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Mejiro Exchange

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

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Study Trip to Australia

I went to Australia for ten days during spring vacation. My host family was like a real family to me. At St. Aloysius, my friend there invited me to sit next to her and eat with her group of friends. Every day I went to school by bus. I got used to going to school by myself in an unfamiliar city. When I got on the bus, I watched people carefully so that I could learn their manners. I noticed that some manners are different in Australia than in Japan. Australia respects all countries and cultures. I felt so proud to know that many people there are interested in Japan.

Now, I am keeping in touch with my lovely host family. I hope that our relationship continues for a long time. I think that I got better at English and I am motivated to study it harder.

Also, my horizons were broadened through experiencing a different lifestyle. I think this was the best experience of this study trip.



Yui (right) in art class

Yui Nagasaki
Senior 2



Group photo with the principal of St. Aloysius College

Mejiro Kenshin Sports Day

On the 12th of June, we participated in Mejiro Kenshin Sports Day. It was held at the Tokyo Metropolitan Gymnasium. It was really fun and everyone tried their best to win the competition. Generally, neither of us are very sporty people, but Mejiro's sports day was different. In New Zealand, sports day is usually made up of athletic sports, which we don't really like, but this sports festival was made up of events similar to games,



Taylor participating in the oonawatobi event

such as piggyback fights, so it was really fun.

The one sport that both of us enjoyed a lot was the club activity relay. Different clubs dressed up in different costumes that represented their club. For example, the football club wore their normal football uniform. This competition in particular didn't seem to be about winning and losing, but more to do with the fun everyone was having.

An event we both took part in was near the beginning, called *oodama korogashi*, which is an event where everyone works together in their respective coloured teams (red, white and blue) to pass a giant blow up ball down a line and then back to the front. The winning team was the one who was the fastest. We both had a lot of fun participating. Another one was *oonawatobi*, which we played with our classmates in our homeroom. The idea was to get fifteen people to jump together inside one huge skipping rope as many times as they could.

The Mejiro Kenshin students were very supportive and enthusiastic during every event, and because

of that, the day was even more fun. Sports day as a whole was a very good day and it will make a great memory to bring back to New Zealand. It is one of the many experiences from Japan that we will never forget.

Taylor Kaaho & Cherry Guo
Takapuna Grammar School



Cherry (second from left) participating in the eye of the typhoon event

Studying Abroad in Japan

I arrived in Japan on December the 28th and stayed until the 22nd of February. During my time I have had an amazing experience in Japan and have enjoyed living in Tokyo. Where I live in Australia it is only a small city, but I already knew Tokyo was a very big city. During my stay in Tokyo I have been to many places, such as Ueno Zoo, Edo-Tokyo Museum, many shrines, and Disneyland. I was able to spend New Year's Day in Japan, which I was very excited about because New Year's Day is very different to the way people in Australia would celebrate it. On New



Christina (right) making *mochi* with her host sisters

Year's Day my host family helped dress me up in a kimono and then we spent the day at their local church. On this day I helped make *mochi*, which I have never tried before. I think *mochi* is an interesting food to both eat and make. I also ate *osechi*. For me it tasted weird, but I did however find the arrangement of food very beautiful and interesting. When I leave Japan I will miss the people because they are always so kind and lovely to be around. I feel very lucky to be able to go on exchange to Japan because it is such a beautiful country. I hope one day soon I can return to Japan and visit all the friends that I have made during my time at the school.

Christina Tooley
Ogilvie High School

My time in Japan has been fun. Because this was my first time to visit Japan I was a little nervous, but my host family and the staff and students at Mejiro Kenshin have been very kind and welcoming so it has been fun and interesting. In Australia I do not study art, music and IT, so studying these subjects in Japan has been an interesting experience. English class has been fantastic as I enjoy talking to other students and helping them learn English. Every day I practice Japanese at home, school and in special Japanese classes. This is sometimes difficult but is more often than not very enjoyable. In Australia it is currently summer so at first it was difficult to adjust to the cold Japanese winter but now I like the cold very much! I have had the opportunity to visit lots of interesting places. On school excursions, I have been to the Tokyo Metropolitan Government Building and Asakusa. The Buddhist temple was very interesting. Additionally, going to Disneyland, Sanrio Puroland, Odaiba and Shibuya with my host family has been very fun. I also went to NHK Studio Park with the members of the International Culture Club.

