

GASTRONOMICHAEL

FOOD AND LIFE ON THE SAN FRANCISCO BAY

SATURDAY, MARCH 20, 2010

Across the Pacific – In 1860!



Note to self: Next time I complain about the 10 hour flight between San Francisco and Tokyo, think about those fellows who set out for San Francisco from Japan on the Kanrin Maru 150 years ago facing a somewhat longer and more perilous trip!

- ~ Departure Uruga (Japan): 10 February 1860
- ~ Arrival San Francisco: 17 March 1860 (+37 days)
- ~ Turbulence en route: Extreme



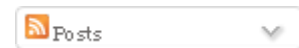
This past Wednesday – St. Patrick's Day – marked the 150th anniversary of the arrival in San Francisco of the Japanese navel vessel, the **Kanrin Maru**, the first Japanese ship to land in the United States. The crossing of the Pacific from Japan had been a rough one. In fact the US naval vessel, the USS Powhatan, that the Kanrin Maru was accompanying, had to detour to Honolulu for repair to damage suffered in a typhoon and did not arrive in San Francisco until almost two weeks later.

This past Monday night at the Kabuki Hotel in Japantown, Professor Naoyuki Agawa from Keio University in Tokyo spoke about the Kanrin Maru's voyage. Professor Agawa was a very appropriate choice for that presentation since, apart from giving a good talk, one of the crew of the Karin Maru, **Fukuzawa Yukichi**, was the founder of Keio.



Naoyuki Agawa and Fukuzawa Yukichi

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GASTRONOMICHAEL

"Oh, I hated the colonel, with his wee beady eyes, and that smug look on his face... 'Oh, you're going to buy my chicken! Ooooh!'" -

----- Yes, "So I Married an Ax Murderer" is one of my favorite movies, but Italian cuisine is what I really love.

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THE ARCHIVES

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 - ▼ March (5)
 - [Across the Pacific – In 1860!](#)
 - [Cheese from Farm to Table](#)
 - [Wine & Cheese @ IWM in New York](#)
 - [Back from New York](#)
 - [A Visit to LA - Park BBQ](#)
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- ▶ 2009 (62)
- ▶ 2008 (15)

MY BLOG LIST

Over a Tuscan Stove
Am I one of THOSE???

Calabria from Scratch
Crema di Limoncello

Italy In SF
Crema Pasticcera

bayarea [in Japanese]
鮓

briciole
Edizione speciale: Novel Food #10

An Italian in the US
Primo post ufficiale dal Canada

Tosha Bakes Cakes
Banana Bread!

Offal Good
No Reservation Deleted Scene

Viaggio in Sicilia - Our September 2008 Trip
8. And For Our Next Trip...

Fork & Bottle

Vinography: A Wine Blog

FAVORITE RESTAURANTS

Then, on Wednesday afternoon, there was a ceremony held along the Embarcadero in front of Pier 9, at the base of Vallejo Street.



The ceremonies started with a rousing performance by Seiji Tanaka and the [San Francisco Taiko Dojo](#) and speeches by Japan's Consul General [Yasumasa Nagamine](#), [Monique Moyer](#), the Executive Director of the Port of San Francisco (who presented a proclamation from Mayor Newsome proclaiming March 17 as "Kanrin Maru Day," a brave political move given San Francisco's Irish electorate), and others. Following those speeches, a plaque embedded in the sidewalk was unveiled which commemorates the 150th anniversary of the Kanrin Maru's arrival.



In 1858, five years after Commodore Matthew Perry had forced his way into Tokyo Bay with his "black ships" and ended Japan's 200 years of self-imposed isolation, the United States and Japan signed a Treaty of Amity and Commerce. This was one of the "unequal treaties" that Japan was forced to sign during that period, and a motivation for the Japanese government to seek ways to demonstrate Japan's capabilities and reestablish its stature, both domestically and internationally.

Although it was not necessary to send a delegation all the way to Washington in order to ratify the Treaty, the Shogunate decided to do so, and arranged for the official embassy to travel for the first leg of the trip to San Francisco aboard the USS Powhatan. However, they also decided to send along the Kanrin Maru, a small warship that Japan had acquired three years earlier from the Netherlands. The approximately 100 man crew of the Kanrin Maru included a number of individuals who would become famous Japanese historical figures, including, in addition to Fukuzawa Yukichi, [Katsu Kaishu](#), the ship's captain who was to later play a prominent role in the Meiji Restoration, and [Nakahama \("John"\) Manjiro](#), who was one of the few crew members with any oceangoing experience and who served as a translator.

