

Betsuin Jiho

No. 386

January-February, 2008

www.nishihongwanji-la.org

Phone (213) 680-9130 • FAX (213) 680-2210

NEW YEAR'S GREETING

"IMMEASURABLE LIGHT AND LIFE"

At the beginning of the year, I would like to send you my greetings.

May we all continue to live every moment and every day of this year in appreciation of the Nembutsu.

I wonder how you all spent this past year. There are a number of armed conflicts all over the world and climate change seems to have occurred. Those whose work or daily lives have been directly affected by these things must feel particularly threatened, but even those of us who are not directly influenced feel somewhat anxious. All lives are interrelated, and therefore, armed conflicts or climate change cannot be regarded as the problems of other people. We must address them as issues that concern us all.

Some of you may wonder how



peace issues and environment concerns are related with the teaching of the Buddha, or how on earth they are connected with being born in the Pure Land to attain Buddhahood. I recognize that the basis of Buddhism is my attainment

of enlightenment or my birth in the Pure Land, and so the teaching is not a wonder drug which can immediately solve those problems. Taking into account, however, the fact that the human race has caused serious problems on a global scale by pursuing their self-centered desires without careful consideration, you cannot say that Buddhism is irrelevant to these issues. Buddhists seek enlightenment because actual humans, due to their ignorance and blind passions, constantly cause damage to their own lives and the lives of others, thereby deepening everybody's suffering.

It is said that Bodhisattvas, who are regarded as ideal beings in Buddhism, cannot feel happy

Ohtani Koshin

It is said that Bodhisattvas, who are regarded as ideal beings in Buddhism, cannot feel happy

ANTICIPATING THE 750TH MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE VENERABLE MASTER SHINRAN

to be held in conjunction with the Goshoki Ho-onko Service on January 13th

by George T. Matsubayashi, Rimban

The Venerable Master Shinran, the founder of our Jodo Shinshu Buddhist teaching, passed on to the Pure Land during 1262 C.E. at the ripe old age of 90.

Seven-hundred-forty-six years have passed since then. Many people in many different places have come and gone during this time, but those who live within the warm embrace of the Nembutsu reverently maintain memory of him with a memorial service held on the day of his passing. That date is January 16th according to the Western calendar or November 28th according to the old Japanese lunar calendar.

Although we in the Hongwanji conduct a memorial service every month on the day that the Venerable Master passed on to the Pure Land (the 16th), the day of the month during which he passed on is considered especially important. This service is referred to as the Goshoki



Bronze statue of Shinran Shonin in the LA Betsuin gardens. Donated by Seiichi Hirose of Japan to commemorate the 800th anniversary of the birth of Shinran Shonin

Ho-onko Service. It is one of the most important services in our calendar year.

We will conduct the 747th

Goshoki Ho-onko Service for the Venerable Master this year, and three years from now – during year 2001 – a once-in-a-lifetime service commemorating the 750th year since his passing will be conducted at our Hongwanji Headquarters Temple. This great service will begin during April of 2011 and continue for ten months until January of the next year. Memorial services commemorating the Venerable Master will be held throughout Japan during this time, of course, but they will also be held all over the world wherever people appreciate the Nembutsu.

Before the year 2011, however, services anticipating that great memorial service will be held throughout Japan and the world. They will be held within all Hongwanji organizations (the BCA

see RIMBAN-SHINRAN page 4

NEW YEAR'S GREETINGS

George T. Matsubayashi,
Rimban



May you greet this New Year basking in the Light of Great Compassion and in good health! This past year we here at the Los Angeles Betsuin Buddhist Temple have been greatly indebted to all of you in so many ways that I do not have the space to list them all. All I can say is: "Thank you. Thank you in gassho."

To summarize some of the ways in which you assisted in our temple activities, however: Until last year we had to borrow a refrigerated truck from Mr. Kawaguchi's Fishing Company whenever we had a bazaar or cooked on a large scale. Last year, however, because of all your efforts, during the month of February we were able to construct a ten-foot-square walk-in refrigeration room where we can store perishable goods. How much easier things went last year because of it!

About that same time, we began renovating the restrooms in the lobby of our multi-purpose hall so it would accommodate the disabled. We are presently waiting for the permit to install electrical wiring. Upon receipt of the permit, construction can be completed, which will be some time early this year.

During the month of October, we completed a "Special Common Mausoleum Area" within the see RIMBAN NEW YEAR page 4

Rev. William Briones



For most people, the activities and traditions surrounding New Years is symbolic of all our hopes and aspirations for the coming new year. These activities and traditions manifest that which we hold dear to our hearts and minds.

Every New Year morning, for as far back as I can remember, we visited my aunt's house for *menudo* ... unfortunately I haven't been home to celebrate New Years for the past 12 years. However, my children now look forward to part take in the New Year Day festivities of *menudo* and I'm sure Malik, my grandson, will one day make this part of his New Years tradition.

I'm sure many of you have your own New Year traditions of visiting your grandparents or relatives house for *osechi*. As we revisit the activities and traditions of celebrations past, it is the family experiencing historical continuity that keeps us in touch with the present, past and future.

As the year 2007 comes to a close I would like to wish you and your family a very meaningful and fulfilling 2008. I would also like to express my sincerest appreciation and gratitude to all of you for making this past year a most meaningful and rewarding experience. To be able to share the Nembutsu teaching with you has been a truly wonderful experience for me.

