



NEWSLETTER

HEC, Japan is Entering the New Era with New Opportunities and Challenges !

Rabbi Marvin Tokayer, Great Neck, NY

Permit me to pen some personal words and comments. My family ancestry is from Hungary, in Central Europe. I was there as a young child, and my older brother remembers painting our front door each morning, as during the night, someone painted a Nazi swastika on our front door. That was in the 1930's. Luckily, my immediate family reached America before the war, but my mother who had ten brothers and sisters, all married



Rabbi Marvin Tokayer lighting the candle

with children, and in 1944, ALL were sent to Auschwitz and not even one survived. At that time, the very efficient Nazi death machine, murdered 10,000 Hungarian Jews per day at Auschwitz, including my entire family.

In America, when I would pass the local Catholic school, the students would shout pejoratives at me, from their classrooms, and some would even run out of class to hit me.

How did they know I was Jewish? I could not understand.

My reading of history taught me of the great hate of the Jews in Europe leading to the Holocaust, and its origin is clearly with Christianity and the church fathers.

Our family arrived in Japan in 1968, and soon I was introduced to Beit Shalom and Father Takeji Otsuki. Japan was an ally of Nazi Germany and there were outbursts of anti-Semitism in Japan, with influence from the foolish Russian forgery, "The Protocols of Zion", and the Christian missionaries who loved to teach about Shakespeare's Shylock, and Nazi propaganda in Japan.

However, one minute with Father Otsuki demonstrated the best of Japan, and another side of the church. Father

Otsuki was sensitive to Jewish feelings, had a love for Israel even before there was an Israel, and presented a new image to me, for which I am very grateful. Only Father Otsuki could conceive of a Holocaust Education Center. Only Father Otsuki could create a Beit Shalom, to make Jews feel at home in Japan. Only Father Otsuki could create a church where a Jew could feel comfortable, with no feelings of fear. Only Father Otsuki could be a loyal citizen of Jerusalem.

Father Otsuki taught me that enough Jewish blood has been shed between us, and enough of the debate as to whether the Messiah has come or will come. Let us join hands and work together with respect and friendship.

I learned so much from Father Otsuki and miss him everyday. I am honored to be part of the Beit Shalom community and join Rabbi Shlomo Goren, chief Rabbi of Israel, in urging all Jewish visitors to visit the Beit Shalom in Kyoto and the Holocaust Education Center in Fukuyama.

I have visited numerous holocaust museums. In every city I visit, if there is a Holocaust museum, I make certain that I leave time to visit there. At Yad Vashem in Israel, I spent hours listening to the names of all my grandmother, uncles, aunts and cousins who perished in Auschwitz. However, the only time that I cried when visiting a Holocaust museum, was when I visited the HEC in Fukuyama...

The architect and the designer were absolutely brilliant and creative. Every Holocaust museum, throughout the world, can learn from you. You give honor and respect to the victims, and perpetuate their memory, by teaching the future generation.

Rabbi Tokayer has kindly sent us his messages right after the earthquake and tsunami on March 11, 2011, to express his sympathy.

Gratitude to the Encouragement to the Tohoku-Pacific Ocean Earthquake Disaster

Makoto OTSUKA, Director General

The Great East Japan Earthquake occurred at 14:46 JST on Friday, March 11th, 2011. It was the most powerful known earthquake ever to have hit Japan

We would like to express our deepest appreciation for your condolences and assistance in response to this great earthquake last year. The various aids including financial support from Anne Frank-Fonds, Switzerland, and Israel helped mobilize us to overcome challenging

circumstances.

This tremendous suffering our fellow citizens have received from this geological instability was also intolerable pain for us at the Holocaust Education Center, Japan, where it was located at a long distance from the epicenter. As you have profoundly uplifted us, we have truly felt that "a friend in need is a friend indeed."

I would like to once again express my deepest

appreciation upon having received this truly tremendous assistance from you.

Supporting the Earthquake and the Tsunami Suffered Area

Holding a strong sense of solidarity with the people in the earthquake and the tsunami suffered area, HEC has been supporting the people, especially the children through several activities, such as sending books, and raising donations.

A building which suffered the earthquake and tsunami in Miyagi.



Presenting the Comic Book “ANNE FRANK” to Schools



HEC has presented 1,200 copies of the comic book, “Anne Frank” to schools in the three prefectures of Miyagi, Iwate, and Fukushima of the stricken area.

This book was published from Shueisha, under the supervision of Makoto Otsuka, Dir. Gen. of HEC in 2011.

Anne Frank wrote in her diary about her desire towards peace, and wishes for a long life, and also the wish for working for the mankind. HEC hopes that children in those areas will receive hope and courage

through this book.

Letter of appreciation from a school who received the book.

