

The Eddie Kamae Songbook



A Musical Journey

“NO KE ANO AHIAHI” DIGITAL PŪ‘OLO

The Hawaiian Legacy Foundation

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No ke ano ahiahi ke aloha

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No Ke Ano Ahiahi

In The Quiet Of Evening

*The quiet of evening is the time I love when fond memories come to me.*¹

Eddie and legendary hula dancer 'Iolani Luahine were good friends. He loved to watch her dance, especially to “Ua Nani ‘O Nu‘uanu” and “No Ke Ano Ahiahi.” One day, likely in the early 1960s, she told Eddie that he should put both to music. Working from 'Iolani's chanting, Eddie composed the familiar melody to “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” that we know today.

As he worked on the arrangement over several years, Eddie began to sense that it needed a bit of an introduction, something to set the scene of what sailors would call out before embarking on an ocean voyage, for that is what the song is about. He went to his mentor, Mary Kawena Pukui, who suggested he meet with former seaman and retired minister from Kawaiaha‘o Church,² Reverend Edward Kapoo.

Eddie would visit him to play music and lift his spirits after a recent stroke. Eddie recalled that their conversations eventually got around to Kapoo's early years as a stevedore at Honolulu Harbor. “Right away he reached over and grabbed his two ‘ulī‘ulī and called out, ‘E nā luina!’ the way he used to hear it when he was a young man, as a ship was getting ready to pull away from the pier and set out to sea. He came alive then, shaking the gourds and shouting.” From his time with Reverend Kapoo, Eddie composed a kāhea³ and worked with singer and musician Moe Keale to introduce “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” on the Sons of Hawai‘i's “Five Faces” album of 1971 as the lead track:

<i>E nā luina!</i>	<i>You sailors!</i>
<i>Huki mai ka heleuma!</i>	<i>Haul up the anchor!</i>
<i>E ho ‘omākaukau e holo aku!</i>	<i>Let's get ready to sail!</i>

“No Ke Ano Ahiahi” is a rich description of a Hawaiian sailor's voyage during the whaling season. The original chant from which 'Iolani's version derived was probably known around the mid-1800s. A version of the mele was found in the copybook of American whaler George Wilber Piper during the period of 1868–1870 when he was aboard the ship *Europa* out of Edgartown on the island of Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.⁴ Piper meticulously transcribed the Hawaiian lyrics he presumably heard from a Hawaiian sailor during their voyage of nearly six years.

However, an earlier version of “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” dates to 1861 from a chant book in the Kalaniana'ole Collection at the archives of Bishop Museum.⁵ The chant comprises twenty-two lines, about twice as many as are sung today. Interestingly, they do not include the typical set of closing “ha'ina” lines that Piper's version has that shows the name (or place) of Pilikoahu. The lyrics of both versions describe the intricacies of sailing aboard a whaling ship, the ice of Alaska and the sighting of America, all bookended by a rushed romantic encounter where the sailor tells his sweetheart that he must hurry off to board the ship no matter the plea for him to stay.

Contrasting with the energy of the whaling voyage description, it is the plaintive tone of the chant (and now melody) that seems to emphasize the first two lines of the song. They describe the author's love of the evening hours when the busyness of life recedes into a special kind of quiet that invites fond recollection.

These first two lines are found together in various iterations in the Hawaiian newspapers. Or, in the case of the May 21, 1909 edition of *Kuokoa Home Rula*, just one line forms part of the lyrics to “Ahi Wela”.⁶ Perhaps, as is the case with other isolated lines of poetry that repeatedly occur in stories or are used in letters to the editor in the newspapers, these could constitute an 'ōlelo no'eau.

Both versions of “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” are rare finds in Hawaiian music history, dated examples of a sub-genre of Hawaiian mele, that of Hawaiian sailor songs. They are also among the earliest texts of a hula ku'i song, which, according to ethnomusicologist Amy Stillman, is a late nineteenth-century genre that combined Hawaiian and Western poetic, musical, and dance elements to form the basis of modern Hawaiian hula music.⁷



In 2000 the song—and its kāhea—served as the melodic backdrop to a moment of reflection for Eddie when he was recognized by Honolulu Mayor Jeremy Harris for his lifetime contribution of music and culture. Hearing the song took him back to when he met with Reverend Kapoo, trading songs and stories of Kapoo’s days working on the docks amid the sounds of a seafaring legacy that still lives today. When Eddie spoke to receive his award, he reflected on the importance of preserving the culture of the past so it may live on in the children of the present and future. He honored his teachers by name—Mary Kawena Pukui, Pilahi Paki, and Sam Li’a—remarking on their persistent guidance in building this cultural foundation.

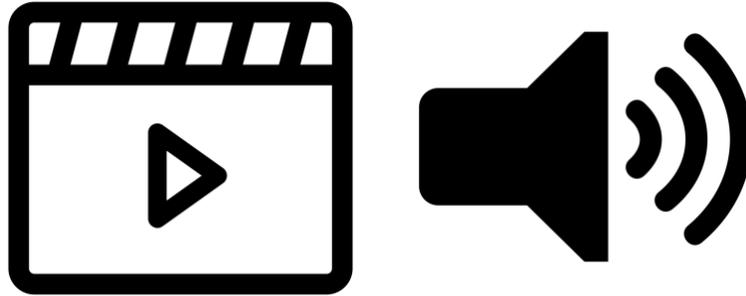
“No Ke Ano Ahiahi” has special meaning to Myrna Kamae. The song was played at Eddie’s celebration of life in 2017 by the Waimānalo Sunset Band, Mel Murata and Ocean Kaowili. When the canoe carrying his ashes was about to be launched from the shore of Kaimana Beach, Kimo Kahoano told Myrna to do the kāhea. “You have to do it,” he said. After the kāhea and “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” they got in the canoes to accompany Eddie on his next journey.

