

# ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會  
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

24 October 2000

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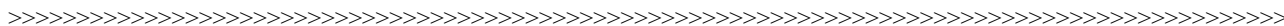
**Dates for Your Calendar**

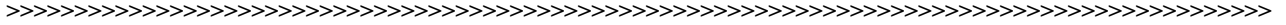
Friday 27 October	City Hall Lecture
<i>Awards to Britons in the Service to China</i> David Mahoney	
Friday 10 November	City Hall Lecture
<i>George Smith, Iconoclast Bishop, (1815-1871)</i> Dr. Gillian Bickley and Dr. Verner Bickley	
Saturday 18 November	Local Visit
<b>The Police Museum</b>	
Friday 24 November	City Hall Lecture
<b>The Life and Times of Charles Henry Brewitt-Taylor 1857-1938</b> Dr. Cyril Cannon	
Saturday 9 December	One Day Conference
<b>Hong Kong: Forty Years of a Growing City</b>	
22-29 January	Overseas Visit
<b>Goa: Former Portuguese Enclave in India</b>	

Many thanks to all members who returned the questionnaires which were included with the last newsletter. A full report of the survey results is included in the *Of Interest to Members* Section of this newsletter. Please note that **from 1 November 2000, all City Hall Lectures will begin at 6:15pm**, since the general opinion is that 6:00pm is a bit early for many people. This is the latest time we are able to begin, as the hall is available only until 7:30pm. The City Hall Lectures are proving extremely popular, with a record turn-out at Professor Puay Peng Ho's recent talk about the Chi Lin Nunnery. The visit that he led to the nunnery the next day was over-subscribed, and as that seems to be the trend, we are finding it necessary to limit some visits to members only, with non-members accepted on a space-available basis.

Once again the Activities Committee has arranged an interesting programme for the autumn, and our special committee, headed by Dr. Elizabeth Sinn and Dr. Joseph Ting has planned what promises to be a fascinating one-day conference at the Museum of History, in celebration of the Society's 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary. We hope to see a good turn-out for the conference, offered without charge except for an optional lunch.

All who participated in our recent visit to Central Vietnam, led by Dr. Patrick Hase, report that it was a great success. Places visited included Hue, Danang, and some sites formerly occupied by the Cham people. Patrick is planning another visit for members, to Goa, India, over the Chinese New Year. Cost of the visit is approximately HKD13,000, and interested members are encouraged to contact Patrick as soon as possible, as he must make the booking early, since that is a busy time of the year for hotels and airlines. Read on for details of this and other activities





City Hall Lecture

Friday 27 October

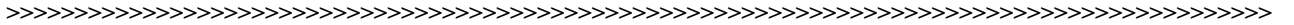
*Awards to Britons in the Service to China*

- Speaker:** Mr. David Mahoney
- Time:** 6:00pm
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall High Block, Edinburgh Place, Central
- Cost:** The lecture is free and it is open to the public.
- Booking:** No Booking is required.

Since the arrival of Britons in China to conduct trade, build railways, carry out missionary and welfare work and enter the service of the Chinese Government and councils of the Treaty Ports, medals were awarded for gallantry, life saving, and long service. The awards to Shanghai Volunteers, Hong Kong Policemen, Yangtse River Pilots, Chinese Customs Officers and to those serving in various other capacities, provide a fascinating historical and artistic record of expatriate life in, and service to, China.

David Mahoney has been collecting medals for over 50 years since, as a schoolboy, he inherited his grandfather's WW1 medals. David first came to HK in 1964 with the Crown Lands Survey Office, and joined Swire Properties in 1973, looking after Taikoo Shing and their other properties in Quarry Bay. He retired in 1993. Now, in addition to attending sales and conducting research around the UK, David serves on the committees of the British Association of Cemeteries in South Asia, the Orders and Medals Research Society, Hong Kong Society, and has recently joined the UK Friends of the HK RAS.

(Repeated from last newsletter)



City Hall Lecture

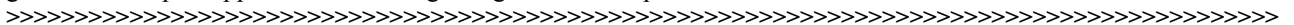
Friday 10 November

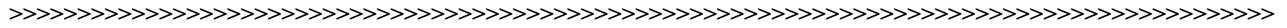
*George Smith (1815-1871)*  
*Iconoclast Bishop who Established the See of Victoria and Founded St Paul's College*

- Speaker:** Dr. Gillian Bickley and Dr. Verner Bickley
- Time:** 6:15pm-New time, don't forget!
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall High Block, Edinburgh Place, Central
- Cost:** The lecture is free and it is open to the public.
- Booking:** No Booking is required.

