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Minatop

Communicating the charms of the community from a local point of view
Takanawa Community News Magazine

Regional information paper of Takanawa area
Mita 4 and 5-chome, Takanawa, Shirokane, Shirokanedai

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The Changing Faces of Shirokane 1-chome

Shirokane 1-chome is about to undergo a major transformation with a spate of redevelopment plans. It was featured along with "Showa Retro Town," which was once bustling with artisans working at factories.

A Memorable Retro Landscape

In recent years, there has been an ongoing "Showa Retro" boom, especially among young people.

"Showa Retro" is a feeling of nostalgia or yearning for the Showa era. This may be because the social conditions of moving toward a bright future during the period of high economic growth seem brighter and more alluring than the current situation. Moreover, advertisements that convey a sense of human warmth which cannot be found in digital processing, as well as brightly colored cream sodas that translate well into photo graphs, have become popular on social media. Even in the Shirokane 1-chome area which is undergoing redevelopment, there are some precious landscapes that give one a sense of "Showa Retro." Among these, Shinohashi Market in Shirokane 1-chome exudes this atmosphere most. At the time of preparing this article, the greengrocer (Okawa Seika) and chicken meat store (Torihiko) were both in operation.



The (second generation) greengrocer that sells fresh vegetables with cheerful cries of "Irasshai!" ("Welcome!")



Torihiko (second generation), which has been in operation for about 55 years. In addition to chicken meat, its side dishes are also popular.



Shinohashi Market entrance

Furukawa Sakura Children's Amusement Park

This corner features the Furukawa Sakura Children's Amusement Park, opened on February 1, 2023 and located along Furukawa River.

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● Features of the Children's Amusement Park

Furukawa Sakura Children's Amusement Park is divided into three zones for playing, resting, and walking, based on the theme of "a children's amusement park linked to the community, and which children can play in creatively." It was designed based on the following five concepts:

1. A place for children of different ages to play creatively
2. A place for members of the local community to rest and gather
3. An enriching and attractive waterside space
4. A safe and reassuring space
5. Reinforcement of disaster prevention functions

● Overview of the Children's Amusement Park

With an area of 500 m², it offers facilities including a mound-shaped playground equipment, mist water play, and "toilet benches" and "cooking stove benches" for use during disasters. There are two man-made mounds in the play zone serving as playground equipment that children can

climb up and down. Mist sprays out when a button is pressed, helping to take the edge off the summer heat.

In the rest zone, benches are placed on all sides so that grownups can also rest and relax. There are also benches that double up as toilets and cooking stoves for use during a disaster.

The walking zone features cherry trees and hydrangeas along the Furukawa River, so visitors can enjoy taking walks along the river.



Furukawa Sakura Children's Amusement Park

The Takanawa Area Today – Explore Its Attractions!

The many attractions of the Takanawa area include its lush greenery and ease of raising children. We spoke to a group that works actively to create these attractions.

“Takanawa Midori de Tsunagaru Project”

Preserving, nurturing, and enjoying Takanawa’s greenery

We spoke to members of the “Takanawa Midori de Tsunagaru Project,” which involves volunteer greening activities, organized by the civic organization, Town Meeting TAKANAWA.

Since its launched in April 2015, the group has mainly carried out the following activities:

Planting seedlings growing from seeds at parks and roadsides of the area, and taking care of the plants

Nurturing and maintaining “Hydrangea Road”

Growing hops

Promoting and educating the local community on greening through “green” activities

The group struggled most with carefully growing hydrangeas, known to be difficult to grow, from cuttings and caring for them until they flowered and bloomed gloriously as they do now.

“Hydrangea Road,” located within the premises of Takamatsu Junior High School, was opened to the general public for the first time in June this year, allowing local residents to take their time and enjoy the. Flowers. There are plans to further expand it in the future.



