

## PAWS AROUND THE WORLD

### PART I

By PAT JOHNSTON

To the Cat Fancy I will be eternally grateful; to it I am indebted for the many wonderful friends I have made that otherwise in the ordinary every day pattern of life our paths would have never crossed.



**Author with Bonzai trees at  
Chinzan-So**

You never sell, place or send away a cat or kitten that a part of you does not go with it. We become so deeply attached to these little furry characters that it is impossible for this not to happen. Having sent several cats and kittens to Japan I was overjoyed when the invitation arrived to judge the Tokyo and Osaka shows. This was indeed an honor and a privilege, I was happy at the prospect of seeing my little ones again, plus being selected to do their shows and conduct two schools.

Gwen Webb, Southwest RVP accompanied me on this journey. She left the mainland a few days prior to my departure to spend some time in Hawaii. I left San Diego October 12 with keen anticipation as to what might lie ahead in Japan, Hong Kong, Rome, Paris, Brussels and London. The date seemed apropos for was it not on this same day that "Columbus" discovered America? I now wondered at what Mrs. Webb and I would discover on our travels. Our itinerary had been expertly set up by the Van Zele Travel Agency so we set forth on our magic carpet without a care or worry.

First introduced to the most delightful of Japanese customs on their carrier as the first part of our trip was on Japan Air Lines. This is the steaming hot wash cloths wrapped in plastic served you before eating or during the flight to freshen up a bit. This is a wonderful custom and though before your departure you find it difficult to believe you are really going on this tour when these are handed you, now you know it is for real and you are actually on your way.

In a torrential downpour arrived at the Haneda Airport, Tokyo about 8:30 P.M. This was Tuesday in Tokyo as you know a day is lost in crossing the International Date line. The rain did not keep the Japanese Cat Fanciers from meeting me, Dr. Matsui, Miss Bess Higuchi, Mrs. Shirane, Mrs. Mori and Mrs. Souma plus many others were there with true Japanese Hospitality. An amazing country Japan, beautiful, glorious and the women are some of the most beautiful I have ever seen. Their complexions are divine and lest I be criticized let's not forget the opposite sex. Very, very handsome gentlemen and such impeccable manners. I know there will not be sufficient adjectives nor time or space to adequately describe all we experienced in Japan in these pages. The flight to Tokyo was a very long one and I was indeed glad that I had taken advantage of the five hour stop in Hawaii.



**Dr. Matsui and Mrs. Johnston, back row left, before bus tour.**

time Tokyo was swollen to overflowing. A true melting-pot, regardless of where you went or were, no group of people were speaking the same language.

I was amazed to see the modernization and progress of these people. Magnificent new Expressways constructed to relieve traffic congestion especially during the Olympics, also to note that it was practically empty of cars. Motorists being creatures of habit would still rather take their chances on the overcrowded streets at their break-neck speed. Anything and everything you may have read about Tokyo traffic is true believe me! For a new and startling experience try a ride there in a taxi or just a ride. They seem to delight in this hazardous way of driving. Passengers seem to pay little if any attention — I mean those that are accustomed to same, sit back relax and/or pray. I cannot remember at the moment which I indulged in.

In the heart of this bustling city surrounded by moats centuries old stands the Imperial Palace. The gardens are beautiful and impressive with the verdure of old shapely pine-trees. All is immaculate and the caretakers were busily at their work in spite of the rain. On this particular day they were women. All dressed alike in an odd sort of ankle length bloomer. They are not paid for this work but after three days they will meet the Emperor. All who choose may volunteer for this work.



**Lunch, left to right; Mrs. Webb, Mrs. Johnston and Miss Higuchi.**

Rose Mallow Arbor. This was the Genghis Kahn Barbecue prepared right at our table.

Dr. Matsui had tours arranged to begin the following day so to be up at the crack of dawn I retired early. I say "I" because Gwen was still in Hawaii and would join us in a few days. Still raining but away we went, Dr. Matsui and I. Tokyo as you know is the largest city in the world with a population over ten million. You can imagine with the "Olympics" being held at this

We had lunch at "Chin-zan-So" which means "Mansion of the Camellia Mountain." Its beginning was in 1867. Now it has been converted into a garden restaurant with an overwhelming popularity. It covers seventeen acres of the most beautiful landscaped grounds I have seen. Despite the rain it was crowded and we had the most delicious lunch in the

We had but two weeks to spend in Japan and were determined not to waste a precious moment of it. That same evening with most of the Cat Fancy members we had a new experience, an authentic Tempurra dinner. We were seated at a revolving circular table and the food prepared directly in front of us. This consists of prawns, eggplant and other items deep-fried in oil, which I understand is changed after each cooking to insure freshness. Japan has countless varieties of food and each in its own is a rare and tempting treat so — follow the adage "When in Rome." Japanese cuisine is characterized by eye tempting arrangement as well as taste. Gwen and I ate or tried just about everything that was placed before us.

