



Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney)

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NEWSLETTER

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WELCOME TO FUKUOKA

Fukuoka Prefecture is located in Kyushu, the southernmost island of Japan's four main islands, and has been Japan's gateway to Asia since ancient times. As an important transport hub, Fukuoka is connected to approximately 30 domestic and 20 international cities by direct flight. Travelling to other prefectures within Kyushu, or to other major cities in Japan such as Tokyo, Osaka and Kyoto is extremely convenient by bullet trains and express buses from Fukuoka City's city centre, which is only five minutes away from Fukuoka Airport on the subway. Fukuoka was the only Japanese destination chosen by CNN Travel as one of the 19 best places to visit in 2019 due to its plentiful tourist attractions. Fukuoka Prefecture is divided into four regions: Fukuoka, Kitakyushu, Chikugo and Chikuho, and we will introduce a major attraction in each region below.

ancient shrine with over 1,100 years of history. The main hall was reconstructed in 1591, and the shrine has been designated as an Important Cultural Property of Japan. Many Japanese students visit the shrine to pray to the enshrined god of scholarship, and the shrine is also a popular destination for many overseas travellers. In addition to the splendid main hall, the grounds of the shrine is also impressive. There is a wide range of plants planted within the grounds, such as approximately 6,000 plum trees in almost 200 varieties, cherry trees and Japanese irises that bloom throughout the year.

In the Fukuoka region, Dazaifu Tenmangu is an



Dazaifu shrine

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Tanga market

In the Kitakyushu region, there is a shopping street named Tanga Market. The Market was established in the late 1950s by a group of shop owners. If you set foot in the area, it will feel as if you have time slipped into the Showa period (1926-1989). Inside the Market, you can build your own “Daigaku don”, a rice bowl filled with fresh products. To build your own bowl, you should start by buying a bowl of white rice from the designated shop. After this, you can walk along the street and talk to the friendly staff at over 100 stores to buy and fill your bowl with fresh seafood, stewed dishes or a wide variety of fish cakes. Once your bowl is filled, enjoy eating your original creation of the Daigaku don!

In Yanagawa City in the Chikugo region, you can join a sightseeing boat tour along the moat around the ruins of Yanagawa Castle which was built over 400 years ago. From the boat, you can enjoy the views of the former castle towns and sense the remnants of their former glory as you listen to the boatman’s explanations and songs. Tourists can expect an exciting experience on the boat tour as there are narrow areas just wide enough for boats to pass through tightly, and bridges with clearance so low that all passengers must stoop down for the boats to pass under.



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Yanagawa

In the Chikuho region, Kaho Gekijo is a wooden Kabuki theatre that opened in 1931 and served as a popular entertainment facility for coal miners who risked their lives working in coal mines in the area. The theatre has been well maintained and still stands in its original state today. While watching a play or joining a backstage tour of the theatre, visitors can sense what it was like in the Showa period.



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Kaho gekijo

As well as sightseeing spots, Fukuoka is well known for its delicious cuisine in Japan. The Fukuoka-originated pork bone broth ramen, the local dish of chicken hot pot, locally caught fresh seafood, the locally produced Yame green tea which

has a naturally refined sweet taste, local sake produced by one of the few famous sake breweries in Japan, and so on. You will certainly be able to find something that will suit your palate!

We hope you will visit us, and enjoy the deep history and culture of Japan and Fukuoka by visiting the many sightseeing spots and interacting with the friendly locals once the border restrictions have been lifted between Australia/New Zealand and Japan.

Introducing Our New Deputy Executive Director



Perth in 2018

Makio YAMADA

Deputy Executive Director from
Nagoya City in Aichi Prefecture

Government and was in charge of promoting sister city relationships. So, I am very excited to have this chance to promote the exchanges between Australia/New Zealand and Japan from here, Sydney. Unfortunately, due to the pandemic, we are having difficulties with continuing the exchange activities between our countries. But I believe we will be able to resume those activities soon and create a new exchange style that is resilient against the COVID-19 pandemic.

This is my first time living overseas. I love travelling and have visited Sydney twice on business, Perth in 2018 over the New Year holidays and Auckland in 2013 for a vacation. I would love to visit more places and meet many people while I am here. I'm really looking forward to meeting everyone!!

Hello! My name is Makio Yamada and I have been seconded to CLAIR Sydney from the Nagoya City Government at the beginning of this month. After 14 days of quarantine, I was finally released last week!

