

1st press release

A Bell for Heiden from Japan

Delegations from the Henry Dunant Museum in Heiden, the Heiden Hospital and the Swiss Red Cross of both Appenzell have symbolically accepted the Peace Bell in Nagasaki on October 13, 2009. The public interest was huge.

The beautiful copy of the Peace Bell, the “Angelus Bell” of the oldest Christian church in Japan, which has survived the horrible nuclear attack on Nagasaki on August 9, 1945 with minor damage, weighs more than 110 kg, the suspension not included.

During a festive ceremony that lasted several hours and which was televised on National- and Local TV stations and covered by the Japanese press great interest at the lecture hall of the Faculty for Medicines of the University of Nagasaki, the Peace Bell was solemnly unveiled by two Delegation members of the Henry Dunant Museum, together with Dignitaries of the Japanese Red Cross and the University of Nagasaki. The two other Swiss members received the engraved plaques, one with the names of 80 donators and the other one indicating the pledge to further engage against the nuclear dangers and to engage for peace for all over the world. A children’s choir sang the more than 50 years old hymn ‘The Bell of Nagasaki’. The various addresses in Japanese as well as the thanking addresses in four languages by the Swiss Delegation were translated and well accepted by the public.

Professor Dr. med Yamashita, Director of the Institute for Biomedicine Science and Nuclear Damages and Head of the Organization, which is responsible for the awarding of the Peace Bell, guided the delegation beforehand through the excellently arranged museum for the over 70’000 casualties who directly died on the catastrophic day of attack and for the more than 30’000 casualties that left their lives in the aftermath for reasons of related illnesses. This walk through made it more than clear to reach the obvious conclusion that a war – and especially a nuclear war – will never result in winners, but only in victims on both sides. The following meetings with the Mayor of Nagasaki, the Director of the University of Nagasaki and the Dean of the Faculty of Medicines were less burdening for us Swiss thus somewhat unusual. After the ceremonial days in Nagasaki, the Delegation crossed Japan to see Fuji-San (3776 m over sea level). Three members climbed on top of the mountain in memoriam of Katharina Sturzenegger’s winter climbing some 105 years ago.

The Peace Bell will now be shipped to Heiden with the help of a private sponsor. It should arrive at Heiden at the end of 2009. Its first place of exhibition will be in the entrance hall of the Heiden Hospital. Later, the Bell will be displayed at the Henry Dunant House. A festive ceremony will be held at a later date.

2nd press release

A bell for Heiden from Japan

The Henry Dunant museum in Heiden is presented with the famous and well known Nagasaki Peace Bell thanks to longstanding contacts with the Japanese Red Cross and the City of Nagasaki.

The presented Peace Bell is a copy of the “Angelus Bell” of the oldest Christian church in Japan. The Peace Bell fell to the ground from the 50m tower during the nuclear bombings of Nagasaki on August 9, 1945. It was later discovered with very minor damages. Duplicates of the Bell are being casted since 1988 and they are donated to cities all over the world which themselves have suffered under heavy wars or natural disasters. Such cities have been thus far: The Peace Park of Hiroshima, Tschernobyl, Leningrad and Honolulu.

As a big exception, Heiden and its Henry Dunant Museum are the first places that have not directly suffered from wars or nature disaster. The Peace Bell has been awarded in honor of Henry Dunant, the founder of the Red Cross who lived part of his life in Heiden. The necessary funds were raised by members of the Faculty of Medicines at the Nagasaki University and Citizens of the city of Nagasaki.

The bell weighing more than 100 kgs has been exhibited in the entrance hall of the Faculty of Medicines since this year. There, a delegation from the Henry Dunant Museum, the Red Cross of both Appenzell (AR/AI) as well as from the Heiden Hospital will accept the Peace Bell during an official ceremony on October 13, 2009.

The members of the delegation – who will carry their own travel expenses – are:
John Boehi, Board Member of the Henry Dunant Museum
Marlies Hoerler, Auditor of the Henry Dunant Museum
Jessica Kehl, President of the Red Cross of both Appenzell (AR/AI)
Dr. med. Othmar Kehl, Head of the Heiden Hospital

The Peace Bell will arrive at Heiden towards the end of March 2010, and it will be exhibited for the beginning at the entrance hall of the Heiden Hospital. At a later date, it will find its definite place at the Henry Dunant Home. A festive ceremony is anticipated.



The Swiss Delegation at the Acceptance of the Peace Bell in Nagasaki/Japan
Mrs. Jessica Kehl-Lauff, President of the Swiss Red Cross of both Appenzell (AR/AI)
Dr. Othmar Kehl, Head of the Heiden Hospital
Mrs. Marlis Hoerler-Boehi, Auditor of the Henry Dunant Museum
Mr. John Boehi, Board Member of the Henry Dunant Museum.