Koedo
KAWAGOE
WHERE TIME STANDS STILL
東京国際大学
言語コミュニケーション学部
Tokyo International University
School of Language Communication
Vol.9
List of Important Buildings for Urban Landscape Registered by Kawagoe City
都市景観重要建築物リスト

1. Tsuchikane
   都市: 土金
   Old business: building materials sales → Current business: handicraft shop
   Designated name: Tsuchikane-ke
   (Registered March 18, 2009)

2. Benino
   都市: ベニーノ
   Old business: post office → Current business: restaurant
   Designated name: Rokkenmachi Post Office (Registered February 16th 2000)

3. Fukuda-ya
   都市: 福田屋
   Old business: pawnshop → Current business: book & stationery shop
   Designated name: Fukuda-ya
   (Registered March 6th 2003)

4. Genji-ya
   都市: 源氏家
   Old business: tea house → Current business: Japanese-style restaurant
   Designated name: Genji-ya
   (Registered March 24th 2010)

5. Hyakujo
   都市: 百丈
   Old business: fishing supply shop → Current business: soba shop
   Designated name: Teuchisoba Hyakujo (Registered February 16th 2000)

6. Imoju
   都市: 芋十
   Old business: liquor shop → Current business: sweet potato shop
   Designated name: Imoju, Inc. (Registered March 8th 2002)

7. Kawagoe Chamber of Commerce
   都市: 川越商工会議所
   Old business: Bushu Bank → Current business: Chamber of Commerce
   Designated name: Kawagoe Chamber of Commerce (Registered March 12th 2001)

8. Sakumia Inn
   都市: 佐久間旅館
   Old business: stagecoach business station and Japanese inn → Current business: Japanese inn
   Designated name: Sakumia Inn, Okunoma (Registered March 6th 2003)

9. Shimapanaka
   都市: 島仲
   Old business: baby buggy shop → Current business: rice shop/ diving shop/kerosene shop
   Designated name: Shimapanaka (Registered March 6th 2003)
10 Shimano Coffee Taishokan
(8:00~19:00) TEL: 049-225-7680
Old business: kimono shop → Current business: coffee shop
Designated name: Kyu Manita-ke (Registered March 12th 2001)

11 Taiyoken
(Lunch 11:00~15:00/Dinner 17:00~21:00) Closed: Mon. (group reservation OK)
TEL: 049-222-0259 Old business: meat shop/restaurant → Current business: restaurant
Designated name: Taiyoken (Registered March 12th 2001)

12 Tennuma
(11:00~14:00/ 17:00~21:00) Closed: TEL: 049-225-0012
Old business: private house → Current business: tempura restaurant
Designated name: Tempura Tennuma (Registered March 8th 2004)

13 Yoshida Denki
(10:00~19:00) Closed: Wed. TEL: 049-222-1728
Old business: shop of Sekine Daijiro → Current business: electrical appliance shop
Designated name: Kyu Sekine-ke (Registered March 12th 2001)
Koedo Kawagoe is a phrase familiar to Kawagoe citizens, though many may have never thought about where the phrase’s meaning came from. We did not know, either, until the interview of this handicraft shop: Tsuchikane. Located nearby the Hon Kawagoe Station, Tsuchikane started as a supply business, but became a handicraft shop in 1977. When the 2nd owner, Tsuchikane Tominosuke, was working for the Koedo Kawagoe Tourism Association, he started working on a tourist guide book titled Koedo Kawagoe. As a result, this phrase became famous and came to be throughout Kawagoe.

According to the owner, customers are not only from Japan, but also from Korea, Taiwan, China and the US. These tourists want to buy souvenirs which are made in Japan and represent Kawagoe City. Therefore, the shop sells products like posters of Kawagoe, Japanese teacups with Kawagoe printed on and detailed handicraft from professionals. However, these amazing handicrafts are decreasing because of the decreasing number of craftsmen.

The Tsuchikane building is known for its black plaster finished walls and old glass windows. On March 18th, 2009, the building was designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City. Mr. and Mrs. Tsuchikane said they still love Kawagoe City as their hometown, even though the buildings have become old.
This building was first built as an exhibition room to display masterpieces of wood by a timber merchant in 1924. From 1937, it was used as Rokkenmachi Post Office, then used for offices, and finally was remodeled into a music store. From 1997, it was also designated as a Japanese Tangible Cultural Property. In 2001, the "Italian Restaurante Benino" was opened in it. The owner of this historical building changed the interior only a little, but the exterior remains the same, and it is still beautiful. In the Kawagoe Festival, Rokkenmachi’s Dashi (festival wagon) starts here, and the building is loved by many local people.

