

History of Newsletter Production

Many people have been involved in the 45 years of our newsletter's production, and as you would expect, the content and design have evolved over time. However, one thing has remained unchanged throughout the years, and that is the desire for our students and their parents to enjoy reading these newsletters. In this interview, we asked the previous generations of teachers who were responsible for the production of the newsletters, as well as Ms. Tamami Kobayashi of GrapeCity, who has been in charge of its production since 1998, about their memories and even some of their difficulties in producing these newsletters over the years.

What is a newsletter?

The production of the first issue started with this question. I had to build a darkroom and develop the photos myself.



Mr. Timothy

At the start, I had no idea what a newsletter was or even how to take quality photographs, so I started from scratch and learned everything I could about it, before we could launch the first issue.

I purchased a small camera and learned the basics of photography and composition, by reading a book titled "Photography." In an age when it was not possible to easily print photos at camera shops or with personal printers, I built a makeshift darkroom in the attic of the staff room and developed the film myself, making many mistakes along the way. At the start, I didn't even know what kind of articles to include in the school's newsletter, so I asked a reporter from the *Kahoku Shimpō* newspaper to teach me the basics and give me ideas for its composition.

Because of that, we were able to produce the first issue, finishing it just in time.

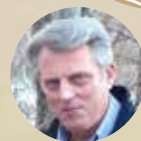
This article is based on an interview with Mr. Timothy last December, before he passed away.

1977



The first issue of the newsletter. At the time, it was printed completely in black and white, including all photos and illustrations.

The early newsletters were **letterpress**. I drew the illustrations myself.



Mr. David

Like Mr. Timothy, I started out with no experience at all. At that time, letterpress printing* was a printing method in which the printer assembled the text by aligning each individual kanji character, so I counted the number of characters in each article as I prepared the layout. It was meticulous work, as I had to make room for photographs and illustrations and fit the articles in where I could.

I wrote the articles, and Ms. Hideko Awano, who was the assistant director at the time, and Mr. Mamoru Ogawa, who was the executive director, proofread the articles. I also drew illustrations of events and even illustrated some of the school's principles that I felt were important for the children to keep. Some of the illustrations are a bit embarrassing to look at now, but they are fond memories, nonetheless.

Although the newsletter was first published in black and white to keep the printing costs down, I sometimes added one more color to the cover, or used green and red Christmas colors for the winter issue to make it more enjoyable to read.



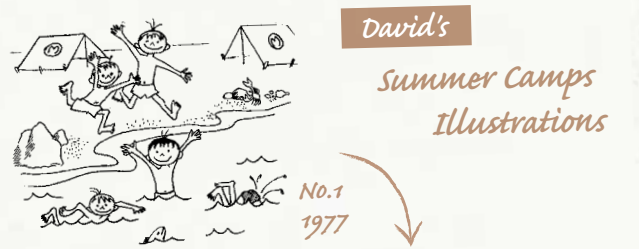
Illustration from the first issue

What is Letterpress?

It is a printing method in which metal stamp-like objects called *Katsuji* are arranged according to the manuscript to make a plate, which is then inked and printed. Compared to the Western alphabet, the Japanese language consists of many kanji characters as well as *kana*, so it was difficult to produce and manage the typesetting process. This laborious method is almost unthinkable today, as most printed materials are made digitally.



Metal type. The kanji characters are mirrored. The characters are arranged in lines.



David's Summer Camps Illustrations No.1 1977



Meisen Summer Camps No.5 1978



Meisen Summer Camps No.14 1980

Illustrations of summer camps by Mr. David. You can see the progression from issue No.1, to No.5, to No.14, with the brush strokes becoming more intricate, and the expressions on the children's faces becoming more detailed. In those days, MeySen was written in English as "Meisen" instead of how we write it now as "MeySen."

English teacher by day,

newsletter publisher by night!

1990~



Mr. Joshua

The first newsletter I created was the October 1990, Halloween issue. The whole idea was to do something different—new and fresh. I tweaked the style and played around with the layout, by cutting out photos and combining them with hand-drawn graphics. These changes helped give this newsletter a fresh feel. I added snowflakes to the winter issue after that, and then added a watercolor background to the spring and summer issues after that... All of those elements were hand crafted, painted by hand to my own liking, making many versions until I was satisfied with the look of it. This was before the time of digital graphic design, and I remember staying up late on many occasions after teaching English classes, to work on these newsletters. I also remember using the copy machine to blow up or reduce pictures to the size I wanted in the layout and then counting out the squares for the words by the number of words in the articles. All of this work done manually.



