Dear Members,

Welcome to this new electronic issue of Sounding Board (SB). In the coming years, we are planning to deliver SB to you electronically that will us to serve you better. First of all, as the Chairman, I would like to offer my gratitude to our infatigable Editor, Y N Au Yeung for his effort in bringing this idea in fruition.

In the past few months, we have a relatively quiet period as most of our events have been suspended due to the adverse impacts of SARS. With the recede of SARS, we are finally seeing lights at the end of the tunnel and getting back to our normal daily routines. An imminent event will be our delegation visit to Jeju, Korea this Summer in August. For those of you who are interested to join the event, please contact Maurice Yeung (mklyeung@epd.gov.hk) for more information.

Yes, as time slips past us quickly, the HKIOA is 10 years old by December 2003. In the next few months after the summer break, we shall be arranging a series of events, both socially and technically, marking the 10th Anniversary of the HKIOA. The Executive Committee has been working hard in recent months to arrange activities for celebrating this memorable day. We shall announce these events very soon. Please keep an eye on these activities as I hope you will join us for the celebration.

Finally, I wish you will enjoy reading the SB. If you have any comments and suggestions, please feel free to contact us.

Best wishes

Dr KM Li

REPORT ON THE 10TH ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING OF HKIOA

Ir Dr CM MAK
The tenth Annual General Meeting was held on 18 March 2003 at the Marco Polo Prince Hotel with a cocktail reception started at half an hour earlier. About 40 participants attended the meeting.

The chairman, Ir Dr. K.M. Li (see photo) declared opening of the AGM and the proceedings of the 9th AGM was received. The reports by the Chairman and Hon. Treasurer were received and presented to members. The chairman then proposed to incorporate "The Hong Kong Institute of Acoustics Limited" by offering decisions on two motions:

(a) HKIOA shall incorporate a “company limited by guarantee and not having a share capital” and register as "HKIOA Ltd" or similar approved by the Companies Registry"; and
(b) The executive committee of the HKIOA shall be empowered to follow the procedures for formation of the new company and shall be appointed as the first directors of the new company. All existing members of the HKIOA at the date of incorporation of the new company shall be the members of the new company.

Ir. K.K.Iu introduced the background and reasons for the incorporation of HKIOA Ltd and members expressed their views on this matter. There were no objections and the two motions were passed. The executive committee members, Mr. Andy Chung, Ir. Y N Au Yeung, Mr. Martin Chan, Dr. Kin Cheng and Dr. C.M.Mak retired. Ir. N.C.Cheung, Ir. Y N Au Yeung, Mr. Martin Chan, Dr. Kin Cheng and Dr. C.M.Mak were elected as new Executive Committee Members.

The chairman concluded the AGM and thanked all members for their presence. The spring dinner was held immediately after the meeting.
歌剧院声学设计研讨会

2002年12月10日，北京市城乡建设研究院教授级高级建筑师、国家一级注册建筑师杨国良教授出席了歌剧院声学设计的回顾与展望研讨会有精彩报告，就歌剧院的发展史、歌剧院的音质设计要领、世界著名歌剧院的音质对比等课题进行了深入的阐述，并对二十世纪的歌剧院设计提出了方向。报告会在热烈的气氛中进行，并针对一些问题进行了讨论。在研讨会上，学会还邀请了教授出席每年一度的「Meyer Poon Memorial Award」颁奖典礼，由领导颁发。今年活动由三十多名成员出席，包括前主席、康广辉、姚景光、杨国良及多位学会理事，这是香港声学学会与国内的声学专家又一次成功的学术交流。将两地声学界友谊推向了一个新的高度。

Dr. Westwood HONG

MEYER POON MEMORIAL AWARD 2002 CEREMONY

The Meyer Poon Memorial Award Ceremony was held on 10 Dec 2002 following the Technical Seminar with the speech delivered by Prof Xiang from Beijing. We had the honour of having Prof Xiang to present the prizes to the winners of the 2002 Meyer Poon Memorial Award Competition: Mr Tang Siu Hong (1st prize) (see photo), Mr Leung Cheuk Hang (2nd prize) and Mr Chan Chi Lung (3rd prize). Mr Tang gave a short speech to enlighten our 30 members on his good piece of work titled “The Predicted Effects of a Barrier in an Urban Environment”, which was selected after the hard work of the judging panel with precious time and opinion offered by Maurice Yeung, Daniel Chan, Sam Wong, Tommy Wan, CM Mak & Westwood Hong.

