

Nakano Shrine

Nakano Shrine was built in 799 in the village of Nakano (now Higashinakano). When kite making began in the area in the early eighteenth century, it became a site for the collaborative work on the kites due to its familiarity in the local community and the ample space inside the grounds.

By the mid-nineteenth century, the shrine became known as the birthplace of the Higashiomi *oodako* (giant kite). The giant kites, which measure approximately 100 tatami, a common Japanese unit of measurement (1 tatami mat is 1.65 square meters), were constructed on the shrine grounds and then transported and to an open field called Okinogahara to be flown. The kites gained wide renown and the village of Nakano came to be known as the home of the best kite-makers in the area.

Higashiomi Oodako Hall was built in 1991 to accommodate the construction of the giant kites. Kite making near the shrine ceased, but people in Higashiomi still visit the shrine to pray for the success of their kites.