



Last month's events

BODHI DAY

Donated LHM Wreath



Organist Michelle Zoodsma, MC Carol Inaba, Rev. Ai Hironaka



Corner, Prison Rd. / Front St.

Holiday Luncheon & Pre-school Show at Makawao Hongwanji



Mini-Santas wait for their cues.



Chatty, funny Teppan chef.

Maui-Shima Kyogakkai – sponsored SERVICE for PHILIPPINE TYPHOON SURVIVORS Hosted at Kahului Hongwanji



L.to R. Father Adondee Arellano, Christ the King Catholic Church / Rev. Austin Murray, Trinity by the Sea Episcopal Church / Hau'oli Tomoso / Foreground: Rev. Sol Kalu, Makawao Hongwanji.

An idea that was formed from a conversation between Rev. Ai Hironaka and Rev. Sol Kalu some weeks ago eventually led ... step by step ... to this event. The interfaith service / program was hosted at Kahului Hongwanji and emceed by 'Noosh' Nishihara.

The evening program, held on Dec. 20th, consisted of:

- Opening words and Welcome
- Kansho, then Buddhist Chanting by Rev. Ai Hironaka, Rev. Shinkai Murakami, Rev. Sol Kalu, Rev. Richard Tennes
- Sharing of Prayers & Aspirations by Rev. Adondee Arellano, Christ the King Catholic Church, Rev. Gensho Hara, Lahaina Jodo Mission, Rev. Austin Murray, Trinity by the Sea Episcopal Church
- Maui Taiko entertainment
- Words of Support: Joe Pontanilla, Executive Ass't to the Mayor; Brian Nagami, President of Japanese Cultural Society of Maui
- Silent Meditation for Typhoon Haiyan victims / Collection to aid typhoon survivors
- Keynote Message: Rev. Sol Kalu
- Hawaiian Blessing: John Hau'oli Tomoso
- Final Aspiration/Benediction: Rev. Shinkai Murakami
- Refreshments and Fellowship

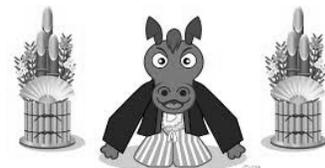
NEW YEAR'S EVE SERVICE

Our newsletter printing and mail-out date this year will prevent us from including New Year's Eve Service photos and reportage. That may be included in February's newsletter.

RINGING THE TEMPLE BELL 108 TIMES

In Buddhist tradition, the temple bell is rung 108 times at year's end. This symbolizes getting rid of our 108 (at least) impurities, one by one.

Why is the bell struck 108 times? In Buddhism there are the six senses of sight, sound, smell, taste, touch and consciousness of the unenlightened being (the mind). Our senses have experiences that are pleasant or unpleasant, or neutral. When our six senses are multiplied by the three types of experience, the total equals 18. Our lives, when spent in search of pleasure, can be defined as being attached to getting what we want, or lamenting receiving what we don't want. When we multiply the two types of desires by 18, we get 36. Since all these attempts either took place in our past, are happening in our present, or will occur in the future – the number 36 is multiplied by three – to then arrive at the final total of 108.



HAPPY NEW YEAR 2014

Year of the Horse, Chinese Zodiac



ANNOUNCING – A new feature in the 2014 newsletters will be sections on the 'Three Treasures':
BUDDHA / DHARMA / SANGHA.

[From <http://www.sonic.net/~enmanji/Enmanji/Buddhism.html>]

Kyosho – The Essentials of Jodo Shinshu AMIDA BUDDHA



[Verbatim from the above website]

While the essence of the Amida Buddha is Infinite Wisdom and Compassion, and has no physical form limitations or physical boundaries, for devotional purposes the Amida Buddha is traditionally represented in three forms:

- 1) the Chinese characters of the Name – Na Mo A Mi Da Butsu,
- 2) a picture scroll of a figure of Amida Buddha, and
- 3) a statue image of the Amida Buddha.

The picture and the statue image of Amida are identifiable by their hand gestures, or mudras. The right hand is held up with the palm facing outward and the thumb and forefinger forming a circle. This is the mudra known as “bestowing fearlessness” (abhayada-mudra).

The left arm is hung downward with the left palm facing outward and the thumb and forefinger also forming a circle. This is the mudra known as “fulfilling one’s wishes” (varada-mudra), symbolizing the fulfillment of the Vows and the sharing of merit and virtue by the Amida Buddha to all sentient beings.

