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Stephen Davies, a Briton with family connections to Hong Kong that go back to the mid-1920s, served in the Royal Navy and Royal Marines (1963-67), briefly designed atlases and taught sailing and mountaineering before falling of a cliff and having to be screwed back together (1967-68). After university in Wales and London (1968-74) he taught political theory at the University of Hong Kong (1974-89). From 1990-2003 he and his partner sailed 50,000 miles visiting 27 countries in their 38' sailing sloop; useful background for a maritime historian. He was appointed the first Museum Director of the Hong Kong Maritime Museum in 2005. From 2005-2011 he built the collection and library, found the museum a new location, got government and donor funding for the expansion and relocation, and created the design and storylines for the new premises. He resigned in 2011 and was rehired as the museum's first CSSC Maritime Heritage Research Fellow. From 2011-2013 he wrote the new gallery panel texts, chose objects for displays, wrote the captions, and scripted and co-produced the audio-visual displays. A widely published maritime historian, focused on Asian Seas and the interactions between the western and traditional Asian maritime worlds, he is now back at HKU as an Honorary Fellow of the Hong Kong Institute for the Humanities and Social Sciences. His most recent books are *Coasting Past: The last of South China coastal trading junks photographed by William Heering* (Hong Kong Maritime Museum 2013) and *East sails west: the voyage of the Keying, 1846-1855* (Hong Kong University Press 2014). He is at present writing the history of the Mariners' Club in Hong Kong; a study of the provision of seafarer welfare in Hong Kong and the Pearl River from 1822 until 2000. He tutors on a course on the sustainable use of heritage buildings in the Department of Real Estate and Construction focused on coastal defences in the Second World War. He is Hon. Editor of the *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society Hong Kong*, continues as a yachting journalist, active yachtsman and occasional TV presenter, and works with museums and heritage interests in China, Singapore and Hong Kong.

Maritime Cultures: What Were They, When Were They and Where did They Go?

This essay approaches the question posed by the title through the lens of the language of matters maritime, at our use of it and specifically at the salience of maritime vocabulary in popular printed utterance through time. It uses as its main analytical tool the Google Ngram viewer. A three-facet model of a human maritime world is advanced, distinguishing the geographical, socio-economic and cultural maritime elements of any given society and arguing that these are contingently, not necessarily connected. The working assumption of the analysis that follows from this is that there is a correlation between the maritime sensibility that underpins any maritime culture, its related vocabulary and the use of that vocabulary in the printed books through which a literate maritime culture finds public expression. The more sparse the use of a maritime vocabulary, the less salient or present is a maritime culture. It therefore follows that it is possible for any society to have a maritime geography (to have a seaboard), to be socio-economically engaged in the maritime world but not necessarily to have a maritime culture. The essay notes that 'maritime culture' is a mid-19th century neologism that entered more general use extremely

slowly. Only in the last two decades of the 20th century did usage grow exponentially, despite being confined to a small number of users. The essay juxtaposes this finding to the pattern of use over the same time period of other words in the maritime lexicon noting, by contrast, that in general these have been in a long, slow decline despite the unprecedented rise of sea trade to the point that it is carrying 90% of the world's merchandising trade. The essay seeks to explain these findings in the merely contingent connection between maritime geography, maritime economic activity and maritime culture. In the context of fundamentally terrestrial human cultures, languages and tools of public policy, and the tendencies of modern port and shipping technologies to dispense with human agency at sea, the maritime past is disconnected, save as a commoditised 'heritage'.

