

Sonoginosho History Park

The town of Higashisonogi has been inhabited since the Paleolithic period, more than 10,000 years ago. It experienced its heyday between the Yayoi and Kofun periods, when Higashisonogi prospered as the center of the Sonogi district (present-day Nagasaki City, Sasebo City, Omura City, Saikai City, Nishisonogi District, and Higashisonogi District). During the Edo period, Higashisonogi was a thriving post town where travelers along the Nagasaki Kaido and Hirado Kaido roads would stop to rest. For this reason, the town holds a treasure trove of historical landmarks and cultural assets, including the Hisagozuka Kofun, a burial mound recognized by the prefecture as having enormous historical value.



Facility Overview

- Hisagozuka Kofun ● Meiji-period Farm House
- Museum of History and Folklore

Handscroll of Higashisonogi History

Park Map



Park Overview

- Museum of History and Folklore
- Meiji-period Farm House
- Hisagozuka Kofun
- Michi-no-Eki Sonoginosho

Visitor Information

- Museum Admission
General Admission:
Adults 200 yen, Elementary and Junior High School Students 100 yen
Groups (10+ people):
Adults 100 yen, Elementary and Junior High School Students 50 yen
- Museum Training Room Rental Rates
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m. _____ 1,000 yen
12:00 p.m. - 5:00 p.m. _____ 1,300 yen
10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. _____ 2,000 yen
- Hours: 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m. (last entry at 4:30 p.m.)
- Closed
Tuesdays
New Year holidays (December 29 - January 3)

Directions

- From Nagasaki Expressway, take Higashisonogi Interchange, and drive approx. 200 meters towards Sasebo.
- 10 minutes' walk from JR Sonogi Station
- 3 minutes' walk from the Choei Bus Center Mae bus stop



[Contact Information]

History Park [Sonoginosho]

Higashisonogi Town Museum of History and Folklore

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Handscroll of Higashisonogi History



Unroll the scroll and travel back
in time to another world



History Park
[Sonoginosho]

Higashisonogi Town Museum of History and Folklore



Hisagozuka Kofun

Hisagozuka Kofun is one of Nagasaki Prefecture's famed keyhole-shaped burial mounds. The name "Hisagozuka" comes from its shape which resembles a gourd (hisago). This is the tomb of a powerful family that ruled over the region about 1,500 years ago.



Bronze mirror excavated from the Hisagozuka Kofun



Arrowhead

The Hisagozuka Kofun has two stone chambers (burial facilities). The arrowhead was excavated from the first chamber. Measuring 15.5 cm long and 4.0 cm wide, the iron arrowhead features two types of openwork designs.



Hisagozuka's stone chamber



Iron sword and small knife

Magatama and glass beads



Originally built in the village of Nakatakego (located within the town), to serve as the main house on a wealthy farmer's estate during the Meiji period, the structure has been relocated to the park.

Meiji-period Farm House



Meiji-period Farm House (former home of the Takenaka Family)

◎ Museum of History and Folklore

◆ History Hall

The History Hall showcases exhibits covering the history of the town from the Paleolithic period, over 10,000 years ago, to the Yayoi and Kofun periods, when it flourished as the center of the Omura Bay coastal area, and Edo period, when large-scale agrarian development took place. It also features materials related to local Sonogi tea.



Development of Sonogi Tea

Sonogi tea has been cultivated since the Edo period. The tea was notably exported abroad by the trader Oura Kei at the end of the Edo period. Later, from the Meiji and Taisho periods to the beginning of the Showa period, Tajima Fukujiro, Noda Utaro, Nakashima Sakae, and others laid the foundation for today's tea plantations. With subsequent improvement of the land, Sonogi tea now accounts for the majority of the tea produced in Nagasaki Prefecture.



