

ENGLISH LANGUAGE

TONO AREA TOURISM INFORMATION PACKET

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MAPS AVAILABLE FROM THE TOURISM OFFICE**



**PREPARED BY THE
TONO SOCIETY OF COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY
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VISITING TONO CITY

Home to the *Legends of Tono* & Japanese Folktale Traditions

Tono City in Iwate Prefecture is only a little over three hours from Tokyo by the Shinkansen bullet train, but it is a century away in terms of experiencing Japan's folk traditions and local color. And in 2010-2012, Tono will be even more exciting because of all the special events under way to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the publication of the collection of local legends known as *The Legends of Tono*.

In June 1910, Kunio Yanagita (the founder of Japanese folklore studies) had 350 copies of his short collection of folk legends printed. Modeled on *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (1812), Yanagita's book has become a literary classic. An English translation is available from Lexington Books. See: www.rowmanlittlefield.com or www.amazon.com. If you can read the "*Legends of Tono*" before visiting Tono, you will have a richer experience in Tono. The book will provide you with the background and setting for Tono culture and traditions.

Special events will continue in Tono through 2012, when the city will be part of the nation-wide celebration of Kunio Yanagita's folklore accomplishments. Yanagita died in 1962 and 2012 will be the 50th anniversary of his passing away. 2012 is also the 200th anniversary of the publication of *Grimm's Fairy Tales* (1812)

Today, Tono City has become a popular domestic and international tourist destination. Over the years, Tono City has designed an impressive set of cultural facilities to support its popularity – an impressive library and museum complex, a new hotel where chanters of tales recite legends, a historical village, and two research institutes. Much of this is described in the pages that follow.

The mass media has also picked up on the Tono stories and legends. In 2007, an award-winning animated movie directed by Kenichi Hara, *Summer Days with the Kappa Coo* used Tono as a setting for a good part of the film. The stories in *The Legends of Tono* were also serialized in the popular manga magazine *Big Comic* by the artist, Shigeru Mizuki, famous for his renderings of ghosts and goblins (*yokai*). Mizuki's manga (graphic novel) rendering of Tono monogatari was published as a book in 2010. You will see many of his *yokai* (monsters and goblins) drawings on signs in Tono.

For more information see the Tono websites:

The Tono Club: <http://homepage.mac.com/nanshoji/e.html> and the Tono Tourism Association: http://www.tonojikan.jp/Several_languages/english/english.html

THE LEGENDS OF TONO & KINDER- UND HAUS-MÄRCHEN

In the early 1800s two brothers who lived in Germany, Wilhelm and Jacob Grimm, set about collecting fairy tales and then published them on December 20, 1812 as *Kinder-und Haus-Märchen* (Children's and Household Tales). The first volume contained 86 stories.

Kunio Yanagita collected tales and legends from local Tono residents, mainly Tono resident Kizen Sasaki, and published them in his book, *Tono monogatari* (The Legends Of Tono) in 1910. Yanagita followed the model of Grimm's Fairy Tales in writing his book.

Like many Meiji Era writers, Kunio Yanagita was a avid reader of German literature and in particular the Grimm brothers' writings. From Yanagita's own writing it is clear that he shared the views of the Grimms that the most natural and pure forms of culture - those which held the community together - were linguistic and could be found in tales and legends. Yanagita and the Grimm brothers both saw the inexhaustible store of tales [*Märchen*], legends [*Sagen*], and history [*Geschichte*] as bringing us closer to the refreshing and invigorating spirit [*Geist*] of earlier ages.

As you would expect, there are many similarities between these German and Japanese folktale collections. Yanagita and the Grimms both judged oral tales by the yardsticks of written literature and felt a responsibility to "improve" on the rough and unpolished specimens of the peasant's oral delivery. Today collectors would disagree with this approach. Both works are also written in a standard literary style, devoid of dialects. Both works also have introductions outlining their literary goals and philosophy. And because of their violent content, both books of tales were not considered appropriate for children at the time.

Tono monogatari and *Kinder-und Haus-Märchen* are still celebrated in Japan and Germany. Tono City today has restored historical buildings, trained reciters of local legends, and walking routes that follow the stories and legends in *Tono monogatari*.

In Germany, there is *The German Fairy Tale Route* (Deutsche Märchen Strasse) a 350-plus-mile route between Frankfurt and Bremen. The route starts in the Frankfurt suburb of Hanau, where the brothers lived from birth to ages 5 and 6. The annual summer-long Brothers Grimm Fairy Tale Festival is held here.

