

## Letter from the Chairman

Last November I was elected Chairman of the Hong Kong Society; a great honour and a task to which I commit myself with keen enthusiasm. With the support of our creative and resourceful committee, Robert Guy and the Society's new Communications Manager, Fiona Duong, we stand ready to serve. I must extend a very special vote of thanks to out-going Chairman, Clinton Leeks, who steered the Society safely and surely through the challenging (and on-going) years of the economic recession with charm and finesse, and spear-headed the recent review of membership and activities. I am aware I have big shoes to fill.

But before continuing, 'a word from our sponsors'. We run a very tight ship and without the continuing assistance of generous sponsors such as Cathay Pacific, Mayer Brown and Wing Yip, we simply wouldn't be here. And that would be a great pity for anyone who has worked or lived in Hong Kong and continues to be interested in this dynamic city. Membership subs, sponsored donations and revenue from organised events fund the administration of the Society, with the support and goodwill of its sister organisation, the HK Association. We rely on, and are grateful for, all these contributions.

But we're not a charity. Our mission is to make membership of the Society a genuinely appealing and cost-effective decision. An interesting and varied programme of events with a Hong Kong theme or connection is being evolved in 2013 and we hope you will participate. The seasonal Women's Group lunches are finding a dedicated audience and perennial favourites, such as the Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London, are augmented this year with an invitation from Lady Eatwell (nee former HK resident, Suzy Digby) for supper at the President's Lodge, Queen's College, Cambridge. We are planning an annual formal dinner (in lieu of the tri-annual 'Big Dinner/Dance') in the Autumn and will announce details of venue and headline entertainment in due course.

Last year we instigated, at the suggestion of former UK-based member, Spencer Fung, an initiative to support 'new arrivals' to the UK from Hong Kong in instances where there would otherwise be no friendly welcome. We signed up (with thanks) seven 'mentor' volunteers in the UK and they remain eager to assist. With the appointment last year of Mabel Au Yeung as our Director and representative in Hong Kong, we now also have on board seven volunteers there to support and assist new residents on the same basis. This is a free service and we urge you to get the word out!

I cannot let this article go by without a very warm welcome to our President for the next two years, Baroness Dunn. We are honoured to have her as our figurehead and have been greatly honoured to have had in the last 20 years, Lord Wilson. My predecessor expressed in the last issue our warm thanks to him and Lady Wilson, and I echo this most strongly.

On 10th February the Chinese will celebrate the beginning of the Year of the Snake – but not just any snake, the water snake. The Chinese believe that someone born in this auspicious year is good for the household as with a snake in the house, no one will starve. They say it will be a potentially prosperous financial year (as the snake is keen, cunning and wise) but beset with a myriad challenges....so what's new! Kung Hey Chat Choy and a very happy and prosperous Chinese New Year to all.

**Karen Luard (nee Penlington)**  
Chairman

### Society Forthcoming Events

- 18 Feb** - Annual Chinese New Year Dinner
- 8 Mar** - Women's Group Spring Lunch
- 13 Mar** - Lecture "Admiral Chan Chaks's Escape"
- 17 Mar** - Tea and Special Talk at BADA
- 23 Apr** - Guided Tour of Mansion House, Guildhall Yard and Amphitheatre and Spring Lunch
- 8 May** - Regional Dinner for members living in the East Anglia Region, held at the President's Lodge, Queens College
- 22 May** - Women's early summer lunch
- 30 May** - Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London

(Further details see inside page)

### Other Events currently planned for Spring/Summer

- Mar/Apr/May** - Regional Dinners: Sussex, Winchester, Gloucestershire
- First half of year** - Visit to Hua Gallery
- Apr** - Younger members' lecture with Stephen Phillips, Director of CBBC
- June/July** - London Hong Kong Dragon Boat Day
- June/July** - A midsummer reception
- June/July** - Chinese Gourmet Summer Lunch
- June/July** - A Polo day at Ham Polo club
- Late July** - Women's Group late Summer lunch
- 18 Sep** - Regional lunch in Bath, followed by a visit to The East Asian Museum of Art

Thanks to our sponsors:



MAYER • BROWN

Robert Guy has asked me to write one more letter from Hong Kong looking back on many missives put together - occasionally disintegrating – between 1997 and this January 2013. Looking back is no easy thing to do, especially if one enjoys the process of looking forward so much. So at the creaky age of 80 I shall use this last letter as much as anything to thank everyone for their patience and forbearance as I prattled on.

