

Myriad Leaves

JLGC Newsletter

NOVEMBER 2009

Night view of Kenrokuen Garden in winter,
Ishikawa Prefecture ©JNTO



JLGC News 2

Guest Article: **DPJ Direction of Decentralisation** 3

Topic: **Aland-Okinawa seminar** 4-5

UK-Japan 150: **The Iwakura Mission** 6

JET Programme, Alumni Association 7

Editorial: **Japanese Document Management Law** 8



Myriad Leaves is the English language title for the earliest collection of Japanese poetry, *Manyōshū*. It contains 4,516 *waka* poems, the last of which is dated AD759. There is uncertainty over the intention of the title: it could mean either 'Collection of ten thousand leaves' or 'Collection for ten thousand generations'.

**Japan — UK relations,
A touch of the orient in Gateshead**



Susumu Kitayama with Councillor Linda Green in the Friendship Garden

A new friendship garden celebrating the 20-year relationship between Gateshead and its twin city Komatsu in Japan, received some finishing touches last month. Ten gardeners from Komatsu City worked with council gardeners to create a traditional Japanese garden featuring a stone pond and waterfall, where water is represented by gravel. Leading the construction were two of Komatsu's most senior gardeners Mr Hiroo Kitamura and Mr Susumu Kitayama who is President of the Komatsu Garden Association. Komatsu's former Mayor Mr Toru Nishimura made the offer of a garden when he visited the borough last year.

Komatsu City already has a friendship garden presented by Gateshead in 2001 to mark the tenth anniversary of the two cities links. Cabinet member for Culture, Councillor Linda Green said: "This garden will be more than a place to enjoy the serenity of a Japanese garden. It will be a visible sign of our partnership that continues to grow and mature providing educational and cultural opportunities for children and adults of all ages." The completion of the garden was marked by a tree planting ceremony attended by the Chairman of Komatsu City Hall, Mr Junji Kawasaki and his wife and the Mayor of Gateshead Councillor John Eagle. *Article and photograph reprinted by kind permission of Gateshead Council*

**JLGC Activities
Okinawa — Åland Seminar, Mariehamn, Åland Islands,
Finland**

On the 1st to 2nd of September the Åland Islands Peace Institute, together with JLGC, organised a seminar on the theme "Transforming the relationship with Central Government", in Mariehamn, Åland.

The comparison focused on the self-governing, demilitarized Åland region and the Ryukyu islands southwest of the Japanese mainland in the Pacific Ocean. The U.S. military presence in Okinawa after World War Two has had great impact on Okinawa's social, economic, and cultural development. The seminar looked at shared issues of island culture, economics and security from the viewpoint of Åland's demilitarised status. More details on the seminar can be found on pages 4 and 5.

**JLGC Activities
JET Returnees Reception**

The Japan Local Government Centre and the Embassy of Japan had the pleasure of hosting a reception to welcome back this year's JET Returnees on Friday 25th September 2009 following the Careers Information Day organised by the London chapter of the JET Alumni Association at HMS President, on the banks of the Thames. CID is organised every year by JETAA to help returnee JETs back in the UK

looking for employment, and has stand manned by various graduate recruiters, and seminars and workshops on CVs, employment sectors and showed returnees how to make the most of their skills learnt in Japan. More details on JETAA on page 7

**JLGC Activities
Japan Study Tour Pre-Departure Orientation**

The Japan Study Tour orientation for this year took place at JLGC in October for the tour which aims to foster a deeper understanding of Japan, its culture and system of local government, and encourage the exchange of ideas and information. JST is an ideal opportunity for senior officials from local government and related organisations in the UK. Under the topic of regional regeneration through hosting international events participants will examine and discuss strategies to maximise the potential of international events to encourage business and tourism in a region.

