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20th MAY 2008

FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Friday 6 th June	Lecture	More than a Stuffed Bird Show – The RAS Legacy in Shanghai
Friday 13 th June	Musical Evening	The Dizi – An Encounter with Chao Chin Chung
19 th -24 th June	Overseas Visit	Trip to Northern China
		SUMMER BREAK
Friday 1 st August	Lecture	Paper Offerings for the Worship of Tin Hau
21 st -24 th November	Overseas Visit	Trip to Shanghai (revised date)
3 rd -12 th January 2009	Overseas Visit	Study Tour to Central Bhutan

Lecture at the City Hall

**More than a Stuffed Bird Show
- the RAS Legacy in Shanghai**

Friday 6th June

The story of the Royal Asiatic Society is very much part of the story of the Bund, today as well as yesterday. Presently the magnificent former RAS building lies dormant awaiting a new beginning alongside a whole host of illustrious neighbours in the 'Waitanyuan' area to the west of the Bund. The area was the major centre for British social and civic life in the 19th century. Shanghailanders could glee over Gilbert & Sullivan operas at the 600-odd seat Lyceum Theatre, be put on trial at the British Court for their foibles, attend services and fêtes at the Union Church and take to the waters from the Rowing Club. They could also freely engage in learned activities at the RAS North China Branch, consult its magnificent library or view its mammoth collection of stuffed animals, which evolved from a collection of wild ducks, in its museum. Peter Hibbard will illustrate the history, the vicissitudes and the revival of the RAS in Shanghai and look at some of the practical, social and preservation issues relating to the ongoing development of its Bund locale.

Shanghai-based Peter Hibbard has a background in urban planning and sociology, but decided to turn his attention to the development of the Chinese tourism industry in 1983. He was a visiting scholar at Hong Kong University's Centre of Asian Studies in 1985/86. He devotes his life to researching the historical development of tourism in China and to plotting the historical development of Shanghai. He has produced a wide range of publications and is author of the Shanghai section of Odyssey's *Beijing and Shanghai: China's Hottest Cities*

and *The Bund Shanghai: China Faces West*. Peter is currently project historian for Hirsch Bedner Associates, architects for the restoration of the north wing of the Peace Hotel and president of the RAS China in Shanghai.

Speaker: Peter Hibbard
Time/Date: 6:30pm, Friday 6th June
Venue: 8/F City Hall High Block, Central
Cost: The lecture is free and members of the public are invited
Booking: No booking is required

This lecture was to be a prelude to a Shanghai visit for the RAS, tentatively scheduled for 5th-8th September, when Peter would have been one of our guides. Due to travel restrictions in China at that time this trip has had to be postponed to a later date – see notice to follow.

Musical Evening at the Helena May

Friday 13th June

The Dizi - An Encounter with Chao Chin Chung

Born in Hong Kong, Chao Chin Chung attended Diocesan Boys' School, Fudan University in Shanghai, and is now pursuing a Master of Arts in Music degree at the Chinese University of Hong Kong. As a child he first studied the piano and was introduced to the Chinese flute, the *dizi*, and he knew he had found his calling. A disciple of the well-known Professor Lu Chunling, he won numerous prizes at the Hong Kong Schools Music Festival and also at the Shanghai Students Art Festival.

Chin Chung will talk about the history of the *dizi*, the various types and styles of playing in different parts of China, and differences with the western flute, among other things. He will illustrate his talk not only with slides but by performing on the *dizi*, accompanied by the piano as well as Chinese instruments. He plays regularly with such groups as the Wang Kwong Chinese Orchestra, has appeared on television and is a frequent guest player both in Hong Kong and Shanghai. By day he is a manager dealing with China and Hong Kong personal tax at a Big Four accountancy firm – a versatile young man!

Speaker: Chao Chin Chung
Time/Date: 6:30 pm, Friday 13th June (cash bar from 6:00 pm)
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Cost: Members \$80, guests \$100
Booking: Please send cheque and booking form on page 13 to Geoffrey Emerson

Visit to China

19th-24th June

Trip to Chengde, Mulan Hunting Ground and Beijing

The RAS trip to Chengde and Beijing 19th-24th June has received a warm response. A total of 30 people have enrolled for the trip including 17 members, one of whom is Mr David Gilkes, our past President. Four new members were recruited as a result of the trip. The travel agent has already proceeded to make ticket reservations. Those holding foreign passports are reminded to apply for a visa immediately as new rules are now in force as a result of the coming Olympic Games in Beijing. Contacts have been made with relevant parties in Chengde and Beijing, and all is set for an educational and enjoyable trip.

