

# Consul-General Kohara's activities

## Consular Cook-in at Our Big Kitchen

On 16 February, the Consul-General attended the Our Big Kitchen's Consular Cook-in. Together with other members of the consular corps, Dr Kohara prepared his national cuisine for a multicultural luncheon, held for the launch of a new website to allow all people to express their thanks to emergency services.



Her Excellency Prof. Marie Bashir, Governor of New South Wales, helps cut *makizushi*.

Participants and organisers on the 2011 program

## 2011 JENESYS Japan-Australia University Exchange Program

A reception was held at the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney hosted by the Consul-General to welcome 20 young Japanese university students to Sydney on 3 March. The students were participants in the two-week 2011 JENESYS Japan-Australia University Exchange Program which is coordinated in Australia by AFS. Professor David Wilmoth, an AFS board member, gave the official welcome, followed by Dr Kohara.

The participants went on to study in Sydney or Melbourne before meeting up again at the Australian National University in Canberra. For many of the students it was not their first time overseas but they hoped to gain different experiences as adults—several commented that were looking forward to gaining deeper understanding of cultural differences compared to that gained as high school students.

JENESYS is run by the Japanese government to further understanding among young people in Asia who are interested in strengthening future ties between Japan and other nations.



Photos of the Consul-General's recent activities can be found on our website:  
[www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/about\\_us/consul\\_generals\\_gallery.htm](http://www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/about_us/consul_generals_gallery.htm)

## Former Australian POWs visit Japan

Between 1 and 9 March, five former Australian servicemen who were held as prisoners of war by the Japanese during World War II were invited by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to visit Japan.

The former POWs had endured harsh treatment from their captors and were forced to work during the war at various places including the Changi POW camp, the Thai-Burma Railway and factories in Japan. Despite such appalling experiences, the five men were happy to return to Japan to demonstrate the goodwill and

friendship shared by the two countries today.

The visit featured an apology by former Foreign Minister Seiji Maehara on 3 March. The Minister apologised for the tremendous damage and suffering inflicted by Japan on many people during the war, including Australian POWs.

He presented the five men with copies of the individual records of their time as captives and announced that Japan would be releasing all such records to Australia. On behalf of the delegation, Dr Charles (Rowley) Richards from

Sydney, expressed deep appreciation for the invitation to Japan as a concrete way to express the feelings of apology by the Japanese Government and also noted how important the individual records would be to other former POWs like themselves. The POW delegation also presented Mr Maehara with a book by Dr Richards on his prisoner experience and Australian souvenirs.

The Minister expressed his hope that the visit would help the former POWs' reconciliation with Japan and that it would further enhance friendship between Japan and Australia.

For an announcement by the **Ministry of Foreign Affairs** on the meeting, please visit:  
[www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2011/3/0303\\_01.html](http://www.mofa.go.jp/announce/announce/2011/3/0303_01.html)

A report by the ABC's 7.30 on the visit can be found at: [www.abc.net.au/7.30/](http://www.abc.net.au/7.30/)