

# Cultural Heritage of Ashiya

## Ashiya City

## History of Ashiya

Ashiya City lies in the southeastern part of Hyogo Prefecture, within the Hanshin region. Stretching roughly 2.5 km east to west and 8.3 km north to south, the city covers an area of 18.57 square kilometers.

Human activity in Ashiya dates back nearly 20,000 years to the Paleolithic period. Since people first settled here, generations have lived in a landscape blessed with rich natural surroundings. Over time, they shaped the history of Ashiya and created numerous Cultural Properties—its historical and cultural heritage. This handbook introduces 61 cultural heritage sites within the city. Before exploring them, we begin with the historical background that nurtured these cultural treasures.

### **From Hunting to Rice Cultivation (Paleolithic, Jomon, and Yayoi Periods)**

Near the Ashiya Gate of the Royu Toll Road, fossils of a Naumann elephant molar—estimated to be 30,000 to 100,000 years old—have been discovered (See Page 17).

Stone tools such as knife-shaped implements found at the Uchide-Kozuchi Archaeological Site and related archaeological sites indicate that people began living in Ashiya around 20,000 years ago. At that time, the world was in the Ice Age. The coastline lay far to the south, beyond the present-day Kitan Strait, and the Seto Inland Sea did not yet exist. Ashiya was an inland area.

As the Ice Age ended and the climate warmed, sea levels rose and the Seto Inland Sea formed, creating a landscape close to what we see today. This warming peaked around 6,000 years ago during the early Jomon period. Jomon pottery and stone tools have been excavated from sites such as the Asahigaoka Archaeological Site and the Yama-Ashiya Archaeological Site (Yama-Ashiya-cho) within the city. People used these tools to hunt, gather nuts, and fish, living on the rich bounty provided by both the mountains and the sea.

During the Yayoi period, rice cultivation reached Ashiya. At the Maeda Archaeological Site, traces of rice paddies from the early Yayoi period (about 2,500 years ago) have been unearthed. Many Yayoi settlements have been found throughout the city, but in particular, highland settlements such as the Egenoyama Archaeological Site (a

Nationally Designated Historic Site; see page 18) and the Shiroyama Archaeological Site date from the late middle to early late Yayoi period (2nd century BC to 1st century AD). Why were these settlements built in mountainous areas unsuitable for rice paddies? Scholars have proposed theories such as lookout posts or refuge settlements, but the answer remains uncertain.

In the Edo period, a bronze dotaku bell— known as the Donoue Bronze Bell and now designated as a Cultural Property of Ashiya City—was discovered near Kusunoki-cho and is preserved as a temple treasure at Abosan Shinnoji Temple in Uchide-cho.

### The Era of Burial Mounds (*Kofun* Period)

The earliest burial tomb built within today's Ashiya City dates to the early *Kofun* period (4th century). This is the Abo Shinnozuka Mound (the Mound of Prince Abo), where at least eight bronze mirrors—including Chinese imports—were unearthed. Four of these mirrors are Designated Cultural Properties of Ashiya City. On the same ridge of the Midorigaoka Hills, where the Abo Shinnozuka Mound was constructed, two more keyhole-shaped burial tombs were later built: Kanatsuyama *Kofun* (late 5th century; a Designated Cultural Property of Hyogo Prefecture) and Uchidekozuchi *Kofun* (late 5th century). Both are keyhole-shaped burial tombs, and the fact that their front sections were deliberately oriented toward the sea suggests that the people buried within were powerful local leaders deeply connected to maritime transportation.

From the late *Kofun* to the Asuka period (6th–7th centuries), the number of burial tombs increased dramatically across Japan. In Ashiya, clusters of small tombs with horizontal stone chambers—known as *grouped tumuli*—were formed, including the Shiroyama–Sanjo *Kofun* Group (Oaza Shiroyama, Yama-Ashiya-cho, and Sanjo-cho) and the Yasozuka *Kofun* Group. At the Shiroyama–Sanjo *Kofun* Group, miniature clay stoves and other artifacts linked to immigrant communities from the continent have been discovered. One mound, the Asahizuka *Kofun*, built in the mid-7th century, is particularly rare in the Settsu region for its multi-sided shape and stone facing. From Tumulus No. 61 of the Iwagahira Subgroup within the Yasozuka *Kofun* Group, a double-dragon–decorated sword pommel—designated as a Cultural Property of Ashiya City—was excavated. The burial tomb located within the precincts of Ashiya-jinja Shrine—also designated as a Cultural Property of Ashiya City—has originally belonged to the Kasagazuka *Kofun* Group.

### When Ashiya Was the Center of Uhara District (Asuka, Nara, and Heian Periods)

Archaeological investigations have revealed that, in the 7th and 8th centuries, Ashiya occupied the eastern part of Uhara District in Settsu Province and held a politically and economically significant position at the western edge of the Kinai region. Ashiya was also a key hub for both land and sea transportation, linking it to the capitals of Heijo-kyo, Nagaoka-kyo, and Heian-kyo. Its name frequently appears in classical literature and traditional legends.

The *Shinsen Shojiroku* (compiled in 815, Konin 6) records the names of immigrant clans such as Ashiya no Ayahito and Ashiya no Suguri. The shoreline of Ashiya has long been called “Karahito no Hama,” or “Beach of the Continental People,” indicating that advanced cultures from the continent were brought here and had taken root.

In the Kinai region, by the late 7th century, the construction of burial tombs had ceased, and the Taiho Code in 701 (Taiho 1) established a formal administrative system of provinces, districts, and villages. Documents from the 8th century confirm that Uhara District in Settsu Province extended along the southern foothills of the Rokko Mountains, including present-day Ashiya. It appears that the Ashiya area once housed the chief and assistant district governors who administered Uhara District. At the Terada Archaeological Site (Sanjo-Minami-cho), ink-inscribed pottery bearing the titles “*Kami*” (chief district governor) and “*Suke*” (assistant governor) was discovered—now Designated Cultural Properties of Ashiya City. These finds strongly suggest that the district government office (*Uhara Guke*) was located near modern-day Sanjo-Minami-cho.

During the Asuka period (7th century), the Former Ashiya Temple, an ancient Buddhist temple site, was established near present-day Nishiyama-cho. Although it is now a residential area with no structures remaining above ground today, excavations have uncovered numerous ancient roof tiles and other artifacts, and in 1936 (Showa 11) the Stone Foundation for the Central Pillar of a Pagoda in Ashiya Temple Ruins—now a Designated Cultural Property of Hyogo Prefecture—was found. As Japan developed a national road network from the latter half of the 7th century onward, the ancient Sanyodo highway connected the capital to Dazaifu in Kyushu. Along this route, relay stations (*umaya*) were placed at intervals of about 16 km, and one of them was the Ashiya Station (*Ashiya-no-Umaya*). Ink-inscribed pottery bearing the character “驛” (station) found at the Fukae-Kitamachi Archaeological Site in Higashinada-ku, Kobe, together with discoveries from the Tsuji Archaeological Site in Tsuji-cho, within the Ashiya City area adjacent to this site, suggests that facilities related to the Ashiya Station existed in the area.

### **A Time of Warfare (Kamakura, Nanbokucho, Muromachi, and Sengoku Periods)**

As the *ritsuryo* system declined, *shoen* estates expanded even further and, in the

provinces, the disorder in political affairs allowed the warrior class to rise to prominence. During the Kamakura, Nanbokuchō, Muromachi —when the warrior class held power and the shogunate became the center of political authority—and later in the Sengoku period of *gekokujo*, Ashiya too became the stage for several battles, and mountain fortresses were constructed, and the region was drawn into an era of upheaval.

The Nuezuka Mound is associated with the legend of the warrior Minamoto no Yorimasa, who is said to have slain a monstrous creature—a tale reflecting the shift of power from aristocrats to warriors.

Records from the Muromachi period mention the *Ashiya-no-Sho* (Ashiya Estate), believed to have been an imperial estate. Part of it was donated to Katsuoji Temple in Mino, and later documents in the same period show that the Ashiya Estate belonged to Kitanojinja Shrine. Excavations at the Terada Archaeological Site (Tsukiwaka-cho) and the Rokujo Archaeological Site have uncovered building remains from the late Heian to early Kamakura period (12th–13th century), possibly linked to the Taira clan's advance during the brief relocation of the capital to Fukuhara-kyo (in present-day Chuo-ku and Hyogo-ku of Kobe) in 1180 (Jisho 4). A Chinese yellow-glazed iron-painted plate produced at the Cizao kilns in Fujian Province, China, and dating from the late Heian to early Kamakura period (late 12th to early 13th century)—now a Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City—was also found at the Terada Archaeological Site in Nishi-Ashiya-cho, likely brought to the area through trade between Japan and the Song dynasty.

A record survives stating that on July 25 and 26 in 1285 (Koan 8), the monk Eison, who revived the Ritsu sect, stayed at the residence of Ashiya no Shigenaka and Shigekiyo, where he administered the Bodhisattva Precepts to 139 residents of the Ashiya Estate.

Ashiya later became the site of two major battles: Battle of Uchide, fought on February 10, 1336 (Kenmu 3), between Kusunoki Masashige and Ashikaga Takauji, and Battle of Uchidehama, which broke out on February 17, 1351 (Shohei 6 or Kanno 2), between Ashikaga Takauji and his younger brother Tadayoshi.

After the Onin War (1467, Onin 1), when the Muromachi shogunate was in a state of turmoil, the Kawarabayashi clan held power in the region. In the early 16th century, Kawarabayashi Masayori constructed a mountain fortress—Takao Castle—on the summit of Mount Takao. At this time, the Hosokawa family, the military governors of Settsu Province, was embroiled in internal conflict. In June of 1511 (Eisho 8), Hisaharu, aligned with Hosokawa Sumimoto, the rival of Masayori's lord Hosokawa Takakuni, encamped at Fukae and, together with local warriors of the Nada district, laid siege to Takao Castle. Soon afterward, on July 26, a fierce battle broke out between them and the reinforcements arriving on Takakuni's side—an event known as the Battle of Ashiya-gawara. The Hiyoshi Jinja Small Stone Shrine (a Designated

Cultural Property of Ashiya City) bears an inscription dated “Eisho 17” (1520), corresponding to the period when Hosokawa Takakuni, Kawarabayashi Masayori, and Hosokawa Sumimoto repeatedly fought in the Ashiya and Nishinomiya region. By the end of the Sengoku period, four villages—Ashiya, Uchide, Sanjo, and Tsuji—had formed within the present city area. Of these villages, Ashiya and Uchide were collectively known as *Ashiya-no-Sho*, while Sanjo and Tsuji, together with the villages of Mori, Nakano, Shoji, Kitahata, Tanabe, Fukae, and Ogi—located to the west of Tsuji in what is now Kobe’s Higashinada-ku—were collectively referred to as the Honjo Nine Villages and frequently acted in concert.