1. Translation of first two lines in verse 1 of “No Ke Ano Ahiahi.”
2. Kamae, “Eddie Kamae’s Notecard about the Introduction for No Ke Ano Ahiahi” (n.d.), Hawaiian Legacy Foundation archive.
3. A call to announce the first lines of a stanza typically in the context of hula, Pukui and Elbert, *Hawaiian Dictionary*, 111.
4. The copybook and other articles from the *Europa* currently reside in the Kendall Collection at the New Bedford Whaling Museum in Massachusetts, Stuart M. Frank, “No Ke Ano Ahiahi: A ‘Lost’ Hawaiian Narrative Ballad,” *Mains’l Haul: A Journal of Pacific Maritime* 38, no. 3 (2002): 22–27.
5. “No Ke Ano Ahiahi Ke Aloha / I Ka Halialia Ana Mai” (January 21, 1861), [Mele book], Kapiolani-Kalanianaʻole Collection, HI.M.36, Bishop Museum Library & Archives.
6. “He Kaa No Kauilani,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, October 30, 1869; “He Akua Ke Kane He Ike Ole E Ka Wahine E!,” *Ka Nupepa Kuokoa*, November 18, 1921; “Our English Items.,” *Kuokoa Home Rula*, May 21, 1909.
7. Amy Stillman, “History Reinterpreted in Song,” *The Hawaiian Journal of History* 23 (1989), 3.

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- Stillman, Amy. “History Reinterpreted in Song.” *The Hawaiian Journal of History* 23 (1989).

Video and Audio Resources for “No Ke Ano Ahiahi”



Video and audio resources for this song are on the online songbook page:
<https://eddiekamaesongbook.org/songs/nokeanoahiahi/>



Eddie Kamae and The Sons of Hawai'i (George Kuo, Dennis Kamakahi, and Junior Daugherty) with seventh grader Kealoha Kahele at Ho'okena Elementary School on Hawai'i island performing at the first school program for the film *Li'a: The Legacy of a Hawaiian Man*, 1990.

Photo credit: Bob Fewell
Hawaiian Legacy Foundation archive

Resource material for “No Ke Ano Ahiahi”

Comparative lyrics of “No Ke Ano Ahiahi” by Lilinoe Andrews.

	Piper’s copybook 1868-1870	1861 Mele Index Bishop Museum H.I.M.36	18?? Mele Index Bishop Museum H.I.M.42	Translation
1	No keano ahihi kealoha la	No ke ano ahiahi ke aloha	No ke ano ahiahi ke aloha	I so love the quiet of evening
2	nokohali alia anamai	I ka halialia ana mai	I ka halialia ana mai	When fond memories come
3	ewikioi epualokeoiaia ka hoa iu kane	E wiki ae oe pua rose la Oiai o ka hoa i uka nei	E wiki ae oe pua rose la Oiai e ka hoa i uka nei	Be quick o rose blossom While the companion is inland
4	O kou laholo keia ke lu mai nei napea	O ko‘u la heo keia la Ua makaukau na pea	O ko‘u la heo keia la Ua makaukau na pea	This is my day of haste The sails are ready
5	kiai ui neiikahe leu na niakaeu e ka hae moko	Ke hiu nei e ka hele uma la Ua kau e ka hae ma hope	Ke hiu nei e ka hele uma la Ua kau e ka hae mahope	The anchor is being hauled up The flag flutters astern
6	ao le wau e pa huana ika pohi	Aole au la e pahu ana la	A‘ole au la e pahu ana la	I don’t go overboard when
7	holo ika nia kani	I ka poe heke holo i ka makani	I ka poe heke holo i ka makani	The topsails are flying in the wind
8	Ahia hoopau laina kepeii nei ika lu hihau	A he ia hoopau laina Ke pili nei me ka lihau	A he ia hoopau laina Ke pili nei me ka lihau	And a fish takes all the line* When we are in the lihau rain
9	hau ealo e nele kaeu	Hue ae oe nele kaua la	Hue ae oe hele kaua la	Push off and let’s go
10	Oiai ka moana lipo li po	Eia i ka moana lipolipo	Eia i ka moana lipolipo	Here to the deep dark sea
11	ewaiho o e a huali ho i mai	E waiho ae a huli hoi la	E waiho ae a huli hoi la	Leave it behind and turn
12	ekaupea po no na ia	A kuea pono na ai	A kuea pono na ai	Until the points are properly squared
13	eia kana kani mahope	Eia ka makani ma hope	Eia ka makani mahope	The wind is behind us
14	Anui kahu wilahepeuiwini	Anu ka huila he pae huini la	Anu ka huila he pae huini la	The wheel is cold, a bank of sharp points
15	kauiliki kaihu ehoi mai	Kauliki kaihu e hoi ai	Kauliki kaihu e hoi ai	Southeast heads the prow as we return
16	ikeia o male ailana	Ike ia o Maleka Ailana la	Ike ia o Maleka Ailana la	Having seen America
17	Ma he hau la noali ka	Me ke hau la no Alike	Mehe hau la no Alike	With ice like the Arctic
18	eka we we ihu o ka moku	Ke kawewe i ka ihu o ka moku la	Ke kawewe i ka ihu i ka moku la	Shattering on the bow of the ship
19	A o leauepu nia kiu	Aole au e maliu ana	Aole au e maliu ana	I won’t pay heed
20	ike kaena maiakehoa	I ka kaua mai a ke hoa	I ke kaua mai a ke hoa	To your plea for me to stay
21	ho mai kaihu wali wali	Ho mai ko ihu waliwali	Homai ko ihu waliwali	Bring your soft nose here
22	ehoni kiu ili a kui ai	I honi kuwili aku au	A honi kuwili aku au	For me to kiss and caress
23	ha ina kaino o lohe			
24	A o pilikoahu aikeanu			

*or, And a yard that exhausts all the line

pae=level platform, bank, row, cluster

pae=to land, disembark

pa‘ē=to strike the ear, a distant sound

pā‘ē=to peel as bark

huini=sharp, shrill sounds

huini=wooden pegs for mending bowls

huini=needle pointed, sharp pointed

Sailing terminology

point=a unit of bearing equal to $\frac{1}{32}$ of a circle, i.e., 11.25 degrees. A turn of 32 points is a complete turn through 360 degrees.

square=to place at right angles with the mast or keel and parallel to the horizon, e.g., “to square the yards.”

