

Photos and captions of some highlighted exhibits

1. Silver Model of the Main Building, 1912



The Silver Model of the Main Building is believed to have been commissioned by Naoroj Mody, the son of Sir Hormusjee Mody (1838–1911). His initials, N.H.N. Mody, are inscribed on the model. Sir Hormusjee Mody had donated the funds for the construction of the Main building. This model was intended to be presented to Governor Frederick Lugard at the 1912 ceremony for the opening of the Main Building. Unfortunately, he passed away before he could see the realisation of his and Governor Lugard's dream of having a higher education institution for the people of Hong Kong.

Silver models of an important building were often made in India as gifts on ceremonial occasions. This model was made in South China, probably in Guangzhou by the Hing Wong Company, which had premises on Queen's Road in Central.

2. Golden Trowel with which Sir Frederick Lugard laid the Foundation Stone of the Main Building on 16th March 1910



The Foundation Trowel was used in laying the first foundation stone of the University on 16th March 1910 at the site of the Main Building. The trowel used for this ceremony was made of solid gold and so soft that it bent when used by Governor Frederick Lugard to lay the mortar upon the stone. It is engraved with dragons, and the ivory handle is carved in the form of a dragon that holds the blade of the trowel in place terminating in a dragon's head. The dragon faces a single opal stone surrounded by rays or flames as if the stone were alight.

Reproductions of the Foundation Trowel in sterling silver were given as gifts to the Viceroys of the Two Guangs (Guangdong and Guangxi) and Two Jiangs (Jiangsu and Zhejiang), Zhang Renjun and Yuan Shuxun.

3. Hong Kong University Bazaar Poster, 1912



This poster announced the Grand Fete and Bazaar to raise Funds for the new University, and celebrate the opening of the Main Building. The Bazaar lasted just over a week and was a great success. There were musical entertainments, a banquet, Chinese theatre performances and the new Anthem was played in public for the first time. The new building was opened to the public for a small entrance fee and Hong Kongers flocked to buy the goods from the stalls throughout the building, and to ride on the scenic railway that was specially built for the Bazaar and later auctioned off to a businessman for \$10,000.

The original poster was produced by the South China Morning Post on newsprint. This copy was discovered in the English Department, where it had been displayed for many years in the conference room. However, it is in such poor condition that it cannot be displayed. This copy of the original shows what it looks like now with extensive water damage and paper loss on the folds and around the edge. The colours are faded, and there is browning due to the build-up of sulphur in the paper from its manufacturing process, exposure to light and fluctuations in temperature and humidity. A digitally-enhanced version has been produced to suggest what it might have originally looked like.

4. 1941 Hong Kong Centenary Stamp featuring King George VI and the University



These stamps were released 11 months before Hong Kong fell to the Japanese Occupation when Japanese covers replaced them. They were not used again until the end of the war.