



Yu - Ai

Friendship

Newsletter of NPO World Friendship Center

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1. Reflection on the first five months as Director of WFC

Bernd Phoenix (WFC Director)

The most important and also most amazing part of the World Friendship Center is the guests. Guests arrive from all over the world on their trips through Japan and stay with us sometimes only one, but mostly two to three nights. Many come from European countries, but also the Americas, Australia, Africa and some Asian countries.

During their stay here we offer free talks by A-bomb survivors (Hibakusha) and free guided tours in the Peace Park with English speaking guides. What I find most amazing is the interest of the guests toward peace and also nuclear issues, be it

bombs or nuclear energy. They also show a deep concern for our future on this earth.

We are increasing the number of members in our World Friendship Center Hiroshima group on Facebook. We take pictures of all guests and upload them on Facebook with a comment about the guests. We encourage all guests to join the group and participate in the group even when they're back home.

The guests are often younger couples, but also women or men that travel alone. In the first weeks after we came it was very packed and extremely busy, but in August we do not give English classes, so there was more time to devote to guests. Later it slowed down some except for some events that brought many guests and filled all the rooms to capacity.

For example, we had a Saudi international school here, with 14 students and four teachers, plus 2 other guests from Belgium. Those two nights every possible space was used for futon beds and it was very lively in the living room with the students playing games in the evening.

Another weekend we had the World Nuclear Victims' Forum at the Peace Park and several of their main participants stayed at the center. One woman was an Australian Aborigine who brought two of her young children with her. NHK came to interview her here at the Center. Her father had been blinded when England conducted nuclear bomb tests in Australia in the 1950's. Nobody had warned the Aborigines about the danger and he happened to look at the flash from the explosion.

We hear many stories like these about incidents we never knew about before. Within the past 5 months, we have learned so much ourselves from our guests, from the Hibakusha, and from the events we've attended. Nuclear bombs just have to be abolished before something terrible happens again, like it did here in Hiroshima and Nagasaki.



WFC guests and Sadae Kasaoka

2. My Peace Heroes

Shizuo Tachibana (WFC Riji Vice Chair)



I made a trip to the U.S. in August, 2015. I gave presentations concerning the 70th anniversary of the A-bombing on Hiroshima and Nagasaki at a church conference and churches attended by Bob & Alice Ruth Ramseyer, former board members of the WFC, and Dave & Evie Bertsche, former directors of the WFC.

Before I attended the conference, I visited Tanya Maus, Director of the Peace Resource Center at Wilmington College, who attended the 50th anniversary of WFC last April in Hiroshima.

She took me to several places. One of them was Dayton International Peace Museum. I would like to recommend this for a future PAX team to visit. One of the spaces shows about people who worked for peace. They are called Peace Heroes. Barbara Reynolds was one of them.



You can find out more about Dayton International Peace Museum on their web-site.

<http://www.daytonpeacemuseum.org/#inventpeace>



Tanya drove me to the Ramseyer's home and we had supper together. I could name many peace heroes who I met in the U.S. But I cannot miss the names of Bob & Alice Ruth Ramseyer who served as board members at the WFC, translated a number of books concerning experiences of Hiroshima and Nagasaki into English, and devoted their lives for peace.

To close my report, I would like to give thanks to all of you who I met in the U.S. last summer.

3. Report on the 40th Anniversary Conference of the Peace Resource Center

Tanya Maus, Ph.D.

(Director, Peace Resource Center, Wilmington College, Ohio, US)

The conference, "Justice and Peace: a Call to Local and Global Community," celebrated the 40th anniversary of the Peace Resource Center (PRC) at Wilmington College and the PRC's founder, Barbara Reynolds. The conference was intended to evoke the PRC's 1975 founding conference, "Hiroshima 30 Years After: a Call to Global Community," which gathered scholars and experts from around the country and world to inaugurate the PRC by discussing the global impact of the atomic bombings of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, the threat of nuclear weapons, and the possibility of peace in the world. In addition, for the 40th Anniversary Conference, we were thrilled to welcome three members of the World Friendship Center, founded by Barbara Reynolds in 1965: Miho Ikeda, Asaka Watanabe and Michiko Yamane (WFC Chair).

