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The battle for
**Hong
Kong**

**How the new breed of
journalists covers the protests**

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FROM THE PRESIDENT



Dear fellow Members

It is with some trepidation that I sit down to pen my first “Letter from the President” to you all—along with some humility and hope for our future. Together, and with the help of our tireless staff, we’ve managed to complete the often-tumultuous move, and are finally settling into our new premises. I played no part in this and can only look in awe upon the magnitude of the work.

With the move receding in our collective rear view mirror, we must now look forward. A new challenge lies ahead, one that may not be as obviously complicated, but could prove to be an equally tricky balancing act: Attracting new members while taking care of existing ones. In other words, bringing the club into the 21st century without losing touch with tradition.

One obvious area in sore need of improvement is our online presence. We need a far stronger voice on social media in all its many forms, as this is where both journalism and the younger generations live and breathe. We need a stronger website, to better use as a launchpad for online marketing. We need to strengthen assets such as the *Number One Shimbun*, both digitally and in print.

On top of that come the traditional, yet no less important activities such as our press conferences and social events. Our online platform is no substitute for these, merely a powerful way to announce their presence from the digital rooftops.

All of this, sadly, is a matter of survival. The Club’s future depends on our ability to increase our membership. In many ways, we journalists stand apart from society in our role as watchdogs, but in one sense our Club is an exaggerated version of the demographic problem haunting modern Japan: We are losing an increasing number of members due to age-related issues.

Of our total membership, 64 percent is over 60 years of age. Our total membership now stands at 1,791, after a decline of 18 percent over the past 10 years—a trend that is likely to continue. Every cloud has a silver lining: the good news is that we lose few members for reasons not age-related. But it also means we need to work twice as hard to grow the club.

In order to increase our total membership by 100, we need at least 200 new members to compensate for the members lost to natural causes and for resignations. Quite a task! We need the collective support of the entire membership to accomplish this. I would ask everyone’s help in introducing the club to friends and acquaintances. We are prepared to give one-month’s guest memberships to prospective members to allow them to experience the club before they hopefully make the decision to join. We are working on improving the quality of our professional programs and on bringing in more interesting events.

So a huge thank you to our general manager, Marcus Fishenden, for both helping us through the move and minimizing the inevitable adjustment pains of settling in. The same goes to our librarian Moriwaki-san, for her tireless work in supplying top-notch research to members. And to our PAC-staff, Saikawa-san and Ito-san, for working hard to keep our club on the journalistic map via our press conferences.

And last, but certainly not least, a huge thank you to the many members who have volunteered their time to help me get up to speed on the many intricacies of the club. The club rests on people like you and that leaves me hopeful. Because we are quite a crowd. I wish you all a happy holiday season, and hope to see you at the Club.

– Thomas Hay Davidsen

FREEDOM OF THE PRESS

Journalist says Chinese interference behind work-visa denial in Vanuatu

By Sri Krishnamurthi

A JOURNALIST LOST HIS work permit in Vanuatu in what many believe is an attack on media freedom. On Nov. 7, Dan McGarry, media director of the Vanuatu Daily Post Group, announced that his application for a work permit was rejected after 16 years in the country. McGarry believes that pressure from China was behind the rejection.

“This all began when we broke a story about how six Chinese nationals had been detained without trial or access to legal counsel,” said McGarry. “Four of them had their Vanuatu citizenship unlawfully revoked without ever seeing the inside

“In July, the prime minister summoned me and berated me for my ‘negative’ reporting. ‘If you don’t like it here,’ he told me, ‘go home.’ But Vanuatu is my home.”

of a courtroom. All of them were summarily deported to face prosecution in China.”

“In July, the prime minister [Chariot Salwai] summoned me and berated me for my ‘negative’ reporting,” said McGarry. “‘If you don’t like it here,’ he told me, ‘go home.’ But Vanuatu is my home.”

Within days of these reports surfacing, complaints were lodged with the Media Association of Vanuatu about the *Daily Post*’s ‘negative’ reporting. No evidence was provided to support these complaints, but the timing leaves little question as to how and why they came about.

Said McGarry, “The government can dress it up any way they like, but the evidence is clear: This is an attack on a free and independent media in Vanuatu. But Vanuatu is not Hong Kong, and it’s not China. This fight isn’t over yet . . . by a long shot,” he said.

McGarry’s employers, Trading Post Ltd, were just as surprised with the decision and pledged to support him. The *Daily Post* rejects the allegations, and is of the opinion that the decision is illegitimate and flawed on its own



merits. They intend to fight it.

McGarry has received support from the Media Association of Vanuatu and its 89 members, which have urged Prime Minister Salwai to take a close look at all the contributions the Vanuatu Media Industry has made and all that McGarry has done in promoting the development policies and projects over the last four years of the government.

The Director of the Pacific Media Center and editor of Pacific Media Watch, Professor David Robie, also condemned the action by Vanuatu, saying it was “outrageous authoritarianism” and called for the visa to be granted.

“Dan McGarry is one of the leading investigative journalists in Vanuatu and the Pacific and has a commitment to development values,” Professor David Robie said. “Dan has also been a strong media-freedom advocate . . . publishing the truth and holding the powerful to account. His loss to Vanuatu would be a huge loss to the region as well as Vanuatu.”

He vowed to continue his fight to stay in Vanuatu and maintain standards of a free and independent media. “I’m gutted, personally. I’ve devoted 16 years of my life to this country’s development,” said McGarry, a Canadian who was in the process of getting Vanuatuan citizenship.

“But the groundswell of support we’ve seen, both at home and overseas, is heart-warming and humbling,” he said. “We will pursue this appeal aggressively, and fight for justice to the last.”