The following day we went to Tokyo Tower first. It's the tallest tower in the world. I inquired of our guide why the Japanese decided to erect this tower his reply was amusing: "In the United States you have Empire Building, France has its Eiffel Tower and NOW Tokyo has the tallest tower in the world." It is a 1,092-foot tall structure all steel with a double deck observation platform at a height of 738 feet from the ground.

We visited the Silk Gallery in Korinkaku Mansion. This is the center of silk products, past and present. Seven corridors of silks each more beautiful than the last or so it seemed. While shopping here I saw the Princess Beatrix of the Netherlands, an Olympic visitor who was also shopping.

That evening I attended with the group my first "Kabuki" show. You may have noticed that I have been saying "I," this because Gwen was still in Hawaii and would join us tonight. Kabuki is fascinating, it originated in the 17th century; today it is basically unchanged, and the language is that of the 17th or 18th century. Its popularity is dying among the young people today but its tradition will continue as the Japanese people consider this a part of their cultural heritage. Kabuki is combined drama, dance and comedy. Above all it is color and spectacle. The sets are amazingly beautiful and the costumes gorgeous. Another outstanding feature is that women do not appear on the stage. All female roles are played by impersonators. So great is their skill in copying the feminine mannerisms that many ladies, especially Geisha come to observe and learn.

Krom Kabuki we went to the Mikado Theatre Restaurant. The excellent show lasting one and one-half hours was followed by food which was unsurpassed. Our table was in an excellent position and again the thoughtfulness of the ladies arranging these parties was a source of inspiration. These people are most gracious and thoughtful, leaving nothing to chance, every minute detail is taken care of.

Upon returning to our hotel looking fresh and also filled with anticipation was Gwen. All joined in for cocktails and about three hours chatting. As the next day was to be another full one, especially for me, we all retired.

The love the Japanese people have for their "Neko's" (CAT) is beyond description. There is one gentleman in Osaka (I cannot recall his name) whose Siamese wears strands of matched MIKIMOTO PEARLS, sometimes two. I understand this little cat has been used in

some of their advertisements. Wherever they go if they have been at a cat function the cats go. It is not at all unusual to be seated in a restaurant and feel a gentle nibble on your toes. This was in one instance where in true Japanese fashion we were seated on the floor, having as per their custom removed our shoes before entering. Imagine my surprise on looking under the table to see two of the characters having quite a game with me, I gently pushed them towards Gwen and very shortly she too came up with a look of wide-eyed surprise. It is delightful to see them romping through the lobbys of the hotels having a gay time as only kittens and cats can, and the management paying not the slightest bit of attention. Can you imagine doing such a thing in the good old USA?

With Dr. Matsui I had attended a traditional tea ceremony. This is an art in itself and an aesthetic ceremony which basic objective is to create composure. We then visited Asakusa, the colorful days of the Edo Period are still closely associated with the name Asakusa. Primarily a religious center with the famous Kannon Temple and Shrine located within, it is a unique and popular amusement center.

Friday morning I awakened with pre-show jitters common with some of us judges. Here I was in a strange land about to conduct my first judging school. I did so want it to be a success and hoped that I would be able to convey to all attending the pertinent facts and MECHANICS, exhibiting and last but by no means least the various types of cats. The school was to be held at the Sanno Hotel. This hotel was sort of a second home to us. It is the official billeting post for the US forces in Japan. Bess Higuchi who is an employee of the USAFJ had complete access to it. Bess had very thoughtfully arranged to take her vacation at this time and was at our beck and call. I think now we called on her much too often.

The room was one of the large meeting rooms and expertly set up. Long tables facing each other, full size blackboard, everything I would need. Nothing had been forgotten. Twenty seven members attended this first session. Several had brought their cats (not entered in show) for evaluation. Bess acted as interpreter and she did her usual excellent job as always, everything to perfection. Gwen also attended, I must remember to issue her the customary certificate. To say that Bess was kept busy would be putting it mildly and I was



surprised at the end of the day to find she had any voice left at all. The enthusiasm was most welcome and the questions never-ending and all very constructive. All were taking notes rapidly and that fascinated me. Every now and then I would become so interested in the notes of the two ladies seated closest to me I would forget to go on. However, this was mostly during the time when Bess was interpreting so no great harm was done. We stopped for a lovely lunch served

**Mrs. Johnston, assisted by Mrs. Webb conducting Judges School.**

at the same tables and after a half-hour rest continued. It was over much too soon, I felt I could have gone on and on. Nothing like an attentive audience to inspire one. They too were loath to leave and felt they had learned much but still had a long way to go, however, they were delighted and felt they had a somewhat better understanding of CFA procedure. The Japanese people learn rapidly and I wished I could have had another day at least.

