



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



- 1 The exquisite exterior of the building can be seen with its symmetrically designed entrance from the driveway.
- 2 The handsome building attracts pedestrians who walk on Gaien Higashi Dori.
- 3 Although the street seems flat from the entrance, as one can guess from its address, the building is actually located on hilly terrain. This is a view from Sannen-zaka slope.
- 4 A photograph probably taken when the building was completed. Reference: Yusei Kenchiku Teishin kara no Kiseki (Kenchiku Gaho Sha)

## The Japan Post Group Iikura Building

# Azabu Post Office

The Azabu Post Office is located at Azabu-dai 1 chome, along the road heading towards Iikura from the Iikura Katamachi Crossing. The official name of the building is "Japan Post Group Iikura Building" and it holds group affiliates of the Japan Post Group. It was built in the early Showa era and faces Gaen Higashi-dori Avenue. With its stately presence it can indeed be said that it is a representative landscape of Azabu. The building is also attractive with its art deco design. We took a tour of its history and architecture.

This reinforced concrete building has one floor below ground and is four stories high. The building was built on a grand scale, with a ground floor area of 22,209 sq. meters (6.730 tsubos) and gross floor area of 40,405 sq. meters (Note 1). Its history goes back to May 1930 (Note 2) when it was built as the former Postal Saving Bureau of the Ministry of Communications. It was designed by the Architecture Section of the Ministry of Finance and constructed by the Zenitaka Corporation. The classical construction indeed reflects the atmosphere of a government building. The address at the time it was built was 6 chome Iikura, Azabu-ku. It was originally where Marquis Yorimichi Tokugawa's Nanki Library stood and also the location of the mansion of a family of feudal lords, the Inaba Family. If we go further back in history, this site, which was owned by Marquis Yorimichi Tokugawa, was the residence of Uesugi Suruga up until the end of the Tokugawa Shogunate. One can feel a sense of dignity from this building which is probably the reflection of the noble and honorable origin this land has.

This building's modern and detailed design makes it both imposing and impressive. Rows of ovals line the six columns of the entrance canopy, geometric patterns are carved on the four-layered columns and a waved pillar is set on the center stairway. It is said that art deco was introduced to the world at the 1925 French World's Fair and that this influence reached the shores of Japan around the time of the building's construction. Therefore, this was the type of design used. The exterior of the building is still an intriguing site to see even to this day.

The history of the offices which used this building is long and complicated. The Postal Savings Bureau eventually moved to the Postal Life Insurance Bureau of the Ministry of Communications in Mita. Opinions were raised in 1943 that since the headquarters building of the Ministry of Communications was a wooden structure, it would be vulnerable to fire during an air raid, so the Ministry was moved to this building. The Azabu Post Office, which suffered damage in 1945, moved into this building as a temporary office and made it their official building the following year. In 1949, the Ministry of Communications was separated into the Ministry of Tele-Communications and Postal Bureau, and until the former Postal Bureau moved to the former Post Bureau building in Kasumigaseki in 1969, it used this building as its headquarters. The former Japan Post Tokyo Branch Office moved into this building in 2005, and after it was privatized on Oct. 1, 2007, it continued to use this building, calling it the "Japan Post Group Iikura Building." A familiar sight to residents and workers in Azabu, its entrance is around the right side of the building.

A large-scale renovation took place from 1984-1987. The exterior maintained the same image of the former building, but all the tiles were replaced and decorations of the pillars were restored using the newest technology and material. Work to make the building earthquake-resistant was completed in 2003 and the building is preserved with care. This building has stood for a long time, and although the intended purpose of the building has changed over its lifespan, it is a precious treasure of Azabu. Why not drop by and take a tour of the building when you are close by?

Interview cooperation by: Professor Kazunobu Minami of the Shibaura Institute of Technology, Department of Architecture Zenitaka Corporation

- References: 1. *Construction of Ministry of Communications* by Sugao Cho. (Tokwa Publishing, Inc.)  
 2. *Yusei Hyakunen Shi*. Editing/ Postal Bureau (The Communications Association)  
 3. *Yusei Kenchiku Tsushin kara no Kiseki*. Supervising Editor: Japan Post (Kenchiku Gaho Sha)  
 4. *Historical Structures of Minato City Research Report on Location of Historical Structures of Minato City*. (Minato Board of Education)  
 5. *Nanki Bunko Me Gakumon Mimi Gakumon* by Mariko Tsubota (Ikuhoshya Publishing)  
 Note 1 items are excerpts from Reference 2 and note 2 items is excerpts from Reference 1.

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



- 5,6 The stair hall at the front of the building. Waves are carved on the granite columns.
- 7,8,9 The columns look impressive viewed close up. Their oval forms look very artistic.
- 10 The geometrically designed art deco columns lined up in regulatory fashion and the clock tower (currently not in operation), exist in a harmony of classical and new designs.



- 11 The Post Office was located on the left side of the building before but moved to the right when the building was renovated in 1984.
- 12 This is post card is an original designed by the Post Office. It is available at each post office and is popular among collectors.
- 13 The landscape stamp of the Azabu Post Office. One can get this stamped on parcels at the reception by request. It is a beautiful picture with a design featuring Zenpukuji Temple at Azabu-san and a gingko tree on the other side.



Nishi Azabu is literally located on the west side of the Azabu area. The Nishi Azabu crossing formally used to be called Kasumicho. You can get into a taxi and tell the driver "Kasumicho" and he would have no problem finding the location even now. If you walk uphill from here, where the Nezu Museum is, you'll find yourself at Nishi Azabu 2 chome. Tadashi Nishikawa who runs a cigarette shop has lived in this area for generations, his son being the 4th generation.

## Continuing to live in the town of Nishi Azabu after over 100 years spanning four generations.

# 麻布 びと

"AZABU - A Human Story"



**Tadashi Nishikawa**  
(84 years old)

"I love this town where I can come across memories of the Edo period."



Fittingly for an area where there were once many horse cart businesses, the Bato (Horse Head) Kanzeon Sacred Stone is located near to his house.

I was born on Dec. 25, 1926 (the Day of Accession of the Taisho Emperor), the first year of the Taisho period. I was the youngest of 7 brothers and my mother passed away when I was one years old.

