From the Editor  Mimi Gardner ‘52

Happy Chinese New Year! The snake is a symbol of power, fortune, strength and good luck. May we all be so blessed!

In this issue we include much about the lives of Sherry Sherertz Messersmith (SAS ’48) and Molly Lu Isham (SAS ’49) who died in recent months. How they will be missed!

There are other stories of past adventures and future ones to be considered, some SASA history, another interesting book review by Carl Scovel (SAS ’49), reminders about how to add two exceptional SAS-related books to your library, some “notes from you” – more updates are always welcome - and a note about a new book on China by one of the Scovels (younger brother Tom).

Quite some time ago, Paul VanderMeer (SAS ’50) made some excellent suggestions in an email for recruiting articles for SASA News as I was coming on as the new editor. I quote: “Please allow me to say that Carol and I feel that the SAS group is exceptional in that so many have expertise in separate fields. For this reason, it might be worthwhile to invite op-ed pieces from all members who have knowledge and opinions of any topic of national or international importance, with priority given to those dealing with China…”

Let me make this suggestion into a formal request. Look through your files or think about your interests and what you know about and send me something – mimihollister1@verizon.net. 7 Glover Square, Marblehead MA 01945 – medical issues or energy or business/trade or retirement investments or, or… - whatever keeps you cooking along. Thanks.
In Memoriam

Margarita Park Sherertz “Sherry” Messersmith (SAS ’48)
November 25, 1930 to November 22, 2012
Information from Don Messersmith’s Eulogy

The Years Before Don
Sherry was born on Thanksgiving Day and died on Thanksgiving Day. She was the youngest of 5, born in Soochow, China to a family of Methodist missionaries going back many generations. The Sherertz home was on the campus of Soochow University where her father taught and they also had a home on Kuling (Lushan) Mountain for their summer retreat. As many of us know, Kuling is a mountain resort area (see articles on Lushan Institute) developed in the early 1900’s for business people and missionaries. Chiang-Kai Shek also had a house there and as a girl Sherry once sang in a chorus for Generalissimo Chiang and Madame Chiang. Summers on Kuling were full of hiking and swimming and all sorts of fun activities.

In 1937 the Japanese bombed the airport in Soochow and the family had to flee on short notice. They left at night by canal boats camouflaged with rice straw. Sherry was held on her Grandmother’s lap. When Japanese planes flew over they would hide near the canal bank. Their trip took them finally to Moganshan, another mountain retreat, where they spent the winter of 1937-38 with other western refugees and Chinese who they were protecting. Sherry has written about all this in her father’s biography.

Like many of us, Sherry’s schooling was interrupted by wars and the Communist revolution in China. When in the States, she was in Durham, North Carolina and Atlantic City, New Jersey and then back to China, where she graduated from SAS in 1948. She began her college studies at Soochow University, was evacuated once again, this time on an American troop ship with 1500 Marines (what fun for a college freshman!), and then enrolled in Duke University in the nursing program. She did a lot in college: sang in the Chapel and Nurses Choirs; served on the Honor Council and Student Council; was Editor of the Nursing School publication aptly called the Hypodermic; and was the State Student Nurse Association Treasurer. She graduated in 1954.

Then she moved to Washington, DC and began working for the Visiting Nurse Association in an area that included 14th St and Columbia Rd. NW (for you DC buffs). She lived in a rooming house for working young women (remember when there were such things?) called White Hall which later became the first Washington Youth Hostel.

Don Comes into Her Life – a Love Story

“I arrived in Washington in the Fall of 1953 courtesy of the U.S. Army and was stationed at Walter Reed Army Medical Center. I met Sherry for the first time on May 29, 1955. I was leading a weekend bicycle trip for the Potomac Area Council of American Youth Hostels ..My friend George Orr had brought Sherry and he introduced us. She joined the organization sometime after that and I saw her on other trips. By January of 1956 I was seeing more of her on trips and began to ask her and her roommate, Nina to come to the house I was sharing with 3 other men in Arlington for dinner.

