



JET *Journeys*

DECEMBER 2005

President's Message

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to everyone! We have had another very successful year – I would like to thank the entire Committee for their grand work and making this year so fantastic!

We have welcomed a new Consul-General of Japan to the Sydney Consulate: Mr Kawada and his wife. We look forward to working with him during his time in Sydney, and especially with the 2006 Japan Year of Exchange and all the wonderful events to come next year. We'll be sure to keep you updated on the events that are coming up!

We have a very driven Committee this year, one of whom is Michelle Morita. She has been elected as the Australian Country representative and we look forward to the great work she'll be doing in her new role.

Speaking of roles, our next AGM is due towards late February, so if you or anyone you know is interested in running for a position, please come! We are also looking for additional part-time Executive Members who can help out with the large number of events to come in 2006.

JETAA is always looking for ways to make events friendlier for our members, so please let me know your thoughts and pass me an email: jetaasydney@yahoo.com.au.

I wish you all the very best in the New Year and look forward to seeing more of you throughout the coming months!

Michael J Adams
JETAA Sydney President

Contents

	Page
President's Message.....	1
Meet the 2005 JETAA Committee Members.....	2
What is the 2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange?	5
Interview with new Japanese Consul-General.....	5
Farewell to Ms Tomoko Inujima	7
2005 Regional Conference.....	7
Careers Night	8
Hanami Party	9
Christmas Party	10
Returnees' Party.....	10
Member's Submission – Ikebana.....	11
2006 Calendar.....	12
Useful Contacts.....	12

Meet the 2005 JETAA Committee Members

As we head towards arguably the busiest time of the year, let us take some time to pause, breathe and reflect on this past year's activities.

Since our last newsletter in June, we've since had the national JETAA meeting in Brisbane, reported in this issue by our representative to the meeting, Samantha Ishizuka; the arrival of Sydney's new Japanese Consul-General; Hanami at Centennial Park; the return of our recent JETs; and our Christmas party at the GPO Table Bar, reported by our Social Coordinator, Michelle Morita.

But first, I'd like to remind everyone of our Annual General Meeting which is set for Thursday, 23 February 2006. The JETAA would like to invite all members to attend and participate in the election for your 2006 Committee representatives. There are eight position openings: President, Secretary, Social Coordinator (x2), Membership Officer, Webmaster, Treasurer and Newsletter Editor.

As we all know the JET Programme's core foundation is to foster grassroots internationalisation at the local community level. The Sydney Chapter of JETAA is a unique example of such internationalisation at work. The 2005 JETAA Committee Members comprise of a mini UN, our President is an American national, Secretary is from England, and Social Coordinator from Scotland. I'd like to take this opportunity to introduce you to the people that

have volunteered their time and efforts this past year to represent you.

President – Michael Adams

In Japan, I worked 10 minutes from a fuming volcano in Kagoshima Prefecture, and after three years I found I made a new home. Due to JET, I now live and work in one of the most beautiful cities in the world, Sydney! Although I am originally from the USA, I have now made my third home here and couldn't be happier.

As President I am the main point of contact for a variety of functions. To be honest however, I just let the Committee members do their jobs and everything has worked out fantastically! Although I have said it before I am very proud of the Committee this year. But we're not done yet! Next year brings more challenges and a lot more fun. I look forward to seeing you out there!

Secretary – Samantha Ishizuka

Hi everyone!

My name is Sam Ishizuka and I am currently the Sydney JETAA Secretary. I was an ALT in Japan between 1997 and 2000 in the small town of Ono-cho about 40 minutes out of Hiroshima city.

After the JET Program, I came to Australia for the first time to do my masters in Tourism at UTS. At the same time, I taught English at two local English Colleges. After deciding that teaching wasn't the thing for me, I worked for a year at Flight Centre before joining Japan

Airlines, where I have been for the last 18 months.

