

# Myriad Leaves

## JLGC News Letter

MAY 2008



Carp streamers in the Oboke Valley, Miyoshi City

[JLGC News](#) 2

Topic: [The Hometown Tax System](#) 3

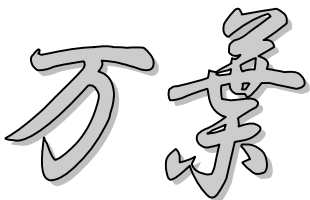
Guest Article: [Japanese Local Assemblies](#) 4

Topic: [Longrunning Japanese TV Show for Community Creativity](#) 5

JETAA: [2008 JETAA Conference](#) 6

UK-Japan Relations: [Thomas Blake Glover](#) 7

Editorial: [The Hokkaido Tōyako G8 Summit and Global Environment](#) 8



**Myriad Leaves** is the English language title for the earliest collection of Japanese poetry. 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'.

**The Council of Local Authorities  
for International Relations**

Founded in 1998, CLAIR is a joint organisation representing Japan's 47 prefectures, 17 designated cities and 1,788 municipalities.



**General:**

JLGC is pleased to announce the appointment of four new staff at the London office. Ryoko Matsunoshita from the Tokushima Prefectural Government, Seiki Kimura from the Tokyo Metropolitan Government as Assistant Director, and Jason Buckley as Office and Research Assistant all joined the office in April. Keith Kelly also joined JLGC in early May as Research and Publications Assistant.

**Visits:**

On the 15<sup>th</sup> of April, JLGC was invited to attend a meeting of the NALC Larger Local Councils Committee, which conducts its twice annual meetings at different town councils across the country. This time the meeting took place in Aylesbury in Buckinghamshire, a prime example of a new town council - established only in 2002 – and very active. The council has already achieved Quality Status, so the future bodes well for taking over even more services from the Aylesbury Vale District Council or Buckinghamshire County Council. Currently Aylesbury has made a start with the management of the cemetery, 600 allotments and a number of roundabouts in the town. JLGC was very pleased to be able to not only visit Aylesbury but also to make contacts with people from other larger Town Councils at this occasion.

JLGC made a visit to Argyll and Bute Council from April 16<sup>th</sup> to 18<sup>th</sup> after accepting a kind invitation from Argyll and Bute Chief Executive Mr James McLellan. We discussed different challenges, policies, and were able to sit in the public seats during the annual meeting of the council. Following this was a visit to Glasgow City Council where we listened to a lecture about Glasgow and met with local JETAA members.

**Speaker Series:**

On the 28<sup>th</sup> of March, East Sussex County Council Chairperson Mr Bob Lacy was kind enough to speak to JLGC about the various activities of his council; and on the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, Professor Tamio Nakamura of Tokyo University, currently working as a guest professor at Oxford University, spoke to JLGC on the structure of the EU and its relations with European municipalities.

**Business Trip Report: Sweden/Finland**

JLGC took a research trip to Sweden and Åland from the 4<sup>th</sup> to the 8<sup>th</sup> of March where we visited SALAR (Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions), the Embassy of Japan, the Hägersten-Liljeholmen District Council in Stockholm, and Nyköping City in Sweden, learning about the mechanisms of local democracy and the recent decentralisation reforms.

One of the most memorable things was the youth council in Sweden – a forum for young people who are not yet at voting age to be engaged in political work in the city. Nyköping was early in founding a youth council in 1995, whose members are chosen from local schools. We were lucky to have the opportunity to meet and discuss youth councils with the co-ordinator for Nyköping, who was also former chairperson of the council. Politicians in the city often consult the youth council in order to get the views of younger people in the council, while at the same time young people can learn about political work and are given an opportunity to influence the decision making process. Following a meeting with a former JET member in Sweden, the last day of the trip saw a visit to Åland, an autonomous, demilitarised Swedish speaking region of Finland to hear how its wide ranging autonomy and special status has led to its economic prosperity. JLGC thinks the dissemination of these examples of regional policy could be useful in Japan, especially in the promotion of local democracy.

**Business Trip Report: Germany**

Like Japan, Germany is also affected by a declining and rapidly aging population, particularly in rural areas. In states like Brandenburg - which is in Eastern Germany, surrounding Berlin and bordering on Poland - this has been recognised as an important policy issue with wide-ranging implications. The Association of Municipalities in Brandenburg has been instrumental in putting the message across that not only does this issue affect municipalities in the region very deeply, but that it demands concerted efforts and response from actors at all levels of government. For their recent board conference on the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> of March 2008, they invited JLGC to speak on the topic of 'Strategies and best practice examples for adapting rural areas in Japan to demographic change', with the aim of providing an international comparison to their members as well as government personnel. Director Shunsuke Mutai and Research and Policy Manager Irmelind Kirchner gave a 40 minute presentation, drawing together facts and figures on how depopulation is affecting Japan's rural areas, what measures have been taken so far, and what new approaches the current government is considering, as the increasing gap between urban and rural areas has become a burning issue. In particular, encouraging people to move to rural areas permanently or semi-permanently (so-called U-turns), measures to share tax takings in cities with rural areas, and measures to revitalise communities are currently taking shape.