“Thank you very much for your warm encouragement and support. We are happy to know that there are people who care about us from the bottom of their hearts.

The children are living everyday school lives positively, although they carry sad and hard feelings while living in temporary housings and studying at temporary classrooms.

We truly appreciate the book of “Anne Frank”, and we have put them in the children’s book shelf. We believe that many children will read it.”



A book presented to Natori city Education Bureau in Miyagi.

Charity Concert Held in HEC for Raising Donations



A charity concert was held at HEC on May 22nd, 2011, by regional singers and chorus groups.

In the program, well known Japanese songs were sung by Ms. Shinobu Nakagawa, and

also, Mr. Toshitaka Yokoyama played flute tunes. A male chorus sang beautiful tunes, and a Christian choir joined with hymns. 190 people gathered and listened to the music performance and participated in raising donations.

HEC will continue to raise donations for the disaster.

Words of Sympathy and Encouragements

From Mr. Buddy and Mrs. Gerti Elias, cousin of Anne Frank, President of AFF, who suffered the tsunami in Sri Lanka on 2004.

「Dear Children of Japan,

In the year 2004 my wife and I were in Sri Lanka when a tsunami hit us. We were saved, but many people unfortunately perished.

I send all my love and best wishes to all of you who survived this same tragic event in Japan. May such a catastrophe never happen again and may all of you live a long peaceful and protected life. This would be Anne Frank’s wish to all of you wonderful Japanese children too.」

Donation sent from Anne Frank Fonds to a School in Tohoku

Right after the earthquake and the tsunami disaster, HEC received an e-mail from the Anne Frank Fonds in Basel which showed us their deep sympathy to the victims and also an offer to send the donation of \$5,000 to a school which suffered the earthquake.

HEC contacted Tohoku Gakuin Tsutsujigaoka High School in Sendai-city, Miyagi Prefecture, which had visited us before. The school teacher told us that there were no student victims, but the area was severely damaged, and so were the school buildings and equipment. They were more than happy to know that there were people abroad who care about them, and are willing to support them financially.

The Anne Frank Fonds kindly sent the donation to this school, and it was used to restore the school facilities and to support the students who suffered.



The ceiling of a classroom which collapsed by the earthquake.

Activities Commemorating the 40th year of the First Meeting with Mr. Otto Frank (2011), and the Arrival of the Anne Frank Rose to Japan (2012)

Holding Public Seminars on 2011 and 2012

Public seminars were held in Nov. 2011 and May – June 2012, commemorating the 40th anniversary since the first meeting with Mr. Otto Frank and the main board members of HEC on 1971, and also the 40th anniversary of the arrival of the rose of the “Souvenir d’Anne Frank” in 1972.

Participants from the area listened to the unique stories

from Makoto Otsuka, Dir. Gen. of HEC, and Rev. Michiko Otsuki, who was one of the people who received the Anne Frank Rose from Mr. Otto Frank 40 years ago.



Applicants attending the seminar (2012)

Special Exhibition on Anne Frank Held Throughout Japan



Special Exhibition held in HEC

Special exhibition on Anne Frank is now travelling through Japan. The exhibition was made by Anne Frank House (Amsterdam), introducing the history of those days and detail story of Anne Frank and her family, who went through hiding and then

taken to concentration camps.

HEC also held the exhibition from Nov. 2011 to Feb. 2012, together with actual artifacts related to Frank family, such as original letter from Mr. Otto Frank, and belongings of him and his family.

This exhibition will be travelling through many cities in Japan through out the year.

Visit of Mr. Stefan Verveacke from Anne Frank House

Mr. Stefan Verveacke, Project Coordinator of the East-Asia Department of the Anne Frank House, visited HEC on Feb. 15, 2012, to exchange ideas for future plans of Anne Frank House and HEC, in order to spread the story of Anne Frank and her message of peace.



From the sign book

Excellent educational museum–center.

An “Open door” also for children. We can learn a lot from your approach.

All the best. Pax et Bonum

Collecting Peace Ideas from Children “I want to Tell My Peace Idea!”

Commemorating the 40th year since the first meeting with Mr. Frank, HEC emphasized the importance to convey Anne’s will of peace through Mr. Frank to next generation, and carried out the event “Peace Idea for Children” from July 1st 2011 to Feb. 29th 2012.

In this essay contest, primary and junior high school students entered their own essays about peace ideas, whereas kindergarten children entered their drawings. Approximately 100 ideas were sent from the children who visited HEC, or read books on the Holocaust or Anne Frank, etc.

The contest was sponsored by various institutions including the Anne Frank-Fonds in Basel, Switzerland, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, the Netherlands Embassy, the National Federation of UNESCO Association, and the Education Newspaper.

The issue with 40 selected essays was made public and will be presented to children and libraries.



