

TIME TRAVEL



United Nations
Educational, Scientific and
Cultural Organization



Toya-Uso
UNESCO
Global Geopark

Travel around by means of photos and experience life in
Toya Caldera and Usu Volcano UNESCO Global Geopark

An aerial photograph of Lake Toya, a large blue lake surrounded by green hills and a small town. The lake is the central focus, with a large island in the middle. The surrounding landscape is a mix of green fields and forested areas, with a small town visible on the right side. The sky is blue with some clouds in the distance.

Introduction

Memory Evoking “Time Travel” by means of the Local Scenery that Links Generations

Lake Toya, which we see every day, is water that has accumulated in an enormous hole created by a huge volcanic eruption that occurred a long, long time ago. It has taken an unimaginable length of time for it to become the Lake Toya we know so well today.

Funka Bay and the Toya caldera are evidence that the land is breathing around us and at the same time they also tell our story – the residents who have continued to live with the volcano.

The lifestyle when Grandpa was a boy,
The scenery that mother saw on “that day”
and the eruption of Mt. Usu that we heard about at school.

This booklet brings you the photos old and new,
that look back on the memories that link these generations.

Take a trip through time to where we,
the people who live in the Toya Caldera and
Usu Volcano UNESCO Global Geopark, want you to know about.



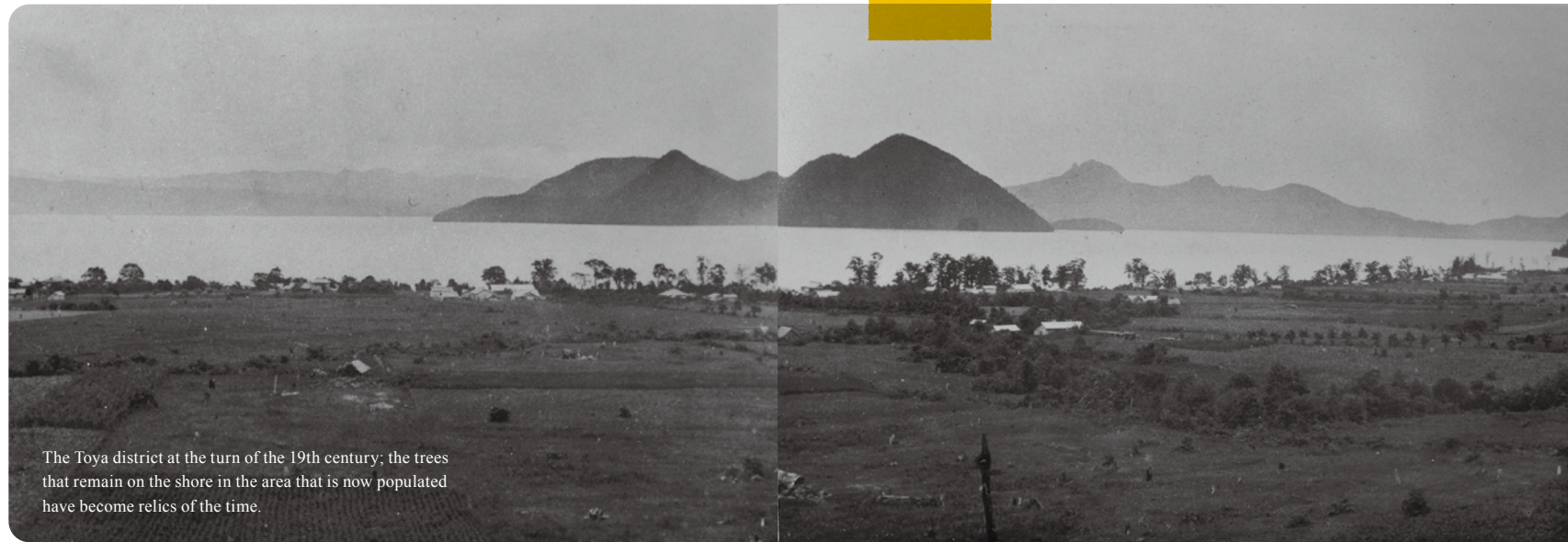
From Ancient Times

the Land and People have Existed Hand-in-hand Since the Jomon Period.

