

The magazine of the
British Chamber of
Commerce in Japan

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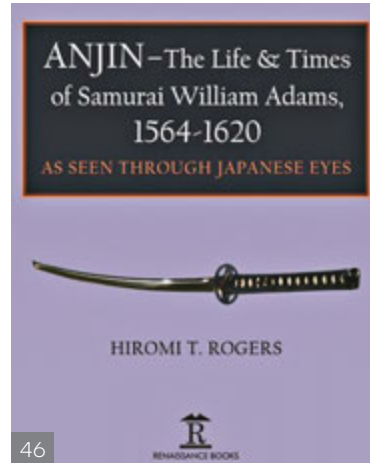
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The British Chamber of Commerce in Japan

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To strengthen business ties between Britain and Japan, promote and support the business interests of all our Members, and actively encourage new business entrants into the Japanese market as well as Japanese investment into the UK.

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New Year greetings for a happy,
healthy and prosperous 2017!



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Guys and LOLs

Taking stock, looking ahead

SIMON FARRELL | simon@custom-media.com

As we kick off another year, I'd like to wish *BCCJ ACUMEN* readers good health, happiness and prosperity over the coming 12 months. After the shocks of 2016, we can expect an intriguing 2017.

As always, please let us know if you think you know a candidate—individual or organisation—with strong UK-Japan links and worthy of being featured in *BCCJ ACUMEN*.

Speaking of which, congratulations to Guy Perryman, who decorated our September 2016 front cover, for being appointed Member of the Most Excellent Order of the British Empire (MBE) "for services to British music in Japan".

Also to Marianne Black, chair of the Board of Trustees at the British School in Tokyo, whose MBE is for "services to British international education" (page 30).

Well before Guy joined the Executive Committee of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) in 2016, he had been a popular member of the British expatriate community in Tokyo. He was also an active BCCJ volunteer, especially as co-host and task force member of the annual BCCJ British Business Awards (BBA), as well as promoter and supporter of good causes (see opposite page).

In early December 2016, Perryman had graciously accepted my invitation to write an occasional column for *BCCJ ACUMEN*. I had asked him to write because I suspected he had some interesting anecdotes about the visiting celebrities he had encountered in his quarter of a century as a radio and club DJ in Tokyo.

While he's not the kiss-and-tell type, he did promise to make his pieces entertaining. His mix of nostalgic and current stories begin in February.

I'm afraid the best I can offer in terms of such tales came early in my media career, when I interviewed an ageing 1970s glam rocker on another reunion tour of expat spots. The long-haired lead singer arrived late, haggard and reeking of alcohol, with groupies on each arm.

Dramatically, in mid-sentence, his false upper front teeth popped out of his mouth. After noisily bouncing off a glass table and spinning wildly across the hotel lobby's shiny floor, they landed at the feet of a bemused onlooker.



Vain and sheepish, the rocker begged me—with a lisp—not to reveal in print that he wore dentures (the tardiness, booze and blondes were fine) in return for backstage tickets. It is a pledge I have honoured for some 20 years.

Cause for effect

Custom Media, publisher of *BCCJ ACUMEN*, is pleased and honoured to be continuing, for another year, its support for the following great causes (in alphabetical order):

Animal Refuge Kansai—founded in 1990 by Elizabeth Oliver MBE, this is a network of people who love animals, believe in sharing their lives with them and work to rescue them from suffering.

Knights in White Lycra—an amateur cycling team, founded in 2012 by BCCJ BBA 2015 Person of the Year Rob Williams, it raises funds for, and awareness regarding, community projects and disadvantaged children in Japan. KIWL aims to raise ¥7 million in 2017, the second consecutive year it has supported our next not-for-profit organisation.

Mirai no Mori—since 2011 it has provided safe, professional and fun life-changing experiences, such as outdoor programmes for abused, neglected and orphaned Japanese children.

Refugees International Japan—led by President Jane Best OBE to support projects that restore the dignity of refugees displaced by war and conflict. Funds are channelled to sustainable, community-led projects implemented by experienced organisations already working with refugees in the field.

Chris Russell

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First of all, I would like to wish all *BCCJ ACUMEN* readers a happy new year. While last year presented its fair share of challenges, it should not be forgotten that obstacles often have opportunities in tow. Rest assured that, over the coming 12 months, we will be highlighting prospects in the UK-Japan relationship.

A new year typically represents a chance to turn over a new leaf, but it is also a moment for reflection. And it is on that note that we take stock of some of the events of 2016, which will continue to reverberate for a long time to come.

On page 16, we have coverage of a seminar jointly held by the Daiwa Institute of Research and the Royal Institute of Foreign Affairs. Taking as its theme "Economic Uncertainty, Risk and the Limits of National Governance: Perspectives from Japan and the UK", the event brought together experts such as Lord Alistair Darling, former chancellor of the exchequer, and Bill Emmott, former editor-in-chief of *The Economist*, for their take on the current state of the world.

And on page 26, Baroness Ashton, former high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, covers similar ground. Those looking to make sense of President-elect Donald Trump and Brexit would do well to bear in mind their views.

We take an in-depth look at the latest results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (page 29), also known as PISA, which always provides fodder for the debate that surrounds the contentious subject of education. We also discuss what the programme has to say about the education systems in the UK and Japan.

We then focus on the future, as we look at efforts to promote and grow the UK's aerospace sector on page 24. On a lighter note, on page 32 we carry an interview with the Perfect Liars Club comedy event founder, Layla McCay. She talks about her desire to help build an English-language cultural scene in Tokyo. 🍀

MEDIA

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Suntory buys craft gin firm



Craft gin is enjoying a growth in popularity. • PHOTO: SIPSMITH

The London-based craft gin distillery Sipsmith has been bought by the spirits firm Beam Suntory Inc. for an undisclosed sum, the BBC reported on 16 December.

The deal follows other moves by large drinks firms to tap the increasing demand for craft beers and spirits. For Sipsmith, which was founded in 2009, the acquisition bolsters its presence in existing export markets and adds new ones in Central and South America.

Beam Suntory, a subsidiary of Suntory Holdings Limited and the world's third-largest spirits firm, counts Yamazaki whisky, Laphroaig Scotch and Courvoisier cognac among its products.

JR East leads group bid for West Midlands rail

A consortium led by East Japan Railway Company has made a bid to run the West Midlands network franchise, the *Nikkei Asian Review* reported on 31 December. Other members of the consortium include Mitsui & Co., Ltd. and the Abellio Group.

They will compete against the existing franchise holder, a UK-French joint venture. The bid represents JR East's first attempt to run an overseas train operation as it seeks new sources of growth.

The decision will be made in June.

Citi role in pound crash probed

The Japanese trading operations of Citigroup Inc. are being investigated by the Bank of England for its role in October's "flash crash" in sterling, the *Financial Times* reported on 6 December.

The investigation is focusing on multiple sell orders that came from Citi's Tokyo desk. Although not believed to have started the crash, they nonetheless played a key role in sending sterling to its lowest value in 31 years. A panicky trader and an electronic tool known as an Aggregator are possible reasons for the orders.

The incident saw the value of the pound fall from \$1.26 to \$1.14, with the currency sliding 9% in about 40 seconds.

Maid café makes Manchester debut

The Japanese phenomenon of maid cafés has made its way to north England, the *Manchester Evening News* reported on 3 December.

The first maid café event in Manchester was hosted by the Newcastle-based Meian Maids, a group established last year by student of Japanese Sally Blake. According to Blake, the majority of the group's customers are female, unlike in Japan where the clientele is predominantly male.

Maid cafés emerged in Tokyo in the early 21st century. They typically see waitresses serving customers while performing dances, playing games and drawing pictures, behaviour that in Japan is generally described as "cute", or *kawaii*.



Japanese-style maid cafés have arrived in the UK. PHOTO: MEIAN MAIDS

Eddie Jones to help Team GB in Tokyo

England rugby Head Coach Eddie Jones has been asked to help with Team GB's preparations for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the BBC reported on 13 December.

Team GB would be seeking Jones's advice based on his success, the fact his team will be competing in Japan the year before the Games at the 2019 Rugby World Cup, and the experience he gained as coach of the country's national rugby team, according to British Olympic Association Chairman Sir Hugh Robertson.

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 Products | Fashion | People | Sport
 Travel | Food | Drink | Technology
 Science | Culture | Health | Energy
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Sports Direct sells Dunlop to Kobe firm

Sports Direct International plc has agreed to sell its Dunlop brand to Sumitomo Rubber Industries Ltd. for \$137.5mn, *The Daily Telegraph* reported on 27 December.

The British firm expressed its intention to become the “Selfridges” of sports retail, and as such would focus on its core UK business and developing relationships with third parties. As part of the deal, Sports Direct will be granted a royalty-free licence to continue using the Dunlop brand name.

Sports Direct owner Mike Ashley bought Dunlop Slazenger in a 2004 deal reportedly worth at least £40mn.

Banks threat to leave London

At a meeting on 1 December, Japanese banks including Nomura Holdings, Inc. and Daiwa Capital Markets Europe Limited told the UK government that they would begin moving some operations out of London within six months unless they were given clarity on the UK’s post-Brexit relationship with the EU, the *Financial Times* reported on 16 December.

The meeting was held with City Minister Simon Kirby and International Trade Minister Mark Garnier and was described as being a “frank exchange of realism”.

Funds set for Welsh plant



The site is on the Isle of Anglesey off the north-west Welsh coast. • PHOTO: HORIZON NUCLEAR POWER

Japan plans to contribute a financial package worth ¥1 trillion to the proposed nuclear reactor project at Wylfa Newydd off the Welsh coast, the *Nikkei Asian Review* reported on 14 December.

The money will be provided in the form of loans from the Japan Bank for International Cooperation and the Development Bank of Japan to Horizon Nuclear Power Limited, which has been contracted by the British government to build and run the plant. Horizon is a subsidiary of Hitachi, Ltd.

The Japanese government sees the funding as a way of boosting exports of its nuclear power technology.

Calbee, Unilever win women awards

UK–Japan firms were among those recognised in the inaugural Japan Women Award 2016, presented by *Forbes Japan* in conjunction with LiB, Inc., a Tokyo-based female employment agency, *Japan Today* reported on 28 December. The awards recognise female entrepreneurs and firms working to attain gender equality.

Calbee, Inc., which runs a factory in Wales, was recognised for having boosted to 22% the number of women in managerial positions in fiscal 2016, up from 8% in fiscal 2011. Meanwhile, Unilever Japan K.K. was recognised for its efforts to promote a female-friendly workplace.



Japan Women Award celebrates female entrepreneurship and gender equality.

UK–Japan science team bags Daiwa prize

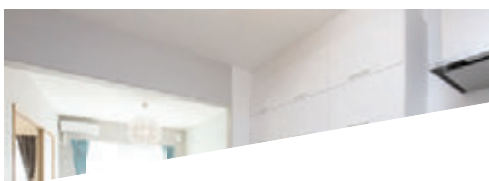
A team from Imperial College London was among those that won the 2016 Daiwa Adrian Prize, the university announced on 15 December.

The award came for collaboration—between the university’s Department of Materials and Kyushu University—on research in ceramic oxide surfaces. The universities have had an active relationship for more than 20 years.

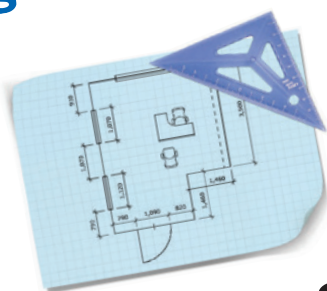
The prize is administered by the Daiwa Anglo-Japanese Foundation and given every three years, with winners receiving £10,000 in prize money. Three other prizes were also awarded.



