

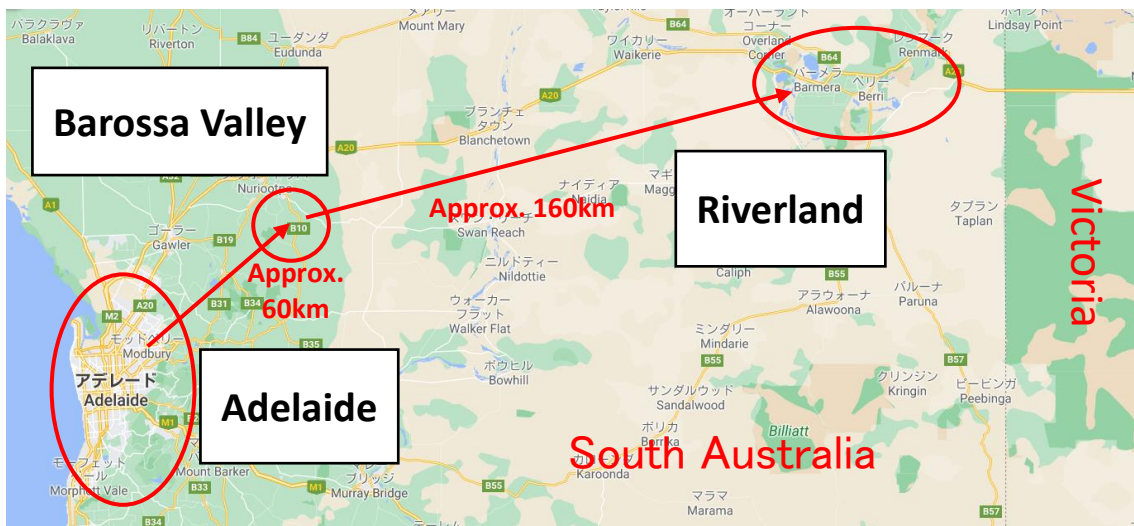
## News from under the Southern Cross – Edition 15

### Visit to South Australia

25 May

I recently returned from a trip to Adelaide. The capital of South Australia, Adelaide is the fifth largest city in Australia. While the state is 2.6 times bigger than the whole of Japan, it only has a population of 1.7 million. How is this vast land being utilised? Well, I went to check it out for myself.

I was accompanied to South Australia by Consul-General SHIMADA Junji of the Consulate-General of Japan in Melbourne, whose jurisdiction includes South Australia, and Mr Adam Wynn, Honorary Consul-General of Japan in Adelaide.



**Top right:** Location of Adelaide (*freeworldmaps.com*)

**Top left:** View of Adelaide (River Torrens and Adelaide Oval)

**Bottom:** Locations of Adelaide, the famous Barossa Valley wine region, and Riverland

## 1. 'Free State'

When I've spoken to people from Adelaide, they often confidently tell me that South Australia is a 'free state'. Each state in Australia, which is a federation of 6 states and 2 territories, has a different history. Unlike the other states which were settled by convicts from England, South Australia was settled by 'free people' who then established this 'free state'.

South Australia also takes pride in being ahead of the other states because their Governor is the first person of Asian heritage to be appointed to this role in Australia. His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC was born in Vietnam and came to Australia as a refugee at the age of 23. His Excellency and his wife kindly welcomed my wife and me, and we enjoyed a very warm and friendly lunch together.



At the residence of His Excellency the Honourable Hieu Van Le AC, Governor of South

## 2. Warm eyes on Japan

When I met with the Hon. Steven Marshall MP, Premier of South Australia, I was completely thrown by him greeting me in Japanese. When I asked him if he spoke Japanese, Premier Marshall told me that he was often late to his Japanese class in high school and so even now

he remembers the line, '*Okurete Sumimasen*', which means 'Sorry I'm late'. The score is set at Steven Marshall 1 – Ambassador 0, as "Ippon" in Judo.

Of course, far from running late, the meeting with the Premier ran meticulously on time. Later that day, I observed Question Time in the House of Assembly of South Australia. Premier Marshall acknowledged our delegation's visit and spoke of the close relationship between his state and Japan, including the points of discussion from our lunch meeting. I was impressed by his considerate and quick response.

