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SEPTEMBER 2008

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Future Activities

LECTURE

Watching Over Hong Kong — Private Policing 1841-1941 The Helena May • Friday 3 October

Dr Sheilah E. Hamilton's book is the fifth in the RAS Hong Kong Studies Series. Relatively little has been published about policing in Hong Kong, with the non-public variety being all but neglected until now. This book shows the previously ignored area of private security to be full of exciting features including piracies and explosions as well as the occasional murderous riot. Reviewers of Sheilah's book have emphasized its 'readability' aspect, particularly as this relates to some of Hong Kong's more eccentric characters such as Major General D'Aguilar. Some of these interesting and unusual areas will be discussed during this talk.

Born in Glasgow, Sheilah has a degree from Glasgow University in Pure Chemistry as well as a Master's in Criminology from HKU and a PhD from the History Department of HKU. She came to Hong Kong in 1968, becoming the first female forensic scientist in HK, leaving in 1988 briefly for Australia before returning to HK in 1989. After five years teaching in the UK, she returned to Hong Kong in 2005 to teach at City University and restart her business, Forensic Focus. At the age of 37 she took up long-distance running and has completed 13 full marathons as well as three mini-triathlons. She is passionate about classical music and cats, sharing a flat with a very handsome ginger Persian cat called Bryn.

Speaker: Dr Sheilah E Hamilton
Date/Time: Friday 3 October, 6.30 pm (6.00 pm cash bar)
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Cost: Members \$50, guests \$70
Booking: Please send cheque and booking form on page 18 to Geoffrey Emerson

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OVERSEAS VISIT

12-day Study Tour to Persia's Caspian Coast with Brian and Felicity Shaw 27 September - 8 October

Several members expressed interest in this proposed visit, but we could not raise sufficient numbers to make this a viable venture. A similar venture may be proposed for 2009.

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LECTURE

The Great Wall of Europe: European Views of China Before 1750 City Hall • Friday 24 October

What was known about China in early modern Europe? This talk will look at three examples: the Formosan imposture of George Psalmanazar ca. 1704, the gradual adoption of the idea of a 'yellow race' and the discovery of the Nestorian Monument in Xi'an in 1625. The speaker will argue that Europeans seemed to be able to detect little if anything beyond their own preoccupations and presuppositions about China — like a Great Wall of Europe that kept in just as much as it kept out, a mental border that even eyewitness travellers could hardly cross.

Michael Keevak, with degrees from Columbia and Yale, is a Professor of Foreign Languages at National Taiwan University, where he has taught since 1992. He has published three books — *Sexual Shakespeare: Forgery, Authorship, Portraiture* (2001), *The Pretended Asian: George Psalmanazar's Eighteenth-Century Formosan Hoax* (2004) and most recently *The Story of a Stele: China's Nestorian Monument and Its Reception in the West, 1625-1916* (published by Hong Kong University Press, 2008). He is currently completing another book, *How East Asians Got to be Yellow* (Princeton University Press). His hobbies include red wine and not living in the USA.

Speaker: Dr Michael Keevak
Time/Date: 6:30 pm, Friday 24 October
Venue: 8th Floor, The City Hall High Block, Central
Booking: This lecture is free and open to the public with no booking required

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Future Activities

LECTURE

China Revolutions and Family History The Helena May • Friday 31 October

Hong Kong-born speaker, businessman and novelist Adam Williams is the author of three acclaimed historical novels: *The Palace of Heavenly Pleasure*, *The Emperor's Bones* and *The Dragon's Tail*. His novels weave both historical fact and family history; Williams, who has spent twenty years a businessman in Beijing representing Jardine Matheson, is the fourth generation of his family to be living and working in North China.

In this talk Williams will describe the historical events — from the Boxer Rebellion, through the turbulent civil wars of the 1920s and the founding of the communist and nationalist parties, to the Cold War and Mao's China of the 1960s and 70s ending with the Tiananmen Incident of 1989 — that formed the background of his trilogy. He will also describe his own family history in China and how this China heritage, dating back to the 1890s, inspired his stories.

The talk, to be illustrated by more than 100 photographs and drawings dating back to the early 1900s, will trace China's path from a feudal empire to the modern state it is today, at the same time showing, through the lives of his family, what it was like to live through those turbulent times.

Speaker: Adam Williams
Date/Time: Friday 31 October, 6.30 pm (6.00 pm cash bar)
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Cost: Members \$50, guests \$70
Booking: Please send cheque and booking form on page 18 to Geoffrey Emerson. (Please note on the booking form if you will join the self-paying dinner.)

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LECTURE

Reading the Landscape: The History of Hong Kong Interpreted from the Rocks and the Scenery The Helena May • Friday 7 November

The earth is currently considered to be about 4.5 billion years old. Within this extensive time-span, the rocks of Hong Kong record a relatively short history of only 400 million years. However, the story of those years is a fascinating series of vignettes, revealing extreme climatic fluctuations and major environmental changes that range from warm shelf seas to deep ocean basins, and from arid desert plains to an inhospitable landscape of violently explosive volcanoes.

Archaeological evidence indicates that humans commenced their low-impact activities in the Hong Kong region about 6,000 years ago, farming, building lime kilns, making pottery and forging tools. Human imprints increased steadily over the historical period so that, by 1900, most of the land area of Hong Kong bore some evidence of human endeavours. But it was the twentieth century that saw an exponential increase in developments, projects that transformed the landscape beyond recognition, and certainly well beyond the abilities and aspirations of the early settlers.

Bernie Owen, of the Chinese University of Hong Kong, and Raynor Shaw, of the University of Hong Kong, authors of the book *Hong Kong Landscapes: Shaping the Barren Rock* (Hong Kong University Press, 2007) will, in less than one hour, lead a tour through the past 400 million years, describing the geological environments and human activities that have produced the Hong Kong landscape that we see today.

Speaker: Dr Raynor Shaw and Dr Bernie Owen
Date/Time: Friday 7 November, 6.30 pm (6.00 pm cash bar)
Venue: The Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central
Cost: Members \$50, guests \$70
Booking: Please send cheque and booking form on page 19 to Jenny Day. (Please note on the booking form if you will join the self-paying dinner.)

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Future Activities

LOCAL VISIT

Reading the Landscape: Boat Trip to the Northeastern New Territories Saturday 8 November

We are endeavouring to arrange a boat trip to follow the lecture on 7 November but at the time of going to press there are still some final details to be arranged. A special mailing will be sent out once this event is finalized. Meantime, please note the date and wait for more details.

