

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

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The
Foreign Correspondents' Club
of Japan

TOKYO 1964

The 50th anniversary of the city's previous games

+

Seeing stars: behind the sale of a Tokyo bank
Grammar standards: dictation vs the real world
Kazuo Kobayashi profiled



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Cover photograph: Gymnasts perform in the opening ceremony of the Tokyo Olympics, 1964. (AP Photo/MC)

From the President



WHILE THE DAYS ARE heating up, so is interest in our speaker events. We've expanded our options, partly to improve and enhance our membership benefits. But more importantly, we have done this to reflect the growing international interest in Japan-related topics (and help quell concerns the FCCJ just doesn't pull 'em in anymore).

Along with our press luncheons and press conferences, we're now offering monthly morning "Asa-kai" talks; evening political roundtables; study sessions; and the

"Women Speak" series. All have been attracting wide audiences.

Though July has been a relatively quiet month the past few years, our PAC speakers this year included Chief Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, who pulled in 162 attendees and coverage from 17 TV stations, and other high profilers like Justice Minister Sadakazu Tanigaki and Masako Mori, Minister for Declining Birthrate and Gender Equality.

The Political Roundtable on July 3 with Unity Party member Tsuyoshi Shiina and Professor Christopher Hobson of Waseda University was also well received. To top off a month on the political front, Tokyo Governor Yoichi Masuzoe made his third Club appearance of the year.

Among business movers and shakers, Nissan CEO Carlos Ghosn graced our podium on July 17 after a four-year lull and numerous invitations from our hardworking PAC team. His talk on Nissan's self-driving cars pulled in 151 attendees and seven TV stations.

The business of crowdsourcing was one of our new study session topics featuring three compelling entrepreneurs. The typhoon warning that night had to be a big factor for the disappointingly small turnout, but we're sure that offering evening study sessions is a smart idea. The smaller scale events allow our members and guests closer contact with speakers on a wide variety of topics.

Business topics have been a focus of our Asa-kai talks, some drawing up to 60 attendees. Our July speaker was Dr. Gerhard Fasol, CEO of Eurotechnology Japan, who shared his entrepreneurial expertise on ways "to make Japan even more fantastic." It was hard-hitting analysis, and a reality check for some. Hard-hitting analysis also reigned during our "Women Speak" talk with Kathy Matsui, Chief Japan Equity Strategist with Goldman Sachs, who shared her recently released report: "Womenomics 4.0: Time to Walk the Talk." Also in the "Women Speak" July spotlight were top women educators - University of Tokyo Director Masako Egawa, Hosei University President Yuko Tanaka, and Kayo Inaba, vice president for Gender Equality and director of the Center for Women Researchers at Kyoto University.

Kazue Morisono and Saeko Uno from the organization, "Women of Fukushima Demand an End to Nuclear Power" drew a crowd of about 30. But their video on the FCCJ's YouTube channel has received over 15,200 views, probably our largest number of viewers to date. Proof again of a small organization using the Internet to reach an unimaginable number of potential supporters. That is power.

On the powerful diplomatic front, Waleed Ali Siam, Palestine's Ambassador to Japan, spoke about his country's searing conflict with Israel in Gaza. While Japan is not directly involved, one wonders how the recent "re-interpretation" of the Constitution's war-renouncing Article 9 would play out if Japan were asked to assist in a future conflict.

Democratic Party lawmaker Hiroyuki Konishi and four other politicians spoke about their efforts to nominate Article 9 for the Nobel Peace Prize. The Norwegian Nobel Committee has received 278 candidates for the 2014 Peace Prize - the highest number ever. We'll learn in October when the laureates are announced. Could this be Abe's game changer?

And that was July at the FCCJ. So much for somnolent summers.

— Lucy Birmingham

RE/PRINT

SHINJUKU MAN: SUICIDE, THE STATE AND THE MEDIA

by PHILIP BRASOR

UNTIL THE GREAT EAST Japan Earthquake, social media didn't have much purchase on Japanese life. But disasters are transformative, and social media came into its own after the tsunami and meltdown. People wanted to know what was going on, and the newspapers and TV weren't supplying them with information as quickly and straightforwardly as they wanted.

When a besuited middle-aged man set himself ablaze on a pedestrian overpass outside Shinjuku Station on June 29, there were no reporters or camera crews on hand, but there were thousands of witnesses, many with mobile devices. By the time the national newspapers reported it on their websites several hours later, people online had already seen raw video of the incident from every conceivable angle. The newspapers' sketchy web reports and the cautious TV bulletins seemed inconsequential in contrast. Except for the *Asahi* and *Sankei* papers, all mentioned that the unidentified man protested Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's plan to allow Japan's Self-Defense Forces to participate in collective self defense (CDF) despite Article 9 of the Constitution, but they didn't elaborate.

That evening, social media were abuzz with talk of why the press was not treating the story with the gravity it deserved. A man had set himself on fire in one of the busiest public places in the world. Wasn't it news? Many suspected that the media didn't want to publicize what appeared to be a political act, but most did report it, and the next morning all the "wide shows" covered the incident fully, even the political angle, in a manner some might find sensational. But there was one gaping hole in the coverage: NHK, the nation's public broadcaster, didn't mention the incident on its news programs that night or the next day.

Some who consider NHK to be the propaganda arm of the government said the anti-militarization component of the story made NHK nervous. But others believed the broadcaster's restraint had more to do with self-imposed guidelines regarding the reporting of suicides. Since 2000, the World Health Organization has been urging media outlets throughout the world not to cover suicides in a sensational manner and not to air or publish related death scenes or suicide notes, because troubled individuals are sometimes pushed over the edge when these stories become news. NHK may have felt a responsibility to hold back on the story.

In his *Independent Web Journal*, reporter Yasumi Iwakami rejects this theory, pointing out that NHK does cover suicides, including the recent



Police watch the unknown man address people in Shinjuku before his self-immolation. Photo courtesy of Instagram user "ywrg"

case of a policeman in Fukushima. What made that story newsworthy and the Shinjuku incident off-limits? A number of people on Twitter have said that the man in Shinjuku, who survived, may be mentally ill, so it would be unethical to report on his situation. This argument takes for granted the notion that a person not in his right mind is incapable of rational thought, so his reason for setting himself on fire was not newsworthy.

Iwakami claims that NHK "admitted" to holding back on the story for political reasons, but he provides no attribution and there is no other available source for the claim. He describes NHK, perhaps facetiously, as being a "state broadcaster" (*kokuei hoso*) rather than a "public broadcaster" (*kokkyo hoso*). According to *Tokyo Shimbun*, NHK does not publicly discuss how it determines news coverage. In any event, the broadcaster's decision to not air the story can't help but be political. According to the *Chunichi Shimbun*, the man climbed up on the pedestrian overpass at Shinjuku Station's south exit with two containers of flammable liquid and talked for more than an hour about how Japan had enjoyed 70 years of peace thanks to Article 9 and how politics should be kept out of education. Then he quoted Akiko Yosano's antiwar poem, "Don't Lay Down Your Life." When police and

firemen tried to bring him down, he set himself on fire.

The man's psychological state, however empirically you assess it, becomes incidental at this point. He chose to draw attention to his statement in the most shocking way imaginable. Symbolism was paramount. Many foreign media, such as Reuters, picked up the story as an international news item and used it as a means of explaining the Abe administration's decision on CDF. Other foreign media outlets, such as AP, mentioned that while suicide is relatively common in Japan, suicide for political reasons is rare, and cited novelist Yukio Mishima's suicide in 1970 after a failed coup attempt as the most famous example.

But Mishima killed himself the old-fashioned way, by means of ritual disembowelment, not with fire. We associate self-immolation with spiritual-minded martyrs in Vietnam and Tibet protesting oppressive regimes. The Shinjuku man may indeed have been mentally ill. As of this writing he is still in the hospital, and though his name has not been revealed, several media have reported that he is in his 60s, unemployed, and lives alone in an apartment along the JR Saikyo Line. *Tokyo Shimbun* quoted a neighbor as saying he keeps to himself. But whatever his state of mind, it's safe to assume he knew what he was doing: By staging his demise in one of the most public places in the world, the symbolism would have its intended effect, even if it wasn't covered by the mass media, because now there are other ways to spread news.

It's impossible to measure what effect the act had on the consciousness of his fellow Japanese, but it didn't stop the Abe Cabinet from authorizing CDF. By all rights the story is over, but this sort of incident can take on a life of its own. Thich Quang Duc set himself on fire in Saigon in 1963 to condemn the persecution of Buddhists by the government of Ngo Dinh Diem, but that demonstration subsequently became a powerful symbol with regard to America's involvement in the Vietnam War. Only time will tell if the Shinjuku man's act will take on a similar meaning, but for what it's worth, Akiko Yosano's poem has gone viral. ①

Philip Brasor is a freelance writer who lives in Chiba Prefecture. This article first appeared in the *Japan Times*.



