

New Trail Forged and Existing Trails Kept Open

The Hawaiian Trail & Mountain Club has a long tradition of trail building and trail maintenance on O'ahu. In 1911, William R. Castle, first president of the club, built the Castle Trail that started in Nu'uuanu Valley, contoured along the Ko'olau Summit Ridge, and dropped-down into Palolo Valley. Declared off-limits when the mountains above Honolulu were made into watersheds, only remnants of the trail remain today.

Club legend Dick Davis (1920 - 2004), forged a number of new trails -- the Ulupaina Trail in Kaneohe, the Manamana-Kahekili complex of trails above Swanzee Park, and the network of trails in Kahana Valley. But the trail he is most remembered for is the Likeke Trail -- which bears his name in Hawaiian -- that he single-handedly forged that starts near the Wilson Tunnel and leads to the old Pali Road.

The trail maintenance crew, currently lead by Mabel Kekina and Mike Algiers, is the unsung hero of the club. Whenever access to an existing trail becomes blocked, the crew will reroute the trail to keep it open. Each Sunday, the crew tackles a different trail by sawing fallen trees and chopping back the vegetation, that if not cleared would overwhelm the trail in a matter of several years. The crew's labor to keep the trails open have benefited generations of island residents who use the trails to gather palapalai ferns, harvest mountain apples, or otherwise gain access to the mountains.