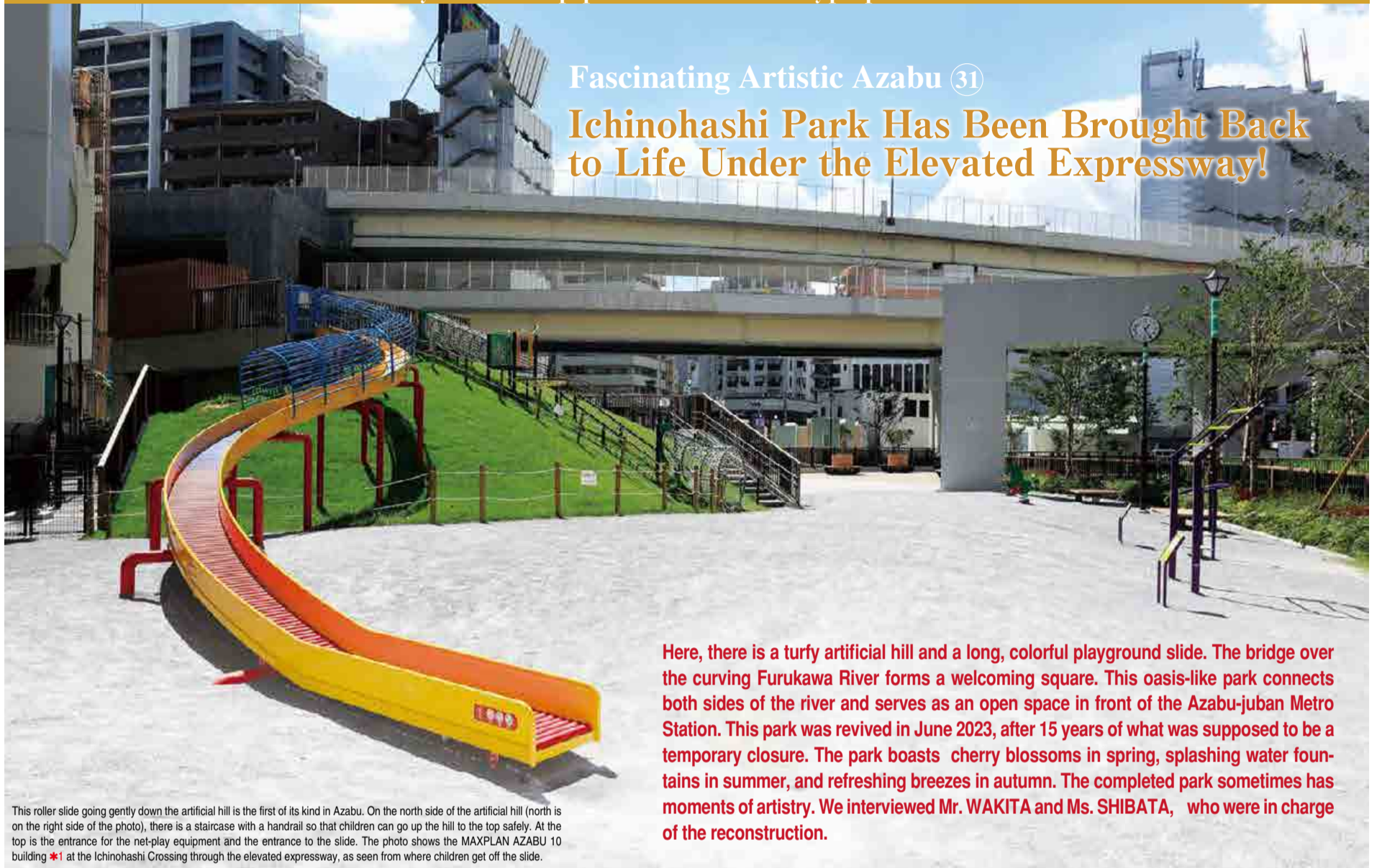




A community information paper created and edited by people who live in Azabu.

Fascinating Artistic Azabu ③①

Ichinohashi Park Has Been Brought Back to Life Under the Elevated Expressway!



Here, there is a turfy artificial hill and a long, colorful playground slide. The bridge over the curving Furukawa River forms a welcoming square. This oasis-like park connects both sides of the river and serves as an open space in front of the Azabu-juban Metro Station. This park was revived in June 2023, after 15 years of what was supposed to be a temporary closure. The park boasts cherry blossoms in spring, splashing water fountains in summer, and refreshing breezes in autumn. The completed park sometimes has moments of artistry. We interviewed Mr. WAKITA and Ms. SHIBATA, who were in charge of the reconstruction.

This roller slide going gently down the artificial hill is the first of its kind in Azabu. On the north side of the artificial hill (north is on the right side of the photo), there is a staircase with a handrail so that children can go up the hill to the top safely. At the top is the entrance for the net-play equipment and the entrance to the slide. The photo shows the MAXPLAN AZABU 10 building *1 at the Ichinohashi Crossing through the elevated expressway, as seen from where children get off the slide.

