



President's Message: 2008 in review

2008 was another busy year for JETAAWA, and a rewarding one in terms of our engagement with the WA Japan-Australia community. Apart from continuing to hold the fortnightly kaiWA conversation event in the city, we have also organised several other very well-attended and successful shindigs.

In early November, we held the JETAAWA Careers Seminar with the cooperation of UWA. We were happy to see the huge turnout (over 70 keen listeners) and would again like to express our gratitude to the speakers who were kind enough to take time out of their busy schedules to share their experiences and advice across various fields. We intend to hold the event again in 2009, this time at a larger venue!

A week later we put out a yatai at the Japanese School in Perth's bunkasai, under the blazing sun. Thanks to the JSP for organising a great day – many of the people who attended the main event stopped in for a perfectly prepared gyoza or yaki-onigiri. Definitely something we intend to continue.

In October we again held the returnees function at Santa Fe in Subiaco. Old hands and fresh faces alike had a great time swapping stories and meeting new people.

In September we held the Nitaboh movie night, with the kind cooperation of the Consulate-General, who provided the venue. Nitaboh was an anime quite different from what we were used to – a moving story and incredible sound made it a great event. Thanks also to UWA JAPSSOC for their assistance on the night.

We have also selected a new logo to represent JETAAWA into the future. It's a great design, simple and symbolic, which we think will be the perfect emblem for our organisation. Check it out:



Facebook has continued to prove a useful resource for getting the word out to current and potential members and JETs. If you haven't signed up, please visit the JETAAWA group and get in there. You can get info on kaiWA and on upcoming events, including the Family BBQ on Feb 21 and the Quiz Night and AGM scheduled for March 19 and 27 respectively. The Quiz Night in particular is not to be missed!

As always, we look forward to your feedback on this newsletter and in general.

Nick John
JETAAWA President
2008/2009



JETAAWA Committee 2008/2009

Nick John
JETAAWA President



Brad Baker
JETAAWA Vice President



Adam Reynolds
JETAAWA Treasurer



Tegan Chubb
JETAAWA Promos Rep



David Millin
*JETAAWA Secretary /
Employment Rep*



Emma Wilson
JETAAWA Social Rep



Julius Pang
*JETAAWA Media /
Newsletter Rep*



2008 Year in Photos



Stories from Japan: Kagoshima - Donican Lam

We asked the new 2008-2009 WA JETs to share their experiences of Japan in a survey. Many thanks to Donican Lam (CIR in Kagoshima), Erica Trotter (ALT in Hyogo) and Rachelle Kearney (ALT - Tome, Miyagi) for sharing taking part in the survey and submitting photos.

1. In general, how would you describe your experiences on JET so far?

Awesome! The first few months were a bit rough as it was a very busy period for City Hall, so I was literally thrown into mountains of work while still trying to adjust to things here and sort out stuff. But as I had stayed in Japan before and was prepared for the challenges, it wasn't too bad and I got through it. The fact that we arrived in summer really helped as well (I'm not a fan of the cold), and everyone I have met has been so kind and supportive. Things have calmed down a lot now, so I have finally time to do more exploring and go out with people besides my colleagues (who are all great). I'm really starting to love this city, and even though my apartment is tiny, it feels more and more like home everyday.

2. How do your experiences differ from or accord with your expectations before leaving?

People work very hard here, and overtime is like the norm. As a foreigner, I'm not expected to do overtime/beyond the hours of my contract, so I always get time back if I do, but still, seeing my colleagues pour so much of themselves into work makes me a little concerned for them.

In City Hall, there's a school bell that rings every morning, noon and evening to signal the start of the working day, lunchtime and the end of the working day, respectively. This, I did not expect.



Stories from Japan: Kagoshima - Donican Lam

Everyone here is really kind. I'd had that image and it proved true during my previous stay in Japan, but people here in Kagoshima seem even more that way.

Also, it rains a lot more here than I expected, and there are a lot of overcast days. We really are spoiled by Perth's lovely climate, aren't we? ^^

1. How long do you think you will stay?

It's hard to say at the moment, but God-willing, I hope to recontract for next year. I can definitely see myself staying for 3 years (on JET) as well.

