

The magazine of The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan



# NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

July 2018 · Volume 50 · No. 7

## World Class Waste of Time and Money?

The Journey of an FCCJ Member to the  
Singapore Summit



**Election Results:**  
Meet the 2018-2019  
Board of Directors

**Memoirs:**  
Mr. Smith Goes to  
Tokyo (Part 4)

**An Appreciation:**  
Susumu Awanohara  
1945-2018





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For Introducing  
A New Member**

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## THE FOREIGN CORRESPONDENTS' CLUB OF JAPAN

Yurakucho Denki Building North 20F, 1-7-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006, Japan  
www.fccj.or.jp E-mail: front@fccj.or.jp Tel: +81-3-3211-3161 Fax: +81-3-3211-3168

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**The Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan**  
 Yurakucho Denki Building, North Tower 20F,  
 1-7-1 Yurakucho, Chiyoda-ku, Tokyo 100-0006.  
 Tel: (03) 3211-3161 · Fax: (03) 3211-3168 · fccj.or.jp

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## PITCH US YOUR STORY

Please send your story ideas to  
[no.1shimbun@fccj.or.jp](mailto:no.1shimbun@fccj.or.jp),

and be sure to note whether you have (or have access to) visuals. Our rates are ¥20 per published word, ¥20,000 for a front cover photo. Photo essays: ¥15,000 for full-page photos and ¥5,000 for smaller shots.

All payments will be made in credit to your member account.



## From the President

Dear FCCJ Members,

**W**e have just completed another Board election at your Club and as you will see from the message sent out from the office, we have some new officers on the Board.

It's an especially warm welcome to Abigail Leonard as first vice president and Daniel Hurst as secretary. Both will be bringing their significant journalistic talents and experience to ensuring the FCCJ remains relevant to newsmakers and the journalist of today and the future.

We also have a returnee to the Board in Director-at-Large Dan Sloan, who brings both news and corporate experience to the role. Thankfully for the FCCJ, our numbers man Willem Kortekaas will continue as treasurer. Willem is working on a comprehensive five-year business plan for your Club. (It's so impressive I borrowed sections of it for this message.) Everyone's favorite author Bob

Whiting rounds up the officer positions as second vice president.

Space restraints prevent me from going into the roles of all Board members, for which I hope they will forgive the oversight.

The old adage is "crisis brings opportunity" so one could argue the FCCJ has plenty of both - though I would contend that "crisis" is a generally overused word.

My reading is we have four priorities facing us: The Move, F&B, PAC and Membership, not necessarily in that order. As far as I'm concerned, all roads in the FCCJ lead to PAC. Our newsmaker events distinguish this Club and make it what it is. So that priority is one I have particular interest in.

For The Move in October to new premises, the hunt for a new F&B provider, and Membership initiatives we are most ably assisted by the Club's new General Manager Marcus Fishenden. Marcus has a wealth of experience in these fields and the FCCJ is especially fortunate to have him at this particular stage of its evolution. (An example of crisis meets opportunity?)

At the risk of boring some readers, it's perhaps worthwhile to reflect on what the FCCJ is.

With its PAC program as its core, and supporting social activities and services, the Club aims to provide a professional working environment for journalists and to be a valuable location for information gathering and professional exchange for all its members.

The Club aims to provide foreign correspondents in Japan and other journalists,

including visiting correspondents, with various forms of access to news sources in Japan and overseas. The Club is committed to defend the freedom of the press and the free exchange of information. Further, the Club promotes friendship, harmony, and mutual welfare in both professional and social relations among Japanese and non-Japanese journalists.

The Board you have most recently elected has plenty on its plate to help achieve these goals and every FCCJ board, of course, never completes the task. It's passed on for others to carry on.

Journalism is not by any measure a "dying" profession but its means of practice and execution has changed, though that is always the case, it's just that some disruptions are bigger than others - like the invention of the printing press and the Internet.

(Note: Journalism schools in the US are reporting a surge in applications. Thank you, Mr. Trump.)

The Internet has changed the model of journalism. Traditional print media have gone into decline. Many legacy jobs have been eliminated as a result. The number of overseas correspondents and bureaus has fallen. Print media rely increasingly on outsourced news from the large wire services. A number of active free-lance journalists exist but the increasing commoditization of news make it difficult for them to sustain themselves. Hence, many take on other work to make a living.

The major wire services, especially Reuters

## Letter to the editor

**T**he FCCJ is no longer a real "correspondents" club. Correspondents are largely a thing of the past, unfortunately. The club has become, instead, a journalists' club, but a critical review of the regular members' qualifications is likely to show that many no longer even qualify as journalists as defined in our Articles of Association or Bylaws, taking work in other fields of business. Many others have retired. This raises the question whether the role with regard to governance of a club with a

total membership of 2,000 by less than 300 regular members, who may or may not be involved in journalism can still be justified.

The quorum for decisions at General Membership Meetings is 50% of members entitled to vote (i.e. regular members). This percentage represents no more than 7.5% of total membership. This position of control - undemocratic as it may be - comes with responsibilities. If the recent General Membership Meeting is any indication, the regular members seem to take this responsibility rather lightly. Only a handful of members showed up in person at the GMM and it took a massive phone-call effort by the already beleaguered office staff to finally reach the number of votes necessary for a quorum. This in turn delayed the start of the GMM

by two and a half hours and necessitated a one-week extension of that meeting and a corresponding delay in the selection of BoD officers for the 2018-2019 term. It is the third time this has happened in the past two years.

Participation by the associate membership in the preliminary round of voting for associate candidates for the board was also problematical. Probably only a little over 100 out of a total of 1700 associate members voted (around 6%).

Why is there so little interest in club affairs on the part of the associates? Is it a sense of disenfranchisement? If this is the case, why not give the associate membership a larger say in club matters? It is not necessary to restrict voting rights to journalists to maintain the journalistic character of the club.



and Bloomberg, have little need for the Club as a source for news. (Though note that the FCCJ still has significant drawing power for some newsmakers and it's not beholden to the whims of billionaire owners. The latter qualification alone is priceless.)

A whole new group of online publications has emerged in the form of websites, newsletters, blogs, etc. This has had consequences for standards of journalism and for the technical needs on the part of journalists working for this type of publication. In fact, a new type of specialist journalist has emerged, capable of providing news not only in print but married with the photography, video and audio that online publications demand.

These changes are likely irreversible and will continue to evolve. For this reason, we need to continue asking ourselves the question how does the Club remain relevant and accessible for journalists and what the Club can do to support them?

As we chew over and respond to that question, Japan will play host to some of the world's biggest sporting events in the coming years, as well as the G20 next year. It's located in one of the most dynamic regions on the planet and tourism numbers keep breaking records. (Significantly, many are repeat visitors — in other words, once people discover Japan, many keep coming back.) I could also mention what's unfolding on the Korean Peninsula. Sounds like opportunity to me.

● **Peter Langan**

There are other and probably better ways to do so.

Why this fear of giving associate members a larger say in club affairs? Do journalists not recognize that it is as much in the interest of associates as in their own interest to maintain the club as a genuine journalists' club? If associates want to join a social or a dining club, there are better options. They join precisely because it is a journalists' club and because of its professional activities. So -- in sum -- it is time to think seriously about the roles of regular and associate members and come up with a more workable system of governance.

