



OGSH  
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e-Newsletter  
**2023**  
**March**

Donna Nakamura  
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*First Vice-President*  
 Jackie Toma  
*Second Vice-President*  
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*Assistant Treasurer*  
 Rodney Kohagura  
*Advisor*

OGSH March Meeting  
 March 25, 2023, 9AM  
 Serikaku Chaya or Zoom

**AGENDA**

- I. Guest Speaker – Stan Uehara
- II. February Treasure’s Report
  - a. Income – membership dues, donations, bookmark sales, Bonenkai
  - b. Expense-appreciation bentos, Bonenkai, HUOA Annual Advertisement
- III. Committee Reports

photos by Curtis and members

Upcoming Events 2023

March  
 25 Saturday OGS Meeting, 9AM  
 Speaker: Stan Uehara

April  
 01 Saturday Jikoen Bazaar, 8:30am-12noon  
 15 Saturday OGS Meeting, 9AM  
 Speaker: Micah Mizukami  
 UHM Ethnic Studies Center  
 for Oral History

May  
 20 Saturday OGS Meeting, 9AM  
 Speaker: Brynes Yamashita

June  
 17 Saturday OGS Meeting, 9AM  
 Speaker: Colin Sewake,  
 David and Amy Kaneshiro

September  
 2 and 3 Okinawan Festival

November  
 18 Bonekai  
 Hawaii Okinawan Center  
 Legacy Ballroom



Donna’s Word of the Month

Kajitui – *noun; steering, helmsman*



Haitai everyone!

I want to start this message with a shout out to the helping hands who took care of our OGS exhibit at the Ukwanshin Loochoo Conference. Heidi, Sue, Ginny and Jackie made our presence at the conference meaningful and eye-catching. There were many of us who attended and learned new

things like singing and dancing that was a little challenging for me but for others was a breeze! Our word of the month should resonate with those of you who attended the conference. Kajitui is the helmsman who keeps a vessel going in the right direction and to me, the shared values and mission for OGS keeps us going forward. Some of these shared values relate to our desire to honor our ancestors and to increase our appreciation of our ancestry and culture. As we move forward through the remaining months of 2023, let’s keep our eyes fixed on our values and mission. We will begin to see and hear a lot of discussion and traction in executing this year’s Okinawan Festival and our Bonenkai where we will celebrate our 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary. As we gather this Saturday, we will celebrate our “birth” month 30 years ago with a special commemorative cake! Thank you, Kay, for thinking of this!

We are especially honored to have Stan Uehara share his treasured family history. I look forward to seeing Stan again in person and it certainly is an auspicious day in many ways. We continue to plan the details of our very first workshop which will cover DNA basics. We are working towards getting an endorsement from HUOA so we can use the ballroom on a weekday . . . Stay tuned as we end the meeting with an open discussion about our upcoming Okinawan Festival. We have much to discuss and to share! Looking forward to seeing all of you again, either in person or on ZOOM.

Ippe nifee debiru,  
 Donna Nakamura

Speaker: OGS member Albert Katsuyama

I'm Albert Katsuyama and I used to do driving for Miss Bernie a while back. It started back in 2014 after being in the genealogy workshop at JCCH, OGS, HGSC and a few other smaller clubs. I was interested in joining the club because I wanted to find out my genealogy. What was sad at that time was that my mother had passed away and most of my relatives had passed away. A few of the who are still living were reluctant to tell stories because they lived through the Hiroshima bombing and lost relatives.



But, being in the genealogy research was an eye-opening experience because there were things like online sites like Ancestry.com, Familysearch.org (a freebie, but you could do only 1 family). They have almost as much resources as Ancestry but it is not as sophisticated. There is going to be a 'RootsTech' conference which will be on Zoom for free starting on March 2 and 3. You can go online and join various seminars on genealogy research.

Dr. Hirai was a very interesting person in that she grew up in the Hakalau Plantation but she was in a different social class because her father was a bookkeeper. He was fairly well off compared to the plantation laborers, but she had good family ethics in that you don't look down on anyone and empathize with them. Her father would go down to the various camps and help those who were farmers. He would help them with their bookkeeping and other needs. She got a chance to appreciate that aspect of plantation life. Also, she mentioned she became Christian because she found it was more inclusive of ethnicities and backgrounds. They weren't as discriminatory as the Buddhist churches were and she felt more comfortable there. One thing her daughter Anna mentioned in her obituary was that she would not be Henry's wife. She wanted to be a person on her own. She got her master's degree and finally a PhD in Japanese studies. Ironically, she went to Indiana University which was the same grad school I went to but 1 year later. We had a few different ties and so forth. Now to the presentation.



“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 forebearers? 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. But this heritage will disappear unless we do something now. Congratulations on starting!”

Dr. Bernice Hirai



Speaker: OGSB member Jackie Toma



I want to give you a background on how I came to OGSB. I came because my family on my mother's side (Kochi) have done extensive genealogy on my maternal side which goes back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. We are descendants of King Sho Toku. His daughter married my great-grandfather, Shojo Kochi who was an envoy and ambassador to China. He's considered a hero in Okinawa because he tried secretly on his own initiative, to stop the Emperor of Japan from taking over. But the emperor refused to see him. So, he decided not to return to Okinawa and if he did, he would have been arrested. He stayed in Fujian which had a large Ryukyu community. He died there. That's my mom's side.



