

On the waterfront

HONG Kong's Maritime Museum completed its return voyage to the city's iconic harbour front with a grand reopening on Monday evening.

The museum was temporarily housed in Stanley on Hong Kong's south side but now occupies a long, attractive new building on Pier Eight.

Hong Kong chief executive CY Leung was on hand, emphasising the importance of the territory's maritime sector, flanked by museum chairman Anthony Hardy and director Richard Wesley.

CC Tung, the chairman of Orient Overseas (International) Ltd, parent company of OOCL, is also chairman of the Hong Kong Maritime Museum Trust.

Taking his turn at the podium he said: "As China becomes the world's largest consumer as well as manufacturer, and as developing nations become the primary drivers of world economic growth, Hong Kong's deep maritime cluster will once again undoubtedly play a critical part in the city's growth and prosperity."

The new building has 13 permanent galleries and two special exhibition galleries that will present touring exhibits from mainland China and other collections from around the world.

The museum is certainly colourful.

Exhibits include replicas of sea bandits plying their trade in the Pacific Basin Shipping Gallery, a lifesize bronze of 19th century official Li Hongzhang, who helped to modernise China's navy and a facsimile of the lantern at Waglan Lighthouse, a key navigational aid in the 19th and 20th centuries.

Another exhibit, which has current resonance, is a scroll dubbed Pacifying the South China Seas, hand-painted by an unknown artist circa 1910.



From left to right: Richard Wesley, Tung Chee Chen, CY Leung and Anthony J Hardy at the reopening of Hong Kong's Maritime Museum.

Buy the book

MORE sad news for Luddites who believe reading material is best delivered on paper — the International Chamber of Shipping is to produce its best-practice guides for shipping companies as eBooks.

ICS' publications will still be published by Marisec. However, from April, the chamber will sell eBooks through maritime booksellers that use eReader technology developed by Witherby Seamanship Group.

Buyers will choose between single-user versions, for the same recommended retail price as a print book, or network versions that offer up to five copies of the guide in question for twice the price.

"We believe that by using the proven WPG system it will be helpful to ship operators for our books to sit alongside [International Maritime Organization] regulations, as well as useful advice produced by other maritime bodies, in electronic form," said ICS spokesman Simon Bennett.

First off the — virtual — presses are the fourth editions of the ICS Bridge Procedures Guide, the ICS Guide to Helicopter/Ship Operations and the ICS/ISF Guidelines on the Application of the ISM Code. ■