2. What has been the single best experience for you so far?

Ah, there's so many!! But just to give one, it would probably be going to Yakushima and hiking through Shiratani Unsuikyo to reach Mononoke-hime no Mori (Princess Mononoke's forest)! ^^

3. What foods can you now eat that you couldn't eat before?

Lots of different kind of pickled things...

4. What advice can you give to potential candidates for 2009?

If you have a love for Japan and are willing to give it your all, then go for it! There will be some hard times and things that make no sense to you, but the experience is priceless and you'll meet many, many wonderful people in the land of the rising sun.



5. Photos:

[prev. page] Location: Shiratani Unsuikyo, Yakushima, Kagoshima Pref.

[right] Organising the "Genki Gaikokujin & Friends" foreigners group to dance in the Ohara Festival (Kagoshima's biggest local festival), Nov 2008. (I am on the bottom right).

Stories from Japan: Hyogo - Erica Trotter

1. In general, how would you describe your experiences on JET so far?

Well, I don't really know where to begin. So much as happened in the 5 short months I have been here.

So far I have had very few negative experiences, some frustrating experiences and too many once in a life time experiences to mention. Everyday at school is a new and mostly wonderful experience. My two schools are polar opposites of each other. My Base school is academic and by the book. It has very little room for deviating from the plan while my visit school is an agricultural school; there is very little pressure on the students to learn English so they seem to enjoy it more. This means I get to spend more time talking with the students and doing fun activities etc.

In general, this has been the best experience of my life to date. Everyday is a different adventure. I love my schools (most days!) and I love my friends that I have made here and I couldn't really think of being anywhere else for the foreseeable future.

2. How do your experiences differ from or accord with your expectations before leaving?

When I applied for JET I sort of new what to expect as I had spent some time with a friend when she was on the JET programme. During that time I visited schools and hung out with other JETs. I thought I knew what to expect but as they say "Every situation is different!" I was placed in a senior high school instead of the junior high schools I had previously visited and things are done differently in this world. I hate to say it but about 1/3 of my time is spent at my desk surfing the net (sound familiar?) I am given a text book to teach from and can very rarely deviate from it. However, this is what I kind of expected but I honestly thought they would utilize me a bit more. However, now they seem to be used to me, more teachers are coming up to me to proof read things or just chat.

My expectations of living in Japan have been met but it still surprises me that with only a few words of Japanese and hand gestures you can accomplish nearly anything!

3. How long do you think you will stay?

I received my re-contracting paper the other week. I sat down and thought about my decision. I also talked to my friends and other JETs to see what everyone is doing and feeling. I can say to nearly 100% certainty that I can't think of anywhere else I would rather be at the moment. So I have already circled yes for another year.



Stories from Japan: Hyogo - Erica Trotter

1. What has been the single best experience for you so far?

Wow, where to begin... So far I have road-tripped to Hiroshima, Okayama and Miyajima. I have dressed as a maiko in Kyoto. I have hiked to the top of too many mountains to name. I have camped in the freezing old train tunnels in Takedao. I have dressed up in full Halloween costume and scared locals as I walked around Awaji Island with friends, I have visited castles, eaten wild boar, been attacked by mukade... I have packed so much into my time here that I have had only two weekend home by myself and one was when I was sick with the flu (I was meant to be in Osaka). However, I have to say that the best experience I have had so far on JET was working with my English Speaking Society while they re-wrote a brothers Grimm story from Japanese to English then turned it into a play. We then rehearsed the play for a month then took it on the road to various elementary schools. The play was very impressive. I am very proud to have been involved. We got a favourable review in the Kobe Shinbun.

2. What foods can you now eat that you couldn't eat before?

Ummmmmm.....nothing. I could eat Natto before and I can now!

3. What advice can you give to potential candidates for 2009?

Choose Hyogo! The best of all the prefectures! It is a gateway to the rest of Japan and it has everything from Skiing in winter to beaches in summer. Also leave your expectations at the door and take every opportunity that is presented to you, otherwise you will regret it later!

