

Professor Okazaki's Kodenkan Belt Buckle

By: Professor Dan Butler



At the July 2016 Christian Jujitsu Association annual camp, Professor Gene Edwards shared several DZR historical items with those in attendance. One of those items was the brass belt buckle pictured above. These buckles were awarded by Master Okazaki to his top students.

The wording on the buckle states:

*Prof. H.S. Okazaki's
American Jujitsu Institute
Black Belt
Organized 1939
Hawaii*

The buckle above was given to Prof. Edwards by Hachiro Okazaki, the oldest son of Master Okazaki in July 1978. At the time, Prof. Edwards was visiting Hachiro at his residence above Nikko Restoration Massage in Honolulu, Hawaii. Prof Edwards, his future wife, Lora, and Tom and Christine King had traveled to Hawaii to interview Hachiro about his father and early DZR.

Jostens, a 120 year-old American company which continues to make yearbooks and class rings, manufactured the "first run" of buckles in the 1930's and then a second batch of buckles likely in the 1940s. Hachiro provided three "first run" belt buckles to his visitors; one each to Prof Edwards and Prof Lora Edwards, and one to Tom and Christine King. Prof Edwards also received one "second run" belt buckle from Hachiro during the visit. Jostens was contacted to determine if they could provide any additional information on the buckles, but their records only go back 10 years.

January 2017