

# JETAA Journal

Canberra Chapter

**WINTER 2004**

## CONTRIBUTORS

Roderick Siebel  
Lucy Shields  
Jenny Fielden  
Christy Burns  
Grant Barton

Many thanks to the contributors to this newsletter. I was delighted by the amount of submissions I received. The best newsletters are an amalgam of news from everyone. Please send your contributions to me at [ericaoakley@optusnet.com.au](mailto:ericaoakley@optusnet.com.au) Japan related articles, photos, reviews, recipes, news items are all appreciated. Even just a paragraph or two makes all the difference! The **deadline** for the next newsletter is **November 15th 2004**.

Happy Reading!

Erica Oakley - Designer & Editor

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## SAYONARA NEW JETS

**A Farewell Cocktail Reception** was held at the Ambassador's Residence to say farewell to the successful Canberra JET applicants on Thursday 22nd July. Around 50 guests attended.

Guests were formally attired and there was a sense of subdued excitement in the air. His Excellency Mr Kenzo Ohshima gave a warm welcome speech to the new JET participants.



**President of JETAA Roderick Siebel**

JETAA Canberra President Roderick Siebel, gave a witty speech, "We expect our 2004 JETs to charge in and charge ahead. As new jets, you probably really will feel like part of a large machine. If there is such a thing, you are a vital component...Both groups - CIRs and ALTs - are the public face of Japan's international relations policy."

Roderick described the JETs debut in Japan as metaphorically entering an "enchanted forest", and urged returnees to become involved with

JETAA.

Roderick also thanked JETAA for their input in preparing the successful candidates for life in Japan and in the recruitment process.

He also urged returnees to contribute their new skills and experiences and enthusiasm to their local JETAA chapter.

Next, each of the new JETs gave a speech in turn. Meet the new JETs on the next page....



**H.E Mr Kenzo Ohshima, Ambassador of Japan**



From Left: Gregory Pampling, Nathan Poore, Roderick Siebel, Georgia Wemyss, Daniel Julian, Lucy Shields, Bill Edwards, Patricia Tsen, Alex Manning, Jenny Fielden, Lalindra Gunasenara, Erica Oakley

### NEW JETS:

#### WHO LEFT CANBERRA

Lalindra Gunasenara  
Jade Carson  
Lyndon Christie  
Alana Christoff  
Sally Dunbar  
Gregory Pampling  
Nathan Poore  
Patricia Tsen  
Joshua Young

#### WHERE TO?

Japan (Fukuoka)  
Mie  
Kochi, Sukumo-shi  
Shimane Prefecture, Nishinoshima-cho  
Hiroshima-ken, Takehara-shi  
Oita Prefecture, Ogi-machi,  
Oita Prefecture, Ume-machi,  
Okayama Prefecture, Kume-cho,  
Oita Prefecture, Azimu-machi

## NEW JETs PROFILED

What kind of person is a successful JET applicant these days? Editor Erica Oakley interviewed some of the lucky candidates at their farewell reception in Canberra...

**Lalindra Gunasenkar**a will be an ALT in Nakama City, Fukuoka.

Lalindra first became interested in Japan upon hearing the travel stories of cherry blossoms and other cultural phenomena, from his father's friend.

Lalindra, of Sri Lankan and Australian background, had already been interested in Japanese manga and martial arts .

He went on an AJS cultural exchange to Japan for 2 weeks and stayed with a host family. This experience was most insightful. He found Japanese people to be compassionate and helpful.

**Greg Pampl**ing will be an ALT in Ogi-machi, in Oita Prefecture.

Greg is impressed with the professionalism of the JET Program, and finds the lead up to going on the program to be well organised.

Greg first became interested in Japan through a couple of Japanese friends. He answered a newspaper ad and worked for NOVA for 10 months, after which he thought he had better enrol in a Japanese course.

Greg has a BA in History and

German, and a Master of Asian Studies, and a diploma of Modern Languages. He has also completed six months of a Dip Ed.

Greg is keen to compare the language education system in Japan with that in Australia.

**Patricia Tsen** will be an ALT in Kume-cho, Okayama Prefecture.

Patricia started studying Japanese in year 7 and is fascinated by Japanese culture. She is a member of the ANU tea ceremony club and is keen to participate in tea ceremonies in Japan. She also worked with a master calligrapher while in Japan, and is keen to do calligraphy again.