“Hydrangea Road,” beautifully cared for by the group



Hops growing splendidly along the wall of Takanawa Regional City Office



Working with cuttings along Hydrangea Road

“Summer Project Organized by Takanawa Kids-to-Teens Hall (TAP)”

Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) activities ~ Learning activities for children

In August, TAP took the opportunity of the summer holidays organized workshops in collaboration with corporations. Here, we feature some of the workshops held, including the workshop hosted by Sony Group Corporation on making speakers from paper cups, and the workshop hosted by tesa tape K.K. on making plastic from soy milk.

The “paper cup speaker” workshop always receives more applications than the number of spaces available. A free craft kit is distributed to participants, who learn together with their parents or guardians about the mechanism of sound production as they have fun making the speakers. A coil and a strong magnet generate a magnetic field that vibrates the

paper cup. When connected to a player, sounds can be heard through the paper cup speaker. In the workshop on making plastic from soy milk, participants experiment with making plastic that breaks down in nature. Lemon water and coloring dyes are added to soy milk, which solidifies to make plastic. This is used to make original keychains that participants can bring home with them. In the time it takes for the soy milk to solidify, participants

are quizzed about the environment and plastic, and learn about how eco-friendly plastic can be made from corn. The children looked intrigued by all the information and knowledge they were gaining.



Paper cup speaker kit



Making a paper cup speaker



Making plastic from soy milk



Removing soy milk plastic from the mold

Tokaido and the Old Roads of Takanawa

Ieyasu Tokugawa is said to have first officially entered the Edo Castle on August 1, 1590. In later years, the Tokugawa Shogunate celebrated this day as their biggest holiday after New Year's Day.

● Establishment of early modern Tokaido

After Ieyasu entered Edo, he immediately proceeded with road reforms and opened up major roads in low-lying areas passing through Takanawa from Shinagawa, and later, to connect Nihonbashi and Senju.

In the New Year of 1601, the Shogunate issued Ieyasu's "Tenma Shuinjo" (vermillion-seal documents) and "Gotenma no Sadame" to each inn. This laid the groundwork for the "Shukueki Tenma" system(*1) along Tokaido, and led to the establishment of the early modern Tokaido.

(*1) "Shukueki Tenma" system: A free horse and rider for transportation prepared by post towns to enable the seamless relay-style transportation of official Shogunate documents and other items.

● The roads that passed through Nihon-enoki Oshu-Kaido

A "kando" (road maintained by the government) already existed during the Nara era, and the ancient Oshu Road passed through the hill above Mitadai.

Takanawa-dori was a narrow lane dotted with small villages, located at Nawate (a footpath crossing rice fields) on a hill along the coast. During the Middle Ages, this road became Kamakura-Kaido.

Nakahara-Kaido

This was a side road of Tokaido with its starting point at present-day Toranomom. It split at Nihonenoki-dori and entered Shiba Nihon-enoki Nishimachi, crossing Shirokane Sarumachi and extending to Shinagawa.

Reference:
Minatokushi (A History of Minato City), etc.

Takanawa's Tokaido, which the Sankin Kotai (attending officials) and the Ako Roshi (group of 47 loyal samurai warriors) had walked upon.

The routes taken by the Sankin Kotai were determined by the Daimyo (feudal lords), and Daimyos from about 150 families designated Tokaido as the route for their officials. More than half of the 270 Daimyo families across Japan had established residences in Minato City, so during the season each year, the section of Tokaido passing through Takanawa bustled with numerous Daimyo processions. Mt. Koya was treated as "tenryo" (territory under the direct control of the Shogunate), independent of the Kishu domain, and Takanawa was home to the "Koyasan Edo Zaiban Yashiki" (present-day Koyasan Tokyo Betsuin) granted by the Shogunate in 1655,

so Sankin Kotai was practiced on the same level as the Daimyos. On December 15, 1702, the Ako Roshi samurai warriors who had fulfilled their purpose walked towards Sengakuji along Tokaido, which was frozen due to the snow that had fallen the day before. It is said that many members of the local populace (known as "Edo Suzume") gathered along the three-hour route spanning 12km, by the roadsides, and in front of gates, eager for information and rumors.

Reference:
Koyasan Tokyo Betsuin no Keifu (Genealogy of Koyasan Tokyo Betsuin), etc.