What I believe I can record with great enthusiasm and conviction is that Hong Kong is a far better place in almost every way from when I commenced writing – as always I use that word loosely. The big exception is the increasing amount of decorative Chinese mist accumulating each day from the factories of nearby China and from the consistently dangerous emissions from buses, lorries and shipping. The smaller ships, in particular, use the cheapest and dirtiest fuel available. The fortunate exceptions are the huge container vessels which increasingly use clean fuel and between which our local ferry from Aberdeen to Pak Kok and Yung Shue Wan has cautiously to weave its way. As you look left and right from our little boat you can see these monsters, the size of an aircraft carrier, spaced out and queuing to come in.

I thought the two letters in the last edition summed up the confusing image of Hong Kong's present government. Rachel Cartland was criticizing the government for wanting to make money out of the closure of the West Wing and the general commercialization of Government Hill. Happily her megaphone in Central has done the trick and we have been saved, at least for the moment. I wish so much that the land around the West Wing could be used as a green and pleasant area for people to perambulate within a busy city and where the plants and rocks could eventually filter down to the cathedral. Because I love water features I would also include a splendid fountain and waterfall which could use the considerable drop towards the end of Battery Path to cascade down almost to Queen's Road Central. At the speed the traffic crawls along Queen's Road it could probably incorporate a road-side carwash.

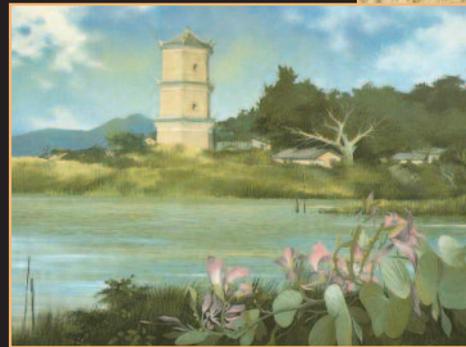
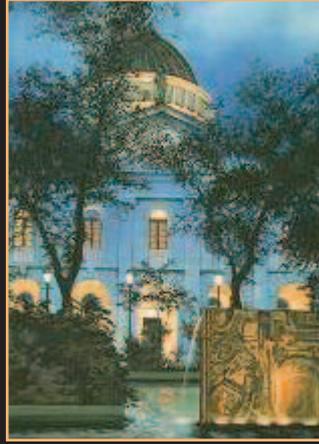
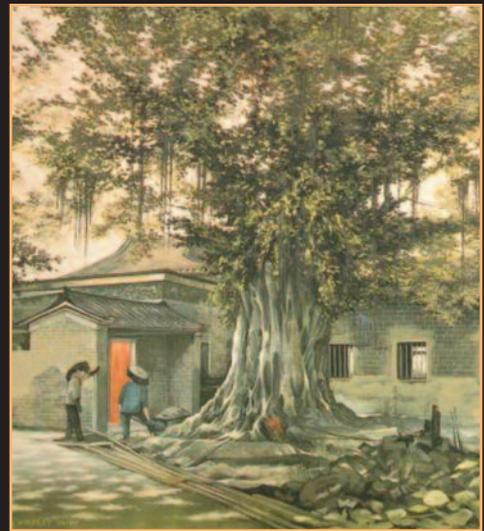
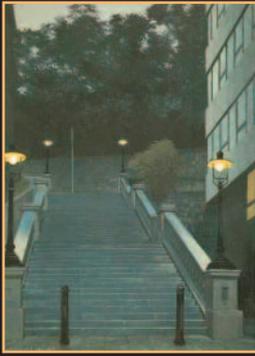
The other letter, by Kim Salkeld and reprinted with his blessing in the monthly Hong Kong Gardening Society magazine, for which our sincere thanks, shows a wholly different, concerned and sensitive aspect of certain government departments busy greening, refining and improving an elegant city. It really does get better every year. Close to our seaside home in Pak Kok the Aberdeen waterfront is being converted into a mock fishing village. However it is such a big job that before it's finished the Chinese government may have had their way and rubber-stamped the resident fishing fleet to marine oblivion.

