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Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation
newsletter editing volunteers
URL <http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp>

<People> Ms. Helen Swift

Helen comes from a small town near Cambridge, England. She came to Himeji in 2013. Previously she has travelled and done a homestay in Japan, but this is her first time living here. She is an Assistant Language Teacher at elementary and junior high schools in Himeji.



Q: What kind of city is Cambridge?

A: Cambridge is a quiet city with many beautiful streets, about one hour from London. Because Cambridge is home to the well-known Cambridge University, the city is full of students. I was lucky enough to study at one of the University's colleges, Queens' College. Cambridge is also known as a technology hub because a lot of scientific research goes on there.

Q: Why did you want to work in Japan?

A: I have a strong interest in Japanese art, particularly *ukiyo-e* woodblock prints, so I studied for a Master's degree in London, specializing in Edo period culture. While in London, I also began to learn Japanese. I had a Japanese flat-mate there, so we used to teach each other new words. After that, I heard about the JET (Japan Exchange and Teaching) Programme and decided to work in Japan. It's because I want to experience Japanese culture that I came to Himeji.

Q: What do you do at the weekends?

A: I love Japanese art so I usually visit art museums and see exhibitions. Recently I visited the MIHO Museum in Shiga; the artworks, architecture and landscape were all stunning. I also enjoy walking around old towns so I have visited Kyoto and Nara many times.

Q: What is your dream?

A: I'd like to work as a Japanese art curator, so I have to learn Japanese and study for a PhD at university. It will take six or seven years to do this, but I like studying so I don't mind! In the future, my dream would be to work at a museum with a fantastic Japanese art collection such as the Boston Museum of Fine Arts, or the British Museum, London.



*** Spring Outing Information ***

Himeji Castle opens to the public on March 27th !

【Entrance Fee】	Individual	Group ※ ₁
Adult (18 years and over)	1,000 yen	800 yen
Junior & Child (6-18 years) ※ ₂	300 yen	240 yen

※₁ for a group of thirty visitors and more
 ※₂ student (elementary, middle or high school)
 ※infant (under school age) admitted free

Castle and Gardens ticket

+ → **1,040 yen**
 + → **360 yen**

★Note★

From March 27 to May 10, numbered tickets will be issued up to the first 15,000 visitors per day, handed out on a first-come, first-served basis at the ticket gate. The main castle keep is only accessible to visitors holding these tickets. These tickets are being issued to reduce congestion.

◆◆◆◆ Events Information on Himeji Castle, a World Heritage Site ◆◆◆◆

●SDF “Blue Impulse” - Commemorative Flight

The Japan Air Self-Defense Force’s Blue Impulse flight team will perform aerobatics in the sky over Himeji Castle.

【Date & Time】 Thursday, March 26 10:00~

【Venue】 Over Himeji Castle ※The flight may be cancelled in the event of bad weather.

●Himeji Castle Cherry Blossom Viewing (*Kan-ou-kai*)

Himeji Castle is listed as one of the top 100 cherry blossom viewing sites in Japan. Musical performances of *Koto* harp and *Wadaiko* drum are given on the stage at *Kan-ou-kai*. *Sake*, *Dango* (sweet rice dumplings), boxed lunches, and the like can be purchased there.

【Date & Hours】 Saturday, April 4 10:00 - 16:00

※to be held on the next day, April 5 in the event of rain

【Place】 Sannomaru Square



●Himeji Castle Cherry Blossom Night Viewing

You can enjoy looking at cherry blossoms while they are fantastically lit up in the garden at night.

【Date & Hours】 Friday, April 3 - Sunday, April 12 18:00 - 21:00 (Last admission 20:30)

【Place】 Himeji Castle Nishinomaru Garden (on the west side after passing through the gate)

Admission free

●The 66th Himeji Castle Festival

The festival, held in August until last year, is to be held in May from this year on. It includes special events such as announcement of the Castle's Queen, a citizen's parade and an all-performer Banshu folk songs dance. 'Takigi-noh' (a traditional Japanese performing art) on the night of May 2 is a must. Many other traditional performing arts can also be enjoyed at this event. (charged for some seats in front area)

【Date】 Saturday, May 2 - Tuesday, May 5

【Place】 Otemae Street, Otemae Park, Sannomaru Square, etc.

●The World Heritage Himeji Castle×RYNSHU Leather Fashion Show “Himeji Collection”

Garments made from 'Himeji-no-Kawa' (locally-made leather), will be featured in leather fashion show. The garments have been designed by RYNSHU (Mr. Rynshu Hashimoto), whose work is successful in Paris Collection.

【Date & Hours】 Friday, May 15 18:00 - 21:00

【Place】 Himeji Castle Sannomaru Square

Admission free

◆◆◆◆ Outing spots ◆◆◆◆

Here are some popular outing spots where you can enjoy seeing a wide variety of flowers. These places offer a great chance to see colorful blooming flowers at their best.

●Senhime Peony Garden (late April - early May)

The garden stands on a hill, the west side of Himeji Castle Sannomaru. Some 800 red, white or pink peonies will be in beautiful bloom there.

●Yamasa Kamaboko・Yumesenkan “Shibazakura-no-Komichi” (mid April - early May)

Enjoy a wide expanse of pink flowers in full bloom.

【Place】 327-16 Okimoto Yumesaki-cho, Himeji Phone 079-335-1055

【Opening hours】 9:00 - 17:00

【Fee】 Entrance free

【Access】 Take Shinki Bus [51](#) [52](#) bound for Maenosho or Yamanouchi from Himeji-eki-kitaguchi bus terminal next to the north exit of JR Himeji Station.(about 30-minute ride).