Bishop Smith? Wasn't he the man who broke the statues at a Chinese temple with his umbrella? Yes, he was, and this is the reason why Dr. Gillian and Dr. Verner Bickley joined the RASHKB trip to Ningpo, Chusan, and Putuoshan, some time ago, to try to find the temple where this happened! The story gives a false impression of the man, however. The initial breakage was an accident. George Smith was sensitive, courteous, adventurous and dedicated, valuing affection. Early inspired with missionary zeal, his health confined him reluctantly to a base in (then) small-town Hong Kong. He still made missionary forays to China, however, resulting in an early death. He also visited India, Japan, and Australia on missionary assignments, recording his impressions in still obtainable essays and books. His wife, Lydia Brandram, born into the evangelical hierarchy, was admired in Hong Kong as a lady and for her sterling work manning the fort while the bishop was away. The talk will introduce Bishop Smith's life and work, illustrated with old and new pictures, including some taken this summer.

Gillian and Verner Bickley, both Life Members of the Society, have a total of forty-seven years' residence in Hong Kong between them. Following service as founding Director of the Institute of Language in Education (now incorporated into the Institute of Education) and Assistant Director of Education, Verner is now an educational consultant in Hong Kong. Gillian continues as Associate Professor in the Department of English Language and Literature at Hong Kong Baptist University. In their talk, they draw on new research on the geography of George Smith, first Bishop of Victoria (Hong Kong) on which Gillian will base a commissioned contribution to the prestigious New Dictionary of National Biography. Gillian's book: The Golden Needle: The Biography of Frederick Stewart (1836-1889) will be known to many members. Verner's forthcoming book, Searching for Frederick, has recently been given the stamp of approval of the Hong Kong Arts Development Council.





**Local Visit**

**Saturday, 18 November**

**The Police Museum**

The Police Museum, scenically situated in the former Wanchai Gap Police Station on Coombe Road, The Peak, is one of Hong Kong’s lesser known-yet very interesting-small thematic museums. The Curator, Mr. Wong Nai Kwan, will give us a guided tour of the Museum and its exhibits, and describe in detail the fascinating and little-known history of the Hong Kong Police along the way.

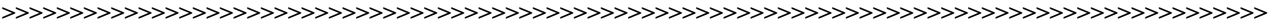
Members must find their own way to the Museum. Bus No. 15 from HK Star Ferry is probably the best public transport option, and the stop for the Police Museum is clearly signposted. There is limited parking.

**Meeting Place:** We will assemble in the car park below the Police Museum on Coombe Road.

**Time:** Assemble at 2:15pm. The visit will last from 2:30pm until 5:00pm.

**Cost:** HKD80 Members, HKD100, Non-members.

**Note: Because of the large response to recent visits, and the size of this venue, we will have to limit numbers to RASHKB Members. Non-members’ applications will be accepted on a space-available basis.**



**City Hall Lecture**

**Friday 24 November**

***The Life and Times of Charles Henry Brewitt-Taylor, 1857-1938***

**Speaker:** Dr. Cyril Cannon

**Time:** 6:15pm

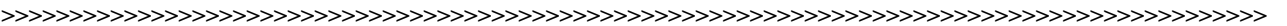
**Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8<sup>th</sup> Floor, City Hall High Block, Edinburgh Place, Central

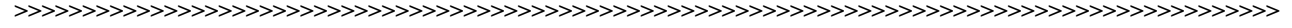
**Cost:** The lecture is free and it is open to the public.

**Booking:** No Booking is required.

Very little has been known about the life of Charles Henry Brewitt-Taylor who worked in China from 1880 to 1920. His name is most familiar as that of the first person to translate into English the whole of the Chinese classical novel, The Romance of the Three Kingdoms. He initially went to China to teach mathematics and navigation, then entered the Chinese Maritime Customs, eventually becoming a Commissioner for Customs, holding posts in various parts of China until his retirement.

Dr. I.C. Cannon worked in Hong Kong for a number of years. Originally a sociologist, he moved into academic planning in higher education in the U.K. He was appointed founding Associate Director responsible for Academic Planning at the then City Polytechnic of Hong Kong (1984-1988), and then became Academic Consultant to the then Lingnan College (1990-1994).





**One Day Conference**

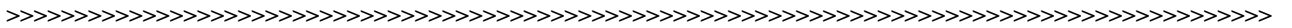
**Saturday 9 December**

**Hong Kong: Forty Years of a Growing City**

Jointly held with the Hong Kong Museum of History, this one day conference will celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch. During the morning Dr. Patrick Hase will give a talk, *Shatin: From Village to City*, and we will view a film, circa 1960, *Report on Hong Kong*. During the afternoon session, Rev. Carl Smith will tell us about his Hong Kong research in a talk entitled, *Forty Years of Research on Hong Kong*, and Mr. Ko Tim Keung will give a slide presentation, *Living in Hong Kong, 1960-1980*. The Centre of Asian Studies of the University of Hong Kong has provided a documentary film on the Western District in the 1970's.