As Secretary on the Sydney JETAA Committee I take the minutes of our monthly meetings, forward emails to all members about our events, employment, and the like and get the opportunity to hang out with a great group of like-minded people all connected to Japan. The position is a lot of fun and I would more than love to do it again for a second year.

Treasurer – Sharon van Etten

I have been involved with the Sydney JETAA Committee in the role of Treasurer since February. I came back from Japan (Iwate Prefecture for three years) towards the end of last year, and so am a relatively new member of the JETAA team, but it has been great to be working with my fellow Committee members, particularly those *senpai* that have been involved for several years. Of course it is always a good idea to get people recently returned from the programme into the team as well, so I look forward to meeting many new members next year, particularly as we will be planning extra events for the Year of Exchange.

I have enjoyed the role of Treasurer so far, which until now has basically involved assisting other members in organising events and wielding the chequebook. However, December marks the deadline for budget paperwork to be finalised and submitted to CLAIR, so I get the feeling that the next three weeks will be when this job really happens. Receipts and signatures

have to be collected, statements consolidated, and everything checked and handed in on time. Wish me luck!

Social Coordinator – Michelle Morita

There are two Social Coordinator positions up for grabs this coming AGM. I have had such a great year, and will definitely be running again, but I just wanted to let you know what is involved in this role so some other enthusiastic JETAA members can get an idea what it's like to participate in the Committee and feel empowered to join us.

The JETAA has a busy calendar of events the whole year so it is the Social Coordinators' responsibility to make sure the social events, which bring the members together three or four times a year, are as well planned and as entertaining as possible. You work with the other Committee members to find the best options for socials and then it's up to you to organise the event. You can get involved in, or delegate things like designing the invitation, inspecting the venue, choosing the food menu and planning out how the evening will run.

It is a really fun job and you have a lot of support from the Committee. The best part is seeing it all coming together successfully knowing that it was your ideas and hard work that made it a wonderful event. Next year, with the Australia-Japan Year of Exchange, we will hopefully have some more exciting projects to work on so we welcome anyone who wants to step up to join the Committee next year.

Newsletter Editor – Yvonne Khoan Adams

Hi! Yes, I am related to the President, Michael – he’s my dana-san. In fact it is my entire fault that he is now living in Australia.

I took over the role of Newsletter Editor when Natalie Miller resigned from the post to go live in San Francisco. I worked as a subeditor/production editor at a leading legal publisher for a few years, but by no means does this role require professional training – just an enthusiastic member who’s willing to stay sober enough to take notes at functions and the occasional photos.

The newsletter goes out to the 300-odd members’ mailing list twice a year. However, the Committee is considering the possibility of increasing the issues through our website and maintaining the hardcopy to twice a year. An online version of the newsletter will open up many opportunities for the alumni and future newsletter editors without having to apply for an increase in the budget.

I’ve had a lot of fun meeting up with other members at the monthly meetings and getting to know personnel of the Japanese Consulate and CLAIR better.

Membership Officer – Chris Loch

The Membership Officer’s role is to liaise with the membership and keep everyone’s contact details up-to-date. We mainly keep in contact via email. The chief challenge is keeping track of a fairly mobile group of people whose email

addresses change. Things were so much easier when everyone just had a hotmail account!!! The workload is sporadic.

Most of the year, the membership officer pretty much just makes up the numbers at meetings. But there are occasional “spikes” of activity before any major JET event. It is important to make sure the lists are up-to-date so everyone knows what social extravaganzas are on offer.

All in all, I got to meet a lot of very nice people in my time as Membership Officer.

Webmaster – David Boyd

I spent my time as a JET in beautiful Kochi-ken, a rural and isolated part of Japan known for its rugged coastline, surfing beaches, abundant nature and laid-back people.

I have been back in Sydney for two years, and now work to support Japanese language education in Australian schools.

