



The Bamboo Shoots

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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.

Australia's Flowers



[Australia's National Flower: Golden Wattle]

The Golden Wattles, the national flower of Australia, are very similar to the Sakura blossoms in Japan. When the flowers begin to bloom, Australians realize that spring is come. The pattern of the flower is used as the national crest. In the sport world the yellow color of the Wattle petals and the green color of the leaves are also used as the traditional colors for the uniforms of the national teams of Australia.

Spring is ushered in by the coming out of Jacaranda. This flower is called "Purple-colored cherry blossoms" by Japanese living in Australia.



[National team uniform of soccer]



[State Symbol of Australia]



[Avenue of Jacaranda in full bloom]



[State Flower of New South Wales: Waratah]



[Mr. Nagaoka's demonstration]

After the general meeting of Yamato-Takada Sister City Association on April 17 all of the participants enjoyed the interesting and instructive talks about the variety of Australian flowers and also the wonderful demonstrations of flower arrangement by a Japanese guest who is familiar with Australian flowers.

The following is the explanation by the guest named Mr. Junichi Nagaoka, the first-class flower decorator in Japan.

Among the Australian flowers there are some kinds of flowers with curious leaves and shapely branches, which are unknown to Japanese. Most of the Australian flowers have unaffected scents and colors. In Autumn many flowers, which are often used as dried flowers, are imported to Japan. Taking some flowers for example they are Rice Flower, Craspedia, Wax Flower, and so on. Gentians, which are autumn flowers in Japan, are to arrive in Japan in spring as an attempt, due to the differences of the seasons between Australia and Japan. All the flowers are sent to Japan by air and it usually takes the flowers three clear days to appear at flower shops in Japan.



[Rice Flower]



[Craspedia]



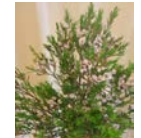
[Koala fern]



[Banksia]



[Eucalyptus]



[Wax Flower]

Annular Solar Eclipse

On the morning of May 21 the annular solar eclipse could be observed all over Japan, especially along the Pacific Ocean. The sun was hidden by the moon and the golden ring around the sun was clearly seen.



In Takada the beautiful golden ring could be seen for only 2 to 4 minutes around half past 7 o'clock in the morning. The eclipse was expected to begin just at the time of commuting and of attending school, so some of the schools decided to change the opening time. In Nara prefecture it was observed after an interval of 282 years since the year of 1730. It will be observed in 2095, 83 years later.

Revisit to Yamato Takada

by Rosemary Murphy



This year I have made my second trip to Japan, I love this country it is so beautiful and the people are very kind. I have been staying with the Kameda family who I stayed with when I came with the Lismore Sister City program. The Kamedas have been very kind to me again. They have taken me to many large and famous temples and shrines in the Nara prefecture.

It's hard to decide which temple was my favorite, I enjoyed them all very much, the architecture is amazing.

When we went to Todaiji Temple we tried to feed the deer some senbei, but there were so many tourists, that the deer were all full and none of them want our senbei. We had to walk around a bit before we found some that were hungry.

During my stay I have tried a small selection of Japanese foods, like mochi. Mochi is very delicious and sticky, I enjoyed it very much and would like to eat a lot more.

The Kamedas have been kind enough to take me to two onsens during my stay. They were very refreshing and calming. I liked the outside ones best where they had music playing and you could just sit and enjoy the atmosphere. The baths with the herbs were nice too, the smell was wonderful.

We went to a strawberry farm which had an all you can eat buffet, where you walk up and down the greenhouse picking and eating whichever you want for half an hour. The strawberries in this areas are the best!

At the house we have been playing many games, such as Mario, Pokemon and some card games.

All in all I have enjoyed my time in Yamato Takada very much, and as a last note I would like to say that all the Sakura were very, very, VERY beautiful.

Happy 10 days with Rosemary

Rosemary, who stayed at our home as an exchange student before, came to see us after an interval of 3 years.

She visited the *Todai-ji* Temple and Nara Park with me and my parents. We went to a hot spring and enjoyed picking strawberries there. She had a lot of fun picking strawberries because they are her favorite fruit. She told us that they found no hot springs in Australia and that they never played strawberry-picking.

We held "*Takoyaki* Party" at home as she liked Takoyaki or octopus flitters very much. She seemed to enjoy takoyaki turning tako-balls around one by one on the plate. After she tried to do the takoyaki several times, she became good at baking them.

