

Fascinated by Artistic Azabu ⑩ The White Palace is a Treasure House of Islamic Culture.

—Visiting the Arabic Islamic Institute in Tokyo—

Halfway up the hill, along the steep slope commonly called “Kitsune-zaka”, an impressive white building comes into view. Its formal name is the “Arabic Islamic Institute in Tokyo”, a branch institute of “Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University”. It was originally established in 1982 as a cultural organization attached to the Royal Embassy of Saudi Arabia Tokyo. It was moved to the present location in 2001 and the Arabic Language Education course was inaugurated there. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia invested in this Institute and the National Al-Imam Muhammad Ibn Saud Islamic University operates it. The same types of branch institutes are located in Djibouti and Indonesia.

More than 2000 people have participated in the Arabic Language Education Course.

The main purpose of the Institute is to provide the opportunity to study the Arabic Language. This course has a semester system starting from April and September, and each course period is two years. In each term, students learn reading, writing, grammar and conversation from native instructors for 15 weeks. They provide thorough lessons about how to write Arabic letters from right to left, pronunciation, using educational equipment, conversational Arabic, and other fundamental skills. In the day classes, they provide productive lessons from Monday to Friday, in total 300 hours. For night classes, they give lessons three times a week, for 90 hours. The required fee per term is only for the textbook and is as reasonable as 25,000 yen. Classes are structured on a level system, are from level 1 to level 4. In this system, levels are achieved by passing examinations. Recently, the number of students has increased continuously. In particular, the number of students in night classes has been double that for daytime classes. Since the courses started, more than 2,000 students have participated. An alumni bulletin called “Tawasol” is issued. The students are of various ages and from various countries.

The number of staff members is 35 in total. The principal Dr. Nasser Mohammed S. ALOMAIM, a Saudi Arabian native, studied economics in the US and was assigned as the principal in 2014. In addition to the staff members from Saudi Arabia, there are other members from various countries including Sudan, Egypt, Indonesia, Tunisia, Pakistan, Djibouti, Philippines, Jordan, Morocco, and others. There are also five regular Japanese staff members, serving as lecturers, etc. They have experience living or studying in Arabic speaking countries and are strong supporters of the students.

The expressed purposes of the Institute are not only language education, but also reinforcing the friendly relationship between Japan and the Arabic Islamic world and to contributing to mutual understanding. In addition to Arabic language classes, the Arabic Calligraphy class has become very popular. Many students have become enraptured by focusing on interpreting the Arabic characters, finding themselves drawn into another world. Actually, whenever new students are recruited, a long waiting list is created. The Institute actively develops cultural exchanges including operating a Japanese - Arabic Translation course and cooking classes, holding symposiums and more. This Institute plays a role as a comprehensive base for learning Arabic culture.

It is Friday when Muslims gather at a mosque.

As prayer time approaches, the voice of “azan” (Islamic call to prayer) echoes in the building. After the prayers cleanse their bodies, they go to the service room. Men pray on the first floor and women pray on the second floor. There is a niche in the wall at the other end of the mosque, indicating the direction of distant Mecca. Muslims pray in the direction of Mecca. About 200 people including ambassadors of Arabic Islamic countries, come to the mosque for pray every Friday. In such cases, both underground halls and the service room on the first floor are used.



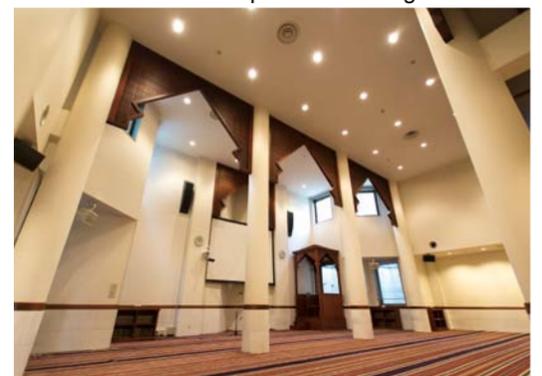
Arabic Calligraphy by the hand of Mr. Koichi Honda (Chairman of Japan Arabic Calligraphy Association): Mr. Honda is world-famous calligrapher, one of only a few Japanese.
 Photo provided by Mr. Koichi Honda

There are two types of services, the obligatory service and an optional service. Of those gathered to pray, the person who is most familiar with Islam leads the service as an Imam. However, worshippers can pray individually at any time whenever they want. The service rooms in the Arabic Islamic Institute are always open. We saw some Muslims offer prayers individually.

We got the impression that the Institute is very open for everyone, which was different from what we expected from the image outside of their high gate. We enjoyed the interview and also the delicious food prepared by a Moroccan chef. We fully understood how Dr. ALOMAIM, the principal, emphasizes their approach from the cultural side, in addition to language education.

Currently, the interest in halal food and the Islamic religion and culture is growing gradually as the 2020 Olympic Games in Tokyo approach. As we left the Institute, we became aware of our strong feeling that friendly relations with Arabic Islamic countries will strengthen more and more.