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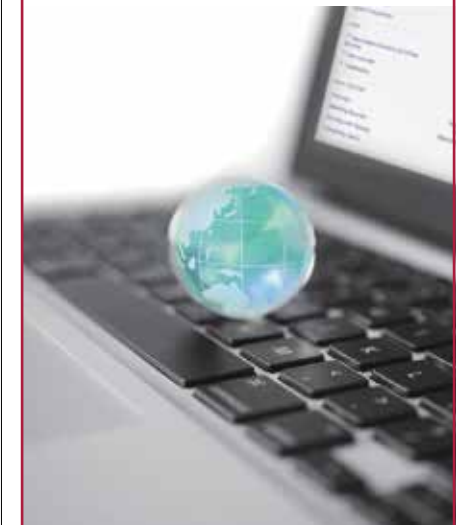
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TOKYO GAMES

The 1964 Summer Olympics changed the landscape and the very soul of Tokyo. Will the 2020 version have the same impact?

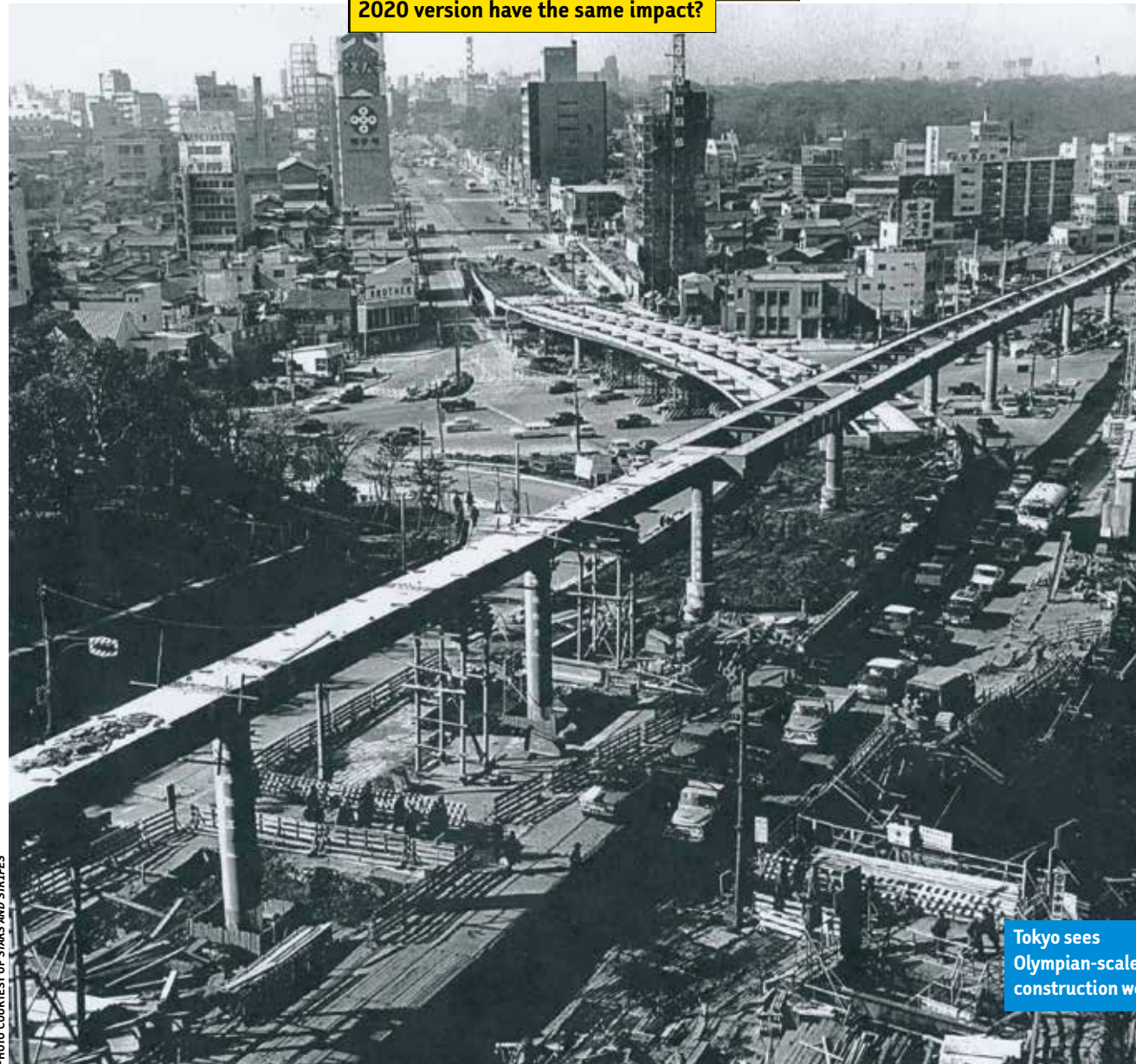


PHOTO COURTESY OF STARS AND STRIPES

Tokyo sees Olympian-scale construction work

by Mary Corbett

The 1964 Olympics, Japan's startling return to the world's center stage after the devastation of defeat, celebrates its 50th anniversary this October. Though it was already a favorite hub for many foreign correspondents in 1959, when the host city was selected, the choice of the war-scarred, ramshackle megalopolis over Detroit, Brussels and Vienna struck

many as the height of folly, comparable today to picking Qatar as a summer venue for the FIFA World Cup.

Though Tokyo boasted a population of nine million people at the time and was still growing, little more than 20 percent of its residents enjoyed the luxuries of flush toilets, the rest having to be serviced by the ubiquitous "honey trucks" of old *gaijin* lore.

Add to that the dearth of English speakers, the lack of hot water, the bad roads, few hotel rooms – and it's no wonder that foreign observers on the ground were scratching their heads over the IOC's overwhelming vote of confidence in Japan's ability to pull off what would have to be the most dramatic urban transformation in Asian, perhaps world, history.

Hours after the IOC's announcement on May 26, 1959, the Olympic flag was raised in Tokyo, heralding the start of the metamorphosis that turned the ancient city into a gargantuan 24/7 construction site for the next five years. FCCJ members and cohorts were front row witnesses to the unfolding drama.

First off the block was the official return to Japan of the Washington Heights property, a 920,000-square-meter U.S. military-housing complex, to make way for the building of the Olympic Athlete Village. Today the land has become part of Yoyogi Park and the NHK headquarters complex. Its return certainly served to deepen Japan/U.S. friendship, but must have also been a great relief for some to see the barbarians at the gates of Meiji Shrine finally decamp. Other land was set aside all across Tokyo for the new Shuto Expressway, Monorail, new rail lines and stations.

Then construction went into immediate hyper-overdrive.



BOB WHITING ARRIVED IN Japan just as noise and air pollution levels were hitting historic heights, and recalls his surprise at seeing oxygen cylinders being sold in vending machines, people overcome by the fumes and electronic boards around the Ginza announcing not only time and temperature, but off-the-charts carbon monoxide and sulphur dioxide readings.

Many recall the buzz and energy of the time and the excitement of the collective wave of anticipation. But it couldn't have been much fun for residents who lived over, under, and through those birthing pains. Imagine Akasaka as one of the frenetic hubs of a New Japan in the making. Shuto Expressway going up overhead, infrastructure works beneath. Drills, car horns, blazing lights and action all through the night – every night.

Yonetaro Otani watched the urban miracle unfold from his home on the hill, an old samurai mansion with magnificent gardens and moat, which he then converted into the dazzling New Otani Hotel – joining the construction rush of the Okura, Hilton and Prince hotels in anticipation of 30,000 foreign visitors. With less than two years to go before the Olympic opening, logistics must have been difficult enough without Mr. Otani deciding after the start of construction that he wanted to add a revolving restaurant on top. His wish that every diner would have a chance to see Mt. Fuji was fortunately realized, though at great effort and additional expense, and the Blue Sky Lounge became an instant landmark. Also

helping to meet construction deadlines was the revolutionary all-in-one "unit bathrooms" – 1,085 of which were lifted into place by crane. The finished hotel was a virtual metaphor for overcoming obstacles once thought insurmountable.

Club stalwart Ichiro Urushibara, born in England to a father who had originally travelled to London for the Great Japan Exhibition of 1910, had been forcibly repatriated to Tokyo in 1940 after Japan signed the treaty with Nazi Germany. It felt like cruel fate at the time, but by the 60s, he was a pioneer bilingual radio broadcaster. He can still remember the hopeless congestion and noise on the roads as he drove from studio to studio. It didn't help that parking lots were still rare.

