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Friday, February 15, 2008

# Century-old shopping complex prospers in upscale Hanalei

Pacific Business News (Honolulu) - by [Jon Letman](#) PBN Contributor

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When Chinese immigrant Ching Yuk Hom arrived on Kauai a century ago and opened a general merchandise store on a small parcel of leased land in Hanalei, he never could have imagined that purveyors of digital photo processing, fiberglass surf boards, Web design and pizza by the slice would one day occupy a market on the same spot still bearing his family name.



Jon Letman

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But those are exactly the type of businesses found today at **Ching Young Village**, a 40,000-square-foot shopping center on 2.4 acres that sit, as the tag line goes, in "the heart of Hanalei."

Ching Young Village, the oldest and largest commercial retail complex in this high-profile town on Kauai's North Shore, is home to some 30 tenants, a mix of eateries, clothing and accessory shops, galleries, professional offices and services ranging from real estate management to sports equipment rentals.

Managed by Ching Yuk Hom's grandson, Mike Ching, the shopping complex is a textbook example of sound commercial management; modest, steady growth; and stable business practices that have resulted in a successful and popular commercial operation where tourists and locals shop together.

Looking back at the post-Iniki years -- Hurricane Iniki still is used as a measuring stick 15 years later -- Ching remembers the devastation the storm brought to the island and his shopping complex. Forty percent of Ching Young Village was damaged but the original Ching Young Store, built in 1906, survived.

It took several years, but eventually all insurance claims were settled and the shopping center was rebuilt.

A scarcity of visitors resulted in some vacancies in the mid-1990s, Ching recalls, but the complex refrained from raising rents during the rest of the decade to maintain stability and prevent further tenant loss.

"During that time, we worked with new tenants to see what they could handle," he said.

Beginning in about 2000, Ching Young Village was able to raise rents to keep pace with market values. By the early 2000s real estate values on Kauai began to accelerate significantly or, as Ching puts it, "gone crazy, skyrocketed."

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One beneficiary of the higher land values, particularly on Kauai's North Shore, may be Ching Young's business owners themselves. Along with high land values have come customers who are less price conscious and inclined to spend more.

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