

Christchurch Branch Newsletter

March 2013

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Monthly Meetings Held

Last Thursday of the Month (except January, September, November and December)

7:30 pm

Rewi Alley Education and Cultural Centre
(Wharenui School)

Next Meeting - 28th March 2013

Speaker: Judy Livingston

Judy and Eric took a group of photographers to China last April. While there they visited such picturesque places as Guilin and Zhangjiajie National Park; a photographer's paradise! Then they went by boat down the Li river to Yangshuo, where they saw a spectacular evening show on water "Impressions of Liu Sanjie". From there it was off to a Yao village of Longji in the rice terraces, then by train from Liuzhou to Hunan, visited the ancient river city of Fenghuang and ended up in Hangzhou then Shanghai. 23 days of delightful sights, & people - a great tour.

The photo shows a cormorant fisherman. The birds are not fed during the day and are taken out at night to fish, wearing a collar to prevent them swallowing the fish they catch. They can live for up to 20 years and cost more than a buffalo! Come along and hear Judy regale us with her impressions and memories, and of course pictures!!



Important:

Please note: As April meeting is on Anzac Day, it has been moved to 2 May .

New Committee

Following our branch Annual General Meeting on 28 February, our committee has remained largely unchanged, except that Vivien Qin is now treasurer and we welcome aboard George Elder. Please remember that no committee has a monopoly on knowledge or good ideas. We are always open to your comments and suggestions, so please approach a committee member if you feel you have something constructive to offer. Updated committee details are on the front page of this newsletter.

Member News

A warm welcome to new branch members Michelle MacWilliam.

Lantern Festival 3 - 4 March, to Welcome the Year of the Snake

Well, what can one say? 100s of hand-crafted lanterns, amazing onstage performances, loads of food and craft stalls etc etc. It makes you wonder what they can do next year to top it!! It certainly gets bigger and better. Probably the most exciting lantern was a new one, The Lady White Snake lantern, which was made in Zigong to celebrate the Year of the Snake. The Lantern Festival has certainly become part of the local calendar, and it was great to see the multitude of cultures enjoying a great event.

Ferry and Auje van Mansum in Zhangye

Dave Adamson writes: Have a look at <http://nzchinasociety.org.nz/9615/ferry-and-aukje-in-zhangye-gansu-province/> for Nelson branch members Ferry and Aukje van Mansum's entertaining diary of their experiences at Zhangye University in Gansu Province, where they are teaching English. There's a lot of very interesting reading to be had. Have a particular look at the article on shopping, *Shopping with a Shadow*. Having been with Ferry on a prominent persons and leaders tour a few years ago, when we had a great time going down the back streets and ferreting through all the stalls for bargains and unusual things, I can just imagine him in Zhangye!! Ferry and Aukje were secondary language teachers in Nelson. By all accounts they're having a wonderful time in Zhangye - and I'm sure their students are as well!

24 -26 May 2013 National Contional Conference Update

Planning for this important event is coming along very well. Attached is the registration form and DRAFT programme, and we would encourage you to get your registration in early.

We are expecting a good number of delegates from branches around the country, and it would be great if you could give some thought to offering home hosting to someone. It is a wonderful experience to have someone you perhaps have not met before, in your home. You know what they say; there are no

strangers, only friends you haven't met yet.

Nearer the time we will be looking for branch members to help out in all sorts of ways, so please be prepared to be part of the support team during the three days of the conference.

China National Day Banquet

Have a look at these amazing sights!! : <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/motoring/picturegalleries/9882839/Chinas-overloaded-delivery-vehicles-trucks-scooters-bikes-and-motor-tricycles.html>

China Daily Article - Circle of life

A school teacher has risen to the challenge of caring for his Alzheimer's-stricken mother, in memory of his childhood, Wu Ni reports in Shanghai.

Chen Binqiang often remembers how he played and slept on his mother's back as a child while she toiled on their hometown farm in Pan'an county, Zhejiang province. His mother would usually tie him to her with a wide, long belt.

