



ANGLO - KOREAN SOCIETY

Newsletter March 2009

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

Chairman: Sir Stephen Brown KCVO

From the Chairman:

Dear Members,

First, the good news: the Society had a successful year in 2008. This included the introduction of some new events. These were much enjoyed by those who attended and we hope to repeat them this year. We benefitted too from the opening of the new Korean Cultural Centre and the generous support of Director Choi and his team. The KCC has provided a venue both for the Society's events and for our Committee meetings.

Now for the better news: the Society's prospects for 2009 are excellent. With economic gloom everywhere, I am pleased to tell you that the Society is financially stronger than ever. We are well placed to weather the financial crisis. This is thanks to our sponsors, Diageo, Samsung and Hyundai whose support has enabled us to expand our events programme. We also owe a debt of gratitude to Ambassador Chun for a significant donation to the Society from the Embassy of the Republic of Korea. The Committee is considering how to put this to best use.

Our cash reserves are strong enough to enable us to continue to subsidise events this year. We are planning to take a larger and more prestigious room in the Houses of Parliament for our annual dinner. This will allow us to have over 100 guests. For the Annual dinner and for the "Two Ambassadors" event in the Houses of Parliament on 26 March, we are financially committed to achieving minimum numbers. I hope that you will all make a special effort to attend these events and to bring guests.

Membership remains a concern and this year we will be trying hard to recruit more members. In addition to various activities the Committee will organise, there is no doubt that recommendations by existing members are often the best way to bring in new members. If every member of the Society could recruit just one new member, our membership would double. So, please be on the look out for potential members among your friends and acquaintances and encourage them to join.

In closing, I want to pay tribute to two stalwarts of the Society's Committee who stood down last year, CS Khang and Derek Blake. Between them, they notch up over 70 years of loyal and dedicated work on behalf of the Society, a truly remarkable achievement. The Society would not function without commitment like this. The Committee had no hesitation in awarding both "CS" and Derek life membership and we hope that, with their Committee responsibilities behind them, we shall see them regularly at our events.

Best wishes to you all for 2009 and book early for the event on 26 March.

Stephen Brown



50 Years of Friendship, Understanding and Cultural Exchange 1956-2006
www.anglokoreansociety.org.uk



PAST EVENTS

Annual General Meeting

The 2009 AGM was held on 11th February at the Korean Cultural Centre. Approximately 40 members braved the freezing weather to attend. The surroundings were brightened by fluorescent plastic flowers and lanterns and the event was supervised by a group of Korean traffic police (actually discarded dummies), all part of the colourful 'Shine a Light' contemporary art exhibition currently at the KCC.

Our Chairman opened the formal proceedings by thanking the members for attending and welcoming Dr Robert Hawley, joint President of the Society. The Chairman then presented his report and those of the Treasurer and Social Events Secretary. These prompted comments and much positive discussion from the floor. Colonel George Gadd, Chairman of the British Korean Veterans Association, gave his report on the varied activities of the BKVA, concluding with a reference to the generosity of the people of Korea and their determination not to allow the Korean War to be forgotten.

The members who stood for the Executive Committee were duly elected, and are listed at the end of this newsletter.

Following the meeting we were joined by Ambassador Chun Yung-Woo, joint President of the Society. He was accompanied by Mr. Yoo Euy-sang, Minister & DHM, and other staff from the Embassy. The remainder of the evening was spent enjoying the excellent Korean buffet with wine.



Joint Presidents Ambassador Chun Yung-woo and Dr Robert Hawley with Chairman Sir Stephen Brown, centre, at the 2009 AGM

Annual Dinner at the House of Commons

This was held on 6th November 2008, luckily the rain held off and we were able to enjoy the stunning views across the River Thames from the Terrace Pavilion. Those who chose to start the evening with the tour of the Houses of Parliament were treated to an informative and amusing insight into the long history and traditions of the building and its occupants - for those who have never taken the tour, it comes highly recommended!

Nearly a hundred members and guests gathered for the reception, creating an enthusiastic buzz of conversation as old acquaintances were greeted and new introductions made, accompanied by the essential exchange of business cards. The lively atmosphere continued throughout the evening in the Churchill Room where the dinner was held.

To open the proceedings our Chairman, Sir Stephen Brown, introduced the Society's guests for the evening. These included Ken Lee, President of Hyundai Motor UK who sponsored the event. Then our host, Peter Bottomley MP, welcomed us to the Churchill Room with its many historic associations.

Introductions over, we enjoyed an excellent meal accompanied by generous quantities of wine, our lively conversation uninterrupted until coffee was served. Following the Loyal Toasts we settled back to listen to the guest speaker, Warwick Morris, former British Ambassador to the Republic of Korea. Warwick entertained us with his personal observations and reflections on the dramatic changes that have taken place in Korea over the last thirty years, drawing on his experiences whilst posted there from 1975 to 1979, 1988 to 1991, and finally as Ambassador from 2003 to 2008.

The evening closed with a speech of thanks given by Minister Hong Jun-Beom from the Korean Embassy, and the Chairman presented a bouquet of flowers to Sylvia Park as a token of the Society's appreciation for all her hard work in organising such an enjoyable and successful evening.

Chuseok Celebration - a joint event with Asia House

On 16th September 2008, AKS members and friends of Asia House were given a presentation on the meaning of Chuseok by Dr. Charlotte Horlyck, Lecturer in the History of Korean Art at SOAS.