## Japan Study Tour 2008 9-19 November, Tokyo and Nagano

Applications will be open from June for our Study Tour to Japan. This tour aims to foster a deeper understanding of Japan, its system of local government and culture, and to encourage the exchange of ideas and information. The tour is an ideal opportunity for senior officials from local government and related organisations.

This year's main topic is the *Linking the Urban and the Rural* so it is recommended that participants be interested in these issues. The tour will take place from the 9<sup>th</sup> to 19<sup>th</sup> of November, beginning with a visit to the Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications in Tokyo where participants will learn about the relationship between central and local government in Japan. The next stop will be Nagano Prefecture, a mountainous area in the centre of Japan, where participants will learn about Japanese local government and participate in visits, meetings and symposia mainly focused on rural issues. Here, participants will also have the opportunity to experience a short home stay with a Japanese family and watch an over one-thousand year old traditional Japanese festival which was granted a cultural heritage listing.

Further information, including an application form and a provisional schedule, can be found on our website from June: [www.jlgc.org.uk](http://www.jlgc.org.uk)



Harvesting in terraced rice fields

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## Topic

# The Hometown Tax System

By Eitaro Kawamoto, MIC, Assistant Director, JLGC  
Translated by Jason Buckley

The Japanese National Diet recently passed the Local Tax Amendment Bill which included a new system commonly referred to as *Hometown Tax*.

Since the implementation of the Comprehensive Decentralisation Act in 2000 the government has been promoting the decentralisation of power. Also, at the same time that the *Trinity Reform* (reform of central government subsidies, transfer of tax revenue sources to the regional level, and reform of the local allocation tax system) was carried out, it was decided that from this year approximately ¥3 trillion (£15 billion) in tax revenue sources will be transferred from income tax (national tax) to residence tax (local tax). However, even with the transfer of tax revenue sources, local governments will still find themselves in difficult situations due to their inability to curb outward migration to big cities such as Tokyo.

According to an investigation by the National Institute of Population and Social Security Research, more than 30% of people living in the Tokyo metropolitan area migrated there from other regions. Also, as a consequence of migration into big cities, a lot of tax is collected in metropolitan areas, leaving an insufficiency of tax revenue in regional areas. Meanwhile, heads of local government have been suggesting that a system of resolution is needed towards education and welfare costs that rural areas incur until people migrate to the city, and that the benefits given by local authorities during a person's childhood should be balanced to a certain degree by that person during their working life. Also, taxpayers who live in cities have been saying that they want to contribute to the place where they were born and grew up, or support the area to which they feel a close connection. In fact, some athletes and entertainers will risk not changing their certificate of residence so that their resident tax goes to their hometown as a kind of gift of gratitude.

In 2007 there was an increased demand from citizens to correct the urban-rural divide, and former prime minister Abe positioned the implementation of Hometown Tax as one of his most important measures. The Ministry of Internal Affairs and Communications set up the Hometown Tax Research Commission in order to extensively research the implementation of tax related policies to facilitate taxpayer contributions to hometowns. A total of nine fast-paced meetings were held from the group's inception in June until the release of the final report in October. However, in regards to the implementation of a Hometown Tax, several large tax system related problems stood in the way, and the opinions between local governments of rural and city areas also differed greatly.

Firstly, there was the issue of how to define *hometown*. In an era when migration both domestically and internationally is considerably heavy, the idea of a hometown that a person would want to contribute towards varies from person to person. Given this, the choice of hometown was regarded as something that should be left to the will of the taxpayers. Due to the clerical burden that confirming a taxpayer's hometown would bring it was decided that rather than legally defining *hometown* the taxpayer could choose where their Hometown Tax goes. Thus, both prefectures and municipalities could be the receivers of Hometown Tax.

Secondly, there was the issue of whether a system that allows taxpayers to pay tax to local authorities outside their residential address is even possible considering certain principles of tax, such as the:

- *benefit and burden principle*: if a taxpayer does not benefit from the tax they pay to the authority there is no legal justification for the tax;
- *authority to tax principle*: the right to enforce tax payments to local authorities outside of a residential address cannot be permitted; and
- *tax enforcement principle*: the possibility of a system where the taxpayer can choose the payment destination is in conflict with the concept of tax.

