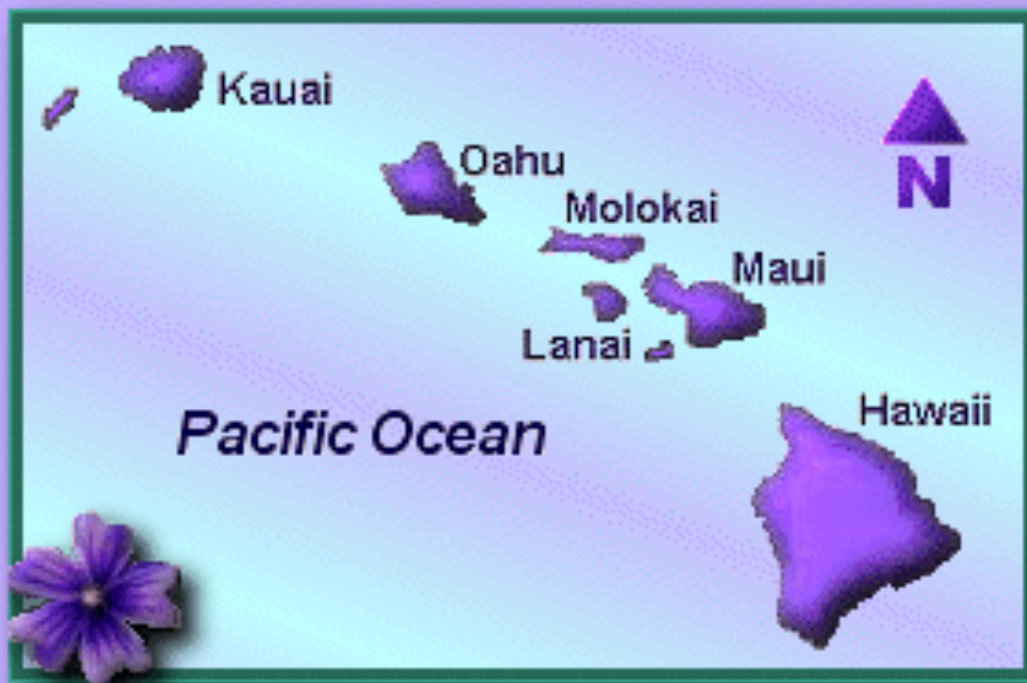




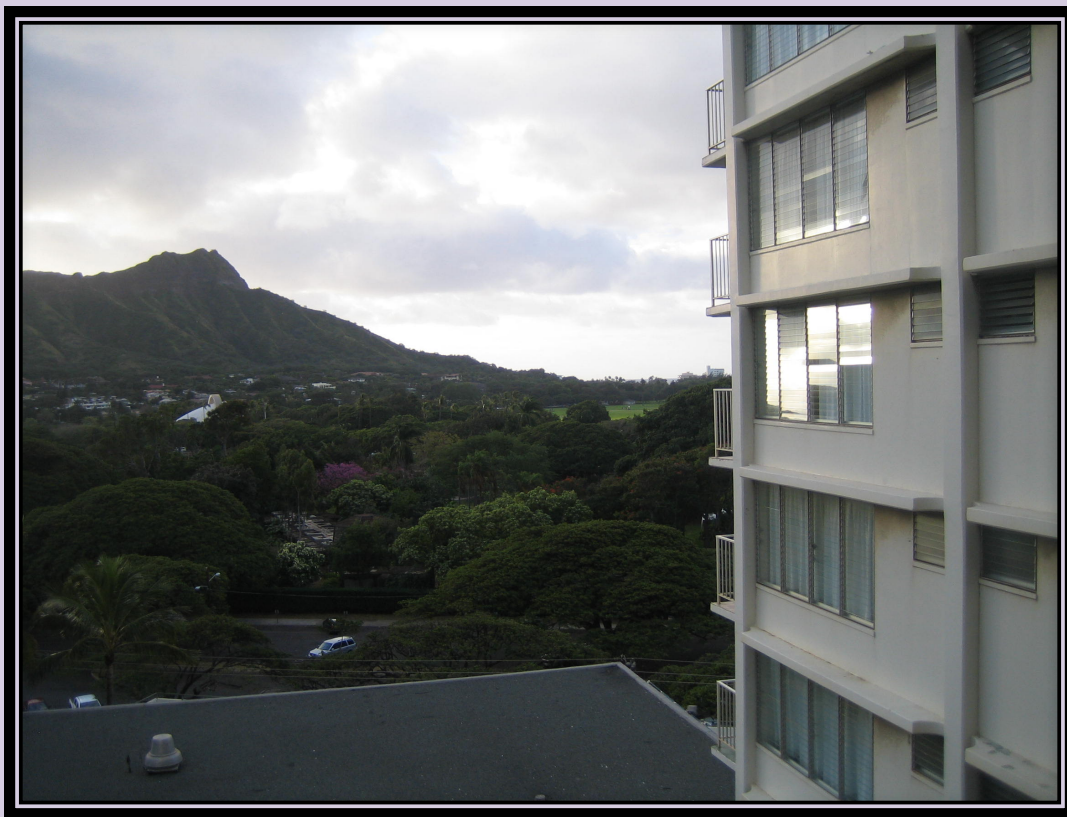
DESTINATION HAWAII OAHU & BIG ISLAND JANUARY 2008