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Happy New Year

To BCCJ members

EMMA HICKINBOTHAM

I would like to wish all British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) members and *BCCJ ACUMEN* readers a very happy new year—*akemashite omedetou gozaimasu*. Here's hoping that 2017 will be a successful, happy and prosperous year for you all. Normal service resumed at the BCCJ office after a wonderful festive break, and we are back to business in organising some great events for our members.

As is customary in Japan, we will be kicking off the year with a *shinnenkai* (new year's party) on 18 January at the Andaz Hotel in Toranomon. This is a chance to express our thanks to one another for last year, and to wish everyone the very best for the year ahead. Do join us in the Tavern Lounge to meet members and non-members alike and find out more about our work at the BCCJ.

As is also customary—perhaps not so much in Japan, but certainly in the UK—I have made some new year's resolutions. I am a keen cyclist, and every year resolve to get faster and stronger. But each time my plans to train my way to peak fitness are thwarted by work, family commitments

and a love of nice food and wine. Maybe, just maybe, 2017 will be the year?

Looking ahead

I think we are perhaps all wondering what 2017 will hold. The global events of 2016 caused disruption and uncertainty in all business sectors, and quite how this year will pan out remains to be seen. Will Donald Trump's presidency bring the boost to global growth that the markets are anticipating? Will China's credit bubble burst and give rise to even greater levels of economic uncertainty? In Japan, we wait to see what impact the breakdown of the Trans-Pacific Partnership may have on growth, and how the Bank of Japan will continue in its efforts to reflate the economy.

All these issues influence the business of our members hugely. As such, the BCCJ will strive

The BCCJ will strive
to continue providing
high-value events.

to continue providing high-value events with great speakers who can offer expert opinions on a range of topics such as globalisation, the new US presidency and the unfolding story of Brexit.

Last year, I was very excited to see Japan gain momentum in its commitment to diversity and equality in the workplace. I hope that 2017 will deliver further progress in this area. It has been long recognised that diverse teams are more successful and profitable, and I'm very proud to say many BCCJ member firms are pioneers on this front.

This year we will also be running a series of events around UK-Japan partnerships, starting with the nuclear decommissioning work involving TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company) and Sellafield Ltd. Japan and the UK enjoy a great relationship in many sectors and there are numerous success stories from which we can all learn. We hope to cover partnerships in the fields of life sciences, education, financial services and more. Please do keep an eye on our events page on the BCCJ website for details of all our upcoming offerings. 🇬🇧

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YEAR IN REVIEW AND 2017 FORECAST

“Fads starting with young people, transcending generations”. That, in a nutshell, was how the *Nikkei Marketing Journal (NMJ)* explained the reason it picked smartphone game Pokémon GO and the hit animated film *Kimi No Na Wa (Your Name)* as its top two choices for 2016.

The thrice-weekly newspaper of the retail industry issued its *Hitto Shohin Banzuke* (List of Top Hit Products) on 7 December. Now in its 45th year, the list is distinctively Japanese in that it adopts a sumo-style hierarchical listing, or *banzuke*, using traditional calligraphy and even titles such as *yokozuna* (grand champion) and *ozeki* (champion) to rank the products.

Among the items on the *NMJ*'s 2016 list are:

- The city of Hiroshima (6th place), which was visited by US President Barack Obama and whose popular baseball team captured first place in the Central League.
- A boom in low-cost consumption (7th place), with ¥100 shops and other businesses that appeal to thrifty consumers thriving.
- *Minpaku*, or accommodation in private homes (9th place). Initially encouraged to alleviate the country's hotel room shortage, thanks to Internet services such as Airbnb, it's been booming, with more than 3 million guests reported in the first 10 months of 2016—double the number for the previous year.

Popular or controversial imports or items with a decidedly foreign slant were fewer than previously. They included the Rio 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games, 3rd place; the Donald Trump phenomenon, 6th place; and Dyson's premium Supersonic hair dryer, 10th place. Special mention was also given to Opdivo, the promising new cancer medication jointly developed in Japan and the US.

The *NMJ* predicts that the year ahead will mark the “starting gun” in terms of consumption in the lead up to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. One aspect of this will be



The summer's Pokémon GO craze saw people flock to Yoyogi Park to play the game. • PHOTO: HIDEYA HAMANO VIA FLICKR

asureja (athleisure), the fashion trend in which such garments as yoga pants, tights and leggings that look like athletic wear are worn in other settings, such as at work or on social occasions.

The *NMJ* emphasises that its key criteria for picking a hit product or service were determined not merely on profitable performance, but also by taking into account innovative marketing and how a product influenced consumption patterns, for example through carving out of new demand that previously had not existed.

Nonetheless, the average consumer in Japan may devote more attention to reading about hits than actually purchasing them. In response to the question, “Did you buy one of this year's hit products?”, out of 1,819 respondents to an online survey conducted by the *Asahi Shimbun* on 3 December, 66% replied in the negative, with their three main reasons for lack of interest being “Among them, there was nothing I wanted”; “They didn't appeal to me”; and “I don't like to be manipulated by information into buying something”.

Looking ahead at 2017, there's talk that the introduction, starting on 24 February, of a “Premium Friday” system to extend weekends—

by encouraging government offices and firms to give workers time off from noon on the last Friday of each month—may spur new consumption. During March, Japanese baseball fans are certain to watch the 4th World Baseball Classic—Japan won the first two and made the finals in the third.

Two leisure complexes are coming: IHI Stage Around Tokyo opens on 30 March in Toyosu, and Legoland Japan on 1 April in Nagoya. The Ginza Six complex, the largest shopping facility in its namesake district with 47,000m² of floor space, will open on 20 April at the former site of the Ginza Matsuzakaya department store.

Sometime during the first half of the year, Universal Studios Japan in Osaka will open Minion Park based on the popular characters from the *Despicable Me* franchise, hailed as the “world's largest Minion area”.

And from October, drivers will be able to apply for number plates with designs related to the 2020 Olympics and Paralympics. In addition, pedestrians will have free reign over a 6,500m² plaza, once construction on the Marunouchi side of Tokyo Station is completed, with bus and taxi stands moved to opposite ends of the building.

LABOUR PINCH GETS WORSE

Hito ga tarinai! (We can't get enough people!) is being heard increasingly in Japan's retail and service sectors. With crackdowns on unpaid overtime threatening to exacerbate the pinch, management is being forced to get creative to make sure sufficient staff are on hand.

On 25 November, *Toyo Keizai Online* reported that to conserve human resources (and avoid being stigmatized as a "black company" that overworks its staff), several restaurant chains have announced plans to cut back on hours of operation.

Royal Host, for example, announced late in 2016 it would suspend all-night operations until January, and was also mulling selective holidays for outlets one

day a week. Over the past several years, about one-fifth of Skylark restaurants have been closing two hours earlier than previously. McDonald's Japan has reduced the number of outlets operating round-the-clock by around 40% over the past two years. And in March 2016, Aeon supermarkets in the greater Kanto area began closing one hour earlier.

On 23 December the *Nikkei Marketing Journal (NMJ)* reported on some innovative attempts to tap latent worker availability. For housewives, that might mean only for a few hours a day when they can get away from caring for an elderly parent or toddler.

When the Izumi Yume Town Hiroshima shopping centre put

out word that it would accept part-timers for as little as two hours a day, it received a greater than anticipated number of applicants.

One way in which employment agencies have started tapping the pool of underutilised workers is by harnessing the LINE smartphone application. In theory, one worker might post a message on a network saying, "Sorry, I can't make it in today—my child just developed a high fever". To this another might respond, "I can fill in for you".

In February last year, McDonald's Japan, another company that relies heavily on part-time workers, went online with a new system called *Omakase! Makku*. This allows people looking for a part-time job at outlets close to their homes to quickly arrange

interviews and start work, even on the day they apply. Applications can be made either by telephone or via the web. This flexible, worker-driven system, referred to in the *NMJ* as *wagamama kinmu* (literally, selfish employment), may very well be a wave of the future.

To enable part-timers to make contributions to the national pension fund, the law was recently changed so that people who work as little as 20 hours a week can pay into the system. However, this may backfire in the short term—a survey of 52 major enterprises found that nearly twice as many firms (19) said workers had requested a cut in their working time compared with those who wished to work longer hours (10). 🇯🇵



Royal Host cut back its all-night operations in January due to a tighter labour market.

PHOTO: MATHIEU THOUVENIN VIA FLICKR

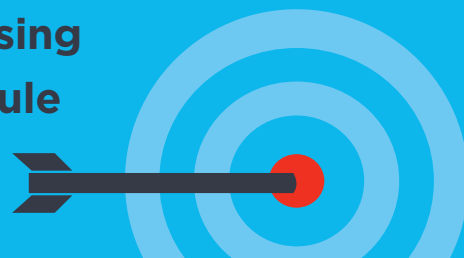
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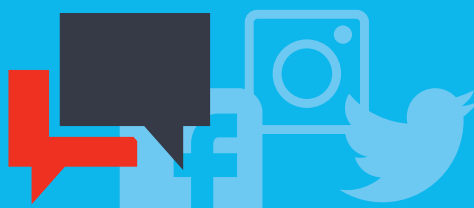
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DAVID BICKLE | @BCCJ_President

The traditional New Year tuna auction at Tokyo's world famous Tsukiji fish market saw a whopping £500,000 bid for a 210kg specimen. Not a record, but a very high price, indeed. It would certainly be welcome were it a sign of confidence in Japan's economy for the year ahead.

Only time will tell if there is a correlation, but what we do know is that the world will be navigating through significant change in 2017. There will be elections in Europe, the commencement of Brexit negotiations, and the inauguration of a new president in the US.

In times like this, many in business will look to their personal networks as a source of guidance and inspiration. Leon Shapiro and Leo Bottary address this phenomenon in their book *The Power of Peers*, reminding us that the most accomplished business leaders exchange information and ideas, and network to make deals and build partnerships. They work together to establish best practices, and reach out to leaders outside their firms to accelerate growth. In short, they provide one another with value that they cannot find elsewhere.

In this vein, the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) will continue to bring to its members people who matter, and in doing so will facilitate opportunities for interaction with peers, clients and stakeholders. Events began on 16 January with a case study of a successful UK-Japan partnership in the nuclear industry, between Sellafield Ltd. and TEPCO (Tokyo Electric Power Company), and that was followed on 19 January by our new year *shinnenkai* networking event at the Andaz Hotel.

Then, on 1 February, we are delighted to be welcoming the chief executive officers of BCCJ platinum members Barclays Japan, Jaguar Land Rover Japan and the president of GlaxoSmithKline K.K. for a panel discussion on key business themes for 2017.

Executive Committee

For those members who wish to help shape the direction and programmes of the BCCJ, I urge

Accomplished business leaders exchange information and ideas.

you to stand in the forthcoming elections for the 2017/18 Executive Committee (Excom). The BCCJ is blessed with a very committed and capable Excom, comprising individuals with a diverse range of experiences and capabilities.

Like any organisation, Excom evolves over time and it is, therefore, with a measure of sadness—but also immense gratitude—that I thank Jonty Brunner and Emily Le Roux, who stepped down from Excom at the end of last year. They have both been generous contributors of their time and talents in support of chamber goals, and we wish them well as they take on new roles.

