

# Musical Notes



A Publication of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission Office of Buddhist Education Music Committee

January 2011 Issue



## **FOR THE LOVE OF A SONG** **Cecilia Kapuaokaainaoku'ui poleimanu Lindo** by Kaethe Kauffman



**Cecilia K. Lindo**

**Cecilia Kapuaokaainaoku'ui poleimanu Lindo** grew up in a family steeped in Hawaiian music and tradition. She and her mother were both named "Cecilia" after the patron saint of music. Cecilia's middle name, given to her by her pure Hawaiian grandmother, means "the child of this land which is blessed by a precious feather lei." In the 1930s and 1940s, people in Hawaii strived to be "modern," some Hawaiian customs were not as accepted as they are today. Cecilia remembers whenever the weather was stormy, her grandmother loosened her long braided hair, shook it out, put on a full red skirt and went on the porch to chant in Hawaiian. When Cecilia was young, her grandmother's beliefs embarrassed her, but now she appreciates her direct connection to nature and ancient Hawaiian customs. Her grandmother made sure each grandchild received a Hawaiian name as a way to connect them to their heritage; their names seem to personify who they are.

Cecilia's Catholic mother, also pure Hawaiian, was a graduate of Sacred Hearts and was the organist at Our Lady of Peace church in Honolulu. She loved to play classical and church music. However, Cecilia was three years old when her beautiful and talented mother died of TB, a sad, but common fate for Hawaiians in the early 1930s.

A dedicated father, Cecilia's dad, Charles Lee, raised Cecilia and her three other siblings with the help of his family. A son of Chinese immigrants, her father worked as a manager at Liberty House, but was also a talented musician as well as a conductor, arranger, and manager of Hawaiian and popular music of the time. He is featured in the book ***The Golden Years of Hawaiian Entertainment: 1874 to 1974*** by Tony Tadaio along with other noted family members Billy Lee and Kui Lee (Cecilia's first cousin.)

Since early childhood, Cecilia studied hula in her mother's youngest sister's halau, Kamae's Hula Studio. Cecilia's love of music and hula so permeated her life, she does not remember a time she did not sing and dance. Both sides of her family always sang, played instruments and danced at every family get-together.

When Cecilia became a teacher after the war, she naturally taught children music and dance, integrated into lessons in writing and history. She taught at Kamehameha School, at the University Lab School and eventually at the Honpa Hongwanji Mission School, mostly in grades 4 to 6.

(continued on page 3)

# Music Editorial

by Francis Okano



## GOOD BOX OFFICE

When a young pianist had finished playing a difficult Rachmaninoff prelude for Vladimir Horowitz, arguably the most colorful pianist of the 20th century, she was surprised at the maestro's reaction. "It was wonderful," said Horowitz, "but you should speed up at the end." Puzzled, she asked, "Why? Rachmaninoff didn't indicate any such thing in the score." With a grin Horowitz whispered "Ah, good box office."

Not unlike Elvis for the '50s pop crowd, Horowitz dazzled concert audiences with daring pyrotechnics and interpretive freedom. For all his dash, however, Horowitz – and most concert pianists – rarely allowed freedom to stretch into license – changing the notes of the score at will, for example. An incident involving composer Frederic Chopin and larger-than-life pianist Franz Liszt tells all. When at a salon of friends, Liszt dallied with Chopin's pieces, embellishing them with flourishes of his own devising, Chopin, having had enough, is said to have told Liszt in no uncertain terms to play the music as written or not play them at all. Bowing to good taste, Liszt swallowed and complied.

While the temple is not exactly the concert hall, I think a touch of freedom and restraint applies as well. I do not speak, of course, of the "improvisatory" slips on the organ – they are not attempts to re-compose! I refer, instead, to gatha lyrics. Maybe because everyone is versed in English (more than in musical notes), some may feel it OK to change a word or two of a song to suit one's taste. Because some words sound Christian (e.g., "sin," "Lord," etc.) or archaic or not right, why not alter and "update" lyrics for current use?

Maybe I do not see the full picture, but I cannot help but feel otherwise. If the original lyricist, whose sweat gave birth to the lyrics, does not "own" her words, I don't know who does. And, if she is deceased, who "inherits" the right to pick and choose new words? I don't know what intellectual property law might say, but if lyrics can suffer change at will – and be transformed to a pale imitation of the original -- I suspect any lyricist worth her salt would think twice about offering fresh lyrics to the temple.