Sri Krishnamurthi is a journalist with the Pacific Media Center’s Institute for Pacific Research. This article is republished from Asia Pacific Report. <https://asiapacificreport.nz>

FROM THE ARCHIVES

Super-feminist & author



Betty Friedan—super-feminist, author, and former journalist—made a humorous point during a professional luncheon at the FCCJ on Sept. 27, 1995. Seated to her immediate left are Club president Jim Lagier (AP) and former president Gebbard Hielscher (Suddeutsche Zeitung). Her reputation as a leading activist in the feminist movement in the US attracted a high turnout by female Members, as can be seen in the photo.

Born in 1921 into a Jewish family in Peoria, Illinois, as Bettye Naomi Goldstein, Friedan became active in journalism at a young age. She graduated from Smith College with honors in 1942 with a major in psychology while editing the school’s newspaper. In 1943, while on a fellowship at the University of California, Berkeley, she became increasingly active in politics, favoring Marxism.

Under the name Betty Goldstein, she worked from 1946 to 1952 as a journalist for *UE News*, a labor union publication. She retained this as her pen name following her marriage to Carl Friedan in 1947, a union that produced three children but ended in divorce in 1969.

Betty Friedan became a leader in the US women’s movement after publishing her 1963 book, *The Feminine Mystique*. She followed that by co-founding the National Organization for Women (NOW) in 1966. She served as first president of that organization until 1970, the year she went on to organize a successful women’s strike for equality with men. This was followed by organizing other feminist groups, whose activities led to the passage of laws that favored women’s rights reform. Although her personality was described as “famously abrasive,” she was not considered an extremist. The author of six books, Friedan remained active in women’s advocacy and politics until the late 1990s.

The recipient of many awards and honors, Friedan died of congestive heart failure at her home in Washington, D.C., on February 4, 2006, her 85th birthday.

– Charles Pomeroy
editor of Foreign Correspondents in Japan,
a history of the Club that is available at the front desk



On point
A mural in a train station aims to instill positivity in the populace—and in visitors?

Could North Korea's bullish tourism slogan of "See you in Pyongyang" mean the secretive dictatorship is warming to visitors?

On a recent trip, I found the rules and people remarkably relaxed. As expected, we were not allowed to leave our hotel grounds (one on an island, the other in a gated compound) without an official guide. But we spent much of the last 48 hours unescorted at a trade fair and on the Beijing-bound overnight train.

Yes, I was obliged to dress well and bow deeply at revered monuments to supreme or eternal leaders. But before we visited the ghoulish, garish mausoleum of the country's first two leaders—Kim Il-sung and his son Kim Jong-il—an Australian member of our group politely declined due to his Christian sensitivities and was happily allowed to stay on the bus.

Taking photographs of almost anyone, anywhere, at any time, was allowed—subject, naturally, to asking first. And I learned how to legally shake off your guide and obtain unlimited cheap global internet without causing trouble or offence.

We could even call abroad from our hotel room and keep our cameras, cellphones, laptops, notebooks, pens, recorders and any other devices or instruments, if declared on entry.

FROM TOKYO, I APPLIED for a North Korean visa by paying a refundable (if visa is declined) deposit online with a specialist travel agent in Beijing. The all-inclusive trip was marketed as featuring Pyongyang's signature Mass Games, International Film Festival, and Autumn Trade Fair, plus the Korean Demilitarized Zone, restaurants, cultural sites and monuments.

As the trip went through Beijing, the next step was to go to

the Chinese Visa Application Service Center, in Toranomon. After I asked for a double-entry visa to transit China via North Korea, the official said: "Why do you want to go there? Terrible place North Korea. Don't steal any ashtrays or paintings from the hotel like that American did." He meant the tragic case of student Otto Warmbier, who died in 2017 of botulism or torture—according to conflicting accounts—after being repatriated in a coma 15 months into his 15-year sentence of hard labor for attempting to steal a picture.

I was mildly rebuked during my visa interview for writing "Hong Kong" under "previous countries visited" rather than "China (Hong Kong)." When my interrogator saw "media" in my company name, I thought the game was up. But she kindly compromised by asking me to write and sign two letters detailing my job and pledging not to work in China.

My North Korean visa was waiting in Beijing the day before my flight to Pyongyang on North Korea's state-owned Air Koryo. The airport queue for the 90-minute flight was bare-faced sanction-busting: huge parcels of tightly wrapped consumables and commodities had formed tidy lines before any passengers arrived. Every Korean checking in looked laden down with at least three times the baggage allowance.

AT CLEAN, SPACIOUS, AND efficient Pyongyang International Airport, easy-going officials smilingly eased me through a throng of Chinese tourists at customs, barely glancing at my bags and quickly stamping my tourist visa card.

The 20-minute bus drive to the 47-story Yanggakdo International Hotel set the tone for much of what we saw of Pyongyang—spotless with fresh flowers decorating apart-

SIMON FARRELL

ment and shop balconies, and pavements full of well-dressed pedestrians. Luxury European and Asian cars vied with electric bicycles. Charm offensive or typical airport route?

The hotel façade was a thin, shiny metal and glass frontage concealing a rough stone eyesore of reality. The spacious lobby was bright and airy, but gloom set in as we entered the shabby lift. There was no button for the mysterious fifth floor, said to house spies who operate secret cameras in some guest rooms. But my local source claimed that Otto admitted in court stealing the picture of Dear Leader Kim Jong-un from the staff-only second floor, not the also off-limits fifth floor, as widely reported.

Spying-on-guests is a myth, anyway, claim some tourism industry insiders. Authorities have a much more effective tool to control tourists and discourage espionage or journalists: keep visitors busy and tire them out with early power breakfasts, whirlwind tours, boozy lunches and late dinner-movies. Then it's back to the room for Al Jazeera English TV's take on global affairs and local news and dramas controlled by the government's Propaganda and Agitation Department. No time for naps, let alone a rendezvous or dead drop.

