

OBITUARY

KEIZABURO KUBO 1922-1995



All the members of the Earthquake Resistant Structure (ERS) Research Group, Institute of Industrial Science, University of Tokyo, received with sadness the news of the demise on May 30, 1995 of Dr. Keizaburo Kubo, Professor Emeritus of the University of Tokyo, outstanding researcher and internationally recognized pioneer in earthquake engineering.

Keizaburo Kubo was born in Tokyo in 1922, a year before the famous Kanto earthquake. He pursued his civil engineering studies at the University of Tokyo and subsequently earned his Doctor of Engineering at the same university for his studies on the earthquake-resistant properties of suspension bridges.

He started his academic career in 1946 as a lecturer of the Department of Civil Engineering, Faculty of Engineering, University of Tokyo, from which he retired in April 1982.

He became interested in earthquake engineering after the two damaging earthquakes that occurred in Japan during the late 1940's, namely the 1948 Fukui and the 1949 Imaichi earthquakes. His early interest in earthquake engineering was in the structural field. He investigated earthquake-resistant properties of suspension bridges, long-span highway bridges, and buried pipes. These investigations have made substantially contributed to the development of earthquake-resistant structures in Japan during the recovery from her war-stricken economy.

He was one of the pioneering engineers who recognized the importance of lifelines in urbanized areas during seismic disasters. After having made reconnaissance surveys of the lifeline damage caused by the 1964 Niigata and the 1971 San Fernando earthquakes, he realized that damage to lifelines could be costly to society and very time-consuming to repair.

After his 37 years of service to the University of Tokyo, he taught and supervised students in Saitama and Tokai Universities.

Keizaburo Kubo served as chairman of the Earthquake Engineering Committee of the Japan Society of Civil Engineers (JSCE) from 1979 to 1985, vice president of JSCE from 1982 to 1983, and president of JSCE in 1986. He received many awards for his academic accomplishments, including the best paper award in 1979 and the cultural award in 1987, both from JSCE.

He was vice president of the International Association for Earthquake Engineering from 1984 to 1988, and successfully organized the 8th World Conference on Earthquake Engineering in Japan in 1988.

His friends, colleagues and students, particularly those who worked with him in the ERS Group in the Institute of Industrial Science, will miss a truly likable man, and remember him for his contributions to the improvement of the quality of life and the promotion of science and technology in the service of mankind, especially his efforts to mitigate seismic disasters the world over.

T. Katayama