



英国北西部日英協会 Japan Society North West



The Meiji Restoration

And the part the British played in making sure it went the way it went

A talk by the prolific, award-winning and best-selling author, Lesley Downer

Friday 17th September 2021 from 7pm

Streaming on Zoom at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/88052434584?pwd=dTBQcW1JRFPFY0ZZNEVXQ1Z2UTVQdz09>

For more information, please email: northwest@jetaa.org.uk

In 1868 the feudalistic shogunate, which had kept Japan set in aspic for 250 years, was toppled by a group of heroic young samurai who brought Japan into the modern world ... Or was it? Is that what really happened? Is this the full and only story? And what was the role of the great powers? Britain was busy empire building across China, India, Central Asia and Africa. Were the British also busy in Japan?

For over a century the story of the so-called 'Meiji Restoration' and the events that preceded it has been as told by the winners. But recent studies have shed new light on the vanquished. What is the true story - and what was the British role in shaping Japan's destiny?

In her talk Lesley Downer will describe the dramatic events that led up the Meiji Restoration and its far-reaching consequences. It is a swashbuckling tale of swords, samurai and regime change - and the pivotal role of the British.

Lesley Downer first went to Japan on the very first year of the Wolfers Scheme, which later became known as the JET Programme. She lived in Gifu City for two years, followed by many more years in Japan. She spent some 15 years researching and writing the *Shogun Quartet*, four novels set in the crucial years between the arrival of Commodore Perry and the Meiji Restoration, and discovered that the true story is a lot more complicated.

For more see www.lesleydowner.com

