



# The Bamboo Shoots

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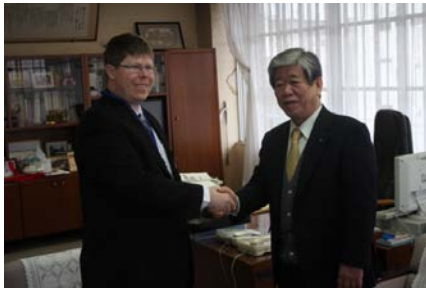
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We do hope The Bamboo Shoots born out of the soil of Yamato-Takada will grow up and act as a go-between for the citizens in Lismore and in Yamato-Takada.

## Welcome to Yamato Takada!



Mr. Cameron Smith came to work at Yamato Takada City Council from Lismore City Council. He worked for the Public Relation and Information section for one month, deepening his various knowledge about his specialty and forming a good relationship with many of the staff. During his stay he paid a visit, as a Public Health Officer or a food inspector, to the local health center and the general (multipurpose) welfare institute, *Katuragi* health center and also to the livelihood and consumption-life security department at Nara Prefectural Government Office. He learned a lot at these facilities.

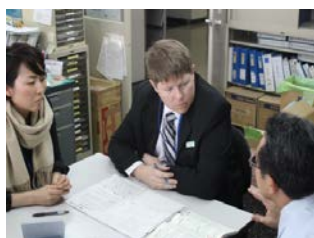
Cameron is attracted to Japanese culture and he is very skillful at judo with black belt. This time he experienced Japanese folk dance and karaoke. He also visited *Senryu-ji* temple, *bonbai-ten* or 'dwarfed tree of Japanese apricot exhibition' in Koriyama city, *ume-no-yado* sake factory, *Nara-machi* or 'Nara traditional town' and so on. Additionally he seems to have become fond of Japan.

Some questions to Cameron:

### 1. We are happy to have you here in Yamato Takada City. Please tell us what the purpose of your visit is.

I have two reasons for coming to Yamato Takada city. Firstly as Lismore City has such a strong tie with Yamato Takada it is a great opportunity to meet the people and see the place that our Council and Mayor talk too and about regularly while enabling me the time to be able to learn more about the Japanese culture.

Secondly as I have spent my life working for the Government in food inspection, it is really exciting to learn how another City and the Prefecture operate its system of government and to see how the Yamato Takada City operates its services and looks after its citizens. (I am discovering how very similar our two Cities are)



### 2. What is your job in Lismore City Council? Please tell us about it in detail.

My position is Public Health Officer. This means I am responsible to ensure that the health of the public is looked after. I do this by inspecting food shops to make sure they sell food safely and they have good hygiene standards. I monitor the Council water supply test results to ensure our Council is delivering safe water to the public. I also inspect beauty salons, hairdressers and tattoo parlours for their level of hygiene and check they are complying with the requirements of the law. So essentially my primary purpose is to protect the public from poor and/or dangerous business practices.

### 3. Are there any differences on the systems and the standards for food sanitation or hygiene between Lismore and Yamato Takada?

I have been pleasantly surprised to see that the systems are very similar in terms of the hygiene standards and requirements. One of the main differences is that Lismore City doesn't issue a license to operate a food business unlike here in Japan. A food business is required to tell Lismore Council it would like to operate a shop and it has to be built to meet the requirements of the law, after that Council will inspect the business annually to make sure they are keeping it clean and producing safe food.

The other interesting thing I have noticed in Japan is that the qualifications to be a food inspector here is that of a Doctor, Dentist or Pharmacist while in Australia you need to be qualified as a Food Technologist (Which I am) or an Environmental Health Officer.



### 4. You came to Japan in the dead of winter. How do you feel about the winter in Japan?

The reasons why I chose to come at this time of year were personal, the first one was to experience snow for the first time and go snow boarding, the second was to propose to my now fiancé in a setting which is rare in Australia and that has a picturesque setting of a fireplace, in an exquisite restaurant with the snow falling outside. (And yes I was lucky to have all that happen)

So for me and my first experience of such cold, I can definitely say I love your cold weather and snow. Plus of course as it was a special event for me the memories when I return home will be very vivid for a long time to come. (To be continued to next page)

### 5. What places were you struck on in Takada city?

I was really impressed by the history of the city, especially by the museum and the efforts made to preserve artefacts when found around the city for future generations to see and enjoy. The fact that there are ancient tombs that can still be seen to this day around the city is fantastic.

Senryuji is also a place I would consider a must see for visitors, the garden was beautiful and I was especially lucky on the day I visited the snow was falling making it picture perfect. The art work on the interior doors was spectacular as well as the ornateness of the shine.

The river which runs through the city where the cherry blossoms are is a very picturesque spot, I have seen snow on the banks, and I would love to see the trees when there in full bloom.

