

THE HONG KONG BRANCH OF THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

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20th December, 2002

Council members 2002-2003

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

(see back page of newsletter for telephone numbers and Email addresses of Council members)

On Saturday 23rd November members were treated to a very interesting and well-presented lecture on the different characteristics of Cantonese Opera, given by Stella Ma. Stella first discussed the different musical aspects of the opera, speech and singing and the accompanying percussion music. She then talked in more detail about the different singing styles and the importance of the hand and body movements and what they all represent. We all enjoyed trying out some of the hand movements, with varying degrees of success! Stella is Chair of the Children's Cantonese Opera Association and the producer of the first children's CD series on Cantonese operatic music and she ended her fascinating talk with slides of children performing in primary schools, where Cantonese Opera is now a subject in mainstream teaching in some schools in Hong Kong.

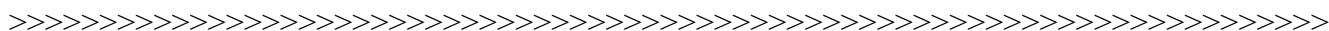
We then assembled at the old Sunbeam Theatre on King's Road, North Point, which opened in 1972, where the opera is performed. We were taken on a visit backstage where we saw the two female stars being made up and we saw racks of the very elaborate costumes and headdresses. We were then allowed to stand in the wings and watch the beginning of the actual performance, which was very exciting. A very interesting and informative Saturday afternoon, enjoyed by everyone.

Again it was standing room only for a talk at City Hall on 29th November when Mr. William Lindesay, researcher, author and field guide for the Wall, spoke on the topic "The Great Wall – Research and Impressions". Mr. Lindesay explained how his fascination and love for China's Great Wall could be traced back to a prep school teacher and his interest in maps, which always showed a hatched line for the Wall in China.

In 1987, Mr. Lindesay began his quest to learn all he could about the Wall with a 2,470 kilometer walk along the Wall. He has subsequently published several books and articles as well as leading efforts to conserve the natural setting of the Wall, and in 2001 he founded the "International Friends of the Great Wall". Amply illustrated with beautiful slides, his talk enlightened us about the original multiple purposes of the Wall, using his "4 S's" method of explanation, namely Signalling, Storage, Shelter and maintaining Sieges. With so much fascinating information to talk about, the time passed too quickly for questions in the City Hall but the conversation continued over dinner later in the evening.

On 6th December 2002, Valery Garrett, Council Member of the Society and Honorary Research Fellow at the Centre of Asian Studies, the University of Hong Kong, spoke on the history of Canton, now Guangzhou. The talk was entitled “*Heaven is High, The Emperor Far Away: Merchants and Mandarins in Old Canton*”, the title of her book published by Oxford University Press. Her fascination with Canton started in 1975, when she first visited the city, and culminated in the publishing of her book earlier this year.

Lavishly illustrated with interesting slides of maps, old paintings, sketches and photographs as well as present day scenes taken by the speaker herself, the talk fascinated the audience. Not only did she give a clear, historical background to the trade at Canton but made the story come alive with references to her own visits and research experiences. Pointing out that although most present-day visitors to Canton might think that modern development has replaced almost all historical buildings, there is in fact quite a lot left from the past, e.g. a Buddhist temple dating back to 397 AD, a mosque to 626 AD, Shamien Island with its many European buildings of the 19th Century, and the Nanfang Department Store built in 1918 as the Sun Department Store. Of course, most of the past has been lost, including the city walls, which were torn down in 1920, but as Ms Garrett made clear, visitors still can find a large amount of history in Canton.



FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Friday, 3 rd January 2003	City Hall Lecture	Voices from the Past: Hong Kong 1842-1918
Friday, 10 th January	City Hall Lecture	Macau: The Farming of Friendship
Friday, 24 th January	City Hall Video Presentation	Devil’s Peak Ruins: A Glimpse of a British Stronghold
Saturday, 25 th January	Local Visit	Visit to Devil’s Peak
30 th Jan – 13 th February	Overseas Visit	Eastern Bhutan
Friday, 14 th February	City Hall Lecture	Ultimate Return: The Transshipment of Emigrants’ Bones and Hong Kong’s role in the Chinese Diaspora
Friday, 21 st February	City Hall Lecture	To be decided – talk by Anthony Lawrence
Saturday, 1 st March	Local Visit	War and Peace: Treasures of the Qin and Han Dynasties
7 th – 12 th May 2003	Overseas Visit	Japan

City Hall Lecture

Friday, 3rd January, 2003

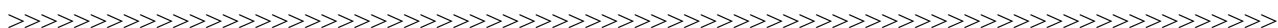
Voices from the Past: Hong Kong 1842 - 1918

- Speaker:** Dr. Solomon Bard
- Time:** 6:15 p.m.
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central, Hong Kong
- Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public.
- Booking:** No booking is required.

Dr. Solomon Bard, who was made an Honorary Member of the Society earlier this year for his many services to the Society and to the preservation of Hong Kong's historical heritage, will talk about Hong Kong's colonial past through excerpts from the earliest English language newspapers in Hong Kong and photographs from the Hong Kong Museum of History's photographic library.

Focusing mainly on Hong Kong, the excerpts also touch on Macao, mainland China and the rest of the world. They reflect the changes over the years in language, style of writing, even in humour. Of special interest are the public's responses to the many inventions which today we take for granted, such as electric lighting, the motor car, or the first attempts at flying. Most importantly, they reveal the gradual changes in Hong Kong's colonial attitudes as these slowly adjust to the new contemporary values and social and political changes.

Dr. Bard served in the Field Ambulance of the Hong Kong Volunteers during World War II, and was the director of the University of Hong Kong's student health service in its early days. From 1976 to 1983, he was the Executive Secretary of the Antiquities & Monuments Office. He was also the conductor of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra and the founder of the Hong Kong Archaeological Society. Currently, he is undertaking research in archaeology, local history and heritage.



City Hall Lecture

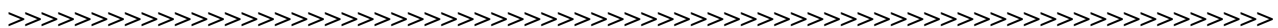
Friday, 10th January

Macau: The Farming of Friendship

- Speaker:** Christina Miu Bing Cheng
- Time:** 6:15 p.m.
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central, Hong Kong
- Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public.
- Booking:** No booking is required.

Macau was a colonial settlement of the Portuguese Empire from 1557. It was “consensually decolonized” on 20 December, 1999. The Portuguese enclave was then reunited with the People's Republic of China after a separation of 442 years. During the colonial vicissitudes, there were occasional misgivings between China and Portugal, but the two national states tried to lay the foundation for a smooth reversion of power. In the lead-up to China's resumption of sovereignty, the Portuguese Government of Macau was imbued with an earnest interest not only in promoting cultural legacies and goodwill, but also in cultivating renewed friendship. In the last seven years of Portuguese administration, a total of thirteen monuments and statues were inaugurated in commemoration of Sino-Portuguese amity. Behind the veil of friendship, Dr Cheng's paper “Macau: The Farming of Friendship” examines these works of art and explores the relationship between the signifier and the signified. The objectives are to understand the disjuncture between the government's intention and the general public's reaction to the friendship projects, as well as to trace cultural clashes and stereotyped colonial images in artistic representation.

Christina Miu Bing Cheng received her Ph.D. in Comparative Literature, M.A. in Literary Studies and B.A. (Hons) from the University of Hong Kong and is an Honorary Research Fellow at the Centre of Asian Studies. She is author of *Macau: A Cultural Janus* (1999) and a number of articles on Macau and Hong Kong.

