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Local Cuisine around Japan: Vol.18

Nara City-Launch of the 'Nara Time' Website

We would like to introduce our recently launched new website, Nara Time (<http://narajikan.jp>), which publishes captivating information on the history and culture of Nara, as well as stories from producers of Yamato Tea, Kotoka Strawberries and Japanese Sake. Nara Time can be viewed in five languages, Japanese, English, French, Chinese and Korean. If you are coming to Nara, please take a look at our website beforehand!

Yamato Tea

Nara is one of the major producers of green tea in Japan and the city's tea-making history dates back 1200 years. The tea produced locally, Yamato Tea, is grown primarily in a mountainous natural environment such as the areas of Tsukigase, Tahara and Yagyu in Nara. On the website, you can read stories from ten producers of Yamato Tea.





Kotoka Strawberry

In the hope that the strawberries will become the new specialty (ka) of the ancient city (koto) Nara, this new variety of strawberry was named Kotoka and was formally registered in 2011. The sweet, rich and juicy taste, in addition to the sweet and sour aroma make these strawberries irresistible. On the website you can read stories from five producers of Kotoka strawberries.

Japanese Sake

Since Washoku (Japanese style food) was recognised by UNESCO as an Intangible Cultural Heritage in 2013, together with other Washoku, Japanese sake has gained worldwide attention. As the national drink, Japanese sake has been offered to gods since ancient times and has been an essential part of celebrations and festivities in Japan. It can be said that Japanese sake is a sacred part of the Japanese culture. Nara is believed to be the birthplace of Japanese sake. On the website you can read stories from six producers of Nara Sake.



○Website: <http://narajikan.jp/en/>

○Facebook: @narajikan ○Twitter: @narajikan_nara

A delegation from the Ishikawa Foundation came to Sydney

From 12 to 18 March, a delegation from the Ishikawa Foundation for International Exchange, the Ishikawa Japanese Language Teacher's Association, and the International Exchange Division of the Ishikawa Prefectural Government visited universities in Australia and New Zealand that provide Japanese language education to promote the Ishikawa Japanese Studies Program (IJSP). IJSP is a program that provides opportunities for groups of working adults or university students from foreign countries who are learning Japanese to study and experience Japanese language and culture while participating in a homestay program.

They visited the CLAIR Sydney office and explained the program to our staff. The delegation and our staff talked about Japanese language education in Australia and New Zealand. There are not too many local governments in Japan that execute a program for Japanese language learners overseas. It was a great opportunity to learn more about programs like this.

For more information on IJSP, please see the following URL.

<http://www.ifie.or.jp/english/j-education/ijsp/index.html>

Japan Festival in Perth

On March 10, the Japan Festival was held in Perth in Western Australia. This year was the 5th anniversary of this event that showcases various aspects of Japanese Culture, from traditional culture to pop culture such as anime and cosplay. This year, Mr. Kojiro Fujihara, Principal Trombonist of the Japan Philharmonic Orchestra, was invited to the event and gave wonderful performances of some popular Japanese songs. There were a lot of other cultural performances as well that showcased different aspects of Japan and fascinated visitors. CLAIR Sydney promoted Japanese tourism at the booth run by the Consulate-General of Japan in Perth. Many visitors stopped by the booth and obtained tourism information by reading through brochures of each prefecture. This event highlighted the great interest in Japanese culture and tourism in Australia.



Study tour at Fremantle City Council

Between February 26 and March 2, Nanako Shimada, one of our Assistant Directors, interned at Fremantle City Council to learn more about a variety of policies at the council.

Through her study tour in Fremantle, she got an overview of city planning including the Kings Square Redevelopment Project, and she also visited the Aboriginal Community Centre, Art Centre and library to learn more about community services. She also visited Fremantle Ports, a state government trading enterprise to learn more about the operation of container terminals and redevelopment of the Fremantle Harbour water front.

She also had the opportunity to observe a council meeting on February 28, and met Mr Josh Wilson MP, Federal Labor Member for Fremantle, who presented to her comprehensive information on Fremantle City.



