

JAPANESE MATSURI FOR GLASGOW

**REFLECTIONS ON THE 10TH
ANNIVERSARY OF JMG
2001-2011**



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***MEMORIES OF JMG TAIKO IN WELLINGTON CHURCH
(AND MORE)***

The Past surrounds the ancient sounds
The present generations hear and learn
The unfamiliar rhythms of the unfamiliar drums

The streets outside are grey and wide
But from the church the listeners might discern
Some bright kimono colours in the unfamiliar thrums

Through Taiko beat the cultures meet
As baachi rise and fall, the drummers turn
And follow age-old patterns played by unfamiliar hands

Images seen on silver screen
Show country, people, towns and chic fashion
Modern technology but in an unfamiliar land

Shared food before the drums, once more
As in the times of Hiroshigo's her'n
Insistently call union when those unfamiliar come

Matsuri Day – shouts of 'Sore'
A tree of Peace by Kibble Palace fern
Joins open minds and open hearts to rail against the bomb

And I (who saw Mugenkyo roar
At Hornel's place when sun in Summer burned)
In Kelvingrove played Taiko – and I wish I could return

REFLECTIONS ON THE 10TH ANNIVERSARY OF JMG ***by Participants and Friends of JMG, Past and Present***

- **From a former committee member:** When we first became aware of the Japanese Matsuri (literally ‘a celebration’ and based on Japanese Drumming) and Mr and Mrs Toda who founded it in Glasgow, it was already popular and sometimes attracted audiences numbering as many as 2000.

At that early time we were able to use the beautiful building known as the Kibble Palace, which was ideal. But after a few years the Kibble Palace started on a much-needed rebuild, courtesy of CBC Ltd., so the Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) had to find another venue. We were assisted in this by the kindness of the Minister and congregation of Wellington Church in University Avenue. Eventually, the Kibble Palace was finished, beautifully, and the Matsuris are there again.

Some readers may wonder what, exactly, is the purpose of the Matsuris. They, and the presence of Mr and Mrs Toda in Glasgow, are both part of a sincere effort by the Japanese Government to effect an exchange of social habits and mores. Glasgow University also does its bit, and there is no doubt that they are all very successful.

Enjoy it!

- **From a current committee member:** There are several principles for JMG’s activities, which have emerged over the years. For example, every participant in the Taiko Fun Workshops is encouraged to perform Taiko at Matsuri, regardless of their skills. This seems to have contributed towards creating a nice, inclusive atmosphere at Matsuri.

Another principle relates to JMG’s volunteers, who are both British and Japanese. Some Japanese visitors were surprised to see British volunteers teaching origami, but they may have forgotten that many Japanese people play piano or violin, which were originally European musical instruments. Cultural traditions go beyond ethnic boundaries.

Matsuri is a festival for all, with Japanese culture and traditions as a catalyst, regardless of the participants’ backgrounds.

- **From a current volunteer:** It is very difficult to believe that it is ten years since the first Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow. It’s wonderful to see such great interest in Japanese culture shown by so many people of all ages at the festival.

I am looking forward to the Matsuri's continuing success in developing mutual understanding and friendship.

- **From a former committee member:** I have many pleasant memories of the Matsuris early on when they started. For some reason they all seemed to be on sunny days, which I find hard to believe, and involved lots of carrying of Taiko drums from the vaults of the church up into vans and then off to the Botanics. It was nice and quiet at the start before the real crowds started arriving and by then it was quite difficult to manage much while trying to keep half an eye on our 3 relatively young children. Later it would be heaving. I remember one Matsuri afternoon being given a big box of Japanese novels to give away. A lot of people took what I handed to them with a good-natured look of bemusement. They hadn't expected to get given a Japanese detective story or romance that day in the Kibble Palace. Before the Matsuris started no-one noticed their lack, but I think that now Glasgow is a better place for having a wee Japanese festival!
- **From a current committee member:** There was a Japanese teaching the Japanese language on the Internet. One of the lessons was about Hina Matsuri: 'Hina Matsuri, a spring festival unique to Japan, a festival for girls with dolls displayed and sweets eaten, being held on 3rd of March.' There was a comment by someone from Glasgow: 'Hina matsuri is not unique to Japan. In Glasgow, there has been Hina Matsuri at Botanic Gardens from 2002 onwards, and many people celebrate it. It is our Hina Matsuri.' I was surprised to read this comment. It seems that it was written not by JMG members and volunteers but by a visitor.
- **From a former volunteer:** Congratulations on the 10th Anniversary of Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow. When I knew that you had had the 10th Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow my heart began filling with emotion. I respect all of you who have continued these activities for ten years, appreciate the people of Glasgow who have been interested in Japanese culture for such a long time, and am pleasantly surprised that it has lasted so much longer than its initial forecast.

I took part in Matsuri in its early years before my husband and I left for Kunohe, Japan. I remember, from the beginning, the people of the West End showed their interest in our activities and actively took part and enjoyed it! It was an amazing experience for me that made me happy; I felt the people of Glasgow were broad minded. Matsuri also gave me an opportunity to realise how little I knew of my own country and its culture. How many times I felt I wished I had known more about my country!

My most memorable moment was cooking tempura outdoors in the Botanic Gardens. Tempura outdoors! Now that is something new!!

I am very glad to hear that you have held the 10th Anniversary, and will hold the 10th Hina Matsuri in March 2011. I hope that everyone who takes part in it enjoys the event as I used to do, and I wish I could be there; but instead I send my best wishes from the home of Matsuri.

Finally, well done to Fumi and Yushin. Without your passion and determination the Matsuri would never have come thus far. Also, thank you for all you have done. I have many wonderful memories to look back on, and I look forward to making many new ones in the future.

- **From a former committee member:** Having lived for two years in rural Japan (1997 - 1999) I have been keen to maintain links with the country despite living in Glasgow, half a world away; Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow has provided me with this opportunity. I first became involved in JMG as a Taiko workshop participant and then subsequent performer at Hina Matsuri at the Kibble Palace. Since then, over the years I have sat on the committee and have been an occasional volunteer at events.

Aside from sharing many aspects of Japanese culture with residents of Glasgow and surrounding areas, I like that the ethos of the festival is one of 'inclusiveness' – that all members of the community are encouraged, and allowed, to attend and participate. It truly feels like a community festival, and this perhaps is the biggest link with Matsuri in Japan: it is run by the community, for the community with no exception. I especially like it when the festivals attract passers-by previously unaware of the event's existence and who leave an hour or so later having participated in the Japanese experience corners and attended the Taiko performance, with a new appreciation of Japanese culture – an unexpected adventure on a quiet Saturday afternoon!

Of course, I am consistently amazed at the dedication and enthusiasm demonstrated by Yushin and Fumi in organising and running the two annual Maturis, raising funds and visiting schools under the JMG banner. Their commitment and energy is truly inspiring, and I would like to thank them for their friendship and 'sharing Japan with me'.

