

THE BURMA CAMPAIGN SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

September 2009

Number 14

CHAIRMAN'S REPORT

Since I became Chairman in May 2008, inheriting the legacy of Masao Hirakubo, OBE (and the British veterans who had created and sustained BCFG and subsequently BCS, I have had the wonderful encouragement from Philip Malins, MBE MC, former Deputy Chairman of BCS and many other veterans and I have gained the confidence to try to carry on their work and honour their achievements. I offer my sincerest thanks to all the veterans who still support BCS, and to those former members of BCFG for all the telephone conversations that we had and for the letters, cards and notes they sent me.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to all the other members of BCS who have given me so much help. In particular, I would like to add to the warm applause unanimously accorded to Pauline Martin at the AGM and my own personal thanks for all that she has done for us as Honorary Treasurer over the years.

Last November our first Committee Meeting was held at the Nippon Club and I am delighted that at this year's Annual General Meeting, the appointments of the new Committee Members that we invited, together with our new Deputy Chairman, David Charles, the son of Stanley Charles CBE, the former General Secretary of BCFG, who died in April 2008, were formally approved.



Hideko Hayasaka (Hon. Secretary)

At that Committee Meeting, I proposed to run a big International Symposium to participate in the official commemoration of the 150th Anniversary of the Anglo-Japanese Amity and Commerce Treaty, since this would fit in with the Burma Campaign Society's past focus on Reconciliation and also raise its profile both with the British public and the Japanese community here. The Japanese Embassy and Chamber of Commerce (Japan-UK150) and the Great Britain Sasakawa Foundation were very generous in their support. Also large Japanese organisations were keen initially to participate initially. During my business visit to Japan earlier this year, I had several opportunities to discuss about the Symposium speakers, however the cost of inviting those speakers is very high.

On my return, I spent a great deal of time in trying to organise the event and attract sponsorship. Unfortunately, given our proposed theme of looking at the relationship of our two countries since 1858 and considering their relationship both before and after World War Two, I found little support from previously supportive organisations and a business community largely concerned with its own immediate interests.

This made it all the more important not to give up our programme of educating the public as regards these important events. I therefore decided to propose to our Committee, at a subsequent meeting, that we should hold a smaller, but nonetheless significant event at St. Ethelburga's. This was agreed, and the resulting programme is summarized under **Coming Events**, and I would be most grateful for your help in spreading the word.

As for the future in general, there is much that needs to be done. It includes the stabilization of the Budget; the search for Sponsors, the question of the Name of the Society and a Review of its Constitution. Other matters are the establishment and maintenance of a General Archive, application for Registration as a Non-profit Organization in this country and the setting up of an office in Japan.

There is also the continuing need to plan an Events Programme and, last but not least, to attract New Members, and in the latter context I am pleased to mention Robert Lyman, author of *Slim, Master of War* and *Generals*, who is Chairman of the Kohima Trust, and U Kyaw Swa Thein, a Burmese BBC Reporter, who recently joined us, and who attended the AGM. It was also a pleasure to have been able to welcome Sumio Kusaka, the Consul General of the Japanese Embassy, Kaoru Magosaki, the First Secretary and Chiyuki Kozuga, Senior Political Researcher as guests after the Meeting.



Dr. Lucien Chocron

Finally, I would like to extend warm thanks to Dr. Lucien Chocron, who has for years worked selflessly to produce the Newsletter and to take photographs on our behalf. I also cannot refrain from expressing my personal delight that my friend, Hideko Hayasaka, who has lived for thirty years in England, is a brilliant communicator in both languages and who has a good business background, has agreed to take over as Honorary Secretary.

Akiko Macdonald

SEVENTH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING.

At the start of the Meeting at which David Charles, as Deputy Chairman Elect, took the Chair, Akiko Macdonald gave an outline of her activities as Chairman since the previous AGM.

She felt strongly that Masao Hirakubo's legacy should not be allowed to sink into the sand and that his work should be carried on for the sake of generations to come. He had left a treasure trove of documents and papers filling some eight or nine boxes and her proposal that Prof. Ryugo Matsui's generous offer to catalogue them during his



Akiko Macdonald

Prof. John White

David Charles

Pauline Martin

seven months' stay in England should be accepted, was received with acclamation.