4. Photos:

- 1) School Life- My ESS students performing their play for elementary school kids (previous page);
- 2) Enjoying a good meal and a few drinks with new friends (top, right);
- 3) Becoming one with the culture (bottom, right).



Stories from Japan: Tome, Miyagi - Rachelle Kearney

“Miyagi? Where’s That?!” My JET Journey to Japan

I applied for the JET Programme in December 2007. On the part of the application form that is about your placement preferences, I wrote Nara, Kyoto and Kyoto Prefecture as my first choices – I really wanted to have my JET experience in Kansai! That area is so steeped in the culture and tradition of old Japan, and that’s where I’d pictured myself heading, if I was lucky enough to be accepted. And when the word came back that I HAD been accepted as a 2008 JET, I waited in anticipation until the placement information email made its way to my inbox. When it came, I opened it with my breath held to behold... not Nara, as I’d hoped. Not Kyoto... not even Kansai... but Tome City, Miyagi Prefecture. Miyagi? Isn’t that the guy out of Karate Kid? And Tome? I’d never heard of the place! So I did a little Wiki-ing and googling to see if I couldn’t find out a little more about this mysterious placement of mine. What I found was, at the time, not so encouraging. I had hoped to be placed in central/southern Japan to avoid the worst of the cold that I, as a Perth-ite, had NO experience with. Miyagi, however, is about 500km north of Tokyo in Northern Honshu, so THAT wasn’t going to work out. I had also hoped to be placed in a medium-sized city, something like the size of Perth. But Tome City is not a city as we know them back home – it’s more like a shire. A few years ago a bunch of neighboring towns amalgamated into Tome City for funding reasons, so while on the map Tome City looks pretty big, it’s actually about 10 smaller towns about 10-20mins drive from each other. So! All in all, not the central-Honshu-semi-urban existence I’d been hoping for! I had visions of freezing cold winter weather and blizzards and earthquakes and nobody speaking English and a tiny house in the middle of a rice paddy with my name on it... and for a while, I was a little worried about what I’d been given.

But after contacting my predecessor and getting all the goss on the place, I found that all was not lost. She told me about my own little part of Tome, Yoneyama Town, and showed me pictures of my apartment-and-car-to-be. She also gave me lots of info on what there is to do in Tome, and about my workplace and future colleagues, and it was all fairly reassuring. Yes, Tome is in the countryside, and yes, the entertainment and nightlife on offer may leave a little to be desired, but no, I would NOT be living in a rice paddy and no, I would NOT be the only foreigner around. So it was with slightly more confidence that I packed my bags

and headed off to Japan at the beginning of August with the other nervous and excited WA JETs.

At the Tokyo Orientation I met the other Miyagi and Sendai-bound JETS, which included some pretty classic characters and people I was sure I could become friends with. I was also lucky enough to meet another JET that had been placed in Tome City. She was a lovely, cheerful girl from England, and I immediately felt better knowing that I wouldn’t be alone on my journey to the strange new world of Japan’s northern inaka! Actually, after meeting her I felt better about my situation, because she had come to Japan without knowing anything about where she was going to be living (her predecessor’s apartment was no longer available), and so was kinda flying by the seat of her pants. I figured, if she could live with that kind of uncertainty, I’d be fine!

