

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii

HEADQUARTERS UPDATE

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OCTOBER 2014

THE 32ND WORLD JODO SHINSHU COORDINATING COUNCIL MEETING AND THE 17TH BIENNIAL EUROPEAN SHIN BUDDHIST CONFERENCE

The 32nd World Jodo Shinshu Coordinating Council Meeting was held on August 31, 2014 in Southampton, England. For some of you, Southampton may ring a bell. It is the port town from which the Titanic sailed. In attendance at the Council Meeting were: Governor in-charge of Overseas Bishop Ryuji Kuwaba, Director Rev. Shun'ei Sakae, Rev. Sammi Kiribayahsi and Rev. Itaru Nozaki of Japan, Bishop Kodo Umezu, National President Dr. Kent Matsuda, Mr. Alan Kita and Rev. Kiyonobu Kuwahara from Buddhist Churches of America, Bishop Tatsuya Aoki of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist Temples of Canada, Rev. Gary



Robinson of United Kingdom and Rev. Fons Martens of Belgium as observers from the European District and Bishop Eric Matsumoto, State President Pieper Toyama and Executive Assistant to the Bishop Rev. Toshiyuki Umitani from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. Unfortunately, due to circumstances, Sul-Americana Da Seita Jodo Shinshu Honpa Hongwanji (South American District) was not able to attend.

Following standard practices, reports were shared by each Overseas District on developments since last year's meeting and a report was also given by Japan. The Japan (Honzan) report included: Monshu Succession, Hongwanji New Project extended from Kid's Sangha, 2014 Tokudo Programs, IMOP and English Correspondence Course Hongwanji Propagation in Europe, Minister and Tokudo Holder's List and Initiative to Nurture the Overseas District. The Japan Report emphasized "Building Opportunities for Children and Youth (Kids' Sangha campaign expansion)." "In recognition of the Succession of the Jodo Shinshu Tradition ceremonial observance, we will strive to further promote the Kids' Sangha program, providing not only children, but also youth, with as many opportunities as possible to make the temple an integral part of their daily lives."

After spending some time on Old Business, attention shifted to New Business. New Business items included: Aging population of the temple members and declining membership, Middle and long term visions for International Propagation, World Buddhist Women's Convention Calgary 2015 and San Francisco 2019, and District Name Plates for Overseas' HQ Offices.

After the Meeting, attendees attended a dinner hosted by Hongwanji with Zen-mon-sama in attendance. A special note of interest for Hawaii is that at this dinner the Resolution of Appreciation from Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii to His Eminence Koshin Ohtani, the 24th Spiritual Leader of the Hongwanji, which originated with the Hawaii Federation of Jr. YBAs, was personally hand delivered to His Eminence along with a photo of the attendees of the most recent State Jr. YBA Convention. Further, a Letter of Appreciation

and Gratitude, authored by the Hawaii Delegation, was presented to His Eminence on behalf of the Four Overseas Districts to express our appreciation.

The next few days, the 4 Overseas District Delegations attended the 17th Biennial European Shin Buddhist Conference with the theme “Jodo Shinshu in Daily Life” at Southampton Solent University Conference Centre. It was attended by His Eminence Koshin Ohtani, Zen-mon-sama. At this Conference, presentations were mainly made by European Shin Buddhists from Germany, United Kingdom, Romania and Belgium, but included presentations and attendance by Shin Buddhists from Australia, Nepal, Japan, USA and other European countries like Switzerland. At the Conference, our European Buddhists were made aware of the existence of PBA/Pacific Buddhist Academy.

For us, from Canada, US Mainland, and Hawaii, it was our first encounter and experience in meeting our fellow Shin Buddhists in Europe. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet them and also hear their presentations which were well-prepared and in many cases very deep, but you could also sense their deep appreciation and highest regard for the Nembutsu Teachings that they each held. They were very earnest and enthusiastic and sincere and appreciative. This was most touching and probably the best experience of the entire trip which took us so far away to England. From Hawaii, it took us, literally, a whole day to get there with a 15 ½ hour plane ride, but meeting our fellow Shin Buddhists from around the world made it certainly worthwhile. We left marveling and grateful for the wonderful workings of Amida Buddha’s Wisdom and Compassion which connected, guided and embraced all of us!

Namo Amida Butsu/Entrusting in the Buddha of Immeasurable Life and Infinite Light.
Eric Matsumoto, Bishop

PEACE ON YOUR WINGS

World Premiere (Oahu) Performances

November 20th-22nd, 2014 @ Leeward Community College Theatre.

Tickets are available through www.showtix4u.com

Neighbor Island tour (January-February 2015) is currently being planned.