I would like to thank Rimban Matsubayashi for his continued guidance, support and friendship through out

see BRIONES NEW YEAR page 5

BETSUIN SCHEDULE

- * **SHUSHO-E (NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE)**
JANUARY 1st
- * **KOHAKU UTAGASSEN**
JANUARY 6th
- * **HO-ONKO SERVICE & SHINNEN ENKAI**
OMACHIUKE MEMORIAL SERVICE
January 13th
- * **BWA KISARAGI-KI SERVICE**
FEBRUARY 3rd
- * **SURF 'N TURF FUNDRAISER**
MARCH 1st (Saturday)

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DID YOU KNOW?...

by Eiko Masuyama

Reprinted excerpt from the May-June 2002 issue of the JIHO

Yutaka Shinohara, a single man, was active in the late 1930's Los Angeles *Betsuin* Young Men's Buddhist Association and president of the *Gyotokukai* (*Kibei* - American born, Japan educated - Association). Shortly after December 7, 1941, Mr. Shinohara met with the wives of the ministers of Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Temple because of their concern about their future. The Japan born ministers, Rimban Jokai Kow, Reverends Bunpo Kuwatsuki, Miyoshi Okita, Daitetsu Hayashima, Koro Maehara, Giko Yamamoto, Jotetsu Ohno and Giko Abiko were all arrested by the FBI and sent to various Department of Justice internment centers in the interior of the United States. Rev. Reiichi Mohri was a Japanese citizen, but the name on the FBI list was "Mori", hence the FBI did not arrest him. The wives voiced their concern about where they were going to be sent and asked Mr. Shinohara to request Santa Anita Assembly Center; they did not want to go to Manzanar, which they had heard was very windy and physically unprepared to receive internees. Mr. Shinohara requested Rev. Newton Ishiura, an American citizen, born in Hawaii, to intercede for them. Mr. Shinohara was instructed to gather 40-50 people, with Rev. Ishiura as the leader. He was able to gather 41 members. They were called the *Hongwanji Family #18390* and entered Santa Anita Assembly Center on May 9, 1942. The heads of family were Rev. Newton Ishiura, Rev. Reichi Mohri, and Yutaka Shinohara. The family consisted of the families of Rimban Kow, Reverends Okita, Hayashima, Abiko, Ohno, and friends and relatives of Mr. Shinohara.

Leader Rev. Ishiura became ill and was sent to a sanatorium in La Crescenta. Rev. Mohri and Yutaka Shinohara led the group to Heart Mountain Relocation Camp, Wyoming, on September 9, 1942.

In October of 1942, in Block 30, a Buddhist Church was established in the

Recreation Hall; Sunday School was established first. A Buddhist altar (*butsudan*) four feet high, five feet wide, and 30 inches deep, was built by the carpentry shop headed by foreman, Shinzaburo Nishiura (of San Jose). The material used was originally designated for a bookcase. This *butsudan* is currently stored in the Japanese American National Museum in Los Angeles. The design at the top and front sides was laid out by Yutaka Shinohara, who was assigned to the sign shop. Tom Konishi carved the details of the wisteria design. The statue of Amida Buddha was brought by the wife of Rev. Tesho Matsumoto from Yakima Buddhist Church (WA)....

In April of 1943, in Block 30, the Heart Mountain Nishi Hongwanji Buddhist Church opened. ... A Dedication Service was held on April 18th. The service dedicated the *butsudan* and also celebrated Hanamatsuri. With the opening of this church, the Sunday school increased from 40 to close to 300 children. Superintendent of Sunday school was Yutaka Shinohara....

In September of 1943, Rev. R. Mohri and family, and Mr. and Mrs. Yutaka Shinohara (Yutaka Shinohara and Takako Kohno were married by Rev. Mohri in early September) were reassigned to Tule Lake Relocation Camp.

**Thank you for everything,
Mr. Yutaka Shinohara (1915 - 2007)**



YUTAKA AND WIFE, TAKAKO, SHINOHARA

If you have any interesting stories that you would like to share, please submit to JIHO or leave note for Eiko Masuyama. Thank you.



THE 750TH MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR THE VENERABLE MASTER SHINRAN

On January 9, 2005, the *Monshu* Spiritual Leader of our Hongwanji Organization announced that the 750th Memorial Service for the **Venerable Master Shinran** will be held during the year 2011. This once-in-a-lifetime service will begin during the month of April and continue for 10 months, until January of 2012.

This major service will be conducted at the Headquarters Temple in Kyoto, Japan, and throughout Japan, of course, but also throughout the world wherever there are persons who live within the *Nembutsu*. Many from all over the world are expected to attend the services to be held in Kyoto.

To make it more comfortable for those from outside Japan who are not used to sitting in the formal *seiza* position on *tatami* mats as is usual in Japan - chairs will be provided for the services held at the Headquarters Temple.

Although this once-in-a-lifetime service will be held three years from now, we are urged to conduct services among members, temples, *betsuins*, and teaching areas now to enhance our consciousness of it.

Here at our Los Angeles *Betsuin* Buddhist Temple, we will conduct a service at 1:30 PM on Sunday, January 13, 2008 in anticipation of that 750th Memorial Service for the Venerable



"Kagami no Goei" (Mirror Portrait)

Portrait of Shinran Shonin painted by Sen'amidabutsu. The famous standing portrait, preserved at the Honzan in Kyoto, was painted in the last year of Shinran's life. It is rendered in bold ink lines capturing Shinran's spiritual strength.

Master. Ministers from all Southern District temples and their members will participate to recall the Venerable Master's great virtue and our indebtedness to him. This service will be lead by Bishop Koshin Ogui, the current *Socho* of our BCA, who will also give the *dharma* talk in Japanese. Reverend Masao Kodani will give the *dharma* talk in English. A banquet luncheon will be served in the multi-purpose hall after the service.