And from there, things only got better. After the 6-hour bus ride (through some beautiful country!) from Tokyo to Sendai (the largest city in Miyagi) and then the 2-hour car ride from Sendai to Tome (on which I got freaked out by how narrow the roads are!), I got to meet my fellow Tome ALTs. There are around 14 of us here in Tome, 11 JET ALTs and 3 Interac ALTs (a different organization). I was one of three new 2008 JETs, the others being sempais (2nd or 3rd year JETs). We are a multicultural mix spanning 5 continents, and as such, our gatherings are always interesting and a lot of fun! It didn’t take long for us to become good friends. Through the Tome JETs and my own encounters, my circle of friends soon expanded to include quite a few Japanese young people too, which was great – after all, a lot of the reason I came to Japan was to meet Japanese people and practice my language skills! And because there were plenty of sempai ALTs to get advice from, my transition into life in Tome went pretty smoothly. They were there to help me in the rough few first weeks of limbo when I didn’t yet have a phone or the internet or a car. And they’re always there as friends and advisors, even now I’ve been here for 5 months (wow, has it been that long already?!). We hang out together a lot, whether it be for Karaoke on a Friday afternoon to celebrate surviving to the end of another week, or for a nice warm nabe-party around the kotatsu at someone’s apartment in winter, or for a weekend trip somewhere exploring the countryside or a new onsen. The best thing to do when you’re feeling

Stories from Japan: Tome, Miyagi - Rachelle Kearney

a little lonely and missing home is call up someone who is maybe feeling a little bit the same way, and then get together to cheer each other up! That's especially true today, being Christmas (and a work day in Japan!). Those of us who decided to stay in Tome over the holidays are getting together tonight for a fried chicken Christmas dinner, followed by cake in true Japanese style.

Another reason that adjusting to life in Tome City has been fairly easy for me is my working environment. My base school is a junior high school (equivalent to Aus years 7-9), and everyone there has been really lovely ever since I came. My JTEs were really great in the tricky first few weeks, helping me get established here with bank accounts and internet and car insurance, all things that would have been much more difficult without a real Japanese-speaker on side! And they still help me out whenever I need it. They eased me into the teaching process, and while some JETs complain of boredom or not being used enough, I've found myself well and truly occupied and included in many lessons and school activities, which has been great. My visiting schools (2 elementary schools, 2 kindergartens and a nursery school) have all been lovely and welcoming too, letting me know what is expected of me ahead of time (usually!) and inviting me to school events such as festivals and performance days. I think I have been really lucky in my work placements!

And though Tome "City" is really more of a country town, it's not like I live outside of civilization! There's still plenty to do here, though maybe not the same kind of things I'd necessarily find myself doing at home. I've done lots of karaoke, learned to play shamisen and taiko, tried my hand at Japanese ceramics, nomihodi-ed and tabehodi-ed, taken part in English conversation classes, become a member of a yoga class, tried calligraphy and attended or participated in lots of festivals and events all over Tome City (including once dressing up as Santa!). And if I'm feeling restless or bored with the country life (or if I need to find some gaijin-sized clothes!), Sendai is only a couple of hours away on the bus, and a weekend in Tokyo is only a shinkansen-ride away.

So though I may have been mildly alarmed when I found out that my JET placement wasn't quite what I'd hoped for, after 5 months living in Tome as an ALT I am more than happy with where I ended up. Though winter is colder than I'd like it to be and sometimes friends and family a little further away than I want them to be, the new friends I've made here have made it easy to be happy in this strange but wonderful new place. And speaking of new friends, next month a few of us have planned a trip together... to Kyoto and Nara! So I still get to see and experience what I wanted to when I applied for JET, even though I live at the other end of Japan.

If you're a past JET planning on coming back for a visit, don't overlook Miyagi – it's a place well worth seeing! And if you're a prospective JET who is just starting out on this crazy journey, jump in head first and don't hold back, because whatever and wherever your own situation is, you can make the most of it and have a great year in Japan. Ganbatte!

Rachelle Kearney

'08/'09 ALT
Tome City, Miyagi Prefecture



JET Oceania Conference 2009

Cooperation and Communication was the theme at this year's Oceania Conference from the 14th – 16th November 2008 at the Rydges Hotel, North Melbourne.

Hosted by JETAA VIC: Glenn & Zosia
 Attended on behalf of JETAA WA by: Adam Reynolds and Tegan Chubb.

Friday 14th November

JETAA Vic hosted a tram and walking tour of Melbourne on Friday morning. This tour was led by the knowledgeable & street savvy Glen Clark, who put his degree in tourism to good use. Took in the sights of Melbourne including Victoria Parliament, the State Library, the old Theatre district and some great quirky alleys and shopping lanes. All accompanied by Glen's impressive historical narration.