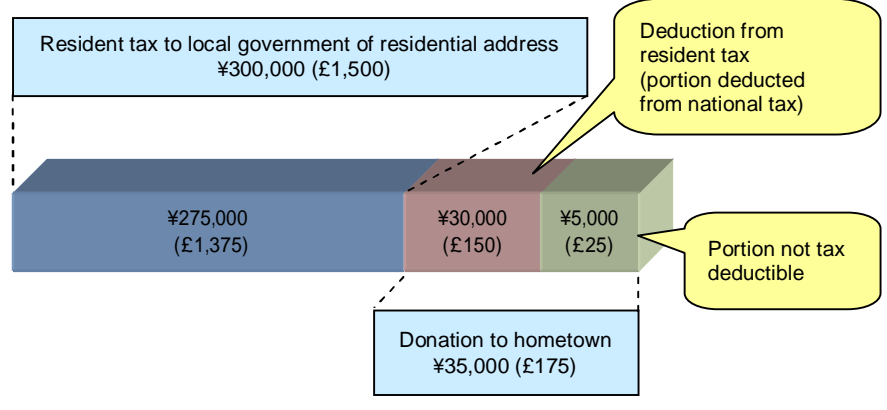
Heads of local government in large cities expressed negative viewpoints against Hometown Tax because they said it violates these principles.

As a result of these discussions, *Hometown Tax* was formally defined as a system based on a combination of *donation* and *tax deduction*, rather than being defined as a new type of tax. When donating to local authorities, a system already existed where the amount of a donation

**Figure: Hometown Tax**

Source:

[www.city.maibara.shiga.jp/rk/files/tm\\_d12/pdfurusatonouzeigaiyou.pdf](http://www.city.maibara.shiga.jp/rk/files/tm_d12/pdfurusatonouzeigaiyou.pdf)



exceeding ¥100,000 (£500) and limited by a ceiling of 25% of income is deductible from taxable income. The Hometown Tax System is an extension of this, where a donation exceeding ¥5,000 (£25) and limited by a ceiling of 30% of income or 10% of resident tax paid in the previous year will be directly

deducted not from taxable income but from resident tax (and partly from national tax) (refer to Figure).

Now that the bill has been passed, Hometown Tax will take effect as of this year. Hometown Tax leads the way in tax systems that allow taxpayers to choose where their tax money goes, and offers those who have left their hometown to work in big cities a chance at re-recognising the importance of their hometown. Furthermore, a battle of ideas to acquire more hometown tax from citizens who have moved to big cities has already begun among local governments throughout the country, but through the honest competition of local governments, it is hoped that Hometown Tax will increase local authorities' awareness of self-governance.

# Japanese Local Assemblies

## Powers, performance and problems

By Ken Hijino, PhD Candidate, Japan Studies, Cambridge University

Recent decentralisation reforms in Japan have generated greater interest and concern in the performance of local assemblies as never before. As local authorities acquire greater autonomy and discretionary powers, local assemblies are expected to contribute more actively to local policy generation and scrutiny. Yet the general perception – among voters, the media, scholars and politicians – is that most assemblies are failing to live up to these responsibilities now as they did in the past. What are the formal powers and roles granted to Japanese local assemblies? Why do they continue to under-perform in their roles? How have their circumstances changed recently? In this article we address these issues briefly, along with some comparisons to the English system.

The Japanese Constitution (Article 93) stipulates that all local authorities must establish directly elected assemblies as “deliberative organs” along with a directly elected chief executive. Hence all 47 prefectures and 1,788 municipalities in Japan have both an assembly and a governor/mayor as chief executive elected by local residents. Assembly members and chief executives hold four year terms, and elections are usually held conjointly in unified local elections (the latest was held in 2007).

This so-called “dual representative” system of assembly and mayor/governor is an uncommon one globally, but a key defining feature of Japan’s local governance structure. A similar mayor–council system has been adopted by 12 English councils following the Local Government Act in 2000. But the Japanese “dual representative” system is a unique hybrid in that it combines elements of presidential and parliamentary models: governor/mayor as the chief executive can dissolve the assembly, while the assembly can pass a vote of no-confidence in the chief executive.

Local government law grants local assemblies the powers to approve, amend, and abolish bylaws; to decide budgets; to approve the settlement of accounts; and to scrutinise the activities of the executive. The chief executive’s core responsibilities are to propose and present resolutions to the assembly; propose and execute the budget; collect taxes and revenues; and oversee accounts. In theory, both representative organs are expected to contribute to policy formation and to check and balance one another as equals.

