

ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG

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G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



NEWSLETTER

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November 2015



**W O II John Robert Osborn VC (Winnipeg Grenadiers)
Killed in Action, Battle of Hong Kong, 19 December 1941**

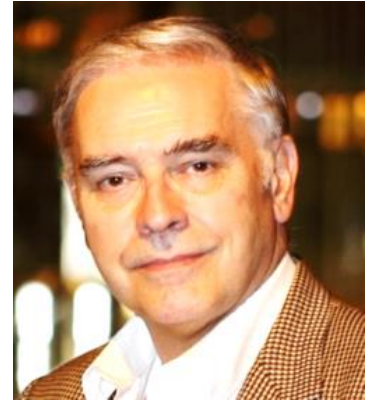
Photo courtesy Martin Merz

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President's Message

I would like to begin this message by extending a warm welcome to all our new members. Some of you I have met at recent events, I hope you have enjoyed these and will continue to support future ones. In China National Day is celebrated on 1st October. This is followed by the 'Golden Week' holiday. I think that this year October could well be described as a golden month for our Society, although I do not imagine we will be able to sustain this level of activity. Taking into account the post summer programme kicked off in September, with an overseas trip to China along the 'Silk Road' we have had an impressive and varied programme including overseas/China trip (1), local museum/field trips (2) cross-boundary trips (1) and talks (5). Approximately 253 RASHK members and their guests participated in these events. I think this is an impressive record, which took a considerable amount of time and energy on the part of the individual co-ordinators who volunteered their time to plan the individual events. The members concerned include Rocky Dang and Peter Stuckey (Silk Road), Davina Lee and Bill Greaves (Ping Shan Trail) and Pat Hase (Dapeng Trip). I would also like to record my thanks to Helen Tinsley, Katherine Fulton and Chris Bailey who have run the reception desk at various talks. Finally the third group who deserve thanks are the many members, too numerous to mention here, who volunteer to write event reviews and submit photographs for the newsletter. Some of these reviews and photos are published in this issue and many members have commented appreciatively on the quality of the newsletter.



I could not begin to estimate the number of hours which have gone into producing the September/October programme but it has certainly been a successful one, if members' comments are anything to go by. I think this also reflects that in each case involving a visit, the leaders conducted a visit to the site in advance of the event taking place. This demonstrates wonderful dedication in delivering a quality programme for you the members so once again congratulations to all those who have contributed to activities in September and October. It would be good to hear what you the members think?

This is a good point to mention another important change, which will shortly be taking place and which I think it is fair to say will have an impact in the programme in next two months. For the past four years, the Society has had the benefit of a very efficient and capable Administrator, Liz Hamerton. Although you may not know Liz by sight, she is certainly known to every member by word. Not only does Liz maintain the database she has processed all new applications since 2012. In addition to dealing with all routine members' enquiries she also took over the publication of the Society's newsletter, which many of you have expressed pleasure and interest in reading.

Liz has informed the Council that she will be leaving Hong Kong and will resign from the post of Administrator at the end of November. While I am personally sorry to see Liz go I understand her reasons for making this decision and take this opportunity, on behalf of the Society, of thanking her for her past service and for the efficiency she has shown while acting as Administrator. I would also like to wish her every success and happiness in the future. Liz's resignation has, of course, caused Council to consider the question of a replacement. Some of you may have noticed that an advertisement appeared in the classified section of the SCMP on Saturday morning.

We have therefore commenced a recruitment exercise to find a new Administrator and attached to this edition of your newsletter is a notice advertising the vacancy. If you know of anybody who you think would be suitable for the position, please advise them to apply. The object of this exercise is to select a new Administrator who can commence his or her appointment by mid-November to permit an understudy period before taking up full responsibility. For this reason, I anticipate fewer activities in the coming two months while the transition is taking place. I would also ask for members'

President's Message

understanding of the situation and that the new Administrator will require a period of familiarisation. The Hon Secretary will announce the appointment of the new Administrator in due course.

I would like to conclude this message by saying that with the start of November new members joining the Society enjoy a bonus two months membership. If you have a friend or colleague who you think might be interested in the Society why not encourage them to come along and perhaps join the Society. We are always looking to recruit new members and nothing is more effective than a personal recommendation.

Michael Broom
President



Future Activities

LECTURE

Introducing Lt. Cmdr. Henry C.S. Collingwood-Selby, RN (1898-1992)

Friday • 13th November

Dr Gillian Bickley will introduce British naval officer, Henry Collingwood-Selby, as known from his diaries, essays, talks, sketches, photographs, and personal letters to and from his wife, his two sons and the Hong Kong school-teacher who was in love with him.

Dr Verner Bickley, MBE, who in addition to his many other accomplishments is a well-known “voice”, actor, broadcaster and voice-over artist, will join his wife on the platform to read extracts from Harry’s writings.

Laid off from the Royal Navy after serving at the end of the First World War, Harry Selby joined the Chinese Maritime Customs Service but was recalled to active service in Hong Kong during preparations for the inevitable extension of the Second World War to include Hong Kong. When the Japanese attack on Hong Kong came, he was ordered to scuttle his mine-layer, HMS *Redstart*, and afterwards fought on land. After being wounded and hospitalised, he was confined until the end of the war in various camps as a Prisoner of War in Hong Kong. The lively Hong Kong life he describes in the year immediately before the Fall of Hong Kong, the camp documents and official welcome from King and Queen on his return home when the extreme period of trial was over, tell a unique and fascinating story.



