

Torii Teller

Marine Corps Air Station, Iwakuni Japan

Vol. 22 No. 18

May 20, 1977

TRANQUIL - Imose Falls, on the outskirts of Miyajimaguchi, is a most peaceful and relaxing scene less than an hour's drive from the Air Station. In this photo, the photographer's wife, Futana Rowe, stands on a foot bridge that connects the falls with a group of temples and shrines. Behind her is another waterfall and under the bridge flows a mountain stream that is the source of Imose Falls. (Photo by SSgt. C.W. Rowe)

Imose Falls: a peaceful place

(See pages 6 and 7)

Quiet getaway

Story and photos by SSgt. C.W. Rowe

A quiet, peaceful place, isolated from the hustle and bustle of modern life and yet close enough to be reached after an easy journey, is rare.

Less than an hour's auto trip from Iwakuni is just such a spot. Imose Falls is an almost idyllic spot on the outskirts of Miyajimaguchi.

The falls proper are 75 feet high and 30 wide. At the bottom is a 200-square-foot, shallow, wading pool of cold, pure, clear mountain water. On one side of the pool is an almost vertical bank studded with rocks, trees, bushes and flowers. Climbing the bank is possible, but quite difficult.

On the other side of the pool is a flat, open area perfect for picnicking. A hundred feet long, its average width is only 20 feet. The land side of the spot gradually shelves up into a cliff as steep as the one on the other side of the pool. On the lower slope of this cliff is an easily walked path that follows the river and terminates beside a small lake a quarter of a mile above the falls.

The wading pool ends abruptly with a drop-off over a small check dam. The stream flows under a bright, orange painted, walking bridge. This bridge connects the falls area with a group of temples and shrines.

The area of the temples and shrines is entered from the road which has a tiny parking area. Framing the entrance to the religious structures is a stone torii. The area is shaded and very restful and is a popular weekend recreation spot for Japanese.

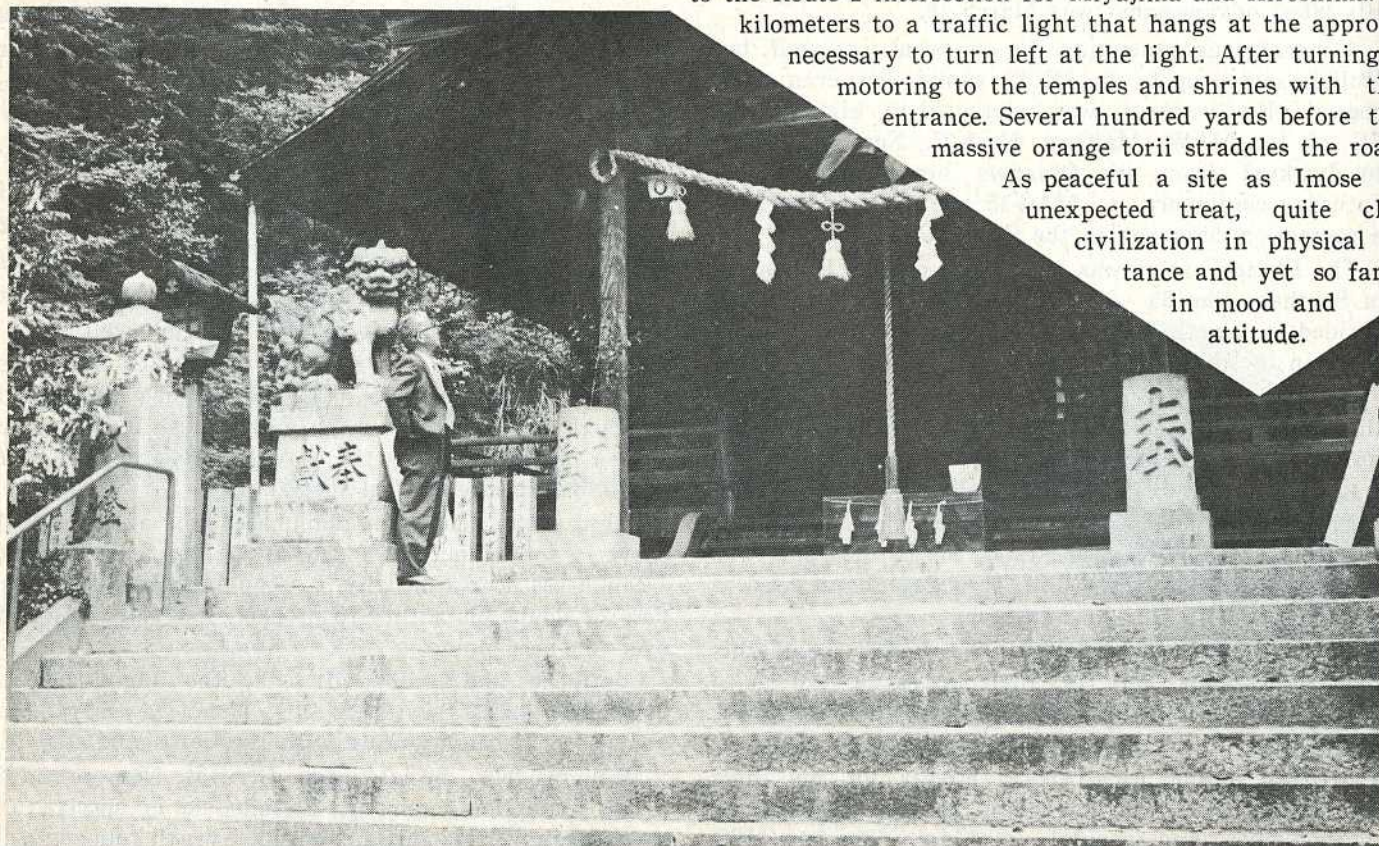
Temples and shrines are still in use and are well cared for. One is a frequent site of Japanese style baptisms. Another is dedicated to heroes of the 1904-05 Russo-Japan War.

Above the falls is the lake. This is a commercially developed area with trout pools, a carp pond and a restaurant that frames the carp pond and gives diners a view of the cavorting fish. In addition, boats can be rented for rowing on the lake and hiking paths wind back into the hills. The road that leads to the temple area continues on and climbs up to pass the lake. The lake is on the left and a parking area is to the right. To reach the lake, it is necessary to descend a footpath.

From the lake above the falls to the stone torii guarding the temples, the entire scene is one of beauty and serenity. It is easily reached from the Air Station. Motorists go through Kawashimo and RTO to the Route 2 intersection for Miyajima and Hiroshima. From the intersection, it is 15.9 kilometers to a traffic light that hangs at the approach to a small bridge. It is necessary to turn left at the light. After turning, it is only a few minute's motoring to the temples and shrines with the stone torii at the entrance. Several hundred yards before the temple area, a massive orange torii straddles the road.

As peaceful a site as Imose Falls, is an unexpected treat, quite close to civilization in physical distance and yet so far in mood and attitude.

RELIGIOUS SITE - A Japanese visitor to Imose Falls pauses at the top of the steps that lead to one of the temples in the area.



WORTH A VISIT - Lisa and Harold Wheeler gaze at the falls from the bank of the shallow, wading pool.



TO FALLEN HEROES - These stone slabs are dedicated to heroes of the 1904-05 Russo-Japan war. A visitor finds them worthy of a few minutes of reflection.



PICKERS PARADISE - Picnickers Futana Rowe (right) and Lisa Wheeler lay out the food for a picnic at the falls. Helping them is the youngest member of the Wheeler family, Adena.



CLEAR, PURE WATER - At the edge of the shallow, wading pool, a Japanese father shows his son the feel and taste of mountain fed stream water.