January 2008

Early in January Frieda called to say she was going to celebrate her 75th birthday by going to Hawaii for three weeks and invited me to join her. I had never had a burning desire to go to Hawaii but maybe this was an opportunity I couldn't pass up? A quick check of my airline miles let me know the flight wouldn't cost anything. Yes, I would go for a week in the middle of her stay there. It was perfect...a great trip in every way...and I was so glad I went. Read on...

Diamond Head from our Hotel Room Window



Flew non-stop from Las Vegas to Honolulu in just under six hours.



Took the Roberts Shuttle from the airport



to Queen Kapiolani Hotel (she was queen from 1874-1891)



I left Las Vegas at 6:10 PM and arrived in Honolulu at 10:00 PM—they are two hours earlier than Vegas. Frieda had arrived the day before so she was waiting for me at the hotel - a comfortable room with some



Wednesday, Jan 23.

Walked one block from our hotel to Wakiki Beach—made famous by Elvis Presley in the 1950's. Today it's a mile and a half of beautiful white sand beaches on gorgeous deep blue Pacific waters, full of tourists from many countries. Lots of surfers.



touring

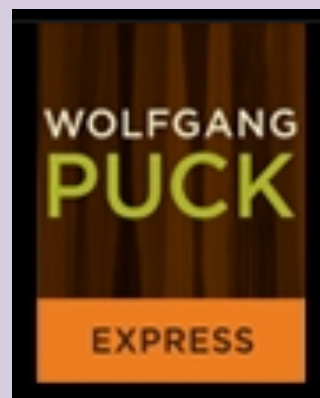
Mall—four levels with 260 shops from Sears to Prada all opening to an open-air setting with tropical plants and ponds. We ate lunch there and spent the afternoon



Interior promenade of Ala Moana Center



Back at the hotel, we took a short rest then went out to walk along the beach. Stopped in at Wolfgang Puck for supper. I had delicious Butternut Squash soup. Frieda had Tortilla soup. On the way out, we met some people from Edmonton that Frieda knew and talked a while. She had heard from Gertrud that they were vacationing here. Back at the hotel...devotions....and lights out at 8:30 PM...it will be an early and long day tomorrow.

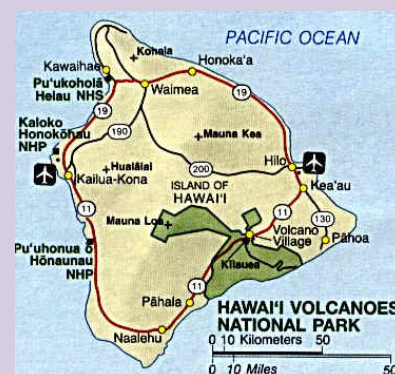


Thursday, Jan 24 - Flight to Hilo



Up at 4:45 AM, shuttle to airport to take plane from Oahu Island (where Honolulu is and where we are staying) to Hilo on Hawaii Island--also known as The Big Island--(a 40-min. flight on Hawaiian Airlines in a 757 with about 130 people—many of whom commute daily for work).

