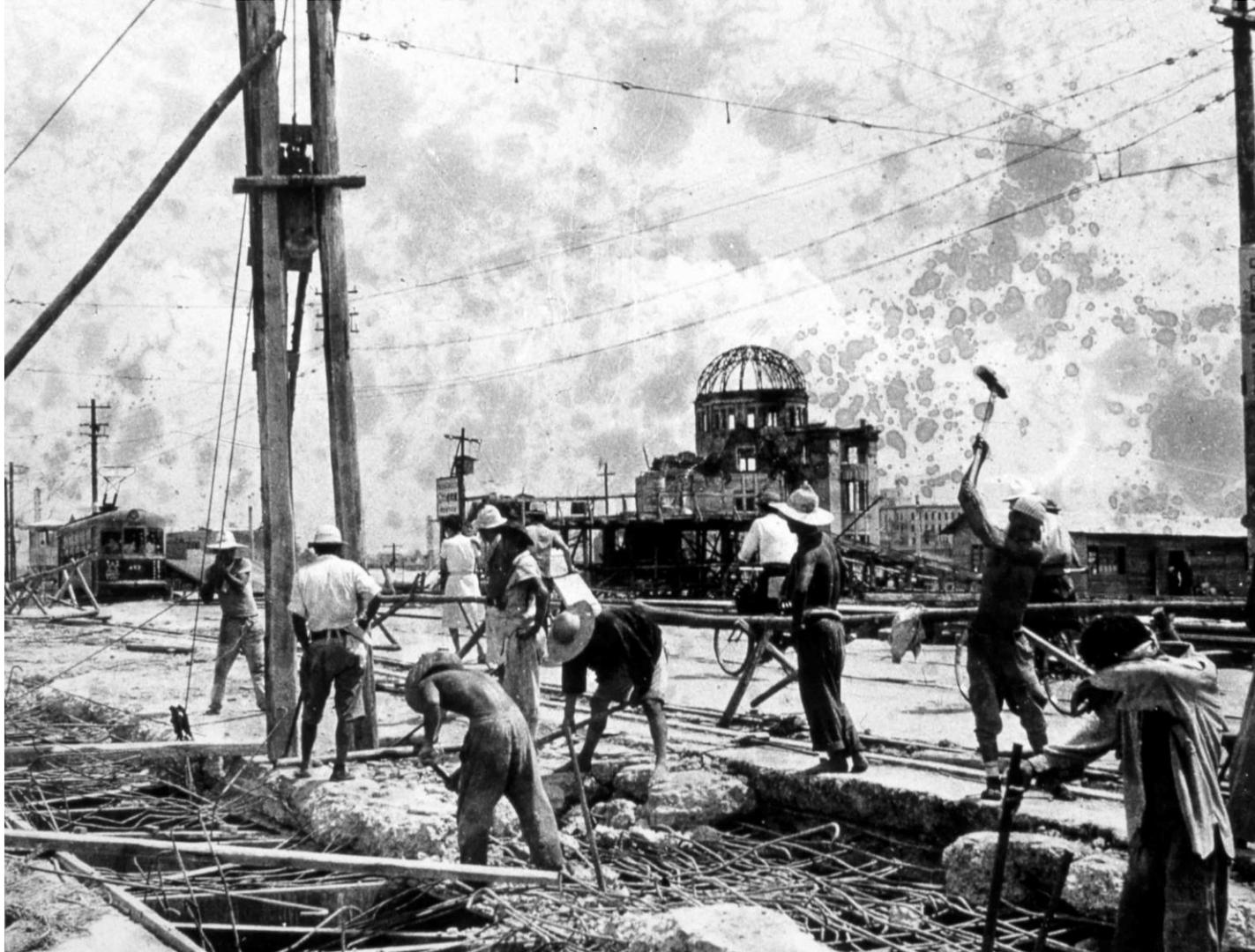


## Chapter 5 Postwar Hiroshima



5-01 Restoration work at Aioi Bridge (1949)

## Citizens' lives in the ruins



**5-02 Rise from the ashes**

The street in the foreground is Hondori Shopping Street, going to the downtown district of Nakajima-honmachi (now Peace Memorial Park). On the far left is Honkawa Elementary School. In front of the school is the radio tower of the Hiroshima Post Office. The tower was almost directly beneath the epicenter of the blast and barely remained standing. To its left is the Industrial Promotion Hall (A-Bomb Dome). (December 1945)

Shinzo Hamai, who became Hiroshima's first publicly elected mayor in 1947, was head of the city's rationing section at the time of the bombing. He stayed day and night at city hall, a reinforced concrete building that was completely burned out, overseeing the distribution of rice balls and dried bread brought in from rural areas. On August 15, 1945, the Emperor's announcement of the end of the war was aired on the radio. Hamai wrote that after that he went to various army units to obtain food, supplies, and consumables that had not been destroyed by fire.

A few weeks after the atomic bombing, on September 17, the Makurazaki Typhoon struck Hiroshima, leaving 2,012 dead or missing in Hiroshima Prefecture. Hamai wrote, "The city turned into a vast lake. The ruins and rubble were all hidden under the water. I felt as if everything had been utterly and completely buried." This reflection appears in *Hiroshima Shisei Hiwa* (Untold Stories of the Hiroshima City Government) written ten years after the war.

A city survey in November 1945 showed that the population had fallen to about one-third of what it was before the atomic bombing, yet 137,197 people subsisted in the outer areas of the city that had escaped the fire. Hiroshima's postwar years and reconstruction began amid unprecedented chaos.

## Emergency Restorations

In Hiroshima, destroyed in an instant, the emergency restoration of the city began with the

transportation systems including trains and streetcars as well as water supply systems and electricity.

- Debris was removed from streets to clear passages. Some bridges had collapsed due to the blast. The parapets on the remaining bridges were repaired, and reinforcement work was done. However, because of the additional damage caused by the Makurazaki Typhoon, it took many days to restore all the bridges.
- The streetcar network on the delta of Hiroshima suffered serious damage to its vehicles, tracks, utility poles, and overhead wires, and many employees were killed or injured. But three days after the atomic bombing, on August 9, single-track shuttle services began between Koi and Nishitenma-machi. On August 18, the line between Hiroden-honshamae and Ujina was restored. On September 12, streetcar operations were extended to Kamiya-cho. On October 11, the line between Hiroshima Station and Koi was fully restored with single-track operation.



**5-03 Restoration work on the streetcar tracks near the Kamiya-cho Intersection** (October 1945)

- Hiroshima Station was heavily damaged. On the day of the atomic bombing, trains operated to and from nearby railroad stations that suffered less damage. On August 7, the Ujina Line resumed operation. On August 8, the Sanyo Line was restored as Hiroshima and Yokogawa were connected with single-track operation. On August 9, the Geibi Line resumed operation to and from Hiroshima Station. The restored trains carried injured people out of the city, while other passengers traveled into the city to look for their families and friends and to engage in rescue work.
- Although the municipal waterworks building in Moto-machi suffered extensive damage, the damage to the water purification plant in Ushita was minimal. Emergency repairs were done there, and by the evening of August 6, backup pumps were used to begin supplying water to the city. Full-scale water supply was resumed on August 10, but due to damaged water pipes, leaks occurred at numerous places. Work to stop leaks continued, and in April 1946, the water supply finally reached the outer edges of the city.

- The head office of Chugoku Haiden (present-day Chugoku Electric Power Company) in Ko-machi was seriously damaged, but some electrical substations in outer areas suffered less damage. On August 7, restoration work began, and on August 8, electricity began to be transmitted to the Ujina area, which had not burned down. Meanwhile, power lines and utility poles were being repaired. On August 20, power had been restored to 30% of the houses that remained in the city, and by the end of November the electric supply had been restored in all affected areas.
- The head office of Hiroshima Gas in Ote-machi near the hypocenter was completely destroyed, and its main Hiroshima plant in Minami-machi was also devastated. Prioritizing restoration in the less-damaged southern part of the city, the supply of gas to 235 households in areas including Ujina-machi and Midori-machi resumed on April 11, 1946.



**5-04** The bent iron framework in the center is the remains of the Moto-machi Office of the Hiroshima City Waterworks Department. The streetcar line between Hatcho-bori and Sakan-cho (present-day Honkawa-cho) was restored on September 7, but the damaged streetcar remained at the side of the road. (Early October 1945)

### Rebuilding daily lives

Surviving citizens had to rebuild their daily lives on their own. They had lost their families and friends. They had no shelter or work. In December 1945, the *Chugoku Shimbun* conducted a survey, asking 1,000 citizens about their living conditions, and 86% answered “starvation is imminent.” The rations from the government were meager, so people depended on the black markets that sprang up in front of Hiroshima Station and in Tenma, Koi, Yokogawa, and Ujina to seek food and sell their possessions.



**5-05** A hut made of paving stones from streetcar tracks and galvanized iron sheet (1948, near Hiroshima Station)



**5-06** Six months after the atomic bombing, a black market filled the area in front of Hiroshima Station. (c. February 1946)

## Children and the atomic bomb

There were 41 elementary schools including branch schools in the City of Hiroshima. Of those, 19 burned down, five were completely destroyed, and six partially destroyed. Only 11 were still usable. Of the 30 secondary schools, 19 were completely destroyed or burned down.

Noboricho Elementary School resumed classes in October 1945, but as the school buildings had been burned down, it used the nearby reinforced concrete building of the Hiroshima Central Broadcasting Station, which had survived the bombing. When restoration work began at the broadcasting station, the school moved to the Central Telephone Bureau building in Fukuro-machi. When repair work began there too, the school moved back to its original site. But without a school building, students had to study in the open air by arranging desks and chairs in the schoolyard. A single-story makeshift school building was completed in July 1946, but since there were not enough classrooms, students attended in two shifts.

Many children who had been evacuated outside the city learned there that their parents had died in the atomic bombing and that they had been orphaned. According to the Ministry of Health and Welfare's nationwide survey of orphans in 1947, there were 5,975 orphans in Hiroshima Prefecture, the highest number in Japan. A Buddhist priest opened the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home in Itsukaichi (now part of Saeki Ward) in the suburbs of Hiroshima at the end of 1945. This orphanage was transferred to the management of the City of Hiroshima in 1953. On the offshore island of Ninoshima, the Ninoshima Gakuen for Hiroshima Prefecture War Orphans was also established in September 1946.



