**Hong Kong Maritime Museum Special Exhibition**

**Mapping Ming China’s Maritime World – The Selden Map and Other Treasures from University of Oxford**

Date: 21 March to 23 June 2014

Venue: Robert Y.T. Chen Gallery, Hong Kong Maritime Museum

The Hong Kong Maritime Museum will display highlights from the celebrated Chinese collections held at the University of Oxford in a temporary exhibition entitled “**Mapping Ming China’s Maritime World – The Selden Map and Treasures from University of Oxford”.**

This special exhibition tells the story of the maritime world of the late Ming-era China (mid-17th century). It features the Selden Map and other related treasures from the Oxford University’s Bodleian Libraries and the Ashmolean Museum. Collections from the Hong Kong Maritime Museum, as well as items from local collector K.L. Tam will also be featured. Most of the objects are displayed to the public in Hong Kong for the first time.

**The highlight of the exhibition is The Selden Map of China.** It is the earliest map to show shipping routes linking Ming-era China to markets in South Asia and beyond. It is also the first to depict China as part of a greater East and Southeast Asia, and not the centre of the known world. It has recently benefited from extensive conservation work and recent research that has shed new light on the map. Dating from the late Ming period, it shows China, Korea, Japan, the Philippines, Indonesia, Southeast Asia and part of India. It was bequeathed to Oxford in 1659 by John Selden, the London lawyer and historical and linguistic scholar. Other exhibits from Oxford will include the well-known **manuscript rutter** or manual of compass directions **Shun feng xiang song**, as well as the **Zhi nan zheng fa (The True Art of Pointing South).**

This exhibition is jointly organised by the Hong Kong Maritime Museum and Oxford University’s Bodleian Libraries. The University of Oxford is grateful to Dr Chung Hong Dak for his generous support of this exhibition.

The opening ceremony will be held on 20th March 2014. University of Oxford Chancellor Lord Chris Patten of Barnes and the Bodleian Librarian Mr. Richard Ovenden will join the opening ceremony. Press interviews for Lord Patten of Barnes and Mr. Ovenden will be from 5:30pm to 6:20pm.

A series of public lectures will be arranged during the exhibition period. An international academic conference will be held from 7th-8th June 2014 to discuss the latest research into this important period in Chinese maritime history, followed by the publication of the symposium in the end of 2014.

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**Resources**

The Hong Kong Maritime Museum is the home of Hong Kong’s maritime heritage past, present and future where we place Hong Kong’s maritime story into its local, regional and international context. Our vision is to become the maritime museum showcasing Hong Kong and China’s maritime connections to the world focused on the Pearl River Delta and the emergence and development of Hong Kong as a port and international shipping centre. [www.hkmaritimemuseum.org](http://www.hkmaritimemuseum.org)

Selden Map website: <http://seldenmap.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>. Photographs of the Selden map are available to the media. Please credit to: “The Bodleian Libraries, University of Oxford”

Oxford is one of the western world’s leading centres for the study of China, with the largest number of academics working on China anywhere in Europe. A dedicated new building to house the University’s China Centre will open in 2014. Hong Kong-based philanthropist Dickson Poon CBE donated £10million for the new centre. <http://www.st-hughs.ox.ac.uk/alumni/university-of-oxford-china-centre>

The Bodleian Libraries of the University of Oxford form the largest university library system in the United Kingdom. They include the principal University library—the Bodleian Library—which has been a library of legal deposit for 400 years; major research libraries; and libraries attached to faculties, departments and other institutions of the University. The combined library collections number more than 11 million printed items, in addition to 50,000 e-journals and vast quantities of materials in other formats.

<http://www.bodleian.ox.ac.uk/>

Founded in 1683, the Ashmolean Museum is home to the University of Oxford’s art and archaeology collections. It has one of the finest collections of Chinese art in Europe, ranging from jades and ceramics of the Neolithic period to contemporary paintings and prints. With three permanent galleries dedicated to these collections, the Museum presents an integrated display of art as appreciated both in China and in Europe.

<http://www.ashmolean.org/>