

NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN

April 2014
Volume 46 No. 4
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The Foreign
Correspondents' Club
of Japan

The use of undersea methane hydrates
could mean Japan will have

ENERGY TO BURN

+

*The Guardian's Justin McCurry profiled
Safecast takes its message to the IAEA
Henry Scott Stokes vs. "Victor's History"
Fred Varcoe vs. "comfort women" deniers*



Fit for the future

17th Annual Global CEO Survey
The glass half full¹ / The global rebalancing act² / Three trends that will transform business³ / Creating value in totally new ways⁴ / Developing tomorrow's workforce⁵ / Serving the new consumers⁶ / The need for hybrid leadership⁷

Fit for the future Capitalising on global trends



1,344
CEOs in 60 countries

39%
of CEOs are very confident about their company's growth prospects
See page 5

86%
of CEOs recognize the need to change R&D and innovation capacity
See page 14

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The number of CEOs who believe that the global economy will improve over the next 12 months has doubled to 44%, compared to the previous year.

CEOs are also feeling better about their own companies' prospects, with 39% now very confident of revenue growth in 2014.



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Cover illustration: Andrew Pothecaray

From the President



WITH CHERRY BLOSSOMS AND HANAMI BECKONING, it's definitely time to do something fun, and a glance at the FCCJ's monthly calendar shows a remarkable mix of entertainment options. For all those wondering what benefits they can gain from membership, I'd like to highlight some of the many past and future events our hardworking committee members and staff have been organizing.

First, hats off to Tokyu IRS and president Masaichi Nakauchi. He and his busy staff have been collaborating with several of our committees on events like the March 19 *maguro* dinner – which was a huge hit. Yashima Suisan provided a melt-in-your-mouth selection of their best tuna, prepared and presented by the award-winning sushi restaurant Suehiro-zushi. Their top chef, Eiji Mochizuki, came all the way up from Shizuoka especially for the event. Food & Beverage Committee chair Rike Wootten said, "Over 20 people told me how much they enjoyed the event. And six people said it was the best event they have ever attended at the FCCJ."

On March 24, Tokyu IRS, with Entertainment Committee support, held a "Delicious Tottori Prefecture" dinner featuring the region's famous wagyu beef and sake. Special guest Governor Shinji Hirai was there to meet our members. From April 1, Tottori wagyu T-bone steak is on the menu of the Pen & Quill dining room – the only place in Tokyo you can dine on one of these exclusive cuts. Tottori Prefecture and Governor Hirai have also invited a group of our Regular Members for a visit to the region April 22-23 as part of a press tour organized by IRS and the Special Projects Committee (SPC).

From the beginning of this month, 1,000 JTB sales staff are distributing a new FCCJ brochure advertising the Club as a venue for corporate seminars and events, and a new Tokyu IRS sales staff is joining us to support our banquet event sales. Students from Yokosuka high school are visiting the club for a tour and talk by regular member Jonathan Soble, organized jointly by IRS Tokyo and JTB.

Many thanks to Special Projects Committee chair Haruko Watanabe and the others who helped organize a birthday celebration for our beloved, long-time staff Mohammed Hanif on March 14. Members and staff donned "Happy Birthday Hanif" T-shirts and enjoyed the birthday cake. I'll never forget Hanif-san's smile. It was a truly memorable moment; a great opportunity to show appreciation for his years of service. (See page 18.)

Haruko-san and her SPC committee members manage to magically secure tickets to some of the most popular, sold-out performances in town. Recent conquests include a Takarazuka Revue 100th anniversary performance and champagne lunch on March 15. Upcoming events include: Press Tour to Flagship Atakemaru Cruise and Appreciation of Edo Theater Culture (April 7); Study Tour to Toray Mishima Factory (April 10); world premiere of the musical "Lady Bess" (April 19); and "The Prince of the Pagodas" ballet (June 15).

Entertainment Committee chair Sandra Mori has been the force behind countless superb in-house events since the 1990s. Committee member Dennis Normile oversees the excellent Saturday Nite Live music line-up. I was among the many fans that made up the full house for the Mike Price Jazz Quintet performance on March 8.

The Food & Beverage Committee also oversees an impressive array of events including the FCCJ Sunday Brunch Buffets (Spanish cuisine was the March feature). The popular Monthly Wine Tasting for April focused on affordable wines from "new world" countries such as Chile, South Africa and Argentina.

I must also mention the outstanding film screenings with guest appearances organized by the Movie Committee and chair Karen Severns; the eye-catching photography and art exhibitions in the Bar & Grill and sushi restaurant organized by the Exhibition Committee and chair Bruce Osborn; the monthly "Book Break" dinners and talks by a variety of captivating authors set up by the Library Committee with co-chairs Suvendrini Kakuchi and Koichi Ishiyama.

– Lucy Birmingham

CELEBRATING
LA DIFFÉRENCE!

Eric Johnston finds in
Kansai a wealth of diversity,
a unique view of social
trends and an attractive
cost of living

OVER THE YEARS, FRIENDS IN AND OUT OF JAPAN have repeatedly asked me why I'm not working in the nation's capital. They are, to put it mildly, surprised a foreign journalist would willingly live and work in the Kansai region rather than in Tokyo.

I've never been seriously tempted to make the move, partially because (1) I work for the *Japan Times*, which, thankfully, wants news from this part of the country and understands the importance of a Kansai viewpoint on national and international issues; and (2) there are practical and logistical issues that make it easier to be based here than in Tokyo.

Let's start with the bottom line. One can find office space in my neighborhood of Osaka, an area with quiet parks, cafes, shops, and craft beer restaurants, yet just a 15-minute walk to Osaka's main Umeda area, for as little as ¥20,000 a month. The cost of living in one of Kansai's four main cities (Osaka, Kyoto, Nara or Kobe) is, in general, about 15 to 20 percent less than Tokyo. And you get more – bigger offices, apartments and houses. In these days of cost-cutting measures, especially for overseas reporting, Kansai is, compared to Tokyo, a bargain.

The second reason is geography. From Osaka, Kyoto is 30 minutes and Kobe is 20 minutes away on the fastest trains. By train, Nara is about an hour and Hiroshima is roughly 90 minutes, while Tokyo is an hour by air. There are three major airports (Kansai, Itami and Kobe) to choose from. If you need to get to western Japan or East Asia on assignment, it's easy and, if you know where to look, cheaper – in the case of Okinawa flights, for example, up to 50 percent cheaper – than flying out of Haneda or Narita.

Other professional advantages are less quantifiable and depend greatly on what kind of a journalist you are. If you have to attend lots of official government press conferences, then the Kansai region is definitely not the place to be. But if you have the freedom to do more feature-type pieces, analysis and commentary, and if much of your work is being done over the phone or the computer anyway, then you, and your editors or producers, need to seriously ask if it's absolutely necessary to be in Tokyo.

If your beat is Japanese culture, you can do worse than Kyoto. If your beat is business, and you write on small and medium-sized Japanese firms, you

Eric Johnston is the Kansai-based Deputy Editor of the *Japan Times*.



Mountain man
or city woman
(or vice versa),
Kansai has the
the environment

already know of Osaka's importance. And if you only need to be in Tokyo semi-regularly, then you have to weigh the cost of travel X times a month between Tokyo and less-expensive Kansai against the cost of being based in more expensive Tokyo. You may find that, even with the added costs of flights, shinkansen tickets, and hotels, you're still saving money by being based in Kansai.

As general correspondent, though, Kansai is a great place for its great diversity. Osaka, Kyoto, Kobe or Nara have distinct personalities, petty rivalries, special quirks, and different outlooks on just about everything. Certainly, in terms of living

Japan head to Kyoto. Need to be near good international schools and hoping to live in an "international" atmosphere? Kobe is often named by Tokyoites as their favorite Kansai city, partially because, they say, it's the Kansai city closest to Tokyo in terms of attitudes and atmosphere.