**5-07 An open-air classroom at Noboricho Elementary School on the burned-out school grounds.**

Children grew sweet potatoes there. (c. February 1946)



**5-08 Small children at the shelter for lost children set up at Hijiyama Elementary School two days after the bombing.**

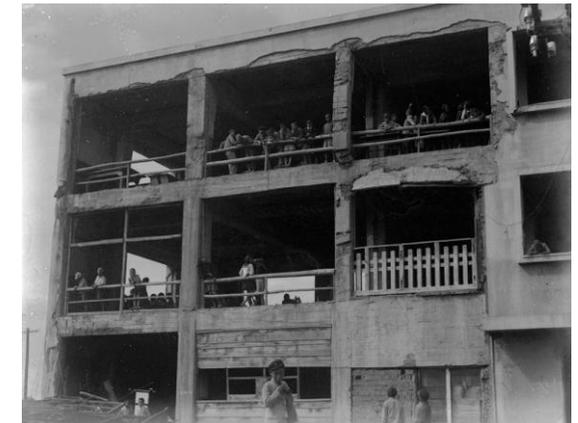
Behind the children are two teachers at the elementary school, who were like mothers to them. Sixteen children for whom no guardians appeared moved to the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home in February 1946. (Autumn 1945)



**5-10 Children at table, at the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home (1947)**



**5-9 At Doshinji Temple, which was established at the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home, the children chanted sutras morning and evening to pray for the repose of their parents and siblings who had died in the atomic bombing. (1947)**



**5-11 Fifth Middle School (now Noboricho Junior High School) opened in April 1947 on the third floor of the ferroconcrete Fukuromachi Elementary School building, which had survived the fire.**

The middle school had only two pieces of chalk, three buckets, and five brooms. (c. 1947)

## Support from Overseas

On September 8, a month after the city was destroyed by the atomic bomb, Marcel Junod, chief delegate of the International Committee of the Red Cross to Japan, visited Hiroshima with the U.S. Army's Manhattan Engineer District Investigating Group. He had negotiated with the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ/SCAP) and obtained approximately 15 tons of medical supplies, which he delivered to Hiroshima Prefecture.

Japan was suffering from dire shortages of food and clothes. The Licensed Agencies for Relief in Asia (LARA), a relief organization established by religious and charity groups in the United States, sent large quantities of relief supplies called LARA goods. The first batch arrived in Japan in November 1946. They were delivered to Hiroshima, too.

Hiroshima Prefecture had sent the biggest number of emigrants overseas. The first- and second-generation Japanese emigrants from Hiroshima played a major role in delivering relief supplies and funds to Hiroshima. The Hawaii Society for Relief of Hiroshima War Victims was established in April 1948 and raised \$113,000 (40.68 million yen at the time) by June. The first \$90,000, which arrived in September, was split equally between Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima. The city used the funds to build four dormitories for single mothers and children and a nursing home for the elderly. Members of the Hiroshima Kenjinkai (prefectural people's association) of Southern California (Nanka Hiroshima Kenjinkai), who had returned to California from wartime internment camps, sent relief supplies to the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home, Ninoshima Gakuen and other facilities in 1948. They also donated four million yen to the city in May 1950 to build a library, and with other donations and city funds, the Children's Library opened in Moto-machi in 1952.

Emigrants to South America also supported Hiroshima. In 1950, those living in Brazil formed the Relief Group for A-Bomb Orphans, sending relief goods to eight orphanages including six in the city. In 1951, the Hiroshima Kenjinkai in Argentina donated approximately 670,000 yen to the City of Hiroshima as reconstruction funds.

Support for the A-bombed city of Hiroshima extended by Japanese communities overseas was reported on by the local news media in their countries. Christians and other people led the support, which began in the United States and spread to many other countries.



5-12 A dormitory for single mothers and children, built with donations from Hawaii (c. 1948)

Norman Cousins, editor-in-chief of *The Saturday Review of Literature*, a weekly magazine published in New York, visited Hiroshima in August 1949. In his report titled "Hiroshima—Four Years Later," he proposed "moral adoption" to help raise children who had lost their families in the atomic bombing and solicited donations of \$2.25 (810 yen) per month. Beginning with children in the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home, the "moral adoption" program was supporting more than 400 children by the end of 1953.

Floyd Schmoie, who had studied forestry at the University of Washington and supported Japanese Americans in internment camps during the war, visited Hiroshima in 1949 with nine other people, including an African American woman and Japanese students. They built two duplexes on a municipal housing plot in Minami-machi and named them "Heiwa Jutaku" (Peace Houses). The "Houses for Hiroshima" project led by Schmoie continued until 1953 and built 21 units in total, including those in Eba and Ushita.

Europe extended support to Hiroshima, too, although it was still recovering from war damage. Father Hugo Lassalle, who had been sent by the German Province of the Jesuits to Japan and exposed to the atomic bombing at the Noboricho Catholic Church rectory, traveled around Europe and North and South America from 1946 to 1947 to ask for support for Hiroshima. In Japan and abroad, he asked people to pray for the victims of the atomic bomb and to help build a church that would become a base for world peace. The Memorial Cathedral for World Peace designed by Togo Murano was completed in 1954. Peace Bells, donated by a steel company in West Germany, were installed in the 45-meter-tall tower.

The Memorial Cathedral for World Peace and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum were designated Important Cultural Properties of Japan in 2006, the first postwar architectural buildings designated as such. The Schmoie House, which still stands in Eba, became affiliated with the Peace Memorial Museum in 2012. It features exhibits on the support extended to Hiroshima from overseas.



5-14 Schmoie's "Houses for Hiroshima" project. Municipal housing being built in Eba. (1950)



5-13 Children at the Hiroshima War Orphans Foster Home and Norman Cousins (August 1949)



5-15 Completed Memorial Cathedral for World Peace (c. 1954)

## Hardship of the survivors, and support initiatives

Those directly exposed to the atomic bomb suffered not only from burns, fractures, and other external injuries but also from prolonged poor health caused by exposure to radiation. Many of those who entered the city for rescue activities or to search for their family members fell ill due to the effects of residual radiation. Furthermore, the survivors continued to suffer from anxiety about their health, people's stares at their keloids, discrimination, and other difficulties.

In 1952, when young women with keloid scars received treatment at university hospitals in Tokyo and Osaka, it became a major subject of discussion. Many physicians in Hiroshima said that treatment for A-bomb survivors must be available in Hiroshima, provided by local doctors. Thus, in January 1953, the Hiroshima Prefectural Medical Association, Hiroshima City Medical Association, Hiroshima Prefecture, the City of Hiroshima, Hiroshima Medical College (now Hiroshima University School of Medicine) and others jointly established the Hiroshima City Atomic Bomb Survivors' Treatment Council (ABSTC, today's Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Casualty Council), which offered free medical examinations for survivors, conducted home visits to survey 4,000 survivors, and established organized systems for treating them, providing health guidance, and conducting research on the hazardous health effects of the atomic bombing.

In 1954, the 23 crew members of a Japanese tuna fishing boat, *Daigo Fukuryu Maru*, were exposed to the fallout of a hydrogen bomb test conducted by the United States on Bikini Atoll in the mid-Pacific. This sparked a nationwide movement to ban atomic and hydrogen bomb tests. Against this backdrop, the first World Conference against Atomic and Hydrogen Bombs was held in Hiroshima the following year. While reconstruction of the city was progressing, atomic bomb survivors, who had been marginalized, also raised their voices. In August 1956, they formed the Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (Nihon Hidankyo), which has continued its activities to this day. Municipal and prefectural governments, prefectural assemblies and city councils, as well as Diet



**5-16 First-aid station set up at Fukuromachi Elementary School (October 1945)**



**5-17 First free medical examination provided by ABSTC at Hiroshima Citizens Hospital (January 18, 1953)**



**5-18 Health examination for survivors (October 21, 1958)**

members from Hiroshima and Nagasaki also supported survivors' calls for relief measures.

These developments led to the enactment of the Atomic Bomb Survivors Medical Care Law in 1957. With this law, the Atomic Bomb Survivor's Health Certificate ("handbook") began to be issued to survivors. Holders of the handbook were eligible to receive medical treatment for atomic-bomb-related illnesses paid for by national funds.

In September 1956, the Japanese Red Cross Society–Hiroshima Atomic-bomb Survivors Hospital (today's Hiroshima Red Cross Hospital & Atomic-bomb Survivors Hospital) was established in Hiroshima, using approximately 70 million yen from the proceeds of the sales of New Year's postcards with a lottery. The ABSTC, renamed the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb Casualty Council (HABCC), had petitioned the national government to build a center to treat atomic-bomb-related illnesses. With the enactment of the Atomic Bomb Survivors Medical Care Law, it became clear that survivors officially certified as suffering from A-bomb-related diseases lived in 41 prefectures. This meant that a nationwide research forum was necessary to advance medical treatment for them. In 1959, the Research Society for the Late Effects of the Atomic Bomb held its first conference in Hiroshima, and 34 presentations were given by participants from across the nation. The society has continued to this day to conduct comprehensive studies on the medical effects of the atomic bombing.

The Atomic Bomb Survivors Medical Care Law fell far short of providing adequate support for survivors whose physical and mental health as well as their livelihoods had been utterly destroyed. Untiring campaigns to resolve these issues led to the enactment of the Atomic Bomb Survivors Special Measures Law in 1968 to provide not only medical allowances but also special allowances, health management allowances, nursing care allowances, and other benefits. In 1995, the Atomic Bomb Survivors Support Law was enacted, integrating the Atomic Bomb Survivors Medical Care Law and the Atomic Bomb Survivors Special Measures Law. This law removed the ceilings on income for receiving various allowances and codified welfare services such as providing counseling to the survivors.

### Belated support for overseas atomic bomb survivors

Many people from overseas became victims of the atomic bombing, including many from the Korean Peninsula under Japanese colonial rule, who were brought here for work, or

during wartime, conscripted for labor or for military service. There were also second-generation Japanese Americans who had come from the United States for education, students from Manchuria (Northeast China) and Southeast Asia, people from Taiwan, Chinese laborers and others. The survivors who managed to return to their home countries voiced their plight, but they were neglected for years and could not yet receive any assistance under the relevant laws.