The tour will take place from the 16th to 26th of November, beginning with a visit to the CLAIR in Tokyo where participants will learn about the relationship between central and local government in Japan. Following this will be a trip to Hokkaido prefecture, the northernmost island of Japan with a population of 5.5 million and known for its natural beauty. Here participants will learn about Japanese local government, and participate in visits and meetings, including a trip to Tōyako, the host town of the 2008 G8 summit. In Hokkaido participants will also have the opportunity to experience a short home stay with a Japanese family and visit a number of famous local sites. Participating local authorities this year include Camden, Norfolk, St Edmundsbury, Scottish Borders, Richmond-upon-Thames, Aberdeen, Exeter, Essex, Derbyshire and Buckinghamshire

**JLGC Activities
Short term international trainee course**

Each year Japan Local Government Centre hosts a number of Japanese local authority officers on CLAIR's Short Term Trainee programme, who are sent on placements to a variety of British host authorities. This year was an exception as we received a member of staff from a Japanese police department, Ms Mari Takano of Tokyo Police Department. This presented something of a challenge as our centre has in the past solely arranged local authority placements, so this year we were required to source relevant meetings with not only the Metropolitan Police in London, but also the wider police family, for Ms Takano's fortnight with us.

Her visit to the Metropolitan Police Service comprised not only sessions geared around her interests back in Japan, personnel and training, but also visits to the National Bomb Data Centre and the Met's famous Crime Museum, the world's only such facility. She was also able to gain an oversight into the array of agencies involved in policing the capital, in direct contrast to the role of Tokyo Metropolitan Police as its sole police force. Furthermore, her visit touched on the different nature and priorities of policing in London, such as the pro-active role taken by police and government alike in tackling youth crime and violence. Ms Takano heard about the recruitment pressures on the Metropolitan Police during times of increased economic hardship and demands for efficiency, as well as the role of staff training in increasing the amount of time police officers are able to spend actively policing rather than in stations.

JLGC would like to thank the Official Visits Office of the Metropolitan Police Service, as well as the Metropolitan Police Authority, British Transport Police, National Police Improvement Agency, Government Office for London and the Greater London Authority for enabling Ms Takano to gain the necessary oversight of policing in London to be able to compile a useful report on her return to Japan.

Guest Article

Local government trends in Japan after the national elections

Prof. Katsuhiro Inazawa, Kansai Gakuin University, Nishinomiya Campus, Hyogo Prefecture.

Translated by Jason Buckley



Picture © Wikipedia

The Democratic Party of Japan was voted into power at Japan's Lower House election on the 30th of August this year, shifting power from the Liberal Democratic Party who had been in government since 1955. Party manifestos, taken from the British model, made a significant contribution in this election, so to understand the future direction of local government in Japan it is necessary to consider the Democratic Party's manifesto.

One of the five major policies in the manifesto was to move from centralised government to regional sovereignty. Here regional sovereignty is understood to mean the strengthening of the basic units of local government and reorganisation of the roles of central and local government based on the principle of subsidiarity. The government aims to create citizen autonomy by forming a new public realm in which citizens play a pivotal role – thus enabling them to exert true sovereignty (which is invested in them in the constitution).

The manifesto outlines a number of measures to take in order to achieve regional sovereignty. These are, 1) establish a central-local government forum on a clear legal basis (provisionally named the Local Government and Finance Council) with the aim of creating a more equal central-local government relationship; 2) reform of the local finance system through abolishing ring-fenced funding in favour of aggregate payments, and granting local authorities further power to raise finance locally; and 3) reform of local administration, (through the Administrative Reform Council) by transferring administrative functions from central government to local government, and abolishing regional offices of the national government.

The most fundamental of these three steps will probably be the first one. Regarding the extent of administrative functions that local governments carry out (in monetary terms surpassing central government expenditure) a systemic architecture is needed which can guarantee the wishes of local authorities on issues such as local government and finance systems and local financial matters within the national budget, even if it does not reach the same level of influence the German Bundesrat has on such matters.

The second measure attempts to tackle the issues of the amount of non-specific general funding, which has dramatically decreased since 2004; and the rate of local tax, which has only ever been around 30% of total revenue. This will be done by decreasing the involvement of central government in local government financial affairs and increasing the amount of locally-sourced finance, that is to say local tax sources.

However, if the goal is to increase locally-sourced finance then an adequate financial equalisation system will also need to be constructed for those local authorities that do not have strong tax resources.

Furthermore, if many administrative functions are transferred from central government to local government as per the third measure, obviously both the transfer of administrative authority and sources of finance must be aligned, so there is a requirement to co-ordinate with the second measure.

When considering the timeline, work on the first measure will begin in October after the convening of the Japanese parliament with the second and third measures to be implemented shortly after. However, the first major test will be the local finance settlement to be drafted at the end of the year.

The extent to which local authorities' wishes are reflected, and whether there will be sufficient non-specific general funding guaranteed will provide a gauge to evaluate the government's true position.