In the Spring of 2008, she had organized Masao Hirakubo's funeral.

She had been encouraged by large numbers of people to carry on Masao's work, particularly by Japanese who were anxious to know more about what had happened in Burma and elsewhere during the war.

She had therefore set about raising funds for a Symposium at St. Ethelburga's, where she had organized previous events at Masao's request, in order to join in the celebrations of the 150th Anniversary of the Treaty of Amity and Commerce between Great Britain and Japan. So far, £1,800 had been obtained from the Japanese Embassy and £1,500 had been promised by the Sasakawa Foundation.

As regards the future, she felt that the Newsletter should be continued, the Website updated and expanded and that, in addition to a major event each year, there should be Discussion Meetings from time to time.

At the end of her Report, the Chairman was most warmly thanked for all her efforts.

In the lively discussion that followed, Phillida Purvis expressed her concern that in spite of considerable expenditure, there had been no return in terms of events which the membership could attend, and also felt that that funds should be allocated to allow contact to be made with universities with a view to widening and enriching the scope of the Society.

After some discussion a Motion, proposed by her and seconded by Philip Malins,

*'That 50% of the existing funds should be ring-fenced
for annual academic activities related to the "Burma Campaign and to
relevant events in World War Two'*

was put to the Meeting and carried unanimously.

Then, in accordance with the resolution at the 2008 AGM that a final decision as to whether or not the Society should remain in existence should be deferred to the 2009 AGM, John White, seconded by Jimmy Evans, put forward a Motion

*'That the Burma Campaign Society should not be wound up
at this point, but should remain in being'*

which was carried unanimously.

Following a suggestion by the Seconder that, in the new situation, the Society's Mission Statement should be looked into, a small working group, consisting of himself, the Chairman, Deputy Chairman Elect and Phillida Purvis, was appointed to consider the matter.

The Hon. Treasurer, in her Report, stated that Expenditure during the year had exceeded Income by £679.61, but that, including the £1,800 from the Japanese Embassy, there was, at 14th July, the sum of £7,660.70 in the Business Money Manager Account. There was general agreement that the present situation could not be sustained and that it was essential that Income and Expenditure should be kept in balance.

At the end of her Report, Pauline Martin, who had intended to retire a year ago, but had most generously agreed to hold the fort during the crisis in the Society's affairs, was warmly applauded for all that she had done over the years to help to keep the Society going.

When it came to elections to the Committee, the existing Members, consisting of the Chairman, Akiko Macdonald, Keiichi Komatsu, Takeshi Shimizu and John White were re-elected en bloc.

On a Motion put forward by John White and seconded by Philip Malins, David Charles was unanimously elected Deputy Chairman, Hon. Treasurer and, until a suitable candidate came forward, Membership Secretary, and was warmly applauded for his generosity and courage.

Hideko Hayasaka, whom the Chairman had successfully persuaded to take up the post, was then confirmed as Hon. Secretary, much to the relief of the Editor of the Newsletter, who had made the mistake of being present at the Meeting and been gently bludgeoned into taking the Minutes.

Finally, the Nominations of Asst. Prof. Tomoyo, Mr. Akira Ikeda and Mr. Masahi Okuyama as representatives in Japan were formally accepted.

John White

EAST MEETS EAST.

Editor's Note.

Owing to shortage of time, it was not possible for the Guest Speaker, Alice Kemp-Welch, to give her Talk during the AGM itself, but she did so with great vivacity during the refreshment period which followed. This Article about the remarkable initiatives taking place in East Anglia is drawn from the Notes which she has been kind enough to send me.

East Meets East is a prime example of the kind of lively local activity which is being generated to celebrate the 150th Anniversary of the Anglo-Japanese Treaty. Largely funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and CUE East University of East Anglia, it is a year-long series of events involving at least a hundred volunteers across three generations, but with the vast majority, two-thirds of them British and one-third Japanese, being in the fourteen to thirty year-old age groups..

About thirty, mainly young people, with academic help in specialist topics, are researching Japanese connections with East Anglia in trade and business, education, arts and literature, military and diplomatic relations, Japanese cultural activities in the area, and Japanese artefacts in regional museums.

