

# Chinese Historic Sites 1989

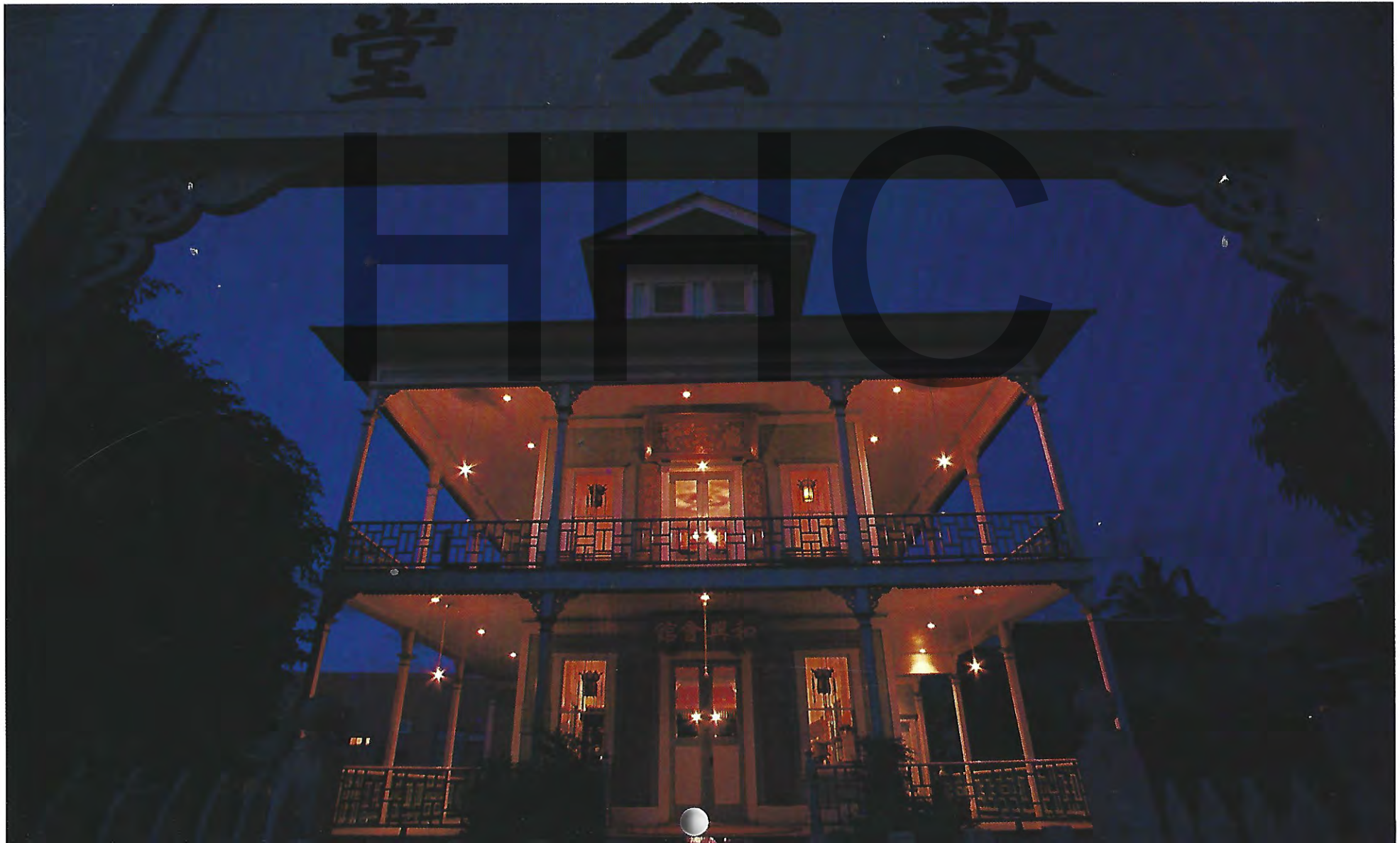
STATE OF HAWAII



DEPARTMENT OF LAND AND NATURAL RESOURCES



THE YEAR OF THE CHINESE



## Hawai'i's Historic Sites Inventory

For Hawai'i the preservation of our historic and cultural sites is a vital public concern. To endure, a society or an ethnic group must pass on its distinguishing attributes from one generation to the next. Such attributes are the essence of cultural heritage. The memory of an event or person, the perception of a shared identity, and physical remains all are evidence of cultural heritage, and all are worthy of preservation.