Of course, there are challenges. You do need an ability to speak and write Japanese well above what you can get by with in central Tokyo, and it takes more time to cultivate sources. And when news happens in eastern or northern Japan, you're at a disadvantage. Flights to and from Tohoku are extremely expensive. Given the ongoing crisis at Fukushima,

I REMAIN CONVINCED KANSAI IS A GREAT PLACE IF YOU
WANT TO KEEP EYE ON NOT ONLY THE NEWS-OF-THE-DAY
BUT OBSERVE DEEPER TRENDS

environment, it's hard to beat Kansai. If you want a beachfront view, check out west of Kobe, only about 45 minutes to an hour from central Osaka. If you're a mountain man (or woman), the rural hills of Kansai beckon, but are often only a short train ride (15 to 20 minutes in some cases) to an urban center. How about a Mediterranean climate? Parts of Kansai, especially the coastal areas, are warm most of the year. Prefer the four seasons? Northern Kyoto and Hyogo are the place to be.

And what of the cities? Kansai is great for those whose motto is *vive la différence!* Osaka offers a modern, uber-urban atmosphere with hip restaurants, shops, and entertainment. Those seeking the more historical, refined, and cultured

journos who need to be there or the devastated towns in Iwate and Miyagi prefectures on a regular basis should stay in Tokyo.

In the end, though, I remain convinced Kansai is a great place to be based if you want to keep eye on not only the news-of-the-day but observe deeper trends affecting the rest of the country (and thus national political and social trends). No, you don't have the advantage of being on the front lines of reporting, counting and classifying each new tree that comes along. But the view of the forest that is Japanese society can be much better, even if it is often quite different from what all of the other tree surveyors in Tokyo are saying. *Vive la différence*, indeed. ●



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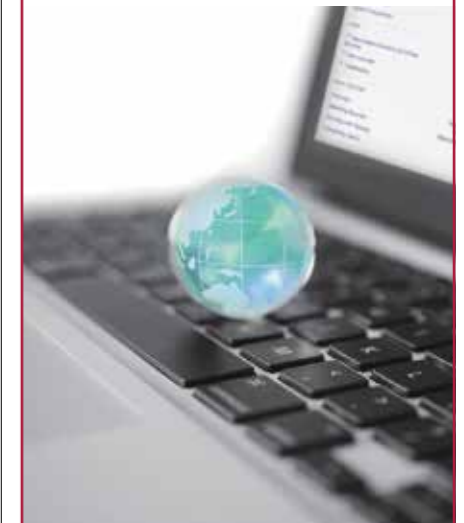
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For those already in on the secret, the application form is available on the FCCJ website or from the 19F Club office.



Drilling the deep: in search of a new energy source

by Sonja Blaschke

“Burning ice” could solve the energy crisis and stop climate change; but environmentalists warn of potential dangers and criticize the lack of sustainability



The Japanese drill ship *Chikyu*, which took part in trial extractions of gas from methane hydrates.

At the end of January 2013, the drill ship *Chikyu* left Kiyomizu harbor in Shizuoka prefecture and headed south-west towards Cape Omaezaki. After weeks of preparation, it was on a mission – an experiment that some hoped could be the first step to a solution for Japan’s energy crisis.

In the early morning of March 12, several pumps on the ship went into action, dropping the pressure in a drill hole some 1000 meters under the sea and another 300 meters under the seabed. Hours later, the researchers were rewarded for their efforts when flames shot out of the flare head on the *Chikyu*: for the first time in history they had successfully extracted gas from a methane hydrate layer, a thick sorbet-like substance in the seabed.

In six days, they retrieved 120,000 cubic meters of gas, far more than expected, before sand eventually choked the machines and the experiment came to a halt. “The next level of methane hydrate research has been reached,” says specialist Professor Gerhard Bohrmann of the Center for Marine Environmental Sciences (Marum) in Bremen, lauding the efforts of his Japanese colleagues.

It was a great success for Japan, which has spent far more money than any other country on methane hydrate research. To diversify its energy mix and become more energy independent, Japan has been looking for years to find a home-grown solution. Since the nuclear disaster in Fukushima in 2011, efforts have increased to find alternatives to the costly energy imports that weigh heavily on its trade balance. The supporters of “frozen natural gas,” or “burning ice,” as methane hydrate is sometimes called, brush aside the fact that its exploration is technically challenging, time consuming and prohibitively expensive. They are enticed by the prospect that it could possibly satisfy Japan’s energy needs for the next century.

Marine scientists are fascinated by methane hydrate, too, but as a part of their basic research into the oceans to discover how its exploration would affect the ecosystem of the deep sea. Environ-

mentalists, however, criticize the lack of sustainability and point out possible negative effects on the environment.

ELUSIVE SOURCE OF ENERGY

“It looks like a McShake,” jokes Yuji Morita, Senior Research Fellow at the Institute of Energy Economics (IEE) in Tokyo and member of the government commission for methane hydrate, when he’s asked to explain what Japan’s energy dreams are made of. Methane hydrate only forms at low temperatures of 4 degrees Celsius or less, and between 20 and 40 bar pressure. Under such circumstances the gas is trapped inside a cage of water molecules that surround the gas-filled core and form an ice-like structure.

It’s the reason why 80 to 90 percent of worldwide methane hydrate reservoirs can only be found in the “stability zone” between 500 and 2,000 meters under the mud layer of the seabed, and a little closer to the surface in the polar sea. The rest is thought to be located in the permafrost in polar regions.

To be able to use its energy potential, though, the gas has to be extracted on site from its icy shell. Hot water, gas or even methanol, an antifreeze agent, can be used to melt the crystal cages. However, the most promising method appears to be the one applied in the Japanese trial, lowering the pressure so that it becomes unstable, thereby setting free the natural gas inside.

Methane, a colorless and odorless gas, is created through the degradation process of organic material like plankton that has sunk to the seabed. As the gas is very light, it usually rises up from between the sediments deep beneath the ocean floor until it gets trapped in the stability zone. Fishermen are sometimes surprised to find their nets floating towards the ocean surface after accidentally releasing methane hydrate from its cool grave.

VAST METHANE HYDRATE RESERVOIRS ESTIMATED

Due to its elusive nature, methane hydrate remained undiscovered for a long time; in fact, research has only intensified since



Pieces of burning methane hydrate demonstrated on the German research ship, *Meteor*

the turn of the millennium. Scientists use data from drillings and numerical models based on decay rates of plankton, but are divided about how much might be hidden under the ocean floor: Professor Klaus Wallmann of the German GEOMAR Helmholtz Centre for Ocean Research Kiel thinks that between 1000 to 5000 gigatons of organic carbon might lie in gas hydrate layers, others estimate 500,000 gigatons. Even conservative estimates are much higher than the reserves of coal, natural gas and oil put together. How much of that can be reached is a different kettle of fish.

Excitement about the potential new energy source is high in Japan, China,

Taiwan, Vietnam, India and South Korea, and all have invested a lot of money in its research. India is thought to possess its biggest reserves though, according to Bohrmann, “the icy mass might not be homogenous and concentrated enough.” After figuratively and literally digging through murky mud for a long time, researchers have found that sandy sediment consisting of sand of a certain pore size is particularly suited for extraction. Luckily for Japan, there are many such reservoirs nearby. The governmental energy organization Japan Oil, Gas and Metals National Corporation (JOGMEC) thinks that about one-tenth of the methane hydrate around Japan is located near Cape Omaezaki alone.

GLOBAL WARMING POSSIBLE THREAT TO RESERVOIRS

Though European countries are relying on Russian gas fields for the coming decades, they also have intensified their methane hydrate research. Marum researcher Bohrmann explains: “70 percent of the surface of our globe consists of ocean, and there is so much we still need to know about it.” Basic researchers like him are trying to find out how the exploration of methane hydrate, as well as oil, affects the ecosystem of the deep sea. They also want to prove what most scientists believe, but have yet to confirm: that methane hydrate stabilizes the continental slopes that form the border between the shelves and the deep sea.

