



The articles which were written in Japanese are directly translated into English.

Social Welfare Corporation

The Minato Council of Social Welfare Conducts Its Activities from the 2nd Floor of the Azabu Regional City Office



Azabu Regional City Office

Developing a region in which all the residents can support each other, feel connected and live safely.

What is the social welfare council?

The social welfare council is a civil society organization established within each city, town and village in accordance with the Social Welfare Act with the purpose of promoting community social welfare.



We interviewed Mr. Susumu Oki, the Secretary General and Ms. Hiroko Hiroki, in-charge of business management from the Minato Council of Social Welfare (hereafter Council).

What is the work of the Council?

Under the basic policy of "supporting," "nurturing" and "connecting," we work to develop a system in which the "community can support each other" through the participation and cooperation of regional members and relevant organizations. In particular, efforts are being put into developing leaders who can provide assistance to those in need of support such as senior citizens, the disabled and families bringing up children, and to promote the creation of a network development of "people and people" and "people and community" in alignment and cooperation with local governments, corporations and relevant organizations.

What type of activities does the Council do?

We are quite diverse such as support programs for senior citizens, the disabled and families bringing up children, lectures and classes regarding volunteer activities, promotion of the adult guardianship system, comprehensive activities to assist usage of welfare services, sign language classes, and rental wheelchairs.

Can you be specific?

As a part of our cooperative activities with the community, we assist household chores for senior citizens, the disabled and families with sick people, the "omusubi service (welfare services with gratuity*), and child support services* to assist those in need of help for their children.

*There are terms and conditions regarding usage and cooperation etc.



The Volunteers Beginners Class has courses in simulating wheelchairs assistance and other experiences at facilities. Lectures, experience and reviews come as one set.



Members of the "Poppy Group" enjoying their volunteer activity of organizing stamps.



"Heart warming communication kangari" sends postcards with warm greetings from you.

We conduct during the summer and winter season called "Heart warming communication kangari" which consists of volunteers writing and sending seasonal greeting cards for senior citizens over 75 years old living alone. This is a volunteer activity in which one can cooperate by writing even one postcard. There are other activities conducted to further deepen understanding of disabled and senior citizens at schools and corporations, such as wheelchair assistance, activities to help understand the visually disabled and guide help, and the "fureai classes" that consist of simulation experiences as a senior citizen. I also experienced wearing goggles (which narrow your eyesight or partially cut off your view) and I was surprised at how much more insecure I felt than I had originally imagined.

The Council welcomes members who want to contribute to our activities of providing opportunities to participate in community programs through both active participation and support.

Why not drop by and see what we do?

Inquiries: Minato Council of Social Welfare Tel: 03-6230-0280

(Interviewed by: Kazue Asakawa, Tsuneko Ishiyama Written by: Kazue Asakawa)
The original article is written in Japanese.

Do you know "Misha" who is the mascot character of the Minato Council of Social Welfare?

Her hairstyle consists of an image of Tokyo Tower and Shiba Park and her ears symbolize the sea of Minato City. She's a cute mascot wearing a dress inspired from the Rainbow Bridge. The name Misha comes from the "mi" of Minato City; "mi" meaning "minna" (everyone) and "sha" meaning shakai fukushi kyougi kai (social welfare council). She was created based on applications from everyone. Please give her lots of love!





“Jurakuen” the fishing pond which quietly exists in Minami-azabu 3 chome, located down the alley alongside Hommura Elementary School at a dead end, is said to be a secret haven only for those who know about it. It has been said to be a “super well-kept-secret-place of the metropolis” and “a place to have fun that you don’t want to share with others,” and is also listed as one of “Minato City’s Well-Established 100 Selected Locations.”

We Want To Continue the One and Only Fishing Pond in Azabu

A Fishing Pond for Carps Is Born in Azabu Hommura-cho Where There Is Abundant Water

It was in the early period of the Showa Era that a fishing pond was made in this area. Eiko Tsubota’s father started the fishing pond with the carp that he had. Eiko, who was born in 1932, remembers her childhood days when her father was always busy working at the fish pond. She reminisced about those days and said, “It wasn’t that I especially liked fishing, but, I loved to watch my father busy as work.”

Fishing at the fish pond has always been a form of entertainment now and before, so the basic style is “catch and release.” The fish are returned to the pond immediately. “Back in those days, there wasn’t much entertainment, so there were so many people who enjoyed fishing at the pond.”

When WWII eventually started and all forms of entertainment were prohibited, they were also forced to close down. The water and the fish were left behind till the day the war ended. Through the recommendation of a customer, the fish were changed from carps to Crucian carps. Eiko’s father accepted the recommendation right away when he was told that, “Crucian carp fishing is really popular now so why not switch to them?”

Hotel Fuji which was opened in 1953, was right by the fishing pond. It became the Azabu Prince Hotel in 1956, which was a 3 minute walk to the fishing pond. The hotel was a secret hideaway and loved by many highly educated people and entertainers. She told us that there were many guests who stayed at the hotel who were fans of the fishing pond and that entertainers also came. The Azabu Prince Hotel unfortunately closed down in 1981, and two years later the Finland Embassy moved to this location.

