

WWW.NCOKK.ORG

FEBRUARY 2024

Tayui

SOKK's End of an Era ~ Celebrating a 45-year Legacy



The Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai (SOKK) was established in April 1979, with Founder and first President Fujiko Dandoy heading a small group of 16. For the past five years, three current Board members, Harumi Ducharme, Tsuneko Silva, and Toyoko Yungling, worked hard to promote and foster Ryukyu culture by holding small *yuntaku* gatherings for members and acted as a conduit with Okinawa by hosting visitors from the Okinawa Prefectural Office.

Discussions about our future were held with our members during two meetings in November and December 2023. After much consideration, it was decided that the Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai (SOKK) would close operations at the end of March 2024.

The main reason for the closure was because there was no successor to take over the reins of the Board. We had an aging membership and had trouble retaining new members. Sadly, we decided that now was the time to close our 45-year history.

We will hold our last group dinner on Sunday, February 25th and conclude the meeting by presenting letters of appreciation to past officers and share final messages from current members. The three current Board members will finish organizing any outstanding tasks and SOKK will officially close on the last day of March.

As President of the Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai for the past five years, I would like to express my gratitude to all those who have had close relationships with us over many years, including the NCOKK Board and members of NCOKK's Geino-bu Performing Arts group.

Finally, I would like to wish a successful future for NCOKK.

Sincerely,
Harumi Ducharme
President, Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai (SOKK)

1979年4月富士子ダンドイさんが代表となりサクラメント沖縄県人会は発足しました。発足当初は16人居た会員は、マクレラン空軍基地の規模が大きくなるにつれ年毎に当県人会の会員も増えてピーク時には80人を超える程の盛会でした。

SOKKの目標は、会員同士の親睦、琉球文化の習得と伝承を通しての地域社会への貢献、米国内の他の沖縄県人会への協力でした。そしてこの県人会が米国と沖縄県を結ぶ架け橋になるための尽力となる様努めるというものでした。私達の45年の歩みにより、いくらかはその望みが叶ったと思います。

しかしこの度、この歴史あるサクラメント沖縄県人会を閉じるに至った1番の理由は会員の高齢化にありました。加えて新規会員の定着がままならない現実が有りました。

2019年から現在では3人の役員は5年間細々ながらも43人残った会員の親睦を図りながら琉球文化の継承、沖縄県議会一行の訪問団との会食を含む沖縄県とのパイプ役を果たして来ました。

しかし、SOKKの抱える問題は、解決策が見当たらないままでした。前進出来ずにいたのです。去年の末、11月と12月と2度のミーティングに於いて会員一同との議論と熟考の結果、最早今が潮時と感じて、45年の歴史を閉じる決断に至りました。

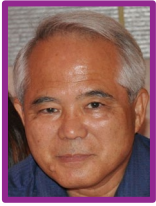
最後の食事会を2/25/2024と決め、その日は歴代役員等を感謝状贈呈で労い、5年間役員を務めた現役員からのSOKK会員への挨拶で締めくくる運びとなります。

役員3人は、残務整理をした後最後に銀行口座の解約の手続きを終え、3月末日をもってサクラメント沖縄県人会の45年の歴史に幕を下ろす事となります。

これまでSOKKを盛り立てて下さったNCOKKの役員の皆様、芸能部の皆様、そして私共と親しくお付き合い頂いた方々にSOKK会員一同より深く感謝致します。

最後にNCOKKの益々の御発展を祈って私の挨拶と致します。

サクラメント沖縄県人会会長
はるみドゥシャーム



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Hai-Sai, *Gusu-yo, Chu-uganabira!*

Happy New Year! The Year of the Dragon is said to be a year in which things become energetic, grow big, and take shape. Unfortunately, the New Year began with sad news such as the Great Noto Peninsula Earthquake and the plane crash at Haneda Airport in Japan. We pray for the repose of the souls of those who passed away. We would also like to express our sympathies to those affected by the disaster. We pray that they can return to their normal daily life as soon as possible. In honor of this year's zodiac sign, I wish that like the rising dragon, your efforts will bear fruit, grow greatly, and be filled with joy and hope.