The family moved from Onomichi, Hiroshima during my grandfather's time and settled in Azabu Kogaicho since we had relatives there. My grandfather owned a horse cart business. He would transport items using horses. There were many businesses like that around here when I was small and I remember there were many horses tied on both sides of the streets then. But our family wasn't in that business at that time anymore.

The horse cart business was active during the war (1945). There was demand until then because fuel became scarcer when the war started. I heard that people evacuated putting their belongings on the horse carts.

Talking about animals, I saw the real "Hachi". I had a relative living in Setagaya and I would go play at their house taking the Tama Line.\*1

I didn't know then that the dog I saw was the famous "Hachi". All I thought then was that there was a big dog sitting in front of the Yakitori Shop at Shibuya Station and found out later that the dog I saw was that of the statue of the faithful dog Hachi-ko. Hachi died in 1935 so the dog I saw was indeed the faithful dog "Hachi" still waiting for his master to come home because this was after Mr. Ueno had passed away.

Tadashi lives with his wife, Sumie, and two sons. His oldest son, Masanori, who owns a wine bar, also joined the interview and it turned out to be very lively. He added, "Hidesaburo Ueno was a professor of the agriculture department at the Imperial University (currently Tokyo University) in Komaba and his grave is in the Aoyama Cemetery. Hachi-ko's monument is there also. A stuffed specimen is at the National Museum of Nature and Science, Tokyo.

I went to Kogai Elementary School. In those days, the Gaien Nishi Dori Avenue itself didn't exist. The current Bistro Dori Avenue, which is the street closest to Shibuya, was the main street then. That was the street I used to commute to school. There were two streetcar lines which crossed at Kasumicho Crossing so it was really lively. The No. 6 line from Shibuya to Shimbashi ran from Shibuya - Aoyama 6 chome - Kasumicho - Roppongi - Tameike to Shimbashi. The No. 7 line ran from Shinagawa Station to Sengakuji - Gyoranzakashita - Furukawabashi - Tengenjibashi - Kasumicho - Aoyama 1 chome to Yotsuya 3 chome. It was very convenient to go anywhere. I could get on the subway, Ginza Line, if I went to Aoyama Dori.

The children in those days would play at Aoyama Cemetery, around Aoyama Brain Hospital \*2, at Chokokuji Temple, and around the residence (the current Nezu Museum opened in 1941) of Kiuchiro Nezu, the president of the Tobu Railroad. The street down from the Nezu Residence to this area was surrounded by fields and fruit farms and it was still like that when my oldest son was born in 1955.

Soldiers were marching down this slope everyday. The 3rd Infantry army post before the war was located where the current National Art Center, Tokyo stands.

The soldiers would march in front of our house to Yoyogi Park where they would train. The military's rifle range was located from around where the Aoyama Park to Denny's is now, and it was called the rifle



1956 - Masanori in front of the shop. There were fields and even a fruit farm around the Nezu Museum in the far distance.



In front of the same shop as in the picture on the top right with his wife Sumie.

mountain. The "2.26 Incident" which involved the 3rd Infantry also happened when I was in elementary school back in 1936. \*3



Around 1959. Tadashi and his oldest son, Masanori. The street leading to Nezu Museum hasn't changed much. The current Nezu Museum behind. The slope commonly known as Nezu Slope.



How it looks today. Same location as the picture on the left.

The gentle slope from the Nezu Residence (currently Nezu Museum) down towards Nishi Azabu existed from when Tadashi was still a child. This was the slope which the 3rd Infantry marched on every day. This slope actually has no name. Tadashi said, "Slopes get named when people use it to go back and forth. No one used this slope during the Edo period so that's why it has no name." The local people call it the Nezu Slope.

I didn't evacuate during the war. My parents and older sister were caught in the Great Tokyo Air Raids on March 10, but I was saved because I wasn't home. After that my mother and sister evacuated and my father and I moved in with a family which owned a western house, actually, the only house which survived the air raid in our neighborhood.



Around 1956. In front of the cigarette shop, hardware store and stamps. They carried many items.

He eventually got married. Sumie said, "When I got married, the cigarette shop and hardware store was already there."

Our family was in business before the war, but, after everything burnt down after the war, we got permission to buy rationed wood and built our house immediately and re-started the business. The most enjoyable thing during those days was the

movies. The Kagetsu Theater used to stand near the Nishi Azabu crossing where the Mitsui Sumitomo Bank is now and vaudeville shows and actors on tour used to perform. The Nanseiza Theater was built on that land later. (Tadashi)

That theater was still around when I got married. Kasumicho was lively then. "I went to the bank at Azabu Juban." (Sumie)

The area changed dramatically later around the time of the Tokyo Olympics in 1964. Expressway Route 3 was built parallel to Roppongi St. and many buildings and condominiums started to be constructed. Gaien Nishi Dori Avenue opened around those times. Tadashi was busy as a salary man during the height of the Japan's economic boom, so it was Sumie who had to look after the cigarette shop.

There are more people now in this area but there is still a Koshin Stone Landmark near our house and you can reminisce about the days of Edo. This street was the main street. It was built in 1865, the end of the Edo period. The stone statue was a landmark so people wouldn't get lost. On it is carved; "migi Aoyama Naito Shinjuku, Horinouchi, hidari Nijyu kiokumi, Hyakunin okumi, Zenkoji". \*4 Our house itself has moved a little but the width of the street in front of our shop hasn't changed much from the old days. There are many things which haven't changed and those are the places that I like. I couldn't even think about living anywhere else than Nishi Azabu. I hope to continue to live here forever.



An important landmark for the people. The Koshin Stone Landmark from the last days of the Edo period.

- \*1 Tama Line (Tamagawa Electric Railway) Street car which operated between Shibuya and Futako-Tamagawa.
- \*2 Brain Hospital - the Aoyama Brain Hospital which Mokichi Saito's grandfather opened in 1907. It stood next to Aoyama Cemetery and was burnt to ashes in 1924. It was rebuilt but burnt to ashes again during an air raid in 1945. In the same year, control was handed over to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and it was transferred to Setagaya City. It is now the Tokyo Metropolitan Children's Medical Center. Mokichi's son and writer Morio Kita wrote a novel titled, "The House of Nire" which was a story the Aoyama Brain Hospital.
- \*3 2.26 Incident. The incident was an attempted coup d'état in Japan, carried out by 1,483 troops of the Imperial Japanese Army. There were many members from the 3rd Infantry which also participated.
- \*4 Koshin Stone Landmark. On it is written, "Aoyama to the right, Naito Shinjuku, Horinouchi (Suginami City). To the left there are 20 masked riders (the area between Minami-Aoyama 4 - 6 chome where the vassals of the shogunate lived), hundred pairs (along the current Aoyama Street) and Zenko Temple.



