

The magazine of the
British Chamber of
Commerce in Japan

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The UK's new top diplomat in Japan

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PUBLISHER



Changing of the Guard

SIMON FARRELL | simon@custom-media.com

On behalf of Custom Media, the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ), the UK community and the many Anglophiles here, a big thank you, well done and all the best to Paul Madden CMG.

The outgoing British Ambassador to Japan has given us a fascinating and rare insight—through his regular *BCCJ ACUMEN* column, “Despatches”. Reprinted in this special issue is a cavalcade of all those informative pieces, about how government has been working during a particularly engaging era for UK-Japan ties, marked by Brexit, the subsequent trade deal, a levelling of the playing field in bilateral trade and, among other challenges, the debilitating effects of Covid-19.

Ambassador Madden has supported a regular flow of royals (Princes Charles and Harry, Princess Anne); politicians (including Prime Ministers Theresa May, Boris Johnson and Shinzo Abe); sport stars (England, Wales, Scotland and Ireland teams for the Rugby World Cup 2019); and too many cultural and business VIPs to mention here.

The successful hosting of events kept his passionate Embassy team very busy during a period when Japan was often seen abroad as the flavour of the month, with unprecedented numbers of inbound tourists, visiting Royal Navy warships and UK exports reaching £14.6bn in 2019. Such exports included those from iconic brands such as Lush, Ted Baker Plc, Burberry Group Plc, Fortnum & Mason, Barclays Bank UK PLC, GlaxoSmithKline plc, Jaguar Land Rover Automotive PLC and Rolls-Royce Motor Cars Ltd.

Since 2018, he has presented trophies to winners at the annual BCCJ British Business Awards, and will be remembered by many for his humour and warmth. But it’s not all glamour and cocktails. Down-to-earth Ambassador Madden also toured the spartan Fuchu Prison and met a British inmate there. This duty is usually performed by consular staff, rather than the UK government’s top representative in Japan who directs and oversees politics, trade, investment, media, cultural affairs, visas, consular services and other key operations. 🇬🇧



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Welcome to Ambassador Paul Madden

The UK's new top diplomat in Japan

BY SIMON FARRELL
PHOTOS: ANTONY TRAN

The new year often brings change, and easily one of the most important developments in the UK-Japan relationship has been the appointment of Paul Madden CMG FRGS as the UK ambassador to Japan commencing in January.

A career diplomat, Madden has served at several embassies and high commissions and also performed roles at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), UK Trade & Investment (now Department for International Trade) and the UK Department of Trade and Industry, where he began his career.

No stranger to Japan, Madden first visited the country in 1982 as part of a study tour, studied Japanese at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London during 1986-87, and was posted to Tokyo from 1988 to 1992.

In this exclusive interview with *BCCJ ACUMEN*, Madden discusses his past experience with Japan, his diplomatic career and important aspects of the UK-Japan relationship.

Please tell us about your career and personal interests.

I have been a career diplomat for over 25 years, following a few years in the Department of Trade and Industry, and studying for an economic geography degree from the University of Cambridge.

I am particularly delighted to be coming back to Tokyo as Ambassador, because Japan was my first posting, from 1988 to '92. I have very fond memories of a fascinating period during the bubble economy, *kokusaika* (internationalisation), *boeki masatsu* (trade friction) and the start of the Heisei era. Most of my postings have been in Asia-Pacific, where I served most recently as high commissioner to Australia, and before that to Singapore. I also worked at our embassy in Washington.

I have worked closely with business in various roles, including two years as a managing director at UK Trade & Investment, working on developing trade strategies and leading trade missions to places such as China and India.

In my personal life, I am married to Sarah and have three grown up children. The eldest was born in Japan, and they all look forward to coming here for visits. I love travel, which I suppose is just as well given my job. And I enjoy writing: I wrote a book analysing Stamford Raffles' business leadership skills, and have had a play performed in Sydney.



Why do you believe you were offered the job as UK ambassador to Japan?

I think I was successful in the competition because of my past posting in Japan, when I learned to speak Japanese, and my wider experience of Asia-Pacific and working with business.

What are your main achievements in past roles?

A diplomat's life is very varied, and most of what you achieve is very much a team effort. I was particularly pleased that at the 2005 World Expo in Aichi Prefecture, the UK pavilion, for which I had lead responsibility, won a prize. In Australia, we chose to focus the FCO's Chevening Scholarship programme on indigenous young people during my time there and saw the first ever aboriginal students studying at both Oxford and Cambridge universities. Helping survivors and bereaved families after the 2002 Bali bombing was one of the most challenging things I've ever had to do, but very rewarding. I cannot praise highly enough my consular colleagues around the world who deal with such tragedies on a regular basis.

How would you like the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) to help you succeed here?

I look forward to renewing my relationship with the [British Chamber of Commerce in Japan]—I used to sit on its board as an embassy representative back in the 1980s. I have worked closely with sister chambers in my recent postings. The BCCJ provides valuable opportunities for networking, professional development and support for small and medium-sized enterprises looking to enter the Japanese market. I also hope to see it developing its ability to analyse and make policy recommendations to support possible future bilateral trade agreements with Japan, following our departure from the European Union (EU).

What advice did your predecessor Tim Hitchens CMG LVO offer you about the job and Japan?

Not to reveal publicly the private advice given you by your predecessor. Seriously, Tim is an outstanding colleague and has been a friend for nearly 30 years. He has done a great job here, and I'm honoured to be following in his footsteps.



On 18 January, Ambassador Madden presented his credentials to the Emperor of Japan.
PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Ambassador Madden poses with a Nissan Leaf made in the UK.

What is the latest on any post-Brexit UK-Japan trade deal?

You will have seen Prime Minister Theresa May's speech on 17 January setting out the UK's 12 negotiating objectives in leaving the EU, and aiming to give as much certainty as possible. The prime minister emphasised that the UK will remain an outward-looking country, a country that welcomes global talent and investment to Britain and a country that will play its full part in the world contributing to global security, peace and prosperity. She made it clear that we want to agree a bold and ambitious free trade agreement with the EU, which gives the closest possible access to the single market. And that whilst we do not want to be part of the Common Commercial Policy, or to be bound by the Common External Tariff, we want to ensure that cross-border trade is as frictionless as possible.

I intend to continue to maintain close contact with the Japanese government on these issues and to listen to the views of Japanese investors who play a very important role in the British economy, as well as UK companies exporting to Japan. I'm confident that Britain will remain a great place in which Japanese companies can invest.

How do you see the UK-Japan security partnership evolving?

The government's 2015 Strategic Defence and Security Review named Japan as our closest security partner in Asia. The joint exercises between the Royal Air Force Typhoons and the Japanese Self-Defense Forces last November was a big success. We were the first country, other than the United States, to do this on Japanese territory.

There are also increasing opportunities for collaboration in defence and security procurement, including new areas like cyber security. We welcome the Japanese government's aspiration to play a larger role in international affairs and think it can make an important contribution to global peace and security.

What industries will you be targeting to improve UK exports to Japan and Japanese investment in the UK?

Guided by business itself, our strategic priorities for UK exports where we can add value are life sciences, food and drink, the digital economy, nuclear, defence, aerospace and, of course, opportunities related to sporting events—the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games and the 2019 Rugby World Cup—alongside more opportunistic areas, such as fashion and fintech.

And as for Japanese investment into the UK, they cover a wide range of sectors, but in particular automotive and advanced manufacturing, life sciences, digital economy, and food and drink. We have had some notable recent successes with Nissan confirming investment in Sunderland, and Softbank's commitment to grow ARM Holdings following its acquisition.

Will you use social media to convey the UK's messages and values in Japan?

I used to head the FCO's public diplomacy department and was responsible for many aspects of communication, including the financial support that we provided for the BBC World Service and the British Council. And my MBA thesis was on "The UK as a brand". I recognise the important role that social media can play as part of a wider marketing and communications strategy. So, yes, I'll be tweeting and blogging to highlight the work of the embassy.

Any special message for British expats here and Japanese anglophiles?

I hope that many Brits living here will, like me and my team, be proud to speak up for the UK and its values, and our role in the world. And to cheer for our teams at the Rugby World Cup, Olympics and Paralympics. Japan shares many of our values, and that is why we find so many anglophiles in



Simon Farrell, publisher of BCCJ ACUMEN, shows Ambassador Madden the magazine.

this country. I hope that even more of them will come to study, work and holiday in the UK.

Most British expats living in safe, well-organised, welcoming Japan will not experience any difficulties during their time here. But when individuals do experience specific problems, or natural disasters strike, we aim to be there to help. 🇬🇧

BCCJ EVENT

On 27 January at the Shangri-La Hotel in Tokyo's Marunouchi district, many BCCJ members had their first chance to meet Ambassador Paul Madden at a chamber lunch event introducing him.

Addressing a wide variety of topics—ranging from important business sectors to growing defence ties—and peppering his speech and the following Q&A with personal anecdotes from his time in Japan and as a diplomat, Madden reaffirmed the core areas of the UK-Japan relationship, as well as setting out the hopes of the UK government, given that today, the ties between the countries are more crucial than ever.

"Against [an uncertain] background, countries like Britain and Japan are increasingly important to each other. And I'm pleased to see that our relationship has gone from strength to strength. We are like-minded nations that share many values: the rule of law, democracy, human rights and free trade", he said.

Madden also made clear that business is top of the agenda.

"Our relationship with Japan has lots of different facets. But business is clearly my top priority".

BUSINESS TIES

"The most important pillar of that [business] relationship is undoubtedly the £40bn of

investment that Japanese companies have made in the British economy over the last few decades—our second biggest non-European investor. Before coming here I had the chance to visit a number of those investors, like the Nissan car plant, Eisai Pharmaceuticals and Nomura in the City. I was able to see for myself what a success this relationship has been for both sides. I also met representatives of the Trades Union Congress, who told me what great employers Japanese companies in the UK were for the 140,000 workers they employ.

"All the Japanese companies said to me that they were pleased with the efforts that the British government had made to reach out to them, to understand their detailed concerns. As you know, we had a large number of ministers coming out to Japan in the second half of last year to reassure business here".

POST-BREXIT

"During the course of the detailed negotiations, people won't be able to know everything all of the time. But we have committed to providing business, including Japanese business, with as much certainty as possible throughout the process. And I am confident that Britain



Ambassador Madden speaks at a BCCJ event.

will continue to be a great place for Japanese companies to invest.

"[The work of the Prosperity and Trade & Investment teams] will grow even more important as the UK starts to initiate new free trade agreement negotiations with third countries, once we leave the EU. I think Japan will potentially be a priority country for such agreements. So I know that [the Prosperity Team] will be looking to business, both here and in the UK, for advice on what our detailed priorities should be. And that's an invitation to all of you. Of course in the meantime, we continue to be one of the leading voices within the EU calling for the early conclusion of the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement".

A busy week in April

Much in store

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
UNITED KINGDOM AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



The Queen's actual birthday is on 21 April. She will be 92. She has been on the throne for 66 years and is the oldest and longest-reigning British monarch ever. For most of us, it feels as if she has been a constant backdrop to our lives: four out of five of the British population were born during her reign.

Thirteen British prime ministers have held office during that time, starting with Winston Churchill, and 13 US presidents. There have been 29 Japanese prime ministers during the same period, starting with Shigeru Yoshida, grandfather of current Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso. The Queen is actually the head of state of 16 realms, ranging from large countries such as Australia and Canada, to small island nations such as Tuvalu.

Visitors to my residence are greeted by a smiling portrait of the Queen, taken by photographer David Bailey CBE in 2014. As an ambassador, you are the representative overseas of Queen Elizabeth II, so you get the opportunity to have a private audience at the palace before your posting. For Sarah and me it was a very special moment. Her Majesty talked warmly of her visit to Japan in 1975 and of her ties with Japan's Imperial Family.

The Queen also has an official birthday on the second Saturday in June, chosen because British weather tends to be a bit better then. British embassies overseas are allowed to choose to host their annual Queen's Birthday Party around either the actual or official birthday. This year we are going for June.

Flying the flag

St George's Day falls on 23 April. The choice as England's patron saint, of a Roman soldier from Turkey who died in fourth-century Palestine, is not an obvious one. But we are not alone. He is also patron saint of seven other countries, ranging from Ethiopia to Greece and Lithuania, mainly because his name became synonymous with bravery during the crusades. He has been our patron saint since 1350.

The red cross flag of St George, came to England via the crusades. It is much more prominent on churches and other buildings in Britain nowadays than it used to be when I was

For most of us, it feels as if
[the Queen] has been a
constant backdrop to our lives.



The Red Arrows flew over The Mall in June 2016 for Her Majesty's official 90th Birthday. PHOTO: ©CROWN COPYRIGHT



The Royal Gibraltar Regiment performed a 62 gun salute at the Tower of London for the Queen's birthday in 2017. • PHOTO: ©CROWN COPYRIGHT



The British Embassy Tokyo's party for the Queen's official birthday in 2017. PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

young. Some people say this is a response to devolution in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. Others date the change back to 1996, when we hosted the UEFA European Football Championship. I remember how the flag was everywhere as England made it to the semi-finals, only to lose to Germany on penalties, in what has become a tradition.

St George's Day tends to have less prominence than the national days of the other home nations—St Andrew's of Scotland, St David's of Wales, and St Patrick's of Ireland—and there are fewer branches of the Royal Society of St George overseas. Perhaps because the English make up 85% of Britain, they feel less need to assert a separate identity.

Further landmarks

Shakespeare's birthday is on 23 April. He was a contemporary of William Adams, the first Englishman in Japan, who arrived here in the year *Hamlet* was first performed. Shakespeare continues to influence artists in Japan, as all around the world. Whenever I address Japan-British societies around the country, I'm sure to bump into a Shakespeare scholar from the local university.

On 25 April, I will be joining my Australian and New Zealand counterparts for the Anzac day ceremony at the beautiful, tranquil Commonwealth War Cemetery in Hodogaya near Yokohama. 🇬🇧

From trade talks to wedding bells

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
UNITED KINGDOM AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



The TV camera rolled, I blinked in the arc lights and tensed as the interviewer put his question. "How did you feel when you heard Prince Harry had chosen an elderflower-and-lemon cake for his wedding?" I was relieved; that's a bit easier than dealing with my usual fare of Brexit, North Korea and the Salisbury chemical weapon attack. In fact we were filming a programme featuring a former chef from Buckingham Palace who was visiting Tokyo, and had come to the Ambassador's Residence to showcase British cakes and desserts.

It always fascinates me how other countries take so much interest in our royal weddings, even great republics like the United States.

Of course we do the splendour and the pageantry very well in Britain. That's great for tourism, which is really important for the UK economy. But there's also always something special about a wedding. It reminds you of your own happy day and all the good things that have flowed from it. Somehow the royals are able to personify that generalised sense of optimism for all of us. And Prince Harry and Meghan Markle make a particularly handsome and popular couple.

Having experienced combat action in Afghanistan, Prince Harry has a special bond with the military—one he reciprocates through his support of the Invictus Games, and his work with injured servicemen and women. When I was High Commissioner of the United Kingdom to Australia, I remember him attending the great gathering of ships from 30 nations in Sydney's magnificent harbour for the 100th anniversary of the Royal Australian Navy.

I thought of that last month, when I went on board HMS *Sutherland*, which was at the Port of Yokosuka, before heading off for some joint exercises with the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force.

With other ship visits to follow later this year, we are really seeing the closer security ties that Prime Ministers Theresa May and Shinzo Abe signed up to last year becoming a reality.

It always fascinates me how other countries take so much interest in our royal weddings, even great republics like the United States.

Plans for our new bilateral trade and economic relationship are moving forward too, following the March European Council's agreement that Britain will be able to negotiate and sign new trade deals during the Brexit implementation period, starting when we leave the EU in March 2019. Those deals would come into force at the end of the implementation period in December 2020. Both Japan and Britain are looking for an ambitious new agreement, based on the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which is due to be signed in July 2018. The next meeting of the Japan-UK Trade and Investment Working Group takes place in London in May 2018.



From left: Ambassador Madden with the Rt Hon Mark Field MP, Minister for Asia and the Pacific at the FCO, and Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike • PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Prince Harry and Meghan Markle • PHOTO: KARWAI TANG / GETTY IMAGES

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From left: Ambassador Madden, his daughter Francesca, Dame Darcey Bussell DBE and his wife Sarah • PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



HMS Sutherland leaves the US Naval Base in Yokosuka. • PHOTO: US NAVY / PETER BURGHART

We had Foreign & Commonwealth Office Minister Mark Field and senior officials from the Department for International Trade and the Department for Exiting the European Union all come through Tokyo in April. Whilst the Japanese businesses they met still had concerns about how Brexit will work, the initial shock here following the referendum result seems to have been replaced by a calmer pragmatism. In fact, we haven't seen any fall-off in flows of new investment from Japan over the past year.

The initial shock here following the referendum result seems to have been replaced by a calmer pragmatism.

I also enjoyed hosting Health Secretary Jeremy Hunt, who was in Tokyo in April for a conference on patient safety. He still speaks impressive Japanese, which he learnt during a couple of years working here in his twenties, and is a big fan of this country. I invited his former host family round for a *hisashiburi* drink.

But I think my favourite guest this year has been Dame Darcey Bussell DBE, star of the Royal Ballet and TV's *Strictly Come Dancing*, who delivered the annual Daiwa Lecture at my residence in March. Former Royal Ballet lead Miyako Yoshida, as well as Tamiyo Kusakari, star of the wonderful 1996 Japanese film *Shall We Dance*, also came round to join us. 🍷

DESPATCHES

Talking Japan in London

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
UNITED KINGDOM AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

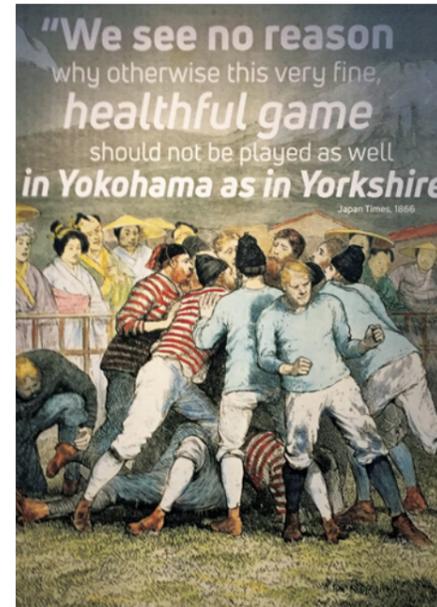


Boris Johnson also spoke at the event. • PHOTO: FCO/CROWN COPYRIGHT

I was back in the UK for a couple of weeks in May, mainly to attend the annual conference of our ambassadors from around the world. There will soon be a few more of us at these meetings, as the foreign secretary recently announced we will be opening 10 new embassies, including three in the Asia-Pacific region—in Vanuatu, Tonga and Samoa—bringing the total to 178 embassies.

In addition to Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson and other senior government figures, BBC nature presenter David Attenborough—still remarkably sprightly at 92—also addressed us. He spoke on the illegal wildlife trade and in support of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's work on climate change.

I addressed the All Party Parliamentary Group on Japan over lunch at the House of Commons, where I sat next to Lord (Menzies) Campbell, former head of the Liberal Democrats, who reminisced about having competed in the 1964 Tokyo Olympic Games before becoming a politician.



This poster, displayed at Twickenham Stadium, depicts an early rugby match in Japan. PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



The Innovation is GREAT campaign is now featured on the exterior of the embassy. PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

It was great to be back in Britain for the royal wedding—every small town high street seemed to be emblazoned with red, white and blue bunting

I had a number of meetings with companies interested in Japan, from financial services to aerospace concerns. In addition, I visited Twickenham Stadium and met representatives of the Rugby Football Union to talk about their preparations for the Rugby World Cup Japan 2019, to which they are very much looking forward.

It was great to be back in Britain for the royal wedding—every small town high street seemed to be emblazoned with red, white and blue bunting and photos of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle.

On 14 June, I hosted, at my residence, the annual Queen's birthday party, our biggest event of the year. We welcomed some 400 guests, drawn from government, business and culture circles, as well as the media. With music provided by the Scots Guards and the British School in Tokyo, it was a great event. I'm grateful to those British companies who have sponsored it.

We are also using the Queen's birthday party to promote our new Innovation is GREAT campaign, focusing on British strengths in artificial intelligence. Britain is a world leader in fields such as machine

learning and natural language processing. But, since this isn't always well recognised in Japan, we are using the campaign to promote opportunities to collaborate with Japanese business and academics.

I just celebrated my 500th day in Japan and have been enjoying making a video series to mark the event on my @PaulMaddenUK Twitter account. A quick calculation revealed that I have now visited 23 of the 47 prefectures. This includes official visits to meet local politicians and business people, give speeches, as well as participate in conferences and local *matsuri*. My wife Sarah and I have also enjoyed chances to reconnect with the Japanese coast and countryside, including a memorable tour of Shikoku island at Easter and the Japanese Alps in Golden Week.

We've been able to see Japan in a new light through the eyes of our 21-year-old daughter Francesca, who is just completing the ninth month of her gap year here. It's clear that Tokyo is a really cool destination for young Brits. In a month of hitchhiking around Japan—where, apparently, she never waited more than five minutes for a lift—Francesca got to places that we have yet to visit, such as remote islands off Okinawa. 🍷



David Attenborough spoke about climate change and the illegal wildlife trade. PHOTO: FCO/CROWN COPYRIGHT



Attending a festival in Otari, Nagano Prefecture. • PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

A Tokyo Summer

Garden parties, visits and visitors

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
UNITED KINGDOM AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



From left: Takashi Hibino, chairman, Daiwa Securities; Paul Madden CMG, UK Ambassador to Japan; Sir Peter Williams, chairman, the Daiwa Foundation



Ambassador Madden and his wife Sarah met Yamagata Governor Mieko Yoshimura and enjoyed a festival.

A speech at the Queen's Birthday Party is one of the big events of the year for most ambassadors, taking place in front of hundreds of VIPs and important embassy contacts. So I suppose it was a bit brave to give up part of mine to a synthesised version of my voice, speaking random sentences written by party guests. All in the interests of promoting our Innovation is GREAT AI campaign.

The technology, developed by Japanese tech firm Toshiba Corporation and the University of Cambridge, is pretty impressive. I had to record 100 sentences in Japanese, from which the programme could then synthesise a very realistic version of my voice, saying any Japanese text typed into it.

