


Now, the island begins a new chapter in its history...



World Heritage Site
(Cultural Heritage)

Gunkan-jima

Around 4.5km west of the Nagasaki Peninsula, 2.5km southwest of the island of Takashima where the Mitsubishi Mining Company's main coal mine was located, and 19km southwest of Nagasaki Harbor lies Hashima. It is a small island that once had several seabed coal mines, measuring 480m from north to south and 160m from east to west, giving it a circumference of 1,200m and an area of 63,000m². It is surrounded by a seawall and has many multi-story apartments made of reinforced concrete on it. The seawall and buildings give the island an appearance similar to the warship Tosa, causing the island to become known as "Gunkanjima".

Though the Hashima Coal Mine lay dormant for many years after its closure, in 2015 it was registered as a component part of the UNESCO World Heritage Site "Sites of Japan's Meiji Industrial Revolution: Iron and Steel, Shipbuilding and Coal Mining." The Hashima Coal Mine, which once supported Japan's modernization, is an industrial heritage site which conveys the history of Japan's coal industry.

Protocols for Visiting Hashima

- (1) Dangerous actions such as climbing over fences
 - (2) Actions which dirty the facilities
 - (3) Drinking alcohol (including on the boat)
 - (4) Smoking
 - (5) Cause annoyance for other people
3. Follow the instructions and directions of the safety guide and other staff.
4. Wear appropriate clothing and footwear, allowing for safe use of the observation facilities.
5. Take your garbage with you when you leave.
6. Preschool children or people who cannot walk unaided such as those with disabilities must be accompanied by a guardian or caretaker.
- ◆ Depending on the weather and sea conditions, it may not be possible to use the observation facilities. In the event that the facilities are unusable, entry fees will be refunded.
 - ◆ For safety reasons, intoxicated individuals are restricted from using the observation facilities.
 - ◆ Elementary school students must have a letter of consent from their parent or legal guardian.

Entry Fees		Individuals	Groups (over 15 people)
◆ Costs of boat travel to the island must be paid separately.	Standard (above 12 years)	¥310	¥250
	Elementary School Students	¥150	¥120

Inquiries


Nagasaki City Call Center (Ajsai Call) (TEL 095-822-8888)

Learning about Gunkanjima

Gunkanjima Museum (095-893-1651)
Takashima Coal Museum (Takashima Regional Office) (095-896-3110)

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The roadsides and the playground residents called the "Children's Amusement Park" were used for open-air markets, which thrived with trade between residents and peddlers.



On Hashima, in addition to schools, hospitals, and shops, there were also leisure facilities such as a cinema and pachinko hall. However, as there was no space to plant trees, the PTA and other groups cooperated to carry soil to the roofs of the apartment buildings, where they grew flowers and vegetables. These are thought to have been the first rooftop vegetable gardens in Japan. The residents must have wanted to add a little greenery to their barren island, and to create a space where they could relax and feel at ease. This innovation was unique to Hashima.

Life on the Island

Hashima Timeline

1810	Coal is discovered on Hashima (it was discovered on Takashima in 1895). At this time, Hashima is merely a barren shelf of aqueous rock.
1869	The Nagasaki Trading company, Mitsumi, begins development of the Hashima Coal Mine.
1887	Vertical Shaft No. 1 is opened. (It is 44m deep. The shaft was closed in 1897 following a fire.)
1890	The mine comes under the administration of Mitsubishi Corporation. Mitsubishi bought the mine from Magorokuro Nabeshima for ¥100,000. Hashima becomes a branch of Takashima Coal Mine, and Mitsubishi begins mining in 1891.
1895	Vertical Shaft No. 2 is opened. (It is 168m deep, until improvements in 1934 extend it to 636m deep. The shaft remains in use until the mine is closed.)
1896	Vertical Shaft No. 3 is opened. (It is 161m deep, and is used until 1935.)
1916	Japan's first reinforced concrete apartment is constructed on the island.
1925	Vertical Shaft No. 4 is opened. (It is 370m deep, and is mostly used for ventilation. It is also used as a substitute when Vertical Shaft No. 2 is inaccessible. It remains in use until the mine is closed.)
1941	The mine produces its highest recorded yearly output of coal, at 4,11,100 tons.
1945	The ship Hakujimanu is struck by a torpedo and sinks while being loaded with coal.
1955	Hashima, Takahama Village and Takashima Town are consolidated to form Hashima, Takashima Town.
1965	Excavation of the new shaft at Mitsuse begins. (The shaft remains in use until the mine is closed.)
1974	Hashima Coal Mine is closed on January 15th. On April 20th of the same year, the island becomes uninhabited and remains as it is even now.

