

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

Telephone/fax : 2813 7500

e-mail address : membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

web address : www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

20th June, 2001

Council members

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

Members have enjoyed a busy and varied programme recently, with three interesting talks at City Hall and a visit to the batteries at Mount Davis and Pinewood (Lung Fu Shan).

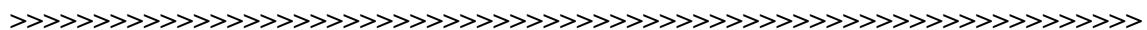
Happy Harun gave a lively and informative talk to an audience of 90 on Friday 4th May. She spoke about the restoration of the Jianfu Gong Garden in the Forbidden City, lost to fire in 1923, and provided a step-by-step account of the reconstruction of the Pavilion of Prolonged Spring. Effectively illustrated by slides, this account showed several traditional elements of Chinese architecture including the unique *dougong* bracket sets and extensive reliance on the mortice and tenon system in wood-frame structures.

On Friday 18th May Dr. Pauline Poon presented a paper based on her well-researched thesis on the role of the Po Leung Kuk and the system of domestic servant girls, "Mui Tsai", which was prevalent in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Girls were sold by their parents to work as servants. In 1901 there were 8,653 Mui Tsai, over 5,000 of whom were under 14 years of age. Abuses of the system and kidnapping of women and children led to the setting up of a well-organised charitable organization, the Po Leung Kuk, which worked in co-ordination with the Tung Wah Group, the Secretary for Chinese Affairs and the Royal Hong Kong Police. Although the Mui Tsai system has been abandoned, there remains a role, even today, for the Po Leung Kuk in 'protecting the innocent'.

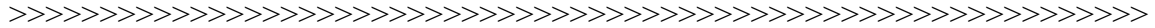
On Saturday 26th May, Council member Tim Ko, co-author of “Ruins of War”, led two groups on a visit to the batteries at Mount Davis and at Pinewood. Tim described how and why the Mount Davis battery, with its five 9.2 inch gun emplacements, was completed in 1912 to defend the western sea lane from attack by European powers. Construction of the Pinewood battery on a flank of Victoria Peak was started in 1903, and it was converted to accommodate two 3 inch anti-aircraft guns in the mid-1920s. Both forts were heavily attacked in December 1941 by the invading Japanese. The visit served also as a prelude to Drs. Gillian and Verner Bickley’s talk on 1st June about the background to Gillian’s recently published book “Hong Kong Invaded? A ’97 Nightmare” and how it came to be written. By coincidence, the visit took place on the day the SCMP reported on a Government planning and development study of Hong Kong Island South and Lamma Island, which includes proposals to develop the Mt. Davis fort into a tourist attraction. The groups combined to enjoy an Indian lunch at the Peak Café, a last chance to enjoy the lovely ambiance before this popular restaurant closed.

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Friday, 3 rd August	City Hall Lecture	150 years of Hong Kong’s water supply
Saturday, 18 th August	Local Visit	Preview visit to Hong Kong Museum of History
Friday, 31 st August	City Hall Lecture	Imagination and Reality in the drawings of William Alexander
Saturday, 15 th September	Local Visit	Visit and tour of the new Central Library
Sept. 28 th – October 3 rd	Overseas Visit	The Palaces of Korea
Friday, 19 th October	City Hall Lecture	Life in Government House
Friday, 26 th October	City Hall Lecture	Portuguese relics in Macau and Goa
Chinese New Year 2002	Overseas Visit	Bhutan – more details in August newsletter



(International Relations), and University of Tokyo (Area Studies, MA). As a researcher, he worked for twelve years at Toyo Bunko Research Department (Morrison Collection) compiling prints/drawings/watercolours and old photos to update their catalogue first published in 1924. The result of this work is being published by the Toyo Bunko Library Department, with illustrations, from 1999 through 2002. He is currently an associate professor in the Department of International Sociology, Kibi International University in Okayama prefecture, Japan.



Local Visit

Saturday 15th September

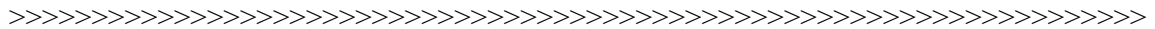
Visit and guided tour of the new Central Library in Causeway Bay

We will be given a guided tour of the superb new Central Library in Causeway Bay, to include the valuable RAS collection in the Special Collections section of the library. In addition, our President Dr. Patrick Hase will talk to us about books found in villages in Hong Kong, such as the Hoi Pa collection.

Meeting Place : Beside the gift shop, on the first floor of the library.

Time : There will have to be a maximum number of 20 members due to space restrictions, but if there is sufficient demand there will be two sessions, one starting at 2:30 pm and one at 4:00 pm. Please note on the booking form which time you would prefer.

Cost : \$50 (members only) to include light refreshments.