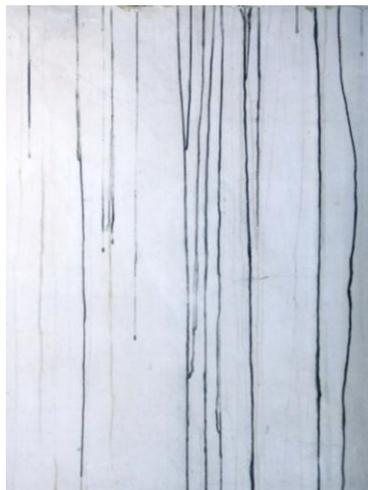
In 1977, medical examinations of atomic bomb survivors in North America by physicians from Hiroshima were finally carried out. In 1985, Hiroshima Prefecture also began health examinations for survivors in South America. The biggest number of survivors overseas live in South Korea. For five years from 1981, the Japanese government, together with the government of South Korea, invited them to Japan for free medical treatment.

“A hibakusha (atomic bomb survivor) is a hibakusha wherever they are.” Lawsuits were filed under this slogan. In the lawsuit filed by the founding members of the Association for Relief of Korean Atomic Bomb Victims (now Korean Atomic Bomb Victims Association), who demanded that they should be eligible for the health management allowance provided under the law, the Japanese government waived its right to appeal in 2002. The following year, the government began providing relevant allowances to overseas survivors. Survivors outside Japan have continued to expand their right to various support through legal actions.1977

### Black rain

On August 6, 1945, a massive cumulonimbus cloud rose over Hiroshima. It was the mushroom cloud created by the atomic bomb dropped by the United States. Approximately 20 minutes after the bomb exploded, black rain containing large amounts of radioactive matter began to fall. Particularly heavy rain was recorded to the west from the city center (toward Koi and Takasu), and to the north (toward Kabe).

In 1976, the elliptical area stretching northwest from the hypocenter, with a major axis of approximately 19 kilometers and a minor axis of approximately 11 kilometers, was designated as the heavy rainfall area eligible for government support, based on a report by meteorological observatory technicians. People exposed to black rain outside this area were excluded from the government relief measures.

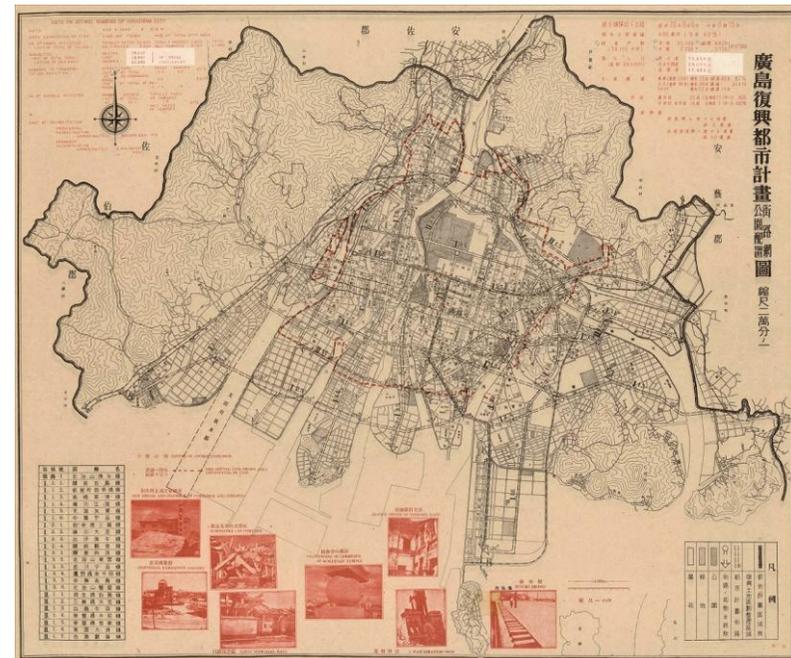


5-19 Stains of black rain on the white wall of a house in Takasu, Furutamachi, 3,700 meters from the hypocenter

In 2010, based on various research findings as well as the results of the Survey on Health Awareness of Atomic Bomb Survivors and Others conducted among residents in relevant areas, the City of Hiroshima and Hiroshima Prefecture requested that the national government expand the black rain areas covered by the government relief measures approximately sixfold. In 2021, the national government decided not to appeal the class-action lawsuits filed by residents whose applications for an Atomic Bomb Survivor's Health Certificate had been denied. The following year, new guidelines to issue certificates were introduced, opening a path for more people to be officially recognized as atomic bomb survivors eligible for government support. However, not all applications are accepted, and lawsuits by residents continue.

### Reconstruction of the City

Hiroshima was a castle town before the war, characterized by grid-patterned zones and narrow streets. A major issue in planning for reconstruction was how to make these streets significantly wider.

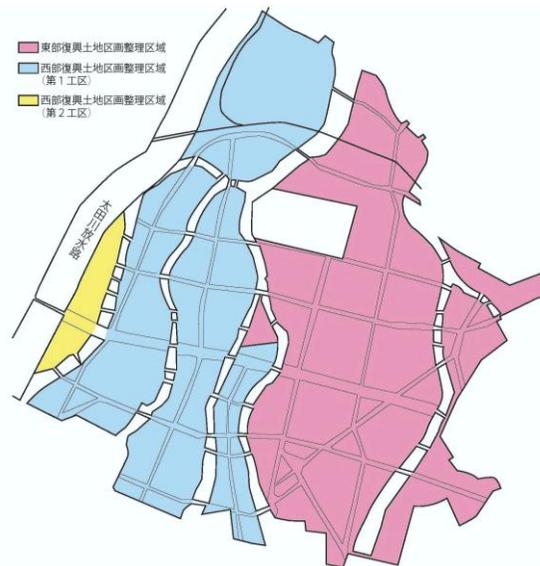


5-20 Urban-planning streets and parks in Hiroshima City Reconstruction Plan (December 1946)  
The area inside the red lines in the center indicates the area that was completely destroyed and burned out. The War Damage Reconstruction Project was conducted based on this plan.

Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima took the lead in drawing up the Hiroshima City Reconstruction Plan, a blueprint for reconstructing the war-damaged city. Based on this plan, the urban-planning streets and parks as well as green spaces, cemeteries, and land readjustment project areas were determined in October and November 1946. The plan included the construction of two 100-meter-wide streets as well as the development of city parks centered on Nakajima Park (now Peace Memorial Park), Central Park at the site of Hiroshima Castle, and East Park at the site of the East Drill Ground. However, not much progress was made on the plan due to funding difficulties and other challenges.

Based on the Hiroshima City Reconstruction Plan, large-scale land readjustment was conducted as part of the War Damage Reconstruction Project. Hiroshima Prefecture took charge of the western part of the planned area, and the City of Hiroshima took charge of the eastern part.

The War Damage Reconstruction Project, initially planned in 1946, was finally completed in 1972. During this period, many people were unable to rebuild their houses due to financial difficulties, land readjustment issues and for other reasons. Many who managed to rebuild their houses were forced to tear them down and move to other locations due to land exchanges. Amidst the housing shortage, some displaced residents built makeshift huts on sites intended for riverside greenbelts and parks. Among them, the large group of temporary houses which emerged on the east bank of the Honkawa River (Ota River) in Moto-machi came to be called the “A-bomb Slum.” The War Damage Reconstruction Project was not conducted without sacrifices by residents.



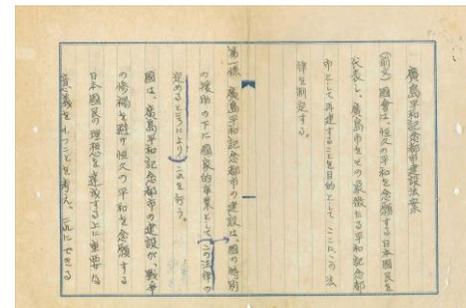
**5-21 Area assignment map**  
Red indicates the Eastern Reconstruction Land Readjustment Area assigned to the city government. Blue indicates the Western Reconstruction Land Readjustment Area assigned to the prefectural government. Yellow indicates the western area where land readjustment was implemented later.

## Enactment of Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law

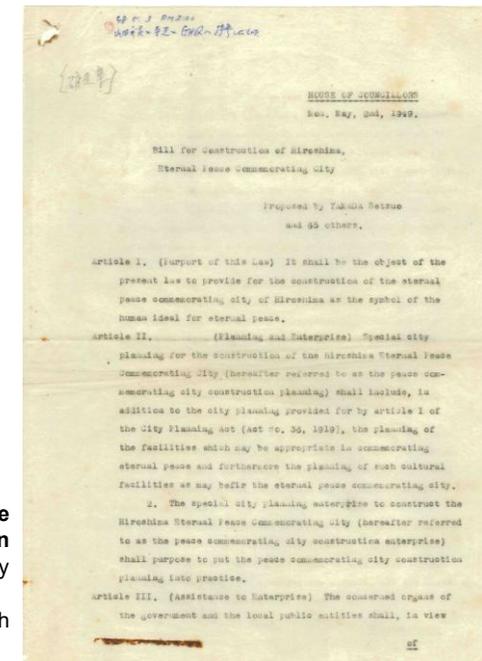
Due to the catastrophic damage, Hiroshima had a sharp decline in population and lost most of its buildings. The drastic decline in tax revenues resulted in severe financial difficulties. As reconstruction of the city on its own was extremely difficult, special financial assistance from the national government was indispensable.

From 1946, the City of Hiroshima repeatedly asked the national government to transfer former military land, such as the West Drill Ground, to Hiroshima. However, the national government declined this request because it could not give Hiroshima special support over the many other war-damaged cities in Japan.

In order to resolve this situation, an idea emerged to enact a special law to be called the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law. It envisioned not merely rebuilding the city from the war damage but also building a “peace memorial city,” a new ideal.



**5-22 The first draft of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Bill, drawn up by Tadashi Teramitsu, originally from Hiroshima and Director General of the Proceedings Department of the House of Councillors (1949)**



**5-23 English translation of the final draft of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Bill, for the purpose of explaining it to GHQ (May 1949)**

The note says: “49.5.3 2:00 pm. Brought to GHQ with house member Yamada, and Teramitsu.”

