

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY

HONG KONG BRANCH

皇家亞洲學會香港分會
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

Telephone/fax : 2813 7500

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

web address : www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

20th MARCH 2007

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Friday 20 th April	Lecture	Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong
Friday 27 th April	Annual Event	AGM and Annual Dinner
Friday 4 th May	Lecture	Almost Forgotten Aspects of the Dragon Boat Festival in the North-west New Territories
Friday 11 th May	Lecture	Cinnamon – The Enigmatic Spice
Saturday 12 th May	Local Visit	Lunch at Miles Young's Home
Friday 25 th May	Informal Talk	From Shanghai to Shek O
Friday June 8 th	Lecture	Carl Crow: His Newspapers, His Adverts and the People He Knew
18 th August – 1 st September	Overseas Visit	Proposed Western Mongolia Explorer Tour

Lecture at The Helena May

Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong

Friday 20th April

John Carroll will talk about *Edge of Empires: Chinese Elites and British Colonials in Hong Kong*, which has recently been re-published in paperback by Hong Kong University Press. First published by Harvard University Press in 2005, *Edge of Empires* looks at how Chinese elites in Hong Kong collaborated with their British rulers to build a place that they came to consider their own. This collaboration resulted from the initiative and endeavor of the rising Chinese business class, whose leaders worked within the cracks and spaces opened and shaped by Hong Kong's strategic geographical, political, and cultural position at the edge of the Chinese and British empires. Contrary to conventional wisdom, Carroll argues that a sense of Hong Kong identity characterized the local Chinese bourgeoisie well before 1949, when the colony was cut off from the mainland by the founding of the PRC. By arguing that colonies like Hong Kong were based as much on cooperation, familiarity, and affinity as they were on conflict, unfamiliarity, and difference, Carroll's book challenges prevailing ideas of colonialism and imperialism.

John Carroll was raised in Hong Kong, where he was educated at Wa Ying College and at Hong Kong International School. He received his BA from Oberlin College, his MA from the University of Iowa and his PhD from Harvard University, and is currently Associate Professor of History at the University of Hong Kong. He has also taught at The University of Texas, The College of William and Mary, and Saint Louis University. His second book, *A Concise History of Hong Kong*, will be co-published this spring. Both books will be for sale to members at this talk. Carroll is an avid rock-climber and hopes that the RAS will organise a trip to Yangshuo, near Guilin and the fastest-growing climbing area in Asia.

Speaker: John Carroll
Venue: The Blue Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Time/Date: 6.00 for 6.30pm, Friday 20th April
Cost: \$50 for members, \$70 for guests (there will be a cash bar)
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 15 and return to Geoffrey Emerson

The Harcourt Suite, Hong Kong Club

Friday 27th April

Annual Dinner and AGM

As we announced in the January Newsletter, last year's Annual General Meeting set a benchmark, and expectations are already high for a repeat performance this year. Those expectations will be met fully by this year's speaker - Arthur Hacker. Arthur's skills as a historian, writer and artist, together with his 40 years of living in Hong Kong, give him a unique ability to record the different aspects of life in this city. He has published a number of books over the years, the most recent being *British Hong Kong: Fact and Fable* and it is this book which will be the focus of his talk at the AGM. Amongst the subjects Arthur will cover are Emanuel Ralph Belilios, who used to commute between The Peak and Central riding a camel, and the clock tower in Pedder Street that was built with no clock. Arthur will illustrate his talk with his own trademark "curlicue" style of cartoons, and his trademark dry wit.

The AGM will also feature a selection of photographs from recent RAS visits, and a number of members' recent publications available for people to buy. Most of all, however, the AGM gives members an opportunity to meet and mix and to hear about what their Society has been doing - and what it plans to be doing in the coming year. The venue will be the same as last year, the Harcourt Suite at the Hong Kong Club, and a buffet dinner will be provided.

We recognise in addition that some members may wish to come to the meeting but not stay for dinner. Such members will be very welcome also and appropriate arrangements will be made to accommodate them and make them feel welcome.

Please note that 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. The event will be booked and signposted in the name of Hong Kong Club member Mr. David Holdsworth.

Venue: The Harcourt Suite, The Hong Kong Club, Central
Time/Date: 6.00 for 6.15pm, Friday 27th April
Cost: \$325 for members, \$375 for members' guests
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 16 and return to Jenny Day by 14th April

Lecture at Central Library

Friday 4th May

Almost Forgotten Aspects of the Dragon Boat Festival in the North-west New Territories

Some members may recall Dick Irving from the time he spent teaching in the Department of Geography and Geology at HKU, 1985-1995. As an active member of WWF(HK) he produced educational material for the Mai Po Marshes, and frequently led tours there. More recently, RAS members may be familiar with the tours he helped create along the ancient highways of Japan as co-founder of Walk Japan. Indeed, he has been based in Japan since leaving Hong Kong, currently teaching at the School of Policy Studies at Kwansai Gakuin University, near Kobe.

Dick's research interest in Hong Kong was rekindled recently with the saga of an estuarine crocodile 'infesting' the marshlands near Mai Po. He recalled an earlier notion he had conceived – that the origins of the Dragon Boat Festival in southern China lay in the fact that these sleek boats were originally designed to chase down troublesome crocodiles in the local waters. Whilst still holding this notion to be true, his main concern on this occasion is with the nature and significance of the Festival as it used to be celebrated in the north-west New Territories. Following a post-war revival, depopulation, land reclamation, and events in the mainland all combined to bring about the eventual demise of the Festival in this area in the late 1940s. Today only a handful of former participants survive to recall the memories they share of this event.