First, I would like to express my appreciation to the government officials, health care staff and hotel staff for their warm hospitality. My quarantine life in a hotel room with a full view of the Harbour Bridge was very well organised and quite comfortable.

The City of Sydney and the City of Nagoya signed a sister city agreement in 1980. Since then, we have maintained a strong relationship through many programs and face-to-face interactions between the people of our two cities. I used to work in the International Relations Division of the Nagoya City



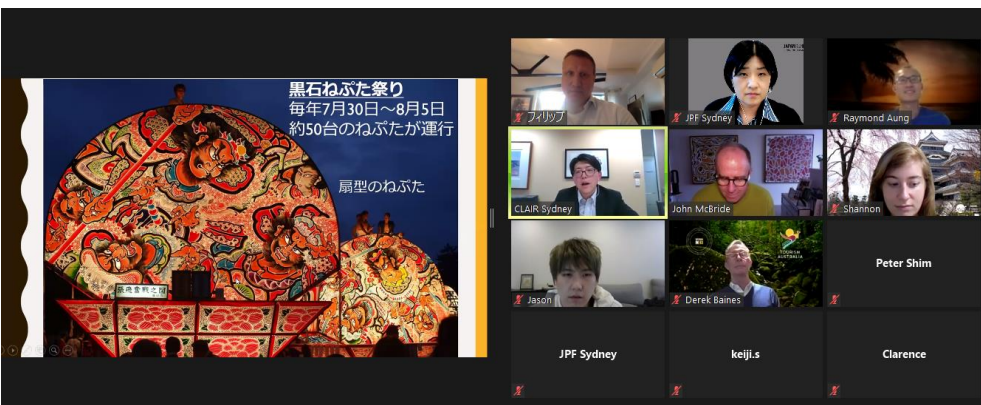
Dubbo in 2016

Presentation at the J-course by Japan Foundation, Sydney

On 30 Nov, a CLAIR Sydney staff member delivered an online presentation for a J-Course class ran by the Japan Foundation, Sydney, which provides the Australian public with opportunities to develop their Japanese skills.

In the Upper Advanced Course, students learn about different regions

of Japan, and one of the regions the students study on is the Northern Tohoku region. A CLAIR Sydney staff seconded from Kuroishi City in Northern Tohoku's Aomori Prefecture delivered a presentation at one of the classes. He provided the students with information such as festivals held in Aomori and dialects found in the prefecture: the Tsugaru-dialect (Tsugaru-ben) and the Nanbu-dialect (Nanbu-ben). The students showed a keen interest in Japanese history since they have already studied on the 'Kitamaebune', a merchant ship that sailed in the Edo and Meiji periods; and a book written by a British traveller who travelled around Japan in the Meiji period. In the presentation, the staff spoke about Aomori's



connections to the Kitamaebune and details in the book.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to promote local areas in Japan by promoting Japanese local cultures to the people of Australia and New Zealand.

LG Professionals Australia 2020 Local Government Meeting

The LG Professionals Australia 2020 Local Government Meeting was held between 1 and 2 December in Canberra. Due to the COVID-19 Pandemic, there was an option for participants to join the conference virtually this year. Those who joined virtually gathered mainly at the designated venues in capital cities in Australia.



LG Professionals Australia was founded for the purpose of providing local government professionals opportunities to upskill, network and discuss common challenges faced by local governments. LGPA has been focusing on the following common issues in its national advocacy program: financial sustainability, climate change and natural disaster management, diversity and inclusion, and workforce development. Subsequently, in the Meeting, presenters delivered presentations that are related to these topics.

At the Meeting, CLAIR Sydney provided information on our recent activities, upcoming notable sports events (in particular Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games and World Masters Games KANSAI) and Japanese tourist destinations. We were also able to reunite with alumni of the CLAIR Local Government Exchange and Cooperation Seminar and network with local government executives.

CLAIR Sydney will continue to learn and research into the current challenges and best practices of Australian local governments and support Japanese local governments in their activities in Australia.



Visit to Waverley Council

On 4 Dec, CLAIR Sydney staff members visited Waverley Council in NSW, whose governing area includes the world-famous Bondi Beach, to learn about waste management carried out by local governments in Australia.