So this is really to say thank you for, hopefully, not being too critical of all the puns and 'opinions' expressed. It has been a pleasure always. We were all, or most of us, lucky to land up in Hong Kong and to have its adventurousness, vibrancy and that marvelous mix of the west and Asia seep into our very being. Moyreen and I still wallow in it and from our strange but friendly roof garden gaze down on the Pak Kok rocks below with the lovely sound of the waves crashing ashore. In the distance to the left one of my favourite really large trees seems to bow graciously towards the sea, while strange and quite large rock formations offer constant protection. To the right we look across to HK island where, particularly at night, the view is quite entrancing. In any one night as many as ten boats can load or unload because the world's biggest freight terminal is still not big enough. Thus does Hong Kong continue to flourish and prosper. I don't see its people being easily pushed around by outside forces. They are generally too articulate, educated and concerned and in the final analysis quietly but firmly prepared to march.

On a more personal note, the painting continues unabated. One of the happiest events recently was the commission to paint a large mural, 21 m x 1.8 m, for the Singapore HQ of a huge Vietnamese conglomerate. The artwork is installed in the newly built monster convulsion of gleaming metal embedded in the Singapore waterfront beside the famous Collyer Quay and Change Alley, where I first came ashore in Asia as a national serviceman 60 years ago. And also, as a charming giggle, the print of Flagstaff House - which was among the prints I gave to the Hong Kong Society - is now buried in the grounds of Buckingham Palace! It is actually part of the Commonwealth Society's state-of-the-art Time Capsule and is certainly no big deal, except that as an artist I shall now be able to add RA after my name – by royal allotment.

Best wishes and happy memories,

Brian Tilbrook  
Jan 2013



Some of these free prints are still available. For your copies, please contact the society office on 020 7963 9447 or via email [communications@hkas.org.uk](mailto:communications@hkas.org.uk)

## Hong Kong Society Committee 2013

### Karen Luard (Chairman)

Linora Bennet  
 Caroline Emery  
 Emily Fan  
 Andrew Jaques  
 Shanyan Koder  
 Ting Ting Li  
 Mark Patterson (Hon Treasurer)  
 Christopher Rampton  
 Stuart Tait  
 Sue Thistlethwaite  
 Betty Yao  
 Winston Yap

Committee members serve for three years.  
 The committee meets every three months to discuss matters related to the Society.

The committee is keen to hear your views on the running of the society. You can reach its members through the office:

Executive Director - Robert Guy  
 Communications & Marketing Manager - Fiona Duong

email [communications@hkas.org.uk](mailto:communications@hkas.org.uk) or telephone 020 7963 9447.

## Members Offers

The website carries details of a number of discounts or other offers made to bona fide members. Amongst the following are good discounts on: truffles at L'Aquila, suits from Ede & Ravenscroft, membership at the Fox Club, service charges at KP Communications, etc.  
 Visit [hkas.org.uk/membership-offers](http://hkas.org.uk/membership-offers) for more details

## Deaths

We have been told of the deaths of the following members.

1. Mrs Elizabeth Primrose
2. Sir Wilfrid Newton
3. Mr William Houston
4. Miss Margaret Fisher
5. Mr John Hopkinson
6. Mr David Michael Adami
7. Mr Ivor Napier

## A Glamorous Evening in the Cowshed

Perhaps we will not be quite “putting on top hats, tying up white ties and brushing off our tails” but we will not be far off it as the dress instructions are firmly black tie and to “bring out the bling.” All this so that some one hundred of us can spend a Sunday evening in.....a cowshed.

