



# Singapore Spotlight

Tom Benner

偶数月第1週掲載



英ロックバンド「ビートルズ」の、ジョン・レノンのファンである筆者は、レノンがシンガポールにお忍びで旅行した事を知り、調べてみることにした。すると、当時のエピソードや本人の思いなどを知ることができ、とても興味深かったという。(写真は筆者提供)

## 34) John Lennon's mystery trip to Singapore

ジョン・レノンのシンガポール旅行に迫る

### ■ 偽名を使ってホテルに滞在

Even today, I tend to find that people young and old remember the Beatles, a British pop band that became famous worldwide and whose songs remain loved long after their 1970 breakup.

In Japan, I know people particularly remember John Lennon, the group's most visible and outspoken member, who famously married Japan-born artist Ono Yoko.

He was my childhood hero. I was just 5 years old when my older brother brought home the records and the excitement known as Beatlemania in 1964. I grew up admiring Lennon's quick wit and humor. He died tragically in December 1980, when I was a college student.

The little snippets of stories about him are precious memories to his fans, and I happened upon one such story in Singapore.

In fall 1976, Lennon — who had been living in New York

City at the time — took a rare trip outside the U.S., keeping it a secret to avoid fans. He wound up staying in Singapore for five days, holed up by himself at the Hyatt Hotel on Scotts Road near Orchard Road. He stayed under the pseudonym “John Girskin,” wrote postcards to friends and family and went out shopping.

Not much else is known about the trip. But whenever I pass the hotel — it's just off the famous Orchard Road shopping strip — I get curious. So I decided to do some digging.

### ■ 世界的スターの気さくな一面

I strolled into the hotel and was lucky to find Jais Abdul Rahman, the lobby manager. He's 68 now, but at the time of Lennon's stay, he was a young duty manager at the hotel.

The hotel staff seemed not to notice the famous Beatle, but Rahman did. “I told him, ‘Welcome to the Hyatt.’ He was surprised I recognized him. I knew



ジョン・レノンとのエピソードを語ってくれた、Jais Abdul Rahman さん

the names of all the Beatles.”

Rahman had just bought a guitar, and asked Lennon if he had time to tune it. Lennon agreed to do it, and told Rahman to bring the guitar to his room. The two chatted for 10 or 15 minutes, Rahman recalls.

“He gave me time. He's a professional and a star, but he gave me time. He was very friendly,” Rahman said “He said he came here just to be himself. He came here in private, no one knew he was here.”

I found an old news story saying that while Lennon was shopping at a department store, a woman named Jzenea Foo noticed him, and she nervously approached him. Her friend, who had a camera, took a picture of her with Lennon, and her story later got picked up by a local newspaper. I searched online to see if I could find her

today, but I found nothing.

An interesting footnote: At the time of his trip, Lennon's hair was on the short side — a good thing, because there was a government campaign against men having long hair until 1980s, and long-haired men had their hair cut at the border. Other artists in the 1970s, such as Kitaro and Led Zeppelin, had to cancel appearances in Singapore because of the short-hair requirement.

An interview I found in Rolling Stone magazine shortly before his death has Lennon explaining that at the time, he was just trying to do average things, like an average person. His travels took him to Singapore, South Africa, Hong Kong and Bermuda.

“And I did fairly average things,” Lennon said. “I went to the movies.”

Tom Benner is a freelance journalist who moved to Singapore from Boston, U.S., in fall 2012. His recent journalism has appeared in Al Jazeera English, Global Post and Nikkei Asian Review.

### KEYWORDS

**visible** 目立つ  
**outspoken** 率直な  
**Beatlemania** ビートルズの熱狂的なファンのこと(後出)

**Beatle** はビートルズのメンバーの一人)  
**admire** 素晴らしいと思う  
**quick wit** 機転が利くこと  
**tragically** 悲劇的に  
**snatch** 断片、一片

**happen upon** ～に出会う  
**wind (→ wound) up** ～(ここでは)結局～する  
**hole up** 身を隠す  
**pseudonym** 偽名  
**shopping strip** 商業地帯

**get curious** 興味を持つ  
**digging** (ここでは)調査  
**stroll into** ～にふらっと入る  
**lobby manager** ロビー全体の統括者(後出 duty man-

**ager** は(24時間体制の)接客全般を統括する責任者)  
**tune** 調整する  
**nervously** そわそわして  
**footnote** (ここでは)余談  
**border** (ここでは)入国管理

**Kitaro** 日本の作曲家(後出 Led Zeppelin は英ロックバンド)  
**appearance** 出演  
**Bermuda** バミューダ諸島  
**fairly** かなり

多読チャレンジ

Jais Abdul Rahman さんがジョン・レノンに頼んだ事は？ A ギターの演奏 B 歌の披露 C ギターの調整

[本文 - 562 words]



## MACHIGAI! © Tim Young

毎週掲載



by Tim Young

**A: I finished making supper. / 夕飯ができたよ。**

**B: It's about time!**

✗ 時間だね！

“It's about time (to ~)” can mean 「そろそろ(～する)時間」, but most Japanese students of English are unfamiliar with the other meaning of this expression. When we feel that we've had to wait too long for something or someone, we might say “It's about time!” to mean:

○ やっとか！



© Tominaga Yoshiko

米アイオワ州出身。イリノイ州オーガスナ大学で英文学学士号取得。1989年から日本在住。現在はスカイプでマンツーマンの英語レッスンをするほか、YouTubeチャンネル“Machigai English”やポッドキャストの製作など幅広く活躍。Twitter (@machigai)でも日々つぶやいている。著書「I can't eat natto!」がアマゾンで発売中。



MACHIGAI Meter

How many of Tim's students made this mistake?



Visit <http://www.machigai.com> for podcast, online quiz, and more!