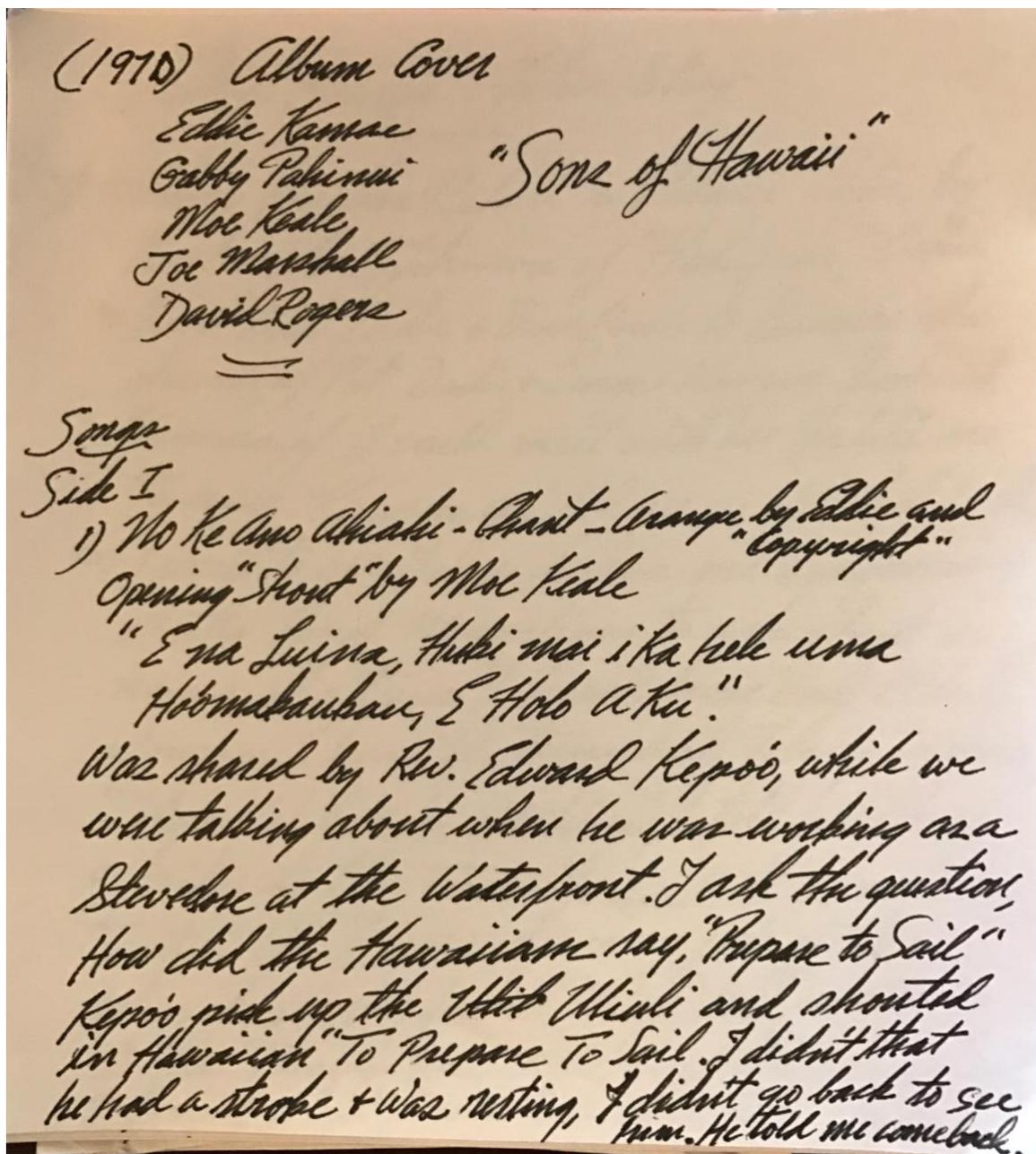
yard=a tapered wooden support from which sails hang

squared away=yards held rigidly perpendicular to their masts and parallel to the deck. This was rarely the best trim of the yards for efficiency but made a pretty sight for inspections and when in harbor. The term is applied to situations and to people to mean that all difficulties have been resolved or that the person is performing well and is mentally and physically prepared.

Note: a compass point is 11.25. If squared, the total is 126.5625 or a direction toward southeast.

