



Fukui Prefectural Museum of Cultural History



Welcome to the Fukui Prefectural Museum of Cultural History

The Fukui Prefectural Museum of Cultural History introduces the history and folk customs of the people who have called Fukui home from the Paleolithic era through to the present day with a focus on the Northern region of Echizen.

The history and folk customs of the Southern region of Wakasa is introduced at the Wakasa History Museum.

Exhibition Rooms: Main exhibition facilities are located on the second floor.

Of these exhibitions, the History Zone, “Life in the Showa Period” Corner and Open Storage alter their displays on a regular basis.

Second floor

History Zone: chronological presentation of Fukui’s history

Topic Zone:

- Special Exhibition Room
- “Life in the Showa Period” Corner



“Life in the Showa Period” Corner

First floor

Open Storage:

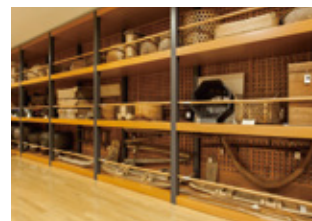
- Folk Customs Exhibition
- “Religious Culture of Echizen” Corner

Information Library:

Visitors can view original museum programs.(Only in Japanese)

Entrance Gallery:

Holds photo exhibitions and small-scale exhibitions.



Folk Customs Exhibition



Information Library



History zone

Jomon Period

(approx. 10000 BCE to approx. 400 BCE)

The Jomon Period is a period of the Neolithic Era characterized by the use of cord-marked Jomon Pottery (earthenware).

This period signifies the first use of earthenware in Japan. Countless pieces of Jomon Pottery have been unearthed from Jomon Period ruins in Fukui. The exhibition pieces reveal just how much the shape and decoration of the earthenware changed over the almost 9,000 year long Jomon Period. People of the Jomon Period fed themselves by hunting, fishing, and gathering plants and then cooking these natural food sources in earthenware. A close look at the shells and bones unearthed from the Torihama shell-mounds shows the rich variety enjoyed by the people of the Jomon Period. A variety of craftwork and accessories including combs made from wood and lacquer have also been unearthed, indicating the honed artistic skills of the Jomon people.



Yayoi Period

(approx. 400 BCE to first half of 3rd Century CE)

The Yayoi Period is characterized by thinly made Yayoi Pottery featuring fewer patterns than Jomon Pottery, as well as a more advanced diet based on rice cultivation. This period also signifies the introduction of bronze ware and ironware. The earthenware pot with a narrow neck seen on display was made to store rice and is distinctively different in shape from Jomon Pottery. Furthermore, a large number of hoes and plows used for cultivating rice have also been unearthed from the ruins. Bead-making was a popular way to make personal ornaments from stones in Fukui's Northern region during this period. The existence of these ornaments in the far-off regions of Kansai and Tokai points to cultural exchange with distant settlements.



Highlight: "Bead-making Studio" (diorama) Early Kofun Period (around 4th Century)

A recreation of the bead-making process.

The pit dwelling house in which the work is being done is a bead-making workshop.

Archeological work has shown that settlements at the time consisted of homes as well as workshops.



Kofun Period

(later half of 3rd to 7th Century)

The era in which large mound-shaped tumuli known as kofun were made is called the Kofun Period. Most of Japan at this time, including Fukui Prefecture, was ruled by the Yamato Kingship centrally controlled by the kings of the Kinai region. The size of the kofun seen throughout Fukui Prefecture, along with the volume and quality of the relics found within them indicate the high social ranking of the people buried within. The stone coffin, gold and silver plated crown, bronze mirror, and stone ornaments on display in the exhibition room could have only been possessed by the regional leader. Weapons such as iron swords, armor, helmets, harnesses and iron arrow-heads, and ritual-related items including earthenware have been unearthed from the kofun of those with military power under this regional leader.



Highlight: Stone Coffin

Unearthed from a kofun at Mt Nishitani. Approx. 2 meters long and weighs around 1,400 kilograms. Is made from Shakudani ishi (welded tuff) taken from Mt Asuwa in present-day Fukui City. The surface is covered with marks made by work tools.



Nara and Heian Period

(8th to 12th Century)



The period when the capital was located in Nara is referred to as the Nara Period, and the period when the capital was in Kyoto is known as the Heian Period.

