

# ROYAL ASIATIC

# SOCIETY

# HONG KONG

皇家亞洲學會香港分會  
G.P.O. Box 3864, Hong Kong



## NEWSLETTER

**E-mail: [membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk)**

**Tel: + (852) 6590 7523**

**GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong**

**[www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](http://www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk)**

**<http://www.facebook.com/RoyalAsiaticSocietyHongKong>**

**Twitter: RASHK 1959**

## March 2016



**Dr Deric Daniel Waters BBS, ISO  
(1920 – 2016)**

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## President's Message

The year started on a sad note with the news that Dr Dan Waters had passed away on 27 January 2016. Dan had celebrated his ninety-fifth birthday in November and had always hoped to make his 'century'. A condolence card was sent to his wife and family on behalf of the Society. In her reply Mrs Water's said,

*"Dan had always been proud to be a member of your Association. I am grateful to you and your members for the kindnesses you have shown him"*



A memorial service will take place at the Catholic Cathedral on the 3 March 2016. The Society also honoured Dan's memory with a short memorial on Thursday 28 February following the scheduled talk. This was held, rather appropriately, at the Clubhouse of the Royal Hong Kong Regiment (Volunteers) at the HKJC Happy Valley Course. During the ceremony members and invited guests spoke warmly of Dan, they included Mr Ian Burchett (the Canadian Consul-General), Ms Annemarie Evans, Mr Richard Garrett, Mr Peter Stuckey and Mr Michael Broom who also proposed a toast to his memory. Dan joined the Society in 1964 and actively supported it throughout. The last meeting he attended was in November and as a past president he unfailingly attended Council meetings. I would like to pay tribute to Dan for his contribution to the Society during his membership. His encouragement and support were a wonderful inspiration and I am sure that I speak for all members when I say he will be greatly missed.

With Christmas and the Lunar New Year festivals behind us you will notice more events in the programme. These include not only talks but a visit to the 'Radiant Ming' exhibition at the Hong Kong Museum of History. As a follow-up to his talk last year RAS member Roy Delbyck has kindly agreed to host a visit at his office in Kowloon, where members can view some of his fascinating collection. Space dictates that only small groups can be accommodated and places will be on a strictly application only basis.

I would like to take this opportunity to remind all members that your 2016 subscriptions are now due. Please do ensure your membership subscription has been paid and for the correct amount. This will save time for the Administrator and ease the burden on our limited resources. I was pleasantly surprised to see that in February ten new members joined the RASHK. I would like to extend a welcome to the new members and I hope you derive interest and pleasure from your membership. I would also like to encourage all members to redouble their efforts in recruiting new members. The Hon Secretary, David McKellar has given notice of the AGM which will take place at the Hong Kong Club on Friday 22 April. As with last year the meeting will be followed by drinks and a small buffet which is being co-ordinated by Robert Nield. This was well received last year and certainly gave members a chance to interact. I hope that even more members will attend the AGM this year. This is your opportunity to say what you think and what you would like to see your Society do. The organization of the RASHK depends very much on the support of its members who generously give their time working on various committees. These include the Council, the Activities Committee, The Editorial Board and the Sir Lindsay and Lady Ride Trust Fund. With the approach of the AGM we shall once again consider a new council for the year 2016-17. If you are able to spare time and contribute to the Society as a volunteer please do get in touch and let me know.

I hope the coming Year of the Monkey will bring you all success and happiness and that our Society will continue to prosper.

Michael Broom  
President



# Future Activities

## LOCAL VISIT

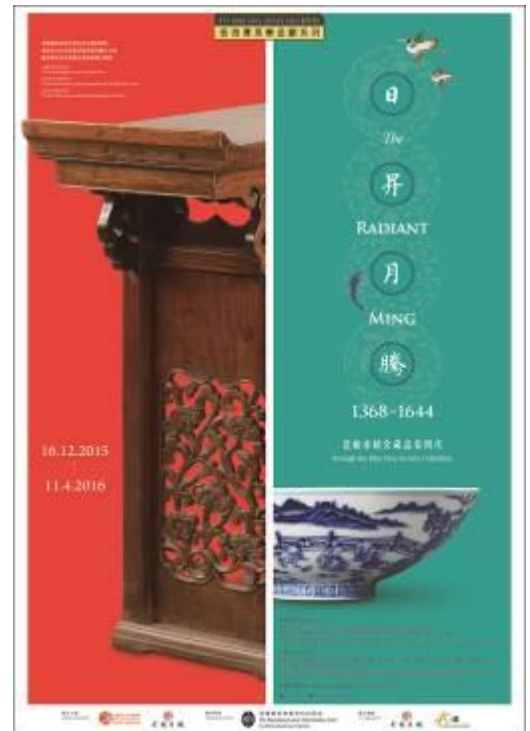
### The Radiant Ming 1368 – 1644 Exhibition

Saturday • 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016

The RASHK will be organizing a curator guided tour in March 2016 to view “*The Radiant Ming 1368 – 1644*” exhibition at the Hong Kong Museum of History, 100 Chatham Road South, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon.

