

Citizen's top executives in 1930:
Yosaburo Nakajima, Yamaski,
Kamekichi and Ryoichi Suzuki.



初代会長
山崎亀吉氏



初代社長
中島与三郎氏



工場管理人
鈴木良一氏

Citizen: Watches for the world

There is probably only a single watch manufactory on the globe that can boast the fact of owing its name to a veritable mayor. And that is the Tokyo-based Citizen Watch Co. Ltd. As a »timepiece for citizens« the developments of a research institute should be worn on the wrists of people.



The first pocket watch by Citizen of the year 1924.

The foundation of the company in such an extraordinary way was brought about by well-founded reasons. The head of the municipality at that time with the name Shinpei Goto desired nothing less than that the outcome of the research of the Shokosha-watch institute should »have a bearing on all citizens in so far as people appreciated and liked to benefit from the institute's results«. In order to emphasise the seriousness of his longing, he gave the products the name of »Citizen«, which is easily to be remembered, and simply has the meaning that every member of a community should have the advantage of their practical application. In this sense, Goto San, who governed the Japanese capital from 1911 to 1925, can be regarded as a kind of sponsor, who proposed the name for the watch brand Citizen.

Since the year 1918, the Shokosa-institute itself had put the subject of »a watch« only on the agenda for research and development purposes. It was not until December 1924 that results materialized. And they became manifest in the sha-

pe of a pocket watch being adorned with the signature of Citizen. One of the first samples could be proudly presented to the Japanese Emperor. And the Emperor himself seemed not only to be deeply impressed, but also to use it frequently. Before that, the monarch had always been a little bit annoyed at the necessity of using only watches that were of foreign origin. Pleased at the now Japanese origin of the product, he once let the producer know by a letter about the good quality and precision of the first Citizen.

But for all that, no one in Japan thought of constructing a watch manufactory of this name at that time. It still took another 6 years till a watch manufactory of this name was to be founded. On 28 May 1930, Yosaburo Nakajima laid the cornerstone for this watch and trade empire, extending over the globe. Yamasaki Kamekichi, in his capacity as the company's first director, was next to him. Ryoichi Suzuki held the position of general manager.

From its beginnings, the young enterprise attached particular importance to innovations. Already in 1931, several types of watches were ready for serial production. One watch had a modern tonneau-shaped case, another appeared on the scene with

a classic round case. A 10¹/₂-line manual winding movement, with the simple designation »F«, made both watches function. In 1935, the Citizen Watch Co. could come up with a 8³/₄-line caliber »K«. And in 1940, the 5 ¹/₄-line caliber »L« followed. All these calibers required to get daily in touch with their wearers, women and men alike, as the coil spring had to be wound manually every day. From 1936, the growth-oriented company expanded well beyond the borders of Japan by exporting watches into the Southeast Asian and South-Pacific regions.



後藤新平氏

Mayor Shimpei Goto.

During the second world war, the army, as in other countries, could turn the expertise in precision mechanics of watch manufacturers to good use. The Citizen watchmakers were compelled to produce, among other things, chronometers and ignitors for military use.

Not least for these reasons were the production facilities in the Japanese capital the target of air raids by the Americans. However, in order to be able to continue production in spite of these adversities, Citizen established, still during the war, a new factory building in the small town Iida, about 200 km safely away from the former location. No bombers got lost into these mountainous regions, therefore, at this place one could pursue one's work nearly without disturbances.

Rise without a parallel

In the wooden building, erected in those days, Citizen has not discontinued producing watches here by this very day. The painful closeness – entailing working conditions, that are not at all optimal – of the green-painted building, meanwhile rather advanced in years, has to be accepted more or less voluntarily. The municipal authorities don't comply with requests of replacing the old building by a new one on the grounds of city planning priorities and of being obliged to preserve buildings of historical significance. They will certainly not alter this policy in future. But on the other hand, the executive board of the Heiwa Tokei Manufacturing Co., a subsidiary of the Citizen Watch Co., is able to hint, not without pride, to the fact that not a single working accident has happened since 1949. And despite angled ways, and other shortcomings in regard to the structure of the building.

After the end of the second world war, the company with ambitious goals could

report nearly breath-taking growth-rates under the management of Eiichi Yamada. This success could also be significantly attributed to the Citizen Trading Co., founded in 1949 and mainly in charge of marketing, importing and exporting Citizen watches, as this company could in the course of the next decades finally achieve that watches with the signature Citizen are made available on the world's markets to customers of more than hundred countries and that the watches are entitled to a after-sales

service of adequate expertise there as well.

The parent company Citizen Watch Co., responsible for the production, supplied attractive models. In 1950, for example, the first manual winding caliber with indication of central seconds, simply called »B«, could be offered. In 1952, the 17-stone caliber »C« followed, with the hand for seconds also arranged in the centre of the dial. In the same year, Citizen launched its first wristwatch with a full calendar, its styling was already clearly adapted to the taste of consumers in Europe.

