



This past June, we, Hokkaido Government CIRs, had the wonderful opportunity to visit the newly opened Hokkaido Museum. The museum used the building that was previously the Historical Museum of Hokkaido (*kaitaku kinenkan*). Merged with Hokkaido Ainu Culture Research Centre, the Historical Museum was renovated and reformed into the Hokkaido Museum, which is now nicknamed *mori no cha-renga* – “Brown Bricks in the Forest”.

WHAT'S IN THE NEW HOKKAIDO MUSEUM?

The new Hokkaido Museum has the same outside appearance and structure as what the Historical Museum of Hokkaido used to be. What changed the most is how the exhibits are organized and displayed. In this Red Brick Bulletin, I would like to show some of the neat new ideas and features the museum has incorporated.

When you walk inside, you are first welcomed by seven different versions of Map & Guide pamphlets: two Japanese versions – one for adults and one for children, English, Simplified Chinese, Traditional Chinese, Korean, and Russian.

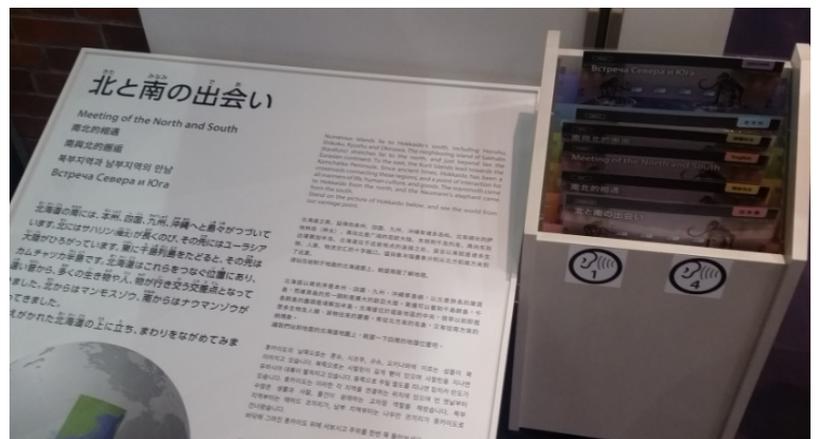


The museum features exhibitions based on five different themes, plus the Prologue: “Meeting of the North and South”. In the Prologue area are two gigantic skeletons – a Naumann Elephant (*Palaeoloxodon naumanni*), and a mammoth. What is interesting about this area is that the mammoth is displayed in a way in which the visitors can walk beneath the skeleton, to see what it is like to view the skeleton from under the belly of the mammoth.

There are also screens behind these two skeletons showing video clips introducing Hokkaido, with English subtitles.

Each exhibition has a panel that explains the theme of what is displayed in the section. The explanatory paragraphs on the panel are also in six different languages. Not only that, but *kana* letters – Japanese letters – are given above *kanji*, Chinese characters, so that children who can't yet read *kanji* can also read the panels.

On the side of the panel, laminated sheets with more information about the theme are prepared in each language for visitors to pick up and read at their own pace.



GENERAL EXHIBITION AND THEIR FIVE THEMES

1st Theme: Tale of 1.2 Million Years in Hokkaido

This area explores the history of Hokkaido from 1.2 million years ago to the end of the 19th century, along with the lifestyle of people who lived through the time.

2nd Theme: The World of Ainu Culture (photo on the right)

In this area, we can experience the Ainu culture not only by viewing the exhibits, but also by playing the Ainu musical instrument *tonkori* (photo on the right), and playing with the word dice to form simple sentences in Ainu language.



3rd Theme: The Secret to "Hokkaido-Like" Lifestyle (photo on the left)

The lifestyle and ideas of people who lived in Hokkaido are the main theme of this area. What are the specialties people came up with in this great nature Hokkaido prides itself in? How did people survive the harsh winter in the old days and how are they incorporated into our modern lives? We can learn all about it here, while looking at the actual winter items people have used in the past.

4th Theme: Towards Our Generation

This is the place to learn about the modern history of Hokkaido starting at the beginning of 20th century up until the current days, as well as the place for visitors to recognize and to think about the future of Hokkaido.

5th Theme: Animals and Hokkaido (photo on the right)

This area lets you explore Hokkaido nature from the viewpoints of animals such as brown bears, Hokkaido deers, salmons, etc. and learn the connections between the nature and us, the human beings in Hokkaido. To enter this area, most adults will have to go through the bear-shaped hole (as shown on the photo), while little kids can go through the deer-shaped hole.



SPECIAL EXHIBITION Aside from the general exhibition, Hokkaido Museum incorporates special exhibition that changes from time to time. Next special exhibition is titled "*Ishūretsuzō, the Image of Ezo: Tracing Persons, Things, and the World*", featuring the Ainu portraits by Hakyō Kakizaki from the Edo period. Starting on Saturday, September 5th, this special exhibition will be available until Sunday, November 8th.

CANADA COLUMN: CANADA DAY EVENT 2015

ON FRIDAY, JULY 10TH, 2015, more than 140 people from Sapporo and outside gathered in a ballroom at Sapporo TV Tower to celebrate Canada's birthday. Canadians and Canada-loving friends from various organizations and parties came together to plan and organize this joyous event, featuring live performances by local Canadian artists and a jazz quartet, fun games and prizes, tasty dinner, and – this is even better – Sapporo TV tower lighting up in red-and-white, only for this special occasion!

You can check out how the event went down in this short film:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dDvcyiborUc>

