Hawaii Historic Places Review Board

Dear Board Members:

RE: Cultural significance of Haleiwa Jodo Mission.

I am a 3rd generation member of Haleiwa Jodo Mission, and as in other families belonging to the temple, we now have had 5 generations of members. I have had a great deal of respect and affection for this property since I was a small child. The old temple is peaceful and elegant. It is also very simple as far as Japanese Buddhist temples go, but that perfectly represents the North Shore of many decades passed. Ours is one of four temples that I can remember existing on the North Shore, and although I am sure I am biased, it is the most beautiful of all. All have fallen into disrepair; one or possibly two, are no longer.

The Haleiwa Jodo Mission's membership of my parents time consisted mainly of trades people and merchants. The trades were reflective of workers employed by Waialua sugar Plantation. The members provided pretty much all of the services, products, and labor needed to build and maintain the temple property. With much of the 1st and 2nd generations now gone, Haleiwa Jodo Mission has had to pay for all services by professionals in the trades. It has been a struggle, especially with the temple being right on the beach and constantly exposed to salt air.

From the beginning, Haleiwa Jodo Mission has observed O-bon each summer. But since the mid 1950's, it has also held a floating lantern ceremony during O-bon. I believe Haleiwa was the first temple to float lanterns in Hawaii. Others have since followed, but they are not like Haleiwa. This is the original and quintessential O-bon festival of the North Shore on Oahu. Everyone is welcomed and everyone I know looks forward to it. People from all cultures and religions come to observe and participate in the festivities. This fosters nostalgia (remembrance of our past), honor of those before us (we all have loved ones), understanding and tolerance (a sense community) in a beautiful setting.

If we are granted listing on the register of historic places, our members plan to restore the old temple to its former beautiful and elegant state. We'll use it as a community resource; a gathering place in service of the North Shore community; a space to bring people closer, a space that is needed, but presently lacking.

I hope you will consider our temple favorably and thank you for you time.

Sincerely,

Lori Campbell