2025 Summer Internship Report

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Institution: Hong Kong Museum of History

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Summary

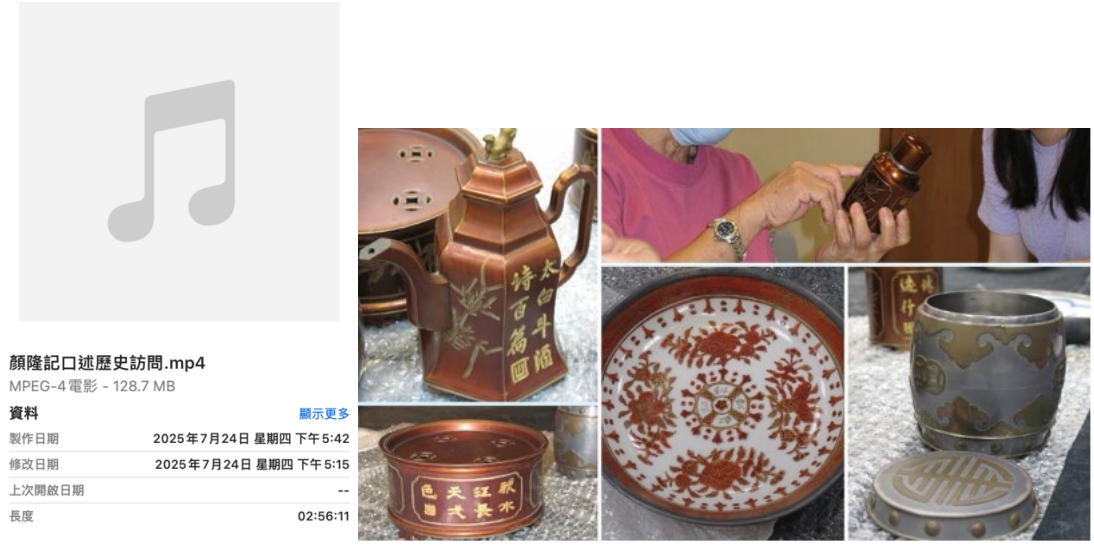
I am very fortunate to have had the opportunity for this internship at the *Hong Kong Museum of History*. During my internship, I worked under the supervision of one Assistant Curator I and two Assistant Curator IIs. They were very generous in sharing museum operations as well as allowing me to get familiar with hands-on research. I was assigned to the *Hong Kong Urban Oral History Unit*. My key responsibilities included assisting with documenting digitized artifacts, visitor engagement, and archival research. This report details my tasks, learning outcomes, and reflections.

Internship Experience & Responsibilities

The *Oral History Unit* is responsible for systematically recording, processing, and archiving first-hand accounts of individuals who have witnessed or participated in significant events, industries, and ways of life in Hong Kong. As my supervisor put it, our tasks affiliate with every unit and we are responsible for every possible aspect of research. I personally understood this as our unit being the central control unit which manages the research process. I am very honored to have been placed in such a working environment as it allowed me to have a taste of different parts of museum duties.

Documenting different kinds of urban history requires very different skill sets. For instance, I assisted in three different projects which all required different research methodologies.

My first research task was regarding the history of *Ngan Lung Gei (顏隆記)*, a prestigious store for aluminum utensils. This industry diminished around the 1990s when Hong Kong shifted its focus from secondary industry to tertiary industry. We had to conduct an interview with the offspring of the founder of *Ngan Lung Gei* as there was virtually no documentation regarding this industry. The whole research process was as follows: First, we conducted biographical research on potential interviewees for the project. Then, by using the obtainable information from online sources, books, research papers and old newspapers, we drafted preliminary questions. After that, we interviewed the informants. Post-Interview Processing was the next step, and the most important one in my opinion. We constructed Audio Logging, where we created time-coded logs to identify key themes discussed and added contextual notes to the transcripts.