The Festival then was very different to the rather synthetic version of dragon boat racing we see today. Extending over a number of days, when tides were highest during the first week or so of the fifth lunar month, the 'races' were not just an opportunity to display village prowess but also to resolve inter-village disputes, or re-establish friendships. The size of the boats varied according to the status and wealth of the thirty or so village communities who regularly participated, so competition was never even. Rather, the Festival resembled a mere procession of boats from township to township, with rivalries being settled out of sight of the crowds who would assemble to greet their male relatives from more distant communities.

Although memories of these events are now distant, there are many artefacts associated with the Festival which survive, and so this talk will be fully illustrated. **Please note the venue.**

Speaker: Professor Dick Irving
Time/date: 6.30pm, Friday 4th May
Venue: Activities Room 1, G/F, Hong Kong Central Library, Causeway Bay
Cost: This event is free and open to the public with no booking required

Lecture at the Helena May

Friday 11th May

Cinnamon – The Enigmatic Spice

This talk will look at the historiography of cinnamon, a spice which has been in continuous usage from ancient times, but which has never received as much attention as spices such as nutmeg or vanilla. From its mysterious origins in both South Asia and China, cinnamon diffused throughout the world; it strongly influenced the Western 'discovery' of Asia in the 15th century and it is a continuing, albeit low key, life enhancer today.

Miles Young was educated at Bedford School and New College, Oxford, where he read Modern History. He is the Chairman of Ogilvy & Mather Asia Pacific, the region's largest marketing services company. He also farms cinnamon in Sri Lanka and is in the process of creating the world's first Cinnamon Museum on his plantation there.

Speaker: Miles Young
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Time/Date: 6.00 for 6.30pm, Friday 11th May
Cost: \$50 for members, \$70 for guests (there will be a cash bar)
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 17 and return to Geoffrey Emerson

Local Visit

Saturday 12th May

Lunch at Miles Young's Home

Miles Young, our speaker on 11th May, talking about Cinnamon, has very kindly invited members of the Society and guests to his home for lunch. Miles lives in a large and very attractive home on Chatham Path, just above May Road and next to the Peak Tram, so this is a special opportunity for us to visit an unusual, beautiful pre-war house. (This is a five-minute walk up steep Chatham Path from May Road with no vehicular access.) Miles is also a well-known collector of modern Chinese art, so participants will be able to view his collection as well. This promises to be a rare and fascinating treat!

The maximum number of participants will be 50, and each member may bring one guest only. As usual, first come, first served. Full directions will be sent to successful applicants. The lunch will be held even if it is raining.

Date/Time: 12 noon, Saturday 12th May
Venue: 1 Chatham Path, just above May Road
Cost: \$100 for members, \$150 for guests (maximum one guest per member)
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 17 and return to Geoffrey Emerson

Informal Talk at the Helena May

Friday 25th May

From Shanghai to Shek O

Long time RAS member Anne Marden was born in Shanghai in 1926. She was educated at the Public School for Girls in Shanghai, Chatelard School in Switzerland and Heatherton Park School in England - each one of which has now closed down. She married and came to Hong Kong in 1947 and spent the next few years raising a family of four.

In 1960 Anne became Director of the Hong Kong Red Cross and kept the position until 1965 when she joined the Hong Kong Society for Rehabilitation. She became the first Chairperson of Rehabaid, the forerunner of the Rehabaid Society, also a founding member of TREATS and of Playright. She was appointed a Justice of the Peace in 1973 and was awarded an MBE in 1991. The Hong Kong Government awarded her a Bronze Bauhinia Star in 2006. She is still actively involved in many of the charities that she founded. Anne will be talking to us about her early life in Shanghai and in Hong Kong. This will be an informal talk along the lines of a 'fireside chat', with an interviewer and unscripted conversation.

Speaker: Anne Marden
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Time/Date: 6.00 for 6.30pm, Friday 25th May
Cost: \$50 for members, \$70 for guests (there will be a cash bar)
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 17 and return to Geoffrey Emerson

Lecture at the Helena May

Friday 8th June

Carl Crow:

His Newspapers, His Adverts and the People He Knew

Carl Crow arrived in Shanghai as a young man in 1911 fresh from Missouri. His job was to launch the China Press – Shanghai's first American-run English language newspaper. Over the next 25 years he became one of the most popular Shanghailanders and a well-known character along the China coast. He launched a number of magazines and newspapers, started a ground-breaking advertising agency and wrote one of the most influential and best selling books on China ever – *400 Million Customers*. He became not just a well-known journalist in China but was one of the major interpreters of China to the world outside through his writing for a host of publications including the *Saturday Evening Post*, *Reader's Digest* and *Liberty*.

Paul French, author of *Carl Crow - A Tough Old China Hand: The Life, Times, and Adventures of an American in Shanghai* (published by the Hong Kong University Press), will give a presentation which takes you back to a China and a Shanghai between the wars and looks at the fortunes of those foreigners who made Shanghai their home and business base as well as re-assessing the importance of Carl Crow's legacy and journalistic work. Copies of this book will be available at the talk.

Paul has lived and worked in Shanghai for many years. He is a widely published analyst, journalist and commentator on China and foreign business in the country. He is the author of *One Billion Shoppers - Accessing Asia's Consuming Passions after the Meltdown* written with Matthew Crabbe and inspired by Carl Crow's similarly titled book. Recently, French has written the well-received *North Korea: The Paranoid Peninsula - A Modern History*.