Before this service, the 747th *Goshoki Ho-onko* Service in the Venerable Master Shinran's memory will be held starting at 10:00 AM. The English speaker will be Bishop Koshin Ogui, and the Japanese speaker will be our Rimban George Matsubayashi. As usual every year, new cabinet members of the various

Betsuin organizations will be installed during this service. Our *Betsuin's* New Year's party will be held in our Multi-Purpose Hall after this service, starting at 11:30 AM.

We hope all of you, together with family members, will participate in both these morning and afternoon services. In order to assure that we have sufficient food, please inform the temple office if you will attend. Thank you.

Gassho

MEMORIAL: LADY TAKEKO KUJO 1887 - 1928

by Elaine Fukumoto

During the month of February, Buddhist women throughout the *Jodo Shin-shu* world will commemorate the life of Lady Takeko Kujo for her exemplary dedication and her inspiration as the founder of Buddhist women's activities.

The *Betsuin* will observe the 81st memorial the of the passing of Lady Kujo at the *Kisaragi-ki* Memorial service to be held at on February 4th.

Lady Takeko Kujo

was born as the second daughter of the 21st *Hongwanji Monshu*, Myo-nyo Shonin, on October 20, 1887. Myonyo Shonin is credited as the first *Monshu* to send two *Hongwanji* priests to the United States as missionaries in 1889.

During her youth, Lady Takeko Kujo served her father, Myonyo Shonin. From the age of 17 years, she helped her sister-in-law, Lady Kazuko Otani, and actively participated in Buddhist women's activities

In 1904, the first *Fujinkai* (Buddhist Women's Association) was formed in Kyoto, Japan. In 1909, when Lady Kujo was 22 years old, she married the Baron Yoshimune Kujo and accompanied her husband to



九條武子夫人

LADY TAKEKO KUJO

London where he was scheduled to study at Cambridge University. She returned to Japan after one year while her husband continued on with his studies in London.

In 1911, the honorable advisor to the All Japan *Fujinkai*, Lady Kazuko Otani, passed away. Soon afterwards,

see KUJO page 3



EITAIKYO SERVICE MINISTERS

left front: Rev. Hoshu Matsubayashi, Rimban George Matsubayashi, Rev. Seikan Fukuma back: Rev. Yoshinori Teruoka, Rev. Kenn Koizumi, and Rev. William Briones.



DEDICATION CEREMONY FOR THE "COMMON AREA CHAPEL"



RIMBAN MATSUBAYASHI'S BIRTHDAY

left front: Rev. Briones, Rimban Matsubayashi, Gary Kawaguchi middle: Amy Miyakawa, Helen Takata, Jean Kondo, Toshiko Sugiyama back: Bruce Shinohara, Bruce Hatakeyama, Bessie Tanaka, Ernest Hida, and Kanji Sadamoto.



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

left: Jean Kondo, secretary; Gary Kawaguchi, president, and Rimban George Matsubayashi.

INTERVIEW:

SEIBI OKITA ABOUT HIS FATHER, REV. MIYOSHI OKITA, PART IV

by Elaine Fukumoto

This is the fourth in a series of parts of an interview where Seibi Okita speaks of his father, Rev. Miyoshi Okita, and his own life. This interview was part of a research project that compiled stories told by offsprings of detainees who were deemed as "Dangerous Enemy Aliens" at the Santa Fe internment camp.

This is an edited version. The complete interview can be viewed/heard on the internet at:

<http://manymountains.org/family-histories/okita/media/index.php>

Seibi: [looking at an issue of the Jiho] This is 1939 ...our newspaper...the Jiho.my dad's on there. My dad wrote a little article, "Hige to hage". I had a bald spot. This was right after I was born. He grew a mustache when I was born because I looked like him. So to distinguish [himself from me] he grew a mustache. [In his article he wrote that] he looked at his mustache and my bald spot and he wished he could put his mustache on my bald spot. That's what he wrote.....this [article] was about parent wish....parent love.

MM: When did [your father] come back [to the US]?

Seibi: No...he didn't. My dad was running the temple [in the Japan]. He's not going to leave there....he's there until he dies. That's the way it is...the oldest son takes over and his oldest son takes over....that's the way you do it in Japan.

MM: And here [in the U.S.] every one switches?

Seibi: Here, you don't own anything. In Japan, the family owns the temple...it's generation to generation. Especially the Nishi Higashi--the Jodo Shinshu--the Pure Land sect--the family owns the temple. Other temples like Koyasan....the ministers of Zenshu...they marry. But in Japan, they don't marry. They go to school and they are cut off from regular life to become a monk. So you don't have a wife, you don't eat meat.... It is very different from Jodo Shinshu...Nishi-Higashi, the Pure Land sect. We could marry, we live the same as regular people....only the Nishi and Higashi temples and Jodoshu. Other school's temples--no marriages. So at these other temples, when a minister passes away, they assign another minister. But at Jodo Shinshu temples, it's generation to generation. It's a little bit different. So, my family temple is maybe three or four hundred years old.

I found out when I was younger, from some really old stuffsome emperor came to Kumamoto and stopped by the temple. This was in the records, so it must be old.

I came [to the US] after right after high school finished with the intention of staying just two to three years. Then, my brother graduated high school and he came. Another brother graduated and he came-- all because the three of us were born here -- we had citizenship. Me, I was going to go back to take over my [family's] temple, so I was suppose to go to school in Japan. So I was suppose to be here for just a few years. But I stayed.