Fifteen young British and Japanese youngsters, trained by the BBC Voices and Archive Centre, have been interviewing people fifty years old or older from both countries, who have long-term connections. There are also Schools Arts Projects and a Film Project. In late September and October (See **Coming Events**) a free Exhibition will be taken to Norwich, Yarmouth and Peterborough, and there will also be free Public Lectures on art, poetry and international cultural relations.

Every kind of connection is being explored, and the grandchildren of veterans are being asked to write about their grandfathers. The emphasis is on young people, escaping the bitter memories still present in the minds of older generations, although, once things have been explained, surprising numbers of older East Anglians have joined up..

It is all about learning what is happening in the present and remembering the past in a different way.

John White

THE UNIVERSITY CONNECTION.

During a lively discussion at the AGM it was pointed out that, as a result of the declining numbers of veteran members with their first-hand accounts, there was a need for a new approach to honour the more academic commitments made by the Society at its foundation.

Its aims would be to promote research and debate on all aspects of Britain and Japan's encounter in the Second World War; to help enquirers to find information on any aspect of that encounter; to further the recording of truthful historical facts and stories about it; and to encourage publication of balanced accounts of it, and especially of the Burma Campaign.

In accordance with the Resolution that 50% of the available funds, excluding, of course, any monies raised specifically for the 150th Anniversary Celebration, should be ring-fenced for annual academic activities, things were already moving forward with the aim of instituting an annual seminar or lecture at a British University with a Japanese Studies Department. As far as possible, this would involve both British and Japanese specialists on the encounter between the two nations.

This proposal is now being considered by the White Rose East Asia Centre, an East Asian Studies collaboration between Sheffield and Leeds Universities, two of the leaders in the field.

Phillida Purvis

MEMORIAL SERVICE AND PRAYERS FOR WORLD PEACE AT THREE WHEELS. Saturday, 15th August 2009.

This year's Ceremony took place on the actual Anniversary of the end of the War and was memorable for the fact that not only Philip Malins, but, despite his recent illness, Maurice Franses, though now in a wheelchair, was able, with the help of his wife Jean, to attend.

It was also rendered notable by the Opening Address from Sumio Kusaka, the Consul General of the Japanese Embassy. Eschewing the usual platitudes, he gave a most interesting and important talk on the need for Japan to come to terms with what had happened in China, and for the final achievement of a true reconciliation between these two great nations.

On this occasion the Buddha Hall was jam-packed by what was probably the largest gathering to have taken place since the inception of the annual event. Among the many distinguished people present were Akiko Macdonald, Chairman of BCS, Christopher Purvis, Chairman of The Japan Society, and Phillida Purvis former, long-time Honorary Secretary of BCS.

A Dharna Talk entitled *To Build an Everlasting Temple* was given by Andrew Webb, who earlier in the year, along with Andie Barritt, had been invited to become a Trustee of the London Shogyoji Trust, and a letter from Satoru Yanagi, who was again, because of illness, unable to come from Japan to represent the Japanese veterans, was read out.



Maurice and Jean Franses

The Religious Ceremony itself was conducted by the Reverend Professor Kemmyo Taira Sato, and his widespread influence among the Buddhist communities in Britain is reflected in the fact that this year three other Denominations took part in the chanting. The Theravadan Tradition was again represented by Venerable Bhikkhu Nyanarato and a companion from Amaravati; the Lotus Sutra School by Venerable Gyoro Nagase from Nihonzan Myohoji, who accentuated the rhythms of his chanting on a fan-shaped Japanese drum, the *uchiwadaiko*, and finally the Rinzai Zen Group led by Venerable Daizan Skinner.

John White

**INTERNATIONAL FRIENDSHIP AND RECONCILIATION SUNDAY
CANTERBURY CATHEDRAL.
Sunday 16th August 2009**

This year's Evensong was extremely well attended by guests of the International Friendship and Reconciliation Trust and the Burma Campaign Society. Japanese Ambassador, Shin Ebihara and Consul General, Sumio Kusaka and Mrs. Kusaka were joined by many other colleagues from the Japanese Embassy, together with their families, ranging down to a few months old. The German Ambassador was represented by the Military Attaché, Colonel Martin Hein.