Patricia won a Mombusho scholarship in Okayama. There she developed a love for the simplicity of Japanese life.

Patricia, of Malaysian descent has a BA in Tourism, and has completed six months of an ESL teaching course. She is keen to learn about the Japanese Education system, and get some practical teaching experience.

**Nathan Poore** will be a CIR in Ogi-machi, Oita Prefecture.

He has been enthusiastically studying Japanese since primary school, and has been on exchange to Japan.

Nathan faces new challenges in Japan, as he has never lived in a town with around 4000 people before, and has an image of a cute country town in his mind.

Nathan is keen to teach Chinese in Japan, and to change the thoughts of young Japanese about foreigners.

## NEW JETS

From left to right:

Patricia Tsen  
Greg Pampl  
Nathan Poore  
Lalindra Gunasenkar



## PRESIDENT'S PIECE



**A curious thing** happens when

we go on JET. Time seems to start again from August. While it has a lot to do with starting a new life in an unfamiliar country, especially for Australian JETs, it also means a switch from freezing Julys to sweaty ones.

And it is a shock to turn up back in Canberra on the first of September, after three or four years away, to find that a) it's freezing and b) people are planning Christmas parties (as opposed to enkais).

September 1 2004 marks three years back in Australia after JET for me. The transition was difficult but made easier by having a support network around. For me, that network has solidly been built around my JET Alumni activities. It has been my pleasure (and honour) to be re-elected into the role of president for a second year. Jenny Fielden (Kumamoto) is now the Vice President; Lucy Shields (Kagawa) Treasurer; Alex Manning (Saitama) Webmaster; Alison Jost (Fukuoka) and Bici Byrnes (Shiga) Social Coordinators; Majdie Hordern (Okayama) Orientation Coordinator; and Erica Oakley (Shimane) the Newsletter Editor.

This is our first newsletter for 12 months. Hopefully they will become a bit more regular in the future. Thank you to Erica and all the contributors to this edition.

For those of you who are on the email list, you will know that life in Canberra is busy and that there is always something on the boil. Last October Canberra hosted the 10th anniversary celebrations of the Canberra-Nara Sister City relationship, and JETAA played key roles in providing and organising volunteers, attending events (I did the 4km fun run) and was represented on the committee. We also provided volunteers for the annual Japan-Australia Sister Cities conference. From November 2003, we have been involved in assisting the Embassy with the selection process for the 2004 JETs, and from May this year, we welcomed, taught and then farewelled our 2004 proteges.

JETAA Canberra also has a slew of social events - from the Shinnenkai held at IORI restaurant in Civic in January, to a much-anticipated (drive-visit-eat-stay) trip to Cowra, softball tournaments, ohanami picnics. To keep in touch with what's going on in Canberra's Japan-Community, make sure your email address is up-to-date and on our list.

I hope to see you in the next few months. Stay warm or cool wherever you are in the world.

Roderick Siebel  
President, JETAA Canberra  
(Nagasaki ALT 98-01)

## LOST & FOUND

### WHO LEFT CANBERRA

Takayuki Mori  
(First Cultural Secretary, Embassy of Japan)  
Yoichi Ohno  
(Cultural Attache, Embassy of Japan)  
Leisa MacLellan  
Sam Dyer  
Suzette Raison De Kori  
Minister Ukita (Embassy)

### WHERE TO?

Tokyo, Japan  
Gifu, Japan  
Brisbane  
Adelaide  
North Queensland  
Dakar, Bangladesh

## PAST EVENTS

A Welcome dinner for New JETs was held on 11 June at Koreana in Dickson.

JETAA helped organise the **JET Orientation** which ran smoothly. Thanks to Majdie, Keith, Alison and others involved in the process.

A **Q&A night** was held for new JETs. Thank you to Majdie and Jenny for their presentations.

A **Farewell Dinner for new JETs** was held on July 14th at Tip Top restaurant in Civic. 2004 JETs departed for Japan on 25th July.

A **Japanese Film Night** was held on August 12. The film was a comedy called "Nabbie's Love".

## COMING UP.....

One of the advantages of being in JETAA Canberra is that we are invited to attend the functions and events of AJS - The Australia Japan Society via the email list.

