



"Eight-Beat" Yakumo



For information on sightseeing in Yakumo and local products, please inquire at Okanoeki, a commercial facility offering Yakumo products and information.

Inside Hokkaido Prefectural Funka Bay Panorama Park, Hokkaido Expressway Parking Area, Hamamatsu 368-8, Yakumo, Futami-gun, Hokkaido
<http://yakumo-okanoeki.com/>



Issued by Yakumo Tourism & Local Products Association
 Head office: Commerce, Industry,
 Tourism and Labor Division, Town of Yakumo
 Sumizome-cho 138, Yakumo, Futami-gun Hokkaido 049-3192
 Tel: 0137-62-2116 Fax: 0137-62-2120
<http://www.town.yakumo.lg.jp/>

[Editing] Labbott Co., Ltd.
 [Design] R. Wakai
 [Illustrations] S. Sasaki
 [Photography] I. Sasaki



Cover photo

Yakumo, the birthplace of carved wooden bears, a Hokkaido specialty
 (These bears were produced by Shigeyuki Shibasaki and others)



Special Yakumo Stories

A guide for taking an "Eight-Beat" leisurely trip around Yakumo

Yakumo, Futami, Hokkaido

八雲立つ
 出雲八重垣 妻籠みに
 八重垣作る
 その八重垣を
 古事記から

Here in Izumo
 land of layered clouds rising
 I will build layers of fences
 to protect my new wife
 fences for our new life
 — Records of Ancient Matters —



The Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan Yakumo is the only municipality in Japan facing two oceans

The Pacific Ocean

Overlooking the Pacific Ocean from the municipal dairy cattle raising farm



The Sea of Japan

Sun setting between Okushiri Island and the Kumaishi area

Yakumo is the only municipality in Japan that faces two oceans—the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan.

Route 277, which runs through Yakumo and links its Pacific side (Yakumo area) with its Sea of Japan side (Kumaishi area), is known as the shortest route connecting the two oceans.

The scenery of Yakumo during the autumn foliage season is included in the eight most beautiful sceneries of southern Hokkaido.

The summit of Mt. Obokodake rising beside Unseki Pass commands a panoramic view of the moon rising from the Pacific Ocean and the sun setting over the Sea of Japan. No other place in Japan offers a view like this of a simultaneous moonrise and sunset right before your very eyes.

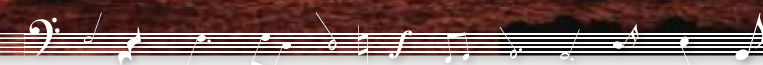
Yakumo is home to mountains that divide the town into two areas: the Yakumo area on the Pacific side and the Kumaishi area on the Sea of Japan side. As a result, both the climate and the development history differ between these two areas. This makes Yakumo a unique town with two different histories and cultures—the Yakumo area with its history of the Owari-Tokugawa family and the Kumaishi area with that of the Matsumae feudal domain.

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1 Birthplace of carved wooden bears

A ninety-year history with production dating back to 1924

Yakumo is the birthplace of Hokkaido's specialty—carved wooden bears. This type of woodcarving started in Yakumo in 1923, when Tokugawa Yoshichika brought back carved wooden bears he bought in Switzerland while traveling abroad. He thought carving wooden bears would be an appropriate side job for farmers in Yakumo and encouraged local farmers to produce these bears themselves, saying, "Give it a try; I will buy all the bears you carve." The Swiss wooden bear and the first wooden bear produced in Hokkaido at the time are on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum.

Raising bear cubs as models for carving wooden bears

Yakumo's wooden bears differ from those produced elsewhere in Japan in that they feature fur lines extending downward from the shoulder like a flowering chrysanthemum. Since Yakumo farmers raised two bear cubs

as models for carving bears themselves, many wooden bears in Yakumo feature a soft facial expression, a pear-shaped body and playful gestures. They also look prettier than carved wooden bears produced elsewhere.