**Bill Rose and George Housego taking tea
with Ambassador Shin Ebihara and Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Councillor Dr. Harry Cragg**

The Lord Mayor of Canterbury, Councillor Dr. Harry Cragg, and the Lady Mayoress represented the City, and Dr. Pritchard, as a Trustee, and Mr. Todd, as Vice Chairman of the Canterbury Branch, represented the Royal British Legion.

Akiko Macdonald, Chairman of the Burma Campaign Society, was accompanied by various of its members, including Professor Ryugu Matsui from Japan; Philip Malins, Chairman of the International Friendship and Reconciliation Trust; the Reverend Professor Kemmyo Taira Sato of the Three Wheels Buddhist Centre, and Dr. Keith Wren, Vice Chancellor of Chaucer College, the Canterbury branch of a Japanese University.

The service was led by the Vice Dean, Canon Pastor the Reverend Clare Edwards. Readings were made from Lawrence Binyon's *The Fallen* by ninety-seven year-old Far East Prisoner of War, William Rose, and from Laurens van der Post's writings on forgiveness by Dr. Alan Russell, Chairman of the Dresden Trust. The Lessons were read by Philip Malins and by the Vice Dean, and the final Kohima Epitaph was given by Major J. Deninson, a serving Officer.

Attendance at the service was coordinated by Chris Chalk, grandson of former BCS member, the late John Bynoe, for many years the organiser of the event, and Phillida Purvis. Afterwards, over tea, hosted by the Cathedral, there was a lively exchange between the guests, and there was a resolution to publicize this important reconciliation event more widely next year, the 65th anniversary of the end of the Second World War. So please put 15th August in your diary for 2010 for this solemn and moving annual event, which is so important for the aims of the Burma Campaign Society.

Phillida Purvis

WARREN IWATAKE'S WAR.

George Bush Sr. who later became US President made his first parachute jump on Chichi Jima during the Pacific War when his plane was shot down. I saw his rescue and was happy to learn that he was picked up by the submarine Finback. I am also grateful to the captain of the US submarine that sank our troopship, because if we had not lost our artillery and ammunition, we would have gone on from Chichi Jima to Iwo Jima. Our anti-tank platoon, with which we had trained in Hiroshima, was one convoy ahead of us and reached Chichi Jima safely, where we met them. But it was not so lucky. A week later, they were sent on to Iwo Jima, only a hundred and fifty miles away, and were all killed. Such is fate.

I had had dual American and Japanese citizenship and had been told by my high school teacher never to join the Japanese Army or I would not be able to return to Hawaii. However, I was attending university in Tokyo in 1943 when the military government ordered all university students to be drafted into the army. Although they were exempt from military service, the war was being lost and a hundred thousand students were drafted, and many never returned.

I myself did three months basic training in Hiroshima, and life in the Japanese Imperial Army was a nightmare. We recruits were constantly reminded that we were fighting for the Emperor, who was at that time considered to be a God, and the army tried to pound it into our heads that we should be willing to sacrifice our lives for him and for the country. Life was really tough, as we were beaten by our superiors, and when we were lined up at night for roll call and our kit was inspected, our faces would be violently slapped if there was one speck of dust on our boots.. The beatings were routine and since, in my case, my English was better than my Japanese, I was singled

out several times because of my enemy background. Since we were in the artillery, we trained with cannons which were hauled by manpower. However, things improved after basic training, as attention was then focused on the next batch of recruits and we were no longer beaten. After the war some soldiers called their basic training hell.

I took the name of Pilot Warren Vaughn to honour his memory, as I became friends with him until he was executed. Despite being a POW, he managed to smile and tell us jokes. I had been ordered to join a naval radio facility to monitor enemy communications and Warren Vaughn was forced to work with us for a while, and it was he who caught a message from US Army Headquarters announcing that “all organized resistance on Iwo Jima has ended.” One day, a member of our army unit passed by and asked me how the war was going, and when I told him that I knew, because of the monitoring, that Japan was losing, he called me a traitor. The Japanese soldiers did not know that it was being lost, because the High Command in Tokyo kept announcing victory after victory for the Japanese Imperial Army, and during the Battle of Midway, which turned the tide of the war, and in which Japan lost three of its top aircraft carriers, Japan announced that it had won a major victory, sinking several US carriers.