- **From a current volunteer:** I remember Hina Matsuri was being held in the Botanic Gardens when I moved to Glasgow from Japan in 2002. Since moving, I had been wondering how I could return something to this community. And now, here I am. I have been helping at Matsuri and Hina Matsuri for a couple of years now. I am glad to be able to contribute a wee bit. It is always a nice surprise to see such a large number of people turned up to those events. I do enjoy communicating with local people, talking about Japanese culture. As a Japanese Volunteer, I would like to keep giving something back to Glasgow. Also, I hope Matsuri and Hina Matsuri will have a 20th anniversary!

- **From a current committee member:** Here are some of the things that I would never have imagined doing had I not been involved with Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow:
 - Doing the conga around Wellington Church while singing ‘forwards, backwards, 1 – 2 – 3’ in Japanese.
 - Reading greetings and messages from a remote village in Northern Japan to visitors to Matsuri and Hina Matsuri
 - Enjoying Fumi’s noodles and Irene’s cakes at the AGMs.
 - Being asked to be the Treasurer (me in charge of someone else’s money!)
 - Introducing:
 - Taiko drumming
 - Japanese songs
 - the Consul-General of Japan
 - a Butoh dance
 - a traditional Indonesian performance.
 - Watching my kids performing Taiko for a public audience
 - Tensioning Taiko drums in preparation for performance
 - Meeting so many people who are interested in Japan and Japanese culture

The most interesting thing has been to see how energy and enthusiasm for an idea can be transmitted between people and amplified to bring benefit to the local community.

- **From a current committee member:** My family and I have never been to Japan. Thank goodness, though, Japan has come to us. We didn’t know Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow from the very beginning, but for many years now we’ve been involved. Our children have played the Taiko drums in the Wellington Church and the Botanic Gardens, and have spread the enthusiasm for this glorious thunder to friends and relatives in Glasgow and beyond. We parents have attended JMG meetings, celebrating the successes of JMG over the years and sharing the challenges it faces. And the whole family have joined in the annual feast at the AGM, enjoying wonderful cooking by Fumi and all her friends. Above all, we’ve enjoyed the friendship and enthusiasm of JMG’s founders, Yushin and Fumi. Through them, we feel as if the Japanese people are our friends, and one day we hope to participate in a Matsuri in Japan itself. We wonder, though, if it could possibly be as warm, hospitable and entertaining as the Maturis we’ve celebrated here in Glasgow!

OUR SPONSORS OVER THE YEARS



Kunohe Village



Japan UK 150 Fund



FINANCIAL SUPPORT FOR MATSURI

Before JMG was established

June 2001	Matsuri	Japan 2001
March 2002	Hina Matsuri	Japan 2001

After JMG was established

June 2002	Matsuri 2	Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation
March 2003	Hina Matsuri 2	Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation UK-Japan Joint Project Scottish Arts Council
June 2003	Matsuri 3	Scottish Arts Council Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh Glasgow City Council
March 2004	Hina Matsuri 3	Scottish Arts Council Glasgow City Council Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh Embassy of Japan in the UK
June 2004	Matsuri 4	Glasgow City Council Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh
March 2005	Hina Matsuri 4	Glasgow City Council Japan21 Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh Embassy of Japan in the UK Awards for All
June 2005	Matsuri 5	Glasgow City Council Awards for All
March 2006	Hina Matsuri 5	Glasgow City Council Embassy of Japan in the UK
June 2006	Matsuri 6	Glasgow City Council

March 2007	Hina Matsuri 6	Glasgow City Council Embassy of Japan in the UK
June 2007	Matsuri 7	Glasgow City Council
March 2008	Hina Matsuri 7	Glasgow City Council
June 2008	Matsuri 8	Glasgow City Council
March 2009	Hina Matsuri 8	Glasgow City Council Japan UK 150 Fund
June 2009	Matsuri 9	Glasgow City Council
March 2010	Hina Matsuri 9	Glasgow City Council
June 2010	Matsuri 10	Glasgow City Council
March 2011	Hina Matsuri 10	Glasgow City Council

Support in Kind

Ricoh UK

Kunohe Village office, Iwate Prefecture, Japan

Japan National Tourist Organisation, London Office

Calbee

Particular thanks to Glasgow Botanic Gardens, Wellington Church, Hillhead Primary School and Walter Halley for special support through the years.

JAPANESE MATSURI FOR GLASGOW: EARLY DAYS

The Story Told Through Newsletters



Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow

Membership Newsletter, No.1 May 2003

HINA MATSURI 2003



Mugenkyo



Kimono



Cleveden Secondary Pupils



O hina-sama

Despite the continual rain, **Hina Matsuri 2003** (Sunday 9th March), attracted over 1,000 visitors to the Kibble Palace in Glasgow's Botanic Gardens.

The audience were entertained by a variety of taiko performances including those by **MUGENKYO**, a Motherwell-based professional Taiko group; Taiko bands from **Cleveden Secondary School**, Glasgow; MUGNENKYO Dojo band, and volunteers who had participated in Taiko workshops, organised by Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow and taught by Mugenkyo members. These workshops were held in weekends prior to the event.

In Japan, Hina Matsuri is traditionally celebrated by the display of hina dolls, and not Taiko performances. However, in Scotland in early March, we need the sound of the Taiko to wake us from the dark slumber of winter and prepare ourselves for spring.

In addition to the taiko performance, visitors were able to have a "Japanese Experience" by visiting a variety of information stands. Participants were able to try on kimono, taste Japanese sweets, and write their names in Japanese characters. Children from **Hillhead Primary School**, Glasgow, taught origami and basic Japanese phrases, and sung Japanese songs. There was also a stunning display of hina dolls, provided courtesy of Miyuki's (Mugenkyo) mother who had brought them from the United States. The Kaki project which seeks peace by planting a kaki (persimmon) tree, similar to that which survived the atomic bomb dropped on Nagasaki, was also represented.

For the organisation of this free event, we received generous financial support from The Japan Society, Embassy of Japan, The Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation and Scottish Arts Council. Ricoh generously printed the poster. Consulate General of Japan provided free information materials on Japan, which were given away. Glasgow City Council provided support by allowing us to use the Kibble Palace free of charge. We would like to thank all the organizations for their generosity.

MATSURI 2003

Matsuri 2003 will take place on Sunday 22nd June, from 12 noon to 3pm, in and around the Kibble Palace in the Glasgow Botanic Gardens.

This **free event**, which is open to everyone, is part of Glasgow's West End Festival 2003. Bring friends, family and colleagues!

Students from Cleveden Secondary School, (Glasgow) will perform Taiko outside the Kibble Palace. Participants of the taiko beginner workshops, organised by Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow, may also be performing.

Additionally, inside the Kibble Palace, participants will be able to learn about Japan by visiting various information stands. As at Hina Matsuri 2003 there will be kimono, calligraphy, origami, colouring, Japanese sweets, information on Japan, etc. There will also be the added opportunity of playing traditional Japanese games - this is an exciting addition to our programme.

Matsuri 2003 will be organised by Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow, in conjunction with Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh, with financial support from Glasgow City Council and Scottish Arts Council. Glasgow City Council again allowed us to use Kibble Palace free of charge. We would like to thank all the organizations for their generosity.