● **Willem Kortekaas**  
Board member (associate).

## Dick Hughes—Doyen of Correspondents in Asia

by CHARLES POMEROY

**H**ong Kong-based Richard "Dick" Hughes, known as "Your Grace," was roasted\* at a Club dinner in his honor on May 8, 1981. In addition to his work as a war correspondent in WWII and his later coverage of Asia for major news organizations, Hughes had also served from 1947 as the general manager for 18 months of the Tokyo Press Club, as the now-FCCJ was known at the beginning. Seated left to right are John Roderick (AP), Al Cullison (*New York Journal of Commerce*), Allen Raymond (former *New York Herald Tribune* correspondent for whom our library is named), Dick Hughes, Jack Russell (NBC), and Kei Kawana, a former manager who served under Hughes. The Hughes-masked figures suggest his various roles, including his alleged work as a spy, and behind them is an enlarged photo of the first club premises.

An Australian born in Melbourne on March 5, 1904, Hughes was enticed into journalism at a young age through his work on the house magazine of the Victorian Railways. He became a newspaper reporter in Melbourne in 1934, but the next year moved on to the *Daily Telegraph* in Sydney. From 1940 he reported from Tokyo and Shanghai, then covered the war in North Africa in 1942-43 before illness returned him to Sydney for editorial work. He was assigned as a foreign correspondent to Tokyo in 1945 to cover the Occupation, but resigned in 1947 and transitioned into Club management. Returning to journalism and based in Hong Kong, he



wrote for *The Times*, *The Economist*, *The Far Eastern Economic Review* and various other publications over the next 30 years, covering the Korean and Vietnam wars among other stories.

Congenial and highly regarded, Hughes had a reputation as a flamboyant raconteur with a dry sense of humor. He inspired the creation of fictional characters by authors John le Carré and Ian Fleming. Reportedly a double agent for MI6 during the Cold War, he was among the first to interview British spies Burgess and Maclean in 1956 (see page 38 of the FCCJ history book). He also authored four books, of which the best known are *Foreign Devil* and *Hong Kong: Borrowed Place, Borrowed Time*. He was honored in 1980 by Queen Elizabeth II, who named him a Commander of the British Empire (CBE).

Richard Hughes died in Hong Kong at the age of 77 in 1984.

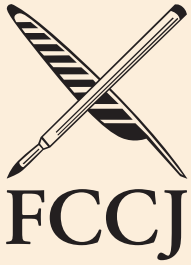
\*A roast is the honoring of a colleague in a humorous way with jokes at their expense as well as genuine praise, often with the roastee responding in kind.

● **Charles Pomeroy** is editor of *Foreign Correspondents in Japan*, a history of the club that is available at the front desk.



Left to right: John Roderick (former president: July 1, 1965 - June 30, 1966), Alvin (Al) E. Cullison (former president: July 1, 1975 - June 30, 1976), Allen Raymond, Richard (Dick) Hughes, John (Jack) R. Russell (former president: July 1, 1980 - June 30, 1981) former General Manager, Kuwajiro Kawana (Kei Kawana)





# Meet the 2018-2019 Board of Directors



## PRESIDENT

### Peter Langan, Freelance

PETER LANGAN has been in the news business in Asia for almost 30 years, with postings in Japan and Singapore, covering stories on the ground from Sydney to Ulaanbaatar and Beijing, Mumbai to Jakarta and many points in between. He was the Tokyo Bureau Chief of Bloomberg News from 2005 to 2009, and later led the bureau's news team that won two SOPA awards for coverage of Fukushima. He is from the U.K., more precisely the City of Liverpool - well known for producing lousy music and useless football teams, with the exception of Everton FC. He's now the Northeast Asia Editor for Hong Kong-based Asia Times.



## 1ST VICE PRESIDENT

### Abigail Leonard, Freelance

ABIGAIL LEONARD is a Tokyo-based journalist who covers Japanese politics and culture for print and broadcast news outlets in the U.S. and Europe. She has written stories for the Washington Post, Newsweek and Vox; produced video pieces for the New York Times and radio stories for NPR, BBC and Deutsche Welle. Before she moved to Japan, she wrote and produced long-form news documentary stories as a staff producer for PBS, ABC and Al Jazeera America and was also a lead writer for two news analysis programs: Countdown with Keith Olbermann and The War Room with Jennifer Granholm. Stories she's reported from Japan have earned a National Headliner Award and a James Beard Foundation Media Award Nomination. She was a 2011 East-West Center Japan Fellow and a 2010 UN Foundation Journalism Fellow.



## DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

### Khaldon Azhari, PanOrient News

KHALDON AZHARI is president of PanOrient News, which produces TV News Packages and articles for wires and print publications mainly in Arabic with a focus on Japan and East Asia. Azhari has been the bureau chief of WAM (UAE-based news agency) and a correspondent for PETRA (Jordan News) since the mid-nineties. Additionally, as a former correspondent for various Arabic media such as MBC, CNBC Arabia, Dubai TV, he has been a regular contributor to BBC Arabic Radio and TV, since the mid-nineties. Azhari has been the voice of Japan and East Asia to West Asia and the Arabic world for a quarter of a century and is a recipient of an award from the Japan-Arab Association for his contributions to media relations and for strengthening ties between Japan and the Arab countries.



## DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

### Daniel Sloan, Nissan Motor/ Freelance

DAN SLOAN has over 25 years in global media and corporate communications experience, leading teams at Nissan Motor and Reuters. Dan founded the Nissan Global Media Center, which yoked traditional and social media with corporate public relations, while earlier working as senior correspondent and bureau chief for Reuters. He is an author, frequent public speaker, and former adjunct professor of Journalism at Komazawa University. He served as president of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, and is a graduate of Columbia Graduate School of Journalism and University of Virginia.



## DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE

### Mary Corbett, Professional Associate Member

MARY CORBETT's career as writer and documentary producer dates back to her student years in Japan and the US working first as intern, then location coordinator, writer and producer for local and international media organizations including BBC, Nikkei, Discovery Channel, NHK, Asahi and NPR. She hopes her passion for research and project management will contribute towards optimizing this historic year of transition for FCCJ.

**2ND VICE PRESIDENT****Robert Whiting, Freelance**

ROBERT WHITING is the author of several successful books on contemporary Japanese culture, including Tokyo Underworld, The Meaning of Ichiro, The Chrysanthemum and the Bat and the best-selling You Gotta Have Wa. He has published 20 other books in Japanese. He has written for Sports Illustrated, Time, the New York Times, the Wall Street Journal and the Japan Times as well as for Japanese publications, including Shukan Asahi and Bungei Shunju. He authored a manga series for Kodansha that sold 750,000 copies in graphic novel form. At present he writes a weekly column for Yukan Fuji. He has lived in Japan on and off for the past 50 years, and is a graduate of Sophia University. Tokyo Underworld is under option to Amazon Studios.