Overseas Visit

28th September – 3rd October

Visit to Korean Palaces

There will be a visit to Korea from September 28th to October 3rd inclusive, the main aim of which will be to see the relics of the former Palaces and other royal institutions there, to be led by Dr Patrick H. Hase. The total cost will be HK\$6,800 for Members, HK\$7,450 for Non-Members (including Non-Member spouses), plus HK\$800 Single Supplement as required. This figure includes airfares, breakfasts, lunches (except on 3rd October), and all costs within Korea for entry-fees, guides, and local transport, but not dinner, except for Saturday September 29th. See the proposed Itinerary below.

This tour will give Members a good view of Korean art and architecture, and should provide a fascinating insight into a variant of the sinitic styles we all know so well. A must for all interested in the Far East!

We have only 25 places for this trip, so first-come-first-served! Send your cheques early!

RAS BUSINESS

Request for photographs of past activities from members

Our hard working web designer Moody Tang would like some photographs of past activities to add to our web site. Photographs and scanned images of RAS visits or activities within the last ten years with a short description would be much appreciated. One or two photographs for each event would be ideal; also, if anyone has any old photographs that would be suitable, these would be very welcome. These will, of course, be returned in due course. If you have any contributions, please post them to Moody Tang, P.O. Box 1857, Shatin Central Post Office or send the scanned images through E-mail to moody_tang@i-cable.com. Moody will acknowledge your contribution on the web site. Any member sending photographs or scanned images will be deemed to have given consent for us to use them on the web site or for other RAS publications. Many thanks.

RASHKB Library

Our extensive RAS library is now located on the 7th floor of the new Hong Kong Central Library at Causeway Bay. It consists of the Main Collection shelves in the Special Collections area and the Rare Book Collection housed in the Rare Book Room. The Main Collection comprises post-1900 materials in western and East Asian languages including monographs, periodicals and audiovisual materials. The Rare Book Collection includes pre-1900 publications (with selected rare post-1900 materials) in western and East Asian languages. Members may use for reference only the books in the Rare Book Collection but may borrow books from the Main Collection on production of their current membership card and personal identification document. They are requested to sign in the register, giving details of the time, date, item(s) borrowed and telephone number.

Tai O Salt Pans

Following on from our very interesting visit to the Tai O salt pans in February, led by Dr. Patrick Hase, members may like to know of a book of photographs which shows some of the farmers collecting salt in Tai O in the 1920s. The book's title is "Tai O Love Stories of a Fishing Village, 1920-2000" by Wong Wai King, price \$150, ISBN 962-85809-1-4, available through Joint Publishing Company Branches.

Silverstrand, Clear Water Bay area

RAS member Denise Hardwick would like to contact anyone who knew the area pretty thoroughly about 30 years ago. There used to be a military firing range in the region. If anyone thinks they might be able to help would they please contact Denise direct on (T) 2835 2076.

Military trail

We had a splendid visit to the old military installations on Mount Davis and Pinewood Battery on 26 May led by Tim Ko. Tim, together with Jason Wordie, was the author of *Ruins of War* (1996) still one of Hong Kong's best sellers.

On the visit a number of members were of the opinion that more should be done to preserve the Territory's military installations. The RAS Volunteers, under RAS member Bill Greaves, plan to reconnoitre a possible military trail around Wong Nei Chong Gap (about 1½ hours walk) on Saturday 7 July. This research will be carried out in conjunction with the Antiquities and Monuments Office.

Web sites

We hope you look regularly at our RASHKB site. Another interesting web site is www.talesofoldchina.com/tales/t-build.htm. It's about Shanghai's old buildings.

News from our "Friends" in the U.K.

For members who will be on leave in UK this summer or are about to return to the UK to live, there are details about the Friends of the RASHKB on our web site www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk. Please make sure you visit our web site regularly for updated information. As mentioned in our April newsletter, our new Hong Kong President Dr. Patrick Hase will give a talk entitled "Traditional South China Agriculture and the Pitt-Rivers Collection" at the Salisbury and South Wiltshire Museum at 2.30pm on Saturday, 4th August. There will be a small charge of approx. £2.00 to cover admin costs.

They are planning to meet at 12 noon at the Jade Restaurant, 109A Exeter Street, Salisbury, and all are welcome. Lunch is for your own account. Previously to this they hope to arrange a guided tour round the Cathedral and into the Tower but they need to know numbers. For further information and booking please contact Anita Wilson on 020 8940 7408 or E-mail anitaw@euphony.net or Paul Bolding on 020 7684 5811 or E-mail pbolding@bigfoot.com.

A small world!

Long time RAS member Rosemary Lee, now a committee member of the Friends in the UK, emailed to say she had lent our last Journal (vol. 38) to a friend in England, Gillian Barrett. On turning to page 314, with the two gentlemen sitting on the balcony in Shanghai, Gillian promptly said, 'This is my father!' If any old Shanghailanders can throw any light on this photograph and the people in it, please let us know.

