

**Barbara Hoskins
(1986~89)**

My most outstanding memory of LIOJ is my first. I had come down from Sendai to interview with John Fleischauer. I didn't know a lot about the school, although the programs seemed interesting. But then John took me up on the roof of Asia Center. It was one of those crystal clear days where the sky defines the color sky blue, and the Pacific Ocean was just a few shades darker. The waves even had sparkles from the sun hitting the crests. I remember thinking, "Someone is going to PAY me to work here?", and agreed then and there to come to Odawara.

It turns out that the setting was just one of the attractions at Asia Center. The Business Program was amazing and unique, with the residential setting allowing teachers to work with students in a way that I've never experienced since. And what students! The businessmen who passed through the center were certainly a varied group in age and rank, but impromptu speeches and karaoke field trips were great equalizers. And when the businessmen left, the Japanese English teachers came for the summer. And through it all, the LIOJ staff and teachers encouraged each other to try new approaches, and to strive for higher standards in teaching.

Although I first chose LIOJ based on its gorgeous ocean view rather than its academic merits, it was still the right choice. Career-wise, my stint at LIOJ was my second job in Japan. I had learned just enough about teaching EFL to be dangerous, and working in the Business Program was the perfect challenge. Life-wise, many of my best friendships can be traced back to LIOJ. EFL teachers are typically a transient group, and I am still amazed when I look at my Christmas card/*nengajo* list and see the number of friends whom I originally met in Odawara, or who passed through LIOJ before, or after me.

And, as always, life and career end up completely interwoven. My co-editor on *Cross Currents* at LIOJ, Sherri Arbogast, ended up as my editor at Oxford University Press, and we had a blast working together. Then, I had a chance to work with Jim Kahny during the work on the second edition for *Let's Go*, and that was great fun, too. And of course Bill Gatton and Lance Knowles are the brains behind DynEd, and the *Let's Go* CD Rom.

I'm glad I was a sucker for an ocean view.