Frieda had arranged for a day tour that took us through Volcanoes National Park where we explored the summit of the famous Kilauea volcano via Crater Rim Drive--an 11-mile road that encircles the summit caldera, passes through desert, lush tropical rain forest, traverses the caldera floor.



Below: Big Island Lava Hill



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)



Left - Frieda on the parking lot of the Kilauea Visitors Center

Right – Waterfall on the Crater Drive



Below left – Crater Drive and Crater Rim



Above & Below – Kilauea Visitors Center



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)



Above - Frieda and Yvonne standing on the Lava flow from Kilauea Volcano. Where you see sky is also the ocean. Some of our tour group walked to the ocean.

Right - Frieda with lava mound behind her.



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

Our tour also took us along the East Rift and coastal area of the Park via Chain of Craters Road. This road descends 3,700 feet in 20 miles and ends where lava flows crossed the road in 2003. I walked up through a lava tube—it was like walking through Mammoth Cave. (See photo on right). We could see the steam coming from Kilauea. Further down the road, we saw Sulfur Bank Trail where volcanic gases seep from the ground, depositing sulfur crystals and other minerals on rocks--stinky!



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)



in front of Bayan tree planted by Babe Ruth on the Big Island

Right - Frieda and Yvonne and
Below - Frieda. We stopped by
a Banyan Tree planted by Babe
Ruth in 1933.

Next to the tree was a cute
little gift shop with native
products.



Chinese Banyan

Wasps live inside the fruits of this tree. They pollinate the flowers which are also inside the fruit. The wasp was introduced in 1938, almost 150 years after the tree, so that the tree could reproduce on the islands. Today the Chinese Banyan (also called strangler fig) sprouts readily even on the tops of walls and other trees.

Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

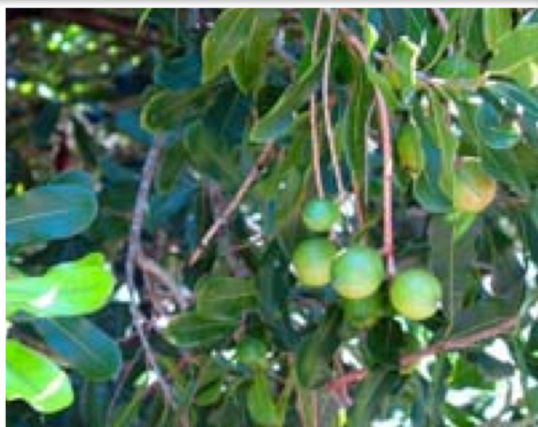


Sweet potatoes are a big crop on this island ,and we ate sweet potato chips, sweet potato cookies (Lavosh), sweet potato salad, etc. etc.



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

The tour took us to visit a macadamia nut plantation and factory where we watched the workers do each chocolate covered nut by gloved hand and enjoyed the free



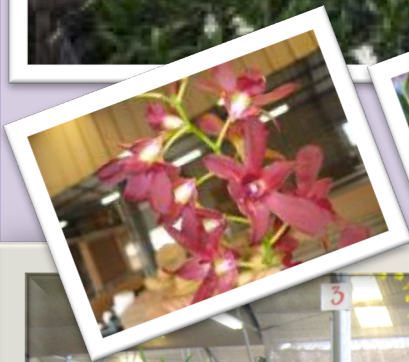
Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

Lovely MuanaLoa,,
known as the
Village by the Sea,
is home to the
Macademia nut
plantation as well
as some sweet
potato farms.



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

We visited an orchid plantation and were given a lovely fresh orchid for our hair. There were orchids of every color and variety.