Trying Japanese food and experiencing Japanese culture first-hand have also been definite highlights so far. I am excited to meet more people and improve my Japanese when we return from winter break.

Emily Leggett
Somerville House



Emily (top row, third from right) with the International Culture Club

Studying Abroad in New Zealand

I have been studying in New Zealand for about 10 months. At first I had trouble speaking English and understanding what people were saying to me, but I was able to improve my English through talking with my friends and host family.

My host family was very kind and funny. They helped me with many things,



Tessei during his trip to Hobbiton

including schoolwork and planning a trip to the South Island and Hobbiton. Also, they spoke slowly to make it easier for me to understand, especially my host mother. She helped me with my homework and English conversation practice, and my host father always told jokes.

I made lots of friends from other countries, such as Korea and Germany, at Takapuna Grammar School. They are very kind, funny and good people. In PE class I made many Kiwi friends. They are very interesting and good friends. Everyone came to talk to me. They told me about delicious food and amusement places in New Zealand, and took me to many good places. The Night Market was the most fun out of the places we went. It is a market which is held on Sunday evening and sells delicious food from many countries. The market became my favourite place, so I went there often on Sunday evenings.

For my last two weeks I went to NZIE language school because my classes at Takapuna Grammar School finished in October. Studying at the language school was very interesting because we made a movie in English and went to a nearby beach during class. It was a lot of fun. I think the language school was helpful because my English improved.

I wasn't interested in going abroad until last year, but I have come to like foreign countries. If I have the chance to go to a foreign country again I want to speak more English and make friends.

Tessei Kawashima
Senior 3

Studying Abroad in Canada



Kento with friends in Canada

I went to study abroad in Vancouver, Canada for two months. I had a great time. I went to West Vancouver Secondary School and made a lot of friends there. There were many students from other countries, so I heard many languages and became interested in languages other than English. My friends were very kind

to me because they talked to me when I first arrived. They invited me to go out with them many times. I am very thankful to them.

I am thankful to my host family, too. They were very kind to me, and I was able to experience a lot of things that I can't do in Japan because of them. One thing was experiencing Halloween in Canada. I went trick-or-treating in the neighborhood and was able to get many sweets. Another thing was my host family took me to Seattle in the U.S. I was surprised by this because I didn't think I could go to the U.S. since I was in Canada. I thought it would be very difficult to get there, but they arranged it for me. I was very grateful to them and felt very happy.

I think if I didn't have good friends and a nice host family, I wouldn't have enjoyed studying abroad in Canada. Because of them, I could spend a very good time there and make great memories. I think two months was very short. If I could go there one more time, I would choose one year, but I will never forget my two short months in Canada.

*Kento Otsuka
Senior 3*



Narumi (left) with her host family

I studied abroad at Rockridge Secondary School in Vancouver, Canada for about two months. It was a very marvelous experience for me. My host sister came to Mejiro Kenshin first, so I had spoken English before I left Japan, but when I arrived in Canada, I felt so nervous that I couldn't speak English well.

My host family was so nice and their food was so good. They were always kind to me. We sometimes played games together and often watched movies together. They took me to a lot of places that I wanted to go. We went skiing, downtown, the theater, a planetarium and other places. It was very fun.

At school, I could make friends right away because my host sister introduced me to her friends. I studied art, cooking, P.E., social studies, math, and other things. I had difficulty in understanding what my teacher was saying at first, but I got used to it. I was able to make friends from Canada, China, Korea and other countries. We went to many places together, such as downtown, a café, and our friend's place. I also went to a sleep over. On Halloween, I went to my friend's house with my host sister and friends. We ate food, played a game, and watched a movie. After that we went trick-or-treating around the neighborhood. It was a memorable experience for me.

Doing a homestay, going to a Canadian school, taking the bus by myself, talking with my friends and going to many places are all memories that I will never forget.

My experience in Canada made me realize that learning and speaking English is fun.

*Narumi Ogata
Senior 2*



Nanami (right) with her host family

I studied abroad for about three months in Delta, Canada. It was a very nice experience for me because Canada was so different from Japan.

