

# 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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**20<sup>th</sup> SEPTEMBER, 2006**

## FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Saturday, 14 <sup>th</sup> October	Local Visit	<b>Visit to the Conservation Department at the Hong Kong Museum of History</b>
Saturday, 28 <sup>th</sup> October	Annual Event	<b>Quiz Night</b>
Friday, 10 <sup>th</sup> November	Lecture	<b>The New Territories? Please Remind Me!</b>
Friday, 17 <sup>th</sup> November	Lecture	<b>Imperial Connections – Canada and the Chinese Labour Corps</b>
Friday, 24 <sup>th</sup> November	Lecture	<b>Captives of Empire: The Japanese Internment of Allied Civilians in China and Hong Kong, 1942–1945</b>
Friday, 8 <sup>th</sup> December	Lecture	<b>Daniel Caldwell: Churchman, Freemason, Policeman ... and Pirate Accomplice?</b>
Saturday, 9 <sup>th</sup> December	Local Visit	<b>Visit to Chiu Yuen Cemetery, Mount Davis</b>
19 <sup>th</sup> - 28 <sup>th</sup> February, 2007	Overseas Visit	<b>Study Tour to Bhutan</b>

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** As we will not be able to meet at City Hall, with possibly a few exceptions, until next summer, please pay special attention to the times and venues of activities.

**Local Visit**

**Saturday, 14<sup>th</sup> October**

**Visit to the  
Conservation Department at the Hong Kong Museum of History**

We are pleased to be invited to visit the Conservation Department at the Hong Kong Museum of History. There we can view the metal laboratory, the paper laboratory and the textile conservation taking place on a Manchu military uniform. We will also see the conservators working on the collection of items for the Dr. Sun Yat-sen Museum due to open towards the end of the year.

There will be an optional self-paying yum cha lunch afterwards at a restaurant nearby for those who wish to stay on.

**Time:** 10.30am – 12 noon  
**Meeting place:** First floor lobby of the Hong Kong Museum of History, Tsim Sha Tsui  
**Cost:** \$70 for members, \$100 for non members  
**Booking:** Please return the booking form on page 11 with your cheque to Valery Garrett  
(tel 2849 8164 during office hours)

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## Mariners Club

Saturday, 28<sup>th</sup> October

### Quiz Night – “Asia”

Following the success of the inaugural quiz night last year this will be another light-hearted evening of questions and answers on the theme of Asia. It is suitable for everyone with an interest in the place we each call home – indeed for anyone interested in Asia, good food and pleasant company.

Questions will range over a wide spectrum of Asia from Authors to Zodiacs, visiting Films, Geography, History, etc., along the way, and will feature Hong Kong, China and beyond. It is a good chance to meet each other and to enjoy a dinner buffet provided by the Mariners Club, with a cash bar.

For the quiz we shall form teams of six with small prizes for the winning team. You can apply as a member, a non-member or as a group and we can help you form a team. If you would like to form your own complete team of six, you can do so and enjoy the member's rate irrespective of the number of members and non-members on your team.

The capacity of the room is limited so early booking is advised.

**Organizers:** Peter Stuckey, Bob Bunker and Jenny Wu  
**Time:** 7.00pm to 10.00pm  
**Venue:** Conference Room, The Mariners Club, 11 Middle Road, Tsim Sha Tsui  
**Cost:** Members \$200, Non-members \$250. Team of six \$1,200  
**Booking:** There is a booking form on page 12, to be returned as soon as possible please, and before Saturday, 21<sup>st</sup> October

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## Lecture at the Helena May

Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> November

### The New Territories? Please remind Me!

Leased from China for 99 years in 1898, the New Territories was a distinctly separate place until urbanization and development began furiously in the 1970s. In the 1980s, very likely by conscious decision-taking in high places, this separate identity was gradually eroded, until its very name disappeared from the names of government departments and the indexes of official publications.

This talk, accompanied by a PowerPoint presentation, will review the history of the New Territories from 1898 to 2004. James Hayes has always been associated with the area, having spent half his government service working there as a District Officer, as a Town Manager, and finally as the official responsible for its administration, until his retirement in 1987. The talk will feature his latest book, *The Great Difference, Hong Kong's New Territories and its People 1898-2004*, published by Hong Kong University Press. In April this year, James spoke to the Society about Chinese Scholar-Officials and their Calligraphy. He is Ph.D. (London) and Hon. D.Litt (Hong Kong) and a Past President of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch.