It is one thing to translate lyrics from one language to another, thereby re-creating the meaning as best possible in new settings. It is quite another to second-guess the creator's words in the same language – or, to act the Monday-morning quarterback. It is far more productive, I believe, to let unwanted lyrics die whole, and create fresh lyrics from scratch. Meiji Japan's offering of *Hotaru no Hikari* to the tune of *Auld Lange Syne* succeeded with integrity. Yes, an eye on the "box office," but not at all cost.

### Music Committee

Francis Okano—Chairperson, Gladys Fujiuchi—Kauai,  
Osamu Kawabata—Honolulu, Mitsuyo Saito—Honolulu,  
BJ Soriano—Hawaii, Gail Taira—Oahu, Joan Tamori—Maui

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(Lindo—continued from page 1)

In 1955, she married Howard Lindo, who worked for the city and county as Investigator for the Prosecuting Attorney. He bought her a piano and she quickly taught herself to play. She also taught herself to play guitar and ukulele. Cecilia and Howard traveled the world and Cecilia brought music back to her students from all over the globe. Cecilia and Howard also collected art from their travels and from Hawaiian artists, particularly Alan Akina, who also designed clothes. Cecilia often wore his latest clothing designs.

In the 1960s and 1970s, Cecilia was vice-principal of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission School. She was acting principal for a full year when Principal Ms. Tanaka took a sabbatical. Cecilia not only taught, but also organized a choir and a ukulele group.

But Cecilia has always done much more than teach and work with students. She was instrumental in the current Hawaiian renaissance by serving on the first Board of the Hokulea's Polynesian Voyaging Society in the 1970s. She co-authored the important book, ***Polynesian Seafaring Heritage***, a guide for teachers on how to integrate Hawaiian canoe voyaging into their curriculum, including math, science, writing and history. In this way, she has expanded a generation of children's minds concerning the importance of Hawaiian skills and culture.

If all this was not enough, tragedy struck Cecilia's sister and husband. Cecilia and Howard adopted and raised her sister's four young boys! They are now ages 62, 58, 55 and 50 and doing well. Together their lives were filled with love, purpose and fulfillment, along with struggles. Cecilia says, "As parents, we couldn't ask for anything more."

Between work, child-raising and her many volunteer activities, Cecilia has been very active in the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin for years. She was in the founding board of the temple's ***Living Treasures*** program. Cecilia extends outreach into the Hawaiian and Chinese communities, making this program truly representative of the community. Cecilia was the keynote speaker for the Buddhist Women's state convention in 2006.

Throughout the years, Cecilia has penned many poems, many of them published in Buddhist books, magazines and newsletters. The poems reflect her sensitive compassion for and understanding of life's vicissitudes. She has adapted some of these lyrics to create a number of gathas (Buddhist hymns). Three of the most popular ones are:



***Dana Rainbow*** – written for the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin's Project Dana's 10th anniversary.

***I am Thankful***  
***Becoming Free***

The lyrics that Cecilia authored are admired and used by all in the Buddhist community; the Hongwanji Mission School, the Dharma School (Sunday School), and all the people attending the regular English temple services.

Cecilia has taught hula for many years at the Honpa Hongwanji Hawaii Betsuin, and she creates songs for hula. She recently served as a Vice-President of the Buddhist Women's Association. Currently, Cecilia continues to spread her love of Hawaiian music and dance by performing and teaching at various centers, particularly at the Lanakila Senior Center.

How fortunate we are to benefit from Cecilia's talent and generous giving to our community, a gift that extends the ancient Hawaiian past into our future.

# CHORALFEST 2010: A RESOUNDING SUCCESS

"Songs fill Sangha Hall as 100 singers gather for gathas" ran the header on page D1 of the Sunday Hawaii Tribune-Herald of August 8, 2010. The event was a musical appreciation of the dharma, the third such choralfest of the Honpa Hongwanji Mission of Hawaii, held this year at Hilo Betsuin on Sunday, August 1, 2010. This year's event was the first to be held on a neighbor island, to resounding success. According to BJ Soriano, Hilo Betsuin choir director and Music Committee coordinator, "This event was a wonderful sharing of song. It was a spirited and moving service on Sunday."

