

Saihoji Temple

Saihoji Temple sits on a hill overlooking Takehara's historic district. The local landmark is famous for its impressive stone wall, which resembles that of a castle, and viewing platform. Saihoji is said to have been founded in 1560 in a nearby town. It was destroyed by a fire in 1602 and then moved to its current location.

The Fumeikaku (Kannon Hall) was built in 1758 and has a large veranda cantilevered over the edge of the sacred site. The hall enshrines Juichimen Kannon (Eleven-Headed Kannon), a popular manifestation of Kannon (Avalokiteshvara), the bodhisattva of compassion. In the precincts of the temple is the Asakarizuka Mound, a memorial to the haiku poetry written in Takehara during the Edo period (1603–1867).

The temple was immortalized in the 1983 movie, *Toki o kakeru shōjo* (The Girl Who Leapt Through Time), directed by Obayashi Nobuhiko (1938–2020). It is an important part of the town's landscape and can be seen from many locations around Takehara. Saihoji has been designated an Important City Heritage Site.