

## OBITUARIES

# Harriet Stibbard still taught hula while in her 80s

By Mary Adamski

Star-Bulletin

Harriet Kuuleinani "Puna" Stibbard retired as a schoolteacher and hula instructor more than 20 years ago, but she never really quit teaching or hula.

"She still taught hula at the church, at the senior citizen center, to her groups, until about two years ago," said her granddaughter Vanelle Maunalei Love. "She was such a lively spirit."

Stibbard, 87, died June 15 in Honolulu.

She taught in public elementary schools on Kauai, Maui, Hawaii and Oahu for 41 years.

She had as many as 300 students at a time in classes at her Kuuleinani Hula Studio, where she emphasized the story behind the dance, said Love, who took over as kumu hula about 20 years ago.

"She was known for her keiki hula. She would put on extravaganzas twice a year at the Waikiki Shell and Hilton Dome.

"She was very, very giving. That was her manao, you always give back to the community."

Love, who started lessons from her grandmother at age 3, recalled, "When I was a child, we went everywhere to share our hula, to Tripler Hospital to entertain injured soldiers, during holidays to old folks' homes, the Kaneohe State Hospital.

"As a child I grew up with her idea of giving back to the community.

"Now it's part of the pattern of my life. I tell my kids, give back, do something for other people, the community," Love said.

Stibbard found another way to give in her later years.

She crocheted in every spare moment, then gave away the baby clothes she created, not only to family and friends, but to strangers such as women in a home for unwed mothers, Love said.

Love said friends and former students will honor Stibbard in their familiar way, by dancing a hula in her memory at the funeral service.

It will be held at 9 a.m. Saturday at Oahu Cemetery chapel. Inurnment will follow.

The family asks that aloha attire be worn.

Stibbard, who was born on Kauai, is survived by her husband, Harry T.K.; son John S.; daughter Carol Mae Vanderford; 14 grandchildren and several great-grandchildren.