Our promised tickets for the 17th Pyongyang International Film Festival red carpet opening ceremony never materialized. We got instead sincere apologies, official goody bags, and a private showing of *Comrade Kim Goes Flying* in a cavernous art deco cinema decorated with North Korean propaganda and film posters.

AT DINNER, ONE QUITE professional guide seemed well briefed on global issues but angry about Japan; she was convinced that Tokyo was lying about its citizens being kidnapped. The often credible-sounding guides occasionally let themselves down with claims such as: "There is no crime in North Korea because we teach our children manners, respect and honesty."

The same charming guide casually pumped me over beers about my job, passport, life, and family, until I showed her a photo on my cellphone; she then quickly and expertly swiped through dozens of my images uninvited and out of my reach. Just curious, a cultural thing, or something sinister?

One of our group got quite mouthy with the same guide, but it was soon forgotten. Guides often try to divert tourists to softer destinations such as UNESCO sites, Buddhist temple, souvenir shops, and more monuments. But they are hard sells competing with more interesting sites.

Pyongyang's marbled subway claims the world's longest murals, deepest escalators, and cheapest tickets. At the Korean Demilitarized Zone, where the Korean Armistice Agreement was signed to cease hostilities in 1953, one can endure loud lectures on "American Imperialism." The uneventful three-hour drive from Pyongyang, with farmers and builders toiling alongside the pothole-scarred road, was our only rural view of the week.

Then there's the Victorious Fatherland Liberation War Museum—an eerie monument to perceived injustices and victories. You are seated on a moving 360-degree journey around a movie-set-like bloody battleground, with graphic exhibits of captured enemies' personal and military items.



Guarded
The author at the border

WHO COULD PASS UP a visit to the Kumsusan Palace of the Sun to see the preserved remains of Kim Il-sung and Kim Jong-il lying in state, bathed in blood-red light inside their transparent crystal sarcophagi? An estimated 1.5-kilometer-long subterranean moving walkway—closely monitored by static soldiers and secret-service types glaring through sinister dark shades—glides foreign visitors and selected North Korean high achievers at funeral pace through bizarre wet shoe-cleaners and powerful full-body air blowers (to remove dust and detect hidden devices) into a somber and grey zone of utter silence.

In groups of four, everyone must bow at the feet and sides of both bodies in separate chambers. Adjoining rooms display hundreds of their possessions: mementos, uniforms, arms, gifts, medals, images and awards from governments, universities and organizations mostly from communist countries or other dictatorships: Gaddafi, Castro, Zhdong, Ceaușescu, Tito, Stalin, Khrushchev, Arafat, Guevara. Africa is well-represented, especially Nigeria, but noticeably not South Africa. Peru gets many mentions. There's also a Peace Medal from Japan and a photo with former visiting US President Jimmy Carter.

On the last day, I orchestrated a mini-revolt by asking everyone if they really could take any more temples, monuments and facades. No! I sold this to our long-suffering guide by gently explaining that we had democratically voted in a democratic country: she laughed and set us free. Well, almost.

We wandered the Pyongyang International Autumn Trade Fair for two hours, guideless, rather than the 15 minutes under escort as originally planned. I was allowed to forego the group dinner and movie in exchange for sundowners with another guide in my hotel's top floor revolving restaurant. We were rewarded with a breathtaking 360-degree dusk view of egrets and ibis silhouetted against the 12-minute rush hour and murky Taedong River, both slowly snaking through the barely lit pastel-painted suburbia.

In the lift going down, a young Westerner told me free Wi-Fi was accessible in the casino. It was deep in the bowels of the hotel, one of the country's three casinos. It warms up about 8pm, shuts at 3am, and is smoky and noisy. But the big draw is unlimited Wi-Fi if you spend (and lose) just \$10.

And so I sat until closing time, sending and receiving LINE and email messages and enjoying the BBC, Japan News and just googling, apparently without censorship or monitoring. With my guide's proud boast still ringing in my ears that "North Korea doesn't have Internet; we have Intranet," I was delighted to swap messages and images with several surprised Tokyo compatriots after a week of online silence.

Of course, revealing these hacks to hacks so openly like this may result in the authorities closing such loopholes. But by not revealing them, nobody would know and nothing would be gained, right?

I did feel that—like Vietnam, China and Cuba before them—North Korea is loosening up because it knows that hard-currency visitors require certain freedoms and respect, and that it's pointless denying them the basics they enjoy at home. ●

Simon Farrell is publisher and editor-in-chief of *Mansion Global Japan*, *BCCJ ACUMEN*, *ACCJ Journal* and *The Canadian* at Custom Media.



KAZUKO ARMURA

Series: **Profile**

John Ashburne Freelance

By Eric Johnston

Journalist, author, and photographer John Ashburne has always followed his own path. It led him to Kyoto, where he is one of the very few successful foreign freelance journalists based in the ancient capital. From there, amidst the ancient temples and shrines, Ashburne contributes, or has contributed, articles and photos to the *Wall Street Journal*, *Forbes*, the *Japan Times*, *Newsweek Japan*, *Gourmet Traveler*, *Kyoto Journal*, and a host of in-flight magazines, among others.

Kyoto has a very different information-sharing culture than Tokyo. Ashburne says the key to journalistic success there is that one must be extraordinarily patient and persistent—and not facing an immediate deadline.

“Things move forward at a much slower pace in conservative, traditionalist Kyoto,” Ashburne says. “Building sources and contacts over time is the only way to get things done. That means, naturally, you often approach stories over a longer gestation period. Though I still manage to find myself hurtling towards deadline more often than not.”