Since culture is essentially abstract, the approaches to its conservation often rely on the recognition of cultural expression, the overt evidence of cultural identity. However, it is helpful to recognize two forms of cultural identity. The tangible portion of our cultural heritage consists of such items as artifacts and buildings. The intangible aspects would include tales, values, beliefs and language. Both of these categories are found in every item. To fully understand the significance of a society hall, for example, we should consider its traditional intangible associations — the process by which it was made, the reason why it was made, and the functions it served within the community.

The State of Hawai'i under the Department of Land and Natural Resources is undertaking an on-going statewide survey of historic and cultural properties. The Department of Land and Natural Resources' historic preservation program deals only with cultural attributes that manifest themselves in tangible forms. Cultural resources not linked to properties are covered by other State programs.

The State's inventory contains materials on approximately 25,000 sites located within Hawai'i. It is the product of a continuing historic properties survey effort coordinated by the Division of State Parks. Through the inventory, professionals can place in



Wo Fat restaurant, established in 1882, is the oldest Chinese restaurant in Honolulu. The current building, designed by Yuk Tong Char, dates from 1938, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. It prepares food for banquets, weddings and birthdays, as well as everyday fare.

perspective the amount, type and quality of historic properties in the Islands.

The inventory documents specific properties and from this data base decisions can be made as to which properties should be considered for placement in the Hawai'i and National Registers of Historic Places. Planners can consult the files to determine areas where historic preservation concerns exist; other people use the information to help develop education programs and promote the sites.

Should you have any questions concerning the State's historic preservation program, contact the State Historic Preservation Office at 548-7460 or write P.O. Box 621, Honolulu, Hawai'i 96809.



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Governor of Hawai'i

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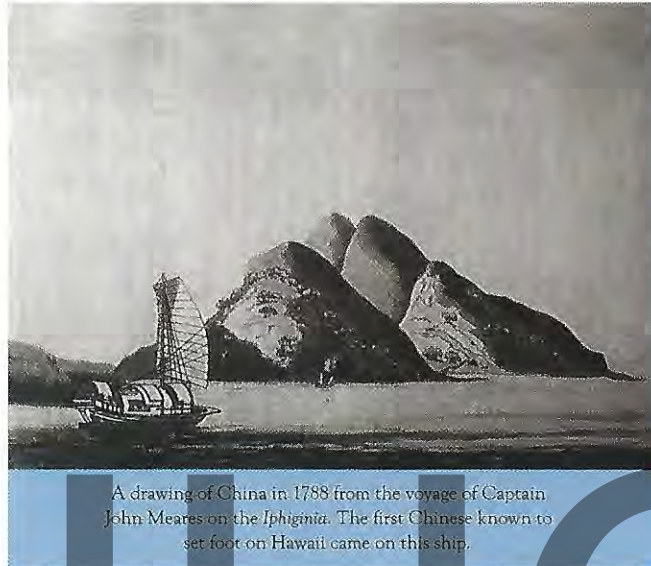
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For 1989 calendar information, contact the Hawaii Heritage Center, 1128 Smith Street, Honolulu, Hawaii 96817



THE CHINESE  
IN HAWAII  
200 YEARS

The Wo Hing Society Hall in Lahaina, Maui, was built in 1909, and is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. Secret societies such as this were formed by Chinese men to provide fellowship and financial assistance to members. The Society and the Lahaina Restoration Foundation restored this building in 1983 with the assistance of a federal historic preservation grant.



