

HIMEJI CIR NEWSLETTER

Happy autumn, and welcome back to another Himeji CIR newsletter! This edition includes the English version of the Himeji Workplace Explorer series, which is also available in Japanese on the Himeji Official Note. I hope you enjoy!

Contents



What is a CIR? (p.1)



スコットランドのことば (p.2)



Updates from Himeji City (p.3)



Himeji Workplace Explorer! (p.4)



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.





スコットランドの**ことば**

1. Blether (ブレーザー) 喋る・ごちゃごちゃという

子どもの頃、母は学校に迎えに来て、姉と私が一緒に車の中で待っていた間、他の親たちと長〜く話していました（実際は約5分〜10分ですが、子どもなら永遠に感じます）。こんなに長く喋る人は「bletherer」（ブレーザーラー）と呼びます。

例文

He keeps blethering on 彼はごちゃごちゃ言っています。

I like to have a blether 喋るのが好きです。



2. Peely Wally (ピーリー・ワリー) 顔色が悪い

体調不良な時、母に「You are looking a little peely wally」と言われることが多いです。オノマトペではないですが、熱が出て顔色が悪い



例文

You are looking a little peely wally

顔色が悪そうです。

3. Baltic (ボルティック) 非常に寒い

この季節になったらようやくこの言葉を思い出しました。外に出て「It's baltic!」と独り言で言います。スコットランドの天候は常に涼しめなのでよく使う言葉です。

例文

The weather has been rather baltic recently

最近、寒いですね。



関西弁というと「ずつない」という言葉があるらしいです。「苦しい」という意味ですね。お好み焼きをいっぱい食べたときに使うフレーズです。しかし、実際に関西人あんまり言わないようです。発祥地は和歌山県とネットで書いてありますが、和歌山出身の方に言っても通じなかったです。



Himeji Castle Moon Viewing Festival

Himeji City International Friendship Festival



姫路城観月会

今年も姫路城観月会に参加させていただきました！去年のステージプログラムに比べてジプシージャズ、シンガーソングライター、ピアノとバイオリンなどの多彩で新鮮な演奏が披露されました。

姫路市国際交流フェスティバル

フェスティバル前半は雨の影響でお客様が少なくてちょっと心配しましたが、天気が晴れるといつものように日本ルーツ住民と外国ルーツ住民で賑わってきました！

Himeji Castle Moon Viewing Festival

I participated in this year's Himeji Castle Moon Viewing Festival again! In comparison with last year's stage performances, this time there were a lot of fresh new acts including gypsy jazz, a singer-songwriter, a piano & violin duo among more.

Himeji International Friendship Festival

There were less people during the first half of the festival this year due to the rain, but after the weather cleared up, it became full again with Japanese and foreign residents as always!



Himeji Workplace **Explorer!**

Hello!

I'm Cessan and I am the Coordinator for International Relations in Himeji City.

Since moving here from Scotland in 2023, I have visited many tourist spots in Himeji City. Sometimes I find myself wondering what it takes to run some of these places. And so I decided I would go and find out for myself.

This time, I visited the Himeji City Museum of Literature. This museum was built in 1991, for displaying books and manuscripts written by numerous writers and poets who have connections with Himeji. To be honest, as someone who often struggles to read the ramen shop menu, this is not a place I usually hang out. But I wasn't going to let that stop me from searching out all the wonders and secrets of this hidden gem.

Okay, let's go!



