

A Toast by Ambassador Hayashi

at Japan House London's

Private Viewing of "The Carpenters' Line: Woodworking Heritage in Hida  
Takayama"

on Wednesday, 28 September 2022

Thank you, Mike,

May I start by offering the heartfelt condolences of my wife and myself to all of you here over the passing of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. She certainly played no small role in the development of the cordial relationship which our two countries enjoy today. The attendance of Their Majesties The Emperor and The Empress of Japan at the State Funeral clearly proved such strong ties between us.

It is certainly a great pleasure for my wife and me to be with you all this evening here in person to appreciate the Private Viewing of "The Carpenters' Line: Woodworking Heritage in Hida Takayama", in the presence of those coming all the way from Japan for this exhibition, including Mr Yu Yamada and Mr Tetsuya Ozaki.

The woodworking skills of Hida craftspeople are rightly acclaimed not only in Japan but around the world. In this regard, it seems fitting that artisans from Hida made a round table and chairs for the meeting room of G7 Summit held in Ise-Shima, Japan in May 2016.

Looking again at the photo of these round table and chairs, I am amazed at the magnificent curves, the warmth and user-friendliness of the absence of exposed metal, and the beauty of the wood itself.

And to my surprise, I hear that the technology dates back 1,300 years. I am very interested in how it could have continued to flourish for such a long time since the Nara Period in Japan, during which time the Vikings were invading many parts in England. I am very much looking forward to learning through this exhibition how woodworking techniques have developed and how they have been handed down from craftsperson to craftsperson, with each generation nurturing them for their successors.

Distinguished guests,

Now, let me ask you to join me in a toast. Japan House is kindly offering various kinds of sake from Takayama City, and I am sure there is something for every taste! To the continued development of Hida's woodworking expertise, the success of this exhibition and the health and happiness of everyone taking part in this private viewing today! Cheers! Kampai!

Thank you very much. I hope you enjoy the rest of the evening.