

What's New?

Niihama City

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Bosozoku: the long ride towards extinction

Henry Lewis

Late on a Sunday, cycling up towards the old Besshi mine, I came across a group of boys standing beside their parked motorcycles on the road. I'd seen one earlier running a red light in town, before speeding off down the road and I had just assumed him to be in a hurry. It was only a little further down the road before I could hear all the revving. It wasn't long before the persistent blaring grew tiresome, but I was curious to know what was making all the noise. A few corners later and there they were; five impressively decorated bikes painted with a sparkling finish and showing off an unusually tall back seat, stopped in the centre of the road as cars tried to slowly pass around them. The riders, a group of teenage-looking boys wearing matching outfits, helmets worn either around their neck or none at all, looked only like they could be up to one thing, mischief.

Bosozoku, loosely translated to 'Out of Control Speed Gang,' are a subset of motorcycle enthusiasts that are notorious for civil disobedience and the general terrorisation of the community. Found riding individually customized and aggressively loud motorbikes on Japan's streets from as early as the 1950's, the Bosozoku are a uniquely Japanese nuisance. Though today's Bosozoku might only be shadow of former fights and glories, club chapters are still found bringing their unique style of rebellion to the streets.

The origins of Bosozoku can be traced towards the years that followed the Second World War. Veterans struggling to reintegrate into a drastically changed home environment, influenced by the heavy influx of American culture brought in with the Allied Occupation, laid the ideological foundations that birthed the first set of gangs. Though the name *Bosozoku* was not used until the 1970's, the motorcycle obsessed youths of Japan had already created an environment of recklessness and excitement, centred on vehicle customization and unsavoury behaviour associated with gangs.

With the golden years coming in the 1980's, it was not unusual for groups, upwards of one hundred members, to ride through the suburbs, revving strident engines, recklessly changing lanes and patriotically waving Japanese flags. Fighting anyone who opposed them, Bosozoku revelled in the reputation they had for violence and aggression. Despite narratives of social outrage and moral panic, pushed by national media outlets and the police force in attempts to brand the wayward youths as a *basket of deplorables*, membership numbers reached to above 42,000 men nationwide. To be a Bosozoku was to live life as a 'rebel without a cause.'

Perhaps it was due to economic hardship in the 1990's, or possibly a police crackdown on unruly vehicular behaviour that brought them here to the brink, but to encounter *real* Bosozoku today is a rare occasion. Though speculated to peter out into nothingness and to be replaced by the law abiding members of the *Kyushakai* motorcycle clubs, the remaining Bosozoku will continue to carry the torch of tradition until the end.

Hello, my name is Henry. I'm an Australian who has enjoyed teaching English at a hoikuen in Saijo for the past year.

Information in English & Chinese on the Web

***What's New?**

***How to sort garbage and trash**

Visit  <http://www.city.niihama.lg.jp>

Clair:*Multilingual Living Information

<http://www.clair.or.jp/tagengorev/en/index.html>

MOVIES

TOHO CINEMAS Niihama (AEON Mall)

February 24 ~	La La Land	2D English
March 17 ~	Sing	2D English / Dubbed
March 24 ~	Passengers	2D English / Dubbed
March 25 ~	Kong : Skull Island PG12	2D English / Dubbed
April 7 ~	Ghost in the Shell	2D English
April 14 ~	The Great Wall	2D English
April 21 ~	Beauty and the Beast unfixed	
April 21 ~	BURNING OCEAN	2D English
April 28 ~	ICE BREAK	2D English

Information Service

Internet: <http://niihama-aeonmall.com>

Tape (24 hrs): 050-6868-5019(in Japanese)

Movies might be changed without notice. Please check.

A Film Shooting in Niihama

(from Ehime Shimbun, February 14, 2017)

Director Kenichi Omori (41) from Tobe, Ehime, will shoot a film, which will showcase Besshi Copper Mine, Taiko Festival and other tourist spots in Niihama. This is a project to celebrate the 80th year of Niihama as a municipality.

He will start shooting on location in Niihama in the fall of 2017 and release the film all over Japan in the first half of 2018. Persons connected to the film will organize a committee and look for support companies.

The head cast and story have not been finalized yet. But director Omori says, "I am anxious to introduce Besshi Copper Mine and Taiko Festival as the charms unique to this region with Niihama citizens' enthusiasm to it. I want to produce a bright film which is loved by the local people."

Niihama City places this film as the highlight of the commemorative project for Niihama's 80th anniversary. The city has included ¥24 million into the budget of fiscal 2017 to contribute to the film's operating cost.

Parents and kids delighted with funny bicycles

(from Ehime Shimbun March 5, 2017)

Are they dinosaurs and dolphins, bananas or eggplants?

Much like a theme park, the "Funny-Bicycle" corner of "Toukaidou Yutori Park" in Senzoku, Tobe-town, where you can find bicycles of various types and characters, is crowded with parents and kids who have come to enjoy cycling on their holidays.