Speaker: Paul French
Venue: The Blue Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Time/Date: 6.00 for 6.30pm, Friday 8th June
Cost: \$50 for members, \$70 for guests (there will be a cash bar)
Booking: Please complete the booking form on page 18 and return to Geoffrey Emerson

Proposed Western Mongolia Explorer Tour

This adventurous tour will take us into Mongolia's western provinces. The impressive peaks of the Mongolian Altai Mountain range rise up to more than 4000 metres dominating the region. Snow peaks, turquoise lakes and swift rivers, summer pastures and the hot lake depression with the world's northernmost desert form ever-changing landscapes.

We will take flights to Ulaan Bataar and then a domestic flight to Khovd Province in the far west of (Outer) Mongolia. We then have 10 full days to explore the westernmost Provinces of Outer Mongolia using land transport before flying back to Ulaan Baatar for the return flights to Hong Kong. We shall have the chance to visit Kazak people and to see their traditional hunting using eagles. The region is a melting pot of ethnic tribes and among others we also see the Khoton tribe who are well known for their Shamanistic beliefs. We see salt water lakes, rich in birdlife and huge sand dunes as well as two Provincial capitals.

The total cost including flights, both international and domestic, transfers, land transport, guides, group tips, accommodation, tents, mattresses and sleeping bags, admission fees, and breakfasts, lunches and dinners throughout (full board) is HK\$29,000 for Members and HK\$29,600 for Non-Members on a twin sharing basis. A single supplement of HK\$4,000 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 UB 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 with your expression of interest. You will also want to purchase your own travel insurance and will need a double entry visa, or similar, for China.

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 by completing the booking form on page 19 accompanied by a cheque deposit of HK\$6,000 payable to the "Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch", as soon as possible and before **1st May 2007**, please. The deposit will be non-refundable if the visit goes ahead. The balance will be payable by **10th June 2007**. Please fill in the form at the end of this Newsletter and send it to Peter Stuckey from whom you can obtain further details if you wish. The trip will be led by Peter Stuckey and Rocky Dang who led the RAS HKB Study Tour to Mongolia last year.

Remarks:

Accommodation in this remote region is spartan – where gers or hotels of adequate quality are available we will use them, but for the most part we will use tents. The Mongolian Agent will provide tents to a western standard as well as mattresses and sleeping bags. A small team of helpers will erect the tents for us and provide the cooked meals.

This trip takes us into remote areas, where no touristic infrastructure is available. The roads are often in a neglected condition.

The total distance to be covered overland will be approximately 1100 km (not including the flights).

TENTATIVE ITINERARY, (SUBJECT TO REVISION)

Proposed Western Mongolia Explorer Tour 18th August - 1st September 2007

Saturday 18th August: Hong Kong to Ulaan Baatar (Via Beijing)

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.

Sunday 19th August: Ulaan Baatar – Khovd (Domestic flight)

Transfer to the airport for domestic flight to Khovd Province. The Province is famous for its many different tribes and for its spectacular scenery. Drive along the valley of the Buyant River into Bayan Oelgii Province, where most of the population is Kazakh.

Monday 20th August: To Deluun, visit Kazakh family

Tuesday 21st August: Get to know lifestyle of Kazakh people

Spend the day with a Kazakh family. See traditional hunting using eagles. Kazakh gers are richly decorated with felt carpets and wall hangings.

Wednesday 22nd August: Lake Doroo Nuur and on to Lake Tolbo Nuur

Leave Deluun in a northern direction and drive across several mountain passes to Lake Uureg Nuur. The beautiful lake is surrounded by stunning snow mountains. We continue to the small Doroo Nuur Lake, nestled in the foothills of the impressive Maraa Mountain. Through summer pastures and river valleys we reach the impressive Tolbo Nuur Lake, a salt water lake rich in birdlife.

Thursday 23rd August: Buyant village and to the Khargantin Gol Valley

Travelling further west we reach the Khargantin Valley, at the foot of Tsengel Khaikhan Mountain, one of the highest mountains in Mongolia.

Friday 24th August: The Altai Tavanbogd National Park, visit Khurgan Nuur lake

We enter the beautiful Altai Tavanbogd National Park. The turquoise coloured mountain lakes such as Khurgan Nuur and Khoton Nuur reflect the snow-clad peaks, which form the natural border with China.

Saturday 25th August: Oelgii, visit the Aimag (Provincial) museum and mosque

We leave the National Park through the Khovd River Valley and reach Oelgii, the capital of the Province.

Sunday 26th August: Tsagaannuur to the foothills of Ikh Turgen Uul Mountain

Further east we reach the valley between the Kharkhiraa Uul and the Turgen Uul Mountains. The inhabitants of this valley mostly belong to the Khoton tribe, famous as shamans.

Monday 27th August: Lake Uureg Nuur, stroll in the surrounding mountains

We leave the mountains and drive into the hot lake depression of western Mongolia. On the way we see Uvs Nuur, the biggest lake in Mongolia.

Tuesday 28th August: Karkhiraa Valley, walk in the forest

Wednesday 29th August: Lake Uvs Nuur, visit sand dunes

Uvs Nuur is five times saltier than the ocean, making it an inland sea. On the Eastern Shore rise huge sand dunes out of the plains, the Borog Deliin Els, forming the northernmost desert on earth.

