



LAST MONTH'S EVENTS

NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE



Kokoro & Minori Hironaka have their chance at ringing the bell.



Members partake of the New Year's Eve mini-banquet.

HONKO SERVICE



The guest speaker for the service was **Rev. Shigenori Makino** of Oahu. During Rev. Makino's earliest years of ministry, he served as resident

minister at Wailuku Hongwanji. Now retired, Rev. Makino had served at other temples in Hawaii, as well as serving as Rimban, Honpa Hongwanji.

HIGHLIGHTS of dharma talk:

- "... 'home' is a place you can go back to; it is not the physical place, but a place where you can be yourself."
- Story about a conflict between a man & his elderly mother. Lesson: gaining awareness of the love and indebtedness toward his mother.

NEW YEAR Service, Installation of 2014 Officers, Fukunaga Dana Award Presentation, and New Year Party !



Fukunaga Dana Awardee Yumiko Nishimoto, with three of her four children, Janet Kusuda, Robert Nishimoto, and Thelma Kiyonaga.



Mahalo to the leaders of party décor planning and presentation: **Earl Zaan & Dawn Fujiwara** – Year-of-the-Horse calendars, display placards, and mementoes. **Sharon Nohara** – table coverings, lotus décor (made from coffee filters!) & 2014 handmade party favor gift boxes.



A BIG MAHALO to the Kupuna Serenaders for their joyful mele.

Last Month's Events, continued.

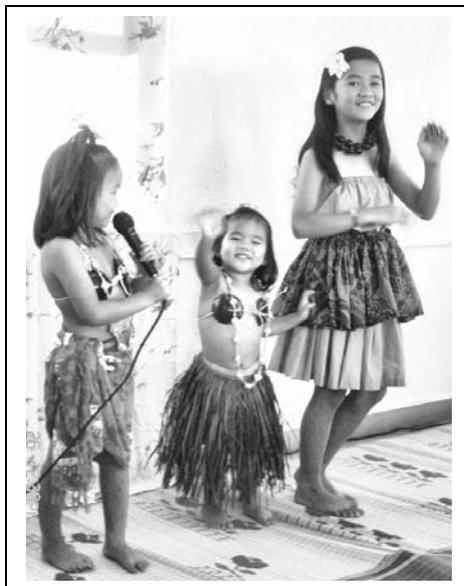
Gratitude is expressed to the following people who planned for, coordinated and led the very willing work force. Together, the production / presentation of the New Year Service and Party resulted in a collaborative success:

- Rev. Ai Hironaka, Aileen Cockett, Sylvia Neizman – TEMPLE SERVICE / INSTALLATION
- 'Noosh' Nishihara – FUKUNAGA DANA AWARD
- Dawn Fujiwara, Earl Zaan, Sharon Nohara, Megumi Hironaka, Violet Nishijima, Shirley Tobita – DA FOOD ! Thank you to all who helped with food prep work and potluck contributions to complement the catered main dishes.
- Dawn Fujiwara, Earl Zaan - coordinating the ENTERTAINMENT: Kupuna Serenaders, Minyo Dancers – Violet Nishijima, Sakae Kawaguchi, Aileen Cockett, Earl Zaan. "Puamana" Hula – temple family girls, Kokoro, Ayumu, and Minori with 'Uncle' Neal Fujiwara's accompaniment. Solo karaoke – Rev. Ai Hironaka. Traditional songs singalong – Neal Fujiwara in voice & on ukulele. Games & Lucky Number – Dawn / Earl team, Toddy Lilikoi, Carol Inaba, Noosh Nishihara.

MOST OF ALL, THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR GUESTS AND MEMBERS WHO ATTENDED THE EVENT. IT WAS A SPECIAL PLEASURE TO BESTOW OUR GRATITUDE TO ALL OF YOU.



Service Emcee, May Fujiwara



Ayumu-chan, Minori-chan, & Koko-chan



Sensei sings a favorite Japanese Tune.



Neal-san leads off a group-sing, along with his trusty ukulele.

ENTERTAINMENT

Apologies to the excellent Minyo dancers. Cameraman had other duties and missed taking a snapshot. AUWE.

THE NEWSPAPER TOWER GAME



It took PLANNING, TEAMWORK, a lot of TAPE, and maybe even some petitionary prayers – but all of the towers grew TALL !!!

More of Last Month's Events



Eiffel Tower ?



Pioneer Mill Smokestack ?



Flight Control Tower ?

COMMUNITY OUTREACH

Maui United BWA Participated in the 2014 Martin Luther King Day Event



Kallie Agaran, Kahului HM, was the primary contact person and coordinator for this event participation.



MUBWA for Peace & Compassion

UPCOMING ...