Last year, we were almost freed from the restricted activities of the long COVID-19 era and were able to hold all of our annual events. A summer picnic has also been added to the annual events. I think we have almost returned to our normal daily life. Our *Geino-bu* members participated in various Japanese cultural events and played an active role in spreading Okinawan culture. Thank you for your hard work. With the help of five Ryukyu dance master teachers (Kinuko Mototake - San Francisco, Frances Nakachi - Hawaii, Ben Higa - Los Angeles, Joseph Nishijo - San Diego, Momoe Onno - Washington DC), the performing event focusing on classical Ryukyuan dance was held in Washington DC last November. This event was well received by the audience. I look forward to more collaboration by these master teachers in the future. Thank you to all the members who donated and our kenjinkai for taking an active role in supporting the event.

The war is still going on in the Ukraine. The war between Israel and Hamas that began in October last year, has spread to a wide area of the Middle East and is expanding. In wars, weak people like women and children suffer the most. As Uchinanchu who lost many people in World War II, I pray that peace can be restored to these areas as soon as possible.

It is very unfortunate that the Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai will end its 45-year history at the end of March. The main reasons seem to be the aging of the members and the lack of successors from the younger generation. We hope that all members of the Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai continue to participate in our events. I believe that the problem of a lack of successors among the younger generation is an issue that is shared by other Kenjinkais, including our own.

Our goals for the New Year are to register our kenjinkai as a charitable 501c3 organization, which has been planning for some time, and to hold a mini-event that also serves as a *yutaku* for members in remote areas. We also want to explore various ways to increase the number of younger generation members.

I think the most appealing thing about our Okinawa kenjinkai is the opportunity to experience Okinawan culture. Unfortunately, our kenjinkai, like other kenjinkais, has few members from the younger generation. Therefore, the current situation is that there are almost no successors to the Okinawan culture. For the sustainable development of our kenjinkai, please encourage your children and grandchildren to participate in our Kenjinkai events.

Hatsuko Hitchcock and Fujiko Dandoy have reached to *Kajimaya age* this year. Congratulations to both of them! I pray that you will continue to live a long and healthy life. Also, I pray that many people will celebrate *Kajimaya* next year and the year after.

Spring is approaching, but the days are still cold and there are signs of a slight increase in COVID-19. Please take preventive measures and receive the necessary vaccinations. Please pay attention to you and your family's health too. "*Nuchi du Takara*"

ハイサイ、グスーヨー、チューウガナビラ!

明けましておめでとうございます。辰年は活力旺盛になって大きく成長し形がととのう年と言われています。不幸にも新年早々、日本では能登半島大地震、そして羽田空港での飛行機事故と暗いニュースで始まりました。お亡くなりになった方々のご冥福をお祈り申し上げます。又災害で被害にあわれた方々へお見舞い申し上げます。一日も早く日常の生活を取り戻せるようお祈りいたします。今年の干支にちなんで、昇竜の如く、今までの皆様の努力が実を結び大きく成長して明るい話題で賑わうように祈ります。

昨年のはあの長かった COVID19 時代の制限された活動からほぼ解放され、毎年恒例の行事を行う事が出来ました。以前の日常生活にほぼ戻ったかと思えます。又、夏のピクニックも年中行事に加わりました。当県人会の芸能部も色々な日本文化行事にも参加して、沖縄文化の紹介で活躍しました。芸能部の皆様、ご苦労様でした。去年の11月にはワシントン DC に於いて、5人の琉球舞踊の師範 (Kinuko Mototake-サンフランシスコ、Frances Nakachi-ハワイ、Ben Higa-ロスアンゼルス、Joseph Nishijo-サンディエゴ、Momoe Onno-ワシントン DC) のご協力で古典舞踊を中心に発表会をしました。今後の師範たちの協演発表会に期待したいと思えます。寄付をくださった会員の皆さん、感謝いたします。当県人會もこの公演を積極的にサポートいたしました。

ウクライナではまだ戦争が続いています。そして、去年の10月に始まったイスラエルとハマスの戦争は中近東の広範囲に広がって戦争が拡大しています。いつの世でも戦争は女性や子供のように弱い人たちが大きな被害を受けます。第二次世界大戦で多くの人々を失ったウチナーンチュとして一日でも早くこれらの地域に平和が取り戻せることを祈ります。

