
HIROKO GOTO

*—AN ACTIVIST FOR INTERNATIONAL ACTIVITY AND
JAPANESE CULTURE*

AND

GENKI TAKAHASHI

—AN OWNER OF A PENSION IN LAKE YAMANAKA—

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Hiroko Goto

—An activist for international activity and Japanese culture—

Who is Hiroko Goto?

Surprisingly, she is 100 years old, but she is so energetic. She is from Tokyo, but she moved to Oshino, because she loves Mt. Fuji. When she lived Tokyo, she had got know an interpreter who worked in U.S. Armed Forces, and then, she made friends with a lot of international people. That was the beginning of her international activity in Tokyo and Yamanashi. She worked with people from 15 countries. and another member will speak more about an international activity after.

Her works

She had taught calligraphy and tea ceremony for a long time, but now, she just enjoys it with her friends rather than teaching it.



Her motivation for work

She taught us two tips on her work. One is Omotenashi spirit. She thinks just drinking tea is not "Ocha", and she said a goal of tea ceremony is feeling good each other when they they go home after a tea ceremony activity. So she tries to make visitor feel good with Omotenashi spirit.



Another is 和敬清寂 (Wakeiseijaku). This is knowledge in tea ceremony. It expresses calmness, respecting, cleanness, and silence. In other words, both of a host and visitors respect each other, and tries to make tea tools and atmosphere in a tearoom clean. It is important on tea ceremony, and it is named after spirit of Sen-no-Rikyu. Omotenashi spirit and clean space are her belief, and it can be her respect for work.

Her motto is "Visiting old, learn new".

Onko Chishin means to find new reasoning and knowledge by reexamining and thinking about what you have learned in the past, and to make it your own. It means to learn new things by seeking out the old. Mrs. Goto said that the spirit of creating something new from something old is the most important thing.

Her favorite era was looking back over the past 100 years.

She said it was **the war era**. She was born in 1921. The Taisho era lasted until 1926, so she lived in the Taisho era for five years. Most of her life was in the Showa era, and her youth was in the early Showa era, when gender discrimination was severe. However, there was no war and it was a peaceful and joyful time. She got married in 1942. She said that the time of war was the most memorable time. Mrs. Goto was able to study in school, but later students were deprived of that right because of the war. Japanese people couldn't even speak English. There was no food to eat. It was truly a time of hell, she said. After the war, she told me, she walked alone from Kyoto to Tokyo for a pilgrimage.



Message to today's youth

from Mrs. Goto

No one knows what will happen in the future. The future is dark. War is not good. **Peace** is important. It is important to educate children from an early age. We need to learn from **nature** how to behave as human beings. It is really important to learn from **nature**.

One of the things that Mrs. Goto is most proud of in her life is the "**international exchange**" she has done. She said it was important for everyone to know the world. By the way, she is the one who built the passport center in Tsuru so that people don't have to go to Kofu. Isn't that amazing ?

Tourists in recent years

Many people seem to be enjoying day trips to the area

At Lake Yamanaka, for example, you can have a unique experience of watching a ninja show at the Shinobi no Sato and of course enjoy the beautiful scenery. Even if the trip is only for one day, the visitors are said to leave with enough fun.

Many reporters

In the past few years, many media people have been visiting Lake Yamanaka instead of ordinary tourists. They ask how the spread of the covid19 has affected Lake Yamanaka.



Attractions of Lake Yamanaka for Mr. Takahashi

Lake Yamanaka became a resort in a short period of six months

Now, Lake Yamanaka is a wonderful resort, but it took only six months to make it. Lake Yamanaka is completely rural, so it already had beautiful nature as an attraction before it became a resort. Especially, tourists coming from cities like Tokyo enjoy lake Yamanaka's rural nature as it is.

Many people with a variety of knowledge

There is always full of energy, and Mr. Takahashi himself says that he is able to work in a fun atmosphere. He said that by talking with such people on a daily basis, they supplement each other's knowledge and sometimes feel stimulated.

What Mr. Takahashi pays attention to when running his pension

Hospitality

There are many different kinds of guests. Some of them are very particular, and some of them have problems. It is important to be close to people with various backgrounds and provide customer service that suits each individual.

Corona VS pension "cottontail"

First question was how the damage of corona virus was and what he did to break through



the difficult situation. Before the pandemic, there was **a lot of** tourists from inside and outside of Japan. A lot of people came to Fuji five lakes to see Mt. Fuji and have **special time** from around the world but since the start of the corona pandemic, they had very few customers. So next, I asked Mr. Takahashi “how to spread and tell the charm of lake Yamanaka area”

Make lake Yamanaka a resort area

Mr. Takahashi and Ms. Goto and their colleagues are now on the project named

“Make Lake Yamanaka a resort, 山中湖をリゾートに in Japanese”

Regardless of the pandemic, the degree of familiarity of Lake Yamanaka as a sightseeing spot is not as good as other lake areas like Lake Kawaguchi. As we said at last page, lake Yamanaka has a lot of attractive, so the goal of this project is to make lake Yamanaka a destination for people to travel to. Mr. Goto said, around the lake Yamanaka, there are a lot of people with knowledge and passionate about the project. I am looking for their future. Please visit Lake Yamanaka and cottontail.



↑ Mr. Genki Takahashi