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

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A street on the island of Taketomi,
one of the beautiful islands in Okinawa

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The Enthronement Ceremony of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan

On 22 October 2019, the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor of Japan was held at the Imperial Palace in Tokyo.



His Majesty the Emperor delivering the Imperial Address at the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor at the Seiden (State Hall)

His Majesty the Emperor of Japan succeeded to the Imperial Throne in accordance with the Constitution of Japan and the Special Measures Law on the Imperial House Law on 1 May 2019, after the abdication of his father, the current Emperor Emeritus, on the previous day. On 22 October, His Majesty performed the Ceremony of Enthronement at the Seiden (State Hall) and proclaimed His Enthronement to those at home and abroad.

His Majesty the Emperor's proclamation read in part as follows:

I deeply reflect anew that for more than 30 years on the Throne, His Majesty the Emperor Emeritus constantly prayed for the happiness of the people and world peace, always sharing in the joys and sorrows of the people, and showing compassion through his own bearing. I pledge hereby that I shall act according to the Constitution and fulfill my responsibility as the symbol of the State and of the unity of the people of Japan, while always wishing for the happiness of the people and the peace of the world, turning my thoughts to the people and standing by them.

I sincerely hope that our country, through our people's wisdom and unceasing efforts, achieves further development and contributes to the friendship and peace of the international community and the welfare and prosperity of humankind.

Among the international dignitaries participating in the Ceremony of the Enthronement of His Majesty the Emperor at the Seiden, Their Excellencies General the Honourable David Hurley AC DSC (Retd) and Mrs Linda Hurley attended from Australia.

In the evening, a court banquet to celebrate the Enthronement was hosted by His Majesty the Emperor at the Imperial Palace, and the Governor-General and Mrs Hurley were among the honoured guests.

PHOTO: Courtesy of the Imperial Household Agency

Consul-General Kiya meets the Premier of NSW



Consul-General Kiya Masahiko paid a courtesy call on the Premier of New South Wales, the Hon. Gladys Berejiklian MP, on 23 January 2020. Western Sydney development was among the many topics discussed. The Consul-General also expressed his heartfelt sympathies for the victims of the bushfires on behalf of the people and Government of Japan.

Consul-General Kiya visits Darwin

Soon after assuming his post as Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Consul-General Kiya Masahiko visited Darwin from 17 to 19 November 2019.

As his first official visit, Consul-General Kiya paid courtesy calls on Her Honour the Hon. Vicki O'Halloran AO, Administrator of the Northern Territory (pictured below), the Hon. Michael Gunner MLA, Chief Minister of the NT, and The Right Worshipful the Lord Mayor Mr Kon Vatskalis, Lord Mayor of Darwin. They exchanged views about working to further strengthen NT-Japan ties.

The Consul-General also met with members of the local Japanese community, including with Australian-Japanese Association of the NT (AJANT).

Consul-General Kiya would like to do all he can to build on the outcomes of Prime Minister Abe's visit to Darwin in November 2018 and increase the momentum of the ever developing ties between Japan and the NT.

* The Consul-General wrote about his visit to Darwin in his No.3 newsletter (see below right).



Consul-General Kiya visits New Caledonia



From 5 to 7 January 2020, Consul-General Kiya paid his first official visit to New Caledonia. As the closest Japanese mission, it is this consulate's responsibility to provide consular services (e.g. issuing passports).

During his visit, he met with government officials as well as members of the local Japanese expatriate community and New Caledonia-Japan friendship group.

The Consul-General writes about the Japanese presence—historical and present day—in his latest newsletter which is available online. See below for details.

Laying flowers at the Japanese cemetery.

From left: 3rd, Mrs Rosemary Take, President of New Caledonia Japan Friendship Association; 4th, Consul-General Kiya; 5th, Mrs Marie-José Michel, Honorary Consul of Japan in New Caledonia; 7th, Mr Takahashi Masahiko, President of Japanese Society

Sister-cities visits

Soon after his arrival in Sydney, Consul-General Kiya had the opportunity to attend several events at cities and local governments that have sister-cities with places in Japan. He was able to participate in anniversary events where he particularly felt the importance of sister-city relationships.

On 12 November, the Consul-General visited Goulburn (Goulburn Mulwaree Council) to attend the Mayoral Civic Reception to celebrate the 20th anniversary of the Sister City arrangement between Goulburn and Shibetsu City in Hokkaido. On 23 and 24 November 2019, he attended the 30th Anniversary Events of the Dubbo Regional Council—Minokamo City.