In practice, the chief executive has been dominant in most local governments, with assemblies often relegated to a secondary, almost advisory, position. Most observers explain this to the imbalanced nature of Japan’s “dual representative” system, which gives the chief executive certain advantages over the assembly. These include the mayor or governor’s exclusive control over budget formation and budget-related bills and its prerogative to convene an assembly. The assemblies, on the other hand, are constrained in submitting legislative proposals and granted minimal research staff. The result has been that only a miniscule fraction of all local policy is initiated or designed by assembly members.

Local assemblies, having largely been inactive as legislative bodies, have also been criticized for inadequate scrutiny and oversight of the executive. Recent events – the *de facto* bankruptcy of Yubari City and the arrests of three prefectural governors for corruption and malfeasance in 2006 – have highlighted the poor vigilance of local assemblies over municipal/prefectural affairs.

One reason for this poor record has been a tendency of assembly members to perceive themselves not as independent organs, but as “backbench supporters” of the chief executive. Many local assembly members mistakenly consider themselves as part of the “ruling party” of the mayor or governor, leading to unhealthy cozy ties between the two organs.

These issues have led voters to question the value of assemblies and maintaining such highly-paid representatives. Unlike England (and most other countries), Japan is unique in that local assembly members are essentially professional politicians: average annual compensation and benefits are around 40,000 GBP for Japanese city assembly members (compared with 3,000 GBP in the UK)<sup>1</sup>. With most local government finances in severe crises and public services being scaled back, citizens have predictably been calling for reductions in the pay and size of assemblies. There have also been calls to reform assembly operations to enable part-time politicians with day-jobs and increase diversity of local representatives, who tend to be older and male.

These pressures for further cuts come even as massive municipal mergers between 1999 and 2006 have already drastically reduced the sizes of assemblies. There are currently 39,200 local assemblymen (compared to over 61,000 in 2002), or one representative per 3,490 citizens in Japan, compared to one district councillor per 2,605 citizens in the UK<sup>2</sup>. Both countries have fewer local representatives per capita than most European states. Average turn-out for Japanese local municipal elections (53.5 per cent in 2007), though higher than in the UK, continues to drift downwards, far below Scandinavian and continental European levels.

These democratic and performance deficits of Japanese assemblies have long been recognized, but only given serious attention as a result of recent decentralisation. Changes to central-local government relations and fiscal decentralisation reforms are slowly freeing local governments from central control and interference, permitting local authorities to pursue more localised policies. This has led to a consensus that assemblies need be re-invigorated to meet their expanded roles.

Piecemeal changes have been made in recent years to national local government law, addressing the imbalance in the relationship of assembly and the executive and facilitate local assemblies to generate policy. Various local assemblies have also initiated reforms to improve information disclosure, citizen participation, and stimulating debate and dialogue among assembly members. One recent promising development has been the adoption of a “basic assembly code” by the assemblies of Kuriyama Town and Mie Prefecture. These codes aim to clarify the powers and responsibilities of the assembly and ensure more active engagement in the local policy process.

Such internal reforms and changes in local government law will likely continue and improve, to some degree, the quality of local assembly performance. Yet, further decentralisation – specifically, reducing extensive detailed regulations by national law on public service provision and ensuring adequate financial resources to all local authorities – will be necessary. Under the current system, most cash-strapped local governments can not exercise substantive discretion and powers. Without such meaningful influence in shaping local policy, most local assemblies in Japan (or indeed anywhere) will remain in a state of limbo; unable to attract quality candidates and voter interest, local democracy will neither be healthy nor legitimate.

<sup>1</sup> Koso Nippon, Conditions of Japanese and Foreign Local Assemblies (chart) [www.kosonippon.org/temp/060925gikai.pdf](http://www.kosonippon.org/temp/060925gikai.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> From Wilks-Heeg and Clayton 2006, “Whose Town is it Anyway?” (pg 174) The Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust, York, UK.

## Topic

# Longrunning Japanese TV Show for Community Creativity

By Shunsuke Mutai, Director, JLG  
Translated by Jason Buckley

The Japanese equivalent of the UK's BBC, NHK, has been broadcasting a popular programme called *Gokinjo no Sokojikara* (the Power of the Neighbourhood) since 2002.

On this programme, twenty representatives from neighbourhood groups and associations whose areas are facing various problems consult with other neighbourhood groups who in the past have faced and overcome similar problems.

The programme has been addressing issues such as the prevention of crime in residential areas, rubbish separation, and graffiti, but the scope of the themes has been gradually widening. A diverse and creative bank of knowledge is being accumulated, giving a lot of helpful tips on how to put the power of communities into use.

