

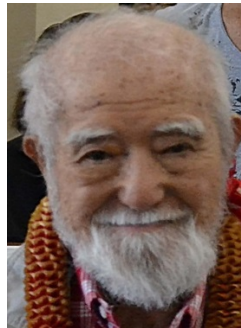
Upcoming activities:

May 18, 2019 – Meeting at 9 a.m.

June 14 Senior Health and Fitness Fair  
Okinawan Center

-August 31-September 1, 2019  
Okinawan Festival, Hawaii Convention Center

-November 16, 2019, Saturday, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.  
OGSH Bonenkai, Okinawan Center



Happy 97<sup>th</sup> Birthday  
Goro Arakawa

e-Newsletter  
2019  
MAY



Donna's Word of the Month

sagee-sun

To search for, to look for.

Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii  
c/o HUOC  
95-587 Ukee Place  
Waipahu, Hawaii 96797

OGSHnews@gmail.com

Meeting Report  
Saturday, April 20, 2019

Attendance: 71  
New Members: 4  
Visitors: 6  
August Treasurer's Report:  
Income-Membership dues, donations, sales of Guide  
Book and Short Stories  
Expense – postage, Guidebook printing  
Speakers: Eric Wada, Yuichiro 'Harry' Masuda,  
and Hilson Reidpath  
Secretary's Report: Newsletter  
Transcribed by: David R.  
Photos by Curtis S.

Membership Meeting Notice  
Saturday, May 18, 2019  
9 a.m.—12 p.m.  
Serikaku Chaya

AGENDA

- I. Call to Order
- II. Treasurer's Report
- III. Committee Reports
  - a. Bonenkai
  - b. Okinawan Festival
  - c. Nomination Committee
  - d. Bylaws/BOD
- IV. Announcements
- V. Speaker: Lee Tonouchi
- VI. Discussion:
- VII. Committee Work



"CONGRATUALTIONS to all members and friends who supported OGSB with the FESTIVAL SCRIP sale. We have gone over the allotted amount of \$6,000. The total sales thus far is \$6,300.

I would like to express my deepest appreciation to all who made this milestone possible."

Sally M.

"**Lee A. Tonouchi** is a Hawaii born writer and editor, who calls himself "Da Pidgin Guerilla" because of his strong advocacy of the Hawaiian Pidgin language. Tonouchi graduated from Aiea High School in 1990. He promotes he idea that Hawaiian Pidgin is an appropriate language for both creative and academic writing." Wikipedia

Mr. Tonouchi is the nephew of the late Mac Yonamine.

Speaker: Eric Wada



My name is Eric Wada. I am one of the co-directors of Ukwanshin Kabudan. The ancestry on my mom's side is from Bise, Motobu and Tāba Gushikawa , so I am hapa Uchinanchu. This past conference's theme was "Washiraran". I think it connects to OGSB because of its theme, Washiraran, which means 'never forget'. Norman Kaneshiro, the other co-director designed this shirt, the conference shirt for this year. The kanji in the back does not mean Washiraran, but "umui", which is "remembrance" or things that you hold dear, so it's the hands holding memories. At this time, for everybody, especially in Hawaii for the 5th, 6th and maybe 7th generations, we're losing our connections to our ancestors because of the generations we are going into. We hear less and less of our issei. We hear less of our connections to Okinawa. Our conference this

year was mainly to bring the memories back. We talked about continuum, where we hoped everyone would connect to by bringing memories back. I had the participants think about the issei, something about the past. Through those memories, you could use your 5 senses, touch...feel...smell, etc. You could be at baba's house and smell the senko, the outside smell, the garden, the smell of chicken manure.. Those kinds of things. When you bring it back into this time is a continuum because you are bringing in the past into the present. Also, how do we pass it on to the next generations because they have never seen the first generation. They don't know what's it like. They don't have that connection, so how do you pass it on, those memories of the 1st generation to the next generation so that it becomes important to them. It would give them some responsibility to do something Okinawan or some kind of interest.

