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## Local Cuisine around Japan: Vol.25

Written by Joetsu, Niigata prefecture

Joetsu is located in the southwest of Niigata prefecture, and is surrounded by an abundance of stunning nature such as mountains, sea and vast stretches of land. The region is conveniently located only two hours from Tokyo by bullet train, just an hour and a half from Niigata airport by car, or one hour and forty minutes from Toyama airport, so getting there is a breeze.

Although well known for its delicious rice and seafood, this time we'd like to introduce Joetsu's sake. Joetsu's rice and water, and high altitude combined create the perfect conditions for high quality sake production. Currently, there are twelve breweries located within the town, and they are frequently enjoyed by tourists on sake tours.



But sake isn't the only drawcard for Joetsu- the city is also home to the Iwanohara Vineyard, founded in 1890 by Zenbei Kawakami, who is renowned as the 'Father of Japanese Wine'. Here in Joetsu, you can savour wine produced using the Muscat Bailey-A red wine grape hybrid, a wine grape that was developed by Kawakami himself and is considered to be one of the country's top varieties. The Muscat Bailey-A achieved a place on the International Organisation of Wine and Vine list of registered varieties (OIV) in 2013. Iwanohara Vineyard also offer visits and tours of the winery, and we would highly recommend a visit to both the Iwanohara Stone Storehouse No. 1, the oldest wine storehouse in Japan, and the warehouse with the second longest history of usage as a wine storehouse, the Iwanohara Stone Storehouse No. 2.

In October every year, the Echigo Kenshin Sake Festival is held in Takada Honcho's shopping district, Joetsu. The festival is a popular event where you can try a wide range of sake and wine produced in Joetsu region's very own breweries and wineries. Approximately 100,000 guests attend over the course of the two-day event. If you're a fan of sake and wine, don't miss the opportunity to get your fill of Joetsu's finest locally-produced alcohol at this incredible festival!



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## JETAA Oceania Conference

On 6-7 October, representatives from all JETAA chapters in the Oceania region got together in Perth to attend the Oceania Conference. The conference is held annually for all chapters to update the other JETAA Oceania chapters on their recent activities, and to share ideas and discuss any challenges they are facing. In the conference, representatives from each chapter made a presentation about their initiatives that contributes to promoting Sister Cities relationship interactions and other cultural exchanges with Japan, and provided plenty of advice and encouragement to chapters to be more active. Also, the Executive Consultant of CLAIR's Tokyo Headquarters, Mr. Hiroaki Isobe, attended this year's conference and made a presentation on the current situation and prospects of the JET Programme. During the conference, the chapters further strengthened their ties with one another through different workshops and conference activities to promote their own chapter's activities. We thank the JETAA chapters for their ongoing key roles as bridging Japan and the Oceania region at a grassroots level, and we look forward to supporting them in future.



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# Support activities for students from Ibaraki Prefecture



On October 9, six high school students from Meikei High School in Ibaraki Prefecture came to our office after a farm stay in Bowral in New South Wales. Mr Takanori Tanimoto, Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney gave a presentation that included an outline of Australia, CLAIR Sydney's activities, and Mr Tanimoto's personal experiences before he started working in Sydney. There were various questions from the students, which highlighted their interests in other countries. We hope that the students'

experience in Australia becomes a great memory and encourages them to pursue their goals in life to the best of their abilities.

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## Annual Multicultural Seminar

CLAIR Sydney's annual Multicultural Seminar was held this year on 15-20 October.

Every year, we organise an official multicultural seminar for Japanese local government staff members and regional international exchange association employees. This year, eight delegates travelled from Japan, where they work in a variety of organisations, education institutions and local government authorities, to come to Sydney and learn about Australia's best practices and policies in regard to multiculturalism and the provision of services to a culturally and linguistically diverse population. We were also honoured to have the Executive



Director of CLAIR's Tokyo Headquarters, Mr Kenji Saegusa, in attendance.

The delegation visited and exchanged information and ideas with ten organisations, including the Cumberland Council and Multicultural NSW to hear about the wonderfully multicultural population in their respective local areas, and their various services, infrastructure, policies and practices. CLAIR Sydney would like to extend our thanks to all participating organisations who kindly hosted us.



