

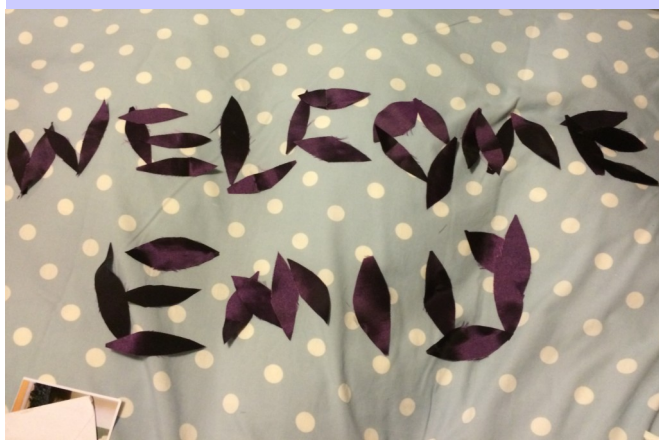
HOST *Matters*

Welcoming International Students

Issue No. 28 Spring 2015

“My husband and I had a trip to Australia just before our HOST visitor, Emily, came to stay with us. Unbeknown to her, we had a request from her mum to meet her for a coffee in Melbourne so we could bring a surprise present back for Emily. So when Emily arrived at our house she found a parcel waiting for her in her bedroom with a note from her mum and a photo of her with Bryan and myself, drinking coffee. A surreal but lovely way to feel at home straightaway!”

Sarah Bradbeer, host in Cornwall



Bryan and Sarah lay out a welcome message on Emily's pillow

PHOTO/VIDEO COMPETITION: EXTENDED DEADLINE

Don't forget to submit your HOST visit photos and videos for the chance to win a wonderful prize. The deadline to submit your entries has now been extended to the 16th March 2016.



Ex-HOST student Ambrose and his family hosting Irwan Limanto from Indonesia

GOING ONCE, GOING TWICE...

HOST is looking for items and activities to offer as part of the [ebay Charity Auction](#). Are you able to donate tickets for an event, a crate of wine, or even a 'tea for two' in your garden? From everyday items, to one-off experiences, we would love to hear your ideas. Items and experiences are sold through auction site ebay, with profits benefiting HOST's work.

“Being a Host is something I would like people to do more to break barriers and embrace other peoples cultures. I was a beneficiary of HOST in 2003 in Northern Ireland. My hosts and I are still in touch and talk on the phone, exchange emails and send each other presents .”

Ex-HOST Student and current host, Ambrose Isibor

Summer is fast approaching along with warmer weather. It's a great time to invite students, but also to meet other hosts in your area. If you would be interested in hosting a host Get-Together, or in helping to organise one, please contact your Regional Organiser.



A year ago I signed up for HOST. Five hosting experiences later and I can only say that I am proud to help this wonderful organisation. I have genuinely enjoyed hosting over the last year and will be looking forward to renewing this experience in the future. Wonderful memories!

Vanina Meunier, East Riding

HOST Matters is made to be enjoyed by everyone and anyone interested in international friendship and cultural exchange. Why not pass on the newsletter to someone who you think would enjoy it?



Maria Spotorno, from Argentina, shoots a selfie with host Mary Irving

HOST gave me one of the best experiences in my life. My hosts, Jackie and Doug, are very kind people. They were pleased to share everything with my friend and I which was such a rare opportunity. We visited many interesting places, had many talks and shared our cultures and stories. I also got the opportunity to breed beef cows at their farm which was super exciting...

Adhitya Ryan Ramadhani, Indonesia

Read more about this visit, view photos, and find many other hosting stories at

www.hostuk.org

BEYOND HOSTING

Do you want to continue supporting HOST but are unable to offer invitations? There are all sorts of ways you can help, from handing out leaflets in your local area, to making a regular or one-off donation, or even arranging a fundraising event. Visit www.hostuk.org/support-us for more information and contact HOST if you would be interested in helping. Every little helps!

LIONS AND PROBUS AND WI, OH MY!

Are you part of a group whose members may be interested in hosting? Why not bring your HOST guest along to a meeting, offer to give a short talk, or submit a newsletter piece? A recommendation coming directly from you can make a world of difference and HOST is able to help provide speakers or write an article.



Rami Zaatari, from Syria, and his young hosts show off their building skills

TIPS FOR A SUCCESSFUL HOST VISIT

Involving students in mundane tasks such as cooking and laying tables and perhaps encouraging them to make something from their own culture encourages a two-way communication.

Christopher Millington-Hore, host, Hertfordshire



Christopher admiring the snowdrops with his guests

Hosting students has had lots of unexpected bonuses for us. We knew we might be offering a student their only chance to be welcomed inside a British home, but we hadn't thought of all the implications. We have taught some of our guests how to use a knife and fork – and they have had lots of fun watching us failing to manage chopsticks. We've explained how we try to save the planet by putting on another jumper, instead of turning up the heating. We've had students comment on how politely we speak to each other, always saying please and thank you after 40 years of marriage – and learnt that it is actually impolite to use these words too often in their culture!

