

MEJIRO
GAKUEN

VOL.49

Mejiro Exchange

Mejiro University (Undergraduate, Postgraduate)
Mejiro University College
Mejiro Kenshin Junior and Senior High School

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JUNE 2014

Study Trip to Australia



Kana (left) participating in French class at St. Aloysius College

I went to Australia for 10 days during spring vacation. It was too short for me, but I really enjoyed this study tour. I went to Adelaide which is a very beautiful city. There are many buildings, and nature is everywhere.

My host family was very kind to me. My host mother, Linda, is good at cooking. My host father, Michael, is funny and kind. My host sister, Michaela, is very cute. I watched "Frozen" with her. She sings very well. I enjoyed that.

One day we visited St. Aloysius College. I joined French, English and math classes. Studying French is my dream. It was exciting but difficult for me. French pronunciation is so difficult, but I really enjoyed my time there because the students were very friendly to me. I also felt that Australian people are very kind because when I took the bus to go to school, people said thank you to the driver when they got off the bus. I was surprised. I thought it was very nice.

My best memory is going to Glenelg beach because it looks like a resort area. The sea was beautiful. I played in the water. It was very exciting.

I am very happy I could go to Australia to improve my English skills. This experience was wonderful for me. I will never forget it.

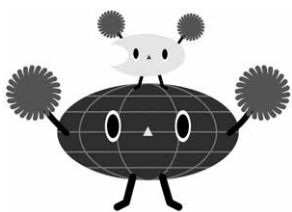
Next year will be the 20th anniversary of this study trip so I recommend it to anyone interested in going abroad.

Kana Miyasaka
Senior 2



The closing ceremony with the principal Ms. Paddy McEvoy, Ms. Margaret Dyer and host families

Mejiro Kenshin Sports Day



This year's Sports Day took place on May 13th at Tokyo Budokan. It was such an awesome experience! Everyone tried so hard and the activities were so fun. The whole day was so entertaining! I was really impressed with how fast everyone was in the races and how talented the cheerleading team is. It was really nice to see everyone work together and have lots of fun. Sport usually doesn't interest me a whole lot, but this day was definitely an exception! Everyone was really encouraging and supportive when it was my turn to partake in a sport, which was nice because I was a little nervous. It was quite different from sports



Ellie (center) participating in the Tamaire event with her team

day in New Zealand, but that just made it a more exciting and new experience. I partook in the three-legged race and Tamaire, a Japanese game where everyone throws balls into a basket on a tall pole. I was a little scared for the three-legged race because everyone was so fast, but it ended up being really fun. I could see that Mejiro Kenshin students have great teamwork!



All of the students warming up for the event

Tamaire was also really fun, as we don't have the sport in New Zealand. It was really intense when versing other classes, and funny to watch the teachers and parents try it. I'm so glad I got to experience this part of Mejiro and I will never forget it!

Ellie Saxby
Takapuna Grammar School

Studying Abroad in Japan



Tamaki (left) with her host sister and friends at Disneyland

exchange surpassed all of this without doubt.

This exchange was the first time travelling by myself overseas; a different country, different people and different lifestyle. I was beyond excited the moment I stepped off the plane and into Narita International Airport. The thought of me staying for six weeks in the opposite hemisphere to my family felt so surreal! I was greeted by my host family with a big welcome banner and lots of hugs. They were so affectionate and I literally became my host parents' second daughter!

During the winter holidays, I was taken to countless fun places. I spent a lot of time with my host sister and friends around Harajuku, Shinjuku and Shibuya. I would also say that I spent my Christmas Eve and day in the best possible way, at Disneyland! I spent my Christmas Eve with my family who visited all the way from Kyushu, and Christmas day with my host sister and her friends!

Whenever you hear the words 'language exchange', it conjures concepts of inflexibility, packed schedules, no communication with friends, and overall a boring and mildly satisfactory trip. However my six week stay in Tokyo was definitely none of the above. Because I have travelled to Japan many times before I wasn't really expecting much, but this

My host family and I then road-tripped to Kyoto, where we spent New Year's with their family. It was definitely the highlight of this whole trip; In particular, the snow was the most incredible first encounter. Although I was accustomed to the customs of Japan, the aspect that I was possibly most nervous for was school. As I go to an all-girls high school in Australia I was slightly nervous attending a co-educational school, but my thoughts immediately changed. The students were all so friendly, and they never failed to put a smile on my face! I made an enormous number of friends from different year levels, but I also created a strong friendship between the other exchange students from Canada and Tasmania. Of course, the school never ceased to amaze me how caring they were of us exchange students. The school organised a special timetable for the exchange students in which we participated in many different classes; calligraphy, Japanese, music, art, and we also helped our grade in English classes. We were also taken to sightsee, from Tokyo Tower to Studio Ghibli. Towards the end of our stay, we had the experience of wearing yukata. I must say that Mejiro is the only school I have enjoyed waking up early for!