On the subject of Excom, I would like to close by congratulating Reiko Sakimura of Clifford Chance on being named in December as Asian Legal Business Japan Dealmaker of the year, and Guy Perryman, who was awarded an MBE in the New Year Honours. Collectively, the individual successes of BCCJ members reflect well on the chamber, and these announcements were a tremendous way to end 2016 and to begin 2017. May they be a harbinger of great things for BCCJ members in the year ahead. 🇬🇧

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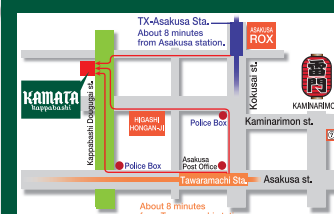


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The Brexit result has revealed how deeply divided political opinion is in the UK. • PHOTO: GARON S VIA FLICKR

Risky times

Confab on UK-Japan ties in a changing world

BY MAXINE CHEYNEY • PHOTOS: DAIWA INSTITUTE OF RESEARCH LTD

A number of seismic economic and political shifts shook the global financial and political landscape last year, including the UK's Brexit decision and the election of Donald Trump as president of the US.

It was against this uncertain backdrop that the Daiwa Institute of Research and the Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) convened a seminar titled, "Economic Uncertainty, Risk and the Limits of National Governance: Perspectives from Japan and the UK".

Held at the Daiwa Conference Hall in Tokyo's Marunouchi district on 7 December, the joint seminar included a video address by Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe and panels of leading political and financial experts.

Confidence in UK-Japan ties

"Brexit does not mean a retreat from the world", said Tim Hitchens CMG LVO, then-UK Ambassador to Japan, as part of the event's opening remarks. He noted that, although there have been some "ups and downs in the UK-Japan relationship, including the

UK's decision to join the (China-led) Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank ... the fundamentals of the UK-Japan relationship remain unchanged and strong".

Indeed, the UK's involvement in the delicate geopolitical balance in East Asia was an important point at the seminar.

"A UK that appears inclined to be more accommodating towards China worries Japan's political leadership and citizens, who are aware of this and its implications", warned Sahoko Kaji, a professor at Keio University's Faculty of Economics.

But Hitchens highlighted the key bonds that bind the UK and Japan, including shared values and interest in having a rules-based international system of democracy. He also underlined the transformation of the UK-Japan defence and security relationship, describing Japan as the UK's "closest security partner in Asia".

This bond, he said, has been strengthened through collaboration between the Japan Self-Defense Forces and the British Armed Forces, as well as shared foreign policy on issues such as South Sudan and Syria.

Secondly, he stated, "We have an exceptionally strong trade and investment relationship". Explaining that this is the central pillar of the UK-Japan relationship, with the UK being the top EU destination for Japanese investment, he added that British exports to Japan are worth £10 billion a year, according to the latest available figures.

Hitchens maintained that research and development (R&D) will remain key to the UK-Japan relationship. The UK is Japan's fourth-largest global partner in R&D collaboration, with more than 8,000 researchers, collectively, in research areas ranging from dementia to cyber security.

Then there is the upcoming Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, which have taken centre stage in UK-Japan collaboration.

Hitchens emphasised the UK's intention to maintain transparency with the Japanese government and Japanese businesses to "ensure there are no surprises" regarding the Brexit negotiations.

"Each sector has a different set of concerns", Hitchens explained. But for Japanese firms, access to labour, research funding, as well as

passporting rights and equivalence for the financial services sector are some of the most important. The UK is committed to taking on Japan's views, he added.

The problem with politics

Political and economic tensions within the UK had a strong hand in the Brexit referendum result, as they shall have in the Brexit negotiations with the EU, too. The decline of the post-war consensus at the end of the 1970s combined with the 2008 financial crisis have divided the UK population on both economic and political levels, and the referendum revealed these inequalities and the polarisation in political views.

The Rt Hon. Lord Alistair Darling, member of the House of Lords and chancellor of the exchequer during 2007–10, sought to clarify how the referendum result came about, explaining that one of the main reasons—and a potential barrier to an agreeable solution to the forthcoming negotiations—was domestic politics on “both sides of the channel”.

“This referendum was nothing to do with trading relationships”, he said, explaining that the result reflects worldwide trends. A dissatisfied section of society had changed the political and economic environment, in which immigration was a major factor. Comparing the reaction of London residents and those of the capital's outskirts, he noted that “perceptions are just very different”.

“For the first time we now have a generation who believe their children are going to be poorer than they were”, Darling added. “It is what happens when you find a large population simply feeling they have been left behind”.

This move away from mainstream thinking was in step with recent developments in

“I think that the new formula has to be one that emphasises equality”.

Europe. In France, support for Marine Le Pen's far-right National Front continues to increase, and in Germany the Alternative für Deutschland Party, established in 2013, has gained support, particularly in opposition to Chancellor Angela Merkel's refugee policies. In addition, the recent presidential election in Austria last year saw a close race between Alexander Van der Bellen and far-right candidate Norbert Hofer. And further away, the results of the US presidential election in November, as with Brexit, was an outcome not expected by the establishment.

Regarding Brexit, the UK's concern, Darling said, is “trying to figure out what our negotiating position is going to be”. In a bid to assure the audience, he said that the government would produce a white paper stating their negotiation policy by the end of March, when Prime Minister Theresa May intends to trigger Article 50, the EU's exit clause.

“I don't see this as a normal negotiation that you might have between two willing parties trying to get to a commonly agreed objective”, he said.

Lord Darling explained that, although economics and common sense might lead to one set of proposals being deemed reasonable, ultimately the UK is “hard up against British politics”, which is currently dominated by Brexit thinking and lacks effective opposition.

In any case, Darling anticipates that the process will be long, drawn out and not helped by domestic European politics.

“The one thing you cannot accuse the EU of doing is acting with speed”, he said.

Kaji of Keio University talked about the anti-establishment trends that are occurring worldwide, particularly in the US, UK and EU. She agreed that a solution needed to be found to appease angry voters, and highlighted the issue of social media contributing to a “post-truth” environment.

In relation to Japan, Kaji said that problems could arise if young people are not represented in the political sphere, describing it as an “extremely dangerous phenomenon”.

Bill Emmott, editor-in-chief of *The Economist* in 1993–2006, expressed the view that, in Europe, “France is the most risky at present” in terms of political stability. He described the current situation in France as being a combination of economic disappointment and “long-term disenchantment with the political class”. It is this environment that has the potential to lead to the rise of anti-establishment movements.

When asked how politicians on both sides were blindsided by Brexit, Darling answered: “Then-Prime Minister David Cameron thought that he could heal the wounds within the Conservative Party that has been split by the EU for 30 years now.”

“He thought he could just get through this referendum”, he added.

He expressed the belief that the Labour Party's current leader Jeremy Corbyn is not “engaged” in the Brexit negotiations, and the party itself consists more and more of people who have “no interest in [Labour] being in government” of the EU. Moreover, many of their voters are slipping away to the UK Independence Party because of the appeal of populist nationalism.



Tim Hitchens CMG LVO



The Rt Hon. Lord Alistair Darling and John Nilsson-Wright, senior research fellow, Asia programme at Chatham House



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Lord Darling said the Brexit negotiations will not be a normal one between two willing parties.



Bill Emmott, editor-in-chief of *The Economist*, 1993–2006

He concluded that, “referendums are really divisive things” and urged that they should be avoided.

When asked what political approach could be recommended to leaders, Emmott explained that, the political classes were at fault. Specifically, their “failure to deliver stable and rising prosperity and living standards, and the failure to prevent the crisis of 2008” and then further to amend and change things were to blame.

“I think that the new formula has to be one that emphasises equality much more than it has been in the past, but without being a classic socialist equality” based on “redistribution according to need rather than deserving.” He also argued that everyone should have a political voice, rather than a democracy focused on the “best policies that money can buy.” “If you can achieve that then you’ve got it made.”

Concerns

Masatsugu Asakawa, vice finance minister for international affairs, emphasised Japanese investors’ concerns over Brexit. He pointed out that the Japanese government has already clearly communicated its thoughts to its UK counterpart and the EU. In September, the Japanese government issued a letter setting out its position on Brexit.

Kaji echoed this, explaining that the letter, “should be taken extremely seriously”. With more than 1,000 Japanese firms in the UK, Kaji expressed her concern that the UK has not done enough to reassure them of future opportunities in the UK market. “If there is anything the Japanese do not like, it is instability”, she added, saying that, “the more information, the better”.

Emmott noted that EU membership is only one factor affecting the British economy

for investors, with trade and fiscal policy, overseas demand and oil prices being other important factors.

According to Emmott, negotiations are likely to lead to a “relationship with Europe that is analogous to [that of] Switzerland”, with a few differences. But, he pointed out, it is difficult to say which model would be most appropriate to follow. Unless there is a change to the freedom of movement rules by the EU, potential models are limited to Switzerland or, perhaps, Canada, which recently signed a free trade agreement with the EU. In any case, there will need to be partnership on trade and global immigration, as well as filling gaps resulting from the “decline in American leadership”.

Asakawa explained that Japan is committed to free trade, as shown by its ratification of the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) agreement. Further, it is important to emphasise the merits of the TPP for the US. These kinds of multilateral agreements “have their merits”, he said.

The TPP in its current form will not go ahead without the support of the US, and Emmott noted that, even prior to the election of Donald Trump, “TPP was in trouble in Congress”. He added that Trump’s priorities will be the domestic economy, and so “the likelihood that Congress would favour TPP in the next one to two years has to be rated as low”.

The panel agreed that the UK and Japan need to work as allies to both prevent Donald Trump from leaning towards protectionism, and support international agreements on trade, investment and tax.

Training and structural adjustment

“Globally, I think there is a need to find ways to redistribute wealth”, Asakawa said, highlighting the Japanese government’s efforts to do so through Abenomics.

Capital movements and the impact of technology and automation have caused uncertainty in job markets, said Emmott. In this respect, retraining the workforce to meet these changes is important, and he noted that Scandinavian countries are leading the way.

Talking about Japan, Kaji said, “We do have a certain record on keeping people in jobs ... firing people outright is just not done in this country”. This means that on-the-job training is carried out from time to time, although globalisation has meant this has become increasingly rare.

Future of UK-Japan ties

Asakawa said that Japan wants to collaborate with those who share a “fundamental set of values”. He suggested, “Maybe after Brexit we could establish a bilateral agreement with the UK”, however Japan is focused first on the TPP and then on a trade agreement with the EU.

There is also an opportunity to collaborate further on defence, he noted, echoing Hitchens’ earlier comments. The UK and Japan have already been involved in talks on North Korea, the East China Sea, counter-terrorism and anti-corruption efforts.

Kaji also suggested that the combination of the UK’s so-called special relationship with the US and its membership of the EU had previously left the UK “unreachable”. As this has changed, Japan and the UK now share a similar global position, meaning there is potential for a closer UK-Japan relationship.

“There is big potential in technology and R&D collaboration”, Emmott concluded. And, in addition, “it is absolutely crucial that the UK and Japan collaborate to domesticate Donald Trump”, in preparation for the next eight years. 🇬🇧

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ENTICING TALENT

More than visa changes needed if Japan is to attract executives

BY MAXINE CHEYNEY

The Japanese government's Abenomics initiatives have focused on embracing diversity in the workforce and attracting world-leading human resources. And now the government reportedly is seeking to expedite the granting of permanent residence status to non-Japanese nationals by introducing a "green card" for highly skilled professionals. This could see a reduction—to three years, or even one year—in the time before applications for permanent residence can be lodged.

But what does this mean for British executives coming to work and study in Japan?

Although the government proposition is encouraging, some claim that visa regulations have not been a barrier to attracting global talent.

When deciding to pursue a career in Japan, or do a master of business administration (MBA) course with a view to staying and working in the country, there are other barriers to consider, particularly for those high level executives who come out with their families.

The issue of visas

Applying for and maintaining visas often can be one of the greatest and most taxing barriers for anyone looking to migrate to another country. This can affect the number of skilled professionals



PHOTO: GLOBIS UNIVERSITY

going to a country or staying there after they have completed their studies.