**SECRETARY****Daniel Hurst, Freelance**

DANIEL HURST is a freelance journalist based in Tokyo. He writes news and feature articles about Japan for a range of international publications. Prior to moving to Japan in 2016 he specialized in political reporting in his home country of Australia. Previous positions included political correspondent for Guardian Australia, education correspondent for the Sydney Morning Herald and The Age, and state political reporter for the Brisbane Times.

**TREASURER****Willem Kortekaas, Associate Member**

WILLEM KORTEKAAS has been an Associate member since 1983. Following a 25 years' career in banking with ABN Bank and postings to Africa, Canada, the USA and Japan, he set up a Japan based consulting firm that focused on Japanese M&A in Europe. At present, he manages a foreign-owned company on behalf of a client and concurrently is a director of several foreign owned companies in Japan. Past honorary functions include Chairman of the Netherlands Chamber of Commerce in Japan, Vice-chairman of the Japan-Netherlands Society, Vice-chairman of the European Business Community (EBC) and Member of the Expert Committee of the Japan Investment Council.

**DIRECTOR-AT-LARGE****Milton Isa, Associate Member**

MILTON ISA is a consultant and serves in an advisory capacity with several organizations, including NPOs. He has lived in Tokyo since 1972 and has been a member of the FCCJ since the eighties. He worked in the financial field for over 40 years: he spent 20 years with Merrill Lynch, set up the representative office in Tokyo for Permal Asset Management and was the president and CEO of State Street Japan. He has an MA in Diplomacy from Norwich University and a BA in Business Administration from Seattle University. Isa has lectured at Keio and Hitotsubashi universities and the National Defense Medical College. He retired as a Colonel from the U.S. Army Reserves after 30 years.

**KANJI****Kazuo Abiko, Freelance**

KAZUO ABIKO is former AP general manager for Northeast Asia. He served as FCCJ president in 2001-2002. Following his retirement from the international news agency in 2010, he taught at universities on subjects related to journalism as a part-time lecturer and visiting professor until March 2017. In the meantime, he also translated the AP's history book "Breaking News" into Japanese, and co-authored several books on international reporting, journalism standards, and news agencies. In addition to occasional writing for various publications, he has been contributing a monthly column on the state of U.S. media to the Japan Newspaper Publishers and Editors Association's weekly publication since April 2013.

**ASSOCIATE KANJI****Makoto Honjo, Associate Member**

MAKOTO HONJO is a native of Tokyo, who graduated from Keio University in 1973 and joined Sumitomo Corporation. For the last 15 years at Sumitomo he was working on acquisitions and disposals, something that he continues to advise on as an independent consultant. He is the author of the first Japanese language academic paper on European foreign labor, which appeared in the March 1973 issue of Gekkan Rodo Mondai. He is married to Ann Sado who runs her own business advising nonprofit organizations on diversity and inclusion issues, and has a son Akira from a previous marriage who is a practitioner of Oriental medicine.

# World Class Waste of Time and Money?

by DONALD KIRK

The “Singapore Summit” on June 12 may have been the most over-hyped event that I have ever made a pretense, at least, of “covering.” In post-summit analysis, journalism scholars should do a count of how many times the adjective “historic” showed up in stories before, during and/or after the event. Judging from the blitzkrieg of media coverage, the tete-a-tete between U.S. President Donald Trump and North Korea’s Kim Jong-un was about the most important happening in modern Korean history since the Korean War. Excitement in the run-up to the summit was infectious. For many of us the critical issue was getting accreditation for a media center in Singapore that some said would accommodate 5,000 or so correspondents from around the world.

A day or two before the deadline for applying for accreditation, CBS Radio, for which I’ve been filing intermittently from Korea for years, wrote the needed letter. Not only that, but CBS mentioned my name in the sixth paragraph of a press release, the subject line of which was “JEFF GLOR WILL LEAD CBS NEWS’ COVERAGE OF THE U.S.-NORTH KOREA SUMMIT FROM SINGAPORE.” Here’s what the release had to say about CBS’s stellar radio team: “On CBS News Radio, Glor will co-anchor CBS NEWS ON THE HOUR WITH JEFF GLOR (5:00 PM, ET) on Monday. CBS News Radio will have also special coverage from Steven Portnoy and Don Kirk



PHOTO BY KEVIN LIM/THE STRAIT TIMES

in Singapore; Lucy Craft in Tokyo; and Jason Strother in Soul (sic).”

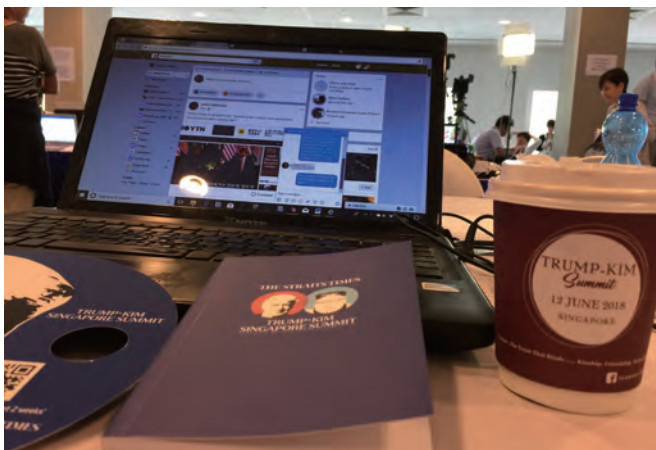
This event promised to be big time indeed. After having waited rather nervously for the response from Singapore, the email arrived the day before my departure. “We are pleased to inform you that you are now accredited for the DPRK-USA Singapore Summit,” said the supposedly crucial message. “Singapore’s Ministry of Communications and Information (MCI) is setting up an International Media Centre (IMC) for the Summit. **Only accredited media personnel will have access to the IMC**” – yes, that sentence was underlined, in bold.

Yay! I was in! At Incheon airport in Korea, waiting for the flight to Manila, I discovered

a number of colleagues also about to make the trip – a few of the journalistic hordes descending on Singapore. The taxi driver on the way in from Singapore’s Changi airport knew where to take me. The media center, as the accreditation message told me, was in F1 Pit Building, surely one of the most extraordinary places in which to corral the journalistic mob. F1 Pit, for the benefit of those who had no idea what on earth was F1, much less the allusion to “pit,” was a reference to the Formula 1 races held on the track in front of the drab, elongated concrete structure that serves all the needs of anyone and anything having to do with the races, including cars and drivers, officials and journalists. There are even stands on top for spectators.

Huge rooms on the third floor would be equipped “with about 2000 workstations available for use on a first-come-first-served basis,” said the accreditation message. Big screens would show “live’ footage of the media events,” it promised. “Free high speed wireless Internet access and refreshments will be provided.” Oh, and the IMC would “also house a Broadcast Centre operated by Mediacorp, the Host Broadcaster, including “Live feed distribution system; Live stand-up locations at various locations with connectivity; Media booths (4m by 3m) within the IMC; and Uplink and fibre delivery services.”

COURTESY ANDREW SALMON



Ready for action in the press center - with branded summit goodies on full display



There was no doubt about it. The Singapore authorities had it all figured out. Polite men and women, mostly from the communications ministry, were on hand to greet and assist us, give us media cards to drape around our necks and make sure we got every conceivable service the center had to offer. Never mind that the media card they issued me identified me with “Christian Broadcasting System” despite the letter that the manager of CBS Radio in New York had written on my behalf on CBS News letterhead and the application form I had filled out. There is indeed another CBS in Seoul - Christian Broadcasting System - for which some people keep thinking I work. Details, details. Nobody ever squinted at the fine print on my media card during my four days in Singapore.