I was given the opportunity to meet and speak with *Gokinjo no Sokojikara*'s chief producer, Takaaki Sato.

Sato worked on the very famous *Closeup Gendai* show similar to BBC's *Newsnight*, but says that when he first started working on *Sokojikara* he never imagined that a show which went about solving local problems at grass-roots level would attract so much attention. However, to his surprise it has become a long running programme.

I asked him what the secrets were to putting together a successful case study.

"To make it work well you need the participation and know-how of young people. Make it easy to participate and not too expensive – no more than ¥1,000 (£5). Having fun and enthusiastic people will help get others involved, and remember that arguments and in-fighting lead nowhere.

"People will often say that NHK is really good at research, but actually there are a lot of groups out there that publish their own information. Naturally there are a lot of resources on the internet that we can use. Also, successful cases will spread naturally by the internet even if they are not published by the original group."

Sato also says that producing the show gives him a chance to come into contact with the true characters of young people, which are often quite different to what most people expect.

"For example, one time we asked some kids why they hang out in front of convenience stores and community centres instead of going downtown or heading into central Tokyo. They said it was simply because they like their local area and don't want to hang out anywhere else.

"Although these kids like their local area, there's nowhere to really go so they hang out at these particular places. Solving community problems starts with these young people who do actually care about their communities."

A survey of adolescents loitering around Sakai City, Osaka Prefecture, showed that 70 percent of them said that they wouldn't mind participating in community activities. From this, Sakai City decided to introduce a policy to encourage young people to take part in community activities.

We also heard a story from Suginami, a borough of Tokyo, where children and the elderly were paired up together to patrol the streets on crime watch. It was a refreshing and popular exchange that brought children together with senior citizens who they might not otherwise come into contact with.

The most popular topics on *Gokinjo no Sokojikara* are those that relate to everyday life, such as crime prevention, disaster prevention and relief, action against shady business practices, animal themes (e.g. controlling nuisance crows and pigeons) or lifestyle (e.g. group living).

The reason these personal topics draw people's attention might be to do with the maturing society phenomenon. In an aging society with a low birth rate and declining population it is assumed that these types of neighbourhood topics will garner further interest.

Sato says that NHK has already collected around 200 cases, and will make a tentative database, but regrets that they haven't been able to compare and analyse them all yet.

"This programme is made using precious public funding so it's my wish to try and benefit society as much as possible."

Public broadcasters play an essential role in community progression and development. And schemes that make good use of a public broadcaster's stock of cases is also important. Wisdom is local.

## The 150th Anniversary of The Anglo-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce

### Japan-UK Memorial Seminars Aberdeen, June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008

This year is the 150th anniversary of The Anglo-Japan Treaty of Amity and Commerce. To celebrate this, JLG will be holding a series of seminars about how the relationship has changed and developed over the 150 years with speakers from both Japan and Britain. These seminars will be held in Aberdeen (June 10<sup>th</sup>), Medway (September 13<sup>th</sup>) and Newcastle (September 22<sup>nd</sup>) in 2008.

In addition to these three seminars, the annual Japan Day Seminar "Regenerating Regions Through Partnership" will also be held in Derbyshire (November 18<sup>th</sup>, 2008) as one of the Japan-UK Memorial Seminars.

The first seminar, held in Aberdeen on June 10<sup>th</sup>, 2008, will examine the impact Thomas Glover had on Meiji Japan and his legacy in both countries. It will consist of two lectures, followed by refreshments. The speakers are Professor Brian Burke-Gaffney (Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science) and Mr. Masahiko Arihara (Mitsubishi Heavy Industries Europe, Ltd.). The seminar will run from 17:30-19:30 followed by refreshments at Robert Gordon University.

This event is free to attend, but registration is necessary via email [mailbox@jlgc.org.uk](mailto:mailbox@jlgc.org.uk) F.A.O.:J-UKMS. Please include your name, address, organisation, affiliation and whether you will attend the seminar, reception or both events.

Further information about the seminars in Medway and Newcastle will be given in the next issue. We will also update the information about these seminars on our website in May. Please visit [www.jlgc.org.uk/](http://www.jlgc.org.uk/).





## UK-Japan Relations

### Thomas Blake Glover

#### Purveyor of the Industrial Revolution in Japan



**By Brian Burke-Gaffney, Professor and Dean of the Human Environment Faculty, Nagasaki Institute of Applied Science, Honorary Director of Glover Garden**

A native of Fraserburgh, Aberdeenshire, Thomas Blake Glover (1838-1911) arrived in Nagasaki in September 1859 at the age of twenty-one to take up a position under fellow Scotsman Kenneth R. Mackenzie, local agent for Jardine Matheson & Co. In February 1862, he founded "Glover & Co." and joined in competition with other foreign firms scrambling to keep up with Nagasaki's rapidly expanding international business activity.

