



MIA news

Miyakonojo International Association

Miyakonojo International Association
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Australia's Unique Christmas - George Goonan (Miyakonojo City's Australian CIR)

For the first time in four years, on December 25th, 2022, I joined my family in Australia for Christmas. Australia treat Christmas in a similar manner to how Japan treats New Year's Eve, as a time to be spent at home with your loved ones. My family, however, spends much of the Christmas holidays going between all of our relatives' homes, even up to New Year's Day! On Christmas Eve, my brother and sister, as well as their partners and children, make their way to my parents' home. After eating a modest meal together and watching Carols By Candlelight, a well-known live show broadcast across Australia at Christmas, the children are put to bed around 9PM. Once all of the children are sound asleep, Santa, having partaken of the milk and cookies left on the table, as well as feeding his reindeer some of the carrots left for them, places his presents for everyone under the Christmas tree. Now it's time for the parents to go to bed, as you can expect the children to be up bright and early to check out their presents!



is always a veritable feast, with roast turkey, roast ham or lamb, barbecued meats, roast vegetables, two or three salads, and plenty of desserts. We always end up with leftovers, which we eat the following day for lunch and dinner!

Once everyone is seated at the dinner table, there's one last thing we do during the course of the meal: open bonbons! For those that haven't seen or used a bonbon before, here's a brief explanation. Everyone at the table will have a bonbon, which looks like a colourful cardboard tube with a middle and two side pieces, placed next to their dinner plate. You and the person sitting next to you pull on either side of the bonbon, and it opens with a 'BANG!' In the middle, you will find a hat, a small toy, and a truly terrible joke to share with everyone at the table. No one really knows how this became a tradition, but it's a fun way to start the meal! Eventually, once the evening meal has concluded, everyone gradually says their farewells and heads back to their own homes; the household that was just a moment before a bustling, cacophonous hive of activity returns to its usual stillness. Over the course of the next week, this repeats a number of times as we visit all of our extended family who live in Victoria.



Plenty of presents under the tree!

Christmas Day begins with presents from under the Christmas tree being handed out to everyone, before a generous Christmas lunch is served. Afterwards, all of the extended family who live nearby will converge on one house; this is typically our house, as we usually have the most guests present already. If we get all of the aunts, uncles, cousins and grandparents together, we have just short of 30 people in one house for Christmas dinner! This dinner



Everyone gathered for the Christmas meal, with some bonbons (right) to make it festive!



I hope that everyone had a wonderfully merry Christmas and a Happy New Year, and I look forward to seeing you all at our events in 2023!

Information & Notices

◇ MIA is moving office on Monday, March 13th!

Firstly, we would like to thank everyone who has visited us while we were in City Hall on the 2nd floor.

As of March, we will be moving to the 1st floor of City Hall's new North annex along with the Internationalisation Promotion Office staff, which will be known as the International Exchange Center. As always, please feel free to stop by for a chat after our move on the 13th!

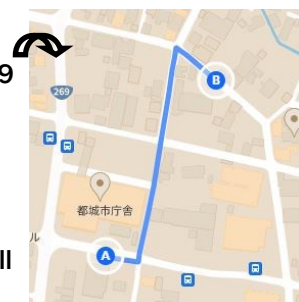
*Please note that our Japanese Practice Sessions will be held in this building as of April.



Date of move: March 11th (Sat) - 12th (Sun)

Location: Miyakonojo City Hall North Annex 1F
International Exchange Center
(Former Commerce Chambers)

Route 10/269



B) New North Annex

A) City Hall



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Aussie Bites! (Vegemite & Cheese Shapes, Miyakonojo CIR George Goonan)

It's Vegemite, but not as you know it! Australia's Vegemite has become rather famous, or perhaps infamous, for its unique taste around the world. For those who wish to find out for themselves what kind of taste this Vegemite has without the fear of being blown away by its potent flavour, try these Vegemite & Cheese Shapes! Shapes are rather famous in Australia as well, with a number of flavours such as Bacon & Cheese, Barbecue, Chicken, even Pizza! While you can occasionally find Shapes online, they are extremely expensive, and very few flavours are available. Keep an eye out for Shapes if you ever make your way to Australia!



Left: Packaging for a standard box of Vegemite & Cheese flavoured Shapes. Right: Contents of a small share pack. They really are shaped like Australia!

Information & Notices

The following is a notice from MIF (Miyazaki International Foundation)

◇ "Hinata Nihon Navi" is now available!

"Hinata Nihon Navi", a website designed to provide information for both international Japanese learners and local teachers of Japanese, is now available for use. Information regarding Japanese courses in each local area, as well as Study Support Volunteer Courses, can be found on their home page. Scan the QR code on the right to access their page. Please feel free to make use of this website.

Inquiries: MIF
TEL:
0985-32-8457



<http://hinatanihongo.mif.or.jp/>

◇ "Miyazaki-From The Outside Looking In" Exhibition

The art exhibition "Miyazaki-From The Outside Looking In" held in Miyazaki City is once again coming to Miyakonojo! These art pieces will be on display at Okimizu Chiku Kominkan for a few short weeks, so please come and check them out while they're here!

Date: February 7th (Tue) - 18th (Sat)

Location: Okimizu Chiku Kominkan*

For further details, please contact MIA:

TEL: 0986-23-2295



*This QR Code links to City Hall's page on Okimizu Chiku Kominkan, including a link to Google Maps at the bottom.



◇ Hatsu Haru and "Enjoy the World"

As previously mentioned in the January edition of MIA NEWS, the Miyakonojo General Culture Hall hosted "Hatsu Haru - Connecting Our Dreams" on January 15th (Sun). While we had some unfortunate weather on the day, we were glad to see a great turnout for the event, including plenty of guests for MIA's International Corner. Thank you to everyone who came and joined us on the day!



Movies info C-Plaza Cine-port (Tel: 0986-24-2571)

17-9 Nakamachi, Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Map-Code (GPS): 117 488 540*55



- *Kin no Kuni Mizu no Kuni* (Japanese)
- *The Legend & Butterfly* (Japanese)
- *Avatar: Way of Water* (Japanese Dub)
- *Suzume* (Japanese)
- *The First Slam Dunk* (Japanese)

● *One Piece Film: Red* (Japanese)

- *The 1st of every month is ¥1,100 for everyone.
- *Every Wednesday is 'Ladies' Day', all ladies ¥1,100.
- *The cinema is closed every Tuesday.
- *For session times visit: <http://movie.walkerplus.com/th286/schedule.html> (Japanese)