3-4-18, Moto-azabu, Minato City
 Tel: 03-3404-6622 <http://www.aii-t.org/>



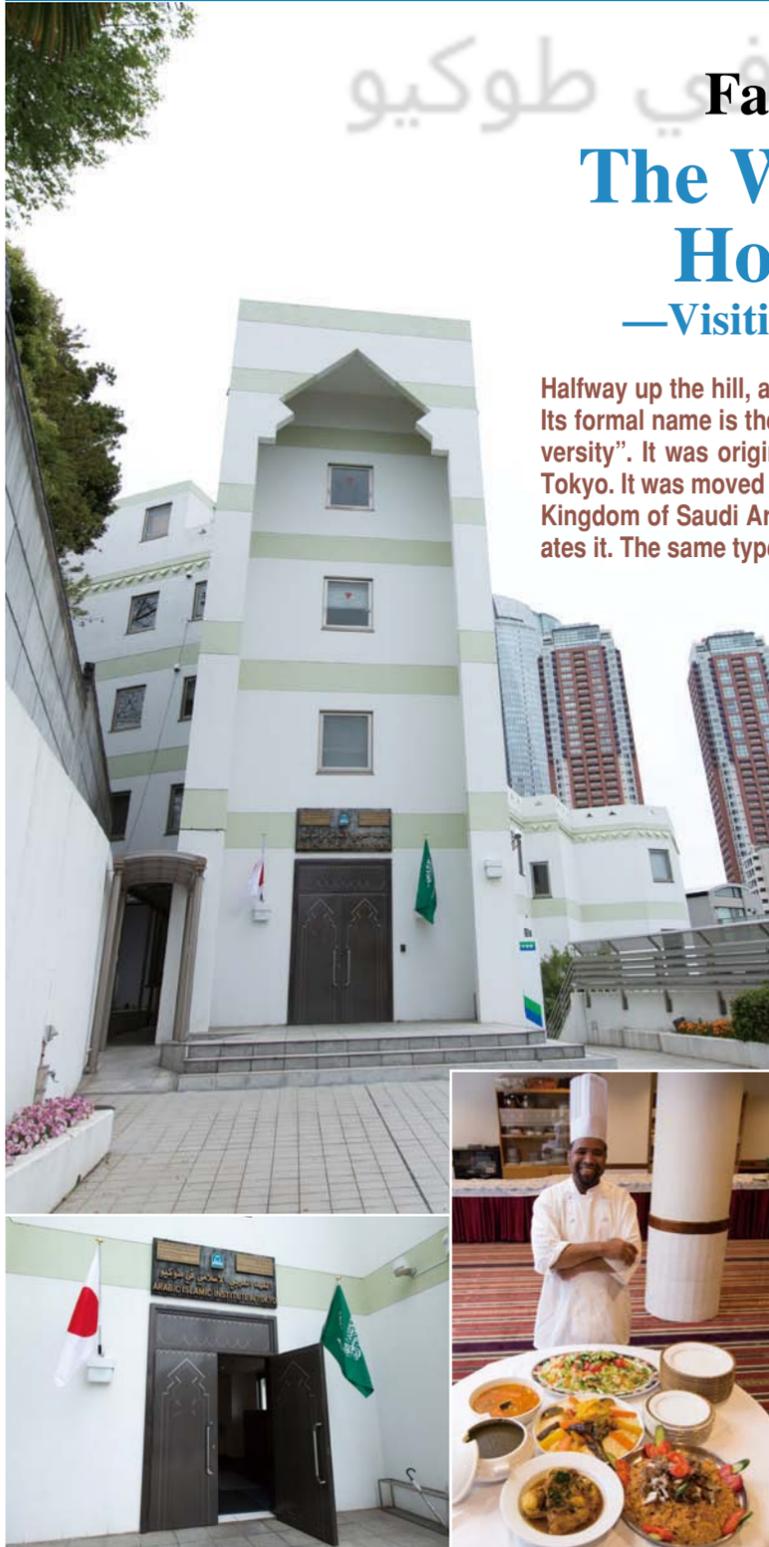
(Upper) Service Room for Men: because many people come to the mosque every Friday, the service room is filled to capacity, the underground room is opened as an additional service room. The service room for women is located on the 2nd floor.



(Right) A fully equipped library is attached to the building. Korans translated into many languages are arranged on the shelves.



In the exhibition room, articles for everyday use, etc., made in Saudi Arabia are displayed.



(Upper) The outside appearance of a magnificent white palace that has four stories above ground and two below
 (Lower) The flags of two nations flutter in the wind over the large door.



Arab dishes made by a Moroccan chef: main dish is chicken and lamb. In addition, couscous is provided. For rice, Basmati rice produced in India is used.



Dr. Nasser Mohammed S. ALOMAIM, the principal, is very passionate about cultural exchange with Japan.



A woman instructor from Egypt was teaching Arabic language pronunciation in the audio-visual classroom.



A class in session with rich content: Students learn reading, writing and grammar. For each student, a 60% attendance rate is required.



麻布 びと

"Azabu — A Human Story"

Believing in the power of drama, we want to sincerely and realistically express the human condition.

On this page of the "Azabu - A Human History", we introduce Ms. Naoko Shimizu and Mr. Yasuhiro Wakita, two members of the Haiyuza Theater Company. Haiyuza was established by Mr. Koreya Senda and others in 1944, and is one of the representative theatrical companies in Japan. This company has developed its activities since 1954 based at the "Haiyuza Theater" located close to Roppongi Crossing. The number of members is more than 100, from teenagers up to seniors in their eighties, including research students. The above two persons are core figures in the Company. We visited the rehearsal room of the Company to meet them.

They want the audience to see the realistic human conditions they perform.

Many people tend to feel that being an actor or actress is a glamorous business. However, in the rehearsal room, they look just like ordinary people wearing jeans. Ms. Shimizu was invited by her friend to join the theatrical club in high school, and studied the dramatic arts at university, like her senior who she looked up to. Mr. Wakita was invited by his friend to join Haiyuza Actors School and has polished his skill of acting. Unexpectedly, neither of them is good at letting their real selves out in front of many people. They read a play script carefully and repeatedly, learning their parts and searching for the most natural behavior and body movement in the rehearsal. When they come to perform they are perfectly in tune with the other actors and actresses on stage. They can act the part of a character from their heart.



Ms. Shimizu always carries this bag with her. In it you will find her script, costume, make-up set and mouthwash. (Although sometimes she forgets important items.)

In order to perfect their prepared roles on stage, maintaining good health is essential. Sometimes, they sleep with a mask on or warm up by stretching in the morning before a performance.

Dramas are performed to express human conditions. Actors want the audience to experience the energy that comes from the acting, not only that of performers, but also of the director and staff members.

