

**Report on Hong Tuck Kun's Talk on Early Postal Stationery Cards used in the Straits Settlements, Part I, at the Singapore Philatelic Museum, 12 August 2006, courtesy of Alan Au Yong, Editor, SSC Newsletter**

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It was well worth the wait to hear our dear Tuck Kun, an expert in all things 'Singapore' to give yet another dimension to his pet topic at 2pm on Sunday 12 August 2006 at the Singapore Philatelic Museum. This time around, it is early postal stationery cards and picture postcards used in the Straits Settlements. Not only did the speaker expertly present his treasures but also lucidly revealed untold aspects of his Swiss Club cards to the audience of 16. If you have missed the talk, you would have missed a lot!

***Close-up of Swiss 'Club Haus', reproduced from***

***Prof. Cheah Jin Seng's Singapore 500 Early Postcards, 2006***

The speaker, in his usual systematic style of delivery, gave a brief history of how official postcards with a stamp imprint began in Austria in 1869 and how this evolved some ten years later with UPU approving the use of privately used post cards in the Straits Settlements. He shared the process of printing some of these early cards with printed scenes at the back. The examples shown were all individually printed on post office issued postal stationery postcards with 3 cents postage imprint. They were produced individually as the post office only sold them as such unlike in commercial printing where up to say 20 postcards would be printed at a time before the individual cards were separated. Most of these cards ended up being posted as they already had the postage pre-paid through the stamp imprint they bore. According to the speaker, he has so far come across 3 mint cards.

Next, the audience was enchanted by the 'private' scenes of early picture post cards. At this juncture, the speaker made references to Professor Cheah Jin Seng's recent publication, 'Singapore: 500 Early Postcards', citing 14 September 1895, as the earliest picture postcard used from Singapore. He then went on to reveal what he has in his collection which included many gems including the G.R. Lambert's series featuring scenes of Bugis boat builders at a kampong dated 10 September 1898, a Malay lady dated 29 November 1898, Cavenagh Bridge dated 8 June 1899, just to name a few. A similar card with undivided back is also featured in Professor Cheah's book (see below). It is an artist's impression of the famous Hotel de L'Europe sited on a plot with the beautiful flame-of-the-forest painted in orange hues amidst the lush greens. The mood was nostalgic. Do you know there was a stable for horses nearby as well?

The highlight of Hong's talk is the 2<sup>nd</sup> series of picture postcards showing 4 different views of the Swiss Club. The speaker explained these cards were derived from photographic films and due to the delicate process of transferring images from film, creases on some of these cards are to be expected. The Swiss Club cards had a rich history and perhaps, this could be the topic of an article by our dear speaker in a subsequent issue of our Club's newsletter. For the moment, I will just leave you to discover the charm of collecting 'Schweizer Schutzen Verein' and yes, you may even find the 'ghost' of long forgotten characters such as a CA Rauch! I assure you it is not Roach but Rauch. You can also discover the long and winding road leading to the Swiss Club but be warned, as the speaker cautioned, you may not find the exact location if you take the modern path!

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### **Greetings Card from Royal Singapore Flying Club, 1936-37**     *Alan Au Yong*

Look at the bi-plane on this private greetings card. Do you know where it was flying over? My guess is it was flying over the Kallang Airport open in 1937. The card was probably prepared by the Royal Singapore Flying Club to commemorate the opening of the Kallang Airport.

The history of the Club began with a flight on a DH 60 Cirrus Moth Seaplane piloted by Flt. Lt. Carnegie of the Royal Air Force in April 1928. The clubhouse, then located at Tanjong Pagar near Keppel Harbour, had about 112 members who shared one common passion - flying. There were only two Moth seaplanes when it started training flying instructors. A year later, the Club celebrated the "Round the Island" Race won by a Mr Field, averaging a speed of 89 mph. That is about the average speed on our expressways today. In 1931, the Club received the Royal Charter from King George V and the flying club was officially named Royal Singapore Flying Club until the Singapore government requested it to be renamed Singapore Flying Club in 1966. The Club expanded to include 9 aircraft in 1938, and among them were a DH87 Hornet Moth, a Miles Register and a Miles Withney Staight. Can you identify the bi-plane on this very lovely 'Segara Udara' greetings card with an eagle insignia? For more information on these pre-WWII planes, check out on the Club's history at: <http://www.singaporeflyingclub.com/history.htm>

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*Show & Tell session*



*Hong TK with S'pore PROOF*

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*Gems from Hong TK collection*