Bizarrely, if you typed in English text, it made me speak English in my natural voice, but with a heavy Japanese accent. It's a fascinating insight into how foreign speakers' pronunciation of a language is influenced by the stresses and cadences of their own language. You could even adjust the emotional tone to warm, angry, or sad. Naturally I went for warm.

Fortunately, the party guests were kind and the sentences spoken by my voice were fully appropriate—apart from a rogue one by my team promising all embassy staff a 100% pay rise. Nice try. Our guest of honour, Internal Affairs and Communications Minister Seiko Noda, Japan's most senior female minister, seemed most impressed.

Garden parties

Many people associate a British June and July with garden parties and summer fetes. So, in addition to the Queen's Birthday Party, it's not surprising that I end up hosting a number of such events for British-related organisations here at this time of year.

The biggest ones, which both had events last month, were the Japan-British Society and the Cambridge & Oxford Society. We are fortunate to have members of the imperial family engaged in both societies.

Sadly HIH Crown Prince Naruhito was unable to attend the Cambridge & Oxford Society event, out of respect for the victims of the Kansai earthquake. But later, HIH Princess Akiko was at the Japan-British Society event, as its patron.

I always enjoy spending time with members of both organisations, who often have very happy memories of living, working and studying in Britain, and remain personally engaged in promoting links between the two countries.

Of course Britain has many other great universities beyond Oxbridge nowadays, and there are a number of other alumni groups in town. I hosted an event for University College London alumni last year, when their vice chancellor was here. There is also an active group of alumni of the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's own Chevening Scholarship scheme, many of whom work in government.

It is always a pleasure to get together with other British organisations here. The Japan Scotland Association also just held its AGM and reception at the embassy. Some Japanese form their own groups, often with highly specialised membership. I was guest of honour last year at the St James' Kai, which comprises former Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry officials who served in London. And I have hosted members of the Club Hiraeth, for Japanese business people who have been posted in Wales.

I also just held a reception to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of the Daiwa Anglo Japanese Foundation, established by Daiwa Securities. It has done a fantastic job of providing grants to many individuals and organisations to promote links between the two countries across a wide range of spheres. And its flagship Daiwa Scholars programme has now seen 170 outstanding young Brits learning Japanese and being placed here in their chosen fields. This year's batch includes a sword maker and a space academic (well, I said to him, it's not rocket science).

I knew Japan was famous for its cherry blossoms, but was less aware of its strengths in producing delicious cherries.

People sometimes comment on the fact that FCO rules now require that we have to charge on a cost-recovery basis for events that used to be free or subsidised for British-linked organisations. I'm afraid that is a consequence of operating in a resource-constrained environment. But we do sweat the assets hard: I share my home with up to 20,000 people a year.

Visits and visitors

I have now been to more than half of Japan's prefectures since arriving last January. Sometimes I am invited to fascinating local festivals. In June, Sarah and I were up in Yamagata Prefecture with Governor Mieko Yoshimura (one of Japan's all too few female governors) for their annual *sakuranbo* event. I knew Japan was famous for its cherry blossoms, but was less aware of its strengths in producing delicious cherries. Apparently, the fruit trees are a completely different species, though they belong to the same plant family.

I will be travelling down to Kumamoto shortly to address the Japan-British Society there, one of 20 or so such organisations around the country.

Last month I also paid my first visit to the Tokyo Racecourse, to present the trophies for the Epsom Derby Cup, which marks the link between the Japan Racing Association and its UK counterpart, as was featured in the June issue of *BCCJ ACUMEN*. It was the Brits who introduced organised horse racing to Japan in the 1860s. Nowadays, the races are big business, and there are increasingly lucrative ties between the two nations' horse racing industries.

After diligent perusal of form and the horses' appearances, we placed a selection of bets on horses whose names we liked. So it was not surprising that we ended the day down to the tune of several hundred yen.

July visitors include Charles Bowman, 690th Lord Mayor of the City of London, with a delegation from the asset management sector. During his year in office he is travelling the world promoting the UK's financial services.

Fiona Hyslop, Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs in the Scottish Government, has been here to promote many aspects of Scotland's relationship with Japan.

Liam Fox, International Trade Secretary, is due in Tokyo for the third time in my first 18 months in office here, a reflection of the importance of our future trade relationship with Japan, particularly at a time of growing trade tensions around the world.

We will be able to start negotiating a new Free Trade Agreement as soon as we leave the EU on 29 March, 2019. It could come into effect at the end of the Brexit implementation period in December 2020 and will largely be based on the new EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement that Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe is travelling to Europe to sign in July. I suspect that some of Dr Fox's Japanese interlocutors will be extolling the virtues of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

So, a busy month as the Tokyo weather gets hotter and stickier. ☀



Ambassador Madden met two *maiko* at a lunch hosted by Governor of Yamagata Prefecture Mieko Yoshimura.



At the Tokyo Racecourse to present trophies for the Epsom Derby Cup.

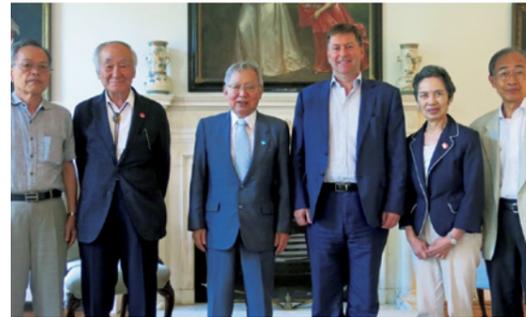
Floods, Fox, football

So far a summer of wild weather, VIP visits, and near misses

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
UNITED KINGDOM AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Ambassador Paul Madden and International Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox visited Prime Minister Shinzo Abe



A group of *hibakusha* visited the embassy to detail their experiences

The floods across a wide swathe of Western Japan, killing over two hundred people and temporarily displacing millions, were yet another reminder of how vulnerable Japan is to natural disasters, and how resilient the Japanese people are.

I called at the Imperial Palace to pass on a message of condolence from Queen Elizabeth II to the Emperor of Japan. Prime Minister Shinzo Abe had to cancel his visit to Europe, so President of the European Commission Jean-Claude Juncker and President of the European Council Donald Tusk came to Tokyo to sign the new EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement.

In July, the British government published a white paper on its future partnership with the European Union. Naturally there was much interest here, and I held a press conference for Japanese media, as well as writing to update top politicians and business leaders.

The proposals are well-judged to find a way of ensuring that the UK government fulfils its political mandate from the referendum of regaining control of our borders, our laws and our finances, whilst enabling the maximum continuity for trade and investment.

Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox set this out in more detail during his visit to Tokyo in late July. He then called on Prime Minister Abe and ministers from the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Cabinet Office, and held a number of meetings with business representatives. Prime Minister Abe warmly welcomed the UK's interest in considering joining the Comprehensive Partnership on Trans Pacific Trade (CPTPP).

Space is one of the areas in which the UK and Japanese prime ministers agreed last year to increase collaboration.

Star struck

Last month, I visited Tsukuba Science City in Ibaraki Prefecture for the first time, with members of my trade and science teams. Established in 1963 just 50km northeast of Tokyo, the City of Tsukuba houses 29 national and public research institutions.

At the Japanese Aerospace Exploration Agency, I was given an overview of Japan's impressive space programme. The nation's comprehensive capabilities include rocket launch sites in Kagoshima Prefecture.

Space is one of the areas in which the UK and Japanese prime ministers agreed last year to increase collaboration. This could include addressing the problem of space debris. The increasingly large volume of redundant kit floating around the Earth has the potential to damage expensive communications satellites.

At the Space Dome Exhibition Hall, you can go inside a mock-up of the Kibo, Japan's experiment module and the largest module of the International Space Station (ISS). It was a particular privilege to meet Kimiya Yui, one of Japan's 12 astronauts (the UK has had only two), who in 2015 spent 141 days in space. Astronauts are a special breed—highly intelligent, super-fit and brave. I would have thought once would be enough, but Yui said he'd love to get back into space again. He politely fielded my star-struck questions, such as, "How do you sleep in space?" His answer: "It doesn't matter in zero-gravity. Standing up, lying down; it's all the same."

We also toured the prestigious National Institute of Materials Science and heard about its collaboration with Rolls-Royce to develop alloys for jet engine turbines which are capable of operating at extraordinarily high temperatures.

And we had lunch with Tsukuba's dynamic young city mayor, Tatsuo Igarashi. Educated at the University of Glasgow and University College London, he credited his experiences in the UK with his decision to go into local government where he could make a real difference to people's lives.

Interestingly, as a relatively new city, Tsukuba's challenges are the opposite to those of many Japanese towns which face falling populations

A group of *hibakusha* ... outlined their life-stories: most had been young children, or even in the womb, when the bombs struck, but the experience had impacted their whole lives.



The St. George's cross flew at the embassy when England played in the World Cup

and ageing citizens. Mayor Igarashi told us he is more focused on building enough schools for his young population—and with so many PhDs among his townsfolk, those schools have to be pretty good.

Nuclear free

This was a very different conversation to one I had over a lunch I hosted for Baroness Cavendish, who used to be David Cameron's chief policy adviser, and is now writing a book on the challenges of ageing societies. We were joined by former Health Minister Yasuhisa Shiozaki MP, and a former chief government economist, and a top academic dementia specialist. Ageing raises many issues: medical costs, lack of carers, fewer workers and lower tax revenues. And in Japan it exacerbates the growing trend of rural depopulation, as younger people move to the cities, leaving country towns and villages with increasingly elderly populations.

A group of *hibakusha* from the Hidankyo (Japan Confederation of A- and H-bomb Sufferers Organizations) called on me in the run up to the Atomic Bomb Memorial events in Hiroshima and Nagasaki in August, which I had attended last year. They outlined their life-stories: most had been young children, or even in the womb, when the bombs struck, but the experience had impacted their whole lives.

They lobbied the UK to join last year's United Nations Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons. I explained that the UK shared their ambition to see a nuclear-free world—indeed we have halved the number of our nuclear weapons since the end of the Cold War, and now only account for less than 1% of the world's nuclear weapons. I added that we saw the Nuclear Proliferation Treaty, which celebrates its 40th anniversary in 2020, as the best

approach to making practical progress towards nuclear disarmament, and so that was our focus.

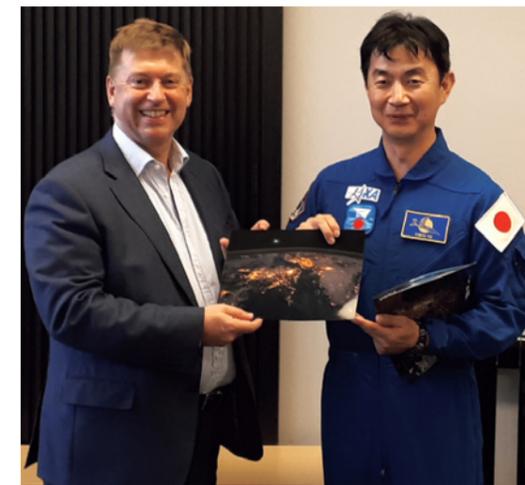
Sleepless nights

Dinner in Kumamoto to celebrate the 25th anniversary of the local Japan British Society was a fascinating insight into the broad range of reasons that people in provincial Japan are interested in the UK.

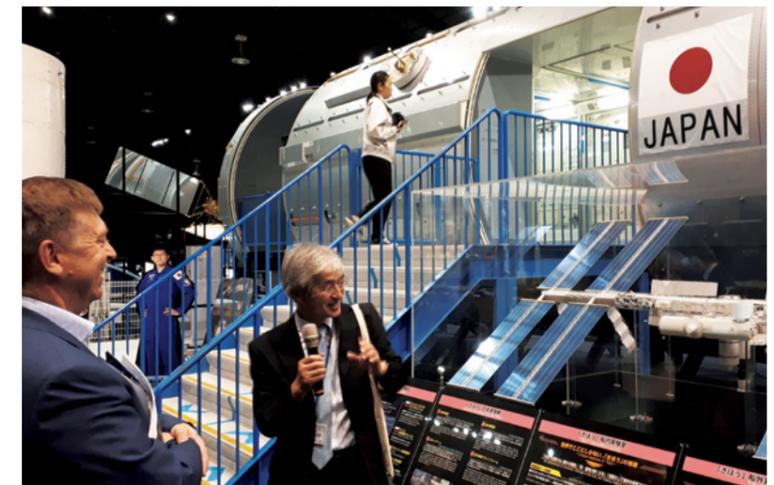
There was the local medical professor, who had studied in Edinburgh; the local museum director, who used to work for the British Council; and a former priest who came as a missionary and stayed on to teach English after marrying a local resident. Then there was a local businesswoman, who has built a thriving shortbread business with skills acquired when she was previously married to a Brit. Plus of course many who have visited the UK for holidays or enjoy literature and other aspects of our culture.

Finally, congratulations to both Japan and England for a great showing at the 2018 FIFA World Cup. Japan was very unlucky to go out to Belgium in the knockout stages after securing a two-goal lead. And the young and relatively inexperienced England team did a fantastic job to reach the semi-finals. We flew the St George's flag at the Embassy whenever they played, and I was ready to host a party if they made it to the final.

It was a heady few weeks of sleepless nights—those 3am starts could not have been more badly designed for this time zone. We exchanged excited WhatsApp messages with our three children, including the eldest who was actually there in Russia, and football came up in almost every business meeting I had. Let's hope the 2019 Rugby World Cup goes just as well—if not better—for our teams and Japan. 🇬🇧



Meeting with Japanese astronaut Kimiya Yui



A visit to JAXA allowed for a look at Japan's space exploration sector

Japanese investment

And cultural and sporting links around the UK

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Ambassador Madden visited Hitachi's rail plant in Newton Aycliffe



A 1,000-acre site on Anglesey may be home to a new nuclear power station

I spent several weeks in August back in the UK, travelling on Japan-related business all around the country, including Scotland, Wales and the North East of England, as well as London. I was reminded again what a truly beautiful country we have, with an extraordinary diversity for our relatively small landmass.

My main focus was meeting Japanese investors across a wide range of business sectors. I was particularly pleased to visit the stunning 1,000-acre site on Anglesey, North Wales, where Hitachi hopes to build a new nuclear power station, subject to striking the right financial deal with the British government. The scale of the project is immense and would involve up to 9,000 workers in the construction phase.

In the North East, I visited Hitachi's rail plant at Newton Aycliffe, in County Durham, which is producing trains for intercity express and suburban lines. I also saw NSK's bearings plant at nearby Peterlee, which proudly claims to be the oldest Japanese manufacturing investment in England, dating back to the 1970s. The sophistication of its products has evolved significantly over that time, but it remains a key supplier to automakers in Britain and Europe.

I had several roundtable discussions with groups of investors, facilitated by the Welsh government and by the Japanese Consulate General in Edinburgh. Inevitably there was quite a lot of discussion about Brexit. I had previously caught up with the latest thinking in calls on key government departments in London, including the Department for Exiting the European Union, the Department for International Trade and the Department for Business,

I was reminded again what a truly beautiful country we have, with an extraordinary diversity for our relatively small landmass.

Energy and International Strategy. The firms were supportive of the proposals for continuing access to the EU market set out in the British Government's white paper. Their main concern was continuity, in order to minimise disruption to their European supply chains and export markets.

Cultural exchanges

I also saw many examples of cultural exchanges between Japan and Britain. In London, I visited the brand new Japan House on Kensington High Street, one of only three that have been established by the Japanese government—the others being in Los Angeles and Sao Paulo, Brazil. With retail, exhibition and performance spaces, plus a Japanese restaurant, it looks set to become a great showcase for Japan in Britain. Do drop in next time you're in London.

At the National Museum of Wales in Cardiff, I had a tour of the major current Kizuna exhibition, a collaboration with Japan's National History Museum about the links between Wales and Japan. With artefacts going back to the earliest contacts between Japan and the West in the 16th century, it is proving very popular, and visitor numbers are well ahead of expectations.



Conwy Castle in Wales was recently twinned with Himeji Castle in Hyogo Prefecture

I couldn't resist popping in to see UK-based, Japanese stand-up comedian Yuriko Kotani, who was performing in the cosy environment of a converted double-decker bus.

Driving into Conwy, north Wales, I was impressed to see the streets bedecked with Japanese flags, celebrating the recent twinning agreement between Conwy Castle and Himeji Castle in Hyogo Prefecture. The town council and local tourist officials told me they were already seeing a significant upswing in Japanese visitors.

While in Edinburgh, I couldn't resist popping in to see UK-based, Japanese stand-up comedian Yuriko Kotani, who was performing in the cosy environment of a converted double-decker bus. She has some very funny takes on British life from a Japanese perspective, which you can find on YouTube. When I introduced myself afterwards, she was delighted that the British Ambassador to Japan had stopped by.

I also met a number of sporting organisations to discuss the various events taking place in Japan over the next couple of years. In London I saw British Olympic Association CEO Bill Sweeney and British Paralympic Association CEO Tim Hollingsworth. Both have made very good progress on their arrangements for Tokyo 2020.

We discussed how the British Embassy Tokyo is supporting their efforts, and how we can use the 2020 Tokyo Olympic and Paralympic Games for wider promotion of the UK.

I also dropped into the Principality Stadium in Cardiff, to discuss the Welsh Rugby Union's plans for the 2019 Rugby World Cup with former Welsh fullback and winger Rhys Williams. He told me about their visit earlier in the month to Kitakyushu in Fukuoka Prefecture where Wales will have its pre-tournament training camp. They had carried out training for local players, coaches and referees, and received a warm welcome at the local *matsuri*.

Distinguished predecessor

On my return to Japan it was straight into the annual meeting of the UK-Japan 21st Century Group, which brings together parliamentarians, business people and academics from the two countries. It is chaired by former



Ambassador Madden met former Wales rugby player Rhys Williams

Cabinet ministers Yasuhisa Shiozaki and Lord (Andrew) Lansley. I used to work with the latter when we were both young government officials more than 30 years ago, and we won scholarships from the Japanese government for study tours in Japan in consecutive years in the 1980s.

The group called on Cabinet Secretary Yoshihide Suga, and attended a reception hosted by Foreign Minister Taro Kono, before heading down to Kamakura in Kanagawa Prefecture for its meeting. We discussed a wide-range of economic, security and cultural issues. Unsurprisingly there was a very large measure of agreement about the nature of the challenges and opportunities which both countries face in these uncertain times, and about how we could work together to tackle them.

David Fitton, who some of you may remember as a former minister at the British Embassy Tokyo, has just become secretary of the group on retirement from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office, following his posting as High Commissioner in Jamaica.

Finally, last month we lost a great friend of Japan with the death of Sir Hugh Cortazzi at the age of 94. I have always seen him as the most distinguished of my predecessors as British Ambassador to Japan in the modern age. I think we have all benefited from the many popular and scholarly books on Japan which he wrote during his long retirement. I was corresponding with him about the draft of his latest book only a couple of months ago. RIP Sir Hugh. 🌸



The UK-Japan 21st Century Group held its annual meeting in Kamakura, Kanagawa Prefecture

Ministers turning up like London buses

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



They often say about London buses that you wait for ages for one, then they all come at once. It's a bit like that with ministerial visits nowadays, as the parliamentary arithmetic means that they can only travel when Parliament is in recess. So, we had a very busy September of VIP visits.

The highlight was Jeremy Hunt, our new foreign secretary. He wowed the media here and at home by being the first British foreign secretary to give a speech in Japanese.

I have known him for some years because of our mutual love of Japan: he lived in Kyoto, Nagasaki and Tokyo in the early 90s, learning the language. I have hosted some of his homestay families for tea at my residence and the affection that he holds for this country was clear. From his Strategic Dialogue session with Foreign Minister Taro Kono, and the fact that Prime Minister Shinzo Abe made time in his busy electioneering schedule to meet him, it is clear that our bilateral relationship is in very good hands.

UK Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) Permanent Secretary Sir Simon MacDonald came separately for talks with his opposite number and met foreign policy experts. He gave a lecture to a packed audience of young Japanese diplomats. Meanwhile, I took him for his first experience of sumo. As he watched the giant wrestlers grappling with each other, I think he saw some parallels with diplomacy.

Foreign policy

At the beginning of October, our ambassadors from Beijing and Seoul, and the FCO's Asia director joined me in Tokyo for discussions on the UK's foreign policy in Asia.

We also had a visit by Earl Howe, minister of state for defence, who met his Japanese ministerial counterpart, and some leading Diet members who follow defence and security issues. It has been a busy year in the bilateral

defence relationship, with two Royal Navy ships having visited already and HMS Argyll visiting later in the year, and a group from the British Army in October.

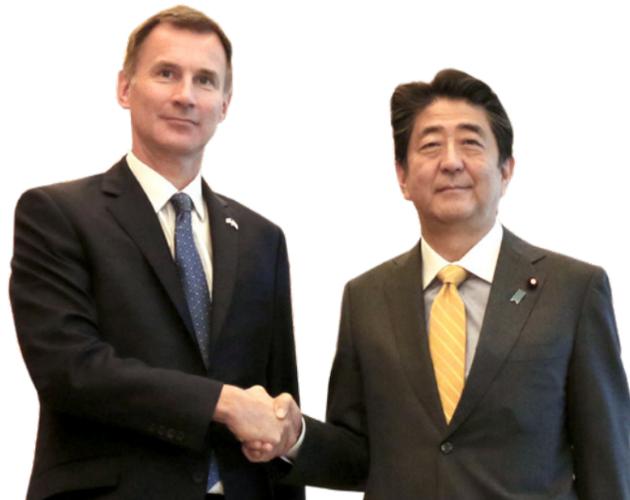
John Glenn, economic secretary to the Treasury, had a busy programme at the end of September, calling on two Japanese finance ministers, central bank Governor Kuroda, and the heads of many financial institutions.

He brought upbeat messages about the progress of Brexit negotiations. He also attended the FINSUM exhibition and promoted opportunities for UK-Japan cooperation in the fast-growing field of fintech, where British firms lead the world.



John Glenn, economic secretary to the Treasury, at UK FinTech Night on 27 September

The highlight was Jeremy Hunt (left), our new foreign secretary. He wowed the media here and at home by being the first British foreign secretary to give a speech in Japanese.



Tennis star Kei Nishikori was the main guest at the launch on the Japanese market of the I-PACE, Jaguar's first fully electric sports utility vehicle.



