**MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING**

**OF THE BRITISH ASSOCIATION FOR JAPANESE STUDIES**

held at SOAS, University of London

**09 September 2016**

**PERSONS PRESENT:**

Chair: Prof Caroline Rose

Council Members**:**

Dr Peter Matanle (Honorary Treasurer)  
Dr Gitte Hansen

Dr Thomas McAuley (Communications Officer)

Dr Chris Gerteis (Japan Forum)

Mrs Lynn Baird (Secretariat)

33 members in attendance

**APOLOGIES:**

Dr Erica Baffelli (Honorary Secretary)

Dr Andrew Cobbing (co-opted Council member)

1. **MINUTES OF 2015 AGM:**

Minutes from the previous AGM held at SOAS, University of London, 11 Sept 2015 were accepted as a true record.

1. **MATTERS ARISING:**

There were no matters arising which were not covered within the agenda items.

1. **COUNCIL ELECTIONS:**

* President:

Dr Christopher Hood (Cardiff University) was nominated by Dr Matanle, seconded by Dr Gerteis.

Dr Hood was confirmed as the new President of BAJS.

* Honorary Secretary:

Dr Erica Baffelli, University of Manchester, was confirmed as Honorary Secretary.

* Council member:

Dr Christopher Perkins, University of Edinburgh, was nominated by Dr Hood, seconded by Dr Hansen, and confirmed as a Council member with responsibility for the Comms role (shadowing Dr McAuley).

**4. PRESIDENT’S REPORT:**

* The President thanked Dr Macnaughtan and the organizing team in the Japan Research Centre, SOAS for a highly successful conference.

***BAJS activities***

* The annual joint Japan Foundation/BAJS postgraduate workshop had taken place in London on 03 February 2016 and had once again been a big success, with very positive feedback from the student participants. Planning for the next workshop would begin in the autumn.

***BAJS scholarships and funded projects***

* BAJS had awarded five BAJS studentships and two John Crump scholarships so far in 2016. Both funding schemes had seen a pleasing increase in applications this year, with applicants from Japanese Studies departments as well as discipline-based departments. This suggests that BAJS is becoming more well-known as a potential source of funding for students across UK institutions, including non-traditional applications.
* BAJS had also funded a number of students to attend the JEASC at SOAS, plus other events under the Conference Support scheme.

***BAJS website***

* The new BAJS website had been launched earlier in 2016, Dr McAuley was thanked for all his hard work in liaising with the website developers Capability Cloud to produce this new face of the Association. It has a much improved database functionality, and should enable BAJS members to access the online version of Japan Forum. There had been a noticeable increase in members signing up to join the association since the website had been launched. A dedicated ‘member area’ is under discussion and should be available in due course to enhance the accessibility of information. Members were invited to put forward any suggestions / comments related to the new website.

**5. HONORARY SECRETARY’S REPORT:**

Apologies had been received from Dr Baffelli.

The President reported that a funding application had been submitted to Japan Foundation to support the BAJS conference, and had been successful, unfortunately with a reduced award being offered this year. They were thanked for their continued support of BAJS.

The Honorary Secretary would be exploring the possibility of other sources of funding to enhance BAJS activities.

**6. HONORARY TREASURER’S REPORT:**

Dr Matanle had circulated the most recent 2013 audited accounts to the AGM, and indicated that the most up to date totals for BAJS were currently standing at £151,000 +, which was almost the same as in December 2013.

The Association finances are considered to be in a very healthy position, which has been boosted by the new membership numbers, plus the income generated by the journal, but we do need to spend some of this surplus.

The membership was encouraged to put forward proposals for consideration to the forthcoming Calls for the following suggested initiatives:

* Collaborative research project(s) with BAJS and JFEC;
* Research projects with Japanese studies evidenced research in the UK;
* General research projects.

**7. JAPAN FORUM:**

Dr Gerteis reported on the continuing progress of the journal with the SOAS Editorial team, with a slideshow showing the distribution and global standing of the journal. Subscriptions are always encouraged (especially from Social Sciences), and the members of the editorial team attend international conferences to identify potential contributors. Some special issues are in the pipeline to consolidate topics across the years.

The availability of articles on Open Access (OA) has been under continued discussion with the publishers, and members are asked to encourage their institutions to subscribe to OA, the percentage that have this facility at the moment is quite small.

Members will shortly be given the option of electronic copies of the journal, but printed copies will still be available. The reduction in the number of copies being printed will obviously be reflected in the production charges BAJS pays to the publisher each year.