(Continued on next page)
I learned of her interesting family background in China and how very sweet she was. (She sometimes claimed I married her because of her interesting China background – not true!) She did have this odd drinking problem – water of course. I soon learned it was an inherited family trait and was later to see it in three of our girls as well as scattered Sherertz relatives. Up to the end I kept her water bottle and special drinking cup full and close to her.” (Both Carl and Jim Scovel (SAS ‘49 and ’48) remembered with a chuckle this attribute of Sherry’s.)

Their courtship activities were pretty athletic – bicycle trips with Youth Hostel groups and hiking along the C & O Canal. When Don got out of the army in 1955 he went bicycling through Europe, Egypt and Israel. Sherry waited for him, he proposed in late 1956 and they were married in June, 1957 and they began their life together in a dorm room at the University of Maryland, along with a large praying mantis that became their first pet.

Life in Montgomery County

While Don completed his work on a PhD in various places, they finally settled in Silver Spring, Maryland when Don was offered a faculty position in the Department of Entomology at the University. For 41 years they lived there, raising their three daughters, staying very active in church and community and neighborhood affairs. Sherry loved the details of parenting – the birthday parties and school events, camping on vacations – and later the joys of grandparenting.

“As the girls gradually went off to college, we became closer than even before. Then came engagement parties and marriages with Sherry always playing an active role in the planning. My role was being very proud of my girls. It wasn’t long before grandchildren began to appear with Sherry always there to help with the new babies. She became a most loved Grandma.”

In 1975, after lots of travel on their own, they formed a company, World Nature Tours, Inc., taking folks all over the world. “Sherry was the Office Manager, Secretary, Finance Officer, Bookkeeper and problem solver…in most of my endeavors she was my partner always working with me and never complaining about anything. A friend told me he thought Don and Sherry was one word.”

As their nest became empty they began welcoming foreign students into their home – Chinese and Sri Lankan – who remain part of their family.

(Continued on next page)
Her Last Days

They moved to Riderwood, a retirement community, at Sherry’s insistence. She became active with all sorts of interest groups, including Shakespeare and Tai Chi. In October she decided to have a foot operation which was followed by sever back pain, terrible stomach problems for a while and loss of appetite. All this “gradually wore her down and she seemed to know the end was near. She went over things with me, showed me her organized filing system, taught me how to boil an egg, do the laundry and more. Twice in her pain, she said, ‘I’m dying.’ I told her, ‘No, I need you.’ However, after her foot healed she began to feel better…and a complete physical exam showed she had no health problems…She renewed her driver’s license, ate in the dining room for the first time in five weeks, planned on Thanksgiving, which was her birthday, at Heidi’s and church on Sunday. However, on Thanksgiving she woke suddenly and poked me saying, ‘I have pain very bad,’ and fell to the floor.” She died at the hospital 3 hours later.

“So, with great sadness I end this story of my dear, sweet, intelligent, wonderful wife for 55 years and the best friend I’ve ever had.”

From Reva Feldman Jolovitz (SAS ’49), who attended the memorial service: “Sherry came alive! What a funny thought, but you know, it is not without credibility. Those marvelous testimonies – and she just came through…”

From Ginni Gorman: Jeff (SAS ’53) and I went to a wonderful memorial service for Sherry yesterday…What we learned was that Sherry was her usual amazingly active self until 5 weeks before her death…All of her daughters spoke and there were messages from all her grandchildren. The remembrances also included two from Chinese students they had taken into their homes. Musical performances by a son-in-law and a granddaughter. The service was at a church they had gone to for the nearly 50 years they lived in Silver Spring, where Sherry sang in the choir…”

From Janice Flanley Nelsen (SAS ’49): I fondly remember the trip to China that she organized in 1990 for about 14 of us. It was memorable and she did a great job. Hans Conrad broke both his wrists the first few days of the trip, Reva Jolovitz had a sprained foot, my late husband, Clarke Braly, ended up needing a wheel chair and Sarah Workman was in a wheel chair and needed assistance. That was before there were any handicap accessible places, but somehow we all managed with a lot of assistance from Teddy Heinrichsohn and Myles Walburn. Sherry referred to us as the “walking wounded,” and we all proceeded thru the trip with great shared good spirits. Sherry will be missed by us all.