Please indicate on the booking form whether you would like to stay for dinner at the Helena May after James's lecture on a cost-sharing basis.

**Speaker:** Dr. James Hayes  
**Time:** 6.00pm drinks, 6.30pm lecture  
**Venue:** The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central  
**Cost:** \$140 members, \$170 non-members (*includes canapés and one drink*)  
**Booking:** Please complete and return the booking form on page 13

Central Library Lecture

Friday, 17<sup>th</sup> November

### Imperial Connections – Canada and the Chinese Labour Corps

On the first day of the Battle of the Somme on 1<sup>st</sup> July 1916, 57,470 British soldiers were killed, wounded, or unaccounted for. The devastating Allied casualties and severe labour shortages accelerated the demand for more men. By August 1916, a decision was made by the British and French governments to recruit hundreds of thousands of Chinese labourers to replace British and French workers who could then be enlisted for military services. However, in order to get them from China to Europe, Britain had to call on the assistance of Canada. The Canadian Government accepted the challenge with the support of the Canadian Expeditionary Force and the Canadian Pacific Railway and steamship lines.

Canada's role was indispensable and so was China's contribution of manpower. Much risk was involved in using labourers from China as its international legal status was neutral until August 1917, when China declared war on Germany. The Chinese could not fight as members of military forces and thus could only be contracted as labourers. Chinese officials had to consider how any type of involvement in war operations would affect China's neutrality and how its limited contribution could affect their leverage in postwar negotiations. The Chinese Labour Corps (CLC) of the British Expeditionary Force (BEF) was officially named on 21<sup>st</sup> February 1917.

Canada and the Chinese Labour Corps were essential to the success of the Allied war effort. Their contributions in this regard, however, have largely been overlooked and forgotten. Using slides of original photographs, Judy will uncover a significant yet hidden part of Canadian, Chinese, and British transnational history. Judy Maxwell, a Ph.D. candidate at the Australian National University, specializes in Chinese Transnational History, pursuing comparative studies on the Chinese in Canada and in Australia with a focus on illegal entry during the period of restrictions and exclusion.

**Speaker:** Judy Maxwell

**Time:** 6.30pm

**Venue:** Activities Room 1, G/F, Central Library, Causeway Bay

**Cost:** This event is free and open to the public with no booking required

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Central Library Lecture

Friday, 24<sup>th</sup> November

### Captives of Empire: The Japanese Internment of Allied Civilians in China and Hong Kong, 1942 – 1945

On the morning of 8<sup>th</sup> December 1941, thousands of American, British, Dutch, and other civilians of Allied nations living in China and Hong Kong awoke to find that their countries were at war with Japan. Those in Hong Kong were to suffer from the lack of Japanese policy toward civilian internees, enduring inadequate rations, horrible sanitary conditions and limited medical care. Those in China, where expatriate organizations such as the British Residents' Association were allowed to plan and prepare for internment to a limited extent, fared much better organizationally, but still suffered from shortages of everything. Yet through it all, the internees rose to meet the challenge of survival. They placed their hope in the future and educated their children, organized kitchens and hospitals, started libraries, and engaged in resistance.

Utilizing scores of internee interviews, published and unpublished first person accounts, and archival sources in Japan, Hong Kong, Australia, New Zealand, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, Canada, and the United States, Greg Leck will present a look at the internment experience, with many unpublished and long hidden photos. From the idyllic life of the expatriate, to the shock and surprise of the Japanese victories and rule, to imprisonment and eventual liberation, the talk covers this little known chapter of the Pacific war.

Resident in Pennsylvania, USA, Greg Leck is the grandson of an Old China Hand who served in the Chinese Maritime Customs. He grew up hearing stories of China and internment. He recently authored a 738-page book on the subject of internment in China, *Captives of Empire: The Japanese Internment of Allied Civilians in China*.

