

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY, HONG KONG BRANCH

NEWSLETTER

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20th MARCH, 2006

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

3 rd -15 th April	Overseas Trip	Study Tour to Yunnan and Tibet
Friday, 7 th April	City Hall Lecture	Chinese Scholar-Officials and their Calligraphy
Friday, 28 th April	AGM	Annual General Meeting and Dinner, Hong Kong Club
Friday, 12 th May	Local Visit	Heritage Value in Macao – a One-day Tour
Friday, 26 th May	City Hall Lecture	The Shaping of Hong Kong's Central Business District
Sunday, 18 th June	Local Visit	The Jewish Synagogue in Mid-levels
Friday, 23 rd June	Dinner Talk	The Sinking of the Lisbon Maru
17 th -26 th August	Overseas Visit	Proposed Study Tour to Mongolia

Overseas Trip

3rd-15th April

Study Tour to Yunnan and Tibet

This trip is now completely full. Thirty-six members (including at least six who have joined in order to come on this trip) will be leaving in a few days for what promises to be a fascinating, if challenging, visit to Yunnan and Tibet. We wish everyone a safe and healthy journey and look forward to reports – and photos for the website – on their return.

City Hall Lecture

Friday, 7th April

Chinese Scholar-Officials and their Calligraphy

In this talk, James Hayes will speak about his fascination with scholar-officials of the Qing Dynasty (1644-1912) deriving from his long residence in Hong Kong, where he was able to collect their calligraphy, particularly those of Cantonese officials, native to the province.

Scholar-officials held the supreme place in Chinese society. As a long-serving American diplomat in Beijing once wrote, "the aim and end of all study, the line of ambition of every scholar ... is to pass the government examinations, become a gentleman, a member of the honoured and privileged class, and obtain official position". As a class, they were noted for their manners and courtesy, something they owed to the educational regime of the day, which even in the meanest rural schoolroom was grounded in ethical teachings and etiquette.

The scrolls and couplets written by scholar-officials were not only to be found on silk or paper. Transposed on to wood and stone, some of their work can still be found around Hong Kong, especially in the ancestral halls and temples of Hong Kong's New Territories, its former rural adjunct, with its 700 old villages and former market towns.

A historian rather than an art historian, James will provide background to the calligraphic images he has selected for his talk, some drawn from his collection and others from old buildings, together with photographs of a number of the officials themselves. An exhibition of his donated collection of Qing Dynasty scholar-officials' calligraphy was held in Sydney, at the Art Gallery of New South Wales, between September and November 2005, under the title "The Poetic Mandarin".

James Hayes, a former civil servant, lived and worked in Hong Kong for nearly 35 years (1956-1990), spending almost half that time in the District Administration, New Territories. Besides his calligraphic interests, he has written a number of books on Hong Kong history and society, his last published work (2001) being *South China Village Culture* in OUP's Images of Asia series. He has always been a keen collector, especially of historical materials on Southeast China, much of them now in public collections. He is Ph.D. (London) and Hon. D.Litt (Hong Kong). A new book, *The Great Difference: Hong Kong's New Territories and its People 1898-2004*, is likely to appear later this year, published by Hong Kong University Press.

Speaker: James Hayes
Time: 6.15pm
Venue: Extension Activities Room, 8/F, City Hall High Block, Central
Cost: The lecture is free and open to the public
Booking: No booking is required

Annual Event

Friday, 28th April

Annual General Meeting and Dinner

Everyone should have received by now the AGM documents, which were mailed out on 22nd March. The Annual General Meeting will be An AGM With a Difference this year. The venue will be the same, the Hong Kong Club, but this time we will be dispensing with long speeches and instead will have a guest speaker, member Professor Hugh Baker, who will be speaking on "Thinking the UnDinkable; an excursion through the borderland scenery where Chinese and English languages meet." Many of you will have heard Hugh speak in the past and so know that this is something to look forward to.

There will also be a display of Tony Hedley's remarkable photos taken on the RAS trip to Bhutan in 2003. These will be for sale (cash or cheque only) with a percentage of sales going to RAS. We hope, space providing, to have RAS authors' books on display, together with some special items from our library. We are also planning a PowerPoint showing of Hedda Morrison's wonderful 1946-47 photographs of Hong Kong, thanks to member Ed Stokes.

This year we simply do not have the space to do all we would like to! Between now and 28th April we'll be working to making this a special evening for everyone. This is your Society, and the AGM offers the important opportunity for you to come along and make your views heard (if you so

wish) and to hear the views of others being expressed. Or simply to get to know each other better and to meet many of our varied and talented members.

We currently have over 650 members – but there is only room for 80 in the Harcourt Room at the Hong Kong Club. So if you want to be there you should send in your form promptly. If you don't have the original AGM documents to hand, the booking form that was included with the AGM documents is repeated on page 13 of this newsletter.

