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| **1276** | The Song Dynasty, retreating from marauding Mongol hordes, moves its court to Hong Kong. The Emperor is defeated, and drowns himself along with his court officials in the waters off Hong Kong. |
| **1557** | The Portuguese set up a trading base on nearby Macau. |
| **1714** | The British East India Company establishes offices in Guangzhou. Britain immediately starts to import Opium, causing massive addiction to the drug in China. |
| **1840** | The First Opium War breaks out. The war is caused by the Chinese seizing an estimated half tonne of British imported opium and burning it. |
| **1841** | The British rout the Chinese forces, occupying ports along the Yangtze River, including Shanghai. The Chinese sign a peace treaty ceding the island of Hong Kong to Britain. |
| **1841** |  A landing party raises the British flag at Possession Point on Hong Kong Island claiming the island in the name of the Queen. |
| **1843** | Hong Kong’s first governor, Sir Henry Pottinger is dispatched to take charge of the twenty or so villages on the island and conduct British trade. |
| **1845** | The Hong Kong Police Force is established. |
| **1856** | The second Opium War breaks out. |
| **1860** – | The Chinese find themselves on the losing side again and are forced to cede the Kowloon peninsula and Stonecutter’s Island to the British. |
| **1864** | The Hong Kong Shanghai Bank (HSBC) is founded in Hong Kong. |
| **1888** | The Peak Tram starts operation. |
| **1898** | Britain forces more concessions from the failing Qing Dynasty, gaining a 99-year lease of the New Territories. This lease will end in 1997. |
| **1924** | Kai Tak Airport is built. |
| **1937** | Japan invades China resulting in a flood of refuges heading for Hong Kong swelling the population to around 1.5 million |
| **1941** | After attacking Pearl Harbour, the Japanese army invades Hong Kong. The overstretched colony resists the invasion for two weeks. Western citizens, including the governor, are interned in Stanley, while Chinese citizens are massacred in large numbers. |
| **1945** | As Japan surrenders to the Allies, they surrender Hong Kong, returning it to British ownership. |
| **1950’s** | Many refugees provide the labour for Hong Kong’s rapidly expanding manufacturing industry. |
| **1973** | Hong Kong’s first new town at Sha Tin is built in an attempt to help relieve the city’s housing crisis. |
| **1970’s** | The British and Chinese government begin to negotiate about Hong Kong’s status after the 99-year lease of the New Territories runs out in 1997. |
| **1984** | Margaret Thatcher announces that the whole of Hong Kong is to be handed back to China at midnight on June 30th 1997. |
| **1992** | Chris Patten, Hong Kong’s last governor arrives to take up his post. |
| **1997** | The Hong Kong Handover takes place. |
| **2003** | Hong Kong suffers a deadly outbreak of the SARS virus, which kills 300 people. |
| **2005** | Hong Kong Disneyland opens. |