

Japan REPORTS

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

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INSIDE THIS ISSUE

- Consul-General Kiya attends Memorial Service for the Sinking of HMAS *Kuttabul* Page 2
- Consul-General Kiya visits Cowra Page 2
- Australia-Japan business ties continue to deepen Page 3
- Consul-General Kiya's online newsletters — a round-up Page 3
- Staying in & reaching out Page 4
- World Masters Games 2021 KANSAI Japan Page 5
- Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest 2020 — topics Page 6
- JET alumni stories — social media connections Page 6
- Summer festival fun — a former JET reports Page 7
- Himeji Castle — a national and World Heritage treasure Page 8

Matsue Castle, Shimane Prefecture
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Consul-General Kiya attends Memorial Service for the Sinking of HMAS *Kuttabul*



Photos courtesy of RAN

On 1 June, Consul-General Kiya Masahiko attended the Memorial Service for the Sinking of HMAS *Kuttabul* held at the HMAS *Kuttabul* naval base on Sydney Harbour. Seventy-eight years ago, in the evening of 31 May through to dawn of 1 June 1942, Japanese Imperial Navy midget submarines attacked Sydney Harbour killing 21 Australian and British sailors. Six Japanese submariners also lost their lives.

The memorial service, conducted on a smaller scale than usual due to COVID-19, was held in honour of the Australian and Japanese victims, and Consul-General Kiya laid a wreath as the representative of the Japanese Government.

In a recent newsletter (no.17) entitled 'HMAS *Kuttabul* and the Midget Submarines in Sydney – “We will remember them.”', Consul-General Kiya describes the memorial service itself and invites readers to reflect with him upon the Japanese Imperial Navy midget submarine attack on Sydney Harbour, its history through to the present day and the significance of this.

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/document/CGKiya_17newsE.pdf Change the 'E' to 'J' for Japanese language.

Consul-General Kiya visits Cowra

On 25 and 26 June, Consul-General Kiya paid his first official visit to the New South Wales' town of Cowra, where he was guided around key sites and learnt about their historical significance.

His visit began at the Australian and Japanese War Cemeteries where he laid wreaths at both cemeteries with the Mayor of Cowra, Cr Bill West. The Consul-General took the opportunity to express his heartfelt gratitude to Australians and the Council for taking care of the place over so many years.



Among the locations visited was the beautiful Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre. The Consul-General learnt about the wealth of people-to-people exchanges between Cowra and Japan and had excellent discussions with the chairman and directors of the Garden and Mayor West to further promote exchanges toward the future.

Cowra Japanese War Cemetery online database
Cowra Japanese Garden and Cultural Centre
Cowra Voices

www.cowrajapanesecemetery.org
www.cowragarden.com.au
cowravoces.wordpress.com

The Cowra Japanese Garden appreciates donations to sustain its operations as it lost public admission charges for three months due to the COVID-19 crisis and was financially significantly affected.

Photos of the Consul-General's visits and Consulate events are regularly uploaded to our website and Facebook.

Facebook: CGJSYD

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

Consul-General Kiya's official Twitter account—[www.twitter.com/CGJapanSydney](https://twitter.com/CGJapanSydney)

Australia-Japan business ties continue to deepen

Companies and organisations were quick to implement measures against the spread of COVID-19, but business has continued, and there have been several notable developments between Japan and Australia, particularly in the arena of Western Sydney development.

Consul-General Kiya was among the participants in the **Fourth Japan-Australia Infrastructure Networking Meeting** held in Sydney on 3 March, just before COVID restrictions came into place. The meeting was also attended by HE Ambassador Takahashi Reiichiro.



The 4th Japan-Australia Infrastructure Networking Meeting

The meeting focused on Western Sydney development. Government and corporate representatives from both Japan and Australia came together to deepen partnerships. The Consul-General said on Twitter that he was "glad to see further progress", and indeed in the next two months, two memoranda of understanding (MoU) were signed.

On 23 April, the **NSW Government, NEC and NEC Australia** signed an MoU to become foundation partners in the co-creation and development of a world-leading Digital Safer and Smarter City environment. NEC will utilise its biometrics, 5G, IoT and AI technologies. Consul-General

Kiya was among those who attended the signing ceremony which was held as a teleconference.