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A Popular Venue Known for Crucian Carp Fishing

Three years after Eiko got married to her husband, Taizo, her father “just naturally passed on the business to the couple.”

It then became a fishing pond for Crucian carp fishing. Below the fishing pond was the Furukawa River, and so water was abundant. Water from the well was used for the fishing pond from the day it was made. Eiko told us, “We used water from the well in the house as well.” Her daughter Yoko exclaimed, “The water tasted delicious.” It was reported by the Public Health Center that this water was not suited for drinking since about 20 years ago, so since then it has been used only for the fishing pond. “Maybe it has to do with the fact that many condominiums have been built in the vicinity and the demand for water and drainage increased,” was one likely explanation. The water from the well still continues to sufficiently supply the pond.

The fishing pond is a cozy size of 10 meters square and the depth 1.4 – 1.5 meters. Since it’s a bottom fishing style, the bait has to be sunk to the bottom when fishing. There are many customers who concentrate while fishing. “Some customers always sit in the same place each time.”



Yoko and Eiko



A cozy fishing pond of 10 meters square

Although it’s a hard place to find, an ad of the location is wrapped around the telephone pole

There are customers who also enjoy fishing all day long on Saturdays and Sundays. The mosquito coil is a must-have item for the summer.

When we asked whether there have been any customers who have committed a blunder, Eiko replied, “Yes, one man was so happy that he was successful that he got excited and fell into the pond.” This person lived in the neighborhood, so although he was dripping wet, he walked back home and was okay. Yoko told us, “We need to be very careful in the winter because it freezes and gets very slippery.” We were told that there had been customers who slipped and fell into the pond. Although this is their job, they have to be alert at all times.

Yoko Would Like To Continue Here Indefinitely

The business is run by Yoko, who is the third generation owner. “I would like to continue the business because we have many regulars who have come here for three generations.” Yoko watched her parents work at the fishing pond and naturally started helping them.

She goes to buy Crucian carp at Lake Biwa where they are raised every year around November. From late autumn till winter when this finishes, she is fighting the cold every morning outside from 7 a.m. Although she protects herself from the cold, her hands and feet get numb, and her chapped hands are an occupational hazard. “I hope to use the briquette used by my father to keep warm this year.”

She told us that the happiest moments of this job was “looking at the smiles of the customers who have fished carps” together with her mother. “We really appreciate the customers who have continued to come to such a difficult place to find.”

A 70 year old woman said, “My father often brought me here when I was small. It’s still a quiet place now but in those days there were more trees in the area. I remember squeezing my father’s hand hard because it’s located in a dead end of a narrow alley.”

Yoko told us, “During the mid 50’s to the 60’s, there were many small flat houses swarming next to one another at the back of the alley squeezed between Hommura Elementary School and the fishing pond. The boundary between the pond and the road was the cliff and there were more trees than there are now.” It’s hard to imagine the past scenery now because there are condominiums everywhere. However, this fishing pond located at a dead end in which cars don’t come inside is a “really quiet and relaxing haven.” It makes you want to visit again. As I left the fishing pond, I felt a strong desire that this fishing pond would stay in business as long as there were people who came looking for a soothing place.



A memorial stone for the Crucian carps which was built by Taizo and Eiko in 2008



Winter of 1967. A father and son who were regulars fish in the snow. There weren’t many condominiums in those days.

(Interviewed and written by: Yukiko Takayanagi)
The original article is written in Japanese.

麻布びと

“AZABU – A Human Story”



Eiko Tsubota
(Mother)

Yoko
(Daughter)

A Soothing Haven in Azabu Which has Continued for 85 Years - This Fishing Pond Will Be Protected by the Family



Full sets of equipment are available



Going around Moto-azabu and Minami-azabu

As we did previously when we took the Chi Bus, this time we followed the Azabu route and went toward Hiroo Station. On top of Sendai-zaka Slope and in front of the Azabu Sports Field is the “96 Moto-azabu 2 Chome” bus stop. This route is convenient not only to get to the Azabu Sports Field, but also to the Tokyo Metropolitan Library. Beyond that, below Kinoshita-zaka Slope ① is the “98 Arisugawa-no-miya Memorial Park” bus stop. The area surrounding the bus stop is abundant with cosmopolitan colors reflecting the people and the town atmosphere consisting of a park, market and open cafes. ② This kind of area cannot be found on the Metropolitan Bus system.

If you go further near “100 Tengenji-bashi Bridge,” you come to an area where there are many hidden spots to see, so I decided to get off and take a walk.