Thursday 30th August: Transfer to Ulaangom, domestic flight to Ulaan Baatar,

We drive back to the capital of Uvs province, Ulaangom, from where we fly back to Ulaanbaatar.

Friday 31st August: Free at own leisure/explore Ulaan Baatar

Perhaps visit some of the museums, the National Museum, the Fine Arts Museum or the Natural History Museum, or visit the Winter Palace of the Bogd Khan, or visit the shops and buy some cashmere, paintings or leatherware.

Saturday 1st September: Ulaan Baatar - Hong Kong (Via Beijing)

Advance Notice of an Overseas Study Tour

Members may wish to note that a Study Tour of parts of Northern Vietnam is being planned for late November or early December this year. Further details will be given in the next newsletter.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Visit to the Temple of Hidden Peace and Tranquillity

Some 50 members and guests in two buses and eight cars found their way to the amazing home of Veronica and Ron Clibborn-Dyer on 21st January, on a mountain-side in the New Territories not far from Lok Ma Chau. This visit followed on from Ron's talk at The Helena May the previous week, entitled 'From Tangled Jungle to Hidden Paradise'. Those on this visit saw exactly why Ron's talk was so-entitled. Being experienced and excellent hosts, Veronica and Ron answered the many queries about the restoration of the nunnery, the various trees and flowering shrubs and living in such an isolated spot. They then led a tour of the property, particularly to see the more than 25 goats in residence. Sadly, all the fowl – chickens, ducks, and geese – no longer are in residence because of the bird-flu scare. An excellent curry lunch was provided by Shaffi's famous restaurant.

Putting Hong Kong on the Map: the Strange Story of Captain Daniel Ross

Despite suffering a dislocated shoulder earlier in the afternoon, Dr Stephen Davies, Director of Hong Kong's Maritime Museum, delighted a well-attended meeting on 26th January with a very well-researched and brilliantly arranged PowerPoint presentation about Captain Daniel Ross, 1780-1849, a famous Marine surveyor

Stephen described the remarkable though little-known career of Daniel Ross, the son of the wealthy Hercules Ross in Jamaica, a friend of Horatio Nelson. Daniel's mother was a freed quadroon slave, Elizabeth Ford. In 1795 the 14-year old Daniel joined the Bombay Marine, the navy of the British East India Company. He developed a special talent as a marine surveyor. Between 1806 and 1808 he was surveying the South China Coast and the Paracels. In 1808 he published a chart of the Paracels and in 1810 the first accurate chart of Hong Kong waters entitled *Macau Roads* which covered the area of the mouth of the Pearl River estuary.

In 1809 Daniel Ross and his ship *Discovery* were captured by a French ship and he was imprisoned in Batavia. The French took all his finished charts and he had to reconstruct his map of the *Macau Roads* from his notes and drafts.

Ross returned to Chinese waters 1816-1818 when he accompanied Lord Amherst's Embassy. Ross was made a Fellow of the Royal Society in 1822. In 1823 he was appointed Marine Surveyor General in Calcutta and the same year James Horsburgh dedicated his chart of the South China Sea to Ross.

Many of the numerous maps he produced were lost due to decay, carelessness or fire. Our thanks go to Stephen for his careful research and excellent talk.

Hong Kong and Macau - A Comparison of Integration with the Mainland

On 9th February, at the Helena May, Dr Werner Breitung gave a most interesting talk very well illustrated with PowerPoint slides. In addition to discussing such topics as identities and values, Werner made some very apt comparisons of Macau with his hometown, Berlin. Whereas the people of Berlin rallied round the slogan 'Tear this wall down', the people of Macau are quite content to keep their wall. While in Macau people are very patriotic, they like the opportunities the wall brings, e.g. buying cheaper things in Zhuhai and keeping out undesirable immigrants and problems such as crime. There is in Macau much more integration with the mainland than in Hong Kong. Werner pointed out that, however, frequent border crossing, as in Macau, does not necessarily mean understanding the other side and the people's lives and values.

A very lively, long and interesting question and answer period followed the talk. One of the many questions asked about casinos and the possibility of Hong Kong following Macau in building casinos. Werner said that he felt the limit has been reached in Macau and it is wrong for Macau to rely on this advantage for too long. Macau will probably not keep its monopoly on gambling forever and eventually Hong Kong may open gambling facilities as well. A number of members remained afterwards to enjoy dinner and further discussion with Werner. They were joined by former RAS President David Gilkes and his wife, Edith, visiting from England.

Bhutan Study Tour

Having spent months organizing the Bhutan trip in February, Felicity Shaw had to leave Brian in sole charge due to family illness. In spite of these difficulties, from all the accounts received it appears that the trip was yet another unqualified success and a fuller report will follow in the May newsletter.

Conducting Sino-British Relations before the Opium War: Ruan Yuan, a Major Scholar-Official in Canton, 1817-1826

On 2nd March Dr Betty Peh T'i Wei treated us to one of her ever-fluent lectures, based on her immense knowledge and appreciation of Chinese history. This time her subject was related to that of her recently published book on Ruan Yuan. She gave us an insight into this second Rank (Provincial level) mandarin, a scholar who became governor General of Guangdong and Guangxi. She concentrated on the relationships between the Chinese and British in the period up to 1826. In doing so she described also Sir James Urmiston who was head of the British East India Company.