We are always looking for volunteers to help out on the day. If you are interested in participating please contact us.

JAPANESE MATSURI FOR GLASGOW RECEIVES CHARITABLE STATUS

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow was a by-product of Japan 2001, which took place throughout the UK from May 2001 till March 2002. As part of **Japan 2001** and Glasgow's own West End Festival, a one-off Matsuri was organised in June 2001 in Glasgow Botanic Gardens. This event proved so successful by attracting about 2,000 visitors that the Consulate of Japan in Edinburgh suggested another Matsuri be

organised within the lifespan of Japan 2001. The resulting event was Hina Matsuri held in March 2002, again as part of the Japan 2001 festival. Despite heavy rain this event attracted about 1,000 visitors. Our second Matsuri, held in June 2002 as part of the West End Festival, attracted more than 3,000 visitors.

Following on from the success of these events, Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) was established in 2002. JMG originated as a voluntary association to organise a Japanese festival (matsuri) in Glasgow on a regular basis. Its objectives are as follows:

The objects of the association shall be to advance the education of the public in Japanese culture and heritage by the organising and operating of a Japanese festival (matsuri) to be held in Glasgow (or elsewhere as the membership may deem appropriate) with a view to promoting wide community involvement and the promotion of awareness of different cultures.

Kunio YANAGIDA, the father of Japanese ethnology, referred to Matsuri as "a festival in which all social divisions dissolves in the ecstasy of communal celebration".

JMG has tried, and will continue to try, to create such feeling by involving as many people as possible, regardless of their backgrounds and nationalities, as visitors or volunteers.

JMG has been recognised by the Inland Revenue as a Scottish Charity (Scottish Charity Number: SC 034172), with effect from 13 January 2003.

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow Contact Details

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Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow

Membership Newsletter, No.2 November 2003

Matsuri 2003



As part of Glasgow's West End Festival, Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) organised our third Glasgow Matsuri on Sunday 22 June 2003. The event attracted over 2000 spectators. As before, and as is the custom in Matsuri in Japan, there was a Taiko performance by children: Cleveden Secondary School students and JMG taiko workshop participants. In addition to the taiko there were opportunities for visitors to try on kimono, write their names in Japanese script, make origami, colour in pictures taken from Japanese fairy tales, and try some Japanese sweets. The Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh kindly provided

information for visitors about Japan. This time around visitors were able encouraged to try a traditional Japanese game, Fuku Warai.

We received considerable positive feedback, here are some of the comments:

"Thoroughly enjoyable. It opens up fantastic opportunities for children and adults to broaden their knowledge of Japanese culture etc."

"Very colourful and fun"

"I have enjoyed my time and look forward to seeing you next year"

"Very friendly people. Many thanks. My two boys loved it"

"Very pleasant experience. Genuine example of Japan for Glasgow people."

"Excellent range of events, all staff were extremely friendly and helpful"

"I like it, specially the part putting the kimono on"

Matsuri 2003 was made possible through grants from the Scottish Arts Council and Glasgow City Council. In addition, Glasgow Botanic Gardens permitted JMG free use of its magnificent glasshouse, Kibble Palace. JMG wishes to thank these organizations for their generous support.

Festival of Roses 2003

As part of the Festival of the Rose, JMG was invited by Glasgow City Council to organise a "mini matsuri corner". The event was held in Tollcross Park over the weekend of the 19th and 20th July. The many visitors, including Dr Junichi Seki, Deputy Mayor of Osaka City, Japan (host of the World Rose Festival in 2006) were able to participate in a number of traditional Japanese activities.



JMG is a recognized Scottish Charity (Scottish Charity Number: SC 034172)



Later in the week, on the 24th, also as part of the Festival, the World Rose Garden was officially opened at the Glasgow Botanic Gardens by Her Imperial Highness, Princess Nobuko, President of the Rose Society of Japan.



The Princess was welcomed by a small choir of children performing *Auld Lang Syne*, both in English and Japanese. Most of the children are seasoned Matsuri participants. The song, sung in Japan at the end of each academic year graduation service at primary and secondary schools, is one of the most popular in Japan. Indeed, many Japanese believe it to be a traditional Japanese song! JMG was pleased to be able to help celebrate the opening of the garden at the botanics as the staff have been very accommodating to us over the past few years.

Kunohe Village, Japan

JMG has learned of an interesting development with Kunohe Village, Iwate-ken, Northern Japan: more than a hundred years ago, a

youngster, Aikitsu TANAKADATE, came to Glasgow to study Physics with Lord Kelvin. On returning to Japan he later became a famous scholar.

To commemorate his achievement, every year Kunohe village organises for a group of secondary school children to visit Glasgow. To our surprise, this village also organises every September the "Tohoku Children Taiko Festival", and, to their surprise, they discovered that Glaswegians also enjoy Taiko performances during our own Matsuri. To recognize this coincidence JMG was asked to contribute "a message from Scotland", for publication in the Tohoku's Festival programme.

Video footage from the Tohoku Festival will be screened at Taiko Workshops and Practices in November and February.

Taiko Workshops and Practice

Mugenkyo will be taking taiko Workshops, organised by JMG, on Saturday 8th and Wednesday 19th November at Wellington Church (77 Southpark Avenue, Glasgow). Following the Workshops, there are also practice sessions.

There will be further Taiko workshops with Mugenkyo on Saturday 14 February and Wednesday 18 February 2004.

Hina Matsuri 2004

JMG will organise the third Hina Matsuri on Sunday 29 February 2004 at the Glasgow Botanic Gardens from 12 noon. MUGENKYO will perform Taiko and those who participate in our Taiko workshops will perform Taiko as well. There will be kimono, origami, calligraphy, sweets, game corners as well.

For further information about Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG), please contact

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JMG is a recognized Scottish Charity (Scottish Charity Number: SC 034172)

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow

Membership Newsletter No. 3

Festivals, 2004

So far this year we have organised 2 very successful events: the first was Hina Matsuri 2004 held in a marquee on the main lawn of the Botanic Gardens on Sunday 29th February, and the second was Matsuri 2004 on Saturday June 19th in Wellington Church halls. This second festival was part of the recent West End Festival .

Due to the closure of the Kibble Palace for refurbishment, we have had to seek out different venues- future matsuri will be held in Wellington Church Halls until further notice.

There was a great turnout at both events- at Hina Matsuri over 3,000 people (1 in 200 Glaswegians!) came, no doubt brought outside by the sunny, warm weather and the stimulating taiko performance by professional taiko performers, Mugenkyo. There were further performances by Mugenkyo, Taiko Project trained by Mugenkyo, and children and adult participants of JMG's Taiko Workshop led by Mugenkyo. Many of the adults and children performing in Hina Matsuri also took part at the successful June event.

At both events visitors enjoyed participatory corners: kimono wearing, Japanese calligraphy, origami, colouring picture, traditional Japanese games, Japanese sweets, videos about Japan and information on Japan and Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme. Information materials as well as posters and souvenirs were generously provided by Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh and Japan National Tourist Organization (JNTO) London Office.

