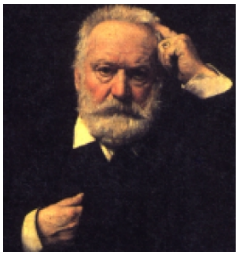
Chapter 7. The Marine Sciences Building



"Great buildings,
like great mountains,
are the work of centuries"
Victor Hugo
(1802-1885)



Officially called "The Oceanographic and Marine Laboratory" by the state of Hawaii Department of Accounting and General Services (DAGS), ground-breaking for what would later be known as the Marine Sciences Building (MSB) took place on 1 October 1979. MSB had been in various planning stages for at least 14 years so the ground breaking was a sight to behold for many of the old, salty oceanographers at UH. A cluster of old wooden buildings on the planned construction site, which had served as offices and laboratories for several Department of Oceanography faculty and students, were demolished to make room for a new 6-story, 60,000 square foot marine research facility (Figures 7.1 and 7.2).



Figure 7.1: The "end' for the old 1-story wooden office/lab buildings and the beginning of the new 6-story Marine Sciences Building. (from SOEST archives)

The construction progress was monitored with great interest and enthusiasm by all UH marine scientists until the building – at least most of it – was officially dedicated on 21 May 1982; nearly a decade later the official "art work" was added (see *Box 7.1*). MSB was constructed by Allied Builders at a cost of approximately $10 M; the architect was Clarence Fong Associates. At that time, and largely due to construction cost overruns, the entire 6th floor was left unfinished until additional funding and a new DAGS contract could be arranged a few years later.

***Box 7.1*: "Divers" – MSB Art**

As is common with most State of Hawaii buildings, the State Foundation on Culture and the Arts – in accordance with the "Art in State Buildings Law" – commissioned a work of art to commemorate the opening of MSB. According to the 1967 law, 1% of construction appropriations must be used for "permanent or movable art." In the case of MSB, the permanent art came in 1991 in the form of Robert Stackhouse's red brass sculpture "Divers" – which looks more like a boat's framework than a diver *per se* (Figure 7.3). Located on the Diamondhead side of MSB on the hill between the building and East-West Road, this work of art is flush with the ground and otherwise out of the line of traffic and sight.



Figure 7.2: Marine Sciences Building from 1979 ground breaking to 1982 dedication. (from SOEST archives; collage design by N. Hulbirt)







Figure 7.3: Robert Stackhouse's red brass sculpture "Divers" commemorates the construction of the Marine Sciences Building. (photos by D. Karl)

Just as the new building was ready to be occupied, there was a failed attempt to fill a significant portion of it with non-marine programs. According to a 30 July 1984 memorandum from then Department of Oceanography Chairman Lorenz Magaard, the attempted takeover originated with the office of the vice chancellor for administration and it was presented to Magaard via the dean of natural sciences, Bob Pecsok.

Magaard felt that the "attack" was provoked by the fact that the UH administration had seen a great deal of underutilized space during an inspection of MSB. All this despite a previous 13 July 1984 memo from Magaard to the UH administration entitled "Space in the Marine Sciences Building" which concluded: "…the Department of Oceanography and the other marine related elements and functions that are now occupying MSB will fill the whole building properly within two months from now. In one or two years these functions, by means of this growth, will make MSB overcrowded. If, after two years, there will be any space questions concerning oceanography, it will not be how to fill MSB but how to find additional space for oceanography outside and beyond MSB." Magaard, of course, was absolutely correct in his prediction for the need for additional space in what amounted to a very short period of time. The "ocean space wars" had begun – again!

In the end, space in the new MSB was assigned broadly to several marine entities including faculty from the departments of oceanography and geology and geophysics, the dean of marine programs and his responsible entities (the Sea Grant College Program and MOP), and the NOAA-sponsored Joint Institute of Marine and Atmospheric Research (JIMAR), and Hawaii Undersea Research Laboratory (HURL) programs.

Today the building houses the Department of Oceanography, HURL, and JIMAR and its affiliated programs (see *Box 7.2*).

***Box 7.2*: JIMAR and Affiliated Research Units: UH Sea Level Center, Pelagic Fisheries and the Klaus Wyrtki Center for Climate Research and Prediction**

The Joint Institute for Marine and Atmospheric Research (JIMAR) was created in 1977 in an agreement between NOAA's Environmental Research Laboratories and UH. It is presently one of nine cooperative or joint NOAA-academic institutions of its kind. Research themes include climate, tropical meteorology, equatorial oceanography, tsunamis, and fisheries oceanography.





University of Hawai'i
Sea Level Center

The UH Sea Level Center was founded in 1984 as the TOGA Sea Level Center under the leadership of Klaus Wyrtki. The center maintains an extensive tide gauge network around the world to support climate research. Scientists in the center collect, process, distribute and analyze these key data sets.

The Pelagic Fisheries Research Program was established in 1992 following an amendment of the Magnuson fishery conservation and management act of 1976 to include "highly migratory fish." Hence, the central mission of this program is to collect data relevant to the fisheries management policies of the oceanic species of interest including, but not limited to, tunas and billfishes.

In September 1996 the Klaus Wyrtki Center for Climate Research and Prediction (The "Wyrtki Center") was established as a key component of JIMAR. This center was named in honor of Klaus Wyrtki (see *Box 4.7*) who conducted pioneering research on the El Niño-Southern Oscillation (ENSO) phenomenon, one of several central research themes in the Wyrtki Center.