



# *Dialogue*

Creating the Next 60 Years

## Project Report

September 14th, 2013

ICU 60th Anniversary Project Gallery Lecture:

ICU History and Campus Archaeology

Dr. J. Edward Kidder, Prof. Emeritus, ICU



60th Anniversary Project  
INTERNATIONAL CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY



# Dialogue

Creating the Next 60 Years

ICU was pleased to invite Dr. J. Edward Kidder back to campus on September 14, 2013, to give a gallery lecture as a part of the university's 60th anniversary celebrations. Kidder's talk covered not only a brief history of ICU, but also touched on the ancient peoples who lived in the area, and the cultures that existed throughout the ages. Kidder is a veritable ICU veteran, having taught at the university from 1956 to 1993. He was present during the early years of ICU, as it was developing into the institution it is today.

He held a number of positions at ICU. Among them, he served as Dean of the College of Liberal Arts, and as Vice President of Academic Affairs. He also acted as the first Director of the Hachiro Yuasa Memorial Museum, and as Director of the ICU Archaeology Research Center. In addition to serving in these positions, he also conducted a great number of archaeological excavations, which gave him an intimate understanding of the history of the land upon which ICU now stands.

Kidder's lecture gave the audience a very personal look at ICU's history. He presented a number of slides showing photographs of his time at ICU, including photos of his colleagues and students and of the excavations he





undertook.

## Part One: The Founding of ICU

Kidder began his talk by describing the time just before the university was founded.

The land in Mitaka where ICU now stands used to belong to the Nakajima Aircraft Company. Kidder explained that the ICU campus had been the home of the Musashino Plant, where they built an aircraft called the Ki-44 Shoki, a four-machinegun, single-seater fighter plane that was both fast and could operate at higher altitudes.

Kidder showed an aerial photograph taken of the campus in 1956 and explained that many of the structures were still in place when he arrived in Japan. By 1962, only a few fragments of the old factory remained, and much of the campus, including the dormitories and church, was already in place. He also showed a slide of what was called “East Grove,” a historic building that used to be used to house younger faculty at the time. Many in the audience gasped in recognition at the old photograph, something that happened quite often over the course of Kidder’s lecture.

Kidder explained why the site in Mitaka was chosen as the future home for ICU with a quick overview of the end of World War II. According to Kidder, B-29 bombers flew out of the Mariana Islands, which had been hard-won, and for the bombers, “priority number one was the Musashino Nakajima Plant.”

The reasons for this was that the Musashino plant was making about 40% of the engines made for Japanese fighter planes at the time. It was an important strategic target, and was known as target #357. Over the course of the bombing campaign, 828 planes in 8 sorties had attempted to destroy the plant, but even with all that, it remained standing at the end of the war.



Kidder believes that this was “providential, in a way.” When ICU was looking into the various candidates for the future home of the university, the site may not have been chosen had the plant and its surrounding buildings been destroyed during the air raids.

The reason the former aircraft factory was determined to be the best was because it “was abandoned, and would be easy to acquire, and that sort of thing. But it had this fantastic one building...this building that was intact, untouched, and perfectly usable. Big enough to start a school.”

## Part Two: Early Years of ICU

During ICU’s early years, it implemented a number of innovative policies and programs, for which Kidder believes the university deserves more credit. Many of those innovations have been adopted by other Japanese universities, although in the beginning, they created conflict with the Ministry of Education. Kidder explained a few of those innovations.

The open-stack library concept was revolutionary. At the time, Japanese libraries were generally “possessively managed by some librarian, and you practically had to bribe them to get your books.” With an open stack library, “you can wander through, you browse, you can pick out the book you want.”

The student union building was innovative not only for a Japanese university, but for universities in general. Kidder stated that even the college he attended had had no student union building. It was “totally un-academic. Where you could have all kinds of student activities.”

The ICU dormitories also ended up as a source of conflict, as the Ministry told the university that they “couldn’t have dormitories for both boys and girls on the same campus.” Kidder mentioned his belief that the dormitories are one of the greatest innovations, as many former students still identify themselves by the dorm they lived in.

Another innovation was that student fees were all-inclusive. While other schools



charge building fees, facility fees, and have various other add-ons that increase the cost of tuition, at ICU, while the cost has always been relatively high, the tuition fee has always been all-inclusive.

One of the biggest issues ICU faced was in how to coordinate between the Japanese educational year, which runs from April to March, and the educational years in many other countries, which usually run from fall to spring. This was a barrier to one of the key focuses of ICU: internationalism. ICU developed a three-term system to overcome the issue, and accepted students from abroad in the fall term, creatively implementing the system.

Another barrier to internationalization was that students were required to have four years of university residence in order to earn their degree, a rule that made it almost impossible to offer exchange programs at universities in other countries. Eventually, through some more creative financial paperwork, they solved this issue as well.

Other innovative policies included a drop period for registered courses, reducing





the Ministry's allowance for 12 years of registration down to 8 years, and introducing a policy that allowed for the expulsion of a student who received three terms of D grades in a row.

Kidder continued.

