

Segawa Residence

The Segawa residence dates back to 1887. It was originally built as the private house of Koh-i Furuichi (1854-1934) who was a distinguished scholar on civil engineering in the Meiji and Taisho eras. After the Kanto great earthquake ¹⁾ Masayo Segawa who was Furuichi's son-in-law and a doctor of medicine, pediatrician, inherited this house. The modern Japanese style house well represented the neighborhood of Hongo-Yumi-Cho district, which was sometimes called 'the town of doctors'.

The refined preference for elegance over three generations formed this impressive 'Sukiya style' ²⁾ house. The 'Irimoya' ³⁾ style porch with the roof of the main house in the back has a modest appearance. The entrance hall with the floor of 'Kawara-nuno-ziki' ⁴⁾, the rectangular low cut stone where shoes are removed before going into the house, stepping board of a pine wood which is slightly lower than the floor of the main house as well as the 'Koshishoji' ⁵⁾ sliding doors give us a serene impression. A hanging lantern in the corner, which is quite unique, also adds to the atmosphere of the hall.

The drawing room, where you are first lead to, has square columns with 'Nageshi' ⁶⁾ and a parquet floor. This room was constructed so that it could also be used as a stage for the 'Noh play'. From here you enter the main room through a narrow room called 'Saya-no-ma'. The main room is a twelve and a half-tatami⁷⁾-mat 'Shoin-style room' ⁸⁾, with square columns with Nageshi made of Japanese hemlocks and the ceiling frame is doubled, and on the left of the alcove 'Tokonoma' there is a single level shelf fixed along the wall. The 'Ranma'⁹⁾ shows the openwork of the flowers of the paulownia on a paulownia board.

South to the drawing room there is a six-tatami mat room called 'Yorituski', where one can see the whole view of the garden and during the formal tea ceremony the guests are first lead to this room to enjoy this view.

In the east edge of the passage around the main room there is a small open veranda called 'Hashigakari' ¹⁰⁾ with a 'Tsukubai' ¹¹⁾ on the right side. By crossing the 'Hashigakari' and opening the 'Kuguri' ¹²⁾ you enter the 'Doma' ¹³⁾ of the eight-tatami-mat room of the 'Butsuma' ¹⁴⁾ where the ancestors of the Segawa family are worshipped. This room can also be used as a tea ceremony room.

To the east of the 'Butsuma' there is a tearoom called 'Isshian' with a 'Mizuya-style room' ¹⁵⁾, and a room called 'Tsugi-no-ma' in between. 'Isshian' is a three 'dai-me-tatami-mat' ¹⁶⁾ room, and the alcove called 'Tokonoma' and 'Temaeza' ¹⁷⁾ are lined. The 'Nijiri-guchi' ¹⁸⁾ opens to the east. Outside the 'Kinin-guchi' ¹⁹⁾ in the south of the room you find an exquisite scenery lying in front of you wherein stands an early Oribe lantern ²⁰⁾.

Both the 'Butsuma' and 'Isshian' are masterpieces planned and designed by Masayo Segawa and constructed by a master carpenter called Ishikawa in the beginning of the Showa era (around 1925). Both the design and craftsmanship are excellent.

There is another tearoom called 'Taian' in the southeast corner of the garden covered with green moss. Along the passageway you see a natural stone washbasin squatting in the stream, and the stepping stones lead you to a bench and to the 'Nijiri-guchi'. The manner of opening the 'Renji-mado' ²¹⁾ above the 'Nijiri-guchi' is said to be most unique. Inside, one sees two tatami mats with a board between and the exposed attic showing the entire roof with a ridgepole in the center. This innovative style was designed by Isao Segawa, a pediatrician, (son-in-law of Masayo Segawa and father of Masateru Segawa) and the distinguished members of 'Aitaikai' (the club formed by people who loved moss).