A new travel advice video was put on social media ahead of the Rugby World Cup 2019

Automation delegation

And we had a delegation of MPs from the Business Select Committee in Tokyo and Kyushu on a study tour to look at the impact of automation on the workplace. They were interested to find that, while some in the UK fear that innovations such as AI, robots, IoT and big data will destroy jobs, here in Japan with its rapidly shrinking population, these new technologies are seen as a solution.

I had a fascinating trip to Kashiwasaki-Kariwa in Niigata Prefecture, the largest nuclear power station in the world. We went inside the two advanced boiling water reactors of the type that Hitachi is hoping to deploy in Wales. I called on recently elected Governor of Niigata Prefecture Hideyo Hanazumi, who talked about public attitudes in Japan regarding nuclear power, which had been a significant issue in his election campaign.

I was also down in Osaka, visiting some British and Japanese firms, and having dinner with the Kansai Economic Federation Chairman Masayoshi Matsumoto. I met with members of the Kansai Cambridge and Oxford Society, some of whom told me they first came to Osaka as English teachers in the run-up to the 1970 Expo. I also called on Cardinal Maeda who, earlier this year, had been elevated from archbishop by Pope Francis—who may visit Japan in 2019. Some damage from the earthquake and typhoon earlier this summer was still visible around the city.

Rugby-related activities

I hosted an event with Sports Travel & Hospitality (STH) at my residence to mark one year until the Rugby World Cup 2019, with former Wallabies captain Michael Lynagh. We also launched a new travel advice webpage with lots of useful information for the 40,000 or so British fans we expect to visit Japan for the event. I hope you enjoy the Twitter video we used to launch it on @PaulMaddenUK.

Alongside the main tournament there are going to be a number of other rugby-related activities: Paul Farrelly MP popped in to tell me about



Kei Nishikori helped show off Jaguar's new I-PACE

a parliamentarians rugby tournament; and I also heard about plans to stage some exhibition matches for the relatively new sport of blind rugby, for visually impaired players.

Anyone for... music?

It was also a tennis month. Jaguar's brand ambassador, tennis star Kei Nishikori was the main guest at the launch on the Japanese market of the I-PACE, Jaguar's first fully electric sports utility vehicle. Jaguar CEO Magnus Hansson invited me to take part in the event. I previously had a chance to test drive this beautiful car at the embassy. We also managed to get to the Toray Pan Pacific Tennis tournament and catch Japan's new tennis sensation Naomi Osaka making it into the finals.

It was a privilege to host a reception and recital to welcome the London Symphony Orchestra (LSO) back to Tokyo, together with their new Musical Director Sir Simon Rattle. You may remember him conducting the LSO during the opening ceremony of the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In my speech, I couldn't help expressing regret that Mr Bean wasn't joining them on this occasion. 🐼



Ambassador Madden and his wife Sarah met with LSO Musical Director Sir Simon Rattle

Autumn: Season of mists and mellow persimmon

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Lloyd's of London CEO Dame Inga Kristine Beale, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, and British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG at the British Embassy Tokyo on 10 October

Is it just me, or is autumn the most beautiful season in Japan? Spring blossoms are stunning, of course, as are the clear blue skies of winter. But, for me, the season's wonderful diversity of colours and the mild weather represent my favourite time of year. Oh dear, I'm turning Japanese—beginning a column by talking about the weather. But, of course, many events in Japan follow the seasonal pattern and occur at particular times of the year.

Science and arts

October is always a science month, with Kyoto hosting the annual Science and Technology in Society (STS) forum, a big event in the global science world. Professor Patrick Vallance, the British government's new chief scientist, was here to attend the discussions, after which I accompanied him on some of his Tokyo calls. The Shintomi nursing home was particularly interesting. They are pioneering research on practical applications of robots to help elderly people and their carers with activities such as lifting, walking and providing empathy to help reduce feelings of loneliness.

We also visited the Japan Meteorological Agency and saw its disaster coordination centre, which swings into action when floods, typhoons or earthquakes strike. As you can imagine, they have been pretty busy this year. They have a bank of screens where you can watch all the live volcanoes in the country puffing away.

It's also the season in Tokyo for the Praemium Imperiale, one of the world's major arts prizes, which each year honours prominent artists in the fields of architecture, music, painting, sculpture and theatre/film. Actress Catherine Deneuve was a prominent winner this year. And my friend Andrew Jackson was here to pick up the youth prize for Britain's Shakespeare Schools Foundation, a cultural education charity that he chairs.

The UK judge for the Praemium Imperiale is Lord Patten, the polymath politician who seems to have held every imaginable political post: Tory Cabinet Minister, last governor of Hong Kong, European Commissioner, chairman of the BBC, and chancellor of the University of Oxford. He's also found time to write many fascinating books about current affairs. He gave a very amusing talk to the Cambridge and Oxford Society here.

We were invited to the annual Takigi Noh performance at the Meiji Jingu shrine. This takes place under torchlight, which makes the backdrop of the historic shrine buildings look even more striking. We were also privileged to attend a recital at Suntory Hall by Dame Mitsuko Uchida, one of the world's greatest pianists. Now based mainly in London, her partner is one of my former colleagues at the Foreign & Commonwealth Office who served at the embassy here.

October also brought a great production of the ballet *Cinderella*, by UK choreographer and dancer Sir Matthew Bourne OBE. The production by his dance company here from the UK is set, poignantly, in London during the Blitz.

The Shintomi nursing home ... is pioneering research on practical applications of robots



With Lord Patten, the UK judge for the Praemium Imperiale

Business and values

The embassy's Trade and Investment team is having a busy autumn. A large group of UK firms were in Yokohama for the BioJapan trade show and conference. I went down to speak at the opening ceremony, alongside several Japanese government ministers and Lithuanian Prime Minister Saulius Skvernelis.

The House of Commons International Trade Committee was also here as part of their enquiry into UK investment policy. In addition, the annual nuclear talks took place, bringing together regulators, scientists and business. Trade Secretary Liam Fox announced the appointment of Lord Trenchard as a special representative to support our work on UK-Japan financial services. Some of you will remember Hugh Trenchard from when he lived here as a banker. He is currently vice-chairman of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Japan in the British Parliament, so is well qualified to take on the role. I accompanied him when he called on several ministers here, including Deputy Prime Minister and Finance Minister Taro Aso.

I was delighted to work with the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) to take advantage of the visit by Dame Inga Beale, CEO of Lloyd's of London. At my residence, I hosted a roundtable on diversity, at which Executive Director Lori Henderson MBE ably chaired an excellent discussion between Beale and Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike. The governor was about to visit London, both for a closer look at our experience in hosting the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and to take forward cooperation on financial services.



Noh performance at Meiji Jingu shrine

The Paralympics in 2020 will give a big boost to diversity in Japan, as it did in London. British Paralympic Association CEO Tim Hollingsworth was here in October for talks with his counterparts. I hosted a dinner for him with officials from the cities of Yokohama and Kawasaki, as well as the president of Keio University. The two cities and the university's Hiyoshi Campus will be hosting the British team's training camp.

I addressed the Japan Federation of Bar Associations on the death penalty, explaining how and why Britain had come to abolish capital punishment in the 1960s and setting out the reasons many countries hoped Japan also would move in this direction.

I always enjoy attending BCCJ business award ceremonies and handing out some of the prizes. It's something I've done in other countries, too, and it gives you a real feel for the breadth and quality of the activities of UK businesses in the market. It's also fun to see everyone dressed up in their finery, just like the Oscars.

British troops on the ground in Japan

I travelled down to JGSDF Fuji School, North Fuji Maneuver Area and Ojojihara Maneuver Area with Lieutenant-General Patrick Sanders, the number two in the British Army. There we watched joint exercises between the Honourable Artillery Company and the Japan Ground Self-Defense Force.

It's the first time such exercises have been carried out on Japanese soil by a military force other than that of the United States, so it was a symbolic event and a vivid demonstration of our strengthening bilateral defence ties. I was wishing I could join them up in the helicopter until Sanders described to me how he'd twice been shot down in helicopters in action in the Middle East. It was a salutary reminder of the price our forces pay for our defence and security.

Supporting Osaka for the Expo

At the end of October, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office's Minister of State for Asia and the Pacific Mark Field announced that the UK would be supporting Osaka's candidacy to host World Expo 2025. It's a reminder of the strong rivalry between the Kansai and the Kanto regions that, every time Tokyo hosts an Olympics, Osaka wants to host an Expo.

As I said in an op-ed I wrote for the *Nihon Keizai Shimbun* financial newspaper, I believe Osaka would do a great job as a host city. I was the British official in charge of the UK Pavilion at Expo 2005 in Aichi Prefecture, and remember how well everything worked there. 🇬🇧



British Army and Japan Ground Self-Defense Force conduct joint exercises.

Industry and innovation ... and Christmas best wishes

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



We had a big industry and innovation focus at the embassy during November. Secretary of State for Business Energy and Industrial Strategy Greg Clark was here, with his Permanent Secretary Alex Chisholm, for a busy three days. He met his counterpart Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry Minister Hiroshige Seko, Japan Business Federation President Hiroaki Nakanishi, and a range of big Japanese investors in the UK, including three car makers. He outlined the terms of the Brexit deal and the next steps in the legislative process.

Mr Clark also addressed a seminar on the UK's industrial strategy and the opportunities it offers for collaboration with Japan on big shared challenges, such as energy and the ageing society. Later in the month I hosted a couple of more industry-specific seminars at my residence: one on aerospace, with Rolls Royce CEO Warren East as guest of honour, and one on the rail sector.

Big science

I had a fascinating visit with my science team to the Super Kamiokande particle physics research project in Gifu Prefecture. The UK is one of the leading international collaborators in this "big science" project, which has already garnered two Nobel prizes. At the project I met researchers from Oxford, London and Liverpool Universities. We drove far inside an abandoned zinc mine deep in the mountains near Toyama, then were lowered down on ropes into a huge 40m-deep tank lined with photo receptors. We were lucky to be visiting during an overhaul period, when the water had been emptied out for the first time in 12 years. It was impressive and surprisingly beautiful.

Waseda University hosted a Birmingham University in Waseda day to mark the very successful, 18-year collaborative relationship between the two establishments. I visited to open a joint academic conference,

Many congratulations to Osaka ... Britain had strongly supported their candidacy.

which ranged from robotics to literature: Birmingham has its Shakespeare Institute at Stratford-upon-Avon, and Waseda was the home of Professor Shoyo Tsubouchi (1859-1935), who compiled the first complete translation of The Bard's collected works into Japanese.

International conferences

My wife Sarah and I were invited to a wedding reception for Princess Ayako, along with hundreds of others. It was a lovely occasion and the young couple were clearly radiantly happy. We bumped into Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike there. She was just back from a trip to London where she had visited London's Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park for briefings on our 2012 experiences, and had met the Lord Mayor Peter Estlin to discuss financial services cooperation, and London Mayor Sadiq Khan to exchange views on running a big metropolis.

We like to keep the Ambassador's Residence busy with events, from business to politics and culture. I was delighted to co-host an event with Chatham House, or the Royal Institute for International Affairs, to give the distinguished London think tank its proper title. The theme was W20, the international conference on women's issues which will take place here as part of G20 next year. I couldn't resist saying that our seminar would be following Chatham House Rules, the widely followed international convention where participants agree not to attribute any comments made at a meeting to named individuals. It enables more open discussion.



Autumn in Kenrokuen Garden, Kanazawa



Shirakawa is famous for Gassho-style houses

The Foreign Secretary's Special Representative on Climate Change Nick Bridge gave a presentation to business at the Ambassador's Residence as part of a busy programme of calls. Japan's climate change commitments have been challenged by the shutdown of its nuclear power stations following the Fukushima tragedy. Only a few nuclear power plants have been restarted so far. But as Prime Minister Shinzo Abe recently set out in a *Financial Times* article, Japan remains committed to meeting the targets it signed up to at the 2015 United Nations Climate Change Conference held in Paris.

Barclays Bank kindly brought the English Premier League Trophy (which they sponsor) to the embassy for some photographs, accompanied by the former Liverpool, Real Madrid and Manchester City star Steve McManaman. Later in the month the Chelsea CEO Guy Laurence was in town with football legend Didier Drogba, for some events with their shirt sponsor Yokohama Tires. They announced that Chelsea would be playing a match here next summer.

There was a big meeting in Tokyo of the Association of National Olympic Committees, so we met the British Olympic Association CEO Bill Sweeney, and the new vice president, former Olympic rower Annamarie Phelps. We also assisted with the visit by the Olympic Committee member from the British Virgin Islands, a British dependency. They only have a population of 70,000, but have a realistic medal prospect for 2020, which would be a fantastic achievement.

World Expo

Many congratulations to Osaka. It was announced in November that they had won the competition to host the World Expo in 2025. As I mentioned last time, Britain had strongly supported their candidacy.

On 5 November, my home town in Devon, Ottery St Mary, hosts a big bonfire night festival, where men run through the streets carrying burning "tar barrels." This year a delegation from their Japanese namesake village of Otari in Nagano Prefecture, were over in the UK to watch it. It is nice to see the friendship between the two communities still going strong 25 years on.

Sarah and I had a couple of pleasant weekends away to enjoy the autumn foliage. For me it's the most beautiful time of the year in Japan. We were up at Lake Chuzenji, staying near the former British Embassy villa there. And we went to the historic city of Kanazawa, with its stunning Kenrokuen Garden, and the thatched roof villages around Shirakawa.

No sooner is Halloween over than Christmas is all around us. Our very first event of the season was the Parliament Christmas dinner, for the various Diet members who are Christians. It was a fun event with Christmas music played on traditional Japanese instruments.

As we approach the end of our second year back in Japan, Sarah and I and the staff of the British Embassy Tokyo and Consulate General Osaka send all *ACUMEN* readers our best wishes for the Christmas season, and a Happy New Year. 🍷



Ambassador Madden with Greg Clark, visiting Japanese investors



British Embassy science team at Super Kamiokande research centre, Gifu



Former England midfielder Steve McManaman visited the British Embassy Tokyo with the Premier League Trophy



2019: Busy year ahead

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



A *kemashite omedeto!* Happy New Year, everyone! I hope *ACUMEN* readers all had a good break over the Christmas and New Year holiday period.

After Australian and Singaporean Christmases in my previous two postings, it's good to have Christmas actually falling in winter, as did those I grew up with in England. I know that, for most Japanese, it's just another working day, but parts of Tokyo looked quite festive and Midnight Mass at the Franciscan Chapel Center in Roppongi—with its Filipino choir—was a great reminder of the essence of Christmas.

With the Residence festooned with Christmas decorations, we hosted a number of festive events, including dinners with senior Japanese officials and businesspeople, where chef Freddie served up Turkey and the full trimmings. Many of our guests, such as Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda, commented that it reminded them of their time as students in the UK.

Kansai Christmas

I also managed to get down to Osaka to co-host the British Consulate General's big Christmas reception there with our Consul General Sarah Wooten. It was very well attended by locals, who have a wide range of connections with the UK—political, business and academic—and included rugby legend Toshiyuki Hayashi. I don't know whether it's just me believing stereotypes, but parties seem to be a little more lively down in Kansai.

Whilst in Osaka, I visited Panasonic's new museum, opened in 2018 to commemorate the 100th anniversary of the firm's founding by Konosuke Matsushita. Panasonic is a significant investor in the UK.

UK-Japan meetings

I was back in London briefly just before Christmas, where I met International Trade Secretary Liam Fox, Asia Minister Mark Field and Sports Minister Mims Davies. I also visited the global headquarters of SoftBank's Vision Fund, which is investing \$100 billion in technology firms from its Mayfair base.

Back in Tokyo, I called on Tadashi Yanai, founder and president of Fast Retailing Co. Ltd., who are behind the Uniqlo stores. They have a significant presence in the UK with their European headquarters, and a number of stores in London and other cities. I told him that my family are regular customers.

Professor David Richardson, the University of East Anglia's vice-chancellor, came through Tokyo in December, together with Dr Simon Kaner, director of the university's Sainsbury Institute for the Study of Japanese Arts and Cultures. The institute is home to one of the largest pools of expertise on Japanese arts anywhere in the world outside Japan.

This year will, literally, be the start of a new era, with the Emperor abdicating on 30 April

Seasonal stars

Mansai Nomura, the famous Kyogen actor and movie star, came to call on me at the Residence. He has also staged Kyogen and Noh versions of some of Shakespeare's plays. He spent 1994 studying in the UK, and is now the creative director for the opening and closing ceremonies of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and I'm sure he is going to present spectacular events for both.

Diplomatic dining

Once a year, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe hosts a lunch for Japanese-speaking ambassadors serving in Tokyo. There are about 25 of us among the 150 or so ambassadors here. Most have made a long-term commitment to Japan, with several postings under their belt and many have Japanese partners. It is a rare privilege to have the opportunity to engage with the prime minister in this format. He was in the UK for meetings with Prime Minister Theresa May in early January.

My wife Sarah and I were once again invited to attend two annual events at the Imperial Palace over the Christmas period. On 23 December, I put on my morning suit and, together with fellow members of the diplomatic corps, went to pay our respects on the occasion of the Emperor's birthday. As we mingled with members of the Imperial Family, many of whom had studied in the UK, it was a little sad to recall that this was His Majesty's last birthday as Emperor. On 1 January, the ambassadors were all back at the palace again for an audience to mark the New Year. We saw in the New Year at Suntory Hall, watching British conductor Alex Joel and the Vienna Volksoper Orchestra performing a selection of Viennese waltzes.

Busy months ahead

The start of a new year is always a time of hope and expectation. It helps that, in Japan, it is usually accompanied by blue skies and sunshine. This year is going to be an exceptionally busy one for Japan. On 28–29 June, world leaders will gather in Osaka for the G20 Summit. There will also be some eight meetings of ministers—covering a range of issues, from finance to agriculture—held in cities around the country during the year.

Japan aims to use its G20 presidency to pursue a number of themes, including economic growth and promotion of the rules-based multilateral trading system. Later, in Yokohama from 28 to 30 August, Prime Minister Abe will host the seventh Tokyo International Conference on African Development, involving many leaders from African nations.

Heisei farewell

This year will, literally, be the start of a new era, with the Emperor abdicating on 30 April and handing the throne to his Oxford-educated son, Crown Prince Naruhito. The formal enthronement ceremony follows later in the year, on 22 October. I was living in Japan exactly 30 years ago at the time of the death of the Showa Emperor and the enthronement of the



With rugby legend Toshiyuki "Destroyer" Hayashi

current Emperor. It felt like a very historical moment, as Emperor Hirohito had been on the throne for 64 years, during periods of major change and upheaval in Japan. So, I feel fortunate to be back here once again to witness an imperial transition.

Field favourites

For Brits here, particularly, one of the highlights of 2019 will be the Rugby World Cup (RWC), which will run from 20 September to 2 November at 12 venues around Japan. Many of my visitors tell me that they will "have to" come back for important business in Japan around that time. With England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland all here, the British Embassy Tokyo and Consulate-General Osaka will be busy assisting the teams, supporting the tens of thousands of travelling British fans (we've already started our digital consular awareness campaign) and seeking opportunities to promote the UK. We will also be launching our UK in Japan 2019–20, which will run from the RWC through to the Olympics and Paralympics. It's definitely going to be a busy year for us.

Finally, many congratulations to British School Tokyo Principal Brian Christian for his well-deserved MBE, announced in the New Year's Honours. 🇬🇧



Prime Ministers May and Abe meet in London

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



The year got off to an excellent start in Anglo-Japanese relations, with a very productive visit to London by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe in January. I flew back to join the meetings.

Getting ready for rugby

To mark the fact that Japan is hosting the Rugby World Cup later this year, Prime Minister Theresa May had invited him to visit Twickenham Stadium, home of English rugby. I accompanied Mrs May as we drove from Number 10 Downing Street to Twickenham to give her a last-minute briefing. The two prime ministers toured a fascinating special exhibition on rugby in Japan, which is currently on display at Twickenham's museum. Then they went to the pitch on a crisp winter morning to meet some schoolchildren, who were there to display their rugby skills.

Japan is very interested in our recent experience hosting both the Rugby World Cup in 2015 and the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games. In particular, they are keen to share our thinking on the security aspects of such major international events. Mrs May had arranged a special security briefing, chaired by Home Office Minister Ben Wallace with the head of Scotland Yard, the London Fire Brigade, London Ambulance Service and the National Cyber Security Centre. The Prime Minister spoke with the experience of having been Home Secretary, with overall responsibility for security, during London 2012.

During the visit, Mrs May announced that the government would be mounting a Year of UK in Japan 2019–20, running from the Rugby World Cup to the Olympics and Paralympics, including a cultural season and various great branded initiatives. Back in Tokyo, later in January, I hosted a briefing at my Residence to set out for business and other partners the opportunity to be associated with the event through sponsorships.

Closer ties

The two leaders had a substantial series of discussions over lunch at Twickenham and a summit meeting at 10 Downing Street. It's clear to see that they have an excellent personal chemistry, in addition to the very strong state of bilateral relations between our two countries.

Mr Abe was particularly grateful for the significant uptick in the defence relationship, with three Royal Navy ships having visited Japan last year for joint exercises and enforcement of the UN sanctions on North Korea. We announced that a further warship, the HMS *Montrose* will be here in the spring.

Naturally, they discussed Brexit. Mrs May briefed Mr Abe on the latest parliamentary discussions and reiterated the UK's intention to remain an excellent base for Japanese investors. Mr Abe reconfirmed Japan's commitment to agreeing a new economic partnership with the UK as we

Mrs May announced that the government would be mounting a Year of UK in Japan 2019–20, running from the Rugby World Cup to the Olympics and Paralympics.

leave the European Union. It will be based on the EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, which has just come into force.

The two leaders identified a number of other areas for strengthening cooperation. There will be a new government-to-government dialogue on infrastructure, an important pillar of Mr Abe's Free and Open Indo-Pacific Strategy. This offers real opportunities to combine the UK's long experience in certain markets in Africa and South-East Asia, and the skills of our consultancy sector, together with Japanese companies' construction strengths and finance.

The leaders committed to further joint work on innovation to address global challenges such as ageing, launching a significant joint programme of research and collaboration that will help people live independently in their own homes for longer, develop new treatments for chronic conditions such as dementia and heart failure, and ensure a cleaner world for future generations.