The cost per person is HK\$325 for members and HK\$350 for non-members, which includes a full buffet dinner and two bottles of wine per table during dinner. Any further drinks will be at members' own expense. Please fill out the booking form and return it, together with your cheque in payment, **no later than Saturday, 15th April 2006.**

***Please note: The Hong Kong Club has a strict dress code which requires that gentlemen wear a tie. No jeans, any garment in denim, or trainers are allowed. Please note also that the event will be booked and signposted in the name of Hong Kong Club member Mr. Robert Nield.*

Local Visit

Friday, 12th May

Heritage Value in Macao - a One-day Tour

Last year the outstanding universal value of Macao's heritage was recognised with a coveted place on UNESCO's World Heritage List. "The Historic Centre of Macao" consists of a wide range of heritage sites representing four and a half centuries of uninterrupted cultural encounter between East and West.

Find out more about Macao's fascinating past and how it is reflected in the city today on a guided visit that combines some of the best-known architectural gems with a glimpse behind the doors of freshly completed or on-going conservation projects. A self-pay lunch will be served at the Institute for Tourism Studies, set in the beautiful grounds of Mong Ha Fortress, and the afternoon will finish with coffee in an Italian restaurant overlooking the original waterfront. The tour will be facilitated by the Cultural Affairs Bureau of the Macao Special Administrative Region and will include a short talk given by Marie Imelda Macleod, Acting Director of the Historical Archives.

The Cultural Institute of Macao (ICM) will provide a bus to and from the Macao ferry terminal. We will be met at 9.30am in the arrival hall of the Macao ferry terminal, and at the end of the afternoon those who do not wish to stay longer in Macao will be driven back to the terminal at 5.30pm. The size of our group is limited to the number of seats on the bus, which is 24.

Please note the time and date of this visit – it is not a weekend event.

Time: 9.30am

Meeting place: In the arrival hall of the ferry terminal, Macao. ICM staff will be there to meet us.

Cost: \$100 for members, \$150 for non-members (includes transport within Macao and afternoon tea)

Booking: Please return the booking form on page 14 to Jennifer Day

Enquiries: Tel: 2813 7500 or email membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

City Hall Lecture

Friday, 26th May

The Shaping of Hong Kong's Central Business District

Nicholas Sallnow-Smith will give a presentation looking back over the development of Central since the founding of Hong Kong in 1841. He will review how the series of reclamations have expanded the district and how design and construction techniques have enabled it to become one of the world's key business hubs.

Mr. Sallnow-Smith is Chief Executive of Hongkong Land Holdings Limited. He was Finance Director of Hongkong Land from 1998-2000, prior to which he was Group Treasurer of Jardine Matheson for five years. His early career was spent in the British Civil Service, where he worked for Her Majesty's Treasury in Whitehall, London from 1975-1985. He was educated at Gonville & Caius College, Cambridge, and the University of Leicester and is a Fellow of the Association of Corporate Treasurers. He holds M.A. (Cantab) and M.A. (Soc. of Ed.) degrees.

Speaker: Nicholas Sallnow-Smith
Time: 6:15 p.m.
Venue: Extension Activities Room, 8/F, City Hall High Block, Central
Cost: The lecture is free and open to the public.
Booking: No booking is required

Local Visit

Sunday 18th June

Visit to the Jewish Synagogue in Mid Levels

Following our visit to the Synagogue some years ago, we are delighted to be invited back again. This time the Rabbi has kindly offered to talk the group through the religious aspects of the Synagogue, and another member will discuss the architectural features of the building. After this the librarian will give us a short tour of the interesting collection of Sino-Judaica.

Lunch will follow in the Jewish Community Centre and it is hoped the Rabbi will join us in case some people are interested in asking further questions. Immediately after lunch RAS member S.J. Chan will give a short talk about Jews in China and his book will be for sale afterwards.

Time: 11.00am
Meeting place: Outside the main entrance to the JCC at 70 Robinson Road
Cost: \$180 for members, \$230 for non members (includes buffet lunch and a donation to the JCC library)
Booking: Please return the booking form on page 15 to Valery Garrett (Tel 2849 8164 during office hours)

Dinner Talk

Friday, June 23rd

The Sinking of the Lisbon Maru

We are delighted that Tony Banham has agreed to give a talk on the subject of his most recent book, the sinking of the Lisbon Maru, a Japanese ship carrying POWs from Hong Kong to Japan which was torpedoed by an American submarine off Shanghai in 1942. Tony spoke to us previously about his first book published by HKU Press, "Not the Slightest Chance: The Defence of Hong Kong, 1941".

The venue will be the Helena May with either canapés in the garden before the lecture, or else dinner in the newly refurbished dining room, followed by the talk. We are now finalising these details and a full announcement will be in the May newsletter.