In both Goulburn and Dubbo, Japanese gardens are making beautiful and tangible contributions to the ties between the sister-city partners. In Dubbo, there is Shoyoen Garden, and in Goulburn, 'Shibetsu Garden' is being built within Victoria Park.



Dubbo



Goulburn

The Consul-General has also met with the mayor of Liverpool City Council, which is sister-city with Toda in Saitama Prefecture, and with the mayor of Georges River, which is sister-city with Shirosi in Miyagi Prefecture. When visiting Port Stephens for a FootGolf championship, he met with the deputy mayor—Port Stephens has two sister-cities in Japan, Yugawara in Kanagawa Prefecture and Tateyama in Chiba Prefecture.

You can learn more about the anniversary events and the cities' sister-city programs in the Consul-General's no.4 newsletter.

Consul-General Kiya's newsletter

Consul-General Kiya writes a fortnightly online newsletter. The purpose of the e-newsletter is to introduce various activities he engages in as Consul-General and to share some of his thoughts and feelings as he goes about his duties.

He hopes that through these newsletters more people will learn about the multi-faceted connections between Australia and Japan.

To date, he has written on the following topics:

- No.7 **New Caledonia and Japan** (January 24, 2020)
- No.6 **Western Sydney Development** (January 10, 2020)
- No.5 **Japanese Cultural Festivals** (December 20, 2019)
- No.4 **Sister City Relationships** (December 13, 2019)
- No.3 **Darwin and Japan** (November 29, 2019)
- No.2 **Presenting Japanese Art in Sydney** (November 15, 2019)
- No.1 **Japanese Community in Sydney** (November 1, 2019)

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



Western Sydney Development Symposium inviting MoU partners (16 Dec 2019) was discussed in the Consul-General's newsletter no.6.

Mrs Roslynn Bracher AM receives Imperial Decoration

On 5 December 2019, Consul-General Kiya hosted a dinner at his official residence in honour of Mrs Roslynn Bracher, who was named by the Government of Japan on 21 May 2019 as a recipient of the 2019 Spring Imperial Decorations. Mrs Bracher was presented the award at the dinner.



Mrs Roslynn Bracher AM holding the certificate of conferment with Consul-General Kiya. Also present at the dinner were members of her family and Mrs Kiya.

Mrs Bracher is a former Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Darwin and a member of the Darwin-based Paspaley family. She was awarded The Order of the Rising Sun, Gold Rays with Neck Ribbon, in recognition of her contributions to the promotion of Japan-Australia relations and friendship.

Mrs Roslynn Bracher was appointed Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Darwin in April 2002 and held the position for ten years until April 2012.

During the decade she held the position, Mrs Bracher greatly contributed to promoting strong relations between Japan and the Northern Territory, fostering friendship between the people of Japan and Australia. Having worked for a major pearling company which has been closely associated with Japan since the early 1950s, Mrs Bracher drew on her years of experience in business with Japan and knowledge gained from numerous visits to Japan on both business and personal occasions.

In 2008, Mrs Bracher was appointed as a Member in the General Division of the Order of Australia in part for service to the promotion of cultural relations with Japan.

Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu receives Foreign Minister's Commendation

Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu, conductor, received a 2019 Foreign Minister's Commendation in recognition for his services to the promotion of cultural exchange through music between Japan and Australia.

Rather appropriately, the conferral took place on stage.

Consul-General Kiya presented the commendation to Dr Muramatsu on 7 December 2019 on stage at the Matsuri Japan Festival in Sydney.

He was there to do what he does best—conduct.

Dr Muramatsu conducts several orchestras in Sydney including Strathfield Symphony Orchestra as well as Sydney Sakura Choir. He is a talented conductor and contributes to mutual understanding between both countries. On the day of the Matsuri, he was conducting the choir which regularly performs at Japan-related events including the Cherry Blossom Festival in Cowra.



Dr Sadaharu Muramatsu (right) holding the certificate of conferment with Consul-General Kiya. The presentation took place on stage at Matsuri Japan Festival in Sydney.

The Foreign Minister's Commendations are awarded to individuals and groups with outstanding achievements in international fields, in order to acknowledge their contributions to the promotion of friendship between Japan and other countries and areas.

