

英國國防部

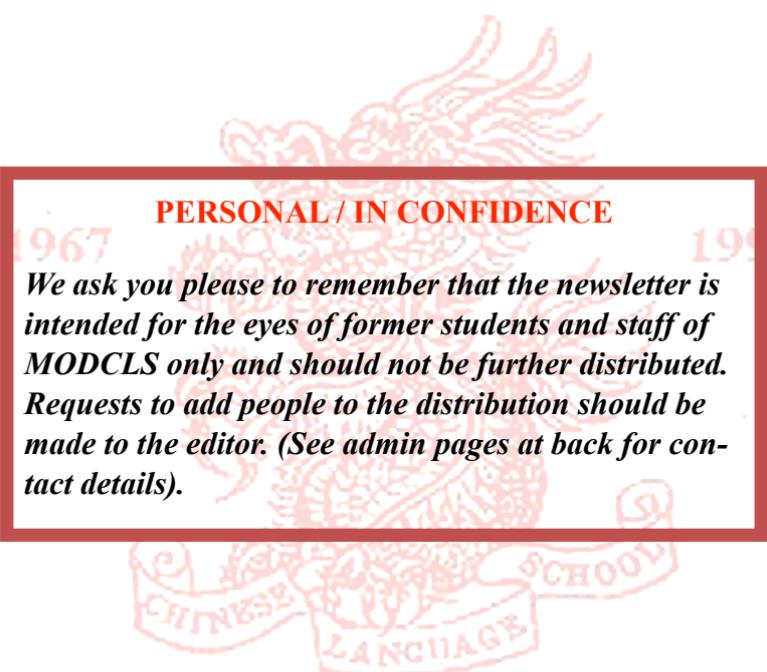
中國語文學院



香港

國際通訊

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PERSONAL / IN CONFIDENCE

We ask you please to remember that the newsletter is intended for the eyes of former students and staff of MODCLS only and should not be further distributed. Requests to add people to the distribution should be made to the editor. (See admin pages at back for contact details).

From Kim Winfield

This newsletter is essentially a vehicle for us all to keep in touch. It is not a political rag. But Hong Kong was once our home (briefly for most but permanently for some) and it is hard to avoid mention of the controversial political situation there.

John Shannon is one for whom Hong Kong became his permanent home. His view of developments there, while strongly expressed, is as valid as anyone else's. Your unworthy editors feel it is not for them to repress the topic or to censor anyone's views.

While it would be disingenuous to ignore the political situation completely, we urge you all to remember that the newsletter is mainly a conduit for old comrades to maintain contact and reminisce over the wonderful opportunity we were given to come to understand something about what is undoubtedly a great country, a great civilization and culture, and a great language (Cantonese ;))

Take care and keep safe.

Best regards,

Kim

Neal **ANDERSON** wrote to inform us that he would retire from government service at the

end of July. We have encouraged Neal (and all of you!) to tell us more about his (your) career and future plans.



Richard **BOOKER** solved the mystery of who's who in the photograph provided by Willie LUI in the previous newsletter. It is reproduced here, appropriately captioned. Richard adds:

Thanks for the latest newsletter. I can put a name to all the gaps in the photograph on page 9. I can't remember it being taken, but it was obviously before the move to the new building in 1985 / 1986.

The secretary was Jackie Tyrell (Terrell?). Her husband, Peter, worked for Civ Sec.

The US Liaison Office was Lt Col Bob Howell, a really nice chap to whom life was very un-

kind. I once went with him on a visit to Shan-tou to assess its suitability for a school visit. We went up by bus—a long journey in those days—and returned by overnight ferry, in the honeymoon suite. I last saw him in Washington in 1993. He died in the mid-1990s.

The technician was Sonny Chan, another chap to whom nothing was too much trouble, Like Cpl. Lui. He worked on producing computer-generated lists of vocabulary that had been



From left: Maj. Booker, Commandant | Cpl. Lui, Clerk | Jackie Tyrell (Terrell?), School Secretary | Mrs. Chen, Mandarin Teacher | Lt. Col. Bob Howell, USA Representative/student | Sonny Chan, School Technician | Sgt. Phil Sked, Chief Clerk | Capt. M Roberts, Chief Instructor

introduced, using an Apricot computer. There was an article about this in *Army Training News*, of which I think I still have a copy hidden away somewhere. He went to Canada - Edmonton, I think - in the late 1980s. He and I used to have an annual competition, in which he recited a passage in Mandarin and I did the

same in Cantonese. He always won, as his Mandarin was marginally less bad than my Cantonese.