In May 1949, the bill unanimously passed both houses of the Diet. On July 7 of that year, a local referendum was conducted in Hiroshima to ask for the citizens' approval. Voter turnout was 65%, and with 90% of their support, the law was promulgated and took effect on August 6.



5-24 Mayor Hamai (second row, second from right) and Governor Tsuney Kusunose (third from right, next to Hamai), watching the House of Representatives pass the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Bill (May 10, 1949)

5-25 Signboards in front of the City Hall, calling for the citizens' participation in the referendum. The surface of the building was still charred, and the windows remained broken. (c. June 1949)

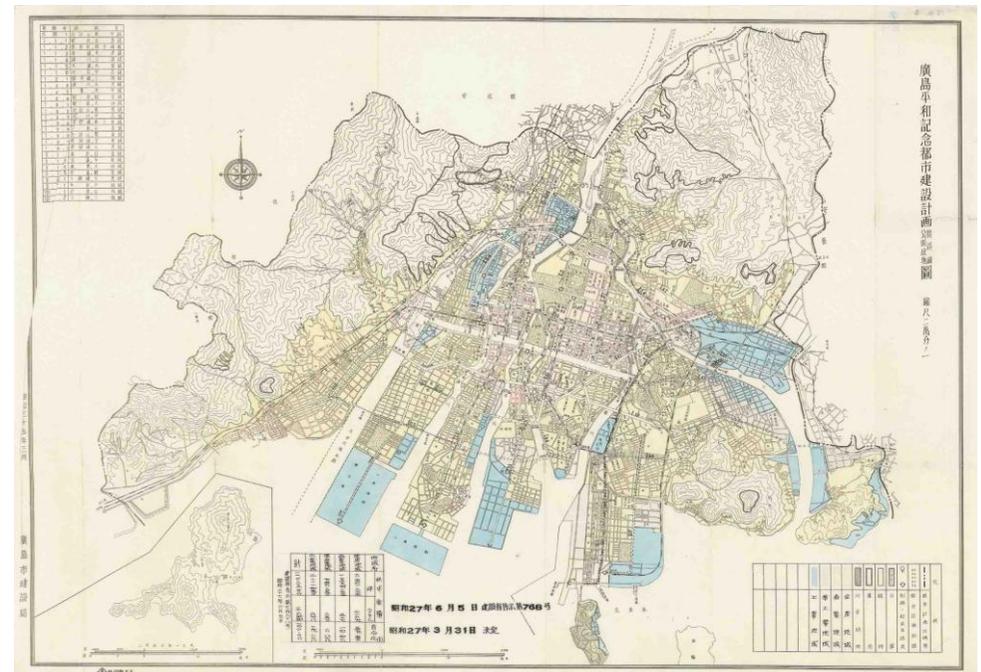
Article 1 of the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law states: "It shall be the object of the present law to provide for the construction of the city of Hiroshima as a peace memorial city to symbolize the human ideal of sincere pursuit of genuine and lasting peace." Thus, the purpose of this law was not merely to reconstruct the city from the destruction of war but to construct Hiroshima as a "peace memorial city" to symbolize the ideal of pursuing lasting peace. The enactment of this law enabled Hiroshima to obtain more support from the national government for the War Damage Reconstruction Project. The law endorsed the transfer of former military land and other national properties in Hiroshima to the city or their use at no cost if deemed necessary. In this way, the law not only spurred progress in developing infrastructure including roads, bridges and houses but also enabled the city to obtain national support for constructing cultural facilities.



5-26 Referendum conducted at Oshiba Elementary School (July 7, 1949)

#### Outline of the Law

1. To construct the City of Hiroshima as a peace memorial city, a symbol of peace.
2. To create cultural facilities befitting a peace memorial city.
3. Relevant agencies of the national and local governments shall render every possible assistance to the expedition and completion of this project.
4. As deemed necessary for the execution of Peace Memorial City Construction endeavors, the national government may transfer its assets to local public entities.
5. The Mayor of Hiroshima shall, with the cooperation of residents and others, strive ceaselessly to complete the construction of Hiroshima as a Peace Memorial City.



5-27 Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Plan, finalized in 1952

Urban-planning streets, parks, green spaces, cemeteries, riverbank greenbelts and others are indicated.

## City under reconstruction

The reconstruction of the city progressed with increased subsidies from the national government under the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law. These six photographs were all taken looking north from the rooftop of the head office of the Chugoku Haiden, which became Chugoku Electric Power Company in 1951. They show the cityscape from autumn 1945 onwards. The A-Bomb Dome and Aoi Bridge are in the center-left background. The streetcar street (current Rijo-dori Avenue) going from Kamiya-cho to Ujina Port is in the lower right. The photographs also show the progress in the construction of buildings and the development of Peace Boulevard.



5-28 Autumn 1945

Only a few reinforced concrete buildings remained. The rest was a burned-out plain.



5-29 April 1946

Weeds grew on the scorched earth. Temporary huts were beginning to appear.



5-30 November 1947

Vacant lots were tilled to grow vegetables. The street along the streetcar tracks was about to be widened.



5-31 July 1949

Construction of the 100-meter-wide street had begun.



5-32 April 1950

An extremely wide street was emerging.



5-33 February 1953

Construction of the 100-meter-wide street was progressing, and the main lanes of the street and the greenbelts on both sides were emerging.



**5-34 Peace Apartments in Showa-machi** (December 20, 1951)

After the enactment of the Peace Memorial City Construction Law, municipal apartment buildings named “Peace Apartments” were built in Showa-machi. They were the first ferroconcrete apartment buildings built by the city.



**5-37 Kamiya-cho Intersection and MacArthur Street (now part of Rijo-dori Avenue)** (September 30, 1952)

A 40-meter-wide street (today’s northern end of Rijo-dori Avenue) was newly created across the former military land in Kamiya-cho. In May 1949, greenbelts with ginkgo and camphor trees appeared in the center of the street.



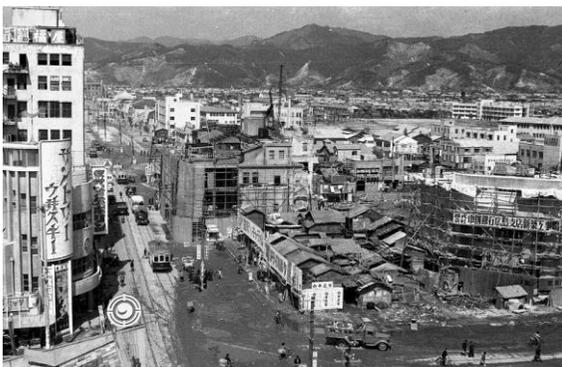
**5-35 Landfill work along the Hirataya River** (May 8, 1952)

The Hirataya River was a canal that had been used as a castle moat and waterway for transportation since the Edo period. In order to develop streets (including today’s Namiki-dori Street) and residential land, the river was filled in after sewer pipes were laid.



**5-38 Kamiya-cho Intersection** (June 24, 1958)

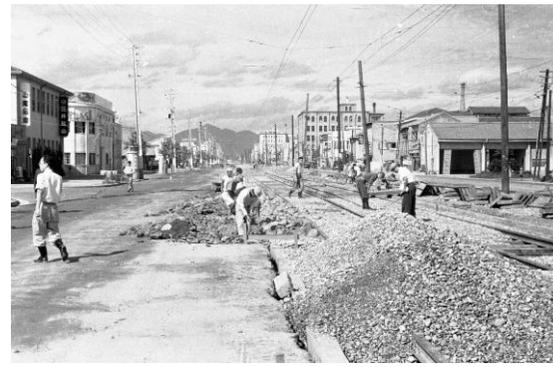
In July 1957, the Hiroshima Bus Center was completed on the west side of the Kamiya-cho Intersection. In this photograph from 1958, the Hiroshima Castle tower, rebuilt that year, can be seen behind the Bus Center.



**5-36 Streetcar street being widened in the Hatcho-bori area** (July 21, 1953)

As land readjustment progressed, streets were widened in the city center.

Along the streetcar street in front of the Fukuya department store (now Aioi-dori Avenue), houses and stores including the old wing of Fukuya were removed to widen the street, and the streetcar tracks were relocated to the center of the street.



**5-39 Relocation of the streetcar tracks on the street in front of the City Hall** (September 20, 1956)

The streetcar street in front of the City Hall was also widened, and the streetcar tracks were relocated to the center of the street.



**5-40 View of Peace Boulevard (100-meter-wide street) from Hijiyama Hill (May 12, 1952)**

The 100-meter-wide street was planned as a 3,570-meter-long avenue (including bridges) from Tsurumi-cho to Fukushima-cho to provide space for disaster prevention, and above all, to serve as greenbelt areas. This street was named Peace Boulevard in November 1951 after a contest in which names were solicited from citizens.



**5-41 Planting trees along Peace Boulevard (November 1957)**

Trees donated from within and outside the prefecture for greening the city were planted along the greenbelt areas of Peace Boulevard and in Peace Memorial Park.

Initially, the construction of this exceptionally wide street drew public backlash. Many questioned why the city needed to build such a wide street before addressing the severe housing shortage. In the April 1955 mayoral election campaign, reducing the width of the street became a focus of the policy debate. Tadao Watanabe, who proposed an alternative plan to build reinforced concrete apartment buildings on some part of the proposed greenbelt areas along the 100-meter-wide street, won the election. After he took office, he reconsidered his proposal and promoted a tree donation campaign for greening the city.

#### **Development of riverbank greenbelts**

Before the war, private houses, restaurants, and other establishments lined the banks of the Ota River tributaries flowing through the city. Developing the riverbanks into

streets and greenbelts had been proposed at an earlier time after the war and included in the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Plan in June 1952. However, makeshift houses began to be built on the riverbanks soon after the war ended. This situation continued, and many of those who lived in the areas to be cleared refused to move, due to the convenient locations and for other reasons, hindering the development of streets and green spaces. Furthermore, garbage and sewage from these buildings flowed into the rivers and caused serious contamination of the water, which became a major problem from the viewpoint of disaster prevention as well as sanitation.

