

UK JSPS Alumni Association

Newsletter No.1 2004



Prof Peter Sammonds, Chair,
JSPS UK Alumni Association.

Welcome to the new JSPS UK Alumni Association

and to its first newsletter. We are an Association of former, current and candidate JSPS and STA fellows and scholars. For many of us doing research in Japan was a formative experience, which significantly helped our careers, established lifelong friendships and research collaboration, and introduced us to a very different culture.

The Alumni Association aims to promote scientific exchange between the UK and Japan. We particularly want to offer advice and ready networks to young researchers taking up fellowships in Japan and to support Japanese researchers working in the UK. We also want to provide a forum for exchange of information amongst the Association's members and to keep them in touch with developments in UK-Japan scientific collaboration. We intend to hold joint meeting and activities with universities and research institutes on themed topics and also with the various science promotion agencies. We hope to become a useful point of contact for those generally seeking information on science, technology, society and culture in Japan, by maintaining a useful website with links and contacts.

An Executive Committee runs the Alumni Association. This consists of four old hands, plus two co-opted members who are current or were very recently JSPS/STA fellows. All members of the Committee are approachable for advice and information and we welcome input on what the Association should be doing and ideas for putting on events.

We had a successful launch event at the Royal Society in June and will follow this up with the reception in Oxford in November. (There are further details in this newsletter.) We have established links with our sister German association, which is long established with a large active membership: we hope to emulate their success. The various European JSPS Alumni Associations, I am sure, will start co-operating closely with each other.

There are many areas of scientific collaboration between the UK and Japan. In the near future collaborative projects in space science, UK scientists' use of the Earth Simulator to model the earth's environment, and exciting developments in bio-medicine will see UK-Japan research collaboration grow. But, it is people that make this happen and I hope that you will join us in fostering strong UK-Japan research collaboration.

What is UK-JSPS ALUMNI ASSOCIATION?

Aim:

The aim of the Association is to promote scientific exchange between the UK and Japan. In pursuit of this objective, the Association will carry out the following objectives;

- (1) Provide personal and expert guidance to young researchers under JSPS Postdoctoral Fellowships for foreign researchers and to support Japanese researchers working in the United Kingdom.
- (2) Exchange information amongst the Association's members.
- (3) Conduct joint activities with academic institutions and organisations of science promotion.
- (4) Collect and disseminate information regarding science, technology, society and culture.

Membership:

- a) Regular Members: Individuals who are being or were supported by JSPS or STA
 - b) Associate Members: Individuals and organizations who are interested in pursuing and achieving the Association's objectives
 - c) Honorary Members: Individuals who have a distinguished record of promoting scientific exchange between the UK and Japan
- *The Association requires no membership fee, however the Association reserves the right to introduce a fee at any time.

How to Apply:

Applications for membership to the Association should be made in writing to the JSPS London Office at 12 Berkeley Street, London W1J 8DT or alternatively you can complete and submit an application form online at www.jsps.org.



First Annual General Assembly on Friday 4th June 2004

The UK JSPS Alumni Association held its first annual general assembly on the afternoon of 4 June 2004 at the Royal Society in London. Membership of the association is growing and in total the alumni embody three decades' experience of educational and research activities with Japan. Professor Yasuhisa Kanaguchi, Director of the

JSPS London Office, welcomed three dozen alumni and as part of the afternoon's programme, a series of brief lectures took place: Dr Arnulf Jäger-Waldau, a member of the German JSPS Alumni Association told us of the development of similar associations in continental Europe and Mr Takashi Kiyoura, Head of the Foreign Fellowship Division of the JSPS, outlined the expanding remit of JSPS activities. The alumni also heard from two JSPS fellows: Dr Peter Matanle of the University of Sheffield, who is about to leave for a two-year stay at Niigata University, outlined his planned comparative research into the employment prospects and expectations of Japanese and UK graduates and Mr Andrew Faulkner of Oxford University, who spent one month at Hokkaido University, not only introduced his research on Homeric hymns but also presented a number of useful tips for researchers about to leave for Japan. After the speeches, alumni had the opportunity to mingle over coffee, reminisce about Japan and revive old friendships. A commemorative photograph was taken on the balcony of the Royal Academy before the alumni reassembled to hear presentations from a number of the UK research funding councils. This first general assembly coincided with the 10th anniversary celebrations of the establishment of the JSPS London Office and the alumni had the chance to attend the welcome reception and hear speeches and lectures by Professors Motoyuki Ono, Julia Higgins, Yasuhisa Kanaguchi and Atsuko Toyama.

This was the first event organised by the alumni association since its creation in 2003 and the members of the executive board are eager to hear suggestions from alumni of the kind of activities the association could organise in the future. In the meantime, we look forward to seeing everybody at the next event in Oxford on 15 November 2004.

Dr. Hugo Dobson, Executive Committee Member



Evening Event in Oxford on 15th November 2004

The UK JSPS Alumni Association's next event will be held on Monday 15th November 2004 at the Ashmolean Museum in Oxford. Professor J. Arthur Stockwin, a distinguished professor of contemporary Japanese politics and foreign policy and former Director of the Nissan Institute of Japanese Studies will give an informal speech to the fellows at the reception. Further details of the event follow on the JSPS London Office website at www.jsps.org

Date: Monday 15th November 2004 at 17:15pm

Venue: the Eastern Art Galleries and the Cafe at the Ashmolean Museum, Beaumont Street OXFORD OX1 2PH.

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