大変残念な事ですが、姉妹県人會でもあるサクラメント沖縄県人會がこの3月末をもって45年の歴史に幕を閉じるとのことです。会員の皆さんの高齢化そして若い世代の後継者不足が主な要因だそうです。サクラメント沖縄県人會の皆様も、今後もお気軽に当県人會の行事にご参加くださるようお願いいたします。若い世代の後継者不足の問題は当県人會も含めて他の県人會も共有する課題でだと思います。

新年の目標は、以前から計画していました、我が県人會の慈善団体としての登録、遠隔地での会員とのコンタクトを兼ねたミニイベントを是非、実現させたいと思えます。若い世代の会員を増やす方法も色々模索したいと思えます。

沖縄県人會の一番の魅力は沖縄文化に接する事が出来ることだと思います。当県人會も他県人會同様、若い世代の会員が少ないです。よって、沖縄文化の後継者もほぼ、いないのが現状だと思います。当県人會の持続可能な発展のためにも皆様の子や孫達が当県人會へ気軽にご参加して下さるよう促して下さるようお願いいたします。

Hatsuko HitchcockさんとFujiko Dandoyさんが今年カジマヤーをお迎えします。おめでとうございます。これからも、ご健康で長生きされるようお祈りいたします。又、来年、再来年と多くの方がカジマヤーを迎えますことを祈ります。

春も近づいていますが未だ寒い日々が続きます。そして COVID19 も微増の兆候が見られるそうです。必要な予防接種を受けて健康管理にはより一層の注意を払ってください。どうぞ十分にご自愛くださいませ。「ヌチドゥ宝」

2024 CALENDAR of EVENTS イベントカレンダー:



- March 22 - 24, 2024** 10th Annual LooChoo Identity Summit sponsored by *Ukwanshin Kabudan*
Windward Community College, Oahu, Hawaii, IN PERSON
Check out their website: loochooidentity.org
- March 27 - 31, 2024** All Kubasaki High School Dragons 50's, 60's, 70's Reunion
Hilton Garden Inn Dulles North, Ashburn, Virginia (to book call 1-703-723-8989 KHS rate)
If interested, contact Juli Kodani sfokjuli@yahoo.com for flyer or call Sunny 321-299-3071
- April 13-14, 2024** 57th Northern California Cherry Blossom Festival, San Francisco Japantown
北カリフォルニア桜まつり, Performance at Peace Plaza
- & April 20-21, 2024** Grand Parade (4/21), San Francisco, 1:00pm from Civic Center Plaza
グランドパレード (4/21) 午後 1 時開始
(If you're interested in walking in the Grand Parade on Sunday, April 21, contact either Kinuko Mototake 510-708-6672 or Fumiyo Tomita 510-426-2833)
- April 27-28, 2024** Cupertino Cherry Blossom Festival, 10:00am-5pm, Memorial Park
クパチーノ桜祭り, 場所:メモリアルパーク, 時間:10:00am – 5:00pm
- June 30, 2024** NCOCK High School Scholarship DEADLINE (see details in this issue)

2024 SHINNEN-KAI ANNOUNCEMENT 新年会についてのお知らせ:

Come out and support NCOCK by buying **RAFFLE** tickets and bidding at this year's **SILENT AUCTION** (for higher value items)! There will be terrific bargains donated by members and friends of NCOCK. It's happening on **February 18, 2024** during our annual *Shinnen-kai* New Year's Celebration at Fairfield Community Center.

We are accepting donations of merchandise (even regifted Christmas presents), gift certificates and services. If you have a high-value donation you think would interest bidders, please call Juli at 415-479-4214 by **Friday, February 9, 2024** with a description of the item(s) you're donating as soon as possible. The sooner we know, the easier it is for us to organize the Silent Auction.

Some higher value donation ideas:

- ❖ Unused merchandise or Christmas gifts, antique or collector's items
- ❖ Services and / or gift certificates
- ❖ Tickets to sporting and other events
- ❖ Hotel / vacation home stays
- ❖ Wine or other packaged foods

We're also having a DVD/CD/BOOK SALE too. If you have any books, DVDs and CDs you want to donate, please bring them with you to the Book Sale table inside. So bring your cash and checkbook (sorry, no credit cards) and help us make this event a success! Remember, whatever is raised, helps fund the many NCOCK activities.