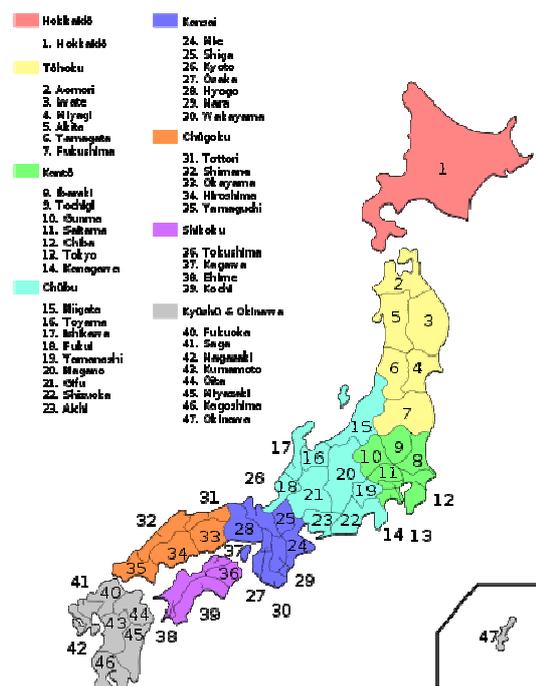
The Democratic Party should also provide a more detailed action plan for regional sovereignty policies in their manifesto for the 2010 upper house election, as well as an outline of their achievements for their first year in office.

That would entail that this "pro-regional sovereignty administration" provides concrete proposals on exactly how the 1,760 (31st March 2010 forecast) local authorities, with populations ranging from a mere 200 to more than 3 million, will be strengthened.

The government will likely be presented with the choices of, more local authority mergers, an increase in administrative support for small local authorities from wide-area local authorities, or a move towards unitary authorities. Also, along with the strengthening of basic local authorities, there is also a need for a clear outline on what will become of wide-area local governments.

Finally, as to the implementation of all the policies concerning the execution of functions at the local level in the manifesto, it would be advisable for those on the local government side under a strong central government to keep a close watch on tendencies for further centralisation.

Regions and Prefectures of Japan



Joint Okinawa Prefecture - Åland Islands Seminar: Transforming the Relationship with Central Government

On the first and second of September 2009, the Åland Islands Peace Institute, together with the JLGC organised a seminar on the theme of "Transforming the relationship with Central Government", in the city of Mariehamn on the Åland Islands, an autonomous Swedish-speaking province of Finland.



The comparison focused on the self-governing, demilitarized Åland region and the "Ryukyu Islands" (the original name of Okinawa) southwest of the Japanese mainland in the Pacific Ocean. The islands with 1.4 million inhabitants are a popular tourist resort and have a language and culture distinct from the mainland. The U.S. military presence in Okinawa after World War 2 has had great impact on Okinawa's social, economic, and cultural development. The autonomous status of the Åland islands was affirmed by a decision made by the League of Nations in 1921 following the Åland crisis. The proclamation of independence from Russia by Finland saw strong nationalistic sentiment building in Helsinki with potential conflict in Åland over the forseen suppression of Swedish culture by the islanders and Sweden. It was reaffirmed within the treaty admitting Finland to the European Union. By law, Åland is politically neutral and entirely demilitarised, and residents are exempt from conscription to the Finnish Defence Forces. The islands were granted extensive autonomy by the Parliament of Finland in the Act on the Autonomy of Åland of 1920, which was later replaced by new legislation by the same name in 1951 and 1991.



Ålandica Conference Centre, venue for the seminar in Mariehamn, Åland.

The following article gives a brief outline of the presentations given over the course of the two days. A more detailed report with details of the discussion following all the presentations, as well as the final question and answer session is planned for publication by Ålands Peace Institute and JLGC in the New Year.

Economic Situation

On the first day of the seminar, **Ms Elisabeth Naucler (right)**, MP for Åland in the Finnish Parliament opened the seminar recounting previous Japanese research trips she has been involved with, interested in the situation in Åland and drawing parallels between the people of Okinawa and Åland – both are island nations with similar issues over being an island economy and infrastructure, the effects of war in shaping the islands' history, and that both islands enjoy some of the highest life expectancy



rates in the developed world. This was followed by an address from First Secretary Kunihiko Yasuda of the Embassy of Japan in Finland, expressing hope that the seminar would see a real exchange of dialogue over the issues in both directions with both sides learning something.