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OVERSEAS VISIT

RASHKB – Shanghai Weekend Cultural Experience 21-24 November

This overseas visit is now going ahead, having been postponed from September due to travel problems associated with the Olympic Games. At the time of writing, over twenty members have signed up for this special RAS-oriented four-day trip to Shanghai, with the option of a further day in Suzhou. Unfortunately, due to the deadline imposed by the airline, no more bookings can now be taken.

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LECTURE AND LOCAL VISIT

Sun Yat-sen's Visions and Treatise on The International Development of China Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum • Saturday 29 November

Dr Sun Yat-sen (1866-1925), the 'Father of the Chinese Republic', led the revolutionary movement which in turn led to the overthrow of the Qing Dynasty on 10 October 1911. This is common knowledge, but long forgotten are his national building theories, which at the time were considered too idealistic, impractical and even utopian. The foremost of his national building ideas was Sun's monumental work, 'The International Development of China'. His plan in a nutshell was to use foreign capital and technology to create Chinese Socialism in order to develop China's economy. This is what Dr Sun called 'Socialism with Chinese characteristics'. It was not only a prophesy but has become a phenomenal reality today, a testament to the greatness of Dr Sun's remarkable vision.

Our speaker Charles Wong's maternal great grandfather was Dr Sun Yat-sen. Charles' mother is Dr Lily Sui-fang Sun, and his grandfather was Dr Sun Fo. Charles graduated from Occidental College with an A.B. in Diplomacy and World Affairs, and has a Master of Pacific International Affairs from University of California, San Diego. He is Vice President of the Sun Yat-sen Foundation for Peace & Education, and a Trustee of the Lin Yee Chung Association, the oldest Chinese association in Honolulu, Hawaii, U.S.A.

This talk, in association with the Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, is open to the public and there is no charge. The Museum opens at 10.00am and the talk will begin at 10:30. Following the talk, there will be a self-paying lunch near the Museum for the speaker and RAS members and guests. Seating is limited both for the talk and for the lunch, and as we need to reserve seats, please contact Geoffrey Emerson — see contact details below. If necessary a waiting list will be drawn up; successful applicants will NOT be notified — only those on the waiting list will be.

Future Activities

Speaker: Charles Wong Tsu Yew

Time/Date: 10:30 am, Saturday 29 November

Venue: The Dr Sun Yat-sen Museum, 7 Castle Road, just above Caine Road, Mid-levels. (The museum is a three-minute walk west from the Mid-levels escalator, or take bus 23 or 40 from Pacific Place and alight at the second stop on Caine Road, just past the escalator.)

Cost: The talk is free. Admission to the Museum is HK\$10. The lunch afterwards will be self-paying.

Booking: Please ring or email Geoffrey Emerson (T: 2550 4374 or E: emerson@netvigator.com) by 20 November if you wish to reserve a seat for the talk, and also a seat for lunch. When you phone, if you leave a message, be sure to clearly repeat your name, phone number and email address please.

Enquiries: Geoffrey Emerson (T: 2550 4374, or E: emerson@netvigator.com)

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LECTURE

China and India — An Unpredictable History: Ups and Downs from 1947 to 2008 **City Hall • Friday 12 December**

Claudia Astarita, a PhD candidate in the Centre of Asian Studies at the University of Hong Kong, will explore the evolution of relations between China and India in the context of broader geopolitical and economic transformations. She will focus on the main problems that persist in preventing China and India from following a path of mutual friendship and reciprocal trust, such problems as the Tibet issue, the border dispute, and economic unbalance. Also, she will analyse the historical role played by two countries — Pakistan and the United States — in shaping the relationship between China and India.

Born in Carpi (Modena), in Italy, Claudia came to Hong Kong in October 2005 to work as a research assistant for the Italian Trade Commission. She received a BA in International Relations from Bologna University and an MA in International Affairs from the Institute for International Political Studies in Milan. As well as researching Sino-Indian relations and regional economic integration at the Centre of Asian Studies, she is also an Associate Researcher at the Centre d'Etude Français sur la Chine Contemporaine (CEFC) in Hong Kong. When not researching, Claudia enjoys travelling, reading, and playing volleyball, hobbies that she is not neglecting even in Hong Kong.

Speaker: Claudia Astarita

Date/Time: Friday 12 December, 6.30 pm

Venue: 8th Floor, The City Hall High Block, Central

Booking: This lecture is free and open to the public, with no booking required

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OVERSEAS VISIT

Study Tour to Bhutan **30 December 2008 – 11 January 2009**

There has been an encouraging response to the proposed visit to Bhutan, although initial connections have had to be re-arranged with cancellation of direct Bangkok-Guwahati flights by IC. Also, a new tariff of US\$250 a night takes effect from 01 January 2009. Since this is the case, in order to maximise our time in Bhutan and avoid the previously unavoidable duplication of travel going between west and central Bhutan, we have opted for an east-centre-west itinerary which enables one to see an entire cross-section of the country in one continuing journey westward, to exit at Paro airport for Bangkok on 11 January. Some days will involve relatively long hours of travel, but in comfortable coaster buses with appropriate stops, and with rewarding splendid views. Although not as well-priced as previously, one may say that this itinerary is good value for money. The budgeted all-in cost is HK\$26,000: we hope we can reduce this when final fares and extra charges are confirmed. Interested members are invited to read and complete the booking form attached at the end of this newsletter, and send it together with the non-refundable deposit of HK\$5,000 to secure airline seats. Indian transit visas are required by all members; the Bhutan visa will be chopped on arrival at Samdrup Jongkhar. For further details contact Dr Brian Shaw at bcjshaw@hkucc.hku.hk. (Members may also like to note that while a Travel Industry Council levy is applicable to this arrangement, they should consider taking out their own personal all-risks insurance, as advised by the TIC.)

Future Activities

Present arrangements in outline (but subject to change) are:

Tuesday 30 December – check in at Suvarnabhumi Airport at 0020 latest; depart 0920 for Kolkatta (Calcutta) by Jet Airways 9W65, arrive 1020; connecting flight 9W619 to Guwahati, depart 1320 arrive 1535; meet reps from local travel agency and transfer to hotel in Guwahati town (4-star). Dinner at a nearby restaurant. Overnight Guwahati.