CLAIR Sydney would like to extend our sincere appreciation to the Mayor of the City of Fremantle, Dr Brad Pittitt, and CEO, Mr Philip St John, Member Support Officer, Ms Rebecca Bowden, and other staff members of Fremantle City Council for accommodating Nanako's study tour.



Study tour at the City of Cockburn in WA



From February 28 to March 7, Rina Okamoto, Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney, interned at the City of Cockburn in Western Australia for 5 days. Cockburn is located in the southern part of Perth, and the surrounding regions such as Fremantle City and Perth City are fast developing as tourist areas. However, the region is focusing more of its efforts into developing the living environment for its citizens rather than focusing on tourism. In recent years, the population of the city has been on the increase, especially the number of elderly people. Rina was able to learn about the challenges faced by Cockburn in relation

to an increase in its elderly population, which is similar to those faced by Japanese local governments. One of the solutions she came across was a comprehensive support facility providing a program on health, medical care and welfare, a one stop service concentrated in one place which might be applicable in Japan.

Rina would like to express her deepest appreciation to the City Mayor, Mr. Logan, and the Executive Manager, Ms. Margot, who kindly hosted her as an intern. She was deeply moved by their warm welcome and highly values the opportunities provided to her by all of the staff involved during her internship.



JET Programme Returnees Reception in Sydney



On March 2, CLAIR Sydney attended the JET Programme Returnees Reception at the residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney. At the beginning of the reception, there was a session for returnees to present their experiences in Japan as JET participants, and one of the returnees presented in Japanese. They said their experiences and memories in Japan became great assets in their lives. We hope they will continue to play a role as a bridge between Australia and Japan.

JET Programme Returnees Reception in Perth

On March 22, the JET Programme Returnee Reception was held at the residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Perth. CLAIR Sydney was invited to the reception and together with other attending guests, applauded the returnee's successes in Japan. We were glad to hear that they had wonderful experiences in Japan through the JET Programme, and some of them have already joined JETAA WA. In the reception, a new JET participant also attended and got advices about living and working in Japan from the returnees and JETAA members.



We wish the new JET good luck in Japan and hope that the returnees will continue to play a role as a bridge between Japan and Australia.

CLAIR staff learnt about the NSW education system



On March 8, Toru Sugawara, one of the Assistant Directors visited Chatswood Intensive English Centre to learn more about the New South Wales (NSW) education system.

Deputy Principal Mr. Ashton and the SLSO (School Learning Support Officer) Ms. Fehlner gave an overview on how education works in NSW. Intensive English Centres (IECs) provide intensive English tuition to newly arrived, high school-aged

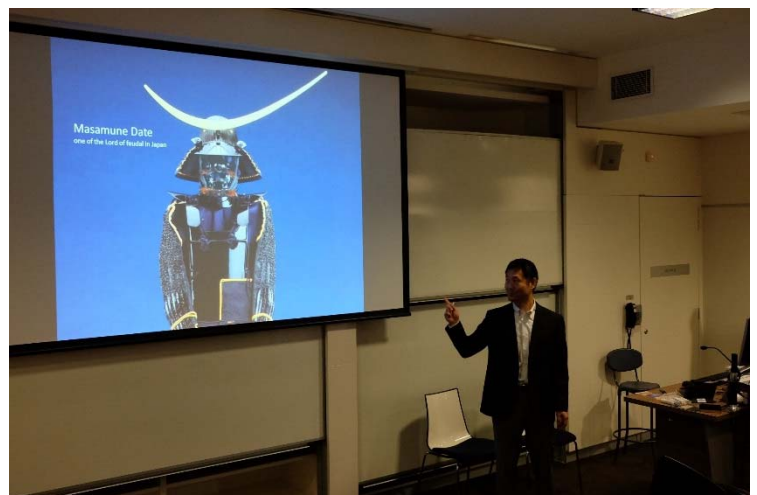


students whose first language is not English. In addition, the IECs provide orientation, settlement, and welfare programs to prepare students for learning in a NSW government high school and to participate in Australian society.

CLAIR Sydney would like to share more about multiculturalism, challenges and best practices in the NSW education space.