On the German Fairy Tale Route, the town of Kassel is a cornerstone of the story about the Brothers Grimm. In Kassel there is Brüder-Grimm-Platz and the Brüder Grimm Museum. The museum collection includes original volumes of the first fairy-tale collection with authors' notes in the margins identifying the source of each story. The Tono City Municipal Museum has a similar display of original documents for *Tono Monogatari*. And there is a Tono - Yanagita "Platz" in Tono City.

SIGHTSEEING IN DOWNTOWN TONO



Tono City seems large, but it only has a population of about 30,000 residents. The history of the city goes back to the 1200's, but the Yokota Castle was only built in the late 1500s. Tono (referred to as Nambu Han or Domain) became part of the Tokugawa government in 1627 and the Nabekura Castle was constructed on the hill behind the present Aeria Hotel. Like other castle towns, the city was divided into guilds with separate areas for markets, entertainment, and shrines and temples.

Coming out of the train station, you are immediately exposed to some statues of Kappa in a pond. The police box off to the right is also designed to look like a Kappa. The Tourist Office is also next to the train station. Get your maps there. Everywhere in town there are English signs on the street corners to point you in the right direction for sightseeing.

As you can see on local maps available from the Tourist Office, there are a number of sights to see just walking around the downtown area. You can use the Tono Train Station as a landmark for your sightseeing. You can also rent bicycles near the station. If you need to do any food shopping or need an internet café, visit the Topia Shopping Center just a couple of minutes from the Train Station.

Next to the Tourism Office is one of three “Kataribe (Storyteller) Spots” in town that you can visit. Another Storyteller Spot is on the main street on the way from the Train Station to the museum and library. Kataribe are the local reciters of Tono folktales. Tono City has set up “Reciter Spots” so that tourists can get a feel for the local legends as they might have been told years ago.

The main cultural sites in the downtown are close to the Tono Municipal Museum beside to the City Library – these are at the other end of the street straight in front of the Train Station. As you walk to the museum, you will see story image tiles placed in the sidewalk. You can also climb up to the Nabekura Castle site from the road beside the Library. The Museum has a excellent exhibit on the history and culture of Tono as well as a new display about the *Legends of Tono*.

The Tono Folk Village is across the bridge from the Library. Most of the Folk Village area is focused on the *Legends of Tono* and Kunio Yanagita. Here you will find the Tono Castle Town Materials Museum with samurai armor, swords and other objects. Inside the village you will find the restored Takazen Inn that Yanagita and other famous people stayed in when they visited Tono a century ago. Connected to the Inn on the inside is a storehouse (once a rice wine brewery) with a display on folktale history. It has an animated film of the “parlor child” story. In the Folk Village you will also find the *Legends of Tono* Research Center, the original private Tokyo library of Kunio Yanagita, and a bronze bust of Kunio Yanagita. There are restaurants in the area. Take time to explore the attractive “kura” (old warehouse buildings) in the area.

On the street behind the Folktale Village (on the corner) is one of the oldest buildings in Tono, dating from the 1880s. It now sells sweets and Japanese tea. From April 2011, there will also be the new Tono Culture Research Center in the downtown area.

A SHORT DOWNTOWN TEMPLE VISIT WALK

Many of the temples in Tono are on the west side of town near the Rainai River. They were located here as a form of protection for the Castle. Most of the temples are connected by their cemeteries and you can save time and have some fun by cutting through the cemeteries. Here is a sample of some of the temples in the area (from north to south).

Manpukuji Temple (Jodo Sect Buddhism) dates from 1571. On the left as you approach the temple is the grave site of a famous Edo era Confucian scholar, Kusu Eiho.



Zenmyoji Temple (Jodo Sect Buddhism) dates from the 1500s. On the left of the gate is a five-tier stone monument from the Kamakura era. Inside the temple are paintings showing the items people who died liked and wanted to take with them to heaven. There are also 10 small wooden statues of the judges who decide your fate in the next world.



Daijiji Temple (Soto Zen Sect Buddhism) dates from 1411. This was a favorite temple of the ruling Nambu family. There is an Oshira-sama inside, but it can only be seen on holidays.



Zuioin Temple (Rinzai Zen Sect Buddhism) dates from 1653. Inside there are sculptures of a dragon and a princess.



Ryugenji Temple (Soto Zen Sect Buddhism) dates from 1651. There are some interesting gate carvings.



Chionji Temple (Nichiren Buddhism) is perhaps the nicest of the temples in the area. It has an impressive gate entrance leading to stairs that take you to the main building.

TONO CITY MUNICIPAL MUSEUM



The Tono Municipal Museum opened in 1980 as the first folklore museum in Japan. It was renovated in April 2010 and now has a completely new exhibit on Tono history, culture and traditions. The new exhibit also has a large display of books, letters and documents related to the June 14, 2010 celebration of the hundredth anniversary of the publishing of *Tono Monogatari* ("The Legends of Tono" in English).