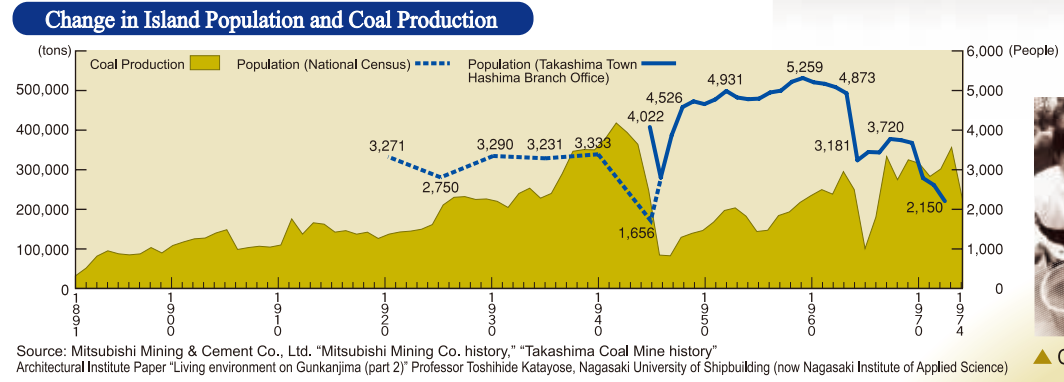
Hashima (Gunkanjima)

The History of Hashima

Coal was discovered on Hashima around 1810, with the Saga Clan carrying out some small-scale mining for a time. However, it was not until the mine came under the control of Mitsubishi Goshi Kaisha (Mitsubishi Limited Partnership) in 1890 that full-scale seabed coal mining operations began.

As the amount of coal being excavated increased, so did the population of Hashima. In 1916, Japan's first reinforced concrete high-rise apartment building was constructed to house many of the people living on this small island. At its peak, the population of the island was around 5,300, giving it a population density nine times greater than that of Tokyo at the time.

With the Energy Revolution and a shift from coal-based to oil-based power, both the mine's production and the island's population gradually decreased. The mine was closed in January of 1974, and the island became uninhabited in April of the same year.


