



# GASSHO

## December

### 2014

Issue No: 12-14

*"Hands together in reverence & gratitude"*



## Season's Greetings!



Brought from Japan to Hawaii, a statue of Shinran Shonin arrived at Shinshu Kyokai, one of the delightful centennial changes. What wonders might church members behold in the next hundred years? *Photo by Russell Mukai*

### MONTH'S THOUGHT



"Almost every commentator on the current scene bemoans the increase of violence, lowered ethical standards and loss of civility that mark American society. Is the decline of religious influence part of what is happening to us? Is it not just possible that anti-religious bias masquerading as religious neutrality is costing more than we have been willing to acknowledge?" William Raspberry, "Christmas Without Meaning? Must the Religious Make a Secret of Their Beliefs?" *The Washington Post*, December 24, 1993, A15.



### AS OUR CENTENNIAL YEAR COMES TO AN END

by rev. roland k. tatsuguchi

As Shinshu Kyokai's centennial year 2014 comes to its end, fond memories of *Issei* members who once lived in the Pawaa-Sheridan neighborhood and by the old temple and parsonage on 1014 Kaheka Lane come to mind. Memories of the Great Depression years up to WWII also arise. Then the words of Rennyo Shonin — "Life is momentary, passing and transient" — become vividly undeniable fact.

As an octogenarian I will be entering my eighty-fifth year of life the very instant when New Year's Eve seamlessly becomes New Year's Day at midnight. As Rennyo Shonin said: "A person's lifetime is but full of dreamlike beginnings and

# REMINDERS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

## SERVICES FOR DECEMBER 2014

### 1ST SUN Dec 07th

SKM Services Cancelled  
Please Attend  
**HBC "BODHI" DAY SERVICE**

### 2ND SUN Dec 14th

Shinshu Kyokai's  
**BODHI DAY SERVICE**  
9 A.M. English Service

### 3RD SUN Dec 21st

9 A.M. Eng. Service  
Dharma Talk for Children & Adults  
Rev. Tatsuguchi

### 4TH SUN Dec 28th

MONTHLY FAMILY WORSHIP  
9 A.M. "Dharma Talk"  
Rev. Tatsuguchi

### **WEDNESDAY, Dec 31st** ***New Year's Eve Service***

7 P.M. English service  
Soba will be served after Service

### **THURSDAY, Jan 1st** ***New Year's Day Service***

10 A.M. English Service

## WEEKLY ACTIVITIES

**KARAOKE SINGERS CLUB** Mon 7 - 9 p.m.  
Mr. Nelson Yoshioka

**KARATE CLASSES** Tues & Fri 6 - 8 p.m.  
Int'l Karate League - Walter Nishioka

**KARATE CLASSES** Thurs 5:30 - 8:30 p.m.  
Hawaii Shotokan Karate - Alan Sekiguchi

**FUJINKAI LADIES' FELLOWSHIP GROUP**  
Tues 9 a.m. - noon

### *Wedding Congratulations*

Gaven Ikeda & Shawn Yamasaki  
November 1, 2014 - Ihilani Resort

### *With Deepest Sympathy*

Mrs. Grace H.I. Sakuragi 86 yrs. Oct. 8, 2014

### **THANK YOU**

*for YOUR GENEROUS DONATIONS !!*

### 2014 Memorial Service Schedule

2013	1 Year	2012	3 Year	2008	7 Year
2002	13 Year	1998	17 Year	1990	25 Year
1982	33Year	1965	50 Year	1915	100 Year

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endings." The memories of my early childhood now are nothing more than blurred nostalgic recollections.

Now in my twilight years all the more do I ponder the truth to the words of a Japanese song, "Haha wo Shinobu" as follows:

"Wanting to be born and yet  
unable to be born!  
Not expecting to be born,  
and yet suddenly born!"

Followed by the ending words:

"People are born naked  
without a thing or a name!  
Then, they laugh, get angry,  
and become attached  
to their possessions!  
They especially become anxious  
about losing their loved ones.  
Nevertheless, once again,  
people become completely  
naked and without a thing  
To then continue their journey  
into the Unknown Beyond"  
Trans. from *Haha wo Shinobu*

The Japanese lyricist who wrote these words obviously based them on the Buddha's teachings that life is transitory (*anitya*) and that the nature of things and life is such that no thing of form of life can stay the same unchanged and intact (*anatman*).

