
THE TOMBO

Oita's English Newsletter

July, August, September 2018

Issue 91

Summertime Stories

Japan has plenty of interesting summer traditions, from festivals and fireworks to nagashi soumen and suikawari, but there's one specific tradition that calls to mind those hot nights of summer: ghost stories. Cool yourself off by letting your skin crawl as you fill your mind with tales of the supernatural at a hyaku monogatari kaidankai.



Hyaku monogatari kaidankai, or a gathering of a hundred ghost stories, is a Japanese tradition that dates back an unknown number of years. Anthologies of the tales told during these kaidankai were published during the Edo Period, but the oral tradition behind these stories stretches back further. In *Otogi Bōko* (1666), Ryōi Asai noted a variety of rules for hyaku monogatari kaidankai. Amongst these rules were “kaidankai must take place on a new moon,” “the room must be completely dark aside from 100 paper lanterns in the middle of the room,”

and “the participants should be wearing blue and must be without swords.” After everyone had gathered, a total of 100 ghost stories would be told. After each story was told, the light from one paper lantern would be extinguished. After the hundredth story had been told, the room would receive a spectral visitor...

There isn't enough room here to tell you a hundred ghost stories, but there is enough time to tell you what is perhaps Japan's most famous ghost story: Yotsuya Kaidan. Although based on a true story, the most famous retelling of the events comes from the 1825 play *Tokaido Yotsuya Kaidan*. The story of Oiwa is a subplot within a larger story, and certain details have been omitted or otherwise altered for clarity's sake. The following story also contains a content warning for mention of sexual assault.

This is the story of a woman named Oiwa.

Her father was Samon, a masterless warrior of Shiotani, and she was married to a man named Iemon Tamiya, another masterless warrior of Shiotani. Although she was due to give birth soon, her father sent for her to come back home after learning that Iemon was misappropriating public funds. Samon wanted to spare his daughter of shame before the Shiotani Manor found out about Iemon's misconduct. Fearing that Samon would expose his misdeeds, Iemon murdered him in secret.

Samon had another daughter, Osode, who was married to a different masterless warrior of Shiotani named Yosomuchi Sato.

Although she was married, a man named Naosuke was eager to steal her away from her marriage to be his own bride. As time passed, he stopped listening to Osode as she spurned his advances and decided to murder her husband as he set out for long journey. But he accidentally murdered the wrong man.

Unknowingly, Naosuke came before Osode to tell of her husband's death. He swore that if he ever found the person who had killed Yosomuchi, he would personally avenge him. And so, based upon that lie, they wed. Similarly, Iemon returned home to Oiwa to tell her of her father's death and likewise promise to avenge him if the chance should ever arise.

Oiwa soon gave birth, but she recovered poorly, and Iemon

gradually found himself becoming more and more disgusted by her.

It was around that time that Kihei Ito, a retainer of Takashinao, began to state his desire for his granddaughter, Oume, to marry lemon. Upon hearing this from Kihei, lemon realized that if he were to marry Oume, he could almost certainly be guaranteed to become a vassal in a noble manor. His marriage to Oiwa was the only thing standing in his way. Thus, he launched a plot to divorce her on grounds of adultery. He hired a man named Takuetsu to rape Oiwa, therein giving him legal grounds for separation.

But Kihei had launched a plot of his own. Under the guise of delivering Oiwa a medicine designed for pain relief, he delivered her a murderous poison instead.

The poison arrived moments before Takuetsu did.

Oiwa drank the “medicine” without suspicion, and her hair began to fall off of her scalp. And then her face began to fall away from her bones.

Overtaken with fear, Takuetsu abandoned his mission and instead decided to tell Oiwa about her husband’s plot against her. Naturally, Oiwa grew enraged. She fought with Takuetsu and, in the ensuing struggle, he mistakenly murdered her with his own sword.

But Oiwa would not be the only victim connected to Kihei’s poison. lemon and his ilk caught a manservant named Kohei Shobtsu attempting to steal their coveted poison. Kohei fought against them, and so they had no choice but to murder him. lemon then procured a door, strapped Kohei’s body to one side and Oiwa’s body to the other side, and pushed them both into the river.

