

THE BURMA CAMPAIGN SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER

Numero 1

August 2002

The Burma Campaign Society

It is now some 4 months since we set up the Burma Campaign Society and I am writing to thank you very much for agreeing to be a member. I must apologise that we have been slow to bank the payment you kindly sent (if you did pay by cheque), because we have had difficulty organizing for the Chairman, Vice-Chairman, Treasurer and Secretary all to get to a bank at the same time, as required by all banks' strict new anti-money laundering rules for groups wishing to open accounts with them. We have just resolved this at our latest Committee meeting on 3rd July but I do hope this delay has not caused you any trouble.

Important news, for those who have Internet access (www.burmacampaignsociety.org) is that our website has now been launched. All thanks must go to Japan 2001 and new member, Alex Fanshawe, for making it possible. It is early days for the site, which can only be as interesting as we, the members, make it. I should be very glad of any comments and suggestions you may have on it. There are two sections where your input would be especially valuable. We have a section, which has a link to the SOAS library and the Burma Campaign Memorial Library books. Depending on what contributions we receive, we plan to introduce, rather than review, a different book each month. For this purpose, I should like to call on you to offer a description, of a few lines, of a book written on our theme 'Britain and Japan's encounter during the Second World War' or a directly related theme, which you have found to be well-written, instructive and constructive. You yourself, may well have written such a book! Please would any veteran members also let us know if they would be prepared to give a talk about their experiences to school or university audiences.

A second section of the site will lead to papers and articles on our theme. Again, please send in any which we could put on the site which can be downloaded by visitors to the site and which do not have copyright restrictions.

With another new member, Luke Razzell, we are also planning a discussion forum for the site for the

exchange of views, so please look out for and make the most of the opportunity.

Our own first actual, rather than virtual, discussion meeting was held on 9th May and led by Dr Keiichiro Komatsu. The subject was 'Was the Pacific War Inevitable?' and Dr Komatsu's fascinating answer to this question can be found under Literature on our site. The paper is drawn from his book 'The Origins of the Pacific War and the Importance of Magic', published by the Japan Library ISBN

Our next meeting will be in the 'autumn term' on Tuesday 15th October, 6pm – 8pm. It will be held at the Nippon Club, 2nd Floor, Samuel House, 6 St Albans Street, (off Lower Regents' Street), London SW1Y 4SQ. If you are able to let me know ahead of time whether you will be joining us, it would be very helpful.

Other dates for your diary are the 17th August Joint Memorial Service at 2pm at the Three Wheels Buddhist Centre, 55 Carbery Avenue, London W3 9AB (Tel: 020 8248 2542), to which not only British and Japanese Burma veterans but all are welcome, and 18th August Evensong service at 4pm at Coventry Cathedral. This service will, as in past years, focus on the theme of reconciliation and those who sacrificed their lives during the Second World War will be remembered in the prayers. Please contact the Chairman, 020 8998 5216, if you would like to join the coach from London which he is organizing, departing at 1.15 pm and returning by 9pm.

A list of members of the Society is attached to this newsletter.

Finally, thanks are also due to another new member of the Society, Dr Lucien Chocron, who has kindly produced this newsletter.

Phillida Purvis
Honorary Secretary

Special message from the Chairman, Masao Hirakubo

“The Burma Campaign Society was established in March 2002 to promote Anglo-Japanese reconciliation through the organising of joint memorials to the war dead and discussion meetings and lectures to enhance mutual understanding. Your Executive Committee will continue to work to ensure that BCS adds value and achieves these ends.”



Philip Malins addressing the gathering at the Tree Planting Ceremony at Yamanashi Gakuin University on 23 May 2002 of an English Oak (*Quercus Robur*) to commemorate the Centenary of the Anglo-Japanese Alliance 1902 and twinned with an English Oak (*Quercus Robur*) planted in the Japanese Section of the Grove of the International Friendship and Reconciliation in the National Memorial Arboretum at Staffordshire (England)



Philip Malins planting the tree with Japanese Children.



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