



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney)

Newsletter Issue
No.144 Feb 2020

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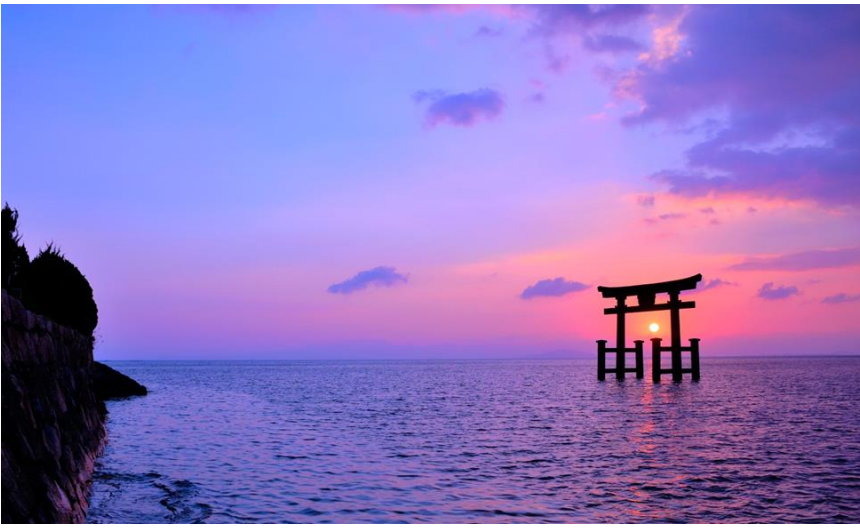
W e l c o m e t o S h i g a

Shiga is a beautiful prefecture located in Kansai, at the centre of Japan. It is right between large cities like Osaka and Nagoya, and its capital, Otsu, is only two stations away from Kyoto. Although it doesn't overlook the sea, Shiga is home to Japan's biggest lake. While not very deep, Lake Biwa is one of the oldest lakes in the world. The lake has both literally and figuratively been at the heart of the prefecture since time immemorial, and it has shaped the lives of those who live here.



Kaizu Osaki

Enjoying Lake Biwa is weaved into local culture, whether it's fourth-graders going on a 4-hour-or-so train journey around the lake or every fifth-grader boarding the school boat, Uminoko, for a mandatory two-day camp. In addition to the same train ride, visitors can embark on the Michigan paddle boat, a symbol of Shiga's sister status with the state of Michigan, which leaves from a few ports around Otsu and goes around the southern part of the lake. Other short cruises can bring you to Biwa's three islands: Chikibushima, with its important temple, Takeshima, the island with a thousand faces, or Okishima, inhabited by both humans and cats.



Shirahige Shrine

Another way to enjoy Biwa has been gaining track in the past few years. Biwaichi is Shiga's cycling road that goes all around the lake, and it's one of the first designated routes on Japan's National Cycle Routes. You can concentrate on biking around just the northern or southern part of the Lake, or you can choose to do the whole 193-km trip. Experts can complete the tour in a few hours, but we hope you stop along the way to really enjoy all that Shiga has to offer. Popular stops include

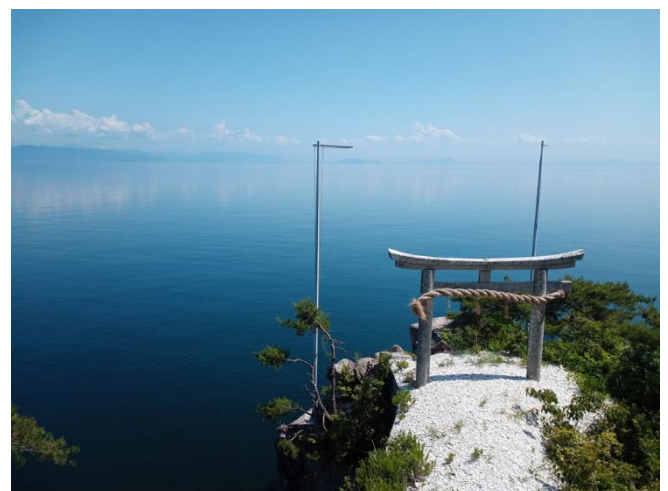
Hikone and Nagahama castles, Kaizu Osaki, one of Japan's famous cherry blossom viewing spots in the spring, and Shirahige Shrine, with its torii gate placed right in the water.