*“Ming dynasty saw the peak of traditional cultural development as well as the gradual sprouting of new culture. Its productivity surpassed that of Song and Yuan times, and commodity economy enjoyed unprecedented prosperity, pushing the progress of folk culture and the standard of artistic creation to new heights. The frequent communications between Ming China and foreign countries brought about the import of foreign culture, unfolding a brand new scenario in the social development of the time.”*

– Hong Kong Museum of History



Huanghuali wooden six-post canopy bed from the late 16th century  
(Collection of Mr Raymond Hung)



A large blue and white bowl with children at play from the Yongle period of the Ming dynasty  
(Tianminlou Collection)

**Coordinator:** Helen Tinsley  
**Date:** Saturday, 5<sup>th</sup> March 2016  
**Time:** Assemble 10:00 a.m. at the foyer of the Museum (i.e. 1/F lobby)  
 Tour begins 10:15 a.m.  
 Tour ends 11:45 a.m. approx.  
**Venue:** Hong Kong Museum of History, 100 Chatham Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon  
**Admission:** Free-of-charge for RASHK members  
**Booking:** Please email [fulttins@netvigator.com](mailto:fulttins@netvigator.com) in advance to reserve your place

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## Future Activities

### LECTURE

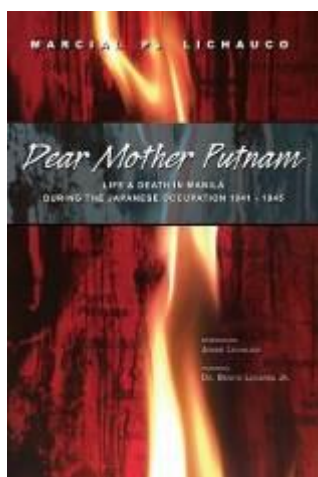
#### A Manila Diary: Life & Death in Occupied Manila, 1941 - 1945

Friday • 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016

*“Monday, 9<sup>th</sup> November, 1942*

*When the voice of Juan de la Cruz suddenly went of air a few weeks ago, we did not know whether those who were conducting the broadcast had been arrested or decided the chase was getting too hot. Today’s newspaper however announces that the operators of this station, twenty men have been captured, court-martialled and executed”*

Marcial Primitivo Lichauco was the son of a leading Filipino independence leader. He was born in 1902 in the Binondo District of Manila and during the Philippine Commonwealth period went to the United States where he studied law at Harvard. In 1926 he gained the distinction of being the first Filipino to graduate from Harvard University. Returning to the Philippines Lichauco was employed as the secretary to two important missions who travelled to Washington DC to lobby the Congress for Philippine independence.



On the 8<sup>th</sup> December, 1942 Lichauco’s life and career were to be abruptly changed following the Japanese attack on the US Pacific Fleet at Pearl Harbour in Hawaii. Simultaneously the Japanese Imperial Army launched co-ordinated invasions of Malaya and Hong Kong while in the Philippines the Japanese 14<sup>th</sup> Army landed in Northern Luzon. In four months the main island of Luzon was overrun forcing the remnants of the US and Philippine Forces to make a final stand in the Bataan peninsula. Bataan fell on the 9<sup>th</sup> April and one month later the island fortress of Corregidor, guarding the entrance to Manila Bay surrendered. For tens of thousands of prisoners-of-war and Filipino civilians Japanese victory meant enduring more than three years of suffering under a brutal occupation. Varying estimates give the number of deaths between 500,000 and 1,000,000 and the city of Manila was utterly devastated.

Throughout this period Marcial Lichauco kept a diary recording his experiences and those of his family and friends at the hands of the Japanese invaders, including some who had been imprisoned or had survived the notorious ‘Bataan Death March’. Lichauco’s wartime diary has now been edited by his daughter Mrs Cornelia (Nelly) Lichauco Fung who has kindly agreed to speak to the Society about her father’s experiences during the Japanese occupation.

#### The Speaker

Cornelia (Nelly) Lichauco Fung was born in the Philippines and was educated at Maryknoll before proceeding to the Convent of the Sacred Heart, Kent, England for pre-university studies. She graduated with a degree in History from Wellesley College, Massachusetts, USA and pursued post-graduate studies in the School of Education at London University. She lives in Hong Kong with her husband Kenneth Fung and has been active in community work with the HK Arts Festival, the HK Philharmonic Orchestra and the Society for Hospice Care. She was a





## Future Activities

Founder and Board Member of the Chinese International School and the ISF Academy. She is also the author of *Beneath the Banyan Tree* describing her family chronicles.

### Programme

**Speaker:** Mrs Cornelia (Nelly) Lichauco Fung

**Date:** Friday, 11<sup>th</sup> March 2016

**Time:** 6:30pm Reception opens, 7.00 pm Lecture starts

**Venue:** Garden Room, The Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong

**Admission:** RAS Members \$100; Non-Members / Guests \$150

**Booking:** Please email [membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) in advance to reserve your place and pay at the door

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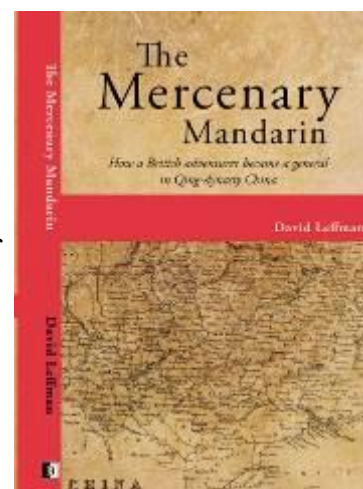
### LECTURE

## The Mercenary Mandarin: How a Nineteenth-century British Adventurer became a General in the Chinese Military

Monday • 14<sup>th</sup> March 2016

William Mesny (1842–1919) was born in Jersey, ran off to sea as a deck hand aged 12, and finally wound up at Shanghai in 1860. China was being dismembered by foreign powers and civil war, and amid the chaos Mesny became variously a prisoner of the Taiping rebels, a smuggler, a customs official and an arms dealer. He eventually enlisted as an instructor in the Sichuan Army where, after five years of fierce campaigning against Miao and Muslim insurgents in remote Guizhou province, he rose to the rank of general.