Lecture at City Hall

Friday 1st August

Paper Offerings for the Worship of Tin Hau

One of the most vibrant aspects of life in contemporary Hong Kong is the celebration of traditional Chinese culture, one component of which is the material culture of everyday life. An especially significant category of everyday objects is the materials supporting popular religion and ritual practice and, more specifically, the repertoire of ritual paper offerings accompanying the worship of Chinese deities. Within the pantheon of deities deemed great and good is the goddess Tin Hau. A popular and beneficent deity, Tin Hau is offered a variety of splendid paper items, not only those characteristic of everyday, private worship, but also the

spectacular flower cannons (*fa p'au*). Laden with elements culturally meaningful and spiritually significant, the flower cannons convey the hopes and gratitude of devoted worshippers, but simultaneously serve as physical embodiments of the contradictory social processes and patterns of worship.

Janet Lee Scott took her Ph.D. in anthropology from Cornell University. She was a university professor in Hong Kong for twenty-five years before her retirement three years ago and is an Associate in Research at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University. Dr Scott has conducted research into the material culture of popular religion, and has formed a large collection of the paper offerings used in rituals directed to the gods, the ghosts, and the ancestors. She is the author of *For Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors: the Chinese Tradition of Paper Offerings*, a volume in the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Studies Series.

Speaker: Dr Janet Lee Scott
Time/date: 6.30pm, Friday, 1st August
Venue: Activities Room, 8th Floor, City Hall High Block, Central
Cost: This event is free and open to the public with no booking required

Overseas Visit

21st-24th November

Proposed Trip to Shanghai

In our last newsletter we asked for expressions of interest for a proposed trip to Shanghai in September. We had a good response with over 25 replies and then began to work on the logistics of the trip. As members will be aware, there are currently many problems with regard to travel to China. Hotel reservations are proving extremely difficult to arrange and the airlines will not commit to being available at the time we wish to travel. Even if reservations were made, we could not necessarily rely on them. Also, anyone needing a visa for entry into China may well have problems at this time. With these difficulties in mind, it has been decided to postpone this trip until November when the Olympics will be well behind us.

We therefore propose a new date for this trip, 21st -24th November, and ask those members interested in being a part of this group to send the Expression of Interest Form on page 13 to Jenny Day to arrive by **20th June**. Our apologies to those of you doing this for the second time.

Overseas Visit

3rd-12th January 2009

Study Tour to Central Bhutan

The RASHKB again offers members the chance to visit Bhutan, this time touching places in central Bhutan, specifically to see the major parts of the splendid annual *tsechu* at Trongsa (some say older and more authentic than those held at Paro in March-April and at Wangdue in September-October annually), as well as historical monasteries in Bumthang, Ura and Shingkar villages. There will also be the chance to visit typical village family homes and see more of rural life in rapidly-changing Bhutan.

The tentative itinerary (for members only) is to depart Bangkok early on Saturday 3rd January, make our way to Trongsa for the important two final days of the *tsechu* on 6th and 7th January, then go on to Bumthang and neighbouring places, returning to Paro and flying back to Bangkok on the morning of Monday 12th January 2009 (arriving mid-afternoon). Tentative costs are HK\$22,500 or a bit less (single room occupancy extra).

Further details and a booking form will be given in a newsletter later this year. If you have interest in this event, you may like to note that a non-refundable deposit to cover full cost of airfares (Bangkok-Paro-Bangkok only) and related taxes (i.e. at present, HK\$5,200) should be paid by interested members by 30th November 2008. Meanwhile, it would be much appreciated if you would send an email indicating possible interest to Dr Brian Shaw (bcjshaw@hkucc.hku.hk) as soon as possible so that appropriate reservations can be made. Members without email can call Jenny Day at 2813 7500.

One Other Planned Event for your Calendar

On 19th September Geoffrey Emerson will give a talk on Stanley Internment Camp at the Helena May. Geoffrey's recently published book in the Hong Kong Studies Series on this subject is featured on page 10 of this newsletter and full details of his talk will be in the July issue.

RECENT ACTIVITIES

Faces in Jade

On 14th March Angus Forsyth shared with us his passion for ancient jade. He gave an erudite talk on the fascinating historical development of the human face in nephrite jade figures. He explained that these figures were abraded, in the earliest examples, by crushed garnet, then by bronze and only since the 18th century by carborundum. Jade cannot be carved. Ancient – pre 16th century AD – jade is nephrite, a felted structure crystalline mineral composed of silicates of calcium and magnesium. One of the best sources was, and still is, Khotan in Chinese Turkestan.