First you come upon the old deep indigo well ③ at the corner of the Tengenji-bashi Bridge crossing which is quite intriguing as it blends in with the atmosphere perfectly. The color of the leaves on the ginkgo tree in front of the well hints that winter is just around the corner. Tengenji-bashi Bridge is also famous for the cafes along Meiji Dori street ④, but it is also a hidden spot ⑤ for Japanese, Italian and French restaurants. There are also quite nostalgic scenes such as the “tatami” banner ⑥ and the bench ⑦ in front of the general store etc. The Minami-azabu Fujimi-cho Town Council Hall which stands at the bottom of Fujimi-zaka Slope has a modern exterior of exposed concrete. The building design reminds me of the community “bond,” and it harmonizes

well with the French Embassy ⑨ standing next to it creating an attractive sight along the street.

I go past the French Embassy and take a left at Meiji-dori St. and get on the Chi Bus again at the “101 Korin-ji Temple” bus stop. Residential areas and alleys along the stairways ⑩ come into view. As you come to the “101-2 Hommura Elementary School Entrance” bus stop which stands on top of Shin-zaka Slope, the scene becomes peaceful along the road leading to the stone wall of the Finland Embassy, which was built on a former mansion ground, and a Japanese restaurant which comes into view. ⑪ In contrast, the multi-cultural regionalism ⑫ is reflected in the unique buildings of the Embassy of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Europa House, and the Ambassador’s Residence of the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria. The Chi Bus heads down Sendai-zaka Slope from there and returns to Roppongi Hills. Riding the bus from Moto-azabu to Minami-azabu is a nice way to spend a cold day, enjoying the scenery from the bus window.

Goal



Start



(Reported and Written by: Toshie Suzuki)



Technical Dept., Aoi Studio
Ryoko Yashita



To give children power for life

Reading material for parents and children

KIDS' Hello Work

I Always Wanted to Work on the Side of Making Television Shows

This issue's theme is about the job of a visual editor. Five 1st year students of the Minato-ku Koryo Junior High School visited Ms. Ryoko Yashita in Aoi Studio (Azabujuban).

What kind of work is it?

It's about completing visual material after it has been shot according to the director's instructions. My job is editing preview material for TVCM's and films. While it's my understanding that in the past there were jobs in cutting and pasting film, now the job consists of downloading visual data and working on it on the computer. You need ample physical strength as well because some jobs take three days to complete. Sometimes when you are cooped up in the studio, you become unaware of big news that's happening and find out a day later.



Why did you want to become a film and video editor?

I wanted to “work on the side of making television shows” since I was a child. I actually joined this company after I had studied sound in university, but when I was offered a position as a film and video editor, I felt it would be interesting and so I started this job.

(The interviewer's comment about this job: I felt very attracted to the job of a film and video editor. I would also like to do work that makes visual material more beautiful, cooler and more interesting)

How can you become a film and video editor?

There is no definite education or qualification required. There are those who go to vocational schools but many who haven't. I believe that if you are really committed, you can be successful doing this job.

Who is suited for this job?

First of all you, you need to concentrate on one thing. If it's a job you like, you can concentrate. It's very time consuming and irregular, so you



They were not able to see the actual editing process because the process was using material had been aired or screened but they were told about the mass monitor (monitor used to decide on the standard colors)

need to have physical strength. Furthermore, it is important that you have good communication skills. This is important because you need to be able to understand the instructions of the director at meetings, and be able to respond accurately to their requests.

Have you ever made mistakes on your job?

On several occasions during my 1st and 2nd years as an assistant, I was not able to thoroughly prepare for the job and would be late, or I would make mistakes and cause inconveniences for the staff or clients. You don't want to cause trouble to others.

(The interviewer's comment about this job: I always cause inconveniences to people around me so I admired what she said)



We couldn't put everything down by the questions to Ms. Yashita were over 50.

(Interview by: Eito Asano, Tsubasa Igarashi, Mako Iwaki, Rin Sekine, Yuki Hashimoto Interview support by: Kumiko Omura) The original article is written in Japanese.



1



Visiting the Ambassador 21
From the "World" of Azabu

Federal Republic of Germany
 Total Area: 357,000 km² (approx. 94% of Japan)
 Population: 8,175,000 people (2010 statistics)
 Capital: Berlin (approx.. 346, 000 people)
 Language: German
 Religion: Christianity (Catholics 251,800 people)
 Protestants (245, 200 people)
 Judaism (110,000 people)
 Government: Federal Parliamentary Constitutional Republic
 (16 states: 10 former West Germany, 5 states former East Germany and Berlin. Reunified on Oct. 3, 1990)
 Head of State: President Joachim Gauck (in office from Mar. 23, 2012, 5 year term)
 Legislature: Bicameral
 (However, compared to a federal parliament, the power of Bundesrat is limited.)
 Information from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/germany/data.html>

Dr. Volker Stanzel, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Japan
 Interview cooperation by the German Embassy



2



3



4



5

- 1 The atrium adds to openness of the facility. This earthquake-resistant construction was built in 2005.
- 2 There is a Römerberg on the 1st floor where the staff can have tea. The origin of the name comes from the biggest square in Frankfurt.
- 3 The ground of the Ambassador's residence inherits the remains of the residence of Sakutarō Koizumi, a politician of the Meiji and Taisho period.
- 4 The garden is well kept, and has a close resemblance to the Edo period. It was designed and supervised by landscape gardener, Juki Iida. An arbor can be found in the back on the southern side of the garden.
- 5 This belfry was created in 1703 in Kyoto and was owned by Mr. Koizumi. It was donated in 1959 by the founder of Yanmar, Magokichi Yamaoka who contributed in the relationship of German and Japan.