A Challenge for Ms. Shimizu

For an actor who needs to act various parts with different ages and vocations, daily feedback is essential. When Ms. Shimizu played the role of an extremely rich wife, the director pointed out "From your reaction now, you do not look like a wealthy woman because I can't feel your emotional stability". She smiled wryly saying, "It is because I haven't ever been rich!" However, she is a talented actress because she received the "Yomiuri Theatrical Grand Awards Excellent Actress Prize" in 2012. During a performance in November last year, an actress who was playing an important role had to withdraw from the performance before the closing day due to poor health. Mr. Wakita recommended Ms. Shimizu as an emergency substitute. Mr. Wakita told us "I could not think of anybody other than Ms. Shimizu who could learn such an enormous amount of lines in such a short time, and act such a difficult role". Ms. Shimizu learned her role and cues, without full rehearsals. Moreover, she was able to do this while rehearsing another play. Two days later, as she performed on stage as the substitute, she was working hard, feeling "I want to be helpful to them". "My heart was pounding!" she said, because she did not just want to act like a substitute, but to show her true acting ability. She certainly went beyond the expectations of her seniors and co-actors.



Trophy of "Excellent Actress Prize of the 20th Yomiuri Theatrical Grand Awards" in 2012: Ms. Shimizu received it for the excellent performance in the role of Barbara in "Pack of Lies - Lies, Lies, Lies" and Gina in "Nogamo" (Wild Duck).

Mr. Wakita's Beliefs

The Haiyuza Company has evolved along with the times, periodically presenting plays with the theme of "War and Peace", and representing itself as a "Theatrical Company that watches over the present era". Mr. Wakita is 9 years junior to Ms. Shimizu, and played a role as a staff member who made a concerted effort in the labor movement at a munitions plant in the "Hanno Kotei" (Reaction Process) held in May. It was valuable experience for him as an actor as he was instructed how to wear military costumes and the like, as is necessary in all war dramas. His admirable



Mr. Wakita said, "I am interested in many things. I want to do everything I can".



"I just love rehearsals", said Ms. Shimizu.

senior who actually had the experience of doing up his puttees during WWII directed him. "My generation did not go through the war. I always play the role hoping that something important remains in the memory of the audience".

Moving along with the Times in the Town of Roppongi

For both of them, Roppongi is a "workplace" where they have come for 20 years since their research student days. When they were students, "We felt awkward coming to Roppongi". However, in the course of watching the townscape and the people change, they became attached to the area. On Fridays, they participate in cleanup activities in Roppongi as volunteers. The "Roppongi Clean-up Association" organizes these activities. Its members are local residents and people working in Roppongi. Ms. Shimizu told us "After completely cleaning up



Part of Mr. Wakita's collection: not only does he use them for performances, but he has made a hobby out of collecting them.



Both of them participate in cleaning activities around Roppongi Crossing, each with a dustpan and a broom, and wearing a blue jacket uniform.

the town, going drinking with the other members is great! The food always tastes good and the conversation is fascinating for me". Their volunteer friends come to the theater to see their performances. "I can learn a lot from them when I listen to their comments while drinking beer after the show. They are important supporters for me", said Mr. Wakita. It is sure that they have completely blended into the community in Roppongi.

Ms. Shimizu's next performance is a contemporary drama titled "Sogekihei" (A sniper) (original title of "Dead Metaphor" written by George F. Walker) from July 23 to August 7, 2016. She plays a female politician in this dark comedy set in Canada. Mr. Wakita's next performance is "Kazoku Reijo tachi no Taisho Showa" (Taisho and Showa Eras for Daughters of Noble Families) in which he plays the interviewer of a former nobleman. These plays are both performed in the drill hall on the 5th floor of the Haiyuza Theater.



Mr. Wakita is an important power in Haiyuza's baseball team. He can do everything from pitching, catching to managing.

It would be great to think about your own life while watching their passionate performance on a midsummer night.



H.E. Mr. Leonardo CARRION Eguiguren

**The Republic of Ecuador**Total Area: 256,000 km²

(Approx. size of Honshu and Kyushu combined)

Population: 15,420,000 people

(Source: INEC report in 2013, National Institute for Statistics and Census)

Capital City: Quito

President: Rafael Correa

Assembly: Constituent Assembly

(137 seats with 4-year term)

Reference: the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Website
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/latin/ecuador/index.html>

Interviewed at Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador

Visiting Embassies 35

From the "World" of Azabu



ECUADOR

The Emblem at entrance of the Ecuador Embassy on the 8th floor of the Embassy Building in Nishi-azabu.**Ecuador, overcoming a devastating earthquake, continuously living with Great Nature and focusing on the future ahead**

The news of a powerful earthquake, which struck near the coast of Ecuador in South America (a moment magnitude of 7.8), made headlines around the world on April 16 at 18:58pm ECT in 2016. It was just 17 hours after the main-shock of Kumamoto Earthquakes (maximum Seismic Intensity of 7 with a magnitude of 7.3). The intensity of the impact in Ecuador was almost 20 times larger than the one in Kumamoto. The severe quakes of "P-wave" and "S-wave", lateral and vertical tremors had occurred simultaneously and entirely demolished the most beautiful northern part of Ecuadorian coastline. Despite the circumstances, Ambassador Leonardo CARRION Eguiguren (hereinafter called the "Ambassador") took his time to meet for our interview.



Mt. Cotopaxi (5,897m) known as "Mt. Fuji of Ecuador"

Life goes on – the stronger relationship between Japan and Ecuador

At the beginning of our interview, we expressed our deepest sympathies and condolences to the people of Ecuador who have been affected by the unexpected tragedy. The Ambassador told us, "Natural disasters are unavoidable. Japan, too, has shown us the great resilience to recover from the Tohoku Disaster and to rebuild communities since then. This time again, in spite of the catastrophic situation in Kumamoto, the Japanese government, the City of Minato and many others have shown us a great support, humanity and friendship. We are very thankful. We just cope with the reality and must move on. Pain and sufferings only make us stronger".

