



# HAMAKUA JODO MISSION OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER FEBRUARY 2025



P.O. Box 7 Honokaa, HI 96727 Ph. (808) 775-0965  
[contact@hamakuajodomission.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodomission.org)

*"Honoring Tradition, Embracing Community"*

## NEHAN-E



In Buddhism, Nirvana ("*Nehan*" in Japanese) is the state of complete peace and freedom from suffering. When a person reaches Nirvana, they are no longer caught in the cycle of birth, death, and rebirth.

*Nehan-e* is a special religious service to remember Buddha's death and his final moment of attaining enlightenment.

This service is traditionally observed on Nirvana Day on February 15th, especially in Japan, though the date may vary slightly in February depending on the temple.

During the service, Buddhists gather to reflect on Buddha's life and how he achieved freedom from suffering. The focus is on the idea that everything is temporary, and applying Buddha's teachings to our own lives by following his path to find peace.

## 2025 MEMBERSHIP DUES REMINDER

We are currently accepting membership dues for 2025, with a deadline of March 31, 2025. The dues remain at \$60, reflecting our commitment to keeping costs affordable for our members despite rising living expenses and the challenges of an unstable economy.

As a member, you will receive benefits that include discounts on renting our beautiful facilities for parties, classes, or events, the opportunity to attend meetings, and voting privileges on key decisions. You'll also gain access to special events, meaningful volunteer opportunities, and receive our monthly newsletters and announcements.

If you missed the 2024 dues deadline, you can still reactivate your membership by paying your 2024 dues along with any outstanding fees from previous years.

We also invite individuals who are passionate about preserving our temple and supporting the teachings of Buddhism to join HJM as members!

Please send your membership dues in the form of a check or money order made payable to Hamakua Jodo Mission to:

**Hamakua Jodo Mission  
Attn: Membership  
P.O. Box 7  
Honokaa, HI 96727**

If you are unsure of your membership status or want more information on how to become a member, you can reach us at (808) 775-0965 or by email: [contact@hamakuajodomission.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodomission.org)

## WE ARE NOW ON INSTAGRAM!



Many thanks to our amazing volunteer, Sam Lee, who lives on the East Coast, for helping us launch our social media presence!

Be sure to follow us on Instagram [@hamakua\\_jodo\\_mission](https://www.instagram.com/hamakua_jodo_mission) for all the latest updates, fun facts, mini-history lessons, and so much more!

Don't forget to spread the word and tell your friends, family, and colleagues to follow us too!

## OTHER NOTEWORTHY HAPPENINGS

- A huge congratulations to HJM member Eric Page! Earlier this month, he was officially confirmed as the designated term pastor of the Hokuhoa United Church of Christ - what an exciting and well deserved accomplishment!
- HJM Executive Team members Nicole Garcia and Sandy Takahashi met with the on-island representative from Japan Memorial Corporation, a company that offers religious supplies and services to Buddhist temples, to explore whether their business could match or beat rates offered by other companies.
- As we welcome the new year, we are happy to introduce Mr. and Mrs. Warren Osako of Lanai and Arlene Pullen of Sacramento as the newest members of our growing HJM congregation!
- Many of our plants and trees have been affected by Japanese beetles, which have been eating the leaves. In an effort to eliminate these pests, traps have been placed.

- The HJM Executive Team is still patiently awaiting a response from the Hawaii Council of Jodo Missions (HCJM) to answer their concerns and questions about the HCJM budget and assessment dues invoiced to HJM.

## TREASURES FROM THE PAST

GROOM  
NAME Shizuo Nogami  
DATE OF BIRTH Jul. 21, 1921  
ADDRESS Paahau, Hawaii

BRIDE  
NAME Fujie Akahoshi  
DATE OF BIRTH Apr. 26, 1924  
ADDRESS Kukui, Hawaii

WITNESSES  
NAME Hyakujii Uyeda  
NAME Tame Ekuan

OFFICIATING MINISTER  
NAME Rev. K. Shuman  
AT H. J. Mission  
DATE June 26, 1954

A while back, we discovered several documents stored in cardboard boxes in the temple's closets, untouched for decades.