Oishii British beef and lamb

Mr Abe also confirmed that Japan would be ending the long-standing ban on sales of British beef and lamb to Japan, which dates back to the bovine spongiform encephalopathy (BSE) problem of the 1990s. This will create opportunities potentially worth more than £120mn over five years, supporting farmers from the valleys of South Wales to the Scottish Highlands. It means that consumers here in Japan will have access to some great, high-quality British meat. I look forward to finding opportunities to put it on the menu for events at the Residence.

Whilst in London, I dropped into Parliament to call on Alistair Carmichael MP. He is the Liberal Democrat member for Orkney and Shetland—the most remote constituency in the UK. Alistair chairs the All-Party Parliamentary Group on the Abolition of the Death Penalty, and is planning a visit to Japan to meet lawmakers and experts.



Advice for Welsh rugby fans

I had an enjoyable evening with former Welsh rugby skipper Gareth Thomas, who is one of the country's most capped players. He was at the end of a trip around Japan, visiting venues where Wales will be playing and making a film to introduce fans at home to what is in store for them. He interviewed me in his warm, chatty style as we discussed how much the host cities are looking forward to being in the international spotlight later this year. We also talked about the British Embassy Tokyo's social media consular campaign, introducing aspects of Japan's culture and social norms, aimed at ensuring all visitors have a safe and trouble-free trip.

Regional trade coordination

In January, the new HM Trade Commissioner for Asia Pacific, Natalie Black, visited Japan. Based in Singapore, she is responsible for leading our trade and investment teams in the region. This is a role newly created by the Department of International Trade. It offers a good opportunity to ensure that the teams in different parts of the region are fully joined up to maximize opportunities.



Natalie Black

FOO

I hosted a dinner for Natalie, together with Deputy Governor of the Bank of England Sir Jon Cunliffe, who also happened to be in town on G20 business. It was a good opportunity to hear from a range of Japanese experts about current developments on economic and trade issues, and to set out the latest UK thinking.

Senior speakers

At the end of January, I spoke at the annual conference jointly organised by the UK's Royal Institute of International Affairs (Chatham House) and the Daiwa Institute of Research. Senior speakers from the UK included Lord O'Neill, former Treasury minister and Goldman Sachs chief economist, as well as Bill Emmott, the distinguished journalist and author who has just become chair of the Japan Society of the UK in London. I also hosted a seminar on composite materials at the Residence, with speakers from UK industry and government. This is an important sector, in which both countries have considerable strengths, that is driving improved efficiencies in many areas of manufacturing. 🇬🇧



Lord O'Neill

FOO



Bill Emmott

MARINA ZANNIELLI

Warm welcome

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Clad only in loincloths, despite the snow underfoot, and brandishing flaming torches as they chanted and danced, the men of Otari, Nagano Prefecture, had an interesting way of welcoming the arrival of spring. It was a pleasure to be back in the town—that is twinned with my hometown of Ottery St Mary, in Devon—for yet another of their traditional festivals.

It was also a reminder of how tough life can be in winter for those who actually live up in the mountains, rather than just go there for a ski break. You wonder how they coped in the days before mechanised snow ploughs and tunnels through the mountains, when neighbouring communities in remote areas were isolated from each other for months on end.

On the way back to Tokyo, we stopped at the famous Jigokudani Monkey Park to watch macaques relax in the warmth of an *onsen*. At first glimpse of this iconic image of Japan, we felt tempted to jump in and join them. But a closer inspection of the murky water suggested that, perhaps, the monkeys were not fully signed up to *onsen* etiquette.



Wales in Japan

February had a bit of a Welsh feel to it. I hosted a reception to welcome Robin Walker, the newly appointed head of the Welsh Government's Tokyo office, which is located inside the embassy. Robin is a Whitehall civil servant by background, but previously lived here teaching on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme. I was particularly impressed by the Japanese Welsh-style male voice choir who sang at the reception. My video tweet of their performance got more than 6,000 views.

Alun Cairns, the Secretary of State for Wales (right), paid his second visit to Japan. As a member of Prime Minister Theresa May's Cabinet, he was well placed to brief interlocutors on the latest Brexit developments. He spent time in Tokyo, Nagoya and the Kansai region, visiting a range of Japanese firms which are investors in Wales.



FCO

Security talks

In February, our security engagement continued in London with the annual pol-mil (political-military) talks, which included senior officials from the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO) and the Ministry of Defence, along with their Japanese counterparts. They worked on concrete plans for joint actions to implement the closer cooperation outlined by the two prime ministers in January.

Later in the month, General Sir Mark Carleton-Smith (right), chief of the General Staff and head of the British Army, spent a week in Japan meeting his counterparts. The army is keen to develop stronger ties with the Japan Self-Defense Forces, just as the Royal Navy has been doing so actively over the past couple of years.



MOD

Deputy National Security Adviser Madeline Alessandri also came through for meetings with Japanese government bodies dealing with issues such as terrorism and cybersecurity. On 14 February, I found myself hosting a dinner for her with Japan's Ambassador in charge of Cyber Policy. It was very useful and productive.

Meanwhile, the Japanese Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the UK Department for International Development held their annual development talks in London. The two countries, both among the world's leading aid donors, had a useful exchange of views as they identified specific projects where we can work more closely together, drawing on each other's respective strengths.

Tokyo has drawn a number of lessons from the way the City of London Corporation organises itself.

With PM Abe at a lunch for Japanese-speaking Ambassadors



With Bill Emmott, President of the Japan Society

Japanese investors

In February, we learnt the sad news that Honda intends to discontinue production at its Swindon plant when the current model range comes to an end in 2021. This was disappointing, both because of the 3,500 workers who would be losing their jobs and because of Honda's history as one of the earliest Japanese investors in the UK. Honda made clear that the decision was not a result of Brexit, saying it had more to do with the big global challenges affecting the industry, such as the shift to electric vehicles. Their next-generation vehicle production is not being relocated to another European country but to a base in one of their other major markets.

Lord Mayor of the City of London Peter Estlin visited in February, with a focus particularly on asset management and fintech. He brought with him an upbeat message on the future competitiveness of the City of London as a global financial hub and fronted a seminar with Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, to take stock of the implementation of the memorandum of understanding signed by his predecessor. Tokyo has drawn a number of lessons from the way the City of London Corporation organises itself. They have recently designated a new "financial mayor" to give shape to their international offer. A former deputy governor of the Bank of Japan, Hiroshi Nakaso brings to the role great credibility with both the industry and regulators.

I returned to London for an annual prosperity conference organised jointly by the FCO and the Department for International Trade. Whilst I was there, I took the opportunity to deliver the annual Ambassador's lecture to the Japan Society, which drew a couple of hundred people to the headquarters of Nomura Holdings on the banks of the Thames. I also spoke to the Whitehall & Industry Group, which brings together high-flying leaders from the public and private sectors.

At the same conference, exactly a year ago, I had been stranded in London by a freak snowstorm. This time Britain experienced its hottest-ever February temperature. I guess that's what climate change is all about.

Preparing for the Games

As we work on plans for our celebration of UK in Japan 2019-20, which will run from the Rugby World Cup 2019 to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympics, I hosted a meeting with representatives of many British firms here to identify opportunities for them to be involved with the campaign as partners and sponsors. There seemed to be a lot of excitement about these forthcoming major sporting events and an enthusiasm to get involved.

We had a fun meeting with UK-based comedian Yuriko Kotani, who we will be working with on our consular messaging campaign directed at visiting rugby fans. She had lots of good ideas on how to communicate important messages in an accessible and humorous way.



I hosted a roundtable with Jenny Sealey (above, right), the deaf artist responsible for the Paralympics opening ceremony, and Eri Yamamoto-MacDonald (left), Japanese para-powerlifter and Tetsuya Takeuchi, the first-ever NHK Senior Commentator to use a wheelchair. We had a fascinating discussion about the role that both sport and the arts can play in promoting understanding of disability among the wider public. You will be able to view some of this conversation on the Embassy's social media. Tokyo is very keen to emulate the successes of the London 2012 Paralympics.

Some ACUMEN readers will have had the chance to meet British Olympics Association (BOA) Chief Executive Officer Bill Sweeney on one of his many visits to Tokyo. He was interviewed in the January issue, and in February announced that he will be leaving the BOA. But we will still be dealing with him as he is becoming CEO of the Rugby Football Union. We have also just seen a change of guard at the British Paralympics Association, with CEO Tim Hollingsworth heading off to run Sport England. His successor, Mike Sharrock, visits Japan in March.



A British Serenade Dinner Concert performed by the Tokyo Sinfonia at the Foreign Correspondents' Club of Japan—attended by quite a few members of the British community—was a very pleasant way of ending the week on a Friday evening in February.

The month ahead

In March, University of Oxford Chancellor Lord Patten is due to be back in Tokyo, which is this year's host city for the university's annual Oxford in Asia events. He will be joined by a selection of Oxford alumni and luminaries, including my predecessor Sir Tim Hitchens, who is now head of Wolfson College.

Commonwealth Day falls on 11 March, and I will be hosting an event on 12 March to celebrate this with my colleagues, the ambassadors from Commonwealth countries here. 🇬🇧



Lord Patten

Cherry blossoms and Vice Chancellors

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Spring is a great time of year to visit the British Embassy Tokyo. Our grounds and the surrounding neighbourhood—particularly the famous Chidorigafuchi walk—are adorned with *sakura* (cherry blossoms). Individually, the flowers are delicate and the palest pink. But, collectively, it is as if someone has daubed the whole landscape.

We take advantage of the opportunity to host many *hanami* (cherry blossom viewing) parties for the contacts of the Embassy's various teams. This year, I hosted six. Luckily, most were concentrated in the week of *mankai* (full bloom). Since you have to plan weeks ahead, that's not always the case, and we had our fingers crossed.

With so many visitors walking past the Embassy during this period, we thought it was a great chance to promote British food and drink, with a seasonal theme. You may have seen the very attractive pink-tinged posters and banners featuring award-winning English sparkling wine, as well as craft gin and soft drinks, plus the British lamb that is now able to be imported into Japan.

Our location, just up the road from the Diet, means that it is not too difficult to tempt members of parliament (MPs) to join us at the end of their busy day. Three Cabinet ministers were among those attending my *hanami* for politicians. And Deputy Prime Minister Taro Aso brought members of the Diet's British-Japanese Parliamentary Group round for an enjoyable dinner.

We are fortunate to have so many Japanese politicians with personal knowledge and experience of Britain, including a number who studied there. Many

of the MPs thanked me for the UK's defence and security cooperation with Japan, which was visible again in March with the visit by HMS *Montrose*.

University links

In the space of three weeks, I found myself hosting dinners for the vice chancellors of three of our leading universities: Oxford, Cambridge and Durham. As a graduate of the latter two, it was a particular pleasure for me. Oxford drew alumni from all over Asia for a big annual regional event. Cambridge conducted a symposium on international collaboration with Japan's prestigious University of Tokyo, with which they have a formal partnership agreement. And Durham was showcasing their links with Teikyo University which has a long-standing campus in Durham.

Sporting preparations

If Japan owns the colour pink at this time of year, I suppose Ireland has come to have a fair claim to green. It was a pleasure to watch my friend Paul Kavanagh, Irish Ambassador to Japan, leading the St Patrick's Day parade down Omotesando. We will be working closely together to support the Irish team and fans at the Rugby World Cup, as it is an all-of-Ireland team.



Plans for the Rugby World Cup continue apace. Jason Leonard, England's most capped player and a key member of the 2003 World Cup-winning team, came round for tea. We discussed a charity event which he is planning to run during the tournament. And several former Welsh internationals—now representing the Welsh Rugby Union—used the Embassy for a media event to talk about their plans for the tournament.



England's blind soccer team competes in an IBSA Blind Foundation competition.

It was also a great pleasure to watch the England blind soccer team playing at an international tournament in Tokyo, and to chat with the team afterwards. It is a great spectator sport, requiring strong ball control skills and no small bravery. The team was really hoping to do well enough in the European championships later this year to be back here for the Tokyo 2020 Paralympic Games.

Also, on the inclusivity theme, we enjoyed going to watch the UK's Stoppag Dance Company, a group of disabled and able-bodied artists, performing in Setagaya.

With the Rugby World Cup taking place in so many different locations around Japan, and our latest estimates suggesting that some 50,000 British fans will be here to support them, it is very useful that we have a network of volunteer wardens all over the country to support us. These are Brits who usually have been here for some time, are well established in their local communities, and can provide useful signposting to key local contacts in the event of emergencies. I was able to thank them for all their help when they attended their annual briefing and training session at the Embassy.

In April, England coach Eddie Jones will be giving the annual Daiwa British Embassy Ichiban Lecture at my Residence. He is a really inspiring speaker, and his thoughts on leadership are relevant to many fields beyond sport. The Daiwa Foundation continues to make a great contribution to Anglo-Japanese relations, and I enjoyed attending their March graduation ceremony for this year's six Daiwa scholars.



With Welsh Rugby Union (from left) Group Business Development Manager Rhys Williams, Strength and Conditioning Coach Huw Bennett, Regional Rugby Coordinator RGC West Rachel Taylor, Rugby Enterprise Manager Greg Woods and Wales National Team Communications Manager Luke Broadley PHOTO: CUSTOM MEDIA

Malala wows at WAW

Over the weekend of 23–24 March, Japan used its G20 Presidency to bring together the W20 event, with its annual World Assembly for Women (WAW). Keynote speakers included former Chilean President Michelle Bachelet and the young UK-based Pakistani Nobel laureate Malala Yousafzai, who is currently studying at Oxford. Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe addressed a packed meeting, which was standing room only. The Foreign & Commonwealth Office's Special Envoy for Gender Equality, Joanna Roper, also spoke on a panel at the event. Some of you may remember Jo from her time as head of communications at the Embassy. I also hosted a WAW side-meeting on women's role in peace-building at the Embassy.

The previous weekend saw Carolyn Fairbairn, director-general of the Confederation of British Industry, in town to head the strong British business delegation to the B20 meeting. They came round to the Embassy for a breakfast briefing session before the event.

End of an era

April marks the end of the Heisei era. I will write more about this next month. But, I would like to record my sincere best wishes—and those of the United Kingdom—to His Imperial Majesty the Emperor, who has symbolised Japan with such dignity and grace for the past 30 years. 🌸

Musical treats

One of the Welsh Rugby team's greatest fans is the wonderful mezzo-soprano Katherine Jenkins. We went to see her performing at Shibuya's Orchard Hall, and she came to my Residence to meet some members of the Welsh community here.

Fans of the BBC Proms are in for a treat in October and November when the world-renowned BBC Scottish

Symphony Orchestra will be here for a mini-proms, including a re-creation of the spectacular Last Night of the Proms. They will feature a variety of Japanese artists, including the famous violinist and composer Taro Hakase, who fronted a media event at the Embassy that we used to announce the Proms season.



Dawn of Reiwa

Welcoming a new imperial era

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



So, the Heisei era has drawn to a close and we have entered the Reiwa era. I was delighted to be here at this time, as I was serving at the Embassy 30 years ago when the Heisei era began. That earlier transition seemed more dramatic, as the Showa Emperor had been on the throne for 64 years. His reign spanned a tumultuous period in Japanese history, one that saw vast changes. I remember the Duke of Edinburgh coming to Japan for the funeral of Emperor Hirohito, and the Prince and Princess of Wales attending the enthronement ceremonies for Emperor Akihito. It was an exciting time to be a young diplomat at the Embassy.

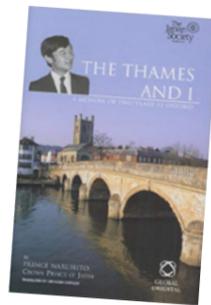
This time round, it feels like there is much more continuity. Emperor Naruhito looks set to continue in the footsteps of his father, who played such a valuable role in promoting friendly ties with Japan's Asian neighbours.

We are heading for a particularly busy period ... with a number of senior Cabinet ministers, including the Chancellor and Trade Secretary, due to be heading to Japan.

Emperor Akihito won the respect and affection of the Japanese people by being steadfastly there to comfort them when the country suffered major natural disasters during his reign. I will always remember my call on Emperor Akihito to present my credentials when I took up my post as Ambassador in January 2017. It was a very dignified formal ceremony, following a ride to the palace in horse and carriage, and the Emperor was warm and gracious.

It was a pleasure to call at the Imperial Palace in late April to deliver messages from Her Majesty the Queen for both the outgoing and incoming Emperors. The warm relationship between the Imperial and Royal families is a fitting reflection of the excellent relations between our two countries.

And it is particularly pleasing that—for the first time in a 2,600-year continuous dynasty—we now have an Emperor of Japan who studied at Oxford University. His Majesty has attended various events at my Residence, and I know that he feels a particular affection for Britain from his student days there. If you haven't seen his book, *The Thames and I: A Memoir of Two Years at Oxford*, translated by one of my predecessors, Sir Hugh Cortazzi GCMG (1924–2018), it's a fascinating read.



The British School in Tokyo acapella choir performing at the Queen's Birthday Party.



With Foreign Minister Taro Kono



PHOTO: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO / JUN TAKAGI

The Queen's birthday

It has, in fact, been a rather Royal month. On Sunday, 21 April, Her Majesty the Queen turned 93. She is now in the 68th year of her reign. I hosted our annual Queen's Birthday Party (QBP) on 25 April at my Residence with about 500 participants. Our Guest of Honour was Foreign Minister Taro Kono, who spoke warmly of a bilateral relationship going from strength to strength. We toasted the Queen and the Emperor with Dojima sake, now brewed at Fordham Abbey in the UK. We also showcased British beef and lamb, which can now be imported to Japan after the lifting, in January, of a long-running ban.

We used the QBP to launch our celebration of UK in Japan 2019–20, which will run from the Rugby World Cup 2019 through to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. The year-long event will include cultural, business and sporting themes. New British Paralympic Association Chief Executive Mike Sharrock was present, and we also had an impressive display of cars from Jaguar Land Rover, which is a keynote sponsor of UK in Japan 2019–20. The British School in Tokyo acapella choir provided some great singing, alongside bagpiper Frank Hunter, and I am grateful to all the British firms who helped sponsor and support the event.

Leadership lessons

It was a huge pleasure to host England Rugby coach Eddie Jones, who gave the Daiwa/British Embassy Ichiban Lecture at the Residence. This was followed by a private dinner for a smaller group. His lessons on leadership were fascinating—in particular the importance of knowing how to motivate different individuals. He made some interesting comparisons on the difference between managing millennials and older cohorts, drawing nods from many present. Eddie enjoyed meeting some of his old chums from the Japan national team, which he was coaching when they had their famous win against South Africa at the Rugby World Cup 2015. I'm pleased to report that he believes we could have a couple of Home Nation teams in the semi-finals here later this year.



More music

With a number of diplomatic colleagues, I very much enjoyed attending a 20th anniversary concert celebrating the work of Japanese choral composer Maki Ueda. My wife Sarah sang in the Ambassadors' Wives choir under the baton of Hiroaki Kato, Maki's husband.

Infrastructure and development

Sir Danny Alexander, a former Liberal Democrat Treasury Minister in the 2010–15 Coalition government, came round for lunch. He is now vice president of the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB), based in Beijing. Japan remains somewhat cautious about this China-led institution, but the UK became a member in 2015 with a view to influencing the structure and practices of the new bank. At my lunch, Sir Danny was able to explain the AIIB's current approach to representatives of a number of Japanese institutions involved in infrastructure development—an area of increasing cooperation between the UK and Japanese governments, which have established a new bilateral working group with a particular focus on South-East Asia and Africa.



By uncannily apt timing, another Queen Elizabeth—the famous Cunard cruise liner—was in Japan in April as the inaugural ship to arrive at the Port of Yokohama's new cruise terminal. I made a welcome speech alongside Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi, then had a tour of the splendid 2,000-passenger ship as well as lunch with the captain. I remembered visiting its sister ship, the *Queen Mary 2*, when it came through Singapore a few years ago. There was an excited buzz around the ship that "Mr Blair was on board". To my amusement, it turned out to be Lionel Blair—the dancer—rather than Tony.

Lest we forget

On the same day as the QBP, I attended the Anzac Day ceremony, hosted by the New Zealand and Australian Embassies at the Commonwealth War Graves Cemetery in Hodogaya, Yokohama, where my defence adviser, Captain Paul Casson RN, and I laid a wreath. It brought back memories of participating in the very moving dawn services at the Australian National War Memorial in Canberra, when I was High Commissioner there. Significantly more British soldiers died at Gallipoli, though from a much larger population, but the campaign has a very special resonance for Australians and New Zealanders, for whom it was an important part of their coming of age as new independent nations at the beginning of the 20th century.

PHOTO: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO / JUN TAKAGI

PHOTO: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO / JUN TAKAGI



Paul Madden CMG, the British Ambassador to Japan, hosted a Queen's Birthday Party at the British Embassy Tokyo on 25 April.

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO / JUN TAKAGI



Fashion

During April, I received a number of visitors from different ends of the fashion industry. Somehow, they had managed to choose the best time of the year to visit Japan, when the *sakura* were still looking beautiful. Celebrity fashion designer Sir Paul Smith, who remains hugely popular in Japan, came round for tea. Like Sarah, he comes from Nottingham, so I felt quite left out of the conversation. Dame Margaret Barbour, of the eponymous clothes maker best known for its waxed jackets, visited Tokyo to meet the firm's agents and retailers. She told me that they have been doing good business here for a long time now. Lorna Macaulay, chief executive of the Harris Tweed Authority, also dropped by as part of her trip to Japan. She explained the very important role the industry plays in the islands of the Outer Hebrides where, to this day, the tweed is woven in the homes of individual weavers. The iconic fabric has a strong following here in Japan.

Travels

Over the Easter break, we went down to Shimoda at the bottom of the Izu Peninsula for a drive along the beautiful coastline. We visited the temple where Townsend Harris, the first US consul general in Japan, established a presence in 1856. On the way back, we stopped to admire the statue in Ito City that commemorates Will Adams—known in Japanese as Miura Anjin (1564–1620)—the first Englishman in Japan, who lived here from 1600 until his death. He became a close adviser to the first shogun, Tokugawa Ieyasu, and helped him construct Japan's first Western ship at Ito. I remember playing the role of Will Adams in the city's annual Anjin Festival nearly 30 years ago and being hauled through the streets of Ito in a replica sailing vessel while wearing 17th-century sailor's garb.