The Ambassador has been appointed at the current position since January 2012. Before his duty in Japan, he had been posted to Chile, Uruguay and Bolivia as a Minister as well as Ambassador. This is his first assignment in Asian Pacific Region. "I now feel Japan and Ecuador would be much closer than I thought. We are somehow connected at deeper levels". In fact, the Valdivia Venus (a mother figure statue) from the era of Valdivia Culture in the coastal area around B.C. 3500 resembles the Japanese Jomon Dogu (a mother figure statue from the Jomon period). We may also find similarities between the Andean music and the Japanese traditional music with respect to its scales. We may also feel familiar with the cultures of folk crafts and food. Above all, these make us ponder and romanticize with a wild historical supposition that Japan and Ecuador have had been connected by land since the times of Jomon period.

"Ravage" and "Richness" of Great Nature

Ecuador is located right on the equator on the South American Continent. "Ecuador" stands for "equator" in Spanish. The capital city is Quito, and is located 2,850m above sea level. The size of the country is equivalent to the areas of Honshu and Kyushu region combined. The population is about 15 million people, close to that of Tokyo. The President Correa, inaugurated since 2007, is 53 years old. More than half of the population is under 25 years of age. The birth rate is 2.6 (1.42 for Japan in 2014). Ecuador is certainly the country that represents the power of Sun with full of young vitality.

Due to the occurrence of Super El Nino almost every 14 years, Ecuador had heavy rains and floods that increased fragility on its soil just before the occurrence of the massive earthquake. Historically and geographically speaking, the friction between the Nazca plate and the South American plate has repeatedly caused major quakes on the coastline in the Pacific Ocean. The people in Chile, Peru and Ecuador have had lived under the harshness and ravage caused by Great Nature.

There are currently four active volcanoes in Ecuador such as Mt. Cotopaxi (5,897m known as "Mt. Fuji of Ecuador") and Mt. Tungurahua (5,023m). But in the meantime, these volcanic activities bring abundant natural resources to the country. In fact, there are hot springs called "Baños" everywhere. The Andes run through the center of Ecuador. If you rent a car and drive up and down around the country, you will find yourself stopping over at seas in the "Costa coast area", mountains in the "Sierra mountain district", islands in the "Galapagos Islands" and forests and lakes in the "Oriente rainforest area". This is ab-



The Galapagos Islands are located 900km away from Ecuadorian mainland towards west. These world-heritage islands accommodate many unique indigenous species.



olutely a lifetime experience of natural treasures in paradise. This is the reason why the country attracts so many visitors from all over the world. "Ecuador has everything and you can do anything there except for one thing - skiing. Snowing at 5,000m above sea level is just too high up in the mountains," he told us with a big smile.

**The Ecuadorian Broccoli and Beautiful Roses**

The imports from Ecuador to Japan have been increasing. In particular, how many people would have known that most broccoli we eat here are now coming from Ecuador? The Ecuadorian broccoli, richer in color, have become very popular since growing up at high in altitude where there is less disease and pests with the abundant sunlight. The broccoli that grow up right on the equator may probably contain more vitamin C and minerals than usual. The latest popular superfoods such as "quinoa" and "chia seeds" are also imported from Ecuador.

The Preserved Flowers has also become popular in Japan because of its ever-lasting freshness for a longer period of time without losing its beauty. The historical background of preserved flowers in business is that it was developed by a French company in 1991. The company obtained an international patent and established the first rose factory in Ecuador, due to the perfect climate to supply first class roses throughout the year. Since then, many have followed the trend in business worldwide. Yet, the Ecuadorian roses are still the

best of all in terms of elasticity, freshness and brightness of the flowers. It has been such an eye-opening experience to learn that our daily life and newly life-style are so reliant on products from Ecuador.

Main Export Items to Japan					
Unit: Million Dollars					
HS	Items	2005	2007	2009	2015
08	Banana	50.57	31.58	47.46	50.71
23	Fish Meal	16.65	34.47	34.34	34.34
44	Wood Chips	16.54	13.62	16.44	-
03	Tuna or other fishery products	9.84	7.1	15.62	-
07	Frozen Broccoli	10.39	12.36	14.94	-
06	Flowers	7.95	9.18	10.18	3.7
18	Cacao	12.9	14.46	9.83	11.52
21	Other foods	5.82	7.01	5.53	-
53	Fibers	2.32	2.04	2.44	-
20	Preserved Foods	1.04	1.58	1.77	-

Source: Japan Customs
Change in Main Export Items to Japan, which shows the export of broccoli and flowers has increased steadily.**For the next 100 years**

We will be soon celebrating the 100th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Japan and Ecuador in 1918. The embassy of Ecuador states that "Strong shared desires between the two countries for maintaining peace and continuous growth will be the international standard for the global community". In April 2016, devastating earthquakes happened almost simultaneously in both countries. We are both blessed by abundance of Great Nature and ravaged by natural disasters at the same time. Ecuador is overcoming one of its most difficult times full of positivity and young power to recover from the aftermath and to rebuild communities. For the next 100 years, what do we learn from each other and where does it take us to?

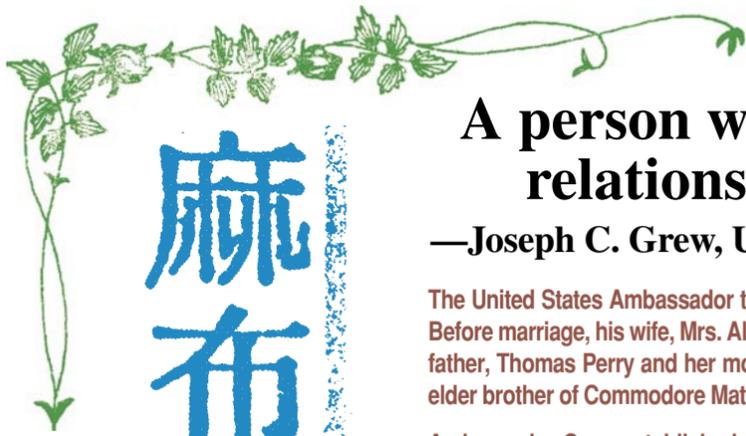
● Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador Website
<http://www.ecuador-embassy.or.jp/j/index.html>



As the Ecuadorian roses are available throughout a year, there is a great demand in preserved flowers business worldwide.

