

[Cultural Properties of Nyoho-ji Temple]



Tangible Cultural Properties
Designated by Ehime Prefecture

Mokuzo Jizo Bosatsu Ryuzo

Mokuzo Jizo Bosatsu Ryuzo is in the Jizodo of the temple. It is a life size statue with a height of 162.5 cm. The body was made of three wooden blocks: two in the front and one for the back, all of which are essentially solid and carved. First, the shoulders of the front and back blocks were joined and next the flanks were put together, and finally the tips of the hands and the shoes were added. This is a dynamic and powerful statue suggestive of a Kamakura warrior's proportions.

On the mortise joints of the feet, are inscribed the year 1276 (Kenji 2) and the name of the Buddha statue maker, Kokei Hokyo. It is considered that he was the same sculptor who made the wooden Shakanyorai in Hozoji in Tamagawa Cho, Imabari City. Based on his distinct powerful style, he is thought to be a Buddhist statue maker from the Kanto area.



Jizodo

※ This statue is usually not on view for the general public.

Natural Treasure Designated
by Ehime Prefecture

Camellia Trees of Nyoho-ji Temple

In the front garden at the entrance of the temple, there are three of the finest camellia trees, one Goshiki Chiri Tsubaki tree and two Shutendoji trees.

The Goshiki Chiri Tsubaki is estimated to be about 300 years old and is said to have come from a famous camellia tree related to a heroic feudal lord of the Kumamoto Domain, Kiyomasa Kato. The Shutendoji trees, which grow only within the area of the old Ozu Domain, bear gorgeous scarlet flowers. One of them is estimated to be more than 150 years old and the other more than 250 years old.



※ Flowering period: between February and April.



Tangible Cultural Property
Designated by Ozu City

Mokuzo Bankei Osho Zazo

This statue is placed in Oshiken (Kaisando) on a mountain about 15 minutes on foot from the main hall.

An inscription, Oshi Kaiso Sonki was found on the base of the statue. It says that Bankei carved the statue himself and placed it in the Juto Tower of Oshiken, which was used for educating and training monks.

Oshiken was a monks' ashram and no other people, even lords of the domain, were allowed to enter it. Meetings with visitors were done in a small hut built between the temple and Oshiken. Now on the site, there stands a monument, describing "Kaizan Kokushi Gessoko Iori Ato," which means that this is the site on which a reputable monk, Gesso, created the temple.

※ This statue is usually not on view for the general public.

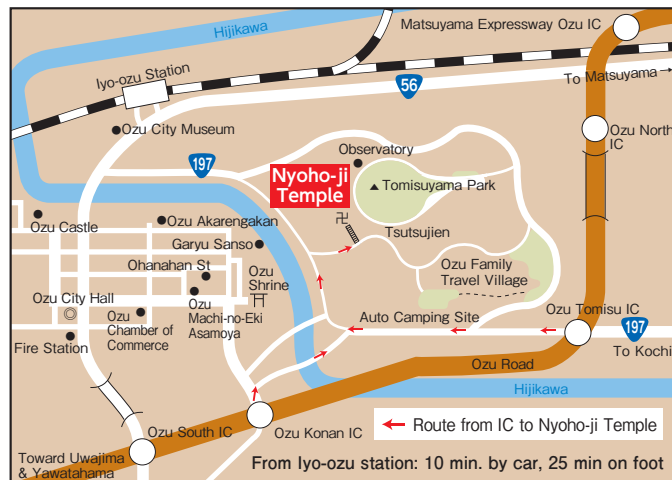
Kannondo

Old records state that when Nyoho-ji Temple was rebuilt, many other buildings were also built around the mountains, as well as inside of the temple site.

Kannondo is one of these buildings and was built in Enpo 5 (1677). This hall is an important building which still maintains its original appearance.

