

Exploring Hong Kong's wedding footprint through "Wedding Stories in Archives" exhibition (with photos)

The Public Records Office (PRO) of the Government Records Service (GRS) today (September 2) launched its annual thematic exhibition, "Wedding Stories in Archives", to revisit with members of the public the evolution of Hong Kong's marriage systems and wedding customs.

The earliest law related to civil marriage in Hong Kong was enacted in 1852, which was more than 170 years ago. How have marriage registration laws and systems evolved? Why were early Registrars of Marriages also Land Officers? And what are the distinctive features of traditional wedding scenes, rituals and celebrations? Is the "blind year effect" an urban myth or a real phenomenon?

The "Wedding Stories in Archives" exhibition presents over 70 selected items. Apart from PRO's holdings, there are also items from the Hong Kong Museum of History, the Immigration Department, and the Hong Kong Sheng Kung Hui Archives, that reveal intriguing information and guide members of the public in exploring the evolution of the following Hong Kong marriage systems and customs:

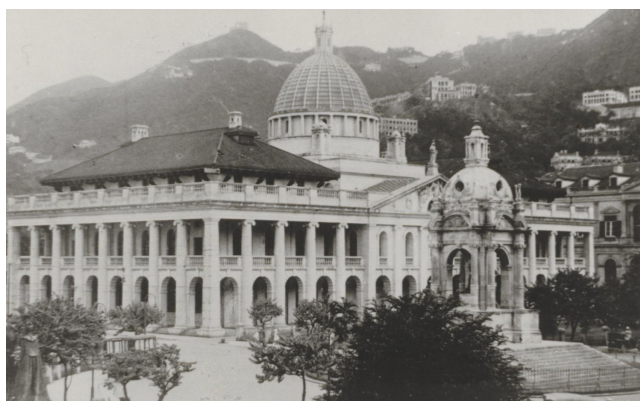
- various ways in which couples tied the knot before the enactment of the marriage law;
- the validity of marriages performed during the Japanese Occupation; and
- the institutionalisation of monogamous marriage in 1971.

Many traditional wedding customs have fallen out of favour or been simplified over time. Images displayed in the exhibition, including a register of betrothal gifts, notices about marriages, and scenes of the bride being carried to the bridegroom's place in a red sedan chair, offer glimpses into Hong Kong's past wedding customs. Additionally, the exhibition revisits the development of marriage registries, including the opening of the first Sub-Registry for marriages in Kowloon in 1956, and the relocation of the Principal Marriage Registry to the High Block of Hong Kong City Hall in 1962 – places steeped in the collective memory of citizens.

The "Wedding Stories in Archives" exhibition is open from today (September 2) onwards from Monday to Friday, from 9am to 5.45pm (except public holidays), at the Exhibition Hall on the second floor of the Hong Kong Public Records Building at 13 Tsui Ping Road, Kwun Tong, Kowloon. Admission is free. To enhance visitors' experience, a new optical illusion backdrop featuring traditional wedding themes has been exclusively set up near the entrance to the Exhibition Hall. Visitors who complete missions on the exhibition leaflet will receive special souvenirs.

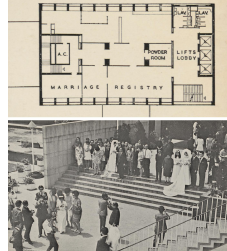
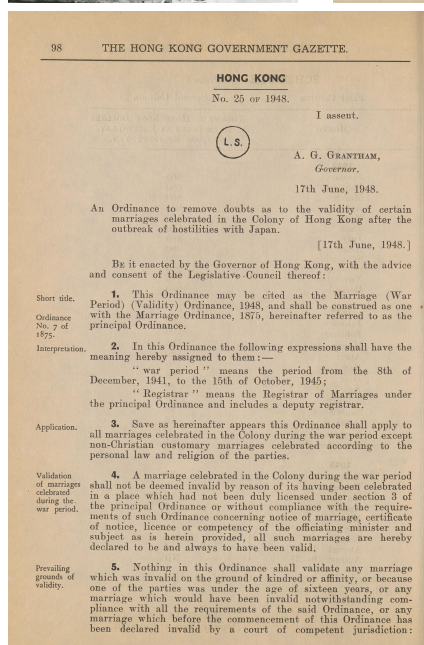
To facilitate those who are unable to visit in person, the PRO has developed an online exhibition (www.grs.gov.hk/ws/online/wedding/en/home/index.html). In addition, the PRO Facebook page (www.facebook.com/grs.publicrecordoffice) will also share selected holdings and interesting stories featured in the exhibition.

The PRO will be organising roving exhibitions to take this thematic exhibition to various districts of Hong Kong at a later date. Details will be announced later on the Government Records Service website (www.grs.gov.hk) and the PRO Facebook page. For enquiries, please contact the PRO at 2195 7700 or email to proinfo@grs.gov.hk.



No. 722.—His Excellency the Governor has been pleased to appoint the Land Officer to be Registrar of Marriages and the Assistant Land Officer to be a Deputy Registrar of Marriages, with effect, in each case, from and including the 1st January, 1927.

31st December, 1926.





CERTIFICATE OF MARRIAGE
MARRIAGE RETURN ORDINANCE, SECTION 5
婚姻註冊條例第5條

Marriage solemnized in Hong Kong in accordance with Chinese law and custom
在香港依照中國法律及習俗訂立的婚姻

No.	When and where solemnized	Name	Condition of bridegroom	Age of bridegroom	Birth of bridegroom	Residence at the date of marriage	English name	Rank in service
1	December 1966	Mr. & Mrs. Lee	Single	24	1942	100, 100, 100	Lee	—
2	January 1967	Mr. & Mrs. Lee	Single	24	1942	100, 100, 100	Lee	—

The marriage was registered by me in accordance with Section 5 of the Marriage Return Ordinance on the 14th day of 1966 at the Marriage Registry Office.

我於1966年14日根據婚姻註冊條例第5條，在婚姻註冊處註冊了上述婚姻。

Signature of Registrar