The City of Hiroshima and the City Assembly worked together to urge the residents to relocate or remove these illegal structures, but progress was slow. Particularly in the Matoba area on the right bank of the Enko River near Hiroshima Station, illegal structures became a major obstacle to developing streets. To break the deadlock, the city government finally proceeded with the forced eviction of shops and other structures on January 19, 1966. After that, the government continued its efforts to negotiate with residents, under a fundamental policy of voluntary relocation and eviction. The purpose was explained to citizens using city bulletins and other means to raise awareness. Over time, people became more supportive of voluntary relocation and eviction, and finally, the removal of illegal structures progressed.

Few municipalities in Japan could successfully implement such a large-scale riverside greenbelt project. This was possible in Hiroshima only because the citizens and landowners cooperated. On the other hand, some evicted residents moved to the area then called Aioi-dori along the riverbank in Moto-machi, and this created new problems.



**5-42 Illegal housing along the Enko River. The banks of the Enko and Kyobashi rivers were crowded with houses jutting out over the water. (1966)**



**5-43 Forced eviction by proxy in Matoba (January 19, 1966)**

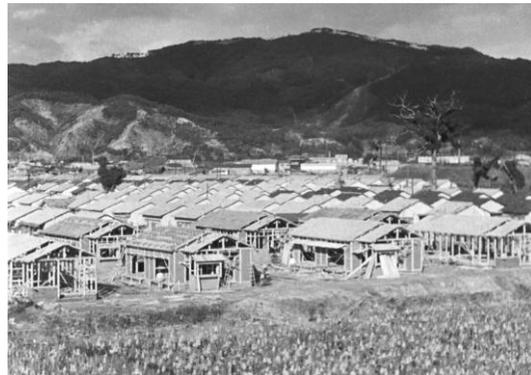


**5-44 Some illegal houses remained on the riverbank in Matoba after the forced eviction. (1966)**

### Moto-machi district redevelopment project

The Moto-machi district surrounding Hiroshima Castle was dense with military facilities. Because of its proximity to the hypocenter, the area suffered catastrophic damage. The military facilities all burned down, and the castle tower completely collapsed.

After the war, the military was disbanded, and the extensive military land owned by the state remained. The City of Hiroshima formulated a plan to allocate the eastern half of the former military land in Moto-machi district for government offices and the western half for parkland. However, addressing the housing shortage was an urgent priority. Therefore, the city temporarily borrowed the former military land from the national government and constructed emergency housing for war victims in June 1946. Subsequently, the construction of municipal housing, prefectural housing for repatriates, and other residential projects got underway. The Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Plan formulated in 1952 envisioned designating the approximately 58.74 hectares of land at the Hiroshima Castle site and its surroundings as Central Park, with recreational and cultural facilities. However, the return of people who had evacuated outside the city along with many demobilized soldiers, repatriates and newcomers led to an increasingly severe housing shortage, and the park development was put on hold.



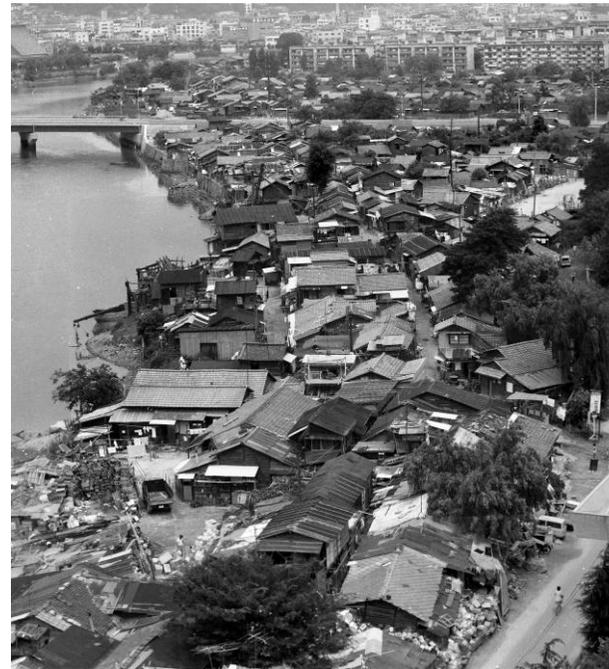
5-45 Municipal houses under construction in Moto-machi (1948)



5-46 Moto-machi area just before Hiroshima Municipal Baseball Stadium was constructed (1957)

People without land and those who had been evicted and relocated began building makeshift huts in an area on the riverbank along the east side of the Honkawa River (Ota River), where riverbank greenbelts and parks were planned. By 1960, there were about 900 of these houses.

This area along the river came to be called Aioi-dori (different from today's Aioi-dori Avenue), also known as the "A-bomb Slum." While reconstruction progressed in other areas, the slum with illegal housing remained until the 1970s.



5-47 Aioi-dori on the east bank of the Honkawa River in Moto-machi (c. 1970)

Initially, the city considered developing a park by building mid-rise public apartments to replace existing one-story public houses. However, no progress was made because of strong opposition from the residents, who were concerned that low-income people could not afford the higher rent and that those who lived in private houses would be excluded. In July 1967, 149 houses around the bank of the Honkawa River burned down in a fire. This served as catalyst to reexamine the approach to the redevelopment of the Moto-machi district. Instead of merely rebuilding public housing, the plan shifted to constructing

high-rise apartment buildings to accommodate not only the residents of the aging municipal housing but also those living in the illegal dwellings on the riverbank. The illegal structures and the old public housing would then be removed, and the cleared land would be developed as a park and a riverside greenbelt. Thus, in March 1969, Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima launched the Moto-machi District Redevelopment Project, which was completed in September 1978. With this, the post-war reconstruction project in Hiroshima was completed.



**5-48** Before the area was redeveloped, many old houses stood on the bank of the Honkawa River in Moto-machi. When a fire broke out, it spread rapidly. (July 27, 1967)



**5-49** Completed high-rise apartment building complexes in Moto-machi, and those in Chojuen (November 1978)

### Hiroshima Restoration Exposition

The Hiroshima Restoration Exposition was held for 50 days from April 1 to May 20, 1958. It was organized by the City of Hiroshima to publicize the city's recovery and its industry and tourism. Around the Peace Memorial Museum and Peace Boulevard, 29 pavilions were opened, including the Reconstruction Pavilion, Transport Science Pavilion, Space Exploration Pavilion, and Atomic Science Pavilion.



**5-50** The Peace Memorial Museum was the main venue for the Peace Restoration Exposition. (April 1958)

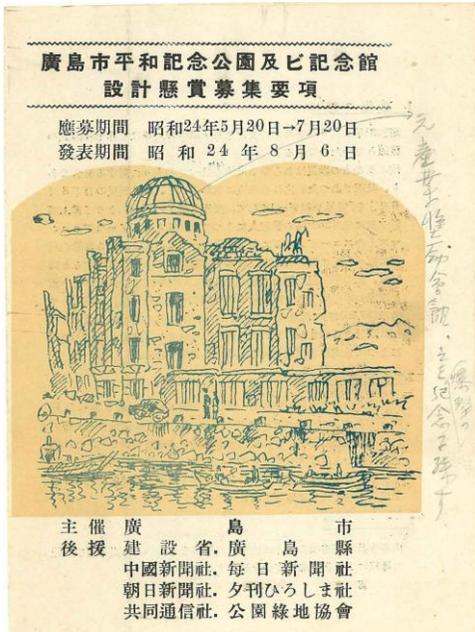
Hiroshima Castle's tower was rebuilt as a reinforced concrete structure, which served as a pavilion to introduce local history. After the exposition, it was turned into a museum to display exhibits mainly on the early modern period of Hiroshima.

That year, the population of the City of Hiroshima recovered to its pre-war level of 410,000. The exposition had approximately 880,000 visitors. Through this event, citizens could sense the recovery of daily life in Hiroshima.



**5-51** Hiroshima Castle tower restored at the time of the exposition (1958)

## Design for Peace



5-52 Application guidelines for the design competition for Peace Memorial Park and other facilities (1949)

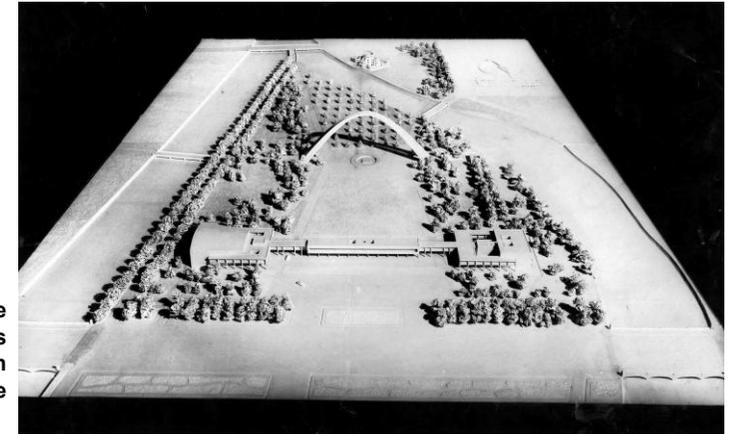
100-meter-wide street (Peace Boulevard), facing the display hall (Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum), the facilities were arranged so that the A-Bomb Dome could be seen through the open space on the ground level of the Peace Memorial Museum, which would be built in piloti-style with columns elevating the building, and through the arch-shaped tower, which would serve as a memorial monument.

In this design, the Peace Memorial Museum, the arched memorial monument, and the A-Bomb Dome were in a straight line, called Tange's Axis. The north-south axis based on Tange's plan and the east-west axis represented by Peace Boulevard came to be known as the "Axes of Peace." This remains a key concept in the development of Hiroshima's city planning.