Learning English had become a national mission, and for one of his many hit radio programs at Bunka Hoso, Urushibara penned a "phrase of the day" six days a week to accompany the countdown to the opening of the Tokyo Olympics. He even appeared in a U.S. television commercial for Schlitz beer – in which popular American sports commentator Tom Harmon expressed great relief that Schlitz was available in Japan, as Urushibara's elegant wife, Yuko, made a guest appearance in her kimono, dutifully delivering the cold brew. Never mind that Schlitz wasn't available in Tokyo and they had to put a Schlitz label on a Kirin beer for the scene.

Suddenly, everyone wanted to be seen here, even as the benevolent local bureaucracy found it necessary to ask residents to "Please refrain from urinating on the streets," or "Do not go to the new Haneda Airport in pajamas and *haramaki*," in order not to give visitors a negative impression of Japan.

The total cost of the 1964 Olympics was estimated to be 10 times that of the Rome games in 1960, and that didn't include most of the Shinkansen construction cost. Five days before the opening, *Sports Illustrated* magazine highlighted some issues that remained even after an estimated \$1.9 billion had been spent to "dress up ugly old Tokyo."

There are 26,753 cab drivers ready to solve the insanities of the Tokyo address system for English-speaking visitors – house No. 14 might be next to house No. 13, but it also might be next to house No. 36. Twenty of the 26,753 cab drivers speak English. . . . In Tokyo, some 6,600 athletes will be housed at the Olympic Village, which cost more to build and renovate than was spent on the first nine Olympics together."

Many think the actual total cost was even higher, equivalent to the nation's annual

budget, but few would debate the spectacular success of the newly democratic Japan's postwar debut: the world landed at the dazzlingly refurbished Haneda Airport, to a landscape featuring a futuristic monorail (mysteriously dead-ending in Hamamatsu-cho), Tokyo Tower (completed in 1958), Tange's architectural masterpieces, and on-time trains that people could set their watches by. Rikio Imajo, then a photographer working for UPI, remembers making a pre-opening, media-only run on the just-finished Ginza-Haneda portion of the Shuto Highway. The ¥50 toll, it was proudly pointed out to him, would be decreased as the cost of construction was gradually paid off, and the elevated road would eventually be free. He is still waiting.

Opening Day, Oct. 10, 1964, unfolded under a sky so blue it was as if "the best of the world's autumn skies have been brought to Tokyo today," went an oft-quoted NHK broadcast. Across that sky, the Blue Impulse acrobatic Self Defense Force pilots created the five magnificent rings that were transmitted to the world via satellite for the first time in Olympic history, all in full color. Yoshinori Sakai, born in Hiroshima on the day the bomb was dropped, and himself a leading runner who had narrowly missed Olympic selection, carried the sacred flame up the stairs to light the Olympic torch. It was an Olympic opening that enthralled the world, and is still remembered by many as one of the best ever.

Domestic television ratings predictably went through the roof, with neighbors and extended families crowding into the few homes fortunate enough to have color televisions. Highest on record was the women's volleyball final, in which the Japanese "Witches of the Orient" beat the Russians. Americans did exceptionally well. Gene Saltzger, who had just left the *Far East Network* and was helping to cover the games for the *Asahi Evening News*, remembers that the "Star-Spangled Banner" was Japan's most popular song in the autumn of 1964. The U.S. flag went up so often that all of Tokyo seemed to be humming it – even a Japanese copy boy in the AEN newsroom, who was whistling the tune rather loudly to the great amusement of everyone on the news desk.

Abebe Bikila, already a living legend after his barefoot gold-medal marathon in Rome, defended the title in convincing fashion, and was arguably the most venerated athlete of 1964. All of Japan fell in love with the graceful Vera Caslavka, the all-round gold medalist who represented the end of the age when gymnastics was more

elegant ballet than the teenage acrobatics it has since become. Dutchman Anton Geesink won the gold in judo's open weight division the first time it was contested in the Olympics. The shock to the nation's psyche in what many thought was an unlosable sport, was deep, but that soon was replaced with profound respect and affection for Geesink, which was never forgotten.

There were future legends galore: Joe Frazier arrived as a reserve and ended up winning the heavyweight boxing gold, going on to become heavyweight boxing champion of the world and creating the sport's Golden Age with Muhammad Ali. Bob Hayes easily took the 100-meter sprint gold in borrowed shoes, then came from five runners back to propel the U.S. team to a 4 x 100 gold in what still may be the fastest relay split ever run, including Usain Bolt's time at the 2012 Olympics. And it was run on a wet, ripped-up cinder track, no less. (Bullet Bob's speed took him to a Super Bowl ring with the Dallas Cowboys and into the NFL Hall of Fame, revolutionizing the entire game of American football in his wake.) Future Japan national soccer team manager Ivica Osim was on the pitch as a young standout for Yugoslavia.

Former *Business Week* Bureau Chief and FCCJ president Bob Neff was a 17-year-old senior at the American School in Japan, who headed to the Olympic stadium with his friend after they learned NHK wasn't going to televise the men's basketball final. Of course, all tickets were sold out, but bemused guards and officials pretended to believe Neff's story of them having just arrived from Haneda and not being able to find their tickets. Neff watched the finals shoulder to shoulder with basketball dignitaries and VIP guests. On the floor that night leading the U.S. to another gold was Princeton star Bill Bradley, who was to go on to win two NBA championships with the Knicks and three terms in the U.S. Senate.

The most prolific journalist perhaps, was the Club's own Vivienne Kenrick, a popular interview columnist at the *Japan*



Ginza crossing in 1958 (top) and in 1962 (below)



BOTH PHOTOS COURTESY OF STARS AND STRIPES

Times. While covering the games for AP, Reuters and the *Japan Times*, she was also the local liaison officer for the British equestrian team, keeping an eye out for the well-being of officials, athletes and horses. Apart from daily filings throughout the equestrian events, her daughter Miranda recalls Vivienne writing a dozen stories in the lead-up, and perhaps just as many immediately after the Games – including interviews with a barrage of medallists and a full spectrum of Olympic luminaries, like then JOC chairman Prince Tsuneyoshi, father of the current JOC chairman. Miranda can still remember the dizzying energy she felt as she watched a gray town magically transformed into an international hub pulsating with Japan's new glamour and sightings of the world's top athletes.

Kenrick wasn't the only one looking after the British sports mission. Chris MacDonald, widely recognized for his role in helping raise Japanese soccer to world

standards and a Japan Soccer Hall of Famer, looked after the young arrivals while running around preparing Japanese soccer officials and refs, who had little experience in world-class tournaments. He even took to the microphones for the Olympic matches.

Renowned dentist Dr. John Besford, himself a two-time Olympic swimmer, was "uncle" to the swim team and took the whole group for a break at his beachfront villa. Perhaps the Olympic Village food was a tad too posh for the homesick swimmers. Asked what they wanted to eat, he was bemused by their collective call for ordinary "toast!" and promptly sent out for six toasters, which were then scattered throughout the house, as there wasn't enough voltage in any single outlet to power the appliances.

Besford's trusted assistant, Teruko Fukasawa, was seconded to the British delegation headquarters in the Village as an interpreter, and recalls the wonderful camaraderie and excitement that permeated Tokyo throughout the entire Games. Besford's dental practice was at the center of Tokyo's expatriate life, so – unlike most Japanese at the time – she was familiar with the celebratory traditions and drinking customs of Europeans.

But she is still laughing at just how much scotch and gin were consumed in the headquarters' lounge upstairs at the former U.S. Air Force residence. "Every day there were occasions which warranted multiple trips upstairs, whether it was a medal, a qualifier, or even a disappointment," she says. "I remember being surprised at the number of cases [of alcohol] which came in the delegation's cargo, plus a huge supply of tonic water, which apparently wasn't available in Tokyo."

The food on offer during the Olympics was of extraordinary gourmet standards and presentation at a level never experienced in an Olympic Village before or since. Japan showcased its very best to press, visitors and athletes alike, and the reaction was the start of the world's love



Nippon wins the gold in volleyball. (And confuses some foreigners who thought the country was called Japan.)

AP PHOTO/N. MASAKI

affair with Japanese food and food culture. Never mind the visitors' bewilderment over Japan's favorite offerings of mysterious "Viking Food" and "snails" (*sazae*). The Imperial and New Grand hotels led teams of the nation's best-known chefs running four 24-hour restaurants on the premises, something the athletes still rave over today.

Olympians were equally impressed by a range of firsts, including the full computerization of results by IBM and electronic timing by SEIKO. In fact, the Tokyo Olympics are remembered by many as the first time finishes weren't endlessly contested.