① recording and photos of the interview

My second task was mainly about large-scale quantitative digitization. I handled over 2,000 real estate pamphlets and sales catalogues from the 1960s to the 1990s. This project involved a meticulous process: carefully handling fragile documents, scanning them at high resolution, and inputting critical metadata—including developer, location, year, price, and flat sizes—into the museum's digital asset management system. This data is invaluable for researchers studying post-war economic growth

and the very concrete (literally and figuratively) transformation of Hong Kong's landscape. Although the repetitive data input was nonetheless tedious, I found the covers of these pamphlets very aesthetic and interesting. I greatly enjoyed examining the artworks as well as finding familiar buildings while documenting.

Lastly, I was tasked with investigating a pair of prescription glasses issued by the Student Healthcare Service in the 1930s and a component from a popular 1980s video game console. This required a different methodology altogether. For the glasses, I researched the history of public health initiatives in Hong Kong; looking through government reports throughout the years is frankly not something I had pictured I'd do, especially when the reports from the 30s were written in old-fashioned English. The game console, on the other hand, led me to investigate global electronics supply chains and how, although it was produced in Hong Kong, the biggest buyers were Americans. I also noticed that components from different countries were slightly different (e.g., the Japanese version included a realistic gun-shaped controller, whereas the American version had a bright orange one). I found the research process to be an engaging form of historical detective work, piecing together the story of an object clue by clue. The challenge was most pronounced when information was scarce; for the game console component, I had to become a linguistic sleuth, seeking out references in different languages.

Manufacturer	EACA International Ltd., founded by mainland Chinese immigrant Eric Chung, became a successful Hong Kong electronics manufacturer by 1978. Initially producing "Pong-type" games with around 50-60 employees, it shifted to microcomputers from 1980-1983. Its most famous product was the TRS-80 Model I compatible Video Genie/System 80. EACA INDUSTRIAL BUILDING, 13 CHONG YIP STREET KWUN TONG, KOWLOON, HONG KONG
Revenue in 1980-1983	**精靈I/II** **Genie I**是第一臺Genie計算機。它是TRS-80的大型複製品，有一個Z80A微處理器。 當Fred Trommeschläger來到荷蘭與自己的飛機進行談判時，幾家公司已經在爭奪Genie I的獨家發行權。他帶著自己的飛機的出現給來自香港的對話者留下了深刻的印象，以至於trumschläger獲得了Genie–Computer的獨家發行權。 隨著Genie I的推出，年銷售額急劇增加（1980–1983年銷售和利潤發展）： 營業額 利潤 1980 1,850 TDM 72.6 TDM 1981 7,051個TDM 62.0 TDM 1982 10,384 TDM 93.7 TDM 1983 12,654 TDM 損失 隨著時間的推移，EACA開發了其他一些微型計算機，TCS獲得了獨家發行權：1980年6月的Genie I，1981年4月的Genie II，1982年7月的Genie III和1982年8月的Color Genie。 (translated version)
	Genie I/II Der **Genie I** ist der erste Genie-Computer. Er ist ein weitgehender Nachbau des TRS-80 und verfügt über einen Z80A Mikroprozessor. Als Fred Trommeschläger zu Verhandlungen nach Holland mit seinem eigenen Flugzeug kommt, liegen mehrere Firmen um die Alleinvertriebsrechte für den Genie I bereits im Rennen. Sein Auftritt mit eigenem Flugzeug beeindruckt seine Gesprächspartner aus Hong Kong aber dermaßen, dass Trommeschläger die exklusiven Vertriebsrechte für die Genie-Computer erhält. Mit Einführung des Genie I steigt der Jahresumsatz sprunghaft an (Umsatz- und Gewinnentwicklung 1980-1983): Umsatz Gewinn 1980 1.850 TDM 72.6 TDM 1981 7.051 TDM 62.0 TDM

②part of my research on the game console

I am very impressed by this kind of research, as it allows detailed stories of “little characters” to be passed on. It made me realize that cultural history is not only about big decisions or drastic incidents, but that a mundane event which seemingly is unimportant to the “big picture” is also very precious and would otherwise be buried in the flow of historical waves. I learned that history is a living, breathing entity composed of countless individual voices. The internship has not only equipped me with practical skills in various research methodologies but has also profoundly deepened my appreciation for the multifaceted work required to preserve and interpret urban history.