

A community information paper created and edited by people who live in Azabu.

Fascinated by Artistic Azabu ⑮ A Mansion Preserved and Protected in the Azabu Area Former House of the Ishimaru Family “l’Assemblee HIROO”



l'Assemblee HIROO
 Area of the premises: 542.1m² (About 167.3 tsubo) Building floor space: 314.8m² (About 97.2 tsubo)

Do you know about this mansion quietly nestled along the Teppo-zaka alleyway slope in Minami Azabu? It turned 95 years old in 2017, but still has all the fascinating and elegant appearance it had when it was first built.

This luxurious mansion was built for the late Mr. Sukezaburo Ishimaru, upon his return from London in 1922. In the following year, 1923, the Great Kanto Earthquake struck this area. Fortunately, this building was not seriously damaged.

On the premises, there are three of the zelkova trees that are over 300 years old. There is a story that relates how, during the Great Tokyo Air Raid in 1945, those living in the neighborhood poured water over this cypress tree to protect the tree. The tree in turn protected the mansion from showers of falling sparks.

In 1977, this zelkova tree was designated by Minato City as a protecting trees. The trunk of the tree has become much larger than when the house was constructed, marking a significant passage of time.

The architect the late Mr. Isaku Nishimura designed the house. There is an open ceiling space at the center of the house, and in this five-floor structure, the rooms from the basement, through the 1st floor, mezzanine floor, 2nd floor and up to the loft, are arranged around this open central space.

There are two sets of stairs—one in the front, and also at the back. Combined with the central passage, they give this house an almost labyrinth-like quality. However, the house is well-ventilated, and gentle natural light shines on the floor through a skylight. The passage is located on the side of the open ceiling space, so that all the family members can see each other's faces as they move around the house.

The Tudor-style architecture of this house was quite rare at that time. However, the house is not completely a Western style structure.

In what was formerly a bedroom, there are several elements of Japanese style, including sliding doors and tokonoma (alcove). However, all of this is matched harmoniously with the Western-style fireplace, also designed in consideration of the family's lifestyle.

The stone pillar in the dining room, the handrail of the stairs, and the beams in the student room on the top floor remain unchanged and fully functional, the same as they have always been. You can almost imagine the original inhabitants of the house emerging from one of the rooms.

Mr. Ishimaru also had a keen interest in culture and art, and this place took on the role of a salon where great and well-known writers interacted. This included Yasunari Kawabata (1899 to 1972), Takeo Arishima (1878 to 1923) and Fumiko Hayashi (1903 to 1951). They met through the introduction of the late Mr. Kojirou Serizawa (1896 to 1993), a novelist who had spent time there as a student.

After the War, the GHQ requisitioned this mansion temporarily. At present, it has been turned into a wedding hall that warmly embraces newlyweds. At other times, it is used as a location for the filming of TV dramas or commercials, events or as a dining area for dignitaries. This place has once again become a central meeting point (“l’Assemblee” in French) for very interesting people.

Guided tours of the building are provided, but advance reservations are required. We welcome one and all to visit and experience the atmosphere of the Taisho Era.



Some earthquake reinforcement has been carried out for the building, and the stones forming the pillar are the same as ones put in place when the building was completed.



Rare scene of the Japanese room with sliding doors and shoji screen, where the Western-style fireplace was added. This is no longer a functioning fireplace, but still makes a magnificent addition to the room.



An open wedding ceremony space surrounded by green plants with the open skies above has been incorporated. This space is not visible from the front of the building.



Spacious view from the nostalgic open ceiling space. This dignified-looking handrail has been in use for 95 years.



Ishimaru Family Members: Mr. Sukezaburo Ishimaru is the second person from the right. On his right is his wife, Mrs. Tsue Ishimaru. (Photo provided by l'Assemblee HIROO)



The mansion, back in 1922 (Photo provided by l'Assemblee HIROO)

Architectural Designer: Isaku Nishimura (1884 to 1963)

Born in Shingu City in Wakayama Prefecture, he taught himself the art of pottery and drawing from an early age. He designed his own house by employing key aspects of modern Western living design.

His design is somewhat prototypical, and he referred to it as “housing design centered around the living room”, which serves as a unique space perfectly suited for gatherings of family members.

On the other hand, as an educator he established a private school called “Bunka Gakuin” (located in Surugadai, Tokyo) in cooperation with Akiko Yosano and others.

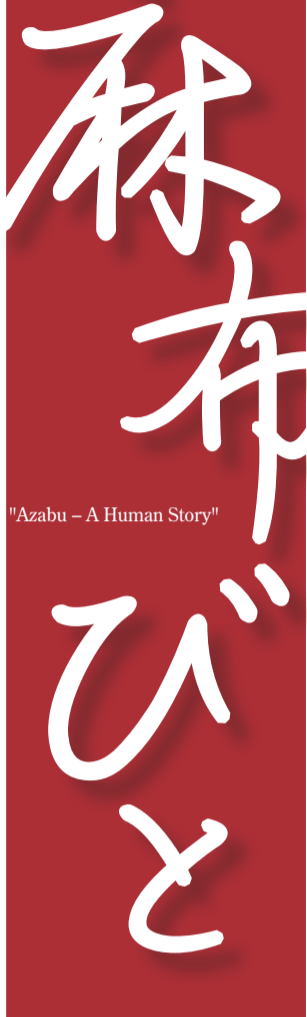
As one of the foremost modernists of the Taisho Era, he continued to preach about the need for lifestyle improvement and modernization to the Japanese people.



Isaku Nishimura (Photo provided by Musée Le Vent)

Data Collection Support

l'Assemblee HIROO <http://assemblee-hiroo.com> Tel: 03-5793-3088



Mr. Miguel Gen Ozaki
(26 years old)

Former Member of the Spanish National Swimming Team selected for the Olympic Games in Rio



Uniform jacket and high-speed swimwear used at the Olympics

I will always treasure what I learned and experienced competing as a swimmer in the Olympic Games

“The most important thing in the Olympic Games is not winning but taking part”. This is a famous quote from the Baron de Coubertin.

In fact, it is unimaginably difficult to reach the finals, and be chosen to represent your country. Miguel Gen Ozaki (hereafter, “Gen”) was born in 1991 and is 26 years old. He participated in the 2016 Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro (hereafter, “Rio”) as a member of the Spanish national Swim team.

In a rare coincidence, his younger brother Bruno was selected alongside with him.

He graduated from Minato City Honmura Nursery School and Honmura Elementary School.

On August 8, 2016, Gen competed in the men’s 4 x 100m freestyle relay in the Olympic pool in Rio. He made his best effort as the second swimmer, and his younger brother Bruno anchored the relay team. In the magnificent competition arena of the Olympic Games (held only once every four years), the team put in an amazing performance and set a new national record for Spain! During the preliminary heats, the team broke their own previous record. This was a brilliant achievement, and even more amazing that two of the fastest four swimmers for Spain are brothers.

“Our final rank was fourteenth, so we were not able to participate in the finals. Nevertheless, I felt I had accomplished something great!”

Gen’s father is Spanish and his mother is a Japanese Brazilian. He grew up in Minato City until senior high school, due to his parents’ work.

Gen started attending swimming school when he was in the Minato City Honmura Nursery School, and started to train in earnest at the recommendation of his swimming coach. He easily won the competition and set a new record at the swimming competition in Minato City.