Wednesday 31 December – travel by road to Samdrup Jongkhar; complete border formalities, meet our in-country guides; proceed to Tashigang with hot lunch provided by our team at a scenic spot en route; overnight at local lodge.

Thursday 1 January 2009 – After seeing the sights at Tashigang (including the dzong), drive to Mongar (hot al fresco lunch by our team en route) via Yadi; overnight at Mongar [Druk Zhongar Hotel].

Friday 2 January – drive Mongar-Bumthang (lunch en route at Sengor); overnight Bumthang at Rinchenling Lodge.

Saturday 3 January – in Bumthang – local sights; dinner at Kaila's; overnight Rinchenling.

Sunday 4 January – in Bumthang - visit to Tang valley and short walk to Ugyen Chhoeling museum; if fine, lunch with team by riverside; overnight Rinchenling.

Monday 5 January – in Bumthang; lunch to be arranged; early afternoon, depart for Trongsa via Chume; overnight Yangkil Resort.

Tuesday 6 January – a.m., attend Trongsa tsechu (Raksha); p.m., visit Tadzong museum (renovation completed August 2008); overnight Yangkil Resort .

Wednesday 7 January – a.m., attend Trongsa tsechu – last day (thondrel and Guru Rimpoche; finishes 14.00); move to Punakha with late lunch by our team at Chendebji; overnight Puna-Tsangchhu Cottages.

Thursday 8 January – in Punakha; visit the sights, Kuruthang, parts only inside Dzong [as monk body is resident]; lunch by river by our team if weather allows; pm, push to Thimphu; overnight Riverview Hotel.

Friday 9 January – Tour of local attractions in Thimphu town (details to be confirmed) e.g. Textile museum, paper-making cottage industry, weaving at Chamzamtog etc; lunch at Plums; depart for Paro; overnight Jangka Resort.

Saturday 10 January – Visit Kyichu lhakhang, National Museum, Duntse lhakhang and Paro dzong; pm, visit Drugyel dzong; overnight Jangka Resort. Farewell dinner.

Sunday 11 January – Early breakfast - To Paro airport by 0700 to join KB120 Paro-Bangkok dep 0900 via Kolkata (to be confirmed) – arr 1425 – connect BKK to HKG.

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OTHER FUTURE ACTIVITIES

Here are preliminary notices of two other future events to note in your diaries — full details will appear in the November newsletter.

La Salle College — Hong Kong's Heritage The Helena May • 9 January 2009

Mark Huang, author of 'Sons of La Salle Everyone', will speak about his alma mater, the famous school in Kowloon Tong

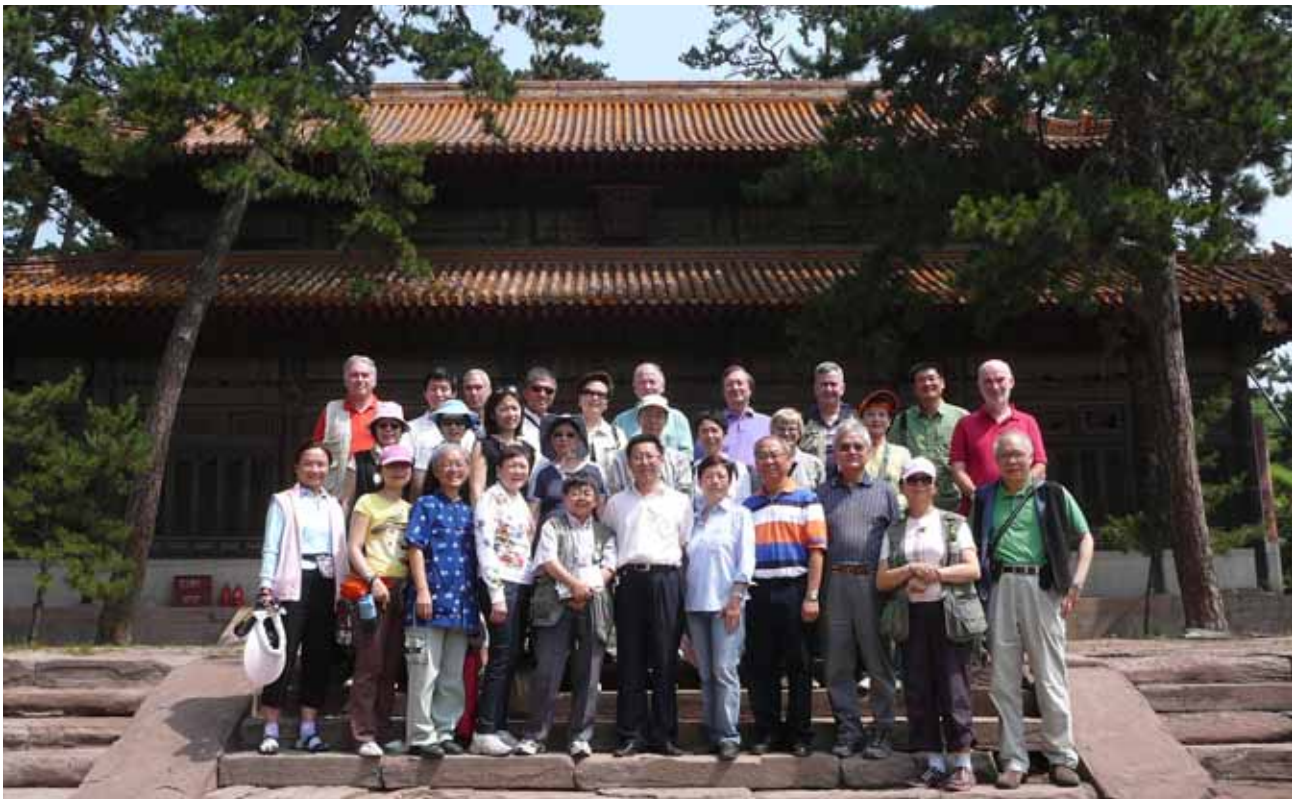
200 Years of China Trade — Perspectives from the Fifth Generation City Hall • 16 January 2009

George Cautherley will speak about the activities of the Heard family, his maternal grandmother's family, who started trading with China in 1801, as well as other branches of his family in China and Hong Kong in the 19th Century

Recent Activities

OVERSEAS VISIT Chengde – Imperial Mountain Resort *Written by Michael Broom*

In June, about thirty members and a few non-members joined Dr Joseph Ting on a trip to Chengde and Beijing. Joseph is Past Curator of the Hong Kong Museum of History and also a past RAS Council Member. For the benefit of those of us unable to join the group, Michael Broom has brought the trip alive with the following detailed report for this newsletter. Thank you, Mike!



