

Prof. John Hannavy PhD FRPS

Great Photographic Journeys *In the footsteps of 19th century photographers*

3rd March – 28th March 2008
Monday to Friday 9.30am – 4.30pm



Domes of the Cathedral of the Assumption, Moscow, Russia

Every once in a blue moon, a project comes along which is so absorbing that it takes over your life! For Professor John Hannavy PhD FRPS FBIPP, the Great Photographic Journeys project was one such. It culminated with the publication of a book in late 2007, and now, in March 2008, an exhibition of some of the photographs at Fenton House, Bath, the headquarters of the Royal Photographic Society.

From an initial idea about ten years ago – that a good way of trying to understand more fully the challenges faced by Victorian photographers might be to recreate their journeys – the project finally started to come to life in 2001 with the opportunity to make a journey from Cairo to Abu Simbel, walking in the footsteps of Francis Frith.

The award of a Winston Churchill Travelling Fellowship in 2002 enabled journeys to Russia and the Ukraine, in the footsteps of Roger Fenton, and to China Hong Kong and Macau in the footsteps of John Thomson to be completed.

Then came journeys across India from Kolkata to Shimla in the footsteps of Samuel Bourne. Further journeys to Scotland, France, Cyprus, and a second trip to China, completed the travel and photography aspect of the project, and the resulting 256-page full colour book was published in November 2007 by Dewi Lewis Publishing. The book is not just about travel photography – although it offers an enlightening comparison between the challenges, opportunities and constraints which faced the Victorian pioneers, and those which face today's independent traveller – it is also about the changes which have taken place in culture, in travel, in living conditions, and in attitudes since the first photographers left Britain with their cameras more than a century and a half ago.