



KBS

NEWSLETTER

KOREA-BRITAIN SOCIETY

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Welcome to the fifth edition of the Korea Britain Society Newsletter! This informal quarterly newsletter aims to keep KBS members informed of news about the Society and events and activities of interest for those with an interest in the UK and Korea.

MEMORIES OF THE KBS CHRISTMAS DINNER



As the first buds of spring start to appear, the cold winter's night of 12th December might seem like a distant memory. But for over 400 members and guests of the KBS, that date proved to be an evening to remember as they gathered together at the Seoul Hilton Hotel for what has become one of the highlights of the KBS calendar – the annual KBS Christmas dinner.

After speeches by senior KBS figures and guest of honour Dr Han Duck-soo, Deputy Prime Minister, guests enjoyed a lavish festive dinner whilst being entertained by a classical trio. In what has become a KBS tradition, dinner was followed by a lively performance of carols by the Haesimwon children's orphanage choir and a competitive auction directed by KBS member Mr Alan Timblich.

The dinner has become one of the KBS' biggest fund raising activities and 2005 was no different making a profit of over 20 million won. The funds will go towards supporting the work of the KBS, including offering scholarships to enable Koreans to study in the UK and to charities in Korea.

Information on the 2006 dinner will appear in this newsletter later this year.



Guest of Honour Dr Han Duck-soo delivers his speech at the dinner

AGM UPDATE

The Korea Britain Society held its annual general meeting at the British Ambassador's Residence on Wednesday 15 March. Over 50 KBS members participated in what was a successful meeting chaired by Dr Park Jin, Executive President of the Society. The meeting agreed that the Organisation was in good health with a wide range of new activities and a healthy bank balance.

During the meeting KBS members agreed to fund a British Chevening Scholarship, an English teacher programme for 4 Korean teachers of English, and to continue the Society's long-term commitment to the Duke of Edinburgh Fellowship.

Membership of the Society was reported to have increased slightly in the last year due to a range of activities - in particular the English language debates were praised for attracting a large number of new student members. Executive Committee members agreed to promote KBS membership within the British community in Korea.

The AGM thanked departing KBS member Mr Martin Nesirky and Mr Kim Jae Ho for their work on the KBS Executive Committee. An updated Executive Committee was then agreed. Mr Dong Hoon Lee, a Korean representative of the UK Alumni Association, and Mr Jonathan Thatcher of Reuters were welcomed on board. Full minutes from the meeting are available on the KBS pages of the Embassy website - www.britishembassy.or.kr

OPINIONS DIVIDED ON KOREAN SCREEN QUOTA AT DEBATE



KBS members joined the debate

On 28 March the British Embassy's Broughton Club hosted the second KBS debate attracting over 50 young debaters. The proposition was 'This house believes the screen quota system is good for Korea' – a suitable controversial topic to ensure that debate was passionate!

Mr Mark Lee, an Ehwa Women's University Lecturer, film producer and director, argued for the proposition including by suggesting that the audience ask themselves "is film is a commodity like any other when it has the power to open doors on other countries and promote dialogue?" Speaking against the proposition was KBS Executive Committee member and Director of Investment

Relations at Hana Bank, Mr Ernst Lee. Mr Lee countered that the Korean film industry was now strong enough to stand on its own two feet and that cinema goers should be given the right to choose what they wanted to see rather than to have their options closed.

The hour-long debate that followed saw many well-reasoned and convincing interventions from the floor, both for and against the screen quota. As the moderator drew discussion to a close and called for a vote, the results indicated an exact 50-50 split amongst the attendees!

Ernst Lee, an organiser of the debate as well as one of the speakers said "The last KBS debate was a great success so we were delighted to see so many people returning to discuss the hot topic of screen quotas. The KBS is always keen to engage with young people and we hope that many of those who attended will become more involved with the Society in the future."