My dad came when I got married. That's the only time he came. Oh, he came back one more time later on. After that, he didn't come.

MM: Did you lived with him all through high school?

Seibi: Right after I went back to Japan after the war, I went to elementary school, junior high school, and high school. When I finished high school, before I went to the university [to study to become a minister], I came to the U.S. and didn't go back.

MM: So when you came here, how did you survive?

Seibi: I asked a person who knew us before the war. She took care of me. This lady knew my dad from Okinawa--Mrs. Oshiro. She was a student in Okinawa when my dad was

there. She came here and my dad came here. When my dad went to Brawley, she was in Brawley. Since then, our families were in a relationship. So I stayed in her house.

Then I went to be a houseboy. We all had a houseboy job. We stayed in a *hakujin* house--we worked a little bit--go to school--go back and do some things.

MM: Where did you do this?

Seibi: Los Feliz

MM: How was that? Was it hard or was it easy?

Seibi: In Japan, we learn English in junior high to high school from a Japanese teacher, right? I came here and I didn't know anything! The pronunciation was different. I didn't understand anything!

My friend found me a job as a houseboy. Good thing-- she was a retired English teacher. She was patient. She would tell me to set the dining table.

see OKITA page 5

(continued from page 2)

Lady Kujo succeeded the position of president of the All Japan Buddhist Women's Association. She participated in bringing messages of importance of the BWA which helped the organization to grow and expand throughout Japan.

In 1912, the "Prospectus for the Establishment of a Women's University" was issued by Lady Kujo, as president of the *Fujinkai*, and backed by the Nishi Honganji Temple. In response, the Japanese government gave permission to establish a college for women, and the Women's Institute of Kyoto was established in 1920.

In 1920, after nearly 11 years of studying at Cambridge, her husband, Baron Yoshimune Kujo returned to Japan. They lived together in Tokyo Tsukiji Hongwanji.

On September 1, 1923, the Great Kanto earthquake devastated the city of Tokyo. Lady Kujo led the efforts to provide humanitarian aid for the victims. She also worked to establish the Asoka Medical Clinic, one of Japan's first modern medical centers. Embraced by the the *nembutsu*, she dedicated herself to helping the homeless, delinquent children, educating and giving medical aid.

Lady Kujo was the author of many books, *gathas*, and a play. She published the book, "Muyuge" (Flower without Sorrow) which became a best-seller in Japan. "Muyuge", the most notable of her works, is a compilation of poems which is now regarded as a classic internationally. The proceeds from this book were contributed to the building of Asoka Hospital. One of her poems is "Seiya" which means "Peaceful Night" and

BETSUIN PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

As we approach the end of the year 2007, once again, I would like to express my sincere appreciation for your support to our Betsuin this past year. Moving forward into 2008, I ask you for your patience and support as we continue to build the temple for the future.



GARY KAWAGUCHI
BETSUIN PRESIDENT

I wish to thank our ministerial staff, Rimban George Matsubayashi, Rev. William Briones, and Rev. Kenn Koizumi for dedicating their time and devotion to our members and community. Under the guidance of our Rimban, our Betsuin is continuously being asked to support the needs from our community, creating even more demands from our ministers, aside from the daily routines of our temple.

I wish to thank our Komon and the members of the Board of Directors for their support and guidance and lastly, our office staff and volunteers for their assistance in meeting the never-ending daily administrative tasks of our temple.

This past year was no different from any other years with each month filled with many events and activities which kept all of us very busy. Three more innumerable services were held this past year. This brings our total to 313 members reserving a niche with 145 niches being occupied. I am very pleased with the support and, especially, the successful results of all the events.

The capital project of two handicap bathrooms in the Kaikan will soon be completed, so the elderly members will no longer have to walk downstairs. We will continue to upgrade and maintain our temple to accommodate our members and community comfortably with their needs.

As we continue to change our direction to focus on the future, I firmly believe that our future relies greatly on the younger generation. We must look to see how we can provide more exciting youth programs for our younger generation. With all the programs we already have in place, let us see how we can improve them to draw more membership from the community.

There are many challenges that lie ahead of us and I look forward to be working in harmony with everyone in 2008 to meet these challenges.

gassho,

Gary Kawaguchi,

President Board of Directors

KUJO

has been set to music.

In January, 1928, Lady Kujo became ill from physical exhaustion stemming from her ceaseless humanitarian efforts. She succumbed to her illness on February 7th at the age of 42. The Buddhist name bestowed upon her was *Gonjo-in Shaku-ni Kyo-sho*.

Lady Takeko Kujo is honored each year as a selfless *nembutsu* follower who dedicated her life promoting the status and solidarity of Jodo Shinshu Buddhist women.

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2008

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MARCH 1, 2008

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The number of meals to be sold will be limited.

NO MEALS WILL BE SOLD AT THE DOOR

All proceeds will go the Los Angeles Homba Hongwanji Buddhist Temple.

RIMBAN-SHINRAN

(continued from page 1)

in the United States), all districts (*Kyoku*), all *Betsuins* (temples with a direct relationship with the Hongwanji Headquarters Temple in Kyoto), and all individual Hongwanji temples.

Here at our Los Angeles Betsuin Buddhist Temple, we will conduct this anticipatory service on January 13, starting at 1:30 PM. It will be led by Bishop Koshin Ogui, the current *Socho* of our BCA. All ministers of our Southern District, as well as many members of their temples will attend this service. What a wonderful opportunity for all of you to join them in expressing our deep indebtedness to the founder of our religious teaching!