However, when it comes to studying in Japan, "visa restrictions seldom seem to impact a candidate's decision to enter our MBA programme", according to Kenji Yokoyama, vice-president of Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University. Most individuals who do an MBA join on an easily obtained student visa, allowing them to live and study in Japan. Then when those students look to begin working in Japan, typically a trickier proposition in many countries, "visas are again seldom an issue", said Yokoyama.

Indeed, since there is a process to facilitate changing from a student visa to a work visa, this can often be easier than securing a working visa at the start.

Sven Van Stichel, head of overseas marketing at the Graduate School of Management, GLOBIS University, echoed this sentiment. The visa process has changed over the years and is now "at a level where it is easy to switch from a student visa to a working visa", he said.

In response to the proposed green card, Yokoyama explained that the original points-based highly skilled professional visa "attracted a relatively low

amount of interest", and perhaps "reducing the time required to gain permanent residence through this visa could potentially generate more interest and more applicants".

But he also highlighted the fact that "the points system assigns a fair amount of weight to an advanced degree, with additional points granted for completing an MBA and even more points for having a degree from a Japanese university or graduate school".

And so, for someone in business management who is planning to stay in Japan for the long-term, doing an MBA at a domestic Japanese institution is beneficial.

Communication

Japan is beginning to develop its English language capabilities to make international business easier. Yet those coming to Japan are still likely to find a language barrier. This is one factor that can prevent foreign talent from being able to do business and live comfortably in Japan, especially as the country doesn't have the in-built advantage of a significant English-speaking community as do Hong Kong and Singapore.

"Japanese lessons for people who are inbound are important", Steven Ellis, country manager at Education First Japan stated. While "most executives will never learn Japanese properly", being able to handle normal working situations is important.

Language preparation is imperative for these executives coming to Japan to study or work.



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Van Stichel agreed, adding that, on a non-work-related level, “when settling in Japan, the very first few months especially, can be a little bit of a challenge if you don’t know some Japanese.” The fear of lacking the means to communicate effectively can be daunting.

Thus, language preparation is imperative for those executives coming to Japan to study or work. It may necessitate expanding government-backed learning materials, scholarships and overseas language institutes similar to the British Council and China’s Confucius Institutes.

Another barrier is the cost of living, Van Stichel said. “Sometimes [people] are not sure what to expect”.

Ranked by consultancy firm Mercer as being the fifth-most expensive city for expatriates, Tokyo can represent a challenge for those who come with children

and families. In particular, sending children to international schools is costly.

Ellis highlighted another potential issue for executives coming to work in Japan. Many are “sometimes quite lonely, they bear the weight of the firm on their shoulders and they find it hard to form real friendships with people in the firm because they are the boss”, he said. This is where he highlighted the need for Japanese firms to also enhance their global offering through encouraging Japanese staff to learn English.

Need for corporate changes

The ageing population poses a significant problem for Japan, while the knock-on effect requires that structural changes be implemented at large firms.

“Because the general labour market in Japan has been shrinking, there is a higher need

for skilled people”, Van Stichel emphasised.

But for firms looking to hire such workers, they need to make sure they are seen as appealing, especially given that skilled people have broad, global choices.

“While it is commendable that the Japanese government is making efforts to attract more foreign talent through changes like [the green card] to the immigration system, some attention needs to be focused on the actual firms and institutions that would hire this talent”, said Yokoyama.

“Organisations should be more flexible in their hiring practices and in their willingness to make accommodations for people from different backgrounds or different levels of Japanese language ability. They need to understand the value in foreign talent and a diverse workforce”.

Ellis also highlighted the need for change in corporate functions and to tackle traditionally minded senior management who perhaps are not so open to hiring foreign talent.

“The key is to find the people who care enough to take action and are senior enough to see it through”, he said.

Thus, to attract to Japan and retain in the country foreign talent, it is necessary for organisations to offer competitive compensation, a work-life balance, and a quality of life comparable with that found abroad.

Japan’s advanced technology, as well as its research and development capabilities, are among the country’s main strengths. But the government may find that luring global talent is one of the hardest parts of bringing to fruition the three core Abenomics principles of monetary policy, fiscal policy and structural reforms. 🇯🇵

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STILL FLYING HIGH

UK firms keep their edge in aerospace

BY JULIAN RYALL

Hybrid Air Vehicles, the firm behind the Airlander aircraft, is one of many innovative UK aerospace firms. • PHOTO: HYBRID AIR VEHICLES

The British public may have voted for Brexit in June 2016, but British industry used the Japan International Aerospace Exhibition to underline its strengths and commitment to long-standing overseas partners and markets.

Held at the Tokyo Big Sight convention centre on 12–15 October last year, eight British firms had booths in the UK pavilion—beneath banners proclaiming “Innovation is Great Britain” and alongside images of spacecraft, helicopters, fighter aircraft and airships. Meanwhile, Rolls-Royce Holdings plc and BAE Systems plc operated large stands to showcase their products and strengths.

The firms are all members of the Aerospace Defence Security Group, Ltd., which was formally created in September 2009 to advance the interests of British firms in a sector in which the UK is

the second-largest player in the world, behind the United States.

“The UK has an approximately 14% share of the global aerospace market and reported an annual turnover of £31bn [in 2015],” said David Scotter, director of events and market development for the London-based group.

Productivity in this sector of the British economy saw growth of 7% between 2008 and 2013, significantly outstripping the rest of the economy, he pointed out.

“British firms are involved in all aspects of the aerospace sector, but we are particularly strong in a number of areas, such as wing technology, propulsion systems and advanced systems such as landing gear, actuation, avionics and fuel and power supplies,” Scotter explained.

The UK is also a world leader in advanced helicopters and has a deserved reputation in

the areas of maintenance, repair and overhaul of aircraft.

Taking the Boeing 787 as an example, Scotter pointed out that well over a dozen UK firms provided components or systems, including engines from Rolls-Royce, seats in the first class and business compartments from Zodiac Seats UK, and fuel pumps and valves manufactured by Eaton Aerospace.

Given the importance of the sector to the overall economy, the British government has unsurprisingly been generous in its support for aerospace firms. And it is working closely with them to safeguard the industry for the next 20 years, Scotter said.

Under the public-private initiative Means of Ascent, some £385mn is being invested in research projects, including £137mn in universities, while bursaries are being offered for masters qualifications,



Inside the £400mn Airbus S.A.S. wing factory at Broughton in Wales. • PHOTO: © AIRBUS S.A.S.



The expo was held on 12–15 October at the Tokyo Big Sight convention centre. • PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

as well as funding for a further 3,000 apprenticeships.

Additional efforts, and funds, are being earmarked for advanced research and development projects, improving the supply chain and the creation of seven high-volume manufacturing centres across the UK.

The world's leading aerospace firms now see the UK as an increasingly competitive environment for investment, with Rolls Royce, for example, investing in a new composite technology hub in Bristol, while Airbus S.A.S. has opened a £400mn wing factory in Wales. In all, an estimated 115,000 new jobs will be created in the aerospace sector by the start of the 2030s, Scotter added.

Yet, inevitably, there has been a degree of concern among the UK's partners about the possible impact of Brexit on the sector.

"We understand from our engagement with Japanese businesses so far that many people

are keen to see rapid progress and understand what a post-Brexit UK will look like", said Esther Williams, first secretary and head of trade at the British Embassy Tokyo.

Up until the completion of procedures for the UK to leave the European Union (EU), which will, barring special circumstances, take two years from the invocation of Article 50, "We remain full members of the EU and will continue to make the case for free trade", Williams said, adding that the UK also remains committed to supporting the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement, which saw its 17th round of negotiations in September.

"While we cannot at this stage speculate on what it may look like, we will try to find the best possible arrangement for trade in goods and services with the EU, and we will also try to ensure ongoing trade and investment with our partners outside the EU", she said.

"The negotiation process will not be brief or simple, but our aim is to be as transparent with the Japanese government and [Japanese] businesses as possible, and to ensure there are no surprises", Williams added.

Already there have been some very positive signs that UK-Japan business partnerships will not be seriously affected by the fall-out from Brexit, with Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. committing to producing a new generation of cars in North-East England and Softbank Group Corp. completed the acquisition of technology firm ARM Holdings in September.

"The UK government's role is to maintain our strengths while building an even stronger relationship with the EU and its partners, including Japan", Williams said.

"The relationship between the UK and Japan has gone from strength to strength in recent years, and will continue to do so", she added. 🇬🇧



PHOTO: ROLLS-ROYCE



The Rolls-Royce Trent XWB-97 propulsion system is used in the Airbus A350-1000. • PHOTO: AIRBUS S.A.S.

The world's leading aerospace firms now see the UK as an increasingly competitive environment for investment.

CHOPPY WATERS

Baroness Ashton on the value of strong ties in tough times

BY JULIAN RYALL

In a world that appears to be fragmenting—with nations increasingly looking inwards and acting for short-term gains rather than for the promise of long-term stability and prosperity—the international community needs to reconnect and work together, said Catherine Ashton, Baroness Ashton of Upholland, GCMG PC, in her keynote address to the UK-Japan Global Seminar 2016.

Held at the headquarters of the Nippon Foundation on 12–13 October, in conjunction with the Royal Institute of International Affairs and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation, the event took as its theme “Challenge and Uncertainty in a Volatile World: Japan-UK Perspectives”.

The baroness, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy between 2009 and 2014, and vice president of the European Commission for four years from 2010, opened her comments by stating that, “The quantity, the intensity and the complexity of the issues that are faced now in this more interconnected world are truly daunting”.

Geo-political clashes, civil wars, simmering conflicts and regional disputes mark our present world, she said, adding that nations need to become more creative to ensure that diplomacy does not go into retreat.



Baroness Ashton, former high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy. • PHOTO: FRIENDS OF EUROPE VIA FLICKR

And that is possible, she added, pointing to her own work connected to security in the Horn of Africa, where the international community came together to combat piracy. The problem was becoming an epidemic due to the wealth that pirates were able to accrue and the

appeal that had for young people in particular.

“You can address not just the challenges created through piracy at sea, but also the difficulties for these young people on the land, the prospects for their future”, she said. “And if you can work

“The quantity, the intensity and the complexity of the issues that are faced now in this more interconnected world are truly daunting”.

with African Union troops as they tackle [the Islamist military group] Al-Shabab and those who would cause terror in a country like Somalia, you can replace them with those who can provide education, healthcare and jobs”.

Education was at the heart of the success of the campaign against pirates in Somalia, with the slogan “Give up your guns and go to school” playing a part in reducing the number of youngsters becoming child soldiers.

But the key element, she emphasised, was multilateral collaboration between all of the people and players with a stake in a positive outcome. And that same principle needs to be applied to any number of crises that we face now.

“I cannot think of an issue—from climate change, to energy needs, to development requirements, to trying to solve the conflict in Syria; from dealing with what is happening in Yemen and North Korea, to thinking about the rise of China, to what Russia might be doing in Ukraine—that does not require collaboration”, Baroness Ashton said.

“And that is especially relevant, of course, as the UK has decided in one aspect of its collaboration to think differently”, she said, alluding to the referendum on Britain’s membership of the European Union.

“And then you look at the American election and the

Republican Party candidate [Donald Trump]—who is hugely popular in many parts of the country—querying the role of NATO, America’s place in the world, what the role of the United Nations should be and supporting the UK in its Brexit journey”, she pointed out.

“There are many politicians who are saying that many of the mechanisms by which we have traditionally collaborated need, at best, to be rethought or, at worst, to be undone”.