Angus used many actual period examples through the ages distinctions between the Chinese (Han) face and the more western face, in particular the epicanthic fold present with the Mongoloid eye and the facial hair of the western face. Early jade figures, from 4,000 to 5,000 BC, even those from north-east China, had an occidental appearance. By the Shang dynasty, epicanthic folds and slanting eyes were shown. By the Eastern Han at the opening of the first millennium AD period there are caricatures, for example, of a cripple or a pensive priest. From the 3rd century AD pieces include Buddhas in traditional postures and Tang dynasty pieces include flying Apsaras and the classic “fat” lady with strong epicanthic folds. By the Liao period, 11th to 13th century AD, pieces include heavily bearded foreigners with their performing animals and round eyed figures of terror.

Angus illustrated his talk profusely with fine photographs of many beautiful examples. He briefly also mentioned the place of jade in history, including the Confucian concept of the excellent qualities of jade serving as metaphors for the virtues in man.

Peter Stuckey

The RAS Retakes Shenzhen

Our first event at City Hall after a long absence for renovations was a talk given by RAS member Ted Rule on 11th April about the ‘secret’ history of Shenzhen. Well, neglected rather than secret. Those who peered northward over the border before it was opened widely in the late 1970s can recall rustic scenes of rice paddies and water buffalo, a modest town of 40,000 people, and little more. In the quarter century since, the buffalo have almost all disappeared and greater Shenzhen has been built over the paddy fields to create one of the largest cities in the world. It is not surprising that the idea that Shenzhen has no history took root.

Ted energetically dispelled the misconception with a vivid romp through the area’s history, starting with the demise of the last Song dynasty emperor, who was drowned by a loyal minister rather than subject the child to suffer the indignity of capture by the Mongols. The role of Shenzhen in the Opium War of the 19th century and the opening up to the West in the late 20th century followed in rapid succession. This was augmented by a lively commentary on the bus the next day, 12th April, during a heavily subscribed visit to some of the historical sites of Shenzhen.

We bussed through the picturesque, rural, northeastern New Territories to cross the border at Sha Tau Kok. First stop in the Nantou area, after passing along the modern boulevards of new Shenzhen, was the Guandi Temple, though unfortunately there was not enough time to explore the museum next door. The Nantou ancient fort presented a fine Ming dynasty gate opening to a lively encounter with old world city life as we walked through the narrow bustling streets to the few remaining Qing dynasty structures, like the military headquarters which was active during the Opium War. Nearby the facades of a brothel, an opium shop and a silver shop were preserved as well as the archway to the Street of Beauty (aka ye olde red light district) and the ancestral temple of Wen Tianxiang, a Song dynasty loyalist who turned down a job offer from Kublai Khan. The old Yamen appeared to be under repair.

To the discrete inquiry as to whether canine flesh would be on the lunch menu, a perplexed Ted was overheard consulting with his efficient and charming partner Karen, “Where will we find dog in April? I wasn’t planning to go quite that up-market”. But on the second count he was only joking; the dim sum lunch, plus Peking duck, inside the Portofino complex was sumptuous – and sans fido. Our record of attrition improved slightly with the reappearance of a member who had wandered off in the Nantou fort.

The Ming dynasty explorer Admiral Zheng He encountered a typhoon in the mouth of the Pearl River delta and turned to the Goddess of the Sea – Mazu, aka Tin Hau, and ultimately Guanyin – for assistance. The emperor was so pleased that he ordered the temple in honour of the goddess be renovated and enlarged. Whether it was pleasure that a Muslim turned to Tin Hau for assistance or relief that his favourite eunuch was rescued, the Chiwan Tin Hau Temple, our first stop after lunch, is now the largest of its kind in China, though in the guise of a temple inside a museum.



Chiwan Tin Hau Temple

Photo courtesy of Karen Rule

The tomb of the Song Emperor is a modest affair on a hill overlooking the sea where the fully robed young emperor washed up on the site of what is now a major container terminal. The tomb is clearly a popular spot with local worshippers. We enjoyed seeing it too.

Our final destination was the area surrounding the now landlocked good ship *Minghua* with a neon sign displaying the words ‘Sea World’ in Deng Xiaoping’s own hand. The surrounding Taizi Square is now filled with international eateries and drinkeries. From there our bus headed back to the SAR over the new border crossing at the Shenzhen Bay bridge, where we bid an appreciative farewell to Ted and Karen. Several tantalizing sites were omitted, due to time constraints, but hopefully another excursion will include the Dapeng fort and the Xia Sha village.

Martin Merz

AGM and Annual Dinner

On 25th April the Society held its 48th Annual General Meeting at the Hong Kong Club, followed by the Annual Dinner. Members had been reminded that they were welcome to attend the AGM – indeed it is their right to – and several came just for the first part of the evening. The dinner, as in previous years, was fully booked by members and guests.

