NOTICE OF ORDINARY MEETING

The seventh general meeting of the Society for 1976 will be held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at

8.00 pm Monday 27 September, 1976

AGENDA

1. Apologies.

2. Minutes of meeting held Monday 23 August, 1976 to be confirmed.
   Copies of these minutes are attached.

   Various papers and journals from other Societies and Organizations were tabled at this meeting.

4. Speaker.
   Mr. Leonn Satterthwait, Curator of Anthropology, S.A. Museum, will speak to the meeting on:

   'Australian Aboriginal Food Procurement Technology'

VERN TOLCHER,
Honorary Secretary/Treasurer,
213 Greenhill Road,
EASTWOOD, S.A. 5063

Telephone 272 2311
MINUTES OF GENERAL MEETING

Monday 23 August, 1976

Held in the Museum Education Building, North Terrace, Adelaide at 8.00 pm.

In the absence of the President, Dr. C.P. Mountford, Mr. G.L. Pretty took the chair. There were 11 members present.

1. Apologies.
   Apologies were received from the following members:-

   Dr. C.P. Mountford, Mr. & Mrs. V.A. Tolcher, Mr. P. Critchley, Mrs. M. Sando and Mrs. R.D.J. Weathersbee.

2. Minutes.
   The minutes of the previous general meeting held Monday 26 July, 1976 having been circulated prior to the meeting were taken as read and confirmed.

   Papers and journals received from other Societies and Organizations were tabled at the meeting.

4. Vote of Thanks.
   It was proposed by Mr. R.D.J. Weathersbee, seconded by Mrs. M. Nobbs, and carried unanimously that the Society record its grateful appreciation to the Secretary, Mr. V.A. Tolcher, for the efficient organization and hard work carried out by him that made the 50th Anniversary Weekend such an outstanding success.

5. Speaker.
   Mr. D. Hein, Curator of Art Education, Art Gallery of South Australia gave the following address:-

   'A TRAVELLER'S VIEW OF THAI ART'

   It is common to find a brief history of Thailand beginning about the 11th or 12th century AD when the Thai tribes began to establish their communities in Thailand, but, of course, the land was peopled much earlier than that. The area is sometimes referred to as 'Further India' because at least some of the early inhabitants migrated from the eastern seaboard of India and the 'Indianization' of S.E. Asia was well advanced before the coming of the Thai, mainly due to the sea trade commerce. The religions of India, both Brahminism and Buddhism are thought to have reached S.E. Asia by the 2nd century AD. Theravada Buddhism was practiced by the pre-Thai Mon people and Mayahana Buddhism had a strong influence along the Malay Peninsula and in Annam, Champa, and the area centering on Cambodia, called Funan by the Chinese. Brahmin priests and literati were advisors in the royal courts even to the Monarchs of Buddhist States and Indian Sanskrit texts were read by the educated. However, the area should not be seen as an Indian colony. Most of the people were indigenous Malayan stock and recent study indicates one of the world's earliest civilizations. Also from early times strong land and sea routes existed with China. Missions between the S.E. Asian and Chinese courts are recorded.
Funan came to dominate the region and strengthened the Hindu religion in the area in the 7th century AD. The Khmer Kingdoms appeared from the 8th century AD and were still ruling through their god-kings (the kings saw themselves as reincarnations of the Hindu gods) when the Thai began to make their presence felt in the 13th century. They had been gradually filtering down since the 6th century into Burma, N. Thailand and Laos. The first Thai states were established in Burma, then in Laos at Luang Prabang. In 1238 they attacked and captured Sukhothai on the N.W. extremities of the Angkor Empire. Further north the Mon states at Lampun fell to the Thai who founded Chieng Mai. The third king, Rama Khambeng (1238-1317) carved out an empire at the expense of Burma, Cambodia and the Malay States in the South. He adopted a combination of Mon and Khmer writing often referred to as the Sukhodaya script. Carefully he paid tribute to the the Chinese Yuan court at Peking and it is thought that after each visit, brought back Chinese potters to establish firstly the Sukhothai kilns, then those of Sawankholok. After Rama's death (in the Me Yom?) there was a decline. The preoccupation of his sons with religious life allowed a northern Thai state (Chieng Sen) at Chieng Mai to subjugate Sukhothai. Later a new Siamese Kingdom was established at Ayuthya in 1350 which also subjugated Sukhothai. Sukhothai's pre-eminence was shortlived, lasting less than 100 years.

Burmese forces destroyed Ayuthya in 1767. The city was not rebuilt and a new capital was founded at Thonburi (by Pya Taksin) and later at Bangkok (by Rama I). Much of the treasure from other cities was moved to Bangkok and now the relics and statuary are incorporated into the large number of monasteries within the city.