Hina Matsuri and Matsuri 2004 were made possible through grants from the Scottish Arts Council, Glasgow City Council and Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh.

JMG would also like to extend thanks to Glasgow Botanic Gardens for their support of Hina Matsuri, 2004 Wellington Church for their support of Matsuri 2004; JNTO and Kunohe Village for their contribution and support of both events.



Summer 2004

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow

Membership Newsletter No. 3

Kimono Donated

JMG are grateful for Mrs. Yasue Tsuruta, who helped the colour-in corner at these previous festivals and is now in Japan, and Mrs. Kimiko Young, the regular helper at the kimono corner, for their generous donation of several pieces of kimono and obi (sash). These, together with a new piece of kimono made by Mrs. Young, were popular among the visitors at Hina Matsuri 2004.

School Visits

JMG was invited to visit two primary schools and a toddlers & mothers group in Glasgow. In November and again in December 2003, JMG members visited P4/P5 children at Albert Primary School, Springburn, doing a project on Japan. The children from a variety of ethnic backgrounds enjoyed wearing kimono, hitting Taiko, writing their names in Japanese characters, and making in origami cranes. In February 2004, JMG visited P1 and P5 children at Carnwadric Primary School doing a project on Buddhism. The children, again from various ethnic backgrounds, tried Japanese-style meditation, Buddhist chanting in Japanese, Taiko, origami and writing their names in Japanese. In May 2004, JMG was invited by a toddlers & mothers group at Tron St Mary's Church, Springburn, to teach origami to the mothers, who were asylum seekers. JMG were very pleased to be invited by them and thrilled to share Japanese cultural traditions with children and mothers from Britain and various other countries.



Death of Mr Katsuhiko OKU

JMG was saddened to hear of the tragic death of Mr Katsuhiko OKU, a Japanese diplomat, in Iraq on 29 November 2003. He played an important role, as Director of Japan Information and Cultural Centre, Embassy of Japan in London, in encouraging and supporting the development of the Glasgow Matsuri from its humble start in June 2001 onwards. Our sincere condolences were sent to Mrs. Emiko OKU, their children and Embassy staff.

The Japan Foundation

In November 2003, JMG was visited by Ms Aiko Watanabe, University of Tokyo, who was assigned by The Japan Foundation to do a research into grassroots activities originated in *Japan 2001*, a UK-wide celebration of Japanese cultures held in 2001/2002. As part of *Japan 2001*, the first Glasgow Matsuri was organised in June 2001 as a one-off event, from which JMG has developed to this day.

Launch of JMG Website

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow now have a website- for further information please go to:

www.japanese-matsuri-glasgow.org.uk

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Editor: Andrew Shoolbread

Summer 2004

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG)

Membership Newsletter No. 4

Autumn/ Winter Update

Editor Andrew Shoolbread

Children's Garden

JMG was invited by the **Hillhead Children's Garden project**, an initiative within Glasgow Botanic Gardens to provide city children with gardening experience, to plant Japanese vegetables. SAKATA UK Ltd kindly donated daikon (Japanese radish) seeds. The seeds were sown in April and daikon were harvested on 2 occasions.

In July the first harvest took place and JMG members provided the traditional dish of miso-soup with sliced daikon, to visitors, who were further entertained by a Taiko performance provided by JMG volunteers.

At the August harvesting, daikon leaf tempura and daikon pickles were supplied by JMG members to visitors. Following the success of the daikon, JMG have been invited again to grow traditional Japanese vegetables in the children's garden.

With a mind to JMG's ongoing exchanges with Kunohe village, Iwate, Japan, the village were contacted for seeds of typical vegetables. The village kindly supplied the following seeds: *daikon* (radish), *kabu* (turnip), *hakusai* (Chinese cabbage) and *yukina* (Chinese vegetable). In return, with kind assistance from Glasgow Botanic Gardens, JMG and the children's garden will send seeds to Kunohe of vegetables grown in Glasgow and Scotland- an international vegetable exchange!

The sewing of Japanese vegetables will be held in the spring of next year. An invitation will be send to JMG members and volunteers.



Exchange with Kunohe Village

On Saturday 12 June, JMG welcomed a group of school pupils and adult escorts from Kunohe village, together with pupils and a teacher from Dollar Academy (their host school in Scotland) by organising a joint Japanese class and a Japanese-style curry lunch at Hillhead Baptist Church, and a joint Taiko Practice at Wellington Church. Two of the Kunohe pupils performed Taiko. One of the Scottish participants at Taiko Practice said: "I thought that my Taiko did not sound well because I was using JMG's Taiko [which were made in Scotland], but, after hearing Kunohe boys' Taiko, I realised that I was totally wrong." The day was a nice occasion for Scottish people interested in Japanese cultural traditions to meet with Japanese people.

Following last year, JMG sent a message to the 8th Tohoku Junior Taiko Festival organised by Kunohe village, and the message was read at the Festival. More interestingly, a video of *Hina Matsuri 2004* made thanks to Mr Peter Spinney, JMG member, was screened too. JMG has received from the village a video of this year's Taiko Festival, which will be screened at various occasions. JMG are most grateful to Kunohe village for their friendship.



Winter 2004

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG)

Membership Newsletter No. 4

The first AGM

JMG held its first AGM on Monday 13 September 2004 at Wellington Church. Out of eleven family members and four individual members (as of 31 July 2004), nine members attended. The current office-bearers were re-elected: Chair, Yushin Toda; Secretary, Andrew Shoolbread; and Treasurer, Irene Spinney. After the AGM, Andrew gave a presentation about the 2 years he spent on Naoshima, an island in the Japanese Inland Sea, as an assistant language teacher of English on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) programme. It was a nice occasion to meet with JMG members and receive feedbacks.

Taiko Workshop and Practice

On Saturday 6 November, JMG organised a full-day Taiko workshop with Mugenkyo at Wellington Church, which consisted of a two-hour lesson in the morning and another two-hour lesson after lunch break. This new arrangement enabled Mugenkyo to teach a longer piece than at previous two-hour workshops. Thirteen adults and five children participated in the workshop, most of whom continued to practice Taiko on following Saturday afternoons.

There will be another full-day Taiko workshop with Mugenkyo on Saturday 29 January 2005 at Wellington Church from 10 am to 2.30 pm. This will be followed by Taiko Practice on the following three Saturday afternoons. The Taiko Workshop/Practice is organised with a view to encouraging the participants to perform Taiko at *Hina Matsuri 2005*.

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Hina Matsuri 2005

Hina Matsuri 2005 will be held on Saturday 26 February 2005 at Wellington Church, University Avenue, Glasgow, from 12 noon to 4 pm. As with previous Hina Matsuri, there will be "The Japanese Experience" with participatory corners for visitors to wear kimono, write their names in Japanese alphabets, do origami, try Japanese sweets, colour in Japanese fairy tales, etc. Mugenkyo, together with their Project Taiko teams will perform taiko. The participants at Taiko Workshop will also perform. This is a free event.

