



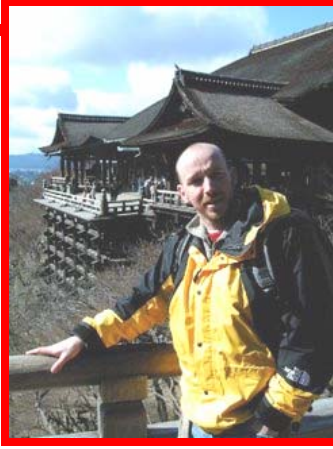
Japan's Minister for Education Meets UK-JSPS Alumni Chair and Vice-Chair

On 9th January 2006, our chairman Professor Peter Sammonds and vice-chairman Dr Martyn Kingsbury took part in a meeting with Mr Kenji Kosaka, Japan's Minister for Education Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, at the JSPS London Office while he was in the UK to attend the World Ministerial Seminar on Information and Communication Technologies in Schools. Three former Ministry of Education scholarship holders also participated in the meeting.

After a briefing on JSPS activities in the UK from Professor Masuru Osanai, Director of the JSPS London Office, the Minister was keen to brainstorm with the former fellowship holders and questioned them about their experiences in Japan and their opinions on the

current levels of research in Japan. During the discussion there was general agreement that the level of research in Japan is high but British researchers do not necessarily turn to Japan when considering researching abroad. It was suggested that reasons for this may include a preconception that Japan is extremely expensive and anxieties that language and cultural barriers will inhibit progress.

Solutions suggested for these problems included adopting more effective measures to disseminate information about Japanese Universities and research institutes by creating a web portal that would provide a one-stop resource for researchers looking for opportunities to research in Japan and providing information about daily life and living costs in Japan.



Greetings From

Freshly back in the UK from Japan, **Dr Jonathan Shanks**, University of Bath, shares his experiences on the JSPS Short-Term Award in the Land of the Rising Sun.

I am writing this six weeks after returning to the UK following my JSPS scholarship. I became aware of the JSPS from a group email sent by my PhD supervising Professor. I had never considered working in Japan before but it seemed like a great opportunity. So, I decided to apply for the short-term award in 2004; which meant finding a suitable host and institution. I am sure this start is the same for many alumni.

At the time, I was in the process of completing a PhD in structural engineering, specifically, traditional green oak carpentry connections in the UK. This research took me to the World Conference of Timber Engineering in Finland in 2004. I noticed a very large Japanese contingent at the conference so the conference proceedings provided me with all the information I needed to find a suitable research host. After thumbing through the conference proceedings, Professor Komatsu became the obvious choice as he was producing innovative and exciting work, researching traditional Japanese timber framing - perfect. Professor Komatsu is from the Laboratory of Structural Function in the Research Institute for the Sustainable Humanosphere, Kyoto University. He was happy to be my host. I applied and heard at the beginning of 2005 that I had been granted the award.

I left for Japan in January 2006. Prof. Komatsu picked me up from Kansai airport. Only later, when I found out how busy he was, did I appreciate the great effort he had gone to in taking an afternoon off work to pick me up from the airport. Acts of generosity like this from my host were not unusual.



I was working in a secondary campus of Kyo-dai in Obaku, near Uji City. In Obaku Prof. Komatsu introduced me to the research institute and laboratory, which was fantastically well equipped, then he took me to my 'compact' flat. The next day I was put to work. All the researchers had arranged a welcome party for me, which we had at the end of my first day - 24 hours in Japan and I had already eaten raw sea urchin. I guessed it would take me weeks to settle in before I could really achieve any meaningful research results but actually the laboratory was in the middle of some very large scale tests. I spent the first few weeks working very long hours helping out with these tests on the seismic performance of the Kyomizu dera floating deck.

A Recently Returned Research Fellow

Following this, I started my own work, testing traditional Japanese timber connections and comparing their behaviour with the behaviour of traditional UK timber connections tested as part of my PhD. I fabricated these connections from Japanese sugi in the extremely well equipped wood workshop. The 100+ physical tests very successful and in between tests I spent more time helping out in the laboratory. There were about twenty people working in the laboratory: about 80% were Japanese, there were two Malaysians, two of us were from Europe and one South American.



