

Japan REPORTS

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

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A message from the new Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr KIYA Masahiko

Dear Readers,

I arrived in Sydney in early October and have been enjoying getting to know this beautiful city which has such a large and active Japanese community. I hope to travel widely in New South Wales to promote Japan-Australia relations and to learn more about this important state. I also look forward to visiting the Northern Territory with its distinct and strengthened ties.



The Japan-Australia relationship is described as a Special Strategic Partnership by our countries' leaders and there is no doubt that our ties are very strong across diverse areas. I am already aware that this strength is built on the great depth of friendship that we share and the dynamic people-to-people exchange between Japan and Australia.

The 2019 Rugby World Cup is in full swing as I arrive and Japan has been energised by the contest. More than 40,000 Australians will have travelled to Japan for the Cup. Sporting ties will play an even larger role next year when Tokyo will host the 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. I am sure there will be much friendly rivalry between Japan and Australia, particularly in the pool.

Finally, I would like to ask for your continued support to enhance exchange between Japan and Australia and to promote strong ties between us.

Kiya Masahiko

PROFILE

Mr KIYA Masahiko arrived in Sydney in early October to assume his current duties as Consul-General of Japan in Sydney. Mr Kiya is a career diplomat who entered the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MOFA) of Japan in 1987.

Prior to Sydney, Mr Kiya held several positions concurrently in Tokyo: Deputy Assistant Minister, African Affairs Department / Middle Eastern and African Affairs Bureau / International Cooperation Bureau (2017~), Ambassador for TICAD (Oct 2017~), Deputy Assistant Minister for Evidence-based Policy-making (April 2018~) and Ambassador for NGOs (Sept 2018~). His most recent overseas posting was as Ambassador of Japan to South Sudan (2015~2017).

Mr Kiya is a graduate of the University of Tokyo (Law) and earned a Master of Philosophy (International Relations) and a Master of Law at the University of Cambridge.

He has published works on international cooperation and peacebuilding.

New Foreign Minister

On 11 September, Prime Minister ABE Shinzo reshuffled his Cabinet to form the 4th Abe Cabinet.

As a result of the reshuffle, Mr MOTEGI Toshimitsu became the new Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan. The former foreign minister, Mr KONO Taro, is now the minister of defense.



Foreign Minister
Motegi Toshimitsu

Minister Motegi is a member of the Liberal Democratic Party of Japan (LDP). He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 1993 (Tochigi 5th Electoral District) and has been elected nine times consecutively. Prior to becoming a politician, Mr Motegi had experience working as a political journalist and a management consultant.

He has held various ministerial positions (including time as Senior Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs in 2002) as well as positions within the LDP. Before his current appointment as Minister for Foreign Affairs, he was Minister of State for Economic and Fiscal Policy, Minister in charge of Social Security Reform, and Minister in charge of TPP and Japan-U.S. Trade Negotiations.

The Minister's profile can be found at:

www.mofa.go.jp/about/hq/profile/motegi.html



On 26 September, Foreign Minister Motegi held a Japan-Australia-India-US Ministerial in New York with Mr Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State of the United States of America, Senator The Hon. Marise Payne, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Commonwealth of Australia and H.E. Dr S. Jaishankar, External Affairs Minister of India.

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

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Foreign Minister's Commendations

On 16 July 2019, the Japanese Ministry announced the recipients of the Foreign Minister's Commendations for FY 2019. Among the 206 individual recipients this year were New South Wales' residents Dr Misuzu Hanihara Chow, Cr Bruce Miller, Cr Bill West, and Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu.

Dr Misuzu Hanihara Chow

Former Academic Director and Head of the Department of Japanese Studies, Macquarie University — in recognition of her services to the promotion of Japanese language education in Australia.

The late Dr Chow's remarkable contribution was reflected upon by Professor Chihiro Thomson (UNSW), Chair of the NSW Japanese Speech Contest Steering Committee, at the 50th NSW Japanese Speech Contest held at Hunters Hill in Sydney on 15 September.

"Today many of us here are involved in Japanese language education in the state of NSW, and this is a most becoming occasion to honour the memory of Dr Chow.

"Dr Chow studied journalism at Waseda University in Tokyo, then received a Master's degree in journalism from the University of California, Berkeley. Her path to journalism somehow strayed as she settled in Sydney in 1972.

"Her dedication to Japanese language education started as she founded the Japanese program at Macquarie University in 1988 with the sponsorship of the Yasuda Fire & Marine Insurance Co. Ltd. and the City of Nagoya. She was a great advocate for Japanese language education to industry as she established a Corporate Traineeship program with leading Japanese companies and organisations, such as JAL, Mitsubishi Electric, and Kadokawa Publishing.

