Kasari Area, Amami City Tale of Tomori Community

Kasari area is surrounded by the Pacific Ocean and the East China Sea, and has small mountains with altitudes of 200m or less running north and south. On the east side, here lies a flatland where sugarcane and semi-tropical fruit fields are cultivated, and livestock is raised. Kasari Bay, one of " 500 Important Wetlands in Japan," designated by the Ministry of the Environment, covers the west side. Many communities in Kasari area inherit their traditional performing arts, passing their unique culture from generation to generation through their daily lives.

※ The scale below is presented as an approximate guideline.

0Km 1Km 2Km 3Km 4Km 5Km

Amami City HP

Administration: Amami City

Legend

- Toilet
- Shower
- Parking area
- Rest area
- Barrier-free toilet
- Kasari Branch, Amami City
- Major Sightseeing Spots and Facilities

Tomori

Tomori Beach is known as one of the best beaches in Amami Oshima island. The contrast of the white sand beach and blue sky always fascinates visitors. Far away in the distance, Kikaijima island appears like a black-figure image. The scene includes uniquely shaped rocks such as Holding Child Rock.

1

Kishigo remains

Kishigo remains were discovered in 1982. Seven joint research and excavations were conducted by Kishigo remains Investigation Committee led by Prof. Koichi Tamura at Aoyama Gakuin University and Kasari Town Board of Education between 1987 and 1992. The investigation discovered, from the lower layer to the upper layer: chert chips, AT volcanic ash, relics, thick potsherds, Akahoya volcanic ash, and potsherds with nail-shaped patterns.

2

Matsunoto remains

Matsunoto remains were discovered in 1990, during construction work by the members of Kishigo Remains Investigation Committee whilst investigating Kishigo Remains right across the street. The scattered artifacts at the site sparked an academic investigation in the following year. Some cultured layers, representing the *Yayoi* period (approx. BC 4 - AD 3 century) and the post *Yayoi* Tumulus period, were found along with a large volume of burnt green turban shells, and other newly discovered imported artifacts.

3

Holding Child Rock (Tomori Beach)

Tomori beach with a mother-holding-child rock *(Kwadaki iwa)* is a beautiful beach. The offshore current is a complex and dangerous place for swimming. The Holding Child Rock consists of a round sandstone on top of a limestone. The name comes from the shape resembling a mother piggybacking a child. The spot with white crested waves in the offshore is called *Zan-no-su* (a dugong nest).

4

Miki Mori

Amami Oshima island has some sacred spots, for example, *Kamiyama* and *Obotyama* mountains. The senior locals recall that older ladies, called *Miki oba*, held a ritual event in *Miki Mori* forest on September 9th of the Lunar calendar until the late 1970's. People believe that this is a sacred spot requiring purification, and that one would be cursed if they break tree branches. *Kaminichi*, or the deity path, leads to this place through the community.

5

Takara no mori

The area around a small hill at the edge of the community was a site where the local residents held various community events. The top of the hill is larger than it appears, providing a haven of rest. The senior residents say it was a mountain of a watch-tower for trading and fishing as well as worship. The spot is also called *Majimun* (venomous Habu snake) forest. Visitors should pay attention to the venomous snakes.

6

Kamiyama

There used to be a short hill near the center of the community, referred to as *Kamiyama*, or a divine hill. The place is an abandoned area of flat ground today, covered by grass. *Miki mori* forest is situated on its south side, implying some kind of relationship between the two. The community's August dance is held here, and the place is considered as the center of the community.

7

Giant banyan tree

Almost all communities along the coastline in Amami Oshima island had banyan trees functioning as windshields. As one of these communities, Tomori Community has a number of banyan trees surrounding its residences. Tomori Ondo, a song composed by an educator, Tetsuo Yoshida, has lyrics describing the island's sceneries with banyan trees. Even today, some giant banyan trees still remain in Tomori Community.

8

Common well

Kishigo river, meandering from the west side to the north side of Tomori Community, was the community's resource of daily life water. They used the common wells for drinking water. The community had a few common wells. The one at the elevated ground in the community was the richest and the water used to rush out, they say, until the late 1970's. It was a chitchat spot for females who came to collect water.