In the evening all delegates were kindly invited to attend a Welcome Reception, hosted by the Consulate-General of Japan & CLAIR at the beautiful Melbourne residence of Consul General Mr. Hasegawa.

Saturday 15th November

Opening Session

- Welcome, housekeeping, outline of agenda and statement of objectives.
- Introduction of all Participants and Observers

Information Session – JETAAI

Review of the JETAA International Meeting

Oceania Logo Competition

- JETAAI will be holding a logo competition. Everyone is encouraged to submit possible logos, and the winner will be rewarded. For more information see the pamphlet
- Once designed, we're welcome to use the international logo
- It will be given to us on CD, and also available on the Canberra website (www.canberra.jetalumni.org)

Conference

- International meeting has just been concluded in Paris
- 2009 will be held in Jamaica
- Nomination of new Australian country rep for 2010 – 2011 welcomed
- International Conference in 2010 will be held in Japan – different to prior, only country representatives will be eligible to participate.



JET Oceania Conference 2009

CMS

- JETAA Content Management System (CMS)
- The CMS has been tested for the last 3 years, and is scheduled for a 2009 release. Created and so far managed by Paul Donovan
- Seeking new content manager
- JETAAI sponsorship guidelines to ensure ethics/transparency
- Number of members counted – for CLAIR funding

GIA

- Grant In Aid funding from CLAIR treasurers to GIA – Ahkee
- Please provide Chapter Reports each year to CLAIR
- Please give updates on request
- Administration - Contact Michelle Fox to create an alumni address. Also, be sure to subscribe to Yahoo Groups to maintain contact details (President and delegates)

Charity

- JETAAI is sponsoring the charity www.roomtoread.org
- Chapters can contribute by donations of books and providing funds from fundraising/entry fees etc

Workshop 1 – JETAA Sydney

Effective Pre-Departure Orientations

- Sydney has an awesome logo!
- The major event for committee each year is the Pre-Departure Orientation
- Committee members are definitely required to attend
- Members are also active in JET interviews, recruitment drives etc
- In Sydney, Pre-Departure Orientation is compulsory for all JETS to attend prior to going to Japan = 100% attendance
- Resources available at www.jetalumni.org
- Books & handouts are available in soft format / online so new JETs not carrying so much to Japan
- Q & A Box throughout session for questions to be asked afterwards
- Parents also welcome at networking dinner
- New JETs sit on the floor and go through true false questionnaire – shock to the system to prepare for reality of going to Japan, think more about the culture etc and prepare them for life in Japan



JET Oceania Conference 2009

Keynote – Dr. Jun Ohashi

Intercultural Exploration for Cooperation and Better Communication

- Dr. Ohashi holds a PhD in the culture of thanking, “orei” and bowing
- “Fureai” – the importance of JET in bringing people together. Denies the belief that where 2 cultures meet there is dissonance.
- Believes there can be a connection of mutual trust, respect and rapport.
- Japanese have a debt sensitive self construct.
- When communicating, must consider: Who benefits? Is it an offer or a request? Language changes accordingly
- Bowing as repayment of debt / credit
- “Fureai” – it is important to be active internationally “blog” etc – terrorism destroys trust so must be vigilant in maintaining grass root connections

Workshop 2 – JETAA QLD

Welcome Back Packs

- Quiz – recent knowledge of Japanese news & events. Since we didn’t know much, watch SBS NHK news each morning 5:20 am!
- “Welcome Back” pack for new returnees. Now more important after cancellation of returning JETs conference
- Brainstormed extras to include: Job-finding, resume, culture clubs, ingredients, restaurants, other JETs, language, study, pension refund, tax return included...