Once I got the precious credential, however, the challenge was actually to “cover” the summit. The answer was, you don’t really. From the perspective of my room on the 44th floor of a hotel in the heart of Singapore, I could see F1 Pit, about a 20-minute walk away, and the monumental buildings soaring above what journalists liked to call “the small island city state.” The closest I got to covering anything, really, was a lengthy taxi ride across the bridge over the harbor to Sentosa Island the afternoon before Trump and Kim were to meet. Guards swarming around the entrance to the drive leading to the Capella Hotel, the venue for the summit, not in the least impressed by my “media” badge, waved us away. The Capella, my driver helpfully explained, is well hidden behind trees and shrubbery. I might even like to see it someday. The day before the summit was definitely not the time.

Now let’s see, what else was there for a correspondent to do - aside from watching all the talking heads showing up on BBC, CNN, Fox, MSNBC, Channel News Asia and a few others on my hotel TV? OK, boldly I ventured out again, this time to the St. Regis Hotel, where Kim and his entourage were lodged. Camera people were staked out as close as they could get to the lobby, blocked from getting inside. One of the guards made a pro forma effort at keeping me away but didn’t object too much when, pointing in the general direction of a small knot of people inside the lobby, I said I was meeting a friend and slipped inside. Not a total waste of time. Black-suited, grim-faced young men were seen getting on and off the elevators. There was no doubt where their loyalties lay. Every one of them had a North Korean pin on his lapel bearing the image of Kim Jong Un or his father Kim Jong Il or his grandfather, dynasty founder Kim Il Sung. None of them changed expression

or said a word when I murmured, “Ahn Yong Haseo,” Korean for “hello.”

I knew Kim was up there, around the twentieth floor. Maybe rehearsing what he would say to Trump the next day. After hanging around in the lobby for an hour or so, I walked up a charming tree-shaded street to the Shangri-La, ten minutes away, where Trump & Co. were booked. Nothing whatsoever was going on there, either. Maybe Trump also was rehearsing his lines. Next stop was back to F1 Pit, but an immense traffic jam was blocking the way. My driver finally figured out what was going on. Kim and his bodyguards were going out for their night on the town, on the way to Marina Bay where the cameras caught him smiling jovially, posing for a few shots - an hour or two that I got to see on TV once the traffic had cleared and I got inside the media center.

Those excursions outside my hotel were not a *total* waste of time. Next morning, on TV in my room, I saw the running coverage of Trump and Kim getting inside their vehicles, getting out, greeting one another, walking past the alternating US and DPRK flags inside the Capella, sitting down. At least I had gotten a first-hand glimpse of the route to Sentosa Island and thus had a sense of the scene. It was all a show that reached a climax when the two of them signed their “joint statement.” As I surfed the channels, talking heads were everywhere, flown in at the expense of the networks. Universally, they were shocked by the statement - shocked, as was I, by how little it said about anything. Had we all come to Singapore to watch on TV as these two bozos, defined by their distinct hairstyles, “committed to cooperate for the development of new US-DPRK relations and for the promotion of peace, prosperity, and the security of the Korean Peninsula and of the world”?

Not to worry. The reading and listening audience was mesmerized. The superstars flown out by CBS had more than they could handle. My job was to respond to calls from CBS stations asking for my view of the whole thing. Yakking on and on, I was the original “motor mouth,” not really knowing what the hell I was saying as the words rolled off my tongue into my Korean cell phone. Oh, and the day was far from over. The main outlet for my ruminations was the Daily Beast, whose foreign editor, Chris Dickey, a world traveler with years of experience working for Newsweek and writing books, had been taking my stuff since before the Pyeongchang Olympics. He had me filing every day while I was there, providing a much needed platform for whatever I was seeing, hearing, thinking.

The biggest challenge, on that summit day,



One reason the US chose Singapore as the summit loc was to impress KJU with the vision of a successful and prosperous Asian city. Singapore delivered.

was to figure out how to do everything at once. Not a member of the White House press corps or one of the privileged reps of the Korean and Singapore media, I missed a first-hand view of Trump in his rambling afternoon press conference but saw it all in the media center along with hundreds of others staring at the TV screens. But how could I file for Dickey while fielding all those calls from radio stations. At one stage, he messaged, “We are sliding from ETA to MIA, would really love to have your file,” to which I responded, in between calls, “writing madly....” It was a long day of TV-watching, yakking on air and, yes, writing and writing. (I was also filing for two or three others.)

Post-summit, the occasion was a tremendous let-down, but the media center was great. I learned how great it was when I discovered what everyone else had known - that the staff had an absolutely marvelous, gourmet-style buffet going every day down on the first floor. Sorry to say, I didn’t know about it until the day after the summit. I am basing my judgment on one terrific lunch, after which I repaired to the third floor, fed a last story to the Beast and retreated to my hotel for one final night. If I didn’t see much of Singapore I at least treated myself to one excursion to the hotel’s seventieth story bar, where a go-go dancer, swathed in tight-fitting swimsuit-like attire, could be seen swaying rhythmically on a stage overhead. The next day I was off, back to Seoul, exchanging war stories with the journalists who hadn’t gone there but had seen the same damn stuff on TV. Well, at least I had had the Singapore dateline.

● **Donald Kirk**, a member of the FCCJ in the 1970s and 1980s, has been reporting from Asia since the Vietnam War. He’s currently based in Seoul and Washington, reporting mainly for CBS Radio, the Daily Beast and Forbes Asia, among others.



# Don't Forget: Bookstores Have Souls, Too

by EIICHIRO TOKUMOTO

**A**t the time I started elementary school, I was completely unable to swim. On a summer day in 1970 my mother went to observe a physical education class at an elementary school in Kashima City, Saga Prefecture. There she found her first-grade son clinging to the side of the pool and wearing a frightened expression.

After talking things over with her father-in-law, she arranged for me to attend a swimming class. The class had been organized for elementary school students during their summer vacation. On the first day, the middle-aged male instructor looked down at me with a stern expression and asked, "You're the grandson of Lieutenant Tokumoto, aren't you?" Completely intimidated, I nodded affirmatively without speaking.

I was to learn afterward that the instructor

was a former sailor of the Imperial Japanese Navy. Thanks to his strict - some might say militaristic - training, I completed the course without mishaps and learned to swim. Was that stern-faced instructor one of those diehard militarists, or perhaps a follower of right-wing politics, nostalgic for the days of prewar nationalism?

Quite the contrary: Fujio Iwanaga was the operator of a small, family-owned bookstore called Kashima Shobo. At the front of his store, he had posted a sign proclaiming that "The beauty of knowledge is refined through reading." The store and the sign are still there - but faded, hard to see, like the rest of the surviving bricks-and-mortar bookstore industry in our wired world.