"Dr Chow secured funding from the Nippon Foundation and established the Macquarie Japanese Studies Centre in 1995. Many of us would know that the MJS Centre was the home for a number of NSW speech contests, which today's contest is built upon. The MJS Centre also played a pivotal role in training numerous Japanese language teachers in the state of NSW.

"Dr Chow had the keen foresight to develop computer assisted language learning programs. As early as the 1990s, Dr Chow led



the project which created *Kantaro interactive Kanji learning program I, II & III*, the first computer-assisted learning kanji software of its kind. She followed it up with *Gengoro*, interactive multimedia Japanese language learning software.

"She was also an author of two monographs, *The study of Japan in Australia: a unique development over eighty years* and *The Turning Point in US-Japan Relations: Hanihara's Cherry Blossom Diplomacy in 1920-30*. The latter is a story about Dr Chow's grandfather, Japanese Ambassador to the US, HANIHARA Masanao.

"It is evident that Dr Chow was one of the pioneers of NSW's Japanese language

education. For well over 30 years, she had endeavoured to develop the infrastructure of Japanese language education, but we also cannot forget her dedication to creating new opportunities for young Australians through the teaching of Japanese. She was a firm believer in education which can transform young students' futures. She often noticed hidden talents in her students and supported them to develop them.

"Dr Chow was rightfully awarded the Japanese Foreign Minister's Commendation, in recognition of her services to the promotion of Japanese language education in Australia ... a month before her passing.

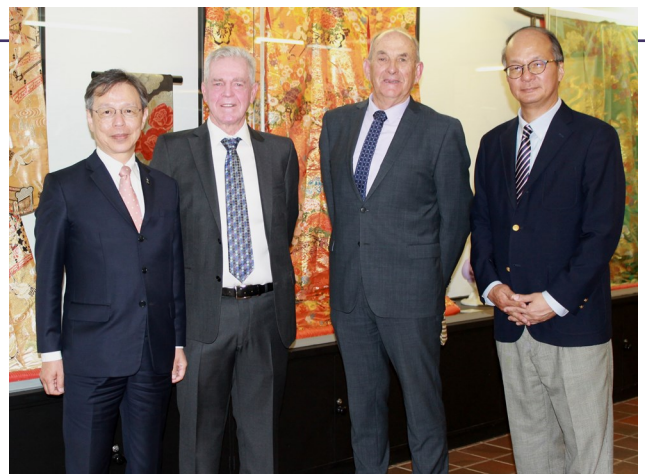
"Thank you, Chow-sensei, and please keep watching over us."

Acting Consul-General MATSUO Hideaki attended Dr Chow's funeral service and conferred the Foreign Minister's Commendation posthumously in the presence of her family, friends, former colleagues and students.

Foreign Minister's Commendation Presentation Ceremony in Cowra: Cr Bruce Miller and Cr Bill West

Cr Bill West, Mayor of Cowra Shire, and Cr Bruce Miller, former Mayor of Cowra Shire, were presented the Foreign Minister's Commendations by His Excellency the Ambassador, Mr TAKAHASHI Reiichiro, together with Acting Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr MATSUO Hideaki, on 28 September 2019

Cr Miller and Cr West were recognised individually for their promotion of mutual understanding between Japan and Australia. Both have played key roles in the friendship between Japan and the people of Cowra and Australia.



Acting Consul-General Matsuo, Cr Miller, Cr West and HE Ambassador Takahashi [left to right]

Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu, conductor, is being recognised for his services to the promotion of cultural exchange through music between Japan and Australia, and the conferral will take place at a later date.

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.



JETAA 2019 Oceania Regional Conference

From 4 to 6 October, the JETAA 2019 Oceania Regional Conference was held in Sydney. JETAA is the alumni association for former participants on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. Members from JETAA chapters in Oceania (Australia and New Zealand) and Singapore met to discuss the management and future direction of JETAA.

The JET Programme Alumni Association (JETAA) was created in 1989 to strengthen and maintain the bonds of friendship developed between JET Programme participants. The purpose of JETAA is to promote through its activities a broader and deeper understanding between Japan and the countries participating on the JET Programme. JETAA is a self-supporting alumni association and currently has 52 regional chapters located in 18 countries/regions encompassing approximately 22,000 members.

The theme of the 2019 Oceania Regional Conference was *2020 Vision—Looking Clearly to the Future*, held at the Japan Foundation, Sydney, which generously provided the venue. Presentations were given by each chapter and topics included supporting returnees' career development, using networks, contributing to exchange and international understanding between Japan and home countries, as well as how to remain relevant in the era of social media and the constantly changing internet, and how to keep regional members involved and included. Given the area that many of the Australian and New Zealand chapters cover, this last point is an important albeit challenging consideration.



