

NEWSLETTER

Issue 168 – June 2023



Japan Local Government Centre

Council of Local Authorities for International Relations (CLAIR, Sydney)

Welcome to Hakusan City

Hakusan City is located in Ishikawa Prefecture to the southwest of the prefectural capital city, Kanazawa. With a total change in elevation of about 2,700m from the mountains to the coast, the Hakusan City area is abundant with natural features; including one of the three famous Japanese mountains, sacred Mt. Hakusan, the Tadori River, fertile plains and beautiful white sand beaches on the Japan Sea that are accented by fresh green pine trees.



C O N T E N T S

Discover JAPAN - Welcome to Hakusan City

CLAIR Sydney May Activity Reports
From the Executive Director

The entire area of Hakusan City has been designated as a Japan Geopark as the “Hakusan Tedorigawa Geopark.” Additionally, from May of this year, the Hakusan Tedorigawa Geopark received its designation as a UNESCO Global Geopark. Geoparks are important areas where the formation of the Earth can be understood and with their beautiful scenery, are also used for sight-seeing.

Furthermore, Geoparks are not just for the protection and preservation of nature, they are also connected to education, regional revitalisation and the promotion of tourism as their own special brand known as “Geotourism.” Come see and experience the stunning sites that are born through the journeys that water and stone made as they flow from Mt. Hakusan to the sea, aptly named the “Journey of Water,” and the “Journey of Stone.”



Hakusan City entered a friendship city agreement with Penrith, New South Wales in 1989. Over 30 years have passed since this agreement and through deep bonds, Hakusan and Penrith have built a relationship of trust and friendship. High school homestay exchange has been done since 1993, making this year the 30th anniversary of the program. The high school homestay exchange program has been cancelled since 2020 due to the COVID-19, but this summer marks the restart of the program with Hakusan sending 12 high school students for homestay in Penrith. For the youth of both cities, who will become the future leaders of their generations, time living together on homestay where cultural differences will be overcome, will become a treasured memory and an experience that will lead to a more global way of thinking.

Penrith also has the scheduled opening of the West Sydney Airport in 2026 which will make the distance between the two cities closer and hopefully open up many more opportunities for various exchanges. We are hoping that the friendship between Hakusan and Penrith will deepen even further from these developments.



CLAIR Sydney May Activity Report

- [The Kodomo no Hi Japan Festival in South Australia \(7May2023\) → Go to Facebook Page](#)



- [Japan Festival 2023 in Victoria\(21May2023\) → Go to Facebook Page](#)



- [The Cowra Koyo Festival \(Autumn Festival\) \(29May2023\) → Go to Facebook Page](#)



From the Executive Director

Increases in exchanges between local governments

I attended the National General Assembly hosted by ALGA in mid- June for the first time. It was interesting to see how the conference was run, it was very different from the conference for local governments in Japan. Many mayors, councillors and CEOs stopped by at our CLAIR booth, and we heard that they are resuming exchanges with Japanese local governments after COVID-19, or looking for a new exchange partner.

In late June I went back to Japan for the first time in a year and visited several local governments. I heard about their stories of exchange with sister cities and about new exchange partners they are considering. In addition, since April this year (the new fiscal year for Japanese local governments begins in April), many prefectures and municipalities have planned activities in Australia/New Zealand, and requests for support for their activities to our office are increasing. We believe that the change in attitude towards COVID-19 in Japan and the lifting of travel restrictions have increased exchange activities.

If you have any questions about exchanges with Japanese local governments, please do not hesitate to contact us. We look forward to supporting your exchanges between Japan and Australia/New Zealand.