

President: Ferry van Mansum
Phone: (03) 546 6574 **email:** ferryvanmansum@gmail.com
Secretary: Barbara Markland
Phone: (03) 544 4712 **email:** erm@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz



No. 5 - June 2017



June Meeting Tours for Rewi Friday, June 30, 5:30 p.m.



This month we have the opportunity to hear about two different tours to China, both related to the life and work of Rewi Alley.

Alison Horn is related to Rewi through her Alley ancestors. In April this year Alison and her partner David Ayre travelled to China as part of a family group that joined celebrations marking the 90th anniversary of his arrival in China. They visited many of the places where he lived and worked, to see how those areas and projects had developed.

Richard Brudvik-Lindner was a member of the NZ delegation that travelled to China recently to commemorate the 120th anniversary of Rewi Alley's birth, a milestone honoured in China by a ceremony in the Great Hall of the People conducted by China's vice president. Richard's presentation recounts a whirlwind trip that included visits to Rewi Alley's residence in the Old Italian embassy in Beijing, and in the provincial town (now a city of nearly a million people) of Honghu, abutting the flood-prone Yangtze river, and the site of Rewi's first job in China at the main fire station in Shanghai. While this commemoration was exciting to many Chinese and covered in a front page story in the China Daily, it barely made a blip in NZ, though the NZ Ambassador did participate in the ceremony. Hear all about this in Richard's presentation.

The meeting will be at the usual place, Hearing House, 354 Trafalgar Square (next to Synagogue Lane). Visitors are welcome.

**To arrange catering, please contact Barbara Markland
 by Monday, June 26
 ph. (03)544 4712 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz
 Please make sure she knows you are coming!**

A Weekend With Helene Wong

Nelson NZCFS Branch enjoyed a special weekend with '*Being Chinese*' author Helene Wong and her husband Colin Knox. On the last Friday in May, our usual monthly meeting became a special one with a change of venue to the Jaycee Room at Founders' Park and an increased attendance with extra guests, all eager to hear Helene Wong's story.

The concept for this meeting had been developed by Vice-President Lori Brudvik Lindner after meeting Helene and reading the book. We were lucky to book her for our May meeting and to arrange a larger venue for an outreach meeting. Nelson Oriental Restaurant brought in food for 53 members and this was easy to serve at the larger venue. Members also appreciated being able to park easily nearby. An extra 20 visitors arrived for the 7pm address, which was capacity for the Jaycee room.

While many of our members had read '*Being Chinese*', and realised its significance within the history of Chinese in New Zealand, meeting its author was an extra pleasure. Helene's address reprised many of the issues raised in her book, published to acclaim in 2016, but it was enthralling to hear her speak personally of her own rural and suburban childhood, university in the 1960s and her work for Prime Minister Muldoon. Helene drew us into her realisation that she needed to find out about her Chinese origins in order to more fully understand her own identity. Her research into her family stories and the experiences of generations of Chinese in New Zealand proved to be both fascinating and challenging. Some of her audience have themselves been subjects of suspicion, and covert or overt abuse because of their Chinese appearance, occupations, or names. Others in Helene's audience, having worked for many years on developing friendship and cooperation were nevertheless challenged to be reminded of the way our public policies and private behaviours have been so discriminating and hurtful. Sadly this is still happening, even while we appreciate the valuable and diverse contributions Chinese make to multicultural New Zealand. Helene Wong's generosity in sharing her journey of self-discovery was greatly appreciated by all present.

On Saturday morning following the Branch meeting a group, including Helene and Colin, gathered at Zumo's meeting room for the fascinating local story of Appo Hocton presented by great-granddaughter Diana Clark. Then, in an NMIT van, driven by Ian Lister, the group went out to Dovedale to see the Appo houses and to visit the graveyard where he and some of his descendants are buried in the cemetery. Lunch at the Apple Shed in Mapua enabled our visitors to see more of the countryside and the region's tourist attractions.



Our photographs show the Appo Hocton headstone and the group accompanying Helene and Colin.

NZCFS and Yunnan Province MoU – Recently NZCFS signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the Yunnan Provincial People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (Yunnan Youxie).

The purpose of the MoU is to promote mutual understanding and friendship through exchanges.

Both parties have agreed to start friendly exchanges and cooperation in various fields including agriculture, technology, commerce, indigenous culture, youth development, education, tourism and sister-cities.

NZCFS National Conference in Christchurch 2017

The conference this year had the motto "Rewi Alley - New Zealand's and China's Shared Son".

During the day the college student Peter Yu recited from Rewi's poetry, there was an excellent musical recital on the guzheng by master Chen Xiyao and there were performances from the children of the Rewi Alley Chinese School in between some very interesting and entertaining speakers.

Opening speeches were from our National president David Bromwich, Mr. Qu Guangzhou from the Chinese Embassy and Mr. Felix Hao from Youxie, who were present with our friends Linda and Karen.

