



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney)

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Welcome to Yamagata Prefecture



Yamagata, meaning 'mountain shape' in Japanese, is a prefecture located in the north-eastern area of Japan, bordering the Sea of Japan. The prefecture is home to picturesque mountains, parks, and hot springs, making it impossible to sum up the beauty of the prefecture in just a few words.

The esteemed Mount Zao is one of the prominent representative symbols of Yamagata Prefecture. In the winter months

of January and February every year, tourists from around the world travel to Mount Zao to see the renowned juhyo, an entire forest of snow-covered trees known as 'snow monsters'. The surreal sea of snow monsters is formed only in specific climates and geographic conditions.



Located very close to the snow monsters is the Zao Hot Springs Ski Resort, one of the most extensive ski resorts in Japan with ski courses suitable for skiers at different skill levels. Below the ski resort area on Mount Zao is the Zao hot spring village. Discovered in the year 110 AD, the hot spring in the village is known as 'the Princess Hot Springs' and 'the Fountain of Beauty', and the acidity of the hot springs in this area are said to be able to heal skin and digestive conditions.

Yamagata Prefecture also have year-round ski and snowboarding adventures available. In the northern areas of the Prefecture is Mount Gassan, the highest mountain out of the Three Sacred Mountains of Yamagata. The ski season of Mount Gassan starts in April and ends in mid-July, which is the summer season that ski resorts around Japan are normally closed. Due to the heavy snowfall throughout winter and the high altitude of the mountain, the snow melts at a slower rate, offering a unique experience for skiers and snowboarders to enjoy their favourite snow activity while wearing a t-shirt!



Mount Haguro is another mountain of the Three Sacred Mountains of Yamagata. Religious pilgrims and travellers visit the mountain throughout the year to trek up the stone steps surrounded by 600-year old cedar trees. Along the way to the summit, there are temples, shrines, and a five story wooden pagoda that has been designated as a national treasure of Japan. Near the pagoda is the 'Grandpa Cedar Tree', a cedar tree estimated to be 1,000 years old and has a trunk base circumference of 10 metres.

Another hiking location in the prefecture is Yamadera, a picturesque temple in the mountains close to Yamagata City. The temple's official name is Risshakuji, but is commonly known as Yamadera, which means 'mountain temple'. The temple was founded in 860 AD and inside the temple's main hall is a sacred ritual flame that has been burning since the structure's foundation. The most famous structure of the temple is a platform on top of the mountains where visitors

can relish the breathtaking views of the valley and mountain surroundings. The temple is also known to be where the famous Japanese Haiku poet, Matsuo Basho, visited and composed many of his famous poems.

For more information please visit: <http://yamagatakanko.com.e.db.hp.transer.com/>

(Please note that the above website is translated using automatic translation and the information may not be 100% accurate.)

Supporting Activity for High School Students from Nagoya



From 28 Jul to 6 Aug, a student exchange delegation consisting of 30 students and two teaching staff from eight Nagoya municipal senior high schools visited Australia. The delegation spent the majority of their time in Sydney, Nagoya's sister city.

The delegation visited Australia for the purpose of strengthening the sister city ties between Nagoya and Sydney, and to conduct school exchange with high schools in Sydney. At the schools, the Nagoya students participated in classes and cultural exchange

activities, as well as experiencing a homestay. They also paid a courtesy call to Sydney Town Hall and visited Taronga Zoo, which is the sister zoo of Nagoya's Higashiyama Zoo.

During their stay, a CLAIR Sydney staff seconded from the City of Nagoya set up appointments and provided support at the courtesy call at Sydney Town Hall, the students' visits to local high schools, and the tour of Taronga Zoo.

The delegation received a warm welcome at Sydney Town Hall from the City of Sydney's Cr Robert Kok. A student representative gave a speech that summarised their time in Australia, and expressed their gratitude to those who assisted them. At the courtesy call, the students also interacted with members of the Sydney Nagoya Sister City Committee.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to support the City of Nagoya and its school and sister city exchange activities in Australia.

