



# Tung Feng

VOL. 48 No.40

2<sup>nd</sup> May 2001

## What Happened Last Week

This meeting got under way when President Taj gave a special welcome to the guest speaker, and his personal friend, Arthur Gomez.

Rtn Malcolm then facilitated the introductions of the visitors and other guest:

PE Jerry Liu (Mid-Levels)

Rtn John Ng (Mid-Levels)

PP Tom Matthews (Honolulu)

Eric Van Der Hoeven (Rtn Andrew)

President Taj gave members a reminder of the joint-club function to be held at Ocean Park on 5 May. Details were in the bulletin.

PE Stephen made two announcements:

- The District Assembly will be held on 12 May at the Mirimar Hotel and incoming Board members were urged to attend.
- Our sister Club, Makati North in the Philippines will hold its inauguration meeting on 8 July and any members wishing to attend were invited to inform him.

Acting Sergeant Rudy announced that 18 members were in attendance and \$960 had been collected.

President Taj then conducted an exchange of banners, this time with the visitor from the Rotary Club of Honolulu, PP Tom Matthews.

PDG Y.K. had the honour of introducing the guest speaker, Mr Arthur Gomez, MBE. Arthur was born in Hong Kong in 1917, educated at St Joseph's and La Salle Colleges. He joined the Hong Kong Volunteers Defence Corps, No 5 Machine Gun Company, and took part in the defence of Hong Kong during the Japanese invasion.

He became a prisoner of war with the surrender of Hong Kong and was incarcerated in Shamshuipo POW Camp for the duration of the occupation until the arrival of the British Fleet in August 1945.

Arthur retired from the Mobil Oil Company as Shipping and Purchasing Manager in 1977 and became Secretary of the American Chamber of Commerce in Hong Kong.



THE ROTARY CLUB OF HONG KONG ISLAND EAST

香港東區扶輪社週報

Club 4350

District 3450

Chartered on 6 April, 1954 by Charter President  
PDG (Uncle) John Yuen

He is also a Past President of the Hong Kong Toastmasters Club, the Kowloon Chess Club, and a Senator and Past Secretary of the Jaycees in Hong Kong.

In 1975, he was awarded the MBE and honoured by Portugal in 1998 with the Order of Comendador.

Arthur is currently Chairman of the Hong Kong Prisoners of War Association, Hon Secretary of the Portuguese Community Education & Welfare Foundation, Inc., and a Director of the RHKR The Volunteers Association.

The talk given by Arthur was a vivid, detailed account of events leading up to, and during the Japanese occupation of Hong Kong. Before the war, Hong Kong was prospering with the influx of hard-working Chinese people from the surrounding provinces. Business flourished and the shipbuilding industry was in its heyday. However, the Japanese occupation of China was already very extensive, and by 1938, they were at Mirs Bay and encroaching on Canton. Wyndham Street was full of Japanese shops, and because some were obviously gathering information for the Japanese military, it was known as "Spy Alley."

An invasion was anticipated, even though slow in coming, and people were becoming very complacent. However, many of the women and children were evacuated.

Events took a turn for the worse by December 5-6, 1939 and Arthur's Volunteer Defence Corps were issued with live ammunition and weapons. On December 8, they heard for the first time the explosion of bombs and other weapons. The Volunteers were allocated to pill boxes around Hong Kong. By the next day, the Japanese had advanced to the Shing Mun Redoubt, and offered a truce which was rejected. Fighting subsequently continued until Christmas Day when Hong Kong surrendered at 3:15 p.m.

Arthur described their march to the POW Camp at Shamshuipo, during which the Japanese tried to humiliate them as much as possible. This camp was looted and in a mess and all facilities had to be built from scratch. As prisoners, they had to work from 7:00 a.m. at Kai Tak levelling a hill, unloading ships and digging tunnels. All this was done on meagre rations of one pound of rice and 7 ounces of rotting vegetables ("green horror") per person per day. The unlucky prisoners were sent to Japan to work in the coal mines.

Amid all of this misery, there were also some happy times, mostly created by the inmates. They were very fond and proud of their interdenominational church which they built. They often put on concerts for entertainment; Red Cross parcels were a grand highlight when they arrived (although only 3½ parcels per prisoner were received during the whole incarceration), and American air raids were a source of great enjoyment and satisfaction.

On 15 August, 1945, rumours began circulating of a Japanese surrender. This was confirmed when it was printed on 17 August in the Hong Kong News. The next day, the Japanese handed over to the British and the prisoners attended a parade during which the Union Jack was rehoisted over Hong Kong while the British anthem was played.

Arthur had strayed overtime by about 15 minutes but members remained seated to hear with interest the human touches that were related about this whole conflict and imprisonment. Rtn Andrew thanked Arthur for his very graphic and moving account of his personal impressions and experiences.

To close the meeting, President Taj proposed a toast to the Rotary Club of Honolulu.



Pres. Taj & PDG Uncle Peter taking good care of Speaker, Arthur Gomez, MBE.



PP Tom Mathews (Honolulu) accepts a HKIE banner from Pres. Taj.