A central archive set of printed copies will be maintained.

A Call will be circulated to identify a new Editorial Team to take over from SOAS in 2017, with the term of office being increased from 3 to 5 years to allow for a greater degree of continuity within the production processes undertaken by the team.

The Call for Expressions of Interest will have a deadline of mid November 2016,

Council decision due in January 2017.

The President expressed thanks to the SOAS team for their excellent work in increasing the visibility and reputation of the Japan Forum journal.

**8. BAJS JAPAN CHAPTER:**

Dr Seaton was in attendance at the AGM and reported on the activities of the Japan Chapter, which included the October 2015 Symposium on ‘Health & Well-Being in Contemporary Japan’ held in Nagoya, plus the July 2016 mini conference held in Hokkaido on Civil Society, Tourism, Anthropology.

The events have increased attendance numbers and continue to receive positive feedback. Dr Seaton is pleased to advise that he now has other people assisting in the organisation of events and the Japan Chapter plans to run autumn and spring events as usual in the coming year. Autumn event will be in December 2016 in Kyushu, with a Spring 2017 meeting to be announced shortly.

The President thanked Dr Seaton and his colleagues for continuing to promote the Japan Chapter, BAJS would be willing to consider proposals for funding support for these future events.

**9. BAJS REGISTERED ADDRESS AND SECRETARIAT ARRANGEMENTS:**

Since the recent retirement of Mrs Baird from the University of Essex (but not from BAJS), the registered address of BAJS and the Secretariat needs to identify a new institutional home.

In the interim Mrs Baird will continue in the Secretariat role, and also take back the admin tasks which had been undertaken at Leeds by Halima Chen (BAJS email box and applications).

A proposal document with a Call for Expressions of Interest will be issued. Sample models of how this arrangement might work will be provided to enable potential candidate institutions to make a more informed decision.

All admin tasks / division of responsibilities will be reviewed and listed with the Call to provide clarity of commitment.

Drafts to be prepared for mid / late Sept

Call to be prepared for end Sept 2016

Review of potential interest within two weeks of Call.

**10. REPORT FROM JEASC 2016 ORGANISING TEAM:**

Dr Macnaughtan advised that the JEASC SOAS team (thanks to them all, but specifically Dr Griseldis Kirsch and Ms Jane Savory) had hosted 350 delegates over the period of the conference, with 77 panels and 3 plenary sessions, with some papers having to be declined as the programme was full.

No ambassadors had been invited to the conference reception this year, but there were several diignitaries who would be attending the closing reception as guests of the individual associations.

BAJS were thanked for stepping in and basically co-funding the conference as unfortunately there had been some funding shortfalls at the final stages. Dr Macnaughtan thanked everybody for attending and making the event such a huge success, the team would be pleased to receive any comments which could be taken forward to improve the experience in future years.

The President expressed thanks to the JEASC SOAS team for their excellent organization, and to SOAS for hosting the event.

**11. IVAN MORRIS PRIZE:**

Jessica Peet was announced as the winner of the 2014-2015 award.

15 submissions had been received for the 2015-2016 award, these will be judged shortly, and the winner’s name published on the BAJS website.

There was a suggestion that two separate prizes be considered, one for MA, and one for PhD submissions. This was agreed by Mr Peter Cave (IMP Trustees representative).

The deadline for 2017 submissions will remain at June/July, with external examiners being encouraged to identify any potential candidates to the respective institutions for nomination / submission.

**12. CONFERENCES:**

* 2017 One-day BAJS workshop –a further call would be made via the website and mailing list in due course.
* 2017 European Association of Japanese Studies will take place in Lisbon, Portugal.
* 2018 BAJS Conference – a Call will be sent out.   
  Point to note: this will be the 30th anniversary year of Japan Forum / Meiji celebratory year.

**AOB:**

Brendan Giggs introduced himself as the successor to Stephen McEnally at Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation and he advised he was very pleased to be attending his first BAJS conference and to have had the opportunity to network with its members.

The membership welcomed Brendan, and thanked Stephen for all his support to BAJS over the years, also congratulating him on his recent appointment as a JRC Senior Fellow.

Dr Matanle announced that a research meeting has been organized in Sheffield on 8 & 9 December 2016 for new academics who are ex JET programme participants. They have received £2000 of financial support from JETAA towards this event.

On behalf of BAJS, Dr Hood thanked Professor Rose for her work and dedication during her term as BAJS President – and indicated that in his new role he would continue working for the benefit of the membership and the Association.

LB