In 1863, Glover built a private residence at No.3 Minamiyamate, a hillside residential lot with a panoramic view over the gray mosaic of rooftops in Nagasaki and the full length of the harbor. The house borrowed from the colonial styles prevalent in the ports of India and China at the time, but it was essentially a Japanese structure built by Japanese hands, an example of the compromise between Japanese and European architecture that was already becoming the characteristic style of the Nagasaki Foreign Settlement. After completion, the house stood on the Minamiyamate hillside like a new-generation castle symbolizing the importance of commercial wealth and international exchange as Japan evolved from a secluded feudal nation into a world power. The building remains to this day as the oldest Western-style building in Japan, a nationally designated Important Cultural Asset, and the centerpiece of the Glover Garden complex.

The Glover house served another role as a reception parlour for Japanese guests, particularly the representatives of feudal clans hankering after second-hand ships, guns and machinery and trying to strike deals for exchanges with local products like tea, lumber, vegetable wax and camphor oil. Discussions at the Glover dinner table also included whispered requests for the Scotsman's assistance in traveling abroad. Glover responded with his full cooperation, making arrangements for forward-thinking samurai to smuggle themselves out of Japan and to study in Britain. One of the recipients of these favors was a young samurai of the Chōshū Clan named Itō Hirobumi, who would later serve as the prime minister of Japan for four terms. Glover developed such ability in the Japanese language and knowledge of Japanese culture and customs that he turned into a kind of freelance diplomat. In 1863, British Consul George Morrison reported to his superiors in Edo that, "Mr Glover is fluent in the Japanese language and is on terms of intimacy and friendship with many Japanese of rank, amongst whom he is much esteemed."<sup>1</sup>

Glover & Co. was flooded with orders for ships, cannons, rifles, machinery and everything else the rebelling clans needed to topple the Tokugawa Shogunate. At the peak of its prosperity in the middle of the decade, the staff of Glover & Co. included seventeen Europeans and hundreds of Chinese middlemen and clerks, and Japanese labourers, wharf runners and messengers, making it the most important foreign business enterprise in Nagasaki.

The contributions made by Thomas Glover around the time of the Meiji Restoration cement his reputation as a purveyor of the Industrial Revolution in Japan. The list includes the first railroad, first slip dock, first mechanized coal mine, first ironclad warship and an array of other "tools of Western civilization" that built the foundation for this country's rapid emergence as an industrial and military power in the late nineteenth century.

Although only a small model, the steam locomotive that Glover displayed on the Nagasaki waterfront in 1865 awakened Japanese people to the potential of train transportation. Similarly, the slip dock and hoisting engines that he installed at Kosuge in 1868 and the coal mine that he established at Takashima Island with the help of British engineers the following year stimulated an industrial success story that would go on to stun the world. In April 1870, Glover imported a 1,500-ton corvette called the *Jho Sho Maru* built in Aberdeen through his older brother Charles. Japan's first ironclad warship, the corvette, renamed the *Ryūjō*, became Emperor Meiji's flagship and the pride of the new Imperial Japanese Navy.

An accumulation of debts forced Glover & Co. into liquidation in August 1870, but Thomas Glover did not retreat from Japan in humiliation. On the contrary, he remained in Nagasaki for several years to settle his company's outstanding obligations and to watch over the expanding Takashima Colliery. In 1876, he moved to a grand house in the Shiba district of Tokyo and spent the rest of his life as a trusted Mitsubishi company consultant and friend of the Meiji Government. He mediated the installation of equipment at the Osaka Mint, where the first "yen" were produced, and played a leading role in the establishment of the Japan Brewery Company, predecessor of Kirin Beer Company. He also made frequent trips back to Nagasaki to visit his British-Japanese son Kuraba Tomisaburo, who maintained the elegant house on the Minamiyamate hillside. In 1908, the Japanese government awarded Thomas Glover the prestigious Second Class Order of the Rising Sun in recognition of his contributions to this country. He died in Tokyo in 1911, a legend in his time, and was buried at Sakamoto International Cemetery in Nagasaki.

In January 1903, the following letter to the editor appeared in *The Nagasaki Press*, submitted by an unidentified person in response to a scholarly article about lighthouses printed earlier by the newspaper:

Sir, — When reading the interesting article on "Some Ancient Lighthouses" it occurred to me that probably very few people now living know who built the first modern lighthouse in Japan. The first lighthouse in Japan was built through Mr. T.B. Glover by his engineer Mr. T. Waters, on Satanomisaki, the most southerly point of Satsuma. This was followed sometime after by a lighthouse on Kwannonsaki built by the French engineers who constructed the Yokosuka Docks. Japan since then has made rapid strides — indeed jumps — not only in lighthouse building, but in everything else, and I am quite sure that when the true history of this country is written Mr. Glover will, or ought to, be credited with no small share in Japan's present position in the world. Apologizing for troubling you, I am etc., A RESIDENT.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> National Archives of the UK, FO 262/60/144.