So it is kind of a journey and for those who have not been to our conferences, this was our fifth conference. We have different themes to help with our journey, what we call decolonization or taking off the layers to get to the core of our identity, as shimanchu. It was special this year because the students from Okinawa, started to do their engagements by supporting Okinawan movements, such as the democracy that they are fighting for and other things. This election, they did a lot of things with Governor Tamaki. They told him what they learned and about their experiences in Hawaii, so he contacted us and wanted to visit to experience the conference. So we sent an invitation so that he could get appropriate funding and was asked to be the keynote speaker. He came

for 2 nights. Saturday night was an informal setting where he could just speak about economics and problems in Okinawa. Sunday night was the keynote speech. It was a very powerful, emotional thing for him. When he first arrived here, we took him to Mauna 'Ala, the Royal Mausoleum in Nuuanu. It is part of my responsibility to do proper protocol and to honor the Ali'i to ask to start the journey. Governor Tamaki was greeted by the Royal Order of Kamehameha and Royal Societies of the Hawaiian community. It was historical as we had 2 former kingdoms coming together at Mauna Ala. It was the first time an Okinawan leader came to show respect there. So, the Hawaiian community was very happy. It was very special to him, as he took a long time in Kalakaua's tomb. The chants kept on going and going as long as the governor was giving his ho'okupu and prayers. The chanter is someone I knew and he kept looking at me to see like when he was going to finish. The governor was actually crying and a lot of it was the weight he had on him



because of what is happening in Okinawa right now. Sharing with the Ali'i about Hawaii and Okinawa's similar problems really connected with him. Those kinds of things resonated with our pre-conference tour with the 30 students from Okinawa that came for the conference. So, we are lucky to have OGSB to help support two students who participated in the conference, so it was free for them. With your help, we were able to have them participate without having to worry about the expenses and they will take their experiences back to Okinawa and hopefully they will do things that will benefit the next generation. Thank you OGSB for your continued support.

Speaker: Yuichiro 'Harry' Masuda and reporting for Shiori Yamauchi

Thank you for inviting us to be with you today. Shiori is not able to be here because she has a fever. She wanted to come, but I thought it would be better if she did not force herself to come. First, I would like to introduce myself. My name is Yuichiro Masuda. Call me Harry. I have a band and it was necessary to have an English name. When I came to Hawaii, Akino from Okinawa knew of my band and called me Harry, so please call me Harry. I was born and raised in Yamate prefecture, which is close to Mt. Fuji. When I was a kid, I questioned my Japanese history and what we learned in school. At that time, there was an Okinawan boom in Japan. What I saw on T.V. were blue ocean, blue sky, and beautiful ladies. What I wanted to see was the other Okinawa and to learn about the ocean. When I was 18, I enrolled in University of Ryukyu to learn about Oceanography and research sea level change by studying Taito Island and its limestone. So, my research was on the scientific side. When I graduated, I became a science teacher in Okinawa and I worked in public schools and later in international school in Uruma City where I met Shiori and we came here to learn education. Currently, I am teaching science at Mid-Pac as an intern. At the same time, I am learning education at UH. I will now read what Shiori wrote and her English is difficult for me, but I will try my best and if you think my pronunciation is not perfect, please scold me.



The following are notes from Shiori Yamauchi:

*“Last month, I participated in the 5<sup>th</sup> annual LooChoo Identity Summit. There, I met a lot of people who have a background in Okinawa and had many discussion sessions. The most memorable group talk was the one after a presentation by Mrs. Shigeko Nakasone. First, we tried to recall something about old times in Okinawa. Every time when I look back to the past, what I remember is always connected to my grandfather. He was a typical Okinawan man, who grew Go-ya, played Sanshin and taught me how to sing Okinawa children’s song. Those memories were very positive, as like the ones other members shared within the group members. Then, we talked about how sad the time of war was in Okinawa. It was a painful and sorrowful moment, especially after hearing Nakasone Shigeko san’s story.*

*In Okinawa, every year when it becomes closer to June 23<sup>d</sup>, which is close to the time when the Japanese commander of Okinawa committed suicide, we study about the Okinawan war and the peace process from elementary to high school. At this time of the year, many students get sadden and feeling so bad about what happened to Okinawa. In our group discussion, we discuss the importance to tell what happened in the battle of Okinawa, though it is also important to tell how Okinawan people were strong, resilient, and survived in the poor conditions after the war. As an educator, I want to have time with my students to talk about this topic much deeper, so that they would not just feel themselves as victims, but as resilient people who did their best to bring back their lives for them and their children, and to us as descendants.*

*I hope my students become proud of themselves, rather than thinking themselves as being ‘kawasou’. I don’t want young people to give up so easily on things, but instead, I want them to learn from their antecedents who were smart, strong, and cheerful in spite of the hardships they had.”*

