

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, HONG KONG BRANCH

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9th February, 2001

Council members

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

Kung Hei Fat Choi to all our members. Chinese New Year was typically cool and cloudy but always a welcome break from work. 32 RAS members took off for warmer climes in India – see below.

On Saturday 13th January a group of members spent a very interesting afternoon at Hong Kong's new Heritage Museum at Tai Wai, Shatin. To coincide with the opening of the museum, a special exhibition has been assembled from the Palace Museum in Beijing on Emperor Qianlong's 80th birthday celebrations in 1790. We enjoyed a guided tour of the special exhibition led by Valery Garrett and May Holdsworth, two Council members with extensive knowledge of the Forbidden City and Chinese costume. For those members who were unable to attend, we recommend a visit while this exhibition is on show, until March 15th. The museum is very interesting and includes galleries on the history of the New Territories, Cantonese Opera, etc.

At Chinese New Year a group of 32 members visited India to explore the Portuguese history in Goa. There was a brief stopover in Bombay in each direction which enabled us to get a good impression of the city, and included a boat trip to Elephanta Island to see the ancient caves and associated Hindu temple carvings. We had excellent local guides in Goa and Bombay who managed to show us a great deal of interest in a few days. The highlight of the trip were the beautiful old Roman Catholic cathedrals and churches in Old Goa which were magnificent. When driving around Goa, it was interesting to see the Portuguese style houses with their deep verandahs. The beaches are inviting and popular with British tourists. The people were polite and helpful and as everyone spoke English it was easy to communicate with them, even in the markets. Thanks to Dr. Patrick Hase for his efficient organization of an interesting trip.

The HKU Libraries Web Site

The Hong Kong University Main Library has been kind enough to allow us to put our RAS Journals on their web site. The content pages and selected articles have been scanned but only after approval has been given by all contributors concerned. A search mechanism is built into the web site. As soon as the operation is completed you will be informed of the address of the web site. From now on, all contributors to our Journal will be required to sign an undertaking that they agree to their work being published both in hard copy form (for our Journal) or electronically.

The RASHKB Group of Friends in UK now on our web site

A piece about the Friends has now been included on our RASHKB web site, the address of which is www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk. Please make sure you view our site regularly for updated information. For instance, our latest Newsletter appears on our web page. Comments are welcome.

Our 60 or so "Friends" in the UK meet regularly, usually in London, and their last gathering was a Chinese New Year lunch on Saturday 27th January, 2001 at the China City Restaurant in Lisle Street, London which was a great success. For information please contact Paul Bolding by e-mail on pbolding@bigfoot.com or look on our web site. Our Assistant Secretary Mary Painter has application forms available for any members about to return to the U.K. who are interested in joining the "Friends" in U.K. Please call her on 2813 7500. Alternatively, there is an application form on our web site.

Affiliation privileges

All Hong Kong RAS members when visiting London are entitled to use the library and attend ordinary meetings of the Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland at 60 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AF. You are advised to inform them in advance that you will be coming. Their web site address is: www.royalasiaticsociety.co.uk

Hong Kong's clockmaker

Via RAS member Lorna Christofis, we have received an inquiry from a Dr Hansell in the UK. He recently bought a 19th century travelling clock made in Hong Kong by Douglas Lapraik. Dr Hansell is keen to find out more information about this colourful and versatile personality. We have already sent some information to Dr Hansell but any material any member can send him would be gratefully received. He may be contacted at 5 Lansdowne Place East, Bath, England or e-mail peter.hansell@email.msn.com. Any queries contact Dr Dan Waters on 2858 1858.

RASHKB Library

We are all very proud of our Library which is on permanent loan to the City Hall. In May, this will be moved to the new Central Library building at Causeway Bay. We are sorry to say that, in the past, a few of our members have borrowed books and have failed to return them. This has made a considerable amount of extra work for some Council members to try and locate books and, in some cases, even locate past members. We ask you, please, if you do utilise the privilege of borrowing books from our Library, to conform to the rules and treat our books with care and return them on time. Our library is located at the City Hall Reference Library, 9th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central. Entrance is on the 10th floor, then walk down one floor. Go to the enquiry desk where 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.

