

## IAN ASHLEY HOWARD MBE (S57-62)

He was born on 16 April 1944 and after leaving the College was offered a (normally) graduate traineeship with Gallaher Ltd, tobacco manufacturers. The company sponsored him in 1964-65 on a VSO as part of his training and when he finished, the Foreign Office was discovering that we had terminated the Colonial Office a bit too soon. He was therefore offered a job as Administrative Officer in the Gilbert & Ellice Islands Colony in 1967 where he became the first Colony Lands Officer since Sir Arthur ('Pattern of Islands') Grimble. Before he could do that he had to learn Gilbertese and then go to Fiji where Grimble's hand-written records were all stored in the archives.

He was sent to the New Hebrides in 1971 because they had noticed that he was a fluent French-speaker. He was awarded the MBE, along with the Queen's Medal in the New Hebrides and the Vanuatu Independence Medal, on the occasion of the celebration of the independence of the Anglo-French Condominium of the New Hebrides. He had been serving there as, latterly, Financial Secretary in the British Administration and, finally, as Technical Adviser to the first Prime Minister, Walter Lini.



In 1974, he was sent to Wolfson College (Cambridge) to study for, and subsequently earn, a Masters Degree in Development Economics and, after independence in 1980, he was offered a job in the colonial administration of Hong Kong (as Assistant Financial Secretary – under the legendary Philip Haddon-Cave). The Hong Kong Government later put him in charge of its foreign investment promotion programme – and then sent him to promote Hong Kong to the business communities in North America (based in New York, 1990-91) and then in Europe (based in London, 1991-1995).

He started his own consulting firm in 1995 when he decided to leave the Hong Kong Government and he found himself spending so much time back in East Asia that he finally moved back there, to Hong Kong, in 2000.

He worked for three years, on a full-time consulting basis, for the Founder/Chairman/CEO of the Shui On Group in Hong Kong and Shanghai and very closely on a rather special project ("Xintiandi") in Shanghai. Anybody who has been to Shanghai during the past five years has almost certainly visited this attractively restored area of the city.

He is still consulting in East Asia (China, Hong Kong, Vietnam) and acts as an Adviser to the Municipality of Chongqing in SW China.

He organised the SOF Hong Kong Supper from 1983-89 and 2000 – 17. He says "I well remember 'my' first HK SOF Supper in 1983. I booked the function room at the Foreign Correspondents' Club and there were three of us (Self, John Birt, Jeremy Simpson - whose Dad was a Governor, I think, and son Ben also an OF). I remember we needed a minimum of four to make the spend on the private room viable, so we solemnly dubbed a drinking friend as an Hon OF and included him! I arranged all the Suppers 1983-89 and 2000-'17 (23) but was an expat in New York and/or London during the intervening years - although I remained a Permanent Resident of HK throughout."