

OGSH Monthly Zoom Meeting 2021  
January 23, 2021, Saturday, 10AM

Guest Speaker – Professor Mark McNally  
University of Hawaii, Manoa; History Department

- I. Guest Speaker – Professor Mark McNally
- II. December's Treasurer's Report – Income – Dues, Donation; Expense- Uchinanchu Annual OGSB half page advertisement
- III. Announcement of OGSB Second Vice President
- IV. Collection of stories for Short Story Book VIII
- V. OGSB donation to HUOA
- VI. Planning for 2021, guest speakers, events, misc.

Phrase of the Month



"Ho' omakaukau"

Hawaiian to English ho'o-mā'-kā'u-kā'u

To make ready; to prepare; to get in readiness for business or for a coming event.

<https://hilo.hawaii.edu/wehe/?q=hoomakaukau>

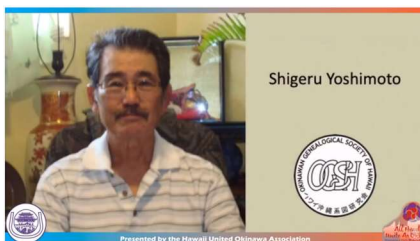


Mark McNally received his BA degree from Pomona College in Asian Studies (1990) and his MA and PhD degrees in History from UCLA (1995, 1998). He spent three years in Nagoya as a participant in the Japan Exchange and Teaching Program (1990-1993). He has been a Postdoctoral Fellow at the Edwin O. Reischauer Institute of Japanese Studies at Harvard University (1999-2000) and a Foreign Research Scholar at Tokyo University's Historiographical Institute (2005). In 2008, he was the Erwin von Baelz Guest Professor at the Eberhard Karls University, Tübingen (Germany). He has been a recipient of various grants and fellowships, including a Fulbright fellowship. His research interests are primarily in early modern Japanese social and intellectual history, including Confucianism and Kokugaku. He is currently writing a monograph on the Ryūkyū Kingdom and early modern Japan. <http://manoa.hawaii.edu/history/people/faculty/mcnally/>

Saturday, January 16, 2021 at 2:00 pm (HST).



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## President's Message January 2021

Hai tai Everyone,

Thankfully, 2020 is behind us and we can look forward to 2021 with hope that we can soon return to normal. I truly miss our in-person meetings, but I will do my best to stay in touch with the membership and continue promoting our mission.

I am pleased to announce that Heidi Shimabuku has graciously agreed to fill our open 2nd Vice President slot through the end of 2021. Thank you to Heidi.

I would also like to congratulate Shigeru Yoshimoto, our Uchinanchu of the Year for 2020. In the short time he has been a member of OGS, Shigeru has done so much to help us translate numerous documents from Japanese to English.

One of my goals for this year is to organize our committees and set objectives for 2021. We have volunteer opportunities for members to get involved within OGS committees. We have seven Standing Committees: Bylaws, Education, Finance, Genealogical Research, Internet and Technology, Library and Mensore. We also have six Ad Hoc Committees: Bonnenkai, Bookmark, Short Stories, Nominating, Okinawan Festival and OGS Guidebook.

If you see a committee on which you are interested in serving, please contact a member of the Board of Directors.

Another goal of mine for 2021 is to include more guest speakers at our meetings. We are honored to have Prof. Mark McNally as guest speaker this Saturday. Prof. McNally teaches Okinawan History at UH Manoa and he will be talking to us about his new book. So plan on joining us for this Saturday's meeting.

Ipee nifee deebiru and Mahalo,  
Joy



### Congratulations to the 2020 Uchinanchu of the Year Honorees

Follow this link to see all the pictures: <https://www.flickr.com/gp/189713674@N02/9281V2>

**Aza Gushikawa Doshi Kai** Guy Yoshi Agena  
**Chatan-Kadena Chojin Kai** Malcolm Chinen  
**Club Motobu** Melissa and Greg Yamashiro  
**Gaza Yonagusuku Doshi Kai** Clyde Kazuo Sato  
**Ginowan Shijin Kai** Sandra "Sandy" Nishimoto  
**Ginoza SonJin Kai** Anita Beppu  
**Gushikawa Shijin Kai** Paul Kaneshiro  
**Haneji Club** Laura Miyashiro  
**Hawaii Sashiki Chinen Doshi Kai** Mel and Dorothy Gushiken  
**Hawaii Shuri-Naha Club** Caroline Toyoko Okazaki  
**Hui Alu, Inc.** David and Lee Anne Miyashiro  
**Hui Makaala** Karen Shishido  
**Hui Okinawa** Kaye Nagamine