For his junior and senior high school education, he attended an international school in the Tokyo Metropolitan area, where he played an important role in the swimming club team and continued to compete. During the summer holidays, he spent time in Spain, the home country of his father, and trained with the local club team, practicing every day.

Four Years of Intensive Training at the University of Michigan

He went to the prestigious University of Michigan, also famous for graduate Michael Phelps, who won a total of 23 gold medals in the Olympic Games. This Olympic gold medal record has not been broken yet.

All first-year undergraduates in the swimming club had to live in the dormitory. In such a prestigious university, he needed to give 100% not only to swimming, but also to his academics. Every week, he was obliged to attend a tutoring program course for his academics. Other than on Sundays, and revising his academics, his life comprised of only swimming. Gen always participated in the morning practice, and after school, he swam for 4 hours, a distance of 8,000m.

Under the guidance of a nutritionist, he took his meals in the dormitory. He told us, “I consumed about 9,000 kcal of food per day”.

Gen recalled, “I was intensely competitive with myself until senior high school. However, when I entered the University of Michigan, my attitude changed a lot because of the swimming practices”.

He learned a great deal from swimming and university life, such as the importance of teamwork, collective responsibility, time management, etc.

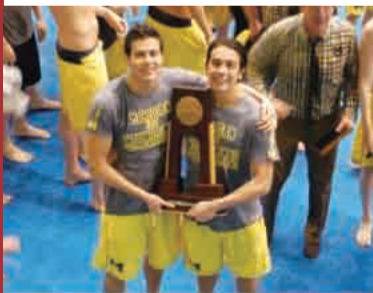
By the time he became a third-year student, his younger brother Bruno had entered the same university. They were now able to support each other in training and university life.

At the invitation-only National Collegiate Athletic Association Championship (a competition comprising only university teams from the U.S.), Gen participated in the men’s 4 x 50m medley relay together with Bruno. They represented Michigan University competently, and the team won the race and set a new record in the U.S. The brothers led their team to glory in this prestigious and highly competitive event.

Of the nineteen members of the team who entered the university at the same time, only six survived to graduation. Some were unable to continue improving as competitive swimmers, while others were unable to maintain a satisfactory level of academic performance. In either case, they were not able to retain their membership in the team swim. However, they all maintained their friendships and strong relationships as they had grown and shared a lot together, living under the same roof.

The Journey Toward Becoming a Member of the Spanish National Team as a Professional Swimmer!

Gen majored in economics at the University of Michigan, and after graduation, decided to become a professional swimmer.



Gen and Bruno won the medley relay in 2013, when they were students at the University of Michigan.

He also furthered his education, and pursued a postgraduate course at the Eastern Michigan University. This time, his focus was on the hospitality industry, specifically hotel and restaurant management. This still left him some of time to participate regularly in swimming competitions in Spain.

Gen decided to try and become a member of the Spanish national team during the national trials for the Olympic Games in London in 2012, thinking “There’s a good chance I could be selected if I continue to try as hard as I

have always done”. He redoubled his efforts together with his brother Bruno.

His wish was fulfilled! Gen and Bruno were officially selected for the Spanish national team, and chosen to represent Spain at the Olympic Games in Rio. Gen told us modestly, “Spain is not like the U.S. or Japan, which are internationally recognized as the countries with the best swimmers”.

However, with slight exaggeration he said that he and his brother have been through every trial, and come out ahead of 46,000,000 Spanish people! They participated in the Olympic Games carrying their country on their shoulders. I can only describe that as “Awesome!”

I thought that he might be nervous about venturing to

The swimming coach picked out Gen because he was impressed with Gen’s kicking power. Gen started swimming seriously when he was in the second grade of elementary school.



“What do you think about as you swim?” He replied, “During practice, I count strokes or my breathing, but during a race, I try not to think about anything”.



One of Gen’s many talents lies with language, and he is multilingual. In addition to Japanese and English, he speaks Spanish with his father and Olympic teammates. He also speaks Portuguese, and mostly uses English and Japanese when speaking to his mother and grandmother. His grandmother, Keiko, laughs and says, “Both Gen and Bruno spoke Japanese in their sleep when they were children”. When they were in the U.S. and Spain, Gen and Bruno used Japanese whenever they wanted to have a private conversation.

Rio. However, he told me, “Many of my swimmer friends were there participating in the Games for other foreign national teams. Also, a total of about 30 swimmers who had been to the University of Michigan came to Rio as members of other national teams. I had not seen many of them for quite a while, so it was terrific to see them again”.

I was surprised to hear all of that, but then realized that, of course, since the U.S. is a country that attracts many of the world’s best swimmers, many of them would naturally be at the Olympics.

From Great Olympian to Successful Businessman

Gen announced his decision to retire from the swimming world in December 2016. He started a new life as a businessman and a member of society, based alone in Tokyo.

Many of the job offers Gen received were as a swimming instructor. During holidays, he would occasionally conduct a swim clinics at places like the Tokyo American Club in Azabu-Dai, when he has the time.

He has completely reorganized his life, from being an athlete who swims for a living, to going to an office every day. However, he goes to the gym to exercise vigorously every morning, and does some form of exercise every single day. “My experience as an Olympian was very valuable, but I would like to become a great businessman in the future”. Gen is determined in all things, including his new career.

Did his experiences as a professional swimmer prepare him to be a businessman? I have no doubt that his life at Michigan University had prepared him to work hard, to deal with major changes in life, as well as given him an international outlook.

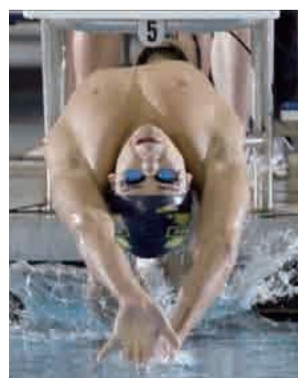
“Well done, Gen!” In addition, I would like to say, “Good Luck and Never Give Up!” to Bruno, who is hoping to compete with the Spanish National Team at the Tokyo Olympic Games.



The brothers participated together in the Olympic Games! The elder brother is 188cm tall and the younger brother 194cm tall. They have the advantage of being very fit, having trained constantly.



Spanish National Team relay members completed the relay of 4 x 100m at the Rio Olympic Games



Although Gen can do anything in the water, he is especially good at backstroke and freestyle.



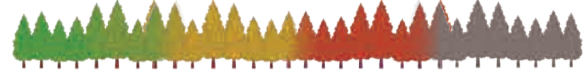
While visiting Honmura Elementary School for a photoshoot, Gen said, “I remember the good old days, and I’m glad nothing has changed”. Then, he jumped into the pool. Children frequently ask him how they can become a member of the Olympic team. He asks them “Do you enjoy swimming?” He said clearly, “That is the starting point”.

(Data collected and written by Yukiko Takayanagi)

Looking for **Verdure** in Azabu Series: No. 3

Metasequoia

— The tree that is symbolic of resilience and regeneration —



The Tree That Overcame Crisis

Have you ever heard of the “Metasequoia (Dawn Redwood)” tree? It is also known as “Akebono Sugi” or “Ichii Hinoki” in Japanese. Metasequoia used to be classified as Taxodiaceae, but now belongs to the Cupressaceae family. Metasequoia was believed to have become extinct a million years before, until Dr. Shigeru Miki, a paleobotanist, discovered a fossil of metasequoia in 1941, when the Pacific War broke out. After Japan was defeated in the war, an old sacred tree was found in Hubei, China, and later verified as a metasequoia. It soon became a hot topic around the world as a “living fossil”.