A proud Yorkshireman, Ashburne arrived in Japan over 30 years ago. He came at the suggestion of a friend, after deciding a stint as a low-paid grunt at an Oxford-based publishing company owned by Robert Maxwell was not his life’s calling. He first ended up in Gunma Prefecture and found a job commuting to a small Tokyo publisher, where he sub-edited material for high school textbooks.

Ashburne turned up to work one day to find the building surrounded by cops and angry men with punch perms and knock-off Ray Ban shades. “The rightists had taken exception to the inclusion of sections on the Nanjing Massacre and the Comfort Women we were preparing,” he says. “As a naive newcomer to Japan, I hadn’t even considered that anyone might find these topics controversial. I certainly didn’t imagine they’d still be ruffling feathers more than three decades later.”

BUT LIFE IN GUNMA became a bit isolated. After numerous visits to Kyoto, Ashburne, like so many others, fell in love with the city’s gallery and art scene. He made lots of Japanese friends, including musicians and arty types. “Once I started chatting to the Gunma scarecrows on a fairly regular basis, I knew it was time to make the next train ticket one-way,” he says.

Yet unlike most foreigners who come to Kyoto to seriously (sometimes too seriously) study traditional Japanese history, arts, crafts, culture, or Zen Buddhism, Ashburne was drawn more to the Kyoto that doesn’t appear in tourist postcards, academic symposiums, government propaganda, or coffee table photo books. “I’m very much interested in what you might call the Kyoto Underground, the alternate society of radicals, musicians, people of the buraku, and others.”

Ashburne got lucky again when he received his first real break

HE FOUND HIMSELF IN OTHER JOBS . . . PLAYING IN A PUNK BAND AND WORKING ON A ROAD GANG

as a Kyoto-based writer from the legendary, Kobe-based publisher David Jack, owner of the late, and still much lamented, *Kansai Time Out* magazine, which ran from 1977 to 2009. “Dave gave me the freedom to cover stories I wanted to write, and do so in my own voice,” he says. “I met plenty of interesting char-

acters, including former British PM Edward Heath, Richard Branson, and sumo wrestler Chad Rowan, aka Akebono.”

The interview with Branson remains vivid in his memory. “I thought I’d been asked to be there as the photographer,” he recalls. “But three minutes before the meeting, Dave turned to me and said ‘John, you ask the questions.’ I had to wing it, but found out I could do it.”

ALONG THE WAY TO becoming an established freelance writer, Ashburne found himself in other jobs and projects, from playing in a punk band to working as a laborer on a road gang largely made up of Japan-born Korean residents. A key turning point was when he met his wife, a remarkable woman who gave him access to many doors in notoriously closed Kyoto that would not have been possible otherwise. Those contacts, he says, plus an ability to speak Japanese, are crucial for journalists to succeed in Kyoto.

In addition to his writing, Ashburne is also a talented photographer. His works took first prize in the Mazda International Photo Contest two years in a row, and were voted the best in Japan a third year. Photography is a love he’s had since childhood when the powerful impact of war photographs in his local newspaper deeply moved him.

“I grew up in Yorkshire with the massive *Sunday Times* and its photographs dropping through our letterbox,” Ashburne says. “I suppose I was an unusually aware seven-year-old, because the Vietnam War filled my mind. First it was images of Phantom F-4s. Later, with Don McCullin’s ‘Shell-shocked U.S. Marine: The Battle of Hue,’ and AP Photographer Nick Ut’s ‘Napalm Girl.’ Those images were seared into my mind, to the point where, by 1979, I wanted to be a war photographer.”

That didn’t happen, though the belief in photography as a form of journalism remains strong. Despite his love of the written word, Ashburne has a modicum of distrust in its ability to reveal truths and elicit emotions in the ways that the best photography does. Still, he says, at the end of the day, he’s a freelance writer, a journalist.

“I’m one of those poor souls stuck between starvation and liberation, desperation and desire,” he concludes. “All I can really hope for is a paycheck, a byline, some laughs, and the hope that sometime, somewhere, I’ve helped to tell the truth, large or small.” ●

Eric Johnston is Senior Kansai Correspondent with the *Japan Times*.

Sadako Ogata

A DEFINING CHARACTERISTIC of FCCJ Associate Member Sadako Ogata, who passed away in October at the age of 92, was her simple and sincere humanity, particularly manifested in her work with international refugees. Along with the compassion and care she displayed went a fiercely egalitarian attitude toward the role and status of women in society.

She was a role model for women in Japan, where male dominance has long been accepted as part of the natural order of things. She led by example rather than exhortation, by simply getting on with the job.

She was, like her late husband Shijuro Ogata (also an FCCJ member), a self-deprecating person, yet able to project an aura of authority and quiet competence. They both could “walk with princes and with commoners,” and they did—in her case with figures at the highest levels of diplomacy; in his, with the most senior figures in international finance.

A front-page photograph accompanying the *Japan Times*’ report of Mrs. Ogata’s passing showed a tearful Bosnian refugee woman embracing her during her lengthy period as head of the United Nations High Commission on Refugees (UNHCR). She had strength that enabled her to remain calm and collected in the face of strife. Machiko Kondo, wife of FCCJ Board member Robert Whiting and a retired senior UNHCR official who worked closely with Mrs. Ogata, recalls her being asked by a reporter during a visit to a region suffering a severe refugee crisis whether she ever became emotional at seeing the difficulties that refugees faced.

“I cannot go around with tears in my eyes” was her response. “I have a lot of work to do.” She went on showing exemplary devotion to duty at a time of life when many people believe they have earned retirement and rest.