Benino’s manager, Ms. Okuyama’s recommended menu items are fresh pasta and pizza. The pizza’s oven temperature heats up to 600°C, hotter than usual pizza ovens. We would also like to recommend you taste the menu items which vary according to the seasons! All the dishes and desserts are handmade from beginning to end, so you can enjoy dishes that you can never taste in other restaurants. In addition to more than 40 menu items, there are 10 recommended items that change daily. There is also a reasonable full-course meal served.

As you can see in the pictures, the atmosphere of the restaurant is enjoyable. Many things, such as the doorknobs the menu holders, etc. of the restaurant were crafted by expert craftsmen. Look for them when you visit. Benino has been featured on Japanese gourmet TV programs. There are also some bar counter seats, so why don’t you enjoy the cozy ambience while you are drinking wine selected by the chef and eating Italian food? You can even reserve Benino for a party or other special events.

1924年に材商の銘木の展示場として建設され、1937年に郵便局から事務所、楽器屋になり、1997年には日本の登録有形文化財に指定されました。そして2001年にイタリア料理レストラン「ベニーノ」になりました。

ベニーノ代表の奥山さんオススメの料理は、生パスタと 600℃まで上がるピザ釜で焼くピザですが、季節によって変わるおすすめメニューも注目して頂きたい!! 料理・デザートは、全て一から手作りなので、他では味わえない料理を楽しむことができます。

レトロ感を感じられる店内で食事をすることができます。カウンター席もあり、落ち着いた雰囲気の店内でシェフ厳選のワイン、本格イタリアン料理はいかがですか?
“Fukuda-ya” was built in 1929. At first the building was kurazukuri style, but the owner ended up moving and rebuilding the building, because the street in front of the store became a prefectural road. The store keeper wanted to build the same Japanese style of building again, but the carpenter was from Tokyo, so he recommended the owner to build a box-shaped building. In those days, such buildings were in fashion in Tokyo.

Fukuda-ya was the only box-shaped type of building in Kawagoe then, so it attracted attention and neighbors talked about it. The technique and skill of the carpenter who built this building was good, so the external appearance remains beautiful even after all these years. Enjoy this Western-style building.

Fukuda-ya was started by a farmer who was from Konosu. He had given up farming to come to Kawagoe to start a general merchandise store selling Hina ningyo dolls, because Kawagoe was a good place for doing business. The second storekeeper was good at drawing pictures and started to sell Ema, wooden tablets with pictures on them, which he drew himself. And finally, the Fukuda-ya bookstore was started. Around 1876, he was selling only picture books on festival days. But in 1887, he officially started the bookstore which remains today. The recommendation of this store is the “Photo Album Kawagoe-shi no Showa,” Kawagoe in the Showa-era, by which you can also understand Fukuda-ya better.

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Genjiya: 料亭「源氏家」

“Genjiya” was built in 1926, and it was designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe city in 2010. In the past, it was used as a place where men and women met secretly, and it still retains those traits from the structure of the building. Later, it was used for some time as a wedding hall until the Hikawa Wedding Hall was opened. Then the owner’s grandfather bought the building. Since then, it has been a restaurant. Kaiseki ryouri, tea ceremony dishes, are mainly served in Genjiya, a high class Japanese style-restaurant.

Genjiya is located a little far away from Kurazukuri Street and the Time Bell Tower (Toki no Kane). This results in Genjiya being located in a quiet, isolated neighborhood where customers can enjoy a healthy meal and a beautiful garden. The garden symbolizes beautiful Old Japan, and customers also experience traditional Japan in tatami-mat rooms. Genjiya has been repaired frequently to preserve its beauty. The owner takes pride in having maintained the garden at the entrance of the building well. The building is earthquake resistant.

The most important thing about Genjiya is that you have to make a reservation by phone before visiting there. Because of this management policy, Genjiya is open every day of the year as long as you have reservations. Genjiya specializes in Itamae style foods. Itamae style food features vegetables and meat. Among them, the most famous is traditional New Year’s food, including kurikinton made with chestnuts and sweet potatoes. Genjiya doesn’t use additives and uses only high quality domestic products. Also, all foods served here are 100% made from scratch.