Workshop 3 – JETAA Victoria / Tasmania / South Australia

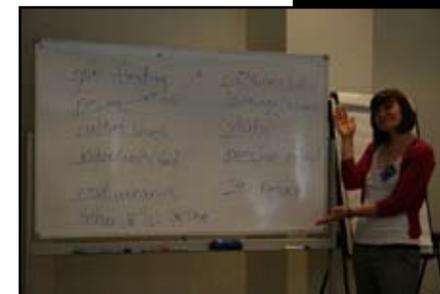
Promoting Cooperation and Involvement with JETAA

- Cooperation and involvement with a) outside sources and b) members
- Opportunities from networking “JETAA” recognition – members benefit
- PR/Communications Coordinator. Relations with Japan – related
- JALTs etc buddy system is good way to include more Japanese

Workshop 4– JETAA Wellington

Happi Coats Make JETAA Happy: Using Consular Funding

- Suddenly faced with a budget surplus to use quickly, Wellington used the funds to buy promotional goods. The result – happi coats & eco bags
- Good for recognition (and fun)
- www.goodsfromjapan.com good for promotional goods.
- www.zestpromotions.co.nz for happi coats and eco bags



JET Oceania Conference 2009



Workshop 5 – JETAA South Island (NZ)

Promoting Japanese Learning at Home

- Make learning Japanese easy – internet can help
- Blog of an American who learnt Japanese in 1.5 years, and his hints and tips: www.alljapaneseallthetime.com
- Treat everything as a game and have fun
- “When YOU put 2 + 2 together, you’ll REMEMBER it’s 4”
- Website useful to keep a record of which kanji you’ve learnt and to practice them: www.kanjiposter.com
- An online chat room where you can talk to people in foreign languages: www.sharetalk.com
- Good book: “Remembering the Kanji”
- Nintendo DS has a dictionary which is useful for looking up kanji

Wrap up of Day 1

We were treated to a dinner & social event hosted by JETAA Vic/Tas/SA at the Rydges Hotel North Melbourne. Delegates then headed into the city afterwards for a surprise event... karaoke!

Day 2 – Sunday 16th November

Session 1 – JETAA Canberra Inc

How to Fundraise for Your Chapter

- Be aware of what others at events are doing, and what works ie. Beer and gyoza are very popular
- Careful of liquor licensing laws in your state
- Insurance – can’t use CLAIR funding... Can’t be incorporated
- Staffing meetings to divide tasks and event jobs. Not too many people in charge, but lots to provide relief in shifts
- Work with other clubs and decide on money-related matters before the event to know exactly how monies will be divided
- It’s difficult getting people to help out, so small tasks can help
- Dedicated PR person on the day – hand out JET flyers, talk to people etc

Workshop 7 – JETAA WA (Adam & Tegan)

Social Networking: Bringing the Net to Life

- Hands on approach to show how easy it is to use Facebook and Mixi
- Many delegates were interested to see how WA has been using Facebook and Mixi to promote events

Workshop 8 – JETAA Auckland

Promoting the JET Programme in high schools

- Necessary to have appropriate contact person at the school
- Sasakawa – sponsors to promote Japanese language & culture
- Arrange for 1 person to organize – promote the fact that it’s good on their resume etc
- Include uni students also

JET Oceania Conference 2009

Plenary Session

- Roster System for Oceania Conferences from now on
- Expectations of Country Representatives
- LOGO Competition – Support needed for the prize (\$100)
- Resources available on the conference website & JETAAI Websites
- JET Website – handouts, presentations, slides, etc
- 2009 Auckland proposal – agreed in principle, Nick to confirm
- Arrange voting rights for next regional conference
- Please CC Newsletters to JETAAI

Charity

- Support by devoting 1 event to donate funds to the charity
- Suggestions welcomed for other charities next year
- Donations of English language kids books can be sent to the Sydney office
- 10% of event entry fees, book grab etc to raise funds/books
- Publicity?

Wrap-up and discussion of plans & aims arising from the conference

CLOSE OF CONFERENCE

After the conference, delegates were invited to a BBQ lunch with local JETAA members & partners by the Yarra River, which was a great location and we enjoyed some great weather. It was well attended by CG & CLAIR representatives, Melbourne's ex-JET community and most of the Oceania Conference attendees. The seafood *okonomiyaki* with Japanese mayonnaise was amazing, and there were even a few tasty alcoholic beverages on offer which made the flight back to Perth that much faster.

