

TORII

TELLER

VOLUME 5, No 33

MCAF IWAKUNI JAPAN

MAY 23, 1960



MIYA JIMA



WINNERS—ActSSgt M. O. O'Loughlin of MACS-4 was named winner of the Honda Super Cub in the recently conducted Notre Dame Bazaar at Hiroshima. Second prize winner was Pfc Garry Swinney of H&HS-1 (Petri Camera) and third prize, an automatic clock radio, went to LtCol E. C. Carlson of MAG-12

Hota Dogs Sale Aids Notre Dame

Final proceeds acquired from the original donation of three prizes that were given by the Cardinal Doi Holy Name Society of MCAF, Iwakuni totaled \$953.28 or ¥ 343,176. The proceeds were donated to the Notre Dame Girls School in Hiroshima.

Included in this amount was \$200 from the sale of "Oishii Hota Dogs, (delicious hot dogs) from the American style hot dog stand that was centrally located at the Notre Dame Bazaar. The stand was a sell out by 3 p.m. on Sunday afternoon. One hundred and twenty dozen hot dogs were passed across the counter by eager to sell, singing, and Coney Island type yelling Holy Name members and their efficient school girl helpers.

Another early sell out was the cake auction with Mrs. J. Larkin in charge and her assistant Mrs. Stein, two tireless workers. There were many other ladies from the base who gave their time and effort, to bake and donate cakes for this worthy cause. The cake sales brought in another \$76.55 which brought the grand total to \$1029.83 or 370,740 Yen.

The First Marine Aircraft Wing Band put on a performance at the ball park which was in the valley below the school. Many Japanese and Americans were attracted out doors by this event and dotted the hill-sides to listen to the concert.

If you are here on the base this time next year, make it a point to attend this affair as it is held only once a year.

Deactivation Announced

The Marine Barracks, U. S. Naval Ammunition Depot, Bangor, Bremerton, Washington, will be deactivated June 30, 1960, Headquarters Marine Corps announced.

Two officers and about 42 enlisted Marines now stationed at the Barracks will be reassigned, HQMC said.

The deactivation does not involve the Barracks, U. S. Naval Base, Bremerton, which will continue in operation.



TALENTED TUTORS—Four officers from Marine Attack Squadron 121, have donated their teaching talents to 35 members of the squadron who are participating in class-room Group Study courses through the United States Armed Forces Institute. Comparing Text books that will be used in the four designated courses are (Left to right) Captain John L. Driefer, Major William L. Traynor, 1stLt Henry L. Searle and 1stLt Peter R. Maitland. All are college graduates and majored in the subjects which they will teach.



FINAL PROCEEDS—Major Conrad G. Winter (left), President of the Cardinal Doi Chapter, Holy Name Society, Marine Corps Air Facility, Iwakuni presents \$1,029.83 or 370,740 yen to Mother Superior Aloyse, of the Notre Dame Girls School, Hiroshima. The money represented the final proceeds acquired from an American style Bazaar conducted at the school by the Society.

Group Study Classes For VMA 121 Marines

Marine Attack Squadron 121, holds the distinction of being the first unit of the Wing to organize and conduct group study classes through the United States Armed Forces Institute.

Thirty-five members of the squadron are now enrolled in the four courses being offered. Two are first

