

Newsletter

Sep 2024

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DISCOVER

JAPAN

Welcome to
Oshu City

Oshu City is located in the southern inland region of Iwate Prefecture, with the Kitakami River flowing through its centre. On the western side of the river, there are great locations for residences surrounded by rich nature. The city is one of the leading agricultural areas in the prefecture, especially known for its rice, apples and wagyu beef.

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Welcome to Oshu City

The city is also famous as the hometown of Shohei Ohtani, a worldwide superstar in Major League Baseball (MLB).

The sister city exchange between Oshu City and Greater Shepparton began in 1979 through the effort of National Diet member Motoo Shiina, establishing a relationship between the former Esashi City and Shepparton. Over the past 45 years, there have been numerous citizen exchanges and student exchange programs.



Although there was a brief hiatus in the exchange due to the Great East Japan Earthquake and the pandemic, the bond between the two cities has never changed.

Oshu City made an official visit to Greater Shepparton for the first time in a while in 2023.



A sister city exchange agreement was renewed with the aim of deepening exchanges more than ever in various fields such as agriculture and education.

Additionally, the Mayor of Oshu City visited multiple Japanese food import and wholesale companies during their stay in Australia. The city made deals with a few companies regarding the sale of Oshu rice.

Now, Oshu rice is available in Australia. A strategic sales plan will be created with the cooperation of Greater Shepparton, based on the sister city exchange agreement.

The city hopes everyone falls in love with Oshu rice.



News from CLAIR Sydney

School Exchange Opportunities

To support cultural exchange between schools in Japan and Australia/New Zealand, CLAIR Sydney has a dedicated page on our website that lists schools in Japan that are interested in initiating cultural exchange with schools in Australia/New Zealand. Please click on the link or scan the QR code below for more information on the respective schools.

Should you be interested in a particular school, please get in touch with them!



[Schools interested in exchange opportunities - CLAIR Sydney \(jlgs.org.au\)](https://www.jlgs.org.au)



CLAIR Sydney August Activity Report

JET Programme Pre-Departure Orientation in Auckland (3 Aug)

We attended the Pre-Departure Orientation for 29 new JET participants, held by the Consulate General of Japan in Auckland on 3 August. During the orientation, a representative from the Consulate General congratulated the new JET participants and extended best wishes for their success in Japan. Following this, the staff provided important information on travel to Japan and necessary precautions. CLAIR Sydney staff members outlined CLAIR's role in the JET Programme, along with the training and support we offer to the participants.



Members of the JETAA chapter within the consular jurisdiction offered valuable insights on various aspects of life in Japan including the Japanese educational environment, tips for maintaining mental health, and advice on community involvement. They also introduced the wide range of activities JETAA engages in, fostering connections with the participants to establish strong relationships.

The new JET participants, who were just a day away from their departure, listened attentively throughout the orientation, demonstrating their dedication.

We hope these new JET participants will have wonderful experiences at their contracting organisations while enjoying their new lives in Japan. Moreover, we look forward to seeing them continue to serve as bridges between Japan and New Zealand even after the programme concludes.

For more information about the JET Programme, please visit the following link:

<https://www.facebook.com/clair.syd/posts/668799495432848>



Support Activities for Fukuoka Prefecture: Visit to New South Wales by the Fukuoka Delegation (4-7 Aug)

From 3 to 8 August, Fukuoka Prefectural Government delegation including the Governor of the Fukuoka Prefecture and the Chairman of Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly visited New South Wales.

Fukuoka Prefecture is working closely with the New South Wales Government, which includes Sydney, the economic and cultural centre of Australia in fields such as hydrogen industry, sports, and tourism.

The delegation participated in the Cowra Breakout 80th anniversary commemoration ceremony and laid wreaths at the Australian and Japanese War Cemeteries in Cowra to honour the victims of the Cowra Breakout.



Additionally, the delegation held discussions with NSW Government ministers, exchanged views with officials in NSW and the Sydney Fukuoka Kenjin Kai, hosted tourism and educational travel seminars, visited the Central Sydney Intensive English High School established by the NSW Government, and toured related

facilities in Newcastle, NSW's hydrogen hub.

CLAIR Sydney provided support such as pre-arrangements and accompanied the visit. We will continue to support the cooperation between Fukuoka and NSW so that it will progress further in the future.