Premières, records and diversification

In April 1956, the manufactory acquired renown by offering the first shock-proof watch of Japanese origin. In order to prove in a spectacular way the efficiency of the patented safety device for the protection of the sensitive pivots of the balance, clever marketing strategists submitted the model »Parashock« to rigid tests, witnessed by the public. For instance, watches were dropped from the third floor of a building. According to expectation, the movements stood the strain on the whole without any impairment. The »Parawater«, introduced in 1959, had to undergo similar rigorous testing procedures. In 1964, the first water-proof wristwatch, made in Japan, was exposed to the waters of the Pacific within the scope of a so-called »Trans-Pacific-Test«. In 1964, a second test of this kind followed. Here as well, the watch stood the test, and, of course, notice of defects could not be made. The watches kept what the ambitious producer had expected and promised. Already in 1958, Citizen launched on the market the first Japanese wristwatch with an alarm function with the manual winding caliber A-980. The time of alarm could be set with a second crown and a reminder-disc, arranged in the centre of the face. In the year 1964, Citizen was for the first time



First Citizen wristwatches with the caliber F of 1931.



The factory building, erected in the midst of 1940.



Wristwatch of 1950 with central second, caliber B.



The wristwatch with full calendar, caliber K, launched in 1952.



Wristwatch with alarm function of 1958, caliber A-980.



First Japanese wristwatch with shock-absorption »Parashock«, 1956.



Survey of the history and high performance level in regard to chronometers of the House Citizen:

Month/year	Dates of Citizen's history
March 1918	Foundation of the Shokosha Watch Research Institute in Tokyo, predecessor of the Citizen Watch Co. Ltd.
December 1924	Production of the first pocket watch.
May 1930	Foundation of the Citizen Watch Company.
June 1931	Completion of the first Citizen wristwatch, a model with tonneau-shaped case; 10 1/2 line manual-winding caliber F.
1935	Start of the production of the 8 3/4 line manual winding caliber K.
1940	The 5 1/4-line caliber L extends the product range.
June 1949	The Citizen Trading Co. for marketing, exporting and importing watches is founded.
1950	The new caliber B is equipped with an indirect, central second.
1952	A wristwatch with a simple, full calendar is launched. The time is given by caliber C with central second.
March 1953	The Rhythm Watch Co. merges with the Citizen Group.
April 1956	Public rigid tests for the »Parashock«.
January 1958	The start of exporting watches to the peoples'republic China.
June 1958	Market introduction of the first wristwatch with alarm function of Japanese origin, »Citizen Alarm«. The manual winding caliber A-980 with 19 stones keeps the time in the case. Introduction of the company's first automatic movement, caliber 3 KA with 21 stones. The model »De Luxe« is distinguished by a particularly fine manual winding movement with the caliber 2B-920. It has 25 stones and is in 3 layers finely regulated.
July 1959	Market launch of the first water-resistant wristwatch of Japanese origin. Citizen names it »Parawater«.
March 1960	Signing an import-export-agreement with the American Bulova Watch Co.
1960	Baguette-Caliber L-940 with manual winding with 17 stones.
1961	New automatic caliber with the designation H-030. The rotor moves around the proper movement.
July 1962	Start of exports to Southeast Asia with the help of an agency in Hong Kong.
1963	Citizen introduces a wristwatch chronometer with an official certificate for the movement.
June 1963	The »Parawater« is submitted to a rigid Trans-Pacific test. For this purpose a wristwatch of this type is exposed to the rough sea.
March 1964	Water resistance tests also in the Japanese Sea; execution of a second Trans-Pacific test for the »Parawater«.
1965	Start of a diversification process in order to produce office machinery.
October 1965	Citizen opens up a sales office in Germany; start of exports to Europe.
December 1965	With the »Crystal Seven« Citizen launches a new water resistant wristwatch with an automatic winding, indication of date and the day of the week.
March 1966	Introduction of Japan's first electronic wristwatch with the name Citizen »X-8«. An electronically regulated balance of the Caliber 0800 makes it tick. This watch is also available with an official certificate.
December 1966	Completion of Citizen's tower clock in Tokyo's noble shopping center Ginza. Taro Okamoto is responsible in his capacity as architect.
January 1967	World première: The quartz transistor-movement with the name Cryston.
1967	Manual-winding chronograph with indication of the date, caliber 5700, model »SportsMaster«.
May 1970	Market introduction of the new »X-8« as the world's first wristwatch with titanium case.
July 1971	Export of the first automatic wristwatch factory to India.
October 1971	Citizen launches a tune-fork movement on the market. Die HiSonic is equipped with the caliber 3700.
1972	Introduction of a new automatic chronograph with push bottoms at the top, Caliber 8100, given the nickname »Easter rabbit« within the company of Citizen.
August 1973	The »Quartz Cryston« is launched on the market with analogous indication of the date. The used hybrid movement regulates the oscillations of the balance by quartz.
April 1974	Market introduction of the »Citizen Quartz« with liquid crystal display (LCD).
1974	Citizen presents its first quartz movement with electronically driven synchronous motor, Caliber 8600 XE.
June 1975	On the occasion of the 45th anniversary of the brand Citizen, the company presents blind pupils with wristwatches of the type »Shine« with a dial face that can be read by touching.