The scenery around us is constantly on the move. The same is true of Mt. Usu and also Lake Toya. Like the life of a human, appearances change over a long period of time.

Since as long ago as the Jomon Period, the land and humans have progressed “hand-in-hand” to this day. The human’s partner is this vast abundant land – the caldera we call home, formed by a volcanic eruption long, long ago.

Built to commemorate the opening of the Usu Abuta Farm in 1805, the Irie Hayagriva Monument is said to be Hokkaido’s oldest Buddhist hayagriva (to pray for the protection of horses). The farm’s manager and many Ainu lost their lives in the large-scale pyroclastic flows that occurred during the eruption of Mt. Usu in 1822.



The Toya district at the turn of the 19th century; the trees that remain on the shore in the area that is now populated have become relics of the time.



The history of the town of Toyako dates back to the Jomon Period(13000BC to 300BC). Jomon Period remains have been discovered in Irie-Takasago Shell Midden. The Jomon people’s shell middens were special – they were not just places to discard shells; it is thought they had the meaning of sacred “send-off places,” as seen in the Ainu culture.

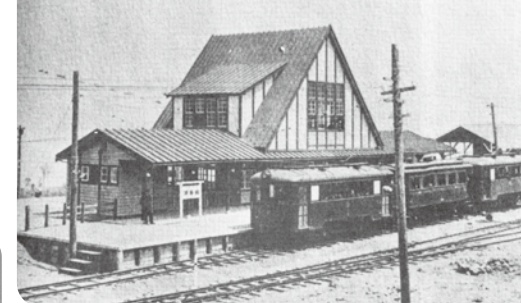
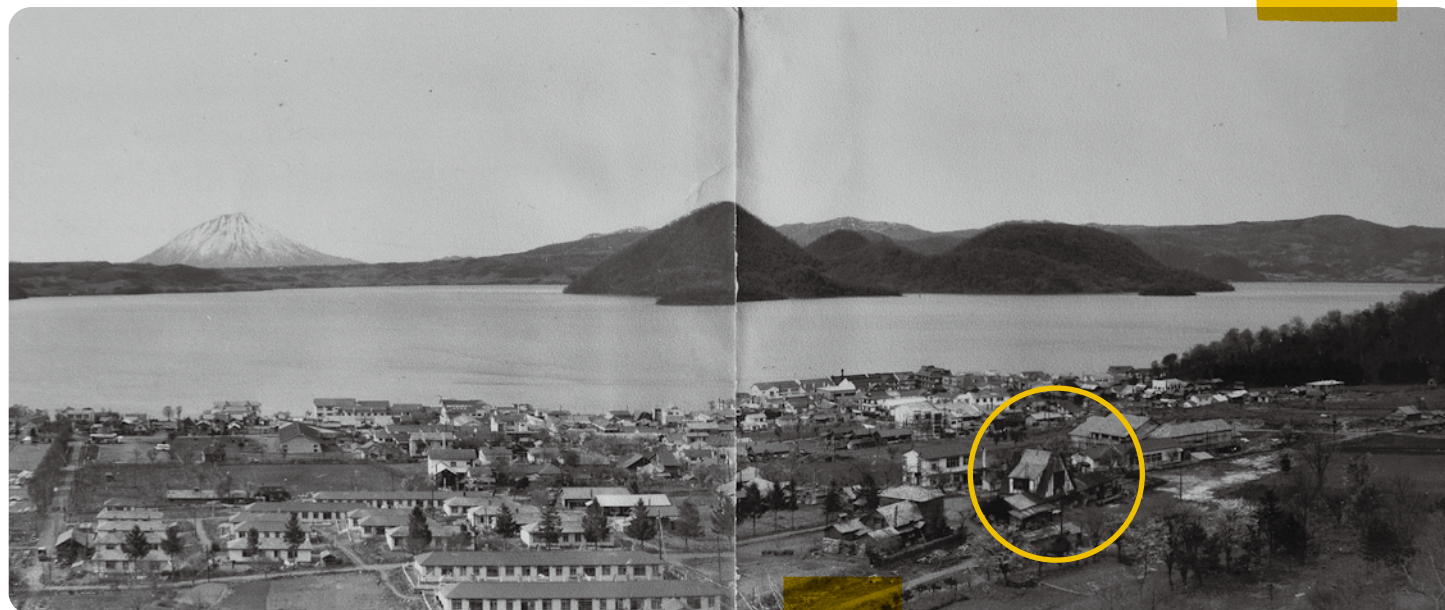


The Honcho district in 1906; in the top right of the photo, a smoking steamboat can be seen. Around the turn of the 19th century, Abuta rapidly developed as a stopover for pioneers arriving from mainland Japan.