My weekly life generally involved working six days at the laboratory and spending a couple of evenings and Sundays in Kyoto or

travelling around Japan looking at temples. Working this hard meant that when I had visitors I could take time off and travel with them.

One of my visitors was my former PhD supervising professor. He came to Japan in part to sight see but mainly to visit my host to discuss future collaboration. Their meeting was very successful.

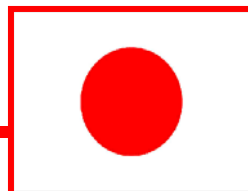
During my fellowship I managed to visit Tokyo, Yokohama, Hiroshima, Himeji, Osaka, Nara, Ise, and, my highlight, Miyajima. I also went camping in the

mountains around Fuji-yama, and went to visit my Japanese friend's parents in Enoshima during Golden Week.

A few choice memories of my time in Japan include: watching Sumo in Osaka, 'hanami' by the river in Kyoto, staying a night on Miyajima, great restaurants in Kyoto, the generosity of my colleagues, Japanese medical centre, sleeping in Daishin Ji, eating raw chicken and natto, many sake-fuelled nights, karaoke, pachinko, second-hand clothes shops, Louis Vuitton bags (not mine) and my leaving party at which everyone drank a lot.

In my spare time I created a bicycle made from waste timber material. This bike uses no glue or metal fixings but incorporates much of the research into all-timber connections being investigated in the laboratory I worked in. I presented the bicycle to Professor Komatsu at my leaving party.

In closing, I would like to thank JSPS for giving me the opportunity to conduct research in Japan, and in such an amazing research environment. I have made some great contacts and friends in Japan. The visit from my PhD Professor has created an important link between Bath University and Kyo-dai and I will definitely be working with the researchers I met at Kyo-dai in the future.



Rice and Hops-Fuelled Night in Edinburgh

'The Green Revolution in Africa' Lecture Evening



On the 1st March, 2006, the UK-JSPS Alumni Association hosted an evening lecture and dinner in Edinburgh for former JSPS fellows and interested researchers and students in the Edinburgh area. Held just a stone throw from Edinburgh Castle at the Scotch Whisky Heritage Society, the participants were treated to enjoyable and informative lectures on the topic of "The Green Revolution in Africa". Invited to speak were two leading figures in African agricultural development: Professor Keiji Otsuka of the National Graduate Institute for Policy Studies and chairman of the board of trustees of the International Rice Institute and Professor Jonathan Kydd of Imperial College London.

The speakers and participants gathered in the large meeting room at the top of the historic building where a roaring open fire was blazing, and the meeting began. Following a short welcome speech by Professor Osanai, Director the JSPS London Office,



and a brief up-date on Alumni activities by our chairman Professor Peter Sammonds, the invited speakers gave spirited and interesting lectures.

Professor Otsuka, the first to take the platform, discussed the need to develop new rice varieties that are capable of enduring droughts and presented up-to-the-minute information on the current research into creating such a variety. Complementing issues raised in Professor Otsuka's presentation, Professor Kydd discussed the socio-economic conditions required to accomplish a green revolution in Africa by drawing comparisons with the Asian green revolution.

A lively question and debate session ensued before all the participants and speakers retired to the dining room where they were treated to an even more lively whisky tasting lesson by the staff at the Scotch Whisky Heritage Centre and a delicious whisky-themed Scottish dinner.

Full transcripts of the presentations are available on the JSPS London website at www.jsps.org/

Summer Fellowship Evening



In conjunction with the British Council Japan, JSPS London organised and held a pre-departure orientation afternoon for participants on the JSPS Summer Programme 2006 and recently awarded Short-Term Award fellows on the afternoon of the 20th May, 2006.

UK-JSPS Alumni member, Dr Ruth Goodridge kindly attended the orientation afternoon and gave the pre-departure fellows the benefit of an account of her experience researching in Japan and advice on life as a researcher in Japan.