The first day of the conference (9/10/15) involved an opening ceremony, memory sharing, and lectures related to justice and peace. During the Opening Ceremony, these themes of justice and peace were introduced beautifully by Jessica Reynolds who read her mother Barbara Reynolds' poem, "Birdsong Meditation," and by the World Friendship Choir (led by Asaka Watanabe) which sang the moving song, "Life of the World, Spirit of Hiroshima." In our memory sharing event, Michiko Yamane of the WFC welcomed participants with greetings and calls for peace from the WFC and Hiroshima, Japan. Dr. Terry Miller (Professor Emeritus, Education, Wilmington College and student organizer of the 1975 conference) described the founding of the Peace Resource Center by Barbara Reynolds in 1975, and various individuals who had attended the original 1975 conference came forward to share their memories. In Plenary Talk 1, Dr. Elyssa Faison (Modern Japanese History, University of Oklahoma) discussed conflict between a) Japanese survivors of the atomic bombings who sought their own unique international voice and b) the desire of Barbara Reynolds to speak on behalf of survivors for the cause of a nuclear free world in her lecture, "Barbara Reynolds, Hiroshima, and the Origins of a Transnational Anti-Nuclear Movement." For Plenary Talk 2, Kingian non-violence activist Kazu Haga defined the concepts of negative and positive peace and posed the necessity of positive

peace as a means of correcting imbalances (injustice) in the social system. In her Keynote Address, "How can We Say and Mean *Peace* Now?," Dr. Norma Field (Professor Emeritus, East Asian Languages and Civilizations, University of Chicago) asked whether peace is possible, or even desirable, without justice for the survivors of Japanese wartime atrocities as well as survivors of the more recent Fukushima nuclear disaster.

The second day of the conference (9/11/15) was divided into panels and workshops where participants could listen to short presentations about justice and peace, ask questions, and discuss their meaning. In Panel 1, "Global Peace Initiatives in our Local Community," Returned Southwest Ohio Peace Corps Volunteer and Energize Clinton County founder Taylor Stuckert defined the official Peace Corps understanding of peace before discussing his path to the Peace Corps and beyond, while Arcadia Learning Commons founder Nicole Friend discussed the need to resolve conflict by creating a culture of empathy through education. In Panel 2, "Peace Pilgrimages and Awakenings as Alternatives to Violence," each participant outlined a different path to peace activism: for Kazu Haga it was the "Interfaith Pilgrimage of the Middle Passage" at age 17 that turned him to a life of peace and social justice activism, for Dr. Roy Tamashiro (Professor of Interdisciplinary Studies at Webster University), it was a visit to Hiroshima and the stories of atomic bombing survivors that sparked a psychological crisis and shifted his academic path to one of peace education, and for Dr. Stephen Potthoff (Professor of Religion and Philosophy, Wilmington College), the need to understand an underlying human consciousness and connectedness through dreams. In Workshops 2 and 3, local community members and Wilmington College students discussed how they could bring peace and non-violence to their campus and local community, while in Workshop 4, "Defining Peace for a Global Community," scholars discussed specific examples from their scholarship of nonviolent activism, the creation of peace museums, and movements for justice.

The conference invited a diverse mix of community members and students to reflect upon the meanings of peace and justice through history, philosophy, religion, literature, and a variety of interdisciplinary studies to develop new understandings of these concepts. The audience was able to encounter a diverse group of scholars such as grassroots peace museum expert Kazuyo Yamane from

Ritsumeikan University and Vice Director of the Kyoto Museum for World Peace in Japan and Joyce Apse, from New York University and the President of the Institute for the Study of Genocide, from various disciplines from across the nation, and indeed the international community. The mood of the conference was one of excitement and joyfulness. The conference concluded at 5:00 p.m. Friday 9/11/15 with a closing ceremony in which participants vowed to go

forward and build a more peaceful world.