<sup>2</sup> *The Nagasaki Press*, January 10, 1904.



The Glover house

# JETAA

## 2008 JETAA Conference

### -Edinburgh

By Anne Grieve, JETAA UK Chair

This year we held the JETAA (JET Programme Alumni Association) UK Conference in Scotland's historic capital city, Edinburgh. The UK conference is held every year as an opportunity to bring together the committee members of the UK chapters, which are:

- London
- Midlands
- Wales
- North West
- Scotland
- Northern Ireland

JETAA UK also has a National Executive who deals with co-ordinating national concerns such as our website, strategy on international issues and supporting the regional chapters in their activities.

This year we were lucky enough to be joined by Mr Takeda and Mr Mutai, the Director of JLGC. It is great for us to have representation from JLGC to discuss upcoming events and anniversaries, for example the 150th anniversary of the Japan / UK Treaty of Friendship and the JLGC London office 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary.



#### JETAA UK Regional Chapter Events

Our UK meeting is a chance for each of the chapters to give an update on the activities they have organised throughout the past year. We try to give each other inspiration and encouragement on how to involve new returnees from the JET Programme in Japanese culture when they get back to the UK as well as creating a social support network.

Some examples of activities JETAA UK have organised over the past year 2007-8:

- Japanese language classes
- Sushi making
- Sake tasting
- Social events with Japanese Embassy and Consulate
- Watching Japanese films
- Kodo and Taiko concert events
- Pre-departure orientations across the UK for new JET participants
- University recruitment talks for new JETs across the UK
- Mountain biking and ski weekends
- Karaoke nights
- Careers Information Day in London

#### JETAA International

As well as regional issues, we also look at what is happening in the world of JETAA International. One of the most exciting things happening right now is the development of the JETAA International website: [jetalumni.org](http://jetalumni.org).

JETAA International provides a central point of communication, facilitates exchange of resources, knowledge and talent, and helps promote the JET Programme and alumni Chapters around the world.

The JET Alumni Association has 50,000 alumni since the inception of the programme 20 years ago. Nearly 21,000 alumni have registered to the some 50 regional Chapters located across 15 countries and this is possibly the largest growing alumni association in the world. We are now seeing second generation JETs (participants whose parents went on the JET Programme) joining the alumni on their return from Japan.

In the UK, we have three country representatives (Scotland, Northern Ireland and England / Wales) who attend the international meeting held each year. It is their job to help move forward the work of JETAAi with projects such as helping small countries and chapters start up and evolve and developing resources such as the website.

#### JETAA Scotland Ceilidh

In the evening JETAA Scotland had kindly organised their annual ceilidh to coincide with the UK meeting. This was a great chance for people from other parts of the UK as well as our Japanese visitors to experience a live ceilidh band and some energetic dancing by the local JETAA members in Edinburgh. Other Japanese related societies as well as the Japanese Consulate staff came along with their families who especially enjoyed the event.

The ceilidh is a great example of the type of cross-cultural event that JETAA hold across the UK. A dedicated team of volunteers on the JETAA Scotland committee does the organisation. They seek out an appropriate venue, in this case a church hall beside the castle in the historic Old Town with disabled access and a safe outside garden area.

The committee finds a ceilidh band with a good reputation and a reasonable price tag. The church hall was decorated with tartan ribbons and Scottish and Japanese flags and there was a selection of refreshments, soft drinks and shortbread.

Invitations to the event were sent out to all of the JETAA Scotland members across the country as well as the Japanese Consulate, Japan Society of Scotland, Japanese Residents Society of Scotland and of course to the UK meeting attendees. There was a ticket price on the door to subsidise the cost of the event.

As well as the dancing one of JETAA Scotland's members Allie McDougall is an accomplished harp player and gave us a stunning performance followed by two young Japanese children singing to her accompaniment.

At the end of the night everybody linked arms and sang Auld Lang Syne a favourite ending song for Scots and Japanese alike making the feeling of cultural connection even stronger. This is just one example of the hundreds of events that held by dedicated JETAA committee members across the UK and the world every year.



#### The Coming Year

Over the coming year JETAA UK will continue to work to help its members stay in touch with their Japanese experience by forming social networks and holding events like the one mentioned above. For new participants preparing to fly over to Japan we try to share our experiences and advice in the hope they will begin their lives and jobs in Japan with open hearts and minds.