The clerk was Sgt Phil Sked, who left in about 1985. By coincidence, I'd previously known him when we both worked at HQ 3 Armoured Division in Soest, BAOR.



Bill **GUEST** (C6) sends his best wishes and writes:

The newsletter as usual brings back many good memories of old friends and places, some of them really intriguing, Cyril Thomas's for one. While I knew vaguely of his missionary work, the details are absolutely fascinating.

Good to hear of my classmate David Ellis too, with whom I have remained in desultory touch down the years. I didn't know that he and Miki had moved to their North Carolina fastness. But I suppose in his line of work it doesn't really matter where they live. When I first met him in Singapore in 1967 I had no idea of his hidden depths!

Finally, very good to see Rod Whitticase again, whose shade does not lessen. What a nice man.

After leaving CLS I was lucky to have had two further postings in Hong Kong during the 80s and early 90s, and I went back for the hand-over to see fair play. I always intended to make one final visit, but somehow never did. Too late now. It is sad to see the place in such dire straits.

I am feeling a bit guilty for not responding to Brian's request for updates. But precious little ever seems to happen in Peckham. Apart from Covid of course, which still adds a soupçon of potential hazard to an otherwise unchanging daily routine. Despite having been double-jabbed, because I have long been immunosuppressed as a result of a kidney transplant in 2009 I have no antibodies and therefore re-

main vulnerable, as a result of which I must avoid public transport and indoor gatherings. That still leaves pub gardens though, so not all is lost!

But Catherine and I are otherwise in good nick. Catherine retired from SOAS in the early 2000s.

Our tiny garden has been a godsend, especially during lockdown, and daughter Janet and family live in East Dulwich, a fifteen minute walk away, so we see quite a bit of them.

I retired from the FCO in 1995 and after a couple of years dabbling in the solar industry I began volunteering for a local charity, Link Age Southwark, which supports older and more isolated people; and still do, although now I "befriend" by telephone. It has been very worthwhile and also unexpectedly fun.

Accompanied by years of ferrying grandson Albert (now 17) to and from school! A Levels next year...

Bill

PS. I still try to keep in touch with China. A couple of recent books I have enjoyed are:

The Great Decoupling, by Nigel Inkster

Hidden Hand, by Hamilton and Ohlberg (pb). This one is particularly alarming!

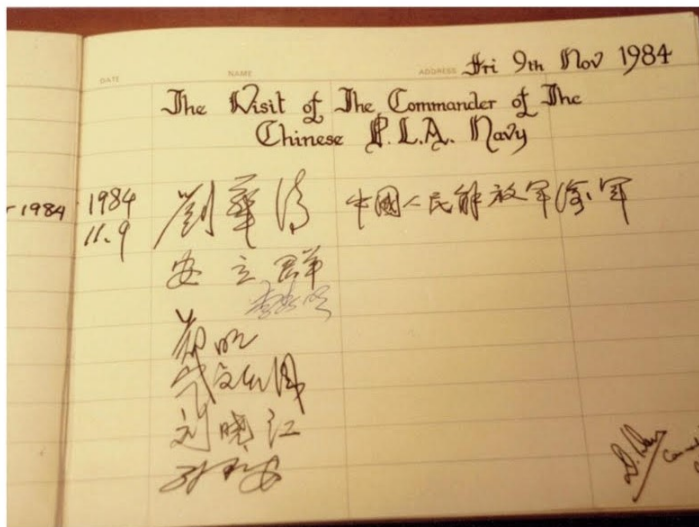
Shaun **LEWIS** says it all began in a submarine...

I recently came across this exhibit in the Royal Navy Submarine Museum's archives. It is an extract from the visitors' book of the nuclear-powered submarine, HMS Valiant.

I was then serving in the submarine when the head of the PLA(N) and his delegation visited. Their escort officers included Mel Petrie as the interpreter and Mike Farr, formerly the BNA Beijing. I was required to brief the delegation on submarine logistics and answer their questions on such matters as submarine pay and submariners' perks. The visit inspired me to wish to learn Chinese.

Two months later, I was ashore on a submarine staff and, coincidentally, serving alongside Mike Farr. It was he who told me about the interpreter course and guided me through the application process. Within two years, I was at CLS, a course that changed my life for the better. Another two years later Mike Farr was back in Beijing and I was out there assisting him and interpreting for British exhibitors at a defence exhibition. Mike became the godfather to my daughter and a dear friend as well as my mentor. His passing several years ago was a great loss.