A radiating aura of 48 beams of light emanating from the Amida Buddha, symbolizes the 48 Bodhisattva vows made by the Buddha previously when he was the Bodhisattva Dharmakara. After the completion of all conditions of those Vows, the Pure Land manifested from the perfection of the virtues and merits of Dharmakara’s pure practice.

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. Son Mark Unno is Buddhism professor, University of Oregon, and author of Shingon Refractions: Myoe and the Mantra of Light.]

Can you tell us about chanting the nembutsu, Shin Buddhism's central practice? *[Jeff Wilson of 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.

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.

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 mind set 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.

SANGHA

[The following article is about MR. TAKUJI "TOMMY" SARASHINA. The write-up is based on printed information and photographs provided by Mr. Sarashina, and on information gathered from an interview with him.]

Takuji "Tommy" Sarashina was born in Lahaina in 1925. His father, the Reverend Shinri Sarashina was the resident minister at Lahaina Hongwanji from 1924 to 1936.

83 SARASHINA, Shinri (1916-1945) 更科 眞理

Born: August 3, 1890, Takada-gun, Hiroshima, Japan

Graduated: Ehime Shiha Gakko, 1911

Ordained: 1913 (Tokudo & Kyoshi)

Assigned: May 26, 1916

May 1916 - July 1918

July 1918 - August 1924

August 1924 - August 1936

August 1936 - December 1945

Arrived in Hawaii

Hawaii Betsuin, Hawaii Chujogakko

(teacher)

Waianae Fukyojo

Lahaina Hongwanji

Hawaii Betsuin (Fuku-rimban:

1937-1945) (interned: 1941-1945, returned to Japan

after the war)



Rev. Sarashina died on February 5, 1984, in Hiroshima, Japan.

The following account is an excerpt from a Lahaina Hongwanji commemorative anniversary booklet:

"It was during Rev. Shinri Sarashina's tenure (1924-1936) when the present large temple opened. Rev. Sarashina came to Lahaina in August 1924 and contributed greatly to church and school with emphasis on the young generation. In 1925, the minister's residence was built. In 1927, the adjoining property was purchased to build a new temple. Under a 5-year plan, he raised \$20,000 plus, and in November 1933, with much trial and tribulation, the temple as it stands today was completed. In 1930, the school building was also expanded with the addition of a teacher's cottage." Tommy adds that his uncle, Gisen Sarashina, taught at Hongwanji then; he was a favorite among the students because of his story-telling talent.

Interview question: "What do you remember the most about the time when your father was the resident minister at Lahaina Hongwanji?"

Response: *"I remember he was always going to Pump Camp, Mill Camp, Honolua Camp ... all the camps. He was trying to propagate Shin Buddhism. He also went to Molokai and Lanai. In the evening we seldom saw him. [at the camps], he would sit, eat with them, talk story ..."*

Question: "Your father accomplished so much for Lahaina Hongwanji. How old were you then? What do you think now about all that he contributed to our temple?"

Response: *"In 1936 I was in the 4th grade [at Kamehameha III]. [When] my father was transferred to Hawaii Betsuin, all the children did not want to leave. Your [the membership's] parents and grandparents were so nice to us. Now, at 88, I tell myself I gotta do something for the church. But I was always working. Now I like to come almost every Sunday. I'm trying my best to catch up."*

Tommy spoke of his siblings; there were 3 boys and 2 girls. The eldest sibling, Mariko, passed away three years ago. Kanji lives in Yokohama today. He was educated in the sciences but also studied Philosophy at the University of Tokyo. According to Tommy, Kanji became a 'boss' of an electronics division at a company. Upon retiring from that company, Kanji partnered with a friend to sell memory chips. Tetsuko, 86, lives in Hiroshima. Junji, 84, lives in Buena Park, CA. He retired from Norfolk Aircraft Co. Junji, having been in Hiroshima at the time of the bombing, continues to do a lot for H-bomb victims.



This photo, taken about 1931, shows 1/3 of the whole class at Kamehameha III. Which one is Takuji-san? Front row, far left.

Does anyone recognize other faces? At the top is the teacher, Mrs. Paki. How many of you remember her?

Thank you to Tommy for a wonderful glimpse at the past.

Question: "Where did you and your family go after leaving Lahaina?"