LG Professionals Australia National Congress & Business Expo 2019

The LG Professionals Australia National Congress & Business Expo 2019 was held from 31 Jul to 2 Aug in Darwin. The conference featured lectures and sessions to further elevate the abilities of local government staff, and also incorporated many great opportunities for networking.



In one of the lectures, the Executive Director of CLAIR Sydney gave an overview of CLAIR, an outline of the Japanese local government system, and introduced the CLAIR Local Government Exchange & Cooperation Seminar to be held in Tokyo and Miyakonojo next February. Ms Candy Choo, an alumna of the Seminar last February, also gave a presentation on the wonderful experiences she had when she attended the Seminar.

The event also featured a booth area ran by relevant institutions and organisations. CLAIR Sydney ran a booth to provide information about our recent activities, the Local Government Exchange & Cooperation Seminar, upcoming notable sports events such as the Rugby World Cup 2019, 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games, and World Masters Games 2021 KANSAI, and tourism destinations in Japan. Many domestic and international expo attendees who are interested in Japan and CLAIR kindly visited our booth.

Thanks to this event, CLAIR Sydney was able to strengthen our relationships with many local governments and relevant organisations in Australia and New Zealand.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to promote exchange activities between local governments in Japan and Australia/New Zealand through the Local Government Exchange & Cooperation Seminar and more.



Visit to the Papatoetoe Olympic Weightlifting Club



On Friday, 2 Aug, a CLAIR Sydney staff met with Mr Simon Kent, High Performance Director of Olympic Weightlifting New Zealand. Simon is based in the Papatoetoe Olympic Weightlifting Club at South Auckland, and is dedicated to training weightlifting athletes.

From beginners to Olympic athletes, various levels of weightlifting athletes from across Oceania train at the club, and this diversity has a positive effect on the team. The club focuses on not only improving the athletes' performances,

but also developing their mental strength and sportsmanship. The club also provides youths with opportunities to try the sport, and over 900 students have tried out Olympic weightlifting for the first time at the club.

The New Zealand weightlifting national team conducted their one-week Tokyo 2020 Pre-Olympic training in Kurashiki City, a sister city of Christchurch, from 23 Aug. Simon has been to Kurashiki twice and met with Ms ITO Kaori, the Mayor of Kurashiki. He also visited a local school with athletes and had a good time with the students. Simon is keen to expand sport related exchanges between New Zealand and Japan leading up to, during, and after the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Games.



CLAIR Sydney will continue to support sport exchange programs between New Zealand and Japan, in addition to the sister city relationships in the two countries including Christchurch and Kurashiki.

<https://www.facebook.com/PapatoetoeOlympicWeightliftingClub/>

2019 JET Programme Pre-Departure Orientations & Farewell Receptions



Wellington

Pre-Departure Orientations and Farewell Receptions for new Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme participants were held in three New Zealand cities in August.

CLAIR Sydney staff participated in the orientation and reception events in Wellington (2 Aug), Auckland (3 Aug) and Christchurch (3 Aug).

At each Orientation, a staff member from CLAIR Sydney provided information on the support services available to JET Programme participants (JETs) while they are in Japan. Representative members of the local JET Alumni Association chapter gave presentations about life in Japan based on their own experiences as JETs. The new JETs completed their final preparations just before their departure.

At each Farewell Reception event, a staff member from CLAIR Sydney delivered a congratulatory speech and all attending guests gave their warm wishes to the new JETs. The new JETs gave speeches about their future aspirations in Japan. All the participants were full of motivation and were looking forward to leaving for Japan.

The new participants have already landed in Japan, and have just started their new roles at their contracting organisations. We hope that their contributions will foster intercultural awareness in their students, colleagues and community members, and develop warm relations, mutual growth and understanding between Japan and New Zealand.



Auckland



Christchurch

Cowra Breakout 75th Commemorative Events

From 4 to 5 Aug, staff from CLAIR attended the Cowra Breakout 75th Commemorative Events in Cowra, a town 320km west of Sydney. This year marks the 75th anniversary of the Cowra Breakout. Many guests from not only Australia but also Japan visited Cowra to attend commemorative events, including representatives of Joetsu City, which has a peaceful friendship relation with Cowra Shire Council, and Fukuoka Prefecture, and a former Japanese prisoner in the Cowra Prisoner of War Camp who wished to pay his respects to his fellow soldiers.