### **When the Lords Ruled from Amagasaki Castle (Azuchi–Momoyama and Edo Periods)**

In 1582 (Tensho 10), as the age of civil war was drawing to a close, Ashiya became a direct territory of Hashiba Hideyoshi (later Toyotomi Hideyoshi). However, after the fall of the Toyotomi clan in the Summer Campaign of Osaka in 1615 (Keicho 20), Ashiya became part of the lands governed by hereditary vassals of the Tokugawa shogunate. In 1617 (Genna 3), it was granted to Toda Ujikane, who became the lord of the Amagasaki Domain. The Edo shogunate ordered Ujikane to rebuild Osaka Castle, and large quantities of stone for its walls were quarried in the Higashi-Rokko area within the Amagasaki Domain. The remains of these quarries within the city are known today as the “Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry.” Stones extracted here were transported down to the coast and shipped across Osaka Bay to the castle. Some of these stones—left temporarily at Uchide Beach—have been excavated from sites such as the Kuregawa Archaeological Site (Pages 58–59), the Miyagawa Riverbed Archaeological Site, and the Nishikura Archaeological Site (Nishikura-cho). After the Toda clan, the Aoyama clan in 1635 (Kanei 12) and later the Matsudaira (Sakurai) clan in 1711 (Hoei 8) ruled Amagasaki Domain, and Ashiya remained under their control. But in 1769 (Meiwa 6), the shogunate reclaimed the coastal areas of Nada as direct shogunal land (*tenryo*). From then on, Ashiya and Uchide villages became shogunal territory, while Sanjo and Tsuji villages remained part of the Amagasaki Domain.

The Saigoku Kaido Historic Road, which passed through Ashiya, split into two routes at Uchide: the mountain route (Honkaido), used by western feudal lords traveling to Edo, and the coastal route (Hamakai-do). Ashiya prospered early due to its proximity to Kyoto and Osaka and its location along this major road. In particular, waterwheel-powered industries using water drawn from the Ashiya River flourished, supporting the development of rice-polishing for Nada sake brewing and the pressing of rapeseed oil.

To address chronic water shortages, Sarumaru Matazaemon Yasutoki, an elder of Ashiya Village, spent more than 20 years, starting in 1841 (Tempo 12), constructing Okuike (Okuyama Reservoir), which was completed in 1865 (Genji 2).

### **From Rural Villages to a Suburban Residential City (Meiji, Taisho, and Showa Periods)**

In 1868, at the start of the Meiji era, the four villages of Ashiya, Uchide, Sanjo, and Tsuji were divided between shogunal land and the territory of the Amagasaki Domain. That same year, the former two were placed under the Hyogo Garrison (later the Hyogo Court) and subsequently became part of Hyogo Prefecture (first formation). The latter two became Amagasaki Prefecture after the 1869 (Meiji 2) return of lands and people (*hanseki hokan*), and then part of Amagasaki Prefecture after the 1871 (Meiji 4) abolition of domains (*haihan chiken*). In November of that year, Amagasaki Prefecture was merged into the second formation of Hyogo Prefecture, bringing the four villages under a single administration. In April 1889 (Meiji 22), with the implementation of the municipal system, the four villages merged to form Seido Village.

Even in the Meiji period, the Ashiya area retained its long-standing rural landscape inherited from the Edo period. Against this backdrop, in 1874 (Meiji 7), the government-operated railway between Osaka and Kobe (present-day JR Tokaido Main Line) opened, and, in consequence, one of Japan's earliest railway tunnels—the Ashiyagawa Tunnel—was constructed. However, no station existed within the city at the time; Ashiya Station was not established until 1913 (Taisho 2). Hanshin Electric Railway opened in 1905 (Meiji 38), establishing Ashiya and Uchide stops. The old stone piers supporting the Ashiyagawa Bridge still remain beneath today's Hanshin Ashiya Station platform. In 1920 (Taisho 9), the Kobe Line of Hanshin Kyuko Railway (now Hankyu Railway) opened, and Ashiyagawa Station was established. In 1927 (Showa 2), the Hanshin National Highway (now National Route 2) opened, and later four stops—Yama-Uchide, Ashiya-Ekimae, Ashiyagawa, and Tsuji—were added on the Hanshin National Highway Line.

The construction of the highway also brought the building of Narihira Bridge and Uchide Bridge. With this rapid development of transportation, business leaders from Osaka and Kobe began building residences in Ashiya from the late Meiji period onward, attracted by its scenic residential environment. From 1917 (Taisho 6) into the early Showa period, land readjustment projects were carried out, creating orderly street grids. On this foundation, Seido Village transformed rapidly from a rural community into a suburban residential area. As Seido Village developed, its population grew rapidly from 3,285 people in 597 households at its founding in 1889

(Meiji 22) to 20,586 people in 3,963 households by 1926 (Showa 1). Historic buildings from the Taisho to early Showa periods include the YODOKO Guest House (the Former Residence of the Yamamuras, a National Important Cultural Property), the Former Residence of the Matsuyamas, Shotokan (Ashiya City Uchide Branch Library, a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property), the Ashiya Buddhist Hall (a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property), the former Ashiya Post Office Telephone Office (Ashiya Monolith, a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property), and the Ashiya Police Station.

Ashiya suffered major damage from the Muroto Typhoon in September 1934 (Showa 9) and the Hanshin Great Flood of July 1938 (Showa 13). After the flood, the Ashiya River underwent major improvement works from 1939 to 1946, during which several dams were constructed.

On November 10, 1940 (Showa 15), following the establishment of the city system, Ashiya was incorporated as a city—the 173rd city established nationwide—remarkable for its direct transition from village to city without passing through town status.

In 1945 (Showa 20), the city suffered four air raids, resulting in 139 deaths and the destruction of about 40 percent of all households.

After the war, Ashiya devoted itself to reconstruction. On March 3, 1951 (Showa 26), the Act on Construction of Ashiya as City of International Culture with Good Residential Environment was promulgated. In the years following the war, based on this law, the city pursued its unique vision of creating “a residential city rich in internationalism and cultural character,” a policy that continues to shape Ashiya today.

## Column The Origin of the Name “Ashiya”

The coastal area stretching from Nishinomiya to Kobe—known in the Edo period as the Nada district—was in earlier times called “Ashiya-no-Sato.” The place-name “Ashiya” is said to derive either from the reeds (*ashi*) that grew thickly in the wetlands along the coast, where houses with reed-thatched roofs once stood, or from interpreting *ya* in Ashiya as “valley,” meaning low-lying land, thus referring to a reed-growing marshy area.

The name “Ashiya” (as a place name or personal name) can be traced back to the Nara period (8th century). In the 8th century, Uhara District of Settsu Province was established on the southern side of the Rokko Mountains, roughly from the Shukugawa area of present-day Nishinomiya City to the former Ikuta River in today’s Chuo-ku of Kobe, or to the Minatogawa area of Hyogo-ku and Nagata-ku. In the *Wamyō Ruijushō* (compiled during the Johei era, 931–938) of the Heian period, two village names are recorded at the eastern edge of Uhara District: Kami-no-Sato and Ashihara (Ashiya)-no-Sato.

The *ritsuryō* state established relay stations (*umaya*) along major roads to maintain transportation networks. According to the *Engishiki* promulgated in 967 (Koho 4), an Ashiya Station was placed on the Sanyōdo highway, where twelve station horses were maintained. However, the precise route of the ancient Sanyōdo highway within the present-day Ashiya area, as well as the exact location of the Ashiya Post Station, remains uncertain, with several theories proposed.

In the Heian period, the name Ashiya appeared frequently in poetry and literature as a place of white sand and green pines along the ancient Sanyōdo highway, most notably in the *Ise Monogatari* (The Tales of Ise, compiled in the early Heian period, 9th–10th century), whose protagonist is traditionally identified with Ariwara no Narihira. In the medieval period, the name Ashiya was recorded as the name of estates such as *Ashiya-shō* (written with different characters).

Toward the end of the medieval period, village communities became established, and Ashiya Village emerged as one of them, continuing through the Edo period and into the Meiji period.

In 1889 (Meiji 22), with the enforcement of the municipal system, the four villages of Ashiya, Uchide, Sanjo, and Tsuji were merged to form Seido Village. When deciding on the new village name, Ashiya and Uchide each insisted on using their own name and refused to yield. As a compromise, the name “Seido” was taken from Seido Elementary School, located within Ashiya Village. Seido Elementary School itself had been created in 1886 (Meiji 19) through the merger of Ashiya Elementary School (located within Anrakuji Temple) and Uchide Elementary School (within Shinnoji Temple), both originally established under the 1872 (Meiji 5) school system. The school’s name was

said to have been chosen by Toyoda Masanae, a Confucian scholar from Nishinomiya, drawing from the phrase *yosei shudo* (“cultivating virtue and practicing the Way”). However, the name “Seido” never gained wide familiarity, and ultimately, when the city system was implemented on November 10, 1940 (Showa 15), the ancient name “Ashiya” was restored, giving rise to Ashiya City as it is known today.

## Cultural Heritage of Ashiya

Ashiya City has a long history stretching back nearly twenty thousand years, and many cultural treasures from different periods remain today. This booklet introduces 61 cultural sites within the city that visitors can see in person, along with on-site explanations or displays. The sites featured here are limited to those dating up to the 1950s.

### Column **Naumann Elephant Fossil**

A fossil of a Naumann elephant was discovered in 1961 (Showa 36) during construction of the Royu Toll Road. It was found near the Ashiya Gate in the Okuyama area, about 100 meters to the north at an elevation of around 320 meters. The Osaka Museum of Natural History identified it as the right lower jaw’s third deciduous molar of a Naumann elephant that lived roughly 30,000 to 100,000 years ago. The fossil measures 13.6 cm.

The fossil is now on display at the Ashiya City Museum of Art and History.

### **1 Shiroyama Archaeological Site / Takao Castle Ruins (Oaza Shiroyama)**

Mount Takao—commonly known as Shiroyama—has the Shiroyama archaeological site spread across its summit area (approx. 260 m elevation) and the northern ridgeline. This is the remains of a highland settlement, offering excellent views from the site. Pottery from the middle to late Yayoi period (about 2,000 years ago) has been found here, although no full-scale excavation has been carried out, so details remain unclear.

The summit area is also the former site of the Takao Castle. Takao Castle was a medieval mountain fortress built in the early 16th century (late Muromachi period) by Kawarabayashi Masayori, a local lord of Settsu Province aligned with Hosokawa

Takakuni. In 1511 (Eisho 8), forces of Hosokawa Takakuni and Hosokawa Sumimoto fought over control of this castle. This battle is described in the column “The Tale of Matsuwaka” on page 19.

## **2 Nationally Designated Historic Site Egenoyama Archaeological Site (Sanjochō)**

The Egenoyama Archaeological Site is a highland settlement from the middle to late Yayoi period (2nd century BCE to 1st century CE). It was discovered in 1954 (Showa 29) by students of Ashiya Municipal Yamate Elementary School. Excavations were carried out from 1956 to 1961, and on February 7, 2011, the site was designated as a National Historic Site.

The remains extend across the entire Egenoyama area and include pit dwellings, ritual spaces, hearth sites, moats, and graves. A raised-floor storehouse has been reconstructed on-site.

From near the 200-meter summit, visitors can enjoy wide, panoramic views.

The site can be freely visited by following the hiking trail that begins at the entrance just east of the Ashiya City Funeral Hall (Seien).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **Column The Ashiya Tale: “The Story of Matsuwaka”**

Ashiya is known as one of the major historic battlefields of the Hanshin region.

In the early 16th century (late Muromachi period, during the Sengoku era), Kawarabayashi Masayori—a local lord of Settsu Province who supported Hosokawa Takakuni—took refuge in Takao Castle in Ashiya. Meanwhile, another branch of the Hosokawa family, led by Hosokawa Sumimoto, opposed Takakuni for supremacy and repeatedly fought his forces along the Ashiya River and around Takao Castle. Ashiya lay along the important Nadasuji route, a strategic corridor that controlled the advance of Sumimoto’s forces from Awa (present-day Tokushima Prefecture).