My grandfather, Eijiro Tokumoto, had been a career officer in the Japanese Navy whose posting when the war ended was Shanghai. After demobilization he settled

in Kashima, a quiet northern Kyushu city of around 30,000 people situated in the midst of rice fields and beside the Ariake Sea. There he started a rice mill.

Soon after the war's end, Iwanaga, my grandfather's subordinate in the Navy, opened a bookstore in the same town and, besides that day job, threw himself into civic betterment.

Thus the swimming classes. As Iwanaga's son Fujifusa recalls, "During the war my father had been a seaman on the Japanese battleship Kongo, which was torpedoed by an American submarine. After treading water frantically for twenty-four hours he was miraculously rescued by a friendly destroyer. He organized those swimming classes for the children of Kashima in the hope that it might help them survive any similar experience."

The Kongo was a large battleship displacing thirty thousand tons. It took part in such



campaigns as the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Before dawn on November 21, 1944, while it was off the coast of Taiwan en route to Japan, two torpedoes from the American submarine USS Sealion struck it, causing it to explode and sink, with a loss of some 1,300 lives. Only 237 of its crew, including Iwanaga, survived.

Iwanaga-san's concerns notwithstanding, up until now I have been fortunate enough not to have experienced a torpedo attack.

Meanwhile, for decades, he and his business were important in the lives of myself, my family and our fellow townspeople.

Fujifusa Iwanaga emphasizes the differences between his father's shop and those operated by large bookstore chains such as Kinokuniya and Sanseido. The founder of Kashima Shobo, he says, was more interested in public service than the bottom line. And part of what the store was about was spreading lore about Saga's history and illustrious people, via the bookshelves in a dedicated corner. "It attracted the interest of visitors from Tokyo," the younger Iwanaga says.

From the 1950s, at the time of the autumn festival at the Kinro Shrine in Kashima, the senior Iwanaga organized the town's children to carry an *omikoshi* - portable shrine. At one time he also served as a city councilman. Thus Kashima Shobo did not merely sell books but looked after the local community on a volunteer basis.

One recipient of Iwanaga's benevolence was my grandfather Eijiro. Around the time he started his rice mill, periodic food shortages were common. He was detained by the police and investigated on suspicion of illegally dealing in black-market rice. According to my grandmother, at that time Iwanaga sen Grandfather books to read while confined in a holding cell at the local police station. Pleased to be the object of Iwanaga's generosity my grandfather laconically remarked, "It was good to be able to enjoy some leisurely reading."

Fujio Iwanaga passed away in May 1972, but son Fujifusa continued to operate the store. From the latter part of the 1970s, I would hang out at Kashima Shobo on my way home from high school, occasionally purchasing the latest issues of *Playboy* and *Penthouse* magazines. "High school boys, fascinated by the sight of undraped female breasts, were surreptitiously buying magazines with nude photos," recalls Fujifusa with a chuckle. "I never gave it a second thought - figured it was an important part of children's education."

Eventually I was admitted to university and moved to Tokyo, where I stayed to pursue my journalistic career. In the years that followed, the environment affecting Kashima Shobo



was to change radically. According to the Saga branch of the Book Retailers Association, the number of supporting members in Saga Prefecture declined from a hundred and one shops in 2000 to just forty-four last year, and the number of towns with no book outlets at all has been increasing. Kashima Shobo, where customers once thronged, has become a quiet place.

The reason, in a nutshell, is the diversification of book sales channels. Large bookstore chains have opened outlets in newly opened shopping malls, and people can buy books and magazines any time of the day or night at convenience stores such as 7-Eleven and Lawson. Amazon has also been grabbing away customers, a phenomenon seen not only in Saga but throughout Japan, not to mention the entire world. To Iwanaga, Amazon's presence can be likened to yet another awesome

**“The existence of these shops is analogous to capillaries. They contribute significantly to sales of our paperback books, which cannot be made up for by Amazon or major bookstore chains. If these bookstores were to vanish, the publishing industry would be adversely affected.”**

attack from the U.S., this time abetted not by torpedoes from submarines but by the Microsoft Windows operating system.

In the spring of 2014, all of Saga's public high school students became the first in all of Japan's forty-seven prefectures to be required to use tablet computers running the Windows 8 OS, as part of its information and communication technology promotional program. Because such reference materials as Japanese-language and English-Japanese dictionaries were bundled with Windows, sales of printed dictionaries at Kashima Shobo plummeted.

"In the past, students would always drop in at the start of their new academic year to buy dictionaries, but that suddenly came to a stop," Fujifusa recalls.

As a survival strategy, the bookstores in Saga have requested that public libraries procure their books from stores in the prefecture rather than from Tokyo. Last autumn an editorial in the local Saga Shimbun newspaper made a reference to the so-called "Anti-Amazon Law" in France, which was passed in order to help independent bookstores compete against the large chains. Starting this academic year, dictionaries have been excluded from the table computers used in Saga.

Japan's major publishers are acutely aware of the disappearance of these small local bookshops. An editor at Shinchosha, one such publisher, remarked to me, "The existence of these shops is analogous to capillaries. They contribute significantly to sales of our paperback books, which cannot be made up for by Amazon or major bookstore chains. If these bookstores were to vanish, the publishing industry would be adversely affected."

I don't know if this situation spells doom for book shops in rural areas or not. I suppose some might see the concern I and others feel as irrational resistance to globalization and the changing times; or it might just be nostalgia on my part. In any case, Kashima Shobo stands out as one of the indelible memories of my hometown.

Kashima Shobo is still in business at the same location, and whenever I pay a visit I note how its atmosphere and various scents are unchanged. Among its wares on display are books that I have written. Whenever my mother stops by to purchase a copy, she recalls her young son's swimming lessons and performs a deferential bow to the current proprietor.

● **Eiichiro Tokumoto**, a former Reuters correspondent, is an author and investigative journalist.



# Mr. Smith Goes to Tokyo

PART  
4

by CHARLES SMITH

When Charles Smith arrived in Tokyo in 1973 as *Financial Times* bureau chief, he had no idea he would end up spending most of the rest of his life here. Reaching 80 and having been diagnosed with malignant lymphoma, he set about writing his memoirs. When he finished the project recently, Charles - still an enthusiastic FCCJ member after all those 45 years - consented to share with us some memories from the early years of a long and interesting career. The series began running in the April issue. On May 18 Charles died, at age 82. We are continuing to run installments. In this, the fourth, he recalls prime ministers of the 1970s.



KOJI SHIKI

In my later years with the *Financial Times* in Tokyo I became fascinated by the nitty-gritty world of constituency politics, but it took me time to penetrate the grass roots to that extent. In the meantime I focused mainly on the leaders - men with distinctive talents and personalities who took turns in what seemed to be a choreographed power struggle.

Being a member of the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan was especially important in the 1970s because in those days every actual or aspiring prime minister felt obliged to address the Club. I never missed these meetings and was grateful for the first hand insight into the personalities of Japan's leaders that I gained from them. But I failed to write one FCCJ story that became a legend. This happened in the dying days of Kakuei Tanaka's premiership.

The prime minister had suffered a series of reverses before he came to speak at the Club in October of 1974. His weak point seemed to be the touchingly simple belief that, at the upper levels of factional politics, power equalled money. There were other senior politicians who agreed that ready cash was important but who also cherished a sense of the boundary between patronage and corruption.