April 23 is my birthday, so my parents held a birthday party for me on that day. Rosemary and Mom cooked the dishes for me. Rosemary gave me a gift. It was a picture of *Pokemon* (an animation) together with a frame for photos. She embroidered the picture by herself, which I was fond of. I was very happy.

She taught me English and we played cards and various kinds of games.

I hope she will come to see us again some day. (R. K)



I was very surprised to know that Rosemary, who visited us again in 3 years, had become better at Japanese. She left our home 3 years ago saying, "I will never fail to come and see you..." I guess she tried her best to speak Japanese better because she did want to visit Japan again. I was very impressed with her efforts.

Due to her good Japanese we could communicate with her very well this time.

During her stay in Japan she paid a visit to Tokyo, Kyoto, Hiroshima and Nara and back to Tokyo again, and she enjoyed her trip to the fullest. She made a stopover in Yamato Takada and without forgetting she visited us. We were very happy to have spent 10 days with her.

I do wish that the student exchange project between Lismore and Takada will be more and more fruitful.

(N. K)

Place of Interest in Yamato Takada City (11)

MIROKU-JI TEMPLE

at *Dongo* :



Tradition says that *Miroku-ji*, a temple situated to the northwest of Takada, was founded between 1532 and 1554 as the temple of the *Dongos*. The detailed history

has not been obvious yet. The main hall, the campanile (a kind of bell tower) and the *Kuri* (a kind of temple house), all of which were built in the Edo period, still remain there as they are.

The Main Hall of the temple, in which the seated figure of *Miroku* (a future Buddha) is to be niched, is now under repair.



MIROKU BUDDHA SEATED FIGURE designated as National Important Cultural Property



It was newly decided that *Miroku* Buddha Seated Figure seen at Dongo in Takada city be designated as a National Important Cultural Property. In terms of 'national important cultural property' this is the second case in Takada next to the Main Temple of *Fudo-in*.

Miroku Buddha Seated Figure is the image of Buddha of *Miroku-ji* temple. The statue is a large sized one. The main part of it is 147 cm tall and almost the whole body including its legs is made of only one hardwood. The good figure of statue full of bodily beauty with a full bust remains grave and dignified, and its roundish, peaceful face and the lines of its clothes as well tell us that it is dated to about the end of 10th century or to about the beginning of 11th century.

Among the works of statues of the period it is said to be rare to find that the tracery patterns are carved on its earlobes and that the expression is used that the lines on the knees are gathered up and reaches its ankles.



The Haloes and the pedestals were added to the statue in the Edo period and its surface was also lacquered in that period, though there was not so much adaptation to it. The whole bodies are in good condition now.

In Nara prefecture there remain many old-styled images of Buddha by wood carving used only one wood, and the *Miroku* Buddha Seated Figure niched in *Miroku-ji* temple has come to be highly appreciated in the history of sculpture as a spectacular among a few great works of *Miroku* Buddha statues.

Miroku Buddha seated figure is kept at the Tokyo National Museum until the end of May, and then it is to be exhibited at the Nara National Museum in which it is deposited at a time. However, it is now discussed whether or not it should be held for a several years in a certain special institution in Kyoto in order to repair it.

It is regrettable to say that the original figure cannot be appreciated now, but it can be said that Takada city has another heritage she can make a boast of.

School Introduction: UKIANA-NISHI (municipal) Elementary School



[English lessons by an Australian teacher]

The school district, behind which Mt. *Katsuragi* rises, covers a residential area located in the northwest part of the Nara Basin, that is, it is situated in the southern part of Yamato Takada City. The school celebrated the 30th anniversary of its foundation last year, and it is the latest school founded in Takada. 366 pupils (180 boys, 186 girls), all of whom are very obedient and friendly as well, learn there eagerly and cheerfully. They exchange morning greetings warmly and there are many who take an active part in the school cleaning every day, so the corridors are all clean because pupils wipe the floors with their damp cloths very hard.

The playground is the largest (11,680 m²) of all in the city. They play naturally and actively there, doing ball games, walking on stilts, unicycling, playing tag and so on. Twice a month the school has a special time called "Golden Time" at lunch break for the pupils to play more in the playground. Happily the pupils have 40 minutes then.