More information at: <http://melbourne.jetalumni.org/conference>



AJS Christmas Party

JETAA WA got into the Christmas spirit early, with the Australia Japan Society (AJS) Christmas Party being held on Friday the 5th December 2008 at the Karrinyup Golf Club in North Beach. Arriving for pre-dinner drinks outside, committee members were pleasantly surprised to meet many new faces, as the event was well attended by not just members of the Japanese community, but also employees of Japanese companies based in Perth.

Everyone received their raffle ticket to go into the draw, and we proceeded to make our way inside to begin the lavish dinner presented by AJS. We were greeted by Mr. Patrick White, president of AJS who also passed around the quiz questions to be answered that night. There were murmurs as guests glanced over the near-impossible questions, which soon gave way to the sound of Christmas crackers as most people gave up and instead enjoyed the plentiful food and wine.

Raffle prizes were drawn throughout dinner, with lucky committee members Karen LeBlanc and Tegan Chubb each winning bottles of wine, and Kanako Hayakawa was even lucky enough to win an umbrella! Those who missed out still had their Christmas cracker toys to enjoy...

Finally the answers to the quiz were read out, and no one seemed very surprised that yes, indeed we didn't really know many answers to the questions. JETAA WA members could be seen plotting revenge at our own quiz night to be held in March.

The AJS Christmas Party turned out to be a fun way to start the silly season, and good times were shared by all. Thanks goes to AJS for hosting such a wonderful party, and inviting us along! Merry Christmas!!



Bunkasai

It was the beginning of the first hot, sunny day of summer 2008 as JETAA WA members converged early at President Nick John's house, to get started for a big day feeding the hungry hordes at the Japanese School's annual Bunkasai. This being the first fair-type event for the year, we were not very sure of what to expect. The plan was to prepare onigiri, to be fried into yaki-onigiri on barbeques along with gyouza. These were to be sold in little trays, with soft drinks also on sale. Having no clue how many people would be there, we worked solidly through the morning preparing hopefully what would be enough (and not too many) treats for the day.

After a mammoth effort of transporting our 2 big barbeques into place, we were finally ready to set up shop just before midday. The crowd was already gathering around before we had even had a chance to set up our tent and banner, hungry eyes trying to decipher what exactly we would be preparing to sell.

The school grounds were already packed with people young and old, wandering around and taking a look at the myriad of different stalls prepared and manned by members of the Japanese community in Perth. There were Japan-related items for sale, as well as other food stalls selling takoyaki and okonomiyaki, and even an animal exhibit where koalas and kangaroos were on display. Children wearing yukata (traditional summer kimono) were running around having a ball.

There seemed to be a lack of food stalls, and the crowd thronged round the JETAA WA barbeques ready to buy our yaki-onigiri and gyouza hot straight from the grill. Committee members Emma Wilson, Dave Millin & Adam Reynolds manned the grill, with Nick John and Tegan Chubb hastily preparing the food into the takeaway dishes to sell. Brad Baker was also there helping out while Julius Pang roamed around recording the event on film. Finally we were able to get into the rhythm of preparing and selling, and with help also from Karen LeBlanc and Luke Eaton during the busier times were somehow able to cope with the constant stream of okyakusama lining up to wait for the hot delicacies.



Bunkasai

To our delight (and relief) the youza & yaki-onigiri were well received, with voices raised with "itadakimasu!" heard all around, almost always followed with exclamations "oisii~!" The JETAA WA stall was a success! So much so that we were so busy with cooking all day long, that unfortunately no one was able to see much of the rest of the festival.

But the day was a great success, busy but enjoyable and a great learning curve for us all. Packing down and enjoying the small amounts of leftovers for ourselves, it was over before we knew it. Deciding to definitely participate in more fairs should we get the chance, it was time to be back off home with one big "Otsukaresama"!

Special thanks to the Japan School in Perth for having us along to share in the fun.