The fourth Hina Matsuri will be supported by **Glasgow City Council**, **Calbee Foods Co. Ltd.**, with a donation of their Kappa Ebisen (a prawn cracker), and **Kunohe Village**. We are most grateful to them for their generous support. The event will be part of **2005 EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges**, which is aim to "encourage and promote face-to-face exchanges and contacts, between people, with an emphasis on ordinary people, as well as events and initiatives to promote better understanding of European and Japanese society and culture." Our event is listed in the Embassy's events calendar <http://www.uk.emb-japan.go.jp/en/eujapan/events.html> Please come along to the event.

JMG Website

Keep up to date with what's happening by checking our new website:

www.japanese-matsuri-glasgow.org.uk



Winter 2004

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) Autumn Membership Newsletter, Number 5

Hina Matsuri 2005

The fourth Hina Matsuri was held on the afternoon of Saturday 26 February in Wellington Church. Visitors experienced a variety of Japanese activities including kimono wearing, origami, and calligraphy, and enjoyed a selection of Japanese drinks and sweets. A video on Japan was shown; printed information was also available. A stand provided information about the Kaki Tree Project.

As it was an uncharacteristically sunny day, Taiko was practiced outside on the main gate of the Wellington Church in University Avenue; this unusual spectacle attracted a number of additional passers by to the event.

Taiko was performed by participants of the JMG Taiko Workshops who wore T-shirts kindly donated by the Tohuko Children's Taiko Festival's organiser: Kunohe Village in Iwate-ken, Japan.

Professional Taiko performers, Mugenkyo, who had led our Taiko Workshops also performed. A special activity "Taiko Fun" was also organised for participants on the day who learned "Hounen Mushioi Daiko", a traditional tune from Nagano, Central Japan. Music teacher John Guerir instructed the Taiko Fun group for a couple of hours before they were invited to play in front of a receptive audience.

The event was free and was supported by Embassy of Japan in London, Awards for All, Glasgow

City Council, Japan21, Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh, and was sponsored by Calbee Foods, Co., Ltd., Kunohe Village, Iwate, Japan, Japan National Tourist Organisation London Office, and Japan Local Government Centre London Office.

JMG would like to thank Wellington Church for allowing us to use their magnificent building, and to Osuwa Taiko Hozonkai for allowing us to use the tune they have preserved at the Taiko Fun. The event was part of 2005 EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges.



Japanese Seeds Planting Festival

Since 2003 JMG has developed exchanges with Kunohe Village, located about 400 miles north of Tokyo. Kunohe sends youngsters to Scotland every year to commemorate the achievement of local person, Professor Aikitsu Tanakadte, who studied Physics with Lord Kelvin in the late 19th century. One of the ongoing exchanges is the Seed Exchange Programme.

Seeds have been exchanged between Kunohe and Glasgow to allow children in each place to grow traditional vegetables from the other country.

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Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) Autumn Membership Newsletter, Number 5

JMG, together with Hillhead Children's Gardens, organised the Japanese Seeds Planting Festival on Sunday 20 March. Glasgow Children planted the following: daikon (radish), kabu (turnip), kyuri (cucumber), hakusai (Chinese leaves), and various beans. Japanese-style chicken teriyaki, and vegetable tempura were served, and a workshop on origami was held.

JMG received the following message of support from Mr Hiroyasu Hareyama of Kunohe Village:

"Good afternoon, people who have gathered at Hillhead Children's Garden.

"Some of the seeds I have sent to you were taken from the beans my 72-year-old mother had looked after in our farm for a few years. It makes me emotional to think that the seeds nurtured in Kunohe Village, Japan, are going to be planted in such a place far away from here as Glasgow.

"Kunohe Village is still covered by twenty inches of snow, and it is still early here to do seed planting. The seeds sent from Scotland, however, will be used for primary school children within their school curriculum.

"There is a reason for doing farm works within the school curriculum. In our village, agriculture is the main economic activity, but a few children here grow vegetables at home. Therefore, we are thinking of using the school lesson hours to

provide our children with farming experience.

"By the way, did you know that people in Japan like eating edible wild plants? When I visited Scotland, I was amazed to find a lot of bracken (*warabi*) grown naturally in the mountains. Bracken or *warabi* is one of the most popular edible wild plants in Japan. Many people in Japan live long, and Japan is one of the countries enjoying longevity. This is not unrelated to the fact that people in Japan eat edible wild plants. Would you like to try to eat wild plants?"

"Last but not least, I do hope that our exchange will grow gradually but steadily, like a vegetable growing from a seed, having flowers, and bearing fruits, and that the exchange will go on for ten years, twenty years, or more than 100 years for the children and grandchildren of those who are gathering today."



Matsuri 2005

The fifth Japanese Matsuri was held on the afternoon of Saturday 11 June in Wellington Church. Approximately 1,000 visitors enjoyed the Japanese Experience participatory corners in addition to Taiko performances.

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Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) Autumn Membership Newsletter, Number 5

This time there were several new features at the event. "Manga Experience" was provided for the first time and proved to be very popular: an experienced Manga artist instructed participants on how to draw Manga cartoons and characters.

There was also special participation by high school students from Kunohe Village on an exchange visit, who had arrived only the previous day. Aya performed Taiko and Chihiro danced Kagura, an ancient dance form. The Kunohe pupils also sang two Japanese songs, one of which was "Auld Lang Syne" which is sung in Japan at the end of academic year ceremony at primary and secondary schools. It is believed to be an old Japanese song by many Japanese!

Following on the success of the one-day "Taiko Fun" organised on the morning of Hina Matsuri 2005, a series of "Taiko Fun" was organised prior to the event, with John Guerrier once again teaching a simplified version of the traditional tune "Hounen Mushioi Daiko" courtesy of Osuwa Taiko Hozonkai, Japan. Taiko Fun participants performed this tune on the day. Jennifer McMurtrie, who has performed Taiko at previous Matsuri as a member of several Taiko bands, including Yakamashi Taiko, also played a solo.

There were also performances from Begin, an Indonesian postgraduate student who sang two traditional Indonesian songs with associated dance, and Japanese students and a teacher who played four Japanese songs, representing the

four seasons, on piano, cello and clarinet.

This event was free and made possible through funding provided by Awards for All and Glasgow City Council, and was sponsored by Japan National Tourist Organisation London Office, and Japan Local Government Centre London Office.

JMG are most grateful to Wellington Church for allowing us to use their magnificent building, and to Osuwa Taiko Hozonkai for allowing us to use



the tune they have preserved at the Taiko Fun. The event was part of 2005 EU-Japan Year of People to People Exchanges as well as Glasgow's West End Festival.

Event with Exchange Students from Kunohe Village

On Saturday 18 June, JMG welcomed pupils from Kunohe village and Dollar Academy, Kunohe's host school in Scotland. Students attended Japanese class in the morning, and enjoyed a lunch of Japanese and Chinese dishes. After lunch, all of us headed to the Children's Garden in Glasgow Botanic Gardens, where vegetables from Kunohe village are being grown.