Mesny witnessed many of the period's brutal conflicts first-hand, from the Taiping, Miao and Muslim rebellions – civil spats responsible for the deaths of over twenty million people – to territorial wars with France, Russia and Japan which saw China lose valuable tributary states. He spoke fluent Chinese, was twice married to Chinese women, and spent twenty-five years orbiting the country between Beijing and Burma, writing opinionated newspapers articles on everything from mining opportunities to local cuisine, ethnic customs, the appalling state of the roads and inns, and the rigours of dealing with petty officialdom.



## Future Activities

Having served as an advisor to several prominent officials – including the enthusiastic industrialiser, Zhang Zhidong – Mesny eventually settled down at Shanghai with his second wife and published a magazine about his experiences, Mesny's Chinese Miscellany, whose four collected volumes comprise a fascinating mosaic of late nineteenth-century China. In later years he lost his patronage through entanglement in the Mason Affair, and became caught up in a series of financially ruinous court cases. When he died at Hankou, aged 77, he was working as a desk clerk.



William Mesny  
(Photo courtesy of  
David Leffman)

### The Speaker



David Leffman was born and raised in the UK, took a degree in photography, spent twenty years in Australia and relocated back to Britain in 2009. Since 1992 he has worked as a travel writer, authoring and regularly updating guidebooks to Australia, China, Indonesia, Iceland and Hong Kong. In between assignments, he has helped compile a Chinese cookbook and written articles on subjects ranging from crime to horse racing. David spent over fifteen years foot-stepping the nineteenth-century adventurer William Mesny around China, interviewing locals and piecing together his life from contemporary journals, private letters and newspaper articles. His biography of Mesny, *The Mercenary Mandarin*, is due to be published by Blacksmith Books in 2016.

### Programme

- Speaker:** Mr. David Leffman  
**Date:** Monday, 14<sup>th</sup> March, 2016  
**Time:** 6:30pm Reception opens, 7.00 pm Lecture starts  
**Venue:** Auditorium, L4, Centre for Visual Arts, 7A Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels  
**Admission:** RAS Members \$100; Non-Members / Guests \$150  
**Booking:** Please email [president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) in advance to reserve your place and pay at the door

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## Future Activities

### LECTURE

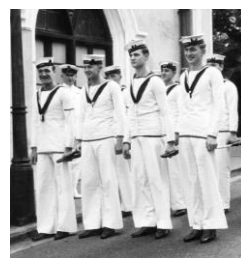
### In, On, Under & Around Hong Kong Harbour

Wednesday • 6<sup>th</sup> April 2016

David Bellis will show a selection of photos from his collection, using them to tell us stories about old Hong Kong.

Most of the photos were taken in the early years of the twentieth century, and show a Hong Kong that has long since disappeared. They have been scanned at high-resolution and digitally restored, so David can zoom in to show us their hidden details.

In this talk we'll use the old photos to look at the harbour through the eyes of several different groups, including: The Royal Navy, local fishermen, overseas tourists and swimmers & sailors.



*(Photos courtesy of David Bellis)*

### The Speaker



David runs the popular local-history website, Gwulo.com. It hosts over 20,000 pages about old Hong Kong, including over 10,000 photos. In 2014 David won the SCMP's Heritage Preservation Award, one of their "The Spirit of Hong Kong Awards", for his work on Gwulo.com.

### Programme

- Speaker:** Mr. David Bellis  
**Date:** Wednesday, 6<sup>th</sup> April, 2016  
**Time:** 6:30pm Reception opens, 7.00 pm Lecture starts  
**Venue:** Auditorium, L4, Centre for Visual Arts, 7A Kennedy Road, Mid-Levels  
**Admission:** RAS Members \$100; Non-Members / Guests \$150  
**Booking:** Please email [president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) in advance to reserve your place and pay at the door

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## Future Activities

### AGM

#### **RASHK 56<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting & Cocktail Party**

**Hong Kong Club • Friday 22<sup>nd</sup> April 2016**

Our Annual General Meeting will be held at the Hong Kong Club on Friday, 22 April 2016. Similar to last year, the AGM will be followed by a cocktail party. In accordance with the Club's regulations, the event must be hosted by a member. Therefore, the notice at the venue will be in the name of "Mr Robert Nield", not the Society.



The General Meeting will begin at 6.30 pm, with cocktails and canapés to follow at 7.30 pm. Drinks will be able to be purchased prior to the cocktail party.

A booking form is provided at the end of this Newsletter and should be mailed to Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong together with your cheque made payable to 'Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch'. If you only wish to attend the AGM, please inform the Administrator, Ms. Ivy Ho, so that seating can be arranged: [membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) .