RAS Group at Shuxiang Temple, Chengde

Photo courtesy of Peter Stuckey

Chengde is situated in the northern province of Hebei, a mere three hour coach journey from Beijing City International Airport. However when the Emperors of the 'Great Qing' left the Forbidden City in Beijing and moved to the Summer capital, it took fifteen days by sedan chair along the Emperors' Road through the Great Wall at Gubeikou and the awe inspiring Yanshan Mountains. Their destination was Chengde, which three hundred years ago was in an area called Jehol. Here from the time of the Emperor Kangxi in the early 18th century China's rulers, for part of each year, conducted the affairs of Asia's largest empire

Following in the footsteps of the Manchu Qing Emperors a group of twenty-eight RASHK Branch members travelled to Northern China on 19 June 2008 for a six-day visit, which included the UNESCO World Heritage site in Chengde (the Bishu Shanzhuang or Summer Resort), the Eight Outer Temples, the Mulan Hunting Grounds and Beijing. The northern part of Hebei Province borders Inner Mongolia, which in the Qing Dynasty was a source of considerable political concern, not only because of the threat of local Mongol insurrection but also the subversive intentions of Russia. For this reason the Qing Emperors found it expedient to move the Court to this northern location, together with the imperial army, where they conducted both diplomatic affairs and military manoeuvres, which included large-scale hunting in the Mulan hunting grounds. These hunting grounds are located approximately 150km north of Chengde in the rolling grasslands bordering Inner Mongolia, an area of great scenic beauty.

As successive Emperors continued the practice of moving the Court to Chengde, the location was developed from a temporary rest camp into a magnificent mountain resort called the Bishu Shanzhuang. This was the largest imperial garden in China comprising of a palace complex set in parkland and lakes with natural mountains as a backdrop and surrounded by a wall 22km long. Chengde became not only a seat of temporal authority but also a spiritual one with many Buddhist temples being constructed outside the imperial compound.

Recent Activities



The Great Wall at Jinshanling

Photo courtesy of Michael Broom

Day Two – For most of the RAS Group the long journey to Chengde resulted in an early night; however, the next day saw everyone refreshed and keen to discover this amazing place. Following breakfast, we drove the short distance to the Bishu Shanzhuang and proceeded to move through the nine compounds, which comprise the imperial apartments. These apartments are now used to display various artefacts including furniture, porcelain and costumes from the Qing era. Emerging from the imperial quarters one is confronted by a vista of artificial lakes and parkland, which even today are home to deer grazing in the grounds. Visitors have the option of taking small buses around the perimeter of the Bishu Shanzhuang or being rowed on the lakes to various islands on which are located pagodas and pavilions. Notwithstanding time constraints the RAS Group did both, which proved to be

very worthwhile as the views from the perimeter wall enabled us to see many of the temples we were to visit later.

Following lunch the group spent the afternoon visiting the Puning and Putouzhongcheng temples. The Puning Temple (Universal Peace) was built in 1755 by Emperor Qianlong to commemorate his victory over the Junger Mongols. It features both Han and Tibetan styles of architecture. The second temple we visited was the Putouzhongcheng, which is a free translation of the Tibetan word ‘Potala’. The temple is modelled on the Potala Palace in Lhasa and was built to commemorate the Emperor Qianlong’s sixtieth birthday.

In the evening the RAS group were entertained to a banquet by the Director of the Chengde Bureau of Cultural Affairs, Mr Shih, and members of his staff. This took the form of a traditional Mongolian style banquet held in a tent, where we feasted on roast lamb. The more adventurous members also drank some of the local ‘Bai jiew’ spirit.

Day Three – The 0600 hrs morning call was preceded by thunder and rain, which had the beneficial effect of clearing the previous day’s heavy mist and humidity. Following breakfast, we boarded our bus and set off for the Mulan Hunting grounds and Inner Mongolia where we would stay overnight. The journey through Longhua County and into Weichang County saw a transition from mountainous scenery to open grasslands and plantation forests. At mid-day, we arrived in the Sanha National Forest Park, which according to the sign at the park entrance covers some 1,460,000 mu. Having deposited our bags at the hotel and after finishing lunch the afternoon was spent on the rolling grasslands at one of the area’s scenic lakes where a detachment of the RAS HKB Mounted Branch carried out a patrol on horseback, while others took a more leisurely walk around the lake admiring the birdlife and alpine flowers.

In the evening, we all met for a group dinner and feasted on roast goat cooked in what appeared to be a Mongolian version of a tandoori oven. In the evening there was a noticeable drop in temperature, necessitating warm clothing and jumpers. At 1,700 metres above sea level even the chilly temperatures did not deter some members from taking an evening stroll to view the nearly full moon and the myriad of stars in the sky, something rarely seen in Hong Kong.

Day Four – Another early start and a drive out onto the grasslands. It was a fine morning, sunny with an almost cloudless sky. We crossed the source of the river which divides Hebei from Inner Mongolia. As we arrived a herd of possibly a hundred horses came galloping over a hill and came to a halt some distance in front of us where they stopped to graze before abruptly galloping off again; it was a marvellous scene. After lunch, we returned to Chengde and a free evening.

Day Five – Our last morning in Chengde started with a visit to the Shuxiang Temple which is not usually open to the public but which was made possible following a request by Dr Joseph Ting to the Chengde Cultural Affairs Bureau, who kindly approved the request. On arrival at the temple location it seemed appropriate for the driver to enter through the gates bearing the Buddhist ‘Wheel of Life’ symbol and quite possibly this was the original entrance; however the PLA soldier on guard in full combat order had other ideas, as it is now the entrance to the local PLA garrison! We debussed and made our way, Indian file along a dyke through farmland to the entrance where we were met by Mr Zhang of the Cultural Affairs Bureau, who acted as our guide for the visit. The Shuxiang temple was constructed in 1774 by Emperor Qianlong and is modelled on the Shuxiang temple on Wutai Mountain

Recent Activities

in Shanxi Province, which Emperor Qianlong visited together with his mother the Empress Dowager. It is of special significance inasmuch as Qianlong had the image of Buddha, which is referred to as the Manjusri image, created in his own likeness and was therefore considered by the Emperor as his personal temple. Although the fabric of the main buildings is in a state of decay, pioneering work in the field of conservation is being conducted between the Getty Institute in the USA and the Chengde Cultural Affairs Bureau with the object of preserving this treasure.