現在、ラッフル（くじ引き）とサイレントオークションへの寄付（商品、ギフトカード、又は不要なホリデーギフト等）を受付けています。（サイレントオークションとは出品物の前に置いた紙に競り値を書き込んでいく形式のオークションです。）寄付されたお金は我々の奨学金制度や他の県人会年間行事の為に使われます。もし寄付可能なものをお持ちの方は新年会当日に会場へお持ち寄り願います。

当日は古本市も開催する予定です。読み終わった本、雑誌、DVD、CD等是非お持ち寄りください。

新年会当日にボランティアをして下さる方も募集しております。内容はラッフル（くじ引き）販売、お弁当、おつまみ係等です。興味のある方はジュリー415-479-4214 まで御連絡下さい。皆様のご協力に感謝いたします。

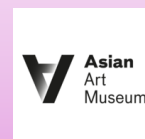


SCHOLARSHIP DEADLINE IS SUNDAY, JUNE 30, 2024

The **2024 NCOCK High School Scholarship** is open to 2024 high school Junior or Senior graduate whose **family are paid members of NCOCK**. A 200 to 300-word **autobiographical essay must be submitted with the application**. The essay should cover significant experiences, community involvement, and the qualities of character important to achieving your personal goals. Be sure to comment on your aspirations in terms of your educational (whether you plan to attend college, JC or trade school) and career goals. The scholarship will be accepted with the firm understanding that the recipient must **commit to volunteer** and assist the Northern California Okinawa Kenjin-kai for at least **two (2)** NCOCK events **AFTER** receiving the scholarship or can fulfill the above obligation **PRIOR** to and **AFTER** graduation.

The application form is available on our website www.ncokk.org. Mail the completed application and essay to: Ben Kobashigawa, 669 57th Street, Oakland, CA 94609.

Thank you for the generous donation from the **Asian Art Museum**, 200 Larkin Street, San Francisco





Reflections on *Udui Nirai Kanai* “Heart of Ryukyuan Dance Capital to Capital” in Washington DC

by Joseph Nishijo, Tamagusuku Ryu Kansen Atae no Kai, Southern California

Ryukyuan Performing Arts, or Ryukyu Buyo, has always been an important aspect in my life since the age of six. Even when I couldn't yet appreciate the depth of the art – the music, costumes and tradition always echoed through my bones. It was for these reasons, nearly 30 years later, I believed it increasingly important to share this art with different regions of the United States and abroad. While I've had the opportunity to travel extensively for performances, I had never yet made it to Washington DC. This is when Capital to Capital become a reality.

The capital of the Ryukyu Kingdom, modern day Okinawa, was Shuri. Shuri is also the birthplace of Ryukyu Buyo hundreds of years ago. This is why bringing the Shuri Ryukyu Buyo to the US capital, Washington DC, seemed powerful for our troupe.

Gathering five different masters from varying schools to perform on a cohesive platform seemed the best way to share this artform. Focusing on the Ryukyu Buyo *Nana Udui*, or seven classical numbers, was a unique way of sharing this ancient art form. While Ryukyu Buyo has some growing recognition, it is still considered a rare performing art, even in Japan.

Having the privilege of sharing the stage with **Kinuko Mototake** of Azama Honryu Seifu Ichisenkai Mototake Kinuko Ryubu Kenkyujo USA from San Francisco, **Frances Nakachi Kuba** of Tamagusuku Ryu Senju Kai Frances Nakachi Ryubu Dojo of Hawaii, **Ben Naoya Higa** of Tamagusuku Ryu Shosetsu Kai Ben Higa Dance Studio of Los Angeles, and **Momoe Onno** of Tamagusuku Ryu Shosetsu Michiko-no-Kai of Washington DC, was more inspiring than we could have all imagined. Understanding that we have all learned from different schools for decades, it was our *Shimagukuru*, or islander-spirit, that drove us to build a production to share our un-tethered love for Ryukyu Buyo.



After the last show of the trip, we had a unique opportunity to share cocktails and meet-and-greet some attendees. The most touching of greetings came from those people who had driven 8 or 9 hours to attend the show from faraway states. We were met with many thanks for having live, active translations in English and Japanese for many of the classical numbers. We were also extremely fortunate to have the support of the Okinawan Prefectural Government office in Washington DC, who shared with us that they felt prideful tears as they saw the dance *Kagiyadefu* being performed in Washington DC.

Many thanks is owed to the countless volunteers, both local and from afar, who supported *Udui Nirai Kanai* in the background.