From the Editor: Sherry was a lovely presence at all the reunions. She enjoyed in her quiet and attentive way the reminiscences and conversations and programs at these events. We all came to know and enjoy Don, also, and especially appreciated his wonderful talk about birding at the Split Rock reunion. I hope he will stay connected with the SASA family still. What a great loss in his life and for all of us! Since I have been editor of SASA News, Sherry has emailed me with kind words after every issue.
In Memoriam (continued)

Molly Huang Isham (SAS’49) 1 November, 1931 to 15 December, 2012
From obituary sent by her son, Jimmy Hsia

After graduation Molly was admitted to Mills College in Oakland, CA, but she could not go due to the civil war in China. She attended St. John’s University in Shanghai, earning a B.A. in English Literature and Translation. She worked in a series of language-related positions in China, including English teacher in Anhui, English radio announcer at Radio Beijing, transcriber and translator of English documentaries, and high school teacher in Beijing. In 1982 she came to the U.S. and enrolled at Mills College 33 years later. She earned the Master of Arts in English Literature and in Linguistics and Teaching English as a Second Language (ESL) in 1984. She then worked as a translator and interpreter for the U.S. Federal Courts in San Francisco and San Jose, the Municipal and Superior Courts of many counties in the Bay Area, and was one of the official interpreters for the Immigration Court for many years. She also taught ESL and English Writing and Translation. She lectured on Chinese culture and the lives of artists in China as well as her personal experiences in China at National Association of Foreign Students Affairs, at the Bechtel International Center at Stanford University, and at the Monterey County Office of Education, among others, until she retired in 2005. She later moved to Champaign, IL to be close to her son’s family. She is survived by her two sons, Ted Y. Xia and K. Jimmy Hsia, from her first husband Qingyun Deng, four grandchildren, and the two sons of her late husband of 25 years, Howard Isham. Molly very much enjoyed coming to SASA Reunions and we are grateful to the family for including SASA as a recipient of memorial gifts. If you wish to remember her in this way, please send a check to Charlie Way, 222 Highland Drive, Bellingham WA 98225 made out to SASA and with Molly Isham Memorial on the memo line.

Ted Stannard SAS’48 wrote to Molly’s son, Jimmy Hsia, “I met Molly at SAS in spring 1946, when it was still officially the “Shanghai American Private School” and I was the first American boy back from the states after WWII. We were only two months apart in age. We have met several times over the years at SAS reunions, both in the US (including Bellingham 2005) and once in Shanghai at the 1998 semi-centennial reunion of the post WWII SASites. Molly loved SAS and was a regular at our reunions whenever she could make it, with many stories to tell that would make a fascinating memoir.

“We pass through poignant years as we lose more and more of those who shared the excitement and memories of our youth. Molly was a person of great heart and a giving nature, and brightened the world of those around her. She will be remembered warmly for that.”
BORDEAUX BARGE IN OCTOBER

We have almost filled the 24 spaces. There is room for one more couple and one more single. Did you forget to sign up? Please call or email Mimi Gardner ASAP: 781-910-2376 or mimi-hollister1@verizon.net for more details. The dates are October 13 to 19, 2013. If we can fill the boat, the cost will be about $4000 per person, including air fare. We would LOVE to have you join us!

City of Tranquil Light
by Bo Caldwell, Henry Holt and Company, New York, 2010
Reviewed by Carl Scovel (SAS ’49)

I have avoided reading novels about and books by missionaries, assuming, right or wrong, that they were either hagiography or demonology, neither of which interested me. Therefore, when a friend sent me a copy of City of Tranquil Light, I thought I’d leave it at a local book sale. But I did begin to read the book and by the second chapter I was hooked. I felt as if I was reading, not fiction, but fact. It rang true with what I knew of missionaries and their life in China.

