

Correspondence

Sendai, Where City and Nature Live Side-by-Side ~Date Masamune's Eternal Town~



Approximately 400 years ago, under the orders of Date Masamune, Lord of the Sendai Clan, a delegation was dispatched to Europe. This delegation is said to be the first Japanese one to cross the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans and reach the European continent.

Sendai was founded and named by Date Masamune in 1601, wishing for eternal development. Located Northeast of Tokyo, and a 1 hour and 30 minute journey by bullet train, Sendai has flourished as a financial, cultural and academic centre of the Tohoku region.

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Sendai has various events organised all year round. In spring, there is the Aoba Festival, that has a procession of samurai, taiko drums and where the sound of the flute can be heard echoing throughout the streets. In summer,

there is the multi-coloured, washi (Japanese paper) decoration-filled Tanabata Festival. Autumn sees the town enveloped in music, holding the Street Jazz Festival, whereas winter sees the night sky shine bright with the Pageant of Starlight.

Sendai, also known as the City of Trees, is famous for being a city that is comfortable to live in. While having the atmosphere of a city, you can feel the change of the seasons in the town centre with the sunlight filtering through the zelkova and ginkgo trees. In addition the arcade streets span out from the front of Sendai station so you can enjoy

shopping at your own pace without worrying about car traffic or bad weather.

Moreover due to the food connoisseur Date Masamune, a food culture also developed in this area. You can have your fill of seasonal foods raised in a rich, natural environment, and fresh seafood caught in the affluent fishing grounds of the Miyagi coast – all while enjoying fragrant local sake. At night, enjoying Japanese



food and sake in the restaurants and bars of the amusement district's

Kokubuncho, home to over 2000 restaurants, where the local Sendai people gather with their co-workers and friends, is highly recommended.



In the Sendai suburbs, surrounded by rich and prosperous nature, you can enjoy a diverse range of scenery in each and every season. From central Sendai, you can reach Akiu and Sakunami onsens (hot springs) in around 30 minutes. From Sakunami

monkeys! Yamadera, also known from one of the haiku poems composed by great poet Matsuo Basho, towers up a small mountain with a view of such magnificence and serenity that one can forget the passage of time.

onsen, there is a popular trekking course path which leads to Yamadera, a famous temple. Part way on said trek, there is a chance you may encounter

Furthermore, in the South of Sendai, Mount Zao stretches out brilliantly. It is here that the crater lake called Okama has been created by a volcanic eruption. It shines an emerald colour and emits a

mysterious aura. These, together with the frosty, ice and snow covered pine trees are symbolic of Zao. After enjoying trekking and skiing, one can relax and unwind in the onsen.



In addition, we cannot forget Matsushima, the first bay in Japan to be admitted to the Most Beautiful Bays in the World Club. The contrast of the small islands floating in the vast sea and the setting sun is truly

a beauty that takes the breath away – no wonder this view is considered to be one of the best three of Japan.



Sendai was named by Masamune, in hopes of eternal development. It sustained damage from the 2011 Great East Japan Earthquake but thanks to the support of everyone, the region has made great strides towards recovery and is restoring its previous energy. The will of Masamune, who 400 years ago had already turned his attention to the world beyond the seas, has been continuously inherited, giving Sendai a warm, hospitable attitude towards foreigners, eagerly awaiting their arrival.

We hope you come and learn about the Date family's history and enjoy the food culture, shopping and rich natural environment!