Researchers from the Arnold Arboretum of Harvard University flew to China to examine the metasequoia, and collected seeds to cultivate them in the United States. The first seedling that came to Japan was presented to the Showa Emperor and planted in the Imperial Palace. In 1950, an additional 100 seedlings were received and distributed all over Japan. Planting metasequoia trees became more popular as its rapid growth (around 80cm per year) fittingly symbolized Japan’s era of regrowth and revival. However, the metasequoia cultivation fever cooled down around the time of the Tokyo Olympic Games.

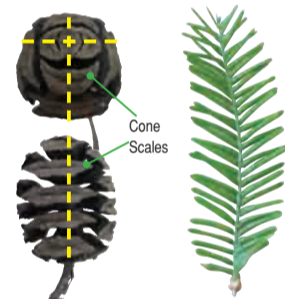
76 years have passed since metasequoia came out of its deep, ancient slumber. Since then, the revived metasequoia “miracle trees”, owing to the cooperative efforts of Japanese, American and Chinese paleobotanists*, have remained with us consistently and peacefully.

* Dr. Shigeru Miki (Japan), Dr. H. H. Hue and Dr. W. C. Cheng (China), Dr. E. D. Merrill and Dr. R. W. Chaney (U.S.)

Let’s find the tree! It is very common to mistakenly identify Redwood (Sequoia) or Bald Cypress (Taxodium) as metasequoia. Let’s have a close look at their distinctive differences. The following two main points might be helpful when looking for metasequoia trees around the neighborhood.

Deciduous or Evergreen

The Redwood is known as an evergreen needle-leaved tree, while metasequoia trees are deciduous. The color of metasequoia leaves changes dramatically from season to season, and creates an artistic atmosphere and unique seasonal scenery that move us emotionally. The Redwood, on the other hand, are the famous giant trees commonly seen in National and State Parks and Forest Reserves in California, U.S. In the vastness of these lands, such trees have grown more than 100m high and occupy top ranks among the world’s tallest trees.



Scales are positioned so they face each other and crosswise (decussate cone scales).
Leaves grow in opposition (opposite leaves).

Opposite or Alternate

Let’s shift our focus to the leaves and cones. The leaves of the Metasequoia grow oppositely, and their cone scales also grow in cross opposite (decussate). On the other hand, Redwood and deciduous Bald Cypress (also called “Rakuusho” in Japanese) leaves grow alternately, and they have obliquely lined cone scales. When cone scales like this mature, they come apart.

- **Key References**
H. Okano and M. Tsukagoshi, “Metasequoia to Bunka Sozo (Metasequoia and Culture Creation)”, OMUP (Osaka Municipal University Press)
K. Saito, “Meta-sequoia - Showa Tenno no Aishita Ki (Meta-sequoia: The Showa Emperor’s Most Favourite Tree)”, Chuokoron-sha Inc.

- **Research Support:**
Osaka Museum of Natural History <http://www.mus-nh.city.osaka.jp/language/en/>
Expo '70 Commemorative Park <http://www.expo70-park.jp/languages/english/>

Behind-the-scenes in Azabu

I interviewed two tree and park management specialists to better understand our green environment: Mr. Tsuyoshi Kaga from the Public Works Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, and Mr. Atsushi Kuraishi, the Park Designated Administrator of “AMENIS K-MIX HIBIYA-KADAN Group”.

Mr. Kaga The Metasequoia has been designated as a symbolic tree in the Roppongi West Park. The tree was planted in 1981 when the City of Minato bought the site of the former Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications’ official residence to construct a new park.

Later, local residents spent their time participating in workshops to discuss how the park could be revamped to get more sunlight, and to be used as a base during natural disasters. When the Roppongi West Park was completely renovated in 2016, the metasequoia maintained its important symbolic standing.

We will continue to take care of trees loved by local residents, and aim to keep the balance between old and new trees, providing a harmonious green environment for the community.

Mr. Kuraishi Since April, we have been responsible for managing and operating the municipal parks and children’s playgrounds in the Azabu area.

Azabu is a place where large trees grow in narrow spaces, and because of that, heavy construction machinery cannot be used for maintaining these trees. It makes our job rather difficult and challenging, not only given the conditions on the ground, but also because residents have different values and opinions regarding how the trees should be managed. However, after making drastic decisions, if we hear positive feedback saying “good job – it is far better than before”, we certainly feel relieved and happy.

It was oddly coincidental that the day I encountered the metasequoia was on the anniversary of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima on August 6. I took this as an indication of the importance of remembering Japan’s turbulent past and ensuring Japan’s peaceful future. Moreover, I believe it to be imperative to be thankful for our natural green surroundings, too often taken for granted. Searching for Greenery in Azabu certainly brought me a breath of “fresh air”. Can you feel the breeze?



The Roppongi West Park’s Symbolic Tree

**Where to find metasequoia trees:
Municipal Parks and Children’s Playgrounds in Azabu**

- Roppongi 3-Chome Children’s Playground (at 15-25, 3-chome, Roppongi)
- Roppongi West Park (at 17-8, 7-chome, Roppongi)
- Mamiana Park (at 63, Mamiana-cho, Azabu)
- Ajiro Park (at 15-1, 2-chome, Azabu-Juban)
- Shin Hiroo Park (at 5-1, 4-chome, Azabu-Juban)
- Arusugawa no Miya Memorial Park (at 7-29, 5-chome, Minami-Azabu)
- Nishi-Azabu 2-Chome Children’s Playground (at 18-9, 2-chome, Nishi-Azabu)

Note: The growing conditions of metasequoia trees vary from park to park. In Ajiro Park, the leaves fall earlier than in the other parks, perhaps because the tree grows less vigorously than the others.



Mr. Kaga (left) and Mr. Kuraishi (right)

Other interesting information!

- **Cleaning of Parks and Children’s Playgrounds**
Cleaning of parks and playgrounds is conducted three to five days a week by staff from the Minato City Employment Service Centre for the Elderly. Toilet cleaning is done twice a day.
- **Planting Trees**
Opinions of local residents are highly respected when selecting symbolic trees and other plants upon the improvement and refurbishment of a park.
- **Management of Trees**
An arborist diagnoses tree conditions once every three years. The arborist keeps medical records for each tree with a description of conditions and circumstances. Any risk of falling trees or branch damage is curtailed by regular check-ups to prevent accidents.

(Interviews, photographs and article by Mimi S Koike)



Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan to Japan
His Excellency Mr. Yerlan BAUDARBEK-KOZHATAYEV



Handicrafts



Republic of Kazakhstan

Area: 2,724,900 Km² (7 times larger than Japan)
Population: 17,900,000 (as of 2016, based on United Nations Population Fund)
Capital City: Astana
Head of State: President of the Republic of Kazakhstan
(His Excellency Mr. Nursultan NAZARBAYEV)
Legislature: Bicameral System House of Lords: Senate (47 seats, 6-year term
(election of half the members every three years)),
House of Representatives: Majlis (107 seats, 5-year term)

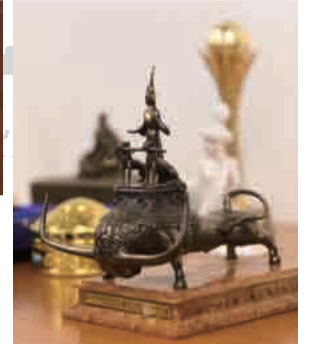
Reference website and map provided by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
<http://www.mofa.go.jp/region/europe/kazakhstan/index.html>

Interview Support: Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan

Visiting Ambassadors ④ From the "World" of Azabu



Chocolate



Handicrafts made in Kazakhstan



The former capital Almaty is also known as the center of apple production.

