The Doll Festival, Hina Matsuri, has more than 1000 years of history of giving the message for young girls’ happiness. Hina means a chick, a newly-born bird, a tiny thing or a cute creature. Matsuri means a festival. Hina Matsuri or the doll festival originated as a family tradition, and Hina dolls were displayed in homes, and were handed down from mothers to daughters for generations. Hina dolls have been the reminders for the family.

These days, Hina doll sets are displayed at schools, hotels, department stores and everywhere in Japan during March. After being displayed for one month, the Hina dolls are put back into boxes and stored.

The symbol of Hina Matsuri is peach flowers. In Japanese culture, the seasonal flavor is important. Long ago, it was believed that peach trees and flowers had magical power to expel evil spirits. Also, after a long cold winter, peach flowers are forerunners of a cheerful spring.

Additionally, in Japan, March is the time of change: graduations are held in March, and a new school year begins in April. Spring time is the season of growth and new beginnings. Hina dolls evoke these feelings for Japanese.

There is an old doll called “Miss Tokushima” at the Northwest Museum of Arts & Culture in Spokane. She was born in Tokyo in the early 20th century, and now she is 85 years old. She is not only a display doll, but also she can bend her arms and legs. She also has a small voice box in her body just like American mama dolls. She is one of the dolls sent from Japan as a doll ambassador through “The Friendship Doll Program” in 1927. This program was originated by Dr. Gulick who believed the friendly face of a doll would sow seeds of peace in the minds of children. Through this program, Americans sent over 12,000 dolls to Japan and in return Japanese sent 58 dolls which were just like Miss Tokushima. Miss Tokushima is one of the 45 known dolls from 1927.

Inspired by the noble spirit of the original Friendship Doll Program, Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute started a new Friendship Doll Program in 1993. So far more than 600 Japanese dolls have been received by educational institutions all over this country, and in return over 100 educational institutions have sent dolls, letters, school albums and so on to Japanese schools.

I hope all of you will listen to the silent messages of the Friendship Dolls. Dr. Gulick first showed this fantastic path. And now, it is up to us to broaden this path for peace and friendship in the world.
Girl Scouts Hina Matsuri

Over 40 Girl Scouts and their families came to the Japanese Cultural Center for their very own Hina Matsuri. The Girl Scouts brought their own dolls to have on display and some were able to show and tell about their dolls to the group.

Mukogawa students formed groups with the Girl Scouts. Each group had the opportunity to dress up in yukata, make calligraphy, fold many origami, and even learn how to sing a song in Japanese.

It is always fun to have established collaborations with the community and we look forward to working once again with Marilyn Stedman and the Girl Scouts! Thank you all for a wonderful time!

MFWI Hina Matsuri

MFWI’s Friendship Doll Program is in its twentieth year and together with the annual tradition of Hina Matsuri were celebrated together on March 2, 2012 at the MFWI Commons.

We’d like to thank Senior Consul Tomoko Dodo, Consul General of Japan, for her greetings and for the “The Story of Sendai International Airport,” presentation, City Council Representative Mike Fagan and the Spokane City Mayor Dave Condon for his gracious appearance. Other honored guests were: Rol Herriges, President of Spokane-Nishinomiya Sister City Society; Terren Roloff, Spokane Public Schools; Palisades Christian Academy band; Madison Elementary Choir, Shadle Park High School, and the Tessera Program with Spokane Public Schools; Summit School from Central Valley School District; and of course Miss Tokushima (see picture on left) with her representatives from the NW MAC.

Another of our notable guests were Dr. Denny and Dr. Frances Gulick who were able to join us from Maryland to share their Doll Exchange program and their mission. You may see Dr. Gulick’s speech on page three.

Pamela Fremd, MFWI, graciously agreed to be the Master of Ceremonies and performed wonderfully throughout the event. Barbara Bent’s conversation class were delightful with their skit performance of the “Doll Ambassador’s.” Executive Vice President, Kinya Masugata, helped with the presentation of the dolls to schools with Hitomi Takaai and Aki Uyama. We heard lovely speeches about Hina experiences from MFWI students Hitomi Takaai and Aki Uyama. Our students were led in song by Yoshiko Sakai, Kana Matsuura, Yui Miyaki, and Yuuri Saito. Flowers were arranged by MFWI students Yuki Tatsumi, Mako Ikeda, and Yukako Nakagawa.

A big thank you to all our wonderful volunteers from the community helping us prepare for our event! They are Marcia Dukes, Misako Egner, Peggy Heyamoto, Katsumi Hoki, Noriko Masugata, Marilyn Stedman, and Hide Tsutakawa.
Doll Exchange Programs and Their Mission
by Denny Gulick

Mina-san, konnichi wa. My wife and I thank you from the bottom of our hearts for inviting us to celebrate O Hina Matsuri with you, and to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the wonderful doll exchange that Michiko Takaoka-san started when she was Director of the JCC. It is also a great pleasure to be at Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute, which we first visited 18 years ago, and to see the beautiful Miss Tokushima once again.