Time need to get from Sendai to various places (all times approximated):

- Matsushima – 30 mins (train)
- Akiu Onsen – 30 mins (car)
- Sakunami Onsen – 30 mins (train)
- Yamadera – 50 mins (train)
- (there is a trekking course between Sakunami and Yamadera)
- Zao – 1 hour (car)
- Hiraizumi (world heritage site) – 40 mins (train and bus)

Promoting Japan at the LGNZ conference

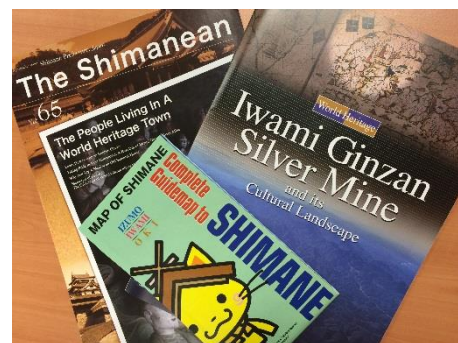
From 20 – 22 July, we attended the 2014 Local Government New Zealand (LGNZ) conference in Nelson, New Zealand. We promoted CLAIR's activities including Japanese tourism, this year's local government exchange seminar and sister city relationships between New Zealand and Japan.

Since we have not been to the conference for a while, it was a good opportunity for us to meet people at our exhibition booth and make a lot of contacts. We were very glad to talk to all the people who visited our booth. Thank you very much and we look forward to seeing you again and working with you in the future. Also, we are always happy to offer information on the Japanese local government system at New Zealand and Australian local government events.



Supporting Shimane Prefecture

Staffs from the Shimane Prefectural Government visited CLAIR Sydney's office for a briefing about exporting Japanese products and promoting them in Australia. Shimane Prefectural Government plans to export some products to expand its market. This Australian visit took place in Sydney as well as other areas. We expect them to sell a lot of attractive products that will captivate Australians' hearts.



Researching the legacy of Sydney Olympic and Paralympic Game

On 16 July, we visited the Sydney Olympic Park Authority (SOPH) to assist a staff from The Tokyo Organising Committee of the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. As a part of Tokyo metropolitan government's staff training, he also visited London (Summer Olympics 2012) and Vancouver (Winter Olympics 2010) to research on the legacies of the Olympic and Paralympic Games. He will finalise a report by December 2014 and it will be referred to the Plan of 2020 Tokyo Games that will be submitted to IOC. We will continuously research the legacy of Sydney Games for a successful 2020 Tokyo Games.



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International Art Exhibition for Artists with Disabilities in Tottori

This art exhibition is an event that showcases artworks created by Japanese and international artists with disabilities.

*Art allows people to demonstrate their potential and awakens our liberal sensibilities.
The exhibition is now accepting entries which display this kind of power.*



<Exhibition Period>

From 25 October to 3 November 2014

<Venue>

Tottori Prefectural Museum

<Host>

**The Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare,
Tottori Prefecture, and Tottori City**

<Entry Period>

From 1 August 1 to 22 September 2014

For the details of the exhibition and entry, please refer below:



[Flyer](#)



[Entry Guideline](#)



[Entry Form](#)

Contact

14th National Arts and Culture Festival for Persons with Disabilities in Tottori

International Art Exhibition for Artists with Disabilities Secretariat (Nihonkai Shinbun Project Division)

Address: 2-137 Tomiyasu, Tottori City, Tottori Prefecture 680-8688

Fax: +81-857-21-2891/ Email: kokusaiart@14geibunsai.jp

Website: <http://www.14geibunsai.jp/> (in Japanese)

※Please make inquiries by fax or email only.

New JET participants leave for Japan

Many young Australians and New Zealanders left for Japan at the end of July and early August respectively. They are the participants taking part in this year's Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Farewell receptions were held at the end of July and we attended some of them to encourage the new JETs. We wish them best of luck and hope that they further

develop ties between Australia, New Zealand and Japan, and have a memorable experience in Japan.

They are working as Assistant Language Teachers (ALT) or Coordinators for International Relations (CIR) in Japanese prefectures, cities, towns and villages.