It will not be my first encounter with this place. During a couple of periods in the 1980s and 1990s my responsibilities within the Hong Kong Government lay in the field of heritage. Those were hectic years and I kept in my desk drawer a list of “things I really must get round to” and always featuring somewhere near the bottom of it was “Pokfulam Cowsheds”. Sadly, I was sent to another post before I was able to see them let alone try to decide their fate. For these were potentially “heritage cowsheds”, built in 1889, next door to the Béthanie, the historic building constructed in 1875 as a sanatorium for French priests serving in the Asian missionary field for and not far from Hong Kong University, at the west end of Hong Kong Island.

The historic cowsheds were the brainchild of Sir Patrick Manson, one of those remarkable Victorians who in the course of their busy lives founded enduring institutions and changed the history of the world, sometimes, it seemed, almost as afterthoughts. Having studied medicine at Aberdeen University, Manson came to this part of the world as soon as he had qualified as a doctor, joining the Chinese Imperial Maritime Customs as a medical officer in Formosa (now Taiwan). Five years later he was in Amoy and interesting himself in malaria, working towards his hypothesis that mosquitoes were involved in the transmission of the disease, a theory later proved by his pupil Ronald Ross. The discovery was historic in more ways than the obvious; it made possible the building of the Panama Canal since it was thereby known how to ensure that there were enough healthy workers by dealing with the mosquito menace.

Manson spent just six years in Hong Kong, from 1883 to 1889 but during this time he, together with Dr. James Cantlie, another Aberdeen graduate, founded the Hong Kong College of Medicine which evolved later on into Hong Kong University itself. Friendly links between Aberdeen and Hong Kong Universities are still evident and the former has recently presented the latter with its very own tartan. What use will be made of it? An intriguing question but, perhaps, given Hong Kong's continuing fondness for the bagpipes, a band of scholars could be formed to play reels and laments dressed in kilts made from the Hong Kong University plaid. There is, after all, at least one tailor in town who advertises his ability to construct traditional Highland outfits, his craft honed by years of providing such services for the men of the Scottish regiments that were once stationed here.

Back in the nineteenth century, Manson's scientific mind was much occupied with thoughts of how the diet then obtainable in Hong Kong might be improved. He was interested in work being done in Europe on pasteurization and more hygienic milk production. As historian Alain Le Pichon puts it “in a flash of inspiration, a new idea was born – Hong Kong must have its modern dairy company and he must start it”. Hence the Dairy Farm Company, later to become a mighty

enterprise of food suppliers and supermarkets, was incorporated and the elegant octagonal cowsheds were built to house the cows to provide the milk.

Manson saw the beginning of this project but not much more. He returned to the UK, where he founded the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine which is to this day one of the world's pre-eminent public health schools. He also assisted his former colleague Dr. Cantlie in the adventure of the rescue of their star pupil in Hong Kong, Sun Yat-sen, who had become a revolutionary, and was kidnapped and held in the Chinese Legation in London. Sun was consequently able to continue his political activities, culminating in the overthrow of the Imperial Chinese Government and the establishment of modern China.

By strokes of good fortune and the timely intervention of Mr. CH Tung, Hong Kong's first chief executive after the transfer of sovereignty, and of Anna Pao Sohmen, the former chairman of the Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts an inspiration as great as that which put the cattle there although with very different results led to the entire Béthanie complex including the nearby cowsheds being preserved, beautifully restored and renovated and re-opened in 2006 as the Academy's School of Film and Television and sometimes available for private functions.

So this is the cowshed that we are dressing up for and it is a very nice kind of cowshed and, indeed, the event itself is rather a suave one with an opera performance in the former chapel and dinner in the room above. The story of why we will be there involves some more modern Hong Kong-ers.