## Taking a stroll in Azabudai 1 chome

Although it is a only walking course which takes you once around the Azabu Post Office, there are many ways to enjoy this walk which features sloping roads, steps and interesting spots to drop by on.

**Start**



We start our walk from the Azabu Post Office this time.



The Tokyo Tower then appeared on our right again.

There was immediately "a roof with a circle on it" to our left, so we went in that direction.



We went towards "the roof with the circle" at the end of the street.



Midway up the hill, you can enjoy autumn by picking up the ginkgo nuts that have fallen from the ginkgo tree.



We saw the building that has "the roof with a circle on it" again as we went down the stairs to our right. The pavement stones on the Gangi-zaka slope are set a right angle and are truly a zigzag pattern.



We took a left along the crossing street and enter a quiet residential area.



We went towards a gigantic building on the street at the bottom of the steps.



Sannen-zaka is also a slope of steps. Unfolding at the end of the bushed wall and cobblestone steps are new and old buildings of different height.



There's stone signage as you come to the end of the street with "Sannen-zaka" engraved on the stone post.



We go back to the top of the steps and head straight down alongside the stone wall.



As we turn left along the white façade wall,



We come across a sign post which has "Ochiai-zaka" written on it but can't find where the slope is so decide to go straight.



On the way down this path we come across the Memorial Hall of Yoshida Hochiku, who is known as the father of modern calligraphy.



There are also great spots to drop by on that commemorate people who were active in modern times, such as the Yokoyama Shozo Memorial Park.



As we go past the park and face a wide street, we discover a signage directing pedestrians to "Ochiai-zaka." As you turn back, you notice that it was a gentle slope actually.



There are slopes to the right and left as we come to a dead-end, so we decide to take the slope on the left.



Looking at the signage post, we realized that the slope which goes up and down is Yuki-zaka.



We have circled and come back to the Azabu Post Office where we departed from.

(Researched by: Toshie Suzuki, Misa Suzuki Written by: Toshie Suzuki)



"I work together with the patient and the family aiming at reaching a common goal. Recovery is a goal accomplished together with all those who were involved in the treatment."

**Physical Therapist**  
**Yuzuru Chigira**

There are a lot of different jobs.  
**Physical Therapist**

Giving children the power to live.

Parent and child learning together

## KIDS' Hello Work



The junior editors are surprised at how heavy the special shoes for walking training are and intently inspect the construction to support the paralyzed leg.

## Compassion and Toughness; A Rehabilitation Specialist

This month's edition is about the job of a physical therapist. We visited Yuzuru Chigira, a physical therapist who works at "Arisu No Mori Minami Azabu", a senior citizens health and welfare facility which we introduced to our readers in Volume 15, our last edition.

Our junior editors were Taichi (7) and Hibiki (10).

### What is the job a physical therapist?

To put it simply, the job of a physical therapist is to help restore mobility of those who have become "immobile" because of accidents and illnesses. We mainly specialize in the body and the lower part of the body. My actual job is supporting the patients residing in the facility that I am in charge of by assisting them during meals and their overall daily life so we can create a relationship based on trust. There is also another similar profession called an "occupational therapist" but this therapist specializes in rehabilitation to improve motor functions of the hands.

### What got you into this job?

I was originally interested in airplanes and majored in engineering at university. While I was in the university hospital I did part time work and this is when I became interested in "finding a career where I could interact with people and their feelings". Thinking back about it, it could have been because I was influenced by my mother who was a nurse and because I also lived with my grandparents. I'm happy I was able to find a lifetime career thanks to the fact that I questioned my own life goals at an early stage. After I graduated university, I worked at a welfare facility during the day and went to a vocational school at night and got my qualifications.



(Interviewed by: Tsuneko Ishiyama, Kumiko Omura, Hibiki Omura, Taichi Suzuki Written by: Kumiko Omura) The original articles are written in Japanese.



(Top) Yuzuru kindly shows the children the relationship between the quantity of exercising and reduction of quantity. (Bottom) Yuzuru working closely with a patient's walking training.

### How can you become a physical therapist?

Generally, one would go to university and after studying general education, etc., and then undertaking practical training as a physical therapist major, you need to pass the national examination before you become certified. After that the most important steps are to get on the job training at respective medical or welfare facilities. There are a lot of opportunities to participate in training and study sessions after you start working in the field.

### What are some instances that have made you happy to be working as a physical therapist?

To me it's when a patient who was immobile starts walking again. Of course, it's not only because of my effort but the result of everyone involved in the therapy. There are times when a patient is in agonizing "pain" but you have to push them to continue. A patient may hate you at times like that, but if you can show results, that's when you start building a trust-based relationship. I think that someone with perseverance, compassion and toughness is suited for the job.

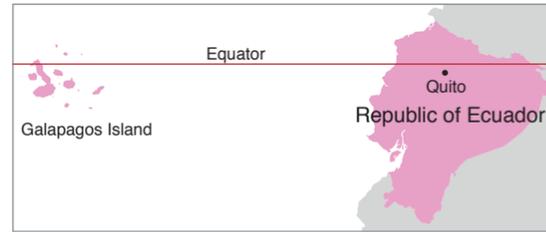
### Do you have any advice to those who want to become a physical therapist?

It's a very satisfying job to be able to assist someone to use their restorative capacity and to help them to be able to do things that they were unable to do.

After the interview, we were able to get permission to observe at close quarters a patient who had a brain illness and was paralyzed on her right side go through walking training. Our junior editors were a little nervous to experience observing someone go through rehabilitation, however, they helped carry special shoes for training and also talked to the patient and were able to get precious first hand experience of what physical therapy was.



