

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

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13th December, 2000

Council members

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| Dr. Dan Waters, President | Mr. Robert Nield, Hon. Treasurer |
| Rev. Carl Smith, Hon. Vice President | Dr. Patrick Hase, Member |
| Dr. Elizabeth Sinn, Vice President | Mrs. May Holdsworth, Member |
| Dr. Michael Lau, Vice President | Mr. Robert Horsnell, Member |
| Dr. Peter Barker, Hon. Secretary | Mr. Timothy Ko, Member |
| Ms. Julia Chan, Hon. Librarian | Dr. Janet Lee Scott, Member |
| Mrs. Valery Garrett, Hon. Activities Co-ordinator | Dr. Joseph Ting, Member |
| Dr. Peter Halliday, Hon. Editor of Journals | Mrs. Mary Painter, Assistant Secretary |

With the sunny, dry autumn weather and the Christmas holiday approaching, for most of us this is the best time of the year in Hong Kong. Our members enjoyed three interesting talks at City Hall during October and November. On 27th October, David Mahoney talked to us about his extensive collection of medals which were awarded by the Chinese Government to Britons serving in China. The background to each medal gave a fascinating historical insight into the lives of the recipients. David Mahoney is on the Executive Committee of the British Association for Cemeteries in South Asia and if any of you are interested in joining please call Mary Painter on 2813 7500 for information.

On 10th November Drs. Gillian and Verner Bickley gave an interesting talk about Bishop George Smith, the first Bishop of Victoria and founder of St. Paul's College. They described in detail his life in Hong Kong and his extensive travels all over Asia on missionary assignments.

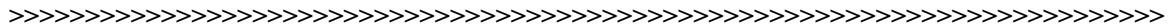
On 24th November Dr. Cyril Cannon gave an insightful talk on the life of Charles Henry Brewitt-Taylor, who worked in China for the whole of his career, firstly as a teacher of mathematics and navigation, then in the Chinese Maritime Customs, eventually becoming a Commissioner for Customs.

On Saturday 18th November members enjoyed a guided visit to the Police Museum at Wanchai Gap Police Station on Coombe Road, which was very informative, explaining the history of their extensive collection of interesting old photographs and memorabilia.

On Saturday 9th December we celebrated our 40 year anniversary of the Hong Kong branch of the Royal Asiatic Society with a one-day Conference at the Hong Kong Museum of History. The lectures and the two films about old Hong Kong were excellent. It was organized in conjunction with the Museum of History and our thanks go to everyone who contributed in any way towards making the function such a success. We hope you enjoyed it and any comments you may have about the conference would be most welcome.

Dates for your Calendar in 2001

| | | |
|------------------------------------|-------------------|---|
| Saturday, 13 th January | Local Visit | Hong Kong Heritage Museum |
| 22nd-29 th January | Overseas Visit | Goa, India |
| Friday 9 th February | City Hall Lecture | Salt Making in Hong Kong by Dr. Patrick Hase |
| Saturday 10 th February | Local Visit | Tai O, Lantau |



Local Visit **Saturday, 13th January, 2001**

An Exhibition from the Forbidden City at the new Hong Kong Heritage Museum

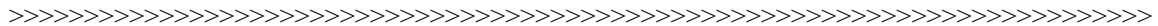
A stunning exhibition from the Palace Museum in Beijing has been assembled for the opening of the new Hong Kong Heritage Museum at Shatin. Its theme, that of Emperor Qianlong's 80th birthday celebrations in 1790, is illustrated by anniversary gifts, costumes and ornaments, utensils used in banquets, and other imperial possessions.

Our visit will be led by May Holdsworth, who has written two books on the Forbidden City, and Valery Garrett, author of several books, including *Chinese Dragon Robes*. There will also be an opportunity to view the permanent exhibition, which includes traditional dress from the New Territories acquired from Valery's collection.

Meeting Place: Northbound exit of Tai Wai KCR station (first stop after Kowloon Tong).
Time: Assemble at 2:00 pm prompt. The visit will last until 5:00 pm.
Cost: \$80 members, \$100 non-members (including spouses).

Questions? Call May Holdsworth on 2818 8425.

Note: **Non-members applications will be accepted on a space-available basis.**



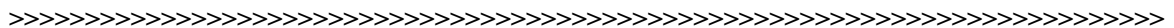
Overseas Visit **22-29 January 2001**

Goa: Former Portuguese Enclave in India

Dr. Patrick Hase is planning this visit, scheduled over the Chinese New Year holiday, to Goa, India, where Portuguese 16th and 17th 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.

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.

We regret that this visit is now fully subscribed.