To sum it all up this exchange was by far, the most memorable trip I have ever experienced. Yes, it was busy; the school days, the weekends and the holidays but it was incredible nonetheless. I want to thank Mejiro for making this opportunity possible for me, in particular, Ms. Morimoto, Ms. Strong and Ms. Goto. I also want to thank my incredible host family; I could never have asked for a better host family! Overall, it was such a special experience, I enjoyed every minute of it and I know it will be one of my memories that I will keep with me for the rest of my life.

*Tamaki Matsuo-Hoobin
Somerville House*



Ashleigh (center) with her host mother and sister

I really enjoyed my time in Japan. Being able to experience Japanese food, culture, people and places was an amazing experience. I really enjoyed going traveling to all different places and seeing what Japan is like from an up-close perspective. I really enjoyed staying with my host family and being taught all the different aspects of Japanese life from them and also tasting all the delicious Japanese home-cooked food! I loved being able to go to a Japanese school and seeing how different Japanese schools are from Australian schools. I really liked Japanese school and getting to know everyone and sharing happy moments with my classmates. When I first arrived in Japan my Japanese wasn't very good and I had no confidence in myself, but after going to school and listening and working on my Japanese I gradually became more confident. I really enjoyed the field trips the exchange students went on every Wednesday. I really liked touring around different places and being told about the history of places and enjoying a few laughs along the way. All in all I loved my exchange to Japan and would like to thank everyone who treated me with kindness and patience. I can't wait until I can go back to Japan to start a new adventure.

*Ashleigh Dobson
Ogilvie High School*

During the winter in mid-December, Tamaki and I went on exchange to Tokyo, Japan. The everyday experiences broadened both my cultural understanding and Japanese vocabulary during my stay. I am really grateful to have been given this opportunity.

My host family took me to various places including Disneyland, Osaka and various places in the Tokyo area. They were always supportive, and assisted me whenever I queried about something I didn't understand. The food was always amazing, doughnuts and *otono* alike, especially with New Year's around the corner. Being in Japan, I was able to apply my prior knowledge and learn new things along the way – as well meeting many friends with similar interests.

I enjoyed school life at Mejiro Kenshin, be it the intriguing classes offered to us exchange students to the food available at the cafeteria. The excursions I went to with other students were very thrilling, particularly the Mori Art Museum and Ghibli Museum. And the classes we took were interesting, and taught us a lot. The Japanese classes were stimulating, the calligraphy class was truly fun and throughout our English classes we got to go to different classes at times and see how they



Selina (second from left) with her host family

learn our language at school.

Everyone I met was very open and ecstatic in showing me new aspects of things I never knew about the country I love most. For example, I learned that an hour's worth of travel was barely anything and that schools in Japan have an extensive variety of clubs. Mejiro even has a cheerleading club. I admit that speaking Japanese all the time was difficult, but I am so happy I took away so much from my exchange. I would love to go back to Japan again, perhaps on exchange, but my first and unforgettable Mejiro exchange will remain the most inspiring of all!

*Selina Spiliopoulos
Somerville House*



Yasmine (left) and her host sister

places such as Disneyland, Toshimaen, Yokohama Hakkeijima Seaside Paradise and many shrines and temples. We often talked and laughed together and the closer we all got, the harder the thought of leaving became.

I learnt a lot about the Japanese language and culture at school. Studying calligraphy and helping

From December to March this year, I received the privilege of experiencing life as an exchange student at Mejiro Kenshin. I stayed with my host sister, Kaede, and her family, whom I came to love very much. They cared for me and took me to all sorts of fascinating

the English conversation classes was a really great learning experience for me. I often visited various school clubs such as the basketball, tea ceremony, light music, kendo, manga and badminton club. I was really glad to make many new friends at school. When I was with them, I could never stop smiling. I still keep in touch with them and am looking forward to meeting with them again someday.

I felt really at home in Japan. It had been my dream to travel there and experience life at a Japanese school for many years, so I am very grateful to have lived out my dream and as a consequence have created new ones. Someday I plan to come back to Japan to work and live there. Until then, I'm going to study Japanese really hard to become more competent.

*Yasmine Shabaneh
Ogilvie High School*

Studying Abroad in Australia

I studied abroad last year from June to September in Tasmania as an exchange student. I went to Ogilvie High School. Ogilvie High School is very large. Both the students and teachers were very kind and friendly. At Ogilvie, I could choose my favorite classes once every three weeks so I was able to attend a lot of classes and make many friends. And through conversations with my classmates, I was able to speak English.