There is no charge for the conference. There will be an optional Chinese lunch at a nearby hotel restaurant. A booking form for the lunch is on the last page of this newsletter.

- Venue:** The Hong Kong Museum of History, 100 Chatham Road South, Tsimshatsui East, Kowloon (adjacent to the Science Museum, please enter through the side entrance on Chatham Road)
- Time:** Morning Session: 9:30-12:00, Afternoon Session: 2:00-5:00
- Cost:** There is no cost for the Conference. The Optional lunch is HKD200.



**Overseas Visit**

**22-29 January**

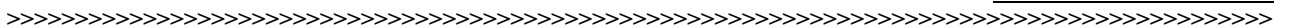
**Goa: Former Portuguese Enclave in India**

Dr. Patrick Hase is endeavouring to plan this visit, scheduled over the Chinese New Year, to Goa, India, where Portuguese 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> Century influence is visible through architecture of the churches and stately homes that remain from that period. Where in Macau during the same period, the Portuguese left a lasting legacy in the mixture of their culture with the Chinese, in Goa the same is everywhere evident, but in that case the mix is Hindu/Portuguese. Portuguese influence on the Goan culture, in the form of cuisine, attitudes, and religion of the people is evident to this day.

Our group will visit, among other spots, the city once known as 'the Rome of the Orient', Goa Dairada, home to the largest Cathedral in Asia, the Renaissance Se Cathedral, completed in 1619, in which lies the font (a vessel of Hindu origin), from which large numbers were baptised into Christianity by St. Francis Xavier, during the 16<sup>th</sup> Century. St. Francis Xavier's remains are enshrined in the nearby Baroque Basilica Bom Jesus, having been returned to Goa from their original internment place in China, on St. John's Island near Hong Kong, where he died in his lifelong quest for more converts. A portion of St. Francis Xavier's mortal remains were once housed in the Church in Coloane, Macau.

In addition to the historical nature of the visit, Goa is the Indian 'Shangrila', with over 100 miles of unsullied white sand beaches. We will visit country markets and villages of the area, and we will also stop in Bombay. Because of the timing of this venture, we request that you contact Patrick for full details of the visit as soon as possible if you are interested in joining.

- Cost:** HKD13,000, Members; HKD 13,800 Non-members; single supplement to be advised. A Non refundable (provided we have enough interested members) deposit of HKD 3000 will be requested in due course.



## **RAS Business**

### **Did you return your Questionnaire?**

Of the 552 questionnaires sent out in August 2000, only 112, 20% of those sent, (percentages have been rounded) were returned. We have to assume members who did not return them are generally satisfied with RAS activities although this may not necessarily be so. Of our respondents, 73% are aged between 40 and 60: 60% live on HK Island, 11% in Kowloon and 28% in NT: 31% expect to leave HK within five years: and 42% are also members of other similar societies. Perhaps more attention should be paid to joint functions?

The fact that 90% of respondents rated our activities as 'excellent', 'good' or 'reasonable/about right' seems to indicate the RAS is on the right track. There were, of course, a small number of caustic remarks and one or two said a change of direction was necessary. That direction was not, however, specified by anyone. Regarding functions which are combined with social gathering: 18% of the respondents said they would attend regularly, 66% occasionally and 14% never. Three-quarters were in favour of social functions taking the form of drinks followed by a lecture or activity, followed by a meal or something similar. We have already organised some such activities.

Regarding venues: 49% preferred Hong Kong Island and 39% had no preference (11% did not answer the question). Some requests were received for a later starting time for lectures, ie. later than 6.00 pm. With 52% in favour of weekend regional trips and 33% against (13% had 'yes' or 'no' with caveats) these should be further considered. Again, 53% were in favour of our Branch focusing more on the Asian region, as opposed to Hong Kong, with 34% against and 12% having no opinion. This year we have visited Vietnam and Guangdong Province. Responding members indicated a strong preference for European food and other Asian food, as opposed to Chinese food.

In sum then it seems, from the disappointing 20% return of questionnaires, that as far as can be ascertained we are on the right lines. We shall pay attention to the many suggestions received in the returned questionnaires and try out and/or implement some of them at appropriate times. Should you wish to raise anything further or to assist in any way please make your views known to a member of Council. Council members will in future wear name badges at the activities so that they can be readily identified.

### **RASHKB Library**

Our branch has a splendid library which includes a large number of valuable books many of which are kept under lock and key. Members of the general public are welcome to refer to the books within the library itself. Only RAS members may borrow books, and to do so, they must produce their membership cards. This is one of the privileges of being a member of our Society. Very valuable books, however, may only be read in the library itself, even by RAS members.

We stress that you must return all the borrowed books by the due dates. Several members have contributed to building up our library, many by donating rare books. It is therefore disappointing that a small number of members, or past members, have borrowed books and not returned them, and in some cases they have left Hong Kong. We request your full co-operation in this matter.

