

### ***Bonsho* (Temple Bell)**

The *bonsho* (temple bell) was cast in 1255. It is one of the oldest features of Kenchoji Temple and is designated a National Treasure. The bell bears an inscription by Kenchoji's founding abbot, Lanxi Daolong (1213–1278). Unlike the other temple buildings, the bell tower retains its traditional thatched roof.

The 2.1-meter tall, 2.7-ton bell survived the fires during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries that destroyed most of the temple. The long history of the *bonsho* meant it was one of the few temple bells that was not requisitioned and melted down by the government during World War II.

Despite its age, the *bonsho* is still used for telling time. The bell is rung between 5 p.m. and 6 p.m. daily and is also used during special events.