

International supermodel Naomi Campbell partakes in a Japanese tea ceremony

On 30 November, international supermodel Naomi Campbell visited the consul-general's residence and took part in a tea ceremony performed by Urasenke Tankokai in Sydney. It was a relaxed and tranquil atmosphere, and Naomi said that she would 'just like to go through the day like this'.



The early afternoon tea ceremony was held in honour of Naomi in recognition of the generous donation that her charity 'Fashion For Relief' made to support victims of the Great East Japan Earthquake and tsunami disaster. The donation of just over 191,000 pounds (approximately AUD339,000) was announced after the tea ceremony.

On behalf of the Government of Japan and the Japanese Red Cross, Acting Consul-General Toshiaki Kobayashi thanked Naomi for her generosity and kindness. He also said that he felt the tea ceremony was a very appropriate way to acknowledge the contribution of Naomi and those who work with her at Fashion For Relief because the tea ceremony and its principles

reflect important elements of Japanese culture.

Naomi spoke warmly of how she had always felt welcome in Japan, a country that had been important in her career.

The donation was passed on by the consulate to the Japanese Red Cross.

Naomi was in Sydney filming a TV series, and shooting schedules being what they are, the tea ceremony was confirmed very close to the event. Urasenke Tankokai did not miss a beat! The practice of many years was clearly evident and the tea ceremony unfolded with a remarkable sense of calm – the nature of tea.

Emperor's Birthday Reception

A reception to celebrate the birthday of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan was held on 3 December. Emperor Akihito turned 80 on 23 December 2013.



Deputy Premier Stoner at the lectern as Minister Hazzard and Acting Consul-General Kobayashi look on

More than 270 guests attended the reception including the Deputy Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Andrew Stoner MP, who gave a speech, and NSW Minister for Planning and Infrastructure, the Hon. Brad Hazzard MP, who proposed the toast.

In his welcoming speech, Acting Consul-General Toshiaki Kobayashi looked back over 2013 noting developments in a wide range of fields including politics, economics and culture. He thanked guests for their ongoing support of the Australia-Japan relationship.

鉄道 Japan Booth at AusRAIL PLUS 2013

From 26 to 28 November, members of the Australian railway industry gathered at the Sydney Convention Centre for AusRAIL PLUS 2013.

From Japan, four companies that have leading rail technologies, JR-Central, Mitsubishi Electric, Hitachi Australia and Toshiba International, together with JETRO Sydney and the consulate cooperated to organise a Japan booth for the event.

Many convention participants came to the booth to see the display about the highly safe and reliable Japanese *shinkansen* and to learn about the four companies' latest rail technologies.

Japanese Film Festival

The **17th Japanese Film Festival** was graced by the presence of veteran actress, Ms Kaoru Yachigusa, who attended the Australian



premiere of her film *Don't Lose Heart* together with the director, Mr Yoshihiro Fukagawa, on 23 November.

Acting Consul-General Kobayashi spoke earlier at the film festival's opening reception on 14 November.

Photos: Ken Chang