

Michishirube Jizo

This *jizo* statue, placed here around 1806, was a useful guide for travelers because of its position along an old trade route. The road to the right leads in the direction of Tokyo; the way to the left leads to the mountains. The engraving reads, “Edo on the right” (Tokyo was once called Edo), and, “Yamamichi on the left” (Yamamichi means “mountain road”).

There is a strong historical connection between *jizo* statues and travelers. These stone guardians often act as directional markers or waypoints along walking or hiking routes. They are also said to protect children and confer good luck upon passersby.

Many famous visitors to Nagaoka during the early nineteenth century made mention of the Michishirube Jizo in their travels. To this day, it remains a beacon of guidance and good fortune for people passing through the Settaya area.