Research is also being conducted on the effects of global warming on methane hydrate reservoirs and the stability of continental slopes. If too much of the methane hydrate layer dissolves, it could lead to mudslides and even tsunamis. And while scientists consider this scenario unlikely, it is not altogether

CONSERVATIVE ESTIMATES ARE MUCH HIGHER THAN THE RESERVES OF COAL, NATURAL GAS AND OIL PUT TOGETHER. HOW MUCH OF THAT CAN BE REACHED IS A DIFFERENT KETTLE OF FISH

impossible. In the “Storegga Slide” 8000 years ago, underwater landslides near the Norwegian coast triggered megawaves that wreaked havoc across Northern Europe. To reduce such risks, scientists recommend that, prior to any exploration, geotechnical tests be conducted and explorations be done only in marginally inclined areas.

Another potentially damaging effect of warming ocean temperatures is if the methane gas rises up from the depths and into the atmosphere. Methane is a greenhouse gas 30 times more powerful than carbon dioxide, and would do extensive damage to the ozone layer.

For these and other reasons, environmentalists are skeptical. “Considering our limited carbon dioxide budget – why develop something completely new?” asks Greenpeace Japan energy campaigner Hisayo Takada. She argues that it would only prolong the dependence on fossil fuels, and that resources currently spent on methane hydrate exploration would be better used to further develop already existing technologies and improve energy efficiency.

ANOTHER DECADE UNTIL COMMERCIALIZATION

If such counterarguments are considered at all by the Japanese government, they are shunted aside. Japan wants to finish developing a suitable technology by 2018. Profitability would be reached if they managed to draw out 100,000 cubic meters a day, five times more than in the 2013 test, Wallmann estimates.

The next step would be commercialization, says Morita, with the help of private companies. Mitsui Engineering and Shipbuilding, which was involved in the 2013 production test, has already declared its intentions to participate.

However, Morita believes that

another 10 to 15 years will pass until commercial extraction is feasible, as the technology must first be improved and the costs lowered significantly. Just to hire a drill ship for one day sets the government back ¥50 million, he says; others say it costs twice as much.

Greenpeace Japan campaigner Takada says, “We don’t have much time left!” She disagrees with the idea that methane hydrate could be suitable to make the transition from nuclear to renewable energy go more smoothly.

“GOLDEN AGE” COULD HELP STOP CLIMATE CHANGE

Wallmann, however, supports the continued efforts to try and explore methane hydrate, and predicts a Golden Age of Gas. “In the coming 20 to 30 years, a big part of energy in Asia will be generated from gas hydrates,” he says. The Japanese government seems to agree. In its latest energy plan it reserved generous funds for methane hydrate research – to be used for further data analysis of previous tests and explorations in shallower areas like the Japan Sea.

Many basic research scientists currently pin their hopes on a German project called “Sugar,” which is being held close to the South Korean coast this year. The project aims to discover if carbon dioxide, a side-product of energy generation in thermal power plants, could be liquefied and then injected into the methane hydrate reservoirs deep under the deep seabed. There, carbon dioxide would be converted into the more stable carbon dioxide hydrate, from which methane can be extracted, Bohrmann explains.

If successful, the “burning ice” from the deep sea would not only satisfy energy needs, but also help stop climate change. Bohrmann is excited about the upcoming experiment: “A cycle is created: We get methane and get rid of carbon dioxide.”

Sonja Blaschke is a freelance journalist and producer for German media based in Tokyo since 2005.

► What happens when a group of radiation-detecting hackers is asked to speak to the IAEA?

The crowdsourcing genie escapes the bottle

by Azby Brown

The initial contact came last summer. It was a polite email informing Safecast that an International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) expert meeting dealing with the Fukushima accident would be held in Vienna in Feb., 2014; it would pay particular attention to “public communication and stakeholder involvement.” Would we consider making a presentation about our radiation monitoring work?

While Safecast doesn't have much in the way of official or academic credentials, we are proud of what we have accomplished. What started as an anxious international web chat between Joi Ito, Pieter Franken and Sean Bonner in the days following 3/11 has grown into a loose-knit but effective group of citizen-scientist volunteers on several continents.

We've created no fewer than seven increasingly full-featured and compact mobile radiation detector (Geiger counter) designs, and built a database with over 16 million discrete GPS-tagged radiation measurement points, all of which are accessible through state-of-the-art web and smartphone maps. Everything is open to anyone to use, free of charge and free to use under a Creative Commons CC0 license. In response to the acute vacuum of information about radiation levels after the Fukushima disaster, our response was to do it ourselves, and to teach others how to do it too.

WALKING A FINE LINE

People on all sides of the nuclear power debate have pointed to Safecast as a source of unbiased information. This credibility derives in part from the group's technical skill, but equally from a jealously guarded independence. As we are forced to repeat time and again, we are not an anti-nuclear group, nor are we pro-nuclear.

We have no political agenda. We are pro-data and pro-openness, and believe people should be aware of what's going on in their environments and involved in gathering and sharing information about it. Our radiation-mapping work after Fukushima has been a de-facto criticism of Japanese government efforts, but we

spend little time criticizing and a lot trying to set a better example.

Because of this, the IAEA invitation sparked an internal discussion as we clarified for ourselves what group goals would justify our participation. In the end, we saw it as an opportunity to open up the debate within the regulatory agencies themselves; to call attention to what citizen scientists who make use of a new generation of low-cost tools and technologies can now accomplish; and to see if we couldn't help set the bar higher for clear, timely communication of radiation and other environmental hazards. We said yes.

Born in the wake of President Dwight Eisenhower's famous “Atoms for Peace” speech given at the UN in 1953, the IAEA from the outset has carried multiple and sometimes conflicting briefs. It is simultaneously called on to support and enable peaceful uses of nuclear technology, prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons, and promote nuclear safety around the globe. Many observers consider non-proliferation to be the agency's most important mission, and give it high marks in this area overall, while acknowledging failures of varying degrees in cases such as Libya, Pakistan, Iran, and North Korea.

And as far as nuclear power is concerned, critics frequently point out that any agency that supports the expansion of an industry will find it difficult to also be its primary regulator. Not many people realize that the IAEA actually has no enforcement power. It can report nuclear weapons violators to the UN Security Council, which can then decide on sanctions, but it cannot force a country to improve the safety of its nuclear power plants. It can make recommendations, which carry weight in and of themselves, but cannot punish violators.

HINDERED BY RED TAPE AND RESISTANCE

Further, the IAEA can only act at the behest of member states. Powerful members can provide funding for preferred programs, discourage others, and influence the agenda in many ways. Finally,

over the years a labyrinthine process of consultation and recommendation has evolved among the IAEA and other international agencies like the ICRP, WHO, and UNSCEAR, and regulatory agencies of the member states, like the NRC and DOE in the U.S. Decision making can be glacial, and proponents of change must usually overcome stubborn institutional resistance. Even those who support this system will admit that it is highly politicized and suffocatingly bureaucratic.

Even if a group of uncredentialed hackers like us were invited in, there was little precedence to presume our appearance would make a difference. After the Chernobyl disaster, the IAEA and its partner agencies embarked on an extensive review of policies and procedures. New guidelines were developed for protecting the health and welfare of populations, new protocols were worked out for prompt international notification of nuclear accidents, new international and interagency agreements codified in writing who was supposed to do what and when in the case of an accident, and all of this was regularly tested and rehearsed over two decades.



The author addresses the IAEA. Opposite, a Safecast group-sourced radiation-reading map

Yet, when Fukushima Daiichi melted down, almost none of it worked like it was supposed to. Most importantly, the IAEA failed to promptly inform the global public of the severity of the situation, waiting four days before giving its first press conference. These failures have been chronicled and dissected at length, but it appeared that a few people in these agencies had watched with admiration and envy as Safecast rapidly built a grass-roots organization with impressive technical capabilities and communications savvy. They wanted to know how we had earned the public's trust while the IAEA and Japanese government had lost it. And they

were hoping we would shake things up in a way they themselves couldn't.

