

POINTS OF SPECIAL INTEREST

HISTORY OF RYOTANJI

The floors are "Nightingale Floors" made from pinetree wood. They make special sound when walked on and are called "Singing Floor Boards." This "Nightingale Floor" was constructed by Hidari Jingoro.

The wood carving of the dragon. (the ryu in the Ryotanji name) was also made by Hidari Jingoro.

A nationally designated cultural asset the "Kanazawa Bunko" is the oldest of its kind from China. It was left to Japan as a cultural heritage, originally by Nobunaga Oda.

The "Ryotanji Byobu" (a folded screen) is entitled "Yuge no Zu" and is supposedly the work of Matabei Iwasa. This folding screen portrays the customs and recreations of the people of the Edo period.

Ryotanji is a temple of the Zen sect of Buddhism, the Rinzaï shu, Myoshinji ha. The principal Image is Kokuzo Dai Bosatsu. The Ii family's Temple is called "Munenaga Shino" and the grave of Prince Munenaga Shino who died about 500 years ago, are, located there.

History —————

This Temple was founded in the year 733 by the Priest Gyoki, who enshrined a Buddhist image here.

In the year 1010, a baby appeared in the "Well" which is in front of this temple, and there was washed (for purification). The child was raised at the temple until he was 7 years old. In later years, the child retired to Inoya (this area) and took the name of "Ii". Then he was named Ii Tomoyasu, who was the feudal lord of the Ii family, When he died in 1093, he was buried in this temple. The Ii family had governed this region for approximately 500 year until Ii Naomasa (the 17th. Lord Ii) moved his residence to Hikone City in Shiga Pref. During that 500 years period. Ryotanji served as their family temple.

The Ii family were the ancestors of Ii Naosuke, and the character for "Well" is in the family crest. Since there was a wild orange tree beside the well, the character for this tree is also on the family crest.

In the year 1572, this temple was (burnt by) the Lord Imagawa. The whole building was rebuilt by the Ii family in the Edo Era. The Hondo (Main Hall) was built in the year 1670.

The Kaisando which was constructed to honor the enshrined priest "Kaisan" was built in 1702.

The Kuri (entrance building) was made in 1815.



ryotanji Byobu



Kanazawa Bunko



The wood carving of the dragon



Nightingale Floor
Rebuild in 1676



Otamaya (mausoleum) for the Ii's
It is recorded that Priest "Hakuin Hara" who is highly respected as a great contributor regarding the prosperity of the Rinzaï Zen sect attended the Rakkei memorial service for this mausoleum where the spirit of the members of the Ii is enshrined. The wooden statues of Tomoyasu, the founder of the Ii's, Naomori the fifteenth and Naomasa the seventeenth are enshrined in this mausoleum.



Joroku the great image of Buddha

This is the biggest of all the images of Buddha "Shakyamuni Tathagata" in the Enshu district. The temple for this great image of Buddha was destroyed in the early Meiji era when the anti-Buddhist movement took place and the image is now provisionally placed in the main building of the temple.