Karaoke bars and Pachinko, what can I say these are two truly Japanese past times of entertainment that I would highly recommend to any visitor to experience Japanese leisure time. Wow the sights and sounds and the challenge of Pachinko and the Karaoke experience of moving out of your most comfort zone when it comes to singing in front of others. Now I do realise that these aren't unique to Takada, but it was the citizens of Takada that introduced (or corrupted me) to being able to enjoy both of these activities.



### 6. What did you think of Takada city? How do you like Takada City?

I think you have a wonderful city, you have great city run facilities such as libraries, schools, senior citizen centres and the hospital to name a few. From a commercial aspect there are so many retail shops, eating and dining establishments and entertainment (I am amazed at the choice I have had since arriving in the city). In many ways I feel that the people living here have very rich lives with everything around them being so close. This is made even easier with access to good public transport and the ability to easily ride bikes everywhere (which I have been experiencing first hand).

In many ways you have more convenient access to so many things, compared to Lismore where we are more spread out and not as many choices and retail stores.



### 7. Did you enjoy working at your office in Takada City Hall?

I have absolutely loved working at City Hall, it has been a great privilege to be allowed to work there. I can't get over the size of the building and the number of staff that work in one place. I think looking back on the last 4 weeks, and what has made it great working there is not so much the building but the people who work there. They are the most friendly, helpful and generous people I have worked with. They have created such a family atmosphere at city hall it made me sad going home each day.

The job I was doing in Public relations afforded me the privilege to be able to meet so many of the Council staff and the citizens of Takada City, which really afforded me the ability to really get to know the people and not just the sights of the city.



### 8. We are afraid that Yamato Takada city might be behind Lismore City in the fields of food control and public health administration. Please make a few remarks on it.

I think you have nothing to worry about in terms of food control and public health in comparison to Lismore City. The work the food inspectors do is at the same level that we do (if anything more food sampling and testing is done than in Australia)

I believe the public health standards are a little more stricter in Australia but that doesn't mean there are low standards here, from what I have seen a lot of Japanese people are very aware of good public health practices or food handling practices, and as such this is very obvious when shopping or dinner out in many places, which as a consumer is great to see.



# In Commemoration of 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Sister City Relationship Between Yamato Takada and Lismore

Yamato Takada City formed an alliance with the City of Lismore, New South Wales, Australia, on 7<sup>th</sup> August, 1963. This was the first Sister City Agreement between Japan and Australia. The 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary is coming in August this year. The year, 2013, is, at the same time, designated as 'Japan and Australia's Tourist Exchange Year.'

Naturally, for the duration after World War II there remained not a little strong anti-Japanese sentiment among Australians. Under such circumstances Father Paul Glynn, who was born and brought up in Lismore, visited Japan in 1955 and in the following year he began to work for Takada Catholic Church.



Father Paul Glynn

It is said that in his school days Father Glynn heard Father Lionel T. Marsden, who had devoted his whole life to the cause of the reconciliation and the promotion of goodwill between the two countries, say that it was a continuous malice against the opponent country that merely brought another war (retold).

Australia had 60 sister cities in the world but that she had no sister city relationship with Japan at that time. So he wrote an English letter to Senzo Nagura, the then mayor of Yamato Takada City. Father Glynn had learned Japanese by the Roman alphabet but he could not write Japanese so well. The reply arrived at him very soon. It is said that Mr. Nagura was good at English since he had learned English in America.

Afterwards, in 1962, Mr. Clyde Campbell, Mayor of the City of Lismore, told his strong intention of agreeing with the conclusion of the Sister City Agreement between Lismore City and Yamato Takada City to Senzo Nagura, Mayor of Yamato Takada City.

## ●As to how Yamato Takada City became

### 'Sister City with Lismore' in 1963

- In March, a plan for making an alliance with Lismore City as Sister City was reported to the Yamato Takada City Council.
- On 24<sup>th</sup> April, Mr. and Mrs. Nagura had a talk about an alliance as sister cities with Mr. Heffron, Prime Minister of New South Wales, who stayed in Japan then, at a hotel in Osaka.
- In May, in the extraordinary meeting of the city council in May the proposition of 'Sister City Alliance with Lismore' was unanimously accepted.
- In July, Nagura received an invitation letter from the mayor of Lismore city, saying that he should attend the signing ceremony of the Sister City Agreement. The Takada City Council approved of Mr. Nagura visiting Australia with his wife.
- On 7<sup>th</sup> August, at the Lismore city council chamber the mayors of Lismore and Yamato Takada signed the Sister City Agreement between the two cities.



the Agreement



Mayor Campbell in Takada, '64

Significantly enough, the day of 7<sup>th</sup> August came just one day after the first atomic bomb was dropped on the City of Hiroshima. It is said that the two cities chose this day on purpose as the day not only of their friendship as sister cities, but also of their swearing peace and goodwill in the whole world.