In Time of War, co-edited by his son, Richard Collingwood-Selby, OBE (in Chile) and Gillian Bickley (in Hong Kong), who persuaded him to search for the material, is based on Richard's findings and transcripts of his father's personal papers and was published by Proverse Hong Kong in November 2013. Copies will be available at the talk at a price of HKD180.

"A tale of service, stamina, and survival, with lessons for us all." – Jay Winter, Yale University.

The Speaker



Dr Gillian Bickley is a Vice-President of the RAS(HK), having been a Council Member for a number of years. She joined the Society in 1970, soon after arriving in Hong Kong to teach at the University of Hong Kong and since then has enjoyed attending the Society's lectures, events and overseas tours. She has contributed to the Society's *Journal* and spoken to the Society on a few occasions, often together with her husband, Dr Verner Bickley, MBE, also a Life Member of the Society. Born and educated in the United Kingdom, Gillian Bickley has lived in Hong Kong for over forty years, working mainly in academia (including the University of Lagos (Nigeria), the University of Auckland (New Zealand) and the University of Hong Kong, and retiring from Hong Kong Baptist University as an Associate Professor.

She is the author or editor of several works relating to Hong Kong. Her *The Golden Needle: The Biography Of Frederick Stewart (1836-1889)* (the David C. Lam Institute for East-West Studies, Hong Kong Baptist University, 1997), is considered the definitive biography of the founder of Hong Kong

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Government Education (also the first Hong Kong Government Servant to be head of the Government Administration). Her *The Stewarts of Bourtreebush* was published in the UK by the Institute for Scottish Studies, University of Aberdeen Press, 2003. Gillian is the editor of *Hong Kong Invaded! A '97 Nightmare* (University of Hong Kong Press, 2001). She compiled and edited *The Development of Education in Hong Kong, 1841-1897* (Proverse, 2002) and *The Complete Court Cases of Magistrate Frederick Stewart* (Proverse, 2008), both supported by the Council of the Lord Wilson Heritage Trust. She also edited *A Magistrate's Court in Nineteenth Century Hong Kong: Court in Time* (Proverse, 2005; 2nd edition, 2009), to which several members of the RAS(HK) contributed chapters. She has contributed biographies to both the *Oxford Dictionary of National Biography* and the *Dictionary of Hong Kong Biography* and published academic articles in the same area. Published by Three Continents Press, Inc., in Washington, DC, 1978, her "Hong Kong Literature in English" is included in *Asian/Pacific Literature in English: Bibliographies*, ed. Robert E. McDowell and Judith H. McDowell.

Speaker: Dr Gillian Bickley
Date/Time: Friday, 13 November 2015 / 6:30pm Reception, 7.00 pm Lecture
Venue: Auditorium, L4, Centre for Visual Arts, 7A Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels
Admission: RAS Members \$75; Non-Members / Guests \$125.
Booking: Please email in advance to Helen Tinsley on fulttins@netvigator.com to reserve your place, and pay at the door.

LECTURE

Hong Kong: Fulcrum of the Sino-Japanese War.

Friday • 4th December 2015

During the Second Sino-Japanese War Hong Kong was a Chinese city of great significance as it became the nexus of imperial conflict in Asia.

Hong Kong's strategic military value rested in its port facilities, as these were connected by rail to China's 9th War Zone in Hunan. Throughout the course of the war, Hong Kong served as the most significant conduit of military supplies sustaining Chinese resistance, particularly at Changsha, and this situation helped draw the Japanese into a quagmire that could not be escaped easily.

Within this scenario, Hong Kong became a city of geopolitical importance. Southern China was a region where international influence was strong. Soviet advisers helped sustain the Chinese army, while the British maintained open logistical doors through Hong Kong and Burma. An objective in China for some was the formation of an anti-fascist front with the Soviets, but this met with failure initially while Anglo-Japanese antagonism intensified. After the fall of France, however, British influence was eclipsed by American intervention that rose steadily throughout 1941. One result was an oil embargo against Japan and another was the creation of the American Volunteer Group. A third was the reinforcement of Hong Kong with forces from America's Canadian ally. The latter move was a gesture of assurance to China that additional support was on the way.

To relieve the pressure, Japanese leaders considered advancing north into the Soviet Union or south against the British and Americans. The latter option held greater appeal, but the rising level of US intervention meant that the window of opportunity was closing. Racing against time, the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and began a fateful campaign into the Southwest Pacific in December 1941. Part

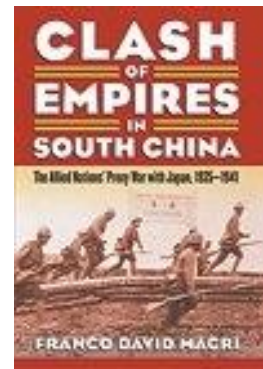
Future Activities

of the opening act included battles at Hong Kong and Changsha to force an end of the war in China. This effort failed in Hunan, and although the Japanese empire expanded rapidly across the Pacific, the result was a Pyrrhic victory at best. British power in Asia was smashed, but for the Japanese, a similar fate was only a matter of time. Hong Kong was an important catalyst that contributed to this process.

The Speaker



Dr Macri's presentation is based on research conducted for his PhD in history at The University of Hong Kong. The dissertation evolved somewhat and was published by the University Press of Kansas in 2012. The book is entitled *Clash of Empires in South China: The Allied Nations' Proxy War with Japan, 1935-1941*. Currently, he is the senior research fellow and senior tutor at St. John's College. He previously served as an infantryman with the Royal Canadian Regiment and more recently as an investigation



leader with the Joint POW/MIA Accounting Command at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam in Hawaii.

