

**ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY  
HONG KONG BRANCH  
LIBRARY**

**REPORT FOR THE YEAR 2001/2002**

As of 1 March 2002, the library collection had increased to 4,380 volumes. A total of 247 volumes were added during the year. Donations of books were received from Mr Anthony Chung, Mr Peter Crush, Mrs May Holdsworth, Mr Bob Horsnell, Dr James Hayes, Mr Lai Tim-cheong, Mr Hugh Phillipson, Dr Dan Waters, Hong Kong Museum of History, and Friends of the Art Museum at the Chinese University of Hong Kong.

The long awaited for Hong Kong Central Library was finally opened on 16 May 2001. The RAS Collection is now housed on the 7/F of the Central Library. The Main Collection of post-1900 materials is shelved in the Special Collections area, and the Rare Book Collection of pre-1900 materials (with selected rare post-1900 materials) is housed in the Rare Book Room. Compact shelving is provided to maximize storage capacity and a comfortable reading area close to the Collection is also available for users to consult the materials.

A guided tour of the RAS Collection was organized by the Hon. Librarian for the Society members on 15 September 2001. A total of 34 members in two sessions attended the tour. All were impressed and appreciative of the modern and well-equipped facilities as well as the spacious and pleasant environment conducive to study, research and recreational reading. It was gratifying to see that the RAS Collection is well taken care of and has adequate room for expansion.

During the Library tour, the Hoi Ha (Village) Collection which was moved from the Shatin Central Library to the Hong Kong Central Library was displayed specially for the members. These books were found by our President, Dr Patrick Hase, by accident some years ago. It included books on schools and medicine and covered all aspects of village life in that period. Patrick gave a very interesting talk on the history of the collection at the same time.

With the move to the new location, Hong Kong Central Library has imposed tighter measures on loan procedures. Loans are closely monitored and we are pleased to report that there is presently no overdue item in the RAS Collection, except for the five old outstanding items that could not be traced any more.

As previously agreed, the Curator of the Central Library has kindly helped to review the RAS Collection and restore deteriorated books. About 600 books have been fumigated or repaired. The Curator will continue to detect books in poor condition and repair where necessary. The Central Library has also processed about half of the Arnold Graham Collection which was donated by the late Mr Arnold Graham in 1995. These bibliographical records will soon be loaded into the OPAC, available for access online.

A set of five books by Tess Johnston, at the suggestion of our Secretary, Mrs Mary Painter, after the interesting talk by Tess were purchased. The titles included:

- Far from home: western architecture in China's northern treaty ports.
- God & country: western religious architecture in old China.
- A last look: western architecture in old Shanghai.
- The last colonies: western architecture in China's southern treaty ports.
- Frenchtown Shanghai: western architecture in Shanghai's old French concession.

These books provide illustration of unique western architecture in different periods in China and were ordered directly from Shanghai. They are of great interest and are an important photographic record of a style of architecture which is fast disappearing in China today.

Concerning usage of the RAS Collection, since the library move in May 2001, the numbers of reference enquiries have increased by 31% although the number of books loaned out have dropped by 50%. As reported by the Hong Kong Central Library, usage of the RAS Library for the period from 1 March 2001 to 28 February 2002 was as follows:

No. of reference enquiries	230
No. of books consulted	306
No. of borrowers	12
No. of books loaned out	17

Ms. Julia Chan  
Hon. Librarian  
1 March 2002