

Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum
Special Exhibition

Memories of Friends

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(Left) Donated by Michiko Umekita
(Right) Donated by Noriko Ueda

Diaries of Tomiko Umekita (12) and Mutsuko Ishizaki (13)

Exposed to the bombing 800m from the hypocenter, near Dobashi

1. Days with Friends

Mutsuko Ishizaki and Tomiko Umekita, first-year students at First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School, were in the same class.

On the second day at school, a new diary was handed out to each student. Inside the diary can be found the rules which read, "Today' is a valuable day which we can never live twice. Thus, we must live each day for improving ourselves [...]"

Girls entered the school full of hope; however, classes were suspended every time an air-raid warning was issued. Day after day, they were occupied with labor services with empty stomachs. Still, the school days spent with friends were indispensable and invaluable times for them.

Introduction

The junior high school students who survived the atomic bombing of Hiroshima suffer lingering guilt over their deceased friends. When walking on the street, holding hands with their loved ones, seeing the growth of their children or grandchildren, and noticing their parents getting old, they suddenly recall that day.

This exhibition displays belongings left behind by the deceased schoolchildren as well as drawings and testimonies to introduce the situation which decided their fates: dead or alive, the hardships and burdens of the surviving students, and the records that the survivors left as prayers for the repose of their deceased friends.

We hope that you will learn the feelings of the survivors for their deceased friends through the memorial records of the deceased left by the survivors.

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June 17

Today was the day of the class event that we had been waiting for. After the class, we ate lunch happily together. The first performance was a Japanese poem. After that, the teacher went out of the classroom, and everyone was talking loudly. Teacher Miyamoto came into our room and scolded us. While we were quietly waiting for our teacher, an air-raid warning was issued, so we went home immediately. (M)

June 18

We cultivated the drill ground. Starting today, I wore summer clothes. It was very funny to see everyone wearing clothes in different colors. (M)

The soil was so hard that the work was tough for us. I soon became hungry, and I couldn't wait for lunch. Shortly after we started work, Iwasa-san and others joked, "It's time for lunch soon. Today's main dish is potatoes." (T)

June 28

Today, Teraoka-san left school. The number of students in my class has decreased a lot. (T)

July 6

We took our belongings for evacuation to Yagi Training Hall. We walked all the way for 12 kilometers, carrying three books in turn. We were exhausted greatly. (M)

Hearing that we would get to the hall in 30 minutes, we bestirred ourselves and made another step forward walking, but it started to rain heavily. I shared my umbrella with my friends, so I was drenched by the rain. (T)

July 12

When we were imitating the sound of air-raid warnings, an actual air-raid warning was issued. We rushed home immediately. (M)

July 20

The fifth period was gymnastics (test for national exercises). After the class, I practiced flag signals with Tomiko. (M)

July 24

Today, from about 6:30 a.m., air-raid warnings were issued so many times that I don't remember how many. So I hid myself at home all day long. There is nothing more boring than not going to school. (M)

July 25

As the air-raid warning was lifted a little before 9 a.m., I went to school. On my way to school, I joined Mutsuko's group. When I saw my friends at school, I felt that I hadn't seen them in a long time. There were many who were unable to come to school. (T)

August 4

The day after tomorrow is Monday. Until the 14th, I will go to the cleanup work for the building demolition. I have got to keep up this spirit. (T)

August 5

In the afternoon, I went swimming with Konishi-san. I cannot swim at all, but everyone floated so well that I felt ashamed of myself. It was a very good day today. I will keep doing one good deed a day. (M)

April 6

I attended the entrance ceremony of the girls school; it was a once-in-a-lifetime experience for me. Now I am a student at First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School. I want to befriend other girls as soon as possible. (Mutsuko, hereinafter M)

April 9

On the blackboard was written that classes for the first-year students would start tomorrow. After school, I asked around if anyone had any textbooks. I asked three or four people, but none of them had any. Finally, I found a second-year student at Hiroshima Municipal Girls High School who let me use her textbooks. (Tomiko, hereinafter T)

April 10

Today, classes finally started. I really enjoy going to school. (M)

It was strange that teachers came into the classroom one after another in turn. I've made many friends. (T)

April 13

During the drill, everyone turned around, so I also turned around and saw a B-29 beyond the roof calmly circling over Hiroshima City with a contrail stretching across the sky. (M)

May 14

When I was on my way to school, an air-raid warning was issued. I went back home, and then I went to school again.

