

British Club Active Living Section

Lunch Presentation titled: “Searching for Billie: A journalist’s quest to understand his truly amazing mother’s past”

Chairperson’s Introduction of the Speaker:

A very warm welcome to our lunch presentation, and especially to our speaker Ian Gill, who with his wife Jean, have travelled from home in Manila for this presentation. Ian is a veteran journalist and author whose distinguished career has spanned more than four decades across the Asia–Pacific region.

Conceived in the notorious Stanley Internment camp in Japanese occupied Hong Kong, born in New Zealand, and educated in England, Switzerland and Hawaii, Ian began his career in journalism before moving to Asia, where he has lived and worked for the past 46 years. Over that time, he has reported and written for some of the region’s leading publications including the *Asian Wall Street Journal* in Singapore, *Asiaweek* and *Insight* magazines in Hong Kong, and the *Fiji Sun* in Suva. His byline has also appeared in respected international outlets such as the *South China Morning Post* and other major regional media.

For some twenty years, Ian was based in Manila with the Asian Development Bank, where he wrote extensively on economic reform, regional development, and the social transformations shaping Asia’s modern history.

His work shows the careful accuracy of an experienced reporter and the insights of a good storyteller bringing to life how people’s everyday experiences are shaped by wider changes in the world. That same depth of insight underpins his latest book, *Searching for Billie*, in which Ian turns his investigative eye to his own family history to illuminate one woman, his mother’s absolutely remarkable journey through the upheavals of twentieth-century China and Asia.

We are privileged to have Ian with us today to share his experiences and reflections from a truly remarkable career in journalism and writing. Please join me in giving a very warm welcome to our guest speaker — Ian Gill.