My dad was born in 1898. He was called to serve Shinshu Kyokai at age 29 in 1927. Then my dad returned to Japan to bring my mom to Honolulu. They had married a year and a half before they came to Honolulu. She was 25 when she came to Honolulu. I was born in 1930. My

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## WORDS OF SHINRAN

When the one thought moment  
of joy arises  
Nirvana is attained without  
severing blind passions;  
When the ignorant and wise,  
even grave offenders and  
slanderers of the dharma  
All alike turn about  
and enter shinjin,  
They are like waters that,  
on entering the ocean,  
become one in taste with it.  
*SBT-Series. Notes on the  
Inscriptions on the Scrolls.  
pp. 69, 70.*

dad and mom then became the first husband and wife team to serve Shinshu Kyokai. By then the temple had been relocated from the dead end of Aloha Lane all the way up to 1014 Kaheka Lane. Now Kaheka Lane today is Kaheka Street. The area now has become part of the Pawaa Neighborhood District Park. This area once was full of single family homes. It was bought out by Sears, Roebuck and turned into a parking lot, then became parking for the Honolulu Police Department.

The time from the 1800s, the 1920s and the 1930s up to Japan's attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, present strange moments in American history. For it must be remembered that with the arrival of New England missionaries in the 1820s, beginning with Queen Kaahumanu's conversion to Christianity, other Hawaiian ali'i (royalty) began to be converted to Christianity. Eventually the Hawaiian Monarchy was toppled and replaced by a provisional government comprised of European and American businessmen in collusion with the descendents of missionaries who gained great tracts of Hawaiian land. When Hawaii was annexed as a territory of the United States, the provisional government comprised of these men came to control the economic, political, culture and religious life of the people.

The first Chinese to set foot on Hawaiian soil was in 1778. A decade later, a Chinese brought the first sugar mill to Hawaii from China. It was,

however, not until 1823 that a Chinese trader with a stock of goods to sell took up permanent residence in Honolulu that became the Chinatown district. By 1840, there were 40 or so foreigners living in Honolulu. Of these, 30 or more were Chinese. Then a group of indentured Chinese plantation workers arrived in 1852. Between 1852 and 1856, several thousand Chinese were brought in as contract plantation workers. Many being bachelors married Hawaiian women because Chinese women were not available.

According to Wikipedia, the free Internet encyclopedia, the sugar plantations with their Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino laborers were

“... tightly controlled by former missionary families, concentrated in corporations known in Hawaii as ‘The Big Five.’ These included Castle & Cooke, Alexander & Baldwin, C. Brewer & Co., American Factors, and Theo H. Davies and Co., which together eventually gained control over other aspects of the Hawaiian economy including banking, warehousing, shipping, and importing. This control of commodity distribution kept Hawaiians burdened under high prices and toiling under a diminished quality of life. These businessmen had perfected the double-edged sword of a wage-earning labor force dependent upon plantation goods and services. Close ties as missionaries to the Hawaiian monarchy along with capital investments, cheap land, cheap labor, and increased global trade, allowed them to prosper.”

Now the *Issei* Japanese working on plantations in the last half of the 1800s well before my dad and mom arrived in 1927 were contract laborers who also were bachelors. Those who came later during the Great Depression Years were professional and business people who operated their own businesses, mama-san and papa-san shops and stores in neighborhoods like Pawa, Sheridan, Kakaako, Palama and Kalihi.

So, when speculation on the stock market reached rampant, unsettling highs and the Great Depression of the 1920s and 1930s began setting in, the market first, then the banks, and finally the whole economy of the United States burst into a massive depression that would last until the

outbreak of WWII. Then suddenly a “war-time economy” began off-setting the depression. Though the federal government tried to resolve the psychological damage and economic hardship that was brought to bear on ordinary Americans throughout the United States, in Hawaii, however, it was the “aloha spirit” of the common working people of various ethnicities, especially the local born Hawaiians of various and mixed ancestries, who looked beyond self-interest and found ways to help one another that made a great difference.

In those painful days of the Great Depression, in spite of cultural, religious, linguistic and especially racial discrimination, people in Hawaii were able to relate to each other through a special “language” suffused with the “spirit of aloha.” This common language was comprised of Hawaiian, English, Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese. Pidgin allowed plantation workers to communicate effectively with one another and promoted a transfer of knowledge and traditions between the various ethnic groups. The workers of European and Portuguese descent, however, were given positions as “lunas” or overseers and paid higher wages than workers of Asian descent. They supervised the Chinese, Japanese, Korean and Filipino laborers who were paid much less for their labors.

