



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



Fascinating Artistic Azabu 27

**A misegura has been brought back to life in the Reiwa era. A misegura was a building for a family business, with both a shop and living area. The outside walls were typically finished with clay, and these buildings were common during the Horeki years of the Edo period, from 1751 to 1764.**

Last summer, a modern concrete building was built on a straight road connecting the hilltop of Sendai-zaka Slope to the Shinohashi Bridge. For some people, the lattice doors in front look very familiar. Yes, the old misegura Japanese-style house that once stood there has been recreated as it was in the Edo period, on the first floor of the building.

The warm and welcoming atmosphere of an old misegura has been recreated in the Reiwa era, combining the effects of natural and artificial lighting.



Mr. Yoshiya Yamaoka  
Representative of Yamaoka Design Studio, a First-class Architect's Office

### Misegura: A classic example of the old business district

In fact, this is the second time we have visited this place. In January 2014, we interviewed the architect Mr. Yoshiya Yamaoka, and explored his love for his own old Japanese-style house ("Azabu - A Human Story" page in The Azabu Vol. 27). His house consisted of a *misegura* shop that was also used as a reception room, which had survived intact from the Edo period, and behind that was the main building built at the beginning of the Showa period. This *misegura* was very valuable because it was the only surviving *misegura* within the old town limits of the Edo period. Mr. Yamaoka's ancestor was a merchant who came to Edo from Omi (present-day Shiga Prefecture) during the Horeki period, and provided medicines, rice, charcoal, firewood and more as a regular tradesman of the "Sendai Domain" residence in Edo. Mr. Yamaoka prepared the blueprints for the building, after carefully measuring the façade and each of the structural elements together with students from his university at the time. His mission was to make an accurate record of the house and pass it down from generation to generation.

Unfortunately, the house deteriorated all at once due to a typhoon in 2018, etc., and it was scheduled for demolition. However, Mr. Yamaoka earnestly said, "This street used to be lined with shops from the Edo period to around 1985, and this *misegura* is the last of the originals. It is important to preserve it for the history of Azabu. I really want to save it here by any means necessary."

### A treasure house of craftsmanship

Planning for this work took 15 months, and the dismantling started in May 2020. "It was amazing, all that we found," he told us. The foundations were made of *takekomai*, thick bamboo bars joined with straw rope, which appeared after the clay on the walls was scraped off with

great care. The pillars and beams were originally put together without nails, using techniques called *shiguchi* and *tsugite*, where the timber was carved and slotted together. The timber was also covered in marks left from fire, moisture damage, and insects. Significant restoration work was needed, and reassembly was done using a technique called *kanawa-tsugi* to remain faithful to the original. "In the past, whenever the house was damaged by disaster, etc., it was restored carefully. I was fascinated by the excellent craftsmanship." Additionally, according to the research done by cultural property experts, based on the marks on the surface of the materials, most of the repairs were done during the Horeki period. "It was initially thought that this *misegura* was built during the Ansei years, from around 1855 to 1860. But the final results revealed that it was built during the Horeki years, about 100 years before that, around the time my ancestor came to Edo and took up residence there. This was quite a surprise for me."

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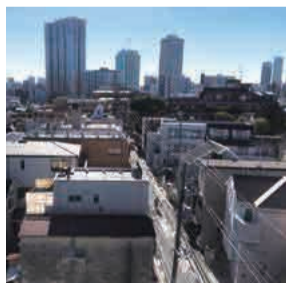
All aspects of this *misegura* have been preserved or reproduced, including the *takekomai* walls made of clay and bamboo, and the *shiguchi* and *tsugite*, just as they were at that time. Even the *hako-kaidan* shiny black stairs with built-in cupboards underneath were still in good shape; that was quite remarkable for us when we visited the house last time. The fact that all of these things still exist here and now is something close to a miracle. All of us were convinced that this *misegura*, restored and preserved for the future by Mr. Yamaoka, the 17th head of the family and an architect, is surely a new work of art in Azabu.



It required great care to preserve the structural elements of the building. They all had to be sterilized and disinfected after being painstakingly dismantled.



The delicate beauty of the *takekomai* foundations. New material has been added to the lower section to maintain its integrity, and there is an engraving that says, "Repaired in the 3<sup>rd</sup> year of Reiwa."



The remarkable view from the roof: Deep rectangular lots with narrow frontage. This is a remnant of a merchant town from a bygone era.



Photo shot by Mr. Hiroyasu Sakaguchi

### "Ohteikyo" (House with Japanese Nightingale Singing in the Garden)

Mr. Yamaoka named this building "Ohteikyo," referencing the legendary "Haiku" "Uguisu wo tazune tazunete Azabu made" [I finally came to Azabu, following Japanese nightingales] by Matsuo Basho, a haiku master of the Edo period. He also has fond memories of these birds, which would often visit the gardens of his family's old residence. On the upper floors, there are apartments that he expects international families to move into. He hopes that the carefully preserved *misegura* on the first floor will be a great place for the future residents to meet, and for local people and town walking tour participants to visit.



The old *misegura*, shot in January 2014



A cross-section showing where old material has been integrated with new material, using the *kanawa-tsugi* technique. If used at the base of a pillar, when the material is stressed from the right, left, front or rear, it deforms based on the direction of the stress, and returns to its original shape in a flexible manner.



Hundred Views on Work

# TOKYO METRO

## Great people who work in the background, supporting travelers moving in and out of the city



**Mr. Shigeaki Furusawa,**  
Tameike-sanno Area Stationmaster,  
Kasumigaseki Station District

**Ms. Momoko Murai,**  
Station Staff

**Mr. Takumu Horiguchi,**  
Public Relations Section, Public Relations  
Department, Head Office

### Workers supporting the functionality of a major metropolis

"I was born in Hokkaido, so when I came to Tokyo for the first time, I was very surprised that trains came and went every four minutes during the morning rush hour. I was so impressed that I came to admire the people who work for Tokyo Metro, providing a vital part of the functionality of Tokyo, the capital of Japan," said Ms. Momoko Murai, the person Station Staff.