Such demands are “slogan solutions”, Ashton said, because “it’s easier to be against something than for it”, while reducing complex issues to a sound bite resonates far too easily.

Given the British public’s position on the EU, the focus must now turn to ways in which the British government, British institutions and businesses, as well as the British people can continue

to interconnect with the Continent and the rest of the world.

“Whatever framework you are working in, we are going to need to be faster, smarter and better at what we do to bring collaborative processes to bear on some of the biggest problems that we face”, she said.

And Japan shares concerns over many of those same problems.

“As you in Japan think about your neighbourhood, you will see lots of opportunities for collaboration with your partners here and further afield”, Baroness Ashton said. “And you will see the challenges that you are most concerned about right now, whether that is China or what to do about the problem of North Korea”.

But given the obvious—that the world is an unpredictable place—the need for collaborative thinking is paramount, she added.

“None of us know what the future will throw up and none



Baroness Ashton said that the need for collaborative thinking is paramount. PHOTO: EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT VIA FLICKR

of us could have foreseen recent events”, she said.

“Brexit changed any thought that I had that I could understand what happens in my own country”, she admitted. “I could not have predicted the Arab Spring. I did not see what might happen in the South China Sea. I did not see what might happen with the

change in the leadership in North Korea. Nobody predicted the fragmentation and the horror that we see in Syria.

“We don’t know what the future holds”, she concluded. “But what we can do is to prepare for it, and that means being flexible and smart and, above all, collaborative in our long-term thinking”.



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My advice to companies who are struggling to hire bilingual talent is to identify which recruitment firms can introduce unique candidates, and then build a relationship to make sure that you get to meet them first. 🇬🇧



Matt Nicholls, managing director of RGF



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GETTING RESULTS

Japan beats UK in PISA, but test isn't perfect

BY CHRIS RUSSELL

In the UK, the results of the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), a worldwide study assessing the performance of 15-year-olds in maths, reading and science, invariably dominate the front pages of newspapers and see an outpouring of opinion pieces bemoaning the failings of the country's students. The tests bring a reaction from the government, too, and in 2014 then-Education Minister Elizabeth Truss was dispatched to Shanghai, China as part of a fact-finding mission to discover how the city was achieving such high results in maths.

Conducted every three years, PISA is administered by the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) in member and non-member nations, and on 6 December last year the OECD published its latest results, for tests taken in 2015. Asian countries again performed strongly, with Singapore topping the rankings across all three categories. Japan, meanwhile, was second in science, fifth in maths and eighth in reading. By contrast, the UK came 15th in science, 22nd in reading and 27th in maths.

Moreover, Japanese students exhibited greater effectiveness in their studying. Bucking the stereotype of Asian students spending their lives constantly studying, and despite the existence of *juku*, or cram schools, in Japan, 15-year-olds spend 41.1 hours a week learning, both at and outside school, compared with an average of 44 hours for OECD countries and 43.5 hours for the UK.

Indeed, PISA shows that too much studying after school typically leads to lower test scores. In this respect, Singapore, which maintains an extensive shadow education system of private tuition and cramming, is an outlier in its success, and time spent learning is far less effective there than it is in Japan or even the UK.



Brian Christian,
principal of the
British School in Tokyo

Yet the UK does a much better job of inspiring enthusiasm in its students towards science—29% see themselves in science-related careers by the age of 30, compared with 18% in Japan. Further, only students in Singapore, Taiwan and Japan are ahead of the top 10% of students in science in the UK.

Brian Christian, principal of the British School in Tokyo, attributes this enthusiasm to the UK curriculum, and feels that this may also help explain the disparity in the results.

"The UK curriculum ... in areas like science is quite practical—kids will typically spend a lot of hours in a lab, and kids love doing things," he said.

But Christian also cautions against the value of the international comparisons on which the press and government fixate.

"The worst thing that we can do is to actually look at national rankings," said Christian.

"Where it is interesting, though, is when you look at a country's performance over a number of years".

A sense of the difficulty in comparing results across countries is revealed by the number of students tested in each country: 14,157 students were tested in PISA 2015 in the UK, versus 5,712 in the US—despite the latter having over five times as many 15-year-olds enrolled in schools.

The same sort of kneejerk reaction that led to Truss's Shanghai trip was on display in Japan in the government's reaction to the 2003 results, when Japan slipped in the national ranking.

This led to rolling back so-called *yutori kyoiku*, or "relaxed education", policies that had been intended to give students a more well-rounded education. Christian notes, however, that reforms in Japan's education system are beginning to take hold again.

"We have to bear in mind that because the test only looks at 15-year-olds, any policy reforms that a country has undertaken in the past five years or so will almost certainly have had little or no effect on the results that those kids achieve," said Christian.

PISA has also come in for criticism over apparent conflicts of interest regarding the results for Shanghai in 2012. Questions also have been raised regarding the conflict of interest resulting from the same OECD subunit both planning and administering PISA, before it analyses the data and makes policy recommendations—all positions that they would feel compelled to defend.

Christian believes that the UK can learn from Japan when it comes to using education as a means of attaining social mobility. According to PISA, 49% of Japan's disadvantaged students were "resilient" and had beaten the socio-economic odds to perform among the world's top 25%. This represents an increase of eight percentage points since 2006. In the UK, meanwhile, 35% of the disadvantaged students were rated as being "resilient", an increase of five percentage points over the same period.

"In countries like Japan and Singapore, very often if you come from those lower strata of society, education is seen as a way to make your way to a higher level," he said. "In the UK, that sort of lack of social mobility is really concerning, and people from working-class backgrounds [feel put off by the thought of] educational advancement because they don't see that there's opportunity at the end of it." 🇬🇧

GLOBAL CITIZENS



A place to fulfil potential

BY BRIAN CHRISTIAN

Established in 1989, the British School in Tokyo (BST) has steadily built an enviable worldwide reputation over more than a quarter of a century. Earlier this month, the school's good name was further enhanced when the Chair of the Board of Trustees, Marianne Black, was awarded an MBE for services to international education in the latest New Year's Honours list. This prestigious award, one of just 76 granted to recipients overseas, recognises the progress made by BST under her guidance over the past five years and offers affirmation of the school's central importance to both the British and the broader international community here in Tokyo.

An accredited member of the Council of British International Schools and one of only a small number of schools worldwide to have been independently inspected according to the UK standards for British Schools

Overseas, with the school judged to be excellent in every category, we regard this as yet another very welcome endorsement of the high standards we set for ourselves.

This year, for the first time in its history, BST is home to well over 1,000 students. There are many good reasons to explain the remarkable surge in student enrolment at BST in recent years, but foremost among them is the widespread recognition that this is a school where young people of all abilities and from the most diverse backgrounds can find a niche and fulfil their potential.

Since 2012, we have seen the number of 15- to 18-year-old students on our IGCSE and A Level courses more than double to almost 250. And examination results have improved to the point where they match the gold standard set by the UK's independent sector. Indeed, our graduates are winning places at some of the most prestigious universities around the world.

Young people today see themselves as global citizens and, while most of our graduates seek to continue their education in the UK, there is certainly an increasing interest in both the US and Japan. In addition, a number of current students are looking to Australia and mainland Europe. Most universities worldwide are very familiar with Britain's public examination system and are more than happy to accept students with A Levels or their equivalent.

In fact, the specialist nature of these courses means that students with better grades can expect to earn significant credit—sometimes up to a whole year's worth of study. At Harvard, for example, you will need to have at least three A or B grades to matriculate (earn a place), but three A grades will merit a full year's academic credit; Boston College will offer two courses of credit for A or B grades, while C grades will earn one semester's credit; and Princeton

clearly states on its website that A or B grades will earn Advance Placement credit. It is a similar story across the world.

BST is, of course, much more than an A Level school. All examinations are important, and many parents are impressed by the rigour and structured progression of our particular brand of British education from the age of three through to 18. That said, students here know that education is not simply about passing exams. Sport, music and drama are woven into the fabric of school life, and we see both community service and adventurous activities as real strengths. From their early years in our Nursery and Reception classes, children are given countless opportunities to develop the independence and resilience that will enable them to take the next step in their education—wherever it might take them—with confidence and a smile. 🇬🇧



LIFE AND SOUL

Academic and football fan was larger than life

BY JULIAN RYALL

Gordon Liversidge, university professor, founder of the British Football Club and a hugely popular member of both the expat and local communities in Tokyo, died in November aged 65.

Originally from Sheffield, Liversidge moved to London and developed a passion for Crystal Palace Football Club.

He arrived in Japan in the mid-1970s, having gained a degree from the University of Salford, and initially took a job teaching English to employees at a number of firms, before getting a position at a high school in Saitama Prefecture.

About a decade later, he spent five years lecturing in the English department at a university in Nagano. He then took up a post as a professor focusing on English pedagogy, British and American culture, and multimedia at Otsuma Women's Junior College in Tokyo, where he was deeply committed to his students and oversaw the college's annual study abroad programme in Oxford.

Liversidge went on to complete an MA and PhD at Temple University's Japan campus, with fluency in Japanese becoming another of his accomplishments.

Liversidge's arrival in Tokyo coincided with the football team organised by the British Embassy Tokyo facing a decline in the number of embassy players available. He thus took on the task of setting up a replacement club and finding sufficient players.

He served variously as captain, organiser and "general head honcho" of the British Football Club (BFC), according to long-time friend and team-mate Don Whyte.

"He really loved his football and was instrumental in everything that the club did", Whyte told *BCCJ ACUMEN*. "And he was a regular on a Saturday night when Premiership games were being shown on the big screen at the Footnik bar in Osaki".



Gordon Liversidge, professor and founder of the British Football Club

The club combined its *bonenkai* end-of-season party and a memorial for Liversidge on 10 December, with the club unveiling a commemorative plaque.

A non-religious funeral service was held at a temple in Takadanobaba in November, with about 200 people attending.

"It was standing room only and it took everyone aback that so many people came", Whyte said. "But that goes to show just how many people knew him over the years".

And while the tears flowed, according to one of those present, they were offset by plenty of laughs as Gordon's closest friends recalled many of the absurd things he used to get up to—all on display in graphic detail in a slide show spanning the years.

"In Gordon's world, table tops were for dancing on, beer was for spilling and his generous girth was for exhibiting", Fred Varcoe, another BFC team mate, said. "And cars really did look better parked in rice paddies.

"As he would have wished, the service was more party than pathos".

"He was also the life and soul of the football club. He ... gave it much of its character"

Hideko, his wife of 10 years, was present at the service, along with Liversidge's two brothers, one having flown in from Australia and the other from the UK.

"It was a very sad occasion because his death was just so unexpected", Whyte said. "Everybody there said Gordon never had a bad bone in his body; he was a really good bloke who would do whatever he could to help anyone who was having any sort of problem.

"He was a dedicated husband to Hideko and was great with his students, caring about them".

Liversidge remained closely involved in the BFC after calling time on his football exploits, but also took up golf and went on annual overseas tours with expat friends, including to courses in Malaysia and Thailand. He was also involved in Brits at Lunch and other events and organisations in and around Tokyo.

Varcoe said he had first met Liversidge shortly after he arrived in Japan 30 years ago.

"He was one of the first people I met", Varcoe said. "Luckily, I already had accommodation. Gordon would certainly have offered me some if I hadn't. On one occasion, he allowed two homeless footballers to crash at his place 'for a month or two' even though he only had a six-mat room—which he was already sharing with someone else. Generous to a fault, indeed.

"He was also the life and soul of the football club. He founded it, ran it and also gave it much of its character.

"He loved his football, he loved drinking and took every opportunity to combine the two things", he said.

"The team played a central role in the British expat community here and Gordon was this larger-than-life character at the very heart of it", he said.

