

By Emiko Mayer
(April 1992, Emiko joined Rotary Club of Morialta)

- July 1993** Mr. F. Okamoto, Rotarian of Usa RC visited Adelaide as a member of Kimono Goodwill Mission from Kyoto, Japan. Emiko, who had interpreting/guide assignments with this group, was asked about a make-up opportunity by Mr. Okamoto and another Japanese Rotarian who arrived on Sunday and departed Adelaide on Tuesday. As it was not possible for them to attend a Morialta meeting, Emiko took them to Thebarton Rotary Club. Thankyou letter arrived and Mr. Okamoto and Emiko wrote to each other occasionally.
- May 1994** Peter and Emiko went to Japan, visited Usa, a provincial city in south-west Japan, and attended Usa Rotary Club meeting. Emiko discovered upon arrival that she was a guest speaker.
- June 1994** President Ken Robson went to Taiwan to attend Rotary World Congress and saw strong contingent from Japan. Ken asked Emiko to look into finding a suitable Japanese club in view of forming sister clubs to mutually develop international friendship and understanding. Emiko starts contacting a few avenues in Japan. Usa Rotary Club showed modest interest and Emiko continued to provide information about Morialta Rotary Club, Adelaide, and South Australia.
- Nov 1995** **Usa Delegation** came to visit Morialta and to meet members. Friendship Club Agreement was signed by two Clubs on Nov 15th
- Nov 1996** **Morialta Delegation** visited Usa for Usa RC's 30th anniversary. Re-signing of Agreement took place. Idea of Friendship student exchange between the two clubs was expressed by Bruno Giorgio while in Usa.
- Apr 1997** Chihiro Iwai came to Adelaide as a Friendship student from Usa. Chihiro studied at St. Peter's Girls College and returned to Japan in February 1998.
- Nov 1997** **Usa Delegation** came to Adelaide to visit Morialta. Re-signing of Agreement took place. Usa proposed future reciprocal visits to occur every two years which was agreed by Morialta. (Usa has a Sister Club in South Korea)
- Mar 1999** Michael Barber went to Usa as a Friendship student from Morialta. Michael studied at Yanagi-ga-Ura HS briefly and returned to Australia in May 1999.
- Nov 1999** **Morialta Delegation** went to Usa and participated in local autumn festival. Re-signing of Agreement took place.
- May 2002** **Usa Delegation** visited Morialta (instead of Nov 2001 visit). Re-signing of Agreement took place.
- Nov 2003** **Morialta Delegation** visited Usa. Re-signing of Agreement took place.
- Apr 2004** Yui Fujibayashi came to Adelaide as a Friendship student from Usa. Yui studied at Norwood Morialta HS and returned to Japan in January 2005.
- Nov 2005** **Usa Delegation** visited Morialta. Re-signing of Agreement took place.
- Oct 2006** **Morialta Delegation** visited Usa for Usa's 40th anniversary (instead of 2007 visit). Re-signing took place.

International Rotary Friendship 2009

The Rotary Club of Morialta has just had a visit from the Rotary Club of Usa, from Oita Prefecture in Japan to help celebrate its 25th Anniversary. It was a short but eventful visit with members joining for a tour of the Adelaide Hills before the special anniversary dinner.

Over the past 14 years there have been 9 visits by club delegations and the friendship between the two clubs has flourished. The friendship between these two Rotary clubs started through a chance meeting.

An Usa Rotarian, Mr Okamoto, was visiting Adelaide for a special Kimono Show, and asked about Rotary make-up opportunities. Morialta Rotarian, Emiko Mayer happened to be an interpreter for this event, and was able to take him to the Thebarton Rotary Club, as Morialta's meeting time did not fit his tight schedule.

They exchanged letters after this and Emiko discovered that Usa had a very rich history. Emiko and her husband Peter, decided to visit Usa in May 1994 and arranged to attend the Usa Rotary meeting. On arrival at the meeting Emiko discovered that she was the guest speaker. They soon realised that Usa had a wonderful community spirit and that the club had a lot in common with Morialta.

Coincidentally, the following month, President Ken Robson attended the Rotary World Conference in Taiwan and was very impressed with the strong contingent from Japan. He asked Emiko to find a suitable Japanese club as a Sister Club to foster international friendship and understanding.

The Usa Club already had a Sister Club in Korea but was interested in the idea of a Friendship Club relationship. Much correspondence followed (this was before email or Skype) and finally the first Usa Delegation visited Adelaide to sign a friendship agreement with Morialta on the 15th November 1995.

Since then they have had bi-annual visits, alternating Morialta visits to Usa and vice versa. They have shared some wonderful events including Usa's 30th and 40th anniversaries. They have formed some lasting friendships both as a group and as individuals; sharing happiness as well as sadness from time to time. Those members of Morialta that have visited Usa gained a totally new perspective about Japan, one which they could never have experienced through reading, films or even business trips to the main cities.

Sharing our common interest in Rotary with such warm hearted people and seeing the rich and diverse countryside around Usa, with its beautifully preserved historic shrines and temples is something that has to be experienced to be understood.

They have also shared some wonderful lighthearted moments, cruising on the Murray River for a long lunch, or partying at Mr Kaneda's famous BBQ restaurant in Usa. Members of both clubs have learned that they share the same sense of fun and that surely must contribute to international understanding.

Morialta really enjoyed hosting friendship exchange students Chihiro Iwai and Yui Fujibayashi. It is great to follow their progress and obvious success; their parents have every reason to be proud of them.

Morialta also greatly appreciate the generous support that Usa Rotary Club has given over the years to their Safe Motherhood program in East Timor, IMOG.



Usa contingent arrive at Adelaide Airport



Usa and Rotary Club of Morialta at Williamstown



25 Anniversary and Signing Ceremony

Exchanging of Gifts



President Peter Mayer and President Eiji Fujibayashi Exchanging Gifts
Gift from Morialta to Usa above and from Usa to Morialta below