Tanaka's creed saw him through his first two years in office, but by 1974 I began to feel that something was wrong. The trouble seemed to start when he made a tour of Southeast Asia

without proposing any solutions to a massive trade imbalance in Japan's favor.

In mid-June Tanaka presided over what became known as a "money election" to the upper house of parliament, which the Liberal Democratic Party almost lost after the media discovered that some of his faction members were spending twenty to thirty times the legal limits of their campaign budgets. After the election debacle, Tanaka's factional rivals began quitting his cabinet one by one.

On October 9 a package - some sixty pages - of two minutely informed articles, one entitled "Tanaka, His Money and His Men," and the other, about his long-time secretary, "Lonely Queen of Etsuzankai: Aki Sato," appeared in a November special issue of *Bungei Shunju*, a reputable monthly magazine.

The mainstream Japanese media - the big daily newspapers and broadcast networks - for several weeks paid little attention to the magazine's revelations about Tanaka's second career as a real estate tycoon.

But when Tanaka visited the FCCJ on October 22 for what had become an almost obligatory appearance, the *Bungei Shunju* stories were the main focus of questions.

I was present at the FCCJ lunch and heard the PM being crudely insulted by an Eastern European reporter who happened to be moderating. Then came reporters' questions about the *Bungei Shunju* articles. Tanaka wouldn't,

or couldn't, take it. He left the Club in obvious anger and distress well before the meeting's scheduled finishing time.

Japanese reporters overcame their hesitation after that day and began questioning Tanaka. His retirement from office came shortly afterwards.

It wasn't until much later that I came to believe that the FCCJ episode was part of a long running drama involving four bitterly divided LDP leaders: Tanaka; Takeo Fukuda; Masayoshi Ohira; and one regular side-changer, Yasuhiro Nakasone. Among the four I may seem to have singled out Tanaka for special criticism, but I now believe that Tanaka was one who could have changed the all-too-even course of Japanese politics.

Tanaka was not part of the Tokyo educational elite, and lacked the merit of belonging to a celebrated political family. But I believe the graduate of an industrial training technological college in provincial Niigata may have had a more comprehensive view of Japan's problems and possibilities than a star pupil of Tokyo University's law school.

It was Tanaka, not Fukuda, who saw that Japan's long term hopes of maintaining social and economic health would require spreading growth outside the world's largest city. His Archipelago Plan fell victim to the oil shock and probably wasn't helped by some careless presentation. But by the early decades of the twenty-first century, the oppressive magnetism of Tokyo for rural Japan had begun to seem a major problem.

Tanaka was indicted in 1976 for receiving a payment of ¥500 million from Lockheed Aircraft Corporation, allegedly in return for influencing an aircraft purchase. A Tokyo court in 1983 convicted him of violation of foreign exchange control laws and sentenced him to imprisonment. He appealed and managed to stay free until his death in 1993.

He had been expelled from the LDP after the indictment, yet he was still the leader of the party's largest faction. The disaster seemed to open a remarkable new phase in his career. His wealth and his sensitivity to local economic issues made him overwhelmingly the top vote winner in his own prefecture during two successive elections.

For several years a man whose support was needed to determine the leadership of the ruling political party was not a party member.

Tanaka wasn't an expert solely on the claims of Tokyo versus the rest of Japan. Partly because he had not received a political inheritance, he seemed to be free of the war nostalgia that tended to surface in the thoughts of rivals.

Conversely, the man from Niigata sometimes seemed to go off on a tangent. This struck me in September 1974 when he spoke to a small gathering of European reporters about an approaching trip to Europe (his first and only one as prime minister). The issues then included a serious bilateral trade imbalance, disputed exchange rates, and how the two sides saw relations with the United States.

Tanaka's theme, as I remember it, was that visiting Europe would give him the chance to see a number of famous structures - bridges, viaducts, causeways - that he knew of from his early civil engineering experience in Niigata. It was one of several occasions in the 1970s and '80s when I felt that Japanese PMs had personal interests that sometimes cut across or even overrode their concerns as politicians.

If Japanese politics was a tapestry of many colors and weaves there were, of course, other threads that stood out. While Tanaka was a self-made original, many LDP leaders owed their reputations and their party leverage to their descent from famous leaders of the past. Sons often succeeded fathers in the same constituencies; a great name was a sure way to get somewhere in a faction. But money wasn't crucial. There were two important skills that also helped: versatility and personality.

Masayoshi Ohira, prime minister from December 1978 until his death from a heart attack in June 1980, was the first Japanese head of government to grasp that Japan's direct taxation system, inherited from the United States, suffered from overreliance on personal and corporate income taxes. This had become clear from 1975 onwards as slower economic growth had begun to reduce tax yields. The direct/indirect imbalance eventually helped to create what came to seem an open-ended rise in Japan's public debt.

Ohira's solution, probably inspired by purse-conscious bureaucrats at the Ministry of Finance, was to introduce a European-style value-added tax that would levy a small percentage charge on all sales transactions. It was a good idea, but Ohira also became the first of a succession of prime ministers to show how not to do it, politically.

A VAT proposal was included in the platform for what had looked like a safe parliamentary election called by the PM in November 1979, but the LDP managed only a bare victory and the unpopular VAT idea had to be scrapped. Ohira may have made the mistake of assuming that the best way to cross a political chasm is to call a "can't lose" general election.

His standing inside the LDP never quite recovered from this setback. The Ohira who

held on for six months as prime minister after November 1979 was a shadow of the man who had defeated Fukuda in a party leadership vote in 1978. But he never lost the signature smile that may have helped him win the leadership. We discovered this one day at the Club when Umar Kahn-Yousufzai ("Doctor" Kahn to us, because he held an advanced degree in chemistry), a Pakistani reporter known for his slightly off-beat queries, asked the PM why the LDP did not recruit more talented ladies to become members of parliament.

The question gave Ohira an opening. "Actually it's not just the ladies who have talents," said the PM. "We all need them to stay in business, and mine is my smile." The smile that followed was apparently spontaneous yet brilliantly professional. For me it was my last opportunity to see one of Japan's more attractive leaders scoring a friendly point from an inquisitive foreign press.

Before I leave the subject of prime ministerial versatility I want to add a word about Yasuhiro Nakasone. Before serving in the Imperial Navy near the end of the World War II he had been an official in the *Naimusho* (Ministry of Home Affairs), the pre-1945 intellectual and administrative headquarters of the Japanese militarist state.

That record might have raised worries about his pacifist credentials, and Nakasone was indeed a nationalist with a right wing bias. But he was also one who knew how to sell himself. I saw him in action on three occasions, twice during interviews with editors and finally when he graced a farewell party for foreign reporters just before he stepped down after five years as prime minister.

During the second of these meetings, an interview with an American editor, I thought I saw the PM personifying Abraham Lincoln. He was seated upright with his arms stretched out on the wings of a presidential chair while he gravely assured us that Japan would never again be involved in conflict outside its borders and would never spend more than one percent of its Gross Domestic Product on defense.