REPORT ON TAIWAN TRIP—NOVEMBER 2002

K. K. IU, Dr. Westwood HONG & N. C. CHEUNG

On 15 November 2002, Westwood Hong, N.C. Cheung and K.K. Iu represented the Institute to attend the 2002 Annual Meeting and Symposium of the Acoustical Society in Taiwan (see photo). This Year, the Institute has been invited to give a keynote speech, which was nicely prepared by Maurice Yeung and presented by Westwood Hong. The speech, titled “How to solve the Hong Kong road traffic noise problem” was well received by over 200 delegates.

After having a nice lunch, a walk around the campus of the host “Leader University” was arranged (with the company of the President of the University, Prof. Hung-Chih Shih and his Directors) to help us to digest the great food. Following that, we took an escorted coach trip and headed for the bird sanctuary. We learn that Chikul is very famous for having a near-extinction migrating bird, Black-faced Spoonbill. We actually saw some twenty of them and other birds and cranes at the sanctuary and on our way through the wetland and ponds. We also visited other scenic spots including climbing a salt mountain near the Chiku wetland (see photo), enjoying the special salty ice cream and not missing the famous selling of Ping Long fruits from attractive girls alongside the Tainan motorway.

After the bird-watching, we rushed back to attend the technical sessions, which included the topics of Architectural Acoustics, Applied Acoustics, Environmental Noise, Psycho-acoustics, Basic Research, Underwater Acoustics, Signal Processing, Noise & Vibration Control, System Dynamics Analysis & Noise Measurements.

Amongst the 40 papers presented, an interesting one was from Mr. Terry Yu about the Taipei Song Shan Airport noise research. The busy day was ended with a delicious banquet, which was well attended by over 60 delegates and guests including the Director of Department of Engineering, Tainan City Government, Mr. Fu-Tzu Huang.

MESSAGE FROM THE EDITOR

YN AU YEUNG

Very probably you have already realised a change in format and approach in this issue of Sounding Board. Firstly, there does not exist any particularly fancy layout. Secondly, the number of pages is four instead of the previous eight or twelve. Thirdly, members no longer receive hard copies via mail; instead, a soft copy would be obtained via e-mail. Of course, the file will be uploaded to the Institute website as usual. This change follows the environmental conservation concept by reducing the amount of bulk printing required. There is an immediate benefit of cutting down the cost which will be more pronounced when the layout of the newsletter is done in-house to save up the printer cost. Real thanks to Maurice who agrees to take up this additional task as a try. This issue is his first effort. I personally think and am sure you will agree with me that it is marvelous. The no. of pages will be limited to four for ease of handling and any necessary subsequent printing for various functions. The total no. of issues per year may be increased to four (three in previous years) when needed. This can also help to enhance communication among members. Just a reminder, keep us informed about your e-mail address so as not to miss any e-copies of your newsletter.
On 15 January 2003, the HKIOA and the Mechanical Engineering Department of the Hong Kong Polytechnic University jointly hosted a seminar on how the European Union (EU) tackles environmental noise problem.

We had the honour of inviting two distinguished speakers from France, Dr Michel Vallet and Dr Jacques Lambert (see photos). Dr Vallet is the former Research Director at Institute National de Recherche Transports et Sécurité (INRETS) which is the French National Institute for Studies on Transportation Noise. He was and is still a member of many EU Working Group on noise issues. Dr. Lambert is currently the Research Director at INRETS-LTE and was the Chairman of EU Working Group on dose/effects issues, and is now a member of the new Working Group on health and socio-economic aspects of noise.

Dr. Vallet gave us an update report on the latest development of EU Noise Directives including the noise descriptors to be used, the reasons and rationales behind the actions and studies so far. By and large, for cities of population not less than 250,000, noise mapping exercises would need to be conducted and results of the noise problem (i.e. number of people exposed to high level of environmental noise) should be made available for public by 2007. Action plans would also be developed by individual city by 2008. There are also other progresses like setting up of new working groups to oversee various noise related issues like application of low noise road surfacing, new harmonizing method for assessing Lden and Lnight, studying long-term health effect on children due to noise etc.

Following Dr. Vallet’s presentation, Dr. Lambert introduced us the method adopted commonly in EU in evaluating economic value of transport noise. He took us through in good details with illustration about the “Hedonic Pricing” and “Contingent Valuation”.

More than 40 members and students attended the seminar. Questions were raised with regard to the rationales of the ways adopted in tackling environmental noise and how to evaluate the economic value of transportation noise. They all found the evening very interesting, insightful and informative as Dr. Vallet and Dr. Lambert have wide experience of traffic, railway and airport noise surveys, of sleep research on physiological disturbances of noise, and of the economic valuation of benefits of transportation noise policy. The seminar no doubt brought the local acoustic and noise control professionals and practitioners a new dimension.

Maurice YEUNG


I attended the seminar with great enthusiasm and I was deeply impressed by the presentations. The speakers were experts in their field and they provided valuable insights into the latest developments in tackling environmental noise in the EU.