During the WWII years there were people not affiliated with Shinshu Kyokai who directly or indirectly helped my mother get through those most trying years of WWII. Such people as Dr. Gilbert and Minnie Bowles, retired Quaker missionaries, being bilingual and proficient in reading and writing Japanese, were a great help to my mother who could not read or understand English. There were also individuals who anonymously helped our family by leaving money or food items or whatever at the temple for us.

Many today do not know that Kaheka Steet was once called Aloha Lane that was renamed Kaheka Lane. The lane during WWII and some years thereafter was a dead-end at what is now the “T” intersection at Kaheka and Rycroft streets near Pagoda Restaurant. In King Kamehameha I’s time the area was once tidal wetlands full of marshes and swamps. Not many know that the Moiliili Park and the Old Stadium were once full of duckponds and rice paddies. Fort DeRussy itself was once an ocean water fishpond. The areas of Kaimuki High School and the Ala Wai Golf Course

were once full of rice paddies fed by the waters of bubbling artesian wells and streams. The artesian well in Pagoda Restaurant once fed the paddies and duckpond on the Sheridan side Pahke Patch tended by Chinese bachelors. In fact, there are pictures of the area from Waikiki, Kapahulu, Kapiolani, Moiliili, up to the base of St. Louis Heights, Manoa and Palolo Valleys showing that this vast area was once generously fed by rainfall, mountain streams and gushing artesian wells.

In fact, ancient photographs show that these areas were full of freshwater fish ponds as well as taro patches. Well before King Kamehameha I conquered Oahu, Waikiki was full of bubbling artesian wells. Waikiki in translation means "bubbling waters," meaning bursting with gushing spring waters. These waters fed the network of streams and rivulets that once flowed throughout the area into the sea. In fact, the records show that in the 1400s, Chief Kalamakua built irrigation systems to take advantage of Waikiki's abundant waters. This system of irrigation ditches were built in the 1450s.

In 1794, Kamehameha I from the Big Island invaded Oahu with a fleet of canoes. His army stormed Waikiki Beach and set out to take on Oahu's Chief Kalanikupule and his warriors. Kamehameha had quite an advantage, for among his warriors were several Western sharpshooters with firearms and hand cannons. As of consequence, the warriors of Kalanikupule were forced to retreat before such firepower. They were pursued up the valley, up to the very edge of the steep Pali cliffs. They were driven off to their deaths.

Long before Kamehameha's invasion, Honolulu was no more than a little harbor village with small huts near the beach front of Mamala Bay. The bay came to be known as Honolulu, which means "protected bay." By 1809, King Kameha-meha moved his residence from Waikiki to Honolulu proper to tighten his control on the then flourishing fur and valuable sandalwood trade with China. By the 1820s, whaling ships began harboring in Mamala Bay. Their crews were a rough crowd. Taverns and brothels soon followed to serve their needs.

Soon thereafter arrived the New England missionaries who traveled to the other islands to convert especially the Hawaiian ali'i. The

## SHINRAN'S WASAN

This "me" that I am lacking  
a heart of shame and penitence,  
Nonetheless, is endowed with  
the Virtues of Amida's Name  
permeating the "ten directions."

*Shozo-matsu Wasan No. 97*  
rkt translation

missionaries exerted enormous influence on Hawaiian royalty with their Calvinistic view of sinfulness. By the mid-1800s, they managed to convince the Hawaiian ali'i to prosecute drunken sailors and curb the growing prostitution trade. Most whaling boats then abandoned Honolulu to harbor in Lahaina on Maui. The sons of the original missionaries would in time become businessmen who came to wield enormous power in the islands. They came to control most of the land and operated large and profitable sugar plantations. Westerners also brought many diseases that decimated the native Hawaiian population that had no immunity to them.

Faced with a shortage of workers due to the decimation of native Hawaiians by diseases, the sugar and pineapple plantation owners first brought thousands of Chinese, then Japanese, followed by Portuguese and other Europeans, then the Koreans and finally the Filipinos to work their plantations. In the meantime, the United States was already venturing out in the Pacific regions to establish strategic military bases on such islands as Wake, Midway and the Philippines. Most people do not realize how the island of Oahu was becoming full of military installations even before the fall of the Hawaiian Monarchy.

The Hawaiian islands reportedly were first discovered on January 18, 1778, by British explorer Captain James Cook, who landed on Kauai. Honolulu then was a small village. Purportedly it became a harbor for foreign fishermen in the early 1800s. Though the Spanish, Portuguese and Dutch were already crisscrossing the Pacific Ocean ever since the 16th century, they had not come across the Hawaiian Islands. Because the Bay of Honolulu provided a safe resting spot for merchant and whaling ships in the 1800s, it became a flourishing center of trade. This was especially so for those

dealing in the lucrative sandalwood trade with China.