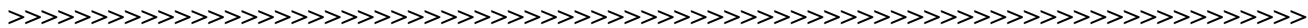


City Hall Video Presentation

Friday, 24th January

Devil's Peak Ruins: A Glimpse of a British Stronghold

- Time:** 6:15 p.m.
- Venue:** Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central, Hong Kong
- Cost:** The video presentation is free and open to the public.
- Booking:** No booking is required.



City Hall Lecture

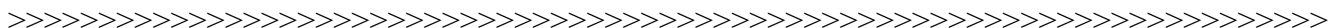
Friday, 14th February

**Ultimate Return: The Transshipment of Emigrants' Bones
and Hong Kong's Role in the Chinese Diaspora**

Speaker: Dr. Elizabeth Sinn
Time: 6:15 p.m.
Venue: Extension Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central, Hong Kong
Cost: The lecture is free and open to the public.
Booking: No booking is required.

In the second half of the 19th century, the bones of thousands of Chinese emigrants around the world were repatriated through Hong Kong for reburial in the native village. The exercise reflected the cultural ideas about roots, identity and death that shaped the behaviour of Chinese abroad and the business and social networks that made the transfer possible. Hong Kong's contribution to the exercise also demonstrates its key role in the Chinese diaspora. Dr. Sinn's talk will focus on the social, financial, political and cultural aspects of the process. Although the process is well known, and despite its great significance, so far no serious study has been done on it. She is studying it to highlight the vital role that Hong Kong played as a transit point -- or "in-between place" - in the movement of people, ideas, consumer goods, entertainment, remittances of all kinds in the Chinese diaspora, and of course, bones and coffins as well. She argues that the social and financial networks that were created in Hong Kong with different Chinese communities across the globe, formed the deep infrastructure that enabled migrants to leave China as well as maintain ties and ultimately to return, thus giving unity and coherence to the migratory process, transforming it from the mere movement of individuals into a diaspora.

Elizabeth Sinn is Vice President of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch and Associate Professor and Deputy Director of the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong. Her research is on Modern Chinese History and Hong Kong history and, in the past few years, she has been researching on the history of the Chinese press and Chinese migration.



Local Visit

Saturday, 1st March

War and Peace : Treasures of the Qin and Han Dynasties

This visit was originally organized for 14th December, but due to very high attendance figures at the exhibition each weekend since it opened, the Chief Curator of the Museum has requested a postponement of the RAS visit, because the venue will be too crowded to conduct a special tour with such numbers in attendance. It has now been rescheduled for 1st March, and places are open for members and accompanied guests.

This exhibition, jointly presented by the Chinese Cultural Artifacts Association and the Leisure and Cultural Services Department, and co-organized by the Shaanxi Provincial Cultural Heritage Bureau and the Hong Kong Museum of History, will feature 100 items of invaluable artifacts from the Museum of the Terracotta Warriors and Horses of Emperor Qin Shihuang, the Shaanxi Archaeology Institute and the Shaanxi Provincial History Museum.

The exhibition will feature some recent archaeological finds from the Shihuang Mausoleum, including a stone helmet and a set of armour, as well as the legendary life-size terracotta warriors. From the Han Dynasty, highlights will include the painted naked figurines and lifelike pottery animals from the Yangling Mausoleum, a major archaeological discovery of recent years. A large proportion of the exhibits are national treasures and have never been shown in Hong Kong.

RAS BUSINESS

Representations to Government

During the last two months, the President, Dr Patrick Hase, has on three occasions made representations to the Government on behalf of the Society, and Members may be interested to know the details.

