



MIA news

Miyakonojo International Association

Miyakonojo International Association
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Five Years of Gratitude! - (Australian CIR George Goonan)

In the blink of an eye, five years have passed, and it is now my turn to say farewell to everyone here in Miyakonojo. While the incessant march of time stops for no man, reaching this inevitable eventuality still comes as a surprise; as all good things must come to an end, so too must my time here in Miyakonojo. That being said, I would like to finish my time here talking at some length about all of the wonderful things I have had the pleasure of experiencing and taking part in whilst living in the 'city of smiles'. Apologies in advance for the rambling to come!

Upon arriving in Miyakonojo, I was immediately introduced to cuisine that would become instant and permanent favourites, such as Chicken Nanban and Jidori Sumibiyaki (locally raised char-grilled chicken). As a side note, I think that the comment I made about Shochu being 'not bad' will certainly live on in infamy! Thanks to my compatriots in the Internationalisation Promotion Office, my transition to life in Japan was made effortless, and my work environment was a truly enjoyable one. I can't thank you all enough for all of the support that you have given me over the course of these five years.

I have had the opportunity to translate for City Hall during visits to Australia, and vice versa, when Australians have come to visit Miyakonojo City. I've even had the opportunity to regularly perform live on radio, and made a brief appearance on local TV. Whilst having successfully undertaken such roles fills me with a sense of pride, I must admit that it has been my many school visits and seminars that give me the greatest sense of satisfaction. From young children to adults and senior citizens, seeing everyone fascinated by Australian culture and customs, and witnessing such genuine interest in international exchange and multiculturalism is heartening beyond words. As discussions have ranged from general knowledge to national census methodology, technological developments, Australia's rehabilitation & healthcare systems and more, I have been able to learn a great deal myself about both of our countries, and the innumerable similarities and differences between them. I am truly grateful to everyone who has come and been a part of these seminars and school visits.

I've also been lucky enough to experience and take part in a variety of events, from local festivals to MIA's premiere events, World Festa and the World Beer & Trivia Night. Within my first month in Miyakonojo, I



This photo was taken during a Challenge Video shoot!

went from hearing about Bonchi Matsuri for the first time, to teaching all of our international residents how fun it is to dance the Samba Yassa down the main street! It's been my absolute pleasure to prepare dauntingly difficult questions for the trivia night each time, and everyone always manages to exceed our expectations. Hosting the World Festa stage performances (as well as taking to the stage to play some piano myself) was always nerve-racking, but I hope that everyone who came along to see our talented international residents show off their skills had a great time. I look forward to spreading the word further about Miyakonojo's summer festivals, and maybe next time trivia is happening, I'll be able to take part alongside all of you instead!

While I have certainly explored a vast portion of Miyakonojo over the course of the last 5 years, there are still so many places I have yet to go to, and they're all awe-inspiring in their own right. Most of the places that Lewis mentioned in last month's article were entirely new to me! That being said, Sekino-o and Mochio Park hold a special place in my heart. Sekino-o was the very first place that I was able to visit after arriving in Miyakonojo; walking amongst the trees and seeing the falls up close was a sight to behold. As for Mochio Park, after having heard about the cherry blossom season in Japan for so long, I was blown away by how the feel of the city, and Mochio Park in particular, changed entirely once they were in bloom. I am certain that there is much still left for me to explore, and I hope to have the opportunity to do so in the coming years.

Finally, I would like to say thank you to my fellow CIRs. From guiding me through my first few weeks as I learnt the ropes of being a CIR, to preparing for all of our events and seminars, shooting our all-new challenge videos together and more; every moment of these past five years is precious beyond words. It is amazing to think of what we have managed to accomplish together over the course of a few short years, and I look forward to what our newest additions to the team manage for themselves in the years to come.

While there is still so much more that I could write about, it is about time for me to finally wrap this up and say my farewells for now. It has been an honour to be able to work here in Miyakonojo City with everyone. While it may be true that all things must pass, it is that self-same transience that makes each moment all the more precious. I hope that those I have met feel much the same, and I look forward to the next time I have the opportunity to come and visit everyone here. Cheers, and I'll see you all again soon!

***See the next page for a few photos from George's time in Miyakonojo.**

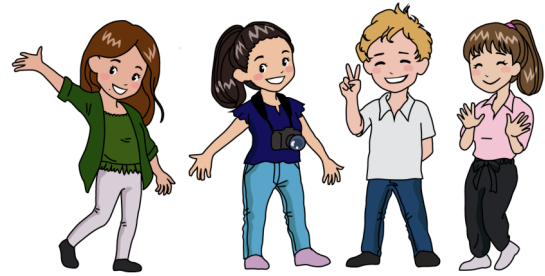


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Top: Characters used to represent, from left to right, Khishige, Soyolmaa, George and Qian in their videos.
Middle Left: George's piano performance at MIA's World Festa in Miyakonojo 2019.
Middle Right: A group photo taken at our World Beer & Trivia Night, where George MC'd for the evening.
Bottom Left: George during one of his school visits, teaching Miyakonojo's youth about Australian culture.
Bottom Right: A group photo of, from left to right, George, Khishige and Karen, Miyakonojo's latest CIRs.
Below Left: George at Miyazaki's International Festa.
Below Right: George, Qian and Soyolmaa at BTV for their live TV appearance on 'Tege Jado News'.



Aussie Bites! (Childhood Memories, Australian CIR George Goonan)

My family often went travelling around Australia on holidays when I was a child, and today, I want to share a couple of interesting photos I found from some of those trips. Firstly, there's the absolutely GIANT 20 meter long crocodile statue, which you can find in Wyndham, Western Australia. By comparison, me and my brother are little more than snacks! For those into the extra-terrestrial, there's a place in the middle of Australia known as Wycliffe Well, where you might just catch a glimpse of a Martian or two! You can always find something a bit different in Australia, you just need to know where to look!



Above: Edward (rear) and George (front) at Wycliffe Well
 Right: Edward (bottom) and George (top) at Wyndham



Information & Notices

◆ Bonchi Matsuri is Back!

MIA is getting involved in Bonchi Matsuri's Dance Line once again! Join MIA and dance the Samba Yassa and the Yasuhisabushi together! We look forward to seeing you all there! *MIA will be dancing in Happi. These Happi will be provided for all participants.

Date: August 5th (Sat), 18:00~18:50
 (In the event of postponement to August 6th (Sun) due

to wet weather, MIA will not be participating)
Dance Location: Chuo-doori, near Nakamachi
 Gather at Miyakonojo City Hall's North Annex 2nd Floor at 16:00 (this area will be used to practice the dances)
Capacity: 20 people (must apply in advance)
Inquiries: Please contact MIA Inc.
TEL: 0986-23-2295
E-mail: mia@btvm.ne.jp



Movies info C-Plaza Cine-port (Tel: 0986-24-2571)
 17-9 Nakamachi, Miyakonojo, Miyazaki Map-Code (GPS): 117 488 540*55



- Tokyo Revengers 2: Bloody Halloween Finale (Japanese)
- Meitantei Conan: Kurogane no Submarine (Japanese)
- Fast X (Japanese Dub)
- The Super Mario Brothers Movie (Japanese Dub)
- The Flash (Japanese Dub)
- Indiana Jones and the Dial of Destiny (Japanese Sub)

- The Little Mermaid (Japanese Dub)
- The First Slam Dunk (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)