A bit further to the south and away from the Lake, the city of Koka has a few tricks up its sleeve. It's well known as one of Japan's ninja cities, and even has a whole not-so-hidden ninja village! You can try your hand at throwing stars or explore the hidden traps and passages of the ninja house. If another type of craft is more up your alley, you can travel even further south to Shigaraki, teeming with tanuki statues and figurines made from the area's celebrated ceramics. Need an art break? Sit at your own pottery wheel and make your own souvenir!

Shiga has a rich history, magnificent landscapes and, more importantly, a whole lot of friendly faces. We hope you'll come visit us, and see what a great place it truly is! Find out more on <https://en.biwako-visitors.jp/>.



Hachimanbori



Chikubushima

Kagoshima-Perth Sister City 45th Anniversary Celebration

On 18 January, Mayor MORI Hiroyuki of Kagoshima City in Japan visited the CLAIR Sydney Office.

Prior to their visit to the CLAIR Sydney office, Mayor Mori and Kagoshima City delegation visited Perth, Western Australia, the sister city of Kagoshima City. In Perth, the two Cities celebrated the 45th anniversary of their sister city relationship and held a ceremony to celebrate the occasion. A commemorative tree planting ceremony was also held in the Kagoshima Park in Perth by



Mayor Mori; Mr Andrew Hammond, Chair Commissioner of the City of Perth; and Ms Bindi Gove, a member of the Burswood Park Board. Over the past decades, the two Cities have deepened their ties mainly through school exchanges, and as a sign of their strong relationship, the main street in Kagoshima City is named 'Perth Street'.

At the CLAIR Sydney Office, Mayor Mori and the Kagoshima delegation was briefed on the politics, economy and society in Australia. The delegation and CLAIR Sydney staff also had meaningful discussions on various topics.

The CLAIR Sydney Office will continue to support the sister city relationship between Kagoshima City and the City of Perth, which we are sure will continue to thrive in future.



Visit to City of South Perth

On 16 January 2020, CLAIR Sydney staff members visited Mr Geoff Glass, CEO of the City of South Perth, Western Australia. Mr Glass is one of five delegation members from Australia and New Zealand to participate in CLAIR's annual Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar to be held in Tokyo and Miyakonojo City, Miyazaki Prefecture, in early February this year. Mr Glass was the leader of the delegation during the Seminar.



On this visit to the City of South Perth, Mr Glass introduced CLAIR Sydney staff members to the City's famous facilities.

- ① RAC Intellibus: an automated electric shuttle bus on trial on public roads
- ② Nursery: a seedling growing facility
- ③ Old Mill: a restored site with high historical value

①The RAC Intellibus is being tested by the Royal Automobile Club of Western Australia on public roads in South Perth in collaboration with the City of South Perth and the Government of Western Australia. ②The nursery is a facility that grows seedlings which includes ginkgo biloba seeds that survived the atomic bomb in Hiroshima, and plants that are indigenous to the South Perth area. ③The Old Mill was built in 1835 during the colonial period of Western Australia and is a landmark of South Perth and is a high-value building.



The visit has enabled CLAIR Sydney staff members to learn about the City of South Perth's advanced initiatives. We hope that Mr Glass and the other four other Seminar participants had a meaningful time in Japan and established many new friendships with local government staff and relevant personnel in Tokyo and Miyakonojo City. CLAIR Sydney will continue to keep in contact and build friendly relationships with past and present participants of the Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar.

JETAA New Zealand Summit in Christchurch

On 18 to 19 January, representatives from three JETAA chapters in New Zealand assembled in Christchurch to attend the JETAA New Zealand Summit.

At the NZ Summit, which was held for the first time, each chapter gave a presentation on their recent activities, and CLAIR Sydney introduced recent approaches to the JET Programme and examples of other JETAA chapters' activities.

After the whole session, a group workshop was held to confirm the goals of JETAA and other general matters, as well as a lively discussion of views on future initiatives to achieve goals such as an increase in the number of JET Programme participants.



Each chapter's information and views were shared throughout, and it was a meaningful opportunity to strengthen cooperation between the chapters.

I hope that their activities will expand, and play increasingly important roles as bridges between Japan and New Zealand.

The Canterbury Region Sister City Forum

On 29 January, the Canterbury Region Sister City Forum, a regional conference of Sister Cities New Zealand, was held in Christchurch, New Zealand. There were approximately 40 attendees from government organisations and sister city committees at the conference. At the Forum, the Consul-General of the People's Republic of China in Christchurch and representatives from local governments in the region presented on their recent sister city activities, and discussions were held on various



sister cities related topics, such as how to engage the younger generations in sister city related activities.