We expect that the Multicultural Seminar gave the delegates plenty to consider for their own work in policy planning and service provision in Japan.



The delegation visited the following organisations:

- Cumberland Council
- Sydney Local Health District
- NSW State Emergency Service - Bankstown Unit
- University of New South Wales
- Community Migrant Resource Centre (NPO)
- Multicultural NSW
- NSW Department of Education
- Chatswood Intensive English Centre
- Advance Diversity Services (NPO)
- Ethnic Community Services Co-operative (NPO)



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## Support activities for City of Nagoya promotion at The Armageddon Expo, Auckland 2018

The Armageddon Expo 2018 was held on 19-22 October at the ASB Showground in Auckland, New Zealand. This event is well known as one of the biggest pop culture events in New Zealand, and was attended by many cosplayers who dressed up as different Japanese anime and video game characters.

CLAIR Sydney was also at the event at the request of the City of Nagoya to promote Nagoya tourism destinations and cuisine at the booth run by the Consulate-General of Japan in Auckland. We also promoted the World Cosplay Summit, an international cosplay event held in Nagoya every year for fans of Japanese anime and manga.

Many event attendees visited the booth and explained that they first became interested in Japan through Japanese anime and manga. We were happy to see them collect many brochures and hear them express their desire to visit Japan someday.





We, CLAIR Sydney, would like to continue our support for Japanese local governments in their efforts in promoting tourism destinations through manga and anime as a new form of regional appeal.

## Support activities for Sannohe town, Aomori prefecture

On Friday 19 October, a group of junior high school students and teachers from Sannohe Town in Aomori Prefecture visited our office. Sannohe has a sister city relationship with Tamworth in New South Wales, and are holding a student exchange program. Ten students from Sannohe took part in a study tour and home stay program in Tamworth from 16 to 19 October this year, and stopped by our office upon their return to Sydney. A member of our staff from Aomori prefecture gave a presentation of an overview of Australia and shared their experiences with living in Sydney.



We hope this experience will ignite the students' interest in international relations and contribute to strong sister city relationships.

## The National Conference of the Federation of AJS

The National Conference of the Federation of Australia-Japan Societies was held on Friday 19 October and Saturday 20 October in Sydney. The conference featured many information sessions about topics such as tourism, business and education. Mr Kenji Saegusa, the Executive Director of CLAIR's Tokyo Headquarters, made a presentation about Japan's Sister City activities with Australian local governments and other partners worldwide, and one of the potential future concepts of Sister City relationships in the world. We were pleased to receive great feedback from attendees.





CLAIR Sydney will continue to value our relationships with institutions that are bridges between Australia and Japan, and we look forward to incorporating what we have learned at the Conference in future support activities for Japanese local governments.



## SCA Annual General Meeting

On Tuesday 16 October, the 2018 Sister Cities Australia (SCA) Annual General Meeting was held at the Stanhope Leisure Centre in Blacktown, NSW. Three members (including Director Akaiwa) of CLAIR Sydney attended this event and gave a presentation about Japan's Sister City activities with Australian local governments and other partners worldwide, and one of the potential future concepts of Sister City relationships in the world.

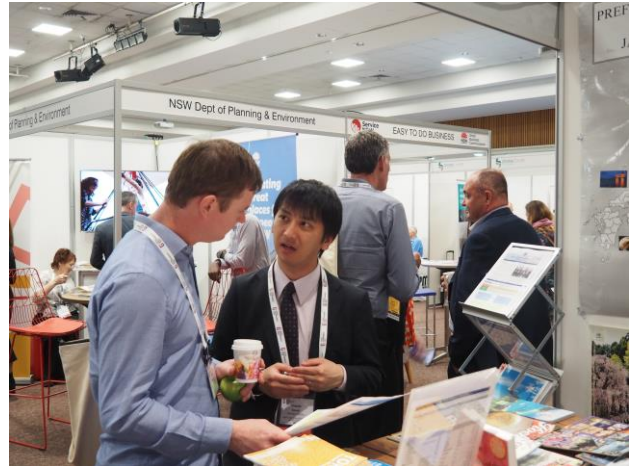
We are thankful for this opportunity to exchange information with councils that have a sister city relationship with a Japanese local government, and discuss their future sister city exchange schedule and activities plan. We also gained a lot of valuable knowledge, and we look forward to applying this as we continue to support sister city exchanges in collaboration with sister city associations and councils.