Following the orientation, the UK-JSPS Alumni Association held an "Alumni Fellowship Evening" to give the new Summer Programme and Short-Term



Programme awardees the opportunity to meet with former JSPS fellows.

Held on a warm summer evening in the rooftop Japanese 'zen' garden at the School of Oriental and African Studies, the event was well-attended by JSPS alumni members and provided an excellent opportunity for exchanging information on Anglo-Japanese research activities as well as meeting up with old friends met in Japan.

It is expected that the young researchers about to leave for Japan will contribute to the alumni association's activities by helping to broaden the scope of the Anglo-Japanese research community. We wish them successful trips to Japan and look forward to welcoming them into the Alumni Association upon their return.



Another Fellowship Evening is planned for December 2006.

JSPS Programme Presentation



If you would like JSPS to hold a Programme Presentation at your university to introduce your colleagues and students to the possibility of obtaining an opportunity to research in Japan, please contact the JSPS London deputy-director Mr Kazuyuki Todogawa at todogawa@jsps.org.

All the presentations materials and abstracts are available on the JSPS London website at www.jsps.org/

Throughout 2006 the JSPS London Office has been holding JSPS Programme Presentations at UK universities.

On the 2nd March at the University of Edinburgh, the JSPS London Office staff introduced JSPS' Postdoctoral Fellowships for Foreign Researchers, the Summer Programme and other fellowship programmes with the assistance of former JSPS fellows Dr Martyn Kingsbury (Imperial College London) and Dr Erfu Yang (University of Edinburgh) who both gave presentations of their research experiences in Japan.

On the 9th May, a similar event was held at the University of Cambridge. Former fellows Dr Martyn Kingsbury and Dr John Fossey (University of Bath) gave presentations of their experiences in Japan.

Another presentation was given at the University of Leicester on the 23rd May where former fellow Dr Tim Marczylo gave a presentation on his time in Japan.



Keep Us Up-to-Date

Please keep JSPS London up-to-date with your current contact details. If your details have changed, please e-mail your full name (including title), postal address and e-mail address to Natalie Loader at nloader@jsps.org, with your fellow ID number and indicating which publications you currently receive.

If you do not know your fellow ID number, please indicate which programme you participated on and the dates of your tenure in Japan.



Announcements

Up-Coming UK-JSPS Alumni Association Events:

- **Annual General Meeting**

We are pleased to announce that the date for the UK-JSPS Annual General Meeting, to be held at the House of Lords, will be 7th September, 2006. The AGM will be followed by a canapé and wine reception. A representative from Toyota Motors will be our guest speaker.

Please join us for what will certainly be an enjoyable evening in a prestigious location by completing the registration form on page 11 of this newsletter or by e-mailing all the requested information on the form to Natalie Loader at nloader@jsps.org.

Fellows are requested to register by Thursday 10th August. Please note, places are limited and will be reserved on a first come first serve basis. Register quickly to avoid disappointment!

Date: 7th September, 2006
Time: Registration from 6:30pm for 7pm start
Venue: House of Lords, Westminster, London

- **Alumni Fellowship Evening**

Date: 7th December 2006
Location: London (venue TBC)

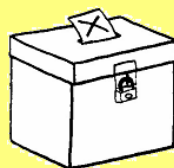


Up-Coming JSPS London Events:

- **JSPS-ICL-University of Tokyo
Large Scale Symposium**

Title: Climate Change: “Energy Technology and Green House Gas Mitigation”
Date: 27th – 28th September, 2006
Venue: Imperial College London, South Kensington Campus, London

For more information or to register, contact Natalie Loader at nloader@jsps.org



Executive Committee Elections Call for Nominations

In accordance with Article 8 of the Articles of the UK-JSPS Alumni Association, we hereby announce a call for nominations for executive committee members.

Executive committee members serve for two years and without remuneration. Voting will take place on the 7th September, 2006 at the AGM or by postal ballot.