The Toyako Onsen district at the beginning of the 1900s; on the other side of the lake is Mt. Yotei. In 1857, explorer Takeshiro Matsuura visited Lake Toya and spoke highly of the scenery.

The Electric Railway's station building, with its pointed roof, closed in 1941, but continued to be symbolic of Toyako Onsen for some time after. In 1949, the name of Toya was included in the designation of the Shikotsu-Toya National Park, making it known nationwide.



In 1929, the Toyako Electric Railway opened between Toyako Onsen and Abuta Station. This is the Toyako Station building at the time of opening.



The Osawa Line (currently the Muroran Main Line) opened in 1928. This is the first train standing at Abuta Station.

Toyako Electric Railway's Contribution to the Development of Toyako Onsen

The mining resources from the western and eastern shores of Lake Toya were transported across the lake by boat, loaded onto the Toyako Electric Railway at Toyako Onsen and transported to Abuta Station (currently JR Toya Station), where they were then transported by railway overland to Muroran. After the hot spring was discovered, many tourists rode the electric railway to the area.



Toyako Onsen in 1973 (left-hand photo) and 2007. The difference in the shape of Mt. Usu due to the eruption can be clearly seen.

1910 The birth of Meiji Shinzan and the hot springs

The area around Lake Toya became a “spa town” after the volcanic eruption of 1910.

The underground magma raised the earth’s surface 170 m, creating the Meiji Shinzan lava dome (Mt. Yosomi-yama). The magma at that time heated the underground water that created the hot springs.



The volcanic activity that gave birth to the Meiji Shinzan lava dome; volcanic smoke was seen rising everywhere.

The Toyako hot spring was discovered in 1917, and was first called Tokotan Onsen.



Immediately after the discovery, the number of hot-spring inns increased from two, along with the development of the Electric Railway, and the area soon became a hive of activity.



The whole of Mt. Usu as seen from the former Toya Village

Records remain of fire-extinguishing prayers by the Ainu who lived in Aputa Kotan (village).





The Mt. Showa-Shinzan lava dome, which was formed by the volcanic activity from 1943 to '45

1944 Mt. Showa-Shinzan is born during the war

The birth of the Showa Shinzan lava dome helped spread Mt. Usu's name nationwide. Each year, many visitors are mesmerized by the magnificent view from the Usuzan Gondola Observation Deck.

Before the eruption in 1977, the outer ring of Mt. Usu was a popular spot for picnics and hiking, with grazing land for cattle, and Ginnuma Marsh, where lotus flowers bloomed.



Families hiking on Mt. Usu in 1982. Many locals enjoyed climbing Mt. Usu during its calm period.

Column

The People who Conveyed News of the Eruption

1910 Tokyo newspaper reporter

This man is a reporter dispatched from the *Tokyo Nichinichi Shimbun* newspaper, who arrived on August 1, 1910 to report on the eruption. It was not only news of the eruption that filled the newspaper pages, with reports on the Ainu lifestyle and details of Abuta Village at the time also being introduced.



Reporting so close to the crater would be unthinkable now.

1977 A report from a child's point of view

The front page of the *Abuta town* magazine issued on October 20, 1977 featured an essay by an elementary school pupil. According to the essay, during the second large-scale eruption, "stones and ash fell from the sky and the stones hit the [roadside] guardrails making a clanging sound."



The volcanic smoke forms a backdrop to a residential area



Scenes photographed from this spot by hordes of journalists were transmitted nationwide.

1977 The ash-covered hot-spring resort area

Many precious materials remain from the 1977 eruption.

The circumstances at the time differed according to the places where the people lived.

Why not ask people you know about what happened at that time?

