

A Glimpse of Japan Konnichiwa!

After two years here at the Kitakyushu International Relations Section, and four issues of Bridges, the time has come for me to return to the United States and pursue my dream of a Ph.D. in History. This job has had many pleasures, but the time I have spent interacting with Kitakyushu children and adults as part of International Education projects has been the most memorable. Sharing games and telling stories beats sitting in an office any day! And editing Bridges gave me the opportunity to see many of the great things that this city has to offer, the depths of Senbutsu Cavern and the Yabusame mounted archery exhibition being two of my favorites. It also gave me the privilege and pleasure of meeting a number of Kitakyushu's most interesting personalities and, unexpectedly, making friends with a great many of our readers all over the world through email and letters. I wanted to thank all of you for your support, and ask you to continue your patronage of our newsletter as Sonia Takahashi of Hawai'i takes over for me this month. I am sure that through her eyes, you will discover even more to love about this wonderful city.



I try my hand at Taiko drumming

Farewell,
Craig Colbeck (USA)
Bridges editor, 2002-2004



Population:

1 million; 12th largest city in Japan,
2nd in Kyushu Region

Climate:

Temperate; Mean temp: 15

International Recognition

UN Global 500 Award for Environmental Clean-up; UNCED Local Government Governmental Honors for Environmental Education; Earth Summit 2002 Sustainable Development Award.

Industries

Traditional base— steel & metal, ceramics, machinery, chemicals, shipping
New industries— computer software, environmental technologies, robotics, assistive technologies

Local Life:

- *With 1075 hectares of parkland, 3rd per capita among major Japanese cities
- *Summer season of exciting festivals
- *City of mountains and waterfronts

Current Projects:

New Hibiki Port (open in 2004)
New Kitakyushu Airport (open in 2005)

Website: www.city.kitakyushu.jp/~english/

KITAKYUSHU BRIDGES



A Century of Changes Part Two

In this issue, we complete our look at twentieth century as the City of Kitakyushu experienced it. In this issue, we describe some of the ways that Kitakyushu has participated in cultural exchanges within the borders of Japan and beyond. And as always, this issue covers much more. This time Bridges reports

on new city projects like Fisherman's Wharf, the recent celebration with our Friendship-city of 25 years, Dalian, China, and has hints on where to go for fun in the heat of a Japanese summer.

From Beijing
Beijing International Airport – Fukuoka Airport: 2 hours 20 minutes

From Dalian
Dalian International Airport–Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour 50 minutes

From Incheon
Incheon International Airport– Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour 10 minutes

Access to Kitakyushu

From **Tokyo**
by plane
Haneda Airport -- Kitakyushu Airport: 1 hour 30 minutes
by Shinkansen bullet train
Tokyo Station -- Kokura Station: 4 hours 32 minutes

From **Osaka**
by plane
Kansai International Airport -- Fukuoka Airport: 1 hour (approx.)
by Shinkansen bullet train
Shin-Osaka Station -- Kokura Station: 2 hours

From **Fukuoka**
by expressway bus
Fukuoka Airport -- Kokura Station: 1 hour 19 minutes
by Shinkansen bullet train
Hakata Station -- Kokura Station: 17 minutes

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1-1 Jonai, Kokurakita-ku, Kitakyushu 803-8501 JAPAN
PHONE: 81-93-582-2162 FAX: 81-93-583-7947