Foreigners began to visit Waikiki as early as 1830. Soon a road was constructed in the 1860s from Waikiki to downtown Honolulu and a tramway and tramcars were introduced in the late 1880s. After annexation, in anticipation of an increase in visitors, the Moana Hotel was opened in 1901 followed by the "Pink Palace," the Royal Hawaiian, in 1927. The Waikiki area then included the Moiliili-Kapahulu, Palolo, Manoa and Makiki districts all the way down to Ala Moana beach. In those days there were no highrises or the Ala Moana Shopping Center. There were tidelands, marshes, coral outcroppings, inlets and islets.

American and European speculators saw possibilities in turning the wetlands fed by mountain streams and artesian wells into real estate by filling them with coral materials obtained in dredging canals and channels such as the Ala Wai Canal, Ala Moana beachfront channel, Kewalo Basin, Honolulu Harbor and the seaplane landing and take-off lanes in Keehi Lagoon. People born after the Viet Nam War generally are not aware that even before the Hawaiian Monarchy was toppled, the island of Oahu was already being well fortified as a military bastion beginning with facilities like Fort Shafter, Pearl Harbor, Hickam, Fort Ruger, Diamond Head, Fort DeRussy and so forth.

World War I ushered in a new era that began turning Waikiki into a tourist resort area. The wetlands and marshes were declared a health hazard and drained by constructing the Ala Wai Canal which was completed in 1928. These wetland areas of Waikiki, as of consequence, were reclaimed by filling them with dredged coral material and soil. The lands were divided into 5,000-square-foot lots. This real estate development turned what was one estuarial Waikiki into a suburb for tourists. The Moana Hotel was the first to be built with all its grandeur, offering its guests true respite and rejuvenation.

So what did the landscape look like from Palolo down to the Kapahulu-Kapiolani Park to Kuhio Beach and in the low-lying areas of Moiliili below St. Louis Heights, Manoa and Palolo Valleys before the arrivals of Rev. Untai Toshima and Rev. Jyakujiyo Takeda, the first ministers to serve the fledgling members of Shinshu Kyokai of the Aloha Lane community in 1914? Basically the area was

one of single-family wooden houses instead of the concrete highrises that you see today.

Now, when the Japanese navy attacked Pearl Harbor, posters saying "Speak American" were posted in ethnically diverse areas of the United States. While Japanese Americans were singled out, martial law affected the entire population. My father and other ministers and community leaders, being Japanese aliens, that very evening were arrested, held at Sand Island, then shipped to the mainland to internment camps for the duration of WWII.

Everyone, as I recall, was required to carry a gas mask at all times. The beautiful beaches of Waikiki were covered with barbed wire. Curfews and blackouts forced everyone indoors by 6:00 p.m. Everyone throughout the United States was fingerprinted. It was the first mass fingerprinting of civilians in U.S. history. Phone calls and mail were censored, and the federal government issued paper currency with "HAWAII" in capital letters imprinted on the back so that they could be used only in the islands. Hawaii *Nisei* didn't complain much about their plight and were eager to prove their loyalty as they did in the 100th Infantry Battalion and 442nd Infantry Regiment.

Speaking of the war years, a Faustina Bayas, a Filipino worker for the Waipahu Sugar Plantation, spoke of December 7, 1941, as follows:

"We thought they were practice shooting because we heard it all the time."

This was also what I thought when I heard the "popping" of anti-aircraft shells in the skies that Sunday morning in Sunday School.

Then Bayas noted the difficulty that the soldiers from the mainland assigned to Hawaii had in distinguishing who was Japanese, Chinese or Filipino. For they thought everyone in Hawaii who was not white (Caucasian) was Japanese as far as they were concerned. This inability of mainland soldiers, sailors and airmen on furlough roaming in Waikiki and the Hotel Street area fueled several instances of racial tension between them and the local boys trying to protect local girls from being enticed and seduced.

Then he pointed out that:

"Gasoline and food items were rationed through ration stamps and ID cards with one's fingerprints were required to be carried all the time."

But then, he also noted that

"though people said the Japanese could not be trusted, locking up things never came up in those days (on the plantation) because we trusted everyone."

In those days, Bayas said:

"families did not have convenient gadgets and luxuries like we have today."

He also tells of how workers were identified and called by their assigned *ban'go* which is a Japanese term for number. Workers were called and paid by their assigned number, not by their names.

