



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

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2012 Nara Candle Festival in Canberra



On 27 October, CLAIR Sydney lent support to Nara city at the “Nara Candle Festival” in Canberra. Nara and Canberra have fostered a close sister city relationship since 1993.

We promoted Nara city and Japanese tourism to festival attendees. The Japanese embassy introduced examples of Japanese culture, such as “Shuji” (Japanese calligraphy) and “Mochitsuki”. “Mochitsuki” involves using a mortar (“kine” in Japanese) and pestle (“usu”) to pound rice. After pounding the rice, the Japanese embassy presented

the “mochi” (sticky rice cake). Of course, visitors were delighted, and enjoyed the lovely taste of this Japanese sweet.

In addition, CLAIR staff supported JETAA, rolling up their sleeves and assisting with cooking and selling dumplings; they truly looked like good dumpling master chefs.

After sunset, the lantern lighting ceremony was held.

The atmosphere was fantastic.

Next year will be the twentieth anniversary of the Sister City relationship between Canberra and Nara.

We hope Canberra and Nara will continue their strong relationship, and that next year’s festival will also be a success.



Japan Expo and Matsuri in Sydney 2012

We are sure that like Japanese people, Australians love festivals – in the spirit of love of festivals, let’s all visit “Japan Expo and Matsuri in Sydney 2012”!

We will have exhibition stalls featuring Japanese food, Japanese tourism, and various stage performances such as Yosakoi Soran (Japanese dance), Yukata (Japanese traditional clothes) competition, COOL JAPAN etc.

Date: December 15th, 2012 (Saturday)

Venue: Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour, Sydney NSW 2000



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LGAQ and LGA NSW

In October 2012, CLAIR, Sydney participated in the annual conferences of LGAQ and LGA NSW both as delegates and as a sponsor.

At the conferences, we promoted the Japanese local government system, Japanese tourism, and sister city relationships among other things. We also met many people at our exhibition booth and made a lot of contacts. We were happy to talk to all the people who visited our booth. Many thanks, and we hope to maintain good relations into the future.

We are always happy to offer information on the Japanese local government system at Australian local government events, especially by way of presentations from our director.



LGAQ (Brisbane)
22-25th October 2012



LGA NSW (Dubbo)
28-30th October 2012



New Staff

Petar Rajic

Hi, I'm Petar Rajic, born and raised in Sydney/Canberra. After studying at the ANU and experiencing life as an exchange student at Yokohama National University and Tokyo's Hitotsubashi University, I spent just under three years as a researcher at the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO) in Sydney before joining CLAIR as a Research and Liaison Officer in October 2012; the same month, I graduated from the University of Sydney with a master's degree in International Business and Law.

I have a particular interest in Australian public policy, and the effect those policies have on employment and economic growth. My work at CLAIR will no doubt assist me to more deeply understand the many opportunities and challenges local and state governments tackle here in Australia.

In my spare time, I enjoy cycling, scenic driving and exploring the many kinds of food and drink that places I travel through have on offer.

Wakayama products business meeting in Sydney

On 18 October, Wakayama prefecture held a meeting to promote Wakayama products at JETRO Sydney (Japan External Trade Organisation). CLAIR supported this meeting to promote Japanese local products with Japanese local government. Here are some examples of products from Wakayama companies:

1. Specialised blended rice

The aim is to blend the rice to make it optimal for specific purposes, such as for Japanese, Western and Chinese cuisine, sushi, lunchboxes and other uses.



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2. Ume-shu, plum wine

Wakayama is famous for plums. One of Wakayama's *sake* makers is trying to promote *ume-shu* in the Australian market, particularly in Sydney and Melbourne. It tastes like dessert wine, but with a lighter sweetness.



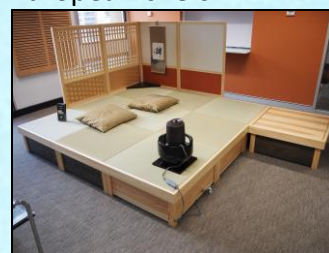
3. Highest quality bonito-stock flavored vinegar

You can use it as a *dashi* flavour dressing. Nowadays, these vinegars are available worldwide, and are widely used by European chefs.



4. Flexible "tatami" rooms,

One of Wakayama's furniture makers is producing a new Japanese style room whose shape and size can be freely changed to suit the installation layout. You can put this in a space where people can meet and enjoy the Japanese atmosphere.



5. New type of dry cleaning machine

The owner of a dry cleaning shop has developed a new machine that contributes to a reduction in environmental load and operation costs. It is already available in many countries.

If you are curious about such products, more details are available at the link below.

Please click here: [Wakayama products](#).

Currently, many Japanese local governments are actively promoting their local products to the world. In the near future, you might find a lot more Japanese regional products in your everyday shopping.

Australian market research from Kochi prefecture



The Kochi Prefecture local government makes strong efforts to promote exports. Kochi's local producers already export to China, Singapore and France; Australia is now a potential export market, too.