Social media can be a very powerful tool for building a following, but it also takes time and effort to get those results. You can check our website: ncokk.org to find out what's going on AND we're also on **Facebook**: [ncokk.org](https://www.facebook.com/ncokk.org) and **Instagram**: [hatai.ncokk](https://www.instagram.com/hatai.ncokk)

So join our Facebook and Instagram NCOKK community and drop a comment to say Hello!

Furthermore, we had the distinct privilege of having the help and support of the San Francisco Kenjin Kai President, Tetsuo Ishisoko, as chairman of our inaugural performance. His countless hours of hard work, sleepless nights and pride for Okinawa made this seemingly distant dream a successful reality.

As I reflect upon our past performance, it is a goal of *Udui Nirai Kanai* to bring these performances to different Kenjinkai's around the United States. If you believe we can help spread this art to your local area, please reach out to us so we can continue to extend the bridge to more communities. *Ippe Niffee Deebitan*

EDITORIAL NOTE: This dance performance of 5 Masters at Georgetown University in Washington DC last November can serve as a cornerstone for the rejuvenation of our performing arts in the US and hopefully lead to the expansion and development of *kenjinkais* in the US, many of which are struggling. With a mutually beneficial relationship and support, we can nurture the future generation of leaders and invest in our performing arts. In short, to help our *kenjinkais* survive, we can start by preserving and fostering our performing arts.



About Mindful Meditation

In this hectic pace that we live in, I wanted to share this meditation link to help you get some much needed relaxation time! It's FREE

and available online. MarinHealth Zoom online meditation sessions are conducted by Corliss Chan. The live meditation sessions are on the first Monday of each month from 10:00 am for 45 minutes.

Go to:

<https://www.mymarinhealth.org/meditation>

More than 80 past sessions are also available on YouTube beginning with:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=02T7x0KcxFk&list=PLN59y7ZWE4_JNDrK_NCsGUcWPK1gvUzoC&index=1 She also conducts sessions on **Jin Shin Jyutsu**, an ancient Japanese healing art that focuses on harmonizing the body's life force energy using the hands and breath:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6boKpN0r5s>.

Enjoy both!

Azama Honryu Seifu Ichisen Kai U.S.A.
Kinuko Mototake Classical Okinawan Dance Academy
Est. 1996
SF Okinawa Kenjin Kai Performing Arts Director
SF Okinawa Kenjin Kai Eisa Shima Daiko
Instructor and Director

Master Kinuko Mototake
Ambassador to Okinawa
510.708.6672
kinuko4@gmail.com





MUNUGATAI: How We Remember, How We Share, How We Create

This is the theme for this year's Loochoo Identity Summit in Honolulu, Hawaii in March.

“For those of us who are separated from our ancestral homelands by both generational time and geographic space, stories are often the only connections we have left. In Okinawan, the word for “story” – *munugatai* – also means conversation or dialogue. In this way, stories are not simply recollections of past events, people, or places, but a vital means of communication that helps build relationships with others and the world around us. The understandings we gain from *munugatai*, however, depend heavily on the lens through which we view the information presented to us. Therefore, as we engage in *munugatai* on a daily basis, we constantly rewrite our own stories and co-create stories with others. Come join us for our 10th Loochoo Identity Summit as we delve into the ways we remember, share, and create stories and conversations together.”

We are especially delighted to offer financial assistance for qualified students to attend this year's Summit. Thanks to our many generous supporters who feel the importance for succeeding generations to connect to and appreciate their precious heritage, students may apply to receive fee waivers and/or reimbursed travel expenses.

For all those interested in attending the 2024 Loochoo Identity Summit, please visit our website for more details, registration information and student applications at loochoo.identity.org.

NOTE: *Ukwanshin Kabudan is an independent non-profit performing arts And education organization based in Honolulu, Hawaii, dedicated to the preservation and perpetuation of Okinawan culture. They share information about their classes and workshops as it relates to Okinawan history, language and culture and we pass it on to our membership.*

めんそーれー
New Members / Address Changes as of 1/31/2024:
 新会員加入 2024年1月31日付
 Steve Matsumoto
 Izumi Sunagawa

Address Change:
 Yasuharu Matt Matayoshi

SUSHI RAN

107 Caledonia
 Sausalito, CA
 94965

415.332.3620
 sushiran.com

COMMENTS FROM OUR MEMBERS & OTHERS:

