

HIMEJI CIR NEWSLETTER

Things have been getting busier in Himeji with the Osaka Expo well on its way. As things get hotter in the summer months it's about time to start buying handheld fans, sunscreen and UV protection in any form I can!

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About Me

Hello! My name is Cessan Smith and I am the fifth Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Himeji City. I was born in Scotland but lived in Australia for seven years.
よろしくお願いします！

What is a CIR?

A Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) is a position on the JET Programme that involves providing international expertise in a local government office. My everyday work involves translation, interpreting as well as holding cultural exchange events in Himeji.



3 things you can do in the UK which you can't do in Japan.

1. Jay-walk

I have had the experience many times in Japan where I find myself standing at the pedestrian crossing with absolutely no cars in sight waiting for the lights to change in pure agony. In the UK, there is usually a pavement in the middle of the road called a 'refuge island', so pedestrians can stop halfway through crossing the road.

2. Use a bank card to pay for literally anything and everything.

It is rare to find a place in the UK (apart from the occasional corner shop) that doesn't except payment via bank card. I could even take the bus and train with my bank card. They've even included the option to add a tip on card machines (also known as a gratuity) in the UK. I only realized how specific this is to Japan once I went to South Korea and found that everything could be paid for digitally!

3. Roadside parking

This is another road-related topic but I rarely see a car parked on the side of the road in Himeji. In the UK it's quite normal to find cars parked alongside (or sometimes on) the pavement and it is not something I like at all.

Schönbrunn Palace Sister Castle Signing!

Himeji Castle is now officially sister castles with Schönbrunn Palace in Austria! The partnership was declared at Himeji Castle on May 24th. Looking forward to more exchanges!



Himeji Castle Festival

I did the English announcements again at the Himeji Castle Festival (for those who didn't see me, I was hiding in the tent closest to Himeji Castle). I hope everyone enjoyed the parades and performances!

Japanese Word of the Month

さみだれ しき 五月雨式

五月雨式（sa-midareshiki）is usually used in referenced to emails/contacting people in general, whereby information is communicated in short and frequent emails rather than one long email. For example, if I kept writing emails every two hours updating someone on tomorrow's meeting that would be 五月雨式. It rained little but frequently during June in Japan (May on the lunar calendar) which is why this style of emailing is called 'May rain style'.



Foreigner in Japan Spotlight

Emily Bierma

Hello, my name is Emily Bierma and I am from the United States of America. I work as a Coordinator for International Relations (CIR) in Seika Town, Kyoto Prefecture. My work consists of translating and creating the newsletter 'Ichigo' for foreign residents, English conversation class, nursery school visits, events, and more.



What is your
favourite food?

I love sukiyaki, and my
favorite dessert is purin.



What is your least
favourite food?

I am not a fan of natto
or inarizushi.

Where is your favourite place in Himeji?



しろまるひめ

Shiromaruhime

When I went to Himeji, I really enjoyed going to Himeji castle and exploring the area around it. It is a beautiful Japanese-style castle that you can only see in Japan, and the surrounding area and shops were fun to go to as well. One of my college Japanese instructors was from Himeji, so I learned a lot about it from her. I like Shiromaruhime, the mascot. It is very cute!

Why did you want to move to Japan?



These are plum flowers that blossomed in Keihanna Commemorative Park. At the park, you can really feel the changing of the 4 seasons.

I enjoy the connection that is made specifically through communicating in Japanese, and I love to connect with others and not only share my culture, but learn more about Japanese culture as a whole.

Story Time: A Misdirected Call

This happened very early into my first year as Seika Town's CIR. It was around the time I started to get phone calls and had to do phone correspondence in my division, so I was very nervous.



Another picture of Keihanna Commemorative Park. There are a lot of waterfalls in the park.

Even in English, I get very nervous doing phone call correspondence like I did at my previous part-time job, so I was equally if not more nervous to do it in Japanese. However, one of the first calls I get was supposedly from a foreign resident in Seika that needed something confirmed, so it was something I could do in English. I was happy this was the first call I was going to do, so I picked up the receiver and pressed the buttons I was told would connect me to the line with the foreign resident and started my sentence confidently in English.