Sir David Akers-Jones had a long career in the Overseas Colonial Service starting in Malaya but mainly in Hong Kong. He was Chief Secretary and also Acting Governor after the untimely death of Sir Edward Youde. Sir David is an alumnus of Brasenose College, Oxford and, as universities will, Oxford came to him a while back and sought his help in fund-raising. He cogitated with the late Sir Oswald Cheung, QC, a fellow Oxonian, and they concluded that the cause that would be most appealing to a local audience would be funding to enable Hong Kong students to pursue post-graduate courses at Oxford. At the end of 1991 Sir David Wilson, Governor of Hong Kong (yes, since you're wondering, Oxford educated too but, to add in another link to the chain nowadays the Chancellor of Aberdeen University) gave the use of Government House for a fund-raising dinner that allowed what was then known as the Hong Kong Oxford Scholarship Fund to be formally launched in 1992. In the late 1990s the obvious decision was taken to extend its remit so as to draw in students from the whole of China, including Hong Kong. Thus, the glamorous event in the cowshed is a gala evening to mark the twentieth anniversary of the China Oxford Scholarship Fund.

Galas need organizing and this task could have

found no more dedicated nor suitable a volunteer than Annie Liang Bentley. Annie is Chinese and a graduate of Hong Kong University. She was also at Oxford but her time there was overshadowed by money worries since this was during the mid-1970s and the UK Government's drastic increases in fees for overseas students presented an almost insurmountable challenge to the small savings that she had painfully accumulated in four years of working since her graduation. She needed to prove that she had some capital sum even to obtain a visa to go to the UK. A "consortium" of ten equally penniless young friends came to her aid with one even going as far as to get two additional part-time jobs in order to help. The loan that they raised meant that she was able to complete her studies.

Annie returned home and eventually set up her own business, Bentley Communications, which became a leader in the fields of branding consultancy, public relations, advertising and events management. For years her company was particularly well known for its role in responsibility for the logistics of the fireworks displays that lit up the harbour for every major festive occasion. She never forgot her early experiences and made generous donations to support needy post-graduates both through the China Oxford Scholarship Fund and to Lady Margaret Hall, her old college, where the first recipient of the scholarship that she gave was a Mongolian girl from Ulan Bator who wrote a poem for Annie to express her joy at the chance she had been given.

Over the past twenty years, the China Oxford Scholarship Fund has assisted almost two hundred students to a total amount of more than £800,000. Applicants must first secure their place at Oxford and then convince the Fund's interviewing panel of the personal qualities that will mean that

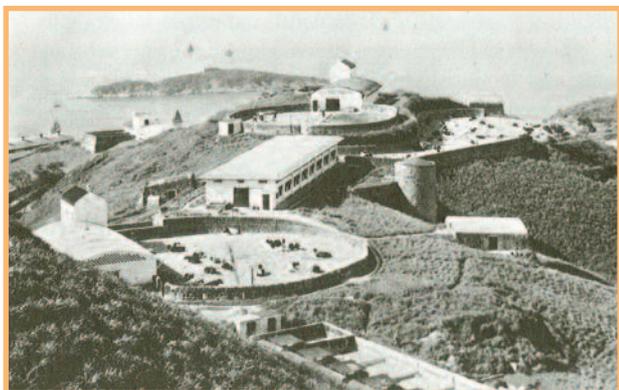
they can get the most out of this period of post-graduate study in a foreign environment and that they will make good use of what they learn for the benefit of China and the wider world.

Our glamorous evening in the cowshed has the underlying purpose of reminding people of the value of this cause and to that end five of the Scholars will speak briefly on what the Fund has meant to them. One of these will be Anthony Boshen Wu, who was born in Shenzhen, earned his first degrees at Peking University and completed his Oxford D.Phil garlanded with prizes. His main focus while at Oxford was on cancer research; he synthesized two potential molecules that may be used to treat cancer and HIV and are currently being subjected to bioassays while he himself is now working with the United Nations to introduce advanced medical technologies into China.

The photograph on the invitation to the evening is of a wide spreading tree growing in Oxford and referencing the Chinese proverb that "It takes ten years to grow a tree but it takes one hundred years to nurture talent." How nice it would be if in some corner of eternity Sir Patrick Manson, that practical, problem solving humanitarian, was aware of the unlikely journey through history that his cowsheds have taken. One can't help thinking that he might well feel that things had turned out rather satisfactorily. Perhaps he will even be silently joining in our applause!