And then everything that stood in lemon’s way was clear. lemon and Oume were free to wed.

But every time lemon looked at Oume, her face became Oiwa’s.

And every time he looked at Kihei, his face became Kohei’s. In a fit of absolute terror, lemon murdered them both.

After some time had passed, lemon went fishing down by the river where he met Naosuke. Naosuke was on his way home with a comb he had found in the river in tow. Naosuke bid him farewell and went home, but lemon remained by the river.

And then lemon saw something terrible.

Floating in from upstream, lemon caught sight of the door that he had made into Oiwa’s grave. As it lifted up, he could see Oiwa’s corpse. Her mouth was open, and she was uttering curses against him. lemon was overcome with fear and couldn’t bear to see her animated corpse any longer. And so he reached into the river and turned the door over.

And so Kohei’s corpse appeared instead. His corpse was the same as Oiwa’s: mouth open, uttering curses against him.

Meanwhile, Naosuke had returned home with a present for Osode: the comb he had found in the river. He assumed his wife would be happy with the present, but she was confused instead. She had immediately recognized the comb as her sister’s.

Desperate for the truth, she sought out Takuetsu, who told her the story of her sister’s death. Osode was shocked. And then was shocked again as her former husband, Yosomuchi, whom she thought was dead, reappeared. Then, she became conflicted.

But then the truth began to spill out. Naosuke did not confess to attempting to murder Yosomuchi. He chose to confess another truth instead: he was actually Osode’s brother.

The shame of it consumed Osode so much, she begged Naosuke to kill her then and there. He acquiesced to her request and then turned his sword on himself.

(Continued on page three.)

EXHIBITIONS & SCREENINGS

Date	Description	Place	Cost	Contact #
Jun. 15 th – Jul. 22 nd	Tea Ceremony Fascination of Art and Design	Oita Prefectural Art Museum (OPAM)	¥1,000	☎ 097-533-4500
Jul. 7 th – Aug. 19 th	Takayama Tatsuo Retrospective	Oita Prefectural Art Museum (OPAM)	¥800	☎ 097-533-4500
Jul. 7 th – Sep. 24 th	Maywa Denki Nonsense Machine Exhibition in Oita	Oita City Art Museum	¥1,200	☎ 097-554-5800
Jul. 10 th – Sep. 24 th	(Summer Exhibition) Art Wonderland 2018: Imagine and See!	Oita City Art Museum	¥300	☎ 097-554-5800
Jul. 18 th – Oct. 10 th	The History of the Dictionary	Oita Prefectural Museum of History	¥310	☎ 097-837-2100
Jul. 21 st – Sep. 9 th	Machu Picchu & Ancient Andes Civilizations and the Japanese	Oita Prefectural Museum of History	¥310	☎ 097-837-2100
Aug. 8 th – Aug. 12 th	The 36th Takayama Tatsuo Price Junior Exhibition	Oita Prefectural Art Museum (OPAM)	FREE	☎ 097-538-9647
Sep. 4 th – Sep. 23 rd	The 54th Oita Prefecture Art Exhibition Photography Exhibit: Sep. 4 th – 9 th Japanese and Western Sculpture Exhibit: Sep. 11 th – 16 th Calligraphy Exhibit: Sep. 18 th – 23 rd	Oita Prefectural Art Museum (OPAM)	¥500	☎ 097-541-3316

Most Museums and Centers are closed on Monday, or Tuesday if Monday is a public holiday. Student admissions vary, highest cost shown.



STAGE & MUSIC EVENTS

Date	Time	Artist/Event	Venue	Cost	Contact #
Jul. 29 th	13:00	Yurikago Ballet Studio 10th Review "Petit Entrer"	iichiko Oto-no-Izumi	¥1,000	☎ 097-538-5077
Aug. 5 th	TBA	Scramble6	T.O.P.S Bitts Hall	FREE + ¥500 drink	☎ 097-533-0467
Sep. 2 nd	16:30	Flower Companyz Accoustic One Man Tour	T.O.P.S Bitts Hall	¥4,000 + drink	☎ 097-533-0467

**Ticket prices range from student to most expensive general admission. Prices shown otherwise indicate price for purchase on the day of the event, they may be cheaper if purchased in advance. "w/ drink" prices include a drink, "+drink" prices require the additional purchase of a drink. Times shown indicate start times, doors usually open 30 minutes beforehand.

