

INTRODUCTION OF GIFU SAKURA NO KAI (Gifu Cherry Blossoms Association)

Gifu Sakura no Kai (Gifu Cherry Blossoms Association) has its headquarters in Gifu Prefecture, which is centrally located in Japan.

The association was established on the 9th of October 1993 with the theme words “Widen the Circle of Cherry Blossoms” in the hope of preserving our natural environment and beautifying the earth by planting cherry blossoms trees over the world. With the above activities, we hope to promote the spirit of cooperation and international exchange within the country where we plant cherry trees. Subsequently we hope our activities will make a contribution in bringing peace and prosperity in the world.

The founding President is Kazuo Kawashima, Esq., the Chairman of Attorneys Association of Gifu Prefecture, who contributed to growth of the organisation from the inception.

We have more than 500 members, including the Governor of Gifu Prefecture, the Mayor of the City of Gifu and other top level people from government, politics, business and various organisations.

We have planted more than 10,000 trees at home and abroad. The organisation has been noted by the United Nations and Ambassadors from various countries for its international activities. The following list shows some of the organisation’s activities around the world.

Year	Country	City Name	Location of Tree Planting
1995	China	Hangzhou	Hangzhou Botanical Garden
1995-1996	Hungary	Budapest	Budapest Engineering School
1995-1996	Austria	Vienna	Central Park, UN HQ Peace Bell Plaza
1996-1997	Croatia	Sisak	Sisak Refugee Camp
1996-1997	Italy	Rome	City Park, Rome University, Japanese School
1996-1997	Switzerland	Geneva	Japanese Embassy
1997-1998	Czech Republic	Prague	Presidents Residence, City Park
1998-1999	USA	Washington DC	Potomac Park
		Cincinnati, Ohio	Ault Park, Eden Park

		Highland Heights, Kentucky	Northern Kentucky University
		San Francisco, California	Quad of Stanford University
1998-1999	Brazil	San Paulo	City Park
1999-2000	Mongolia	Ulan Bator	Natural History Museum Park
2000-2001	Nepal	Kathmandu	Kathmandu International Airport, City Park
2001-2002	Canada	Victoria	Cemetery of Japanese, Government House, The Capitol

All the above activities were accompanied by 50 to 150 members of our organisation.

In particular, the United Nations gave us a high prize for the planting of 2000 cherry trees, with help of refugees from Bosnia, at the Sisak Refugee Camp in Croatia in November 1996. The activity of working together to plant cherry trees created a warm atmosphere of co-operation and eased tension amongst the people.

We have received many awards and recognition but the following are noteworthy.

A Congratulatory Certificate from Prime Minister Obuchi 1998

A Municipal Cooperation Award from Sister Cities International (SCI) 1999
The Honorary Chair person of the SCI was the First Lady Hilary Clinton

Although our effort is small we will continue to plant our national flower cherry blossom trees at different places in the world to make a contribution to the beautification and preservation of the environment and to promote international friendship and peace.

Kazuo Kawashima, Esq.
President, Gifu Sakura no Kai