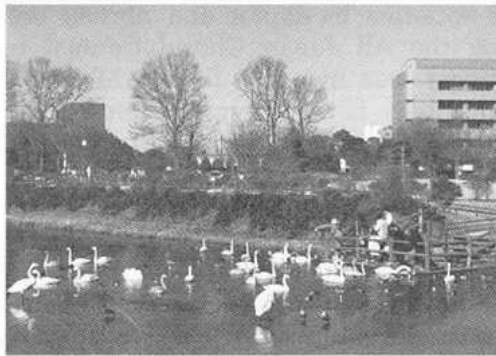


Swan pond – Ichinoseki-tameike, Naka city

In the winter in Japan, migrant swan visiting is one of the charming sights. From November to the end of March, swans stop over in the vicinity of Hitachi which is located in the north of Ibaraki before their going back to north. We'd like to introduce a park where swans stop over which is in front of Naka City Office located about 30km southwest of Hitachi.



Naka City Office is located on the west side of Japan Railway Kamisugaya Station on the

Suigun line which runs along Route 349. It takes about 15 minutes on foot from the station. Ichinoseki-tameike water park fronting the city office gives comfort to the citizens all through the year. In spring, a lot of acacia trees flush in unison everywhere in the park. Families play on the waterside in summer, there is a clump of *hagi* (Japanese bush clover) in fall, and then in winter a great number of swans come flying there. This *tameike* (basin) was built as a storage reservoir to manage agricultural water.

The swan, a herald of winter has come flying in Ichinoseki-tameike every winter to overwinter since 1974, when the swan first visited there. The largest number of migrant swans was 166 recorded in 1999. Swans usually live in Siberia. In May and June, they lay eggs and then cygnets are hatched. In fall, swans gather into Hokkaido via Sakhalin for food. Then they come down to Ichinoseki-tameike in November. They overwinter in Japan and then go back to Siberia in mid-March with the coming of spring. The number of swans coming flying in the pond as of mid-January is around 60 which is less than usual. In addition, because of this unusual cold winter, half of the water surface turned to ice, you can see the swans and ducks walking on it.

There are two feeding platforms by the pond where even children can feed swans safely. In the daytime, not only swans are sailing peacefully, but

also various ducks swim on the water lively. The number of them might be hundreds. If you are lucky, you'll see that a common kingfisher tries to fly into the sky from around the pond. They show us their very beautiful blue wings and orange bellies sitting in a tree as well as in flight.

There are two kinds of swans coming down to Ichinoseki-tameike: one is whooper swan, the other is bewick's swan. About 70% of them are whooper swans.

Whooper is larger than others at about 140cm length, a 200cm wingspan and 10kg weight and has white plumage (cygnet has gray one). It also has a more angular head shape and a more variable bill pattern that always shows more yellow than black. Bewick's is smaller than whooper at about 120cm length and a 180cm wingspan and honks differently. Swans eat aquatic vegetation, including the stems, and roots of many types of pond weeds in nature. In artificial feeding, swans eat immature rice, oats and crumbs provided.

An old Japanese farmhouse was moved to right next to the swan pond and reconstructed which you can tour inside. There are a kitchen and a living room in it which are exactly the same as they were when it was functioned. The style of the farmhouse is called *magariya* which was seen more common in the colder region. *Magari* in Japanese means bent, in the literature the house is built in an L-shape. The longer part of building

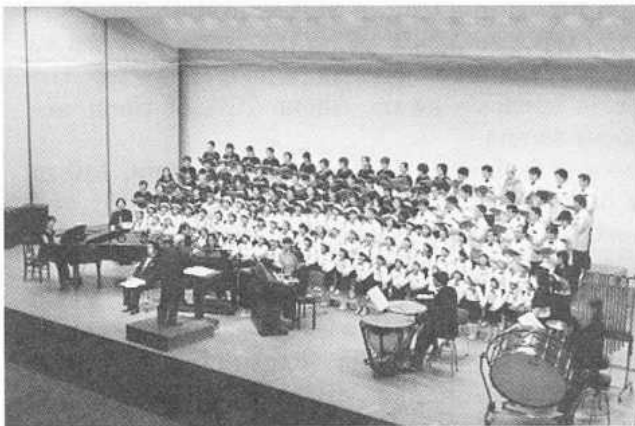


was used as a residence and the shorter one was used as a barn for cattle or a barn.

