

ANGLO - KOREAN SOCIETY



JOINT PRESIDENTS

H.E. The Ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Mr Chun Yung-woo
Dr. Robert Hawley CBE

CHAIRMAN

Sir Stephen Brown KCVO

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT for 2008

1. I am pleased to report to the Annual General Meeting that the Society had another successful year in 2008.
2. The AGM held in January 2008 was exceptionally well attended and provided an opportunity for the Society to thank departing Ambassador Cho Yoon-je for his support for the Society during his time in London. Ambassador Cho thanked the Society for its work and its support for him and the Embassy. The Chairman presented Ambassador Cho with a farewell gift of a book on The History of Modern Britain written by Andrew Marr.
3. The Society's events programme has continued to grow. Our core programme of four events, the AGM, our spring tourism and culture event, the Chuseok dinner and the annual House of Commons dinner were all successful and well attended. Our Chuseok dinner took place at Asia House and included a talk on Korean culture. This was a joint event with Asia House and continued our practice of combining with like minded organisations. Hyundai kindly agreed to be the sponsor of our House of Commons dinner. In addition, we have had three new events.
4. Samsung, one of our new sponsors, hosted an event for the Society. Samsung treated the Society to a briefing on its impressive business activities in the UK. The event doubled with recollections by recently retired British Ambassador Warwick Morris of his experiences of Korea over more than 30 years. The legal firm of Laura Devine sponsored a briefing and discussion on immigration formalities for Koreans living and working in the UK. This talk clarified some of the mysteries around visa and resident permit issues and was much appreciated particularly by the Korean members of the audience. A walk around the City of London was also organised for members of the Society which was much enjoyed by all who took part.
5. The Chairman represented the Society as an observer at the UK Korea Forum for the Future which was held in London in June 2008. This provided an opportunity to meet the newly appointed Korean Ambassador to London, Mr Chun Yung-woo, who in keeping with tradition has become a Joint President of the Society. In a new departure, the AKS Committee hosted a lunch for the new Ambassador in July. The purpose of the lunch was formally to welcome Ambassador Chun to the UK and to give him an opportunity to brief the Committee on developments on the Korean peninsula and relations between the UK and Republic of Korea. In return, the Committee explained how the Society worked and how it could support his and the Embassy's work in the UK.
6. A major step forward for the Society in 2008 was the launch of its first website, which, in line with modern practice I will now give you: www.anglokoreansociety.org.uk. This has been an important development for the Society both in raising its profile and in making it easier to communicate with members and non-members about the Society's activities. There is also some evidence that it can help in attracting potential new members. Given the increasing importance of electronic communications and the internet, this was an essential step that the Society had to take. It



is good that we now have a site up and running which we can develop to enhance the Society's reach.

7. Another major development in 2008 was the opening of the Korean Cultural Centre in London where we are tonight. Under Director Choi, the KCC has been hugely supportive of the Society in allowing us use of its premises here both for our events and for our Committee meetings. We hope that the Society has contributed something to the Cultural Centre's work. For our part, we are deeply indebted to Director Choi and his colleagues for their warm welcome and practical support.

8. The Society has continued with its outreach programme by sponsoring two bursaries this year for British academics studying aspects of Korea. The two recipients are Kevin Cawley, a candidate for a PhD in Korean Studies at the University of Sheffield and Ben Jackson, a candidate for an MA in Korean literature at SOAS. Full details of their areas of study can be found on our website.

9. We could not have achieved what we did in 2008 without the support of our sponsors. We are deeply grateful to Diageo, Samsung and Hyundai for their sponsorship. This has allowed us both to organise more events and to provide more bursaries.

10. The Korean Embassy has always been generous in its support for the Society. I am delighted to inform the AGM that in January of 2009, Ambassador Chun Yung-woo donated on behalf of the Embassy £5,000 to the Society to continue its work in forging closer relations and understanding between the British and Korean people. This donation represents an important gesture of confidence in the Society and behoves us to demonstrate that we can grow the Society and increase its impact.

11. Thanks to our sponsors and the Embassy's donation, the Society is financially comfortable. However, the one area of concern remains the size of the membership. Throughout 2008 this has remained broadly static. The Committee will address this issue as a priority in 2009 but experience shows that the best way to attract new members is through the personal encouragement of existing members. If every existing member were to recruit just one new member, then the Society's position would be greatly strengthened. I encourage you all to do so.

12. In closing I would like to thank Ambassador Chun Yung-woo and the Korean Embassy, Director Choi and the team at the KCC, as well as all our sponsors for their tremendous support in 2008. I would like too to thank all members of the AKS Committee for their tireless efforts. All the work essential to make the Society what it is, is provided voluntarily, with many Committee members willingly giving up many hours of their time to make the Society a success.

13. Finally, I would like to pay tribute to one longstanding Committee member, in fact the longest serving Committee member, who is not standing for re-election this year, namely CS Khang. CS has been on the Society's Committee for nearly 40 years; a truly remarkable achievement. He is stepping down and we wish him all the best. We know he will stay in touch and hope to see him at many of our events. As a mark of appreciation for his tremendous efforts over so many years, the Committee have decided to offer Life Membership of the Society to CS. I am sure that all members of the Society will welcome and endorse that decision.

Stephen Brown

Chairman

7 February 2009

www.anglokoreansociety.org.uk