Coming up is a **Australia Japan Goodwill Softball Challenge** on Saturday 9 October 2004 at Turner Primary School oval. The warm up is from 10:15 a.m., and games start from 11:00am and go till around 3pm. We need enthusiastic players - enthusiasm is the most important thing, skill level is not particularly so! Leo Yamaguchi is the AJS Captain. Please contact him (0404 841 505) and tell him you

want to be in it. AJS has kindly offered to have combined AJS/JETAA teams. Also, Bill Bannear from ANU Club would like to also have a **cricket game** so anyone who would like to play cricket after the softball please contact Leo Yamaguchi.'

If you're coming along (but not playing) contact either Roderick or Social Coordinator Bici Byrnes so we can advise numbers for lunch.

JETAA Canberra is looking at designing and printing **special Alumni T-shirts**. We may look at a different logo or use the same logo.

The annual **ANU Kabuki** is coming up at 7.30pm on **Friday 3 and Saturday 4 September** at Band Room in Peter Karmel Building, School of Music, ANU (next to Llewellyn Hall). Admission is free, until tickets run out. Contact Roderick and he will make a group booking for SATURDAY 4 SEPTEMBER. Members will meet at Great Wall Chinese restaurant (close to ANU) at 5.30 for a quick dinner, OR meet at the ANU School of Music centre at 7pm (show starts 7.30pm). After Kabuki finishes at 9.30pm, we'll go for a few post-match drinks at the Wig n Pen.

Also, recent returnees are invited to **welcome home drinks on Sep. 10**.

For more details on events in general make sure you are on the JETAA email list. **Contact Roderick for details at [president@canberra.jetalumni.org](mailto:president@canberra.jetalumni.org)**

## SOME QUOTES ...

**"JET could be the start** of a whirlwind international career as a foreign minister or it might be just the thing to have you appreciate farm-life in Yass. But FOR MANY, IT ISN'T SO MUCH THE JET PROGRAM THAT KICKSTARTS THEIR POST JAPAN LIFE, BUT THEIR EXPERIENCES WITH JET ALUMNI."

"..the reason it (JET Alumni) is something that is there at all is due to the dedication of ex-JETs to make it work. " - Roderick Siebel

## Back to Japan - Obon

**Remember Obon?** I remember dancing in the festival streets in a long line with my yukata. Later I was awarded with a humungous watermelon for my 'elegant' dancing! In fact I was quite inept, but I think it was a show of 'international relations'.

Obon is likely to be the first festival new JETs encounter in Japan. It was for me. I was impressed by the boats with lanterns and the fireworks on the river.

- Erica Oakley

### Here is a brief history:

July 15 (Lunar calendar), or August 15 (Solar calendar) is celebrated in Japan as "Bon" or Urabon, The Feast of Lanterns, especially by the Japanese Buddhists. It is said that during the year, on this day only, the iron pot in hell is opened for the deceased.

Buddhist services are held at temples and private houses for ancestors, relatives and friends who died in the past, and particularly for those who passed away during the past year.

Many people living away from their homeland return for the family Obon service, an important social event.

It is customary to light lanterns at all houses to guide the spirits of ancestors

on the day.

The most important feature of the service is the offering of food. The ancestors are offered rice, vegetables, fruits, cakes, sweets and flowers. Special foods are prepared and served to guests and friends. It is religious day, but also quite a joyful social occasion.

"Toro-Nagashi" or lantern floating is the picturesque ending to the Obon service. To guide the ancestral spirits back to the other world, little floats are lighted with candles and floated down rivers or on the sea. People eagerly watch them float away.

"Bon-Odori" or Bon dance, a religious folk dance was originally to comfort the spirit of the dead during the obon season. It is enjoyed by men, women, and even little children. It differs according to locality, as each district has its own songs and styles of dancing. Recently many modern or even foreign songs and dances have been introduced to these programs.

Thank you **Lucy Shields** for this contribution.

(reference:<http://mothra.rerf.or.jp/ENG/Hiroshima/Festivals/50.html> and <http://www.bonodori.net/E/>)

## OBON DANCING



## JETAAI Conference

### New York

I represented the Canberra chapter in February this year at the 2003/2004 JETAA International Conference in New York.

The goals of International Conferences are to work on communication between countries, support new & smaller chapters, improve communications between JETAA and Ministry of Foreign Affairs/CLAIR, and contribute ideas to improve the JET Programme for current and future JETs.