Still, there were hurdles. Insiders hinted of people with influence who might prefer we not be given the chance to speak, either because of the criticisms we might voice or simply because we're not part of the academic establishment. It was also suggested that our usual snarky and flippant style of communication, which works well in a social media context, was as likely to alienate an audience of experts as entertain it, particularly if Japanese delegates felt ridiculed. We spent a fair amount of time preparing and polishing our presentation before Joe Moross, a Safecast radiation detector designer with over 30 years experience, and I made our way to Vienna.

Our slot was late in the afternoon of the second day, when people are likely to be tired and a bit cranky. After softening up the 200+ audience with filmmaker Adrian Storey's short video about Safecast, I explained our organization, methodology, and guiding principles. I described our hardware and design guidelines. I compared the quality and quantity of the radiation data in our maps to what the Japanese government provides, and let the images speak for themselves.

THE BENEFITS OF CROWDSOURCING

Finally, I told everyone that the genie is out of the bottle, that soon everyone will have these capabilities – actually a good thing and not something to be feared. I suggested that the best official response would be to streamline their own data collection and dissemination processes, and make them more transparent, and to allow citizens' groups like Safecast to operate unhindered. When data becomes available from many different sources, people will be able to compare it, and as in most crowdsourcing efforts, the best data will survive scrutiny.

During the following Q&A, many questions were raised about the calibration of our devices, about how we guard against malicious data, how we ensure the safety of our volunteers, and yes, about our credentials. The skeptics were raking us over the coals. At one point, however, a representative from Norway leapt to our defense, telling the doubters that they were missing the big picture, that, “If an accident happens in your country you'll be lucky to have people like this!”

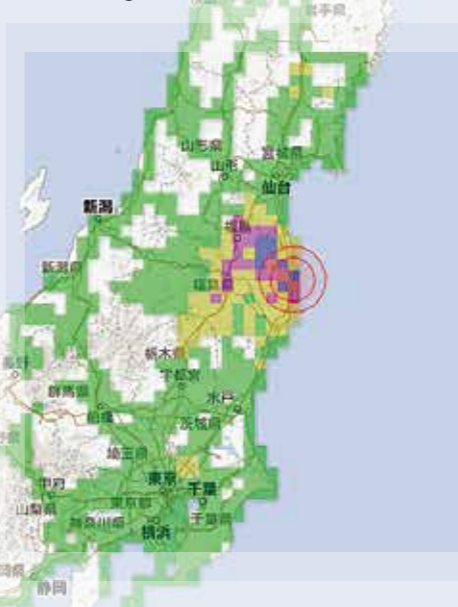
At that the room burst into applause, and we could feel the consensus shift solidly to our side. Afterward, we were approached by several people who told us that they had been skeptical, but were now convinced and intended to spread the word. A couple

‘OUR RADIATION-MAPPING WORK AFTER FUKUSHIMA HAS BEEN A DE-FACTO CRITICISM OF JAPANESE GOVERNMENT EFFORTS, BUT WE SPEND LITTLE TIME CRITICIZING AND A LOT TRYING TO SET A BETTER EXAMPLE.

of attendees even asked us to sell them our bGeigie detectors right then and there.

The Chairman's report of the meeting, IEM6, includes a clear acknowledgement of our principles, admonishing government authorities and agencies to disseminate timely information as widely as possible. And though the tone is typical IAEA-speak there is some language that is clearly from our presentation:

“For government authorities and



agencies, crowdsourcing certainly is the ‘genie that will not go back in the bottle.’ It is necessary to accept that this technology is here to stay and that empowerment of the public is not necessarily a negative development.”

If the tone is as unthreatening to member states as possible, the intent is clear: the presence of active and independent watchdogs will encourage everyone to do their jobs better. At the moment, it is just a paragraph in a report, but its inclusion there allows it to be put on the agenda for discussions shaping the next revisions of protection guidelines. We feel this language sets an

important precedent for the acceptance of independently gathered radiation data.

In the case of Safecast, the data is about environmental radiation, but in principle independent data about food contamination or health screening should also be encouraged and protected. Most importantly, the statement encourages countries to allow independent groups to form, and to protect their independence. Even if these recommendations become actual advisory guidelines, however, it might not presage as big a change as we might hope.

HOPE AND DOUBTS, SIDE BY SIDE

As mentioned earlier, the IAEA cannot enforce its guidelines. Safecast's techniques and methodologies are teachable and scalable, but we also benefited from an optimum combination of talents, non-ideological principles and ethics, and not every group that forms in the future will necessarily repeat this. If groups start publicizing lousy data (and some already do), the whole thing could backfire. We could also imagine some governments propping up groups that look similar but that are really not independent, further damaging trust. Nevertheless, we think a giant step has been taken and we couldn't have hoped for a better outcome.

Our criticisms of the IAEA stand. Their structural problems continue to make it difficult for the primary regulatory agencies to respond quickly and adequately to new information, specifically concerning health risks from radiation. There is a status quo, and it is resistant to change, and colleagues who have tried to make important revisions to protection guidelines after Chernobyl tell hair-raising stories of stonewalling, duplicity, bad faith and prevarication.

Yet I have less doubt about the seriousness and motivation of the people on the front lines. Much of our audience was made up of the emergency responders, the ones who are prepared to put themselves in harm's way to gather radiation data when the next emergency arises, the ones who really have a need for tools like our bGeigie. I see that there are reformers at work, lobbying, writing, reporting, and finding allies. Disasters are like wars in that we're always prepared for the last one, but true preparedness requires agility and resilience. These are guiding principles at Safecast, and if our culture is starting to find a wider foothold, then I think we can claim a new measure of success. ●

Azby Brown is the director of the KIT Future Design Institute, author of several books on Japanese architecture and design and a Safecast volunteer since 2011.



Another
in our series
of Club Member
profiles

Justin McCurry

by Lucy Alexander

Since time immemorial, foreign correspondents have complained about the antisocial working hours imposed by deadlines set by editors in time zones far, far away. Today, the daily print edition may be in its final death throes, yet deadline tyranny has only increased. The pressure of a 24-hour rolling news culture driven by social media means that a foreign reporter is now permanently on call, and none more so than Justin McCurry, *The Guardian's* man in Tokyo.

"You've got to keep feeding the beast," he sighs. "Editors don't care if they call you at five in the morning or if you've done three or four 14-hour days in a row. You're out at night and your phone rings and you have to say 'Yep sure!' while thinking, 'You're ruining my life again!'"

McCurry is a victim of his employer's success. *The Guardian*, one of the few remaining British newspapers that gives its entire content away for free online while continuing to charge for the print edition, was until recently a minority London-centric publication catering to a dwindling band of left-leaning intellectuals, students, public sector workers and media executives. Yet in the last five years it has performed an extraordinary transformation, metamorphosing into an online global mega-brand with 90 million monthly readers and a string of high-profile international scoops.

The smugness with which it wears its reputation for moral rectitude may still nauseate the rest of Fleet Street, but *The Guardian* does not care. Its online success has propelled it far beyond the realm of its traditional print competitors to the stellar echelons of Google, Facebook, the BBC, *The New York Times* and the *Mail Online* – the latter with its 190 million monthly readers kept happy on a diet of health warnings and hatred (of gays, immigrants and working mothers), illustrated by pictures of celebrities "pouring their curves" into bikinis. "I don't feel like I'm writing for a British audience any more," said McCurry.

The son of a civil servant from the West Midlands, McCurry, 44, studied economics and politics at the London School



A FOREIGN REPORTER IS NOW PERMANENTLY ON CALL. YOU'VE GOT TO KEEP FEEDING THE BEAST

of Economics. "I got the drinker's 2:2," he said, which, according to the arcane system of British undergraduate exam marking, implies priorities other than academia. After a few months working as "a pipe salesman of sorts" for British Gas, he took a TEFL course and left London in 1991 for a "very small English conversation school in Osaka."