"And I think that is how we want to remember him". 🍷



The event takes place at the British pub Good Heavens Bar in Shimokitazawa, Tokyo.

Tall stories

New comedy night format arrives in Tokyo

BY LILY CROSSLEY-BAXTER

Standing by her mantra that “normal people tell the best stories”, Layla McCay, founder of the Perfect Liars Club, should know. Having perfected a sell-out show in which lies, deception and invention are positively encouraged and the suspension of disbelief is a fool’s errand, we discussed the creative scene in Tokyo and the comedy show’s winning formula.

Invented on a whim based on fond memories of a childhood game, the event’s success lies in its simplicity: four storytellers regale the audience, who then quiz them in an effort to root out the liar, all before the grand revelation. While it seems simple enough, years of practice have helped McCay streamline the show, with little twists and charms that add to the intrigue, while keeping it firmly structured.

Most vital, of course, is the knack for picking great storytellers and great stories.

“If you’re the sort of person who would tell funny stories round the dinner table then

you’re going to be all set for Perfect Liar’s Club”, McCay explained. And in terms of stories?

“You need to catch that fine balance between interesting and crazy, but not so crazy that it’s obviously a lie, and not so boring that people stop listening”.

Luckily, she has the storytelling down to a fine art, and with a little revision and coaching, so do the performers. However, “whilst it’s really fun listening to the stories in the Perfect Liars Club, the interrogation is still the best bit. It’s set up in such a way that they always get laughs”.

Key to the process, the interrogation depends on the audience, and there were some initial concerns about bringing the show to Tokyo, where it now takes place at the Good Heavens pub in the Shimokitazawa district.

“I was worried people wouldn’t ask questions and would be a bit shy, but I was surprised—the Tokyo crowd really got involved and ask some very shrewd questions”.

Global origins

Started in Washington, DC, in 2013, the Perfect Liars Club was an instant sell-out success.

“Tickets once sold out in 90 seconds. That was our glory moment; we felt like rock stars. It started to get really crazy: people were getting their grandmothers to wait for the release online. There were lots of ticket strategies”.

They moved to a bigger location and then took the show to the Capital Fringe Festival in 2014 and again in 2016. But, as McCay noted, “although that was a bigger venue and it was really successful, I think it’s the sort of thing that works best in a bar, with people chatting and people scheming together rather than sitting separated in theatre seats. [For] the sort of show this is, a certain intimacy is quite important”.

With many audience members working in politics and with probing questions part of their everyday work, it’s no surprise the show was a hit in Washington, DC. But Tokyo was seen as a risk.

Tim Hitchens CMG LVO, then-UK Ambassador to Japan, told a story about penguins at the event.
PHOTO: LILY CROSSLEY-BAXTER



“In Washington I was tapping into this big established storytelling scene where people knew what to expect, whereas here it was a matter of introducing the format and hoping it worked”.

Following the success of the opening night, however, any fears were soon forgotten.

“At that first show, where the liar was caught and everyone was screaming, I felt like I was in DC. But also it felt like this was a show that would work anywhere, because it just taps into human nature”.

This was by no means a leap into the dark, however. There was a strategy, and integrating into the Tokyo scene was key. To that end, McCay had a plan: her trademark newsletter and, most important, friendliness.

“I spent six months going to all the shows and making friends with everyone because I like being able to talk about other people’s events and trying to build the audience together”.

Never a bystander, McCay soon joined in, performing in both English- and Japanese-language stand-up comedies, as well as writing *A Brit About Town*, a listings blog for spoken word and creative nights in Tokyo. The blog proved to be a great help, as it had in Washington.

“Everybody loved this blog back in DC, and even more so in Tokyo, where it can be hard to find interesting events on in the evenings, particularly if your Japanese isn’t great. So it helps build the audience, not just for Perfect Liars Club, but for all the other great things that are happening across the city. Also, the other shows like that, I advertise them and attend their events, so they often reciprocate—it’s helped build a nice community”.

Her combined efforts have meant that, rather than appearing from nowhere, the first Perfect Liars Club was already long awaited,

and performers from established local shows such as Improvazilla and Stand-Up Tokyo have already taken to the stage with their stories.

Alongside familiar local faces, there have also been some special guests, including the director of *Billy Elliot Japan*, Simon Pollard, and the apparently adept liar, Tim Hitchens CMG LVO, then-UK Ambassador to Japan.

“My personal highlight was getting the British ambassador to perform. He was just about to leave Tokyo, so he was looking for fun things to do and he thought this was a hilarious idea—he insisted on being the liar!”

Beguiling the audience with a tale of penguins murdered in the name of the Queen on a distant press trip, the ambassador fielded questions with alarming skill and was eventually crowned a perfect liar, much to the astonishment of the crowd.

Fostering a successful English-language creative scene is a priority for McCay.

“As the wife of a British diplomat, we have moved from place to place, but it’s really

important to me to not just be a visitor, or someone passing through—as long as I’m here I want to feel part of the city”.

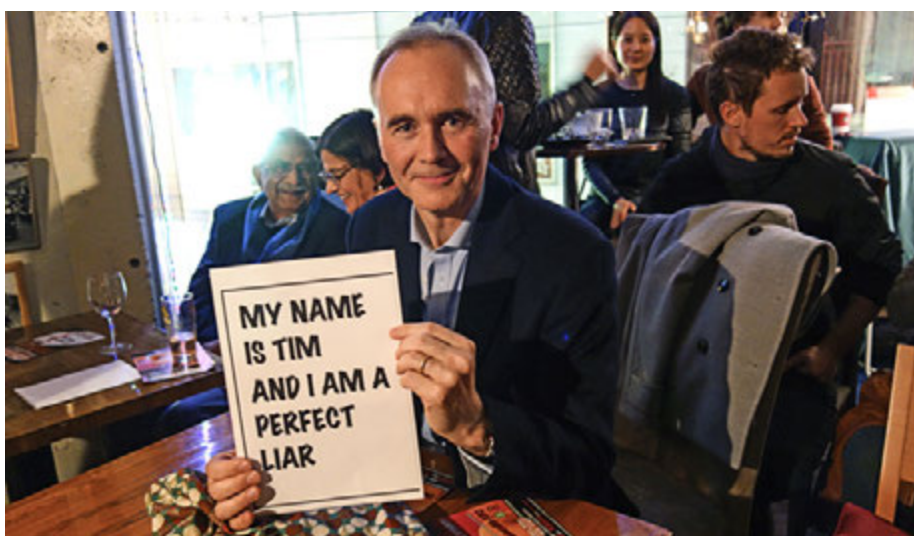
By focusing on encouraging a culture of English-language accessible events, she hopes to help Tokyo develop a strong and open international arts scene that caters to diverse tastes and attracts the somewhat elusive expat community, as well as Japanese people.

“When you look at big cosmopolitan cities around the world, many of them having thriving English-language arts scenes, and Tokyo really is quite Japanese focused,” said McCay. “Obviously we’re in Japan, but it doesn’t need to be like that—we can have both [languages in the arts scene]”.

Having already tested the waters with Japanese comedy, there are some plans to develop this further.

“I hope one day to do Perfect Liars Club in Japanese. Not regularly, but as an occasional thing”.

With the seemingly unstoppable Perfect Liars Club plan in place, it is certainly a space to watch. 🇬🇧



Hitchens successfully fooled the audience with his tale. • PHOTO: LILY CROSSLEY-BAXTER

DOING MORE WITH LESS

Communication skills and the Talent Crunch

BY STEVEN ELLIS

Nurturing and retaining the best talent has always been a significant challenge for organisations. But how has a slowing global economy affected matters?

Has muted global growth made it easier for employers to find and attract talent? Or has the need for cost containment made it harder to reward top performers? How will talent needs change over the next decade and what should be done now to ensure those needs are fulfilled?

To answer these questions, and others, EF Education First commissioned a survey across 12 territories worldwide during April 2016. It shows that the tough economic situation is expected to continue for the next five to 10 years due to reduced consumer spend, increased global competition, currency volatility and general global uncertainty. This means budgets across the board are tight, organisations are trying to do more with less, while worker fatigue, stress and turnover are on the increase.

This is a tough situation for human resources departments to manage, which is why we call it the Talent Crunch. But it is not all doom and gloom. Our research highlights four areas on which organisations need to focus.

- Engagement and motivation, to both decrease turnover and increase employee effectiveness and impact, especially in such turbulent times.
- Leadership, to keep employees focused and upbeat, especially during significant corporate change programs (such as corporate mergers).
- Creativity, to foster greater innovation as a competitive advantage and as a revenue growth driver.
- Flexibility, to keep the most critical talent engaged and deliver the greatest business impact.

Communication skills play an important role in each of these areas. In Japan, ever more organisations are realising that, in order to adapt to increasingly turbulent business conditions, their existing talents need a greater ability to collaborate across borders or with non-Japanese counterparts, typically in English.

Whereas once many successful businesses had a structure in which a few people—fluent in English and perhaps with overseas experience—would handle all overseas communications, these resources no longer suffice. Communication now must be organisation-wide and continuous.

A shift has occurred, and communication is now increasingly about being able to plug in to a global dialogue. If you or your staff don't have the appropriate English skills, you may find yourselves severely limited—however good you or they may be in a Japanese context—and that is a cost that organisations are increasingly less able to afford.

That said, the learning process to attain these skills should only take so long. You and your staff should then be able to complete your studies and continue with your day job now able to communicate in English and to build productive relationships with people overseas.

The benefits for an individual are considerable: a change in mindset, leading to improved mental agility and flexibility, wider access to useful information and the sharing of ideas faster and with less friction. This will save time at the individual level and, when multiplied, the wider network benefits for the organisation will be huge in terms of both cost efficiency and opportunity gains. In the end, it is often easier to teach an experienced engineer, service expert or senior manager to speak English, than to teach an English speaker those specialised occupational skills.

For many organisations, in which the workday involves communicating with parties overseas or with non-Japanese colleagues in Japan, a good deal of the stress that Japanese professionals experience is related to the use of English. Many capable people are keenly aware that insufficient English ability places them at a disadvantage.

It takes the right support and focus for people to see English as a tool that is personally useful and directly relevant to their job performance. Help people realise this and you already will have gone a long way towards enabling talented staff to achieve even more.

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For the full report please visit:
<http://page.ef.com/talent-crunch-jp.html>

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Established in 1989, The British School in Tokyo (BST) has developed a reputation for high quality education. Rated excellent by an independent inspection, our community is warm, friendly and offers the highest standards of pastoral care. Unique in Japan, BST follows the English National Curriculum from Nursery to A Level, preparing pupils for entry into universities worldwide. Our graduates continually achieve results well above the UK national average.

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PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM

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The Montessori School of Tokyo
3-5-13 Minami Azabu
Minato-ku
Tokyo 106-0047

Pete Juds, head of school
03-5449-7067
info@montessorijapan.com
www.montessorijapan.com

Situated in the heart of Tokyo, The Montessori School of Tokyo (MST) is a well-established Montessori school offering a vibrant and fresh education for your child.

Our core values of confidence, respect and compassion represent the characteristics we instill and uphold in our administration, faculty and student body.

We are accredited by the International Montessori Council, and the only Montessori school in Japan offering educational programmes for children up to 15 years old.

PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM

Montessori education is increasingly recognised as highlighting the skills and characteristics that are sought after in 21st century society and the modern-day workplace. The Montessori curriculum is designed to teach children to think deeply, to think for themselves, and to think about others.

Here at MST we cultivate an atmosphere of joy, wonder and appreciation for life. This is a place where children are encouraged to become independent, intrinsically driven learners and to truly fulfill their potential as members of a modern society.