The first representation was on the subject of the preservation of the Kom Tong Hall, in Central. The President first spoke personally with the Secretary for Home Affairs, Dr Patrick Ho, urging on him the importance of preserving this structure, given its critically important heritage value. Dr Ho informed him that the Government was "absolutely determined" to preserve the Hall. Subsequently, the President wrote in a similar vein, and received a reply saying that, while the Government could not guarantee that the owners of the building would agree to preservation, nonetheless the Government was doing everything possible to ensure that the building was preserved. Following this letter, the President again wrote, urging on Government the need for a thorough review of the policy on preservation of historically important buildings, especially those in private ownership. The President noted the financial problems Government would face in the preservation of privately owned historic buildings, but urged on Government the need to have a policy to permit the transfer of development rights over identified historically important buildings in private ownership, to allow preservation without unacceptable financial loss to the owners. The President finally noted the depth of public feeling now existing on the subject, and suggested that if some historically important building were to be demolished because Government could not accept the revenue loss transferring its development rights might entail, then this would lead to a significant public outcry. After this, the President had a long discussion with a senior official of the Bureau and pursued these points further. Eventually, the Society received a letter from the Secretary for Home Affairs, thanking the Society for their views, and stating that they would be considered carefully in the review of preservation of historically significant buildings which is now in train.

The second representation made by the President was to the Leisure and Cultural Services Department on the subject of the Culture and Heritage Commission's 2002 Consultation Paper. The President stated that he found the paper's stress on the Chinese cultural background of Hong Kong overdone, and likely to lead to the treatment of non-Chinese culture in Hong Kong as "foreign" and thus to be left, effectively, in an inferior position. The President stated that no policy which might lead to a lessening of Hong Kong's position as a meeting place of Chinese and non-Chinese culture was acceptable. The President supported the Commission's view that more money needs to be spent on the preservation of Hong Kong's cultural and historical heritage, but objected to the paper's suggestion that the money for this should be found, in practice, by cutting back what Government spends on the performing arts, instead stating that additional money must be found. The President also objected to the proposal for a "Libraries Board" and a "Museums Board", stating that the need for this additional layer of bureaucracy had not been made, and objecting to the suggestion that these Boards should have control over the allocation of money to the libraries and museums, seeing this as an attempt to politicise them. Finally, the President objected also to the proposal that heritage preservation should be handed over to the Housing, Planning, and Lands Bureau, as likely to lead to a conflict of interest as that Bureau's main task is the maximisation of income from land. The Leisure and Cultural Services Department thanked the Society for its views, and passed them on to the Commission. No reply has yet been received from the Commission.

The third representation made was to the Secretary for Security, Mrs Regina Ip, expressing concern over the Article 23 legislative proposals, and, in particular, expressing concern that, if the definition of State Secrets to be used were to be the same as that used in China, then academic freedom would be seriously impaired, as the definition of State Secret in China is so broad as to make research into the Social Sciences effectively impossible without the consent of the State. In reply, Mrs Ip wrote saying that the definition of State Secret in the proposed Ordinance would be the same as that used in the current Official Secrets Ordinance, and that "there is no question of extending Mainland laws regarding "state secrets" to Hong Kong". Mrs Ip went on to explain that, under the proposed Bill, there would be only four categories of unauthorised disclosure which would constitute an offence, that is, disclosure of information related to security and intelligence, to defence, to international relations, and to ongoing criminal investigations. It would be a requirement for the prosecution to demonstrate, and for the Courts to agree, that the disclosure was damaging, and that the person disclosing it

knew, or had reasonable cause to believe, that it was damaging. These categories of unauthorised disclosure would be broadly the same as those in the current law in the United Kingdom.

Subscription Renewal

Enclosed with this newsletter you will find either a renewal form (if you are an annual member) or a confirmation form (if you are a Life member). If you wish to continue your membership of the Society, and all Life members, please kindly complete these forms and return them to us by mail or fax as soon as possible so that we can update your details in our database. If you are an annual member and do not pay by Autopay or Banker's Order, please enclose your cheque. It would help our administration enormously, if you intend to renew your membership for next year, if you would do so **now**, to save our hard-working secretary the very time consuming task of chasing members for their subscription payments – thank you very much! If you do not wish to renew your subscription, please would you let us know, either by Email to membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk or phone 2813 7500.

