

## ***Gegyo* Bargeboard Pendants**

The bargeboards that run along the outer edges of the castle's gables are adorned with decorative wooden pendants called *gegyo*. Like the *shachi* roof tiles displayed nearby, *gegyo* were said to protect a building from fire. The word *gegyo* literally means "hanging fish," and the earliest versions of these decorations were shaped like fish. Many different forms of *gegyo* were developed over time, including variations based on the shape of a boar's eye (a heart-shaped design), shells, turnips, and clovers.

*Gegyo* can be seen on all the triangular gables of the Great Keep, Northwest Tower, and Southeast Wing. The one displayed here was removed from the Southeast Wing. Such turnip-shaped *gegyo* were particularly common during the Edo period (1603–1867).

This *gegyo* is made from Japanese cypress. It was originally covered in hempen cord, which served as an anchor for a layer of plaster, and the small nails used to attach this cord to the wood are still present. The central hexagonal fitting (*rokuyō*) was coated in black lacquer. The lacquer has since worn off, but it remains visible in the staining of the wood.