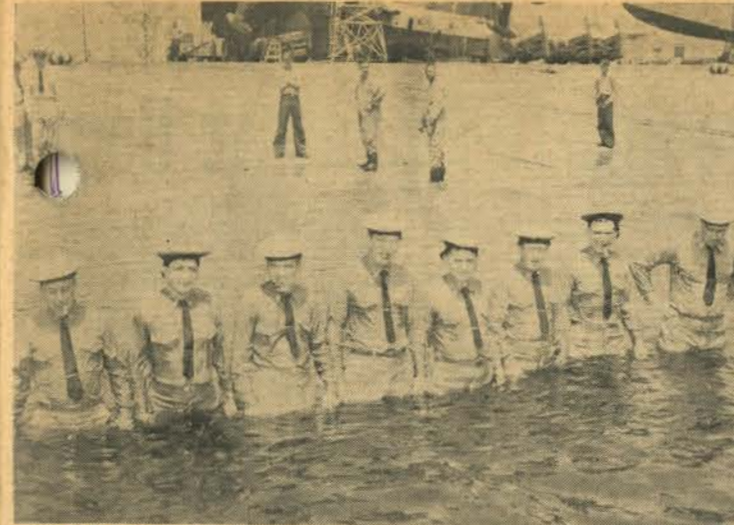
and second year college level while the other two are senior high school subjects. All are accredited USAFI courses, acceptable at the majority of participating colleges and universities throughout the United States. A great number of high schools accept USAFI completed courses as credit toward a diploma.

The courses included in the VMA-121 curriculum are Sociology, American History, Mathematics and English.

Four squadron officers, all holding college degrees, have volunteered to instruct the off-duty classes which will be conducted Monday through Thursday from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m.

The Squadron Executive Officer, Major William L. Traynor, a graduate of the University of Maryland (BA) will instruct American History. Others instructing, who also majored in the particular subject they are to teach are: SOCIOLOGY - Captain John L. Driefer (BA), graduate of the University of Virginia; MATHEMATICS - 1stLt Henry L. Searle (BS), graduate of Washington University; ENGLISH - 1stLt Peter R. Maitland (BS), graduate of the U. S. Naval Academy.

Although this is the first U.S. group enrollment to be organized in the Wing, it is anticipated by education officials that the growing interest in other squadrons will result in similar classes being started.



"WET DOWN"—Eight "boot" Chiefs are marched into the Inland Sea of Japan as part of an old Navy tradition of being initiated a new CPO. Left to right, Eugene Wilcox; William Attencio; Walter McCormack; Billie Pierce; Richard McDonald; John Larkin, Richard Abramowicz and John Duggan.

Largest Number Of Navy Chiefs To Receive Rate

Successful and happy first class petty officers, numbering 10,400, will don the "hard hat" of a chief petty officer as a result of the February 1960 examinations. According to a BUPERS announcement, this will be the largest number of peace-time CPO advancements in the Navy's history.

Overall statistics revealed that seventy-six per cent of those who passed the Navy-wide CPO exams will be advanced. This is another new high in the advancement picture.

Ratings which have been extremely tight for years have opened wide. For the first time since World War II all men who passed the examination for Aviation Machinist's Mate, Hospital Corpsman, and Boatswain's Mate will be advanced to chief.

Advancements will be divided into five increments with effective dates of May 16, July 16, Sept. 16, and Nov. 16, 1960. The last will be Jan. 16, 1961. About 2,500 will be advanced in the first month and approximately 2,000 on each of the four succeeding dates.

The prospects for advancement will continue to brighten for the next few years as a great number of senior petty officers who first enlisted just prior to and during World War II transfer to the Fleet Reserve after 20 years of service. As the BUPERS announcement read: "It's clear sailing ahead for advancements in the enlisted ranks."

Chiefs Get Traditional Wet Down

True to Navy tradition, nine "Boot" chiefs were "wet down" at the Sea Plane ramp May 17 as they were marched into the Inland Sea of Japan. Their initiation was continued at the Fleet Reserve Association Club, Iwakuni where they were served their first meal as E-7's from a hog's trough, a ceremony as old as the Navy.

Lieutenant Colonel Phillip L. Crawford, Acting Facility CO, presented flat hats to John Larkin, William Attencio, Walter McCormack and Billie Pierce, Commander William R. Knopke, USN, Commanding



FIRST MEAL—Boxing gloves, blind folds and hog's troughs were part of the "silverware" used by the new Chief Petty Officers to enjoy their first meals as E-7's.

Telephone Office Offers Telegraph Service To States

For 266 yen, less than one dollar, Iwakuni personnel can send a three line telegram to a loved one anywhere in the United States through the Japanese telephone and telegraph service.

