

Aloha!

5 August 2006



Photo 1: This is a Blue Torch Ginger found at the Waimea Audubon Center.

Today was another beautiful sunny day in Hawaii. We began the morning with breakfast choices of oatmeal with brown sugar and raisins, omelets made to order, light and fluffy pancakes, and a variety of fresh fruits.

Following breakfast, we ventured to the Aloha Stadium to experience the flavor of the local artisans. There were a multitude of booths displaying wares of festive Hawaiian clothing, handcrafted wooden instruments, jewelry made of both sterling silver and whale bone, fresh fruits, a variety of Hawaiian flora and coffee.



Photo 2: Enjoying the “Swap Meet” are Regina Sumner in the background, Tami Wells on the Ukulele, and Ruthie Hollis in Aloha Wear.

Lois Eppich and Misty Savell spoke with a local vendor who was selling homemade jams. The vendor shared that she was a retired teacher who had sold jams over a period of 30 years to raise money for school supplies for her students. This teacher had also purchased slippers for her students to wear in the classroom.

Tami Wells formed a Sea Scholars band by purchasing a Ukulele, a flute, a rain stick, two hand-drums, an Andean Nation flute, and a nutshell shaker. Mary Ruch entertained us with a rowdy rendition of “Ukulele Lady” while we waited on the rest of the team to finish buying local crafts. The teachers aboard the ship will later play these instruments at a barbeque on the fantail. A name for the band is in the works!



Photo 3: A collection of Tami’s new instruments is displayed above.

We returned to the ship for lunch. The choices were: Grilled Cheeseburgers or Chicken Cordon Bleu, with an Assortment of Vegetables, a Fresh Salad Bar, and Split Pea Soup.



Photo 4: Joan Turner is standing behind the entrance sign to the trail.



Photo 5: This steep incline was only one of many!

The afternoon was spent at the Diamond Head (Le’ahi) State Monument in Honolulu, O’ahu. As excerpted from the “Diamond Head (Le’ahi) State Monument” brochure.....Le’ahi is the most recognized landmark in Hawai’i and was designated a National Natural Landmark in 1968. The creation of O’ahu began approximately two and one-half to three million years ago with volcanic eruptions from two shield volcanoes. After two million years of volcanic inactivity, the southeastern end of the Ko’olau Range erupted. These eruptions occurred near the ocean where the magma was reduced to ash and fine particles by water and steam. These particles, blown into the air, were cemented together into rock creating tuff cones. Le’ahi is believed to have been created approximately 300,000 years ago during a single, brief eruption. In the late 1700s, western explorers visited Le’ahi and mistook the calcite crystals in the rocks on the slope of the crater for diamonds. Thus, the name Diamond Head came into common usage.

The trail to the summit of Le’ahi was constructed in 1908 as part of the U.S. Army Coastal Artillery defense system. Entering the crater from Fort Ruger, through the Kapahulu Tunnel, the trail scaled the steep interior western slopes of the crater to the summit. The dirt trail, with numerous switchbacks, was designed for mule and foot traffic. The mules hauled materials on this trail for the construction of Fire Control Station Diamond Head located at the summit. Other materials were hoisted from the crater floor by a winch and cable to a point along the trail. The Kahala Tunnel was built in the 1940s and is the public entrance to the crater.



Photo 6: This photograph was taken before the hike to the Diamond Head summit.

We prepared for the strenuous hike with bottles of water and appropriate footwear. The trail was less than one mile (0.8 miles or 1.3 km) one-way and we climbed 560 feet (171 m) from the crater floor. The trail followed an uneven and steep terrain. One portion of the trail was a stairway to heaven, leading to beautiful sights above.



Photo 7: This stairway had 99 steep stairs to climb.

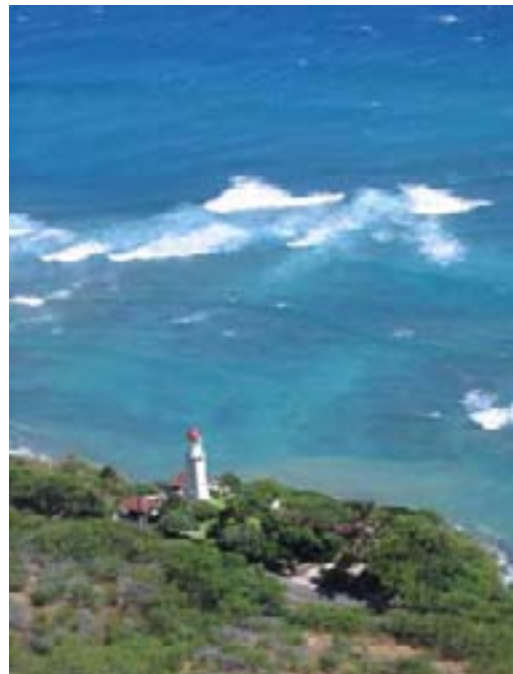


Photo 8: This view from the summit is Diamond Head Lighthouse.

The view from the summit was more than breathtaking, not only because we were “out of breath” from the steep climb but due to the colors of the water, ranging from teal blue to deep cobalt. The waves gently rolled to shore, which was lined with very affordable housing (wink, wink).



Photo 9: This photograph of the 2006 Sea Scholars was taken at the Diamond Head summit with Waikiki Beach in the background.

The hike was steep and extremely warm, and for those of us who live at sea level it was strenuous, but totally worth the climb!

After the hike, we drove to the Princess Kapiolani Hotel and met with Senior NAVOCEANO Representative, Jim Newman. From the hotel, we walked to the International Market with our first stop being the Crazy Shirts shop. The shirts in this shop are dyed from various products, including hemp, money, chocolate, coffee, volcanic ash, and the hibiscus flower.



Photo 10: This view of Diamond Head was taken from the restaurant on Waikiki Beach.

We dined at the Royal Hawaiian Hotel's Surf Restaurant located on the beach of Waikiki. We tasted a variety of appetizers and entrees, from Diamond Head nachos, to coconut shrimp, to raw oysters, and "fire mountain" hot wings.

All in all, it was a long, healthy day with our shop-till-you-drop attitude this morning, to our approximately two-mile hike, "straight up" this afternoon. And, we look forward to the next two weeks of experiential learning, being just as rewarding!

Aloha from Regina Sumner and Joan Turner!