Chen, now a 37-year-old middle school teacher, uses the same belt to strap his mother against him so they can ride together on his electric bike to his work. Chen's mother, 64-year-old Chen Yueguang, has struggled with Alzheimer's disease since 2007. The illness overtook her very quickly and she has lost the ability to speak and has become incontinent. None of Chen's other family members, however, could take care of their sick mother. Chen's father died in a traffic accident when he was 8; his two sisters married far away; and his wife has a 92-year-old bedridden grandmother to look after. A nursing home was not an option, either.

"In the preliminary stage of the disease, when my mother maintained some mental ability, some relatives asked whether she was willing to live in a nursing home. After thinking for a while, my mother replied that she would like to live with her son," recalls Chen. "My tears flowed immediately when I heard her words and I was determined I will never leave her alone," Chen says.

Chen taught Chinese in the Central School of Lengshui town, which is about 30 kilometers away from his home in Pan'an. Due to the long distance, he spent five days at school and only went home on weekends. When he announced he would take his mother to work, even his wife was doubtful and worried.

"I really didn't think it is realistic for him to take care of his mother in school. If he lost his job because of this, who would sustain our family?" says Chen's wife, Fu Liuping.

But Chen was determined, and soon he was strapping a safety helmet onto his mother's head, settling



her on the bike's back seat, and securing her snugly to his back with the belt for the ride to school. "My mother used to take me around with the belt and now I am using it to take her. Every mother would dedicate the best she could offer to their children, and I would like to try my best to care for her," Chen says.

Luckily, the school supported Chen's idea and provided him a free dormitory to accommodate his mother.

A timetable in Chen's room reveals his busy day:

1 am and 5:30 am: Wake up mother to take her to the toilet;

7 am: Feed mother breakfast and comb her hair;

teach classes during the day;

9 pm: Take a walk with mother;

10 pm: Help mother fall asleep.

Chen Yueguang has the mental capability of a 1-year-old child, and her son must feed her at every meal. Though engaged in the chores of looking after his mother, the teacher is popular among his students as "he is humorous and always has a big smile".

Lu Yixuan, one of Chen's students, says she feels "teacher is always in a hurry".

Recently, things got a little easier for the mother and son, as his story gets known. With the help of Pan'an county's education bureau, Chen was transferred to a new post in Pan'an Experimental Junior Middle School in October 2012. The new school is only five minutes' ride from his home, which means the dutiful son could take care of his mother more conveniently. Chen feels happiest when his mother is looking at him although she cannot speak.

"She must have forgotten who I am, and she could not call my name. But she surely knows that I am kind to her," he says. "That's enough for me."

In December, Chen was elected one of 20 candidates for Touching China Awards, held annually by China Central Television to honor those whose performances have moved the nation over the past year.

MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION (Due 30 June 2013)

I/We would like to renew/commence membership of the **Christchurch Branch of the New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc.** for 2013

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---------------------------------|-------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Student / Unwaged | \$ 18.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Single | \$ 22.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Family | \$ 30.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Educational Institute/Corporate | \$ 35.00 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | Donation | \$ <input type="text"/> |

PAYMENT METHODS:

Please make cheque payable to NZ China Friendship Society

OR

Direct Credit our Chch NZCFS Kiwibank Account 38-9010-0816274-00

(NOTE: please ensure your name and the word "Sub" are in the reference)

Please fill in below so we can check all details are correct:

Name: Surname: Given names:

Spouse's/Partner's Name: Surname: Given names:

Address (including Postal Code)

Phone: **Cell Phone:**

Email Address:

PLEASE NOTE: Monthly newsletters are sent by email. If you do not have email, please advise a committee member and it will be posted to you.

Have you any suggestions for the society eg Activities, Speakers, Other:

Please send your cheque and form to:

Tony Tian
341 Wairakei Road
Burnside
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