A visit to the Overseas Telegraph Company Office in building 464, near the Air Facility Officer of the Day's office, is all that is necessary to bring a lot of happiness to someone at home. You don't even have to compose your message. There are over 250 prepared, one line messages to choose from. All you have to do is pick out any three lines you would like to send, give Miss Teddy Shigeoka the name and address you want it sent to, and in 24 hours it is there.

The sentences range from a one word "no" to "I wish we were together on this special occasion."

Some of the other 250 phrases available are, "keep smiling," "please send me money," "have been promoted," or the one we all look forward to, "expect to be home soon, don't write further."

If you have about \$12 during the week you might like to make a three minute phone call home. Normally it only takes about an hour and a half to place a phone call anywhere in the States. There are two sound proof booths for complete privacy when your call comes through.

The office handles about 15 telegrams and about 35 calls to the States a week now. But is capable of handling a lot more. Next time you are lonely for a voice from home, do something about it. It is yen well spent.



FREE SHOE SHINES— "Boot" Chief Richard Abramowicz, Fleet Air Wing-6 shines shoes for Commander C. M. Tugger, Training Officer, FAW-6 as part of the initiation ceremonies on becoming a Chief Petty Officer.

Let's See Japan

To the north east of Iwakuni in the Inland Sea of Japan lies a beautiful and intriguing island. Five miles in length and two and a half miles in width, it was known as Itsukushima or "Shrine Island" up until the late 12th century. Since then this parcel of sacred land, one of "The Three Famous Views" of Japan has commonly been known as MIYAJIMA.

Mt. Misen, 1300 feet in height, rises up in the center of the island with its slopes beautifully wooded with Pine, Cypress, Cherry and Maple trees. From the top of Mt. Misen which is ascended by the Miyajima Ropeway, it is possible to view Hiroshima City and innumerable islands and boats of the inlets.

The Maple Valley-Momijidani-lies to the south and is famous for its cherry blossoms in spring and for the exquisite tints of leaves of the Maple in Autumn. A sparkling stream, the Mitarai-gawa flows through the valley around weird shaped rocks and under curious bridges. Amidst the wooded slopes nestle the inns and tea houses for pilgrims, the dwellings of innkeepers and fishermen with those of priests and image carvers which make up the population of the island.

For more than 18 centuries, according to tradition, Miyajima has been a sacred island. Until the

Restoration of the Mikados in 1868, births were forbidden on the island. When they were about to occur, the mother or the body as the case might be were hurried to the mainland to avoid ceremonial impurity. This air of sacredness still exists. Although births on the island are now allowed, the dead are still removed as quickly as possible.

With a recorded history that dates back to 592 A.D., Miyajima has long been a place of pilgrimage for Shinto followers. These early worshippers came to pay homage at the famous Itsukushima Shrine.

The temple connected with this shrine is dedicated to three goddesses, Ichikishima-hime, Tagokoro-hime, and Takitsu-hime, daughters of Susano-o.

Fascinating legends are associated with the first building of this shrine in 592 A. D. The goddesses, desiring a place to live on the island, appeared to a man and ordered him to make their wishes known to the Empress. As proof of the truth of the vision they told him that a pair of crows would appear at the capital bearing a twig of the sacred Clevera tree of Shintoism and present it to the Empress. This all came to be.

The crows had a shrine built in their honor by an old man from Hiranosato and there the spirit of the crow was worshipped. The crows



DRAGON BOAT..... Miyajima is never more beautiful than when viewed from the decks of an approaching boat. This magnificent ship is a great favorite with children and from it the great TORII of Itsukushima shrine can be seen rising majestically out of the sea.

then declared, "As you have worshipped me here in this manner, we will return and our descendants will serve the goddesses of Itsukushima as sacred crows forever."

These crows nestle on the summit of Mt. Misen. They differ from the common ones living thereabout in their manner, and in their feathers being white under their wings.

