Welcome to the first of what the Committee hope will be many newsletters. The purpose of the newsletter is to give members of the society information on past and forthcoming events and to encourage members to participate in the activities of the Society.

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Chieftain’s Message

I am honoured and privileged to serve as the Society’s 119th Chieftain and take this opportunity to thank my predecessor Alan McTaggart for his sterling efforts last year.

The purpose of this inaugural newsletter is to improve communications with members of our Society by providing a snapshot of the Society’s activities during the year and upcoming events. I hope you like the format and if you have any suggestions to make do please make contact with any of us on the committee.

Our Society exists to create fellowship amongst Scots in Hong Kong so I encourage you to attend our events.

Yours,
Graeme Brechin
Chieftain 2013-2014

Stanley Internment Camp 1942 Programme Loan Ceremony

On the 18 of June 2013 committee members from The Hong Kong St. Andrew’s Society loaned St. Stephen’s College a historic programme dating from 1942. The programme was originally given to the society by Jim Shepherd Senior (an officer with the Hong Kong Police) after the second world war. Jim was an internee at Stanley refugee camp during the Japanese occupation and saved the programme for posterity. He was also an active participant in the event. He also recorded the event in his autobiography (See Bibliography later for details of the book and other more detailed accounts of life in Stanley Internment Camp).

The programme hung for many years in the Hong Kong Club. It was recently rediscovered during the renovation of the Club. The St. Andrew’s Society commissioned a professional conservationist to treat the programme and to have it reframed prior to giving it to St. Stephen’s College on permanent loan.

The Principal of St. Stephen’s College Ms Carol Yang stated that she was pleased to receive the programme (it transpired that Ms Yang undertook a proportion of her teaching education in Glasgow). After the handover ceremony the programme was installed in the St. Stephen’s College Stanley Internment Camp Heritage Museum (the college grounds we used as a part of the Stanley Internment Camp).

The Original St. Andrew’s Day 1942 Stanley Camp Programme now under the care of St Stephen’s Heritage Museum.
There is a high degree of pathos and patriotism in the Programme. The play (Campbell of Kilmohr) is set after the Rising of ’45. There is a clear analogy between the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong and what occurs in the play. The playwright (J.A. Fergusson) was a contemporary of Arthur Conan Doyle (another Scot) and wrote a series of popular detective stories but none were to have the lasting popularity as Doyle’s famous detective. The meaning behind the two closing songs is self apparent. The Japanese halted all such events not long after November 1942 as they were seen as ‘moral boosters’. The chieftain, K.S. Morrison, died within months of the St. Andrew’s Day celebrations. It was not until 1946 that a new chieftain was elected.

In recognition of the value of the programme the Society has printed 100 numbered limited edition copies of the programme (See image of original above). These may be purchased from Museum Concept, 2nd Floor Princes Building, Central. All proceeds will go to a Scottish Military Charity.

Bibliography

Campbell of Kilmohr
J.A. Fergusson

Prisoner of the Turnip Heads
George Wright-Nooth

Silks, Satins & Monkey Jackets
Jim Shepherd Snr.

Hong Kong Internment 1942-1945
Geoffrey C. Emerson
St. Andrew’s Football: Inter-port Football Competition

The Shanghai Scots and The Hong Kong St. Andrew’s Society played the first inter-port sports challenge to be held in many years. Played at the Hong Kong Football Club, the soccer challenge kicked off with a pipe band and a splendid rendition of ‘Oh Flower of Scotland’. Both teams attempted to keep up with the singer. Commencement of the game was hindered by not only the absence of a whistle but also the absence of a referee. The Whistle was found as was a referee. Ex chieftain John Bruce boldly stepped into the role.

The game kicked off at a temperature of 32 degrees. The Shanghai Scots commenced the game with a bold well measured attacking game. Hong Kong St. Andrew’s gradually got the measure of the game and the goals came gradually. So gradually that the groundsman from the Football Club failed to notch up the Society’s score. Fortunately Bobby Tsang was on hand to give an erudite Scottish-Cantonese explanation to the groundsman of his numeric deficiencies.

Given the heat the game was split into four quarters. By the second half The St. Andrew’s Society resplendent in their Saltire Cross kit sponsored by Murray and Currie were firmly in control of the match save for a few dangerous breaks by the Shanghai Scots. One such break led to a convincing goal.