VENUES

iichiko Oto-no-Izumi= Oasis Tower 1F Oita City

T.O.P.S BittsHall.= Ikushi 5-783, Oita City

(Continued from page two.)

Things had begun to look up for lemon after he left the river, for he had been invited to spend the Tanabata festivities with a beautiful female lord.

But then the lord's face turned into Oiwa's. And the squash in the garden became Oiwa's face as well. And then, from within the lanterns themselves, Oiwa began to emerge.

And so she began to appear everywhere, and lemon found himself haunted by her corpse at every turn.

Desperate for a solution, he prayed a countless number of times. But to no avail, Oiwa's face continued to corner him no matter where he went until his dying day.

End

Farewell from the Editor

I've spent the past three years living in Oita City and a little over a year serving as editor-in-chief of the Tombo. I've had many incredibly rewarding experiences during my time here in Oita working with the International Plaza, and I will dearly miss the many places, people, and events I've grown to love. I wish all of the Tombo's readership continued happiness and prosperity. Thank you for helping to make my time here special.

Festivals and Events

Date	Event Description	Location	Contact #
Jul.13 th ~ 21 st	Usuki Gion Festival - A traditional festival that started in 1643. There are 3 portable shrines and 2 floats paraded "Owatari" on the 15 th , (12:25 - 15:00) and "Okaeri" on the 21 st (14:30 - 17:00).	Usuki City Castle town	☎ 0972-64-7130
Jul. 14 th	Earthenware bell making workshop - A hands on event for children and parents to enjoy. Participation fee is 70 yen (incl. admission fee, 9:30- / 14:00-), reservations necessary.	Oita City History Museum	☎ 097-549-0880
Jul. 14 th ~ 15 th	Tsukumi Port Festival - A "Soiya Tsukumi" traditional dance on the 14 th (19:15-), a fireworks display on the 15 th (20:00 - 21:00), and much more!	Tsukumi City Chuou-machi area	☎ 0972-82-5111
Jul. 14 th Aug. 18 th Sep. 8 th	Yufuin Onsen Kagura - Traditional Kagura dance performed by local groups (Participation fee is 500 yen, 20:30 - 21:30).	Yufu City Kuaju Yufuin	☎ 0977-85-7667
Jul. 21 st Aug. 18 th Sep. 15 th	Kimono Appreciation Day - Held on the third Saturday of each month, with special offers and discounts for kimono rental and professional photography.	Kitsuki City Jyouka-machi	☎ 0978-63-0100
Jul. 21 st ~ 22 nd	Hita Gion Festival - Hita Gion celebrates over 300 years of history. Here you can see a portable shrine that is 10 meters tall! On the 19 th from 19:00, all the floats will gather in front of JR Hita Station for a taste of what is to come. This festival is one of the "Yama, Hoko, Yatai, float festivals in Japan" and is listed on UNESCO's Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity	Hita City Mameda & Kuma Area	☎ 0973-22-8210 ☎ 0973-22-2036
Jul. 24 th ~ 25 th	Tenjin Festival - Portable shrines will be carried throughout the city, and on the evening of the 25 th there will be a shrine against shrine hitting competition.	Kitsuki City Tobimatsu Tenman Shrine	☎ 0978-63-0100
Jul. 27 th ~ 29 th	Beppu Summer Evening Festival - Over the three days there will markets, local food stalls, performances, and a fireworks display on the evening of the 29 th	Beppu City Kitahama Area	☎ 0977-24-2828
Jul. 27 th ~ 29 th	Nakatsu Gion Festival - This prefecture-designated "Intangible Cultural Property" has 580 years of history. Highlights include shrine processions and more! There is a fireworks display on the 27 th (20:00-).	Nakatsu City Nakatsu Shrine Area	☎ 0979-22-1111