Mr **Katsunori Uehara (above)**, Deputy Director General in charge of Industry and Employment, Okinawa Prefecture, then gave a presentation, a general introduction about Okinawa including the geography of the region and the changing relationship with surrounding countries, first as an independent kingdom with strong trade relations with Korea and South East Asia, then tributary state to the Ming dynasty on the Chinese mainland, followed by annexation to the Satsuma domain of Japan. As the westernmost prefecture of Japan, Okinawa is strategically located between Japan and the rest of Asia. Because of this, Okinawa became a battleground in World War II and more than two hundred thousand lives were lost. Even now Okinawa still has its fate tied up to the installation of the US military, with the bases taking up much of Okinawa and the island's economy heavily dependant upon them.

Dr Richard Palmer of Åland Statistics Office gave a presentation on trends in Åland's population and employment patterns, explaining that the influx from the Finnish mainland has risen from the 1870s and that Åland's population has been rising stably but from the mainland as well as now with migration from abroad. There are many men involved in working in the shipping industry and the construction industry, while many women working in the public sector field (hospitals, social security services), which on the islands is the biggest single employment sector. The population of Åland is 0.52% that of Finland's total, and on this basis the redistribution of collected tax from central government is 0.45% of that nationally collected. When the collection of tax controlled by the central government of Finland reaches 0.50%, anything over that part will be returned to be used independently by the islands' government.

Peace and Culture Issues

Dr Masako Ikegami (left) of Stockholm University started off this session explaining how she had often been to Åland with study groups to look at how the model can be transplanted elsewhere and is seen by many as an ideal system for disputed areas all over the world. The problem of peace in Okinawa is an issue of the East Asia regional problem over the Korean peninsula, Taiwan and the advent of a new arms race. Considering the geography of Okinawa, placed within the vortex of the above mentioned problems, and in the front line of potential conflict, it is not surprising that the US is keen to maintain a presence there. China lays claim to the islands, because of the historical tributary status. The battle of Okinawa was the most brutal ground battle of the WW2, and not only did locals perish in great numbers, it was also the biggest single loss for the US during the campaign to invade Japan. There are also currently many disputed islands throughout the area, with tension increasing around some, and a growing challenge to the US from massive Chinese build up and other Asian nations modernising their military forces.



In considering the burden of the American military presence, the US bases take up 11% of the surface land of Okinawa, and have an enrolled staff of 26,000. Transfer of the bases to Guam will hit the Japanese central government with a bill of

400 billion yen (£2.67 billion). The degree of dependence upon the military bases by Okinawa prefecture is decreasing, with reliance on central government through the rented land leased to the bases. When the military bases are transferred out of the prefecture economic policies will become an issue. On the Åland Model and Okinawa, the local government takes on board Ålands' position of unarmed neutrality Okinawa's relationship with its periphery will be strengthened and will be able to make a contribution towards peace in the area.



Dr. Sia Spiliopoulou Akermark (left) of the Ålands Peace Institute went on to discuss the issue in Åland, and the development of the area as a neutral demilitarised zone. Åland became a demilitarised region through the League of Nations resolution in 1921. Its position was recognised by the Paris Treaty in 1947 as a neutral and demilitarised region. Currently there is an issue of balancing this neutrality and demilitarisation with EU and Nordic security guarantees, for example in

dealing with the illegal drugs trade off the coast of Åland. Although at the legal formal level there is no basis for Åland citizens having a role, the islanders have been involved in discussion and effecting the decision regarding these issues, a system which has developed in practice. There was an explanation of the Peace Institute and discussion of the logo, symbolising the centre and periphery. Åland's relationship with Finland, working towards demilitarisation has been a process over the last 200 years, with the separation of Sweden and Finland as the beginning of this process. It was actually Finland that made most effort to demilitarise the region, and Great Britain and France who were the strongest pushers of the idea around the time of the Crimean War. There was also an explanation of the Nordic Council and the development of a common Scandinavian defence policy. There is a mixture of civil and military components which makes it difficult to separate clear cross national cooperation, in particular to a common coast guard policy and joint missions for example to Afghanistan.