If you would like to nominate yourself for election to an executive committee post, please contact Natalie Loader by e-mail at nloader@jsps.org or by telephone on (020)7 629 3577 for further information. The deadline for nominations is **Friday 11th August, 2006**.

Meet the UK-JSPS Alumni

Peter Sammonds: Chair



I am Professor of Geophysics at UCL and am Chair of the UK Alumni Association. I have had a long involvement with Japan, dating back

to 1991/92 when I was a JSPS Research Fellow at the Earthquake Research Institute, University of Tokyo. My research aims are to investigate the mechanics of the Earth's crust and ice sheets by studying the fundamental physics and mechanics of geological materials. I do research directed towards studying the impacts of climate change on the cryosphere and towards studying geohazards (earthquakes and volcanoes). It was for this reason I was particularly keen to do research in Japan. My host, Professor Miti Ohnaka, himself had been a JSPS Research Fellow in my lab at UCL in the past. So there was a long-standing collaboration. Working in Japan was certainly a formative experience. I loved Tokyo and made many friends there. The research on earthquake mechanics I did at ERI was both novel, because of the facilities available, and had an immediacy about it, because of the importance of geohazards in Japan. Four of my research students have since done research in Japan and I returned in 1999 as a Visiting Professor at Tokyo University. It continues to be a place for research excellence in geohazards and a country always full of surprises, even when you think you know it.

Martyn Kingsbury: Vice-Chair



A long interest in Japan and Japanese culture that stemmed from an interest in classical Japanese martial arts led me to explore the chance

of research in Japan on completing my PhD at the Bath University. I was lucky enough to be awarded a JSPS fellowship in 1990 and I spent two years working on cardiovascular pharmacology at Tohoku University in Sendai. I completed a return fellowship back in Bath and then moved to Imperial College as a research lecturer looking at various aspects of heart failure. Having become increasingly involved with and interested in teaching I recently changed roles within Imperial College and I am now a lecturer in educational development. While I maintain some links to my old research I am now teaching and researching in education. I also had a short study visit to Japan in 1995 and am constantly looking for excuses to return. I am the vice-chair of the alumni association and my main role is to assist the chair and to stand in when the chair is unavailable.

Hugo Dobson: Treasurer



Hugo Dobson is senior lecturer in the international relations of Japan and sub-dean for graduate affairs in

Association Executive Committee

the faculty of social sciences at the University of Sheffield. His research and teaching interests include Japan's international relations, multilateralism, the G8 and the role of images in international relations. He is the co-author of Japan's International Relations: Politics, Economics and Security (Routledge, 2nd edition 2005), co-editor of Britain and Japan in the Contemporary World: Responses to Common Issues (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003) and is the author of Japan and United Nations Peacekeeping: New Pressures, New Responses (RoutledgeCurzon, 2003), Japan and G7/8, 1975 to 2002 (RoutledgeCurzon, 2004) and The Group of 7/8 (Routledge 2006). He is currently co-editing books on Japan and global governance, and East Asian postage stamps as propaganda. From September 2006 he will be visiting associate professor in the Faculty of Law, Tokyo University.

Melody Liles: Secretary



Melody Liles has just completed a PhD with the Structural Biophysics Group in the School of Optometry and Vision Sciences at Cardiff University.

Melody gained a Short-Term JSPS Fellowship at Kyoto Prefectural University of Medicine under Professor Shigeru Kinoshita, an international leader in pioneering vision research. Her research interests centre around the relationship between corneal structure

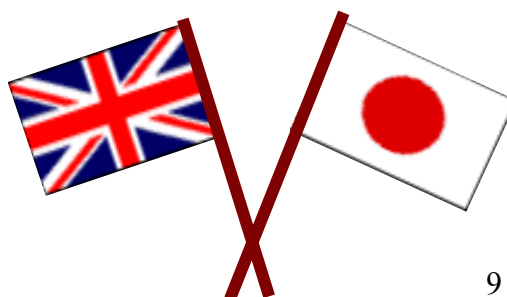
and function. Using state-of-the art techniques such as synchrotron X-ray diffraction combined with a range of biochemical studies in collaboration with the Cardiff School of Biosciences, Melody's work aims to understand better corneal transparency. Her findings have been presented at a number of conferences, including the international IOVS research meeting, ARVO. Melody is also enthusiastically involved in a number of projects, including National Science week, Researchers in Residence, Women in Science and Engineering, and is a keen adventure runner.

