



JET *Journeys*

JULY 2007

President's Message

Hi everyone and welcome to this edition of the JETAA Sydney newsletter!

First of all I'd like to thank Mike Adams for his hard work over the past 2 years, especially during the 2006 Year of Exchange, and welcome our new committee member Melissa Yorizane to the team. A big welcome also to the new faces at CLAIR, we look forward to working with you over the coming months.

This year's schedule won't be quite as crazy as last year's but we have lots of exciting and interesting events planned so be sure to put them into your diary. The trivia night was a great success, so congratulations to the Sanuki Allstars who took out the major prize. Our next major event will be a shabu-shabu dinner with this year's JETs after their pre-departure orientation on June 23. I'm sure they would love the opportunity to hear about your time in Japan, and what could be better than hot-pot on a cold winter's night!

As always, we welcome your feedback and please let us know if your details have changed. If you're moving interstate or overseas let us know and we can put you in contact with JETAA chapters around the country and across the globe. Email jetaasydney@yahoo.com.au.

I look forward to seeing you at one of our upcoming events!

Sharon van Etten
JETAA Sydney President

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The Faces of 2007

Mr Andrew Brown Japanese Consulate

Hi! I'm Andrew Brown. Nice to meet you! I returned to Sydney in July last year after spending two great years working as an AET at a Junior High School and Primary School in Hidaka City, Saitama Prefecture. Hidaka was a very beautiful city, not only because it was surrounded by mountains with deciduous trees that changed colour with the seasons, but also because on a clear winter's morning there would be a perfect view of a snowcapped Mt Fuji from almost any high spot in the city!

I took up many hobbies while living in Japan, one of which was Kyudou (Japanese Archery), a sport which required me to have more determination than anything I have ever attempted before.

I am looking forward to contributing to JETAA and assisting with its activities and events as much as possible. I am also looking forward to meeting everyone involved with the association!

See you soon!

New Faces at CLAIR

Six people began their two-year term at CLAIR Sydney in April, five seconded from local authorities in Japan and one local staff. We wish them all the very best and hope they enjoy their time in Sydney!

Goichi Koyanagi

Konnichi wa JETAA Sydney no minasan. My name is Goichi Koyanagi. I'm originally from Kumamoto prefecture in Kyushu, but I've lived in Saitama prefecture with my family for 25 years.

Basically I work for the Japan Association of City Mayors. This is my third visit to Sydney, but on my previous trips I was only here on short visits. This visit is for two years, so I'm looking forward to learning more about Australia's wonderful local people and culture.

Kazuma Fujimoto

Hello! I am Kazuma Fujimoto of CLAIR Sydney.

I have been seconded from Ueki town office in Kumamoto Prefecture. Kumamoto Prefecture is famous for Mount Aso, the largest active volcano in Japan, and amongst the largest in the world, and Kumamoto Castle (nearly 400-years old).

This year I am in charge of JETAA in place of Mr Takayoshi Horikiri. I am still poor at English, but I'll do my best to learn more. I am looking forward to meeting you and other members of JETAA in the future.

Mitsuo Kawano

Hi, My name is Mitsuo, (please call me Mick). I'm from Niseko in Hokkaido.

You know Niseko is the most exciting ski resort in Japan. So many Aussies have been coming and enjoying powder snow every season.

Chiho Takahashi

Hello everyone, my name is Chiho Takahashi.

I'm from Kurihara City in Miyagi prefecture. I want to enjoy Sydney life. I'm looking forward to meeting everyone.

Bryony Dyer

Hi! I have recently joined CLAIR Sydney as a Research Coordinator. I am having a lot of fun working with Japanese here in my home city, Sydney. I lived in Osaka for 3 years where I worked as a sub-editor for *Kansai Flea Market Classifieds* magazine – some of you may have read it. In my spare time I love skiing, reading and writing. My research interests are society

and government and I recently completed a thesis with 1st class honours at UNSW on the Japanese family registration system (*koseki seido*).

Shu Igari

Hi, everyone!

First of all, let me introduce myself in English, although I still have a long and winding road to travel with my English language.

My name is Shu Igari from Iwaki City in Fukushima prefecture, part of the Tohoku region. Iwaki is on the Pacific Ocean about 200km from Tokyo and it takes just three hours by highway express bus. It's famous for a type of fish called Mehikari, which is caught off Iwaki and is a rich source of omega oil. You should definitely try it if you have a chance to come to Iwaki.