The time is longer than usual by 20 minutes, so they are able to play to the fullest. They are looking forward to enjoying the happy time.

Taking an event in autumn for example, the school holds "A Baked Sweet Potato Meeting" as the whole school assembly. In May pupils plow a field for sweet potatoes at a corner of the playground and in autumn they bake them in burned chaff piled up a mountain of hulls. After that they enjoy eating baked sweet potatoes all together. At the assembly they invite volunteers in the school area who helped them with their work like making rows of sweet potatoes and who took care of them about seed beds and manure or fertilizer, and they enjoy various games with the volunteers and also they enjoy the sweet potato contest with them.

The volunteers help pupils with their English learning and they watch them on their way to school in the morning every day.

The volunteers' cooperation or support in many ways with the school enables the pupils to spend their happy days in a variety of activities.

Grandparents Day

Grandparents Day is celebrated as part of National Seniors Week. The last day of term one, the 5th April, saw Dunoon Public School holding Grandparents Day.

Students were encouraged to invite their grandparents to the school for a concert and morning tea. The parents provide the morning tea. We have two grandchildren attending the school so have attended the special function for the last few years. The children performed an impressive display of songs as well as playing the marimbas, an instrument which plays a big part in Dunoon School's music program. Each year a delegation of students attend the Sydney Opera House and the Entertainment Centre to play the marimbas in concert.



Relay for Life



[Mayor (left) in the event]



Relay for Life Lismore and Surrounding Villages was held on the 28th April. It is a major fundraiser for the Cancer Council.

Lismore managed to raise \$116,000. People register and commit to raising funds for Cancer research by walking from 3pm on the Saturday til 9am on the Sunday morning. It is very popular for survivors and carers of people with cancer as well as ones who have lost a family member or friend to cancer. This years message was hope both for the survivors as well as a cure for the future. Lismore had a huge effort put in by 100 teams consisting of about 1,000 people. Cancer fundraising is ongoing, later in May many will contribute to Australia's Biggest Morning Tea.

Colleen Virtue

What we would like to do in Lismore

The following 5 students were selected to be the exchange students delegated this year by Takada city. The 5 senior high school students are going to visit Lismore, Australia, for 14 days from July 25 through August 7, being accompanied by Ms. Hiroko Yokoi, an English teacher at Katashio junior high school.

【 Ms. Hiroko Yokoi, English teacher 】



I'm honored to have this opportunity to support them since I always dreamed of staying abroad same as they do when I was their age. I want them to enjoy cultural differences between Australia

and Japan and I hope they can discover their possibilities through this project. I will do my best as much as I can.

【 Ms. Mizuki Akai 】



I would like to talk with local people in Lismore as much as possible to learn about Australia a lot. I am sure it will be of great use for my future life. Of course

I will try to tell people in Lismore not only how wonderful Japan is, but also how nice a place Takada City is.

【 Ms. Honoka Oshikawa 】



I would like to talk with as many people in Lismore as possible to learn how important it is for us to join up with each other in everything and also I

want to know how precious it is to understand each other. As an exchange student I hope various experience I gain there will be very helpful in my future life.

News of Death



All of a sudden sorrowful news came to us that Mr. Hirohiko Ikeuchi (age 79), the ex-president and present

advisor of the Yamato-Takada Sister City Association, passed away on May 7. During his lifetime he exerted himself to promote goodwill between Takada and Lismore.

All the members of the Association were genuinely grieved at the loss of him. We sincerely pray our last respects to him.



【 Ms. Miduho Hiramii 】



Before everything else I would like to understand a variety of differences between Japan and Australia. And at the same time

I want to enjoy learning some differences in Lismore. I really hope that I will be able to tell Lismore citizens about some of the wonderful points of Japan I love very much.

【 Ms. Kayo Yamano 】



I would like to learn what we call natural English, which I've had no opportunity to use. By using it, if possible, I want to tell

local people in Lismore how lovely it is to say, "*Itadaki-masu*" or "*Gochisou-sama*" before or after each meal. I want to tell them that these Japanese words have wonderful meanings in them.

【 Ms. Mana Yamano 】



I would like to deepen the friendship between Lismore and our city Takada. So I must learn manners and customs of local

people as well as their culture. I want to actively understand them much better. I also want to tell them the beauty of the Japanese own characters through calligraphy. I hope they will be interested in it.