She has worked for Tokyo Metro for nine years. I imagined that the railway industry is generally male-dominated. So, what percentage of women work in it?

Mr. Shigeaki Furusawa is the Tameike-sanno Area Stationmaster, an expert who is proud of his 36 years of service. He told me, "There are around 117 staff members in the six stations that I manage—Roppongi-itchome, Azabu-juban, Shirokane-takanawa, Shirokanedai, Tameike-sanno, and Kokkai-gijidomae. Of those 117 staff members, 21 are female."

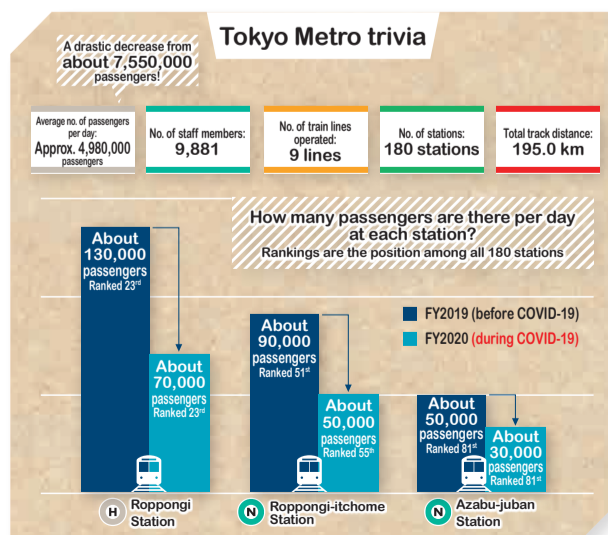
Work in the station generally means a five-day workweek. There are also bedrooms in the stations, and these are separated by gender. A 24-hour shift means working from 8:00 am to 8:00 am the next morning. A single 24-hour shift corresponds to two days of work. There is also a single day shift, which means working from morning to evening. However, two 24-hour shifts and a single day shift are required for each staff member per week.

When two stations are directly connected, or in large stations that host two or more lines, passengers can easily get lost. Ms. Murai told me that, "When we start working in a station for the first time, we actually walk to every corner of the station on our own time to consider the best way to guide passengers."



### A professional group, good at coping with any crisis

The number of Tokyo Metro users halved due to COVID-19, but passenger numbers have been slowly returning to normal since October last year. In around April 2020 when the first state of emergency was declared, station staff had to take care of a lot of passengers. How did they feel about the situation?



The Station Monitor Room, usually closed to the public. The photo shows Mr. Furusawa, Ms. Murai, and Mr. Horiguchi (from left to right). Wearing a face mask is obligatory in the Station Office, as well as in the station premises. We asked them to remove their masks only for the photo. This is a common situation when we are carrying out interviews during the COVID-19 pandemic.

I have planned to write about railway services in Japan for a long time. Why? Because I believe the workers who maintain the on-time operations of the trains every day for millions of people do an incredible job. When we consider that this work is often made even more challenging by natural disasters such as earthquakes and sudden downpours, as well as man-made disasters, railway services almost deserve World Heritage status! The staff members of Tokyo Metro Co. Ltd., Japan's No. 1 subway company, kindly cooperated with us for this article. I spoke with them in the back area of the station office. The passageways back there are like a maze, or a secret underground base!



"I'm sure that staff members who had direct contact with passengers felt a sense of duty to support this vital part of urban functionality. They believed it is very much part of their personal mission to do so," said Mr. Furusawa.

Many years ago, the Tokyo Subway Sarin Gas Attack occurred in Kamiyacho Station, the nearest station for people living in the Azabu area.

"Yes," he said, "I remember that. At that time, I was at the ticket gate and I was extremely concerned. As I was working, I also had to consider how best to evacuate passengers from the station when something happened."

At the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake, "Tokyo Metro operates through-service with other train companies. So, even if we were not directly affected and could operate normally, some of the trains belonging to the other train companies could not come into our railway tracks for common use. It was really difficult."

"No Subway stations were damaged by the earthquake. Tokyo Metro's stations are generally reinforced after disasters. In fact, the underground is quite safe in a disaster, and rushing to escape to ground level is dangerous. In such situations, you should remain calm and follow the instructions of the staff."

"In the event of a sudden downpour, we have good methods to manage flooding, and various other countermeasures. Please don't worry." I was very reassured by Mr. Furusawa's powerful words.

### Much more convenient and comfortable

In December last year, a new barrier-free route was created in Roppongi Station. An elevator was installed connecting the ticket gate floor of Hibiya Line Roppongi Station and Platform 2. This means that people can move from Exit 4a on ground level (the Bic Camera Building by Roppongi Crossing) to Platform 2 with a baby carriage or a wheelchair. When we consider this, we realize there have been many hands hard at work supporting the subway stations.



For example, "Station Staff Call Intercoms" that directly connect to the station office have been placed on each platform at regular intervals. An "Emergency Call System" with a red "SOS" mark has been installed in each train vehicle. There are also many "Emergency Stop Buttons" installed around escalators to prevent accidents such as people falling down on top of one another, etc. In some stations, a "Remote Work Booth" section provides services to respond to continually changing situations and the needs of the era.



Mr. Horiguchi of the Public Relations Section explained to me, "When we provide support to passengers in wheelchairs or

Station Staff Call Intercom and Emergency Stop Button. Every week, the station staff see violence between passengers or towards staff, including from drunkards or people involved in fights. "There are many such incidents, particularly in the Roppongi area." We are grateful for their hard work.

Let's have a look at the history of Tokyo Metro and Azabu!

The Hibiya Line opened for the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games. This is the third oldest of the nine lines.

The Namboku Line opened in 1991, and celebrated its 30th anniversary in November last year. This line greatly enhanced convenience for the local people who used Kamiyacho, Roppongi or Tameike-sanno Stations, as they had needed to go up and down several slopes.



