Dr Bard was born in Siberia, schooled in Harbin and, forsaking a career in music, studied medicine at HKU where he was awarded the Anderson Gold Medal, an award bestowed annually to a medical graduate with the highest aggregate marks for the entire course. At a recent book talk on his autobiography, held at HKU Libraries, Dr Bard entertained the audience with a vivid account of his life in HKU and Hong Kong in the 1930s.

**Fun but Not Easy**

Life at HKU in the 1930s was not easy but it was fun! Dr Bard recalls only 5 of his 45 classmates managing to graduate in 1939 at the end of their six years of studies. But there were lots of happy memories too, including parties, games of volleyball and “lapta” (a Russian game resembling baseball), going through the tough ragging in the first year, later ragging batches of greenhorns who came after him, and getting up to all kinds of mischief with his Lugard Hallmates, which led to many visits to the office of then Vice-Chancellor, Sir William Hornell.

**Most Humiliating Time**

During the Second World War he served as a medical officer in the Hong Kong Volunteer Defence Corps with fellow officer Sir Albert Rodrigues 羅理基爵士 (MBBS 1935; Hon LLD 1962), former Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, HKU. Both he and Sir Albert were interned together as prisoners-of-war at Sham Shui Po Camp in 1942 when the city fell to the Japanese. It was in the camp that music once again entered Dr Bard’s life when he formed a small band, which included Sir Albert playing guitar. The band performed three well-received “Bard Concerts”; the programmes of which are kept in the Hong Kong Museum of History.

Looking back on those days Dr Bard poignantly described them as “the most humiliating time in my life”.

Turning 93 this year, Dr Solomon Matthew Bard 白爾德 (MBBS 1939; Hon DLitt 1976) has never lost his zest, curiosity and capacity for enthusiasm; all of which shine through in his autobiography *Light and Shade Sketches from an Uncommon Life*.

“There was no mistaking the excitement and pride which all of us – novice clinical students – felt in taking our first steps as medics, wearing white gowns and stethoscopes dangling around our necks.”

- *Light and Shade Sketches from an Uncommon Life*

He was awarded the Efficiency Decoration (Military) for his service in the Corps.

**Archaeology and Music**

After the war, he returned to HKU in 1956 and took up the position of University Health Officer, later retitled Director, University Health Service, a post he stayed in for over twenty years. He retired from HKU in 1976 and actively pursued his passions of archaeology and music.

From 1976 to 1983, Dr Bard was executive officer of the Antiquities and Monuments Office. An accomplished violinist, he was leader of the Hong Kong Philharmonic Orchestra for many years, occasionally taking up the conductor’s baton. When he visited Hong Kong in March, he conducted the Hong Kong Chinese Orchestra at its “Passionne Shanghai” concert.
Dr Bard (2nd row, 1st left) and his hallmates at Lugard Hall, 1936. A large number of his hallmates were from Russia, Sri Lanka, and India. Rivalry between Lugard, Morrison and Ricci Halls was intense.

The Medical Class of 1939 Graduation at the Great Hall in the Main Building, together with Dr Duncan Sloss, Vice-Chancellor (1937-49), Professor Lindsay Ride, Dean of Medicine, Professor Gordon King and Professor P B Wilkinson. Which one is Dr Bard? The first standing on the left.

This photograph was one of the very few taken inside Sham Shui Po Camp in 1943. Standing from left: Dr Solomon Bard and Sir Albert Rodrigues (1911-2006) (MBBS 1935; Hon LLD 1962), former Pro-Chancellor and Chairman of Council, HKU.