Since it took me about 20 minutes to get to the gathering place (the Meiji Bridge) for going to school, I felt nervous wondering if I made everyone wait for me. I want to be able to walk quickly like an adult! (T)

May 17

Today, we started a four-day work for cleaning up the place in front of the court after building demolition. Everyone brought shovels and hoes from home by dragging them on the ground because they were too heavy to carry. At home, when I stood up after a meal, my legs hurt so much. (T)

I worked in the school building because I couldn't see well due to a sty on my eyelid. I was very lonely because I was totally alone. When I returned home, I felt a little tired, but I thought that the other students must be even more tired than I was, then I was not tired anymore. I shouldn't give up over such a trifling matter. (M)

June 9

My teacher said that we would have a class recreation event next Sunday. My friends and I decided to perform in a fife and drum band. I want to see other students' performances. I love playing with everyone at school, so I'm looking forward to going there. (T)

June 10

I practiced in the fife and drum band to prepare for the class event. I was glad because we did very well. We said, "Good job, good job." with Mutsuko and others, while saying goodbye to each other at the Sumiyoshi Bridge. (T)

June 12

We are supposed to wear summer clothes from Monday; however, since it is prohibited to wear white clothes because of the air defense rules, we will keep wearing long-sleeved clothes. (T)



Drawn by Chieko Kiriake

Fourth-year student at Second Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School
Exposed to the bombing 1.9 km from the hypocenter, near Hijiyama

2. Life and Death

Chieko Kiriake, 15 years old at the time, said that she still remembers the sky of August 6. The sky in the west was blazing red, while the sky in the east was filled with stars. There were shooting stars all night long. While watching the stars, she thought about her teacher and friends who had passed away. What happened to the boys and girls on that day? What they were wearing and what they saw will paint the picture of the landscape right after the atomic bomb exploded.

The morning of August 6

“That’s the sound of a B29!”



Drawn by Miyoko Matsubara (then 12)

First-year student at Hiroshima Girls Commercial School
Exposed to the bombing 1.4 km from the hypocenter, Tsurumi-cho

My best friend Funaoka-san shouted, “That’s the sound of a B29!” Looking up at the sky, I could barely see a plane flying away toward the northwest.

Friends who passed away



Donated by Michiya Yamamoto and Akemi Nishijima

School uniform of Tatsuya Yamamoto (14)

Second-year student at Hiroshima Municipal Junior High School

Exposed to the bombing 1.4 km from the hypocenter, Nakahiro-machi

Mr. Takahashi and Tatsuya were exposed to the atomic bombing at the school field. After Tatsuya got separated from Mr. Takahashi, a passerby helped Tatsuya somehow make his way home. However, he died on September 16.

Drawn by Akihiro Takahashi (then 14)

Second-year student at Hiroshima Municipal Junior High School
Exposed to the atomic bombing 1.4 km from the Nakahiro-machi

I didn't know my classmate Tatsuya was following me. The skin on our faces and legs peeled off and our clothes were burned and in tatters. Tatsuya was crying, "Mom, mom." Meanwhile, I was surprisingly conscious at that time. I urged him, "Stop crying!" and "Come on," to encourage Tatsuya.

Junior High School hypocenter,

following me. and hanging down,

at that time. on," to encourage



Friends who died together



(Left) Donated by Junnosuke Taniguchi

(Right) Donated by Asao Nishimoto and Masae Nishimoto

School jacket of Isao Taniguchi (13) and Asahiko Nishimoto (12)

First-year student at Second Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School
Exposed to the bombing 600 m from the hypocenter, Nakajima-shin-machi

The two boys were exposed to the atomic bombing at their building demolition worksite. Isao's father and older brother found the two. Isao asked them, "Please bring Asahiko back with me!" Carrying Isao and Asahiko on their back, the father and brother took them home; however, both of them died on the following day.