Speaker: Dr Franco Macri
Date/Time: Friday, 4 December 2015 / 6:30pm Reception, 7.00 pm Lecture
Venue: Auditorium, L4, Centre for Visual Arts, 7A Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels
Admission: RAS Members \$75; Non-Members / Guests \$125.
Booking: Please email in advance to Michael Broom on stgeorge_hk@yahoo.co.uk to reserve your place, and pay at the door.

RASHKB OVERSEAS TOUR

Central Vietnam: Danang, Hoi An, Hue.

11th December to 15th December 2015 (5 days/4 nights)

Central Vietnam is an area immensely rich in history, culture and heritage. We shall be visiting Cham sanctuaries including the UNESCO World Heritage site at My Son (meaning "Good Mountain"). The Cham empire flourished in this area from the 2nd to 15th centuries, but was finally overcome by the Vietnamese in the nineteenth century. We shall visit the superb Cham Museum in Danang to see some of its treasures, particularly of stone carvings.

Just to the south of Danang we shall drive via China Beach and Marble Mountain to the ancient town and port of Hoi An. This is another UNESCO World Heritage site. Hoi An was a major international port in the 16th and 17th centuries. It controlled the strategic spice trade with Indonesia. Foreign influences, including Dutch and Portuguese, are still discernible and are exemplified in its fascinating museums and the Japanese Covered Bridge was first built in the 1590's by the Japanese community. These days Hoi An better known for its silk and delightful silk lanterns, illuminated in the evenings.

Our third UNESCO World Heritage Site will be Hue, just to the north of Da Nang where we shall visit

Future Activities

the vast Imperial Citadel, home of the Nguyen Dynasty that ruled in the area from 1802 to 1945. Here we shall visit some of the palaces, temples and tombs and take a cruise on the Perfumed River.

Between Danang and Hue we shall drive over the spectacular Hai Van Pass (Ocean Cloud Pass) on National Highway 1A. This Pass provided a natural boundary at times between the Champa and the Dai Viet Kingdoms and now, mists permitting, gives a wonderful elevated viewpoint over the S China Sea and the highlands of central Vietnam.

We shall fly directly to Da Nang and are deliberately restricting ourselves to a relatively small area of Vietnam, (Hue is around 100 kms. north of Danang, which in turn is about 70 kms. distant from Hoi An and also My Son). We intend that, after arrival in Hue, this will be a more relaxing and comfortable tour than some of the others. We plan to use just two hotels during the four nights, probably two nights each in Hue and Hoi An).

Tentative Summary Itinerary (subject to refinement)

11 Dec (Fri) Flight from Hong Kong – Danang

By Dragon Air flight KA220, Dpt. 16:50 Arr. 17:50. Upon arrival, transfer by coach to Hue. Overnight in Hue.

12 Dec (Sat) Hue



We have a full day to explore Hue, the home of the Nguyen Dynasty from 1802 to 1945. After breakfast, we take a cruise on the Perfume River passing picturesque villages and the delightful Vietnamese countryside to visit the magnificent tomb of King Minh Mang with its stele pavilion and fine architecture reflecting the Confucian values of the King. This is on the west bank, about 12 kms. south of Hue, while a second tomb we visit is the ornate but less refined tomb of Khai Dinh who reigned from 1916 to 1925. The architecture has a fusion of Vietnamese and European details. We also visit the seven storey Thien Mu Pagoda, founded in 1601.

In the afternoon, we visit the Hue Citadel, inside which is the Imperial City, protected by fortified ramparts and ringed by a moat fed from the Perfume River. The perimeter wall is 2 ½ kms. long. Within the Imperial City is the Purple Forbidden City. If time permits we shall visit the Dong Ba market to see local life and produce before dinner in Hue. Overnight in same hotel in Hue.

13 Dec (Sun) Hue to Hoi An

After breakfast, we drive to Hoi An via the Hai Van Pass. After lunch we walk around to explore the compact Hoi An old town, visiting the Japanese Covered Bridge, the Museum of History and Culture, the Trade Ceramics Museum, the 200 years old home of a successful Vietnamese merchant (known as the Tan Ky house), the silk street of Hoi An and some temples and pagodas. Dinner and see the evening illuminations in Hoi An. Overnight in Hoi An.

Future Activities



14 Dec (Mon) Hoi An, My Son and China Beach

After breakfast we drive to the Cham sanctuaries in My Son. Located 60 km to the west of Hoi An, My Son was the mystical and auspicious high ground where the mighty Champa Kingdom aimed to link itself with the cosmic progenitor. Here are a complex of brick towers or sanctuaries typically around 1,100 years old. We return to the coast and take lunch on China Beach, a beautiful sweep of some 30 kms. of fine white sandy beaches. Later we visit Marble Mountains (actually marble and limestone, with some caves and shrines. Dinner. Overnight in same hotel in Hoi An



15 Dec (Tue) Hoi An to Danang to Hong Kong

After breakfast we drive to Danang. Visit the Champa Art Sculpture Museum, a splendid museum started by the French in 1915 and now housing the finest display of Cham works in the world. After lunch, transfer to Danang airport for the flight back to Hong Kong. Dragon Air Flight: KA225 Dpt. 18:40 Arr. 21:30

Future Activities



Cost: HK\$15,300/ per person on twin/double room basis
Single-bed room: HK\$2,800 supplement; Non RASHK Members: HK\$700 supplement

Tour price does not include:

Insurance, Visa (most passports do not require a visa, please check with us).
Beverages (other than water/tea) at meals, Personal expenses.