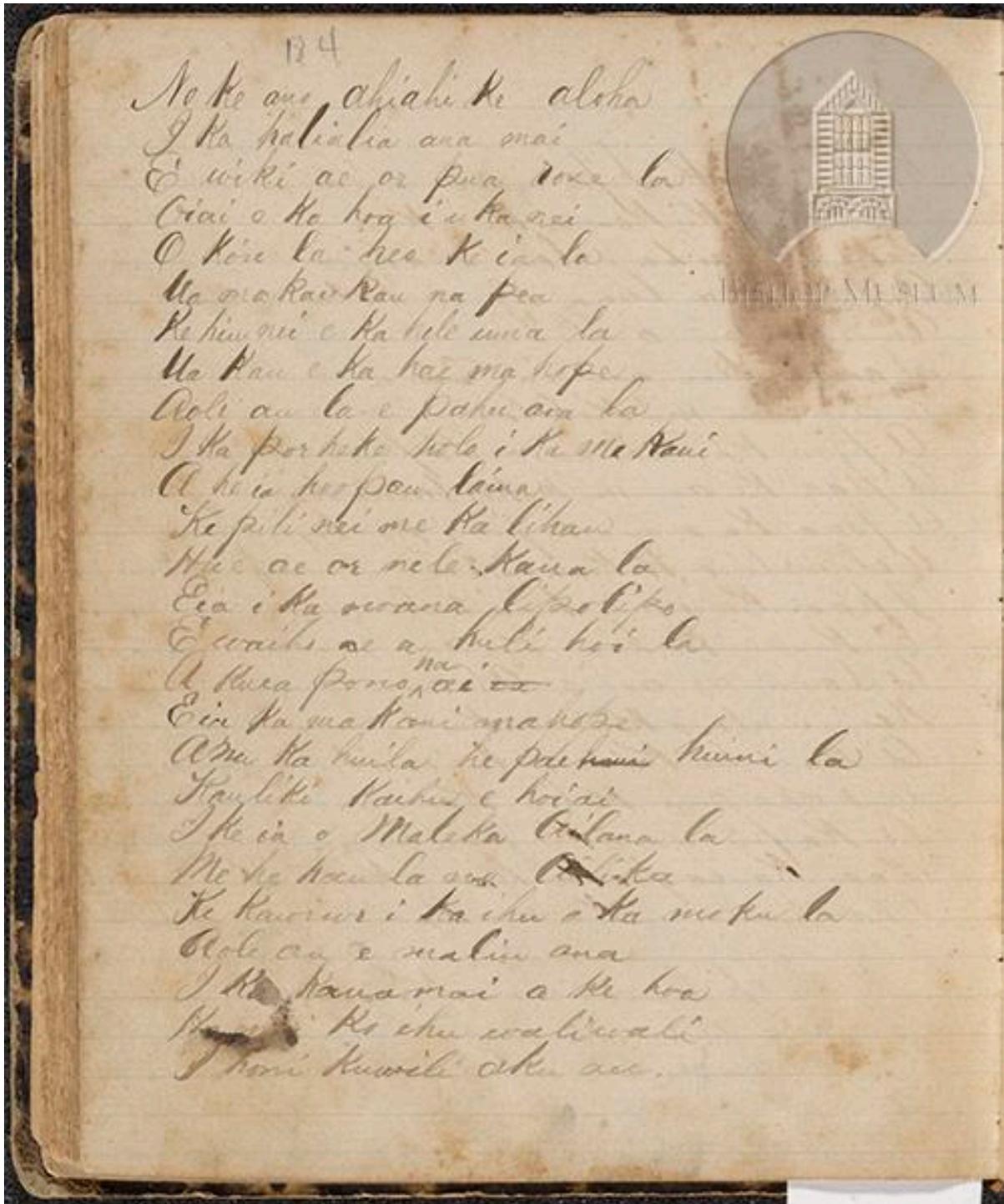
Resource material for "No Ke Ano Ahiahi"

Eddie Kamae's note card about the introduction for "No Ke Ano Ahiahi."



Resource material for “No Ke Ano Ahiahi”

No ke ano ahiahi ke aloha, January 21, 1861.

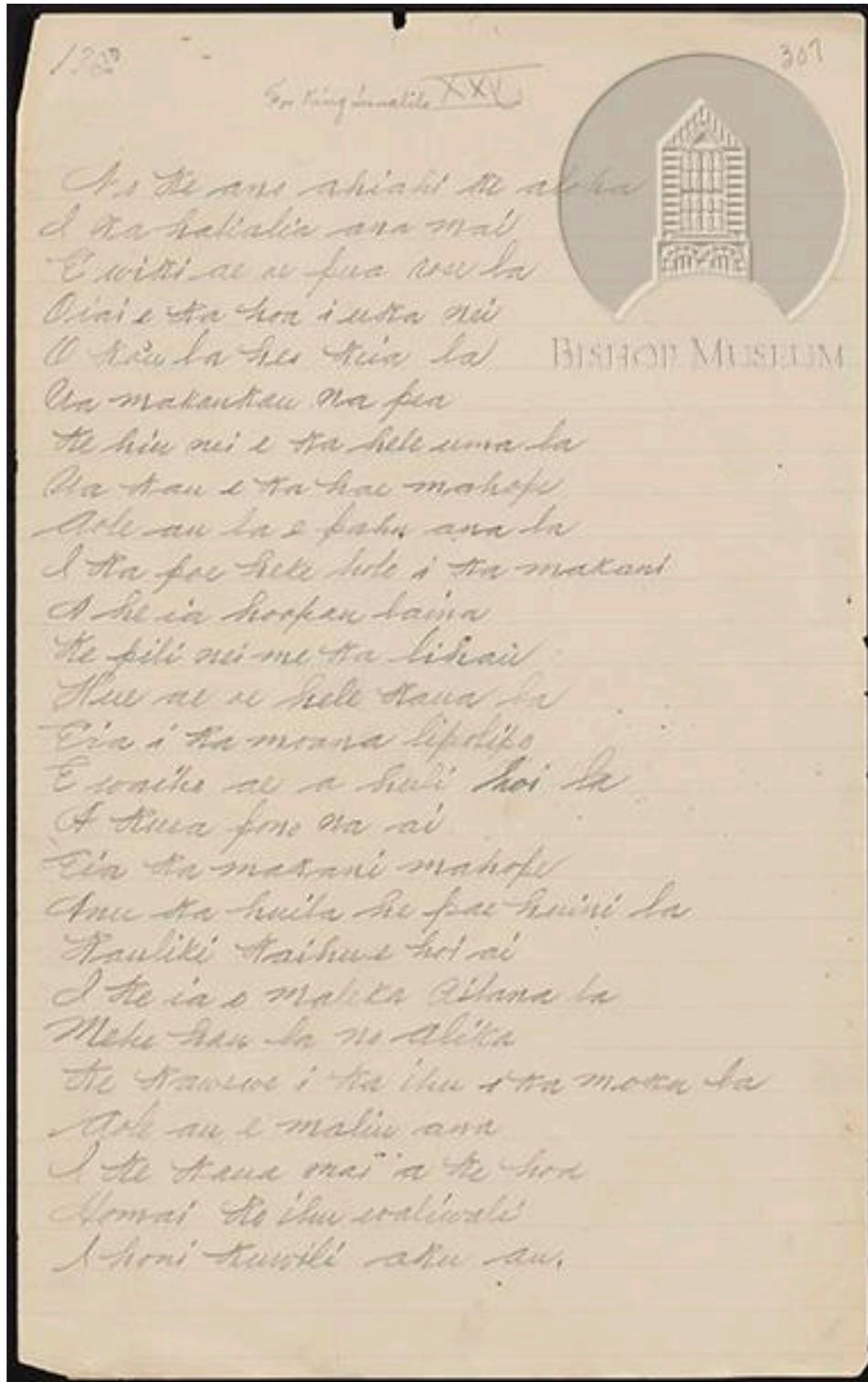


Credit: Bishop Museum Archives, www.bishopmuseum.org.