The seminar was very well-organized and the materials provided were very helpful. The discussions were very lively and engaging, and I learned a lot from the speakers and other attendees.

Overall, I found the seminar to be very informative and interesting. I believe that the topics discussed are very relevant and will have a significant impact on the future of environmental noise in the EU.

Maurice YEUNG

Maurice YEUNG

Maurice YEUNG
專訪地球之友

(採訪者: 歐陽躍南 (香港聲學學會出版委員會主席))

在過去幾年的診察當中，我們已經和多位專家、探討聲學在本港的發展，其中得到的一個印象是，噪音污染在香港，並逐步黑雲及水質污染，受到廣泛重視。這令我們才求民間環保團體組織-地球之友，討論這個問題。

地球之友香港分會現時有 15 位職員，主要負責本港的環保教育，以及香港環保政策研究，最近的主要研究為再生能源，提倡利用風力發電去減少空氣污染。

地球之友環境事務統籌馬雅燕(參閱相片)表示，由於資源有限，加上相對於空氣污染及水質污染等環境問題，噪音污染問題的迫切性及嚴重性較低，所以該會暫時并无有計劃積極研究香港的噪音污染問題。

她表示，香港固然有很多環保問題，但就難引起市民的關注，地球之友較多地進行空氣質素研究，他們要花上數年，搜集很多的數據，例如空氣及汽車尾氣每年排放量多少，如何影響社會企業成本上升，實質上對公共健康及經濟我損失，這些統計數據一定要很實際的，才能服民心；但噪音污染方面，實質上人需要時間研究及搜集有關數據，證明人受噪音質素影響。噪音對身體，精神及經濟上的損失有幾大，所以相對來說，市民對噪音污染的重視程度不是太大，但環保團體都認為，噪音研究其實是有需要的。

馬雅燕說，政府在開建一些新建工程時，會進行環境影響評估，當中亦包括噪音的範疇，而地球之友就很重視環境影響評估報告的質素，一些環評顧問曾經向他們指出，如果有人要操控環評報告並不難，以噪音不能超過 70 分貝為例，在不同地方作測，所得的結果會有差異，例如在天橋及住宅中間測量，噪音可能超出 70 分貝，但在住宅大廈後面測量，就可以得出較低的數字，所以環評報告是否有質素及公正，要親自翻閱的專業性及操守。

她又表示，政府在處理環保政策缺欠彈性，有需要改善，以平衡及提升整體環境質素。

馬雅燕以吐露港公路為例，吐露港公路一帶，是香港少有無遮無擔的天然海景，地球之友認為在環保考慮上，是值得保存的，而附近居民在衡量選景觀，以及公路所帶來的噪音後，仍然傾向保留原有的海景，希望令到物業升值。不過，當期時政府就因為公路噪音超標幾個分貝，不理民意反對，在公路邊設置隔音屏障，馬雅燕說，如果市民認為隔音屏障不好，可以申請更改，但就已經耗時失事，浪費大量人財。

她表示，在地球之友的角度來看，政府即使要減少吐露港公路的噪音，在良好的規格下，其實有很多環保又美觀的方法，例如可以考慮在公路旁邊種種綠樹的山丘，並將隔音屏障藏於樹木中，可以隔音之餘，亦可以保持海景，令到更多人可以享受親海景觀。

汲取吐露港公路隔音屏障事件的經驗，地球之友認為，政府在開建工務工程時，都要事先聽取環保組織以及民意的意見，按不同情況彈性處理問題，其中新區的規劃，包括西九龍填海區，希望政府在住宅、公路及電車等一併規劃興建，令市民的生活質素可以提升。

馬雅燕舉例說，政府興建元朗市中心環迴公路時，並無顧及公路離住宅太近，居民因而會受噪音影響，而這樣的情況實在可以避免，只要有關的政府部門，例如規劃署及路政署等，在工程開建時先行作出協調。

另一個地球之友關注的，是海裏面的噪音，例如在海內爆破對海洋生物的影響；起新機場時就要注意到爆石的噪音，如何影響到鯨魚等，而最新的興建西部通道，涉及要在海底起幾大樁柱，相信會對海洋生態構成影響。

總體而言，地球之友認為，政府的噪音管制條例及政策，有需要檢討，配合現況及未來發展，如果可以的話，進一步和內地加強溝通，鼓勵兩地環保的交流及合作。

[An interview with the Campaigns Coordinator of Friends of the Earth (HK), Ms. Daphne Mah, on her views towards noise pollution control in Hong Kong: importance of quality ELA, increased flexibility and coherency of Government departments, strategic review of noise control policy and regulations, reinforced communication and cooperation with the mainland.]