Subscription Database for RAS Journals and Publications

We are very pleased to say that we have a volunteer Michael Leung, who is very kindly writing a database programme especially for us, which will give us a more efficient subscription system for our journals and other publications. This will hopefully be up and running by the New Year.

RASHKB Journal Goes Online (<http://sunzi.lib.hku.hk/hkj/main.jsp>)

The *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* is one of the journals enlisted in the University of Hong Kong Libraries' digital project: Hong Kong Journals Online (HKJO). This is a full-text image database providing access to selected academic and professional journals published in Hong Kong. Titles in this database cover a wide range of disciplines including law, medicine and education. University of Hong Kong Libraries, with a rich collection of Hong Kong journals, developed this database with the objectives of facilitating efficient information retrieval as well as archival preservation. Resources in this database are ever growing, as new titles will be added continuously. When accomplished the database, which allows browsing of table of contents and keyword searching of author, title and journal, will be open to public access on the World Wide Web, providing convenient access to resources on Hong Kong and China studies.

The *Journal of the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society* is one of the first journals to be digitized. Due to copyright concern, only table of contents and selected articles with author's consent will be available for access. Although anticipated access has been delayed due to problems with the agent responsible for the digitization process, we are pleased to confirm that it is finally ready. Premier release to the online version will be given to RASHKB members. Hong Kong Journals Online will be officially open to the public when more content is available in the database.

Departed Members

Three dear friends left us this autumn.

Past RAS member Dorothy Collins (1914-2002) arrived in Hong Kong shortly after World War Two, having spent the war years in Mauritius with her husband, who was a medical practitioner with the Colonial Medical Services. She always had interesting stories to tell about their early days in Hong Kong after the war, when everyone worked so hard to build up the colony again. She used to recall that, in those distant days, Christmas in the Colony was a quiet affair. It was a time to remember the fallen and the surrender to the Japanese on Christmas Day 1941. In more recent years, if one attended a lecture on local history or Chinese customs and culture, Dorothy would usually be among the audience. Dorothy was a lecturer in the Chemistry Department at the University of Hong Kong and had maintained an active academic life until a couple of years ago when she had a bad fall. She spent the last years of her life at The China Coast Community.

Lady Akers-Jones MBE, JP arrived in Hong Kong in 1957. It was not long before Jane and her husband, who later became Sir David, played active roles in Hong Kong life. Sir David was a founder member of our reconstituted Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. Among many other activities, Jane played a leading role in the Girl Guide movement of which she was Chief Commissioner, and it was good to see a large contingent of Girl Guides at Jane's funeral service in October at St. John's Cathedral.

Irmgard Lawrence came to Hong Kong with her husband, Anthony Lawrence, BBC Correspondent, in the early 1960s. Anthony has lectured to our Branch on many occasions. In addition to being the woman behind the successful man, Irmgard also took part in local activities. This included being a tutor in Mandarin. Fortunately she lived to see Anthony's 90th birthday celebrations recently at the FCC attended by Mr. Tung Che Wah.

"You can shed tears that they have gone or you can smile because they have lived ..."

Belilios Star

RASHKB friend and collector of medals David Mahoney has sent the following enquiry:

"Having acquired a named silver Belilios Star at a recent London auction, I have been persuaded to write an article on this rare medal, which is Hong Kong's own life saving award. This star, hallmarked 1884 – the year of its institution - is named to F. Horspool, who is thought to be Fred, the son of George, who was a senior Hong Kong policeman in the late 19th century. By coincidence, the Star, in silver for lifesaving on land and bronze on sea, has not been awarded since Lee Wing-kee received a silver one in 1984. Although records of the awards since 1945 seem to be complete, very little material is available prior to that. Presumably all records kept by the Registrar General, the trustee of the Belilios Fund, were destroyed during the last war.

