



ヨッカ ニュース YOCCA NEWS

Yotsukaido Cross-Cultural Association News

四街道市国際交流協会広報誌

Vol. 2

2012.3.31

短期留学生&訪問団 リバモアへ出発!



大盛況のポットラックパーティー



目次・Contents

- P1. 訪問団が姉妹都市リバモアへ
大盛況のポットラックパーティー
- P2. YOCCA総会のご案内
YOCCA会員更新と登録情報確認のご案内
- P3. 【連載外国籍市民インタビュー】クローズアップ!
- P4. 【連載コラム】Think You Know Yotsukaido!?
- P5. リバモアからの義援金、香取市へ
- P6. 協会の活動報告
市内の団体紹介
- P7. 各部会からの活動案内と募集
- P8. 【ピックアップ】初めまして～所属会員の自己紹介～
協会からのお知らせとイベントスケジュール
編集後記、会員募集のご案内

Think You Know Yotsukaido?

四街道を知り尽くそう!〜『四街道知ってるか!?』 このコーナーはヨッカ副会長のデボン・マクネアさんが四街道を探索する連載コラムです。

Castles of Yotsukaido -Part 1-

Castles are something you just don't get to experience in America. Just the word summons images of kings and knights and fair princesses. My first experiences in Japan also involved castles -- Osaka Castle on my first business trip to Osaka, Matsuyama Castle when I was travelling by myself, and even Otaki Castle when I first came to Chiba to live. The fact that little ole humble Yotsukaido could have held castles struck me as amazing. Doing some online research dimmed my optimism considerably. Most information was in blogs, showing pictures of a few trees and explanation along the lines of "this is where the gate was." Before abandoning the topic I set out with YOCCA's camera ma'am Ms. Shiraishi and her husband to take a walk



around at least one spot -- Kyodo No Mori (郷土の森), where there was once Shisiwatashi Castle (鹿渡城). It lies just on the south side of the JR tracks between Monoi and Yotsukaido stations. My understanding of Japanese history is terrible, but as I

understand it, during the Sengoku Era, (16th century) the Chiba family controlled this area and defended it with a network of castles and support castles. The main castle was in Usui, near Yukari ga Oka. Shisiwatashi Castle, and the remains of at least ten other castles around Yotsukaido, were mainly military bases or homes of aristocrats.



On the way, I said, "Hey, a friend of mine showed me another castle, right in a residential neighborhood, behind Yotsukaido City Hall. It's a miniature castle that the owner has built." After some initial wandering we found it. I'd seen it before but it was always at night while driving and I never got a good look at it. It was the first time I saw it in daylight, and was immediately struck by the level of detail -- with windows, stone foundation (石垣), tile roof with whale ornaments. Mr. Shiraishi seemed excited -- "This is exactly like Himeji Castle in Hyogo." He pointed to the downward-facing slots on the corners of the castle wall. "This is so soldiers can drop rocks on the heads of attackers trying to climb the walls. Also look -- some windows are round, for riflemen, and some are diamond-shaped for archers." The castle even had a genkan with a living garden (well, wild grasses and weeds) This was not just a yard decoration; it was a careful creation and recreation -- it must have taken years to build.

Feeling a bit shy, we rang the intercom on the gate, noting the name "Fujimoto." An older woman came out, and we cautiously and politely asked if the person who built the castle was at home. "No, it was my husband but he passed away three years ago. But come in. You can see the castle better from inside the gate."

Ms. Fujimoto was clearly very proud of her husband's accomplishment. A retiree of Japan's First Airborne Brigade (reminding me again how closely Yotsukaido's history is tied with the military) he decided to build something, and eventually decided on a scale model of Himeji Castle. But showing a wisdom which most hobbyists do without, from the beginning he planned three years to build it, carefully measuring pictures of the original, and drawing plans at precisely 1/20th scale of each of the four north, south, east, west faces, then spending months building the rock foundations layer by layer, modeling the ornaments in clay and firing them in an oven. The decorations on the roof, however, showed a bit of "artistic license" in using his own family seal (家紋) rather than the one on Himeji Castle. Construction began in 1989 (Heisei 1) and finished according to plan three years later.



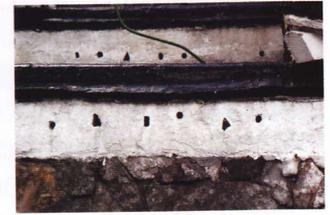
Front gate garden



Family seal



Ninja Returns



Loophole (狭間:sama)

Did you have "Castles of Yotsukaido Part 1" enjoyed? Their search still continues. We announces "Part 2" by YOCCA News of next number.

四街道に城跡があることを知ったマクネアさん。城跡探索に行く途中、友人から聞いた「四街道には住宅街に城がある」という噂を、まず確かめに行くことに。

そのお城は藤本さんのご主人が姫路城をモデルに、石垣や白壁、瓦など細部に至るまで正式な築城技術を用いて造った20分の1の大きさのものでした。続きは次号の『四街道知ってるか?』でお伝えします。

“Think You Know Yotsukaido?” の日本語全訳を
会員向けに配布しています。
希望する人は協会までご連絡ください。