Edited by: Craig Colbeck

E-mail: 11030100@mail2.city.kitakyushu.jp
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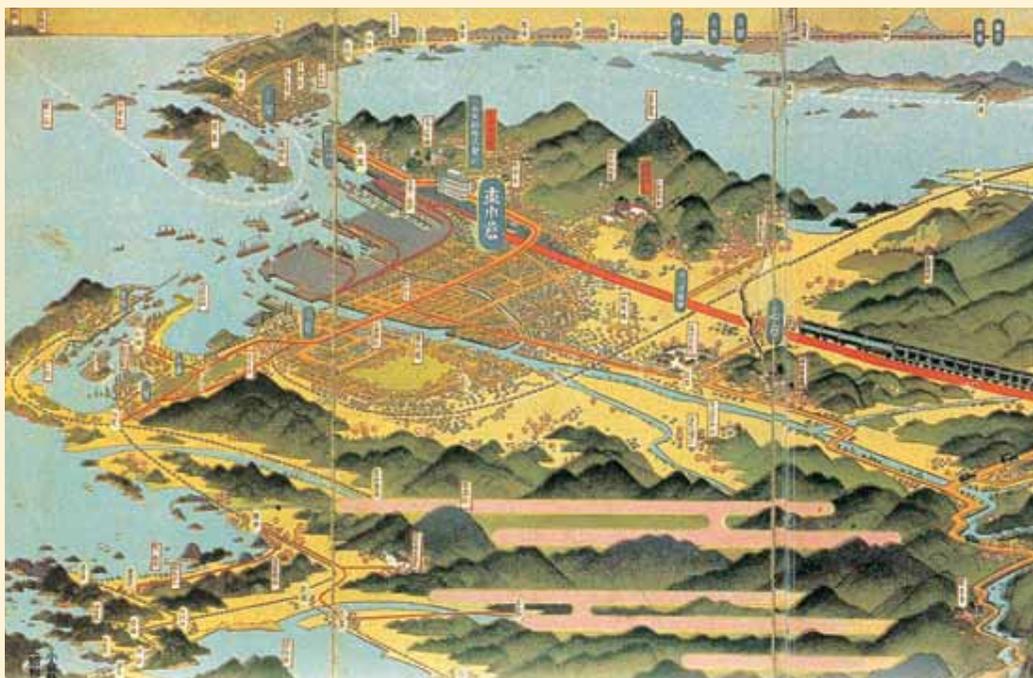
Cover and page 2 photographs from "Kitakyushu Omoide Shashinkan" Hello Bridges Readers! Many thanks to those who have sent us letters, postcards, and emails. Don't forget that we need to hear from you!



Inside:

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New in Kitakyushu
Special Report
Plus: Letter from Kitakyushu, and more!

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A map shows the train and rail lines that connected Kitakyushu to Honshu and Kyushu

Twentieth Century “Koryu”

“Koryu” means exchange in Japanese, but more than just the exchange of goods, it includes the exchange of ideas. We have chosen to take this as our theme as we complete a two-part series on the twentieth-century history of Kitakyushu.

Anyone who knows a bit about Japanese history can tell you that in the late nineteenth century, Japan opened its famously closed doors to the world and radically modernized its government and culture. But few people are aware that the Japanese were not just importers. By first decades of the twentieth century, Japan was among East Asia’s biggest exporters as well. Beginning with low-tech products like coal and steel (both important local industries at that time in Kitakyushu, as reported in our last issue), and moving on to manufactured products, mostly textiles. And although there was nothing like today’s instant cultural interactions through television and the internet, authors like Lafcadio Hearn shared images of Japanese life with the rest of the world.

Kitakyushu prospered in the internationalism of the 1930s, opening a port in Moji that drew passenger steamships bound for major destinations in Asia and Europe during the heyday of travel by steamship. Albert Einstein visited in

1936, when he was a famous physicist but before he became a legend. These ships also brought new goods to the area: bananas shipped from the Philippines became a fashionable exotic treat. Fashions and habits from around the world made their way into the daily lives of people here.



A U.S. serviceman shows Japanese and American children how to shake hands

Investments in International Goodwill

The postwar period has seen Japan become extremely dedicated to peaceful coexistence with other nations. “Koryu” in this era, therefore, has been much more pleasant in the past sixty years.

The 1950s and early 1960s “high-growth years” were high times for Japanese metal and chemical industries, and powered Japan’s recovery from the devastation of the war. But as the country became more prosperous the environmental crises that we described in our last issue, the billowing smoke of factories and the poisoning of bays with industrial waste, made people think twice about the price of prosperity. The city of Kitakyushu reversed its environmental policies to go from one of the dirtiest cities in the country to one of the cleanest. And this dedication to the environment has become the city’s most important resource for international exchange, as the city has put tremendous energy into sharing its experience with the rest of the world.

Every year, the Japan International Cooperation Agency office in Kitakyushu hosts hundreds of trainees from all over the globe. Representing countries that Japan has agreed to assist, the mostly come from South East Asia and stay for periods of one month to four months. Here, they receive training in various fields ranging from firefighting to water purification systems. These efforts allow the city to share its commitment to concepts like sustainable development with the broadest possible reach.