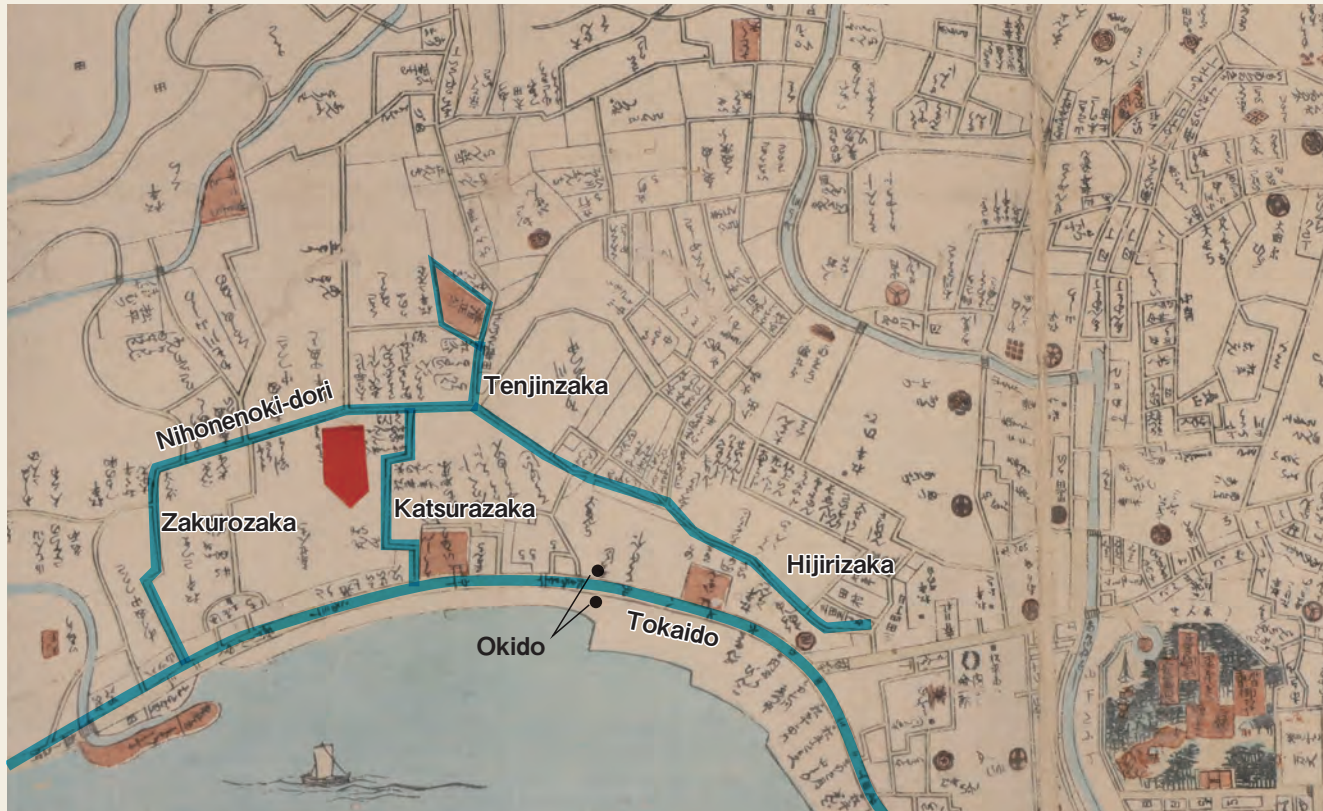


From "Toto Takanawa fukei" ("View of Takanawa in the Eastern Capital"), Utagawa Sadahide (Nagoya Token World, Token Corporation of Land Utilization)

Historical Sites of the Region

The Roads of Takanawa That Have Stood the Test of Time

Roads began alongside the evolution of human lives. People hunted in the mountains and fished in the seas and rivers in order to survive. Roads developed as people began to interact with other villages. Even so, these were not clearly marked roads, but rather, narrow paths that evolved where people happened to pass through looking for ways to move forward to their destinations. People live in places where there were roads, and their culture becomes deeply rooted in that area. Such roads, which have stood the test of time, remain visible to us and continue to be used every day even now. This issue introduces the stories revolving around the roads of Takanawa.