The Commendations also aim to promote the understanding and support of the Japanese public for the activities of the recipients.

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

Facebook: CGJSYD www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp

Consul-General Kiya's official Twitter account—www.twitter.com/CGJapanSydney

Many Australians choose to travel to Japan during cherry blossom season, but did you know that there's a part of Japan where the cherries are at their best from mid-January to mid-February? Where?

Japan's most southerly prefecture, Okinawa, is a 1,200km chain of islands that stretches from the bottom of Kyushu down in a westward arc towards Taiwan and the Asian continent. It is in this subtropical environment that Japan's earliest cherry blossoms bloom against mild winter skies.

Beautiful balmy islands with white beaches set off by glorious blue or emerald seas have made Okinawa a popular holiday destination for Japanese domestic tourists. It is not just the environment that makes it so attractive to visit. The pace of life is more relaxed, and thanks to its location and history, Okinawa enjoys a distinctive culture still evident in everyday life.

Ryukyu Kingdom

The Okinawan islands were the domain of the Ryukyu Kingdom for several centuries until it was formally annexed by Japan as a prefecture in 1879. From the late 1100s, smaller provinces were consolidated and by 1429 the main island of Okinawa was under the rule of one king.

The Ryukyu area prospered as a trading nation, trading between China (with which it had a tributary relationship since 1372), Japan and other south-east Asian countries. It dealt in swords and copper from Japan, raw silk, silk textiles and ceramics from China, and pepper, sappanwood, turmeric, sugar and other commodities from south-east Asia. From 1609 it came under the control of the Satsuma lord from Kyushu but the kingdom

maintained its independence so that the trade from the tributary relationship with China could continue.

With trade ties came cultural ties

There are several examples of the back-and-forth of cultural exchange. *Bingata* is a type of Okinawan dyeing method and its textile was worn by the royal and warrior classes on formal occasions during the Ryukyu period. Still manufactured today, the textile is thought to have its origins in Indian, Javanese and Chinese dyeing designs. The Okinawan instrument called the *sanshin*, a three stringed lute, was based on a Chinese instrument; the *sanshin* or *jamisen* spread to mainland Japan and became the basis of today's *shamisen*. Probably Okinawa's best know cultural export is *karate*—said to be a mix of Chinese kung-fu and local Okinawan techniques.

The Ryukyu era and its distinctive culture and history are today recognised internationally. The 'Gusuku sites and related Properties of the Kingdom of Ryukyu' are inscribed as UNESCO World Heritage sites. Part of the Shuri-jo Castle, an element of the Gusuku sites, was destroyed last year by

fire, but will be rebuilt and 80% of the surrounds are already open. In fact, the UNESCO inscription includes nine sites and ruins located around Okinawa ... and one of them, Nakijin Gusuku, is well-known for its cherry blossom festival!



Shureimon Gate at World Heritage listed Shuri Castle in Naha, the capital of Okinawa



A touch of Okinawa in Sydney

On 10 November 2019, Okinawa Soul Festival took place to a sold-out crowd. Okinawa's famous Eisa dance [left] was among the performances the audience could enjoy.

Consul-General Kiya attended and afterwards observed:

As understanding of Japanese culture in Australia is deepening, events such as this increase the appreciation of Japan's various regional identities.

The organizer of the festival was the Sydney Okinawan Club (シドニー沖縄県人会) with participation from Perth and Okinawa. There is even a group called "Sanshin Sydney" which seeks to spread Okinawa's unique music culture for Australians to enjoy!

Seikatsu Kogei: Objects for Intentional Living

This exhibition will present some 50 works by 22 active Seikatsu Kogei artists—for the first time in Australia. Seikatsu Kogei is the Japanese craft movement that began in the 1990s and can be translated as "lifestyle crafts".

The objects on display are made from a variety of materials, including wood, ceramics, lacquer, glass, metal, bamboo, paper and clay.

The Japan Foundation Sydney Gallery

21 February to 23 May 2020



Essay Contest Awards Ceremony

The awards ceremony for the **6th Australia-Japan Relations Essay Contest for Secondary School Students in NSW and the NT** was held at the official residence of the Consul-General of Japan in Sydney, Mr Kiya Masahiko, on Wednesday 4 December 2019.