メニューには栗きんとん、野菜の煮たものを中心とした懐石料理、そして一番有名なのがおせち料理である。このおせち料理の特徴は、すべて手作り、無添加、国産品だということだ。
When you hear of Kawagoe, you imagine buildings called kurazukuri. There are many such old buildings in Kawagoe. Soba Shop Hyakujo is one of the most famous. On July 16th, in 1999, Hyakujo was registered as a culture asset. The original shop, Yumiya, was rebuilt into three-storied wooden house and a fishing supply shop in 1930. The shop is called “Kanbankenchiku,” which was built in Asakusa in Tokyo after the Great Kanto Earthquake of 1923. Most houses called Kanbankenchiku were destroyed with the passage of time. So any existing buildings are very valuable. Hyakujo was named after a Zen monk of the Tang Dynasty in China. The monk protected and passed down the spirit of self-reliance that was unusual then. He lived without relying on economic aid from believers.

Hyakujo: 百丈

Good buckwheat flour is most important for making soba noodle. Hyakujo uses good buckwheat cultivated in Santocho town, which is 400 meters above sea level. The cool climate there is suitable for the cultivation of buckwheat of good quality due to a wide range in temperature between day and night, and the morning and evening mists. Hyakujo has been contracting with soba producer, Mr. Suzuki, who sends buckwheat flour ground by a stone mill.

Let me introduce Masaru Suzuki. Santocho is where economic development projects were successful due to buckwheat. In this town, Mr. Suzuki is working as a leader in the growing of buckwheat. Ties with a reliable producer like Mr. Suzuki and his family are really important for Hyakujo. Hyakujo has long been encouraged and supported by the Suzukis’ passion, sincerity, and enthusiasm. Throughout the year, Mrs. Suzuki encloses short letters with buckwheat flour. She writes about the beautiful seasonal changes and the growing of soba in her letters. They are always struggling with summer heat, long rainy seasons, and typhoons. Hyakujo’s owner and family feel as if they were in Santocho whenever they read these letters. The Suzukis also write about how hard agriculture is, and about the difficulty in dealing with weather.

In this way, buckwheat flour is delivered to Hyakujo, by which the shopkeeper makes and serves good soba with his heart.
Imoju was started around 1900. The present storekeeper is the 3rd generation to sell sweet potato confectionery. The structure of the wooden building is of Sukiya style. After WWII, people were not allowed to make sweet potato confectionery, so they sold popsicles (ice-candy) instead. In those days, Imoju was the first to sell popsicles in Kawagoe. Later, the shop became a liquor store. However, the current owner sells sweet potato confectionery. Imoju also sells antiques.

Merits and demerits:

**Merits:** The building is located on a corner, so customers can find the building easily. More than 100 years have passed since it was built. There is a tall pillar in the house that is unusual in Kawagoe. Imoju is at the entrance of Tachimonzen Street, so many people pass by here.

**Demerits:** It is an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City, so there are many regulations that prevent the building from being renovated or repaired easily.

Sweet Potato Confectionary:

There are ten kinds of sweet potato confectionaries sold here, mostly priced about 500 yen. Every sweet potato confectionery is very delicious.

- "Imoju-to" are steeped in molasses. They are soft and sweet.
- "Imoju Matsuba" are fried in oil, and are seasoned with sugar. There are two types, one made with white sugar, and the other with brown sugar. They are thin and easy to eat.
- "Imo Senbei" and "Imo Chips" are not so sweet. They are also thin and easy to eat.
- "Imo Yokan" is sweet and soft.

Some sweet potato products are sugar-free.
The building was originally built as the Saitama branch of Bushu Bank in 1928. The Kawagoe Chamber of Commerce took over the building in 1970. It was designated as a Tangible Cultural Property of Japan in 2001, and Kawagoe City also registered it as an Important Building for Urban Landscape. The building was modeled after old European houses with thick stone columns. These columns become thinner and steeper from bottom to top. This technique is called entasis. As seen from a distance, the building embodies magnificence and elegance. Inside the building, there are very high ceilings and many big windows which notably characterize it. About 80 years have passed since it was built. It underwent major repairs with the centenary anniversary of the Kawagoe Chamber of Commerce. During the massive March 11, 2011 earthquake, it suffered no damage.

The Kawagoe Chamber of Commerce was established in 1900. It mainly supports small and medium sized enterprises. Half of Kawagoe’s 9,000 enterprises are members. The Chamber also plays an important role in conveying enterprises' opinions and ideas to the government.

The Agency for Cultural Affairs Dept. in Kawagoe City has registered the building as a Tangible Cultural Property. Therefore, the department gives subsides to help the Chamber of Commerce repair its building. But the Chamber is not allowed to change the building’s appearance, so it is hard to modernize such facilities as handrails or elevators. The air conditioning systems do not work well. But, the building’s classic appearance is one of Kawagoe’s historic assets.

