

TRIPS

Queen Margaret College's exchange to Japan

by Hidemi Fuke, Japanese Teacher

Queen Margaret College, Wellington is named after Margaret the Queen of Scotland. We are one of the many Margaret schools who belong to a world wide Margaret school society. As a result our college is involved many exchange programmes including our last one, with St Margaret's in Tokyo.

Eight Year 12 and 13 Japanese students participated in a wonderful study trip to St Margaret's Tokyo during for 18 days during the last July holidays. Students studied Japanese for two hours every morning and they joined a variety of practical classes. They made creative pizzas in home economics class and took part in an interesting science experiment with Japanese students. Their most memorable moments in Japan were spent with their lovely host families. They had never had a non-English environment and they tried hard to communicate with their homestay families with their basic Japanese. 'Don't be afraid of your Japanese, just say anything' was our policy and students did very well. I found that after this trip their Japanese communication skills have improved amazingly and their pronunciation is superb. For the last three days, we explored Japan. We went to Kyoto and Hiroshima. Queen Margaret College sent 1000 paper

cranes to Hiroshima last year and all the girls were very interested in the Hiroshima Peace Museum. They learned the importance of peace.

From August 2nd to 12th St Margaret's Tokyo visited Queen Margaret College. Japanese students joined in normal classes everyday with a buddy student. They experienced real NZ life. They were surprised by our lunch boxes and they enjoyed Kiwi morning teas. (In Japan, there is no morning tea). These Japanese visitors gave Year 9 and 10 students a new found interest about Japan and provided them with many opportunities to speak the Japanese language.

Our Queen Margaret students realised how enjoyable it is to communicate with foreign students using the language which they are currently learning. This trip was a valuable opportunity for our students who have matured and gained real understanding of another culture. Throughout this exchange programme students not only gained great language skills but also made many new friends. Both the our NZ students and their Japanese counterparts were great ambassadors in each country.



[Click here for next article](#)