The farmhouse which is preserved there was built in 1862 at Tozaki Naka. It is the last existing one so that the city decided its preservation. It was relocated and reconstructed in September, 1999.

The Choral Society of Hitachi Ltd.

When it comes to choral works, "Beethoven's 9th" is famous for being performed all over the world as an annual event by many choral societies. The chorus is a cooperative enterprise that requires great technique and all the endeavour of those involved. It is a moving and wonderful thing when everything fits together smoothly. It epitomises the ideals of harmony. In Ibaraki, there are about ninety choral societies. We would like to introduce one of them to you, The Hitachi Ltd. Choral Society, which has been crowned with great success despite undergoing many difficulties.



History and Standing

The society started just after World War II at a time of extreme food shortage. Some employees used to sing together in a corner of the factory. In May 1948, a choral group known as the 'Singing Circle' came into being in the Cultural affairs Department of Hitachi Ltd. As a background to this, choral singing was becoming increasingly popular in the Kanto Region after the Second World War. The Kanto Choral Federation founded in 1946 with only 40 member societies increased its membership to over 140 in 1948, and the Japan Choral Federation was established in the same year. In September 1949, a workers' choral competition took place in Ibaraki for the first time and this prompted the foundation of the Ibaraki Choral Federation. In 1950, the Hitachi Company's "Singing Circle" changed its name to the Hitachi Ltd. Choral Society and was able to take part in the Kanto Choral Contest only two

years after its foundation, thus embarking on its subsequent 50 year history. In 1954, Mr. Yoshiaki Kimura, who was already a member of the Society, was entrusted with conducting the society's choir. He still continues in that role today.

Current situation of the Society and its achievements

The Society achieved a first prize in the 9th All Japan Choral Contest in 1956 and thenceforth has taken part in that contest 43 times, gaining a first (gold) prize ten times, thus marking it out as one of the leading amateur choral societies of Japan. The society is active in a wide number of areas such as the organisation of a fixed annual concert, the foundation of the Hitachi "Call Familie", specialising in the performance of the 9th, in 1997, which performs together with the Hitachi Philharmonic, and coordinating programs with other choral societies in Japan and abroad etc. After winning the All Japan Choral Contest in 1956, the Society was awarded by the Mayor of Hitachi, and has been honoured by the Governor of Ibaraki for its many recent first prizes.

Organization

The Society is made up of four parts, the tenor and bass for men, and the soprano and alto for women. It has currently about 70 members. Usually, they have choral practice every Sunday. Members consist of Hitachi Works employees, their families, and former (retired) employees. Hitachi Call Familie is open to employees from all of Hitachi Ltd.

Moving the listener

Mr. Kimura, the conductor, says that the point of the society's music is moving the listener by enabling him to grasp the background of the melody, the unwritten emotion of the work and its vitality. He ideally wants each member of the choir to be able to move their audience and to gain their mutual appreciation and understanding by continual practice, since the harder they train, the more they will achieve these aims.

However, Mr. Uezono, the Chief Manager of the Society, made a point of reminding us that Mr. Kimura in his role as conductor never berates his members, but always leads as an equal in a pleasant manner to achieve high standards of choral excellence.

KIWI-HITACHI CLUB

-Friendship with New Zealand-

Do you know foreign sister cities of Hitachi? One is Birmingham in Alabama, United States. The other is, Tauranga in New Zealand. KIWI-HITACHI CLUB (hereinafter called KIWI) is a civic group of 30 members which plays an active role to develop friendly relations with

Tauranga City and New Zealand.

When the students from Tauranga Boys College visited Hitachi in 2004, KIWI helped with warming up a welcome party. Some of KIWI members hosted the students. They held a barbecue party, hoping the students have good memories of Hitachi.

