

**COMMISSION ON  
HISTORICAL SITES  
1924-1960**

**Prepared  
November 2005**

**Hawaii State Archives  
Iolani Palace Grounds  
Honolulu Hawaii 96813**

COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL SITES

**Table of Contents**

<u>Section</u>		<u>Page</u>
<b>Introduction</b>		1
<b>Administrative History</b>		1
<b>Series Description</b>	Series 201 - Records of the Commission on Historical Sites	3
<b>Records Container List</b>		C-1

## COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL SITES

### INTRODUCTION

Although the Commission on Historical Sites existed only from 1951 to 1959, the records in this collection date from 1928 to 1960. They consist of materials created or collected by the Commission, as well as a few items added to the records by its former Chair subsequent to the Commission's disestablishment in 1960. The records deal with efforts to identify and preserve historic sites in Hawaii, by the Commission itself as well as by contemporary and predecessor governmental and private agencies and individuals.

There is no record of the receipt of the records in the Archives. They were probably in the Archives when the Commission was disestablished, in the custody of the Commission Chair, Miss Agnes Conrad, who was also the Archivist of the Public Archives, and remained *in situ* in the Archives when she retired.

Access is unrestricted.

### ADMINISTRATIVE HISTORY

**Established:** By Act 36, Session Laws of Hawaii (SLH) 1951.

**Dates:** 1951-1960.

**Predecessor Agency:** None. However, some of the historic preservation functions assigned to the Commission date from 1921, when they were created by statute and assigned to the earlier and separate Historical Commission upon its establishment. The functions were transferred to the Board of Regents of the University of Hawaii in 1932, when the Historical Commission was disestablished. Although these same functions were assigned to the Commission on Historical Sites when it was created in 1951, they remained concurrently assigned to the Board of Regents.

**Organizational Relations:** Independent board of five members, at least one from each county, appointed by the Governor per §80 of the Organic Act, who served four year terms without remuneration. The secretary of the Commission was *ex officio* the Executive Secretary of the Hawaii Visitors Bureau (HVB). (Legislation was proposed in 1957 to make the Archivist of the Public Archives *ex officio* the Secretary of the Commission in lieu of the Executive Secretary of the HVB; it was not enacted.) There was a three-person advisory committee in each county, two members appointed by the mayor or board of supervisors and one by the Chairperson of the Commission on Historical Sites. Although there was no official relationship, the Commission worked closely with the larger private sector agency, Conservation Council for Hawaii.

## COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL SITES

**Functions:** To locate, identify and preserve in suitable records information regarding heiaus (*sic*), ancient burial places, and sites of historical interest, in cooperation with other territorial agencies and owners of private historical sites. To transmit such information to the Territorial Tax Commissioner who was charged with mapping the location of all heiaus (*sic*), etc., on the tax maps of the Territory. To recommend, to agencies controlling the land involved, the issuance of permits for the examination of ruins, excavation of sites or gathering of objects by properly qualified institutions, provided that such examination, excavation or gathering is for the benefit of reputable museums, universities, colleges or other recognized scientific or educational institutions. To concur in any construction or improvement which would result in total or partial destruction of any such heiau, ancient burial place or site of historical interest, before such construction or improvement could take place, subject to appeal to the Governor.

**Disestablished:** By Act 1, 2<sup>nd</sup> Special Session, SLH 1959.

**Successor Agency:** Department of Land and Natural Resources, effective May, 1960.

**References:** RLH, 1945, §1963; 1955, §14-7 and §44-21  
SLH, 1921, Act 120; 1932, 2<sup>nd</sup> Spl Sess, Act 9; 1951, Act 36; 1955, Act 78; 1957,  
Act 169; 1959, 2<sup>nd</sup> Spl Sess, Act 1 §21  
Records of the Legislature of the Territory of Hawaii: Records of the Clerks  
[Series 228]: House Resolution 119-53; Senate Concurrent Resolution  
126-59; Senate Resolution 125-59, House Concurrent Resolution 112-59;  
House Resolution 105-59

## COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL SITES

**Series Number:** 201      **Series Title:** Record of the Commission on Historical Sites

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**Date Range:** 1924-1960

**Quantity:** 0.48 cubic foot in one 7.5-inch box

**Creator:** Created or collected by the Commission on Historical Sites

**Physical Characteristics/Condition:** Consists primary of letter- and legal-size original and carbon copy typescript leaves in good condition. Includes a few photographs, folded oversize diazo maps and a few pamphlets and other publications. Thermofax materials were replaced with copies using alkaline paper.