**Speaker:** Dr. Greg Leck  
**Time:** 6:30pm  
**Venue:** Activities Room 1, G/F, Central Library, Causeway Bay  
**Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public  
**Booking:** No booking is required

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## Central Library Lecture

Friday, 8<sup>th</sup> December

### Daniel Caldwell: Churchman, Freemason, Policeman ... and Pirate Accomplice?

Daniel Richard Francis Caldwell (1816-1875) was a Freemason popular enough to be twice elected Master of one Lodge and thrice of another. His grave near the entrance to the Happy Valley Cemetery is one of the most magnificent there and was set up “as a token of their affectionate regard and appreciation of his long and faithful services to the Craft” by the ‘Freemasons of Hong Kong’, among the most senior of which were such LegCo members as Sir Paul Chater and Phineas Ryrie. Caldwell was “the best colloquial linguist Hong Kong ever possessed” (E.J. Eitel, 1895 – another Freemason), and an “an assiduous Anglican” (Chris Haffner, 1988 – another Freemason). As Supreme Court Interpreter, he was “indispensable” (the Governor, Sir John Davis); as Assistant Superintendent of Police, he was “attentive, zealous and willing” (Superintendent of Police Charles May) and “highly effective, particularly in connection with piracy cases” (Eitel).

However Caldwell was dismissed as Assistant Superintendent after being accused of being “a speculator in brothels and brothel licences, and ... [of having] had association with pirates” according to ‘the appalling Thomas Chisholm Anstey’ (Welsh, 1997), the Attorney General, who also said Caldwell was “apparently of mixed blood ... his youth was passed in various inferior occupations ashore and afloat”. Anstey was hardly an unbiased observer.

Caldwell had, however, the last laugh, being rehabilitated by the next Governor, Sir Richard MacDonnell, (who was not a Freemason!) who employed him on a “monstrous” salary as an adviser “on licensing gaming establishments and establishing a Chinese detective force”.

Professor Mark MacAlpine spent 31 years in the Electrical Engineering Department of the HK Polytechnic University and published some 100 research papers in the 10 years before his retirement two years ago. Many years ago he obtained a BA and MA in Natural Sciences (Physics) at Cambridge, followed by a PhD in Electrical Engineering at London. He continues to do the fun stuff – research and teaching – variously in Australia, Hong Kong and elsewhere in China and is a Guest Professor at Shanghai Jiaotong University. His interest in nineteenth century Hong Kong history is very much as an amateur! As is his interest in MG cars, and also hill walking and running.

**Speaker:** Prof. Mark MacAlpine  
**Time:** 6:30 pm  
**Venue:** Activities Room 1, G/F, Central Library, Causeway Bay  
**Cost:** The lecture is free and open to the public  
**Booking:** No booking is required

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## Local Visit

Saturday, 9<sup>th</sup> December

### Visit to Chiu Yuen Cemetery, Mount Davis

A short history of the Chiu Yuen Cemetery is given in a memoir about Ho Kom-tong published by some of his descendants:

“During most of the nineteenth century, there was no burial ground for Eurasians in Hong Kong. The Colonial Cemetery was exclusively for Westerners, and the Chinese Permanent Cemetery for Chinese. Being friendly with many officers, Ho Kom-tong and his brothers (Ho Tung and Ho Fook) were able to persuade the Government to let them buy part of Mount Davis off Pokfulam Road, which was under military command at the time. As private cemeteries were not permitted under English Law, however, Ho

Kom-tong had to go to London personally to obtain written authorization from the military. Thus, in 1897, Chiu Yuen Cemetery for Eurasians was established on Mount Davis, with the Ho brothers as trustees.

“Since Ho Kom-tong had negotiated the deal, he was able to acquire the choicest part of Mount Davis for his own private cemetery. Being knowledgeable in *feng shui*, he selected a hillside adjacent to Chiu Yuen Cemetery with a scenic view of Hong Kong harbour, and personally designed the layout of the graves. He named it ‘Ho Chong’, which means ‘Farmstead of the Ho family’.”

Some of the most prominent Eurasians of Hong Kong are buried in the Chiu Yuen, including Sir Robert Ho Tung’s second wife, Clara, Sir Man-kam Lo and Sir Robert Kotewall. It is hoped that Ho Kom-tong’s great-grandson, Andrew Tse, will lead this visit.

The number we can accept for this visit is limited. As the site is a private family cemetery, successful applicants are asked to keep together as a group, to treat the graves with respect and to dress appropriately.

Transportation will be provided from Queen’s Pier, City Hall. The morning will end with a lunch at a Chinese restaurant in Cyberport.