Issue No.55 Candy Corner

The Candy Corner was something I started too. It was quite fun trying to get



Upper Photo: At the time of opening in 1967
Lower photo: 25 years later in 1992
Both photos facing Izumi-Chuo and Shogen from the Maruyama campus. Many houses and buildings had been constructed during those 25 years, and the view beyond the school building has changed considerably.



all those pictures of Candy* and using them to express rules, manners, and other things. I think this made the newsletters more interesting for the children.

I did the 25th Anniversary issue at the time too. I wanted to get a photo from the same perspective as the original picture, of the first MeySen building with those pine trees in the background and now with the Shogen neighborhood way off in the distance (which did not exist back in 1967). To get this shot, I rented a bucket truck and captured the angle from "CI Town" behind the Maruyama Hall—showing the differences from the opening of the kindergarten, with how it looked 25 years later.

*Candy: An Old English Sheepdog that was kept at the Takamori campus. She was a very smart dog and a great friend to the children and teachers and the star of "Candy Corner." She was trained in English and learned to follow many instructions.

~2022

We value the **"MeySen-ness"** that has continued since the first issue of the newsletter.



GrapeCity inc.
GrapeColors (Creative Production Team)
Tamami Kobayashi

I was working in Tokyo for Kakutaro limori's design firm, limori Art, and my first work with MeySen was in 1997, when we created a new symbol for the kindergarten, called the "persona mark," for the school's 30th anniversary. The variations of the persona mark on the school buses, including a flying figure and a parent and child holding hands, were also created as part of this project.

I have been involved with the Friends Newsletter since its 90th issue in 1998. At the time, limori Art was in charge of creating the newsletter's logo and the layout of the cover. I remember being overcome with emotion by the number of wonderful photos taken by the teachers, over the years. I now work for GrapeColors, collaborating with MeySen in selecting and processing the photos to be featured, designing the title of the articles, and laying out the cover pages with text prepared by the kindergarten, for all issues of the Friends Newsletter. GrapeColors has 13 staff members, working together to maintain a



When it is time to start work on a new issue, the GrapeColors staff holds a production meeting to decide on the layout and design. This photo shows the 200th issue production meeting, in which previous newsletters and design materials were poured over and the new design was discussed.



high level of creativity in order to create something unique to MeySen, while also taking advantage of and incorporating the individuality of the staff member in charge of each issue.

Publishing four high-quality newsletters in a timely manner year after year can at times be difficult, especially when including so many beautiful photographs and illustrations. This makes MeySen's Friends Newsletter quite rare and so very special. We hope that those who pick up a copy of the Friends Newsletter will be able to see the children's lively expressions and feel the seasonal atmosphere, in each and every issue.

English-language editions are also produced for overseas readers

In order to deliver MeySen's news to those in Australia and Europe, we translate each issue of the newsletter and produce an English version, like this one. The English version is also posted on the MeySen website, so we encourage our own Japanese high school students to check it out and hopefully find it an enjoyable reading experience, that is different from classroom materials and useful for learning English.



MeySen's English Grammar Class

Aiming for a high level of reading and writing skills

MeySen offers English grammar classes for junior and senior high school students who want to better understand English classes at their own Japanese school and build a solid foundation to support their conversational English skills. Our three grammar teachers teach not only for improved entrance exam scores, but also to help students acquire English literacy skills that will be useful even after they have finished school and start their careers.

Ms. Himi Matsumoto (left of photo)

It's been almost 8 years since I started teaching grammar classes at MeySen. As a graduate of Friends Club, I am thankful that I could experience having fun while learning English at MeySen. I would encourage all of you to study English grammar to further develop your English skills when you become a junior or senior high school student. I think that grammar can be your strong ally as you get older.

Mr. Makoto Sano (center of photo)

I believe it is good to be curious and to question why things are the way they are, not only in English grammar but in other aspects of life. In English grammar class, we feel that this attitude of asking or wondering "Why?" is beneficial to our students' own educational growth.

