

## **The Japan Society Annual General Meeting 2014**

The Society's 2014 AGM took place on 18 June 2014 at the Embassy of Japan. The membership was well represented and we are grateful to all who attended and who took the time to vote by proxy. Following the formal business of the AGM there was a drinks reception.

### **Minutes of the 117<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting of The Japan Society**

*Held at the Embassy of Japan, 101-104 Piccadilly, London W1  
at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday, 18 June 2014*

#### **Chairman's Welcome**

Sir David Warren, the Chairman, opened the meeting by welcoming all members and their guests to the AGM along with the Society's President, the Japanese Ambassador, Mr Keiichi Hayashi. He thanked the Ambassador and his colleagues at Japanese Embassy for their consistent support for all the Society's activities.

Ambassador Hayashi was invited to say a few words.

#### **Ambassador Hayashi**

Ambassador Hayashi welcomed members of the Japan Society to the Embassy for his fourth AGM as its President.

The Ambassador reflected on Prime Minister Abe's visit to Northern Ireland in June 2013 and his second official visit to the UK at the end of April this year. He reflected on the bi-lateral talks held on regional and global issues highlighting Prime Minister Abe's commitments to make Japan a productive contributor to peace. Prime Minister David Cameron welcomed the idea of Japan playing an even greater role in the maintenance of regional and global security, which was demonstrated by the agreement of both Prime Ministers to accelerate their bi-lateral defence and security cooperation. The Ambassador further noted the declaration by both Japan and the UK to enhance their economic business partnership by working towards a Japan-EU Economic Partnership to be ratified in 2015.

The Ambassador finished his speech by making reference to the long history of the Japan Society in promoting Anglo-Japanese relations and had no doubt that with Sir David Warren as Chairman the Society would flourish.

#### **Sir David Warren**

The Chairman thanked the Ambassador for his comments and reflected on the strength of the bi-lateral relationship on both the political and economic front. He explained that both the Japan Society and the Embassy had had a busy and eventful year and highlighted some of the regular business and education programmes of the Society. The monthly academic lectures on a wide range of subjects, have this past year included mountaineering in Japan, contemporary art and architecture and the history of Japan and Korea relations. This has run alongside business related events and seminars inviting senior representatives from government and experts and commentators on topical political and economic issues. This programme of lunches, evening seminars and workshops enabled members of the Society to keep abreast of major economic and political

developments. Sir David hoped that such events covering current issues would continue to be a major focus of the business related activities. The Chairman also mentioned the valuable work carried out by the JIYC volunteers and the range of education programmes and family events run by the Society over the past year including a family day on the Golden Hinde.

The Chairman also mentioned the Society's new publications 'The art lover's guide to Japanese museums' and a future publication of Sir John Pilcher's dispatches during his time as Ambassador of Japan (1967 – 1972) to be published by the Society in late 2014. Particular thanks was due to Sir Hugh Cortazzi for his continued work on the Biographical Portraits series.

The Society had moved offices at the end of 2013 and the Chairman took the opportunity to express great thanks to John Swire and Sons for their kind and generous support during the Society's tenancy at Swire House and throughout their recent office move. He also thanked Jason James and the staff of the Daiwa Anglo Japanese Foundation for their support in making the Society's move to Japan House a smooth transition.

Final thanks were given to both individual and corporate Society members along with Heidi Potter and the Japan Society office staff without whom the extensive and ambitious range of activities run by the Society would not be possible.

Three years had passed since the Great East Japan Earthquake and the Society's Tohoku Earthquake Relief Fund continued to support non-profit organizations in the Tohoku region with their recovery work. Applications had now closed for the fifth tranche of funding for projects which would run until the middle of 2015.

In conclusion, the Chairman explained the AGM vote and the board and trustee structure and tenure. Since January 2014 two trustees Hiroshi Hattori and Masaaki Goto had returned to Japan and the Chairman thanked them for their support during their time in London and wished them well for their new postings in Japan.

Pauline Chakmakjian and George Olcott were standing down after serving the maximum term as board members. The Chairman thanked them both for their contributions to the Society. George who had acted as Vice Chairman of the Society had been based in Tokyo for the past few years and had been invaluable in representing the Society in Japan. In addition, Andrew Cahn had decided to stand down having completed his first term on the board; the Chairman thanked him and wished him well with his new commitments as Chairman of the WWF.

Before turning to the formal business on the agenda including the election of four new trustees to the board, the Chairman invited Members to make comments and questions.

### **Comments and Questions from Members**

Sir Hugh Cortazzi enquired about the status of issue 147 of the annual Japan Society Proceedings. Heidi Potter, the Chief Executive, apologized for this missing issue and said it was in final stages of publication.

Martin Day hoped that the Society might consider the possibility of acquiring legacy funding to secure financial stability for the Society's future.

Sean Curtin thanked all contributors to the bi-monthly Japan Society Review and warmly welcomed contributions from new and existing members.

## **Agenda Items**

Nine ordinary resolutions to be considered. Voting was conducted by a show of hands.

### **The following resolutions were passed:**

1. To receive and adopt the audited annual accounts for the financial year ended 31 December 2013 and the Trustees' report.
2. To reappoint Richard Place Dobson as auditors and to authorize the Board to approve their remuneration as thought fit.
3. To elect Anna Dingley as an ordinary member of the board of the Japan Society.
4. To elect Masahiro Imai as an ordinary member of the board of the Japan Society.
5. To elect Shinichiro Masunaga as an ordinary member of the board of the Japan Society.
6. To re-appoint Akihiro Tsuchiya as an ordinary member of the board of the Japan Society.
7. To elect Jenny White as an ordinary member of the board of the Japan Society.

## **Documents**

If you wish to receive a hard copy of the annual accounts and Council Members' report, please **contact us**.