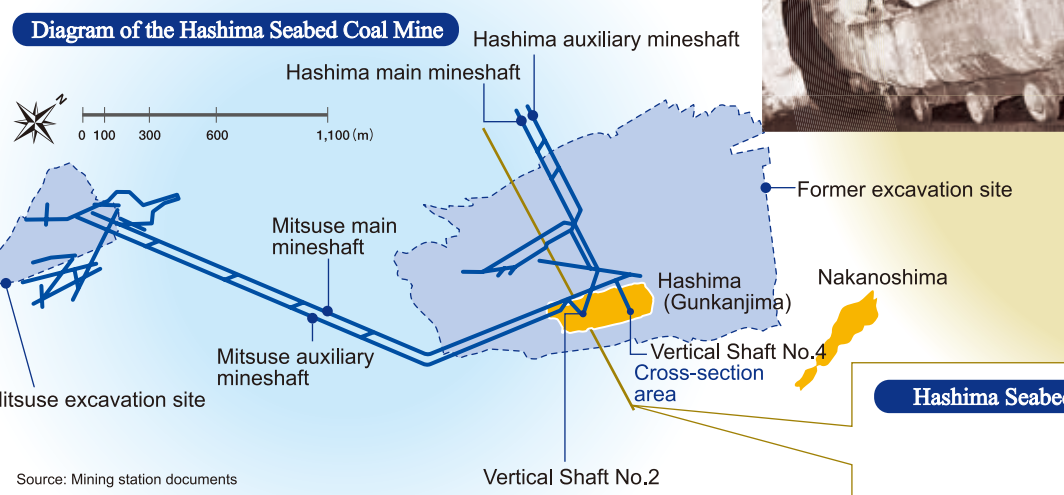


▲ Rooftop vegetable garden


▲ Children carrying soil to a rooftop

Work in the Coal Mine

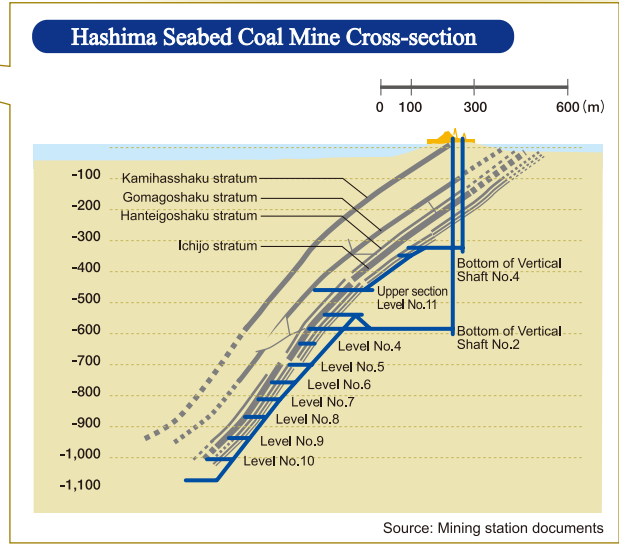
Between 1891 and the mine's closing in 1974, around 15.7 million tons of coal was excavated by the "men of the pit." Mining the seabed coal reserves of Hashima took the miners to points over 1,000m below sea level. The slope to the shafts was steep and the men worked in terrible conditions, braving temperatures of 30°C and 95% humidity, not to mention the ever-present danger of gas explosions, making their jobs extremely grueling. Within the often-exchanged greeting of "Goanzen ni" (Lit. "safely") was the meaning "Make sure not to have an accident."



◀ Using mine carts to carry coal waste out of the mine

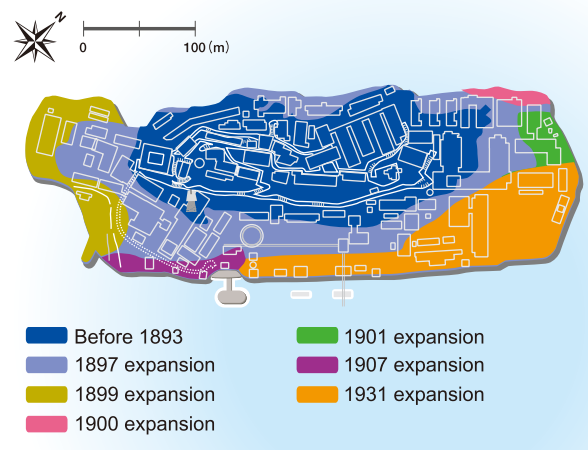


▶ Pushing a frame cart fully loaded with mining timbers to the main tracks



Island Expansion

Originally just a small, barren shelf of aqueous rock, Hashima was expanded as the development of mining methods progressed. Through land reclamation, embankments were constructed and expanded six times, which created the island's present size and shape. Hashima started out at just one third of its current size.



Around 1910



Around 1959

Building Layout When the Mine Closed

Around half of these buildings remain today.

