

THE AUSTRALIA SOCIETY TOKYO



australiasocietytokyo.com

January 2008 – Volume 23



Mark your calendar for these upcoming events & check the web for updates.

Australia Society Gala Ball

Date: Friday 25th January 2008 - 07:00pm till late
Place: Grand Hyatt Roppongi
28,000 yen for members; 30,000 yen for non-members.

Celebrate Australia Day with a sumptuous meal, entertainment, dancing, and auctions of wine, travel and other goods. The Society's annual gala charity ball features all of these plus frock watching, midnight snacks, and goodie bags to take home. This year, our attention turns to the beauty of the Australian bush. Our ball's theme is "Outback" and proceeds from the auctions go to two environmental charities: Eco-Future in Japan & Aussie Helpers in Australia.

***Ticket on sale now; For further details please email:
balltickets@australiasocietytokyo.com***

Ski Weekend

Date: Saturday 9th February 2008
Place: Yuzawa, Niigata, 3 Mountains and the Sporea Hotel
Cost: 60,000 yen for 3 nights accommodation, meals and ski passes

Join in a long weekend of snowy athletics, steamy baths and delicious food. The folks at We Love Snow will cater to our needs as we go from piste to table. Yuzawa is just a few hours by car or train, so you can arrange transportation to suit your schedule: come for two days, three days or add a fourth day for an extra long weekend. Ski gear is available for rent, or bring your own. Download the booking form here:

<http://www.australiasocietytokyo.com/files/AST-SkiTrip2008.xls> and return to We Love Snow. **For further details please email: patrick.latter@welovesnow.com**

Easter Party

Date: Sunday 23 March 2008
Time: 14:00 ~ 16:00
Location: Australian embassy – Cost: TBD



“..Happy New Year to all members. ”

Robert Quinlivan

President's Report

Happy New Year to all members and welcome back to those who traveled during the holiday season.

Last year ended with well-attended Christmas parties for adults and children. The kids enjoyed a wonderful morning at the Embassy recreation room with lots of activities, plenty of delicious Kiwi Kitchen snacks and of course a visit from Santa. The early Sunday morning timing might have been a bit of a challenge for many of the grown ups who appeared to be suffering from the effects of various seasonal festivities occurring the previous evening (yours truly included) but the coffee, party pies and sausage rolls were on hand to assist with recovery efforts.

The adult's party was held at the spectacular Oakwood Shinjuku Sky Lounge. The weather was perfect and the clear views of the city were amazing. A delicious spread provided by the American Club kept the guests well fed. The thick slices of ham and turkey were a particular hit with several of the guests seen enjoying second and third helpings. Thanks to Keren Miers and Michael Jaehrling from Oakwood for providing the venue and helping to organise the event.

Excitement is now building for the Australia Day Ball. The Outback theme with decorations to match, a broad selection of entertainment and delicious menu augurs well for what will be a spectacular night. Currently we have sold about 400 tickets and with a capacity of around 500 you should be quick to get your tickets if you have not already done so.

Don't forget the Society's ski trip to Yuzawa in February organised by the guys from We Love Snow. There is plenty of snow around this year and with Yuzawa being less than 90 minutes from Tokyo by Shinkansen, it promises to be a great weekend at a very convenient location.

Finally, please keep a look out for the next edition of the Tokyo Weekender. The newspaper will feature several articles written by Society members covering Australia Day, the Australia Society and the upcoming Australia Day ball.

Cheers
Rob

“..excitement is building for the Australia Day Gala Ball. ”

Children's Christmas Party

Report by: Alison Quinlivan



The 2007 Christmas season started early with the Children's Christmas Party on December 2nd. Everyone had lots of fun making Christmas arts and crafts as well as icing delicious Christmas biscuits. Once all the 'work' was done it was time relax, chat and enjoy some good Aussie fare such as party pies and sausage rolls to enjoy. We were then treated to a visit from Santa who came with gifts for all the children. It was a wonderful way to start to holiday season. Photos of the event can be viewed and purchased from keyshots Photography on <http://keyshots.smugmug.com/gallery/3917>