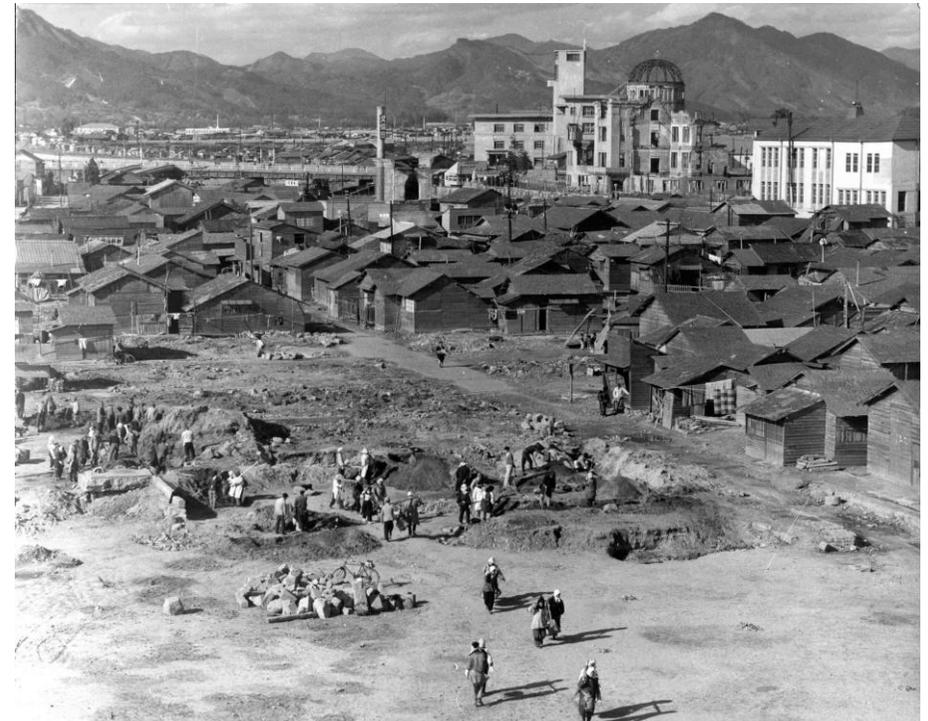
The Nakajima district, which was a bustling commercial area, is now Peace Memorial Park.

In the Hiroshima City Reconstruction Plan for urban parks, finalized in November 1946, the Nakajima district was designated as a park. In the process of formulating the Hiroshima Peace Memorial City Construction Law, it was decided to develop the Nakajima district as Peace Memorial Park. The City of Hiroshima held an open competition to determine the design of the park, and the call for entries began in May 1949. From among the 145 proposals submitted by the deadline of July 20, the proposal by the group led by Kenzo Tange, then an assistant professor in the Department of Architecture at the University of Tokyo, won the first prize.

In Tange's design, when standing on the



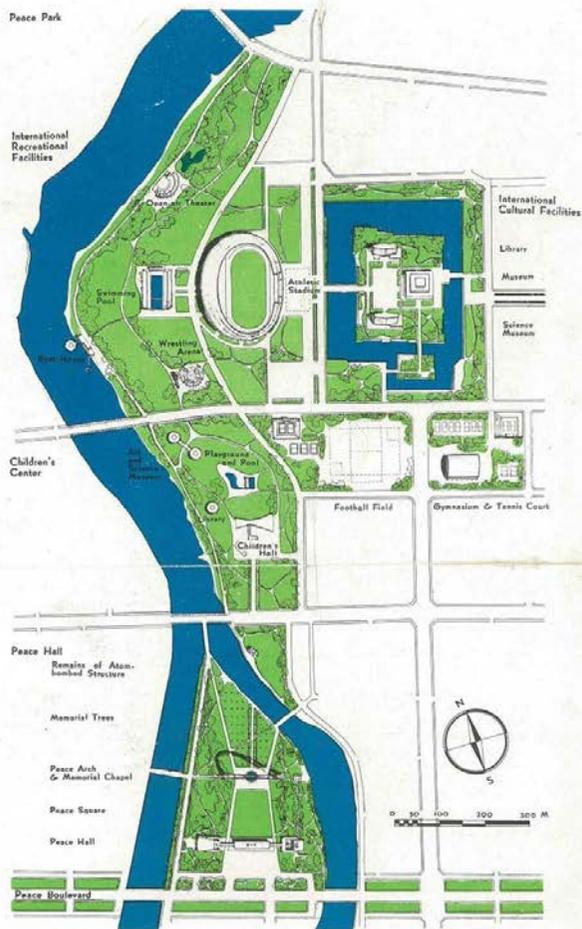
5-53 Model of the winning plan of Tange's group at the design competition for Peace Memorial Park



5-54 Developing the site for Peace Memorial Park.

Photographed from the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum under construction. Many makeshift houses remained on the planned park site. (1952)

## CENTRAL THEME OF HIROSHIMA CITY PLANNING



### PEACE PARK PROJECT

Designed by:  
Kenzo Tange, Takashi Asada, Sachio Otsui  
and their associates of the Planning Research  
Group, Architectural Department, Tokyo Uni-  
versity.

Our city planning is a planning for construction of a peace city as the symbol of the human ideal for eternal peace as well as a planning for reconstruction of human life. Therefore we have launched a program of constructing peace facilities, as the central theme of city planning, and also housing, working, recreation and transportation facilities. Hiroshima which had a population of 136,000 at the close of war had increased its population to 270,000 (as of Dec. 1949). The problem of housing shortage is still acute. Although numerous temporary homes have been erected, these are far from meeting actual needs. However, construction of ferro-concrete apartmenthouses, though of a crude nature, has gotten underway in recent months, bringing new light and hope into the lives of many.

Despite all hardships, we of Hiroshima are daily becoming more resolute in our conviction that peace is not only desirable but imperative, and in our determination to establish a peace city symbolic of the human ideal for eternal peace.

Hiroshima no longer belongs to the people of Hiroshima or Japan alone. It belongs to the whole human society. This is the spirit which lies at the core of Hiroshima's city planning. The central theme of Hiroshima city planning program, therefore, lies in the ultimate creation of a city whose facilities would be of real service to mankind in its pursuit of peace and happiness. The following is a brief description of the important peace projects contemplated by the City of Hiroshima.



**5-56 Peace Memorial Park on August 6, 1955. The Peace Memorial Ceremony was taking place.**  
From left in the background: the Peace Memorial Hall, Peace Memorial Museum, and City Auditorium. Some makeshift houses remained in the foreground. (1955)

### 5-55 Tange's concept for Peace Park.

In addition to Peace Memorial Park, it featured cultural, sports, and recreational facilities in Central Park. (From the pamphlet "Peace City Hiroshima") (1950)

### Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum (display hall)

The display hall was built based on the winning proposal of Tange's group and opened on August 24, 1955 as the Hiroshima Peace Memorial Museum (Atomic Bomb Museum). It has played an important role in conveying the reality of the atomic bombing through its permanent exhibition, which includes roof tiles and porcelain burned by the heat rays collected by the first director of the museum, Shogo Nagaoka, from soon after the bombing, along with documentary photographs as well as victims' personal belongings donated by citizens.

As this building was the first postwar architecture in Japan to receive high international recognition, and as it was an important starting point for Kenzo Tange's career, it was designated an Important Cultural Property on July 5, 2006.



5-57 The Peace Memorial Museum opened in August 1955.

### Peace Memorial Hall (memorial hall)

The Peace Memorial Hall was also constructed based on the design by Tange's group.

It opened on June 1, 1955. In addition to an exhibition room, it had a hall with 260 seats, meeting rooms, a library, and other facilities. While it hosted various events in the exhibition room and the hall, it also played a role in the peace administration of the city.

In June 1986, it was renovated and reopened as the Peace Memorial Museum's East Building, accommodating a special exhibition room, storage rooms and other facilities.



5-58 Peace Memorial Hall (March 13, 1962)

### Hiroshima City Auditorium (assembly hall)

Among the three buildings planned as peace memorial facilities, the assembly hall was not eligible for national government subsidies because there were similar facilities in other cities. The local business community and others raised funds, and the hall was constructed based on a plan drawn up by a local architect and donated to the City of Hiroshima.

The City Auditorium opened in March 1955 as a complex with a hotel accommodation, the Shin-Hiroshima Hotel. The auditorium served as a venue for various events, including the first World Conference Against A- and H-Bombs on August 6 of that year. After it was closed in 1986, the International Conference Center Hiroshima, designed by Kenzo Tange, opened on the same site in 1989, taking over the role of the auditorium, serving as a venue for domestic and international conferences.



5-59 Completed Hiroshima City Auditorium (March 2, 1955)

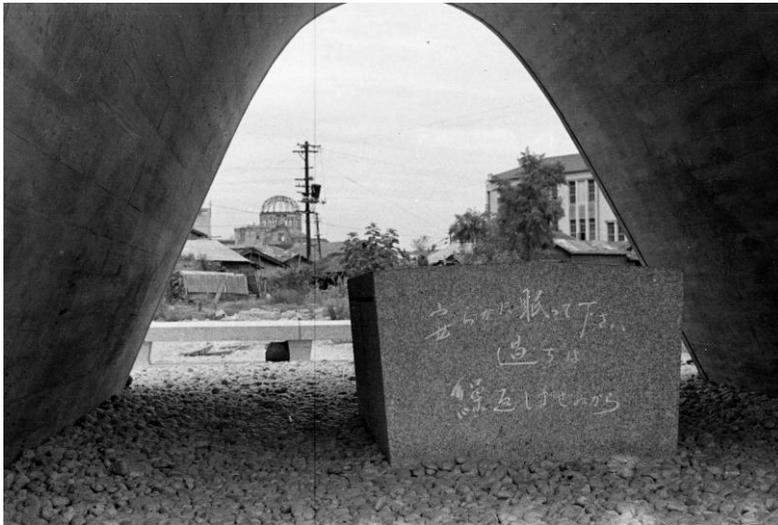
### Memorial Monument for Hiroshima, City of Peace (Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims)

The official name of the Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims is the Memorial Monument for Hiroshima, City of Peace. According to the design proposed in the competition for Peace Memorial Park, it was to be an arch-shaped monument with a hanging bell. However, due to the cost and other issues, it was redesigned to resemble an ancient house-shaped *haniwa* (clay figure). On August 6, 1952, the cenotaph was unveiled.

The stone chest houses registers of the names of people who died in the atomic bombing and of survivors who died later. As of August 6, 2025, the names listed in the registers totaled 349,246.