A pleasure boat that had evacuated Toyako Onsen can be seen on the lake.



Frequent eruptions spewed large amounts of ash onto the lake's surface according to the direction of the wind. Work to clear volcanic ash from in front of the Village Office continued.



Volcanic ash falls on Toyako Onsen



People with horses evacuated from the Izumi district to toward Funka Bay



People who had come to the campsite watched the eruption from the opposite shore.

The eruption as seen from various places

Mt. Usu ▲



A Japan Coast Guard patrol boat looks on as the eruption is witnessed from the sea.

Toyako Onsen's Mt. Kompirayama on April 1. Eruptions begin midway up the slopes.



Scenery as viewed from the Kagawa district

The voice of a fisherman who was working at the time

"We were watching the smoke as we worked on the boat, wondering whether we would have to stop and evacuate. There was a continuous feeling of insecurity and tension."

2000 An evacuation system that makes use of the lessons learned

At the time of the eruptions in 2000, lessons learned in 1977 were used to issue pre-eruption evacuation orders and residents were evacuated in advance.

The voice of a member of the volunteer firefighting group that was dispatched to the scene

"Calls were made for the volunteer firefighters to gather. When we went to look round the town we found curbstones that had been pushed up, reminding us of the powers of nature."



The eruption from the Nishiyama foothills on March 31, photographed from Honcho near National Highway, Route 37



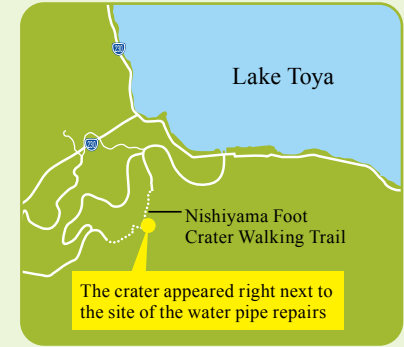
A Photo Documentary of 2000



An excavator under the ground? How did that happen?

The voice of a Town Office employee who was working at the scene

“Early on the morning of the eruption we received a report from the Disaster Countermeasures Headquarters saying that a water pipe had burst, and I headed out to the site with the workers to carry out repair work. I also had experience with water pipe repairs in 1979, two years after the previous eruption, and remember thinking that, if it had begun again, it was going to be a long, hard battle.”



The crater appeared right next to the site of the water pipe repairs



Immediately after the repair work had been completed, the eruptions began, forcing everyone to escape from the imminent danger. When they returned after the volcanic activity had settled, an excavator and the apartment itself had been buried in volcanic sediment.



The area near the crater is now the Nishiyama Foot Crater Walking Trail, where traces of the eruption can be sensed at close hand.



Eruptions from the Nishiyama foothills at 1:07 p.m. on the same day

At 7 a.m. on March 31, 2000, there was a report from an apartment on the Izumi Park Road in the town that a water pipe had burst. This is the scene as work commenced.



A Photo Documentary of 2000



Before the eruption

Part of the enormous damage that occurred in the eruption of 2000 was the severing of National Highway, Route 230. The upper photo is of Route 230 before the eruption.



After the eruption

Uplifting of the earth's foundations resulted in the road breaking and forming steps



In 2007, two tunnels were opened, creating a new link between Toyako Onsen and Shimizu. The road also acts as an evacuation route at times of emergencies.

Present day



The site is now green and quiet.

The Changing Land

Old and new photos that explain the transformation of the town

The lakeshore in Toyako Onsen



Before the 1977 eruption

Restoration was underway in the Tsukiura district one-and-a-half months after the eruption



Immediately after the 1977 eruption

A footpath that makes it easy to walk has been established



After the 1977 eruption

Cherry blossoms have been planted on the volcanic ash that covered the lakeshore



After the 1977 eruption

2014



Along the footpath, Fountain Plaza is a children's play area



The whole of Mt. Usu, photographed from the lakeshore in front of the *Asahiura* bus stop in Toyako in March 2015

2014



In the flowering season, the scenery can be enjoyed by drivers

Mt. Showa-Shinzan

Mt. Higashi Maruyama

Meiji.Shinzan (Mt. Yosomi-yama)

Northern Somma

Mt. Nishimaru-yama

Kita Byobuyama

South gairinzan

Nishiyama

Mt. Kompirayama

O-usu

Mt. Usu-Shinzan

Ko-Usu

Bentenjima(Nakajima)

Lake Toya (caldera lake)



Large-scale land improvement project took place in an elevated district of the former Toya Village between 1973 and 1987. At the time, Hokkaido aimed to be Japan's most prolific food supply base, and efforts were implemented in various regions.



