

Meiji 150th
Anniversary
Commemorative
Ceremony



Kagoshima's

Meiji

Restoration

Exposition

Guidebook



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Kagoshima's
Great Figures



Big Events



Kagoshima's
Highlights
by Area



Meiji
Restoration
Column



150th



Meiji Restoration 150th Anniversary Project Committee

Looking to the Lands Beyond the Seas

"In order to counter the threat posed by the West, Japan must change." This sense of danger would lead to the Meiji Restoration.

The Satsuma Domain is at Japan's southernmost tip and is an opening to the southern seas. From the days of old it has seen thriving exchange with foreign countries and is the place where firearms and Christianity came to Japan. Even during the Edo period it conducted exchange through the Ryukyu Islands and easily obtained information from overseas. At the same time, it had a keen sense of the threat posed by foreign powers. In the midst of this, there was a lord who had his sights on the advanced technologies of the West. It was the 8th feudal lord Shimadzu Shigehide.



History guide point 'Shigehide, building the foundations of Satsuma's science and technology' (Shimadzu Shigehide, Mizuma Yoshizane)

With a burning desire, they opened the door for a new Japan.

A note about the shopping area in Kagoshima called

'Tenmonkan': it gets its name from the Tenmonkan Observatory established by Shimadzu Shigehide.



The Kagoshima City shopping area Tenmonkan



Leading Japan's Modernization

Eventually Shimadzu Shigehide would teach Western knowledge to his beloved great grandson. And it was that great grandson who became the 11th feudal lord Shimadzu Nariakira. Upon becoming the feudal lord, Nariakira went straight to work implementing modernization policies. Specifically this was constructing

Japan's first Western style industrial complex called Shuseikan Project. The aim



Reverberatory furnace (Sengan-en)

The Meiji Restoration Started in Satsuma

was to make navy ships and weapons rivaling those of the West, and telegraphic communication experiments and industrial research were also undertaken.

The civilized Nariakira was also relied on by the Tokugawa shogunate who were shaken by the arrival of Commodore Perry's ships. He assisted in the shogunate reforms, as well as with issues with the succession of shogun. It was around this time Saigo Takamori was promoted and worked under Nariakira.

From Reforming the Shogunate to Overthrowing it

Inaugurated as a chief minister, Ii Naosuke forcibly advanced his political aims while suppressing his opposition (the Ansei Purge) Shimadzu Nariakira had planned a military advance on Kyoto, but died suddenly. After that Saigo Takamori became a wanted man by the shogunate, so he was forced to hide away on Amami Oshima Island.

Meanwhile, the assassination of the chief minister (Sakuradamongai Incident) and other events began to greatly undermine the power of the shogunate. After Nariakira's death, his younger brother Shimadzu Hisamitsu, who assumed control of Satsuma Domain, succeeded Nariakira's will in reforming the shogunate. He had a great influence on the political climate at the time through actions like leading an army to Kyoto.

Aiming for the unification of the Imperial Court and the shogunate in the beginning, the Satsuma Domain's position shifted to overthrowing the shogunate.

Through the efforts of Saigo Takamori, Okubo Toshimichi, and Komatsu Tatemaki, the Satsuma Domain seized political leadership. And after the restoration of imperial rule, and the Boshin War, Japan was reborn as a new country.

Saigo Takamori's Fall at Shiroyama

Many samurai were dissatisfied with the new Meiji Government, and some created a rebellion. In Kagoshima some rebels raised an army with Saigo Takamori taking up the position as leader. In 1877 the Satsuma Rebellion broke out. It was the largest scale samurai rebellion, and it would also be the last.



The cave where Saigo Takamori is said to have spent 5 days at the close of the Satsuma Rebellion.





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What is Kagoshima's Meiji Restoration Exposition?

The year 2018 marks the 150th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration. Kagoshima is blessed with many tourism resources including historical and cultural heritage sites that were cornerstones of the Meiji Restoration and pioneers of Japan's modern industries. Furthermore, Kagoshima is also currently receiving attention from around the country and abroad due to the broadcast of the period drama called Segodon (a television drama about Saigo Takamori).

This milestone 150th year is a great opportunity for Kagoshima Prefecture to energize and revitalize itself.

As such, the public and private sectors of Kagoshima have come together to establish the Meiji Restoration 150th Anniversary Project Committee. Activities and events that promote Kagoshima's unique characteristics within and beyond the prefecture, urban development projects, initiatives that foster a lively atmosphere or disseminate information, and educational projects are carried out as part of "Kagoshima's Meiji Restoration Exposition".

The whole of Kagoshima has banded together to ensure that visitors who come during this 150th anniversary of the Meiji Restoration leave with a deep impression of our prefecture. We welcome you to reflect on the late Edo and Meiji periods that Kagoshima's historical figures lived in, walk in their footsteps, and transcend time to experience the Meiji Restoration for yourself!



Meiji 150th Anniversary Commemorative Ceremony ~Transcending Time, in Kagoshima~

2018
5/25 FRI Commemorative Ceremony

Time 9:00am to 11:45am

Place Kagoshima Prefectural Comprehensive Physical Education Center

An event to renew one's understanding of the Meiji Restoration and the modernization that followed, to pass down this heritage to future generations, as well as broadcast Kagoshima's historical and cultural attractions to people both within and beyond the prefecture.