I also had the opportunity to exchange views with representatives of the South Australian government, including the Hon. Stephen Patterson MP, Minister for Trade and Investment and the Hon. Dan van Holst Pellekaan MP, Minister for Energy and Mining. It is very promising to see and hear of Japanese companies such as Mitsubishi Motors, Asahi Kasei Homes, Hitachi Zosen Corp., NEC, and I'Rom Group being warmly welcomed by South Australia.



Lunch with Premier Marshall at Parliament House of South Australia



One feature of Adelaide is its classical architecture such as Parliament House, which is open to visitors including the Old Parliament House Chamber.

### 3. South Australian wine to Japan

Wine is one of South Australia's largest exports with the state producing half of Australia's annual production. According to an expert who has run a winery for many years in the famous wine-producing region of Barossa Valley, South Australia's success is thanks to the high number of clear days and the strong sunlight is unaffected by the direction or incline of the



hills in the region. And that's why South Australia can be very proud of their consistent fine wines as European wines can be easily influenced by that year's weather conditions.

There is one problem that I would like to highlight and that is the export of high-end wine from South Australia. Famous brands such as Penfolds have largely concentrated on the Chinese market, making it quite difficult to find in Japan. As this is the case, I took the opportunity during my talk at the University of Adelaide and interview with The Advertiser to stress that it is high time for South Australian wine producers to look at the Japanese market (You can read my [speech](#) and [interview here](#)).

#### 4. Space and defence industries

South Australia's connection with Japan isn't limited to the 'water of life'. I am sure many of you remember the return of the Hayabusa2 capsule to Woomera, South Australia last year. South Australia is home to the Australian Space Agency and its vast expanse of land makes it the perfect place for space cooperation.

When I visited the Australian Space Discovery Centre, I was gifted an adorable 'Koalanaut', which is a koala soft toy dressed as an astronaut. I was jokingly told, 'we want to work with Japan to send a koala into space', which brought a smile to my face.



The *Koalanaut* I received when I visited the Australian Space Discovery Centre



Satellite Tracking Simulation Room  
(Himawari 9 shown on screen)

If I were to talk about the state's major defence industry, I would have to say it is regrettable that the Japanese Soryu submarine was not chosen for the Future Submarine project by the Australian federal government. I do hope, however, that Japan and Australia will be able to cooperate together in the area of defence equipment in the future.

## 5. Hydrogen

South Australia has a strong focus on hydrogen. From this month, 700 households in Adelaide will be fed hydrogen from the gas distribution grid. You can sense the strong enthusiasm in South Australia for promoting cooperation with Japanese businesses in this field. One perfect example is capital investment by Mitsubishi Heavy Industries in H2U, a local green hydrogen developer. I look forward to seeing future developments in this area.



Hydrogen Park South Australia in Tonsley Innovation District

## 6. On to Riverland

Recommended by former president of the National RSL, former Major-General Peter Phillips, whom I'd met previously in Canberra, I visited the town of Barmera in the Riverland region of South Australia. It took roughly 3 hours one way by car from Adelaide. I decided to visit this part of South Australia because this is where the Loveday Internment Camp used to be.

During World War II, citizens of Japan, Germany and Italy were interned in Loveday. There were approximately 1,000 Japanese internees. Guided by Loveday historian, Rosemary Gower, I found the visit to the former site incredibly profound and moving.



Loveday Internment Camp, which housed Japanese internees during World War II. I visited the site with Mayor of Berri Barmera, Mr Peter Hunt JP (Second from left) and members of the Parliament of South Australia (Third from the right, and far right).



Mayor Hunt asked me to join him on a houseboat. Anyone can use the houseboat, even to go fishing.

The evening prior to the visit, Mayor Hunt and his wife kindly welcomed us to dinner on-board a houseboat. We travelled down Australia's longest river, the Murray River and took in the beautiful sights of the Riverland region. Mayor Hunt told us that they've never had an Ambassador make a visit out to the region. I responded with, "Japan and Australia have shared a dark period in their past, but now we share basic values and strategic interests. You could say we're in the same boat now!" which was met with laughter and cheers by many on-board. It was a wonderful evening in a typically Aussie-style atmosphere; natural and relaxed.

What I found really special was the next day we received a bracelet as a gift (photo below) featuring the *Hi no Maru* or Japanese flag made by Indigenous Australians of Erawirung country. The beading is intricate and beautifully handmade. This will be my lucky bracelet.



The *Hi no Maru* bracelet (right) made by an Indigenous Australian from Erawirung country (on left in the left photo) and Loveday historian, Rosemary Gower (middle of the left photo).

YAMAGAMI Shingo