

## Bakuya tomb

This is a large round mound built utilizing the end of a complexly branched ridge, at the southern fringe of the Umami hills. It was nationally designated a Historic Site in 1957. As ground construction proceeded under plans for the Mamigaoka New Town development, after the mound was topographically surveyed in 1968, from 1983 to 1984 excavations were conducted of the base of the mound and the horizontal stone chamber, with large amounts of artifacts being recovered.

The mound is built in three tiers, and measures 48 m in diameter. It had *haniwa*, and possibly a cover of cobbles as well. The total length of the burial facility (passageway plus inner burial chamber) was 17.1 m, with the burial chamber widening in both directions at the entrance from the passageway to width of 3.3 m, and a length of 6.7 m. Although the entrance had been open from sometime in the distant past, in addition to a house-shaped sarcophagus with a body hollowed out of a single block of volcanic tuff, plus another house-shaped sarcophagus made of slabs of volcanic tuff fitted together, discoveries in the excavation included pottery (Sue and Haji ware), gilt-bronze decorated equestrian gear (bits, saddles, saddle flaps, stirrups, harness pendants, crupper strap bosses, strap dividers, petal-shaped gold ornaments, etc.), weapons (silver-ornamented and antler-ornamented swords, socketed spearheads, daggers, arrow points, etc.), tools (knives, etc.), personal ornaments (earrings, gilt-bronze hollow beads strung together with silver thread, glass beads, etc.), a gilded cup with a wooden core, and so forth. Just outside the stones sealing the entrance to the chamber, cylindrical *haniwa* and *haniwa* in the shapes of houses, shields, humans, and animals etc. were recovered.

The most significant feature of this tomb is that it is considered with certainty to be the mausoleum named “Narahi no haka,” described in the historical text *Engishiki* as located in the Hirose district of the ancient province of Yamato, and as being the grave of Prince Oshisaka no Hikohito no Ōe. Because the person buried there is thus historically known, it is an extremely rare example for which the features such as the mound and stone chamber, and the artifacts recovered from it, can be clearly identified as to their actual date and associated social class, and the tomb is therefore a precious point of reference indispensable for archaeology.

Prince Oshisaka no Hikohito no Ōe was a son of Emperor Bidatsu (r. 572–585) and father of Emperor Jomei (r. 629–641), though he never succeeded to the throne himself. His year of death is considered roughly to be after the birth of Jomei in 593, but prior to 607, when a hereditary group was established as an economic base for promoting a rival, Prince Umayado (who later served as regent and came to be known as Prince Shōtoku).