After the war, when the President learned that I had taken Warren Vaughn’s first name, he called me “a true friend of America”, and when, in 2004, I was able to visit Childress. Vaughn’s home town in Texas, with a population of ten thousand, I received a warm welcome and was made an Honorary Citizen.

As to the war, my opinion is that wars may be necessary to protect the democratic way of life and get rid of dictators, but we must remember that war is a matter of kill or be killed. I lost my brother, who was only thirteen when he was killed in his classroom in the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, and as a result of my experience, I am opposed to war.

Warren Iwatake

Editor’s note

The above Article is drawn from two Emails which were sent to Akiko Macdonald.

GALLANTRY IN THE PACIFIC.

British war veteran, Sir Samuel Falle, who was one of four hundred and twenty-two officers and sailors of the British Navy rescued by a Japanese warship during World War II, visited Japan in December 2009 and placed flowers on the grave of the ship’s Commander, Shunsaku Kudo..

On March 1st, 1942, the British destroyer Encounter and the heavy cruiser Exeter were sunk by the Imperial Japanese Navy off the coast of Surabaya, a port in what is now Indonesia, in the north-eastern Java Sea. About four hundred and fifty British officers and sailors were left drifting in the water under the scorching sun..

Next day, when the men had been pushed to their limits due to fatigue, thirst and fear of shark attacks, the Japanese destroyer Ikazuchi found them by chance when patrolling that sector of the ocean. Commander Shunsaku Kudo made the decision to rescue all the officers and sailors, despite being in danger of submarine attacks.

The deck of the Ikazuchi, which had two hundred and twenty crew members, was filled with the four hundred and twenty-two British officers and sailors, who were covered in heavy oil from the water, but the crew members

treated them as friendly forces by washing them and giving them clothing and food.

“I remember to this day that they gave me a green shirt, khakhi trousers and a pair of tennis shoes. Then, we were given hot milk, corn willies and biscuits” said Falle, former Lieutenant in the British Royal Navy and a former Ambassador to Sweden, at a press conference after paying his respects at Kudo’s grave in Saitama prefecture north of Tokyo.

According to the eighty-nine year-old man - who was in a wheelchair but whose mind was keen - Kudo came down to the deck and addressed the sailors in English, saying “You are the honoured guests of the Imperial Japanese Navy. You fought very bravely. We respect the English Navy, but the English government foolishly made war on Japan.”

“He treated us with all the chivalry possible as the commander of a small destroyer and it was a remarkable experience that has lived with me throughout my life. I can still see him standing there and addressing us.” said Falle.

In 2003 he visited Japan to offer flowers at Kudo’s grave, but could not locate the site. Later, Japanese journalist, Ryunosuke Megumi discovered where his grave and his relatives were located, and upon hearing this, Falle decided to visit Japan again. Megumi introduced the story in Japan in 2006 by publishing a book, *Save the Enemies*, describing Kudo’s decision and the rescue.

“I actually expressed my gratitude in person at the grave of Commander Kudo” Falle said of the reunion at Kudo’s gravestone after sixty-six years.

The next day, a memorial ceremony for Kudo and a welcoming ceremony for Falle, hosted by Japan’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ministry of Defence and the Japan-British Society, were held at the Grand Prince Hotel Agasaka in Tokyo.

“I am sure that Sir Samuel Falle’s visit to Japan will help in strengthening ties with Britain and in bringing about reconciliation between former English prisoners of war and Japan,” said Foreign Minister Hirofume Nakasone.

In fact, Kudo’s decision to conduct such a large-scale rescue operation during a battle at sea, where Dutch and US submarines were swarming, is noteworthy. A Japanese carrier had been attacked and sunk by an enemy submarine the day before in that area of the sea.

Some crew members jumped into the sea to save sailors who could not grab or climb a ladder or a rope by themselves. Moreover, the *Ikazuchi* searched for all of the survivors in the surrounding area and went wherever survivors were found.

Falle, who had imagined that the Japanese were cruel and strange, felt as if he was dreaming and even pinched his arm, as he described it in his autobiography, *My Lucky Life*, published in 1996.

