

# Ka`a Ahi Kahului

## Words and Music By: Palani Vaughan

☞ **Source:** In the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the steam locomotive found its way into countless musical cultures throughout the world. Musicians integrated its distinctive rhythms into their playing, singers and harmonica players imitated its many sounds, composers celebrated its remarkable capacity to link distant communities or conjure up adventure. July 29, 1879, marked the arrival of passenger train service to Hawai'i, when the Kahului Railroad Company of Maui began running from Kahului to Wailuku.

Because King David Kalākaua encouraged railroad construction in Hawai'i, Kalākaua-era enthusiast Palani Vaughan wrote this song in the early 1970s. The second verse honors King Kalākaua and the chorus contains the onomatopoeic phrase, "chuku chuku" to simulate the sound of the engine. The rhythm recreates the steady beat of a train as it runs across the rails *kuehu aku ma ke alahao* (stirring up dust along the track). "I kind of muffle the string with my right hand to create the train sound," Led says. Led Ka'apana plays in Standard tuning (E-A-D-G-B-D) and arranged in the keys of F and C. (notes from *Dancing Cat*)

### Sample Song List:

- Palani Vaughan, *Palani Vaughan's Best with the King's Own - Vol I*, 1993
- Ledward Ka'apana, *Led Live Solo*, 1994
- Kahua, *Mali'o e*, 2002
- Brian Tolentino, *Ka Ukulele Lele*, 2005
- Keoki Kahumoku & Herb Ohta, Jr, *Hawaiian From The Heart*, 2000
- Hau'ula, *Na Mele 'Ohana*,
- Cyril Pahinui, *'Ia 'Oe E Ka La - Helu 'Ekahi - Vol. 1*
- Bruddah Waltah, *Ka Ho`ina*, 1997
- Troy Fernandez, *Cruzin' Island Style (DVD)*,
- Troy Fernandez, *Hawaiian Style Ukulele*, 2005
- Makapu'u Sand Band, *Makapu'u Sand Band*, 1996
- I Ku Mau Mau, *I Ku Mau Mau*, 2004

# Ka`a Ahi Kahului

Key of G Major(#) 4/4 Time (fast tempo)

## Song Structure:

**Verse** – 8 bars (repeated)

|I~~~~|~~~~|V7~~~|I~I7~|IV~~~~|I~~~~|V7~~~|IV~~~~|

**Hui** – 8 bars

|I7~~~|I~~~~|V7~~~|~~~~|I7~~~|I~~~~|V7~~~|I~~~~|

## Kika Ki Ho'alu Basic Chords (Taro Patch G Tuning – DGDGBD)

I = G Major

I7 = G7

IV = C Major

V7 = D7

Root **G (I)**  
G Chord Form

5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  
D G D G B D

Root **G7 (I7)**  
G7 Chord Form

5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 7b |  
D G D G B F

Root **C (IV)**  
C Chord Form

3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 1 | 3 |  
E G E G C E

Root **D7 (V7)**  
D7 Chord Form

3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 7b | 3 |  
F# A F# A C F#

Inversion **G (I)**  
E Chord Form

same as standard G

1 | 3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 1 |  
D G D B D G

Inversion **G7 (I7)**  
E7 Chord Form

7b | 3 | 1 | 3 | 5 | 7b |  
F G D B D F

Inversion **C (IV)**  
G Chord Form

5 | 1 | 5 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  
G C G C E G

Inversion **D7 (V7)**  
C7 Chord Form

3 | 5 | 3 | 7b | 1 | 3 |  
F# A F# C D F#

## Ukulele Basic Chords (C Tuning – GCEA)

I = G Major

I7 = G7

IV = C Major

V7 = D7

Root **G (I)**  
F Chord Form

Two Bs  
Two 3s

3 | 5 | 1 | 3 |  
B D G B

Root **G7 (I7)**  
G7 Chord Form

1 | 5 | 7b | 3 |  
G D F B

Root **C (IV)**  
C Chord Form

Two Cs  
Two 1s

5 | 1 | 3 | 1 |  
G C E C

Root **D7 (V7)**  
C7 Chord Form

5 Low

5 | 1 | 3 | 7b |  
A D F# C

Inversion **G (I)**  
D Chord Form

Two Ds  
Two 5s

5 | 1 | 3 | 5 |  
D G B D

Inversion **G7 (I7)**  
E7 Chord Form

3 | 7b | 1 | 5 |  
B F G D

Inversion **C (IV)**  
A Chord Form

Two Cs  
Two 1s

1 | 3 | 5 | 1 |  
C E G C

Inversion **D7 (V7)**  
A7 Chord Form

7b Low

7b | 3 | 5 | 1 |  
C F# A D

**Performance Notes:** This a fun song with a driving up-tempo choo-choo beat and kika sound effects -- thumps, slides, bends -- to create the sound and feel of riding on the old sugar cane train to Kahului.

# Ka`a Ahi Kahului

♪ Intro ~ G7 /// G /// G7 /// G /// ♪

## Verse:

**G**  
| Eia ka mo`olelo | pōkole | *Here is the short story*  
**D7** **G** **G7**  
| No ke ka`a ahi mua | o Hawai`i Nei | *About the first train in Hawai`i*  
**C** **G**  
| Chūkū-chūkū maila | Chūkū-chūkū maila | *Choo-choo here,  
Choo-choo there*  
**D7** **C**  
| Ko`ehu (kuehu) aku ma ke ala-|-hao | *Stirring dust along the tracks*  
~~ Repeat ~~

## Hui:

Chorus:

**G7** **G**  
| Wū-wū | Ka`a Ahi Kahului | *Woo-woo! Kahului Railroad*  
**D7**  
| Ke alahao a i Wai-|-luku | *Tracks all the way to Wailuku*  
**G7** **G**  
| Wu-wu | Ka`a Ahi Kahului | *Woo-woo! Kahului Railroad*  
**D7** **G**  
| Chūkū-chūkū mua o Ha-|-wai`i | *The first train of Hawai`i*

♪ Turnaround D7 G ♪

♪ Instrumental Bridge of Verse and turnaround or Pa`ani ♪

# Ka`a Ahi Kahului

## Additional Verses:

| Hūlō, Hūlō, | no Ka Lani e |

*Hurrah! Hurrah! for the chief*

| No Ka Lani `O Kalā-|-kaua |

*For the chief, Kalākaua*

| Ke mea i kākau | kona inoa |

*The one who signed his name*

| Ma ka Palapalano ka | chūkū-chūkū |

*On the Act for the Railroad*

| Lohe mai e nā keiki | hānau o ka `āina |

*Listen, oh children of the land*

| Lohe mai i ka mo`olelo | chūkū |

*Listen to the train story*

| A i ko `oukou | Ka Lani hope |

*And (hear) about your last King*

| Ka mea i kākau kona i-|-noa |

*The one who signed his name*