It was very inspiring to meet all the Uchinanchu who are active in San Francisco and Sacramento. Thank you for your warm hospitality. We were blessed with beautiful weather, a great atmosphere, food, and good conversation. I hope the Vice Governor's caravan visit will benefit the future succession and enhancement of the *Uchina* Network. Although my office is on the East Coast, we are in the same U.S. and will continue to exchange information closely as we work together.
Kazuyuki Nakazato, Director, Okinawa Prefecture DC Office

It was a really nice and meaningful reception. We had a great time! Thank you so much for everything. I hope that our connection has gotten tightened and will continue from now on. Everyone was so-o-o nice. Stay *genki* and we are looking forward to seeing everyone at the next Uchinanchu Festival!
Sawako Tamaki, Okinawa International Exchange Division Staff

Thank you to Annette and all the NCOKK volunteer members' hard work for the luncheon. We had much fun talking with Vice Governor Ikeda and the Okinawa Delegation members at the luncheon. My husband and I were sharing each other's thoughts while enjoying the delicious food. We talked about the JET program and other things Okinawan prefectural offices face.
Harumi Ducharme, Sacramento Okinawa Kenjinkai President & NCOKK Member

Want to thank you for the article in the kenjinkai newsletter concerning Masako and myself. Like I said, each one of us has a story to tell!
Albert Citero

Seeing familiar faces was great. Such energetic, involved and talented members.
Donald Lee, custodian at San Mateo Buddhist Temple during 2023 Keiro-kai

We all look so forward for this event and any other Okinawan get-together! My mom really enjoyed the show and glad she got to see some old friends. Everything worked out and I am very happy everyone helped out.
Suzanne Chanduloy, daughter of 97-years young Honoree, Michiko Fujii who cut the ceremonial 2023 Keiro-kai cake

I thought everything ran very smoothly. The bentos were delicious and the program was great.
Sue Detwiler, new member who volunteered at 2023 Keiro-kai with daughter Sequoia

Thank you so much! Keiro-kai was a huge success and I had a great time watching the performances and meeting other members. Thank you for organizing, and hope to see you soon at the next NCOKK event.
Emma Anderson, new member

Thank you for the newsletter. We always enjoy reading it.
Sachiko Adolph, Fayetteville (North Carolina) Okinawa Kenjinkai President

From the *Tayui* Archives:

Satokibitake no Uta, by Misao Sakamoto, August 2004

Note: Sadly, Misao Sakamoto passed away in 2020.

The haunting melody of “zawawa zawawa zawawa” deeply touched the depth of people’s heart and memory as they watched the Fuji TV drama “*Satokibitake no Uta*” in May 2004.

The invasion of Okinawa in the spring of 1945 by the US military with its massive manpower and advanced technology, and the aggressive and inhuman approach of the Japanese military in the light of its apparent defeat, were well portrayed in this drama. There were some romantic episodes woven into it, but essentially it was the story of the innocent and peace-loving people of Okinawa caught in a war between two nations destined to win the Pacific War. The futility of war, negative feeling of ultimate patriotism, and the sentiment of pacifism and humanism were the underlying theme of this drama.

One day I received a telephone call from **Junichi Oshiro**, President of NCOKK (editor’s note: at the time). He explained that Fuji TV wanted me to narrate my experiences to compliment this drama. I was astounded, had no idea what he was referring to since I knew nothing of this particular drama nor of what was required of me as a narrator. Being a man of few words and quick action, he succinctly said, “Just say a few words of your trip to Okinawa after the war. That’s all.”

After much verbal negotiation, I reluctantly agreed to be interviewed. Never having any TV experience, I had somehow expected a TV camera person and interviewer to meet me at a designated place. On another day, Junichi called me again, “I’ll come to your home. What kind of bento do you want for dinner?” He arrived with a small camera and a bagful of foodstuff, a typical gesture of his kindness. Without any formal instruction or direction, I responded to his plea of “just say what you want to say.” This essentially was my introduction to TV drama narration.

