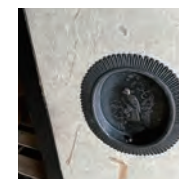




弘前忍者屋敷
Ninja



Hirosaki Ninja house

The "Hirosaki Ninja house" is the only existing clan-managed Koka-style ninja house in Japan, and is said to have existed since 1761, in the late Edo period. The house was not used as a residence for the ninja clan, but was mainly used as a meeting place for the "Hayamichi no Mono," a group of ninja from the Hirosaki Clan, to exchange information. The period when this house was used was not a time of warfare, but a time of peace with relatively little conflict, so there are same big tricks such as surprise attacks to surprise the enemy. Therefore, it is said that you can see the real ninja's house here.

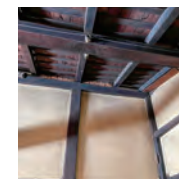
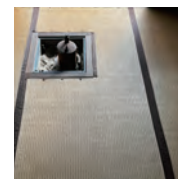
Inside the house, there are many features characteristic of a ninja house, such as a ninja detector, a hidden space behind a wall, and a guard window that is thought to have been used to watch the outside of the house. There are also many nail marks where medicinal herbs were hung out to dry, giving visitors a glimpse into the lifestyle of the ninja of that time.

Hirosaki Domain Ninja Group "Hayamichi no Mono"

The "Hayamichi no Mono" who were based in this house were a group of ninja of the Hirosaki domain formed by TSUGARU NOBUMASA, the fourth lord of Tsugaru, who took Nakagawa Kohayato, a Koka-style ninja, and others as his retainers in Edo (now Tokyo). In the Hirosaki domain's divisional register (list of feudal warriors), there were about 60 names listed as "Hayamichi no Mono".

Hayamichi no Mono had various secret duties in Ezo (Hokkaido), such as investigating the movements of the Matsumae clan and the Ainu people, maintaining public order in the territory, guarding the borders, and providing intelligence in other clans.

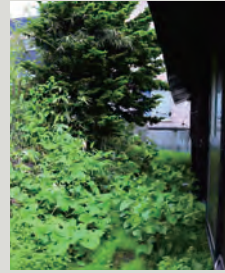
Since its establishment in 1674 (Enpo 2), the association was temporarily disbanded and reorganized, but continued to exist until the end of the Hakodate War in 1870 (Meiji 3), continuing for a total of approximately 196 years.



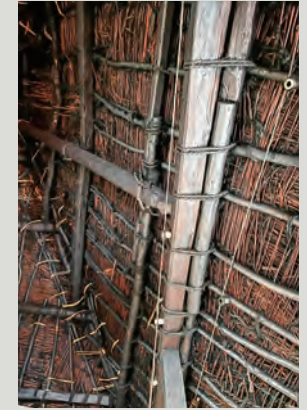


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The house was built in the late Edo period, and records remain of the management of the house by Yoshikichi Munakata and other members of the Hayamichi no mono as shown on an old map from 1869, and has been operating as the "Hirosaki Ninja House" since spring 2022.



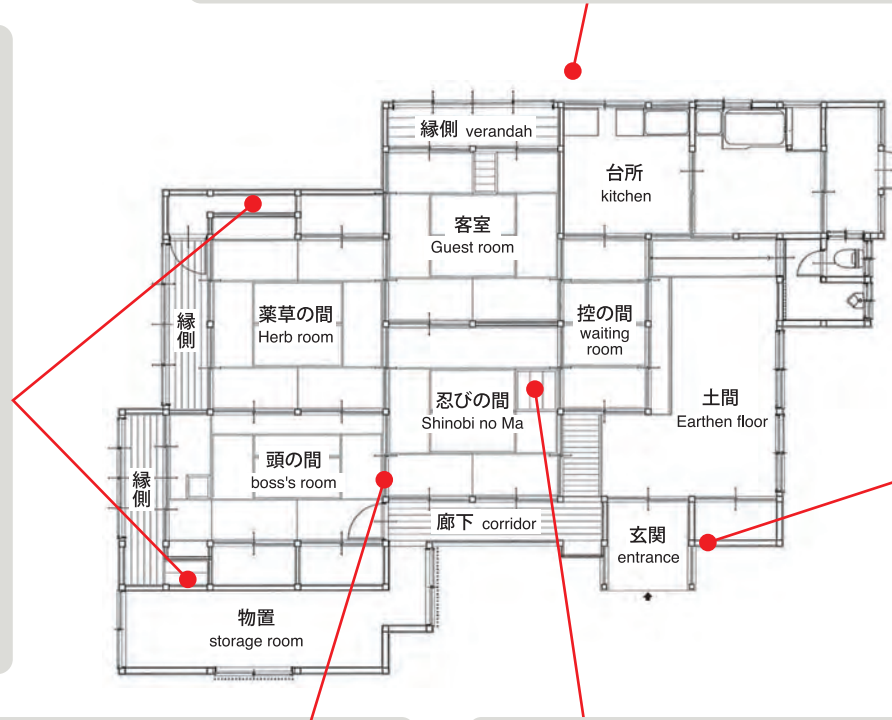
During the Edo period (1603-1868), when the castle town was divided, the site of the house was developed by cutting down Mt Shigemori. A small mountain remains behind the house, and natural vegetation that cannot be found in the city of Hirosaki today still grows there. About 50 years ago, tricaput (a poisonous plant) was blooming beautiful flowers near the mansion. The ninja probably grew medicinal and poisonous plants.



The interior of the house had a thatched roof, but it was covered with a tin roof, which could not be seen from the exterior.



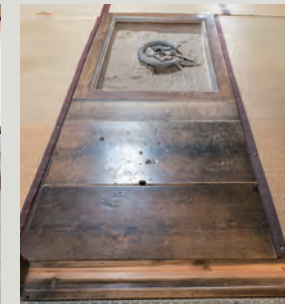
Behind the wall there is a space 92cm deep, 54cm wide, and about 2m high. If a person is about to be found, they can insert their finger in a hole in the floorboard to remove it and crawl into the space underneath the floor to escape.



When you enter through the front door and look back, there is a lookout window which is thought to have been used to take a keep an eye on the surroundings.



The previous owner of the house told us, "When the former owner purchased the house, the house was filled with the smell of medicine. Many nail holes remain in the beams of the interior. It is thought that medicinal herbs were dried there. The traces of a ninja who was familiar with medicinal herbs and gunpowder can be seen in the house.



Only one corner of the entrance to the tatami living room with the shoji door open is a wooden floor. When you step on it, it makes a squeaky sound when you step on it, and it was used as a warning for intruders.