My host family was very cheerful and kind. Four languages were spoken in the house because my host father comes from England and my host mother comes from Vietnam. In addition, they were hosting another exchange student from China. So, I learned not only English, but also other foreign languages and cultures, which was very interesting and a good experience for me. I went to many wonderful places with my host family. I especially liked Hastings Cave and the zoo. At the zoo, I saw Australian and Tasmanian animals like kangaroos, koalas, wombats, and Tasmanian Devils. On my last holiday, I went to Bruny Island with my host family. We camped there. There was a very clear beach and beautiful view. When it was time to say goodbye, my host father and mother said, "You are our other daughter. Come home anytime." When I heard this, I was really touched. I had a very wonderful time in Tasmania. I will never forget my experience there. Someday, I would like to visit Tasmania and my host family's house again.

Chiharu Sato
Senior 2

I went to Tasmania, Australia to study for three



Chiharu, Rin and Kaede with their host sisters in Australia

months. I first thought that I wanted to go to other countries when I went to Canada on my school trip last year. At first, I felt nervous and was homesick, but my host family was kind to me and I had so much fun thanks to them. I went to Ogilvie High School, which is my host sister's school. There were a lot of people from different countries there so I was able to make friends from many countries. We took classes like regular students. We had math, student support, art, fitness, music, Japanese, and P.E. classes. I liked music class the best because we were able to practice our instruments freely. I played the piano in music class and it got me interested in the piano. On every Tuesday and Thursday, Ogilvie High School had Breakfast Club. Breakfast is available for 20-cents for Breakfast Club members. I loved the club, so I went to it every time. Every weekend my host family took me to various places. I was very happy to go to the bakery. Australian culture was very different from

Japan and difficult for me to understand sometimes. Nobody knew Japanese so I spoke English all the time. I was able to improve my English, and I thought that I wanted to study lots of languages and go to many other countries in the future.

Rin Suzuki
Senior 2

I went to Tasmania, Australia for about three months. I learned many things through English.

There were five people in my host family: my father, mother, two older brothers and sister. My host sister, Yasmine, likes Japanese very much so we watched Japanese dramas on holiday. My host

brothers, Omar and Sami were always kind to me and taught me English. My family took me to many places around Tasmania. I went to some national parks, a museum, limestone cave, salmon pond, shopping, cinema and Port Arthur. There is a lot of nature in Tasmania. I could see many stars at night. It was very beautiful.

At school, I could choose my favorite classes. I studied Japanese, visual art, math, team sports, English, music, health and fitness. I liked fitness class the best because I did archery, jumped on a trampoline, played golf and went bowling. They were very fun.

During the exchange, I made many new friends. I joined the scouts and got to make even more friends there. I slept over many times with my friends. I'll never forget this experience. I want to thank my host family, teachers and students I met.

Kaede Aseda
Senior 2



Keyaki and Hana with students at Somerville House

I went to study in Brisbane, Australia as an exchange student from June to September of last year. The school I went to was called Somerville House. At school I learned English, French, art, music and P.E. All the classes were taught in English. It was hard for me, but my host sister and my friends helped me when I didn't understand. Japanese classes were very fun. The students' Japanese was very good. I also participated in Sports Day. It was very different from Japan's and I really enjoyed it. I also made a lot of friends at school. They were very kind to me and I enjoyed talking to them. My favorite time of school was morning tea. It would be very nice if there was something like it in Japan, too.

I was happy because I didn't only learn English; I also learned a lot about Australian culture and lifestyle. It was a great experience for me. I really miss my host family. I made many wonderful memories with them, especially when we went to the beach and the Gold Coast which was very impressive.

I think that studying abroad was the best experience I have ever had in my life. I didn't want to come back to Japan. Even now, I want to go there again. I'll never forget about the time I spent in Brisbane.

Keyaki Shimada
Senior 2

I studied abroad for about three months in Brisbane, Australia. The school I went to was called Somerville House.

It was my first time to study abroad so I was very excited and nervous. I stayed at the house of a family of four: my host father, mother, sister and brother. They were very kind to me. They took me to many places. We went to the park, zoo, beach, theater, ice skating and the city. I bought a lot of souvenirs for my family and friends in the city. Brisbane is really a beautiful city. There are a lot of shops. I especially like the chocolate shop, Max Brenner. I want to eat chocolate fondue at this shop again. Brisbane also has beautiful beaches. When I went to the beach with my host family, we swam in the sea and we made a mountain out of sand. I really enjoyed it. At school, I was able to make many friends. I was worried about talking with friends because I couldn't understand what they were talking about. But they spoke slowly and clearly for me. I learned about art, P.E., math, biology, Christian education, economics, Japanese and English with my host sister. During Japanese class, my teacher and friends held a surprise party for us on the last day of school. We ate some snacks, played card games, and took pictures. I had a wonderful time at school.