The A-List of Education



Nishimachi International School
2-14-7 Moto-Azabu
Minato-ku
Tokyo 106-0046

Kiki Jiang-Yamaguchi, admissions officer
03-3451-5520
admissions@nishimachi.ac.jp
www.nishimachi.ac.jp

Conveniently located in central Tokyo, Nishimachi International School offers a co-educational learning experience in English for students from Kindergarten to Grade 9. We educate all students to be internationally minded and independent thinkers.

PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM

- Rigorous academic curriculum
- Emphasis on Japanese language
- Experienced teachers
- Multicultural approaches to learning
- Small and intimate community
- Centrally located
- Co-educational, non-sectarian Kindergarten to Grade 9
- Accredited by the Western Association of Schools and Colleges and the Council of International Schools
- Recognised by Tokyo Metropolitan Government



Poppins Active Learning International School
Yebisu Garden Terrace Nibankan 1F/2F
4-20-2 Ebisu, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo 150-0013

School manager
03-5791-2105
palis@poppins.co.jp
www.poppins-palis.jp/en/

Aiming “to awaken in children a passion for discovery”, Poppins Active Learning International School (PALIS) is beautifully located within Yebisu Garden Place.

PALIS offers the highest quality education for children aged 11 months to five years. At PALIS, children—curious and inquisitive by nature—can reach the highest level of learning through exploration and active interaction with others and the environment. Through authentic, interactive and international activities, we nurture each child’s creativity and independence by developing problem-solving abilities rather than skills for rote memorisation.

PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM

Our “Edu-care” philosophy is a synthesis of:

- Educational standards based on the British Early Years Foundation Stage including research from Harvard University and Stanford University
- High-quality childcare which Poppins has provided for 26 years in more than 150 nursery schools across Japan, benefitting from a 20-year partnership with Norland College in the UK

The curriculum includes art, music, math, science, physical skills, and languages taught by specialist teachers. PALIS also offers seasonal holiday programmes and after-school classes for children aged three years and older.



St. Alban's Nursery
3-6-25 Shiba-Koen
Minato-ku
Tokyo 105-0011

Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland
090-6480-4542
gilma.yam@gol.com
www.saintalbans.jp

Learning, love, laughter ... that’s how one parent summed up her child’s experience at St. Alban’s Nursery, one of the longest established international kindergartens in Tokyo. Small and intimate, with a quiet garden playground, close to Tokyo Tower, our nursery offers each child his or her own choice of purposeful, fun-filled activities, in a safe, structured, loving environment. Our aim is to promote learning and self-discovery, as well as the development of skills and self-confidence that will give each child a strong basis for moving on to his or her next phase in life.

PROGRAMME / CURRICULUM

Led by Director Gilma Yamamoto-Copeland, our highly qualified staff offer an extensive range of materials and activities based on the Montessori method. We introduce the first steps of writing, number work and nature in a simple, enjoyable way. St. Alban’s emphasises creativity, providing daily opportunities for children to enjoy singing, dancing, making things, storytelling, simple drama and art.

The A-List of Business



Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University
1-1 Jumonjibaru
Beppu City, Oita Prefecture
874-8577 Japan

Admissions Office
(0)977-78-1119
welcome@apu.ac.jp
<http://admissions.apu.ac.jp>

Since its founding, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) has been a leader in the globalisation of higher education in Japan. Half of our students come from 90 countries and regions outside Japan, making our campus an environment of cultural and linguistic diversity, providing an experience unmatched anywhere in Japan.

Our undergraduate programmes give students the opportunity to take courses in Japanese or English, while students in our Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies and Graduate School of Management study exclusively in English.

APU is the only AACSB-accredited university in Japan offering an English-language MBA and an undergraduate business curriculum in both English and Japanese. Our graduates join a network of professionals spanning 138 countries and regions.

AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- College of International Management (BBA)
- College of Asia Pacific Studies (BSS)
- Graduate School of Management (MBA)
- Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies (MS)
- Graduate School of Asia Pacific Studies (PhD)



RGF HR Agent Japan
Ebisu East Building 2F
1-13-7, Hiroo, Shibuya-ku
Tokyo 150-0012, Japan

Matt Nicholls, managing director
03-6422-4400
m-nicholls@rgf-hragent.jp
<http://www.rgf-hragent.jp>

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

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- Finance and Accounting
- Sales and Marketing
- IT
- Digital and Web services
- Manufacturing and Engineering
- Consulting
- Healthcare



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Shibuya Minami Tokyu Bldg. 14F
3-12-18 Shibuya
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 150-0002

David Swan, managing director
03-4570-1500
info@robertwalters.co.jp
www.robertwalters.co.jp

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AREAS OF EXPERTISE

- Accountancy & finance
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- Legal
- Compliance & risk
- Engineering
- Chemical
- Automotive
- Manufacturing & components
- Energy & infrastructure
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- Human resources
- IT & online
- Sales & marketing
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THE LEADERSHIP JAPAN SERIES

2017: GOOD OR BAD?



BY DR GREG STORY
PRESIDENT, DALE CARNEGIE TRAINING JAPAN

There are many starts to a year. Some are based on financial years, zodiacs and calendar years. Generally speaking though, 1 January signals a new start and we are reconnected with our better selves. Those extra kilos we need to shed, getting down to the gym more regularly, eating more healthily, drinking less booze and all the other typical personal and work aspirations we embrace for a better year to come are commonplace goals. All excellent stuff and hopefully this time we will carry through on our brilliant starts.

How about setting a serious goal though? Why don't we make a commitment to stop complaining in 2017?

This means a total overhaul of our brain. We have a lot of concerns, stresses and worries in our daily lives, so complaining comes very naturally. It doesn't take us anywhere though. We just focus on something that is either already done and irretrievable, or we express some concern over something that might happen in the future.

Well it might not happen. Perhaps we can take some steps and make sure it doesn't happen and, if it does, can we lessen the impact? Just complaining about it is basically pointless.

Why don't we resolve to make 2017 a "complaint-free zone". This means we have to rethink how we see the world around us. We have to have fresh eyes for old problems. We have to move from having our usual "pity parties" to being proactive.

When we decide we won't complain, we are taking on more accountability. We are saying we are in the fixing, not dithering, business. We have to switch our language from negative to positive. We need to embrace the mantra of IWWCW, or "In what way can we", and deal with whatever is causing us grief and hardship.

If we take away the chance to find refuge in the act of complaining, then we need to mentally move to a new place—a land of the possible and the positive. Now this obviously requires discipline, because we are all whiners at some point.

This perspective shift has two dimensions. One is internal—our self-talk about what is happening in our own world. The second is related to our dealings with others. We often get frustrated with other people and we complain to them and/or about them. This does no good whatsoever. The individuals in question often become defensive, usually reject what we say and sometimes even feel required to counterattack or seek revenge at a later point.

We are better off finding different ways to communicate our concerns or dissatisfactions with others. We might be inclined to tell it as it is, and it makes us feel better because we were righteous. The only problem is that the other party feels offended, insulted and righteous about justifying whatever it is they are doing that annoys us.

Instead, allowing others to keep face, being tactful, indirect, subtle and talking about our own failings first are all tried and true methods of dealing with the insufficiencies of others. If we fix our self-talk and shift to the positive, we will have a much better 2017. If we stop

complaining about others, we will have a spectacular new year.

None of this is easy, but the rewards are definitely there. Are we all perfect and can just switch out of old habits with a mere snap of the fingers? No, so let's not beat ourselves up if we occasionally slip up. Rather, let's keep working on establishing new habits that will work for us. Each time we truncate our negative self-talk or refrain from giving some irritating transgressor both barrels, we have made progress. It takes 21–30 days to cast a new habit, so we have to be patient and just keep going with it.

Imagine how life would be if we were able to eliminate complaining from our lives? A worthy goal for sure. Best wishes for your success in making this a reality.

Engaged employees are self-motivated. The self-motivated are inspired. Inspired staff grow your business, but are you inspiring them? We teach leaders and organisations how to inspire their people. Want to know how we do that? Contact me at greg.story@dalecarnegie.com 🇯🇵

When we decide we won't complain,
we are taking on more accountability.
We are saying we are in the fixing, not
the dithering, business.

ARTS

UK EVENTS IN JAPAN

COMPILED BY
KIYOKO MORITA
AND SOPHIA KIRTLEY

1 17-18 FEBRUARY

Valentine's Ballet

Introducing the diverse world of ballet, performances at the *Valentine's Ballet* range from *Don Quixote*'s brilliant pas de deux to *Swan Lake* and the *Black Swan*. The ballet is conducted by Northern Irishman Paul Murphy, principal conductor of the Birmingham Royal Ballet since 1997 and previously a guest conductor at the New York City Ballet, Dutch National Ballet and Australian Ballet.

THEME AND VARIATIONS
© THE GEORGE BALANCHINE TRUST
PHOTO: TAKASHI SHIKAMA

New National Theatre, Tokyo

1-1-1 Honmachi
Shibuya-ku, Tokyo
Various times
Adults: from ¥1,620
» www.nntt.jac.go.jp/
03-5352-9999

2 13-14 FEBRUARY

Travis

The four-piece rock band from Glasgow are back with a Japan tour after their success last year performing at Fuji Rock 2016. *Travis* will be promoting their most recent album, *Everything at Once*. They have been named Best Band at the BRIT Awards on two occasions, and in 2016 they were commended for their outstanding contribution to music at the Scottish Music Awards.

Zepp DiverCity (Tokyo)

Diver City Tokyo Plaza
1-1-10 Aomi, Koto-ku, Tokyo
7:00pm
Adults: ¥8,000
» www.smash-jpn.com/live/?id=2558
03-3444-6751

3 19 JANUARY- 12 FEBRUARY

Leach Pottery Standard Ware Exhibition 2017

This pottery exhibition, displaying standard ware pottery designed by the renowned British potter Bernard Howell Leach CH CBE (1887-1979), focuses on his 1960s works. The pieces were conceived by Leach and made by the pupils and apprentices at his studio between the 1930s and 1970s. Leach spent part of his childhood living in Japan and later returned to learn about Japanese ceramics. This influenced the works he made after setting up Leach Pottery in St. Ives in 1920.

Gallery St. Ives

3-5-13 Fukasawa
Setagaya-ku, Tokyo
11am-6pm
Closed: Mondays and Tuesdays
Admission: free
» www.gallery-st-ives.co.jp/e/
03-3705-3050

● Free gift

We have one slipware tile by Clive Bowen and two calendars related to this exhibition to give away.





To apply for free tickets and gifts, please send an email with your name, address and telephone number by 31 January to: coordinator@custom-media.com.
Winners will be picked at random.



4

4 FROM 27 JANUARY

Doctor Strange

The latest entry into the Marvel cinematic universe, *Doctor Strange* tells the story of Stephen Strange—played by Benedict Cumberbatch—who, following suffering a car accident, goes on a journey to recover the use of his hands. After finding himself a place called Kamar-Taj, he begins learning spells and sorcery, leading him to become *Doctor Strange*.

PHOTO: ©2017 Marvel

Theatre West, Tokyo Metropolitan Theatre

1-8-1, Nishi-Ikebukuro
Toshima-ku, Tokyo

Various times

Adults: from ¥3,600

» <http://kakushinhan.org/works>
03-5391-2111

Free tickets

We have four tickets to give away.

6 25 FEBRUARY

Eddie Izzard: Force Majeure

World-famous British stand-up comedian, actor and writer Eddie Izzard brings his hugely successful comedy tour *Force Majeure* to Tokyo. Beginning his career as a street performer, Eddie had his first solo show in London's West End in 1993. Since then, he has won numerous awards and has graced the silver screen and TV. The *Force Majeure* tour began in 2013 and, by the time it ends, Izzard will have visited and performed in more than 30 countries.