### **New Assistant Secretary**

Our present, conscientious, helpful, Assistant Secretary, Mrs. Sarah Parnell, will be stepping down as from 1 November and her post will be taken up by Mrs. Mary Painter. Mary and her husband, Allan, have been RASHKB members for a number of years and keen supporters, attending many of our functions. We welcome Mary to the post of Assistant Secretary.

We are pleased that Sarah will continue to be an active member and will, along with Member Moody Tang, among other things, look after and update our new web site, coming soon. We take this opportunity to thank Sarah for all she has done for the Branch, so willingly, over the past three years. In spite of the change, our contact numbers for the RASHKB Office/Assistant Secretary remain the same, T/F 2813 7500.

### **Hong Kong Ghosts**

We recently received a letter from a film production company that is involved in a production entitled Asian Enigma, for Discovery Channel. They wrote, “ The documentary intends to explore a host of Asian myths and legends that will give viewers a deeper understanding of the many rich Asian traditions that exist within this region”. In Hong Kong they will be documenting the traditions of ghosts in the Territory. Do you know any good Hong Kong ghost stories? If so, Contact Dr. Dan Waters, T 8581858, E-Mail: [benefit@netvigator.com](mailto:benefit@netvigator.com).

### **Friends of HK Royal Asiatic Society**

Our Friends are active in the U.K., and upcoming events include a talk by our Past Member, Janice Thorpe, *Hong Kong Revisited*. If you are planning to return to the U.K., please contact our Assistant Secretary for details about joining the Friends group there.

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Advertisements

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**I am looking for a copy of the book, ‘HONG KONG AND ITS EXTERNAL COMMUNICATIONS BEFORE THE BRITISH ARRIVAL’ edited by Lo Hsiang-lin et al and published in Hong Kong by the Institute of Culture in 1963. If any member knows of a copy or wishes to sell a copy, I would be most grateful if they could let me know. I will pay any price within reason! Patricia Lim, Tel. 1987 1700, Fax 2522 7314, E-mail [lims@vol.net](mailto:lims@vol.net).**

**WWW.RAXRLX.COM Have a look at Phillip Bruce’s site if you are interested in the History and Culture of China. Lots of interesting items**

### **Of Interest to Members**

#### **Lunchtime Talk by Sir James Hodge, New British Consul-General**

The recently-appointed Consul-General in Hong Kong, Sir James Hodge, will address a lunch gathering on Friday 24 November at 12:30pm, at the Hong Kong Club. This function is arranged by the Royal Overseas League, jointly with the Royal Society for Asian Affairs. Sir James was, until recently, British Ambassador in Thailand, and worked before that in Peking. The subject of his talk is *Diplomatic Ramblings*. He will be introduced by Sir David-Akers Jones. Royal Asiatic Members are very welcome to attend, and can E-mail Mr. Pail Surtees, Chairman, Royal Over-seas League on [roslhongkong@hotmail.com](mailto:roslhongkong@hotmail.com), or call 2984 2237 to request full details and booking forms.

#### **Lectures at the Chinese University, Department of Anthropology**

Two lectures in English will be taking place in the near future at the University. On 27 October, Larry Witzleben, Department of Music, CUHK, will give a talk entitled, *Music in the Hong Kong Handover Ceremonies: A Community Re-images Itself*. On 24 November K.E. Kuah-Pearce, Department of Sociology, University of Hong Kong, will speak on *The Moral Economy of Ancestor Worship in South China*. The seminars take place from 12:30-2:00 in Room 401, Humanities Building, New Asia College, CHKU, and they are free. For details or to order lunch, E-mail the Department of Anthropology, [anthropology@cuhk.edu.hk](mailto:anthropology@cuhk.edu.hk).

#### **Christie’s Auction**

Christies will hold its autumn auction 29-30 Oct and 1 November at the J.W. Marriott Hotel. Sally Lo, Chairperson of the Cancer Society writes, that as a part of the auction, along with regular items, “ Christie’s Hong Kong Ltd., has generously offered its support by evaluating, photographing and publishing all the items donated by individuals, art galleries and companies in this autumn auction”. Proceeds from the sale of the donated items will contribute to the setting-up of a new Chemotherapy Day Clinic at Queen Mary Hospital. For details of the auction and a list of donated items, contact 2521 5396, website, [www.christies.com](http://www.christies.com).

#### **Sotheby’s Auctions-Asia Week, Hong Kong**

Just in time for your Christmas shopping, Sotheby’s is holding three days of auctions, on October 29, 30, and 31. Items for sale include classical and modern Chinese paintings, Ming and Qing porcelain, snuff bottles, and ‘magnificent’ jewels and jadeite, in the Shangri-La Ballroom. For details, call 2524 8121 or 2822 8142, web site: [www.sothebys.com](http://www.sothebys.com) .