Upon entering the Museum, you have the option of going up stairs to watch movies in the multi-screen second floor theater or entering the main exhibit on the first floor. The movies in the theater are about Tono's folklore traditions including animated Shigeru Mizuki films about Kappa and Oshira-sama. A panel as you enter the theater allows for film selection.

The main floor exhibit begins with the star-shaped map in the middle of the room focused on the geological formation of the Tono Basin. Press the button to start the display. The display around the room recounts the historical development of Tono from pre-historic times to the 19th Century.

The next three rooms of the exhibit cover different aspects of Tono life around 100 years ago: (1) life (festivals & trading) in the castle town, (2) village life (farming tools, food, housing & spiritual life), and (3) life in the mountains (itinerant priests, hunting, & Mt. Hayachine). Many of the exhibits are interactive if you touch the video screens.

Next is the Special Exhibition Room with a display focused on the people and publications related to 1910 printing of *Tono Monogatari* ("The Legends of Tono"). Books and other items are for sale in the Entrance lobby.

KIZEN SASAKI – JAPAN’S GRIMM



The famous linguistics expert from Morioka City, Kyosuke Kindaichi (1882-1971) called Kizen Sasaki (1886-1933) “Japan’s Grimm” in reference to him as the Japanese equivalent of the Grimm brothers who collected the tales known as *Grimms’ Fairy Tales* (1812). It is said that Sasaki might have even coined the Japanese term “mukashi banashi” or “old tales.”

Sasaki captured the attention of a number of younger Japanese writers when he went to Tokyo as a twenty year old in 1905. Kunio Yanagita, a recently published author and eleven years Sasaki’s senior, was introduced to Sasaki in November of 1908 by Sasaki’s roommate and fellow Waseda University student, Mizuno Yōshū (1883-1947). Mizuno Yoshu, who was himself a writer, wrote a novella based his acquaintance with Sasaki entitled, *The Person from the North Country*. Mizuno’s fictional portrait of Sasaki suggests a brooding and restless spirit.

Sasaki shared his Tono stories with Yanagita Kunio over the course of several nights in February 1909. Yanagita then went to Tono City in August 1909 to verify the situation for himself. Indeed, most of the tales that Kunio Yanagita compiled in the “Legends of Tono” were first told to him by Kizen Sasaki. In the “Legends of Tono,” Yanagita wrote about Sasaki as follows:

“All of the tales and stories here were told to me by Mr. Sasaki Kyōseki (Kizen) who lives in Tōno. I have been writing the stories down since February 1909 just as they were told to me during his many evening visits. Kyoseki is not a good storyteller, but he is honest and sincere. I have recorded the stories just as they affected me, without adding a word or phrase”

Sasaki had an uneven and difficult career. His father died before he was born. He started out in medical school in Iwate Prefecture and then switched to literature at Waseda University in Tokyo. In 1911, Sasaki fell seriously ill with respiratory problems and returned to Tono. In many respects, Kizen’s failure to fully achieve success as a published writer during his lifetime only enhanced his popularity in Tono as a long-struggling underdog. Sasaki died at age 48 and his remains are interred in the same cemetery as his father Shigetarō, located near his birthplace called Dannohana. A memorial museum to Sasaki is located inside the sightseeing spot, Denshoen.

KANORI INO – TONO SCHOLAR ON TAIWAN



When Kunio Yanagita visited Tono City in August 1909, he met with Kanori Ino, who had a good grasp of Tono area historical documents. When they met, Ino (1867-1925) was already an internationally known expert on Taiwan ethnography. Ino established the Taiwan Anthropological Society in December of 1895.

Ino was born into a line of scholars who had served the powerful Nambu daimyo in Tono. His grandfather provided him with an early grounding in Confucian learning, but the family could not afford to provide him with advanced education. Ino had no choice but to make his way in the rough and tumble world of Tokyo doing night-teaching and freelance journalism.

During the early years of Japanese colonial rule in Taiwan, anthropologists Kanori Ino and Torii Ryuzo (1870-1953) investigated the racial status of the Taiwan aborigines. They devised the first academically influential overviews of Austronesian people in Taiwan. Ino's 1905 *Ryōtai jūnenshi* (10-Year History of the Occupation of Taiwan) was compiled for the Taiwan Government-General's second-in-command, Gotō Shinpei.

Torii went on to become a professor at Tokyo Imperial University, but Ino continued his researches as an obscure independent scholar based in Tono, finally receiving public notoriety with the posthumous publication of his signature work, *A History of Taiwan's Civilization* in 1929.