At school, I studied math, science, ESL, food, P.E., and planning. I had four classes each day from Monday to Friday. Each class was 90 minutes long. I didn't have school on Saturdays and Sundays. I also didn't have school one Friday a month. It was called Pro-D day. On that day, events for international students were held. I went to a camp, Playland and other places. It was fun. Usually school started at 8:30 but two Wednesdays

a month it started at 9:30. These were called collab days. Therefore I had a lot of holidays in Canada. It made me happy.

There were four people in my homestay family: my father, my mother, and two younger sisters. They were very kind to me and taught me English when I made mistakes. I liked my homestay father's meals. He cooked Italian and Mexican well. They were delicious. Studying abroad was good for me because I could learn not only English, but also about other cultures. I want to go there again.

*Nanami Watanabe
Senior 2*



Reo (front) with friends from Soccer Academy

I went to Vancouver, Canada for two months. I was very glad when my host family came to pick me up at the airport. I spoke in Japanese at first because I was not used to speaking in English, but I gradually started using English in conversation.

I spent the first few days with my host brother. On the first

day, I played soccer with him. Then, on the second day, I started classes at Sentinel Secondary School. There weren't many Japanese students in the school, but the experience of interacting with people from other countries was very good. My English communication ability improved because of all the communication I had with the people in my classes.

Soccer Academy was especially exciting for me. Playing soccer with friends from other countries felt a little weird at first, but it was fun because everyone was so good. I have very good memories of all the things I did in Canada. My best memory is playing soccer with people from other countries. I want to thank everyone who helped make my exchange so incredible.

*Reo Harada
Senior 2*

Internship Program



Mizuki (center) celebrating her birthday with students



Mizuki (left) with students wearing yukata

Somerville House, Brisbane, Australia

This internship was the first time in my life to go abroad. I went to Somerville House, which is a girls' school in Brisbane, where I supported Year 6 to 12 students in Japanese classes. When I arrived in Brisbane, I couldn't speak English well because I was shy, but the teachers and students were extremely kind. Soon after I started working at the school I was able to talk to everyone. All of the Japanese teachers and

students at Somerville House were interested in Japanese culture, fashion and TV shows. I helped to make resources and exams, and do activities with them. I also had the chance to teach them how to wear *yukata*, a light kimono worn in summer. That was a nice experience for me. On holidays I tried to go to Australian festivals whenever I had the chance. Because there are many different nationalities in Australia, I could go to many kinds of festivals. It was so

fun. I will never forget this experience and I want to go back to Brisbane to meet the teachers and students again. Some of them will come to Japan later this year so I will definitely go to meet them then.

*Mizuki Hagiwara
Alumnus, Department of Japanese and
Japanese Language Education
Mejiro University*

University Life in Japan

Last year I graduated high school in Sweden and had decided that I did not want to immediately start university but instead travel abroad.

Since I studied Japanese during my high school years and wanted to continue my studies afterwards, I decided to come to Japan and take a course in Japanese. JALP (Japanese Language Program) at Mejiro University seemed like a great course where I could really learn Japanese with ambitious students and good teachers. I chose to study at a university because I wanted to have the opportunity to meet Japanese students and be sure that the course was serious with its education.

After taking the placement test I was placed in the N3 level class. I think the classes are very good and all my teachers are great. The difficulty level of the classes is very good, with the right amount of challenge without making them incomprehensible. I am also very glad that I can take preparation classes for the Japanese Language Proficiency Test and the Examination for Japanese University Admission for International Students. My favourite class is "Understanding Japan". In this class we get to learn a lot of Japanese culture which is very interesting. All of my classes are in Japanese, so every day I can improve my Japanese comprehension, if only by a little.

Not only are my goals for studying Japanese being fulfilled, but also my wish to meet Japanese student. The International Exchange Center offers you the



Johanna (left) with her classmates

chance to enter a tutor circle where you are partnered with a Japanese student that wants to learn your mother tongue in return for helping you learn Japanese. It is a great way of learning more about the language and the differences in each other's culture. Another way you can meet other students is to hang out in the cafeteria where many students always are. It is really fun to meet new people and at the same time learn Japanese. By speaking Japanese with other students you can gain more knowledge of how the language is actually used.

I have only been here for two months so far but I have had a wonderful time meeting new

people and improving my Japanese. So far, I have learned a lot and have made some great memories. I hope that for the remainder of my stay I will continue to have just as much of a great time as I am having now.

*Johanna Stenmark
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