Although the Club's regulations prohibit the sale of books, the Society is very keen to showcase any books that have been written or edited by members in the last twelve months or so. Note that this does not include books that have been published by members on a commercial basis. If you would like to promote a book that you have written or edited recently, please notify the Administrator and bring a copy to the AGM, together with order forms to allow members to purchase a copy if they wish.

If members wish to submit nominations for the Society's Council, they are asked to complete the nomination form at the end of this Newsletter and return it to the Hon. Secretary, Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong not later than Friday, 15<sup>th</sup> April 2016. Nominees, as well as their Proposer and Secunder, must be members of good standing. Election will be by a majority of members present as required by the Constitution of the Society. Members are reminded that the Council is a functional one. The standard of the Society's activities depends on having officers and members of the Council who are willing to take their part in the efficient management and control of the Society's affairs. Please note that a quorum of 20 members is required for any General Meeting.

Kindly note that the dress code for the event is Smart Casual. Smart Casual includes slacks and an open-necked shirt with collar. Shirts must be tucked in. Denim jeans, T-shirts, tracksuits, shorts, shoes for sports activities and flip flops are not acceptable.

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## Future Activities

### LOCAL VISIT

#### Roy Delbyck's Photo & Document Collection

Saturday • 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016

Members will recall an interesting talk delivered on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015 by RAS member Roy Delbyck entitled *'Ten Thousand Items Later, A Journey So far'*. In his talk Roy discussed his passion, one might even say addiction for collecting documents which have a connection with China and the Chinese in the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> centuries. His interest in this period started four years ago and he has amassed a veritable treasure trove of photographs, letters, posters, directories, programmes and other interesting ephemera which shed light on the history of China and Hong Kong during this period. As reported in the subsequent RAS newsletter Roy regularly spends approximately two hours per day surfing eBay and related auction sites online and offline, in search of documents and items with a connection to China and Hong Kong.

Roy's collection is now housed in his office in Tsim Sha Tsui and I am pleased to say that in response to member's enquiries Roy has kindly agreed to open his office on a Saturday in April for members to visit his office and see for themselves some of the items in his collection. Unfortunately space is restricted therefore only small groups will be entertained. On this occasion the participants will be restricted to RAS members and not guests. If you are interested in this event please send your application as advised.

#### The Speaker



For those of you who may not know Roy, he is a US trade lawyer with his own practice in Hong Kong, which he started in the early 1990s after a partnership in the Hong Kong office of Baker & McKenzie. Roy joined the RAS in 2013 and has been an enthusiastic attendee at RAS talks since then.

#### Programme

**Speaker:** Mr Roy Delbyck

**Date:** Saturday, 23<sup>rd</sup> April 2016

**Time:** 10:30am – 12:00pm

Please assemble Ground Floor, Main Entrance, Kowloon Centre

**Venue:** Law Offices of Roy Ian Delbyck, Room 1302, Kowloon Centre, 29 – 39 Ashley Road, Tsimshatsui, Kowloon

**Admission:** Event open to RAS members only, admission free

**Booking:** Please email [dioramaprojects@gmail.com](mailto:dioramaprojects@gmail.com) in advance to reserve your place

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## Future Activities

### 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](mailto:membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk)

**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 [president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk](mailto:president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) or by telephone on 2719 4958**

## Recent Activities

### HMS Tamar & its Recent Rediscovery Near the Wanchai Ferry Pier

Wednesday • 28<sup>th</sup> October 2015

*Written by Peter Stuckey*



HMS Tamar c.1870

Dr Stephen Davies gave a fascinating account of the life and fate of HMS Tamar and of its recent rediscovery near the Wanchai ferry pier. Most of us who have lived in Hong Kong before the 1997 Handover will have known of HMS Tamar as the British Naval Base spanning between Central and Admiralty. Indeed, I was around early enough to know of the opening of the Prince of Wales Building (now the Chinese People's Liberation Army Forces HK Building) in HMS Tamar in 1978. This had replaced the old Wellington Barracks, which in turn, had been sited at the present Harcourt Garden (currently closed to facilitate work by the MTR to extend Admiralty Station for the Terminal platforms of the South Island Line and the Shatin to Central Link). But much less well known is the story of the original HMS Tamar. This story Stephen recounted with his usual lively, well-researched, authoritative, entertaining and detailed manner.

A total of six ships and a naval station have been named HMS Tamar, bearing the name of the river separating Devon from Cornwall in the south west of England. The original HMS Tamar was a 16 gun sloop, launched at Saltash in Cornwall in 1758. Further generations of HMS Tamar were launched in 1795, 1796 and 1814, but the HMS Tamar of our primary concern was launched on 6th January 1863. She was a wrought iron troop ship and served as a troop carrier for 32 years, steaming some 400,000 miles and carrying some 30,000 to 40,000 troops. She made 18 visits to Hong Kong, carried troops of 39 regiments and saw the bombardment of Alexandria, in 1882, the acquisition of Cyprus in 1878, the Boer War in 1881, the Zulu war in 1879, until her last voyage in 1895 to Hong Kong. Here she became a base, or a "Depot" ship in Hong Kong in 1897 and continued as such till she was scuttled in HK Harbour at the time of the Japanese invasion in 1941.