Paul Barclay argues that while the Ino and Torii theoretical approaches were influenced by the academic trends of the time and the Japanese colonial situation they labored under, their ethnographic styles differed considerably. Because of Ino's penchant for mining written records, it has seemed natural to consider Torii as the 'anthropologist' and Ino as the 'historian.' Ino arrayed Taiwan Aborigine tribes along an evolutionary axis from savage to civilized based on degrees of acculturation to Han Chinese folkways.

The 1990s saw a resurgence of interest in Ino's Taiwan anthropology. In 1992, Moriguchi Kazunari's edited edition of Ino's Taiwan fieldwork journals was published and in 1995 a three-month exhibition of Ino's manuscripts and ethnographic collections was held in his home town of Tono. A similar exhibition was staged in Taipei, Taiwan in 1998.

Source: Paul D. Barclay's "An Historian among the Anthropologists: The Ino Kanori Revival and the Legacy of Japanese Colonial Ethnography in Taiwan," *Japanese Studies*, Vol. 21, No. 2, 2001

GETTING TO KNOW THE TONO KAPPA

Kappa seem to be everywhere in Tono – in the pond in front of the train station, the shape of the police box, toys and souvenirs in all the shops, and in Kappa pools in all the local rivers. Stories 55 to 59 in the “*Legends of Tono*” are about Kappa. You can get a PERMIT to catch Kappa from the Tono Tourism Office next to the Tono train station.

The cute Kappa called “KARIN-CHAN” is Tono’s official character mascot. The name is a combination of KA from “kappa” and RIN from “rindo” the bellflower the kappa carries. “Chan” is a name suffix for cute, lovable children. In the background of the image there is a thatched roof Tono-style farmhouse.



Generally, Kappa are mischievous water spirits or deities that are the size of a 6 or 8 year old child and very strong. They are capable of innocent pranks as well as kidnapping children and impregnating women. They are also generally trustworthy. They smell like fish, have scaly limbs, and their feet are like a monkey, with the large toe separated off – like the handprint of a human. Kappa have webbed feet and this allows them to swim very fast.

The tip of a Kappa’s toe does not leave a distinct mark in the sand. Their color is usually yellow-green. They have a turtle shell attached to their back. You will see Kappa foot prints on the sidewalks in Tono and in the sand along the rivers.

Kappa dislike metal objects and loud noises. The defining characteristic of the Kappa is the hollow cavity atop its head that holds a strength-giving fluid, usually water. Should you chance upon a quarrelsome Kappa, remember to bow deeply. The Kappa will return the bow and spill-out the water on its head. This will make the Kappa weak, forcing it to return to the water.

In Tono, Kappa have a red face, a large mouth, and big dark eyes. Tono Kappa also have no ears, no belly button, and only one opening in the nose. They like fresh vegetables, especially cucumbers. You will see male and female wooden carvings of Kappa all around Tono.

If you are lucky enough to catch a Kappa, be sure to notify the Tono City Tourism Association.

Permit Number: K27201-16

TONO CITY PERMIT TO CATCH KAPPA

Permit Valid from: January 2011 to December 2012

PERMIT ISSUED BY THE TONO CITY TOURISM ASSOCIATION

GUIDELINES FOR CATCHING KAPPA

Kappa can be caught in only in designated rivers.

Make sure the Kappa has a red face and a large mouth.

Be careful not to injure the Kappa.

Don't use metal objects to catch a Kappa.

Kappa like fresh vegetables, especially cucumbers.

Be careful not to spill the water on the Kappa's head.

If you catch a Kappa, notify the Tono City Tourism Association.

DENSHOEN, KIZEN SASAKI & OSHIRA-SAMA

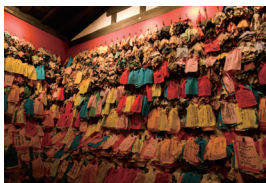


Denshoen (Historical Park about the Transmission of Culture) is just a few minutes walk from Jokenji Temple and the Kappa Pond. At Denshoen you can walk around the garden area and learn about Tono's cultural history and traditions. This includes hearing folk legends, seeing folk crafts made, exploring the Tono "L" shaped traditional farmhouse that has a stable for the horses at one end, visiting the display in the Kizen Sasaki Memorial Museum, and experiencing the collection of 1,000 Oshira-sama (agricultural gods) in the impressive Oshira Room.

Kizen Sasaki (1886-1933), who lived in Tono, was the person who first told Kunio Yanagita the local Tono legends that Yanagita made so famous in his 1910 book the *"Legends of Tono."* Sasaki is specifically mentioned in the Preface and legends 17, 22, and 59 of the *"Legends of Tono."* In front of the Museum there is a bronze bust of Sasaki.