Two most important annual activities of KIWI are participation in Hitachi Industry Festival and a hosting KIWI Festival. They sold products from New Zealand to introduce culture of the country to Hitachi citizens in the Industrial Festival on last November. KIWI Festival was held on last December. It consists of two parts, the first part was a lecture, and the second was a picture-story show and a music live show.



On the lecture, Mr. Fraser Brace and Mrs. Tomoko Brace made a speech on what it is like raising children in New Zealand, which is different from Japan. Mr. Keiji Kurihara, a third-year student of Chuo High School, spoke about his school life in Tauranga Boys College

where he studied for a year, and also made a speech in fluent English. Mayor Kashimura celebrated the festival and made a statement on sister city exchange. In the second part, a folk tale of New Zealand was played by KIWI members, and "Dylan and His Cheerful Fellows", also KIWI members, played Japanese songs and Christmas medley.

Mrs. Yumiko Morimura, a chairperson of KIWI told that important things about their activities are cherishing link between people and heart-to-heart communication. She also told just enjoying the activities with everyone is important, not thinking too seriously. For example, they usually set up tea time and chorus time at lectures to amuse guests in warm handmade atmosphere.

At the first meeting for starting KIWI in 2004, one member told about her motivation that she thought it would be fun to join a "club", which may remind us of club activities in school days, even though she was adult already now. Other members may also feel in the same way, I guess. If you are interested in their activities, check KIWI festival and their shop at Industry Festival this year. Then you may discover the fascination of New Zealand, or maybe of KIWI HITACHI CLUB. You are welcome to join the club. Call Mrs. Morimura: 0294-37-1483

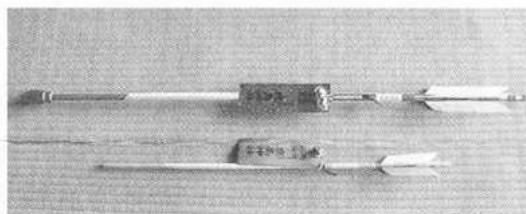
Japanese Culture and Social Customs Part 11

Good Luck Symbols : The Sacred Arrow (Hama-ya)

Did you know that the bow and arrow have been symbols of good luck against evil in Japan since time immemorial? Originally, bows and arrows were used for hunting from around 10,000 years ago. In modern times, they have been used in sports such as western-style archery and Japanese "kyudo". It has often been felt that the bow and arrow have the power toward off evil and so they often form part of various "Shinto" rituals. This is because they could bring down an enemy during battle or one's quarry during the hunt from a distance with no need to come to grips with either. So, in the past, they were believed to possess a sacred power even in the spiritual world. They often made appearances in myths and legends as weapons to fight against demons. Even now there is an event called the "Yabusame" in which riders dressed as samurai of the Kamakura Period (1185-1333) shoot arrows at targets from horseback in order to pray for good health and a rich harvest.

"Hama-ya" or Sacred Arrows are sold at shrines during New Year's as good luck charms. "Hama" means to destroy demons and thus to renounce worldly desires in Buddhist terminology. In the Edo Period (1600-1867), when a boy was born into

a samurai family, he was presented with a bow and arrow during his first "Shogatsu" (New Year's Season) as a mark of his



parents' wishes for him to become a great samurai. This custom has been handed down to the general public over the years but in the simplified form of an arrow being sold at shrines at New Year's as a good luck charm. Apart from this, maybe some of you have seen a ceremonial bow and arrow being placed on the roof of a newly erected house, pointing in the direction of the devil's gate. This act is believed to ward off the evil that enters through the devil's gate (situated in the north east corner of a building).

These are just some of the many interesting references relating to the symbolic significance of the bow and arrow.