Glossary

- 1) **Kanto great earthquake** - It occurred in 1923 and widely devastated the Kanto area.
- 2) **Sukiya style** - Sukiya style architecture give expression to a gentle human individuality solely by using natural materials. This style of architecture also follows the strict ethics of the tea spirit and the tea ceremony and conceals within it a sophisticated and pure artistic form.
- 3) **Irimoya** - A tradition Japanese-style roof, mainly made of tiles.
- 4) **Kawara-nuno-ziki** - Orderly layer of the flat Japanese tile usually used for roofing.
- 5) **Koshishoji** - A translucent paper-covered sliding screen with a wooden frame used as windows or doors in traditional Japanese homes. It is a kind of Shoji.
- 6) **Nageshi** - A horizontal piece of timber in the frame of the house.
- 7) **Tatami** - Floor covering in the form of blocks padded with straw and covered in rush matting. Tatami come in set sizes and act as a unit of measurement in traditional Japanese architecture.
- 8) **Shoin** - In all, there are four different styles of tea architecture: the large drawing room (shoin); the rustic hut-style called kozashiki, which expressed the merchant's taste; the sukiya room that appealed to the samurai class; and the aristocrat's tea pavilion. The shoin was originally a study or writing room in a Zen temple occupying a small, projecting section of the building, but later it was adopted into the design of private homes where the shoin room replace the drawing room, and ornamental shelves and alcoves were added.
- 9) **Ranma** - A transom with openwork. A board between the ceiling and the sliding doors.
- 10) **Hashigakari** - A bridge formed for passageway,
- 11) **Tsukubai** - stone washbasin. Guests crouch on a flat stone in front of the basin to wash their hands and mouths before entering the tea room.
- 12) **Kuguri** - A small door.
- 13) **Doma** - An unfloored part of house.
- 14) **Butsuma** - The room where the Buddhist altar is placed.
- 15) **Mizuya** - A small room or nook containing shelves and a washing area where all the utensils needed for a tea gathering are laid out ready for use.
- 16) **Daime-tatami mat** - A tatami mat, about one foot five inches (forty-five centimeters) shorter than the regular tatami mat. In a daime-style tea room, there are two regular mats for the guests and a shorter mat for the host near the host's door.
- 17) **Temaeza** - A mat the host sits on. Temae is a general term for the ritual preparation of tea, or specifically the procedure used in the serving of tea.
- 18) **Nijiri-guchi** - The narrow entrance to a tea house through which one has to crawl to enter.
- 19) **Kinin-guchi** - The entrance for distinguished guest.
- 20) **Oribe lantern** - This was first produced in the Momoyama period by the Japanese warlord Furuta Oribe. Oribe stone lanterns are among the oldest Japanese garden lanterns known. The lantern is a classic representation of a 'planted' stone lantern style, for they do not have a base at the bottom. The Oribe lantern has a carved Buddha at the base of the lantern and is often thought of it to be that of praying missionary, thus sometimes it is referred to as the 'Christian' lantern.
- 21) **Renji-mado** - A window with two papered sliding screens and a bamboo latticework frame outside it.

Koh-i Furuichi

Koh-i Furuichi was born in Edo (old term for Tokyo) province in 1854 as the eldest son of Takashi Furuichi, a Himeji clansman.

In 1870 he was recommended and accepted as a student by Daigaku-Nanko, later known as the Imperial University of Tokyo. He majored in French, and he was always the head of the class. He went to France to study as a scholarship student of the Ministry of Education in 1875. He returned to Japan with bachelor degrees of both engineering and science in October 1880. After serving at the civil engineering bureau of the Ministry of The Home Office, he was appointed as the professor and the president of the Institute of Technology, the origin of the Faculty of Technology of the Imperial University of Tokyo, in May 1886. In May of 1888, he was granted the doctoral degree of engineering first time in Japan.

In 1890, he was designated to the director of engineering bureau of the Ministry of The Home Office. He devoted himself to the fields of river improvement, flood control and harbors repairing, and showed the great ability in improving of the engineering administration, enacting the engineering regulations and laws. Then he was regarded as the most distinguished figure in the modern engineering circles. He was also the first Imperial nominee to the House of Peers in September of the same year.

His accomplishments also included the supervision over the industries of railway, construction, hydroelectric power as well as water supply and sewerage.

He also served as the first president of the Engineering Scientific Meeting, the chief of the Institute of Physical and Chemical Research, the president of Science Research Council.

He was influential and played important roles in various fields. Furthermore, he made great effort as a chairman of the French-Japanese Association and the French-Japanese Hall. He greatly contributed to cultural exchanges between Japan and France all his life.

He also had a great interest in Noh-play and became a pupil of the Noh instructor, Bai-jaku-kan of the Kanze school when he was 28 years old in 1881 . He showed an extraordinary ability in playing Noh to the level of receiving the praise of the Empress. He was a man of elegance to set up a stage in his residence to hold Noh play with the friends of the same interest.

In 1919 he was awarded a title of baron for his meritorious deeds and was appointed a Privy Councilor in 1924. He received Juh-nii ¹⁾ in 1932. He died at the age of 81 years on January 28, 1934,

1) **Juh-nii** - High-rank of status at Imperial Court