Preceding the anticipatory service on that day, we will conduct the 747th *Goshoki Ho-onko* Service starting at 10:00 AM.

The term *Ho-onko* literally means "association to express indebtedness to the *dharmā*" and is an abbreviation of *Ho-onko-shiki* (*shiki* means "ceremony"). This term was coined by the Venerable Master's great-grandson, Master Kakunyo (1270-1351 CE) in a work with that title, which he wrote for the Venerable Master's 33rd Memorial Service.

The text that Master Kakunyo wrote then is reverently read before the image of the Venerable Master, praises him, and express gratitude for our indebtedness to the *dharmā*. Specifically, Master Kakunyo stated that:

1) We are indebted to the Venerable Master for accepting the "easy practice" (*igyō*) of reliance on the Primal Vow based on "Buddha-centered power" (*tariki*), and his indebtedness to the true Pure Land teaching.

2) We are indebted to the Venerable Master because after he received *shinjin* based on "Buddha-centered power" and was assured of birth in the Pure Land himself, he sought to spread this teaching to all others as being the correct cause of birth in the Pure Land.

3) We are indebted to the Venerable Master even though we no longer have the opportunity to personally come in contact with him because through his writings we can come in contact with the *dharmā*.

Master Kakunyo concluded each of the above statements with the phrase:

Thus we should express our indebtedness by "reciting the Buddha's Name (Namo Amida Butsu).

Master Kakunyo also wrote:

...reciting the Name of the Buddha based on the Primal Vow, become aware of the great Compassion of the Two Sacred Ones and our indebtedness to them.

And,

Rely on "Buddha-centered power" and recite the Buddha's Name.

Master Kakunyo personally relied on the Primal Vow based on "Buddha-centered power" and recited the *Nembutsu* to express indebtedness to the *dharmā* and to the Venerable Master.

The Venerable Master Shinran expressed his great joy in being in the embrace of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow, going so far as to say:

(The Primal Vow) is for me, Shinran, alone!

And,

(I) must repay my indebtedness to Amida's Great Compassion



SHINRAN SHONIN
Wooden statue preserved at the Senjuji temple in Mie Prefecture, Japan.

even if my body is crushed!

The Venerable Master's great joy and feeling of indebtedness was not limited to himself. As Master Rennyō quoted the Venerable Master in one his "Letters":

(I, Shinran)...do not teach a new Dharma at all. All I do is entrust myself to Amida's Dharma and teach it to others...

That is the spirit of "fellow followers along the same path" (*ondobo ondogyo*) that the Venerable Master spread during his lifetime. But spreading that teaching was not limited to the 90 years of his life. As Master Kakunyo also wrote:

Although the year of his passing is now distant, those who come to pay him respect does not cease. His (physical body) is now dust but that does not prevent his image from continuing to appear before our eyes. Though blown by the winds of transiency, his words of

truth (have sunk deep) into our minds and hearts. His written works have been opened by multitudes and caused them to enter the True Gate in the Western Direction. Through that teaching/practice, his later disciples are able to benefit widely. This flowering (of his teaching) is overpowering today.

And 746 years later, it has not remained in Japan but been transmitted here to the United States and all over the world. Amida Buddha's Primal Vow based on the "merit transference" (*eko*) of "Buddha-centered power" is ceaselessly acting on all, one person at a time. That power cannot rest until everyone awakens to the Warmth and Great Compassion of Amida Buddha's Primal Vow.

The Venerable Master expressed this feeling in the following words:

Since those counted among the "truly settled" are at the same stage as Maitreya, they are also said to be equal to the Tathagatas. Know that persons of true shinjin can be called the equal of Tathagatas because, although they themselves are impure and always create karmic evil, their hearts and minds are already equal to Tathagatas.

This is the realm in which Amida Buddha's limitless wisdom and limitless compassion become the "Namo Amida Butsu" Name of the Buddha that we recite. That "merit transference" is what allows us to continue living within the "marvelously mysterious" and immeasurable life of the *Nembutsu*. Truly, this is the Great Indebtedness that try as we may, we are unable to express completely. It is indebtedness to the Venerable Master for leaving us this teaching that can never be completely repaid.

With a deep feeling of indebtedness to the Venerable Master Shinran, we here at the Los Angeles Betsuin Buddhist Temple will conduct a service in anticipation of the 750th Memorial Service for the Venerable Master on January 13th at 1:30 pm. As already mentioned, this special service will be held following our usual *Goshoki Ho-onko* Service, which will be held starting at 10:00 am. I respectfully invite all of you to participate in both these most meaningful services.

--Gassho

RIMBAN NEW YEAR

(continued from page 1)

Memorial Chapel of Immeasurable Light and Life specifically for the remains of 399 persons whom we were unable to associate with a family or relatives. A special service to inaugurate this "Special Common Mausoleum Area" was conducted during the month of November in conjunction with our annual *Eitaikyo* Service.

With *Eitaikyo* Service held during November of

last year, construction and furnishing of the Memorial Chapel of Immeasurable Light and Life to commemorate the 100 years of our existence was completed. I am unable to find words to express my great joy and gratitude to all of you for making it possible. Your contributions have allowed us to start a new chapter in the history of our Los Angeles Betsuin Buddhist Temple. Thank

you. Thank you.

With the completion of our new structures, our "place to practice" (*dojo*) the *Nembutsu* gives us even deeper awareness of our indebtedness. I conclude this New Year's Greeting with the wish that you all continue keeping awareness of the sacred *dharmā* deep within your minds and hearts. Happy New Year! *Gassho*



*Furu ame wa onaji
de atte mo ukeru
soumoku ni yotte
koto naru*

Although the same rain falls equally on all vegetation, the benefits differ.



