

# Japan REPORTS

The Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney's  
Quarterly Newsletter

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## News from the Consul-General of Japan

*Dear Readers,*

Happy New Year! It has been some while since I last wrote, so I have several months' highlights to report.

This year began with a visit to Sydney by Japanese Foreign Minister Fumio Kishida (13 January) who held talks with his counterpart, the Hon. Bob Carr, and with Australian Minister for Trade Craig Emerson. It was Minister Kishida's first official trip overseas and the importance of the Australia-Japan relationship was evident in his decision to include Australia as one of the first countries to visit. It was a good start to the year for Australia-Japan relations.

Looking back over the last few months of 2012, we saw further proof of the important strategic partnership that Australia and Japan share. The Foreign and Defence Ministers of both countries met for 2+2 consultations (14 September) and reconfirmed that Australia and Japan share a common strategic objective of ensuring long-term peace, stability and prosperity in the Asia-Pacific and beyond, as the region and the world grow ever more connected.

Marking a significant anniversary, the 50th Anniversary Australia-Japan Joint Business Conference (7-9 October) reinforced how strong our economic ties are. More than 300 people attended the conference, and Prime Minister Julia Gillard delivered the Australia Japan Foundation Address. New South Wales Premier Barry O'Farrell, Deputy Premier Andrew Stoner and Treasurer Mike Baird were also among the many distinguished attendees.



*One of the final events of 2012 was the National Day Reception to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan, held at Consul-General's official residence on 4 December.*

*The Hon. Gladys Berejiklian, NSW Minister of Transport, attended the event, representing the Premier of NSW.*

*Dr Charles 'Rowley' Richards [right] and Mr Barton Richardson [second right], former POWs, were among those who attended the reception.*



2013 is a significant one in the history of people-to-people ties; it is the 50th anniversary of the very first sister-city relationship between an Australian and Japanese city—between Lismore in northern NSW and Yamato-Takada in Nara Prefecture.

Coinciding with this anniversary, Japan National Tourism Organisation (JNTO) and Tourism Australia have designated 2013 as the Australia-Japan Tourism Exchange Year and a range of events will be held throughout the year. I hope you can join us.

*Masahiro Kohara*  
January 2013

- INSIDE:** ● Consul-General's activities ● An article by Consul-General Kohara on the Senkaku Islands  
● New honorary consul-general of Japan in Darwin ● We've moved! ● Results of the 30th Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest  
● Japanese Cultural Day in Darwin ● Japan Expo & Matsuri in Sydney ● Japanese Nobel Laureate  
● Destination Japan: Seto Inland Sea ● New Year in Japan!