

Earthquake Stories Passed on by Items Left Behind

“Tango Earthquake Memorial Exhibit” 91 Years Later

March 3 - 7



Top: Visitors look at photos from the earthquake and things left behind by the deceased
Bottom left: Wall clock indicating the time of the earthquake. Bottom right: Baked cash. Coins that fused together during the fires

It has now been 91 years since the Kita Tango Earthquake brought about serious disaster for the Tango region. From March 3rd to 5th, Mineyama Regional Community Center displayed an Earthquake Memorial Exhibit.

This is the 47th exhibit since it was started in 1972, as a way to educate people about disaster prevention and pass on memories of the disaster. In the exhibit hall, photos belonging to the National Museum of Nature and Science (Tokyo), a clock that has stopped at the time of the earthquake, coins that fused together and rice that carbonized in the fires, and the names of the victims were all displayed so that visitors could really see the scope of the damage with their own eyes, and leave with a higher disaster awareness.

Even in the Ancient Tango Museum (Tango), there is a special exhibit up of a picture scroll of Mineyama after restoration following the earthquake. (Until April 15th.)

Must pay admission. Closed on Tuesdays.)

Kita Tango Earthquake

On March 7th, 1927, at 6:27pm, a near-field earthquake struck with the epicenter focused on Go, Amino-cho. Because it struck during winter and around dinnertime, many households had fires going, and the damage from fires was magnified. In the Kyotango City area, there were about 2,400 casualties, and 4,300 buildings were completely destroyed. Another 4,000 buildings burned down in fires.

Magnificent Doll Display!

Over 400 Dolls Unveiled

February 20th – March 20th, Omiya

A display of dolls collected from all the areas in Kyotango was on display in Komachi Park from February 20th to March 20th. Those on display were not only hina dolls, for *hinamatsuri*, or Doll's Day, but also Children's Day dolls and Japanese traditional dolls, for a total of more than 400 dolls. Among them were hina dolls that were stuffed with straw 100 years ago, which filled the older visitors with nostalgia.

The staff at the exhibit said “Thanks to everyone's cooperation, we were able to collect many dolls. They're all in beautiful condition, and you can tell they have been treasured. Some of the people visiting even said they'd like to display their dolls next year.”



↑ The dolls arranged before a golden folding screen.

Oyster Shells and Bamboo for Soil Improvement

Making a Cycle to Connect the Mountains, Rivers, and Seas

March 12th and 13th, Yasaka

In Yasaka's Noma ward on March 12th and 13th, raw materials to improve the soil were made out of bamboo from Noma's overgrown bamboo thicket, and oyster shells that are polluting the Aso Sea that extends over to Miyazu City and Yosano. This is part of the "project to make a new cycle to connect the mountains, rivers, and seas" that the NPO IVUSA (International Volunteer University Student Association) and the Kawazato Noma Aso Sea Environmental Association have been cooperating on for three years.

This time, six college students belonging to IVUSA participated. Together with residents, they piled bamboo carried down from the mountains into a furnace dug into the ground, and also added in two tons of oyster shells that the students retrieved from the Aso Sea in February, and turned it into materials for soil enrichment. There was also an exchange meeting held on the first night, where the students met with local residents to learn more about the state of the area and what efforts they will be making in future.

Saya Kawai, a junior at Doshisha University, said "I really felt the necessity of having many people work together to reach a solution. It will be great if students can lend their strength to brighten up the region, even a little bit." The soil enricher that they made will be distributed to local farms.



↑ Students make soil-enriching material by burning a mixture of oyster shells and bamboo.

Weaving Culture through the Chirimen Kouta Dance

20 Japanese and Foreign Residents Learn and Practice

February – March, Amino



↑ Participants and children from the preservation society present their dance together.

A series of “Chirimen Kouta Dance” classes aimed at local children and foreign residents were held in February and March in Amino Regional Community Center.

These events were planned by the Northern Kyoto Regional Cooperative Urban Promotion Foundation (Kyoto-by-the-Sea DMO) with the goal of acquainting more people with the history and culture of weaving, by experiencing arts that are connected to the story of the world heritage site, Tango Chirimen Corridor.

There were four meetings scheduled for learning the dance, and a total of 20 participants including people originally from Thailand, the Philippines, and the United States joined in. The local preservation society members taught the basics, and everyone learned the dance. On March 10th, there was a dance performance, where the new learners and the children from the preservation society all danced in a circle together in brightly colored kimono. Nyna Ezeh, from the United States, said “I’m glad I could wear kimono and experience Japanese culture with my daughters.”

Wishing for Maritime Safety and a Good Haul

Beach Festival in Koma Fishing Harbor

March 4th, Tango



↑ Attendees look on as a Shinto priest releases an arrow to pray for a good fishing haul.

A Beach Festival to pray for maritime safety and a good fishing haul was held in Koma Fishing Harbor (Taiza) on March 4th.

The Beach Festival is a custom that began in the Showa era and has continued to the present day, and is organized every year by the Taiza Outboard Motor Association and local fishermen.

At the festival, it is customary for a Shinto priest to face the sea and read a ritual prayer, then fire an arrow out into the waters of the harbor, and the further the arrow flies, the better the haul of fish will be that year.

On the day of the event, the arrow flew beautifully out from the coast, and you could see the relief on the faces of the attendees. Group leader Ken'ichiro Shimooka said "Now we can expect a good haul for the fishing season. I hope above all that we have a year without a single accident."

The attendees took home bamboo grass that was purified at the festival to put in their boats in preparation for the start of the fishing season.

Student's Debriefing Session in Asahi and Kamai

Producing a Video of Fun Sea Kayaking

February 18th, Kumihama



↑ A student hands over a DVD containing the video to a resident. The footage will be used at the inn “Fuuran-no-Yakata.”

On February 18th, as part of their activities in the Kyotango City Community Development Committee, and to contribute to the Kamai and Asahi wards, college students premiered a video they made at the inn “Fuuran-no-Yakata.”

The video was footage of a fun sea kayaking experience in the Kamai and Asahi wards, which also showed the preparation and warnings necessary to have a fun time. There was also a documentary about the scenery and local residents, and those who came to watch it were very moved, saying “They were able to make something better than just finding a sea kayak instructor.”