

Second visit to Lismore

It was the second time to go to Lismore for me, so I had been looking forward to going back there and seeing Mayor Jenny Dowell and others in Lismore who I met last time. Nature is very beautiful and we could see koalas, kangaroos, whales and dolphins. One of my favorite things in Lismore is walking around Byron bay with beautiful views.



I was impressed with warmness of host family and we enjoyed going out and talking to each other.

We had precious experiences. I really appreciate that, all of you. I wish our friendship and bonds will be stronger than ever before.



Mika Ogawa

English teacher
of Yamato Takada
commercial high school

Flood-funds already handed to Lismore

The torrential rains together with strong winds started to rage over the city of Lismore, Australia, on June 3 this year and the flood due to them caused untold damage to Lismore. Yamato Takada City began a fund-raising campaign to Yamato Takada citizens. The sum of the donated fund-raising money came to 628,000 yen. The exchange students this year directly handed the whole sum of the donations to Mrs. Jenny Dowell, mayor of Lismore City Council, when they paid a courtesy call on the mayor on July 29.



Thanks words

I am very appreciative of the concern that you and the Yamato Takada council staff have shown to me and to Lismore since the flood. I am happy to report that we are all safe and well.

Your offer of support is very kind however as Lismore is all back to normal now we have no need for it.

As always your kindness and extension of friendship is very generous.

Jenny Dowell



The Bamboo Shoots

A local newsletter quarterly issued
Yamato Takada Lismore Sister City Association, Nara, Japan
Autumn Issue, 2016

No.169

Contact :

Yamato Takada Lismore Sister City Association

TEL : 0745-22-1101

<http://www.city.yamatotakada.nara.jp/lismore/>

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

Bamboo English Classes start



The Bamboo English classes have started as one of the international exchange programs conducted by The Lismore • Yamato Takada Sister City Association. The English classes, one for kindergarteners and the other for elementary schools, are practiced twice a month for 4 to 12 year-old children living in Yamato Takada city.

Using the so-called human five senses, children are expected to enjoy singing in English and dancing with Mr. Claudio Lopez, a native speaker of English, and some of the members of the association as well. What is more, in the programs they will be able to enjoy easy everyday English conversation through familiar topics of their daily life.



Instructor in charge

Mr. Claudio Lopez from the USA, living in Yamato Takada city and working as ALT of English for kindergartens and elementary schools in Nara Prefecture.



The path to success!

Since my arrival to Japan and living in Yamato-takada with my family. I found a special place in this city. When I was introduced to the Lismore -yamato takada sister city association program bamboo English, I knew it was an excellent opportunity to teach inspiring students the English language. As an ALT in UDA city, everyday I see students and even teachers asking and wanting to learn more English because they want to succeed in the future.

Personally, my goal as an English teacher is to help and teach the students here in Yamato-takada with English as a second because I know they really want to learn. With our dedication and commitment in helping students

achieve their goals, this is why I really like the Bamboo English program because it is an excellent opportunity for kids and especially their parents to interact with English in a very fun and positive way. It provides a great and fun lesson experience with our team of experienced native Japanese teachers whom also know English which they are also dedicated to help students become more involved.

The bamboo English program has helped and guided me to become a better teacher because it has given me access to interact with students helping them learn the language which is accessible to everybody who wants to learn. It is an excellent opportunity for your children to go to bamboo English to get first hand experience in a new language.

Questionnaires: Yamato Takada Exchange Students



1) What attracted you most in Lismore city?

- There were so many beautiful brick buildings there, which was different in Japan.
- The suburbs of Lismore city were abundantly blessed with nature and cattle were put out to pasture there.
- Lismore, as a whole, was beauty itself and also very large with neat rows on either side of each street.
- Few traffic lights were there in Lismore, which surprised us.
- There was a little difference in altitude here and there, so at intersections motor vehicles curved in a circle, which was a little funny and interesting to us.

2) What places appealed to you or what scenes impressed you most on your memories?

