

The Reconstruction of the Hitachi Station Frontage

The reconstruction of the square in front of JR Hitachi Station has been proceeding since last January and will be completed in mid April. The New Square will be a place where people can gather and crowded with people.

◆ Why is the reconstruction taking place?

It is part of the redevelopment plan for the Hitachi Station frontage. Hitachi Civic Center and Patio Hitachi were constructed in 1989. This time, the station frontage reconstruction work is aimed to reduce traffic congestion problems, previously caused by buses, taxis and private vehicles accumulating on the same thoroughway, and to create barrier-free access for physically handicapped people and senior citizens.

◆ Features of the New Square

The new layout is an almost complete square shape. There are barrier-free sidewalks and four bus stop areas. There are also two separate lanes for buses and for taxis and private vehicles. And in the center of the square will stand an Illumination Tower (25m tall), the light rings of which are shaped like cherry petals reflecting the town's symbol of cherry blossom. Moreover, a real steam turbine vane, presented by Hitachi, Ltd. has been installed to act as a symbol of this industrial city. It is one of Hitachi company's well known products, used for the generating of electricity. The square itself covers an area of about 8,600 m². Though this does not seem so

spacious, when combined with the open area to the left (Kotsu Hiroba), it takes on quite a feeling of spaciousness. These two areas combined cover 12,000 m² altogether.

◆ Buses and taxis

The new bus embarkation points are separated into four areas. The buses drive into each area at the scheduled time and leave directly after allowing passengers to get on and off. They can not park there. As for regular bus routes, buses from "embarkation point 1" go to Kamine Park and Takahagi station, from point 2 they go to the Heiwadai Estate via Taga Station, from point 3 they go to Omika Station via Hitachi General Hospital, from point 4 they go to the Dodaira and Narusawa estates, and point 4 also serves as an embarkation point for the JR and Hitachi Dentetu express bus to Tokyo. To catch a taxi, cross the bus lane in front of the station building and there you will find the taxi stands.

◆ Future Reconstruction Plans

Hitachi Station originated as "Sukegawa Station" at the current "Kaiganguchi" (Seaside exit) site, when the JR Joban Line began their train service in 1897. Later, it was renamed "Hitachi Station" after the reorganization of the area as a city in 1939. The present "Chuoguchi" exit was opened in 1952 as part of the construction of Heiwa street. Hitachi City in conjunction with JR has started to make plans for the improvement of the station building itself in the light of the need to create a station barrier-free to all.



KAMINE PARK

1. The Birth of Kamine Park and the Cherry Trees

Kamine Park was first planned in October 1933 when the Urban Planning Law was applied to Hitachi Town, but due to a combination of financial problems and World War II, its construction was postponed until after the war was over.

Even after the war, the original plan was only changed but not carried out due to persisting financial troubles. In 1953 the plan was finally realized when the "Kamine Park Preparation and Promotion Committee" was formed by volunteers from the Miyata and Namekawa area, the site where the park was scheduled to be built. The committee promoted a contribution campaign entitled "one cherry tree from every family" and volunteer projects such as planting young cherry trees, fertilizing them, and mowing the grass in the planned site.

Kamine Park was opened in 1953. Starting in 1957, it has been improved upon on an annual basis through financial support owing to full application of the Urban Parks Law promulgated in 1956. Application of this law first led to the construction of the Kamine Zoo, opened in a corner of the park in June 1957.

Around the same time, an amusement park was also opened on the site. Future improvements on Kamine Park, including further planting of young cherry trees and their subsequent growth, has made the park a famous place for cherry trees. Kamine Park, together with Heiwa Dori Street, was selected as one of the "100 Famous Places of Cherry Trees in Japan" in March 1990—37 years after the opening of the park. A monument commemorating this achievement has been set up at the entrance gate of the amusement park.

At present, most of the roughly 1000 cherry trees in the park are of the "*Somei-yoshino*" variety, and five typical ones can be found on a slope near the south parking lot. Those particular cherry trees have been chosen as a standard for the declaration of blooming in Hitachi City. The best time to see them may be from early to mid-April, but tens of "*Yae-zakura*" (double-flowered cherry trees; introduced in *Hyotan #116*) that bloom in late April grow in the parking lot at the top of the hill and on its northern slope. These allow you to enjoy cherry-blossom viewing twice in the same month.

2. Opening of the Yoshida Tadashi Memorial Museum of Music



Mr. Yoshida conducting a band.



Mr. Tadashi Yoshida—born in Hitachi City—was a great composer of popular songs. He composed upwards of 200 hit songs including "Hitachi Ondo" and "Hitachi Kouta," tunes quite familiar to Hitachi citizens. During his lifetime he composed approximately 2400 songs until he died in June 1998 at the age of 77. His wife made a donation to build a memorial museum in accord with his last wishes, which is now under construction near the top of Kamine Park and scheduled to open to the public on April 29th.