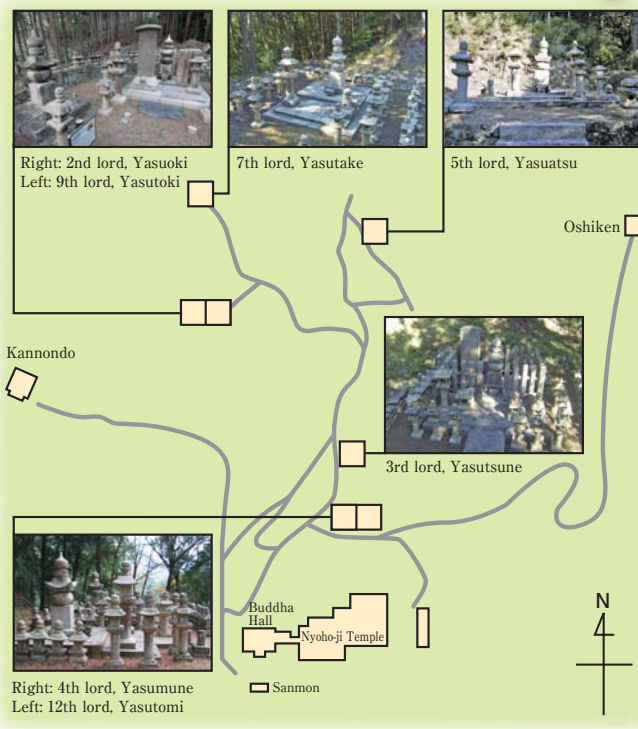


Directions within Ozu City to Nyoho-ji Temple



The Lords of Ozu Domain, the Katos, Grave Sites

Ozu City Designated
Historic Sites



Inquiries Ozu City Board of Education, Culture & Sports Department

690-1 Ozu, Ozu City, Ehime Pref., 795-8601

TEL 0893-57-9993 FAX 0893-23-5760 E-mail bunkasportska@city.ozu.ehime.jp



Exploration of Cultural Properties in Ozu City②

Nyoho-ji Buddha Hall

Nationally Designated Important Cultural Property



OZU NYOHOJI BUDDHA HALL

About Nyoho-ji Temple

Nyoho-ji Temple was originally built by the lord of Kita-gun, Utsunomiya in the Muromachi period. Later this temple was closed. However, it was reopened by the second lord of Ozu Domain, Yasuoki Kato in Kanbun 9 (1669). He brought in a reputable Zen monk, Yotaku Bankei and rebuilt it as a temple of the Myoshinji denomination of Rinzaishu.

Originally there were many buildings on the grounds including a Buddha hall, a Rinzo (a library with rotating shelves for sutras), Hojos (living quarters), and Kuris (monk's living quarters). However, due to several fires, all the buildings except the Buddha hall were burnt down, and only a few of them were rebuilt later.

Several buildings were scattered across the mountains including Kannondo, which was built in Enpo 5 (1677), and Oshiken (Kaizando). In addition, behind the living quarters, there is a chisenkansho style garden (a garden with a central pond and fountain, designed to be appreciated from a study room), which was said to be made in the middle of the Edo period. The pond, Fushoike, colored by lotus flowers, creates a serene atmosphere.

Nyoho-ji Temple was a family temple of the lords of Ozu Domain, the Kato Family, as well as Ryogozansokeiin. Seven lords were buried at the grave site: the second lord, Yasuoki, the third lord, Yasutsune, 4th lord, Yasumune, 5th lord, Yasutsu, 7th lord, Yasutake, 9th lord, Yasutoki, and 12th lord, Yasutomi. The grave site and precincts were designated as historic sites by Ozu City.



Main Living Quarters (Main Hall)



Pond and Fountain Garden with Islands Shaped like a Turtle and a Crane



Oshiken



National Important Cultural Property Buddha Hall

The hall was built in Kanbun 10 (1670). It measures 4 *kens* in width and 5 *kens* in length and has a one *ken kohai*^{*} in front and a *Karahafu geya* attached to the building at the back entrance. It has a dirt floor paved with diamond shaped bricks called *sen*, and the ceiling is painted with 96 pictures of dragons.

In the center of the hall, there is a platform of the alter called Shumidan, where a Shakanyorai Image is placed and enshrined. On each side of the hall, there is a *Tatami* space, 1 *ken* in width, called *Tan*, which was used for monks' daily activities including meditation, and against the wall next to it, there is a line of chests of drawers called *Kanki* to keep their bedding. As a Buddha hall, the floor plan of this hall is unique since it was made to have dual functions, as a space for Buddhist prayers and at the same time as a space for monks to practice Zen and live.

The Buddha hall survived several fires. It still maintains its original structure and has an excellent design as well. Because of these features, the hall was designated as an important national cultural property in Heisei 4 (1992) as an example of a typical modern Japanese Zen Buddhist hall.

Findings of the Buddha Hall Revealed during Preservation and Reconstruction Work

Preservation and reconstruction work took about 4 years, starting in Heisei 22 (2010). It revealed the original conditions of the hall and other new facts. Some notes were found scribbled on the sides of the drawers of the chests



Drawers on the West Side of the Hall
Notes Found on the Side of the Drawers in Charcoal Ink

in charcoal ink such as "Temple under restoration" and "Shakamuni Hall." These notes show that the architects and workers then considered that Nyoho-ji Temple was a restored temple and that this Buddha hall was a Shakamuni hall.

In addition, it was found that the sculptures of *kohai* and *kaerumata* (frog-leg shaped struts) were carved by artisans in Himeji and



Kohai: Nose of the Lion on the East Side
Kohai: Notes Written in Charcoal Ink on the Nose of the Lion on the East Side

that ridge-end tiles called *onigawara* were made by tile makers in Ozu. Furthermore, it was found that the roof and roof boards of the hall were repaired several times and that a few areas of the hall were renovated.