The construction of the Hibiya Line, around 1962. This photo shows Gaien Nishi-dori Avenue, close to the present-day location of 4-3-1, Nishi-azabu. The white Hallelujah Beauty Salon building in the center was located at around 3-24-18 to 19 Nishi-azabu. Roppongi-dori Avenue is around 30 meters ahead. (Photo provided by Minato City Open Data Catalogue)

visually impaired passengers, we recommend that announcements be made keeping in mind the passenger's privacy. In addition, we offer high-level support using a software application developed in-house to share information between staff members." The support system continues to evolve and is being enhanced every day.

### Looking back at what we take for granted in everyday life

I think that many readers will have had the irritating experience of being stranded or affected by unsurprising delays on foreign public transport when they have been on overseas business trips, traveling, studying abroad, or living with dual residency. In Tokyo Metro stations, however, where an average of as many as 5 million people per day embark, trains always operate on time. Why is this so different?

Looking at the interviews and the research for this article, I came to appreciate the "high aspirations" and "diligence" of the people who work in this industry. This includes technical personnel that work in the rolling stock, electrical, civil engineering, architectural and ICT departments as well as transportation specialists such as train drivers, conductors, and station staff.

Since the state of emergency has been lifted, I have privately enjoyed "Subway Petit Travel": getting off at stations I do not usually visit and strolling around the streets. These other areas have diverse redevelopment and community development. I strongly recommend it for foodies and people who love exploring in general.

- References:**
  - Tokyo Metro Co., Ltd. Company Information (<https://www.tokyo-metro.jp/corporate/index.html>)
  - New graduate hiring information for Tokyo Metro Co., Ltd. (<https://tokyo-metro-recruit.jp>)
  - Japan Private Railway Association (<https://www.mintetsu.or.jp>)
- Support:**
  - Tameike-sanno Station, Kasumigaseki Station District, Tokyo Metro Co., Ltd. Public Relations Section, Public Relations Department, Head Office of Tokyo Metro Co., Ltd.

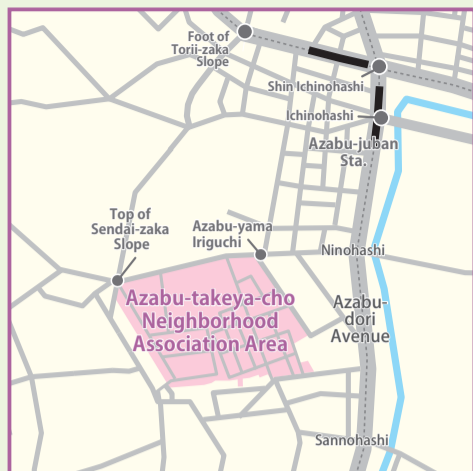


Cheerful News from Neighborhood Associations and Residents' Associations **02** Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association

## The town where my gentle and warmhearted friends live

This series of articles introduces the activities of the neighborhood associations and residents' associations in the Azabu area.

This time, we spoke with the members of the Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association.



Hello everybody! I am Kenichi Abe, Chairman of the Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association. I believe that the daily greeting campaign is the most useful activity regarding crime prevention. In our town we always greet each other, and my favorite phrase is "itsumo osewa ni natteimasu" [Thank you for your continuous support]. When I meet a stranger, I always ask, "Are you looking for something?" Everybody in town loves our Neighborhood Association.

● Mr. Kenichi Abe, Chairman



Our Neighborhood Association organizes a variety of events, and many children take part in festivals, children's group meetings, disaster prevention drills, etc. Recently, the number of foreign children has been increasing, resulting in many international friendships. Every day, we really make an effort to say hello to as many people as possible.

● Mr. Yoshihiro Ishii, Vice-Chairman



Young people love to carry the portable shrine during festivals. We work to create a safe town in cooperation with the police, following the Chairman's instructions. He's served a long time as the Manager of the Crime Prevention Division. Everyone here has great affection for this town.

● Ms. Tamae Matsubara, Manager of the Women's Division



### Protect

19:30

Our research team arrived in front of the Take-no-Yu public bath at Minami-azabu 1-chome. This evening the owner of the public bath, Mr. Hiroshi Higuchi, would be on duty as the night watchperson.



19:50 Meeting

In front of the office, we made sure we were protected against the cold weather by donning matching windbreakers, knitted caps, and mufflers.



20:00 Starting the night watch!



The snap of wooden clappers used to generate awareness among the public echoed in the December night sky.

The slope on the way was a little tricky for us because it is quite steep. However, this was no problem for the members of the Night Watch because they are familiar with it.



20:30 Seidaizaka-Ue (Top of the Sendai-zaka Slope)

We saw Tokyo Tower in front of us. As people passed us on the street, they gave us words of appreciation.

20:45 Mission accomplished

It was said to be the coldest day of winter this season when we accompanied them on the Night Watch. We were very impressed by the people who care for the safety of the town, and left for home with a warm feeling.



### Pass



This is a big event held every autumn. Adult portable shrines, children's portable shrines, women's portable shrines, and festival floats parade around the town. The Azabu-takeya-cho portable shrine enters Azabu Hikawa Shrine together with the portable shrines of Azabu-shimbori-cho and Azabu-hommura-cho.

Initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic (1)

Mikisho is the place to offer Japanese sake to the gods. However, in pandemic conditions this place was used as the god worshipping space from a distance.

### Prepare

● Mr. Chiaki Tamura, Fire Prevention Manager

A disaster prevention drill is carried out with an organization for children, in collaboration with Azabu Fire Station. People prepare for disasters from childhood onwards, through AED training, earthquake simulation vehicle experiences, training to use fire extinguishers and D-class water pumps, and more.



Initiatives during the COVID-19 pandemic (2)

Due to the cancellation of events in the City, a special disaster prevention drill was designed and performed by the neighborhood association. The fire extinguishing equipment and warehouse stocks were checked and confirmed to be adequate and in good condition.



### Love

● Mr. Kei Takahashi, Advisor

When the students leave school, I go outside of my house to say "Hello" to them. Foreign children frequently greet me. I have been a member of the Neighborhood Association for a long time. Here, everybody is friendly, and I will never move away. I want to live in this town forever!



The Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association has its own twitter account, and information on annual events is updated there from time to time. Why don't you have a look? Don't hesitate to contact us!

#### Information about the Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association

- No. of member households: 300
- Annual Events
  - January:** Night Watch in the evenings around New Year, New Year's Party, Distribution of congratulatory gifts to new adults who've just turned 18
  - May:** General Meeting
  - July:** Higashimachi Elementary School Radio Gymnastics
  - August:** Disaster prevention drill for children, carried out with local organizations for children
  - September:** Distribution of gifts for the aged, Traffic Safety Campaign, Azabu Hikawa Shrine Annual Festival
  - October:** Bus trip, Facility Cleaning Tour, Local Crime Prevention and Safety Campaign
  - November:** Azabu area general disaster prevention drill, Azabu Fire Prevention Association Workshop
  - December:** Year End Night Watch

#### Origin of Azabu-takeya-cho

The town's name is a derivation of an older name, "Takegaya" [valley covered with bamboo], which was once used locally. There were two other names for this town. One was "Nekurumi Village" and the other was "Sudachino," as it was famous for Japanese nightingales. In 1872, the samurai area merged with the town and it came to be called "Azabu-takeya-cho." Based on the name, the town crest consists of the Chinese character for bamboo (pronounced "take") and two drawn leaves that resemble arrows (pronounced "ya") with a butterfly (pronounced "cho") in the center.

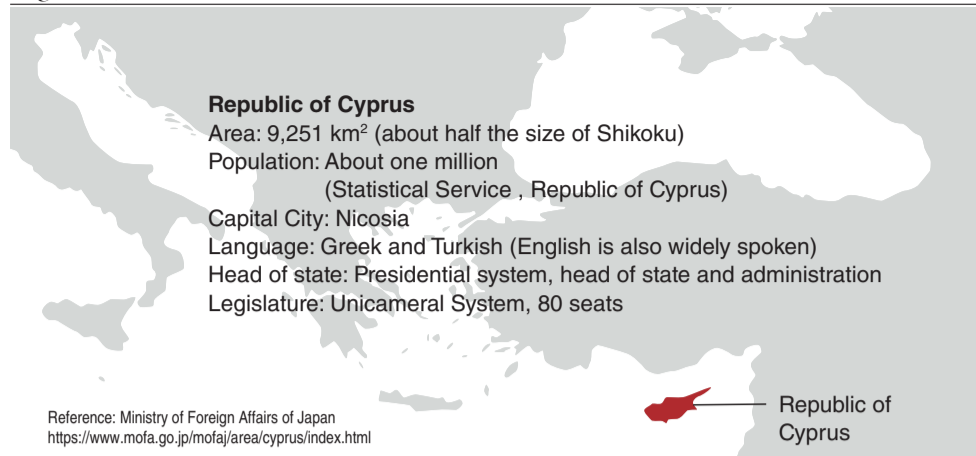
#### Inquiries:

**Azabu-takeya-cho official Twitter account**  
<https://twitter.com/takeyachou>  
**Collaboration Project Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office**  
 Tel: 03-5114-8802 Fax: 03-3583-3782

**Membership Admission Guidance, Neighborhood Associations and Residents' Associations, Azabu Regional City Office on the Minato City website**  
 URL: <https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/azabukyoudou/azabu/kurashi/chokai.html>

● Photos provided by: 1 to 4 the Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association

● References: The Azabu-takeya-cho Neighborhood Association official Twitter account



**Republic of Cyprus**  
 Area: 9,251 km<sup>2</sup> (about half the size of Shikoku)  
 Population: About one million  
 (Statistical Service, Republic of Cyprus)  
 Capital City: Nicosia  
 Language: Greek and Turkish (English is also widely spoken)  
 Head of state: Presidential system, head of state and administration  
 Legislature: Unicameral System, 80 seats

Reference: Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan  
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/cyprus/index.html>



Ambassador Charis Moritsis

Visiting Ambassadors  
**From the “World”  
 of Azabu**



# CYPRUS

Research support: Republic of Cyprus

The Embassy of the Republic of Cyprus in Japan opened in February 2020, in Europa House in Minami-azabu. The Delegation of the European Union to Japan is located in the same building. Cyprus is an island country located in the east of the Mediterranean Sea, and is about half the size of Shikoku. Mr. Charis Moritsis arrived at his post as the first Ambassador of the Republic of Cyprus to Japan. He told us about his enthusiasm for his work and his hopes for the future.



Baked halloumi cheese is always served in restaurants in Cyprus. Halloumi cheese does not melt even when it is baked. Whether this cheese is eaten baked or fresh, it is very delicious.  
 ※ The Cyprus Information Service provided the two photos above.

Loukoumades, sweet donuts dipped in honey syrup, are regarded as the soul food of Cypriots. Everyone from adults to children loves this confection.

## The Ambassador nominated himself to come to Japan

To date, Ambassador Moritsis (hereinafter the “Ambassador”) has served as a diplomat in Serbia, Finland, Belgium, and twice in Egypt. However, his new appointment in Japan is a personal choice. “Japan is recognized internationally as a technological superpower, and has an important role in world affairs. I thought that there would be many things I could learn in Japan, so I nominated myself to come to this country as my next post.” In Cyprus, he did research about Japan through books and movies. He also met some Japanese diplomats to prepare for his work. However, there were many things he began to learn only after he arrived.