The Tamar was used as a floating office, and hotel useful for day to day administration. She was deliberately scuttled on 12 December 1941 to avoid her coming into Japanese hands and Hedda Morrison's photos in 1946 showed her masts still protruding. Salvage was carried out post-war to make for safe navigation, but the wrought iron hull remained on the sea bed and was shown on charts as a wreck near what is now the Wanchai ferry pier on successive charts from 1948 through for 30 years. By 1981 the sea bed had risen by sedimentation from about -10m to about -5m PD, and the wreck was no longer shown as it no longer featured at the sea bed.

The wreck was rediscovered by the contractor dredging for the Central Wanchai By Pass Project. It appears the Project was caught unaware of the wreck and the earlier charts had not been consulted, or the delays incurred might have been mitigated.

The likelihood of the obstruction being the HMS Tamar was increased when a brass tally engraved with the name Goodman was found in the mud at the site – he had been a Lance Sergeant who had spent time

## Recent Activities

aboard the HMS Tamar. The ship's logs survived and are being edited for a book to be published by HKUP.

The sixth generation of HMS Tamar was a ship previously named HMS Aire which was renamed HMS Tamar in 1946 and acted as base depot ship for 8 months in 1946 before the Wellington Barracks were commissioned as the first "stone frigate". Only in 1960, after the closure of the Naval dockyard and the filling in of the dry dock, did the whole Royal Naval area become "HMS Tamar"

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### Central Vietnam Tour: Danang, Hoi An & Hue

Friday • 11<sup>th</sup> December to Tuesday • 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015

*Written by Peter Stuckey*

A happy group set out on the direct Dragonair flight arriving just 2 hours later in Danang. After a short journey we were feasting on a seafood meal in a stilt house restaurant before continuing our journey to Hue. There we were greeted at the fine La Residence Hotel, which was bedecked with fairy lights and Christmas decorations. The old part of the hotel was the former home of the French Governor, Hue having been the capital of Vietnam in former days.



Detail of the fine Vietnamese artwork at the Hue Imperial City

The following morning, after a delightful buffet breakfast on the patio, we strolled round the corner from the hotel and took a private ferry to the Thien Mu Pagoda, This was followed by a visit to two of the magnificent tombs that the Nguyen Kings had built for themselves close by the Perfume River. After a satisfying lunch in the French Les Jardins de la Carambole Restaurant nearby the Citadel, our guide, Tina, gave us a tour of the old Imperial City and Citadel with its fine Vietnamese detailing. Dinner was in the privately run home restaurant called Y Thao Garden where the family served us several Vietnamese and Hue specialties.



Silk lanterns at Hoi An

The next day we were again blessed with good weather as we reluctantly checked out of our hotel and drove to the Hai Van Pass with its superb sea and coastal views and its brick built forts dating from the Ming Mang king of the Nguyen dynasty. We pressed on to our seaside hotel just outside Hoi An, the Victoria, and after a rest went into Hoi An in the evening for a visit to the illuminated 16th century Japanese bridge and wandered round the busy streets to catch the flavor of this ancient port and nowadays popular backpacker destination. The illuminations were a delight with the iconic silk lanterns. After a Vietnamese dinner most of us were content to take the coach back to the hotel but some insisted on returning to their youth and taking a motor bike ride home.



## Recent Activities

Inspired by the excitement of the motor bike one keen member took an early morning side car ride into the countryside and assured us we had missed something spectacular, but most of were content to have an early morning swim or just to relax at the buffet breakfast. It is remarkable that there are three UNESCO World Heritage sites within 100 kms of each other and after visiting the Complex of Hue Monuments and the Hoi An Ancient Town we now turned our attention to the My Son Sanctuary just 60 kms or so from Hoi An. Here, up in attractive mountain scenery, about 1100 years ago, the Cham Empire built many brick towers and sanctuaries to house their Hindu gods, and provide a political and religious centre. We took a late lunch at the Vina House where the owner has established a wonderful collection of Vietnamese arts and crafts and where Nathan, the Manager, took pride in giving us a very informative tour. After a further swim at the private beach of the Victoria Hotel, we enjoyed drinks and a farewell dinner, al fresco, beside the pool.

The final day we went to the Danang local market to see the local produce and in some cases to fill up our suitcases with the delicious local fruits, passion fruits, mangos, lemons and many more. Others stocked up on the local bamboo artifacts. We then moved on to the Champa Art Sculpture Museum in Danang where our guide, Duyen, gave a fine introduction to the magnificent pieces collected, their conservation and the Cham culture. After some refreshing coconut drinks in a café overlooking the river, all too soon it was time to fly back to Hong Kong, but we have our photos to remind us of a delightful vacation. Should you wish to see more, there will a photo display at the AGM on 22 April and, as for all our tours since 2006, the informative handout is available at the RAS HK library in the Central Library in Causeway Bay.