KAZAKHSTAN



Mausoleum of Khoja Ahmad Yasawi on the Silk Road, a World Heritage Site
Photo provided by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan

Kazakhstan is ranked as the 9th largest country in the world, and is the world's biggest landlocked country. This country has a long history, and the Silk Road passed right through it. Of course, it has a new modern face, exemplified by the remarkable development of the very forward-looking city of Astana.

His Excellency the Ambassador Mr. Yerlan BAUDARBEK-KOZHATAYEV (hereafter, "the Ambassador"), came to Japan for the first time in 13 years when he assumed office as the Ambassador to Japan. He had been to and stayed in Japan several times before that. He answered our questions in fluent Japanese.

down from 40% to 5%. Consequently, GDP has increased 23 times since the changes, and foreign exchange reserves have increased to as much as 95 billion dollars.

The World Bank's Business Environment Ranking in 2017 ranks Kazakhstan 35th, coming just after Japan. Direct investment from foreign countries has reached 260 billion dollars.

Kazakhstan's aim to become "one of the 50 most competitive countries of the world" was achieved in 2013. This is remarkable because this goal was set as part of "Kazakhstan's 2030" Strategy in 1997, and the country has attained its goal way ahead of schedule.

It has initiated policies known as the "Third Modernization Policies" with the aim of diversifying the economy and moving away from its reliance on raw materials and natural resources.

Kazakhstan's main imports from Japan are automobiles and automobile parts, construction and mining machinery, and rubber products, among others. The majority of their exports to Japan include metals, metal products, crude oil and chemical products.

The Ambassador suggests that in the future, Kazakhstan could export wool and food including wheat, which is of quality that has been proven worldwide.

Astana: Designed by the late Mr. Kisho Kurokawa, a famous Japanese architect, philosopher and businessman

In 1997, Kazakhstan's capital city was relocated from Almaty to Astana. Mr. Kisho Kurokawa won the grand prize in the New Capital Design International Competition, and prepared the master plan for the whole of Astana City. The President himself also took part in this major undertaking.

Mr. Kurokawa visited Kazakhstan frequently, as well as the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan. The Ambassador has also spoken to Mr. Kurokawa before, and reminisced, "He talked about Astana with great passion".

The new location of the capital brought great economic development to the whole country. Astana



became the symbol of the dynamic economic growth of Kazakhstan, and is now a large city with a population of over one million people.

The famous Bayterek Tower, with a height of 97m, was designed based on a freehand drawing by the President based on the image of a bird's nest.

"Bayterek" stands for "A Growing Tree, Young and Strong". It symbolizes the country developing toward the future, while at the same time preserving its traditions.

The largest opera house in Central Asia is located in Astana, and three Japanese ballerinas are presently actively involved in performances there.

The strong relationship between Kazakhstan and Japan is also observed at Nazarbayev University (a training school for the elite), where Mr. Shigeo Katsu (from Japan), the former Vice President of the World Bank, was appointed as the president of the university.

This University was established in 2010, and employs professors and faculty members from many of the world's top-class universities. Education is delivered fully in English. Within a short time after establishment, it has become a research university that continues to maintain the highest international standards.

Mr. Katsu is greatly valued for his enormous contribution to the growth of the university.

Horsemeat is strongly recommended!

The Ambassador has lived in Japan for a long time, so how does he like Japanese food? He smiled broadly, and said, "I love it all! Natto, sashimi—I eat everything". However, he has never tried horsemeat sashimi, a popular food in Japan. His favorite soba restaurant, Japanese restaurant and Korean barbecue restaurant are all in

Azabu-Juban.

In fact, Kazakhstan's traditional cuisine frequently includes horsemeat, mutton, and a variety of other meats, along with a wide variety of dairy products.

A common signature dish is called "Beshbarmak", a thick pasta topped with stewed horsemeat, mutton and onions. This dish is essential on auspicious occasions and a real favorite of the Ambassador's.

He also recommended to us "Qazi" (horsemeat sausage), "Manti" (steamed juicy dumplings), "Samsa" (small meat-pies). There are many Kazakhstani dishes that contain horsemeat. Based on data collected in 2014, annual meat consumption is 63.2kg per person in Kazakhstan, and annual horsemeat consumption is 6.2kg per person. This is almost equivalent to Japanese beef consumption.



Traditional dish "Beshbarmak"
Photo provided by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan

Incidentally, Kazakhstan's consumption of other kinds of meat is as follows: 25.3kg for beef, 17.6kg for chicken, 8.6kg for mutton and 5.7kg for pork. They eat any meat that has been cooked over a fire.

Kazakhstan is world famous for the high-quality wheat it produces, and has many types of delicious bread.

Confectionery is also extremely popular; "Chak-chak" is a type of deep-fried dough topped with honey, "Boursak" is another common deep-fried bread, and various pies are popular. Surprisingly, chocolate produced in Kazakhstan is highly regarded, which we did not expect because Kazakhstan is not a cacao-producing country. However, it has long been producing chocolate in factories constructed during the time of the former Soviet Union. Its formula for chocolate has not changed since the 1930's, and the people would not have it any other way.

For drinks, strong tea with milk is the most popular, but the people sometimes drink it with lemon or jam depending on personal preference. Green tea and coffee are also popular.

The Ambassador thinks that much of Kazakhstan's cuisine is very suited to Japanese tastes, so we would like to try some if we have a chance.

The Ambassador's quiet and unpretentious demeanor makes it a little difficult for us to imagine him really "playing to win" at table-tennis. We were very impressed with his charming, slightly shy and reserved manner.



Day and night in the modern city of Astana Photo provided by the Embassy of Kazakhstan in Japan

The Azabu Future Photo Studio

— A Quiet Place of Strategic Importance in Ancient Azabu —

The Ushi-zaka Slope

There are a few slopes named after animals in Azabu. Appearing for the first time on these pages is the “Ushi” slope.

This word refers to the bovine family of animals in Japanese. This name harkens back to an era of the distant past, very different from the modern town of Azabu. The guidepost says, “This slope derived its name from the fact that it was an ancient traffic route leading to “Kogaibashi Bridge”, and the setting for the legend of Minamoto no Tsunemoto and the Shirogane Millionaire, in which many ox-drawn carriages came and went”.

This could be a link to the legend of Minamoto no Tsunemoto in “Ipponmatsuzaka Slope”, which appeared in The Azabu Vol. 40! My heart skipped a beat when I realized that.

Also Known as “Ushinaki-zaka”, The Mooing Oxen Slope

When looking up the slope from the bottom, the inclination does not seem so sharp, although it does look rather long. However, when looking at photos from the top, the reason for this other name becomes apparent.