Attendees this year came from Australia, Brazil, Canada, France, Germany, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, UK, US, and new members from Russia and Jamaica.

A special committee now exists at CLAIR to re-evaluate and revise the JET Programme. Some **current strategies and suggestions** made at the conference are: 1. to have promotional tours by CLAIR to universities and remote areas; 2. to publish the "After JET Prep Guide" to distribute at the Returnees' Conference; 3. to explore the possibility of a salary raise for 4th and 5th year participants; 4. to consider applicants with qualifications other than university; 5. to consider raising the age limit again; and 6. to address issues for JETs such as rent subsidy, CIRs being used as ALTs, level of CIRs' Japanese and under-utilisation of ALTs.

There was talk about corporate spon-

sorship. Citibank offered US\$2000 to JETAAI and a 'special deal' to current JETs in exchange for promoting Citibank at orientation events. JETAAI is also looking into getting some better deals from other companies.

We agreed that from now on the International Conference will be replaced with a meeting of the country representatives and the JETAAI executive. This will mean that country reps will now have a truly representative role, and will take ideas and suggestions from the Regional Conference (or directly from chapter representatives at other times of the year) and bring back the results of the International Meeting to pass on to each chapter. There may be a conference with reps from every chapter every 5 or 10 years, though, beginning with the 2005 Conference in Kobe (held concurrently with the Aichi Expo by Aichi-ken and Hyogo-ken). If you're interested in representing Canberra there next year, start getting involved now!

The next JETAA International Meeting is to be held in Portland, Oregon, in the USA in November this year.

You can check out the entire report and other JETAAI info at [www.jetalumni.org](http://www.jetalumni.org).

Jenny Fielden, Vice President  
JETAA Canberra



## A Story from a Current JET

**Grant Barton** in Seta-Azuma, Gunma-ken writes:

“Since coming to Japan, I have tried to engulf myself in all things Japanese – the food, the culture, the lifestyle. Oh, and of course the work. So whenever an opportunity arises that allows me to get involved, I always try to say yes. That is how I ended up in the Tatebayashi Matsuri on 17th July.

Our fellow Canberran, Nicky Willcox, is the CIR in Tatebayashi – one of the 11 cities in Gunma, and fondly known to us as Tutty-B. So, when asked by her friends if I wanted to help carry a portable Shrine through the streets of Tutty-B, I said “Of course!” Not really knowing what I was getting myself into, I drove the 2 hours from my little mountain village down to Tutty-B, anticipation making me smile the entire way. I was greeted by men wearing very little, who were filled with energy and a drop or two of beer. After a few more drops of the good stuff, we headed off to the

Matsuri. Dressed in a happi and with a bandana wrapped around my head, I mixed and sweated with the barely-dressed locals and a few other ALTs, as we danced and stumbled our way down the street carrying the Mikoshi. Despite the fact it already weighed something resembling the weight of four cars, some members of our group – called Sakura-kai – decided it would only be advantageous to our dancing rhythm if they stood on the Shrine and yelled “Saa! Saa! Saa! Saa!”

In all, we and the Mikoshi bumped, danced and side-stepped our way down the street and back for about 2 hours, but I think I managed to carry it for no longer than 20 minutes. For the remainder of the time, my shoulders already sore and bruised, I assumed position behind the group and clapped in rhythm and encouragement. Nicky was kind enough to follow us most of the way carrying bottles of water for us.

It was an awesome night; one I will remember for a long time. So now, the Tutty-B Matsuri is over for another year, which raises the question - Will I carry Mikoshi again next year?

Of course! “

## LOST & FOUND

### WELCOME (BACK) TO CANBERRA

Lucy Shields (CIR)  
Andrew Rayner  
Robert Sluce  
Loan Huynh  
Kath Mann  
Claudette Bateup  
Erica Oakley (CIR)  
Katherine Ivansson  
Fontessa Brusse  
Daniel Julian  
Georgia Wemyss (CIR)  
Matthew French  
Majdie Hordern  
Yagi Kazuhiro  
(First Cultural Secretary, Embassy of Japan)  
Yamauchi Nobuaki  
(Cultural Attache, Embassy of Japan)  
Lisa McLachlan (CIR)

### WHERE FROM?

Kagawa via JETAA VIC/TAS  
JETAA VIC/TAS  
Kagoshima  
Ishikawa  
Ishikawa  
Gifu  
Shimane via JETAA WA/NT  
Kumamoto  
Kagoshima  
Saga  
Saga  
Niigata via JETAA Sydney  
Okayama  
  
Japan  
  
Japan  
Kochi

## Another Story Continued

Cristy Burns, our former treasurer writes: “Got back yesterday, but am still riding the high on nearly two weeks in Ogasawara, a group of islands 26 hours from Tokyo by boat (there’s no airport). I got my dive licence (in Japanese!?! ) and spent every day with sharks, dolphins, giant tuna, sea turtles, and squillions of delicious fish (it’s true that Japanese divers say 'yum' instead of 'wow').