Rtn. Henry sharing some fun with PE Jerry Liu & Hon.Sec. John Ng (Mid-Levels).



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Rtn. Alex enjoying the company of visitor PP Tom Matthews (Honolulu).



PP Rob helping guest Eric van der Hoeven feel welcome.



Visitors and guest to the meeting, 25 April, 2001.

# Rotary Information

## *RI president's Web site features Online Learning Center*

The RI Technology Task Force has created an Online Learning Center, aimed at equipping Rotarians with the resources and tools required to help spread the world about the service and fellowship opportunities offered by Rotary to current and prospective members.

"We're entered the 21<sup>st</sup> Century, and it is only fitting that all Rotarians seize this great opportunity to learn about their association and to inform potential Rotarians using the content the task forces have developed for our Online Learning Center," said President Devlyn. "This is the first time in Rotary's history that we are putting such powerful resources in the hands of Rotarians worldwide via the Internet!"

The center features general Rotary information, courses on The Rotary Foundation, the 2000-01 RI Task Forces, and specific courses for Rotarians with leadership responsibilities at the club, district, and international level. Designed to be viewed on a computer and/or downloaded for presentation at club meetings and other Rotary events, all courses are currently available only in English. However, several volunteer Rotarians are in the progress of translating these courses into the official languages of Rotary and these multilingual versions will be posted on the Web as soon as they are ready. Visitors to President Devlyn's Web site can access the Online Learning Center via a link on the homepage.

## *Rotarians fight river blindness in Tanzania*

Rotarians are helping in the campaign to control river blindness, a disease that has long been a scourge in parts of the developing world. Also known as onchocerciasis, it is caused by the river-breeding common black fly, whose bite transfers infected larvae to humans, triggering severe itching and eventually leading to eye inflammation and blindness. Of the 120 million people at risk, 96 percent are in Africa, in areas such as Tanzania's Kilosa district in the Morogoro region.

In 1998, a campaign to control the disease in Tanzania came to the attention of the Rotary Club of Bonds Meadow (Westminster), Maryland, USA after seeing a presentation about a disease-control program being carried out by Interchurch Medical Assistance (IMA) in collaboration with the Tanzania government, the World Bank, and the World Health Organization. Via the program, annual doses of the de-worming drug Mectizan, produced and donated by Merck & Co., and administered throughout various districts in Tanzania.

The club quickly adopted the program as its international service project, focusing on Kilosa district, and raised enough funds to support distribution of the drug to 2,500 people there. By 1999, enthusiasm for the project had spread throughout District 7620, USA. When RI President Frank Devlyn established the Avoidable Blindness Task Force in 2000, it helped generate even more support.

# LAUGH FOR THE WEEK

A high school English teacher reminds her class of tomorrow's final exam: "Now class, I won't tolerate any excuses for you not being here tomorrow. I might excuse you in the event of a nuclear attack, a serious personal injury or illness, or a death in your immediate family - but that's all, no other excuses whatsoever!"

A smart-ass guy in the back of the room raises his hand and asks, "What would you say if tomorrow I say I am suffering from complete and utter sexual exhaustion?"

The entire class does its best to stifle their laughter and snickering.

When silence is restored, the teacher smiles sympathetically at the student, shakes her head, and sweetly says, "Well, I guess I'd have to advise you to write the exam with your other hand."

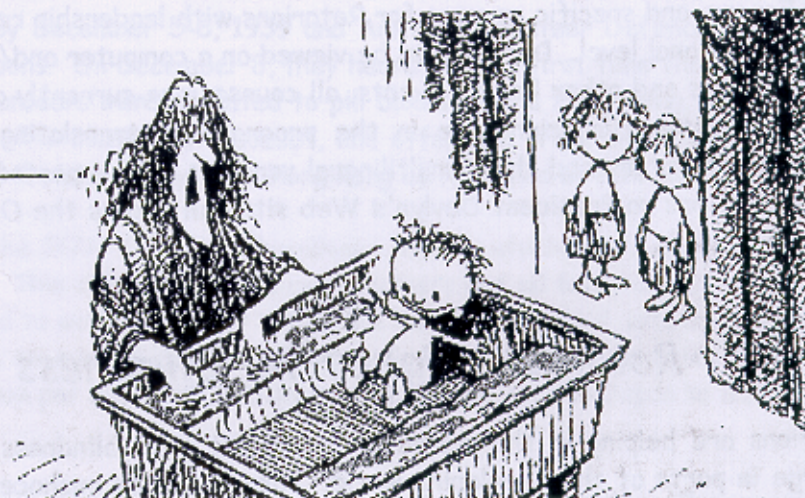
An exasperated mother, whose son was always getting into mischief, finally asked him, "How do you expect to get into Heaven?"

The boy thought it over and replied, "Well, I'll just run in and out and in and out and keep slamming the door until St. Peter says, 'For Heaven's sake, Jimmy, come in or stay out!'"

Q: What's the difference between a girlfriend and a wife?

A: About 45 lbs.

MOSES !!!  
Cut it  
out  
and take  
your bath!



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ROTARY CLUB OF HK ISLAND EAST MEETS EVERY WEDNESDAY, 12: 30 p.m. AT  
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