The capital was home to various central government agencies. Each province had a provincial governor's office, and the domains making up each province had a domain office. This system signified that people were now controlled by government employees. Government offices created the family registers which formed the basis of control via offerings of rice and specialty products (tax), along with the assignment of work services such as military duty. Reading and writing proliferated for the first time during this period due to the need for government offices to keep records. The earthenware with ink writing, mokkan (strips of wood with an official message), and ink stone on display are proof of the rapid spread of written language skills in Fukui during this era. Salt production using seawater was also a popular industry during this period. The small, thin earthenware on display was used to boil seawater

and create salt that was then taken to the capital in Nara as tax.





Kamakura Period to Muromachi Period

(12th to 16th Century)

The period from the Kamakura Period to the Muromachi Period, recognised as the Medieval Times, was one in which samurai wielded great power. The Muromachi Period is particularly known for the emergence of feudal lords, or daimyo, that fought for supremacy during an era also known as the Sengoku, or Warring States Period. Echizen Province (the northern region of Fukui Prefecture) during this Warring States Period was ruled by the Asakura clan, seen in the pictures displayed here. The Asakura, however, were defeated by Oda Nobunaga in 1573 in the race for national unification. While the Warring States Period was a period of turmoil, it also saw great advancements in the realm of artistic culture represented by the tea ceremony and flower arrangement amongst others. The tea utensils seen on display were used for such purposes, with a massive amount of porcelain being imported from China at this time. Echizen-yaki, pottery named after its region of origin, was mainly made for use as storage containers and for cooking applications. Echizen-yaki was transported along the Japan Sea trade routes and had a vast region of distribution extending some 1,000 kilometers.



Highlight: Echizen-Yaki Kiln (diorama)

This diorama, modeled after kiln remains from between the 13th to 14th century, recreates two-thirds of an Echizen-yaki kiln. The way in which the structure was built by excavating the side of a mountain, and the jars and pots inside can be seen. Items in the kiln were baked at 1,200 degrees Celsius.



Edo Period

(17th to 19th Century)

Tokugawa Ieyasu's establishment of the shogunate in Edo in 1603 signaled the beginning of the Edo Period. The Edo shogunate provided samurai (daimyo) with land (feudal domains) where they built a castle and ruled over the villagers and townspeople in their domains. Vassals and merchants lived in the castle town built around the daimyo's castle. Fukui domain was established in Echizen and ruled over by the Matsudaira Family who constructed Fukui Castle. The moat and stone wall of the castle still remain standing in front of JR Fukui Station. A castle town was established around the castle's outer perimeter. Archeological excavation work has unearthed a variety of remains that reveal the everyday life of people of that era including porcelain ware such as bowls and plates, and wooden items such as chopsticks and geta footwear. The folding screen on display depicts the Uma-odoshi festival held over New Year in Fukui's castle town. This festival was a popular annual event that brought samurai, townspeople and villagers together. Marine transportation thrived during the Edo Period with the opening of new sea routes. Cargo ships called kitamae-bune actively sailed the Japan Sea coastline. The affluent port towns of Mikuni and Tsuruga acted as Echizen's main trading ports.



Highlight: Votive Picture Ema Artist Murakudo-Manshi's Studio (and Shop) (diorama)

Offering up ema (votive pictures) to shrines was a popular trend during the late Edo period. This diorama is the workshop of the man behind this trend Murakudo-Manshi. This historically accurate recreation of a mid-19th century shop shows ema, a hanging scroll of Sugawara Michizane, along with various work items including tools for painting ema.



Meiji Period to Showa Period (19th to 20th Century)

In 1867, shogun Tokugawa Yoshinobu of the Edo shogunate relinquished power to the Imperial Court, bringing an end to the Edo Period. This led to the commencement of the Meiji Period, and the establishment of the Meiji Government under Imperial rule. Present-day Fukui Prefecture was created in 1881. Diplomatic relations and trade with Europe and Asia thrived after the Meiji Period, and Japan's industrial and economic sectors rapidly developed as a result. In Fukui Prefecture, particular attention was given to expanding textile factories which had operated since the Edo Period. The textile industry, which produced a finely woven silk cloth called habutae, and later rayon (artificial silk) flourished, so much so that the industry claimed the country's export record during the early Taisho Period. The railway network was built up during the Meiji and Taisho periods as a means of transporting this cargo. A recreation of a late 19th century Jacquard Loom, a theatre recreating the Fukui Rayon Hall, in addition to a variety of other materials regarding rail transport are on display. The Fukui Air Raid of 1945 and Fukui Earthquake of 1948 are also introduced here with information about the disasters and subsequent reconstruction activities.



Highlight: Jacquard Loom (recreation)

This is a recreation of a Jacquard Loom, jointly constructed by artisans from Kyoto and Fukui based on techniques learnt from late 19th century France.