Volcanic ash covered the fields in 1977.



Turnover work was carried out using tractors to plow the surface ash into the soil.

Delicious local vegetables such as potatoes and squash are popular items sold at the farmers' market area of the roadside station.



2014



Before the 1977 eruption

People fishing near the Pon Nishiki River inlet in the Toya district. In the 1950s and '60s, large carp and rainbow trout were often caught here.



Toya district in August 1977; work is being carried out to clear volcanic ash that had fallen and accumulated in the area

After the 1977 eruption

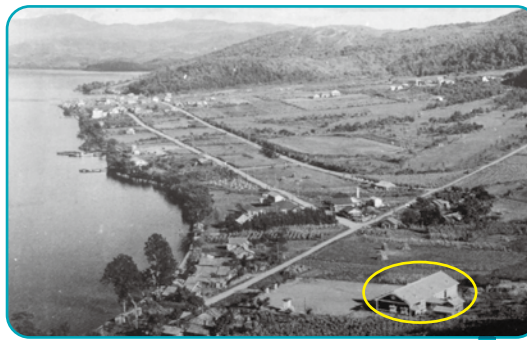


The volcanic ash was transported to the lakeshore, where an embankment was created.

2014



The lakeshore embankment was made into the Toya Sho Park. Numerous sculptures dotted along the shores of Lake Toya blend in with the scenery.



Opened in
Toyako Onsen-cho in 1930



Toyako
Onsen
Elementary
School

The school building was transferred after the eruption in 1977. The school is currently located in the Tsukiura district after it was damaged by volcanic mudslides in the 2000 eruption.



Housing

Toyako Onsen's Sakuragaoka housing complex was badly damaged by volcanic mudflows and cinders at the time of the eruption in 2000.



The buildings are preserved in the sabo (erosion protection) designated area, where there is now a walking trail.



Abuta Power Station began operating in 1939. The electricity produced here was mainly used at the steel plants in Muroran. Located close to Lake Toya with a drop of approx. 64 m that enabled hydroelectric generation, it is highly regarded as a historical civil engineering structure.



Immediately after the 2000 eruption, pupils were dispersed and lessons were held in classrooms in Oshamambe and Toyoura. Subsequently, a temporary school building and then a permanent one was built in the Tsukiura district.



Water
purification
plant

The water purification plant, built on elevated land in the Izumi district after the eruption of Mt. Usu in 1977, was again devastated in the 2000 eruption.



A temporary water purification plant was established after the volcanic disaster of 2000.

The existence of Lake Toya is indispensable in our daily lives as residents, as it provides domestic water and is also a source of electricity.



Industry



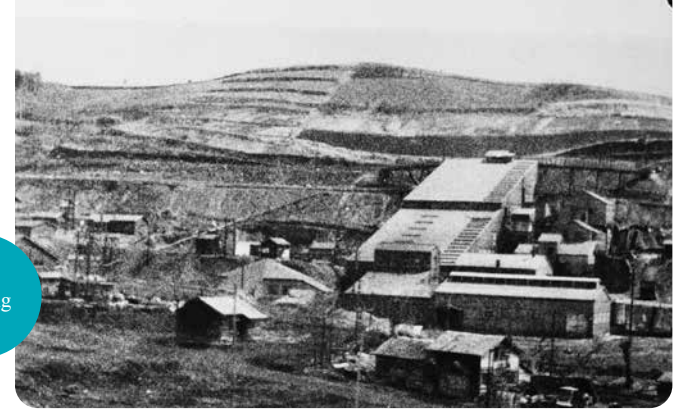
The "Hot-spring Stand" in the Toya district is a hot-spring vending machine, which is rare in Hokkaido. It began operating in 1986.