Original location: H.I.M.36, p.184

Resource material for "No Ke Ano Ahiahi"

No ke ano ahiahi ke aloha.



Credit: Bishop Museum Archives, www.bishopmuseum.org.

Original location: HI.M.42, p.307

Resource material for “No Ke Ano Ahiahi”

‘Iolani Luahine at the University of Hawai‘i at Mānoa behind Kennedy Theater for the National Geographic Society’s *The Music of Hawaii* album, 1973.



Photo credit: John M. Lavery
Used with permission

Educational questions for “No Ke Ano Ahiahi”

To get the most out of these questions and to find the answers: 1) read the song lyrics, translation and story; 2) review the footnotes; 3) engage the resource materials—watch the video clips and listen to the audio recording of the song; and 4) try to play and sing along with Eddie Kamae using the included sheet music.

1. What is the song about?
2. What is a kāhea, how was this kāhea created, and what is it about?
3. Who is the composer of this chant?
4. Research the person who asked Eddie to write the music for this chant. Why was she important?
5. Who was the king mentioned in the song and what do we know about him?
6. How would you prepare to write a song that needs a lot of research?
7. Can you find a simple chant and put melody to it?
8. How are other versions of the song different from this one?
9. If you were a sailor, what would you write about to create a song?

For additional resources and information, visit The Hawaiian Legacy Foundation’s website, www.hawaiianlegacyfoundation.org to explore other songs in the Eddie Kamae digital songbook, find streaming links to our ten award-winning documentary films, access additional study guides and link to hours of digitized raw footage from the films with our partner, ‘Ulu‘ulu: The Henry Ku‘ualoha Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai‘i. Read Eddie’s book, *Hawaiian Son: The Life and Music of Eddie Kamae* as this provides a great overview about Eddie and his journey playing (and learning about) Hawaiian music.

A note to teachers and parents:

These questions are for grades 4-12 and post-secondary; use the ones that are most appropriate for the age of your learners. For each song, a central question is: “What did this song teach Eddie Kamae about Hawaiian music, about life and about how it was part of his journey as a Hawaiian Son?”

Our hope is that these mele are used as core curriculum. The materials in the songbook were written with an overarching goal to make music part of the core curriculum by helping learners see how mele is connected to all the subject areas they study. We also hope that the mele, resource materials, and exploratory questions are springboards for learners to engage with their co-learners, teachers and family to unpack each mele’s layered educational richness.

We are hopeful that these learners will dive deeper into the lyrics, translations and stories by continuing to research in the Hawaiian language newspapers and dictionaries and other sources found “in” and “outside” our libraries and archives.

No Ke Ano Ahiahi

The Quiet of Evening

Kāhea

E nā luina!

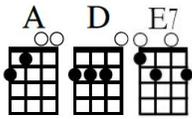
Huki mai ka heleuma!

E ho'omākaukau e holo aku!

Lyrics by unknown author

Kāhea by Reverend Edward Kapoo and Eddie Kamae

Music by Eddie Kamae



Original version

1 Quick and upbeat ♩ = 148

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

No ke a-no a-hi - a-hi ke a - lo - ha__ lā I ka hā - li-'a - li-'a 'a-na mai

2

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

'O ko -'u__ lā he-o kē - i - a lā Ke lū mai nei nā__ pe - 'a

3 8 measure guitar solo*

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

Ke hi - u__ nei ka he-le - u - ma lā U-a ka - u ē ka ha - e ma__ ho - pe

4

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

Hu-li a-'e 'o - e a he-le kā - u - a lā E-ia i ka mo - a - na li-po - li - po

5 8 measure guitar solo*

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

Ka-u a-ku kā - u - a a ho - 'i__ lā (ke) 'I - ke 'ia__ 'o Ma - le - ka 'ai - la - na

6

E7 A E7 A E7 A D E

Ha - 'i - na ka i - no - a o ke a - li - 'i__ lā Noka la-ni Lu-na - li - lo he i - no - a

D E D E A

* A guitar solo is played between verses 2-3 and 4-5 for the length of one 8-measure verse, following the same chord progression.

No Ke Ano Ahiahi

The Quiet of Evening

Kāhea

E nā luina!

Huki mai ka heleuma!

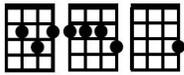
E ho'omākaukau e holo aku!

Lyrics by unknown author

Kāhea by Reverend Edward Kapoo and Eddie Kamae

Music by Eddie Kamae

G D7 C



Transposed version

1 Quick and upbeat ♩ = 148

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

No ke a-no a-hi - a-hi ke a - lo - ha___ lā I ka hā - li-'a - li-'a 'a-na mai

2

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

'O ko -'u___ lā he-o kē - i - a lā Ke lū mai nei nā___ pe - 'a

3 8 measure guitar solo*

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

Ke hi - u___ nei ka he-le - u - ma lā U-a ka - u ē ka ha-e ma___ ho - pe

4

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

Hu-li a-'e 'o - e a he-le kā - u - a lā E-ia i ka mo - a - na li-po - li - po

5 8 measure guitar solo*

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

Ka-u a-ku kā - u - a a ho -'i___ lā (ke) 'I-ke'ia___ 'o Ma - le-ka 'ai-la - na

6

D7 G D7 G D7 G C D

Ha - 'i-na ka i - no-a o ke a - li -'i___ lā No ka la-ni Lu-na - li-lo he i - no - a

C D C D G

* A guitar solo is played between verses 2-3 and 4-5 for the length of one 8-measure verse, following the same chord progression.

About The Songbook

The Eddie Kamae Songbook: A Musical Journey is a compilation of thirty-four songs that played an important role in Eddie's life. Each song is presented in the form of a digital pū'olo (bundle): researched lyrics and translations, a story about the song and its importance, video and audio clips, a music sheet and multiple resources that range from important to fascinating. The goal of this work is to tell Eddie and Myrna's story of Eddie's musical journey and share some of what he learned along the way.

