

A. D. el Arculli – the first Rotarian Commissioner

Hong Kong St. John Ambulance Brigade

By Herbert K. Lau (劉敬恒) (Rotary China Historian)

1 September 2015



A. D. el Arculli (夏高理), OBE, KSJ, ethnic Indian, solicitor, was a Charter Member 1931 of the Rotary Club of Hong Kong (香港扶輪社) and later served the Club as President in 1950-1951 holding the Classification “Law – General Practice”.

Arculli was the fourth Commissioner of the Hong Kong St. John Ambulance Brigade (SJAB) (香港聖約翰救傷隊), serving from 1947 to 1951. He succeeded Edward Mauric Raymond (雷文), who had been Commissioner during the Pacific War (1941-1945) and the Japanese occupation of the British Crown Colony Hong Kong.

Upon Raymond’s death in 1947, Arculli took over the role. Arculli’s tenure as Commissioner is noted for the continued re-building and re-organization of the St. John Ambulance Brigade after the War. The SJAB was upgraded to an Overseas District of the British St. John Ambulance. Mr. Aw Boon Haw (胡文虎) financially supported the re-construction of the Tai Hang Headquarters (大坑總部) and donated an ambulance to the Hong Kong District, plus all operation expenses for the ambulance. The Kowloon General Chamber of Commerce (九龍總商會) donated an ambulance to the Kowloon District. The “Penetration Squad” (巡迴醫療服務隊) was established, which provided free medical, dental and vaccination services to residents of fishing villages in rural areas and outlying islands every Sunday with the help of the Marine Police. This service scope and model were unique to St. John’s Ambulance organizations around the world.

His cousin, The Honourable Ronald Joseph Arculli (夏佳理), barrister and solicitor, was also a prominent figure in Hong Kong, serving as Unofficial Member of both Executive and Legislative councils, as well as Chairman of Hong Kong Exchanges and Clearing.