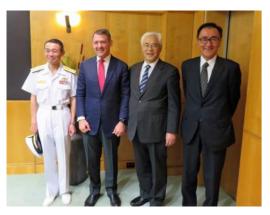
75th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin

This year marked the 75th anniversary of the bombing of Darwin during World War II. The Ambassador of Japan to Australia, His Excellency Mr Sumio Kusaka, paid an official visit from 16 to 19 February. On 19 February, the Ambassador, as the representative of the Government of Japan, attended the commemorative service at Darwin Cenotaph which was attended by Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull and some 5,000 people.



Meeting with Chief Minister Gunner [second left]: left to right Rear Admiral Kenjo Sato, Ambassador Kusaka and Consul-General Takewaka

Coinciding with part of the Ambassador's visit, on 17 February, Consul-General Keizo Takewaka visited Darwin. It was his second time to visit the northern capital

While in Darwin, Mr Takewaka attended talks with the Hon. Michael Gunner, Chief Minister of the Northern Territory.

In the evening of 17 February, the Consul-General attended the unveiling of a commemorative plaque to the Japanese I-124 submarine which was sunk with all 80 crew on board during WWII. The unveiling [below] took place at a reception organised by the Australian-Japanese Association of the Northern Territory (AJANT). The plaque has been laid near Darwin's Casuarina Cliffs.



Spotlight on sports-**Swimming**

The 2017 Swimming NSW State Open Championship was held at the Olympic Park Aquatic Centre from 3 to 5 March. It is a state championship with a high level of competition -Australian Olympic Medallists among the participants and international competitors from several countries. Japan sends a national team each year and this year thirteen team members including gold medallists took part in the championships.



During the championships, Japanese swimmers won the men's 200m butterfly, 200m and 400m individual medleys, 4x50m and 4x100m club medley relays and mixed 4x50m medley relay.

On 4 March, Consul-General Keizo Takewaka visited the championships to support the team and award medals.

The next championships will be held in January 2018.

Japan-Australia Project 2020

In 2015, Swimming Australia and the Japan Swimming Federation signed the Project 2020 agreement designed to improve each country's medal haul at Tokyo 2020. Both countries have top national teams and Project 2020 will see greater collaboration between them.

In a recent development, Australia announced the city of Nagaoka in Niigata prefecture would be its national team's Japanese training base in the lead up to Tokyo 2020.

Beyond 2020

The Japan-Australia swimming connection will no doubt endure beyond Tokyo 2020. If for no other reason, the 2021 World Aquatic Championships will be held in Fukuoka, Japan.

JETAA NSW—



Ms Ashlie O'Neill Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) Hyogo Prefecture, 2013-2016 At the Himeji Yukata Festival 2015

Favourite memory from time on JET:

My favourite memory on JET was the day I sat and watched one of my students compete at the state speech contest. She was a quiet student from my ESS club who had not believed 6 months prior that she was capable of making a speech in English (especially in front of a large crowd). When she took the stage and opened her mouth she projected confidence, power and enthusiasm. She got the attention of the room and delivered every sentence and joke with her own personality injected into it perfectly. After her speech her mother handed me a letter. In the letter she explained about my student's struggles in life and how she did not believe in herself until we began training. Being a member of JET for me was about the moments where I could see positive changes in those around me in school, my community and other JETs.

Favourite holiday spot in Japan:

This is a tough one because there are so many amazing and unique places. I will have to say Sapporo during Yuki

Ms Haruko Asakura receives **Consul-General's Commendation**



Students from Hijiyama University, Hiroshima, joined the Consul-General's Commendation Ceremony on 22 March for Ms Haruko Asakura

[centre standing] who was acknowledged for her outstanding contributions to the consulate essay contest and the JET program.

JETAA NSW is the alumni association keeping JET ties strong for former Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Program participants living in New South Wales. For more than three decades, the JET Program has been helping with language education and internationalisation in schools and local government bodies in Japan. JETAA helps promote and recruit for the program. It is also a great way for former JETs to keep in touch with Japan and its culture.

In late February, JETAA NSW held its annual general meeting to elect committee members. Many sitting members, including President Eden Law were re-elected. The committee also includes two new event coordinators who kindly share some thoughts with us.

Matsuri. Nothing says good times quite like HUGE snow sculptures, festival food, snowboarding and beer halls. It was so good that I went back twice and brought people with me both times! The first time was JETs from all over Japan and the second time was Aussies who flew over for the festival. If you get a chance to go it cannot be missed.