Jessica and Jerry talked to the participants during the break



Presentation by Dr. Roy Tamashiro, Professor at Webster University



Tanya and participants in front of the Peace Resource Center



Reunion with former WFC directors

**4. Hiroshima Mon Amour: excerpts from elin o'Hara slavick's blog
elin o'Hara slavick
(Director of Graduate Studies for Studio Practice, Professor of Art,
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, US)**

Elin spent 2-1/2 months at the World Friendship Center, working as a Fellow with the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science to visually link nuclear weapons and nuclear power. She helped beautify the Center and we came to call her our Artist-in-Residence. We're going to miss her. (WFC Director: Maggie Phoenix)
elin's blog <http://elinhiroshima.blogspot.jp/>

Hiroshima > Fukushima > Iwaki > Hiroshima

Wednesday, October 14, 2015



There are not words to express = to describe = to cover = to explain = to summarize = to bear enough witness = to fix the sickening stomach, to make radiation visible, to store the mounds and heaps of contaminated matter.....

Many industries in small villages have closed since the accident: rice; silk worms; daikon radish, restaurants....

there are no doctors or clinics in most of the towns. An ambulance takes at least 30 minutes...Bamboo shoots are too contaminated to eat, like mushrooms and fish...

A road sign/banner reads, "Use Solar Power to help us recover." And I must say that the solar power panels are one of the only things that give me hope - that and the people in Japan fighting against the government - the majority against nuclear power.

N A G A S A K I: another beautiful city utterly destroyed by an atomic bomb - once again ALIVE



Wednesday, November 4, 2015

The most spectacular and beautiful and hopeful place in Nagasaki for me was this place: two 400 year old Camphor Trees at a Shinto Temple. I loved them so much that I went back at 6:30am the next day to collect leaves and sticks from the ground beneath them. This is not so easy to do, as they rake the ground clean beneath all trees at temples and in parks very early in the morning. Luckily, it is fall, so I was able to collect freshly fallen and some dry leaves for cyanotypes and photograms...

you can see the repairs done on the trees; the one on the left was cut in half from the top - stunted and forlorn, but new growth for the last 70+ years gives it a healthy and normal appearance. The things and history and life and death these trees have witnessed and felt....



Still Summer in Hiroshima

Friday, October 23, 2015

There is a morning when you wake up in a foreign country and feel different, as if you finally live there. I live here now. I have my paths and try to take different routes every day. I walk miles a day in the hot sun. It took my going halfway around the world to get back into a darkroom (with a bright red sink) to play - having boxes of abandoned paper for my use helps! I feel like I am in college again when I am in the darkroom -

making photograms of Fukushima chestnuts and plastic, Hiroshima A-Bombed roof tile fragments.....

For a Nuclear-Free Future! World Nuclear Victims Forum - Hiroshima

Sunday, November 22, 2015

This is the very first forum of its kind. I thought this was an annual event and it very well may become one. At the end of two full days - 9am - 8pm - of 100% focusing on talk after talk, powerpoint after powerpoint, Q+A and a film by Shriprakash on the contaminated Navajo Nation from Uranium Mining, I am exhausted, overwhelmed, inspired, angry, depressed, not alone in this world, educated and more.

5. Visiting Ikata Nuclear Power Plant

Kaori Kurumaji
(WFC Riji Vice Chair)

Over two days, on October 29 and 30, 2015, the members of the WFC Peace Seminar visited the Ikata Nuclear Power Plant (NPP) in Ehime prefecture. This was the second tour visiting nuclear power plants since we visited the one in Shimane in October, 2014. There were four participants, including Mr. Shouji Kihara the Peace Seminar leader, Ms. Michiko Watanabe, Ms. Chizuko Taguchi and Kaori Kurumaji. We were joined there by Ms. Junko Saima, who has been working against nuclear power plants for many years.

