

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會
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NEWSLETTER

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20th February, 2002

Council members

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Dr. Elizabeth Sinn, Vice President	Rev. Carl Smith, Hon. Vice President
Mr. Peter Stuckey, Acting 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	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

On Friday January 18th the Society again had the pleasure of hearing from a visiting scholar from neighbouring Macau. This time Dr Paul Van Dyke spoke on his extensive research made in the archives in many countries including Holland, Denmark, Sweden, the UK, as well as the US, China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, and Macau. Much new material has now come to light on the importance of the Chinese traders who were dominant players in Canton in the period up to the Opium War. We learnt that the Chinese junks were the second most important carriers, after the British East India Company's ships. The Chinese linguists emerged too as wielding considerable power. Being intermediaries between western merchants and Chinese authorities, they had control over the main exports, and at the same time were not above taking a cut from smuggling too. Dr Van Dyke illustrated his talk with new documents he had found, all of which gave us a greater insight into the China trade of the 18th and 19th centuries.

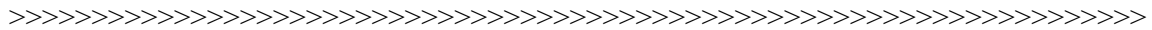
On Friday, 1st February, Susanna Hoe, author of "The Private Life of Old Hong Kong: Western Women in the British Colony 1841-1941", spoke on her latest book, "Women at the Siege - Peking 1900". This was a most appropriate date as it marked the centenary of the Empress Dowager's meeting with the diplomatic wives on 1st February 1902, after she returned to Peking

of Deep Bay. This fine temple is the Community Temple for the whole of the Ha Tsuen area, and is currently owned by the Tang clan of Ha Tsuen. It stands immediately on the totally unspoiled sea-shore, and was the place where the vitally important ferry from She Hau used to land.

Meeting place: The visit will leave by coach from Middle Road, Tsimshatsui (immediately behind the YMCA).

Time: 1.30 p.m. sharp on Saturday 13th April. The coach will return to Middle Road by 6.00 p.m. at the latest.

Cost: \$70 per Member and \$100 per non-Member (including non-Member spouses).



City Hall Lecture

Friday, 3rd May

Hong Kong's Lighthouses and the Men who Manned Them

Speaker : Fr. Dr. Louis Ha and Dr. Dan Waters

Time : 6:15 p.m.

Venue : Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Edinburgh Place, Central

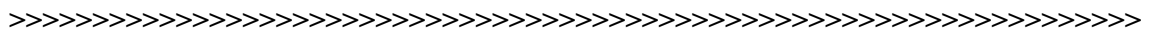
Cost : The lecture is free and open to the public.

Booking : No booking is required.

In the second half of the 19th century Sir Robert Hart established a chain of lighthouses extending from Newchwang to Kiungchow. He made navigating the China coast, in his words, 'as easy as walking down Broadway by gaslight'. Not to be left behind, Hong Kong also constructed lighthouses with the first, at Cape D'Aguiar, coming into operation on 16 April 1875. Others, like those at Green Island and Cape Collinson, followed.

What was the political situation like at the time, which allowed the setting up of lighthouses along the China coast, and what were the consequences? How did Hong Kong and China benefit from these navigational aids? With automation, the last few decades have seen the end of lighthouse keeping as a profession in many countries. What sort of people were Hong Kong's keepers? What kind of life did they lead and under what conditions did they work? One keeper, after having lived in comparative isolation on Waglan, when on shore leave used to go off on his own, fishing!

These are a few of the questions which will be addressed by the two speakers who have made many visits to the Territory's lighthouses and have taken part in television programmes on the subject. Fr. Dr. Louis Ha is the Archivist of the Catholic Diocesan archives and Chairman of the Hong Kong Archives Society. Dr Dan Waters has been an active member of our Branch since the mid 1960s. He is currently Immediate Past President and his interests include local history, culture and customs.



Visit to Waglan Island Lighthouse

Ships that pass in the night, and speak (to) each other in passing;
Only a signal shown and a distant voice in the darkness;
So on the ocean of life we pass and speak (to) one another;
Only a look and a voice; then darkness again and a silence.

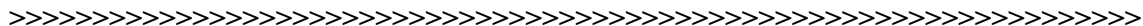
Longfellow

With the kind assistance of the Government Marine Department we will visit Waglan. It is the most isolated of Hong Kong's lighthouses, although helicopters have destroyed much of the romanticism.