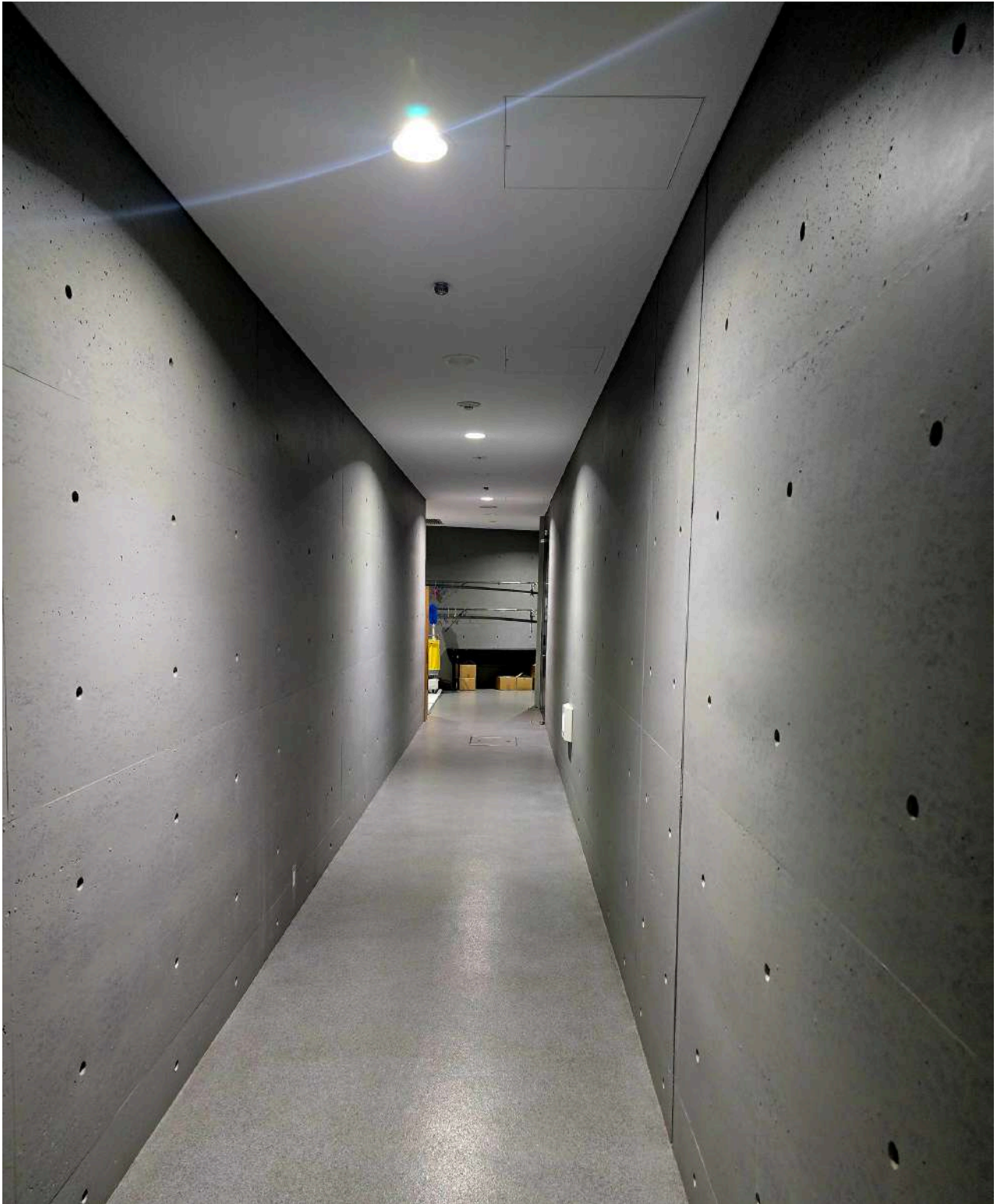
<North Building viewed from the South Building>

On 23rd October, when the summer heat was really starting to overstay its welcome, I found myself wandering around the front of the museum awaiting the deputy director, who had agreed to show me around for the day and explain what kind of work they do. When asked if a lot of foreigners come to the museum, she explained that the buildings were designed by a famous architect named Tadao Ando, so many foreign tourists come especially to see his architecture. Once inside, we made our way to the deputy director's office where I was introduced to some of the employees who work at the museum, and asked to give a short introduction...in front of everyone...I hate giving self-introductions in Japanese.

It always feels like I'm starting my first day at work or something. The more I think about what I'm saying, the more my Japanese gets messed up - it always ends with me drafting my resignation letter in my head.

The deputy director had prepared some activities for me, including replacing some of the display items in the permanent exhibition and working the reception desk for a public training seminar.

After receiving the customary 'Nihongo Jouzu desune ✨' for my hideous self-intro, we made our way to the workshop room. Now, I know that this museum was designed by a famous architect and is considered a work of art but...



<South Building Hallway>

Does it really need to have a creepy hallway?



