

**Terttu Harker**  
**(1968~75)**

As a student advisor and events coordinator, I was in the Language Institute of Japan from the beginning of 1968 to 1975. Because after twenty-seven years, one's memory fades a little, it is fortunate that I have several thick photo albums from that time. It looked like we who participated in the experience at LIOJ were in permanent motion all the time, with many different activities. That kind of phenomenon is called "living one's life fully." It was very exhilarating indeed, because two cultures, Japanese and Western, were in constant communication with each other.

One of the most interesting examples of this cultural experience was a one-time student body presidential election. The foreign teachers prepped the students concerning Western style elections. And although there was among the candidates one enterprising male student campaigning for the post by giving flowers to the girl students, the outcome for the Japanese students was quite clear beforehand, without any elections! This caused great commotion among the foreign teachers, and one of them was so agitated that he felt the need to type up the whole experience.

Apart from the daily language classes, there were many social activities arranged in order to speak English in more natural settings, such as the students and teachers eating lunch and supper together at small tables. Once a businessmen's class had a costume party, and I will never forget the sight of one of them wearing an upside-down metal cookie box on his head! It looked almost regal.

On some weekends, there were day trips by bus or ship to nearby historical and scenic places. Several foreign teachers participated and the English conversations continued outside of class. The strawberry pickings in Shizuoka, eating *obentos* among the vineyards in Yamanashi prefecture, and climbing the volcano at Oshima island, still dormant at the time—these adventures come vividly to mind even now.

In conclusion, I would say we had a rare opportunity to create something special in very beautiful surroundings with dedicated people.