The artistic periods commonly used to structure a chronology are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Period</th>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Location</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dvaravati</td>
<td>6th to 11th century</td>
<td>Malay/Indonesian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sirijaya</td>
<td>8th to 13th century</td>
<td>Far North</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chieng Sen</td>
<td>12th to 20th century</td>
<td>approx. 50 miles west of Ayuthya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sukhodaya</td>
<td>13th to 15th century</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ayuthya</td>
<td>15th to 18th century</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bangkok</td>
<td>18th to 20th century</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**RELIGIOUS INFLUENCES**

The Mon people of the Dvaravati period were Theravada Buddhists (the purist doctrine of the senior monkhood). While the Thai were Buddhist they followed Mahayana Buddhism (the greater vehicle) while in China and this they gave up in favour of the local belief. The Mon people had built stupas and temples in stone and Bronze statuary with a well developed skill. Very few of these remain. Most of the early missionary contact was with Ceylon and consequently the Singhalese influence in Buddhist architecture form and style is strong. The stupas follow the same basic bell shape.

The stupa was of course not a new form and had been used by the ancient sun worshippers and common ancient symbols were absorbed into the mythology of Buddhism; elephants represented the earth, Nagar were the serpent spirits from the primeval water world, while Garudas as divine birds ruled the sky skies and lions, bulls and horses represented fire and the sun. Added to these were the special aniconic symbols of the Lord Buddha. A pair of feet represented Buddha's birth as might a stone altar slab. A tree meant
the enlightenment and a pillar of fire the presence of Buddha. A wheel symbolised the dharma (doctrine) and the first sermon and the parasol meant death.

Later when the image of Buddha was permitted, it had controlling canons - the earlobes, the ushnisha, the curls, the urna (or sun disc) on the forehead, and so on to the 80 marks of the supernman (and 108 auspicious signs). Buddha's body was a radiant golden hue so strong that prolonged concentration (trance) was needed to see the actual form. All Buddha images are contemplative and sublime. No attempt is made to show muscles, veins or boney articulation - so direct the ?all texts, 'Buddha has arms like elephants trunks, the chest broad and narrow of waist. A chin like a mango, a nose like the beak of a parrot, eyebrows like drawn bows etc.'

The early missionaries would have brought small model sculptures back to Siam as reminders and these would have been copied again and again. One of the most popular postures was Buddha calling the earth to witness his defeat of Mara (Bhumispar). Buddha sits with his legs crossed, (i.e. either legs parallel (hero) or crossed with soles of feet upwards, (adamantine) with his right hand touching the ground over his right knee. This symbolises the triumph of good over evil.

There are four allowable positions for Buddha - standing, walking, sitting and lying on the right side (parinivarna). Certain changes occur between the Indian originals and the developed Thai styles. The reasons for the differences are both generic and technical. Whereas Indian sculpture is generally in bas relief i.e. entirely integrated with architecture, Thai sculpture is mostly in the round and free standing. Therefore differences occur in the translation from one to the other. Differences also occur in the translation from a small reminder model (perhaps even damaged) to a larger image where detail has to be invented. Furthermore, the sculptor probably worked essentially from a memorised model. A similar set of conditions applied to religious architecture, and also some allowance must be made for Thai inventiveness. The Sukhothai lotus bud spire is pure Thai in that it does not appear elsewhere. Influences were drawn from Ceylon, The Khmer Kingdom, Burma and China. The first three in respect of forms and from China in decoration.

Early models were venerated and re-copied endlessly. The enlarging of a stupa did not mean destruction of the existing one but the encasement of it inside a larger new construction. The stupa at Nakhon Phanom, now one of the world's largest has at least two earlier stupas within it.

A monastery or wat usually contained a stupa (chedi or prang) perhaps to house a relic of Buddha (mahathat = great relic) but more likely to act as a reminder (a descendant of the earlier stupa in India) a Mandapa (mondop) a hollow cube with a pyramidal roof (mostly since looted) to house a footprint or image, a vihara (wharam) on the east, which is an assembly for the faithful and a uposatha (bot), an ordination hall for the monks distinguished only by the 8 sacred boundary stones. All this would be enclosed within a fence of brick laterite or simple bamboo. Surrounding moats were also common.

While carved stone was a common skill to the Khmers the Thai favoured stucco over brick or cast bronze. The Thai were predominantly modellers of form
rather than carriers and this is apparent from observation of their art and architectural forms.

Sukhodaya (the birth of happiness) is an old city about 14 kilometres from the new one of the same name, at the village of Muang Kao. The city walls are largely decayed but the 21 monasteries within the city and 70 or so outside it, vary in condition but are nevertheless very impressive. The avenue of various types of chedi and shrines suggest what A.B. Griswold calls 'indicative reminders', a record of original types to act as reference points for further construction. Apart from the Mahathat shrine Wat Si Chum is one of the most impressive. A vast mondop, 32 metres square 15 metres high, housing a high seated Buddha 11 metres 'knee to knee'. A passage way inside the walls leads upward, reflecting the circumambulation ritual, and the passage way has more than 50 ancient slate ceiling slabs engraved with scenes illustrating the Jataka tales.