We learned that Chuseok had its roots in Confucianist Ancestor worship and a bountiful harvest which are inter-linked, for in many agrarian based societies there is a direct link between showing respect to ancestors and being blessed with a favourable harvest. In a lively post talk discussion a number of those present noted that in their own cultures, such as in Latin America and elsewhere, ancestors must not be forgotten and the best of the harvest's foods are offered first to one's family line.

Dr. Horlyck noted the special foods served at this time such as songpyeong, which are crescent shaped rice cakes that are filled with beans, chestnuts and jujube, and some of the special family games played to strengthen familial relationships.

Afterwards we were treated to delicious Korean food to help us celebrate the mood of the Chuseok festival.

With thanks to Dr Ruth Taplin

Hidden Gems of the City of London

On 10th July 2008, a dull but dry summer's evening, a hardy group of AKS members and friends met at St. Paul's underground station. Our leader for the evening was AKS member Sue King, who is an official City of London Guide.

Sue's theme for the walk was 'Trading Places', recalling the long history of the City as a commercial centre. After a visit to Paternoster Square and the re-erected Temple Bar, we looked down on some remnants of Roman London, followed by looking up at some modern architecture.

Next stop the Guildhall, seat of the Lord Mayor of London and the ruling merchant classes since the 12th century, with lots more fascinating stories about people who influenced the making of this area. More twists and turns led us to Bank and the old Corn Exchange building - no longer a bustling market place, now home to luxury shops, and restaurants.

Past the site of the Lloyds Coffee House and on to our final destination, The Counting House pub on Cornhill. Here we quenched our thirst and tucked into home-made pies. We all hope Sue will share her knowledge with us again at a future AKS event.

FUTURE EVENTS

KOREA UPDATE — Thursday 26 March 2009,

House of Commons, Committee Room 10, 6.30pm.

Martin Uden, British Ambassador to the Republic of South Korea, and Peter Hughes, British Ambassador to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea will talk about the work of their Embassies and current issues within the Korean Peninsula, as well as relations with the United Kingdom particularly in the light of the recent visit to the UK by the Workers' Party of Korea and the visit in April to the UK by President Lee Myung-bak. There will be a stimulating discussion where you will have the opportunity to put your questions to the Ambassadors.

Hosted by Frank Cook MP, Member of the All-Party Britain-Republic of Korea Parliamentary Group.

Followed by a Reception in the Churchill Room. Cost £20.00 (Buffet & wine included).

To book, contact Sylvia Park on 07802 858 771 or sylviaparkairtravel@hotmail.co.uk

Chuseok Celebration — Thursday 17 September 2009

A Joint event with Asia House featuring traditional food, music and dance.

Annual Dinner at the House of Commons — Thursday 8 October 2009

NEWS

AKS Committee host new Korean Ambassador

His Excellency Mr Chun Yung-woo was appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Korea to the UK in May 2008. In a new venture, the AKS Committee invited Ambassador Chun to lunch with them on 2nd September. This was part of the Society's programme to welcome the Ambassador to the UK and to emphasise the Society's commitment to further strengthening understanding between our two peoples.

Ambassador Chun treated the Committee to an update on developments in Korea. Despite the economic difficulties around the world, the Republic of Korea still hopes to achieve levels of economic growth that leave Western economies both envious and breathless. The Ambassador also briefed the Committee on the latest state of play in North South relations. In a lively question and answer session, we were able to probe the Ambassador's thinking and to explore ways that the Society could continue to remain relevant and supportive. We updated the Ambassador on developments within the AKS including support from our new sponsors (Diageo, Hyundai Motor UK and Samsung) and the launch of our new website.

The lunch was successful in opening a dialogue with the Ambassador and reinforcing the support offered by the Society. We are grateful to The D Group, one of the UK's leading business development networks, for providing an attractive venue for the event.

Launch of AKS Website

www.anglokoreansociety.org.uk

At the end of September a website dedicated to the activities of the Society was launched, fulfilling a major aim of the Executive Committee. For members with access to the internet the website gives up to date information, with reports on past and future events and links to other sources of information.

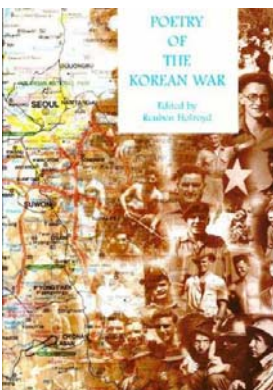
One great advantage of a website is the ease of including photographs which bring our events to life, a good way to introduce new people to our activities and encourage them to become a member. Joining is made easy with downloadable membership application forms and we have already welcomed new members in this way.

The website will be updated whenever there is new information on forthcoming events or reports on past events. If you would like to be notified by email when this happens, contact me on webmaster@anglokoreansociety.org.uk to join our mailing list.

Cathy Kim

Poetry of the Korean War

“An excellent and moving book of poems written by British soldiers of who served in the Korean War”.



The book containing 100 poems, some written by Prisoners of War, is available from Peter Poole, Membership Secretary, himself a veteran of the war.

If you wish to purchase a copy please send Peter a cheque for £7:50 and he will arrange for one to be posted to you.

Brackendale,
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AKS Executive Committee

Chairman:	Sir Stephen Brown
Treasurer:	George Harvey
Secretary:	Cathy Kim
Social Events Secretary:	Sylvia Park
Membership Secretary:	Peter Poole
Committee:	Miriam Chung Peter Corbishley Melville Guest Hyun-key Kim Hogarth Grace Koh Derek Marsh Hugh Merrill Warwick Morris Woo Seung Shin Jim Thomson
Embassy Representative:	Wun Jeung Chang
Email the committee:	info@anglokoreansociety.org.uk