Paul Matthews, Curator, Botanic Gardens, and his family, and John

Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) Autumn Membership Newsletter, Number 5

Hancox, Leader of Hillhead Children's garden, warmly welcomed the Kunohe students. The pupils were surprised to see Glasgow children getting excited digging *daikon* (Japanese radish); *daikon* is very common in Japan and is usually much larger than the ones harvested in Glasgow. They were also surprised to hear that in Glasgow most people live in a tenement and so don't have their own garden and rarely touch the soil. Kunohe is a rural, agricultural village. They were also surprised to see many people sitting on the green and basking in the sunshine, as in Japan people are usually not allowed to sit on the grass.

JMG will continue to develop exchanges with Kunohe village. Kunohe Village now has its home page in English at:

http://www.vill.kunohe.iwate.jp/new_1/Framepage1.htm

In July, a family who have been volunteers at the recent Japanese festivals visited Kunohe on holiday. Kunohe Village organised tailor-made activities for the family, such as kendo (Japanese fencing), kyudo (Japanese archery) calligraphy, Taiko, picnics, and farm working.

In late July, a volunteer at the Japanese festivals, left Glasgow for Kunohe to work there as an assistant language teacher of English.

Japanese Cultural Traditions: Films and workshop

University of Glasgow's GilmorehillG12 invited JMG to

organise workshops on Japanese tea ceremony and kimono, as well as screening three Japanese cultural documentary films on Saturday 25 June.

75 people attended these free activities. At the tea ceremony, most visitors were surprised to find that Japanese green tea (*maccha*) is really green. Some tranquillity space was created. A Japanese screen was made by Mr and Mrs Young to be used at the kimono corner. The cultural films were: "The Yuzen Shilk" about the art of Japanese dress; "The Spirit of Tea – Sen no Rikyu" about the tradition of a tea ceremony; and "Master of Earth and Fire" about the creation of Japanese ceramics. This free event was part of the West End Festival.

Visits

On Monday 21 February, JMG members visited 207th Guides at the Hillhead Baptist Church, Glasgow, and gave workshops on origami and calligraphy.

On Wednesday 3 March, JMG members visited **Loch Primary School**, South Lanarkshire, and gave workshops on kimono and calligraphy.

On Wednesday 30 March, JMG members visited **Scottish Women's Rural Institute** in Kintyre, and did workshops on origami, making a canoe-boat and a flapping bird, and calligraphy.

On Monday 6 June, JMG members visited **St Rocks Secondary School**,

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NEWSLETTER 6

Matsuri 2006, Saturday 10 June

In its sixth year, Japanese Matsuri will be held on Saturday 10 June at the Wellington Church from 2 to 5 pm, with support from Glasgow City Council. There will be Japanese Experience corners for visitors from 2 to 4 pm for kimono, origami, calligraphy, manga, colouring-in pictures, Japanese games and Japanese drinks and sweets. Following its popularity at *Hina Matsuri* this year, there will be a corner for Kunohe village, Japan, with which JMG has developed various exchanges. Currently, a former volunteer at Glasgow Matsuri, Hazel, is working there as an assistant language teacher of English. She participated in Kunohe Matsuri last summer by playing Taiko. The Kunohe corner will be staffed by people from Kunohe who will be visiting Glasgow. Information on Japan will be distributed, provided by Japan National Tourist Organisation and Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh. From 4 to 5 pm there will be a Performance Corner, with Taiko to be played by participants in the Taiko Fun Workshops led by John Guerrier, and Japanese songs performed by Kunohe visitors and participants in the Japanese Class in Glasgow. This is part of the West End Festival. Admission is free.

“Kimono: Films and Workshops”, Saturday 17 June

In its second year, GilmorehillG12, in cooperation with JMG, will hold a mini-matsuri on Saturday 17 June at GilmorehillG12 from 2 to 4 pm. There will be a screening of two documentary films on Bashoufu (kimono cloth made from banana leaves, which is made in Okinawa, a southern island of Japan) at 2.25 pm and Edo Komon (stencil dyeing on kimono cloth) at 3.25 pm, together with two short animated films at 2 and 3 pm respectively. These films are borrowed from The Japan Foundation Film Library through the Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh. While the films are screened in the cinema, a kimono-wearing workshop and a taster of the Tea Ceremony will be held in seminar rooms on the first floor. This is also part of the West End Festival. Admission is free.

Exchange with Kunohe Visitors: Saturday 17 June

On Saturday 17 June, pupils from Kunohe village and those from Dollar Academy, Kunohe's host school in Scotland, will join the Japanese class at the Wellington Church, which will be held from 10 am to 12 noon. This will be followed by a welcome lunch at the church. Please come along to meet with them.

Second AGM Held

In September 2005, the second AGM was held at Glasgow Botanic Gardens. Out of ten family members and nine individual members (as of 31 July 2005), ten members attended it. The current Chair, Yushin Toda, was re-elected, while Kirsty Maslen and Tim Campbell were newly elected to Secretary and Treasurer, respectively, with the departure

of Andrew Shoolbread and Irene Spinney from these posts. Irene remained as a member of Executive committee, and Andrew as Editor of the web site and the newsletter.

Hina Matsuri 2006 Held

The fifth Hina Matsuri was held on Saturday 4 March 2006 at the Wellington Church. About 800 visitors, including Mr Noboru Sekiguchi, Deputy Director of Japan Information and Cultural Centre at the Embassy of Japan, enjoyed the Japanese Experience corners and the performance of Taiko and Japanese songs. In particular, P5B pupils from Hillhead Primary School, who practised Taiko on three Friday afternoons during school hours with JMG, entertained the audience, including their relatives and friends, by performing Taiko. This Taiko workshop at Hillhead Primary, as well as JMG's other usual Taiko workshops, were supported by the Embassy of Japan in the UK. Kunohe Village kindly donated special T-shirts made for their Children's Taiko Festivals, and Japan National Tourist Organisation donated T-shirts and information on Japan. As it was an independent event, unlike Matsuri in June, a poster was made, featuring pictures drawn by Bethany Maslen, who has attended the Taiko workshops for a few years.

Taiko Workshops at Secondary Schools

There has been a significant development in JMG's outreach activities, especially Taiko. In November 2005, a Taiko workshop was held during school hours, as part of music lesson, at King's Park Secondary School, Glasgow. Some of the participants performed Taiko at the school's Christmas concert in December, after one and a half hour's practice. In February 2006, a similar Taiko workshop was held at Rosshall Academy, Glasgow. These workshops were led by John Guerrier, our Taiko teacher, who is also a music teacher employed by Glasgow City Council. John considers Taiko to have great potential as an instrument for teaching music, as it delivers quick results. He is planning to visit Kunohe this summer to learn more about Taiko.

Fundraising for Future Activities

Having received financial support from Glasgow City Council for *Matsuri 2006* and *Hina Matsuri 2007*, JMG may also apply to other funding bodies if necessary to support our continuing and expanding activities.

JMG Newsletter

No. 7. January 2007

JMG in Japan

Cultural Exchange Travel between Glasgow and Kunohe is on the Increase

Can you imagine life in a small, snow-bound village in the far north of Japan? What would a visitor who had lived in that village all their life think of Glasgow? People from both places are now beginning to find out due to the increasing number of exchange visits taking place in both directions.