Some 80 guests attended the reception which was an opportunity to celebrate the achievements of the prize-winning students. Guests included parents, teachers, principals, NSW Education Department representatives and contest supporters. They heard speeches from the first-prize winners - **Ms Bella Lim (North Sydney Girls' High School)**, in the Junior Division, and **Ms Chloe Hoang (Pymble Ladies' College)**, in the Senior Division. School of the Year was awarded to **North Sydney Girls' High School** whose students excelled in the Junior Division.



Prize-winning students with the Consul-General and several sponsors

Congratulations to all the prize winners and a heartfelt **thank you** to all who support the contest. They include our remarkable pre-readers and judges, and our wonderful sponsors **Japan Airlines, JTB Australia, Kinokuniya Bookstores** and **Tokyo Mart**.

For the full results, see - www.sydney.au.emb-japan.go.jp/english/education/essay_contest_2019_results.htm

SCHOOL VISITS

The Consulate's school visit team travelled to several schools in Term 4 2019 to give calligraphy workshops and a presentation. At **The King's School** (31 Oct.), Years 9 and 10 geography students had many interesting questions. At **St Georges Girls High School** (19 Nov.), year 9 students did some great work in their calligraphy workshop as part of their Japanese studies. The Years 7 and 8 at **International Grammar School** (25 Nov.) also put in a great effort; the workshop was the last session of their Japan day—they had also done a *furoshiki* wrapping workshop at the Japan Foundation.

Schools in New South Wales* are invited to apply for our 2020 program (Terms 1 & 2).

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

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



Matsuri in Sydney

Matsuri Japan Festival in Sydney was another great success at Tumbalong Park in Darling Harbour on 7 December 2019.



The Consulate had a presence at the festival, distributing free *Niponica* magazines introducing various aspects of Japan. We also conducted a calligraphy workshop and were grateful for the assistance of many volunteers.

The turnout for Matsuri was still strong despite the smoke haze on the day. It was a warm day but that didn't stop many people dressing up for cosplay. What was terrific to see was the number of people interested in travelling to regional Japan with steady lines at the stalls giving out information about various parts of Japan.

Congratulations to the organisers of Matsuri Japan Festival in Sydney on a fantastic effort. Here's looking forward to the 2020 Matsuri!

matsurisdney.com

Japan's bean-throwing festival —

Throwing food around is normally frowned upon, but at the Setsubun festival, held annually on 3 or 4 February, throwing beans about is positively encouraged!

Winters can be tough in Japan, and the coming of spring has always been eagerly anticipated. Spring's arrival means winter's cold and icy grip on the land is a memory for another year.

One way to observe this transition is the custom of Setsubun. Setsubun actually means 'seasonal division', but today the term is only used to mark the end of the period known as *daikan* or 'big cold'. This is the eve of Risshun, the 'first day of spring'.

JET PROGRAMME

Jessica is a recent returnee of the JET Programme. She worked as an ALT (Assistant Language Teacher) in Akita City from 2017 - 2019 and is now managing the JET Desk at the Consulate-General of Japan in Sydney. She shares her experiences with us.

泣ぐ子はいねが？ Are there any crybabies around?

Welcome to Akita Prefecture's catchphrase. This infamous quote is said by the prefecture's mascot: **Namahage**, a demon-like ogre that comes down from the mountains in winter to look for lazy or disobedient children.



Before I went on my placement, I knew nothing about Akita. Now, after two years of living and working there, I proudly consider Akita as my home-away-from-home.

In my day-to-day life, I primarily taught English at one junior high school with about 540 students. My students were the best thing about being an ALT. Whenever they saw me, be it in their class, the neighbouring class or walking down the hallways, they always greeted me so enthusiastically.

After school, I would visit the various school clubs on offer (everything from baton twirling to volleyball) and the students were eager to teach me, no matter how terrible I was, and talk.

I even joined my school in the prefecture's most famous event: Kanto festival. For four nights in summer, hundreds of lanterns adorning bamboo poles up to 12m tall and 50kg heavy are lifted into the air to the festive sounds of flutes, thunderous taiko drums, and the crowd cheering "**Dokkoisho, Dokkoisho!**"



Dressed in traditional **happi** emblazoned with my school's emblem, I played taiko on the back of a truck with my students. The energy on that night, especially as a performer, was absolutely indescribable.

Outside of school, I also joined a local Kyudo club. **Kyudo** is the martial arts practice of traditional Japanese archery. During



break time we would all sit down on the tatami mats, drink tea, munch on weird and wonderful Japanese snacks, and talk. My Kyudo club made such an impact on me that I even joined the **Sydney Kyudo Kai** club when I returned to Australia.