Booking Deadline: As soon as possible (if in doubt please check with Eugenia - 2722 7378)

For more details/enquiries, please contact Phoenix Services Agency (HK) Ltd.
Rm 1417, Austin Tower, 22-26 Austin Avenue, TST, Kowloon
Eugenia Choi (ras@phoenixtrvl.com; 2722 7378) and/or
Rocky Dang (rockydang@yahoo.com; 9182 3483)
Travel Agent License No.: 350706

Any member who would be willing to write a review of an RAS activity for the Newsletter should please contact Mr Michael Broom, Hon Activities Co-ordinator, either by email on stgeorge_hk@yahoo.co.uk or by telephone on 2719 4958

Recent Activities

RASHK Overseas Trip Visit to the Eastern Section of the Silk Road 11 - 20 September 2015 *written by Dr Patrick Hase*

At 10 a.m. on Friday 11th September, 12 eager participants met at the Airport for the Dragonair flight to Xi'an: eleven days later they arrived back from Xi'an, weary, but very satisfied with a superb tour which showed us a great deal and taught us a great deal more.

The heart of the trip were visits to three of the greatest Buddhist cave-complexes in China, mostly dating from the Wei to the Tang periods (4th – 10th centuries): Mogao (near Dunhuang), Binglingsi (about twenty miles from Lanzhou, via an hour-long speed-boat ride down the Yellow River), and Maiji Shan (about ten miles from Tianshui). All three complexes consist of caves hand-cut into cliffs, full of Buddhist statuary and mural paintings, in a miraculous state of preservation. The paintings are spectacular, and the statues in many cases exceptionally fine.



Carvings and walkways at Maiji Shan



Entrance to the Mogao Caves

At Mogao we had a guide from the Mogao Museum who was exceptionally knowledgeable, and was able to let us into five caves not currently open to the public. Binglingsi had perhaps the most magnificent site, cut into the side-wall of a canyon running down to the Yellow River. Maijishan is a sheer cliff some hundreds of feet high: access to the caves is by a spider's-web of narrow steel walkways and steps pinned to the cliff wall. Very spectacular, but a little vertiginous!

These Buddhist cave-complexes were, however, by no means all we saw. Leaving aside the two fine Provincial Museums we visited (Gansu and Shaanxi), we also visited the Banpo Neolithic Village Museum, and, somewhere I have long wanted to visit, the remains of the Han dynasty Great Wall to the west of Dunhuang, with the remains of the Yumenguan Fort, the fort which marked the extreme end of the wall, and which was the gateway into China for all travelers on the Silk Road then (and the site of the best tour-guide remark of this trip: "The lavatory is behind the tree"). We visited the Chiu family Ancestral Hall and the great Fuxi Temple at Tianshui. Then we went to see three Imperial Mausolea (Jin, Han, and Tang), the superb walls of Xi'an (we walked from the East to the South Gates), the Forest of Steles Museum, the Grand Mosque of Xi'an, and much else.

Recent Activities



At the western end of the Han Great Wall

All photos courtesy of Peter Stuckey

Every meal we had was superb, and very sumptuous. Lots of local specialities, mostly very tasty. Hotels were excellent. A farewell “Tang dynasty” cultural show was enjoyable.

Everywhere we went were signs of the huge expenditure on infrastructure in today’s China. For the most part we drove on brand-new six-lane motorways, all constructed in the last eight years, piercing through the mountains on dozens of magnificent viaducts interspersed with tunnels: alongside the motorways the High-Speed Rail from Xi’an to Urumchi was being built by huge numbers of men and machines. Less positive feelings were evinced by the vast numbers of new luxury housing estates, surrounding every town, and even some villages, all built in the last five years or so, but with the overwhelming majority empty.

The great wealth of the new China has enabled immense numbers of Chinese tourists to visit their national attractions. This occasionally has less than ideal consequences. In stark contrast to the Han Yanling mausoleum, which we had almost to ourselves, the Terracotta Warrior tomb of the First Emperor now receives 100,000 visitors a day. As a result, outside the entrance to the protected area there is now a market of some 200-300 shops and stalls, with higglers and hucksters of every description, shouting and yelling, pushing and jostling, and, inside the Tomb Pit the visitors stand ten deep at the front. What will happen when visitors to Maijishan soar in numbers (as they will, it having been recently upgraded to a “Five-Star” attraction) try to force their way up those narrow steel walkways? It will be, at the least, very dangerous! And poor Famen! Eight years ago this great Tang temple, with its magnificent Imperial treasures, was a must-see for people interested in history visiting Shaanxi, but now! It has been turned into a vast Disney-style Buddhist theme-park, entered through a monstrously grotesque building, leading to a two-mile long drive ending in a nine-storey high “Jewel in the Lotus” construction, lined with three storey high statues painted a gold colour, with the Tang temple pushed off to one side, with most of its treasures removed. A terrible lesson in what can happen if you have unlimited cash, no taste, and zero respect for the historical background! Poor ravaged Famen! Alas, no-one seeking Chinese history should now go there!

But these slight negativities did not in the least reduce the splendour of the tour. A never-to-be-forgotten visit! I shall remember it to my dying day!

Recent Activities

Ten Thousand Items Later A Collector's Journey So Far

Wednesday • 30 September 2015

written by Peter Hunt

Roy Delbyck is a man of many parts. A mild-mannered American attorney-at-law by day, he transforms into a determined, passionate, and some might even say fanatical collector, also by day. Roy usually spends at least two hours every day relentlessly patrolling eBay and other sources, offline and online, in search of items that offer an insight about China to liberate and to give a safe home in his growing collection. To a sympathetic audience of over 40 members at the Hong Kong Visual Arts Centre, Roy exposed the roots of his addiction and led us on a journey through the length and breadth of his collection that was amusing, insightful and educational all at the same time.

