

# Trust Youth Centre

Campaign to support the next generation



## Our Aim

In Japan, there has yet to be a popular 'heritage movement' like that in the UK. Voluntary participation in National Trust activities and the importance of protecting historical buildings has yet to gain wide public awareness.

At Amenity 2000 Association, we believe that Japan's heritage consists of an extremely diverse range of buildings and areas of natural beauty.

We feel it is our duty to prevent the irreversible loss of such treasures to our culture and preserve heritage sites wherever possible at a community level. It is our ambition to support the preservation of the past for future generations.

This will be achieved by engaging young people through our Trust Youth (TY) Centre to promote the development of a National Trust movement, and to

advocate wider accessibility to heritage sites by work at our property in Kobe.

We aim to expand our TY Centre, to use heritage as a platform to engage in cross-cultural and inter-generational exchange.

In doing so, we aim to secure wider appreciation for the social and educational benefits of active participation with the historical and natural environment.



### Our property:

The Vories Rokko Mountain Lodge in Kobe was built in 1932 designed by an American architect, William Merrell Vories, who was responsible for the construction of many European style buildings throughout Japan in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century. The property was designated a 'Heritage of Industrial Modernisation' in 2007 and is currently managed by the Amenity 2000 Association and its members.

## Our Approach

The Amenity 2000 Association started the Trust Youth Centre (TYC) campaign in 2013 to target students of colleges and universities in Japan and abroad. We aim to ensure that students have the chance to develop personally and professionally by empowering them to have an active role in our organisation. By joining the TYC:

- Students can become full Amenity 2000 Association members free of charge.
- They are provided with free admission to our seminars, exhibitions and events.
- They gain access to our network of trust members from a variety of professional backgrounds.
- They are encouraged to gain skills by working as volunteers at our property, the Vories Rokko Mountain Lodge in Kobe.
- They are given the opportunity to assist in promotion of our events, organise and plan activities and projects, such as the Working Holiday programme.

## Activities of current TYC students



Hannah Eastham

Hannah met Amenity 2000 in 2011 when working in Japan as an English teacher. After gaining a qualification in heritage and museums, she returned to Kobe in 2014 through a fund from the University of Cambridge Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology. She joined the TYC and worked as volunteer staff at the Vories Lodge whilst home-staying for a few months through our support. She intends to work in Japan as a researcher, and to continue assisting Amenity 2000 to facilitate exchange between the UK and Japan.

Sho Tanaka

Sho is an undergraduate at Kwansei Gakuin University based near Kobe. He joined the TYC and worked as a volunteer on many occasions. He was particularly involved in the planning and execution of our Working Holiday project. Recently, he gained work experience volunteering in Kenya and is now taking time away from university as a teacher in The Philippines supported by The Japan Foundation to promote Japanese culture abroad. It is his ambition to work for an NGO in the future.

Masako Yamamoto

As a PhD student at the Tokyo Institute of Technology, Masako undertook courses in Social Engineering and has developed an interest in the value of public participation at heritage sites. She is now working to finish a doctoral dissertation on the theme of the UK National Trust and is currently a visiting research student at University College London where she has been able to interview a member of INTO staff and National Trust property managers. She aims to use this research to assist the growth of the National Trust movement in Japan.

Hannah Eastham and Masako Yamamoto will join the INTO Conference in Cambridge in September 2015 where they hope to be able to share their experience of Amenity 2000 and discuss their current work with other participants.

## Relevance for INTO members

Amenity 2000 is a local-level, independently run NPO based in Japan which is inspired by the philosophy and principles of the UK National Trust. We are proud of the fact that our activities are almost entirely run by our volunteer members and feel that our heritage property is a good example of grassroots, community-based management. Although the Trust Youth Centre is still in the early stage of development, we aim to increase participation and membership from students and younger volunteers; we believe that supporting them to develop the skills to become future leaders should be at the forefront of our work. As we hope that over time we can eventually build our organisational capacity and develop a stronger platform to officially launch the Trust Youth Centre on a wider scale, we ask for help and support to achieve this ambition. We look forward to sharing best practice examples and experiences with other INTO members.

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