Long jump gold medalist Lynn "the Leap" Davies, now president of UK Athletics, has been to nine Olympics since 1964. Even from his privileged, multi-faceted vantage point, the Tokyo Games were the only ones that rate alongside the London Games of 2012 as the absolute best. He remembers the thoughtfulness of cleaning staff who wore masks to protect athletes against infection, and bicycles that were freely distributed and could be dropped anywhere in the Olympic village at the athletes' convenience. It took a few times of missing the

shuttle bus for foreign athletes to realize what "on time" meant in Japan – such was the clockwork precision of everything in the Village.

Held in October to avoid the swelter of August and typhoons in September, Tokyo 1964 was one of the coldest Summer Olympics ever – on a par, ironically, with the average temperatures at the recent Sochi Winter Olympics. So cold, in fact, that Davies chuckles as he recalls rather modestly that it may have given UK athletes, used to training on cold, rainy tracks, a big advantage. No such luck should be anticipated for the next Tokyo Games, to be held from July 24 to Aug. 9.

Tokyo's biggest *omotenashi* challenge in 2020, in fact, may be none other than to keep athletes and spectators alive in mid-summer conditions. As host cities now have little voice in the choice of dates, the next Tokyo Olympics are on course to becoming the hottest ever.



COURTESY OF BILLY MILLS

Billy Mills and his wife experience *omotenashi*

BILLY MILLS IS ONE who has no doubt Japan will deliver another memorable performance. His love affair began the day he arrived in Tokyo, and was enhanced, of course, by his gold medal in the 10,000

meters. It was a historical performance still considered one of the most exciting finishes in Olympic history, competing, as it was, for space on the front pages of the world's newspapers on the same day as the equally dramatic ouster of Soviet premier Krushchev.

On his last day in Japan, Mills went to the U.S. motorpool to arrange transportation for him and his wife, Patricia, to the airport, only to be told that all vehicles assigned to the team were being used by officials for sightseeing for the rest of the day and that he should find his own way to the airport. Mills apologetically approached the Japan Olympic Committee desk to ask for help. He had just paid a rather large sum of money to check Pat out of the Palace Hotel, where she had been staying throughout the Olympics, and had no cash left to pay for transportation.

Something may have been lost in the translation, but the officials looked aghast, and started running around with great urgency. The next thing they knew, Billy and Pat were being shown, with profuse apologies and deep bows, into a glittering limo, and to their eternal surprise, seen off with great ceremony in a full motorcade.

"Only in Japan," many still say with awe today. May the same *omotenashi* spirit guide the world to fall in love with Tokyo all over again in 2020. ❶

Mary Corbett is a writer and documentary producer based in Tokyo.



Another in our series of Club Member profiles

Kazuo Kobayashi

by Anthony Rowley

It is tempting to refer to Kazuo Kobayashi as “Scoop” Kobayashi, except that the title does not sit well on a man of such gentlemanly – one might say statesman-like – demeanor. And yet the scoops this veteran broadcast journalist achieved during his long career with NHK were many and remarkable.

Few journalists could hope to have a one-and-a-half-hour interview with Russian president Vladimir Putin, as Kobayashi did, or a “history-making” meeting with former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev. And sneaking at crack of dawn into the funeral of another former Soviet leader, Nikita Khrushchev, is not exactly an everyday occurrence.

Despite having undergone treatment for a bout of lymphoma, the 74-year-old Kobayashi was in remarkably fine fettle at his home in Kawasaki recently. The warmth of his welcome was infectious, as was the rich chuckle with which he punctuates tales of his experiences.

“The feeling of the human being is fed by the counterpart,” he noted over tea in a home adorned with paintings and other memorabilia of the years he spent in Russia for NHK. “If you like people, they like you,” he said – something borne out by many famous people’s reaction to him.

Kobayashi’s precise recall of dates is remarkable. One of them is the day his love affair with Russia and the Russian people (who he says are often “irrational, impulsive and unpredictable” compared to the rational and predictable Japanese) began: Oct. 4, 1957 – the same day Russia launched the Sputnik space craft.

The young Kobayashi had already decided by then that he wanted to be a journalist – “by the persuasion of my teacher” – but he did not know how to go about it. “Suddenly I decided that if I studied Russian I could become a correspondent there.” He duly enrolled in the Russian faculty of the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies.

Kobayashi joined NHK and in 1970 was appointed Moscow correspondent. “It was a sensation, as I was the youngest [NHK] foreign correspondent.” He was determined to make his mark and not rely on rewriting Tass news agency reports. But when he got to Moscow, he discovered that under the Communist Party regime it was difficult to do anything else.

“I was very frustrated and so I spent every night in the Bolshoi Theater and at concerts where I got acquainted with a lot of artists, including [cellist and conductor Mstislav] Rostropovich and ballerina Maya Plisetskaya,” he said. “It was a treasure, but the work was very frustrating.”

Then, in 1971, an unusual opportunity arose. He learned through Reuters that Nikita Khrushchev, the former Soviet leader and successor to Joseph Stalin, had died in a suburb of Moscow. “It was because of Khrushchev and Sputnik that I became a journalist, so I felt I had to cover his funeral.”

But how? Official permission would almost certainly not have been given. “So I went to the cemetery in the dark of early morning with my Bell & Howell movie camera. I put it under my coat and waited.” At dawn, a lot of policemen and soldiers came and surrounded the cemetery

upon Reagan and his entourage returned home. But Kobayashi stayed on for a press conference given by Gorbachev. “This was my chance to talk to him,” he said.

Kobayashi had previously interviewed Gorbachev for documentaries and knew him to be a man of “big vision.” So when he asked a question of the Soviet leader he emphasized that “the world is worried” by the collapse of the arms talks. Gorbachev responded by insisting, “This is not the end but the beginning of a new stage,” which Kobayashi transmitted to NHK. Upon arriving back in Washington, Reagan duly changed his message

‘IN RUSSIA EVERYTHING IS “IMPOSSIBLE” BUT EVERYTHING IS POSSIBLE,’ KOBAYASHI SAYS

to keep out journalists among others. But Kobayashi had seized the opportunity and was already inside.

He shot film of the sparsely attended funeral without sound. “To send it back to Tokyo I would have to get customs declaration and permission from the ministry of radio and TV,” he said. “But I would never get permission.” Luckily the governor of Kagoshima Prefecture happened to be visiting Moscow and agreed to spirit the film back to Tokyo.

NHK “developed it and showed it on the 7 p.m. main news,” recalled Kobayashi. “Every broadcaster from all over the world asked for it but NHK was scared since I didn’t have permission and refused to sell it. They showed it only that once.”

The Khrushchev incident taught Kobayashi that, “in Russia everything is ‘impossible’ but everything is possible.” He was transferred in 1972 to Vienna to cover the Balkan and East European countries but returned to Moscow to spend a total of 14 years covering the two regions. Then, in Oct. 1986, came another big chance. Once again, Kobayashi (who had learned fluent Russian by then) seized it.

Mikhail Gorbachev, then General Secretary of the Communist Party, met with then-U.S. President Ronald Reagan in Reykjavik, Iceland, for a “Star Wars” summit. The talks did not go well, leading U.S. Secretary of State George Schultz to declare that they had “collapsed,” where-

after hearing this more positive view. “I am very proud that I made history,” said Kobayashi.

He officially retired in 2000, and began an academic career as a professor in the political science faculty of Sakushin Gakuin University. But he had long wanted to meet President Putin. “On May 24, 2003, the Russian ambassador called me at home and said, ‘Do you have time to come to Moscow? The president is ready to meet you.’ So on May 26 I met him at his official residence in the suburbs of Moscow.”

The two men got along very well and photographs of the meeting show a remarkably relaxed and smiling Putin, who gave Kobayashi a highly unusual one and a half hours of his time, and even made visiting Chinese President Hu Jiantao wait.

While relations between Russia and Japan have not been as smooth as Kobayashi’s encounters with Soviet and Russian leaders, Kobayashi believes that the Northern Territories issue could be solved if only PM Shinzo Abe showed a “warmer” approach to Putin. Putin and Hu resolved the territorial issues between Russia and China on a leader-to-leader basis. Kobayashi believes the same could apply to Russia and Japan, if only Abe understood Russia better. ❶

Anthony Rowley, a former President of the FCCJ, is currently Tokyo Correspondent of the *Singapore Business Times* and Field Editor (Japan) for *Oxford Analytica*.