Tourism and everyday life



Pleasure boats on the lake, circa 1929. In May and June, students on school trips, and group tours from Hokkaido and beyond enjoyed riding the boats from Toyako Onsen, which was thriving thanks to the Osawa Line and Electric Railway Line.

Mining



Abuta Mine began as a limonite mine in 1905; gold mining at Toya Mine reached its peak around 1927.

Planting rice in 1941; the fan-shaped Takarada district is renowned for its rice.

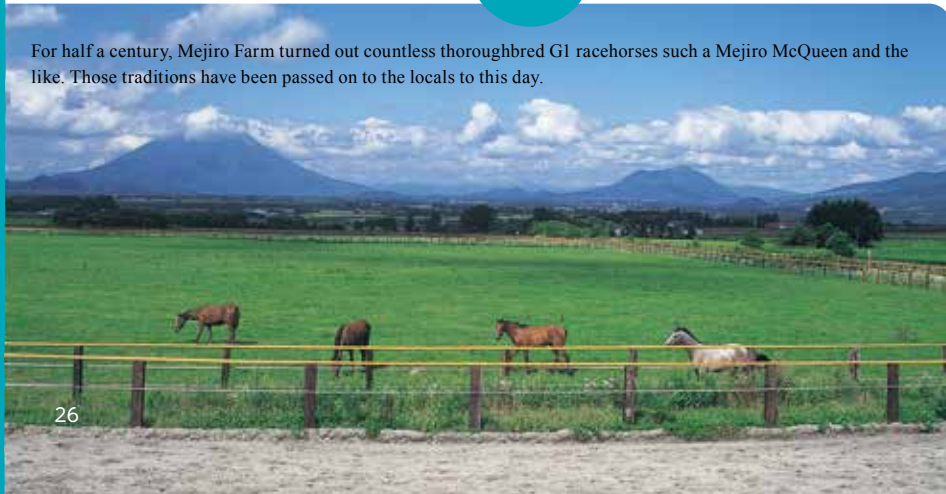


Agriculture

Mejiro Dober achieved dominance in Japan's G1 horse races for four consecutive years from when it was two years old.



For half a century, Mejiro Farm turned out countless thoroughbred G1 racehorses such as Mejiro McQueen and the like. Those traditions have been passed on to the locals to this day.



Fishing industry



Around 1937, the fishing industry's main catch changed from sardines to tuna. The photo shows tuna being landed on a sardine boat. Each fishing trip would result in between 20 and 30 tuna, each weighing approximately 190 kg, being caught.



Scallops were also used by people in the Jomon period and were unearthed from shell middens. Currently, scallop farming in which the scallops are raised while hanging from ropes in the sea, takes place.

Commerce



The flax (linseed) industry thrived in the former Abuta Town in the Meiji period. As Hokkaido's climate is suitable for its cultivation, it was grown extensively in the region, from the early pioneering period to around the 1950s, and was used to make work gloves and the like.



After the opening of the Osawa Line (JR Muroran Line) in 1928, the streetscapes around Abuta Station (currently Toya Station) changed drastically. In 1931, approx. 50 volunteers gathered to form the Abuta Chamber of Commerce and Industry. The photo is of the Ekimae-dori St. in front of the station, circa 1932.

The Geopark blessings that lead to the future

Honcho district in 2015



Circa 1960



Circa 1960



Toya district in 2011

Circa 1960



Toyako Onsen in 2006

A fishing industry grateful for the blessings of the sea – scallops being landed at the Abuta fishing port



A safe port equipped with disaster prevention functions – Abuta fishing port's Oiso sub-district



A farming industry that harvests the blessings of the land – winter wheat fields in Naruka



The blessings of the volcano brimming with potential – Geothermal development on Mt. Kompirayama



The workings of Mother Nature, which bring peace and prosperity to our hometown, continue



Living in the Geopark

We who live in the Toya Caldera and Usu Volcano UNESCO Global Geopark know about the joy of receiving the blessings of this vast land and the feeling of respect for nature.

We want to convey to the children, the unforgettable memories and the importance of wisdom in preparation for the future.

Let's talk together about the ones we love and about our hometown.

The editing of this booklet was possible thanks to the cooperation of countless residents of the town.



Toyako Town

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