She discussed the contrasting systems of justice between the corporate responsibility recognized by the Chinese side whereby a group would maintain its own discipline and the British system of individual responsibility, and illustrated how this led to clashes with each side regarding the other as unreasonable, as with the case of the Lady Hughes ship in 1784. The outcome of this case was that the British handed over a gunner who had accidentally killed two Chinese, only for the Chinese to put the gunner to death.

She hinted at the differences between the British who, learning from this incident and supported by their Government and the Navy, could afford to take a principled stand as distinct from the Americans' more pragmatic approach as in the Terranova case in 1825. The Americans handed over a sailor who had caused the death of a sampan lady whom he thought had cheated him. The Chinese put the American to death but Ruan was upset that peace had been bought at the price of failing to search the ship which would undoubtedly have had opium on board for illicit trading.

Usually the threat of suspension of trade was sufficient to avoid such incidents. Trade was normally carried out through the Chinese middlemen – the Hong Kong merchants. Betty concluded that Ruan and Urmiston almost certainly never met. Both men left Canton in 1826

Visit to the Border Closed Area

On Saturday 10th March, 53 Members of the Society went on a trip with the Immediate Past President of the Society, Dr Patrick Hase, to the Border Closed Area. This trip had been arranged in co-operation with the Police, whose friendly assistance was extremely marked, and much appreciated by those who came on the trip. The trip began with a briefing at Border Police Headquarters, and then moved on to Lo Wu. At Lo Wu we visited the old Border Bridge, now preserved in a small, rather unkempt, garden next to the border river. What a pity that this historical monument cannot be visited by interested members of the public, and that there is no explanatory plaque there!

We then moved on to the Sandy Ridge Cemetery, where Society Member Tim Ko clarified the history of the Cemetery (or, more truthfully, Cemeteries), and took us to the Chungshan, Fukien, Chiuchow, and Yanping Cemeteries, and on to the Tung Wah Cemetery. Perhaps the most touching things seen were the communal graves where the bones of those removed from urban cemeteries which were needed for redevelopment were re-buried, and the graves where stillborn children are buried year by year by the Tung Wah Group of Hospitals.

After an excellent lunch at the Wan Chuen Sin Koon, the party then visited the Nam Hang Observation Post, one of the 1949 small border posts ("Macintosh Cathedrals", so called from the then Police Commissioner) erected to protect the border and keep the border fence under constant observation. This visit was of huge interest, and the excellent view of Shenzhen, which could be compared with a photograph of the same area in 1974, when there was no development there at all, was very telling. Then we went on to the current high-tech Border Control Centre at Man Kam To, to see how the Police control the border today, and how the border is kept under constant observation.

Finally, the group visited two villages, Heung Yuen Wai and Lin Ma Hang, within the Border Closed Area. Heung Yuen Wai is a very beautiful place, with numbers of extremely fine, and very well-preserved, village houses, and the finest gun-tower in the New Territories (built in the 1920s to defend the village from bandits from Warlord China who at that date frequently crossed over to rob the villages). Lin Ma Hang has the finest Fung Shui pool in the New Territories, as well as a fine series of four or five Ancestral

Halls and a small temple. Access to the village required the party to travel along the Border Road for some distance.

The party left Lin Ma Hang at 5.00pm, exhausted, but having had a most enjoyable day. Sincere thanks from everyone go to Patrick for organising this exceptionally interesting local visit, and also to him and Tim Ko for giving us the benefit of their unparalleled knowledge of local history. Many remarked how fortunate the Society is that they are willing to share their time and expertise with us.

FEATURE ARTICLE

Dr. Joseph Ting, ex-Council Member and, prior to retirement, the Chief Curator of the Hong Kong Museum of History, was the key person in planning and co-ordinating the new Sun Yat-sen Museum on Castle Road in Mid-levels. He has written for this newsletter a brief background of Dr Sun Yat-sen and the birth of the museum. The Sun Yat-sen Museum is now a branch museum of the Hong Kong Museum of History.

Birth of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum

After years of planning and preparation, the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum was eventually opened on 11th December 2006, the same year that marked the 140th anniversary of the birth of Dr Sun Yat-sen.

Dr Sun Yat-sen was a widely-respected important figure in modern China. On the mainland, he is looked upon as a forerunner in the revolution, and a representative of the bourgeois democratic revolution. In the Chinese societies in Taiwan, Hong Kong and abroad, he is known as *Guofu* (Father of the Nation). In fact, the name *Guofu* was bestowed on Dr Sun by the Nationalist Government during the War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression in 1940. Now this name has already transcended the original meaning of “Founder of the Republic of China” and has become an honorific title from all Chinese people for this Pioneer and Founder who led the overthrow of two thousand years of a feudalistic regime and the establishment of republican government in China.

Dr Sun Yat-sen had deep-rooted connections with Hong Kong. First, Hong Kong was the nourishing ground for his revolutionary ideas. Secondly, Hong Kong was an important base for the revolutionaries to promulgate their cause and plan their movements and uprisings spearheaded by Dr Sun. Third, many tutors, friends and comrades of Dr Sun in Hong Kong became his staunch supporters in revolutionary activities and the revolutionary regimes established after the 1911 Revolution.

Dr Sun Yat-sen has averred that his revolutionary ideas were nurtured in Hong Kong. He completed his secondary and college education in Hong Kong; and from 1883 to 1892 (i.e. during the age of 17 to 26), he was enrolled in the Diocesan Home and Orphanage (now Diocesan Boys’ School), the Government Central School (now Queen’s College) and the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese (forerunner to the Faculty of Medicine of the University of Hong Kong), all of which adopted the British education system. These schools turned out bilingual graduates with a global vision, in sharp contrast to those brought up through the imperial examination system in mainland China. As different education systems nurture intellects in different ways, Dr Sun’s education in Hong Kong had considerable impact on his personal and intellectual development.