Thursday, Jan 24, continued (Big Island)

Coffee plantations on the island are a major source of export—Kona coffee being the most prestigious and popular. We passed by some coffee fields but not like the big plantations that were on the other side of the island. Our guide told us that sugar used to be a major crop but no longer. Cattle ranches are growing in



The Big Island is known for its rainy climate as it rains 90% of the days. Fortunately for us, it did not rain while we were there.

The sunsets in all of Hawaii are extraordinarily beautiful. One of my pictures shows one we saw as we prepared to fly back to Honolulu.



We got back to our hotel about 7:30 PM and headed for Wolfgang Puck. This time Frieda had Butternut Squash Soup and I had the Tortilla soup. Um Um good. It was a long day and we were in bed by 9 PM.

Friday, Jan 25 - BUS TRIP AROUND ISLAND OF OAHU

With no tour scheduled, we had our usual breakfast in the room and took our time getting ready to take on the day. Around 11 AM, with our map in hand, we boarded TheBus —a title given to the bus transportation around Oahu—paid our \$2 fare on #8 and headed to Ala Moana Mall.



We had lunch in the Food Court, then used our bus transfer to board bus #55 and headed to the North Shore - an area best known for its massive waves, attracting surfers from all around the globe.

After about 90 minutes, we reached **Polynesian Village**—one of the more popular tourist sites with reenactments of the various Polynesian islands cultures and an evening program. We walked into the village and looked around, but decided not to pay the \$65 entrance fee to experience the native dinner, exhibits, luau, fire show, and canoe trips.



Friday, Jan. 25, continued, Polynesian Village



Friday, Jan 25 - BUS TRIP AROUND ISLAND OF OAHU - NorthShore

Instead, we used our transfer ticket to get back on TheBus and continue our loop around the island. High School students who boarded told us they had to ride TheBus 45 minutes to an hour each way to school every day. They didn't seem to mind the ride—I guess when there is no alternative, you just get used to it. The ride was enjoyable because we got to see the native Hawaiians and how they live outside the big city.



NorthShore Oahu Hawaii

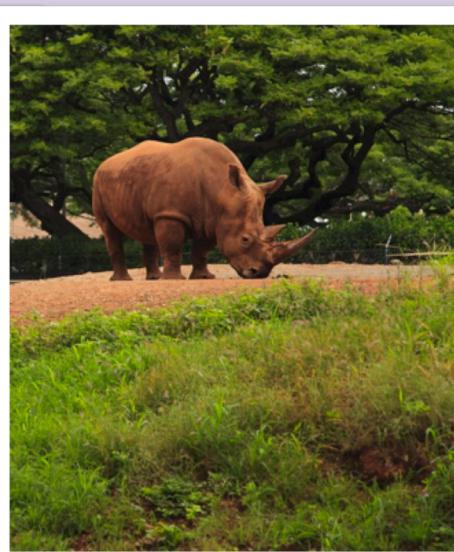
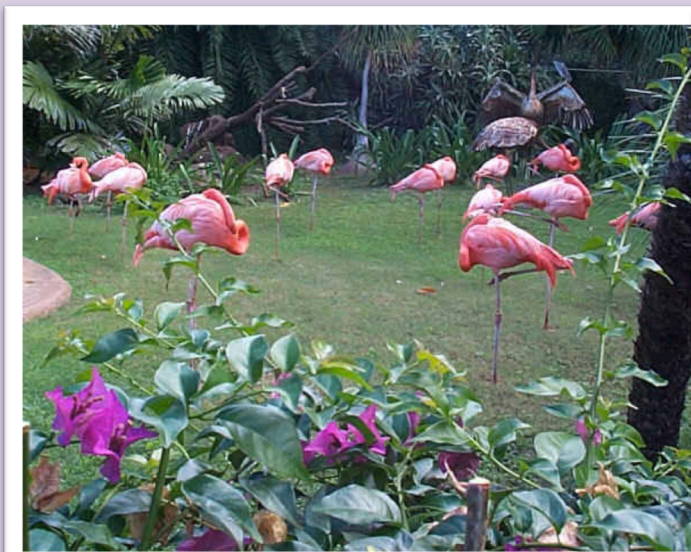


The loop takes riders around the center mountain range that goes through the island. Entire ride was about 5 hrs. and 120 miles. Since we had to transfer buses at Ala Moana Mall, we decided to have supper there. Got back to our hotel around 8 PM.