Aug. 3 rd ~ 5 th	Oita Tanabata Festival - This exciting summer festival takes place across downtown Oita, and features parades, performances, and dances.	Oita City Downtown Area	☎ 097-537-5959
Aug. 5 th	Oita River Fireworks Festival - To celebrate the last day of the Oita Tanabata Festival, there will be a fireworks festival along the river.	Oita City Oita River	☎ 097-538-9647
Aug. 11 th	Haniwa (clay images) making workshop - A hands on event for children and parents to enjoy. Participation fee is 250 yen (incl. admission fee, 9:30- / 14:00-), reservations necessary.	Oita City History Museum	☎ 097-549-0880
Aug. 14 th ~ 15 th	Himeshima Bon-Odori Festival - Himeshima Bon-Odori dances are said to have come from Nenbutsu folk dances. Come see traditional local dances such as the 'fox dance', recreated and performed each and every year.	Himeshima Village Chuo-Hiroba	☎ 0978-87-2111
Mid Aug ~ Early Sep	Sunflower Festa - 1.2 million sunflowers are in bloom on the approx. 11.5ha grounds of the Nagasakibana Resort campsite. Enjoy flowers and artwork (Yoko Ono's "Invisible Benches" and Choi Jeong Hwa's "Iro Iro Iro")!	Bungotakada City Nagasakibana	☎ 0978-54-2237
Aug. 25 th	Tsukumi Senu Dance Ceremony - 1,000 dancers will dance with Japanese fans.	Tsukumi City Tsukumin Park	☎ 0972-82-9521
Aug. 25 th	Usuki Stone Buddha Fire Festival - 1,000 torches will be lit around the ancient stone Buddha carvings which are nationally designated treasures. It is the biggest fire festival in western Japan!	Usuki City Fukata	☎ 0972-64-7130
Sep. 8 th ~ 9 th	The Ajimu Fair "Wine Festival 2018" - Various events such as Ajimu wine sampling and bazaar. You can have your fill of Bungo Beef, wine, and more.	Usa City Ajimu Area	☎ 0978-34-4839 ☎ 0978-44-0381 ☎ 0978-44-1111 ext. 211
Sep. 8 th ~ 9 st	Usa City Port Festival - This festival is dedicated to the ocean. There will be dances, performances, and a fireworks display on the 8 th .	Usa City Nagasu Port	☎ 0978-33-3433
Sep. 9 th	Free onsen entrance - September 9 th is Kokonoe's designated hot spring day and designated facilities marked with posters let customers bathe for free!	Kokonoe-machi Various locations	☎ 0973-73-5505
Sep. 21 st ~ 25 th	Ohara Shrine Festival - Vendors line the street leading to Ohara Hachiman Shrine at the shine's biggest festival of the year.	Hita City Ohara Shrine	☎ 0973-23-8951
Sep. 21 st	Kappa Festival - A traditional festival spanning over 300 years. Young boys perform songs and dance to pray for the autumn harvest.	Nakatsu City Yabakei area	☎ 0979-54-3111
Sep. 22 nd	Rice field exploration - An outdoor exploration activity for adults to learn about the harvest and how to cook rice. (Participation is FREE. Reservations necessary. Bring clothes and shoes suitable for outdoors and bring side dishes.)	Kokonoe-Machi Kuju Furusato Shizen Gakkou	☎ 0973-73-0001

What's Going On?

From the Plaza

Free Legal Consultations for International Residents

The Oita International Plaza is holding free legal consultations for foreign residents on *the third Wednesday of every month*.

- When: **July 18th, August 15th, September 19th**
- Time: **13:00-16:00**
- Consultant: **Sei Ito** (Administrative Solicitor)
- Venue: **Oita International Plaza (iichiko Culture Center, B1F)**

Free Tagalog Consultations

The Oita International Plaza is holding free consultations in Tagalog.

