

# 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,* Over the past three months, I have been reminded of the important contribution that so many Japanese people living in New South Wales have been making to exchange between Japan and Australia. It gave me great pleasure to be able to recognise the efforts of several people as you can see on the following two pages.

I also met with one of the earliest and strongest promoters of sister-city ties between Australia and Japan when I met with Father Paul Glynn. As many of you will know, this year is the 50th anniversary of the very first sister-city agreement between an Australian and Japanese city, Lismore and Yamato-Takada, and Fr. Glynn was instrumental in establishing the friendship. In early May I visited Lismore for the first time, where I was very warmly welcomed and I heard Isabella a Cappella, a wonderful Lismore-based choir, perform. I was certainly impressed by their voices but I was also moved to learn of their longstanding commitment to touring Japan and their fundraising tour after the Great East Japan Earthquake. I invited them to give concerts in Sydney on 2 and 3 June, and as a former choir boy, I really enjoyed their singing.

Turning to Japan-Northern Territory relations (in case you've forgotten, the Sydney Consulate-General's jurisdiction covers New South Wales and the Northern Territory), soon after the new Chief Minister, the Hon. Adam Giles, took office, he had briefings about the future of our bilateral ties, and in July he visited Tokyo for high-level talks with government and business leaders, deepening the bonds of trust between the NT and Japan.

Earlier in July, I'd had the chance to learn about tourism opportunities in the area around Alice Springs which is Mr

Giles' hometown. The Chief Minister kindly introduced some of the unique tourist experiences to be had in the Alice Springs area. The vast expanses of Central Australia are on a completely different scale to Japan's landscapes, the flora and fauna are fascinating, and I was very impressed by the Uluru-Kata Tjuta National Park.

It was also interesting for me to reflect on the significance of landscape and place in culture. Uluru (Ayers Rock) is known around the world as an Australian icon and it is a World Heritage Site. Just before my visit there, Japan's own Mount Fuji was also inscribed as a UNESCO World Heritage Site [see p.5] for its cultural values.

I am always encouraging Australians I meet to visit my country. Mount Fuji is already a popular place for people to visit, but I hope its designation as a World Heritage Site does make more people interested to visit it and the surrounding areas. You can see Mount Fuji on a daytrip from Tokyo, but I'd recommend you stay longer.



Chief Minister of the Northern Territory, the Hon. Adam Giles MP, and Consul-General Kohara in Alice Springs

Finally, in late July I received official notice of my new posting to Shanghai in China and I will be leaving Sydney by early September. I will be sorry to say good-bye. Sydney is such a beautiful and friendly city, and it has been a great place to live and work since taking up my post in May 2010. I have had many wonderful opportunities to meet people around New South Wales and the Northern Territory. Thank you to all the supporters of the Australia-Japan relationship, and the kind assistance you have extended to me and my office. I leave confident that our friendship will continue to grow.

*Masahiro Kohara*  
August 2013

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