After welcoming the Society’s special guests for the evening; Mr Tony Nedderman, the Society’s auditor and his wife, Claire Baillieu; Dr. Hugh Baker; Ruth Benny, the Society’s webmaster; and Mr Rik Ponne, the evening’s speaker, Robert gave the President’s Report. In his report he acknowledged the work of individual



Photo courtesy of Peter Stuckey

In recognition of his long association with the Society and the great amount of work he has done on our behalf, Robert appointed Dr. Hugh Baker an Honorary Fellow of the Society, presenting him with a framed certificate to mark the occasion.

Hon. Secretary David McKellar proposed a resolution that two new Memberships be introduced: Joint Life Membership and Overseas Life Membership, and this resolution was passed.

More than a year ago Richard Engelhardt, Asia Pacific Regional Adviser in Culture at UNESCO accepted our invitation to be our dinner speaker for this evening, but unfortunately at the last minute he was unwell and, on doctor's orders, unable to travel. In his place his colleague, Mr Rik Ponne, very kindly agreed to step in and give the talk on Mr Engelhardt's behalf. His talk covered in detail the approaches to and the methods of conservation, based on international standards of best conservation practice, which will hopefully ensure that heritage sites in Asia will be protected. He also gave the Society a number of advance copies of the Hoi An Protocols for Best Conservation Practice in Asia which outline in details the site methodologies for Asia; cultural landscapes, archaeological sites, underwater cultural heritage sites, historic urban sites and heritage groups and monuments, buildings and structures. Anyone interested in seeing the Protocols will find copies in the RAS library. We in Hong Kong often bemoan the fact that heritage seems to account for nothing, but Mr Ponne pointed out that we are the only jurisdiction in Asia that has a requirement for heritage impact assessments to be carried out when major developments are considered.

Throughout the evening books published by RAS members during the past year were on display. These included Valery Garrett's *Chinese Dress: From the Qing Dynasty to the Present* and *HKU SPACE and its Alumni* by Peter Cunich, as well as the two recent Hong Kong Studies Series already mentioned. Sales were brisk and by the end of the evening very few copies were left unsold.

After the evening's events were over and the remains of the excellent buffet dinner wheeled away there were still many people left sitting at the empty dinner tables, a last glass of wine in hand, enjoying the company and reluctant to leave for home.

Jenny Day

Vice Admiral Nagumo and the British Eastern Fleet: April 1942

A Saturday afternoon talk with tea beforehand was a new venture and doubt had been expressed if enough members and guests would attend. However, the result, on 3rd May, was a full house and a waiting list at the Helena May for this talk by John Parkinson, a South African member of our Society and contributor to our Journal. He gave an interesting account of the Japanese and British fleets in the Indian Ocean in early 1942.

Using overhead transparencies, John began by showing the three main players in the drama: Admiral Nagumo, Commander in Chief of the First Air Fleet which, by late 1941, consisted of Japan's six largest carriers; British Admiral Sir James Somerville; and on the American side, Admiral Ernest J. King, Commander-in-Chief of the U.S. Fleet and, from mid-March 1942, Chief of Naval Operations. Nagumo had state-of-the-art ships and planes compared to the British (with two modern carriers in poor condition, four old battleships and poorly trained pilots), and the Japanese pilots flew the famous high speed Zero planes and were well trained in the art of dive bombing, a skill then unappreciated by the British. The Japanese also had the experience gained since July 1937 after attacking China. Thanks partly to uncertainty in Tokyo and a delay of four days in Admiral Nagumo's plans, the two fleets failed to meet, which surely would have been another Japanese victory following the surrender of Hong Kong on 25th December 1941, the fall of Singapore on 15th February, Nagumo's raid against Darwin on 24th February and the 10th March surrender of the Dutch East Indies.

In spite of these events, some of the British officials failed to appreciate the technical and flying efficiency of the Japanese Air Force. Somerville's second in command, Admiral Willis, later expressed his opinion that if the British Eastern Fleet had come up against the greatly superior Japanese fleet, then the result would have been disastrous. Thus in April 1942, Admiral Somerville was saved from something which would have been close to annihilation.

Geoffrey Emerson

What is Shanghai Style?

Speaking to a full house in the Garden Room of the Helena May, Lynn Pan treated us to an original, engrossing and richly illustrated PowerPoint presentation on Friday 9th May. As members arrived, they could see the first image already on the screen. This was, as Lynn explained, the Chinese sign on the door to the 'Gents' (*nan cisuo*) in the 1933 RAS North China Branch building in Shanghai. The characters – stylised and obviously modernist – could only have been designed after exposure to the New Typography developed for the Latin alphabet by the likes of the Bauhaus school.



From this introduction, Lynn went on to unveil over 50 other images to show how the tapping of Western sources renewed Chinese forms and created what she calls Shanghai Style (*haipai*), a style that for a number of economic, social and intellectual reasons flowered between the two world wars. Those years being the high season of the modernist movement in Europe, the trend that predominates in Shanghai Style is modernism.