McCurry spent four years there, and, apart from an 18-month period studying Japanese politics at the School of Oriental and African Studies (SOAS) in London in 1995-96, has been in Japan ever since. "It's scary when I think about it," he says. "I can't imagine myself living here for good."

On his return from SOAS, McCurry got a job as a copy editor with the English-language edition of *Yomiuri Shimbun*, where he stayed for seven years. Working for a hierarchical, conservative Japanese media organization had its frustrations: "We were not allowed to write about anything political or controversial, or any breaking news," he said.

He began writing occasionally for *The Guardian* and was offered the staff job in 2003. Ten years on, the repetitiveness of the Japanese news cycle is beginning to pall: "the perennials are Yasukuni, whaling, dolphins, old people, the Senkakus, suicide, North Korean missiles. By the sixth time round it's pretty difficult to find a new way of saying the same thing."

He also writes for other international titles including *The Christian Science Monitor*, and is amused by the difference in editorial approach. "The professional cultures are totally different," he says. "Americans insist on 'playback' [checking edited proofs] at least twice." We agree that British papers, in contrast, prefer not to let accuracy get in the way of a good story.

Which is not to say that McCurry does not care whether or not Japan is portrayed truthfully in the international media – it's a subject close to his heart. He deplores "wacky Japan" stories, and is an unlikely defender of the reputation of Shinzo Abe.

"I think the whole Abe project is a lot more nuanced than some

of the coverage would suggest," he says. "I don't think he wants to turn Japan into an expansionist military power again. He has to tread this very fine line between honoring his own beliefs – and it's not often in Japan that you get a conviction politician, so in that sense I quite like him – and taking into account the people who helped him get elected, and what Japanese voters and his international allies feel. He is not completely deaf to what the rest of the world thinks."

McCurry is fortunate among his peers in having a large audience for his work, one that has been boosted by the paper's famous scoops on Wikileaks and Edward Snowden. Yet, despite the fact that the *Guardian's* print edition sells at best 200,000 copies a day, compared to the 5-million-strong daily global readership of *Guardian.com*, McCurry still hankers after the old-world satisfaction of seeing his name in print.

"I think we're in a transition period where we still feel that for an article to have any intrinsic value it's got to be printed on some dead wood," he said. "But that will change." Whether he'll be here writing is the question. McCurry may not know where he will be in ten years' time, but he is certain that by that time, *The Guardian's* print edition will have met its final deadline. ①

Lucy Alexander is a freelance journalist and correspondent for *The Times*.

ANDREW POTHECARY

▶ One of the FCCJ's oldest members has struck bestselling gold with a revisionist book on the "victor's justice" of WWII. *The No. 1 Shimbun* talks to Henry Scott Stokes

The revenge of history

by David McNeill

The FCCJ alumni boasts its share of bestselling authors: Robert Whiting, Bill Emmott and Karel Van Wolferen top the veteran's list; Jake Adelstein and Richard Lloyd Parry lead the newer pack. You may, however, have missed the latest addition to this select group: Henry Scott Stokes.

A former bureau chief of the Big Three English language newspapers – the *Times*, *New York Times* and *Financial Times*, Henry's Japanese-only book *Eikokujin Kisha Ga Mita Rengokoku Sensho Shikan no Kyomou* ("Falsehoods of the Allied Nations' Victorious View of History, as Seen by a British Journalist") has sold over 70,000 copies since being released last Fall.

"It has just exploded," says a smiling Scott Stokes in an interview at the Club. "It's selling 10,000 copies per week." That means it's likely that by the time you read this interview the book will have passed the 100,000 mark and may end up shifting a lot more copies than that. "All of which is very flattering," he admits.

BOOKSTORE BONANZA

Henry's success is part of a boom in revisionist tomes about Japan's 1933-1945 long war and the U.S.-brokered post-war settlement that created the nation's modern education and defense charters. Nationalist-tinged books attempting to overturn the war's entire narrative can now be found stacked in special displays in many bookstores.

The nation's Revisionist-in-Chief is Naoki Hyakuta, a fiction writer who has sold millions of books aimed at restoring Japanese "pride." Hyakuta's latest, *Kaizoku to Yobareta Otoko* ("The Man who was Called a Pirate") – an historical novel based on the Idemitsu petroleum company's court battle with a British oil concern – has sold over 1.3 million copies. The big screen adaption of his bestselling debut *Eien no Zero* ("Eternal Zero"), a sympathetic look at kamikaze pilots, is one of Japan's top 10 most successful movies ever.

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe has made public comments suggesting he is a fan of Hyakuta's oeuvre. Last year Abe trig-

gered controversy by supporting Hyakuta's appointment as one of 12 governors to NHK's board, along with several other radical conservatives. Hyakuta subsequently embarrassed Japan's state broadcaster by saying the 1937 Nanjing Massacre never happened.

This background of increasingly unabashed revisionist posturing is important, says Henry. "This book could not have been published two or three years ago," he insists. "It has flourished in an atmosphere where the political miasma is totally different to what I've ever seen before. We truly have this sense of change and we felt that Abe was part of this."

IT IS LARGELY AS A RESULT OF JAPANESE SHEDDING THEIR BLOOD THAT WE ENTERED A NEW WORLD WHERE COLONIES DID NOT EXIST'



MISHIMA'S BIOGRAPHER

Henry describes himself as politically "right of center." He once wrote a book on Japan's most famous radical right-winger, *The Life and Death of Yukio Mishima* (1974), and he returns to Mishima in the new book as something of a lay prophet. He says he has come to agree with Abe on Yasukuni Shrine and likes the "cheerfulness and spunkiness" of the prime minister. "I find myself talking the same language. [Abe] says 'What about Arlington?' The Americans are entitled to have a place to grieve. Why shouldn't the Japanese?"

His essay-style book interrogates the "victor's justice" of the Tokyo war crimes trials and explores Henry's thesis that the U.S., not Japan, bears what he calls "prime responsibility" for the Pacific War. The raising of the Stars and Stripes aboard the USS *Missouri* on September 2, 1945 was the culmination of America's attempt, which had been ongoing since the arrival of Commodore Matthew Perry, to bring Japan to heel, he says.

Henry sides with the staunchest revisionists in attributing the end of European colonialism in Asia to imperial Japan – "Asia's light of hope," he says. "It is largely

as a result of Japanese shedding their blood that we entered a new world where colonies did not exist any more and there is racial equality." The tone of the book is set in Chapter Two, which rhetorically asks: "Is Japan the only criminal country?"

AUTHORSHIP RESPONSIBILITY

Oddly, perhaps, he admits to not knowing exactly what's between the pages of the book that carries his name – he says he reads little Japanese and an English translation has yet to be produced. It was dictated over hundreds of hours to another FCCJ member, Hiroyuki Fujita, then brought to publication by Tony Kase, an old friend of Henry's with connections to the LDP. "Tony Kase had the most to do with this," he explains, but adds: "I have to accept responsibility for it since it is in my name."

The book was triggered by Henry's desire to describe how Japan is changing in a way that he finds unique in his half a century in the country. "When I first came here, the universities of this country were a sea of posters for the left wing. Everyone was left wing except for Yukio Mishima. We don't have those anymore. Everyone is on the right, or right of center."

He says Yasukuni is key to understanding this changing collective psyche. "Right now, the rest of the world is lined up against the Japanese. Any other time, the Japanese public would have got frenetic about this, about being isolated." This time, however, the controversy hasn't led to "hysterical overreactions." "There has been a sort of calmness and maturity."

During the interview, Henry does not tread Hyakuta's controversial path of denying Nanjing, though he does say the event is "unknowable in many aspects." "The stance I take is that ghastly events occurred in Nanjing," he explains. "Responsibility lies with the Japanese military, Chinese military and Chinese Communist Party. And to know the details of what happened is largely impossible."

The book's argument is balder. Chapter Five is titled "The massacre that even (former Chinese leader) Mao Zedong and (nationalist rival) Chiang Kai-shek denied." The chapter argues that there is no proof for the massacre of 300,000 people by the Japanese Imperial Army, as Beijing claims.