● **Takiji Mogi**
Born in Motoizumi, Saitama in 1902 and died in 1976. Mogi gave up farming to become a woodcrafter specialized in bears and trained many successors.



● **Shigeyuki Shibasaki**
Born in Namarikawa, Yakumo in 1905 and died in 1991. His wooden bears carved with a single adz (a unique carving style referred to as Hatsuri in Japanese) enjoyed wide popularity.



● **Walking tour of places related to carved wooden bears**
You can enjoy Yakumo sweets at confectionery stores with long and distinguished histories after visiting places related to carved wooden bears around the town.



● **Carved wooden bear expert certificate**
This certificate is presented to those who have deepened their knowledge of carved wooden bears.



● **Wooden bear carving training sessions given by the Yakumo Farmer Art Study Group (from Yakumo History)**



● **Monument of the birthplace of carved wooden bears in Hokkaido**

Immigration history of the Owari-Tokunaga family

The immigration of the Owari-Tokunaga family started when the former Owari domain head Tokugawa Yoshikatsu asked the Meiji Government to grant him the Yakumo (Yurapu) land and had his subordinate warriors immigrate there for vocational training and full-fledged Hokkaido settlement. Before that, Yoshikatsu dispatched three warriors to Hokkaido for preliminary research to select the most appropriate settlement area. This type of mass immigration with private funds set a precedent for the subsequent migration of the warrior class to Hokkaido and a model for the descendants of the Mori, Maeda and Nabeshima families to move to Hokkaido.



● **Tokugawa Yoshikatsu**



Carved wooden bears and other historical objects of Yakumo from the Old Stone Age to the modern period are on display by category at the Yakumo Historical Museum.



2 The origin of butter candies



● "Phantom" butter candies produced by the founder, Sakakibara
Butter candies, a familiar Hokkaido souvenir, also originated in Yakumo.



Butter candies, one of Hokkaido's typical sweet specialties, also originated in Yakumo.

Yakumo once extensively produced potato farina, from which farina candies came to be manufactured.

In 1916, Yasushige Sakakibara began manufacturing thick malt syrup from farina. After many years of research on manufacturing methods, he succeeded in producing butter candies for the first time in Japan by blending beet sugar and butter into the farina candies using an original recipe. He received a patent for the manufacturing process and began selling

butter candies as Yakumo's specialty, establishing his foothold as the founder of butter candies. Since then, both renowned and obscure manufacturers have competed with each other to produce and sell butter candies.

It was also Sakakibara who taught the manufacturing methods used for the famous Trappist butter candies. **Sakakibara's butter candies differed from others in that they were plain in taste and less sticky.** His original manufacturing methods were passed on to his successor, Mikio Sakakibara, who died in July 2004 without training his successors.

The manufacturing equipment for butter candies used by Sakakibara at that time is on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum, allowing visitors to enjoy the smell of butter candies produced back then.



● Butter candy manufacturing equipment (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)

◆ Advanced region with Hokkaido-style dairy farming techniques learned from Denmark

Dairy farming in Yakumo was once regarded as a model by dairy farmers nationwide. Before the First World War, Yakumo farmers produced a large amount of potato farina, but its export price and volume dropped sharply due to increasing imports from foreign starch factories after the war. Repeated potato cultivation also deteriorated the soil quality, making it inevitable for Yakumo farmers to look for other income sources. They started raising livestock to complement farming, and then shifted to dairy farming.

At the time, Denmark was enjoying great success as the world's top dairy kingdom despite its small land area, cold climate and poor soil. The Yakumo leaders at the time, having taken notice of the close similarities in natural conditions between Yakumo and Denmark, **dispatched many young farmers to Denmark as trainees in Denmark-style agriculture. By putting all of their efforts into dairy farming, Yakumo came to be known as an advanced dairy farming area** and its image as home to Hokkaido-style dairy farming was strengthened.