In 2013, viewed from the bottom, the slope looks very gentle. So perhaps this slope didn't make oxen bellow for mercy.

The inclination as seen from this perspective is so obviously steep that we can imagine that an ox pulling a cart might begin to beg for mercy. It is in fact quite long, but because the road is so narrow, it creates the impression of being much longer than it actually is. I had to catch my breath after realizing this as well.

The view from the hilltop is more marvelous than you might think.

Where is the “Kogaibashi Bridge”?

Where is the “Kogaibashi Bridge” described on the guidepost?

The location used to be in front of the crossing at the foot of the slope.

There is no bridge today, but the Kogaigawa River used to flow right through there. The river is still there of course, but has long since become a closed conduit as the area developed. So, there used to be a bridge over the river once upon a time.

All of this somehow reminded me of “Gojo Ohashi” in Kyoto, in relation to Benkei and Ushiwakamaru (Minamoto no Yositsune). I suddenly became curious about the legend of Minamoto no Tsunemoto.

What is a “Kogai”?

I have just come to understand how difficult it is to read this Chinese character. We read it as “Kogai”. The town and neighborhood we've been looking at was called “Kogai-Cho” until 1967, and this name comes from the Kogaigawa River.

So, what is a “Kogai” after all? I looked it up, and found that it's a decorative hairdressing implement for coiling and holding a bun in place. Alternatively, it can also refer to one of the attachments of a Japanese short sword, also known as “Mitokoromono”. It's very interesting that a single word like this was used to refer to decorative accessories for both men and women.

Contrary to what I had previously thought, men in those days also paid a lot of attention to their grooming.

Outline of the Legend

This “Legend (Minamoto no Tsunemoto) of Kogaibashi Bridge” is one of the origin stories of the town. This story takes place just as Minamoto no Tsunemoto was on his way to inquire about a night's lodging in Ippon Matsu Zaka Slope.

Tsunemoto, who was returning to Kyoto to make a report about the “Taira no Masakado's Rebellion”, had reached the Kogaigawa river. (Incidentally, it appears to have been a much larger river then, and was also called the “Ryugawa River”).

At that time, this was a kind of border crossing station to a separate area, and travellers were scrutinized here. In this case it was Echigono Zenji Hiroo, one of Masakado's men who was carefully conducting the checks. (This is unrelated, but the nearby town of Hiroo came to my mind.) This created a problem for Tsunemoto; to put it bluntly, he was caught in a trap!

Naturally, the question on his mind was how he could get out of this sticky situation. However, Tsunemoto was an extremely resourceful and quick-witted fellow. So, when he reached the front of the line he knew just what to say, “I am also one of Masakado's men, and am going to Sagami Province to call up more troops!”

When he was asked for some sort of identification, he showed his “Kogai”, the ornament attached to his sword. In this way, he successfully evaded Masakado's clutches, which would surely have ended in death.

Following this harrowing experience, he was able to reach Kyoto, his home, where unfortunately further hardship awaited him.



In 2017: The name “Ushinaki-zaka Slope” seems most appropriate now. Viewed from this very different point, we get the impression that the angle of the slope is steep indeed.

Photo shot by Marika Oba

The Legendary Kogai

The “Kogai” that Tsunemoto showed to the border guard still exists, and is kept at the “Shibuya Konno Hachimangu” shrine. (Actually, this shrine is also part of another Kogai legend, but that is a story for another time!)

It is amazing that this artifact, clear evidence of the “Kogai” legend, was not lost in time. So much has changed since this story occurred, but an important piece of it has been preserved after more than 1,000 years.



The “Kogai”, made more than 1,000 years ago, is preserved in the Shibuya Konno Hachimangu shrine. It's astonishing that it remains with us, and in such great condition.

Azabu has played an important role as a key strategic geographical area since ancient times. This becomes even more evident as we explore the many historical connections it has to neighboring areas.

The town that once proudly bore the name “Kogai” no longer exists, but there are some places here and there where the name “Kogai” still comes up. In this way, the legend persists, and offers us a lesson in history.



This picture taken in 1975, 42 years ago, shows that the area was once densely forested.



In 2013: The width of the street has not changed in all the time that has past, but the area has lost a lot of its trees. So much has changed that it is hard to imagine the Kogaibashi Bridge, with the Kogaigawa River flowing under it.

In 1975 and 2013: Photos shot by Mr. Masanori Taguchi, and provided by Shigehisa Taguchi



About the Azabu Future Photo Studio?

Since 2009, the Azabu Regional City Office has been organizing activities with Azabu Future Photo Studio in an endeavor to capture the changes to the cityscape of Azabu. They've been working together with local residents and businesses to collect old photographs of the Azabu region, as well as taking photographs at fixed-point locations.

Through the collection and preservation of things from the Azabu region, these activities are designed to preserve and pass down historical and cultural resources that are familiar to long-time local residents down to future generations, as well as expanding their utilization in the future. At the same time, the project aims to make the history and culture of the town known to even more people, contributing to the deepening of their affection for the town.

The Azabu Future Photo Studio is looking for old photographs.

If you have any old photographs of the Azabu region that you feel should be preserved and passed on with a view to the future, please contact the Azabu Regional City Office. For details, please contact the Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office.

Inquire: Tel: 03-5114-8812



Present View of the Site of Toson Shimazaki's Former Mansion, August 2017

Azabu Iigura-Katamachi, Where Toson Shimazaki and Other Writers Lived

The writer Toson Shimazaki (1872 to 1943) featured here, lived in Iigura-Katamachi for almost 19 years, from October 1918 when he moved into a rental house at 33 Iigura-Katamachi, Azabu-Ku, to 1937 when he then moved to Kojimachi. This is according to *likura Dayori*, his serial essay published in the January 1922 issue of *Fujin no Tomo* magazine.

This place is located in a natural geographical depression, where an area of the Azabu flatland slopes down to the Furukawa River on the south side. There are many slopes around this area. Here, we will explore the traces left behind by the writers who lived here, especially Toson Shimazaki. In the time when these were living in this valley, going anywhere required walking up and down the local hills.



麻布の軌跡

Historical Footsteps
of Azabu

Falling into the Trap of an Ill-Fated Love Affair – The *Shinsei* Incident

In 1912, Toson Shimazaki had an illicit relationship with his own niece, and in April the following year, he retreated to France at the recommendation of his friend, Rinsen Nakazawa (Note 1). In France, he became acquainted with Japanese artists living there, including Kanae Yamamoto and Tokusaburo Masamune. (Note 2).

Three years later, in July 1916, Toson came back to Japan and got back together with his niece, who helped him compile his travel journal. His serial novel autobiography *Shinsei* (New Life) was published in the Tokyo Asahi Newspaper on May 1, 1918. This novel incurred the anger of one of Toson's elder brothers (the father of his niece), so this niece was put under the care of his eldest brother.

This became known as the *Shinsei* Incident. This published journal was in fact a public confession of his illicit affair with a family member, so there was a social price to pay. He had angered many people around him, not just his brother. However, his sincere confession was also greatly admired in some circles. In October of the same year, when the first chapter of the serialized novel was completed without any trouble, he moved to the house at 33 Iigura-Katamachi, Azabu-Ku. Toson was then 46 years old.

