

# Queen Elizabeth II's Birthday Special

## 'Respect and affection' as strong as ever for steadfast monarch

**PAUL MADDEN**  
BRITISH AMBASSADOR TO JAPAN



Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II celebrated her official birthday on June 9 this year, and we will be marking that by hosting the annual Queen's Birthday Party at the British Embassy

Tokyo on June 14, with leaders from the Japanese government, businesses and other fields. At the age of 92, Her Majesty has been Britain's head of state for 66 years.

Many Japanese people have told me how much they enjoyed watching TV coverage of the recent marriage of HRH Prince Harry, the Duke of Sussex and Meghan Markle, the new Duchess of Sussex. At the heart of all the splendid pomp and ceremony were the clearly very happy couple. As one of the preachers put it, "Two young

people fell in love and we all showed up." It must have been an enjoyable few months for Her Majesty, with the birth in April of her latest great-grandchild, Prince Louis, son of the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge.

In April this year, Her Majesty hosted the Commonwealth Heads of Government Meeting in London, which was attended by 46 heads of state and heads of government from 53 Commonwealth countries. The common bonds felt between the member countries, and their respect and affection for the dedicated role that the Queen has played as its head over many decades was obvious.

When Prime Minister Theresa May visited Japan last August, I enjoyed accompanying her on her call on His Majesty Emperor Akihito, to whom she brought greetings from the Queen. The links between the Royal and Imperial families remain strong and vibrant and I am delighted to see that the Imperial family's ties with the U.K. are continuing in the current generation of young family members

studying in the U.K.

May also announced a joint vision statement with Prime Minister Shinzo Abe that set out plans for a real deepening of the U.K.-Japan economic and security partnership. Since then, we have seen significant growth in the depth and intensity of our cooperation in these areas. Three Royal Navy ships will visit Japan this year for joint exercises; an important symbol of the U.K.'s support for Japan's security at a challenging time in the region. New working groups on trade and investment, as well as industrial strategy, are making plans for our ambitious, new bilateral trade relationship with Japan as Britain leaves the European Union. In the meantime, the implementation period gives Japanese companies predictability in the current arrangements through the end of 2020.

500 days into my job as ambassador, I have visited half of Japan's prefectures. In this 150th anniversary year of the Meiji Restoration, I have seen many reminders as I travel around the country of the role that Britain played in supporting Japan's

modernization. Times are very different now, but I am pleased to report that every day I see vibrant examples of successful collaborations between British and Japanese scientists, artists and businesspeople, and flourishing links between our sportsmen and women as they prepare for the

great sporting events Japan will hold over the next couple of years. .

*This content was compiled in collaboration with the embassy. The views expressed here do not necessarily reflect those of the newspaper.*



Queen Elizabeth II receives flowers from well-wishers during a visit to the King George VI Day Centre in Windsor, west of London, on April 12. POOL/VIA GETTY IMAGES



Queen Elizabeth II after the wedding ceremony of Prince Harry and Meghan Markle, the new Duchess of Sussex, at St. George's Chapel in Windsor Castle on May 19. POOL/VIA REUTERS

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