

編語

許舒博士(James William Hayes) 於2023年7月6日在澳洲悉尼離世，享年92歲。許舒博士1956年前來香港，在香港政府擔任32年公職，1988年退休。他幾乎一半的時間是在新界服務。許舒博士不單熱心推動保存新界傳統和文物，亦積極研究新界歷史，曾出版多本著作。許舒過去搜集大量香港地方文獻，除慷慨讓學者作學術研究和出版外，更悉數贈予香港及國外大學圖書館。

本通訊今期特設紀念專號，以誌許舒博士對本港研究的重大貢獻。

Memories of James Hayes

Patrick H. Hase

I first met James in late 1972. I was a newly appointed Administrative Officer. James was then Assistant Director (Hong Kong) of the Urban Services Department, and I was posted as Administrative Assistant to help him out. We quickly became friends, and that friendship lasted without any break for over fifty years. James was my first friend in Hong Kong, and my dearest.

James quickly discovered that I was a historian, and he urged me to join the Royal Asiatic Society, Hong Kong Branch, and to interest myself in the history of Hong Kong: I joined the Society within six months, and within a few months more James had manoeuvred me onto the Council of the Society. Joining the Society was, by far, the most momentous decision of my time in Hong Kong. The Society has taught me almost everything I know about the New Territories and its history. I will always be indebted to James for getting me interested in New Territories history.

I vividly remember the first afternoon trip I made with the Society – it must have been in the Au-

tumn of 1973. James was leading a walk through the marshes which used to stand where Tin Shui Wai is today. This was before any development of any kind there. I remember the narrow, winding Lau Fau Shan Road, just barely one lane wide, with tall reeds on either side cutting out the sky, and the narrow path on a bund over the marshes, and a smell that you felt you could cut with a knife. I fell in love with the New Territories that day, and regret, to some degree, that these pre-development areas have now gone, for good or bad. Other early visits with James that I remember fondly are my first visit to the Tai Po Kau Forestry Reserve, and my first visit to Stanley. He was a superb organiser of visits to places of interest in the New Territories. He would always do a “dummy-run” beforehand to ensure he had the timings right, and that nothing new had occurred since his last visit that he was not aware of. He urged me to do the same when, in due course, I started to organise trips myself. It was excellent advice, and I tried to live up to it.

On one occasion James invited me to go with