ROYAL ASIATIC



SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

HONG KONG

January 2023

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GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong
www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk
http://www.facebook.com/RoyalAsiaticSocietyHongKong



A View from Kennedy Town

Picture Credit Sally Lui

Message from your President, Helen Tinsley

Welcome to our January/ February 2023 RASHK Newsletter.

We say goodbye to an old year as we welcome a new one - reflecting on the past and looking forward to the future. COVID-19 restrictions continue to govern different aspects of our lives here in Hong Kong, but stepwise relaxation of policies and easier overseas travel have lightened the mood. We look forward to the opening of cross border travel in January 2023.

For RASHK activities and events, we continue to try and arrange two talks and one visit every month. Some of these are talks via zoom, but our visits are now almost all in person. In the past couple of months, we have enjoyed talks on the local history of pharmacy development, the fascinating history of a local WW2 plane relics recovery (Project Avenger) and our Council member Dr. C.M. Kwong delivered a talk based on his recent publication on the history of Hongkongers in the British Armed Forces. We also had a series of visits including member Brian Tilbrook's retrospective art exhibition in HKU's UMAG, an exhibition of rare old maps at Wattis Fine Art, a tour of the legendary Chung King Mansions with buffet lunch at the Africa Centre and very recently a timely visit to Sai Wan War Memorial and Cemetery remembering troubled times during the 1941 defense of Hong Kong. We are grateful for the generosity of the hosts who welcomed our members' group visits. Many had capped attendance numbers following the local COVID-19 regulations.

For photos and visit reports please take a look later in this Newsletter, where you can also see the activities we have planned in the coming months. We hope you enjoy the choices the Activities Committee have made on your behalf. Some are already gaining very enthusiastic support such as the planned visit to the Bishop Hill Reservoir in early January 2023 which is already oversubscribed and for this reason we will arrange another visit with WSD later in the year.

From an administrative perspective there is some information I would like to share. Many of you enjoy logging on to zoom events hosted by RASBeijing and RASShanghai. From January 2023 onwards there will be a small registration fee (RMB 50) for non-RAS Beijing and non-RASShanghai for attending their zoom events. At our recent RASHK Council meeting, members' majority also decided that in future RASHK will charge non-RASHK members a small registration fee (HK\$50) to attend our own zoom events. We have found that for RASHK events which were well subscribed, a significant number of those who register do not in fact attend.

As a Society our finances are sound, and over the past 3 years, despite the impact of COVID-19 on our revenues, we have been committed to delivering free zoom events not only for our members but also for guests and members of sister RAS. This Council decision on the charging of registration fee for non-RASHK members will require some IT adjustments, which will probably be completed around April 2023. We will keep you informed of progress.

I hope you all had an enjoyable festive season wherever you were based. Chinese New Year is approaching soon when we welcome the Year of the Rabbit - to farewell the Year of the Tiger we have a talk on 26 January by John Saeki based on his recent book 'The Last Tigers of Hong Kong'. I will look forward to wishing you 'Kung Hei Fat Choy' then.

In the meantime best wishes to you all wherever you are and stay well.

Helen Tinsley, President RASHK December 2022.

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Future Activities

All planned activities will be subject to local regulations regarding COVID-19 restrictions, so please check when we are nearer the event date. If face-to-face meetings are not possible, every attempt will be made to link up via Zoom.

NOTE FOR ONLINE TALKS

The RASHK hosts online talks over the Zoom application, downloadable on computer at https://zoom.us/ or smartphone from any app store.

Zoom links to access the online talk will be sent to members (who have registered) prior to the event.

If you would like to attend an online talk, please email membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk so that we can send you the zoom link for access.

LOCAL VISIT

Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir Guided Tour

Thursday • 5 January 2023



Source: https://www.waterconservation.gov.hk/en/ex-sspsr/index.html

The RASHK has booked a guided tour for members to the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir.

Details

(extracted from https://www.waterconservation.gov.hk/en/ex-sspsr/index.html)

In June 2021, the Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir (Ex-SSPSR) was accorded a Grade 1 historical building status by the Antiquities Advisory Board. The Water Supplies Department (WSD) has already launched a **virtual tour** of the service reservoir. WSD now allows restricted opening of the service reservoir for visiting by the public. The visiting programme will be conducted in the form of guided tours with a view to enhance public's understanding of the historical background and appreciate the internal structure of the Ex-SSPSR to increase public's awareness on conservation of historic waterworks building and heritage.