Memorial service

A memorial service was held on 18th May, at St John's Cathedral, for long-time RAS member Patrica Loseby. She was the Colony's first practising woman solicitor. Most of her life was spent in Hong Kong but she left for England in the run up to 1997. After the memorial service Pat's ashes were scattered over the Hong Kong Harbour off the Yacht Club. The Branch was represented at the memorial service by Dan Waters.

Old Hong Kong clocks

In our February newsletter we announced that a British enquirer had bought a clock made in Hong Kong, by Lapraik, in the 19th century. How common are they one wonders? Does anyone have, or know of, another 19th century, made-in-Hong Kong, clock? There must still be a few around one would think? Information to Dan Waters please benefit@netvigator.com or (T) 2858 1858.

Subscription Renewals

Thank you to all members who have returned our renewal/confirmation forms and to the annual members who have paid their 2001 subscriptions. *For annual members who have not yet renewed your subscription, this is your last chance to do so; if we do not receive your renewal cheque by the end of this month, your name will be removed from our list and you will no longer receive anything from us. For those members in arrears who have still not paid up-to-date, the same applies.* If you have mislaid the renewal form, please telephone our assistant secretary Mary Painter on 2813 7500 and she will send you a replacement form. If you do not wish to renew your membership, please would you advise us so we can remove your name from our database.

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.

Introduce a Friend

If any of our members have friends who may be interested in joining our society, please call our Assistant Secretary Mary Painter on 2813 7500 and she will send you copies of our brochure to pass on to your friends.

OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Orders and Medals Research Society, Hong Kong Branch

The Hong Kong Branch of the Orders & Medals Research Society is holding an exhibition of orders, decorations and medals relating to Hong Kong and China, at the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence. The exhibition opens on 1st July and is scheduled to run for about four months. The exhibition focuses on the First and Second China Wars, the Boxer Rebellion, gunboats on the rivers of China, the Second World War, awards to Hong Kong's disciplined services and the Hong Kong Volunteers, orders of the Chinese Republic, and so on.

The University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong

This summer, the University Museum and Art Gallery is host to a number of collaborative projects that will satisfy even the most artistically curious of audiences.

1) Bits of You, Bytes of Me: An Aesthetic Dimension of Human-Machine Interface.

This is the first collaboration between the University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong and the School of Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University.

The central theme of this installation exhibition by five teachers from the School of Design, The Hong Kong Polytechnic University, is how computers shape man's experience of the world. It explores the aesthetic possibilities of human interaction with machines in challenging and innovative ways. Also exhibited will be the work of the artists' graduating students. The exhibition will be on view from July 11 to August 31, 2001.

2) An exhibition of works by artist from HKU's School of Professional and Continuing Education (SPACE). A wide variety of works will be exhibited including paintings, Chinese calligraphy and seal carving. The exhibition will be open to the public from July 18 to August 12, 2001.

3) An exhibition celebrating 28 years of the Hong Kong Visual Arts Society. The Hong Kong Visual Arts Society was founded in 1974 by a group of artists working actively in the visual arts. The commitment of the VAS to arts development in Hong Kong continues to be influential but was particularly felt during the 1980s and 1990s. In addition to their active participation in developing creative awareness in Hong Kong, the artists of the VAS also take part in arts events throughout Hong Kong. This exhibition in honour of its 28th anniversary will be open to the public from August 22 to September 30, 2001.

4) Heavenly Earth Ancient Chinese ceramics from the Tsui Art Foundation. This semi-permanent exhibition of ceramics from the collection of T. T. Tsui includes representative examples from the history of Chinese ceramics. Highlights include painted pottery vessels and burial ceramics, stamped pottery, Han lead-glazed wares, glazed ceramics from the Northern and Southern Dynasties, tri-coloured glazed wares of the Tang dynasty, Song whitewares, underglaze-blue ceramics from the Yuan and Ming dynasties as well as overglaze ceramics.

The Museum's opening hours are Monday to Saturday, 9:30 am to 6:00 pm, and Sunday 1:30 to 5:30 pm. Closed on public holidays. Admission is free. All are welcome!

Please call the Museum on 2241-5513 for further information about any of the Museum's summer activities.