We saw pictures of architectural detail, furniture, paintings, cartoons, magazine illustrations and advertisements (many of which featured glamorously alluring women). Lynn showed the link between the work of Shanghainese painters and graphic artists and that of such European artists as Modigliani and Aubrey Beardsley. She said she was puzzled by the design of the cover of a Chinese novella, *Chrysanthemum Fragrance*, until she chanced upon the Estorick Collection in London, which specialises in modern Italian art. After a day browsing in its library – she does not read Italian, she said, but she could look at the pictures – it became forcibly clear that the design was influenced by the work of the Italian Futurist Fortunato Depero. It remained for Lynn to establish a connection between Depero and Shanghai: she found it in the magazine *Vanity Fair*, some of whose covers between 1928 and 1930 were designed by Depero, working in New York at the time. There were other striking images: one was *My Family* (1931), an oil by Pan Yuliang, a prostitute redeemed by a customs official who put her through art school in Shanghai and supported her when she went on to study in Paris. Another was Ren Xiong's self-portrait, which combines Western and Chinese painting techniques – naturalistic modelling of face and torso versus schematic treatment of garments, painting in Chinese black ink brushstrokes.

In the 1920s and 1930s *haipai* was scorned by writers in Beijing, who associated it with 'meretriciousness, plagiarism, rumour-mongering, the arty-fartyness of celebrity men of letters conjoined with the auctioneering of traders'. They thought Shanghai culture decadent and identified it with 'compradors, hoodlums and prostitutes', and 'money and sex'.

After the communist victory of 1949, Shanghai Style was blotted out and replaced by socialist realism. Lynn saw few originals of the images she researched. Some were lost in the Japanese war, some in the ensuing civil war and others were destroyed in the Cultural Revolution 'because totalitarian states hate modernism'. Shanghai Style died and was written out of history as if it had never happened.

MORE ABOUT SHANGHAI

There is a website, <http://www.historic-shanghai.com/?p=32>, specialising in historic Shanghai which contains an illustrated article on the RAS North China Branch in Shanghai. On accessing the website, under the line of photographs at the top of the page (where there are a couple of excellent examples of Lynn Pan's Shanghai Style) click on 'Resurrecting an old Shanghai Institution: the RAS'. Members will be interested to read this before going to Michael Hibbard's talk at City Hall on 6th June.

NEWSLETTER WRITE-UPS

In the last newsletter we gave credit to the 'authors' of the write-ups of past activities. While contributors in the past have been happy to remain anonymous, it has been decided to credit each piece to show that your newsletter is truly a group effort with contributions coming from a wide group of members, not just the Activities Committee. Anyone who would like to assist by offering to write up an activity is most welcome to do so. Just contact Geoffrey or Jenny when you see the notice in the newsletter and let us know that you will cover that event. And if you would like to contribute but prefer to remain anonymous, that is fine, too.

RAS SUMMER BREAK

There will be a short break in our activities in July, as there is each year, to give the Activities Committee a well-earned rest. Please also note that as Jenny will be out of Hong Kong for most of July that month's newsletter will go out later than usual this year, but every effort will be made to make sure you receive it during the first week of August. As usual, an email reminder will be sent out for the event on 1st August and that will include any other essential news.

OBITUARY

10 March 1918



7 April 2008

Rev. Carl T. Smith

Carl T. Smith, distinguished historian of Hong Kong and Honorary Vice-President of the RASHKB, has passed away in Macau, four weeks after his 90th birthday. A pioneer in the use of sources, a lively writer and communicator, and a generous friend to all who sought his help, Carl influenced two generations of historians and played a key role in revitalising the study of Hong Kong and China Coast history. He will be greatly missed.

Carl Thurman Smith was born on 10th March 1918 in Dayton, Ohio, U.S.A., into a family of Swiss-German ancestry. His mother encouraged his early interest in genealogy. His father was a manufacturer of ice cream – a delicacy for which Carl retained a passion for the whole of his life. Carl took a Bachelor of Arts degree at DePauw University, Greencastle, Indiana, in 1940 and graduated from the Union Theological Seminary, New York as a Master of Divinity in 1943. He was ordained as minister in the Evangelical and Reformed Church (now the United Church of Christ). After two years as Pastor of Dewey Avenue Reformed Church, Rochester, New York, he became Founding Pastor of St Stephen’s United Church of Christ at Philadelphia. He developed a strong interest in local history, serving as Secretary of the Genealogical Society of Pennsylvania 1953-1960, and giving lectures on the use of sources.