On the third and last time, I watched Nakasone fling an affectionate arm over the shoulders of Dr. Kahn in a gesture that seemed to say, "We are comrades and we are all in this together." If I had been asked which of those performances was the real Nakasone, I could not have answered. I was reminded of having watched a famous British actor giving brilliant renderings of a number of Shakespearean characters in a solo act in London. Nakasone's "Lincoln" and his greeting to Dr. Kahn both seemed to me to be the real, spontaneous, thing.



Feature

# Coming Attraction: Kim Jong-un on Wall Street

by ANTHONY ROWLEY



SHUTTERSTOCK

## BREAKING NEWS

(Pyongyang, August 1, 2020) Pyongyang stocks closed higher on news that North Korean “B” shares are to be listed on the Seoul Stock exchange and that a raft of recently issued North Korea mutual funds are proving popular. Investors have been beating a path to Pyongyang’s door lately.

Speaking on the trading floor of the Pyongyang Stock Exchange, Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un recalled a sentiment often attributed to the late Chinese paramount leader Deng Xiaoping: “To get rich is glorious.” Socialism “with North Korean characteristics,” Kim boasted, “can give capitalism a run for its money any day.”



**T**he news item on the left page is fiction, for now, but the day when North Korea opens its mineral-resource rich economy to an outside world that is eager also to tap into the country's cheap and well educated labor pool and its potential for joining global supply chains may not be too distant given recent developments.

Some see North Korea as the next big thing for investors now that the Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un summit in Singapore has ended with a walkabout (rather than a walkout) by the two leaders. Denuclearization may be some way off yet but outside interest in the economic potential of North Korea is rising.

The general verdict on the extraordinary Singapore summit (from "war war" to "jaw jaw" within the space of a few months) is that there is still a way to go before it can be said that Trump's art of the deal has paid off. But the economic and financial implications of the summit are more immediate.

Unless there is a reversal of the Singapore agreement (not impossible, given the volatile nature of the two summiteers) the emphasis now in Pyongyang and Seoul will be on economic as well as military matters. Kim Jong-un has emphasized his desire to modernize North Korea's economy but he cannot afford to do so alone.

Nor will South Korea be able to pick up the tab in the same way that West Germany did for East Germany several decades ago when the two halves of the divided nation were reunified. Outside aid and investment - a great deal of it - will be needed from governments, multilateral agencies and private investors.

Providers of bilateral official aid, in addition to South Korea, will include China, Japan and maybe the United States and European countries. Multilateral aid, too, will flow in time. But the more intriguing question is how private investment - whether of a business or portfolio nature - will flow into the hermit kingdom.

Fund managers, who usually like to be ahead of the game, will likely approach investment in North Korea initially via an indirect route - targeting stocks of outside companies that are likely to be doing more business with North Korea as, presumably, the denuclearization process begins to unwind.

South Korea's Hyundai, already involved in cross-border ventures with the North, along with other South Korean *chaebol* - industrial conglomerates - will very likely attract fund manager interest in coming months, as will Japanese giants like Mitsubishi Heavy Industries or construction giant Komatsu, not to mention listed Chinese enterprises.

It would not be surprising if, in addition, investment houses should start churning out Korea Funds - not of the kind that proliferated in the 1980s and

early 1990s to invest in South Korea's export boom but new ones designed to capitalize on the prospective opening up of the North Korean economy.

In the same way that North Korea's economic development from here on is likely to reflect the Chinese model of foreign company-invested special zones, so the evolution of portfolio investor exposure to the North could mirror the Chinese model of "A" and "B" shares - the latter being listed in Seoul and elsewhere.

There are myriad potential opportunities in North Korea for outside investors. Apart from a vast need for new infrastructure in the form of highways railroads, energy and communication networks, etc. - all of which suggest opportunities for foreign contractors and suppliers - North Korea is rich in minerals.

The country's mountain ranges conceal not only nuclear testing sites but also, according to some estimates, 200 varieties of minerals, including gold, iron, copper, zinc, magnesite, limestone, tungsten, and graphite. Some of these stocks are said to be among the largest in the world, with a total value of perhaps up to US\$10 trillion.

As it happens, that is perhaps around the same sum of money that it will require to modernize North Korea's economy and bring it onto a par with that of the much more highly developed economy of South Korea. And, exploiting this vast mineral wealth will obviously require foreign finance and technology.

As Jesper Koll, head of investment house Wisdom Tree, Japan, in Tokyo, has noted, "As North Korea prepares to emerge slowly but surely from decades of isolation, an enormous potential investment opportunity is about to unfold." Japan for one has the wherewithal to benefit from this, if only its political relations with Pyongyang can be strengthened.

The reason why North Koreans cannot turn to their cousins in the South of the country to take care of the cost of economic modernization, in the same way that that the East Germans were able to from their West German counterparts is a matter of scale, as Koll has pointed out.

East Germany's modernization required some \$2 trillion of public sector support and \$3 trillion of private sector investment, mainly from West Germany. That was doable in terms of the relative size of the two economies. North Korea could require up to \$10 trillion of investment - way beyond the ability of South Korea alone to provide.

It is by no means beyond the resources of China and Japan, acting together with South Korea, however, not to mention potential US and European investment. Then there are the multilateral institutions - the World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank, etc. - once Pyongyang shows serious interest in joining those bodies.

**There are myriad potential opportunities in North Korea for outside investors. Apart from a vast need for new infrastructure in the form of highways railroads, energy and communication networks, etc. - all of which suggest opportunities for foreign contractors and suppliers - North Korea is rich in minerals**

● **Anthony Rowley** is a former Business Editor and International Finance Editor of the Hong Kong-based *Far Eastern Economic Review* and has spent some 40 years writing on Asian affairs from Singapore, Hong Kong and Tokyo. He currently writes for the *Singapore Business Times*, among other publications.



## Marcus Fishenden

### The FCCJ's New General Manager

by HARUKO WATANABE

In April, after half a year without top management, the Club hired as General Manager Marcus Fishenden, a 51-year-old Canadian resort and hospitality industry veteran. Marcus was formerly the director of operations in Asia for Troon, the world's largest golf course management, development and marketing company. He later worked as second in command at Acordia, Japan's biggest golf resort development and managing company.

Marcus has enjoyed a very versatile athletic and international life since his childhood in the small village of Revelstoke, British Columbia, which is now considered a sanctuary of snow sports in Canada. As a boy, he enthusiastically challenged rock and ice climbing and skiing. He still wryly recalls watching ten inches of snow accumulate on the edge of the window by the couch where he rested while a broken leg mended. But above all sports, fishing remains Marcus's life-long hobby and passion.

His relationship with Japan started during his high school days. In 1985 he won a Rotary Club Student Exchange Scholarship and studied at Mitsuda High School in Kure City, Hiroshima. Upon graduating from the University of British Columbia, he joined Troon. For that company the young Marcus took part in projects ranging from land reclamation to the establishment of

country clubs and commercial and residential districts in Hong Kong, Vietnam, China and other Asian countries.

His job experience includes consultations and negotiations with contractors and government agencies and with financial institutions such as HSBC, Goldman Sachs and Deutsche Bank. He learned the hard way in how to deal with delinquent accounts.

In Hong Kong, his major commitment was to develop 410 acres of an eighteen-hole golf course landscaped by Nicklaus design and a residential area. He brought an American school to the project to meet the needs of prospective residents.