Yearly on May 15th, rites are held at a small shrine on the side of the island opposite the shrine. Just at this time four Sacred Crows, two old and two young, come to the place near the shore of Yabusaki where the priests are waiting in boats. Nine small dumplings are put in an earthen vessel and set on a board to float in the water. As the story goes, the Sacred Crows carry those dumplings to the shrine for the purpose of offering them to the Gods and then the young return to Mt. Misen while the old crows go to their hereditary home at Kumano.

The shrine itself is partly built over the sea on piles, and at high tide appears to float upon the water. Galleries 888 feet long and 14 feet wide stretch out like spreading wings into the sea on both sides of the shrine. The main shrine consists of three parts: the inmost where the goddesses dwell; the inner where only priests enter, and the outer, an open railed space where worshippers are admitted. In front of the temple is a large open air platform where festival dances are performed.

While this island and its shrine still remain a place of religious significance, its most popular present

day attraction for natives and foreigners alike is its huge red TORII. Standing at high tide in the sea before the shrine this great TORII or "Sacred Shinto Gateway" is a favorite motive of Japanese Art.

The TORII is built of camphor wood—the main pillars each of one great trunk. It is peculiar in having two pillars at each side of the main ones to strengthen them. This TORII, built in 1875 is nearly 54 feet high with a traverse beam of 73 feet. Rarely does a visitor to the island come away without a snapshot of this most famous TORII.

While the Itsukushima Shrine is Shinto, the island has several landmarks which are Buddhist. The Buddhist Temple—Dai-Gwanji—stands on the western side of the Shinto Shrine. It contains relics, some of which are National Treasures.

Another of these is THE HALL OF A THOUSAND MATS. It was used for Buddhist worship after the Reformation when Buddhist priests were expelled from the Shinto Shrine. Its name is simply a picturesque way of describing a large room. Its dimensions are 65 by 120 feet and would contain about 450 mats of ordinary size. Legend has it that the structure was built from the wood of a single camphor tree.

Before the China-Japanese war soldiers were quartered there on their way to the front. Some of them as a token of their determination to conquer China, hung rice paddles on the pillars in the Hall.

Now other soldiers and even civilian visitors follow this fashion for luck and the Hall is filled with ladles from ceiling to floor. Overhead on the cross beams are many ancient paintings called EMA (Paintings of Pilgrims).

Other Buddhist remain is a five storied Pagoda which stands just east of the great Hall. This building, which has a unique point in its Chinese style of construction rises 100 feet into the sky. It was built in 1408 and contains an image of the Buddha, as well as such relics as coins, weapons, armor and furniture. It is never opened to the public and is opened only once a year by a Buddhist priest.

Children visiting Miyajima also have something to look forward to. Among the animals on the island are the Sacred Deer. Years ago they were considered sacred and no one was allowed to harm them. During World War II however, food supply on the island became a problem. Most of the deer were hunted down and killed. After the war deer were again transplanted on the island and are kept in a small park just behind the Shrine. The deer are very tame and will eat from a persons hand.

Another children's favorite is the Sacred Horse which is kept in a stable opposite the main entrance of the Shinto Shrine. The first was presented by General Taira-no-Kiyomori, and its successors by various donors as needed. Shinto

divinities prefer white steeds: therefore the horse always becomes white in time, no matter what its original color may have been. Two fine bronze statues of the sacred horse cast in Osaka stand behind the Shrine.

Outside the western entrance of the shrine flock the sacred pigeons. These perch on the hands and arms of anyone who will feed them with a handful of grain supplied by an old woman for that purpose. They gather in great flocks at the sound of her bell.

Miyajima has long been noted for its many colorful festivals. Six of the most important ones will be detailed here.

A principal festival is the New Years (Shinnen-Sai) held in January from the first to the third. Special offerings are presented and prayers recited. Afterwards "Bagaku" a religious mask dance is performed for three or four hours.

Peach Blossom (Toka-Sai), a festival held from April 16-18 takes place after sunset. Peach blossoms are offered to the goddesses, and afterwards scenes of "Bugaku" are performed for several hours.