From 8 to 12 October, two officials from Kochi Prefecture visited Australia for market research, finding that Kochi's local food and sake would do well if exported to Australia.

Carrying out their research in Sydney and Melbourne, they visited Japanese food import companies, then did field research on prices and product ranges at major retailers.

Japanese food importers briefed them on the Australian market, import restrictions, and the general market awareness of Japanese food here.

Australian food import regulations are very strict, raising costs for importers. Nevertheless, thanks to economic growth spanning over twenty years, Australians' buying power is very strong; if something is good and of high quality, it is very likely that consumers will purchase it.

Next year, if their promotion and exports succeed, we'll be able to enjoy very delicious Japanese local food here in Australia!





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Internship (By Shinji Tagashira, Assistant Director)



I was fortunate enough to be accepted for an Internship to Melville City in Western Australia from 2 to 5 October, gaining invaluable Australian Local Government staff experience. In addition, I conducted research on the Australian local government finance system for my CLAIR Report due later this year.

Melville City is a part of Greater Perth, the city by the Swan River, with a population of about 100,000 and growing. Balancing population growth and environmental protection, and receiving support from the regional community, Melville is continuing housing land development.

On the first day, I attended training for new staff, learning about the council and its operations. In the evening, I was allowed to attend a council meeting, which ran until 10pm. Councillors heard about some issues from staff, and held serious discussions on some agenda items.

The next day, I heard about local government finance from the CEO, council staff and councillors. They told me about their strategic community plan, including annual budget process. They were also kind enough to show me in detail their long term budget plan, relating to policy implementation, and major construction and maintenance projects. The information I received was very useful for my research for the CLAIR Report.

On the third day, I heard about the council's urban plan, for example, the Western Australian state government's plans for building a hospital in the Melville City area. I got to see the progress of the hospital's construction, as well as buildings looked after by the council.



My final day was spent analysing all the valuable information I had received thus far, and receiving a briefing on the council meeting cycle, including councillors' remuneration and penalties for non-attendance of council meetings.



I wish to express my deep thanks to Melville City Council for accepting me for this Internship. For their assistance during my time there, I express my appreciation and thanks to Mayor Russell Aubrey, Chief Executive Officer Dr. Shayne Silcox, Director of Corporate Services Mr. Martin Tieleman and the warm assistant staff of the City of Melville.

Lockyer Valley Council visit



On 26 October, 2012, we went to the Lockyer Valley, one of the most fertile agricultural regions in Australia, to visit the relocation area and disaster monitoring centre.

On 10 January, 2011, the Lockyer Valley region experienced unprecedented flooding that caused death, destruction and horror. After the flood, the council held some community workshops and developed a master plan for land swap and relocation to the hills. Around 70% of people in the flood zone took part in the land swap.

We are writing a report on how an emergency management system in Australia could be of some help for Japanese local governments who are in the process of reviewing their management system.



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From the Director: Multicultural society and Japanese local governments

Japan's society is becoming more culturally diverse as the number of foreign residents increases. The foreign population living in Japan exceeded two million as of 2011. Among so-called "newcomers" who came to Japan during and after the 1970s, there are some who do not understand the Japanese language, and various problems arise as a result of having difficulty communicating in Japanese.

Looking at the trends regarding continued globalization and Japan's declining population, policies concerning foreign residents are no longer just applicable to some local governments, but are becoming a national issue.

Local governments are at the forefront of public policy related to this demographic shift. It is becoming increasingly important for them to be able to offer appropriate community services for their foreign residents.

Because of this, we define the concept of various nationalities and races building relationships centered on equality and recognition of each others' different cultures, and coming together in the same local community of society, as "multicultural coexistence." Local governments across the country are working to push forward policies to promote this.

CLAIR Tokyo plays an important role as the information centre for multiculturalism and provides resources to assist local governments in this process. We are also researching advanced multicultural policies in Australia. For more information on our role in relation to multiculturalism and assisting local governments, please see: <http://www.clair.or.jp/e/multiculture/index.html>

Every year, we organize an official multiculturalism study tour around Sydney area for Japanese local government officers and staff. This year, we are expecting about eight officers and staff to participate in the study tour from 19 to 24 November.

The purpose of the delegation's visit is to research multiculturalism, and to view first-hand, services for migrants of different backgrounds in Australia. Over the study tour, the delegation will be visiting various NSW government departments such as the Community Relations Commission, Department of Education and Communities, a public school, and city councils such as Hurstville and Fairfield.

I hope it will be an invaluable experience for the delegation to learn about Australia's multicultural services and programs. Thanks to the cooperation of NSW government, councils, and volunteer groups, we now have a lot of research reports on Australian multiculturalism that are very useful for Japanese local governments. Again, I thank all of the agencies which have accepted our delegations in the past and provided us useful information. Next time we would like to visit your council.



*2011 multiculturalism study tour at
Auburn City Council*