Overseas visit

17th – 26th August 2006

Proposed Study Tour to Mongolia

The RASHK Branch is arranging a study tour to Mongolia (previously known as Outer Mongolia). The ten-day visit will include an introduction to the capital city, Ulaan Baatar, and to some of the fine temples, monasteries, palaces and museums in the vicinity. We will visit the two National Parks nearest to Ulaan Baatar and see some of the wildlife, including the famed Takhi or wild horses of Mongolia. A highlight will be a visit to Erdene Zuu, the first and possibly most important monastery of Buddhism in Mongolia. To get there involves a day's coach journey through the Mongolian steppe and Gobi-type desert scenery. We will have the opportunity to experience Mongolian wrestling, archery and horse racing, to hear Mongolian throat singing and to enjoy a Mongolian "hot stone" barbeque.

Four nights will be spent in hotels and five nights in the spacious and comfortable Mongolian "gers" – the traditional homes of Mongolian nomads.

The total cost including flights, transfers, guides, group tips, accommodation, admission fees, and breakfasts, lunches and dinners throughout (full board) is HK\$18,600 for Members and HK\$19,200 for Non-members on a twin sharing basis. A single supplement of HK\$2,500 is applicable

should you require single accommodation. We will assist with visas but the fee is payable as an extra, at cost (allow, say, HK\$400 dependent, to some extent, on your nationality). There may be a possible option for an extended stay in Ulaan Batar or Beijing at a modest extra cost relating to flights and depending on numbers of participants. Please let us know if you are interested in such an extension.

We are sorry not to have been able to give more advance notice of this event. However, this rare opportunity has now arisen. August is normally an ideal time to visit with pleasant temperatures and weather.

We ask for your expression of interest accompanied by a cheque deposit of HK\$3,000 payable to the "Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch", as soon as possible and before **1st May 2006**, please. The deposit will be non-refundable if the visit goes ahead. The balance will be payable by **1st June 2006**. Please fill in the form on page 16 and send it to Peter Stuckey from whom you can obtain further details if you wish.

Proposed Itinerary for Study Tour of Mongolia (subject to change)

Thursday, 17th August: Hong Kong to Ulaan Baatar

Fly from Hong Kong to Beijing and transfer to a flight to the Mongolian capital of Ulaan Baatar (UB). Transfer by coach to 4-star hotel.

Friday, 18th August: City tour – Ganden Monastery – Terelj National Park

After an introductory coach tour of UB we go to the Ganden Monastery, including the Ochidara Temple and the Migjid Jamraisig Temple with its 26m high gilded statue, which was consecrated by the Dalai Lama. We travel 70kms by coach to the Terelj National Park and visit the Turtle Rock and a small museum of Chenggis Khan. Overnight in a ger in the Park.

Saturday, 19th August: Return to UB – National Museum of Mongolian History – Winter Palace of the Bogd Khan – Zaisan Hill – Folklore Concert

The National Museum displays Mongolian culture including gers, farming, music, costumes, hats, jewellery and armour as well as a display on Chenggis Khan. Bogd Khan was Mongolia's last king. The palace, built at the end of the 19th century, features temples, thankas, costumes and a wildlife collection. Zaisan Hill offers great views over UB.

Sunday, 20th August: Bayangobi via Ovgoni Temple

By coach 280kms across three kinds of landscape – a Gobi-type desert with sand dunes, steppe and forest steppe. En route we visit the recently re-opened Ovgani Temple at the foot of the 1967m high Khogno Khan mountain.

Monday, 21st August: Kharakorum – Erdene Zuu – daily life of nomads

Drive to Kharakorum, the site of the capital of Chenggis Khan's Mongul Empire. We visit Erdene Zuu, the first and possibly most important Buddhist Monastery in Mongolia, with three ancient temples and 108 stupas. In the afternoon we visit a horse-breeding family to see the daily life of nomads.

Tuesday, 22nd August: Experience Mongolian festivities at Anar ger camp

Special activities are arranged for the group, including the three key Mongolian sports of wrestling, horse racing and archery. Ger building demonstration – join in if you want. A special dinner with a traditional Mongolian barbeque roast using hot stones, and a cultural evening show around a bonfire.

Wednesday, 23rd August: Khustain Nuruu National Park – Takhi wild horses

By coach, we return towards UB and visit the Khustain Nuruu (Birch Mountain Range). Here a reserve protects the re-introduced Mongolian wild horses, the Takhi, also known as Przewalski's horses.

Thursday, 24th August: Museum of Fine Arts

Complete the coach journey back to UB. Visit the Zunabazar Museum of Fine Arts, with its splendid thankas, Buddhist statues, and Mongolia's finest paintings, sculptures and carvings.

Friday, 25th August: Choijin Lama Monastery – Natural History Museum

Choijin Lama was a State oracle and brother of Bogd Khan. The monastery was built in the early 1900s and is a museum with five temples, fine thangkas and masks. The Natural History Museum has wonderful displays of dinosaur skeletons and eggs, meteorites, and the camels of Mongolia. Free time for some shopping or further exploration of UB. A farewell dinner in the evening.