"I have never found myself driven into a corner and denied that anything hap-

pened," Henry responds. "You have to say that the homework on Nanjing hasn't been done yet. The debate and the wrangling over how many people died is terribly badly done. It is a work in progress that has only just started."

On comfort women, the war crime issue du jour, Henry says he finds "convincing" the arguments of Osaka Mayor Toru Hashimoto, who triggered a furor last year by saying there was no evidence of Japanese state involvement in herding Asian women into military brothels. "I've been seated on the stool [about this issue] for too long," says Henry. "Why don't I get off?"

ADVICE FOR OSAKA MAYOR HASHIMOTO

Again, the book is much less ambiguous. Chapter Four says the comfort women were high-class prostitutes, paid far better than the soldiers who "exploited" them – ¥300 a month to the ¥10 of an average grunt. America, it says, has a history of slaves; Japan does not, partly explaining the lack of understanding on the issue. "In America and Europe, women in wartime have always been targeted, raped and hurt in history," it says, in comments that echo Hashimoto's.

Hashimoto defended his views at a marathon FCCJ press conference a year ago, but Henry thinks he should not have come. "He was surrounded by a hostile audience." Instead, the embattled mayor should have called his Tokyo presser at a hotel where he would have been surrounded by an army of like-minded supporters, says Henry.

Over a long career, Henry has interviewed many of the architects of Japan's flourishing neo-conservatism, including Abe's grandfather, Nobusuke Kishi and his father, Shintaro, who served as foreign minister in the LDP.

He was born into a Quaker family and dodged a career at the family shoe business in England before talking his way into a job at the *Financial Times*, initially covering commodities. One of his odder near career misses was a failed consortium – with comedian Peter Cook – to buy the satirical magazine *Private Eye*. But he says he quickly tired of the snobbishness and elitism of London. Eventually, he landed a foreign correspondent job, arriving in Japan first in 1964.

It was the beginning of a lifelong love affair, both with Japan and writing. "I just wanted to shine and be glorious in my own way," he says. For better or worse, this book may be his legacy. ❶

David McNeill writes for *The Independent*, *The Economist*, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and other publications.

In his new book, Scott Stokes shuns the Allies' "victorious view of history" for the revisionist perspective that believes Japan was "Asia's light of hope."



▶ After 37 years, the parents of the young woman abducted by North Korea are still waiting for proof of her fate

Megumi's parents refuse to abandon hope

by Julian Ryall



Sakie and Shigeru Yokota at the Club

Sakie and Shigeru Yokota hope that baby steps will help to bring their daughter home.

No strangers to press conferences at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan, the parents of Megumi Yokota appeared on March 24 to relate their bittersweet meeting in the Mongolian capital of Ulan Bator earlier in the month with their granddaughter, Kim Eun-gyong, and their 10-month-old great-granddaughter. They also explained why they had gone back on their previously firm policy of refusing invitations to meet Megumi's daughter, rooted in concern that visiting Pyongyang might be held up by the regime there as a tacit admission that they accepted their daughter is dead.

As both emphasized, they will never make that admission until they are shown undeniable proof.

"I am 81 now and we felt very strongly that we do not have much time left, and that was one of the biggest reasons why we decided to go and meet our granddaughter," said Mr. Yokota.

"We felt that by taking this action, it might stimulate the restart of exchanges between the Japanese and North Korean governments," he added. "Bilateral talks were scheduled to take place in Beijing in April, but those have been brought forward to late March and will include discussions on the abduction of Japanese nationals.

"We believe we made the right decision to go and visit our granddaughter," Mr. Yokota said.

The disappearance of Megumi, then aged 13 as she walked home from school in November 1977, was initially a mystery. And while there had long been rumors that North Korean agents were abducting unsuspecting Japanese nationals from isolated spots on the Sea of Japan coastline, it was not until 2002 that Pyongyang came clean on the activities of its agents.

To date, 17 Japanese nationals are officially listed as having been kidnapped – while supporters of the relatives of the missing say that as many as 300 Japanese may have been taken in the 1970s and '80s in a program to train North Korean agents in the Japanese language and customs.

In 2002, North Korea admitted kidnapping 13 Japanese. Pyongyang later permitted five of the abductees to return home but said the rest were dead, insisting that Megumi committed suicide on March 13, 1994. The Yokotas have never accepted that explanation and demanded proof. North Korea subsequently returned what its officials said were her cremated remains, but DNA tests conducted in Japan proved the remains were those of a male.

The Yokotas have continued their campaign to find their daughter, buoyed by tantalizing reports that she is still alive. Some North Korean government documents given to a support group for relatives of South Korean abductees indicate Megumi was alive as recently as 2004.

With no news and no form of leverage over the North Korean regime, the Yoko-

tas decided in early March that their only option was to meet the granddaughter they had never seen. "We first learned that Eun-gyong existed in 2002, when she was 15, and we saw a video of her in which she said she wanted to meet us," said Mrs. Yokota. "Now, she has been transformed into a wonderful young mother of 26.

"We have spent every day since we first heard of her worrying whether she is well and happy, so it was tremendous to at last be able to see her and to know that she is healthy," she added. "Her baby is plump – just like Megumi was – and she smiles a lot."

The Yokotas spent four days getting to know their granddaughter, talking about everyday things and avoiding any issues that might be deemed controversial or could bring the meeting to an abrupt end. "Our conversations had no political content or insinuations; we were just a family getting back together," Mrs. Yokota said. "Of course, the one thing that we wanted to get the smallest glimmer of information about was Megumi."

None was offered and the Yokotas bit their tongues. "Even though she is our granddaughter, Eun-gyong was still raised in North Korea and has a very different way of thinking to us," Mrs. Yokota said. "It was like a happy dream to be able to meet them, but in the back of my mind was the reason why we had gone there," she admitted. "When we parted, I could not help but say that I think her mother is still alive.

"I'm not sure how much she understood or if it was translated for her, but she gripped my hands and there were tears in her eyes," she said. "I told her 'Please do not abandon hope and we want all the abductees to come home.'"

The Yokotas hope something positive will come out of the meeting between the two governments, but whatever the outcome, they will not give up on their daughter, Mrs. Yokota said. "The first 20 years were the hardest, because there was just no information, and there were times in the first five years when I felt I was on the verge of insanity," she said. "I asked how could a person just disappear; what had we done wrong. I was exhausted and I was close to losing my will to live.

"Then I discovered the Bible, the power of prayer and the support of my church," she said. "I still hope that God may be able to step in and resolve this situation. That kind of hope sustains me and has enabled me to find a kind of calm." ❶

Julian Ryall is the Japan correspondent for *The Daily Telegraph*.

▶ A Club Member believes he's still owed an answer to a press conference question

My question to comfort women deniers

by Fred Varcoe

When two right-wing politicians came to the FCCJ on Feb. 25 to express their views on the "comfort women" issue, the audience had a good opportunity to understand how the right thinks in Japan.

Yoshiko Matsuura and Tomoko Tsujimura, both municipal politicians from Tokyo's western suburbs, spoke about their travels to Glendale, California, to protest the erection of a "comfort woman" statue in a public park. They took with them a letter addressed to Glendale's mayor from the Japan Coalition of Legislators against Fabricated History, signed by hundreds of Japanese legislators.

Here are some excerpts:

- "We are committed to instilling a fair-minded, accurate perception of history in our children."
- "Japanese military authorities never forced Korean women to engage in prostitution. The comfort women were part of a legally sanctioned prostitution system, similar to others in existence throughout the world. They were handsomely remunerated; the word 'sex slaves' is an inaccurate description of the comfort women."
- "Japan is a nation whose culture places great value on women, as evidenced by the fact that works about romantic love were created by women writers such as Murasaki Shikibu."