After the school our evening consisted of a Chinese dinner at the Sanno. Saturday morning Dr. Matsui, Bess and I went to the showroom for the final arrangements. It was held at the Officers Club and beautifully set up. All was in order so Bess and I spent the remainder of the day shopping. Shopping in Japan is great fun, there is no limit to what you can find. You name it — they have it, and so inexpensive.

Sunday, the day of the show, came the usual torrential downpour we had been experiencing. I had so hoped for a sunny warm day. However, I did not know the Japanese people, rain would not keep them from attending. The showroom was completely set up and expertly so. The previous year Joan Van Zele had been with these people and instructed them and helped with their show. She being an expert instructor and perfectionist, I could see her fine hand in these minute details.

The short tailed Domestic cat of Japan, called Mike (Mikay) is a delightful and colorful little character. In Osaka I had several. They are tri-colored and here we had a male that I was informed was a proven sire.

All of the cats were in beautiful condition, perfectly groomed and a joy to handle. Not one bad actor reflecting the loving care they receive. Excellent weight on most, especially some of the Siamese. All the exhibitors were most interested in the judging procedure, though they had a CFA show the previous year they feel they are still learning. With their attitude for learning it will not be long before they have accomplished this. Bess was both clerk and interpreter and did her usual excellent work. Dr. Matsui was very busy taking photographs. All was moving well, there were no lagers, cats as called were immediately brought to the judging area. More Shorthairs than Long but they are importing more and more of all the various breeds and colors and it will not be too long before they will be able to have a good sized show. Best in Show was a Siamese male and a very nice one, too. It was so refreshing to see all the exhibitors happy with whatever awards they received, also their good sportsmanship.

The Japanese prefer our way of judging to theirs. Their way is usually held outdoors. Cats are brought on leashes, in arms or carriers. They are placed on long tables together and the judges begin their work. All the cats seem to behave beautifully so I am told. After the show a banquet dinner was held at the Officers Club, more after-show talk and then off to bed.



**Last banquet in Tokyo entertained by Harpists.**

We were given many beautiful gifts, there seemed to be no end to the hospitality of these lovely people. Most entertaining this evening was a Japanese Harp recital. The girls were very talented and we certainly enjoyed the concert. We had been unable to attend their public recital so they came to us. Gwen and I were a wee-bit sad this evening — it was our last night in Tokyo and much too soon, now we must say goodbye to our wonderful new friends.

Tuesday morning we arrived at the Tokyo station to take the "Bullet Express" to Osaka and Kyoto. This station was huge and one of, if not the busiest, I have ever seen. Crowds rushing in every direction. One glance at the steps that lead up to the platform convinced me that without the assistance of porters of which there seemed to be a shortage, we could never make it. Having been told none were available I kept looking and finally did manage to find two boys and they managed between them to get our luggage to the loading platform. Dr. Matsui was waiting to accompany us, Bess was to follow in a few days. A very pleasant surprise was in store for us when our friends to whom we had said goodbye the night before, arrived again to see us off.

The "Bullet Express" is a fabulous train, traveling at 150 miles per hour, it literally flies on the ground. The country at this particular time is so beautiful, comparable to some of ours. Beautiful autumn coloring and such luxuriant foliage the like of which I have never seen. One almost wishes the train did not travel so rapidly that one might enjoy more of the scenic beauty.

Arriving in Kyoto we found it was still raining, but all that was needed was a glance to prove all we had been told was true. Here indeed, was beauty unsurpassed, this was old Japan, beautiful beyond description. Kyoto had been spared during the bombings so buildings and temples were as they had been for centuries. Kyoto is as ancient as it was in 794, when it became the capital of Japan and remained so for over one thousand years. Nestling among purple hills and mountains it is probably the most quaint and picturesque city in all Japan.

Monday morning we had to do the necessary marking of books for our Central Office. In the afternoon we did some last minute shopping as the following day we were to leave for Kyoto and Osaka. Another banquet was held that night at the Sanno with all club members attending.



**Mrs. Webb and Mrs. Johnston standing behind pictures. Seated at right: Mrs. Higuchi and Mrs. Shirane.**



We stayed at the Miyako Hotel, our rooms delightful overlooking the most beautiful gardens. The Japanese are world famous for their landscaping and it was more than evident here.