Response: [The family moved to Oahu, where Rev. Sarashina was assigned to Hawaii Betsuin.] *"From Kam III, I went to Royal School in Honolulu for 6 months. Then, about 1936, all the family except my father, went to Japan. I was supposed to be in 5th grade but ... [due to the language barrier] my uncle, who was mayor of a small city, said to drop Takuji 2 grades and then he could take the test. So, I was sent to Hiroshima First Middle School, which is now Kokutaiji."*

[At this point in the interview, Tommy talked about his military years.]

When Tommy was 19 years old, he was drafted by the Japanese army, so he was unable to officially graduate from the school. He was told by the principal that he would be a graduate because he was fighting for the country.

His unit was sent to China, but was then told that they had to go to Manchuria due to the Russian threat. Two months later, the war ended on August 7, 1945. The Emperor's broadcast was heard by the soldiers, so they assumed that they would be returning soon to Japan. However, that was not to come till much later.

On September 3, 1945, the unit, which consisted of 400+ Japanese troops, surrendered peacefully to the Russians. From **Vladivostok**, the Japanese soldiers were transported by boxcar to a destination unknown to them. Eventually they could see what they thought to be an ocean – and they imagined that they would board a ship to Japan. However, Tommy, who had been given an elementary Russian language book, could read a sign --- and it seemed to indicate Lake Baikal. *“Some of the guys went down to the ocean and tasted it, and it was fresh water.”* And so, in disbelief, the soldiers found out that they were 1,500 miles into Siberia.

*“Everyone kind of gave up hope and on September 28 we arrived at the internment POW camp. It was called **Ustkamenogorsk**. Now and then it snowed at night. From there on, my first job, for 2 months, was standing at the entrance gate – to count the number of people leaving the camp to go to various work sites and then coming back.”*

“So many became ill ... T.B., fatigue, cancer, malnutrition.” So, with losses of men, Tommy had to go out from the camp to work after that. They would have to load sand onto a flatbed train. The sand was used for railroad construction and for the hydroelectric plant on the Irtysh River, which later conjoined with the Ob River. This is in the area now called Kazakhstan. *“40 years later [after the internment], some friends hired a helicopter to go there but it was off limits. It could be due to the radiation [area was used for A-tests].”*

“What did we eat? Light gruel – not rice but millet, barley, etc. It tasted really good because we were so hungry. We were always thinking of food. We also got a slice of Russian bread, crude kind; it was a round loaf. No meat, no vegetables. Sometimes we had soup, with maybe drops of shoyu, and if lucky, some fat in it – from horse or goat, maybe. Russia was a poor country so they didn't have enough to feed the POWs well. At lunch time we had almost nothing. Especially in winter because everything was frozen.” Tommy said that it was like that for the 2 years that they were interned.

There were 400+ in the beginning, and 135 passed away. 34% died. *“The POWs had to do the burials. The frozen ground was so solid, the pick would bounce back. Five*

guys would try to dig holes all day ... and get only 4 inches deep. Temperature was about -35 degrees. So we covered with a little dirt, ice, etc. No markings.” Tommy remembers softly uttering 'Namoamidabutsu'.

At the end of August, 1947, they told us, “You're going back to Japan.” *“On my birthday (Sept. 3rd), we were on the train to **Nakhodka**, next to Vladivostok, which was a big Russian naval base. On September 16th, we boarded a cargo ship to Japan.”*

As fate sometimes has its little quirks – Tommy reminisced that on the ship he saw the captain descending stairs to greet them – and it turned out to be Suzuki-san, a man whom he knew from the past.

The cargo ship had to detour to Hakodate in Hokkaido – due to a typhoon. But eventually they landed at Maizuru (Sea of Japan, Kyoto prefecture). Tommy recalls that they were greeted by American G.I.s who sprayed them with a powder – which, he eventually found out, was DDT. It was used to kill the lice.

At this point, Tommy talked about other hardships while interned. *“The shower was about 1 mile away from the camp. We had to walk in snow.”* He said that they were taken to the shower just one time each year that they were at the camp. *“The soap that they gave us was the kind for scrubbing the floor. And we couldn't brush our teeth for 2 years, because they took everything away. But there was no bacteria in the mouth [hardly any food] so no one had a toothache. Six months after I returned to Japan, I had to go to the dentist.”*

The place for their bedding was previously used for the Germans. The Germans had no toilet facilities, and the rooms were quite dirty . So the Japanese POWs had to build a second floor 1 inch above the original one. This camp did have toilets.