Fifteen years after his Hiroshima stay, in 2000, Marcus Fishenden returned to Japan.

He administered and managed more than a hundred golf courses, with hotels and restaurants, of Acordia Golf Company in Japan as number two in the company's management.

"Number two works harder than number one," he said. "People misunderstand me as a *kuromaku* (wire-puller) because I do not seek the number one position. But what I want is privacy rather than unnecessary publicity."

Press Club is scheduled to move from the present Yurakucho Denki Bldg. to the New Fuji Building in Nakadori in mid October. Major furniture and interior designs have been completed already but Marcus's decision to introduce temperature controlled food carts and changes

of floor layout leading from the bar to the dining room are the touch of a professional, which no architects had suggested.

Khalidon Azhari, President of the FCCJ, said, "All the Board and the Human Resources Committee members agreed Marcus was the best choice among ten candidates."

A young journalist praised him, saying, "His friendly smile is a complete presentation of hospitality."

Of course, the board may change with the annual election - and journalists often prefer to criticize rather than to develop employees. Besides, the salary levels of a public interest press organization are much lower than those of golf course developers. Fishenden's motivation to work for the Club is a mystery to many members.

When Marcus heard about the job opening at the Press Club, he said, he thought about renovation of management and infrastructural changes. "Let FCCJ shine again!" To achieve that goal, he wants to appeal to younger and digital journalists in addition to traditional print, television and radio groups.

Although he prefers not to talk about himself, some FCCJ members and employees observe that his welcoming facial expression and his imposing figure (he's 190 cm. tall) symbolize the social status and professionalism of the Press Club. They are already impressed by him even before completion of his three month probation.

As a fishing enthusiast, he boasted, his biggest catch was his Japanese wife, a 178 cm tall former Waseda University volleyball player he met in Hong Kong. They have a nine-year-old girl and a six-year-old boy. "I hope she would never change her spectacles - or else she would find all my faults." He whispered, with his usual smile.

Marcus-san gambatte!

● **Haruko Watanabe** started working for the *Mainichi* as a student contributor. Upon receiving her master's degree from the University of Missouri in 1964, she joined the *Chicago Sun-Times*. Later she was Tokyo bureau chief for the Press Foundation of Asia. In 1976 she produced the path-breaking video *Women Pioneers*. During the 1980s and '90s she worked on United Nations women's conferences. She trained Japanese, other Asian and African journalists as UNESCO media development consultant and lecturer at Sophia University. Haruko-san joined the FCCJ in 1981 and has served on the board as vice president, director and *kanji*. She is the Special Projects Committee chair and a life member.



# An Appreciation: Susumu Awanohara, 1945-2018

by TRACY DAHLBY

**S**usumu Awanohara, by a long shot, didn't fit the image of the impulsive, daredevil foreign correspondent you see in Hollywood movies. Susumu was a big-hearted, beautifully rumped man, who observed the world from behind smudged glasses, his incisive mind working to crack its puzzles with the instincts of a great detective.

A respected former denizen of the FCCJ, Susumu spent two decades covering Asia and its role in global affairs for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, alternating between editing turns in the Hong Kong newsroom and bureau chief postings in Tokyo and Jakarta in the 1970s and Singapore and Washington in the 1980s and '90s.

Armed with a Ph.D. in economics from Yale University (and an undergraduate degree from Tokyo University), Susumu immersed himself in transformative, large-canvas stories. What would China's economic awakening mean for the world? How would rising economies in Southeast Asia alter the face of business and politics? Whither sprawling, complicated Indonesia? A dogged field reporter with a knack for languages, Susumu loved to repair to a desk strewn with newspapers and reference books and tease out clues to the shape of things to come.

In the mid-1990s, Susumu embarked on a second career as a financial policy maven. After a stint at the Nikko Research Center in Washington, he moved to a New York job as analyst of Asian business and economic trends for Medley Global Advisors. He lived in Manhattan's East Village with his wife, Mary-Lea Cox. He had been retired for several years when he died of pancreatic cancer at Calvary Hospital in the Bronx on June 11, at 72. In addition to Mary-Lea, he is survived by children from a former marriage: son Gen (and Gen's wife Meagan) and daughters Mika and Yuri; two grandchildren, Max and Elle Awanohara; an older brother, Kan Awanohara; a nephew and two nieces; and many friends across the globe.

My own debt to Susumu is profound. In 1976, when he opened the Review's first stand-alone Tokyo bureau in the Nikkei Shimbun's infamous "Gaijin Ghetto," he hired me as his back-up reporter. New to journalism, I knew neither how to do it nor why it was



done. Susumu pulled double duty teaching me the craft. He showed me how to block a story and fashion those pesky ledes and nut grafs. He also taught me that a good reporter covers not just the "what" of the news but also the "why"—and is a tireless student of any beat, inhaling its history, politics and the intricacies of its social fabric.

Susumu was expert in looking out for his friends. When the Review asked Bradley Martin, then of the *Baltimore Sun*, to replace Susumu as Jakarta bureau chief, Susumu advised him not to come — Jakarta was no place to take a wife who was recovering from a serious illness. "Besides being one of the best-educated journalists I've ever met," said former Review colleague Mike Tharp, "Susumu was one of the nicest ... not in a saccharine sense ... but in caring about people both individually and in sum."

If Susumu covered Asia at a transformative time, he was born into a turbulent one — August 1945, in Japanese-held Manchuria. His maternal grandfather, Tsutomu Nishiyama, had been serving as president of the Central Bank of Manchou. With Japan's defeat, the Russian army swarmed across northern China. In the chaos, Susumu and his twin brother, Shinji, were spirited back to Japan, where Shinji soon died of malnutrition. The dramatic circumstances of Susumu's birth contributed to his desire to get to know Asia, in all its complexities.

Susumu was a man of charming eccentricities who modeled himself after the artfully fumbling 1970s TV detective Columbo. A Medley Advisors colleague fondly recalls him carrying a hardboiled egg in his suit pocket; he won office prizes for "most bad hair days" for his prodigiously spiky mop. Yet his unflappable, cerebral demeanor also masked a courageous spirit. When right-wing extremists phoned in threats to the Tokyo bureau over a Review cover of Emperor Hirohito, Susumu didn't flinch.

Former Review editor-in-chief Philip Bowring recalls a hard trek through Kalimantan in the early 1980s with Susumu's "relaxed good humor overcoming innumerable obstacles." When the two were ready to fly on to Manado in Sulawesi, "the plane we were supposed to take crashed on landing at Balikpapan and after three days waiting in vain for a relief plane we had to return to Jakarta. Susumu kept me sane and smiling."

On a visit to Susumu's hospice in the Bronx, a pilgrimage other Review alumni made, as well, he and I reviewed the magazine's gallery of memorable characters for a last time and traded a few laughs and barbs. Mary-Lea, watching us from across the room, said it best: "There will never be another Susumu."

● **Tracy Dahlby**, a former FCCJ member, reported from Tokyo in the 1970s and 1980s for the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, *The Washington Post* and *Newsweek*, respectively. He now teaches journalism at the University of Texas at Austin.



# Land of Clouds

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