Toson Resurfaces – The Release of *Arashi* (Storm)

At this time, Toson lived quietly in Iigura-Katamachi with his children, who had been taken care of by others up till that point. He had managed to avoid serious repercussions from the *Shinsei* Incident.

His four children grew up rapidly. His first son returned to Magome to pursue work in the agriculture industry. He insisted that his second and third sons learn to paint at art school, hoping they would become painters in the future. At Toson's strong recommendation, his friend Keizo Koyama (1897 to 1987), an artist of Western painting from Komoro, went to France. Koyama returned to Japan in 1928, and in March the following year, Toson sent his second son to France to study.

In this way, he put great effort into fostering his children's artistic development despite his own complicated life. In September 1926, he released a series of short stories titled *Arashi* in the magazine *Kaizo*, in which he described his daily life. Ikuma Arishima described these stories as "poems that exist between the real and the abstract", and reviewed *Arashi* favorably (*Shinchosha* 1927). It was said that this novel would certainly be remembered as a definitive description of the state of mind of people living in the Taisho Era.

This was quite different from *Shinsei*, which was a confession based on a real incident that caused something of a scandal. This time, his insightful observations about daily life, coupled with his unique emotional touch and style, was very well received.

This provided Toson with the chance to rejoin the polite society of the Taisho literary circles. Even his private life improved as he remarried. For his next literary challenge, he sailed to sea to create his monumental work *Yoake Mae* (Before the Dawn) (*Shinchosha* 1932 to 1935).

Two Writers from Two Different Levels of Society – Toson and Motojiro Kajii

In May 1925, seven years after Toson started living in Iigura-Katamachi, a young student and aspiring writer moved into 32 Iigura-Katamachi, Azabu-Ku.

His name was Motojiro Kajii (1901 to 1932). He chose this place because his high school friends (from the former Third High School), Ryuzo Yodono (1904 to 1967) and Shigeru Tonomura (1902 to 1961), were living in Azabu Ichibei-cho. He moved into a room on the second floor of a boarding house where Yodono was living.

The landlord was a gardener, while a young couple (his son and daughter-in-law) who had taken over his business were renting two 4.5-tatami rooms on the second floor of their house to students. The house was located in a corner of a hill in Iigura-Katamachi. This was only accessible by going down the hill from the main street to the bottom of the hill, then going up the Uekizaka Slope on the right-hand side, and taking a right-turn halfway up the hill.

Toson's house was situated in a corner of a valley accessed by going down to the foot of the Uekizaka Slope (Refer to * mark on the map).

In April 1926, Kajii visited Toson, together with Tonomura, and they brought with them the magazine, *Aozora* (Blue Sky) Vol. 15. They were shown into a 2-tatami room near the entrance, where they presented the magazine to Toson.

During their discussion, Toson was smoking a cigarette. Immediately after he took a

puff of a cigarette, he would stand it in the ash in the brazier. Then he would take another cigarette and do the same thing, creating a circle of many cigarettes standing on the ash.

Kajii was very impressed with Toson's luxurious way of smoking. In the literary circles of the time, there was a great difference in living standards between masters like Toson and a young upstart like Kajii.

However, Kajii entered a turning point in life this summer. He had been asked to submit work to a special edition of the *Shincho* magazine for new writers. However, he was unable to complete his work due to serious illness. This work was later published as *Aru Gakeue no Kanjo* (Emotions at the Top of a Cliff), when he was finally able to finish writing it.

In October the same year, a writer, Tatsuji Miyoshi (1900 to 1964), moved into the room next to Kajii's and became his lifelong friend. He became a member of the group from *Aozora* Vol. 16. Later, Miyoshi worked together with Yodono to publish Kajii's short story collection *Lemon* while Kajii was ill in bed.

In May 1928, Kajii returned to the boarding house in Iigura-Katamachi. Another of his high school friends (from the former Third High School), Fuyuhiko Kitagawa, was living in his room during his absence. Sei Itoh (1905 to 1969) was also living there, and Kajii became acquainted with Itoh at that time.

Itoh published his autobiographical full-length novel *Wakai Shijin no Shozo* (Portrait of a Young Poet) (*Shinchosha* 1956), which describes the zeitgeist of Iigura-Katamachi at the time with absolute clarity.

In July the same year, Kajii released *Aru Gakeue no Kanjo* in the *Bungei Toshi* (Literary City) magazine. In the literary circles, this work was highly admired by Seiichi Funabashi. The main characters are two young boys named Ikushima and Ishida. Ikushima introduces Ishida to the "temptation of looking through the windows of the houses located below the cliff from the cliff top", and they spy voyeuristically on someone from the cliff top. In doing so, Ishida surprisingly, does not feel any sexual stimulation, but instead "gets a powerful feeling of mujoukan (a sense of the mutability of life) that far surpasses the emotion of monono aware (a sense of the sadness or pathos of things)". This work draws out an extraordinary depth of emotion through Ishida's character.

After this, Kajii received some reviewing work, but dropped out of the Imperial University in September and returned to Osaka. Kajii thought he would come back to the boarding house in Iigura-Katamachi someday in the near future, so he left Tokyo with only a small bag, leaving everything in the room as it was. This was on September 3 of the same year.

Iigura-Katamachi is the place for me

In the 71 years of his life, Toson lived in Iigura-Katamachi for the longest time. In his essay *Iigura Fukin* (Around the Iigura Area) (*Kaizo* 1928), he described the area around Iigura-Katamachi, and a "distinctive alley" "hidden in the back of Iigura 2-chome", reminiscent of the "deserted street" in "Saint-Germain in Paris" that he concluded was "his favorite area". At present, the Toson Shimazaki Dwelling Site Signboard is shown at 4, 3-chome, Azabudai.

No monuments have been left to mark the literary achievements of these Taisho Era writers, such as Motojiro Kajii, Ryuzo Yodono, Fuyuhiko Kitagawa, Tatsuji Miyoshi and Sei Itoh. Even the exact location of the boarding house that they lived in is uncertain. We have only a rough idea, around a spot in an alley accessible from halfway up the Uekizaka Slope. Topographical changes to the areas have made this information lost in time.

From the diary or drafts of Kajii, who could not come back to Tokyo, we can be sure that he was quite fond of the area around Azabu based on such expressions as "the many streets in the town" and "I moved into the town on the hill".

Note (1) He established the magazine *Yamabiko* (Echoes) together with Kaoru Osanai, a literary critic.

Note (2) His story about his time spent studying in France is described in detail in *Toson no Paris* (Toson's Paris) written by Mr. Yoshizo Kawamori, winner of the 49th Yomiuri Literary Prize. Mr. Kawamori was well-acquainted with Kajii and Miyoshi when he was at the former Third High School. He was Mr. Kudo and Mr. Kashima's teacher.