Highlight: Old Hokuriku Line Yamanaka Signal Station (model)

A recreation of the perilous Yamanaka Signal Station on the old Hokuriku Line (1919 to 1962). The highlight of this facility is a railway siding for extremely long freight trains designed to allow trains to pass each other safely. Built in the Taisho Period, this facility reflects the major role the Hokuriku Line played as a main artery for rail transportation in Japan at the time.



Museum Theatre

The theatre plays news reels from the period between 1955 and 1975. The theatre is modeled after the main hall of the Fukui Rayon Hall built in 1937. This building features an art deco style design which was popular at the time.

“Life in the Showa Period” Corner, 1950’s to 1970’s



This corner focuses on the period between 1955 and 1975. Life in Japan experienced major changes during this period. Household appliances, private cars, and the westernization

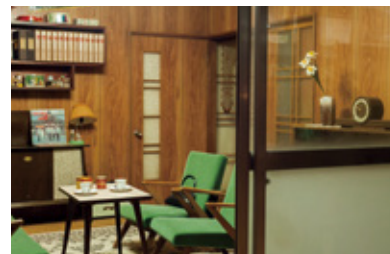
of eating habits also spread from the city to rural areas. The recreated townscape and farmhouse of the era are modeled after actual buildings that existed in Fukui Prefecture. The recreated farmhouse is from the period around 1965 to 1969.

This building is a traditional Echizen farmhouse that has been renovated. The pillars and walls in the entrance have been painted with an iron oxide rouge to prevent decomposition, while the foundation makes use of locally quarried Shakudani ishi (welded tuff), giving the building a distinctly Echizen flavor. A Western style drawing room and new kitchen have been added during the renovations. The interior, furniture, and household appliances in each room give an insight into how everyday lifestyle changed over time. The townscape is a recreation of the period from 1960 to 1964.

A traditional sweets shop, car service center, and inexpensive restaurant line the street. The traditional sweets shop was a gathering place for children where cheap sweets and raffle tickets were sold. “Life in the Showa Period” Corner alters the lighting and acoustics every hour on the half hour to simulate morning to evening. Shop assistants and radio broadcasts recreate the mood of the period. The sound of looms can be heard throughout the day, indicating the large number of factories operated by the affluent textile industry. The four seasons can be experienced through the ripening of fruit on persimmon trees, and the sound of cicada and crickets singing. Small touches like geckos on the farmhouse walls, the cat in the traditional sweets shop, and sparrows



make this is a popular exhibition. Visitors can also enjoy exhibits of everyday items, photos, and automobiles from the Showa period.

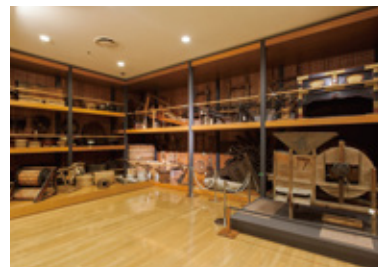


Open Storage

Two main corners introduce the museum’s basic functions of collecting and storing material.

Folk Customs Exhibition

Located roughly in the middle of the Japanese archipelago, it is also said that Fukui Prefecture is characterized by a mixture of cultures from both East and West Japan. This exhibition presents material relating to the food, clothing, housing, work and lifestyle of people living in Fukui.



Religious Culture of Echizen



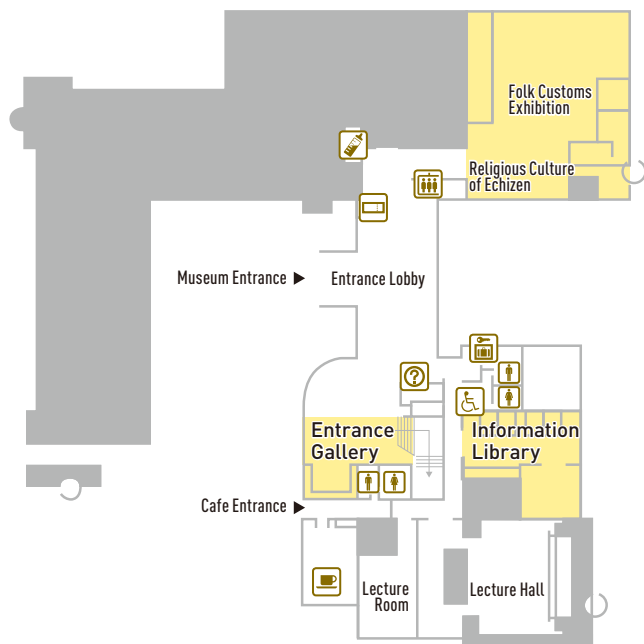
Since ancient times Japanese have believed that god dwells in natural objects such as mountains, trees and rocks. Tall, beautiful mountains in particular have been the subject of religious faith. Mt Haku