Saturday, 26th August: UB - Beijing - Hong Kong

Coach transfer to the airport for an early morning flight to Beijing, with connecting flight to Hong Kong.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

One Couple, Two Cultures

The first lecture of 2006 was given on 20th January by a very familiar figure to the Society, our former President, Dr. **Dan Waters**, and his wife, **Vera Waters**. They spoke about the book published by Dan in 2005, “One Couple Two Cultures: 81 Western-Chinese Couples Talk About Love and Marriage”. In the first part of the lecture, Dan shared a number of his findings from his research about Western-Chinese inter-marriages. Stating that he believes “everyone has a book inside them”, Dan began making notes many years ago about this subject. He found that two of the most important things for a successful inter-marriage are respect for each other’s customs, religions and families and a sense of humour. Couples of inter-marriages must be prepared to give up more of their own wishes than in a conventional marriage.

For the second part of the lecture, Dan was joined by his charming wife Vera, who, among many other accomplishments, was the first female manager in the Hong Kong Standard Chartered Bank, a well-known expert in the beauty industry and honoured in 2004 as one of the ‘100 Outstanding Women Entrepreneurs in China’. She expertly handled many questions from the audience and gave many amusing examples of their marriage of more than 46 years. Vera explained that she and Dan have never had an argument as both of them believe in not reacting spontaneously but waiting for suitable moments to speak of any differences and often handling things in indirect ways. Fortunately, Dan’s love of Chinese culture, his fluency in Cantonese and his curiosity of things Chinese have also helped.

Liu Chi-wen – Revolutionary Leader

On Friday, 24th February, a near-capacity audience enjoyed the talk given by Council member Dr. **Betty Wei Peh T’i** entitled “Liu Chi-wen – Revolutionary Leader”. Betty had last spoken to the Society in April 2004 about Jesuit Missionaries and Lord Macartney during the 17th and 18th Centuries. This year Betty supported her talk with an excellent PowerPoint presentation put together by her daughter, Katharine. Everyone who attended this interesting talk received a copy of the book *Liu Chi-wen - Biography of a Revolutionary Leader*, written by Betty and published in 2005. Betty explained how she came to write this book for the Liu family. Betty’s mother and Mrs. Liu had organized a school in Chongqing during the Second World War, and Betty had been a schoolmate and long-time friend of two of the five children of Liu Chi-wen. When the family was looking for someone to write the book, Betty was the obvious choice. She has another book coming out soon, and we look forward to once again hearing her address the Society.

University of Hong Kong Library

On Saturday morning, 4th March, nearly 20 members and guests “returned to school”, enjoying a most interesting talk and guided tour of the University of Hong Kong Library. The Librarian, Dr. Tony Ferguson, and Assistant Librarian, Annabelle Pau, were excellent hosts. Tony first spoke to us for nearly an hour, making clear with the use of a PowerPoint presentation that the digital revolution has brought enormous changes to both the users of libraries and the librarians.

Tony gave many interesting statistics, such as the fact that in 2001, only 12% of the Library’s budget went for electronic resources, while 57% was spent for printed journals; in 2005, the figures were 49% and 26%. Another example: instead of ordering one journal, as used to be done, the Library

buys huge packages of journals in electronic formats. Also, all eight universities in Hong Kong are now linked. Following a lively question period, Tony and Annabelle led the group to the Special Collections section, where we saw the very extensive collection of Hong Kong books and materials and the microfilm room. We were then taken into the normally off-limits room housing rare book collections such as the Hankow and Morrison libraries. Here we were shown a few examples of some of the Library's rarest books, such as large, beautifully illustrated books of Lord Macartney's visit to China in the 18th Century, with painted pictures of life in China at that time looking as if they had been painted only yesterday. During our tour of the Hong Kong collection Tony indicated that they would welcome any gifts of materials relating to all aspects of life in our city. He indicated that the Library was also most interested in historical photos and other sorts of memorabilia that would help capture the life of Hong Kong's people.

After the visit, many of the participants continued the discussions about the Library and the digital revolution over lunch in the Senior Common Room with a magnificent view of western Hong Kong Island, the harbour and the New Territories.

Sheung Shui Ta Tsiu

More than 50 Members of the Society and their guests joined Dr. Patrick Hase, Immediate Past President, on a visit to the Sheung Shui Ta Tsiu on Saturday 11th March. Since Sheung Shui only holds its Ta Tsiu once every sixty years, this was truly a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity!

After a walk of some forty minutes from the Sheung Shui Railway Station, the group reached the Ta Tsiu Ground, behind the old walled village of Sheung Shui, just before 10.00am. This was dominated by a spectacular opera matshed, and the usual range of temporary temples and other structures around a great square of open ground. After a brief introduction to the Ta Tsiu by Dr. Hase, the party joined the crowd of thousands of the Liu clan of Sheung Shui which filled the Ta Tsiu Ground to capacity for the Hang Heung Procession, during which the Taoist Priests, elders, and ordinary villagers went out to visit all the villages taking part, to bring the peace and purity of the Ta Tsiu to all participating households.

