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Japan Screen Topics

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FESTIVAL IN SHIMODA

138 feet 3 min. 50 sec.

1. (INTRO) Hot spring spas dot the lovely Izu Peninsula... for centuries a popular vacation resort for Tokyo people.

On the southeastern coast of the peninsula stands the historic port of Shimoda. There in 1854, Japan and the United States signed a treaty that ended Japan's 251 year policy of seclusion.

Let's visit Shimoda, where a festival every spring re-enacts that dramatic meeting between East and West.

2. (SHIMODA PORT) Located near the tip of the Izu Peninsula, modern Shimoda is a city of about 40,000 population. Only about 140 kilometers southwest of Tokyo, it is a tourist center and one of the gateways to Izu's mountains and scenic bays.

Shimoda was a fishing town in 1854 when the American Navy Commodore, Matthew Perry, came there with his black warships, and it still is.

Shimoda's fishermen catch and dry the delicious aji, a mackerel found in Japanese waters. Dried Shimoda aji today remain popular presents for vacationers to take home to friends.

3. (BEACH) Shirahama, whose name literally means "white beach" is one of Japan's finest ocean swimming sports. The district around the beach is studded with vacation homes.

The Hawaiian sport of surfing is coming in... its devotees at Shirahama may still have a lot to learn, but their enthusiasm is unquenchable.

4. (BLACK SHIPS) Japanese artists of the 1850s recorded the arrival of the American flotilla that Commodore Perry commanded. Japanese called them kurofune, or black ships.

Perry's negotiations with Japanese authorities took place at Ryosenji Buddhist temple in Shimoda.

The treaty granted America the first foreign consulate opened in Japan.

5. (CONSULATE) Gyokusenji... another temple building in Shimoda... was the office of the first American consul, Townsend Harris.

6. (MATSURI) Shimoda's Black Ships Festival is held yearly from May 16th through 18th. This year, a U.S. Marine corps band took part.

(MANSFIELD) The American ambassador to Japan, Mike Mansfield, was an honored guest.

A Japanese Self Defense Force band signals the start of the treaty pageant, with Japanese dressed up to play the roles of Commodore Perry and his officers.

(SAMURAI) Other actors portray the Japanese daimyo... or feudal lords... with whom Perry negotiated.

7. (FIREWORKS) On the first night of the festival, Shimoda and its harbor are lighted by a spectacular fireworks display.

(CHILDREN) Shimoda children watch the show with mixed delight and awe.

8. (FISHING) The black ship festival is over, and Shimoda's people resume their normal lives. Fishing boats set out on their rounds from nearby Suzaki Bay.

Fishing in Shimoda has remained what it was in Perry's day... an enterprise of families operating from small vessels.

Shimoda's people are proud of their community and its role in Japan's history.

They call Shimoda "Nihon no kokoro-wo hiraita machi"---the town that opened Japan's heart.

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THE ROBOT JANITOR

39 feet 1 min. 05 sec.

1. (MACHINE) Japanese engineers have married the computer to the floor polishing machine. The result: a robot janitor that can buff the floor of a corridor or meeting room without human guidance.
2. (OPEN UP) The machine runs on batteries. It is designed to do its work when left alone at night. When it encounters a wall, the machine's brain of integrated circuits simply guides the floor polisher off in a new direction. It even has a burglar alarm. If a prowler shines a flashlight on the robot, it emits a loud, beeping alarm.
3. (RUNNING) Running into an obstruction, the robot simply shifts to a course of about 30 degrees away from the obstacle. In the course of a few hours its rotating brushes will have polished every part of the floor.
(BUYERS) Business men watch it and think of savings in personnel costs.
(JANITORS) Janitors are less enthusiastic, concerned about their jobs. But the threat is minor. The robot can't perform in a room full of furniture. Human janitors will still be needed.

CURRENT HISTORY IN STAMPS

71 feet 1 min. 58 sec.

1. (STAMP MUSEUM) Twenty thousand postage stamps issued by 150 countries between 1974 and 1977 go on display at the 12th World Stamp Show in Tokyo... and enjoyable history lesson for stamp collectors young and old.
2. (POLISH) Poland issued four stamps to commemorate its role as host of the 12th International Conference on Nutrition.
3. (BRITAIN) Here's Britain's philatelic salute to the 25th anniversary of the reign of Queen Elizabeth II.
4. (BELGIUM) Belgian stamps display the works of the great artist Rubens on the 400th anniversary of his birth.
5. (INDONESIA) Indonesia depicts the peoples of her various regions.
6. (CHINA) Chinese stamps honored the late Premier Chou En-Lai on the first anniversary of his death.
7. (JAPAN) Japan... the 50th year of the reign of the present Emperor.
8. (EL SALVADOR) El Salvador issued stamps in 1974 with group pictures of teams taking part in the World Cup soccer matches.
9. (CANADA) The 1976 Olympics in Montreal... Canada's philatelic tribute.
10. (BRAZIL) Brazil... a series on emigrants who peopled the country.

11. (U.S.) The 200th anniversary of the independence of the United States.

A panorama of modern history, colorfully illustrated in stamps.

HONEYMOON BALLOON

85 feet 2 min. 22 sec.

The first balloon ascent was made in France in 1873. Since the late 1960s, ballooning has attracted growing interest as a sport in Japan.

About 500 Japanese now belong to ballooning clubs. Among them are the 40 members of a club who make their ascents from the valley of the Tone River near Tokyo.

Today is a sort of milestone in the club's history. Two of its members were married in the morning. They're going to celebrate with a balloon ride this afternoon. The club has 13 women among its members.

Japanese differ from some other balloon enthusiasts in that their balloons are home made. Each one costs about four thousand dollars.

Nylon or tetron is used for the balloon itself. Gondolas are made from straw. The balloons are inflated with portable stoves fueled by gas stored in cannisters.

2. (COUPLE) It's a day of flowers and congratulations for 26 year old balloonist Koji Tachihara and his new wife Yumiko, who is 23.

Amid applause and champagne toasts, the Tachiharas board their balloon for a honeymoon ride.

3. (FLIGHT) A last blast of heat from the gas jet and the Tachiharas' balloon is poised for ascent.

A balloon usually carries three gas cannisters... enough for two hours flying.

Koji and Yumiko wave farewell to their ground crew as their balloon starts its journey skyward.

The highest altitude to which a balloon of this type can rise is about 6,000 meters. Usually amateurs stay much closer to the ground. Koji and Yumiko's highest ascent today will be about 200 meters.

Managing the balloon means constant attention to the stove. If the air inside becomes too hot it flows out, and the balloon becomes unstable. If the pilot lets the air cool, the balloon will descend.

Ballooning... a relatively safe adventure for earthbound sportsmen, and for Koji and Yumiko, a gay wedding day.

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