Political and Legal Systems

Dr. Jun Shimabukuro (left) of the University of the Ryukyus started off this session with a comparison of East Asia to Europe. In relation to regional devolution in western Europe, the transfer of functions from central government, participation in government by minority peoples, and the existence of the EU have all been the main pillars of this. The case in Japan with the transfer of power to the regions has seen one portion of central government transferred, while participation of minority groups in government is small, and there is no international cooperation organisation like the EU. The exception to this system in the Japanese system of decentralisation of power is Okinawa and Hokkaido. With the existence of a Okinawa Development Office, the identity of the Ryukyu People, and close links to neighbouring countries from the time of the Ryukyu Kingdom in Okinawa there is a framework for further devolved powers.



Lars Ingmar Johansson, former director of the Åland parliament summarised The history of Åland's Autonomous Government. 1854-56 Åland was demilitarised after an

international meeting in 1921 which saw the creation of the Law on Ålands Autonomy (through the League of Nations). The period 1951-1991 has seen revisions of the law on Åland's Autonomy. There needs to be a vote in the Parliament of Finland and Åland's parliament on revisions. The Parliament of Åland legislates on education, health, environment, local governance, postal service, radio and television, and traffic, while diplomacy, criminal law, the justice system, customs and the tax system, are under the jurisdiction of the central Finnish government. EU affiliation is a Finnish central government matter, but there is currently a debate over the position of the government of Åland. On Åland citizenship rights, children up until the age of 18 who have parents with Ålandic citizenship are citizens of Finland. Conditions of receiving citizenship are being resident in Åland, hold Finnish nationality, and having lived in Åland for five years.

Panel Discussion

There was a full discussion on all the session issues raised, moderated by Barbara Sunback, member of the Åland Parliament, and joined by Dr Fujio Ōnishi, visiting fellow at the Wider Europe Research Centre at the University of Shizuoka with a discussion on:



- Dealing with multiple conceptions of security across borders, rather than just one national policy.
- Questioning how young people think and how do young people feel about these issues in relation to population trends, and how to deal with the issue of identity.
- Questioning Okinawa's alternative vision for security and the economy, without the US bases, accepting Japanese forces and the security issues around demilitarising the area in the context of the East Asian "vortex".
- The importance of looking at the example of history as a foundation to resolving current disputes.
- The prospects for an integrated East Asian community.
- The need to build autonomy from within a community and through identifying the needs of that community.
- Protecting the coastal areas of the Åland Islands.
- Åland's special status as a minority people, and getting international attention through having foreign powers intervene in the issue.
- Protecting the identity of inhabitants in the Åland Islands.
- Commonality between Åland and Okinawa—historic trade and shipping connections with neighbours, successful development of this economy in recent times and the positive effects on the economy being a lesson for Okinawa.
- Questioning the validity of a reviving a China based relationship for Okinawa, in the context of the current regional order, the example of Taiwan and its relation to China.
- The Okinawan Plan over the next 30 years, and the emergence of East Asian cooperation.
- Cultural attitudes towards conflict; the respect for harmony versus right to equality which differs between Europe and East Asia.
- Future opportunities for cross cultural exchange between the two island communities.
- The role of indigenous language.



Japan-UK Relations

The Iwakura Mission

By Keith Kelly



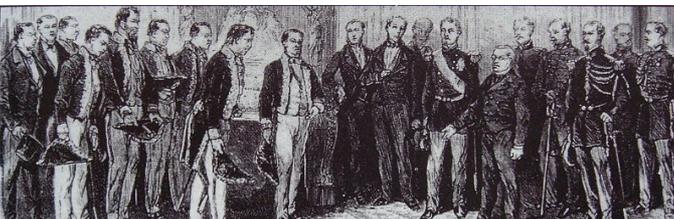
After Japan's forced opening to the outside world, with the arrival of the US Navy Commodore Perry's Black Ships carrying superior industrial technology and weapons, the Meiji Reformation is regarded as the turning point of Japan's modernisation with the creation of the monarchy as absolute power in Japan. With the restoration of the Emperor, those close to the court including the country's nobles and scholars were dispatched to the outside world after the recognition of Japan had been weakened by its period of seclusion and being sheltered from the industrial revolution and arms race of the great powers; there was the risk of colonisation by one of those powers. The Iwakura Mission is possibly the most important of such "missions" as part of Japan's attempts to mould itself in the form of the modern European constitutional monarchies with their vast empires.

