



## ***Lyle Lowell "Gus" Guslander***

*Lyle "Gus" Guslander started in the hotel business as a bellhop and cook. After studying hotel operations at Cornell University, Gus set out on a long and successful career in hotel management at the Palace Hotel in San Francisco, eventually working his way up to become assistant manager. Gus came to Hawai'i in 1947 to manage the Niunalu Hotel for Walter Child, Sr., but soon moved on to bigger things: Matson Navigation's Moana Hotel, the grand lady of Waikiki. Not content to work for others, Gus borrowed \$25,000 in 1953 to invest in his own hotel, leasing (and later purchasing) the Coco Palms Lodge on Kaua'i. When he took over, the hotel had twenty-four rooms and two guests. Gus took a chance, hiring Grace Buscher to be the hotel's manager. The two of them became closely identified with the success of Coco Palms and they eventually married.*

*As the Coco Palms became successful, Gus expanded his operations eventually acquiring hotels on Kaua'i, O'ahu, Maui and the Big Island of Hawai'i. With his growing hotel operations Gus recognized the need to develop a distribution system and, working with Myrtle Lee, he created Island Holidays Tours. The hotel and tour operations worked well together—as Gus expected—and Island Holidays became a respected and successful interisland hotel operator in Hawai'i. The success of the company attracted the attention of AMFAC, one of Hawai'i's "Big Five" companies, which acquired Island Holidays for \$20 million and made Gus a vice president.*

*Gus Guslander—and Island Holidays—had a vision that made Hawai'i a reality for thousands of visitors.*