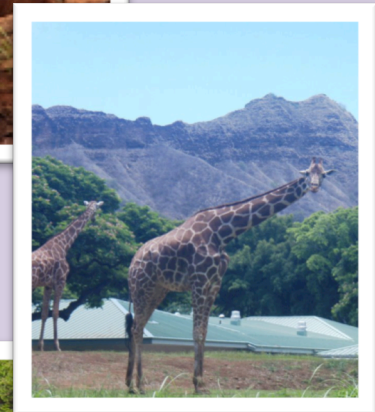
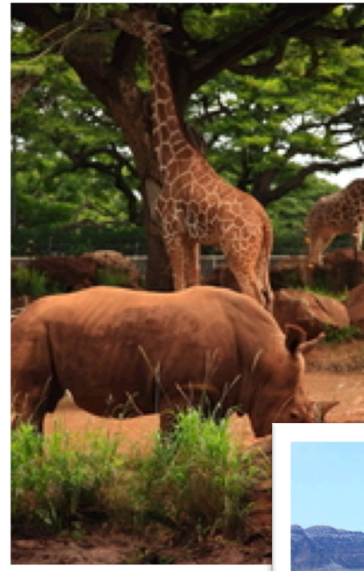
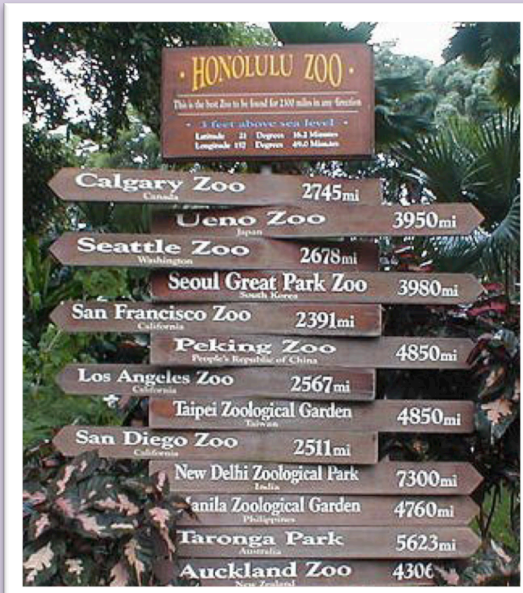


Saturday, Jan. 26 - OFF TO THE ZOO

We were on 7th floor (of 17) in our hotel. Two sides of our room were all windows. From one window we could see the famous Diamond Mountain about a mile away and the Honolulu Zoo just across the street. In fact, we could hear the animal calls from our open window. So today we went to the Zoo and spent the day admiring the flamingos, the tigers, the lion, the giraffes, the zebras, the apes, the turtles, and many more. We had lunch there—very good chicken strips and fries.



Saturday, Jan. 26, continued, at the HONOLULU ZOO



Saturday, Jan. 26, continue, WAIKIKI BEACH

Got back to our room around 2:30 and took a rest. In the early evening, we rolled up our pants legs and walked in the ocean all along the 1.5 mile beach. Nice warm water. We met more people from Edmonton—also acquaintances of Frieda.



Afterwards, we walked through International Marketplace where shops are set up like a big carnival, and then to Denny's for supper; walked back through the Marketplace and to the hotel. We were in bed early again because we had another tour scheduled for tomorrow.



Sunday, Jan 27 - PEARL HARBOR

We arose at 5:45 AM and met our tour early to go to [Pearl Harbor](#) (which, of course, was so named because of all the pearls found in the oysters there. Pearls remain one of Hawaii's most exported items.) Our tour guide gave us the historical setting of December 7, 1941 when the USA battleships were all lined up wingtip to wingtip resting from maneuvers in the harbor nestled between two mountains. Their weapons were not engaged because we were not at war. They did not expect the Japanese planes. Radar was not perfected. They were hit before they knew what was happening..