**Time:** 10.00am  
**Meeting Place:** Queen’s Pier, City Hall, Hong Kong  
**Cost:** Members \$200. Guests \$250 (includes lunch)  
**Booking:** Please complete and return the booking form on page 14  
**Enquiries:** Phone May Holdsworth at 2818 8425

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## Overseas Visit

**19<sup>th</sup> – 28<sup>th</sup> February, 2007**  
**(Bangkok-Bhutan-Bangkok)**

### Study Tour to Western Bhutan

The Society’s visits to Bhutan have been popular with members in recent years, and the Society is pleased to offer (for Members only) a new study tour, to places in Western Bhutan, from Monday, 19<sup>th</sup> to Wednesday, 28<sup>th</sup> February 2007, visiting Paro, the lovely Phobjikha valley, Wangdue-Punakha valleys, and the capital Thimphu. As already announced, a principal focus of the visit will be to attend some major features of the Punakha domchoe, an important and colourful annual celebration over several days of ritual ceremonies introduced by Zhabdrung Ngawang Namgyel (in gratitude to all forms of protective deities guarding Bhutan against enemies and invasions). The group will also have the valuable opportunity to ascend into the famous Taktsang (“Tiger’s Nest”) Monastery – off-limits for many years - perched over Paro valley, and to witness details of village life.

Members should particularly note that this tour is being offered ex Bangkok’s new Suvarnabhumi airport - participants are asked to **\*make their own transport arrangements\*** to get to and from Bangkok (it is very difficult to get confirmed group bookings in advance from Hong Kong at Chinese New Year, but individual travellers should find a fairly wide range of choice if bookings are made early.) The draft programme in summary is :

**Monday 19th February** – Early (4.50am) check-in; depart Suvarnabhumi for Paro via Kolkata 6.50am, arrive 10.00am; transfer to Gangtey Palace. After lunch, visit Tachogang lhakhang (temple). Return to bazaar and dinner at hotel.

**Tuesday 20th February** – We will first visit the 7<sup>th</sup>-century Kyichu lhakhang and observe the start of a sand mandala. Visit the National Museum and Duntse lhakhang, then drive to the western end of the road in Paro valley to inspect the defensive construction of the massive Drukgyel dzong (now in ruins following a fire decades ago). Returning to the town, we will see the completed sand mandala and take part in its destruction.

**Wednesday 21st February** – A full day devoted to a walk up hill to the Taktsang lhakhang (the fabled “Tiger’s Nest”) and return. We will take lunch at the cafeteria on the way down. Buffet dinner at site to be decided.

**Thursday 22<sup>nd</sup> February** – An early start and drive to Punakha via Dochu-la. From Lobesa we will drive up to view Talo lhakhang, then go on to village Nobgang for tea. A downhill stroll for about one hour will bring us to excellent views from above of Punakha dzong, and picnic lunch in the grounds of a private house. Another 10 minutes walk will bring us to a local school (where we will spend a few minutes) and our transport. Overnight at YT Guest House.

**Friday 23rd February** - After breakfast we travel to village Khabji to see preparations for the following day’s rituals. Lunch by the riverside will be followed by an easy stroll for about one hour to Khunsum Nyeling and afterwards to our transport waiting by a bridge near the new Aman Punakha resort hotel. Dinner at the guesthouse.

**Saturday 24<sup>th</sup> February** - After breakfast, travel to Punakha dzong and witness the monk festival Macham and the pazap ceremonies. Lunch by the river. About 2.00pm, depart for Gangtey.

**Sunday 25th February** – After breakfast, see inside the renovated Gangtey Gomba and take a short walk to see the black-necked cranes which come to this area during the winter. Visit some local houses, and return to the Wangdue checkpost; travel south from there, towards Chirang, for interesting views. Return to Wangdue and visit the Wangdue-Phodrang dzong. Dinner at the guest-house.

**Monday 26th February** – After breakfast, travel to Punakha dzong to witness the serdar. Lunch in the shade of trees with pazaps; depart mid-afternoon for Thimphu; overnight Riverside hotel.

**Tuesday 27th February** – Full day in Thimphu to see the sights, including paper-making and the work of the Changzamtog Craft Centre. Mid-afternoon, travel to Paro, and overnight at Gangtey Palace.

**Wednesday 28th February** – Early start; breakfast 5.30am, report to airport by 6.20am for 8.20am departure (KB120) for Bangkok, arrive BKK (Suvarnabhumi) 1.35pm (4 hours 15 minutes transit time), and connect to Hong Kong.