Dr Sun Yat-sen’s revolutionary career was inseparable from Hong Kong. However, for a long time, Hong Kong did not have any museum as a commemoration. Although the various spots of his early activities in Hong Kong have been mapped out into the “Dr Sun Yat-sen Historical Trail”, the original sites have all put on new faces with the passage of time. Since the 1997 handover, the inception of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum became an important agenda for the Hong Kong SAR Government. After the millennium year, strenuous efforts were made to source for a suitable location in Central and Sheung Wan districts. The Government finally entered into an agreement with the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, who agreed to surrender the Kom Tong Hall at 7 Castle Road, Central, as the home for the Museum.

The original owner of Kom Tong Hall was Ho Kom Tong (何甘棠), the second brother of the famous Hong Kong magnate Sir Robert Hotung (何東). Ho Kom Tong was born in 1866, the same year as Dr Sun. They both graduated from the Government Central School in 1886, but we could not ascertain with evidence whether they knew each other. All we know for certain is that Hotung knew of Dr Sun and had made donations to the Guangdong Military Government. While historical buildings in Central and Sheung Wan districts are now few and far between, an old-style mansion in the Mid-Levels, like Kom Tong Hall with its magnificent façade and glamorous interior, well deserves our attention. It was indeed a milestone in the preparation and planning for the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, when the Government was able to find such an ideal venue to house the Museum in that splendid location.

There are other memorials to Dr Sun Yat-sen in places around the world where he left his mark. In comparison, the museum in Hong Kong is the youngest and most meagre in substance. The challenging issues in its planning lie in the positioning and competitiveness of the museum with various memorials of the same theme. The positioning of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum in Hong Kong is relatively clear and the exhibits focus on the theme of Dr Sun Yat-sen and Hong Kong. Apart from showing Dr Sun's activities in Hong Kong, however, there are more intriguing questions: Why and how did Hong Kong in the late nineteenth century nurture someone like Dr Sun Yat-sen who possessed such progressive revolutionary ideas? What elements characterized the education system, as well as the political, social and economic atmosphere of Hong Kong at Dr Sun's time? If we can find out answers to these questions, we will not only be able to probe into the role of Hong Kong in modern Chinese history, but also gain insight into the future development of Hong Kong.

Christianity had a great influence on Dr Sun Yat-sen during his early life. He was baptized a Christian in Hong Kong, and most of his tutors and friends were also Christians, including Ho Kai and Ou Fengchi, who were instrumental in shaping his thoughts. Without the recommendation and encouragement from Rev. Charles Hager, Dr Sun Yat-sen might not have pursued medical studies as a matter of course. However, both mainland China and Taiwan have refrained from mentioning Dr Sun's intricate relationship with Christianity or only touched upon the subject superficially, but in Hong Kong we are able to explore this relationship between Dr Sun and Christianity in depth. We are particularly indebted to the two churches with which Dr Sun had close relations, the China Congregational Church (where Dr Sun was baptized) and the Hop Yat Church (formerly the To Tsai Church where he attended services), for furnishing the Museum with invaluable memorabilia. This religious connection was an indispensable part of Dr Sun Yat-sen's relationship with Hong Kong.

Exhibition is at the core of the Museum, and the attractiveness and sustainability of the Museum depends on how rich and representative the exhibits are. The Hong Kong Museum of History possessed only three items relating to Dr Sun Yat-sen before the commencement of this project. The first is a letter written by Dr Sun to his nephew, Sun Chang, donated by the Queen's College. The second is a scroll inscribed with the wordings "Bo Ai (Fraternity)" by Dr Sun as a gift to the Luen Yee Seamen's Society in Hong Kong. The third is Guan Jingliang's marriage certificate bearing the name of Dr Sun Yat-sen as a witness, donated by Guan's descendants. In order to gather sufficient exhibits, the museum proceeded in two directions. On the one hand, we contacted and borrowed artefacts from local and overseas cultural organizations and museums. On the other, we launched a collection campaign to build up artefacts of Dr Sun Yat-sen and the 1911 Revolution. Such efforts have borne fruit during recent years. In 2002, we acquired from a lady in the United States one lot of memorabilia on Dr Sun's family. Later, the descendants of Guan Jingliang furnished us with Guan's graduation certificate from the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese (Guan graduated a year later than Dr Sun). This certificate is now all the more important, as the one of Dr Sun can no longer be traced with the passage of time. During our collection campaign in 2004, we received generous donations from all walks of life, with the most precious ones being the seal of "Long Live the Republic of China" and the calligraphies of Yau Lit under the donation of Mr Yau Dick Kwong (尤迪光) and Yau Dick Woon (尤迪桓), the

great grandsons of Yau Lit (one of the “Four Desperadoes”). The seal is now among the national treasures and the highlights of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum in Hong Kong.

It is encouraging to make significant progress in our borrowing of artefacts, and to gain unfailing support from relevant organizations in mainland China, Taiwan and Hong Kong. Through the coordination of the State Administration for Cultural Heritage and the Art Exhibitions China, six mainland museums including the National Museum of China unselfishly loaned us the cream of their collection, including such unique first-class relics as Dr Sun’s accessories in his early years, announcement of election results of his provisional presidency, imperial edict of abdication of Emperor Xuantong (宣統皇帝), and Dr Sun’s inscription to Huang Xing (黃興). From Taiwan, the KMT Archives also provided replicas of some important manuscripts, further enriching the scope of our exhibition contents.