FREE CAREGIVER WORKSHOP
"UNDERSTANDING
DEMENTIA BEHAVIORS"

Sponsored by:

Maui Adult Day Care Center &
Maui County Office on Aging

Kathleen Couch, Program Coordinator
Maui Adult Day Care Centers
Mike O'Brien, Family Caregiver

- *Early, Middle, & Late Stage Dementia*
- *Tips & Techniques for Working with Dementia Behaviors*
- *Caregiver Survival*

LAHAINA HONGWANJI MISSION (in temple)
THURSDAY, FEB. 6TH - 9:00 - 10:30 am
PUBLIC INVITED

[This month's article was submitted to bulletin staff by LHM member, Michael Nishimoto. His interesting find came from website: <http://www.theguardian.com>]

Archeologists' Discovery Puts Buddha's Birth 300 Years Earlier

Elizabeth Day – The Observer, Saturday 30 November 2013

When Professor Robin Coningham's youngest son Gus was five, he was asked at school what his father did. "He works for the Buddha," said the boy. Which led to a bit of confusion, recalls Coningham. But it turns out Gus was not that far off the mark. Last week it emerged that a team led by Coningham, a professor of archaeology and pro-vice-chancellor at Durham University, had made a startling discovery about the date of the Buddha's birth, one that could rewrite the history of Buddhism. After a three-year dig on the site of the Maya Devi temple at Lumbini in Nepal, Coningham and his team of 40 archaeologists discovered a tree shrine that predates all known Buddhist sites by at least 300 years. The impact of Coningham's work is groundbreaking in many ways. Prior to this discovery, it had been thought that the shrine at Lumbini – an important pilgrimage site for half a billion Buddhists worldwide – marked the birthplace of the Buddha in the third century BC. But the timber structure revealed by archaeologists was radio-carbon-dated to the sixth century BC.

"It has real significance," says Coningham, 47. "What we have for the first time is something that puts a date on the beginning of the cult of Buddhism. That gives us a really clear social and economic context ... It was a time of huge transition where traditional societies were being rocked by the emergence of cities, kings, coins and an emerging middle class. It was precisely at that time that Buddha was preaching renunciation – that wealth and belongings are not everything." The early years of the religion took hold before the invention of writing. As a result, different oral traditions had different dates for the Buddha's birth. This is the first concrete evidence that Buddhism existed before the time of Asoka, an Indian emperor who enthusiastically embraced the religion in the third century BC.

Legend has it that the Buddha's mother, Maya Devi, was travelling from her husband's home to that of her parents. Midway in her journey, she stopped in Lumbini and gave birth to her son while holding on to the branch of a tree. The research team believe they have found evidence of a tree in the ancient shrine beneath a thick layer of bricks. According to Coningham, it became clear that the temple, 20 km from the Indian border, had been built "directly on top of the brick structure, incorporating or enshrining it".

The site at Lumbini had been hidden under the jungle until it was excavated in 1896. Back then, it was identified as the Buddha's birthplace because of a sandstone pillar that bore an inscription documenting the visit of Asoka to the site. The earliest levels remained buried until now. After the filming of a documentary about the find for the National Geographic Channel, Coningham has been dubbed a real-life Indiana Jones ...

"... in a way I suppose the experience [of this dig] has made me a great relativist. Also for me it shows we know so little about the early years of the world's great traditions." But he says that the tenets of Buddhism hold a certain appeal. "At the moment, I'm balancing this job with the role of pro-vice-chancellor. So I'm a bureaucrat and it's very tempting, at times, to think of renunciation," he jokes.

The next site Coningham and his team have been encouraged to look at is one of the rumoured locations of Buddha's childhood home. UNESCO, with the Japanese government's aid, is funding three more years of research. "Buddhism is a growing religion, and within five years there will be 22 million annual pilgrims flying into south Asia," says Coningham. "That will overwhelm these sites. So the next mission is to start mapping and planning how they will be protected."

In an area where more than half the population live below the poverty line, subsisting on less than \$1.50 a day, the key will be to balance the financial benefits of tourism with the need for sustainability and historic preservation. As the story of the discovery at Lumbini becomes widely known, Coningham is hopeful more young people will be attracted by what archaeology has to offer. "What's really interesting is it's the ancient civilisations that continue to pull people in," he says. "Archeology like this can touch and be of interest to the life of hundreds of millions of people."



[From National Geographic website: "Pilgrims meditate in the Maya Devi Temple at Lumbini, Nepal. The remains of the earliest temples at the site are in the background."]

