

**H. Pepi Pesentheiner, re – dedication of the SMS Donau grave at King Street Catholic Cemetery  
On October 26<sup>th</sup> 2012**

The frigate **SMS Donau** together with the Corvette Erzherzog Friedrich of the Imperial Austrian Navy left their base at Pola, Croatia on the Adriatic in late 1868 on a mission to strengthen Austria-Hungary's trade and consular establishments in the Far East and along the coast of South America. At that time Austria – Hungary, also known as the **Danube Monarchy** was a major European power comprising some 60 Million people who spoke 14 different languages and dialects. The country was ruled by the **Habsburg** dynasty.

**Count von Wipplinger** was the captain of the SMS Donau, **Rear Admiral Anton von Petz** born in Venitze, Transylvania, then part of Hungary was in charge of the overall mission. The "Donau" had a crew of **360 officers and sailors**.

Off the coast of Japan the two ships ran into two horrific hurricanes. It was decided for the Erzherzog Friedrich to return to Europe and the damaged Donau to continue to Honolulu for repairs. The ship entered **Honolulu Harbor on December 20<sup>th</sup> 1869** carrying the remains of 2 officers and 4 sailors who all were interred here at King Street catholic cemetery. One of the officers turned out to have been **Graf von Beust**, the only son of the then Austrian **Reichskanzler Carl Friedrich Graf von Beust**. We have located members of the prominent family in Germany and learned of their surprise that their ancestor whom they believed to have been missing in the Pacific is actually buried in Honolulu. Once more we find that there is a living connection to history. The second officer, **Seekadet Josef Hlouschek** was born in Moravia, part of today's Czech republic and entered the naval service at **age 16** and drowned when he was **only 19 years old**. We have not located any relatives of his. Unfortunately as was the custom of the time no record exists of their names either at the archives in Vienna nor at the catholic church in Honolulu. **May they rest in peace!**

**It took some 5 months to repair the ship.** All along that time as befits an Austrian naval unit, the ships marching band held concerts in the evening at dockside. This delighted the populace of Honolulu who beseeched the King, Kamehameha V to re-institute the Royal Hawaiian Band, originally established in 1836 as the "King's Band". And now we are proud to have the company of that **Royal Hawaiian Band** in our presence, although not all it's members were around during 1869!

It is fitting to honor the efforts of our member **Roman von Schafnitzel** who exceeded all of our expectations receiving permission from the catholic church and has labored tirelessly to bring this undertaking to it's conclusion!

There is another Austrian naval grave in Honolulu dating back to 1892. It is that of Capt. Heinrich Schweisgut, a German who rests in Oahu Cemetery. This grave is lovingly maintained by our past president **Hermann Allerstorfer**.

The SMS Donau was on a **mission of peace and friendship** showing the flag. Today, on the **National Day of Austria** we remember her and her crew who rest in this sacred ground.

**Col. Pergler, please proceed to unveil the monument.**

We now ask **Father Gary Secor**, Vicar General of the Catholic Diocese of Honolulu to bless the deceased, this grave and all who are assembled here today!

**Grüss Gott, Servus and Aloha !**