I came because I did not know much about my dad's side (Toma). In 1993, my dad's cousin came from Okinawa and gave us a genealogy book. It was done by a committee formed in Okinawa in 1976 and developed this extensive genealogy which also went back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century. It was all written in Japanese. I went to the Japanese Cultural Center, but they were not able to translate it because it was written in old Japanese. I came to OGSB in 2018 because I thought they could help me. At that time, I showed it to Shigeru and he wasn't able to translate it because it being in old Japanese which may be comparable to Chinese writing. Luckily there was a librarian who was also a member and is in the University of Hawaii Okinawan Studies program. I asked her if she knew anyone who may help. She told me she had a graduate student, Harry Matsuda, who worked for her, and she would ask him. I met with him and he could read it. I then found out that we were descendant back to the 14<sup>th</sup> century on my dad's side to King Sho Hashi, which is the first Sho Dynasty. That was news to us.



I continued to come to meetings and I met Pearl Toma. During our conversations we realized we both had the same genealogy chart. So, we had common ancestors. Twenty years before then, she and her husband visited Okinawa and met some of our relatives. She gave me the contact number and I was able to correspond with the Toma side. On my mom's side, in 2019, we wanted to visit our relatives and find out more information about my great-grandfather, Shojo Koji. I got an opportunity to meet my dad's cousin who had come to Hawaii to give my dad the book. I showed him a picture of my dad's family and he recognized my dad's older sister because she lived with his grandparents till she was 16 and then she came to Hawaii. This how I became involved with OGSB and how they helped me in my genealogy research.

Howzit  
by Colin Sewake



I arrived back in Okinawa on Feb 17 and thought I could wake up in time for the Feb 18 meeting (my Feb 19), but...haha!

I'll be in Tokyo from Mar 24 to 29 to see my brother and his family who are visiting so I'll miss out again on this month's meeting. I'm staying in a capsule hotel when the meeting occurs so it'll be hard to tune in. Catch up with you folks in May. Wanted to provide you an update on what I've been up to and what's still on my plate in terms of genealogical/relatives' stuff on this end.

Mar 07 to 17 - Spent most days with Kaua'i brothers Daniel & Mel Momohara to assist with coordinating details of June trip to place late mom's urn in haka on Torii Station per her request

- Introduced them to American guy who cleaned haka (married to Uchinānchu, Okinawa resident of 38 years), Sobe Kōminkan Kuchō (handles escort paperwork with Torii Station since several haka are located on Army base), Community Relations Office (one guy is from Izena where I'm headed to next week!), Torii Station Garrison Commander (Lt Col), and Masaji Matsuda who is an Okuhara Foods relative and former Okinawa Hawai'i Kyoukai Director

- Helped with process (ongoing) to transfer haka from aunty in Zakimi to them, went with uncle to a real estate office and the military land office in the same building as FM Yomitan (What a learning experience and another one of the most unique experiences since moving here!)

- Toured Yomitan sites in free time  
- Family of 10 Momoharas come in June to place urn in haka  
- My HH article about the mom being placed in the haka and all the prep work behind it is scheduled for the Jul 07 edition

Mar 19 - I was the guarantor for Erica Kuniyama...niece's friend, Kenpi scholar who participated in Sep to Mar program, graduated Mililani HS and lives in Portland, OR. Took her to OPL when she arrived in Sep and introduced her to Hiroaki Hara and staff. Erica didn't meet any relatives, but a Yaese-cho volunteer took her around to see where her grandfather used to live and do farm work so she got to see some farmlands from the approximate area. Erica just completed the program and is back in OR. My HH article about her and her experiences will be in the May 05 edition.

Mar 31 to Apr 01 - Escort Leilehua friend on her first Okinawa visit and sister in law to Izenajima to meet Maekawa relatives and tour island, dinner at Yoshihachi Sushi Restaurant (relative, chef/owner, and longtime friend) on Apr 01

Takara Family Research - Got a request from Yomitan Club member Shirley Takara to make contact with relatives in Hija near San-A Owan City using documents she got from research through OPL/OGSH, did a drive by of the address she gave me, asked Masaji Matsuda to help me contact Hija Kōminkan Kuchō in Apr

Yomitan Koseki Documents - Anne Oshiro of OGSH asked me to help find out from Yomitan Sonyakuba about the process for obtaining docs (who can request, what proof is needed to show relationship, how to pay, etc.), asked Masaji to help me talk to sonyakuba about this in Apr

David Kaneshiro's relatives - I've been wanting to contact and visit Mitsuji Arakaki, his Gma's side relative in Nanjo-shi, since I've been back but that won't happen until Apr. Hope to follow up next month to touch base with Mitsuji and keep things going for Dave.

All my best always to everyone in OGSH!

瀬分コリン善久  
COLIN Y. SEWAKE

Nancy Yogi shares...back in 1993

Dr. Hirai had a workshop sponsored by HUOA.