One important figure to play a role in the Meiji Restoration influencing the opinion of the imperial court was statesman Iwakura Tomomi (October 26, 1825 - July 20, 1883). So important was he that his portrait was carried by the former 500 yen banknote issued by the Bank of Japan. Not only was he given full status as Ambassador Plenipotentiary, accompanied by four vice-ambassadors, all of ministerial or vice-ministerial status, he was the second highest member of the Emperor Meiji's government.

Because of his influence and the trust that he shared with the Emperor Meiji, from its establishment Iwakura played a major role in his new government. He was largely responsible for the abolition of the "han" feudal system of Japanese society, as well as the promulgation of the Five Chapter Oath in 1868, setting out the course of action and the main aims of the new emperor.

He led the two year expedition around the world soon after his appointment as Minister of the Right in 1871 (an ancient position in imperial government within the Council of State, comparable to the Privy Council) visiting the United States and several countries in Europe, with the dual purpose of renegotiating the unequal treaties Japan had signed since the arrival of Perry's Black Ships together with gathering the information needed to help the modernisation of Japan. It was the realisation of what was going on in the wider world and Japan's need to strengthen, which pushed him to help prevent an invasion of Korea, understanding that at that time Japan was too weak militarily to attract international attention nor in any state to challenge the western powers. His advocating of a written constitution and limited form of parliamentary democracy was a measure to strengthen the imperial institution, and the work began on the Imperial constitution after research on the institutions of Europe.

The Iwakura Mission first arrived in London in August 1872 and split into smaller groups to visit various places including Liverpool, Manchester, Sheffield, Glasgow, Edinburgh and



Iwakura Mission with President Thiers of France in 1873
© Wikipedia Commons



Iwakura Tomomi sitting in the middle, the leader of the Japanese diplomats. Picture © Wikipedia Commons

Newcastle upon Tyne, inspecting industry and institutions throughout the country, accompanied by Captain Andrew Noble of the Royal Military Academy, and visited industrialist Sir William George Armstrong, designer of the Armstrong gun. He was central to the procurement of the battleship Mikasa from Vickers in Barrow-in-Furness, flagship of the Japanese Imperial Navy, taking part in trouncing the Imperial Russian Navy at the battle of Tsushima in 1905 destroying around two thirds of the Russian fleet – Japan's first victory over one of the "great powers".

It was an incredible logistical feat moving 100 members of the mission around the world safely of whom many did not speak any other language and who had not been outside Japan. Despite probably greatly overrunning its budget and certainly its schedule few came to any harm if any, and none were lost upon return to Japan. The mission spent four months in Britain, the longest single stage in a journey around the world via the United States and Europe. One of the most celebrated documents from the whole tour was the Kairan Jikki, an extraordinarily detailed account of the travels by the mission, with the largest volume on the subject of the mission's travels around the United Kingdom, the biggest section devoted to descriptions of Victorian London by the Confucian scholar Kume Kunitake, with such a wealth of information relating to the city of London that it became a valuable tome of knowledge, referenced by many readers in Meiji Japan.

On their stay in London, the documents note the showcase of attraction that Victorian London had to offer, for example Crystal Palace, the British Museum and Madame Tussaud's. The ministry buildings of Whitehall (amongst which JLG now sits) were so magnificent they made the streets of Washington and New York look like filthy alleyways. There was amazement at the world's first underground railway, now part of the London Underground Metropolitan line, the trains of which ran beneath the street if the mission's hotel, with a cacophonous rumbling from underground throughout the day. In Newcastle upon Tyne they arrived on October 21 staying in the Royal Station Hotel where they met Sir William Armstrong, ten years after a Bakufu (feudal) mission of the previous Shogunate era had visited the town.

"The gentlemen were attired in ordinary morning costume and except for their complexion and the oriental cast of their features, they could scarcely be distinguished from their English companions." (Newcastle Daily Chronicle, October 23, 1872)

While the attempts at renegotiation of the treaties was not a success, the effects on Japan's institutions, in particular inspecting Britain's military technology, was to have profound



Japan Exchange and Teaching Programme UK



JETAA Careers Information Day (CID) **Ed Horner, CID Coordinator,** **JETAA London Chapter**

In the oppressive economic climate of early 2009, many companies were scaling back their graduate recruitment schemes, citing a lack of resources, but many large graduate employers including Ernst & Young, Deloitte, NTT, and KPMG, were still keen to be involved in this year's CID. Up until the week before prospective exhibitors were getting in touch, to see if there was still space available.