Friends who went missing



Donated by Aiko Wakitani

Hat and bag of Toshiko Sekioka (13)

First-year student at First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School
Exposed to the bombing 800 m from the hypocenter, near Dobashi

Toshiko was exposed to the atomic bombing at the building demolition worksite. She was crouching with her head bleeding there. Her friend Miyoshi-san said to her, "Let's go together," but Toshiko replied, "I can't, but you go. Hurry!" Toshiko's whereabouts is still unknown. Making her way home, Miyoshi-san left a message for Toshiko's mother, but then, Miyoshi-san passed away.



Koji Wada (then 12)

First-year student at Second Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School
Exposed to the bombing 1.91 km from the hypocenter, Nishi-kan-on-machi 2-chome

3. Survived

The junior high school students who barely survived also suffered deep emotional and physical scars.

Some could not return to school and had to leave, and others developed atomic-bomb diseases. More than anything, the hardest thing for them was to see the parents of their deceased friends.

The sudden loss of friends who they had been studying and working with until that day left deep scars in the minds of the students who survived. They could never forget about their friends even after many decades have passed.

Friends who escaped together

Gaiters of Akiro
Third-year student at Technical School
Exposed to the bombing from the hypocenter,



Tatehata (then 14)
Matsumoto
1.65 km
Tsurumi Bridge

Donated by Akiko Tatehata

Mr. Tatehata was exposed during a roll-call at the worksite. His friends, Shoda-kun came to friends' faces blackened, "Your faces are burnt," "Your face is burnt, too." As fires were breaking they started walking

to the atomic bombing building demolition Taomori-kun and him. Seeing the Mr. Tatehata said, and then his friends said, They pointed at each other out here and there, to go home.

Friend whom I couldn't help



Drawn by Masako Yoshiyama (then 13)
First-year student at a girls high school
Exposed to the bombing 1.5 km from the hypocenter, Tsurumi-cho

"Masako, it hurts, it hurts." Morikawa-san's voice still lingers in my ears. At that time, all I could do was throw myself into the river to cool my burnt body.



Donated by Yoko Sumimoto

Friends who helped me

School uniform and monpe working pants of Yoko Sumimoto (then 12)
First-year student at Second Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School
Exposed to the bombing 2.3 km from the hypocenter, Onaga-machi

Ms. Sumimoto was exposed to the atomic bombing while mowing the grass on the East Drill Ground. She was seriously burned, so her friend packed this uniform and monpe working pants in the friend's backpack. Meanwhile, Ms. Sumimoto found it hard even to walk. Her friend brought her some water and she drank it. The friend took her to the relief station, and then, took her to the school.

Friend whom I helped

Drawn by Satoshi Tarumoto (then 13)
Second-year student at Koryo Junior High School
Exposed to the bombing 1.71 km from the hypocenter, Hijiyama

The person who is removing debris of the collapsed building is me seeking my classmate's body.



A handmade cenotaph



Drawn by Seigo Nishioka (then 13)
First-year student at Hiroshima Prefectural Hiroshima Technical School