Various events were held, such as the launch of the Cowra Voices App, World Peace Bell Ceremony, and Lantern Parade. On 5 Aug, the day of the tragedy, wreath-laying ceremonies were held in the Prisoner of War Campsite, Japanese War Cemetery and Australian War Cemetery to pay respect to the victims.

A Prisoner of War camp, holding prisoners of war from countries including Japan, was used in Cowra during World War II when Japan was one of the adversary countries of Australia. The Cowra Breakout occurred at around 2am on 5 Aug in 1944, when Japanese prisoners of war attempted to escape the camp, and 231 Japanese prisoners of war and four Australian soldiers lost their lives in this tragic incident.

The cemetery for the casualties of the Cowra Breakout had been neglected for some time after the war until it was restored with the assistance of the Cowra Returned and Services League as a mark of respect for the victims despite anti-Japanese sentiment at the time. This initial restoration by the Cowra Returned and Services League, with the cooperation of the Embassy of Japan, the Cowra Shire Council and the Australian Government since, has ensured ongoing, proper maintenance of Japanese War Cemetery, where the bodies of Japanese nationals who died on Australian soil during World War II were buried. The Prisoner of War Camp Site, Japanese Garden, Sakura Avenue, and World Peace Bell were later built, and now Cowra is a symbol of reconciliation and the friendship between Japan and Australia.



Internship at Whakatane District Council, New Zealand

Assistant Director Tanimoto, who is seconded from Kochi Prefectural Government, completed a 10-day internship program at the Whakatane District Council from 5 to 14 Aug. Whakatane District Council is located in the Bay of Plenty region, where many prosperous primary industries are based. During the 10 days, Mr Tanimoto mainly focused on learning about forestry in New Zealand. He also learnt about various government led projects, in particular, forestry related projects in Rotorua, Kawerau and Tauranga.



During his internship, junior high school students from Shibukawa City, Gunma Prefecture, were also in Whakatane to participate in a school exchange and homestay program to learn about New Zealand culture. Mr Tanimoto was invited to a reception for the students and had an opportunity to interact with them, and witnessed the exchanges between Shibukawa and Whakatane.



Mr Tanimoto also visited Tauranga, a sister city of Susaki in Kochi Prefecture, to pay a courtesy call on Mayor Greg Brownless. Mr Tanimoto and Mayor Brownless discussed the Yosakoi Festival and its spread from Kochi to the world.

During his internship, Mr Tanimoto was able to learn not only about the local administration and primary industries in New Zealand, but also various aspects of Maori culture. He was able to gain a first-hand understanding about ethnic diversity

initiatives in New Zealand, such as the fact that in New Zealand, the official languages are English, Maori, and New Zealand sign language.

Mr Tanimoto is extremely grateful to Mayor Tony Bonne who kindly accepted his internship request, Ms Janie Storey at Whakatane District Council who planned a solid internship program, and Mr Andrew Illes, Chairperson of the Whakatane District Sister Cities Committee, who kindly offered Mr Tanimoto a homestay opportunity and accompanied him on visits to different organisations.

Mr Tanimoto would also like to express his deep appreciation to everyone he met in New Zealand during his internship. He strives to become a bridge between New Zealand and Japan through this special experience he had in New Zealand.

Mr Tanimoto has plans to visit the Bay of Plenty again, bringing his family on his next visit.

Tena koutou Tena koutou Tena koutou Katoa.



Junior High School Students from Ube City Visited CLAIR Sydney

Ten junior high school students and two English teachers from Ube City, Yamaguchi Prefecture, visited Australia as a part of a junior global training program, and on 6 Aug they visited the CLAIR Sydney office.