I should be grateful for any information that members may have on the Star, its design changes, and past awards etc. in the period 1884-1945. Please reply to: David Mahoney, Oatlands, Shermanbury, West Sussex, RH13 8HE, U.K. or Email davidmahoney@aol.com."

Repulse Bay

In the October newsletter, Dan Waters raised the question of how Repulse Bay got its name. RAS Member Michael Guilford has sent in the following reply:

Dr. Dan Waters is correct in his comment (RAS Newsletter October 2002) that the HMS Victor Emmanuel was originally named Repulse (in 1853); however, her name was changed in 1855 whilst she was still on the stocks.

The name Repulse Bay appears on James Wyld's chart, 3rd edition, 1841, of the "Canton River with the Entrances & Islands", i.e. over ten years earlier. It is also indicated on Lt. T. B. Collinson's (Royal Engineers) ordnance map of Hong Kong dated 1845.

I have contacted a friend of mine in Australia who served on HMS Repulse when she was sunk off Kelantan, east Malaysia, by the Japanese in December 1941. He is not aware of any ship of this name serving in the Far East in the early 1840s.

Subsequently, at his suggestion, I wrote to the National Maritime Museum at Greenwich. The Head of Library and Manuscripts commented that "one was built in 1803 and broken up in 1820, the next not being built until 1855. The only Repulse to have been stationed in the Pacific in the 19th century was not built until 1870, and then we do not know if she was located near Hong Kong. Whilst searching the web I found the following site* claiming that it was named after a pirate ship that had cruised in the area; it does not say which nationality it was."

*<http://www.travelchinaguide.com/attraction/hongkong/island/island/bay.htm>

A resume of alternative names for Repulse Bay covering some 160 years follows:-

Repulse Bay (Wyld chart, 3rd edition, 1841)
Chonghom Bay (Belcher chart, 1841)
Repulse Bay (Collinson's map, 1845)
Chogham Bay (Jardine Collection map, based on Belcher, 1845)
Chonghom Bay (Imray chart, 1855)
Tsinshui Wan (Stanfords map, 1888)
Shallow Water Bay (Hong Kong Guide, 1893)
Repulse Bay (or Chunghom Wan) (Collinson's updated map, 1895)
Freshwater Bay (Tourist Guide map, 1896)
Repulse Bay (War Office map, 1905/1909)
Repulse Bay or Telegraph Bay (Tungar Printing map, 1925+)
Repulse Bay (US Army map, 1930)
Repulse Bay (Japanese overprinted map, 1939-1940)
Tsin Shui Wan or Repulse Bay (GSGS map, 1949)
Tsin Shui Wan (Repulse Bay)(HM100 CL map, 1980)
Tsin Shui Wan (Repulse Bay) (HM50CL map, 1989)

Note : Post-war references to Repulse Bay only are omitted. Information mainly obtained from Mapping Hong Kong, Hal Empson, GIS, 1992.

The mystery of the origin of Repulse Bay is clearly still unresolved. It seems to me unlikely that it was named after a ship. Perhaps, as pure speculation, Chunghom Bay was renamed Repulse Bay after pirates were repulsed by a nearby military garrison soon after the British occupied the Island.

Other local waters named after British naval vessels should clearly include Sulphur Channel and Starling Inlet. Do any readers know the origin of Rambler Channel which is indicated as Ching E Man (US Army map, 1930); Rambler Channel (GSGS) map, 1936 & Japanese overprinted map, 1939-40) and subsequently? If any member has anything to add to the above, please reply to the Editor of the Newsletter at membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk or tel/fax 2813 7500 or direct to Michael Guilford at tel/fax 2778 8613. Perhaps this could be the start of a correspondence column in the newsletter?