After a full day of rehearsal on Saturday, July 31, under the remarkable hands of choral conductor, Nola Nahulu, and the piano accompaniment of Francis Okano, the massed choir sang five gathas at the Sunday service where over three hundred worshippers were in attendance. The selections were *Each Day Anew* (Inochi Mainichi Atarashii), *When I Look Up At The Sky* (Ano Sora Mireba), *A Lotus Pure* (Mimegumi mo), *Amida Is Such* (Mihotoke wa), and the American favorite, *Flying Free*. The congregation

joined in on *Gratefulness* (Ondokusan). The first four gathas were musical arrangements by Honzan for its annual nation-wide choralfest in Kyoto, Japan. Gatha translations were those produced by the Hawaii Music Committee's Translation Subcommittee.

Participant response was overwhelmingly positive, as singers felt good about hard work and accomplishment. The congregation responded with appreciation of the spiritual beauty of musical expression. Generous neighbor island hospitality smiled on Friday night, when a warm and fun-filled welcome dinner was hosted by Puna Hongwanji Mission. The surprise ice-breaker got the Choralfest 2010 weekend off to an unforgettable start!

Memorable as it was, Choralfest 2010 owed much to its hosts, Honpa Hongwanji Hilo Betsuin, Rimban Toyokazu Hagio and ministers, and the Betsuin Kyodan's many hard-working staff. Much thanks also go to Puna Hongwanji Mission for hosting the reception -- Rev. Earl Ikeda, Mr. Lee Ikeda (choir director), and the entire Puna Hongwanji sangha.



**Nola Nahulu,  
Choral Conductor**



**More ChoralFest photos on pages 6, 7, & 9**



**HONOLULU DISTRICT**  
by Mitsuyo Saito

**Choirs of Honolulu District Busy Making Music**

The 49<sup>th</sup> annual Nu'uaniu Valley Interfaith Thanksgiving service was held on November 23, 2010 at the Harris Memorial Congregational Church. The Hawaii Betsuin choir sang *Many But One* with masks shaped as circles, triangles, and squares representing the many kinds of faces. Mari Murakami played the tambourine during the presentation. Special guest speaker was Governor-elect Honorable Neil Abercrombie who delivered an inspirational message. It was a beautiful sight to see the participants united together to promote world peace. The Hawaii Betsuin choir has been participating in this special service since the early 1960's.

The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary Betsuin Project Dana service and luncheon was held on October 10, 2010 at the Hawaii Betsuin. The choir participated in this joyous occasion and sang the theme song *Dana Rainbow*



and *Shall I Dream a Dream?* accompanied by Mari on the violin. The Dharma School students made colorful onenjus which they gifted to the congregation as the choir sang the theme song.

A massed choir made up of the Hawaii Betsuin Choir along with Jikoen and Moiliili Hongwanji choirs performed at the Hawaii Buddhist Council Bodhi Day on December 5, at the Jodo Mission. They sang two gathas, *Overflowing Light* and *Amida Within My Heart*, which are newly translated. Multi-talented Joy Wasai Nishida played the flute and oboe during the singing of the two gathas. Francis Okano, accompanied and lifted the choir with his magical playing on the Jodo Mission's recently purchased digital baby grand piano. It was truly a musically delightful day!

**Music Fest: A Tremendous Success!**

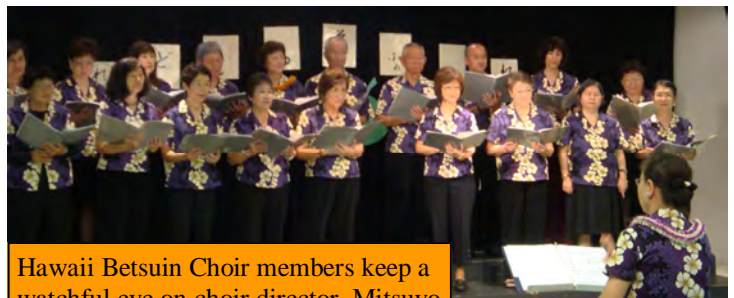
The Betsuin Music Fest marks the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of observance this year. The purpose of the event is to foster fellowship among the Betsuin sangha through sharing dharma messages in gathas and songs. It is planned to also include featured young students and adults to share their musical talents. This year's music service was combined with the Betsuin Bodhi Day. Rev. Richard Tennis, Betsuin minister and also well known as a beautiful tenor singer joined the Betsuin choir and sang, *Refuge*. It was a very impressive presentation. Well known as one of the "Enka Sisters", Lacy Aiko Tsutsuse, who is studying at the University of Ha-



