

Tribute to Kouchi Matsumoto

Contents

- Obituary
 - Memorial Service tribute
 - Remembrances – members of Canadian Pugwash
 - Article from Ottawa Citizen
-

OBITUARY [OTTAWA CITIZEN]



Kouchi Matsumoto

May 26, 2013 at the age of 70. Beloved husband of Lynda (nee Shackleton.) He is survived by step-mother, Sizuka Matsumoto, his step-sister Yuriko Hiraiwa (Kenzo Hiraiwa), step-brother Hisashi Matsumoto (Shoko Matsumoto) and brother-in-law Brian Shackleton. He will be sorely missed by his nieces, nephews and all who knew him. The memorial service will be held June 23, 2013 at 2:00 p.m. at the Garden Chapel of Tubman Funeral Homes at 3440 Richmond Road, Nepean (Ottawa)

The following tribute was given at the June 23, 2013 memorial service,
by Peter Meincke:

Kouchi Matsumoto

Recently, while I was sitting in the garden on one of the few beautiful summer days, a gentle breeze stirred the leaves and brought back vivid memories of that gentle man we mourn today. He was a gentle breeze but there was no doubt he was there. You knew you were in the presence of a very special person who had a very compelling message.

I had the honour of recommending that he become a member of the Canadian Pugwash Group and had the pleasure of his company on the one day drive to Pugwash NS to attend an international workshop on a world without nuclear weapons. There is no doubt he was one of the stars at that workshop.

One cannot help but wonder how someone who survived the horrific bombing of Hiroshima could be taken from us many years later by a such a senseless car accident. He will be missed. We must do all we can to make sure his message continues. Let us celebrate his life and all he has done to rid the world of nuclear weapons.

Lynda, let me assure you of the condolences and support of the members of Canadian Pugwash.



.Peter Meincke, Andrea Levy, Debbie Grisdale, Murray Thomson, Bill Bhaneja, Tony Meers

Dear friends in Pugwash,

With great sorrow, I pass on the news of the untimely death of our member Kouchi Matsumoto this past week.

Kouchi was a mild and humble man who sought to contribute substantively to nuclear disarmament. We recall how he traveled by car from Ottawa last year to Pugwash, Nova Scotia, enduring torrential rains, to participate in our workshop on "A World Without Nuclear Weapons." Kouchi was a survivor (*hibakusha*) of the world's first use of nuclear weapons in Hiroshima while he was a young child (too young to remember the horror of it, fortunately for him). It was a car collision that claimed his life. He is survived by his equally committed wife Lynda, who was also in the accident. She remains a devoted member of Canadian Pugwash. Our thoughts and prayers go out to both of them.

Sadly,

Walter

WALTER DORN, CHAIR, CANADIAN PUGWASH

Kouchi was such a faithful, dedicated and diligent member of our group, and he always could be counted at any of the Canadian Pugwash gatherings in Ottawa. When we sponsored eminent nuclear disarmament expert

Jayantha Dhanapala to visit Ottawa, Kouchi made sure to engage him in a detailed conversation. He was a convincing delegate to NATO-country embassies in Ottawa, as we pointed out the need to change the NATO nuclear weapon policy . In 2007, Pugwash Conferences on Science and World Affairs celebrated its 50th Anniversary at Pugwash NS. Kouchi and Lynda were valuable members of our organizational team. It was absolutely wonderful to have his participation the summer of 2012 in Pugwash . He was an ideal host for the two Japanese experts, as we explored together the possible characteristics of a World Without Nuclear Weapons. A devout Buddhist, Kouchi's reverence for all life made him a shining example of a life well lived.

In sympathy,

Adele

ADELE BUCKLEY, PAST CHAIR, CANADIAN PUGWASH

What a tragedy... Kouchi was a delegate last summer at Pugwash conference... arrived in good cheer with Peter after arduous drive from Ottawa through torrential rain. You may recall that Kouchi did an excellent post-conference interview with journalists.

I extend condolences to his family. In sadness,

ALEXA MCDONOUGH

Kouchi was one of the nicest (in all the meanings of that word) people I have ever met.

David

DAVID HARRIES

..on the tragic loss of Kouchi: I particularly remember going with him on a visit to ambassadors a few years back and the truly humble yet dignified way he addressed them on the urgent need for disarmament.

Murray

MURRAY THOMSON

By OTTAWA CITIZEN, Ottawa Citizen May 27, 2013

Hiroshima survivor dies in Woodroffe crash

Kouchi Matsumoto, a former Carleton University chemistry professor, was killed when an out-of-control car struck his vehicle on Sunday evening.



Photograph by: BRUNO SCHLUMBERGER , THE OTTAWA CITIZEN

OTTAWA — The 70-year-old former Carleton University chemistry professor killed in a car accident Sunday evening was a survivor of the atomic bombing of Hiroshima.

Kouchi Matsumoto, who died Sunday evening after the Hyundai he was driving was struck by a speeding car on Woodroffe Avenue, was only two years old in 1945 when the American-made bomb struck Hiroshima, Japan.

His mother was killed and his family home destroyed.

On Sunday, a 66-year-old woman in the passenger seat of Matsumoto's car was taken to hospital with serious chest, abdominal and hand injuries. She is in stable condition.

Matsumoto was pronounced dead at the scene.

The Kanata resident came to Carleton University in 1967 to study chemistry, and returned to teach there in 1983.

Since the 2011 magnitude 9 earthquake in Japan that hit close to that country's largest nuclear power plants, Matsumoto had become convinced that nuclear power was the wrong choice for his native land since the chance of earthquakes and tsunamis were grave.

And, after experiencing earthquakes of magnitudes 5, 6 and 7 in Japan, he became vocal about his opposition to nuclear power for other countries, too.

"You cannot negotiate with nature," he told the Citizen in a March 2011 interview.

Radioactive isotopes last hundreds or thousands of years in the environment once they escape, he said, and the devastation their destruction causes makes them tempting targets for terrorists.

However, while he was against the development of nuclear power technology, Matsumoto said he supported research into nuclear technology to make isotopes for medicine.

Police say the other car, a BMW, was on a westbound off-ramp of Highway 17 when the driver lost control. The car struck a curb, crossed two southbound lanes and jumped the median before hitting the Matsumoto car. The 28-year-old driver and a 22-year-old passenger were not hurt.

Police said alcohol was not a factor, but speed contributed to the collision.

Police have not determined if charges will be laid.

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