There's a Big Secret Hidden in the Turfy Artificial Hill

Ichinohashi Park opened in 1953 as a Minato City Park. However, it was closed temporarily in FY2008 due to a Furukawa River maintenance work project being carried out by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. This summer, the park was revived as a bright and relaxing space, despite being under an elevated expressway. We asked Mr. WAKITA about how this was done.

"When we hear that the park is under an elevated expressway, it doesn't sound like such a beautiful place. So we first put long benches in the shade to make the park a relaxing space. In the south zone, there is a building for underground management constructed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. This building is covered by an artificial hill."

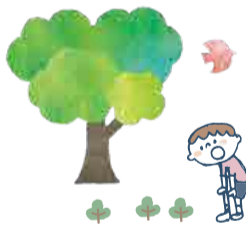
On the artificial hill, they set up a long slide and net-play equipment. Then, a wall where people can enjoy bouldering and a turfy hill were installed. Under the hill is the Underground Furukawa River Water Regulating Pond*2 constructed by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government. This pond is used as a temporary collection point for river water overflow. Interestingly, this building has an elevator for management vehicles that are used from time to time to remove mud that accumulates at the bottom of the underground pond.

Spring Water, Movable Trees, and a Bridge with Fountains

The Furukawa River curves significantly after it passes Ichinohashi Bridge, flowing east, and a new bridge was built at this bend. We asked Ms. SHIBATA about the bridge and greenery.

"Before the park closed, there was a narrow pedestrian bridge over the Furukawa River. We did not plan on restoring the old bridge, but instead built a new, wide bridge that connects the two halves of the park divided by the river, integrating them."

The new bridge was a project carried out by the Tokyo Metropolitan Government, but every-



Movable planters that serve as benches are placed on the new bridge.



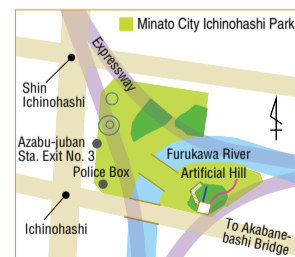
A wall for bouldering on the west side of the artificial hill. The ground is paved with soft rubber chips. The tasteful color scheme was chosen by the person in charge of planning in Minato City Office.

thing else on the surface was done by Minato City. There are fountains splashing water into the Furukawa River on both sides of the bridge. The water that springs up*3 from underground has done so for a very long time. The quality of the water is very good, and has been used in the park since 1990. Three types of fountains were built utilizing this spring water, as shown in the lower left photo.

Some planters that can also be used as benches were placed on the bridge. The fountains for children to play in are encircled by trees. As the park is located under an elevated expressway, no tall trees can be planted. They wouldn't get any rainfall, and there is limited sunshine. As a result, all of the plants are small trees or bushes, and the planters can be moved around for variety or when necessary.

"Two of the cherry trees that had been in the park for a long time were left next to the road on the north side. New cherry trees were planted around the park. At the center of the park, we planted a coast redwood. This type of tree will grow very tall," we were told.

This coast redwood is still young. It is said that this type of tree can grow to be one of the tallest in the world. The hope is that this one will become a tree symbolic of the park.



*1 Refer to "Fascinated by Artistic Azabu" No. 26 in "The Azabu" No. 55.

*2 Underground Furukawa River Water Regulating Pond: This underground facility draws the Furukawa River overflow from around the Gono-hashi Bridge and collects it. When the water level of the Furukawa River returns to normal, the water is discharged around the Ichinohashi Bridge. (Community Development Section, Minato City Azabu Regional City Office)

*3 The underground water flow is an average of 350 to 400 tons per day in the tunnel for TEPCO Power Grid Inc. underground cables. This water is used for the fountains and discharged into the Furukawa River, which also helps keep the river clean. (Community Development Section, Minato City Azabu Regional City Office)

Minato City Ichinohashi Park

Address: 3-9-1 Higashi-azabu, Minato-ku
Adjacent to the Ichinohashi Police Box and close to Exit No. 3 of the Azabu-juban Metro Station
Area: 4,997.19 m²
Open Date: April 1st, 1953
Re-open Date After Renovation: June 24th, 2023 (completion ceremony was held)
For more details about the park, refer to the following website.
<https://minato-park.jp/azabu/parks/ichinohashi/>

● Research Support
Community Development Section, Minato City Azabu Regional City Office



(Upper Left) Water Curtain Wall Fountain: Here you can see the light of the brilliant water curtain at the crossing under the elevated expressway at night. Water flows from 5:00 am to 1:00 am the following morning. The idea for night illumination came up during construction.

(Upper Right) Fountains for Water Play: The spring water is great for children to play in during the hot summer months. The water spray comes on for 10 minutes at a time twice an hour each day, from 8:00 am to 7:00 pm between July and September.

(Lower Left) Bridge Fountains: There are fountain waterfalls on both sides of the wide bridge over the Furukawa River, and at night they are colorfully illuminated. The water spray comes on for five minutes once an hour.

* The spring water occurs naturally, so the fountains may not operate exactly as planned.



麻布 びと

Azabu – A Human Story
Preserving Voices of Azabu
for the Future



In Kensoji Temple in September 2023

People who invite you to share memories of Azabujuban, with a smile.

