

**Report on the October HKNHS Boat Outing
To **High Island** South Lantau and Cheung Chau
19th October 2008**

Yet again this year, our plan to sail east to High Island was scuppered!! The Strong Wind signal had been issued on the day before and the coxswain of our boat apologetically telephoned me on Saturday with the immortal words "Big Wind – No Go"! (I did hear of a complaint from one of our members that we would have gone, no matter what the weather, "in the old days" – please let me re-assure you all that we would not be so foolhardy to disregard the opinion of the coxswain who has all of our safety as his priority) Fearing that the Nor-easterly winds may cause a change of plan, this year I took the precaution of planning an alternative venue and booking a restaurant on Cheung Chau recommended by a member of my Design Team at work! .



So an almost full boat (thirty-six of us) ventured westwards under cloudy, somewhat ominous looking skies. However, after ten minutes or so, patches of blue sky ("enough to darn a pair of sailors trousers" as my old Mum used to say) appeared. Soon we were all basking in glorious sunshine with an almost cloudless blue sky. We slowly chugged our way towards Tai Long Wan beach on the Chi Ma Wan peninsula of Lantau, only disturbed by the wake of several larger boats and the Macau ferries. As we arrived in the bay, it was immediately apparent that the concrete pier had been destroyed in one of the summer typhoons! Luckily, a temporary floating jetty was available for our group to disembark. Again, just like last year, the beach was in absolutely pristine condition – very clean with no flotsam or jetsam visible at the high water mark – with no other people on the entire beach! The majority of our travellers enjoyed a relaxing couple of hours on the beach and a refreshing swim in the sea. The more adventurous of our group decided to explore the hinterland and set off on a circular trail.

After a couple of hours, we re-assembled and set sail for Cheung Chau for a late seafood lunch. I was told that the restaurant booked was "just by the Wellcome store" – it turned out to be by the temple! Never mind, the seafood restaurant enjoyed a view of the harbour and the meal, chosen for us by my Design Engineer, seemed to be enjoyed by all. (I did tell him that his annual Performance Appraisal depended on it!).



After we had finished eating, there was enough time for a brief exploration of Cheung Chau. Rose, I and a few others visited the local Pak Tai temple which has recently been beautifully renovated. The Shekwan pottery along the roof ridge looked wonderful against the deep blue background of a cloudless sky. Inside the temple, along with the usual deities, there is a whalebone – I am not sure of the origin but can only assume it came back with a Cheung Chau sailor who had been, Moby Dick style, with a whaling fleet. Walking through the car-less streets along the spine of the island, there are several old-style merchants shops which give a hint of how Hong Kong used to be many years ago.



The time to depart Cheung Chau arrived and we set sail, via Peng Chau to drop off some of our Lantau residents, back to Central in the warm evening sunshine. I hope everyone enjoyed the day – next year I am going to cunningly advertise visiting Tai Long Wan in advance knowing (with my luck) that the wind will be bound to be blowing the wrong way and then of course we can get back to High Island!

Dave England

HKNHS Chairman