Over Golden Week, we visited Seoul, South Korea, staying with our good friend Simon Smith, British Ambassador there. We had studied Japanese together in the 1980s. Visiting the demilitarised zone and the Korean War Memorial was a salutary reminder of Britain's contribution to what is sometimes called the Forgotten War. After the United States, the UK had the next largest contingent of troops there, more than 80,000, and they suffered significant casualties. We also gained interesting insights into Japan's complex relationship with Korea over the centuries. Whilst we were in Seoul, North Korea carried out yet another provocation, with the test launch of some short-range missiles. It reinforced the importance of our continued cooperation with the United States, Japan and other partners to maintain and enforce the United Nations sanctions.

G20

We are heading for a particularly busy period over the next couple of months, with a number of senior Cabinet ministers, including the Chancellor and Trade Secretary, due to be heading to Japan for various G20 ministerial meetings in the run-up to the Osaka Summit on 28–29 June, which Prime Minister Theresa May will attend. 🇬🇧



Japanophile

Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt visited again, calling on Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (above) and Foreign Minister Taro Kono (top picture) to discuss defence and security cooperation, as well as economic issues. He also met several major Japanese investors in the UK and briefed them on the latest Brexit developments. He gave an English lesson to a group of students at Tokyo Metropolitan Hibiya High School. During the lesson, he gave a speech in fluent Japanese which went viral on Twitter, receiving 600,000 views. It is a huge asset to us to have a foreign secretary who knows and likes Japan so well.

G20 comes to town

As does Shakespeare and Scottish jazz

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Japan's G20 Presidency kicked off in earnest in May. Robert Goodwill, Minister of State at the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, was here for the G20 Agriculture Ministers' meeting in Niigata. I couldn't resist calling it a "goodwill visit".

In a single weekend in early June, we had the Chancellor of the Exchequer Philip Hammond attending the G20 Finance Ministers meeting in Fukuoka, as well as Trade Secretary Liam Fox at the gathering of G20 Trade Ministers and Department of Culture, Media & Sport Minister Margot James at the meeting of G20 Digital Ministers, both in Tsukuba, Ibaraki Prefecture.

Then, on 28–29 June, Prime Minister Shinzo Abe will host Theresa May and other world leaders for the G20 Summit in Osaka. That will be Xi Jinping's first visit to Japan as China's president. Given the current state of the international debate, there will be some delicate discussions on issues such as trade and climate change, where the UK and European partners are hoping to see ambitious outcomes.

At the end of May, US President Donald Trump became the first foreign leader to call on the new Emperor, and on 3 June he travelled to the UK for a three-day state visit. He didn't get to go to the sumo there, but did receive a welcome full of pageantry, including a State Banquet at Buckingham Palace.

Getting down to business

Another big theme in May was financial services, with the Secretary of State for Trade and Industry's Special Representative Viscount Trenchard in Tokyo again for a series of calls on business and government. I hosted him for a meeting with Hiroshi Nakaso, former deputy governor of the Bank of Japan who was recently appointed as Tokyo's new Deputy Mayor for Financial Services.

Later in the month, former Lord Mayor of the City of London Sir Roger Gifford was in town to front a seminar with the Tokyo Metropolitan Government on green finance. This is a fast-growing area with many opportunities for



I had a fascinating visit to Zojoji, near Tokyo Tower, to see a very interesting display of a large model of the original temple, which was destroyed in WWII, that had been sent to London for the Japan-British Exhibition of 1910, and then gifted to the British Royal Family. It was returned to Japan in 2015 and reassembled by master craftsmen, and is on long-term display by permission of the Queen.

London and Tokyo to work even more closely together. I took Sir Roger to call on Governor Yuriko Koike, who is particularly interested in the Green Agenda. One of my predecessors, Sir David Wright GCMG LVO, who chairs City UK's Japan committee, also came through.

Mark Slaughter, director general at the Department for International Trade (DIT) who heads the UK's inward investment promotion work, visited Tokyo for a conference of DIT staff from across the region and to meet Japanese investors. He met some big manufacturing and financial services investors, and I also hosted an event with existing and potential capital investors who are showing a growing interest in UK infrastructure. This includes house-building, which is a big priority for the British government.

The automotive sector is one of Japan's most important industries. It is also a key link with the UK, given the substantial investment in Britain by Japanese carmakers. I attended the Japan Society of Automotive Engineers (JSAE) Congress in Yokohama, where I gave a speech at the UK pavilion, which was packed with cutting-edge technologies from the UK. It was fascinating to talk about the future of this industry, which is being revolutionised by new technologies, such as electronic vehicles as well as connected and autonomous driving. Changing cultural habits also play a role as more and more young people look to the sharing economy for transport rather than owning vehicles themselves.



The Japanese Parliament's rugby team, led by former Defense Minister Gen Nakatani, played a team comprising representatives from the British and other embassies. Everyone is getting in the mood for the Rugby World Cup.

Never promised you a rose garden

May is also the time of year for hosting summer Gala Parties for various UK-linked friendship organisations. HIH Princess Akiko graced the annual event for the Japan-British Society, which was attended by nearly 200 guests. My Residence gardens were looking beautiful. No sooner were the sakura blossoms over than the azaleas were out, and now the roses are particularly stunning, lending a real "English country garden" feel to the place.

The Japan Chevening Alumni Network invited me to their summer reunion. This is a scholarship named after the Foreign Secretary's country house in Kent, funded by the Foreign & Commonwealth Office (FCO), which brings about 1,500 young people from all over the world to Britain every year on master's degree programmes. We try to talent-spot people who are going to go on to become leaders in their chosen fields and create enduring bonds of friendship with the UK. I always take a particular interest in this group, because, at an earlier stage in my career, when I was head of Public Diplomacy at the FCO, I was responsible for the Chevening programme.



I also hosted a garden party for the Cambridge & Oxford Society. And, the house echoed with the sound of jazz, when representatives of the Scottish National Jazz Orchestra performed at a reception for the visiting chief executive of Scottish Enterprise, Steve Dunlop.



All the world's a stage

It is always a privilege to enjoy some of the best of UK culture on display through the many British artists who tour Japan. Theatre is probably the least represented, because of the difficulties of an English language-based medium for many Japanese audiences. But, every year, the International Theatre Company London brings Shakespeare to theatres and university campuses around Japan. My wife Sarah and I were delighted to watch their rendition of *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, in which six actors play at least four roles each with great physicality and musicality—which the audience seemed to love. We also enjoyed a fantastic dance performance by James Pett and Travis Clausen-Knight, two young dancers who recently left Britain's Company Wayne McGregor to go solo. Chatting to them after the performance, they described their excitement at getting to dance on the unique stage of the Nogakudo—Noh Theatre—in Shibuya.

Given the current state of the international debate, there will be some delicate discussions [at the G20 Summit] on issues such as trade and climate change.

Sharing our values

In addition to all our work on business, foreign policy and security, we also have a lot of engagement with the Japanese government on the "values" agenda. We are working with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs to encourage high-level Japanese participation in the upcoming Global Conference for Media Freedom: London 2019, to be held in July, hosted by Foreign Secretary Jeremy Hunt, and led by the UK and Canada.

And at the Embassy, we are developing plans to implement an FCO-wide commitment to phase out all avoidable single-use plastic from our operations by the end of 2020—a task that is not always easy here in a country which has made packaging an art form.

I also gave a speech about gender diversity in British politics to a Diet committee which had commissioned a study into how some European countries have been successful in getting more women into politics. Two female prime ministers is better than many countries have achieved, but we still have a long way to go. 🇬🇧

Osaka's weekend as the centre of the world

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



World leaders flew into Osaka on 27 June amidst a heavy rain storm. We huddled under our umbrellas, waiting for the Prime Minister and Mr May to come down the steps of the aircraft. Our motorcade, with police outriders, sped back into the centre of Osaka. Impressive how fast you can move through a city when they close the motorway to other traffic. Osaka Castle looked splendid towering above the metropolis, as always.

It was not the easiest meeting for the Japanese hosts. There were fierce debates on issues like trade and climate change, but they managed to find a way through and emerge with a consensus communiqué that maintained momentum on climate change commitments of the 2015 Paris Agreement.

Outside of plenary sessions, an important element of these big international meetings is the opportunity for leaders to meet each other individually. At the Intex Osaka exhibition centre, where the summit was held, famous faces—Presidents Trump, Xi Jinping, and Putin—swept past with their entourages.

Theresa May had meetings with a number of counterparts, including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, who spoke warmly about the strengthening of the UK–Japan relationship during her term of office.

Minister visits

Earlier in the month, we had a particularly busy weekend in Tokyo when three British ministers came through for separate G20 meetings. Chancellor Philip Hammond spent a day in Tokyo meeting members of the Keidanren—the Japan Business Federation—and key business leaders, including Masa Son of SoftBank, a major investor in the UK. Then he travelled down to Fukuoka, where Finance Minister Taro Aso was hosting his ministerial colleagues on his home patch.



Trade Secretary Liam Fox was in Tsukuba for the trade ministers' meeting. It was his third visit to Japan since I have been here—a sign of the priority that he attaches to Britain's trade and investment relationship with the country.

Margot James, minister of state at the Department for Digital, Culture, Media and Sport was also in Tsukuba for a meeting of digital ministers. The two groups of ministers joined for a session to discuss the important issues around trade in digital services, a growing concern for the international community. Prime Minister Abe picked up the theme in Osaka, with his call for "Free data flows with trust". The excitement of the summit may now be over, but Japan still has four more G20 ministerial meetings to host in the autumn.

Just to make that weekend even busier, former Prime Minister David Cameron dropped by my Residence. He was in town delivering a speech. I was able to give him a briefing on recent developments in UK–Japan relations.

Theresa May had meetings with a number of counterparts, including Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

METI links

Some 30 years ago, when I was first living in Japan as a young embassy language student, I was fortunate to have the rare opportunity of doing a three-month secondment to the Ministry of International Trade and Industry, as METI—or the Ministry of Economy Trade and Industry—was then called. It was a fascinating experience, to see the work of a ministry which, at the time, was famed around the world for its role in Japan's post-war economic miracle.

So it is always a pleasure to be working with METI nowadays. We have a number of areas of collaboration. METI Minister Hiroshige Seko (right) came round to my Residence for a very enjoyable private dinner in June. Earlier that day, we had both taken part in an event called J-Startup. This involves a group of promising young Japanese start-up companies who are expected to have significant growth potential. For the second year running, we have invited these companies to take part in a study tour to the UK so they could see for themselves the potential for working with Britain.



Another important trade partner is the British Market Council. This group was formed by the leading Japanese trading houses more than 25 years ago to help identify opportunities to promote British exports to Japan. The rotating presidency is currently held by Teruo Asada, Chairman of Marubeni Corporation. The Council is a valuable source of advice and networking, but it also generously contributes to a fund which enables us to organise specific trade promotion initiatives. In June, it was a pleasure once again to host their annual general meeting at the embassy.

Back in London

I was briefly back in the UK in mid-June to attend the annual Foreign Office leadership conference when British ambassadors from around the world gather back in London. We heard from the Foreign and Development Secretaries, and various senior officials. This year's celebrity guest was Professor Mary Beard, the Cambridge classicist and television presenter, who talked very persuasively about female inclusion.

Whilst in London, I called on a number of ministers and senior officials. I joined several colleagues from other Asian posts in briefing members of



PHOTO: LEOBOLD VIA WIKIMEDIA



It is always a pleasure when one of Britain's many great museums is able to loan objects from its collection for an exhibition in Japan. This month, we enjoyed going to Bunkamura to see an exhibition called "Towards Impressionism", featuring items on loan from the famous Burrell collection in Glasgow. After Tokyo, the show will move on to Hiroshima and Shizuoka.

the Inter-Parliamentary Union committee at the Houses of Parliament. And I did a briefing for the Japanese press corps in London. My predecessor, Tim Hitchens, who is now the head of Wolfson College, Oxford, kindly invited our Ambassadors in Beijing and Seoul, as well as me, to Oxford for a day of seminars on political and economic aspects of North-East Asia.

Global affairs

Fernando Arias, the director-general of the Organisation for the Prevention of Chemical Weapons, came through Tokyo, and I was able to attend a lecture which he gave under the auspices of the Japan Institute of International Affairs. His important international organisation, based in The Hague, was less well known to the general public before the Salisbury chemical weapons attack on 4 March, 2018. Since then, it has, of course, become much better known and played a key role in helping to identify the Novichok nerve agent. Japan, like the UK, has been a strong supporter of the agency. 🇬🇧



Welsh lamb

I have mentioned before that we have just secured access to the Japanese market for Welsh lamb. It was a pleasure to host a dinner at my Residence, with a 10-course tasting menu composed largely of Welsh lamb prepared in different ways. To be honest, I had not realised that there were so many ways you could prepare lamb. The event was attended by food buyers and chefs from top Tokyo hotels and restaurants. They seemed very impressed by the lamb on offer, and we hope this will develop into a promising new export channel.



Japan in the UK

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



I spent much of July in the UK on a mix of business and leave. Whilst I was there, we got a new Prime Minister, Boris Johnson, and many new Cabinet members. The new Administration has made clear its determination to leave the EU on 31 October, and the whole government system is very focused on delivering this. Members of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan will recall Boris Johnson speaking at a chamber breakfast when he visited in 2017, when he impressed with his energy and enthusiasm.



Japan in Northern Ireland

I try to visit different parts of the UK to learn more about their links with Japan. Last summer, I had visited Scotland and Wales, so this time I decided to go to Northern Ireland, which has entered the public consciousness this year because of the issue of the “Irish Backstop” in the Brexit context. It’s only an 80-minute flight from London, similar to the kind of hops that Japanese make around the four main islands here. I met a number of Japanese investors there across a

variety of sectors: medical equipment, IT, electronic components, aluminium castings and blockchain technology. All were very complimentary of Northern Ireland as a place to do business, with a high-quality workforce and a cost base significantly lower than in most other parts of the UK.

One of Northern Ireland’s strengths is education. Its primary school system is sixth in the world for maths. I visited the two universities, Queen’s and Ulster, and met representatives of a number of further education colleges. All were keen to talk about their links with Japan—from joint research to student exchanges—and were enthusiastic to do more.

I had briefings from the Northern Ireland Administration at Stormont Castle, and was taken on a tour of some of the now very peaceful former conflict zones around inner Belfast, whose names were very memorable from news coverage of the “troubles” before the Good Friday Agreement 20 years ago.

Universities and sake in East Anglia

Education was also a theme of a brief visit to East Anglia. I met the Japanese faculty at Cambridge University and at the University of East Anglia’s Sainsbury Institute of Japanese Arts and Culture, both very distinguished institutions in their fields.

Whilst in Cambridge, I visited Arm Holdings, the world-leading semiconductor design and software firm acquired by SoftBank in 2015. It is on target to meet SoftBank’s commitment to double UK staff numbers.

And, at Fordham Abbey, I visited Dojima Sake Brewery, who are developing a number of Japanese cultural experiences alongside the new brewery.



The Northern Ireland Administration also arranged a visit to the famous Giant’s Causeway (above), where the beautiful setting and unique geological feature of hexagonal basalt pillars attract several million tourists each year. The National Trust, who manage the site, told me they’d like to see more Japanese visitors.

The Embassy is currently preparing for the onslaught of visitors in what promises to be an incredibly busy autumn.

Financial services and fintech

In London, I joined the programme of Tokyo Deputy Mayor for Financial Services Hiroshi Nakaso, for calls at the House of Lords and the Lord Mayor’s Mansion House. I also visited a lively fintech hub, sponsored by Barclays, in the trendy Shoreditch area, known as the “silicon roundabout”. Fintech is a big strength of the UK, thanks to the proximity of a global financial centre in the City and a range of world-class universities.

Britain was sweltering in its hottest-ever July, with temperatures reaching 38.5C—actually a bit too high in a country where air-conditioning is not the norm. But my travels were a reminder of what a beautiful country it is, from the gently rolling landscapes of my native Devon to the historic Tudor houses of East Anglia.

Nuclear visit

I accompanied a visiting delegation on a trip to the nuclear facility in Rokkasho, Aomori Prefecture, where nuclear waste—reprocessed at Sellafield in North-West England for the Japanese utilities—is stored when it comes back to Japan. The scale and rigorous approach to safety is impressive. I noted that nuclear facilities always seem to be located in the most stunning natural landscapes.

The Embassy is currently preparing for the onslaught of visitors in what promises to be an incredibly busy autumn. 🇬🇧



Manga exhibition

In addition to the usual round of calls across Whitehall, I also checked in with the British Olympic and Paralympic Associations, and the UK-Japan 21st Century Group. Sir Richard Lambert (above centre), chairman of the British Museum, took me on a tour of its current blockbuster exhibition on Japanese manga, which is drawing huge numbers of visitors. And I called on the Director of the National Gallery to talk about the high-profile exhibition they are mounting in Japan next year.



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What a year for sport

I got back to Japan just in time to watch Manchester City, who won every trophy available in England last year, playing their sister club Yokohama Marinos. I had just missed Chelsea’s Japan tour. What a year for sport here! In August, we are launching our social media campaign on local customs and etiquette, fronted by Japanese stand-up comedian Yuriko Kotani, aimed at the tens of thousands of British rugby fans who will visit this autumn.

Getting ready for a busy autumn

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



August was a month of finalising planning for the onslaught of events triggered by the Rugby World Cup, which starts this month, saying farewell to colleagues and some travels around Japan.



Hiroshima and Nagasaki memorials

It is always deeply moving to attend the annual Peace Memorial Ceremonies in Hiroshima on 6 August and Nagasaki on 9 August in the company of other Ambassadors and Japanese

Prime Minister Shinzo Abe (above), as well as many national and local dignitaries, and with impressive performances by local children's choirs. We had dinner with a *hibakusha*, an atomic bomb victim, who had been just a few weeks old when the bomb fell. In an interview with local media, I noted that the UK had halved its stocks of nuclear arms since the end of the Cold War.

En route to west Japan, we stopped in Okayama to visit the beautiful "Art Island" of Naoshima in the Inland Sea, with its stunning museums and artist communities, and also Kurashiki, with its well-preserved canal district.



As we passed through Kokura Station in Kitakyushu, where the Welsh Rugby Team will have their camp, we were very impressed to see massive posters saying "Go Go Wales". On the way back, we had a weekend in Matsue, Shimane Prefecture visiting the impressive museum to writer Lafcadio Hearn in the samurai quarter nestling under the famous "black castle" (though, frankly, it looked grey to me) and the Adachi Museum, with its prize-winning garden (below).

The summer is a time when a number of staff turn over, and I took my Defence Attaché, Captain Paul Casson RN, for a farewell call on Japanese Defence Minister Takeshi Iwaya, and to introduce his successor, Captain Simon Staley RN. The past three years have been a very busy period for our Defence Section, with a significant step-up in the number of ship visits and other security collaborations. Simon has served in Japan before, on attachment to the Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force at Yokosuka, so he will hit the ground running.

On 17 September we will formally launch the year of UK in JAPAN 2019–20, GREAT for PARTNERSHIP.

Prison visits

One of the less well-known roles of our consular team at the Embassy is regular visits to British citizens in Japanese prisons. Fortunately, there are only a small number, about 25, with a further 10 in detention pending investigation or trial, mostly incarcerated for drug offences. Our staff provide a vital lifeline for links with families back in the UK and checking up on prisoners' health and conditions. I decided to accompany consular colleagues on a visit to Fuchu Prison, where I met the Governor and officials from the Ministry of Justice, with whom we have an excellent relationship, as well as a British inmate, and toured the facilities. It was very clean and efficient, but somewhat spartan, with stricter rules than in the UK. My message to British visitors, including all those rugby fans, is please don't get on the wrong side of Japanese laws.

Fellow *ACUMEN* columnist Guy Perryman invited me onto his InterFM897 radio show to chat and choose some of my favourite songs. My first choice was David Bowie's "Starman", linked to one of my earliest encounters with Japan as a teenager: I recall hearing it for the first time on my brand-new Sony transistor radio, which I had just received for my 13th birthday. I chose all British artists, and a song from each of the past five decades. Fortunately, thanks to Spotify, I can now access music from my kids' generation.

Education ties

Tucked in the beautiful foothills of Fukushima is British Hills, an impressively attractive recreation of a British village, with castle, pub and half-timbered houses. It's a hotel and educational facility where junior high and high school students get the chance for "an overseas experience inside Japan". The teachers and many of the hotel staff are from the UK and Commonwealth countries, and there is a big focus on getting the children away from their grammar books and actually speaking English. We very much enjoyed sessions interacting with students from five schools.

The University of Tokyo asked me to give a lecture on their Executive Management Programme, which aims to broaden the experiences of fast track middle managers from the private and public sectors by exposing them to a range of speakers and topics. I talked about the similarities and differences between Britain and Japan, which flowed from both of us being *shimaguni* (island nations).

A busy autumn

With several G20 ministerial meetings still remaining, at the end of August Japan also hosted the 7th Tokyo International Conference on African Development (TICAD) in Yokohama. At the opening reception, I watched Prime Minister Abe

One of the less well-known roles of our consular team at the Embassy is regular visits to British citizens in Japanese prisons.

welcome heads of state and government from 42 African nations. Our two prime ministers agreed in January that we would work more closely together in Africa on infrastructure development, bringing together our aid and trade ministries and business.

On 17 September we will formally launch the year of UK in JAPAN 2019–20, GREAT for PARTNERSHIP. Running from the Rugby World Cup 2019 through to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, it will include a series of GREAT weeks promoting business and technology in key sectors relating to the grand challenges, such as climate change, ageing societies and the future of mobility, set out in the UK's industrial strategy. We will also have British food and drink promotions in various rugby host cities and a major cultural season, devised by the British Council's fantastic Japan Director Matt Burney, who has sadly just moved on to head up the Council's China operation. We will greatly miss Matt. It has now been announced that HRH Prince Charles, the Prince of Wales, will attend the Emperor's enthronement ceremonies in October. We are in for a very busy autumn. 🍁



Britain in Hokkaido

I was invited to Sapporo to give a speech to the Japan British Society. The Vice Governor and Deputy Mayor attended. Many of the JBS members were linked to Hokkaido University, which, as one of the old Imperial Universities, has a strong reputation and many international links. I visited the university and called on Acting President Masanori Kasahara to discuss academic collaborations. I was also taken on a tour of the museum of the 1972 Winter Olympics, a reminder that the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games are now less than a year away. We stayed on for the weekend at the splendid Noboribetsu Onsen, then travelled to Hakodate—one of the 19th-century "*kaiko*" Treaty Ports, where you can visit the former British Consulate (above), now a museum, in the foreign quarter on the slopes of Motomachi.