Leaving the Shuxiang Temple we proceeded to our last location which was the Xumifushou Temple built in 1780 by Emperor Qianlong in honour of the visit by the Sixth Panchen Lama, who spent almost one year travelling from Tibet across the length of China to attend the seventieth birthday celebrations of the Emperor. This temple is an imitation of the Zhashilumbu Temple in Tibet, which was the official residence of the Panchen Lama.

We left Chengde after lunch and took the long drive back to Beijing which this time would involve negotiating the city's rush hour traffic and locating our hotel in the city centre. We left this fascinating area of Northern China as we had entered it, passing through the Great Wall, except on this occasion we were able to stop and visit one of the best preserved sections of the Wall at Jinshanling, which required the group to make the ascent by cable car.

Day Six – The evening Dragonair flight departure enabled us to spend a full day of sightseeing in Beijing, which included a tour of the Dagexiang Hutong in the morning. We were given a very interesting talk by Mr Matthew Hu Xinyu of the Beijing Cultural Heritage Protection Centre on the conservation work, which the Centre undertakes. Following the talk the Group was taken on a guided tour around the hutong and was even invited into the home of Mr and Mrs Lu, local residents who were keen to show us some of the roof tiles and other artefacts they had collected during previous renovations. The hutong is located adjacent to the former Imperial College and Confucius Temple in Guozijian Jie (formerly Chenxiang 'The Street of Achieving Virtue').

In the afternoon, following a sumptuous Beijing dumpling lunch, we visited the cemetery containing the headstones of Matteo Ricci and several other foreign missionaries who served the Ming and Qing Courts. This visit was remarkable because not only are these relics still in existence but also because they are located within the grounds of the Beijing Administrative College (the Communist Party of China's Training School). We were fortunate to be shown around the cemetery by Professor Yu Sanle. Once again, the visit to this site, as with so much of the group's itinerary was made possible by the personal efforts of our Group Leader Dr Joseph Ting Sun-pao to whom all participants of the RAS Group would like to extend their sincere appreciation for a fascinating visit.

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LECTURE

Paper Offerings for the Worship of Tin Hau

Reported by Robert Nield

On Friday 1 August about 35 people came to the City Hall to listen to Dr Janet Lee Scott, former RAS Council member, giving a fascinating and lavishly illustrated talk on a subject in which she has become a rare expert — paper offerings for the worship of the goddess Tin Hau, the Queen of Heaven. Dr Scott's expertise, knowledge and enthusiasm were apparent from the outset of this fast-paced and wide-ranging presentation. Before retiring from Hong Kong three years ago (she is now an Associate in Research at the Fairbank Center for Chinese Studies at Harvard University) Dr Scott amassed a huge collection of offerings, as well as a prodigious amount of knowledge on the subject. She is the author of the second book in our Hong Kong Studies Series — *For Gods, Ghosts, and Ancestors: the Chinese Tradition of Paper Offerings*.

Tin Hau had for long been a very popular deity in imperial China, and it is impossible not to notice how popular she remains in present-day Hong Kong. Tin Hau temples are plentiful and the goddess is constantly beseeched to defend village communities and protect fishermen; she is even attributed with rescuing shipwrecked sailors by plucking them from the water. Her official birthday, the 23rd day of the third month, is celebrated in style with thousands flocking to sometimes remote temples to give offerings to the Queen of Heaven. It is the special form that these offerings take that provided the theme for Dr Scott's presentation.

Recent Activities

Offerings for simple domestic worship include bundles of clothes and other items that are placed at the feet of the goddess's image. Such bundles can be bought ready-made, in which case they are labelled with the deity for whom the particular bundle would be most appropriate. Alternatively, custom-made bundles can be made by shops that specialise in such goods. In addition to clothes, worshippers can give tiny shoes (for her presumed bound feet), images of dragons and phoenixes, and of peaceful mountain peaks and clouds. Red is an appropriate colour, of course, "but yellow is all right and gold acceptable" said Dr Scott. But the most spectacular form of offering is the flower cannon, or *fa pau*.

An early western description of a *fa pau* said that its gaudiness has to be seen to be believed. Having seen a few of them myself, I can understand this observation; to the untutored eye they seem to be a mass of brightly coloured random bits and pieces. But of course they are not, and Dr Scott introduced us in fine style to many of the subtleties involved in the manufacture of a *fa pau*. Today's sensitivities mean that "flower cannon" has become a misnomer; they no longer launch into the air and there are no explosives involved. Yet they remain huge (up to 20 feet high) and very elaborate. The basis of their structure is a bamboo frame, over which coloured paper is stretched. They are thus not particularly heavy, but the bigger ones still need three or four men to carry them.

Fa pau are built in sections, and each section tends to have its own particular significance. The base is the largest piece, to bear the weight of the rest, and it is here that the maker's name, address and telephone number are written, so passers-by can note where to get one just like it. The Lady Tin Hau does not appear to mind such open commercialism. The upper levels often comprise a pair of dragons, images of the Eight Immortals, clocks, fake money, replicas of ships, large wax candles, gold flowers and, the crowning glory, the figure of a bat; in true Chinese manner, a bat is lucky as the words for bat and luck sound similar — *fuk* or *fu*, depending on your dialect. The connoisseur can even tell which shop made a particular *fa pau* by looking at the bat: some have pointed ears, some have fuzzy ears, some are smiling and some look mean.

In amongst all these culturally meaningful and spiritually significant ingredients are spaces in which other offerings are placed by the helpful for the hopeful. Parents of recently born children will leave red eggs and stems of ginger in these spaces, so that couples who are hoping to have children can take them home so as to work their magic.

Harmony and balance are essential elements in the careful construction of these wonderful creations, although the average worshipper would only see before them a beautiful object. But once the ceremony for which the *fa pau* was created is over, the most impressive examples may be kept in the temple, but the majority are auctioned off and then burnt. The successful bidder would get the satisfaction of having such a special symbol burnt in his or her name, and the temple would have the benefit of the proceeds. It is extremely gratifying to see that such customs are thriving in this city, where so much of our heritage is being lost.