At the end of the game (the score was no reflection of the veracity of the match) the St. Andrew’s team achieved a 7-1 victory. A return match is planned to be held in Shanghai. Please let the society know if you are interested in playing. The Society team will also be taking on other team’s in Hong Kong. Again write in if you are interested in playing.
St. Andrew’s Rugby (by John Bruce)

For many years the young and not so young players of the Society have ventured onto the pitch to compete with the Auld Enemy in the annual Calcutta Cup event. In recent years the games have been highly entertaining and both the St. Andrew’s and St. George’s societies have worked hard to raise the profile of the match. Currently St. Andrew’s hold the trophy and have for about the last three years with some great entertaining games which would have put many a defensive coach into an early grave. Hong Kong’s most capped player, Dave Lewis, a man approaching his fifty fourth birthday turned to me after a game three years ago saying, ‘I’ve played in a lot of games in my time John, but that was perhaps the most entertaining’. Of course, the fact that we were on the right side of a 53-52 cliffhanger probably made the difference between entertaining and ridiculous.

The games are a great opportunity for players of all levels, ages and abilities to strap on the boots and play some rugby and the crowds that have turned up always enjoy the atmosphere. Of course, a personal highlight was when the husband of the female St. George’s Chairperson footed the bill for all the food and drink. Let’s be honest; a win and free food and drink with bagpipes thrown in. One could have been in heaven.

Last year, we inaugurated at least for the first time in many years (older members are welcome to correct me) a fixture against the Welsh. Unlike the rugby back home, St. David’s boys were sent the same way as St. George’s, this time with a last minute break from our own twenty two, followed by a cross kick, a catch and a try under the posts.

These are great inclusive events enjoyed by players and spectators alike. Indeed, with a little application of my historical knowledge, we have striven to make them as inclusive as possible and the St. Andrew’s team operates a “Highlands and Islands” selection policy. Given that the great Scottish diaspora has seen the likes of Robert Louis Stevenson buried in Samoa, it only seems fair that we extend the “islands” part to our relatives in the South Seas; after all there are ten times as many English as Scots and then we have to counter the Welsh talent. We are eying off the lads across the Irish Sea for this year and in a similarly expansive mood we shall expect them to select anyone that’s ever had a pint of Guinness or been able to do the River Dance after ten such pints.
St. Andrew’s Rugby - The Calcutta Cup St. Andrew’s vs. St. George’s

The Shanghai Scots and The Hong Kong St. Andrew’s Society played the first inter-port sports challenge to be held in many years. Played at the Hong Kong Football Club. The soccer challenge kicked off with a pipe band and a splendid rendition of “Oh Flower of Scotland”. The biggest casualty of the night was the head of The St. George’s Society beer which seemed to be a target for his own team.

Pre match Line Out – St. George’s on the left and St. Andrew’s on the right

Trophy Presentation
Hong Kong Scottish (Message from General Manager - Dave Whiteford)

Hong Kong Scottish Rugby Club enter their 3rd year in the HK Premiership with a sense of expectation despite the relative infancy of the club. After two solid years whereby they defeated every Premiership team and in consecutive years overcame the league leaders in the penultimate match of the season to cost them the league title (Valley in 2012 and HKFC in 2013). They therefore entered 2013/14 with people tipping them to push on with a title push.

This expectation was dented with a series of injuries in the opening weeks which ruled out a number of 1st team regulars but with players returning every week, the club enjoyed a record win over DeA as they won out 64-10. The club hopes to push on for the rest of the season and be involved in the Grand Championships which contains the top four sides at the conclusion of the league.

The shining lights of the lower end of the club have been the HK Scottish Bravehearts side that won the Community 3A league and cup double last season. This was the first silverware for the club.

Two Scottish born players, Craig Wilson and Dave Whiteford, became the first HK Scottish players to be capped for Hong Kong after becoming eligible through residency in HK. Head coach Craig Hammond is also the HK A team coach.

The club has developed into a fully fledged sports club in the last year with the addition of a ladies rugby side, the HK Scottish Kukris, along with 5 Netball teams and a lacrosse side. The HK Scottish Pipers netball team currently tops their league.

The club has seen a number of ex Scotland age group internationals play for the club already and are always on the lookout for the latest Scottish talent to come into town.

Ex Scotland internationals Gavin Hastings and Graeme Morrison (who was born in HK) have been ambassadors for the club since its inception and work to support the club back in Scotland.

The club also runs a community section in conjunction with Edinburgh Napier University, which looks to develop rugby within the local Chinese population as well as working with disadvantaged and disabled children through a range of programmes.

