



**Southeast Asian
Ceramic Society**



Revealing the Magnificent Tang Dynasty Secrets of Famen Temple

A talk by Patrica Bjaaland Welch

Wednesday 11 August 2010 @ 7 p.m.

Venue: 82 Cairnhill Road, Singapore

This lecture is for members only.

Application forms for membership will be available on the evening of the talk.

Synopsis

Famen Temple (法門寺), located 120 km west of Xi'an, gained international fame in 1981 when the pagoda collapsed to reveal a Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) underground crypt that contained the largest and most complete underground religious vault ever found in China. Consisting of the Buddha's finger bone relics and royal offerings of gold and silver vessels, ritual implements, glassware, pearls, gems, coins, silks and brocades, the finds, totaling 2,499 items, excel all other finds of pagoda deposits, especially for sheer magnificence, and provide rare insights into Buddhist practices and imperial sponsorship of a temple during the Tang. The crypt also disclosed several pieces of the famous long-thought lost "secret porcelain" known as *mise* (秘色), revealing its famous glaze. Join us as member Patricia Bjaaland Welch, who recently visited Famensi, shares with us the results of recent research and her April visit to the site.

About the speaker

Patricia Bjaaland Welch was a University Lecturer on Chinese religion and philosophy at Boston University. She now works in the corporate world but is an independent scholar in the area of Chinese art and symbols. An active docent at Singapore's Asian Civilisations Museum, she is also the author of Oxford University Press' *Chinese New Year* and *Chinese Art: A Guide to Motifs and Visual Imagery* (Tuttle/Periplus 2008).

This talk is organised by the
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