## Agricultural products of Cyprus, aiming for Japanese market expansion

His most important mission as the first Ambassador to Japan is to enhance the political relations between the two countries and expand trade with Japan. “Food items from Cyprus are the main things exported to Japan—mostly frozen fish, rather than shellfish. Other things include cheese, wine, and salt,” he explained. He is working to increase export quantities, and to establish these in Japan. Wine, olive oil, and cheese produced in Cyprus are also candidates for export. In particular, the Ambassador spoke enthusiastically about a Cypriot cheese called “halloumi”: “Halloumi is a very special cheese made of sheep and goat’s milk. They are fed a diet that consists mostly of thyme (an herb belonging to the Lamiaceae family). In Cyprus, this is a very popular fresh cheese, and we see it every day on tables in ordinary homes.” Even when this cheese is baked in the oven, it does not melt, which is another special quality of halloumi cheese. You can enjoy this cheese either fresh or grilled. Every restaurant in Cyprus serves halloumi in this way. In fact, the Ambassador offered me some to try. I found the taste to be simple and easy to eat, so I believe that it would be enjoyable for most Japanese people.

Cyprus mostly imports automobiles, ships, and technology from Japan.

## The Ambassador follows a healthy lifestyle. His hobby is to do lots of exercise

He came to Japan for the first time after he was appointed as Ambassador. When I asked him about his impression of Japanese people, he immediately answered, “There are three things that stand out: they are very modest, calm, and polite.” His policy is to experience the daily life of Japanese people and learn together with them as he lives in Japan.

As proof of this, he started yoga classes after he came here. He eagerly goes to a yoga class that starts at 7 o’clock in the morning before work, three times a week. “Thanks to yoga, my body

has become much more flexible,” he said with a big smile. In addition, he never misses a chance to do training at a fitness club.

The Ambassador added “I walk a lot.” He takes a long walk almost every weekend. His favorite place to go walking is the Hiroo-Meguro-Daikanyama area. It is not unusual for him to walk up to 20 kilometers! He puts books in his backpack, and as he explores, he stops by his favorite coffee shop to enjoy coffee and reading, which is a moment of joy for him. The Ambassador told me, “I always walk there, so I have become very familiar with the area from Hiroo to Daikanyama.” He goes to Roppongi, enjoying a walk in the Arisugawa-no-miya Memorial Park close to the Embassy, up and down the hills. He walks from the Ambassador’s residence to the Embassy when he has time, which takes 30 minutes. As I interviewed him, I realized that he loves exercising. He told us that he did a lot of walking around all the countries he has been assigned to. It’s fascinating for him to find nice hidden restaurants while walking around cities as well as the countryside.



Including the Ambassador, there are about 100 Cypriots living in Japan. Recently, he set up a website to share information between Cypriots. He added that the number of Japanese people living in Cyprus was also about 100.

## Captivating Cyprus Island, where Aphrodite is waiting for you!

Cyprus is still fairly unfamiliar to the majority of Japanese people. A brochure issued by the Deputy Ministry of Tourism says, “There was only one place that Aphrodite (Venus), Goddess of Love, called home in Ancient Greece: Cyprus Island!” I asked him what sightseeing spots he recommends.

“Of course, I recommend my hometown, PAFOS in western Cyprus, and I would like everyone to visit there. The sea is the most beautiful in the world. The city used to be the capital of



Lace handicraft Lefkaritika works registered on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list.



Day-to-day clothing worn by Cypriots a long time ago, with beautifully embroidered collars, sleeves, and trouser hems.

Cyprus and is the birthplace of the Aphrodite legend.”

There are mosaics in aristocratic houses dating from Roman times (the 3rd century BC) that must be seen. Another highlight are the Tombs of the Kings, huge underground royal tombs that were the graves of Egyptian Ptolemaic Dynasty royal families. This is a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Knowing things like this about Cyprus, we can understand that it is a fascinating country with many historical sites, some more than 2,000 years old.

We should also take note of the traditional and folk handicrafts that developed through the country’s long history. The national costume in the Ambassador’s hometown is worn every day by the people there. It’s called “Fiti”, and is made of a warm woven cloth decorated with fine embroidery. There is also the lace embroidery known as “Lefkaritika,” which has been passed down from generation to generation in Lefkara village in the southeast region of the island. This is wonderful to see, and also on UNESCO’s Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

I am curious about the food in Cyprus, as well as sightseeing spots. They say that Greek, Eastern Mediterranean, and South European food can be enjoyed there.

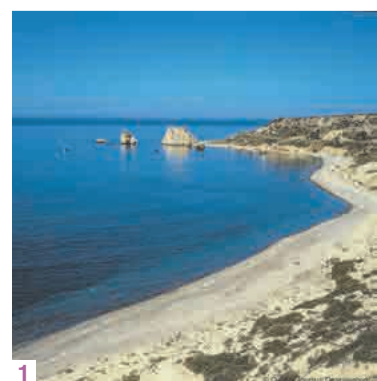
“I strongly recommend you try grilled halloumi cheese along with the other things it is generally served with. Kebab is also a must-try. When it comes to sweets, loukoumades, donuts dipped in honey syrup, have a unique taste only found in Cyprus.”

The Ambassador’s favorite food is a Greek dish called mousaka, which is layered grilled eggplant with potato and meat sauce. It’s his favorite dish, and a warm reminder of home. While listening to him, I was fascinated by the charming mixture of history, culture, and everything else about Cyprus.

In fact, I was almost overwhelmed by the abundant charm of Cyprus by the end of the interview. The Ambassador was born in 1970, so he is very young to be an Ambassador, at 52 years old. He is very friendly. Needless to say, Cyprus has moved up my bucket list of countries I want to visit someday. This interview was a great experience.



The Ambassador entertained us with fresh and delicious halloumi cheese snacks. It was raw, not baked.



1



2



3

Sightseeing spots around Paphos registered as UNESCO World Heritage Sites

① “Aphrodite’s Rock” on Petra tou Romiou, a famous beach and the legendary birthplace of Aphrodite (Venus), 25 kilometers east of Paphos.

② Mosaic with a motif from Greek mythology that survives on the remaining walls of a Roman-era aristocratic house from the 3rd century BC.

③ The vast underground graveyard, the Tombs of the Kings.