Since returning home, I have been privileged to be a part of the JETAA Committee. As Webmaster, I am responsible for maintaining the Sydney chapter’s homepage and domain registration, and liaising with the JETAA International webhost in Canada. As well as keeping our website up-to-date with the chapter’s latest events and news, I have been trying to make our website more interactive and useful for Sydney JETAA’s 300 members.

The Webmaster position is a challenging, but satisfying role on the JETAA Committee.

What is the 2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange?

The **2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange** will take place both in Australia and Japan from January to December 2006.

The governments of Australia and Japan are planning a number of events, including an official opening in February and events commemorating the anniversary of the Basic Treaty of Friendship (signed in Tokyo on June 1976).

Events organised by various organisations, groups, corporations, non-governmental organisations and local authorities involved in exchanges between Japan and Australia can be registered as official events for 2006 Australia-Japan Year of Exchange.

The **Year of Exchange** aims to:

- Deepen mutual understanding and relations between Australia and Japan through exchanges in many fields, including culture, arts, tourism, economics, business, politics, education, sport, science and technology, society and the challenges of an ageing society.
- Invigorate grassroots exchanges through various events initiated not only by governments but also by private sectors.
- Promote direct person-to-person contacts and exchanges between Australian and Japanese through collaborated activities between Australia and Japan.

Visit the website at:

http://www.japan.org.au/2006_Exchange_Year.htm for more information.

Summer Festival Natsumatsuri!

The Japanese Consulate as part of the Australia-Japan Year of Exchange will be organising a Summer Festival extravaganza at Darling Harbour with close to 300 performers flown in from Japan at their own expense.

Date: Saturday, 4 February
Venue: Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour
Time: 3.00pm – 9.00pm
Dress: Yukata!

Reproduced from Consulate-General of Japan website.

Welcome Consul-General Mr Tsukasa Kawada



Leanne Mumford, Consul-General Mr Kawada, Michael Adams and Sharon van Etten.

Mr Tsukasa Kawada is Sydney's new Consul-General of Japan. He arrived early September 2005 and the following are some interview questions that Mr Kawada has taken the time to answer for our newsletter.

Have you been to Australia before your current posting?

Strangely enough, I have never been to Australia while I have been working for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs almost 30 years. Just after knowing my assignment, I hastily visited Sydney and Canberra before being posted here officially.

How does your image of Australia before arriving compare to with it now?

Before coming here, I watched the DVD of "Crocodile Dundee" and read "Voss" written by Patrick White. I have got contradictory images of Australia from both. I have so far lived in several countries. From my experiences, I understand that every country has multiple faces. If you perceive a country with only one image, you will make a mistake. In replying to the question, I should say that my contradictory image of Australia has not yet changed.

How did you become a Consul-General?

It is difficult to answer. It is the Division of Personnel in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs that decided my destiny.

What/where were your previous postings?

I was Deputy Director General for Public Diplomacy in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. I was in charge of public relations, press and cultural exchanges.

JETAA Sydney has always had a close working relationship with the Consulate, how do you

foresee this relationship developing?

I would like to thank JETAA for its efforts to maintain good relationship with the Consulate-General of Japan. I think we can explore the possibility to use the JETAA network in a more expanded way to increase the exchanges between the two countries in various fields.

What kind of role would you like JETAA to play in the upcoming Year of Exchange 2006?

JETAA may organise an event by using "Jetters" experiences and personal connection. JETAA may, for example, hold a symposium to make the Australians understand better the Japanese society particularly for young peoples.

What do you do in your free time?

I am now crazy about internet "Go" game on "Panda Net". If there is anyone interested in playing, I use the name "korobuta". Otherwise, I sing a song of "No" theater from time to time, but my wife always says that my singing disgusts her.

You coined the term "Jetters" for ex-JET participants. What inspired you to come up with this term and is it a term that we will see used more often in the future?