- The most impressive place was Byron Bay, The ocean spread before us and the lighthouse of Byron Bay were very beautiful. I saw wild dolphins swimming there.
- Though I was very much interested in all the places I visited, the waterfall, where my host family took me on a holiday, was especially mysterious to me.
- As for me, Cadina High School was very impressive and unforgettable.
- The West Factory impressed me most. Though entering a rubbish disposal facility is strictly prohibited like in Japan, we were happily allowed to see how to do the work in a certain factory in Lismore. In addition, we were able to see wild koalas in the botanical garden next to the factory. Koalas made my stay in Lismore very happy.
- After all nothing was more impressive than Byron Bay on the easternmost point of Australian Continent.

3) What surprised or bothered you in terms of the differences of culture, manners and customs?

*About life (inconvenient, troublesome or good points):

- We were able to take a shower, but unable to soak in a bathtub.
- We had to go to bed earlier than when in Japan.
- People in Lismore don't change their clothes every day, that is, not very often.
- Toilet seats were cold.
- Host families believed in Christianity and went reading the Bible and singing hymns in churches or Kingdom Chapels.
- I couldn't get used to taking off the shoes before entering my house in Lismore.
- Most of the Lismore citizens were really open-minded (we Japanese aren't very open-minded though) it was easy for us exchange students to be on friendly terms with them.

*About life at school (through interaction among local students):

- About manners and appearance local students were really free to have personal hairstyles and to wear pierced earrings though we Japanese students are not so free in Japan.
- Local students enjoyed their life at school in a more relaxed manner than Japanese students. Their school rules were not so strict as those in Japanese schools.
- Almost all students in Lismore were very friendly.
- They were eager to express their feelings and opinions.
- In Lismore high school subjects in arts and humanities were very distinguished, compared to those in the actual state of Japanese high schools.
- It was more difficult for us to interact with local students in English than to talk to adult people, because old persons tried to speak English more slowly than students did.
- We enjoyed free time talking to local students and also having sweets and snacks outside school.

4) What impressions did you have during your stay with your host family?

- My host family took me to Byron Bay and the zoo, where we spent a happy time.
- There were many children in my host family and I soon became close to them. Of course I had a good time with them talking to one another, playing some games and so on.
- My host family told me how to play board games and chess, which were very popular in Australia.
- I had a lot of happy memories. When my host family and I went for a walk with their dogs, we had fun talking to each other, which made me very happy.
- My host family took me to the zoo on a holiday and I was able to get close to nature. We took pictures of a crocodile, which we picked up, and saw Aboriginal dances. I told their children how to play old maid and we played it with them at home. We also enjoyed playing some games on tablet with them.

5) How could you enjoy interacting with local students over Skype?

- I felt very happy because my local friends told me that I had spoken good English at my presentation.
- I felt a little strange anew when I talked to people in Yamato Takada city on Skype. I thought that I was playing an important role between Lismore and Yamato Takada.
- I thought it wonderful to get close to each other, however far it was from Takada to Lismore.
- I got nervous when I talked on Skype, and I breathed a sigh of relief hearing Japanese after a long while.
- I was very happy to have an excellent opportunity of speaking English before mayors and city officers of both cities, though I got very nervous at my presentation on Skype.



6) How do you make use of your experiences as exchange students in the future?

- Since I noticed I could not make myself understood in English when I talked to local students and local citizens, I'd like to speak English much better.
- My first experience in Lismore and interaction with local students were good enough for me to live a useful life in the future. I made up my mind to take advantage of these from now on.
- I would like to be what we call a world-wide person living in such a globalized society as today.
- I couldn't understand English spoken by my host family completely. So I do want to study English much harder. As I visited a lot of places with my host family and also I was taken to some places like schools and facilities where only we exchange students could go, I thought I had to tell various kinds of people in Yamato Takada city about this exchange student system.
- I am poor at speaking in public still now, but I could gain the confidence to speak up in company through my experiences this time. In Australia I came to take a much more positive attitude than before, so I will try to think positively and actively about my future life.