Club news

As well as being a member, Sadako Ogata appeared many times at the FCCJ. On this page, in 1992 before a press conference when she was with the UNHCR; opposite, in 2013, as chairperson of the World Economic Forum, Japan

When I profiled her for the *Singapore Business Times* in 2013 she was still a commanding presence at 86.

Mrs. Ogata had a relationship with the United Nations spanning more than 30 years, including being appointed as UN High Commissioner for Refugees from 1991 to 2000, then co-chair of the Commission on Human Security, and then chairperson of the UNICEF Executive Board. From 2003 to 2012 she was head of the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA).

That career began in the late 1960s, when she was a lecturer in international relations at the International Christian University in Tokyo. She was asked if she would join the Japanese delegation to the United Nations General Assembly in New York. Mrs. Ogata hesitated to take the UN opening, as her career until then had been as an academic. After graduating from the University of the Sacred Heart in Japan she had obtained a Masters in international relations at Georgetown University in Washington and then a PhD in political science at the University

of California, Berkeley. She also had two young children at the time.

“There was a big family discussion and it took a little time,” she told me. “But my father [former diplomat Toyokazu Nakamura] told me, ‘Your grandfather and grandmother will take care of all that. You go.’ I had studied at Georgetown University and had my Master’s already, so going to the United States was not something new. But being married and with children—it was a big difference.” Mrs. Ogata duly left for New York, leaving her husband, son and daughter behind. That initial two-month stint on the Japanese delegation began her long devotion to official duty.

FCCJ Regular Member Haruko Watanabe says that she was the first female Japanese journalist to cover Mrs. Ogata in New York when she was appointed Japan’s first female UN minister. “Mrs. Ogata,” she says, “convinced me to keep working in journalism rather than limiting myself to academic research. The result is that I am the simple and happy

‘Haruko-san,’ rather than the bookish ‘Dr. Watanabe.’”

Guiding other people along their career paths seems to have been one of Sadako Ogata’s gifts. Sachiko Sakamaki, another journalist and former Regular Member of the FCCJ, remembers that, “Mrs. Ogata was someone who inspired me when I was in college to do work related to international affairs.” There are numerous such examples.

While Ogata is well remembered at the FCCJ for the 10 occasions on which she gave press conferences at the Club in her roles for the UNHCR and JICA, Club Members recall other aspects that were displayed during her long association with the FCCJ. Former FCCJ president Kaz Abiko told me that Mrs. Ogata “loved tennis.” “She used to come to the Tokyo Lawn Tennis Club regularly on weekends,” he recalled. “After I joined the Club in 2006, we occasionally played together.”

Mrs. Ogata, a former All Japan Tennis Championships player, learned the sport as a child from her diplomat father. Says Abiko, “When she was a student at the University of the Sacred Heart, she successfully lobbied the university to build two tennis courts on its campus, and she helped organize the tennis team. Empress Emerita Michiko, another Sacred Heart graduate, was another of her tennis friends.”

“She was about 80 years old when I was playing, so that she could not move fast on the court,” says Abiko. “But I was impressed by her steady ground strokes. I still remember her beaming smile when we won a mixed-doubles match against fellow Club members.”

Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi once offered Sadako Ogata a government position. Her husband Shijuro told me in a conversation before his passing in 2014 that Koizumi once called him to ask whether it was acceptable to offer Mrs. Ogata the post of minister of foreign affairs. “Why don’t you ask my wife,” Mr. Ogata responded, rejecting the idea that it was a husband’s prerogative to decide such matters. In the end, she turned down the position, but did become an advisor to the minister of foreign affairs.

Mrs. Ogata came from an elite family. She was the great granddaughter of Inukai Tsuyoshi, who was prime minister of Japan in the 1930s. Her grandfather, Yoshizawa



PM Junichiro Koizumi once called her husband to ask whether it was acceptable to offer Mrs. Ogata the post of minister of foreign affairs. “Why don’t you ask my wife?” Mr. Ogata responded

Kenkichi, was a Japanese foreign minister and her father a diplomat who insisted that Ogata maintain her English lessons wherever the family went. Hence her spoken English was of a quality that could put many native speakers of their language to shame.

She was strongly aware of the need to protect human dignity even among refugees. “Refugee work is not just about charity or protection [of people],” she told me. “It is really about the relationship between state and society.” She was at the height of her career at a time when what she called the “disintegration of states” became a major threat to human security. The former Soviet Union, Ukraine, Yugoslavia were all federated states that disintegrated. Citizens were turned into refugees. In Africa, too, she said, countries became independent and were expected to protect their own citizens, so there were many refugee protection issues. Citizens were no longer under the cover of former empires. They had to be protected by their own new state and there is inevitable conflict. “Those

were the times when there was a lot of fighting, a lot of persecution and death,” said Mrs. Ogata. “I worked very hard at that time.” In recognition of her work, Russian president Vladimir Putin awarded Ogata the Order of Friendship of Russia in 2001 (one of many foreign decorations she has received).

Did she think that the value of the work she and others did with refugees had been fully recognized? “It will need a lot of work to put the principles and the regulations in the Refugee Convention into practice,” she said. “There is a whole lot of refugee-related international law [to be enacted], particularly with regard to internally displaced persons.”

Ogata was as passionate about the role of women in society as she was about the welfare of refugees. When I suggested that women appeared to be achieving greater professional success and recognition now in Japan, she responded smartly (and also a little tartly): “It’s about time. In terms of education, [the system in Japan] is fully open to women. There are certainly professions in which women are doing very well such as in the areas of medicine, finance and local politics,” she said.