**Kin Chojin Kai** George Toyama  
**Kona Okinawa Kenjin Kai** Gilbert Taira  
**Maui Okinawa Kenjin Kai** Darren Konno  
**Nishihara Chojin Kai** Terry Goya  
**Okinawa City Goeku** Mae M. Kuba Chung  
**Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii** Shigeru Yoshimoto  
**Oroku Azajin Club** Ethel Teruya  
**Osato Doshi Kai** Genevieve "Genny" Salmonson  
**Shinka** Brianne Yamada  
**Wahiawa Okinawa Kyoyu Kai** Candice Chun  
**Yomitan Club** Joy and Kristen Murashige  
**Yonashiro Chojin Kai** Betty Ganeku  
**Young Okinawans of Hawaii** Naomi Masako Reagan



## OKINAWAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF HAWAII SHIGERU YOSHIMOTO

Shigeru Yoshimoto was unanimously selected to be OGS's 2020 Uchinanchu of the Year. Shige was born and raised in Naha. He and his wife have 4 children and 6 grandchildren and are members of Tomigusuku Sonjin Kai. In 2009, Shige came to Hawaii after his retirement from the US Army Corps of Engineers Okinawa.

Shige was coaxed by an OGS member to join the group as a translator was sorely needed, He succumbed and joined in January 2018. His translation skills are invaluable. He has translated over 50,000 Okinawan names and addresses for the Immigration Data Base Project, currently translates titles of our library books and continues to do genealogical investigations with the research team on Fridays. Besides volunteering at OGS's booth at the Okinawan Festival, he is a docent for Waipahu Cultural Center. His name, Yoshimoto, is Yushimutu in Okinawan and is still used by Shige when in Okinawa.

Being the new kid on the block, it is unimaginable how much he has accomplished for the club, its members and the public. He displays great patience and has an infectious smile. He is most deserving of this honor and we are truly blessed to have Shigeru Yoshimoto as our 2020 Uchinanchu of the Year. Ipee Nifee Deebiru.



### My Childhood Memories Shigeru Yoshimoto

I was born on 29 December 1946 in Naha city Okinawa. According to my parents I was born in military furnished outdoor tent living with 2 other families. My family fled to Oita prefecture in Kyushu Japan by the forced evacuation order of the Japanese Army due to imminent war in Okinawa. Fortunately they didn't have to experience the fierce battle of Okinawa. They returned from evacuation in the fall of 1946 and saw total destruction of their homeland. Since Okinawa was under US military controlled area then they could not go back to their old home but rather were allocated the living place in Tsuboya district in Naha city. They were furnished with a tent and starting new life again together with 2 other stranger families and I was born as a long awaited boy baby for the Yoshimoto family. They told me that everyone in the tent was so happy to see a baby boy and danced *kachaashii*. 3 days after I was born, on the New Year's Day the American soldiers at nearby Army camp were shooting guns to celebrate the New Year all day long. My parents said that they were so terrified they thought they would be killed. But they also told me that Americans may have been welcoming a baby boy with congratulatory gunfire. What a positive way of thinking at the time when they were in midst of fear. Of course I don't remember all that happened, my memories don't start from the time when I start the school. The memories are all vague before that. Shortly after the tent was replaced with small wooden houses and each family had their own house to live in. The elementary school I attended was the largest school in Okinawa at that time in terms of the number of students. There were already wooden classroom buildings with Okinawan red roof tiles. We had wooden desks and chairs to study with. Since our family spoke *uchinaguchi* at home all the time I wasn't too good with Japanese language when I first went to school. My Japanese began at 1<sup>st</sup> day of school and learned very quickly. Teachers were pretty strict about speaking Japanese while we were in school. But we spoke *uchinaguchi* after school hours among friends, at home and neighbors as well. I don't remember I've done any homework, maybe there were no homework then but I was too busy playing outside with neighborhood friends of my age. In 1950s we didn't have televisions, phones and any electronic games. Electricity came in early 50s for lighting only and running water became available in mid-50s and sewer system was not ready even in 1967 when I left Okinawa for Hawaii. Nobody had water flush toilet at home then. Toilet was located outside next to house something like the ones you see at the Waipahu Plantation Village today. So you may wonder how the human wastes were collected and disposed. I remember every so often a man with a horse wagon that carries a sewage tank and collect the waste from our toilet and poured into his tank. After he filled up his tank with the waste he took it to huge community waste storage tank at the farming villages for making organic fertilizer for farmers, the ultimate recycling process. The storage tank is open at the top so you can smell the very strong scent from far distance and you can tell you are approaching the farming village. A vacuum truck replaced a horse wagon later. No hot water coming out of the faucets, so we did not have a place to take a bath at home. We went to a