Two enquiries about the Sassoon Family

One of our members has come across the following offer of information relating to the famous Sassoon family from a member of the Jewish Genealogical Society of Great Britain:

“Seeing an email elsewhere on the Sassoon family reminded me that I have a family tree called “Pedigree of the Sassoon Family”. The first entry is David Sassoon, of Bombay, Merchant Banker, born 1793, and the last entry is Meyer Archibald, born Hong Kong, 1887. The document itself is dated 1st July 1888. Is this of interest to anyone? Shirley Collier, London, England”. (shirley.collier@btopenworld.com).

Members will recall that the Sassoons came to Hong Kong in 1842, established E. D. Sassoon & Company, a branch of the successful Bombay family business, and donated the land in 1901 for the foundation of the Ohel Leah Synagogue on Robinson Road.

We have also received the following enquiry from a researcher in the USA:

“I'm writing an article about my rabbi, Rabbi Theodore R. Alexander, the descendant of a long line of distinguished German Jewish rabbis. After arriving in Shanghai from Berlin, Germany (in 1939), my rabbi was hired by the Sino-Jewish firm, E. D. Sassoon & Co. After the Japanese Occupation of China, company operations (and presumably assets) were taken over by the Japanese. Rabbi Alexander, along with his father, Rabbi Hugo and mother Kate (nee Spiegel) Alexander and sister Gerda were interned in the Shanghai ghetto during the 2nd world war.

I'm interested in knowing what happened to the Sassoon family (i.e., those who were stationed in China) during those years of occupation. Were they also interned by the Japanese, and if so, where -- or were they given preferential treatment? Did some of them manage to leave the Far East and return to the UK (or go

elsewhere?) I'm under the impression that the Sassoons resumed control over their Far East operations after the end of the war in the Far East but would like to know more, including whether its firm still does business in Shanghai.

Any help will be appreciated".

Naidia Woolf
San Francisco, CA
(Formerly from Birmingham, England)
P. O. Box 170248
San Francisco, CA 94117
U.S.A.
Email to: mwoolf@earthlink.net

Alternatively, please contact RAS member David McKellar in Hong Kong on 2843 2493 or fax 2103 5996 or email to mckellar888@yahoo.co.uk.

New Honorary Institutional Members

The Madras Literary Society has recently been made an Honorary Institutional Member of the RASHKB. Anyone visiting Chennai is very welcome to visit their library, which includes several volumes on 19th century China. Please contact Rear Admiral Mohan Raman, Hon. Gen. Secretary, Madras Literary Society, College Road, Chennai 600-006, India. Email to: mraman@vsnl.com.

The Asiatic Society of Bangladesh, Dhaka, runs a very full and interesting programme of lectures. Members visiting Bangladesh are urged to contact Prof. Abdul Momin Chowdhury, President, at 5 Old Secretariat Road, Nimtali, Ramna, Dhaka 1000, Bangladesh or Email to: asb@bangla.net for details, or contact our Assistant Secretary, who has copies of the current newsletter of the Bangladesh Society.

RAS Volunteers

Our only item of interest this month is that we are rather concerned about the removal of the replica Farman Biplane from its spot in the Passenger Terminal of Hong Kong Airport. According to the Hong Kong Historical Aircraft Association (HKHAA), the Airport Authority want to change the "marketing image" of the airport and the replica is no longer considered suitable and will be removed in January 2003.

The Farman Biplane would make a fine contribution to an aviation museum, if one were to be set up here. In fact the old Spitfire Hanger at Diamond Hill is also looking for a new home, as the site is required for a government school. Perhaps both historic artifacts could be brought together? However, the availability of an appropriate site is the first necessity.

If you have any views on the subject please contact Bill Greaves (greaves@netvigator.com) or David England of the HKHAA (dengland@mtr.com.hk).

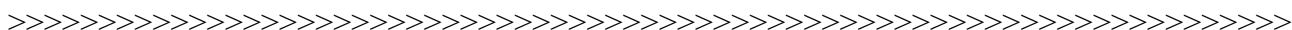
Friends of the RAS Hong Kong Branch in UK

For those members returning to live in the U.K., the Friends organize lectures and visits on a regular basis throughout the U.K. Their annual Chinese New Year lunch will be held on Saturday, 8th February, and any Hong Kong members visiting London at that time would be very welcome to attend. For those interested please contact Paul Bolding at pbolding@bigfoot.com for more details.

