



Hawaiian Mission Houses  
Historic Site and Archives



MEDIA CONTACT:  
Bonnie Louise Judd  
bjudd@missionhouses.org  
808-447-3916, cell: 808-256-5991

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

HAWAIIAN MISSION HOUSES ORGANIZES A SYMPOSIUM “LETTERS FROM THE ALI’I”  
ON AUGUST 6 AT PUNAHOU SCHOOL

Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives announces “Letters from the Ali’i,” a symposium that will be held at the Luke Auditorium in the Wo International Center on the Punahou School campus on Saturday, August 6, from 2 p.m. to 3:30 p.m. to discuss an important collection of ali’i letters consisting of more than 225 letters from about 35 different chiefs held at Hawaiian Mission Houses Archives. Recently reassembled from separate collections held by Hawaiian Mission Houses, scholars will discuss the content of the letters, and the translation process that will make them widely available to the public. The letters, written between 1823 and 1887, are assembled from three different collections: the ABCFM Collection held by Harvard’s Houghton Library, the HEA Collection of the Hawaii Conference-United Church of Christ, and the Hawaiian Mission Children’s Society. The letters have been digitized by Hawaiian Mission Houses staff, then transcribed, translated, and annotated in a project led by Puakea Nogelmeier and Awaiaulu Foundation, supported by HMH through a grant from the Atherton Family Foundation.

The symposium is free and open to the public. Puakea Nogelmeier will moderate a discussion of the project with student participants who translated the letters and scholars Noelani Arista, John Kalei Laimana, Kapali Lyon, and Marie Alohalani Brown. There will be light refreshments and dialog with participants and the audience after the symposium.

Awaiaulu Foundation was created to train young scholars to understand, translate, and interpret Hawaiian language resources for English and Hawaiian speaking audiences. These words from the ali’i themselves, newly translated by advanced students under the guidance of Awaiaulu, give us a remarkable lens through which we can view changes occurring in nineteenth century life in our islands. The newly translated chief’s letters will be made available to the general public for the first time in September at Hawaiian Mission Houses as part of Hawaiian Mission Houses annual fundraising event and subsequently will be made available online through their website [missionhouses.org](http://missionhouses.org) as part of its digital collection. The symposium is supported by a grant from Dolores Furtado Martin Foundation.

# # #

Hawaiian Mission Houses Historic Site and Archives is located in Honolulu’s Historic Capitol District and is the leading authority on Protestant missionary history in Hawai’i. It is known worldwide as the place where the Hawaiian written language was developed through the collaborative efforts of the missionaries and the ali’i (the Hawaiian royalty) and the Hawaiian people. It preserves the two oldest documented houses in Hawai’i, which were built and used by missionaries in the early nineteenth century, and the largest collection of Hawaiian language books in the world.

# # #