



Correspondence



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Australia – Japan Partner for Tourism Exchange 2013

Hiroshima Prefecture



VISIT HIROSHIMA!

In this issue, we would like to introduce “Hiroshima” which is the hometown of Ms. Misa Hirasawa, one of our new staff members.

Hiroshima Prefecture is located in the southwestern part of the Japanese islands. It is rich in the natural beauty of the Inland Sea and the Chugoku Mountains, with rivers, valleys, and plains that characterise Japan's landscape.



Hiroshima is famous for having TWO world heritage sites: the Itsukushima Shrine, and the Hiroshima Peace Memorial (Atomic Bomb Dome). They are only 20 km away from each other, so you can visit these famous spots during a short stay!



Itsukushima Shrine



**Hiroshima Peace Memorial
(Atomic Bomb Dome)**



Cyclists in front of Shimanami Kaido

In addition to these popular tourism destinations, Hiroshima has one of the most popular cycling courses in Japan. Have you ever heard of the bridge between mainland Japan and the Shikoku region, which is called “Setouchi Shimanami Kaido”? This bridge is approximately 70km long, and can be crossed by bicycle. If you ride a bicycle across the bridge, you can feel the sea breeze, see the calm sea and beautiful islands, and feel relaxed.

Of course, you don't have to worry about bringing a heavy bicycle. You can rent a bicycle at many places! Do you have any interest in Hiroshima? If so, please access this site! <http://visithiroshima.net/> Also, Hiroshima Prefectural office has a Facebook page. Please check it out!



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

Messages from Our New Staff



Hiromi Hakuta,
Assistant
Director

Hello, my name is Hiromi Hakuta. You can call me Hiro. I'm from a town called Shikaoi in Hokkaido, Japan. Shikaoi is famous for agriculture and tourism, especially dairy farming and the annual Snow Festival. The population of Shikaoi is only 6,000 people, so it is a very small town. If you would like to learn more about Shikaoi, please visit our website!

<http://www.town.shikaoi.lg.jp.e.bu.hp.transer.com/kankou/>

I heard that a lot of Australians like visiting Hokkaido to enjoy skiing and snowboarding! I recommend you to visit Shikaoi in Hokkaido.

This is my first time to live outside of Japan, I'm going to stay in Sydney with my wife and daughter for 2 years. We are very excited about that. I'm looking forward to meeting lots of people at work and during my free time as well. I'm hoping to learn a lot from a great country like Australia and I'd like to tell everyone about Japan in exchange.



Misa Hirasawa,
Assistant
Director

Hello, my name is Misa Hirasawa, and I'm from Hiroshima Prefecture in Japan. I will be staying in Sydney for two years from this April. This is my first time living overseas, so I am excited to have the opportunity to experience life in a different country and learn about another culture. I am looking forward to meeting many people here through my job and my hobby of playing the violin.

Since Australia is a multicultural society, I will be able to come across many diverse cultures from all around the world here. Specifically, I've been told about the Sydney Festival, which is the largest art festival in Australia. I am looking forward to going to this event as one of Sydney's residents.

I'd like to introduce my hometown of Hiroshima to people who live in Australia and New Zealand during my two years at CLAIR Sydney. It is rich in the natural beauty of the Inland Sea and the Chugoku Mountains. I understand Australia's culture is also strongly influenced by the environment, and I am very eager to learn more about this during my stay here.



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)



**Yumi Tsutaki,
Office
Administrator**

My name is Yumi and I have been working here at Japan Local Government Centre as an Office Administrator from the end of March. I am very excited about my new role and appreciate the opportunity to be able to work for such an organisation that supports the development of relationships between Japanese local government and those of Australia and New Zealand.

I have been living in Sydney since 2000. I am very fortunate to be able live in such a wonderful city. I was born and raised in Nagano, Japan, which is known for its beautiful mountains and great nature. Nagano is also famous for skiing and hot springs. I hope you have the chance to visit my beautiful hometown of Nagano one day.

Lastly, I look forward to meeting new people and learning a lot about our activities through my work.

Thank you.

2013 Sister Cities New Zealand (SCNZ) Conference in Tauranga

This year, the SCNZ Conference was held in Tauranga from 13 - 15 March. We attended this conference and our Director made a speech about "[CLAIR Sydney's Role in Sister City Relationships between New Zealand and Japan](#)". The main theme of the conference was how to promote sister city relationships from an economic perspective. The key words seemed to be "collaboration" and "cooperation". Many of the speakers at the conference emphasised these two things. We hope the sister city relationships between New Zealand and Japan will continue to move forward and be successful in the future, as more Asian countries are growing and becoming a source of competition for Japan.

The SCNZ Annual General Meeting was also held at the conference, and Hiromi Morris, the former Vice President of SCNZ, was appointed to the position of President. We look forward to keeping in touch with SCNZ and working with them on future endeavours.





Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

Assistance with Academic Research on Australia's Refugee and Asylum Seeker Policy

In the first half of March 2013, CLAIR Sydney had the honour of assisting Professor Yoshikazu Shiobara of Keio University's Faculty of Law with his research into Australia's refugee and asylum seeker policy, particularly relating to children.



The professor met with officials from the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) in Canberra, New South Wales State Government departments and associated agencies, as well as many non-government organisations and local groups advocating for refugee and asylum seeker rights. DIAC also assisted Professor Shiobara's field research with a tour of the Villawood Immigration Detention Centre.

We thank all government departments, agencies, organisations and community groups for their kind assistance with the professor's research.

Support services: Visiting the NSW Electoral Commission

(11-15 March)

On 15 March, 2013, we accompanied Professor Hiroaki Inatsugu, from Waseda University, to a meeting with the NSW Electoral Commission. Mr Colin Barry, the NSW Electoral Commissioner, met with us and explained the Electoral Commission's history, the Electoral Commission's role in local government elections, the routine procedures which take place on Election Day, responsibilities of the Electoral Commissioner, and other aspects of the electoral system in NSW.

Having previously served as the Commissioner for the Victorian Electoral Commission, Mr Barry was able to provide us some information about the electoral system in Victoria as well. His extensive experience and knowledge allowed us to learn about electoral system in NSW and at the local government level from several points of view.





Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

Through our visit, we noticed that there are many differences between the electoral system in Japan and that of Australia. For example, in Australia, voting is compulsory, including in local government elections. Also, in NSW, candidates are allowed to campaign on Election Day.

In addition to the NSW Electoral Commission, we arranged visits to the Australian Electoral Commission (Canberra), Australian National University, and the New Zealand Electoral Commission (Wellington) for Professor Inatsugu as part of our support services. He was able to gather a lot of information for his research project. Many thanks to all those who helped make his visit a success.

The Japan Sister Cities Forum in WA



On 22 March, the Japan Sister Cities Forum was held at the official residence of Mr. Ishikawa, Consul-General of Japan, Perth. The Director of CLAIR, Mr. Yasuhiko Tanabe, attended the event and made a presentation about the sister city relationships between Japan and Australia.

The state of West Australia has a sister state relationship with Hyogo prefecture, and nine cities within the state have sister city relationships with ten Japanese cities.

The participants discussed the strategic objectives for WA sister city relationships with Japan, the future of sister city programs, and how to measure the success of sister city programs. The forum was very meaningful for the participants to exchange their views about strengthening the sister city relationships between Japan and WA.



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

Interviews for the Film Commission

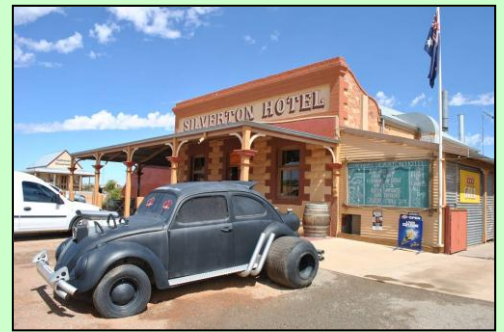


We will be publishing an article about our research on the film commission in our magazine, CLAIR Forum, which is issued to Japanese local governments, authorities, and institutions.

We went to Wellington in New Zealand and Broken Hill in NSW to interview representatives from the respective film commissions. These two cities are famous for filming, so it was great to be able to learn about the film industry in that type of environment.

As a result of these interviews and our research into the topic, we were able to acquire a lot of information that will be useful for Japanese local governments in relation to their plans to boost the development of the film industry.

We would like to acknowledge everyone who met with us during the interviews and made this opportunity possible for us. Thank you for your time and assistance.





Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR Sydney)

From The Director: 40th Anniversary of the sister city relationship between Japan and New Zealand

Last month, I attended the Sister Cities New Zealand 2013 Annual Conference and had the opportunity to make a presentation about CLAIR Sydney's role in sister city relationships between New Zealand and Japan.

In my presentation, I emphasised the year 1973 which was when the first sister city relationship was established between New Zealand and Japan. This means 2013 is the 40th anniversary of the sister city relationship between Christchurch and Kurashiki city in Okayama prefecture. For 40 years, these two cities have engaged in cultural exchange, sports exchange, student exchange, and thus developed a successful grassroots relationship.

At the time of the earthquake in Christchurch, the people of Kurashiki raised donations for the victims and dispatched fire fighters to support the rescue and recovery efforts.

When the major earthquake happened in Japan, sister cities in New Zealand offered warm-hearted support to the Japanese people. Earthquakes often occur in the two countries. We have helped each other and recovered from the hardships. The disasters are unfortunate, but the disasters have made the two countries' bond stronger.

We now have 41 sister city relationships with New Zealand local governments. To mark 40 years, CLAIR will be promoting sister city relationships all throughout this year