This MoU is the 5th between the NSW Government and a Japanese business or organisation related to the Western Sydney development.



Technology enabling business to continue

The following month saw the other MoU signed. On 25 May, a three-way MoU was signed by **Hitachi Australia, Liverpool City Council and South Western Sydney Local Health District** on civic and health initiatives such as digital healthcare.

For further information on the MoUs, see:

www.nec.com.au/insights/media/nec-sign-foundation-partnership-with-nsw-government-for-states-digital-technology-revolution

www.hitachi.com.au/about/news-releases/news-2020/200525.html

Consul-General Kiya's newsletter

Consul-General Kiya writes a fortnightly online newsletter. The purpose of the e-newsletter is to introduce various activities he engages in as Consul-General and to share some of his thoughts and feelings as he goes about his duties.

He hopes that through these newsletters more people will learn about the multi-faceted connections between Australia and Japan.

Since the last issue, he has written on the following topics:

- No.18 **Australia's JobMaker plan – New opportunities for the Japanese private sector** (June 26, 2020)
- No.17 **HMAS Kuttubul and the Midget Submarines in Sydney – “We will remember them.”** (June 19, 2020)
- No.16 **Alice Springs and Uluru: Looking beyond COVID-19** (May 29, 2020)
- No.15 **“COVID-safe Australia” – towards the post-COVID world** (May 13, 2020)
- No.14 **ANZAC Day for Japanese** (May 1, 2020)
- No.13 **Australia's Response to Coronavirus (Part 3) – “Strategic Communication”** (April 17, 2020)
- No.12 **Australia's Response to Coronavirus (Part 2) – “Hibernation Strategy” and “Social Distancing” to overcome the “Twin Crisis”** (April 3, 2020)

All previous issues are available online:

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/about_consul_generals_newsletter.html

Also available in the Japanese-language original:

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_ja/about_consul_generals_newsletter.html

Staying in & reaching out

The COVID-19 situation has meant that workplaces have had to reconsider how, when and where their people work. The Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney is no different. It quickly adopted measures, including dividing the workforce into teams and initiating working-at-home, to ensure that people could work safely and still deliver essential services.

A crucial part of the Consulate's work is providing various administrative services to Japanese people living in NSW and the NT, and the consular section has been particularly affected. It had to introduce shorter counter service hours and bookings, opening the counter in the mornings only, as part of efforts to help prevent the spread of the coronavirus.

But **the need to communicate remained a top priority**. Monitoring and providing the latest information in Japanese language via various channels was and is paramount.

Facebook, Twitter and consular email notifications have all played key roles in reaching out to keep people up to date with changing circumstances. This will continue for the foreseeable future and **we urge people to continue to follow our social media**, sign up for the monthly Japanese-language メールマガジン and remember that major announcements are also posted to our website in the special COVID-19 section on our home pages.

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp
(Japanese and English)



@CGJSYD



@CGJapanSyd



@CGJapanSydney — Consul-General Kiya's Twitter

*As we all had to **stay in**, organisations worked quickly to **reach out** virtually to people and there has been some excellent online content created.*

We have already shared many of these via Facebook, but here are some that we strongly suggest you consider checking out if you haven't done so yet!

And of course, for fans of Japan in regional areas, these online resources are welcome anytime.

This just scratches the surface!

SEIKATSU KOGEI

OBJECTS FOR INTENTIONAL LIVING



FULL EXHIBITION ONLINE NOW

In Sydney ...

The Japan Foundation's **SEIKATSU KOGEI** exhibition was put online for people to enjoy virtually. With the easing of restrictions people can once again visit the gallery (check website for latest details).

[jpf.org.au/events/seikatsu-kogei/](http://jpf.org.au/events/seikatsu-koge/)

Interstate and Overseas ...