Exposed to the bombing 2 km from the hypocenter, Senda-machi 3-chome

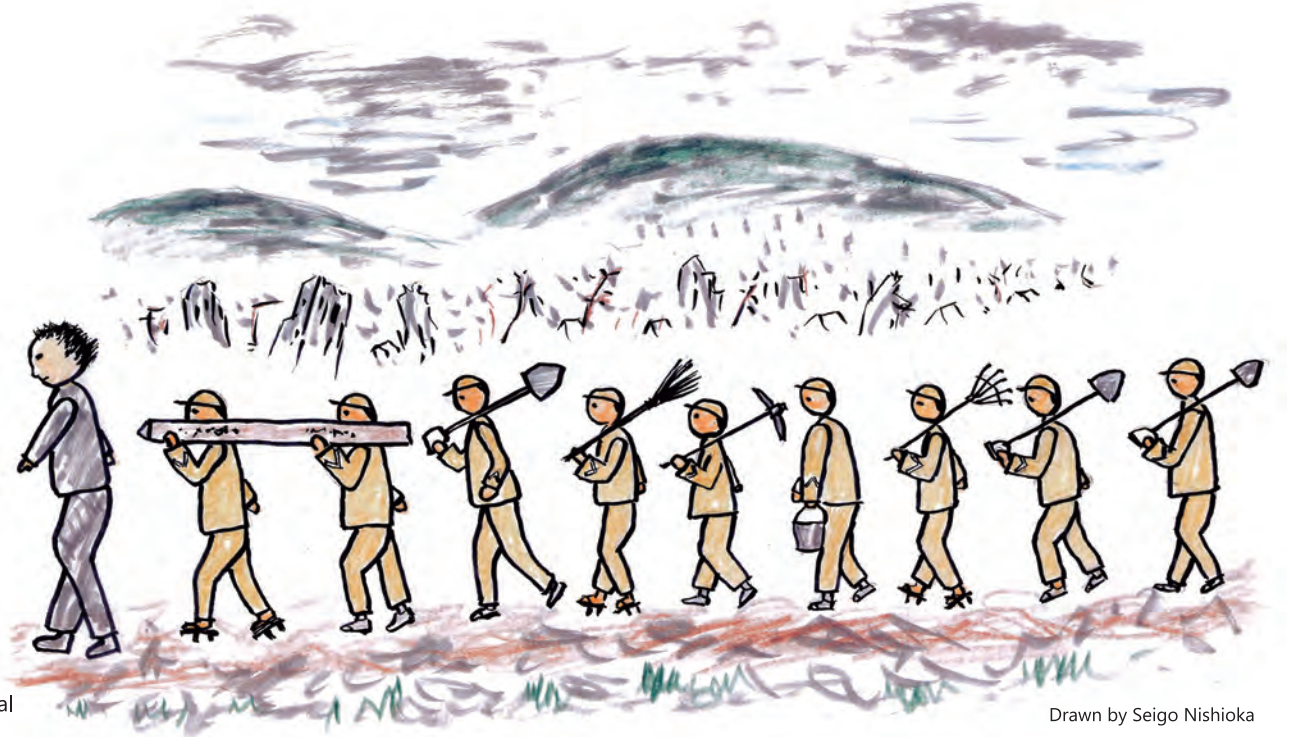
I was shocked at the teacher's words saying, "All the students who went to work for the building demolition have died." On a cold February morning of the following year, the teacher and about 10 students who had survived erected a memorial. We made the memorial by cutting a pillar of the collapsed school building. At the worksite, we collected our deceased classmates' belongings such as buttons and lunch boxes, and handed them to their bereaved families.

Hiroshima's first collection of memoirs



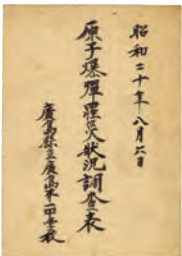
The First Collection of Izumi (Fountain): Dedication to the Souls of the Deceased

The first collection of memoirs of the atomic-bomb experience published in Hiroshima in 1946 was compiled to commemorate the deceased friends. 39 surviving students of First Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School and First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School contributed their memoirs in memory of the students in 35 classes of First Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School who became victims to the bombing.



Drawn by Seigo Nishioka

Wounds never heal



Report of the Atomic-bomb Damage Condition on August 6, 1945

This report compiled in 1947 is the results of a survey about the atomic-bomb damage to the staff members and students at First Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School. It records the location where each of the 27 students and six staff members was exposed to the atomic bombing, and the symptoms of the atomic-bomb disease they suffered. At First Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School, students voluntarily took action to manage the health condition of their classmates.

Donated by Hiroshima Kokutaiji High School

Postcard asking



Donated by Makiko Furuta

Michie Furuta's whereabouts

Dear Michie, how were you doing in Hiroshima then? I am really, really worried about you and want to know about your safety. Write to me soon. I am waiting for your reply.
Tetsuko Sakamoto sent on October 2, 1945

Michie was exposed to the atomic bombing at the place where she had been mobilized and died on August 10. Not knowing about Michie's death, her best friend Tetsuko inquired about her safety.

Friends' safety

Video testimony of Yuko Tamagawa (then 13)
First-year student at Second Hiroshima Prefectural Junior High School
Exposed to the bombing 1.9 km from the hypocenter, Matsubara-cho

Fumiharu's mother repeatedly asked me, "Where's my son?" Not knowing what to say, I couldn't stop thinking why I had come back alive.



Donated by Akiyo Kano

Fumiharu Kano's bag for military drill textbook

My deceased friends,
How hot that must have been for you,
How painful that must have been for you,
How hard that must have been for you.

