

Foreign Students Support Network (FORSNET)

Activity Name	The 120th Anniversary of the Opening of the Port of Moji "Gentlemen's Tea Ceremony by International Students--Team Sadou 2009"			
Dates	From December 12, 2009 (Sat) to December 13, 2009 (Sun)			
Location	Historic Furukawa Mining Building in Wakamatsu			
Participants	International Students	Residents, Corporation	Other	Total
	100	300	90	490

<Activity Details>

A "Gentlemen's Tea Ceremony" was hosted on December 12 (Sat) and 13 (Sun) by the Gakken Toshi Team Sadou ("the way of tea") 2009, which includes 17 members from seven countries, at the Historic Furukawa Mining Building in Wakamatsu. Appropriate for a December event, the venue was filled with a Christmas atmosphere. A number of wonderful tea sets owned by Omotesenke tea master Munehiro Matsumoto added to the brilliance of the event.



In front of the Historic Furukawa Mining Building in Wakamatsu

As the 2009 team leader mentioned in his opening remarks, the tea ceremony originated in the warrior culture, and therefore emphasizes "unity and harmony". In turn, the team members demonstrated their unity and remarkable teamwork--from setting up the tea rooms to taking them down--deeply impressing everyone at the event, including local residents.

The tea ceremony snacks for this occasion, "Santa Claus" and "Christmas macaroons," were specially made by Japanese confectioner Josuian and local sweets shop Carino, respectively. The hosts were inundated with inquiries from visitors about the treats.

Fresh flower arrangements in the style of the Ohara school were also displayed throughout the venue, helping to create a relaxing atmosphere that wonderfully complemented the tea ceremony. Because December is the Christmas season, the team members wanted to host a tea ceremony around the theme of "Important People in Our Lives" and serve tea with a sense of appreciation toward people they work with, family members in their home countries, and former members of Team Sadou. The members flawlessly performed the otemae (ceremonial preparation and presentation of tea) that they had mastered, for the visitors, including the difficult nagaita temae and the beautiful and splendid standing otemae.

We are thankful that we were able to hold such a wonderful tea ceremony again this year. We are also happy that we were able to participate in exchange that went beyond age and national differences. We hope to continue our efforts in the coming year. We'd like to express our sincere gratitude to everyone who supports Team Sadou, including the staff of the Nakajima Foundation and local supporters.

<Comments from The Participants>

Dauendorffer Arnaud (France)

"I love traditional Japanese culture. I feel that Japanese culture demonstrates empathy toward others in the midst of tranquility and intensity. It's a culture very different from France's in many ways, but I find this ritual called sadou to be refreshing. During this event, I was in charge of nagaita temae in the Japanese room. This otemae is beautiful, but involves complicated steps. It was difficult and took long hours of practice to master. But thanks to many of my team members who encouraged me and the master who instructed me, I was able to perform to my satisfaction, for which I am grateful. Learning about sadou also got me interested in another Japanese practice, that of zazen (seated meditation). I pay frequent visits to a zazen training hall when I have some spare time. I would definitely like to continue practicing sadou in France."



Dauendorffer Arnaud (France)



Huang Jiajun (China)

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"I was so fascinated with last year's tea ceremony held at the Kokura Castle Garden by Team Sadou 2008 that I joined the Gentlemen's Tea Ceremony this time. As I performed standing otemae, I realized how wonderful a tradition sadou really was. You can provide hospitality to many people through serving tea even when there's a language barrier. We live in Kitakyushu, which is a monozukuri (shop-floor production) city. I didn't know the name of even a single tea utensil when I first started to practice, but I'm happy to say that I learned not only the names but also the foundation of the monozukuri spirit of engaging with things wholeheartedly.

This has become the most precious memory in my time studying abroad."



Christmas macaroon served at the standing otemae ceremony



Seating in the Japanese-style room