Led by the Taoist Priests in their pink-and-blue robes, and the Ritual Representatives in yellow silk cheongsams, with the village elders in blue and brown robes, and accompanied by a Dragon Dance, half-a-dozen Lion Dances and a Unicorn Dance, with accompanying drums and cymbals pulled along on little carts, and with hundreds of flags, mostly in yellow and red, the huge procession set off to visit all the shrines and ancestral halls and as many of the village houses as possible. The group accompanied the procession for part of its four-hour journey, and then returned for an excellent Vegetarian Pun Tsoi lunch in one of the village halls, before returning to the City at about 2.00pm. A splendid day: something definitely to remember!

We thank Patrick for organising this very special event for the Society. His expertise and understanding of the traditions of the New Territories added immeasurably to our enjoyment.

A REQUEST FOR INFORMATION

On four Chinese Canadian sisters, WWII

Todd Cleave has asked whether any members have information about four Chinese-Canadian sisters who were in Asia during World War II. If anyone can help, please contact him direct at the email address below.

“My father, David C. Cleave, MD, set up and operated the Dispensary at China-Burma-India Forward Echelon HQ, November 1942 to December 1943. He was assigned the services of an RN, Ms. Flossie Lee, probably by General Jerry Hwang (War Area Service Corps). Ms. Lee was one of four sisters in Asia in late 1941. One stayed in Australia and one was imprisoned in Hong Kong by the Japanese and later escaped to Kunming. Another, I think, worked for the Red Cross in Chongqing.

“A young pilot who was shot down and seriously injured was carried to a remote site, 200 miles from Chongqing. Ms. Lee and my Dad, with some medical supplies, jumped to where he was, and operated on him while he was still tied down on a barn door. The pilot had suffered terrible injuries; he was two weeks in transit on the barn-door, kept alive by Chinese volunteers who carried

him and hid him. Dad wrote that when he hit the ground, all his buttons and his web-belt broke, almost disintegrated, spilling medicines, morphine, etc. Neither Ms. Lee nor my Dad had ever jumped out of a plane! A Zero strafed them, but an American plane took out the Zero, which hit the ground 100 yards away. Ms. Lee later hitched a ride to Kunming to reunite with her sister. Her successor was Lucy Wong in Chongqing. I'd appreciate it if anyone can help me locate either Ms. Flossie Lee or her sister, or their descendants. I have photos of both, taken at the HQs in Chongqing."

ToddCleave (toddcleave@sbcglobal.net)

DONATIONS TO THE ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG BRANCH LIBRARY

We thank Felicity Shaw and Edward Stokes for their recent donations to the RAS library.

From Felicity Shaw:

- Cameron, Nigel. *The Face of China as seen by Photographers and Travellers 1860-1912*. London: Aperture Books, 1978.
- Ghose, Rajeshwari. *In the Footsteps of the Buddha: an Iconic Journey from India to China*. Hong Kong: University Museum and Art Gallery, The University of Hong Kong, 1998.
- Kin, Bunkyo. *Sangokushi no sekai: Gokan sangoku jidai*. Tokyo: Kodansha, 2005.
- Law, Joan and Ward, Barbara E. *Chinese Festivals in Hong Kong*. Hong Kong: South China Morning Post, 1982.
- Thomson, John. *China, the Land and its People: Early Photographs*. Ed. by John Warner. Hong Kong: Warner Publications, 1977.
- Williams, C.A.S. *Outlines of Chinese Symbolism and Art Motifs*. Dover, 3rd Rev., 1971.
- Worswick, Clark. *Imperial China: Photographs 1850-1912*. New York, Pennwick Publishing, 1978.

From Edward Stokes:

- Hedda Morrison's *Hong Kong: Photographs and Impressions, 1946-47*. Hong Kong, Hong Kong University Press, 2005.

HAVE YOU PAID YOUR MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR 2006 YET?

Most of our members now pay annual dues by autopay, because a) this is so much more convenient for them and for us, b) it saves them having to search back through their cheque stubs each year to see whether or not they have yet paid and c) they are then protected from those annoying reminders which have to go out from February onwards. If you are still paying by cheque, please check now to see whether you have paid for 2006. If not, this is a good time to switch to autopay.

For your convenience, there is a Membership Renewal Form and Direct Debit (autopay) form on pages 17 and 18. Please return the Renewal Form with either your cheque or the completed autopay form to the Assistant Secretary, RASHKB, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong. *Do not* send the form to your bank – it must come to us first for processing. Whichever option you choose, please send your membership renewal as soon as possible. After a period of time we have to delete unpaid memberships from our database – something we really do not want to do.

As a reminder, current rates for payment through autopay are \$475 for Single membership and \$700 for Joint membership. For payment by cheque the rates are \$525 for Single and \$750 for Joint.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series
“Reluctant Heroes: Rickshaw Pullers in Hong Kong and Canton, 1874-1954”
by Fung Chi Ming

A few years ago Council created the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Studies Series to make widely available important contributions on the local history, culture and society of Hong Kong and the surrounding region. A Trust Fund was established in the name of Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride, in memory of the Society’s first Vice-President. In addition to a sum set aside from the Society’s own funds, generous donations were received from the Clague Trust Fund and from the Friends of RASHKB in UK, enabling the series to publish high-quality works that will be of lasting appeal and value to both scholars and informed general readers.

