



In Brief



If you have any feedback, or would like to contribute material, please email editor@australiasocietytokyo.com
This **In Brief** will be emailed to members each month. Details of events can be found on the website.

What's Coming Up?

Monthly coffee mornings:

Next: Thursday April 5 10:00~12noon at: Oakwood Residence Roppongi T-cube
Level 22, 3-1-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku, Tokyo 106-0032 / T: 03-6229-3131.

Cost: FREE for members, 2000 yen for non-members. For inquiries, or to rsvp please contact Anna Cock-Gibson annacock@hotmail.com

Future Dates

Thursday June 7
Thursday September 6
Thursday October 4
Thursday November 1
Thursday December 6

Easter Party - Sunday April 8th at the Embassy

BBQ - Saturday May 19th - at the Embassy

Autumn Sausage Sizzle - Sunday September 16th at the Embassy

Diary Dates

Flyers with registration and payment details will be emailed to members and posted to the website.

Mark your diaries now so you don't miss out. Please check the flyers for the latest information in case there has been a change in details.

Welcome to New Members

The Australia Society extends a warm welcome to new members:

Mark Lind & Rachel Davidson
Melissa Young-Lewis & Milton Lewis
Yvonne Chong

Stephen Burroughs & Helena Allen
Esther Touma

Robert Quinlivan – President

From the President

(Robert Quinlivan)



Last month I got one prediction right and one horribly wrong. The first was that this year's Australia Day Ball raised a record amount for charity. The numbers are now in and I am delighted to advise that the total to be donated to the Society's designated charities (Saalaa and the Manly Warringah Women's Resource Centre) will be a 8 million JPY record for the Society. Thanks and congratulations again to our ball committee lead by Jasmin Kallas and Judy Taylor including Allison Botterell, Karen Bruce, Anna Cock-Gibson, Aliy Lickfold, Mary Saphin, Tony Scimonello and Leanne Stone. Thanks again to our sponsors, in particular lead sponsor Qantas; platinum sponsors ANZ, American Airlines, Bear Stearns and Macquarie; and all our other sponsors. Finally, thanks to all of you who came along on the night and not only had a fantastic time but opened your wallets and benefited our designated charities.

My other prediction - that the final of the recent one day cricket series in Australia would be over quickly was correct but for the wrong reason with Australia failing dismally against England and then going on to get trounced by the Kiwis. Thanks to all my English and Kiwi friends who have provided commentary on my prediction. We're all looking forward to the Cricket World Cup which kicks off shortly.

On the social scene, an all star cast of current and former Society members attended Jordan Millar's wedding in Melbourne over the weekend. Jordan's wedding to Catherine Hiller (known as the Millar-Hiller Thriller) was held at the Melbourne Town Hall and afterwards at Champions Racing Museum in Federation Square. As would be expected, Jordan put on a very good show. Jordan was president of the Society in 2001 and 2002 and was active in the society for many years before. After Tokyo, Jordan was transferred to Bristol for two years (where he met Catherine) before moving again to Melbourne where he is now living. In May, the newlyweds will be moving again - this time to Paris.

With apologies to anyone I have left out, former Society members at the wedding : David Fingret (best man), Michael Clark (MC), Anthony McCormack, Campbell Crombie and Sachiko Ishihara; Nigel Papi and Rie Haji, Andrea Cornwell (Houston); Viv and James Young; Dennis (the Hat) Davis; Lisa McCallum; Reece and Trixie Prewett; Mark Redmond, Brad Gowenlock; Nathan Hedley; Adam Harley. Evan and Julie Armstrong and Andrew Slatter also made special guest appearances at drinks on Friday night. Other current Tokyo residents in attendance were Tony Scimonello, Brendan Ryan, Andrew Holmes, Laura Greenshields and Deepak Jain.

A number of functions are now in the planning (Easter Party and BBQ) and the AGM is also coming up, so be on the look out for email notes for these functions.

Cheers
Rob

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS NOW DUE

Renew your Australia Society membership by March 31 and WIN!

