

Karen Oda and Janet Honda recently attended the 750th Shinran Shonin's Memorial Service and the 14th World Buddhist Women's Association Convention on May 15-17, 2011 in Kyoto, Japan. Prior to the Memorial Service on May 15th for the overseas participants, Karen and Janet, who were part of the Hawaii processional delegation, walked to drum beats and entered the Goeido (Founder's Hall) as 3,500 members and TV cameras looked on. All of the Hawaii processional participants wore aloha attire and orange eyelash leis. Karen and Janet were even pictured in the newspaper the next day. It was an awesome experience that many processional participants will never forget.

The 14th World BWA Convention was held at the Kyoto Pulse Plaza on May 16th (workshops and banquet) and 17th (convention meeting and entertainment) and was hosted by the Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha Buddhist Women's Federation of Japan. There were 4,000 delegates from Japan, the Buddhist Churches of America, Canada, South America, as well as Hawaii. One of the highlights of the Convention was meeting Lady Noriko Ohtani and Shimonsama who recently became a father of a baby boy. Mrs. Lily Horio of Jikoen BWA represented Hawaii very well on the theme, "May Peace and Tranquility Prevail Throughout the World." The Convention ended with the World Buddhist Women's Convention flag passed by Japan to Canada. For the next World BWA Convention to be held in Toronto, Canada on May 30-31, 2015.



L to r: Donna Higashi, Shinmonsama, Janet Honda, Bishop Eric Matsumoto and Mrs. Tamayo Matsumoto (below) and Rev. Shindo Nishiyama

(For photos & videos, see www.hawaiibwa.org;

click on Japan 2011 14th WBWC on the upper left, then click on Videos and Photos),

Karen and Janet joined the Moiliili Hongwanji pilgrimage group that traveled from May 12 to 23, visiting Kyoto, Fukui, Awara Onsen, Kanazawa, Takayama and Nagoya. Mililani Hongwanji BWA sister temple in Hiroshima, Senkouji was disappointed that Mililani Hongwanji members did not make it to Japan but is hoping

that the Mililani members will visit them in the very near future.

Shinmon-sama, who became a father two days prior to this auspicious occasion, flawlessly conducted the service. He looked very handsome. He expressed his sympathy for the many lives lost because of the March 11 tragedy and concern for the well being of the survivors. He asked for everyone's assistance and help. The future monshu conducted the entire Memorial Service superbly as his father, Monshu Koshin Ohtani, sat proudly watching his son. English translation was available throughout the proceedings and messages.

Interestingly, because the procession was on video, Rev. Masashi Fujisawa of Senkouji, saw us. Our yellow leis were very outstanding. Everyone knew we were from Hawaii. As we gathered our bags after the service, Masashi located us. After very brief greetings, he left saying he was returning to Hiroshima and that his mother would come the following day for the 14th World Buddhist Women's Convention. I met her at the banquet held the night prior to the convention proceedings. I promised to stop over at Hiroshima on May 23 on my way to Yamaguchi.



Karen Oda visited Senkouji Temple in Hiroshima and was warmly hosted by the ladies of Senkouji, Rev. Eriko Fujisawa and Rev. Kojun Suehira

Following the morning service and keynote address, lunch for all overseas participants was on the second floor—seated by groups. Table and chairs with lunches greeted us. After lunch, we were surprised to see Oura-sama come with a cameraman. Since 1986, I've attended every World Buddhist Women's Convention but had not taken a group picture with the Oura-sama. What a privilege and joy!

Note: The 750th Memorial Observances continue through January 2012 for those wishing to attend the special services for overseas participants at the newly restored Goeido. Check with headquarters to schedule your pilgrimage.