In 1511 (Eisho 8), fierce battles were fought between the armies of Hosokawa Takakuni and Hosokawa Sumimoto over Takao Castle. Although Takakuni’s side initially prevailed, the Sumimoto-aligned Akamatsu Yoshimura advanced with a large army from Harima (present-day southwestern Hyogo Prefecture). Because of this, Kawarabayashi Masayori and his men secretly abandoned Takao Castle and fled to Itami Castle.

A tragic tale known as “The Story of Matsuwaka” is associated with this struggle for

Takao Castle. Its outline is as follows:

Among the local samurai who surrendered to Kawarabayashi Masayori was Kawashima Hyogonosuke, formerly aligned with Sumimoto. Masayori treated him generously and entrusted him with the defense of Takao Castle. Hyogonosuke had a 16-year-old son named Matsuwaka, a bright young man gifted in poetry. Masayori himself was known for his skill in composing poems, and he brought Matsuwaka into service as an attendant at his residence, Koshimizu Castle (located in present-day Nishinomiya City). However, a rumor began to spread that Hyogonosuke was secretly communicating with the enemy.

Fearing for his father's life, Matsuwaka slipped out of Koshimizu Castle to warn him at Takao Castle. But by the time he arrived, his father had already been captured. Seeing smoke rising from Shiroyama, Matsuwaka believed his father had taken his own life. Losing all hope, he sought an introduction to Masayori through a relative, Imanishi Shogen. Masayori felt deep pity for the boy and wished to spare him. Yet his retainers warned, "A youth this clever may one day seek revenge for his father. He must not be allowed to live." Unable to overrule them, Masayori reluctantly ordered Matsuwaka to take his own life at Rokutanji Temple in Nishinomiya. Matsuwaka left a final poem: "My only wish was to serve my father—how joyful it would have been to cross the Mitsuse River together."

This sorrowful tale is recorded in *Kawarabayashi Masayori-ki*—the Chronicle of Kawarabayashi Masayori—a work of uncertain date that preserves events close to historical fact.

### **3 Sanjo Cultural Property Processing Office (Sanjo-cho)**

Established in 2001 (Heisei 13), this facility—located inside the Ashiya City Hall Sanjo Branch—was created to survey, organize, and store cultural properties found within the city.

It houses many artifacts excavated from archaeological sites in Ashiya, including pottery and stone tools. A selection of these items is displayed in the exhibition room. Visitors should check opening days and hours in advance. (For inquiries: Ashiya City International and Cultural Promotion Section, 0797-38-2115)

### **4 Asahizuka *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) (Yama-Ashiya-cho)**

Asahizuka *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) is part of the Shiroyama–Sanjo Group of burial tombs. It was discovered in 1961 (Showa 36) and excavated by Kyoto University's

Archaeology Laboratory. A second excavation survey was carried out by the Ashiya City Board of Education in 2007 (Heisei 19), confirming that the mound dates to the mid-7th century, during the Asuka period. The mound is polygonal in shape and covered with facing stones. Its horizontal stone chamber measures: 9.8 m for total length, 4.1 m for main chamber length, 2.1 m for main chamber width, 5.7 m for passage length, 1.6 m for passage width, and 2.1 m for remaining height. After the excavation survey, the stone chamber was reburied for preservation, and the area has been developed as the Yama-Ashiya Archaeological Site Green Space.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## Column **Waterwheels Once Found in Ashiya**

Along the southern foothills of the Rokko Mountains, including the Ashiya area, many large industrial waterwheels operated from around the mid-Edo period (18th century). These waterwheels used the fast-flowing streams to power oil pressing for rapeseed and cottonseed, as well as rice polishing for sake brewing. From the Meiji through Taisho periods, they were also used to grind wheat flour for “*Nadamoku (or Nadame) Somen*,” a well-known local noodle product. However, with the spread of modern power sources, all waterwheels in the Ashiya area had disappeared by the 1950s. In 2006 (Heisei 18), the remains of the Ashiya River waterwheel site in Yama-Ashiya-cho were excavated for survey during the construction of an apartment building. Part of the structure has been relocated and preserved in the building’s front garden, where an explanatory signboard has been installed.

## **5 Kadoishi Dam, 6 Kawarake Dam, 7 Tsue-Higashi Dam, 8 Ashiyagawa 1st Dam (Yama-Ashiya-cho / Yamate-cho)**

These dams were built in the midstream area of the Ashiya River after the devastating Hanshin Flood of 1938 (Showa 13). Kadoishi Dam and Tsue-Higashi Dam were constructed by Hyogo Prefecture in fiscal year 1941 (Showa 16). Kawarake Dam was built in June 1941 (Showa 16) by the Kobe Civil Engineering Office of the Ministry of Home Affairs. Ashiya 1<sup>st</sup> Dam was built earlier, in April 1940 (Showa 15), by the same office.

## Column **The Ashiya Legend: “The Burning Waterwheel of Kinbee”**

From the mid-Edo period onward, rural villages prospered, and many regions

developed small handcraft industries to produce their own local specialties. Along the southern foothills of the Rokko Mountains, sake brewing flourished, and the rivers flowing down from the Rokko Mountains were used to power large waterwheels for polishing rice. Ashiya, too, has a legend connected with these waterwheels. Its outline is as follows:

As Nada's sake became famous, some of it was presented to the Imperial Court and the shogunate. The waterwheels used to polish rice for this special sake were regarded with great honor. One year, a young man from Tamba Province (present-day northeastern Hyogo, central Kyoto, and northern Osaka) was chosen to work at one of these prestigious waterwheels. This was a great honor for him, his family, and his entire village. However, he had a childhood sweetheart—a beautiful girl who loved him deeply. As the day of his departure for Ashiya approached, the pain of parting grew unbearable, and the two wished desperately to be released from this duty. But no one around them would listen.

The young man crossed the Rokko Mountains and arrived in Ashiya, where he entered the distinguished “Kinbee Waterwheel” at the foot of Shiroyama. The master of the waterwheel explained the honor of the task and instructed him in the strict rules: before polishing the rice, he must purify himself in the Ashiya River, and once the work began, he was forbidden to leave the waterwheel or engage in idle talk until all the rice had been polished. From that day on, the young man devoted himself earnestly to his duty.

Meanwhile, back in Tamba, a marriage proposal was brought to the girl. Driven to despair, she finally left her village and traveled all the way to Ashiya in search of the young man she loved. But the master of the waterwheel stood in her way, refusing to let her see him.

After many attempts, unable to meet him and losing her sanity, the girl appeared one day from the hillside holding two branches of sacred sakaki. Her eyes were wild, her hair disheveled, and she ran frantically through the hills and fields, circling the waterwheel again and again. At last, her entire body burst into flames, and she rose into the sky. Later that night, the Kinbee Waterwheel was enveloped in a strange light. The waterwheel, the millstone, the young man, and even the master were all consumed, becoming a single wheel of fire that rose into the night sky and vanished. No one knows when this happened, nor the name of the young man. But in time, the children of Ashiya began to chant the tale as “Kinbee Yake Guruma — the Burning Waterwheel.”

## **9 National Important Cultural Property**

**YODOKO Guest House (the Former Residence of the Yamamuras) (Yamate-cho)**

This villa was built in 1924 (Taisho 13) for Yamamura Tazaemon VIII, a sake brewer known for the “Sakura Masamune” brand in the Nada region. It was designed in 1918 (Taisho 7) by Frank Lloyd Wright (1867–1959), one of the three great masters of modern architecture, who was in Japan at the time for the construction of the Imperial Hotel. After Wright returned to the United States in 1922 (Taisho 11), his apprentices Endo Arata (1889–1951) and Minami Makoto (1892–1951) completed the detailed design and supervised construction. Work finally began in 1923 (Taisho 12) and was completed in 1924 (Taisho 13).

The property later came under the ownership of Yodogawa Steel Works (present-day YODOKO, Ltd.) in 1947 (Showa 22), and on May 21, 1974 (Showa 49), it was designated as a National Important Cultural Property. Today, it is open to the public as the YODOKO Guest House. (For inquiries: YODOKO Guest House, 0797-38-1720)

## **10 Monument: “Site of the Ashiya River Breach during the 1938 Hanshin Flood” (Higashi Ashiya cho)**

In 1938 (Showa 13), the Hanshin region was struck by a catastrophic flood. Rain that began on June 28 intensified into a violent storm on July 5, bringing a record daily rainfall of 326 mm. Debris flows occurred, and both the Ashiya River and the Miyagawa River overflowed, turning much of Seido Village into a sea of mud. Damage in Seido Village included: 3 deaths, 2 seriously injured, 14 houses washed away, 14 houses completely destroyed, 111 houses half destroyed, 790 houses flooded above floor level, 1,458 houses flooded below floor level, 6 bridges washed away, 8 bridges damaged, 10 locations where roads or embankments collapsed or were breached.

In July 1988 (Showa 63), a stone monument engraved with “Site of the Ashiya River Breach during the Hanshin Flood” was erected at the breach site near the east end of Kaimori Bridge. During the bridge reconstruction in 2016 (Heisei 28), the monument was moved slightly to the southeast.

## **Column Ashiya’s Famous Tree: “Shiomi Cherry Blossoms”**

The Shiomi (“tide-viewing”) Cherry Blossoms, is one of Ashiya’s celebrated trees. According to tradition, the first generation of this cherry tree once stood within Entsuzan-Hoonji Temple in Nishiyama-cho, and was planted by the Heian-period poet Ariwara no Narihira. Its name comes from the view from the tree: from that spot, people could see a rainbow-like band of tidal currents flowing from Kumano in Kii Province across the waters off Ashiya. The second generation of the tree grew in the

grove of Daijikudo in the Maeda-cho area, and is mentioned in the *Settsu Meisho Zue*, published in 1796 (Kansei 8). The third generation consisted of two weeping cherry trees planted in 1873 (Meiji 6) in the schoolyard of the newly built Ashiya Elementary School at the west end of Kaimori Bridge. These trees were well known as famous cherry trees of Ashiya until the early Showa period. The fourth generation was planted in March 1958 (Showa 33) by volunteers from the Ashiya Historical Society, and it stands today just southeast of Kaimori Bridge.

### **11 Yasutoki Sarumaru Monument (Higashi-Ashiya-cho)**

This monument was erected in 1916 (Taisho 5) to honor Sarumaru Matazaemon Yasutoki (1804–1879), the man who built Okuike (also known as Okuyama Reservoir). During the Edo period, the villages of Ashiya suffered from severe water shortages whenever droughts continued, and disputes over irrigation water were frequent. As an elder of Ashiya Village, Yasutoki devoted more than twenty years—from 1841 (Tenpo 12) to 1865 (Genji 2)—to constructing the large reservoir of Okuike. In 2016 (Heisei 28), the monument was moved slightly to the southeast due to the reconstruction of Kaimori Bridge.

