

## Ishiage Festival

There are a number of theories about the origin of the Ishiage festival, but it began growing into the large-scale event it is today about 170 years ago. Many people believe it began in 1837, the year after the end of the Great Tenpo Famine. The festival takes place on the first Sunday of August and, as its name implies, involves “carrying rocks” to the summit of Owari Fuji (277 meters, 908 feet), a small mountain in the city of Inuyama.

One theory about the origin of the festival goes that long ago, someone climbed Owari Fuji and left a wish inscribed on a stone. Princess Konohana sakuya-hime then appeared to the person in a dream and lamented that Owari Fuji was not as tall as Mt. Hongu, a neighboring mountain.

Afterwards, the individual picked up some clean rocks from the Kiso River, carried them to the top of the mountain, and stacked them up into a pile. As a result, the person’s wish came true.

The story spread from village to village, and soon people began carrying large rocks to the summit to pray for long and prosperous lives, good fortune for their descendants, and bountiful harvests. This was the beginning of the Ishiage festival.