Rachael Cartland

Jan 2013



Then: Dairy Farm Cowshed in 1889



And now: The octagon shaped cowshed, which has been leased to the Academy of Performing Arts

Footnote by Rachel Cartland to Brian Tilbrook's article

With regard to the last piece that I wrote, "The Battle of Government Hill", you may be interested to know that on 4 December the Hong Kong Government held a press conference at which the Secretary for Development announced that the previous decision to demolish the West Wing of the Central Government Offices and replace it by a new office tower had been reversed. The West Wing will instead be retained, conserved and used for accommodation for the Department of Justice as well as law-related NGOs. This Friday, 11 January, the Government Hill Concern Group is holding a celebration dinner where we will doubtless be calling to mind Michael Wright, his role in the construction of the West Wing and, more recently, in the fight for its preservation.

Note from the Government Hill Concern Group: "If you have any first hand information or anecdotes about the CGO buildings and grounds, amusing or otherwise, please do send them in to [info@governmenthill.org](mailto:info@governmenthill.org) and we will gladly help them find their way to the "relevant authorities".

## 17th March - Visit, Tea and Special Talk at the BADA and Fine Art Fair

**Date:** Sunday 17th March

**Venue:** Duke of York Square (off Sloane Square), London SW3 4LY

**Time:** 11.00am Fair opens; 4.30pm Reception; 4.45pm Private visit to the special exhibition

**Cost:** £12 per person (members & members' guests)

In association with:



Tea and a special talk at the British Antique Dealers' Association Fair has been organised for Society members and their guests. A visit to the fair is a 'must' for anyone interested in art and antiques, where a dazzling array of top quality furniture, paintings, clocks, ceramics, jewellery and silver can be viewed and bought.

The great attraction of this annual visit is the easy access to stalls and exhibits of about 100 of the best antique dealers in the UK. It is all beautifully laid out and presented.

A private visit to the special exhibition "**William Payne (1760-1830): Topographer and Artist of the Picturesque**" is also included. This is a unique loan exhibition of rarely seen works by the influential English watercolorist, William Payne. Curated by the expert and BADA Fair Exhibitor John Spink, all the paintings in the exhibition will be lent by four private collectors and have rarely been seen in public. The show will include scenes of Devon, Cornwall and South Wales painted by Payne in the late 18th century and display them alongside contemporary photographs of the same places. The exhibition will provide both a fascinating historical record and a long overdue tribute to an artist who played an important part in the development of British watercolour painting.

## 30th May - Ceremony of the Keys at the Tower of London

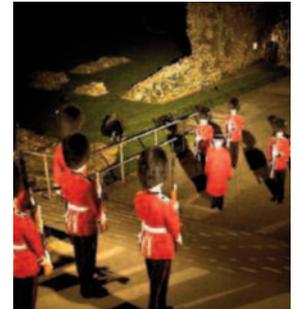
**Date:** Thursday 30th May

**Time:** 7.15pm - 10.00pm

**Cost:** £20 (members) £25 (non-members)

Members will gather at 7.15pm sharp at the West Gate of the Tower of London for a guided tour of the Tower, including the Chapel, which is not normally open to visitors. The tour will last about an hour after which drinks and a buffet supper will be served in the Yeoman Warders Club. The supper is now provided by an in-house caterer, as opposed to the fish and chips of recent years.

The Ceremony of the Keys, which represents a 700 years old tradition, will take place at 9.30pm. After the Ceremony members may return to the Yeoman Warders Club for a final drink.



## Early Notice

### Visit to Mansion House and Society Spring Lunch - Tuesday 23rd April

Details have yet to be finalised but there are confirmed plans to visit the Mansion House in the City of London in the morning of 23rd April and then move to the nearby Peony Club, a Restaurant owned by active member, Geoffrey Leung, for our Spring Chinese Lunch in a private room. Blue Badge guide David Thompson, who will have guided us in the morning, to see the Harold Samuel Collection of 16th/17th Century Dutch Paintings in the Mansion House, will join us for lunch and then take us at 2.30pm to the Guildhall (short walk) Yard and also to view the Amphitheatre which is directly underneath. Members can join for the lunch only (£28 per head for food) or for the whole programme which is as follows:

10.50 Assemble at the Mansion House

11.00 Visit Mansion House with the Blue Badge Guide and view the Harold Samuel Collection of 16th/17th Century Dutch Paintings

12.15 Walk to Peony Club. Chinese Lunch in Private Room

14.30 Walk to Guildhall Yard. View Amphitheatre

16.00 Dispense

Spaces on this programme are limited and you are encouraged to register as soon as possible. As a few details have yet to be finalised, there will be a chance to opt out at least 3 three weeks before.