Everyone who renews online this month will go in to a draw for two free tickets to one of the Australia Society's most popular events: the annual Spring Barbeque in the cherry-blossomed garden of the Australian Embassy. The lucky winner will be notified by email.

To renew, please log in to your membership account via the Australia Society website. Fees remain unchanged at 3,000 yen per year for singles, 6,000 yen for families, plus discounted rates for two-year memberships. See the website for payment details.

Membership benefits include reduced ticket prices for Australia Society events – including the Spring Barbeque, Melbourne Cup luncheon, and Australia Day Gala Ball – as well as the monthly newsletter and regular email updates.

Please email Anna Cock Gibson anna@australiasocietytokyo.com if you have any membership queries.

Editorial

Thank you to the many members who make contributions to the newsletter. The feedback from the contributions is excellent and members appreciate the shared information and experiences.

Consider becoming a contributor to the newsletter. Some people are reluctant because of concerns over vested interests related to business. Also a lot of us think that our experiences are ordinary or not interesting to others. You are urged to reconsider! Sharing your business experience in Japan encourages others to attempt do the same. Share your holiday, cultural or shopping experiences. In doing so **you can bring a smile to the face of someone who has had a similar experience and at the same time provide great input for somebody's next experience.** Supporting photos are not essential but preferred.

In this months edition we have a great story contributed by David Taylor on where the Tokyo's wealthy go to play on the weekends – Karuizawa Also an interesting new bar in Higashi Shinjuku with strong ozzie influence is reviewed by Tracey Northcott....enjoy.

The April edition will have an ANZAC focus. If you have ANZAC stories about family or friends, memories and photos they will be well received.

I look forward to receiving your contribution. editor@australiasocietytokyo.com

Thanks Ed.

Fun in the Past

March Morning Coffee

(By Anna Cock-Gibson)

A cozy gathering at the Oakwood Roppongi T-Cube welcomed new Australia Society member Kerry Guthrie, who arrived in Tokyo in January with husband Andrew and sons Angus, 11, and Lachlan, 9. Japan is the latest in a series of international postings for the Guthries, who were most recently based in Bangkok. It was also good to see Robyn Grow, just back from a two-month trip to Australia that included a visit with family in Geraldton, WA. The next coffee morning is on Thursday, April 5, 10am-noon. There will be no event in May due to the Golden Week holidays.



L-R Australia Society members Brenda Gray, Kerry Guthrie, and Robyn Grow



Embassy Update

(from Damien Dunn)

NSW State election: 24 March 2007

The NSW Election Commission has advised us that the dates which the Embassy will be accepting pre-poll and postal voting services have been revised. At this stage, we expect to be able to begin accepting postal vote applications from early March, and to be able to offer in-person pre-poll voting services on weekdays from 9:00 am to 5:30 pm from 15-22 March.

Final confirmation of our opening times (which is subject to the arrival of ballot papers in Tokyo) will be posted on our website (<http://www.consular.australia.or.jp/voting.html>) in early March.

NSW residents in Japan who wish to vote are encouraged to visit the NSW Electoral Commission website, <http://www.elections.nsw.gov.au>, for up to date information on the election.

The Australia-Japan Foundation Grants Program

The Australia-Japan Foundation is pleased to announce the launch of the *Australia-Japan Foundation Grants Program* for promoting increased understanding between Australia and Japan. This initiative offers funding for innovative joint proposals that establish and strengthen bilateral linkages between people and organisations in two categories: Community and Professional/Academic.

Eligible community and professional/academic organisations are invited to apply for funds to initiate support and encourage activities and exchanges that support Foundation objectives through;

- encouraging a greater interest in the development of professional, academic and community relationships between the two countries;
- demonstrating excellence and broadening community knowledge and understanding of Australia in Japan and Japan in Australia.

Applications shall be made through Australian non-profit organisations with an identified Japanese partnering organisation. The Foundation accepts applications throughout the year.