The Three Treasures: THE DHARMA

Questions & Answers: Excerpts from TRICYCLE magazine's interview with Mark and Taitetsu Unno. [*Taitetsu Unno is professor emeritus of religious studies at Smith College, and author of River of Fire, River of Water... and Bits of Rubble Turn into Gold. His son, Mark Unno is Buddhism professor, U. of Oregon, and author of Shingon Refractions: Myoe and the Mantra of Light]*

Question: Can you tell us about chanting the nembutsu, Shin Buddhism's central practice? [Jeff Wilson, TRICYCLE]

Taitetsu Unno: Chanting "Namu Amida Butsu," which translates as "I entrust myself to the Buddha of Infinite Light and Life," is not a form of petitionary prayer or mantra. It is a means of communication between a relative being or consciousness and the Buddha deep within. When I chant, there is the expression of Namu Amida Butsu not only from this side, but also from the side of the Buddha.

Mark Unno: From the Shin standpoint, the nembutsu arises not from the being who is living in this karmic world but from the highest truth, or the Dharmakara, which in Shin Buddhism manifests as Amida Buddha. Yet it's not as if the two entities are separate. One could say that the nembutsu arises from Buddha-nature, even though initially one senses or invokes it from the side of the karmic human being, the person who is burdened with suffering due to blind passions and attachments. So Shinran said that the act of saying "Namu Amida Butsu" – which is an expression of what we call shinjin, or true entrusting – is actually the expression of Buddha-nature. It arises from our deepest, truest nature, which is ultimately none other than the awakening of infinite light, Amida Buddha herself. I say, "herself," because Shinran refers to Amida as the Compassionate Mother, even though Amida originated in India as a male Buddha.

Question: You said the nembutsu is different from mantra and petitionary prayer. How so?

Mark Unno: It's not used to pray for good health, wealth, and things like that. Petitionary prayers generally don't work, and if you encourage too much petitionary prayer, then it makes it more difficult for people to relate to the teachings as a vehicle of enlightenment and liberation. Such prayers encourage attachment, which leads to greater suffering.

Each time a person says the nembutsu, it is unique in that moment, because the karmic constellation of that person's life and of the whole universe is unique in each moment. There's something fundamentally the same, which is the deepest reality, the highest truth, yet each saying of the nembutsu is unique to the time it is uttered. But this is not difficult to understand.

Taitetsu Unno: There is a popular poem in Shin regarding the nembutsu. A very famous teacher passed away and left this poem: *"If you miss me, say 'Namu Amida Butsu,' for I too live in the nembutsu."* In other words, if you have any questions about death or dying or where I am, say "Namu Amida Butsu," and that's where I am. And you will also realize that's where you are too.

Petitionary prayer is basically self-centered. Namu Amida Butsu is to release that kind of self-centeredness, and that's where I like to think the idea of entrusting ourselves to the higher reality comes in. And the higher reality is not out there; it's in Namu Amida Butsu.

Question: Do you think, as Honen did, that there's benefit in chanting the nembutsu as often as possible?

Mark Unno: In nembutsu practice, one of the important things to understand is that this problem – the desire for a result – is unavoidable. I had a great Buddhist teacher who once said that the more pure and white the emptiness at the center of the circle becomes, the blacker the line of the circle itself becomes. The purer you become, the more you become attached to that purity. It's unavoidable. The deeper I go into the path, the more I become attached to the results of my practice. So practice is an unending task. That's why in Shin Buddhism we emphasize that chanting nembutsu is not one's own practice. It's a practice that comes from Buddha-nature. Even though my deepest, truest reality is Buddha-nature, my immediate experience of myself is still of my deluded passions. The mindset that obsesses over "What am I going to get out of nembutsu?" or "When am I going to get enlightenment?" is precisely what is causing me problems. Being reminded that practice comes from Buddha-nature helps release me from the calculations of the karmic self.

The Three Treasures: THE SANGHA

Most people would agree that the most “visible” individuals of the Lahaina Hongwanji sangha are the active members of the Buddhist Women’s Association (still warmly and nostalgically referred to as the Fujinkai). This month’s SANGHA SPOTLIGHT is on two ladies who are, indeed, very visible at Lahaina Hongwanji. They may be quieter ladies, but their opinions and wisdom are there to be tapped. They may, by choice, purposefully remain in the background rather than in the limelight – but they are always noticed and appreciated, because they are always there helping out.



Interview with **Mrs. Yumiko Nishimoto**. She is a widow, with a son & three daughters.

Where were you born? “In Oloo.” Yumiko added that, when she was 7 years old, the family moved to Lahaina – due to her father’s work at Pioneer Mill.

What did your parents do for a living? She stated that her father, Shoichi Iwamoto, worked for Pioneer Mill. Her mother, Kikoyo (Nakao) worked for Oloo Plantation when the family lived on the Big Island. In Lahaina, her mother stayed at home to “take care of the seven children”. At one time, Yumiko’s mother also “used to do laundry for the single men.” “My mother and father both came from Japan – my father from Yamaguchi ken and my mother from Hiroshima ken.