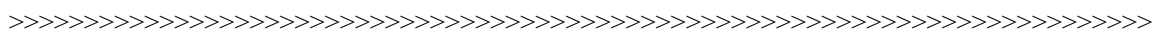
City Hall Lecture

Friday 9th February 2001

Salt Making in Hong Kong

- Speaker:** Dr. Patrick Hase, RAS Council Member
- Time:** 6:15 p.m.
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Edinburgh Place, Central
- Cost:** The lecture is free and is open to the public
- Booking:** No booking is required.

Dr. Patrick Hase, a member of the RASHKB Council, will give a lecture on “Salt-making in Hong Kong”. The manufacture of salt is the oldest recorded industry in the Hong Kong region, probably from more than two thousand years ago. In the nineteenth century there were some 200 acres of salt-fields in today’s New Territories, at Tai O, Sha Tau Kok, Tuen Mun, Shuen Wan and elsewhere. There were at least two or three different methods of salt-making in the area; the relationship and historical development of these differing methods are of the greatest interest, and will be discussed in the lecture. In connection with this lecture, Dr. Hase will lead a visit to the remaining salt-fields at Tai O on Saturday 10th February. (See below).



Local Visit

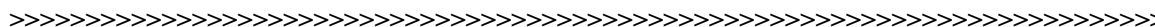
Saturday 10th February, 2001

A visit to Tai O, Lantau

Dr. Patrick Hase will lead a party to visit Tai O, Lantau, on Saturday 10th February. This visit will include the Tung Chung Fort, the Tin Hau and Hau Wong Temples at Tai O, and the remaining parts of Salt-field No. 4 at Tai O. This visit is a follow-up to the lecture being given on “Salt-Making in Hong Kong” on 9th February (see above).

- Meeting Place:** Exit “B”, Tung Chung MTR Station.
- Time:** 1:45 p.m. sharp. Return to Tung Chung at 5:45 p.m.
- Cost:** HK\$100.00 Members; \$150.00 non-Members (including spouses).

Questions? Phone Dr. Hase on 2658 6529.



RAS Business

Our 40th Anniversary

Our 40th Anniversary year, which coincides with the New Millennium, is almost over. As a grand finale we hope you were able to attend our conference, *Hong Kong: Forty Years of a Growing City*, which was held at, and organised in conjunction with, the Hong Kong Museum of History on the 9th December. Our thanks go out to the many people involved in helping to organise and to those who attended this Conference. It was a fitting climax to our Anniversary Year. Thank you if you have assisted in any way.

The special Anniversary Edition of our Annual Journal is about to be published and will be sent out to all fully paid up members soon. Consisting of 410 pages, it contains many scholarly articles and other information. Congratulations to the Honorary Editor, Dr Peter Halliday, on whom a doctoral degree was recently conferred by the University of Hong Kong. We welcome your comments on this anniversary edition of our Journal. In turn, if you would like to contribute to a future edition you are welcome to do so.

Subscription Renewal

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find either a renewal form (if you pay your membership subscription annually) or a confirmation form (if you are a Life member). We should be most grateful if you would kindly complete these forms and return them to us as soon as possible so that we can update our record of your membership. (Please remember to enclose your cheque for your subscription if you are an Annual Member). There are quite a few members who haven’t paid their subscriptions for 2000 yet – please pay two together if you wish to continue your membership.

New members

As a form of community service our lectures, most of which are held at the City Hall, are open to the general public free of charge. Thus, with a total membership of over 600 and non-members attending too, we are sorry we are not always able to recognise all new members. They are therefore requested when they attend functions to please make themselves known to Council members who now wear name badges. As new members of our Branch may we extend a specially warm welcome to every one of you! We hope you find our activities interesting and that you become involved.

Tracing past members

Can anyone please inform us how we can contact the following past RASHKB members:

M Garrison who was a member in the mid 1990s
D J Wilmshurst who was a member around 1990
L A Deana who was a member in the mid 1980s

Any help will be appreciated. Please contact Dr. Dan Waters (T) 2858 1858.

RASHKB website

Our new web site, thanks to web master Moody Tang and Sarah Parnell, is up and running at:

www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

This contains a wealth of information. Comments are welcome.

Postmortem lunch

Participants in the splendid RAS tour to central Vietnam, organised and led by Dr Patrick Hase, recently met for a dim sum lunch during which photographs were swapped and recollections recounted. The lunch was organised by new RAS member Crystal Tang who, together with Gaye Plunkett, is writing up an account of the tour for a future article for our RAS Journal.

Dissertation and video presentation

Ms Eve Lam, a Masters degree student in journalism at the University of Hong Kong, is researching and writing up the role of the RASHKB. To compliment this she will also prepare a video presentation. She will later present a copy of this to our Branch for our archives. You will probably meet her in action at one of our functions.

Tai Fu Tai

Our RAS Volunteers, who assist the Antiquities and Monuments Office, will commence work early in 2001 restoring the front garden at Tai Fu Tai, at San Tin, to its original state. If you would like to be involved in this interesting project please inform Dr Dan Waters on (T) 2858 1858.