Throughout the world, sister-city relationships are the most



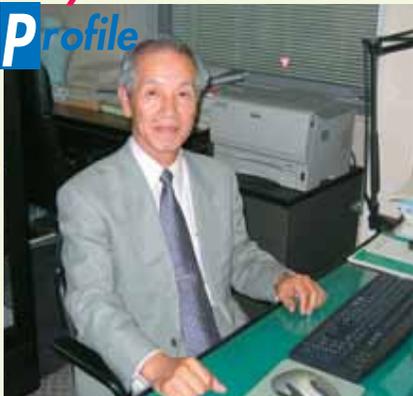
JICA trainees



active international interactions below the national level. For the City of Kitakyushu, sister-city relationships with Dalian, China, Incheon, Republic of Korea, and Tacoma and Norfolk, United States of America, offer the opportunity for citizens to meet and share both common “global” culture, like baseball, and their individual languages and customs. In this city’s case, however, these bonds are also an opportunity to expand into larger business, trade, and environmental projects like the Pan Yellow Sea Cities Conference (which is described in the interview section on page four and five).



Kitakyushu
Profile



Shoichi Yamashita, Director of the International Centre for the Study of East Asian Development (ICSEAD), Kitakyushu



What first interested you in economics?

Well, I needed a job [laughs]. You see, I entered Waseda University in 1959, a time when most Japanese were very poor and mostly concerned with meeting their basic needs. I figured it was easier to find a job when I studied economics.

How did you come to work at ICSEAD?

I was invited here about two years ago by Professor Ichimura,

the former director. At that time I had a post at a private university in Tokyo, but I was interested in Kitakyushu city since they were promoting drastic restructuring projects under the leadership of Mayor Sueyoshi. I considered ICSEAD could play some roles in these processes, so I quit my position and came to work under Professor Ichimura.

Before coming here I had actually done several works with the city, starting about ten years ago. As you know, Kitakyushu did a lot of international cooperation in environmental projects, first with Dalian, China, in providing their knowhow of pollution control. We were very interested in studying these issues. The Chinese government was not really concerned with environmental problems at that time. So we developed quite a close relationship with Fudan University in Shanghai with Hiroshima University group. Chinese professors were interested in learning from us about anti-pollution measures and environmental preservation knowhows and we also wanted to make studies the environmental situation in China.

What major developments has East Asia seen in ICSEAD's fifteen years?

Many of East and South-east Asian countries could enjoy rapid economic growth during the late 1980s and early 1990s, called the "East Asian Miracle". It began with a dramatic appreciation of the yen after the Plaza Accord [of 1985]. Because of the Yen appreciation Japanese foreign investment rushed into East Asian countries. Then there was the very famous burst of the Bubble in this region in the early 1990s, and then the Currency Crisis in 1997, the latter of which really damaged the economies of Thailand, Indonesia, Philippines, and Korea. Recently, we have seen the rapid growth of China. I don't know how long before that comes to an end, although many economists say that it will come after the Beijing Olympics [in 2008]. But who knows, it is plausible, but you can't really rely on that kind of speculation.

Former Director, Professor Ichimura wanted to transform ICSEAD into the leading research institute in the world—not just Japan, the entire world—and he backed up the researchers here to produce the high quality papers that would be published in the leading journals. I am committed to continuing this drive for academic excellence. I am also trying in taking ICSEAD into the area of policy decision making. Since this institute was established by the city government, it is essential that the city sees a return on that investment.

Please tell me about the Pan Yellow Sea City Conference and the tentatively named Organization for the Coordination of East Asian Economic Development.

One of the city's most interesting projects is the Pan Yellow Sea Cities Conference, which this city started ten years ago. Mayor Sueyoshi has called to the mayors and representatives of the chambers of commerce of the ten cities surrounding the Pan Yellow Sea to join. They hold regular conferences, but so far these have only made recommendations on areas of potential cooperation. It is easy to propose these things, but mayors are not in a position to set up new businesses or joint enterprises. This means that there is a lot more that can be done, and is the reason for establishing the Organization for the Coordination of East Asian Development. In the past two years we have been developing the new orientation and the concept behind this new Organization. We started by looking at the keen necessities among the participating cities and focused on four major areas, i.e. manufacturing, environment, tourism, and logistics. We proposed to set up four study groups and expected the groups would start new business. In this system, private enterprises interested in doing international business will be able to access this network to build partnerships. I really see this as a more locally-based effort that can become one of the core business engines in the "new East Asian Economic Region"

What role does ICSEAD play among the City of Kitakyushu's international cooperation efforts?