Folk crafts made of Ivory palm nutshells (Tagua), carved as animal ornaments.

Called "Balsa", folk crafts made of balsa-wood. Birds and fish are colorful in South America.



麻布の軌跡

The Phenomena
of Azabu

A person who made a great effort to develop a friendly relationship between Japan and the United States

—Joseph C. Grew, United States Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Japan—

The United States Ambassador to Japan, Joseph Clark Grew (1880-1965) arrived at his new post in Japan in 1932 and served for 10 years until 1942. Before marriage, his wife, Mrs. Alice Grew (1883-1959) lived at 44 Sakurada-cho, Azabu (present day 3-4, Moto-azabu) for three years from 1898 with her father, Thomas Perry and her mother Lila, an impressionist painter (The AZABU Vol. 19) before marriage. Thomas Perry was a great-grandson of the elder brother of Commodore Matthew Perry, who urged the Edo Shogunate to open the country in 1853. Thomas was also a Keio University professor.

Ambassador Grew established a deep friendship between Japan and the US with his good sense and patience. He recollected in his own literary work, "Ten Years in Japan", that when he was asked by a Japanese newspaper journalist, "Do you conceal a dagger or dove in your bosom?" he answered that "I have nothing concealed in my bosom except the desire to work with all my mind, with all my heart, and with all my strength for Japanese-American friendship", when he came back from vacation in 1939, the relationship between Japan and the US had become tense just before the Pacific War.



The US Ambassador to Japan, Grew (first from the left in the front row) and his friends in the Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club House (Collection of Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club)

Ambassador J. Grew's Arrival at the New Post

Grew was born into a distinguished business-leading family in Boston and studied at the highly regarded Groton high school. In 1902, he graduated from Harvard University. He traveled for more than one year after graduation, to Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan. In the course of this travel, he brought down a tiger while hunting in China and then stopped off in Japan. He traveled around Japan at first from Nagasaki to Kyoto. He was impressed by the artfulness, diligence and the teamwork of the Japanese people. He wrote in his travel writing that he would not forget the time he sang the national hymn with the crewmen on a ship going out from the Port of Yokohama to return to the US, while watching Mt. Fuji turn red and gleaming in the background.

In 1904, he entered the US Department of State, and became a diplomat. He arrived at his new post in Cairo. Then, in 1905, Grew married Alice Perry. They met each other by chance. However, he recalled that he got married with Alice because of Japan.

After that, Grew held various posts successively in Cairo, Mexico, Russia and Germany as a diplomat, and in 1919 he attended the Paris Peace Conference after WWI. He met Kinmochi Saionji (1849-1940), Nobuaki Makino (1861-1949) and an attendant, Shigeru Yoshida (1878-1967), who attended the Conference as delegates from the Japanese Government, and he obtained personally the member list of the Japan delegation. Grew later became the Ambassador to Japan, and by curious coincidence ended up establishing a deep friendship with them in Japan. After attending the Conference, Grew engaged in diplomatic activities in Europe and became the US Ambassador to Turkey in 1927, after serving as the Assistant Secretary of State. In 1932, he was assigned as the US Ambassador to Japan.

Missions of Ambassador J. Grew

The Ambassador, who had loyalty to the US, but at the same time was a Japan expert, always said that "The missions of the ambassador are to protect the interests of the US in Japan, deepen the friendship between Japan and the US, and make the best effort to maintain the friendly relationship".

When Elsie (1912-1998), the third daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Grew, got married to a US diplomat and held a wedding ceremony in 1933

at the American Embassy, Empress Kojun sent a gold-lacquered jewel box. The Empress Dowager Teimei sent a silver vase, and Prince and Princess Chichibu sent a lacquered cabinet as wedding gifts to the newly married couple. Many high society people including the Prince and Princess Chichibu and Prime Minister Minoru Saito, attended the ceremony.

In his speech for the Perry Memorial Day in 1934, Ambassador Grew noted that Japan has a great enduring culture, with arts, literature and the industry and economy that had developed as the result of accepting Modern Western Civilization since the opening of the country. Then, in 1937, he became very impressed that Japanese people took to heart that Helen Keller (1880-1968) overcame her visual and hearing handicaps and came to Japan for social welfare activity in April 1937.

He loved sports, in particular, tennis and golf, and was chosen as Chairman of the Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club in 1939. The club was moved in 1940 from Sannen-cho, Kojimachi-ku (present day Chiyoda-ku) to Azabu Morioka-cho (present day 5-Chome, Minami-Azabu).

Grew, the Ambassador, encountered many historical incidents in Japan, including Japan's secession from the League of Nations (1933), which brought the relationship between Japan and the US to a major turning point. These included the outbreak of the Second Sino-Japanese War, (1937), the Notification of Annulment of Japan-US Commerce and Navigation Treaty (1939), the Tripartite Pact (1940), the outbreak of the Pacific War (1941), and the February 26 Incident (an abortive Coup d'état by young officers) (1936).

Grew analyzed the condition of Japan around 1941, and concluded it was taking reckless action because of hard-liners in part of the military. On the other hand, the Ambassador Grew acknowledged the existence of moderates who supported the friendship between Japan and the US, such as moderate group in the Imperial Court, in business circles, and some naval officers. He formed friendships with Nobuaki Makino, Tsuneo Matsudaira (Minister of the Imperial Household) (1877-1949), Aisuke Kabayama (1865-1953), Jiro Shirasu (1902-1985), Shigeru Yoshida and others. He addressed the issues and made a great effort to settle the difficult situation up to around

September 1941. He brought about the meeting between the Prime Minister, Fumimaro Konoe (1891-1945) and President Franklin D. Roosevelt (1882-1945) to avoid the war between Japan and the US, but his efforts were not successful.