“We are currently in rehearsal for “Peace On Your Wings” written by Jennifer Taira and Laurie Rubin. This upbeat and modern musical is based on Sadako Sasaki’s inspiring life story and helps spread the message of peace. I am very excited to direct this original musical with so many wonderful and talented kids from all over Hawaii from ages 6-18. Also, there are live taiko numbers that will feature many students from The Pacific Buddhist Academy and Hongwanji Mission School. Please join us in helping to spread our message of peace and harmony.” (Cari Lee, Director of “Peace On Your Wings”, HMS Drama Teacher)

“I am very excited to be in this musical because we are the first ones to perform this musical. I think this musical is filled with lots of touching moments. I also think this musical is filled with dance, music and a message of friendship, love, and peace.” (Naho Umitani, HMS 5th Grade)

“It is a great opportunity to be a part of this musical, especially since it’s an original musical that promotes a meaningful and peaceful message. The music is amazing, catchy, and written with a beautiful complexity that helps to emphasize the characters in their own unique, lovable way. Also, “Peace On Your Wings” not only fosters peace on a global level but among our peers as well. The story shares the message that treating others with respect and making good decisions are important steps to achieving harmony and peace.” (Shelby Taketa, PBA 10th grade)



HHMH 125TH DISTRICT EVENTS

125th Theme "Live with Harmony, Peace and Gratitude: Share Aloha"

District	Date	Time	Event	Place
Maui	October 18, 2014	4pm-8pm	A Taste of Hongwanji	Kahului Hongwanji
	November 1, 2014	9am-1pm	125 th Celebration Service	Wailuku Hongwanji
Kauai	November 16, 2014	8am	Kauai District Affirmation Rites	Kapaa Hongwanji
		10am	125 th Celebration Service	
Hawaii	November 22, 2014	4pm	Hawaii District Affirmation Rites	Hilo Betsuin
	November 23, 2014	9am	Hilo Betsuin & HHMH 125 th Celebration Service	

***For more detailed information of these events, please contact the temples on each district.*

ARRIVAL OF THE NEW MINISTER

Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii welcomed the newest minister, Rev. Daido Baba, on September 27, 2014. Rev. Baba is from Chiba prefecture in Japan. After graduating from Ryukoku University Graduate Course with a major of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in 2010, he had worked at the Honzan (our mother temple in Kyoto, Japan) for three years. Last year he had successfully completed the Honzan's IMOP (International Ministerial Orientation Program) which is required for him to become an Overseas Minister, and effective on October 1, 2014, he officially became a Kaikyoshi Minister of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. He will receive an orientation during a month of October and will be assigned to Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin as its Associate Minister as of November 1, 2014. Rev. Baba said, "I came to Hawaii seven years ago for the first time. At that time, I was a student at Ryukoku University. After that I had various experiences such as marriage and child rearing. I could finally become a minister of Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii. I'll meet a lot of happy things and surprising things from now on. I want to enjoy Nembutsu life in Hawaii with my wife and two boys."



DHARMA EDUCATOR'S CONFERENCE

A Dharma School Teachers Conference hosted by a district comes every two years. This year the Dharma School Teachers of Oahu hosted the conference at the Ala Moana Hotel on October 11 - 12, 2014. As the planning committee gathered they wrestled with ideas for the conference - should it be filled with lesson plans, or should it have a famous speaker from the mainland, or should the sessions deal with social issues? After much discussion, the committee decided to do none of these. They decided to change the name of the conference to "Dharma Educators' " and that it would include everyone in Hawaii Kyodan because we are all educators of the Dharma. Hence, the theme "Engage! The Dharma".

From that point on, we walked on a new path but always with the intent of the engagement of the Dharma foremost in our minds. We decided to ask James Koshiba to be our keynote speaker. He is a writer, consultant, and organizer whose work focuses on building community around island values and ideals. Many of these values and ideals go hand in hand with Buddhist values. He co-founded Kanu Hawaii, a non-profit organization dedicated to building a social movement for sustainable communities, rooted in personal commitments to change. Under his leadership, Kanu attracted a membership of 20,000 individuals spread across every Hawaiian island in under 5 years.

Connected to the keynote address, participants were given the opportunity to break up into 7 small groups to discuss their thoughts on the address as well as the challenges they were experiencing personally or at their temple. The groups were ably assisted by facilitators from the Mindful Hawaii organization. They were Paula Allen, Stephen Chinen, Ernestine Enomoto, Karl Minke, Rod Moriyama, La Vonne Richardson, and James Toyama.

After a delicious lunch, the participants attended two of four workshop sessions in the afternoon.

Workshop 1: Gratitude by Pieper Toyama

Workshop 2: Buddhist Study Center Fellowship Club Panel. The panel members were Jessica Galacgac, Lacy Tsutsuse, Emi Hashi, Dustin Iwasaki, and Bryce Ikeda.