HALLOWEEN



photos by
Glen Tao



IT IS ONLY THE BUDDHA'S WORKING OF GREAT COMPASSION AND GREAT WISDOM THAT SAVES US. IT ENGENDERS IN US THE MIND TO RESPOND TO HIS WORKING, TO TAKE REFUGE IN HIM, AND TO ENTRUST OURSELVES WHOLEHEARTEDLY TO HIM. THIS MIND IS CALLED SHINJIN. IN OTHER WORDS, SHINJIN IS NOTHING BUT THE WORKING OF AMIDA'S MIND THAT PENETRATES OUR WHOLE EXISTENCE AND REVITALIZES IT TO JOIN THE ETERNAL, PURE ACTIVITY - THE VOW-POWER.

-- Zuiken Inagaki
1885-1981

Betsuin Jiho

Editor-in-Chief: Rimban Matsubayashi
English: Elaine Fukumoto Japanese: Tomoko Ama
Photographer: Koichi Sayano

DAIJO FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

Annual General Meeting

Monday, January 14, 2008 12:00 noon

Coming Soon!

"A Buddhist Walk"

Come with us on a walking tour & lesson on other sects of Buddhism in our local area.

Nishi Adult Buddhist Association

DAIJO FEDERAL CREDIT UNION

by Elaine Fukumoto

Having returned from the relocation camps the end of World War II, a group of L.A. *Betsuin* members wanted to go beyond the "*Tanomoshi*" with a more structured, legal form of lending money to help the temple members. They filed an application to create a federally regulated credit union. In April of 1949, the *Betsuin* obtained its charter and the **Daijo Federal Credit Union**, a non-profit organization, was established. The founders of the Daijo FCU were: Shigemi Aratani, Noboru Ishitani, H. Ma-yeda, Masuo Sakamoto, Tozo Yahata, Edward Yo-shimoto, and Rev. Giko Yamamoto.

Daijo's first financial statement reported assets of \$730. One year later, shares had increased to \$12,900. As the Daijo FCU nears its 60th year, its assets are close to \$3 million with over 400 members.

The members of the current Board of Directors are: Eddie Sasaki, CEO/Manager; Neil Hashiba, Chairperson; Helen Takata, Secretary; Hideki Yama-zaki, Loan Officer; Amy Miyakawa, Supervisory Committee Chairperson; Patricia Murakami, Supervisory Committee Member; and Kenji Maki, Supervisory Committee Member.

In asking Eddie Sasaki, what the benefits are to becoming a member of Daijo, he explained:

"Daijo was started as a place for Betsuin members to join, save money and borrow money, when needed. All monies that are borrowed belong to the credit union members, similar to a bank, but the interest earned benefits the members and not the executives. Young families were encouraged to open a savings account for their children and make deposits on a regu-



EDDIE SASAKI
DAIJO CEO & MANAGER

lar basis." Sasaki further explained that to become a member of Daijo, being a member of the LA Betsuin or any other BCA temple would qualify an applicant. A minimum of \$5 is required to open a savings account.

Sasaki has been at the LA Betsuin since his youth when his mother, Emiko Sasaki, would bring him weekly for dharma school. At age 26, his mother advised him to open an account at Daijo and a few years later, he took out his first loan.

Sasaki began working for the Daijo in 1987 at the request of his mother. The former manager, Kame Goto, was turning 80 years of age and was ready to retire. The Daijo board of directors interviewed Sasaki and was asked to start working right away. He was quickly trained by Goto during two weekends and was then given charge of the whole operations. "Needless to say, I learned on-the-job," was Sasaki's remark.

Sasaki's background includes a bachelor's degree in accounting. He has worked as an auditor for the State of California for the past 32 years. He is currently working as a manager of a statewide tax fraud detection program.

For any Daijo information, Sasaki can be reached at 213-626-3805, Saturdays from 11am - 3pm.

FYI: HONZAN

MOTHER TEMPLE, KYOTO

by Elaine Fukumoto

The Nishi Hongwanji head temple in Kyoto (aka: *Honzan*), was built in 1591 by Toyotomi Hideyoshi and is considered one of the finest examples of architecture from the Azuchi-Momoyama Period (1573-1603).

The *Honzan* holds many items that are recognized as National Treasures and Important Cultural Properties. In 1994, the entire Hongwanji precinct received designation as a UNESCO World Cultural Heritage Site.

Currently, the Goeido (the Main Hall) is being renovated until the end of 2008 in preparation for Shinran Shonin's 750th Memorial Commemoration Services in 2011.



THE GOEIDO (MAIN HALL)
IS CURRENTLY BEING RENOVATED.

BRIONES NEW YEAR

(continued from page 1)

the year. Rimban's work and dedication to the *Betsuin* has truly been an inspirational experience for me. I would also like to thank Rev. Koizumi for his support and assistance during this most demanding year.

May gratitude and appreciation enter your life as you awaken to the *Nembutsu* teachings.

Namo Amida Butsu

OKITA

(continued from page 3)

She would write it down and showed me in a dictionary. Next day she would tell me the same thing. That's the way I learned. She was so patient.

MM: So from that, you were able to support yourself?

Seibi: She gave me a few [dollars]. City college cost nothing...I was going to the city college.