The "L" shaped (magariya) farmhouse shows the importance of horses to the local culture. The building here was the original home of Kizen Sasaki and is a designated national cultural property. The farmhouse has historical farming equipment and displays about silk worm cultivation. The Oshira Room is also located inside the farmhouse.



Oshira-sama is a god made from a mulberry wood branch with the heads of a horse or a woman carved at one end. Mulberry leaves are used to feed silk worms in the production of silk. Stories number 14, 69 and 70 in the *"Legends of Tono"* explain the history of this deity. Oshira-sama is the god of agriculture, horses, and silk production. Oshira-sama's robes are replaced with bright new ones on the 16th day of the Lunar New Year. You can write your own wish to this deity on a piece of cloth and then place it on a branch of your choice in the Oshira Room.

In Denshoen there is also an old well, a sample of an old toilet, a water wheel grinding mill, a storehouse and other displays. Light snacks are available and there is a gift shop.

From Denshoen you can walk to Jokenji Temple and the Kappa Pond. Off to the left a few meters outside of Denshoen you will also find the Shinto Torii gate that is the old starting point for pilgrims climbing Mt. Hayachine.



Some of the stone monuments directly in front of Denshoen were put there by pilgrims making the trip to visit the Buddhist deity Konpira-sama in Shikoku. The other stone monuments are offerings to Koushin, the monkey god which represents a mixture of Japanese Shinto and Chinese Taoist beliefs. The monuments are there to ward off sickness and misfortune.

JOKENJI TEMPLE & THE KAPPA (BUCHI) POND



Jokenji Temple and the Kappa Pond are a short walk from Denshoen.



If you came to the Kappa Pond through Jokenji Temple (1490, Soto Zen Sect Buddhist Temple), you probably noticed the small shrine in the front with two small kappa dogs (kappa komainu) to either side. This shrine is there because it is said that there was a fire in the temple and the kappa used the water on his head to put the fire out. It is said that if you rub the wooden image inside the temple (Obinzuru-sama) it will cure an injury or illness. See story 88 in the “Legends of Tono.”



At the Kappa Pond (Haseki Creek) there is also a small shrine for women to pray to if they do not have enough breast milk to nurse their baby. Should you be confronted by a kappa, the only way to escape is to make him bow. When he bows, the water on his head will pour out and he will run away.

At the Kappa Pool on weekends, you might meet Mr. Haruo Unman, an aspiring master Kappa catcher. You can get an official permit to catch kappa at the Tono Tourism Office next to the train station.

TONO FURUSATO-MURA (HOME TOWN) VILLAGE

EXPERIENCING TRADITIONAL FARMING LIFE & CUSTOMS



The Village is a large complex of restored farm houses and walkways about 20 minutes by car from downtown Tono. There is a Japanese language website for the Village (<http://www.tono-furusato.jp/>) and the local Tono tourism guidebook in English has a map and explanation of the things to see.

Many of the 20 or so buildings in the reconstructed Village are designated as national tangible cultural properties. One of the seven large farmhouses dates back to the 1760s. Inside the Village area they have a nature museum, woodcraft center, cloth dying workshop, storehouse museum, charcoal kiln, and farmhouse rooms for overnight guests. They have tried to create the atmosphere of an actual working village.

There are over 20 hands-on seasonal activities that can be tried: planting and harvesting rice, sewing, painting pictures, making straw and bamboo crafts and preparing foods. Many of the craft makers are only there on weekends. Reservations are required for certain activities. Call: 0198-64-2300

At the modern Fujusha visitor center and restaurant, you can enjoy a variety of local dishes. Cakes, charcoal broiled fish and other snacks can be found around the Village. In the Winter, they make dobekko or doburoku (home-brewed sake rice wine) and have performances of the traditional Kagura Shinto dance. There are special events for each season.



The Village is sometimes used as a shooting location for TV dramas and movies. The local people who staff the Village are called “Maburitto” or “Protectors” in the local Tono dialect.

On the road going to the Village, you will see stone monuments put in place by pilgrims making the trip to visit the Buddhist deity Konpira-sama in Shikoku. The other stone monuments are offerings to Koushin, the monkey god which represents a mixture of Japanese Shinto and Chinese Taoist beliefs. The monuments are there to ward off sickness and misfortune. Just north of the Village you will find the Hiwatashi Stone monuments that were used as the model for the cover of Shigeru Mizuki’s cartoon (manga) version of the “*Legends of Tono*.”