She and I learned a lot from the session. I want to share three of my biggest memories of the session. The first moment was a very moving moment. I was moved by a gentleman’s speech as he talked about Uchinanchu’s strength. He said we can accept others and their culture. I was so moved as I was worried as my name is Masuda and it is not Okinawan, but if it was Matsuda than it would be

okay. In the application, there was a column for which village you were from, so I put in my Japanese 'village'. So, I was worried I would give people a bad impression or feeling since I was not Uchinanchu or that I was not a descendant of an Uchinanchu. But the talk from the gentleman made me feel better about the situation. This is a great characteristic of Uchinanchus for being accepting of others. The next is another eye-opening moment. To this summit, many Okinawan students came from the main island but also the other islands. A girl said she was not Uchinanchu but Yamatonchu. This is evidence of Island ID, but there is also village ID. Language can be very different. There are over 800 dialects in Okinawa. I realized how rich Okinawan culture and identity is. For my UH graduation paper, I wrote about the diversity of Uchinanchu identity. Last year, I went to Brazil and interviewed Uchinanchu people. They all said I was Uchinanchu. But when I went into depth with them, their idea of Uchinanchu is very different. They say they are Brazilian but have Uchinanchu background, therefore, I am Uchinanchu/Brazilian. Some would just say, I am Uchinanchu and others would say I am Uchinanchu/American, so I am both. So I teach my class there are different identities. Teachers should not force one type of identity on their students. This year, the Japanese government changed their teaching guideline. There is one sentence in it that is to love your country, which is people who have the same culture and history. I believe it is not necessarily true because we all have different background culture and history. As a teacher, when I go back to Okinawa, I want to instill a more culturally correct education to my students. Another important moment for me is when people tell me they want to learn more about Okinawa, but there is not too many resources in English. One tells me his grandson wanted to do research on Okinawa for a school project, but there were few resources for him, so he changed his research to Japanese. It is so sad not to have more resources on Okinawa. I want to contribute by writing in English about Okinawa. I feel it is important for Okinawans to put in English what they feel. So, when I go back, I want to expand this project to students to express their opinions and what they learned in English to the world. Thank you

Speaker: Hilson Reidpath



Hello everyone. Good morning. My name is Hilson Reidpath. I am a PhD student at UH Manoa. I'm studying Okinawan and Japanese literature. I have been in Hawaii 5 years and before that, 5 years in Japan with 3 years in Miyakojima on the JET Program (Japan Exchange and Teaching). I got my MA at UH and today, I want to talk about where I am currently doing research on an Okinawan poet. I will keep out some of the academic jargon and hopefully I can talk on how I read this poet and why it is important to spend time on pre-war figures. It is an important area that has not received a lot of attention.

I want to talk to about poet Yamanokuchi Baku. In terms of Okinawan poets, Baku looms the largest. He has a large legacy in both Japan and Okinawa. He was born in 1903 in Naha and he attended Shirukoko, which was the best school in Okinawa, but he did not finish there. He was kicked out of school. He had some political leanings that did not agree with administrative policies. He leaves school and shortly moves to Tokyo in 1922. There were many reasons why people moved to Japan, but the main reason was economic. It was a very tough time in Okinawa. After the earthquake of 1923, he returns to Okinawa to find that his father, who was a successful businessman, sold his business and entered into a fishing venture that failed very badly and the family moved to Aoyama to try and restart things. Baku's father encourages him to join him in Aoyama and to abandon his studies. Baku rejects the idea and returns to Tokyo and does not return to Okinawa for 40 years, so he spends most of his life in Tokyo. He became known as a struggling artist, living a very poor life, making means by continually to write, his art.

The first poem on the handout reflects his early life. This is my translation. It is called "Life's Patterns" or "Sei Katsu No Gara". He reads the poem – possible copyrighted material. This poem is later adapted by Japanese

folk artist Takara Wataru in the 60's and it was quite popular. I'll skip over the second poem which is "A Letter to my Sister" for time sakes. In these first 2 poems, we see a poet who is struggling to make ends meet and who uses these struggles as a catalyst for his art. These are the poems, early on, that garnered Baku a lot of literary attention in Tokyo. He finds himself rubbing shoulders with popular poets and influential people. His literary star quickly rises.

