



Calligraphy Kyoto Newsletter, July 2018

Hello everyone, I hope you are enjoying your practice,

In Kyoto, tsuyu (the Spring rains) are ending. Our hot Summer has started, and with it comes the Gion Matsuri (Kyoto's biggest festival). As I write this newsletter it's 35° outside. Please stay well during these hot Summer days.

Shodo to the World News



In February, the “Shodo to the World” project took me to Eton College in England. Princess Aiko from Japan's Imperial Family will be attending Summer School at Eton from the end of this month. Let's wish her well!

Kyoto this Month

July is “shichigatsu”, the 7th month. A poetic name is “fumidzuki” (ふみづき, 文月), the month of books. The days are too hot for work. It's a time when we can read, play music and so forth in the evening breeze. Or maybe it's short for “hofumizuki” (ほふみづき、穂文月), the time when the rice heads swell.



Yasaka Jinja holds the Gion Matsuri this month. This festival to pray for protection from plagues and disasters dates from the Heian Era, 1,100 years ago. The Gion Festival is one of the three biggest festivals in Japan.

Official site <http://www.yasaka-jinja.or.jp/>



This is a time to eat Zaru Soba. This dish is cold soba noodles served with a delicious dipping soup, nori seaweed, shallots and wasabi. The weather is hot and cold food is very popular. Zaru Soba is a very traditional Japanese food, like sushi or simmered tofu.



Around town we can see beautiful mukuge flowers everywhere. Mukuge is the Japanese name for *Hibiscus syriacus*, or Rose of Sharon. This photo is from the Minami Ward beside a very busy road.



Akemi Chiyami

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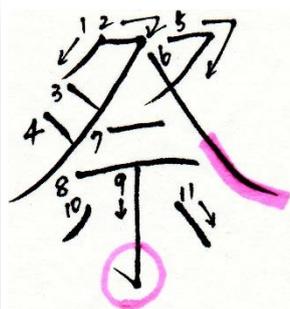
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This Month's Otehon (copy sheet, おてほん、お手本)

祭 まつり matsuri festival

In the hot steamy Summers, Kyoto has often suffered from plagues. We are very careful at this time to drink fresh water and tea, to keep our food in the refrigerator, and to do all we can to avoid tummy trouble. The Gion Matsuri is a festival that started long ago to pray to the Kami-sama (gods) for protection from illness and disaster. It is a lively festival even though it often rains.



祭

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