

Audio Guide: Gyōki Bodhisattva and Mototarō Ueki Monument

Before leaving this small forest, look for a large statue of a Buddhist monk. This is an image of Gyōki, the famous monk and eventual bodhisattva who is central to Unzen's history. This monument and others at Manmyōji would not have been possible without the contributions of Ueki Mototarō, the founder of the Shimabara Railway Company.

Mototarō was a man of culture who had a deep appreciation for history. He was born in Unzen in 1857 and founded the Shimabara Railway Company in 1908. He became the first mayor of the city of Shimabara in 1940, and also served as chairman of a local historical preservation society. Thanks to his fundraising, Manmyōji's buildings were restored and its monuments repaired.

Gyōki, coincidentally, was not only a great Buddhist monk but was likewise skilled at raising funds to finance the building of infrastructure for the benefit of the common people. It is fitting, then, that the memory of Gyōki should be preserved by a man like Mototarō.

You have now reached the conclusion of the Unzen Onsen Town audio tour. We hope you have enjoyed your stroll through Unzen's long and colorful history.
