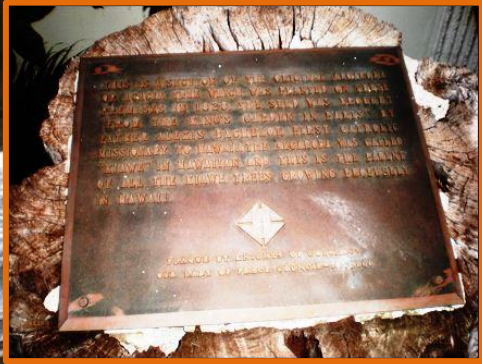


On November 21st 1826 La Comete left France on its voyage to the Sandwich Islands. Before arriving in Honolulu circa July 6th 1827 the ship made two stops in Peru for 6 weeks. On board was Hawaii's first Catholic Priest, Father Alexis Bachelot, also known as the man who brought Kiawe to Hawaii.



The Plaque to the first kiawe ("Algarroba") in Hawaii on Fort Street in Honolulu.

Kiawe is botanically known as *Prosopis pallida*. The tree is a tropical legume from coastal South America whose range spans southern Ecuador, coastal Peru, Bolivia and northern Chile. Half way between the Port of Quilca, Arequipa and the Port of Callao, Lima, is an inland desert town of Ica. Ica is world renown for its dry climate, massive sand dunes, and excellent wine. In the early 1500's the Spanish attempted to produce wine in different regions of Peru. They first tried the high altitude region of Cuzco, and then later moved to Arequipa before finally settling in the lower Ica Valley where they could achieve the quality they wanted. Up to that time the sand dunes were covered with forests of a tree the locals call huarango. This ancient Quechua word translates to "the tree" or "the one" an allusion to its significance as the tree of life in a marginal desert environment. Under Spanish rule massive trees were cut down and their trunks used for making presses to extract the sugary liquid from grapes. After fermentation the wine is distilled into brandy using carbon de huarango. Today, the national drink of Peru is the pisco sour a combination of brandy, milk, and syrup of the huarango pods known locally as algarrobin.