Eddie and Myrna Kamae

For over fifty years Eddie and his wife, Myrna, were responsible for fifteen albums of genre-defining Hawaiian music, ten award-winning documentaries, and curriculum for K-12 learners. While Eddie created the music, led the Sons of Hawai'i, collected stories from kūpuna, and directed the documentaries, Myrna handled the business side of things, co-produced most of their projects and co-wrote several songs with Eddie. From the beginning, Myrna was a formidable notetaker and meticulously documented their work. Together they created the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation to document, preserve and perpetuate the cultural heritage of Hawai'i. Its archive consists of the raw footage from all documentaries, audio recordings, thousands of photographs, and papers ranging from original lyrics, scores, arrangements, notebooks, correspondence, and scribbled ideas on cocktail napkins.

This project

The seed for this project was planted when U.H. West O'ahu chancellor Maenette K.P. Ah Nee-Benham talked with Myrna and found out she was busy pulling some of Eddie's songs to share with musicians. Maenette suggested a songbook and the curriculum to go with it. The majority of the work was done by the Hui Hana, the core project team comprised of Myrna, archivist Kapena Shim, and language and curriculum specialist Lilinoe Andrews. They divvied up the work then huddled together every week in person or on Zoom for two years to ensure, as Maenette promised Eddie days before his death in 2017, that his work would be made available to students in Hawai'i's classrooms.

Kapena began processing the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation archives in 2013. In 2015 digitization began on the ten documentaries, undertaken by 'Ulu'ulu: The Henry Ku'ualoa Giugni Moving Image Archive of Hawai'i located at U.H. West O'ahu. In June, 2018, Hui Hana started tackling the material for this collection with Myrna providing guidance, detail, accuracy, and alignment with the goals of the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation. Kapena served as project director and Lilinoe served as researcher and writer and updated the translations for all songs except for "Kalaupapa," "Kanaka Waiolina," "Kēlā Mea Whiffa," "Nānā Mai," and "Aloha Chant" which was worked on collectively by the group. Together the trio reviewed story drafts, lyrics, translations, original documents, and new research. The last six months were spent editing, rewriting, having the songs scored and thinking about the educational implications of each song.

Resources

The result is a songbook grounded in the rich resources of the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation archive and Hui Hana's research. The primary sources were conversations and correspondence with Myrna and the materials from the HLF archive. Hui Hana relied heavily on James Houston's biography of Eddie, *Hawaiian Son: The Life and Music of Eddie Kamae*, and the ten documentaries as secondary resources. They allowed the team to hear Eddie voice his thoughts about his teachers, the many songs in the songbook, and what he learned about Hawaiian music and life. Extensive use of published resources including Hawaiian and English language archives of Hawai'i's newspapers added important information to the background stories of many of the songs. Additionally, the extensive cross-referencing of newspaper archives, online search engines and databases, and Hui Hana's network sometimes yielded new or updated information that occasionally shed new light on previously published stories.

Original lyrics, translations, orthography, and notes

What is the right or correct version of a song? It is the prerogative of a composer to create different versions of their lyrics or scores let alone make changes during subsequent performances of them to reflect particular contexts,



audiences, or times. One of the most challenging tasks was presenting a standard set of lyrics for each song based on the original lyrics and sometimes several slight variations thereof. Careful effort was made to note where the standard lyrics deviated from what Eddie sang in the accompanying audio sample.

English translations were done as narrowly as possible with attention to specifics and nuance while avoiding clumsy word-for-word explanations. Broad translations that make for pretty phrases in English were avoided to keep the emphasis on the integrity of the Hawaiian lyrics. All Hawaiian words (with the exception of personal names where exact spellings were unknown) were spelled according to modern orthography using diacritical marks.

Footnotes include short-form citations of sources and point the reader to important additional information that did not quite fit in the main body of the text. Full citations are included in the bibliographies.

Our hope

Hui Hana shares this work with a deep desire to perpetuate the knowledge Eddie gained from kūpuna of his time. This is what his teachers urged him to do. It is hoped that by exploring these songs, some of their lessons, stories, kaona (hidden poetic meaning), and aloha will resonate with you. We also hope that by playing and singing them you will not only help this music live on but reflect on your own stories and tell them. For educators, this publication serves as a foundation to create curriculum across multiple disciplines.

While the greatest effort was made to create an accurate publication that honors Eddie and Myrna's stories, any shortcomings, mistakes or omissions that may appear are ours alone.

About Eddie Kamae

Ho 'omau, Eddie, ho 'omau

For Edward Leilani Kamae music was the language of life. He said a song wasn't finished until it brought tears to his eyes. He searched for forgotten songs and reinterpreted them in a style that was both traditional and new at the same time. He used music, and later, film, as a means of cultural preservation, seeking out and sharing the songs and stories of kūpuna as his teachers encouraged him to do. They told him to do it for the children, for the generations yet to come.

His talents and achievements are legendary. *The New York Times* called him one of the most important musicians of the second half of the 20th century. A career that spanned five decades was marked by innovation and preservation, and his passing in 2017 left a mighty legacy in three parts: music, critically-acclaimed cultural documentaries, and an archive of rich materials.

Born in Honolulu on August 4, 1927 to Alice Ululani 'Ōpūnui and Samuel Hoapili Kamae, Kamae was raised in a Hawaiian-speaking home in a mostly Chinese plantation camp near Chinatown and spent summers with his maternal grandmother in Lahaina. The musician who revolutionized 'ukulele playing by bringing it out of the rhythmic background to the solo forefront had his first experience with the instrument when he played one his older brother brought home.

The only style of music the young Eddie wasn't interested in was the one his father asked him to play: Hawaiian, because he thought it was too simple. Instead he picked out popular tunes, Latin music, even classical works on the 'ukulele and became known for a unique way of playing both rhythm and melody at the same time. He played for tips at Charlie's Cab Stand and then formed the 'Ukulele Rascals with Shoi Ikemi. Together they joined bandleader Ray Kinney for a coast-to-coast tour on the continental U.S. in 1949.