Angelino
Avatar's
Barbacco Eno Trattoria
Boulevard
Delfina Pizzeria
Incanto
La Ciccia
Oliveto
Perbacco
Sociale
Sushi Ran

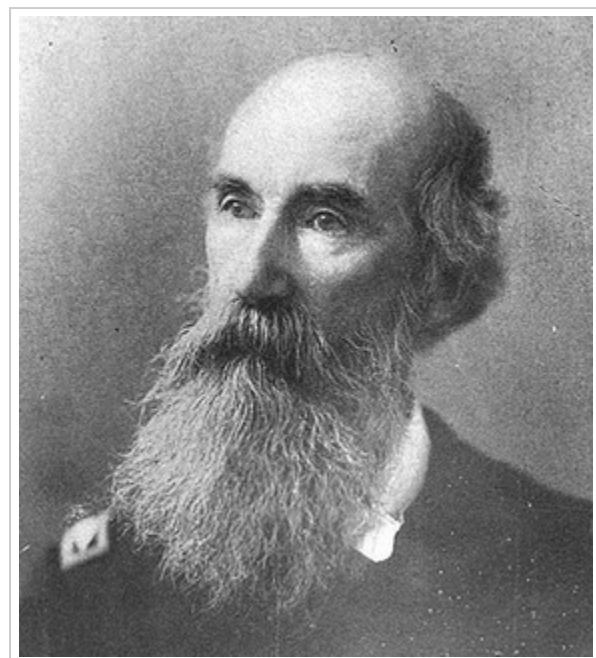
LABELS

'Nduja (3)
Abruzzo (1)
Adobe Creek (1)
Agnolotti dal plin (1)
Albarino (1)
Alsatian Wine; Alpine Cheese (1)
Andrew and Connie (2)
Angel Island (1)
Angelino (4)
Argentina (2)
Avatar's; Aversa (1)
Avedano's (1)
Barbacco (3)
Becchina and Company (1)
Beef short rib stracotto (1)
Bergamot Station (1)
Bianco Sottobosco (1)
Birthday (3)
bollito misto (1)
Bologna (1)
Boulevard (1)
Brussel Sprouts (1)
Butchery (1)
Butternut squash lune (1)
Calabria (1)
Caldo (1)
Caldo verde (1)
California Artisan Cheese Festival (1)
Caltagirone (1)
Campania (1)
Carlitos Gardel (1)
Castelvetrano (1)
Cavallo Point (6)
Cavolo Nero (1)
Cece (1)
Cece; New York City (1)
Cheese (8)
Cheese School of San Francisco (12)
cheeses of the British Isles (1)
Chile (1)
Cibo (1)
Cibo; Tosha Callahan; Cheesecake (1)
Cocido (1)
Cody (1)
Cook Italy (1)
Cooking Class (1)
Cristina Kirchner (1)
Da Michele (1)
Dario Cecchini (1)
Dawn (1)
Delfina (3)
Della Fattoria (2)
Duarte's Tavern (1)
El Paseo (1)
Elephants (1)
Elite Restaurant (1)
Farro and Kale Soup (1)
Fatted Calf (1)



Members of the Karin Maru crew with Fukuzawa Yukichi at far right

The Kanrin Maru's crew also included a US naval lieutenant named [John Mercer Brooke](#) whose ship had been damaged beyond repair during a mission to chart Japanese ports.



As it turned out, it was fortuitous that Lieutenant Brooke sailed with the Kanrin Maru since, as [described further here](#), he and John Manjiro ended up played important roles in navigating the ship safely to San Francisco.

Pier 9 along the Embarcadero was selected for the location of the commemorative plaque since the Kanrin Maru docked at the Vallejo Street Wharf when it arrived in San Francisco.



However, although Pier 9 is at the foot of Vallejo Street, in 1860 the shore of the bay was closer to Battery Street, two blocks west of the Embarcadero, so the actual landing spot of the Kanrin Maru was somewhere to the west of the plaque. Here is a map and some photos showing the location of Pier 9.



- Ferry (6)
- Flowers (1)
- Fog (1)
- Fra'Mani (1)
- Galicia (1)
- Golden Gate Bridge (3)
- Golf (1)
- Grappa (1)
- Gregory Colbert (1)
- Grelos (1)
- Grumpy's (1)
- Harley Farms (1)
- Head to Tail Dinner (1)
- Hermidad; Sergio Castillo (1)
- Herring (1)
- Incanto (1)
- Inn by the Sea (1)
- Italian Cheese (1)
- Italian Wine Merchants (1)
- Judy Witts Francini (2)
- Kanaye Nagasawa (1)
- Kanreki (1)
- Kanrin Maru (1)
- Korean BBQ (1)
- La Bottera (1)
- La Casera (1)
- La Ciccia (3)
- La Mar (1)
- Laura Werlin (1)
- Linguine alla Pescatore (1)
- Lobster (1)
- Los Angeles (2)
- Maine (1)
- Marin Organic (1)
- Mariposa Kitchen (1)
- Martin Luther King (1)
- Mezzo Mezzo (1)
- Mozzarella di bufala (2)
- Museo Cooking Class (1)
- Napa (1)
- New York City (2)
- Noccellara del Belice (1)
- Olio Verde (1)
- Orecchiette (1)
- Pansotti (1)
- Paradise Ridge Winery (1)
- Park's BBQ (1)
- Pecorino (1)
- Perbacco (4)
- Peru (1)
- Pescadero (1)
- Pici (1)
- Pizza (2)
- Poggio (1)
- Polenta (1)
- Porchetta (2)
- Pork (4)
- ramen (1)
- Ramen Girl (1)
- roast cauliflower (1)
- Robiola di Capra Incavolato (1)
- Rocky Mountain Oysters (1)
- Rosetta Costantino (1)
- Sakata Seed (1)
- Salami (2)
- Salciccia di Bra (1)
- San Francisco Bay (10)
- Santa Monica (1)
- Sausalito (2)
- sheana davis (2)
- Sicily (3)
- Sister Cities (2)