Germany

Diplomatic Relationship with Germany Started in Azabu and Still Continues to This Day after 150 Years

The relationship between the Federal Republic of Germany which has an overwhelming economic power within the EU countries and Japan is very deep. Azabu is the current location of the Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany as it was over 150 years ago when diplomatic relations started. We interviewed Ambassador, Dr. Volker Stanzel known as a Japanophile.

The Friendship between Germany and Japan Started from Azabu

The Embassy of the Federal Republic of Germany in Japan stands between Arisugawa-no-miya Memorial Park and Nanbuzaka- slope. It is surrounded by a beautiful garden with green grass, a pond and a forest of trees.

Dr. Volker Stanzel, Ambassador of the Federal Republic of Germany to Japan majored in Japanology, Sinology, and Political Science at the University of Frankfurt and also studied for 3 years at the Kyoto University. He also held a position in political affairs and public relations at the Embassy in Japan after joining the Foreign Ministry. It was in 2009 when he was appointed as the German Ambassador to Japan after working in Italy, Hungary, Yemen and as German Ambassador to China. We were very impressed by his fluency of the Japanese language when we interviewed him.

The relationship between Germany and Japan is very intimate. For example, P.F. von Siebold taught Western medicine in Japan and introduced Japanese fauna and flora to the world and also named a hydrangea in native Japanese. When we said that because of his influence, Japan opened its eyes to western medicine, the ambassador said, "Exchange between Germany and Japan in fact goes back to Engelbert Kaempfer", and further emphasized the importance of academic and cultural exchange.

Looking back at history, the close and friendly bilateral relations started here in Azabu. It was in January, 1861, when the "Treaty of Amity, Commerce and Navigation" was signed between Japan and Prussia, which was before Germany was unified. The Prussian Expedition stayed at the Shutoin (has now been moved to Minami Azabu 3 chome, Rizai-shu) located alongside Azabu Sendaizaka and this became the legation quarter later. It is currently a parking lot, however, when we told the Ambassador that there was a monument engraved with "former Prussian Legation", he said, "Yes, that's right!" with a smile on his face.



The monument of the former Prussian Legation alongside Sendaizaka

Both Germany and Japan Facing Same Issues Regarding Decreasing Birthrate and Aging Population

As we face the current day issues, we notice that Germany and Japan have similar issues which are the "decreasing birthrate and aging population". This is very clear when we look at both countries population compositions. According to the WHO's World Health Statistics 2012, Japan is 30% (No. 1 in the world) in the population ratio of those over 60 years old and Germany is at 26% (4th). (Italy and San Marino are both 2nd). The analysis of the Ambassador is that this is due to increase in women giving birth at a later age and the divorce rate (50%).



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The trend in decrease of children is the same for both countries, and he told us, "In Germany it is common for young people to leave their homes after turning 18 years old and becoming independent. Many young people do house sharing. In my case, I came to study in Kyoto." However, in Japan, due to high rent, it may be difficult for young people to live independently.



The "bear" in front of the embassy building which welcomes the visitors was created to commemorate the 150th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Germany and Japan and was painted by the children. The President signed his autograph on the chest when he made his visit in 2011.

In finishing our interview, we asked the Ambassador where his favorite place or restaurant he liked in Azabu. To this he answered with a slightly disappointed look, "I am so busy with my official duties that I don't have too many chances to go outside." Then, he continued with a smile, "It would be so nice if I could go look for those types of places with you all" and with that, had to dash to his next duty.

The Ambassador writes about his memories of his days as a student at Kyoto University and the diary of his official duties in Japanese. We would like to recommend our readers to access the site and take a look.

<http://ambassador.blogs.young-germany.jp/>
 German embassy coverage day: October 18, 2012 (Interviewed by: Akira Mori, Kumiko Omura, Yukiko Takayanagi Written by: Kumiko Omura, Yukiko Takayanagi)
 The original article is written in Japanese.

Azabu Cool

We will be asking foreign nationals who either reside, work, or study in the Azabu region to appear in our edition to ask them about their impression of Japan. This time we interviewed Mr. Adrian Corn (from Australia), who works as an English teacher at Roppongi Hills.



When we requested that he write his favorite kanji, he wrote "shina" consisting of 3 blocks and "kawa" expressing the flow of the river. He told us that he liked the station name of "Shinagawa" because it was easy to understanding the definition of the kanji.



Wearing a yukata which he feels comfortable in.

Why did you decide to come to Japan?