Kimono Art Sunaga was founded in 1886 and is located at the entrance of the Azabujuban Shopping Street. Mr. SUNAGA Tatsuo is the third-generation owner, and he also contributes to community development as the head of the Azabujuban Shopping Street Promotion Association and the Chairman of the Minato Council of Social Welfare. For this issue, we interviewed him about his boyhood memories and the path of his life until now.

An Active Boyhood

How did you spend your time during childhood?

I was born in Minami-azabu in 1943, and my family ran the Sunaga Gofukuten kimono shop on the Juban Shopping Street. When I was a kid, I collected insects and built a hut on the mountain behind Kensoji Temple. At that time, I spent a lot of time running around the mountain.

As the Third-Generation Head of a Long-Established Kimono Shop

When did you take over your family business?

My father passed away when I was a university student. Until then, I did not intend to take over my family business, and I had already chosen an occupation. However, after I graduated from university, my mother told me, "I will do my best to manage the shop, and you will go to Kyoto for training." So, I went to Kyoto. After returning home I went to the Shimizu Toki Kimono Academy and learned all about kimono, starting with how to properly wear one. I was the only male in the class, and it was, in a way, very fun! (laughs) What I learned there is a great help to me now.

Did you change anything after you took over the business?

First of all, I stopped selling goods on credit and widened the product lineup by increasing the stock of Japanese-style accessories, etc. This was in order to transform the customer base. The number of foreign visitors increased, so I learned English for them. Then, I changed the shop name from "Sunaga Gofukuten" to "Kimono Art Sunaga." I believed that changing the shop name would make it more my own. I didn't want to just take over my grandfather's business.

Changes on the Azabujuban Shopping Street

Could I ask you about what you've been doing for the Shopping Street?

When I was the Chairman of the Community Development Committee, we created a project for the removal of the arcade in 1991. This helped gather the necessary momentum to change the streetscape. There were fluorescent lamps under the arcade, but it was still quite dark. We wanted to see the sky from the Shopping Street. After that, I became the Chairman of the Shopping Street in 2000. I was very glad to see the number of visitors increase. This was also in part because a Metro Namboku Line station opened in September that year, and a Toei Oedo Line

station opened in December.

You have been active for a long time, leading development. What is your motivation?

I thought it was a great opportunity to become involved in the Juban community. That's why.

Mr. SUNAGA has just turned 80. What is the secret of your youthfulness?

No, no, there is no secret! My days off? I love mountains, so I often go to the mountains. A while back I formed the "Azabujuban Mountaineering Club" and I've climbed many of the 100 most famous mountains in Japan together with my friends from the Shopping Street. This year we went to Mt. Tateshina, which is located in the Yatsugatake Mountains.

This year (2023), the Azabujuban Summer Festival was held for the first time in four years, that's right, isn't it?

The festival was a success without any serious incidents, right? That was thanks to the Police and Fire Department, who prepared well for the safety of the event. Everyone involved did great, including Mr. HIRANO, the Chairman of the Azabujuban Shopping Street Promotion Association.

What is the charm of Azabujuban Shopping Street?

The street has not developed as a "downtown street," but is still a traditional "shopping street," where local customers are still well taken care of. Also, each shop serves as a general representative of the whole Azabujuban Shopping Street, and can help to guide visitors. In addition to this, even when an old wooden shop is torn down and rebuilt in concrete, Azabujuban citizens will not move. They will continue to live in that building because they love Azabujuban so much. They could of course rent the building to someone else and move to the suburbs, but they truly want to stay in Azabujuban after all. I appreciate their passion for our local community.

Kimono Art Sunaga

Address: 2-1-8 Azabujuban, Minato-ku, Tokyo Tel/Fax: 03-3457-0323

● **Research Support** ●
Kensoji Temple 1-2-12 Moto-azabu, Minato-ku, Tokyo

● **References** ●
The Azabujuban Shopping Street Promotion Association's PR Magazine, "Juban Dayori"



Mr. SUNAGA Tatsuo
(80 years old)
Kimono Art Sunaga



View of Azabujuban Shopping Street in 1913
The Sunaga Gofukuten banner-flag is visible on the front left.



Handwritten tags are attached to the products
There are many foreign visitors, so all the tags have English translations



At dusk when the shop turns on the lights, it creates a completely different atmosphere.

What Can I Get?

The Azabu Town Gacha Project has Begun!

Heart-Pounding Excitement!



When we think about Azabu, most of us have an image of a town with a lot of charms. Now, there's a new project designed to make the charms of the town known to many more people. For the first step, capsule toys that show the charms of Azabu are being introduced, and visitors can pick them up and bring them home.

The Minato City Local Business Activation Project 麻布の縁さ〜 (AZABU-ru-EN-cer, means Azabu + influencer)

The AZABU-ru-EN-cer project started in 2022. The Azabu Regional City Office implements many projects in collaboration with local administrative entities such as citizen participation organizations and local businesses. The past participants of such projects became the members of this project. They continuously share information about the Azabu area through a dedicated website, leveraging their knowledge and expertise in specialized fields. They also plan and manage various events, using the experience they obtained during their activities in collaboration with local administrative entities.