On the opening night of the conference, a reception to welcome the delegates was held by the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney, hosted by Acting Consul-General MATSUO Hideaki. Joining the JETAA representatives were supporters of the JET Programme, including academics from NSW universities and representatives from Japanese government organisations based in Sydney. The reception was honoured by the attendance of Mr Geoff Provest MP, representing the Acting Minister for Multiculturalism in NSW.

Conference delegates with Ms Ashlie O'Neill, President of JETAA NSW [front, 4th from left], Acting Consul-General Matsuo [front, 5th from left], Mr Geoff Provest MP [front, 5th from right], and Mr ISOBE Hiroaki from CLAIR Tokyo [front, 4th from right].

More than 7,800 Aussies and Kiwis have been on JET since 1987.

In 2019, there are 5,761 participants from 57 countries, and since its creation more than 70,000 participants from 75 countries have taken part in the JET Programme. In Australia and New Zealand alone, the number of former participants is more than 7,800. That represents a sizeable network of people to foster understanding between Japan and Australia and New Zealand.

JETAA is not just about former participants. Committee members of JETAA chapters help to promote the future of the JET Programme in practical ways, working with local diplomatic missions to give presentations about life on JET and helping with the selection process of prospective JET participants. JETAA chapters, such as JETAA NSW, also forge ties with other Japan-related groups in their area holding a range of social events to create even broader networks.

So what is the **JET** Programme? The **J**apan **E**xchange and **T**eaching Programme is a Japanese Government-run program which aims to foster internationalisation within Japan and improve foreign language education (largely English) while also promoting international understanding between Japan and JET participants' home countries. The JET Programme has been running since 1987 and has grown to be one of the largest international exchange programs around the world. Australia was one of the four original participating countries.

There are two main positions: **ALTs**—Assistant Language Teachers and **CIRs**—Coordinators for International Relations.

Learn more at:

www.jetprogramme.org



Matsuri in Sydney returns to

**Tumbalong Park, Darling Harbour,
Saturday 7 December, 11.30am-7.30pm**

A great way to experience the fun of a Japanese festival in Sydney.

Last year, around 40,000 people came to enjoy fantastic stage performances, workshops, demonstrations and food. A great line-up is planned for this year.

Learn more at: matsurisydney.com

A spring flowering of festivals—

Matsuri in Chatswood, Strathfield Spring Festival and Cowra Sakura Matsuri

The sound of Japanese drums by **Wadaiko Rindo Sydney** got things off to a dynamic start at **Strathfield Spring Festival** on Saturday 7 September, and later that afternoon, **Soran Odoritai** surprised some in the audience by how energetic Japanese dance can be. The two groups were proudly presented by the Consulate-General of Japan, Sydney as part of our efforts to introduce Japanese culture at local community festivals.

There was a great turnout at **Matsuri Japan Festival in Chatswood** on 14 September organised by Japan Club of Sydney as part of Willoughby Council's Emerge Festival. And there was also a fantastic turnout this year at the **Cowra Sakura Matsuri Family Fun Day** on 28 September in their beautiful Japanese gardens. Many travel quite a distance to Cowra for the event including those giving performances and workshops, including the Aikido group from Senshu University in Japan.



**Sydney, it's not long now!
Japanese Film Festival 2019
coming to
Event Cinemas George Street
14 – 24 November**

<https://japanesefilmfestival.net/>

SCHOOL VISITS

The school visit team was delighted to be able to give calligraphy workshops and presentations at six schools in the Greater Sydney: **North Sydney Girls' High School** and **International Grammar School** (2 Aug.), **St Columba's Catholic College** (16 Aug.), **St Charbel's College** (28 Aug.), **Greystanes High School** (16 Sep.) and **St Monica's Catholic Primary School** in Windsor (26 Sept.).

The team is always impressed by the can-do attitude of so many students and the natural feel that some students have from the outset when they pick up the brush!

Schools in New South Wales* are invited to apply for our 2019 program (Term 4).

*Schools in regional areas are welcome to apply for visits, however, we may not be able to meet all requests.



There really are some great first efforts!