Many Japanese women are “quite emancipated,” she said. “I think what kept them behind were child welfare arrangements.” The education system in Japan is not a problem. It’s the health and welfare part that was not sufficient. In the past, kindergartens and nurseries were under different government ministries, and that made it very difficult for mothers. . . . That has been changed and mothers have more [free time now].”

I asked Mrs. Ogata what advice she would offer to young Japanese women who are about to start climbing the career ladder? “Carry on,” she replied. “Try to do whatever you want to do.” That could be a fitting epitaph for a woman who was an inspiration to so many others.

– Anthony Rowley

Anthony Rowley is a former president and first vice president of the FCCJ. During a long career in journalism he has worked as Business Editor and International Finance Editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review* and prior to that on the *Times* of London. He is the author of several books.

Turmoil on the streets of Hong Kong

While traditional media covering the protests is suffering from shrinking pocketbooks and fewer reporters, freelancers using new techniques and support groups are taking up the slack.

By Pio d'Emilia

"I would say my worst experience was when I was tear-gassed by police in the face. The burning sensations lasted many hours. The uncertainty of not knowing what could happen next also was a big psychological factor. Events and information flood in from all over the city and it is hard to gauge, especially when you can't afford a local fixer. You know something is horribly wrong with society when you feel safe among the protestors but fear the police."

— Sean Fleck, 50, "stock footage and filmmaker"

Sean Fleck, who hails from Desert Hot Springs, California, is one of the hundreds of foreign reporters, mainly freelancers, who have been constantly covering the HK crisis over the last months. It is thanks to him and his colleagues, rather than the mainstream media and big networks, that the world has been kept regularly informed about what is going on in the once-peaceful, rich, and fascinating "fragrant harbor."

Journalists are not required to mention their profession or purpose of visit on their Hong Kong arrival cards. Journalists on a temporary assignment or even those without a proper visa don't have to lie or be afraid of being found out, as in many other countries. Even during these difficult and politically tense days, most foreign nationals get a three-month visa, and can find themselves quickly on the road, free to report.

While it definitely is part of China, the "one country two systems" still works most of the time, at least as far as freedom of the press is concerned. Beside a few, some very serious, cases of harassment and blatant violations of the rules (widely reported and denounced even on the local media), Hong Kong is still heaven to report from compared to many other places. "We don't know how long this is going to last," says Tom Grundy, founder and Editor-in-Chief of Hong Kong Free Press. "But we will certainly fight to keep it going as long as we can. HKFP is a very active "run by journalists and backed by readers" non-profit, online news source, which specializes in front line reporting.

THERE IS NO WAY to check just how many journalists there actually are. Some people say a few hundred, some say more than a thousand. Many come and go, like myself.

For months, Hong Kong has been torn apart by antigovern-



Protection at work
Freelance journalist Sean Fleck covered up and marked out as a journalist.

AIDEN ANDERSON



PIO D'EMILIA

ment protests, at times some very violent ones. The police force has become increasingly violent and reckless, something, to be honest, that we are used to witnessing in other countries. (Mine included; remember what the police did during the 2001 G-8 in Genoa?) But this sort of thing was never seen before in Hong Kong. Now protesters, along with doctors, first-aid volunteers, social workers—and many journalists—are being beaten, tear-gassed, pepper-sprayed and arrested. Some were clearly and directly targeted.

One day, I was coming out of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University campus in Tsim Sha Tsui, which after being occupied by the protesters, had been sealed off and literally put under siege by the police. It was on Monday, Nov. 18, after a violent, but unsuccessful attempt to "clean" it up. I saw with my own eyes fellow journalists (mainly local), who were wearing yellow "press" jackets and had their hands raised, being grabbed and dragged into police vans. None of the police attempted to identify them or ask for their credentials.

A few of us foreign journalists even took photos and video of this shameful behavior. They let us go, but I was really worried. In fact, I'll confess, I was scared.

In this splendid, but now deeply wounded and divided city of more than 7 million that is struggling to preserve and defend its "system," the job of journalism has become increasingly difficult and dangerous. All the more so for those among us—an ever-increasing number—who are not full-time employees of big media, and cannot afford fixers, translators, or insurance; those who don't have official assignment letters and have to keep expenses as tight as possible. I am talking about the hundreds of young and old, generous, motivated, brave colleagues who keep us informed about the situation in HK beyond the usually short, very episodic "breaking news" reports on the big networks.

FOR YEARS I WAS a freelancer, so I feel lots of sympathy and respect for these people. I've watched them in action on the "battlefields" of Hong Kong, constantly on the front line, trying to get the best shot. But they also are always helping each other, in a kind of group solidarity which is increasingly hard to find among mainstream media journalists.

I believe they deserve our gratitude. They are the ones who are risking their lives to get as close as possible to the action, to get the best shot and then spend time to edit, select and send it out in the hope that somebody will use it—and pay for it. It's something that no one does if they don't love their job, if they're not sincerely committed, if they don't consider the job, no matter how dangerous and difficult, a duty and a privilege.

Being accurately and promptly informed is fundamental in this situation, where the apparently leaderless, multifaceted "movement" organizes all kind of actions at the very last minute. And just as the "movement" uses several more or less "open" chats on different platforms (mostly Telegram), journalists have set up their own network.

Some, like "Kwan Kung Temple" (<https://t.me.kwan.kungpress>), have close to 10,000 members (once they register, very few bother to sign out) and is run by a group of local media in both Chinese and English. It is available on Telegram and has several different "subchannels." Among those, "take an interview" or "looking for a fixer" are some of the most useful.

You can post a request for an interview, specifying the details and conditions and wait for an answer. Replies tend to come after a few minutes, directly to your Telegram account or via the forum. I have personally used this chat to interview a former policeman who resigned after he realized his son was a protest frontliner, and to meet several protesters who successfully escaped from the "occupied" PolyU. It is also a very efficient way to get updates on the actions of the day, press releases and links to local media and their livestreams.