Tamagawa Kuminkaikan

3-4-1, Todoroki

Setagaya-ku, Tokyo

7pm (doors open at 6:30pm)

¥6,500

» https://tokyocomedy.com/eddie_izzard
03-3702-1675



5

Toho Cinemas Shinjuku

Shinjuku Toho Bldg.

1-19-1 Kabukicho

Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo

Various times

Adults: from ¥1,100

» <http://marvel.disney.co.jp/movie/dr-strange.html>
050-6868-5063

Free gift

We are giving away three *Doctor Strange* pin badges.

5 26-29 JANUARY

Macbeth

Theatre Company Kakushinhan presents a vivid interpretation of one of William Shakespeare's best-known plays, which portrays the deleterious effects of pursuing power for its own sake. Company director Ryunosuke Kimura formed Kakushinhan in 2012, and focuses on creating original works as well as new, colourful interpretations of classics.



6



UK-Japan events

1 | EMBASSY

Tim Hitchens CMG LVO, then-UK ambassador to Japan, makes a farewell call on the Emperor and Empress of Japan on 14 December.

PHOTO: @UKAMBTIM VIA TWITTER

2 | BCCJ EVENT

Emma Hickinbotham, interim executive director of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan, Jeremy Hunt MP, secretary of state for health, David Bickle, president of the BCCJ, and Tim Hitchens CMG LVO, at a BCCJ breakfast event on 9 December at the Peninsula Tokyo.

3 | BCCJ EVENT

David Bickle toasts with representatives of other national chambers of commerce at the Annual Joint Chamber *Bonenkai* on 8 December at the Embassy of Canada to Japan in Tokyo.

PHOTO: SEIYA WATANABE, COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONS COORDINATOR, AMERICAN CHAMBER OF COMMERCE IN JAPAN

4 | BCCJ EVENT

On 30 November, BCCJ members gathered with their American Chamber of Commerce in Japan counterparts at a joint-chamber event held at the ANA InterContinental Tokyo to hear from John Coates, vice-president of the International Olympic Committee.

5 | MARKET

Ian Gibbins, owner of the Swan & Lion British Deli and Bakery, sells his wares at the Bridge Street Market pop-up event on 3 December at BA-TSU Art Gallery in the Shibuya district of Tokyo.



6 | CHARITY

On 10 December, charity cycling team Knights in White Lycra took a short “Santa Ride” to a children’s care home in west Tokyo to deliver Christmas presents and take part in fun and games with the residents.

7 | CHARITY

The volunteer group Animal Walk Tokyo hosted an end of year party on 4 December at Station Garden Tower in Tokyo for the benefit of charities Animal Refuge Kansai and HEART Tokushima.

8 | BRITS AT LUNCH

Sally Sheridan, Shanthe Deshpande and Shamim Daniels attend the Brits at Lunch Christmas party at the Roppongi Hills Club on 9 December. With 120 guests present, the event raised ¥601,000 for children’s charity Mirai no Mori.

9 | PARTY

Custom Media, publishers of *BCCJ ACUMEN*, celebrates the end of the year at its *bonenkai* on 16 December at Crib Tokyo.

10 | CONCERT

Students performed at the British School in Tokyo’s *Home for Christmas* concert on 13 December.

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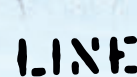
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YEAR OF CHANGE



BY IAN DE STAINS OBE

As I write this, the year is slowly winding down, and by the time you read it we will be in a new year. So this is a good time to take stock; to look back on 2016 and to look forward to 2017, the Year of the Rooster.

Last year was not short on surprises, the UK's decision in the June referendum to leave the EU being perhaps the first most newsworthy one of these. I was in the UK in the weeks before the referendum and found it odd to meet so many people who said they were voting to leave: "Of course, we won't win," they said, "but we're voting to leave anyway."

It was clearly a protest vote, immigration being one of the most often cited reasons, along with the much debated—and disputed—cost to the UK of belonging to the Union. The benefits of belonging for many in Britain were conveniently ignored. There was much disinformation on both sides of the debate, but it appeared right to the very last moment that, though it was a close call, the remainers would prevail.

And when the final result was in, it was immediately clear that those leading the leave campaign had not really thought through the consequences of their determination. There was an immediate sense of "what now?" Six months on, the debate still rages, with many calling for a further vote and some demanding that the result of the referendum be over-ruled.

The entire issue of Brexit remains confusing to a great many people. There are dozens of questions left unanswered and others—some would say—are unanswerable, including what the final exit bill will be. Some have suggested £50 billion. But there are yet further questions. What happens, for example, to the thousands of UK citizens who have bought property in Spain and France, to name just two favourite places to retire. Likewise, what of the

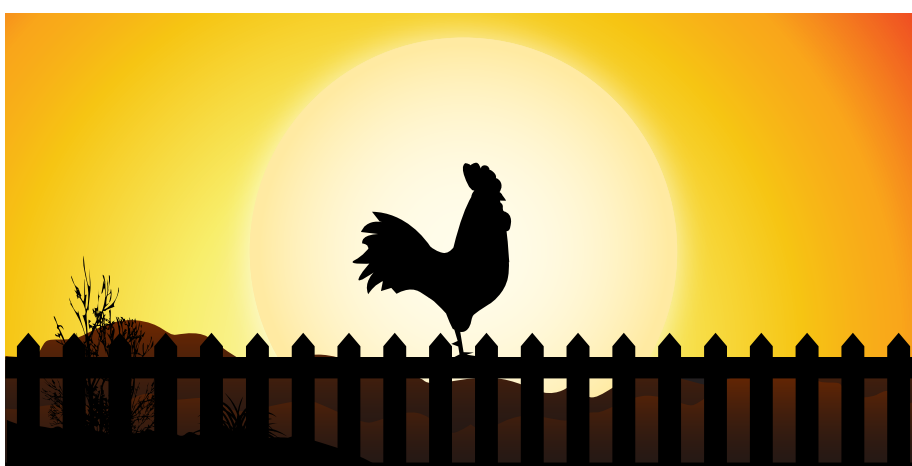


ILLUSTRATION: © CARTERART

thousands of EU citizens who now live and work in the UK?

Business, too, raises questions. We do not know the details of what deal was made to persuade Nissan Motor Co., Ltd. to make a large new—and welcome—investment in the UK, but other Japanese investors are looking on nervously. And there is a serious risk that some will move their operations to other countries once the UK triggers Article 50, which starts the countdown to Britain's withdrawal from the EU.

Prime Minister Theresa May appears confident that she can do this in March. What will follow is anyone's guess, but it is sure there will be more surprises to come as the Brexit story unfolds.

The other major surprise of 2016 was, of course, the US election. After a sometimes ugly and most unpleasant campaign, Donald Trump won the electoral college vote, though his rival, Hillary Clinton, won the popular vote by a record 2.9 million.

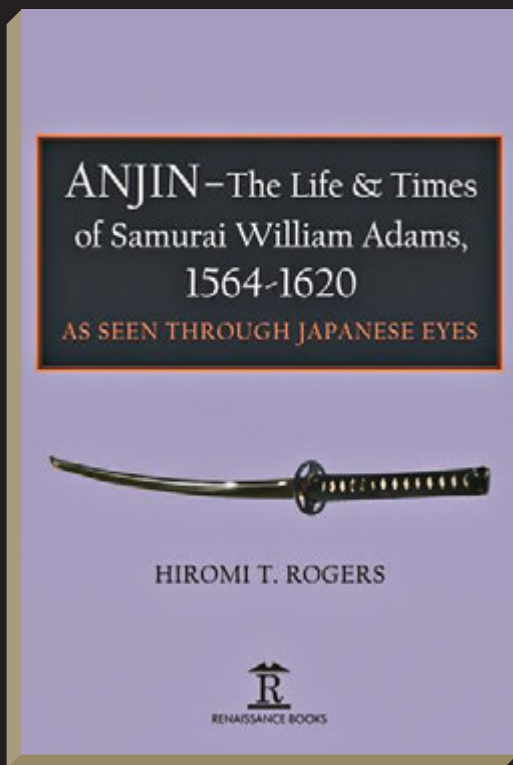
At the beginning of the campaign, Trump was seen as a joke, and during the campaign he certainly did his best to give the media plenty of

ammunition to support the view that he was an unworthy candidate. But here again, it appears a protest vote has won the day. People are tired. They long for change. With Trump they are going to get it. The question is, will they like what they get? Much of what Trump promised during the election campaign is unlikely to find its way through to action and already he has backtracked on a number of issues.

Still, we must wonder what his presidency means for ties with both the UK and Japan. His suggestion that Nigel Farage, a former leader of the UK Independence Party, would make a good British Ambassador to Washington may raise a laugh or an eyebrow or two, but his recent comments on China, together with his call with Tsai Ing-wen, president of Taiwan, do not bode well for Asia. Japan will be watching carefully, especially with regard to his comments on nuclear weapons and his apparently warm relations with Russia's President Vladimir Putin.

We can only hope that the surprises of 2017—and there are bound to be some—are less shocking than those of 2016. 🍀

BCCJ ACUMEN has one copy of this book to give away. To apply, please send an email by 31 January to: editor@custom-media.com. The winner will be picked at random.



A new take

ANJIN—The Life & Times of Samurai William Adams, 1564–1620 As Seen Through Japanese Eyes
Hiromi T. Rogers
Renaissance Books
£24.50

William Adams was born in 1564 in Gillingham, Kent, and at the age of 12 was apprenticed to a master shipbuilder. He spent 12 years studying shipbuilding, navigation and astronomy before joining the Royal Navy, serving under Sir Francis Drake. When he was 34, Adams went to the Netherlands where he was appointed pilot of a five-ship expedition to the Far East. It was to prove a fateful appointment.

After nearly two years at sea, only one of the ships—*De Liefde*—survived, making landfall in April 1600 off Bungo, the present day Oita Prefecture. Of the original crew, only 24 remained alive and only nine of these were strong enough to stand. Thus, William Adams became the first Englishman to set foot in Japan.

At the time, Portuguese priests alleged that *De Liefde* was a pirate vessel, and the crew were imprisoned in Osaka Castle on the orders of Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu, who nevertheless was intrigued by Adams. Ieyasu would later bestow on him a great many privileges, not least of which were two swords and the rank of samurai, along with the new name of Miura Anjin.

This somewhat unlikely scenario has inspired a number of stories, among them James Clavell's *Shogun*, as well as numerous academic studies. Now comes a new book that would appear to be something of a hybrid.

Hiromi T. Rogers writes in her preface: “My interest in William

Adams springs from ... a desire to recontextualise his story from a Japanese point of view—something that hitherto has been missing from Western literature. Adams, after all, became a fully integrated member of the upper echelons of Japanese society ... and it was this phenomenon, with all its cultural implications, that triggered my curiosity to find out more. My book is an attempt, therefore, to combine fact and fiction”.

Rogers admits that some critics will find this approach to be poor scholarship, but she invites the reader to join her in riding “these two horses” in a spirit of adventure and open-mindedness. What she has created is a most readable account of Adams’ voyage to Japan and his 20 years living there, and is enriched by detailed observations of Japanese culture and society of the time. Her writing is immediate and highly engaging, and the reader is at once drawn in to her story. The novel-like approach to telling her tale is extremely effective, and what a tale there is to tell.

The book has a number of interesting illustrations, including a map that Adams might have used as pilot of *De Liefde* and the marker of Adams’ house in old Edo, now on a street named Anjin-dori in Nihonbashi. It is an informative and entertaining read, and the author’s gamble at mixing fact and fiction has paid off handsomely in this new take on the life of William Adams. 🇬🇧



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