History of Nagoya Betsuin

During the Kamakura period (1185-1333), Shinran Shonin (1173-1262) believed that the true way to live was to live the life of the Nembutsu, (repetition of the name of Amitābha.)

Shinran's teachings were spread by Rennyo Shonin (1415-1499) in the Muromachi period (1336-1573) and have been carefully passed on to the people here in Owari.

Nagoya Betsuin is a Shinshu-Otani sect temple established in 1690 by Ichinyo Shonin (the 16th head priest of Higashi Honganji Temple).

This temple was built on the land donated by Tokugawa Mitsutomo, the lord of the Owari domain, on the site of Furuwatari Castle, which is one of the residences of Oda Nobuhide, who is the father of Oda Nobunaga.

Since then, for over 300 years, the temple has been widely known as a place where people can learn the teachings of the Pure Land Buddhism.

In March 1945, most of the historic buildings of the temple were destroyed by fire in an air raid on Nagoya.

In 1962, after the confusion of the postwar period, the current main hall was rebuilt with the efforts of the Owari followers. I hope that this visit to the temple will be an opportunity for you to learn about the various histories that are connected to us, and to have an encounter with Buddhism that will illuminate the truth about yourself.

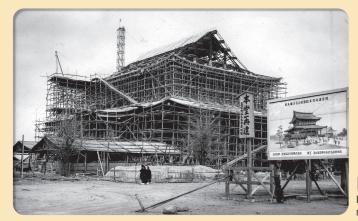


Betsuin in the Edo period ([Owari meisho zue [Guide to famous Owari sites]]1805)

tsvininthe old days



Old Main Hall The main hall was rebuilt in 1823, about 120 years after it was first built. It was destroyed by fire in an air raid in Nagoya in March 1945.



Old Bell Tower

The old bell tower was completed in 1721. In 1918, the stone walls and roof tiles were replaced. The bell tower was destroyed by fire in an air raid on Nagoya, but the bell survived the war, and is still in existence.





Old Gate

1757Built in 1757, the old gate has a statue of Shakyamuni Buddha, Maitreya Bodhisattva, and Ananda on the top of the main gate. On the front of the gate, there was a plaque with four characters that say "Daihi Ougen", which can be translated to" The Power of Amitabha Leading Us". It was written by Gonnyo Shonin, the 21st head priest of Higashi Honganji Temple.

Reconstruction of the Main Hall

In 1962, thanks to the kindness of the Owari followers, the main hall was reconstructed.

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A Main Hall (Hondo)

The main hall of Nagoya Betsuin was built on this place in 1702, after receiving a donation of land from Tokugawa Mitsutomo, the lord of the Owari domain. This place is the site of the former Furuwatari Castle. Since the first building, the main hall was expanded and rebuilt, and became the largest building in Nagoya along with the Nagoya Castle tower.

However, it was burnt to ashes in an air raid on Nagoya in March 1945, and the current main hall was rebuilt in 1962.

The statue of Amida Nyorai (Amitābha) is located in the center of the hall, and the portrait of Shinran Shonin (the founder of the Jodo Shinshū) is in the hall.

A variety of Buddhist services are held here daily.

What are Leftover stones?

The stones scattered around the Nagoya Betsuin temple area and the Shimo-Chaya Park next to it are called "remnants." These are stones left from when Nagoya Castle was built. Back then, this place was where they cut stones for the castle. Some stones have marks (like the red line in the photo) from the lords who got them. Try looking around the temple area to find them!



B Main Gate (Sanmon)

The main gate was built in 1757 and was destroyed by a fire in the war. The current gate was built in 1968.

C Statue of Shakyamuni Buddha

A statue of Shakyamuni Buddha (center), a statue of Maitreya Bodhisattva (right), and a statue of Ananda (left) are placed on the top of the main gate.

E Monument to Toyomoto Sermon Hall

Toyomoto Sermon Hall was one of the sermon halls of the Nagoya Betsuin located in Sakae, Naka-ku. This monument stone was unearthed during the construction of the Nagoya Expressway and then brought to the Nagoya Betsuin.

D Bell Tower

According to the inscription on the bell, the bell was cast in 1692.

It has a total height of 177.5 cm and a diameter of 108 cm. It is designated as a cultural asset by the city of Nagoya. This bell is rung to announce the time of the Buddhist memorial service.

The "Hatsu-gane (First Bell)" is held at midnight on New Year's Day, attracting many visitors every year

F Monument to Emperor Meiji's Naooua Main Camp

In 1890, when the army and navy conducted major exercises in Aichi Prefecture, the headquarters of the army was set up in Nagoya Betsuin.

This monument was built to commemorate that event.

G Monument to the Emperor Meijii's Place of Residence

This monument was erected to commemorate the Emperor Meiji's use of the Betsuin as his temporary residence.

H Monument to the Poem by Sumita Chiken

[Byakugou no Hikari toutoshi Yoha no aki] This poem can be translated to "The light of the Amida is precious in the midnight autumn." Sumita Chiken, the author of this poem, played a central role in the study of Jodo Shinshu Buddhism in the Owari region. The school, founded by Sumita Chiken became the predecessor to current institutions such as Doho University, Nagoya Zokei University, and Nagoya University of the Arts.

The temple grounds are the former site of Furuwatari Castle, which was built in 1534 by Oda Nobuhide, the father of Oda Nobunaga. It is said that Nobunaga held his Genpuku, (a ceremony marking the transition from child to adult) here in 1546.

J Mizuya and Water Basin

The shape of the roof of the Mizuya (washing hands) indicates that there was a well on the north side. The water basin was donated in 1900.

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Monument at the Site of Furuwatari Castle

K Mitegozaru Monument

The words "Mite Gozaru" are inscribed on this stone monument. "Mite Gozaru" can be translated to "I'm getting watched", this is the motto of Enjo Miyabe from Toyohashi City, who devoted himself to the missionary work of the Betsuin. This monument was erected in 1937.

L East Gate (Higashi mon)

The oldest wooden structure in this temple, mentioned in the "Owari Meisho Zue" (an illustrated guide describing famous places in Owari province, published in the Edo period). It was designated as a National Tangible Cultural Property.