Go to "Kagoshima's Meiji Restoration Exposition" website for the latest information!
<https://kagoshima-ishin.com/>

2018
5/26 SAT Commemorative Parade

Time 10:30am to 12:30pm

Place Statue of Saigo Takamori - Tenmonkan St. - Statue of Okubo Toshimichi

Commemorative Festival

Time 11:00am to 5:00pm

Place Kagoshima Prefectural Kamoike Baseball Stadium (reservation not required)

Gourmet and specialty products markets and other fun events abound in and around the baseball stadium!



Aerobatic demonstration show
Blue Impulse (Japan Air Self-Defense Force)



Shima-uta performance
(Islands folk-song)
Anna Sato



Sakigake Min Stage
Sacchodohji (Kagoshima, Yamaguchi, Kochi, and Saga prefectures) Police Music Band



Historical Figures from Satsuma in the late Edo and Meiji Periods



Saigo Takamori

(1828 - 1877)

Saigo Takamori was a pivotal figure in the great revolution from the rule of the Tokugawa shogunate to the Meiji Restoration. In 1854, he was promoted by Shimadzu Nariakira despite being a low-ranking samurai. He built connections in Edo (present day Tokyo) and Kyoto while working under Nariakira. However, after Nariakira's sudden death in 1858, Saigo experienced a series of hardships from hiding in Amami Oshima Island to exile in Tokunoshima Island and Okinoerabu Island. During that time, the power of the shogunate was greatly weakened, and Satsuma Domain actively worked to reform the shogunate. Under such circumstances, Saigo returned to Satsuma in 1864 to lead the domain government together with Okubo Toshimichi and Komatsu Tatewaki. Thereafter, Satsuma Domain's stance changed to that of overthrowing the shogunate, and the domain played a central role in politically weakening the shogunate and bringing about the Boshin War, during which Saigo was a commander. Although he was a key politician in the Meiji Government, he returned to Kagoshima in 1873. The samurai back home were unhappy with the cataclysmic change and the Satsuma Rebellion broke out in 1877. Saigo bore their discontent and led them in the rebellion to die later at Shiroyama.



Shimadzu Nariakira

(1809 - 1858)

The 11th feudal lord of Satsuma Domain. Influenced by his great-grandfather

Shimadzu Shigehide, Shimadzu Nariakira was well-informed about Western affairs and sensed great danger from the expanding influence of Western countries in Asia. Once he became feudal lord in 1851, he set about improving the wealth and military strength of the country, as well as promoting new industries through modernizing projects. He was relied on by the shogunate during the commotion caused by the arrival of Commodore Perry's ships, and played a huge role in shogunate politics such as on issues like opening Japan to the world and the succession of the shogun.



Okubo Toshimichi

(1830 - 1878)

Okubo Toshimichi and Saigo Takamori were brought up in the same Goju school.

In 1861 he was promoted by Shimadzu Hisamitsu to serve the domain government. Along with Iwakura Tomomi and others, he led a coup d'état to restore imperial rule in 1867 and succeeded in establishing a new government. As a politician in the Meiji Government, he promoted the creation of a new system and brought about reforms including the abolition of the feudal domains and establishment of prefectures. Moreover, he became Lord of Home Affairs (de facto prime minister) in 1873. Okubo's life came to an end in the year after the Satsuma Rebellion at the hands of samurai dissatisfied with the new government.

Shimadzu Hisamitsu

(1817 - 1887)

Father of Shimadzu Tadayoshi, the 12th feudal lord, he held real power as a regent for the young lord and succeeded his elder brother Nariakira's will in reforming the shogunate. The Anglo-Satsuma War opened his eyes to the power of foreign countries, and besides reviving the Shuseikan Project, he also dispatched Satsuma students to Great Britain.

Komatsu Tatewaki

(1835 - 1870)

Komatsu Tatewaki became a chief retainer of the Satsuma Domain at a young age and showed off his prowess in diverse fields such as military, education, finance and diplomacy. He led the domain government through difficult times during the Meiji Restoration, and it was to his credit that figures like Saigo and Okubo rose to prominence.

Katsura Hisatake

(1830 - 1877)

A young chief retainer in the late Edo period, Katsura Hisatake served the domain government alongside Komatsu Tatewaki. Born into the Hioki Shimadzu family, he was childhood friends with Saigo Takamori, who frequented the family house. He took part in the Satsuma Rebellion and oversaw supplies for the Satsuma troops. He was killed in action in Shiroyama.

Oyama Tsunayoshi

(1825 - 1877)

Like Saigo Takamori, Oyama Tsunayoshi was born in Kajiya-cho. Renowned as a master in the Yakumaru Jigenryu swordsmanship, he was dispatched to resolve the Teradaya Incident in which Arima Shinshichi and other extremists were purged. He became prefectural governor of Kagoshima in 1871. Oyama cooperated with Saigo's shigakko school and supported Saigo's troops in the Satsuma Rebellion.

Saigo Tsugumichi

(1843 - 1902)

Saigo Takamori's younger brother, Saigo Tsugumichi fought in the Boshin War and served as an admiral and politician in the Meiji period. He did not return to Kagoshima with his brother and remained working for the government. He later became Japan's first Navy minister, and the navy developed under him played an active role in the First Sino-Japanese War and Russo-Japanese War.

Godai Tomoatsu

(1836 - 1885)

After the Anglo-Satsuma War, Godai Tomoatsu proposed to the Satsuma Domain to dispatch students to Great Britain. His suggestion was accepted, and he traveled to Europe, where he was responsible for purchasing spinning machinery and other equipment. After resigning from the Meiji Government, he contributed to the revitalization of Osaka's economy.