The Ikata Nuclear Power Plant is located at the end of the Sadamisaki Peninsula, which is the longest in Japan. There are three nuclear reactors in a small site facing the Sea of Iyo. The Median Tectonic Fault Line runs through the area, only a few kilometers off Ikata NPP. When a large earthquake hits, large-scale devastation may be expected in the area. In May 2015, the Committee of Nuclear Power Regulations determined that the No.3 reactor of Ikata NPP met the new regulations, so it might be in operation before long.

The Ikata Nuclear Power Plant is only 100 kilometers away from Hiroshima city. If any accident should happen, our beautiful Seto Inland Sea would be contaminated by radiation for a long period. I feel so awful when I imagine this happening. Besides, in the case of such accidents, Hiroshima prefecture is supposed to offer a place of refuge for both Shimane and Ikata Nuclear Power

Plants. According to a newspaper article, Hiroshima prefecture is not ready at all to accept people fleeing such a disaster.

Ms Junko Saima lives in the nearby town of Yawatahama. For many years, she and her husband have been writing newspaper articles protesting against nuclear power plants. We listened to her story over a cup of coffee in the lounge of the hotel where we stayed. We heard how hard it has been for her and her family to be active in anti-nuclear power movements in such a closed place as Yawatahama. Visiting the site, we realized how important it is for us living in Hiroshima to learn more about nuclear power related issues.



From Left, Chizuko Taguchi, Shoji Kihara, Junko Saima, Kaori Kurumaji, Michiko Watanabe



Ikata Nuclear Power Plant

6. The WFC and I

Hitoe Yamaji (previously Hitoe Mori)

On one summer's day in 1970, an article on WFC's "World Friendship Night" held on a certain day caught my eye. The WFC was located in Minami-Kannonmachi then. It was just on the way to my work which I had started in April that year. So I decided to visit WFC to join "World Friendship Night." The word "World" also attracted me a lot.



On the very day of the World Friendship Night, I managed to get there on time. The very moment I took a deep breath at the entrance of the old Japanese-style house, my first encounter with the WFC began. A nice-looking elderly foreign woman kindly beckoned me, and guided me to the crowded room where there were men and women, both young and old. Just then, "Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Welcome to World Friendship Night. I'm Gelston McNeil, this World Friendship Center's Director, and the woman next to me is my wife Elsie McNeil. The WFC was founded by Barbara Reynolds in 1965, as a bridge between Hiroshima and the world, to build friendship and promote peace. World Friendship Night is one of the important and enjoyable events we have here. Have a good time," said Mr. McNeil.

After his opening greeting, Dr. Tomin Harada, a Hiroshima surgeon who was the first honorary chairman of WFC, started to talk. He introduced a Vietnamese boy and girl, Dau and Hew, who had been injured in the Vietnam War and had come to Japan to be treated.

The Vietnam War, until then something happening somewhere very far away, suddenly appeared clearly right in front of me. The *ao dai*, the traditional Vietnamese long dress that Dau was wearing, was very beautiful. Next, we really enjoyed ventriloquism, performed by Charlotte Susumago. She and her doll made us feel good in a friendly atmosphere. Charlotte, a co-director of the WFC, spoke fluent Japanese and kept all of us smiling. Her husband was a Japanese-American, and she was even able to drive here in Japan. She was an active and broad-minded woman. After the ventriloquism, refreshments were served.

Everyone seemed to enjoy chatting. I, too, had a good time with the people I met for the first time there.

And this turned out to be how my involvement with the WFC started. The English conversation class that Elsie taught was one of my favorite WFC activities. Other than that, I often dropped in at the WFC after work and spent many hours talking with the Japanese staff. For my holidays, I stayed over there and helped do chores. Japanese staff in those days were expected to stay over. Ms. Masano Seo, Ms. Keiko Uchiyama , Ms. Yoko Ano , Ms. Eiko Nagasue and Ms. Kaori Seo (and one of the board members now, Kaori Kurumaji) did a great job one after another, from 1970 to 1980, if I'm not mistaken. Over those years, the directors were Elsie and Gelston McNeil, Emily U. Light, Soo Ho Han's family, Ms. Maurine Parker, and Mr. Stan Butler. They all were diligent, honest and peace-loving people. From the bottom of my heart, I wish I could see them all again.