"Azabu Town Gacha" Filled with a Variety of Azabu Specialties

Nine types of Azabu Town Gacha (capsule toys) have been created after careful selection from the many "Azabu specialty" items that reflect Azabu's history, culture, local sites, etc. The selection was made by the AZABU-ru-EN-cer members. In a mini explanatory book, members of AZABU-ru-EN-cer introduce the charms of Azabu that only people in the know are aware of. Try picking up the Azabu specialties only available in Azabu!



Roppongi Hills (Mori Tower)

You might be able to have Roppongi Hills in your house for 300 yen. It's a dreamy capsule toy.



Toad in Gama (Toad) Pond

The toad in Gama Pond is one of the seven mysteries of Azabu. The picture shows a frog in Juban Inari Shrine.



Higashi-azabu Scarecrow

This character is from the Kakashi Matsuri (Scarecrow Festival), a former festival that was much loved. It is still very popular among Higashi-azabukko, the people born and raised in Higashi-azabu.



Roppongi Crossing Logo

The stylish logo design as a keyholder.

Nishi-azabu Crossing Traffic Sign

This Traffic Crossing Sign keyholder is a first, despite seeming like it should have been around for a while. When you wear it, you might feel like you are wearing a timeless symbol of the area.



The Disaster Prevention Character "Azabuu"

This time, the "Azabuu" character was drawn specially for the Azabu Town Gacha.



Local Business Activation Project Logo

All Azabukko want to have this logo item. Let's activate the local community!



Sacred Place for Slopes

Azabu is a place with a lot of slopes. The "Sacred Place for Slopes," a location with four slopes, is used as a motif for this gacha.



Kimi-chan Statue

It goes without saying that this statue is a landmark of Azabujuban. Let your desk become Patio Juban.



Azabujuban Summer Festival Debut

Azabu Town Gacha appeared for the first time in the Azabujuban Summer Festival, held on August 26 and 27, 2023. Both adults and children enthusiastically played the gacha machines and cheered for joy when they got the item they wanted. There were some people who got their goal straightaway, and some people who played again and again until they got all the available items.

Some people with connections to Azabu also told us about their memories, showing us keyholders or acrylic stands they had won. Those who were seeing the Azabu specialties for the first time were curious to hear the stories told by members of AZABU-ru-EN-cer, and the "Azabu Ambassadors" who were selected through auditions. I will be very happy if the charms of Azabu become well known.

This gacha machine is permanently located in the Azabu Regional City Office. Turn the handle and try your luck!



View of both buildings from the east side of the garden

A magnificent mansion was completed halfway up the Hojo-zaka Slope at Azabu-Hiroo-cho 3-banchi (presently 5-2 Minami-azabu) in 1919. It was the work of the famous British architect Josiah Conder in his last days. He was well known as the architectural designer of the Rokumeikan and other such buildings. This mansion for NARUSE Masayuki Esq. won admiration as an “outstanding work of Josiah Conder. A work that demonstrates his mature skills, great sophistication and is second to none”*. Recently, we were given the opportunity to tell you about the “Naruse Family Photobook of New Buildings” owned by the Minato City Local History Museum in this part of our paper. By showing you photos of buildings and gardens from the past, we would like to tell you about the history of this land. This story has been passed down for generations and is mainly about Mr. NARUSE Masayuki, the owner of the buildings. However, the story starts with Francis Brinkley, the first owner of this land in the Meiji Period, and goes up to TSUTSUMI Yasujiro, the landowner after 1940.

Photobook

In this photobook, there are a total of 38 photos of the inside and outside of the Western-style building and Japanese-style building and garden. There is no publication data, and details about the photos, such as who took them or exactly when, are unknown. As this was published, multiple copies must have been printed. This one, which has been kept carefully without degradation and is currently available to the public, is probably the only one of its kind. So, it is really valuable.



Photobook

Mr. NARUSE Masayuki and His Residence

Mr. NARUSE Masayuki was born in 1876. After graduating from Keio University, he was selected as one of the first trainees to be trained overseas by the Ministry of Agriculture and Commerce. He trained for five years in machinery manufacturing in the US, and after returning home he worked for Kawasaki Shipbuilding. Then, he went into business for himself in 1914. He established a machinery trading company called “Seiko Shokai” in Kobe. From Western countries, he imported machinery for electric power, shipbuilding, coal mining, iron manufacturing, etc., which were essential industries in Japan. This enterprise made him very wealthy. He built a new mansion for himself in Hiroo-cho at the age of 43. Two years later, he closed down Seiko Shokai. After that, he served as an executive in domestic power and gas companies, including the Toho Electric Power Company. Together with his elder brother, Mr. NARUSE Masayasu (President of Jugo Bank), his name was also on the list of top executives of companies associated with Mr. MATSUKATA Iwao and his relatives, such as Kawasaki Shipbuilding, Chitose Fire and Marine Insurance, and Chiyoda Fire and Marine Insurance.

The Naruse family residence front gate faced the Hojo-zaka Slope. Inside the gate, there was a Western-style building and a Japanese-style building. Behind the buildings there was a large garden sloping to the south.