### **12 Traces of the Hanshin Flood near Sakura Bridge (Nishiyama-cho / Higashi-Ashiya-cho)**

Sakura Bridge was built in the late Taisho to early Showa period to provide residents on the east side of the Ashiya River with convenient access to the Hankyu Ashiyagawa Station, which opened in 1920 (Taisho 9). Its name comes from the famous Shiomi Cherry Blossoms that once stood at the west end of Kaimori Bridge. South of Sakura Bridge, remnants of bridge piers damaged in the 1938 (Showa 13) Hanshin Flood still remain on the riverbed. Other traces can also be found on the riverbed, including sections of the former stone embankment on the east bank that existed before the flood.

### **13 Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City Dayu Sarumaru Tomb (Higashi-Ashiya-cho)**

This stone monument is associated with Sarumaru Dayu, a poet famed in classical literature.

Sarumaru Dayu is counted among the Thirty-Six Immortal Poets, and is said to have

lived in either the 8th or 9th century. However, even his historical existence is uncertain, and he is regarded largely as a legendary poet. The Hyakunin Isshu includes the well-known poem attributed to him:

“In the deep mountains,  
when I hear a stag cry  
as it treads through autumn leaves,  
that is when the sadness of autumn  
truly touches my heart.”

(Though the anthology formally lists the poem as “author unknown.”)

The stone monument designated by Ashiya City as a Cultural Property under the name “Dayu Sarumaru Tomb” within the grounds of Ashiya-Jinja Shrine is a granite treasure pagoda, and it is believed to date to the late Kamakura period (13th century)—several centuries after the era associated with Sarumaru Dayu.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

#### **14 Designated Historic Site of Ashiya City *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) in the Precincts of Ashiya-jinja Shrine (Higashi-Ashiya-cho)**

Located in the southwestern area of Ashiya-Jinja Shrine’s precincts, this burial tomb is believed to have been constructed in the late Kofun to early Asuka period (late 6th to early 7th century). Although it now stands alone, it originally formed part of the Kasagazuka Group of Burial Tombs. The tomb features a horizontal stone chamber, and it is the only kofun in Ashiya City where the ceiling stone of the main chamber remains completely intact. The mound itself is also well preserved. No archaeological excavation has been conducted, so many details remain unknown. Its type is circular burial tomb, and its mound size is 19 m in diameter and 3.5 m in height. The current length, width, and height of the stone chamber is 10.4 m, 1.7 m, and 2.1 m, respectively.

A water deity once enshrined at Benten-Iwa Rock upstream along the Ashiya River was later transferred to this kofun, and a stone monument for Suijinja (Water Deity Shrine) now stands in front of the mound.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## 15 Kimmitsu and Narihira Stone Shrine (Tsukiwaka-cho)

Ariwara no Narihira (825–880) was an early Heian period nobleman, a grandson of Emperor Heizei and the fifth son of Prince Abo. He is celebrated as one of the Six Poetic Geniuses and the Thirty-Six Immortal Poets, and is widely known for his poetry.

The *Ise Monogatari*, a seminal work of poem tales in Japanese literary history, consists of 125 episodes and was compiled in the 9th–10th centuries during the Heian period. From early times, its unnamed protagonist has traditionally been identified with Narihira. Episode 87 recounts a story in which Narihira lived in Ashiya, and because of this passage, Ashiya has long been regarded as a place associated with him.

The episode begins: “Long ago, a man, having some connection with Ashiya in Uhara District of Tsunokuni, went back and forth and came to live there...” According to the tale, Narihira lived in a seaside villa in Ashiya. When his elder brother Yukihiro and others visited from the capital, he guided them on a day trip to Nunobiki Falls (present-day Chuo-ku, Kobe). Night fell on their return, and they made their way back while watching the fishing fires floating on Osaka Bay.

Early modern topographies record the supposed site of Narihira’s villa as the “Temporary Residence of Narihira Ason” or the “Villa Site of Ariwara no Narihira,” locating it either near today’s civic center in Narihira-cho or in the vicinity of Tsukiwaka-cho—both based on tradition rather than firm evidence.

Legends and tales linking Narihira to Ashiya include the first Shioimi zakura, said to have been planted by Narihira; the mysterious “Firefly Battle,” in which his spirit becomes dancing fireflies; and the Noh play *Unrin-in*, which tells the story of Kimmitsu, a young man who revered Narihira and loved the *Ise Monogatari*. Several place names in the city reflect these associations: Narihira Bridge and Narihira-cho, named after Ariwara no Narihira; Abo shinnozuka Kofun and Shinnozuka-cho, named after his father, Prince Abo; and Kimmitsu Bridge and Kimmitsu-cho, named after Kimmitsu of the Noh play.

At 6 Tsukiwaka-cho stands the Narihira and Kimmitsu Stone Shrine.

### Column **Ashiya’s Tales: The Noh Play *Toei***

Set in the Ashiya Estate, which belonged to Kitano-jinja Shrine during the Kamakura period, the Noh play *Toei* (author and date unknown) is well known in local tradition. Its story unfolds as follows.

Ashiya Tozaemon, the steward (*jito*) of the Ashiya Estate, entrusted the future of his young son Tsukiwaka to his younger brother Toei as he lay dying. However, instead of

protecting his nephew, Toei drove Tsukiwaka away and usurped the estate. The boy was forced to live in poverty along the shore.

One day, a traveling monk visited Tsukiwaka's humble dwelling. That night, noticing the boy's noble bearing, the monk questioned him. At first hesitant, Tsukiwaka eventually revealed his misfortune, and the monk was deeply moved.

Meanwhile, Toei was enjoying a boat outing at Ashiya Bay with a wealthy man from Naruo, playing music and dancing. The monk, who had observed Toei's dance, asked him to perform once more. Enraged, Toei shouted at the "impudent monk," vowing to punish him, but the monk revealed his true identity: he was Hojo Tokiyori, the former regent, traveling the country incognito as Saimyoji Nyudo to correct injustices.

Tokiyori exposed Toei's wrongdoing and restored the estate to Tsukiwaka. Toei repented, was forgiven, and thereafter assisted Tsukiwaka in managing the estate, allowing the family to prosper.

The names Tsukiwaka Bridge and Tsukiwaka-cho derive from this tale.

## 16 Ashiya Temple Ruins (Nishiyama-cho)

The Ashiya Temple Ruins mark the location of an ancient Buddhist temple founded in the Asuka period (7th century). Because no contemporary records survive and the original temple name is unknown, it is referred to simply as the Ashiya Temple Ruins (*Ashiya Haiji*).

Today the area is a residential neighborhood, and no visible traces remain on the surface. However, numerous roof tile fragments and temple related structural remains have been discovered through archaeological excavations conducted during housing construction. In 1936 (Showa 11), foundation stones were found in Nishiyama-cho. One of these, now known as the Stone Foundation for the Central Pillar of a Pagoda in Ashiya Temple Ruins (a Designated Cultural Property of Hyogo Prefecture), has been relocated and is displayed in the east garden of the Ashiya City Museum of Art & History. A 1999 (Heisei 11) excavation uncovered a platform base believed to be part of the temple compound. An explanatory signboard is installed at the apartment building that now stands on the site.

A document from 1692 (Genroku 5), the *Jisha Onaratame Saicho*, records a temple in Ashiya Village called Entsuzan-Hoonji Temple (also written "Hoonji Temple"), said to have been founded by the monk Gyoki. It also states that the temple was repaired by Ariwara no Narihira, later destroyed by fire during warfare around 1442 (Kakitsu 2), and replaced by a Yakushi Hall. However, the relationship between Hoonji Temple and Ashiya Temple remains unclear.

\*A stone monument stands on-site.

## 17 Cultural Properties within the Grounds of Sanjo-Hachiman-Jinja Shrine (Sanjo-cho)

Within the precincts of Sanjo-Hachiman-Jinja Shrine stands a stone water basin (photo), associated with the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry. On its side is carved a mark believed to have been used by Shimazu Uma-no-kami Tadaoki of the Hyuga Sadowara Domain (present-day Miyazaki Prefecture). The upper surface bears numerous cup shaped depressions (*haijo ketsu*), created through folk religious practices.

Also relocated to the shrine grounds are: a pair of stone pillars from a flagpole stand, inscribed with “Koki 2600” (referring to 1940 (Showa 15). “Koki” was a prewar dating system that counted years from the legendary accession of Emperor Jinmu, regarded as the first emperor of Japan. This system is not based on historical fact) and “Donors for Road Paving.” Another pair of flagpole-stand pillars has also been moved here, bearing the inscriptions “Our Souls,” “Koki 2602 (1942) — Built on the Emperor’s Birthday,” “*Hinomaru* Flag,” and “Nishiyamate Sixth Neighborhood Association.” In addition, the stone marker of the Rokko Kurogane-mochi tree—designated in 1934 (Showa 9) and later delisted in 1958 (Showa 33) after the tree died—at the former site of Entsuzan-Hoonji Temple (Hoonji Temple) has also been moved here. A descendant of the tree has also been planted on the grounds.

## 18 Maeda Archaeological Site (Maeda-cho)

The Maeda Site is an archaeological area dating mainly from the late Jomon to early Yayoi periods (approximately 2,500–3,000 years ago). It was discovered during reconstruction surveys following the Great Hanshin–Awaji Earthquake. In 2003 (Heisei 15), excavations conducted for the development of Maeda Park uncovered rice paddy remains from the early Yayoi period (about 2,500 years ago) as well as footprints of Yayoi people.

Within the park, an explanatory signboard and a cast model of the Yayoi footprints are installed.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## 19 Rokujo Archaeological Site (Shimizu-cho)

In 2001 (Heisei 13), an archaeological excavation was conducted in connection with the construction of Shimizu Park. The investigation uncovered wells and ink inscribed pottery bearing the character “加”, dating from the late Heian to early Kamakura

period (12th-13th centuries).

Together with contemporaneous building remains and garden pond features excavated in the surrounding area, the site may be related to the expansion of the Taira clan following the relocation of the capital to Fukuhara-kyo (in present-day Chuo-ku and Hyogo-ku of Kobe) in 1180 (Jisho 4).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## 20 Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City Hiyoshi Jinja Small Stone Shrine (Tsuji-cho)

This stone shrine stands on a small island southeast of the main hall of Hiyoshi-Jinja Shrine. Carved from granite, it measures 58 cm in height and 51 cm in width, with the body and roof made separately. Inscriptions appear on all four sides of the roof: on the front, “Eisho 17 (1520) Great Benzai□□” (two characters unreadable); on the back, “ ”; on the left, “ Village” (likely referring to Tsuji Village); and on the right, “包嶋.” These inscriptions constitute the oldest surviving stone epigraphy in Ashiya. The shrine also suggests that Tsuchi Village already existed by the 16th century.

The year Eisho 17 (1520) falls within the Sengoku period, when internal conflict between Hosokawa Takakuni and Hosokawa Sumimoto was unfolding, and when Kawarabayashi Masayori, a local lord of Settsu Province, built a mountain fort on Mt. Takao in Ashiya.

An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## Column Ashiya Legends: “The Maiden of Ashiya Unahi”

Long ago, the coastal region of Nada was dotted with houses thatched with reeds cut from the surrounding marshes. This area was known as Ashiya no Sato, the “Village of Reeds.” In this village lived a beautiful young woman called the Maiden of Unahi. Many men sought her hand, but two in particular—*Unahi Otoko*, a young man from the same village, and *Chinu Otoko* (also called *Shinoda Otoko*), a fine youth from Izumi Province (southern Osaka)—competed fiercely for her love. The two vowed to fight even through water and fire, clashing violently with swords and bows.

