



Japan Screen Topics

ISSUE No. 77-10

KAMAKURA--TREASURE HOUSE OF HISTORY

180 feet 5 min. 00 sec.

1. (TEMPLE ROOF) The classic city of Kamakura... 50 kilometers southwest of Tokyo... is a treasure house of Japanese history and culture. A name closely linked to Kamakura is that of Yoritomo Minamoto... a political and military genius whose grave can be seen at a Kamakura temple.

Yoritomo was appointed shogun or military ruler by the Emperor Gotoba. In 1192 he made Kamakura his capital, a role it retained for about 150 years. Japan's feudal system was born here. Samurai... or knights... became the ruling class.

2. (TEMPLE) More than 150 Buddhist temples and Shinto shrines can be found in modern Kamakura.

3. (MONK HITTING BOARD) A monk of the Zen Buddhist sect summons fellow monks and laymen to the stern experience of Zazen, the Zen sect's distinctive form of religious meditation. Zen Buddhism, with its strict discipline, took strong root among the soldier class in the 13th century Kamakura period.

(MONK WITH STICK) A monk proctor with a stick walks among the meditators... ready to administer blows on the shoulders if they show signs of sleepiness or inattention. Especially on Sundays, Kamakura's temples are crowded with laymen seeking mental composure by practicing Zen.

Many are women. Even they are not spared from the proctor's stick if their minds wander from the path of Buddhist enlightenment.

4. (HACHIMAN SHRINE) Tsurugaoka Hachiman Shrine is Kamakura's best known center of the Shinto religion, and now houses a noted art museum.

The shrine also is famous for its annual contest in yabusame... the medieval military art of archery on horseback. The riders traverse a 300-yard course, and must discharge arrows at three targets positioned along the way. The feudal shoguns encouraged this sport, to keep their soldiers hardy and ready for combat.

5. (KAMAKURA SHRINE) The later Kamakura period coincided with the development of Japan's famous Noh theater in which plays... usually on Buddhist themes... were set to music. Noh actors wear masks and move through their rolls and dances with slow, stately gestures which have become ritualized over the centuries. The Noh tradition is kept alive at Kamakura Shrine, where every autumn Noh performances are presented outdoors.

This is a dance from the famous Noh play Kakitsubata, the story of a girl who was bewitched and turned into a flower. In the play, she resumes her human shape briefly to tell a passing priest her sad story.

6. (CARVED WOODEN TRAY) Another of Kamakura's cultural traditions is wood carving and the making of lacquerware. Kamakura has long been famous for its carved wooden trays. The city's modern craftsmen not only practice this art, but also teach it to numerous enthusiasts who take up wood crafts as a hobby.

7. (TRAIN) In its medieval era, Kamakura was a city of about 200,000 population. Today, around 170,000 people live there.

However, Kamakura is one of the most popular tourist cities in Japan. One attraction is its great bronze statue of Buddha erected in 1282 A.D. and now famous all over the world.

The historic monuments and splendid beaches nearby lure more than 20 million visitors a year.

A lovely natural setting and a rich cultural heritage have made Kamakura one of Japan's most important sightseeing attractions.

TOYTIME IN TOKYO

85 feet 2 min. 22 sec.

1. (BUILDING) The 16th Tokyo International Toy Fair opens at Tokyo's Harumi Pier---an exhibit of more than 10,000 different toys from Japan and countries all over the world. More than 15,000 toy traders... many from overseas... come to choose merchandise and place orders.

(TOY TRAINS) Electric trains are always popular.....

(MARIONETTES) But among the unusual new items are these dancing bird marionettes.

Japan produces well over one billion dollars worth of toys a year, about one fifth of them for export.

2. (MECHANICAL ANIMALS) Toys born from mechanical engineering inspired by animals.

(MODEL MOTORCYCLE) This cutaway motorcycle is designed to teach children the workings of the simple gasoline engine. Manufacturers say toys with educational aim now find increasing popularity.

3. (GOLF) This mechanical golfer is activated by pushing a button... and there's a whole bag of interchangeable clubs for him.

(RADIO CARS) Radio controlled cars and trucks... early training for a new generation of motorists.

(TOY MONKEY) A monkey band... noisy but equipped with funny facial expressions.

(MEN HOLDING CARS) Buyers move in quickly and begin placing orders.

Tokyo's toy fair--preview of children's fun for tomorrow.

EARTHQUAKES TO ORDER

63 feet 1 min. 45 sec.

1. (PEOPLE IN ROOM) An earthquake!! But the people are smiling; that's because its not a real earthquake.

This earthquake simulation truck tours parks and schools to teach children how to behave during earthquakes, an ever present danger in Japan. The 'quake simulator is operated by the Tokyo Fire Department... and features a 54 square foot room mounted on a two-ton truck.

2. (SIGN) The sign tells the strength of the artificial quake in terms of Japan's earthquake intensity rating scale.

One thing the people are taught to do is put special cushions over their heads when the shaking starts... and then take refuge in doorways and under tables if possible.

Japan's worst earthquake disaster of modern times took place in 1923. A quake followed by fires devastated Tokyo and Yokohama with the loss of 140,000 lives. Earth tremors strong enough to be felt by people are everyday events in Japan... 633 of them were reported in 1976.

(WOMAN LECTURER) A fire department worker lectures spectators on the need to put out every flame in the home as soon as possible after a quake gets under way. Families also must learn the shortest route from their homes to parks, schoolyards, and other designated safety zones in their neighbourhoods.

Earthquakes are a serious problem... but Tokyo has injected a little fun into the task of teaching people to prepare for them.

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