CLAIR staff made a presentation at UNSW

On March 19, Mr Toru Sugawara and Mr Jo Fujishima, Assistant Directors at CLAIR Sydney, made a presentation for a Japanese class at the University of New South Wales. The presentation was requested by Prof. Hashimoto and it was a good learning opportunity for both the CLAIR staff members and the students. Mr Sugawara and Mr Fujishima talked about Japanese culture in the Tohoku area, where there are a variety of different Japanese cultures. They also explained the reasons to why there are a lot of differences in culture in the Tohoku area. We hope that the students can find the 'authentic Japan' in the Tohoku region, which truly represents the beautiful Japanese spirit that continues since ancient times.



Students from Nagoya visited Geelong City



On 26 to 29 March, a delegation of 18 junior high school students from Nagoya visited Geelong City as part of the Wetlands Partnership Agreement between the two cities.

The students visited Serrendip Sanctuary, Breamlea beach and Jirrahlinga Wildlife Sanctuary to learn about migratory birds in the region and the natural environment. The students then visited Geelong City Hall and made presentations to the Mayor, Mr Bruce Harwood, on the ways to protect a Ramsar wetland in Nagoya named Fujimae Tidal

Flats, and also introduced the local culture & food of Nagoya. They also visited the Marine and Freshwater Discovery Centre and Queenscliff Primary School. After the presentation, they, together with the local students, checked out Swan Bay Ramsar wetland, an important habitat for migratory birds. All the students tried their best to communicate in English with the Aussie students. They learned not only about the beauty of Australia, but also the Australian culture and way of life.

CLAIR Sydney helped organise the itinerary and provided information on possible places to visit. We will continue to support further exchanges between the two cities.

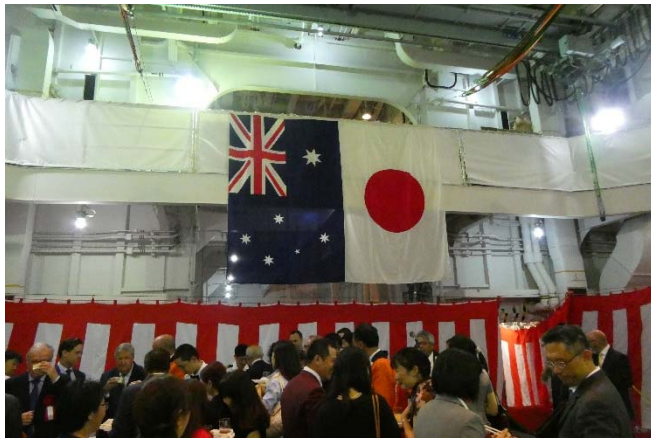


Port of Call of the Japanese Antarctic Research Icebreaker 'Shirase' in Sydney

On March 20, the Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force's Icebreaker, 'Shirase', arrived in Sydney. To mark this occasion, a reception onboard the icebreaker was held and hosted by the Commanding Officer of 'Shirase', Captain Koji Miyazaki, Leader of the 59th Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition Team, Dr. Koichiro Doi, together with the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr. Keizo Takewaka. 'Shirase' carries the Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition Team and is on its way from Showa Station in Antarctica back to Japan.

At the beginning of the reception, the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney gave a speech followed by The Hon.

David Elliott (Minister for Counter Terrorism, Minister for Corrections, and Minister for Veterans Affairs), Commander Luke Charles-Jones (CSC, OAM, RAN, Chief of Staff for Fleet Headquarters (representing Fleet Commander RADM Jonathan Mead)), and Dr. Doi. The lively Australia-Japan relationship in various fields was highlighted in the speeches. 'Shirase' takes its name from an Antarctic glacier named after Japan's first Antarctic explorer, Lieutenant Nobu Shirase, and remains a symbol of friendship between Australia and Japan. During the event, the chefs of 'Shirase' served Japanese cuisine and the attending guests deepened their friendship while enjoying the cuisine.



CLAIR staff attended the SCNZ Regional Collaboration Forum

On March 23, CLAIR Sydney staff attended the 2018 Sister Cities New Zealand Regional Collaboration Forum in Palmerston North, New Zealand.