Cheryl and Joy

waii, sang several nostalgic songs. Joy Wasai Nishida who teaches at Castle High School and Cheryl Emiko Sora

who is a member of the Honolulu Japanese Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors played a flute and oboe duet. Francis Okano accompanied on the piano. Their contribution gave the music fest a professional feel. The audience and the choir members enjoyed *Do Re Mi no Uta*. Mari Murakami helped by interpreting the song with sign language which touched the hearts of the audience and moved them to tears. The social hall was decorated with Bodhi Day posters by the Hongwanji Mission School students. The Betsuin Music Fest was truly a tremendous success!



Hawaii Betsuin Choir members keep a watchful eye on choir director, Mitsuyo Saito.

**Moiliili HM Choir News:**

The Moiliili Hongwanji Choir spent another successful year singing at major services. In June, the choir visited Maunalani Nursing Home and entertained elderly residents with a one-hour program of gathas and popular songs. In December, members and friends enjoyed a joyous year-end dinner and fellowship at the temple social hall.

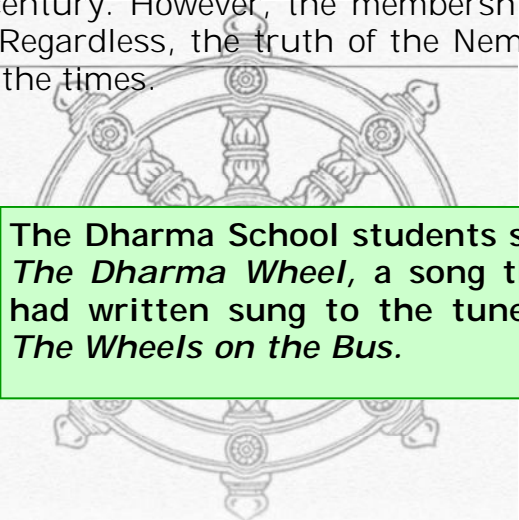


**KAUAI  
DISTRICT**  
by Gladys  
Fujiuchi

**Lihue Hongwanji Mission  
Celebrates 110th Anniversary**

Lihue Hongwanji Mission celebrated its 110th anniversary since it's founding in 1910. The theme of the celebration was "Change and Impermanence". Three speakers, James Yamamoto, Colleen Nonaka and Lynette Mizuo spoke on how the temple influenced their lives and the changes they have seen in their lifetimes.

From horse and buggy beginnings to a digital age where communication is done through cyberspace, church music is promoted through the use of CD's, LHM establishing a website, we have moved forward into the 21st century. However, the membership has moved forward in varying degrees in this respect. Regardless, the truth of the Nembutsu holds steadfast and true and has not changed with the times.



The Dharma School students sing *The Dharma Wheel*, a song they had written sung to the tune of *The Wheels on the Bus*.

**More ChoralFest photos...**



## MAUI DISTRICT

by Joan Tamori



## ChoralFest 2010, a Highlight for the Wailuku Hongwanji Mission Choir

After summer break, many members of the Wailuku Hongwanji Mission Choir started the new choir year by attending ChoralFest 2010 in Hilo. It was an exciting trip and will remain a highlight for all who participated.

WHM held its Hatsubon services on August 6 and 7 where the choir rendered two gathas on each night: *Each Day Anew* (remembering the pointers Nola Nahulu had given them at ChoralFest) and the choir's favorite, *Nembutsu*. It always gives the choir members a sense of pride and accomplishment in sharing the dharma through song.

September 5 was WHM's autumn Ohigan service with guest retired minister, Reverend Midori Kondo, as the featured speaker. She was welcomed by the choir members as she also participated in ChoralFest 2010 and also sings beautifully in the Hilo Betsuin Choir. The choir offered two selections for the service: *The Wondrous Gift of Peace* and *Amida is Such*.

