



The house where Jirocho was born in Shimizu-Minato

Chogoro Yamamoto, famous as "Shimizu-no-Jirocho" and became the biggest boss in the Kaido area, was born in 1820 in this house.

This is a typical building where boatmen working at Shimizu-Minato in those days lived.

It is currently a precious historical asset for Shimizu.



The house where Jirocho was born (before the war)

Era (Year)

Bunsei 3
(1820)

Notorious boy in the neighborhood
Period as a Notorious Boy



He was the second of 4 boys of San-emon Takagi, a boatman in Minowa, Suruga-no-kuni. He was placed with his relatives in Kurasawa, Yui to correct his naughty and brutal attitude.

15
years old

Tempo 6
(1834)

Made a huge fortune by forward trading,
worked assiduously for his family's business.

Period as a Merchant

After his step father passed away, he changed his mind and devoted himself in his family's business, and therefore his shop prospered a lot. However, a traveling monk read his destiny on his face and declared that he would die at the age of 25. This incident dramatically changed his view of life, and he decided to become a gambler.



24
years old

Tempo 14
(1844)

Became the biggest boss in the Kaido area due to his skills and braveness.

Period as a Gambler

He became famous overnight, as he alone settled a conflict between the Tsumugi family and the Wadajima family at the Ihara River. The Shimizu family, consisting of 22 members, helped Kira-no-Nikichi in a mortal combat at Kojin-yama (Suzuka city) against the Kurokoma-no-Katsuzo Family consisting of more than 130 members. These incidents raised his reputation and secured his position. People praised him saying "there is Jirocho in Shimizu-Minato".



48
years old

Meiji 1
(1868)

Worked hard to develop the area.

Period as a Contributor of the Area

Immediately after the Meiji Restoration, Nyusui Fuseya, a judge of Toseigun (army for the eastern expedition) told Jirocho to protect the main road. Interacting with Teshu Yamaoka and others, Jirocho worked hard to make Shimizu-Minato an international port, thinking of the future of Shimizu in the new era. He quit gambling and worked hard as a big master to support the area. He cultivated Fuji, opened a clinic and private school for learning English, cooperated in constructing the Tokaido Line, and planned and executed businesses and cultural facilities. When he passed away at the age of 74, more than 3,000 people attended his funeral to mourn his death.



Meiji 26
(1893)

74
years old

清水湊 次郎長生家
Shimizuminato Jirochouseika

Operated by: Nonprofit Organization Region Support Net
4-16, Minowa-cho, Shimizu-ku, Shizuoka city Telephone: +81-(0)54-353-5000
Hours/Weekdays 10am to 4pm Sat., Sun. and holidays 10am to 5pm Closed/Tuesdays

Historic Building

Jirocho's Birthplace
**Shimizuminato
Jirochouseika**

清水湊 次郎長生家



Admission free

“Come on” said Shimizu-no-Jirocho, the manliest man of all men, standing with Mt. Fuji as his back ground.

This introduction phrase of Jirocho was in a newspaper approximately 10 years after his death, with the articles about General Nogi and Yukichi Fukuzawa. Jirocho is very popular as “the biggest boss in the Kaido area”. In Shimizu, however, he is rather known as a big master working hard to develop this area.



Achievements of Jirocho

The Meiji Restoration had begun when Jirocho was 48 years old. He stopped being a professional gambler, and endeavored in many businesses for the develop of Shimizu until he passed away at the age of 74.

He sheltered Tesshu Yamaoka to promote the new era in Japan.

Tesshu Yamaoka visited Suruga-no-kuni as a messenger of Kaishu Katsu, to talk with Takamori Saigo to open the Edo Castle without bloodshed (to avoid a civil war in Japan). It was told that Tesshu was chased by the government army at the Satta mountain pass, but Jirocho sheltered him via Bogakutei, a restaurant in Kurasawa, Yui. *There are various theories.

Assigned as a police escort to keep peace in the area.

In 1868, he was assigned as a police escort (the current police chief) by the new government in order to keep peace at Shimizu Port and the main roads along with Suruga, Enshu, and Mikawa. He worked hard to keep peace of these areas.



Conducted humanitarian activities.

