

## **Education Tower (Kyōikutō)**

Education Tower was built in 1936 and initially served as a memorial to schoolteachers and students who had died in a typhoon two years before. The storm, one of the most powerful ever recorded at the time, hit at the start of the school day, and more than a quarter of the 990 lives it claimed in Osaka were those of children and teachers. Many schools of that era were wooden structures that could not withstand powerful storms, and more than 200 of Osaka's educational institutions were reportedly destroyed or badly damaged by the typhoon's winds.

Stories later circulated of teachers who heroically risked their lives to lead students to safety or attempted to shelter them as the buildings collapsed. The construction of Education Tower was funded by public donations, and since the end of World War II, it has been managed by the Japan Teachers' Union. Today, the memorial honors educators and students in general, including those killed in subsequent disasters, such as the Great Hanshin Earthquake that hit the city of Kobe in 1995.