space. The Hawai'i government granted the Association a plot of land in downtown Honolulu on the corner of Alakea and Hotel Streets where they built and opened a permanent structure in 1884.

Realizing the need for a much larger structure in which to establish a territorial library, planning began to raise funds and secure a new site. With the sale of existing property, many fundraisers involving the community and the royal family, a bequest of property at the corner of Punchbowl and South King Street, and a grant of \$100,000 from Andrew Carnegie, the Friends of the Library and the territorial government opened the Hawai'i State Library (HSL) in 1911.

Mission

Our mission is to “support and promote Hawai'i's public libraries.” Over \$300,000 is raised each year to fund items not covered by the state budget. While not intended to supplant appropriated funding, last year the Friends provided the following:

- Statewide library programs including Fall and Summer Reading Programs and National Library Week
- Special statewide programming including productions of Honolulu Theatre for Youth

- ❑ \$30,000 in scholarships annually for students pursuing a masters in Library Science
- ❑ \$80,000 in grants
- ❑ \$35,000 for continuing education opportunities for library staff
- ❑ \$3,000 for anniversary and re-opening celebrations
- ❑ \$30,000 in discretionary funds

FLH pursues additional funding through outside sources. As the non-profit 501 c (3) support organization for the Hawai'i State Public Library System (HSPLS), we frequently receive bequests which are held in trust for libraries.

The Friends collect books discarded from library collections on O`ahu. These books, along with generous donations from the public, form the inventory for the Friends of the Library of Hawai'i Annual Book Sale. This year will mark the 61st Annual Sale, and it will take place between June 27 and July 6 in the McKinley High School Cafeteria. We also have a small bookstore located in the retrofitted Kaneohe Bookmobile, which is now permanently parked outside the state warehouse at 690 Pohukaina Street. Bookmobile hours are from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. Monday through Friday and also the first Saturday of each month (except during the booksale). Our operations are housed in the front quarter of the state warehouse where we process over 500,000 books each year. Books not designated for our sales are donated to more than 36 different non-profit organizations for their literacy needs. We are also listed on the City's Opala Website for recycling.

Affiliates

FLH has affiliates at 28 of the 51 public libraries in Hawai'i. One of our goals is to have an affiliate at each library in the state. Having a Friends group at a library is similar to having an active PTA at a school. The group is there to provide support for the staff as they strive to provide the best possible collections, programs and services for their patrons.

We are proud of the many years and many ways we have supported HSPLS and its staff members, and look forward to many more creative, productive years to come.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak to you this afternoon, and if there are any questions I will do my best to answer them for you.

Byrde Cestare
Executive Director
Friends of the Library of Hawai'i