Rugby fever!

And business as usual

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



I guess we're all in rugby fever right now. Since the impressive opening ceremony—with lots of British School in Tokyo students singing in the choir, which many British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) members watched on a big screen at my Residence—the country has been gripped. As I have travelled round the country visiting various host cities, I have been really impressed by the Japanese *omotenashi* welcome and the way ordinary Japanese people have taken the Rugby World Cup to their hearts, dressing up in the colours of the various teams and joining in the chants. At one point, I found myself on the tube next to a lady who appeared to be Googling the words to “Swing Low, Sweet Chariot” so she could join in. The nice thing about rugby is the way fans of the different teams mix so harmoniously, chatting happily away in the pubs and Fanzones.

Of course, it's great fun for the Embassy, getting the chance to watch some of the games and meet some of the sporting heroes. For me, it was a particular thrill to spend time with the legendary Sir Bill Beaumont, president of World Rugby, former England captain and, for my generation, genial team captain on the long-running TV quiz show *A Question of Sport*. Going down to the England changing room after their opening match against Tonga, to chat with Eddie and the team, was also a rare treat.

But there's also a lot of hard work for our various Embassy teams. In particular, the Consular team has been busy producing advance travel advice—including on Japanese customs and etiquette—on our social media and deploying to each city where our teams are playing (nine of the 12 host cities). They made me do a short video, catching a rugby ball in the middle of a very busy Shibuya scramble crossing, whilst talking to camera. The end product looked great: but I won't tell you how many takes it took.

Consular staff visit Fanzones and stadia in recognisable British Embassy T-shirts and stand ready to assist any British visitors who get into difficulties. As I write this, we have not seen any significant problems so far, but a typhoon on the opening weekend threatened to wreak havoc on flights from Sapporo. Those of us who live here are used to that sort of thing, but for the first-time visitor to Japan it can be a disconcerting experience, so we make sure our travel advice is regularly updated.

Our trade team has been mounting pop-up Food is GREAT Galleries to showcase food and drink from England, Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland. I dropped into the one in Sapporo and was impressed to see that it was focused on some newer products that Japanese consumers might be less used to, including English sparkling wines and craft gins from all round the UK.

VIPs here for the rugby

We are also supporting lots of VIP visitors who are in Japan around the rugby and using these visits to promote the various nations of the UK and our union. I hosted a dinner with Japanese firms who invest in and trade with Scotland, attended by several members of the team, and will be hosting Fiona Hyslop, Scottish Cabinet Secretary for Culture, Tourism and External Affairs.

I also hosted a big reception for the First Minister of Wales, Mark Drakeford (right), whom I accompanied to the Wales–Australia match. Princess Anne, The Princess Royal, is visiting as patron of Scottish Rugby, and will undertake events with a number of organisations that she is associated with. Foreign & Commonwealth Office Minister for Asia and the Pacific Heather Wheeler MP (below, second left) was in Japan for talks with her opposite numbers, and enjoyed meeting English supporters in a Fanzone before attending the England–Argentina match.

Around the official tournament there have been many other rugby-related events. There was a parliamentary rugby competition, in which the team from Westminster (including, by chance, the MP for the constituency of Rugby) took part. The British Armed Forces team were runners up in the military rugby tournament, and Britain competed in an exciting wheelchair rugby tournament.



We are also supporting lots of VIP visitors who are in Japan around the rugby.

AWAY FROM THE RUGBY ...



Preparing for a new trade deal

Liz Truss, the new Secretary of State for International Trade, made her first visit to Japan in that capacity. She has been a regular visitor over the years, including when she worked for Shell before entering politics. She met the foreign minister, the minister for economy, trade and industry, and the Cabinet Office minister, making clear that Japan was a top priority for an early new bilateral trade deal, alongside the US, Australia and New Zealand, using her visit to announce a public request for comment on a new UK–Japan trade agreement. We hope that businesses involved in UK–Japan trade will want to comment here:

www.gov.uk/government/consultations/trade-with-japan

Japanese ministers also said they would welcome UK membership of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership in due course. The Permanent Secretary from the Ministry of Defence was here in September to discuss our growing security collaboration and, particularly, the prospects for closer technology cooperation around the two countries' future combat air systems.

At the beginning of September, I was very briefly back in the UK for the annual UK–Japan 21st Century Group meeting, which brings together politicians, businesspeople and academics from both countries, led by former Cabinet ministers Lord Lansley and Yasuhisa Shiozaki. This year's conference took place in the beautiful city of Canterbury and, in addition to some excellent discussions, there was a memorable dinner in the ancient cathedral close. Whilst in London, I addressed a reception at Parliament hosted by the All Party Parliamentary Group on Japan, in honour of the Rugby World Cup.

October enthronement

HRH the Prince of Wales visits Japan on 22–23 October to attend the enthronement of the new Japanese Emperor. I well remember when he came here 30 years ago for the enthronement of the previous emperor, when I was serving at the Embassy on my first posting. The links between the Royal and Imperial Families are very close, and a valuable pillar of the two countries' relationship. We are most fortunate in having a Japanese Emperor and Empress who not only studied at Oxford, but who feel such affection towards Britain.



Sparkling launch for UK in JAPAN 2019–20

We launched our year of UK in JAPAN 2019–20 in September, with a spectacular showcase of British food and drink presented by the renowned British creative team Bompas and Parr. Linked to a weather theme, it included a huge “whisky cloud” in the garden, a gin “tornado” and sparkling wine bubbles. We had our first GREAT week on the Future of Financial Services, including events on Green Finance, Women in Finance and Fintech. The cultural season is now well underway, too. We went to see the Royal Opera House's *Otello*, and the BBC Scottish Orchestra will be here this month staging the first Proms series in Japan. 🍷



A royal autumn

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Over the past few weeks, we have had their Royal Highnesses the Prince of Wales, the Princess Royal and the Duke of Sussex (Prince Harry) staying at our Residence. Normally, this sort of thing comes along very rarely in a posting, so to have them all in quick succession was a real privilege. They attracted huge coverage in both traditional and social media, and really drew attention to the UK.

Ancient enthronement ceremony

Prince Charles was here for the Emperor's enthronement. There have only been three enthronement ceremonies in the past 100 years, so I felt very lucky that one happened on my watch. Dressed in white tie and tails, I accompanied His Royal Highness to the Imperial Palace to watch a ceremony rich in tradition and dignity. At one stage, it was so silent that the only sound you could hear was the swish of the silk kimonos gliding along the *tatami*-mat floors. I attended a banquet hosted by Prime Minister Shinzo Abe where, every time you turned around, another famous international Royal or politician hove into view.

In the run-up to the enthronement, I was privileged to be invited to attend the Kannamesai Festival at Ise Jingu Shrine, the most important annual event there, where the new rice harvest is offered to Amaterasu, the sun goddess. This year was particularly important as the first of the new Reiwa era. Their Imperial Majesties will visit the shrine in November after the Daijosai Great Thanksgiving Ceremony.

Prince Charles visited the Nezu Museum, taking in both the stunning Japanese garden and the Beautiful Lives exhibition, which features birds and flowers in Japanese and East-Asian Art. Then, at Zojoji Temple, he saw a large-scale model of the Taitoku-in (Shogun's Mausoleum) which had been gifted to the Royal Family after featuring at the Japan-British Exhibition of

1910 at White City, London. It was returned to Japan on loan in 2015 and is on public display.

On board HMS *Enterprise*, a Royal Navy hydrographic survey ship, at Harumi Pier Tokyo, he met leaders in campaigns to address climate change and tackle the problem of ocean plastics. He dropped into the Welsh training camp to wish the team good luck in their semi-final. I hosted a large reception for him in the Residence garden, where he met many people involved in the UK-Japan relationship—from sport and culture to government and business—and graciously took time to chat to all of them.

My garden was also the scene for a memorable performance by the Band of the Grenadier Guards, for Armed Forces Day. Many of our guests commented on how stirring it was to see them marching up and down the lawn in their splendid red uniforms and black bearskins.

Princess Anne was here mainly as patron of Scottish rugby, but also visited the equestrian facilities for the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, as she is a member of the International Olympic Committee. She went down to Yokohama to attend a church service and lunch for the Mission to Seafarers, met volunteers with

the Riding for the Disabled Association, and laid a wreath at the Hodogaya War Cemetery.

Typhoon havoc

During the Princess's visit, Japan was struck by Typhoon Hagibis. In Tokyo, we saw the force of the high winds and heavy rains, and some rugby was cancelled, but the worst effects were felt elsewhere. With so many British fans here for the rugby, the Embassy went into crisis watch mode. Although, tragically, about 90 people were killed, there were no British casualties.



This sort of thing comes along very rarely in a posting, so to have them all in quick succession was a real privilege.

A great festival of rugby

It was very exciting to have the Duke of Sussex in Japan for the Rugby World Cup final. Sadly, after a thrilling performance against New Zealand that raised all our expectations, South Africa proved just too strong for England. But what a wonderful six weeks of rugby we had seen. Japan proved a superb host, from the professional organisation to the *omotenashi* welcome from volunteers in cities all around the country. And the verve and energy with which the Japanese team played won them fans all around the world, not least the 60 million people—55% of Japan's population—who watched their last match. Huge numbers of British fans came for the tournament, including representatives from national and local government. Our consular awareness campaign and



deployments to the various Fanzones and stadia seemed to work well, and the World Cup passed off enjoyably and, mostly, without incident for our visitors.

Land of Hope and Glory

The Tokyo Metropolitan Art Museum is currently presenting a great exhibition entitled *Masterpieces of Impressionism* from the Courtauld Collection in London. It's a chance to see Manet's famous *A Bar at the Folies-Bergère*, which, I noticed for the first time, features on the counter a bottle of Bass beer, with its distinctive red triangle that, I subsequently learned, was Britain's first registered trademark. Catch it while you can—in the New Year it moves on to Nagoya and Kobe.

We attended the annual awards ceremony of the Praemium Imperiale, sometimes described as the Nobel Prize for culture. Lord Patten is one of the judges. This year, we were pleased to see British-Palestinian artist Mona Hatoum among the winners.

The BBC Scottish Symphony Orchestra brought the Proms to Japan for the first time. We attended a very memorable Last Night at the Orchard Hall at Bunkamura in Shibuya, where the entire audience was a sea of waving Union Jack *furoshiki*, as we all sang "Land of Hope and Glory" and, for a Japanese audience demographic who grew up with the Beatles, "Hey Jude". It felt like the climax to an extraordinarily hectic, exhausting, but memorable autumn.

What a busy year 2019 has been in Japan, and 2020 looks set to be equally active. Sarah and I, and the staff at the British Embassy Tokyo and the Consulate General Osaka, send all *ACUMEN* readers our best wishes for the Christmas season and a Happy New Year. 🍷

Happy New Year! It's going to be a busy one ...

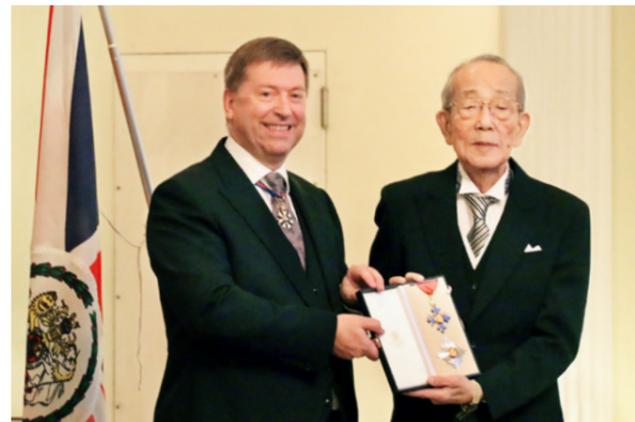
BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN
PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



A *kemashite omedeto gozaimasu*. Happy New Year from all of us at the British Embassy Tokyo and Consulate General Osaka.

So, we enter the Year of the Rat or, as the Japanese would say, the Year of the Mouse. Neither the Japanese nor Chinese languages traditionally distinguished between the two rodents, whereas, for Brits, one is a potentially loveable pet while the other is a loathsome pest. In a similar way, I had always grown up thinking I was born in the Year of the Pig (2019 was one) but was pleased to find that, in Japan, it's known as the Year of the Boar—an altogether more noble-sounding animal.

We had a busy end to 2019, with visits and events capping off what had really been an exciting year. I was briefly back in the UK to attend a conference about Japan at Ditchley Park, a beautiful stately home in Oxfordshire that is now used as an international conference centre. It was good to meet Japan experts from all around the world, including the US and China.



Honours and visitors

In November, I was delighted to host a ceremony to mark the investiture of distinguished Japanese businessman Kazuo Inamori (above), who had been honoured with a Knighthood by the Queen, for his contribution to UK-Japan relations as president of Kyocera Corporation, chairman of Japan Airlines, Co., Ltd., and chairman emeritus of KDDI Corporation, as well as his educational links to Oxford. It was also a big pleasure to see Professor Tim Minton of Keio University recognised by Her Majesty in the New Year's Honours with an OBE for his voluntary work leading so many Anglo-Japanese organisations here.



The visit to Japan in November by Pope Francis, which included stops in Nagasaki and Hiroshima, came at the end of the country's busy year of hosting global figures. As a Catholic, it was a great privilege to attend a packed Papal Mass at the Tokyo Dome, as well as a speech delivered by the Pope at the Kantei (the prime minister's official residence), in the presence of Japanese Prime Minister Shinzo Abe.

Bill Emmott, former editor of *The Economist* and now chair of both the Japan Society London and the International Institute for Strategic Studies, was in Tokyo to give the keynote speech at a big conference hosted by the Japan Institute of International Affairs. I enjoyed hosting a dinner for him.

There has been a change of guard at the Embassy of Japan in the UK. HE Koji Tsuruoka has returned to Japan after a sterling period in office over the past three years, during which he became a well-known figure on the London scene. We wish him well. I was delighted to be able to host lunch for HE Yasumasa Nagamine (right), the new Japanese Ambassador, who has moved there from Seoul, South Korea. He told me he knows the UK well, having studied at Oxford and previously worked at the London embassy. I look forward to working closely with him.



Christmas in Tokyo

Just before Christmas, Sarah and I—along with a number of other Ambassadors—were invited to go duck-netting together with Their Imperial Highnesses Princesses Mako and Kako at the Imperial Wild Duck Preserve in Chiba Prefecture. The historic pastime is a very unique spectacle, with the assembled diplomats brandishing what appear to be large butterfly nets. After being tagged for research purposes, the ducks are all released unharmed afterwards. On New Year's Day, we visited the Imperial Palace for the traditional New Year's greeting ceremony: this year, for the first time, with His Majesty the new Emperor.

Our third Christmas in Tokyo included several Turkey Dinners for senior Japanese guests over the preceding week, Midnight Mass at the private chapel of the Papal Nuncio, our children gathering here from London and Sydney, and a brief trip to Hakuba, Nagano Prefecture, where we managed to find some snow.

2020: a busy year ahead

This year is going to be just as busy as the last. I am expecting five things to keep us particularly occupied at the Embassy.

First, with Prime Minister Boris Johnson returned with a massive majority—the largest for decades—the British government will now be able to get its business through Parliament after a protracted period when this appeared difficult. The Japanese government and Japanese investors will be reassured by this greater certainty as we depart the EU at the end of January. And Japan will be a top priority for negotiating an early new bilateral trade deal, based on the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement.

Second, it has just been announced that Their Majesties the Emperor and Empress have accepted an invitation from Her Majesty the Queen to pay a State Visit to the UK in Spring 2020. Their Majesties will stay at Windsor Castle. We are very much looking forward to welcoming the Imperial couple back to



And Japan will be a top priority for negotiating an early new bilateral trade deal, based on the EU-Japan economic partnership agreement.

a country which they know well from their time at Oxford University, and for which they clearly feel a strong affection.

Third, Japan will once again host a major sporting festival, with the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games this summer. We cycled past the new Olympic stadium over the Christmas holiday—it was looking impressive. We can expect strong GB teams at both events and large numbers of British fans, which will require a lot of support from the Embassy. The remaining half of our UK in Japan 2019-20 campaign will include a busy programme of "GREAT Weeks" linked to specific challenges for business and innovation, such as healthy ageing and the future of mobility. And there will be some blockbuster cultural visits, including by the London Symphony Orchestra, the Royal Shakespeare Company and works from the National Gallery.

Fourth, as you may know, Britain will be hosting COP26, the meeting of parties to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change, in Glasgow in November. This is a top priority for Her Majesty's Government and will be an important meeting where the world will be looking to see strengthening of emission reduction commitments from many countries, including Japan. The wave of unprecedented natural disasters in 2019—from typhoons in Japan to bushfires in Australia—reminded us of the importance of concerted action.

Fifth, we hope to see an early meeting of foreign and defence ministers, in the so-called 2+2 format. This will give renewed stimulus to the active programme for strengthening UK-Japan cooperation across many fields—including defence, security, science and infrastructure—which was agreed between our two Prime Ministers last year.

Finally, as we face a new year, and indeed a new decade, let us spare a thought for those—the majority of the world's population—who do not live in countries as prosperous, secure and healthy as Britain and Japan. Our two countries aim to be a force for good in the world through our policies and our major aid programmes. We can have even bigger impact by working together ever more closely. 🌸

Foreign Secretary in Tokyo

Trade, security, COP 26, Paralympics and culture

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



On 31 January, the UK left the European Union. This was an historic event which marks a new chapter in Britain's domestic policies and international relations. What does it mean for Japan? I think it means that the UK will be even more actively engaged in this part of the world: a Global Britain that looks outward beyond its immediate neighbourhood. Already, Japanese government and business are sensing a new confidence in the UK after a period when a minority government struggled to get its business through Parliament.



The two foreign ministers discussed the UK–Japan trade agreement.

Foreign Secretary's Indo-Pacific tour

It seemed natural that Foreign Secretary Dominic Raab's first overseas trip after our departure from the EU should be to the Indo-Pacific. In early February, he visited Japan, Australia, Singapore and Malaysia.

In Tokyo, he held a strategic dialogue with Japanese Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi, covering a wide range of shared challenges and regional issues. At the press conference afterwards, Minister Motegi called the UK an "indispensable partner" and welcomed the big surge in our security cooperation over the past three years—particularly the number of Royal Navy vessels working with the Maritime Self-Defense Force in Japanese waters. The ministers expected this interoperability to expand further and discussed the need to get the right legal arrangements in place to facilitate that. Earlier in the month, I met Admiral Yoshiyasu Ishimaki, who was heading to Bahrain to command CTF151, the international maritime task force tackling piracy off

the coast of Somalia. He will be supported by a Royal Navy Chief of Staff.

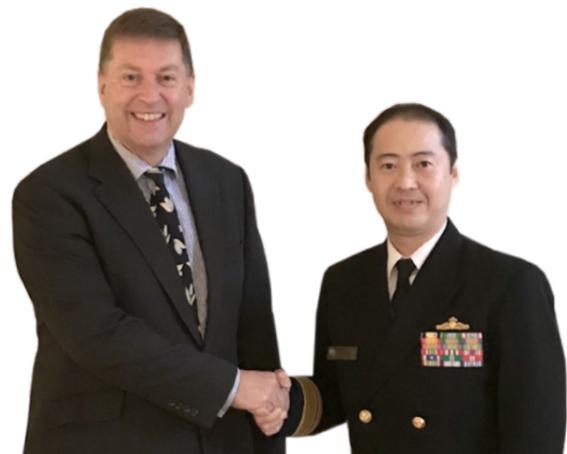
The two ministers also discussed the future UK–Japan trade agreement. A team led by the Department for International Trade had been in town earlier in the week for discussions with Japanese ministries. Both sides hope to make early progress towards an agreement, which will take as its starting point the existing EU–Japan Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), with some additional ambition as time permits.

In the meantime, all the provisions of the EU–Japan EPA will continue to apply to the UK until the end of this year, giving business additional certainty. Mr Motegi also welcomed the UK's interest in joining the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement

for Trans-Pacific Partnership at some point. Mr Raab also explained that we are expecting the separate negotiations between the UK and the EU to produce a trade agreement that maintains largely tariff-free trade between the two—something many Japanese investors in the UK are very keen to see.

The Foreign Secretary was pleased to meet representatives of a small British solar energy firm, Winch, that had just partnered with Itochu to provide renewable energy solutions for remote off-grid locations in Africa.

I hosted a reception to give Mr Raab a flavour of the variety of things we are doing as part of our UK in JAPAN 2019–20 campaign. Attendees included the Team GB Women's Wheelchair Basketball team, here for a tournament in preparation for their medal bid at this summer's Paralympics. He also met



(actually it lasts a fortnight), showcasing a range of British technological and commercial innovations as well as helping to build UK–Japan partnerships. The UK's special Envoy for COP 26, John Murton (who worked at this embassy some time ago), will be visiting for the event. And a very senior delegation from the Business Department in London will also be in town at the same time for their annual Industrial Policy talks with the Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry.

representatives of Rio Tinto and Standard Chartered Bank, who, along with Jaguar Land Rover, are the main title sponsors of the campaign, as well as a range of Japanese cultural institutions who are hosting the various performances and exhibitions I described in the January issue of *ACUMEN*. I also took him on an early-morning trip to a sumo *beya* (stable) to watch some young sumo wrestlers training. As a 3rd dan karate expert, he was fascinated.

Gearing up for COP 26 to win support for tackling climate change

The charismatic Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi came round to the Residence for afternoon tea with the Foreign Secretary (below), for a good discussion about how Japan can contribute to successful outcomes at the COP 26 meeting in Glasgow in November. Mr Koizumi has been more outspoken publicly than his fellow ministers in calling for increased Japanese ambition. Ideally, this would include bigger cuts in its emissions targets and an early deadline for zero carbon, as well as a shift away from building and financing new coal plants in Japan and around the region. This will not be easy, but there are some encouraging signs of rising support for the agenda among parts of the business community, media and local governments.

In January, I was invited to speak—alongside three Japanese ministers—at the launch of a report on Japan by the UK-based Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP). From 17 February, the Embassy will be hosting a Clean Growth GREAT Week



Business dialogues

Keidanren President Hiroaki Nakanishi called on me at the Residence in January. It was a pleasure to see him recovering so well from his recent illness. In February, I was invited to address the Keidanren Brexit committee to update members from a range of different business sectors with key interests in the UK on progress following our exit from the EU. They have been following this issue closely and made several study visits to London and Brussels.