In December 8, 1941, the day after the Attack on Pearl Harbor, Ambassador Grew and his wife were held as detainees, together with embassy staff members, at the United States Embassy site in Tokyo. A get-well gift and farewell gift from Prince Chichibu were secretly sent to them through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Ambassador Grew and his wife planted a cherry tree in the garden of the US Embassy on June 10, 1942, just before they returned to the US and left saying that when the cherries blossomed, peace would surely prevail. He wrapped confidential documents to be reported to US Department of State, around his own body, and embarked for the US on July 27, 1942 on a diplomatic exchange ship. He reached New York on August 25, 1942.

After he returned, although he firmly believed in the victory of the US, he gave a lecture on the actual situation concerning the hard-liners in part of the military in Japan. At that time in the US the words "Remember Pearl Harbor" were on the lips people everywhere. Despite this and the ongoing war, Grew invoked the good will and the obedient attitude of Japanese people to calmly concluded that the Japanese people should be given a chance, as he believed the Japanese people with their civilization of abundance, aspire to economic security and liberal universal culture as well. Not only as a diplomat, but also as a deeply moral person, he foresaw the future with rational principles, and again faced difficulties courageously in the US.

At the end of the Pacific War, Grew was the US Assistant Secretary of State, but on August 15, 1945 resigned the post and retired.

After the War, J. Grew encouraged Japanese high school students to study in the US every year and raised funds for the establishment of an International Christian University. During a turbulent period, he had a colorful life as a diplomat, and laid the foundation for the friendly relationship between Japan and the US and received an honorary doctorate from Harvard University.

Mr. and Mrs. Grew fell into eternal sleep in their hometown of Boston.

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 Photo provided by Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club

もうひとつの 麻布の軌跡

Another "The Phenomena of Azabu" Story

Grew's Cherry Tree

Grew's desire for piece has been taken over by the Students in a Local Elementary School.

There is a cherry tree of which blossoms are eagerly anticipated in the spring this year. It is "Grew's Cherry Tree" planted on the ground of Minato City Municipal Azabu Elementary School in Azabudai 1-Chome. In the main section of "the Phenomena of Azabu", it is mentioned that Ambassador Grew planted a cherry tree just before he returned to the US. A branch of this cherry tree was cut as a nursery tree, and it was planted at the elementary school. We would like to describe how it went.

I visited there three times to check its progress from the beginning of April. Around the time when the Somei Yoshino (Yoshino Cherry) almost fell, double-flowered cherry blossoms were in full bloom with young green leaves. We could take photos of them. The tree is still young and slender, but it looks fresh and gorgeous. The following description is shown on a plate that describes the origin and history of the tree.

Grew's Cherry Tree
The 135th School Anniversary Memorial Tree
Origin and History

In 1942, when the late Mr. Joseph Grew, the US Ambassador to Japan at that time, returned to the US due to the war, he planted a cherry tree in the garden of the ambassador's residence wishing for peace between Japan and the US. When he planted the tree, they said that he stated, "When the cherry blossoms bloom, peace will return like the swing of a pendulum".

"Grew's Cherry Tree" was grafted after the War and the original tree is still flourishing in the garden of the US ambassador's residence.

From the grafted tree, another branch was taken as a nursery tree and planted. This "Third Generation" cherry tree conveys the late Mr. Grew's desire for peace and friendly relationship between Japan and the US.

Through the kindness of former US Ambassador to Japan,

Mr. John Roos, this tree was donated to Azabu Elementary School. This was to support the initiative of an old student of the school to hand down the story of "Grew's Cherry Tree" to his old school.

This year is the 135th anniversary of the foundation of our school and this tree was planted as part of the alumni association memorial project, attended by Mr. Roos.

October 19, 2010

Donated by the US Embassy to Japan
Supported by Minato City Azabu Elementary School Alumni Association"

The "old student" mentioned above is the late Mr. Kikuya Funayama who graduated from the elementary school in 1942. His father, Mr. Sadakichi Funayama worked for the US Embassy and was there when US Ambassador Grew planted the cherry tree. In Kikuya's book titled "Hakuto Washi to Sakura no Ki" (Bald Eagle and Cherry Tree) based on the story heard from his father, it says that "Sadakichi visited a gardening fair held once a month at Konpira Shrine in Toranomon close to his house, accompanied by a policeman and obtained a young cherry tree" (sic). Kikuya kept the words of Sadakichi in mind, and wished the tree to last forever. He planned to graft it at his old school. In the third spring after planting the cherry tree, it bloomed for the first time in 2013.

For this article, we interviewed Mr. Hirotaka Sugano, the present Schoolmaster of Minato City Azabu Elementary



Grew's Cherry Tree surrounded by a wooden fence

Watchers of Grew's Cherry Tree



In front of the Origin and History Plate

Mr. Hirotaka Sugano, Schoolmaster

When I found out the historical facts of US Ambassador Grew's extraordinary efforts for the peace and friendly relationship between Japan and the US, I was deeply impressed. It's a great story of a cherry tree that represents high expectations in our school. When the cherry bloomed for the first time, we reported it in our school bulletin as a big story. Also, last year, the 140th anniversary memorial project of our school publication of the "Azabu", we included the chapter "Grew's Cherry Tree" to go down in our school's history.



Looking back at the ceremony with photos

Mr. Hiroshi Shimizu, Councilor, Ex-student

At that time, Mr. Kikuya Funayama's passion to plant a branch of Grew's cherry tree was really enormous, so I was moved by his passion and made an effort to make it happen. The procedure, from the proposal to the US Embassy to the tree planting ceremony, was very smooth. I remember that the former Ambassador Roos attended the ceremony and we enjoyed a friendly talk with each other. So as not to limit this story to being just about a cherry tree, I would like to take the opportunity to suggest that this is also something of a war memorial to hand down to future generations.



Tree planting ceremony scene on the day in 2010
Photo provided by Minato City Azabu Elementary School

(Interviewed and written by Aki Tanaka)

Notification from the Temporary Welfare Benefit Subsection

"Temporary Welfare Benefits" to ease the burden of the rise in the consumption tax rate, and "Benefits for Basic Pensioners with a Disability or Surviving Families" (Temporary Welfare Benefits to support Pensioners, etc.) for supporting low-income pensioners, are to be awarded.