And yes indeed, memories crept into my mind as I recalled my trip to Okinawa in January 1946 after the war in search of my grandparents and other relatives. Having seen the aftermath of war and the suffering the people endured, I could not help but reveal my psychological attitude towards war and its inhumanity. However I was totally unprepared for the profound effect the drama had on the minds and hearts of the TV viewing public. Immediately after the show aired, I received many calls from members of the local Okinawa community recalling their own sufferings and tragic experiences. I received letters and telephone calls from friends and strangers, some of them saying that they were not aware of such warfare in Okinawa. I was recognized by strangers in grocery stores and other places and asked, “Are you the person who spoke on TV about the war on Okinawa?” Subsequently, two Japanese journalists visited me in my home and the director of a local senior center requested that I address the membership on Okinawan history and of my experiences there. She explained that the non-Asian veterans of the senior center saw the TV drama. They were involved in the war in Okinawa. A few days later I received a telephone call from an American veteran who saw the TV drama and also expressed an interest to share his experiences and memories with me someday.

I am not one to seek fame or recognition by my TV appearance and narration. But I am impressed by the overwhelming response I received from members of the community at large who also expressed their deep emotional and negative feelings toward wars. “*Zawawa zawawa zawawa, satokibitake no uta*” indeed touched the heart and soul of many people.

Misao’s note: *I deeply regret the serious error made on TV in introducing and misrepresenting me as Gen. MacArthur’s secretary. I served in the US Occupation of Japan from 10/1945 – 10/1947 and was employed in the Government Section, Political Affairs Unit in his headquarters in Tokyo. I was not Gen MacArthur’s secretary!*

From the *Tayui* Archives:

Mr. Kohama’s 100th Year Birthday Celebration

On May 7, 2005, a party was held for Mr. Ankichi Kohama, a senior member of NCOKK, who celebrated his 100th birthday attended by over 100 guests. He was from the town of Ogawa on Ishigaki Island, worked in Taiwan before and after the war for the Japanese government’s Department of Agriculture. After the war, the Kohama family returned to Ishigaki. He supported his family through difficult times making bamboo baskets which were sold by his eldest daughter, Akiko (Kohler).

At the birthday party, Junichi Oshiro was the MC, then President Yasuharu Matt Matayoshi gave a congratulatory toast, longtime friend Yasukiyo Tanaka recited a celebratory poem and Bea Shiroma draped a hand-made lei around his neck! Performances that followed included: *Kageyadefu* by Junichi Oshiro; song by Yoshiko Sueyoshi; *Abujama* by Haruko Bayes; *Shuri Ondo* by Fujiko Dandoy, Misako Fukui and Tsuneko Silva; song by Nancy Horne; *Iwai Bushi & Katami Bushi* (minyō) by Eiko Urabe, Wesley Ueunten, Toshiko Rabine, Kikue Uehara and Nobuko Vandred; *Nuchibana* by Eiko Urabe, Yoshi Harrison; *Hatoma Bushi* by Junichi Oshiro and song *Yashiko no Mi* by his daughters Akiko, Kazuko and Kyoko.

Ankichi (died 2007) and his wife, Tomi (died 2011), were married for nearly 70 years while raising 2 boys and 3 girls (Akiko Kohler, Kazuko Bray, Kyoko Kohama, Kunio Kohama, and Yasuhide Kohama (deceased)). He was a resident of San Jose for over 32 years and until the age of 93, he walked 2-3 hours a day and kept a healthy lifestyle. His hobbies included *shigin* (singing Japanese poetry), woodworking, calligraphy and traditional Okinawan music. With sanshin in one hand, Mr. Kohama often enjoyed singing at our kenjinkai events. At the 3rd World Uchinanchu Taikai (2006) on Okinawa, he returned to Ishigaki and participated in the *Tubaraama* (Yaeyama folk song) contest and won!

Editor’s note: The birthday part of this article was originally written by member Masumi Uehara in 2005, now shared by his family on this 17th anniversary of his passing, edited and updated for inclusion in *Tayui*. I hope some of you will fondly remember the names of past and present kenjinkai members in this article.



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO BEA SHIROMA!

Looking wonderful at 102! Bea still lives in Honolulu with her daughter Yukie who was born in Hawaii and teaches at the University of Hawaii. "Mom and I enjoy reading the *Tayui*, hearing news of the club's activities and its members and is *genki* as ever!"