We are a group of academicians, so we can contribute to formulate policy and planning issues of international cooperation. We have a lot of contact with economists in the United States and Europe, but our main contacts are throughout Asia. One of Kitakyushu's most valuable resources is environmental expertise, and we at ICSEAD do our part to export this to wherever it will help. We have experts in various fields such as foreign trade, industrial restructuring, regional development, small and medium scale industries, quantitative analysis and others. We are now doing much policy oriented studies, and then we can respond to the needs for the new direction of the Pan Yellow Sea City Forum which is one of the most challenging areas of the Kitakyushu City. It is also essential that policy makers have the information they need to make their decisions, which is where we come in.

What role does Kitakyushu play in the East Asian region?

Well, I have already discussed environmental issues. This year the city will open a deep-water port, the Hibikinada Container Terminal, which while not that big when compared to ports already in operation in South Korea and elsewhere, is nonetheless very important for Kitakyushu and also for Japan. This will allow the city to greatly increase the volume of its trade with China, South Korea, and South East Asian countries. China has expanded its container handling tenfold in the past ten years. That is really tremendous. It is very much in Japan's interest to increase its capacity to deal with this trade. The Kitakyushu deep sea port will contribute to it. The Kitakyushu City will take initiatives in promoting various joint projects in manufacturing, environment, logistics and tourism through the organization of the Pan Yellow Sea City Conference.

Fisherman's Wharf Opens



Kitakyushu has a new seaside destination, the Fisherman's Wharf. This name for this spot on the Wakamatsu shore is a bit misleading: it's not just for the fishing crowd. Since the location has a restaurant, wedding chapel, fish market, and beach, over two hundred thousand people who have visited the cluster of buildings on the coast in Wakamatsu Ward since its April opening have come for a variety of reasons, not just to cast lines. Bridges

visited on a breezy but sunny Monday morning to find a young couple making plans for a wedding in the cozy chapel that overlooks the sea, a few visitors taking early lunches of local seafood in the restaurant, and mostly local customers perusing the last of the day's catch at the market.

And of course, fishermen were also well represented. Area fishers regularly catch halibut, blowfish, various rockfish, and even the occasional octopus. Our tasty fell in the season for aji (horse mackerel), a small but tasty fish delicious when breaded and fried or better yet, eaten raw as sashimi. As the spring breezes give way to summer heat, the beach is sure to become a popular family escape.



The view from the wedding chapel

The National Cultural Festival



Mascot "Tobiumemaru"

This fall, the largest cultural festival in the country, the "National Culture Festival," will be held in Fukuoka Prefecture. As the October 30th opening ceremony approaches, anticipation steadily builds. The roughly two-week festival will consist of a tremendous variety of events taking place all over Fukuoka Prefecture. Some examples are performances of traditional music from Japan and around the world, the showing of films from various parts of Asia, and a digital art display. For its own part, Kitakyushu will host seventeen events including a marching band performance, a ballet and modern dance recital, and an exhibition of traditional Japanese dancing. At the end of the festival, November 14th, this city will also host the closing ceremony and grand finale. If you will be in the Fukuoka area in early November this year, please avail yourself of the chance to see some of these events. It is sure to be quite a show!



Japanese "Buyo" dancing

LETTER FROM KITAKYUSHU

Ni hao!
My name is Jiang Chunmei, from Dalian, China. Six years ago I came to Kitakyushu as part of a government training exchange program, under which I spent nine months working with the Economic Bureau here. That was my first trip to Japan, and of course my first trip to Kitakyushu, so I didn't know my way around and was very nervous. But thanks to the many friendly and helpful people, my training here became a very valuable experience.

After that, I returned to Dalian, where I worked in the Foreign Affairs Office. One day, my supervisor said to me "We need to send someone to Kitakyushu to assist with international relations, and since you have experience there, we've chosen you!" Here, I would facilitate communication between the governments of Dalian and Kitakyushu, perform translation and interpretation, and make sure that pamphlets and signs in the city's various facilities do a good job of guiding Chinese visitors.