● Dairy products
Yakumo, a dairy kingdom, produces large quantities of milk, cheese and other processed dairy products.



● Hokkaido's oldest existing brick silo
The brick silo on the Misawa Farm was built in 1921. Many other old brick silos and cowsheds still remain in Yakumo.



● Milking scene (from around 1955 to 1965)
A pastoral scene of milking cows by hand (from Yakumo History)

● Dairy cattle raising farm
Dairy farmers send young cows to graze in the pasture during the winter.



3

The legend of Peko-chan

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Did a Yakumo citizen serve as the model for Peko-chan?

Peko-chan is the well-known mascot character of the confectionery company Fujiya. Is there a model for this popular character? According to Fujiya's official announcement, Peko-chan hails from "a dream land somewhere on earth." No other information suggesting who she is modeled after is given. **However, there is hearsay that the model for Peko-chan might have been the only daughter of the owner of Asunaro Farm in Yakumo.** Having learned

this, Yakumo conducted an inquiry into this farm, only to discover there is no farm with that name now, nor any trace suggesting that it ever existed. Meanwhile, it was around 1950 when Peko-chan was first displayed in front of Fujiya confectionery outlets, which coincides with the time when Yakumo was drastically changing its direction from dry-field farming to dairy farming. Since Yakumo was more positive about implementing modern dairy farming styles than anywhere else in Japan at that time, it would be no wonder if a Fujiya employee visited Yakumo for an inspection and got the idea for Peko-chan from a daughter working on a farm he happened to walk by.

Actually, half of the milk used for Fujiya's staple Milky candy is produced in southern Hokkaido, primarily in Yakumo. Thus, "Milky, the taste of Yakumo" (a pun based on the popular commercial phrase, "Milky, the taste of mom.")



● Milk Collection Can (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)
This type of container was used to carry milk to processing plants.



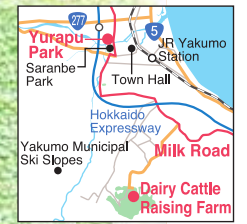
©FUJIYA CO.,LTD



● This is Izumi-chan from Hirano Farm. Yakumo is home to many other children who resemble Peko-chan.



● Source: "Peko-chan legend connected to Yakumo," an article from Lapita magazine December 2005 issue, Shogakukan Inc.



Many cowsheds can be seen along Milk Road, which leads to the dairy cattle raising farm.



4

A place inspiring the lyrics of “Hana-no-kubikazari” by the Tigers

● Children enjoy making flower necklaces with their mothers in Sanrabe Park along the Yurapu River (around May)



● Yakumo is a town filled with flowers: pheasant's-eyes, cherry blossoms, azaleas, white arums, dogtooth violets, soft windflowers, Ezo yellow marsh marigolds, violets, dandelions, sunflowers, etc. The best flower-viewing season is from the spring thaw (around March and April) to early summer.