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## LGNSW annual conference

On 21-23 October, CLAIR Sydney participated in the Local Government NSW (LGNSW) annual conference in Albury. CLAIR ran a booth to promote our activities and sister city exchanges between Japan and Australia. In addition, CLAIR distributed some pamphlets and brochures on Rugby World Cup, which Japan will host for the first time next year. Many participants asked about the game schedules of the Australian national team, and how and where to buy the tickets, and we were pleased to see great levels of interest around the Rugby World Cup from Australian attendees.



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## The Canberra Nara Candle Festival



On Saturday 27 October, the Canberra Nara Candle Festival was held at Canberra Nara Peace Park & Lennox Gardens in Canberra. The event was held to celebrate this year's 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sister city relationship between Canberra and Nara, and was attended by officials from Nara City. CLAIR Sydney staff supported the Nara booth promotional activities alongside other staff who attended the event, and promoted Japan's regional areas at the Embassy's booth. The event featured many fantastic performances that introduced various elements of Japanese culture, such as a Sumo

performance and choir. JETAA ACT also exhibited at the booth, and thanks to the efforts of all, the event was a very exciting exchange between Japan and Australia. We'd like to extend a big thank you to all of the people who took the time to drop by our booth and talk about Japan's regional tourist destinations. We will continue to cooperate with the Embassy to support Japanese Local Governments' activities for regional promotion and sister city relationships.



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## Support activities for Aomori prefecture

On Sunday 28 October, the Food & Sake Expo, organised by JFC Australia, was held in Melbourne for buyers, restaurant owners and the general public. CLAIR Sydney supported the Aomori Prefectural Government, who ran a booth promoting their region's products to attendees. Aomori's finest local products, such as sake, rice, apple juice and seafood products including calamari, scallop and mackerel items, were available to try.

According to the organisers, approximately 500 people attended the event, 400 of which are buyers and people in the hospitality industry. The Expo was a great opportunity for us to promote regional products and it was wonderful to see the great levels of interaction between exhibitors and attendees.



The next day on 29 October, officials and producers from Aomori and a member of our staff visited local



supermarkets that stock Japanese products. We met and spoke with the staff responsible for stocking and selling the products, and shared information about the Aomori products.

This was also an excellent opportunity for CLAIR Sydney to better understand how regional areas in Japan are approaching their promotional efforts in Australia. We would like to make use of this experience to expand Japanese local governments' overseas business activities.

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## Support activities for Yokohama City

On 31 October, delegation from the Committee on International Affairs, Economic Affairs & Port and Harbour of the Yokohama City Council in Kanagawa Prefecture came to our office. The purpose of their visit was to learn more about multiculturalism, and both the challenges and successful initiatives in Australia. Our Director, Mr Akaiwa, gave a presentation on multiculturalism policies in Australia, after which we provided the delegation with information and suggestions for improvement on multiculturalism. We also supported them by arranging their appointments and providing some information in Melbourne and Sydney. We trust that their research will be put to good use in Yokohama's strategies.





October saw the 2018 JETAA Oceania Regional Conference, this year held in Perth, Western Australia and hosted by the WA chapter of JETAA. As President it was my great pleasure to help organise this, thinking about the best ways to showcase our city while also making the most of the opportunity for us to share ideas, experiences and challenges with one another.



The official theme of this year's conference was outreach and communication, and representatives of each chapter presented on this topic from a wide range of perspectives. These included presentations from JETAA Wellington on organisational tools, JETAA NSW on social media, JETAA South Island on building relationships, JETAA Canberra on community collaboration, JETAA Auckland on engaging with Japanese diplomatic allies, JETAA Victoria, Tasmania & South Australia on charitable fundraising, JETAA Queensland on post-JET careers promotion, and our own JETAA WA on building a cohesive annual activity plan. We also heard from the Australian and New Zealand country reps and JETAA International on their work to help support and bring together the chapters on a broader scale. We were especially pleased to welcome our keynote speaker,

Professor Kent Anderson from the University of Western Australia, who spoke on the deeper meaning of an experience like JET and how it can inform our purpose and mission, and were honoured to be joined by representatives of CLAIR. These included Director Akaiwa and other dignitaries from CLAIR Sydney, not to mention Executive Consultant Isobe who travelled all the way from Tokyo to share his insights on JET and its impact with us.