ANGLO-KOREAN SOCIETY MEMBER IN THE UK SEEKS KOREAN PENPALS

Mr Bryan Vallance, a member of the KBS's UK sister organisation the Anglo-Korean Society, recently wrote to the AKS newsletter to identify Korean Pen Pals. The following is an excerpt from his letter should any Korean KBS members be interested in getting in touch:

"Since joining the Anglo-Korean Society my interest in Korean affairs has remained as strong as ever, but feel there is a lack of opportunity for the ordinary 'Anglo' member to have a dialogue with his or her opposite 'Korean number. Should any Korean member be interested in writing to me I would be happy to correspond with them. I am retired, 70 years old and married. As I learnt my little bit of Hangul in 1954/55 it is a little rusty now.

My own interests are many but have a common link, they are:

- Korean art history.
- Wildlife (mainly birds).
- Wetlands and Estuary life.
- Merchant ships."

Mr Vallance's email address is ttch@globalnet.co.uk or he can be contacted by post at 85 Hessary Drive, Roborough, Plymouth, PL6 7DQ, UK

Dr Ruth Taplin of the AKS has also sent the following short report on their recent activities:

"In February the Anglo-Korean Society had its Annual General meeting with a delightful Korean supper at the Embassy in London. The Ambassador was unable to attend because of other commitments but Mr. Whie-jin Lee, Counsellor, Embassy of the Republic of Korea stood in for the Ambassador to good effect. Everyone enjoyed the freshly prepared Korean food and returned to the buffet for many helpings.

In March we again had a meeting at the Foreign Press Association with the assistance of the London Press Club. The Korean National Tourism Organisation (KNTO) sponsored the delicious Korean fare. The KNTO is promoting tourism of Europeans to South Korea. I will be writing an article about my visit to the beautiful island of Cheju-do for the upcoming AKS Bulletin. Having the press write more about South Korea in general and the lovely place to visit there is a priority."

BRITISH VETERANS RETURN TO KOREA



British Veterans of the Korean War will arrive in Seoul on Sunday for their annual war commemorations visit. The Group will consist of 87 Veterans and family members, many of whom will be returning to Korea for the first time since the war.

The week long stay includes visits to the National Cemetery, to Busan to visit the UN Memorial Cemetery in Korea and to Kapyong for the Commonwealth, Canadian and Australian/new Zealand memorial ceremonies. For many veterans the annual "Gloster Valley" commemorations are the highlight of the week-long visit. The event, to be held at Solma-Ri near Munsan on Thursday 20th April, will mark the 55th anniversary of the battle of Imjin when heavily outnumbered British forces fought three Divisions of the 63rd

Veterans in 2005

Chinese Communist Army in an encounter which captured the imagination of the world.

The commemorations will include a march past by the veterans, a wreath laying service, the presentation of scholarships to local school-children and a Service of Remembrance held on Castle Hill – the site where the British soldiers made their last stand. The event will have special poignancy this year as the veterans remember General Sir Anthony Farrar-Hockley – hero of the Korean war and military historian - who passed away last month. At Castle Hill an honour guard will fire a 21-gun salute to mark Farrar-Hockley's passing.

The week is a busy one for the veterans particularly as many are now in their 70s or 80s. The KBS has made a contribution of KRW 240,000 to provide bottled water for the veterans for the duration of their visit.

The KBS are organising a coach for those wishing to attend the Gloster Valley Commemorations on 20th April. For further information please email angela.leach@fco.gov.uk or visit the Embassy website - www.britishembassy.or.kr

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

The KBS's events coordinators Angela Leach and Ernst Lee are working on a programme of events for 2006. Contact angela.leach@fco.gov.uk or leejernst@hanabank.com for further information or to suggest new events.

- Friday 14 April 2006 – **Meal and Karaoke evening.** KBS members are invited for an informal evening of song at the British Embassy Broughtons club. For further information contact angela.leach@fco.gov.uk
- Thursday 20 April 2006 - **British Korean War Veterans** - trip to Gloster Valley
- May/June (date tbc) - **Summer BBQ by Embassy pool**
- June (tbc) - **Gathering at Embassy bar to watch World Cup football match**
- July/August (tbc) - **Royal Asiatic Society trip within Korea**
- September/October (tbc) - **trip to Baengnyeongdo**
- September/October/November (tbc) - **KBS/Alumni Association reception/gathering**
- Monday 11 December (date tbc) - **KBS Annual Dinner**