



OGSH
PO Box 894779
Mililani, Hawaii 96789

OGSHnews@gmail.com



2023 HUOA President Clarisse Kobashigawa's Theme

e-Newsletter January 2023

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“Is there a person who, at one time in one’s life, has not yearned for those ancestral ties that bind? What part do I play in the family line started by my forebears? What can I leave for the generations that come after me? Ultimately, each of our individual genealogies become a valuable foundation for the future of our ethnic population which today often encompasses a cultural diversity of groups due to successful inter-marriages. This heritage will disappear unless we do something now. Congratulations on starting the genealogy workshop!”

Dr. Bernice Hirai

Message from Donna



Ii Soogwachi Deebiru! Happy New Year everyone! We have a brand new year ahead of us and I am looking forward to what this year will unfold for us. We’re starting the new year of the rabbit in 2023 with incredible speakers to pique your interest and curiosity and we hope to carry that trend throughout the year. For this month’s meeting we have Raplee Nobori who will share his personal DNA research journey. I am sure you will find what he has to share very fascinating as we discover what our own DNA and ancient bone DNA reveals and what it says about who we are as Uchinanchu . . . Along with Raplee, Clyde Uchima will be sharing the ancestor slide shows, the version that we saw at our Bonenkai and then another one with voice overs. He will explain more as he shares 3 different versions.

As the year unfolds, your OGS BOD is committed to continuous growth, refinement of existing policies and refreshing the infrastructure to support our evolution.

As a special treat, we are having our gratitude bento to share with all of you! This is our way of saying “Ipee nifee deebiru . . . thank you very much!” . . . we recognize and acknowledge that as an organization, we cannot attain the fabulous results that we experience without each and every one of your efforts. Our progress and development as an organization is in direct proportion to the commitment that each of you has to the precious journey we take to honor our ancestors through discovery, celebration and reverence. Come . . . let’s share a meal together and enjoy each other’s company as we start a new year! Looking forward to seeing you again either in person or virtually. So yes, we will continue to have hybrid meetings for now. We will keep you informed of any planned changes.

With gratitude,
Donna

Upcoming Events 2023

- January 2023
28 -OGSH Meeting
Speaker:
Raplee Nobori sharing about DNA and ancestor research.
- February 2023
14 – Valentine’s Day
18 – OGS Meeting
- March 2023
17,18, 19 – SAVE THE DATE
Loochoo Identity Summit Windward Community College (Additional information will be posted later.)
- April 2023
2 - HUOA “Karii Cheers” at HOC, 5pm-8pm, \$60
- June 2023
16 – Senior Fitness Fair, HOC
- September 2023
2&3-41st Okinawan Festival
- 2023 Assignments
Hokuzan
TBD
- Chuzan
Bonenkai
- Nanzan
Okinawan Festival

CONGRATULATIONS CURTIS -OGSH 2023 Uchinanchu of the Year

OKINAWAN GENEALOGICAL SOCIETY OF HAWAII | CURTIS SHINSATO



Curtis Shinsato describes the feeling of pride and excitement, when upon retiring, he found his grandfather's name listed in "Okage Sama De," HUAO's centennial celebration book. He was aware of his Okinawan heritage from kindergarten when he learned that he had a grandfather in Okinawa from Ozato Village. This new discovery sparked an interest to learn more about his roots.

He sought and joined OGS (Okinawa Genealogical Society of Hawaii), assuming the role of photographer to capture moments recording the story of OGS and helping attendees with their ancestor searches at the Okinawan Festival. Curtis brings so much talent to OGS.

He retired from the Army Reserve and Army Civilian Corps upon earning his college degree in Fine Arts. His career offered him the opportunity to travel and expand his knowledge and skills. These included retail advertising and promotions, simulation training, emergency operations, and more. He brings all this expertise to OGS and works on projects requiring planning and artwork skills. He enjoys what he does; helping others with what he has learned, and is thankful to the club as he continues to learn. "Photographing is my way of saying thank you to the club."

Thank you, Curtis, for your enthusiasm, dedication, and spirit of yuimaaru!

Uchinanchu of the Year & 73rd Installation Celebration Program



On January 21, 2023, the Uchinanchu of the Year and 73rd Installation Celebration was held at the Legacy Ballroom at the Hawaii Okinawan Center. Curtis was the Uchinanchu of the Year for OGS. Curtis is the photographer who has photographed 99.9% of the pictures in the OGS Newsletters. His dedication to capture the faces and activities of OGS is



priceless and much appreciated by all.

Congratulations also to David and Bertha Arakawa representing Kitanakagusuku Sonjin Kai as their Uchinanchu of the Year.

Hawaii United Okinawa Association's President for 2023 is Clarisse Kobashigawa. Her theme is 'Alohi Akatsichi-Vibrant New Beginnings.

Curtis Shinsato Photo Story



Curtis has always been interested in photography. As a kid, he took dedication photos of the Manoa Valley park's first building with a Kodak Brownie camera. His interest led him to become a newspaper photographer by volunteering at Roosevelt High School Year Book. He later shot for the University of Hawaii's newspaper and year book. His best photo assignments were at the UH football and basketball games. He excelled in producing wonderful photos honed through spending hours in photography darkrooms. Curtis graduated at the University of Hawaii with a Bachelors of Fine Arts degree.