The group at My Son

*(Photos courtesy Peter Stuckey)*

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## Recent Activities

### The Miraculous History of China's Two Palace Museums

Friday • 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016

*Written by Chai Kim Wah*

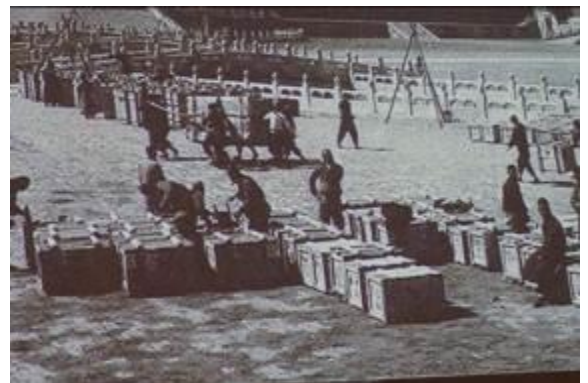
Based on his latest book, “The Miraculous History of China’s Two Palace Museums”, Mark O’Neill’s talk encompassed not only history, art and politics, but also human drama and national identity. It was timely too: The Palace Museum in Beijing marked its 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary on 10th October last year, and in December the National Palace Museum in Taiwan opened its stunning southern branch.

The largest repository of Chinese art in the world, the Palace Museum is also the world’s most visited (15 million visitors in 2014), while the National Palace Museum ranks 7<sup>th</sup> (5.4 million). Such an achievement was unimaginable during the strife-torn decades of the museum’s early history, which Mark skillfully recounted in the context of China’s tumultuous modern history, illustrated with maps and historical photos.

When the Forbidden City, residence of Ming and Qing emperors for over 500 years, was taken over by the government, an inventory found 1.17 million art treasures—even minus the uncounted number sold by the last emperor, Pu Yi, and his eunuchs (who were expelled from the palace in 1924, partly to stop the theft.) Overseas-educated intellectuals in the government who’d seen palaces-turned-museums, such as the Louvre and Hermitage, aspired to create one for China.

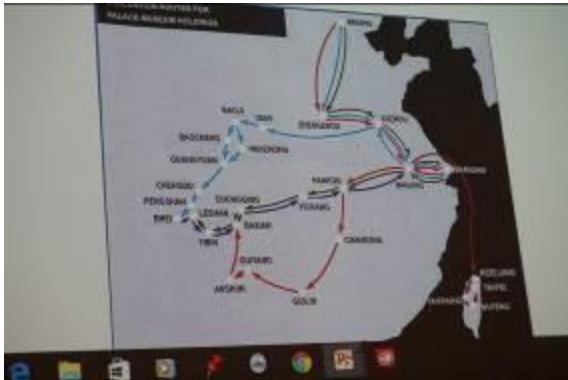
Opened in 1925 the Palace Museum was an instant hit, with 50,000 visitors in the first two days. But it faced serial threats—warlords, lack of funds, proposed auctioning of its artifacts, and, in 1931, Japanese invasion. Fearing the advancing Japanese would seize the collection, the museum’s directors decided to move much of it to safer locations.

Thus in 1933 began the 15-year odyssey of up to 19,557 crates of bronzes, jade, ivory, porcelain, lacquerware, paintings, sculptures, stone drums, imperial documents and other priceless objects. They were transported under military escort across China to the remote southwest, sometimes one step ahead of enemy bombardment; moved over mountains, rivers and thousands of kilometres, by train, boat, raft and truck; stored in temples, basements, warehouses, homes, caves. It was a logistical nightmare that Mark brought alive with many quotes from personal memoirs, official reports and interviews with descendants and museum directors. Incredibly, the collection suffered little loss or damage, thanks to the dedicated museum staff, whose individual stories gave a human dimension to the narrative.



Crates of art treasures to be moved south laid out in a Palace Museum courtyard

## Recent Activities



Evacuation routes of the crates across China

After Japan's surrender in 1945 the collection was returned to Nanjing. Then came the civil war. Facing defeat, Chiang Kai-shek shipped the best pieces in 2,972 crates to Taiwan in 1948-49. They were stored in a purpose-built vault until Chiang, realising he'd never reconquer the mainland, ordered a new museum to be built outside Taipei. Sited under a mountain with 180-metre tunnels and bomb-proof walls, the National Palace Museum opened in 1965 and has become part of Taiwan's identity and an instrument of its soft power.

In Beijing, the Palace Museum had survived unscathed, its remaining treasures almost intact, and reopened under communist rule. Chairman Mao only got as far as sitting on its wall, apparently because he believed entering the palace would bring him bad luck. It also survived the Cultural Revolution (1966-76) thanks to Premier Zhou Enlai, who ordered its gates closed to keep out Red Guards clamouring to destroy a symbol of the feudal past. After normality returned in the mid-1970s, projects resumed to restore, expand and commercialise the museum, greatly aided by Bernardo Bertolucci's 1987 film, "The Last Emperor". A new museum wing is to be built in north Beijing.

Mark also discussed the role of the two palace museums in cross-strait ties, which multiplied after Taiwan started opening up to the mainland in 2008. The Palace Museum has lent artworks to Taipei, though not vice-versa because Beijing refuses to sign a legal guarantee to return the pieces. But Mark said he did not think Beijing wants the treasures back, because the palace museum in Taiwan is an important link with the mainland, binding the two sides in a common heritage.

Thanks to Mark for yet another well-sourced, detailed account of a little-known historical adventure and the heroic figures involved. Many of the 45 attendees at the lecture lined up to buy the book.