"In our heyday, we were taking about 1 out of 20 applicants through the regular examination system. We were very, very selective and they were very, very bright...you had to circumvent, you had to be very devious, and sometimes you had to come very close...to the margin to beat some of those (Ministry of Education) regulations. (But) over time, things have changed... greatly. And most of those (problems) don't apply today the way they did."

## Part Three: Archaeological History of the Area

Kidder got into the meat of his talk with a brief discussion of the archaeological significance of the area around ICU. He summarized the history of ancient geological movements that led to the creation of land bridges between Japan and the continent. He explained that it was during these eras that the megafauna such as mammoths and giant deer were introduced to Japan. He explained that, much later on, the Jomon Period was a "fantastically rich period in Japanese history," when temperatures were warmer than they are today. Kidder described some of his findings using photographs of some of the digs he conducted while in Japan.

The land under ICU is "just one of many...maybe 50 good sites along the Nogawa...it was apparently a very, very pleasant place to be (during) the early Jomon times, the middle Jomon, around 3000, 4000BC. There are sites all the way up and down the valley...it leads down to the Tamagawa. The guess is that 50 more should be dug in the region."

Rivers in Japan are managed by the national government, and it was next to the Nogawa that Kidder and his colleagues got their "first big break." It was called "Location 28." In order to accommodate the construction of a golf





course, the river was going to be redirected. During the excavation, the archaeologists and students dug down through layers of Jomon Era relics all the way down to the Paleolithic era.

The reason the findings were so important was because it was the first time “we had a full sequence of Paleolithic tool types from top to bottom, going back about 28000 years.”

Kidder showed a slide of some of the pieces they discovered arranged in chronological order. The older pieces near the bottom of the photograph included roughly cut hand axes and scrapers, but the audience could follow the passage of time in the increased sophistication of the tools as they went up to the top of the photograph, which included smaller pieces which were balanced and shaped and, “therefore can be used for points - for arrow or spear points because the trajectory will be predictable.”

They also discovered a great number of tiny tools called microliths, which could be hammered into wooden hammers and were perhaps used to cut grass and other plants. Most of the obsidian used to make the tools would have come from the mountains in modern-day Nagano Prefecture. Kidder explained that the fact that they would go so far to get the best materials tells archaeologists a great deal about their culture.

Apparently ICU was expanding at a fantastic rate by 1957, and Kidder described how he offered to teach a course in archaeology. They began the course with excavations on campus, but at the time Kidder was “terribly ignorant of what the law was demanding in regard to how one went about this sort of thing.” He asked the university’s lawyer to look it up for him, and eventually Kidder signed a few papers and thought that he was covered.





However, three or four year later he received a letter from the Cultural Properties division at the Agency for Cultural Affairs stating that he had been digging illegally in “the sacred soil of Japan.” Luckily, it turned out that the office was run by a man who was a graduate student at Kyoto University when Kidder was there on a Fulbright grant. He told Kidder that while they knew he was digging, unfortunately Japanese law did not allow a foreigner to run an archaeological excavation in Japan. Kidder would have to find a Japanese person to sign the papers for him, and then continue to do his work in that way which he did. Eventually, the Agency allowed him to sign his own name to the work, as “everyone (knew) this (was) a farce.”

After the ICU Archaeological Research Center was formed in 1975, they completed 15 excavations, and Kidder said that he was told that he was “the only foreigner who was ever allowed to dig or conduct excavations in Japan.”

Many of their digs were conducted in Koganei, which at the time was seeing a big increase in corporate relocation. As the law requires excavations to be completed on a site before it is developed, Kidder and his colleagues, sometimes numbering as many as 150 students from various schools around Tokyo, did a great amount of work in the area.

Kidder described some of their finds, from a figurine his wife discovered while walking on the hillside one day, to a stone floor which Kidder believes is the only existing one in the area. Another very interesting find was made almost accidentally when the gardeners at the nearby golf course told them of something they found while moving a tree.

That particular dig started in 1973 and lasted two years. By 1974, they had discovered the remnants of a house, with the double runoff ditch that would surround it, holes for posts to hold up the roof, the fireplace, and other items. But the most interesting item was a pot buried beneath where the entrance would have been: a placenta pot, which is thought to have been used to store the



placenta and other material produced after a child is born. The group had never found such an item before.

ICU's campus was a rich source of archaeological treasures, from arrowheads and axes from all eras, to stone weights, pots, fishing gear and earrings that had such a unique polish and finish that Kidder believes they may have been imported from outside of Japan.

#### Part Four: Conclusion

Kidder's easy speaking style and warm, joking manner had the room ringing with comfortable laughter for the entire hour. It seemed to be less a lecture, than it was a relaxed conversation among friends. Kidder concluded his lecture with a photograph of the Honkan as it appeared in 1957. In some ways, the building was almost unrecognizable, as it had not yet been renovated and the trees around it had not yet grown into the lush green bounty we see today. But, to Kidder, the heart of the building was unchanged.

"It was...it is a fantastic building. It housed everything we had at the time. There was just no other place to put anything. The whole library was on the second floor. The science people were down there. We had offices on one side and classes on the other side...to me, this is the sacred soil of Japan...this building is...the core of ICU. And I think that every generation of student will see this as what he or she remembers most...I think we should ensure that it becomes the iconic image of ICU."