ANDREW POTHECARY

► *Ought* versus *is* at heart of language wars

A war of words

by John Boyd

It's a war that's been waged for the past 350 years – the battlefield: our English language. Over the centuries, opponents and their motivating passions have frequently changed. In recent times the struggle has been taken up by prescriptivists, a varied group of writers, editors, educators and pundits who prescribe how English should be used based on their rules of grammar and usage. Challenging them are descriptivists, led by linguists who scientifically study the language and describe, without making value judgments, how it is used. The war, at its most fundamental level, is a struggle of *ought* against *is*.

One of the first to fire a recorded broadside against alleged faulty English usage was esteemed poet and writer John Dryden. In a 1672 criticism of the works of earlier poets such as Shakespeare and Ben Johnson, Dryden was able to “find in every page either some solecism of speech, or some notorious flaw in sense.” He went on to point out several of these solecisms, including, “The preposition in the end of the sentence; a common fault with (Johnson).”

No matter that respected authors from Chaucer onwards had employed this idiomatic construction in their works. No matter that Dryden gave no reason for his reproach. When viewed through the prism of Latin, the language of learning and refinement, ending a sentence with a preposition apparently appeared coarse and in erroneous. This notion took hold when language commentators and grammarians following on from Dryden denounced its use and created a new grammatical “rule” to follow, one that continues to plague folks even now.

Inevitably, this affection took on the role of a shibboleth, a way for the educated class to mark themselves from the plebs; and it is still used as a grammatical gotcha today by their ever-watchful descendants, who write letters badgering editors when they spot its use in print.

Sure, it can sometimes be inelegant to end a sentence this way; but often it is the sensible selection, even mandatory, as in, “Besides their use as museum pieces, what else are the FCCJ's old PCs good

for?” A preposition is a perfectly fine way to end a sentence or clause with, so rely on your native ear when making the kind of choice I'm speaking of.

Much the same criticism can be leveled against other contrived rules handed down to us by the 18th- and 19th-century Latin-loving grammarians. One notable example is the potty proscription against splitting infinitives.

Unlike Latin, it has always been natural for English to separate the *to* from the plain verb with an adverb. A fine contemporary example is the intro to the *Star Trek* TV series: “To boldly go where no man has gone before.” By comparison, “To go boldly” lacks the brio and rhythm of the original. Linguist and author extraordinaire David Crystal in *The Fight for English* explains why the split infinitive complements the beat of English:

It is a construction which has been in the language for centuries. It is popular because it is rhythmically more natural to say. The basic rhythm of English is a “tum-te-tum” rhythm – what in the main tradition of English poetry is called an iambic pentameter, with strong (stressed) and weak (unstressed) syllables alternating.

The curfew tolls the knell of parting day ...

“To **boldly go**” is the resonant, impactful choice, so trust your native ear for English, not the tone-deaf flappers covering fossilized minds.

The American bible for latter day prescriptivists is the oft-cited *The Elements of Style* by William Strunk and E.B. White – a university professor and a writer born in 1869 and 1899, respectively. It has sold over 10 million copies and celebrated its 50th anniversary in 2009. Such celebrations prompted Professor Geoffrey Pullum, linguist and co-author of *The Cambridge Grammar of the English Language*, to pen “50 Years of Stupid Grammar Advice.” In criticizing *Elements* he says, “Its advice ranges from limp platitudes to inconsistent nonsense. Its enormous influence has not improved American students' grasp of English grammar; it has significantly degraded it.”

In particular, Pullen discredits the

authors' denigration of the passive construction, as they are “so grammatically clueless that they don't know what is a passive construction and what isn't. Of the four pairs of examples offered to show readers what to avoid and to correct it, a staggering three out of the four are mistaken diagnoses.”

One such example: “There were a great number of dead leaves lying on the ground.” As Pullum notes, this has no sign of the passive in it. A passive construction commonly employs the object of an active sentence as its grammatical subject, typically followed by a “be”-verb and a past participle. So we have the active “People on the left hate Rush Limbaugh” construction becoming “Rush Limbaugh is hated by people on the left” in the passive.

Elements' harmful influence doesn't end at the walls of ivory towers; mistaught students graduate and enter the wider world citing and praising this fraudulent little tome. So we get novelists as prolific as Stephen King, in his instructional *On Writing*, making this blanket statement in italics: “You should avoid the passive tense. I'm not the only one who says so; you can find the same advice in *The Elements of Style*.” This is an amusing example of prescriptivists' over-generalized proscriptions, for like the two misguided authors of *Elements*, King ignores his own silly advice and begins *On Writing* with, “I was stunned by Mary Karr's memoir, *The Liar's Club*.”

Rather than shun the passive, consider it a useful construction that can improve the effectiveness of your writing in several ways, one example being, “This passionate defense of the passive is written by John Boyd,” when I want to gobs smack you with my name. Hence all good writers, including King and White, use it some of the time.

Now, *Elements* is messing up folks on the other side of the Atlantic. In Britain, Neville Gwynne, author of the best selling *Gwynne's Grammar*, has incorporated it into his primer, modestly subtitled *The Ultimate Introduction to Grammar and the Writing of Good English*. Alas, it reached No. 1 on the Times best-seller list last summer.

Lamentably, Gwynne and similar self-appointed pundits are too often feted and

fawned over in the media. The publicity has helped them create a thriving publishing industry that exploits the linguistically insecure, when in reality their writings belong in the fiction section. Conferring esteem on them has lent unwarranted authority to their pedantic carpings and cavilings, such as when condemning “hopefully” and “data is” in, “Hopefully, RIKEN's data is correct this time.” So it is hardly surprising that a myth-informed public has doubts about the “proper” use of English.

Prescriptivists typically respond to these criticisms by claiming descriptivists accept whatever has been written as correct, and therefore don't ascribe to any rules or standards: the “anything goes” charge. Gosh! So that's why this error-strewn, unreadable denouncement of petty prescriptivism lacks clarity, logic and accuracy! Actually, unlike the pundits, linguists hold to standards that are intellectually honest, for they acknowledge that any standard is but a snapshot, a contemporaneous description of a language variety in a particular point in time. This is why my granddaughter won't hold to the same standard of English I hold to because the language is always in flux.

To judge the descriptive method for yourself, purchase a copy of Merriam-Webster's *Dictionary of English Usage*. In examining language disputes, it uses an evidence-based approach employing the great historical dictionaries, works of distinguished authors, writers and speakers, and many notable usage commentaries from different periods. The historical background of a dispute is presented along with examples old and new of its usage to enable the reader to reach a considered conclusion.

In dealing with *data/datum*, for instance, MWDEU notes it wasn't until the end of the 19th century that *data* meaning *facts* and *figures* became established and was used both as a plural noun (like *earnings*) taking a plural verb, and as a mass noun (like *information*) taking a singular verb. Its earliest recorded use as a mass noun with a singular verb was in 1902, and this form was common enough to incur the full weight of prescriptivist opprobrium in the 1920s.

The dictionary goes on to give examples of how the mass noun/singular verb construction has been only partly “corrected” by automaton editors, resulting in the new plural verb disagreeing with the original modifier:

...much of the data are still tentative
– James Q. Wilson, *N.Y. Times*, 6 Oct. 1974
(the singular modifier much with plural verb shows that some copy editor routinely corrected the verb without thinking)

The modifier has been overlooked precisely because it is standard, and saying “many of the data” would be jarring to the ear. MWDEU provides two similar miscorrected examples to show this is no isolated occurrence. Even general publications, then, rather than employ the same standard of English used by their readers and writers, engage in knee-jerk editing, only to make an embarrassing mess of what were perfectly fine constructions to begin with. Instead of taking a stand on what is long-established mainstream usage outside the science community and certain specialist journals, publishers acquiesce – perhaps out of fear of being labeled unprofessional – to an insensible few who noisily pronounce on how English ought to be used; in doing so, they keep alive one more zombie rule that gnaws away at their readers' confidence in speaking and writing.

Such is the influence of an intolerant, pedantic minority; a minority that loves its own variety of the language, but can abide no other. ●

"Data shows
Rush Limbaugh
is hated!"