A visit to the Island, in the South China Sea, can be an idyllic, not-to-be-forgotten experience. But in such an exposed position, with occasional typhoons and mountainous seas -- and without 'mod-cons' and creature comforts -- life can at times be anything but enviable.

Some keepers found Waglan a wonderful, peaceful place. Others were not at all sorry when the lighthouse was automated. What impressions will you gain from this RAS visit?

Meeting place and time : Queen’s Pier, Central at 1:00 p.m. *sharp*
Return by 6:00 p.m. Journey time to Waglan Island is approx. 1.5 hours each way.
Cost : \$80 for members, \$120 for non members (including non-member spouses).
Maximum number of participants : 90.
Members may bring along their own sandwiches and drinks as no food will be served on board. Please remember that the sea may be rough, depending on the weather conditions on the day. The visit will be cancelled if Typhoon Signal no. 3 or above are hoisted.



RAS BUSINESS

Honorary Membership

The RASHKB Council is very pleased to announce to Members that it has, on behalf of the Society at large, awarded Honorary Life Membership of the Society to two distinguished Members of the Society, to recognise their services to the Society, to Hong Kong, and in particular to the cause of Heritage Preservation in Hong Kong. The two Members so distinguished are Dr Dan Waters, Immediate Past President of the Society, and Dr Solomon Bard.

Dr Dan Waters came to Hong Kong in 1954, to work for the Education Department of the Hong Kong Government, specialising in Technical Education, in which field he is an acknowledged

international expert. He retired as Assistant Director of Education in 1980. He studied for his PhD as soon as he retired, taking it in 1985, from Loughborough University in England. He became interested in the history of Hong Kong shortly after his arrival here. He joined the Society in the mid-1960s. He has written several books on local history. After a number of years on the Council of the Society he became President in 1996, retiring in 2001, although he remains a most active Member of Council as Immediate Past President. He was a Member of the Antiquities Advisory Board from 1991 to 1998, and provided much valuable advice and service to the cause of Heritage Preservation while on the Board and since.

Dr Solomon Bard was born in Russia, and was educated at Harbin, Shanghai, and Hong Kong University, specialising in medicine and music. He qualified as a medical doctor in Hong Kong, and started practising here before the War. During the War he served as Medical Officer to the Hong Kong Volunteers, and was interned by the Japanese as a result. After the War he continued his connection with the Volunteers, being granted the MBE (Military) in 1967, and eventually being appointed Honorary Colonel, 1982-1984. He set up the Student Health Service of Hong Kong University in 1956, as the University's first Health Officer. At the same time he continued his active interest in music, acting as conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra, and, especially, of the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra, of which he was the Assistant Music Director from 1983-1987. He continues with his interests in music, as conductor of amateur musical groups in Sydney, where he now lives. He became interested in archaeology at a young age, being one of the founder Members of the Hong Kong University Archaeological Team (1955), and also a founder Member of the Hong Kong Archaeological Society (1967). He studied the subject formally in Sydney during this period. He set up the Antiquities and Monuments Office as its first Executive Secretary (1976-1983), and retains close links with the Office. He was a Founder Member of the Society in 1960, and has continued to support the Society ever since. He was awarded the OBE for his services to Hong Kong in 1976. He continues as an active archaeologist in Hong Kong, conducting the important excavations in the grounds of the Tai Fu Tai at San Tin in 2001-2, for instance. Few people have done so much, in so many varied fields, for Hong Kong, and probably none at all have done so much for the cause of Heritage Preservation.

The Council is extremely happy to honour these two outstanding and distinguished Members for their services.

Use of the Royal Asiatic Society Library in London

As a Member of a Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society in London, our Members are entitled, whilst on leave or otherwise temporarily resident in the U.K., to the use of the Library as Non-resident Members, and to attend the Meetings of the Society other than Special General Meetings. Members would need to show their RASHKB membership cards. The address of the Royal Asiatic Society in London is 60 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AF. Library & Membership telephone no: 020 7724 4741. Email: info@royalasiaticsociety.org.

Presentation of archives from Australia

Mr Douglas Franklin has presented a number of items collected by his father, Mr. Frederick Franklin, during the more than 30 year period he spent in Hong Kong. He worked on *The Hong Kong Telegraph* and later as Managing Director of the sister paper, *The South China Morning Post*. Mr. Frederick Franklin was buried in the Colonial Cemetery in 1956.