Republic of Ecuador  
 Total Area: 256,000 square kilometers (the size of Honshu and Kyushu combined)  
 Population: 14 million people (2010 National Statistical Research Bureau)  
 Capital: Quito  
 Ethnic Group: 79% Hispanic Mestizo, 8% White, 7% Indigenous  
 3% African & African mixed-race (2001 population census)  
 Language: Spanish, Indigenous languages (Quechua and others)  
 Religion: Separation State/ Church (Major population is Christian)  
 Government: Unitary Presidential Republic  
 President: Rafael Correa  
 Assembly: Constituent Assembly  
 (124 seats with 4 year terms)



H.E. Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary, Mr. Javier Ponce  
 Interview conducted with the kind cooperation of the Embassy of the Republic of Ecuador in Japan



- 1 2 The Galapagos Islands were the first declared World Heritage Site in 1978. These islands are located at the intersection of warm and cold currents and, due to their unique environment and isolation, many examples can be found of animals and plants that have evolved differently from related species in the world. These islands are also famous for their impact on Charles Darwin and his theory of evolution.
- 3 Cotopaxi, with a height of 5,897 meters, is an active volcano. (Chimborazo 6310m is the highest)
- 4 The Panama hat got its name when the Americans who went to construct the Panama Canal wore them. However, this item of apparel is originally from Ecuador and is made from a soft plant called "toquilla" whose resilient structure allows the hat to be folded and packed for trips.
- 5 The tagua palm lends itself to beautiful workmanship and has color and resilience, just like ivory itself. This has become a popular material for environmentally friendly artwork that does not impact on animal populations.

## Visiting the Ambassador 15 From the "World" of Azabu



# Ecuador

## Ecuador – A country known for its diversity

Ecuador, which straddles the equator, is a country of "diversity" in many ways. First of all, let's take a look at its geography. Cities spread in the mountain region, in a valley sandwiched between two 5000 meter high branches of the Andes where the indigenous population is concentrated. Tradition plays an important role and is still passed down in this region. On the other hand, the people of the Costa region which spreads along the coastline are known for their cheerful and fun-loving nature and have embraced new culture. Many people migrated from the Andes and started to live in the area when banana and cacao production began. The most interior region is the Amazon rainforest area. Nature remains unspoiled in this area, together with a wealth of resources, and indigenous groups still live as they did in the past. Lastly, there are the famous Galapagos Islands. These islands are located where warm and cold currents collide, and are most notable for the wildlife found there. Because the adaptation of the animals that live there, Darwin conceived his theory of the evolution of species during his trip in 1835. The climate of Ecuador is diverse, ranging from snowfall in the andean areas, to tropical rain in the jungles and costal locations, which is why many ecosystems are found, and the people are diverse as well. The official language is Spanish and there are many people of Hispanic descent as it was a Spanish colony for many years. However, the population also includes descendants of people from Europe, Palestine, Lebanon and ethnic Chinese who arrived after helping in the construction of the Panama Canal. Therefore, the culture is also diverse.

H.E. Ambassador Javier Ponce, who explained to us about "diversity" as the biggest feature of Ecuador, is very tall, cheerful and jolly character. His past assignments have been in Peru, Venezuela, Switzerland, the U.S., Spain and Moscow; however, Japan is his first appointment in an Asian country. His assignment in Japan was the desire of his wife, a Brazilian national and a 3rd generation Japanese. The two met at the Harvard Kennedy School, later followed by a long distance relationship between London and Madrid which they decided to end by getting married. They have brought one child to Japan and the second one was born in Tokyo.

The images he had of the Japanese before his assignment were "business", "seriousness", "samurai", and "hara-kiri"; as well as thinking the people to be cool and stern. This picture changed completely after he started living here. Contrary to the cool image he originally had, he said he was touched by the warmth of the people. For example, if you go to Arisugawa-no-miya Memorial Park with your child in a stroller, strangers come up and say "kawaii" (cute). Even though he doesn't understand the language, these friendly approaches make him happy, which makes him feel that the Japanese are warm-hearted and kind.



Ecuador and Japan have many similarities. He has studied this and has just published a book with comparative studies of different aspects in both countries. For example, there is Mt. Cotopaxi, an active volcano which has an altitude of 5,897 meters, which is similar to Mt. Fuji in appearance and shape. Another similarity to Japan is the abundance of volcanic hot springs.

The food culture is also similar, with rice frequently served with their meals. The Ambassador even eats rice two to three times a week, and the rice is cooked just like in Japan. It is close to Thai rice, so a bit different from Japanese rice, but, thanks to this custom, he didn't have any trouble getting used to Japan's eating habits. The Ambassador's favorite Japanese dish is "sashimi". This is because raw fish is eaten in Ecuador as well. It is called *ceviche* and similar to the Italian *carpaccio*. The raw fish is marinated in sliced oranges, lemon, chili, and salt. Of course, he also likes sushi and his favorite sushi shops are in Nishi Azabu and Roppongi Hills.

Ecuador and Japan are neighboring countries with the Atlantic Ocean between them. Economic exchange, especially, has expanded in the recent years between the two countries. Business with major corporations is, of course, important, however, the Ambassador hopes to put effort into spreading cultural and social exchange in the future. This is because corporations act on changing interests, but people-to-people interactions endure. He even sent a professor from a Japanese university and a Japanese photographer to Ecuador, in association with the publication of the aforementioned book, and had him interview the people about their impressions of Japan and take pictures. This project was conducted with the purpose of deepening relationships between people, and he likewise sent someone from Ecuador to do similar research here in Japan. An "Art Exhibit of the World Heritage Cities, Quito and Cuenca" sponsored by the Embassy, took place at the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building Observatory in the middle of February 2011 to introduce the fascinating points of Ecuador.

(Interview date: November 4, 2010)  
 (Interview conducted and written by: Chie Kato and Yukiko Takayanagi)  
 The original article is written in Japanese.

# Azabu-nista

A report about foreigners who work in Azabu



Restaurant Owner and Chef  
**Mario Frittoli**

## Welcome to Mario's Path!



If you take a left at the first street towards Shibuya from the southwest corner of Nishi Azabu crossing and walk towards Hiroo for a while, you will see an Italian restaurant on the 2nd floor of the building on the left.