CLAIR Sydney was also in attendance and gave a presentation on upcoming large-scale international sporting events, such as the Tokyo 2020 Olympics and Paralympics and the World Masters Games 2021 Kansai in Japan, and what these events mean from the perspective of sister cities in Japan.

We will continue to take every opportunity to promote Japanese initiatives and projects, and contribute to the further exchange between local governments in Oceania and Japan.



Support Activities for the Kansai Tourism Bureau



On 31 January, Ms ANDO Akemi, Deputy Secretary General; and Ms TAKAMATSU Rie, staff of the Policy Planning Office, from the Kansai Tourism Bureau visited the CLAIR Sydney office.

The Kansai Tourism Bureau is conducting research on the role of overseas destination management/marketing organisations (DMOs), and progressive approaches in areas such as organisational management. The delegation travelled to Australia to research the tourism strategies here in Australia.

The Kansai Tourism Bureau is considering formulating a medium to long-term vision to resolve challenges relating to inbound travels and organisational operations in the Kansai region. The Bureau would like to learn about the strategies and achievements from countries with an advanced tourism

sector, after which the Bureau will then utilise their learnings in their vision, and develop their own strategies for organisational activities. During their time in Australia, the delegation visited integrated resort construction sites in various locations, and had meetings with organisations such as Tourism Australia and Tourism and Events Queensland as part of the Bureau's research.

At the CLAIR Sydney office, CLAIR Sydney staff provided the delegation with information on Australia, and discussed inbound tourism to the Kansai region and effective promotion methods with the delegation.

The CLAIR Sydney office will continue to support the activities of Japanese local governments and other relevant organisations in promoting their regional local tourist destinations and experiences in Australia and New Zealand.

JETAA Auckland - JETAA NZ Summit

Over 18 to 19 January of this year, the JETAA South Island chapter hosted the first ever New Zealand JETAA Summit in Christchurch. This summit provided a valuable opportunity to exchange ideas, expertise and provided a forum where we could discuss and work on New Zealand-specific issues in depth. Hosting this event within New



Zealand also meant that more participants from each of the Auckland, Wellington, and South Island chapters were able to attend and share their ideas on issues concerning us.

Much of the summit was spent on workshops covering topics including Strategy, Engagement, and Event Organisation. The details covered were relevant to all of our chapters, and the takeaways from these workshops will no doubt prove valuable in guiding us in the year to come. CLAIR Sydney was also well represented by Mr Kikuta and Mr Handa, who gave an enlightening presentation showing the ongoing relevance of the JET programme, as well as CLAIR's efforts to support those who have completed their period on JET.

Interestingly, much of the time outside of the structured sessions was also spent discussing JET and Japan,



and problems common or specific to our chapters! Being able to freely interact and mingle with the other participants in the relaxing environment of the South Island created the perfect conditions for us to connect between our chapters, both socially and in the role of JETAA members. We look forward to seeing what these closer ties will allow us to do for the JET Programme and the New Zealand-Japan relationship in the near future.

From the Executive Director

- CLAIR Forum -

In recent years, CLAIR Sydney has organised the annual CLAIR Forum on issues relevant to local governments in Australia, New Zealand, and Japan in collaboration with UTS: IPPG (University of Technology Sydney: Institute of Public Policy and Governance). The CLAIR Forum is a one-day seminar held to provide an opportunity for Australian and New Zealand government officials and academics to exchange knowledge and ideas with peers on topics of mutual interest.

CLAIR Sydney hosted the 2019/2020 CLAIR Forum on 20th February 2020 at the Japan Foundation, Sydney. The theme of the 2019/2020 CLAIR Forum was 'Local Governments and Environmental Challenges'.

On behalf of all the staff of CLAIR Sydney, I would like to extend my thanks to all participants from UTS, academics, local governments, and other organisations including the Japan Foundation, Sydney which kindly provided the excellent venue. We owe the success of this special event to all the participants.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to work closely with organisations and institutions, such as UTS, to provide relevant and informative content relating to local governments in Australia, New Zealand, and Japan. CLAIR Sydney also aims to continue to research and learn about the current challenges and best practices of Australian and New Zealand local governments, and strengthen our relationships with local governments in Australia and New Zealand.