

# World Scout Jamboree 2015

By Calum Walker

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I would like to thank you for your kind donation towards me participating in the 23<sup>rd</sup> World Scout Jamboree in Japan. The experience which I have had has been incredible. From being able to stay with a Japanese family to meeting people from all over the world; the experience was unforgettable.

The experience started in Ipswich on Saturday 26 July at 3am when we took a bus to Heathrow and boarded a plane to Frankfurt, then onto another plane which took us to Nagoya. We landed in Nagoya at around 9am Japanese time (midnight Sunday morning GMT). We then took a bus to Fukui Prefecture where we would spend three days living with a Japanese family. Whilst staying with our Japanese families we visited a local High School where we joined in with lessons and were shown around their facilities. Along with this we also visited the Fukui Dinosaur Museum and although mainly in Japanese, it was very interesting to see all the dinosaurs which were discovered in Fukui. Along with seeing all that Fukui had to offer, we also tried out some local cuisine. We had a traditional Japanese breakfast each morning and were treated to sushi for one of our evening meals, with our other evening meal being a barbeque, which although similar to ours, it was done slightly differently with the meat being paired with dipping sauces instead of being put in buns.

After our three days with the families we travelled to Kiara-Hama, Yamaguchi where the site of the Jamboree was. To get there we spent four hours on the bullet train and upon arrival we had to walk about a kilometer to get to where we could pitch our tents. However, we arrived in the evening so we had to pitch out tents in the dark.

Over the next ten days we took part in a range of activities with people from all over the world, starting with the opening ceremony. At the opening ceremony we enjoyed traditional Japanese Taiko drumming, the renewal of the scouting promise and also all the flags of every country in attendance were flown.

Over the following days we got to experience Japanese culture first hand on our Community day. We visited a school in a small town called Kaminoseki. At this school were given another Taiko drum performance by the school children. After the performance we were allowed to have a go. I found that it was extremely hard work, which made the performance even more amazing. These children, aged from around six to twelve years old were all perfectly choreographed and weren't tiring after 10 minutes, while I was tiring after two. After the drumming we went on a boat tour around the Kaminoseki bay which had blue water. After this boat tour we went and helped to decorate a mobile shrine.

The next day we woke up at 4.30am to visit Hiroshima Memorial Park. Although we were only there for a few hours it makes you think about how far the world has come in 70 years. For me it was a thought provoking experience, and although this memorial park marks a dark past for this world, it also shows how much we have moved forward. The park itself is peaceful however, it is in the middle of a bustling city which shows to me that we have learnt from the past to build a better future.

Over the next few days we did a range of onsite activities; the Global Development Village was one of these and saw around 60 booths, all tackling world problems, whether the issue was big or small. One of the booths we visited was the HeForShe Campaign, a movement which pushes for gender equality, however it's not just women pushing for it, it's men as well. Along with this we also went to a science hub to learn about how and why things are happening in the world. One of the booths was also looking

at calorie intake and at how many calories a mini cheddar has. This then led into healthy and unhealthy diets and made us think about what we're actually putting into our bodies.

To learn about different cultures in different countries we visited stands within a large marquee. Each stand had a different activity from each country. At the Greek stand there was archaeology where you dug for bits of pottery. There was traditional dancing from countries all over the world. Along with everything inside the marquee there were traditional tents outside with different countries hosting activities within them. We visited a yurt where we learnt about Hungarian culture and history.

Further to this we had a World Culture Day where everyone on their campsites set up traditional activities relating to their country and also served traditional food. At our site we set up a tennis court and had a mini Wimbledon. We had visitors from other contingents join in playing tennis and drinking tea. We also had the opportunity to visit the other countries around the sub camp. We were dancing with the Irish and we sampled food from all over the world.

Our whole experience on the Jamboree site was amazing, from meeting people from all over the world to doing activities I would have never even thought of doing. This culminated with a closing ceremony where there was a speech by the UN's Secretary General who spoke about how the Jamboree had created a vision of world peace. There was also a performance by a Japanese group called <sup>o</sup>cute, a Japanese pop group, which was different but rather fun. Following this there was a ceremony where the Jamboree flag was handed over to the next World Scout Jamboree preparation team for the 24<sup>th</sup> WSJ in America.

The next day we left the site and took the bullet train to Tokyo. Whilst there we visited the Tokyo Sky Tree, an earthquake simulator, Disneyland Tokyo and we had a general walk around. Seeing Tokyo was great and in a way similar to any other major city however, everything is closer together and there are a larger number of skyscrapers. Japan is a wonderful country and what we experienced over our three weeks whilst there can never be forgotten. The activities we took part in were amazing and we experienced a culture vastly different to ours.

Once again thank you for supporting me.