A drawing of China in 1788 from the voyage of Captain John Meares on the *Iphigenia*. The first Chinese known to set foot on Hawaii came on this ship.

## The Year of the Chinese

The Chinese have had contact with Hawaii from as early as 1788 when some Chinese arrived on board the British ship *Iphigenia* under Captain John Meares. This ship was engaged in the lucrative fur trade between the northwest coast of America and China and wintered in Hawaii until Spring 1789. In celebration of the 200th anniversary of this early encounter, 1989 is being heralded as the Year of the Chinese.

The relationship between Hawaii and China grew with passing years as sailing ships bearing furs to China stopped in Hawaii for food, supplies, fresh water and repairs during the winter months. It was also a place for crew members, which included Chinese, to go ashore to relax. Tales of Hawaii were told in China and after 1791 when the Chinese learned of sandalwood in Hawaii the islands became known as 'Tan Heong Shan' (Sandalwood Mountain), a name that remains in use even to this day. This wood was an important material for Chinese craftsmen and between 1810-1825, the height of its trade, the monarchy derived a substantial

other enterprises. Another, Tyhune Store (Tai Hoong Wong), sold western and Chinese items and also owned vessels which shipped goods to and from China and serviced their neighbor island branch stores. The Atai Company owned the Canton Hotel in Honolulu.

Among the early merchants Chun Afong became well known for his many successful business ventures. He arrived in Hawaii in 1849 and married a member of the Hawaiian aristocracy. A part owner of the Pepeekeo Sugar Plantation on the island of Hawaii for many years, he eventually sold his business holdings and in 1890 returned to China to spend the rest of his days, a goal desired by most men who came from China.

In the 1840s, some of the sugar plantations were sold to western companies who used efficient steam engines. There was a great need for cheap labor, so the first load of Chinese laborers recruited in the Fukien and Canton ports, were brought on contract to Hawaii in 1852. Life on the sugar plantations was difficult, so at the end of their contracts many workers returned to China or went into Hawaii's urban areas to do other jobs.

and brought an excellent income to owners.

Chinese were also active in the poi industry, frequently growing the taro for their poi factories.

With the increased demand for sugar and rice plantation laborers, the Chinese population greatly expanded in Hawaii during the late 1870s and 1880s, with over 1,000 people a year arriving during this period. After Hawaii's annexation in 1898 by the United States, that nation's labor exclusion law affected the number of laborers brought to Hawaii, but many Chinese continued to come independently as teachers, craftsmen, doctors and business people as well as wives and children of those already in Hawaii. They became settlers and their children received good educations and helped Hawaii to become what it is today. Their impact economically, socially and politically was outstanding and well known.

The Chinese introduced many flowers, fruit trees and vegetables to Hawaii in an effort to have things they were familiar with in the homeland. Coming from

income from sandalwood. The trees were harvested but not replanted, and after 1840 sandalwood was not exported.

Enterprising Chinese considered Hawaii a land of opportunity in contrast to conditions in China in the early 19th century. In 1802 Wong Tze-Chun settled on Lanai and grew sugar cane. With simple equipment he extracted juice and processed the sugar. He decided it wasn't feasible, so packed his equipment and returned to China.

Other entrepreneurs came and established small sugar plantations on Hawaii, Maui and Kauai in the 1820s and 1830s. They also set-up other businesses and stores, and operated their own ships which brought workers from China. Many of the workers were employed in stores owned by relatives. Money earned was dispatched back to China to support other family members.

Among the early businesses established during the 1830s was Samsing and Company, manufacturer of sugar at Waimea, Kohala and Hilo, which also had



The Chun Afong residence which stood at the corner of School and Nuuanu Streets, c. 1890.