<South Building Hallway>

I'm not joking. The staff-only areas of the museum are filled with long winding hallways like this. On top of that, it makes a creepy echo sound when you walk down it, which feels like a horror movie at night according to the deputy director.



<Workshop Room>

After dodging all the ghosts, we arrived safely at the workshop room. I was surprised to learn that all the captions and information panels in the museum were made in this room by city hall employees. When the museum holds special exhibitions, they propose them a year beforehand, and start making panels roughly six months in advance. The caption we were making this time was for one of the permanent displays, which they change now and then to keep things interesting for recurring visitors.

After getting the caption ready, we needed to go collect the new display item, which means...



<Underground Tunnel>

That's right, yet another spooky hallway - I really didn't think the literature museum was going to be this scary.

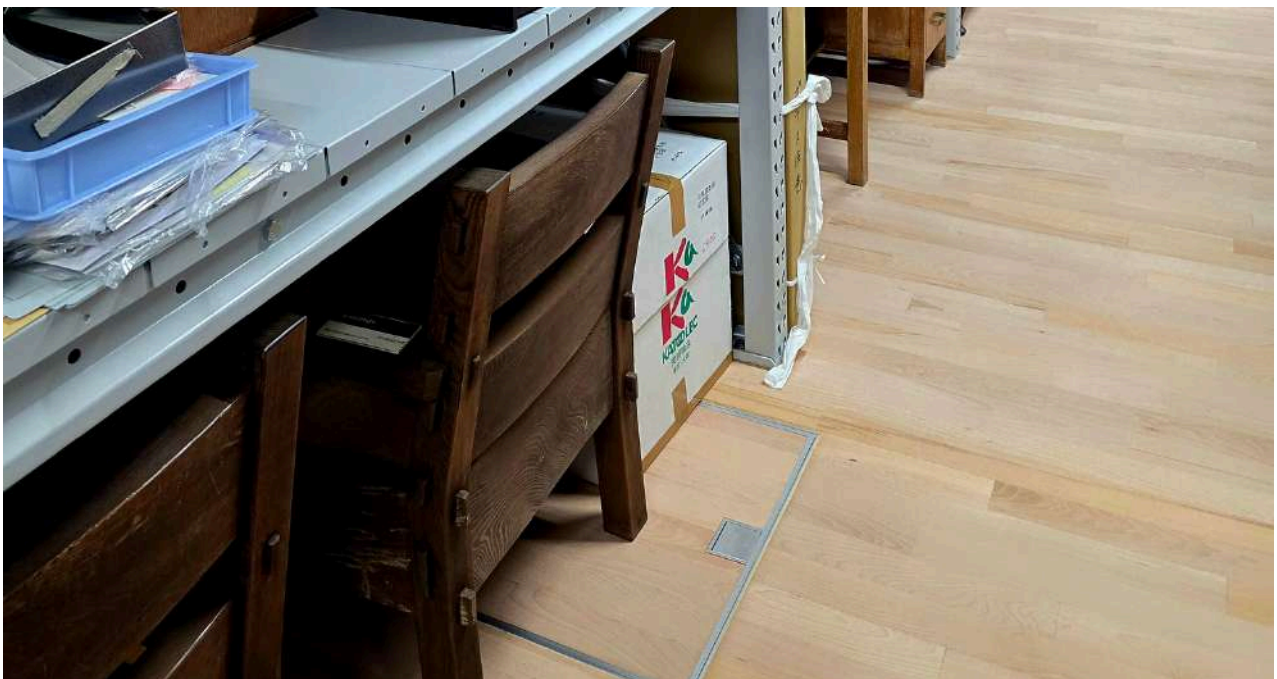
The spooky tunnel lead to the underground storage room, which is set up with a state of the art security system, including an eye scanner, fingerprint scanner and regularly updated passcode (just kidding).



