19) 1130m　Ginkgo tree (*Ginkgo biloba*)　イチョウ

Hosenbo Temple　報専坊内

3-3 Teramachi, Naka-ku, Hiroshima　中区寺町 3-3

It is said that at the time of the atomic bombing, the large ginkgo tree at Hosenbo Temple in Teramachi prevented the collapsed temple from burning down entirely. (The head priest and three of his family members were killed, however.) The tree itself was terribly burnt but sprouted several years later. After using a temporary hall for many years, the new main hall of the temple was finally constructed in 1994. They did not want to cut the tree, so the ginkgo tree is now standing in a big hole created in the staircase that leads to the main entrance (there are openings for ventilation in the staircase, so the tree would not suffocate).

It is said that the temple was originally established in Kabe, to the north of Hiroshima, in the late Kamakura period (1192-1333), but was moved to this area in the late 17th century. All the temples in Teramachi are Jodo Shinshu temples. Jodo Shinshu, meaning True Pure Land School, has prospered in Hiroshima.

Reference:

『歩いて見てほしい　ひろしま原爆の木たち』　大川悦生　たかの書房　1995 年

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