My friends were very kind to me. We went to the theater, shopping mall, and took *purikura*. I enjoyed it and I want to meet them again. Through this experience, I learned not only English, but also about differences in culture. I want to study English more and become a good English speaker. I was able to spend a lovely time in Australia. I would like to return to Australia someday.

Hana Morizumi
Senior 2

Internship Program



Janko with Japanese language students at Ogilvie High School

This trip was my second time to go overseas as a Japanese language assistant through Mejiro University's internship program. I went to Ogilvie High School which is a girls' school and New Town High School which is a boys' school. Each week I worked at Ogilvie for 3 days and New Town for 2 days. Both schools have students from grades 7 to 10. The students all love Japanese things like culture, food, fashion, anime and manga.

I tried to help out in any way that I could. I was happy to help the teachers and students. For example, I helped make

exercises and tests for grades 7-10. I also translated English into Japanese when exchange students from Japan had difficulty understanding English. Sometimes I helped other teachers in classes such as French, English, and history.

During the school holidays, I traveled around Australia. I really enjoyed it. I met many nice people at the backpackers, made friends, and went to see the city together with them.

I had a great time during my internship and will never forget this experience.

Junko Kusumoto

Alumnus, Department of Japanese and
Japanese Language Education
Mejiro University

Studying Abroad in Canada



Gen (second from left) with friends
at West Vancouver Secondary School

When you think of Vancouver, what comes to mind? For me, I recall the five months I spent there because it was one of the most significant experiences in my life.

I went to Vancouver to study for five months. I had never been to a foreign country before so everything that I learned and experienced was new and fresh. It was also my first time staying with a host family. In the beginning I was afraid and lacked the courage and resolve to make the most of my trip. When I realized this I began trying everything. As a result, I was able to make a lot of friends and learn about Canadian culture.

I also learned many other languages such as

Spanish and Chinese from my friends. In return, I taught them Japanese and about Japanese culture because they were really interested in Japan.

Thanks to everyone around me, like my teachers and friends at West Vancouver Secondary School, my homestay family and my own family, I was able to experience so many things. I really appreciate them because without their support, my trip would not have been as substantial as this. I will never forget this special experience because I was able to improve my English and grow as a person. If I have another opportunity, I would like to study abroad again.

Gen Shoda
Senior 2

When I arrived in Vancouver, I was so happy because I had wanted to go back after my junior high school trip to Canada. Studying abroad was difficult because I could not understand nor speak English very well, but I was very happy when I was able to converse with people. So I learned about the pleasure of talking with others.

I studied at West Vancouver Secondary School for about three months. The school was multicultural with many people from different countries. I was able to make friends from other countries. I took nine classes. I could choose the classes I wanted to take. My favorite class was photography because I enjoyed learning about it and I made many good friends.

On the weekends, I went out with my host family or friends. One day, I went volunteering with my host family to serve food to the homeless. It was my first time. Afterwards, I felt a real sense of accomplishment. Another day, I went to the Christmas market with my friends. The decorations, different kinds of food, and big Christmas tree were amazing. I had a great time.

I had an awesome time abroad because it was nice to meet people in Canada and I enjoyed my new experiences. I want to thank everyone who helped me, especially my host sister, Haruka. She helped me improve my English skills and grow as a person. I want to see her, my friends and teachers again. In the future, I want to develop my English skills more and more and make the best use of my experience abroad.



Mizuka (second from right) at the
Christmas market with friends

Mizuka Miura
Senior 2

Studying Abroad in New Zealand



Sonoka (right) with her host sister

I studied in New Zealand at Takapuna Grammar School from August to October of 2013. My life there was really exciting. At the end of my first week of school there was an event called International Evening. The students performed dances and songs from many countries at this event. Because I took a class on Maori culture, I danced the haka, a traditional dance of New Zealand, on the stage too.

All of the students there were very active and at first I was often surprised by the class style and atmosphere because it was entirely different from Japan. However, there were many foreign students from various countries and I could talk with them and spend very interesting days together.

I was really well taken care of by my host family, the Sprays. When we had a school holiday, I went on a trip to Wellington and Rotorua with my family. They treated me like their own daughter. They listened to my halting English and understood. I was really impressed by their kindness. I still remember what they said when I went back to Japan, "Return here anytime because this is already your home."

This exchange has been a very valuable experience for me. I met many people and discovered new things. I want to thank everyone for giving me this opportunity to challenge myself. I cannot wait to return to Auckland one day and visit Takapuna Grammar School again.

Sonoka Shimamura
Senior 2

VOL. 49 JUNE 2014

Mejiro Exchange is published biannually by Mejiro Gakuen. Views expressed in the ME do not necessarily reflect those of Mejiro Gakuen. Comments and submissions invited.