

# WUSA NEWS

The newsletter of the Warwick University Students Association ( Hong Kong )



## Message from the Chairman

Dear Warwick friends,

Time does fly. WUSA has now launched into the fifth year. With the effort of the Executive Committee under the leadership of the previous chairpersons, Connie Chan and Geoffrey Mo, the number of members has increased to about 210. However, the members' participation in various functions is not very encouraging, especially the last AGM Dinner. Perhaps it is due to the financial turmoil that has harassed the SAR; yet I believe a stronger link among Warwick friends may help to ease hardship in low tide. As the chairman of this year, I earnestly need your support to build up a stronger alumni in which we can share greater fellowship spirit. Dinner talks, a relaxing weekend trip to China, visits and outings have been scheduled. I hope to see you all there.

Despite its short history, Warwick University has been developing successfully at a rapid pace. The Times 1998 Good University Guide rated Warwick's teaching quality second only to the Cambridge, and Warwick research fourth in the UK. Furthermore, the Sociology Department was regarded the best in the country with the Business School, History and Computer Science Department all ranked in second place. Being Warwick graduates, we should feel proud of its prestige. Thus miss not any chances which keep you in touch with the pulse of the University as well as in contact with old friends. Lastly, I wish you all a better tomorrow.

Virginia Pak

## 1999-2000 Executive Committee



**Front row (left):** Pam Wood (International Officer), Peter Pang (Vice-Chairman), Virginia Pak (Chairman), Geoffrey Mo (Vice-Chairman), Johnny Li (Vice-Chairman)

**Back row (left):** Raymond Shum (Newsletter Editorial Board), John Ng (Functions Coordinator), Nancy Chui (Secretary), Eileen Tsang (University Liaison Officer), Yvonne Leung (Membership Administrator), Eastman Cheong (Newsletter Editorial Board), Dennis Tse (Functions Co-ordinator), Anna Cheung (Treasurer), Linda Yiu (Newsletter Editorial Board)

**Not in photo :** Ann Lee, Becky Mak, Lawrence Leung, Clarence Chung, Estella Tsang, Moseley Kwan (all are Functions Coordinators)

## Meeting With the Vice-Chancellor

We had pleasure to meet the Vice-Chancellor of the University of Warwick, Sir Brian Follett, on April 18 when he came to Hong Kong for the three-day Vice-Chancellors and Presidents Forum on "Global Tertiary Education Development". Accompanied by Pam Wood, Warwick's International Officer, Sir Follett illustrated to us the latest developments and future plans of the University. We expressed our concerns of an official Chinese name of the University and a home page of WUSAHK, which we hope to attach to the web site of the University.



# activity highlights

## 1998



### June 6 DinnerTalk- Personal Tax

More than 30 participants came to the dinner and received an enlightening speech from fellow Warwicker Johnny Li, who is a certified accountant & specialist in personal tax.



### Nov 1 New graduates gathering

Representatives of the Executive Committee met up with new Warwick graduates in a gathering at the Hong Kong Arts Centre, organized by Pamela Wood.



### Nov 22 Hiking to Sai Kung

On a sunny morning, about 20 hiking enthusiasts tracked along a scenic route in Sai Kung which offers many captivating views of the sea and the islets in the North-East.

### Jan 16 1999 AGM / Annual Dinner

Our AGM / Annual Dinner was held successfully at the Hong Kong Jockey Club with more than 40 participants. It opened with speeches by the Vice-chairman, Peter Pang (also chairman of the Dinner), Pamela Wood, Liaison Officer of the University, and Virginia Pak, our new Chairman, who also introduced the new Committee to the participants. Then the delicious buffet dinner started during which participants got acquainted with one other. After the game session & the lucky draw, everyone has brought home some prizes, and surely many fond memories of the evening.





# Short Tale of Two Cities

David Morley

Director of the Warwick Writing Programme and Writer in Residence,  
University of Warwick

I had read that the view of the Hong Kong skyline seen from The Star Ferry was like looking into the future shaped by the cityscapes of Ridley Scott's "Blade Runner". I had also read that to live and die well in mainland China, you must ensure that you eat in Guangzhou.

From these tassels of information could a richer tapestry be made, but only through keeping your senses open as China hit them with everything you never quite understood until you returned from it. I ate richly in Guangzhou and I thought-up poems on The Star Ferry. Over a space of a fortnight, I met and lectured about two thousand people in eighteen different spaces. I reached a point where I thought I'd lost my voice. The experience would have been worth the cost.

That experience began when Pam Wood, Warwick's International Officer, invited me to 'ambassador the arts' for Warwick. To talk about what I know, or think I know: psychology, poetry, film, fiction, how to run an idealistic University Centre as though it was a business or bank.

My wife Siobhan (also of Warwick) came too, and lectured on Shakespeare. Good timing - "Shakespeare in Love" had just hit Hong Kong and was about to swipe all the Oscars.

A schedule emerged, then that schedule metamorphosed into a something more like a rock tour. It is always worth bearing in mind (or so I tell my publishers) that poets as a species need daily reassurance. About everything. And so Pam assured me, 'It may seem that none of this will work, but it will. Things do in China'. She was right, of course, and Pam is now down in my books as the most reassuring person in world education.

What was striking about the schedule was its inclusiveness and sheer drive. One morning I might be talking to professors at The Chinese University about the impact of science on the arts (I'm a zoologist by training). The afternoon, however, would be spent

working with forty fifteen-year old schoolgirls in the Diocesan Girls School exploring poetry and the delights of the English language.

And how many different schools there are. I visited International Schools, English Schools Foundation schools, Schools schools. I brandished poetry and hypnosis techniques inside the superb British Council Building (trying very hard not to be impressed by the wealth and taste about me). I sat in the most perfect parlour of King George V School talking with students on their own, and working on their writing.