On the blueprints for the Western-style building (a) still in exis-

tence, there are notes written by Josiah Conder himself. Checking it against the photos, we can see that the interior work was done exactly according to the plans. The ground floor served as a social space with an entrance hall, large drawing room, guest room, and dining room. The upper floor served as a space for relaxation with a library, gents dressing room, bedrooms, bathroom, and Japanese-style room. All the items for interior decoration, including wallpaper, carpets, and furniture, were imported directly from the UK. Conder himself oversaw the unpacking of each of them as they arrived.



Mr. NARUSE Masayuki

No blueprints for the Japanese-style building remain, so we don't know what the original plans were exactly. The photos, however, show us that the building was rather large. Notes on the photos include “Mrs. Naruse's Room” and “Daughter's Room.” It is likely that Mr. and Mrs. Naruse and their 10 children (6 sons and 4 daughters) were living in the Japanese-style building, and the Western-style building would have been used mainly as a guest house.

The positions of the buildings were arranged with consideration for the traditional Japanese garden, designed by previous owner Brinkley, which would have enhanced the beauty of the premises. This would have taken three to four years to create at huge cost.

For reasons that are unclear, the Naruse family moved to Shin-machi in Setagaya City at the beginning of the Showa Period (1926–1989). However, it has been suggested that they may have done so because of the Showa Depression (the financial depression in the first year of the Showa Emperor's reign). The French Embassy started using the former Naruse family residence in Azabu-Hiroo-cho in June 1930. It was recorded that Mr. SHIBUSAWA Eiichi had a meeting with the French Ambassador there on July 14 that same year, during the French Independence Day Festival. The French Embassy eventually moved to Azabu-Fujimi-cho, its present location. The residence of the Naruse

The Azabu Future Photo Studio

The Story of a Gorgeous Residence on the Hojo-zaka Slope

Residence of NARUSE Masayuki Esq.

Ground Floor of the Western-style Building



Ladies' Drawing Room



Guest Room



Gents Dressing Room



Hall



Room names have been added onto the blueprints of “Josiah Conder's Architectural Drawings of the Residence of M. Naruse Esq.” (a)



Library



Dining Room



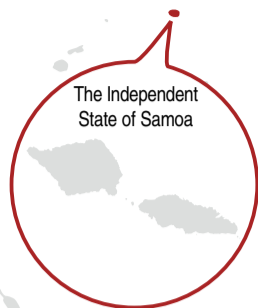
Upper Hall

The Independent State of Samoa
 Area: 2,830 km² (1.3 times larger than the Tokyo area)
 Population: About 218,764 (based on the World Bank in 2021)
 Capital City: Apia
 Languages: Samoan and English
 Head of State: His Highness TUIMALEALI'IFANO Va'aaletoa Sualauvi II
 Legislature: Unicameral System;
 No. of Members: 51; Term of Office: 5 years

From the website of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs
<https://www.mofa.go.jp/mofaj/area/samoa/data.html>

Interview Support: Embassy of the Independent State of Samoa

H.E. Faalavaau Perina Jacqueline SILA-TUALAULELEI,
 Ambassador of the Independent State of Samoa



SAMOA

Visiting Ambassadors From the "World" of Azabu

SAMOA, Celebrating the 61st Anniversary of the Founding of the Nation: Exploring the Charm of Treasure Islands in the South Pacific

The Embassy of the Independent State of Samoa (hereinafter called "Samoa") is located on the 5th floor of a building just across the street from the Azabudai Hills Mori JP Tower, the tallest building in Japan. This country has had diplomatic relations with Japan for more than 50 years, and there are lots of events being held in 2023. We met and spoke with H.E. Faalavaau Perina Jacqueline SILA-TUALAULELEI, Ambassador of the Independent State of Samoa (hereinafter called the "Ambassador"). She kindly accepted our interview, taking time out from her busy schedule.

Still Discovering Fresh Charms in Japan, Even After Living Here for Eight Years!

The Ambassador has been living in Japan with her husband and son, who is presently in senior high school, since 2015. She has had a long career in diplomacy. She lived in New York for five years as the Deputy Ambassador, and came to Japan after serving in Belgium and Samoa. Before that, she'd been to Japan twice for meetings.

The Embassy moved from Shinkawa, Chuo City in July 2021, and the Ambassador explained, "When all is said and done, this place is really convenient for us." She pointed out that it's easy to get to the Government offices in Kasumigaseki for meetings, and to deepen friendships with the ambassadors and staff members of the many embassies in Minato City. It's also convenient for all visitors to the Embassy of the Independent State of Samoa. She added with a big smile, "The Azabudai Hills complex was completed right in front of us. We can enjoy shopping and good meals, so I expect a lot in the future."

Has her impression of Japan changed over eight years? "My first impression of Japan was the excellent hospitality, its omotenashi, and that has not changed. Japan's omotenashi is special." She has traveled all over Japan with her family and told us about an unforgettable and touching episode. "We got lost while traveling, and went into a convenience store to



ask for directions. The staff member not only explained, but also guided us to our destination."