To tell the truth, I happened to become a WFC staff member once, for only two weeks though. Between Keiko Uchiyama and Yoko Ano (mentioned above) there was an unexpected vacancy in Japanese staff. I was asked to fill this vacancy then, and I said "Yes". I was able to because a little earlier I had quit my job of three years. For two weeks I enjoyed doing chores, and when we had overnight guests, I did enjoy preparing Japanese-style breakfast.

I also had chances to do two types of voluntary work, one at the A-bomb hospital and the other at Mutsumien, a nursing home for A-bomb victims. At the hospital, we ran the lending service of books, carrying books from one ward to another. At Mutsumien, we did shopping for the elderly people there. We asked them what they wanted and the next day we took the things we bought for them. Those were the thing which I'm sure helped a bit, as at the time we had neither cell phones nor convenience stores in the neighborhood. Times passed in a rather leisurely way then. My mother is a *hibakusha*, an A-bomb victim, so I was happy to see other *hibakusha* on these occasions.

While I was busy helping at the WFC, I happened to actually meet Barbara Reynolds one day in 1977. I was excited to see her when she greeted me with a smile. Barbara said "I want to have my hair cut. Is there a beauty shop or barber nearby?" she asked. I answered, "Yes, there's a barber near the WFC. Shall I take

you there?" Then we two walked there, talking and laughing. After her hair was done, we went back. She seemed to be satisfied how her hair was done. This is a nice memory, one of the treasures of my life.

Afterward, little by little, I became less involved with the WFC, because of my next job, then marriage, having babies, and caring for our children. But I can say that meeting people and taking part in the many activities at the WFC did inspire me to live my life with a heart full of peace at all times. Finally, thank you for giving me this opportunity to write this piece for *Yu-Ai*.

7. Korean PAX

Jim Ronald
(WFC Riji & Professor of Hiroshima Shudo University)

Korean PAX is a wonderful chance for a group of people from Hiroshima (and, in the past, Nagasaki) to visit Korea, to share a message of peace from our city, and to learn about peacebuilding in Korea. It is also a great chance, in alternate years, for WFC-related people to offer homestays to people from Korea, and to help with welcoming and guiding them as they visit Hiroshima.

This year, thanks to support from the Charles and Helen Sutton World Friendship Endowment, we will be able to offer a number of subsidized places to young people, as well as to one *hibakusha*. We have been told that our partners in Korea, the Korea Anabaptist Center (KAC) are able to host a group of 8 people from Japan. We are looking forward to sending a mixed group of WFC people, young people, and at least one *hibakusha* to tell about peace from a Hiroshima perspective and to hear about peace and peace building in Korea.

As the new year starts, we are still finalizing the details of the coming Korea PAX trip. At this point, we are looking at the following dates:

Leave Hiroshima Saturday, 12th March
Return to Hiroshima Thursday, 17th March

We have already had quite a lot of interest from WFC-related people, and have just started promoting Korean PAX to students. If you know a young person in Hiroshima who might be interested in joining us, please let them know.

8. North-East Asia Youth Peace Camp Update

Jim Ronald

(WFC Riji & Professor of Hiroshima Shudo University)

The North-East Asia Youth Peace Camp was held last year for the 7th time: the initial year in China, then two three-year cycles of China – Korea – Japan.

It has been a wonderful, life-changing experience for around 200 young people from our three countries – and also for the dozen or so slightly older counselors, too! Thank you, friends of the World Friendship Center, for your support through the years, kind thoughts and actions, prayers and advice – all have helped make this peace camp happen. Throughout this time, the camp has been supported by the Mennonite



Central Committee (MCC); all counselor costs (travel, accommodation, food) and administrative expenses have been covered by a grant administered by the local (North-East Asia) section of the MCC. This means that camp fees for campers could be kept to the estimated costs for each camper of US \$500 covering accommodation, food, and in-country travel for the 8-day camp.