The invention of the fax machine

We know that such present day 'necessities' as paper, the process of printing and the compass were first invented in China and, later, 're-invented' in the West. Now our Council Member, Dr Joseph Ting, Chief Curator of the Museum of History, has received an inquiry "as to how likely it was for a 'fax machine' to have appeared in China as long ago as 1861?"

If you have an answer or are interested in further details please contact Dr Ting on (T) 2724 9010. In connection with the above you may be interested in the following web site:

<http://library.thinkquest.org/27887/gather/history/fax.shtml>

What is a Customs Tide-Waiter?

At our talk on 24th November, about the life and times of Charles Brewitt-Taylor, a member of the audience asked the captioned question. No-one knew the answer. Do you? If not, turn to page 5.

The Chinese Labour Corps in World War One

Mr. B. C. Fawcett, one of our overseas members, is researching the above Corps which served on the Western Front. He is looking for additional sources or any other useful information. He knows about the book *China on the Western Front* by Michael Summerskill; also *The Chinese Labour Corps in the First World War* by Dan Waters, RASHKB Journal Vol. 35. But are you able to assist him further in any way? If you can, you may write to him direct at Holly Cottage, 228 Dover Road, Walmer, Deal, Kent, ET14 7NE, U.K. Alternatively, you may telephone Dr. Dan Waters on 2858 1858.

The RAS Library

RAS members are entitled to borrow books from our extensive library, which is located at the City Hall Library, Reference Library, 9th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central. Entrance is on the 10th floor, then walk down one floor. Our library is located in a room behind the enquiry desk, at which you need to show your RAS membership card. Opening hours are Mon-Thurs 10-7pm; Fri 10-9pm; Sat & Sun 10-5pm and closed on public holidays.

Friends of the RASHK Branch in the UK

Our 80 or so "Friends" in the UK meet regularly, usually in London, and their next gathering will be a Chinese New Year lunch on Saturday 27th January, 2001 at 12 noon at the China City Restaurant in Lisle Street, London. For information or booking please contact Anita Wilson by e-mail on anitaw@euphony.net or telephone 020 8940 7408. There will shortly be details of their activities included in our website.

Answer to question on page 4.

Dr. Cyril Cannon, the speaker at the lecture, has written to say : 'a "customs tide-waiter" was a customs official who boarded boats when they came into shore – originally they would have waited on the tide bringing the boat in, hence the name'.

Of Interest to Members

The Hong Kong Natural History Society

Membership of the Hong Kong Natural History Society is open to anyone with an interest in the Hong Kong countryside. The Society organises monthly outings which consist of hikes in the winter months and boat trips to the remoter islands during the summer months. Most outings take place on a Sunday and have leaders who will guide the party and point out items of interest. Memoirs are published from time to time which are available to members and there is a small library of natural history books that members can access. Membership is only \$100 for a year for an individual or \$150 for a couple. Further details may be obtained by e-mail from dingle@hkstar.com or by phone at 2993-3330 or fax at 2993-7709.

The Department of Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

On January 5th, 2001, Mette Thun (Assistant Professor in Chinese, Department of Asian Studies, Copenhagen University) will give a talk entitled "Global Movements and Local Significance : Emigration from two Northern Fujian Villages in the 1990s".

The Future of Hong Kong's Education System

Have you wondered about all the changes planned for the education system in Hong Kong? Here is your chance to find out more about them, and to ask questions of one of the chief planners.

The Royal Over-Seas League's lunchtime speaker on Friday 12th January 2001 is Anthony Tong, the Deputy Director of Education at the Hong Kong S.A.R. Education Dept. He will speak about the far-reaching changes planned for Hong Kong's education system. Mr. Tong will be introduced by the Director of the British Council, Mr. Desmond Lauder, and the vote of thanks will be proposed by Brigadier Christopher Hammerbeck, the head of the British Chamber of Commerce. Royal Asiatic Society members are welcome as guests. A three-course lunch at the Hong Kong Club in Central, with wine or soft drinks, plus tea or coffee, is included in the \$350 price. The time will be 12.30 for 12.45 p.m., and the lunch will finish by about 2 p.m. If you would like to book places for this for yourself and your friends, send an e/mail with your postal address to roslhongkong@hotmail.com. An invitation will be posted to you, along with a booking form. Alternatively, please call 2984 2237 to give your postal address.

Friends of the Art Museum, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

There are currently two special exhibitions being held at the Chinese University Art Museum at Shatin. *Ancient Chinese Gold Ornaments* from the Collections of Chengxuntang, the Kwan Collection and Mengdiexuan which runs until February 2001; and *The Wong Gift : Chinese Painting and Calligraphy* which runs until March 2001.