Seeing this, the maiden was heartbroken and said, “If men of such worth must fight over someone like me, how could I ever choose one in this world? I shall wait in the land of *Yomi* (the Japanese underworld).” She took her own life. That night, she appeared in the dream of Chinu Otoko. Believing she had chosen him, he too ended his life. Learning this, Unahi Otoko stamped the ground in anguish and followed them in death.

Their grieving families gathered and said, “Let us preserve the sincerity of these young hearts for future generations.” They decided to build three tombs: the maiden’s in the center, and the two young men’s to the east and west. Thus were formed Central *Otomezuka* (Maiden’s Tomb) Kofun—located in Nada-ku, Kobe; East *Motomezuka* (Tomb of the Man Seeking the Maiden) Kofun—located in Higashinada-ku; and West *Motomezuka* Kofun—located in Nada-ku. For this reason, it is believed that the central maiden’s mound faces south, and the two side mounds face toward it, placed at nearly equal distances.

This is one of the oldest legends of the region, and it inspired poems by three Nara period Manyōshū poets—Takahashi no Mushimaro, Tanabe no Sakimaro, and Otomo no Yakamochi. The tale later influenced the Heian period *Yamato Monogatari*, the Muromachi Noh plays *Otomezuka* and *Motomezuka*, and Mori Ogai’s play *Ikutagawa*. The legend also suggests that the name “Ashiya” once referred to a much broader area than the present city limits. Archaeological studies have confirmed that these mounds are early Kofun period keyhole shaped or square keyhole tombs, dating from the late 3rd to late 4th century.

## **21 Stone Materials from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Matsunouchi-cho)**

At the Matsunouchi Flower Bed, located on the east bank of the Ashiya River directly above the Ashiyagawa Tunnel of the Yamate-kansen Boulevard, two stone materials (*wari ishi*) associated with the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry are preserved and displayed. These stone materials were unearthed during an archaeological excavation conducted in 2009 (Heisei 21) in Nishiyama-cho and were subsequently relocated to their present location.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **22 Former Site of the Government Operated Railway Ashiyagawa Tunnel (Tsukiwaka-cho / Matsunouchi-cho)**

At the location where the JR Tokaido Main Line now passes beneath the Ashiya River, there once existed the Ashiyagawa Tunnel, constructed of brick. This tunnel was built beneath the river as a *tenjogawa* (sub river) tunnel for the government operated railway between Osaka and Kobe (present-day JR Tokaido Main Line), which opened in May 1874 (Meiji 7). Around 1920 (Taisho 9), the tunnel was dismantled during the quadruple tracking construction between Kanzaki and Higashinada in 1926 (Taisho 15), and it was rebuilt as the Ashiyagawa Railway-Overcrossing Aqueduct, which

remains in use today.

Along the slope on the north side of the tracks—from the southern vicinity of Matsunouchi Green Space to the railroad crossing at Sanjo-Minami-cho—numerous embedded fragments of brick structures can be seen. These are believed to be fragments of the dismantled Ashiyagawa Tunnel.

## **23 Ashiyagawa Dam (Maeda-cho / Narihira-cho)**

This stepped dam, constructed using cut stone masonry in a valley stacking style (*tani zumi*), was built as part of the major reconstruction of the Ashiya River following the 1938 Hanshin Flood. On the stone wall of the right bank is a plaque inscribed “Ashiyagawa Dam, construction commenced in January Showa 17 (1942) and completed in October Showa 17 (1942), Ministry of Home Affairs, Kobe Civil Engineering Branch Office.”

## **24 Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property Ashiya Buddhist Hall (Maeda-cho)**

The Ashiya Buddhist Hall was established by the Soshinkai, an organization founded on the vow of Ito Chobee (1868–1941), the first president of Marubeni Shoten (present-day Marubeni Corporation), to express gratitude for the benevolence of Buddhism. The origins of the Soshinkai trace back to a Buddhist lecture held at the Ashiya Public Hall on September 11, 1924 (Taisho 13). With the development of the Soshinkai, the Ashiya Buddhist Hall opened on June 5, 1927 (Showa 2). It was designed by Kataoka Yasushi (1876–1946) and constructed by Takahashigumi. The structure is a four-story reinforced concrete building. On May 1, 1949 (Showa 24), the library on the third floor was renovated to establish the Ashiya Municipal Library, which remained there until its relocation to the newly opened library in Uchide-Kozuchi-cho on February 11, 1954 (Showa 29). In 2003 (Heisei 15), due to road widening work associated with the Ashiya Western District No. 1 Earthquake Reconstruction Land Readjustment Project, the building was moved approximately 2.5 meters westward using the *hikiya* (building relocation) method without demolition. On March 27, 2018 (Heisei 30), it was registered as a nationally registered tangible cultural property.

## **25 Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City Cultural Landscape of the**

## **Ashiya River (Middle and lower reaches of the Ashiya River)**

On April 1, 2012 (Heisei 24), the middle and lower reaches of the Ashiya River were designated as a Cultural Property of Ashiya City under the name “Cultural Landscape of the Ashiya River.”

Flowing from its source in the Rokko Mountains to its mouth at Osaka Bay, the Ashiya River runs north–south through the western part of Ashiya City. For centuries, the people of Ashiya have benefited from the water provided by the river, while also suffering from its frequent floods. Following the 1938 Hanshin Flood (Showa 13), major river improvement works were carried out from 1939 to 1946 (Showa 14–21), shaping the river into its present form.

Along the river basin are numerous cultural properties—such as the YODOKO Guest House (the Former Residence of the Yamamuras), a National Important Cultural Property, and the Ashiya Buddhist Hall, a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property—forming part of the cultural landscape of the Ashiya River.

The cultural landscape of the Ashiya River reflects the coexistence of the blessings and dangers of water brought by the river flowing from the Rokko Mountains, illustrating the historical development of Ashiya City as it adapted to raised bed rivers and alluvial fans.

The black pines along the river south of Narihira Bridge were planted in 1935 (Showa 10), while the cherry trees north of the bridge were planted in 1949 (Showa 24).

## **26 Cultural Properties within the Ashiya Citizen’s Center (Narihira-cho)**

In the garden of the Citizen’s Center Annex, a *gorinto* (five-ring stupa; left photo) dating from the late 14th to early 15th century (Muromachi period) is preserved. It was unearthed in 1977 (Showa 52) at the Sanjo Okayama Archaeological Site (Sanjo-cho). Carved from granite, the fire ring roof bears Sanskrit (*bonji*) inscriptions on all four sides.

Near the entrance of the Citizen’s Center Main Building, a carved stone from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry, originally located in Nishiyama-cho, has been relocated and preserved. The stone bears the quarry mark believed to have been used by Shimazu Umanokami Tadaoki of the Hyuga Sadowara Domain (Miyazaki Prefecture).

In the south garden of the Citizen’s Center Main Building, the ridge tile ornament (lower photo) from the Seido Village Ashiya Public Hall, completed in 1919 (Taisho 8) on the same site, is preserved, along with an Oribe stone lantern (also known as a Kirishitan lantern) that once stood at the east end of Saikoku Bridge.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **27 Narihira Bridge (Maeda-cho / Narihira bashi)**

The name of Narihira Bridge derives from Ariwara no Narihira. The bridge was first constructed as a wooden bridge during the Ashiya River improvement works of March 1917 (Taisho 6). With the construction of the Hanshin National Highway (National Route 2), the bridge was rebuilt using granite and reinforced concrete, and the new structure was completed on December 30, 1925 (Taisho 14).

The Hanshin National Highway opened on April 1, 1927 (Showa 2). The Kokudo Densha (Hanshin Electric Railway National Highway Line) once operated along this route, but it was discontinued on March 17, 1974 (Showa 49). Within Ashiya City, the line had four stops: Yama Uchide, Ashiya Ekimae, Ashiyagawa, and Tsuji.

In 1936 (Showa 11), a pedestrian passageway was constructed beneath the bridge to allow people to pass under the Hanshin National Highway.

## **28 Monumental Flagpole Base Commemorating the Enforcement of Ashiya City Status (Kimmitsu-cho)**

This structure is part of a national flag raising platform. On its east face is carved the inscription “Kigen 2600 – Commemoration of the Enforcement of City Status,” and on its south face is carved “November 10, Showa 15 (1940) – Naka Ashiya Sanitation Association.” These inscriptions indicate that the flagpole base was erected on November 10, 1940 (Showa 15) by the Naka Ashiya Sanitation Association to commemorate both Kigen 2600 (referring to 1940 (Showa 15). “Koki” was a prewar dating system that counted years from the legendary accession of Emperor Jinmu, regarded as the first emperor of Japan. This system is not based on historical fact) and the enforcement of Ashiya’s municipal status.

Ashiya’s municipal status was enacted on November 10, 1940, the same day the Second Kono Cabinet held the Kigen 2600 Commemorative Ceremony at Miyagimae Plaza (present-day Kokyo-mae Plaza).

## **29 Ashiya Police Station (Kimmitsu-cho)**

The former main building of the Ashiya Police Station, completed in 1927 (Showa 2), was partially preserved when the station was rebuilt in 2001 (Heisei 13). Only the southeastern section of the original structure remains. The former building was designed by the Hyogo Prefectural Architectural Division, where Oshio Akira served

as section chief. It was a three-story reinforced concrete structure.

The preserved former main entrance, constructed of granite, features a carved owl on the keystone of its arch—symbolizing nighttime vigilance.

### Column **Ashiya's Tales: The Noh Play *Unrin-in***

The Muromachi period Noh play *Unrin-in* (author and date unknown) contains a story connected with Ashiya. Its outline is as follows.

Kimimitsu, who lived in Ashiya, had read the *Ise Monogatari* since his youth and deeply revered Ariwara no Narihira. One night, Narihira appeared to him in a dream, standing within a beautiful flower garden. Kimimitsu realized that the setting of the dream was Unrin-in, located in Murasakino in the northern part of Kyoto. He therefore traveled all the way from Ashiya to Kyoto to visit Unrin-in. It was just the season of blossoms, exactly as in his dream. When Kimimitsu broke off a branch of flowers, an old man (*okina*) appeared before him. Kimimitsu explained that he had come here, guided by his dream, out of longing for Narihira. The old man told him that if he waited in the shadow of the blossoms that night, he would be granted the secret teachings of the *Ise Monogatari*. Then the old man vanished. At midnight, just as the old man had foretold, the spirit of Narihira appeared and recited the teachings of the *Ise Monogatari*.

The names “Kimimitsu Bridge” and “Kimimitsu-cho” derive from this tale.

### **30 Hanshin Electric Railway Ashiyagawa Bridge** (Kawanishi-cho / Kimimitsu-cho)

On April 12, 1905 (Meiji 38), the Hanshin Electric Railway opened its line between Osaka (Deiribashi) and Kobe (Sannomiya).

The bridge piers of the Hanshin Electric Railway Ashiyagawa Bridge, which now form the platform area of Hanshin Ashiya Station, consist of a central section built of granite cut stone masonry, with the north–south ends later expanded using concrete. The stone masonry portion dates from before the Taisho period.