The first volume in this series has now been published by Hong Kong University Press. *Reluctant Heroes* by Fung Chi Ming reconstructs the daily lives and social environments of rickshaw pullers in Hong Kong and Canton. Subject to patron-client problems, the interventions of the police, the regulations of the state, and the British colonial and Chinese authorities, they struggled with their adversities and became a political force to be reckoned with. Fung argues that they are “reluctant heroes”, since their collective outbursts were authentic protests against encroachments on their livelihood. This book is accessible and interesting for a lay reader, while making an important contribution to interethnic relations, social movements, migrant populations, the colonial situation, and the growth of the modern state.

Reluctant Heroes is available in local bookstores for \$250, but members may purchase it direct from the Society at the discounted price of \$190 at City Hall talks, through the Order Form on the website and also using the Order Form below.

Order Form

The first volume in the
ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series

“Reluctant Heroes: Rickshaw Pullers in Hong Kong and Canton, 1874-1954”
by Fung Chi Ming

Yes, I would like to order copies of *Reluctant Heroes* by Fung Chi Ming at the discounted price for Members of \$190 per copy, plus \$20 for postage within Hong Kong and \$50 for postage overseas.

NAME.....Memb. No.....

ADDRESS.....

.....

DAYTIME TEL..... EVENING TEL.....

EMAIL (please print).....

My cheque for is enclosed, made out to **Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch.**

MAIL TO: Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong.

OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Doing the Honours for Lord Wilson of Tillyorn

Members will have been delighted to have heard that Lord Wilson received an honorary Doctor of Letters degree which was conferred by the Chancellor, our Chief Executive Donald Tsang, at the University of Hong Kong on 14th March. His Lordship is an Honorary Fellow of our Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society. He is a sinophile and studied the Chinese language at the University of Hong Kong in the early 1960s. He was at one time editor of the highly respected British *China Quarterly*.

Many of us remember him from 1987 to 1992 as Sir David Wilson, Governor of Hong Kong, during which time he was Patron of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch. Another of our Patrons who took a real interest in our Branch was Sir Robert Brown Black. He actually presided over RASHKB meetings during his term as Governor before he left the Colony in 1964 (JHKBRAS, V 1: photo at front).

I also recall the AGM in 1990 which was attended by the then Patron Sir David Wilson. It was held in the Furama Hotel and I was fortunate to sit at his table for dinner. After the meal was over I remember him being in no hurry to rush away and we stayed on discussing early governors.

In a recent letter which I received Lord Wilson said, "... I know that the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society is continuing to flourish and that is very good to know."

Dr. Dan Waters, Past President

Harbin, Heilongjian Province

One of our Overseas members has sent this interesting account of Harbin, Heilongjiang Province.

"There's more to Harbin than ice sculptures, delightful though these are! Capital of Heilongjiang Province, Harbin (population about 2.75 million), is an unusual Chinese city. Founded as a planned settlement by Russians, it served as an administrative centre for the two key railway lines that the Czarist government forced the Qing administration to permit them to build.

Construction began in 1897. The line came in from the Russian frontier in the northwest, 935km away, and crossed the Songhua River by a long bridge. Just south of here the city was founded. From Harbin, one line then headed 940km south to two treaty settlements: Liushun (which became the Russian naval base) and Dalian (which developed as a Russian port). Another line headed east, crossing the border 548km away at Suifenhe, on its way to Vladivostock in Russian territory. Not surprisingly, Russian troops were based at the strategic crossing point of the Songhua at Harbin.

Immigrants, predominantly but by no means exclusively from Russia, and including many Jews, poured into Harbin, taking the opportunity to develop local resources. By 1935, by which time it had become an administration centre of Japanese-occupied Manchuria, the city's population was half a million. As the result of its early boom, Harbin has a magnificent, predominantly western, architectural heritage in a variety of styles – Art Nouveau, Renaissance, Baroque, Classical Revival and Romanesque. Large numbers of these buildings, indeed whole streetscapes, have escaped the ravages of time and are now protected by the Urban Planning Bureau of Harbin Municipality.

The Byzantine Cathedral of Saint Sophia, the largest Eastern Orthodox Church in the Far East, is located near the centre of the old European quarter of Harbin. It now contains a permanent exhibition of photographs that record the growth of the city and its cultural life from the earliest days. Just down the street, and also not to be missed, is a breathtaking exhibition of urban planning and contemporary architecture in Harbin.

In 2005, the Urban Planning Bureau published several books in English and Chinese to commemorate the centenary of the official foundation of Harbin. One gives a detailed cartographic and photographic history of the development of the city. Another is a catalogue of protected buildings, with architectural drawings and photographs. Both of these heavy tomes came back from Harbin in David Teather's baggage in January 2006 – he had been teaching a course at Harbin Normal University for the University of Canberra. Email Liz and Dave (teather@grapevine.net.au) if you'd like details of these fascinating books."