The staff members met with the Manager of Sustainability and Resilience, Ms Suzanne Dunford; and Sustainable Waste Officer, Ms Caitlin Holford. Ms Dunford and Ms Holford provided us with invaluable information on the roles of the Federal, State and local governments in waste management in Australia; and Waverley Council's strategies on sustainable waste management. According to Ms Holford, some of the biggest challenges in waste management for Waverley Council are contamination in the recycling streams and managing problem wastes, which the Council addresses through programs that engage and educate their residents.



For further information please see: www.waverley.nsw.gov.au/residents/waste_and_recycling



CLAIR Sydney will continue to work closely with local councils in Australia and New Zealand to research into topics such as the similarities and differences in local governance systems and local government policies in Oceania and Japan to provide Japanese local governments with relevant and quality information.

Research on the City of Darwin's Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

Between 14 and 15 Dec, Mr KIKUTA Daisuke, an Assistant Director at CLAIR Sydney, visited the City of Darwin in the Northern Territory to research into Australian local governments' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mr Kikuta met with Mr Scott Waters, CEO of City of Darwin, and discussed the City of Darwin's responses to COVID-19 pandemic. Their discussion mainly focused on the Darwin Grant Finder portal, a one-stop portal site where the people of Darwin can easily find grants available to local businesses and NPOs; the Green Army program, which provides employment opportunities to those who have lost their jobs due to the pandemic while promoting greening and beautification works in the city; and the myDarwin program, which encourages local spending by providing vouchers to spend at local businesses via the City's website.

This visit was organised by Ms Cherry Cai, Manager of International Business Relations at City of Darwin, whom members of CLAIR Sydney met at the Sister Cities Australia (SCA) Forum held in Perth, Western Australia in 2019. This visit eventuated as a result of the partnerships built between CLAIR Sydney and stakeholders that look out for us.



Mr Kikuta will complete his CLAIR report which aims to provide Japanese local governments with reference materials on Australian local governments' responses to the COVID-19 pandemic.

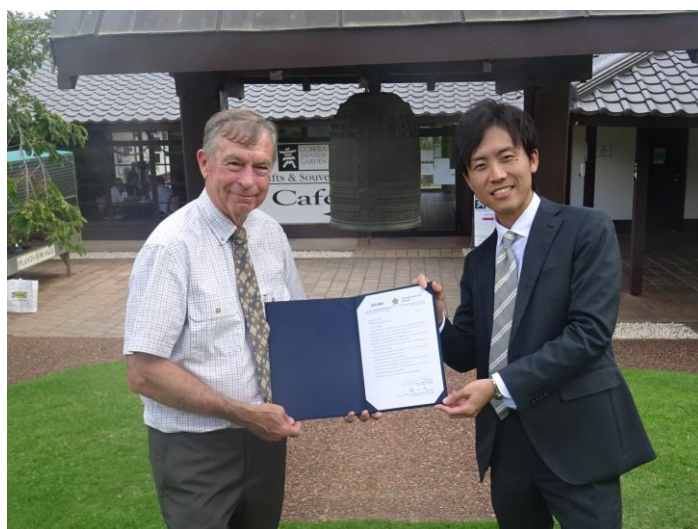
Visit to Cowra



On 16 Dec, CLAIR Sydney staff members seconded from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government and Fukuoka Prefectural Government visited Cowra and met with Cr Bill West, Mayor of Cowra; Mr Bob Griffiths, Chairman of the Cowra Japanese Garden & Cultural Centre; and Mr Tony Mooney OAM, Director of the Cowra Japanese Garden & Cultural Centre and Deputy Chairman of the Cowra Japanese Garden Maintenance Foundation.

During World War II, there was a prisoner of war camp in Cowra where the Cowra Breakout tragically occurred in 1944 and resulted in the death of 231 Japanese prisoners of war and four Australian soldiers. In the years since, the Japanese War Cemetery, Japanese Garden and Sakura Avenue were constructed, and Cowra has become a symbol of reconciliation between Australia and Japan after the war.

