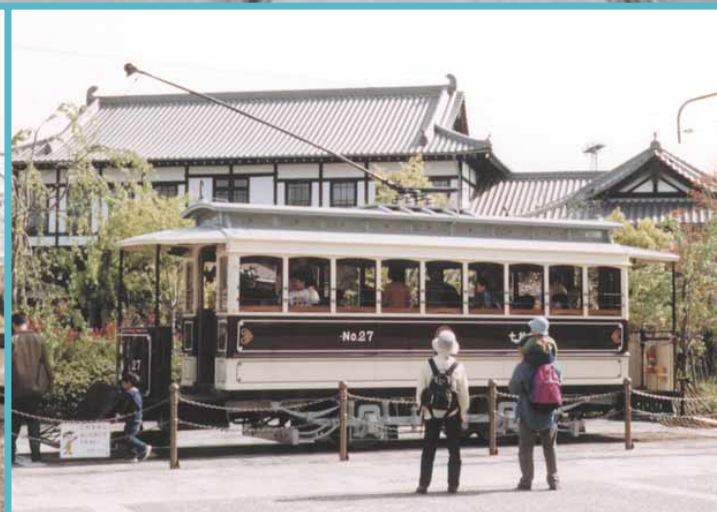


# JRTR

Japan Railway & Transport Review



**FEATURES:** Heritage Railway (part 2)  
Origin of 3'6" Gauge

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Umekoji Steam Locomotive Museum  
attracts people of all ages to see 18  
former JNR steam locos, a Japanese-  
style wooden station building as well  
as a restored Kyoto tram car.  
(EJRFC)

## Editorial

### Changing values

Japan is suffering from a prolonged economic crisis after the bursting of the bubble economy in the early 1990s. Her greying population also casts a long shadow. In sharp contrast to the 1970s and 1980s, today's Japan seems to have almost completely lost self-confidence. However, we must remember that a stagnant economy and unstable society sometimes create a new culture. The famous French long summer holidays started in 1936 under the Popular Front government that was facing social and political unrest in the aftermath of the Great Depression. Similarly, the railway preservation movement originated in North Wales in the early 1950s and flourished through Britain's sluggish postwar economy and aging society.

Japan's postwar economic growth was fuelled by the energies and purchasing power of a young and diligent workforce. But with today's unprecedented low birth rate, the noisy prosperity of the high-growth period is unlikely to be seen again. However, a population with more leisure time as well as a mature and broad attitude to life could change people's sense of values. Things like volunteering free time to operate a heritage railway did not attract busy people in the past, but this could soon change.

T. SUGA

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