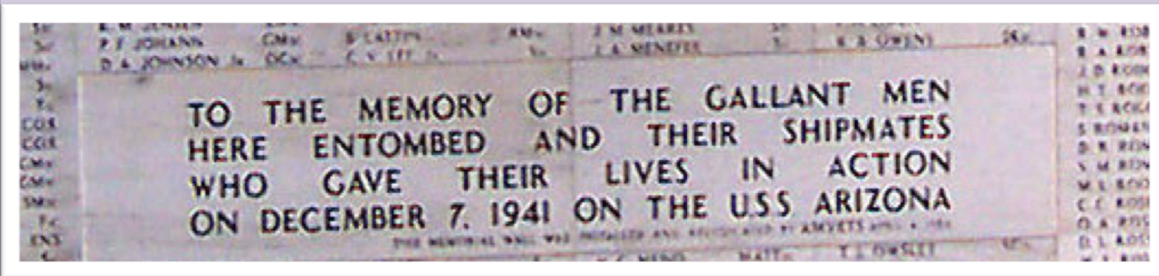


Top photos—looking across the ocean at Pearl Harbor. Middle and bottom photos taken from tour boat as we approached the Harbor.

We were told that rainbows are commonplace there.

Sunday, Jan 27, continued - PEARL HARBOR

The USS Arizona suffered the most casualties and was the only ship that totally sank. Its dead numbered more than 1000 and were left buried with the ship. Today a memorial building stands over The Arizona with a wall on which is written the names of those who died.



ARIZONA WALL PLAQUE
AND WALL OF NAMES



Left and Above,
the Arizona
Memorial at Pearl
Harbor

Sunday, Jan 27, continued - PEARL HARBOR

We also toured the Battleship Missouri which was restored after the attack and fought in WWII and again sailed to participate in the Gulf War of 1991. We saw the Japanese surrender documents and the place on The Missouri

where they were signed
by Gen. Douglas
MacArthur, the Japanese
and members of other
NATO nations. We ate
lunch at a little cafe on
the base.



Sunday, Jan 27, continued - PEARL HARBOR NAVY BASE



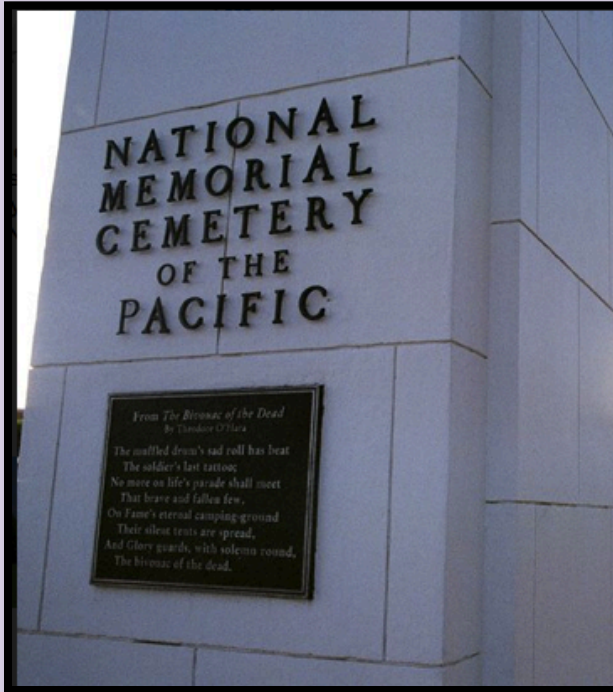
Sunday, Jan 27, continued - ALOHA STADIUM

Afterwards, our guide took us on a tour around Honolulu where we saw the Aloha Stadium (home of the pro-bowl) which overlooks Pearl Harbor,