Lakshmi Sharma: Associate



I have been in Japan now for 6 years. I initially started on the European Commission INCO STF 14 fellowship at AIST in Tsukuba, where I stayed for 2 years. I then

received the Royal Society awarded JSPS fellowship to research at Kyoto University with Professor Kanaya for a further 2 years. I enjoyed the laboratory so much that I extended my time there as a visiting international research associate for a further year. My research field involves polymer chemistry especially structure, crystallisation, blends, rheology and biomaterials.



Registration and Membership Information

What is the UK JSPS Alumni Association?

The UK JSPS Alumni Association was launched in 2004 for former fellows of one or more of the JSPS or STA fellowships.

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.

The Articles of the UK-JSPS Alumni Association can be found in the Alumni pages on the JSPS London website at www.jsps.org/

Register for the Alumni Association

If you are not yet registered for the Alumni Association, do so now! Registration is simple and being a fully-registered member of the Alumni Association ensures that you are kept up-to-date with JSPS and UK-JSPS Alumni Association activities and that you have increased access to the Anglo-Japanese research and networking community.

Membership is currently free of charge. To register as a full member of the UK JSPS Alumni Association, you must fill out the registration form on the Alumni pages of the JSPS London website at www.jsps.org/

Once you have registered you will receive an ID number and password that will allow you the access the UK-JSPS Alumni Association pages and database of fellows on the JSPS London website.

Forgotten your ID or Password?



If you are a registered member but have forgotten your ID and password, e-mail Natalie at nloader@jsps.org who will be pleased to remind you.

AGM Registration

UK-JSPS Alumni Association: AGM Registration

I would like to attend the AGM on the 7th September, 2006.

Title: _____

Name: _____

Affiliation: _____

Membership status:

☐ registered

☐ current fellow

☐ unregistered

☐ future fellow

Postal Address: _____

Telephone Number: _____

Fax Number: _____

E-mail Address: _____

Please send completed form by **Thursday 10th August** to:

Natalie Loader
AGM Registration
JSPS
12 Berkeley Street
London W1J 8DT

Fax: 020-7-6293588

E-mail: nloader@jsps.org



Latest Calls for Proposals

- **Postdoctoral Fellowship for Foreign Researchers (Short-Term)**

Application through JSPS London Office

The next call for applications will be in **November 2006**. Please keep accessing the JSPS London Office webpage for application materials and the announcement of the exact deadline date.

- **Postdoctoral Fellowship for Foreign Researchers (Short-Term)**

Application through to JSPS Tokyo

Period of recruitment: 7 to 11 August 2006

- **Postdoctoral Fellowship for Foreign Researchers (Long-Term)**

Application through JSPS Tokyo

Period of recruitment: 4 to 8 September 2006

- **Summer Programme**

Application through British Council Japan

Period of recruitment: To Be Confirmed (Please see the British Council Japan's Website)

- **Invitation Fellowship (Short-Term)**

Application through JSPS Tokyo

Period of recruitment: 4 to 8 September 2006

- **Invitation Fellowship (Long-Term)**

Application through JSPS Tokyo

Period of recruitment: 4 to 8 September 2006

- **International Joint Research Projects**

Application to Royal Society

Period of recruitment: 15 September 2006

Application to British Academy

Period of recruitment: 30 September 2006

Please refer to the JSPS London website for more detailed information about each programme.

www.jsps.org/

New Website Launch!

The JSPS are pleased to announce the renewal of their website. The site has detailed information about JSPS Programmes and reports of JSPS activities. Registration for the alumni association is now simpler and just a few clicks away... Take a look at:

www.jsps.org/