The Cherry Blossom Season is Like Magic

The Ambassador continued to tell us about her love for Japan, saying, "Of course there's Japan's history and traditions, but I also have to include the architecture, arts, food, manga, animation, and hot springs." Japan has four distinct seasons and each of them has its own charms. The Ambassador looks forward to cherry blossoms in the spring and the autumn leaves every year. The best time to see cherry blossoms lasts for only two weeks. "Cherry blossoms in full bloom during this short time are spectacular and very impressive, like magic," she said. She expands her journeys into all regions of Japan to see autumn leaves in late autumn every year. She added, "But summer in Tokyo is too hot," and our interview staff members nodded their heads in complete agreement. Samoa is in the Southern Hemisphere and the seasons are opposite to those in Japan. The sea water temperature is 28°C throughout the year. Their rainy season is from November to April. The average temperature is 31°C. The average temperature in the dry season, from May to October, is 27°C, so traveling in the dry season is recommended. Samoa is a country of everlasting summer, warm all year round. She told us, "Unspoiled nature exists everywhere in our country."

If You Go to Samoa, Fresh Seafood is Greatly Recommended!

As we listened to the Ambassador, our interest in Samoa continued to grow. The first thing we asked her about was the food. The Ambassador loves sushi and sashimi and said, "Samoa is an island country like Japan, and the fishing industry is very significant. Fresh seafood is widely available and we eat fish often. I strongly recommend the Samoan style sashimi called 'Oka'." "Oka"



Samoa is a treasure trove of seafood and good meals in general. However, Samoan food is defined by their seafood, the same as Japanese food. Photo provided by the Samoa Tourism Authority



In the future, they will expand the sales channels for coffee in Japan, and they are currently looking for import agents in Japan.



In the late 19th century when Samoa was under German control, the German people built a beer factory, which was the start of Samoan beer production. The Embassy staff members highly recommend it: "The water in Samoa is delicious, so we recommend our beer with confidence!" Like coffee, they are expanding the sales channels for beer.



The endlessly beautiful natural coastline of Samoa. Photo provided by the Samoa Tourism Authority

means "raw" in Samoan. They cut raw fish into bite-size pieces that are easy to eat. Then, they are dressed with lime juice, and salt, pepper, and vegetables including onions, tomatoes, and cucumbers are added. Finally, coconut milk is added and mixed in. The dietary staples of Samoa are "taro" potato, breadfruit, and a type of savory banana. Coconut milk is their favorite seasoning.



Juice made from noni, an evergreen tree. The Samoan people drink noni juice from childhood. It is said that it contains more than 150 nutrients. Fruit juice, etc., is frequently mixed with it.

Their major export to Japan is fish. Another well-known item is noni juice. This is made from the fruits and leaves of evergreen trees in Samoa and Australia, and it contains a lot of potassium. This juice is a traditional drink of Samoa. Others are cacao and folk crafts. In the future, the expansion of sales channels for coffee and beer will be promoted. From Japan, they mainly import industrial products, cars, and car parts.

Samoan Women are Active All Over the World

The Ambassador talked earnestly about the charms of the South Pacific Sea and the mountains on the islands in addition to Samoan food. One of our last questions was, "Are there many Samoan female ambassadors?" She answered that the active participation of women in diplomacy has increased dramatically over the last 20 years. There are five female ambassadors serving in foreign countries, half of the total number of Samoan ambassadors. The current Prime Minister, the Minister of Finance, and the Governor of the Central Bank are all women. It is stipulated by law that 10% or more of Parliamentarians must be women. We felt like we had caught a glimpse of how resilient Samoan people are, how they move forward while respecting tradition, and became acutely aware that we, as Japanese people, should follow their example.

The Ambassador always spoke to us with a smile. We were very impressed with what she had to say and quickly grew to like her. The more we find out about the treasure islands in the South Pacific, the more we want to visit.



The "siapo" cloth is made from tree bark, and is one of the Samoan traditional crafts. It is also called "tapa." Specifically, mulberry tree bark (Broussonetia papyrifera) is used. First, the bark is dried and pounded thin like paper, and then colorful geometric patterns are drawn on it using natural dyes. These products are handmade with great artistry, and so they are of course not cheap. In the Embassy, siapo cloth is displayed in a frame on the wall.



There is a famous place in Samoa: a gigantic natural pool called the "To-Sua Ocean Trench," which was created by volcanic activity. It takes about one hour by car from Apia, the capital, to reach it. Visitors can go down a 30 m ladder and jump into this mysterious sea for a swim. Photo provided by the Samoa Tourism Authority



The most popular sport is rugby and naturally well appreciated. In the 2023 World Cup, the Samoan team was in the same group as Japan. Before a match, they perform the famous "Siva Tau" war cry (war dance). Photo provided by twickenhamstadium.com



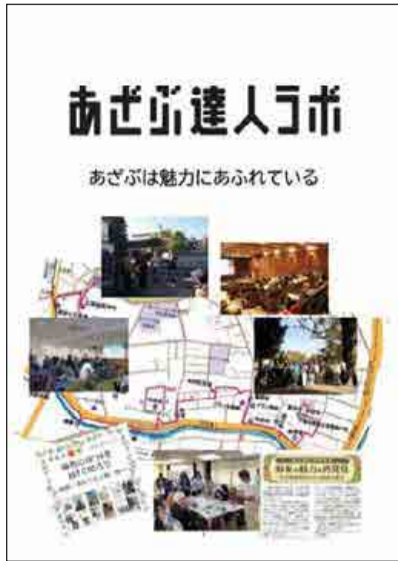
The official languages of Samoa are Samoan and English. Children are bilingual from elementary school. Photo provided by the Samoa Tourism Authority

(Interview and text by TAKAYANAGI Yukiko)



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.

