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Yu - Ai

Friendship

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Accepting Korean PAX

Michiko Yamane, PAX Committee



(Making a rice scoop in Miyajima)

WFC started Peace Ambassador Exchange Program with Korea in 2003. Last year we sent four people from WFC to Korea. This year we accepted seven young people aged 23 to 28 from Korea. Their composition was fascinating with three Koreans (Jo, Seo, Minji), two Americans (Sarah, Kate), and a couple of Canadians (Heather, Michael). They stayed here from April 30 to May 4, but there were only three days really available for all the programs, and it seemed too hectic. We felt relieved when they left for Korea with a sense of satisfaction.

On the morning of May 1, their second day here, they watched the DVD, "Atomic Mom", in which Emiko Okada played a part. Then they listened to Emiko Okada's A-bomb experiences translated by Kaori Kurumaji. After that we had a potluck party. I reaffirmed the real strength of unity of WFC members to see the large amount of delicious food brought for the party. We enjoyed Sachie Harada's hula dance, our directors' duet, Peace Choir's songs, and a wonderful performance of Korean drum, Changgu, by Akiko Isaji and Kikue Takao. Next, we listened to the presentation of PAX members about Korea Peacebuilding Institute (KOPI) and Connexus Language Institute. We were glad to have a former patient of Hansen's disease, Lim Dongsik, and his seeing-eye dog, Ramble with us there. We listened to his sad experiences with Hansen's disease. He published a book titled "The Flame of a Candle" last year.

On May 2, the group joined in the Peace Park tour, and then moved to Miyajima and enjoyed sightseeing of Itsukushima Shrine and the O-torii Gate, and rice paddle making, guided by Yuko Imada. In the evening, together with the host families and some students from Hiroshima Shudo University, we had a really good time for three hours at a karaoke house. I realized that the power of music is borderless.

On May 3, we strolled in Shukkeien Garden and then visited the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum. After that, it was free time, again joined by some Japanese students. Early in the morning of the next day they left for Korea. So many people took part in this PAX program and without their help, it would have been impossible to complete the project successfully. Thank you so much for your collaboration.



(Minji, Kate, Heather with Hiroshima Shudo University students at Flower Festival)

Minji Park's reflection

(PAX members and Shudo University students in Shukkei Garden)



“Adults working hard for peace in Hiroshima, and the children among them who are learning peace.”

In the midst of suffering from the atomic bomb and the sorrow of lost families, I think Hiroshima's extension of peace is an example we must follow. I think we must find ways to live in trust and love toward mankind through making a world without war or weapons. Here in Hiroshima, I feel their sadness and pain deep in my heart, as well as their cries for peace, and I think of them. Those who have experienced pain know how deep and bitter the suffering is, and so I listen attentively to those who have experienced it and join them in the way of peace.

In Peace Park there are many folded paper cranes to pay tribute to the souls that were lost to the atomic bomb. The paper crane is also a symbol of peace. Before I went to Hiroshima, I thought a paper crane was simply something you gave to someone you liked, or something you folded when you wanted to make a wish. But now it strongly conveys to me the meaning of a “seed of peace.” If we view paper cranes in the same way as yellow ribbons [now common in South Korea to mourn victims of the recent Sewol ferry accident], we can't think of them merely as origami and stop there. I hope more people will shout for peace and we can have a really, truly peaceful world to come.

Heather Schellenberg and Michael Harms reflection

We came to Japan with an idea of Hiroshima as a place stuck in the aftermath of World War II; a place of suffering. We were grateful for the chance to learn more about the events that led up to the dropping of the atomic bomb, and the horrible aftermath of the event. However, we were more surprised, and more affected by the efforts of people to reclaim Hiroshima as a place of peace.



(Heather)

We imagined that the Peace Park would feel solemn. But we were struck by a feeling of it being a positive and life-giving tribute to those affected by the bomb. While it could have focused every effort on depicting the horror and sadness of August 6, 1945, it seemed to focus more on turning the event into a cause for reconciliation. The day we visited also happened to be the first day of the annual Flower Festival. The grounds of the park were decorated with flowers, and marching bands paraded by. It was a day of celebration.