Shaun is now an author of naval fiction. His books are available on Amazon. His website is <https://www.shaulewis-theauthor.com/>



Alan **ROBERTSON** (N3 & C8) sends this poignant remembrance of **WANG** Guowei aka James Kwok Wei Wong:

There must be many who enjoyed the teaching of Mr Wang [王国威] during the years he spent at CLS.

He joined when our 5-strong class N3 was beginning our second year, remaining there until CLS closed in 1992, one of the faithful four who rejoiced in calling themselves The Gang of Four. I have not yet forgotten his conversation classes on prepared topics and being led through the editorials in 明报 and the turgid text of 人民日报。

Born in Beijing in 1925, before joining CLS (accompanied by his wife) he spent three years in India, where he taught members of its army, and worked on the Chinese of a compendious



Mr. Wang & his good friend, the late Mrs Zhong, another memorable teacher. She on one occasion had stayed in my London flat, visited there by several of her former students.

volume of Bilingual Selections

[英汉对照] for *Reader's Digest Far East* and also edited the magazine devoured by fans of Shaw Films. Through the latter, he was on familiar terms with several performers.

Having a little unfinished business in Hong Kong in mid-1985, my mother jumped at the idea of going there with me. Thanks to Mr Wang, a highlight of her trip, we were invited to a splendid evening meal at the Morrison Hill home of a former film actress, her tidy teenage sons acting as waiters. Also at the vast round table were Mrs Zhong and at least two other CLS teachers whose names escape me.

After CLS closed, he spent several years in business in Shanghai before settling in Los Angeles. During that time he made many contributions to the Newsletter when Mick Roberts was editor, keeping touch with me by letter, enjoying a visit to London, staying in my then flat, travelling to Guernsey to visit Mick Roberts, and subsequently accompanying me by rail to my native Fife to be shown over St Andrews & Highland Perthshire.

Only an injury to Susan his partner kept him from the 2007 Reunion. Having looked after her in later ill-health, he was greatly affected by her death. As the years passed in LA, I became aware of his declining health of which he told me in email, mostly in Chinese. When his emails suddenly ceased in 2019, with his telephone unanswered and with no means of contacting his only child, a daughter, it was not until March 2020 that a Registrar in LA went out of his way to make enquiries, letting me know that that he was then still alive but in fragile health.

Beyond that, I know no more, forced to conclude that he has departed this life. I treasure a signed copy of his 2014 book 印度那三年 some parts of which have appeared in Newsletters.



John **SHANNON** (C2) sends "An Alternative View of HK":

I first came to Hong Kong in 1969 as an army student on MODCLS Course C2 (February 1969-September 1971) and, apart from two years posted to the UK as DAAG HQ SE District between 1975 and 1977, I have remained here ever since. I was posted to fill various language appointments in Hong Kong, including a 5-year attachment to the Royal Hong Kong Police Force, until I retired from the army in 1983 and joined the colonial Hong Kong Government's Administrative Service as an Administrative Officer. I retired as a colonial civil servant in 1997, as Deputy Political Advisor (Security) to the last Governor of Hong Kong, Chris Patten, on the change of sovereignty. I chose to stay on in Hong Kong after 1997, where I remain to date.

Hong Kong has certainly changed since 1969, 1975, 1983 and 1997. But change is inevitable, whether for the better or worse and one must learn to live with change and adapt, as I did, just as Britons adapted to Roman rule, Norman-French rule and so on over the years. The only alternative if one can no longer bear to live in a place is to leave that place if one can. Hong Kong, for me, is still a good place in

which to live. I don't regret choosing to remain here, which I consider to be my home, having lived here for about fifty years.

The situation in Hong Kong today dates back, perhaps, to the early 2010s, when an anti-China sentiment started to manifest itself amongst some of the people here. Then, in 2014, student anti-government protests broke out, which were taken over by a pre-planned civil disobedience campaign (the Occupy Movement/Umbrella Movement). These mostly peaceful protests by a minority of people in Hong Kong failed in their aim and life returned to normal after about three months, as a result of firm police and government action, with almost 1,000 persons being arrested and taken to court, with the subsequent imprisonment of some activists and the imposition of fines on others, and the general public tiring of the minor inconveniences to their lives.

But in 2019, further anti-government and then anti-China protests broke out, with students and other, mostly young, people galvanised by the 2014 protests taking part, with some seeking the independence of Hong Kong. The 2019

protests started peacefully but developed into civil unrest, with rioting, arson, violence, criminal damage and other crimes taking place. As a result of stepped-up police action, including an appropriate use of force when necessary, many arrests, the imposition of the National Security Law by the National People's Congress Standing Committee to supplement the Basic Law and Hong Kong's other laws, many dating back to colonial days, a crackdown by the HKSAR Government on illegal and disruptive behaviour, a reform of the Legislative Council, which had become largely non-functional, due to constant filibustering and rowdy behaviour by its pan-democratic members and, of course, the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on Hong Kong, the situation was brought under control by the end of 2020. Persons arrested under the National Security Law and other Hong Kong laws are being dealt with by our independent judiciary.