Conclusion

The atomic bomb deprived the surviving students of their friends, but it could not put an end to their friendship. Even after many decades, whenever they recall their deceased friends, they go back to those days when they wore school uniforms. At the end of the exhibition, we would like to introduce the following words of Akira Ishida (then 13), a second-year student at Hiroshima Municipal Junior High School, who survived the atomic bombing.

– For my deceased friends –
We are still looking for you.

Prostrating ourselves before the cenotaph, we are still looking for you behind the incense and offered flowers; each of the stacked stones of the cenotaph seems to represent your spirit. For the sake of your father and mother who don't know where you are, we erected this cenotaph, wishing they could see you here. Please stay here. I am sure you can reunite. When your father and mother pass away, and when we pass away, we will surely see you again. Then let's talk about the old days. We have so many things to talk about: the sweet potatoes we cultivated in Kogo town; when we steamed potatoes in the big cauldron, our teacher said that we could eat them in the classroom, but we only ate skinny ones there, and we shared the rest with our family at home; we went to school carrying a wooden gun on our shoulders; we sat in a kneeling position in the self-discipline room; we stood barefoot on the snow in the morning assemblies; we carried dirt in a rope basket to repair the flood damage in Kabe Town; the white rice in the Hesaka water purification plant; and the teachers and our school classes.

(From *Chinkon* (Repose of Souls), compiled by the reunion members of Hiroshima Municipal Junior High School)

Days with guilt

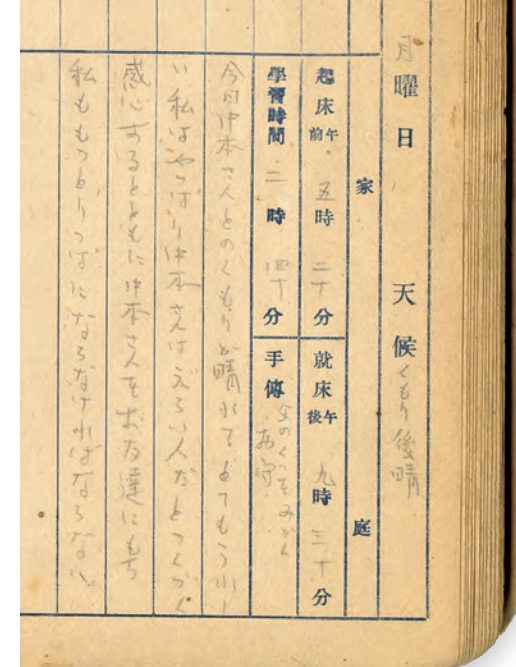
Diary of Ikue Ishido

April 23,
I am very happy because Nakamoto-san and I were reconciled. I think she is outstanding and I really respect her. As her friend, I should become a better person.

Video Testimony of Masako Kajiyama

(maiden name: Nakamoto, then 13)
First-year student at First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls High School
Exposed to the bombing 1.7 km from the hypocenter, Kanaya-cho

I thought that I would forget however, as the it became harder about Ikue with each passing year; years went by, I realized that for me to forget about her.



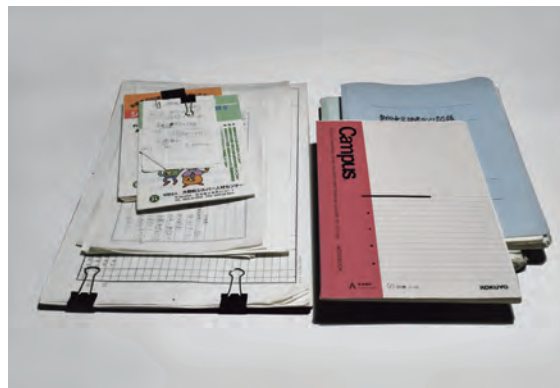
Diary of Ikue Ishido

Looking for friends

Tracking records of surviving students at Sotoku Junior High School

Nobuo Takemura (then 12)
First-year student at Sotoku Junior High School
Exposed to the bombing 800 m from the hypocenter, Hatchobori

Even if they knew what happened, it wouldn't change anything. Still, they wanted to know. That's why I decided to research how my classmates met their death on August 6.



Donated by Ranko Takemura