HACHIMANGU SHINTO SHRINE & FESTIVAL



The Hachimangu Shinto Shrine in Tono is the site of the mid-September (usually the 14th and 15th) area-wide festival. The festival, held every year to pray for a good harvest, is the largest annual festival held in Tono. The Shrine itself is a short distance northeast of town on the way to other sightseeing locations. This historical shrine is also a nice to visit through the year: in the spring there are cherry blossoms and in the fall, colorful autumn leaves.

The September festival involves a parade through town with floats and dancers. There are village teams of *Shishi-odori* (deer dances), *Taue-odori* (rice-planting dances) and traditional *Kagura* (sacred music) dances performed. Horseback archery contests (*yabusame*) take place on the shrine grounds. There is also a children's parade, called *Chigo-gyoretsu*. A distinctive genre of festival music, known as *Nambu-bayashi*, is also performed on the grounds of the Shrine.

Founded in 1189, Hachimangu is the Shinto Guardian Shrine for the Tono region. One of the most popular of Japan's Shinto deities, Hachiman is the Shinto god of war and divine protector of the Japanese people. Hachiman means "God of Eight Banners," referring to the eight heavenly banners that signaled the birth of the divine Emperor Ōjin - the patron of the Minamoto clan. The first shrine was built in 725 and today half of all the Shinto shrines in Japan are dedicated to Emperor Ōjin. His symbolic animal and messenger is the dove. Since ancient times Hachiman was worshiped by peasants as the god of agriculture and by fishermen who hoped he would fill their nets with fish. The crest of Hachiman is in the design of a *mitsudomoe*, a round whirlpool or vortex with three heads swirling right or left.

The Gongen-sama of the Hachiman Shrine protects against fire. Tale 110 of the *Legends of Tono* has this story:

"Gonge-sama (Gongen-sama) is a carved wooden figure resembling a lion's head. Each group that performs kagura, the sacred Shinto dance, has one of these. Having one brings divine favor. The Gonge-sama belonging to the troupe from the Hachiman Shrine in Niibari once met, and fought, the Gonge-sama of the troupe from Itsukaichi in Tsuchi-buchi village. The Gonge-sama from Niibari was defeated, and lost one of its ears. Even now it does not have one ear. Each year, when the troupe goes around dancing at the villages, everyone notices this. The special power of the Gonge-sama is in preventing and extinguishing fires.

The troupe mentioned above, from Hachiman Shrine, once went to Tsukumoushi village. It was getting dark and they could not find any lodging. They were finally invited to stay at the home of a very poor person. They turned a 9-liter grain measure over, and set the Gonge-sama on top of it. Everyone went to sleep. During the night they were awakened by the noise of something being chewed. They looked, and saw the edge of the eaves had caught fire. Gonge-sama, atop the grain measure, was leaping up time after time chewing up the flames.

If a child's head aches, a request can be made of Gonge-sama to gnaw away the sickness."

SUGAWARA (TENJIN HILL) SHRINE IN TONO



When Kunio Yanagita (the author of the “*Legends of Tono*”) visited Tono in August 1909, he wanted to get a feel for the Tono countryside. So, he rented a horse and headed for Mount Hayachine. Late in the afternoon as he approached Mt. Hayachine, he came upon a festival at the Sugawara Shrine on Tenjin Hill. He wrote about this experience in the Preface of the “*Legends of Tono*” as follows:

“At Tenjin Hill (Sugawara Shrine), there was a festival and the Dance of the Deer was being performed. A light cloud of dust rose from the hill and bits of red could be seen against the green backdrop of the whole village. The dance in progress, which they called a “lion” dance, was actually the dance of the “deer.” Men wearing masks with deer horns attached to them danced along with five or six boys who were dressed as warriors waving swords. The pitch of the flutes being played was so high and the tone of the song so low that I could not understand what they were singing even though I was just off to the side. The sun sank lower and the wind began to blow; the voices of the drunkards calling out to others were lonely to hear. Girls were laughing and children were running about. I could not help but feel the loneliness of being just a traveler.”

Sugawara Shrine in Tono honors Sugawara no Michizane (845-903) who was a scholar, poet, and politician of the Heian Period in Japan. He began his career in the court as a scholar. He was also appointed to a position as a government official. Sometimes, as a result of his Chinese language skill, he was appointed to diplomatic offices to host foreign embassies.

Sugawara no Michizane was deified as “Tenjin-sama” or the god of scholarship and is worshipped at a number of shrines throughout Japan. It is for this reason that the site of the Sugawara Shrine in Tono is referred to as “Tenjin Hill.”

While the tall cypress trees leading up to the shrine create a nice atmosphere, the shrine in general is not well cared for. In its present condition, it is not really worth the time it takes to make a visit.