I became acquainted with my wife who was studying in Australia a few years ago. Following which I came to Japan two years ago in January because I was getting married to her. I landed in Japan at around 8 p.m. and nearly froze (he laughs) when I found myself in a world of 1 degrees, coming from the Gold Coast which was 30 degrees.

What kind of work do you do now?

I teach English to a diverse range of people from toddlers to businessmen. I feel personally that growing up listening to my grandparents speaking French and Italian helped me to understand languages. Therefore, I feel that coming in contact with English during childhood is very effective. I used to work for a bank before coming to Japan, but I feel that my job now suits me better. I'm happy that I can help students develop their English skills and I feel that my job is worthwhile.



Where is your favorite place or aspect of Japan?

I love hot springs and often visit Odaiba, Minato Mirai and Hakone. You can truly feel your skin has become smooth after the hot spring. Hakone is per-



haps my favorite place because you can not only enjoy the hot springs, but the beautiful scenery as well. I also admire calligraphy and am very impressed with the swift handwriting with the brush, as well as the brilliant finish of the calligraphy.

What do you think about Japanese food?

Of course I love Japanese food. I've gained quite a lot of weight in the two years since I arrived in Japan. I eat everything from tempura, unagi (eel), okonomiyaki to dorayaki. But I can't come to like natto (fermented soy beans) because of the smell and the stickiness. Speaking of something I do not like, I should mention my first encounter with the typical Japanese style toilet. I was quite taken back, and to this day have not used it even once.

What would you like to take back as a gift when you go back to Australia?

My mother and sister were very happy when I gave them clothes which I bought in Ginza, and for my father I gave him nanoblocks (the world's smallest lego blocks made in Japan) of Himeji Castle, Sensoji Temple and Sky Tree.

Adrian's dream for 2013 is to climb to the top of Mt. Fuji with his wife.



His father looks happy as he completes the nanoblock. (Residing in Australia)

(Interview and written by: Kumiko Omura, Ayako Fukumoto)

地域社会
の
ゆくえ

9

"The Local Community"

Over 20,000 places
within Minato City!

Insect Pest Control Activities

One way to control annoying mosquitoes is to try to decrease the number of wrigglers during the larva period. "Insect Pest Control Activities" are being executed under the instruction of the Life Hygiene Section of the Minato Public Health Center. It is a process of dropping one tablet into each gully, and this activity has been outsourced to the Non-Profit Incorporated Foundation Minato City Silver Human Resources Center (hereafter Silver). This job has continued for over 30 years since 1982.

Do you have any idea how many gulleys there are within Minato City? It amounts to a huge number of 24,730 including city, metropolitan, national and private roads. This simple job of dropping tablets into the gully which requires patience is currently undertaken by 51 members of Silver.

I accompanied Mr. S who is in-charge of the Moto-azabu area. He noted that, "The process needs to be completed within 1 to 2 days after I receive the tablets," and in the case of rain, it takes place the next day. He sets out to do his work with a map in hand of the gulleys of the area, and starts from the early morning. The traffic is not heavy at this time and the job is completed even before the time of garbage collection. The job is carried out six times a year between May and October according to a specific schedule. However, especially during the summer season it starts early from dawn to avoid the heat.

Mr. S is in-charge of 451 places. He has been doing this job for 3 years, so he mostly

knows the position of the gulleys by heart. On the day we accompanied him he was working the Sendai-zaka area. He works smoothly as he drops the tablets inside the gulleys. He marks each gully with chalk when he finishes and marks his map as well.

When I asked Mr. S whether he needed physical strength because the Azabu area has many slopes, he replied, "Its good exercise for my health." There are also many embassies with 24 hour security in the area, and he told us with a smile that the guards say "Thank you" which makes his job worthwhile. While he has an armband with the word "silver" and drops by the police box, he told us that in the past he had been stopped by police officers. He explains what he is doing when passers-by ask him questions.

Many people thank him saying, "Thanks to your work, Minato City doesn't have many mosquitoes."

I also felt gratitude for those individuals undertaking this job.



Dropping a tablet into the gully



Using a chalk to mark off the gully



Map with locations of gulleys



Gulleys:
A deep ditch or channel cut in the earth by running rain-water into the sewage pipe.

(Interviewed and written by: Yukiko Takayanagi)
The original article is written in Japanese.



Raymond and Noémi, relaxing in the atelier with their dog.
(Photograph provided by Raymond Architectural Design Office)

麻布の軌跡

"The Phenomena of Azabu"

Antonin Raymond



Raymond's former house, which was dismantled and reconstructed on the rooftop of the current office building. It is open to public and a tour is possible if you apply.

Antonin Raymond (1888-1976), the architect who promoted modernization of Japanese architecture. He lived half of his life in Japan and has left over 400 works. He built his house and office at Kogai (currently Nishi-azabu 3 chome) after the war. We learned how he felt about Japan and listened to the story behind the basis of his architectural design.