Mr. Shinji Yokota (right of photo)

I'm new to the MeySen Grammar team, so it's nice to meet you! My house is just a minute walk from Maruyama! I also run a cram school at my home. My aim is to explain English grammar carefully and help you to improve your level.
*Mr. Yokota has been teaching at MeySen since August.



Meeting for International Students and Supporting Companies for the 2022 Academic School Year

On July 6, we held a meeting for our new study abroad students and for the representatives of the companies who support our "A Way We Learn" long-term study abroad program. This year, 14 new companies have pledged to endorse the program, bringing the total of supporting companies up to 93, all of whom play a part in supporting the study abroad program for our MeySen students.



This year we have 5 students participating in this program. They are currently living with host families in the U.S. while attending an American high school. High school students who are interested in taking on the challenge of studying abroad should feel free to contact Mr. Peter or Mr. Sano, of the Overseas Programs Department, with any questions they may have about studying abroad.



Click here for information on "A Way We Learn."

Two teachers who laid the foundation for MeySen's English education have passed away.



Ms. Barbara March

Ms. Barbara March, who taught English to children for several years after the school's founding, made all of the English materials of the time by hand, drawing the illustrations herself. Many alumni may remember her singing the morning greeting song "Good Morning to You" and her teaching materials including the "Sunshine Book." After leaving MeySen, Barbara also devoted herself to the training of English teachers, and many of her former students have gone on to become teachers.



Ms. Barbara with students on the bus



The Sunshine Book



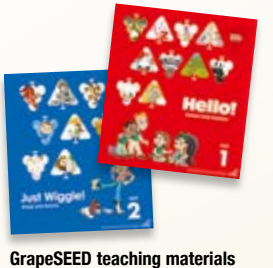
Mr. Timothy Broman

Mr. Timothy Broman, who also taught English, was involved in the development of the GrapeSEED curriculum after leaving the classroom. He and Loretta Kusak* conducted extensive research on the mechanisms of brain growth and English language development in young children, and through their hard work, GrapeSEED was born.

* Loretta Kusak is an expert in early childhood English education. She has worked as an English education consultant in the U.S. and abroad.



Meeting to create English teaching materials



GrapeSEED teaching materials

Their love for children and passion for English education is rooted in their faith in God, which remained unchanged throughout their lives. "Without faith, it is impossible to please God." (Hebrews 11:6) We will continue to carry on the faith and passion for education of Ms. Barbara and Mr. Timothy with great care.

Play equipment donated!



Grace Corporation and 77 Bank donated playground balls worth approximately 100,000 yen.

Five different types of playground balls were donated, including some for dodgeball and will be used by the Friends Club and Premier School students, and also by our kindergarten P.E. program, FitKids. So, when you use these playground balls, be sure to take good care of them!

On June 28, we had a presentation ceremony with Mr. Toshiaki Suda, President of Grace Corporation. Thank you very much for your donation to support our students' activities.

Photo from right Mr. Chiaki Hitoyanagi, Manager of The 77 Bank, Izumi Branch, and President Suda and his wife



Q: Guess the names of the horses and ponies at MeySen!

Continuing on from Issue 199, in Issue 200 we invite you to guess the names of MeySen's horses and ponies! At Maruyama, we have one horse and one pony, and at Takamori, we have one horse and two ponies, raised by our animal care staff. Some of the children love the animals so much they come to the stable every day for a visit!



MeySen Bus Quiz! There were 56 correct answers out of 106 entrants.

MeySen Bus Model Winners



Takamori: Ryoma Kitabayashi (Dale), Friends Club 1st Grade



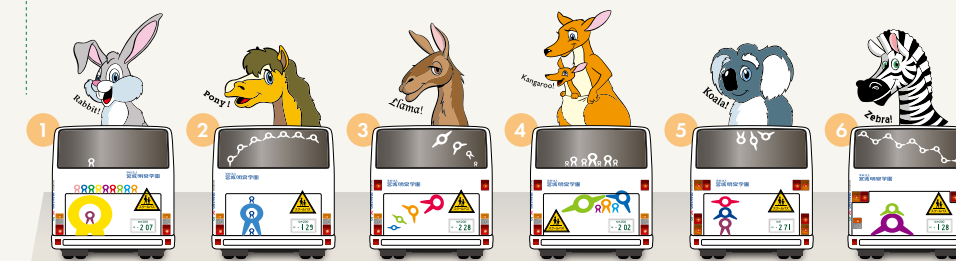
Maruyama: Taichi Sato, Kindergarten Mokuren Class

MeySen Bus Cookie Tin Winners

Maruyama: Haruto Toba, Suzukake Class, Kanato Moriya (Jeremiah), Premier School G3
Takamori: Keita Satomura, Kangaroo Club, Rena Shibutani (Megan), Friends Club 2nd Grade

Thank you for all the entries to our bus quiz in Issue 199.