Upon graduation, Curtis was employed by a photo studio taking wedding photos which became his specialty. He later worked in advertising and marketing. Even during his time serving in the US Army, he always had a camera handy.

When his kids were in school, Curtis took photos and videos of his daughter's softball practice and games, and his son's high school marching band and tours to Paris and London. In his more active years, he took photos and videos of Aikido practice and promotion tests.

Today, you will find Curtis doing photography for Kupuna Aikido club and OGS. Photos captures a moment in time, which the OGS members consider a precious memory. *Curtis*



Bonenkai Summary

“Ukaji Deebiru” Thanking Our Ancestors

The 2022 OGSB Bonenkai, “Ukaji Deebiru” (Thanking our Ancestors) held on Saturday, November 17th in the Legacy Ballroom was a resounding success. There were 188 attendees, eleven of them children.



Held for the first time in three years, the Bonenkai had many firsts. It was the first time the event was held in the larger ballroom. The planning committee began meeting via Zoom starting in May. The registration was available electronically as well as printed. Registration was the same for members and guests. There was an early bird discount and children 12 and under were free. Attendees could pay by check or Paypal. The Bonenkai solicited corporate donors for door prizes along with ones donated by members. The program included well-known Okinawan entertainers, Gay Hongo, Andrew Hongo, Cheryl Toma Sanders, Fred Shinsato, and Dazzman Toguchi. A highlight of the program was the slideshow of member’s ancestors including issei and nisei members.

The event could not happen without the many volunteers. The planning committee included the following outstanding members:

Rodney Kohagura, Advisor, Liaison to ACE
Donna Nakamura, Advisor, Centerpieces
Theresa Tom, Printed Program
Curtis Shinsato, Co-Chair, Photos
Regina Toguchi, Registration and Door Prizes
Amy Tsuru, Favors
Jacqueline Toma, Chair
Pearl Toma, Entertainment
Virginia Tully, Registration and Door Prizes
Clyde Uchima, Slide shows
Byrnes Yamashita, MC, Book Donations

I’d like to acknowledge the efforts of some of the committee members. Donna Nakamura handled the incoming registrations and queries while a few of the members were attending the Taikai in November. She also created the fabulous centerpieces with origami cranes donated by Lois Goto.

Regina Toguchi, a new member brought innovative ideas and energy to the program. She created the online registration and solicited corporate donors for door prizes. Theresa Tom created the beautiful printed programs with photos of members’ ancestors. Amy Tsuru and Sumi Consillio made the unique origami crane favors filled with Chinsuku cookies from Okinawa. Virginia Tully along with Regina, kept track of registration and got door prizes for the children. Virginia created the colorful bingata name tags and table signs, decorated the potted plants, and recruited family members to help her. Clyde Uchima created the moving Ancestor video with photos of members’ family members to pay loving tribute to them. Clyde along with help from Ronald Miyashiro and Curtis Shinsato created the OGSB Review from 2020-2022. Byrnes Yamashita donated Okinawan-themed books that were sold at the table.

Special thanks go to Jon Itomura for audio-visual support and leading the lively kachashi finale. Thanks also to all who for donated pupus. The smooth execution of the event was made possible by the following event volunteers who helped with registration, door prizes, book sales, greeting attendees, stage management, set-up and clean-up: Roy Arakaki, Merton Chinen, Steven Chinen, Sumi Consillo, Kay Ikei, Susan Imai, Amy Kaneshiro, David Kaneshiro, Janet Nakamura, Linda Oba, Kaaren Takara, Lynette Teruya, Janice Shiira Toma, Allen Toma, and Cuyler Yogi. Lunch and the kachashi music CD was provided by Michael Schoonover. I apologize if I missed anyone. *Jackie*

Photos by Curtis







Mahalo to all of our wonderful donors who helped to make our 2022 Bonenkai a great success! Without hesitation, the following individuals generously donated to our door prizes providing us with prizes equalling more than \$1200! *Regina*

If there is ever an opportunity to patronize these businesses, please look them up! And forgive me if I have inadvertently overlooked anyone!

Mahalo to our sponsors and donors:

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Pat and Ken Kamiya (Assorted trinkets and handmade crafts)
Dorothy Nakama (Ceramic vases)
David Arakawa (Zippy's Certificates)

Mensore OGSH Members!

II SOGWACHI DEBIRU!



Wishing you a
Prosperous 2023

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Ukwanshin Kabudan is pleased to announce that their upcoming 9th annual **LOOCHOO IDENTITY SUMMIT** will be held next year in 2023 on March 17 (Friday), March 18 (Saturday), and March 19 (Sunday) at Windward Community College in beautiful Kaneohe. We are delighted to declare that the Summit will be held **IN PERSON**- YAY! Please plan to join us.

Questions may be directed to events@ukwanshinkabudan.org. Summit registration and additional information will be posted later at loochooidentity.com