**IMPORTANT NOTE:** Please keep a reasonable connecting time at Bangkok's Suvarnabhumi Airport to avoid missing ongoing connections, as arrival may be delayed until 4.10pm (landing at slot at present allocated) because of airport congestion. The earlier "scheduled" time (1.35pm) is still subject to agreement by the Thai authorities, however, outgoing flight times are not affected.

The costing for this tour is HK\$20,000 (subject to slight revision), with a single-room supplement (**when available** – see booking form at end of this Newsletter) of HK\$2,000. Please note that the Bhutan Department of Tourism has decided that from 1<sup>st</sup> January, 2007 there will be no "off-season" rates (except for the rainy season of July and August), and therefore the visit at this time of year now attracts a significantly higher premium payable to the Bhutan government. In addition, at present consideration is being given to further increasing the rate-per-night to perhaps US\$250.

Members who are interested in this tour should complete the Booking Form on page 15 and return it with their deposit cheque (HK\$4,000 per member, plus single supplement if required) payable to "Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch" **as soon as possible and in any case before 15<sup>th</sup> October 2006. Balance of payment (amount to be confirmed) will be due by 15<sup>th</sup> December 2006. This group will be limited to 30 members.** Also please note that this event is unsuitable for those with limited mobility.

The payment is to cover: economy-class airfares BKK-PBH-BKK, nine nights' accommodation and all meals, transportation and guide services in Bhutan, Bhutan visa fee, Bhutan tourism development fee, Bhutan airport departure fee, aircraft fuel surcharge fee and aviation insurance fee. Other charges are for members' own account.

Anyone with enquiries should contact Dr. Brian Shaw at [bcjshaw@hkucc.hku.hk](mailto:bcjshaw@hkucc.hku.hk).

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## RECENT ACTIVITIES

### **Down Memory Lane – Rickshaw Days in Hong Kong and Canton**

On 11<sup>th</sup> August, Dr. Fung Chi Ming spoke to the Society at the City Hall. Dr. Fung is the author of *Reluctant Heroes: Rickshaw Pullers in Hong Kong and Canton, 1874 – 1954*, the first publication in our Society's Hong Kong Studies Series issued by Hong Kong University Press. Dr. Fung's talk, aided by a Powerpoint presentation, focused on how he became interested in the topic and what went through his mind as he researched the subject to prepare his Ph.D. thesis and later the book.

An unusually long question and answer session followed his talk, during which Dr. Fung spoke of misconceptions about the rickshaw pullers – it was not as hard a job as many think because a lot of time was spent waiting, and many pullers were not so very poor. He explained that the rickshaw had been invented by a missionary in Japan in 1867 and showed an item from the 1874 *Hong Kong Times* newspaper, the first mention of a rickshaw in Hong Kong, which was quicker even than Shanghai to adopt the rickshaw. Discussion of the triad influence in the trade took place, and it was also explained that rickshaws came about only as smooth, modern roads were built.

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### **Visit to Crown Wine Cellars**

So popular was the visit to Crown Wine Cellars at Shouson Hill on 5<sup>th</sup> August that a second bus had to be hired. More than 50 members and guests were fascinated to see what has been done with the Deep Water Bay Drive Bunkers, originally built by the British military in the 1930s. Not only were there wine cellars, but we also discovered a very fine club and restaurant. Our host, Gregory De'eb, led us through a delightful conservatory and down into a bunker transformed into a lovely dining room with a smart library attached. There he enthralled us with a PowerPoint-assisted history of the site, the story

of the fighting which took place in the vicinity in December 1941, and the saga of transforming the site into the Crown Wine Cellars, necessitating dealing with 22 different government departments and at times appealing directly to the Chief Executive for assistance.

After adroitly handling many questions, Gregory led us along the road to see first some bunkers still enveloped in jungle and then two bunkers presently being used for wine storage. A delicious lunch was then enjoyed, along with a number of bottles of wine! If ever there was an excellent example of saving our heritage and purposeful recycling, then surely these wine cellars are it. The credit goes to Jim Thompson, Chairman of the Crown Worldwide Group, and our host, Gregory De'eb.