Enlarged view of section showing Takanawa from "Edo Zu" during the Genji era (1864 - 1865), collection of Takanawa Seirinji (Takanawa 2-chome)*The red arrow indicates Seirinji, but the temple is not open to the public.

Korean Envoys During the Edo Era

The dispatch of Korean envoys (known as "Chosen Tsushinshi") (*2) began in the Muromachi era, and a total of 12 dispatches were conducted from 1607 to 1811. During the Edo era, diplomatic relations with foreign countries were severed under the national isolation policy, and the only country that Japan maintained diplomatic

relations with was Korea ("Chosen"). The purpose of the Korean envoys was to congratulate Japan on the change of Shoguns or government regime, hand over official letters from the Korean kingdom, and receive replies from the Japanese side. The envoys stayed for one night at Tokaiji in Shinagawa, the last lodging along the Tokaido and traveled from Sengakuji to Okido in Takanawa the following day. It is said that the local residents watched the procession of envoys as if it were a foreign show.

(*2) Diplomatic delegation dispatched from Korea to Japan between the Muromachi and Edo eras.



"Chosen Tsushinshi Raicho Zu" ("Scene of Korean Envoys Visiting Japan"), Hanegawa Touei, collection of Kobe City Museum

Beato and Schliemann, foreigners who traveled to the Takanawa area via Tokaido at the end of the Edo era

From 1860 to 1865, the "Sonno Joi" ideological movement (advocating reverence to the Emperor and calling for the expulsion of foreigners) became greatly influential, leading to many incidents of assault and killing of foreigners on the Tokaido.

At the time, foreigners, including ministers, risked their lives if they went out. Among them was Felice Beato, a British international news photographer who came to Japan in 1863 and left many photographs from the end of the Edo period. He traveled widely across Japan including the Tokaido, leaving behind 180 photographs showing the end of the Edo period. In the Takanawa area, he visited Daimyo mansions, Tozenji, Shinagawa, and many other spots, where he took valuable photographs.

Another foreigner was Heinrich Schliemann, a German archaeologist who discovered the ruins of Troy. He visited Japan from the Qing Kingdom in 1865 and wrote about it in his travelogue. In and around the Takanawa area, he visited Tozenji where the British legation was based, Saikaiji where the French legation was based, Chooji where the Dutch legation was based, and Korinji where Heusken's grave is located.

● Photograph taken by Beato



"Kagokaki" ("Palanquin Bearer") (Collection of Yokohama Archives of history)



"Dainiji Tozenji Jiken no Genba" ("Site of the Second Tozenji Incident") (Collection of Yokohama Archives of history)

Meiji Emperor's Royal Visit to Tokyo

On July 17, 1868, Edo became Tokyo, the name of the era became "Meiji" in September, and the Meiji Emperor journeyed eastward to Tokyo. On September 20, after departing from Kyoto, the Meiji Emperor passed through Tokaido on the morning of October

13 as he made his way from Shinagawa-juku through Takanawa Okido to the Edo Castle, Nishinomaru Palace.

Reference:
Minato-ku to Koshitsu no Kindai (Minato City and the Imperial Family in the Modern Era), Minato City Board of Education, etc.



"Takanawa fukin wo tsukasuru toko no gyoretsu" ("Royal Procession Passing Near Takanawa") (Collection of Imperial Household Archives, Imperial Household Agency)

After Meiji

On September 12, 1872, an embankment was built along the coast of Takanawa along Tokaido, and Japan's first railway connecting Shinbashi and Yokohama was opened. On May 7, four months before the railway commenced operation, Shinagawa Station was opened as Japan's first railway station. As the mode of transportation shifted from horse-drawn carriages and horses to trains and motor vehicles, the streetscapes and cityscapes continued to undergo transformations as the Japanese economy developed.



The old Tokaido and ruins of Takanawa Okido against the backdrop of construction work on Takanawa Gateway City

Musical Groups

Vocal Unit “REAL VOX”

We interviewed Vocal Unit “REAL VOX,” a four-person group appointed as Minato-ku Tourism Ambassadors since 2019.



