

## Congratulations to Nichigo Press

on receiving the Foreign Minister's Commendation for their contribution to Japan-Australia relations.

*Nichigo Press* is a free, monthly Japanese-language newspaper. Established in 1977, it is Australia's oldest continuing Japanese language newspaper.

It is a great way for the Japanese community to keep in touch and up-to-date. From write-ups of social events and profiles on people active in Japan-Australia relations to practical pieces explaining the implications of tax-law changes, *Nichigo Press* has made itself indispensable. In recent years, it has published English-language periodicals introducing Japan and its culture to the wider Australian community, and it has established an online presence.

Approached for comment, *Nichigo Press* expressed their gratitude for the honour and their desire to continue contributing to the Japan-Australia relationship.



## Ikebana—living flowers in Sydney

Ikebana has been warmly embraced around the world and Sydney is no exception. Consul-General Keizo Takewaka has had the pleasure of opening exhibitions by two different schools in recent months—Sogetsu (21 May) and Ohara (5 August).

The art of ikebana, Japanese floral arrangement, evolved over centuries, and by the 17th century, styles began to be codified into what became known as ikebana. With such a long history, it is hardly surprising that different approaches emerged. As the 19th turned into the 20th century,



During a workshop at the Sogetsu exhibition (left) and a demonstration piece at the Ohara opening

both the Ohara and Sogetsu schools had developed, and in Japan today there are many schools of ikebana.

In Sydney both schools are active in Ikebana International Sydney Chapter, and they hold annual exhibitions showcasing the efforts of Sogetsu and Ohara School members and students, also conducting workshops to further their knowledge and attract new members.

Many friendships have blossomed through a shared love of ikebana, and there are surely few more beautiful invitations to learn more about Japanese culture than a striking ikebana arrangement. Ikebana groups in Sydney are truly part of the strong people-to-people exchange between Japan and Australia, fostering understanding of Japanese culture and friendship between us.

Learn more about the different schools of ikebana at [www.ikebanahq.org/profile.php](http://www.ikebanahq.org/profile.php)

## Reception in honour of the Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG

On 28 June, a celebratory reception in honour of the Hon. Michael Kirby AC CMG, recipient of the Order of the Rising Sun, Gold and Silver Star and former Chair of the UN Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea (North Korea), was held at the Official Residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney.

Former Prime Minister of Australia, the Hon. John Howard OM AC was among the attendees who included leading members of the legal community and other spheres. The reception was an opportunity to celebrate Mr Kirby's achievement and contribution. Mr Kirby was conferred the award in May in Tokyo where he was also received in audience by His Majesty the Emperor of Japan.

