

News & Types: News

Masuda Funai Attends 50th Anniversary Celebration of Japan's Consuls-General Chicago Residence

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On April 18, 2018, Colin Hara, Dayne Kono, Joji Kagei and Dick Briggs of Masuda, Funai, Eifert & Mitchell Ltd. attended the 50th anniversary celebration of the Government of Japan's purchase of the Consul-General in Chicago's residence located at 1201 Sheridan Road in Evanston, Illinois. The residence, prairie/tudor in style, was designed in 1912 by Robert Spencer, one of the leading architects of his time who worked closely with Frank Lloyd Wright.

Consul-General Naoki Ito hosted several of his Evanston neighbors and community members, as well as former Senator Adlai Stevenson III, Evanston Mayor Stephen Hagerty, Jerry Reinsdorf, Chairman of the Chicago White Sox and Chicago Bulls, the Evanston Chief of Police and representatives from Northwestern University. Evanston architect, Stuart Cohen, who wrote a book entitled "North Shore Chicago: Houses of the Lakefront Suburbs 1890-1940", gave a talk about the architecture of the home and Dick Briggs and Joji Kagei provided personal stories of their families' connections to the residence. Gene Honda, public address announcer for the White Sox and Chicago Blackhawks, acted as Master of Ceremonies for the event.

The residence has many connections to Masuda Funai, which has a long history representing the Consul-General of Japan in Chicago. Dick Briggs' grandfather, Owen Coon, purchased the residence in 1940. Coon, a successful lawyer, businessman and philanthropist, established the Hardy Scholarships at Northwestern University, which since 1935 has provided financial support to promising scholars including Jim Mitchell, one of the named partners of Masuda Funai. The residence was sold by the Coon family in 1954 to Arthur C. Allyn, owner of the White Sox. In 1968, the residence was purchased by the Japanese government with the assistance of Masuda Funai's founder, Thomas Masuda, who represented the Consul-General of Japan in Chicago at that time. From 1967 to 1973 Consul-General Umeo Kagei and his family, including 8 children, lived in the residence. One of the Kagei children is Masuda Funai's Los Angeles partner, Joji Kagei.