### **31 Yasuaki Sarumaru Monument** (Hama-Ashiya-cho)

This monument was erected in 1930 (Showa 5). It records the life and achievements of Sarumaru Matazaemon Yasuaki (1872–1920), who was active during the Seido Village era. His career included serving twice as Mayor of Seido Village, as Director of the

Ashiya Post Office, and as a Hyogo Prefectural Assembly member. He contributed greatly to the development of Seido Village by planning public works such as the establishment of the National Railway (Railway Bureau) Ashiya Station (present-day JR Ashiya Station), improvements to the Ashiya River, and land readjustment projects.

The inscription title was written by Inukai Tsuyoshi, then President of the Rikken Seiyukai political party, who later became the 29th Prime Minister of Japan in 1931 (Showa 6).

### **32 Nue-zuka Mound (Hama-Ashiya-cho)**

This stone monument was erected in the 1930s (Showa 10s) based on the legend of the slaying of the *nue*, as recorded in early modern topographies such as the *Settsuyo Gundan* (1701, Genroku 14) and the *Settsu Meisho Zue* (1796, Kansei 8). The legend is as follows.

About 800 years ago, Minamoto no Yorimasa shot and killed a monstrous creature whose cry resembled that of a *nue* (a term also used for the scaly thrush), a beast said to have haunted the Kyoto Imperial Palace. The creature had the head of a monkey, the body of a raccoon dog, the limbs of a tiger, and the tail of a snake. Its corpse was placed in a log boat and set adrift. It floated down the Yodogawa River, drifted across Osaka Bay, and eventually washed ashore at Hama Ashiya. Fearing a curse, the villagers respectfully built a mound to enshrine the remains, which came to be known as the “Nue-zuka”.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **33 Ashiya Amusement Park (Ashiya Park) (Matsuhama-cho)**

In 1907 (Meiji 40), Seido Village opened the Ashiya Amusement Park on the east bank of the Ashiya River. The park featured two dining pavilions (*azumaya*), 25 street lamps (kerosene lamps) for nighttime illumination, four restrooms, and offered pleasant walks through a beautiful pine grove. The present Ashiya Park (Matsuhama Park) preserves the memory of this early amusement park, and within the park stands a stone monument inscribed “Ashiya Yuen.” Ashiya Park itself was developed in 1918 (Taisho 7) as part of the Ashiya River improvement works.

The Ashiya Park Tennis Courts opened in 1956 (Showa 31), and in the same year hosted the 11th National Sports Festival tennis events.

### **34 Former Ashiya Amusement Park Bus Waiting Shelter**

**(Matsuhama-cho)**

This reinforced concrete bus waiting shelter, estimated to have been built in the early Showa period, is now used as a rest shelter within Ashiya Park.

In Ashiya City, Hanshin Ashiya Bus began operation on April 1, 1928 (Showa 3), followed by Hankyu Bus (Hanshin Joint Bus) on July 28 of the same year. These routes connected the foothills and the coast, running north–south along the east levee of the Ashiya River. This bus shelter is thought to have been constructed in association with these routes.

### **35 Kigen 2600 Commemorative Flagpole Base**

**(Chayano-cho)**

This structure is part of a national flag raising platform created in 1940 (Showa 15) to commemorate Kigen 2600 (“Koki” was a prewar dating system that counted years from the legendary accession of Emperor Jinmu, regarded as the first emperor of Japan. This system is not based on historical fact). The inscriptions read: on the north face, “Ashiya City Chayano-cho”; on the east face, “Kigen 2600 Commemoration”; and on the south face, “February 11, Showa 15 — Built by the Shinwa Association.” However, Ashiya City did not yet exist on February 11, 1940 (Ashiya’s municipal status was enacted on November 10, 1940), and Chayano-cho did not come into existence until the town name revision of January 10, 1944 (Showa 19). These discrepancies make the inscriptions historically intriguing.

### **36 Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property**

#### **Former Ashiya Post Office Telephone Exchange Office (Ashiya Monolith)(Omasu-cho)**

The Former Ashiya Post Office Telephone Exchange Office was constructed in 1929 (Showa 4) as a telephone exchange facility. It was designed by Uenami Akira, an engineer of the Ministry of Communications. The building is a two-story reinforced concrete structure, retaining its original exterior appearance. The exterior walls are clad in two colors of scratch tile—dark brown on the first floor and light brown on the second. The north façade features a series of continuous semicircular arches.

After the NTT West customer service office closed in 2004 (Heisei 16), the building was converted the following year into the wedding venue and restaurant “Ashiya Monolith.”

It was registered as a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property on June 28, 2017 (Heisei 29).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **37 Stone Materials from the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group, Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Rokurokuso Water Purification Plant) (Rokurokuso-cho)**

At the Rokurokuso Water Purification Plant in Ashiya City, an archaeological excavation conducted in 2002 (Heisei 14) uncovered the remains of the stone cutting site used by Terasawa Shimanokami Hirotaka of the Hizen Karatsu Domain (Saga Prefecture), part of the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group of the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry.

In front of the purification plant, four stone materials (split stones) unearthed during the excavation have been relocated and preserved, along with street lamps, water meter covers, and fire hydrant covers from the development period of the Rokurokuso residential district.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **38 Carved Stone from the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group, Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Ashiya University) (Rokurokuso-cho)**

The Iwagahira Carved Stone Group of the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry is distributed across Rokurokuso-cho and Iwazono-cho. Even today, stone walls of residences in Rokurokuso-cho often contain carved stones and wedge hole stones associated with the quarrying operations of the period.

At this location, the stone wall incorporates a carved stone—relocated and preserved—bearing the quarry mark used by Kyogoku Wakasa-no-kami Tadataka of the Wakasa Obama Domain (Fukui Prefecture), unearthed from a nearby excavation site.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **Column Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry**

Osaka Castle is widely known as the castle built by Toyotomi Hideyoshi in 1583 (Tensho 11). However, the stone walls that exist today belong not to Hideyoshi's castle but to the Tokugawa period Osaka Castle, rebuilt by the Edo shogunate, which

completely buried the earlier Toyotomi period structure and reconstructed the castle between 1620 (Genna 6) and 1629 (Kanei 6). For this reason, the buried remains are referred to as “Toyotomi-period Osaka Castle,” while the existing structure is called “Tokugawa-period Osaka Castle.”

Construction of Tokugawa Osaka Castle began in Genna 6 (1620) as a massive national project known as *tenka bushin*, in which daimyo from 35 provinces and 64 clans in western Japan were mobilized under the *bakuhan* system. The stone walls were built of finely cut stone blocks, forming high ramparts, and it is estimated that approximately one million stones were used. Roughly half of these stones were quarried in the eastern Rokko Mountains.

The quarry sites that remain today in Nishinomiya City, Ashiya City, and Kobe City’s Higashinada-ku are collectively known as the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry. Based on the distribution of carved stones described later, the quarry is divided into six groups: the Kabutoyama Carved Stone Group, the Kitayama Carved Stone Group, the Koshikiwa Carved Stone Group, the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group, the Okuyama Carved Stone Group, and the Shiroyama Carved Stone Group. Within Ashiya City, the Iwagahira, Okuyama, and Shiroyama Groups are distributed. At these quarry sites, numerous traces of stone cutting have been found, including carved stones bearing clan and personal symbols; wedge-hole stones with intact wedge holes used for splitting stone; and split stones showing the marks left after the stones were cleaved in two.

Stones quarried in the Rokko Mountains were transported to the coast and then shipped across Osaka Bay to Osaka Castle. At sites such as the Kuregawa Archaeological Site, carved stones believed to have been stockpiled on the shore have been unearthed. In Nishinomiya City, the quarry site of the Kabutoyama Carved Stone Group was designated a National Historic Site on February 13, 2018 (Heisei 30) under the name “Osaka Castle Stone Wall Stone Quarry Site (Higashi-rokko Stone Quarry Site).”

### **39 Carved Stones from the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group, Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Rokurokuso Green Space) (Rokurokuso-cho)**

Within the Rokurokuso Green Space, four carved stones and one split stone—all unearthed during a large-scale excavation conducted in 2004 (Heisei 16)—are preserved together.

These stones belong to the Iwagahira Carved Stone Group of the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry. Among them are stones bearing the marks used by Mori Nagato-no-kami Hidenari of the Bocho Hagi Domain (Choshu Domain, Yamaguchi

Prefecture), including the symbols.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

#### **40 Rokurokuso Stone Monument (Rokurokuso Residential District) (Rokurokuso-cho)**

The Rokurokuso Residential District was developed by Rokurokuso Co., Ltd. between 1929 (Showa 4) and 1931 (Showa 6). The name “Rokurokuso” refers to a villa district situated at the scenic foot of the Rokko Mountains.

For its time, the district was remarkably advanced: all roads were fully paved, and water supply, sewerage, and city gas were installed. To preserve the landscape, an innovative approach was adopted—burying electric and telephone lines underground so that utility poles and wires would not spoil the scenery.

In one corner of the Rokurokuso Green Space, a stone monument remains, boldly inscribed with the characters “六麓莊 (Rokurokuso).”

#### **41 Iwagahira 13th Burial Tomb, part of the Yasozuka *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) Group (Iwazono-cho)**

The Yasozuka *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) Group consists of a cluster of burial tombs from the late Kofun period to the Asuka period (late 6th–mid 7th century), distributed across the southeastern foothills and plateaus of the Rokko Mountains in eastern Ashiya City and western Nishinomiya City. The distribution area extends approximately 900 meters east–west and 1,100 meters north–south, making it the largest cluster of kofun in the Hanshin region. The group is divided into five subgroups: Asahigaoka Subgroup, Iwagahira Subgroup, Kentani Subgroup, Oimatsu Subgroup, and Kurakuen Subgroup.

The Iwagahira 13th Burial Tomb is located in the forest north of the main hall of Iwazono Tenjin Shrine. A horizontal stone chamber that has collapsed over the long passage of time is exposed, with a surviving length of about 8 meters. No excavation has been conducted, and details remain unknown, but it is believed to have been constructed in the late 6th century.

#### **41 Iwagahira 14th Burial Tomb, part of the Yasozuka *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) Group (Iwazono-cho)**

This tumulus is located in the southern part of the precincts of Iwazono Tenjin Shrine. On top of the mound stands a statue of En no Ozune, erected in 1858 (Ansei 5). En no Ozune (traditionally 634–701) was a ritual practitioner from the Asuka to Nara periods and is regarded as the founder of *Shugendo*.

On the southwest slope of the mound, part of a horizontal stone chamber is exposed. No excavation has been conducted, and details remain unknown, but the tumulus is believed to date to the late 6th century.