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LECTURE

Beijing: City of Heavenly Tranquillity

Reported by May Holdsworth

Well-known foreign correspondent and author Jasper Becker spoke to a packed Garden Room at the Helena May on Friday 5 September, drawing on themes in his new book, *City of Heavenly Tranquillity*, to describe the history of Beijing through its changing cityscape. The story of Beijing, said Jasper, is just as much the story of China's drive to become modern and international. Once the city had seemed eternal: rebels and invaders came and went, but it had remained, to foreigners at least, mysterious, unknowable and different. Jasper mentioned earlier writers such as Victor Ségalen, who found the 'otherness' of a China untouched by Western culture irresistibly compelling.

Now, apart from its core of imperial buildings, old Beijing has been ruthlessly destroyed. If the Forbidden City is excluded, just three Ming-dynasty buildings have been preserved, while only one out of the forty-four princely mansions within the Inner City remains. A few hundred are left of the more than 6,000 hutongs in existence in 1980. It was Mao Zedong who set the demolition in motion: he said that only on a blank sheet of paper could the most beautiful poem be written or the finest painting be drawn. To obliterate the past and show that the Communist Party has succeeded in modernising China, Mao had the ancient walls torn down, altering the original Ming layout at one stroke. His heirs — a majority of them graduates of Tsinghua University — have evicted some three million urban residents occupying hutong houses and living in communities that had existed for hundreds of years. People across the world tuning into television broadcasts of the recent Olympics saw only the new public buildings, but the expanses of office blocks, shopping malls and apartment buildings spreading out from the centre show just how much of Beijing's architectural heritage has been irrevocably lost.

Of General Interest

Invitation to a Private View and Gallery Talk



House on Huashan Lu, North View, Lane 322, Huashan Lu (2005)
© Greg Girard

Amelia Johnson Contemporary is pleased to present *China Lucida*, an exhibition of photographs by Canadian artist Greg Girard and Chinese artist Wang Wei. Members of the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch are cordially invited to a private view and gallery talk by the artist Greg Girard and Tamsin Roberts, CEO of RedT Art, on behalf of the artist Wang Wei. Places are strictly limited so reservations should be made with the gallery; contact details are given below.

The exhibition *China Lucida* casts light upon the aspects of contemporary China that have been obscured by the more places spectacular and ostentatious features of China's economic rise. This new exhibition confronts our assumptions on Chinese contemporary society, Chinese contemporary art and on the ways in which China has been depicted using the medium of photography. Girard and Wang's large format photographs focus upon

individuals existing at the periphery of China's economic success. Girard's haunting night photographs of Shanghai's condemned neighbourhoods and deserted alleys invoke an overpowering sense of nostalgia and loss for these buildings which have survived decades of political and social upheaval only to be destroyed by market economics. Wang Wei's unsentimental, finely-detailed portraits of hotel workers express the hopes and frustrations of the young alongside the stoicism and resilience of the old.

Wang Wei lives and works in Beijing. She studied at the Central Academy of Fine Arts in Beijing and worked as a graphic and web designer before returning to CAFA to study photography in 2002. Wang Wei worked as a freelance photographer for a variety of publications. Her work has been exhibited at 798 RedT Space, Beijing, Les Rencontres d'Arles, Arles, and the ZKM Museum, Karlsruhe.

Greg Girard is a Canadian photographer based in Shanghai. Between 1987 and 1997 he established himself as a photographer based in Hong Kong. In 1993 he published the the acclaimed book "City of Darkness", a document of the final years of the Kowloon Walled City in Hong Kong, in collaboration with Ian Lambot. More recently he published "Phantom Shanghai" photographs from which are featured in the exhibition CHINA LUCIDA. His work has been exhibited at the Kwangju Biennale, Kwangju, the Hayward Gallery, London, as well as in galleries in Shanghai, Vancouver and Toronto.

Time/Date: 11.30 am, Saturday 11 October

Venue: Amelia Johnson Contemporary, G/F, 6-10b, Shin Hing Street, NoHo, Hong Kong

Reservations: In view of space restrictions, places are strictly limited and must be reserved in advance by telephoning 2548 2286 or by email to info@ajc-art.com

Are you planning to visit Thailand? Then consider visiting...

The Siam Society under Royal Patronage

The Siam Society in Bangkok has a very active programme of talks and visits and welcomes any of our members who may be visiting the city. They arrange frequent study trips to places of interest in and beyond Thailand which non-members are very welcome to attend. The Society is open 9.00am to 5.00pm Tuesday to Saturday; their address is 131 Soi Asoke, Sukhumvit 21 Road, Bangkok 10110, Thailand, and they can be telephoned at (66) 2 661-6470-7. For information on their current programme go to the Society's website, www.siam-society.org, or email info@siam-society.org.hk.

Of General Interest

Or Korea? Then bear in mind the...

Royal Asiatic Society-Korea Branch

This society holds lectures twice monthly and also cultural tours which are conducted throughout the year and provide a stimulating way of exploring and experiencing the history, the culture and the arts of Korea. Non-members are very welcome to attend all these events. There is an impressively full calendar of events on their website, www.raskb.com, and they can be telephoned at (82) 2 763 9483 or emailed at raskb@kornet.net. Their mailing address is Royal Asiatic Society-Korea Branch, CPO Box 255, Seoul 100-602, Korea.

Shanghai?...

Royal Asiatic Society China in Shanghai

As well as regular local lectures, which are generally held on the second Tuesday of each month at 7.00pm, the society also hosts more impromptu meetings and talks throughout the year as part of its RAS Studio series. The RAS Studio offers a platform for members, visitors and the wider Shanghai community to make a contribution to Shanghai's cultural life. The society also arranges walking tours (RAS Rambles), tours and visits in Shanghai and beyond. Upcoming events include a talk by Terry Bennett: Early Photographs and Photographers in Shanghai 1842-1860 on 16th October and a lecture by Ambassador Christopher Bo Bramsen: Vilhelm Mayer, China's Great Dane on 3rd November. For full information go to www.royalasiaticsociety.org.cn or email enquiry@royalasiaticsociety.org.cn.

Or Malaysia?...

Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society

This society is located at 4B (2nd floor) Jalan Kemuja, Bangsar, 59000 Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. They hold local lectures which non-members are very welcome to attend. For information on their current programme go to www.mbras.org.my, email mbras@tm.net.my or telephone 603 2283 5345.

And here in Hong Kong...

Seminars at the Department of Anthropology, CUHK

Each month the anthropology Department at the Chinese University of Hong Kong holds seminars which are free and open to anyone interested in attending. Seminars take place in room 401 Humanities Building, New Asia College, CUHK and you are welcome to bring your lunch to eat during the talk.

