

HAWAIIAN HULA GENEALOGIES: THE LAIE CONNECTION

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There is nothing more synonymous with Hawaii and Hawaiians than the hula. As an art form and style, its origins are wrapped up in metaphysical beginnings. But, this paper does not propose to discuss the origin and development of the hula. Rather, its purpose is to reconstruct the hula by looking at some contemporary kumu hula or hula masters, and who their instructors were. As a result, what I propose to do is to create a Hawaiian hula genealogy. I do this with fear and trembling, recognizing that I am relying on memories that are often dimmed by the years, historical records that are incomplete, and family and professional jealousies that often handicap any kind of deep-in-the-field research. Thus the information I have comes from mainly three sources: a) interviews conducted personally with some of the kumu hula, such as Sally Wood, Kau'i Zuttermeister, and Eleanor Hiram Hoke; b) research done by other writers, and shared generously with me, and c) whatever public records were available, either from newspapers, archives, or hula workshops. The purpose of the genealogy is to show who taught them, and, in the process, possibly explain some of the differences in the many hula styles presently in Hawaii. While the present "Hawaiian Renaissance" has created a well-spring of support for Hawaiian dancing, particularly the ancient dances or Kahiko, it has been the hula masters, themselves, who have been the thread that has tied

the interest of the present with the actual performers and rituals of the past. As such, it behooves us all, then, as students and appreciators of the hula to look to our sources, both living and dead, and give them the credit that they deserve.

I have chosen as my model, Sally Moanikeala Wood Naluai. I selected Aunty Sally basically because of her friendship with me, and because of her reputation as a kumu hula throughout Hawaii. In addition to having taught scores of students at the Polynesian Cultural Center for fourteen years, she was also Royal Court Chanter for Aloha Week, Inc., instructor and consultant to the State Council on the Hawaiian Heritage, a Merry Monarch Festival judge, and was for over thirty years kumu hula for her own hula studio.

As an instructor, Sally was known as a strict disciplinarian, and stern taskmaster. Her students were expected to know as much about the philosophical and psychological aspects of their dances, as they could. Thus, Sally was concerned that she produce hula artists rather than dance technicians. This can be partially understood if one takes a look at who she studied and learned her hula from.

Aunty Sally's first major instructor was Lucy Logan Munson who lived in Laie, and whose family were among the first to re-settle in Laie in 1865 when it became a Mormon Community. It might be well to point out here, that Laie was known for its Hawaiian singing and dancing in the pre-Kalākaua and Kalākaua years. Two reasons help to explain this: 1) Laie as a Mormon community did not support

generally, the prohibitions against the hula that characterized other communities, and 2) relatives and friends of the musically talented Kalakaua's, such as Kaiehanu and Nahinu, joined the Mormon Church and lived in Laie. It was into such a musical and hula milieu as Lucy Logan Munson was born. Among her contemporaries either in the Mormon church or in Laie, or both, were Sam Pua Ha'aheo, a policeman, Mormon branch president, and in his later years a renowned kumu hula; Keakaokala Kanahele, Katie Kekaula (also called ~~Nakauia~~) and Luika Pele Kaio.

Pua Haaheo was also the uncle, by marriage, to Kau'i Zuttermeister, and Keaka Kanahele and Luika Pele Kaio were grandparents to Eleanor Hiram. Katie Kekaula was Eleanor's aunt, and Lucy Munson's good friend.

Since these kumu hula were good friends, they often taught each other's students. Thus, Sally learned something from all of them.

Little is known of Lucy Logan Munson's teachers, but Keaka Kanahele learned her chants from Kamawa'e and Niu-o-la'a, who came from the Ka'anapali coast of Maui and were born sometime in the later 1700's.

It was not until much later that Sally, herself, graduated, or uniki'd, under another hula great, Lokalia Montgomery. Lokalia learned from a number of people, but gives credit to Mary Kawena Pukui as her main teacher. Puku'i lists Joseph Ilala'ole and Emma Silva Fern, a Kalakaua court dancer and wife of a former Honolulu mayor, as her kumu hula. Kawena also learned from Keahi Luahine who also

taught Namaka, Kawena's daughter, and Iolani Makekahu, Kawena's cousin.