The Forum was held to explore local government international relations. The forum brought together city, district and regional councils and Economic Development Agencies from the central North Island, along with key contributors from New Zealand government agencies. The focus was on the practical ways that we can work together for greater impact.

Diplomatic representatives were also invited to the forum to gain insight into engagement with New Zealand regions, and to discuss partnership opportunities.

Our Director got on the stage to talk about the Japan Local Government Centre and what we do, which in particular, are our support for sister city relationships and the JET Programme. Also, we promoted attractive travel destinations in Japan to the attendees.

The Forum concluded with a reception for the Palmerston North Festival of Cultures - World Food, Craft and Music Fair 2018, which all delegates were invited to join. CLAIR Sydney attended the opening ceremony of the festival with other diplomatic representatives on March 24.

We were delighted to be able to talk with SCNZ President Hiromi Morris, Palmerston North Mayor Grant



Smith, Mayors, Councillors and General Managers of various councils in NZ at the Forum. We will continue to strive to improve our service delivery by cooperating with local councils in Australia and New Zealand.



The UQ Careers Fair 2018

On March 21, the UQ Careers Fair 2018 was held at the University of Queensland in Brisbane, which was mainly aimed for students of the university. CLAIR Sydney ran a booth with members of JETAA QLD. We showcased the JET Programme and promoted Japanese tourist destinations to students who came to our booth. JETAA QLD has been attending this career fair and promoted the JET Programme since about 10 years ago. Although most students only heard about the JET Programme for the first time at the fair, some students are thinking about applying for the programme after they graduate from university. We found that they have great interest in



working in Japan through their enthusiastic attitudes and the specific questions they asked about the requirements and the application process for the JET Programme. We hope they will become JETs and succeed in Japan in the future.

A delegation from Tokyo Metropolitan University visited the Venues of the Sydney Olympic Games



On March 25, a delegation from Tokyo Metropolitan University (Prof. Yoshikawa, the Vice President of the University, Prof. Takemiya, Prof. Oneyama, Prof. Ito, Research Assistant Prof. Miyake and students) visited CLAIR Sydney. Mr. Kamibo, the Director of CLAIR Sydney, made a presentation on the legacy of the Sydney Olympic Games. After that, the delegation and CLAIR Sydney discussed the development of Sydney Olympic Park and the public transportation systems in NSW. The delegation stayed in Sydney until 29th March and visited the venues used for the

Sydney Olympic Games.

CLAIR Sydney accompanied the delegation to Sydney Olympic Park on March 28, and Western Sydney (Sydney International Equestrian Centre, Sydney International Shooting Centre, and Sydney International Regatta Centre) on March 29. The study tour was really beneficial to the delegation. We would like to express our gratitude to the organisations that accommodated the delegation.



CLAIR staff visited Dunedin in NZ



On 15 to 18 March, our staff visited Dunedin in New Zealand and met with members of JETAA Otago-South Island to talk about their future activities. This subchapter is based in Dunedin, which is located on the South Island of New Zealand. Up until now, the JETAA South Island chapter covered activities in the entire South Island region, but in order to promote JETAA's activities specifically in the southern area of the South Island, the subchapter was established officially.

As a part of this visit, our staff also observed a Japanese class and an ESL class at Taieri College and interviewed Ms. Haruko Stuart, who is a Teaching Fellow in Japanese at the University of Otago, about the current situation of students who study Japanese and applications of the JET Programme. Our staff also met Ms. Naoko Inoue, who researches English language teaching from the sociolinguistic point of view and talked about English teaching in Japan.

We found that the students are very interested in Japanese language and culture, and the JET Programme is well known to them. A lot of students seem to be fascinated by Japan. We hope they will participate in the JET Programme and succeed in Japan in the future.



Promoting the JET Programme - An Essential Task for the JET Alumni Association



Unlike many other large scale programmes out there, the JET Programme starts long before participants are selected, and extends beyond the end of the participants' contracting period. The JET Alumni Association, as its name implies, takes charge of post-JET activities, when participants return home or relocate to a different place.

A little known fact is the involvement of JETAA in the pre-application stage of the programme. One such activity is the promotion of the programme to graduating students. In Queensland, there are a couple of events at the end of March, where soon-to-be graduates attend special "career day" events such as the University of Queensland's "UQ Fair". These events usually take place in vast halls filled with hundreds of booths run by a variety of prospective employers in the industrial, government and other fields, and are attended by hundreds if not thousands of visitors.