We imagined that the survivors and their families would be angry. But among the Hibakusha we heard no words of blame, only a strong desire that it would never be allowed to happen again. The people we met in Hiroshima wanted to mend the broken relationship between their country and others. Whether by simply forgetting the past, or by moving toward acknowledgement and reconciliation for past mistakes, we felt moved by a shared attitude of moving forward.

In addition to the city itself, we were impressed and humbled by the hospitality extended to us by the World Friendship Center. As guests of the Center, we were provided with host families, amazing Japanese food, opportunities to learn more, and many new friends. We are so grateful to the many individuals who planned, drove, sang and cooked to make our experience so wonderful. We feel that our own cities and countries have a lot to learn from the peace-centered attitude of Hiroshima.



(Strolling in Shukkeien Garden)



(Akiko Awa at the hypocenter)

Kate Johnston, USA

"When I first arrived in Hiroshima, I was not only taken back by the beauty and calmness of the city itself, but I was amazed by the love and kindness shown by those I met there. Several friends who survived the A-bomb said of their feelings toward America: "It's in the past; now we must focus on bettering the future."



(Kate and her host family, Kenso Tanaka and his wife)

My experience with the World Friendship Center, host family and the PAX exchange was one of the most meaningful of my lifetime. It opened my eyes to view history in a new way, humbled me to transform my ignorance, and challenged me to stand up and start working to better the future – a future of unity and peace.

Now returned to Korea, I have already had the opportunity to share my PAX experiences with some of my elementary students here. Even things as simple as sharing pictures and stories of new friendships in Japan have proven to be small steps taken to mend turbulent relationships. I pray these are only the first steps of many to come as we journey together toward restoration."

Accepting the Home Stay Guest WFC English Conversation Class Kenso Tanaka

(Sukiyaki dinner at Tanaka's home)

When I was offered the chance to accept a PAX Korea 2014 home-stay guest, to be honest, I was kind of confused and couldn't make a decision right away, because it was the first experience for me and my wife. I was struggled with a decision because it was a wonderful opportunity to



expose to English as a student of WFC which is the active side of me, and I was also worried if my wife would agree or my English is good enough, which is the passive side of me. As I had thought, my wife listed all her concerns and told me "It is impossible to accept the guest. How about the bath? How is the guest going to sleep in a 6-tatami mat room with Piano?" I said to my wife, "When I went to the states for home-stay as a member of PAX USA 2013, I received a warm welcome and hospitality which I have no words to express my appreciation. And I want to repay for all the kindness they have given me. It seems that my wife thought she had to agree to accept a guest when she heard my word. .

I met with my guest Kate (Kate Johnston) at the WFC welcome potluck party on 1 May. She is a petite cheerful lovely girl. She always carries a small Japanese camera that she got from her boyfriend and she was taking a picture everywhere. Kate stayed at my house for 4 days and 3 nights from that night. She was her natural self. And she accepted and enjoyed Japanese-style bath, meal and lifestyle. Moreover, she was very interested in Japanese, has a strong desire to learn, and she actively asked me what do you say English○○ in Japanese. I joined them on their visit to the peace learning at the Peace Memorial Park, sightseeing

to Miyajima and Shukkeien. And I tried hard to communicate with them as much as I could. But it was totally unsatisfactory and I felt a lack of my English skill during these 4 days. In remembrance of Hiroshima, I took Kate to the old ABCC (Current Radiation Effects Research Foundation) and I also took her to the Hijiyama observatory to show the city which was beautifully fully-reconstructed. Kate's most favorite food is Japanese food. During her stay, she ate sukiyaki, sushi, sashimi, tempura, chawan-mushi, etc. Maybe it has been a long time, but she played piano very well even she said the piano at her parents' house is old and sound is not really good.

PAX members are wonderful young people and were full of friendship. I am so glad and honored to be a part of this program and I strongly felt the importance of constructing friendship each other and build a trust bridge. My wife and I feel some small pleasure that we were able to accept our home-stay guest.