<Sticky Mat>

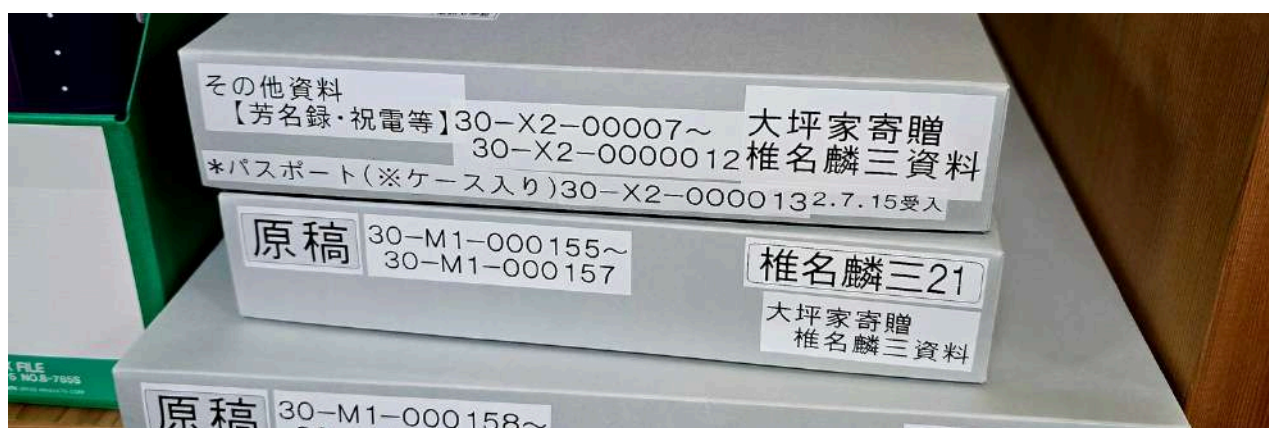
To enter the storage room, you have to put on special slippers, because paper-eating bugs can sometimes get stuck to people's shoes and start eating all the books. Just to be extra safe, they make step on this sticky blue mat as well (in reality, they probably use it to catch all the ghosts that are floating around in the hallways).

Unsurprisingly, we opened the storage room door to find lots of... books, but I was particularly surprised by just how much furniture they were keeping in there as well.



<Tetsuro Watsuji's Chair>

This chair belonged to a philosopher named Tetsuro Watsuji. For special exhibitions, they sometimes let customers sit on the chair, so they can imagine things from the author's perspective.



<Acid-Free Paper Box>

They keep the display items (really old books) inside boxes like this, made out of special acid-free paper. The museum's display items must be handled with care, so the deputy director kept a hold of it at all times. I tried to reassure her that I wasn't going to steal it, but I got the feeling she wouldn't be fooled that easily - I'll try again next time.



<Me proving I'm not a foreigner who's got lost in the museum>

After replacing the display items, it was time for us to head to the public training seminar. These seminars are held approximately 10 times a year, with roughly 80 participants. Participants pay a one-time members fee and then they are free to go to as many seminars as they please. Seminar registration is handled by volunteers, so I thought I'd have a try as well.

With all the participants signed-in and waiting in the seminar room, I thought I was done for the day, but the deputy director had one more surprise for me...



<Boukeitei>

Woah! Has this been here the whole time?

That's right, this beautiful Japanese building has been hiding away in the literature museum all along. It originally belonged to a businessman during the Taisho era (1912-1926). They demolished most of the buildings in the surrounding area when they started construction on the museum, but this building was saved by the architect and renamed 'Boukeitei'.



<Boukeitei>

Since then, it has been registered as a tangible cultural property, and gets used for events like Shogi tournaments and tea ceremonies.

And with that, my visit was complete. Thanks to the support of the deputy director, I got to see many areas of the museum not usually open to the public, along with many unexpectedly special places as well. If you've never been before, just know that the Himeji Museum of Literature is not just for lovers of old books, it's full of hard working employees, spooky hallways and tunnels as well as a beautiful traditional Japanese building. If you ever get the chance, go along and see for yourself!

Also, before I go, just one last thing...



<'Okiku-no-Ido' illustration displayed in the Himeji Castle History section

Doesn't this picture remind you of Toshiro Mifune from the Akira Kurosawa films? It's meant to be a picture of 'Okiku-no-do' – a story about a servant who is murdered by the castle lord for breaking a valuable family plate – but at first glance, it looks like just like poster from 'The Bodyguard'.

Anyhow, thank you for reading! See you next time.