5-60 Completed Cenotaph for the A-bomb Victims (September 16, 1952)

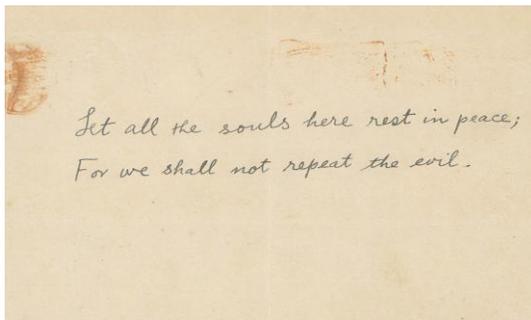


5-61 Inscription on the cenotaph (August 21, 1952)

The inscription on the stone chest says:

Let all the souls here rest in peace;  
For we shall not repeat the evil.

Tadayoshi Saiga, a professor at Hiroshima University, conceived the inscription. He sent a postcard to a staff member of the city government on which he wrote this English translation of the inscription.



5-62 Postcard bearing the English translation of the inscription (c. 1952)

For many years, there was a controversy over what “we” meant. It is now understood that “we” here means “all people.” Many people from Japan and overseas visit the cenotaph to pray for the repose of the souls of the victims of the atomic bomb.

## Peace Bridge

The Peace Bridge spanning the Motoyasu River serves as an entrance to Peace Memorial Park. Isamu Noguchi, a Japanese-American sculptor, designed the parapets of the bridge along with those of the West Peace Bridge over the Honkawa River. The two bridges serve as symbols of Peace Boulevard.



5-63 Peace Bridge (October 8, 1952)



5-64 Isamu Noguchi (front center) and Kenzo Tange (far right), inspecting the construction site of West Peace Bridge (November 27, 1951)



5-65 West Peace Bridge (1952)

## Peace Memorial Park

Peace Memorial Park was developed together with the peace memorial facilities, such as the Peace Memorial Hall and Peace Memorial Museum, but private homes stood on the planned park site, and it took time for the site to be cleared.



5-66 Peace Memorial Park under development (August 5, 1953)

By 1955, the peace memorial facilities were completed. In 1958, the remaining private houses within the park area were vacated, and the park took shape.



5-67 Panoramic view of Peace Memorial Park (July 31, 1958)

## Memorial monuments

There are memorial monuments to pray for the repose of the victims of the atomic bombing in Peace Memorial Park and at many other locations in the city. These were erected by communities, schools, private companies, various organizations and others. One of them is the Children's Peace Monument.

On August 6, 1945, Sadako Sasaki was exposed to the atomic bomb at her home 1.6 kilometers from the hypocenter when she was two years old. Miraculously, she was not injured. But in the winter when she was in the sixth grade at Hiroshima Municipal Noboricho Elementary School, she suddenly fell ill and was hospitalized. She heard that her wish to recover would come true if she folded 1,000 paper cranes. She and another patient in the same hospital room, a girl two years older, went around the ward collecting medicine wrappers and other paper, and folded cranes. However, Sadako died of subacute myeloid leukemia on the morning of October 25, 1955. She was 12 years old.

The following month, her former classmates from Noboricho Elementary School and Ichiro Kawamoto, who later became the facilitator of the Hiroshima Orizuru-no-Kai (Hiroshima Paper Crane Club), called for the establishment of the Children's Peace Monument, distributing leaflets at the entrance to the City Auditorium, where a conference of the Japan Junior High School Principals' Association was taking place. In those days, there were news reports on children dying of leukemia and other illnesses attributable to the atomic bombing. Against this backdrop, the campaign spread nationwide, and donations poured in from around the country.

In this way, on May 5, 1958, the Children's Peace Monument was completed in Peace Memorial Park.

Today, many people continue to visit the monument, offering 1,000 paper cranes.



5-68 Unveiling ceremony for Children's Peace Monument (May 5, 1958)

## Restoration of cultural facilities

### Founding of Hiroshima University

After the war, the Fundamental Law of Education and the School Education Law were enacted. Imperial Universities and Universities of Literature and Science were abolished, and universities under the new system were established. Known as an academic city before the war, Hiroshima was home to Hiroshima Higher Normal School and other higher educational institutions. In May 1949, Hiroshima University (national university) was established under the new system, integrating the Hiroshima University of Literature and Science with other former national schools, namely Hiroshima Higher School, Hiroshima Higher Technical School, Hiroshima Women's Higher Normal School, and Hiroshima Higher Normal School, as well as with prefectural and municipal schools such as Hiroshima Normal School, Hiroshima Young Men's Normal School, and Hiroshima Municipal Higher Technical School.

In 1953, the Faculty of Medicine of Hiroshima University was established, with the former prefectural Hiroshima Medical College as its foundation. Hiroshima University later relocated to Higashi-hiroshima except for its schools of medicine, dentistry, and pharmaceutical sciences.

With regard to higher education institutions for women, Hiroshima Jogakuin University was established in 1949 with Hiroshima Christian Woman's College as its foundation. The following year, the prefectural Hiroshima Women's Junior College opened, with the Hiroshima Higher Education College for Women as its foundation.



5-69 Front gate of Hiroshima University (c. 1955–1960)

## Restoration of cultural facilities

### Opening of the Children's Cultural Center

In June 1946, 60 elementary school teachers in the city established the Hiroshima Children's Culture Association. After the devastation of communities and schools in

Hiroshima, the association held literary, science, art, music and other classes, and published a magazine, *Gin no Suzu* (Silver Bell), featuring reading materials and other articles for children. For a time, *Gin no Suzu* had the highest circulation among children's magazines in Japan.

The association conceived the concept of establishing a culture center for children. Based on this, the Children's Cultural Center was built by bringing a factory building from the suburbs and renovating it. It opened in May 1948 in Moto-machi (near the north side of today's Hiroshima Gate Park) as the city's first cultural facility established after the atomic bombing. The main hall had a projection booth, orchestra pit, and a large stage. Theatrical plays, concerts, and movies, and various other events were held there, including those for adults. Before the Hiroshima City Auditorium opened in 1955, the center played a vital role as the only cultural facility in Hiroshima.



5-70 Children's Cultural Center during Hiroshima City Children's Festival (May 5, 1952)

## Reopened libraries and new libraries

### Hiroshima City Asano Library

The Hiroshima City Asano Library, the only public library in Hiroshima before the war, was located in Ko-machi, approximately 730 meters from the hypocenter. It was burned out in the atomic bombing; only its outer walls remained. In October 1946, at Sanyo Buntokuden at the foot of the west side of Hijiyama Hill, the Asano Library began offering visitors access to precious books that had been relocated from the city and thus spared from the bombing. In June 1949, the library resumed its operations at the original building in Ko-machi after it was repaired, and in July, a children's library was established within this library. In February 1955, the library moved to Kokutaiji-machi and reopened in a new building.

### Hiroshima City Children's Library

In December 1952, the Hiroshima City Children's Library was built in Moto-machi with 4 million yen donated by the Hiroshima Kenjinkai of Southern California, and other donations as well as funds from the City of Hiroshima. Kenzo Tange, who designed the Peace Memorial Museum, also designed the library. Its unique circular mushroom-shaped structure surrounded by glass walls attracted much attention.



5-71 Children's Library, which opened in 1952

### CIE Library

The CIE Libraries were established by the Civil Information and Education Section (CIE) of the General Headquarters of the Supreme Commander for the Allied Powers (GHQ/SCAP) to provide cultural services to people in the postwar years when securing daily necessities such as food, housing and clothing took priority. The CIE Library in Hiroshima



5-72 CIE Library (c. 1952)

was built in Shimonaka-machi (now Ko-machi) in October 1948, on the athletic field of the former First Hiroshima Prefectural Girls' High School. People had free access to books and magazines for reading and borrowing. Movies were sometimes screened, too. In this way, the library comforted the citizens, who craved printed materials and films. When the Allied occupation ended, the CIE Library was closed and reopened as an American Cultural Center.

### Hiroshima Prefectural Library

In 1951, the publisher of the children's magazine *Gin no Suzu* (Silver Bell) and Hiroshima Prefecture jointly established the Prefectural Children's Library on the same premises as the CIE Library. In 1954, the Prefectural Children's Library was renamed the Hiroshima Prefectural Library, and in 1960, it moved to a new building in Kaminagarekawa-cho (today's Kaminobori-cho), on the west side of Shukkeien Garden.

### Art museums opened

Various art exhibitions were held at the Industrial Promotion Hall and other venues before the atomic bombing, but most of those buildings were destroyed. In 1946, the year after the bombing, exhibitions were held at the few remaining buildings, such as the Hiroshima Railway Bureau's auditorium (Ujina-machi), the Assembly Hall at Hiroshima City Hall (Kokutaiji-machi), and the Chamber of Commerce and Industry building (Moto-machi).



5-73 Peace Restoration Art Exhibition at the Assembly Hall of Hiroshima City Hall (August 1946)

Fukuya, the only department store in Hiroshima, reopened its event hall in 1947 and invited large-scale traveling exhibitions. In 1954, Tenmaya opened a department store in Hiroshima, which also became a venue for art exhibitions. In this way, during the reconstruction period, department stores functioned as art museums, too.

### Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum

From around the middle of the 1950s, there were growing calls to build an art museum. In response, the Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum opened in September 1968 where the Kankokan stood before the atomic bombing, adjacent to Shukkeien Garden.



5-74 Hiroshima Prefectural Art Museum (September 1968)

### Hiroshima Museum of Art

In November 1978, Hiroshima Bank opened the Hiroshima Museum of Art in Central Park to commemorate its 100th anniversary. With the permanent collection including European impressionist and modern Japanese paintings, it attracts many visitors from Japan and abroad.



5-75 Exterior of Hiroshima Museum of Art

### Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art

The Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art opened in May 1989 in Hijiyama Park as Japan's first public museum dedicated to contemporary art, under a plan to make an art park there. The museum collects important works representing the history of contemporary art after WWII, excellent works showing the link between contemporary art and Hiroshima, and outstanding works of promising young artists. It offers citizens a venue to enjoy contemporary art up close.

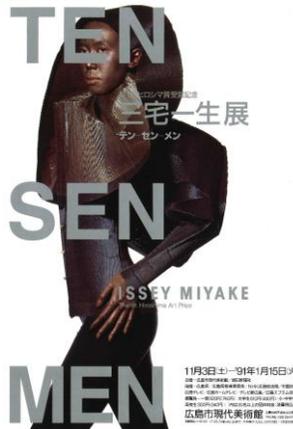


5-76 Hiroshima City Museum of Contemporary Art (May 3, 1989)

The museum also holds an exhibition for the winner of the Hiroshima Art Prize, established by the City of Hiroshima. The prize is awarded once every three years to a globally recognized artist whose contemporary artworks express the spirit of Hiroshima, which wishes for a peaceful world.