Participating as a host family *(Ms. Seino and Michael and Heather)*

Kumiko Seino

We were given an opportunity to participate in PAX as a host family. I am really grateful that foreigners visit Hiroshima and learn about peace

When we hand down the painful experience Hiroshima suffered from generation to generation it is very helpful to know how foreigners feel or what they think of it. I hope they will in the future make good use of what they heard from Hibakusya or what they learned at Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum and Peace Memorial Park. I would like them to feel Hiroshima directly. That's why I accepted them as their host. I would like them to learn not only about peace but also the fact that war leads people to madness and a huge number of people are sacrificed. I also hope they observe many remaining signs of the Atomic Bomb



here and there in the city and feel strength, energy and efforts people in Hiroshima took after it to reconstruct the city.

Looking around the world today, I feel afraid that governments try to control the way of people's thinking. Interacting or exchanging our thoughts beyond the borders like this time will make it possible for each one to find a better way.

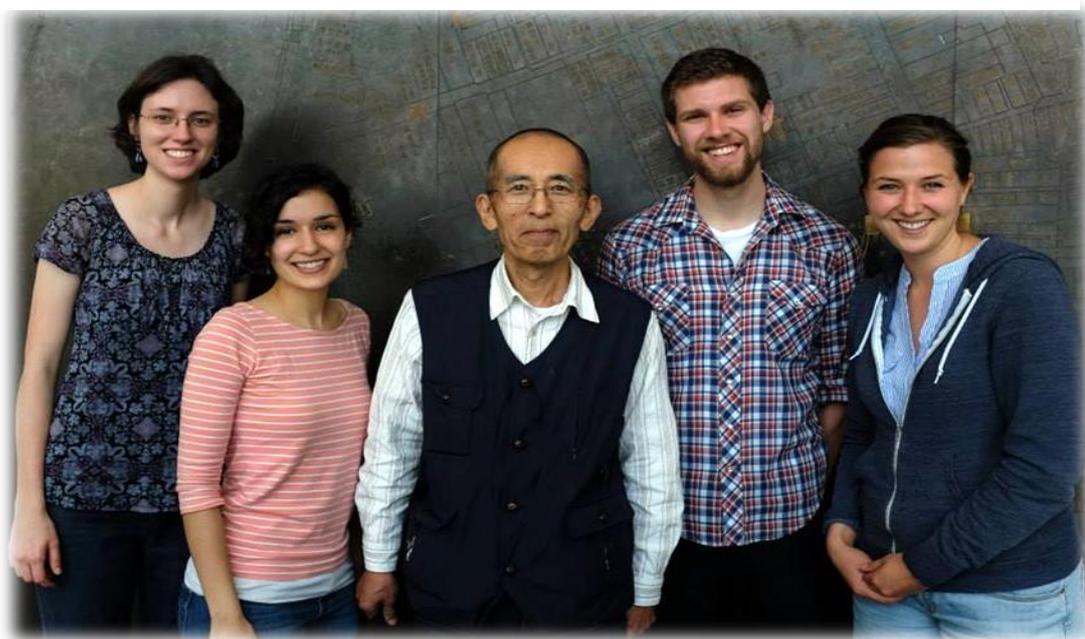
After all, we were happy to spend three wonderful days with these sincere people. Thank you for giving me such a great opportunity.



(Sarah and Minji at Ms. Taguchi's home)



(Peace Choir at Welcome Potluck Party)



(Sarah, Kate, Soh Horie, Michael, Heather)

Fun-Time in English Speaker in April

Jade Brischke

My name is Jade Brischke and I am a 31-year-old woman from Australia. I first visited Hiroshima last year with a group of Australian students and vowed if I ever moved back to Japan, Hiroshima is where I'd live. It seems my fate was sealed when I accepted a job earlier this year as an English teacher at a small language school just east of Hiroshima in the city of Saijo, Higashihiroshima. I currently teach at the two branches of the language school as well as Hiroshima University and Kinki University.