*yuufuruya* (public bath house) for taking a bath. I think we went to a *yuufuruya* once a week. I think I changed my underwear once a week too. Sanitation and public health was not good back then.

My father worked as a sheet metal man for living. He bought 5-gallon cooking oil/milk can from US base salvage office. He made display cases with these cans. After he cleaned cans he cut out the front side of the can and put the glass window and a lid on it. He sold display cases to small general stores for them to display their goods for selling to customers. I often helped him cleaning cans and especially liked to clean milk cans. I checked milk cans carefully before I begin cleaning because there were almost always compressed hardened pieces of milk that stuck on the bottom of the can. The hardened milk was a best snack I had in those days, it was always a reward for my chore. My mother sewed children's kimono for kimono stores in *Heiwa-Dori* market place.

Our house was located along the main roads in Naha and used to be a railroad before the war. Although it was a heavily used road it was an unpaved dirt road. It got muddy when it rained and dusty when it shined. But still I enjoyed the road watching all cars, buses, trucks and horse wagons passed by. I learned later that the road was unpaved because there were POL (petroleum oil liquid) lines under the road for US military use and the military policy prevented paving of the road over the pipelines. The pipelines run from Naha port to Kadena Air Base to supply fuels. Movies were most popular entertainment for Okinawans. There were half a dozen movie theaters within walking distance from our house. My father took me to see *chambara* (samurai) movies every so often and after seeing movies we bought *manju* for a snack on the way back home. Okinawa was still recovering from the war damages.

Since there were nothing to play with at home we all played outside catching insects like grasshoppers, dragon flies, cicadas, butterflies and tree lizards. Sometimes we made our own chewing gum with banyan tree saps. It didn't taste good though. There were hardly any toys available for us to play back then, so we had to create our own play games using whatever available. The games I played in 50s when I was an elementary school kid were *ishinagu* (stone tossing and grabbing), *patchee* (cards flipping), *tamagwaa kwayee* (marbles), *gumukwaayee* (rubber bands), *getchou* (wooden bird), *Kwakkintoruu* (hide and seek), *kiibisaa* (stilts), *kachiminsouree* (demon chasing). Among those games, there was one game that was really exciting and required skills. It was "*getchou*". I don't know how it was named "*getchou*" but I enjoyed playing and believe it or not I was pretty good at it. So what is "*getchou*"? It is a small wooden block in a shape of a little bird. We made our own "*getcho*" by cutting and shaving a small piece of scrap lumber or tree branches. The shape is simple triangular shape with head portion on the left and tail on the right. Now you made your "*getchou*", you need a little wood stick to hit with. Here is how to play:

Place "*getchou*" on the ground parallel to you

Hit the head portion of "*getchou*" with a stick to toss it up in the air

Hit "*getchou*" again while it is in the air aiming at the target marked on the ground about 10 – 15 feet away

Whoever hit the "*getchou*" closer to the target wins

I think we were playing "*getchou*" till 6<sup>th</sup> grade. I don't remember I had seen anybody playing "*getchou*" ever since.

Nobody plays it now and word "*getchou*" is extinct like most other games I played.

I have many fond memories of my childhood time, but many are slowly fading away.

I finished elementary school in March 1959 and started intermediate school in April. I began my youth life not knowing what would be coming in the turbulent era of 1960s and never imagined that I would be heading for Hawaii in 8 years at that moment. \*\*\* Congratulations Shigeru \*\*\* Ippee Niffee Debiru\*\*\*

## January 2021 OGSB ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Continuing to collect stories for OGSB's Short Story Book VIII. Email [OGSBnews@gmail.com](mailto:OGSBnews@gmail.com)
- Have time to share to help a committee? See list in President's Message. Email [OGSBnews@gmail.com](mailto:OGSBnews@gmail.com)
- February's guest speaker will be Patrick Miyashiro, HUOA 2021 President