Liz Teather, Canberra

OBITUARY

Mr. Tony Rydings

The sad news has been received of the death in England, on 15th March, at the age of 83, of Mr. H.A. (Tony) Rydings. Tony was a long-standing member of the Society, having joined in 1961, the same year that he was appointed as Librarian of the University of Hong Kong. He joined the Council of the Society in 1964 and continued to serve as Hon. Librarian until his retirement from Hong Kong in 1983. He was indefatigable in his attendance at Council, rarely missing a meeting, and was always ready to give his advice and comments. When he became Hon. Librarian the Society had almost no books, but by the time of his retirement the Society's Library had become a major research library in Hong Kong.

Tony contributed a number of Articles and Notes to the *Journal*, including "Notes on Hong Kong libraries in the nineteenth century" (Vol. 8); "Books from the Victoria Library" (Vol. 9); "The McMullen Collection of Bills of Lading" (Vol. 13); "Transactions of the China Medical-Chirurgical Society" (Vol. 13); "Missing Maps: Sowerby's 'Sport and Science on the Sino-Mongolian Frontier'" (Vol. 18); and "A Missing Chinese Library" (with Dr James Hayes, Vol. 20).

Tony also compiled the two volumes of Indices to the *Journal*, to Vols. 1-10 (1972) and 11-20(1983), and the first Catalogue of the Society's Library. His very important *Index to Sessional Papers of Hong Kong 1879-1982* was also published by the Society in 1985. On his retirement, the then President, Dr. Marjorie Topley, paid a well-deserved tribute to Tony as "our very hardworking and competent librarian". He was made an Hon. Fellow of the Society in 2004 in a belated recognition of his services to Hong Kong and to the Society.

After his retirement, Tony lived in England. Over the last eighteen months his health deteriorated, and his death came after a fall. He leaves in Hong Kong many friends and old colleagues who regret his passing very deeply: not least the undersigned, who served with him on Council for a number of years, and who benefited greatly from his advice and encouragement.

Dr. Patrick Hase, Immediate Past President

LOCAL EVENTS

Oriental Ceramics Society

For the Dr. K.S. Lo Memorial Lecture of 2006 to be held on the evening of Tuesday, 4th April, the OCS is pleased to present Mr. James C.Y. Watt, the Brooke Russell Astor Chairman of the Department of Asian Art at the Metropolitan Museum of Art. Mr. Watt is well known for his exhibitions and catalogues, the most recent being "Defining Yongle: Imperial Art in Early Fifteenth-Century China" in 2005 and "China: Dawn of A Golden Age, 200-750 AD" in 2004 at the Metropolitan. His subject for the evening will be the Yongle Emperor and the Arts of his Era. Reservations are necessary and should be made by emailing the OCS at ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk or leaving a voice message on 2527 0696. Guests are welcome to join OCS members for dinner following the lecture.

Hong Kong Museum of History

On 8th April, as part of the lecture series on the "Sailing West: Admiral Zheng He's Voyages" exhibition at the Museum of History, Dr. Stephen Davies, Director of the Hong Kong Maritime Museum, will give the talk "Historical Method and Modelling the Past: The Treasure Ship of Zheng He". How do maritime historians go about assessing evidence for producing models of ships of previous times like the Treasure Ship of Zheng He? The answer is a categorization and analysis of the evidence in a simple table. The table shows where evidence is solid and where it is lacking. If all one has is poor quality evidence, how is a model made? The answer lies in good historical method wherever you are and whatever language you speak. By the use of such method, if the evidence cannot tell us precisely what a ship of the past looked like, we can narrow the options to a set of credible possibilities and rule out the wholly implausible. Date and time: 3.00-5.00pm, Saturday, 8th April. Venue: Hong Kong Museum of History, 100 Chatham Road South, Tsim Sha Tsui. There will be 140 seats, first come first served. Enquiries: Tel. 2724 9019.

The Queen's 80th Birthday

On 21st April, HM Queen Elizabeth will celebrate her 80th birthday. The Royal Overseas League have arranged two special events in Hong Kong to mark the occasion and are inviting RAS members to attend both. There will be a special service of thanksgiving at St. John's Cathedral at 11.00am, followed by lunch at the China Club, 14/F Old Bank of China Building, where guests will hear a talk by Mr. David Tang, OBE. No booking is required for the Cathedral service, but early booking is recommended for the lunch. Anyone interested can visit www.rosl.org.hk for full details and a booking form. Enquiries: Mr. Rupert Purser, Tel 9104 3755.

The Textile Society

On Monday, 3rd April, Chris Buckley will be speaking on "Tibetan Textiles, New and Old". Weaving used to play a major part in Tibetan life prior to 1950, when Tibetans used their abundant supplies of wool to make striking carpets and flatweaves for their own use. In this talk Chris will show examples of the main types of Tibetan textiles and photographs of the weaving processes. He will also compare older production with present-day weaving, and talk about some of the challenges that weavers face in Tibet, especially the question of why, despite the popularity of their carpets, the survival of the weaving tradition within Tibet is under threat. Venue: The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central. 6.30 drinks (cash bar) for 7.00pm talk. \$50 members, \$100 non-members. There is no need to register. For more information about the Textile Society go to www.textilesocietyofhk.org or email <mailto:info@textilesocietyofhk.org>.