You can register for the lunch only or for the whole package.

Located in the heart of the City, Peony Club is a private members' club encompassing a cocktail lounge, a private dining room, and a fine dining modern Chinese restaurant headed by Master Chef Kevin Chow (ex-head chef at Cocoon, Goldfish in London; Four Seasons, Grand Hyatt, Raffles in Singapore).

Costs: Lunch - £28 per head (includes all food but no drinks) for members and guests  
£33 per head for non-members and their guests

Whole Package: £35 per head for members

£40 per head for non-members



## Lecture 'Admiral Chan Chak's Escape' - 13th March

**Date:** Wednesday 13th March 2013

**Venue:** East India Club, 16 St James's Square, London SW1Y 4LH

**Time:** 5.45pm Cashbar; 6.30pm Lecture

**Cost for the lecture:** £12 (members & members' guests) £15 (non-members)

**Lecture - 'Admiral Chan Chak's Escape'  
by Tim Luard**

In one of the most remarkable adventures of the Second World War, just hours after Hong Kong's surrender on Christmas Day 1941, the one-legged Admiral Chan Chak and more than sixty British companions staged a daring breakout through Japanese lines. As others prepared for long years of occupation or imprisonment, they sped by torpedo boat through the night to Mirs Bay and marched for four days across occupied China to freedom. The admiral - China's senior representative in the colony - lost his wooden leg as he swam for his life through a hail of gunfire. Local guerrillas helped carry him over the hills and rivers of Guangdong in a bamboo sedan chair.

The motley escape party also included the future head of Hong Kong's post-war administration, bickering staff and intelligence officers carrying sensitive military information, old-school naval commanders and a raucous array of sailors. Thirty Royal Navy survivors reached home five months later after travelling over the Burma Road.

Former BBC China correspondent Tim Luard will give an illustrated talk on the escape, focussing on who the various members of the party were and how they came to be among the lucky few who got away. He will also be available to sign copies of his book, *Escape from Hong Kong*. Tim and his wife Alison -- whose father Colin McEwan was a leading member of the escape party and later a Director of Physical Education in Hong Kong -- retraced the initial 80-mile route to Huizhou on foot with other descendants of the escape group and helped put together an exhibition which is showing until April at the Hong Kong Museum of Coastal Defence.

The talk will last for a total of about one hour and there will then be plenty of opportunity for discussion.

A cash bar will be available from 5:45 pm and for a short time after the lecture.

A supper will be organised in a nearby pub; those who want to join it are asked to tell us well in advance and to bring £25 in cash with them.



### Scottish Regional Lunch

Our Scottish Section pre Christmas Luncheon took place on 7th December at Saigon, Saigon restaurant in Edinburgh. This event has become an annual one and members appear to enjoy it as it is an informal Chinese banquet and a good chance to meet up with friends old and new. As usual Saigon, Saigon which, despite its name, is a Chinese restaurant did us proud and we had an excellent meal and our usual friendly and efficient service. We had an attendance of 30 members and guests and it was good to see a few new faces as well as to welcome back old friends. Many regulars were out of the country, several of them in Hong Kong, but they sent their good wishes and I am pleased to report we had a very successful luncheon.

Our focus now moves on to 2013 and I hope to advise our Scottish members of our plans for this years Events in the near future. In the meantime I wish you all a Prosperous Year.

Roy Dewar

### The Society Dragon Boat Team is Recruiting Again!

The Hong Kong Society is once again planning to compete with a society boat at this years London Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival. We are looking for enthusiastic rower/oarsmen to join our team. A confirmed date will be sent out very soon.