Raymond Architectural Design Office

The Life and Work of Raymond, Who Loved Japan

Raymond is known as an American architect, but was actually born in the town of Kladno, Czech Republic in 1888. He studied architecture in university but decided to go to the United States seeking freedom of his work. He initially pursued a career as a painter, but after he married French painter Noémi Pernessin, he started to work for Frank Lloyd Wright as an architect. It is said that he had a deep interest in Japan, having studied Asian philosophy at a young age. One can say that Raymond met his turning point in life when his mentor, Wright was commissioned to design the Imperial Hotel and asked Raymond to assist him on his project. Raymond was 31 years old when he arrived in Japan along with Wright on Dec. 31, 1919. As he

set foot on Japanese soil, landing at the Port of Yokohama, he was deeply impressed with the sight of New Year's decorations on the houses, people wearing flamboyant kimonos and the tone of the shamisen resonating in the city. He talks about this in his autobiography, saying, "We will never forget this sight."

Although Wright left after the Imperial Hotel project was completed, Raymond decided to remain in Japan. In 1920 he started his activities as an architect by establishing an office inside Mitsubishi-naka 21 Building, and in 1923 he opened his own architectural planning office (the same year of the Great Tokyo Earthquake). He then built his own house in Reinan-zaka Slope (currently Akasaka). It was Japan's first exposed concrete construction. Through acquaintances from the upper echelons of society, he was commissioned large scale construction of public facilities and residences one after the other. It is said that he took great pains to free himself from Wright's influence, and ultimately his body of work was quite diverse. Harmonizing with nature was an important factor for him, as he used diverse material such as concrete, glass, wood and steel to create his own unique style using the material's best qualities. "Raymond's Style," which is based upon his inspiration from old houses, is widely known in the construction of wooden houses. His wife, Noémi, was mainly in-charge of interior designs such as furniture. Those who became famous architects such as Junzo Yoshimura, Kunio Maekawa, as well as the famous woodworker George Nakajima were members of his office in those days.

Home and Office in Azabu Kogai-cho

What was interesting was the fact that he built his home and office in Azabu Kogai-cho, after the war. He built a one story house in the courtyard, a cafeteria for employees in the basement and even built a pool in the garden. He used a western style log house technology, plywood walls, shoji screen and Izumo Washi paper in open spaces. The design which reflects the simplicity and strength of the materials, with an insight into economic efficiency highlights the so called "Raymond Style."

We asked Mr. Toshinobu Miura, the current President of the Raymond Architectural Design Office who joined the company in 1967, about the atmosphere of the office back

then. He was Raymond's last apprentice. "He was very charismatic in the world of architecture, was autocratic and unique, spoke only English and had an intimidating presence." He would go to the staff drawing room during the day. The minute he came in, the staff would offer their chair to him to get instructions, which was a daily routine. He used the Japanese measurement model with a bamboo ruler and divider (compass used for dividing). "He was very detailed in deciding on measurements, and we would have to do the work over if there was even a slight difference. The employees were thoroughly coached on how to religiously draw beautiful lines." However his lifestyle was quite American, and so after he finished work at 5 p.m., he would have a glass of whiskey in his hand, relax and treat his employees like family. "We used to call Raymond, "oyaji" and Noémi, "obah-chan." These nicknames reflected the bond between the couple and the employees.



The one story building, Raymond's house was on the south side and the office was on the other side with the garden in the middle. Having fun in the pool was one of the employees' favorite pastimes in the summer.
(Photograph provided by Raymond Architectural Design Office)



Raymond giving instructions to the staff in the drawing room.
(Photograph provided by Raymond Architectural Design Office)

Respect Towards Raymond's Philosophy

Raymond retired in 1973 and returned to New Haven, Pennsylvania. Three years later, he passed away at age 88. After Raymond's departure, the office expanded with the approaching bubble economy, and eventually the office in Azabu became too small. The company built its own building in Yoyogi and moved in 1978.

Simultaneously, the atelier from his former house was dismantled and reconstructed on the rooftop of the new building, and his furniture was preserved in the "Memorial Room." Raymond's philosophy that, "Our design principle is creating things following a natural flow which are much simpler, much more direct, much more economical and much more honest in approach in accordance with the human scale," still remains and has been passed down as the company's philosophy. Mr. Miura told us that he has a big responsibility because it was directly passed down to him. He has an all employees meeting once a month where he talks to the staff and after the meeting, he continues a ritual from the day's of the Azabu office which is spending time with the employees. They often then prepare a barbecue, which is a reflection of Raymond's spirit of self-sufficiency. Raymond's philosophy is inherited as a legacy through Mr. Miura to the young Japanese architects of the construction industry today.



Mr. Toshinobu Miura, President. He was also raised in Azabu. The new building in which Raymond's (a symbolic coffee shop at the Roppongi Crossing) is in is also a project by the Raymond Architectural Design Office.