The book tells the story of a young man and woman, members of a small German sect in the Midwest, who volunteer to be missionaries in China. They meet and marry in China, and there from 1906 to 1933 they live a harrowing and sacrificial life amidst the chaos of a country ruled by warlords and guerilla bands. The narrative is interspersed with letters and journal entries written by both of them.

So far this may sound like the predictably pro-missionary novel. What struck me about it was the credibility of these people and their story. The accounts of suffering, violence, compassion and the depiction of village and country life in southwest Shantung, not far from where our family lived, were real to this reader. The young couple are devout, dedicated, naive, idealistic, practical, confused, often doubting themselves and sometimes their faith. They are totally human. I kept thinking, “I knew these people.”

(Continued on next page)
An American scholar who grew up in China had the same reaction. He wrote to a friend who sent him a copy, “This is the best book I have ever read. The reason I say that is that it fits me like a glove. There are times I had to shake myself and say, ‘No, this is not my biography.’ “

But how did the author, Bo Caldwell, know this world so well? She grew up and lived most or all of her life in California. Raised a nominal Episcopalian she became Catholic.

As she explains in a postscript, her mother’s parents were missionaries, Mennonite and later Nazarene, in China and Taiwan from 1906 to 1966. Ms. Caldwell heard their stories from her mother and read her grandfather’s memoirs and listened to recorded interviews with him. She read the memoirs and accounts of several other China missionaries from that era, and seems so to have absorbed the reality of missionary life and China’s culture that she almost convinced this reader that this was not a novel.

One of her gifts is to tell a compelling story and at the same time stay invisible. Clearly, she respects the faith of this couple and values their work, but she does not advocate their beliefs in the book or puff their achievements.

Perhaps someday a desperate doctoral candidate will write a dissertation on novels about and biographies of missionaries, including both the hagiography and demonology. Such a text would include Somerset Maugham’s bitter short story, Rain, about a lustimg missionary, as well as John Hersey’s The Mission, Barbara Kingsolver’s The Poisonwood Bible and Pearl Buck’s angry account of her missionary father, Avenging Angel. But to balance the picture the author would have to include City of Tranquil Light. That, as I see it, would give the reader a more realistic picture of who many missionaries really were and what they achieved within the limits of their faith and time. And they themselves might be content with that.
RECENT DUES UPDATE

Charlie Way reports that dues for 2013 and some way beyond came in from Leta May Tucker Hodge, Dorothy Paul, Lenora Regier, Millidge Walker, and Charlie himself. A gentle reminder – a new year needs new dues from many of us. Here’s how to do it:

$15 to Charles Way, 222 Highland Drive, Bellingham WA 98225 and write SASA Dues on the memo line.

CHINA ALIVE - LUSHAN INSTITUTE

Information from Steve Harnsberger

In several recent issues of SASA News we have included information about the Lushan Institute programs held at Kuling Mountain, the old summer vacation spot of so many missionaries and other famous people. The Institute emerged from the work of KAS (Kuling American School) alums and their offspring, most notably, the Harnsbergers and Whiteners. They have now made a strong connection with the current SAS. So here’s the latest:

Meeting with Cindy Easton and others at SAS, Steve has put together a student tour to be included in the offerings of the SAS outdoor education program called “China Alive”. We expect 30-40 SAS students to be coming to Lushan in May, 2013 for 6 days. In addition they are offering a for-credit summer school program in July “taking place up the thousand steps and 433 curves in the cooling mountains of Jianxi!” This program is added to the Lushan International Language and Culture Institute program, now in its third year, that is run in collaboration with Nanjing University. The latter has been enjoyed by many Old China Hands and is multi-generational. Steve writes, “Thanks for inviting any SAS alumni families. They would get to hang out with current SAS students if they go! Send the grand kids!”