Items presented to our Branch include photographs and snapshots of Hong Kong taken in the 1920s, 1930s and 1940s, as well as newspaper cuttings. There is also a presentation specimen of the first telephone cable laid between Hong Kong and Canton (Guangzhou) in 1931. There was said to be very good co-operation between the two cities at the time.

We are most grateful to Mr. Franklin for the donation. You may have heard the 'Hong Kong Heritage' programme on Radio 3, on 10th and 17th February, when Dr. Dan Waters was interviewed about these archives by Annemarie Evans. If you need any further information ring Dan on 2858 1858. These archives have been placed on permanent loan to the Hong Kong Museum of History.

Missing RAS Photographs

Following the success of our best seller, *Hong Kong Going and Gone: Western Victoria* (1980), our Branch started sponsoring a similar photographic survey of Wan Chai. This was undertaken largely by RAS member Phillip Bruce, approaching 20 years ago. However, the approximately 500 photographs and negatives, consisting of facades, doorways and features on buildings and the like, have since gone missing.

Council members have discussed the matter and searches have been made so far without success. If anyone else is able to throw any light at all as to their whereabouts would they please contact Dr Dan Waters on (T) 2858 1858 or benefit@netvigator.com.

News of the RAS Volunteers from Bill Greaves

Plans are in hand for the technical fieldwork preparatory to a possible horticultural restoration of the private garden of Haw Boon Par mansion, next to the former Tiger Balm Gardens. The project will include a survey of the contents of the garden and hopefully its restoration to its pre-WWII condition. There is scope for some valuable research and Mrs. Sally Au, the last owner, will hopefully help with the records of the original garden and its recent history. Date of future visit : Saturday, 6th April for a reconnaissance of the garden to include a look inside the house.

No further visits to Tai Fu Tai are planned until at least the end of the year, when the restoration of the front garden may start.

A visit is scheduled for Saturday, 16th March to the Diamond Hill Resite Area in Kowloon, to see the old Spitfire Hanger, which was built in 1936. Then on to Peak Pavilions, Mount Kellet Road, the old Government quarters block built about 1950, on the former RN Hospital site. The site is likely to be sold next year for luxury housing, and a historic and architectural appraisal needs to be made for record purposes. There are also reports of interesting flora and fauna in the grounds.

If you hear of historic buildings under threat or would like to volunteer to help with this work, please contact Bill on email : greaves@netvigator.com.

Comments requested on paper

The RASHKB has been invited to comment on an interesting paper entitled, "*Is Sinology a Science?*" (19 pages). This paper may be viewed on web site www.soas.ac.uk/eacs. The author, Mr. Hans Kuijper, MA, of Ben Websterstraat 58, 3069 XJ Rotterdam, The Netherlands, would welcome comments.

Recent publications by RAS members

We are delighted to announce the recent publication of *Hong Kong, British Crown Colony, Revisited* (Hong Kong: Centre of Asian Studies, University of Hong Kong, 2001) edited by Dr. Elizabeth Sinn, RAS Vice President and Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre of Asian Studies. The historical significance of Hong Kong's return to China hardly needs emphasizing. Not surprisingly, the event attracted great attention around the world. For us in Hong Kong, the need to understand the event in order to adapt to its consequences in the most positive and constructive way possible, makes it imperative to sustain the pursuit of a genuine understanding of the nature of our society. If anything, it is exactly now, when the sensational and journalistic hoopla surrounding 1997 has subsided, that the time is ripe for more objective, detached and in-depth examination. This book, an anthology of five talks given by retired civil servants (including one given by Dr. Patrick Hase, our current President) about their concerns and experience in the governance of Hong Kong, provides insights into what went wrong as well as what went right. Those of us who believe that we should not be too mesmerized by our success and prosperity and be more mindful of our vulnerability and shortcomings, will find this a most timely publication. Available in most Hong Kong bookstores or direct from the Centre of Asian Studies - E-mail: casgen@hkucc.hku.hk or hrahsyy@hkucc.hku.hk.