Fukazawa Gidayu Katsukiyo and Katsuyuki

The first generations of the Fukazawa clan were born in Saga Prefecture's Kitagata Town. They learned whaling techniques in Kishu (Wakayama Prefecture) and established a whaling company based in the Omura domain. Katsukiyo donated the riches he earned from whaling to the Omura domain and contributed to agrarian development in Chiwata village. His brother, Katsuyuki, also used the money he earned from whaling to expand farming in the Chiwata village.



Mirror fragment from the Later Han Dynasty in China (Shiraigawa archaeological site)



Stone knives



Earthenware jar coffin and stone coffin from the Shiraigawa site



Pearls in three colors

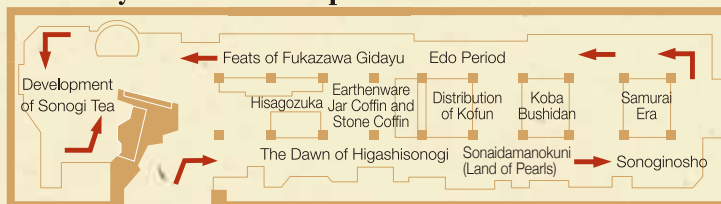


Koba Bushidan (group of warriors)



Jinryu Byobu (folding screen illustrating a battle formation)

◆ History Hall Floor Map



Onigawara roof tile of a waki-honjin (an inn for lower ranking government officials)

◆ Culture Hall

The Culture Hall exhibits materials related to the culture of Higashisonogi, which flourished as a post town along the Nagasaki Kaido, and features local performing arts such as ningyo joruri (puppet theater).



Chiwata Ningyo Joruri

Chiwata Ningyo Joruri puppetry is said to have started about 200 years ago during the Edo period in Chiwata-juku, and is designated as a cultural asset of the prefecture. Wildly popular in the Meiji and Taisho periods, it was performed during the Gion Festival at the local Suijingu Shrine and performed around the country. Lacking anyone to carry on the tradition, Chiwata Ningyo Joruri eventually died out, but today locals are working to revive the tradition with a new generation of puppeteers who are breathing new life into the age old art form.



Sakamoto Furyu

The Sakamoto Furyu is a sacred dance performance that was brought to the Sakamoto area from Saga Prefecture in the Edo period, about 400 years ago, and is designated as a cultural asset of the prefecture. Designated as the domain's official furyu (dance), the Sakamoto Furyu was valued and conserved by the Omura domain. When long spells of dry weather occurred, people performed the dance as a prayer for rain, and when it did, they were well rewarded by the lord. Other types of furyu performed in the Omura domain are believed to be derived from the Sakamoto Furyu.

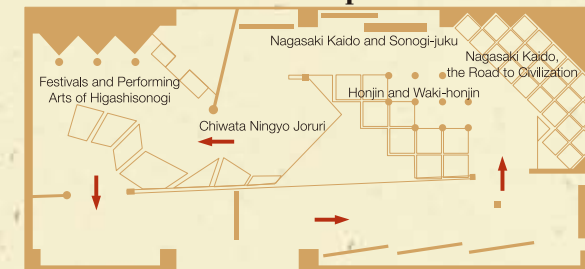


Boundary stone ("South of here is the Omura domain.")



Honmachi Snake Dance

◆ Culture Hall Floor Map



Microliths Excavated by Juken Ide

Here are some microliths unearthed from Omura City's Nodake site. These stone tools were discovered mainly in Higashisonogi and the neighboring city of Omura prior to WWII by local town historian, Juken Ide. Although Japanese archaeology at the time had yet to discover Paleolithic artifacts, Ide is said to have recognized the stone tools he collected as being Paleolithic. Microliths that were later found at the Nodake site were classified as Nodake-Yasumiba.



Post Towns along Nagasaki Kaido

Kokura - Kurosaki - Koyanose - Iizuka - Uchino - Yamae - Haruda - Tashiro - Todoroki - Nakabaru - Kanzaki - Sakaibaru - Saga - Ushizu - Oda - Kitagata - Tsukazaki - Ureshino - **Sonogi** - Chiwata - Matsubara - Omura - Eisho - Yagami - Himi - Nagasaki