Kudo, who never told anyone, including his wife, about the event, passed away at the age of Seventy-seven in 1979. The heart-warming story would have been buried in history but for Falle sharing publicly his extraordinary experience.

Kyosumi Tanigawa, the former navigating officer of the *Ikazuchi*, aged ninety-two, explained the reason Kudo did not talk of the operation even after the war.

“Under the right circumstances, with no enemy airplanes, ships or submarines, we took for granted saving enemies who had lost their combat capabilities and who were dying,” Tanigawa said. “I guess that Kudo might not have thought that he had accomplished a great achievement”.

“Kudo was a well-tempered and silent man of worth, and a quick decision maker,” according to Tanigawa.

Hiroyuki Koshiji

Editor’s Note.

BCS is grateful to Hiroyuki Koshiji and UPI Asia for permission to reprint the greater part of the original Article, which appeared in February of this year.

AFTERMATH.

The war in Burma had lasted three and a half years. The Japanese were in full retreat following defeat in the great battles of Imphal and Kohima and we were preparing to assault them in Malaya. It looked as if a long war still lay ahead, judged by the length of time we had spent in Burma. Suddenly, in the early days of August 1945, what seemed to us to be a wild rumour swept through our Division that the Americans had dropped two bombs on Japan, which had capitulated. At first we thought it was a joke, but the rumour continued.

A little later, I was told to report to Divisional Headquarters, where I learnt that the rumour was true; that the Japanese had surrendered and that our 20th Indian Infantry Division was temporarily to occupy French Indo China, south of 16 degrees north. Our orders were to repatriate our prisoners of war, to concentrate all Japanese surrendered personnel for return to Japan, and to maintain law and order. I was appointed Brigade Supply and Transport Officer, 80th Infantry Brigade, which was to fly into Saigon, with the other two Brigades following by sea.

The suddenness of the end of the war took everyone by surprise. The Indian Divisions, which had fought in Burma, had forthwith to occupy huge areas of South East Asia. Measures taken in preparation for the end of the war included the training of civil affairs units to provide temporary staff to administer the liberated territories.

From Hmaubi, thirty miles north of Rangoon, we flew in one day to Saigon in C46 Dakotas, refuelling on the way in Bangkok, where we were met by immaculately dressed Thai Air Force officers, as though there had never been a war. As we came over Saigon’s Than Son Knut airfield, we saw hundreds of cars and trucks assembled round the perimeter, awaiting our arrival

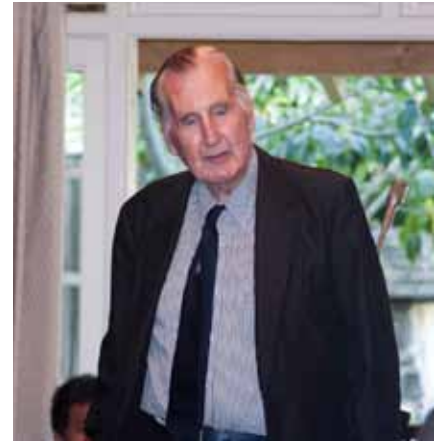
We were driven by the Japanese into the centre of the city, and there were banners out over the road saying “Welcome to the Allied Commission”. However, within a few days, the Annamites, later known as the Viet Minh, who had taken over from the French, realised we were only there pending the latter’s return, and began firing at us.

It was the beginning of the Vietnam War, which was to last for thirty years, and in which some 58,000 Americans, over 100,000 French, and more than 3,000,000 Vietnamese lost their lives.

We had been told that all orders to the Japanese were to use the formula “I order you in the name of the King Emperor”, since it was thought that the word ‘Emperor’ would mean a lot to them. However, I very quickly found myself giving orders to my counterpart, a Japanese Lieutenant Colonel, as I would have to a British or Indian Officer, over cups of green tea, the orders always being efficiently obeyed.

I was responsible for all transport and for providing rations for our own troops, together with some 5,900 Allied prisoners of war and 69,000 Japanese surrendered personnel. I let the Japanese continue temporarily to feed themselves, since, because of bad weather, our supplies by air were not arriving.