In 1960 Carl joined the United Board for World Ministries, which sent him, after a few months of Cantonese training at Yale University, to the Hong Kong Council of the Church of Christ in China. He lectured in theology first at the Church’s Theological Institute in Tuen Mun, and then, between 1962 and 1983, at Chung Chi Seminary and its successor, the Chinese University of Hong Kong. When asked to teach a course on the history of the Protestant Church in China, he discovered that most of the books on this subject “dealt with what the missionaries did and not who the Chinese converts were.” Carl was reluctant to teach the subject from this point of view. Instead, he decided to try and get as much material as he could “about early Chinese converts in the missions, particularly in this area of China, using the same methodology that I had employed for my genealogical research in the USA and looking at all the archives I could find.” This led to intensive research into people, social networks and communities stretching far beyond the subject of Christian converts. Using genealogical methods, he compiled a huge collection of biographical card indexes from information culled from newspapers, official records, missionary archives, wills, cemeteries and other sources. From this research he produced a series of articles – some of them appearing first in the Journal of the RASHKB – on the early inhabitants, communities and neighbourhoods of Hong Kong. The more substantial of these appeared in two books: *Chinese Christians: Elites, Middlemen, and the Church in Hong Kong* (1985, reprinted 2005), a seminal work, described for the first time the structure and leadership of Chinese society in early colonial Hong Kong; and *A Sense of History: Studies in the Social and Urban History of Hong Kong* (1995) brought together essays on neighbourhoods, minority communities, women, children and other topics.

Carl’s work set new standards of historical scholarship and decisively shifted the focus of historical interest away from the comings and goings of governors to the complex activities of people of all walks of life in the peculiar colonial setting of Hong Kong. He showed for the first time that there was coherence, continuity and leadership in the urban Chinese community, and he brought vividly into prominence the many other communities that thrived in colonial Hong Kong. The effect of his writings on the field of Hong Kong history has been little short of revolutionary, and his influence on other scholars has been enormous. This influence owes as much to the warmth and magnetism of Carl’s character as it does to the printed word. He believed that the practice of history should be a social activity, not a solitary pursuit. After formally retiring from teaching in 1983 he went full time into Hong Kong history, and his home in Mei Foo Sun Chuen, with

its wall of card-index cabinets and stacks of notes, became a busy research centre. He opened the index cards to anyone who wished to consult them, and in 2006 donated them – all 140,000 of them – to the RASHKB. To the many students of Hong Kong who went to him for advice he was the perfect mentor: always interested and attentive, never discouraging, and immensely knowledgeable and resourceful. His flat was often crowded with visitors, yet, in between the leisurely consultations and the generous hospitality, Carl and his devoted assistant Dolly Eusala found time and energy not just to probe ever more deeply into Hong Kong's history but also to move their focus to the even more complex social history of Macau. In 2002, at the age of 84, he took on a full-time position with the Instituto Cultural of Macau, and soon after that moved his home to Macau, where he was able, despite failing eyesight, to work on archives that had barely been explored before. His health deteriorated in his final year, and he was taken into the Kiang Wu Hospital in early March. He celebrated his 90th birthday there with visits from many old friends. He died on the morning of Monday 7th April with Dolly holding his hand.

Carl's contributions to the history of Macau were recognised by the award of an honorary doctorate from the Inter-University Institute of Macau in 2005. In Hong Kong his colleagues often introduced him by the less official title "doyen of Hong Kong historians", a term which caused him much amusement. In truth, he needed no special title or position because he was one of a kind: a uniquely gifted historian; an inspiration to other scholars; a gentle, humorous and warm-hearted friend, who never paraded his knowledge, but shared it freely with others.

Christopher Munn

Reminiscences of Carl

At his memorial service on Saturday 3rd May, someone said, 'Carl was a gentle man who would not break a bruised reed'. This I would not dispute. However, when necessary he would stand up and be counted. He was nominated by the RASHKB to sit on the Antiquities Advisory Board, but in 1990 he stepped down because, in his words, 'The AAB had no 'teeth' and was achieving little'.



Photo courtesy of Tim Ko

God's calling with a full heart. Earlier, he had planned to return to the United States, on retirement, but later he decided to continue living in Hong Kong. This was Hong Kong's gain and America's loss. Later he moved to Macau.

In one respect Carl may be likened to Winston Churchill in that neither of them relished exercise. 'I was no good at sports and games', Carl once told me, 'I could never catch a ball'. But his lack of exercise did not prevent him from living a long and meaningful life. However, he awoke one morning in the late 1980s and could not see his own face in the mirror. In addition to losing his sight he also suffered from poor health during his latter years.

We tried earlier, on occasions, to get him to head the RASHKB but, in a modest way, he always said, 'I never wanted to become President.'