Protest and survive
Top to bottom: the author on the streets of Hong Kong; the “stonehenge” arrangement of bricks readied for throwing; Hong Kongers call for a “free Hong Kong”; a protester holding the symbol of the protests—an umbrella



WHERE DO YOU DRAW THE LINE? WHAT CAN YOU EXPECT FROM A COLLEAGUE, AND WHAT YOU SHOULD NOT EVEN ASK FOR?

“Kwan Kung Temple” can be joined simply by sending a message to the above-mentioned link; the on-duty administrator will double check your identity and you are on.

ANOTHER CHAT GROUP THAT is particularly helpful is “solo journo support group.” This is on WhatsApp and is a little bit more complicated to join. But once you are in, you are really . . . in. The group was founded by Laurel, a local, brave and very competent journalist, and is open to all bona fide journalists and cameramen, after a double check of their identity. It is mainly an informal chat line for exchanging all kind of information. It is extremely useful for solo journalists who need updates on what is going on and where,

in order to decide what to cover. Before signing-in, you are advised to go to Google Docs, search for “HK Protests 101 for Journalists,” and read it carefully. It is a precious, constantly updated and very detailed document which deals with all sorts of logistical, technical and legal information any journalist would need while covering the protests on their own. The sections titled “Front line Conduct & Police Precaution,” “Gear and Protective equipment,” and “preventive medical measures” are particularly useful, along with a very detailed segment covering what you should do in case of arrest, including hotline numbers and lawyer contacts.

Once you are member of this chat, you can count on literally hundreds of colleagues who share your job, your responsibilities and (hopefully) your values. Which bring us to a delicate issue of solidarity vs competition. Where do you draw the line? What can you expect from a colleague, and what you should not even ask for?

I’ll quote my friend from Desert Hot Spring, Sean Fleck: “That is a very good question. First and foremost, we are here to do a job, so basically everyone is looking to get the best shot or story. I feel that solidarity and cooperation are essential, and that if you act professionally and are curious you usually can get what you want. The last thing you want to be doing is fighting with other journalists because you never know when you may need help.”

I consider our job a privileged one. This is particularly true when somebody pays you a good salary and foots your expenses, like in my case. Unfortunately, the number of people with this kind of support is shrinking while the number of freelancers is increasing. So we owe them a lot. We should show them respect and gratitude. And pay them decently. ●

A list of helpful links for Hong Kong reporters can be found at the end of this article on the FCCJ webpage. www.fccj.or.jp/number-1-shimbun.html

Pio d’Emilia is the East Asia Correspondent for Italy’s Sky TG24.

PIO D’EMILIA / RAFFAELLA CITTADINI



“I thought after 2020, we should design a new Tokyo using wood, and I designed the Olympic stadium as a hint. I learned about Japanese tradition through the eyes of Frank Lloyd Wright, who wrote about the transparency and deep eaves of Japanese buildings. I tried to apply those to the national stadium.

THE 1964 OLYMPIC BUILDINGS WERE DESIGNED TO BE VERY HEROIC GESTURES AND VERY VERTICAL. INSTEAD WE TRIED TO CREATE HORIZONTALITY, INTIMACY AND WARMTH AS A MESSAGE FROM TOKYO.

Tokyo has a long history of wooden buildings and a long history of sustainable urban design. After the Olympics, I hope Tokyo can show this building as an example to the world.”



YOSHIKAZU TSUNO

Kengo Kuma, “Tokyo and architecture beyond 2020,” Nov. 5

ASA-KAI



YUUSUKE WADA

Asa-kai are the FCCJ’s breakfast meetings bringing topics that will be of interest to different Members. The Asa-kai on Nov. 15 was titled **Dental Health and Mental Health—the Missing Link**. The event looked at that link, especially in older people—an often overlooked subject, yet one that is a real and important one, as clinical research in Japan and elsewhere has demonstrated.

Three eminent and practicing Japanese dental experts—Hiroshi Kawazu, Hideo Kawahara and Akira Uehama—who are all prominent members of the Japan Academy of Clinical Dentistry explained the link, including using video evidence.

Their findings show that the connection between simply chewing properly and good brain function is more direct than is often realized—and such chewing habits need to be cultivated from an early age.

For a country such as Japan and for many others that have rapidly aging populations, recognition of the need to tackle age-related conditions has far-reaching medical, social and even financial implications.

THE FCCJ YOUTUBE CHANNEL



Videos of all our press conferences—as well as some events like the Asa-kai—are on the Club’s YouTube channel. Simply go to YouTube and search “FCCJ Channel”.



Subscribe and you will see our videos listed when you visit the site, hit the bell logo next to the “Subscribe” button if you want to be alerted when new videos are uploaded.

FCCJ EXHIBITION

'Tank Man': Charlie Cole memorial photo exhibition



CHARLIE COLE/PPS

Charlie Cole won the World Press Photo of the Year in 1989 for his instantly recognizable "Tank Man" photo that depicted a lone protester staring down four tanks in Tiananmen Square, Beijing.

The American photographer passed away aged 64 at his home in Bali in early September after apparently suffering complications from a motorcycle injury he sustained in Japan in the late 1990s.

Cole arrived in Japan in 1980, and over the next two decades, he shot many telling moments in and around Asia for publications including *Newsweek*, *Time*, the *New York Times* and the *Wall Street Journal*.

