

## **Back To The Future**

**By Les Hirokane, Bev Ikari Baker, & Amy Gushiken Saito '65**



Fifty-two eager '65ers showed up at the FHS Auditorium at 9:30 a.m. on October 27, 2005 for the "back to school" visit which kicked off a weekend of 40th reunion activities. Some took advantage of the complimentary neck rubs and arm/hand massages, and blood pressure checks given by the Health Academy students, while others registered and received unique ID badges emblazoned with photos (oh my gosh!) from the 1965 annual. As J. Akuhead Pupule used to say over the radio, "HC&D" was present. Hot coffee and doughnuts. Yum!!

A well-orchestrated program commenced at 10:00 a.m. with an opening 'oli, courtesy of students from the 'Aha Hui Kupa Hawaii – Hawaiian Academy. The current FHS students are enthusiastically involved in organizations such as the Family Community Career Leaders of America, Travel Industry and Tourism Academy, Teacher Cadet Program, and the Junior Reserved Officer Training Corps (now voluntary, not mandatory for the male students).

While we sat assembled, once again, in the same auditorium from four decades ago, we heard students speak of the different programs offered at Farrington, and thought how lucky they were to be initiated into possible vocations at such an early age.

We even got to meet Mrs. Nishihama, daughter of Mr. Bernard Lee ... those of you from Kalakaua will remember him as the Science teacher who also took our pictures for the annual. Graceful dancers from Island Harmony, two young men from the precision JROTC rifle drill team, and the super energized pep squad entertained us.

In a tribute to our class, senior Shazarae Kaanehe put together a special slideshow highlighting some of our senior activities and current events from 1965. The program concluded with a rousing rendition of our Alma Mater led by a most dynamic and energetic pep squad. Some of the students were quite surprised that we didn't need the words or music.

Following the auditorium program, we broke up into groups for a tour of the school. Basically, the tour was limited to the front façade, but it still invoked pleasant memories and reminiscing. Mrs. Henrietta Freitas' room is now the school store and student activities room.

The amphitheater looked pretty much the same except the bleachers are in a different position. And, graduation ceremonies are still held there – although the graduating class is now probably only half of the almost 900 seniors in 1965. Something we didn't have back then but is very present now is Security. While we had student ID cards, we weren't required to wear them as the students now do.

Walking through the hallway, we heard some reminiscing about the time Dennis Morioka rode the skateboard down the hallway, of guys on detention pushing brooms down the same, and some discussion about where the "apple machine" was located. Those that had to take potty breaks got to use the same facilities that were there from "our time" when certain groups had "territorial rights" there.

The tour concluded in the library. Some of us remembered the old library being on the second floor on the other side of the campus; others exclaimed, "We used to have a library?? For real?" This "new" library is where the old cafeteria used to be – you know, where you used to be able to buy shortbread cookies, and extra sandwiches, and where each of us took a turn working as cafeteria helpers.

In the library, another group of talented future graduates, the T-Shirt Theater performers, entertained us with a fun and thought provoking musical ditty, "Lychee". The library not only showcased these talented young people, it held some wonderful artwork, memorabilia (archives), as well as books.

Finally, the tour, like the "Gilligan's Island" theme – "a three hour tour" – wound down, with a delicious lunch prepared and served by the Food Services students. To accommodate our large group, canopies were set up on the front lawn, decorated in royal blue and white (our '65 graduating colors), with tables and chairs shaded beneath it. A nominal fee was charged for lunch. The '65ers opted to add a little extra in recognition of the quality and service given to us, and also made another donation to the Student Government Fund which sponsors these "back to school" visits for alumni. The tour ended with group photos on the steps of the still unchanged main entrance to the school where many pep rallies were held.

We hope that, like us, the students will remember their days at Farrington and growing up in Kalihi as memorable ones that will form the bond with their fellow classmates as has been done with our Class of 1965. And, hopefully, in the future, they, too, will want to go back, and see what the future has brought since the time they graduated from Farrington.

The "back to school tour" trail blazed by the Class of '54 gave some insights into the present Farrington. Ms. Theresa Ellis, Student Activities Coordinator, and mentor, is "the" force behind the student involvement for these alumni tours. The Class of 1965 simply wants to encourage all to "enjoy the moment" as we did. Our suggestions to alumni classes: 1 - Choose your visit date/day wisely so that it coincides with the existing school year. 2 - Contact Ms. Ellis with sufficient lead time; a few months is ideal, no less than two months since they are busy with their academic loads. 3 - : Bring your business card so you can be invited to a future performance of the T-Shirt Theater.