Following the ceremony there was a reception for the attendees at the Pier 9 facilities of the San Francisco Bar Pilots, a very nice room at the end of the pier with a beautiful view of the bay. At the end of the day on the way back to my office, I decided to walk up Vallejo Street and came across Grumpy's pub, which I had never seen before. Despite its name, it seemed to be a friendly spot and not too crowded, and it being St. Patrick's Day in addition to Kanrin Maru Day, I followed my instincts.



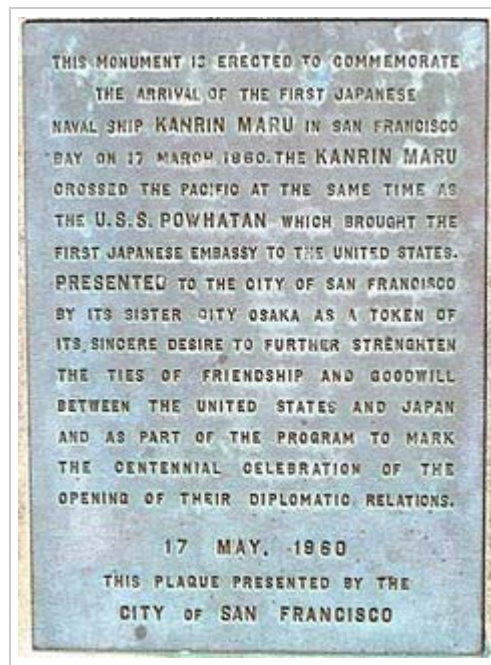
The new plaque at Pier 9 is not the first monument in San Francisco to honor the Kanrin Maru. In 1960, upon the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Kanrin Maru, the City of Osaka, San Francisco's sister city, donated a marker carved in black stone which can be found in Lincoln Park, not far from the Palace of the Legion of Honor. The location provides a beautiful view of the Golden Gate Bridge and is well worth a visit.



Sociale (2)
 Sonoma (1)
 Sopressata (1)
 squid (1)
 Sung Family (1)
 Tampopo (1)
 Thanksgiving (1)
 Tiles (1)
 Tonga Room (1)
 Tony's Pizza Napoletana (1)
 Valle del Belice (1)
 Vitello tonnato (1)
 Viña del Mar (2)
 washed rind cheese (1)
 Wellington's (3)
 White Beans (1)
 Wil Edwards (4)
 Winetasting (1)
 Yellowstone (1)

FAVORITE STORES

Acme Bread (Ferry Building)
 Boccalone
 Cheese Plus
 Cowgirl Creamery
 Dee Vine Wines
 Fra'Mani Salumi
 K&L Wine
 Kermit Lynch Wine Merchant
 The Jug Shop
 Weimax



There are many more events to come this year as part of the celebration of the 150th anniversary as described on [Kanrin Maru 150](#) website.

POSTED BY GASTRONOMICHAEL AT 2:16 PM
 LABELS: GRUMPY'S, KANRIN MARU

3 COMMENTS:



gastronomichael said...

A friend, Greg Marutani, pointed out that the official residence of the Consul General of Japan in San Francisco is today coincidentally also on Vallejo Street, at the intersection with Divisadero - seen here in a photo taken in 1968 when the residence was used for filming a scene from the Steve McQueen movie "Bullitt":
<http://www.filminamerica.com/Movies/Bullitt/bullitt05.jpg>

MARCH 21, 2010 2:37 PM



Allen said...

Absolutely fabulous report on the Kanrin Maru and the celebration of its voyage 150 years ago.
 Thank you,
 Allen M. Okamoto
 Co-Chair
 Kanrin Maru 150th Anniversary Committee

MARCH 22, 2010 11:48 AM



gastronomichael said...

Alan: Thanks for your kind comment, and thanks to you and all the other members of the Committee for organizing both last week's events and those to come. Mike

MARCH 22, 2010 2:58 PM

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