Employee Housing

Miner Housing

Mine-related Facilities

Other Buildings

Observation Facilities (Observation Areas,Route)

Leaving these designated areas is forbidden.



Inside the General Office bordering the storehouse was a large communal bath for the miners. It is said that before entering the clean bathtub, the miners would roughly wash themselves in another bathtub that was always pitch black. There were once many other buildings around this area, but most of them have fallen into a state of disrepair.

General Office

Amakawa Sea Wall

As the island was expanded in the Meiji Period (1868-1912), sea walls of stacked stones were widely built using an adhesive called "amakawa," which was made of red clay and caustic lime. To this day, these retaining walls survive all around the island and contribute to Hashima's unique scenery.



Lifelines

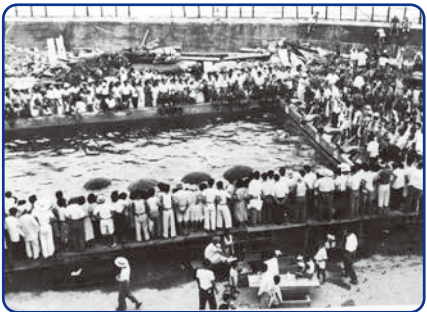
Securing electricity and water was a compelling problem for Hashima. Originally, electricity was provided using a generator on the island, but this method could not provide enough electricity for the growing population. Therefore, in 1918, undersea electricity cables were laid from Takashima.

Drinking water was originally provided by distilling seawater, but it was later brought to the island by water supply ships. The water brought by these ships was stored in an elevated water tank and distributed to communal water hydrants in several areas on the island. At this time, boiled seawater was used for baths; fresh water was only used for rinsing their bodies off when leaving the bath. In 1957, an undersea water supply pipe was laid between Hashima and Sanwa Town on the opposite shore. This led to the end of water rationing on the island. However, with the exception of the senior employees' residences (Building No. 3), baths were not installed in homes, so public baths were used instead.

Before the introduction of propane gas in the mid-1950s, coal furnaces were used on the island, which is why the apartment buildings have chimneys.



▲ Hashima households boasted the highest adoption rate of electronic devices in the prefecture (Mid 1950s to mid 1960s).



A photo of a swimming competition celebrating the completion of the southern pool. (July 1958)
The pool originally was in the eastern part of the island at the old wooden school building, but after a typhoon severely damaged it, it was relocated. A 25 meter long pool and a children's pool were built here, both of which used sea water. There was also another pool at the kindergarten on the roof of Building No. 65.

Swimming Pool



Building No. 30 and No. 31



Building No. 30, constructed in 1916, is thought to be Japan's oldest 7-story reinforced concrete apartment building and served as housing for Hashima's miners. The courtyard has stairwell corridors and steps, and the basement contained a shop. A communal bath was located in the basement of Building No. 31, with a post office and barbershop located on the first floor.



Coal Storage Conveyor Belt



Selected coal was transferred to the storage facility via this conveyor belt, where it was kept before being loaded onto coal-carrying ships. Only the braces of the conveyor belt survive today.



Hashima Hospital and Quarantine Ward



Completed in 1958, this hospital was built to protect the health of the mine workers, who risked their lives in the pit, and their families residing on the island. For the people living on Hashima, the existence of this hospital was no doubt very reassuring.

Hashima Elementary and Junior High School

In 1893, the Mitsubishi Corporation established a jinjo elementary school on the reef. In 1921, the school came under the management of the village. The seven-story building which still stands today was built in 1958. The first four floors of the building served as an elementary school and the fifth and seventh floors as a junior high school. The sixth floor housed an auditorium, library, and music room. The seventh floor also housed special purpose classrooms, such as the science room. In 1970, a gymnasium and facilities for providing school lunches were added. The island's only elevator, which was used to transport school meals, was also at this school.