Tract

Visiting Switzerland and Israel

Makoto Otsuka, Dir. General

I visited Basel, Switzerland and Israel from Nov. 21st to Dec. 8th, 2011.

In Basel, I was invited to attend the Board Meeting of the Anne Frank Fonds, and had a chance to spend a precious time together with Mr. Buddy Elias, cousin of Anne Frank and the President of the AFF, and talked about the paths and the future of the HEC, Japan.

In Israel, I visited people who supported HEC by providing artifacts and materials till today.



Buddy Elias and Makoto Otsuka

At Yad Vashem, I met Directors who are involved in Holocaust education and exchanged ideas.

I also met Prof. Hanoch Gutfreund (Member of the Board of HEC), and Prof. Menachem Ben-Sasson, President of Hebrew University of Jerusalem and Advisory Board member of HEC.

This visit turned out to be a very fruitful one, which gave me many guiding principles and ideas for the future development of HEC.

Visiting Belgium and Netherlands

Akio Yoshida, Deputy Dir. General

I visited Brussels, Belgium, and Amsterdam, Netherlands from Oct. 14th to 21st.

My main purpose to visit Belgium was to attend and give a lecture at the symposium held by the "U-May Foundation" on the theme of the minorities, deaf people, Holocaust, and also music.

Exchanging opinions and information among people of different situations and of different nationalities, such as Belgium, France, Israel, US, and Japan, enriched each participant's way of thinking.

After the symposium I moved to Amsterdam to visit Anne Frank House to meet our friends at AFH, and Mr. Ronald Leopold, Executive Director. After meeting Ms. Terezien da Silva, Director of Archive Department, and exchanged information on materials related to Frank family, I met Mr. Leopold, who kindly spared his time

with Mr. Jan Erik Dubbelman, International Director. This visit enabled us to exchange ideas and plans to expand the relations between the Anne Frank House and the HEC, as well as to develop activities in Japan to introduce more about Anne Frank and her message to Japanese young people.

Mr. Leopold recognized HEC's activity in Japan very deeply and asked us to support AFH's activity such as publications in Japan in a more effective way for children

During my visit to AFH, I was kindly told that the Roses of Anne Frank were presented to AFH by Mr. Buddy Elias two years ago. They were the roses which the Small Hands sent to Anne Frank-Fonds in 2006, and I was very happy to see them in Amsterdam.

Commemorating the Planting of Anne Frank's Horse Chestnut Tree

On January 27th, 2011, the "International Day of Commemoration in Memory of the Victims of the Holocaust" (UN), a young tree of "Anne Frank's Horse Chestnut Tree" was planted in front of the HEC's building.

This tree was raised from a seed of the horse chestnut tree, which Anne Frank used to see from the hiding place in Amsterdam. The tree itself was sent to Japan in March 2009, from Mr. Buddy Elias and Anne Frank House, and was placed in a pot for two years, so that it would get used to the Japanese climate.

After the sad news that the original tree in Amsterdam had fallen down because of a strong wind, we planted this young tree on this special day, which was the day when Mr. Otto Frank was liberated from Auschwitz Extermination Camp in 1945.

For the planting ceremony, 140 people gathered, among whom were 90 children from nearby nursery schools, elementary school, and so on.

Messages from Mr. Buddy Elias, a cousin of Anne Frank, and Mr. Reonald Leopold, Executive Director of Anne Frank House, were presented on this occasion.

As Mr. Buddy Elias kindly wished, we hope the young tree will grow tall and embrace children gathering under it, to share and inherit Anne Frank's thoughts for peace.



Planting the tree with the children

Activities of "Small Hands"

"Small Hands," a children's volunteer group of the HEC, continues to do following activities to send out peace messages.

They made a study trip to Gifu, where Chiune Sugihara was born, and also to visit a park where the Small Hands once sent roses of Anne Frank.

As routine activities, the "Newspaper group" publishes its own newspaper, "Small Hands" two times a year. In the past two years, 20th to 22nd issues were published, which featured the "Terezin Getto" exhibition of HEC, a reminiscence of the 40 years since the first encounter with Mr. Frank in 1971, and also about the study trip to "Chiune Sugihara Memorial Museum" and "Flower

Festa Memorial Park" in Gifu Prefecture.

A special story of "Anne's Roses" was also featured in the last issue as a commemoration of the 40th anniversary of "Anne's Roses" arriving in Japan, which were presented from Mr. Otto Frank as a symbol of peace and hope.

For every issue, 1,500 copies are printed and given to children visiting HEC, schools in the neighborhood.

The "Rose group" grafts and breeds the Anne Frank Rose and presents them to schools.

The "Multi-media group" began to work on Facebook to introduce "Small Hands and its" activities through internet.

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NEWSLETTER

Published since 1995
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