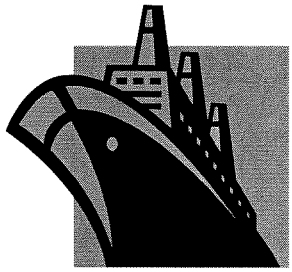
# *MIKASA PARK*



Mikasa, the flagship of the Japanese Imperial Navy, is permanently "docked" in Yokosuka and visitors come from all areas to visit this memorial and museum. Exhibits showing major events in Mikasa's history and the Russo-Japanese War are numerous and even Vice Admiral Togo's cabin has been preserved. There are basic explanatory signs in English throughout, identifying significant points of interest.

Enhancing the Mikasa Park is the "Light, Sound, Water Park" (Hikari O Mizu no Koen). Dedicated April 29,1987 to commemorate Yokosuka City's 80th birthday, it is a favorite for many American visitors. An enchanting series of manmade streams and waterfalls runs throughout the park, and an amphitheater with natural grass seating faces Tokyo Bay. At the heart of the park is an elaborate , coordinated arrangement of fountains, waterfalls, light and music. The fountain moves to the rhythm of the music, resembling a dancer. During the evening hours the fountain is lit, enchancing its beauty. In the center of the park is a small waterfall surrounded by shrubbery. The open-air theater is the site of many band concerts. A stainless steel arch monument by the park s visible from Green Beach on the Yokosuka Naval Base and provides a prism of color as the sunlight hits it.

***HISTORY OF THE JAPANESE BATTLE SHIP, MIKASA***

The Mikasa's story is a heroic one. During the afternoon of May 27, 1905, Vice Admiral Heihachiro Togo, Commander-in-Chief of the Japanese Grand Fleet, opened fire against the Russian Fleet in the battle of the Tsushima Straits, which was fought during the Russo-Japanese War of 1904-1905.

The Mikasa had always been superb, but she added further glory for herself and to the Imperial Navy by gaining total victory over the Russian Baltic Fleet. Japan became a world power because of the victory in the Tsushima Straits and the defeat of the Russian Navy.

While the Mikasa was visiting Sasebo on September 11, 1905, an explosion caused by an exploding magazine ripped holes in her hull and she sank in 11 meters of water. She was refloated, but again sustained damages caused by the Great Kanto Earthquake of September 1, 1923, when the waters of the Yokosuka Harbor smashed her into the side of a pier.

After valiantly serving her country, the Mikasa was preserved as a historical relic in 1926, but was ordered stripped down and scrapped by occupation forces in 1945. The ship was all but forgotten, until a great movement seeking the restoration of the Mikasa began and sympathetic ears listened. Mikasa was restored to her original condition from funds appropriated by the Japanese Government and donated by the people, as well as through financial support from the U.S. Navy. The commemorating ceremony making the Mikasa a Japanese National Monument was held on may 27,1961.

**☞HOW TO GET THERE:**

Both parks are easy fifteen-minute walk from the Main Gate. Turn left outside the gate on RT 16, go to the second stoplight and make another left. (Don't go pass the 7-11 store.) Follow the brick road towards the waterfront, passing Womble Gate to the left. Admission on the ship Mikasa for adults is ¥500 and ¥200 for children 14 years or younger and ¥300 for 15 years and older. It is open daily from 0900-1700. Light, Sound, Water Park is free and is open from 0800-2100 (Apr-Oct), 0900-2000 (Nov-Mar). The water show is presented Monday through Friday at 1100, 1330, 1700, 1830, and 2000. On weekends and Japanese holidays it is presented at 1100, 1300, 1500, 1700, 1800, 1900, and 2000.