Addressing the “nature or nurture?” question Roy believes that collecting is embedded in his DNA. In his youth passions for collecting baseball cards, coins and stamps waxed and waned, and when he moved to Asia he dabbled in collecting fine arts. However, it was in 2011 that he stumbled across his true love, being smitten by a set of 1880s paintings of tradesmen from a Beijing studio. Now only four years later, his collection has grown to 10,000 items as he, optimistically, puts it: “so far...”

Acceptance is the first step to acknowledging an addiction and Roy accepts that collectors are nuts, but with the caveat that: “you have to be disciplined in your nuttiness.” Starting with the broad-brush aim of collecting things about China or the Chinese people he then honed his aim to items that describe the American or British experience in China, and then to items concerning the experience of Chinese people in the USA. Roy specialises in personal items, ephemera such as diaries, letters, party invitations, photographs, newspapers, magazines and yearbooks; items that were not intended to last as part of the historical record or that were intended just to give a snapshot of a day, week or year and then be superseded or discarded. Taking a leaf from the Donald Rumsfeld playbook, Roy also described the anguish of searching for “known unknowns”: items that you know are out there but that you have never seen; and the joy of finding “unknown unknowns”: great stuff you didn’t even know existed.

In the limited time available Roy used less than 0.3% of his collection to take a rapt audience on a journey through snapshots from China’s history from the 1845 wedding in Hong Kong of an American missionary, to a 1972 Pan Am carry bag commemorating President Nixon’s visit to China, touching in-between on such diverse issues as a Chinese Educational Mission student at Yale University in 1880, a Chinese ladies softball team in 1930s New York, 1940s propaganda from Japan on Wan Jing-wei, and the Beatles’ 1964 visit to Hong Kong. Behind each item there was a story of relevance to China, sometimes of intended reporting but often unintentional, such as the expatriate lecturer at Tsinghua University writing home about the joys of being able to put his feet up because the students were on strike, he was writing shortly after the start of the 1919 Movement; or an invitation from Madame Chiang Kai-shek to a 1942 4th July barbecue in honour of the “Flying Tigers” on the very day that the original Flying Tigers were disbanded. Roy’s talk was full of little historical gems like these and he left a well pleased audience grateful for a chance to look at these individual insights into China, and wondering what the remaining 9,970 items of his collection hold in store.

written by Chris Bailey

On Wednesday evening, 30 September 2015, Roy Delbyck opened his talk to more than 40 RAS members by describing his collection as “*a journey so far*”.

Recent Activities

Having grown up in America collecting baseball cards, in later years his interest in historical material was sparked initially by his wife, Kip, while working at Charlotte Horstmann in Asia, and especially when he saw a 1880s Peking map collection at Jonathan Wattis. Roy's collection began with books about the Chinese experience in America, moving on to 19th Century British/American material which he calls ephemeral - newspapers, tickets, etc. - then photos, letters, diaries, magazines, maps and other printed materials. Press photos from 1900-1950 are another speciality.

A typical day for Roy in the office, where his collection is housed, involves around 2 hours online and on eBay auction sites averaging 100-200 searches. He has a record system of when he buys an item, vendor and price, but the items' intimate details are in his head. Roy's PowerPoint presentation involved nearly 30 of his favourite pieces: from Madame Chiang Kai-shek's BBQ invitation to an example of one of 288 bubble-gum cards, he vividly described the hidden stories behind each piece and why they were so collectable.

Roy was asked by an audience member what he thought his biggest mistake had been along this journey: he told us of his discovery and purchase in a bookshop of Eileen Cheng's signed book "Rice Sprouts" priced at USD150. A dealer subsequently offered him USD2,000 for the book which Roy accepted. Two weeks later, he saw the same book on offer for USD48,000 which has since increased to USD54,000.

Roy was thanked for his articulate, enlightening talk: *a picture tells a thousand words* was so true in this case. What may have seemed to most of us, at first glance, a rather bizarre collection of material, came vividly to life with Roy's interpretation: a thoroughly enjoyable evening.

The Second Tang Dynasty

Wednesday • 14 October 2015

written by Chai Kim Wah

The idea for Mark O'Neill's new book came from his mother-in-law. Recounting her childhood in Xiangshan 香山 county (now part of Zhuhai 珠海) in Guangdong province, she mentioned that "many important people" came from her township of Tangjiawan 唐家灣, such as Tang Shao-yi 唐紹儀. Having never heard of him, Mark did an internet search and found that Tang had been the first prime minister of the Republic of China.

Further research uncovered 30 people from Xiangshan county who had indeed played important roles in China's modernization in the late Qing and early Republican period. Not to mention the county's most famous son, Sun Yatsen 孫中山, for whom Xiangshan (Fragrant Mountain) has been renamed Zhongshan 中山. Though far less renowned, the other sons of Xiangshan were also patriots and pioneers in business, education, engineering, law, medicine, industry, diplomacy and defence. They are absent from the Chinese pantheon as they don't fit into the Communist Party's agenda of history. Fortunately, Mark shines a light on 12 of the most remarkable in "The Second Tang Dynasty – the 12 sons of Fragrant Mountain who changed China".