I found it strange and interesting to put myself in the multi-cultural city of Sydney, because this is my first time living overseas. Japanese language doesn't work here and you can see many people with a wide range of cultural backgrounds on the street. Actually, this is one thing I've been wanting to do, to put myself in a different culture I've never known because I believe it can help your horizons broaden and expand.

So I'll make the most of this golden opportunity and I hope I will become a man that can put things into many different perspectives and think in terms of the big picture by the time I go back to Japan. You only live once, it's now or never, so let me seize the day here in Sydney!



Back row: Mitsuo Kawano, Shu Igari, Goichi Koyanagi, Kazuma Fujimoto
Front row: Bryony Dyer, Chiho Takahashi

2007 Committee Members

Congratulations to this year's Committee Members: Sharon van Etten (President), Sasha Anderson (Secretary), Sam Ishizuka (Treasurer), Michelle Fox (Social Coordinator), Tammie Lee (Social Coordinator), David Boyd (Webmaster), Yvonne Khoan Adams (Membership Officer), Michael Adams (Database Officer) and Melissa Yorizane (Newsletter Editor).

Melissa Yorizane

Hi everyone! This past July I finished two memorable years as a junior high school ALT in Nachikatsuura, Wakayama – home of Japan's tallest waterfall and one of Japan's biggest tuna markets. Being a Los Angeles native, it was a bit of an adjustment getting used to small town life. I did come to enjoy the serenity of living in the country and loved being nestled between the ocean and mountains.

I relocated to Sydney shortly after returning from Japan and have been working hard on my Australian accent. I am excited to be a part of the Committee and am looking forward to all of the upcoming events for 2007.

Trivia Night

By Tammie Lee



Sharon van Etten, Quiz Master

JETAA Trivia Night got off to a slow start with just the JETAA Sydney committee and a few early birds. But before we knew it the floor JETAA had reserved in the Forbes Hotel was full and we were hauling furniture up from other levels to accommodate all the JETs, old and new, and their friends who were gearing up to take away some prizes.

We rocked up the conventional trivia night process with some Jan-Ken, Heads and Tails and my favourite – Japanese and Australian logo recognition. The Japanese, never shy when it comes to singing, were definitely taking charge of the “karaoke blanks” segment of the night. I saw the most convincing male rendition of Kylie Minogue that night, and I went to the Mardi Gras for the first time earlier this year! In the end the Sanuki Allstars walked away with the top prize, a cool \$300 worth of vouchers from Kinokuniya.

Sharon did an awesome job MC-ing and kept the crowd on its toes the whole night. David and I kept an eye on the points, and also the groups that tried to cheat their way to the top! It turns out that no one is innocent when there are cool prizes up for grabs.



The winning team-Sanuki Allstars

This JETAA Trivia Night was the first of its kind, and given the reception we had, it definitely won't be the last! A special thanks to Canberra JETAA for their advice, and to David and Sharon for that extensive library of trivia they keep tucked away somewhere in their minds!

2007 JET Interviews

By Sasha Anderson
Secretary, JETAA Sydney

Interviewing for the 2007 JET program has been a real highlight for me this year! Each of the three days I left the Japanese consulate after the interviews, I felt so positive and inspired – every candidate had achieved amazing things and had aspirations for the next stages of their lives, all which made me feel greatly motivated!

You'll have a fantastic experience, all those whom are off to Japan this year, and I look forward to hearing all about them when you return (and hopefully join JETAA!) one of these years. Good luck, best wishes, and gambatte!



JET Programme Returnees Conference 2007

Intercontinental Grand, Yokohama
26-28 February 2007
By Michael Adams

This year I was fortunate to be asked to speak to the newest JET returnees while they were finishing up their last few months on the programme. The conference itself was held in a fantastic venue, the Intercontinental in Yokohama, which appears to be an entirely new development in a corner of the city on the bay.

I was asked to speak in two workshops to the returning Australian and NZ JETs to discuss what lies ahead for them, both workwise and with regard to the shock of reentry. Many expressed nervousness about their pending return as the consequences of finding work, accommodation and returning to their old lives came crashing down upon them. I provided them with several real ex-JET examples of success and tried to let them know they would be fine as long as they remained vigilant and proactive. As with most returning JETs, they're young, educated and in reality very employable. Overall, this group of about 40 was generally quite relaxed and had done most of their homework. In fact their questions tended to be very specific, relating more to the shipping of goods and vehicles.

I think the most surprising thing was seeing a few familiar faces from several years ago when they initially moved to Japan from Sydney! The conference reminded me of the excitement and the unknown of leaving Japan. It also shows just how adaptable and open many JETs really are – especially when Japan had become a 2nd home, and returning to our own countries had become the unknown.