The choir also sang *Each Day Anew* and *May Peace Prevail* at the November 14, Eitaikyo service followed by its participation in the BWA Memorial service held on December 12. They sang *A Lotus Pure* and together with the congregation, *Asoka Garden*.

It is heartwarming to see the choir members diligently practicing, learning and enjoying fellowship at choir practices...and then performing at special services and activities with gratification and delight. 😊



Wailuku Hongwanji Mission choir members pose for their ChoralFest group picture at the Hilo Betsuin Sangha Hall.

### More ChoralFest photos...





**HAWAII  
DISTRICT**  
by B.J. Soriano

**Puna Hongwanji  
Mission Choir:  
Busy Sharing the Dharma  
Through Song...**



This issue, the Big Island Hongwanji Music ohana features choir members from Puna Hongwanji Mission. Having recently played hospitality/reception host to our ChoralFest participants this past July 31-August 1, 2010 in Hilo, they remain busy as any musical bees you have ever seen.

Here are just a few of their Dharma musical experiences: teaching new gathas to Naalehu Hongwanji members including the singing of gathas at their services. Conducting home and home visits with Kona Hongwanji, Wahiawa Hongwanji and Naalehu Hongwanji. The choir also participated in the Ohana conference celebrating the 750<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service for Shinran Shonin and sang in the all-State Choir under the direction of Mrs. Mitsuyo Saito. Puna Hongwanji also joined with the Hilo Betsuin choir to sing a mass-choral presentation at the Big Island's 750<sup>th</sup> Memorial Service on Labor Day 2010. As highlighted earlier, they also participated in the 2007 ChoralFest on Oahu and 2010's ChoralFest in Hilo where they joined 100+ singers to share five special gathas under the tutelage of a gentle, yet powerful renown conductor, Ms. Nola Nahulu, hailing from O'ahu.

Under the expert direction of its five-year veteran choir director, Lee Ikeda, and the magnificent music accompaniment by long-time choir member and pianist, Hatsume Tanaka, the 14 member choir (which also includes Hatsume on alto and Lee on Tenor) enjoy spreading the Dharma through song. Lee currently teaches at Keauu High School serving as its band director, and his goals for the choir are to continue performing, sharing music and meeting others. He also looks forward to someday joining Hawai'i Betsuin's Choir to sing in Japan.

If one had to choose only one word to describe Hatsume Tanaka, it would be the word, "icon." Hatsume first began with a choir, known previously as Olaa Hongwanji in 1938. She then led the choir as a 9<sup>th</sup> grader in 1944 and also led the Fujinkai Choir. She has accompanied and led the Puna Hongwani Choir for many years and has participated in countless temple services, special services and Gatha Fests. She turned over her baton to Lee upon his arrival at Puna Hongwanji five years ago as stated previously.

Congratulations and arigatou are but just two accolades the Big Island Music contingency would like to bestow on our friends at Puna Hongwanji Mission!



The Puna Hongwanji Mission Choir sings at their best with accompanist Hatsume Tanaka and choir director, Lee Ikeda.







# OAHU DISTRICT

by Gail Taira

## 4<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL DSTO Songfest "Voices of the Dharma" Warms Hearts

Sponsored annually by the Dharma School Teachers of Oahu, this year's song fest was held on November 21<sup>st</sup> at the Waipahu Hongwanji Mission. Enthusiastic and excited dharma singers and music lovers met at 8:30 a.m. for the opening service conducted by Rev. Jay Okamoto. DSTO President, Gay Tanaka welcomed and thanked all who attended for their participation. We were happy that the Makawao Hongwanji Mission Junior YBA members joined us.

The program opened with the children and parents of Kapolei Buddhist Sangha as they shared in dance and song, *Live with Aloha*. They were followed by the Waipahu Dharma School singing background to Rev. Jay Okamoto's son, Issei, as he sang, *Kikaida*. Issei, really got into his song, as he was dressed as Kikaida and knew all of the words! Aiea Hongwanji brought their Dharma School children and parents and they sang, *Hotokesama I*.