Further information (guidelines and application form) are available online:
<http://www.ajf.australia.or.jp/english/awards/ajfgrants/>

Damien Dunn
Consul
Australian Embassy, Tokyo
T: 03-5232-4111
E: auscitzreg.tokyo@dfat.gov.au

Bar Review – Araku – Golden Gai (Shinjuku)

www.arakubar.com – by Tracey Northcott

Goldengai G2 2nd floor, 1-1-9 Kabukicho, Shinjuku, Tokyo - TEL : 03-5272-1651

Shinjuku's Golden Gai bar district evokes post-war Tokyo. Nestled in a series of narrow alleys between the Shinjuku ward office and Hanazono Shrine, Golden Gai is home to over 250 tiny bars – some with only enough seating for 4-6 people. To the uninitiated it can be a confusing maze of bottle-keep, handwritten Japanese menus and unspoken bar etiquette.



So what is it like to go drinking in this area that is foreign even to many local Japanese folk? Quaint, mysterious and gritty are certainly words that spring to mind. The buildings themselves were knocked up during the US occupation after WW2 and not much has changed on the outside since then. Originally the occupants were touting for favours of the libidinous kind, however, those seedy red-light days are long gone and now Golden Gai is famous for bars of every other kind of passion – photography, literature, whisky, existentialism, politics, art, cinema, music – punk, jazz, folk, country.... You name it, there is a bar where there are experts quietly discussing it.

Araku is one of Golden Gai's larger bars, with seating for 21 people. It's managed by Australians (including me and my brother, Richard) and conversation with the staff and other customers is encouraged so no need to feel shy about dropping in alone - a great way to practice your Japanese or meet new friends. Araku staff are Japanese and they are all comfortable receiving non-Japanese speaking customers

Araku's extensive, bilingual drinks menu features Australian wines by the glass or bottle, Japanese shochu, and the usual options of mixed cocktails, beers and shots. The wine list, while not huge, offers good value Australian wine by the glass or by the bottle. Brands such as Dreamtime and Peter Lehman are currently featured but these do change seasonally. Only Australian wine is served and the tasting notes are bilingual. If you like a bit of cheese with your wine, a cheese plate is available for ¥900. Other snacks and nibbles are available, but don't expect a full meal.



Golden Gai bars all operate a tab system that is calculated at the end rather than on a per drink basis so it is good to know in advance what you will be in for. It is customary for each bar to levy a cover charge (between ¥800 – 1,000) for which you will receive a small snack, hand towel etc. Then you can either drink from a previously purchased bottle that is kept just for you (bottle-keep) or order from the bar. If you visit a few bars regularly, this system is convenient and economical. Araku's cover charge is ¥800 and drinks are around ¥600 including draft beer. All the prices are clearly outlined in the menu, so there are no surprises.

