

## 23 Feb ~ Saturday PM, Diamond Head or bust!

Back at the hotel we freshen up. It is 12:45pm. The Sheraton is next door. We lunch at their pool bar, sharing a sandwich.

Southeast of Waikiki is an ancient volcanic crater, formed 350 million years ago. The highest point, Diamond Head 761ft, overlooks the sea, and is clearly visible from our hotel.



51. [Diamond Head.](#)

"What is the best way to see Diamond Head?"

"Take a taxi, about \$16. Use a cell phone to call one for the return trip."

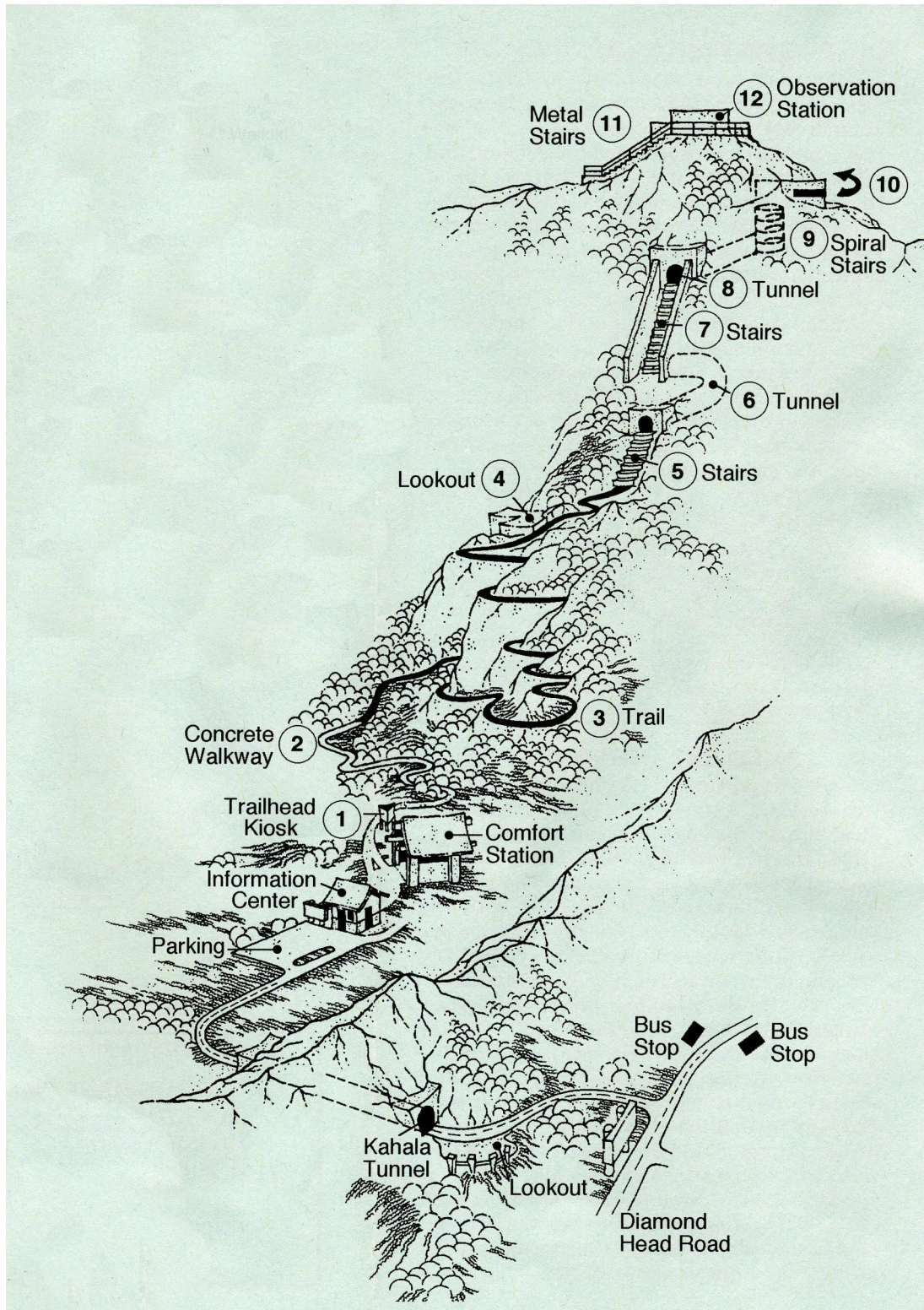
Our driver spends most of his time steering with one hand and placing cell phone calls with the other. The taxi takes us through a tunnel, which penetrates the crater wall. Access tickets to the state monument are just \$1 each. The map says the hike is 0.8 miles and that we will climb 560ft. Sounds easy enough.

