

## PROVERSE HONG KONG

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### FEBRUARY 2015 NEWSLETTER

So Christmas came and went. All the gifts have been unwrapped; admired; played with, and put away. Now for Lunar New Year; more feasting and only a few culinary restraints. How lucky we all are. There are celebrations still to come in this year of the Goat, eighth in the Chinese zodiac.

We cannot claim that we published seven new books in late 2014, simply because seven is a lucky number. It was, nevertheless, a happy coincidence. Leading the pack in alphabetical order of author is Victor E. Apps, *The Perilous Passage of Princess Petunia Peasant* (a tale for all ages); followed closely by Verner Bickley, *Poems to Enjoy* (Book 4 of his 5-book graded anthology); then comes Jupy James, *Hazel Brown: a Very Special Vet* (an illustrated story-book for young children); James McCarthy, *The Consul of Kashgar: A Very Special Agent* (biography); Stuart McDouall's travel book, *All Agog in China* (a must for anyone who is contemplating visits to parts of China, not necessarily frequented by international tourists) and then, Laura Solomon's *University Days* (for young adults and those interested in how they think and act). A month later came Peter Gregoire's exciting and very readable, *The Devil You Know* (seems to be related to the Occupy Central movement - at least there are umbrellas on the covers!)

Our own upbeat mood has been affected somewhat by the news that yet another book shop has closed down - the splendid branch of Dymocks in Hong Kong's International Finance Centre. We agree with Peter Moss, a successful author, who, in a letter published in the *South China Morning Post* on 24 January 2015, addressed those who claim that digitized e-books on a Kindle can replace traditional books. To liken a library to such digitized books, writes Moss, or indeed any other form of electronic reader, it to liken a gourmet feast to a vitamin pill, encapsulating the same essential basic components. One simply cannot derive the equivalent satisfaction.

For some reason, the Kindle controversy reminds me of the days when I seemed to have the time to wander up and down the Charing Cross Road in London. In those days there were a number of second-hand book and gramophone record shops in which one could browse without a commitment to buy. Ah! The smell of old books. Rickety ladders; dangerous staircases. The hunt for a bargain! Book magic!

We are delighted that a few authors published by Proverse have, over the past few months and recently, received good reviews.

Patricia Ginton-Meicholas's poetry collection, "Chasing Light" was reviewed by Mia Ball in *Word Matters: The Journal of The Society of Teachers of Speech and Drama 1914-2014*, Vol. 64, No. 1, Spring 2014, p. 33. ("Chasing Light shows a poet of great vigour writing about issues of the twentieth century, and in particular the situation of women in Africa and the Caribbean. She uses some striking images, often drawn from the natural world to underline her message. // There is a sense of urgency in these poems, especially those which deal with problems faced by women..., but the author also acknowledges the strengths of women.... // ... the whole anthology is an example of the power of language in the hands of a talented writer.")

Birgit Bunzel Linder's *Shadows in Deferral* was also reviewed in *Word Matters*, Vol. 64, No. 2, Winter 2014, p. 38. "The majority of this poetry is in Free Verse and has an alluring



delicacy of phrasing which, as with much good poetry, leaves a palimpsest on the verbal mind. The book is an unusually captivating one, and illustrated with some compelling paintings.”

The *Sunday Morning Post*, ‘The Review’, 1 February 2015, p. 14, carries Guy Haydon’s review of Peter Gregoire’s *The Devil You Know*. (“Gregoire...puts his work as a lawyer to good use. His briskly paced, intricately plotted narrative layers legal challenges for his indefatigable hero ... with a series of threatening problems.... // Gregoire has a crisp, pleasingly direct writing style and, in Lee and Tang, two convincing and – most winningly – likeable protagonists. His punchy pacing, credible action scenes and tongue-in-cheek dialogue are nicely judged as he cranks up the tension while leading Lee – and the reader – on a labyrinthine trail around Hong Kong. // ... a book that deserves its place on bookshop shelves.”)

## NOTES FOR YOUR DIARY

**The Entry Documents for the International Proverse Prize 2015** are already on the Proverse website, [proversepublishing.com](http://proversepublishing.com) and entry forms/fees are already being received. This annual competition for unpublished non-fiction, fiction or poetry is open to everyone who is at least eighteen on the date they sign the entry forms and there is no residence, citizenship or nationality requirements. The winner(s) in the 2014 competition will be announced on Thursday, 9 April.

### **The University of Hong Kong Library Book Club, Thursday, 5 March 2015, 6.30-8.00pm**

For several years now, the University of Hong Kong Library has organized a Reading Club “to promote the cultural and intellectual life of Hong Kong.” On 5 March 2015, the subject will be: **Proverse Prize Library Talk (The International Proverse Prize for Unpublished Writing)**.

Registration available from the following link:

[http://lib.hku.hk/friends/reading\\_club/bt2015\\_02.html](http://lib.hku.hk/friends/reading_club/bt2015_02.html)

**The Proverse Spring Reception, Thursday, 9 April 2015**, Blue Room, Helena May, 35 Garden Road, Central, Hong Kong, 7.00pm-9.00pm, prior registration essential. The registration form is already available on the Proverse website, [proversepublishing.com](http://proversepublishing.com)

(Enquiries to: [proverse@netvigator.com](mailto:proverse@netvigator.com); Tel: 2259-3456 (office hours).)

#### Scheduled to be launched:

Verner Bickley, *Poems to Enjoy*, Book Five (rounding off his five-volume collection for children and adults);

Lawrence Gray, *Cop Show Heaven* (satire);

Andrew Guthrie, *Alphabet* (poetry collection);

Jan Pearson, *Tiger Autumn* (her second Hong Kong thriller),

Andrew Carter, *Bright Lights and White Lights* (a young man’s life in Hong Kong).

Also featuring:

Peter Gregoire, *The Devil You Know*.

## ADVANCE NOTICE

We are trying to find another way of sending out our e-Newsletters and are in process of using the “Google-Groups” facility to set up a special group, created especially and solely to receive the Proverse e-Newsletter, with no other features. Next time you receive your e-Newsletter it may be from a different email address. Please do open and read it, just as you do now, when it is sent from [proverse@netvigator.com](mailto:proverse@netvigator.com).



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