Participating in the Cowra Breakout 80th Anniversary/Support Activities for Fukuoka Prefecture and Joetsu City in Niigata Prefecture (4 & 5 Aug)

From August 4 to 5, CLAIR Sydney participated in the commemorations for the 80th of Anniversary of the Cowra Breakout. During World War II, Cowra was the site of a prisoner-of-war camp operated by the Allied forces, where the Cowra Breakout, a mass escape of Japanese prisoners, occurred in the early hours of 5 August, 1944. This incident resulted in 235 casualties, including four Australian guards.

In the post-war years, Cowra has been a focal point for reconciliation between Japan and Australia, with numerous initiatives aimed at honouring the war victims from both nations. The town is now recognised as a symbol of post-war reconciliation, and it is also home to what is considered the largest Japanese garden in the Southern Hemisphere, attracting many visitors, especially during the cherry blossom season.

The memorial event, marking 80 years since the Cowra Breakout, was attended by many Japanese and Australian representatives who took part in various commemorative activities. It was particularly heartening to see students from both countries actively engaging in the ceremonies, symbolising the spirit of reconciliation and exchange for future generations.

Delegations from Japan, including the Governor of the Fukuoka Prefecture, the Chairperson of Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly, and the Deputy Mayor of Joetsu City, were present and participated in the memorial services. CLAIR Sydney provided comprehensive support to these delegations, including pre-visit arrangements, coordination, and scheduling of appointments. We remain committed to supporting grassroots exchanges between Japan and Australia to foster ongoing development in the future.



Support Activities for Ube City in Yamaguchi Prefecture: Year 7-9 High School Students (5 Aug)

On 5 August, a delegation of eight high school students from year 7-9, along with their teacher, and city hall staff from Ube City in Yamaguchi Prefecture, visited the CLAIR Sydney office as part of the Junior Global Training Programme. We delivered presentations tailored to the delegation's specific requests, sharing our current projects, experiences working in public sectors overseas, and work styles, among other topics. A staff member from the Japan National



Tourism Organisation (JNTO) also gave a presentation, providing insights into tourism expertise related to Japan from Australia and an overview of their work.

The students demonstrated clear motivations and goals for participating in this programme, impressing us with their dedication, diligently taking notes. They also had the opportunity to attend a local school and experience homestays in Newcastle, Ube City's sister city. We hope that their stay in Australia will offer them valuable opportunities to reflect on their future careers and create memorable experiences that will last a lifetime.

We are committed to continuously supporting the activities of Japanese local governments that aim to cultivate a global perspective among students.



The 20-year Anniversary Event of the Father Tony Glynn Japan-Australia Centre Gallery (7 Aug)

On Wednesday, 7 August, the 20-year anniversary event of the Father Tony Glynn Japan-Australia Centre Gallery was held. The Centre is located at the Lismore campus of Southern Cross University, New South Wales. CLAIR Sydney was invited by the university to participate in this event.

The City of Lismore, where the campus is located, is the hometown of Father Tony Glynn, who worked to promote reconciliation between Australia and Japan in the context of severe post-war anti-Japanese sentiment. The city has a sister city relationship with Yamatotakada City in Nara Prefecture, which is known as the first Japan-Australia sister city affiliation. Father Paul Glynn, whose elder brother is Father Tony Glynn, was deeply involved in the partnership.

The Centre was built through the efforts of Tazuko McLaren OAM of Southern Cross University, who was moved by the deep love of the brothers Glynn for Japan, and celebrates its 20th anniversary this year.



The commemorative event was attended by about 100 people from Australia and Japan. Many people who had been close to Father Tony Glynn visited from Nara Prefecture, Japan where he lived before his death. On the 30th anniversary of his death, the participants reminisced the personal character of the late Father and their memories of that time. All of them also deeply appreciated the good Australia-Japan relationship that exists today thanks to the efforts of Father Tony Glynn.



On the day of the event, five high school students from Yamatotakada were staying in Lismore as short-term exchange students. After the memorial function, they watched the film “The Railway of Love”, which documents the achievements of Father Tony Glynn. The students also exchanged views with Mrs McLaren on the history of Australia-Japan relations to date.

We express our gratitude once again to the brothers Father Tony and Father Paul Glynn and all those involved for their efforts over the years to promote exchange between Australia and Japan. We will continue to actively support sister city exchange activities.