### **43 Carved Stones from Iwagahira Carved Stone Group, Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Iwazono 2nd Children’s Playground) (Iwazono-cho)**

During residential development in this area, including the land where this park now stands, an excavation conducted in 2004 (Heisei 16) uncovered two carved stones, two wedge hole stones, and six split stones, which are now preserved together. The mark found here is known as the “Gan (Wild Goose)” mark.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **44 Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City**

### **Carved Stones from Okuyama Carved Stone Group, Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry (Ashiya City Cemetery) (Oaza Kentani)**

During the expansion of the Ashiya City Cemetery in 1993 (Heisei 5), excavations uncovered one carved stone and twelve split stones from the Okuyama Marked Stone Group at the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry. These stones are preserved in the northeastern corner of the cemetery. The carved stone bears symbols used by Mori Nagato-no-kami Hidenari of the Bocho Hagi Domain (Choshu Domain, Yamaguchi Prefecture). Under the name “Carved Stone Excavated from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry,” it was designated as a Cultural Property of Ashiya City on March 26, 2004 (Heisei 16).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

### **45 Asahigaoka Archaeological Site (Ashiya City Historical Hands-on 3D Map) (Asahigaoka-cho)**

Discovered in 1964 (Showa 39) during road construction, this site dates to the early

Jomon period (about 6,000 years ago). Inside the Asahigaoka Community Center within the archaeological site, some excavated Jomon pottery and stone tools are displayed. South of the community center stands a 1:300 scale Ashiya City historical hands-on 3D map representing the topography of Ashiya City and the locations of major archaeological sites. In addition, four split stones—quarried from a medieval burial tomb within the Shiroyama South Foot Archaeological Site and from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry, excavated in 1993 (Heisei 5) in Kuregawa-cho—were transported to the coast in ancient times and are preserved and displayed here.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **46 Medieval Grave from the Shiroyama South Foot Archaeological Site (Asahigaoka-cho)**

This medieval grave dates to the late Muromachi period (Sengoku period, 16th century) and was discovered during excavations at the Shiroyama South Foot Site (Yama Ashiya-cho) in 1982–1983 (Showa 57–58). After excavation, it was relocated to the Asahigaoka Community Center for preservation. The grave consists of upright stones forming a simple grave marker, surrounded by a rectangular arrangement of stones.

At the Shiroyama South Foot Site, remains of 16th century buildings, graves, and cremation sites have been found, believed to be associated with Takao Castle, located at the summit of Shiroyama.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.。

## **47 Abo Shinnozuka Mound (The Mound of Prince Abo) (Midorigaoka-cho)**

This kofun was constructed in the early Kofun period (4th century). Today it appears as a circular mound approximately 36 meters in diameter and 3 meters in height, surrounded by a rectangular moat—a form resulting from major renovations carried out by the Mori clan of the Choshu Domain, who claimed descent from Prince Abo, during the Edo period. At least eight bronze mirrors were excavated during the Hoei era (1704–1710), four of which are preserved as temple treasures at Abosan Shinnoji Temple (Uchide-cho) and are designated Ashiya City Cultural Properties. A 2018 survey by the Imperial Household Agency confirmed part of a cylindrical haniwa row on the southwest side of the mound.

As for the individual buried in this tumulus, although Edo period topographies such

as *Settsu-shi* (1735) refer to it as the “Tomb of Prince Abo”, Prince Abo (792–842), a Heian-period imperial prince and the father of Ariwara no Narihira. However, the construction of the mound dates to the 4th century, and therefore we can conclude that the mound is not related to him.

The actual interred individual is unknown but was likely a local chieftain who ruled the Hanshin region in the 4th century.

## **48 Designated Cultural Property of Ashiya City Chikara-ishi (Strength Stone) of Abo Tenjinja Shrine (Kamimiyagawa-cho)**

*Chikara-ishi* were stones used in strength contests, a coming-of-age ritual for young men in rural communities. The six stones preserved at Abo Tenjinja Shrine are the only surviving examples in Ashiya City. Two stones bear weight inscriptions: “50 *kan*” (approx. 187.5 kg; *kan* is a traditional Japanese weight unit, with 1 *kan* equal to 3.75 kilograms) and “42 *kan*” (approx. 157.5 kg). They are believed to date from the Edo to Taisho periods.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **49 Dai Nanko War Ruins (Kusunoki-cho)**

The Battle of Uchide occurred on February 10, 1336 (Kenmu 3) between Kusunoki Masashige and Ashikaga Takauji. Masashige defeated Ashikaga Tadayoshi, forcing Takauji’s forces to retreat to Hyogo. This monument was erected on February 11, 1935 (Showa 10) by the Seido Village Moral Enlightenment Association Federation as part of the 600th Anniversary Memorial of Kusunoki Masashige. The inscription “大楠公戦跡” (“Battle Site of Lord Kusunoki”) was written by General Honjo Shigeru. The name Kusunoki-cho derives from this monument.

The monument was relocated to its current position during renovations of the Kusunoki Children’s Playground in 2015 (Heisei 27).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **50 Uchide Bridge (Kamimiyagawa-cho / Kusunoki-cho)**

This bridge spans the Miyagawa River as part of the Hanshin National Highway (present day National Route 2). It was completed in March 1926 (Taisho 15). The bridge is approximately 7.3 meters long, built of reinforced concrete, and features unusual lamps at its four corners. The cast iron railings include decorative motifs

resembling a sideways “S.”

Other bridges along the Hanshin National Highway—such as Narihira Bridge and Muko Ohashi (Amagasaki City / Nishinomiya City)—also exhibits unique railing decorations and design features, reflecting the craftsmanship and aesthetic sensibilities of engineers of the time.

## **Column    The Battle of Uchide**

During the Kenmu Restoration (1333–1336, Genko 3–Kenmu 3), Emperor Go-Daigo sought to revive imperial rule and restore court-centered government. However, many warriors became discontented and hoped for the return of warrior rule, gradually gathering under Ashikaga Takauji, a leading figure of the samurai elite. In November 1335 (Kenmu 2), Takauji rebelled in Kamakura and entered Kyoto on January 11, 1336. In response, Nitta Yoshisada, Kusunoki Masashige, and Kitabatake Akiie joined forces and defeated Takauji near Kyoto on January 27. Takauji fled and reached Hyogo on February 3, where he prepared for another advance on Kyoto.

The forces of Nitta, Kusunoki, and Kitabatake moved to pursue him, while Takauji’s army also marched out. On February 10, 1336 (Kenmu 3), the Battle of Uchide took place between the troops of Kusunoki Masashige and those of Takauji. Masashige struck down Takauji’s brother, Ashikaga Tadayoshi, who escaped to Hyogo. Although Takauji was defeated again on February 11 at the Battle of Teshima-gawara by Nitta Yoshisada and fled to Kyushu, he soon regained power. By May, he advanced once more toward Hyogo, fought the Nitta–Kusunoki forces, killed Masashige, and pursued the retreating Nitta Yoshisada into Kyoto. Takauji then installed Emperor Komyo, while Emperor Go-Daigo fled to Yoshino in December, marking the beginning of the Northern and Southern Courts period.

## **Column    The Battle of Uchidehama**

In August 1338 (Ryakuo 1), Ashikaga Takauji was appointed shogun by the Northern Court and established the Muromachi shogunate. However, internal conflicts within the Ashikaga family and disputes among various daimyo soon became pronounced. Takauji relied heavily on his close retainers, the brothers Ko no Moronao and Moroyasu, which gradually led to discord with his younger brother, Ashikaga Tadayoshi. Many daimyo also split into rival factions supporting either side. Tadayoshi eventually defected to the Southern Court and, in January 1351 (Shohei 6 / Kanno 2), launched an attack on Kyoto. Takauji was forced to flee through Tanba and Harima and made his way to Hyogo as he prepared to return to Kyoto. On February

17, the Battle of Uchidehama broke out between the forces of Takauji, Moronao, and Moroyasu, and the army of Tadayoshi, which had moved to intercept them. The battle ended in a crushing defeat for Takauji's side. On February 20, a peace agreement was concluded between Takauji and Tadayoshi, and on February 26, Takauji departed Hyogo and proceeded to Kyoto.

## **51 Saigoku Kaido Historic Road (Chayano-cho, Miyazuka-cho, Uchide-Kozuchi-cho, Kasuga-cho, Uchide-cho, etc.)**

In ancient times, the Sanyodo Highway connecting the capital with Dazaifu passed through what is now Ashiya City. It is said that the place name "Uchide" originated from the point where the road, running southwest across the Seisetsu Plain from the capital, first reached the shore of Osaka Bay. By the Edo period, the ancient Sanyodo had come to be known as the Saigoku Kaido. Entering Ashiya from Nishinomiya, the road split into two routes at Uchide.

One was the main route, which extended northwest from Uchide and roughly corresponds to today's National Route 2 near Chayano-cho. The other was the coastal route, which ran westward along a line that largely matches today's National Route 43. The two routes that diverged at Uchide rejoined westward near the southern side of Ikuta-Jinja Shrine (Chuo-ku, Kobe City), continuing on toward the Chugoku region. At that time, daimyo processions traveled along the main route, while common people used the coastal route. Between Naruo (Nishinomiya City) and Mikage (Higashinada-ku, Kobe City), a milestone mound once stood at Tsuji.

Many Edo-period topographies depict scenes of Ashiya along the Saigoku Kaido, including works such as *Fukuhara Binkagami* (1680, Enpo 8), *Setsuyo Gundan* (1701, Genroku 14), *Settsu-shi* (1735, Kyoho 20), and *Settsu Meisho Zue* (1796, Kansei 8).

Today, traces of the main route remain around Uchide-Kozuchi-cho. Stone monuments also attest to the presence of the Saigoku Kaido, such as the Saikoku Bridge over the Miyagawa River and the stone stele of Prince Abo's Mausoleum along the Naruo–Mikage road north of Hanshin Uchide Station.

## **52 Tokuhon Shonin Monument (Uchide-Kozuchi-cho)**

Tokuhon Shonin (1758–1818) was a mid-Edo period monk of the Jodo sect. He was born in Shiga Village, Hidaka District, Kii Province (present-day Wakayama Prefecture), and his secular family name was Tabuse. From childhood he devoted himself deeply to Buddhist practice, maintaining strong faith and engaging in rigorous *nenbutsu* discipline and ascetic training. For the purpose of religious

propagation, he traveled widely throughout the country, including Kii (Wakayama), Kawachi (Osaka), Settsu (Osaka and Hyogo), Yamashiro (Kyoto), Yamato (Nara), Omi (Shiga), Edo (Tokyo), Sagami (Kanagawa), Shimousa (Chiba, Ibaraki, Saitama, and Tokyo), Shinano (Nagano), Hida (Gifu), Echigo (Niigata), Etchu (Toyama), and Kaga (Ishikawa).

Tokuhon Shonin passed through Uchide many times during his travels, and as a result, many villagers in the area became his followers. The Tokuhon Shonin Monument was erected along the Saigoku Kaido in Uchide in connection with this history. The stone bears the inscription “Namu Amida Butsu” (the sacred nenbutsu invocation) followed by the name “Tokuhon.”

### Column    **The Ashiya Legend of “Uchide no Kozuchi”**

The place name “Uchide” is said to derive from the point where the Saigoku Kaido, descending southwest from the capital, first reached the coastline of Osaka Bay. A local legend connected with the former village of Uchide tells the following story. Long ago, a wealthy landowner lived in Uchide Village. He possessed a small mallet, a treasured object said to grant any wish when it was swung.

This mallet was originally owned by a dragon deity who dwelled offshore at Uchide. According to tradition, the dragon deity once took human form and presented the mallet to the imperial court. How it later came into the landowner’s possession is unknown, but it is said that he may have received it as a reward for distinguished service during his time in the capital.

Although the mallet was an incomparable treasure, it had one troublesome flaw: whenever the sound of a temple bell could be heard, all of the riches it had produced would vanish at once.

### **53 Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property Former Ashiya Municipal Housing, Miyazuka-cho (Miyazuka-cho)**

This municipal housing complex was completed in 1953 (Showa 28). Designed by the Architectural Division of the Ashiya City Construction Department, it is a two-story stone-built structure. A distinctive feature is its exterior walls, which are made of *Nikkaseki*, a tuff stone quarried in Komatsu City, Ishikawa Prefecture. It is believed that stone was used instead of concrete as an experimental measure in response to the postwar cement shortage of the late 1940s and early 1950s.