Among the items we uncovered was a wedding certificate binder that contained records of marriage ceremonies officiated by the minister. Each page provided key information, such as the names of the couple, the officiating minister, and the individuals who served as witnesses.

One particular page offered information about the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Shizuo Nogami, which was performed by Rev. Kogan Ekuan in 1954.

## SCHOLARSHIP OPPORTUNITY



The Hawaii Jodo Shu Rengo Fujinkai is now accepting applications for the Namiye Nakamura Scholarship.

This \$1,000 scholarship will be awarded to a Hawaii high school graduate or a member of a Jodo Shu temple who is pursuing a degree or advanced degree at an accredited college, university, or institution of higher learning.

To be eligible, the applicant's family or legal guardian must be a member of their respective Jodo Mission. The deadline to submit an application is June 15, 2025.

For an application and more details on the qualifications, interested parties can contact the Betsuin office at (808) 949-3995. Good luck to all those who apply!

## NOTICING THE DIFFERENCE IN EVERY STEP



Have you seen the beautiful transformation in the temple hallway, where our vases and

cleaning supplies are kept, and the cemetery, where trimmed back plants and tree branches are no longer obscuring headstones?

This is all thanks to our small crew of dedicated Beautification Work Day volunteers, who faithfully show up each month!

We are incredibly grateful for their hard work and commitment to preserving the beauty of our temple and grounds! Our next work day is around the corner on Sunday, February 23rd at 8am. Your kokua is always wanted and appreciated!

## DID YOU KNOW?



Photo from the Fujitani Family Collection

In 1994, the Centennial Celebration of Jodo Shu in Hawaii was held at our temple, marking a momentous occasion with a special performance of *Gagaku* by Rev. Hideo Yoshida and his group from Japan. This performance offered a unique and memorable cultural experience, showcasing the beauty and depth of traditional Japanese music and dance.

*Gagaku*, a form of sacred music, has been a central part of Japanese culture for over 1,400 years. It is typically performed at ceremonial occasions at Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples, and was once commonly featured at the Imperial Court ceremonies. Known for its elegant sound and deep cultural significance, *Gagaku* evokes a sense of reverence and solemnity.

The performance of *Gagaku* is divided into two categories: *Kangen* and *Bugaku*. *Kangen* is the orchestral section, where a blend of wind and

percussion instruments is used. The wind instruments, traditionally made from bamboo, combine with various drums such as the *kakko*, *taiko*, and *shoko*, creating a harmonious sound that reinforces the ceremonial atmosphere.

Following this, the *Bugaku* portion of the performance takes center stage. *Bugaku* consists of two distinct dances, each with its own unique style and symbolism. The dancers, adorned in costumes, represent different roles in the performance.

One set of dancers appears from the left side of the stage, dressed in red costumes known as *Samai*, while the other set emerges from the right, wearing green costumes called *Umai*. These dances and costumes add a visual dimension to the musical experience, creating an immersive atmosphere.

The performance by Rev. Yoshida and his group during this centennial celebration not only honored the tradition of *Gagaku*, but also allowed the Hawaii community to experience firsthand the sacred beauty of these ancient arts.

## SUPPORTING SMALL BUSINESSES



Photo: Earl's Waimea Instagram

Earl's Waimea, famously known as the "Home of the Bento Roll," has long been a beloved kama'aina favorite on the Big Island, offering delicious plate lunches, bentos, and catering services.

Founded by Earl Saito, this cherished local business is now led by his son, Miles, who continues the family tradition of serving up quality meals with a personal touch.

Over the years, Earl's Waimea has been a reliable go-to choice for HJM, catering numerous services and events with their generous portions and reasonable prices. And who can't resist their Korean chicken and smoked pork bento rolls..... *Oishii* (delicious)!!!