A recent publication in the "Images of Asia" series by Oxford University Press entitled *Chinese Mythological Gods* is written by RAS Life member Keith Stevens, who has been studying icons of Chinese deities since 1948. Author of "*Chinese Gods: The Unseen World of Spirits and Demons*" (1997), in this new book Keith breaks down the wide-ranging Chinese pantheistic beliefs to essentials and distils them neatly into this slimmer volume. No easy task, considering that Chinese religious practices encompass Taoism, Buddhism, Confucianism and the more rudimentary beliefs and rituals of early man. The book would serve as a handy reference book during trips to any temple, which the initial reading might inspire. This compact and concise book manages to present seemingly endless, and sometimes overlapping, gods, demigods, deified human heroes, impersonal rustic spirits, etc. in an orderly and engaging fashion. The book is available in Hong Kong bookshops, priced at HK\$95.00.

The Chinese University Press has announced the forthcoming publication by RAS Life member Gillian Bickley of: *The Development of Education in Hong Kong, 1841-1897 : as revealed by the Early Education Reports of the Hong Kong Government 1848-1896*. On-line ordering and further information from www.chineseupress.com or fax 2603 7355. Price : HK\$600.

News from Friends of the RASHKB in the U.K.

Our "Friends" in the U.K. enjoyed their annual Chinese New Year Lunch in London on 16th February, attended by our President Dr. Patrick Hase and his wife Aileen. In April the Friends plan a visit to Cornish Gardens with an Asian Connection. Their AGM will be held on 25th May, 2002 at which David Mahoney will give a talk entitled "*Awards to Britons in China*".

Subscription Renewal

Renewal and confirmation forms were sent out with the December newsletter. If you are an annual member and have not yet sent in your cheque or completed an Autopay form or have a standing order with your bank, please send us a cheque now so we can update your record in our database and ensure that you continue to receive our newsletters and journals. If you have opted for Autopay or are a Life member, we would still appreciate your returning the form to us if there are any changes to your contact details.

OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

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

Past Visions of the Future - Some perspectives on the History of The University of Hong Kong
15 December 2001 to 19 March 2002

The University Museum and Art Gallery of The University of Hong Kong continues its special exhibition to celebrate the 90th anniversary of the founding of The University of Hong Kong. The exhibition will include architectural models, artefacts and photographs.

Also on display at the Museum is a tapestry presented to former Governor Sir Frederick Lugard in 1910, to mark his achievements in establishing the university in 1911 and also his efforts in improving sanitation in the colony. He was the university's first chancellor and his wife was a major fund-raiser for the project. The tapestry, called "*The Tribute*", was presented to Sir Frederick by a group of Chinese merchants at a farewell ceremony at the former Government House when he left for England on April 28, 1910 for a six-month holiday. The whereabouts of the tapestry had remained a mystery until Professor Anthony Hedley of the university's Department of Community Medicine, gave a talk to a Chinese study group at Aberdeen University in Scotland. A member of the audience (a descendent of Sir Frederick Lugard) knew of the whereabouts of the tapestry, which carried some stories and information about the public health situation in the early 20th century and the founding of the University of Hong Kong. So Professor Hedley was able to arrange for the work to be returned to the HKU Museum where it is now on permanent loan. The tapestry came with a superb sandalwood casket, which was crafted in Canton. It was extremely rare for Chinese to offer such a gift to a Governor when he went on leave.

An exhibition of Traditional Handicraft from Guangdong will be held from 12th April to 3rd July.

The opening hours of the Museum are daily from 9:30 a.m. to 6:00 p.m., and from 1:30 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. on Sundays, closed on public and university holidays. Admission is free.

Royal Commonwealth Society in Hong Kong

The RCS will host a cocktail reception on Monday 11th March, from 6 – 8 p.m. at the China Club in Central, to mark Commonwealth Day, during which Her Majesty The Queen's Commonwealth Day speech will be read. RASHKB members are welcome to attend. Music for the evening will be provided by the APA and there will also be dancing displays. Cost : HK\$350 per person. Enquiries and booking to Ms. Yasmin Stewart on 2887 4237 or E-mail rcs@pcsgroup.com.hk before 4th March, 2002.

Textile Society of Hong Kong

Wednesday, 20th March a talk at 6:30 p.m. at the Helena May Institute entitled "*The Textile Arts of Japan – a Personal Overview*" by Jackie Andrews who will share her experiences of living in rural Japan in the late 1970s as well as showing examples of her Japanese textiles from ceremonial silks to simple cotton work clothes and related craft items. Enquiries : 9274 8753.

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.*

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Vols 1-23	\$100 each
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Vols 29-39	\$200 each
Index to Vols 1-10	\$ 50 each
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