Taking advantage of Hong Kong as an international metropolis, our search for exhibits was never confined to China or Asia. The Wellcome Library in London possessed a collection of exquisite items of Dr James Cantlie, the teacher of Dr Sun Yat-sen, which included Dr Sun’s answer sheet at an examination in the Hong Kong College of Medicine for Chinese, a dinner menu of the College’s graduation ceremony, as well as a reply letter from Stewart Lockhart (駱克), Colonial Secretary of the Hong Kong Government, to Dr Sun Yat-sen on the latter’s banishment. These items are being showcased for the first time after many years. The assemblage of all these invaluable artefacts of Dr Sun Yat-sen for a single exhibition is extraordinary.

The grand opening of the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum conveys the highest respect of all Hong Kong people towards this prominent historical figure. From now on, a permanent memorial to Dr Sun finds its home in Hong Kong, the cradle of Dr Sun’s revolutionary ideas.

Dr Joseph Ting, Curator, Sun Yat-sen Museum

*The Museum is located at 7 Castle Road, Mid-levels, close to the escalator on Caine Road
Opening hours are 10.00-6.00pm Monday-Wednesday, Friday-Saturday, and 10.00-7.00pm
Sundays and Public Holidays. Closed on Thursday, except for Public Holidays.*

THE PUBLIC RECORDS OFFICE

The Society has enjoyed a very long and mutually supportive relationship with the Public Records Office, or PRO. For many years, the PRO was based in small accommodation in Central, but for the past ten years or so it has been housed in a brand new, state-of-the-art building in Kwun Tong. I would guess that many members are not aware of its existence, or if they are that they have not actually been there.

A visit to the PRO can be a very worthwhile and useful experience for anybody interested in Hong Kong's past - and its present. A flavour of what can be found there is given by a small permanent exhibition that is currently showing. This includes a cross-section of their documentary holdings, from a facsimile of the Treaty of Nanjing, through an early marriage register from St John's Cathedral and Japanese war-time propaganda to a collection of submissions in connection with Chek Lap Kok. The staff are without exception keen and friendly - they love to have visitors and the contents of the majority of their nine kilometres of shelved material is available for inspection. A prior visit to their website, www.grs.gov.hk, will help if you are looking for something specific; this can then be made ready and available for you when you go.

The address of the PRO is 13 Tsui Ping Road, very close to Exit D1 of Kwun Tong MTR Station. If you click the envelope in the top right-hand corner ("contact us") of their website you will see a map. There is a small public car park nearby - in the cul-de-sac which is the first turning on the left on entering Tsui Ping Road. I hope to be able to announce an RAS visit to the PRO later in the year, but in the mean time – go and have a look for yourself. They are open Monday to Friday, from 9.00am to 5.45pm.

Robert Nield, President

LIBRARY DONATIONS

There have been six additions to the RAS library recently from the following donors:

Edwin Chow

- 劉潤和. 益善行道：東華三院135周年紀念專題文集 / [作者劉潤和, 王惠玲, 高添強 ; 主編冼玉儀, 劉潤和]. 香港：三聯書店(香港)有限公司, 2006.

Veronica Johnston

- Whitworth, Phoebe. *View from the Peak*. Cambridge: T.G. Whitworth, 2001.

Robert Nield

- International Conference on the History and Culture of the British Concession in China during the late Qing Dynasty. The collection of essays. Shandong: Weihai Municipal Archives Shandong Province, 2006.
- 邓向阳 (Deng Xiangyang). 米字旗下的威海卫 (Weihaiwei under British rule). 济南：山東畫報出版社, 2003.

Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum

- 孫中山紀念館展覽圖錄 (Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum exhibition catalogue) / [孫中山紀念館編 ; 撰稿陳成漢]. [香港]：孫中山紀念館, 2006.

C. Varadarajan

- Varadarajan, C. The divine life of Sri Sri Sitaramdas Omkarnath. Calcutta : Kinkar Rameshananda, 1997.

“OTHER LIVES”

One-time RASHKB Hon. Secretary Anita Wilson passed away last autumn and an obituary written by Dan Waters appeared in the September newsletter. The following is a further tribute to her published in the London Guardian shortly afterwards.

Anita Wilson

The Solomon Islands, Montserrat, Hong Kong and Buckingham Palace are possibly the places you would least associate with archives, but that is where our friend Anita Wilson, who has died aged 63, found her calling.

Anita Smith (as she then was) left Doncaster Girls High School in 1961 to read history at Manchester University, and then took a postgraduate secretarial course. In 1966 she worked as a researcher at Labour Party headquarters in Smith Square, Westminster. After moving to Sutton Coldfield, she taught in local schools until 1971, when she joined the Council for Education in World citizenship, before returning to teaching in 1975.

When her husband, John Wilson, whom she had married in 1967, was appointed Senior Crown Counsel of the Solomon Islands in 1976, and later Attorney General of Tuvalu, Anita was invited to sort out the government records prior to independence in 1978. Postings to Montserrat and Hong Kong followed. In between, she took an MA in Archive Studies at University College London (1982-83), before being appointed Archivist to the Hong Kong Government in 1985, responsible for ensuring an effective handover of policy records to the old (colonial) and the new (Chinese) governments, for which she received the Governor's Commendation from Chris Patten in 1997. She returned to London alone, however, after she and John separated; they were divorced in 1998.