※ Photos ①-③ were provided by the Republic of Cyprus Tourism Agency/Republic of Cyprus, Deputy Ministry of Tourism

(Researched and written by Yukiko Takayanagi)



1 (From 1952 to around 1965) Azabu School Building

# The Azabu Future Photo Studio

Universities that used to be located in Azabu (1) Part 1



2 Entrance of the Azabu School Building in 1980



3 In 2022

1 There was a famous "legend" that preparatory students turned around and went home after seeing this school building.

3 Now, in the Reiwa era, there are condominiums and office buildings all around. There is nothing that still holds the atmosphere of the past...

5 In the alley that would have been behind the university, there are a few buildings left from that period. What secrets could they reveal?

6 A class photograph from that time—this may be a rare artifact.

2 On the left side of the University's main nameplate, there are some other nameplates with inscriptions that are quite difficult to read. What do they say?

4 After all the time that's past, this place is a quiet residential area along a street next to Azabu-dori Avenue. In the past when it was a university town, the environment would have been totally different...

7 You might think that the uniforms these male university students are wearing look highly unusual. However, this was the accepted uniform at the time: completely black with a square college cap, representative of a bygone era with very different values.



4 In 2022



5 In 2014, close to the old University campus site



6 The 1950's electrical laboratory of the First Technical High School (when it was in the Azabu School Building)

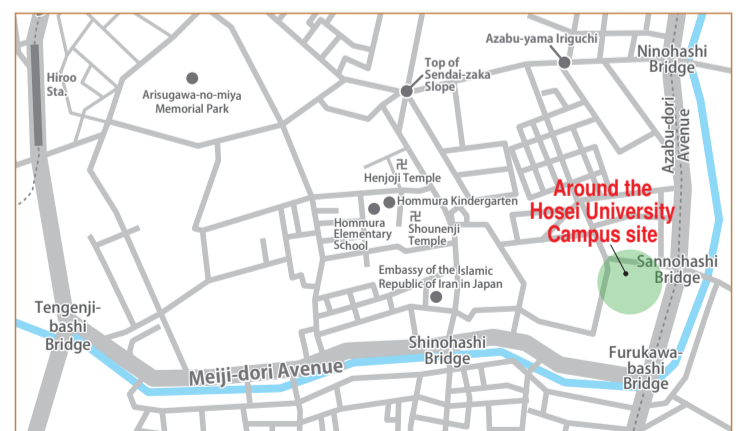


7 In 1953, Azabu School Building

## What's your impression of Azabu?

You might not imagine it from the Azabu you see today, but there used to be many universities here just some decades ago. This time, we'll introduce one of these universities—Hosei University. It stood on present-day 2-8 Minami-azabu. I went to take some casual photographs there, thinking, "Surely some of the old atmosphere of those days remains." I was initially a little surprised that there was nothing left. However, as I walked around the site, I was astonished to find that a rather "mysterious" scene remained. I want to explore this mysterious site for the next issue and perhaps in a later issue as well. Don't miss it! This time, I'll show you some photos. I would like you to simply enjoy the nostalgia and the difference between the present and the past, as if this page is a photo studio.

- Photos provided by: .....
- 1 2 6 and 7 : From page 128 of 100 years of Hosei University, issued in 1980 (HOSEI Museum Digital Archive)
  - 3 and 4 : ©Marika Oba
  - 5 : FY2014 Activity Report, Azabu Future Photo Studio



## About the Azabu Future Photo Studio

The Azabu Regional City Office conducts activities that record the changes to the cityscape of Azabu, preserving and passing down its history in order to deepen residents' affection toward the town.

The Azabu Future Photo Studio Association consists of local residents, workers, and students in the Azabu area, and is at the heart of activities such as taking photographs at fixed-point locations and collecting old photographs of the Azabu region. The photographs collected are shown as panels on the Minato City website and at local exhibitions. The Future Photo Studio Association hopes to spread knowledge of the history and culture of the town to as many people as possible.

## The Azabu Future Photo Studio is looking for old photographs!

If you have any old photographs of the Azabu area from the Meiji to the Showa eras, such as buildings, scenery or festivals, please contact the Azabu Regional City Office. For details, please contact the Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office.  
Inquiries: Tel.: 03-5114-8812



# Walking the periphery of the Azabu area ①

Why don't you try walking the periphery of the Azabu area, along the boundary line? When you familiarize yourself with the boundaries of a city or town, you will likely make new discoveries in familiar places. For our first walking session, we will start from the middle of the Nisseki-dori Avenue Shopping District and go to the Tengenji-bashi Bridge. This walk is along the boundary line between Minato City and Shibuya City (about 1.5 km).

**START**

## From Nisseki-dori Avenue to Hotta-zaka Slope

The road from the start of the course to the foot of Hotta-zaka Slope is the old street drawn in the Edo Kirie-zu (zone map). The suburban residence of the Ushiku Han Yamaguchi family (the feudal lords (daimyo) of Ushiku Domain) on the north side of the street was located in present-day Minato City, and the Sakura Han Hotta family's suburban residence on the south side of the street was located in present-day Shibuya City. This shows us that the boundary of the daimyos' residences eventually became the boundary between present-day Minato City and Shibuya City. ①

Viscount Seiki Kuroda, a famous oil painter, lived on the Minato City side. He owned a magnificent mansion, and he wrote in his will, "The land shall be sold and the money received shall be donated for a project that contributes to the world of fine art." His land was combined with an adjacent lot owned by Viscount Takagi and sold as a residential lot with state-of-the-art facilities in 1926. Baron Toranosuke Furukawa's mansion, also adjacent to Kuroda's residence, later became the site for Koryo Junior High School. Even now, this area is a wide cityscape with large parcels of land.

On both sides of the road there are beautiful rows of Zelkova trees, all uniform in height. When a road is the boundary between two Cities in Tokyo, it is managed by one of the two municipalities. This road is managed by Minato City, including roadside trees and planting.