www.australiasocietytokyo.com

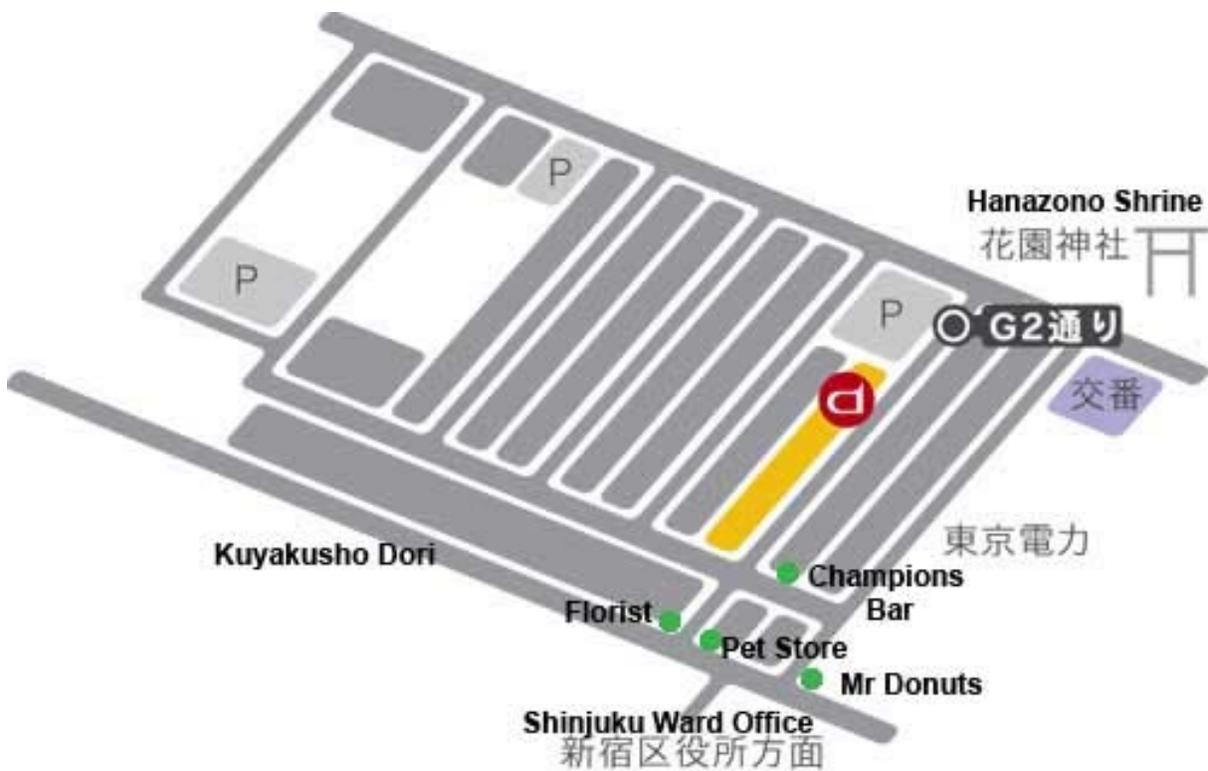
President: Robert Quinlivan /Vice President: Michael Marlay

Editor: Craig Saphin and David Taylor

Araku opens at 8pm and the party continues until the last customer leaves - usually 5am but sometimes much later. Araku provides free wireless Internet, and mobile phone chargers are also available for all standard flavours of Japanese mobile phones. The music is all operated via a new iMAC and the playlist depends on the tastes of customers in the bar. You can request Australian music, jazz, electronica, J-pop, etc., from the extensive music library.

Best way to find Araku is to head for the Shinjuku ward office near Mr. Donut on Yasukuni-dori – the street with all the neon signage (very Ridley Scott). Opposite the ward office on Kuyakusho-dori, turn down a small street with a pet store and florist on the corners and at the T-junction is a bar called “Champions” – a Filipino-run Karaoke bar. This marks the start of Golden Gai. Take the small street to the left as you are facing Champions and Araku is around 50m straight ahead on your left hand side. Look for the red Araku sign and head up the red-carpeted staircase above a bar called 10CC.

Want to experience Araku for yourself? Drop by any night for a relaxing after-work drink. The next Australia Society Pub night is on March 15 and I will be there as host. Stop by, have a glass or two of Australian Shiraz and I can share the hidden treasures of Golden Gai.