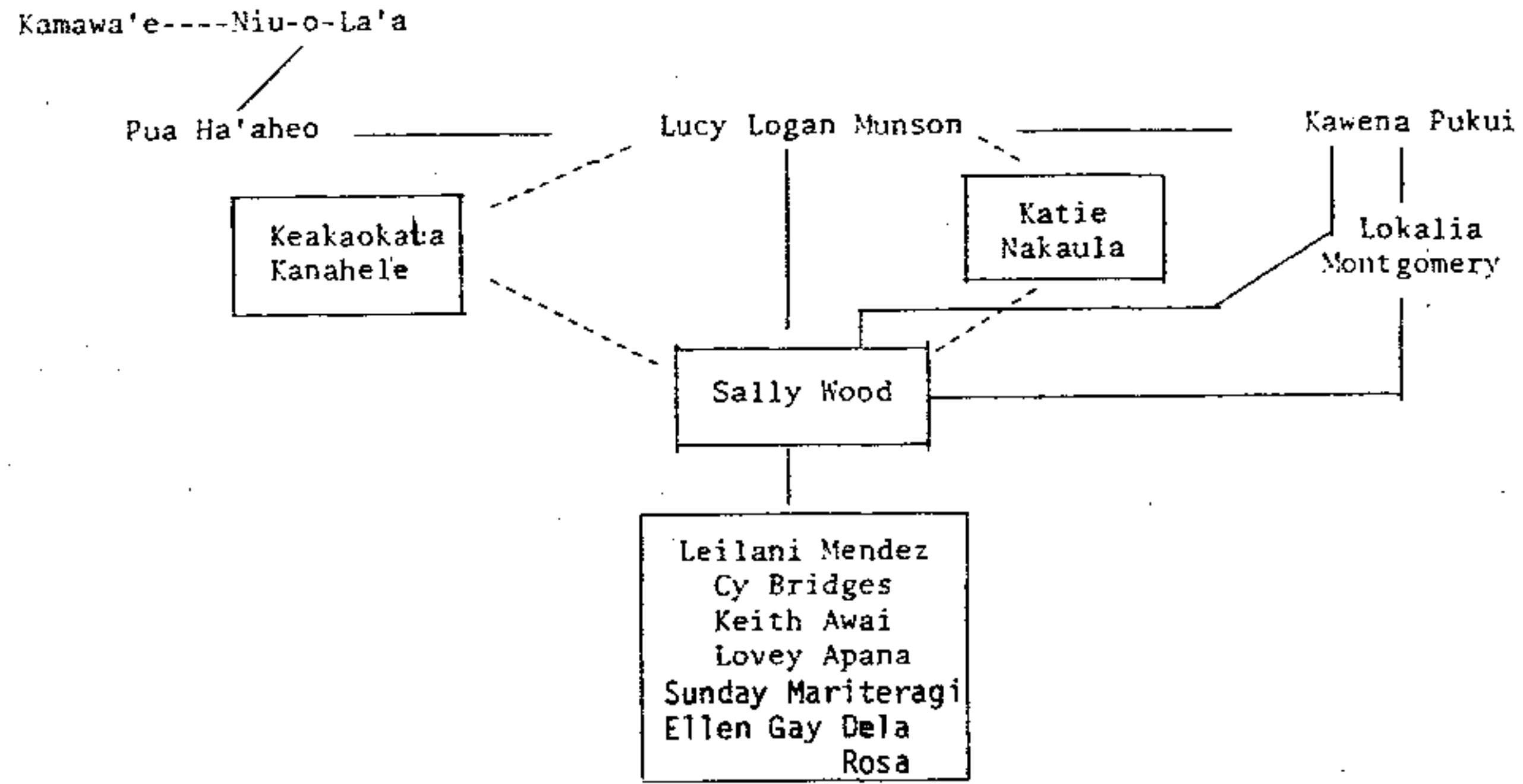
Aunty Sally graduated as an olapa dancer which was the highest form of graduation in the hula system. This meant that she could speak the Hawaiian language, and could compose her own songs (mele) and chants (oli). Graduates at other levels were restricted to learning and teaching the older oli and mele, but did not, necessarily, have the right to compose or to change dances.

Hopefully, what this genealogical information can do, is to help develop in the students of Cy Bridges, Keith Awai and ~~Sandy~~ Mariteragi, and others of Aunty Sally's graduates, an appreciation of the authenticity and beauty of the dances and dance styles that they are learning. There is a Hebrew saying, "if the source is pure, then we can drink deep of the Spring."

Such a source is Aunty Sally Wood.

HULA GENEALOGIES

Sally Hoanikeala Wood Naluai



Mary Kawena Puku'i