He tells of being paid a dollar ten cents a day and how he was

"up by 3 o'clock in the morning, cook our own provisions ... 6 a.m. take train to work site ... soon as getting there, except for lunch break work until 3:30 — *pau hana* — return to home.

He then told of the days before mechanization when they used to have men loading the cane cars by walking up narrow ladder planks with a bundle of cane on their shoulders. There were frequent accidents. Men would slip and fall. They either suffered strained backs or sprained ankles, or a broken back or leg.

Most of them, according to Bayas, suffered cane knife cuts, lacerations, bruises, incised wounds and abrasions. Being assigned to the plantation dispensary, his responsibility was to clean, dress 'em up, do the paperwork, make a report and file the history of the accident. He even had to sew up a corpse whereby it affected him so that he could not eat for two or three days.

Now, let us turn to an Abigail Burgess and Lillian Cameron for a non-Japanese perception of *Issei* and their *Nisei* children. But first let us hear of what they said about Kakaako as being the best place in town to be living in. They lived on Queen Street near the fire station. They claimed that

Kakaako in those days was the best because:

"you could go down to the beach to fish for our own food ... all the fish, the squid, all the opaiies you wanted. Limu — O tons of limu. ... If you got too much of it, you just gave it to the neighbors. So those days was really nice, everybody sharing."

Indeed, this "spirit of sharing" still can be found among local born people who have roots in such a past of Ohana (family) and Aloha Spirit (sharing).

Then they recalled that in Kakaako there were but a few stores here and there and a church. Burgess and Cameron then recall the "Poragee" (Portuguese), Japanese and "Kanaka" (Hawaiian) camps (meaning rentals) in Kakaako. They do not recall any Chinese living there. This probably was because they were already well established in Honolulu's Chinatown.

Then, they recall that the Japanese would not mix (intermarry?) with other nationalities as did the Portugese with the Hawaiians or the Filipinos with others. The Japanese did not mix and kept

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## Donations

*continued from p. 2*

*... to be continued in the next Gassho*

to themselves. But now after WWII this is no longer the case.

Of those times before WWII, Burgess and Cameron recall getting along with kids of other races, but then, they also recalled that:

“like kids, we all used to fight with one another, with different groups ... calling people names ... the Portuguese ‘codfish’ and all that, the Japanese ‘You Buddha heads’ ... the Hawaiians ‘You Kanakas.’”

Both then recalled the hard times of the Depression years when their mothers worked in the pineapple canneries to supplement their husband's income. Then, they fondly recall how their mothers would often bring home the cores of the pineapple as a treat which they said:

“was the greatest thing we ever had. The little we got then during those years, we really thought it was a treat.”

This also reminds me of how *Issei* mothers back in those days would save the scorched rice (*koge gohan*) or stale bread to pan fry them in oil (or butter if they could afford to do so) to then sprinkle some sugar on them as treats for their children.

Burgess and Cameron also recalled how they disguised themselves as boys and sold newspapers for five cents after buying two for five cents. So to make five cents they had to sell two papers. To help out, they gave the day's profits to their mothers. They slept on mats spread out on the floors because of their large families.

Back in those days, other plantation families experienced the same difficulties and hardships as did Bayas. People in Honolulu also experienced much of what Burgess and Cameron experienced. But, in recalling former times, they all seem to say they were happier back then when families were much closer together than the families of today consumed by all the endless stuff and gadgets that keep pouring in to push out the perfectly good stuff that then suddenly becomes old stuff while the new stuff keeps rolling in. Is it not time for us to reflect and understand why this is so and begin to correct the situation by not taking things for granted and not to feel that we are “entitled” and have the “right” to be excessive or wasteful.

## Shinshu Kyokai Mission

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## BUDDHIST VERSES & STORIES

“Whenever a person expresses the thought of his mind in action there is always a reaction. ...

“One should get rid of a selfish mind and replace it with a mind that is earnest to help others. ...

“Thousands of candles can be lighted from a single candle, and the life of the candle will not be shortened. Happiness never decreases by being shared.” *BDK. The Teaching of Buddha*, p. 260.

## QUESTION & ANSWER KORNER

QUESTION: What does *ji-shin kyô-nin shin* mean?

ANSWER: Simply: “By living one's faith, others are led to a life of faith.” There is a Japanese saying: *Kodomo wa oya no senaka wo mite sodatsu*, which literally means “children grow up watching the backsides of their parents.” In other words, we human beings learn from what people say and do when no one's watching them.