December 1975	Premiere of the Citizen »Mega Quartz«. Its movement caliber 8650, diameter 26.4 mm, generates a quartz frequency of 4,194,304 Hz. The error amounts to a maximum of 3 second a year. A true record for a wristwatch. The »Mega Quartz« with a solid gold case and strap is available at not less than 4.5 million Yen, which equals 90,000 DM.
August 1976	The »Quartz Crystron Solar Cell« is the world's first quartz wristwatch with analogous indication of the time and supply with energy by solar cells.
April 1977	First Japanese wristwatch with liquid crystal display (LCD), alarm, stop and calculating functions. Its name »Citizen Quartz Calculator«.
February 1978	The headquarters are moved to the Shinjuku Mitsui building in Tokyo.
May 1978	For the first time, a quartz movement is lowered to less than 1 mm. The analogous caliber of the »Quartz 790« measures in its width just 0.98 mm. Accordingly, the gold case is very flat.
November 1978	Presentation of the »Citizen Quartz Digi-Ana«, with caliber 8900. It features a combination of a digital LCD and analogous indication.
February 1980	Official timekeeper at the Ome-Marathon.
November 1980	Citizen launches the smallest lady wristwatch with quartz movement, »Exceed gold«.
August 1981	The »Professional Diver 1,300 m« is resistant up to a water pressure of 120 atmospheres. No other serial-produced watch reaches such performance standard.
January 1982	Citizen is the official timekeeper of the Osaka International Women's Marathon.
October 1982	Installation of the world's largest neon lights in Hong Kong, of course, advertising Citizen.
August 1983	The brand »Lancel« is launched.
December 1985	Introduction of the »Sport Depth Meter«, featuring the world's first electronic wrist watch with a built-in depth gauge.
July 1987	The »Voice Master VX-2« is world wide the first wristwatch with voice-recognition.
June 1988	Installation of a »Count-down« watch for the coming turn of the millennium in Tokyo's district Shinjuku.
April 1991	Official timekeeper of the 41th table tennis world championship.
April 1992	With the »Analog-Aqualand«, Citizen launches the world's first quartz wristwatch with an analogous depth gauge on the market.
May 1992	Official timekeeper of the high sea regatta for the America's Cup
May 1993	Introduction of the worldwide first multi-frequency radio-controlled wristwatch.
April 1994	»Promaster« with a titanium case is introduced to the market.
May 1995	The models of the line »The Citizen« are equipped with a ten-year-guarantee. In addition, Citizen grants a life-long repair service.
November 1995	The »Eco-Drive« with trend-setting solar-technology is launched. It develops quickly to the sales hit of the House Citizen.
April 1996	The »Eco-Drive« is awarded a prize of the Japanese environment protection organization.
July 1996	Presentation of the world's record-flat movement with solar cells in the line »Eco-Drive«. Its width only 3.14 mm.
October 1996	Watch lovers are able to create on their own their favourite Citizen model on the PC, namely with the system »Watch Studio Design«.
June 1997	Citizen launches the »Exceed Eco-Drive« on the Japanese market. Its quartz movement has an error of utmost 20 seconds from the standard time per year.
October 1997	The new »Eco-Drive Signature« has a function to correct the time differences between time zones, introduction throughout the world. The »Promaster« wins a prize for good design.
May 1998	Official timekeeper of the »German Open« in tennis.
July 1998	The world's first diver wristwatch with solar cells is named »Promaster Eco-Drive-Aqualand«, is manufactured by Citizen and features an electronic depth gauge.
October 1998	The world's slimmest quartz movement in the »Exceed Lady's Eco-Drive« is launched on the Japanese market.
December 1998	A world premiere once again in the shape of the »Promaster Eco Drive Duo« with the name »Promaster Eco Drive Super Tough«.
June 1999	Citizen offers for the Japanese market the »Attesa Eco-Drive Radio-controlled Watch« with radio-controlled quartz movement
October 2000	International introduction of the »Eco-Drive Vitro«. It is the world's first wristwatch with nearly invisible solar cells.
2001	The prestigious collection »Campanolo« with a complicated quartz movement is launched.