On the evening of July 10, the festival (Kangen-Sai) of Itsukushima Shrine is held. The festival is noted for its elegant and traditional rite. The three goddesses are taken to the Jigozen Shrine, a sub-shrine on the opposite shore on the mainland, aboard a colorfully decorated boat which actually consists of three newly



THE PAGODA.... East of the Hall of a Thousands Mats stands this five storied pagoda, 100 feet in height. It was built in 1408 by Hida-no-Takumi, and contains an image of the Buddha. Its towering spire can be seen thrusting majestically through the pine trees which surround it.



THE ARCHED BRIDGE..... Near the western entrance of the shrine is an arched bridge, used only by the Imperial messenger with Imperial offerings or orders for special prayers. The arch is said to symbolize the rainbow, or "Bridge of Heaven" of Japanese mythology.

built boats tied together with a platform on them.

When the tide is low, the boat departs the Grand Torii in front of the Main Shrine and proceeds to Jigozen across the strait. Rowers are exclusively chosen lads from Aga in Kure and Eba in Hiroshima, all in uniformed Kimono.

As the boat gets near the shore, all the lanterns and torches on the boat are lighted. All this while, sacred Shinto music is played by the original Japanese orchestra.

After the rites are conducted aboard the boat in front of Jigozen Shrine the boat is rowed back to the Main Shrine.

By this time, the shores of Miyajima and Jigozen are crowded with thousands of spectators from all over the country and the strait is filled with hundreds of lighted, decorated boats from various ports in the Inland Sea.

The Ball Catching Festival which is held on September 8, is of Shinto origin and takes the form rather of a holiday sport. On a swinging platform, set up in the sea, is placed a sacred wooden ball about 2½ feet in circumference. At full tide a priest swings the platform by means of a rope and the ball drops into the sea. Immediately the crowd of men and boys on the beach plunge in after it. The successful one takes the ball to the priests and is rewarded with the ball and gifts.

Those who have read the April 25 issue of the TORII TELLER will remember the vivid account given of the ritual of the Shingon Fire Walkers. This is held on April 15 and November 15 of each year near the summit of Mt. Misen. During the rites, the Buddhist priests and believers of the faith cross a path of burning coals in their bare feet.

On the 31st of December, the Fire Extinguishing festival is held. It is of

Shinto origin and observed almost as a holiday at the end of the year. The festival commences at 6 p.m. when hundreds of men and boys who are holding the various torches in their hands assemble at the eastern entrance of the shrine and march back and forth from the shrine to the town for one hour. After the festival, the torch of each bearer is placed in front of his house to protect it from fire and there it remains until the 3rd of January. Then it is taken into the house and kept until the return of the festival day next year.

Our purpose in this series has been to interest people in the wonders to be seen in Japan. If you are interested in seeing Miyajima in the near future, we would like to acquaint you with this excellent opportunity being offered by Special Services of MCAF.

Two Holiday tours to Miyajima and Hiroshima are being offered this coming weekend on Sunday May 29 and Monday May 30. Busses will leave the Sakura Theater each day at 8:00 a.m. and will return at 6:30 p.m. Price of the tour which includes transportation, guide service and admission fees is \$1.50 or 540 yen.

The itinerary of the tour includes Kintai Bridge, Miyajima-with all the places of interest mentioned in this article-and Hiroshima. Since there is no yen available on the tour it is advisable to bring some for buying lunch and to spend during the shopping time allotted at each stop.

Because of the wide range of this tour it is urged that you take your camera. If you have any Japanese friends who are interested, you are invited to take them along.

Tickets are available at the MCAF Hobby Shop until noon, Saturday, May 29. For further information call 3174.

HAVE FUN.....

HALL OF A THOUSAND MATS..... (Sen-Jo-Jiki) stands on Tortoise Hill—Kamei-Yama—to the East of the temple. Its name is simply a picturesque way of describing a large room. Its dimensions are 65 by 120 feet, and it would contain about 450 mats of the ordinary size.