The National Gallery of Victoria's virtual tour of its **JAPANESE MODERNISM** exhibition is excellent — www.ngv.vic.gov.au/virtual-tours/japanese-modernism/

And in the UK, the V&A's 5-part curator-led YouTube tour of its **KIMONO: KYOTO TO CATWALK** exhibition is also first-rate — www.vam.ac.uk/exhibitions/kimono-kyoto-to-catwalk [main site]

NHK World-JAPAN On Demand ... more of a rediscovery really, this site has excellent video content on current social trends, traditional and pop culture and some great travel videos that allow you to explore Japan from home—all 47 prefectures!

www3.nhk.or.jp/nhkworld/en/ondemand/special/yourplaylists/

Visit Japan (JNTO) has been posting and sharing materials so inviting that they have produced some bittersweet reactions in the comments from people who enjoy the content but regret they can't be in Japan! There is an international version plus local versions, and here's the one for Australia —

www.facebook.com/VisitJapanAU/

Online Japanese learning ... coming into its own.

Checking out Japan Foundation is a given, but they also have a new free online textbook to add colour to your life in Japan called **IRODORI** —

www.irodori.jpf.go.jp/en/index.html

You can find more information about the various Japan Foundation online learning resources via —

www.jpf.go.jp/e/index.html

Don't forget the Japan Foundation Sydney's online **VIDEO MATSURI** contest which is a great way to get school students to use their Japanese creatively. This year, it's a **SUITO** or water bottle which must feature in each submission. The deadline is 1 September 2020.

www.jpf.org.au/language/for-learners/contests/video-matsuri/



World Masters Games 2021 KANSAI Japan

Japan will host the World Masters Games in May 2021. It is the first time that the World Masters Games (WMG) will be held in Asia. The first WMG was held in 1985 in Toronto, Canada. Australia has a strong history of participation and hosted the 3rd WMG in 1994 (Brisbane), the 5th in 2002 (Melbourne) and the 7th in 2009 (Sydney). The most recent WMG was hosted across the ditch, in Auckland in 2017, and now KANSAI Japan is gearing up to host the 10th WMG.

The Games will be held across the Kansai region in Fukui, Shiga, Kyoto, Osaka, Hyogo, Nara, Wakayama, Tottori and Tokushima.

14 –30 May 2021

The World Masters Games is an international sports festival. Anyone aged around 30 years and older can participate. And participate they do! So far over 170,000 have taken part in the WMG.

In 2021, there will be 35 sports played (59 disciplines) and the 10th WMG is expected to welcome the largest ever number of competitors and participants—around 50,000 competitors and 200,000 participants.



The joy, determination and sense of achievement the Games give competitors are clearly shared by people of all ages looking at images from past World Masters Games!



It is a great mix of sports, with some that might surprise—dragon boat racing, tenpin bowling, tug of war and gateball.

Entries are still open and close on 28 February 2021, but disciplines (events) have maximum numbers and entry is on a first-come-first-served basis, closing once capacity is reached.

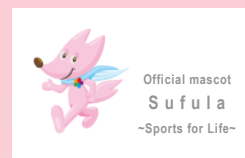
People take part in the WMG not just for the love of sport, but also for the chance to get to know a new city and country. Sports tourism is an opportunity for the WMG host prefectures and

cities to welcome people and invite them to explore. There are special sports activity plans that have been designed with WMG visitors in mind. The Kansai area has so many attractions, natural and manmade. And knowing that Australians love to travel and try new foods, be assured that the Kansai area has a particularly strong and thriving food culture!



Entries close 28 February 2021.

wmg2021.jp/en/



Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest 2020

for secondary school students in NSW and the NT

AIM OF CONTEST

The aim of the Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest is to encourage and develop a better understanding of Japan and Australia-Japan relations, amongst secondary school students in New South Wales and the Northern Territory.

The contest is open to all students—not only Japanese language students—enrolled in New South Wales and Northern Territory secondary schools, both public and private, including seventh year primary school students in the Northern Territory.

The Consulate is looking forward to receiving many interesting essays again this year.

TOPICS

Senior Division – 1300-1600 words

Consider an aspect of Japanese culture that has been embraced in Australia. Introduce it and explain why you think it is popular in Australia.

Junior Division – 700-1000 words

Situation: you have the chance to visit Japan. Perhaps you are into sport, design, the tea ceremony, all things anime, or ramen. There are many more things you could choose and that is up to you! What would you like to see and experience in Japan? Introduce and explain your choice.