For leading the meeting and all documents, Japanese language is used.

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

Information Items in March



Have you completed the proper procedures for transferring the ownership of 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) noted on the automobile inspection certificate as of April 1 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 Automobile Inspection and Registration Office.

You need to complete these procedures by **March 31, 2024**.

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

You need to complete the procedure to register your new address for the Motor Vehicle Tax when you move house.

When vehicle owners move, their new address needs to be registered with the local Transport Bureau or Automobile Inspection and Registration Office. 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

Minato City Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)

Applications for Motor Vehicle Tax exemptions for the disabled are being accepted in regular taxation procedures for FY2024.

Applications from people who have just received their Shintai Shogaisha Techo (Certificate of the Physically Disabled) or have not applied for the Motor Vehicle Tax exemption for the disabled yet are now being accepted for FY2024.

● **Eligibility:** Persons who have received their certificates of physical or mental disability, and who also meet certain requirements.

● **Application deadline:** May 31 (Fri), 2024 *There is an upper limit for the exemption amount.

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

Your Tax Statement can be used when applying for real estate registration.

When applying for real estate registration, the price of your fixed assets should be written down on the form. This is for calculating the registration license tax amount.

The price can also be confirmed in the Tax Statement sent to you in June along with the "Fixed Assets Tax and City Planning Tax Payment Notice." Therefore, the Valuation of Fixed Assets certificate, for which you must pay, is not required. For details, refer to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website.

Land/building prices that are the basis of the Fixed Assets Tax will be available for viewing from April (within Tokyo's 23 wards).

- **Eligibility:** Taxpayers owning land/buildings in the 23 wards as of January 1, 2024.
- **Records to be viewed:** Land/building prices taxable in the relevant wards where the taxpayers own properties (Public Inspection Ledger).
- **Period:** From April 1 (Mon) to July 1 (Mon), 2024 (excluding Saturdays, Sundays, and holidays)
- **Time:** From 08:30 to 17:00
- **Location:** Metropolitan Taxation Office in the relevant wards where the taxpayers own properties.

The notice of tax payment will be sent on June 3 (Mon), 2024.

For more information, visit the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website or the office below.

**Inquiries: For properties, etc. located in Minato City:
Minato City Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)**

Have you completed the procedure for reporting postal address changes to receive the Fixed Assets Tax and City Planning Tax Payment Notice? (Within Tokyo's 23 wards)

You must complete the procedure to change your address on your residence certificate, and on top of this make sure to complete the registration procedure to change the owner's address in the real estate register and the address of the "Fixed Assets Tax and City Planning Tax (Land/Buildings) Payment Notice." If you have not completed the registration procedure yet, submit the "Notification of Changing Address for Receiving the Fixed Assets Tax and City Planning Tax Payment Notice" to the Metropolitan Tax Office in the ward where you own the property or complete the procedure through the Tokyo Common Electronic Application and Notification Service website.

* You cannot change the name of the taxpayer written on the tax payment notice or the owner's name and address on the real estate register with the above procedure.

**Inquiries: For properties, etc. located in Minato City:
Minato City Metropolitan Taxation Office Tel: 03-5549-3800 (rep.)**

City taxes can be paid through a smartphone payment app.

We recommend that you pay City taxes using the smartphone payment app. You can use this app to read the barcode on the payment slip and pay the City tax anywhere, anytime.



Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website

For details, access the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website.

The procedures can be completed without visiting the office.

The Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation has a system that allows taxpayers to carry out procedures easily by postal mail or through the Internet etc., without visiting the office. Reports, applications, and notifications can be accepted by postal mail or through electronic devices. A cashless system for paying tax is also available.

For details, refer to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Bureau of Taxation website.

Information from the Azabu Regional City Office



Sign up for Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance for FY2024!

Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance System is an insurance system where you can take out this insurance with a small insurance premium, and, if you are injured in a traffic accident, you could receive the insurance benefits. Benefits are calculated according to hospital inpatient and outpatient days, and total treatment period.

The "Bicycle Liability Insurance Plan" insurance course combined with Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance is also available. This plan has been designed to provide compensation for damages or costs that arise from accidents caused by the insured when operating a bicycle.

Eligibility Persons living, working or studying in Minato City at the start of the insured period

Insurance Period From 00:00 am on April 1, 2024 to 24:00 am on March 31, 2025

Courses and Premium Amounts There are seven courses, with premium amounts ranging from 1,200 yen to 4,300 yen depending on the compensation. Only one of the courses can be selected.