We aim to encourage new chapters across the UK to ensure that there are enough events spread out geographically to cover all our returnees from the JET programme. This isn't always possible but we always appreciate new returnees coming along to events and finding out about who we are and what we do and hopefully deciding to get more involved.

We will continue to maintain and develop good relationships with JLGC and the Japanese Embassy and Consulate in the UK and with other Japanese related societies. We try whenever possible or practical to support each others events and ideas especially in areas of the UK where interest or turnout is low.

If you are interested in finding out more about JETAA UK why not take a look at our website [www.jetaa.org.uk](http://www.jetaa.org.uk) or our international site [www.jetalumni.org](http://www.jetalumni.org) to see how chapters across the world operate.

## Editorial

# The Hokkaido Tōyako G8 Summit and Global Environment

By Toru Murase, Deputy Director, JLGC

The 2008 G8 Summit, known as the Hokkaido Tōyako Summit, will be held in the town of Tōyako, Hokkaido from July 7th this year. Tōyako is located in the mid-western part of Hokkaido, bordered by the Shikotsu-Tōya National Park, and is surrounded by great natural beauty, being located by Lake Tōyako, Mount Usu, and Funka Bay.

The four main themes of the summit will be the *Environment and Climate Change*, *Development in Africa*, *the World Economy*, and *Political issues including Non-proliferation*. Of these, Environment and Climate Change is gathering particular attention from many people in Hokkaido.

In 1997 the 3<sup>rd</sup> Conference of the Parties on Climate Change was held in Kyoto, Japan, resulting in the adoption of the so called Kyoto Protocol. The goal of the Kyoto Protocol, formally known as the Kyoto Protocol to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, is for every nation to reduce six types of greenhouse gases by 2013.

Ten years have now passed since the adoption of the Kyoto Protocol, and at the Hokkaido Tōyako Summit Japan will push for the implementation of an international framework for after 2013.

With one of the main themes being the environment, the Hokkaido Tōyako Summit has triggered the development of programs to combat environmental problems in Japan, especially in local areas of Hokkaido where along with programmes to welcome visitors to the summit, substantial projects concerning the environment are being pursued.

Four municipalities including Tōyako along with the Hokkaido Prefectural Government and several local businesses formed the Tōyako Global Warming Action Council, and with backing from the Ministry of the Environment are striving to reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Using the Hokkaido Tōyako Summit as a springboard, the council aims to halve greenhouse gasses by 2030 through carbon reduction by putting into action a number of projects. Some of these include the development of agricultural storage facilities that use snow with thermal energy for refrigeration, boilers in plastic greenhouses using the remaining heat from charcoal kilns, a heat pump water heater to raise the temperature of spa water using excess water from hot springs, shuttle buses that use SVF (straight vegetable fuel) made from drained cooking oil, and a pellet stove that burns compressed wood to create a source of heat for residential and industrial areas.



The crater of Mt. Usu  
(photo by Mr. Tomiya of AIST)



Lake Tōya

The entire Tōyako region has been selected as one giant "eco-museum" where all farms, forested mountains, fisheries, settlements

and old ruins are considered

a single exhibition. As well as promoting this eco-museum, Tōyako is striving to introduce environmental measures such as a solar power system and geothermal heat extraction system in the Tōyako Visitor Centre and Volcanic Science Museum. They are also establishing basic environmental regulations, and are planning to use the summit to promote many more environmental projects.

On the 21st of April the Hokkaido government announced the Hokkaido Environmental Declaration, and at the same time set up the Hokkaido Tōyako Summit Preparation Council in partnership with municipalities within Hokkaido and other related organisations. Among other things, this council will establish a prefectural framework in which public and private sectors will come together to host the summit participants as well as work on environmental and climate change related projects.

A number of events to help raise environmental awareness have been undertaken by these organisations. For example, an event where all lights were switched off for two hours and participants discussed issues of climate change under candlelight was held in March.

In the same month, primary school students from around the country came together in Tōyako for the Children's Summit for the Environment where they published their opinions on environmental matters in newspapers written and edited by themselves. Also, in June, one-hundred primary and middle school students from eleven countries gathered together for the Children's World Summit for the Environment in Sapporo.

The Integrated Exhibition of the Environment will be held in June. Participants will be able to test drive an eco-car and learn about issues on the environment and climate change.

Over fifty seminars and events will be held in cooperation, and local towns in Hokkaido are looking towards the summit which is raising awareness of global environmental problems. It is hoped that this summit will help broaden awareness around the world towards confronting environmental problems.

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.

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Issue 59

