

# 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,* April in Japan is the start of another new year. As many of you would know, the Japanese business and academic year commences on 1 April. There can be no April Fool for people in Japan – it's a time to make sure all is in order for the working year ahead. This is a busy time for Japanese businesses and organisations, including the many here in Sydney.

Since our last issue I had the great pleasure of attending the reception hosted by Captain Matsuda, Commanding Officer, and Dr Watanabe, leader of the Japan Antarctic Research Expedition, when the icebreaker *Shirase* docked in Sydney. I was very impressed when I first learn of the history of *Shirase* and saw how the *Shirase* sword was described as the 'sword of friendship' by the Australian Museum in Sydney. At the time, I thought that in a sense Lieutenant *Shirase* was an early ambassador for Japan over a century ago. You can read about the history of *Shirase* and the icebreaker on page 4.

On 15 March, I attended the opening ceremony of the 2013 NSW State Championships for swimming at the Sydney Olympic Park Aquatic Centre. I also went to support Japanese athletes at the finals on 17 March. Although it wasn't the national team, the Japanese contingent included some of Japan's top swimmers, among them multiple Olympic medallist Kosuke Kitajima. These athletes are part of Japan's soft power.

I have also watched with great interest Sydney's new A-League team, the Western Sydney Wanderers, whose

marquee player is Japanese star, Shinji Ono. I have been to see several matches and recognised how Australian people are fans of him.

Sport is enjoyed around the world by people of all backgrounds and can be a great avenue for exchange. I am of course biased, but I would love to see the Tokyo 2020 bid for the Summer Olympics and Paralympics succeed (see p.5). I believe Tokyo would deliver a wonderful Games.

Some of the events I attend can have surprising follow-ups.

I was pleasantly surprised to receive a call from the Federal Member for Paterson and opposition spokesman for tourism, Mr Bob Baldwin, one Sunday morning. The reason for his call? To tell me that he had caught a great kingfish. (I'm told that anything over 1 metre starts to lose its flavour – this fish was 90cm.) He and his fishing

companion turned up still in their fishing gear with said fish and my chef made three excellent dishes from it. Mr Baldwin liked one so much that he asked for the recipe (see p.2). Why not try it for yourself? I think fishing may be one of the reasons Japanese tourists come to Australia.

Finally, this issue's Destination Japan is my home prefecture, Tokushima. Although I have lived for many years in Tokyo and different countries, Tokushima is always close to my heart as my home town. I hope that some of you may visit and see its attractions with your own eyes.

*Masahiro Kohara*  
April 2013



Captain Matsuda, Commanding Officer of the JS *Shirase*, presents Dr Kohara with a medallion (18 March 2013)

**INSIDE:** • Consul-General's activities • Reconstruction from the Great East Japan Earthquake

• *Shirase* visits Sydney—a history of friendship • Tokyo 2020 Candidate City • KIZUNA—creating more bonds

• 7th International Manga Awards • Evangelion Art Exhibition • Contests for schools and students • Destination Japan: Tokushima