After its use as municipal housing ended in 2017 (Heisei 29), seismic reinforcement work was carried out in 2018 (Heisei 30), followed by interior renovations. Since June

2019 (Reiwa 1), the individual units have been repurposed for use as commercial spaces.

Constructed as part of the urgent response to severe housing shortages during the postwar reconstruction period, this building is highly valued as a rare surviving example that illustrates the characteristics of public housing from the 1950s. It was registered as a National Tangible Cultural Property on August 17, 2020 (Reiwa 2).

## **54 Uchidekozuchi *Kofun* (Burial Tomb) (Uchide-Kozuchi-cho)**

This is the largest keyhole-shaped burial mound in Ashiya, estimated to have had a mound length of about 60 meters. It was constructed in the late Middle Kofun period (late 5th century). However, due to the development of farmland during the Muromachi period (late 15th to early 16th century), the mound itself was completely leveled. Excavations have revealed traces of the surrounding moat, and haniwa and fukiishi (paving stones) have been unearthed. After the excavation of the front square portion, an explanatory signboard was installed at the entrance of the apartment building constructed on the site.

In addition, the Uchidekozuchi Archaeological Site extends across this area. From this site, a knife-shaped stone tool dating to the Paleolithic period—approximately 20,000 years ago—has been discovered, making it the oldest artifact found within the city.

## **55 Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property Former Matsuyama Residence “Shotokan” (Ashiya City Library, Uchide Branch) (Uchide-Kozuchi-cho)**

The present Ashiya City Library Uchide Branch occupies a building originally constructed in Osaka during the Meiji period as a bank. Although details remain uncertain, it is believed to have been either the “Itsumi Bank” or the Osaka branch of the Tokyo Chozo Bank. Matsuyama Yohee later purchased the structure to house his art collection and relocated it to its current site in 1930 (Showa 5).

From 1954 to 1987 (Showa 29–62), the building served as the Ashiya City Main Municipal Library, and since 1990 (Heisei 2) it has been used as the Uchide Branch Library. On January 8, 2009 (Heisei 21), it was registered as a Nationally Registered Tangible Cultural Property under the names “Former Matsuyama Residence Shotokan” and “Former Matsuyama Residence Wall.”

The building is notable for its imposing exterior of rusticated granite, its tall arched windows, and the Romanesque-style wooden decorative columns found inside.

## Column Uchide-yaki Pottery

The Uchide area has long been known as a source of high-quality wall-plaster clay. In the mid-Meiji period, Saito Ikuta, a pioneer of Uchide, recognized the clay's distinctive plasticity and excellent properties. He invited potters to the area and built a kiln for *oniwa-yaki* (garden-kiln ware). In 1909 (Meiji 42), a climbing kiln was constructed at 21 Kasuga-cho and was succeeded by Sakaguchi Shozo—known as the first Sazan—who inherited the tradition of Nonomura Ninsei, regarded as the founder of Kyo-yaki. The ware produced here came to be known as “Uchide-yaki.”

Its subdued aesthetic, seen in tea utensils, flower vases, and other pieces, became widely appreciated by people throughout the Kyoto–Osaka–Kobe region. When local clay supplies proved insufficient, clay from Shigaraki and Kyoto was blended to compensate.

After the death of the first Sazan in 1937 (Showa 12), his successor Sakaguchi Jun continued efforts to promote Uchide-yaki. However, production came to an end around 1965 (Showa 40).

## 56 Designated Historic Site of Hyogo Prefecture *Kanatsuyama Kofun* (Burial Tomb) (Kasuga-cho)

*Kanatsuyama Kofun* is a scallop shaped keyhole burial mound constructed in the late Middle *Kofun* period (late 5th century). The mound is estimated to have had a total length of approximately 55 meters. The front square portion was destroyed due to agricultural land development during the Kamakura to Muromachi periods, leaving only the rear circular portion, which now appears as a round mound. At the summit of the rear circular portion, the clay coffin chamber of the burial facility has been identified. Excavations have yielded numerous haniwa and other artifacts, and have also revealed a rare double moat, an unusual feature even on a national scale.

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.。

## Column Legends Associated with *Kanatsuyama Kofun*

*Kanatsuyama Kofun* is also known by the names “Kogane-zuka” and “Kanazuka.” According to legend, Prince Abo buried 1,000 gold coins and 10,000 gold roof tiles here to aid the villagers of Uchide in times of hardship. This legend first appears in the 1701 (Genroku 14) topography *Settsuyo Gundan*, which records a song said to have been passed down among villagers: “As the morning sun rises and the evening sun

shines, beneath this tomb lie a thousand pieces of gold and ten thousand tiles.”

The story continued to be recorded in later works, including *Hyogo Meishoki* (1710, Hoi 7) and *Settsu Meisho Zue* (1796, Kansei 8).

One theory suggests that the legend originated because broken haniwa fragments, when unearthed from the mound, resemble golden roof tiles in color.

## **57 Stone Objects at Wakamiya Machikado Hiroba (Wakamiya-cho)**

This plaza was created by gathering and reusing historic stone objects from various locations within Ashiya City. Among the stone materials are: carved stones from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry Iwagahira Marked Stone Group, excavated in Rokurokuso-cho, including carved stones bearing symbols used by Kyogoku Wakasano-kami Tadataka of the Wakasa Obama Domain (Fukui Prefecture), such as “ ”, as well as symbols used by Ikeda Shintaro Mitsumasa of the Inaba Tottori Domain (Tottori Prefecture), including “ ” or “ ”; a millstone once used at a watermill in Yama-Ashiya-cho; and paving stones from the streetcar line that once ran along the Hanshin National Highway (present-day National Route 2).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.

## **58 The Former Residence of Saika Tomita (Miyagawa-cho)**

This is the former residence of Tomita Saika, known as the “Father of Hyogo Prefectural Culture.” From March 1934 (Showa 9) to November 1936 (Showa 11), the house was occupied by Tanizaki Junichiro, and is therefore also known as “Tanizaki’s Uchide House.” After Tanizaki moved out, Tomita Saika moved in on May 1939 (Showa 14).

The original main house was destroyed during the Hanshin Air Raid of August 1945 (Showa 20) and was rebuilt in 1954 (Showa 29). After Saika’s death on October 17, 1984 (Showa 59) at the age of 93, the property was acquired and restored by Ashiya City. It has been open to the public as the Former Residence of Saika Tomita since May 1987 (Showa 62). Opening hours: Sundays and Wednesdays, 10:00–16:00 (last admission 15:00)

Closed: December 29–January 3, August 13–19, Admission: Free, Inquiries: Ashiya City International and Cultural Promotion Section, 0797-38-2115

Column **Tanizaki Junichiro and Ashiya**

Tanizaki Junichiro (1886–1965) moved to the Kansai region following the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923 (Taisho 12). Between then and 1944 (Showa 19), he relocated 13 times within the Hanshin area. From March 1934 to November 1936, he lived in what is now the Former Residence of Tomita Saika, known as Tanizaki's "Uchide House." Here, Tanizaki held his wedding ceremony with Matsuko, who became his third wife, and lived with her daughter and sisters.

At the Former Residence of Saika Tomita, the only structure that remains from the period when Tanizaki lived there is the gatehouse (*kadoya*), which now serves as the exhibition building. Tanizaki used the second floor of this gatehouse as his study, where he worked on his modern language translation of *The Tale of Genji* and wrote "A Cat, a Man, and Two Women." The Kasuga-style stone lantern in the garden and the pine tree also date from Tanizaki's residence.

## **59 Tokugawa Osaka Castle Carved Stones Excavated from the Kurekawa Archaeological Site (Rinko Line) (Kurekawa-cho)**

The Kuregawa Archaeological Site served as a stone gathering and loading area in the 1620s for transporting stone materials quarried from the Tokugawa Osaka Castle Higashi-rokko Quarry Okuyama Carved Stone Group to Osaka Castle by boat. At this location, three carved stones and two split stones unearthed during the 1993 (Heisei 5) construction of the Ashiya Chuo Line have been relocated and preserved. The carved stones bear the symbol used by Horio Yamashiro-no-kami Tadaharu of the Izumo Matsue Domain (Shimane Prefecture).

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.。

## **60 Tokugawa Osaka Castle Carved Stones Excavated from the Kurekawa Archaeological Site (Ashiya City Museum of Art & History) (Ise-cho)**

In the front garden of the Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, seven carved stones and two split stones excavated from the Kurekawa Archaeological Site during the 1987 (Showa 62) improvement work on the Ashiya Chuo Line are displayed outdoors as part of the artwork "Binding Time" by Yamane Ko.

The stones bear marks used by Mori Nagato-no-kami Hidenari of the Bocho Hagi Domain (Choshu Domain, Yamaguchi Prefecture), such as “ ” and “ ” ; marks used by Horio Yamashiro-no-kami Tadaharu of the Izumo Matsue Domain (Shimane Prefecture), “ ” ; marks used by Kyogoku Wakasa-no-kami Tadataka of the Wakasa Obama Domain (Fukui Prefecture), “ ” and “ ” ; marks used by Ikeda

Ukyo-no-daibu Masatsuna of the Harima Ako Domain (Hyogo Prefecture), “ ” ; as well as additional marks whose domain affiliation is unknown. (For inquiries: Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, 0797-38-5432)

## Column Ise-cho and the Ise *koden*

The name Ise-cho originates from the Ise *koden*, rice fields jointly managed by a group called the Ise ko in the Edo period, whose purpose was to make pilgrimages to the Ise Grand Shrine. Ise-cho was established in 1944 (Showa 19) during the town name revision, covering the entire area of the former Ise koden and the eastern part of Tori Shinden. Members of the Ise ko contributed regular savings and income from the koden, and representatives chosen by lottery traveled to Ise to worship.

Departing from Ashiya, the representatives traveled to Otsu, crossed the Suzuka Pass from the east side of Lake Biwa, passed through Matsusaka, and reached Ise.

The name Ise-cho has no connection to the *Ise Monogatari*, whose protagonist is traditionally identified as Ariwara no Narihira.

## 61 Designated Cultural Property of Hyogo Prefecture Stone Foundation for the Central Pillar of a Pagoda in Ashiya Temple Ruins (Ise-cho)

This stone is believed to be the foundation block for the pagoda of the Ashiya Temple, a Buddhist temple established in the Asuka period (7th century). It was discovered in 1936 (Showa 11) in the vicinity of present-day Nishiyama-cho, after which it was relocated to private residences in Nishiyama-cho and Tsukiwaka-cho. When it was donated to the City of Ashiya in 1993 (Heisei 5), the stone was moved to the east garden of the Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, where it is now exhibited.

The stone measures 130 cm at its longest point and 58 cm in height. Near the center of its upper surface is a mortise hole measuring 31 cm in diameter and 16 cm in depth. An intriguing local tradition holds that rainwater collected in this hole was once used as a remedy for warts.

The stone also bears a “ ” mark, believed to have been carved in the 1620s during the quarrying of stone for the construction of Tokugawa Osaka Castle. This mark is thought to have been used by Shimazu Uma-no-kami Tadaoki of the Hyuga Sadowara Domain (Miyazaki Prefecture). (For inquiries: Ashiya City Museum of Art & History, 0797-38-5432)

\*An explanatory signboard is installed on-site.