What is your relationship with the Takanawa area?

Once a year, we hold a solo live performance at the Takanawa Community center. We also performed at the Takanawa District Festival feat. Takanawa Gateway Fest 2022.

How did Vocal Unit “REAL VOX” begin?

We were formed in 2018 by a member who has experience performing at the Minato Performing Arts Festival. The group’s name, REAL VOX, reflects our desire to present our “real” voices to the people.

“Vox” means voice in Latin.

What kind of activities do you engage in?

As Minato-ku Tourism Ambassadors, we participate in various events in the city and continue to carry out activities aimed at promoting Minato City’s appeal through music and performances!

One of our activity themes is also to bring



During the interview

experiences and inspiration to children. With that in mind, we have also established an exclusive chorus and dance group to join us on the stage and liven up our performances. We also distribute songs in karaoke version, and we would be delighted if everyone sings these songs!

What are your dreams?

Our dream is to appear on the Kohaku Uta Gassen as representatives of Minato City. Every year, all the members keep their schedules free on New Year’s Eve!

Message to all readers

We sometimes appear at events in your local area. Going forward, we hope to work together with residents



Stage performance

of Minato City to actively promote and spread the appeal of Minato City. We look forward to your continued support!

(Persons-in-charge: Ando, Sasaki, Hirao, Matsushima, Nagahara)



At the venue of the Minato City Half Marathon



Local Community Activities

Youth Baseball Teams

Takanawa Club



Junior team



Senior team



Training at Takamatsu Junior High School

We interviewed Takanawa Club, a baseball group active in the grounds of Takamatsu Junior High School.

Having watched the junior team play, we were impressed by the high level of baseball play that surpasses that of adult sandlot baseball teams.

We spoke to Mr. Sasaki, the team's manager. "The club was founded in 1969 and has a history of more than 50 years. There are 35 members in total. We recruit members through posters, hold many trial sessions, and encourage children to join.

Trainings are held eight times a month on Saturdays and Sundays, and there are two

instructors: the manager and the coach. I have been manager of the team for 28 years. A three-day two-night training camp is held once a year. This year, we went to Kashima City in Ibaraki Prefecture and played against their local team. I hope that the children can play hard and enjoy baseball.

We have strong ties with the children, parents, and siblings, and alumni also visit often. Hence, we have established strong community bonds that cannot be forged through school life. Playing baseball also enhances focus and concentration, so many of the children attain good results on their university entrance examinations."

If you wish to join, please visit the website.
★Takanawa Club website



(Persons-in-charge: Ando, Sasaki, Hirao, Matsushima, Nagahara)

Musical Groups

Gospel choir group “Takanawa Happy Mamas”

We interviewed Takanawa Happy Mamas, who practice at the music room of Takanawa Community Center.

What is the origin of the group’s name?

We chose this name with the desire to bring happiness to everyone.

How was the group formed?

This is the 22nd year since the founding of Takanawa Happy Mamas.

The group was formed by members who had participated in a gospel class held at Takanawa Children’s Hall for mothers taking care of children, through which they discovered the joy of making their own harmonies.

How many members are there?

There are currently 18 members. New members are always welcomed! We hold a free trial session once a year, so please feel free to join us.

What kind of music is gospel music?

Gospel music is a form of Protestant religious music that has its roots in churches attended by African Americans. It incorporates African



During a rehearsal

rhythms and singing styles. We enjoy it as a genre of music, regardless of religious affiliation.

What are the important points in singing gospel music?

As it is soul music, it is important to vocalize from your stomach or diaphragm. Abdominal breathing is key.

What kind of activities are you engaged in?

We perform at local community events and visit elderly homes and nursery schools, bringing great joy to these facilities.

What are your dreams?

Takanawa Happy Mamas wants to bring happiness to everyone through our songs for all time!



At a performance



Performance at Welfare Plaza Sakuragawa Day Service

Scenes from their activities can also be viewed on the website.