First Citizen automatic watch, 1958, caliber 3 KA.



Sportsmaster Chronograph of 1967, caliber 5700, manual winding.



Automatic chronograph, 1972, caliber 8100.



Citizen HiSonic with fork tune caliber 3700, 1971.

Quartz Crystron of 1973, caliber 8800, balance controlled and driven by quartz



First Citizen quartz-wristwatch with electronically driven synchronous motor, caliber 8600 XE, introduced 1974.



»Quartz Crystron Solar Cell« as the world's first quartz wristwatch with analogous indication of time and energy generated by solar cells, 1976.

engaged in the field of sponsoring sports-events, which created publicity very much in favour of the company and brand image. The inhabitants of the Olympic Village in Tokyo were presented with altogether 850 watches within a major project of sponsorship. All watches were perfectly synchronised and accordingly showed a uniform time.

In 1965, the company gained another foothold with good prospects. It consisted in the production of office machinery, which met a ready market with Japan's rapidly advancing economy. Citizen, therefore, began a pronounced diversification process. More than 50 % of the sales figures are based nowadays on numerically controlled precision equipment, production robots, computer periphery units, printing machinery, liquid crystal displays, flat computer screens, quartz oscillators, medical machinery, digital hearing aids, golf-clubs, jewellery and spectacle frames. The collection of wristwatches was supplemented in the said year 1965 by a water-resistant automatic model with the indication of week and date, entitled »Crystal Seven«.

Electronics Revolution

With the introduction of the so-called »X 8« in March 1966, Citizen initiated a trend, that was to mark the company's history significantly in the future. It consisted of the timekeeping electronic parts with the application of oscillating quartz. They, however, could not yet prove their accuracy by the caliber 0800, since 1964 developed in the research laboratory Tokorozawa. Instead of it, an electronically driven and controlled balance oscillated in the first electronic watch of Japanese origin. The next step ahead was made in 1971, it was called caliber 3700 HiSonic and consisted of a resonance drive with a tiny tuning fork. A year before, in 1970, Citizen had already acquired the necessary know-how by a joint venture with its long-standing customer and tuning-fork pioneer Bulova.

Two years later Citizen came up with a quartz-regulated balance, caliber 8800 quartz-crystron. The first quartz movement with analogous indication of time and electronically driven synchronous motor, the caliber 8600 XE, followed in 1974. From that time the horological activities at Citizen were focused on quartz oscillators. In the following decades, the group attracted attention by setting new records and world's premieres. They all referred to the development on the sector of analogous and digital quartz wristwatches. One of the blaze-trailing superlatives was the »Mega« with the caliber 8650, launched in 1975. The oscillations of the quartz generated a frequency of 4,194,304 hertz. The error per year amounted to a

maximum of 2 seconds. As can be easily understood, Citizen supplied the technologically advanced movement only in a solid gold case and strap. Ardent adherents to punctuality, who wanted to have a share in the Mega -precision at that time, had to count down the impressive amount of 4.5 million Yen or about 90,000 DM on the table of a licence holder. And amazingly enough, these customers were not few and far between, but their number quite impressive. The whole spectrum of quartz-highlights in an extremely wide range of products, can be studied by the enclosed overview.

However, the conventional, mechanical watch making was of course not completely put aside by the new electronics revolution at Citizen. In 1967 Citizen came up with a manual-winding chronograph named »SportsMaster«. An automatic stopper for the wrist was fit for serial production in 1972. It distinguished itself by the arrangement of the crown and the push buttons at »12«, because of this constellation the watchmakers at Citizen gave the new model the nickname »Easter rabbit«. With the caliber 8700, a ball-bearing rotor stresses the spring in both directions. A classic gear changer provides for the polarisation of the rotor movements. The chronograph mechanism with gearing and gear control is integrated into the 12-line movement. It allows additional stops. With other words, stop functions can be used, as often as one likes, without return to the initial position. A fly-back function enables a new start of the chronograph without return to the starting point.

At the top of the world due to electronics and diversity

In 1980, Citizen advanced to the world's biggest producer of watches and movements.

By the way, mechanical movements meanwhile hold only a secondary position within the range of analogous chronometers at Citizen and Miyota. Only about 3 million movements with automatic or manual movements are produced per year in Japan and partly in South-China. And that is equivalent to only one percent of the whole production per year. Such mechanical movements can be assembled at reasonable prices due to notably low wage-costs on the Asian mainland. The buyers of these watches live mainly in the third world, where electronically driven watches do not enjoy great popularity because of the problematic battery change. With the growing spread and price reduction of solar-driven quartz-watches, being pioneered, as it is acknowledged in the trade, by Citizen since the mid seventies, this situation will possibly be changed soon. ●

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