How could a small rural county produce so many extraordinary individuals? Exposure to the outside world. In the 1880s, China was a closed feudal empire and most Chinese hardly left their hometown. But those from coastal Zhuhai, near Macao and Hong Kong, were more open to foreigners and overseas travel. They went to Britain, the US, Australia and Japan, learned the ways of the West and took their knowledge and skills home to help China modernise. In his lecture, illustrated with

Recent Activities

historical photographs from the book, Mark had time to describe the lives and legacies of five sons of Xiangshan:

Yung Wing 容闳(1828-1912), son of an illiterate farmer, was the first Chinese to graduate from Yale University, where he read English literature, played football (with pigtail flying), and sang in the choir. Despite getting US citizenship he chose to return to serve China. As an interpreter in Hong Kong's Supreme Court, he started studying law, but was forced out by British lawyers fearing he would take over their Chinese legal business. From 1863, he worked with reformist leader Zeng Guofan 曾國藩 to set up the Jiangnan Arsenal, which became the largest arms factory in East Asia, and the Bureau of Translation, which translated over 100 works. In 1870, the Qing government finally approved his life's ambition – to send Chinese students to be educated in the US; over a decade, 120 went, 112 graduated, and many later made great contributions to China. But the scheme was cut short by Qing conservatives. Yung made many other proposals ahead of their time, such as a national bank and railway lines. Although the US revoked his citizenship of 50 years due to the 1882 Chinese Exclusion Act, he slipped back illegally in 1902, living in Connecticut until his death in 1912.

Tang Ting-shu 唐廷樞 (1832-92), entrepreneur extraordinaire, came from a farming family but Morrison School in Hong Kong equipped him with fluent English and an ease with foreigners. Starting out as an interpreter in the colonial government, he was later comprador for Jardine, Matheson for 10 years. Meanwhile he built his own business empire, investing in property, cotton, salt, tea, banks, steamships, etc, against competition from dominant foreign firms. In 1872 he joined the Qing government at the request of its leading reformer Li Hong-zhang 李鴻章, and set up two conglomerates: China Merchants Group, which broke the foreign monopoly on shipping and insurance, and Kailuan Group, which began as the Kaiping Coal Mine in Hebei province. The first modern mining operation by a Chinese firm, Kaiping grew into the biggest state mine producing 700,000 tonnes of coal a year. To transport the coal to Tianjin, Tang pushed for the construction of the first Chinese-made steam engine, running on China's first standard-gauge railway, in the face of fierce opposition from the Empress Dowager, who wanted donkeys to pull the coal carts. His philanthropy endowed hospitals, schools and many other good works.

Tang Shao-yi 唐紹儀(1862-1938) was one of the students sent by Yung Wing to the US, where he stayed seven years, one at Columbia University, and cut off his pigtail; he used a fake one after returning to China. He found a powerful patron in Yuan Shih-kai 袁世凱 who appointed him to high positions in Korea and around China. His greatest diplomatic success was in persuading Britain to recognize China's sovereignty over Tibet, which British troops had invaded in 1903. He also led negotiations that achieved a bloodless end to the Qing dynasty. When Sun Yatsen became president in 1912, he made Tang his prime minister, but both resigned within months in protest against Yuan Shih-kai's imperial ambitions. Disillusioned, Tang refused offers of high office and eventually returned to Tangjiawan. He became an exemplary chief of his home county, in 1936 donating his family home and magnificent garden to the town. Tragically, he was assassinated in Shanghai in 1938 on the orders of the Nationalist Party's spy chief, in the mistaken belief that he would join a pro-Japanese government.

Tang Guo-an 唐國安 (1858-1913) also studied in the US under Yung Wing's programme, but it was cancelled in his first year at Yale and he was ordered home. In China he had an illustrious career as teacher, journalist, diplomat and devout Christian, though his greatest contributions were as an anti-opium activist and educationist. He set up China's first bilingual newspaper in Shanghai in 1903 to campaign against opium, foot-binding and foreign privilege. In 1909 he gave a celebrated speech in English at the first international opium conference, which paved the way for an international drug control treaty. In education, he revived Yung Wing's scheme to send youngsters to the US, using part of the Boxer Indemnity money returned to China by the US. To prepare Chinese for study abroad, he

Recent Activities

set up Tsinghua清華University in Beijing and in 1912 became its first president. But the strain of building up Tsinghua ruined his health and he died less than a year later. The university is now one of the top two in China.

Ma Ying-biao 馬應彪 (1864-1944) attended only three years of school before he had to work to support the family as his father had joined the gold rush in Australia. At age 20 he joined his dad in Sydney where he set up successful grocery and remittance businesses. In 1892 he went to Hong Kong where he met fellow Xiangshan native Sun Yatsen, who told him, “Business can save the nation.” Realising he had a role to play in Sun’s revolution, as well as Hong Kong’s business potential, he settled here and decided to introduce the retail model he’d seen in Sydney. In 1900 Sincere, the first Chinese-owned department store, opened in Central. With fixed prices, saleswomen (his wife and her sisters) and other innovations, it took Hong Kong by storm. Ma opened more branches, then expanded into China, Singapore, Osaka and London. The Sincere company was Hong Kong’s first multinational. He also established a hotel chain, 20 cosmetics factories and other companies. But from 1937 the Japanese seized his businesses and he died in 1944. His family resumed control of his businesses after the war.



Michael Broom presenting Mark O'Neill with an RAS Journal.
Photo courtesy of Dr Helen Tinsley

Tang Clan Villages of Ping Shan Saturday • 17 October



RASHK members outside the former Ping Shan Police Station

Recent Activities



All photos courtesy of Dr Helen Tinsley

RASHK DAY VISIT **Dapeng, Guangdong Province**

Saturday • 24 October 2015

written by Jennifer Eagleton

We set off early morning by bus to Dapeng (大鵬), an old walled fortress-town overlooking Daya Bay on Dapeng Peninsula to the east of Shenzhen. We were briefed en route by Past President, Dr Patrick Hase, about the history of the area.

