

Kimbo Stone (Kimbo Ishi)

Mt. Kimbo (471 meters), is a granite mountain, located at the southern edge of the Shonai Plain. Granite is a type of intrusive rock that forms the Japanese archipelago, and the granite excavated from Mt. Kimbo is called “Kimbo ishi,” or Kimbo stone. The stone had widely been used for stone monuments, bridge piers, tombstones, and foundations, among other uses, from the Edo period until recently, and the remains of a quarry still exist in the mountain.

In 1683 (Tenna 3), Kimbo stone was used to restore stone walls of the turrets of the Tsurugaoka Castle. After being excavated from the mountain, the stone was carried by boats on the Shoryuji River to a bridge on the Oyama Kaido (road), located in current Shinkai-machi, from which thousands of laborers mobilized for the project transported the stones to the outside of the Ote-gomon gate (Source: *The Sakai Family's Century, Vol. VI*).

Placed throughout Tsuruoka Park, Kimbo stones contain precious silent messages telling the history of the Tsurugaoka Castle to the people of the present day.



Mt. Kimbo viewed from around Tsuruoka Park



Tsurugaoka Castle Central Gate
(Early Meiji Period, Photo owned by Tsuruoka City Kyodo Siryokan Museum)