The other day, I finally got to see the interior of the Tower of the Sun, a display that I had been yearning to visit. While I was overjoyed to get a ticket, it was set for a date just two weeks later and I had some trouble arranging my travel and accommodation. The date clashed with an event by a nationally popular idol group, and hotels and airfares were exorbitant. After some anxious consideration I decided to give up on flying and reserved tickets for Shinkansen bullet trains.

Buying the tickets without taking into consideration the distance between Kagoshima and Osaka was a decision I would come to regret, as I don’t like riding vehicles for an extended time. Having to sit still for more than 4 hours on the Shinkansen was a rather awful experience, but my reunion with the Tower of the Sun was even better than imagined and it made me forget that painful journey. I wanted to share with you what I saw, but unfortunately photography was not allowed. I’ll never forget the awe and chills I felt from seeing those artworks that had aged with time. As Taro Okamoto put it, “art is an explosion”.

“Osaka” conjures up images of the Tower of the Sun and takoyaki (octopus balls) for me. What then, do other people associate with Kagoshima? Personally, I think of “Sakurajima” – a term that pops up every time I translate documents or interpret at events, “Saigo Takamori” – the historical figure who has gained attention as the focus of the current period drama, “Yakushima Island” – the setting for a Studio Ghibli movie, and well-known local produce like “Satsuma-imo (sweet potato)”, “Kurobuta pork”, “Kurouushi Wagyu beef” and “Imo-jochu (sweet potato shochu liquor)”. It’s funny how my impression of Kagoshima has become so deep and varied, something I did not expect when I first came here.

When I ask my friends back in Korea about this, most of them think of “Sakurajima”. They all tell me that they’ve never seen an active volcano, and being able to visit one is a rare experience. Furthermore, they are surprised that people actually live on the volcano even now. I remember that when I had just arrived every eruption caused me alarm and I thought it was scary to live so near to an active volcano. But now, even when large eruptions occur...
continuously and concerned friends ask if I was all right, I would just tell them things like “it’s a pity that I can’t do my laundry on such a fine day” and “I wanted to go out”. It’s amazing and amusing how quickly we adapt, and the changes within me speak of the length of time I’ve been living here.

About the nationally popular idol group mentioned earlier, one member of the group visited Kagoshima last month on his variety program, and since then I’ve received numerous enquiries from my friends about the best season to visit Kagoshima and sightseeing spots, among other questions. To that, I would like to introduce my favourite viewpoint of Mt Sakurajima. Shiroyama observatory is good, but I personally prefer the view of Mt Sakurajima from Nagashima Art Museum. I often visit there as it’s usually not crowded and you can gaze at the panorama at your own leisure. With neither a car nor a driving licence, I always take the tram and walk from the tram stop. The walk there feels more like a hike than a picnic stroll, but the view from up there is so refreshing words can’t fully describe my exhilaration, and it makes me want to go back again and again. Mt Sakurajima is extremely active now, but do take the opportunity to visit the viewpoint when it’s more subdued.

Half the year has passed, and I humbly seek your continued readership.

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Latest Kagoshima News
Kagoshima Signed Friendship Agreements with the London Borough of Camden and the City of Manchester

On July 18th (Wednesday), the governor visited the London Borough of Camden, where the University College London that the Satsuma Students studied at 153 years ago is located, and together with the Mayor of Camden Jenny Headlam-Wells signed a friendship agreement.
Additionally, on July 19th (Thursday) the governor visited the City of Manchester and signed a friendship agreement with Mayor June Hitchen. The City of Manchester is where Godai Tomoatsu purchased cotton spinning machinery and contracted technicians for the Shuseikan industrial project, which contributed greatly to Japan’s modernization.

Moving forward, Kagoshima will be making efforts based on this agreement to strengthen the relationship with the Borough of Camden and the City of Manchester, including exchange of people, to strengthen the relationship with the United Kingdom, as well as connect these relations with development in Kagoshima.

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Overseas Kagoshima Kenjinkai Corner
The 105th Anniversary Celebration of the Brazil Kagoshima Kenjinkai was held
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The governor attended the ‘Brazil Kagoshima Kenjinkai 105th Year Anniversary Celebration’ held in São Paulo Brazil. Since its founding in 1913, this Kenjinkai boasts the longest history of kenjinkais in Brazil, and Kagoshima Prefecture has deep respect for their members because their unending effort allowed them overcome many difficulties. Kagoshima Prefecture expressed their appreciation for this effort, and the role they played in the exchange relationship with Kagoshima.

Further, in addition to thanking them for their hard work in the kenjinkai over the years, Kagoshima Prefecture recognized them for all their endeavours as people from Kagoshima in Brazil.

Additionally, their attendance to the ‘Kagoshima Kenjinkai World Conference’, which will be held in November of this year in Kagoshima, was requested, as was their support and cooperation in the development of the Kagoshima homeland.

Many kenjinkai members were present at the celebration making it a great event which was made very lively when attendees performed the Oharabushi dance.
Kagoshima International Exchange A-Z
The JICA Overseas Volunteers Visited the Kagoshima Prefecture Government Office

A group of JICA volunteers – 6 of whom will be dispatched to the Philippines, Malawi, and Indonesia, 1 senior Japanese company volunteer to be dispatched to Brazil, and 3 volunteers who have just finished their programs in Tanzania, Ghana, and Kenya, and returned to Japan – visited the Kagoshima government office. We heard from the group about the aspirations they have for the support activities they will do at their dispatch locations, as well as what they learned through the valuable experiences and activities at their dispatch locations. Kagoshima Prefecture really respects the enthusiasm and ambition all members of the group had, and have high hopes for the endeavours of those in the group who will soon go to their dispatch locations.
A Note from the Editors (Kagoshima Prefecture International Affairs Division)

What did you think of this month’s “Kagoshima Southern Wind Tidings”? The editors will continue to strive to make this prefectural foreign language newsletter a source of information and a bridge to connect all of you to Kagoshima. We’d like to ask our readers to provide their opinions, suggestions, article contributions and Kagoshima-related news.

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