Winter Break in Karuizawa

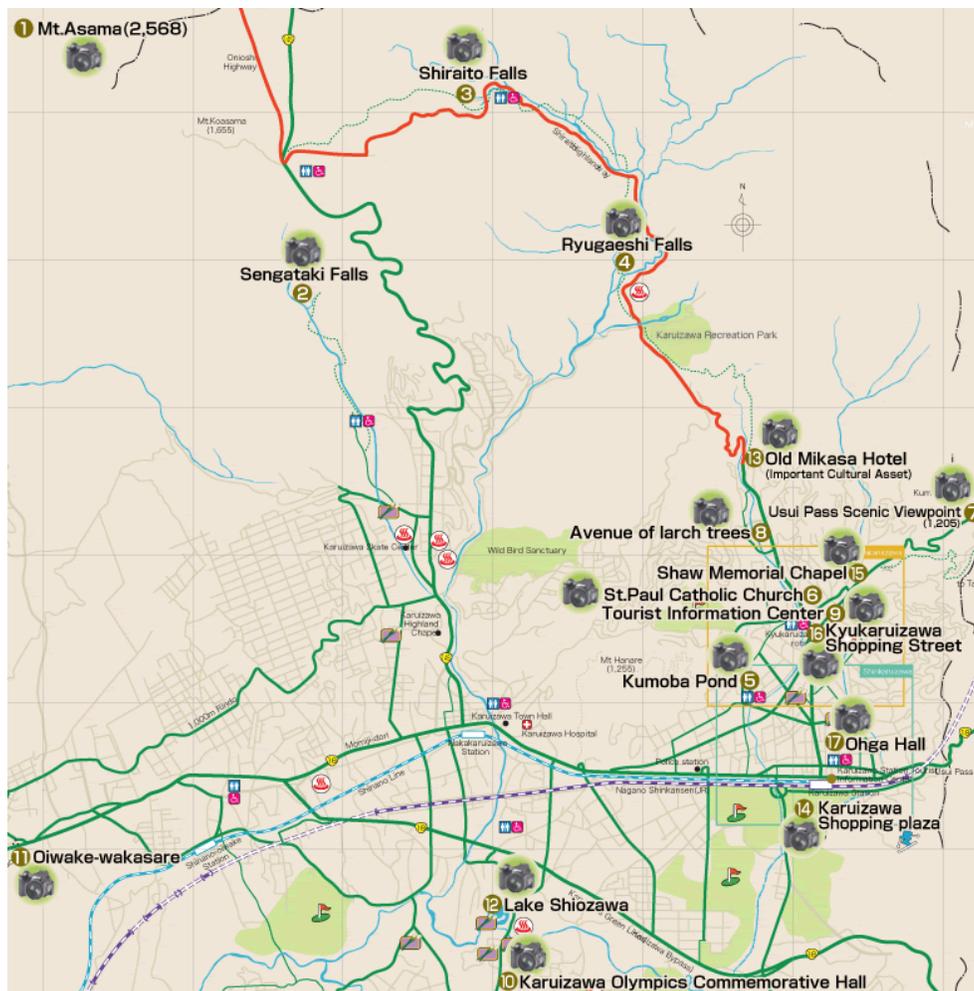
By David Taylor

I wonder why it is that everywhere we go we seem to run into an outlet mall? And we are not even American.

The beauty (?) of having kids at an International School is that there are weird little days off here and there throughout the year. Winter break is one such occurrence where the kids get a Thursday and Friday off, so we decided to help our sanity and get out of Tokyo for awhile. We are not skiers but wanted to see a bit of snow, and we wanted a place within easy reach of the city by car. Karuizawa was recommended, accommodation was obtained at a very reasonable price and so we packed the cold-weather gear and tootled (technical term ed.) off. The trip should take around 2 to 2½ hours, although if you take an inadvertent wrong turn off the expressway into the wilds of Saitama (mea culpa) it can take a lot longer.

Had we not taken the car, the town is easily reached via JR Nagano Shinkansen from either Tokyo or Ueno stations (travel time 1hr 10min, cost ¥5,750 each way reserved). The upside for skiers and snowboarders is that the slopes of the Karuizawa Prince Resort are almost directly outside the southern entrance to Karuizawa Station. Evidently the slopes are very beginner friendly, with a lot of room for the little ones.

We stayed at a great hotel (the XIV, pronounced exiv) about 10km west of Karuizawa where we had 2 huge rooms (our kids are big and so need the space) at a price we couldn't believe.



Prior to the Meiji Period, Karuizawa was a stopover for travelers on their way to the Kanto area, and all its income came from those travelers. Traffic through Karuizawa significantly declined during the Meiji Period for a number of reasons, but was brought back to life when Archdeacon A.C. Shaw, a British missionary, built a vacation house in Kyu-Karuizawa (north of where Karuizawa station is now) and introduced it to other missionaries and the Japanese intellectuals he knew. These days it is still a resort town, with a permanent population of about 6,000 but many very fancy holiday homes owned by both nationals and foreigners. Indeed, it was evidently a favourite retreat for John Lennon and Yoko Ono. The town lies at the SE foot of Mt. Asama which is an active triple cone volcano, and has numerous other smaller mountains to the east and south.

