

As A-bomb survivors age, Japanese pass storytelling to young

By Mari Yamaguchi
The Associated Press

KUNITACHI, Japan — On a recent weekend, an 84-year-old survivor of the Nagasaki atomic bombing retraced his movements on a map: the inferno during his 12-mile walk home, the “black rain” of falling radioactive particles, and how he felt sick days later.

His audience of eight listened intently, some asking questions and taking notes. They hope to tell his story to future generations after he is gone, to take their listeners to the scene on August 9, 1945, the way Shigeyuki Katsura saw and felt it.

As part of a government-organized program in the western Tokyo suburb of Kunitachi, 20 trainees ranging from their 20s to their 70s are studying wartime history, taking public-speech lessons from a television anchor, and hearing stories from Katsura and another Kunitachi resident who survived Hiroshima.

“It’s been 70 years since the bombings, and we survivors are getting old. Time is limited and we must hurry,” said Terumi Tanaka, the 83-year-old head of a national group, the Tokyo-based Japan Confederation of A and H Bomb Sufferers’ Organizations.

In a way, they are going backward in this digital age, learning face-to-face from their elders in order to carry on a storytelling tradition. It is not unlike *kabuki* actors inheriting their seniors’ stage names and performing their signature pieces.

The same stories may be in video and text on the internet, but organizers feel that in-person storytelling adds an invaluable human touch.

The August 6, 1945 atomic bombing in Hiroshima killed about 140,000 people from injuries and immediate effects of radiation within five months, and another one dropped on Nagasaki three days later killed 73,000. The death toll linked to the attacks and their radiation effects has since risen to 460,000, with the number of survivors declining to some 183,000, according to the latest government statistics.

Most survivors live in Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Katsura said about 20 survivors live in Kunitachi, but only a few, including himself, are healthy enough to make public appearances.

Tanaka, a retired engineering professor, survived Nagasaki but lost five relatives there when he was 13 years old. He said it would be almost impossible for storytellers to describe the horrors as vividly as the survivors, but hopes their imagination, compassion, and commitment to peace will make up for any shortfall.

Mika Shimizu, a 32-year-old high school teacher, hopes to do just that, by putting a survivor’s experience in language her peers and others as young as her students can relate to.

“Even if we hear the same story, the way each of us

North Korea pushes clocks back as a snub to Japan

By Hyung-jin Kim
The Associated Press

SEOUL, South Korea — North Korea has no time for Japan. Not anymore, at least.

The country has established its own time zone by pulling back by 30 minutes its current standard time, a legacy of Japanese colonial rule.

The new time zone took effect August 15 — the 70th anniversary of Korea’s liberation from Japanese rule at the end of World War II, the North’s official Korean Central News Agency (KCNA) said. The establishment of “Pyongyang time” is meant to root out that legacy, it said.

Local time in North and South Korea and Japan was the same — nine hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). It was set during Japan’s rule over what was a single Korea from 1910 to 1945.

“The wicked Japanese imperialists committed such unpardonable crimes as depriving Korea of even its standard time while mercilessly trampling down its land with 5,000-year-long history and culture and pursuing the unheard-of policy of obliterating the Korean nation,” the KCNA dispatch said.

The North’s move appears to be aimed at bolstering the leadership of young leader Kim Jong Un with anti-Japan, nationalistic sentiments, said Yang Moo-jin, a professor at the University of North Korean Studies in Seoul. Kim took power upon the death of his dictator father, Kim Jong Il, in late 2011.

Many Koreans, especially the elderly, on both sides of the border still harbor deep resentment against Japan over its colonial occupation. Hundreds of thousands of



ANIMATED EXPERIENCE. Director Ronnie del Carmen, right, poses for a photo with, from left: chief creative officer at Pixar John Lasseter, director Pete Docter, and producer Jonas Rivera upon their arrival for the screening of the film *Inside Out* at the 68th international film festival in Cannes, southern France. The Filipino-American co-director of the highly successful animated movie said it’s a dream come true for him to share with Filipinos a film he helped create. (AP Photo/Lionel Cironneau)

Inside Out co-director thrilled to bring film to Filipinos

By Teresa Cerojano
The Associated Press

MANILA, The Philippines — The Filipino-American co-director of the box-office hit *Inside Out* says it’s a dream come true for him to share with Filipinos the animated film he helped create.