Were your parents members of Lahaina Hongwanji? Did you come to the church when you were a little girl?

“Yes” (parents were members). “I came to church when Rev. Sarashina was the minister. I came with my school friends because my parents didn’t have time to attend church.”

What did you do when you were with friends? Yumiko shared that they sometimes played in the area Olowalu side of what is Malu-ulu-olele Park now. They would find fern shoots, then shred them “like string” and make doll’s heads.

What was your occupation? When did you get married?

“When I graduated from 8th grade, I started working as a maid.” She explains that she was a live-in housemaid for Lahainaluna’s Principal Alton Rodgers and his family. She cleaned and cooked for the family, which included 2 children, John and Patricia. Later, as an adult, she worked at the Sheraton Hotel. She married her husband Buichi when she was 20 years old.

What were church events like back then? “Obon had more people dancing – and not nowadays fancy kind. Before was Iwakuni. Yumiko said that Iwakuni was

usually performed by Mr. Miyamoto and the Tokunaga man.

You attend church regularly. What do you like about coming to church? “Good to get together, talk story. And I can listen to the Buddhist teaching.”

You never seem to get angry or upset. Do you feel that your Buddhist upbringing and the teachings in church have influenced you? “Well, I think so, and my parents too.”

You’re also an active member of the Fujinkai and the Craft Club. What do you enjoy about participating in the activities? “Getting together and making quilts.” When did you learn how to sew? “I worked half day by the mill, and then I went to Ah Sing sewing school. I made dresses – small kid kind.”

When do you have your nembutsu moments? “I say it in the morning.”



Interview with **Mrs. Toshiko Watanabe**, a widow with 2 sons & a daughter, 4 grandchildren.

Where were you born? “I was born in Lahaina – Keawe Camp – but when I was 10 days old, I was given to my great-aunt and great-uncle Hirata. They lived in Makawao.”

“So I went to elementary school in Makawao and then I went to Maui High School. But when I was a junior in high school, I moved to Honolulu and lived with my grandparents Hayashi. I graduated from Kaimuki High School and then moved back to Lahaina.”

“I worked for Pioneer Mill. Before that, no jobs were available so I went to Ah Sing sewing school – for about 6 months. What kind of work did you do at Pioneer Mill? “I worked in the cane field – harvesting – 8 hours in the sun. I did that for about 2 years. I think I got paid about \$100 a month.”

When are your nembutsu moments? “Every morning and in the evening before bedtime.”

Lahaina Hongwanji Mission

110th Anniversary

It is customary for the Sangha to plan and implement an improvement project every five years – to commemorate the Temple’s founding anniversary. This year, Lahaina Hongwanji will commemorate its 110th Anniversary in October.

We are now focusing on two projects. First are improvements to the school building, where windows need to be replaced and the siding repaired. We have an estimate of \$30,000 for window replacement, and reconditioning the siding will cost an additional \$5,000. This project is already underway. We have applied for a building permit to replace the windows. One donor, who has elected to remain anonymous – at least for the short term – has contributed \$30,000 for the windows. With your help, we should be able to raise an additional \$5,000 to fund the project. Completion of this project may not occur before the October 4th date of the commemorative service and luncheon because of the bureaucratic “red tape” governing the building permit application process. Nevertheless, this project is extremely important because of safety concerns and for the protection of our source of rental income.

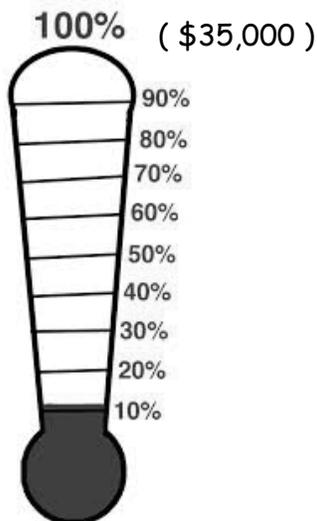
Secondly, for years now we’ve been wrestling with the need for a restroom located near the temple. Many obstacles prevented us from moving forward with such a project. We now believe we can build a small restroom that would be equipped with a commode and a handwashing basin. The facility would be located near the elevator shaft, on the ground floor. An estimate for this work is \$7,500. We can begin this project immediately, provided we have some assurance that funds are available. Work can be completed before October 4th. One contributor recently earmarked a \$500 donation for this project. Thus, an additional \$7,000 is needed.

Any help from the membership will be greatly appreciated. Donations designated for either the school building refurbishment or the restroom construction will be held and used specifically for that purpose. We will also report monthly on the progress of our fund-raising efforts.

Thank you in advance for your generosity and kokua.

‘Noosh’ Nishihara, Board President

School Building Refurbishment



Restroom Near Temple