Presentation to Mark O'Neill after his lecture

*(Photos courtesy Chai Kim Wah)*

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# Of General Interest

## Heavenly Crafted: Selected Mughal Jades from the Palace Museum

Saturday • 13<sup>th</sup> February 2016

RASHK members had a guided tour at the Art Museum at The Chinese University of Hong Kong led by docent Ms Carolyn Lau, a student at the English Department of the Chinese University of Hong Kong on Saturday, 13<sup>th</sup> February, 2016



The RAS group at the exhibition



RAS members at viewing the exhibition



Leaf-shape mirror back with openwork carving of flowers of late 18<sup>th</sup> to early 19<sup>th</sup> century



Mughal jade bowl

*(Photos courtesy Helen Tinsley)*

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## Of General Interests

### Obituary: Dr Deric Daniel Waters BBS, ISO 1920 - 2016



Dr Deric Daniel Waters BBS, ISO  
(1920 – 2016)

Deric Daniel Waters was born in the cathedral city of Norwich, England. He grew up in the nearby market town of Watton, where his father owned a construction company. Growing up in such an environment undoubtedly nurtured an interest in heritage and conservation, both in his homeland and later in Hong Kong, his adopted home for over sixty years.

Dan was a diligent student and a keen sportsman but with the outbreak of war in 1939 his life took a new turn when he was conscripted for military service. Following basic training he was posted to 249 Field Company, Royal Engineers and posted to North Africa as part of the Eighth Army, nicknamed the 'Desert Rats'. At El Alamein Dan recalls the deafening barrages from the artillery and the dangerous role he and his comrades undertook clearing minefields in order for allied forces to advance. Following the allied victory in North Africa he was sent to Italy where, as part of the US Fifth Army he took part in Operation Avalanche and the battles at Salerno and Anzio. At Salerno he was seriously wounded, for the third time, when the vehicle he was in ran over a landmine which exploded. For his professionalism and courage he was mentioned in dispatches. Dan ended the war in Trieste in September, 1946 and returned to England. In recent years it was a privilege to accompany him to annual commemoration services which he unfailingly attended as a token of remembrance to his fallen comrades.

In the autumn of 1954 he left England and came to Hong Kong to work for the Colonial Service as an Education officer (Technical Education). He was to spend the next twenty-five years working for the Education Department in the field of technical education. In 1974 he was promoted to the grade of Assistant Director and for the next six years he oversaw the development of technical education in Hong Kong, which included the establishment of five new technical colleges. In 1980 he retired from the government and for his services to education he was awarded the Imperial Service Order.



## Of General Interests

In retirement Dan took up writing. He had already written one book, *Understanding Technical English* (1973). Although he admitted 'it was a bit dry' it sold a million copies. He went on to write three more books and he studied for a doctorate, which was conferred on him in 1985 by Loughborough University. I also remember with particular pleasure the ceremony at Lingnan University in October 2014 when Dan was conferred with an Honorary Fellowship in recognition of his 'distinguished service to the community for six decades'.

Dan's association with the RASHK goes back to 1964. He was president of the Society from 1996-2001 and in recognition of his service to it was awarded a Fellowship of the Society. To the end of his life he maintained an active interest in the Society which he was very proud of. He contributed some seventy articles to the *Journal* and regularly attended events and Council meetings. During the 1990s he represented the RAS on the Antiquities Advisory Board and participated in a survey of heritage buildings in Hong Kong which recommended the grading of these buildings. In recognition of his service to the community in the field of heritage conservation he was awarded the Bronze Bauhinia Star in 1998 by the HKSAR Government.

*Michael Broom*

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## Of General Interests

### Library News

The following items have been received for the RAS library, our thanks goes to those making these donations:-



#### Veronica Pearson

- Whitfield, Susan (ed.) After the event: human rights and their future in China. London : Wellsweep Press, 1993.
- Redding, Gordon. The spirit of Chinese capitalism. Berlin: W. de Gruyter, 1990.
- Whyte, Martin King and William L. Parish. Urban life in contemporary China. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1983.
- Davis, Deborah (ed.) Chinese society on the eve of Tiananmen: the impact of reform. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Council on East Asian Studies, Harvard University, 1990.
- Cartier, Carolyn. Globalizing South China. Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 2001.

#### Robert Nield

- Coates, Austin. China, India and the ruins of Washington. New York: John Day Company, 1972.
- Dale, Penelope. Ten sacks of rice: our way to China. Texas: Karish Publishing, 2002.

#### David McKellar

- Steeds, David and Ian Nish. China, Japan and 19th century Britain. Dublin: Irish Academic Press, 1977.

#### City University of Hong Kong Press

- Lo, Patrick. Preserving local documentary heritage: conversations with special library managers and archivists in Hong Kong. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, 2015.
- Ho, K.K. Lawrence and Yiu Kong Chu. Policing Hong Kong, 1842-1969: insider's stories. Hong Kong: City University of Hong Kong Press, 2012.

#### Richard Garrett

- Smith, Joyce Stevens. Matilda: a Hong Kong legacy. Hong Kong: Matilda International Hospital, 2012. Third edition.
- Vittachi, Nury. Matilda: for the happiness of patients. Hong Kong: PPP Company Limited, 2013.

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## Of General Interests

### St John's Cathedral Shop

Arrangements have been made with St John's Cathedral Bookshop for copies of RAS journals Vols. 50 – 54 and the book Hong Kong Going, Gone to be sold through the shop. It is hoped that Members will actively support this facility, and encourage others to purchase Society publications from the Bookshop.