Adult Christmas Party – Dec 5th

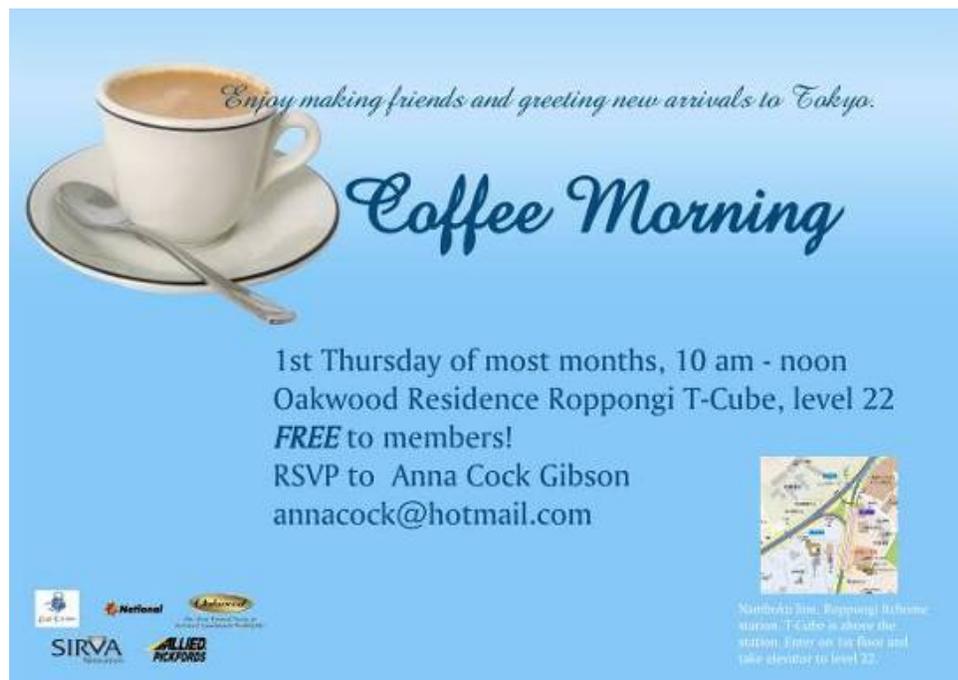
Report by: Keren Miers

This year's Christmas party for the adult society members was held on a clear and starry night at the stunning "Sky Lounge" on the 32nd floor of Oakwood Apartments Shinjuku. A fun group of thirty five members and friends enjoyed loads of Christmas cheer along with outstanding 180 degree views over sprawling Tokyo.

Our good friends at the Tokyo American Club (TAC) presented a fine buffet of traditional Christmas fare that featured juicy roast turkey and baked ham with all the trimmings, plus some great desserts that were pounced on as soon as they appeared. And our often forgotten vegetarian members were well catered for with some tasty vegetable dishes. And there was plenty of Christmas spirit through out the night with free flowing fine Aussie wines and beer.

The venue is spectacular and all members and guests had a great night. It even kicked afterwards at Araku in nearby Golden Gai.

Our thanks go out to Oakwood Apartments Shinjuku General Manager and society member, Michael Jaehrling and his team at Oakwood Apartments Shinjuku for hosting the party. And also to TAC for the great food and service.



Enjoy making friends and greeting new arrivals to Tokyo.

Coffee Morning

1st Thursday of most months, 10 am - noon
Oakwood Residence Roppongi T-Cube, level 22
FREE to members!
RSVP to Anna Cock Gibson
annacock@hotmail.com



Northside line, Roppongi T-Cube station. T-Cube is above the station. Enter on the base and take elevator to level 22.



Gala Ball 2008

Kristen McQuillin

Celebrate Australia Day with a sumptuous meal, entertainment, dancing, and auctions of wine, travel and other goods. The Society's annual gala charity ball features all of these plus frock watching, midnight snacks, lucky door prizes, and goodie bags to take home.

For 2008, our attention turns to the beauty of the Australian bush. Our ball's theme is "Outback" and proceeds from the evening go to two environmental charities: Eco-Future, an NPO that undertakes reforestation projects in Japan, and Aussie Helpers, who provide aid to drought stricken families across Australia.