“It’s kind of a surreal experience because I just watched movies here growing up,” said Ronnie del Carmen, a former advertising art director who moved to the U.S. in 1989 at age 29. He said he loved movies but never expected to be doing films.

He joined Pixar in 2000, and before that worked as a storyboard artist for *Batman: The Animated Series* and for DreamWorks as a story supervisor.

“It’s an amazing experience because I’m not just coming home, there’s a movie I helped make that’s opening here,” he said. “It’s a dream come true.”

He and director Peter Docter spoke to journalists in Manila, the last leg of their Asian tour to promote *Inside Out*. The movie, which opens in the Philippines on August 19, has earned \$630 million at the box office so far.

The two directors, who also collaborated on *Up* with del Carmen as story supervisor, said they drew from some of their childhood experiences as well as their children’s for the movie they also co-wrote.

Docter said it was a challenge to create characters to illustrate the emotions and gaggle of voices in the mind of 11-year-old Riley, who moves with her family from the Minnesota of her childhood to a run-down townhouse in San Francisco.

Sadness begins creeping into Riley’s core memories, where bubbly Joy earlier reigned supreme. Anger, Fear, and Disgust complete the five emotions in the “headquarters” of her mind.

Docter said they had to consult psychologists and had to pare to five what some experts claim to be as many as 27 emotions. They also had to find the right look for each emotion to remind filmgoers that the characters are the personification of feelings and are not little people.

“I think it’s simultaneously the most sort of realistic film we’ve ever done and completely fantasy at the same time,” Docter said. They used San Francisco and Minnesota as settings aside from Riley’s mind.

He said it was a real challenge “because we decided to set it not in the brain but in the mind, so it’s not blood vessels ... its consciousness, personality, so we talk about these very abstract things.” They also used moving as a metaphor for growing up, he added.

Director del Carmen said in the end it’s a movie about family, not just Riley and her emotions.



WARTIME WITNESS. Shigeyuki Katsura, right, an 84-year-old atomic-bomb survivor, speaks about his experience 70 years ago, in the western Tokyo suburb of Kunitachi. In a government-organized program, 20 trainees ranging from their 20s to their 70s are studying wartime history, taking public-speech lessons from a television anchor, and hearing stories from Katsura and another Kunitachi resident who survived the bombings. (AP Photo/Koji Sasahara)

retell it would be different, because we all have different sensibilities,” she said.

Another trainee, Sachiko Matsushita, missed her chance to find out directly from her father, who hid his exposure in Nagasaki for most of his life, and largely kept the story to himself. Initially she wanted to revisit her father’s path, but now is devoted to passing on Katsura’s.

“I’d much rather hear the stories directly from people, and pass them on to people,” the 47-year-old company worker said.

Katsura was 14 years old when he and his schoolmates, put to work for the war effort, were delivering a cartful of weapon parts from school to a factory when the “Fat Man” plutonium bomb exploded over Nagasaki.

“Having witnessed what the manmade nuclear weapon did to humans, I must condemn it as absolutely wrong, and the mistake should never be repeated,” he said. “That’s what drives me to tell my story, and I’ll continue to do so as long as I live.”

The course in Kunitachi is modelled on one started in Hiroshima in 2012. The first group of 50 Hiroshima storytellers debuted this year, with some 150 others underway.

Kunitachi official Mamiko Ogawa said storytelling requires a deep understanding of both the historical background and the survivors’ emotions, along with a touch of the teller’s personality. That’s what makes it different from digital archives.

“I think the stories are best conveyed when told by real people,” she said. “I hope the trainees would fully absorb the survivors’ experience and feelings, so they can tell the stories using their own sensibilities.”



TIME OUT. A clock is visible on top of a train station in Pyongyang, North Korea. North Korea has established its own time zone by pulling back its current standard time by 30 minutes. Local time in North and South Korea and Japan was the same — nine hours ahead of Greenwich Mean Time (GMT). It was set during Japan’s rule over what was a single Korea from 1910 to 1945. The establishment of “Pyongyang time” is meant to root out the legacy of the Japanese colonial period, according to the North’s official Korean Central News Agency. (AP Photo/Wong Maye-E, File)

Koreans were forced to fight as frontline soldiers, work in slave-labor conditions, or serve as prostitutes in brothels operated by the Japanese military during the war.

South Korea says it uses the same time zone as Japan because it’s more practical and conforms to international practice.

Seoul’s Unification Ministry said the North’s action could bring minor disruption at a jointly-run industrial

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