Kunohe Village, in the Iwate Prefecture, and JMG have had a relationship for several years. Since the last newsletter, we have received a group of visitors from Kunohe, and two people have traveled in the opposite direction on separate trips. Read on to find out more about their stories.

Gary's Gap Year

Gary Lai has been a JMG volunteer and Taiko drummer for over two years. He spent a few days in Kunohe during a family holiday in 2005 and liked it so

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- 1 Our Activities in 2006
- 3 Calendar of Events

Our Activities in 2006

A Matsuri, a Mini Matsuri and a Hina Matsuri

As well as three Matsuri, JMG joined an International Night, made a church visit, three school visits and participated in the Sighthill "Festival of Faith".

Matsuri 2006

Saturday, 10th June saw 500 visitors to JMG's Matsuri at Wellington Church. This event was part of the West End Festival, and was combined with an open day at the church.

One of the officials from Kunohe Village was an excellent calligrapher, and demonstrated his skills for visitors.

Films, Tea, Kimonos

The second Mini-Matsuri was held in co-operation with Gilmorehill G12. It was a great success, with a full house for the screening of the film.

Kimono workshops and a traditional tea ceremony were also performed by JMG volunteers.

International Night

Hillhead Primary School has one of the most culturally diverse school rolls in Glasgow. Their first International Night, in May, allowed the children to celebrate their various national identities through traditional clothes, food and fun activities.

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much that he decided to return there for his gap year.

We are looking forward to hearing about it on Hazel's return in 2007.

Gary finished school in June 2006 and was in Kunohe by Mid-September, looking forward to starting work at the Kunohe Ski Resort. He plans to return to Scotland in April 2007, just as the snow will be starting to melt. Good Luck Gary!

Kunohe Kids Attend Japanese Class with JMG Members

A group of Japanese schoolchildren and village officials attended a Japanese language class – in Glasgow! Dollar Academy were the hosts for the exchange, and the visitors joined JMG members for Japanese Class and lunch. Some also participated in JMG's Matsuri 2006.

Musical Exchange

John Guerrier, a music teacher for Glasgow City Council who leads JMG's popular Taiko workshops, took the trip of a lifetime in August. He traveled to Japan, including Kunohe Village, to find out more about Taiko, and its place in Japanese Culture.

John was kind enough to attend our AGM in September to tell us about his trip, illustrating the talk with some amazing photographs.

Grants from Glasgow City Council, and the Sasakawa Foundation assisted John's visit.

Second Year in Kunohe

Making friends, learning the language and enjoying yourself are all important factors when living at the other side of the world. Hazel is achieving all three from the accounts we receive of her two-year stay in Kunohe.

A volunteer for JMG, she has now entered the second year of her job as an assistant English language teacher in the village.

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

JMG Committee meeting

MONDAY, 5TH FEBRUARY, 2007

OFFICES OF THE BOTANIC GARDENS

19:30

Meet at the main gate.

TAIKO DRUMMING WORKSHOPS

SATURDAYS, 3RD, 10TH, 17TH, 24TH FEBRUARY, 2007

£5 FOR 18 + PER SESSION, £2 FOR UNDER 18 PER SESSION

WELLINGTON CHURCH, HILLHEAD

14.00 – 16.00

WORKSHOPS WILL BE LED BY JOHN GUERRIER. PARTICIPANTS WILL HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY TO PLAY AT THE SIXTH HINA MATSURI.

HINA MATSURI

SATURDAY, 3RD MARCH 2007

KIBBLE PALACE, BOTANIC GARDENS

13:00 – 16:00

Free admission. Calligraphy, drumming, manga art, origami, kimono dressing-up, information, cultural exchange.

With support from Glasgow City Council and Embassy of Japan in the UK.

MATSURI

SATURDAY, 9TH JUNE 2007

WELLINGTON CHURCH

14:00 – 17:00

Free admission. Calligraphy, drumming, manga art, origami, kimono dressing-up, information, cultural exchange.

JMG provided a Taiko workshop and an origami workshop, and have been asked to participate in Hillhead Primary School's next International Night.

School Visits Going Strong

JMG volunteers have made three more school visits in 2006:

- Woodside Primary, South Lanarkshire. Taiko, origami, question and answer session.
- Loch Primary School, South Lanarkshire. Kimoni wearing, origami and calligraphy.
- One day Taiko workshop with JMG and John Guerrier – Woodfarm High School, East Renfrewshire

Festival of Faith

In November five JMG Taiko drummers performed for the entertainment of festival go-ers in Sighthill.

Church Visit

Local residents and asylum seekers from Sighthill were treated to calligraphy and origami workshops provided by JMG on the 11th of October.

JMG IN THE NEWS

Accounts of JMG from Japanese Embassy Newsletter

● IN GRASSROOTS

Japan comes to Peterborough and Sheffield

Peterborough turned Japanese on June 27 and 28, with a two-day event organised by the Japan Society of Peterborough to coincide with the annual Peterborough Festival.

On the Friday, Kirkstone House School transformed its classrooms into Japanese workshops to enable the students to try their hand at a number of arts and crafts including *ikebana*, tea ceremony, martial arts and calligraphy. The 200 or so students were also able to try on yukata and play some traditional games.

The following day it was the turn of the general public to test their skills at a wide range of cultural workshops held in the grounds of the Key Theatre, Peterborough. The riverside lawn and weather lent themselves perfectly to outdoor demonstrations of aikido and karate, while stalls offering a variety of experiences, including bonsai, food samples, ink painting, calligraphy, shiatsu massage and origami were housed in a marquee. In the theatre itself, visitors were able to enjoy a tea ceremony while their children



The Ambassador with Deputy Mayor Charles Swift and their wives

dressed up in kimono.

An evening of traditional Japanese music followed, attended by the Mayor of the City of Peterborough, Councillor David Raines, and his guest of honour Ambassador Orita, both of whom had entertained some of the audience earlier in the day with their attempts at *taiko* drumming. The concert began with performances by the City of Peterborough Symphony and pianist Madoka Maxwell followed by the melodious sound of the *ocarina* played by Shozo

Tsukada. It also marked the UK debut of award-winning Shinichi Kinoshita, master of the *tsugaru-shamisen*. Kinoshita also performed at SOAS, University of London, the Embassy of Japan and St James's Church, Piccadilly, as part of his UK tour. Joji Hirota and his company closed the evening with an energetic and inspiring performance of *taiko*.

On June 2, the Fusion Bar of the University of Sheffield welcomed 300 or so people for a Japan Day, organised by exchange students from Hosei University and the Japan Society of the University of Sheffield, with support from Japan 21 and the Japanese Embassy. The successful event attracted a wide range of people and age groups and included original features such as Japanese sign language, hanging wishes on a bamboo tree (*tanabata*) and traditional toys.

Evening performances of a play, "Momotaro", a participatory Bon dance and live modern Japanese music concluded what is hoped will become an annual event in the Sheffield calendar.

Glasgow Matsuri 2003

Over 2,000 people made their way to the Glasgow Botanic Gardens on June 22 to attend this year's Glasgow Matsuri.