The Late Patricia Loseby

We are sad to report the passing of Miss Patricia Loseby, long-time Hong Kong resident and long-time RASHKB member. She died peacefully in England. Pat was, it is understood, the first woman solicitor to have practised law in Hong Kong. As a child she knew Ho Chi-Minh who came to their house to see Pat's father. He served as Ho's solicitor in the 1930s when Ho was in exile in Hong Kong. May Pat rest in peace. She will be missed by all who remember her.

Subscription Renewals

Thank you to all members who returned our renewal/confirmation forms and paid their 2001 subscriptions. For those members who pay by banker's order, we would still like you to return the form to us, so that we can update our new database with your correct details. In particular, we would like to have your e-mail address, for those members who are happy to receive newsletters by e-mail, as this will save us considerable cost. Many thanks. For those members who have not yet renewed, please do so as soon as possible so we can update your membership record.

Annual General Meeting and Dinner

Our Annual General Meeting will be held on Friday 16th March in the Harcourt Suite of the Hong Kong Club. This will be followed by an Extraordinary General Meeting and then a buffet dinner. Details of this important event are included separately in this packet. Please note that the booking deadline for the dinner is 9th March and for nominations 3rd March, 2001. We do hope as many members as possible will attend this evening which is an important event in the RASHKB calendar and always a very enjoyable evening.

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. With a total membership of over 500 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
L A Deane who was a member in the mid 1980s

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

Tai Fu Tai

Our RAS Volunteers, who assist the Antiquities and Monuments Office, commenced 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.

Of Interest to Members

The Da Qin Project: The Discovery of the Oldest Christian Site in China

The Asia Society are organizing a dinner and slide presentation with Martin Palmer, Secretary General, Alliance of Religions and Conservation

Friday, February 23, 2001

The American Club, Central, 47/F, Columbia and Oregon Rooms

Cocktails at 7:00 p.m., Dinner at 7:30 p.m., Close at 10:00 p.m.

HK\$450 Asia Society members

HK\$500 non-members

In 1998 the remains of the oldest surviving Christian church, monastery and library in China were discovered near Xian. Founded in 650 AD, Da Qin Pagoda is the only such site ever discovered. Martin Palmer, Secretary General of the Alliance of Religions and Conservation, an organization which brings together nine world religions to work on environmental projects worldwide, will detail how he and his team found the site and the extraordinary discoveries they subsequently made. Using

translations of documents written at Da Qin, Mr. Palmer will explain how Christianity came to China in the 7th century, how it changed as it moved east—drawing upon religious traditions including Buddhism, Hinduism, and Taoism—and how it adapted elements of Tang dynasty literature, architecture, and art. Mr. Palmer has served as a consultant on religion, education, and conservation for many organizations including WWF International, the United Nations, and the World Bank. He has presented numerous television and radio programs and has written over 50 books on Chinese studies and on religion, culture, history, and ecology.

For further details and a booking form, please telephone the Asia Society on tel 2103 9508, fax 2877 5343 or email : hongkong@asiasoc.org. Their web site address is www.asiasociety.org.

Ancients in Profile : Ming and Qing Figure Paintings

In a joint presentation with the Shanghai Museum, the University Museum and Art Gallery of The University of Hong Kong will be exhibiting fifty figure paintings dating to the Ming and Qing dynasties from 24th March to 10th June, 2001.

To coincide with the exhibition, the University Museum has organized a one-day symposium featuring a number of local and international scholars. The symposium will take place at the University on Saturday March 24, 2001 and will include a guided tour of the exhibition. The symposium will be mainly conducted in English. The registration fee is \$200 (\$50 for students). For further information, please contact Ms. Janet Ho on 2241 5513.

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. In December members enjoyed an outing to Sai Kung West Country Park and in January to Pat Sin Leng Country Park. 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 Royal Over-Seas League celebrate Commonwealth Day

The Royal Over-Seas League of Hong Kong are planning a charity fundraiser to celebrate Commonwealth Day on 12th March to which RASHKB members are invited. Enjoy an evening with the Commonwealth Consular Corps at which the Nova choir will perform songs from Commonwealth countries. Cocktail snacks and wines from Commonwealth countries are included in the price. Raffle prizes. All proceeds will be donated to the Save the Children Fund. Venue : Furama Hotel. Tickets available (price \$400) from Save the Children Fund, tel. Janet Chui on 2511 0505.

The Oriental Ceramic Society of Hong Kong

If any members are interested in joining this society, details are obtainable from the OCS at GPO Box 6202, Hong Kong.