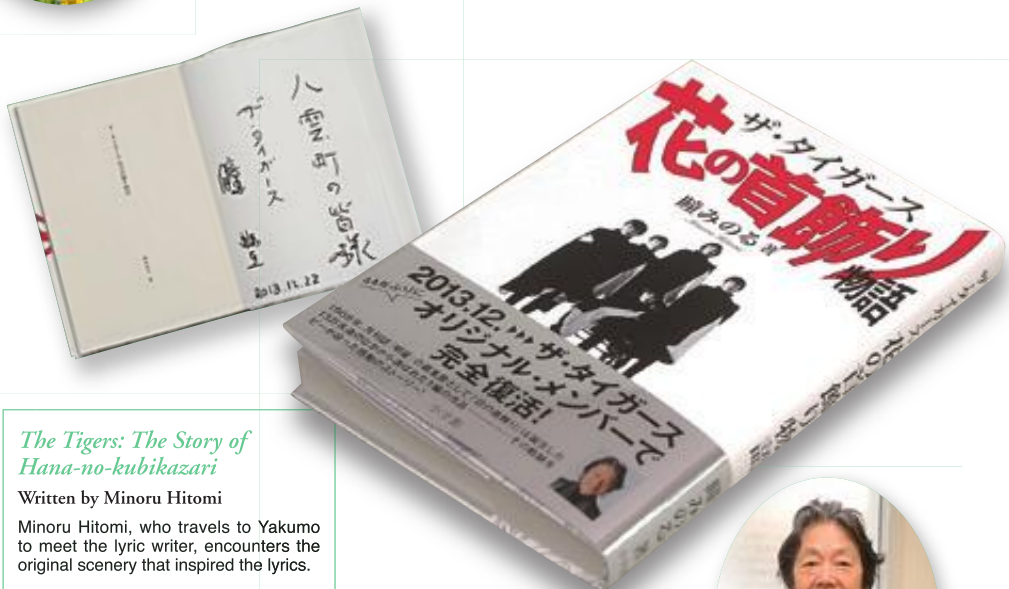


Were the lyrics of “Hana-no-kubikazari” inspired by Yakumo’s scenery?

The girl got her inspiration for the lyrics of “Hana-no-kubikazari” from what was popular among her friends at the time — picking flowers to make flower necklaces. She also incorporated a story depicted in the music from the ballet *Swan Lake* that she was reminded of by the flower necklace. Moreover, the application period was from around November to December, a time when many swans migrate to Yakumo for the winter. This common scenery in Yakumo may have also evoked the image of *Swan Lake*. Therefore, it might just be the unspoiled natural background of **Yakumo that led to the birth of “Hana-no-kubikazari.”**



● Swans migrate to the Yurapu River (from around November to March)



The Tigers: The Story of Hana-no-kubikazari

Written by Minoru Hitomi
Minoru Hitomi, who travels to Yakumo to meet the lyric writer, encounters the original scenery that inspired the lyrics.

- Published on Nov. 29, 2013 by Shogakukan Inc.
- Price: ¥1,575
- ISBN 9784093883405



Minoru Hitomi (The Tigers)

“As someone who has become a Yakumo fan, I would be all the more pleased if this book could help readers deepen their knowledge of Yakumo, a northern town where the wind gently blows over the land.” (excerpt from *The Tigers: The Story of Hana-no-kubikazari*)



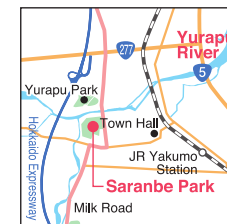
“Hana-no-kubikazari” The Tigers

- Original lyrics: Fusako Sugawara
- Revised lyrics: Rei Nakanishi
- Music: Koichi Sugiyama

Were the lyrics born in Yakumo?

The Tigers, a music band that enjoyed great popularity in the late 1960s, decided to reunite in December 2013 after a 44-year hiatus. According to an article featuring an interview with the band’s drummer, Minoru Hitomi, that was published in *The Hokkaido Shimbun* (November 12, 2013 issue), a female student at Yakumo High School

contributed significantly to the birth of Hana-no-kubikazari (a flower necklace), one of the band’s hit songs. **A 1967 issue of *Myojo* magazine invited the public to send in lyrics for a song to be sung by the Tigers. From among the many submissions, the one sent by a high school girl in Yakumo was chosen.**



Sanrabe Park and Yurapu Park are places where citizens can enjoy a relaxing time, and flowing between them is a river with no artificial weirs—the Yurapu River.

5 History and legend of the Yurapu mine



Conducting Japan's first mine blast in pursuit of a dream to find gold and silver!

The Yurapu Mine closed in 1969 and was located behind the present Oboko Inn. This was one of the oldest mines in Hokkaido, and it was in this mine that Brake and Pumpelly, an **American geologist and a mine specialist, set explosives in 1862 for the first time in Japan.**

The first minerals mined there were silver, lead and gold, followed by manganese spar and lead at the time of its closure around 1969.

