

By CAMERON RILEY

In April or May of this year through school I heard about an exchange with the Council for Year 10's. At that time I could only have dreamed of being picked for this exchange, but three weeks later after filling in a entry form I received a letter stating that I had an interview with the group leaders. I was really nervous about the interview but Richard and Pip made it easy. A couple of weeks later I received another letter stating that I had made the group I was so pleased with the result and could not believe that I had made it.

Over the next two months we had meetings every fortnight and began planning the uniform and other essentials. One thing that worried me was the uniform. It took so long to organize that I thought we were not going to have one. But in the end I really liked the shorts and tops.

Leaving home was hard but I wanted to go so I just thought about Japan and the great times I was going to have. The plane flight was long and boring but the movies were good.

On arrival in Japan I felt great and wanted to get on with the activities. The next day we meet the Mayor and made a speech. I really enjoyed school and making new friends with lots of different people and hope to keep in contact with them. My host family was excellent and I will stay in contact with them and hopefully see them again. I really felt sick after the day in Hiroshima just seeing the cloths of people who were in the blast and the photos of burns made me want to throw up. But I really enjoyed the sights and placing the cranes on the sadako shrine. I had a few problems with homesickness but forgot about them quickly. Over all I really enjoyed Japan and would love to go back. I won't forget this trip because of all the presents and photos that I bought home.

I would like to say thanks to Bill Gourdrie and Keiko Onishi for helping us out and translating for the whole trip.

I would also like to thank Pip and Richard.