(Persons-in-charge: Ando, Sasaki, Matsushima)

Youth Baseball Teams

Takanawadai Fighters



Members of Takanawadai Fighters



We interviewed Takanawadai Fighters, established in 1975 with a proud history spanning 48 years.

Takanawadai Fighters now comprises two teams: the junior team (students from grades 1 to 4) with 19 players, and senior team (students from grades 5 to 6) with 15 players. There are also female members in both the senior and junior teams.

What are the activity days?

We train on weekends and national holidays. Training camps are held once a year for four days and three nights, at venues such as Lake Yamanaka.

What is your policy?

We pay attention not only to improving our baseball skills, but also to learning skills that we can apply in our lives. We communicate

messages to the players such as “Think about why it turned out that way” or “Do not try to recover from failure on the spot. Acknowledge the failure and apply the lesson next time.”

Vertical and horizontal bonds

Alumni visit the Fighters frequently. Even on the day of the interview, four university students who were alumni came and partook in the activities. When asked about what they liked about joining the group, they answered “the horizontal and vertical bonds that were formed.” During the summer training camp at Lake Yamanaka, players of different ages (“vertical”) shared rooms to strengthen the bonds across different year groups. At the same time, efforts are made to ensure that children in the junior grades learn from those in the senior grades. Even when taking

The latest information is posted on the website, Facebook, and Instagram. Those who wish to join should also watch the introductory video on the website.



the group photograph, the senior students made the younger ones laugh at their request, exuding an atmosphere of great friendship.

(Persons-in-charge: Terada, Ando, Matsushima, Sasaki)



Team managers

Seishoko Taisai Festival Held for the First Time in Four Years



Stalls at the festival

The Seishoko Taisai Festival is the largest festival in the Shirokane and Takanawa areas. Organized by an executive committee comprising members from Kakurin-ji and local neighborhood and town associations, it was held on May 4 and 5 for the first time in four years. Both days were sunny and the event bustled with many worshippers.

Kakurin-ji is known affectionately as Seishoko of Shirokane. It is a temple associated with the military commander Kato Kiyomasa, and the Seishoko Taisai Festival is held on Children's Day not only in honor of his bravery, but also with the wish that children will grow up strong. During the festival, stalls line the streets along Tenjinzaka, leading from Kakurin-ji to Nihonenoki-dori, creating a lively atmosphere. In past years, close to 20,000 attended the festival.



Performance by TAKARABUNE, an Awa Odori group

"Noren no Ichi" was held along Nihonenoki-dori at the same time as the Seishoko Taisai Festival. Organized by Merry Road Takanawa, this festival brings together the local community, with eating outlets from the local shopping district setting up stalls, and students from the Takanawa Kyoiku Project (under the School of Information Telecommunication Engineering of Tokai University) helping stores participating in this corner to create social media content. Thanks to the connection with Kiyomasa Kato, who was the lord of Kumamoto Castle, there was also a local product exhibitions from Kumamoto Prefecture. On May 5, Kumamon made an appearance alongside Awa Odori performances by TAKARABUNE. All the visitors appeared to enjoy themselves fully at the first festival held in four years. (Persons-in-charge: Yamazaki, Ando, Abe, Nagahara)

What is Minatop?

This is a community-based information paper that has been published in the Takanawa area since 2006 and is created in collaboration with the local people and the ward.

The contents are diverse, such as "local events and community activities," "local history and resources," and "people who are active in the community," and you're sure to discover something new. Read Minatop and become attached to the area.

I hope that this information paper will help some people to become interested in or like the area called "Takanawa".



Local people and the ward having an editorial meeting.



The official X account of the Takanawa Regional City Office has been established to share information from the Takanawa District more widely. The account posts a wide variety of information, including upcoming events and local happenings, as well as information on disaster prevention and environmental improvements. Please follow the account!

► Search for the Takanawa Regional City Office account



Open until 7:00 p.m. on every Wednesday. ※Services handled are limited. Please check in advance.

Counter Service Subsection, Residents Support Section: ☎5421-7612 / Health and Welfare Subsection: ☎5421-7085