MOUNT HAYACHINE & HAYACHINE SHRINE



Mount Hayachine, one of the three great mountains surrounding Tono, is 1,917 meters (6,289 feet) high. It is the highest peak in the Kitakami mountain range. The people of Tono and the surrounding area have deep reverence for the mountain as a site of ancient mountain worship.

Stories are told about the many unusually shaped rocks on the mountain. “Buchi Ishi” located in the middle of the “Kawara no Bo” trail has a folk story about a Tengu (long-nosed goblin) that hit his head on the rock. The mountain also has a wide variety of wildlife, plants and flowers.

CLIMBING MT. HAYACHINE AND VISITING HAYACHINE

SHRINE ARE VERY DIFFERENT THINGS.

The MT. HAYACHINE SHRINE in Tono City is about a 40 minute drive from downtown Tono. On the second Sunday in June, the opening day of the hiking season on Mt. Hayachine, people gather at Hayachine Shrine to pray for the safety of the mountain. In earlier times, people would visit the shrine to get a guide for climbing the mountain. Mt. Hayachine Shrine, which combines Buddhist and Shinto traditions, was established in 806. The current buildings are representative of Tono workmanship of the Edo Era. The temple gate guardian figures, which look like soldiers, resemble figures guarding the Kyoto headquarters of the Edo Era Shogun.

MT. HAYACHINE can be climbed using several different trails. One popular trail (in Ohasama) takes about 4-5 hours from the end of the paved road to the top of the mountain. Ohasama City is about one hour from Tono going west towards Hanamaki City. Driving from Tono take route 396 to Ohasama. Follow the road to Hyachine Dam on the mountain. After the dam, the road ends by a camping area. See the local hiking guidebooks for trail information.

Mt. Hayachine is also famous for its Kagura dance which dates back over 500 years. Kagura, or “god-entertainment,” is a type of Shinto theatrical dance found throughout Japan. The Hayachine Kagura is a series of masked dances accompanied by drum, cymbals and flute. Dances recount stories of the deities and medieval Japanese history. One dance features a performer dressed as a “shishi,” an imaginary lion-like creature representing the Hayachine deity himself. The dance was originally performed by priests of the Shrine to demonstrate the power of the mountain deity and bless the people. Hayachine Kagura is designated as a national important intangible folk cultural property; in 2009 it was also inscribed on the UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage list.

FUKUSENJI BUDDHIST TEMPLE

Fukusenji Temple in Tono belongs to the Shingon (true word) sect of Buddhism, one of the major schools of Japanese Buddhism and one of the few surviving Esoteric Buddhist lineages that started in India.

Fukusenji (founded in 1912) is part of the nation-wide network of Shingon Temples that believers visit as part of their nation-wide religious pilgrimages.



Fukusenji Temple is also home to Japan's largest wooden image of the Buddhist "Goddess of Mercy" or Kannon in Japanese. The gold-leafed Kannon statue, weighs 25 tons and is 17 meters high. The statue was completed in 1963 after nearly 12 years. The single tree used to make the statue, brought from a nearby village, was 1200 years old.

The Goddess of Mercy, who perceives the sounds of the world, made a vow to grant salvation to the suffering and the afflicted, and dispel the evil and calamities that surround us. Today people visit this temple mainly to pray for world peace and honor the souls of those who died in World War II.

There is a Main gate that marks the entrance to the mountain and then the Guardian Gate that people on the pilgrimage pass through. Both gates are impressive.

Off to the right from the gates is a shrine to Bishamon, one of the seven "Gods of Fortune" and the protector for the northern direction. He also protects against demons and disease.



Next, there is the five storied Pagoda (built in 1990). The pagoda is a structure that evolved from the Indian stupa, which usually contained a relic of the Buddha. The Pagoda is dedicated to world peace and the souls of dead soldiers.

Climbing up the hill to the Main Temple, which has the wooden "Goddess of Mercy" statue, is a pleasant walk. Next to the Main Temple is a carp pond. You can buy food to feed the carp inside the Temple. On the other side of the Temple, up a slight hill, is the Tahoto Shrine (1982), which is dedicated to the return of the Northern Territories to Japan. Russia got the territories after World War II and has not returned them to Japan.

Fukusenji is also famous for its cherry blossoms in the Spring and colorful Autumn leaves in the Fall.

500 RAKKAN --

CARVED BUDDHIST STONE MONUMENTS



Cold wind, rain and volcanic eruptions caused a number of famines in Japan in the Edo Era – the worst famine was the Tenmei Famine (1781-89) when over a million people died nationwide.

In 1755, Tono experienced one of its worst famines. Of the 60,000 people who died throughout the region about 3,000 died in Tono. Tono's population at the time was around 19,000.