- When: **July 7th, 17th; August 4th, 21st; September 1st, 18th**
- Time: **13:00-16:00**
- Consultant: **Rhodora Yoshitake** (President of the Oita Philippines Friendship Association)
- Venue: **Oita International Plaza (iichiko Culture Center, B1F)**

Free Chinese Consultations

The Oita International Plaza is holding free consultations in Mandarin.

- When: **Every Thursday 10:00-13:00 (except July 26th and August 16th)**
- Time: **10:00-13:00**
- Consultant: **Kodama Wenyu**
- Venue: **Oita International Plaza (iichiko Culture Center, B1F)**

(*Dates and times are subject to change. Please contact the Oita International Plaza before coming.) TEL: 097-533-4021

Free Consultations Regarding Immigration, Residency, and Citizenship

The Oita International Plaza is holding free consultations regarding immigration, residency, and citizenship on the first Sunday of each month.

- When: **July 1st, August 5th, September 2nd**
- Time: **13:00-16:00**
- Languages available: **Japanese and English**
- Interpretation into **languages other than Japanese and English** may be available with a reservation (there are no guarantees). The reservation must be made 2 days prior to the consultation day.
- Venue: **Oita International Plaza (iichiko Culture Center, B1F)**

International Event Notifications

The Oita International Plaza will be announcing some international events that take place within Oita Prefecture on our social media pages in order to support organizations proactively fostering international relations. Facebook - <http://www.facebook.com/oitaplaza> Twitter - <http://twitter.com/oitaplaza> If you are interested in relaying information about an event, please send e-mail at the Plaza. Mail: kobayashi-ikuyo@emo.or.jp

Japanese Lessons

Himawari Japanese Volunteers

Support for people learning Japanese in order to help them enjoy their lives in Oita, now at three different locations.
Wasada Public Hall Wed. 10:00-11:30
Meiji Akeno Public Hall Wed. 14:00-15:30
Tsurusaki Public Hall Sat. 10:00-11:30
For more information contact Ms. Fukata TEL: 097-527-2614
E-MAIL: nihongo_himawari_oita@yahoo.co.jp

Nihongo Rakuraku-talk

Beppu City Hall offers free Japanese lessons every Monday from 14:00-15:30. For more information contact the Beppu International Affairs Division
TEL: 0977-21-6133 E-MAIL: int-ma@city.beppu.oita.jp

Sakura Japanese Class

Come study Japanese with friendly volunteers and teachers in a pleasant atmosphere. Sakura Japanese Class is held every Monday from 10:15-12:00 at the Oita University International House in Nishiki-Machi, Oita City. Classes are free of charge. For more information call Ms. Ohashi
CELL: 090-7866-2486

AIUEO Japanese Lessons

Volunteers offer free Japanese lessons on Tuesday and Friday from 10:20-11:50 at I-NESS near Oasis Tower as well as Thursday nights at Compal Hall from 18:30-20:30. Lessons are also offered in Beppu at the Beppu Foreign Tourist Information Office on Tuesday mornings from 10:00-12:00. For more information contact:
Ms. Miyase CELL: 090-8353-2485 (day lessons)
Ms. Kato TEL: 097-532-5940 (night lessons)

More Summertime Stories

If you should decide to host your own hyaku monogatari kaidankai, entertain yourself and your guests with some of the following traditional Japanese ghost stories:

- Botan Dōrō (The Peony Lantern)
- Banchō Sarayashiki (The Dish Mansion at Banchō)
- Kasane ga Fuchi (The Pool of Kasane)
- Mimi-nashi Hōichi (Hoichi the Earless)
- Futakuchi Onna (The Woman with Two Mouths)
- Yuki Onna (Snow Woman)
- Rokurokubi (Long Neck Woman)



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THANK YOU!!

A special thanks to all those who co-operated with us for this issue. Your help was very much appreciated.

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HOURS: Monday-Friday 9:30am-6:00pm

(closed weekends and the 2nd and 4th Mondays of each month. We are open on the Saturdays before these Mondays)

Closed national holidays & Dec 29th - Jan 3rd

The International Plaza is located on the basement floor of OASIS Hiroba 21 (iichiko Culture Center).