PRIZES

A return economy ticket to Japan is the prize for the winner of the Senior Division, thanks to the generous sponsorship of Japan Airlines. The winner of the Junior Division will receive \$300 worth of books of the winner's own choice, and books to the value of \$400 will be the School of the Year award, given to the school with the highest percentage of top quality essays.

Other prizes include gift vouchers for Outstanding and Highly Commended students courtesy of Tokyo Mart. See more details in the guidelines available on www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/education_essay_contest.html.

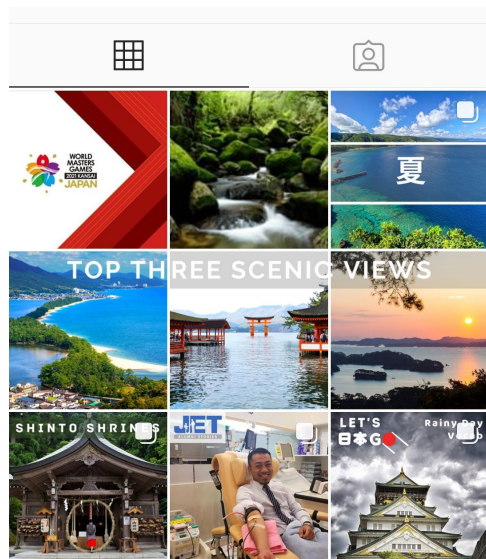
DEADLINE: 9 September 2020

Keep up to date with contest news by following us on Facebook @CGJSYD and Instagram @CGJapanSyd



Have you seen our
Instagram?

Learn more about Japan, the culture and the language through our posts. View our stories for fun & interactive quizzes and polls!



Follow us now!
@CGJapanSyd

The Japan
Exchange &
Teaching
Programme



Hear first-hand
stories about
their adventures
in Japan!

“I’ve been fortunate to have donated a whopping 6 times during my time on JET!”

Moses was based in Okayama Prefecture for 3 years (2016 – 2019) as a Coordinator of International Relations (CIR) and also served as a Prefectural Advisor (PA) for other JET participants. Now, he continues to live in Japan in Saitama Prefecture and works as an Assistant Language Teacher (ALT).

Q1 – What’s the story behind this photo?

I’ve been donating blood since back in Sydney. When I found out in Japan that I could do the same, I made sure to continue. Along the way I was accompanied by some friends and we would schedule appointments together. The nurses and doctors were so kind and enjoyed the talks about life outside of Japan.

Continue reading Moses’
JET Story on Instagram!





Japan is a big fan of listing things in groups of three, such as the Three Famous Gardens of Japan or the Three Scenic Views. So without further ado, I present the **Three Great Summer Festivals of Tohoku!** The best thing? All three festivals are held during the same week, so it's easy to hop to each one.

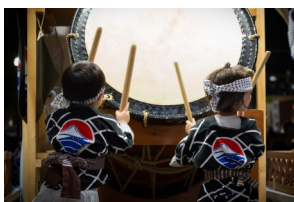


Firstly, where is Tohoku? Tohoku is the region in the north-east of Japan's mainland and is made up of six prefectures: **Aomori** (which sits at the very tip), **Akita**, **Iwate**, **Yamagata**, **Miyagi** and **Fukushima** (which is at the very bottom). It is a region well known for its beautiful countryside, lakes, mountains, hot springs and snowfall.

1 Kanto Festival, Akita Prefecture



The Kanto Festival in Akita City is a four-day event held in the peak of Japan's hot and humid summer at night. From 3 to 6 August, hundreds of performers gather on the main street, blocking off an entire 1km stretch of road.



To the sound of pounding taiko drums, set on the back of moving trucks, and festive flutes, Kanto performers display impressive skill in balancing tall, lantern-adorned bamboo poles in the air. That's no small feat, considering the poles can weigh up to 50kg!

As an Assistant Language Teacher based in Akita, I was lucky enough to experience Kanto three times and even performed taiko in it once. With the crowd's loud chanting of "*dokkoi-sho, dokkoi-sho!*" and the beating drums vibrating through your chest, it's easy to get swept away in festival fever.