**Content Description:** Consists of minutes and correspondence of the Commission with other government agencies, private organizations and individuals. Includes other materials such as memoranda, briefing papers, narratives, transcripts, invitations and programs, lists of historic sites and background materials on *de facto* predecessor agencies. Provides insights into the functioning of the Commission and its interactions with other entities, as well as information on specific projects with which the Commission became involved, such as placing historic markers and plaques at important sites, e.g., at a kukui tree on Iolani Palace Grounds planted by President Franklin D. Roosevelt; restoration of Keaiwa Heiau on Aiea Heights; excavation of Hawaiian cultural sites at Nualolo Kai on Kauai's Napali Coast; and Iolani Palace and Lahaina Restoration.

**Arrangement:** Alphabetical by file folder title; chronological within folders.

**Access:** Access is unrestricted.

**See Also:** Files of Governor King;  
Files of Governor Quinn;  
Records of the Department of Land and Natural Resources:  
Hawaii Historic Places Review Board,  
Preservation Division;  
Records of the Historical Commission;  
Historic Buildings Task Force (M-488);  
Iolani Palace Inventory and Resource Materials (M-486);  
Agnes C. Conrad Papers (U-8):  
Historic Sites,  
Historic Buildings;  
Conservation Council for Hawaii (U-9); and  
Lahaina Restoration Foundation (U-44).

**Prepared by:** A. Hoof

**Date Completed:** November 21, 2005

COMMISSION ON HISTORICAL SITES

RECORDS CONTAINER LIST

Series Number: 201

Series Title: Records of the Commission on Historical Sites

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<u>Box &amp; Folder</u>	<u>Contents</u>
201-1-1	Agriculture and Forestry, Board Commissioners of, 1955-1958
201-1-2	Attorney General, 1951-1956
201-1-3	Bishop Museum, 1952-1960
201-1-4	Bryan, E. H. - Checklist of Hawaiian Artifacts - n.d.
201-1-5	City and County of Honolulu, 1957-1959
201-1-6	Conservation Council for Hawaii - Annual Meeting, 1952
201-1-7	Conservation Council for Hawaii - Sites Committee, 1951-1952
201-1-8	Governor, 1953-1960
201-1-9	Governor's Advisory Committee on Government Organization, 1954
201-1-10	Hawaii Commissioner (and others), 1954-1960
201-1-11	Iolani Palace (site), 1953-1959
201-1-12	Kamakahonu (site), Kailua-Kona, n.d., 1959
201-1-13	Kauai Commissioner (and others), 1953-1958
201-1-14	Keaiwa Heiau (site), Aiea Heights, 1951
201-1-15	Kuydendall, Ralph S. - Papers re Historical Sites, 1924-1948
201-1-16	Legislature, 1955-1959
201-1-17	Maui Commissioner (and others), 1951-1960
201-1-18	Minutes (incomplete), 1951-1952; 1958-1959
201-1-19	National Park Service, 1953-1958
201-1-20	Oahu Commissioner (and others), 1954-1960
201-1-21	Private Agencies and Individuals, 1954-1960
201-1-22	Public Lands, Commissioner of, 1955
201-1-23	Public Works, Department of, 1953-1957
201-1-24	Reports, 1953-1957
201-1-25	Secretary of Hawaii, 1955
201-1-26	Sites - All Islands, n.d., 1958-1960
201-1-27	University of Hawaii, 1953
201-1-28	Washington Place (site), 1959