Upcoming titles which many interest members include:

17 October: "Ethnicity and the Issue of State Restructuring in Nepal: The emerging role of Indigenous anthropologists in Nepal". Om Gurung, Associate professor and Head, Central Department of Sociology/Anthropology, Tribhuvan University, Nepal.

24 October: "From Hong Kong to Canada: Millionaire Migrants, Transnational Circulation and Urban Transformation". Professor David Ley, Department of Geography, University of British Columbia.

7 November: "Muslims in Shenzhen: A Study of State, Religion and Ethnicity in a social Economic Zone in China" (in Putonghua). Chen Yanchao, Department of Anthropology, Chinese University of Hong Kong.

28 November: "Manhood and Masculinity in Chinese Religion: The Aesthetics of Ritual Performance". Avron Boretz, Program Director, United Board.

Volunteer Help Wanted!

We urgently need help with the RAS website. This would involve posting the newsletters and occasional updated forms — on average requests for updating would come through every two months. If you are interested and would like to discuss this please call Jenny Day at 2831 7500. We would also welcome help from non-members so if you have any friends (or children) with website expertise we'd love to hear from them.



**Professor Anthony Edward Sweeting
1938 - 2008**

The news of Tony Sweeting's death in Oxford on 30 July came as a great shock to his many friends and colleagues in Hong Kong. Even though we all knew that Tony had been battling cancer for several years, his condition seemed to have improved enormously in the first half of the year under Sansan's loving regime of healthy food and regular exercise. We saw him regularly at the Society's Council meetings and he continued as our hard-working book reviews editor for the Journal despite his condition. He was in good form at the Society's AGM and dinner in April and left for his summer holiday in high spirits, hoping to complete one book project and make significant progress on two others. He was working until the very end! His passing was peaceful and dignified, as he had hoped, and he was surrounded by his family in their Oxford home.

Tony Sweeting was born in Newport, Wales in 1938. He was always proud of his Welsh heritage and became a long-time member of the St David's Society in Hong Kong. In 1959 he completed his university studies at Jesus College, Oxford, a place which he loved as a second home, before going to London for teacher training at the Institute of Education. He initially embarked on a career as a schoolmaster, first in Wales and then for five years at Thika in Kenya where his great energy and initiative quickly revealed themselves; in addition to rearranging the entire English curriculum, he introduced swimming galas, rugby football and dancing classes into the school. He aspired to a more intellectually stimulating vocation, however, and eventually secured a lectureship in the Department of Education at HKU in 1969. It took some years for him to 'settle in' to life in the then conservative British colony, but he eventually came to call Hong Kong 'home', especially after marrying Sansan Ching in 1975. In his early years at HKU he held down a heavy teaching and administrative load, and was promoted to Senior Lecturer (1979) and Reader (1991). He was a founding member of the Faculty of Education in 1984 and served the faculty with distinction until his retirement in 1998. Upon his arrival in Hong Kong Tony immediately became involved in the teaching and examining of history in the Hong Kong school system. He was on the History Subject Panel (1970-80), was Founding President of the Hong Kong History Society (1971-72), a member of the History A-Level Subject Committee (1981-91), and chairman of the Hong Kong Examinations Authority History Sixth Form Committee (1989-98). He completed his PhD on the reconstruction of post-War education in Hong Kong in 1989.

Tony was a very memorable character. As his colleague Professor Paul Morris said at his funeral, 'He lived his life with an enthusiasm and honesty that was very distinctive. His views were not influenced by expediency or self-interest, and he detested anything that smacked of humbug or pretentiousness. He expressed himself robustly, leaving no-one in any doubt as to what he believed.' He was a trenchant yet constructive critic of education in Hong Kong, and this did not always endear him to the establishment — either in Government or at the University — but Tony was always willing to speak truth to power. He expressed his enthusiasm, passion and energy in many ways, as a young man on the sporting field in the games of rugby, rowing and hockey, and as an academic in heated discussions with colleagues and students in the lecture room and Senior Common Room. Although a relative latecomer to academic research, and despite his painstaking work on the history of Hong Kong's education system having started at a time when few scholars thought it a subject worthy of serious attention, Tony's books and articles have literally defined the field for current and future generations of scholars. Two massive volumes, *Education in Hong Kong, pre-1841 to 1941: Fact and Opinion* (1990) and *Education in Hong Kong, 1941-2001: Visions and Revisions* (2004), were his most significant works, but his other contributions to the history of education in Hong Kong were many and varied. His old friend Professor Eric Hoyle said of him that, 'It is rare in Education for someone to be a first-rate historian and also contribute substantially to the development of the school curriculum'. Tony was able to bridge this gap between Academe and the schools while maintaining a very productive research career. Indeed, he continued to work and publish throughout the ten years of his

Obituary

by Dr. Peter Cunich

retirement, and at the time of his death he was working on a history of the Grant Schools Council, a study of Eurasians in Hong Kong, and was to be co-author of HKU's centenary history.

Tony's connection with the Hong Kong Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society stretches back twenty years. He joined in 1988 but did not become a very active member until his election to the Council in 2006, at which time he also joined the Editorial Board of the Journal as book reviews editor. He took to this role with great energy and was able to secure a stream of excellent reviews with which readers will be familiar.

Tony's funeral in Oxford on 14 August was attended by a large number of his friends from Hong Kong, and his ashes will be scattered in Wales, Oxford and Hong Kong. He leaves behind him five children: Jonathan, Juliette, Janine, Justin and Jacinta, who were fondly known as 'the five Jays', and his wife Sansan, to whom the Society sends its condolences. Friends and colleagues who would like to join his family in celebrating Tony's life are invited to submit their tributes to a website dedicated to his memory (www.aesweeting.com). A memorial service will be held at St John's College Chapel, Pokfulam Road, on Thursday 9 October at 4 p.m.

