

# Rainy Autumn day trip to Aomori City and Back



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

October 25, 2013: My destination was Aomori City, 470 kilometers from home. I hitchhiked from Murakami City as far as Sakata City in Yamagata Prefecture, a distance about 90 kilometers. After that I had to abort due to rain.

It was worth the effort! Mrs. Fujiwara picked me up for the 6th time and she seemed happier than ever to do so. After her a young doctor who works as an anesthesiologist took me nearly all the way to Sakata. He left me near a highway viaduct. I stood under it while hitchhiking to be protected from the rain. Cars trucks were whizzing past at high speed! Often I had to draw back from the road to keep from getting splashed with water. It was an undesirable situation to say the least, but I had plenty of time to spare. After 20 minutes Mr. and Mrs Mikuni picked me up and took me to Sakata Station from where I caught a train.

## **The Return Trip:**



Yuzo Yamada and his friend. They took me nearly half the distance home by taking from from Hirosaki to the Chojahara service area which is not far from Sendai.

A bus of people, all 65 years old, who went to the same elementary school in Ofunato city, took me to Kunimi service area in Fukushima Prefecture. It's pretty rare for the bus driver to offer me a free ride! He did because the passengers liked me. Ofunato city is one of the towns that was devastated by the tsunami of March 11, 2011. One lady told me she was trapped on the second floor of a building. The tsunami washed out the stairway! About an hour later the fire department rescued her.□



The bus and some of the people who took me to Fukushima Prefecture.

After a few minutes wait at Kunimi, a couple offered me a ride as far as the Fukushima Matsukawa parking area which is just past Fukushima City. But after talking with me a few minutes, they decided to take me as far as the Adatara Service Area which is much larger and just before the Banetsu expressway junction. It is an idea place to catch cars going on the Banetsu expressway toward Aizuwakamatsu and Niigata.



Mr. Negishi who went over 60 miles out of his way for me to take me home! He also bought me lunch.

A man named Mr. Negishi stopped for me. Though he was on his way to Tokyo, he said he would take me to Aizu on the Banetsu expressway. After getting on the Banetsu, he said he would take me all the way home! I replied, "But going to Tokyo via Niigata is way out of your way!" He replied, "I don't have to be home till evening and so I don't mind. Later I calculated the extra distance to be exactly **245 kilometers or 153 miles** out of his way! It turned out that Mr. Negishi is a kindred spirit because he himself used to hitchhike when he was young. "I was very poor then," he said.