For more information about the 20-year anniversary event of the Father Tony Glynn Japan-Australia Centre Gallery, please visit the following link:

<https://www.scu.edu.au/.../celebrating-20-years-of-the.../>

For more information about the brothers Father Tony and Father Paul Glynn, please visit the following link:

https://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/.../CGKiya_43newsE.pdf

Support Activities for Ikeda City, Osaka Prefecture (8 Aug)

On Thursday, 8 August, one high school student and one accompanying staff member from Ikeda City, Osaka, who visited Australia as part of a youth delegation program, visited the CLAIR Sydney office. Ikeda City conducts this program to help students learn about Launceston, Tasmania, their sister city, and to introduce Ikeda City as representatives of their hometown.

The CLAIR Sydney office provided a briefing on various aspects of Australia, including its culture and customs, and also shared information about Launceston. It was impressive to see the student and the accompanying staff actively asking questions with the purpose of maintaining and further developing the sister city relationship.

The CLAIR Sydney office will continue to support the activities of Japanese municipalities that nurture an international perspective in their students and promote sister city exchanges.



Support Activity for High School Students from Nagoya City (18-20 Aug)

From 12 to 21 August, a student exchange delegation consisting of 20 students from eight Nagoya municipal senior high schools, along with two teaching staff, visited Australia. The delegation spent most of their time in Sydney, which is Nagoya's sister city.

The visit aimed to strengthen the sister city ties between Nagoya and Sydney, through school exchanges. The students participated in various exchange activities and classes at high schools in Sydney and had the opportunity to experience homestays. Additionally, they attended a reception at Sydney Town Hall and visited Taronga Zoo, which is partnered with Nagoya's Higashiyama Zoo.

CLAIR Sydney played a vital role in organising appointments and providing support during the reception at Sydney Town Hall, the students' visits to local high schools, and their tour of Taronga Zoo.

CLAIR Sydney remains committed to supporting Japanese local governments in their sister city exchange activities in Australia.



Researching Trends of Local Authorities and Strengthening Networks at the Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) Conference (21-23 Aug)

The Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) 2024 Annual Conference, where mayors and councillors gathered, was held in Wellington, New Zealand (NZ), from 21 to 23 August.

At the opening, the Rt Hon Christopher Luxon, Prime Minister of NZ, called for concentrating budgets on the core functions of local governments and improving fiscal efficiency. However, local authorities argued that budget measures focused solely on efficiency are insufficient for maintaining population levels and attracting skilled individuals.

This year's conference, themed "localism," highlighted the challenges faced by local governments, including the need for infrastructure investment, particularly in aging water and sewer



systems, and the financial shortfalls caused by rising costs. The importance of strong collaboration with the central government was emphasised throughout the sessions.



At the CLAIR Sydney office booth, we introduced Japanese local governments that have sister city relationships with NZ and promoted the upcoming Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar scheduled for early December. Moreover, we gathered insights on local government trends in NZ and strengthened networks through exchanges of opinions with local government officials. We will continue to strive to deepen mutual understanding of local government trends in NZ and Japan through ongoing networking with local government officials.

MoU Signing Ceremony to Promote Exchanges between Ehime Cycling Life-Style Promotion Association and Bicycle NSW/Support Activities for Ehime Prefecture (22 Aug)

On Wednesday, 22 August, in Sydney, the MoU Signing Ceremony between the Ehime Cycling Life-Style Promotion Association and Bicycle NSW, along with the Ehime Prefecture Tourism Fair, took place. At the signing ceremony, Tokihiro Nakamura, the Governor of Ehime Prefecture, and Peter McLean, CEO of Bicycle NSW, signed a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at promoting exchanges between the areas centred around the Sydney Harbour Bridge and the Kurushima Kaikyō Bridge.



During the Ehime Prefecture Tourism Fair, presentations on Ehime's cuisine, cycling routes, and tourist attractions were given to local travel agencies and media. Additionally, the Ehime Sake Brewers Association hosted an event featuring explanations and tastings of sake produced in Ehime Prefecture.

The CLAIR Sydney office provided a briefing to Governor Tokihiro Nakamura and his six accompanying delegates, who visited Australia to participate in the event. The briefing covered an overview of Australia and insights gathered from local events in which our office participated, highlighting the positive responses regarding travel to Japan. A lively exchange of ideas took place, focusing on inbound tourism promotion.

During the discussions, the group introduced initiatives such as the "Cycling Shimanami," a cycling event set against the stunning backdrop of the Setouchi Shimanami Kaido. It is anticipated that the promotional activities carried out during this visit will further enhance the appeal of Ehime Prefecture in Australia.