Both Tokyo and Fukuoka have deep ties with Cowra; the Tokyo Metropolitan Government provided financial

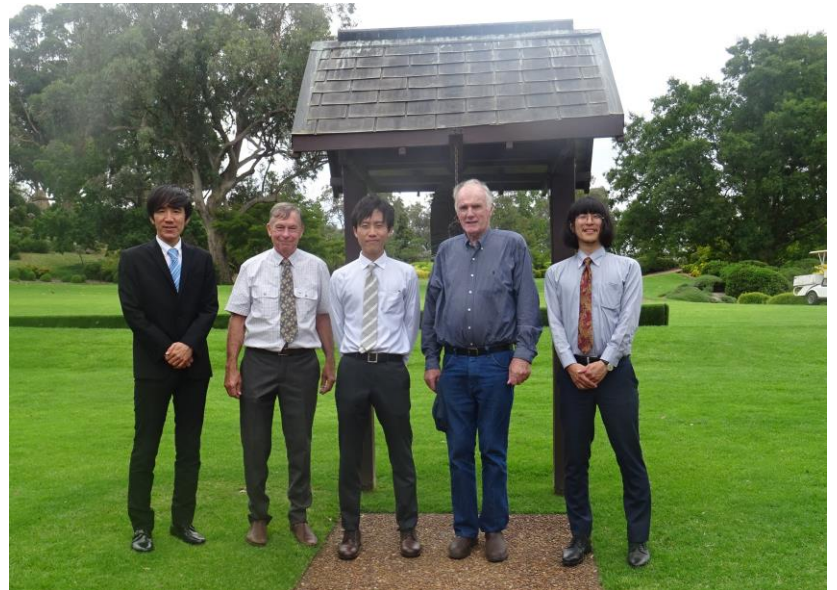


support for the construction of the Cowra Japanese Garden and Mr Saburo Nagakura, a businessman from Fukuoka Prefecture, made a personal donation for the construction of a park in Cowra.



On this visit, staff from the two Governments and Cr West discussed the various exchanges between Cowra and Japan, and the Cowra Cherry Blossom Festival which will be held in September 2021. They also met with Mr Griffiths and Mr Mooney and were provided with explanations on the features and history of the Cowra Japanese Garden. At the end of the meeting, the staff from the Fukuoka Prefectural Government presented letters from members of the Fukuoka Prefectural Assembly to Cr West and Mr Griffiths, and conveyed the Fukuoka Prefectural Government's desire to further strengthen its friendship with Cowra.

CLAIR Sydney endeavours to continue contributing to the strong ties between Australia and Japan by promoting the friendly and peaceful exchange activities between Australian and Japanese local governments and passing on lessons from the Cowra Breakout to the younger generations who have never experienced war.



Research on the Adult Migrant English Program in Melbourne



On 17 Dec, Assistant Director NISHI Hiroko visited the head office of AMES Australia in Melbourne, a national provider of settlement services, to research into the Adult Migrant English Program of Australia.

Mr Laurie Nowell, Media Manager at AMES Australia, provided Ms Nishi with information that focused on the role of volunteer tutors in the Adult Migrant English Program at AMES Australia.

In Japan, volunteers play a large role in Japanese language education for non-Japanese residents. Despite this, there is a severe shortage of language education volunteers. On the other hand, students of AMES Australia have ample opportunities to study English since many people would like to become volunteer English tutors at the institution.

Ms Nishi will complete her CLAIR report which aims to provide Japanese municipalities with information such as the insights shared by Mr Laurie Nowell, which includes approaches to recruiting volunteer tutors and matching tutors with students.

Visit to The Hills Shire Council



On 21 Dec, a CLAIR Sydney staff member seconded from Konosu City in Saitama Prefecture visited The Hills Shire Council to meet with the Mayor, Dr Michelle Byrne; and Senior Coordinator of Economic Development, Mr Stephen Garrard.

The Hills Shire is located in Greater Sydney and has a population of 179,000. The council area consists of a mix of urban areas in the south and rural areas in the north. With the opening of six Metro stations in the council area in 2019, further development and population growth that are harmonious with the

council area's natural surroundings are expected. It has been estimated that the council area will have a population of 290,000 by 2036.

Konosu City and The Hills Shire Council have been maintaining a friendly relationship for over a decade- Konosu City has been conducting junior high school student exchanges with Baulkham Hills High School in the Hills Shire Council area since 2007, and Mayor Haraguchi of Konosu City visited The Hills Shire Council as recent as July 2019.

During the visit in December, a staff member seconded from Konosu City met with Mayor Byrne and discussed ideas on new ways of interactions between the Hills Shire area and Konosu City and current prevention measures against COVID-19 in the two cities.

Towards the end of the visit, the staff member presented a letter from the Mayor of Konosu together with traditional handicrafts from Konosu City to Dr Byrne, and expressed his desire for the further development of friendly relations between the two cities.

The CLAIR Sydney office will continue to support the ongoing friendship exchanges between Konosu City and The Hills Shire.