The picture is an advertisement for those who would like to take a knowledge test on Kawagoe history.
The first owner of Sakuma Inn ran a stagecoach business, too. Sakuma Inn was built in 1894, and the Okunoma (inner room) was made in 1911. In the same year, the room was registered as a Tangible Cultural Property of Japan. The Japanese style room looks as it did 100 years ago. Sakuma Inn was built in Kawagoe according to the advice of Eiichi Shibusawa, one of Saitama’s famous industrialists.

Sakuma Inn is a member of the International Hotel Federation. It’s Okunoma (inner room) is a Tangible Cultural Property registered with the Japanese government. Toson Shimazaki, a great Japanese novelist, once stayed in the Okunoma. In 1981, Makoto Nakahara, the master of Japanese chess, had a championship match in the room with Kiyozumi Kiriyama, who had the eighth “dan” of Shogi. The old-fashioned chandelier hanging from the ceiling remains the same as when this parlor was built.

Inn guests never fail to be pleased with the parlor when they visit the Okunoma. It is Sakuma Inn’s symbol. The number of accommodations is 22 rooms, and the charge is 13,650~26,250 yen per night which includes supper and breakfast. The lunch menu is very popular with women, and the menu is changed monthly. For special occasions, customers may make special arrangements concerning type of seating or menu items.
The building was constructed around the 1920s. It is said that the previous owner of the house sold baby buggies. After the shop closed, the first generation Shimanaka shop owner bought it and started a rice shop about 60 years ago. The current owner also sells diving equipment. Kerosene is sold, too. It is delivered to neighboring residents, much to their appreciation. The building is sandwiched between two others. There is usually much traffic on this street, with many people passing, so it is a good location.

Shimanaka was designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape in 2003. Having been so designated by Kawagoe City, regulations prevent the shop owner from changing its appearance. The building is very hot in summer. Its clay walls crack easily. Moreover, it is very cold in winter. Nevertheless, the third storeowner feels very honored to have his building designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape.

There are many kinds of rice sold here. Yumepirika produced in Hokkaido is very popular these days. Climate has a big influence on the taste of rice which has a large effect on how well it will sell each year. Although Fukushima rice in northeastern Japan was popular before the earthquake of March 11, 2011, Hokkaido rice is more popular now. Here in Kawagoe, Koshihikari brands of Saitama or Kawagoe are widely sold, too. Younger customers are decreasing, so Shimanaka has started delivering rice directly, which is well received by older customers who can’t go to the store easily.

This is how Shimanaka used to look. Before it was repaired, it was difficult to see the appearance of the store because the store’s signboard “Shimanaka Beikoku-ten” hid part of the building, but now it is more attractive. Repairs were made inside, too. Many people are more aware of the building now.
Shimano Coffee Taishokan's building was originally built as Kimono shop Manita-ke in 1933. Then Shimano Coffee Taishokan's owner started his coffee shop in 1996. The owner of the shop has kept the ceiling and lights as they were, and uses furniture and interior decorations from the past. Moreover, this building was designated as an Important Building of Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City in 2001. This coffee shop is loved by a wide range of visitors, including local people and tourists coming from other prefectures and from overseas.

The recommended menu items in the Shimano Coffee Taishokan are the coffee using beans which are roasted on site, and the homemade cakes. The price of coffee is 600 yen and the cake is 350 yen. The coffee and cake set is 700 yen. The coffee shop owner uses an old-fashioned siphon even now. We cannot see this type of siphon so often, but Mr. Shimano has a strong feeling that he wants his customers to drink delicious coffee, so he sticks to this way of making coffee. This is one of the good points that we found while researching this project. This is a spirit of treasuring and preserving old things.

Shimano Coffee Taishokan's building has Western-style construction. This method of construction used to be popular. As seen in the left picture, the building has three arched of windows and two Western-style pilasters. The roof style is called “araidashi” in Japanese. The raw materials of araidashi are concrete, bricks, mud, and so on. This building has special characteristic that we can't find in other kurazukuri buildings.
Kawagoe is famous for its kurazukuri street, however there is some western-style architecture here, too. One example is Taiyoken. The restaurant is designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City. Masaichi Higuchi was the proprietor of a meat shop and a restaurant here in 1922. Seven years later, he renovated the building. The present manager remodeled again in 2003 to maintain its appearance. As the years passed, supermarkets spread throughout the city, so the manager gave up his meat shop, but decided to keep this restaurant. In the second floor banquet hall, we can hold a wedding party or a 7-5-3 festival for children aged seven, five or three, or Buddhist memorial services. People who held wedding parties here visit again later to hold golden wedding parties. Kawagoe people admire this restaurant.