From the Editor:

For us in SASA, there is an overlap of alums with KASA. Some of us went to both schools. So we will continue to update you on these very interesting events that KASA is spearheading. For more information about the Lushan Institute offerings, see www.lushaninstitute.com or email Steve Harnsberger at lushaninstitute@gmail.com. You may recall that Dave Merwin attended the Institute program in 2011 and highly recommended it: “Couldn’t have been better.”
Notes from You

Anne Lockwood Romasco (SAS’51) In November, 2012. “We have had visitors for the past few days who drove up from Tennessee to participate in the (New York) marathon. One was Harriet Refo Locke (SAS’50) who is now 81 and she was going to join the 5K run…They went to sign up on Friday and came back to Brooklyn only to learn that the marathon was canceled (because of Super Storm Sandy). They were good sports and took it in stride and then decided that they wanted to do something for the people most severely affected.

We went to Red Hook, one of the volunteer organizing sites. There we found Occupy Wall Street Volunteers handing out assignments. We loaded the van with water, boots, toilet paper and blankets and headed out to a Rockaway Beach, an area beyond JFK Airport.

There we found things and people in bad shape. Many people’s houses had been flooded so they unloaded their basements onto the sidewalks. Likewise people had abandoned their drenched cars on the streets. After finding the Physicians Without Borders site and unloading our emergency supplies we returned to our Brooklyn neighborhood. It was a good feeling to have done something constructive for those in need. We also felt relieved that we were not in the wake of the storm. Although there are many trees uprooted around my house, at least we did not have to face the current blasts of cold weather without heat or light or flooding.”

Isabel Best (SAS ‘57) “I enjoyed this issue (Fall 2012), with its news of different persons and of Shanghai today…Thank you for including a plug for my new book of Bonhoeffer sermons. I’m glad for so many people to see it. It has the honor of following Bruce Roberts’ fascinating account of his journey. I knew his sister Mary. She taught me to make and dress my own paper dolls to play with when we lived at St. John’s University in Shanghai, though mine were never as elegant as hers. One of my sisters was in her wedding in Taiwan in the 1960’s.”

Betty Barr Wang (SAS ’49) from their Christmas letter: “One day recently on our Metro, I sat next to a four-year-old boy sitting on his mother’s lap. On his smartphone he was watching a video of himself playing Beethoven’s ‘Ode to Joy’ on the violin. Hopefully, he is a symbol of a future modern, multicultural Shanghai…

“In August we returned to Guizhou and visited the western, more rugged, part of that southwestern province of China. Our photo this year of Ten Thousand Peaks exemplifies their popular saying: ‘there are no three flat feet of land.’ Since our return to Shanghai we have been working flat out but the book about Guizhou we had planned to send you for Christmas is not yet finished. We hope to be able to send it in the spring.”

Editor’s note: We were so sad to hear of the passing of Betty and George’s son, MingPu. She wrote, “George and I feel surrounded by the love of friends as we learn to live a different kind of life.”

(Continued on next page)
Cora Lucille (Corlu) Howes Collier (SAS ’44) wrote to Ted Stannard (SAS ’48), “It’s extraordinary to be in touch with people of SAS backgrounds. I don’t remember Dorothy (Stannard Noyes SAS ’44) specifically after all these years, but I am sure we were good friends at SAS. Nancy Allman (SAS ’44?) came across the Pacific with me and my mother in May of 1941, Mother chaperoning Nancy to relatives in San Francisco, I believe. Mother and I went to Albuquerque to await my brother’s arrival. He was on a later ship because of the shortage of space for those leaving Shanghai. My father, who was secretary of the American Chamber of Commerce and secretary of the American Association in Shanghai, had to stay and was caught out there when hostilities erupted. He returned to us on the second trip of the Gripsholm and arrived home in Portland, Oregon on Christmas Eve, 1943.

“Larry Howes (SAS ?) was my brother. He went into journalism, was a reporter for the Portland Journal, now defunct, and was active in the Newspaper Guild. After the war he worked for USIS (United States Information Service) and spent the next decade and a half serving first in France, then Italy and finally became press attaché at the US Embassy in Bonn…”

Ted Stannard (SAS ’48) Ted popped his left knee quadriceps tendon in October and had surgery to fix it. “No actual pain, just total buckling until it was repaired.” He resorted to wearing a sarong, even for outings, while sporting his supporting brace. By now he should be back in trousers and not relying on Femmy to do everything. As we write this, he is likely tooling around in his Prius to visit sister Jean in Fresno and “possibly with coffee stops en-route with assorted SASites and other friends.” Ted is great at keeping up with folks. He and Femmy have regional parties with SAS alums, which we hope will happen in other places around the country. Travel gets harder as we ripen.

