

LETTER FROM THE PRESIDENT AND CHAIRMAN

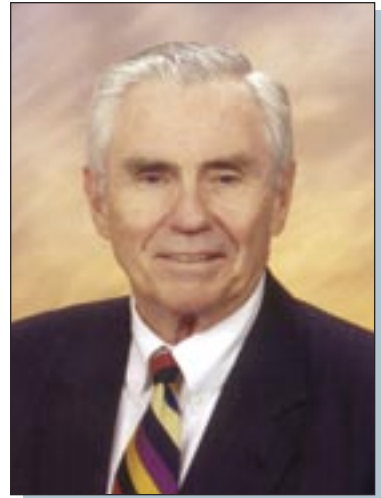
The year 2004 was an especially active and productive one for The Korea Society, as our programmatic activities expanded to reflect the increasing pace of developments on the Korean Peninsula. These activities highlighted all the major trends that emerged during 2004, including South Korea's growing reputation as the most active democracy in Asia, the steady growth of a more diverse and fruitful interaction between Seoul and P'yongyang, and the continuing challenges facing ongoing efforts to resolve through diplomatic means remaining obstacles to the long-term peace and prosperity of the Korean Peninsula and the entire region of Northeast Asia.

At a June meeting in Beijing, the Six-Party Talks initially seemed to hold out the promise of significant progress in dealing with North Korea's nuclear weapons programs, but this hope faded when the talks stalled after P'yongyang refused to return to the table.

I traveled to P'yongyang in August for my third visit to North Korea. On that visit I urged my contacts there to return rapidly to the talks, but found them focused on the upcoming U.S. presidential election. It seemed they clearly hoped the election would result in a "regime change" in Washington. As this did not happen, by year's end, any resolution of this long-standing impasse seemed blocked for the foreseeable future. But this troubling prospect only served to underscore the vital importance of The Korea Society's efforts to promote greater understanding and cooperation between Americans and Koreans, both in the southern and in the northern halves of the Korean Peninsula.

Early in 2004, we began to fully exploit our significantly enlarged floor space, including an audio-visually equipped main meeting room capable of accommodating gatherings of up to 100 guests. We now are able to do all of our programs within our own premises, rather than having to rent or borrow other spaces in different locations. This has markedly strengthened our programmatic activity, both in terms of frequency and attendance. We also now enjoy the advantage of a small but rather elegant gallery space, in which we held a variety of exhibitions during 2004.

The year 2004 was sadly marked by the passing of two of the recent recipients of our Van Fleet Award, General Ray Davis, USMC, and Dr. Horace G. Underwood who was the grandson of the founder of Yonsei University in Seoul. In different ways, both of these outstanding men were unique exemplars of the close ties between Koreans and Americans that were forged in both war and peace during most of the last century. We are all saddened by their deaths, but deeply gratified that The Korea Society was able to make its own small contribution to memorializing their great contributions and the hope they embodied for the future of U.S.-Korea relations.



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Donald P. Gregg".

Donald P. Gregg