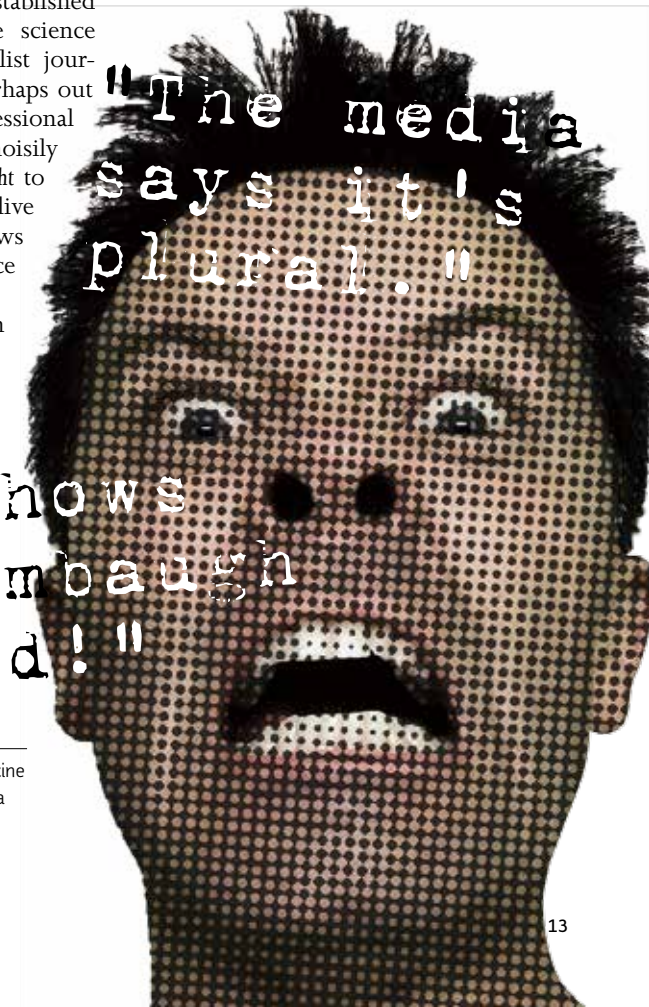
John Boyd strings for *IEEE Spectrum* magazine and covers sci-tech-biz news and events for a variety of publications.

"It's bloody
iambic
pentameter!"

"I boldly
end with
with"

"The
passive
tense
is best
avoided."

"The media
says it's
plural."



► The intriguing twists and turns and compelling characters of a "local" bank's ups and downs

Tokyo Star-crossed

by Peter McGill

Not many hearts will start pounding faster upon hearing that CTBC of Taiwan has bought Tokyo Star Bank, despite the fact it is the first foreign acquisition of a non-bankrupt Japanese bank.

And not many journalists will get late-night calls for copy, even though financial historians may also wish to note that it is the first time a foreign bank, as against a group of foreign investors, has bought a Japanese bank.

But is it important? Of course! Fascinating? That depends on where you start to look. . . .

In fact, when I peered behind the drab official curtain, a strange drama was revealed. The cast includes a Japanese banker besotted by France who was a friend of Jacques Chirac and was brought down by speculative hubris, and a squeaky-clean Mormon who succeeded him.

There's plenty of action in Taiwan with a Chinese merchant opening the gates of Taipei to Japanese soldiers, being richly rewarded for his allegiance, and eventually being elevated to the House of Peers. One of his many offspring then co-founds a major Taiwanese bank and becomes a pillar of Taiwan society. Alas, his wayward son and heir brings disgrace on the bank and family through insider trading, flees to Japan to escape arrest, and then returns to face justice and a lengthy prison sentence.

In the final act, all the wildly disparate strands come together, and everyone concerned, not least the Japanese and Taiwanese authorities, slam shut the bin of history and affect a broad smile.

THE TALE BEGINS IN Japan with a timber dealer's son named Shoichi Osada. In 1949, he used the profit from selling family timber to the national railways to found Tokyo Shokusan Mujin, a kind of loan cooperative. Mujin date back to the 14th century, and traditionally were rotating credit associations, in which a group of people make regular deposits and take turns to win the pot, usually by drawing lots. The link to gambling ruffled the puritanical sensibilities of Gen. Douglas MacArthur's Occupation advisers, and a 1951 law converted the mujin into mutuals. Osada's Tokyo Sogo

Bank later demutualised in 1989 and was renamed Tokyo Sowa Bank.

Osada had only an elementary school education, but was the unchallenged ruler of Tokyo Sowa, first as its president, then as chairman. During the asset bubble of the late 1980s, the bank poured vast amounts of money into Kanto real estate. At its peak, it had a balance sheet of ¥2.27 trillion and earned the sobriquet of "the bank of Ginza and Akasaka."

In 1984, Osada bought an uninhabited island in Suruga Bay with stunning views of Mount Fuji. There, he set about building one of the most expensive hotels in the world. The Awashima Hotel had 200 staff tending to the needs of no more than 138 guests, a wine cellar stocked with 4,000 choice bottles, its own concert hall and an ocean aquarium. Art works from Osada's personal collection, said to include 1,000 Impressionist paintings, lined the walls.

VIPs were ferried to the island in Osada's luxury yacht to be wine and dined at the bank's expense. Along with Tokyo Sowa customers came Ministry of Finance bureaucrats, Japanese politicians, and French celebrities, most notably Jacques Chirac, mayor of Paris from 1977 to 1995, then president of France until 2007.

MYSTERY AND RUMOUR SURROUND Chirac's relationship with Japan, a country he visited 54 times in 37 years. The French press suggested that the love affair went beyond Japanese art and sumo to include a "family entourage." In 2006, two investigating French magistrates (*juges d'instruction*) found a note from the French external security service, the DGSE, implying that Chirac once had ¥7 billion in a secret account opened at Tokyo Sowa in 1992. Chirac denied the allegation.

Osada claimed to have been friends with Chirac for "half a century" and in May 1995 was the first Japanese businessman invited to the Elysée after Chirac's inauguration. In gratitude for his services to France, he was awarded the *Légion d'Honneur*.

But after Japanese land and property prices started to tumble in 1992, Sowa Tokyo found itself in trouble. In spite of two capital infusions in 1998 and 1999,

and a desperate attempt to keep the bank afloat by cavalier lending to loan sharks, many linked to the yakuza, the bank collapsed in June 1999 with a capital deficit of ¥102.2 billion. One year later, Osada and another four senior executives of the bank were charged with fraud in trying to conceal the crater. In 2003, Osada was handed a three-year suspended prison sentence.

The carcass of Tokyo Sowa drew intense bid interest, thanks to the prospect of generous inducements from the Japanese government. An auction was won by Texan vulture fund Lone Star, with a bid of ¥40.3 billion. The Japanese taxpayer had to stump up several times more. The Deposit Insurance Corporation made a grant of ¥762.6 billion to recapitalize the new bank, while the state's Resolution and Collection Corporation paid ¥502.7 billion book value for Tokyo Sowa's bad loans, of which it later recouped just ¥124.2 billion.

LONE STAR RENAMED THE bank Tokyo Star and for its head chose Todd Budge, a former Mormon missionary who was fluent in Japanese. In 2003, he became the first foreign – and at the age of 43, by far the youngest – president of a Japanese bank.

Budge helped restore what he once called "this incredible train wreck" to profitability, and wrote a book in Japanese called *You Can Do It* about his philosophy of "empowering" customers. Cynics would retort that Japanese taxpayers had cleared away much of the Tokyo Sowa wreckage beforehand, while closing most of its branches and getting rid of many of its staff performed wonders on the profit-and-loss statement.

Lone Star listed Tokyo Star on the Tokyo Stock Exchange in October 2005 and sold one-third of its holding for ¥85.4 billion. Looking for an exit, Lone Star agreed to sell its remaining 68 percent of the bank to Japan's first, and largest, private equity group, Advantage Partners, at the height of the leveraged buyout boom in December 2007. The next year, Advantage Partners made a tender-offer bid and bought all outstanding shares in Tokyo Star for ¥250 billion. Advantage Partners borrowed the ¥170 billion needed to buy

THE PRICE CTBC IS NOW PAYING FOR TOKYO STAR, ¥52 BILLION, IS JUST ONE-FIFTH OF WHAT ADVANTAGE PARTNERS PAID FOR THE BANK ONLY EIGHT YEARS AGO



AP PHOTO/MICHEL LIPCHITZ



Jacques Chirac (left) denied he had ¥7 billion in the Tokyo Sowa Bank. Todd Budge (right) helped restore the "train wreck" Tokyo Star Bank



Lone Star's majority stake from Lone Star and a group of banks.

Richard Folsom, the co-founder of Advantage Partners, graduated from Brigham Young University the same year as Budge, and the pair had also worked together at Bain, the American management firm that employed Mitt Romney, a fellow Mormon and the Republican challenger to Barack Obama in 2012. When Advantage Partners took over Tokyo Star, Budge became chairman until he retired three years ago. He is now president of the Mormon Mission in Japan.

Advantage Partners intended to repay money borrowed to buy Tokyo Star with dividends to be paid by the bank. The plan was hatched just as the financial crisis broke. As bad debts began to multiply, Tokyo Star started losing money and stopped paying dividends, causing Lone Star and the other creditors to seize all of the bank's equity in 2011. The price CTBC is now paying for Tokyo Star, ¥52 billion, is just one-fifth of what Advantage Partners paid for the bank only eight years ago.