Applications for the MCC grant and yearly financial reports have been managed by Wang Ying, in Nanchong, in the name of the organization Peace in China (PiK), with support from its co-sponsor, co-hosting organizations in Korea and Japan: Korea Peacebuilding Institute (KoPI) and the World Friendship Center in Japan.

After seven years of Peace Camp, it looks like this coming year will be a sabbatical, a year to not hold the camp but to review what we have been doing over the seven years. Specifically, one condition of the grants from MCC is that

we should become increasingly autonomous, less dependent on the financial support from the MCC. We have not done this, but will probably need a plan for doing this when applying for grants in future years. We also have various unresolved issues that need to be addressed if the Peace Camp is to be effective in what it sets out to achieve. The goals of Peace Camp are set out here:

The purpose of the peace camp is for young people from NE Asia to be inspired to see others as fellow human beings and friends and to actively work against deep seated, cross-cultural assumptions and stereotypes in their home communities by living together in a camp setting and learning skills in peacebuilding and conflict transformation. We aim for three outcomes:

- 1) Participants in the Peace Camp will no longer view "the other" as the Enemy.*
- 2) Participants see themselves as active peace builders in their home environment.*
- 3) Participants acknowledge historic grievances on all sides and take steps towards reconciliation.*

In fact, in many ways Peace Camp has been successful in achieving these outcomes. Not only do peace camp participants change, through the camp, in their attitude towards campers from each country, and their respective countries, they also do become active peace builders in their own countries. Many Japanese campers, for example, have gone on to become peace camp counselors in subsequent years, and to design and lead peacebuilding activities in the camps.

There have been some issues, however, that have remained unresolved. Although the goal for each camp is to have 12 campers per country, only sometimes has the Japanese side been able to provide even half that number. This limits the effectiveness of the camp in a number of ways, and must be addressed. Although there have been attempts to remedy this situation, through promoting in various ways, the success of these attempts has been limited. In contrast, counselors in China now do almost no promotion of the camp because in recent years many young people apply to join the camp.

This coming year, then, there will be no peace camp, but there will be a one-year review of the camp. We have applied to the MCC for a grant for funds to allow coordinators to meet up during the year but, with or without these funds, this will be a year in which we work to improve the prospects for future peace camps. If

any WFC supporters or Yu-Ai readers have suggestions or proposals for how we may do this we would love to hear from you.

9. Middle East Oleander Initiative

Michiko Yamane (WFC Riji Chair)

In November 2015, Mary Popeo, who was once an intern at the World Friendship Center, made enquiries about the possibility of accepting teachers from the Middle East at the WFC. The December 2015 board meeting approved this plan.

At the end of December, we met Ray Matsumiya, Executive Director of the Middle East Oleander Initiative program, and told him that we could offer lodging, arrange hibakusha stories, and introduce experts in the field of nuclear issues and peace activities.

From August 4 - 11, 2016, up to twenty high school teachers from the Middle East will gather in Hiroshima to learn first-hand from atomic bomb survivors about the horrors of nuclear war and from global experts about the basic issues of nuclear weapons: how they work and how to reduce the probability that they will ever be used again. The 2016 program will leverage "the power of place" of the city of Hiroshima - the first city to be devastated by a nuclear weapon - to generate awareness and inspire personal calls to action. In turn, teachers attending the seven day workshop will design educational activities to raise consciousness in their home classrooms about the perils of nuclear war. The 2016 pilot program in Hiroshima is the first of a series of educational programs, workshops and student activities designed to educate a broad foundation of future decision makers to deeply understand the consequences of nuclear warfare and ensure that an ethos of non-proliferation will blossom across the Middle East region. We believe it is worthy for WFC to play a part in such a significant project. We would like to call on all of you to become involved in this project.

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