Tommy also spoke of what could be called “treasured moments” during the POW internment. He said that periodically, vegetables would be harvested at the Russian collective farms, and they needed the POWs for labor. Although the POWs were accompanied by Russian guards, the guards often kindly looked away. At times the prisoners would find and chew into carrots. One special time, Tommy saw an underground storage. He and a friend ventured into the area and discovered huge barrels – about 6 feet high and 10 feet in diameter. Tommy stood up on his friend's shoulders in order to reach into a barrel. What did his hand grasp and pull

SANGHA: Sarashina

out? --- salted fish !!! That was quite a find, and it must have been wonderful to bite into.

Question: "How did you meet your wife, Miyoshi (Sally)?" **Response:** "I met her in 1964 in Tokyo, and we got married in 1965. I used to work for Showa Oil Co. (affiliated with Shell). There were lots of engineers from London; I was an interpreter. One fellow introduced me to Sally, who worked at Hilton Hotel."

Tommy also talked about the long road he experienced in trying to get repatriated and return to America, specifically to Maui. He had dual citizenship when he moved to Japan with his family. That is the reason why he was drafted into the Japanese army. Tommy recalls that it was 1955 when he went to the American Embassy for the first time after deciding to move back to Maui. It took years, and in 1970 he finally received the letter from the State Department. He moved to Lahaina in 1971.



The above is a current photo showing Tommy pointing to a calligraphic writing of the Nembutsu – Namo Amida Butsu. Mr. Sarashina gave the following explanation relating to the writing. His father, Rev. Shinri Sarashina did the calligraphic writing in 1933 – the year of the construction of the present temple. His purpose in doing that was to have a temporary butsudan during the construction period, and for the safety of all of the people involved in the building project. Mr. Sarashina stated that originally, on either side of the nembutsu writing, Rev. Shinri had written the names of committee members, directors, etc. After the temple building was completed, the Nembutsu plaque was stored in the attic of the temple. Decades later, during the tenure of Rev. Yasuaki Hayashi (1983-1986), the resident minister discovered the Nembutsu plaque in the attic. He then built a butsudan for the plaque. This butsudan with the Onembutsu is now housed in the Hongwanji office.

Mr. Sarashina's work history in Lahaina is best told by the following article.

[From the Ka'anapali Golf Courses newsletter, 2004] →

"... Tommy Sarashina is a living historical icon who has worked for Kaanapali Golf Courses since 1971. He started in the ground maintenance department but accepted the responsibilities of Marshal when the position became available. For the last 17 years, he has been out on the North and South courses assisting guests, keeping the game at a reasonable pace and ensuring that rules of conduct are obliged. He is known by some as "Tommy Tang" for his previous servings of the Kraft Foods beverage Tang to players. Tommy is usually recognized driving the Marshal's cart and offering a warm smile to those he meets. If ever an emergency happens, Tommy handles it by coordinating with the Pro Shop. He also keeps the GPS locator up and running. Tommy reflects, 'Kaanapali Golf Courses' location is perfect because it's not too hot, there's not too much rain, and it is a great location because it lies right in the middle of Lahaina and Kapalua.' "

Mr. Howard Fields, currently a resident of Lahaina, has been interviewing Mr. Sarashina. He plans to write a book about Tommy's life and experiences. We can look forward to learning even more !

About the Treasure of the SANGHA

[From BUDDHADHARMA, the Practitioner's Quarterly]

To take refuge in the sangha treasure is to rely upon those who are walking the path with us. It's to understand deeply the value – indeed, the necessity – of being engaged in such a profoundly solitary practice with others. We often think of the sangha treasure in terms of the support it provides, but it's more than that. It allows us to fulfill our natural, necessary, and inescapable obligation to others. If we are to alleviate the suffering of others – of all beings – it should begin here, with this person in front of us, with the people in our sangha. If it doesn't happen here, it's not likely to happen at all.

If we're to regard all beings as endowed with enlightened nature, we should view the people most present in our lives as possessing that nature. Once we genuinely appreciate that the people we practice with possess buddhanature, then we need to cultivate the aspiration to do whatever we can to help them realize that truth. We then realize we can't confine such wisdom and generosity to our dharma friends. It becomes obvious that we need to open our hearts to every being, to the ten thousand things, regardless of their appearance and personality, their karma and background, their politics and lifestyle, what they do and don't do for us.