Before I went to be a houseboy, I was staying [at Mrs. Oshiro's] place then I got the job as a houseboy. I stayed [at the teacher's house] for about 7-8 months then I came back [to Mrs. Oshiro's] and I got a real job as a cafeteria cook. I go to school in the morning and work in the cafeteria in the afternoon. So, I was already making money

MM: So then, did you move out of [Mrs. Oshiro's] house?

Seibi: No. I stayed in that house for 19 years. **She** moved out [chuckles]

Four years later, my brother came and stayed there. Then I got drafted because I'm a citizen. When I left Japan, I was 18 and I didn't register because I didn't know. By then, I was 20 or 21 and a draft note came. So right away I had to go. At that time, my brother was here. While I was in army, the next brother came. So, the two brothers were staying there. I'm away....and they didn't get along too good with [Mrs. Oshiro] and **she** moved out. She had been renting the house. After I came back, we stayed there, in that house, for 19 years. The houseowner was living upstairs and I used to call them grandpa and grandma.....

So for 19 years I stayed there--that was our house. I took care of lot of people from Japan. They came--they had nowhere to go. They stayed until they got a job or had somewhere to go. So many many people came and went from our house

Q & A FROM THE "JODO SHINSHU HANDBOOK FOR LAYMEN"

The following are questions and answers were taken from the "Jodo Shinshu Handbook for Laymen" which was reviewed in the July-August issue of the Betsuin Jiho.

218. When and how should I pay my homage at the Hongwanji?

There are two gates at the Hongwanji on Horikawa street. When you enter from the south gate you will see the information booth on the left hand side. Please ask for assistance there.

Morning worship is conducted first at the Amida-do followed by another at the Goei-do. From March through October the services start at 6:00 a.m., while from November through February the services are from 6:30 a.m.

Confirmation Rites (*Kikyo-shiki*) are conducted twice each day; one right after morning service and the other at 1:30 p.m. For Confirmation, please apply at least one hour ahead of time at the *Sanpai-bu* (reception office).

For group worship, large or small, there is a *Nembutsu Hoshi-dan* (Nembutsu volunteer service group) system whereby groups offer volunteer services in cleaning and maintaining the temple and grounds. these groups are given special privileges which include listening to sermons and lectures, a guided tour of the interior where National Treasures and Important Cultural Assets of the Hongwanji may be viewed, vis-

iting the famed gardens that are not open to the public, meeting with and a group photograph taken with the Monshu. Annual and seasonal special services are open to all. the priest of your temple will be able to give you further information about these services. Foreign visitors to the Hongwanji are requested to contact the International Department.

219. When are tourists allowed to visit the Hongwanji for viewing of National Treasures?

Tours of *Kono-ma*, *Shiro-shoin* and *Noh-butai* (Stork Chamber, White Chambers, and Noh-drama stages) are conducted daily at 10:00 a.m. and 11:30 a.m. and in the afternoon at 1:30 a.m. and 2:30 p.m. On Saturdays the tours are conducted only during the morning hours. However, when the chambers are in use, no tours will be conducted. Tours are free of charge, but inasmuch as the areas have been designated National Treasures and Important Cultural Assets of Japan by the Government, no photography is allowed and of course smoking on the premises is strictly prohibited.

Visitors from overseas Hongwanji temples, missions and churches are requested to contact the International Department.

"*Jodo Shinshu Handbook for Laymen*" Hongwanji International Center 2nd Ed. 1983 (1982), 261 pp. is available at the **Betsuin Book Center**,



BONSHO (Large Bell)

The bonscho is struck before a service is conducted in order to gather the members of the sangha to the temple.

Listen to the bonscho with joy; in the resounding echo of the bell the Buddha's compassionate call can be heard reverberating through the ten quarters of the universe .

ESSENTIALS OF JODO SHINSHU (*Kyosho*)

Name: *Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha* (Nishi Hongwanji), the Hongwanji-branch of the True Essence of the Pure Land Way

Founder: Kenshin Daishi Shinran Shonin (1173 - 1262 A.D.)

Central Objective of Worship: Amida Tathagata (Namo Amida Butsu)

Sutra: Triple Pure Land Sutras

* Bussetsu Daimuryojukyo (Larger Sutra of Immeasurable Life)

* Bussetsu Kammuryojukyo (Sutra of Contemplation on the Buddha of Immeasurable Life)

* Bussetsu Amidakyo (Smaller Sutra of Immeasurable Life)

Teaching: Entrusting oneself in the teaching of *Namo Amida Butsu*, rejoice that one shall attain Buddhahood, and with the heart of gratitude, live for the welfare of the people of the world.

Tradition: We are a community of friends bound together in the joy of the same realization. We will always be mindful of our speech and action, work responsibly for the good of society, and pool our efforts in disseminating the true meaning of the Dharma. Bearing in mind of the principle of causation, we shall not engage in superstitious practices.

MEMORIAL SERVICE FOR 2008

The following years are the dates of special services for the deceased. The temple will send out notices to the next of kin. In the event that a notice is not sent, please notify the *Betsuin* office for an appointment at 213-680-9130 during the business hours of 9 A.M. to 6 P.M.

Memorial Observance Death	Year of
1st year	2007
3rd year	2006
7th year	2002
13th year	1996
17th year	1992
23rd year	1986
25th year	1984
33rd year	1976
50th year	1959

IN MEMORIAM

The *Nishi Betsuin* extends its deepest condolences to the families of the following members who have recently passed away. May the family members find solace and comfort in the *Nembutsu*.

—*Namo Amida Butsu*



2008 MEMBERSHIP

A "member" of the L.A. *Betsuin* is one who donated the annual membership.