One of my colleagues coined the word "JET" about 20 years ago. I always wondered how to call JET participants. As you know, there are now tens of thousands ex-JET participants around the world. I think it is now time to find a suitable word to designate them.

Farewell Inujima-san!

By Yvonne Khoan Adams



Ms Inujima (left) and Yvonne (right).

After nearly three years at the Japan Consulate, Sydney, Ms Tomoko Inujima, Vice Consul-General returned to Tokyo, Japan early December. We would like to thank Ms Inujima for her assistance over the years and for attending the monthly JETAA meetings.

The Sydney JETAA chapter and the Consulate share a good relationship and no small amount goes to the partnership with the Vice Consul-General and JET Programme Coordinator, Julio Santana. JETAA would like to say “Otsukaresama deshita” to Ms Inujima and extend a warm welcome to her successor Ms Cosmo Arai.

2005 Regional Conference

By Samantha Ishizuka

The build up was intense, they had been planning for months and then the day came – Friday, 21 October 2005, the start of the 2005 JETAA Annual Regional Conference in the wonderful city of Brisbane!

I was extremely fortunate to be sent up to Brisbane as Secretary of the Sydney JETAA Chapter along with our awesome Treasurer, Sharon van Etten representing CLAIR Sydney to take part in this three-day event.

After checking into a lovely hotel, our first treat was canapés and drinks at the Brisbane Consul-General’s residence, a mini-castle not far from the city. The Brisbane Consul-General, Mr Hajime Nishiyama gave us a very familiar Japanese style speech about the popularity and great international benefit of the JET Programme, now in its 20th year. Memories of the Keio Plaza in Tokyo came flooding back, when to my horror I realised I had already drunk all of the wine in my glass. Luckily, perhaps edging away from tradition or simply pure forgetfulness, no renditions of *Kampai* were made and I was saved from embarrassment.

Very soon we were whisked away to our *nijikai* at a lovely outdoor style bar in the trendy part of Brisbane and on with the merriment and catching up on old times. To my dismay, the Canberra JETAA representative informed me that my ALT position in Hiroshima had been dissolved and that she knew my successor very well. I had a wee cry as the memory of receiving 120 letters from my *san-nen-sei* students after finishing on the JET Program came flooding back.

Saturday morning started at 9.00am with the whole gang, an opening speech from Mr Yoshiyasu Hyotani, our own CLAIR Sydney Director General and brainstorming sessions about our own chapters. It was excellent to hear how other

chapters structure their Committee, ie the Auckland Chapter has a coaching position to help out other Committee members and the Brisbane Chapter has positions created for special events so that those members not wanting to commit for a whole year can still get involved in their local JETAA Chapter. We also found out that the Kiwis are very active with the Wellington Chapter hosting yearly Halloween parties and the Auckland Chapter organises a video exchange with local schools teaching Japanese. These videos, made in Japanese about student's everyday life are taken to Japan with the new JETs with the idea that the JET's host school in Japan will make similar videos to send back to New Zealand.

The afternoon kicked off with a vigorous discussion about the subject of sponsorship and how chapters can generate more funds to make their events more successful. The presenter, who's nephew had just left Brisbane to go on the JET Programme, was full of excellent ideas about how we can approach companies and make our bids look professional.

The surprise location of the CLAIR-hosted dinner on the Saturday evening was let out of the bag when we were all escorted to Brisbane Wharf and boarded the steamboat that took us on a relaxing cruise. The highlight of the cruise was passing the Brisbane Vice Consul, Mr Ito's residence and spotting the Vice Consul's wife, now six months pregnant, flashing her torch at us from the balcony! We had never seen Mr Ito laugh so much, partly from embarrassment and partly from a deep sense of

pride. Our *nijikai* that night ended early for me at the local pub, though most of the delegates were in the karaoke bar until 3.30am! Just like Japan really.