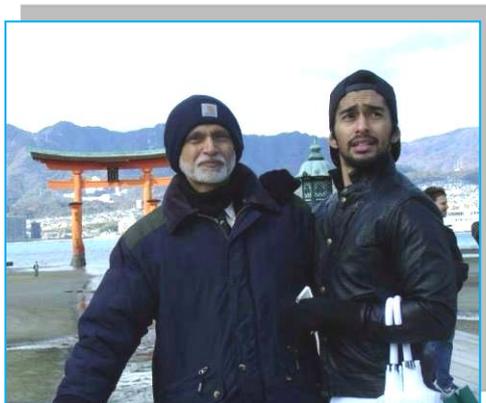
I first heard about the World Friendship Centre (WFC) when I was trying to find a place to stay before moving into my apartment. I wanted to come a few weeks before I started work, just to familiarize myself with the area and also to do some sightseeing. The WFC was not only the cheapest accommodation I found, but also offered the *hibakusha* talks and Peace Park tours. I was really attracted by the friendly nature of the place and of course, the wonderful work that the WFC does to promote peace. I felt it was somewhere I would like to become more involved with and after three weeks of staying in the Sun Room, I became a member and volunteer.

I've spoken about Australia in Fun Time in English and at the moment I'm working with some of the other volunteers to get more young people involved in the WFC. Peace is something everybody in the world deserves to have and only through education and conversation can this be achieved. I now like to think of myself as a permanent piece of 'furniture' in the place and everyone knows I can be found every Saturday without fail, sitting in the kitchen eating *okonomiyaki* and talking to whoever is there! The WFC has become my second 'home.'

Fun-Time in English Speaker in May Ananta Bhawuk

(Ananta and his father in Miyajima)

Aloha! My name is Ananta Bhawuk and I am from Honolulu, Hawaii. I love the mountains and the ocean, so Hiroshima has quickly become a second home for me! When I was in Hawaii, I studied engineering in college, but recently I left my home of 23 some years to be an English teacher in Japan. It has quickly become one of the best decisions I've made in my short 26 year life! Although



at times I miss my family and friends, I have been swept away and won over by the peaceful, friendly, and overall amazing disposition of Japanese people. And I must admit, the incredible food certainly keeps my very satisfied (I absolutely love tonkotsu ramen)!

I have always thought that people should invest themselves and play a part in their communities. Because of this belief, which my father instilled in me, I found the WFC when I was 'googling' and searching for volunteer opportunities in Hiroshima. I contacted Xinia and found the Center one Thursday morning. I spent a few hours learning about the history of the center and knew immediately that I wanted to help out as much as I could. I was fortunate enough to sit in on one of the English courses and had a fantastic time. From that day, I knew I found a place in Hiroshima city where I could try to make a positive impact while I lived here!

WFC New Board Member Ron Klein

Since coming to Hiroshima as a university English teacher, I have been a member of WFC for about 25 years and consider it an honor to have known so many of the dedicated directors who have served. As someone who was active in peace activities in America, I was happy to find a place in Hiroshima where people interested in the Hiroshima Story could meet. Having a "home" environment during their visit to Hiroshima is what has



made WFC so special to the hundreds of guests who have stayed there. Kanzen, my Polish monk friend stayed there several times and gave talks. After years of wanting to, I finally got the opportunity to join a PAX tour to America last summer. It was a very special trip for me, and I got to visit the Hanford Nuclear Power Plant and Minidoka Internment Camp. I appreciate the support WFC has given to St. Xavier's School, the orphanage in India that I am supporting. The Peace Choir has sung at two charity concerts on the school's behalf to help raise funds for a new school building. I have recently renewed my interest in WFC by joining the board, and I hope I can make a small contribution to seeing it continue for another 50 years.

WFC New Board Member

Naomi Omura

When I moved to Hiroshima City two years ago, I had no friends here but enough time to begin a new thing. I visited several websites of organizations of lifelong learning, culture, art, sport, volunteer activities, looking for a comfortable place, and suddenly the name Barbara Reynolds came into my view and remained in my heart. I asked myself "Have I heard her name before?" but I couldn't remember anything. Therefore I read some articles written about her. Soon I understood "She is a person I want to know". My fingers tapped the keyboard lightly and finally clicked the transmitting button to send my e-mail to WFC.