Being part of the JET alumni association community, a question that we often ask ourselves is, “why do we do this?”. For some of us our JET experience was more than a decade ago – in my case, we’ll soon see JET applicants who weren’t even born when I started the programme in 2001, when the mobile phones were new and the internet was dial-up. Others have only just returned from their JET placement, and their fresh and unique experiences of today’s Japan are entirely different to those that have gone before. Despite this diversity, there is something about JET that binds us together across countries, regions and even generations. We have all had the privilege of living and working within a unique culture, gaining an insight that very few people will ever have the chance to receive, and that motivates us to sustain that experience and community long after our time on the programme has ended.

It’s commonly said about JET that every situation is different – some people will go to a city on the coast with a multinational population, others to a village in the mountains where the next nearest English speaker is

more than an hour away. This is also true of alumni – some of us will look back on the people that we met, on the places visited, activities pursued or work completed. There is no wrong answer to the question of what JET means to you, and the beauty of our alumni community is that we welcome this wide membership and recognise how each new face enriches us all. While some chapters will pursue engaging events, others focus on cultural exchange or charitable fundraising. Importantly though, on the all-too-rare occasions when we are able to gather, we continue to applaud and support one another while reflecting on more ways to continue our JET journey together.



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## From the Director

### - Recipients of the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Award for excellent international exchange relationships in Japan -

In Japan, the Minister for Internal Affairs and Communications Award was established in 2006 and is awarded to those organizations that have achieved excellent international exchange relationship with one another. So far, four organizations that have sister city or friendship city relationships with Australian cities have been granted this award. Despite the amazing efforts by sister cities and friendship cities between New Zealand and Japan, unfortunately no organization that has sister city or friendship city relationship with New Zealand cities has been granted this award so far.

Firstly, the renowned Yamato Takada Lismore Sister City Association is a recent recipient. This sister city relationship is the first, and therefore the oldest, such relationship between Australia and Japan. This year marks the fifty-fifth anniversary. In addition, a strong interest in the relationship is fostered locally in Yamato Takada, where all students are given a booklet that introduces Lismore and the history of the two cities' exchanges. The strength of the relationship was apparent when Yamato Takada residents held fundraising activities and donated to disaster relief when Lismore was struck by floods.

The Odawara and Northern Beaches (former Manly) relationship is another award recipient. As a symbol of friendship, Manly named a street 'Odawara Close'. Exchange program alumni provide strong support for subsequent participants, ensuring a strong network that contributes to the overall development and stability of the exchange program. Moreover, this relationship has been a recipient of Sister Cities Australia awards three times.

The Oobu City and Port Phillip's sister city relationship is another award recipient. This relationship features an exchange program between city council staff, for three months of every year, creating an exciting opportunity for staff to learn about practices and policies, language, culture and more. In particular, the 'Clean up the World' project, an environmental initiative that started in Australia, has been adopted by Oobu through the 'Clean up the World in Oobu' event. Also, Oobu citizens have donated to penguin conservation



in Port Phillips. When the Great East Japan Earthquake occurred in 2011, Port Phillips citizens held a charity event and donated the proceedings to Oobu. Oobu was then able to pass this donation on to its friendship city, Tono, which was directly affected by the earthquake.

Another award recipient is Yokosuka's sister city relationship with four cities in Australia (Fremantle), France, the UK, and the US, which I wrote about in our last newsletter. For those who missed it, Yokosuka City is actively working to further awareness and share the concept of 'Fair Trade' with its sister cities. The sister city network has, in this instance, proved to be an effective method of further awareness about worthy causes such as Fair Trade among governments, organisations, and citizens in a way that extends beyond national borders. The network has great potential to assist similar endeavours in future.

I hope that these examples can be food for thought as your city or organisation considers initiating a new sister city relationship, or seeks to further develop an existing relationship.

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