Sunday morning started at the leisurely hour of 9.30am on the subject of incorporation. To date, the Canberra, Wellington and Brisbane Chapters are all incorporated and the pros and cons of becoming incorporated were discussed. After vibrant talks and many smiles we left for New Park Farm and the location of the Brisbane JETAA Hanami Picnic under the lovely purple bloom of the jacaranda trees. We sat near the water under a shady tree, drinking wine, eating sushi and having a good old JET chat. Those memorable moments in Japan that can't be recaptured here in Sydney were talked about after a few beers and a fantastic weekend had by all. I would thoroughly recommend it for anyone looking at joining the Sydney Committee next year and finding out the full potential of the JETAA and what it has to offer its members.

Careers Night

By Yvonne Khoan Adams

The intimate gathering at the Japanese Consulate office for the Careers Night provided frank, useful and insightful information to those that attended. The JET Alumni Association wants to thank the speakers of the night: Kim Swaby, Janine Kitson, Jenny Palmer and Rowena Ward, for volunteering their time on the night.

Kim, 2004 JETAA Sydney President, and Janine, ex-councillor of Kuringai and now Japanese teacher, provided insight on how the JET programme has influenced their lives and how they maintain and utilise their contacts to continue with their Japanese experience. Rowena, a lecturer at UTS, presented practical advice on how to use Japanese in academia and university courses available. Jenny, the only speaker not an ex-JET, works in Human Resources at a leading accounting firm, gave invaluable advice on CV writing and interview technique.

The consensus among the speakers is that our experience on the JET Programme, not primarily the Japanese skills we acquired, but the ability to adapt to a different culture, public speaking skills and working in an international environment, is highly valued by prospective employers.



Kim Swaby, Jenny Palmer, Rowena Ward and Janine Kitson.

The Careers Night is an event that JETAA would like to continue offering, as we believe it is a useful service that all members can utilise, not just new returnees. The night provides a chance to build contacts with Japanese recruitment companies for those wanting to get into the Japanese field, and/or meeting with other ex-JETs.

Hanami

By Sharon van Etten

On 15 October approximately 30 JETAA members, friends and colleagues gathered in Centennial Park to celebrate Spring in Sydney with a Hanami BBQ and picnic.



Hanami at Centennial Park.

Unfortunately there were not any jacaranda trees located near the barbeque area, so we did more “kimi” and “shibafu-mi” than actual hanami, but it was an enjoyable afternoon nonetheless.

We are scouting out possible venues for next year so please let the Committee know of any good hanami hotspots in Sydney. We will also hold the event later, probably in early November, to make the most of the jacaranda flowering season.

Do you know of an ideal picnic spot for a Hanami? Send suggestions to: jetaasydney@yahoo.com.au.

Christmas Party

By Michelle Morita

The JETAA wanted to get in early to kick off the festive season and the Christmas Party at the GPO Table Bar was a great way to get into the party mood.

Members who went on JET 20 years ago, right up to new returnees attended, as well as guests and friends from the Sydney Japanese community.



Claire Wallom, Mary Samra and David Boyd.

We were also delighted to welcome the new Consul-General, Mr Kawada, to his first JETAA event in Sydney. It was a fun evening with great food and endless flowing wine, beer and fizz. We would like to give a special mention to the companies who kindly donated raffle prizes:

My Sony (www.mysony.com.au)

ORIX Australia Corporation Ltd
(www.orix.com.au)

CLAIR (www.jlhc.com.au)

JAL (www.jal.com.au)

Consulate-General of Japan
(www.japan.org.au)

Taka Tea Gardens (outlets at World Square Shopping Centre, Mid City Centre and Double Bay).



Thanks to GPO Table Bar for their \$50 bar vouchers, and for the excellent service on the evening.

Returnees' Party

By Chris Loch

On 24 November we celebrated the return of our newest JET Alumni! We welcome you all back and look forward to seeing you at future functions.