On an RAS visit on the ferry on the way to Macau, in 1999, he surprised me as he said, with a twinkle in his eye, 'I want my funeral to be a joyous occasion and I want all my friends to come!' Looking around in the Church at the congregation attending his memorial service, where in unison we sang *Amazing Grace*, I believe Carl would have been well pleased.

Dan Waters

Carl's Role in the Society

Carl was a long-term supporter of the Society and its aims. He joined Council in 1975, and became Vice-President in the following year. He was an enthusiastic organiser of visits and walks for the Society for many years. His advice on Council was always sound and, above all, sensible. He sought to retire from Council in 1997, when he reached the age of eighty, but Council, being very much aware of what it owed him, was extremely unwilling to let him go. Eventually it was agreed to give him the position of Honorary Vice-President for life, so that he would remain formally on Council, and so be available to give Council advice as needed, but without having to attend meetings. His advice continued to be given, to Council's great advantage, for many years after this arrangement was agreed.

Patrick H. Hase

Peter Hall meets Carl Smith

My late aunt Jean Gittins (née Ho Tung) said to me in Hong Kong in the late 1970s when I was researching my Eurasian background, *"You should meet Carl Smith, but he never gives you anything for nothing"*

One day I was at the Public Records Office, ground floor of the multi-storied car park near the old HKCC ground, turning the pages of the SCMP for 1924 looking for the obituary of my grandfather, Sin Tak Fan (Stephen Hall). After a while I felt a 'presence' behind me – I turned round and looked up at this person. He said: *"You must be Peter Hall,"* I replied: *"You must be Carl Smith."* *"What are you looking for?"* he said, to which I replied: *"The obituary of my grandfather Sin Tak Fan."* *"I have it, I'll send it to you."* That's how we met.

Just over a week later, I received a four-page letter dated 7th June 1980, 'hammered' out on Carl's old typewriter, sent from The Theology Building, Chung Chi College, Shatin, in which he mentioned my maternal Gittins family and Sin A-sin (alias Sin Tak Fan), with details from his schooldays up to his obituary in the SCMP April 9th, 1924. Amongst all the details, he asked me some questions: *"Do you have the various early Gittins sorted out?"* and *"What is the background of Ruth Hall?" (my father's mother)*

Carl supplied me with the details of many connected Eurasian families from his card index system. I returned the compliment by answering his questions providing him with whatever knowledge I had acquired about these individuals. Carl saved me years of research and I think I gave Carl substance on many of the names he had recorded, 'flesh on the bones'. We developed a special partnership over many years, for which I shall always be grateful.

In a letter to me dated 28th May 1993, soon after the publication of my book *"In the Web"* about my Eurasian family, background, and related/connected families, Carl said: *"For me, personally, the contents are invaluable – and it is so convenient to have it altogether."*

A very nice man and a great loss to those of us who knew him well. Goodbye my friend.

Peter A. Hall, Heswall, UK

INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE on Chinese Labour Corps during the First World War 16th-19th September Weihai, Shandong Province

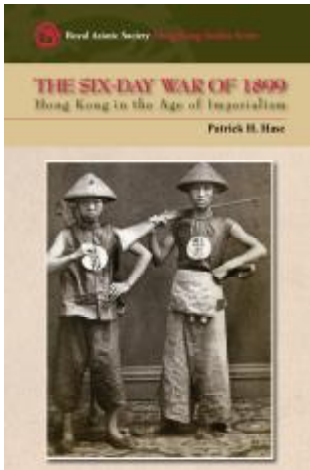
Organized jointly by Weihai Municipal Archives, the Research Centre of the Great War, France, Ferdinand Verbiest Institute K.U. Leuven, Belgium and the Institute of Literature, History and Philosophy, Shandong University, the objective of this conference is to promote the research on Chinese labourers and the First World War, and to examine the relation between China and the war. The organizers welcome papers that examine Chinese Labourers' involvement in the Great War from broad perspectives, especially those which study Chinese labourers' lives in Europe, their interactions with labourers from other countries, and what happened to them after the war was over. The deadline for abstract submission is 15th June. For further information contact Weihai Municipal Archives, Shandong Province, PRC, tel. 06931 5231116 or email jianguozhangwh@sina.com. Anyone interested in being a participant or an attender should contact Robert Nield, tel. 9142 1415 or email him at hi-flyer@netvigator.com.

HOT OFF THE PRESS

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series *The Six-day War of 1899* *Hong Kong in the Age of Imperialism*

Fast on the heels of Geoffrey Emerson's book on Stanley Internment Camp, comes the next book in the Hong Kong Studies Series, *The Six-day War of 1899* by Past-President Patrick Hase. In 1899, a year after the Convention of Peking leased the New Territories to Britain, the British moved to establish control. This triggered resistance by some of the population of the New Territories and there ensued six days of fighting with heavy Chinese casualties. This truly forgotten war has been thoroughly researched for the first time by Patrick, who is an expert on the people and history of the New Territories.

