



# Les Clefs d'Or Japan Key News



December 2017, Vol. 39

## Networking with The Ryokan Collection

By HIROMI YAMADA

On October 16th, Les Clefs d'Or Japan's second workshop and get-together with The Ryokan Collection was held at the Restaurant Hiramatsu Kodaiji. In attendance were 12 Les Clefs d'Or Japan and 19 The Ryokan Collection members. As special guests, we welcomed Mr. Onishi, the deputy chief priest of Kiyomizu Temple, Ms. Suzuki, the chief editor of Kateigaho International and Mr. Kukde, the Assistant Vice President of Diners Club International Card Service.

Prior to the seminar, we were shown around "Jugyu-an", the *ryotei* building on the same premise. What makes "Jugyu-an" different from similar establishments is a perfect combination with the *sukiya* architecture, the style of a tea-ceremony house, and the magnificent garden. The garden is on the list of the cultural properties designated by Kyoto City for its beauty and cultural importance. At Jugyu-an, customers are allowed to experience the Kyoto style cuisine reflecting a sense of the season. While viewing the garden with its colorful changing leaves, we enjoyed having informal discussions.

The seminar began with a speech by Ms. Sumiyoshi, our president, followed by an opening address by Mr. Fukunaga, the chairperson of The Ryokan Collection. Mr. Fukunaga highlighted the significance of the cooperation between the two organizations through the meetings and discussions.

The ryokan members gave an overview of some of their unique activities and demonstrations which are offered to their customers. We were able to get a good impression of what they have to offer. It was a great opportunity to get to know other members and to expand the network, as our services in fulfilling the high-end customer's demands will be accomplished by cooperation, knowledge and expertise of other members.

We exchanged the opinions in small groups while enjoying the French dishes served by the restaurant. The Hiramatsu launched their first Kyoto branch on September 19th. During the dinner, we enjoyed a traditional dance performance by *geiko* and *maiko* sponsored by the Kyoto Convention Bureau. It changed the atmosphere drastically as if we were in the ancient Kyoto.

In our everyday activities, we have become aware of the increasing demands and inquiries from customers for the unique and traditional style accommodations established through the Japanese culture. I appreciate for having such a wonderful workshop and get-together with The Ryokan Collection.



## 20th Anniversary Dinner Party

By IKUYO TAKEUCHI

Les Clefs d'Or Japan celebrated 20th anniversary since its founding on November 18th, 1997, with Mr. Simon Thomas, Les Clefs d'Or International President, and Mr. Roderick



Levéjac, the 1st Vice President, thanking everyone for all their kind support. The party was held at the beautiful French restaurant "Auberge de Lill Sapporo" operated by Hiramatsu that has a

long-time friendship with us.

The special 20th anniversary book was distributed to each member. The book contains of our history with valuable records, photos and chronological table.

The party commenced with the opening address delivered by Ms. Mayako Sumiyoshi, our president, and followed by a congratulatory speech by Mr. Thomas:

"I would like to say that we are doing a fantastic job. 20th year is a milestone in person's life as you have to start work and have to leave the support from the parents. It's an important age and on your 21st year, you get the keys for everything to get access for many things. As a member, we try for the very best. People in the past have helped us to get established and now *Team Japan* has to look for the next step to keep moving forward. I am very proud for the members and very glad to be with you on the 20th anniversary."

A greeting toast by Mr. Levéjac followed:

"I am very happy and glad to be here and very proud of all of us. Thanks to Japanese section. Merci Beaucoup!"

The restaurant prepared a large special chocolate cake for our celebration. We enjoyed dishes of scallops and ducks in season and Hokkaido's regional ingredients.

There was also a wonderfully compiled slide show and it brought back past memories that some had tears in their eyes.

The members and former members gave speeches expressing gratitude to the supportive members, the strong will to stand up in founding the Japanese section, the appreciation to the approval of our independency in Budapest, etc. The Suntory Liquors Ltd., who offered champagnes for the party, gave a speech comparing our 20 years to maturity of whisky.

The party closed with a speech delivered by Ms. Kay Abe. She emphasized the importance of thinking back in our history and how we must evolve to create a brighter future.

Thanking everyone for their support for the past 20 years. Vive Les Clefs d'Or!

## October Monthly Meeting

On October 17th, the monthly meeting was held in Kyoto with attendance of 18 members. The report on the 10th Asian Congress which was held in Mumbai, India in September was carried out by the attendees. In the second part, we invited Mr. Tokumo, the publisher of the free magazine "Enjoy Kyoto", and listened to his speech on the history, concept and details of the his magazine.



## November Monthly Meeting

On November 14th, the monthly meeting was held at the Sapporo Grand Hotel with attendance of 29 members. The meeting commenced with words from Mr. Thomas and Mr. Levéjac who were visiting Japan to attend our 20th anniversary party. In the second part, we invited Ms. Homma of the Hokkaido Treasure Island Travel Inc., and were given lecture on the unique experiences offered by them as well as information on inbound travelers in the region.

