

## May 2013 Adventure to Aomori



With another man also hitchhiking! His partner with him took the photo



Mr. Yasutake Natsukasa from Fukuyama City HIroshima Prefecture. Atsumi Onsen to Tsuruoka. He's retired and travels around Japan living in his car.

From May 10 to 12 I traveled 870 kilometers from Niigata Murakami City to Aomori City and back in 22 vehicles.

The first driver, a lady, took me from Majima station to Nezegaseki near the Yamagata border line. She was on her way to help oversee a group of elementary children (which including her son) climb Mt. Nihonkoku, a small mountain of 300 meters high. From there a van took me to Atsumi Onsen, just 5 kilometers further.

At Atsumi Onsen a man on foot approached me asking if I can speak English. His name is Yasutaka Nakatsukasa, a retired businessman from Fukuyama City in Hiroshima Prefecture. He was living in his car touring the Tohoku area for a month. Yasutaka's hobby is water painting. He showed me drawings of the local scenery. He took me to Tsuruoka City which is where he had just come from that day.



View from Sakata of Mt. Chokai

From Tsuuoka a lady who attends Hawaiian dance classes took me to me to the next city of Sakata. She said she has been a widow from 17 years ago. Her husband was a policeman investigating an accident and was hit by a driver who wasn't watching where he was going! Her husband died immediately. "Was the driver arrested and put in prison? I asked. "No," the lady replied, "But he

was an irresponsible man with bad eyesight who never should have had a driver's license in the first place. "



Single couple who took me from  
Sakata to Omagari to Konoura

The lady dropped me off in the middle of Sataka city. I would rather have been further down the road closer to the edge of the city from where there would be less city traffic, and so I walked. After about 10 minutes I got to a bridge. It's not likely that anyone would stop for me in the middle of a bridge but a car suddenly stopped in the lane it was in. Usually a driver will pull over to the side and so I thought it rather odd. But because there was no traffic behind the car the driver was blocking anybody. It was a young single couple, Shunta and Mizuki, both 20 years old, high school dropouts on their way to Magari in Akita Prefecture, their home. They were debating with each other whether to pick me up or not. After questioning me and being satisfied with my answers, they took me to Konoura Interchange of the Akita Expressway. There are no tolls for the first 40 kilometers of that expressway which made it a good place to hitchhike to catch traffic going some distance. Expressway tolls in Japan are probably the highest in the world. It costs 7000 yen to travel 300 kilometers.

A car transport lorry took me to Honjo City from Konoura. From Honjo another 20 year old man, Mr. Suzuki, took me as far as Akita Station, some 40 kilometers further. He's a seaman who works on a fishing vessel 10 months out of the year. Mr. Suzuki said he has to work 18 hour days for weeks on end. The only days off are when they aren't fishing. The boat goes as far as Peru in S.A. He was on his way to see his girlfriend. The pay, he said, is good, earning enough to easily save to buy a house.

I got to Akita Station just in time to catch a train going to Noshiro City, but took it only a distance of 240 yen to Oiwake Station from where I again hitchhiked. A mother and her daughter who were going to their home in Noshiro went a few kilometers out of their way for me to take me to Futsui, the end of the expressway.

It was hot and I was thirsty. Though it was fine weather in Futatui, unlike previous times standing in Futatsu, I waited a relatively long time for a ride. I decided to walk further up the road. After walking nearly a kilometer, I came close to a tunnel and knew I wouldn't be able to walk through it safely. Just then a car pulled over. It was truck driver on his way home in a regular car. He not only took me a good distance up the road to Takanosu, but he even found the next ride for me a man going all the way to Aomori city, my destination!

**Photos from Aomori back to Niigata**



Newly wed couple to Hirosaki from  
Aomori Chuo

Toru who took me from Odate City to Takanosuke in Akita Prefecture

Road sign in Takanosu.

Miss Yoshimi who took me to Yurihonjo City from Noshiro City in Akita  
Prefecture. She was very interested in the Biblical account of Creation and  
said she wants to believe and accept God's Son Jesus into her life.

A family who took me to Nezugasaki in Niigata Prefecture from Atsumi Onsen in  
Yamagata Prefecture

□□□□□□□□□□□□ A single couple who took me to a train station near home where  
I had my bicycle parked.