

## Appenzellerland

### A Symbol for World Peace is rung at the Dunant Museum

On Saturday afternoon the Nagasaki Peace Bell was ceremonially unveiled at the Henry Dunant Museum in Heiden. Its sound is a call for a commitment to a more peaceful world.

Roger Fuchs, Heiden.

The Peace Bell is a gift to the Henry Dunant Museum in Heiden. It is full of symbolism and reminds of a sad chapter of history: as the Americans dropped an atom bomb on Nagasaki (Japan) in August 1945, a bell from the cathedral, the so-called „Angelus Bell“, was almost undamaged. As a result this bell became a symbol of peace, the Peace Bell, for this severely tried city.

In order to carry the message of peace throughout the world Japan has already presented a number of smaller copies of the „Angelus Bell“. The Henry Dunant Museum was presented with the first exact copy in October 2009. A delegation of four travelled to Japan where they received the 110 kilogramme Peace Bell from members of the Medical Faculty of the University of Nagasaki.

### A Worthy Location

As at the ceremony on Saturday, Mr Hermann Bergundthal, President of the Henry Dunant Museum, said in front of numerous visitors that the acceptance of the bell in Japan was linked with the obligation to give it a worthy location. This has a place between the Dunant Museum and the Heiden Hospital. This is also where the visitors to the first ceremony gathered. The high point of the ceremony, the unveiling of the bell, was framed by the St Gallen Brass Band Ensemble and a Heiden school children's choir. Wearing white gloves, Mrs Marlis Hörler Böhi of the Dunant Museum and Mrs Jessica Kehl-Lauff of the Red Cross for both Appenzells, removed the cloth covering the bell. Then Dr Othmar Kehl, Medical Director of the Heiden Hospital, and Mr John Böhi, board member of the Dunant Museum, rang the bell by pulling on the rope together, the latter paved the way for the bell from Japan to Heiden. Shortly after the ringing of the bell the song "Nagasaki no kane" was sung by a Japanese soprano.

### Artistic Bell Support

The bell support for the Peace Bell was created by St Gallen artist Lucie Schenker. She chose two thin sheets of metal on which the bell is mounted and wave forms reaching out into the landscape. Lucie Schenker said the waves symbolize the fragility of peace. As Mr John Böhi said that from now on the bell will always be rung on the 9th August as a reminder of the dropping of the atom bomb on Nagasaki. The bell also obligates us to do increasingly more to stop atomic weapons.

At the close of the ceremony at the Museum the visitors went on to the second part of the ceremony in the Heiden Kursaal, where among others, Mr Matthias Weishaupt a member of the Ausserrhoden cantonal great council, commented on the story of the Peace Bell in detail. Moreover, there was message of greeting from the Japanese Ambassador to Switzerland, His Excellency, Yasushi Fukagawa.

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