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 in Hong Kong of approaching 500 and non-members attending as well, we are sorry we are not always able to recognize 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 an especially warm welcome to every one of you! We hope you will find our activities interesting and that you become involved.



OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Textile Society of Hong Kong

RAS Council Member Valery Garrett will give a talk to the Textile Society following their AGM on Wednesday 19th February at the Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central. Valery, who is the author of nine books on textiles, will describe how she became interested in the rural dress of Hong Kong's farming and fishing community and will show slides of the dress once worn by the villagers. Reception 6:30 p.m., talk 7 p.m. For information: telephone 2522 6755.

The Hong Kong Gardening Society

You don't have to be a gardening expert to enjoy the Hong Kong Gardening Society. They welcome new members, those with a garden and those with only a balcony or window boxes! All that is required is a love of plants and gardens. The society arranges regular coffee mornings at members' homes where advice, cuttings and seeds are exchanged and friendships made. They also arrange regular visits to garden centers, shows, etc. For information call Lynn Sinclair on 2719 4870 or Email hkgardeningociety@hotmail.com or go to www.gardeninghongkong.com.

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 writing to the Hon. Secretary, The Hong Kong Natural History Society, GPO Box 4369, Hong Kong or email to johnjones@netvigator.com.

University of Hong Kong Museum and Art Gallery

Present an exhibition of works from the L'Ecole de Paris, or school of Paris, from the Mary and George Bloch Collection. The term L'Ecole de Paris refers to the group of artists who were active in Paris during the first half of the twentieth century. The exhibition is a rare opportunity to view paintings and sculptures by some of the most celebrated and ground-breaking figures in the history of twentieth century art, as well as some lesser-known artists of the period, in Hong Kong. The exhibition runs until 15th January, 2003.

The Hong Kong University Museum Society will host a one-day seminar on Saturday 15th February given by Dr. Tim Screech, reader in the history of Japanese art at the School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London and concurrently Senior Research Associate at the Sainsbury Institute for the study of Japanese arts and cultures. He is an energetic speaker and the author of several books in both Japanese and English on the culture of the Edo period.

The series of four lectures, two in the morning and two in the afternoon, will offer a comprehensive introduction to the arts of the Edo period (1603-1868), concentrating on creativity in the great cities of Edo (modern Tokyo) and Kyo (Kyoto). Being a period of the Tokugawa Shoguns, the country was strictly governed, but it was also a time of experimentation and innovation in the arts.

Although the programme will be quite intensive, the venue is spacious and comfortable. The cost of the seminar includes lunch as well as morning and afternoon refreshments. Numbers are limited, so register early. Venue: The Ladies Recreation Club, 10 Old Peak Road, Mid-Levels. Cost: \$800 member, \$900 non-member. Information: Call Irene Chung 2525 8912.

The Royal Asiatic Society of Great Britain and Ireland

The Society, at 60 Queen's Gardens, London W2 3AF, has a busy lecture programme which may interest members visiting London. On January 9th Professor Doris Behrens-Abouseif (SOAS) will give an illustrated talk on *'The Fire of 1479 at the Umayyad mosque of Damascus and its restoration according to an unpublished source'*. On 13th February Charles Allen, FRAS, (writer and broadcaster) will talk on *'The man who put Ashoka on the map: James Prinsep (1799-1840) reappraised'*. For further information Email info@royalasiaticsociety.org or go to www.royalasiaticsociety.org.

The Korea Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

The Korea branch is very active with 1,000 members in Korea and 500 overseas. They have a vigorous lecture and tour programme and members going to Korea should visit their website www.RASKorea.org to view their current programme or Email info@raskorea.org.