JETs were approached through multiple avenues - the Returnees Conference in Tokyo informed all UK attendees, while adverts went into literature for returning JETs and the JETAA UK website began heavily promoting the event on a dedicated page. Leading social networking sites linked to the event, all to ensure that as many JETs as possible were made aware of the event well in advance. JETAA London's regular emails contained frequent reminders, as well as soliciting for speakers and volunteers among the extensive mailing list.

Following one of the emails, leading London law firm Greenback Alan agreed to sponsor a letter to every member of the Japan Chamber of Commerce to encourage participation, and we have discussed doing this next year as well.

This year's Careers Information Day took place on a beautiful 25th of September, as the HMS President venue in the shadow of Tower Bridge opened the doors to over 100 job-seeking JET returnees, who were all given our brochure detailing the different companies and speakers.

The JET returnees were mainly this year's returnees, but JETs from previous years also attended, some looking to change careers and others there to make use of services like the CV doctors - four specialists, there to help maximise the JET experience on paper when looking for work.

Following a brief opening address the careers day buzzed into life, with JETs quickly engaging with exhibitors, as the speakers got started. As the day went on speakers from fields including law, IT, teaching, and the Foreign and Commonwealth Office shared their experience of using their time on JET to get into their chosen career, while other speakers gave more general advice and assistance on how to find the best opportunities in a tough economy.

By 5 o'clock the exhibitors began to pack up, and many gathered by the River Thames to talk informally to the returnees as they all waited for JLGC's evening reception, and they were joined soon after by the final speakers as the sun set behind Tower Bridge.

Interest was expressed in regional JETAA chapters, from those wanting to stay involved in the JET community and maintaining links with Japan and Japanese culture. We had

Kampai! Post CID Reception held by JLGC and the Embassy of Japan



overwhelmingly positive feedback on the day, and with this year's CID being nearly as big as the previous CID despite a challenging climate and with half the number of returnees, we hope to make next year's even more of a success.

JETAA London at Japan Matsuri **Sharon Bignell,** **Chair, JETAA London Chapter**

The Japan Matsuri, organised by the Japan Society, was held at Old Spitalfields Market in London on Saturday 19th September, 2009. The first London Japan Matsuri in many years, it was a huge success – more than 35,000 visitors attended, which was well over the estimated 20,000 people!



The JET Alumni Association's London chapter had a booth at the Matsuri, which four committee members manned (left to right pictured) – Ed Horner and Vanessa Villalobos, former Assistant Language Teachers (ALTs) in Osaka and Tochigi Prefectures respectively, and Josy Audigier and Sharon Bignell, former Coordinators for International Relations (CIRs) in Nara and Mie Prefectures respectively.

The JETAA booth was decorated with a map of Japan, information about JETAA London and numerous photos. JET brochures and posters, and flyers about Japan-related cultural activities in the UK, were also kindly provided by the Japan Information and Cultural Centre (JICC), while JLGC provided brochures on different local areas of Japan, many of which were places where committee members had previously lived.

A lot of visitors to the booth had never heard of the JET Programme or JETAA before, so we were able to raise awareness of the Programme by explaining the two positions that are available – ALT and CIR, the eligibility criteria and basic contract terms and conditions. We also explained the advantages of the JET Programme over other English language teaching programmes in Japan, in particular the fact that the JET Programme is a government-sponsored programme and therefore trustworthy, that JET Programme participants are encouraged to get involved in their local communities and are therefore able to make local friends more easily, and that orientations and professional development opportunities, including free Japanese correspondence courses, are offered to all participants.

Other visitors to the booth had heard about the JET Programme and many were thinking of applying. We were able to answer their questions, providing first-hand information and advice on what JET is actually like, where you might be placed and the application process. A number of former JET Programme participants also dropped by to share JET experiences and find out more about the JETAA London chapter.

All in all, it was a very successful and productive event, where we were able to raise awareness of the JET Programme, JETAA London, as well as promote some of Japan's lesser known cities and towns. We would like to thank the Japan Society, JICC and JLGC for all their support, and we hope to exhibit at another Japan Matsuri in the near future.