The owner of this restaurant and its chef is Mario Frittoli, born in Pavia, Lombardia, Italy. He first came to Japan in 1987 as his mentor; Paul Bocuse was opening a restaurant in Daimaru department store in Umeda, Osaka. He then returned to Japan in 1990 and since then has been active in restaurants in Higashi Azabu and Shirokanedai. He has also shown his talent in various fields and has also been making TV appearances. He met his wife when they performed together in a commercial. They now have a charming 13-year-old daughter.

Mario opened "Mario I Sentieri" in Nishi Azabu in August 2008. In Italian sentieri means path and the name of the restaurant describes Mario's feelings of "welcoming people to his house." The lighting is not bright but creates a cozy atmosphere. This is probably because you can see the staff working inside the open kitchen area. About half of the customers who come to the restaurant are foreigners, and many customers come in order to meet Mario. No matter how busy he is, he greets his customers very warmly.



In addition to his restaurant business, Mario has shown diverse talent as a teacher for cooking classes, during TV appearances, in his mail-order business, consulting, and in other activities. We asked him about business. He said, "Business is like a soccer game. The scores (the money our customers pay) we get is the result of the joint effort of our staff who are like the defense and offense (their roles). No matter how respected the owner is, unless your staff believes and follows you, you can't be successful. Competition is very tough in Tokyo. The Japanese have a delicate sense of taste and so customers don't come if you just offer good food." On the other hand, he notes with a bright and energetic smile, "It's true I'm very busy everyday. But I'm Super Mario, right?" He continues, "A chef is like an artist, the dishes are the entertainment. It makes me happy when my customers eat my food and say it was delicious."

Japanese people and foreigners share parts of their different cultures in Nishi Azabu. We look forward to seeing Mario create more events in which Japanese and foreign guests can enjoy together. Mario says "food is communication" and we need more of it to strengthen the connection between all of us.

(Photographs provided by: Mario Frittoli)  
(Interviewed by: Kumiko Omura, Toshie Suzuki, Ayako Fukumoto)  
Written by: Ayako Fukumoto

地域社会  
の  
ゆくえ

6

"The Local Community"

### Community Support Project

## ["Thinking about the Environment of Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park"]



Members putting in experimental material at the bottom of the pond to improve the water quality.

In order to protect the natural environment of Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park with its natural terrain according to the traditional Japanese rinsen style of landscaping, "Restoring the Natural Environment of Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park Project" started in 2008 by calling out for members from the public to participate. The "Investigative Commission to Create an Attractive Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park" was established in 2009. As a part of this year's activity, the target set by the working group to improve the water quality was "aiming at achieving a level of water quality in which the pond life and the bottom of the pond can be seen". Discussions, research and practical activities have also been carried out to restore the natural environment of the park.

Ms Michiko Machida, who became a community support member from 2010 says, "As someone living in the neighborhood, I would like to preserve the environment, and I have a special attachment to Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park, with its hilly terrain. I wanted to participate in supporting the protection of this environment with its abundant natural surroundings of greenery together with its waterfront." We told her that we had heard that she would go inside the pond to pick up garbage

as well during her "volunteer cleaning activity," to which she humbly answered, "Well...yes..."

Mr. Tetsu Aoyama, the vice-chairman of the Minami-Azabu Hiroo Town Council and also a member of this group told us what he hoped for: "The water level years ago used to be much lower so I want it to return to that level. The mud of the pond can also be used for rice paddies, so it would be better if some of it is left rather than taking all of it away. My wish is that the water level is returned to what it was and to preserve it as a Japanese garden."

The United Nations declared 2010 as the "International Year of Biodiversity" and the 10th meeting of the Conference of the Parties to the Convention on Biological Diversity (COP 10) was held in Nagoya in October.

There is currently a great sense of crisis regarding ecosystems, that many living organisms are facing extinction.

Research conducted by Minato City in fiscal 2008 at Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park confirmed that there were 583 species of living creatures. 16 principal species were also confirmed. The number of species and principal species is the highest in public parks of Minato City and it has become an important location to conduct research of the

ecology and habitat of creatures. Akihiko Yoshida, one of the members who does research on ecological reproduction of the water area and purity due to algae species commented about his research, saying "the result of the comprehensive study and experiment regarding the ecology of the water area of Lake Biwa conducted by the (1997 - 2002 Kyoto University Future Development Project) indicated the importance of the slow and stable flow (approximately 20 centimeters per hour) and later that the field study and experiment conducted at the Tama River was proof that there was a relationship between abundant frustules and green algae and the slow flow, and a patent had been obtained." He added that "Good results were obtained from the experiment on ecological reproduction of the water area and purity conducted at the Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park in summer."

Thanks to the proactive participation of community members, the restoration plan for the natural environment of Arisugawanomiya Memorial Park is progressing towards the target of "aiming at achieving a level of water quality in which the pond life and the bottom of the pond can be seen," from the point of view of the activities as well as from a technical standpoint. Everyone involved is enthusiastically working on this.

The comments we heard from the neighbors were that "there are many people who drop litter, but there are also people and organizations which silently pick up this litter, showing that it is simply a question of mentality," which made a great impression. It is proof that there are people who love the nature and the seasons at Arisugawa and offered volunteer services to show support.



Ms. Michiko Machida



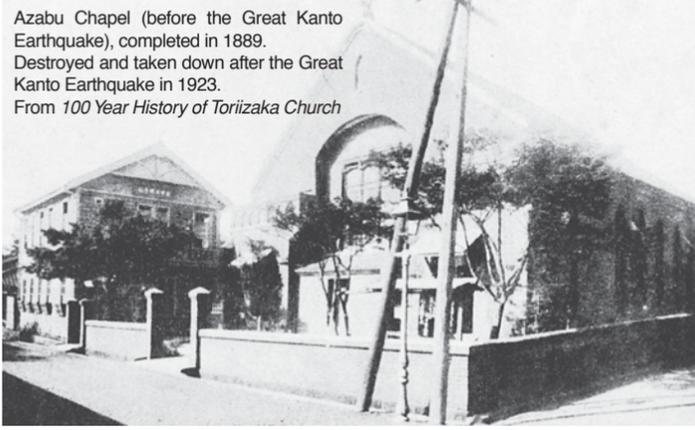
Mr. Tetsu Aoyama



Mr. Akihiko Yoshida

(Interviewed by: Tetsuro Kuraishi, Kazue Asakawa)  
Written by: Kazue Asakawa

Azabu Chapel (before the Great Kanto Earthquake), completed in 1889. Destroyed and taken down after the Great Kanto Earthquake in 1923.  
From *100 Year History of Toriizaka Church*



We started our research on Kimi-chan from a comment we heard which was, “next year marks the 100th anniversary since the death of Kimi-chan”. Those born before the Showa era all know the children’s song “*The Girl in Red Shoes*” by Ujo Noguchi. Children these days may not sing this song anymore. We decided to look back into the history of Azabu during the latter half of the Meiji era with the marking of the 100th year from her death and used this opportunity to find out more about the Kimi-chan statue in Azabu.