When *Newsweek* sent him to China in late June 1989, to cover the student protests, his presence on a hotel balcony overlooking Tiananmen Square incurred the wrath of Chinese authorities who, within minutes, forced their way into his room to retrieve the film. But Cole, suspecting a possible visit, hid the roll inside the lid of his toilet. Managing to avoid police surveillance, Cole brought the precious image to the Associated Press office in Beijing and had it immediately transmitted to *Newsweek* in the U.S.

"I think his action (the white-shirted man) captured people's hearts everywhere, and when the moment came, his character defined the moment rather than the moment defining him," Cole told a BBC interviewer in 2005.

Charlie, we will not forget you.

JOIN THE FILM COMMITTEE...



... on Tues., Dec. 3 at 6:45 p.m. for a sneak peak at the year-end blockbuster-to-be, *Talking the Pictures*, an exuberant love letter to classic films and *katsuben* live narrators from Masayuki Suo,

the director of such indelible works as *Shall We Dance?* Endlessly inventive, quirkily evocative, chockfull of clever period detail and driven by a jaunty ragtime score, the film follows a young man (Ryo Narita in a career-defining role) as he follows his dream to be a *katsuben*, with a few not-quite-legal detours in between. Team Suo favorites abound: Naoto Takenaka, Eri Watanabe, Fumiyo Kohinata star alongside Masatoshi Nagase, Kengo Kora, Mao Inoue, Takuma Otoo and Yutaka Takenouchi in this nostalgia-tinged tribute to filmmaking in the good old days. The director and his star, Ryo Narita, will join us for the Q&A session. (Japan, 2019; 127 minutes; in Japanese with English subtitles)

— Karen Severns



“FOR THE MEDIA, THERE IS SOME SIGNIFICANCE TO THIS ONE-YEAR ANNIVERSARY SINCE MR. GHOSN'S ARREST. BUT MR. GHOSN IS FIRMLY FOCUSED ON PREPARATIONS FOR THE TRIAL AND RIGHT NOW HAS NO PLANS TO APPEAR BEFORE THE MEDIA. MOST OF THE LEAKS FROM THE PROSECUTION WERE MADE BEFORE WE BEGAN SERVING AS HIS LEGAL DEFENSE, AND WE WERE NOT IN THE POSITION DO ANYTHING ABOUT THEM. IF WE DO SEE THE NEED TO RESPOND TO LEAKS, WE WILL.”

Junichiro Hironaka, Carlos Ghosn's Defense team lawyer, Nov. 10

THE CLUB POET

Synergy Net

They burned in my consciousness the KISS formula –
Keep it simple and sweet
So, I have no speech, just a plea, a prayer of sorts:
Judge the art, not the artist,
End the paralysis of silo wars,
The malaise of puffed up ego dancing.

The collective wisdom in this room astounds and humbles –
The aesthetics of Exhibits and of Film
The professionalism of the No. 1 and by definition PAC;
The distinction of Compliance
The protean style of Entertainment
The value-addition and friendship of Association
Last but not least –
The epicurean delight of F&B, especially B!

What we will do, working together,
Puts Watson to shame;
A bountiful harvest in a synergy net
Hug a tree, bring in a new member

Our cup runneth over with love for the Club
And a shared passion to ensure its well-being;
The Typhoon season is behind us
Now it's time for brainstorm
of positive energy.

– Warren J Devalier

“I WAS ARRESTED AND CHARGED WITH BREACHING THE CANNABIS CONTROL LAW AND WAS SENTENCED TO ONE-YEAR IMPRISONMENT AND THREE YEARS PROBATION. IN MY TIME AS A CANNABIS LEGALIZATION ACTIVIST, I HAVE COME TO REALIZE JUST HOW DANGEROUS THE EDUCATION SYSTEM AND THE MEDIA CAN BE, HOW MORE POWERFUL THEY ARE THAN THE TRUTH.”

Saya Takagi, former actress, eco-lodge owner, Nov. 5

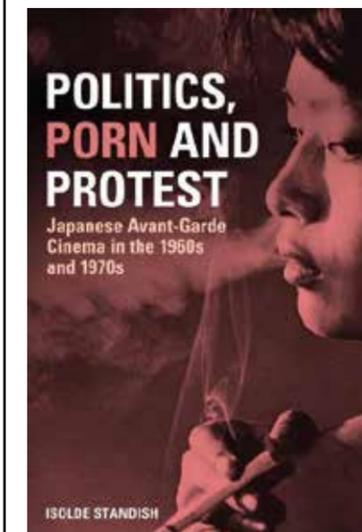
NEW MEMBERS

REGULAR MEMBERS
Zhang Jing is with the Xinhua News Agency

Kazuki Ooishi is a freelance photographer for JP NEWS/Pasya Co. He focuses on press conferences, politics, economics and sports.



NEW IN THE LIBRARY



Politics, Porn and Protest: Japanese Avant-Garde Cinema in the 1960s and 1970s

Isolde Standish
The Continuum International Publishing Group

The Bells of Old Tokyo: Meditations on Time and a City
Anna Sherman
Picador

Waste: Consuming Postwar Japan
Eiko Maruko
Siniawer
Cornell University Press

Japanese Linguistics
Mark Irwin; Matthew Zisk
Asakura Publishing





Lens craft

Towering over
Mount Fuji stands behind buildings in Tokyo at dusk on Nov. 12.
by Tomohiro Ohsumi



Making light of it
Emperor Naruhito and Empress Masako raise lanterns to wellwishers in front of the Imperial Palace on Nov. 9 at an event celebrating the enthronement.
by Yoshikazu Tsuno



Artist of the floating world
Bruce collects found objects on beach walks near his home and arranges them for his photos. While he has been doing this the wider world has become more aware of plastic waste, adding an extra layer of poignancy to his images.
by Bruce Osborn



FCCJ

The
Foreign Correspondents' Club
of Japan

Where news is made