

LOOKING BACK ON OUR CHAPTER'S HISTORY 3rd Installment

by Diana Cull, Chapter Historian

This April, members of our Chapter will travel to Japan to attend the 11th World Convention of Ikebana International. They will be following in the footsteps of many, many members who have made this exhilarating trip before them. The First World Convention was held in 1965 in Tokyo, Japan. I.I. Founder, Ellen Gordon Allen, and Chapter No. 1 President, Medrith Striker, led the Washington delegation. Mrs. Allen and Mrs. Striker again led the delegation to the Second World Convention in 1970, which was to be Mrs. Allen's last. After Mrs. Allen's death in 1972, the tradition of attending the World Conventions was carried on by subsequent generations of Chapter No. 1 members, who have attended every World Convention since.

For those of you who have never been to a World Convention and are wondering what happens there, here is an overview. First there is the Exhibition containing a few hundred ikebana arrangements by I.I. members from all over the world. The highlights of the exhibition are the monumental arrangements by the heads of the leading Ikebana Schools — truly breathtaking! The Exhibition is opened on the first night of the Convention with a ribbon-cutting ceremony, by a member of the Imperial Family, and a gala reception. Then follows two or three days of fantastic demonstrations by the distinguished masters of the Ikebana Schools. These demonstrations often feature arrangements that fill the entire stage and are accompanied by music and light shows. Additional demonstrations and workshops by ikebana teachers from around the world are held throughout the convention. The Welcome Dinner, Business Meeting, Breakfast Discussion Groups, and the Friendship Room all provide congenial settings to meet fellow ikebana enthusiasts. Then, there are optional tours to see the local sights and plenty of shopping opportunities! The Sayonara Banquet wraps everything up with first rate cuisine and entertainment., ending with a bittersweet singing of "Auld Lang Syne" and final group photos.



Mrs. Allen and Houn Ohara toast "Compai" at Second World Convention



Chapter No. 1 members attending the 2006 Ninth World Convention included: Mary Corley, Marianne Enger, Rosalie Ingenito, Maxine Kopecky, Pat Painter, Ellen Dutka, Connie Forster, Fay McLaren, Diana Cull, Jane Bell, Sheila Advani, Jane Redmon and Betty Taylor