



Engaging the Public

Editorial Board

The annual Hong Kong Observatory Open Day was held on 29 and 30 March, when over 18,000 people visited the Observatory's headquarters despite the showery weather. Visitors generally thought that the Observatory staff's hospitality, the well-presented exhibits, the game booths and ecological tours helped increase their knowledge of meteorology and science and enhance their understanding of how the Observatory applies science and technology to serve the public. Scientific Officers who presented the weather live at the event and Dr Tin, the Observatory's mascot, were especially popular among the young visitors: they were kept



Uniformed aviation youth groups visit the Observatory during the Open Day.

Fun with the Public Open Day 2014



Mr KONG Wai, Scientific Officer of the Observatory, presents the weather at the Open Day.

busy by never-ending requests to be photographed with their new fans! Alongside the Observatory staff on duty, some 80 volunteers from Friends of the Observatory served as ambassadors at the Open Day, helping to welcome visitors during the event while also enjoying the great weather-themed fun.

In celebration of World Meteorological Day on 23 March (<http://www.wmo.int/worldmetday/>), this year's Open Day was organised on the theme of "Weather and Climate: Engaging the Youth", and a number of uniformed youth groups, including the Scouts Association, the Air Scouts, the Sea Scouts, the Air Cadets, the Hong Kong Youth Aviation Academy, the Sea Cadets, the CAS Cadet Corps and the AMS Cadet Corps, were invited to the event. Their knowledge of meteorological work and climate change was much enriched by their close encounters with meteorological equipment and conversations with Observatory staff. The young people came to the realisation that with climate change intricately related to their future, a positive and proactive response would be essential.

Meteorology Series IV: Behind the Scenes

LEUNG Wing-mo

With time passing by ever so slowly after retirement and life began to get a bit boring. So when RTHK invited me to host another Observatory-RTHK joint production of "Meteorology Series IV", it was a proposal too exciting to miss. At the first production meeting, the producer mentioned his expectation of me. He half jokingly said that it would be just fine if I could be as natural and persuasive as Sir David Attenborough. That was quite a challenge for a stoic guy like me. All I could mutter at the time were some weak pleas for patient guidance from the directors.

The production took me to Tianshan in one of its first snow in September, to an inundated Vietnam in October, to the typhoon-stricken Philippines in November and a bone-dry Australia in February. What impressed me most was what a Queensland farmer said of the drought there: "It could not be worse as this is already the 18th straight month without significant rain." Indeed, the best way to deal with adversity was to be optimistic, like what Oscar Wilde said, "We are all in the gutter, but some of us are looking at the stars."

The greatest challenge in filming the forsaken farmland in Australia was not the near 40-degree heat and the ultra strong UV rays, but to prevent the flies in their thousands swarming into my mouth when I (left in the photograph below) tried to talk like Sir David Attenborough!



Not quite a leisure boat ride, but an inspection of the inundated rice field of a Vietnamese farmer (the old man on the left). On the way back, the boat carrying the director and the camera man capsized. Fortunately, everyone was unharmed.



Months of dry weather have rendered Queensland practically grassless. The shepherd had to spend nearly A\$100,000 a year to buy feed for his 2,000 sheep - a significant increase in costs.