NOTE: For those who may not know Bea, she was the strength behind her husband, our first kenjinkai President Tom Shiroma (1980-1992). Sadly, Tom passed away in 2008, but his legacy is embedded in the fiber of our kenjinkai! Thanks to Yukie, she shared the article Tom wrote about our kenjinkai history published in the February 18, 1993 issue of the National Japanese American Historical Society (NJAHS) *Nikkei Heritage*, Volume V, Number 1, Winter 1993. It also included articles written by current NCOCK Secretary Ben Kobashigawa, Clifford Uyeda, and Franklin Odo with Karleen Chinen.

**OKINAWA KENJINKAI
OF NORTHERN CALIFORNIA**

by Tom Shiroma

The first Okinawa Kenjinkai of Northern California was founded in 1902 and based in San Francisco. It served the needs of the immigrants from Okinawa. When the 1906 earthquake hit the city of San Francisco, the Okinawans decided to evacuate together -- first to Golden Gate Park, and then to Berkeley. Most of them eventually moved to Southern California.

Since 1924 a group of ten to fifteen Okinawan families in the Bay area gathered at each other's homes for potluck dinners. Tom and Isabel Oshiro were the frequent hosts. The Okinawans kept close contact with one another and gave a helping hand when needed.

The Okinawans' longing for their music and dance was realized at our first public New Year party held in 1977 at Sigmund Stern Grove in San Francisco. It was a resounding success.

In each succeeding year the interest in Okinawan music and dance performances increased tremendously. We were discovering many talented Okinawan performers in our midst. We realized that Okinawa was truly a land of

song and dance. In 1980 the group was formally structured as the Bay Area Okinawa Club. Due to people joining from outside the Bay Area, in 1989 the club name was changed to Okinawa Kenjinkai of Northern California.

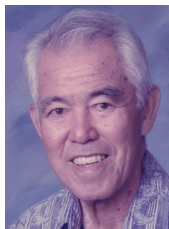
"Fifty percent of our club members are non-Okinawans... The purpose of our club is to maintain and to demonstrate here in America our cultural heritages of Okinawa."

By 1992 our membership had increased to 450. Fifty percent of our club members are non-Okinawans.

Dignitaries from Okinawa have been entertained by our group, such as Governor Nishime and Vice Governor Miyagi in 1988. In 1992, Yuka Arakaki was the first club member from Northern California to receive a one year scholarship to study at Ryukyu University.

The purpose of our club is to maintain and to demonstrate here in America our cultural heritages of Okinawa. *

Tom Shiroma, a Nisei, is the founder and the president of the Okinawa Kenjinkai of Northern California. He and his wife, Beatrice, reside in San Francisco.



VENMO & PAYPAL ONLINE PAYMENT

Some members asked about online payment for some time, so it happened. As of March 8, we are accepting online payments via **Venmo** and **PayPal**. Please make sure that you check **for friends and family and NOT for goods and services**. We hope that this will make it easier for everyone to pay their 2023 Membership Dues, etc.

For those who prefer to pay online:

Venmo:
@NCOCK
or ncokk2020@gmail.com

PayPal:
ncokk2020@gmail.com



However, if you prefer the old-fashioned way, checks are still acceptable!

REVISED TAYUI DISCLAIMER (2022)

SUBMISSION OF ARTICLES FOR TAYUI NEWSLETTER:

You are invited to submit requests for any community announcements or other events that you feel are important to promote for our NCOCK members in the quarterly *Tayui* Newsletter. This includes Okinawan dance performances, concerts, Japanese festivals, local fundraisers, school events, etc.

Please consider if what you want to promote will benefit the NCOCK member community. The *Tayui* Editing Team reserves the right to make editorial and formatting changes to your story if space is limited.

REQUIREMENTS:

1. It must be in **English** and **Japanese (if available)**
2. It must be emailed to the Editing Team at sfokkjuli@yahoo.com, at least **two (2) weeks** PRIOR to printing.

NCOCK Personal Contact Information Policy (as of July 2021)

Due to privacy concerns, the NCOCK Board approved **NOT** to include personal data information (i.e. new member's address and member's change of address) in the *Tayui* newsletter going forward. Any personal contact information in the NCOCK Membership Roster can also be withdrawn. Please email treasurer@ncokk.org if you **DO NOT** want to be listed beginning with the 2022 Membership Roster.

個人情報の記載: ニュースレターやメンバー登録名簿等に記載を希望しない方は treasurer@ncokk.org にお知らせください。



1990's Photo from Albert & Masako Citero (R); Tom & Bea Shiroma (L)



Can you identify the others?

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