Settling in Richmond, Surrey, Anita worked part time at the Public Records Office (now the National Archives), which left time for other interests, like the Chiswick choir and membership in the local Christian Science church. Both music and faith were central to her life, and she sang in choirs around the world.

In 2001, Anita was appointed to the records management team of the royal household at Buckingham Palace, to assist in archiving the Queen's papers. Everyone, from private secretaries to porters, appreciated her warm, learned, modest, supportive and selfless concern for others, and she, in turn, relished the

privilege of using the Queen's box at the Royal Albert Hall, where she entertained her friends at the Proms and her young cousin at a Bruce Springsteen concert.

Jill and Fred Hunter

Reprinted with thanks to the London Guardian

ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP DUES

Have you received your membership card for 2007? If not, this is probably because you are not on autopay and have not paid your dues yet! One way members can help the Society to run efficiently and keep costs to a minimum is by paying their membership dues on time. So please reach for your chequebook and send a cheque straight away to help us keep the accounts in good order.

If you have any doubt about your membership status or would like to switch to autopay (it's not too late to arrange this for the current year) then contact Jenny Day at membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP CARDS

Our rather old-fashioned Life Membership cards are undergoing a facelift. Many Life Members do not know their number as it is not shown on the old card and also, because in many cases the card was issued many years ago, it has been lost. As the old cards are woefully out of date design-wise a new one which is more befitting Life Membership is being designed and will be mailed to all Life Members in the coming weeks.

LECTURE VENUES

Unfortunately we have no news yet as to when we may return to City Hall for our lectures. It could be in September or even later in the year. In the meantime we will continue to use the Helena May or the Activities Room at Central Library for Friday evening lectures.

We appreciate that there is no venue suitable for everyone and have heard a few grumbles about having to get visas to go to Central Library in Causeway Bay and also about the steep uphill walk to the Helena May. City Hall probably comes closest as an ideal location. However, once we are back in our usual routine we will still hold occasional events at the Helena May as this has proved to be such a popular venue - because of both the ambience and the cash bar!

70% OFF SALE OF RASHKB PUBLICATIONS!

From now until the end of 2007 members can buy selected RAS publications at 70% off the usual price. This is a great opportunity to complete your set of journals and also acquire other past publications at this special one-time price (which is for members only). An order form is enclosed with this newsletter - if you mislay it, contact Jenny Day at info@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk for a replacement. And don't forget that the contents of each journal are listed under Publications on our website, www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk.

OF INTEREST TO MEMBERS

Used Book Sale

Hong Kong University Libraries are holding their second Used Book Sale on 31st March and 1st April. Over 10,000 books are for sale, in Chinese and English, duplicates of donations or withdrawn copies from the library collection. Proceeds from this sale will be used for collection development and improving Library services. Prices start at \$20 and fresh stock will be added constantly through the weekend, encouraging return visits. The sale will take place on the 2nd floor of the Main Library, Hong Kong University, 9.00am-7.00pm on 31st March and 10.00am to 7.00pm on 1st April.

The Royal Over-Seas League, Hong Kong

Members are invited to attend to attend lunch with the Royal Over-Seas League on Monday 23rd April when the guest speaker will be Ms Regina Ip. Ms Ip, the former Secretary for Security, will be speaking on "What my Years in Government Taught Me". The meeting will be at the 14th floor of the China Club, Old Bank of China Building, Bank Street, Central, starting with cocktails at 12.5pm. For more details and booking information, please contact Ms. Lisa Wong through email at asstpublicity@rosl.org.hk or by phone at 6288 8490. Please visit www.rosl.org.hk for more information about the ROSL.

The Silk Road in Inner Mongolia

Together with the Inner Mongolia Autonomous Region Museum, the HKU Museum and Art Gallery is holding an exhibition of artefacts dating from the Tang (618-907) to the Yuan (1271-1368) dynasties, including porcelain, glass, gold and silver wares, harnesses and Nestorian Christian items. Phone the Museum on 2241 5512 or visit www.hku.hkumag for further information.

CD-ROM databases at Hong Kong Public Libraries

Hong Kong Public Libraries have subscribed to two CD-ROM databases on the ancient Chinese classical works of Siku Quanshu and the Zhong Guo Ji Ben Gu Ji Ku. Both databases are available in the Central Reference Library.

Study of the North Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society by Wang Yi

Member Christopher Yuen has found a description of this book (in simplified Chinese) on the following website: <http://www.shsd.com.cn/books/bookspec/view.asp?id=0202010000955136>

Hong Kong Oral History Archives

The Hong Kong Oral History Archives is a collection of selected oral histories compiled under the Hong Kong Oral History Archives Project, jointly operated by CAS and the Department of Sociology, HKU, between 2001 and 2004. The Archives have been accessible for research purposes since June 2006. For more information go to www.hku.hk/sociodep/oralhistory (Chinese only.)

Textile Society of Hong Kong

Looking ahead, on Tuesday, 22nd May Sally Yu Leung, San Francisco Asian Art Museum Commissioner, will be giving a talk on Chinese Embroidered Collars. She will explain the cultural connotations of the beautifully decorated detachable collars worn for formal or official occasions. Chinese embroidery reflects a symbolic code, and these collars are no exception. The talk will be at 6.30pm at the Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central. The cost is \$50 for Textile Society members, \$100 for non-members. For information and booking, email info@textilesocietyofhk.org.



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