Reference: "Autobiography of Antonin Raymond" (new format) Translation by Hiroshi Misawa, Kagoshima Shuppan Kai
"Antonin Raymond no Kenchiku" Written by Hiroshi Misawa, Kagoshima Shuppan Kai
"Gendai Nihon Kenchikuka Zenshu 1," Editing author Isamu Kurita Sanichi Shobo Sangyo Shincho Sept., 2006 Issue, Vol. 648 Sangyo Shinchosha

(Interviewed by Akira Mori, Kumiko Omura, Aki Tanaka Written by: Aki Tanaka)
The original article is written in Japanese.

The Azabu Regional City Office intends to solve the various issues of the town through the viewpoint of our residents and by working together to address these matters

Minato City Basic Plan and the Azabu Regional City Office Precinct Plan Regarding FY 2012 - FY 2014

Minato City reviewed the Minato City Basic Plan with foresight into the way it should be in the future, and, drew up the new "Minato City Basic Plan (FY 2012 - FY 2014)." "Regional Precinct Plans (FY 2012 - FY 2014)" were also newly drawn up by the five regions of the city. These plans contain the actual conditions, specific problems and solutions of each community. They also include distinctive community plans and businesses in order to heighten the attraction of each regional city.

At the Azabu Regional City Office as we did in the pre-planning stage, the "Azabu Regional City Office Precinct Plan (FY 2012 - FY 2014)" was constructed with the active participation of residents from the initial stages of planning. We expect to have residents participate as we go into the execution stage and verify the results. In this column, each time we will be introducing four out of the twelve community projects which have been reflected in the plan.

Regarding the Azabu Regional City Office Projects

1. System to Propose Collaborative Projects "Reviewing issues in executing the project"

We will be providing opportunities to discuss a system towards realizing a vision for the future of the region through diverse discussions with the residents, corporations, and foreign nationals who reside, work, study or are otherwise active in Azabu.

[Content of Project]

Reflecting the community's opinion in regional policies and, as a part of executing the system regarding participation and collaboration, we will be accepting applications on project proposals from our residents which will go through a selection process. After the proposal is set up as a project (every fiscal year), collaboration will take place upon execution.

Goal of Overall Plan (End of FY 2014)	Current Situation (Projection at end of FY 2011)	Project Plan			
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total
Execution	-	Notice Execution	Execution (Project)	Execution (Project)	Execution

2. Project to Build Disaster Prevention Network

(Former Name: Building a Safety Net In Case of Disasters)

"Reviewing issues in executing the project"

The Azabu region has a mixture of people who work, study, and shop

on a daily basis, which is why some disorder can be predicted when a disaster should strike. There also have been concerns from the town council and residents' association about how to help people having trouble return home in case of disasters.

Specific disaster prevention countermeasures need to be reviewed in alignment with firms within the region and foreign residents.

[Content of Project]

Based upon the Minato City Community Disaster-Prevention Plan, we will align with the firms and the different community groups on specific countermeasures to address the issues of those who will have difficulty returning home, as well as for the foreign people and the visitors in the event that a disaster should occur.



Goal of Overall Plan (End of FY 2014)	Current Situation (Projection at end of FY 2011)	Project Plan			
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total
Business's Participating in Conference of Azabu Region's Disaster Prevention Network 25 Firms Drills Executed Annually	Business's Participating in Conference of Azabu Region's Disaster Prevention Network 15 Firms Drills Executed Annually	Making Action Plans For Times of Disaster	Verify Execute	Verify Execute	Plans & Execution Regarding Action Plans For Times of Disaster

3. Project on Azabu Disaster Prevention Guide

"Reviewing issues in executing the project"

In case those who work, study and shop in Azabu have trouble with returning home at times of disaster, there is concern that evacuation sites and facilities for those residing in the region will be impacted.

[Content of Project]

Creating "spaces to stay in the town" and establishing bulletin boards etc., regarding information on measures at the time of disaster in foreign languages.

To establish bulletin boards that have disaster prevention maps in public parks in order to spread information of regional evacuation sites and facilities. Also to create maps to support those returning home at the 9 regional evacuation sites at times of disaster.

Goal of Overall Plan (End of FY 2014)	Current Situation (Projection at end of FY 2011)	Project Plan			
		FY 2012	FY 2013	FY 2014	Total
Establish Bulletin Boards Create Maps	-	Establish Create	Establish Create	Establish Create	Establish Create

Koryo Junior High School Indoor Pool Opens

Location	4-14-8 Nishi-azabu, Minato City Tel: 5464-7749 (Phones will be available during operating hours of the pool)	
Open	Thurs. Fri. Sat. Sun.	
Operating Hours	Thurs. & Fri.	- 6:30 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
	Sat. & Sun.	- 10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. and 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m.
	National Holidays on Thurs. & Fri	- 3:30 p.m. - 5:30 p.m. and 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m.

*The above days and hours may be closed due to school events. Please refer to the Minato City Homepage for details.

The fee for 2 hours is 300 yen for adults, 100 yen for elementary and junior high school students and 13,000 yen for groups.