"I want to try that one next!" "Let's race the banana and eggplant!" There are about 40 types and 70 bicycles in total, such as a tandem-style "classic car", a 2-meter long "wan-wan" (woof-woof) cycle with a dog face in front, a rabbit type moved by 2 riders pedaling in harmony and so forth, all brimming with playful spirit. All the kids seem to have a lot of fun. Some pedal effortlessly and others struggle to learn how to ride difficult bikes. Some of them change their bikes often and their cheerful voices can be heard all around. The absence of other facilities like this nearby and the reasonable fee of ¥250 per person an hour are the reasons this facility is so popular. The chief personnel of the designated administrator of the facilities, Fuso Maintenance, Mr. Yoshito Tamai said, "Cherry blossom season is coming soon, and it will be our pleasure for you to enjoy bicycles cheerfully".

April Events

* Spring Cultural Festival at Niihama Bunka Center

Date: 4/ 9(Sun.) 13:00- Folk Songs, Japanese Dance, etc

4/15(Sat.) 13:30-Western-style Dance, Japanese Dance, etc

4/16(Sun.) 14:00- Niihama Blass Band Performance, etc

4/22(Sat.) 13:30- Koto, Shigin, Instrumental music, etc

4/23(Sun) 13:30- Koto, Western-style Dance, etc

Fee: Free

For further information: TEL 0897-65-15

From an ALT's Blog

Anna Sheffer

I thought I knew Japanese food before I came to Japan. I'd eaten sushi and ramen and tempura before, and I liked them all. I knew that Japanese food in America was not authentic, but I figured I was getting the big picture. But there is so much more to Japanese food than I imagined, and a lot of it is unexpected.

Growing up in America, my mom always warned me not to eat uncooked cookie dough because I might get salmonella from raw eggs, but in Japan, I love eating raw egg over fresh, white rice. The idea of eating intestine used to make my stomach churn, but one of the best foods I've eaten here is intestine nabe in Fukuoka.

Western-style food in Japan tends to be very different from what I ate growing up. I've never seen bun-less "hamburg" outside of Japan, and I had never eaten corn and mayonnaise on pizza before coming here. In America there are no fruit sandwiches, and we usually don't eat salad with breakfast.

But America is guilty of the same thing with Japanese food. American sushi is usually deep-fried and covered with sauce. If you tell an American you want to eat ramen, a lot of people will think you mean Cup Noodle. People in America know what mochi is, but not okayu; they've eaten yakisoba, but not okonomiyaki.

It's impossible to know what a foreign country's food is like if you've never left home. No matter how much you read about a country, and no matter how much you like eating foreign food at home, the only way to get a real taste for a country's food is to go there and try it yourself.

SGG would welcome any suggestions, questions or ideas for monthly articles.

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*The editors for this month are T. Matsuoka & Y. Miki

ONE POINT JAPANESE

いろいろな“生” No.2

A : そろそろ 生まれそうですね。Sorosoro umaresō desu ne.

(Your baby will be born soon.)

予定日はいつですか。Yotēbi wa itsu desu ka.

(When is the due date?)

B : 4月10日です。Shigatsu tōka desu. (It's April 10th.)

Aさんのお子さんは、今、何か月ですか。

A-san no okosan wa, ima nan kagetsu desu ka.

(How many months old is your son now, Ms. A?)

A : ちょうど 6か月です。歯が 生え始めましたよ。

Chōdo rokka getsu desu. Ha ga haehajimemashita yo.

(He is just six months old. He is beginning to cut his teeth.)

A : あのう、生け花を習いたいんですが、どうすればいいですか。

Anō, ikebana o naraitain desu ga, dō sureba ii desu ka.

(Umm... I'd like to learn *ikebana* - what should I do?)

B : ちょうど、今、あかがねミュージアムで 作品展をしてるから
見に行きませんか。

Chōdo, ima, akagane myūjiamu de sakuhinten o shiteru kara
mini ikimasen ka.

(Right now there is a flower exhibition at Akagane Museum.

How about going to see it?)

(会場で) (At the museum)

A : 花の 生け方もいろいろあるんですね。

Hana no ikekata mo iroiro arun desu ne.

(There are many ways of arranging flowers, aren't there?)

A : 最近 生き生きしてるけど、何か あったんですか。

Saikin ikiiki shiteru kedo, nanika attan desu ka.

(Recently you seem very animated. What's up?)

B : 実は、付き合っている 人が いるんです。Aさんは？

Jitsu wa tsukiatteiru hito ga irun desu. A-san wa?

(To tell the truth, I'm seeing someone. How about you?)

A : 私は、仕事が 恋人。仕事が 生きがいだから…。

Watashi wa shigoto ga koibito. Shigoto ga ikigai da kara...

(My work is my sweetheart. Work is my reason for living...)

★～が生まれる・赤ちゃん 子犬 作品 友情

★～が生える・・・歯 ひげ 髪の毛 雑草

★～を生ける・・・花 生け花 ★生きる・・・生き方 生きがい 生き生き

< By Niihama Nihongo no Kai >

NNK also provides Japanese lessons for foreigners living in Niihama.

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