



## President's message

Dear AJS-NSW members and supporters,

**Welcome to a new year!** The Society is planning for 2013 to be bigger than last year – including a bigger and broader range of events for business, social and cultural activities and an expanded membership.



The **business events** will again be focused on topical and current issues of importance and relevance to Australia and Japan and will continue to be delivered by experts in their field who can bring a great range of perspectives to their presentation.

The **cultural and social events**, such as the ever-popular *Shaberanaito* and *sumo experience*, will again be scheduled, complemented by some new social events to bring members and their families and friends together.

An events schedule for 2013 is taking shape and will be placed on the Society's website, with invitations for each event being sent to you approximately 3-4 weeks before each event. Keep reading below to see some information on our events coming up in the next couple of months.

Whenever you have time, it is worth a look at the Society's website [www.ajsnsw.org.au](http://www.ajsnsw.org.au). As well as information on upcoming events, it provides a summary and photos from previous events and news of general interest to members.

The fee to attend each event is kept as low as possible and aims to cover the costs of catering and any associated event costs. Each event has a fee for members, and a fee for guests and non-members. Our **corporate members** are able to register up to 10 people to attend each event at the member rate, a very attractive option for our corporate members.

We are looking to grow our membership in 2013 through offering new and expanded services. Over the last year the Society has expanded its support and sponsorship of **university Japanese language awards** with the aim to support the study of the Japanese language in Australia, recognise high performing students and better connect with prospective members in the universities.

If you are aware of anyone who you think may benefit from becoming a member, please encourage them to find out more from our website. The members of the Board of the Society cover a range of ages and walks of life and are happy to speak with prospective members about the activities of the Society.

Our first 2 events for the year will be a Japanese-speaking *Shaberanaito*, a great fun-filled social event to be held in late February, then a business event planned for early March. Watch out for the email invitation shortly.

We are always interested in feedback from members about possible events and activities, or your Society in general. If you

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have any suggestions we would be delighted to hear from you. Please send any suggestions to [info@ajsnsw.org.au](mailto:info@ajsnsw.org.au) or call on (02) 8078 4110.

I join with the entire Board of the Society, all of whom provide their time and services to the Society on a voluntary basis, in looking forward to catching up with our members, supporters, friends and family in the various activities of the Society this year.

Best wishes for 2013. 🍀

**Philip Mitchell, President AJS-NSW**

## Member update

Each edition of *Tomodachi*, the AJS-NSW Board of Directors likes to welcome new members on behalf of the Society.

**Welcome and new and recently-renewed members!**

The Society welcomes new members **Ka Sim Lee, Stephanie Beames, Nada Tasic, Alexander Veneziano, and Timothy Griffiths** with *Lander and Rogers* law firm corporate membership.

And thanks **Manly Council, Thomas O'Keefe and Nichigo Press** for recently renewing their individual and corporate memberships. We look forward to the strengths and ideas that all members bring to the Society. 🍀

## Upcoming Events:

**March – Social event: *Shaberanaito* in Japanese!**  
(see page 2)

**Late March – early April** – Business Seminar  
(Keep an eye on the AJS-NSW website!)

**May 21<sup>st</sup>** – University Awards night and presentation by the Consul-General

**Late June** – ABC foreign correspondent - Mark Willacy

**July** – Social Event: *Sumo night*

## Baseball in Blacktown

Australian Baseball League match Blacktown International Sportspark, on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2012



Canberra Cavalry vs Sydney Blue Sox

Canberra - 6 def. Sydney - 2



One December evening in Western Sydney, members of the AJS and their families and friends attended Blacktown International Sportspark to watch a match of the Australian Baseball League.

The ABL is Australia's newest answer to the big-time leagues of Japan and the USA, and although the league may be small by comparison, the old ball-game is the same as ever.

This match saw the local favourites and home team the *Sydney Blue Sox* go head to head with the *Canberra Cavalry*. Admittedly, though, the *Cavalry* held a special place, at least for the AJS crowd, as their team hosts three Japanese league players, outfielder *Koei Shibata*, right-handed pitcher *Hirokazu Shiranita*, and left-handed pitcher *Masanori Fujihara*, all from



AJS-NSW's baseball *otaku* Anita, Thomas and Junya with the *Cavalry*'s Hirokazu Shiranita (orange on left), Koei Shibata (orange on right) and Masanori Fujihara (far right)

the *Hanshin Tigers* (pictured, along with keen AJS-NSW spectators Anita Byrnes, Junya Kudo and Thomas O'Keefe). Shibata-san did well at bat, and Fujihara-san came in as relief pitcher for the *Cavalry*. All three were stationed with the *Cavalry* up to the end of 2012.

The Japanese contingent in the ABL, scattered across several teams, are wisely taking advantage of the opposing seasons of the two countries. In effect, they enjoy an endless summer, training hard and vigorously for the next Japanese league season back home. It seems to have paid off, because the Japan-infused *Canberra Cavalry* managed to convincingly defeat the *Sydney Blue Sox*, with a 6-2 victory. Australia-Japan sporting links like this one are made possible thanks to *Cavalry* associate Jeff Williams, a native of Canberra, spent much of his career in Japan playing for the *Hanshin Tigers*, and now acts as a scout for the Japanese team.

These kinds of connections between our two countries may not be heralded as mightily as the next trade pact, however they



**Batter Up! The view from our seats – behind home plate!**

help improve communication, understanding and camaraderie at the grassroots level, where personal relationships, the bedrock of any other kind, can grow and strengthen into something very useful.

Those of us present enjoyed the chance to sit directly behind home plate, a spectator position that would cost both arms and both legs in most other parts of the world. The Blacktown facility was built and used for the Sydney 2000 Olympics, which was back in the days when baseball and softball still held a place on the Olympic Games playbill. Getting there is a relatively simple drive out along the M7 or M4, depending on where you are coming from in greater Sydney. 🇺🇸

Report: Thomas O'Keefe

### Upcoming Social Event:

**'Shaberanaito'**

**Japanese-speaking night !**

日本語でシャベラナイト!

6<sup>th</sup> March 2013 (Wednesday)

6:00 PM - 9:00 PM

**International Nippon Australia New Zealand**

**Club, 229 Macquarie St Sydney**

Price: \$30 (\$35 Non-Member)

Hone your Japanese skills and make new friends at the **first Shaberanaito for 2013!** Again from 6pm it will be Japanese speaking ONLY. Join members of JET Alumni Association, the Japanese Society of Sydney and fellow AJS-NSW members and friends for a fun evening of dinner and Japanese conversation.

Past events have always been popular so early signup is recommended.

**Great Japanese food** is included in the price but drinks are on your own account. Lucky door prizes will be awarded. (Please [email us](#) if you would like to sponsor or provide a door prize).

So sign up now for another fun night speaking Japanese! Registration and payment can be made simply online, or download the [form](#) and post a cheque.

Please see the website for details and links:

<http://www.ajsnsw.org.au/Default.aspx?pageId=537030&eventId=634202&EventViewMode=EventDetails> 🇺🇸