Sawankholok (Savarkoloka in the Sanskrit) was the old town of Chaleng on the hair-pin bend of the Me Yom. It dates from the Mon period and was an outpost of the Khmer Empire from the 11th to 13th century. Under the Thai it was called Sri Satchanalai until the Ayuthya period when it seems to have been given the title of Sawankholok.

There is a modern town of both Sawankholok and Sri Satchanalai and the old city is located between them. While not as extensive as Sukhothai it is equally impressive. It too was surrounded by a wall about 2 km square and encloses some low hills (unlike the flat country of Sukhothai). In both cases the kiln sites lie outside the wall. At Sawankholok the Thuriang Pa Yang kilns are only about 2 km away and those of Ban Ko Noi lie 7 km out along the banks of the Me Yom.

**CERAMICS**

The story of the ceramic ware of Sukhothai and Sawankholok, to use the common references, is fascinating. Mystery surrounds their introduction, or rather the introduction of a certain style in the late 13th century. Earthenware and simple glazed pottery had been produced in these areas for literally thousands of years, but, suddenly works of a different quality appeared, coupled with a vigorous export trade. Whether the truth lies in the story of Rama Kampheng bringing back potters from the missions to Peking or not may never be known. But certainly the style does come closely to the Tzu Chou style, and it is quite possible the King visited the kiln sites south of Peking.

The Sukhothai kilns were the first established and produced hard, porcelainous, thick walled glazed ware. The paste used was coarse and dull grey in colour. The body was covered with white slip on which were painted simple designs using iron oxides which fired black. Finally the wares were covered with a thin yellowish-grey, near transparent glaze.

The range of Sukhothai ware was not large consisting of painted plates, bowls, some with lids, jars usually lidded, and vases. Quite a lot of architectural ceramic ware was, of course, produced for the monasteries including guardian figures, end tiles in the flame shape (with a Deva nama figure), pieces for railing cornices, lattices, pipes, roof tiles etc.
The firing technique for ceramics was interesting and quite different to that of Sawankholok. Circular pontils were used along with small flat five-spurred pontils on which wares were stacked. Usually five bowls or plates made up a stack so that the bottom one showed a circular mark, the four lower ones showed five spur marks on the inner face (the centre) and the top one no pontil marks at all. Sometimes these stacks collapsed during the firing and fused together. The kilns were similar to those at Sawankholok, though somewhat larger (8 metres), wood fired and side vented. No saggers were used.

Wares were, of course, thrown on the wheel (a kick wheel operated by an assistant). Larger wares were made in several pieces and joined together when leather hard. No moulds were used. Interestingly, no dates or potters' marks were used (c.f. Chinese wares) making dating and identification difficult. It is not certain for how long the Sukhothai kilns operated but probably until both they and those at Sawankholok were destroyed by the Chiang Mai invasion in the mid 15th century. The Sawankholok kilns were established on the site of better clays which fired to an even, fine-grained greyish-white body. All wares were fired on tall pontils and not stacked as at Sukhothai.

Whereas the main influence to Sukhothai was Tzu Chou, Sawankholok wares are similar to Ling Chuan on the Chinese coast, with a tradition of fine celadon. It has been surmised that a second group of potters came to Thailand and that they were from the Che Kiang region. Celadon wares were predominant in the Sawankholok range along with painted pieces, white glazed and brown glazed wares.

The monochrome brown glazed pieces are traditionally called 'Chalieng' but it is uncertain if they were produced then. The range of forms is great indeed - plates, bowls, jars, vases, bottles, Kendi, water droppers, figurines of many kinds and miniatures of various kinds that are entirely missing from the Sukhothai range.

A reduced fire was needed for celadon glazes and this produced a brick red colour on the unglazed portion of the pot. The most common design element was the floral motif (c.f. the fish motif of Sukhothai) and the most common of these are the lotus and peony. Incised design usually evident by the thicker glaze in the incisions was usually associated with the celadons. Underglaze painting was used under this transparent glaze similar to that of Sukhothai. The influence of Sukhothai on Sawankholok is well known. Fine incised line is often associated with these painted wares. The figurines include horses, elephants, tortoises, birds, dogs etc., along with male and female figurines usually glazed in celadon. These figurines were probably votive offerings left at the guardian shrine site or garden and were intended for use by the spirits. Decapitation of the human figures was probably an attempt for spirits to assume the sins or dangers of humans (e.g. childbirth).

The products of both Sukhothai and Sawankholok were made both for domestic use and trade. Very few whole pieces survive in Thailand. Most are salvaged from graves in the Phillippines or Indonesia. The Thai did not bury objects with their dead. The high proportion of wares are those of Sawankholok (1:20) which raised questions of production and the comparative period of the kilns.