CTBC, which used to be called Chinatrust, is Taiwan's largest privately owned bank. Koo family interests, collectively, rank as the biggest shareholder and still wield considerable power in the boardroom. The Koo's are one of Taiwan's five

wealthiest families, and partly owe their good fortune to an astute move by the patriarch, Koo Hsien-rung, who sided with Japan in its war with Qing dynasty China at the end of the 19th century. On June 6, 1895, Koo opened the main gate to the city of Taipei and welcomed Japanese troops. Japan was duly grateful and rewarded Koo with some lucrative monopolies. In 1934 the Showa emperor made him the first non-Japanese member of the House of Peers in Tokyo. One of his grandsons is Richard Koo of Nomura Research Institute, possibly Japan's most famous economist.

Chinatrust was co-founded by Jeffrey L. S. Koo, "father of the credit card" in Taiwan, and chairman of the bank until his death in 2012. Eldest son Jeffrey Koo Jr., a former fashion model with a master's degree in business administration from Wharton, was vice chairman and heir-apparent until he engulfed the bank in scandal.

In 2004, Chinatrust attempted to take over Mega Financial, a banking group controlled by the Taiwanese government. Taiwan's financial regulator discovered that Koo Junior had instructed the Hong Kong branch of Chinatrust to buy \$390 million of notes issued by Barclays that converted into shares of Mega Financial. These notes were then sold at a steep dis-

count to a paper company called Red Fire Developments, capitalized at \$1.

Koo reaped a windfall profit of \$30.47 million through Red Fire's illegal trading, which he then had wired to offshore companies. When rumbled, he returned \$20.9 million to Chinatrust but kept the rest in a Hong Kong front company controlled by his family. Most of this money was funnelled to the family of Chen Shui-bian, Taiwan's president from 2000 to 2008, as "political donations."

Koo resigned as vice chairman of Chinatrust the day after prosecutors issued a warrant for his arrest, and fled to Japan. In November 2008, however, he flew back to Taipei in his private jet and was handcuffed on arrival. Koo was later found guilty of fraud and embezzlement. Three other senior executives of Chinatrust also received jail terms.

Chen Shui-bian and his wife were found guilty of corruption and are now in prison. Koo is appealing his conviction to Taiwan's Supreme Court.

The scandal has given new meaning to the corporate motto of CTBC, now the proud owner of Tokyo Star Bank: "We Are Family." ❶

Peter McGill is a former Tokyo correspondent of *The Observer* and former president of the FCCJ.

Chief Cabinet Secretary Suga defended the administration's policies in a long awaited visit to the Club

The prime minister's first line of defense

by Justin McCurry

Who among the FCCJ's journalist members have not lost count of the number of times they have mentioned Yoshihide Suga in the 18 months since Shinzo Abe became prime minister?

Whether described as Japan's top government spokesman or, more formally, as chief cabinet secretary, Suga is the public face of the Abe administration: a conduit for his boss's



HAJIME OKINA
Yoshihide Suga
at the Club

he said. "And we can't pursue our diplomatic aims or provide the reconstruction funds we need."

He dismissed criticism of the third and, as-of-now, the least aerodynamic of Abenomics' three arrows: a program of structural reforms that includes raising the status of women in the job market and entering the Trans-Pacific Partnership free trade

agreement. The administration, he said, had been courageous enough to take on vested interests that had for decades resisted long-overdue reform of the agricultural and energy sectors.

But he was less ebullient when confronted over the most contentious decision of Abe's time in office: lifting the ban on collective self-defense. Why, he was asked, had Abe not shown the strength of his convictions and pursued outright revision of Article 9 of the Constitution? "Our priority is to ensure the peace and safety of the Japanese people," he replied. "When Abe returned to power he was concerned with the government's ability to protect the country's people, and asked experts if the current legal framework was capable of meeting that challenge."

While critics accused Abe of abusing the coalition's majority to push constitutional revision through the backdoor, Suga played down claims that Abe now has carte blanche to send Japanese troops to fight alongside allies overseas.

Instead, the shift on security was a necessary adjustment that reflected the changing nature of the dangers facing Japan's citizens, 1.5 million of whom live overseas, with a further 18 million venturing abroad on holiday every year. "That's the kind of globalized world we are living in. The security environment is much more severe, so we thought it

appropriate for the government to show its fundamental thinking on security," Suga said.

He was challenged on a 2009 Liberal Democratic Party proposal stating that sovereignty lies with the people in any decision related to the Constitution. "The Cabinet took into account the severe security environment and the responsibility of the government to secure the safety of the nation and its people, and to do that we have the right to use minimal self-defense," he said. "That's no different from previous government's interpretations [of the Constitution], which is why we saw no need for constitutional reform."

Asked why the government had ignored opinion polls showing that a majority oppose collective self-defense, he said: "Abe feels strongly about honoring his commitments, and from the outset one of those was establishing a more thorough system of crisis management. The government has a clear responsibility to guarantee the safety of its people, regardless of ups and downs in the opinion polls."

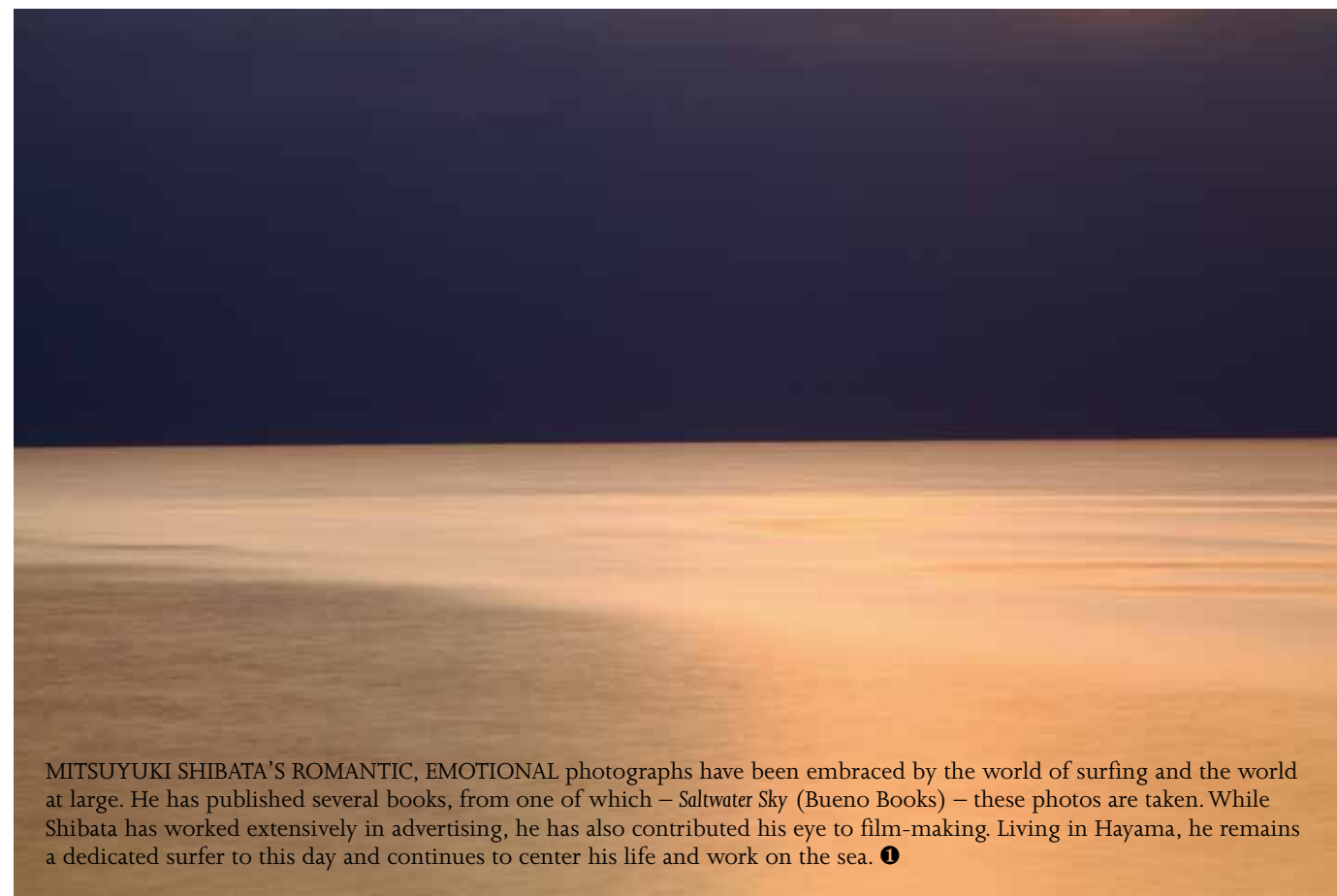
Days before Suga's FCCJ appearance, Japan relaxed some unilateral sanctions against North Korea after concluding that Pyongyang was serious about determining the fates of at least a dozen Japanese citizens abducted by the North in the 1970s and 80s. Suga was asked if Abe was considering a repeat of Junichiro Koizumi's 2002 mercy mission to Pyongyang, which resulted in the return of five abductees and their families.