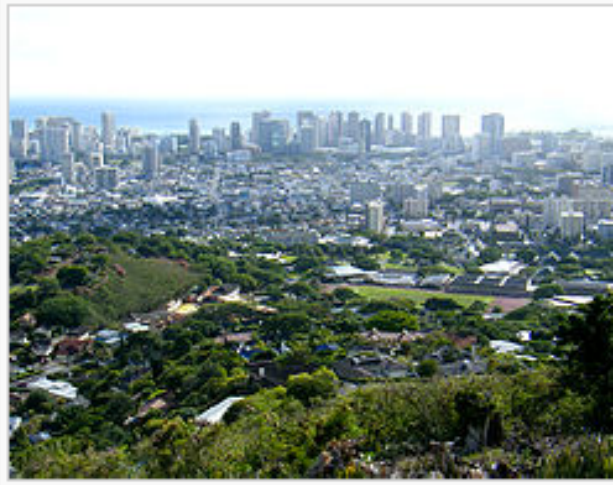
Sunday, Jan 27, continued - PUNCHBOWL CRATER CEMETERY

Punchbowl Crater—a military cemetery atop a mountain overlooking the city,...
National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific



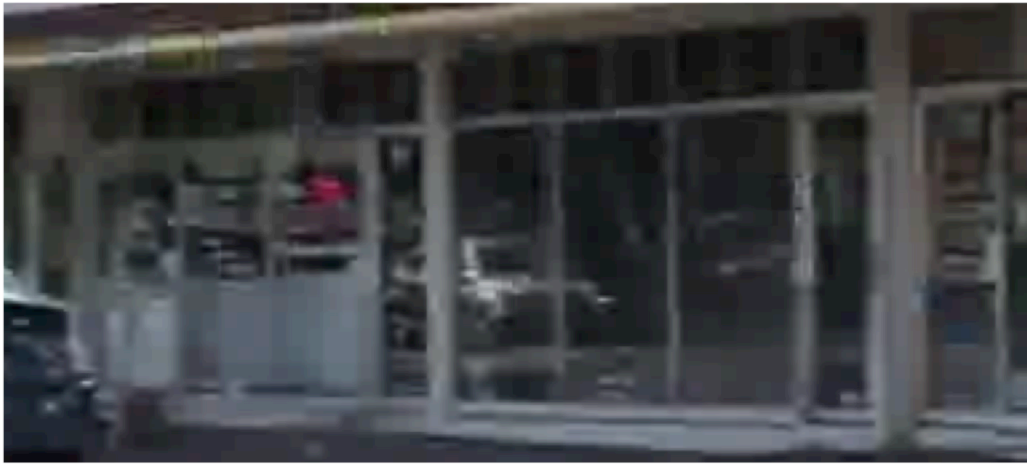
Sunday, Jan 27, continued - HONOLULU TOUR

We drove past the high school Obama attended-Punahou HS a co-ed private preparatory school.



Punahou is situated in the hills above Waikiki and Honolulu

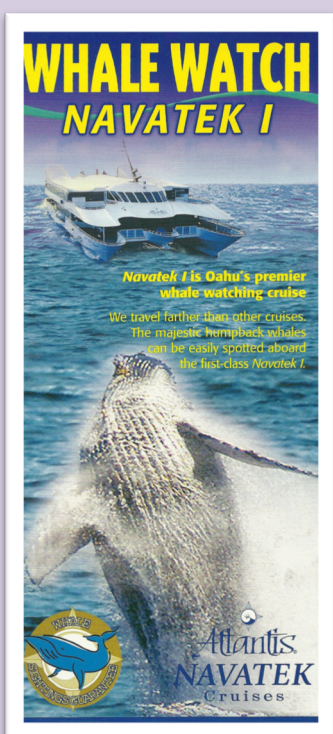
We also saw bounty-hunter Dawg's headquarters in downtown Honolulu—across the street from a Middle School and beside a church.