The speakers, like other right-wingers, claimed that the Japanese military never abducted women. And they absolve Japan entirely by blaming recruitment on local agents. This is to some extent true, but there is little doubt that the agents were working on behalf of the military and that the military was fully complicit in these crimes against humanity. Whatever the chain of command may have been, the women were conned into working for Japanese military brothels. If they had been independent prostitutes, as the Japanese claim, then they would have been free to go where they wanted and sleep with whomever they wanted. Instead, they were textbook examples of human trafficking.

I had a simple question for these women. "Were Koreans forced to work in the mines in Oita?"

As you can see on the video (www.youtube.com/watch?v=LfL8f571hCU), they dodged the question. At first, they said they were only there to talk about comfort women before rambling on about how Koreans and Japanese were working together to win the war, which I thought showed they had a sense of humor – until I realized they weren't joking.

But the question had a purpose. My Korean father-in-law, Lee Jae Hyun, was forced to work in the mines in Oita during the war. Having known him as a man of unimpeachable integrity, I know that his speaking out was not a trick to get money from the Japanese government or companies. In fact, it was a painful memory for him and one he only shared with his family a few years before he died.

So I wanted to know what Matsuura and Tsujimura thought about Korean workers in Kyushu. Were Koreans like Lee Jae Hyun forced to work down the mines? Their reluctance to answer spoke volumes.

If they believed (and I'm sure they did) that Koreans were forced to work, then it shouldn't be a surprise if women were forced to work in brothels for the military. If they had said Koreans weren't forced to work in the mines, then they were calling my father-in-law a liar. I know he wasn't. So for me, their arguments have zero validity.

One of the disturbing aspects of the FCCJ press conference was how Matsuura and Tsujimura sought to turn the issue into a Korean attack on Japanese. Tsujimura claimed that Japanese schoolchildren were being bullied by Korean kids in California and asserted that this amounted to "racial discrimination." She is obviously unaware that Japanese and Koreans are of the same race.

While the statue in Glendale was erected largely at the behest of Koreans, it represents the sex slaves of many nationalities. Dutch, Australian and many Asian women were victims of the comfort women system. Australian Jan Ruff-O'Herne is one of those former sex slaves who have spoken out on the issue. Like others, she didn't want to revisit the past, but Japan's denials of the Korean comfort women forced her to speak out 50 years later.

That people are still suffering was brought home to me several years ago on a visit to England with my Japanese girlfriend, when we went to visit my friend Debi at her parents' house. When Debi's father heard a Japanese was coming to his house, he walked out and refused to return until we had gone. Having been a prisoner of war in Singapore, the mere thought of hearing Japanese or being in the same room as a Japanese filled him with painful memories.

For him, it was a reminder of the hate and violence he experienced. The comfort women are reminded of that hate every day not only through their own experiences, but also through the persistent attempts by Japan to deny that such atrocities ever took place. Would Matsuura and Tsujimura call Debi's father a liar, like they do my father-in-law? ❶

Fred Varcoe is a Chiba-based freelance journalist and reluctant historian



Yoshiko Matsuura and Tomoko Tsujimura at the Club

It hasn't been a good year for the press, as new laws, the press club system, and decreasing transparency stifle access

Northeast Asian media on a shorter leash

by Patrick Zoll

This year's edition of the *World Press Freedom Index*, compiled and issued by the French organization Reporters Without Borders, paints a pessimistic picture of media freedom in the democratic countries of Northeast Asia: Taiwan fell three places to rank 50; South Korea dropped seven to rank 57; and Japan slid down six to 59.

RSF, as the organization is also known, uses a methodology that combines hard facts – such as the number of journalists imprisoned or killed – with a survey of people knowledgeable of the media scene in a particular country. This does give a subjective side to it, admits Benja-

min Ismail, the RSF officer responsible for Asia, but it reflects the opinion of those involved in journalism and it allows scope to discern underlying trends.

OUT OF THE 180 COUNTRIES ON THE INDEX, ONLY FIVE FROM ASIA MAKE IT TO THE FIRST HALF OF THE TABLE

operate behind closed doors remains in effect. The recent Asian Nuclear Power Briefing on the future of nuclear power in Asia, which was hosted by Tepco and chaired by Barbara Judge, the deputy chairman of the company's Nuclear Reform Monitoring Committee, was only opened to journalists after our colleagues from the Foreign Press in Japan intervened.

In interviews, Judge has repeatedly insisted that a new corporate culture has taken root at Tepco. But the fact that Tepco's management thinks that it can discuss the future of nuclear power without media scrutiny raises serious doubts about this assertion. Unfortunately, the Ministry of Environment acts the same way: the rules for media coverage of their "workshop on radiation and thyroid cancer" held in a Tokyo hotel in February were extremely strict.

It is no comfort that freedom of the press has also regressed in South Korea and Taiwan. In South Korea, the main issue is also structural. While the National Security Law (NSL) does not single out journalists, it severely affects freedom of speech and freedom of the press. The key provisions punish vaguely-defined activities against the state and support for

by the domestic intelligence agency and threats of judicial proceedings" in the cases of some Japanese freelance journalists. The harsh assessment of the government's and Tepco's information policies related to the nuclear disaster at Fukushima Daiichi comes one year after RSF first slammed Japan on the same issue. Japan fell a frightening 31 places in the 2012 *Index* due to a "lack of transparency and almost zero respect for access to information on subjects directly or indirectly related to Fukushima," RSF argued.

Tepco is still a big part of the problem, since the company's natural tendency to

Both territories have also seen physical attacks on journalists. The most recent example is the stabbing of Kevin Lau Chun-to in Hong Kong in late February. Only a month earlier, Mr. Lau had been removed from his post as editor-in-chief of *Ming Pao*, a Chinese-language newspaper known for its investigative reporting, and been replaced by someone who is seen as more Beijing-friendly.

Asia, in general, is a dire place for press freedom. Out of the 180 countries and territories listed on the 2014 index, only five from Asia make it to the first half of the table – Mongolia was added to Taiwan, South Korea, Japan and Hong Kong. The democracies in Northeast Asia are role models for the continent, which makes the Chinese-language media in Taiwan and Hong Kong, in particular, relevant beyond the borders of their territories. It is worrying when press freedom in these countries erodes, because the region also features two countries that have been constantly ranked at the very bottom of the table: China came in at 175; North Korea at 179. ❶

Patrick Zoll is chair of the Information Subcommittee of the Freedom of Press Committee.

North Korea. Although the NSL dates back to 1948, the number of cases in which it has been invoked has risen recently: 102 people were charged under the law in 2013 – the most in the past 10 years. In the 66 cases that were ruled upon in 2013, 62 ended in a guilty verdict.

How much this is due to the policies of President Park Geun-Hye is too early to determine, says RSF's Ismail, as she has just completed her first year in office. Amnesty International used that occasion to ask her in an open letter to "repeal or amend the NSL so that it conforms to international human rights law and standards and ensure it is not used arbitrarily or to harass and restrict the rights to freedom of expression, opinion and association."

The Asia chapter of the report accompanying the 2014 *World Press Freedom Index* is titled "Chinese big brother is watching, and exporting its methods." RSF sees Beijing increasingly meddling in media affairs of Taiwan, Hong Kong (dropping 3 to rank 61) and Macau (not ranked). The biggest danger, RSF writes, is self-censorship. In Taiwan, the dependency on the mainland is growing due to the increasing economic ties through the Taiwan straits. RSF is not alone in raising these issues. In a recent study, the Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ) came to the same conclusion for both Taiwan and Hong Kong.

Under the new system, positions that were previously directly elected (e.g. Treasurer) will now be appointed by the Board from among the talent pool of elected directors. This will allow the new

Board to allocate responsibility for positions requiring special management skills (e.g. finance, human resources, house & property and marketing) to elected Associates. And it should solve a thorny long-term problem: journalists being typically more literate than numerate, Treasurer has always been the hardest office to fill.

John R. Harris is a speechwriter and freelance journalist based in Onjuku on Chiba's Pacific coast... and a professional associate member.