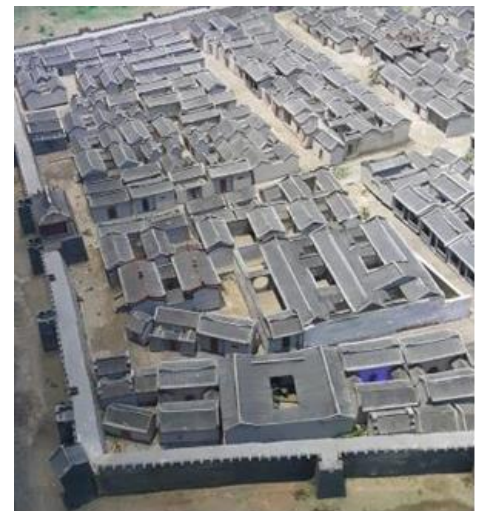
The fortress was first established in 1394 and developed into a large town during the Ming and Qing dynasties. The remains of this walled town cover an area of 10,000 square metres. The fortress-town was built to protect inland villages from coastal pirates and it weathered various battles and typhoons through the years. After 1847 when most of the military had moved to Kowloon City – to keep an eye

Recent Activities

on the newly arrived British – it became rather a quiet place since the walled fortress-town had been predominately a military establishment, with only a few shops and little trade, the latter being carried out at Wong Mo Hui some distance from Dapeng.

This “emptying” meant that the place has been well preserved; it really is a “hidden gem” of fortress-towns in Guangdong. The various *yamen* have disappeared, mostly converted into residences although parts of the old buildings survive. Most of the current residents of the city are descendants of soldiers, who retired there after their service ended.

We entered the city via the South Gate and moved in an anti-clockwise direction, taking in Dongmen Street and Zheng Street. All the streets within the walls have been resurfaced with granite slabs; electricity and telephone wires have been placed in conduits beneath the ground. The houses within the walls are more than a hundred years old but only a few are open to the public. Dapeng is now a bustling tourist spot, but the cafes, restaurants and other facilities, rather surprisingly seem to have been designed to fit into their historical surroundings rather well.



Between the South Gate and the East Gate, the Yiwen Building houses a small museum exhibition of documents and artefacts recording the city’s history which we were shown by the director of the museum.

The museum director also took us to the residence of a former admiral. The house, which has inner-courtyards, bedrooms, a kitchen and an ancestral worship hall, is an excellent example of how the upper echelons of society of that time lived. There is also some early boundary stones after the New Territories were leased to the British.

Dapeng Ancient City is designated as a “patriotism education site”, as Lai Yan-Tseuk, a general who was stationed in the area, was greatly honoured by the emperor for his role in fighting the British in 1839. This is seen in Dapeng as a huge victory over the British, and General Lai is consistently depicted as a hero, but the fight was in fact an overwhelming victory for the British as China let the British have trading rights after the battle.



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RAS members are getting younger!

After an excellent lunch of Dapeng-style cuisine, we were at leisure to stroll around the byways of the old town for an hour or two before visiting the nearby Dongshan Temple, a small garden of tranquility before heading back to the bright lights of Hong Kong.



All photos are courtesy of Dr Ann-si Li

Of General Interest

RAS Publications – St John’s Cathedral Shop

Arrangements have been made with St John’s Cathedral Bookshop for copies of RAS Journal Vol. 55 and the book *Hong Kong Going, Gone* to be sold through the shop. It is hoped Members will actively support this facility, and encourage others to purchase Society publications from the Bookshop.



DOCUMENTARY FILM

Father Nicosia, the Angel of the Lepers

Wednesday • 11 November

This documentary film presented by Beyond Thirty-Nine and The Italian Women’s Association tells the story of Father Gaetano Nicosia, 100 years old and still living in Hong Kong. He was called “the angel of the lepers” for his work in the leprosarium of Coloane where he spent 48 years helping the unfortunate sufferers. He founded and made possible the construction of schools for abandoned young people; dormitories and institutes for the young and elderly, the disabled and the severely handicapped.

In the film Father Nicosia talks about his parents, his youth in Sicily and his missionary vocation and his work in Macau with the lepers.



Venue: Lecture Theatre of the Visual Arts Centre, 7A Kennedy Road

Time: 6.30 pm Introductory Presentation

Admission: \$100. All proceeds will go to “Little Sisters of the Poor – St Mary’s Home for the Aged”

EXHIBITION

Magna Carta Global Tour - Hong Kong

11-14 November 2015

800 years ago, Magna Carta first established the principle that everybody, including the sovereign was equal before the law. Hereford Cathedral’s 1217 Magna Carta and the only surviving copy of the 1215 King John’s Writ will be on public display in Sotheby’s Hong Kong Gallery as part of an exclusive global tour.

There will be gallery talks led by Chancellor of Hereford Cathedral Canon Chris Pullin on 11 and 12 November at 2.00 pm and 14 November at 11.00 am and 2.00 pm.

Date: Wednesday 11 – Saturday 14 November

Times: Weds ~ Fri : 10.00 am – 5.00 pm

Sat : 11.00 am – 5.00 pm

Venue: Sotheby’s Hong Kong Gallery, 5/F One Pacific Place, 88 Queensway

Of General Interest

2016 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Members are reminded that renewals are due on 1 January 2016 and, for this purpose, a renewal form is available at the back of this issue. If you currently pay by cheque and would prefer the convenience of paying by Direct Debit, please contact the Administrator for a Direct Debit Authorisation form on membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk. Those of you who pay by Standing Order are requested to please ensure that the Order is for the appropriate amount.