The club would like to encourage all Scots to get behind the Club. Whether they have an allegiance with another club or not, they’d like to see everyone with Scottish heritage to show their support. Come along to ‘The Rock’ at Shek Kip Mei Sports Ground to watch a home game and you will not be disappointed with your Saturday night’s entertainment.
Membership Survey

Our recent Membership Survey attracted responses from about 10% of the Society’s Hong Kong-based Life and Ordinary members.

Overall, the survey found that satisfaction levels are high. A number of useful suggestions were made for a variety of events, which will be duly considered by the Committee. Usefully, some sponsorship leads emerged so these are being actively pursued.

If you missed the opportunity to participate in the survey and would like to make some suggestions do feel free to contact your Committee. To those of you who participated in the survey, many thanks.

In Memorium

Each year on Remembrance Sunday it is customary for the Chieftain to lay a wreath at the Cenotaph in Central’s Statue Square in memory of the fallen of two world wars. This year’s ceremony took place on 10th November 2013.

Gonfalon Renewal and Renovation

Let’s get the terminology correct first. A gonfalon (from the Italian gonfalone) are the clan banners that we see hanging at our major events. They have survived theft and old age. A few have now given up the ghost and are in need of replacement. It is also tradition that once a chieftain completes a term at the head of the society a gonfalon is made in his or her honour. Well, we are well behind in achieving this. The committee are now therefore fabricating new gonfalons for recent chieftains and replacing ‘deceased gonfalons’. Look out for the new gonfalons at the next St. Andrew’s Ball or Burns Night that you attend.

The Hong Kong St. Andrew’s Society: Forthcoming Events and Culture

Events

Race Night - Wednesday, 27th November 2013

This year’s Race Night is taking place on the Wednesday, 27th November at Happy Valley. Feedback from last year showed that everyone preferred the usual box we have had in the past, with the balcony, so this year we have booked well in advance to ensure we get our usual box back (Box No. D505). Please show your support and come join us on the night. Please see attached the booking form.

St. Andrew’s Ball - Saturday, 30th November 2013

The ball will again take place at the Hong Kong Football Club. Application Forms can be downloaded from the Society’s web site. Four dance practices will take place prior to the event. Again, these will be held at the Hong Kong Football Club.

Burns Supper - Friday, 24th January 2014

Conrad Hotel - Tickets to be released within December 2013.

Culture

Film

A resurgence of Scottish Film seems to have occurred albeit that Sion Connery’s ‘Scottish film industry’ seems to have been a long time coming. In spite of this three great films have been released to excellent reviews over the last few months. Sunshine on Leith is a charming musical with a backcloth of Proclaimers music. George MacKay and Kevin Guthrie are Davy and Ally, a couple of soldiers back from a tour of Afghanistan, set on returning to civilian life for good and thrilled to be once again walking the streets of their glorious hometown, Edinburgh.

Filth (from the Novel by Irvin Walsh) is a police drama with a seriously dark and dysfunctional George MacKay in the lead and a strong supporting performance by Kate Dickie.

Also featuring rising star George MacKay is the third film Peril on the Sea. In this affecting and atmospheric fable he plays Aaron, the sole survivor of a mysterious fishing accident in which several souls were lost, including his long-idolised older brother.

The three films provide well acclaimed entertainment of totally separate genres.
Scottish Photography

Through the Lens of John Thomson: Hong Kong and Coastal China (1868-1872)
23rd November 2013 – 16th February 2014
Special Exhibitions Gallery, Maritime Museum, Star Ferry, Central

This is the first exhibition devoted to the images of China taken by the Scottish photographer John Thomson (1837 – 1921). Born in Edinburgh two years before the invention of the daguerreotype and the birth of photography, Thomson first travelled to Asia in 1862, where he set up a professional photographic studio. Fascinated by local cultures, Thomson returned in 1868 and settled in Hong Kong. Over the next four years he made extensive trips to Guangdong, Fujian, Beijing, China’s north-east and down the great river Yangzi. This exhibition is drawn from his time in these regions.

Asterix

On the lighter side of life Asterix is back and back with the Scots (or the Picts to be correct). This is the first Asterix after a gap of 8 years with the important fact that it is set in Scotland.

Get Involved!!

The Society is not just its committee members participation in its events is vital. If you can assist in organizing or promoting event please get in touch with the society. Sponsorship is also encouraged. Nothing comes for nothing these days. Please also encourage fellow Scots who are not members to join.

This newsletter was written by Alan Macdonald and Alan Dalglish and produced by The Hong Kong St. Andrew’s Society. Graphics by Ho Fong. Additional Material Provided by those credited. http://www.standrewshk.org
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