James and Beth Crayston, hosts, London

I took a young man from Singapore for a walk along the coast path. Of course, his phone was in his hand, and he took loads of pictures to send to his friends back home. Within one minute, someone had replied, 'I want to live there when I retire!'

Sometimes I tell students that hosts are disappointed when their guests seem to spend more time on their phones than engaging with their hosts: some students are shocked at such impolite behaviour; others are bemused that anyone would think this rude. All of them will glance at their screens within the next 60 seconds! My own grandchildren are just the same. I've decided it's not worth getting het up about – just make light of it, and offer them some engaging alternative activities to give them something really interesting to write home about!

Margaret Stevens, Regional Organiser and host, Cornwall

My host and I exchanged several emails before the visit, so by the time I got there I already felt like I was visiting a friend. Also, my parents were quite nervous about what I was doing, so they were reassured to see my host's messages.

Jing Liu, student, China

What are your top tips for a successful HOST visit? Send your thoughts in for possible inclusion in the next edition of HOST Matters.

"Thank you so much. It makes my time here in UK more meaningful than ever. Please keep doing this for other students and let them to have same feeling like mine. It's fantastic!" - **Phuong Dang, Vietnam**

I stayed in my host's house for 48 hours in January. These 48 hours mean a lot to me.

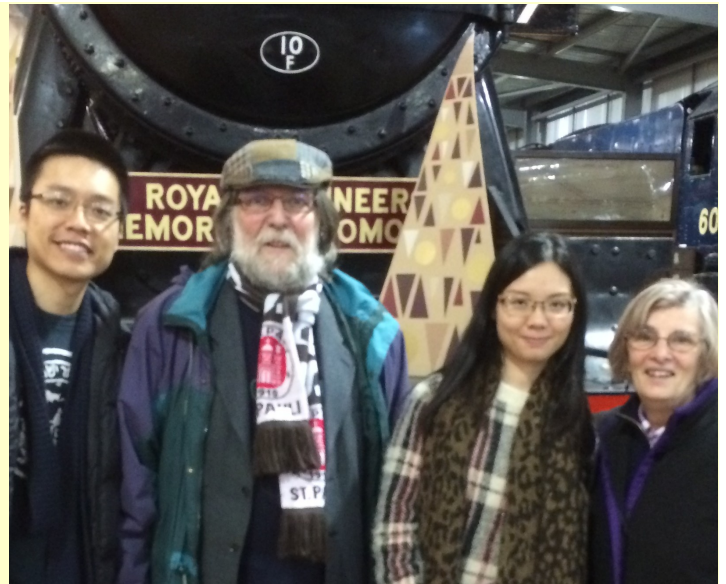
Needless to say, my host, Sue, is a kind person. We talked a lot on the first night before and after dinner. I enjoyed the food but felt embarrassed, as I nearly ate all of the fish cake! After our meal, I had my third drink of the night – green tea—after English tea and white wine. I know British people like to drink!

Having a busy schedule the next day, we all had to be "early birds" and went to bed early. In the darkness, I discovered that there was another staircase in the house. In my home country, having two staircases is the requirement of buildings of a certain height, for fire escape purposes. My profession as a surveyor drove me to think "Why here in the UK as well?"

The next morning, I asked Sue. It was because the house was built in the Victorian Era and it was common at that time to have servants living in the rear part of the house with a separate staircase access.

I went with Sue to shop for the meal that night. Sue and various cashiers talked a lot, which was interesting for me, since we are not like that in my home country.

Visiting the Severn Valley Railway in Kidderminster that day, and Baddesley Clinton in Warwick the day after, is memorable to me. I took a ride on a steam-driven train, which is something I have only seen in historical documents in the past! In Baddesley Clinton I learnt lots of British history from Sue, her husband, and the volunteers there. Sue was so



Walter, John, Nicol and Sue at the Severn Valley Railway

familiar with the house and British history that I was inspired to know more about the past of my own home country.

With a playful mind, my partner and I prepared the meal on the second night, appreciating Sue's permission to work in her kitchen. It was amazing that Sue and her husband liked the Chinese food we cooked!

Ending the visit was a reluctant moment for me, especially as the school term would resume the next day. I would like to say thank you to Sue and her husband once again for receiving us in these 48 hours. I know they prepared a lot for our visit. In particular, I would like to thank them for listening to the story of my home country which is now in a difficult situation and trying to move forward.

I could not ask for anything better in this UK study year.

- Walter Cheung, Hong Kong



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YOUR VOICE

If you have a HOST story which you would like to see in the next issue of HOST Matters, we would love to receive it and will publish all those we have room for. Please submit this to Kimberley at spm@hostuk.org.