The School of Continuing Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong

The following courses are included in the Spring prospectus of the School of Continuing Studies of the Chinese University of Hong Kong. Lao Zi : An Interpretation of the Text and an Assessment of Its Contemporary Significance; The Book of Changes : A Pictorial Presentation and Guided Reading of the Text That Helps One to Solve Problems and Live a Happier Life; An Interpretation of the I Ching as a

Method for Predicting and Handling Difficult Situations to One's Best Advantage; I Ching as a Source of Wisdom and a Guide for Self-cultivation in Modern Living; The Relevance of I Ching to Traditional & Modern Arts and Sciences.

The prospectus will be available in early January 2001 but enrolment is starting now. Contact Mr. So 2209 0240 during office hours for information or enrolment. Note: these courses will be conducted in Cantonese.

Hong Kong Museum of Art

From January 19th until April 15th, 2001 there will be an exhibition of Buddhist Sculptures from Shandong.

Film Festival

A free Anthropology Film Festival will be held on Sunday, February 11th, 2001 from 1:30 to 5:30 p.m. at City University, jointly sponsored by the Hong Kong Anthropological Society and the Chinese Civilization Centre of City University. Four films will be shown: 1) "Dongba He," about Dongba shamans in Lijiang, Yunnan (32 minutes, Chinese with English subtitles); 2) "Marriage," on contemporary wedding customs in Southwestern China (one hour, Chinese with English subtitles); 3) "Taking Pictures," a film about filmmakers working in Papua New Guinea (56 minutes, English); 4) "A Life for a Life," a real-life murder mystery from *Shanghai Vice* (51 minutes, English and Chinese with English subtitles). Venue: Wei Hing Theatre, Floor 6, Amenities Building (Lift 13), City University. Directions: MTR/KCR to Kowloon Tong, Exit C to City University. For further information, contact Mary Erbaugh at City University (2788-7586, ctmerba@cityu.edu.hk), Larry Witzleben at the Chinese University (2603-7333, jlwitzleben@cuhk.edu.hk), or John Dolfin (jd3@amrop.com.hk).

Recent Publications

The Textile Society of Hong Kong have recently published their second edition of *The Guide to Asian Textile Collections*. For information contact the society at GPO Box 7533, Hong Kong or email info@textilesocietyofhk.org. Their website address is <http://www.textilesocietyofhk.org/>.

China Chic by Vivienne Tam

One of today's hottest fashion designers, Ms. Vivienne Tam celebrates Chinese style with her new book *China Chic*, a wonderfully narrated and beautifully illustrated personal journal of discovery. Knowing that fashion is only one element of style, Ms. Tam explores the expression of style through Chinese customs and myths, art and architecture, opera and theatre, film and furniture, décor and decorum. Vivienne Tam was born in Guangzhou, China and moved to Hong Kong at the age of three. She was a student of our Council Member Valery Garrett at the Hong Kong Polytechnic in the late 1970s. Her signature East-meets-West style has formed part of the permanent archives in the Museum at the Fashion Institute of Technology, the Costume Institute at the Metropolitan Museum of Art in New York, the Andy Warhol Museum in Pittsburgh, and the Victoria and Albert Museum in London. She currently lives in New York City. *China Chic* is on sale at the Hong Kong Book Centre, Swindon Book Company and Kelly & Walsh bookshops.

Advertising in the RAS Newsletter

In an effort to defray newsletter costs, we are accepting ads that would be of interest to RAS members. Would you like to advertise a business or a service you can provide, or do you know someone who might be interested? Our rates are very reasonable: Full Page HK\$1,150.00; 2/3 Page HK\$850.00; 1/2 Page HK\$725.00, 1/3 Page HK\$450.00. If you have a short ad and would like to pay according to the number of words in the ad, you may do so at the following rates: first 10 words: \$70.00; each additional word: \$2.50.

RAS Publications

In the Heart of the Metropolis: Yaumatei and Its People

We have received the following testimonial regarding our newest publication: 'It's another magnificent production. It's a super little subject, both for the text and for the visuals. The photographs are very strong. All human life is there.' Have you bought your copy yet? It makes an ideal Christmas present! RASHKB Members are being offered a substantial discount off the published price (HK\$ 275 instead of HK\$ 380), but only while our present stock lasts. Note: there is a further discount if you order both this and the "Villages" book as a set.

Beyond the Metropolis: Villages in Hong Kong

Due to the high demand, this lovely publication, a companion book for In the Heart of the Metropolis: Yaumatei and Its People, has been republished. Note: there is a discount if you order both this and the "Yaumatei" book as a set.

Hong Kong Going and Gone

A nostalgic collection of photographs of the old Hong Kong which is fast disappearing today.

Some Traditional Chinese Ideas and Conceptions in Hong Kong Social Life Today

We are offering this reprinted publication from a symposium held in October 1966 at a very special price of just \$70.00, while stocks last.