Rice cultivation was easier and many found employment on rice plantations owned by fellow Chinese. Often these rice plantations were established on former taro lands. Rice grew well in the islands, and much was exported to California and even to China. The industry continued into the twentieth century

south China where the climate was tropical, the plants adjusted well to Hawaii's balmy climate. People have enjoyed lichees, pomelo, certain species of mangoes, star fruit, dragon eye and others. The Chinese brought in popular lei flowers such as pikake, pakalana and stephanotis. A large variety of Chinese vegetables have become a part of Hawaii's varied ethnic dishes: to name a few, won bok, mustard greens, Chinese parsley, lotus root, and various melons.

The Chinese have become a part of the Hawaiian scene and yet retain many Chinese customs. The Narcissus Festival helps keep Chinese traditions alive for the younger generation and most of the other festivals such as New Years, Ching Ming, and the Moon Festival bring families together and involve food which other ethnic groups have learned to enjoy.

The bicentennial celebration will be a showcase of the Chinese way, reflecting the past and looking toward the future with much anticipation. There are many reminders of the past as seen in the photographs included in this calendar. Each has an interesting story for those interested in pursuing a study.

Two Chinese merchants, c. 1900.



Zhao Wang Zhou uses Chinese brush-pens to make banners for various events. This talented calligrapher is associated with the United Chinese Society, which was started in 1884, and the Chinese Chamber of Commerce, which dates from 1911. The headquarters building for both is located in the Chinatown Historic District.





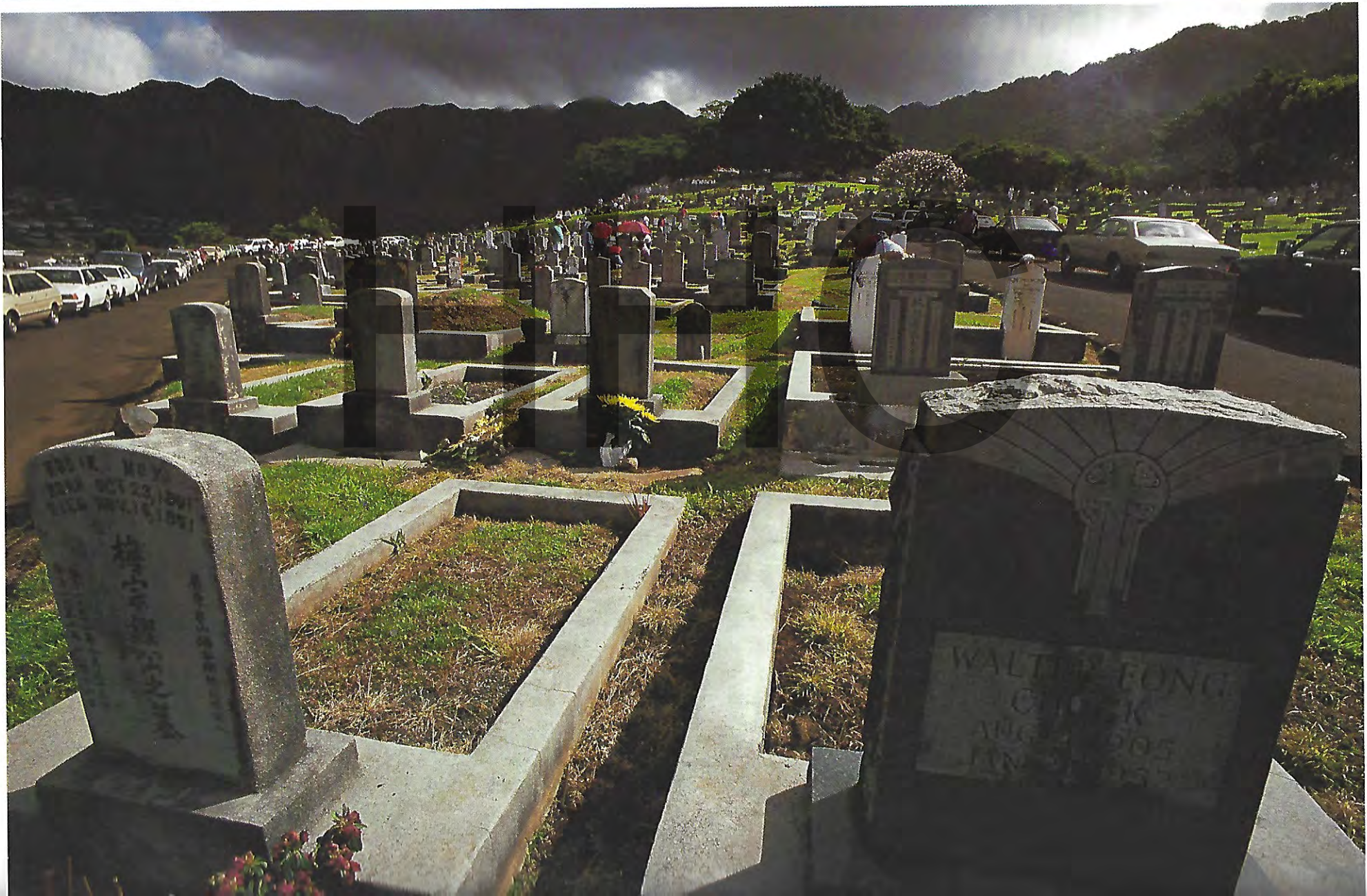
New Years in the Chinatown Historic District is lively when the lions dance to the steady rhythm of drums, gongs, and cymbals. Shop owners invite the lions into their stores and set off strings of firecrackers thus chasing away evil spirits and ensuring a prosperous year.



