

Gion Matsuri to Showcase Great Ship Float on New Wheels

夏の京都の風物詩と言えば祇園祭。祇園祭には前祭りと後祭りがあるそうです。後祭りでは豪華な装飾が施された山鉾が町の中を進む「山鉾巡業」が京都の町を彩ります。今年は山鉾の車輪が新調されました。伝統をつなぐために長い時間と資金がかかったようです。



1. Article

Read the following article aloud.

Ato-matsuri, which will take place on July 24, is the second part of the float display at the Gion Matsuri. One of the ato-matsuri's main attractions is the Ofune Boko (Empress Jingu's Great Ship) float from Shimogyo-ku in Kyoto.

Its newly acquired four wheels were recently **unveiled** to the press. Each boasting a **diameter** of 2.13 meters (83.8 inches) and weighing 685 kilograms (1,510 pounds), these wheels are apparently the largest ever used on any float in history. In 2024, it will parade in its original white wood color without any paint.

The outer parts of the wheel's circumference are made from oak, while the central sections that support the axles are crafted from zelkova. Hachino Carpentry in Takayama City, Gifu Prefecture, undertook the job. It is **renowned** for its expertise in shrine and temple construction, as well as floats.

After a 150-year absence, the Ofune Boko returned to the procession in 2014. It received the wheels previously used by the Kikusui Boko (Chrysanthemum water) float since 1953, which were repaired due to noticeable wear and tear.

Since 2015, the Ofune Float Preservation Society has been procuring wood to replace its wheels. They spent seven years drying wood sourced from Miyazaki Prefecture and Ayabe City and began production last summer.

The organization gathered **donations** from both corporate and individual donors. Seito Transportation and Warehousing (located in Kumiya Town) generously funded the previous two wheels.

Chairman Nobusuke Kimura (54) of the preservation society expressed deep satisfaction. "We are pleased with the impressive craftsmanship," he beamed. "It exceeded our expectations. Our aim is to **perpetuate** these rituals and festivals for future generations. I believe we have successfully handed down something of value to the next generation."

Source : Gion Matsuri to Showcase Great Ship Float on New Wheels
JAPAN Forward

2. Key phrases and vocabulary

First repeat after your tutor and then read aloud by yourself.

1. **unveil** 公表する、（秘密などを）明かす、明らかにする、（覆いを）取る、外す

The artist will **unveil** their latest masterpiece at the gallery opening next week.

2. **diameter** 直径

Engineers measured the **diameter** of the bridge's support cables.

3. **renowned** 有名な、高名な

Kyoto is **renowned** for its historic temples and beautiful gardens.

4. **donation** 寄付、寄付金

The local food bank relies on **donations** from the community to feed those in need.

5. **perpetuate** 伝える、永続させる

The museum's mission is to **perpetuate** the memory of historical events.

3. Questions

Read the questions aloud and answer them.

1. What is the date of the Ato-matsuri?
2. What is unique about the wheels of the Ofune Boko float?
3. How did the Ofune Float Preservation Society fund the replacement of the wheels?
4. How do you feel about the preservation of traditional festivals and rituals for future generations?
5. Can you relate to the concept of 'handing down something of value to the next generation'? If so, in what way?

4. 日本語関連記事： 直径2メートル超…「史上最大サイズ」の車輪を新調、祇園祭・大船鉾

祇園祭後祭の山鉾（やまほこ）巡行（24日）でしんがりを務める大船鉾（京都市下京区）が車輪4本を新調し、報道陣に公開した。新しい車輪は直径2・13メートル、重さは685キロあり、すべての山鉾の中で史上最大という。今年は色は塗らずに白木のままで巡行する。

車輪の外周の部材などはカシ材を、車軸を受ける中心部はケヤキ材を用い、社寺建築や屋台などを手掛ける八野大工（岐阜県高山市）が手がけた。

大船鉾は平成26年に約150年ぶりに巡行復帰を果たした。その際、昭和28年から菊水鉾が使用していた車輪を譲り受け、修理した上で使用してきたが傷みも目立っていた。

大船鉾保存会は将来の車輪の新調に備え、平成27年から木材の調達に着手。宮崎県や綾部市などで入手した木材を7年かけて乾燥させ、昨年夏から製作を進めていた。

法人や個人に寄付を募り、前の2輪は誠都運輸倉庫（久御山町）が全面寄付したという。同保存会の木村宣介理事長（54）は「想像以上に大きく、精緻な技術で立派なタマ（車輪）ができて喜んでい。神事・祭事を未来永劫（えいごう）続けることが目標なので、次の世代に引き継げたと思う」と感慨深そうに話した。