Despite having only just arrived in the country, the students listened very attentively as staff of CLAIR Sydney gave a presentation on Australia and CLAIR Sydney's activities in Australia and New Zealand. A staff from the

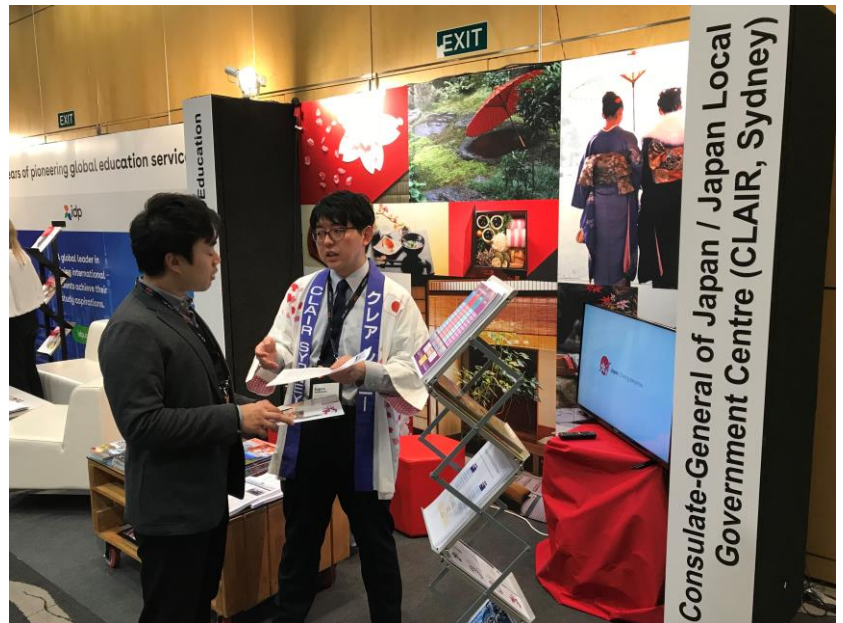
Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) also visited the CLAIR Sydney office to give a presentation on the promotion of tourism to Japan in Australia and New Zealand.

After visiting the CLAIR Sydney office, the students and teachers visited Newcastle, the sister city of Ube City in Australia. They participated in a homestay and made friends with local students. We hope that the information they learned at CLAIR Sydney proved useful for the Ube students during their time with their Australian host families.



Exhibiting at the NZIEC

On 7 and 8 Aug, the New Zealand International Education Conference (NZIEC) was held at SKYCITY Auckland Convention Centre in New Zealand. This is an annual conference held to lead the international education thinking in New Zealand. For each conference, a country is nominated as the 'Country of Honour' where exhibitions and cultural events featuring the nominated country are held during the conference. This year, Japan was nominated as the Country of Honour, due to the country gaining worldwide attention as the host of the upcoming Rugby World Cup 2019 and the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Games.