The Annamites very quickly surrounded Saigon and other main cities and towns, and I had to take action to secure food supplies for the civilian population, numbering some 700,000 in Saigon, and elsewhere. I was appointed Head of the ad hoc Civil Food Control Organization, including the Service de Ravitaillement et des Prix, involving French and British officers and French civilians, using Japanese trucks, aircraft and shipping, Royal Navy ships, and thousands of Japanese surrendered personnel.



**Philip Malins , MBE MC, former
Deputy Chairman of BCS.**

Fortunately, Cambodia was peaceful at that time and we ran armed convoys from Phnom Pen, the capital down the Mekong River and through the Deperre Canal to Saigon. Each convoy carried live cattle, pigs and poultry, fruit and vegetables, together with live fish swimming around in old, water-filled junks towed by tugs. The whole operation, including loading and unloading, had to be completed within twenty-four hours, and the Annamites attacked the first convoy with fire boats. Within the defended racecourse, we had cows providing emergency supplies of fresh milk, but I had problems when the only mill producing baby foods was burnt down, but we obtained supplies by air from Singapore.

I received news that two million people had died of starvation in Tonkin in the Chinese sector in the north earlier in the year, and that they were again starving and in desperate need of food and supplies. I sent two thousand tons in a tank landing ship and Chinese junks, all the shipping then available. We lost a tank landing craft which had safely landed food supplies under fire for besieged Nha Trang. I also sent food to besieged Hue, the imperial capital, in Japanese aircraft, which were interned by the Chinese and took us days to get released.

On 27th September 1945, only some three hundred of our infantry had arrived because of bad weather, and on the previous night the Annamites had killed some hundred and sixty people. I was given a small force of Gurkhas, together with newly liberated Dutch prisoners of war and twenty-five Japanese soldiers, none of whom I had ever seen before, in order to break out of Saigon and bring in a hundred machine guns, a thousand rifles and ammunition from a Japanese arms dump at Laithieu, twelve miles from Saigon.

As darkness was coming on when we had finished loading and the Annamites were massing to attack us, I decided to stay the night in the defended arms dump and obtained a further fifty Japanese infantry. We broke out at dawn and were immediately heavily attacked, fighting our way through many ambushes with tree trunks across the road. All thirteen vehicles and arms arrived safely in Saigon, but my second in command, Harry Kloproge, five

Gurkhas and six Dutch had been killed and many more wounded. The arms were used to re-arm the French and Saigon did not fall.

The Annamites had been fighting for their independence for some two thousand years, first from the Chinese and then from the French. My sympathies were very much with them. It was a bittersweet experience to go back in 1997, fifty-two years later, to see the many war cemeteries. But the people of Vietnam, smiling and friendly, were now rebuilding their country and speaking American English, not French.

Philip Malins

Editor's Note.

Editors are not supposed, I think, to express their feelings, but I cannot help being sad at seeing the end of one war moving seamlessly into the beginning of the next.

COMING EVENTS.

Wednesday, Sept. 23rd - Sunday, 27th: East Meets West Exhibition, Norwich, The Forum,

Friday, Oct. 2nd - Sunday, 4th, "Great yarmbuth Library and Art Galleries,

Saturday, Oct. 24th - Saturday, 31st, Peterborough Museum and Art Galleries.

(For Further Information, **07954 414 579** or atsuko@eastmeetseast.org.uk)

Saturday, 17th September, 11.00 AM - 4.30 PM :- at St.Ethelburga's Church,

COMMEMORATION OF THE 150TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ANGLO-JAPANESE TREATY OF FRIENDSHIP, and of RECONCILIATION AFTER WORLD WAR II.

There will be refreshments and the event will include, amongst other things, a **Joint Memorial Service**, an **Historical Documentary**, a **Documentary on BCS**, and an **Anglo-Japanese Mini-Forum** with **Guest Speakers** on *Human Development, Restoration and Social Development since World War II*, followed by **Joint Entertainment**.

Editor's Note.

For comments, criticisms, and questions concerning the Newsletter, please contact John Wliite, 25 Cadogan Place, London, SW1X 9SA, Tel/Fax 020 7235 4034. Material for inclusion in the March 2010 Issue should reach me at the above address by 28th February the latest.

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