

Dr. Sun-Yat-Sen First President of the Republic of China



The Families of Dr. Sun Yat-sen and his brother Sun Mei at his brother's ranch in Kula, Maui 1903. Sun Mei and Dr. Sun Yat-sen are standing in the back row, center.

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Maui holds a very special place in the early development of Dr. Sun Yat-sen as an individual and later shaped his vision as a revolutionary to free China from the oppressive Qing Dynasty.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen was preceded in Hawaii by his elder brother Sun Mei (孫眉), who arrived in 1871 at the age of 18. Sun Mei began as a rice farmer, and later prospered as a merchant and a rancher. As Sun Mei's businesses and fortune grew, he sponsored his younger brother, Sun Yat-sen to travel to Hawaii for his education. Sun Yat-sen arrived in Honolulu in 1879, at the age of 12, and was able to witness the modern advances of the outside world for the first time.

Sun Yat-sen was educated in Honolulu at Iolani School for three years and attended Oahu College (Punahou School) for one semester. He returned to Hong Kong to study medicine at the Hong Kong Medical College for Chinese and became a Western medical doctor. On the eve of the First Sino-Japanese War in 1894, Dr. Sun Yat-sen wrote a letter to Li Hong-zhang (李鴻章總理), the premier of China, advocating reform to save China from destruction, but he was ignored. In November 1894, Sun Yat-sen returned to Honolulu and founded the Xin Zhong Hui (興中會) as his first revolutionary organization, thus making Hawaii the birthplace of the Modern Chinese Revolution.

Dr. Sun Yat-sen's first Canton Uprising (廣州起義) failed in October 1895, making the entire Sun family fugitives from the Qing Dynasty. Sun Mei arranged to have his entire family come to Maui to live with him on his ranch. Sun Mei's ranch stretched for thousands of acres near the town of Keokea, which was known as "Kula Chinatown." Sun Mei had become so prominent in the Chinese community that he was given the name "King of Maui." From 1895 to 1911, Dr. Sun initiated 10 failed revolts against the Qing Dynasty (清朝), which made him the most wanted man in China. The only place in the world where he could come to as a place of refuge and respite was his brother's home in Kula, Maui.