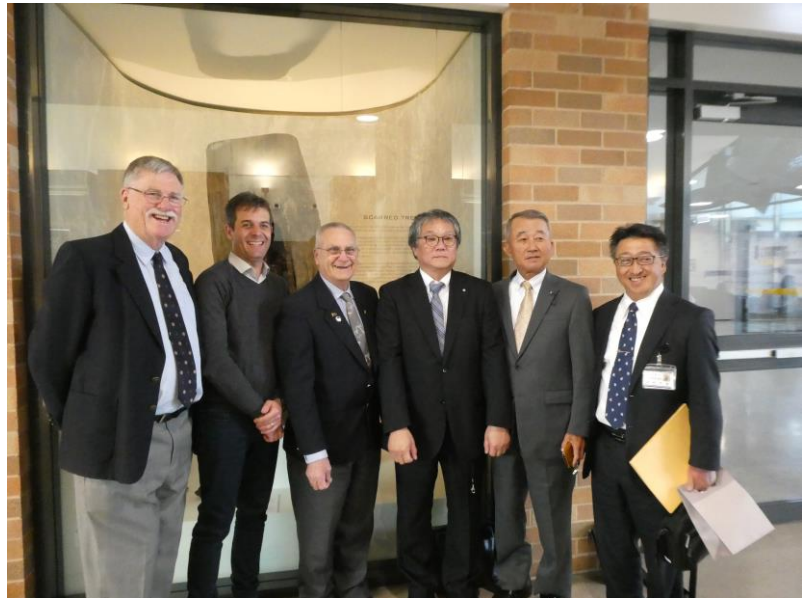


CLAIR Sydney ran a booth with the Consulate-General of Japan in Auckland to promote the Rugby World Cup 2019, Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics Games, and the World Masters Games 2021 KANSAI. Conference attendees who visited the booth all have a keen interest in Japan and the upcoming major international sports events held in the country. Some conference attendees said they are going to Japan to watch some of the games.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to promote major international sports events in New Zealand and Australia, with the aim of encouraging exchange activities through these events between New Zealand, Australia and Japanese local regions.

Junior High School Students and Mayor from Genkai Town Visited CLAIR Sydney

On 8 Aug, seven junior high school students from Genkai Mirai Gakuen in Genkai Town, Saga Prefecture visited Australia as part of an ongoing sister school exchange with Korowal School in the City of Blue Mountains, New South Wales. They also visited the CLAIR Sydney office. The Mayor of Genkai Town, Mr WAKIYAMA Shintaro and other delegates visited Australia to make a courtesy call on the Deputy Mayor of the City of Blue Mountains, Mr Chris Van der Kley, and also visited the CLAIR Sydney office with the students.



CLAIR Sydney assisted with setting up the appointment for the courtesy call to the City of Blue Mountains Deputy Mayor on 9 Aug, and assisted with the visit on the day. The City of Blue Mountains has an established sister city relationship with Sanda City in Japan, and the Chairperson and members of the Blue Mountains Sister Cities Committee accompanied the Deputy Mayor in welcoming the delegation from Genkai. The principal of the Korowal School also accompanied the delegation to the courtesy call and all the attendees engaged in a lively discussion about education in their respective cities and other topics.

A staff member of CLAIR Sydney provided a brief outline on Australia and CLAIR Sydney's activities. All the students were very attentive and showed great motivation to learn about Australia.

CLAIR Sydney assisted with setting up the appointment for the courtesy call to the City of Blue Mountains Deputy Mayor on 9 Aug, and assisted with the visit on the day. The City of Blue Mountains has an established sister city relationship with Sanda City in Japan, and the Chairperson and members of the Blue Mountains Sister Cities Committee accompanied the Deputy Mayor in welcoming the delegation from Genkai.

Tourism Promotion at the Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival 2019

On 17 and 18 Aug, CLAIR Sydney ran a booth at the Sydney Cherry Blossom Festival 2019 held in the Auburn Botanical Gardens. The festival took place until 25 Aug.

At the CLAIR Sydney booth, we handed out brochures to promote tourist destinations across Japan, focusing on cherry blossom viewing destinations that are not known to most Australians. On Saturday, 17 Aug, members of JETAA NSW joined us at our booth and shared their travel experiences in Japan with visitors of the festival. Many of those who visited our booth are very keen to travel to regional areas off the Golden route (Tokyo, Kyoto, Osaka and more) to enjoy cherry blossom viewing in lesser-known locations. Many of the visitors expressed that they are looking forward to visiting the hidden gems we introduced to them!

The great weather over that weekend brought thousands of visitors to the festival to see the beautiful cherry blossoms, and our promotion was a big success!



The Official Welcome Reception of 2019 Kawasaki Junior Cultural Prize

On 20 Aug, CLAIR Sydney staff participated in the official Welcome Reception of the 2019 Kawasaki Junior Cultural Prize in Wollongong. The staff attended the event after receiving a request of assistance from the City of Kawasaki, Wollongong's sister city in Japan, as well as receiving an invitation from Wollongong City Council directly.