Answers to the previous issue



What do these "Persona Marks" represent?

Are they playing on the ring climb?

Maybe they're holding hands!

They're being carried on their parent's shoulders!

The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities. For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is His love for those who fear Him. As far as the east is from the west, so far has He removed our transgressions from us. As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him. For He knows how we are formed, He remembers that we are dust.

Psalm 103:8, 10-14 (NKJV)



MeySen's Core Values

In this fifth and final installment of our series on the values and attitudes shared and cherished by all MeySen faculty and staff, we focus on our fifth core value, "Compassion."

Part 5



Principal
Daniel Fanger

Compassion

Heartfelt compassion / Deep sympathy

If you look up the word "compassion" in the dictionary, you will find that it is expressed as "a deep understanding and sympathy for the suffering and misfortune of others, and the desire to understand their pain and do something about it." It also goes with MeySen's motto, "Itsukushimi (compassion)." The English word "compassion" is derived from com (with) + pati (to suffer), and we consider the word "compassion" to include the meaning of "suffering together."

From time to time, I tell the MeySen faculty and staff that the ultimate example of "compassion" is found in the life of Jesus. Jesus' compassionate attitude toward people in various situations and the way he sacrificed himself to love them are our greatest examples.

Jesus himself said that one of the most important divine commands is to "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." To "love others as you love yourself" is not something that comes easily and naturally to us. However, it may be easier to understand when we consider the heart of a parent toward his or her own children, especially when they are infants.

Can a woman forget her nursing child and have no compassion on the child she has borne? Though she may forget, I will not forget thee! (Isaiah 49:15)

These words from the Bible express the love and compassion of a mother toward her infant, and state that God's love and compassion toward us is even greater.

At MeySen, we strive to practice the heart of "compassion" in the following ways;

- Truly understand and truly care for those around us (including children, parents, and co-workers).
- Treat all children with the mindset that they are created in the image of God and that God loves them.

- Love every child as if they were our own and show love and tenderness to them.
- Love our neighbors (parents and co-workers) as we love ourselves.
- Forgive others' wrongs so that you may be forgiven.

Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ, God forgave you. (Ephesians 4:32)

As with the values of "serving" and "humility" that we have seen, true compassion will not be achieved with a self-centered attitude or heart. Some people may be born with a kind heart, sensitive to the feelings and suffering of others, and may try to help others with compassion. But no one will ever be completely free of self-centeredness or naturally always be able to "love others as themselves."

However, the more we realize how sinful our hearts are and at the same time how much God has loved us in spite of it, the more we will come to love God with all our hearts and the more we will be able to love and forgive others. The following words of Scripture express that even though we fail and sin again and again, if we repent and turn to God, He will have mercy on us and forgive our sins.

Because of the Lord's great love, we are not consumed, for His compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. (Lamentations 3:22-23)

Jesus taught the following in His "Sermon on the Mount": "Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy."

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy. (Matthew 5:7)

If we show mercy to others, we will also receive mercy. There is much more written about this in the letters by Jesus' disciples, some of which are as follows.

Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn. (Romans 12:15)

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness, and patience. (Colossians 3:12)

Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble. (1 Peter 3:8)



In the past five articles, we have discussed the core values that the faculty and staff at MeySen Academy aim to live by. At MeySen, we believe that these values are the most important attitude we can have, and they are the basis for the education and guidance of our faculty and staff, as well as the guiding principles for our hiring practices.

These values are important not only for MeySen staff, but for all people. They are important in family relationships, marital relationships, any workplace, and any gathering of people. I encourage you to work on and acquire these values from the time you are a child, practice them in your daily lives, and make them your own. If you can do this, you will build strong and long-lasting relationships, be of great help to others, and become a valuable member of your community.