To learn more about the details of this tour organised by WSD, please visit: https://www.waterconservation.gov.hk/en/ex-sspsr/index.html

PROGRAMME

Guide: English speaking guide arranged by the Water Services Department

Date: Thursday, 5 January 2023

Time: 3:30pm-5:00pm

Venue: Ex-Sham Shui Po Service Reservoir

Meeting point at: Berwick Street (please click on link for more details)

Admission: FREE

No walk-in guests allowed. Pre-registration required.

RASHK and their guests only. One RASHK member may bring two guests.

(Non-members will be put on waiting list)

Registration: FULLY SUBSCRIBED AND WAITLIST CLOSED

LOCAL VISIT

Pokfulam Farm

Friday • 13 January 2023



Source: https://www.pokfulamfarm.org.hk

The RASHK has booked a guided tour for members to the Pokfulam Farm

Details

(extracted from https://www.pokfulamfarm.org.hk/en/)

The Pokfulam Farm Revitalisation Project falls into the Batch IV Revitalisation Scheme of Development Bureau. It was co-designed and co-operated by Caritas Hong Kong and Pokfulam Village Cultural Landscape Conservation Group, with the vision of setting the stage for creating and demonstrating the distinctive value of the Pokfulam cultural landscape which embodies a unique history of agriculture industry.

The Pokfulam Farm, formerly the Old Dairy Farm Senior Staff Quarters known as Braemar, has been classified as Grade I historic building. Being the entrance to Pokfulam, the Farm envisions a platform for the public to comprehend the history of the region. By adopting a community perspective, the Farm plans exhibition, docent tours and workshops to depict the history of the Old Dairy Farm and its connection with the surrounding settlement culture. Advocating lifestyle diversity and appreciation for the nature, the Farm also promotes and supports sustainable development of the entire community.

Apart from being a heritage conservation project, the Farm also constitutes an important part of community development. The Farm signifies a new milestone on the trend of historical building conservation in the 21st-century Hong Kong. The Farm aims to create a new page of cultural conversation in Hong Kong through the ownership of the local communities, the cohesion of local power, and the establishment of a shared identity. Its vision is to have its heritage, together with the cultural landscape, ripens into a collective treasure for Hong Kong citizens.

PROGRAMME

Guide: English speaking guide of Pokfulam Farm

Date: Friday, 13 January 2023

Time: 3:30pm-5:30pm

Venue: 141A Pokfulam Road, Hong Kong

Admission: \$100 for members, \$150 for guests /non-members

No walk-in guests allowed. Pre-registration required.

Cash payment will be collected at the beginning of the tour.

Please prepare the exact fare.

Registration: Please email < membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk > and

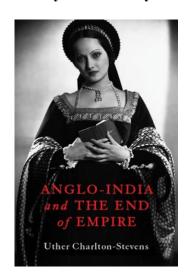
provide your membership number, if applicable, at the time of registration.

Registration will be closed at 12 noon one day prior to the event date.

HYBRID-MODE TALK

Anglo-India and the End of Empire

Tuesday • 17 January 2023



Details

The independence of India and Pakistan in 1947 was the beginning of a chain of events that ultimately brought about the end of the British Empire around the world, an empire on which it was often said, the sun never set. From Britain's largest imperial possession, the so-called 'Jewel in the Crown', the wave of decolonisation that followed across Africa and Asia would eventually reach the smallest, but not least significant outpost of empire, the Crown Colony of Hong Kong in 1997. While the handover was peaceful, the end of the Raj was accompanied by colossal population movements and violence between various religious communities as a result of the decision to partition the subcontinent and its hasty implementation, which was accompanied by the withdrawal of all remaining British troops. In this sudden and precipitous withdrawal the British left behind significant groups of colonial subjects whom they had worked alongside, who had openly or clandestinely supported colonial rule, or who had been co-opted into the civil and military branches of the imperial state. These included soldiers in the Indian Army, Indian members of the elite Indian Civil Service (ICS), mercantile and business interests and several minority communities who had looked to the British for patronage and protection. Among these Anglo-Indians – people of mixed European and Indian descent who had earlier been known as Eurasians and whom had predominantly looked to Britain as their imagined homeland – faced perhaps the greatest challenge of psychological readjustment and reorientation of their lives and identities.