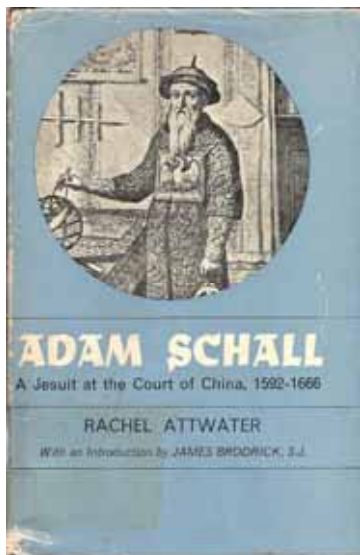
BOOK REVIEW

Adam Schall: A Jesuit at the Court of China, 1592-1666

by Rachel Attwater

Published – London, Geoffrey Chapman, 1963 – 163 pages

Reviewed by Robert Nield



It is often forgotten what an important role was played by the Jesuits in the early days of China's interaction with Europeans. Always driven by religious fervour and the desire to convert the heathen, these hard-liners of the Roman Catholic faith managed to secure for themselves in the late 16th century a permanent and powerful footing in the Chinese capital, a place which was at that time almost a complete mystery to those from outside. The experiences and impressive rise to power of one of these early pioneers is described in a very readable way by Rachel Attwater. Her book is largely drawn from an earlier French work by Joseph Duhr.

Adam Schall arrived in Macao in 1619 and stayed a few years, before travelling north to join the community of brothers in Peking. He soon found that one way in which the Jesuits were able to secure their position was through their skills in mathematics and astronomy. In February 1634 they presented the emperor with a telescope, and then a celestial globe and a sundial. As a reward, they were invited inside the Forbidden City so as to set up their presents and demonstrate how they worked. They proved that they could predict accurately eclipses of the sun and of the moon, skills that were highly prized by the immensely superstitious Chinese

court. For his part, Schall rose to become Director of the Institute of Academy and close confidant of the emperor, no mean feat for a member of a barbarian race.

The Jesuits were not averse to dabbling in a little international politics and rivalry as well. In the early 17th century, the Dutch were looking enviously at Portugal's position as the only European power with direct access to the rich Chinese market. Through his influence at court, Schall went to great lengths to ensure that the Calvinist Dutch did not effectively enter the empire. He even warned the emperor in advance of the Dutch mission, saying that they were rebels who have rejected the authority of their legitimate king (Holland had just broken free of Spanish rule) and since then they have been infesting the high seas. Even the emperor was surprised at the force of Schall's attack, and asked if these new visitors were not also Christians. Schall replied that they were not really Christians at all, although they claimed to be. Even when Dutch envoys did find their way to Peking, they found to their horror that they were obliged to rely on the Jesuits as intermediaries; none of the Dutch could speak any Chinese. They would have been well aware that a number of their requests and statements were "lost in translation." That the Dutch succeeded only in gaining permission to send one ship every eight years can largely be attributed to Schall's intervention.

Despite this somewhat devious side, which is perhaps understandable given the immense rivalry that was emerging between the major European powers, Schall retained his extremely high position and mandarin status for many years, and yet never lost his passion for his religion nor for the pursuit of science.

This is a short book, but an informative one – and just one of a great many that are available to members through our collection held at the Central Library. Go and see for yourself!

* * * * *

Library News

Library Donations

Dr James Hayes and Mr William Waung recently donated the following items to the RAS library:

From James Hayes: *The Great Difference: Hong Kong's New Territories and Its People, 1898-2004*. Hong Kong: Hong Kong University Press, c2006.

From William Waung: *History and Theory: Studies in The Philosophy of History, Vol. 1, no. 1 (1960) – Vol. 24, no. 4 (1985)*. (Journals: 24 copies, 96 issues)

From the Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica:

林美容, 郭佩宜, 黃智慧. 劉斌雄先生紀念論文集. 初版. 臺北市: 中研究院民族所, 民國 97 [2008]

臺灣總督府臨時臺灣舊慣調查會

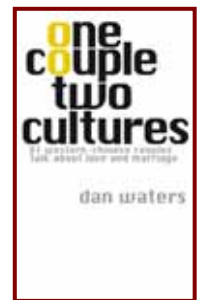
蕃族調查報告書: 布農族. 前篇. 初版. 臺北市: 中央研究院民族學研究所, 民國 97 [2008].

Donations Wanted!!

The donations to the RAS library have been rather fewer in the last two months. If you are thinking of clearing your bookshelves or have duplicate copies of any books related to the interest of our Society, do consider donating them to our library. Your books will then be available for all members to enjoy and will be well looked after in the Central Library's excellent Special Collections section.

RAS Member's Publication

One Couple Two Cultures: 81 Western-Chinese couples talk about love and marriage (2008), pp. 288, reprint revised edition, HK\$155, ISBN 978-988-97610-0-4. Written by RASHKB Past President Dan Waters, this book was first published in 2005. As one reader wrote: 'It's a fascinating study and long overdue for serious consideration.' The book was reviewed in the RASHKB journal, V 45, 2005, pp. 257-259. It's available in most bookshops or direct from the publisher at 2110 0873 or www.mccmcreations.com.



The Book Attic

An English language used books club 'where browsers are always welcome' has recently opened on Amoy Street in Wan Chai. Credit is given for books brought in and added to a Book Lover Account to offset the price of any books bought. This sounds like a great idea! For more details go to their website, www.bookattic.com, where you will find full information and also a clear map of their location.

Library News

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series

To keep our excellent Studies Series publications visible on the front of the shelf, from now on — when space permits — an order form covering all books in the series will be included in every newsletter. The exception will be when there is an announcement of a new book in the series; then the order form will be for that book alone. In other words, the new publication will have the shelf to itself that month. We expect to announce two more additions to the series in the next few months.

ORDER FORM ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY Hong Kong Studies Series

I am an RAS member and would like to order the following books:

NO. OF COPIES

_____ *Reluctant Heroes: Rickshaw Pullers in Hong Kong and Canton, 1874-1954* by Fung Chi Ming
at the discounted price to RAS members of \$195.

_____ *For Gods, Ghosts and Ancestors: The Chinese Tradition of Paper Offerings* by Janet Lee Scott
at the discounted price to RAS members of \$175.

_____ *Hong Kong Internment, 1942-1945: Life in the Japanese Civilian Camp at Stanley* by Geoffrey Emerson
at the discounted price to RAS members of \$200.

_____ *The Six-day War of 1899: Hong Kong in the Age of Imperialism* by Patrick H. Hase
at the discounted price to RAS members of \$200.

_____ *Watching Over Hong Kong: Private Policing 1841-1941* by Sheilah Hamilton
at the discounted price to RAS members of \$200.

POSTAGE: Within Hong Kong, add \$20 for each copy ordered. For overseas members the book 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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MAIL TO: Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong.
