

Elementary School (The upper grades)

Highest Award

“Let's go! A Tour of the Legendary Okinawa”

5th Grade, Misato Elementary School by Misa Sakata

Do you know that there are a lot of legends in Okinawa, the place I live? The legends have been passed down by people from generation to generation in various regions of Okinawa including remote islands. Today I am going to guide you to the location of that legendary.

First of all, there is a legend called “Straw Millionaire” handed down in Sashikini town in Nanjo City. This story talks about a young man who had a piece of straw at first. Then he exchanged it to various things again and again. Finally he became the king named “Shouhashi.” Long time ago, Okinawa was called “the Ryukyus” and there were battles in the Ryukyus by three factions. “Shouhashi” was the king who united Okinawa. In Nanjo City “The Shouhashi half-marathon” is famous for running while watching the superb view that the king saw in the past.

Next is the legend of “plumage clothing” in Mashiki Morinokawa Park located in Ginowan City. There was a fountain in the park and a fairy often came for washing her body here. One day, a young man hid her plumage clothing, so she could not go back to heaven. After that she became his wife. They were blessed with a baby who became a king named “Satto” later. He signed a formal diplomatic relation with China. There is a “Plumage Robe Festival” on the second Saturday and Sunday of August in honor of the plumage robe legend. There are a lot of events that energize your mind and body, such as tournament of Kachashi (Okinawan dance) and a parade of the king's history picture scrolls.

Third one is the legend of “Kajimaya” (windmill) that remains in the Uruma City. A god from heaven borrowed some soil from the god of soil and made six dolls. The god blew air into a doll and made them alive. After that the dolls became six people and later became three couples. The human world has started thus, and there are more and more people. However, the soil can only be borrowed for a hundred years. The god came in the ninety-ninth year and asked for the soil back. He said that you should return me the soil, because today is exactly a hundred years put in leap

years in the three times. As there are more and more people, the god of soil and the god of heaven to consulted and decided to let the humans who have been living for ninety nine years have a Kajimaya (windmill), in order to imitate a newborn baby. Currently in Okinawa, the people celebrate "Kajimaya" on 7th September of the lunar calendar. At that time they have a windmill in their hands and wear a red cloths, celebrating grandly.

This time I could only introduce three legends, but there are indeed still a lot of legends. Many of them are not only from the main island but also islands such as Ishigaki Island and Miyako Island. You will probably be attracted to those humorous and fantasy stories.

I want to tell the legends of Okinawa to people from not only Japan, but all over the world through this tour. I think you can enjoy the wonderful Okinawa if you experience wind, light, hope, joy and sorrow of Okinawa.

Shall we sneak a peek at the fantasy world together? Let's go for a tour of Okinawan legends!
"Mensoriyo!" (= Welcome to Okinawa)