



## Celebrating Japan-CARICOM Friendship Year 2024

### Read Japan Project Handover Ceremony

- Culture, Literature for our future! -

Barbados Museum & Historical Society on March 25, 2024



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Hon. Kirk Humphrey, Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs

H.E. Mrs. Kayoko Fukushima, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados

Ms. Alissandra Cummins, Director of the BMHS

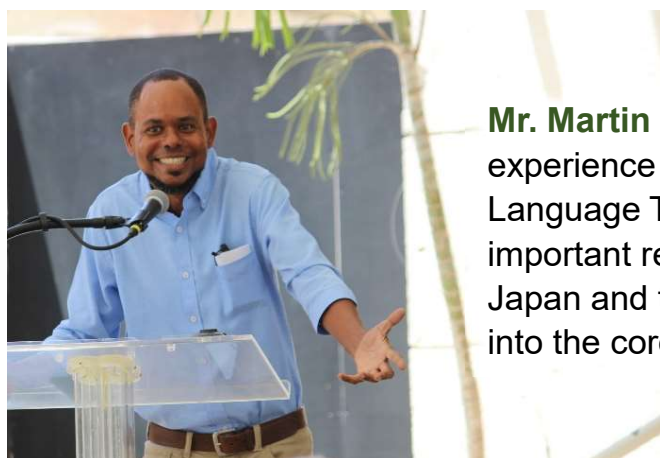
Ms. Harriet Pierce, Librarian of the Shilstone Memorial library, BMHS

On March 25, 2024, the **Barbados Museum & Historical Society (BMHS)**, in partnership with the **Embassy of Japan**, held a handover ceremony for donated books from the **Read Japan Project** at the Barbados Museum and Historical Society's Walled Garden Theatre. This occasion marked the formal presentation of a set of books generously donated to the Shilstone Memorial Library as part of the Read Japan Project, administered by the Tokyo Foundation for Policy Research with financial support from The Nippon Foundation.

Director of the BMHS, **Ms. Alissandra Cummins**, gave the official welcome and opening remarks and expressed her gratitude to Ambassador Kayoko Fukushima for supporting the generous book donation which she is certain "will open the imagination of Barbadians in ways they would not have felt possible just a few years ago." She added that "the selected books would make it possible for all Barbadians to share in the knowledge of a wide variety of compelling cultural expressions, which enrich the Japanese heritage landscape".

During her remarks, Ambassador of Japan to Barbados, **H.E. Mrs. Kayoko Fukushima**, thanked Director Cummins and the museum's staff for collaborating with her Embassy to make the occasion possible and for actively promoting cultural recognition and exchange. Furthermore, she expressed her wish that the donated books would provide invaluable insight of Japan through "the cultural, historical and educational enlightenment activities of the museum, thereby promoting mutual understanding between our peoples and strengthening bilateral relations."

Librarian of the Shilstone Memorial library, **Ms. Harriet Pierce**, expressed her gratitude to the Read Japan Project for its generous donation of the 106 books and added that the acquisition of this comprehensive collection had the potential to deepen the understanding of Barbadians, specifically those preparing to live, work or study in Japan. She stated that the books, which focus on Japanese related content, can be sub-divided into several categories including, history, politics and international relations, society, culture, literature and art.



**Mr. Martin Boyce**, a former Barbadian JET participant, shared his experience of living and working in Japan as an Assistant Language Teacher. He stated that the donated books were an important resource for those seeking a broader perspective of Japan and that the diverse collection would provide useful insight into the core values of Japan.

A brief panel discussion, moderated by **Ms. Kaye Hall**, Education, Community Outreach Officer of the BMHS, followed on the topic “Ikigai”- the power of purpose for longevity, a secret to a long and happy life in Japan. During his contribution, **Major David Clarke**, GA, CVO, ADC, Karate 7th Dan, gave a brief background on karate, informing that it originated in Okinawa and is not only a form of martial arts but comprises an academic aspect. Karate was introduced to Barbados via the UWI, St. Augustine Campus in Trinidad in the early 70s and is based on many scientific principles. He also demonstrated the correct breathing technique used when practicing karate and showed how karate can improve physical strength for longevity. **Ms. Colleen Walcott**, Director of the National Assistance Board, reflected on her recent trip to Japan as a member of the delegation accompanying **Minister Kirk Humphrey** on the APIC invitation programme, and gave her perspective on how “Ikigai” can be applied to the social services to give purpose and improve the quality of life of the beneficiaries. **Ms. Marilyn Rice-Bowen**, President of the Barbados Association of Retired Persons (BARP), shared her hope that the practice of “Ikigai” living life with reason and purpose can be copied from Japan.



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Ms. Kaye Hall, Moderator & Education, Community Outreach Officer of the BMHS

Ms. Marilyn Rice-Bowen, President of BARP

Major David Clarke, GA, CVO, ADC, Karate 7th Dan

Ms. Colleen Walcott, Director of the National Assistance Board



Participatory karate demonstration by Major David Clarke

Coinciding with the ceremony, First Secretary of the Embassy, **Dr. Kikuko Sakai**, in collaboration with **Mr. Winston Farrell**, award winner in the literary arts, and **Mr. Marley Kirton**, musical artist, interpreted Japanese nōh-gaku, a UNESCO's Intangible Cultural Heritage, in an incorporated theatre presentation of spoken words, dance, and music including a Japanese percussion and flute. The nōh story, entitled "Kurama Tengu" from the Japanese classical literature "The Tale of Heike", is compiled from a collection of oral stories recited by a blind monk with a traditional musical instrument called the Biwa.



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Dr. Kikuko Sakai, First Secretary of the Embassy  
Mr. Winston Farrell, award winner in the literary arts  
and Mr. Marley Kirton, musical artist

The presentation was also attended by The Honourable Kirk Humphrey, Minister of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs; Mr. Jehu Wiltshire, Permanent Secretary in the Ministry of People Empowerment and Elder Affairs; Mr. Paul Blackman, Director of the Barbados Language Centre; librarians.