Eligibility and Allowance

	Temporary Welfare Benefits	Benefit for Basic Pensioner with a Disability or the Surviving Family (Temporary Welfare Benefit to support Pensioners, etc.)
Eligibility	Individuals who have Minato City residence certificates as of January 1, 2016, and on whom the ward tax (per capita rate) is not imposed for FY2016, are eligible. * Dependents of persons on whom the ward tax is imposed, or livelihood protection recipients in the social security system, are not eligible.	Out of those who are eligible for Temporary Welfare Benefits in FY2016, individuals who have received the benefits for basic pension with disability or basic survivor's pension in May in FY2016, are eligible. * Recipients of Benefits for Elderly Persons are not eligible.
Allowance	Three Thousand Yen per Eligible Person	Thirty Thousand Yen per Eligible Person

* For those who are eligible both for Temporary Welfare Benefits and Benefits for Basic Pensioners with Disability or Surviving Family, both Benefits are awarded.

Application Period From September 27 (Tue), 2016 to January 13 (Fri), 2017

* The application form is to be sent to those eligible on September 26 (Fri), 2016.

Application Procedure Fill in the necessary items on the application form and send it together with the required document using the enclosed return envelope.

When you come to the office, go to the following temporary reception times.

* Reception Period: Weekdays (excluding Saturday, Sunday and Holidays) From 8:30am to 5:00pm (until 7:00pm only on Wednesday, except for the Daiba Branch Office)

● **Shiba Regional City Office: From September 27, 2016 (Tue) to January 13 (Fri), 2017**

* The application will be accepted on October 1 (Sat), 2016 only in the Shiba Regional City Office

● **Azabu, Akasaka, Takanawa, Shibaura Konan Regional City Offices and Daiba Branch Office: From September 27 (Tue), 2016 to November 30 (Wed), 2016**

Be careful not to fall victim to bank transfer scams, having your benefits being taken advantage of, or being fished for your personal information.

Inquiries: Temporary Welfare Benefit Subsection, Health and Welfare Section, Public Health and Welfare Support Department Tel: 03-3578-2846

Message from the Metropolitan Tax Office

The due date for the payment of Fixed Asset Tax and City Planning Tax in the second quarter comes in September (within the 23 Wards).

Please pay your taxes by September 30(Fri), 2016 at any of the financial institutions or convenience stores listed on the reverse side of your payment statement. Tax payment by account transfer is safe and convenient. Payments can be made by pay-easy service ATMs in financial institutions or post offices, Internet banking, mobile banking or by credit card through PC or smartphone. For more information, access our web site or contact the office as follows.

Inquiries: <Payment by account transfer> Tax Payment Promotion Section, Tax Collection Division, Tel: 03-3252-0955

* Please make sure to dial the correct number.

The Fixed Asset Tax and City Planning Tax for small non-residential land is reduced or exempted (within the 23 Wards).

20% of the amount of the Fixed Asset Tax and City Planning Tax is exempted for part of the land up to 200m² within a non-residential land space of 400m² or less in a single lot (limited to the land owned by individual or company with a capital/investment amount of 100 million yen or less). For this tax exemption, an application from you is required.

* For individuals or companies that are presumed to have some small non-residential land, and have not yet applied for the tax exemption, a guide for the application will be sent by August.

Inquiries: For properties located in Minato City Minato City Metropolitan Tax Office, Tel: 03-5549-3800 (Rep).

For people who have suffered serious damage from a disaster etc., the system that exempts them from Metropolitan tax applies.

For those who have suffered serious damage from a disaster, etc., we have a system where, out of the taxed amount, the amount before the due date is reduced or exempted depending on the degree of the damage (a measure for a tax payment grace period also applies). The applicable taxes are Fixed Asset Tax/City Planning Tax (within the 23 Wards), Real Estate Acquisition Tax, Individual Enterprise Tax, etc. Basically, applications directly from the taxpayer are required before the due date. Apply to the Metropolitan Tax Office with the document certifying that you are a disaster-victim.

Inquiries: Minato Metropolitan Tax Office, Tel: 03-5549-3800 (Rep).

Information from the Azabu Regional City Office



2016 Minato City Disaster Preparedness Drills will be conducted (Azabu Site) – Raising Awareness/Promoting Self Reliance and Community Cooperation! –

Date and Time

Nov. 13 (Sun), 2016:

9:30am~11:30am.

* This event may be canceled if the weather conditions are bad.

Site:

Minato City Roppongi Junior High School Ground and Gymnasium (6-8-16 Roppongi)



* Participants will receive a commemorative disaster preparedness-related gift (limited number available).



Disaster Preparedness Drill Tour for Foreign Residents

The Minato City Disaster Preparedness Drills (Azabu site) welcome foreign participants. Casually join our disaster preparedness drill tour for visiting training sites and practicing training, accompanied by the English-language interpreters we provide.

- Admission:** Free (Advance application is required)
- Application Period:** From Sep. 26 (Mon), 2016 to Nov. 11 (Fri) 2016
- How to Apply:** Please call or fax, providing the following information: (1) your name, (2) your address, (3) your telephone number, (4) Japanese level, (5) any other applicable information.

Tel: 03-5472-3710 Minato City Information Service (English language service provided)
Telephone Answer Service Time: 9:00am to 5:00pm.
Fax: 03-3583-3782 Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office (English applications accepted).

Special Program of This Time!!

What should I do to prepare for a disaster?!

Disaster Preparedness Mini Seminar

"Let's learn useful knowledge to prepare for disaster, and be ready for real situations!"

From Today, You Are a Member of a Rescue Party?!

Children's Rescue Drill and Vehicle Display

You can experience firemen rescue training and sit in a real patrol car.

