

## Tohoku, Japan: Rebuilding for a Better Tomorrow

### Exhibition opens at Customs House Sydney

On Thursday 8 March, around 55 people attended the evening launch of *Tohoku, Japan: Rebuilding for a Better Tomorrow*. In his remarks, the Deputy Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Kazutoshi Inadome thanked Customs House, City of Sydney, for supporting the exhibition saying that having the exhibition in the Customs House Library exhibition space was highly appropriate, because a major reason to hold the exhibition was to provide information to people around the world about what has been happening in Tohoku after the disaster.

Mr Inadome declared the exhibition officially opened by proposing a toast to the future of Tohoku and to friendship between Japan and Australia.



On now until 29 April (Sun)

Customs House Library (Level 2 Exhibition Space)  
Circular Quay, Sydney

Mon-Fri: 10am-7pm; Sat-Sun: 11am-4pm; closed public holidays

## Messages for our Children: 3/11—A New Beginning

From 10 May to 2 June, the exhibition *Messages for our Children: 3/11—A New Beginning* will be held at the Japan Foundation Gallery in Sydney.

Japanese NPO Recovery Assistance Media Team (<http://ramedioteam.org>) provided cameras to children in the disaster-affected areas of Tohoku so that they could record their experiences and feelings. Sixty of their photos will be on display. In addition to the children's images there will be looped video footage showing local people in industries such as fishery, agriculture, saké production and dairy, talking about the effect of the disaster on their lives.

See [www.jpf.org.au](http://www.jpf.org.au) for more information.

## Bathurst, NSW & Ohkuma, Fukushima—Sister Cities

*A friend in need is a friend indeed.* It's phrase often used, and one that seems to fit perfectly the relationship between sister-cities Bathurst in New South Wales and Ohkuma in Fukushima prefecture, as Ms Yoshie Aihara, Consul for Information and Cultural Affairs, discovered when she visited Bathurst recently.

The two cities became sister-cities in 1991 and there has been active exchange between the two cities, at the student level and between town officials. As an example, Bathurst has been organising for a local to work as an English teacher in Ohkuma for many years. In Bathurst there is a lovely Japanese garden by the Macquarie River constructed with the support and know-how of people in Ohkuma.

Ohkuma is currently evacuated as it falls within the exclusion zone around the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power plant, which had employed many of the townspeople. Its citizens now live in two main groups in the nearby cities of Aizuwakamatsu where the Ohkuma council now has its main office and Iwaki; yet others have moved to different areas.

After the 11 March disaster the Bathurst community held an appeal that raised in excess of \$80,000 that has gone to assist the Ohkuma community, in particular the children. The people of Bathurst and Ohkuma are still keeping in touch.

On the anniversary of the disaster, Bathurst Regional Council held a memorial service at the Japanese garden observing a minute's silence in memory of those who lost their lives. The short ceremony was also a chance for people to reflect on the impact the disaster and nuclear accident had on their "Sister City friends".

In the park near the main Japanese garden, Bathurst Regional Council has erected a discrete plaque which proclaims that Bathurst's *sincere sympathy and friendship ever endure*.



A view of the Ohkuma Japanese garden in Bathurst