## The Kimi-chan statue and her legend in Azabu

### The Message of The Girl in Red Shoes Kimi-chan Academy

I heard from a member of the Roppongi Expedition Team about the Kimi-chan Academy holding an Education Seminar at Hotel Ibis in Roppongi for the 100th year anniversary of Kimi Iwasaki, the model of Kimi-chan. I was told that the Kimi-chan Academy was an activity which talked about the short and tragic life of Kimi-chan from the children’s song *The Girl in Red Shoes*, and through that teaches participants to think about parents and children, family bonds, and the lives of children. The Academy’s intention is to spread thinking on these topics to more people. I interviewed Mr. Yuichiro Suzuki of the Rikkyo Archives Center of Rikkyo University, who lectured at this seminar. He told me that there was no real confirmation that Kimi Iwasaki was *The Girl in Red Shoes* or not but that it was true that after living in Azabu, the girl came down with tuberculosis and died at the young age of nine and later rested in peace in a grave at Toriizaka Church inside Aoyama Cemetery.

She led a tragic life; however, one can speculate from that period’s background that it was not unusual amongst children of those times.

So how was life actually like in Azabu in those days? Does Kimi-chan’s grave really exist?

We went on a quest centering on this phenomenon and visited Toriizaka Church and Aoyama Cemetery, referring to research materials such as *100 Year History of Toriizaka Church*, *50 year History of Toyo Eiwa Jyogakko* and *Azabu-ku History*.

### Society in the Latter Half of the Meiji Era and Azabu

There is a quote about child welfare services for unfortunate children in Chapter 12 - “Social Services” in the 4th Edition of *Azabu-ku History*.<sup>\*1</sup>

#### Section 6 - Misc.

**The Woman’s Missionary Society of the Methodist Church of Canada - Nagasaka Orphanage and foundations are available for others who want to be accepted, in addition, to the above. The rest is omitted.**

According to this section it says that the start of the Nagasaka Orphanage by the missionaries Ms. Munro and Ms. Cartmell was in 1894 when they tried to save three girls from human trafficking and officially established the Nagasaka Orphanage in 1896.

There are also records that childcare facilities for infants were founded at Hiroo-cho in 1888 and 1902. One can learn from these materials that there were many children that needed to be saved in Azabu back in those days.

### Student Works of Love: Keifu Gakko and Kojoyo-in

We visited and interviewed Pastor Harita of Toriizaka Church regarding the Nagasaka Orphanage and Kojoyo-in. The history of Azabu Church<sup>\*2</sup> started when a missionary named Macdonald purchased land around Azabu Nagasaka-cho 50 banchi in the autumn of 1883 and in 1884,<sup>\*3</sup> founded Toyo Eiwa Gakko, and in 1885, built Azabu Chapel as a place for students to learn more about faith and foster a spirit of social contribution. By around 1894,<sup>\*4</sup> students of Toyo Eiwa Jogakko established the educational institute, Keifu Gakko, for children of poor families at Ipponmatsu in Azabu. Kojoyo-in was established around the same time.

Kojoyo-in was founded when students heard that one poor girl out of every three living in Azabu would be sold. Students called out for volunteers to take in these girls, plus one more. Later, the facility was moved to Azabu Nagasaka-cho 50 banchi in 1908. Since then it was called Nagasaka Orphanage for Girls and re-named Nagasaka Orphanage in 1928.

Kimi-chan lived at the Nagasaka Orphanage for Girls for a time before passing away at the tender age of nine.

According to Pastor Harita, detailed information was not available because it has been destroyed during the Great Kanto Earthquake and later by fire during the war (<sup>\*5</sup>the name of Azabu Church was changed to Toriizaka Church to reflect the name of the location it stood on in 1941). He took out the *100 Year History of Toriizaka Church* from the bookshelf and said that its content verified that Kimi-chan existed and that it had been verified that she rested at peace in the cemetery of Toriizaka Church inside the Aoyama Cemetery. We were told that the name Kimi Sano was written on her gravestone and were told of where it was.

In order to confirm about the past and present of Azabu on our quest to find out more about Kimi-chan, we took a map listing old place names from the Minato Modern History Chart Collection. There are no remnants from those days left anymore, except Toriizaka Church Cemetery inside Aoyama Cemetery, where we were able to verify Kimi-chan’s name.

We tried to picture Azabu in those days. Azabu Juban, Azabu Ipponmatsu, Azabu Nagasaka-cho and Toriizaka Church.

A Kimi-chan statue currently stands quietly at Patio Azabu Juban.



Present day Toriizaka Church. An organ concert is held every first Friday of the month from 12:25-12:55. Attendance is open for everyone. The sound soothes the heart of those who attend.