"The door has opened just a bit," he said of the fledgling rapprochement with Pyongyang. "We judged that the [North Korea abduction investigation] committee was serious, with the power to investigate government bodies, which is why we relaxed some sanctions. We are committed to bringing all of the abductees home."

As speculation mounts that Abe will hold a rare meeting with his Chinese counterpart, Xi Jinping, on the sidelines of the APEC summit in Beijing in November, Suga simply repeated the official position on sovereignty of the Senkaku Islands – that historically and based on international law, the territory is Japanese. "Having said that, we are the second- and third-biggest economies in the world, so we have a responsibility to ensure the peace and prosperity of the Asia-Pacific. Because of that, the door to dialogue to us is always open." ❶

Justin McCurry is Japan and Korea correspondent for the *Guardian* and the *Observer*. He contributes to the *Christian Science Monitor* and the *Lancet* medical journal, and reports on Japan and Korea for France 24 TV.

FCCJ EXHIBITION *Saltwater Sky*: by Mitsuyuki Shibata



MITSUYUKI SHIBATA'S ROMANTIC, EMOTIONAL photographs have been embraced by the world of surfing and the world at large. He has published several books, from one of which – *Saltwater Sky* (Bueno Books) – these photos are taken. While Shibata has worked extensively in advertising, he has also contributed his eye to film-making. Living in Hayama, he remains a dedicated surfer to this day and continues to center his life and work on the sea. ❶

JOIN THE MOVIE COMMITTEE ...



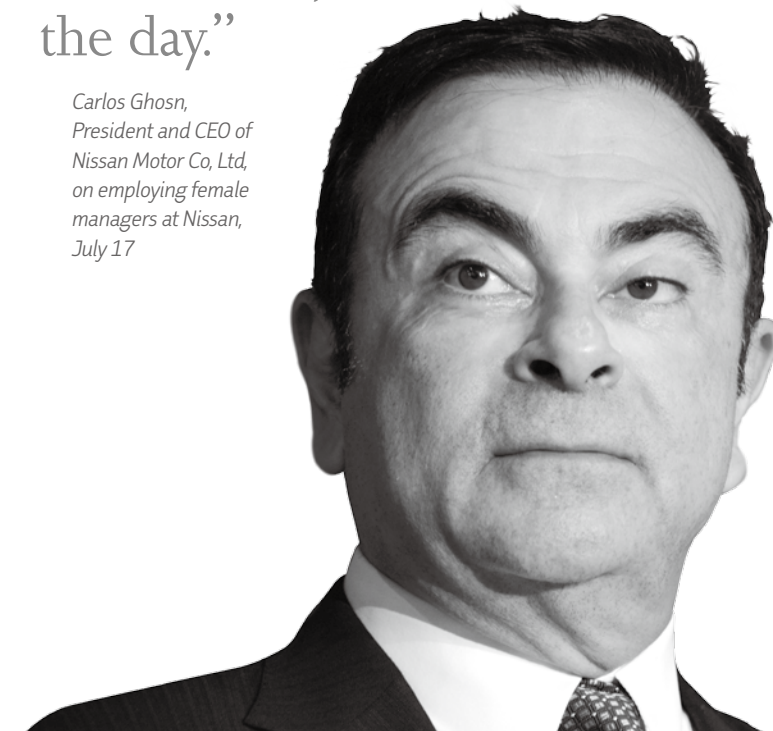
... at 6:30 pm on Thursday, Aug. 7 for director Sion Sono's gonzo new film *Tokyo Tribe*, followed by a Q&A with Sono (his debut appearance at FCCJ) and his three young stars Ryohei Suzuki, Young Dais and Nana Seino. An adaptation of the mega-bestselling manga series "Tokyo Tribe2" by Santa Inoue, the film opens five years after the Shibuya riots. Tokyo is divided into territories run by 23 tribes – the Shibuya Saru, Shinjuku Hands, Kabukicho GiraGira Girls, Bukuro Wu-Ronz, Nerimuthafuckaz – each with their own colorful approach to fashion and the new lingua franca: rap. When the Wu-Ronz leader (Suzuki) attempts to whack a rival, all hell breaks loose ... and it's the ass-end of hell, as one octogenarian DJ puts it. With nods to *West Side Story* and *A Clockwork Orange*, Sono goes deliciously overboard with his visual and aural assault. But there's a message in there somewhere! (Japan, 2014; 116 minutes; in Japanese with Oscar-worthy English subtitles)

– Karen Severns

Heard at the Club (1)

“We’re aiming at a solid 10% [female managers]. Can we move faster? Yes. But with risks that I don’t want to take. I want it to be a constant, patient, systematic, robust, relentless move ... something you cannot challenge. You cannot say it’s artificial, it’s the trend of the day.”

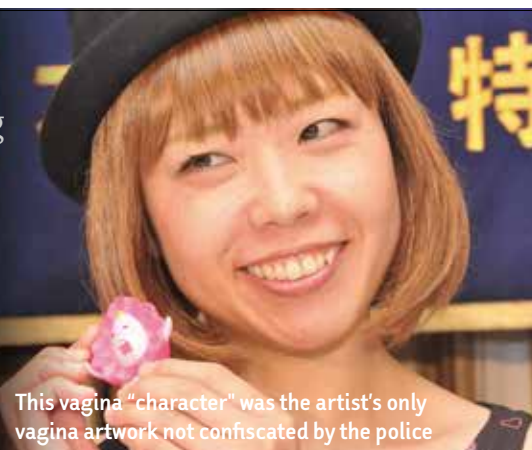
Carlos Ghosn, President and CEO of Nissan Motor Co. Ltd, on employing female managers at Nissan, July 17



Heard at the Club (2)

“It may be obscene if you are depicting something that is actually engaging in sexual activities, but I’m just presenting a part of my body just as it is, and I don’t think that is obscene.”

Rokudenashiko (Megumi Igarashi), artist, on her arrest for distributing obscene materials (3D CAD data of a scan of her vagina), July 24



This vagina “character” was the artist’s only vagina artwork not confiscated by the police

NEW MEMBERS



KIMIKO AOKI is an executive producer at NHK Enterprises. She has previously held positions as chief editor of the program NHK World Newline, London bureau chief, New York correspondent, Hiroshima correspondent and managing editor of the NHK Kaigai Network.



KEN MORITSUGU has been named Japan bureau chief of the Associated Press. Born in Montreal, Moritsugu is a naturalized U.S. citizen who holds an undergraduate degree in economics with a certificate in East Asian Studies from Princeton University. Moritsugu started his reporting career for the *Japan Times* in 1984. He later was a reporter at the *St. Petersburg Times* and *Newsday*, an economics correspondent in Washington for Knight-Ridder and a New Delhi-based freelance journalist. Since joining the AP as enterprise editor based in Bangkok in 2007, Moritsugu has overseen major projects and in-depth, investigative and data journalism throughout the Asia-Pacific region.



SAKI OUCHI has been the chief manager, international affairs at the *Yomiuri Shimbun* since Sept. 2013. She joined the paper in 1986, after graduating from Tokyo University. Saki has mainly worked in the International News Department, with posts to Washington from 1992 to 1996, Geneva from 1999 to 2003, and once again to Geneva from 2008 before being transferred to London in 2009. Upon returning to Tokyo in 2012, she was Deputy Editor at the International News Desk.

REGULAR MEMBERS

Ken Moritsugu, AP
Kimiko Aoki, NHK

REINSTATEMENT (REGULAR MEMBER)

Saki Ouchi, the *Yomiuri Shimbun*

PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST

ASSOCIATE MEMBER

Akihiro Miyata, Ray Productions

STATUS CHANGE (FROM ASSOCIATE TO PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST ASSOCIATE)

Takeya Yamasaki, International Eye, Inc.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Takashi Usuki, Japan Post Bank Co., Ltd.
Akio Makiyama, Forum for Urban Development Co., Ltd.

Ichiro Miyake, Standard & Poor's Ratings Japan K.K.

Masahiro Fukuzawa, Takaoka Toko Co., Ltd.

Noboru Otani, Espritline Inc.

REINSTATEMENT (ASSOCIATE)

Akira Kamiya, Mitsubishi UFJ Securities Holdings Co., Ltd.

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