For more information regarding the JET programme, visit <http://www.jetprogramme.org/>



Supporting Sister City related activities

Manly City and Odawara City, Kanagawa Prefecture

From 28 to 29 July, we supported Odawara City delegates' visit to their friendship city, Manly. The cities started their mutual exchange program called "*Tokimeki* International School" 24 years ago. This time, 16 students and 4 chaperones joined the program and the students stayed at their host families' houses whose children visited Odawara in early July. Through a study tour, the Odawara delegate visited North Head Sanctuary to see some Australian Army facilities that were used during World War II and learn about history of the Australia-Japan relationship.



Hurstville City and Shiroishi City, Miyagi Prefecture

On 28 July, we attended a special dinner organised by Hurstville City Council to welcome the visiting exchange students from their sister city, Shiroishi City in Japan. The cities conduct mutual students exchange program every year and, 10 students and 2 chaperones visited this year from Shiroishi. During the dinner, the students shared some words to express their (as well as Shiroishi City Council and Japan) appreciation of support at the time of the Great East Japan Earthquake in March 2011. They showed off some Japanese traditional clothing, all while working on their English as well.



JETAA Queensland Activities

~Photos and article from JETAA Queensland~

Hi from the JETAA Queensland committee and Cultural Consul Mr. Shusaku Hirashima!

We'd like to share some highlights from our year so far.



January: 2014 Oshogatsu Dinner

The first JETAA event of the year was our ever-popular Oshogatsu Dinner at Nonbei Sake Bar and BBQ in Fortitude Valley. About 20 members, family and friends attended for an evening of great food and conversation. Cries of “oishii” and “natsukashii” reverberated around the table as people rediscovered flavours they had enjoyed so much during their time in Japan.

Our special event for the evening (besides the food) was in celebration of the Year of the Horse. Each person randomly chose the name of a horse that had won the Melbourne Cup over the last couple of centuries, including legends such as Archer, Carbine and Phar Lap, for the chance to win some prizes.



February: Hana wa Saku: a 1000 flowers will bloom project



On Sunday 16 February, a group of JETAA members, family and friends participated in the One Million People's Flowers Will Bloom project. We sang "Hana wa Saku" for NHK to help spread the message about recovery from the Great East Japan Earthquake of March 2011.

The crew from NHK were in Queensland filming a documentary about disaster recovery after the floods of 2011 in the lead up to third anniversary of the Tohoku disaster. The song, "Hana wa Saku", was written by

composer Yoko Kanno and director Shunji Iwai as an outreach to the victims of the disaster and people throughout the world are encouraged to send in videos of their performances to NHK to show their support.

We decided to sing the Japanese version for our performance. The day was both exciting and emotional as we took turns in small groups to sing different parts of the song. The final performance as a group in the acoustic of City Hall allowed our massed voices to bloom beautifully.

Our performance is available to view on the NHK website along with many other submissions from around the world:

http://www.nhk.or.jp/japan311/flowers/video/australia_5_0430.html#video

A big thank you to NHK Japan and Brisbane City Council for organising the event and for the opportunity to be part of such a fantastic project!

March: The University of Queensland Careers Fair



Every year, JETAA QLD organises a booth at a careers fair to promote the JET Programme

to prospective graduates. This year we were at the University of Queensland and were ably assisted by Melissa Lawler from the Consulate-General of Japan and Hiromi Hakuta from CLAIR.

A steady stream of students dropped by the booth for information on the programme and to pick up some of the pamphlets and other goodies that CLAIR had provided. We have been promoting the programme at

UQ for a few years now and we are noticing an increasing number of international students wanting information on applying for JET. This year, enquiries from international students, especially from China, far outnumbered those from Australian citizens and we were scrambling to dig up relevant information for them. It's great that there is so much enthusiasm for the programme but we will need to be better prepared in future to provide more specific information for overseas citizens, most of whom must apply through the Japanese embassies in their home countries.



June: JET Pre-departure workshops

We had the opportunity to meet the new JET participants in the pre-departure workshops held at the Consulate-General of Japan during June and July. Around 40 participants were selected for departure from Brisbane this year – close to double the usual number! Many of them had lived in Japan previously as exchange students or had been on JET.