In April, senior British Treasury Officials and financial regulators will be in Tokyo for their annual talks with their Japanese counterparts. This will also include a business roundtable. To prepare for that, my team and I got together with representatives of British financial firms here for a useful discussion on what issues should be on the agenda.

It was, as always, a pleasure to attend the British Market Council's new year party. The organisation, led by Teruo Asada of Marubeni, do great work in promoting UK exports to Japan.

Culture and education

The London Philharmonia, who have been touring in Japan, brought their virtual reality experience to the Residence at a dinner I was hosting for senior Japanese executives. You don a visor and headphones, and it is as if you are sitting right within the orchestra, under the conductor's baton, with a 360-degree view.

Matt Knowles, the excellent new head of the British Council in Japan, invited Lori Henderson and me to take part in a fascinating seminar about values at the Council's headquarters in Iidabashi.

James Hollow, the chair of the board of trustees, and Paul Tough, the head of the British School in Tokyo, came round to brief me on the latest developments at the school. I was pleased to hear that it is going from strength to strength. 🍀



Corona virus

This issue is moving so fast that anything I write will be out of date before publication. But I would encourage everyone to monitor carefully the Foreign & Commonwealth Office travel advice on Gov.UK, as well as the guidance put out by the Japanese government.

A global crisis and a green spring

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



The worldwide spread of Coronavirus has cast a long shadow over all our lives. As I write, many countries including the UK are in effective lockdown, with big impacts on global economic activity. A combination of travel bans by different countries, and massive reductions in airline schedules means that international travel is grinding to a halt. Many events, including the Emperor's State Visit and the Olympics & Paralympics have been postponed. People fear for the health and livelihood of loved ones.



Clean Growth GREAT Week

February had begun reasonably normally in Japan. As part of our UK in JAPAN 2019–20 campaign, we held our Clean Growth GREAT Week from 17 to 28 February. There were a whole series of events—covering a variety of aspects of clean energy—which brought many hundreds of participants into the Embassy.

At the launch event, I was able to introduce both Alex Chisholm (left), the Permanent Secretary of the Department of Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS), and John Murton, the UK envoy to the United Nations COP26 climate change conference. They both spoke compellingly about the UK's commitment to decarbonising its economy and the need for others, including Japan, to increase the level of their ambition in time for the COP26 meeting in Glasgow in November. John made the same point in an interview on NHK.

Other individual events promoted Japanese energy investment in the UK and UK exports of offshore wind technology to Japan. We also hosted a seminar on nuclear decommissioning, which has been a big growth area for UK firms here since the Fukushima incident. A trade mission of UK energy firms visited Japan and took part in a seminar on improving access to energy in Africa, in which the Japan International Cooperation Agency and Japanese business also participated. We announced that Japan's Albatross Technology,

Meanwhile, our consular team were in regular touch with the 79 British passengers and crew. We worked to support those who tested positive, were hospitalised onshore and remained behind to recover after the evacuation.

There was much media coverage back in the UK, particularly of those passengers who assumed a high profile on social media. I had many Japanese people commenting on my Twitter account, including quite a few who criticised the BBC for referring to the "Japan cruise ship crisis" in a headline, which they interpreted as meaning a "Japanese ship," whereas I think a native speaker would understand it as a "ship in Japan". It was a salutary reminder of the complexity of working across cultures and languages.

Since then we have seen a massive increase in incidence of the disease all over the world. Governments in many countries have had to take very tough decisions to protect the health of their citizens and maintain the

viability of their health systems. This includes unprecedented measures to restrict people's mobility, and major economic packages designed to reduce the impact on national economies. It has had a big impact on people's lives, but our citizens are acting responsibly in respecting the need for social distancing. At the Embassy we have cancelled or postponed many of our planned activities and most of our staff are working from home, assisted by technology in ways that would not have been possible until relatively recently.

which works on offshore floating wind energy, had won our Energy Tech Rocketship Award, giving them a free trip to the UK to identify opportunities to develop their business there. And the British Council launched a climate change essay contest for school students. Perhaps this will help find the Japanese Greta Thunberg?

The BEIS permanent secretary held annual industrial policy talks with his counterpart, Vice-Minister Shigehiro Tanaka of Japan's Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry (METI). Alex Chisholm also called on some significant Japanese investors with big operations in the UK.

During the same period, Foreign Office Political Director Richard Moore visited for a range of talks on foreign policy issues—from North Korea to Iran to Syria—with counterparts across the Japanese system.

Visits to UK and West Japan

In early March, I was back in the UK for a series of meetings. I had calls at Buckingham Palace. The new Japanese Ambassador in London, Yasumasa Nagamine, kindly invited me round for lunch. He is settling in well in London and enjoying being back in the country once again.

I gave the annual Ambassador's address to the Japan Society of the UK, hosted by Nomura International in the City, an opportunity to describe what has been happening in Japan over the previous 12 months. I was pleased to be able to report that UK-Japan relations were still going from strength to strength. Afterwards there was a lively Q&A chaired by the Society's president, Bill Emmott (formerly editor-in-chief of *The Economist*).



coronavirus, local economic developments and opportunities in the UK. Stay safe!



Coronavirus hits Japan

The Coronavirus, which began in China, first hit Japan significantly in February. When the US-owned *Diamond Princess* cruise ship arrived in the Port of Yokohama, it appeared that a passenger who had previously left the ship in Hong Kong had reported positive for the coronavirus. Initially the medical consensus was that the best place to quarantine fellow passengers and crew was on the ship. But as the number of cases on board began to rise, eventually to more than 700, the United States, the UK and other countries decided to evacuate their citizens.

It was a very complex operation. Because of the high potential that the travellers might infect others, it was necessary to establish complicated arrangements to handle the disembarkation from the ship and transfer to the plane—as well as arranging for a quarantine site on arrival back in the UK. The Embassy went into 24-hour, three-shift working.

should return urgently to the UK because of the risk of getting stranded. This did not apply to Brits living permanently overseas. Meanwhile Japan removed the visa waiver for travellers from European countries including the UK, which effectively ended tourist visits.

All of this has led to uncertainty among expatriate communities overseas. But many Brits living in Japan have been here for a long time, have Japanese partners and know the local system well. They have lived through various natural disasters and respect the quality of the Japanese healthcare system.

The top priority for the British Embassy and our Consulate General in Osaka is the safety and welfare of British citizens. The situation will no doubt continue to evolve in Britain, Japan and internationally. Please follow local authority guidance including on personal hygiene measures. And continue to check our Foreign & Commonwealth Office travel advice on gov.uk. 🇬🇧

Covid-19: new tasks, new ways of working

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



This is an unusual column to write, in the most unusual times I can remember. Normally, I would be describing some of the many and varied activities that I get up to as part of the work of the Embassy. Getting out and about, meeting people and continuing to experience new aspects of the country you're posted in is a big part of why I joined the Foreign & Commonwealth Office in my twenties. It's probably what drove many ACUMEN readers to end up in Japan. But for several months now, we've all had to put our lives on hold. That's not to say there's nothing going on at the Embassy. We've actually been pretty busy, but on very different things, and working in very different ways.

From February, our lives have become dominated by Covid-19. Most of us had never heard of it before this year; now, judging by our conversations, we've all become amateur epidemiologists.

Since emerging from Wuhan, China, the coronavirus has wreaked its grim toll of death and serious illness all round the world—particularly in Europe and North America.

I expect many of us have vulnerable loved ones to worry about, perhaps on the far side of the world. In my case, I worry about my 91-year-old parents locked down in Devon.

And as the wheels of commerce juddered to a halt in many sectors, the impact on the economy and people's livelihoods has been traumatic. Governments have had to take extraordinary measures to protect businesses and workers, which could have an impact for a long time to come. Many of us will know someone touched by the disease, but when even prominent people, such as Prince Charles and Prime Minister Boris Johnson (both of whom had stayed at my Residence in the last couple of years) came down with it, we were all shocked.

Responding to Covid-19

The Embassy has been focused on four main tasks. Our top priority is the safety of British nationals. Following our very busy period of evacuating the Brits caught up in the *Diamond Princess* cruise-ship crisis, we put out a lot of travel advice to encourage visiting Brits to go home whilst commercial flights were still available.

Our focus now is on the resident community that remains here. We have tried to ensure that we transmit the latest, accurate information so that people can make informed choices. And we continue to support particularly vulnerable individual cases. As always, we update our Embassy social media channels with all the latest information, and I encourage readers to follow us if you don't already.

Fortunately, the rate of infection in Japan remains well below that in Europe and North America. But the state of emergency has still had a big impact on peoples' lives and on the economy here.



New UK/Japan FTA negotiations

On 12 May, Trade Secretary Liz Truss published the UK's negotiating mandate for the new UK-Japan Free Trade Agreement. It will be based on the EU-Japan Economic Partnership Agreement, but aims to go further in some areas. Formal negotiations—by video conference of course—are expected to begin very shortly, but the two sides have already been holding informal discussions and we aim to make rapid progress.

In such a new and fast-evolving crisis, no one has a monopoly on wisdom.

The second workstream has been around business. Our trade team has been helping the UK National Health Service secure access to supply chains for medical equipment and supplies from all around Asia. It has been interesting to discover how much in this sector, as in others, we all depend on production facilities in just one country: China. Perhaps that will change a bit in the future.

We have also kept in touch with Japanese investors in the UK, and with the British business community here—both individually and through events such as our BCCJ webinar—to identify how we can best continue to support them.

And we have been providing a huge stream of reporting on many aspects of the progress of the disease, and the Japanese government's response. As London looks to share and learn from others' experience, there is a vast demand for information on science, health and economic aspects of the situation in comparator countries. In such a new and fast-evolving crisis, no one has a monopoly on wisdom.

Our fourth area of work has been collaboration with Japan on the global response. We are both major aid donors and have made significant contributions to help poorer, vulnerable countries. Britain is hosting a major pledging conference on 4 June in support of global vaccines. We have, ourselves, committed £1.65bn over the next five years. And in international institutions—from the G7 to the G20 and the World Bank—we have worked together to ensure that the global economy stays open, and to resist protectionist pressures for new trade barriers that could have disastrous long-term consequences.

Meanwhile, conversations with Japan continue on climate change, where the UK will now host the next big international COP 26 meeting next year, instead of in November as planned.

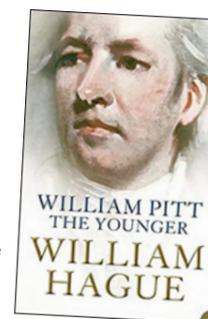
New working methods at the Embassy

More than 95% of our staff have been working from home, and we have all become used to the etiquettes of video conferencing. The technology works better than anticipated, and I expect some of these new ways of working will become a more regular part of our lives. But we all miss the buzz of office life and human contact. I don't think the thought of a week in the office has ever seemed so attractive.

As I write, governments are starting to look towards how to transit out of lockdowns, as the peak of infection passes. It is clearly essential to get things moving again. But the "new normal" will look different, with more social distancing and other precautionary measures. For some vulnerable individuals, the need for particular vigilance could last for quite some time.

Staying sane in challenging times

We have all had to find different ways to maintain our personal sanity during lockdown. I can't really complain. Sarah and my personal "bubble" is a leafy Embassy compound, which has looked beautiful throughout the spring. It was so sad not to be hosting all our usual *hanami* parties here. I've read more, including William Hague's massive biography of William Pitt, and done some writing (they say that everyone has a novel inside



them, but for most people that's where it should stay). And I've particularly enjoyed walks in the park listening to BBC Radio Four on their wonderful BBC Sounds app. I think we've all found time to stay in touch with friends and family through a host of new video links. Not having to eat all those diplomatic lunches and dinners has been an unexpected fitness bonus too.

If there is one silver lining to these terrible times, it has been the vast outbreak of kindness we have witnessed. The kindness of the incredibly dedicated health and care workers, and the vital staff who support them, whose contribution we publicly applaud from our doorsteps every Thursday evening in Britain. Individual acts of kindness by millions of volunteers looking out for the vulnerable. And a general sense that everyone is being just a bit nicer to each other in their everyday lives. Let's hope that becomes a lasting legacy of these dark days. 🇬🇧

Gradually getting back to a “new normal”

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



As I write, in early July, we are seeing increasing signs in both the UK and Japan of a world returning more to normal, after a period that has seen many Covid-19-related tragedies and massive disruption to people's lives. In both countries, with Japan somewhat ahead, we are seeing more schools, offices, shops and pubs opening, and people returning to work. It is nice to see the streets looking busier. But it is, of course, a new normal. Everyone is proceeding cautiously, and many measures have had to be put in place to reduce the spread of infection.

Commercial flights continued to fly between London and Tokyo all through the crisis, unlike many international routes. But border restrictions and quarantine requirements reduced passenger numbers to a trickle. Japan is no longer on the list of countries that the British government recommends against travelling to, and quarantine is no longer required for arrivals from Japan to the UK. But travellers from most countries—including the UK—are still not able to visit Japan. And if permanent residents depart, they are unable to come back to Japan for now, which I know is a concern to many Britons living here—particularly as we get into the summer holiday season. Please continue to check our travel advice, as we are in close touch with the Japanese authorities on this and will be communicating any changes in the rules as soon as they happen.

At the Embassy, we continued to be busy throughout the crisis, initially mainly on Covid-19 work but increasingly with more normal business in recent weeks. Our consular section is open for visitors by appointment. At the height of the crisis, about 95% of our staff were working from home. Actually, we found that the technology worked surprisingly well, and we have all got familiar with the new etiquettes of video conferencing. The “chat function” on many platforms seems to have made it a bit easier to participate for people who might normally be a bit shy of doing so.

We have had to reconfigure our open-plan office space to ensure adequate social distancing, which reduces the overall capacity. But, like other offices, we are seeing more and more of our staff coming back in.

Virtual negotiations for a new trade deal ...

Our biggest focus for the past month has been the negotiations for a new free trade agreement (FTA) with Japan. There are tight timing concerns on the Japanese side, because of the Diet's schedule, so both teams are working flat out.

It is very unusual to be negotiating a major trade deal entirely virtually, but there are some benefits. Instead of negotiators having to leap onto planes to travel to each other's country for periodic negotiating rounds, they are able to work in a more continuous flow of online meetings. This is very useful when you consider that the FTA talks involve more than 20 negotiating groups covering different subjects and more than 100 UK officials from a wide range of government departments. I'm sure that many *ACUMEN* readers are finding that, in your own businesses, questions are being asked about how the balance between international travel and meeting online will change in the future.

My trade and investment team and I have been keeping in close touch with major Japanese investors in the UK, as well as British firms here. British ministers have engaged directly in video meetings with leaders of the Keidanren and heads of big firms. I hosted a webinar for Japanese small and medium-sized investors and was impressed to be joined by more than 400 firms. Many were very appreciative of the Covid-19 support programmes introduced by the British government—from liquidity support by the Bank of England to funding for workers who had been furloughed.

... and a virtual visit by the Lord Mayor

Japan usually features on the annual visit programme of the Lord Mayor of the City of London, as ambassador for the UK's financial services industry. This year's incumbent, William Russell, was unable to travel as planned, so in June he made a “virtual visit,” replicating many features of the programme he would normally have done. He spearheaded seminars on green finance and asset management, as well as having virtual meetings with the heads of major Japanese financial institutions and Bank of Japan Governor Haruhiko Kuroda. On several of these, he was joined by the new Investment Minister in the Department of International Trade, Lord Grimstone. I recalled receiving the minister at my Residence a couple of years ago, when he was chairman of Barclays Bank.

You may have seen the announcement that the Foreign & Commonwealth Office is being merged with the Department for International Development (DFID), a very significant step in reforming the machinery of government. It won't have a major immediate impact on the Embassy, as we don't have any DFID staff. But, the increasing coordination of our foreign policy and overseas aid will give us opportunities to build on the cooperation that we already have with Japan in these important areas.

The UK and Japan are focused on how we stimulate the recovery—domestically and internationally.

Ambassador Yoshitaka Akimoto

Gradually opening up for business

The biggest public day of the year for all our embassies around the world is the Queen's Birthday Party. It can take place either in April (HM's real birthday) or June (her official birthday). Typically, we host up to 600 guests at the Residence. This year, sadly, there were no parties. But the Master of Ceremonies at the Imperial Palace, Ambassador Yoshitaka Akimoto, came round to present a message of congratulations from HM the Emperor. It felt rather strange putting my morning suit on to receive him after weeks of working from home in casual clothes.



Normally, my Residence is buzzing with up to 20,000 visitors a year for seminars, commercial events, receptions and meals. Since March, it has been echoing quiet. I fear it will be some time before we are hosting large events again. But the first official visitor, as we began to open up cautiously in June, was Defence Minister Taro Kono (above). He expressed good wishes for Prime Minister Boris Johnson's recovery, having worked closely with him



when they were both foreign ministers. We talked about growing UK-Japan cooperation in the defence and security fields, including the prospects for collaborating on future fighter aircraft programmes. My next visitor was England rugby coach Eddie Jones, who dropped round for tea and a chat about last year's wonderful World Cup.

Cream Tea

I discovered that 26 June was National Cream Tea Day in Britain. Who knew? So, I decided to make a video tweet for the many Japanese aficionados of English afternoon tea. As a native of the glorious county of Devon, I explained the correct way of preparing the scone, with the clotted cream first, followed by the jam. I noted that some misguided people in Cornwall mistakenly think it is the other way round. To my surprise, it turned out to be one of my most popular tweets ever, viewed more than 80,000 times. A large number of Japanese took the trouble to respond, reminiscing about holidays in the UK and, I'm pleased to report, voting 4:1 in favour of the Devon method.



Building back better

Living in Japan, it is hard not to be impressed by the success with which the country has handled the coronavirus. I'm not sure any expert has been able to say exactly why the impact in Japan was so much lower than in many comparably advanced countries. But it appears to have been a combination of specific government policies on tracking and “cluster busting” and avoiding the three Cs:

- Closed spaces
- Crowded places
- Close contacts

Good underlying public health—particularly low levels of obesity—and social practices also seem to have played a role.

But I think many organisations and individuals here found the shift to teleworking quite challenging, and the experience will have given a big boost to reducing some historic practices such as the requirement for use of *hanko* (personal seals) and increasing the use of online shopping and cashless payments.

Looking ahead, we are clearly not out of the woods on Covid-19. Although the overall incidence and number of deaths in both countries have come down significantly, we have to stay alert and maintain precautions—even as our economies and societies open up again. If spikes reoccur in particular locations, measures may need to be rethought. But our economies have taken a hit, and, like many countries, the UK and Japan are focused on how we stimulate the recovery—domestically and internationally.

It is clear that some of the key pillars of the recovery will include:

- Digital
- Healthcare and life sciences
- Green economy

PM Johnson has set out plans for a major infrastructure programme. With an emphasis on sustainability, you increasingly hear the phrase “building back better”.

Here comes the sunflowers

A further sign of life returning closer to normal was the long-postponed opening of the exhibition *Masterpieces from the National Gallery, London*, at the National Museum of Western Art in Ueno on 18 June. We were lucky enough to have a sneak preview the day before it opened officially. There seems to be a work by almost every famous painter you can think of, from artists of the Italian Renaissance through to the Impressionists. The most iconic is probably van Gogh's *Sunflowers* (actually one of 12 he painted). But my favourite was a huge Turner: *Ulysses deriding Polyphemus - Homer's Odyssey*. Inevitably, in the current climate, you need to make a reservation—and numbers are strictly controlled—but do go along to see it if you can. If you can't, there is an excellent video introduction to the collection by the curator on: www.britishcouncil.jp/en/programmes/arts/national-gallery-online-guided-exhibition-tour

Sadly, a number of major events in our UK in JAPAN programme, such as visits by the Royal Shakespeare Company and the London Symphony Orchestra, were lost to the coronavirus pandemic. We hope they will be rescheduled in due course. In the meantime, we will be running some of the business aspects of the programme digitally, hoping to move towards more real-world events in the run-up to the rescheduled Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games next year. 🇬🇧

An historic few weeks

Farewell Shinzo Abe, friend of Britain

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



Prime Minister Shinzo Abe's decision to stand down due to ill health took the world by surprise. The longest-serving Japanese prime minister ever, he had become a fixture on the world stage and at the G7 summits—second in longevity only to German Chancellor Angela Merkel. Including his first period in office, 2006–07, he overlapped with five British prime ministers. It's usually the other way round.

It's for history to judge the legacy of Abenomics, his international diplomacy—building personal relations with US President Donald Trump and other leaders—and his gradual changes to Japan's defence posture. But, certainly, he will be remembered as one of a small number of Japanese leaders with widespread name recognition in the West.

PM Abe was quick to spot that the UK's departure from the European Union would lead to opportunities to strengthen our bilateral defence and security relationship at a challenging time in the Asia-Pacific region. He has been very committed to this, as I have seen at the many meetings between Abe and senior British politicians that I have attended. At the time of writing, it looks as if we are in for a significant measure of continuity from the new Japanese administration, and we look forward to working with PM Yoshihide Suga.



Historic new trade deal

On 11 September, Trade Secretary Liz Truss and Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi reached an agreement in principle on a new UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA). This was an historic event as the first new trade deal the UK has struck since regaining sovereignty in trade matters. It will ensure that UK and Japanese businesses continue to enjoy the access to each other's markets, contained within the EU-Japan EPA. But it also brings important new benefits by going further in areas such as financial services, digital and data. And it is a key first step towards UK accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership, a move Japan has pledged to support.

It is probably the first-ever trade agreement to be negotiated almost entirely virtually, by video conference. Such a wide-ranging negotiation is a massive undertaking, involving more than 100 British civil servants in 19 working groups participating from a combination of home and office. Our team at the Embassy under Trade Counsellor Sophie Dyer made a huge contribution.

Abe was quick to spot that the UK's departure from the European Union would lead to opportunities to strengthen our bilateral defence and security relationship.



Travel in western Japan

In early August, I attended the Atomic Bomb memorial ceremonies in both Hiroshima and Nagasaki. This year they were somewhat pared down due to Covid-19, with fewer attendees, but remained a deeply moving experience.