Four Year 6 students from Kawasaki were chosen as recipients of the Kawasaki Junior Cultural Prize this year based on their outstanding essay and art submissions. The prize, sponsored by Kawasaki Shinkin Bank, is an opportunity for the selected students in Japan to visit Wollongong, and the recipients were inducted as Kawasaki International Friendship Ambassadors prior to visiting Wollongong. During the reception, the ambassadors introduced their prized essays and artworks to the Lord Mayor of Wollongong, Cr Gordon Bradbery. Students from Wollongong who are studying Japanese made presentations to welcome the ambassadors. CLAIR Sydney staff were able to see the deep ties between Wollongong and Kawasaki through the students' interactions.

Suginami City Board of Education Visited CLAIR Sydney

On 20 Aug, a delegation from the Suginami City Board of Education visited the CLAIR Sydney office. The City of Suginami, Tokyo, organises an annual study abroad program as a part of its sister city exchange program with the Willoughby City Council. Every year, approximately 25 junior high school students from Suginami City are sent to Sydney with the aim to boost international awareness in the students, and to improve their English communication skills, both of which are increasingly important abilities to possess in the globalised world. The program includes a courtesy call on the Mayor of Willoughby, classes at a local school, homestay, and visits to Japanese companies in Sydney. CLAIR Sydney assisted the program by arranging appointments

with Japanese companies for the students to visit. At the CLAIR Sydney office, the Sugunami City Board of Education expressed their gratitude, as well as their wish for continuous support for the study abroad program, to staff of CLAIR Sydney.



Professor Hanai from Seijo University Visited CLAIR Sydney

On 23 Aug, Dr HANAI Kiyohito, Professor of the Faculty of Economics at Seijo University, visited the CLAIR Sydney office.

Professor HANAI specialises in public finance and economic policy and has a wealth of knowledge about Australia's economy, public finances and tax system. During this stay, he visited the Australian National University (ANU) where he was studying before, and the Australian Federal Government to research and exchange opinions about new economic activities and its relationship with tax and social security in Australia. He also visited the CLAIR Sydney office, and discussed the similarities and differences between the Australian and Japanese economies, taxes and public finances.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to exchange opinions with researchers with specialised knowledge so that we can provide useful information to Japanese local governments.



Supporting Activity for Hamamatsu City



On 23 and 24 Aug, the Mayor of Hamamatsu, Mr SUZUKI Yasutomo, and staff of the Hamamatsu City Government visited Sydney to engage in promotional activities to showcase Hamamatsu and appeal to Australian tourists. During Mayor Suzuki's time in Sydney, he co-hosted a 'Hamamatsu Fair in Australia' event, and visited travel agencies and other relevant travel organisations to promote Hamamatsu.

The Hamamatsu Fair in Australia was held in Tetsuya's, one of Sydney's finest restaurants

operated by Mr WAKUDA Tetsuya, who was born and grew up in Hamamatsu. As the Rugby World Cup 2019 in Japan was fast approaching, invited guests included representatives from Japanese travel and flight companies, local media, and rugby players, so that guests could find out first-hand information about Hamamatsu, and the attractions available for tourists during the Rugby World Cup. At the event, Mayor Suzuki gave a presentation on the large variety of attractions in Hamamatsu, such as the food, festivals, history and nature of the city. Mayor Suzuki also spoke about the world-renowned Japanese enterprises that were founded and headquartered in the city, and emphasised the extremely convenient location of Hamamatsu, as the city is halfway between Tokyo and Osaka. The guests were all very interested in finding out more about the city, and many of them expressed their desire to visit Hamamatsu the next time they travel to Japan.



A CLAIR Sydney staff, who had worked at the Hamamatsu City Government as a Coordinator for International Relations, accompanied the delegation on both days and provided assistance with Mayor Suzuki's presentation by utilising her experience and understanding of Hamamatsu. Her effort over the two days was a way for her to give back to Hamamatsu, where she had a wonderful time.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to support Hamamatsu City Government's tourism promotional activities in their efforts to attract more tourists from Australia.

Students from Meiji University Visited CLAIR Sydney



On 26 Aug, the students of Professor YAMAWAKI Keizo from Meiji University, Tokyo visited CLAIR Sydney. The students are studying migrant integration policies and intercultural community building under the mentorship of Professor Yamawaki. They came to Sydney to learn about Australian multicultural policies.