Buried the bodies of the dead sailors of Kanrin-maru who were floating in the port after being attacked by the army of the new government as rebels, in spite of being blamed by the army of the new government, as he believed that all dead people should be considered as good. It is told that Takeaki Enomoto and Tesshu Yamaoka were impressed with such conducts of his later.

Suggested to arrange the port to be an international port to support industries in Shizuoka.

He thought that expanding the tea market would develop Shimizu, and worked hard to arrange Shimizu Port to be able to receive steam ships. He also opened a regular sea route between Yokohama Port.



He was the first to realize internationalization.

He opened a private school for learning English at Meitokukan, an educational facility established by the Tokugawa family, and encouraged international exchanges with foreign countries. Genkichi Kawaguchi, from Miho village who learned at this school, sneaked into a foreign ship for Hawaii from Yokohama, and became successful. Being stimulated by his experience, it is told that thousands of people from Miho village immigrated to Hawaii.

Worked hard to restore cultural resources in the area.

He worked hard at fundraisers to renovate temples such as Kunoji Temple (current Tesshuji Temple), and Rinzaiji Temple in Shizuoka city. He also planned and held cultural events such as “Yamada Nagamasa Kensho Sumo”.



He developed the plains at the foot of Mt. Fuji.

Being asked by the governor Sadakiyo Osako, he cultivated the plains at the foot of Mt. Fuji (Obuchi, Fuji city). He mobilized the prisoners at Shizuoka Prison (including shogunate retainers).



He worked toward community medicine.

He invited Shigetoshi Ueki, a young rising doctor from Tokyo to open a clinic. Shigetoshi, originally from Tosa, graduated from the Faculty of Medicine at Tokyo Imperial University. Jirocho worked hard toward community medicine in Shimizu.



Endeavored to improve the transportation system.

He undertook and completed the construction of the Tokaido Line at the request of Shigeru Narahara, an officer of the Ministry of Engineering. Yamanishi-ya, a rice dealer (currently Tokaiken) who cooperated with this construction, received the right to sell lunch boxes at stations.



Renovated Jirocho House

In 2017, Nonprofit Organization “Town Development Making Use of Jirocho House” supported by many Jirocho fans renovated Jirocho House. This house was built at the end of the Edo period. The renovation methods involved preserving parts and materials that can be used as much as possible to prevent losing the value of the building, rather than replacing everything. Also, the layout was returned to its original state as much as possible.

Took off the mud walls.



The single-story section was covered with a temporal roof and demolished leaving only the columns and beams. The original state of the house, when it was built, was determined from the marks left on these columns and beams.

Heard the opinions of professionals.



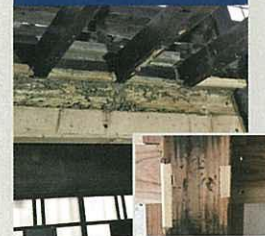
We examined how to renovate the house, based on the information obtained from the demolition and investigation, and opinions of professionals. As a result, we decided to put it back to its original state as much as possible. For example, an unpaved path on the first floor was put back to its original state, accessing only 1 room.

The building was raised with a jack so that a new foundation could be placed.



As the house was once moved, the columns leaned and the foundation was tilted. Therefore we jacked up the house and built a new foundation to be level and plumb.

With the general idea of preserving the original building, the damaged portions were removed and supplemented.



Only the damaged portions of columns and beams, by termites or rot, were replaced with new wood pieces.

Removed the roofing tiles temporarily to be reused later.



The roofing tie was “Shimizu Gawara” that used to be locally made in Shimizu. They were removed one by one, washed, and percussion tested. Good ones were reused, and the ones that failed were replaced with new roofing tiles of the same size.

Dry earth clay walls were used for reinforcement, and columns were painted with the original color.



The walls were reinforced with dry earth clay walls, and finished with plaster. The columns and beams were fixed by adding new wood pieces or inlays, and painted with “Jirocho Koshoku”, a special color prepared by a paint company.

Completion



Nonprofit Organization “Town Development Making Use of Jirocho House”

This organization was established for the purpose of revitalizing Shimizu by repairing Jirocho House, and linking the port and Jirocho-related facilities.