

JMSDF Training Squadron visits Sydney

For the first time in five years, the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force Training Squadron made a port of call in Sydney. The 2019 Overseas Training Cruise is composed of the *JS Kashima* and the *JS Inazuma*. Among the approximately 560 officers and crew on board are 190 newly commissioned officers who graduated from Maritime Officer Candidates School in the northern spring. The purpose of the Cruise is to develop the newly commissioned officers' seamanship through various trainings at sea, foster their international perspective and promote friendly relations with port call countries. The five-month course involves thirteen ports of call in eleven countries with the Training Squadron scheduled to return to Yokosuka, Japan, on 24 October.

On 13 September, a reception was held at Garden Island, Sydney, on board the *JS Kashima* hosted by Rear Admiral KAJIMOTO Daisuke, Commander of the Training Squadron. Around 180 people attended the event, including His Excellency the Ambassador of Japan in Australia, Mr TAKAHASHI Reiichiro. While in Sydney, members of the crew took part in a number of activities such as a joint training with the Royal Australian Navy, volunteer works in the city (Woollahra) and a joint naval band performance in Martin Place with the Royal Australian Navy. Officers also visited and laid wreaths at the Australian and Japanese War Cemeteries in Cowra and at the Australian War Memorial in Canberra.



JS Kashima (front) and *JS Inazuma*; dignitaries taking part in *kagami-biraki* (sake-barrel breaking) ceremony at the reception; officers at Cowra

The Art of Sake 2019



On 12 September, in collaboration with eight Japanese sake importers in Sydney, the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney and the Japan External Trade Organisation (JETRO), with the support of the Japan Foundation Sydney, held the ART OF SAKE 2019.

At the beginning of the event, there was a screening of the documentary film, *Kampai! For the Love of Sake*. Mr KUJI Kosuke, President of Nambu Bijin Brewery from Iwate prefecture, who appears in the film, joined the screening and warmly encouraged the audience to enjoy getting to know different sake.

In his opening remarks, Acting Consul-General MATSUO Hideaki explained that promoting Japanese products and culture is one way of supporting the disaster-affected areas in northern Japan (which were depicted in the movie) and it was an important part of the work of the Consulate-General. He also expressed his hope that the event would lead to further business opportunities and cultural exchange between Japan and Australia.

The event was followed by a Japanese sake tasting session where participants experienced a wide variety of Japanese sake offered by the importers based in Sydney.

Information about the sake exhibitors and their sake is available at:

www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/itpr_en/artofsake2019.html

In Japan, NIHONSHU or sake has long been an integral part of ritual and ceremony, celebrations and daily life. There are more than 1,000 sake breweries throughout Japan producing various sake, ranging from every-day to luxury sake. Recently, international sales are increasing and top-quality Japanese sake is highly regarded overseas.

At top restaurants in Australia today, sake is offered as another wine choice. This reflects the growing market for Japanese sake in Australia. **In 2018, more sake was imported from Japan than ever before**, and in fact, there was a 12.6% increase on the previous year.

