

# Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha

## Hawaii Dazaifu Tenmangu

September 2016



The back-to-school season is a time filled with capturing the last days of summer, assembling school supplies, coordinating new wardrobes and adjusting to new schedules. This is a time that brings about a variety of emotions for parents, teachers and students as a new school year begins.

The shrine offered a special blessing seeped in ancient tradition honoring students of all ages so they may be blessed with the spirit of learning, persevere in their studies and be safe and free from violence and crime. The Otaku Summer Festival was combined with the annual blessing with Anime-related vendors, entertainment and delicious by the Animagid Cafe.

Kicking off the event was a service officiated by Rev. Takizawa and attended by President Shinken Naitoh, Kell Komatsubara - chair of the Otaku Summer Festival and volunteers.

# MAHALO VOUNTEERS

## Preparations 8-6-2016

Jessica Fishel  
Victoria Hallett  
Galen Komatsu  
Kell Komatsubara  
Mike Lee  
Matt Maeda  
Marilyn Naitoh  
Shinken Naitoh  
Craig Nishida  
Diane Nishida  
Gary Shinsato  
Linda Shinsato  
Jonathan Sison  
Wayne Takenaka  
Val Tsutsumi



## Back-To-School Blessing & Otaku Summer Festival 8-7-2016

Lois Arakaki  
Nick Arakawa  
Renee Carlyle  
Puna Choo  
Gayle Fujihara  
Victoria Hallett  
Kathy Hamada-Kwock  
Bob Harada  
Stacie Hata  
Odie Kepo'o  
Kien Kicho  
Asami Kobata  
Robert Kono  
Canaan Kutzen  
Milton Kwock  
Matt Maeda  
Marilyn Naitoh

Shinken Naitoh  
Mei Nakai  
Marvin Nakajima  
Craig Nishida  
Diane Nishida  
Ryukyu Matsuri Daiko  
Rich Salcido  
Nicolo Santos  
Danielle Sato  
Bethany Schwartz  
Gary Shinsato  
Linda Shinsato  
Jonathan Sison  
Sharon Toma  
Pam Verrey  
Kaede Yanagihara



# MAHALO

for your donations

Tom & Linda Agawa  
James Brown  
Bill & Keiko Doughty  
Pat Fujisaki  
Hanae Gouveia  
Bob Harada  
In Memory of Kama &  
Kamado Isa  
Kyoko Isa  
Rodney & Sharon Isa  
Kell Komatsubara  
Cory Kubota  
Kunishima Ohana  
James & Melba Kurashige  
Mike Lee  
Shinken & Marilyn Naitoh  
Jeanette Nakata  
Jon Nakata  
Akiko Sanai  
Tatsu Sasaki  
Gary & Linda Shinsato  
Wayne & Corrine Takara



A blessing was performed on July 28 for the Windward Laundromat Express, opening in mid-August in Kaneohe.



Graffiti season is here !!!!

# CALENDAR

## SEPTEMBER

- 1 Reservations accepted for  
**Shichigosan & Jusan Mairi**
  
- 4 3 pm  
**Tsukinamisai Service**
  
- 25 3 pm  
**Autumn Taisai Festival**

## OCTOBER

- 23/29/30 9 am - 1 pm  
**Shichigosan & Jusan Mairi**
  
- 23 3 pm  
**Tsukinamisai Service**

In 1920, a Gobunrei (spirit of the deity of the main shrine) from Kotohira-gu in Kagawa-ken, Japan was brought to Hawaii by Rev. Hitoshi Hirota, Yasubei Motoyasu, Bunichi Tanaka (a carpenter who lived on Kama Lane), Kyujiro Taguchi (owner of Japanese American Groceries on Akepo Lane) and Gennosuke Okamoto.

A residence at 1256-A North King Street was converted into a shrine where Rev. Hirota performed the traditional rites and rituals embraced by the first generation Isseis.

Kotohira-gu, long known as the guardian deity of fishing, prosperity and commerce, quickly grew in popularity and membership.

On November 3, 1920, the shrine on the corner of Wolter Lane and North King Street was recognized by Kotohira-gu, Japan as a

legitimate branch of the famous shrine in Kagawa-ken.

On February 20, 1924, the shrine was acknowledged by the Territorial government as a non-profit church and officially began its religious activities as the first Kotohira-gu on American soil.



Reverend Hitoshi Hirota

Kapalama was developed as one of the first residential areas of Honolulu and in the 1920s, consisted of mixed ethnic neighborhoods bound by pasture lands. The area around the Kapalama Post Office was predominantly Japanese.

Many Japanese farmers, flower growers and poultry and hog farmers worked and lived near Kam IV Road while those in business and industrial ventures worked and lived along North King Street.

Rev. Hirota, the first Chief Priest was born in 1883 in Shikinobu-mura, Hiba-gun, Hiroshima and moved to Hawaii on August 17, 1917 at the age of 34 to serve at Izumo Taishakyo Mission.

His wife Kotome and daughter Miyora arrived in Hawaii on May 30, 1918 and lived with Rev. Hirota

Photo of Rev. Hirota's son - Robert Shigemaru Hirota Awaya taken in 1958.

According to Robert's son who resides in California, Robert was never able to reunite with his mother and sister after the adoption. He remembered little of his birth parents or Hawaii, being a 1-year old at the time of Rev. Hirota's death.



at 1039-E Pua Lane in Palama.

In 1919, stricken with illness and no longer able to fulfill his duties, Rev. Hirota retired from Izumo Taishakyo Mission.

At the insistence of numerous community members, Rev. Hirota helped to establish Hawaii Kotohira Jinsha in 1920, where he served as Guji until his untimely death in 1925, at the age of 42.

The Hirotas second child, Robert Shigemaru was born on 4/12/1924, a year before Rev. Hirota's passing.

Upon Rev. Hirota's death in 1925, Robert was adopted by his

paternal aunt and lived in Hiroshima.

Kotome and Miyora returned to Japan in April 1926, never to be heard from or to be reunited with Robert.

Robert was married in 1949 in Tokyo and became *muko-yoshi* or the adopted son of his wife's parents Atae and Sumi Awaya - former residents of Palama who returned to Tokyo to start a thriving dressmaking business.

Robert, his wife Yoshiye and two children emigrated to California in 1960.

Robert passed away at the age of 82 on April 9, 2007.



Photo taken in 1926 at Kotome Hirota's Farewell party at the shrine. The woman wearing a kimono in the first row is Kotome, Rev. Hirota's wife. The young girl standing on the right of Kotome is Rev. Hirota's 13-year old daughter Miyora, carrying her 1-year old brother Robert.

# TROPICAL STORM DARBY

Tropical Storm Darby wreaked havoc on Oahu on July 24 with torrential downpours. Darby flooded Kalihi stream, creating a lake of mud on Dillingham Boulevard and other areas of Kalihi and Kapalama. Heavy ponding closed the School Street exit of H-1 and Nimitz Highway along Marukai.

The shrine's 200 gallon subterranean tank filled up within 15 minutes, resulting in a potential flooding of the basement meeting room.

Rev Takizawa and the shrine's neighbors - Rudy, Sherrie and Justin Santiago used buckets to bail out water from the overflowing tank for nearly 2 hours, in a desperate attempt to minimize damage to the meeting room.



# Maintenance

Mahalo to Mike Lee and Craig Nishida for installing a new submersible pump in front of the meeting room. The old pump was replaced with a larger, faster sump pump on July 31 to ensure sufficient power to pump the water out before it can back up and overflow.

Mahalo Bob Harada, Kell Komatsubara, Galen Komatsu and Rev. Takizawa for cleaning up the hall on July 30.