The Speaker

Uther Charlton-Stevens is a Fellow of the Royal Asiatic Society and published his first book, *Anglo-Indians and Minority Politics in South Asia*, with Routledge, UK, in 2018 for the Royal Asiatic Society Books series. His latest book, *Anglo-India and the End of Empire* was released in September and December 2022 by Hurst Publishers, UK, and Oxford University Press, USA, with the South Asia rights having been acquired by Harper Collins India. Growing up in Hong Kong, he learned to speak Mandarin Chinese whilst studying at ESF schools. A first degree at Mansfield College, Oxford,



was followed by a Master of Science at the London School of Economics and doctoral research at St Edmund Hall, Oxford. Supervised by Judith Brown and Francis Robinson, Charlton-Stevens doctoral thesis was entitled 'Decolonising Anglo-Indians'. Born at an army station in Ferozepore (now Firozpur), Punjab, his Anglo-Indian father's family were actually from Bangalore (now Bengaluru) in South India, but migrated to Britain in the 1950s. Much of the inspiration for Charlton-Stevens's research comes from the stories he heard in childhood from his grandmother of her service in the Women's Auxiliary Corps (India) during the Second World War, her trip to Kandahar in Afghanistan, and her husband's close relation, Willoughby Patrick Rosemeyer, a telegraph engineer involved in laying the telegraph wire connecting British India with Lhasa in 1922, whose photographs of Tibet are housed in the Pitt Rivers Museum, and whom, rather exceptionally for a 'mixed-race' man of colour, was awarded an MBE in 1934.

PROGRAMME

Speaker: Uther Charlton-Stevens
Date: Tuesday, 17 January 2023
Time 7pm-8pm, Hong Kong Time

Venue: Café 8, above the HK Maritime Museum, Pier 8, Central

Admission: In Person at Café 8 - \$150 for members, \$200 for guests /non-members

Walk-in guests are welcome depending on availability. Cash payment will be collected at the Reception Desk.

Please prepare the exact fare.

Online - Zoom link is free for members of RASHK and sister societies only.

Non-members are welcome depending on availability.

Registration: Please email < membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk > and

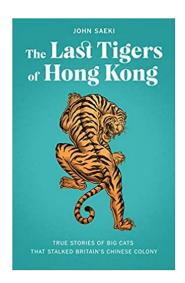
provide your membership number, if applicable, at the time of registration.

Registration will be closed at 12 noon on the event date. Zoom links will be sent before or by 1pm on the event date.

ONLINE TALK

The Last Tigers of Hong Kong

Thursday • 26 January 2023



Details

Tigers once came to Hong Kong. They preyed on pigs, chickens, cattle and deer. They sometimes killed people. They came to Hong Kong most years through to the end of the 1950s, and possibly into the 1960s. As long as there were South China tigers in the wild, Hong Kong saw some of them.

They stopped coming when they were on their way to extinction in their homeland across the border. Not many people know this, and not many people believe it to be true. But it is true, tigers came. And this is the first written history of the Hong Kong tiger.

The Speaker

John Saeki spends his working days writing and designing maps, charts and information graphics on world news. When he is not composing explainers on pandemics, political turmoil and endangered wildlife, he heads through woodland valleys and over the hills, looking in wonder at this strange planet we live on.

His first book, The Tiger Hunters of Tai O, was published by Blacksmith Books in 2017, featuring a fictional tiger in the hills of Lantau Island. After that, he went on the trail of real tigers that came to Hong Kong and found an unexpected treasure trove of forgotten history.



He now lives in windswept Yorkshire, and often talks with family and friends of the wonderful animals he came across in his 20 years in the subtropics of Hong Kong.

PROGRAMME

Speaker: John Saeki

Date: Thursday, 26 January 2023

Time: 7pm-8pm, Hong Kong Time (11am UK time)

Venue: Online via Zoom

Admission: Zoom links are free for members of RASHK and sister societies only.

Non-members are welcome depending on availability.

Registration: Please email < membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk > and

provide your membership number, if applicable, at the time of registration.

Registration will be closed at 12 noon on the event date. Zoom links will be sent before or by 1pm on the event date.

IN-PERSON TALK

Ministering Angels? Eighty Years of Nursing in Hong Kong

Thursday • 9 February 2023



The early Civil Hospital on Hospital Road. Image courtesy of National Archives, Kew and Historical Photographs of China, University of Bristol

Details

Pity the poor men lying sick in hospital in the 1850s. They might see the doctor once a day, but for the rest of the time lay in dirty beds in a smelly, damp room with scant attention from the two coolies and a cook who had to do all the work of the place. The best the men might hope was that a less-sick fellow would bring them some water or a bedpan, or try to re-bandage their wounds.