Get off at Shimizubashi. 15 minutes walk. Fare: 420yen



●Himeji Rose Garden (May 9 - mid June)

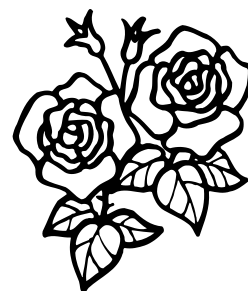
【Place】 2222 Toyotomi Toyotomi-cho, Himeji Phone 079-264-4044

【Opening hours】 9:30 - 17:00 (Last admission 16:30)

【Fee】 Adult 500 yen Elementary school child 300 yen

【Access】 Take Shinki Bus [84](#) bound for Fukusaki Station from Himeji-Kitaguchi bus terminal. (about 30-minute ride)

Get off at Sukainguchi. It's only a short walk from there. Fare: 450yen





What does this word mean?



Have you ever heard a word frequently, but not been able to work out what it meant? Even if you looked it up in the dictionary?

FILE 1

あかん Akan =No, not, don't, never



This word is from Kansai dialect. It is equivalent to the English word “no” and will have varied meanings depending on the situation.

Here are some example situations, explaining where something is not good, unavailable, prohibited or where someone gives up on something despite significant effort.

1. Koko ni haittara **akan**. = Do not enter here.
2. Guai wa dou? **Akan** naa. = “Are you fine?” “Not good.”
3. Nomi ni ikahen? Kyou wa **akan**. =
“How about going to bar?” “Today, I’m not available.”
4. Mo, **akan**. . . = The situation is the worst (or serious).



Please tell us the words which you can't understand. Contact us to the address written in the end of the last page.

Himeji Police News

From the 2nd of March,
the jurisdiction of 3 Himeji police districts will be changed.

We are committed to developing a peaceful and safe town, we appreciate your cooperation with us.



Changed districts: Himeji, Shikama, Aboshi police jurisdiction
See the website of Hyogo prefectural police.

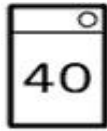
http://www.police.pref.hyogo.jp/topics/pdf_files/himeji.pdf

Application procedure: The new jurisdictional police will cover accidents and crimes on and after March 2nd. Updates of driver's licenses will be accepted by the former jurisdictional police until the end of March of 2016.

In case of emergency, please dial 110 (one one zero).
For lost property, please contact your nearest police station.

Laundering Winter clothes

It's getting warmer. So it's time to put away our winter clothes and take out our summer ones. Before putting your winter clothes away, make sure to launder them properly, so you can wear them comfortably next winter. In the March issue of "VIVA!ひめじ" we'll give you some more useful information about laundering your clothes.



machine washable



hand wash only

Both symbols above mean that you can wash the clothes at home. The "Hand wash" symbol (above right) means that you can't wash the clothes in a washing machine. The number 40 or 30 in the symbols means the maximum water temperature (in Celsius). The kanji character "弱" means "gentle agitation" for machine or hand-washing. These kanji characters "中性" mean that you should use neutral detergent.



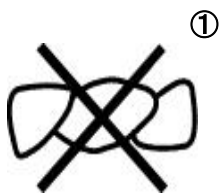
dry cleaning



Do not wash

The "ドライ" symbol (above left) means dry cleaning. Basically, clothes with this symbol should be taken to professional cleaners. Most knitwear have this symbol. Some of the clothes with this symbol can be washed at home, using commercial detergent especially for dry cleaning. The "Do not wash" symbol (above right) means the clothes must not be washed at home. Clothes made from silk, rayon, cupra, acetate and mixed fabrics with these textiles must not be allowed to get wet. Washing them in water may stain them. Fabrics that fade easily are better off taken to a professional cleaner.

There are some other symbols we must be aware of (such as below symbols ① how to wring ② how to dry). We recommend drying clothes as soon as the laundry is done. We also recommend using fabric softener to make your clothes more comfortable.



Don't wring



Wring gently



Dry flat in shade

②



Hang dry in shade

☆Information about the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation☆

■Website renewed

The website has been redesigned to make it more user-friendly. You can find a lot of useful information on the website for foreigners, such as current events, or Japanese learning or multilingual life. The information is accessible in Vietnamese and Chinese too. Useful websites for foreigners are also listed. Please visit the renewed website using the address below or by searching “Himeji kokusai” in a search engine.

■Japanese lessons

The first period in 2015 of Japanese lessons start in May. The Beginners classes, “A” to “F” are held on Sundays and the Intermediate class is held on Saturdays. The tuition fee is 3,000 yen and applications open from April 1st. Early application is advised. For further information, please contact our office.

◇◆◇ Editor’s Postscript ◆◆◇

It is getting warmer and I can feel spring coming closer day by day. In spring, many people start their new lives, and here at “VIVA!ひめじ” we are also renewing our designs. Had you already noticed? When it comes to talking about renewals, Himeji castle is also opening again soon, after its large scale renovation. The areas around Himeji station is also being refined more and more, and many more events will be held there. In this season, cherry trees blossom beautifully, we certainly recommend you to go out to see them. We are pleased to continue providing you with a lot of useful information.

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Their assistance is much appreciated.

You can read back numbers of “VIVA!ひめじ” at the website of the Himeji Cultural and International Exchange Foundation (International Exchange Section)(<http://www.himeji-iec.or.jp/>).

The next issue of “VIVA!ひめじ” will be available in June. Don’t miss it! We invite your comments and suggestions.

We are always looking for translators and native speakers to assist us with translating and proofreading upcoming editions of “VIVA! ひめじ”. If you are interested, please contact us at the following address.

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