- First and Third Sundays: Free Admission for Residents
- Second and Fourth Saturdays: Free Admission for Elementary and Jr. High School students residing in Minato City.
(Eligibility) Residents and Those Working in Minato City
- * Personal registration cards will be necessary upon using the pool.
- * Those who do not have a personal registration card will be provided with one at the pool reception desk, so please bring proof of residency or employment in the city. This is unnecessary for children below the age of Jr. High School.
- * Children below three years old and infants still wearing diapers cannot use the pool.

For those who want to exercise! Drop by on your way back from work! Available throughout the year for people who live or work in the city.



Inquiries:
Sports Promotion Subsection of Minato City Secretariat of the Board of Education Lifelong Learning Promotion Section
Minato Call: 03-5472-3710
Minato City Homepage: <http://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/>

Information from Azabu Regional City Office

We Ask for Your Cooperation in Abiding to the Minato City Smoking Rules



Announcement from Azabu Regional City Office

Parks and playgrounds for children are all non-smoking
Smoking is prohibited on the streets and outdoors public areas such as parks.
Smoking is only allowed at designated smoking areas.

What are the Minato City Smoking Rules?

Minato City is aiming to prevent secondhand smoking and promote environmental beautification by prohibiting smoking in streets and public areas such as parks in all areas of Minato City. Initially, the smoking rule applied to smoking on the road or smoking-and-walking on the streets. From April 1, 2011, the rule has been extended to cover areas such as parks where people can freely go in and out and all outdoors public places. Smoking is absolutely prohibited in parks and playgrounds.

The Minato Smoking Rules are:

1. To be considerate of those who don't smoke
2. No smoking in any areas other than designated smoking areas
3. No discarding cigarettes on the road

Minato Smoking Rules Activities

■ Awareness Campaign

Campaign activities are being executed with the cooperation of Minato City residents, companies, and administrative institutions, with the aim of informing people of the "Minato City Smoking Rules" and improving the urban landscape.

■ PR Activities Using Stickers & Posters

Road stickers are being used mainly around the vicinity of stations to call attention to the "Minato City Smoking Rules." Awareness activities are also being carried out through posters and outdoor visuals (Vision Street).

■ Patrols & Awareness Activities

The Azabu Regional City Office also has awareness patrol members wearing the "Minato City Smoking Rules" symbol mark, giving guidance and conducting awareness activities to encourage people, including non-residents who commute to work or school, not to smoke on the streets.

Minato City will continue to promote the "Minato City Smoking Rules." We appreciate your understanding and cooperation.

Inquiries

Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section
 Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8802

To the foreign nationals residing in Azabu, wouldn't you want to learn more about Azabu by participating in local community volunteer activities?

This will be a great opportunity for you to contribute to the development of the town as well as interact with the people of the community and learn more about the town of Azabu. English interpreters will be there to help you while you participate in the activities.

Eligibility

Foreign nationals residing, working or studying in Minato City who are 20 years old or older and are interested in volunteer activities.

Time and Place:

Cleanup: Friday in the latter part of March, 19:45 (Activity starts from 20:00)

Meeting Place:

Mikawadai Park (Roppongi 4-2-27)

* The purpose of the activity and your work will be explained. The activity will be for about one hour from the start.

Area:

Vicinity of the Roppongi Crossing

- * You can participate in both cleanup and patrol or either one.
- * There will be no reward.
- * The activity will be cancelled if it starts raining and you will be contacted on that day.

Application:

The date will be determined later. Please contact us if you are interested.

For Inquiries Contact:

Collaboration Project Section of the Azabu Regional City Office
 Tel. 03-5114-8812 Fax 03-3583-3782



We Are Looking For Editorial Staff

Please send your application with your address, name, occupation (school name), telephone number, and the reason why you are interested (in Japanese or English, format and number of letters have no limit), and deliver directly, mail, or fax to the following: Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo (106-8515).
 ● Tel: 03-5114-8802 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

We look forward to your participation as editorial staff to make the newsletter more appealing.



You can access the Azabu Newsletter from the homepage as well.



AZABU

● Location of the newsletter: Roppongi 1 chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabu Juban subway station, Minato Library, Azabu Library Service Center, Appy Azabu, Azabu Regional City Office etc.
 ● Usage of articles, illustrations and photographs in this newsletter is prohibited.

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Editor's Note

I return to the Editor's Section from this month. There are many amazing stories we come across at our meetings, and today our proofreading work got derailed?... or should I say, we progressed. It was the first time I heard the story of the gully on page 5. It was a fun 2 hours of rediscovering this area through the people I talked to, and the research I conducted. This is the time of the season where it starts to get cold, so we hope that our stories bring you warmth and keep you cozy. Our wish is that "The Azabu" will continue to bring warmth to your hearts next year as well. (Satsuki Nishino)

The original article is written in Japanese.

"Minato Call" information service.

Minato call is a new city information service, available in English every day from 7 a.m.-11 p.m.

*English speakers are also available

Minato Call :

Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752
 E-mail: info@minato.call-center.jp