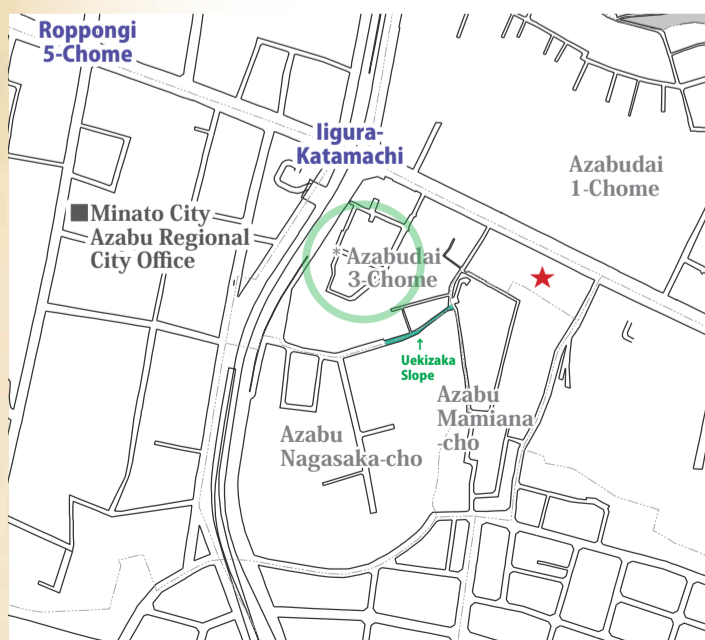
* The quotes used here are from the respective complete works. In using these quotes, the old characters have been changed to new characters and printed kana readings have been omitted. Kana reading has been added to sections that are difficult to read in the main text or quotes.

This article borrows significantly from the 54th Summer Literature Class/A Time called Taisho - Reading from Literature/"Paris no Toson Shimazaki Shigeru Kashima" held this summer in the Yurakucho Yomiuri Hall and sponsored by the Museum of Modern Japanese Literature.

I also referred to the website (written entirely in French) of Mr. Susumu Kudo, Honorable Professor of Meiji Gakuin University, Toson's alma mater.

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 Yukio Miyoshi, presenter. *Shimazaki Toson* (Gakuseisha 1977)
 Yoshizo Kawamori. *Paris no Toson* (Toson in Paris) (Shinchosha 1997)
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- Motojiro Kajii
Kajii Motojiro Zenshu (Motojiro Kajii Complete Works) (Chikuma Shobo 1999)
 Takao Nakatani. *Motojiro Kajii* (Chikuma Shobo 1961)
 Sadami Suzuki. *Motojiro Kajii no Sekai* (World of Motojiro Kajii) (Sakuhinsha 2001)
- Sei Itoh
Sei Itoh Series, Shincho Gendai Bungaku 13 (Sei Itoh Series, Shincho Modern Literature Vol. 13) (Published by Shinchosha 1981)
 Mr. Kudo's website
<http://xerxes5301.canalblog.com/archives/2015/02/10/31484653.html>



Toward a Roppongi with ZERO Violations. Our Slogan is “ZERO ROPPONGI” (Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind).



ルール違反 ゼロの六本木へ。
合い言葉は、ZERO ROPPONGI
Toward a Roppongi with ZERO violations.
Our slogan is ZERO ROPPONGI



Rules exist, and if everybody follows the rules, we will all have greater freedom. Our aim is to have everybody enjoy their freedom, and enjoy their time as comfortably as possible in Roppongi, where many people from a variety of cultures gather.

We conduct a number of campaigns and activities with neighborhood associations, residents' associations, store associations, businesses and concerned administrative organizations every month, centered on the main themes of “Cleaning and Enlightenment Activities” and “Patrol for Prevention of Street Solicitation”.

If you are interested in our activities, don't hesitate to contact us.

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

Minato City is developing the “Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind” Certification System for Recommended Businesses as part of its efforts to raise awareness about the Charter. Shops and businesses that support the Charter are constantly being recruited.

Also, those that actively and independently support this effort are certified as Recommended Businesses.

Eligibility Businesses etc. that are located in, or are active mainly in the Roppongi District (Roppongi 3-chome to 7-chome and Akasaka 9-chome 7)

How to apply Fill out the required information in the Letter of Agreement and send it by post to the Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional Post Office.

* The names of the certified businesses, etc., will be posted on the Minato City website and published in community newsletters as “Recommended Businesses, etc.”

Access the “Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind”, through the following URL: →
Minato City website <http://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/>

Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind

Search



Information from the Metropolitan Tax Office

1. Have you completed the proper procedures for transferring ownership or scrapping a motor vehicle?

The motor vehicle tax is imposed on motor vehicle owners (or motor vehicle users in the case of vehicles purchased in installments) as described in the automobile inspection certificate, from April 1st of each year. When ownership of a motor vehicle is transferred, you need to complete a transfer of registration. When scrapping a motor vehicle, there is a deregistration process that must be completed. To complete either of these procedures, please visit the relevant District Transport Bureau or the Automobile Inspection and Registration Office.

You need to complete these procedures by March 30 (Fri) 2018.

Inquiries: Tokyo Metropolitan Motor Vehicle Tax Call Center Tel: 03-3525-4066

2. Please use the Electronic Application Service to register a change of address for the Motor Vehicle Tax.

When vehicle owners move, the new address needs to be registered with the local Transport Branch Office or Office for Motor Vehicle Inspection and Registration. Delaying the procedure could create issues such as not receiving Motor Vehicle Tax notices.

If delaying the procedure is unavoidable, please notify us about your new address for the tax notice through electronic application or by telephone.

Inquiries: Tokyo Metropolitan Motor Vehicle Tax Call Center Tel: 03-3525-4066

3. Land/Buildings prices that are the basis of the fixed assets tax, will be available for inspection from April (in the 23 special wards).

Eligible applicants	Taxpayers owning land/buildings in the 23 special wards as of January 1, 2018
Records to be inspected	Land/buildings prices taxable in the wards where taxpayers own property (Record Books for public inspection)
Period	From April 2 (Mon) to July 2 (Mon), 2018 (excluding Saturdays, Sundays and Holidays)
Time	Form 9:00am to 5:00pm
Location	Metropolitan Taxation Office in the wards where taxpayers own property

The tax notice will be sent on June 1 (Fri), 2018. For more information, please visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website or the following office.

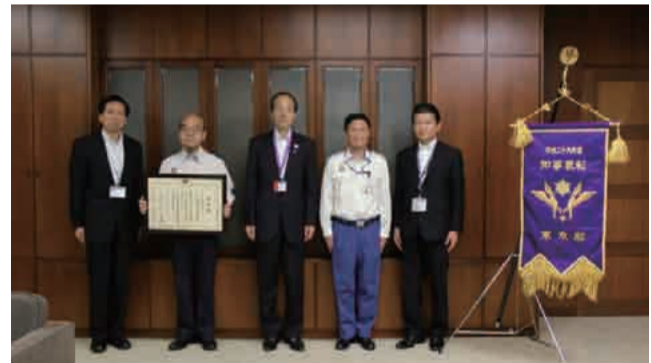
Inquiries on Properties in Minato City: Fixed Assets Tax Subsection, Minato Taxation Office
Tel: 03-5549-3800 (Rep).

Azabu Fire Brigade commended with the Tokyo Metropolitan Meritorious Service Award in FY 2017.

The great achievements of the Azabu Fire Brigade for their everyday work have been recognized. The Fire Brigade has received the Tokyo Metropolitan Meritorious Service Award for meritorious service in the field of fire and disaster countermeasures.

The Commander of the Azabu Fire Brigade, Mr. Keiichi Hasegawa, visited Minato City Hall on October 13 (Fri), 2017 to report to the chief of Minato City, Mr. Masaaki Takei, about their receipt of this award.

Inquiries: Disaster Prevention and Safety Subsection, Azabu Fire Station Tel: 03-3470-0119



Salon AZABU is now open!