It is a very popular place to escape the heat of Tokyo summers with the average summer temperature around 22°C inducing a doubling of the population. The advantages to us of visiting during winter were that we missed the crowds (a howitzer shell fired up the street due north of the station would have caused no collateral damage) and were able to get accommodation at a few days' notice. We also managed to see the area dusted with snow which can lend an element of beauty even to earthmoving equipment. The downside was that a goodly proportion of the places of interest were closed, as were a number of restaurants, cafes and the boutiques which line the Karuizawa-Ginza area of Kyu-Karuizawa. The big bonus was that the Curling Centre (Lawn Bowls on ice) was open with a number of teams practising their skills. This was where the curling events were held during the Nagano winter Olympics, and was the first time it appeared as an Olympic event.

The area has some wonderful hiking trails and is a great place to take your bike or hire a bike once you get there. In the summer season there is also horse riding and golf to keep you busy. The weather at the end of February was a little too cold for us to do too much hiking or cycling, so we let our car do the walking.

The Usui Pass Observation lookout is just out of town and on a clear day it affords a great view of Mount Asama and the other peaks around. It lies on the boundary of Nagano and Gunma prefectures and has a bust of Rabindranath Tagore (the Indian Poet and Nobel Prize who visited Japan in 1916) commemorating this 120th



View from Usui Pass Observation Platform

anniversary (why this is here, I have no idea). There are also two monuments of Tankas written about the Usui Pass and appearing in Manyoshu, the oldest book of Japanese poetry.

If you head due north from Karuizawa station you pass through Kyu-Karuizawa and can visit the unique St. Paul's Catholic Church, drive along the very beautiful Avenue of Larch Trees and stop in to see the Old Mikasa Hotel. This is the starting point of a hike you can take to the Shiraito Falls and beyond. Soon after the hotel you hit one of a few toll roads in the area. We were fortunate the



Shiraito Falls

day we did it this trip that it started to snow in big, fat flakes which made the countryside seem somewhat magical. It also kept us away from the walking trails.

There are a number of waterfalls in the area, but this day we only stopped at Shiraito Falls. These falls are only a couple of metres high, but are around 70m wide. The silence was a great relief from the constant noise of the big city. The snow was fairly thick here so the kids indulged in a bit of snowball fight. We continued north west-ish, taking time to construct a snowman (complete with natty hat), view the many holiday houses amongst the trees and finally stumbling upon the most amazing hotel/wedding centre/amusement park/golf resort in the form of the hotel Green Plaza. The place went on forever and must be a hoot to see in the summer when there are people around. There was even a horse-drawn coach, presumably for the use of bride & groom. The entrance to the resort is watched over by a smaller version of the Statue of Liberty.

The Wild Bird Sanctuary is on the way back south to Naka Karuizawa (not open in winter) as is the Skate Centre.

Back in town we found one of quite a few shops selling locally-produced jams and fruit juices which we purchased in no small measure.

We had breakfast back in the town on our last morning. The wind had come up and the sounds of brass monkeys shivering had us hitting the road back to Tokyo earlier than anticipated, with the obligatory detour through Saitama when the driver had another conniption.

All in all, a very enjoyable little break.

Did I also mention it has a huge Outlet Mall directly outside the south entrance to the station? Well it does.



Daughter & Harold



Part of the Wonderful Outlet Mall with the Ski fields of the Karuizawa Prince Resort behind

For further information:

<http://www.town.karuizawa.nagano.jp/html/English/top.html>

<http://www.jnto.go.jp/eng/location/rtg/pdf/pg-407.pdf>



The Australia Society Monthly Coffee Morning

This event is a forum for making friends and welcoming new arrivals to Tokyo

Date: Thursday April 5

Time: 10am to 12 noon

Place: **OAKWOOD RESIDENCE ROPPONGI T-CUBE**
Level 22, 3-1-1 Roppongi, Minato-ku,
Tokyo 106-0032 TEL 03-6229-3131

Map / See below
Directions:

Please rsvp to Anna Cock Gibson : anna@australiasocietytokyo.com

This event is proudly sponsored by



Coffee Morning Directions:

❖ **BY TAXI**

Up on leaving the ANA Hotel, turn left, and then proceed up “Roppongi Dori” in the direction of Roppongi. At the second set of traffic lights, turn left to access the Roppongi Prince Hotel Street. (Follow the sign to the hotel on corner) Our residence is located in the Samsung Roppongi T-Cube building, with the drive way and main 3rd floor entrance diagonally opposite and up the hill from the Roppongi Prince Hotel drive way. The taxi fare is JYP660 (approx.)