Disease stalked the newly-arrived Europeans from their first days on Hong Kong Island. The Army and Navy were well provided with surgeons and 'hospital orderlies', but soon the Administration had to consider its own sick, and the non-Chinese population who were not rich enough to employ the civilian doctors of the town.

The fledgling Police or Civil Hospital had a ropey beginning, housed in whatever buildings could be rented, and without a purpose-built home until 1893. Similarly, until the 1860s, any 'nursing' the 50 or so patients received came from the untrained Chinese servants. When the Colonial Surgeon's demand that ward-masters be employed was finally met, the salary offered was so meagre that few were either sober or competent. In their reports, the doctors wrote wistfully of what might be achieved if there was proper nursing - an ambition that was not realised until almost the end of the century.

The Speaker

Patricia O'Sullivan has been writing about Hong Kong's vibrant history since 2010, initially uncovering long-forgotten family stories. The result, Policing Hong Kong - an Irish History, was published in April 2017. Many avenues of exploration were opened up by this, often involving the less-chartered waters of Hong Kong's social history. The first result was Women, Crime and the Courts: Hong Kong 1841-1941(Blacksmith Books 2020). The next book in the pipeline is on the First World War in Hong Kong, focusing on the Police who volunteered for military service. Meanwhile, she is researching other aspects of life in pre-war Hong Kong, including the early fire-fighters and now the story of nursing in its first tortuous decades.



In a previous life, Patricia worked for Hertfordshire Music Service, and is still actively involved in music and music education when at home, but is looking forward to being able to rekindle her love of Hong Kong after the enforced hiatus.

Her website is www.socialhistoryhk.com.

PROGRAMME

Speaker: Patricia O'Sullivan

Date: Thursday, 9 February 2023

Time: 7:00pm – 8:00pm Hong Kong Time

(Desk reception opens at 6:30pm)

Venue: Café 8, above the HK Maritime Museum, Pier 8, Central

Admission: \$150 for members, \$200 for guests /non-members

Walk-in guests are welcome depending on availability. Cash payment will be collected at the Reception Desk.

Please prepare the exact fare.

Please note that this is an in-person only event. There will be no Zoom link provided.

Registration: Please email < membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk > and

provide your membership number, if applicable, at the time of registration.

Registration will be closed at 12 noon on the event date.

Recent Activities

Note: Audio only recordings of online talks are available upon request to the RASHK Administrator Email address.

HYBRID-MODE TALK

Transformation from Colonial Chemist to Global Health and Beauty Retailer

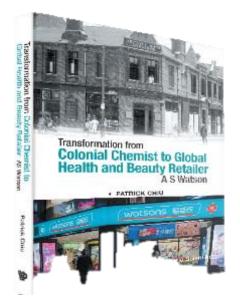
Patrick Chiu

Tuesday • 15 November 2022





Pictures Credit Helen Tinsley





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ONLINE TALK

Project Avenger

Craig Mitchell, Paul Niel, Adam Janikowski and Dr Michael Rivera

Thursday • 24 Nov 2022



Source: https://www.project-avenger.com/

LOCAL VISIT

University Museum and Art Gallery "Past and Present Paintings by Brian Tilbrook"

Saturday • 26 November 2022





It is a great privilege for those visiting an exhibition to be guided on a tour by the artist himself/herself. This was the case when our group of RASHK members gathered in HKU's lovely galleried exhibition space, where we were met by artist Brian and his wife Moyreen, long-time residents of Hong Kong. Our numbers were necessarily limited by COVID-19 regulations. But for more than 1 hour we had expert guidance of the paintings and images on display. This exhibition is a celebration of his wide ranging work over a lifetime, whilst living here in Hong Kong.



Brian had taught Art for many years. He also has actively explored his own creativity, and continues to do so. His Hong Kong heritage paintings, commissioned earlier in his career by the Hong Kong Government were

accomplished in a single year and form beautiful records of historical sites which were destined to be changed following rapid urban development. Over time as a local artist he also received prestigious commissions for large

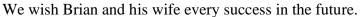


murals from big hongs and from residents of the city.



His abstract and vibrant artwork sometimes incorporate Chinese characters, as well as addressing some of the big geopolitical issues of the day. His abstract images and bright colours are distinctive qualities of his work which stay long in the mind of the audience.

There will be another local exhibition on Brian's works early next year at a different venue (details available later in this Newsletter).