We met with the HUOA president then, Warren Higa, on February 20, 1993, at HUOA with the Hawaii Heritage Hiroshima Club. At the end of the workshop we were asked who would like to start a genealogy club? There many who wanted to come. Exactly one month later on March 20, 1993, we met and there were about 36 people attended. We took a vote of who wanted to start a club. There were 36 signatures and that is how we got started, OGSH. Dr. Hirai has been guest at our bonenkai every year. She is part of the family. There are two things that touched me. On March 20, 2023, we are going to be, we have developed for 30 years. It will be our anniversary next month. I often wonder how did we get involved with her? I asked around and nobody seemed to have the answer. I met with her on her 92<sup>nd</sup> birthday and later I asked her. She told me Governor Ariyoshi, he was our first oriental governor, he had asked her to start a genealogy club for Hawaii. She opened lot of different clubs and on different islands. Whenever she came to our meetings, she was proud of our group. She always said we are the ones who have flourished and grown so much, so she was very proud of us. When I found out it was something that the government asked her to do, I felt wow, this is something.

MESSAGE  
from the Sales Team

### SALES AND SERVICES PROCEDURES

**Purpose:** the purpose of these procedures is to establish a method for monitoring of all funds to ensure accountability and accuracy in a reliable manner.

- All OGSB sales products shall be stored in the OGSB office of the Chaya Room. Products include the Guidebook, Short Stories volumes, Bookmarks.
- All products shall be sold from the OGSB office of the Chaya Room except during the Okinawan Festival.
- Prices of the products shall be established by the Finance Committee and the Board of Directors
- Sales shall be recorded on Form I (Guidebook), Form II (Short Stories), Form III (Bookmark).
- Inventories shall be taken at the end of each calendar year, and recorded on Forms I, II, III.
- Collection of fees are as follows:
  - 1) Payments shall be accepted by cash, check, and Pay Pal (see *oddendum*). Cash and checks shall be kept in a cash box until deposited in the bank account.
  - 2) Monies shall be deposited in the OGSB bank account and a copy of the deposit receipt shall be submitted to the Treasurer.
- Requests for reimbursements of incurred expenses must be supported by appropriate invoice or receipts, i.e., printing, supplies, postage, etc.

OGSH POSTER

2018 OGSB 25th Anniversary Tour in Okinawa



2019 Mac Yonamine OGSB Uchinanchu of the Year



2019 Hawaii Island Genealogy Association (HISGA) 50th Anniversary

2020 Bonnekai on Zoom



2021 Yuntaku Live on September 14, 2021



Okinawan Genealogical Society of Hawaii

"We link our past to perpetuate our heritage."  
Established 1993

"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!" Bernice K. Hirai, PhD

Charter Members

Barbara Fuchigami Karen Hamada Steven Higa Ronald Miyashiro Bessie Nitahara Kiyoshi Taira  
Jane Takaesu Joyce Takara June Takeno Louise Tamashiro John Tasato Tom Tasato  
Nancy Tokuda Nancy Tome Nancy Yogi

2012 OGSB Bookmark Project

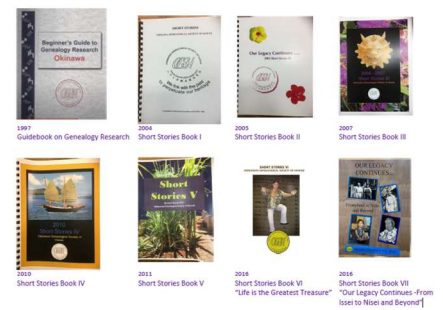
The bookmarks have an Okinawan family name, the kanji character, chronological reading of the name before 1879, after 1879, 1900, and 1937. The bookmarks are made by members of OGSB. They are sold at the Okinawan Festival.



Okinawan Genealogical Resources  
DATABASES AND MAPS



OGSB Publications



**BACK AFTER THREE YEARS!**

# Jikoen Bazaar

Saturday, April 1, 2023

8:30 am to 12 noon

Jikoen Social Hall

Parking available at Kapalama School

**For more information, contact [jikoen.info@gmail.com](mailto:jikoen.info@gmail.com) or call (808) 845-3422. [www.jikoenhongwanji.org](http://www.jikoenhongwanji.org)**

**ITEMS ON SALE:**

Gently used and new clothing, Kitchenware, toys, crafts, handbags,  
Fresh vegetables, plants, flowers,  
Baked goods, takuan, andagi, sushi, and more!

**DONATIONS WELCOME!**

Please drop off your items between 8:00 am to 12 noon on weekdays and Sundays.

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**VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!**

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**SORRY, WE CANNOT ACCEPT:**

- Books and magazines
- CDs, DVDs, cassettes, vinyl records
- Sporting goods; Luggage/suitcases,
- TVs; speakers, audiovisual equipment, computers, laptops
- Major Appliances/equipment; lighting fixtures, lamps, light bulbs;
- Office/home furniture; auto parts; hazardous wastes;
- Medical equipment; infant/toddler equipment.

Please NO torn, dirty, stained, or damaged items

Mahalo!