



Japan-Australia Exchange Program: Japanese/POW Friendship Program

August 2012

Embassy of Japan, Australia

The Japanese/POW Friendship Program is a program through which the Government of Japan (GOJ) invites former Australian Prisoners of War (POWs) of the Japanese during the Second World War to Japan.

1. Objective

- The program aims to promote mutual understanding between the peoples of Japan and Australia by fostering a spirit of reconciliation and encouraging the growth of friendship between the two nations.

2. Program

- The program for the Japanese fiscal year (JFY) 2012 is scheduled to take place from the 1st to the 8th of October 2012.
- A total of ten people, including 5 former POWs and their associated carers, have been invited to participate in the program.
- The program will incorporate visits to Tokyo and Kyoto, as well as visits to places of individual significance to the participants. It includes meetings with relevant government leaders/officials.

3. Background

- The program commenced in JFY 2010. The program for JFY 2010 and JFY 2011 was conducted in March 2011 and November/December 2011 respectively, during which 5 former POWs along with their carers were invited to Japan.
- They paid a courtesy call on the Japanese Foreign Minister on both occasions. With respect to the JFY 2011 program, the former POWs and their carers met Foreign Minister Koichiro Gemba, who reiterated at the meeting Japan's feelings of deep remorse and heartfelt apology for the tremendous damage and suffering inflicted on many people during the war, including former Australian prisoners of war.
- Mrs. Lorna Johnston, on behalf of the invitees for JFY 2011, expressed their appreciation of the program. She stated that she hoped the visit would contribute to enhancing peaceful and friendly relations between Japan and Australia in the future.