Dr. Matsui and Mr. Takeda (Osaka Show Manager) took us on a tour of Kyoto. Here we visited a silk factory, the weaving of the materials used in Kimonos. The materials are thirteen inches wide and are then sewn in strips. Kimono's are quite expensive and one of the reasons given for many of the Japanese women Western attire is that it is much less expensive. The dyeing process is very interesting and they still use the Yuzen Process, created by Yuzen Miyazaki, an artist of several hundred years ago.

After this we saw the Kimono Show; I did not realize there were so many varieties, each seemed more beautiful than the one before. The Bridal Kimono is exquisite, we were told that the Bride changes seven times during the ceremony.



**Bess Higuchi and her winning Siamese at the Japan Cat Show.**

Also visited the pottery plants and this especially interested me as I have a knowledge of Ceramics and we copied from them. The great wood-blocking artist was at work, the famous T. Tokuribu, whose fame is world wide.

The dining room at the Miyako overlooked most of Kyoto and the view was so beautiful one almost forgot to eat. Here are many, many temples too numerous to mention individually, however one bears mentioning, Kiyomizudera, dedicated to the Goddess of Mercy and first built in 798. This three storied Pagoda and exquisite trees are one of Kyoto's major attractions.

Our stay here was but two days, then we were reluctantly off again, but leave was necessary as our time was so limited. We drove to Osaka and were met there by the Osaka group of Cat Fanciers and guess who else — Bess Higuchi, of course. Osaka is also a large bustling metropolis, second largest city in Japan and described as the "Venice" of the Orient, a city of canals and bridges. The traffic here is comparable to that of Tokyo.

The Cat Fancy here is also growing by leaps and bounds. Many cats being imported from all over the world. To those of you who have been requested to send cats or kittens, SEND YOUR BEST. These people are keenly interested; they will pay high prices and deserve to begin with nothing but the best. Pets they can get anywhere. The school here was in a large room on the top floor of one of the leading department stores. Thirty members attended, Bess again was my interpreter and their enthusiasm and attention was wonderful. Questions, questions and more questions, they could have stayed on and on and I too enjoyed every minute of it. Gwen attended this school also

and was to clerk for me the following day, so any day now we can look for a new apprentice.



**Mrs. Johnston, Judge of Osaka Show, Gwen Webb Clerking.**

the cats is excellent. Here we had more Longhairs and a lovely Chin-chilla female was my Best Cat. She was a Silver Mesa breeding, I found out after the show, they all behaved beautifully and loved being handled.

After dinner we talked until almost daylight, the topic was naturally cats, theirs and ours. Once again it was time to say Sayonara to these wonderder, wonderful people from Osaka and Nagoya. I had to return to Tokyo the following day for a TV broadcast on NHK. Gwen would remain in Osaka but pick up the same flight that I would leave Tokyo on Tuesday for Hong Kong.

We, Dr. Matsui, Bess and I left for Tokyo. Arriving there I checked in the airport hotel. Bess and I again did some more shopping of last minute items. We then had the most delicious lunch of "Kobe Beef" which is world famous.

The TV Program was "My Secret" and is similar to our "What's My Line." The questions were asked in Japanese and my interpreter was a lovely young lady. The first question was "did I have a partner?" Of course my answer was yes, Paleface. However, it did not take the panel of four too long to guess as the Cat Fanciers and the Neko's in the wings soon gave the show away.

I returned to the hotel and was once more greeted with a pleasant surprise. Mrs. Shirane, Mrs. Mori, Mrs. Souma, Dorothy Irobe and several others had decided to see me once more before my departure the following morning. The distance to the airport made it too difficult for them the following day. So one more final Sayonara and I was saddened at leaving both the country and the wonderful friends. I hate goodbyes at any time, but in such a short time these people had become very near and dear.



**Dr. Matsui at Chinzan-So Gardens**

The following morning Dr. Matsui was there to see me off for the last time. He is such a dear, kind and thoughtful man. He left no stone unturned to make our visit a memorable



one and he succeeded, he and Miss Higuchi and all the others.

At Osaka airport I saw Gwen board the clipper and in a matter of minutes were were airborne. My experience and impressions of Japan will remain with me for many years to come. I was very happy to see Mt. Fuji. I had been informed by Mr. Shirane that on leaving Japan if you are fortunate enough to see MT. FUJI, that means you shall return, and there it was, majestic, towering into the blue, blue sky! Superstition? Perhaps, but it's nice to dream about and indulge in wishful thinking. Take your choice, I have made mine.

Part II will follow in 1966 Year Book

Note about the author: Pat Johnston, CFA Judge and Board Member, Mrs. Walker K. Johnston in private life, is one of the most experienced and popular judges on the roster. For further information see Judges Section.