Tickets are still available. Ticket prices are 28,000 yen for members and 30,000 yen for non-members.

To purchase tickets, please visit the Australia Society website for the reservation form. After booking your tickets, we ask that you pay the full amount by furikomi (bank transfer) within one week.

Anyone interested in sponsoring the ball with goods, discounts, or cash, please contact the sponsorship team via e-mail to ball-sponsorship@australiasocietytokyo.com



Photos wanted!

Do you have snaps of the outback that we can display at the gala ball? Outback landscapes, flora and fauna, or yourself, friends and family enjoying the bush are all welcome. JPG or TIFF format, at least 640 *480 pixels or up to 2 MB per photo. Please e-mail photos and your full name (for the credits) to kristen@mediatinker.com by Sunday, January 13th.

Gourmet Paddle Pops?

Kristen McQuillin



One of the many benefits to being on the Ball committee is getting an advance taste of the dinner and wines. I've attended several Balls, and can tell you that this year's menu is outstanding. Chef Shaun Keenan at the Grand Hyatt is an Aussie and he says he's had a good time developing our Outback menu and incorporating Australian ingredients into each dish. For example, he's smoked fish in Bushells Tea and lemon myrtle for our entree. The main is Australian beef, of course, but served with a cheddar crust and bush pepper sauce.

And there's an equally wonderful lacto-ovo vegetarian meal, too, with many of the same tasty highlights.

He's developed an exclusive dessert for our event with a cute back-story. Elegantly served in a stemmed glass, the dish is called Gran's Berry Trifle - a delicious layered custard topped with juicy berries. But the little scoop of banana ice cream on the side is what Chef Keenan chuckled over, "I was thinking about banana paddle pops when I came up with this." But his ice cream is far and away better than any paddle pop I've ever enjoyed.



Seats are still available for our January 25th charity gala; if you'd like to book, please contact balltickets@australiasocietytokyo.com, Details are on our website: <http://www.australiasocietytokyo.com>



Tokyo Australia Society Ski Trip

Patrick Letter

What better way to spend the February long weekend than skiing in the Japanese Alps? WeLoveSnow are pleased to be able to offer this great package to members and friends of the Tokyo Australian Society. Places are limited though, so don't delay!

This year the long weekend falls on the weekend of the ninth of February and to best take advantage of this we have put together a 3 night package with 3 days of skiing.

Accommodation.

The accommodation is in the Sporea Hotel in the centre of Yuzawa. With its rooftop onsen offering fantastic views of the whole valley, to its spacious Western style rooms, this is a luxurious place to relax when you are not on the slopes. Both breakfast and dinner are included in the price.



Sporea's impressive rooftop onsen.

The Skiing.

Not forgetting the main reason to visit the area: the snow. To complete our package we are including a 3 day pass for the 3 Mountain Area in Yuzawa. This covers 3 entire resorts: Yuzawa Kogen, GALA Yuzawa and Ishiuchi Maruyama. That should be enough skiing to keep anyone happy for 3 days, whether you are an experienced powder hound or a first timer.



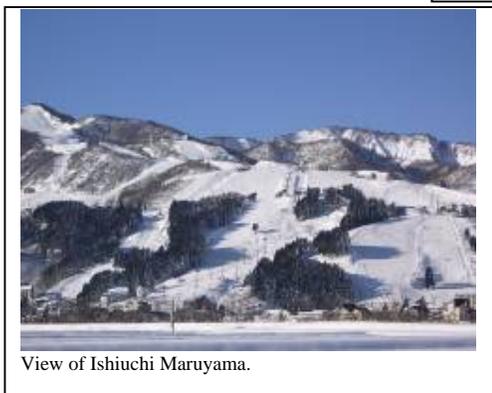
Yuzawa Kogen Ropeway

The basic package is the 3 night accommodation with 2 meals, as well as the 3 day ski pass. We can also provide other services such as ski rental, clothing rental or lessons with English speaking instructors. We offer full flexibility with all our options so if you would like to explore other ideas, please feel free to contact us.