Every year the Consulate is kind enough to organise a welcome-back party for the JET returnees at the Consul's residence. Consulate staff, prominent members of Sydney's Japanese community and the JETAA Committee were fortunate enough to attend. It is a good chance for all the returnees to make themselves known to the Committee, the Consulate and the Japanese community generally. A little bit of networking can go a long way!!!

The food, as usual was fantastic – particularly those small sweet potato dessert things.

Each of these functions is a warm reminder that the Japanese Government and CLAIR appreciate the contribution that every JET has made (and are continuing to make) to increasing cross-cultural understanding between Japan and Australia. It is also a concrete way in which the Consulate seeks to maintain links with Sydney's JET Alumni. I hope JETs continue to take advantage of these events and maintain their links to Japan.

Ikebana

**By Stefanie Verchiani
(Miyagi-ken 1999 – 2001)**

We are all seated on the tatami floor with our legs folded neatly underneath our bodies and the flowers lay before us on the table. We are ready to begin.

“Sensei konbanwa.” It is Thursday evening, time for our weekly Ikebana lesson to commence.

We start cutting stems and placing the flowers in the traditional way we had been taught. Compared to the other students I was still considered a beginner, in spite of the fact that it had been more than a year since I had started.

After much concentration and consideration I finish placing all my flowers in the way I think best and call Sensei over to check.

“Totemo jyo-zudesune!” I love how Japanese people always praise what you do even if you haven't done a very good job.

She says this as she pulls all my flowers out, crushing my self-confidence and starts all over again. She continues to speak in formal Japanese of how the flowers should be arranged and their significance. I struggle to keep up and understand.

Once she finishes perfectly arranging my flowers I am then given permission to sketch them, take them out again and lastly put them back so they resemble my sketch.

The lesson comes to a conclusion once the final inspection of all our arrangements has been done.

We then quickly pack the room up and put the tables away. Then in a semicircle on the floor we bow in unison to Sensei thanking her for her precious time and her teaching.

We race home excitedly with our fresh flowers and arrange them with care and attention. Then wait patiently for next week to come, so we can do it all over again.



JETAA welcomes any contributions from members for the newsletter.
Email: jetaasdney@yahoo.com.au.

2006 Calendar

December

- Emperor's Birthday
- Christmas.

January

- New Years – 2006 is the Year of the Dog.
- 17 January: First **Committee meeting** for 2006 – all welcome.
- Look out for our **Event Survey** coming through to you on email. This association is for you, the members, and we want to get your feedback so we can organise events that you want to attend on days that you can make it.

If you don't get the link by mid-January and you are interested in giving us your feedback, please contact us via email at: jetaasocialcoordinator@gmail.com. It may be that we don't have your correct email!

February

- Saturday, 4 February: **Natsumatsuri** at Darling Harbour.
- Thursday, 23 February: **Annual General Meeting**.

Venue: Consulate-General of Japan, Level 33
Time: 6.30pm

Useful Contacts

JETAA

Website: www.sydneyjetaa.org
Email: jetaasydney@yahoo.com.com

Japanese Consulate

Contact name: Julio Santana
Phone: (02) 9231 3455
Website: www.japan.org.au
Address:

Level 33 and 34, Colonial Centre
52 Martin Place
Sydney, NSW 2000

CLAIR

Contact name: Sharon van Etten
Phone: (02) 9241 5033
Website: www.jlgc.org.au
Email: Sharon@jlgc.org.au

Just moved?



If you are a recently returned JET or have relocated and would like to continue to receive the Sydney JETAA newsletter, please drop us a line with your updated contact details. We look forward to hearing from you.

Send new contact details to:

Michael Adams, JETAA President

Address: 57/14-16 Freeman Place
Carlingford, NSW 2118

Tel: (02) 9858 2494

Fax: (02) 9221 8807

Email: jetaasydney@yahoo.com.au

Sydney JETAA
wishes you a
Merry Christmas and a
Fabulous New Year!

See you in 2006!