OVERSEAS EVENTS

A Siam Society Study Trip

The Siam Society is organizing a very interesting trip to old towns in Anhui and Zhejiang from 22nd to 29th May, led by two Chinese members of the society. This trip will include many ancient and beautiful locations, taking in Mt. Huangshan, one of the four most scenic mountains in China, Tuanqi, a 400-year old city with many historical buildings, Hangzhou, Shaoxing and Shanghai. For full details about joining the society and more information on this trip, with some very appealing photographs, go to www.siam-society.org.

If any members will be travelling to London, or New York over the Easter period, they may like to visit these exhibits:

Royal Academy of Arts, London

The very fine exhibit, "**China: The Three Emperors, 1662-1795**" at the Royal Academy of Arts, Piccadilly; is still running until 17th April. RAS members who have already seen it say it is truly excellent, a must-see. This magnificent exhibition is devoted to the artistic and cultural riches of Imperial China. Spanning the reigns of three Emperors, Kangxi (1662-1722), Yongzheng (1723-1735) and Qianlong (1736-1795), it focuses on the most powerful rulers of China's last dynasty: the Qing. Each Emperor employed the greatest artists and workshops of his day to glorify his rule. For more information go to www.royalacademy.org. Tickets can be booked through this website and are for staggered hours of entrance, commencing 10.00 hours.

Asia Society and Museum, New York

Organised to coincide with the Asia Society's 50th anniversary, **A Passion for Asia: The Rockefeller Family Collects**, celebrates the important contributions of the Rockefeller families as collectors of Asian art. The exhibit will feature 150 of the most stunning and important Asian art works originally purchased and owned by three generations of Rockefellers. The exhibition runs through until 3rd September. Venue: Asia Society and Museum, 725 Park Avenue, New York. General admission is US\$10 for adults, US\$7 for senior citizens and US\$5 for students. For more information, go to www.asiasociety.org, Tel. (1) 212 288 6460 or email <mailto:info@asiasoc.org>.

OTHER SOCIETIES IN HONG KONG

Few places can have as many interest societies as Hong Kong. Many RAS members belong to other groups and with some of these we have a reciprocal arrangement, exchanging information about activities and advertising each other's programmes. For newcomers to Hong Kong these groups offer an informal way to get to know others and to make friends while sharing common interests.

The Oriental Ceramics Society

The Oriental Ceramics Society provides a forum for the exchange of ideas and information in study sessions and travel programmes, a platform for scholarly lectures by distinguished speakers and a medium through which members may show their collections to other members and the public. For further information email ocs@orientalceramics.org.hk or leave a message at Tel. 2527 0696.

The Women's Corona Society also welcomes ladies who are new to Hong Kong as well as those who are not. They meet each Monday morning in the Mariners' Club in TST and enjoy coffee and a chat as well as interesting speakers; they also arrange local visits and social activities. For more information call Karen Ellis on 2779 3476.

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 calling Jan Campbell at 2573 8305 or emailing her at hellojan@netvigator.com.

The Friends of the Art Museum, CUHK

Founded in 1981 to promote the study of Chinese Art and Culture, the Friends celebrate their 25th Anniversary in 2006. Through fundraising activities the Friends have provided scholarship and support to Fine Arts students and help with the acquisition of artefacts by the Art Museum at CUHK. Members and members' guests can enjoy both local and Asian tours, lectures by resident and visiting experts; join study groups as well as film and gallery clubs and, most importantly, enjoy the company of others interested in the Arts. Through these activities and the sale of their popular range of cards and other products they finance their charitable work. For full details of events, please visit the website, www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/friends and to join contact <mailto:asblau@netvigator.com>.

English Speaking Union (Hong Kong) ¾ ESU (HK)

Members are warmly invited to join the ESU (HK), an independent, non-political, registered educational charity, founded in 1918, and active in 56 countries. The mission of the ESU (HK) is to provide opportunities for people from all walks of life to broaden their social contacts through the English language and to advance their knowledge and use of English as the language of the "global village". For further information, do visit the ESU (HK) web-site: <http://www.esuhk.org/>; or send enquiries by email to: esuhk@netvigator.com. Telephone enquiries may be made to the administrator at: 2186-8449 (M-F, 9.00am-12 noon).

The Mineralogy Society of Hong Kong

The Mineralogy Society of Hong Kong is a newly formed society which will be of interest to any RAS members who are fascinated by the symmetry and beauty of naturally occurring crystals, and by the details of their formation over geological ages. Members receive a monthly newsletter, often with some offers of minerals for sale, and participate in a variety of activities, including trips into China. Please visit our website for more details about the society, email info@minsochk.org, or call Anthea Strickland at 2857 3464.