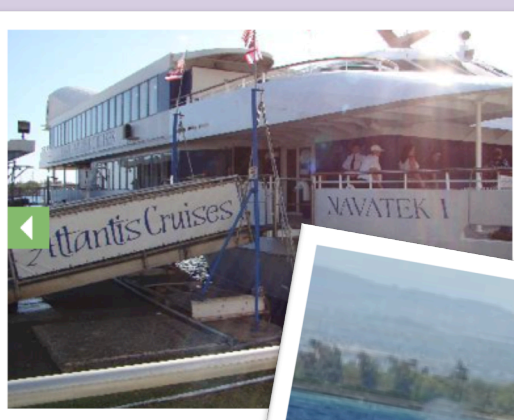
We also drove through China town, saw the capitol building, and various other historic sites. We got back to our hotel around 2:30 and were quite ready for a rest. Later in the evening we went to Wolfgang Puck and I had the Squash soup and Frieda had a salad. Tonight we talked until about 10 PM as we didn't have to get up early the next day

Monday, Jan 28.

Around 11 AM the shuttle bus picked us up and drove us about six miles to the pier where we boarded Navitek 1 to go **whale watching**. There were 150 on board and we were served a nice buffet lunch while sailing out into the bays around Diamond Head Mountain. Whales were spotted and the tables emptied as we all ran to the outside deck to get a glimpse of their tales and their famous hump backs—well, maybe the waves where they supposedly were dovetailing.



Above and above right - our tour and whale watching boat



Navatek 1 – Whale watching ship



Above - a whale!



Right Waikiki Beach and Honolulu from the whale watching boat

We got back to our hotel about 2:30 and were ready for a rest. In the late afternoon we went walking again along the beach. (I neglected to write down what we had for dinner.)

Tuesday, Jan 29

As usual, Frieda and I had breakfast in our room. She made tea for us every morning and most evenings. She had her cereal and fruit. I had my granola bars, and the last couple of days I picked up delicious fresh oranges. Our room was quite large. Besides the twin beds, there was a little table and two chairs, and another nice chair and little corner table, the dresser and a frig.

This was my last day on the Island. It had been windy several nights and today was raining, a cool 67 degrees, and extremely windy—up to 50 mph. (The Pride of Hawaii cruise ship was in dock for the third day and prevented from sailing because of the high winds on the seas.) Frieda and I walked back to the International Marketplace. We had lunch at Denny's, and Frieda went to the hotel for an afternoon rest. I stayed behind checking over all the merchandise. I walked back down to the art store then slowly back to the hotel trying to capture for keeps in my memory the beautiful shoreline with all the swimmers in the rain and the surfers in their glory riding the high waves provided by the wind.

In the evening, we got chicken noodle soup from the ABC store near the hotel and took it back to our room to eat. Then it was 6:30PM and time for me to pack and get ready to leave. I was unable to get all my belongings in the suitcase and had to go downstairs to the hotel shop and purchase a tote for the rest. (When I got home and unpacked, I realized I'd forgotten to expand the suitcase. That's why I was unable to fit everything in! Oh well. I have a cute tote from Hawaii.) Roberts shuttle picked me up at the hotel at 8:30 PM. After picking up 15 others at various hotels, we were on our way to the airport. My ATA flight was on time—in fact it left about 10 minutes early - at 11:40 PM.



Yellow and red hibiscus growing plentifully along the walkway from our hotel to the beach.

Wednesday, Jan 30...Back home.

In five hours and three minutes our non-stop flight traveled about 2500 miles across the Pacific from Honolulu to Las Vegas. There at the airport to pick me up was my most precious 6 month-old little grandson Jack and his sweet mommy Nicole. Yes, I prefer this place to Hawaii. Why? Because this is where God has chosen to put me at this time in my life...and I thank Him.

Reflections. Throughout my week in Hawaii, I marveled at the majestic mountains and seas created when my Savior spoke them into existence. "All hail the power of Jesus' Name." As we always do when we travel together, Frieda and I read passages of scripture and prayed together every morning and night. This week we studied the gospel of John: "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God..." There is explosive meaning in those words: "In the beginning..." And what a better place to experience the products of "the beginning" than in Hawaii. "What a mighty God we serve." He is all-powerful. The rocks and the hills sing out His praise. I was overwhelmed with the magnitude of His greatness.

Thank you, Frieda, for inviting me to share this wonderful experience with you. I am blessed! And thank You, Lord, for giving me the privilege.



Popular "Bird of Paradise" flowers seen everywhere in Oahu.

