



SHERRY WOOD
'Keeping the Peace'

Editor invited to Japan

Japan and New Hampshire established a connection in 1905 that lives on today.

"Every Japanese person I've met has heard of the Portsmouth Peace Treaty," said Sherry Wood, the New Hampshire Union Leader's night editor. Her children's serial story based on the treaty signing appeared in the newspaper in 2005.

Wood has been invited to participate in the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Journalist Invitation program. She will be in Japan Oct. 9 to 19, and will visit officials in Tokyo, Kyoto and Portsmouth's sister city, Nichinan City.

She also plans to write a blog during the trip that will be posted on NewHampshire.com and linked to from UnionLeader.com.

In August and September 1905, New Hampshire moved to the center of the world stage when the Japanese and Russians descended on the Seacoast to negotiate a treaty to end the largest land-sea battle fought before World War I. President Theodore Roosevelt won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1906 because he brought the two sides together.

Baron Jutarō Komura, the lead negotiator for the Japanese in 1905, was born in Nichinan; the city has established a museum in his honor.

The sister-city relationship between Nichinan and Portsmouth began in 1985, the 80th anniversary of the treaty signing. Wood will be conveying official greetings to the Nichinan City mayor from Portsmouth Mayor Steve Marchand and delivering letters and drawings from New Hampshire schoolchildren.

About 5,000 children in classrooms across the state read her children's serial, "Keeping the Peace," in 2005.

"I wrote the story because I realized there were many events celebrating the treaty's 100th anniversary, but none of them were especially for children," Wood said. "I thought it was important for the young people of New Hampshire to understand what an important role their state played in this."

Wood, 49, has been an editor at the New Hampshire Union Leader since 2000. She began her newspaper career in 1974 with her hometown weekly in Virginia. In 1988, she was part of a team of reporters and editors that produced a Pulitzer Prize-winning series on abuses of the Massachusetts prison furlough system.

She and her husband, Jeff, live in Rye and have two children.