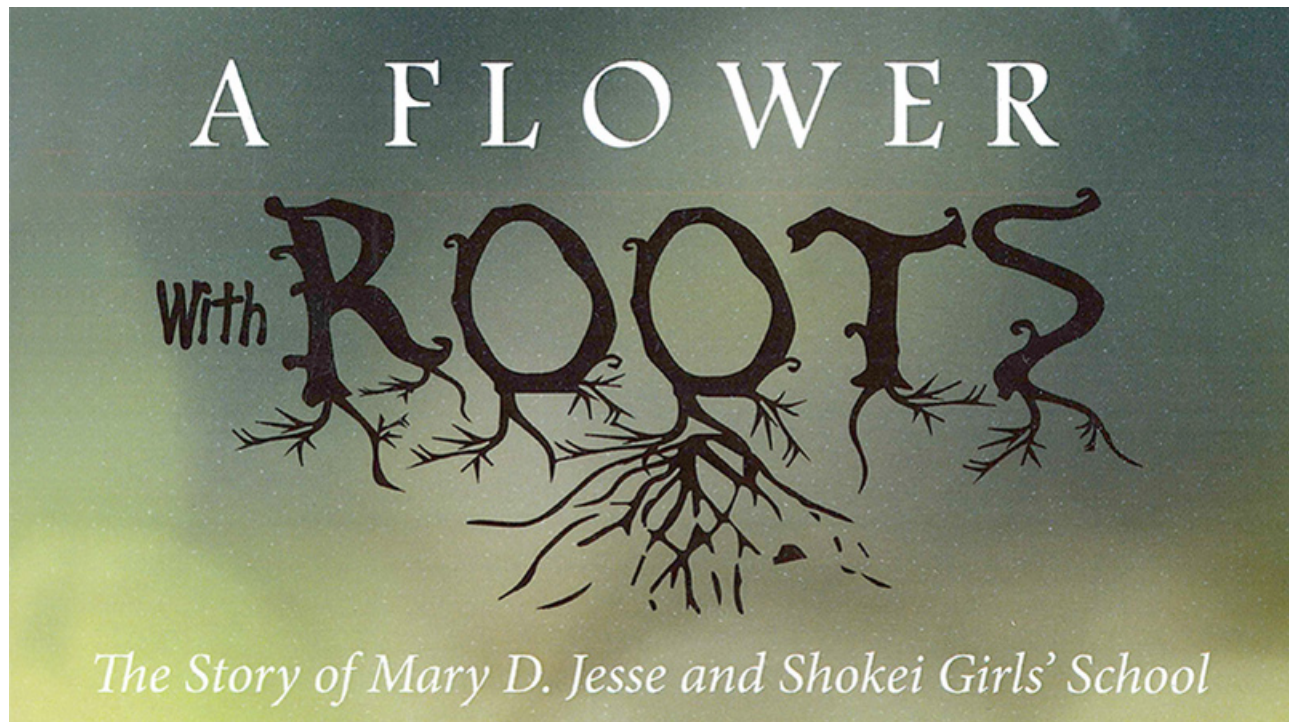


NEWS POSTED ON JUNE 12, 2018

Retired IM Missionary Publishes Book about Shokei Girls' School in Japan



CATHERINE NOLD

International Ministries (IM) is delighted to announce the publication of *A Flower with Roots*, the second book authored by retired IM missionary, Roberta Lynn Stephens.

This is the exhaustively researched story of Mary D. Jesse and Shokei Girls' School in Sendai, Japan, where Stephens taught for 18 years (1979–1997). It explores the challenges and successes of educating Japanese girls against a backdrop of war, personality conflicts, financial hardship and ethnic prejudice.

"Shokei's struggle to retain faith while facing rising nationalism is especially instructive," said the Rev. Dr. Reid Trulson, retired IM executive director. This work is "a fascinating

contribution to cross-cultural studies, as well as to Baptist, mission and women's studies," Trulson continued.

Set in 1911–1952, the book follows Mary D. Jesse, a missionary woman from a family of means, as she abandons everything to follow her vision of helping lift the burden of Japanese girls during a time when education was a privilege and not a right. Along the way, she discovers God's amazing guidance in difficult experiences.

Already a school with a deep and meaningful history, Shokei Girls' School began its walk with Jesse as she and other missionary colleagues shared their Christian faith, the metaphorical flower of the book's title; their love for the students; and Christ's love as it took root in their daily lives. At the same time, the drama of misunderstanding, misery and pain lead to forgiveness and rebuilding.

A Flower with Roots is a compelling account of the resiliency of a mission school where the love and loyalty of students shines through, even as the school leadership is embroiled in endless drama in management and personal relations.

"I had the privilege of visiting the Shokei School in early 2003," said the Rev. Paul Aita, special assistant to IM's Area Director for Southeast Asia and Japan. "*A Flower with Roots* helped me to appreciate the development of the school and one of its early leaders."

Roberta Lynn Stephens is a retired IM missionary to Japan who served there from 1977 to 2014. She served at Shokei Girls' School in various capacities for 35 years. She is the author of the Japanese-language *Nezuita Hana* (2003) and co-author of *An Invitation to Kokeshi Dolls* (1981).

A Flower with Roots may be purchased on [Amazon](#) in paperback and Kindle edition or through the publisher, Wipf & Stock Publishers, at a 20% discount when purchased [online](#) or by calling 541-334-1528.

Stephens will attend the [World Mission Conference](#) on July 4–8, where she will have autographed copies of the book available. The World Mission Conference is sponsored by IM and is held at the Green Lake Conference Center in Green Lake, Wisconsin.