Story Time: A Misdirected Call

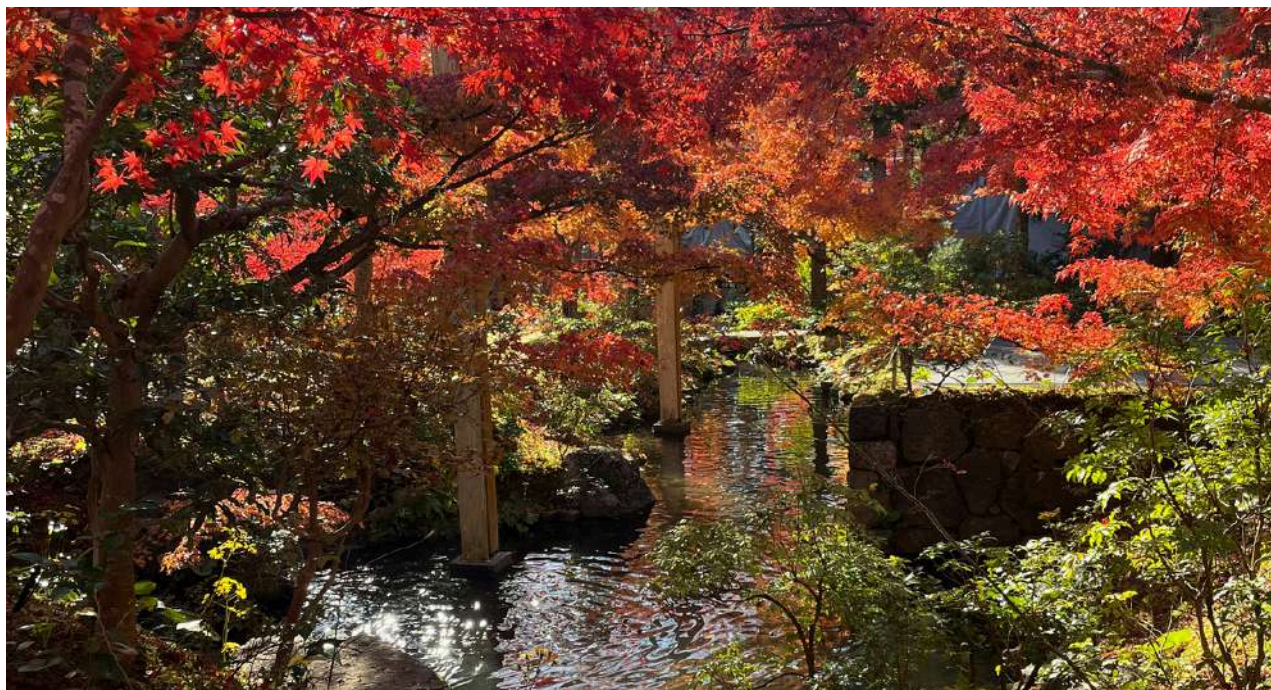
The person at the other end responded in Japanese and sounded a bit confused, so I thought maybe this person wasn't completely confident in their English ability, and easier Japanese would be better to talk in instead.



Also, Seika's specialty product is strawberries, so there are different strawberry desserts.

So, I proceeded to talk very slowly and used very basic Japanese, until one of my coworkers realized I was on the wrong line. It wasn't a foreign resident I was talking to, rather a section chief of one of the divisions on a different floor of the town hall! I became mortified as I realized I was talking in very simple, plain Japanese to a higher-up I did not know, and became so embarrassed. I ended up being transferred to the right line and one of my coworkers apologized for the mistake, but it is a story I will never forget. Now, I am always careful to clearly listen to the name on the other end of the line!

Visit Seika Town



This is a picture of the 'Keihanna Commemorative Park.' I recommend it because when it turns into fall time, you can enjoy the vivid autumn leaves.

Seika is known as the Keihanna Science City, with many different businesses and enterprises researching and conducting business in town. It is also home to the Keihanna Commemorative Park, a gorgeous park that incorporates a mix of modern Japanese design with traditional garden landscape. Seika also has many different and delicious dessert and sweet shops, with so much to choose from, so please come and enjoy the Kyoto countryside in Seika!

Visit Seika Town



Keihanna Commemorative Park in the summer. There is so much wonderful scenery there.

For more information, please check out our Facebook and Town Homepage, which has English options available and a digital version of the newsletter for foreign residents! Also check out the Kyoto CIR Instagram and Blog, which not only includes different events or scenery in Seika, but information about different towns and events all over Kyoto prefecture.

Facebook: Seika Town

Seika Town Homepage: <https://www.town.seika.kyoto.jp/15241.html>

Kyoto CIR Instagram: @experience.kyoto.cir

Kyoto CIR Blog: Tabunka Kyoto CIR Network