The following is a list additional members who have submitted their membership during the October 1 through November 30 period for the year of 2008. Your continuing support of the temple is greatly appreciated.

BETSUIN CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 NEW YEAR'S DAY SERVICE
(Shusho-e) @ 10:00 AM
- 2 BETSUIN CLOSED
- 6 DHARMA SCHOOL,
First Service of the New Year
- 6 37th Annual *KOHAKU UTAGASSEN*
@ 1:00 PM
- 14 *HO-ONKO* SERVICE @ 10 AM
SPEAKERS:
BISHOP KOSHIN OGUI (ENG)
RIMBAN GEORGE MATSUBAYASHI (JPN)
JOINT INSTALLATION @ 11:00 AM
NEW MEMBER WELCOMING
& NEW YEAR'S PARTY @ 11:30 AM
- SHINRAN SHONIN
750th *OMACHIUE* MEMORIAL
SERVICE @ 1:30 PM

FEBRUARY

- 3 BWA *KISARAGI-KI*,
LADY KUJO'S & LATE MEMBERS
MEMORIAL SERVICE @ 1:30 PM
- 10 NIRVANA DAY (*Nehan-e*) @ 10:00 AM
BOARD LUNCHEON @ 12:00 PM
- 23 BUTSUREN "SHOJIN" COOKING
CLASS

MARCH

- 1 SURF 'N TURF FUNDRAISER

TUNE IN TO
KTYM AM 1460
Sunday 12:50 PM Dharma Message

L.A. BETSUIN
"TELEPHONE DHARMA MESSAGE"
ENG: 213-680-2038
JPN: 213-680-2080

L.A. HONPA HONGWANJI BETSUIN INFORMATION



ADDRESS: 815 East First Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012
TEL: 213-680-9130
FAX: 213-680-2210
WEBSITE: www.nishihongwanji-la.org
E-MAIL: BetsuinLA@aol.com

L.A. BETSUIN BOOK CENTER



OBUTSUDAN
OJUZU
BUDDHIST BOOKS
CHILDREN'S BOOKS
CANDLES

COOKBOOKS
WITH EVERYONE'S FAVORITE RECIPES
TERIYAKI, CHASHU, TSUKEMONO,
CHICKEN SALAD, MOCHI CAKE, ETC:
\$ 10 - \$ 25

SUNDAY: 9:00 AM - 12:30 PM
WEEKDAYS - BETSUIN OFFICE PERSONNEL WILL
ASSIST WITH PURCHASES

Email: nishibookcenter@sbcglobal.net

BON ODORI EXERCISE CLASS



LA BETSUIN
downstairs in the Lotus Room

2nd & 4th Tuesdays of the month
6:30 - 8:00 PM
1st & 3rd Sundays of the month
8:30 - 10:00 AM

For further information, leave a message for Eiko Masuyama
at the Betsuin office: 213-680-9130

BETSUIN

2008 CALENDAR

JANUARY

- 1 New Year's Day Service (*Shusho-e*)
 2 *Betsuin* Closed
 6 Dharma School, First Service of the Year
 37th Annual *Kohaku Utagassen*
 13 *Ho-onko* Service (Eng & Jpn)
 & Joint Installation, New Member Welcoming
 & New Year's Party
 Shinran Shonin 750th Memorial Service

FEBRUARY

- 3 BWA *Kisaragi-ki*, Lady Kujo's &
 Late Members' Memorial Service
 10 Nirvana Day Service (*Nehan-e*)
 26-28 BCA Ministers' Meeting @ Portland, OR
 29-2 BCA Council Meeting @ Portland, OR

MARCH

- 1 Surf 'n Turf Fundraiser
 22 Spring *Ohigan* Seminar
 23 Spring *Ohigan* and *Rimban-ki* Memorial Service

APRIL

- 6 *Betsuin Hanamatsuri*
 13 Buddhist Federation *Hanamatsuri*

MAY

- 3-4 Federation Dharma School Teachers' Conf.
 11 Mother's Day Service
 18 *Gotan-e* & Infant Presentation (*Hatsumairi*) Services
 25 Memorial Day Sunday Service
 26 Memorial Day *Hakamairi* Services

JUNE

- 1 *Betsuin* Picnic & Outdoor Service
 7 So. District Buddhist Conference @ San Fernando
 15 Fathers' Day & Graduation Service
 17-19 BCA Ministers' *Fuken* Seminar
 21-22 Sun Valley *Obon*

JULY

- 4 Independence Day (*Betsuin* closed)
 12-13 *Betsuin Hatsubon* Services & *Obon* Carnival & *Odori*
 20 *Obon Hakamairi* Service @ Evergreen Cemetery
Obon Family Service @ *Betsuin*

AUGUST

- 3 Atomic Bomb Memorial Service
 30-31 So. Dist. Jr YBA Conference (*LA Betsuin*)

SEPTEMBER

- 1 Labor Day (*Betsuin* closed)
 7 Dharma School Registration &
 20 Autumn *Ohigan* Seminar
 21 Autumn *Ohigan* Service

OCTOBER

- 5 *Eshinni-ko* Memorial Service

NOVEMBER

- 15-16 *Eitaikyo* Services
 16 General Membership (*Sokai*) Meeting
 27 Thanksgiving Day (*Betsuin* closed)

DECEMBER

- 7 General Temple Clean-up
 14 Bodhi Day Service (*Jodo-e*)
 21 *Oseibo Kansha* Appreciation Service
 25 Holiday (*Betsuin* closed)
 31 *Joya-e*, Year End Service

Dates are subject to change