2 Nebuta Festival, Aomori Prefecture



The Nebuta Festival in Aomori City is another great fire festival and runs annually from 2 to 7 August. At night, larger-than-life lantern floats depicting mythical beings from stories are paraded through the city. On the final night, the floats are set sail on boats, bobbing down the bay with big fireworks—definitely well worth seeing!

In the several months leading up to the festival, teams of locals from businesses and organisations handcraft the floats from washi paper and wire. Some floats can get up to 5m tall by 9m wide. If you're in the area before the event, you can even visit the builder's huts and take a peek at their hard work.

3 Sendai Tanabata, Miyagi Prefecture



Sendai City's Tanabata Festival—or "star festival"—is one of the largest and most famous in Japan. Every year between 6 and 7 August, thousands of giant 3 to 5m long streamers representing shooting stars decorate shopping arcades—all lovingly crafted by the community.

Unfortunately I didn't get to see this festival in person, but it's certainly on my bucket list—and hopefully it's now on yours!



Want to experience all that Japan has to offer—including fun festivals like Jessica? Apply for the JET Programme!

Visit jetprogramme.org/en/ or contact (02) 9250 1000 to learn more!

Himeji Castle — a national and World Heritage treasure

Himeji Castle was one of Japan's first two World Heritage sites, inscribed together with Horyuji Temple in 1993. Japanese castles are on most visitors' itineraries, and Himeji Castle, called Himeji-jo in Japanese, is often listed as the 'must-see' castle. Located in its namesake city, it is considered the finest surviving example of early 17th-century Japanese castle architecture. In fact, the UNESCO listing describes Himeji Castle as a "masterpiece of construction in wood" combining "its effective functional role with great aesthetic appeal, both in the use of white-painted plaster and in the subtlety of the relationships between the building masses and the multiple roof layers."

It would be hard not to be impressed as you approach the structure. Walking from the train station towards the castle, you can see how it dominates the skyline even today.

A hilltop castle, it can still be seen from most parts of the city. The castle has another name—*Shirasagi-jo* or White Heron

The defensive nature of its design is clear as you, the visitor, contemplate the enormous moats, wind your way through the multiple gates and are dwarfed by the impressive and steep stone walls. Himeji-jo was never the site of a major battle. Some buildings were taken down or added over the years, but the castle complex is considered to have great integrity as an example of an early Edo Period (1603-1867) castle. Himeji-jo became obsolete with the fall of the shogun and the rise of the new national government (the Meiji Restoration in 1868).

The importance of Himeji-jo was recognised early on and steps were taken to protect it.



Castle, and perched on high, this rather poetic name seems fitting.

However, the beauty of the structure should not distract from the purpose of Himeji Castle. It was a way to maintain power and order. Built in a strategically important location in the central part of the Harima Plain—in fact there was a castle on the site since the early 1300s—the current Himeji Castle was started in 1601 and served as the centre of a feudal domain for almost three centuries.



Today it is one of 12 original castles throughout Japan. Himeji Castle is certainly in a league of its own, but all these castles exude their own charm, such as the much smaller Matsue Castle on the cover. Himeji Castle can be easily reached from Osaka or Kyoto as a day trip by train, and having completed a major restoration in 2015, it is looking its best!

www.himejicastle.jp/en/

Photos incl. cover © JNTO



Japanese castles—a living history

Knowing you are seeing an original castle does make for a special experience, but the very fact that a community made the effort to reconstruct a destroyed castle signals its importance as a landmark and source of historical pride. Moreover, some are rebuilt using data and methods faithful to the original and this can lead to truly magnificent results.

First completed in 1615, the **Hommaru Palace at Nagoya Castle** (left) was destroyed in 1945. Considered a masterpiece of the Edo Period, the palace and the castle's keeps were the first castle structures to be designated by Japan as a national treasure in 1930. Fortunately plans and early photos existed, and in 2018, the Hommaru Palace was authentically restored. The city now plans to rebuild the castle's tower keeps in wood.

www.nagoyajo.city.nagoya.jp/en/