Then the hard work paid off by the end of the first week - the tour had "snow-balled" according to one academic. I looked up from the podium at City University and saw dozens of familiar faces; media folk and academics, people from previous workshops and talks who had caught back up with me. I talked my head off, showed them a clip from one of my poetry films, and lost my voice that very same evening. Seafood and the sunshine over Repulse Bay revived everything. I even started writing some new work. It was time to stop showing off.

When the Guangdong train muscles itself out from Kowloon and leaves the pig-trains sweating in the heat; when every passenger has settled into an animated conversation with a mobile phone; when the various muddied rivers are crossed, and the skyscrapers start looking brittle rather than sturdy and stylish as supermodels on stilts; when the paddy fields lie down next to the belching foundries, and the train blares its horn to haul the playing children off the high-speed track, well, you are in mainland China or you are in Doncaster.

But the security systems tell you where you are. They might even tell you who you are. The gold and red mottoes will give you a false-hero's welcome to another experience, not that exuberant experience of Hong Kong, but maybe something even more subtle, even more fine. Like those ivory balls carved into eleven moving globes, each independent in their motion, and yet still one sphere.

Welcome to Guangzhou, and the true meaning of the word 'traffic'. Where cars hurtle or, when they can't do that, hurdle. Often simultaneously, and with impressive survival rates. My student drivers are in an engaged battle with the red taxis. They drop and swerve as though flying some combat aircraft. We even keep up a good conversation as my wife and I pretend to be English (she's Welsh) and admire the city.

We meet Dr Mao, young, successful and very, very clever. We meet his team of The Guangdong Institute of Foreign Languages and, almost instantly (one of those rare moments of epiphany) become friends with all of them. And then establish an even deeper friendship with a young poet, Chao, as he walked with my wife and I through the jungles and mountains around the campus (the Moon River spilling as if accidentally through it). I swear I am going to find a publisher for Chao in Britain.

By now, we are taut as wire for the coming lectures. Practice makes perfect, but over-practice lends itself to slickness. Twenty minutes before my lecture (scheduled to last two and a half hours...) I drop my script in the bin and decide to talk from the top of my head. Night draws in completely, leaving the mosquitoes with less-guarded targets. For two hours, the lecture becomes a conversation with some blood in it, some dialogue and exchange. It becomes healthy, and the questions are alert and emotive. We go off singing with Chao next morning.

In Hong Kong, we lived with change and pace, and heard the cicadas counting their coins each night. In Guangzhou, we witnessed a pace of thought and need for change which was both tremendous and strangely humbling. What it proved to me is that educators and researchers worldwide might talk to each other electronically and through their publications: that's fine. But nothing can ever be more valuable than to meet in person, shake hands, share tea. And, most importantly, share ideas. Please can we come back sometime, please?

# Mandatory Provident Fund



John Ng



*The Mandatory Provident Fund (MPF) concept was introduced by the Hong Kong Government in 1995. The Provident Fund Schemes*

*Legislation (Amendment) Bill was passed by the Provisional Legislative Council on 25 of February, 1998. The Hong Kong Legislative Government recently announced that the MPF scheme would be effective as from 1 December, 2000.*

## Key features of the scheme

- \* The MPF will be governed by Trust and based on the defined contribution system.
- \* The trustee will need to be approved by the MPF Authority.
- \* With the exception of domestic workers, civil servants, hawkers, expatriates working in Hong Kong for less than 1 year or covered by their home schemes, all employers and employees, including the self-employed persons, are required to join the MPF.\* Both employers and employees are required to

contribute at least 5% of relevant income. Relevant income is defined as salary, leave pay, fees, commissions, bonuses and allowances (excluding housing allowance).

- \*The maximum relevant for contribution purpose is HK\$20,000 per month, or HK\$240,000 per annum. Employees earning less than HK\$4,000 a month can choose not to contribute but the employer must still contribute regardless.

## Three main principles

1. When an employee ceases to be employed by an employer, he is entitled to 100% of the benefits of his and the employer's contributions.
2. When an employee changes employment, the accrued benefits may be retained in the existing scheme, or transferred to the new employer's scheme, or another master trust scheme.
3. The accrued benefit will be preserved in the scheme until the retirement age of 65, except in the following circumstances:-
  - \* Early retirement between 60-64;
  - \* Death or becomes permanently disabled;
  - \* Permanent departure from Hong Kong
  - \* Balance of HK\$5,000 or less in the scheme if no contribution has been made in the past 12 months.

## Legal and tax implications

The employers may use their portion of contribution to the MPF to offset long service payment and severance payment. The maximum amount of contribution deductible for profit tax computation purpose is 15% of payroll per employee. As the current rule stands, benefits from the MPF received in the hands of the employees are tax exempted. **The Occupation Retirement Schemes (ORS)** established on or before 15 October, 1995 may apply for exemption from the MPF if application had been made to the ORS Office before 16 January, 1996. There will be no requirement to provide minimum vesting or contributions for existing members of the exempt ORS even after the MPF effective date. However, the existing members are subject to the portability and preservation rules of "minimum MPF benefits." The minimum MPF benefits are calculated by the following formula:

**1.2 X Average monthly earning over the last 12 months (maximum \$20,000) X No. of years of post-MPF service.**

For ORS established after 15 October, 1995, employers may not be required to set up a new MPF providing their ORS are in compliance with the MPF regulations. Should the employer choose to do so, he may close the ORS and start a new MPF.

## A Note from the Editorial Board

We welcome any suggestions and articles, which you can send to our correspondence address:

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