Remains of the Pier at the Entrance to Vertical Shaft No. 2

Today, the mine facilities, including Vertical Shaft No. 2 that served as the principal mine, are mostly in ruins. However, the steps leading to the pier that provided access to Vertical Shaft No. 2 have barely managed to survive.



Hashima Shrine

For the miners who risked their lives in the pit, this shrine was something they could believe in and rely on. On April 3rd every year, great celebrations took place all over the island for the shrine's Sanjin Festival. There was once a worshipper's hall in front of the main altar, but it has collapsed. Today, only the small shrine remains.



Building List

Building Name	Date of Construction	Type / No. of Floors	No. of Housing Units	Use
No.1	1936	Wooden / 1 Floor	—	Shrine
No.2	1950	RC / 3 Floors	9	Employee housing
No.3	1959	RC / 4 Floors	20	Employee housing (for executives, with baths)
No.5	1950	Wooden / 2 Floors	1	Mine manager's residence
No.6	1936	Wooden / 2 Floors	—	Employee dormitories (for single employees)
No.7	1953	Wooden / 2 Floors	—	Employee clubhouse
No.8	1919	RC, Wooden / 3 Floors	4	Communal bath (1 st floor) / Employee housing
No.12	Before 1925	Wooden / 3 Floors	3	Employee housing
No.13	1967	RC / 4 Floors	12	Town housing (for teaching staff)
No.14	1941	RC / 5 Floors	15	Employee housing (central housing)
No.16	1918	RC / 9 Floors	66	Miner housing
No.17	1918	RC / 9 Floors	54	Miner housing
No.18	1918	RC / 9 Floors	50	Miner housing
No.19	1922	RC / 9 Floors	45	Miner housing
No.20	1922	RC / 7 Floors	26	Miner housing
No.21	1954	RC / 5 Floors	15	Police station box (1 st floor) / Miner housing
No.22	1953	RC / 5 Floors	12	Senior citizen's club (1 st floor) / Town Hall (2 nd floor) / 'Kamome-so' town housing (for civil servants)
No.23	1921	Wooden / 2 Floors	6	Housing (1 st floor) / Senpukuji Temple (2 nd floor)
No.25	1931	RC / 5 Floors	6	Lodgings (1 st & 2 nd floors) / Employee housing
No.26	1966	Prefab / 2 Floors	8	Subcontracted employee housing
No.30	1916	RC / 7 Floors	140	Former miners' housing (subcontracted housing)
No.31	1957	RC / 6 Floors	51	Communal bath (basement) / post office (1 st floor) / Miner housing
No.39	1964	RC / 3 Floors	—	Community center
No.48	1955	RC / 5 Floors	20	Miner housing / (Pachinko hall etc. in basement)
No.50	1927	Steel Frame / 2 Floors	—	'Showakan' Cinema
No.51	1961	RC / 8 Floors	40	Miner housing
No.56	1939	RC / 3 Floors	6	Employee housing
No.57	1939	RC / 4 Floors	8	Shop (1 st floor) / Employee housing
No.59	1953	RC / 5 Floors	17	Shop (basement) / Employee housing
No.60	1953	RC / 5 Floors	17	Shop (basement) / Miner housing
No.61	1953	RC / 5 Floors	17	Communal bath (basement) / Miner housing
No.65 (North)	1945	RC / 9 Floors	317	Miner housing
No.65 (East)	1949	RC / 10 Floors	317	Miner housing / Hashima kindergarten
No.65 (South)	1958	RC / 10Floors	317	Miner housing
No.66	1940	RC / 4 Floors	—	Miners' training camp (Keimei Dormitory)
No.67	1950	RC / 4 Floors	48	Miners' training camp (single dorms)
No.68	1958	RC / 2 Floors	—	Quarantine ward
No.69	1958	RC / 4 Floors	—	Hashima hospital
No.70	1958	RC / 7 Floors	—	Hashima Elementary and Junior High School
No.71	1970	RC / 2 Floors	—	Gymnasium

RC: Reinforced Concrete