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### 2016 Membership Renewal

Members are reminded that renewals are due on 1<sup>st</sup> 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](mailto: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

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# Publications

## PUBLICATIONS ORDER FORM

<u>Journals</u>	<u>Price HK\$</u>	<u>Qty</u>	<u>Order</u>
Vols. 1 – 48	\$50.00 each	_____	_____
Vols. 49 – 54	\$200.00 each	_____	_____
<u>Books</u>			
Hong Kong Going and Gone	\$120.00	_____	_____
A Sense of Place: Hong Kong West of Pottinger Street	\$300.00	_____	_____
<u>P&amp;P</u>	<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.**

### ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG STUDIES SERIES

Ancestral Images	\$260.00	.....
Cantonese Society in HK and Singapore	\$260.00	.....
Custom, Land and Livelihood in Rural South China	\$260.00	.....
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The Dragon and the Crown: Hong Kong Memoirs (paperback)	\$120.00	.....
Early China Coast Meteorology	\$220.00	.....
East River Column: Hong Kong Guerrillas in the Second World War and After (hardback)	\$190.00	.....
East River Column (paperback)	\$140.00	.....
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Escape from Hong Kong (hardback)	\$220.00	.....
Escape from Hong Kong (paperback)	\$150.00	.....
Forgotten Souls	\$320.00	.....
Governors, Politics and the Colonial Office	\$220.00	.....
Hong Kong Internment, 1942-1945 (paperback)	\$130.00	.....
The Lone Flag: Memoir of the British Consul in Macau during World War II	\$240.00	.....
Portugal, China & Macau Negotiations	\$210.00	.....
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**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.**

## Contact Details

### COUNCIL MEMBERS CONTACT DETAILS

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>Fax</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
President	Mr Michael Broom	2719 4974	2719 4958	president@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk
Vice-President	Dr Gillian Bickley	2259 3456	2688 0546	g.bickley@proversepublishing.com
Vice-President	Dr Helen Tinsley	9034 2241		fultins@netvigator.com
Immediate Past President	Mr Christopher Young	6388 5155		clbyoung@gmail.com
Past President	Mr Robert Nield	2540 0722	2335 5470	hiflyer@netvigator.com
Past President	Dr Patrick Hase	2658 6529	2658 5400	phhase@hku.hk
Hon. Secretary	Mr David McKellar	2843 2493	2103 5996	mckellar@graduate.hku.hk
Hon. Treasurer	Ms Connie Carmichael	2994 2488		treasurer@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk
Hon. Librarian	Ms Edith Chan	2241 5624	2857 2048	librarian@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk
Hon. Editor	Dr Stephen Davies	3917 5034		stephen.davies79@gmail.com
Hon. Activities Coordinator	Mr Michael Broom	2719 4974	2719 4958	stgeorge_hk.yahoo.co.uk
Hon. Archivist	Ms Stacy B Lee	2859 7953	2517 8647	sblee@hku.hk
Council Member	Ms Davina Lee	9196 5934		dioramaprojects@gmail.com
Council Member	Ms Moody Tang	2813 2322	2813 8033	website@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk
Council Member	Mr Maurice J Chan	2877 1833	2596 0845	emailmjc@netvigator.com
Council Member	Mr Donald Gasper	2858 6601		d_gasper@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk

### OTHER USEFUL CONTACT

<b>Position</b>	<b>Name</b>	<b>Phone</b>	<b>E-mail</b>
Administrator (Part-time)	Ms Ivy Ho	6590 7523	membership@royalasiaticsociety.org.hk



# Membership Renewal

## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL FORM



### ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY HONG KONG BRANCH

### MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL 2016

Name/s .....

Address  
.....  
.....  
.....

Tel Home ..... Tel Office ..... Mobile .....

Email .....

Single HK\$700  Joint HK\$1,000  Overseas HK\$420

Life HK\$9,800  Joint Life HK\$13,000  Student\* HK\$50

\*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. The rate of exchange will be advised on request. Please note HKD100 must be added to each cheque to cover the bank charges incurred.**

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](http://www.royalasiaticsociety.org.hk) **[Please leave the Debtor’s Reference blank for office use]**

Signed .....

Date .....

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

# Booking Forms

## AGM

### **RAS 56<sup>th</sup> Annual General Meeting & Cocktail Party**

Hong Kong Club • Friday, 22 April 2016

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places for members at \$375 each and \_\_\_\_\_ places for guests at \$375 each.

I enclose my cheque for \$ \_\_\_\_\_ payable to ‘**Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch**’.

Name(s) of Member(s): *(please print)*.....

Membership No.: .....

Name(s) of Guest(s): .....

Telephone: *(daytime)*..... *(evening)* .....

Mobile: ..... Email: *(please print clearly)*.....

Please send cheque payable to ‘**Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch**’ with this form to:

Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch, G P O Box 3864, Hong Kong.

## **NOMINATION FORM**

I would like to nominate Dr / Prof / Mr / Mrs / Miss

\_\_\_\_\_

for election to the Council of The Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch.

I have ascertained that he/she is willing to stand for election.

Proposer: \_\_\_\_\_

Secunder: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Please return this form, **no later than Friday 15<sup>th</sup> April, 2016** to:  
The Hon. Secretary, Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong Branch, GPO Box 3864, Hong Kong.