Annual

Hong Kong Resident - Individual / Institutional	HK\$700
Hong Kong Resident - Joint / Family	HK\$1,000
Hong Kong Resident – Student*	HK\$50

* in full time education – please enclose a photocopy of your student ID.

Life

Life – Single	HK\$9,800
Life – Joint	HK\$13,000

Overseas

Overseas - Annual	HK\$420
Overseas - Life	HK\$5,800

RASHK ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2016

Friday, 22 April 2016 at The Hong Kong Club

Please make a note of the date. Further details will be included in January and/or March Newsletters.

Advertising

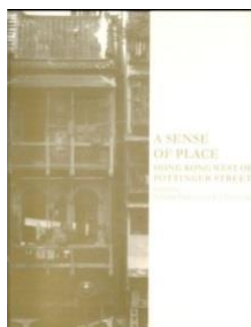
In an effort to defray newsletter costs, we are accepting advertisements that would be of interest to RAS members and related to the objects of the Society. Would you like to advertise a business or a service you can provide, or do you know someone who might be interested? Our rates are very reasonable:

Full Page	HK\$1,150	2/3 Page	HK\$850
1/2 Page	HK\$725	1/3 Page	HK\$450
Classified	First 10 words HK\$70, each additional word HK\$2.50		

To book advertising space, please email: membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

Publications Order Form

<u>Journals</u>	<u>Price HK\$</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Order</u>
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Vols. 50 – 55	\$200.00 each	—	—
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Hong Kong Going and Gone	\$120.00	—	—
A Sense of Place: Hong Kong West of Pottinger Street	\$300.00	—	—
P&P			
	<u>within HK</u>	<u>Overseas (surface/registered)</u>	
A Sense of Place: Hong Kong West of Pottinger Street	\$55.00	\$130.00	—
Full set of Journals	\$260.00	price on request	—
All other volumes (per volume)	\$25.00	\$65.00	—



TOTAL

HK\$ _____

Please send the order & cheque, payable to Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch, to RASHKB, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong. **We accept US\$ or GBP cheques at exchange rates of US\$1=HK\$7 / GBP1=HK\$12, but please also add US\$14 / GBP8 to cover the bank charges incurred in clearing each cheque.**

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Watching over Hong Kong: Private Policing 1841-1941 (paperback)	\$150.00
P&P: within Hong Kong - \$25; Overseas (surface) - \$65		

For RAS HKB Study Series orders, please send your order with cheque, payable to The University of Hong Kong, to Hong Kong University Press, The University of Hong Kong Pokfulam, Hong Kong.

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Booking Form

Central Vietnam Tour: Danang, Hue and Hoi An

Fri 11 Dec to Tues 15 Dec 2015: 5 days/4 nights

Costs: RASHK Members - HK\$ 15,300 per person, sharing a Twin-bed Room
Non-Member Supplement - HK\$ 700
Single occupancy Supplement - HK\$ 2,800
Booking Deadline: As soon as possible (if in doubt please check with Eugenia - 2722 7378)

I would like to join the above Tour organized by Phoenix Services Agency (HK) Ltd ("Phoenix Services") for the benefit of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong ("RASHK").

Passport/Return Permit Name: _____ (underline surname)

Passport Nationality: _____; Passport/Permit No.: _____

Passport/Permit Expiry Date: _____; Date of Birth: _____

Contact Address: _____

Tel. No(s): _____; Email Address(es): _____

Emergency Contact Information _____

Please Tick in the Appropriate Box. * Delete as appropriate.

- I am a current member of the RASHK, and am entitled to Members' rates;
- I am not a member, and agree to pay the Non-Member Supplement of HK\$700;
- I wish to share a [Twin / Double]* room with: _____
- I need a single room, and agree to pay the Single Room Supplement of \$ 2,800;
- Please make the following dietary arrangements, if possible:

By signing hereunder, I confirm my understanding that this trip is organized by Phoenix Services for the benefit of RASHK, and that its members and the participants in this tour shall not be held liable for any accident, injury or loss not directly caused by them. I also acknowledge that confirmed economy class tickets are non-refundable and non-changeable, and that if there are insufficient participants, the trip may be cancelled with a full refund of my payments (if made), or if there are unforeseen circumstances, the tour may be aborted. I also hereby consent to Phoenix Services donating any portion of my payment(s), to RASHK for its charitable purposes.

(Signature)

(Date)

Please make cheques payable to "Phoenix Services Agency (HK) Ltd

Renewal Form 2016



ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG BRANCH

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Life HK\$9,800	<input type="checkbox"/>	Joint Life HK\$13,000	<input type="checkbox"/>	Student* HK\$50	<input type="checkbox"/>

*Full-time students only – please attach a copy of valid student ID

Cheques should be made out to ‘Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch’. Overseas members may pay by US/UK cheque at an exchange rate of : US\$1=HK\$7 / GBP1=HK\$12 but please also add US\$14 / GBP8 to cover the bank charges incurred in clearing each cheque. US or GB cheques should therefore be made out for a total of US\$74 or GBP43.

If you would like to pay by Direct Debit, a form can be downloaded from the Membership Section of the Society’s website: www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk [Please leave the Debtor’s Reference blank]

Signed

Date

Please return to: The Administrator
Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch
G P O Box 3864
Hong Kong