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5-77 Flier for the first Hiroshima Art Prize commemorative exhibition: ISSEY MIYAKE: TEN SEN MEN



### Revival of Music

The Hiroshima music community lost many musicians and facilities due to the atomic bombing and the war. The concert halls in the city were almost all destroyed by the atomic bomb. The Hiroshima Railway Bureau's auditorium in Ujina-machi remained standing. After the war, this auditorium became the main venue for concerts. In February 1946, the Hiroshima Music Federation, a music appreciation group, hosted a memorial concert for war victims at the auditorium, inviting Japan's leading classical musicians. After this concert, the Hiroshima Music Federation regularly held concerts, brightening the devastated city through music.

Café Musica, a coffee shop which opened in August 1946, held musical events such as record concerts with music critics' comments, outdoor concerts, and musical recreations. It became a place to enjoy mainly classical music, but many other genres of music were also played.

In the early postwar reconstruction years, young people who loved music were also active. The Hiroshima Student Music Federation, established in 1946 mainly by students from Hiroshima High School and the Hiroshima Higher Education College for Women, jointly formed a choir and an orchestra and frequently held music festivals. They also visited schools in rural areas and other places to hold concerts. However, due to the closing of schools and their reorganization in the process of the educational reform, their activities ended after a short time.



5-78 Members of the Hiroshima Student Music Federation singing at the Second Student Music Festival (November 16, 1947) Auditorium at Hiroshima High School

In 1948, the Hiroshima Broadcast Symphony Orchestra was founded mainly by some members of the Hiroshima Broadcast Orchestra, which had been founded in November 1941. The symphony orchestra included students and other amateurs and held two regular concerts annually. These energetic activities of the citizens laid the groundwork for the foundation of the Hiroshima Civic Symphony Orchestra in October 1963. Renamed the Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra (HSO) in 1970, it was reorganized as a professional orchestra in 1972 and became the only professional orchestra in the Chugoku and Shikoku regions.



5-79 The first concert by the Hiroshima Civic Symphony Orchestra at the Hiroshima City Auditorium (April 6, 1964)

Music schools were also established one after another shortly after the war. In 1948, Father Ernest Goossens of the Noboricho Catholic Church opened the Hiroshima School of Music, which later became Elisabeth University of Music. In 1949, Hiroshima Music High School opened under the initiative of the Aki District of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism (Jodo Shinshu Hongwanji-ha). In this way, the music culture in Hiroshima was gradually revived from soon after the atomic bombing, despite the loss of performers, instructors, and venues.

### Revival of sports

The war also affected sports. Among the prewar Olympic athletes from Hiroshima, four died in combat or from illness in war, and one died from a so-called A-bomb disease. Sports facilities and educational institutions that had served as sports venues were also heavily damaged by the atomic bombing. Despite this, a rugby match was held in December 1945 at the site of today's Hiroshima Prefectural Sogo (multi-purpose) Ground. In July 1946, the Hiroshima Prefecture Sports Association was re-established, and in August that year the Hiroshima City Sports Festival was held to coincide with the Hiroshima Peace Restoration Festival.

In those days, a space-saving and easy-to-play sport called the Hanetsuki Trio Game was created in Hiroshima. Later, it was renamed ESCI (Education, Science and Culture

Institution) tennis in the hope of promoting peace through sports. Even now, people enjoy ESCI tennis, mainly in Hiroshima.



5-80 ESCI tennis at Honkawa Elementary School(1949)

In August 1949, the General MacArthur Cup Competition was held in Hiroshima. It was the first nationwide sports competition held in the city after the war, and nearly 2,000 athletes participated. In those days, rubble still remained in the city, and there were no venues for sports events. Therefore, to host this competition, tennis courts and a table tennis gymnasium (later the Central Community Center) were built on the site of the former West Drill Ground in Moto-machi.



5-81 The venue for the tennis matches (today's Hiroshima City Central Tennis Courts) (August 1949)

In February 1948, the Chugoku Ekiden relay race also resumed, and sports in Hiroshima were on their way to a full-fledged revival.

In October 1951, Hiroshima hosted the 6th National Sports Festival, a nationwide sports competition held by prefectures in turn. In those days, life was still difficult for the citizens. In order to cover the costs of hosting the sports festival and building facilities, a lottery for the National Sports Festival was held for the first time in Japan. The opening ceremony took place at the Hiroshima Prefectural Sogo Ground, where the torch relay and mass calisthenics enlivened the event. For this festival, the Central Volleyball Courts were built in Moto-machi. The Sports and Culture Exposition held during this time featured a temporary wooden replica of Hiroshima Castle's main tower, which had been destroyed by the atomic bomb. The replica generated momentum to restore the castle tower, which was achieved in 1958.

In 1957, at the 39th National High School Baseball Championship (Summer Koshien, prewar National Secondary School Baseball Championship), Hiroshima Commercial High School (Hirosho) defeated Hosei Daini Senior High School and won the championship for the first time after the war (their fourth championship overall).



**5-82 Hirosho baseball team victory parade in front of the Fukuya department store in Hacho-bori (August 22, 1957)**

### Birth of Hiroshima Carp

In the prewar National Secondary School Baseball Championship, Hiroshima Commercial School and Koryo Middle School won multiple titles, which made Hiroshima well known as a baseball powerhouse. When professional baseball resumed in 1946, many of the best players were from Hiroshima. Baseball was highly popular in Hiroshima, and a crowd of 25,000 turned out even for a preseason game between Hanshin and Nankai at the former West Drill Ground in February 1948.



**5-83 The first training after the inaugural ceremony (January 15, 1950)**

In April 1949, when the creation of two leagues for professional baseball was announced, Diet members from Hiroshima and business leaders collaborated to establish a local professional baseball team. They hoped it would contribute to rebuilding the city, which had declared its intention to be reborn as an international city of peace. Thus, a professional baseball team, the Hiroshima Baseball Club (Hiroshima Carp) was born.

In March 1950, the team's first season began. Without a parent company, the team relied solely on subsidies from Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima and corporate contributions. The team faced financial difficulties from its very first year, and at one point, there were plans to sell the team to another franchise. However, a breakthrough was achieved when then-manager Shuichi Ishimoto proposed establishing a supporters' association. As a result, the team was able to continue. Citizens supported in various ways such as creating the Hiroshima Carp Support Group, purchasing stock, and making cash donations into the empty sake barrel at the entrance to the baseball field. In fiscal 1951, the balance sheet showed a surplus, enabling the team to survive.

In 1957, with donations from the local business community, the Hiroshima Municipal Baseball Stadium was built in Moto-machi, equipped with lights for night games. It became the home field for the Hiroshima Carp.

Overcoming numerous financial crises that followed, the team won a long-awaited Central League championship title for the first time in 1975.



**5-84 Manager Ishimoto receiving donations from citizens (April 1951)**  
Baseball field at Hiroshima Prefectural Sogo Ground



**5-85 Bird's eye view of the Hiroshima Municipal Baseball Stadium (July 22, 1957)**



**5-86 Carp's first championship victory parade on Peace Boulevard, packed with approximately 300,000 fans (October 20, 1975)**

## Sanfrece Hiroshima

Soccer had also been popular in Hiroshima before the war. The Prefectural Hiroshima First Middle School's team was outstanding and frequently won national championships. After the war, the school was reorganized and renamed Rijo High School (present-day Kokutaiji High School). It won the All Japan High School Soccer Tournament in 1948. Shudo High School followed, winning the championships in 1952 and 1961. As for corporate soccer teams, the team from Toyo Kogyo (now Mazda) achieved four consecutive championships of the Japan Soccer League from 1965, when the League was formed. Until the time of the 1968 Olympic Games in Mexico City, Hiroshima was one of the top three soccer powers in Japan, along with Saitama and Shizuoka.

In April 1992, the year before the Japan Professional Football League (J.League) was launched, Sanfrece Hiroshima was founded as a professional soccer team, with Mazda as the top shareholder. Hiroshima Prefecture and the City of Hiroshima also invested in the team. Sanfrece won the J.League's First Stage in 1994, and won its first J1 League championship in 2012. Sanfrece has continued to thrive as one of Hiroshima's three major professional organizations, along with the Hiroshima Symphony Orchestra and the Hiroshima Carp.



5-87 Sanfrece Hiroshima won its first J1 title. (November 24, 2012)

The professional basketball team, the Hiroshima Dragonflies, established in 2013, won its first championship title in the B1 League of the Japan Professional Basketball League (B.League) in May 2024. The Hiroshima Thunders (formerly Monopoly Hiroshima), a corporate volleyball team from before the war, is now a professional volleyball team and competes in the V.League.

## Asian Games in Hiroshima

The 12th Asian Games were held in Hiroshima from October 2 to 16, 1994, primarily in the City of Hiroshima. They were the first Asian Games to be held in a city outside a capital. Forty-two countries and regions in Asia participated. With a total of 1,118,591 spectators, it was a major sports event.

In order to host the Asian Games, various facilities were constructed. The Hiroshima Regional Park Main Stadium (Big Arch) was built in 1992 for the opening and closing ceremonies as well as track and field and other competitions. The Hiroshima City Indoor Swimming Pool (Big Wave) was built in 1991 for swimming competitions. To deepen understanding of Asian countries and regions, community centers and halls across Hiroshima took the lead in the "One Community Center/Hall, One Country/Region Support Program," in which each community center or hall was matched with a country or region and supported and cheered the athletes from that country or region. Bonds formed through this initiative at the community centers led to continued exchanges with the countries and regions even after the Games concluded. The "One Community Center/Hall, One Country/Region Support Program" was later applied to the "One School, One Country Program" at the 1998 Winter Olympics in Nagano and the "One Municipality, One Sport Program" in the National Sports Festival of Japan held in Hiroshima for the second time in 1996.



5-88 Group performance at the opening ceremony of the Asian Games Big Arch (October 2, 1994)