The CLAIR Sydney will continue to support the overseas activities of Japanese local governments to capture inbound tourism demand.



Support Activity for Fukuoka Prefecture: Fukuoka Seminar and Japan Roadshow 2024 (26 & 29 Aug)

On 29 August, a tourism seminar hosted by the Fukuoka Prefecture Tourism Association was held in Sydney to promote the charm of [#Fukuoka](#)'s food and tourism. The seminar took place at [#Gogyo](#) Surry Hills, a restaurant operated



by IPPUDO AUSTRALIA, which is a Japanese ramen chain from the heart of Fukuoka Japan, and was attended by approximately 30 local travel agents.



Attendees had the opportunity to enjoy Fukuoka's famous tonkotsu ramen, local sake, and Yame green tea, while we effectively showcased the appeal of Fukuoka.

Prior to the seminar, on 26 August, we participated in Japan Roadshow 2024, a travel trade event hosted by JNTO, where we introduced Fukuoka's tourism resources to various travel agencies. The CLAIR Sydney office provided event support for this tourism seminar. We will continue to support initiatives aimed at increasing Fukuoka's recognition in Australia and attracting tourists to the region.

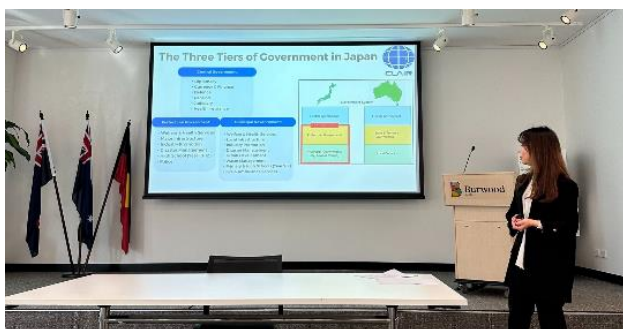


Our Visit to Burwood Council (27 Aug)

On 27 August, we visited Burwood Council following a kind invitation to learn about their operations. The General Manager and Directors from all departments provided us with an overview of the policies, structural systems, and work styles implemented at Burwood Council. They also gave us an onsite tour of the council and its surrounding facilities. We learned about their initiatives to provide services to the community in an interactive way and their efforts in placemaking to engage both the local community and visitors from outside the area.



We were impressed by the strong interactive relationship between the council and the community, as well as their strategic planning. In particular, the Burwood After Dark Strategy stood out to us as it aims to make Burwood a more attractive destination for businesses and the wider community by fostering a diverse and safe night-time economy.



A representative from the CLAIR Sydney office gave a presentation on the three tiers of the Japanese government system, our roles and projects. This provided Burwood Council with a deeper understanding of the Japanese system, which facilitated an active exchange of views on the differences between Australia and Japan.

This visit was an invaluable opportunity, providing us with many insights into Burwood Council's policies. We would like to extend our gratitude to everyone from Burwood council who participated.

We will continue to research the policies and strategies implemented in Australia and New Zealand, with the support from local organisations.



From the Executive Director

Applications for the Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar now open!

One of the major events CLAIR hosts is the Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar, which is an annual program to promote mutual understanding and forge an effective network between local governments in Japan and overseas.

In this seminar, CLAIR's overseas offices invite local government officials from their respective jurisdiction areas to visit Japan to learn about the current situation and challenges that are relevant to Japan's cities and regions.

Our next seminar will take place in Ube City, Yamaguchi Prefecture in December 2024. The theme of this seminar is "Tourism and Regional Revitalisation Efforts Utilising the UBE Biennale".

The UBE Biennale began as the first outdoor sculpture exhibition in Ube City in 1961, initiated by a citizens' movement to beautify the city and enrich its spiritual well-being after World War II. It has been held every two years for over the past 60 years since then. This outdoor sculpture exhibition, where visitors can view the latest works, is expected to attract approximately 100,000 visitors from Japan and abroad. More than 200 outdoor sculptures are installed in the city, making it one of the largest collections in Japan, and visitors encounter a wide variety of art on permanent display throughout the city, including in downtown areas and parks. On 26 March 2024, UBE Biennale was recognized by the Guinness World Records™ as the longest-running outdoor sculpture competition.

For further details of the seminar, please see the link below:

<https://www.jlgc.org.au/our-activities/the-local-government-exchange-cooperation-seminar/>



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