However, what I want to focus on with the time I have is the reading of one poem I have been working on. It's called "Conversation" or "Haiwa" written in 1935. This is perhaps his most famous poem. This poem is interesting for a number of reasons. I mentioned in the 20's and 30's a lot of Okinawans were moving to the mainland where they faced discrimination. There were a lot of stereotypes about what Okinawans were, in terms of finding housing was difficult because the idea was they would have drinking parties late at night, the sanshin would be played loudly, etc. So, this is a poem written in 1935 and it is set right in the middle of all that is going around. There was a pre-war movement to change ones last name because Okinawan last names were so distinctive. If your name is Shimabukuro, you would know where they were from. The idea to change your name or the reading of you name was to help find employment or something along those lines. This is just an example to show why the speaker in this poem is deflecting a lot of main questions. There is a lot of other imagery here like when he talks about the tradition of Hachiji tattoo hands, the flora and fauna. All of this is here. What I want to briefly want to talk about in this poem called "Conversation". I call this poem 'passively passing', meaning the speaker is able to pass as Japanese but he is doing it by never saying he is from Tokyo or Okinawa. What we see inside this poem is an internal struggle trying to figure out exactly where am I from. The lady from the mainland asks an innocent question, "where is he from?", but to an Okinawan man in Tokyo in 1930, it has a deeper significance and invites some serious thought about what you are really asking. There is a number of ways to read this poem. I see in this poem that Baku doesn't actually know what the answer is. To be Okinawan in the 1930s, in terms that you are an extension of the Japanese Empire, colonialism, a lot of effort by the Japanese to get you to embrace the idea of being Japanese. It is easy for us in 2019 to think why would you do that. Colonialism is oppressive but to some degree you go with the flow and Baku struggled with that. Ultimately, he wants to be seen by this woman as both Japanese and Okinawan. He's trying to navigate a space where people can recognize Okinawa as both a part of Japan but also its own independent cultural sphere and everything Ryukyu that comes with it. That is something to be respected and not stereotyped and stigmatized. This poem was written in 1935 and in 1962 he writes a memoir called "Days of my Youth". That's where he talks about being in school, etc. At the end of this there is an anecdote when he was in Tokyo, where he would frequent a café every day and he slowly fell in love with the owner's daughter. He was considering asking to marry her. One day a mainland Japanese man comes into the café and he had just returned from a business trip to Okinawa. He begins to explain in incredible cringe worthy detail the wildness in Okinawa, like drinking with the chiefs and all the other stereotype things, much of which make appearances in this poem. Once I saw the woman that I had fallen in love with, looking at this man, the wide eyed expression that she had in her eyes, I realized that we could never be together because the subtext being, she would only see me as this figure this man created and so I wrote this poem. This poem is how he ends his memoir with. So this was very important to him and he struggled with it.



There is one last poem, this idea of Okinawa and what it means being Okinawan. Later in his life, after the war, he becomes more political. His poem "Shell Shocked Island", here everything comes full circle. The irony is here's a man who stayed away from Okinawa for 40 years and when he returns, he is the only one who can speak Uchinanuchi. So, he was a man who struggled to figure this thing out. I'll stop now and this is where I'm at. This where my project, my dissertation is going. Besides Baku, I am looking at other writers. I'm interested in thinking about Okinawan writers. I want to set it before the war because it was such a violent moment that changes things to be Okinawan, perhaps outside of Okinawa and navigating what it means to be Okinawan during the Japanese Empire. Thank you.

Yamanokuchi Baku

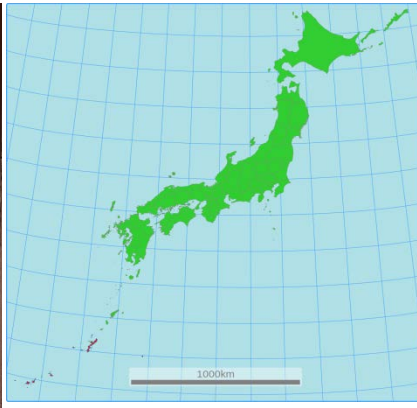
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# Happy 97th Birthday Goro Arakawa

Mr. Arakawa shared a birthday cake to celebrate his birthday. He is pictured with his son David. Singer Harry leads the group to sing "Happy Birthday."



## Masahiro Lee and Yoshiki Nagahama



Both were reporters for the local Okinawan paper, Ryukyu Shimpo. At the 2016 Okinawa Taikai they got interested in the immigration of the Okinawans to Hawaii and the other parts of the world. They also found that the people of Okinawa want to know more about the Okinawans around the world.

They would like to create a documentary about Okinawans living outside of Okinawa. They were able to interview a couple of members and videotaped at the OGS meeting



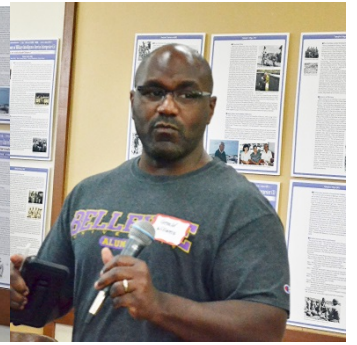
Gregg, WUB President



Gwen



Yuko



Gerald



Hokuzans



Task for the year: Planning the Bonenkai.



Chuzans



Task for the year: Okinawan Festival OGSB booth display.



Nanzans



Task for the year: Nominations and miscellaneous.