❖ **BY SUBWAY**

The residence is located on the Tokyo Metro Namboku line, directly above the Roppongi 1-chome station. On exiting the station, turn right, then head up the first set of elevators. At the first landing, turn right, then walk along the corridor to the “Samsung Roppongi T-Cube” building towards exit #1. Just before you enter the T-Cube building proper, and to the left of the first set of sliding glass doors, is the 1st floor entrance to the residence. Walk in, and then to the left before the second sliding glass doors, is an intercom that connects to our reception. Press “100 CALL” to be connected to the front desk and then ask to be let in. Walk along the corridor to the express elevator and proceed to the 22nd floor.

Map



Chicken and Chablis - Ladies Luncheon Group

Chicken and Chablis was originally formed by and for Australian and New Zealand women to meet once a month at different restaurants in Tokyo. It has continued and evolved over the years and now includes women from other Commonwealth countries as well.

Normally the group meets on the 3rd Friday of each month and we enjoy each others company over good food and a selection of NZ and Australian wines.

If you would be interested in becoming a member of Chicken and Chablis or learning more about us, please contact the current president, Brenda Gray ph 090 4621 9795 or email chickenandchablis@hotmail.com

Our Sponsors

The Australia Society Tokyo relies on the support of its members and sponsors to run successful events. We would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge our sponsors:

PRINCIPLE SPONSOR

Qantas Airways Limited

PLATINUM SPONSORS:

- * ANZ
- * Macquarie Bank
- * American Airlines
- * BEAR STEARNS

GOLD SPONSORS:

- * Allied Pickfords
- * Bice Ristorante
- * Dag Music
- * Four Seasons Hotel Tokyo
- * Grand Hyatt Tokyo
- * Wolf Blass

SILVER SPONSORS:

- * AvidMonster Design
- * Boudoir
- * Coca Cola Japan
- * Conrad Hilton
- * Hayman
- * National Australia Bank
- * Oakwood
- * Radisson Miyako Hotel Tokyo
- * Riedel
- * Robert Walters
- * TerabyteStation
- * Tokyo Physio
- * The Westin

BRONZE SPONSORS:

- * Asian Tigers Premier Worldwide Movers
- * Beacon Communications
- * Government of Western Australia
- * Great Aussie Foods
- * Ikon United
- * Meat and Livestock Australia
- *
- * NEWZEE
- * Nippon Beer
- * North West Shelf Shipping
- * Park Hyatt Tokyo
- * Qantas Holidays International
- * Simmons & Simmons
- * Sin Den
- * Small Luxury Hotels of the World
- * Suehiro Restaurant
- * Voyages
- * Yoshiyuki Yanagawa. Illustrator

OMIYAGE:

- * 148 Hiroo
- * Bear Creek Japan
- * Beaute absolue
- * Corporate Gourmet
- * Erawan Thai Massage
- * Erica Angyal. Nutritional Consultant
- * Fujimamas
- * Good Honest Grub
- * Government of Victoria
- * Las Chicas
- * LINC Media
- * Mandos Japan
- * Nicholas Wyman
- * Novo Nordisk Pharma Ltd
- * Radisson Hotel Narita
- * Riva Degli Etruschi Restaurant
- * Shopping at Tiffany's
- * Tokyo American Club
- * T.Y. Harbor Brewery /Cicada Restaurant
- * Versatile Fitness
- * Warrnambool Cheese & Butter Factory Company
- * WDI Corporation
- * Yokohama Country & Athletic Club

THANK YOU TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS

If you would like to become a sponsor of the Australia Society Tokyo, please email president@australiasocietytokyo.com