# 麻布の軌跡

“The Phenomena of Azabu”



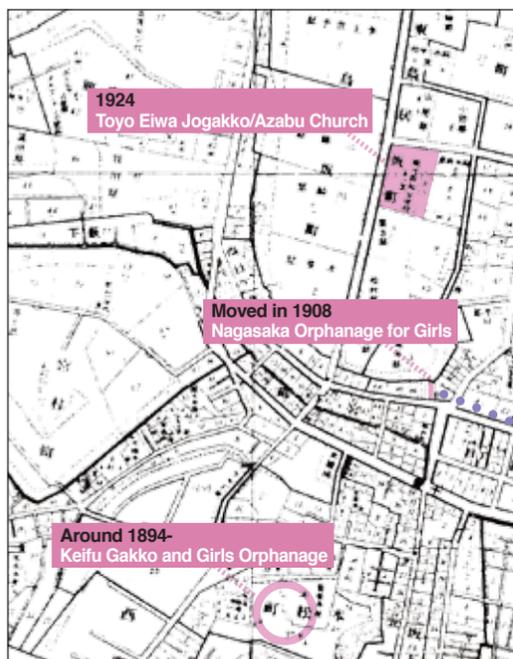
The Kimi-chan statue at Patio Azabu Juban



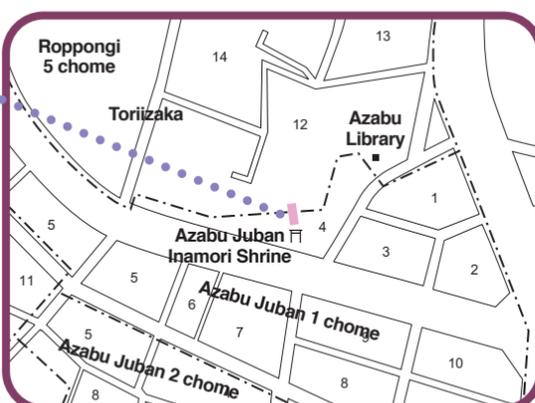
The gravestone at Toriizaka Church inside the Aoyama Cemetery



The Nagasaka Orphanage for Girls (1908.) Sunday School on the stairs Toyo Eiwa Jogakuin Collection



Minato City Local History Museum Map  
Enlarged Minato City Modern History Chart Azabu/Roppongi  
Left 1924 - Red area on the map  
Right 2009 - Entered by the Editing Div.



### Kimi-chan Statues across the Nation! Let’s Spread the Circle of Love and Family Bonds!

Almost every Japanese person knows the sad song, *The Girl in Red Shoes* by Ujo Noguchi, and a Kimi-chan statue also stands in the Port of Yokohama. In addition to this, there is a statue at the top of the Nihondaira mountains of Shizuoka where she was born; one in Rusutsu, Hokkaido where Kimi’s mother, Kayo lived and worked on a homestead; one in the homeland of Shiro Suzuki, her father-in-law, Ajigasawa, Aomori; one in Hakodate, Hokkaido; and at Unga Park in Otaru, Hokkaido where Kayo and her husband spent their last days. The statue in Ajigasawa and Otaru are of three people, Kimi and her parents and the Kimi-chan statue in Azabu.

Kimi-chan led a short and sad life. She is looked after warmly by the people of Azabu and rests in Aoyama Cemetery.

The world changed dramatically after the Meiji Era. During this time, there were many children saved by Azabu’s spirit of mercy. These days there are many parents who feel concerned about bringing up their children. I would like to propose that we take this opportunity to re-think about parents and children and family bonds in the town of Azabu as we commemorate the 100th year anniversary on the death of Kimi-chan.

<sup>\*1-3</sup> *Azabu-ku History*. Tokyo-shi Azabu Kuyakusho. Edited and published by: Masakazu Yoshida. pgs. 735 - 738, pg. 39, pg. 45

<sup>\*4</sup> *100 Year History of Toriizaka Church*. Edited by the Toriizaka 100 Year History Committee. Published by the United Church of Christ in Japan Toriizaka Church. Written by Tetsuya Ohama pg. 55

<sup>\*5</sup> *Toriizaka Kyokai Hyakunen wo Mukaeite*. Published by: the United Church of Christ in Japan Toriizaka Church. pg. 40

Interview cooperation from: Pastor Harita, Toriizaka Church

Mr. Yuichiro Suzuki, Rikkyo University Rikkyo University Rikkyo Archives Center  
Roppongi Ibis The Girl in Red Shoes Kimi-chan Academy  
Toyo Eiwa Jogakuin



# Living in AZABU

★How about making your own style wreath?!★

How about making wreath?!



How are you?  
It busy but merry season is coming  
Christmas, New Year and the Valentine's Day!!  
It's enjoyable to plan the food,  
designing the cards, gifts for the people etc. etc.  
I'm excited about those!!



How about making your own taste wreath?  
If I fortunately find fallen willow twigs  
At a park! my idea good for the wreath  
making. Make it circle on the flat  
surface and dry. After a while you  
work on it arranging any items.  
For the children, real candies or any  
tiny mini toys, etc. For the friends  
artificial flowers, berries,  
and ribbon, etc!  
It's endless! what you put on your own.

Have wonderful holidays.

(Illustration and written by: Sanae Minato)

## Fire! What do you do?

The air is very dry at this time of year and many fires occur during this season. Be careful how you handle fire. If there should be an outbreak of fire, inform your neighbors of the fire and contact 110 immediately.

### Tips for origin-by-origin initial fire control

If you cannot extinguish the initial fire, immediately evacuate.

#### Pan filled with oil



Do not panic when dowsing water on an oil pan. If there is no fire extinguisher nearby, cover the top of the pan with a wet large towel or bed sheet from the front to smother the flames.

#### Clothes



If your clothes should catch on fire, roll on the floor to put out the flames. Pull clothes (except anything nylon) over your head or cover your head with a towel if your hair catches fire.

#### Electrical appliances



Turn off the main power supply (and turn off the breaker) before throwing water on the appliance to extinguish the fire, as electric shock is likely to occur.

#### Kerosene heater



Throw water from directly above the heater (kerosene may spread if you throw the water from an angle). If a kerosene leak from the heater is found, cover it with a blanket and pour water over it to douse the fire.

#### Bathroom



Do not open the door too hastily in the event of fire in the bathroom on the grounds that there is a danger that flames rage on if air drifts into the bathroom. Turn the gas main off, gradually open the door and douse the flames.

#### Curtains and paper sliding-screen



Once the paper sliding - screen (fusuma) or curtain catches fire, you have no time to lose. Before dousing fire, kick and break the sliding - screen or rip down the curtain to keep the origin of fire away from the ceiling.

## To Our Readers Please let us hear your comments.

Please let us hear your comments about our articles or topics you want to be taken up. We would like to use them as reference to make an even more attractive newsletter.



Bandanas with former town names printed on them will be given as gifts to the readers who send in their comments or opinions.