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### **Study Tour of Mongolia**

An intrepid party arrived in Ulaan Baatar in the early hours of Saturday, 19th August to overnight in the first of a number of *ger* camps. As was the signature of the trip, good humour prevailed in driving rain and the organizers worked wonders in getting everyone settled. Next morning, the rain had cleared and a beautiful scene awaited the group on waking. The National Museum of Mongolian History was the first of a number of museums on the tour which gave the group a very good background understanding of Mongolia's roots. An interesting tour of the Winter Palace of Mongolia's last king (Bogd Khan) followed, and in the evening Judy Kolbas gave a talk on the stone tortoises of Karakorum. The day ended with the first exposure for many of the group to "*hoomi*" – throat singing. A sound once heard never forgotten. By the end of the trip many in the group were skilled at identifying, and one or two at mimicking, *hoomi* tunes.

We then headed for the wilds and became intimately acquainted with the pot-holed (and worse) roads of Mongolia. The landscapes were wonderful and vast and the importance of the horse in Mongolian life became more and more obvious. The day finished with a visit to the very simple and beautifully located Ovgoni temple at the foot of the Khogno Khan Mountain. The next day the group visited the Erdene Zuu Buddhist monastery in Karakorum, the ancient capital of the heirs to Ghengis Khan. During the fascinating tour both monastery guides and members learned from each other – the learned discussions on the comparison between Mongolian Buddhist gods and Chinese gods were a wonder to observe.

The next day the group experienced a *Naadam* – a Mongolian festival of sport. We participated to greater and lesser extents – one RAS member showed hitherto unsuspected talent at Mongolian wrestling. The day ended with a wonderful open-air concert. The setting was under the stars, with the Orkhon River as backdrop and a large (dangerous) bonfire - never to be forgotten by all who were there.

We then headed back towards Ulaan Baatar, staying in the Khustain Nuruu National Park. The long trip was more than compensated for by the sight of Takhis or Przewalski's horses. Seeing as many as 20 horses, mares and foals (10% of the world's population of rare Mongolian wild horses) as dusk fell in the high upland valleys was unforgettable.

A short trip to Ulaan Bataar and the surprisingly good Fine Arts Museum was followed the next day by a last overnight in a *ger*. En route the group visited the Ganden monastery at the same time as the Dalai Lama – whose presence was a highlight for many of the group. The last *ger* camp was located in the stunningly beautiful Terelj National Park and the group hiked and photographed its way over the landscape - the unforgettable sights included Turtle Rock and a magical meditation hall high in the hills with a glorious view.

The tour was very well organized and led by Rocky Dang and Peter Stuckey whose good humour and calm in the face of trying circumstances was essential to the success of the trip. Together with the excellent local guides, Agi and Sunny, they made an excellent team and now face the problems of success – where will they lead us next?

**James Bertram and Martin Muirhead**

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### **Visit to the Min Chiu Society**

On Saturday, 16<sup>th</sup> September, 24 members of our Society were fortunate in being guests of the Min Chiu Society at mid-levels. For more than 45 years, the Min Chiu Society has been active as a society of art lovers and collectors, with the promotion of Chinese art and culture being the main objective.

The Society has a spacious flat which has been beautifully converted into space to display members' collections and has an extensive library of both Chinese and English books, as well as a dining room. Two prominent collectors – past Min Chiu Society Chairman Andrew Lee King Fun, a specialist in Qing Dynasty glass, and Humphrey Hui, well-known collector of snuff bottles, were our gracious hosts, sharing their great knowledge and love of Chinese antiquities. Humphrey has twice spoken to our Society in the past and Andrew has very kindly consented to speak to us next year. A delicious lunch was enjoyed by all as well.

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## IN SEARCH OF THE PAST

Searching for the past can be a bit problematic in Hong Kong where things are torn down or “beautified” (and I use the term loosely) with alarming regularity. *In Search of the Past: a guide to the antiquities of Hong Kong*, by Solomon Bard has been a useful compendium of villages, ancestral halls and other historical structures in Hong Kong he deemed worthy of interest. But it was published in 1988 and many things have changed since then. While the updating of this work is still in its initial planning stages, we can get the ball rolling by (a) calling for new volunteers to help with the project and (b) advising the RAS on what new structures should be included. I have compiled a list of the structures listed in the book and you can use this as a guide. Please email me at [jenny@asian-emphasis.com](mailto:jenny@asian-emphasis.com) if you want to see this list. We also need to update the selected reference list of books on villages, antiquities and monuments in Hong Kong, so if you know of some particularly good volumes, please let me know.