If you are interested, please email [communications@hkas.org.uk](mailto:communications@hkas.org.uk) to register your interests.

## The Women's Group



The primary aim of the Women's Group of the Hong Kong Society is to provide women in the UK with a history of living or working in Hong Kong – and an ongoing interest in the city – with opportunities to meet or keep in touch with other former residents at seasonal lunches featuring relevant guest speakers. In addition, it aims to establish close collaboration with women living and working in Hong Kong today and provide a foundation of volunteer support for newcomers from the UK to Hong Kong and vice versa. It is intended also that the Women's Group will offer a dedicated 'marketplace' of promotional opportunities for professional women working in the UK and in Hong Kong.

Karen Luard is the convener of the group.

### Women's Group Spring Lunch - 8th March



**Time:** 12.00pm Drinks 12.30pm Lunch

**Venue:** The Fox Club, 46 Clarges Street, London W1J 7ER

**Cost:** £35 per person (members & members' guests), £45 per person (non-members)

**Guest Speakers:** Kerry Young and Selina Siak Chin Yoke

#### **Exploring Asia: New perspectives on the Chinese Spirit**

The Society will celebrate International Women's Day 2013 with a reading by two fascinating female writers, followed by a discussion over lunch at the Fox Club.

Two authors explore these intriguing aspects of the Asian experience which have rarely been examined. The first is Kerry Young, born in Jamaica to a Chinese father and Chinese/African mother. She writes the tale of a young Chinese boy Pao who comes to live in the booming but dangerous Chinatown of 1930's Kingston, following his father's death in the political turmoil of China.

The second author, Selina Siak Chin Yoke, a successful investment banker and entrepreneur, writes about a woman who is based on portraits of her great-grandmother. Chye Hoon comes from that unique culture born of a Malay/Chinese hybrid - the world of Nyonyas and Babas inhabiting Malaya of the last century. The novel, Spirit of Kueh, tells of how Chye Hoon must overcome dark times when her husband dies, to become one of the first businesswomen of her time. She builds a family fortune selling the cakes (kueh) of her traditional cuisine.

Worlds apart, the novels shed light not only on the traditions of Chinese in diaspora but also explore contemporary issues of multiculturalism, integration, assimilation and the true cost of losing a heritage.

Kerry Young's novel Pao was published by Bloomsbury and won much critical praise. Pao was shortlisted in 2011 for the Costa First Novel Award and in 2012 for the Commonwealth Book Prize.



### HK/UK Mentoring Scheme - Did you know about this?

The Hong Kong Society now has representation in Hong Kong and has launched a Mentor scheme with the support of a group of volunteers so as to facilitate the arrival of first-time residents to both cities. New residents (professional or otherwise) to either London or Hong Kong can be assigned a long-term resident to assist with assimilation into that city. There are currently 7 volunteer mentors in each location.

Each volunteer has committed to meet, advise and guide one (or more) new arrival and to offer assistance with general information about Hong Kong or London and provide relevant contacts and introductions; and to be generally accessible (by mobile phone) for one year.

Anyone who has ever arrived for the first time to live and/or work in an international world city, such as London or Hong Kong, without knowing anyone, will understand how intimidating an experience this can be. A team of welcoming and knowledgeable volunteers are now standing by to offer a friendly face and informed introduction to both cities, completely free of charge.

The Hong Kong Society, London, is directed in Hong Kong by Mabel Au-Yeung, a cosmopolitan local with extensive experience of the city. The team of volunteers in Hong Kong are all long-time residents hailing from various professional backgrounds including business and academia. Together they offer a wealth of experience and expertise that will facilitate the assimilation of new comers in this vibrant city.

For more information about this programme in the UK and to offer support, please contact Fiona Duong, [communications@hkas.org.uk](mailto:communications@hkas.org.uk) or telephone the society office on 020 7963 9447 (in the UK); and in Hong Kong Tel: 9038 8939 and email [mabelay@gmail.com](mailto:mabelay@gmail.com)