Visibility was 25 to 30 m, and the water a most respectable 20-plus degrees. Drool. Incredible islands, amazing people. We ate out every night, eating passionfruit and melon, fresh sashimi, Kobe beef, cold beers.

The stars were incredible.

An amazing break. After so much time on boats I am wrestling with land-sickness at work. Today I didn't even notice the earthquake!

In less tropical news, work wavers between flat out and relaxed.. Between translating and editing I'm learning Japanese, studying (editing and publishing), and writing (finally cracked a niche writing health/fitness at Metropolis mag (Tokyo's number one gaijin lifestyle mag - yippee!). When not chained to the computer I am sweat-



ing my way up the learner's slope at paragliding school, lugging a giant canopy behind me and nursing the crash-landing bruises (my Japanese comprehension turns to zero when someone is yelling 'brake, brake!' through a loudspeaker).

In exciting cultural news, I found a shop at Tokyo station that sells Vegemite, and a pair of jeans that extend to my ankles without requiring a belt.

I am yet to brave a Japanese hair-dresser and hence am flirting with an afro (and some would say its no longer flirtation).

Not sure what the future holds, though today I nearly turned around and got back on the boat to paradise. For the meantime, a friend has discovered an outdoor pool, and construction has just finished on an outdoor cafe (few

## JETRO TEST

### ASSESS YOUR JAPANESE COMMUNICATION SKILLS IN THE WORKPLACE

Application period: 11 August - 29 September

Fee: \$40 (inclusive of GST)

Test date: 28th November 2004

Time: 1:00 - 3:45pm

For more information contact

JETRO Sydney Ph: (02) 9241 1181

library@jetro.org.au www.jetro.org.au

## Gommae Spinach

Kindly contributed by Lucy Shields

**For anyone who's** spent time in the Japanese countryside you're sure to have come across Gommae Spinach. Gommae is a Japanese side dish which can just be translated as "sesame dressing". Gommae Spinach is one of the simplest, healthiest and most delicious of many Gommae dishes. Enjoy!

### Ingredients:

Fresh spinach  
2 tbsp miso (soya bean paste)  
2 tbsp sugar  
2 tbsp ground sesame  
1 tbsp sake (Japanese rice wine)

### Preparation:

- 1) Wash the spinach well and put it with the roots first into boiling water.
- 2) Boil the spinach for about one minute. Be careful not to overcook it.
- 3) Cool the spinach down under cold water. Then, press the water out of the spinach and cut the spinach into about 3 cm long pieces.
- 4) Prepare the dressing: Give the miso, sake, sugar and sesame into a bowl and mix it well.
- 5) Mix the spinach with the dressing as shown on the picture and serve it in small bowls

## Japanese Restaurants in Canberra

How do they rate?

**IORI** ★★★★★

41 East Rv, Sydney Building

**TASUKE** ★★★★★

120 Alinga St, Canberra

**SHOGUN** ★★

1st floor, Garema Centre

**SIZZLE BENTO** ★★

U3-4 "City Walk" Garema Court

**THE CHINESE**

**BOOTH UDON** ★★★★★

in Belconnen Westfield food court

Do YOU agree?

Write and let us know.....

## AUCKLAND

### NEW ZEALAND REGIONAL CONFERENCE

Alex and Majdie will jet off to NZ for the annual excellent adventure - or ANZ JETAA Regional Conference from 17-19 September. Alex and Majdie have worked hard this past 12 months to assist the group and we look forward to them bringing back lots of new ideas and enthusiasm from the conference. If you have any ideas or issues about the operation of the JET program or JET Alumni, that you would like Alex and Majdie to pursue at the conference, please email them to Roderick Siebel: [president@canberra.jetalumni.org](mailto:president@canberra.jetalumni.org)