Eddie taught 'ukulele and played various engagements to support himself. By 1958 he was a featured soloist in Haunani Kahalewai's Top o' the Isle show at the Waikīkī Biltmore hotel. One night Haunani shared some sheet music with him that would change his ambivalence toward Hawaiian music. "Ku'u Pua I Paoakalani" by Queen Lili'uokalani touched something deep inside of him and gently set him on a lifelong path of studying, researching, reviving, and playing Hawaiian music.

In 1959, Eddie drove to Waimānalo to visit friends and found an ailing Gabby Pahinui. Gabby asked him to stay awhile and play music with him. Thanks to Gabby's gifted and deeply Hawaiian style of playing, the impromptu request led to a month-long musical immersion and an epiphany for Eddie: "I heard the soul speaking and in almost an instant I understood what my father had tried to tell me about Hawaiian music. There in Waimānalo, just the two of us, Gabby is pouring out his heart and the whole history of Hawai'i is in his voice." That day would determine the rest of Eddie's life journey.

Their collaboration reinvigorated Gabby and led to the founding of one of the most famous musical groups in Hawai'i's history that still, after many iterations, continues today: the Sons of Hawai'i. Eddie and Gabby were joined by two accomplished musicians: steel guitar player David "Feet" Rogers and bassist Joe Marshall. Together they made hugely popular albums in the 1960s and '70s featuring songs that drew from traditional Hawaiian chant and music but were played in a distinctive and rhythmically assertive style. Their music became part of the soundtrack to the Hawaiian cultural revival movement, a call to pay attention to the traditional values that form the bedrock of life in Hawai'i—including that of aloha 'āina—values that were slipping away. In 1970 Eddie bought blue palaka shirts—a print popular during the plantation era and one that spoke to working-class pride—for the band members to wear when they played at the Hana Ho'olaulea Music Festival. From then on the Sons of Hawai'i wore

palaka shirts whenever they played. Often the group introduced themselves with: “We are the Sons of Hawai‘i and we are Hawaiian.”

Ho‘omau, Eddie, ho‘omau

During their first gig at the Sand Box in Honolulu’s Sand Island industrial area, one of their regular audience members befriended Eddie. Kurt Johnson loved the Sons’ music and invited Eddie to meet a friend of his mother’s who could help him learn more about the music he was playing. “The most knowledgeable person I know is Kawena Pukui. If you’re serious I’d like to take you to meet her,” Kurt told Eddie.

Mary Kawena Pukui was Hawai‘i’s foremost scholar of Hawaiian culture, a living treasure of cultural knowledge. A linguist, translator, genealogist, composer, kumu hula, and storyteller, she had an encyclopedic mind. She was author of over 150 songs and chants and author or co-author of fifty-two books and articles. From their first meeting Kawena would become one of the most important teachers and song collaborators in Eddie’s life. She encouraged his library and archive research but told him those alone would not take him to the heart of Hawaiian music. “It’s out there. In the valleys and small towns, in the back country. All those places where we have come from.” She told him to go there to find the songs and ‘ike (knowledge) usually shared among families, something she knew was in danger of disappearing.

Kawena was generous in both mind and spirit. Eddie said, “She told me, ‘The next time you come to visit me, bring your wife for I want to meet her.’ I called one day and asked if I could see her and she said ‘hiki’ and ‘bring your wife.’ And my wife and I visited Kawena the next day. We discussed my research, translated my work. After an hour I told Kawena, ‘I’m going.’ I leaned over to kiss her and thank her. She looked at me and said, ‘If you have any pilikia with your wife Myrna you’re wrong. For your wife will be helping you in your life’s work.’”

According to Eddie, “I’d never heard a harsh word mentioned by Kawena of anyone, all the years I’d known her. Always love & respect. She would say, ‘there’s always room in your heart for forgiveness.’” He added, “my first visit to Ka‘ū I would say, ‘Kawena Pukui sends her aloha.’ At that moment love was shown to me, with great affection and love for Kawena.”

“Kawena is aloha.”

“Over the years I visited Kawena at her home and shared my research. When I’m in the doorway, saying ‘mahalo’ Kawena would always tell me, ‘Ho‘omau, Eddie, ho‘omau.’”

A life-changing trip for Eddie was one he took with Kawena when she asked both Eddie and Myrna to join her in Ka‘ū. They would visit the places where she grew up and learned from her grandmother. At the end of the long day, at Uncle Willie Meinecke’s home in Nā‘ālehu, Kawena said to Eddie, “I would like you to meet the songwriter of Waipi‘o Valley, Sam Li‘a.” Eddie knew nothing about Sam. Kawena said, “He is the one. He is like no one else. This man writes in the old way, Eddie. No one knows how many songs, or where they all are. He writes in Hawaiian and he gives it away, with his aloha. In our time there is no one else like him.”

Play it simple, play it sweet

On Eddie’s first trip to visit Sam Li‘a he drove from Hilo to Kukuihaele and made his way to a wooden house right by the old social hall. There he found the elderly gentleman on his porch, sitting straight in his chair with a dignified air. Wearing a white shirt, tie and black suit, the man with tinted glasses, white hair and mustache said, “I’ve been expecting you.”

Samuel Li‘aokeaumoe Kalāinaina was born in 1881 in Waipi‘o Valley to Malaka and Samuel Kalāinaina, one of eleven children. In 1913 he married Sarah Kapela Kaiwipoepoe Pupulenui and had two children. In his life he had been a taro farmer, a typesetter, a wagon driver, a plasterer, a road repairer and a supervisor. But music defined him. He played the ‘ukulele, guitar, banjo, piano and organ until late in life. He was the organ player for his church



and taught choir with a reputation as a kind and patient teacher. He was part of, or led, several traveling serenader groups, and when asked how he managed his musicians, he said, “Let each and every one of them share their mana‘o, their intention and feeling, the way they want to play their song, and share the way they want to strum along with you. I let them do that and all I tell them is, ‘play it simple, play it sweet, don’t forget the rhythm, and don’t forget the melody line.’”