I've long felt that the practice of the sangha treasure is Buddhism's response to the eternal human question: Can we live together in peace? Since it's so easy to be caught in self-centeredness, we need to be very alert as we indulge our anger, or cultivate resentment or jealousy. In this way we develop tremendous patience, both with others and ourselves, as we open the heart of great compassion and begin to manifest harmony with all beings.

Project: Recording the Experiences and Life-Lessons of Our Sangha

A project of putting the wisdom and compassion of, and stories about our sangha at Lahaina Hongwanji on paper and / or DVD has been in the 'talking about it' stage for a while. The treasure of our own sangha is waiting to be tapped, especially from members who are in their 70s, 80s and 90s.

Let's move the project on to the action stage. Are there any members who would volunteer to interview our keiro-kai and get it down in print? Just picture it – a binder and a DVD would hold Lahaina Hongwanji's sangha legacy from this day forward.

If the project interests you, but you do not want to do interviewing, there will be other duties to assist the group that takes on this project.



If you are interested in this project and would like to help in some way, please look for the sign-up list on the temple bulletin board, or call Phyllis Nakamura, 661-4032.

About GOJIKAI (Membership Dues)

Dues are payable starting in January of each year.

Recommended amount: \$130 each year

- *Some members pay more than the suggested amount.*
- *Some pay in installments – such as, \$65 twice a year.*



"Oh, boy! It's really tough to balance the books. So many expenses ... how can we pay all our bills?"

Membership Dues are an important part of Lahaina Hongwanji's incoming funds.

Our **Proposed Budget for 2014** includes annual expenses, some of which are:

- Annual assessment paid to Honpa Hongwanji. (*The assessment per member is about \$160.*)
- Resident Minister's salary, including health insurance and other benefits.
- Automobile expenses, including insurance
- Insurance for temple, buildings, and grounds
- Repairs and maintenance
- Supplies and equipment



THANK YOU in advance for your continued membership and for your support of Lahaina Hongwanji. A strong membership and financial security help to keep our temple going and growing.

Lahaina Hongwanji Mission
President's New Year Message
2014

Happy New Year! Akemashite Omedeto Gozaimasu! Hauoli Maka Hiki Hou! FELIZ AÑO NUEVO! Selamat Tahun Baru! It doesn't matter how you extend greetings for a wonderful, prosperous New Year. Just say it !!!

The 2014 New Year is a significant one for Lahaina Hongwanji. The Sangha will come together to commemorate the 110th Anniversary. That's a whole lot of years. The temple was built by the Shin Buddhist faithful who helped establish the temple, its nokotsudo, resident minister's residence, social hall and school building. No doubt many other Issei and members of our Westside community pitched in to help with the construction work and maintenance that was needed over the years. As we enter the New Year, let's reflect on those who sacrificed and worked so hard to establish Lahaina Hongwanji in the finest of Shin Buddhist traditions.

As we begin the New Year, let us be mindful of our rich heritage. Let us be ever mindful to recognize the lessons we have learned from our past and apply these lessons in ways that make us wiser and stronger as a Sangha. Let's avoid "throwing the baby out with the bath water" simply because it's old or because something new or an apparent alternative appears too promising to resist.

Above all, may the 2014 New Year bring Peace that can be enjoyed by all. We as individuals should and can find ways to promote Peace. Remember, Peace starts at our doorstep! Let's also greet the New Year with a renewed commitment to the Buddha's teachings, Shinran Shonin's inspired guidance and the Amidasama's infinite wisdom and compassion.

Wishing you all the very best for the New Year. May 2014 be a productive, prosperous one for you.

Namo Amida Butsu.

Richard 'Noosh' Nishihara



Hironaka Sensei at Bodhi Day Service, with organist Michelle Zoodsma & Emcee Carol Inaba.

Year 2013 is
now a
gathering of
fond
memories ...



Megumi-san at work in her Japanese language class.



Kokoro with A-grade class project.



Dharma School friends.



Megumi-san and Minori-chan at Fujimatsuri - Wailuku HM.



A whole year ago in January, 2013: eldest, Kokoro, then Hoken, Ayumu, and Minori (in front of Kokoro).



**In Gratitude to the Members of
Lahaina Hongwanji Mission,
From Rev. Ai Hironaka, Megumi and
Kokoro, Hoken, Ayumu, and Minori**