The "Welcome Home" offered by the people of



Jiang at work interpreting for official guests

Kitakyushu upon my return warmed my heart. Work had brought me back to Japan several times since then, but it had been a long time since I had seen Kitakyushu's downtown. Kokura station, the covered mall, the Uomachi shopping district, the Murasaki-gawa River with its Bridge of the Sun, the City Hall, all came flooding back to me. When I returned to Yahata, the place where I had lived six years ago, Mt. Sarakura stood right in front of me, seeming even bigger than I remembered. I thought of the time that we climbed to the top to have a barbeque and to look down on the city lights as night fell. With Riverwalk, Kokura Castle and the Kokura Japanese Garden, traditional culture, and modern broadcasting and shopping come together. On my days off I go there to shop or see concerts. Kitakyushu's blend of historical and modern buildings and nature is one of the most impressive characteristics. Kitakyushu is like a second home to me. The mountains and rivers are beautiful and the people are friendly. I know that I will enjoy my time here.



Jiang in one of Kitakyushu's parks

Sincerely,

姜春梅

Jiang Chunmei

Fireworks

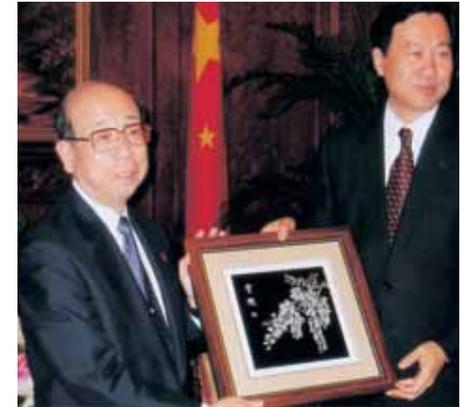
Fireworks are one of the symbols of summer in Japan. Not associated with any particular holiday, their popping is heard after the chirping cicadas and drumming taiko troupes have stopped for the evening. The sound is either young people lighting sparklers and smaller aerial fireworks on riverbanks and sports grounds, or larger displays like the Kanmon Strait Fireworks Festival, where both Kitakyushu and Shimonoseki lob huge numbers of multicolored gunpowder blossoms over the channel that separates the two cities. The larger displays share much in common with other local festivals: spectators dress in *geta* sandals and light summer kimono, called *yukata*, and vendors line the streets with stalls to sell trinkets, anything humans can eat from a stick, and the chance to try to catch wriggling goldfish with paper nets. Whereas festivals mean hard work for some, pulling or carrying carts and beating drums, firework displays allow everyone to stretch out on a blanket, relax, and watch the sky explode.



Fireworks over the Kanmon Strait

Kitakyushu-Dalian 25th Anniversary

Kitakyushu's friendship-city relationship with Dalian, China is one of the strongest and most vibrant of its international city ties. The past several years have seen thousands of Kitakyushu residents travel to Dalian to experience the city first hand as part of efforts to build long-lasting personal connections between residents. And this year, the twenty-fifth anniversary of the opening of friend-ship city relations, was no exception. Two hundred citizens of Kitakyushu of all ages and led by Kitakyushu mayor Koichi Sueyoshi, traveled to Dalian in May to take part in a four day long series of festivities and events. These included cultural events like musical performances,



The mayors shake hands



A joint performance by Kitakyushu and Dalian choirs

culminating in two joint Kitakyushu-Dalian choirs, children's and adults', which sang songs in both Chinese and Japanese. Also present a Kitakyushu Tai chi group, which performed early morning practice sessions with Chinese martial artists, and Kitakyushu's Calligraphy Association, which displayed works in many styles by members. The delegation's visit formed a part of Dalian's own major festival, called "Akashia." There were also academic exchanges as members of the Kitakyushu International Women's Exchange Mission made visits to the Dalian Women's Union and Dalian University to discuss strategies to equalize opportunities for women and men in Japan and China and reduce domestic violence through intervention and counseling.

Behind the scenes of these enter-

taining events, leaders and business people from both cities met to discuss continuing projects aimed at increasing the volume of trade and international cooperation between these two cities. Dalian, a port city of six million people, is experiencing economic growth at an astounding rate these days, even faster than the rest of China. The bustle of new buildings and renovation are all over the city. Although much of China's growth in the past ten years has been in manufacturing, Dalian is focusing on developing the talent to create new technologies by fostering top-rate university programs. All of this means that Dalian is a place to keep an eye on in the coming decades, and that the partnerships developed between citizens of Dalian and Kitakyushu at the Akashia Festival are very important for both cities.



A morning session of Tai chi in a Dalian park