Text and photos by Helen Tinsley

LOCAL VISIT

Scarce Early Maps of Hong Kong

Jonathan Wattis

Thursday • 1 December 2022

Once again our numbers were capped, but our group was generously hosted by Jonathan Wattis himself, along with his wife Vicky. For over an hour we were guided around a fascinating exhibition of old and rare maps of Hong Kong, enlightened by our host's wonderfully expert knowledge of the various exhibits and his patient responses to our many queries.



An early trail walker map of Hong Kong printed in 1901

was one of special delight, along with a written description of how to arrange a pleasure outing to Lamma Island, with an appropriate place to stop for tiffin.



An early city street map reminded us how much has changed since it was first printed. Records of the severe 1937 typhoon highlighted the toll that such events had on Hong Kong.

We thanked Jonathan for his kind hospitality by presenting him with a copy

of our RASHK book 'Hong Kong Going and Gone' published in 1980, which contains a city street map of the time and includes photographs of Hollywood Road very close to the site of his Gallery, taken not long before the book was published.



Text and photos by Helen Tinsley

LOCAL VISIT

Chung King Mansions & Africa Centre

Saturday • 3 December 2022



Chung King Mansions is situated on Nathan Road in the heart of Tsim Sha Tsui, alongside prime Hong Kong real estate. It remains a remarkable anomaly, a symbol of globalization and a 'home' for many nationalities doing business there, particularly Africans and South Asians. Many of our local residents remain nervous of entering the building and warn their children about going there, despite the availability of cheap goods, services and delicious eateries run by various nationalities. HK Chinese University Anthropologist, Professor Gordon Matthews, in his 2011 book 'Ghetto at the Center of the World' famously explored and documented the rich societal, political, economic, environmental

and cultural backgrounds of the residents and business communities who work there. Based in these dimly lit buildings, their energy, global perspectives and entrepreneurship have sustained often marginalized Hong Kong communities and created a place to meet compatriots, thrive and do business.

Our hosts for this tour were Dawit Debesai, originally from Ethiopia, and his Swahili speaking team member. They helped to guide our group around some of the services provided on the ground and first floor of the building. The impact of COVID-19 restrictions over the past 3 years have taken their toll on businesses there, both locally and the global movement of goods. In the past large quantities of phones manufactured in China would be repackaged here for export to many African countries. Our group split up to go and talk separately to some of the shop keepers who offer services and goods, such as



barbers, restaurant operators, money changers and sellers of electrical goods (often recycled). My companion and I went to talk to a Pakistan travel business to gain an understanding of the history and current difficulties faced – the owner's father set up the business 40 years ago but times are tough in the travel industry at present.

It was a fascinating tour, quieter than expected because of the COVID-19 impacts. It is hoped that with easing of restrictions and more visitors to Hong Kong, businesses for this highly resilient group of Hong Kongers will recover and thrive. Our local group members no longer felt anxious about entering the building.

Some of us then walked / took a cab to the African Centre situated a few blocks away, which forms a base for African nationalities





in Hong Kong. There we enjoyed a delicious African style buffet lunch, with a chance to reflect on our tour and thank our tour guides for a stimulating and thought-provoking morning.

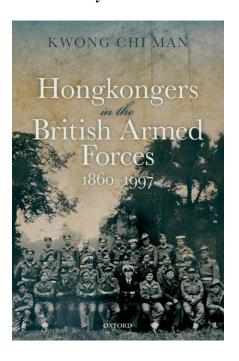
Text and photos by Helen Tinsley

ONLINE TALK

Hongkongers in the British Armed Forces, 1860-1997

Dr Chi Man Kwong

Tuesday • 6 Dec 2022



 $(Source: \underline{https://global.oup.com/academic/product/hong-kongers-in-the-british-armed-forces-1860-1997-9780192845740?cc=us\&lang=en)}$

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LOCAL VISIT

Sai Wan Memorial and War Cemetery

Martin Heyes

Saturday • 17 December 2022



Last year at about this time Martin Heyes led us on a memorable group visit to the Military Cemetery at Stanley. The weather then was sunny and warm, perfect for such an outdoor visit. For this year's visit to the cemetery in Sai Wan we were not so fortunate - it was unseasonably chilly, windy and wet, though not actually raining, and our group came bundled up in winter jackets and coats with woolly scarves and hats. The cemetery occupies the slope of a

hillside, with the memorial situated at the top of the hill. On this memorial are inscribed the names of > 2000

Commonwealth servicemen who died in the defence of Hong Kong in December 1941, or subsequently in captivity, during World War II. The cemetery grounds and gravesites are managed and beautifully maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission.



