

Street Parish Council
6 Leigh Rd,
Street,
A16 0HA
United Kingdom

15 September, 2023

Dear Mayor, Bryan Knickerbocker,

I would like to express my deepest gratitude for your attendance at the Candle Float in Wells on August 6th, commemorating the A-bombing of Hiroshima and Nagasaki.

Seventy-eight years ago, a single A-bomb flattened the city of Hiroshima and as a direct result 140,000 people died by the end of 1945. The survivors have since suffered from the effects of A-bomb-related diseases, both physical and mental.

Over time, though, survivors have moved from resentment to reconciliation. Many have come to think, "No one else should suffer as we have, neither friend nor foe." With the encouragement of others, they began sharing the stories of their lived experiences, which naturally are disturbing and heartbreaking for them even just to remember.

We, the people of Hiroshima, have adopted the A-bomb survivors' will for a peaceful world, and continue their efforts towards the abolition of nuclear weapons.

This year students of Hiroshima's Kyoso Junior High School studied the history related to the bombing, listened to the testimony of survivors, and identified deeply with the agony of survivors and their sincere wishes for the future. Students visited Hiroshima Peace Park and interviewed visitors from home and abroad on the A-bombing of Hiroshima. They decorated Touro lanterns, expressing their wishes for peace and a world without nuclear weapons.

I believe these wishes are shared by the people of Mid-Somerset. The students of Kyoso Junior High School are grateful that local citizens gathered on August 6th and joined in floating their Touro lanterns and I personally deeply appreciate the efforts of the people in your municipality and the attendance of their Mayor. I believe these lanterns are a symbol of solidarity.

Hiroshima City promotes Mayors for Peace, which presently numbers over 8,200 member cities around the world. I would like to humbly invite you and your city to join. A comprehensive overview is available at the following site <https://www.mayorsforpeace.org/en/>

If the matter is to be raised in council please let me know, I would be very happy to arrange a message of support from the Mayor of Hiroshima.

In a time when many world leaders maintain their support for the theory of nuclear deterrence, when the threat of the use of these weapons is more and more real, solidarity is needed in order to realize their abolishment.

To end, I wish you remain safe and sound in this unusual weather.

Warmest regards,

Hideko Okamoto
Chair, Hiroshima Coventry Club