I'm not a Hibakusha and also don't have any relatives who are Hibakusha. I'm an inexperienced person and have many things I need to study about Hiroshima. Someone such as I, like almost all Japanese, continue to wish to prevent any tragedy caused by war since we were children. And now, from the bottom of my heart, I appreciate having met Richard & Xinia, Larry & JoAnn, and many other wonderful people at WFC. I will become a member of the board of directors. I would like to repeat every one thing which can be carried out in me, while believing that our future is more splendid than now.

“FOR THE SAKE OF HOPE FOR THE SAKE OF LIFE”

This is part of the speech by Former President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias and recipient of the Nobel Peace prize in 1987.

It was an honor for me and my husband Richard to meet in person former President of Costa Rica Oscar Arias and his wife Suzanne de Arias on March 23, 2014. Mr. Arias received the Sokagakkai Award on this day. He also was the recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize in 1987 for maintaining peace among the Central American countries through peaceful negotiations and dialogue. He served as President of Costa Rica for two terms in the 1980s.



Mr. and Mrs. Arias were invited to Hiroshima Japan by the religious group SOKA-GLOBAL-ACTION. This is a group in Hiroshima who strongly opposes nuclear weapons. His

message was powerful and inspiring. He said that Hiroshima has rebirth with determination and it is the temple of hope welcoming pilgrims of peace. Mr. Arias also tried to convey the message of peace through Sadako's story of hope. "There was hope in Sadako's heart the same way there is hope in our hearts for peace today. Why didn't the 1,000 cranes fly, why? I have come not empty handed, I have brought 3 cranes for humanity" were the words of Mr. Arias.

"Crane #1, it is my prayer for reduction of militarism construction. Money for militarism could be spent in eradicating diseases and illiteracy.

Crane #2, it is my prayer to stop nuclear weapons and the distribution of weapons.

Crane #3, it is my prayer for the abolition of nuclear weapons from the face of the earth. There are 17,000 warheads waiting to be awakened. In the 1980s the UN talked about abolishing nuclear war-heads.

Too many children are suffering today. Let us stop robbing them of their dreams. Our children need an education, they need to be well and to be healthy. Let us honor them and stop destroying human lives. It is time for our children's cry to be heard and renew hope because hope can win the day. People have the right to live without fear in a world without nuclear weapons. Our children are calling us to make this right. Why don't the cranes fly? Why don't they sing? I believe 1,000 cranes will fly and will sing someday, and the song of peace will sound. It is our only hope".

Allen Deeter

We recently learned of the death of Allen Deeter, former director of the American Committee for the WFC. Dr. Deeter was associated with the Peace Studies program at Manchester College in Indiana. His death on December 20, 2013 was due to a heart attack. He was 84 years old. He leaves his wife Joan and three sons.



Skype interview with Clifton Daniel, a grandson of the former President Truman

Hiromu Morishita

Mr. Daniel, a grandson of the former President Truman, requested an interview with me to listen to my A-bomb experiences, and after considering other options, we decided to have a talk through Skype. On January 22, our Skype interview was held with Michiko Yamane as interpreter.



Mr. Daniel is writing a book on the subject of Hibakusha's experiences, their sufferings and longing for peace, recording his encounters and communication with hibakusha. He is also going to write about his grandfather, President Truman, as a member of his family. After my A-bomb accounts, I told him what I had felt when I met President Truman on the first Peace Pilgrimage with Barbara and others. Taking advantage of Skype, he could get a visual image of WFC, and our directors could talk with him face to face. Later he gave us an e-mail concerning his visit to Hiroshima in the year before last and his impressions. I hope we will keep in touch, and deepen exchanges from now on.



(On 22/January/2014 Morishita Sensei, former Chairman of the WFC communicated via Skype with Clifton Daniel Truman, grandson of President Harry Truman, U.S.A.)