Kerry Jacobson, Current SAS Superintendant. A number of us have come to know and truly enjoy both Mona and Kerry Jacobson in their short time (3 years) at SAS. Kerry has been a true visionary and has led the school with great intelligence and sensitivity. We quote from his email: “Mona and I are still saddened to be leaving SAS at such a wonderful time, but also know that our footsteps are guided by forces strong and good…Our December return trip (to China) was detoured from Chicago to an international school in Lima, Peru: Colegio Franklin Delano Roosevelt. This well-known institution has been searching for a new superintendent and had invited Mona and me to ‘come down and take a look’. After days of interviews and tours, I agreed to sign a letter of intent to begin there with the 2013-14 school year. The folks were very welcoming. The city and country show great promise for an interesting chapter in our international experiences. So, we will be saying ‘zaijian for now’ to friends and colleagues in Shanghai after the school term ends this summer. We’ve had a marvelous time in China and much success at SAS. And, we have also continued to observe that there are no degrees of separation between people anymore…” Our very best wishes go with you!
The Year China Changed, Memories of Remarkable Events and Extraordinary People
by Tom Scovel (www.tatepublishing.com)

Tom sent a copy to me, Mimi Gardner, at the suggestion of his sister, Anne Scovel Fitch (SAS ’52). I look forward to reading it. I quote from the back cover: “Before he retired and wrote this book, Tom was a professor of linguistics, most recently at San Francisco State University. His teaching, research, and publications focused on psycholinguistics, Asian languages, and foreign language pedagogy. He lives in Walnut Creek, California where he is a family caregiver and occasionally participates in triathlons.”

EVACUATION FROM KAS TO SAS, FALL, 1937
Excerpted and edited from Sterling Whitener’s story (KAS/SAS, ’37)

When KAS (Kuling American School) started classes at the end of August, 1937…because of many evacuations, suddenly I was the only Senior left and so was in charge of the Student Government, for editing and printing of the student newspaper, the KAS Echo and for all the student affairs. I was traumatized. That fall semester there were probably roughly 70 students.

Most enthusiastically, I was elected the Senior Patrol Leader and Assistant to the Scoutmaster, Mr. Keller, of the small Kuling Troop. He began training me for what the Scouts should do if we were to evacuate.

EVACUATION IS IMMANENT
…The Japanese Army was marching through the countryside heading directly for Lushan, our 4000 foot high mountain…We were to be ready to evacuate. In early December Japanese planes were flying over us and on one occasion dropped several bombs harmlessly. It clearly appeared to be a warning.

Principal Allgood determined that he would send his family with us to head for Hong Kong as we had learned that an International Train had been prepared and was authorized by the Japanese Government to prepare for departure from Wuhan after mid-December. Classes ended. Serious preparations for packing took place. Everything had to be carried down the main trail. We decided to split the 60 folks into three groups to go down to Jiujiang where we would take river boats to Wuhan. Mr. Allgood saved the precious library of Chinese records and books at the famous Botanical Gardens by bringing them to the school and secreting them away until after the war.

Without classes we held daily gatherings of the entire school to discuss behavior and the dangers inherent in a large scale evacuation. The mountain police were to accompany our groups down the trail and across the plains to Jiujiang city on the Yangtze.

(Continued on next page)
ALL-NIGHT FAREWELL PARTY AND DOWN THE MOUNTAIN
We students requested that we have a party on the last night together at KAS. We had a grand all-night party, including faculty. There was dancing and singing and story-telling. Even the kitchen staff participated with cakes and tasty muffins.