Our very knowledgeable guide, once again Martin Heyes, started our tour with a brief description of the battle for Hong Kong. This helped us understand the role of the involved battalions and the challenges they faced in attempting to halt the

rapid advance of Japanese troops.

Our guide then drew on a couple of names etched into the memorial, to

give us some of the narratives behind these names – one soldier whose reported bravery prompted a late and eventually unsuccessful nomination for the Victoria Cross Medal.



We then descended down the hillside and along pathways between rows of graves, as our guide narrated some of the stories behind the backgrounds and deaths of those laid to rest there. Some were



named, very senior and of various nationalities from within the Commonwealth, notably young soldiers from Canada, some were graves of those who could not be identified.



Despite the chill and wind, for those who attended, this was a very meaningful visit, close to the anniversary of a very difficult period in Hong Kong's history.

Text and photos by Helen Tinsley

Of General Interest

Remembrance Day Hong Kong





Wreath laying by David McKellar on behalf of RASHK on 13 November 2022.

Brian Tilbrook Art Exhibitions

Date: February 11 – 2 March 2023

Venue: Artlands Art Gallery, 3/F Lockhart Centre,

Open 9 am – 7pm Mon – Fri and 9 am – 5 pm Sat

Closed Sundays and Public Holidays

Artlands, 301 – 307, Lockhart Road, Wanchai

Of General Interest

Palette of a Centenarian: Selected Works of Zhu Qizhan from the <u>Jingguanlou Collection</u>



Date: December 9, 2022 – March 29, 2023

Venue: The Hong Kong Museum of Art

Fee: Free

Details: https://hk.art.museum/en_US/web/ma/exhibitions-and-events/palette-of-a-centenarian-selected-works-of-zhu-qizhan-from-the-jingguanlou-collection.html

Membership Renewal

2023 Membership Renewal

Members are reminded that membership renewals for 2023 were due on 1 January 2023. If you currently pay by cheque and would prefer the convenience of paying by Direct Debit, please contact the Administrator for a Direct Debit Authorization form on < membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk or click here. 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\$750
Hong Kong Resident - Joint / Family	HK\$1,100
Hong Kong Resident – Student*	HK\$50

^{*} in full-time education – please enclose a photocopy of your student ID.

Life

Life – Single	HK\$10,500
Life – Joint	HK\$15,400

Overseas

Overseas - Annual	HK\$450
Overseas - Life	HK\$6,300



Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch Membership Application Form 2023

Membership Application Form for 2023, please click <u>here</u>.

Direct Debit Authorisation Form, please click here.

Update Membership Information

If any member's personal or corresponding information needs to be updated, please email the details to membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk. Updated membership information will help us to deliver new messages and notices accurately to members. Thank you for your cooperation.

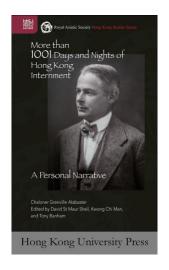
Publications

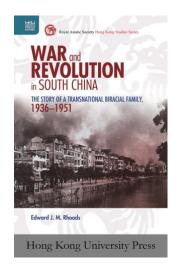
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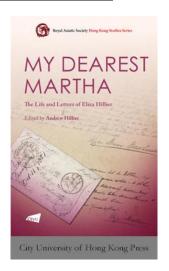
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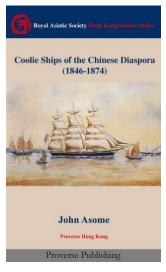
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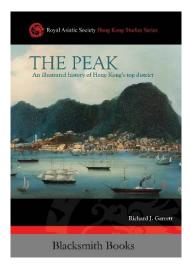
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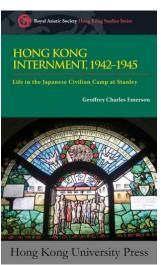


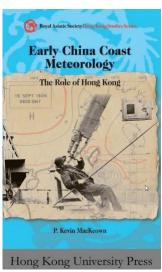


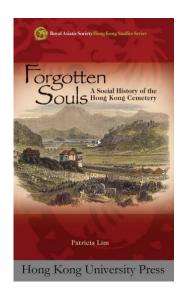














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Beyond the Metropolis; Villages in Hong Kong	Patrick H. Hase and Elizabeth Sinn	Joint Publishing HK	HK\$310
In the Heart of the Metropolis: Yaumatei and Its People	Patrick H. Hase and Elizabeth Sinn	Joint Publishing HK	HK\$260
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