Life then returned to normal (apart from continuing Covid-19 restrictions), with the Rule of Law preserved, law and order restored and peace returning to the streets. However, sadly, Hong Kong has become divided into those who support the government and the police (the "blue" camp), and those who oppose the government and the police and are mostly anti-China (the "yellow" camp). It didn't have to be like this, but the escalating, radical, senseless words and deeds of the protestors, activists, law-breakers and some law-makers too made it inevitable that the HKSAR government and the police would eventually have to crack down and the National People's Congress step in.

Although I don't get out much these days, due to my age, health and Covid-19, almost everyone I know, expatriate and local Hong Kong Chinese, plans to remain in Hong Kong. As do I.



The Lisbon Maru Memorial

by Brian Finch



Regular readers of the newsletter will by now be familiar with the story of the sinking of the Lisbon Maru. However most members of the general public are quite unaware of this atrocity. Over the past couple of years a small team formed the Lisbon Maru Memorial Steering Committee to raise funds and have a memorial built and installed at the National Memorial Arboretum in Staffordshire. We share with the families the wish for the unnecessary suffering of these men to be more widely known.

By appealing to relatives of the prisoners of war who had been on board the ship, both victims and survivors, and to the various service associations concerned we managed to raise over £40,000 to bring the project to a successful conclusion.

The memorial was installed in the Far East section of the Arboretum and can be clearly seen when approaching the area along the main road leading from the visitor centre. It is striking sited just behind Captain Sir Tom Moore Way



The central feature of the sinking ship is copied from a sketch drawn by a US naval officer, Lieut W C Johnson. He was an accomplished artist who drew many pictures of US naval ships and made this sketch in Kobe House POW camp in 1943, from descriptions provided by survivors. One copy of the sketch was presented to The Middlesex Regiment. This was hidden in a bamboo cane until the end of the war by Capt Christopher Man (who in later years as Maj Gen Man became Colonel of the Regiment) and is now in the National Army Museum. Another copy was presented to The Royal Scots and is now in their museum in Edinburgh Castle.



The Memorial was unveiled on 3 October this year by Vice Admiral John McAnally, CB, LVO, Vice Patron of The Royal Naval Association, on behalf of Admiral of The Fleet The Lord Boyce, KG, GCB, OBE, DL, former Chief of the Defence Staff, who was unable to attend on health grounds.



This was followed by a dedication service which drew a large crowd of over 650 people, mainly relatives. Senior officers from each of the service associations involved attended and laid wreaths. There were three chaplains conducting the service, two of whom were Honorary Chaplains to The Queen. The number of two star officers was impressive. The Band of the Princess of Wales's Royal Regiment provided the music, as well as buglers from the Royal Marines Royal Band and two Scottish pipers. The Household Division provided some guardsmen in scarlet uniforms to act as ushers to help the proceedings go smoothly.



Many of those attending commented on how moving they found the service and thought the memorial itself was stunning; a fitting tribute to the men who died in 1942.



Chinese from Zhoushan, representing the community whose fishermen have so courageously rescued hundreds of POWs, from Hong Kong representing The Lisbon Maru Association of Hong Kong, and from Beijing, had hoped to be there, but unfortunately COVID restrictions made travel impossible. Wreaths were, however, laid on their behalf by four Middlesex Regiment Officers, including Brian Finch.



Family members and friends were invited to lay wreaths at the end of the service and were keen to do so, leaving a powerful impression



A full length video of the service can be seen at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vz2RG3s3uz0&t=1135s>

More photographs, taken by Paul Armstrong are here: <https://www.pa-photo.co.uk/Events/Lisbon-Marul/>

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Please let us know if you have an e-mail address for someone who should be on this list, but isn't. Alternatively, please ask them to contact us. For any changes to this list, please notify Brian Finch at: bfinch1941@gmail.com

To send contributions and editorial enquiries please email Kim Winfield at kim.winfield@btinternet.com.

If you receive a paper version of the Newsletter please let Brian know if you change your postal address.

Brian Finch continues to provide the invaluable electronic distribution service for this newsletter. Please remember to let him know (bfinch1941@gmail.com) if you change your e-mail address.





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*In fond memory of Mick Roberts, the Newsletter's
founder, former MODCLS Chief Instructor and
Commandant, colleague, and friend*

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