Li‘a wrote dozens and dozens of songs and gave many of them away as gifts: nāu kēia mele, this mele is for you. With a natural facility in Hawaiian as his first language and the eyes of a poet, he took in the places around him, from pristine Waipi‘o to the urban landscape of Hawai‘i Kai and composed beautiful, thoughtful songs full of aloha for the recipient he had in mind. Sam shared many of his songs of Waipi‘o Valley with Eddie as he did in the old Hawaiian way. Eddie wrote the music for some of them and arrangements for all of them. Eddie felt privileged to sing and perform Sam’s songs.

Sam and Eddie shared a close relationship of four years during which they composed together, recorded songs and chants on audiotape, roamed through Waipi‘o Valley, and shared stories. Mostly Eddie listened. They spent many hours together on Sam’s porch or in his sitting room among his song sheets, books, violin and keyboard. During one of these visits, Eddie asked him how he seemed to be expecting him. Sam explained that Kawena had written to him saying that Eddie would come to visit. If Eddie had found a spiritual father, Sam had recognized in him someone he’d been looking for and waiting to meet. Sam said, “People tend to wait for the right people to come along.”

According to Eddie, on one of the days he visited Sam, he saw a notepad in Sam’s lap. “He was working on a song. He’d written some lyrics on some pages and he tore them off, looked at me, and said, ‘These are for you.’ I said, ‘You give this to your family’ and he said, ‘No, I give this to you with my aloha.’” To Eddie, Sam was a man of aloha.

Do it now, for there will be no more

Like Mary Kawena Pukui, Pilahi Pahi helped guide Eddie on his journey. Hawaiian poet, philosopher, author, and teacher, she was born on Maui and was a contemporary of Kawena’s and other Hawaiians engaged in scholarly work. She was best known for her profound message about aloha at the 1970 Governor’s Conference on the Year 2000 which became a bill signed into law by then governor George Ariyoshi who said it expressed “aloha as the essence of the law in the State of Hawai‘i.”

Eddie was also introduced to Pilahi through Kurt Johnson. Pilahi would often visit Kurt’s mother, Rachel, at her home in Hakipu‘u on Kāne‘ohe Bay to discuss wide-ranging topics of Hawaiian knowledge. At their meeting, Pilahi asked Eddie, “What have you been doing?” Eddie said, “So I showed her some of my work that I’d been doing research on and she gave me her phone number and said, ‘You call me. I live in Kailua. Anytime you want to see me, talk to me, you call me.’”

Eddie and Pilahi would meet up when Eddie had questions about his research or music. He said, “I found her very stern. When she talks to you, she doesn’t smile at all. She just tells you what it’s all about. I like that. She was very generous, very caring, always reminding me, ‘You call me if you need me.’”

Eventually the two would put Pilahi’s thoughts about aloha to music, creating the song “Aloha Chant.” Eddie remembers that Pilahi shared her vision that the spirit of aloha would one day guide a troubled world toward peace. Eddie said, “I liked that. So I did the music for “Aloha Chant.” The two would also compose one of the Sons’ most popular songs, “Kēlā Mea Whiffā” which describes a formerly foul odor at Launiupoko on Maui.

In 1979 Eddie was recognized as a Living Treasure of Hawai‘i by the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawai‘i. At the award luncheon at the Willows restaurant, Pilahi turned to Eddie and said, “Where are you with this work you have been doing for so many years?” Eddie answered, “I am still working on it.” Pilahi then looked at Eddie and said in a stern voice he never forgot, “Do it now, for there will be no more.” At home, Eddie told Myrna what she had said.



Both recognized the urgent truth of her message. It was, in fact, the catalyst that would help launch a second career for Eddie—as a filmmaker.

A treasure trove into the worldview of kūpuna

It began as a small thought, growing over time into an eighteen-year-long puzzle that Eddie wrestled with: how to best tell Sam’s story. Print? Audio recordings? New music? Once he discovered filmmaking he said, “I thought I was just going to make one film. But along the way I met so many people and learned so many stories that I had to keep on making more films.”

Collaborating with his wife of fifty years, Myrna, the pair directed and produced ten award-winning documentaries beginning with *Li ‘a: The Legacy of a Hawaiian Man* in 1986. Their goal was Hawaiian cultural continuity: to preserve and share the firsthand accounts of kūpuna who were passing away and are mostly gone. In each, their voices, gestures, faces, songs, and memories are highlighted against music performed by the Sons of Hawai‘i, narration by Ka‘upena Wong, and an introduction by Eddie expressing what he learned about these stories and himself.

The documentaries about Hawaiian music, culture, language, and history are a treasure trove that takes us into the worldview of our kūpuna with the hope that future generations can learn from them, remember their history, respect their cultural identity, and in turn, learn and tell their own stories. The documentaries are, through arts and cultural education, a means to recover and stabilize the loss of language and cultural identity that occurs with each passing generation.

Eddie and Myrna took the documentaries to schools across Hawai‘i and created learning materials to accompany them. Eddie said, “I try to tell the children, ‘ask your grandparents what life was like, what the sound of music was. What was the lifestyle like?’ That’s what I want them to do to keep this music alive.”

Ka ipukukui pio ‘ole i ke Kaua‘ula/the inextinguishable light in the Kaua‘ula wind

Yet to Eddie, the body of work he and Myrna produced was not measured by accomplishments but by how much was left to be done. Eddie Kamae’s work with Hawaiian culture served as a bridge between kūpuna who shared songs, stories and traditions with him. All of his teachers and most of the kūpuna whose stories he recorded told him to “do it for the children.” So Eddie and Myrna established the Hawaiian Legacy Foundation to “continue the work” of passing on Hawai‘i’s deep culture to future generations of learners.

This collection of songs is part of the ongoing focus of finishing Eddie and Myrna’s work so that the music can live on. In addition, efforts are ongoing to ensure that the irreplaceable materials they collected and created are archived and accessible for educational purposes.

In his search for a deeper source of understanding Hawaiian music and culture, Eddie felt like he was always guided. From locating songs at Bishop Museum’s library to finding old songwriters living in Hawai‘i’s tiniest towns, Eddie listened to and followed the signs that were shown to him. We hope that the stories of his life in music inspire you, and when your signs appear, that you, too, will follow them.

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Ka Pua O Ka Lehua
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Ocean Kaowili

'Ukulele chord charts

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