Rows of Zelkova trees line the street



"Toto Azabu no E-zu" [Map of Azabu in Edo] (in 1861) (a)

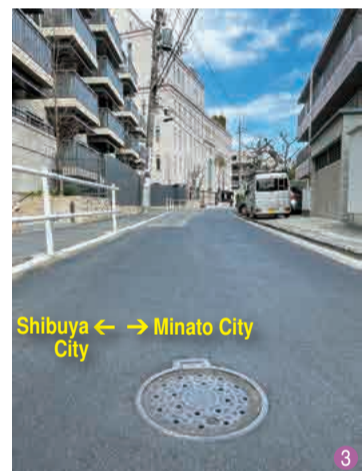
## A street with an underground closed conduit, from the foot of Hotta-zaka Slope to Hibiya Line Hiroo Station

The Kogai-gawa River runs underground from the foot of Hotta-zaka Slope to Tengenji-bashi Bridge through a culvert created as a closed conduit\* in the early Showa period. This also represents the boundary between Minato City and Shibuya City. The City boundary ② at the foot of Hotta-zaka Slope is shaped like the front section of a ship. The road leading to Hiroo Station curves gently, and looking at this curve and the difference in height compared to the land in Shibuya City, we can see that this road used to be a river. On the way, there is a toko, which is a hole from which a lamp was hung when the culvert was being inspected; it resembles a manhole. Toko were mainly used before the War. In Tokyo, toko are highly valued because there are very few left. ③

\*This means to cover a river, etc. so it flows underground.



The City boundary at the foot of Hotta-zaka Slope



Toko cover on the street above the underground closed conduit



## Gaien Nishi-dori Avenue

The Kogai-gawa River flows under Gaien Nishi-dori Avenue from Hiroo Station. If Gaien Nishi-dori Avenue is the City boundary, does this mean that Minato City is on the east side and Shibuya City is on the west side? No! If you look at the road information signs you can see the boundary line curves around and only one place on the east side is in Shibuya City. (This is "Hiroo Complex" at 5-7-34, Hiroo, Shibuya City). If you look at a map from before the Kogai-gawa River became a closed conduit, you can easily understand how this became the City's boundary line. There is a large straight road above it now, but the old river passage remains as the City's boundary line. ④



Road information sign in front of Tengenji Temple



Road information sign, enlarged section



"Azabu Ward: Tokyo City Map with the Address of 15 Wards" issued by Tokyo Teishin Kyoku (Communications Bureau) in 1924 (b)



**GOAL**

## Tengenji-bashi Bridge

The Kogai-gawa River meets the Furu-kawa River at Tengenji-bashi Crossing and Azabu's boundary line follows the Furu-kawa River to the east. The name Tengenji-bashi was taken from Tamon-zan Tengenji Temple, an old temple that's stood here since around 1719. In the temple courtyard there are two sets of guardian tigers (not guardian dogs) that were an offering to the temple. "Meiwa Sannen" (the 3rd year of Meiwa) or "Tempo Rokunen" (the 6th year of Tempo) is engraved on the pedestals. Some believe that these guardian tigers are the oldest ones in Japan. ⑤

(Meiwa Sannen: 1766, Tempo Rokunen: 1835)



It is said that a tiger is a divine messenger of Bishamonten (a guardian god of Buddhism), the main focus of worship at the temple.

● Research Support: Tamon-zan Tengenji Temple

- Map Sources: (a) "Kaei Keio Edo Kirie-zu" [Edo Zone Map in the Kaei and Keio Eras], issued by Jinbunsha in 1997 (b) Public Interest Incorporated Foundation "The Organization of Tokyo Special Wards"

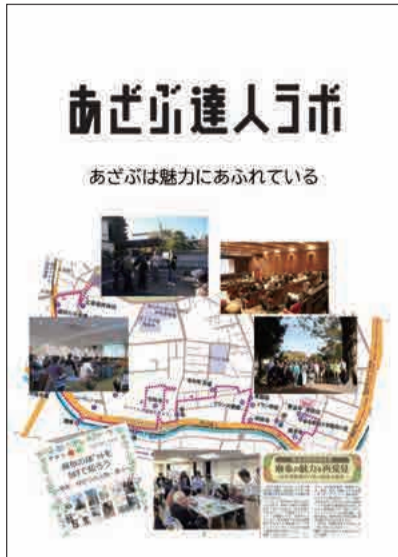
- References: Pre-war Residential Area Development by Trust Companies: The Case of Mitsui Trust Company, written by Hitomi Kato, issued by Daichi Jutaku Kensetsu Kyokai in 1989

(Researched and written by Ayako Yamaki)



# あざぶ達人ラボ Azabu Experts LABO

Why don't you join us as a new member!!



**We are actively recruiting new members who want to work with us to find the charms of Azabu we still don't know about!**

The regional operations team "Azabu Experts LABO" (originally called the "Azabu Experts Club") began their mission to explore and spread the word about the charms of Azabu in FY2008. They are divided into three sections, and each carries out activities to promote the attractions of Azabu from their respective points of view.

The "Planning Section" was established to exchange ideas, to make more people aware of their activities and to inspire younger people to join them.

## The three sections of Azabu Experts LABO

### Research Section

This section analyzes Azabu's architecture, topography, history, and culture, etc. from their unique point of view.

### Cooperation Section with Local People

Members go to the regional operations "Local Saloon Chokotto Tachiyori Café," etc. and hold mini-events. This section created the "Azabu Cards" game, so people can learn the charms and history of Azabu while playing cards.

### Town Walking Section

This section has prepared a Walking Map so people can go around the town to find the charms of Azabu, either on their own or on a guided tour.



Their brochure can be obtained in the Collaboration Project Section of Azabu Regional City Office. **Inquiries: Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8812**



## Azabu Future Photo Studio

We welcome people who are interested in our activities!

The Azabu Regional City Office has been working with the residents of Minato City to collect old photographs of the Azabu region and to take photographs of the current cityscape.

We have been walking around the town to take these pictures in the hope that they will deepen people's love of the area. The images are collected and displayed in the form of panels to spread information about the past and present of the Azabu area.

We always welcome photo lovers, people interested in the history of Azabu, and people who want to deepen their affection for the region. Please don't hesitate to contact us.