Eric Livingstone made a great presentation about the early years of Rewi and celebrated the new colourful edition of the book "Rewi Alley from Canterbury to China", originally written by Philippa Reynolds. Professor Maurice Alley continued with "Rewi Alley's education philosophy in the digital age". The core values of Rewi stay valid in the digital age and can be described as follows: If you hear it, you can remember, if you see it you might remember, but if you do it, you will remember.

Professor Dov Bing will have his book about Rewi published later this year and talked about the difficult period when contact with China was frowned upon because of the Cold War mentality, with the cloud of being a communist hanging over people communicating with the "enemy". Entertaining stories nowadays, but at the time it caused all kinds of problems when the NZCFS was established. To highlight the new website "rewialley.kiwi.nz", Tony Tian showed us some of the pages intended to increase the knowledge about this remarkable man and his achievements. Next was Izze Guo, who presented a video from Shandan Bailie School, where the NZ teacher Michelle Siloata is doing such an excellent job continuing the Rewi Alley education legacy. Author Elspeth Sandys introduced the book she is writing about the man behind Rewi from the perspective of his family. She exchanged letters with her uncle but unfortunately lost these letters! Re-invigorating the He Ming Qing scholarship was the topic of Di Madgin's talk mentioning Kathleen Hall, another important Kiwi friend in China. Tony Brown from the NZ China Council remembered Rewi from their time at Christchurch Boys' High School and meetings in Peking 40 years ago as someone who was down-to-earth and said: "I believe in the common man".

Dave Bromwich finished talking about how Rewi's spirit is still important nowadays with the NZCFS involvement at grass root level and how this will endure in the future.

All the presentations together gave very detailed and personal impressions of a man who was important for both countries and of whom the NZCFS can be proud of.

The following were elected to the National Executive:

President: Dave Bromwich

Treasurer: Chris Goodwin

Secretary: Simon Appleton

Vice President South Island: Dave Adamson

Vice President North Island Northern: George Andrews

Vice President Central: Luke Qin

Executive: Miao Fan (Hamilton), John Hodgson (Tauranga), Heiko Lade (Hawke's Bay), Ken Liu (Auckland) and Deborah Rhode (Christchurch).

- Ferry van Mansum



From Nelson Executive, June

- Art Exhibition: It is hoped to have an exhibition over 2 weeks, including China Week. A theme has to be decided, to do with China and Chinese Culture. Perhaps 'Memories of China'. Possible venues were suggested - Trailways, Rutherford, Museum, NMIT with the input of Art and Design Faculty students. The Refinery is unavailable to the branch. It was suggested a sub-committee be formed to make the arrangements.
- Helene Wong: Thanks to Lori and Jane and all others involved in ensuring the event was a success. Students' involvement was pleasing. Good connections were made between people during the evening which was a great success and opens up possibilities for the future. It was felt Ms Wong's book is relevant to schools and NMIT. Ferry is to investigate and see if funds are available to put a copy in libraries.
- Guang Chang Lu school visit: The school's request is in the hands of the Huangshi Education Dept. Information will come to Jane.
- The discrepancy between money in and expenditure for meals is because of the free meals provided to speakers, MLAs, and Appo Hocton Scholar, also people sometimes ordering and not coming to the meeting.

Rewi Alley Poem of the Month

In June, as we continue through Rewi Alley's anniversaries year, we are hearing from branch members who were able to be part of delegations in April with a special Rewi Alley focus. They are in the long tradition of New Zealanders (including Nelsonians) visiting Rewi himself or his memorial sites. Many of us have visited his apartment, now a museum, which was provided for him in the grounds of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (CPAFFC). After moving permanently to Beijing in 1953, Rewi made many journeys around China and around the world. His trips to the provinces in China were to notice the progress made towards building the 'new China' which had been his focus for several decades. Later there were many trips to further his involvement with the peace movement, attending many peace conferences and congresses, often as a New Zealand representative. He received a QSO from the New Zealand Government in 1985 for community services. For a brief chronology of Rewi's life you can go to <http://nzchinasociety.org.nz/27317/a-chronology-of-rewi-alleys-life/>.

These two fragments of a poem written in Auckland in February 1972, reflect Rewi Alley's underlying belief that a peaceful and progressive world comes from enlightened education theory and practice where young people learn to appreciate the value of working together for peaceful outcomes. This was written in Auckland, dated February 24th 1972.

SCHOOL YOUTH AT OTARA

Samoan, Rarotongan, Maori students give
welcome addresses in their native speech;
a half-Samoan half-Chinese
who is head prefect makes his
in the common language of Oceania
And I was in a high school
in the Auckland suburb of Otara

.....
New Zealand as the new Polynesian centre
teaching better how to serve the people
of all these islands in clear down-to-earth
theory and practice together

From *Poems for Aotearoa*, pages 52 and 53