

PII Internship report by Robert Duffley

In my time at Hokkoku Shimbun, I worked in the 社会部 - the society section. This section covers a diverse range of local cultural and special interest stories, which was a great way for me to see and experience many different aspects of Ishikawa's rich cultural life. A fireworks festival on the Noto Peninsula, a cooking exposition, and trout fishing on the Asanogawa river are just a few of the places and events I got to witness.

As the reporter intern, I was encouraged to take part in as many of the newspaper's activities as I wanted. In an average day, I went to two different sites with a reporter from my section, where I would take pictures, interview participants or spectators, and make notes or look for additional information. On a couple occasions, I got to translate between my reporter and an English-speaking subject of a story, which was a really interesting experience. When I returned to the office, usually in the early afternoon, I would write a news story about the stories I had just finished. Then I would sit down with the section editor, who would edit both my grammar and my style, and then I would get to see what the real reporter wrote for the same assignment.

On several occasions, I also wrote articles on my own to actually be published. I was again encouraged to pick my own topics, which allowed me to seek extra exposure to the parts of Ishikawa and Japan that I was particularly interested in. Most of the articles also had an element of "foreigner's perspective." As someone relatively new to Japanese society, I got to share my impressions of certain places or events (like an Ikebana exhibition, and traditional farming in Noto) with the readers of the paper.

Obviously, this experience was an opportunity for more than just language study. I got to discover parts of Japan that foreigners seldom get to see; and in many cases, that side was the everyday, working side of society. As a reporter, I got to see so many places and meet so many people in Ishikawa, and I was privileged to deepen my understanding of what life in Japan is like, both in and outside the office.