Please contact the following with your name, age, address and occupation.  
By telephone: 03-5114-8812 (8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday)  
By fax: 03-3583-3782



This community information paper is planned and edited by the local residents. We accept application for a member of the editorial board. Ref. p.8

## Information from Azabu Regional City Office



**Announcement from Azabu Regional City Office**

### Posting for editorial staff of "The AZABU", AZABU's Regional Newsletter

"The AZABU" is the regional newsletter in which the community residents work as staff and conduct interviews and do the editing. Wouldn't you be interested in becoming a staff of "The AZABU" regional newsletter?

#### Eligibility:

Residents, those working or going to school in the Azabu Regional City area, who are over 20 years old, speak and read Japanese, and are interested.

#### Contents:

Planning, conducting interviews and editing for "The AZABU" regional newsletter

Interviewing people of the "town" and embassies, writing articles and taking photographs

- \* You will be requested to participate in the editorial meetings (in Japanese). This takes place approximately once a month on a weekday evening. There are also interviews which are conducted during the day.
- \* Compensation and transportation fees are not paid.

#### To apply:

Please write your address, name, occupation (or school name), telephone number and the reason you are interested (in Japanese or English, no restriction to length and format). You can directly bring in your application or send it by post or fax by March 17 (Thurs.) to the following address: Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo, 106-8515  
TEL: 5114-8812 FAX: 3583-3782



**Announcement from Azabu Regional City Office**

### "ZABUZABU Azabu Festa" Calligraphy Workshop Come participate in "Enjoyable Japanese calligraphy workshop!"



Azabu Regional City Office holds "Azabu Festa" every year aiming at interaction within the region and to energize the community. This year's theme is "Art Linking the Town of Azabu".

Workshops and events have been taking place throughout the year under the theme of art and design at "Azabu Festa 2010-2011" with the hope of creating various encounters among the people and for everyone to re-discover attractive points about the Azabu region. The final event of Azabu Festa 2010-2011 titled, "ZABUZABU Azabu Festa" will be taking place on March 21.

A "calligraphy workshop" will be held at "ZABUZABU Azabu Festa" in which foreigners can also participate. You will be able to enjoy calligraphy from various angles such as learning about how the "kanji" were derived and writing hieroglyphics using actual "sumi ink". We will also invite you to have a go at creating an artwork on small items the size of a CD jacket, which you will be able to take home with you. Even beginners will be able to enjoy this calligraphy workshop so why not come and join in?

Pre-registration will be required.

#### Eligibility:

People aged six and older and who live, work, or go to school in Minato City

- \* New first graders on next April can participate in with the guardians.
- First to second grade students must be accompanied by their guardians.



#### Date:

March 21 (Mon. national holiday) 13:30-16:00

#### Place:

Azabu Civic Center 2nd Floor Lecture Room

#### Capacity:

40 people (in order of application)

#### Application:

Contact Minato Call from March 2nd by phone.  
Minato Call Tel: 5472-3710 (9:00-17:00)

## This is a list of the main parks within the Azabu region.

### #7 Kogai Park

#### Address

3-12-1 Nishi Azabu

#### Outline of Facility

Area: 2,441.38 square meters

- 1 Multi-purpose Wooden Play Equipment
- 3 Pieces of Bouncing Play Equipment
- 1 Sandbox
- 1 Swing Set
- 1 Horizontal Bar
- 1 Rest Area (pergola, bench, water fountain)

The park lies adjacent to Kogai Elementary School on its west side between the school and a public street. There is a pergola and bench on the park's east side where one can overlook the whole space. Many mothers sit on the bench watching their children play energetically on the multi-purpose wooden play equipment and swing set.

#### History of the Park's Vicinity

The whole area close to the park was called Kogai-cho after Kogai Bridge which no longer exists. It is currently the vast area which covers Nishi Azabu 2, 3 and 4 chome.



There is a legend that Minamoto Yoshitomo offered his kogai, the ornament of his sword to the God of the River and crossed it during the *Tengyo no Ran* (brief medieval Japanese conflict in 939). There are many other legends about the origin of the name, for example, that it is an accented pronunciation of "Kofugata," or the names of the Koga or Iga clan. The Kogai River flows southwest down the valley of Azabu Hiroo and used to meet the Furukawa River at Tengeji-bashi. It is now an underground drain and flows parallel below the road north of the Route 4 on the Shuto Expressway. Kogai-bashi was at the bottom of the slope from Fujimizaka heading towards Ushizaka, which is illustrated in the famous books *Guide to famous Edo sites and New selection of Tokyo landmarks*. This valley had



many paddies and it was called "Kogai Rice Paddy" until the end of the Meiji Era. It opened as a park in Minato City in 1970.

#### Access

Metropolitan Bus  
No. 97 Shinagawa Depot - Shinjuku  
One minute walk from Nishi Azabu bus stop.

#### Inquiries

Public Works Subsection,  
Collaboration Project Section,  
Azabu Regional City Office  
Tel: 03-5114-8803

## AZABU

● Location of the newsletter: Roppongi 1 chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabu Juban subway station, Chi-bus, Minato Library, Azabu Community Welfare Hall, Nishi-Azabu Community Welfare Hall, Ikkura Community Welfare Hall, Hommura Community Welfare Hall, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office etc.  
● Usage of articles, illustrations and photographs in this newsletter is prohibited.

Chief Yasuhiko Ozaki  
Sub Chief Tsuneko Ishiyama  
Staff Kazue Asakawa

Toshie Suzuki  
Yukiko Takayanagi  
Aki Tanaka  
Satsuki Nishino  
Ayako Fukumoto  
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Sanae Minato  
Akira Mori  
Kanao Morizumi  
Ryozo Yamashita

Junior Staff Akane Ishiyama

Hibiki Omura  
Taichi Suzuki  
Misa Suzuki



Minato City promotes preservation of greenery and waste reduction.

#### Editor's Note

There is a book entitled, "Hello Work for the 13 year old" by Ryu Murakami which is published by Gentosha. When you look at the Table of Contents, you notice that you can search for jobs by interest, for example, "Love of Flowers," "Love of Music." There are probably not many adults who have found a career doing something they love, but I hope that children will think "what I love = career" and "how I like to spend my time = career." One tends to put in a lot of energy into pursuing what they like to do. We hope to introduce how interesting work can be to our readers through our "Kids Hello Work" articles.  
(Yasuhiko Ozaki)

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