A relaxing space to chat with friends over a cup of coffee. Everyone is welcome!

This new space provides the opportunity for members of the local community to take a break and relax. In response to popular demand, mini events such as origami craftwork are also held at this salon.

Open	Fourth Tuesday of every month
Hours	02 p.m. to 6:30 p.m.
Venue	The Azabu Residents' Collaboration Space (Azabu Kindergarten 3F, 5-16-46, Roppongi, Minato-ku)

Inquiries: The 3A Club. Tel: 090-6152-2781



Facebook Page “Minato Information Board” has been started!!



We provide you with Minato City's information in easy Japanese and English!

● Find us at

<https://m.facebook.com/city.minato.mib/>

or

Minato Information Board

Search

Inquiries:
Global Community Planning Subsection,
Community Promotion Section:
Tel: 03-3578-2565

Information from Azabu Regional City Office

AZABU YURU SPORTS UNITED

麻布ゆるスポーツユナイテッド

You can participate by yourself, bring along your family and children, or come with friends. All are warmly welcomed!

This sports event based on the theme of "International Cultural Exchange" welcomes everyone, regardless of age, nationality or gender. Regardless of whether you consider yourself good at sports or exercise, you will surely enjoy the "YURU Sports" experience—something boys and girls, men and women of all ages can enjoy.



Tic-Tac-Toe Space



Flying Eggs



Awa-Awa! Laundry Tennis



Sock-Toss Game

Participants will receive a stainless steel tumbler or a blanket as commemorative gifts! The number of commemorative gifts is limited.

For more information just enter into your search engine to find us.

Other games, including sports for younger children, are also available. Your participation is warmly welcomed!

Participation fee: Free of charge

Event Details

From 10:00am to 12:00pm March 17 (Sat), 2018

To be postponed in case of rain to March 18 (Sun), 2018 from 10:00am to 12:00pm

Venue Higashimachi Elementary School (1-8-11, Minami-Azabu, Minato-ku)

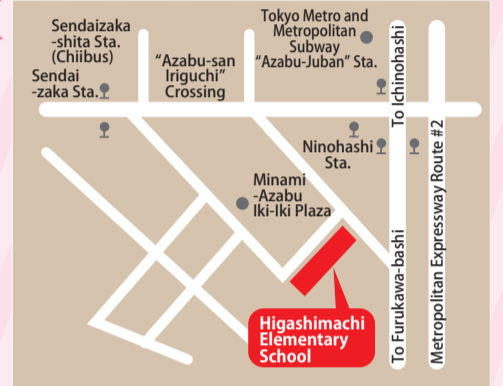
Participants Anyone can participate in the event.

An English translator will be available on site. Come directly to the venue on the day!

Inquiries: Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office
Tel: 03-5114-8812 (Japanese Only)

Suggestions:

- Come to the venue wearing clothes that are easy to move around in.
- The number of commemorative gifts is limited.
- Each game is only open to specific age groups.
- For team competitions, you might have to wait a little for your turn.
- We shall not be responsible for any losses due to theft or other incidents. Please take care of your personal items yourself.



AZABU

●Locations of the Newsletter: Roppongi 1-chome, Roppongi, Hiroo, Azabujuban and Akabane-bashi subway stations, The Chi Bus, Minato Library, Azabu Library, Minami-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Nishi-azabu Iki-Iki Plaza, Igura Iki-Iki Plaza, Azabu Civic Center, Azabu Regional City Office, etc.

●Usage of articles, illustrations, and photographs from this newsletter is prohibited.

Chief	Aki Tanaka	
Sub Chief	Yukiko Takayanagi	
Staff	Miki Ishikawa	Megumi Nakajima
	Kyoko Ideishi	Mizuho Nishimori
	Yoshie Osawa	Minako Hatanaka
	Marika Oba	Akiko Horiuchi
	Kumiko Omura	Akira Mori
	Takehide Kasho	Ryozo Yamashita
	Misaho Kasho	Emi Yonezawa
	Mimi S Koike	
	Yasuhiro Tanaka	

Editor's Note

Just one year has passed since I became a member of The AZABU editorial team. I prepared the report about volunteer activities, titled "Azabu-Juban Pet Adoption Fair" (The AZABU Vol. 39). For this assignment, I participated as a volunteer staff member for the first time since becoming a member of The AZABU editorial team. When I read it again, I found it lacking in some parts. I hope this means that I have grown and improved a little (perhaps only a little!) compared to last year. However, I'm not completely satisfied and I feel that I am still far from where I want to be. In fact, I feel as if I am finally standing at the starting line as a writer. The work of preparing articles based on the data that we have collected has just begun for me. I aim to do my absolute best when preparing articles, and strive to convey my feelings clearly to our readers. (Megumi Nakajima)

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

Inquiry submission form :

<https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/kouchou/kuse/kocho/iken/form-inquiry.html>

Please take a few minutes to fill out this questionnaire about The AZABU!

Please send us your comments, suggestions or requests regarding "The Azabu". We will use your opinions and suggestions to make the paper as attractive as possible.

A drawstring pouch in an original design will be gifted to the first 50 lucky readers who send in our English questionnaire!

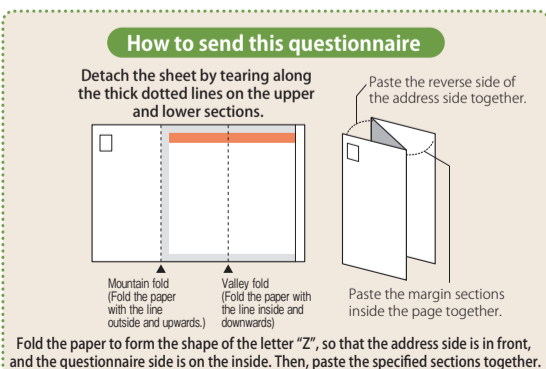
Old town names of the Azabu district are printed on the pouch.

Please attach an 82-yen stamp here.

1 0 6 8 5 1 5

東京都港区六本木
5丁目16番45号

麻布地区総合支所
協働推進課
地区政策担当 行



Azabu Area Local Information Paper "The Azabu" Questionnaire

Please send us your comments, suggestions or requests regarding The Azabu.

Q1 Please check the relevant box for the following items.
 Male Female
 0 to 10 years old 20s 30s 40s
 50s 60s 70s or older

Q2 Did you know that local residents who participate in editorial work for "The Azabu", by public invitation, can become members of the editorial team, working on data collection and preparation of articles?
 Yes No

Q3 How do/did you acquire copies of "The Azabu"? (Multiple answers allowed).
 Sent directly to your house
 At the Azabu Regional City Office
 At the library
 In the train/subway station
 Others

Q4 In "The Azabu Vol. 41", which article interested you most? (Multiple answers allowed)
 Fascinated by Artistic Azabu
 "Azabu - A Human Story"
 Looking for Verdure in Azabu
 Visiting Ambassadors
 The Azabu Future Photo Studio
 "The Phenomena of Azabu"
 Others

Q5 How would you rate "The Azabu" generally?
 Excellent
 Good
 Not very good
 Bad

Q6 Please send us your comments, requests or any suggestions you have, and share your interest in "The Azabu"! For example: "I want to read about what's happening with (XX) in the Azabu Area."

Your Name _____

Your Address _____

Thank you very much for your help!