The first night was a Q&A session with ex-JETs and consulate staff covering everything from school life to driver's licences and bank accounts. Afterwards we retired for a nijikai at Nagomi by the Brisbane River for a chance to discuss the programme more informally. Follow-up workshops on team teaching, Japanese language and culture were led by JETAA members with

invaluable input from consulate staff.

A final farewell reception was hosted



by the Consul-General Ms. Yoko Yanigasawa on 23 July. By now this year's JET participants will be settling into their new lives in towns and cities from Kyushu to Hokkaido. We wish them all the very best on their impending adventures and when they decide to return to Queensland, we look forward to sharing all the memories and special moments they bring back with them.

Introducing Our New Interns



John Bono Corleto

My name is John Bono Corleto, a student from the University of Sydney studying Marketing, International Business and Japanese. I have had many valuable experiences in Japan, however, my involvement in JENESYS 2.0 in particular, a cultural exchange program involving participants from Southeast Asia and Oceania, greatly shaped my outlook and motivated me to seek work experience at CLAIR. In that program I learned that every nation and every district or prefecture within it has unique characteristics and strengths as a result of the passion of its residents- passion that manifests itself in unique forms of art, dance, handicraft, language and humor.

Accordingly, I have become aware of the differences between Japan, Australia and New Zealand in terms of history, business as well as societal dynamics. I recognise that this diversity, if harnessed and communicated, can enrich these countries. I believe that the best way to do this is to foster tolerance and a hunger for knowledge about other ways of living- a spirit of multiculturalism. I am sure that I will develop personally at CLAIR given the welcoming office environment and dedication of the staff. I am also looking forward to learning as much as I can as well as contributing to the best of my ability to CLAIR's goal of bridging Australia, New Zealand and Japan.



Sijin Yang

Hello, my name is Sijin Yang, and I have been an intern at CLAIR since the beginning of August. I am currently studying Law and Arts majoring in Japanese, and am keenly interested in the international relationship that exists between Australia and Japan. In the future, I hope to use the skills that I have learned at university and also at CLAIR to effectively contribute to Australian and Japanese relations.

In 2010, I stayed with a host family in Hiroshima for two weeks, and it was undoubtedly a life changing experience. Visiting locations such as the site of the detonation of the atomic bomb and the Memorial Museum was an extremely powerful and sobering experience, and awakened in me a desire to know the Japanese people better.

As a result, being able to work alongside other people with the same passion to see the relationship between Australia and Japan mature and develop into more than simply being an economic relationship has been a great privilege and honour. Working towards a future where Australia and Japan might understand and appreciate the complexities of one another's culture and tradition is something that I want to be a part of, and am very thankful for the opportunity to get a taste of what the future holds.

Working as an intern at CLAIR has been an amazing experience thus far; with very friendly staff and a warm atmosphere, it has been a joy to research new things and learn as a result, and I believe that it will continue to be amazing.

From The Director

Government's role for recovery from a disaster

Last month, I joined the speed talk sessions at the Institute of Public Administration Australia NSW Conference and made a brief presentation about how government and citizens have worked together to recover from the disaster of 11 March 2011.

The 2014 IPAA NSW conference focused on the theme of *Transforming our future: the changing face of the Public Sector*. The program opened with an exploration of the mega trends that will shape society's future and then explored the international and national perspectives on public sector reform. The speed talk sessions have been designed to present a provocative perspective on how citizens and government work together to shape society. In my presentation, I emphasised that for recovery from a disaster, citizens and the private sector must play a leading role. The Government's role is to develop a well organised road map, to



coordinate the recovery process, to appoint duties to appropriate parties, to provide necessary support, to scrap red tape and above all to work together with the people to lift the dampened spirits. I hope my presentation helped the attendees understand that the collaboration between the government and citizens is the key to recovery from a disaster.

<http://www.ilgc.org.au/about-japan/1110-2/>