Minato City website



People walking and taking pictures around the town



**Inquiries: Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8812**

## Full of Neighborhood Information not found in any guidebook! The Community SNS App "PIAZZA"



### Connect with other Azabu Lovers!

This app gathers local information useful for your daily life in the Azabu area from users, such as: "We are holding a festival in Azabujuban," "I'm thinking of giving my electric fan away to someone in the area," and "Please recommend a dentist for children in or around the Roppongi and Higashi-azabu area." These concerns are collected from application users.

New information from the government such as crime or disaster prevention information, local government news, and event news, will be posted when relevant.

If you want to find out more about the area, but don't want to go and search yourself, or you want to address your concerns about taking care of children, then why not give PIAZZA a try?



### Three-step registration procedure

- Step 1** Download the PIAZZA application
- Step 2** Register your name through your mail address or Facebook account
- Step 3** Input your name and birthplace and select "Azabu/Roppongi area"

Your information will help somebody! If you want to enjoy living in Azabu more, please join in!

Download the application from here



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

## We have created a "Home Evacuation Guidebook for Use in an Emergency"!



### Evacuation shelters are no longer the only option in an emergency!

Minato City has reduced the number of evacuees that can be accepted at Evacuation Shelters in order to control infections. So, we all need to recognize the importance of "home evacuation," or sheltering at home during an emergency.

For this reason, the Azabu area has created the "Home Evacuation Guidebook for Use in an Emergency" to recommend home evacuation in emergencies, based on measures to control infections. This guidebook outlines important details regarding safety at home during a disaster, telling us exactly what home evacuation means, what we should prepare, etc.

This guidebook is being distributed to each household in the Azabu area, and you can also pick one up at the Collaboration Project Section counter at the Azabu Regional City Office.

More details about the guidebook can be found on the Minato City website.

"Evacuation shelters can become overcrowded."



"Aza-Buu"

Access our website using this QR code to read the "Home Evacuation Guidebook for Use in an Emergency."



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



# Information from the Azabu Regional City Office



## The Roppongi Safety and Peace of Mind Project continues!



“Rules are important, and if everybody follows the rules, we will all have greater freedom”; “Our aim is for everybody to enjoy their freedom and their time as comfortably as possible in Roppongi, where many people from a variety of cultures gather.” The “Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind” serves as the “Rules of the Town” that everybody should follow for crime prevention and the beautification of the Town of Roppongi. Many of the well-informed readers of “The Azabu” might say, “These are common sense!” The Roppongi Safety and Peace of Mind Project releases public relations material about the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind—but not in the way you might expect. This material is innovatively provided through modern social media. Use your PC, smart phone or tablet to access our website! You might find useful information for your daily life!

### You can search for restaurants that support the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind on “Tabelog”

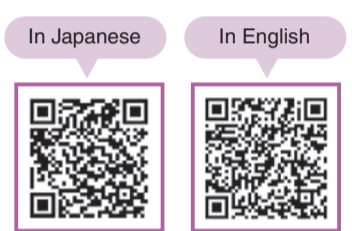
These days, there are many things to consider when selecting a restaurant—not just the quality of the food, but also its interior, if you can use a private room, whether there is enough social distancing... When selecting a restaurant, we would like you to consider adding the idea of “whether the restaurant has a high awareness of social contribution.” For this, we have created a Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind collaboration page on the “Tabelog” website! You can search the restaurants that have a “Tabelog” page for “Certified Shops” that support the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind initiative. If you want to eat and drink enjoyably in Roppongi, we recommend you choose a shop with a greater awareness of a better community. Your time eating and drinking will be much more enjoyable!



### We want “Zero Roppongi” to be spread all over the world!

An article introducing the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind and Businesses Supporting the Roppongi Charter System in Japanese and English is posted in the LIVE JAPAN PERFECT GUIDE, a sightseeing information service for foreigners visiting Japan.

In this article, you can see public relations material about collaborating businesses with an accompanying video!



## Why don't you join us? Come and join the Roppongi Safety and Peace of Mind Project campaign!

Once a month, local residents, staff members of shops and businesses, and government bodies come together and carry out cleaning activities around Roppongi Crossing. Wet tissues with an original design are distributed and the Roppongi Charter for Safety and Peace of Mind is promoted. Cleaning with everyone and promoting “good manners” can make you look at the town from a slightly different perspective. Sometimes, you can exchange smiles with the people walking down the road, and people might say “Good Job!” or “Thank you!” to you.

How about spending a fulfilling time with us? If you're interested in our activities, don't hesitate to contact us!



The campaign

**Going shopping? Visit our local shopping streets.**

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



Please write your address, name, occupation (school name), telephone number, comment and/or request (in Japanese or English, no word/character limit or specific format required), and deliver it directly, or mail or fax it to the Community Policy Subsection, Collaboration Project Section, Azabu Regional City Office, 5-16-45, Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo (106-8515).

● Tel: 03-5114-8812 ● Fax: 03-3583-3782

You can also access this community information paper from the **Minato City website.**



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

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**Editor's Note**  
 I am leaving “The Azabu” community information paper after six years of involvement. The town of Azabu has two faces: a daytime face full of gentle smiles, and a sharp-eyed nighttime face. It reminds me of a dragon, repeatedly casting off its skin and stimulating the hearts and minds of the people who are attracted to it. The dragon's new scales look to the future, and the cast-off skin becomes a “genius loci” (a memory of the land) that tells us about the past. Our activities help pass the stories of such changes down to the next generation. The door is always wide open to all residents and people who work in Minato City. If you are interested in our activities, please join us! (SK)  
 The original article is written in Japanese.

“**Minato Call**” information service answers your questions about everyday life! Feel free to ask about services provided by City Hall, facility guides, event information, and more. Available from 8:00 am to 8:00 pm every day.  
 \* This service is also available in English.  
**Minato Call**  
**Tel: 03-5472-3710 Fax: 03-5777-8752**  
 Inquiry submission form: <https://www.city.minato.tokyo.jp/kouchou/kuse/kocho/ken/form-inquiry.html>