Get ready for **Japan supernatural** 2 November 2019—8 March 2020 Art Gallery of New South Wales

The chills of terror that a good ghost story brings are thought to help you feel cooler in the summer heat—so they say in Japan. How timely as the AGNSW is preparing to welcome its major summer exhibition *Japan supernatural*. Drawing on its own collection and with loans from major international galleries, the exhibition will allow you to explore tales of ghosts, spectres, imps and all kinds of magical beasts. From masters of ukiyo-e such as Hokusai to contemporary-art superstar MURAKAMI Takashi, there will be more than 180 works to see (some fragile works on paper will be swapped over due to light sensitivity). Check the website for ticketing and event details.

www.artgallery.nsw.gov.au/exhibitions/supernatural/

IMAGE **UTAGAWA Kuniyoshi** *Mitsukuni defies the skeleton spectre conjured up by Princess Takiyasha* 1845—1846
woodblock triptych print | triptych 36.9 x 74.2 cm | Donated by American Friends of the British Museum from the collection of Prof Arthur R Miller



Marking mini-milestones—the Shichi-go-san festival

Seven-five-three. These small numbers have big significance for families in Japan. Shichi-go-san (七五三), literally 7-5-3, falls on 15 November. It is a festival to give thanks for the health and happiness of young children.

Shichi-go-san has a long history stretching back to customs from the Heian Period (794-1185). Modern families might struggle to explain these customs, which were rituals children went through before they reached seven years of age, the age at which they were fully accepted into the community as an *ujiko* (member) of their local shrine. In earlier times, when child mortality was high, it was thought children needed divine protection to guard against bad luck at certain ages. During medieval times, Shichi-go-san was observed by aristocratic and samurai families, but in the Edo Period (1603-1867) it became widespread throughout society.

The wish for healthy and happy children is eternal and today many families still mark the occasion.

In most regions of Japan today, boys and girls aged three, boys aged five and girls aged seven visit a Shinto shrine with their parents for Shichi-go-san. Many children are dressed in kimono and are fussed over. For some there's a visit to a photo studio (which often includes kimono hire in the package) to record the event. Special 'thousand-year' sweets called *chitose-ame* are given to the children.

It's not a public holiday, so if you are in Japan over the weekend around 15 November, you may well be lucky enough to see families visiting shrines with beautifully dressed children, who are probably most interested in *chitose-ame*!

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Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan

Japan's latest UNESCO World Heritage Site

The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan is Japan's latest inscription on the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) World Heritage List. The name of the site does not roll off the tongue or stick in the memory very easily, but one look at an image of the impressive Nintoku Mausoleum (below) and you can see that there is something special going on. Just as its shape suggests, the site is a key to understanding the past—a past considered to be of universal significance and part of not just Japan's but the world's heritage.

Japan is fortunate to be the custodian of 19 cultural world heritage sites and four natural sites. These sites are a precious source of knowledge for all people.



The largest kofun in Japan is the Nintoku Mausoleum in Sakai City and is 486 metres long. It is thought to be the tomb of Emperor Nintoku (5th century). If you were unaware of its existence, at ground level it would be easy enough to walk past it and perhaps think how nice it is to have green space in the urban environment.

The newly listed site comprises two major clusters of mounded tombs in the south of Osaka Prefecture. Kofun (古墳) means 'old burial mound' and are large and distinctive shapes. There are 160,000 burial mounds throughout Japan, so what makes the Mozu-Furuichi clusters of kofun special?

The Kofun period in Japan is considered to include the 3rd to 6th centuries. The country did not yet have a centralised state (which it would in time develop under the influence of the Chinese system of law after the Taika Reforms of 646). With the introduction of Buddhism from the mid-6th century, members of the elite increasingly chose to build temples for posterity rather than tombs and the building of kofun mound tombs gradually ceased during the 7th century.

The Mozu-Furuichi kofun groups represent the middle kofun period, the late 4th to 5th centuries, considered to be the peak of the Kofun period, and the Mozu-Furuichi kofun groups—the structures and grave goods—are an expression of kingly power. They *demonstrate the period's socio-political structures, social class differences and sophisticated funerary system* as the UNESCO inscription reads.

The sites have remained largely intact despite being in a highly urbanised environment; Osaka is after all a major population centre in Japan. This continuous preservation suggests how important the sites are culturally. When it comes to the preservation of the tombs, the fact that some such as the Nintoku Mausoleum (part of the Mozu cluster) are the burial sites of former emperors means that the sites are managed by several different groups: the Imperial Household Agency as well as Prefectural and City Governments.

While aerial photos can provide a tantalising hint of past times, new technology is also being employed to give visitors a better appreciation of the tombs. At the Sakai City Museum, it is possible to have a virtual reality (VR) tour of the Mozu tomb cluster from above, see a recreation of a tomb as it was when first built and then 'step inside' the stone chamber that lies within the burial mound—all created some 1,600 years ago!

PHOTO CREDITS: left © Sakai City / © JNTO; right © JNTO

FURTHER INFORMATION

UNESCO description of the The Mozu-Furuichi Kofun Group: Mounded Tombs of Ancient Japan

whc.unesco.org/en/list/1593/

Sakai City Museum VR tour

<https://www.sakai-tcb.or.jp/en/spot/detail/447>