Web site for railway enthusiasts

For members interested in railways in general, and railways in China in particular, look at the Hong Kong Railway Society's web page at <http://www.hkrs.org.hk/e/rstrips.htm> to view the reports and photographs of the regular trips undertaken by this group of enthusiasts.

Web site for Asian Arts

<http://www.asianart.com> is an interesting web site for members interested in all kinds of Asian art, exhibitions, associations, galleries, etc. <http://www.ganesha-publishing.com> is a web site for western historical sources on Asia.

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 18th February 2001; and *The Wong Gift : Chinese Painting and Calligraphy* which runs until March 2001.

Department of Anthropology, The Chinese University of Hong Kong

The department are arranging a series of Friday Seminars to take place at 12:30 – 2:00 pm in Room 401, Humanities Building, New Asia College, CUHK:

February 16 Laurel Kendall, Asian Ethnographic Collections Anthropology Dept., American Museum of Natural History – “Gods, Markets, and the I.M.F. in the Korean Spirit World”.

February 23 Li Wai Ku, Dept. of Anthropology, CUHK – “Seeking an Ideal Wife: Why Hong Kong Men Pursue Mainland Chinese Spouses”.

March 23 Ma Fung Shan, Dept. of Anthropology, CUHK – “Western food in China: Globalization and Consumption in a Restaurant in Guangzhou”.

March 30 Chow King Mun, Dept. of Anthropology, CUHK – “Negotiating Modernity: A Study of Changes in Consumption in a Chinese Village”.

(If you would like to order a Chinese lunch or sandwich, please e-mail the Dept. of Anthropology at anthropology@cuhk.edu.hk by 10:00 of the date of the seminar).

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 textilesocietyofhk.org.

Special Heritage and Architecture Walks with Student Heritage Ambassadors

For members with visitors in town and no time to show them around, the Hong Kong Tourist Association has developed three Heritage & Architecture walks, one each for Central, Kowloon and the New Territories. They have student heritage ambassadors who will share aspects of Hong Kong’s culture, people and geography at the HKTA’s Visitor Information and Services Centre in Central, before escorting guests to the various heritage sites where they will offer further explanation. This special programme is being offered until 26th May, 2001. Tours operate each Saturday morning between 9 a.m. and 1 p.m. starting from the HKTA Visitor Information and Services Centre, G/F, The Center, 99 Queen’s Road Central. Phone 2508 1234 for further details and advance bookings. The Heritage and Architecture Walks – Central is offered at a special price of HK\$25 per person during the promotional period. A “Heritage Pack” containing souvenirs will be provided upon registration for the Central walk.

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? 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.

Order Form

I am a member of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch.

*I would like to order.....copies of **In the Heart of the Metropolis: Yaumatei and Its People** at the special members' price of HK\$275.00 per copy plus HKD40.00 postage per volume.*

*I would like to order.....copies of **Beyond the Metropolis: Villages in Hong Kong** at HK\$320.00 plus HK\$40.00 postage per volume.*

*I would like to order..... **two-volume sets** of the above books at HK\$575.00 plus HK\$70.00 postage.*

RAS Journals

Vols 1-23	\$100 each
Vols 24-28	\$150 each
Vols 29-37	\$200 each
Index to Vols 1-10	\$ 50 each
Index to Vols 11-20	\$ 50 each
Set of Journals in print, 1-37, including indexes	\$4,850 per set

Hong Kong, Going and Gone	\$120.00
Some Traditional Chinese Ideas and Conceptions in Hong Kong Social Life Today	\$ 70.00
The Changing Face of Hong Kong (Symposium)	\$ 75.00
The Vegetation of Hong Kong – Structure & Change (Symposium) 1970	\$100.00
The Fauna of Hong Kong (Symposium) 1976	\$100.00
Hong Kong : The Interaction of Traditions & Life in the Towns 1972	\$ 75.00
The New Territories and Its Future (Symposium) 1982	\$ 75.00
Index to Sessional Papers	\$100.00
Aspects of Social Organisation in the New Territories (Symposium) 1964	\$ 75.00

() copies of Journal Volumes

() Others (please specify)

P & P within Hong Kong	HK\$15.00 per volume (except Yaumatei & Villages books)
	HK\$250.00 per full set of Journals
P & P Overseas	HK\$40.00 per volume (except Yaumatei & Villages book)

*I attach my cheque for HK\$.....to include postage, payable to the **Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch**.*

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