JETAA NSW



As I sit here writing this article in a beautiful holiday home in Lilli Pilli (NSW South Coast) I can't help but think back to just a month ago where everyone was wishing for the promise of the new year "2021" and something better than 2020. Of course, 2020 brought its challenges for all of us personally and as a community. The JET community and JETAA NSW was no exception. 2020 would have been a lot lonelier if it wasn't for the amazing committee that we have as JETAANSW. Our 22 strong committee worked hard last year to make sure that no one in our community needed to be alone.

One of our most successful and consistent events for 2020 was the adaption of our monthly in-person 'hump day drinks' to a virtual event using Zoom. In March it began as a weekly occurrence, then changing to fortnightly as lockdowns were lifted and people headed back to work in person, going out more. The success of hump day was clear in the geographical locations and diversity of attendees with JET community members joining us from around Australia plus Singapore, Guam, London, NZ, Japan and more. We have decided to continue virtual hump days moving forward as we feel it is great to reach beyond a geographical location and allow current JETs as well as other members of the community to attend.

In addition to adjusting our monthly catch up to online, we also began learning of new game platforms, online streaming sites and even were lucky to be able to collaborate with the Australia-Japan Society on a virtual trivia night and continue our successful language exchange night – Shaberanaito. Many of these events were very successful and will be used in the future. In fact, we will be hosting our next AJS and JETAANSW Shaberanaito in March (so keep an eye out).

I am also proud to say that we battled our technologically challenged ways and collaborated with the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney on various projects including Instagram interviews and spotlights, JET promotional activities, the Pre-departure Orientation and careers fairs. We were also fortunate to be working closely with Consul-General Kiya and the Sydney Japanese community on a variety of new and exciting initiatives.



We ended 2020 on a very exciting note at JETAANSW with an in-person event and an award.

The end of year networking event was held in Sydney and attended by 30 people including some old friends as well as new CLAIR Sydney staff members and JET returnees. For many, it was the first time to see each other in almost a year and for others the first time to meet. It was a lively and relaxed day with good food, good drinks and great company. We have certainly missed seeing each other in person but through change, we have learned and we hope to hold in-person and virtual events in future.

JETAANSW was also awarded the Japanese Foreign Ministers Commendation for the 2020 financial year for work promoting mutual understanding between Japan and Australia. We are honoured to be the only group in Australia to have received this award and feel privileged to be listed along with 65 other incredible groups from around the world. I once again want to congratulate each and every member of the committee on this incredible achievement and thank you for your hard work in 2020.

As you can see COVID-19 may have made life for many different but JETAANSW and its members worked hard to continue supporting and building our community. Each year I reflect on just how lucky I am to be part of our committee of passionate, driven and friendly people. A group that truly love the work that we do in JETAANSW.

Now, we look to 2021, a new year, new ideas, new challenges and new successes.

We are excited to grow even further this year, as well as organise events and create opportunities for the JET community as well as the wider Japanese community. I would like to take this opportunity to extend an invitation to you to join our virtual and in-person events.

Please connect with us on Facebook (link: www.facebook.com/jetaansw) Instagram (link: www.instagram.com/jetaansw) or visit our website (link: www.jetaansw.org).

From the Executive Director

- New Year Greetings from CLAIR Sydney -

On behalf of all of the staff at CLAIR Sydney, I would like to wish all our readers a Happy New Year.

Last year was unprecedented for the people of Australia, New Zealand, and the rest of the world due to the COVID-19 pandemic. In addition to the pandemic, the people of Australia also suffered through the worst bushfire season in history at the beginning of last year.

Compared with most of the world, Australia and New Zealand are in such enviable positions with their achievements in managing the pandemic and combating the virus. CLAIR Sydney staff have been learning a great deal from the resilience and cooperative behaviours of the people of Australia and New Zealand.

CLAIR Sydney is also undergoing an unprecedented Japanese financial year in our office's history. Instead of customarily arriving in April, the beginning of the new Japanese financial year, last year's group of new Assistant Directors did not arrive in Sydney until October. Our office also welcomed our new Deputy Executive Director, Mr Makio Yamada, earlier this month and you can find his self-introduction in this newsletter. I hope that the new Deputy Executive Director and the four new Assistant Directors can meet you at upcoming events and meetings very soon.

We sincerely hope that the COVID-19 virus will be contained soon worldwide. We also hope that you, your family, and the communities around you will stay safe and healthy in 2021.