

Aoyagi House: Prefecture-Designated Historic Site

The Aoyagi family were hereditary retainers of the Ashina family, which ruled Kakunodate from 1603 until its family line died out in 1653. After that the Aoyagi entered the service of the North Satake clan, the area's new rulers.

The Aoyagi house is located to the south of the Ishiguro residence, and also sits behind a black-painted *sasarakobei* wooden fence with an observation window. The main *yakui-mon* gate, which has a forepole dated to 1860, welcomes visitors into the grounds.

After passing through the gate, visitors will find a roofed well (*ido-yakata*) and rice storehouse, as well as the main entryway. A secondary side entrance is located farther north, used by tradespeople and guests whose social status precluded them from using the main entrance.

The roof of the main house is thatched and constructed in the hipped style. This style of roof, in addition to the rice storehouse, main gate, protective fence, and other features, makes the house an excellent example of samurai residences of the period.

The house is open to the public, and the entrance fee includes access to a large archive of historical items owned by the Aoyagi family over the years. The building and grounds are also used to host a variety of events and hands-on cultural experiences.