The trek down the mountain was tense. My job as Senior Scout Leader was to lead the last group and make sure that each group had three scouts to watch out for the younger children. I remember Jim and Hugh Harnsberger were in charge of the second group. Girl scouts also helped. The scouts were honored later with commendations by faculty and others. At the bottom we were trucked across the 25-mile dusty plain and put up for the night at a hostel near the docks.

The next morning we ate a Chinese breakfast: rice gruel (xi fan) with pickles, hard-boiled eggs and black beans, something we all had learned to love. Getting us on the boat was more difficult as there were hundreds who seemed to have tickets. All of KAS was sent upstairs to the open deck level and carefully counted. The bedrooms went to girls and faculty. Most of the boy scouts were given blankets and told to sleep on the floor of the lounge/dining hall. The ship moved slowly leaving off Chinese folks at their villages along the river. Reaching Hankow the next day, we gathered on the shore and made sure that all bags were with us, thanks to the Lushan Mountain carriers who were with us all the way.

FINALLY UNDERWAY
The Lutheran Home became our hotel. I cannot remember how many days we waited for the International Train...Excitement prevailed when it was finally announced that the train was nearly ready and all the national flags of Europe and the US were tied securely, one on top of each car...There was great confusion as we tried to board the train because of all the large groups going to different stops along the way. KAS had at least three rail cars because the group had swelled with entire families now headed south.

In our case, the Scouts were to place students and families according to mapped instructions in the cars, dispense dining car instructions, secure the flags on the roof, and make sure everyone knew the way to manage Chinese latrines. We departed in the afternoon each with a small bag of treats, an early dinner assignment, and tired and hungry bodies. Dinner included several choices and most of us enjoyed the fried rice softened up with soy sauce. That night we stopped to fuel at Yochow, where the 3 Whitener boys saw our parents but were not allowed off the train. We could only wave and talk through the open windows. From that time on we organized games and some quiet sleeping times for the weary. We had over 1000 miles to go to Hong Kong.

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Somewhere along the way we were stopped in a tunnel for several hours – bomb damage ahead. We were allowed off the train to walk alongside, but not out of the tunnel – a chance to work off a bit of pent-up energy.

Next a bridge that was bombed into a twisted wreck. We were transferred to another train by carrying our baggage down a pathway to a series of sampans, tied together to form an easy pontoon bridge. Our enterprising Harnsberger cousins climbed up to get all the flags, much to the entertainment of the train crew watching these “foreign devils’ and all of us. Then we formed a baggage brigade to unload from the old train and were underway. We were more crowded but moved faster so just two more nights.

In Hong Kong a large group of Anglicans met us and took us in buses to the church where we slept on cots in school rooms, first there and then at a school until the Italian Liner, the Conte Biancamano, arrived to take us to Shanghai. In the mean time we were active tourists, renting bikes and enjoying the beautiful countryside. The liner was very crowded.

We boys were in the very front of the ship. In four days of rough weather, nights were the most difficult because the bow would rise with a big swell and then loudly crash into the next swell.

SAS AT LAST

We finally steamed up the very muddy Whangpo River past the destroyers of many nations as well as Japanese ships. Our landing was handled by experts from SAS and church groups. We were taken by bus directly to the school and placed in dorms which had been reopened for us.

The principal and several staff welcomed nearly 50 students and family members. Cooks, dining staff and others had been rehired. We had stepped into a very fortunate situation.

The next day we were assigned to our classes and traipsed to the book store for our text books.

My time in Shanghai lasted only 6 months as a normal senior with 11 other classmates. Many had already evacuated from Shanghai. Although SAS was operated on a more sophisticated basis than KAS, the basic curriculum was much the same. We fit in easily and adapted well.

On February 12, 1938, my mother wrote to the Mission Board secretary:

“The children have entered school here and are having no difficulty at all that I can see. Donald was here two years ago so that he had quite a number of friends, and Sterling never has any difficulty making friends...Since the Shanghai school is not running a boarding department this year, the parents and refugees have taken over the dorms and we pay room rent and run our own dining room. That makes the parents responsible for the children and in that way we can live here, too. I do not care especially for this kind of life...”

