### A message from Consul-General Keizo Takewaka

#### Dear Readers.

Since the last issue, it has continued to be a busy time for Japan-Australia related events.

Prime Minister Abe's very successful visit in January was soon followed by another high-level visit, this time by the Japanese State Secretary for Foreign Affairs.

The arrival of the Japanese icebreaker JS Shirase in Sydney was a reminder of the long history of friendship between us, and I was grateful that the heavy rain didn't prevent guests from joining Captain Oga and me at the reception held on board. It was another excellent opportunity to meet supporters and friends of the Japan-Australia relationship.

We recently conducted the Imperial Decoration Conferment Ceremony for Mr Bob Seidler AM, who is Vice-President of the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee (AJBCC). AJBCC (est. 1962) and its counterpart JABCC (est. 1963) are almost as old as the 1957 Commerce Agreement between Japan and Australia. Their 55th Joint Business Conference will be held in Tokyo this October.

In this issue there are articles that look at some of the different types of people-to-people exchange between us-sports and the JET Program. There is also a contribution about intercultural competence which is so important for young people in today's globalised world. I hope you also enjoy the culture and travel articles.

There are many other consulate activities and events that I haven't touched on, and I would encourage you to visit our website where we regularly upload pictures and summaries of

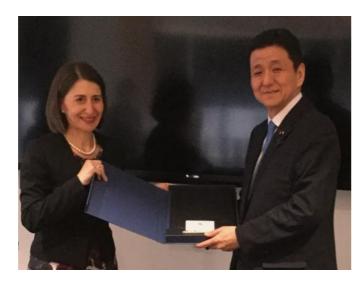
Finally, I would like to express my sadness about the difficulties that Lismore and the surrounding areas are experiencing due to the severe floods that struck the area. On 9 March, I visited Lismore, a lovely city. Lismore is the very first Australian city to establish a sister-city relationship with Japan in 1963, with Yamato-Takada city in Nara prefecture. I was warmly welcomed by Mayor Isaac Smith and others, and I wish them all the very best in the months ahead.

Keizo Takewaka

**EVENTS AND NEWS ARE REGULARLY** UPLOADED ON OUR WEBSITE www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp

page two APRIL 2017

## Visit by the State Secretary for Foreign Affairs Nobuo Kishi



On Monday 20 February, State Minister for Foreign Affairs Nobuo Kishi paid a courtesy call on the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP, Premier of New South Wales.

State Minister Kishi congratulated Premier Berejiklian on her recent appointment before touching on a range of issues such as the increased presence of Japanese companies in various fields in NSW, the large Japanese community in the state and the strong trade relationship with NSW, as well as growing two-way tourism, expressing his hope for even closer ties in the future.

In response, Premier Berejiklian welcomed State Minister Kishi's visit to Sydney and NSW. The Premier stated that in addition to existing trade, she welcomed the recent investment activity by Japanese companies. She expressed her hope that a further increase in cultural and social exchanges, including sister-city ties and Japanese language education, would lead to the promotion of future ties between NSW and Japan.

# **Shirase returns to Sydney**



On 20 March, the Japanese icebreaker JS Shirase made its semi-annual port of call in Sydney. The Shirase is a state-of -the-art Japan Maritime Self Defense Force icebreaker built for Japan's Antarctic observation program. The

from the Antarctic, having completed its mission to deliver supplies and personnel to Showa Station (Japan's Antarctic research station).

The following evening around 230 guests braved the heavy downpour and made their way on board to attend a lively reception hosted by Captain Hisanobu Oga, Commanding Officer of the JS Shirase, together with the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney,

## Mr Bob Seidler AM receives **Imperial Decoration**



Mr Robert Seidler AM [second left] with The Hon. Greg Combet, The Hon. Niall Blair, and Consul-General Keizo Takewaka [left to right]

On 30 March 2017, an Imperial Decoration Conferment Ceremony was conducted for Mr Robert (Bob) Seidler AM, recipient of The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon. It was announced on 3 November 2016 as part of the 2016 Autumn Imperial Decorations that Mr Seidler would receive the decoration in recognition of his contribution to strengthening economic ties between Japan and Australia.