Whilst in Nagasaki, Sarah and I made a side trip to the island of Hirado, scene of the first British settlement in Japan, under a trade agreement, signed in 1613, between the Shogun Tokugawa Ieyasu and King James I of England. William Adams, known in Japan as Miura Anjin, was involved in the negotiations, and it felt very fitting to pay our respects at his grave there in this the 400th anniversary year of his death. Our visit was arranged by the 41st Lord Matura, whose ancestors had welcomed Adams. Hirado is a beautiful island, with well-preserved traditional buildings and some fascinating traces of the Hidden Christians who continued to practice their faith for centuries after it had been banned.

On the way down, we had made a brief side trip to the serene temple complex at Koyasan in Wakayama Prefecture. Together with a trip to Akita earlier in the summer, I have now visited 46 of the 47 prefectures during my time as Ambassador. Just Okinawa to go, in case you were wondering.

During a brief trip to Nagano Prefecture, I took up a long-standing invitation to visit the wonderful Barakura English Garden, with its fabulous display of mature British trees, plants and flowers, and sampled the tasty British food at its restaurants and shop.

Pol-Mil talks

In September, the annual talks between top foreign and defence ministry officials from both countries took place, this year virtually. There was a wide measure of agreement on the joint challenges we face, and commitment to even more active practical cooperation. The British side briefed on our current Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, which aims to define our strategies for the decade ahead. Also, in September, the Foreign & Commonwealth Office merged with the Department for International Development. This will enable greater alignment of our policies and spending programmes in these areas, though the direct impact on staff at the Embassy here in Tokyo is much less than in some other countries.

Life under Covid-19

In Japan and Britain, life is returning to a new normal as we all learn to live with Covid-19. Many travel restrictions and new social practices remain in place, and, for most of us, work will remain a mixture of office and work-from-home for some time to come. Personally, I have found that much of my normal work has returned, and I am pretty busy. The big difference is that I am not hosting or attending the many official dinners, receptions and other events that are a normal part of diplomatic life.

I know that many British long-term residents of Japan have found it a frustrating time, unable to return to Japan if they left, making it impossible to get back to see family and friends. Many felt they were being unfairly treated, as Japanese nationals were free to come and go. Along with other G7 embassies, we regularly lobbied the Japanese government on this and were pleased to see the rules finally relaxed in August.



Climate change

Like the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, another casualty of Covid-19 was the major UN Climate Change Conference (COP26), which the UK was due to host in November. It has been postponed to November 2021 but remains a top priority for the Embassy as we seek to persuade Japan to make more ambitious commitments, including an end to the financing of coal projects in third countries. I have had a number of meetings on this with Environment Minister Shinjiro Koizumi and senior officials in different ministries.

The British Council organised a climate change essay contest for Japanese high school students. We were looking for the Japanese Greta Thunberg. I'm not quite sure we achieved that, but Taisei Yamashita and Shiho Igarashi were worthy winners, and Minister Koizumi was kind enough to invite them in for a chat.

Changes in senior Embassy staff

We've had a few changes over the summer. My Deputy Head of Mission Dr David Ellis left Tokyo in August to prepare for his first ambassadorship elsewhere. Minister Counsellor Economic Sue Kinoshita will be taking on his role for the next year. Director of Trade Esther Williams is returning to the UK, to be succeeded by Marie-Claire Joyce, returning for her third posting here. Consul Andy Ziardis is being replaced by Martin O'Neill. 🇬🇧



Ministerial visits resume, progress on climate change

Trade minister signs deal—our first VIP here for eight months

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



During my time here, I have had the pleasure of welcoming many senior British Cabinet ministers to Japan. But this year we had no VIP visitors, following the Foreign Secretary's February trip. So, it was a great pleasure to have Secretary of State for International Trade Liz Truss here in October. And even more so, because it was for the historic signing of our new trade deal, the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement.

Fortunately, the Japanese government exempted SOS Truss and her small party from the compulsory two-week self-isolation for arrivals from overseas, but set very strict Covid-19 protocols around what they could do here. Essentially, they were confined to meetings at the ministries and my Residence.

Nevertheless, she had a very full programme. After the signing ceremony with Foreign Minister Toshimitsu Motegi (pictured right), we had lunch at the Foreign Ministry Guest House, Iikura House, where we discussed reform of the World Trade Organization and the UK's plans for our G7 presidency next year.

She also called on Minister for Economy, Trade and Industry Hiroshi Kajiyama to discuss UK-Japan business cooperation, and on Cabinet Office Minister Yasutoshi Nishimura (right), who is a familiar face from our TV screens here, as lead minister on the Covid-19 response. He is also responsible for the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP). He undertook to do everything possible to advance the UK's interest in joining the CPTPP during Japan's presidency of the process next year.

Having now worked out a formula for the logistics of VIP visits during the coronavirus pandemic, we are hoping for further ministerial visitors.



Liz Truss also undertook a range of press engagements and met Japanese business representatives, including leaders of the Keidanren, whilst her lead trade negotiator, Graham Zebedee, briefed the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) and British businesses. Having now worked out a formula for the logistics of VIP visits during the coronavirus pandemic, we are hoping for further ministerial visitors.



Making a "virtual" virtue of necessity

In Japan, the second wave has had less-devastating consequences than elsewhere, and our progress towards a new business as usual has continued. We have more staff and visitors coming into the embassy, and our team is able to get out and about more. But the requirement for social distancing means that we are not going to be hosting our usual larger events for a while yet. So, thinking creatively, the Trade & Investment team has turned our conference room into a well-equipped virtual boardroom from where we can stream events to a wide online audience and give visitors a bit of the red-carpet treatment. This will include a series of events on the Future of Mobility, such as autonomous driving, low emissions and smart cities, as part of our UK in JAPAN campaign. We are also using the venue for virtual meetings between Japanese and UK businesses.

Prime Minister Suga commits to net zero carbon emissions by 2050

We were also delighted by PM Yoshihide Suga's announcement—in his speech at the opening of the extraordinary Diet session on 26 October—that Japan would commit to zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This represented a significant policy shift, and one that Britain had long been pressing for—together with like-minded partners within Japan—as we prepare to host the United Nations Climate Change Conference (COP26) next year.

PM Boris Johnson, together with French President Emmanuel Macron and UN Secretary General António Guterres, is hosting on 12 December a virtual Climate Ambition Summit, at which PM Suga will speak, to mark the fifth anniversary of the historic Paris Agreement.

We now look forward to hearing Japan's detailed plans for implementing this commitment, including, hopefully, a full phase-out of support for coal. PM Suga has quickly got into action on the international scene. Following early phone calls with PM Johnson and other world leaders, he made his first overseas visit as PM—to Vietnam and Indonesia—in October.



With Defence Minister Nobuo Kishi

The Trade & Investment team has turned our conference room into a well-equipped virtual boardroom from where we can stream events ... and give visitors a bit of the red-carpet treatment.

Back in the UK, as Covid-19 position tightens

Just before SOS Truss's visit, I had made a brief visit to the UK, my first since the spring. I called on the Defence Secretary, Ben Wallace, to talk about the continued deepening of the UK-Japan security relationship, which has been going from strength to strength. I also met senior officials in a range of Whitehall departments. We discussed the UK's Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy, which is currently underway. It is not clear at the time of writing when, exactly, this will be published. But it is expected to feature a significant shift of emphasis towards this region, sometimes described as an Indo-Pacific tilt.

I also caught up with my counterpart, Ambassador Yasumasa Nagamine, and with British Paralympic Association Chief Executive Mike Sharrock. The postponement of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games to 2021 has created a number of logistical and financial challenges for Mike and his team—just as it has for the organisers in Japan. But they are very much looking forward to coming to Tokyo to compete next year.

Whilst I was in London, the city went into Tier 2 of the government's Covid-19 designation. I was still able to do business meetings but, when meeting up with our children, we had to remain outside as we were not part of their immediate households. It was strange to see central London so quiet. As the second wave hits Europe, moving into the winter, many governments are having to tighten up lockdown measures, often at a city or regional level. England has subsequently moved into full lockdown. Once again, it is a very worrying situation, but hopefully the healthcare systems are a bit more prepared for it this time round. And academia and the pharmaceutical industry continue to make progress towards vaccines.



Christmas in Japan

As the evenings draw in, thoughts begin to turn towards Christmas. As a diplomat, I've experienced Christmas in various ways in different countries: beach holidays in Australia; fake snow in Singapore shopping malls; schmaltzy decorations in America. It's always a bit different in non-Christian Japan, where it's not even a public holiday. But those of us who do celebrate it always manage to make it a special time here, too. The BCCJ's British Business Awards usually feel like one of the first signs of Christmas. This year, that too was a virtual event. And for the first time in nearly 30 years, travel restrictions mean Sarah and I won't be spending Christmas with any of our three children. No doubt many of you are similarly affected. I hope you still manage a happy and peaceful Christmas. And I'm sure we're all hoping that things will look brighter in the new year. ❄️

Parting thoughts

BY PAUL MADDEN CMG
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN

PHOTOS: © BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO



The difficult year of Covid-19—2020—ended with things looking a little brighter. Following our historic new trade deal in October, we welcomed Prime Minister Yoshihide Suga's November announcement that Japan would achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions by 2050. This was something that the UK, as host of the major UN climate change conference COP26 this year, had been encouraging Japan towards for some time. The positive news on vaccines was very heartening, not least for everyone looking forward to the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games. Of course, economic recovery will remain a big focus for governments and business for a long time to come.

Looking back

As this is my last column for *ACUMEN* as British Ambassador, I hope you will permit me to reflect on my time here and my almost 40-year connection with Japan. My first visit in 1983, on a study tour organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan, after winning an essay contest, inspired me to want to live in the country. I transferred from the then-Department of Trade and Industry to the Foreign Office, studied Japanese at London University's School of Oriental and African studies and at the Embassy's language school in Kamakura, and was posted to the Embassy in Tokyo from 1988 to 1992.

Many of my subsequent postings were in the region, including ambassadorships in Australia and Singapore. I also had the pleasure of being responsible for the UK Pavilion at Expo 2005, Aichi, so am very much looking forward to Osaka hosting the expo in 2025. I returned as Ambassador in January 2017.



The bubble era

Younger colleagues often ask me what it was like to be living in Japan during the "bubble *jidai*". It's hard to describe the buzz, the sense of excitement and change that all of us here then felt, as Tokyo seemed to become, briefly, the centre of the world. The word I heard most was *kokusaiika* (internationalisation), as Japanese businesses poured abroad, acquiring firms and assets. The flow of Japanese investment into the UK has brought much benefit to both countries over subsequent decades. Many individual Japanese were travelling overseas for the first time as tourists and students—all fuelled by the strong yen. Tokyo was a magnet for young foreigners like me. Some of my friends stayed, married and made their lives here, as I was pleased to see when I returned.

Sarah and I have many happy memories from that time. They include the birth of our first son in Seibo Hospital, in Shinjuku, as well as homestays with Japanese families—in Oita on Kyushu, the Kansai region and Bihoro on Hokkaido—and twinning my hometown Ottery in Devon with Otari-mura, in the beautiful Japanese Alps. There was also the end of the Showa era and the beginning of the Heisei, a fascinating three-month secondment to the then-Ministry of International Trade and Industry, and Japan's huge trade surpluses and major trade friction with the US, plus my efforts to reduce the liquor tax on Scotch whisky. Who could have predicted that, by 2020, UK-Japan trade would be broadly in balance?

Working on the Expo 2005, Aichi was a fascinating experience. For a start, it introduced me to Nagoya, the industrial powerhouse which still accounts for about 1% of the world's gross domestic product. The area is home to one of my favourite museums in Japan, Meiji-mura, which preserves buildings that reflect the incredible fusion of East meeting West in Japan's rapid 19th-century industrial revolution.



My first visit in 1983, on a study tour organised by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan ... inspired me to want to live in the country.

Returning to Japan

Coming back to Tokyo 25 years after our first posting, what had changed? I guess the biggest difference was the rise of China. People rarely talked about China then; now they talk about little else. The ageing, shrinking population has assumed more prominence. You don't always notice it in Tokyo, but out in the provincial cities and countryside, it is much in evidence. Ordinary Japanese seem to lead more-comfortable, less workaholic lives than I remember from the 1980s. Dads have more time to spend with their families—although fewer people seem to be getting married and having kids. If I'm honest, I had thought Japan would have progressed further in advancing the opportunities for women by now.

There are fewer transient expats here nowadays, and far more long-term ones, often married to Japanese and with a long-term stake in this country. Travelling round the country meeting British people on the Japan Exchange and Teaching (JET) Programme working in schools, I am sometimes a little concerned to hear that fewer young Japanese nowadays seem interested in studying or working overseas.

In the 1980s, government ministries were relatively independent, battling fiefdoms. Now, thanks to structural changes and the longevity in office of former Prime Minister Shinzo Abe, government feels much more joined up and centralised.

I was also struck by the psychological overhang of the 2011 tsunami and Fukushima nuclear disaster—a "far bigger impact than Covid-19," as someone reminded me—long after the physical and economic reconstruction had happened. That's why I chose Fukushima for my first official visit outside Tokyo as Ambassador, visiting the Daiichi Nuclear Power Plant and meeting workers.

The life of an Ambassador is pretty diverse. You have an opportunity to be associated with so many aspects of the interchange between two significant countries. On top of the business as usual come some major one-off issues and events, some of which you are aware of when you get the job and others which—like the coronavirus—just catch you unawares.

My main areas of focus over the past four years have been: security; business (including Brexit); Covid-19; and big, ad-hoc events such as the Imperial Enthronement and Rugby World Cup 2019.



Business ties

Business has always been a top priority for British Ambassadors in Tokyo. With some 150,000 British workers directly employed in Japanese firms in the UK, I have always been clear that supporting them was a key task for me. I've visited Japanese investors all over the UK, including Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, as well as kept in close touch with their headquarters here.

So, the UK's decision to leave the EU was a significant issue in Japan. Japanese investors, who dislike uncertainty, were particularly concerned during the period when our minority government seemed unable to get its policies through Parliament. The election of Boris Johnson with a big majority in December 2019 reduced that uncertainty, and we left the EU in January 2020. So far, a small number of Japanese firms have had to make minor adjustments to their UK presence for regulatory reasons. But my sense is that most remain committed to staying in the UK, because of all the advantages that brought them there in the first place. And, despite the recent global economic challenges, we have continued to see new investment from Japan in tech sectors.

I was particularly pleased to be involved in the conclusion of a historic new trade deal, the UK-Japan Comprehensive Economic Partnership Agreement (EPA), in October 2020, towards the end of my posting. This will ensure continued market access for business on both sides. It goes further than the EU-Japan EPA in a number of areas, including financial services and digital, and marks an important first step towards UK accession to the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP).

Security cooperation

It is not surprising that Japanese are concerned about security, living in a somewhat challenging neighbourhood with territorial disputes and the continuing worry of North Korean missile and nuclear tests. And Japan has worried that a more inward-looking America might become less focused on the region. So, they naturally looked to additional partners such as the UK, with global interests and strong capabilities, to deepen security collaboration. The Royal Navy, whose links with Japan go back to the Anglo-Japanese Alliance of 1902, has sent more ships here on my watch than ever before, and we hope that our new aircraft carrier HMS *Queen Elizabeth* might be out in this region this year. I remember taking the then-Japanese Minister of Defense Itsunori Onodera on board when it was doing trials in Portsmouth three years ago. The UK, as we leave the European Union—and conscious of our important interests in the Asia-Pacific region—is keen to expand our engagement in this part of the world, in a new Indo-Pacific tilt.

Our defence industries are finding more opportunities to work together, and there may well be synergies in the two countries' requirement for next-generation fighter aircraft. But peace and security do not just rest on military might. They also involve the sound working of international institutions based on the rule of law. This is another area that has been under challenge in recent times, giving the UK and Japan a strong interest in working together to reinforce the international system.



Royals, rugby and Covid-19

You hope to get one big event in the course of your posting, if you're lucky. But during my time in Japan, they came thick and fast. Enthronements only happen once in a generation, so I was very fortunate that the Reiwa era began on my watch. Attending this ancient ceremony together with the Prince of Wales was one of the highlights of my whole career. It was disappointing that the State Visit to the UK by His Majesty the Emperor, due in 2020, had to be postponed.



Thanks to the Rugby World Cup, I ended up having three members of the Royal Family staying at my Residence in the space of a few weeks, with Princess Anne here as patron of the Scottish team, and Prince Harry as the English patron. Having four teams to follow—England, Scotland, Wales and the shared all-of-Ireland team—at venues all over Japan was a huge privilege and great fun. Just a shame England faltered at the very end after a magnificent tournament. I was also very sorry to see the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games postponed to this year. I'm sure they'll be a big success.

Japan's G20 Presidency in 2019 was also a big deal for the Embassy. It brought Prime Minister Theresa May to Japan for the Osaka summit, as well as many other Cabinet ministers for separate meetings. PM May was also in Japan in 2017 for a high-profile visit that ran from a tea ceremony with PM Abe in Kyoto, and a joint Shinkansen journey back to Tokyo, to a state banquet at the Akasaka Palace. I also accompanied PM Abe's UK visit in 2019. These top-level contacts between leaders really help to shape the overall bilateral relationship, producing joint vision statements that set out a wide programme of action for working together ever more closely.

I wasn't expecting my final year in Japan to be completely dominated by a pandemic. Here in Tokyo, we got an early taste of what was to come with Covid-19 from the crisis on board the *Diamond Princess* cruise ship docked at Yokohama. With about 80 Brits on board, we were soon in the thick of it, organising emergency evacuation on a specially chartered plane. As the

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disease spread worldwide, wreaking havoc in health and economic spheres, and upturning everyone's lives, all our plans were transformed. Our UK in JAPAN campaign, which had begun so well, was also sadly impacted by the cancellation of many blockbuster events.

At the Embassy, our main focus became helping vulnerable British citizens, assisting the NHS's efforts to purchase supplies from the Asia-Pacific region, and detailed reporting of Japan's coronavirus experience and policies. As a resident of Japan, it is hard not to be impressed with the very low level of Covid-19 cases and deaths compared with other developed countries. I'm not sure anyone has identified a single magic bullet to explain this: it was a combination of some good policy measures, social behaviours and underlying good public health.

It's another example of the safe, secure, comfortable living environment that makes so many foreigners fall in love with Japan and choose to make their lives here. Of course, there are some frustrations with the speed of getting things done in a society that is often risk- and change-averse. But these are far outweighed by the attractions of stunning natural landscapes and a unique culture and history—which I've seen as I've travelled to all 47 prefectures—and, above all, by the decency, warmth and friendship of the Japanese people as you really get to know them.

On my study wall at the Residence is a collection of black-and-white photographs of elderly, often bewhiskered men: my predecessors as HM Ambassador Tokyo. My successor, Julia Longbottom CMG, will be a refreshing change as our first female representative here. As a highly respected colleague, and a friend of more than 30 years' standing, I wish her all the best. I hope she has as much fun as I've had.

So, farewell Japan. You've been such an important and wonderful part of my life. Don't worry; I'll be staying in touch. 🍷



UK-JAPAN EVENTS

1 Paul Madden CMG, the UK ambassador to Japan, and his wife Sarah spoke with Her Imperial Highness Princess Akiko at his welcome reception hosted by the Japan-British Society at the Tsunamachi Mitsui Club in Minato City, Tokyo on 16 March.
PHOTO: YUSUKE FUJIMOTO

2 Ambassador Madden addressed the audience.
PHOTO: YUSUKE FUJIMOTO

3 Ambassador Paul Madden CMG presented Hiroshi Matsumoto, president of Riken, with an honorary OBE at an investiture ceremony held at the British Embassy Tokyo on 23 February in recognition of his "outstanding contribution to research and education relations between the UK and Japan".
PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

4 British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG speaks at the Fashion is GREAT - What is Britishness? event at the British Embassy Tokyo on 1 February.
PHOTO: CUSTOM MEDIA

5 British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG gave the introductory speech at the Pledge for Parity: Bridging the Potential, Performance and Pay Gap event co-organised by the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ) and the British Embassy Tokyo on 8 March at the embassy.

6 From left: Lori Henderson MBE, executive director of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ); David Mundell, secretary of state for Scotland; Paul Madden CMG, British ambassador to Japan; and David Bickle, president of the BCCJ, at the event What Does Brexit Mean for Scotland, the UK and Japan? held at the British Embassy Tokyo on 16 February.



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UK-JAPAN EVENTS

7 The British Chamber of Commerce in Japan held its Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 26 April at the Conrad Tokyo. The event was attended by 80 guests and included an address by British Ambassador Paul Madden CMG.

8 British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG and Intralink CEO Greg Sutch open the firm's new offices in Shimbashi.
PHOTO: INTRALINK

9 UK Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG, UK Trade Secretary Dr Liam Fox and President of the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan David Bickle address members of the BCCJ on 1 August. The title of the BCCJ event was *The Current State of Affairs*.

10 Lloyd's of London CEO Dame Inga Kristine Beale, Tokyo Governor Yuriko Koike, and British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG spoke at "A Diverse and Inclusive Tale of Two Cities," presented by the British Chamber of Commerce in Japan (BCCJ), British Council Japan, and Loyds Japan at the British Embassy Tokyo on October 10.
PHOTO: BRITISH EMBASSY TOKYO

11 From left: Yukihiro Bartlett-Imadegawa, British Ambassador to Japan Paul Madden CMG, Custom Media Publisher Simon Farrell and St David's Society of Japan President Ursula Bartlett-Imadegawa at the Queen's Birthday Party at the British Embassy Tokyo on 25 April.

12 Ambassador Madden (center left) and Yokohama Mayor Fumiko Hayashi (center right) cut the ribbon to open Yokohama's Daikoku Pier passenger terminal on 19 April. The *Queen Elizabeth* was the first ship to dock at the new terminal.

13 British Ambassador Paul Madden CMG (third left) and BCCJ Executive Committee member Richard Thornley CBE (fifth left) joined other England rugby fans on the coach after the Tonga match at the Sapporo Dome on 22 September.



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GONGS FOR GOOD



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Best CSR for GoConnect (NPOs, SMEs)



2018 Top Digital Agency:
Excellence in Copywriting and Design



2015 Japan-British Society:
Simon Farrell, bilateral ties and charities



2014 Best Charity &
Fundraising Cookbook-Asia



2013 Company of the Year:
BCCJ British Business Awards

DOING GOOD

We help our community as Media Partner and pro bono supporter of non-profit organisations in Japan:



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