The bookstore price for this book is \$250 but it is being offered to RAS members at the discounted price of \$200. Complete the order form below and mail it to the RAS address and a copy will be mailed out direct from the publisher.



“The Six-day War of 1899 is an important book for scholars who are interested in colonialisation – and not just the Hong Kong variety. Hase explores the “hidden” history of Britain’s occupation and subsequent pacification of a rural Chinese district. This is a riveting account of a colonial encounter.” – James L. Watson, Fairbank Professor of Chinese Society, Harvard University.

“An 1899 newspaper headline called the war “The Ferment in the Hinterland”, but it went flat very quickly. Well researched and written with exemplary clarity, this carefully crafted account has restored the fizz, challenging received notions of the characters of the main actors as well as of the severity of the bloodshed.” – Hugh Baker, Emeritus Professor of Chinese, SOAS, University of London.

ORDER FORM

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series

I would like to order copies of *The Six-day War of 1899* at the discounted price of \$200 to RAS members, plus HK\$20 per copy for postage within Hong Kong. For overseas members the price would be £14.00 or US\$26. Postage would be £3 or US\$6 by surface mail and £6 or US\$11 by airmail. Please enquire for multiple copies to be sent overseas.

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LOCAL EVENTS AND EXHIBITIONS

Free Identification of Chinese Art Objects

Four times during the year the Art Museum at the Chinese University of Hong Kong is providing members of the CU staff and also members of the public free identification of Chinese antique art objects. The remaining dates this year are 11th June, 10th September and 10th December. The identification will take place at Chengxuan, Room 124, Institute of Chinese Studies, CUHK, 2.00-4.00pm. To make an appointment (which is required) and to obtain a registration form please contact 2609 7416. Details of the Art Museum's summer exhibits can be obtained from this same number, and also from www.cuhk.edu.hk/ics/amm/

Royal Over-seas League, Hong Kong Branch

The ROSL Hong Kong Branch invites RAS members to join them at a black tie dinner on Saturday 31st May at the China Club, when the speaker will be their Branch Patron, Dame Anson Chan. Dame Chan will speak following a multi-course Chinese meal. The title of her speech will be announced nearer the time. For full details of this event and to obtain a booking form, contact Jayne Purser at jayne.purser@gmail.com, or tel. 9104 3755.

Jewish Historical Society of Hong Kong

On Sunday, 1st June, the JHS will be holding the eleventh of their popular Fireside Chats when Bob Green will relate how, after service with the United States military in Korea, he came to Hong Kong as a screenwriter and journalist to work for Time-Life and NBC. His talk promises to be an entertaining story of community and personal history, not least how he and his wife established the very successful Amazing Grace Elephant Company.

Venue: Jewish Community Centre, One Robinson Place, 70 Robinson Road, Mid-levels

Time/date: 6.45 for prompt 7.00pm start, Sunday 1st June

Registration: On arrival a \$50 entrance fee will be charged and donated to the JHS Library Fund

Enquiries: Contact Brenda Yi at 2589 2660 or via email at jhshkg@yahoo.com

Shek Kip Mei/ World-Public Housing Exhibition

This is an interesting exhibition accompanying a project on improving public housing at the Hong Kong Jockey Club Creative Arts Centre (JCCAC), 30 Pak Tin Street, Shek Kip Mei, Kowloon. The exhibit is current and until 30th June. For enquiries call the JCCAC Management Office at 2353 1331 or email jccac@hkbu.edu. The website is www.hkbu.hk/jccac.

University Museum and Art Gallery, the University of Hong Kong

The current exhibit at the Museum and Art Gallery is "The Art of Chinese Wooden Stands" – The Songde Tang Collection. Over 130 examples of Chinese stands from the Tang to the Qing dynasties are displayed, the majority being in wood but also bronze, bamboo, porcelain and ivory. The aim of this exhibition is to encourage greater interest in a branch of Chinese art that has remained largely unrecognised. Please visit the Museum's website, www.hku.hk/hkumag or call 2241 5512 for further information.



Hong Kong Museum of Art

As part of the annual Le French May the Museum of Art, together with the Musée Guimet in Paris, is presenting the exhibition "Paris 1730-1930: a Taste for China". On show is a rich display of some 170 works including Chinese porcelain, lacquer, bronzes, furniture, drawings, prints and paintings. This exhibition addresses the taste for Chinese art which played a major role in the novel artistic and intellectual movements which flourished during this 200-year period. (The 'beaker vase' pictured here is in fact over 3' high.)

This exhibit is running until 15th June. For more details go to www.frenchmay.com and also www.hk.art.museum.

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