Mr Seidler is Vice-President of the Australia-Japan Business Cooperation Committee (since 2011), and since 2007 he has been Chair of the AJBCC's Infrastructure Sub-Committee and in this capacity has greatly facilitated the promotion of joint ventures in infrastructure programs.

The Hon. Niall Blair, NSW Minister for Trade and Industry, represented the Premier of NSW at the ceremony. In December 2016, Mr Seidler was appointed special trade envoy to Japan by the NSW Government.

Multiculturalism, and the Hon. John

Ajaka, President of the Legislative

Council of NSW, gave speeches

together with Captain Oga and the

Consul-General. Enjoying the hospitality

of the Shirase crew and JARE members

were friends of the Japan-Australia

relationship from various fields. It was a

very appropriate day on which to hold

the event, the 21st being Harmony Day

The JS Shirase takes its name from an

Antarctic glacier named after Japan's first

Learn more about the history of Lt Shirase and his stay in Sydney in 1911 at

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/document/

english/japan\_reports/JR50-4/JReports%20Vol%

Antarctic explorer Lieutenant Nobu Shirase.

Minister for

Raymond Williams,

in Australia.

## 60th Anniversary of the 1957 **Japan-Australia Commerce Agreement**

This year marks the 60th Anniversary of the signing of the 1957 Commerce Agreement between Japan and Australia.

The first ever reciprocal visits by Japanese and Australian prime ministers also took place in 1957—Australian Prime Minister Robert Menzies in April and Japanese Prime Minister Nobusuke Kishi in December.

It was a momentous year for relations between the two countries which only twelve years earlier had been at war, and the signing of the Commerce Agreement would set the stage for a boom in trade ties between the two nations.

When Prime Minister Shinzo Abe addressed the Australian Parliament in 2014, he said that the Agreement, which happened to be signed by his grandfather, "propelled us on the road to prosperity, which we still enjoy today." Further, "This was the start of Australian coal, iron ore, and natural gas coming into Japan. The second-coming of Japan's industry after the war first became possible through the help of Australia."

Japan-Australia trade dated back to the second half of the 19th century, first riding on the sheep's back with Japanese trading company Kanematsu importing significant quantities of Australian wool. At the time Japan's textile industry was booming and the quality of Australian wool impressed. This was the first regular trade between Japan and Australia. By 1924-25 Japan was Australia's third largest export

Wool was again in demand after the war, but it was Japan's demand for iron ore in the early 1950s that gave a great impetus for closer trade ties. Negotiations began in 1956 and on 6 July 1957 the Agreement was signed in Hakone, Japan, A revision of the Agreement in 1963 saw Japan gain full most-favoured-nation treatment. By the early 1960s, Japan was Australia's largest twoway trading partner, and this would endure for four decades. Today Japan is Australia's thirdlargest trading partner and second-largest export market. Japan is also Australia's thirdlargest source of imports.

Economic ties continue to evolve. In January 2015, the Japan-Australia Economic Partnership Agreement (JAEPA) came into force and has already led to new business opportunities between Japan and Australia.

icebreaker was on its return to Tokyo



#### A word from the head cook on JS Shirase Mr Keizo Takewaka. Among the many dignitaries in attendance, the Hon.

"What sort of food do you think the Shirase crew and members of the expedition eat? The answer is: as delicious as everyone eats in Japan.

"Special care is taken to ensure raw vegetables last a long time: for daikon (Japanese radish), we cut off the leaves and wrap each daikon in newspaper and look after them just as when they were growing. While the daikon are in storage, we wet them, but because this can cause food to spoil, we regularly wipe the moisture away. Another example is cabbage; we apply lime to the stem of cabbages. Treating vegetables in this way, they can be stored for a long time."



Food storage is all important. Lime is applied to the cut stems of cabbages for longevity.



A normal meal on board the Shirase

APRIL 2017 ■ ■ ■ page three