has been worshipped (Mt Haku Faith) as a holy mountain due to its distinctly white appearance. Buddhism is also widely followed in Fukui. The Sotoshu and Jodo Shinshu sects are particularly well known. The Sotoshu sect is a branch of Zen Buddhism that attempts to acquire truth through Zen meditation. Its founding father Dogen came to Echizen to escape the hustle and bustle of the city and established Eihei-ji Temple. Of the many Buddhas that exist, the Jodo Shinshu sect places particular importance on the worship of Amida Buddha. The monk Rennyo visited Echizen in the latter half of the 15th century and conducted missionary work out of Yoshizaki Gobo Temple. Rennyo’s easy to follow teachings helped spread Jodo Shinshu amongst farmers. The exhibition introduces cultural properties related to such religions and religious practices.

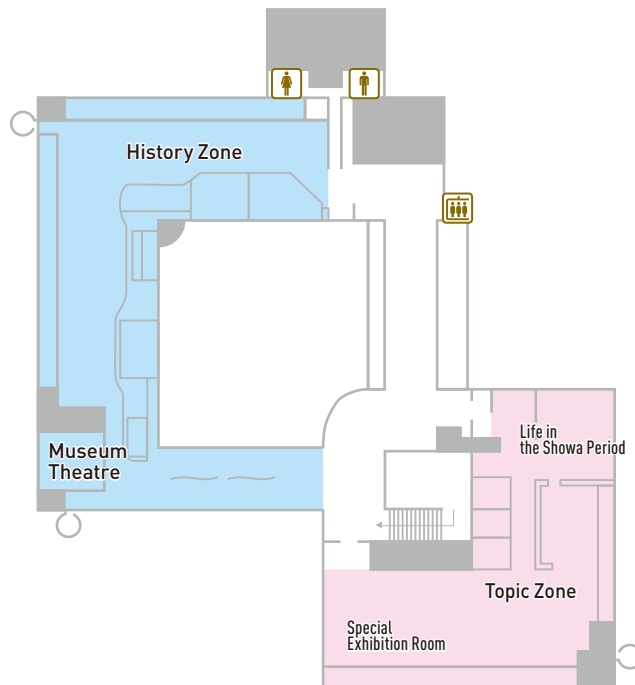
Floor Guide



1 First Floor



2 Second Floor



Hours.....

9am to 5pm (no admission after 4:30pm)

Closed.....

Every 2nd and 4th Wednesdays
 Year-end and New Year holidays
 May close temporarily for exhibition rearrangement and maintenance

Admission.....

■ Permanent Exhibition

<Individuals> 100 yen <Groups> 80 yen
 Free admission for persons high school age and below,
 or 70 years and older

■ Special Exhibition

Depends on the Exhibition



Transportation

By Train

Via Echizen Railway (Mikuni Awa Line)

Get off at Nishibetsuin Station. Walk north about 15 minutes.

Via Fukui Railway (Fukubu Line)

Get off at Tawaramachi Station. Walk northeast about 15 minutes.

By Bus

Via Keifuku Bus (31 Route)

Get off at Miyamaecho bus stop.

Via Keifuku Bus (38 Route)

Get off at "Kenritsu Rekishi Hakubutsukan" bus stop.

Via "Smile" Bus (North Route for Tawara/Bunkyo)

Get off at Miyamaecho bus stop.

By Car

About 10 minutes from Fukui Station (JR Hokuriku Line)

About 15 minutes from Fukui Kita Interchange, off the Hokuriku Expressway



Fukui Prefectural Museum of Cultural History

2-19-15 Omiya, Fukui City, Fukui Prefecture 910-0016 JAPAN

Phone : (+81)-776-22-4675 E-mail : history-museum@pref.fukui.lg.jp

<http://www.pref.fukui.jp/muse/Cul-Hist>

<https://www.facebook.com/fukuirekihaku>

https://twitter.com/Fukui_rekihaku

Fukui Cultural International Dispatch Executive Committee

3-17-1 Ote, Fukui City, Fukui Prefecture 910-8580 JAPAN

Edited in Collaboration with : Fukui Promotion Department Cultural Affairs Division

Published : March 2016

<http://www.real-japan-fukui.jp>

Supported by the Agency for Cultural Affairs, Government of Japan in the fiscal 2015