Best thing about where you lived: Where I lived had a bit of country and a bit of city. Our town was small and my drive/ride to work was through rice paddies but we lived close to a train station that took us straight to Kobe or Himeii in around 30 minutes. From my apartment balcony I could see the Seto Inland Sea and Awaji Island. The community in Inami-Cho and Akashi-city was friendly and welcoming. It was a perfect part of the world.

Why would you recommend the JET Program to others? The JET programme changed my life. I learnt how to be a great teacher and communicator. Getting involved with your local community means that you can try new things and meet new people. Also getting involved in your local AJET chapter or National AJET will give you useful skills for the future, regardless of what you plan to do in life after JET. JET will be an experience that challenges you and surprises you every day. It will also give you a platform to travel and learn in a way that is unique and so very unlike being a tourist.

Why did you decide to join JETAA NSW?

As the AJET Director of Alumni Relations I learnt a lot about JETAA. Becoming involved with JETAA not only allows me to have a community that truly understands how I feel about Japan and my experience but it also gives me the opportunity to do new things and meet new people. It has been really important for me during my return to Australia. I am really excited to give back to JETAA and organize a lot of fun events as the Event Coordinator.

as a citv Why would recommend the JET Program to others? Definitely! Going on the JET Program was the best experience of my life. It taught me so much about myself, the world and gave me a different perspective on life. It brought me closer to Japan and I developed so many close bonds with people in Japan and from all over the world. Being a part of the children's lives as an ALT and helping them achieve their goals was very rewarding and has now led me to be where I am now, studying to be a Japanese teacher in Australia.

Learning language, learning culture

The Hon. Sir Peter Cosgrove's statement at the 2003 Asia Education Foundation National Summit sums up beautifully why the new paradigm of education-intercultural language language learning (IcLL)—is so vital:

"Language skills and cultural sensitivity will be the new currency of this world order."

Language teachers carry an enormous responsibility of ensuring that their students are equipped with this intercultural competence, conducive to peace and mutual understanding beyond the classroom.

Intercultural language learning (IcLL) is incorporated in the Australian schools' language syllabus and encourages students to reflect on their own culture(s) through the study of other cultures and languages. Competent communicators not only have the knowledge of the language system, such as grammar and vocabulary, but they also have an insight into why people in a particular culture operate or express ideas in one way but not another.

Reflection allows students to make conscious choices about their style of communication - 'why I say it this way.'

An Australian student on an exchange program lived in an apartment in Osaka. Her Japanese friend upon visiting remarked on the apartment room as a compliment, 「いいね、XX さんにはもったいないくらいだ a_{\circ}] "Wow, it is too much for you."

Ms Elly-Kate McEwan Assistant Language Teacher (ALT) Sendai, Miyagi, 2014-2016



Favourite memory from time on JET: The memories I have at school with the students have to be my fondest. I remember just sitting with the students at lunch time talking about Australia and travel and feeling like I had really inspired them to use their English and explore the world. These moments were definitely special and made me realise why I came to Japan.

Favourite holiday spot in Japan: I really loved so many places in Japan, because they are all so different and unique! But Kyoto has to one of my favourite spots. The beauty, culture and tradition in Kyoto never ceases to amaze me and showing Kyoto to my Australian friends and family was always something I looked forward to.

Best thing about where you lived: Sendai is such a great city to live in with a real community feel. Sendai has the benefits of a city, with great shopping and variety of restaurants but also has so much natural beauty, with hiking spots, onsens, mountains and trees. The community really look out for each other in Sendai and I noticed that in its friendly nature

Why did you decide to join JETAA NSW?

After leaving Japan I knew that I wanted to stay connected with Japanese culture, people and also others who had participated on the program. I also wanted to support others who would be participating in the JET Programme in the future and promote the program to people who were interested. Joining JETAA NSW is a great opportunity for me and I can't wait to continue helping others have the same great experience I did on the JET Program.

The Australian responded emotionally thinking the friend meant that she doesn't deserve it. However, she was able to de-centre herself from her own perspective and draw upon that of the other,「ありがとう。いい部屋で しょ。」 "Yes, it is a nice room, isn't it." - focusing on the room not on her aptitude. Language should not be a mechanical translation of words, but be based on context and culture.

Even highly advanced bilingual speakers need to be able to continue navigating across languages, cultures and multiple perspectives.

> Tomoko Koyama, Director, MJS Centre, Macquarie University