The Waianae chorus offered their rendition of, *Aoi Sorano Shita*, an amazing song performed beautifully by the group. They even got requests for copies of the words and music for that piece. Pearl City presented, *Yorokobi No Asa*, and Wahiawa shared, *Thanks*, accompanied by the Wahiawa Hongwanji Sangha Strummers. The Oahu District Ministers dressed in their hiking shorts and caps, joyfully, and with humor and lots of energy sang, *Otete Tsunaide*.

The morning program ended with everyone singing, *Listen to Amida with Your Heart*, a wonderful song written by BJ Soriano of Hilo Hongwanji Mission and accompanied by Cari Taira on the ukulele. In the spirit of the occasion, everyone sang, *The Words of Thanksgiving*, to the tune of Edleweiss, led by Rev. Kevin Kuniyuki and enjoyed a delicious bento lunch!



Issei, Rev. Jay Okamoto's son, belts out his rendition of *Kikaida* with the Waipahu Dharma School accompanying with background music.



Dressed in hiking shorts and caps, the Oahu district ministers look cool as they merrily sing *Otete Tsunaide*.

More Choral-Fest photos...





## THE KOMATSU BROTHERS: KOSUKE, HEIGORO, KIYOSHI

*Buddhist Music* newsletter (2007)

Atsuko Yamaguchi, Research Assistant

translated by Osamu Kawabata



Kōsuke, Heigorō, and Kiyoshi Komatsu, three brothers who became composers all, gained wide popularity in the late Meiji to early Showa periods. From the hometown of Akita, Kōsuke (1884-1966), the oldest, was the first to arrive in Tokyo to enter Tokyo Music School (Tokyo University of Arts, Department of Music). Upon graduation, he actively composed music while teaching in schools such as Gakushuin. He went on to become an influential musical personality in Japan.

Younger brothers, Heigorō (1887-1953) and Kiyoshi (1899-1975), also became composers, probably following the example of their oldest brother. Because they came to live with Kosuke while they were in their mid-teens, Heigorō and Kiyoshi must have been deeply influenced by the sight of the oldest brother engrossed in his work.

The three brothers composed over 50 Buddhist gathas. Perhaps the most famous among them is *Shiguzeigan*, written by Kiyoshi, who excelled in applying Western techniques to Japanese motifs. This piece shows the perfect fusion of Buddhist scripture and Western music. He wrote other songs such as *Bonodori Uta* and *Komoriuta*. Heigorō composed Girls' *Bonodori Uta* in similar style. Liked by children and adults is Kosuke's *Hotokesama*. More than a few other compositions by the Komatsu brothers are still sung today as popular Buddhist gathas.



## MORE TRANSLATED GATHAS FOR 2010



In November all temple ministers were sent a set of eleven English gathas that were translated from the Japanese. These gathas are the fruits of the hard-working Translation Subcommittee that has been turning out translations steadily for the past five years. Distributions of completed gathas numbered twelve in 2007 and eleven per year in both 2009 and 2010. These come on top of the fifteen translated gathas done in the mid-1980s that appear in the current *Praises of the Buddha*.

Members of the team this year were Mitsuyo Saito (chair), Shigeaki Fujitani, Osamu Kawabata, Ruby Nagao, Francis Okano, Florence Wasai, and Wendie Yumori. And their output consists of:

*Amida Within My Heart* (Watashi no Naka ni)  
*Amida's Compassionate Vow* (Mida Daihi no Seigan wo)  
*Bodhisattva's Vows* (Chikai no Uta)  
*Consolation* (Nadame)  
*Cosmos Flower* (Kosumosu no Hana)  
*Entrusting Heart* (Marui Kokoro)  
*Life* (Inochi)  
*Overflowing Light* (Hikari Afurete)  
*Shinshu Anthem* (Shinshu Shuka) [revised]  
*Song of Impermanence* (Iroha Uta)  
*Thank You!* (Arigato)



One gatha, *Shinshu Anthem*, was a revision of the translation that appears in *Praises of the Buddha*. The principal translator of the original version undertook this revision in an effort to improve on the earlier attempt.

Temples are asked to make copies of all these gathas and sing them at regular services. Suggestions may be forwarded to project chair, Mitsuyo Saito, c/o Music Committee, Honpa Hongwanji of Hawaii Headquarters.