Big changes are afoot at the FCCJ, as the formerly disenfranchised Associate Members finally get a say in Club governance

Associates emancipated... at long last

by John R. Harris

That the Dalai Lama drops by every time he visits Tokyo is just one of the things that distinguish the FCCJ from a mere social club. And being part of the place "where the news is made" is a key reason why even those who are not journalists take pride in belonging to one of the world's last full-fledged professional press clubs.

For FCCJ Members who are not foreign correspondents, however, there has long been a flip side to that pride: taxation without representation, the same issue that triggered the American Revolution.

The FCCJ membership consists of three castes. Regular Members (accredited foreign correspondents) are a privileged minority who pay low dues and enjoy the right to vote and the use of all Club facilities. Associate Members (typically businesspeople) pay higher dues, have no vote and are restricted in their use of Club facilities. In between is a group not unlike the "Cape Coloureds" of apartheid-era South Africa: "Professional Associates" (typically unaccredited writers and photographers) who pay low dues but get no vote.

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An Associate nomination panel led by Joan Anderson is seeking willing and talented individuals to stand for election. Associates and Professional Associates who have been Members for at least one year are invited to put their names forward by April 25 via email to: fccjassociatenomination@gmail.com

A LONG TIME COMING
"Having Associates on the Board will strengthen the management of the Club," said Associate Liaison Committee chair Kurt Sieber, a Swiss expatriate who has been an FCCJ Member for nearly half a century. "And, hopefully, it will harmonize relations between Regular and Associate Members."

"There are many small things," Sieber said, ticking off a list of longstanding Associate grievances ranging from tables in the Main Bar reserved for "Correspondents" to overly strict restrictions on Associates' opportunities to ask questions at press conferences. Two years ago, many Associates were appalled by a proposal to spend their money on building a private bar for Regular Members.

"Some Associates are fed up with being

treated as walking ATMs," Sieber said. "We pay eighty percent of the Club's dues, but until now we've had no representation. We have been second-class citizens... and we have had to watch decades of financial mismanagement. So we need to have people with a solid financial background on the Board."

Sieber sees this second-class status as one major cause of the Club's declining membership. "We have lost 333 Members over the past two years – most of them Associates," he says. "We need to offer a better value package to retain Members and bring back those who have left."

By way of example, Sieber cited one reform in recent years that has made life easier for retirees on fixed incomes. Associates who reach age 75 after paying dues for 30 years are now eligible for Senior Membership, with dues reduced by half. From a management perspective, this allows the Club to retain Members who otherwise would have been forced to quit.

Although the list of Associate grievances is long, their strong commitment to the Club was in evidence at the Feb. 21 Associate General Membership Meeting. More than 50 Associates and Professional Associates turned out on a Friday night to learn about their coming emancipation and participate in a spirited discussion on the Club's future prospects. ❶

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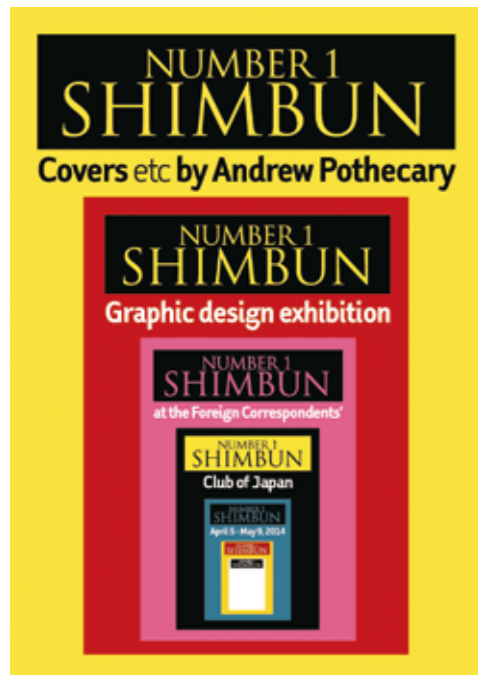
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**FCCJ EXHIBITION
NUMBER 1 SHIMBUN
COVERS ETC**
by Andrew Pothearcy



DESIGN AND JOURNALISM GO HAND-IN-HAND. How to get the story across? How to attract the reader to open the magazine, to read the article, to get an immediate visual summary of the story? And even just to entertain the reader. For No. 1 Shimbun – a magazine that not only contains excellent journalism, but is also partly aimed at a journalist readership – advice from a famous designer on the three rules for achieving good magazine design comes to mind: read the text, read the text and read the text. Each design is a conflation of the facts into a small poster, a concise summary – and an identity. The designs are not only the face of the publication, but play a part in being the face of the Club’s journalist membership.

– Andrew Pothearcy

In the Main Bar and Masukomi Sushi, April 5 - May 9, 2014



MORGAN FISHER

The Saturday Nite Live! event continues to entertain members with an eclectic line-up of great musicians performing a wide variety of genres. Keyboard musician Morgan Fisher and his array of vintage electronic instruments made another appearance in March. His highly individualistic blend comes after years of playing with bands like Mott the Hoople, Queen and Yoko Ono, among others, and was a big hit among the full house audience.

THE SECOND ACT



A GLOBAL FILM VILLAGE: in the Club’s main bar after the screening of *The Act of Killing*: (from left) Karen Severns, Film Committee chair; Alison Klayman, director; and Colin Jones producer of *Ai Wei Wei: Never Sorry*; Argentinian documentarians Patricio Lumini and Maria Sol Nakagama; *Killing’s* director Joshua Oppenheimer; and production assistant Shusaku Harada.

NEW MEMBERS



ALFRED HOLMGREN spent a year freelancing while studying in Japan. He will remain in Tokyo as the games editor of Aftonbladet, Scandinavia’s biggest newspaper and website. He has been writing about video and computer games for Swedish newspapers and magazines since his days at high school, and is also the co-founder, co-editor and art director of Fienden, a sporadically published collection of long-form stories about gaming culture.



HIROYUKI SUGIYAMA is an editorial writer at the Yomiuri Shimbun. He was the paper’s correspondent in Hanoi, Vietnam from 1992 to 1993. He has also spent many years as the Yomiuri’s correspondent in Beijing, covering political and diplomatic news. He is the author of the book, *Haou to Kakumei Chugoku Gunbatsushi 1915-1928*, (“The History of the Chinese Military Clique 1915-1928”) published by Hakusuisha.

**PROFESSIONAL/JOURNALIST
ASSOCIATE MEMBERS**

Pauline Reich, Waseda University School of Law
Howard Ichiro Lim, Incredible Consulting Group
Kazuyoshi Abe, Abe Kazuyoshi Office
Naomi Hatakeyama, Doree Kami Japan Co., Ltd.
Katsura Endo, Hakone Museum of Photography

Yasuhiro Danjo, Shiobara Golf Club
Kazuyuki Umezu, H+B Life Science
Mitsuru Ono, HABA Laboratories, Inc.
Hiroyuki Shibata, HABA Laboratories, Inc.
Tetsu Abe, Abe Chuko-Sho
Shiori Ito, Happyycle Co., Ltd.
Masami Totani, Alpha Partners Law Office
Akiko Kawakatsu, Hibiya Station Law Office
Masanori Takaya, UBS Securities Japan Co., Ltd.

ASSOCIATE MEMBERS

Melanie Kohli, Nestle Japan Ltd.
Isao Hayashi, Sumito Co., Ltd.

REINSTATEMENT (ASSOCIATE MEMBER)
Yukio Masuda, Mitsubishi Corporation

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HANIF-SAN'S BIRTHDAY



THE MAIN BAR OF THE CLUB WAS redecorated for a special occasion last month: the birthday of bar major-domo Mohammed Hanif, who turned 62(ish) on March 14. Staff not only sported some custom-made T-shirts to mark the day but were able to share in a cake feast. We wish Hanif many more years keeping things running smoothly under his friendly eye.



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making the news

For more on the benefits of membership for yourself or a colleague, contact Naomichi Iwamura at iwamura@fccj.or.jp or 03-3211-4392 for further details





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