

Memories of FLEAT II

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FLEAT II was held on the Chubu University campus. It seemed far more like the typical language conference we all know. Computers and video presentations were more abundant in the presentations, as we had all grown more familiar with the emerging media. The presenters were younger, and the pace faster. NALLD had changed its name to IALL, the International Association of Learning Laboratories, and more IALL members were participants at this joint meeting with LLA. LeeAnn Stone was President at that time, with Trisha Dvorak, Robin Lawrason, Robert Henderson, and Dick Kuettner rounding out the Executive Board. I wish that the organizers of the first FLEAT could have been with us to see the continuation of the FLEAT series, especially Sutesaburo Kohmoto, Takashi Kuroda, Kenkichi Watanabe, Sam Burggraaf, Joseph Sheehan, and Charlie Phil Richardson.

The opening session was held at the impressive Nagoya International Center, with a special welcome by Yoshinobu Niwa, LLA President. While we as language professionals are still examining the potential of technology in language acquisition, we as teachers and support staff are much more comfortable with a wider variety of technological applications. Masatoshi Sugiura, Shuji Ozeki, David Herren, Sue Otto, Otmar Foelsche, Gilberte Furstenberg, Saeko Komori, and Harold Hendricks demonstrated some of the technology highlights that caught our attention. The technology showcase sessions were popular places to experiment with state-of-the-art applications. One immediate difference in the Japanese computer labs we saw was the provision of slippers for users, as shoes were left in bookcases outside the lab. Classrooms were well-equipped with technology aids in this fairly new women's college. Sony, Panasonic and Victor/JVC had language laboratory equipment set up for demonstrations.

Most of us stayed in a business hotel in Nagoya and took the train into the Chubu campus each day. This gave us an opportunity to explore another Japanese city as well as to become proficient at subway riding. We found shopping areas with ease, and enjoyed early morning strolls in narrow streets, recognizing with pleasure a few characters in advertisements and signs. Two special and memorable entertainment events were organized by our LLA hosts: a cormorant fishing tour, with dinner on a boat at Inuyama Castle, and a tea ceremony performed at the Kuho-an Tea House, a replica of a 16th century Rikyu Tea Arbor. Some images from those two nights will always provide smiles and "you just had to be there" comments from the participants.

A few from FLEAT I were visible, notably Niwa-sensei, Masuko Izumi, Hiroshi Kita, Jim White, Masayoshi Watanabe, Hideo Tsukiyama, and Yasushi Sato. Professor Niwa, as LLA President and Chubu University professor, was a wonderful host-and not just because his wife sent home-made cookies to us! He presented FLEAT participants with a lovely tapestry piece and a nifty bright blue FLEAT II t-shirt. (just try saying that quickly!)

After the conference, LeeAnn Stone, Robin Lawrason, David Herren and I spent two days in the Temple University House in Tokyo. We spent the time wisely, visiting museums, shopping, visiting gardens, shopping, visiting the technical district, shopping. You get the idea. We found a delightful used kimono shop where treasures were quite affordable, as well as the Oriental Bazaar, another treasure chest of all the possible souvenirs that one could wish to take home. We

filled the little bits of space left in our bags with delicate paper products, calligraphy supplies, chopsticks, paintings on silk, and other oriental trinkets for all those who waited for our return. It was a unique experience. Both FLEAT conferences offered an opportunity to meet with colleagues from around the world, to find a common base with which to support language learning. And even more important: to make new friends.