Editorial

Summary of the Law on Public Document Management

Mamika Kambayashi, Assistant Director, seconded from the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications

Translated by Keith Kelly

July of 2009 saw the establishment of a comprehensive law relating to the management of public documents for the first time in Japan.

Japan, unlike the West, was not traditionally a society where legal contracts were common, and therefore historically had no tradition of recording official documents. However, after the Meiji Restoration, through the introduction of a western style codified system of law, there was a stress on the importance of documented records. In particular the management and preservation of documents were carried out rigorously throughout government bodies on the basis of cross-departmental rules. Further, through the Information Disclosure Law in 1999, and the establishment of the National Archives Law in the same year, general rules were established for the management, preservation and use of public documents. However, under these 1999 rules, there was a problem in preserving historically important documents reliably, and not all government departments and independent administrative institutions were thoroughly implementing the rules.

In 2007 there were a series of events involving the inappropriate management of documents, one example being the loss of military data. Not only were Maritime Self Defence Forces log records being kept in the wrong place, they were also mistakenly thrown out before the expiry of the retention period. The MSDF "shipping log" records details of a military vessel's activities, this time the precise details of the military supply ship's location and the kind of activities it was involved in (what kind of ship it was refuelling).

In order to confirm details, this military log is requested by the Ministry of Defence, gathering data on the performance of the vessel. Looking for the shipping log of the vessel, it became clear that it had been thrown out. A member of the MSDF when sorting through material on the supply ship threw out the documents thinking they were past their retention period. On this occasion, the log was shredded by a member of the MSDF so there was no fear of external disclosure of any information, but the issue was that the disposal of such public documents is at times consigned to civilian businesses, and in that kind of situation the erroneous passing of retained documents to private companies and the possible leak of information could have occurred.

In another example, at the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, an incident due to the lack of thorough handover to new staff was discovered, with personal information relating to the side effects of drugs being stored in an underground store



The core "government documents and records of importance as historical materials" are the following items. Decision-making on important items of national policies, which were required for tracing the Japanese Government's major activities of the past. Processes of deliberation, discussion, or consultation prior to reaching any decision-making, and the process of enforcing policies based on decisions made. Each ministry and agency shall in principle transfer its documents and records of importance as historical materials to the Prime Minister (the National Archives).

house without knowledge of what information was in them. The information contained details of the medical institutions where the drugs used had possibly been infected by Hepatitis C, gathered due to the need for the Ministry of Welfare, Health and Labour to search out these patients who had received the medication, and get them quickly into hospital to receive treatment. The Ministry had requested information relating to who had received the medication from implicated pharmaceutical companies.

As these scandals received much criticism in the media, prime minister at the time Yasuo Fukuda decide to create a comprehensive law, and pushed forward the process to consider such legislation. These considerations were continued by the successive cabinets which lead to the establishment of the law this year.

Features of the Law

Up until now the management of documents made, received and preserved by various organs of government were covered by the Information Disclosure Act, and when transferred to the National Archives were then covered by the National Archives Act, but the legislation on management in these two laws has been consolidated by the Public Document Management Law.

Compliance procedures for the management of public documents were strengthened. As well as each government department having the responsibility of reporting to the prime minister each year about documentation in their possession, the prime minister has the authority to investigate and make recommendations for improvement.

The function of the National Archive has been also been strengthened. With the establishment of the Public Documentation Management Committee, external specialists (non-governmental) have a scrutiny role and have been granted authority to deliberate on the issue.

There is also a newly established legal right to use any historical documents throughout the National Archive.

Conclusion

Through the establishment of this new law we can expect stronger and more appropriate management of public administration, and second, meet the government's obligation to be accountable to citizens now and in the future.

The Japan Local Government Centre is the UK office of CLAIR. CLAIR is a joint organisation of local authorities, working to promote and provide support for local internationalisation.

The main functions of JLGC, London are to conduct research on local government in the UK and northern Europe, and to promote exchanges between individuals, including government officers and local government representatives in the UK and Japan. We are also involved in implementing the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme, which employs UK graduates in the fields of international exchange and English language education in Japan.

JAPAN LOCAL GOVERNMENT CENTRE • LONDON

15 Whitehall, London SW1A 2DD
United Kingdom

Tel: 020 7839 8500

Fax: 020 7839 8191

E-mail: mailbox@jlgc.org.uk

www.jlgc.org.uk

Issue 68

Editor: Keith Kelly