Photo: Earl's Waimea Instagram

They are located at 64-974 Mamalahoa Hwy, just on the way into Waimea Town. Be sure to call ahead to confirm their hours of operation, as they may sometimes vary.

## YOUR QUESTIONS ANSWERED

We received a question from one of our readers about an article we featured last month about trespassers.

*"I read the article about trespassers. What is being done about it besides having people contact the police?" - L.C.*

Trespassing has long been a concern at HJM, with thieves, homeless individuals, and loiterers visiting the property, particularly due to the limited activities held in the past and the absence of anyone living in the cottage until 2020.

In response to these issues, the Honokaa Police Department began conducting courtesy drive-bys of the property starting in 2019, and continues to do so regularly.

Around the same time, multiple security cameras were installed, which proved to be invaluable when a break-in occurred in 2020. The security footage captured the thieves in action, leading to their eventual arrest.

To further safeguard the property, a chain gate was installed in 2020, which remains locked

after hours, and motion detector lights were added to deter unwanted visitors. In addition, only limited quantities of bathroom supplies are now left out to deter theft of toiletries.



Driveway chain gate

We have taken proactive steps to address these issues, including turning away potential fruit thieves, posting clear signage on the premises, and submitting video footage and screen grabs containing suspicious vehicles and individuals captured on our security cameras to law enforcement. Trespass orders have been issued to those when deemed necessary.

Since HJM is open to the public seven days a week, it can be challenging to monitor the property around the clock. However, efforts are being made to make it more difficult for trespassers to enter, loiter, or steal.

The good news is that the number of trespassers has decreased significantly over the last year, and we are committed to continuing these efforts to keep our property safe and secure.

### **MARCH 2025 NENKI MEMORIAL SERVICES**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>YEAR</u>
3/10	Yoshiko "Betty" Kawashima	1st
3/11	Sueko Oka	43rd
3/19	Lynson Okunami	37th

Please contact the HJM Executive Team at [hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com](mailto:hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com) or call

(808) 775-0965 if you would like to schedule a memorial service.

*We regret to inform our readers that an error was discovered in the 2025 Nenki Memorial Services list published last month. The correct date of Tsuruye Hirayama's date of death should have read 2/08. We apologize for any confusion this may have caused.*

*If you come across any errors, please inform us so we can update our records accordingly. Mahalo!*

### **FLASHBACK PHOTO OF THE MONTH**



This month's photo highlights Ernest and Jackie, two visitors from Indiana whom we had the pleasure of hosting during their visit to our temple in December 2020!

Their curiosity and respect for our traditions made their visit truly memorable. While exploring Paauhau, they ran into former Kyodan President Masa Nishimori, who warmly invited them to take a tour of our temple. They happily accepted, arriving that very afternoon!

Ernest and Jackie were captivated by the history and architecture of the temple, and their interest in learning more about our practices was wonderful to see.

During their tour, they noticed the *kadomatsu* lined up in the dining hall for our fundraiser. Upon learning of its significance, they generously made a donation to receive a *kadomatsu*.

It was such a joy to share our traditions with them, and we are always thrilled to welcome visitors, whether near or far!

If you or any organization you know is interested in a tour, don't hesitate to contact us via email at: [contact@hamakuajodomission.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodomission.org) or by phone, at (808) 775-0965.

We look forward to sharing our temple with you!



### IN APPRECIATION

We want to acknowledge those who generously gifted us with monetary donations:

Earl Tanaka, Rev. & Mrs. Junshin Miyazaki, Mr. & Mrs. Dennis Nojiri, and Mr. & Mrs. Yoshiaki Masuo.

Membership dues received:

Sueichi Kawashima, Earl Tanaka, Mr. & Mrs. Yoshiaki Masuo, Mr. & Mrs. Warren Osako, Jason Higaki, David Higaki, Irving Kawashima, Nicole Garcia, Kazue Kimura, Mayette Drake, Eugene Okamoto Sr., Dr. Crystal Moon, and Kihana Moon.