Course	Compensation	Maximum Insurance Amount	Yearly Premium Amount
XJ	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course X and Bicycle Liability Plan	350,000 yen (Traffic Personal Injury) + 100 million yen (Bicycle Liability)	1,500 yen
AJ	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course A and Bicycle Liability Plan	1.5 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury) + 100 million yen (Bicycle Liability)	2,200 yen
BJ	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course B and Bicycle Liability Plan	3.5 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury) + 100 million yen (Bicycle Liability)	3,000 yen
CJ	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course C and Bicycle Liability Plan	6 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury) + 100 million yen (Bicycle Liability)	4,300 yen
A	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course A	1.5 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury)	1,200 yen
B	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course B	3.5 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury)	2,000 yen
C	Minato City Traffic Casualty Insurance Course C	6 million yen (Traffic Personal Injury)	3,300 yen

For more information, refer to the leaflet distributed on the counter of Collaboration Project Section in each Regional City Office or access the Minato City Website.

Application Period Until March 29 (Fri), 2024

However, applications are accepted through the website until March 31 (Sun), 2024.

Enrollment Procedure

● **In-Person Application** Fill out the insurance enrollment application form distributed at financial institutes in Minato City (banks, credit unions, credit associations, Japan Post Bank or post offices) and apply with a premium.

For Group Enrollment (More than 10 persons of Neighborhood Association or Residents' Association, etc.), visit Collaboration Project Section, in the nearest Regional City Office.

● **Online Application** Apply using the following 2D barcode.

Applications for insurance after April 1, 2024, after the insured period has started, can be accepted through the website.



For more information about the insurance, contact the Business Development Div., Tokyo Public Business Development Dept., Sampo Japan Insurance Inc. (1-26-1, Nishi-Shinjuku, Shinjuku-ku) (Reception Time: Weekdays from 9:00 am to 17:00 pm, from Monday to Friday excluding National Holidays)

Tel: 03-3349-9666

Insurance Company Authorization No.: SJ23-13496

Authorized Date: Jan. 19, 2024

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

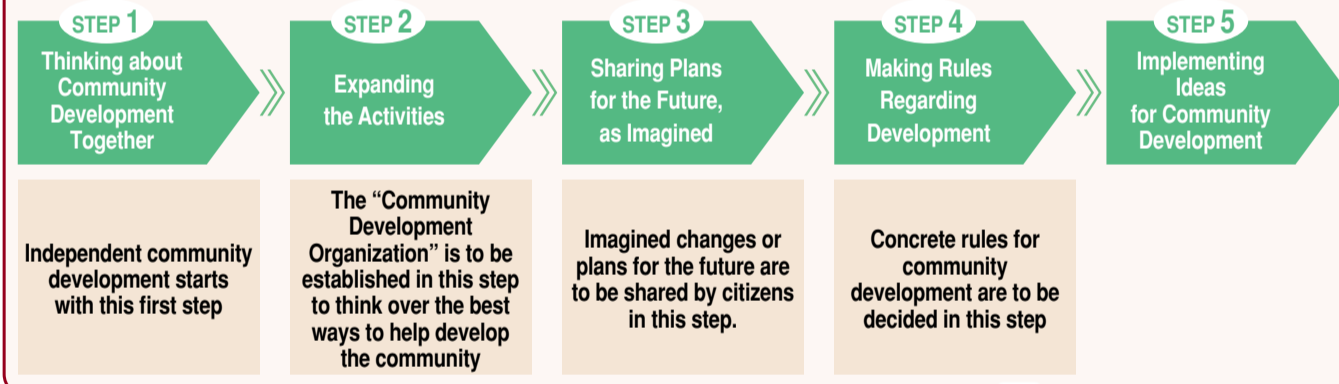
Introduction of the Framework of Community Development using the Minato City Community Development Ordinance

Minato City supports community development activities mainly by the people living in the community, so that local issues are solved within the community. Community development is promoted based on community initiative and agreement.

At present, there are four community development organizations registered in the Azabu area as shown in the figure on the right (as of March 1, 2024).

Three organizations have been registered as having "Regional Community Development Vision." One of them has been certified as an organization that follows the "Regional Community Development Rules"; as such, they are helping the community develop very effectively.

Community Development System Procedure



The certified Regional Community Development Rules are partly described here.

- Creating a disaster-resilient community
- Creating a lush green landscape we can all be proud of
- Reinforcing the bonds of the community
- Maintaining public order and morals
- Creating an environment where everybody can live with peace of mind

* To transfer ownership of property or begin construction in the area, an application must be made to the corresponding Community Development Conference.

If ownership of a property is to be transferred or construction is to begin within the area of activity of a Community Development Conference, or if you are interested in community development activities, please contact us as follows.

A pamphlet with a detailed description of Conference activities, the registered "Community Development Organization" list, and the "Regional Community Development Vision and Rules" are available at the counter of the Community Development Subsection, Community Development Section or through the Minato City website.

Inquiries: Community Development Subsection, Community Development Section, Azabu Regional City Office Tel: 03-5114-8815



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 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.
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Editor's Note

The opening article in this paper is about Ichino-hashi Park. The historic park was reinvented and brought back as a relaxing spot for the people living in Azabujuban.

There are things that have been revived, and there are brand-new things. This month, the tallest building in Japan, "Azabudai Hills," will open at last. What will this town look like some years in the future? The town of Azabu is always one step beyond my imagination. I really love this town.

(INOKUCHI Marina)

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/iken/form-inquiry.html>