CLAIR Sydney assisted with their visit by arranging appointments and accompanying them to state government organisations and other institutions, including the City of Sydney

and City of Parramatta Library.

Students were not accompanied by an interpreter but instead took part in lively discussion in English, speaking directly with staff at each organisation and institute. We wish all the best for the students' bright futures!

Asakuchi Visits Tea Tree Gully

Written by Penny Cowell

Library & Arts Communications Officer at the City of Tea Tree Gully



In late July we welcomed Mayor KURIYAMA Yasuhiko and his Secretary Mr Nishina, two staff from the Asakuchi City Board of Education, and 14 junior high school students (eight girls and six boys) to the City of Tea Tree Gully.

Over the course of our special 22-year sister city friendship, hundreds of Asakuchi high school students have experienced a taste of life in Australia. The City of Tea Tree Gully has the privilege of being the first stop on the tour.

This year's whirlwind 2-day tour in our City included a tour of our amazing new-look Library, a workshop to make Australian souvenirs to take home to Japan, a tour of the Tea Tree Gully Historical Museum (including a live Blacksmith demonstration), a walk through Pine Park, tasting five star food at Newman's Nursery, grooving along

with local kids and parents at the Library's new Mini Movers session, a walking bird watching tour around Solandra Dam, and a Vegemite scroll and pizza making class! It was a real highlight to see Mayor Kuriyama relax after the earlier formalities of the day and show off his magic tricks to some local kids in the library.

Every year all of the Japanese high school students are billeted out with families from Modbury High School, which they attend for one week. Other highlights of their trip include a flight and overnight stay to Kangaroo Island and two days of sightseeing in Sydney.



City of Busselton Japanese Student Exchange Stronger than Ever

Written by Ms Tonia Kilian

City Relationships Officer at the City of Busselton

City of Busselton families hosted nine students from the Town of Sugito in August as part of the annual Busselton Sugito Student Exchange Program.

Now in its 26th year, the exchange offers a unique homestay experience in which students from Sugito live with a family for a week and experience the Australian way of life.

Students attend school for three days, tour the southwest on two days and spend the weekend with their host family. This usually involves a visit to the iconic Busselton Jetty and one of the many stunning beaches in the region.



Busselton students will be in Sugito from the end of September to the beginning of October to spend approximately a week with their Sugito student and their family.



The impact that these exchanges have on the participants can be life changing. Many past participants have gone on to undertake diplomatic careers, study in Japan and abroad, and many chose to return to Japan with their families.

JETAA NSW

JETAA NSW is one of the eight JET Alumni Associations in Oceania, and works to support returnees of the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme with settling back into Australian life, and provide them with opportunities to share their love for Japan with others, as well as maintain their connection to Japan. We work closely with organisations such as CLAIR and the Australia Japan Society (AJS) by supporting their initiatives and the work they do. JETAA NSW also actively plans events for our alumni and the wider JET community as a way to foster relations and contribute to international exchanges as a bridge between Australia and Japan.

Some of these events include:

Working at the CLAIR Sydney Booth at Auburn Cherry Blossom Festival

The Auburn Cherry Blossom Festival is an annual nine-day event run by the Cumberland Council at the Auburn Botanic Gardens. This year, the festival started and finished with 'Hanami' weekends, where people could attend to view the blossoms as well as enjoy Japanese food and drinks, music, cosplay shows and even a Hello Kitty makeover station. On 17 Aug, the first day of the Cherry Blossom Festival, CLAIR Sydney had a booth where



they provided tourist information about Japan to festivalgoers. Volunteering members of JETAA NSW worked alongside CLAIR Sydney at the booth, giving people personal recommendations on places to visit and things to do based on their own JET experiences. Many visitors were planning their first visits to Japan and were

excited to get insider tips from JETAA, with some saying they got more out of talking briefly with us for 10 minutes than speaking with their travel agents! This was a great opportunity for JETAA NSW members to not only help CLAIR Sydney, but also get people excited about the country we love and raise the profile of the JET Programme.