Outline of the Yoshida Tadashi Memorial Museum of Music

Scale: A five-story building; total floor space approx. 800 m²

Opening times: Open to the general public from 10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Admission fee: *Free* (charged for the use of a portable stereo music device as a premium).

Features of each story:

1st Story: An entrance hall, a studio, and a shop.

2nd Story: (His living room in the 1950s):

Introduction to his life using television images, historic materials related to his life, display of music scores, and a planned exhibition corner.

3rd Story: (His living room in the 1960s):

Exhibition of the piano used for music lessons, his desk, his pupils' diaries, and a narrative corner entitled "Memories of Tadashi Yoshida."

4th Story: (His living room in the 1970s, 80s):

A composition workshop (both children and adults can enjoy hands-on learning in how to compose a song).

5th Story: An Observation Cafe (a lunch room, music tables)

Common to each story:

From 2nd to 4th story: A wall exhibiting the history of popular songs, a wall decorated with record jackets, and the use of portable stereo music device.

From 2nd to 5th story: "Background Music" corner where hit songs of Tadashi Yoshida can be heard.

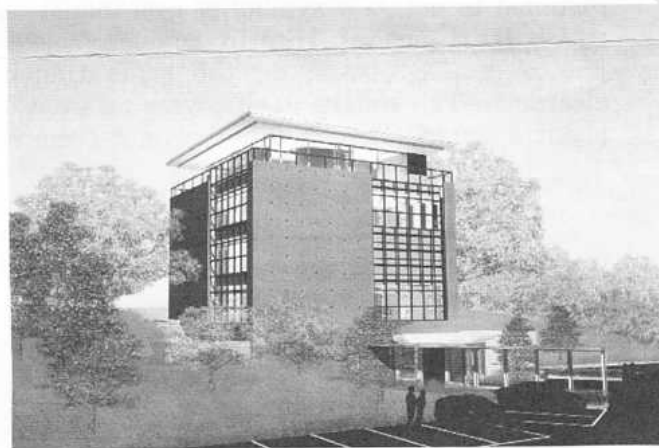


Image of Yoshida Tadashi Memorial Museum of Music.

Horizon Kamine



Going through the front door, one arrives in a spacious comfortable lobby with a several sets of sofas and tables. There is a reception on the left and a cozy restaurant on the right. During this season, from both the lobby and the restaurant, you can see the "horizon" of the deep-blue Pacific Ocean just beyond the pink flock of cherry blossoms.

In the basement, there are a training room, (one wall is completely mirrored), a Japanese style resting room, and two bathrooms (one for men and one for women) with a dry sauna in each. The baths and neighboring swimming pool are heated utilizing energy generated from a nearby garbage incinerator. All the facilities in the basement can be used at very reasonable prices (Adult 320 yen/Child 110 yen). Aerobics classes are provided in the training room on weekday mornings and evenings (fee required).

On the second floor, there are five meeting rooms. You can reserve a room starting three months in advance. Please contact regarding details; such as room charge, availability, or the set-up of each room.

healthful to walk in the water. The indoor adult pool is kindly separated into three lanes: one for walkers, one for beginners, and one for experienced swimmers. Swimming classes are held during two terms each year (April-June, November-March). Additionally, there are two groups that practice aquatics once a week.

The Hitachi City Museum

How did Hitachi, originally a small farming village, develop into the industrial city we know today? In the museum, you can see a variety of objects relating to Hitachi city dating from the Old Stone Age right up to the modern times. There are many different displays, such as the Jomon-Doki (rope pattern pottery) excavated from the remains of Suwa village, farming and fishing tools from the Middle Age to Modern period, and clothing worn in and photographs taken during the second World War. These and many other items really bring to life the history and customs of the past. There is an English guide pamphlet available for free at the reception. Besides the Permanent Exhibition Gallery displays, the Museum also operates a program of temporary exhibitions. For example, 'Hitachi as seen in the Pictorial Maps of the Edo Period' exhibition is being held from March 25th until May 9th.

Kamine Zoological Garden

The Kamine Zoo houses 110 species of animals and birds including elephants, lions, gorillas, peacock, eagles and snakes. Children can touch and hold a variety of animals like rabbits and guinea pigs at the Hands-on area [Fureai hiroba]. Next to the zoo is a children's amusement park. Here kids can enjoy riding on a cute blue train. In spring time, you can often hear kindergarten kids having a great time there.

Kamine Civic Pool



There are four pools in total, two for adults (indoor & outdoor, 25M x 7 lanes), and two for children (indoor and outdoor). During the off-season (September 11- June 30), the indoor water temperature is kept at 30°C (86 F), so you can enjoy swimming at the facility all year around.. Even if you are unable to swim, it is refreshing and

Facility	Tel.	Admission fee	Hours
Horizon Kamine	22-2045	Adult: 320yen Child: 110yen; (limited to use of the basement facilities)	9:00-22:00
Kamine Civic Pool	23-3045	Adult: 420yen Child: 110yen	9:00-20:00
Hitachi City Museum	23-3231	Free (excluding special exhibitions)	9:30-16:30
Kamine Zoo	22-5586	Adult: 500yen Child: 100yen	9:00-17:00
Kamine Amusement Park	23-1515	Free (Fee for tickets to use the amusement rides)	9:00-16:45 9:00-16:15 (Nov.-Feb)

All facilities are closed on Mondays and around the New Year holiday. For more details, please contact the respective facility above. The local area code of all telephone number is (0294).