A little known fact is



This year, on Wednesday March 21, JETAA QLD and CLAIR joined forces to hold a booth at the UQ Fair in order to present and discuss opportunities in the JET Programme to future graduates attending the event.

Our mission consisted of clarifying the requirements for applicants, and notably, participants' country of origin, and the application process, as well as answering questions brought up by potential applicants. We were delighted by the interest shown by the number of visitors, which was large enough that we ran out of brochures.

This event is one of the activities that JETAA contributes to the JET Programme before participants are sent to Japan. The next steps JETAA are involved with include helping with the interviewing process and pre-departure orientations, as well as any other steps that we can assist with.



Introducing our new staff members



Takanori Tanimoto

Assistant Director from Kochi Prefectural Government

Hello everyone, My name is Takanori Tanimoto, and I am from the Kochi Prefectural Government.

Do you know Kochi Prefecture? It is located on Shikoku island, in western Japan.

Kochi Prefecture faces the Pacific Ocean.

The food is really delicious, and Kochi's SAKE is amazing. The people are also very kind.

In addition, there are plenty of must-see sceneries such as the ocean, rivers and mountain.

The Shimanto River, which is said to be the last clear stream of Japan, runs through my hometown.

In summer, I used to swim in the river with my friends.

For my honeymoon, my wife and I actually visited Perth and Sydney. The memories of my incredibly fun experience and the picturesque sceneries are still vividly imprinted in the back of my mind. We got to know a New Zealander at that time, so we have also visited New Zealand twice. When we took a trip to South Island, we rented a car and drove from North Island. We were impressed by the beautiful nature and charm of New Zealand.

There is a Japanese saying that goes 'people are treasures, personal connections are assets'.

I am really excited for the new encounters in the future. I will try hard so that I can become a bridge between Japan and the world.

I am looking forward to meeting you all soon.

Kochi Information

<http://visitkochijapan.com/>

Hello, my name is Yusuke Sasaki. I am seconded from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government for a 2-year assignment in CLAIR Sydney. I was born and raised in Towada City in Aomori prefecture.

New South Wales is one of Tokyo's sister states and it is my great pleasure to experience living and working here. This is my first time to live outside Japan and my wife and I are excited about our new life in Sydney.

Tokyo will host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic games, and my colleagues are working hard to make the 2020 Games the best Games ever!

Tokyo has great food, historical landmarks and lots of shopping areas to enjoy so please come and visit!

See you in Tokyo in 2020!



Yusuke Sasaki

Assistant Director from Tokyo Metropolitan
Government

From the Director

30 – Introduction of Australian and New Zealand local gov't system - A Year of Local Governments in Japan

We, CLAIR Sydney, have completed the revision of our publication, the “Local Government of Australia and New Zealand” guidebook, which outlines information on the local government system in the two countries. The new updated version will be made available in April. The guidebook, which is written by our staff members (some of which have just returned to Japan), is aimed at Japanese local governments and scholars and as such is only available in Japanese. We apologise to those who would like to read the guidebook in English.

As you may know, the local government systems of Australia and New Zealand have some differences from the Japanese system. Of course, both systems are based on democracy, are independent from the central government, and are sustained by civic engagement. In the guidebook, we have made a point to convey that, 1) “council” means not only a conference or body consisting of councillors, but also an entity of local administration (the Japanese system has different names for a conference and an entity), 2) a mayor is also a member of a council and chairs the conference (the Japanese system adopts a strict distinction between a mayor and an assembly like the US President and Congress relation), and, 3) Australian states are not local governments (Japanese prefectures and municipalities are both recognised as local governments in Japan).

We were also able to update the guidebook with recent topics, such as recent referendums in Australia and amalgamations in NSW.

We are very excited to be able to update this publication to more accurately convey the local governance system in Australia and New Zealand to our Japanese audience. We would like to express our deep gratitude for the cooperation and support we received from mayors, councillors, officers and scholars in both Australia and New Zealand.