We should see the newest Returnees coming back after July this year – please give them a great big welcome home!

Thoughts of a Returning JET

By Cairo Forrest

I'm Cairo Forrest from Leichhardt in Sydney. I have lived in southern Osaka and taught at junior high school in a small town called Tadaoka for nearly 3 years.

In this time I've reached the conclusion that Japan is one of the most interesting countries in the world to spend an extended time in. It has a strong western influence and is highly developed while still managing to retain its old culture. New infrastructure and technology is often coupled with a way of thinking and daily customs of the past. This contradiction is what makes the country so interesting and impossible to ever really understand. Modern skyscrapers standing next to century old Shinto shrines or geisha in elaborate kimono walking down the cobbled backstreets of Kyoto holding mobile phones are everyday sights.

The build up to departure is a good time to reflect on these three years which has been the most exciting and interesting period of my life. I have had the opportunity to travel and sightsee all over Japan, I've seen and even participated in Japanese festivals, become a real part of my community and made lifelong friends in the process. I've seen the view from the top of Mt Fuji with JET friends from all corners of the globe and harvested rice by hand among mountains in Wakayama with our favourite Japanese friends. While it's sad to be leaving, it's nice to think that I now have friends all over the world that I can reminisce with or come back to visit in the years to come.

For some interesting articles written by Leanne Mumford, a former JET who has returned to Japan, please visit her website at

http://au.geocities.com/usagi_tabi/



Photo by Regis Lansac

TaikOz Workshop

JETAA and TaikOz will be holding an introductory workshop for JETAA members and friends on Sunday July 15th. This is a great chance to take part in a physical and cultural aspect of Japanese culture, and if the workshop is anything like the one last year, get ready to sweat it out a little and have a great time!

When: July 15th, 1:30-3:30pm

Cost: \$45 pp. This cost has been subsidised by JETAA Sydney

Where: Ultimo Centre, Wattle Street, opposite the Wentworth Greyhound Track.

What to Bring: comfortable clothing you can move around in (must), bottle of water (must), a change of clothes, towel.

RSVP: The workshop can only be held with minimum numbers so please RSVP your (and your friends) name(s), emails and a contact number to confirm your place. There are limited spaces, so please RSVP find tammie@yahoo.com.au by July 6th to let us know if you and your friends are coming!

Taiko drumming is for everybody!

You can learn how to play the awe-inspiring Japanese taiko by joining the members of TaikOz in our community class program, located in central Sydney and Sydney Olympic Park. During one of TaikOz's 8-week courses you will:

- Experience first-hand the amazing sound of the traditional Japanese drums - the taiko
- Learn about the music, history and concepts behind the Art of Wadaiko (drumming)
- Enjoy making music with other people and receive a good physical workout at the same time!

Prior musical training is not a requirement - just bring your Mind, Body and Spirit!

Taiko classes are for all ages from 7 and above. For further information, and to reserve your place to commence classes at the start of our next term, please contact

TaikOz Administration:

Phone: (02) 9572 8595

Email: admin@taikoz.com

or visit www.taikoz.com for more information.

Disclaimer: by taking part in the community class you certify that you do not suffer from any pre-existing condition which may be exacerbated or aggravated by participation in the classes. If in doubt about this please discuss it with us or with your doctor prior to enrolling in the class.

2007 Calendar of Events*

- June** **23rd Pre-Departure Orientation and Shabu-Shabu**
Join the committee and this year's departing JETs for shabu-shabu!
- July** **1st Yum Cha**
Informal Yum Cha with departing JETs
- 15th TaikOz workshop 1-3pm**
- August** **4th Blue Mountains Onsen Trip and Sake Tasting**



- September** **Returns Welcome Reception**
- 29th Yukata and Tea Ceremony**
Re-immense yourself in a bit of traditional Japan, with a yukata workshop and tea demonstration
- October** **12th Careers Information Session**
Newly returned JETs and existing members are invited to attend this careers information session. Representatives from industry and recruitment agencies will be on hand to provide advice and answer questions.
Bring your résumé!
- November-December** **JETAA Christmas Party**
30th November or 1st December

***Dates are subject to change.**

Useful Contacts

JETAA

Website: www.sydneymetaa.org

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jetaasydney@yahoo.com

Japanese Consulate

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CLAIR

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The Japan Foundation, Sydney

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Chifley Plaza

2 Chifley Square

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Just moved?

Send new contact details to:

Sharon van Etten, President

Email: jetaasydney@yahoo.com.au

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