The Ket Hing Society Hall in Kula, Maui, was built in the 1920s, and was rehabilitated in 1986. Listed in the National Register of Historic Places, it has served as the center of Chinese activities for this up-country area of Maui.



The Lin Yee Chung Association started the Manoa Chinese Cemetery in 1852. A royal charter was granted in 1889. The sloping land, mountain backdrop and ocean vista, are all important considerations when locating a Chinese cemetery. Ching Ming, the season for ancestor worship, usually opens April 5 and extends for one month.





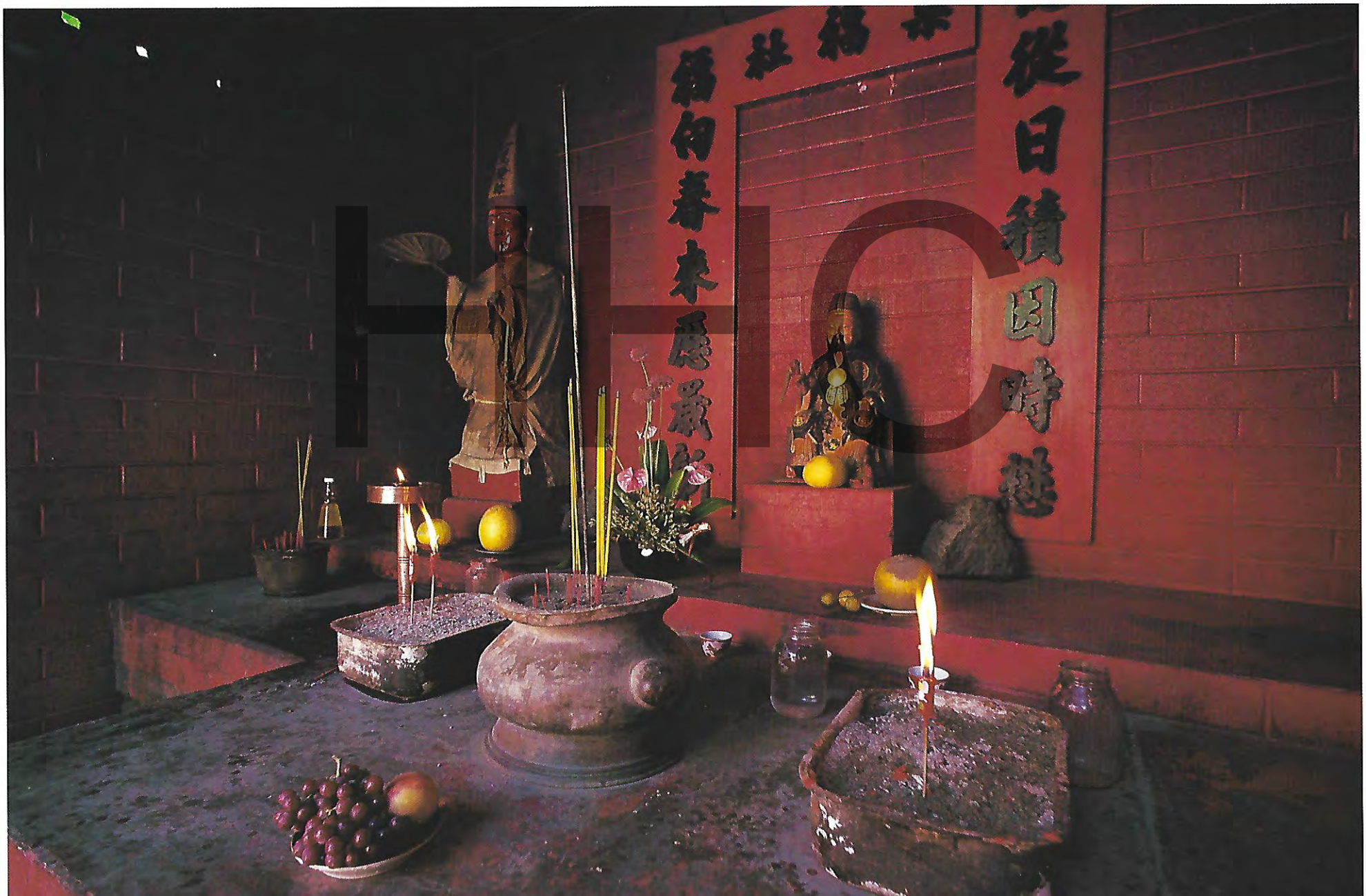
The figurines of the Bhat Dai Sin, or eight immortals, came to Hawaii in the late nineteenth century. Originally housed in Hanapepe, Kauai, they now are maintained by the Reverend Cullen Lum at his sanctuary on Alewa Heights. The six men and two women were people who attained their immortal status for actions on earth.