The prices on the booking form are based on 2 adults sharing. The child price is to add an extra child to the room. (There will be a supplementary charge if a room is shared by one adult and one child. Children are those aged 12 or below.)



Children's Park & Sledging Area at Gala



View of Ishiuchi Maruyama.

We look forward to welcoming you to Snow Country. If you require any further information please feel free to contact Patrick on 025-784-3117 or on patrick.latter@welovesnow.com

Prices

Adult 3 night stay including 2 meals and 3 day lift pass	\60,000	
Additional Child 3 Night stay including 2 meals and 3 day lift pass	\43,000	
Optional Extras	Adult	Child
Return Shinkansen Ticket	\12,980	\6,480
3 Piece Ski Rental for 3 days	\10,500	\4,000
2 Piece Snowboard Rental for 3 days	\10,500	\4,000
Jacket and Pants Rental for 3 days	\6,000	\2,500
2.5 hour ski or snowboard lesson (1-4 people)	\15,000	
4 hour ski or snowboard lesson (1-4 people)	\25,000	

Australian Society History

David Taylor

Last month's news of Florence Takahashi and her long history with the Australia Society Tokyo got a few of us on the committee to think that there is little in the way of records of the Society which the Committee has on hand. The sometimes fleeting tenure of Aus Soc members and the lack of a permanent address have conspired against keeping an ongoing record of Society activities.

This is, therefore, a plea to all those present and past members for any documents, photographs, newsletters, Committee minutes, constitutions or the like which pertains to the Society and its activities. It is also a plea for you all to contact past members who have moved from these shores to see what they can put their hands on. The records do not necessarily have to be official, and those pertaining to Society functions will be equally well received.

Last year we published an article about the Schumakers who lived in Tokyo from the mid 1970s, and who were very active in the Society. Their recollections of life in Tokyo reflected the very different society they lived in compared to the one we find ourselves in today. Stories such as these should be recorded for posterity as it gives we expats some context to this changing society and a foreigner's place in it. So if you have a story to tell, or know someone who has a story to tell, please contact the newsletter editors who would be pleased to ensure that those stories don't disappear in time.

The initial aim of this project is to start an archive which would document the workings and activities of the Society, but a written history of the Society may evolve from that archive.

None of the newsletter staff are trained archivists nor historians, so any recommendations you have of the best way to go about this project, or indeed any other input you may have, would be gratefully received.

Please send all correspondence to either editor@australiasocietytokyo.com or davidjtaylor@gol.com.

As ever, if you have any input you have regarding the newsletter (things you would like to see, an article you may want to contribute), please don't hesitate to contact us.

Nuding it Up with Bears and Nature in Gunma

Craig Saphin



Takaragawa Onsen is the most famous in Japan for mixed (male and female) Rotenburo River Onsens (Outside hot springs). Minakami in Gunma Prefecture is a well known weekend retreat for expats who love to ski in winter, and white water canoe or hike in summer. My wife and I left very late morning and after an easy 2.5 hour drive (I was asleep most of the way) we still arrived before the prescribed

onsen check in time of 3pm. Having deliberately chosen a weekend just after the autumn leaves meant Tokyo was still in Tokyo and this also meant we were allowed to check in 20 minutes early. We had an enforced relaxing tea and seasonal cake before being shown to our spacious traditional tatami room with panoramic views of the mountains and the river.

Soon we were being escorted to the rotenburo in yukata and winter weight over coats + colorful gum boots (just in case the snow started coming down). Before leaving for Takaragawa my friend Jon had warned me that the passage to the rotenburo from the car park was an unusual experience. Jon is known for understatement and this time was no different. We passed through so much eclectic and historical paraphernalia that it felt as if I had ended up at garage sale heaven – I hate garage sales. There were also cages of large black bears which are supposed to be allowed out into the hot baths to bath after the paying guests are done. I was not around to see this.

The rotenburos (all 3) were great. Women wear a bath towel around them – in the water and while walking between baths. Men make the smallest of efforts to keep a small a small towel in front of their man-hood – bare buttocks are OK. As the sun set and the lights came on the men did not really make an effort to cover but the women did. The baths were great...sitting in the hot water outside with the river thundering past and the outside temp close to zero was a wonderful experience. There is also a ladies only rotenburo for females...one of the most beautiful in Japan.....so I have read.