The manager says Taiyoken’s retro atmosphere remains fascinating even 90 years after it was first built. There are many things which we don’t have space to introduce, but it is worth visiting Taiyoken yourself!!

The restaurant’s recommended meal is the Taisho Roman Set. It is difficult to try all of the restaurant’s dishes in one sitting, but we can sample most of them with the Taisho Roman Set. This set has soup, fried shrimp, fried meat, curry, stuffed cabbage, garnish, ice cream, and coffee or tea. It has dishes which are liked by men and women of all ages, so it can be called a Kids Special Plate for Adults.

This meal’s price is 1,995 yen. If we pay 2,000 yen, we may get 5 yen change. 5 yen is pronounced goen in Japanese. It means we hope to get a chance to meet again.

Taiyoken is a restaurant with a long history of 90 years. It is a European-style building. The most popular menu is the ‘Taisho Roman Set’ for which you can taste most of the restaurant’s dishes if you order it. Women and men of all ages like this menu. If you pay 2,000 yen, you will get 5 yen in change. The pronunciation of 5 yen in Japanese is ‘goen’. It means we hope to meet again.

The manager says Taiyoken’s retro atmosphere remains fascinating even 90 years after it was first built. There are many things which we don’t have space to introduce, but it is worth visiting Taiyoken yourself!!
The recommended menu item of Tennuma is Irodori-Gozen, of which only 20 sittings a day are served. The first picture is Irodori-Gozen, which is priced 1,000 yen. Why are only 20 sittings a day served? The owner says it is because he wants to serve his customers food with the highest quality. The good point is that customers do not tired of this menu item because it changes each season. Moreover, the price is very reasonable, so many customers are repeaters.

When we go near the restaurant, the smell of tempura drifts deliciously from inside of the restaurant. The tempura restaurant feel us relaxed and at home. The owner renovated the building recently adding the counter seats for customers eating alone. The location is near Kitain Temple, so many people who prayed at the temple then visited this amusement quarter afterward. It was a social gathering place. The storekeeper hopes to carefully preserve the building.

「てんぬま」は元々木造建築で大正時代に建てられた民家でした。天ぷらとして創業したのは20年前で現在は家族で切り盛りしています。
Yoshida Denki is an electric appliance store on Taisho Roman Street in Kawagoe. As you can see in the first picture, the building is kurazukuri (warehouse) style. It is designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City. The building was built in the 1890s by Sekine Matsugoro who was a master carpenter who also won the contract for building Toki-no-Kane, Time Bell Tower, the symbol of Kawagoe. Though he built it similar to other kurazukuri with thick mortar walls, it has no double doors that open outward.

The wisdoms and device of builders of earlier times are very impressive. There were frequent fires in Kawagoe in the Edo Period, and almost all other buildings were destroyed in the path of fire, but kurazukuri buildings neither burned nor collapsed. Merchants valued them since they were very strong against fires. Another advantage is “insulation effectiveness,” that is, air conditioning works well in them for heating and cooling. Kurazukuri are also beautiful. The disadvantage is that the walls are very thick, so the owner had a lot of difficulty in digging holes for plumbing.

Taisho Roman Street used to be called Ginza Dori. Ginza Dori is associated with a big and rich shopping district in Tokyo. The shop owner is proud of Taisho Roman Street and Yoshida Denki, so he wants to preserve such traditions and cultures as kurazukuri. However, his worry is that there are few successors, so the owner is very afraid about the future of Kawagoe and Taisho Roman Street. Yoshida Denki is probably the only kurazukuri styled electric appliance store in all Japan. Yoshida Denki is not a big electric appliance store, but it takes its good care of its customers. That is why people in Kawagoe trust the shop.

If you want to buy some kind of electric appliance, you should go to Yoshida Denki!
About Important Buildings for Urban Landscape

Kawagoe is famous for its kurazukuri and traditional Japanese style buildings which represent different historical periods. Kawagoe City began preserving these kinds of buildings, environment, as well as landscape, following 1988, when the law for Important Buildings for Urban Landscape was established. Any house, building, or even a tree can be designated as an Important Building for Urban Landscape by Kawagoe City if it is considered highly valuable.

This year we, Kawagoe Tankentai (Kawagoe Research Group) at TIU, interviewed 13 owners of buildings designated as Important Buildings for Urban Landscape. We chose these places from more than seventy Important Buildings for Urban Landscape in Kawagoe City according to one common theme. That is, in the past, each building was used for a different business or purpose than it is now.

Students enrolled in this project

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Kazuki Inoue 井上一希
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