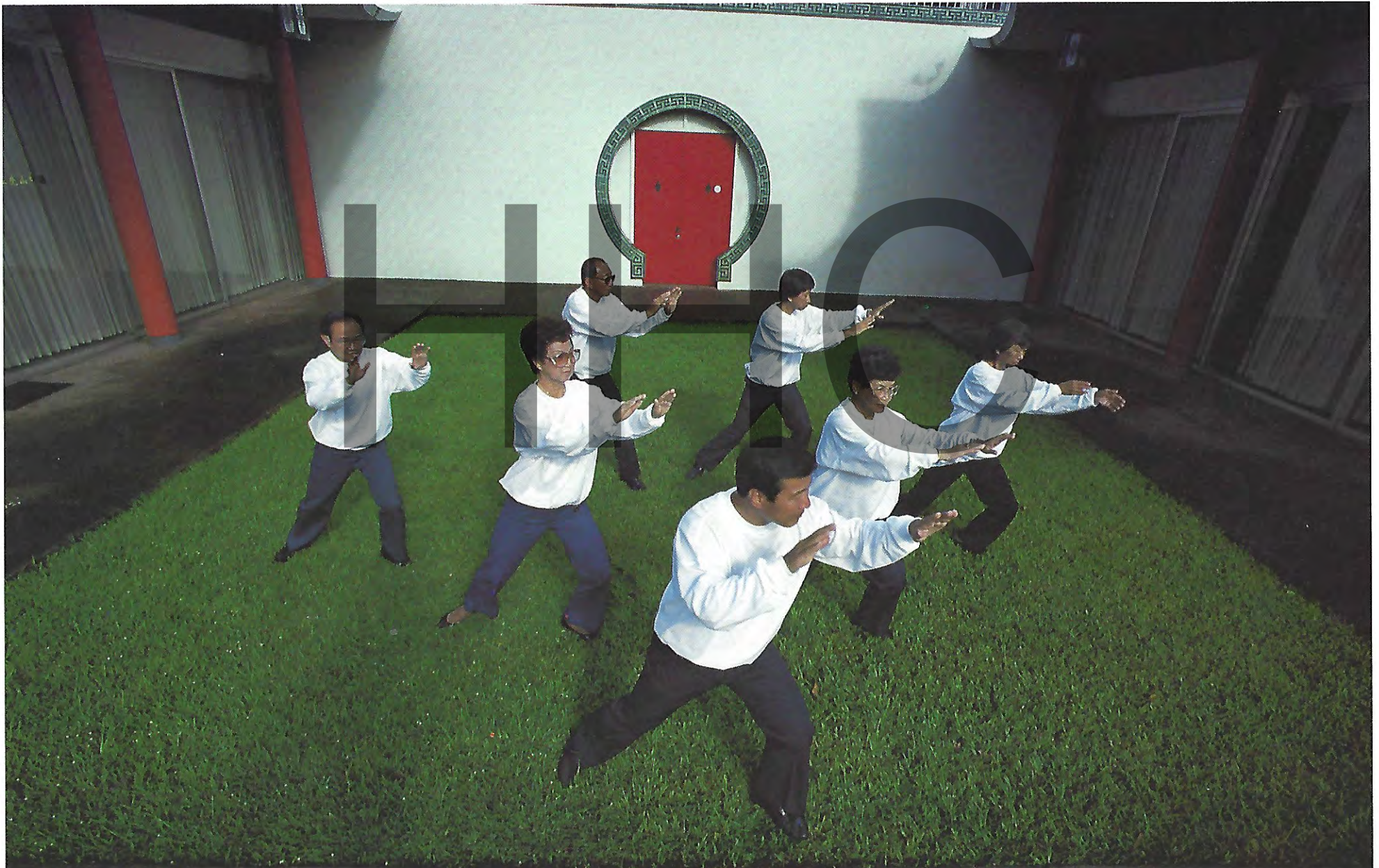
Herbalist and acupuncturist Dr. Setwin Tang has operated Tung Chun Tong & Company in Chinatown since 1926. He is the fourth generation of his family to practice traditional Chinese medicine. Here in his shop, with its drawers of herbs and spices, he measures out an herbal cure.



The deity of filial piety, cloaked in white, stands by the earth deity in the guard house outside the entrance to the Kwan Yin temple in Honolulu. The earth deity protects the temple, its visitors and its inhabitants.



The Coordination Council for North American Affairs forms an appropriate backdrop for the ancient art of Tai Chi. Stressing spiritual and physical control, this traditional form of exercise is still popular today, with a number of classes offered in Hawaii, including this one taught by Victor Young.



The Lum Sai Ho Tong, the surname clan headquarters for Lum descendants, will be 100 years old in 1989. Many worshippers visit the elaborate temple dedicated to the society's patron saint, Tin Hau, which is located on the second floor of the Society's building in Chinatown.



The butcher chops roast pork at Richard's Market, a stall within the Oahu Market. Constructed in 1904, the Oahu Market still remains a retail produce center in the heart of the Chinatown Historic District. It was rehabilitated in 1983 with the assistance of a federal historic preservation grant.



With its pagoda-inspired bell tower and ornate entry, the 1929 Chinese Christian Church reflected the Chinese heritage of its congregation and also met orthodox Christian needs. Its architect, Hart Wood, introduced Hawaii to the possibilities of utilizing eastern motifs within a western architectural context.



Kwan Kung is the patron deity for the Tong Wo Society in North Kohala on the island of Hawaii. The Tong Wo Society was organized in 1886 and its society hall is listed in the National Register of Historic Places. The building was restored in 1977 by the Society.