Workshop 3: Social Media by Robin Dazzeo

Workshop 4: Gatha Singing by BJ Soriano

The workshops were well-attended and enjoyed by everyone, even the morning's facilitators.

The day was not done. After a sumptuous dinner buffet, challenging work lay ahead. The participants were divided into 8 mixed temple groups and they discussed the challenges that were noted at the facilitated sessions such as temple membership, use of social media, or youth involvement. The groups worked on ideas that would assist their temples in overcoming these challenges. They would have one year to work on their projects. The projects and results would be reported to the Commissioner on Buddhist Education in their district who would then bring it to the state level so ideas would be circulated statewide.

After a restful night, the participants shared their projects the next day. It was interesting to hear out-of-the-box ideas. The sharing of ideas spurred other groups to tweak their own projects. It was also encouraging to hear many temples planning to incorporate social media to reach out to the greater community.

The planning committee's goal was to infuse energies and ideas to be spread throughout the state. As we watched everyone diligently working, we feel that it will bring about next year's theme, "Embrace Change - Awareness", into fruition.

HAWAII BETSUIN HONDO OVERFLOWS WITH CHORALFEST 2014

Choralfest 2014 brought together singers from near and far to celebrate the joy of the Buddha-Dharma in song. Held at Hawaii Betsuin on the weekend of September 27 and 28, choralfest concluded with a stunning Sunday Music Service featuring renditions of choral masterpieces by the festival choir under the direction of conductor Nola Nahulu. The service drew an appreciative congregation that overflowed beyond the hondo's side panel doors, which were opened to allow everyone access. Even in 'open air,' the beautiful voices retained focus by the wide semi-circular positioning of singers around the hondo audience.

One hundred fifty singers participated, representing temples from all districts of the state of Hawaii -- and a few in Japan. Mindful of space limits, the Music Committee invited three choral groups from Japan who responded with a total of 35 singers. Their participation not only enhanced the overall quality of singing but also made this the first *international* choralfest held in Hawaii!

Just after noon on Saturday, singers assembled at the Social Hall for four hours of intense rehearsal. With consummate musicianship and charm, conductor Nahulu turned a group of individual singers into a unified choir that responded with nuance and understanding. Participants will attest that to undergo this transformation is to experience not only good music making but also sound collaborative achievement.

It was fitting that the highlight of the choir's offering on Sunday was a home-grown work of art. In *Buddha's Great Light*, lyricist Carrie Kawamoto and composer Jennifer Taira, both of Mililani Hongwanji, gave performer

and listener a satisfying sweep of expression in a unique contemporary voice. Other beautiful choral gathas included *Cosmos Flower*, *Lullaby for Children of the World*, *Each Day Anew*, *Amida's Compassionate Vow*, and *Gratefulness II*, all of Japanese origin and English adaptation by the Music Committee. Ms. Nahulu conducted superbly and was assisted on the piano by accompanist Francis Okano.

The weekend was ably hosted by Hawaii Betsuin and its affiliated organizations. Participants were most appreciative of the food service so warmly provided by the ladies (and few recruited men) of the Hawaii Betsuin BWA. All being well, choralfest is expected to reconvene in two years for another joyous celebration of the Buddha-Dharma in song. Experiencing the joy of singing is open to all.



*Choralfest 2014
Music Service, Festival Choir*

Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin

Sunday, September 28, 2014

PEACE DAY - Honokaa

Parents and students of Honokaa Elementary School, participating in the Peace Day Parade, Honokaa, the Big Island of Hawaii. Students are carrying their donation of cranes to the Peace Committee's "199,000 Cranes" project. The parade was among ten different events scheduled for the 8th Annual Parade and Festival for the United Nations International Day of Peace, produced by the Peace Committee of Honoka`a Hongwanji Buddhist Temple, Honoka`a, the Big Island of Hawaii. (Photo courtesy of Sarah Anderson Photography)



"RUN FOR PEACE" TO SUPPORT PBA

Runners from PBA sangha are running in the Honolulu Marathon to raise money for PBA's Annual Fund. So far, "Run for Peace" runners are Rüdiger Rückmann, PBA's Director of Advancement, and David Atcheson, father of PBA senior Koki Atcheson. Runners are accepting pledges at the following website: <http://bit.ly/peacerun>. If you are training for the marathon and would like to join the "Run for Peace" team, contact Rüdiger at [\(808\) 532-2649](tel:8085322649) or rudiger.ruckmann@pbahi.org.

GIVE ALOHA PROGRAM RESULTS

We are truly grateful for your generous donations, especially those of the women of the Honolulu United BWA, and the matching contributions from Foodland, which all combined, will add \$2900.07 to the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii's Ministerial Training Fund. The Ministerial Training Fund provides assistance to ministerial aspirants who are working towards their ordination and certification to become Hawaii Kyodan ministers.