Kintsugi Workshop

JETAA NSW works with the Japanese community to host a wide variety of events. A number of these are focused Australia/Japan cultural exchange. On 31 Aug, JETAA NSW, our friends, (and three joey kangaroos!) participated in a Kintsugi workshop in Marrickville. Kintsugi - literally meaning “gold joinery” - is the traditional Japanese art of repairing broken pottery by mending the areas of breakage with lacquer dusted or mixed with powdered gold. During the four hour workshop our teacher, Kawada-sensei, explained the traditional practice of Kintsugi as we applied resin to our broken plates, sanded back the excess resin, then added more resin before finally applying a dusting of gold. (Traditionally, the gold used in Kintsugi is 24 carat, but we weren't so lucky!) At the end of the four hours, everyone was able to take home their own mended pottery. Everyone had a great time learning about this unique Japanese art form.



JETAA Oceania Conference

In October this year, JETAA NSW is excited to be hosting the annual JETAA Oceania Conference at the Japan Foundation, Sydney. Delegates from each of the JETAA chapters in Oceania, as well as the JETAA Singapore Country Representative, members of the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney, and both CLAIR Sydney and Tokyo Headquarters will gather from Friday 4 Oct to Sunday, 6 Oct. This year's theme “2020 Vision – Looking Clearly To The Future” aims to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of JETAA whilst also allowing chapters to look forward and plan for changes and goals in the coming years. It is bound to be an exciting and productive weekend for all involved.

From the Executive Director

-The Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme and Sister City Relationships -

In July and August, approximately 200 new Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme participants from Australia and New Zealand embarked upon their new journey and arrived in the local area of their Contracting Organisations across Japan. Some of these participants were specifically placed in cities or prefectures that have a sister city/state relationship with their hometowns. Aside from contributing to the existing sister city/state relations during their time on the Programme by engaging in cross-cultural interactions in their work and private lives, we also anticipate the new JET participants to continue to enhance the sister city/state relationships even after they complete the Programme.

In the JET Programme participant hiring process, after consulting with the individual contracting organisations within their prefecture and municipality, prefectural and municipal governments can submit requests to the CLAIR Headquarters regarding their incoming JET participants. An example of these requests is that prefectural and municipal governments can indicate their preferences for where they would like their new JET participants to be from, whether it is a specific country, region, state, or city that they have an existing established relationship with. As CLAIR needs to process about 2,000 matches every year, not all of the requests can be fulfilled. However, if your city or state has a sister or friendship city/prefecture in Japan, it may be a good idea to encourage your partner prefecture/city in Japan to request for JET participants from your city/state.

Aspiring JET participants are also able to indicate location preferences in their JET Programme applications. As mentioned above, not all requests can be fulfilled. Despite this, it is an excellent way to further strengthen the ties between your city/state and your partner city/prefecture in Japan if aspiring JET participants from your local area nominate your partner city/prefecture in Japan as the location they would like to be placed in. If you happen to come across any aspiring JET Programme participants, you could inform them of the appeals of your partner city/prefecture, and the astounding experiences they could have if they lived and worked in the partner city/prefecture as a JET participant.

Former JET Programme participants are also great advocates who can assist with solidifying the relations between your city/state and your Japanese partner city/prefecture, as they can utilise the insights, knowledge, and experiences they gained while living and working in Japan to provide cross-cultural support for any current or prospective relationships between Australia/New Zealand and Japan. If your city/state would like to harness the skills of the former JET participants living in your local area, I will recommend contacting your local JETAA chapter*.

I believe all former, current, and future JET Programme participants can make substantial contributions to further accelerate the relationship between your city/state and Japan. I sincerely hope that you can consider embracing what the JET Programme can offer to further enhance the interstate or intercity relationships between your city/state and Japan, and that the relationships, as well as the JET Programme, can continue to prosper in future.

* JETAA is short for JET Alumni Association where former JET Programme Participants reunite, promote the program, and become advocates for cultural exchange between Japan and their country of residence.

For detail of the JET Programme, please see the link below.

<http://jetprogramme.org/en/>