

JS Shirase returns to Sydney

After an absence of two years, the icebreaker JS Shirase has docked in Sydney. But it's a new JS Shirase that was welcomed to Garden Island Naval Base on Wednesday 17 March.

On the evening she arrived, a reception was held on board and around 200 people enjoyed the warm hospitality of JS Shirase's commanding officer, Captain Mitsuo Koume JMSDF, and Dr Yoichi Motoyoshi, Leader of the 51st Japanese Antarctic Research Expedition (JARE) Team.

The new Shirase was built to carry on meeting the requirements of the JARE program. The icebreaker is manned by the Japanese Maritime Self-Defense Force and carries members of JARE to and from the Antarctic every year. (During the absence of the JS Shirase, JARE members have been assisted with travel by the Australian icebreaker Aurora Australis.)



Photo courtesy JMSDF

The new JS Shirase was launched in 2008 (commissioned in 2009) and takes over from her namesake, the former JS Shirase.

The ship is named after Lieutenant Nobu Shirase who was the leader of the first Japanese Antarctic Expedition team. In 1910, Lieutenant Shirase set sail from Tokyo in a vessel that was only 100 feet long. Bad weather meant they were unable to land in Antarctica and the expedition made camp at Parsley Bay in Sydney. During their time in Sydney, Professor Edgeworth David gave invaluable assistance and encouragement to the team and on 28 January 1912 the Japanese expedition succeeded in reaching the Antarctic.

The new icebreaker carries on the tradition of expeditions to the Antarctic. Japan has four bases in the Antarctic, including two year-round observation stations, Showa Station and Dome Fuji Station. The commissioning of the new JS Shirase in 2009 illustrates Japan's ongoing commitment to research in the icy continent.

Ikebana International Sydney Chapter celebrates 50 years

The Sydney Chapter of Ikebana International was established in 1960, only four years after Ikebana International was founded in Tokyo by Mrs Ellen Gordon Allen in August 1956. For fifty years, the Sydney Chapter has been encouraging and promoting the study of ikebana and related cultural activities. In this way it has been achieving the aim of Ikebana International whose motto is *In Friendship through Flowers*.



Iemoto Semba in Sydney

A celebration lunch was held on Saturday 13 March at the Sofitel Wentworth Hotel in Sydney. Mr Kazutoshi Inadome, Acting Consul-General of Japan in Sydney congratulated the members on their achievement and thanked them for the way they have contributed to Japan-related events over the years. He said that whenever he has looked at their arrangements he has been "impressed to find how elegantly [they] express the traditional Japanese sense of beauty using Australian flowers and branches".

Helping to celebrate the occasion with a demonstration of ikebana was Mr Rihoh Semba, Iemoto* of the Koryu Shookkai School.

The Sydney Chapter of Ikebana International holds monthly meetings. To find out more see: www.jpif.org.au/jartists/i/ikebana/ikebana.htm

More about Ikebana

People not familiar with Japanese flower arranging might be surprised by the number and variety of schools. The Ikebana International website has excellent information about the history of ikebana and profiles of the different schools. You can also see some spectacular arrangements online.

www.ikebanahq.org

* 'Iemoto' is the term used to refer to the headmaster of an ikebana school.