The idea at present is for RAS volunteers to go to the places listed in *In Search of the Past*, take new photographs of the structures, update information about these structures and write up their findings.

The next stage, of course, will be to publish the results – and for this we will need some financial assistance. Suggestions as to how we could raise funds would also be very welcome.

**Jennifer Eagleton, Coordinator, *In Search of the Past***

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## LIBRARY DONATIONS

Thanks to Betty Wei, the following volumes have recently been added to the RAS library:

- Alley, Rewi. *Land and Folk in Kiangsi, a Chinese Province, in 1961*. Peking, New World Press, 1962.
- E-tu Zen Sun, (Ed.) *Ching Administrative Terms : a translation of the terminology of the six boards with explanatory notes*. Cambridge, Harvard University Press, 1961.
- Fairbank, John King, (Ed.) *Ch'ing Documents : an introductory syllabus*. Cambridge, Mass., East Asian Research Center, Harvard University, 1965.
- Fay, Peter Ward. *The Opium War, 1840-1842 : barbarians in the celestial empire in the early part of the nineteenth century and the war by which they forced her gates ajar*. Taipei, Rainbow-Bridge Book Co., 1975.
- Franke, Wolfgang. *The Reform and Abolition of the Traditional Chinese Examination System*. Taipei, Rainbow-Bridge, c1960.
- Fu, Lo-shu, (Ed.) *A Documentary Chronicle of Sino-Western relations, 1644-1820*. Taipei, Rainbow-Bridge Book Co., 1966.
- Guo, Lin. *A Critical Study of the First Anglo-Chinese War, with Documents*. Pin-Chia Kuo. Taipei, Ch'Eng Wen Publishing Co., 1970.
- Lai, Tim-cheong. *Hong Kong : a pictorial homage*. Hong Kong, Hong Kong Book Centre, 1994.
- Srivastava, Mahavir Prasad. *The Korean Conflict : search for unification*. New Delhi, Prentice-Hall of India, 1982.

A list of Chinese-language books, also donated by Betty, will be displayed on the website.

## OTHER LOCAL EVENTS

### **The Textile Society of Hong Kong**

RASHKB member Chris Hall will be giving a talk to the Textile Society on 10<sup>th</sup> October on 15<sup>th</sup> and 16<sup>th</sup> century Chinese Textiles. Chris will talk about the importance of dress and textiles in Chinese society, illustrating the talk with slides from his personal collection, which is recognised internationally as one of the finest collections of antique Chinese costumes in private ownership. The venue is the Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central, with drinks (cash bar) at 6.30pm for the 7.00pm talk. The charge is \$50 for members and \$100 for non-members. For more information, email the Textile Society at [dsilkstone@dr.gov.hk](mailto:dsilkstone@dr.gov.hk).

### **Mongolian Concert**

There will be a Mongolian Music & Song concert at City Hall Concert Hall on Friday, 3rd November. It will feature traditional Mongolian *urtin duu* long song & *hoomi* throat singing performed with improvised western contemporary jazz. Tickets are available from Urbtix at \$320, \$220, \$120.

Before the concert, on Wednesday, 1st November, there will be a free lecture demonstration at the recital hall, 8/F City Hall High Block in Mongolian with English translation. This form of singing has been declared a UNESCO intangible cultural heritage masterpiece in 2005.

### **Hong Kong Sociological Association**

RASHKB members are invited to attend the Hong Kong Sociological Association's 8<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference which will be held at Shue Yan College, North Point, on 2<sup>nd</sup> December 2006. The theme of this year's conference is "Narratives and Perspectives in Sociology: Understanding the Past, Envisaging the Future." A number of panels will raise issues of local, regional and global concern. For more information please contact Professor Harold Traver or Dr. Selina Chan by email: [hksa2006@hksyc.edu](mailto:hksa2006@hksyc.edu).

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## IN SEARCH OF F.D. OMMANNEY

Probably best remembered in Hong Kong today for *Fragrant Harbour*, his fascinating account of his years at Hong Kong University in the late 1950s, Professor Francis Downes Ommanney served as Reader in Marine Biology in the years when the local fisheries were one of the colony's principal economic mainstays.