The hike follows a concrete path, a steady rise, and then reverts to a rocky trail. Handrails provide leverage for the steeper parts. We are both breathing heavily. The trail is busy with traffic going up hill and returning. There are no rules about which side to pass. Some of the hikers rudely hold their ground, two abreast, forcing us to step aside. Pant, pant. "Let's stop at this bench and rest."

A twelve-year-old boy with broken leg passes on crutches. Must be crazy. We resume the climb.

A steep stairway of 74 concrete steps leads us to a narrow, dimly lit tunnel 225ft long. 99 more steps, then another tunnel takes us to a spiral staircase rising four levels. We enter a concrete bunker. In WWI this was a fire control station for four heavy defensive guns. A Park Ranger is selling \$2 certificates proving we reached the summit. Jan demands one.

We exit through a narrow slit into bright sunshine and complete our ascent. The views are breathtaking, that is if we had any left. Photo time!



Diamond Head Trail.

Diamond Head (Lā'ahi) was created about 300,000 years ago in a single brief eruption. The saucer shaped crater occupies 350 acres. Magma broke down into ash when it hit the ocean. Particles blown into the air cemented together to form a *tuff cone* which eroded away to form the crater.



53. The crater.



54. And there's the sea.



56. Waikiki Beach.



55. Zoom in to the Pink Palace.

The descent is a little easier. "Jan, do you want an ice cream?"

"No, lets catch that taxi." Now I know she is tired....

The driver is strange. He chatters on about his life history, moves, divorce, and jobs. He pretends to expound his new wife's views in a high-pitched voice. I am relieved when we reach the Pink Palace.

This evening we enjoy a cocktail party, introduce ourselves, and get to know others in our group. Two musicians entertain us. The daughter of one introduces herself, she is 21 and has been dancing professionally since she was 9.

"Would anyone like to learn to hula?" I cringe but several brave ladies take part. They are shown about six basic moves or steps which are then linked together to enact a dance.



69. Getting to know you.....



66. Strumming.



68. I teach hula.



64. Hotel gardens.

Touring the halls of the Royal Hawaiian. The decorations are splendid. Opened in 1927, it is a six story, 400 room luxury resort, built in stucco in a fanciful Spanish-Moorish style. During WWII it was used by the Navy.



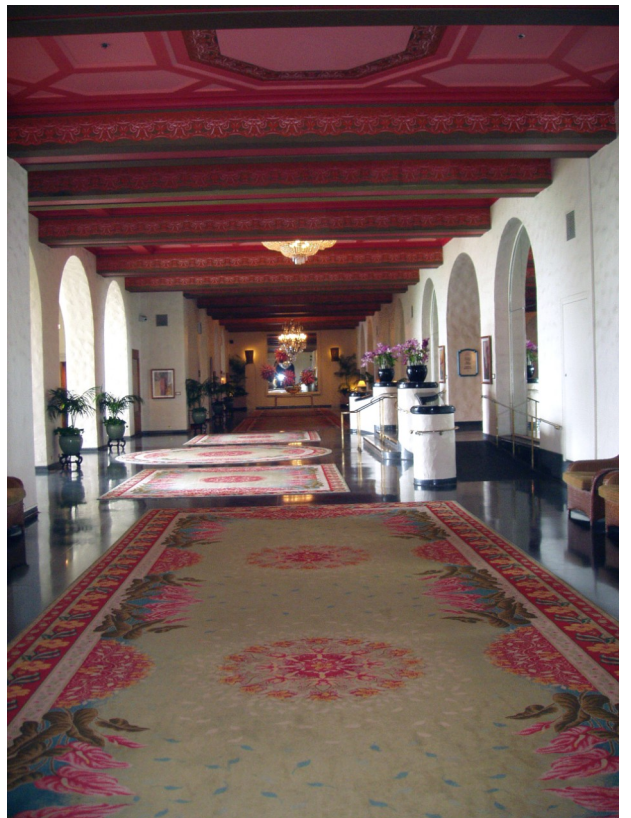
72. Orchids.



70. These are individual orchid flowers that have been attached to twigs. They can only last a day or two.



71. Don't wipe your feet on the carpet!



73.

Dinner in the Surf Room. As its name implies, a view of the beach. We sit and chatter with two other couples from our tour.



# Diamond Head State Monument

I climbed Diamond Head and Survived!  
This will certify that

Jan & Martin Oakes

has successfully climbed to the summit of Diamond Head.  
Mount Leahi rises 760 feet above sea level and 560 feet from the crater floor.

I have officially ascended the .7 mile long trail which is unpaved  
and has an uneven rock and dirt surface that may be loose and slippery in places.  
It leads through a dark tunnel and involves climbing 271 steps  
through a narrow spiral staircase inside an unlit bunker.  
The entire hike took about 1 hour and a half.

My reward for accomplishing this feat was a panoramic view  
of south Oahu from Koko Head to Barbers Point.

Honolulu, Hawaii ♦ FEB 23 2008

Diamond Head Preservation Society