I had too many amazing and unique experiences on JET to list here, but I can honestly say that **it was the best two years of my life!** Now, managing the JET Desk, I get to help others experience their own JET journeys.

Visit jetprogramme.org/en/ or contact the **JET Desk** on (02) 9250 1000 to learn more!

spring is on its way!

The Setsubun ceremony involves people scattering (rather than throwing) beans, a practice called **mamemaki**, to get rid of evil or bad luck.

While scattering the beans, normally soybeans, you say **Oni wa soto, fuku wa uchi**, literally 'Out with the devils (*oni* 鬼), in with good fortune (*fuku* 福)'. **Mamemaki** was commonly done inside and outside a home or building. In a family, one person is normally made to wear a devil mask and becomes the *oni*, and the others, especially the children, have fun throwing beans at the *oni* to drive evil out. Crowds of people also gather at temples or shrines where celebrities are sometimes asked to perform **mamemaki**.

Another custom at Setsubun is to eat the same number of beans as your age plus one to ensure good health for the year ahead.

鬼は外、福は内



A devil mask and lucky beans (**fukumame**)

Discover Tokyo in 2020

With the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games around the corner, Japan's capital will be in the spotlight.

The scale of Tokyo might seem intimidating to a first-time traveller, but it is very easy to get around the city. Thanks to its extensive and efficient transport system, visitors can access all places of interest without too much of a walk. In fact, walking is one of the best ways to get a feel for Tokyo. Tokyo is a patchwork of neighbourhoods, each with its own atmosphere. Many Australians have already visited Tokyo, but there is no shortage of areas to explore and there will always be something new to discover.

Tokyo is one of those remarkable places that seem to be forever renewing. Novel architecture makes its mark on the city, but often with a nod to the past or a traditional technique. Since 2017, one

corner of the famous Ginza 4-chome crossing [photo a] has a building whose façade was inspired by *sukashibori*, a type of traditional latticework. One of Tokyo's most fascinating characteristics is the way that the old and new co-exist.

The massive stone walls of the Imperial Palace in central Tokyo make for an intriguing contrast with the modern office blocks across the parkland of pine trees [photo b]. Japanese gardens such as Hamarikyū or Shinjuku-gyoen provide similar contrasts and are oases of calm green. If you want to take a break and get back to nature, mountain and forest walks are a short train trip away from central Tokyo. Further afield, but still within Tokyo's 'city limits', the 11 inhabited 'Islands of Tokyo' include tropical beaches and the UNESCO World Heritage listed Ogasawara Islands, which are more than 1,000km from central Tokyo.

While we are measuring distances—Nihonbashi, which lies in the centre of Tokyo, was the commercial heart of Edo-period Tokyo [1603-1867]. During that time, all five major roads of Japan began at Nihonbashi [photo c]. Distances from Tokyo are still measured from this point. Today the location of the original Nihonbashi bridge is under two elevated highways. You get a sense of the layering of history as you stand on today's somewhat overshadowed Nihonbashi bridge, then walk down the main street lined with major department stores and impressive buildings, and turn off to explore narrow back streets, where you will find specialty restaurants and small traditional shops—some have been in business for several centuries.

Whether it's eating, shopping, art, history, or entertaining the kids, Tokyo makes for a great holiday destination. The difficulty is choosing what to do each day!

A great source for ideas and information to help you get the most out of your trip is [Go Tokyo: The Official Tokyo Travel Guide](http://www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html).

The website has area guides and a really useful walks-and-tours section.

www.gotokyo.org/en/index.html

PHOTOS © Tokyo Convention & Visitors Bureau

Olympics 24 Jul - 9 Aug ~ TOKYO 2020 ~ Paralympics 25 Aug - 6 Sep

A total of 33 Olympic Sports and 22 Paralympic Sports will be contested at the Tokyo 2020 Games. This year will be the second time for Tokyo to host the Summer Olympiad. In the lead-up to the Games, the organisers are using a range of international events to help test preparations. Some events are special READY, STEADY, TOKYO events; others are events that are part of the international sporting calendar.

The Tokyo Marathon 2020 will be held on 1 March and be the final qualifying opportunity for Japanese marathon athletes. A 10km race is also run as part of the event, as well as the wheelchair marathon and wheelchair 10km.