Mysteries surrounding this mine

There are also many mysterious stories about the mines. For example, when the public bathhouse for miners was destroyed, a gold comb (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum) was found there, **causing people to imagine that there might be the tomb of a princess of a hidden Christian feudal lord from the Tohoku region.** Also, after the young wife of a miner found a gold bar while plowing a field, a rumor spread that runaway soldiers from the Tokugawa army, which was defeated in the Hakodate War, buried gold coins here.

The second hot spring of the public bathhouse for miners is now used as the open-air bath of the municipal Namarigawa Hot Spring campsite, enjoying immense popularity among hot spring goers.



● Open-air bath of the Namarikawa Hot Spring Oboko Inn



● The Namari River and Mt. Obokodake
Mt. Obokodake, a mountain that looks like a person in profile, and the Namari River that supported the lives of mine workers



● Mine roaster that is thought to have been used around 1940 (from Yakumo History)



● Stone mill for ores (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)

This mill was used to remove gold contained in the ores.



● The gold comb that caused quite a sensation when it was found (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)



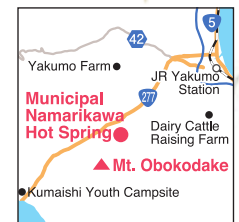
● Manganese spar (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)

It is said that, around the time when manganese spar was mined, many women in Yakumo wore accessories that were cherry in color.



● Lead bar (on display at the Yakumo Historical Museum)

This bar engraved with a Yurapu mark was found at the bottom of Uchiura Bay.



Route 277 (Unseki Pass) with an autumn foliage view that is included as one of the eight most beautiful sceneries in southern Hokkaido, and Mt. Obokodake, the symbol of Yakumo

The stories don't end there!

Stories about Yakumo, a town facing two oceans

There are more!

In the Otoshibe area on the Pacific Ocean side,

- there is a miracle story involving Takojiro Benkai, which may or may not be true. In addition to being the first Ainu to be invited to the Imperial Palace, he played an important role as a member of the rescue and search team for the disaster at snowcapped Mt. Hakkouda where a marching army went missing in 1902.

Moreover,

In the Kumaishi area on the Sea of Japan side, where development began several hundred years earlier than on the Pacific side,

- there is a phantom tramway in the Yurapu mine, which certainly existed but whose location is totally unknown;
- there is a story about the curse of Priest Hakugan, who died a regrettable death amid the trouble surrounding the Matsumae family, as well as a story about Monshoan Temple where the tragedy happened;
- there is a legend regarding the battle between the Japanese and the Ainu at Kumoishi Strange Rock, a sightseeing spot designated as a natural monument; and
- there is a story about the Venerable Enku and Buddhist statues he produced (these statues are enshrined in many shrines for some unknown reason).

There is also a story regarding the northernmost guard stations (a sort of checkpoint) built by wajin (inhabitants of ancient Japan) on both the Pacific Ocean and the Sea of Japan sides.

The Pacific Ocean

These are just a few of the countless stories about Yakumo.

This booklet was produced by Yakumo citizens with a deep love for Yakumo to help more and more people learn about Yakumo.

Both well-known and obscure episodes related to Yakumo are introduced here from slightly different perspectives.

The town was named Yakumo by Tokunaga Yoshikatsu in 1883 after the following 31-syllable Japanese poem included in Records of Ancient Matters:

Here in Izumo / land of layered clouds rising / I will build layers of fences / to protect my new wife / fences for our new life