I have been asked to say a few words about the doll exchange programs and their missions. My grandfather, Sidney L. Gulick, was a missionary and teacher living in Japan from 1888 until 1913. In 1913 he returned to the United States because of ill health. After returning to the United States, he found many misunderstandings between Americans and Japanese, and immigration laws that were unfriendly to the Japanese. For many years he tried to improve the understanding and change the laws. After awhile Sidney Gulick came to the idea that, “We who desire peace must write it in the hearts of children.” That is a really big idea: “We who desire peace must write it in the hearts of children.” He felt that children must learn and believe in the meaning of goodwill between nations. Then, when they became adults and leaders of nations, the nations would be less likely to go to war against one another.

That led to the creation of the doll exchange of 1926-27. It was sponsored by the American Council of Churches and supported by Eiichi Shibusawa-san, who was President of the America-Japan Society in Japan. Three of the announced objectives of the doll mission were:

1. To conserve the natural friendliness of children by providing opportunities for its expression.
2. To implant in the minds of children the ideals of goodwill, understanding, and peace among nations.
3. To give to children knowledge and appreciation of the people of that country, stressing similarities rather than differences.

Nearly 13,000 Friendship Dolls were prepared in the United States and sent with passports to Japan. After welcoming celebrations in Japan, the dolls were placed in schools all around Japan. In return, the best artisans in Japan prepared 58 dolls with gorgeous kimonos and lovely accessories. The new Ambassador Dolls from Japan arrived in the United States before the end of 1927. After welcoming celebrations, they were distributed mainly to children’s museums in nearly every state. Miss Tokushima is one of these special Ambassador Dolls. She is Washington State’s Ambassador Doll, and lives at the MAC in Spokane. Isn’t she beautiful!

Until World War II, the Friendship Dolls in Japan and Ambassador Dolls in the United States lived happily in their respective countries, and they spread the message of goodwill and understanding between the people of the two countries. During the war most of the Friendship Dolls in Japan were lost, and people forgot about them. But in Japan some of the dolls were hidden by very courageous Japanese. In 1974 NHK broadcast the history of one Friendship Doll, Mary, from Azuma Shogakko in Gunma-ken. During the war a teacher had hidden Mary behind a photograph of the Emperor in a sacred closet near the ceiling of a special room in the school. Mary escaped the view of the military police when they visited the school. She was rediscovered in 1967, after Azuma Shogakko suffered bad damage from a typhoon. That NHK broadcast resulted in Japanese searching for other missing Friendship Dolls. Today over 330 of the original Friendship Dolls have been found, and are once again spreading goodwill and understanding.

In the United States nearly all of the Ambassador Dolls were taken out of view during the war. Today we know the locations of approximately 45 of the original Ambassador Dolls. Michiko Takaoka-san traveled in the United States to visit all of the known Ambassador Dolls. After her visits to these special dolls, she wrote a book entitled “Ambassador Dolls: An Alternative History of U.S.-Japan Relations.”

During the past 25 years there have been new doll exchanges, with the same goal of spreading good will and international understanding. The biggest doll exchange was started by Michiko Takaoka-san right here at MFWI. For this exchange program, Japanese students and friends have prepared more than 500 new ambassador dolls for American schools. Another mission was founded by Shoko Tsujimurasan, of Urayasu, near Tokyo, in which more than 40 dolls have been exchanged. Also, during the past 25 years my wife, Frances, and I have sent many friendship dolls to schools in Japan; Frances prepares sets of clothes for the dolls and I prepare the passports.

I believe that what my grandfather Sidney Gulick said 100 years ago is true today: “The achievement of world peace depends on many factors: economic, political, educational, moral, spiritual. To ensure [peace] for the next generation means a steady building of understanding and goodwill among the children of today.” He would have been very pleased to know that his idea of teaching friendship and peace to children is still alive. Domo arigato gozaimasu!
Mukogawa Family Festival

Wednesday, April 25, 2012
3-5pm

Commons building at Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute
4320 W Owens Ridge Rd, Spokane WA 99224

Lively, fun environment with Japanese activities by MFWI students! Activities include:

- Sado—Tea Ceremony
- Soroban—abacus
- Ikebana—flower arrangement
- Origami—paper folding
- Shodo—Japanese calligraphy
- Kingyo Sukui—goldfish scooping
- Water yo-yo balloons
- Nurie—drawings
- and Japanese foods like onigiri and yakitori

Admission is free – all are welcome!
(Kingyo sukui, yo-yo’s, onigiri, and yakitori have $1.00 charges while supplies last!)

Any questions, please contact Candie at CandieC@mfwi.edu or 328-2971 ext 223.

The Japanese Cultural Center at Mukogawa Fort Wright Institute serves as a program source, museum, and resource center with the express purpose of reaching regional and international audiences, young and old, with information on Japanese culture and to promote global friendship and peace.

JCC Notes

In February, we received 733 guests at our facility and reached another ten people in activities outside of MFWI. Thank you for visiting!

Upcoming Events:

- Japan Week Opening Ceremony
  4/21 12pm-1pm
  All activities listed at: japanweekspokane.com

- MFWI Student Cooking Classes 6-7:30pm
  3/31
  4/7
  4/28
  5/12
  For more info, contact CandieC@mfwi.edu

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