Graduation was a big event! The only senior from Kuling, I was 16, the youngest in my class of 12 and graduated with the 3rd highest honors, a boost to me since I had always considered myself a mediocre student. A few other accomplishments: I starred in the senior play, was Senior Patrol Scout leader, played in the orchestra, sang in the glee club and played chess. The 1938 Columbian said I was noted for “fresh, trombone, curly locks, KAS, and gals.” I had grown out of my shyness.

After graduation, I sailed on the “Empress of Asia” to Vancouver on my way to college. Getting to North Carolina from Shanghai was another epic journey in itself.

Author’s note: “If you are looking for a way to study the history of an era from 1919-2013, you can order In the Shadow of the Pagoda, by Sterling Whitener from www.createspace.com.
SASA Ten Years Ago

Editor’s note: Once again we look back at where we’ve been and take stock – a good thing. This article is almost verbatim from one in the summer, 2003 issue. The Executive Committee at that time was truly happy to hand over the reigns and now we have also had some more moving on. Teddy Heinrichsohn ’49 has stepped down as President. Roy Wildt ’50 turned over the books to Charlie Way ’51. Anne Lockwood Romasco ’51 became Vice-President until 2012 when she became Co-Chair with me and we no longer needed a V.P. David Angus ’50 succeeded Angie Mills as Editor of SASA News for the next 6 years until handing it over to me. Hopefully, in the next ten years there will be a whole new roster of much more recent grads to continue the legacy.

From Summer 2003 Issue of The SASA News

By Angie Mills SAS’42

With great pleasure SASA’s nominating committee announces to the SAS constituency that Teddy Heinrichsohn ’49 has accepted its call to be SASA’s new President and Roy Wildt ’50 has accepted the position of Treasurer.

This smooth transfer of responsibility took place during the Orlando reunion. Allen Wiant ’42, having previously alerted SASA’s executive committee of his desire to step down from the presidency effective January 2004 (as well as the similar wishes of Canute VanderMeer ’46, Vice President of Membership Development, Helen Paty Stamps ’41, Treasurer, and Angie Mills ’42, editor of the SASA News), took advantage of the large reunion attendance to assemble a group of current SASA officers and a mix of classes from ’38-’51 to consider the issue of new leadership.

As a result, a nominating committee was formed and discussions on procedures and possible candidates began. At the reunion’s business meeting a few days later, George Stamps made a motion (unanimously accepted) to “endorse and support the work of the nominating committee and propose that the recommendations of the nominating committee be submitted to SASA’s executive committee and current officers for approval.”

The nominating committee (Ted Heinrichsohn ’49, Angie Mills ’42, Ted Stannard ’48, Anne Lockwood Romasco ’51 and Al Wiant ’42) immediately presented Roy Wildt ’50 as its recommended candidate for treasurer, and since all executive committee members and SASA officers were present at the business meeting, Roy was appointed SASA’s new treasurer by acclamation.

Teddy Heinrichsohn’s acceptance of the office of president came a short while later. His name has since been resoundingly approved by all current SASA officers and executive committee members. Teddy is already conferring with Al Wiant on SASA issues and with Ted Stannard on details of the Bellingham, Washington reunion scheduled for 2005.

(Continued on next page)
Meanwhile Helen Stamps the current SASA treasurer, and her husband George are in the process of transferring records and procedures to Roy. The nominating committee continues its consideration of candidates for vice president and for editor of the newsletter.

It is hoped that these two new officers can be announced in the November issue of The SASA News. After nine years of devoted service to SASA (three as president and, before that, six as treasurer) Allen Wiant says he has “reached the age where visiting grandchildren takes all his energies.” Canute, who has spent two years working hard at the computer hoping to increase SASA’s membership roster, looks forward to other projects including a study of his parents’ letters from China. Helen and George Stamps, after three years of keeping SASA’s financial accounts and the mailing lists current, hope to enjoy some travel and deserved relaxation. Angie Mills says that after nearly six years as editor of The SASA News it’s time to move on and leave the News to fresher minds.

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