

News from the Nordic Pavilion, EXPO 2005  
August 10, 2005

## **Moomin troll celebrates 60 years anniversary at EXPO 2005, Japan**

There was no need to introduce the Moomin family and friends during their two-day EXPO visit, which ended today. Everywhere the Moomin trolls appeared you could hear “Moomin, Moomin!” from all directions, with enthusiastic children - and adults - gathering to get a better look at the beloved Finnish trolls.

The Moomin family is here on the occasion of the 60th Birthday of Moomin troll. As part of the Birthday celebrations planned for the autumn of 2005, the Moomins made a special visit to EXPO 2005, where August 9 was celebrated as “Moomin Day”. Today, the Moomins also had a busy schedule at EXPO (see Nordic Pavilion website).

“Moomin Day” marks the beginning of this year’s official anniversary celebrations. The date, August 9, has been chosen especially as it is the Birthday of the creator of the Moomins, Professor Tove Jansson, who both wrote the Moomin stories and produced a unique series of Moomin drawings. The Moomins, presented by the Moomins’ Friends Association, were accompanied by Dr. Janne Gallen-Kallela-Sirén, Director of the Tampere Art Museum. “EXPO 2005 has provided a wonderful opportunity for the Tampere Art Museum to present the diversity of Tove Janssons’ art to Japanese fans”, said Sirén.

The Moomin Family has made many appearances at EXPO, but undoubtedly yesterday’s program at EXPO Plaza was the highlight of the visit. The two-hour program included a musical performance by the Moomins and friends, as well as an excellent display of Tove Jansson’s original Moomin illustrations on the 20 meter wide high-definition screen at the Plaza. According to official EXPO statistics ca 1,900 guests visited the Plaza during the two-hour show.

Also, the “Moomin Post Office” at the Nordic Pavilion proved a great success. Today and yesterday, guests were invited to mail Moomin postcards to friends and family that will arrive from Finland with an original Moomin stamp. Approx 5000 cards were presented by Post Finland and not surprisingly they all disappeared long before the pavilion’s closing time.

Everyone in the Nordic countries knows the Moomins, but it was a great surprise for Nordic pavilion staff to witness how popular the Moomin were among the Japanese visitors. Many guests seemed to know the name of every single character. Ms. Satomi Iwase (53) had come especially to EXPO today to see the Moomin, “I saw the Moomin troll on TV yesterday, and decided to come. I started to watch the Moomin TV series when I was 10 and became a Moomin fan. The Moomins are so cute and the stories are really fascinating”. “I was lucky to get a Moomin postcard, I am going to send it to my friend, who is also a Moomin fan”, said Ms. Iwase.

Mr. Okino (43) came all the way from Okayama with his two children to meet the Moomins in person. “I heard about the Moomin day and traveled two hours on the bullet-train to see the

Moomins. I used to watch the Moomin TV series as a child, and actually my kids are watching it now”.

August is the main summer vacation season in Japan, so this week has been busy at EXPO. Yesterday, 127,443 guests visited EXPO, and probably visitor numbers are similar today. Needless to say, the Nordic Pavilion has been busy during the Moomin days. Japanese media have also shown great interest in the Moomin events, further introducing the charming Moomins and Finland in Japan.

The Moomins’ journey to Japan in August 2005 is made possible by The City of Tampere, the Tampere Art Museum, the Moomins’ Friends Association and JCI Finland.

Today, the Nordic Pavilion greeted its guest number 1,500,000 and to celebrate, the lucky winner received a gift bag with Finnish Moomin goods from the pavilion shop – handed over by Moomin troll himself. The lucky guest, Ms. Kobayashi Masafumi was on her third visit to EXPO.

Moominvalley Collection info site:

[www.tampere.fi/muumi](http://www.tampere.fi/muumi) & [www.tampere.fi/muumi/japanese](http://www.tampere.fi/muumi/japanese) (Japanese)

You can find further information about the Moomin program and latest photos on our website, Nordic Pavilion: [www.nordicatexpo2005.org](http://www.nordicatexpo2005.org)