>>>> INFORMATION February 2006 >>>>

EVENTS in HITACHI in February

Date	Event & Main Attractions	Place	Admission	Inquiry
4 th (Sat) 9:00-12:00	Bird Watching at Sukegawa-yama Citizens' Park	Parking Lot at the Park's Aobadai Entry	Free	Urban Dev. Sec. in C.H. Tel 22-3111 Ex.263
4 th (Sat) 13:00-15:30	International Exchange Lect. Exch. thro' Peruvian Culture	Nameri-kawa Public Hall	Free	Namekawa Public Hall Tel 22-1654
17 th (Fri) 10:00-12:00	"Origami" Class for Adults (bring with ruler and scissors)	Shi-cho-kaku (Audio-Visual) Center	Free 30persons	Taga Library Tel 33-2655
18 th , 25 th (Sat) 14:00-16:00	"Japanese Dancing" Class for Youths of some 18-35 years old	Working Youths' Home Come with Cotton Sox	¥1000 . 15persons	Working Youths' Home Tel 23-3231
19 th (Sun) 10:00-12:00	"Card Game of the 100 Poems" Class for Young Students	Taga Public Hall (Den-tetsu Plaza)	Free	Mr. Kurihara Tel 34-1087
19 th (Sun) 14:00-1600	"Cooking" Class with fresh Fish and shellfish	Juo Health & Welfare Center	¥1500 30persons	Agriculture & Fishery Sec. in C.H. Ex.472
19 th (Sun) 10:00-1300	Soba-uchi (making buckwheat noodles) Hands-on Class	Nakazato Taiken Plaza	¥500	Nakazato Public Hall Tel 59-0013
19 th (Sun) 10:00-	"New Year Recital" by Hitachi Noh-performers Club	HCC (Music Hall)	Free	Hitachi Civic Center Tel 24-7711
25 th (Sat) 18:00-	"A Spring Dance" presented by Sakaba Dance Academy	Taga Public Hall (Dentetsu Plaza)	¥2999	Taga Public Hall Tel 34-1727
25 th (Sun), 26 th (Sun) 12:00-	Children's Cultural Experience Fair	HCC (Music Hall, Gallery)	Free	Community Relations Sec. In C.H. Ex.535

NH: National Holiday CH: City Hall (Tel: 22-3111) HCC:Hitachi Civic Center

Japanese Language Classes

NAME	LOCATION	DATE & TIME	Fee	Contact
Sakura	Shichokaku Center etc.	Saturday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	Ms. Yukiko Katsuki Tel (0294) 35-3475
		Thursday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	
Sakura (Kanji)	Kyoiku Plaza	Friday 10:00-11:30	¥1,800/semester	
Anzu	Shichokaku Center	Tuesday 19:00-20:45	¥300/month	Mr. Shichizoh Kohsaka Tel/Fax (0294) 35-3989 Kohsaka73@ybb.ne.jp Ms. Keiko Kanaoka Tel/Fax (0294)42-8176
	Kyoiku Plaza	Friday 14:00-16:00		

Movies in Fenbruary

Theater	Day	Titles (Original Titles)
Cinefesta 1&2 Tel:21-7472	- 10	The Uchoten Hotel [J]
	- 10	Arashi no yoru ni [J]
Hitachi Central Tel:21-1386	-	Hachigatsu no Christmas[J]
	-	Koisuru Shinpu[K]
Aigakan 1&2 Tel:23-2323	-	King Kong[J]
	-	Otokotachi no Yamato[J]

J: Japanese K: Korean

Emergency Doctors on Duty

Hitachi uses a system called "TOBAN-F". The doctors in the city take turns standing by for emergency patients from 9:00 to 16:00 on Sundays and national holidays. .

Surgeons

Feb.	Hospital Name	Address	Tel
5	Shinohara Clinic	Suwa-cho	34-6800
11	Sakura Clinic	Tajiri-cho	43-2000
12	Sasaki-Ichogeka	Orikasa-cho	43-0333
19	Hitachi-kita Clinic	Kawajiri-cho	43-6555
26	Hitachi Seikeigeka Iin	Kashima-cho	21-0063

Physicians, Pediatricians and Dentists seven days a week:Hitachi Medical Center (5-1-1 Higashitaga-cho)

Have you visited the Hyotan Home Page yet?
<http://www.city.hitachi.ibaraki.jp/upload/english/index.htm>

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Thank you for reading the Hyotan. Inquiries and comments can be sent either by letter, fax or E-mail. We look forward to hearing from you.