Sakura Festival - April 10 (Sat.) & 11 (Sun.) -

Heiwa Dori Area

Event	April 10 (Sat.)	April 11 (Sun.)
Hitachi Fuyu-mono	12pm, 3pm, 7pm	12pm, 3pm
Hitachi Sasara	11am, 2pm	-
Mikoshi (Portable Shrine) Parade	6 - 8pm	-
Wadaiko (Japanese drums) play	-	2:30pm - 3:30pm 4pm - 5pm
Others: Live stage, Stage performances, Sansa-Odori dancing, Syakuhati(flute) play, Karaoke, etc.		

Enquiries : Kanko-ka Hitachi City Office
(Phone 0294-22-3111)

Kamine Park

Event	Date & Time
Spring Festival	March 20 (Sat.) - April 20 (Tue.)
Lanterns and lamps are lighted	April 1 (Thu.) - 20 (Tue.) Evening - 9:30pm
Cartoon character Show (Amusement Park)	March 21 (Sun.), 27 (Sat.), 28 (Sun.), April 4 (Sun.), 11 (Sun.), 18 (Sun.) 11:00am - 2:00pm

The Amusement Park: entrance fee is free from March 29 (Mon.) - April 3 (Sat.)

Enquiries : Hitachi Koen Kyokai (Phone 0294-22-4737)

JAPANESE LANGUAGE CLASSES

NAME	LOCATION	DATE & TIME	Fee	Contact
Sakura	Shichokaku Center etc	Saturday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	Ms. Reiko Tsuru Tel (0294) 53-4558 reiko_tip@yahoo.co.jp
		Thursday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	
Sakura (Kanji)	Kyoiku Plaza	Friday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	
Anzu	Shichokaku Center	Tuesday 19:00-20:30	¥300/month & ¥1,500 (text)	Ms. Kyoko Kamada Tel/Fax (0294) 33-3399
	Kyoiku Plaza	Friday 13:00-16:00	¥300/month & ¥1,500 (text)	

The Hitachi International Street Performances Festival

This year, more than 30 groups of street performers will entertain you with various kinds of performances!!

When & Where : 1) May 8 (Sat) 12:00~ at Hitachi (Hitachi Ginza Mall, My Mall and Patio Mall, in front of Hitachi Civic Center) 2) May 9 (Sun) 12:00~ at Taga (in front of Taga Station and Yokappe street)

Contents : Animation, Clowns, Juggling, Acrobats, Magic, Comedy, Balloons, Puppets, Pantomime and Music. Art market, face painting and special dishes are also available.

Enquiries : Hitachi Civic Center (Phone 0294-24-7711)

Movies in April

Theater	Day	Titles (Original Titles)
Cinefesta 1&2 Tel:21-7472	16-	Innocence [J] Quill [J] The Lord of the Rings [J] Mei Tantei Konan [J]
	17-	Doraemon [J] Kureyon Shinchon [J]
Aigakan 1&2 Tel:23-2323	-16	One Piece [J]
	-24	The Hotel Venus [J]
	-23	Brother Bear [J]
	-23	The Lord of the Rings [J]
	24-	Casshern [J] The Haunted Mansion [E]
Theater Isejin Tel:22-1761	-16	Master and Commander [E]
	-16	Rennai Tekirei-ki (Something's Gotta Give) [E]
	-23	Paycheck [E]
	17-	Ocean of Fire (Hidalgo) [E]
	24-	Cold Mountain [E]

[E]: English with Japanese subtitle [J]: Japanese

Emergency Doctors on Duty

Hitachi uses a system called "TOBAN-I". The doctors in the city take turns standing by for emergency patients from 9:00 to 16:00 on Sundays and national holidays. This system includes surgeons, physicians, pediatricians and dentists.

Be sure to bring your money and health insurance card

Surgeons

Day	Hospital Name	Address	Tel
4	Naito Seikei Geka Iin	Higashi Onuma-cho	53-1833
11	Shimada Geka Iin	Omika-cho	53-4666
18	Heiwadai Shinohara Clinic	Suwa-cho	34-6666
25	Sasaki Ichoka Geka	Orikasa-cho	43-0333
29	Hitachi Sakura Clinic	Tajiri-cho	43-2000

Physicians, Pediatricians and Dentists

Seven days a week: Hitachi Medical Center
(Address: 5-1-1 Higashitaga-cho Tel: 34-2105
Fax: 34-3718 E-mail: webmaster@hitachi-medical.or.jp)

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Editor's Note

Thank you for reading the Hyotan. If you'd like to inquire about anything, please send us a letter, fax or e-mail. Any subject is welcomed. We are looking forward to receiving your letters!