Geya, the roof of the back of the building, was one of the renovated areas. It was tiled before the repair. During the reconstruction



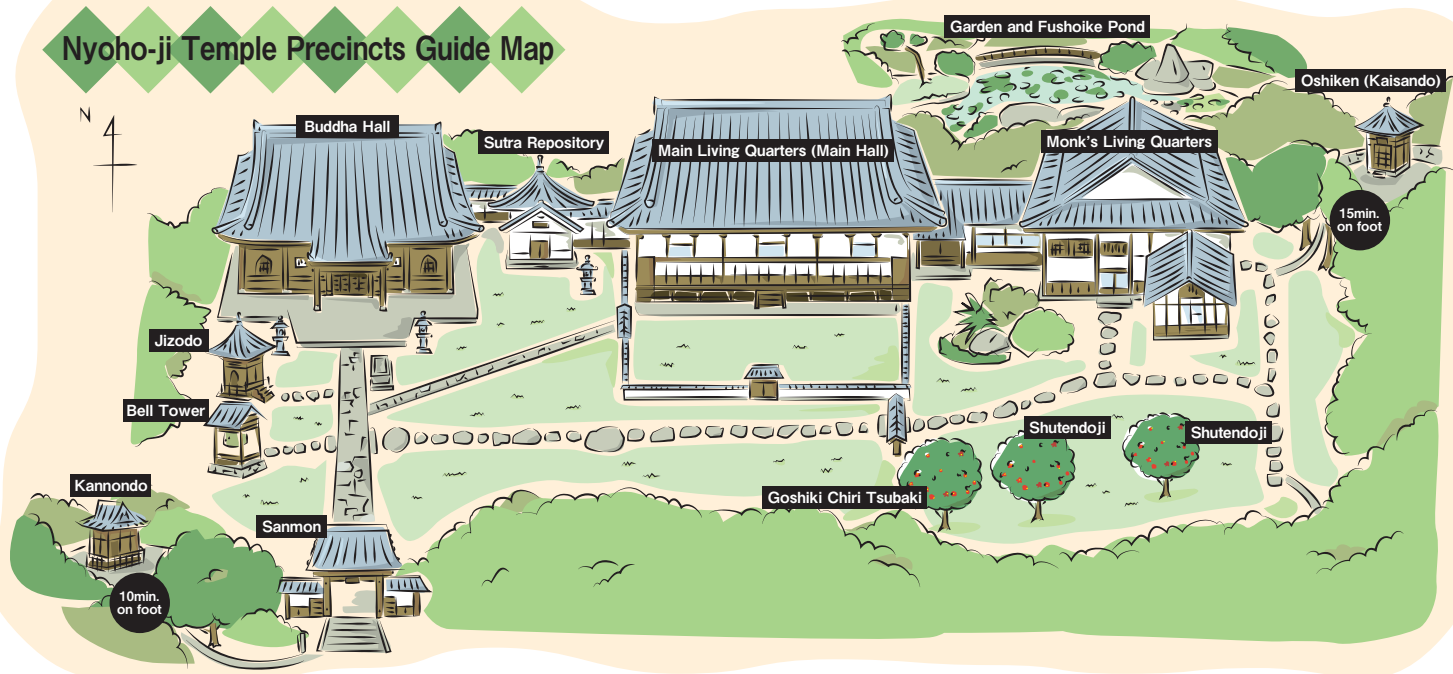
Onigawara on the West Top Ridge of the Roof

work, however, some original materials were found, which revealed that the roof was originally a shingled roof made of thin boards. Furthermore, the foundation of the hall, which was made of stone, was found to be originally a floor made of plaster made with special red soil and sands called *domadataki*.



Kokerafuki of the *Geya* Roof (Shingled Roof) in the Back

Nyoho-ji Temple Precincts Guide Map



Inside of the Buddha Hall

Statues of the Sponsor & Founders in the Buddha Hall

The platform behind the Buddha hall is extended on both sides. On the East side of the platform, there is a statue of the founder of Nyoho-ji Temple, Yotaku Bankei. On the west side of the platform, a statue of the sponsor and founder, Yasuoki Kato can be found. The statue of Yotaku Bankei was made in Genroku 10 (1697). The head was made with clay which contains ashes of the bones of Bankei himself. The hair and mustache attached to the face were also believed to be his own. The year when the statue of Yasuoki Kato was made is unknown. The waistcoat of his statue was said to be worn by Bankei at Yasuoki's 13th memorial ceremony held in Genroku 2 (1689).



Statue of the Founder & Sponsor: Yasuoki Kato



Statue of the Founding Monk: Yotaku Bankei