Announcement of two exciting new publications and special offer for RAS members

We have been offered a generous 20% discount on the normal selling price of these two new publications, for a bulk order:

“An Annotated Bibliography of Hong Kong History”

Compiled by Dr. Lee Pui-tak of the Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong

The Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong has recently completed an annotated bibliography of historical monographs dealing with modern Hong Kong history. In light of the growing interest in Hong Kong studies, both locally in Asia and abroad, this publication aims at providing historians and other scholars working within the field of Hong Kong studies a comprehensive list of the most important primary and secondary monographs on modern Hong Kong history, from the 19th century up to 1998. This publication hopes to promote Hong Kong historical studies throughout the world by making it easier for scholars to conduct research, both inside the Hong Kong SAR and abroad. The bibliography contains about 3,000 entries; they are

arranged topically into ten different categories, ranging from economic and social history to the history of politics, culture, military, corporate and professional organisations with Hong Kong, and contains sources in Chinese, English and Japanese languages.

Special RAS price (including 20% discount): HK\$96.00

See booking form at end of newsletter. All orders to be sent to RASHKB by 1st September latest. This book must be collected by members with our receipt from Joint Publishing stores in Hong Kong – you will be sent a receipt after all orders are received in early September.

“Hong Kong Reintegrating With China : Political, Cultural and Social Dimensions”

Edited by Dr. Lee Pui-tak, Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong

This comprehensive book provides a multi-dimensional analysis of Hong Kong’s development, and her political, socio-economic and cultural relations with China. It covers events leading up to 1997 and the post-1997 environment, and offers important insights into the issues that arise now Hong Kong is a Special Administrative Region of China.

This volume is divided into three sections, which focus on various aspects of Hong Kong’s reintegration with China. The first section examines the political situation in Hong Kong before and after 1997; broad questions of the social and economic interactions between Hong Kong and China are discussed in the second section, while the third section deals with the making of local identity. The differing perspectives and analyses presented in this book will be of interest and value to academics, students and the general reader seeking a stimulating assessment of current Hong Kong – China relations.

Special RAS price including 20% discount and postage direct to member’s home: HK\$158.00. Booking form at end of newsletter. Orders must be received by 1st September for dispatch in mid September.

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 May members enjoyed a junk trip to Po Toi Island and another to the Soko Islands in June. 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 writing to the Hon. Secretary, The Hong Kong Natural History Society, GPO Box 4369, Hong Kong.

Arts Newsletter

Members might be interested in this – it isn’t a web site, but rather a newsletter that one can subscribe to electronically. They advise on Chinese contemporary art, books, exhibitions etc. Click on <http://chinese-art.com/newsletters/newsletter.htm> to see the current newsletter.

Upcoming events from The Asia Society

Central Asian Film Series: "The Adopted Son". Tour of Hong Kong Film Archive and Screening of The Adopted Son (by Aktan Abdykalykov, Kyrgyzstan/France, 1998, 81 minutes, with English subtitles) Wednesday, July 18, 2001 at Hong Kong Film Archive, 50 Lei King Road, Sai Wan Ho. Tour starts at 6:45 p.m. Film starts at 7:30 p.m. Close at 9:00 p.m. HK\$100 Asia Society members, HK\$120 Non-members The first independent feature from Kyrgyzstan is a beautifully composed and photographed tale of a boy growing up in a village in the Central Asian nation. A sensitive coming-of-age film set against the rhythms and rituals of village life, the film offers a fascinating and subtle look at an isolated pre-industrial society. The film received the Silver Leopard prize at the Locarno Film Festival in 1998. The screening will be preceded by a tour of the Hong Kong Film Archive. Opened in January 2001, the archive collects and conserves prints and artefacts from Hong Kong and Asian films. Facilities include a cinema, an exhibition hall, a resource center equipped with the latest technology, and a conservation section. Spaces in the tour are limited and are on a first come first serve basis.

Tourism, Culture, and Environment in Asia. Dinner Presentation with Richard A. Engelhardt, Regional Advisor for Culture in Asia and the Pacific, UNESCO on Friday, July 27, 2001 at the Hong Kong Club, 1/F, Harcourt Suite. Cocktails at 7:00 p.m., dinner at 7:30 p.m. HK\$450 Asia Society members, HK\$500 Non-members.

The explosion of tourism in Asia has created many opportunities for local communities but, unfortunately, mass tourism is also causing irreversible damage to historical monuments, archeological sites, traditional communities, and natural habitats. Dr. Engelhardt will examine real life situations which illustrate the impact of tourism on culture and the environment in the region and discuss some of the strategies to promote a responsible, community-managed, economically sustainable tourism industry which is grounded in local culture, environment and history. Dr. Engelhardt has directed heritage conservation projects throughout Asia for over 30 years; between 1991 and 1994, he launched and headed the UNESCO office in Cambodia which instigated the international safeguarding campaign for Angkor. He has been with the United Nations since 1981, serving in many capacities including as the head of the Philippines office for the United Nations High Commission for Refugees.

For enquiries and registration for above events, please call Frances Chim at 2103 9508 or E-mail fchim@asiasoc.org.

RAS PUBLICATIONS

In the Heart of the Metropolis: Yaumatei and Its People

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 (published in 1980)

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