While decluttering, we discovered an old gift certificate from KTA Super Stores that had expired years ago. Thanks to the generosity of Derek Kurisu, their Executive Vice President, he quickly arranged for a reissue! We'll be using it to help provide meals for our Beautification Work Day volunteers.

Mahalo Derek for your support and friendship!

### UPCOMING EVENTS & SERVICES SCHEDULE

<u>DATE</u>	<u>EVENT</u>	<u>TIME</u>
2/23/25	Beautification Work Day	8:00am - 10:30am
4/27/25	2025 Annual Membership Meeting	10:00am

These are events and services that have been confirmed by HJM's Executive Team. If you have made arrangements for a service or event and do not see it listed, please leave a message at (808) 775-0965 or send an email to: [hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com](mailto:hamakuajodoexecteam@gmail.com)

For the booking of future events, services, and facilities, please feel free to reach out to the Executive Team at the contact info listed above.

*This calendar is being provided to avoid visitors from stopping by during private functions/services, and to prevent double bookings.*



### CONTRIBUTIONS & SUBMISSIONS

Our newsletter thrives on your contributions and we're always eager to showcase insightful articles, old photos, ideas, questions, and feedback you may have. Letters to the Editor are welcomed, too. Your input means a lot to us!

Please submit your materials in Word, PDF, JPEG, or PNG formats by the 15th of each

month. Send your contributions to: [contact@hamakuajodominion.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodominion.org). If you don't have access to the internet, feel free to send them via USPS to us, too!

## OKAGE SAMA DE

Hamakua Jodo Mission, a cherished part of our community for generations, stands as a testament to the values and sacrifices of those who came before us.

It is not just a place of worship, but is a sacred site where the memory of our ancestors is preserved. Many of us have family members whose final resting place is on the grounds of this temple. Yet, as the years pass, there is a growing need for us to actively step forward and ensure that the legacy of those who helped establish our temple continues to thrive.



Volunteerism is an essential part of maintaining the grounds and ensuring that the temple and cemetery are kept in a respectful and pristine condition. It is a collective responsibility - one that belongs to all of us. This responsibility extends beyond just maintaining the physical space. It's about honoring their contributions by giving back in ways that will benefit future generations.

Please consider the importance of your involvement. Your support, whether through volunteer work, donations, or simply taking the time to visit regularly, makes a difference in maintaining the sacred integrity of our historic temple.

If you are interested in volunteering, please reach out to us at (808) 775-0965 or by emailing: [contact@hamakuajodominion.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodominion.org)

Volunteering does not require membership, and you're welcome to contribute in ways that suit

your schedule. If you are unable to attend a designated Beautification Work Day, feel free to volunteer on other days or focus on tending to the grave of your family or loved ones.



Photo credit: Sarah Anderson

Always keep in mind the phrase "*Okage sama de*," which translates to "*I am what I am because of you*."

Let your ancestors know how grateful you are for their sacrifices, as their actions have made it possible for you to live the life you lead today.

## COMING SOON - OBON 2025

We're excited to kick off planning for our upcoming Obon celebration on **Saturday, August 9, 2025**! If you're dependable and ready to dedicate extra hours to help make this event another great success, we'd love to hear from you! Please send an email to: [contact@hamakuajodominion.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodominion.org) or call us at (808) 775-0965.

*Mahalo for reading & your continued support!*

*- The Hamakua Jodo Mission  
Newsletter Committee*

*"The best preparation for tomorrow is doing  
your best today." – H. Jackson Brown Jr.*

For those of you that have email addresses but receive our newsletters via USPS, please consider saving a tree and a stamp by receiving them electronically. Sign up by sending an email to: [contact@hamakuajodominion.org](mailto:contact@hamakuajodominion.org)

Hamakua Jodo Mission  
P.O. Box 7  
Honokaa, HI 96727



**Hamakua Jodo Mission**

*The First Sanctioned Buddhist Temple Built in  
Hawai'i*

[www.hamakuajodomission.org](http://www.hamakuajodomission.org)

<http://Bit.ly/HamakuaJodoMission>