

Enduring friendship

A bridge between Japan and Australia

'I am presenting a gift, not only from Japan Computer Science Corporation, but also from the bedrock of the company, its employees. It was they who collected 2000 books, desiring to make a contribution to the people of Willoughby.'

Mr Masatake Yamagiwa, CEO, Japan Computer Science Corporation, Osaka.

Willoughby City in the North Shore of Sydney has an enviable reputation as a 'City of Diversity'. The ethnic mix of the people who live, work and visit the city is one aspect of the city's diversity. According to the 2001 Census, 1419 Japanese lived in the Willoughby Local Government Area. This represented 14 per cent of the total Japanese population of Sydney. Amongst the entire Willoughby Library membership, in June 2005, there were a total of 1837 members who spoke Japanese. Two hundred and forty-five additional Japanese members had joined Willoughby City Library in 2004-2005.

Willoughby City Library has developed a large and comprehensive collection of Japanese books since 1979. Through the donations and assistance given by members of the Japanese community, the Japanese collection has grown to nearly 7500 items. Willoughby is proud to have the largest Japanese collection held by a public library in New South Wales. The collection has always been popular amongst the Japanese community. The total loan figure for Japanese items in 2004-2005 was over 26 000.

In 1989, staff from the Japan Computer Science Corporation in Osaka donated 2000 books and ¥1 000 000 to Willoughby City Library to celebrate their company's 15th anniversary. These books were donated by staff members of the company living in Tokyo, Osaka, Kyoto, and in over a hundred smaller cities and towns all over Japan. This donation provided Willoughby City Li-

brary with an opportunity to expand the Japanese collection in the Northbridge Branch Library.

Fifteen years on, in September 2004, the company made a second offer to donate another 1400 Japanese books and the same amount of funding to the library to commemorate their 30th anniversary.

Willoughby City Library held a special Mayoral function on 20 September 2005 to acknowledge the generosity of Japan Computer Science Corporation over such a long time. Cllr Pat Reilly, the Mayor of Willoughby, Cllr Adrien Cox, Cllr Wendy Norton and the senior staff including John Owen, the general manager, Marcia Waller, the community services director and Frances Sims, the library services manager, attended the function and welcomed all the honourable guests. The guests who attended this remarkable function included Oriana Acevedo, multicultural consultant of the State Library, and most of Sydney's Japanese dignitaries, including the Honourable Mr Hiroshi Manabe, deputy consul-general of Japan in Sydney, director-general and deputy director of the Japan Local Government Centre, director of Japan Foundation, president and vice-president of Japan Club of Sydney and principals of the Japanese Schools. Two Japanese dances were performed in the launch program to entertain the guests.

The function was a great success. The Mayor, Cllr Pat Reilly, said at the function: 'We welcome this opportunity to further strengthen the relationship between Willoughby City Council and the Japanese community. We hope this donation will encourage even more members of the Japanese community to become familiar with Willoughby City Library and to make use of the Japanese collection.'

*Angelina Yeung,
Willoughby City Library*



Part of the Japanese donation from Japan Computer Science Corporation, Osaka

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