In memory of the souls of those who died in famines Gizan, the priest of the Daijiji Temple in Tono, in 1765 carved several hundred Buddhist images on granite stones in a forest about 3 kilometers southeast of Tono City. This was a natural rock-slide area and ideal for his purpose. This area is referred to as “Gohyaku Rakan” which means “500 disciples of the Buddha,” a reference to the legendary 500 followers of the Buddha. Carving the images of the dead in stone (often as statues) has a long tradition in Buddhism.

Many of the rocks are covered with moss making it hard to see the images. If you climb up the hill, you will find some rocks with clearer images.

On the way to Buddhist stone monument area you can also see:



UNEDORI-SAMA SHRINE

Unedori is the deity that brings lovers together. At the shrine, write your wish on a red strip of cloth and tie it to the tree using only your left hand.



ATAGO SHRINE

The deity of this shrine protects against fire and is located atop a hill with a good view. These shrines usually have an impressive staircase to the top. Tale 89 in the Legends of Tono says:

“There is a small shrine on the top of Mt. Atago, and a path for worshipers which goes through the woods. There is a sacred Shinto gate and about 20 or 30 old cedar trees at the entrance to the mountain. In front of the shrine there is a stone monument with the words “mountain kami (deity)” carved into it. It has been said since olden times that this is the spot where the “mountain kami” first appeared.”

THE CHIBA FAMILY FARMHOUSE

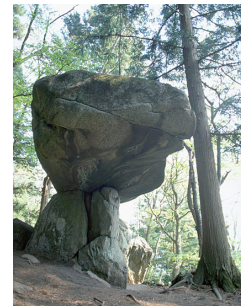


The thatched-roof Chiba family farmhouse just outside of downtown Tono is a 200 year-old example of a wealthy farmer's home. It is the largest "magariya" or "L-shaped" farmhouse in Tono. One side of the farmhouse was a stable for the horses. At its peak, the Chiba family had around 15 workers and 20 horses.

On the property you will find the main house, a tool shed, a garden, a work area, and a small Inari (fox deity) Shinto shrine. The large fortress-like stone foundation for the hillside farmhouse took many years to construct.

The Chiba farmhouse is a designated national cultural property.

Tsuzuki Ishi (Mysterious Boulder Formation)



About 15 minutes outside of town on Route 396 toward Morioka and not far from the Chiba farmhouse there is a bus stop titled Tsuzuki Ishi. Walk through the Torii gate and climb the path in the woods for about 15 minutes and you will find a pile of large boulders. Note that the top large boulder is supported by only one boulder beneath.

According to researchers these boulders resemble European and Asian "dolmen"(stone tables) which were megalithic burial tombs with upright stones supporting a large horizontal capstone. Often tombs of important people, sacrifices were made and prayers were offered in the space under the large upper stone.

Folklore has it that the warrior Benkei (1155 • 1189), known for his great strength, put these stones in place. Benkei might have visited Tono on one of Miyamoto no Yoshitsune's (1159-1189) military campaigns into northern Japan. Legend 91 of "The Legends of Tono" mentions Torigozen falling ill after having disturbed the mountain "kami" (spirits) at this location.

TONO HORSE BREEDING



There is archeological evidence that small horses were in Japan before larger horses entered from Korea in the 600's. European horses may have come to Japan as early as the 1500's. Tono has been famous for its horse breeding since the Edo Era.

The Tono “magariya” or “L” shaped farmhouse, with a stable for horses at one end, demonstrates how important horses were to daily life. There are also shrines to horses in Tono. In many shrines and temples, you will find pictures of horses painted on wood (e-ma). These are placed there to pray for the safety and health of horses.

The Nambu breed of horse in Tono was originally a small, but very strong work horse. Through breeding, the horses were made larger so they could be used for plowing the fields and transporting heavy loads over the mountains to the coast.

Faster and lighter horses were also bred in Tono for use by warriors and the military. Each June, Tono City hosts a day-long, regional “Strong Horse” (*bariki taikai*) weight pulling contest that attracts thousands of people.

KAZE NO OKA – WINDY HILL FARMERS MARKET



Just about 7 minutes (3 kilometers) outside of town going west on Highway 283 is a large farmers market. It can be identified by the big wind-turbine at one end of the parking lot.

WHAT YOU WILL FIND

Flowers, fresh produce, local foods, gifts, books, tourist information, exhibits, garden supplies, restaurant & snacks, and an outdoor patio with a nice view.

MARKET HOURS OF OPERATION

Open Daily 8:00 – 19:00

(October 16 – March 31: 8:30 – 17:30)

RESTAURANT HOURS

11:00 – 19:00

(October 16 – March 31: 10:00 – 17:30)

TELEPHONE: 0198-62-0222/ FAX: 0198-62-0205

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