The pledge they exchanged each other on the day said as follows, **"The City of Lismore, New South Wales, Australia and the City of Yamato Takada, Nara Prefecture, Japan, sincerely desire to promote mutual friendship. They shall strive for sister exchanges, in fields ranging from culture to commerce. The horizons of this contract, this friendship, are not just the two Cities, but the Motherlands, Australia and Japan.**

**More, it is our firm belief that our efforts will contribute to the peace of the whole world. On this Seventh day of August, 1963 we pledge our co-operation as sister cities."** (according to the original)

50 years have passed since the first signing of the Agreement in 1963; meanwhile the two cities have exchanged their goodwill and friendship taking different forms of, for example, the contribution to each other's city in flood, the delegation of citizens' contingents to each city, the continuation of the exchange student project, just to name a few. 159 students in Yamato Takada city have visited Lismore city so far and 147 Lismore students have been here in Takada until now.

In 2011, when the Great East Japan Disaster happened, street fund-raising was practiced in Lismore city.

In the summer of that year the exchange students from Takada visited the Lismore City Council, and then a memorial service was held for the late Japanese and victims in the courtyard of the city council and all the attendants there offered incense solemnly.

From now onward it is strongly desired that a firm friendship and a sincere mutual understanding between the Motherlands, Australia and Japan, should be promoted continuously just as written in the pledge of the Sister City Agreement.



Mayor Cowley visiting Takada, '82



exchange students' event



30<sup>th</sup> year's civic contingent

# Coming-of-Age Celebration Ceremony



“Coming-of-Age Day” is a national holiday which falls on the second Monday of January. On this day “Coming-of-Age Ceremonies” are held in many of the local cities and communities to celebrate the new adults. In Japan all the people over 20 are prescribed as “adults.”

“Coming-of-Age Day” was created in 1948 and is described as the day when young people become aware of their achievement of adulthood and they formally pledge their determination to strive for their own life. By doing so the new adults are given a boost and are congratulated.

In Yamato Takada city, too, the celebration ceremony was held this day and the mayor gave the new adults

a congratulatory message. The number of the new adults is 799 and one of them spoke on behalf of the others their strong will to become good members of society.

After the ceremony, to mark the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the conclusion of Sister City Agreement, Isabella A Cappella, a splendid professional chorus group, appeared as guest from Lismore city, Australia, and sang some well-known beautiful songs in clear voices to the young adults, some of which were “Believe” and “Kimi wo nosete” and so on.

All the audience including the new adults was very satisfied with the performance.



## School Introduction: TAKADA KODOMO-EN Nursery School



This nursery school opened in April, 2010, for the first time in Nara prefecture, as an accredited Nursery School in cooperation between kindergarten and day nursery.

It is compounded from the two functions of kindergarten and nursery.

Kindergartners usually stay from 8:30 till 14:00 on weekdays, and children enrolled at nursery usually stay from 8:30 till 16:30 (12:00 on Saturday). The period for child care is sometimes prolonged from 7:30 to 19:00 on weekdays at nursery.

The number of the enrolled kindergartners (3 years old ~ 5 years old) is now 107, and that of the enrolled nursery children (0 year old ~ 5 years old) is 99, the enrolled total number reaching 206. The educational aim is to train the children to live an active life warmly and also to think about this and that over and over.

Taking some yearly school events for example, they are full of instructive ones, such as safety education practice, class outings, seeing puppet plays, enjoying the cool evening meetings, sports day of running and so on. Besides these, birthday parties, body measurement and evacuation training are held every month.

This school opens its playground as an open field used for the interchange between parents and children, targeted only for local parents who are now raising their children.

Supporting services for consulting about child-care and information service about it as well are practiced at this school.



## ©Why not the best in a great city Lismore in August?



This year marks the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sister city relationship between Lismore, Australia, and Yamato Takada, Japan. The Sister City Agreement was the first to be concluded between the two countries in 1963.

A citizens' delegation of Yamato Takada is supposed to visit Lismore city this August. “Yamato Takada Memorial Day” will be held then, and some events will take place to have Lismore residents know much more about Takada.

Yamato Takada is noted for its beauty of cherry blossoms,

well known as “Takada senbon sakura or a thousand cherry trees,” almost all of which are over 60 years old. Every year Yamato Takada city is crowded with people in and around the city who want to appreciate the cherry blossoms at their best. On Yamato Takada Day there will be a lot of plans and demonstrations, which everyone takes part in, such as tapestry displays on which the beautiful cherry blossoms are depicted, Japanese tea party, calligraphy demonstrations, origami lessons, kimono dressing and much more. The Yamato Takada Sister City Association has been looking for some participants. Everybody is cordially invited to apply.