After an hour or more of this we deemed ourselves clean enough to return to the onsen rooms. Having done this a few time over the last 10 years, we always take some better than average red wine to these places because there is only so much beer and shouchu that you can drink and regional wines in Japan are average at best. Dinner came to our room exactly at

the time we ordered. The arrival heralded a seemingly endless stream of fish, beef, chicken, pork, vegetables, mushrooms and rice. These were all pre-cooked, cooked at the table or eaten raw. Despite my enormous capacity for food I was not able to finish the project and felt a little defeated. Also worth a mention was the final dish which was black bear soup.

It goes without saying that sleep was not a problem. My wife always takes her own pillow because the masochistic objects masquerading as pillows that onsen places give you which seem to be filled with rice do not allow her to relax enough.

Morning time: 1 meter of snow – aaaaah! Thank you – we packed the chains. But first it is important to observe the local customs - an inside onsen and a luxurious breakfast – we were not really hungry but what can you say?

Now chains are a simple thing and should not cause too much angst. However, I am only able to associate pain with these things....therefore I have a significant phobia about talking about them, looking at them or putting them on a car. “You should put them on” said my wife. “You will be OK without” said the Hotel proprietor’s husband. I decide we would be OK without despite being asleep when we drove in. We were not OK. Half way up a steep, narrow hill with buses trying to get past we could neither drive backwards nor forwards. Once the chains are on modern chains seems to self tighten and position themselves. Not such a drama as it turned out. We escaped a very difficult situation without incident and went on to have lunch with friends in Minakami and then visit the local glass factory.

Takaragawa Onsen: <http://www12.wind.ne.jp/takaragawa/el.html>
email: takaraga@bay.wind.ne.jp Phone 0278-75-2121



Stay Beautiful all Winter.

(brought to you by www.boudoirtokyo.com)

As the autumn ends and the winter sets in, the colors in every wardrobe change from bold, bright colors to mellow colors. Winter also brings bad things for your skin, you must be ready with an army of moisturizers, body lotions, hydrating masks and exfoliants. These products can help you win the battle against dry, dull skin and can help your skin have that beautiful summer glow all winter long. Beautiful healthy skin enhances beauty. The Boudoir team has put together these fantastic beauty tips to help you survive the long Tokyo winter ahead.

Problem: Your skins breaking out, but you still need a moisturizer.

If your acne prone, finding a moisturizer that won't cause breakouts is a challenge. The solution to seasonal dryness (added oils and a protective barrier) is also the worst thing for acne. Try a moisturiser with Glycolic or Salicylic acid or use a serum under a moisturiser. Serums tend to be lighter and will still help to combat dryness as well as prevent flare ups.

Problem: Your lips are chapped, no matter how much protection you use.

Be sure to cover your lips with lip balm, applied several times a day. Warm sesame oil will also soothe your lips. Upgrade your lip balm. Balms are made almost entirely of wax, which creates a barrier to keep moisture in and cold air out. But once your lips are chapped you need emollients that actively hydrate them, as well as removing the dead skin. Try not to lick your lips. The skin will not be able to heal if you lick them constantly. We know it is a hard habit to break. Blistex Lip soothing balm is on the top of our winter shopping list. When buying a lip balm be sure to purchase one with a built in SPF.

Problem: Your hands are dry and cracked, and hand lotions stings.

There are 2 things you need to do to heal your hands, prevent inflammation and increase moisture. If your hands are crack use hydrocortisone to the affected areas, then soften the skin with a high end hand cream.

Problem: Brittle nails

Like skin, nails become dry due to lack of humidity. They draw moisture from surrounding skin, so step one is to moisturise the cuticle area. You can even use olive oil straight from your kitchen cupboard.

Boudoir Special Offer: Start the year off by treating yourself to our 'New Years' beauty Package. Guaranteed to make you look and feel amazing! This offer is only available for Australian Society members from January 3rd – January 20th 2008.



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please email president@australiasocietytokyo.com*