For the time when it is required

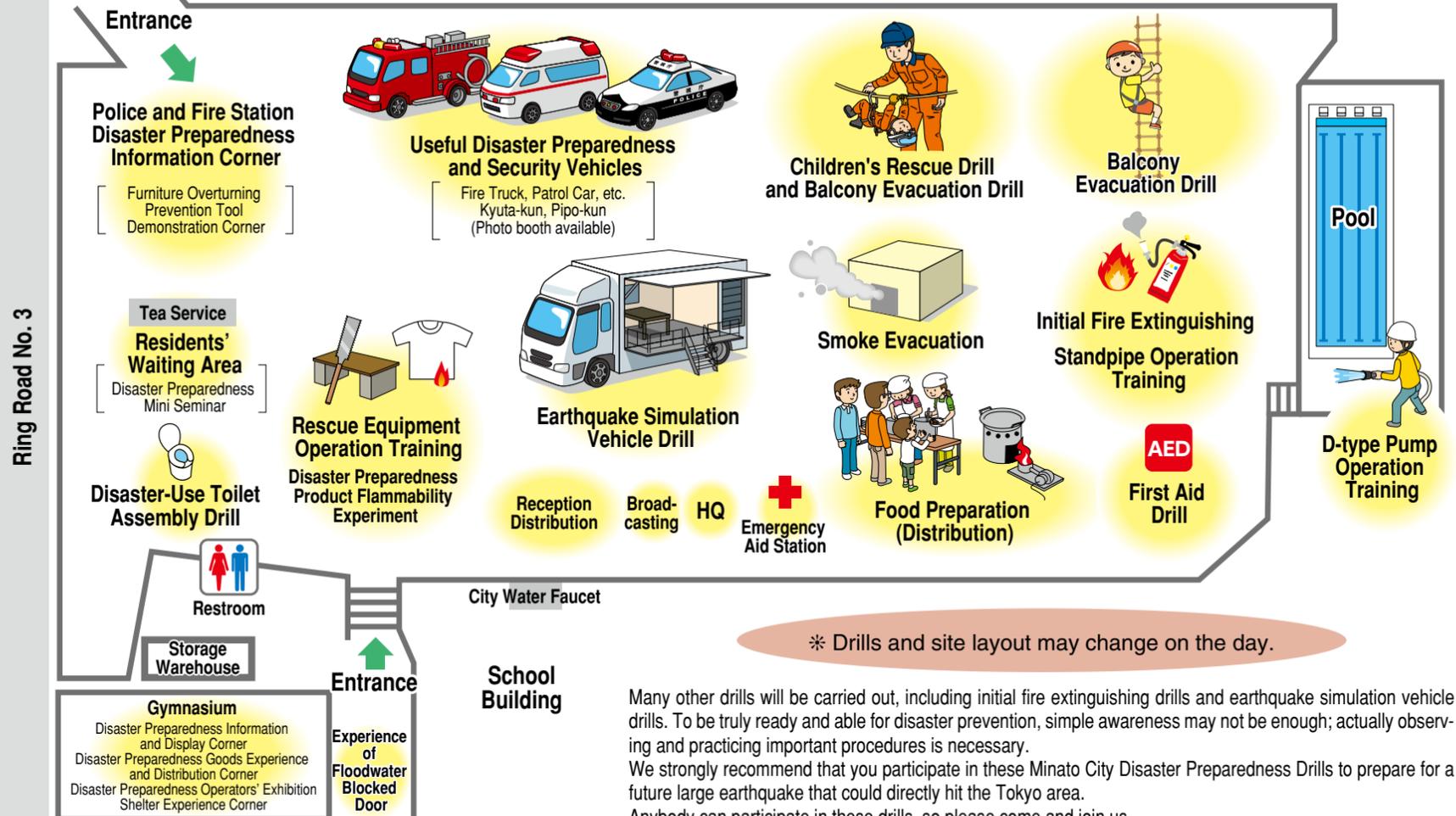
Evacuation training from balconies

If you are likely to have to evacuate from a condominium or apartment, participate in the balcony evacuation drill

What does alpha rice taste like?!

The Food Preparation Drill and Disaster Preparedness Goods Distribution Corner

You can get alpha rice distributed during the food preparation drill and goods that you can keep as personal stock to be ready for any disaster! * Limited numbers available



* Drills and site layout may change on the day.

Many other drills will be carried out, including initial fire extinguishing drills and earthquake simulation vehicle drills. To be truly ready and able for disaster prevention, simple awareness may not be enough; actually observing and practicing important procedures is necessary. We strongly recommend that you participate in these Minato City Disaster Preparedness Drills to prepare for a future large earthquake that could directly hit the Tokyo area. Anybody can participate in these drills, so please come and join us.

Supervising Section: Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8802 Fax: 03-3583-3782

Going shopping? Visit our local shopping streets.

Please send us your comments or requests regarding **The Azabu**

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 not limit), and deliver directly, mail, or fax to the following: Community Policy Subsection Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45, Roppongi, Minato City, Tokyo (106-8515).
● Tel: 03-5114-8812 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

We are looking for **Editorial Staff**

You can also access this newsletter from the Minato City website.



AZABU
● Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabane-bashi subway stations, The Chii Bus, Minato Library, Azabu Library, Minami-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Nishi-azabu, Iki-Iki Plaza, Iigura Iki-Iki Plaza, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office, etc.
● Usage of articles, illustrations, and photographs from this newsletter is prohibited.

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- Makoto Sekiguchi

Editor's Note
This time, I could not visit the Arabic Islamic Institute in Tokyo for the interview due to commitments at work. This was a great sacrifice for me, because I studied the Arabic language in North Africa in the past, and was very interested in attending this interview. "Assalamu Alaykum" is a greeting phrase similar to "hello", but meaning, "May your days be in peace". Presently, we often see somewhat dark images from Arabic countries, such as terrorism or civil wars. However, the Arab people are usually very gentle individuals who wish you to have peaceful days, more than themselves. I would be happy if you could remember this fact.
ارجو السلام على كل شعوب العالم شكرا
This means that, "I hope that people all over the world are able to live in peace". (Minako Hatanaka)
The original article is written in Japanese.

"Minato Call" information service.
Minato call is a city information service about services provided by City Hall, facility guide, event information, etc., available from 7:00am to 11:00pm everyday.
* English speakers are also available.
Minato Call :
Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752
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