Less-well known, F.D. Ommanney was a member of one of Sir Ernest Shackleton's Antarctic expeditions in the 1920s; this inspired an earlier work, *South Latitude*. Post-war fisheries research projects, undertaken in the late 1940s and 1950s under the auspices of Colonial Development and Welfare Fund, saw him posted to territories as diverse as the Seychelles, Singapore, Zanzibar and Hong Kong; each posting resulted in at least one fascinating book.

RAS Council Member Jason Wordie is currently conducting some research on F.D. Ommanney as part of an ongoing project. If anyone has personal recollections of Professor Ommanney that they are willing to share, or knows of anyone who might be able to do so, could they please contact Jason, preferably by email, at [jasonwordie@graduate.hku.hk](mailto:jasonwordie@graduate.hku.hk) or by telephone 2476-3504 or 2476-5057.

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## HOT OFF THE PRESS

For the past couple of years RAS work has shared my desk with another time-consuming but fascinating project; the book *Helena May: the Person, the Place and 90 years of History in Hong Kong*. With text written by Esther Morris, and several original photos supplied by the May family and private individuals, the book recounts the life of Helena May, the founding of the Helena May Institute and its development over the years up to the present day.

The price is \$175 and the copies can be obtained directly from the Helena May (2522 6766) or through me (2818 9206). We hope to see it in most local bookstores by mid-October, when the price

will then be \$225. Do buy a copy and help support this wonderful building – said to be the only one which is still serving the original purpose for which it was built.

**Jenny Day**

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## **OBITUARY**

### **Anita Wilson**

We are sorry to have to announce the passing of Anita Wilson who was 63 and had not been well for some time. For much of her life she was a Christian Scientist.

Tracing through the history of the Royal Asiatic Society one finds that, at varying stages, our Branch revolved around certain prominent figures. One such person was Anita Wilson. She arrived in Hong Kong in August 1983 as an archivist to join the Government where she worked both in the Public Records Office and later in the Government Secretariat. Anita joined the RASHKB in early 1984 and in 1986 she became Honorary Secretary. Up until then we issued circulars. Anita introduced the first RASHKB Newsletter.

Her attendance at RAS functions was exemplary. The last visit she herself led, in early 1997, was in and around the Legislative Council Chambers and afterwards up Government Hill to Government House where we all signed ‘The (visitors’) Book.’ Our Branch was very much a central part of her life and shortly after she left Hong Kong she wrote: ‘My life has been greatly enriched by my membership of the RAS...’ On another occasion she wrote: ‘I can think of no other organization that could have provided such a rich and varied experience.’ Anita returned to Britain in 1997 and worked as an archivist at Buckingham Palace, where she was highly thought of. She was one of the prime movers in setting up and running our Overseas Branch, which we all know as ‘The Friends.’

In keeping with her character Anita expressed the wish that she should have a ‘Woodland Funeral’ and that everything be kept as natural as possible. She was buried in a wicker coffin and mourners were asked not to use plastic bows and ‘wire ties’ on the floral arrangements they sent so that everything can disintegrate back into the earth and return to nature.

Requiescat in pace. The world is a better place for your having passed through it, Anita.

**Dan Waters, Past President**

Anita was our Hon. Secretary in the latter part of my presidency. I had known her for some years but it was only when she took over the job that I realized what a conscientious, willing and sensible person she was, and a very nice one to boot. She maintained excellent relations with all, and was a true friend. I found this especially comforting when my wife Mabel developed serious eye problems in 1989-90, before we went to live in Sydney. She will ever be remembered as a fine human being

**James Hayes, Past President**

Everyone is warmly invited to a thanksgiving celebration for the life of Anita Wilson, on Saturday 4th November 2006 at 3.00pm in Cadogan Hall, off Sloane Square, London SW1. There will be an opportunity for friends to share their own tributes and memories during the service. Retiring collection for charities: Water Aid, and the Hua Dan Project, Beijing. For more information and details of the location see: <http://anitawilson.moonfruit.com>

**Friends of RASHKB, UK**

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## **RAS EMAIL PROBLEMS**

If anyone tried to contact the Society by email during the latter part of August and received no reply, this was due to trouble with our server. Spammers had gained access to our email address and were using it to receive their returned mail. This resulted in over 61,000 messages coming in after I got back from the Mongolia trip! The problem took over a week to put right and during that time some messages may have been lost. If you did not hear from me, or whoever your message was addressed to – we apologise. Everything is back to normal now, in fact running better than ever now due to new computer equipment.

**Jenny Day**