Now an annual event, the Glasgow Matsuri originated as a Japan 2001 project in conjunction with Glasgow's West End Festival, and was so successful that another event, the Hina Matsuri, was organised in March 2002 at the close of Japan 2001. Shortly afterwards, a voluntary organisation, Japanese Matsuri for Glasgow (JMG) was established in order to hold an annual festival to promote Japanese culture and heritage, and to enhance wide community involvement



Festive focus: Glasgow Botanic Gardens provided the perfect setting for the festival

and the awareness of different cultures.

The festivals aim to feature a variety of performances and workshops, and emphasise participation from local state schools as well as team work from British and Japanese volunteers.

One participant described his experience at this year's festival as "a very pleasant experience, and a genuine example of Japan for Glasgow people". This year, JMG co-hosted the festival with the Consulate General of Edinburgh and worked with a team of 40 British and Japanese volunteers, 15 of whom were British children.

JMG received grants from the Scottish Arts Council and Glasgow City Council, and a popular local venue, Glasgow Botanic Gardens allowed JMG to use its magnificent glasshouse, Kibble Palace, free of charge.

Its success inspired Glasgow City Council to invite JMG to participate in the Festival of the Rose to be held at Tollcross Park, Glasgow, on July 19 and 20.

AMBASSADOR'S CRICKET X1 NARROWLY WINS JAPAN SOCIETY MATCH



Mrs Miyaji presents Ambassador Orita with the Cup

One hundred and fifty members of The Japan Society enjoyed an afternoon of brilliant sunshine in Battersea Park on June 15. Students from Teikyo College danced a Bon Odori and provided a delicious barbecue lunch while a clown entertained the young. The sporting highlight of the afternoon was the Annual Cricket Match, which the Ambassador's XI won by a whisker. Mr M Miyaji, President of Mitsubishi, caught an outstanding catch to dismiss a key batsman of the Chairman's XI, and his wife presented the Isherwood Cup to Ambassador Orita.

JAPAN 2001 Inspires Ongoing Exchange – Spotlight on Wales

Although Japan 2001 formally came to an end at the end of March 2002, many of the projects initiated during the festival have led to relationships which look set to continue for years to come. In this issue, we highlight just a few of the initiatives originating in Wales.

DIVERSIONS

Diversions, The Dance Company of Wales, mounted an ambitious project involving collaboration between contemporary dance artists and venues in Wales and Japan as part of Japan 2001. Following an initial research visit to Cardiff, Japanese choreographer Shigehiro Ide created a new 40-minute production for Diversions called *Unspoken Agreement*, which was received enthusiastically by audiences in Wales. Ide's own Tokyo-based company Idevian Crew then toured to seven venues throughout Wales in May 2002 and Diversions has been invited to perform in Japan as part of the Tokyo International Festival in November. Associate Director Ann Sholem feels that a long-lasting legacy is being created through the ongoing relationship between the two companies: "Dancers from different parts of the world, from different traditions and cultures are working alongside each other. Each culture has different standards and expectations, and the sharing of time and expertise is an experience from which everyone is gaining. The wider community has also benefited through workshops and performances."

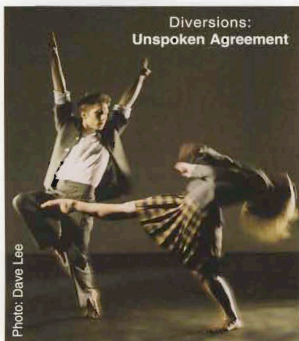


Photo: Dave Lee

Diversions:
Unspoken Agreement

WELSH NATIONAL OPERA

Two of Japan's leading arts producers took part in a residency at the Welsh National Opera (WNO) last February as part of Japan 2001. During their two-week stay, Takeaki Iwashina, lighting director at the Saitama Arts Theatre, and Sadao Kisanuki, technical director at Niigata City Performing Arts Centre, were able to observe colleagues in the technical and administrative departments as well as to

watch preparations for the first production in the WNO's spring season, *Madame Butterfly*. Julie Edwards, who helped to co-ordinate the residency, said that the WNO was delighted to offer its Japanese colleagues the opportunity to learn from the Welsh experience, adding: "Although opera is becoming more popular in Japan, the fact that it is a Western art form means that there is little tradition of staging operas." WNO's links with Japan date from 1989, when the Company toured to Tokyo Bunkamura. The Japan 2001 residency was the third visit by Japanese colleagues, and similar exchanges are set to continue in the future.

UNKNOWN THEATRE COMPANY

The Unknown Theatre Company is an amateur dramatic company for young people aged between 8 and 20. Inspired by an initial meeting for Japan 2001, the company was put in touch with a youth musical group based in Lilia Hall in Kawaguchi, and the link led to a two-week visit to Cardiff by 15 young people from Japan in August 2001. Staying with local families, the youngsters worked with the Unknown Theatre Company on a production of *Cinderella*, which they performed in August 2001 to an audience which included the Mayor of Kawaguchi. This month, the Unknown Theatre Company is scheduled to make a return visit to Japan to appear in *World Festival Fusion*. Jane Donoghue, who formed the company in 1996, says: "We all feel that this project is of huge importance in developing cultural and social links with Japan. Children make such fantastic ambassadors for their respective countries, and friendships have been formed that hopefully will develop over many years to come."



Unknown Theatre Company: *Cinderella*

Matsuri returns to Glasgow by popular demand

A Japanese Matsuri was held in the Glasgow Botanic Gardens on June 23 as part of Glasgow's seventh West End Festival. The event, which attracted as many as 3,000 visitors, was a sequel to the Glasgow Matsuri held last June to celebrate Japan 2001.

One of the highlights of this year's Matsuri was a taiko performance by pupils from Clevedon Secondary School. Last year the school had only one taiko band, *Psycho Taiko*, but this year it had three, including *Yakamashi Taiko* and *Toati Taiko*.



Taiko drumming at the Glasgow Matsuri

('toati' means small in Scottish English). The origami and calligraphy workshops were in great demand, as was the ever-popular kimono-wearing corner, where visitors received free photos of themselves to take home as souvenirs. Information on Japan and Japanese posters, provided by the Consulate General of Japan in Edinburgh, and Japanese sweets were also given away to visitors. In addition there was a sale of hand-made Japanese crafts as well as a raffle to raise funds to hold both a Matsuri in June and a Hina Matsuri in March in Glasgow on an annual basis.

Mr Yushin Toda, who organised both this year's and last year's festivals, has been delighted by the response to the events. He commented, "*Matsuri*

was once referred to by Kunio Yanagida, the father of Japanese ethnology, as a festival in which all social division dissolves in the ecstasy of communal celebration. This is the feeling we have tried to create by involving as many people as possible regardless of their backgrounds and nationalities. This year there were 26 volunteers between the ages of four and 60-something, only six of who were Japanese nationals. Origami was taught by Scottish girls, who were introduced to it by Japanese people several years ago and are now very good at it, and there were also around 30 Scottish pupils playing taiko. Such strong local participation in a Japanese traditional festival created a unique cross-cultural atmosphere."