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**Bishop Museum Invites Community to Celebrate
Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea With Welo Ka Hae Hawai‘i Event**

Honolulu, Hawai‘i — [Bishop Museum](#), the State of Hawai‘i Museum of Natural and Cultural History, invites the community to celebrate Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea, Sovereignty Restoration Day, at its [Welo Ka Hae Hawai‘i event](#) on Friday, July 31, 2026. Now in its third year, the event will feature ka hāpai ‘ana i ka Hae Hawai‘i i luna (raising the Hawaiian Flag), mele (music), conversations, community partner interactions, mea ‘ai (food), and contemporary expressions of ea (independence) in observance of this national holiday of the Hawaiian Kingdom.

During Welo Ka Hae Hawai‘i, an “Expressions of Ea” program on the Museum’s Gallery Lawn Stage will share reflections of the current state of ea and words of inspiration, featuring members of the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana, ‘Īlio‘ulaokalani, ‘Ōiwi Hawai‘i artist and scholar Kauwila Mahi, and other special guests. Also, in conjunction with the Museum’s latest original exhibition, [Ea Mai ‘Eiwa: Patterns of Practice](#), curator Dr. Sarah Kuaiwa will moderate a talk story with Kanaka ‘Ōiwi (Native Hawaiian) scholars Noelani Puniwai and Kaikea Nakachi, “Puka Mai Ka Manō!: Remembering Our Relationships with Sharks.” [A full schedule of presentations and performances is provided at the end of this release.]

“Our goal is to pay tribute to the legacy of our kūpuna (elders) and our ali‘i (chiefs). In this way, we honor our living culture,” said Taylour Chang, Bishop Museum director of public programs and community events.

Established on July 31, 1843 by King Kamehameha III, Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea marks the return of political power to the Hawaiian Kingdom after the British unlawfully seized control earlier that year. Throughout the 19th century, Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea was celebrated annually with great pride. In 2022, the State of Hawai‘i designated July 31 as a special day of observance.

“In our collections, we have source materials that represent what Hawai‘i’s ali‘i and lāhui (people) stood for and continue to stand for,” shared Chang. “It is our responsibility to honor and celebrate the lives and work of our ali‘i and the people of the Hawaiian Kingdom through these observances.”

Welo Ka Hae Hawai‘i – Celebrating Lā Ho‘iho‘i Ea

- Friday, July 31, 2026 | 5-9 p.m.
- Bishop Museum Flagpole Lawn, Gallery Lawns, and Hawaiian Hall Complex
- Free with registration
- Additional information and tickets can be found at BishopMuseum.org.

Event Schedule

5 p.m. | Welo ka Hae Hawai‘i

- Flag-raising reenactment with Imai Winchester & reenactors of the Hawai‘i Civil War Roundtable
- Flagpole Lawn (near the Museum’s Bernice Street Gate)

5:30 p.m. | Mea ‘ai service begins (while supplies last)

- Provided by Hale Kealoha
- Gallery Lawn Ma Kai

5:45 p.m. | Wehena

- Hula with Nā Pua ‘Āhihi Lehua Mai Pihanakalani, Kumu Hula ‘Auli’i L. Heine Hirahara
- Gallery Lawn Stage

6:15 p.m. | Expressions of Ea

- Reflections on the current state of ea and words of inspiration , featuring the Protect Kaho‘olawe ‘Ohana, ‘Īlio‘ulaokalani, ‘Ōiwi Hawai‘i artist and scholar Kauwila Mahi, and other special guests
- Gallery Lawn Stage

6:30 p.m. | Puka Mai Ka Manō!: Remembering Our Relationships with Sharks

- J. M. Long Gallery, Hawaiian Hall Complex
- An essential part of our collective ea is the prioritization of traditional forms of knowledge and learning. In conjunction with *Ea Mai ‘Eiwa: Patterns of Practice*, Kanaka ‘Ōiwi scholars Noelani Puniwai and Kaikea Nakachi will share about how their scientific research and conservation efforts are informed by Indigenous understandings of manō (shark) as ‘aumakua (guardian spirit). This talk story will be moderated by Dr. Sarah Kuaiwa, Bishop Museum curator for Hawaiian and Pacific Arts and Culture, and co-curator of *Ea Mai ‘Eiwa*.

7:00 pm | Live music with Hōlei

- Gallery Lawn Stage

About the image shared with this news release

Inside-cover illustration and excerpt dated July 31, 1843 (p. 91) from the journal of then 11 year-old Bernice Pauahi Pākī, documenting her experiences during her time as a student at the Chiefs’ Children’s School. Ke Ali‘i Pauahi records going to Kulaokahu‘a and rejoicing upon the lowering of the English flag and the re-hoisting of the hae Hawai‘i, marking the rightful return of the sovereignty of Hawai‘i. MS MC Pauahi 1.1, Bishop Museum.

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About Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum, the State of Hawai‘i Museum of Natural and Cultural

History:

Bernice Pauahi Bishop Museum's mission is to inspire our community and visitors through the exploration, celebration, and perpetuation of the extraordinary history, culture, and environment of Hawai'i and the Pacific. The Museum was founded in 1889 by Charles Reed Bishop in memory of his wife Bernice Pauahi Bishop, a royal descendant of King Kamehameha I. Today, the Museum thrives as an educational center for the community and is widely regarded as the world's premier institution for Hawaiian and Pacific content.

Bishop Museum's vast collections of more than 25 million objects and specimens represent nine disciplines and include more than 22 million biological specimens, over 2 million cultural objects, 115,000 historical publications, and 1 million photographs, films, works of art, audio recordings, and manuscripts. These collections tell the stories of the cultures and biodiversity of Hawai'i and the Pacific as well as the proud legacy of scholarly research spanning 130 years.

Bishop Museum proudly serves more than 200,000 visitors each year, including 20,000 children on school visits. Guests are encouraged to pre-plan their trip to #HawaiiisMuseum with its [free digital guide](#), available through Bloomberg Connects.

To learn more about the Museum's research, collections, exhibits, and programs, visit [BishopMuseum.org](https://www.bishopmuseum.org), follow @BishopMuseum on [Facebook](#) and [Instagram](#), visit Bishop Museum's [YouTube](#) channel, or call (808) 847-3511. Bishop Museum is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization.

Bishop Museum is proud to be an Equal Employment Opportunity and Affirmative Action Employer, and welcomes applicants from the military, veterans, and those with disabilities. Learn about careers at Bishop Museum at [BishopMuseum.org/Careers](https://www.bishopmuseum.org/Careers) and on its [LinkedIn](#) page.

[Bishop Museum Press](#) is Hawai'i's oldest book publisher and one of the first scholarly publishers in the Western Hemisphere, and has published over 1,200 titles and distributed over 1 million books in 72 countries worldwide. Bishop Museum hosts a restaurant and gift shop on campus, [Tūtū's Place by Highway Inn](#) and [Shop Pacifica by Nā Mea Hawai'i](#).

Past news releases can be viewed and downloaded at [BishopMuseum.org/NewsRoom](https://www.bishopmuseum.org/NewsRoom).