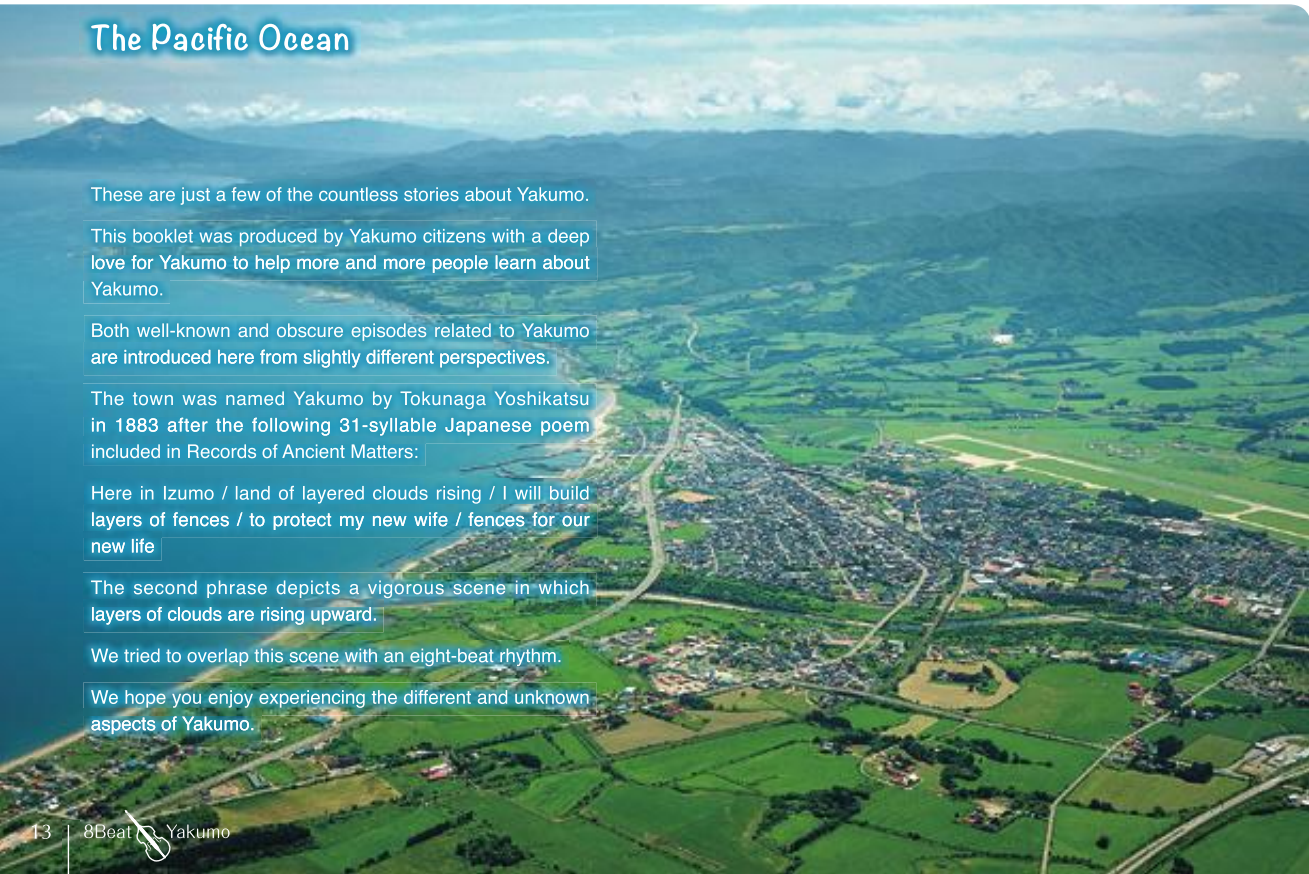
The second phrase depicts a vigorous scene in which layers of clouds are rising upward.

We tried to overlap this scene with an eight-beat rhythm.

We hope you enjoy experiencing the different and unknown aspects of Yakumo.



Sunset over the Sea of Japan



Abalone Festival



Float March



Otoshibe Shrine Festival in autumn



Profit in autumn



Mt. Obokodake in winter



Hokkaido Prefectural Funka Bay Panorama Park