

New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc.

President's Notebook December 2009

Website: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz



REWI ALLEY MAKES TOP TEN

Great news! Over 56 million votes cast recently on an internet survey organised by China Radio International to find the Top Ten Foreign Friends of China over the last 60 years saw Rewi Alley recording millions of votes to be number seven.

The final Top Ten Foreign Friends is an amazing list of outstanding individuals headed by the Canadian Doctor Norman Bethune for whom the New Zealand missionary nurse, Kathleen Hall smuggled medical supplies through the Japanese lines to keep his medical clinic operational.

The list includes John Rabe, the revered German working in Nanjing, who saved thousands from slaughter in that city during the Massacre in 1937. Each of the Top Ten has made memorable efforts in aid of the Chinese people, many of whom were friends of Rewi Alley like Edgar Snow of USA, Dr Joseph Needham of the UK and Israel Epstein of Poland.

PHILIPPA REYNOLDS GOES TO BEIJING

An Award Ceremony is to be held in Beijing on December 8th when a niece of Rewi Alley, Philippa Reynolds of Nelson, will receive an Award on his behalf in the Great Hall of the People. Philippa in 1997 on behalf of the Christchurch Gansu Friendly Relations Committee, wrote a biography "Rewi Alley - From Canterbury To China" to recognise the 100 year celebrations of Rewi Alley's birth and visited many of his residences in China during that year.

2010 GARDEN TOUR FILLING FAST

Next April / May the Society Tour two week tour is being led by Diana Madgin & Bill Willmott to visit China's most beautiful gardens and historical sites in southern China ending in Guilin. The places on this tour are filling fast so contact Des Kearns at House of Travel 0800 808025 early if you considering going....

HONGHU VISITORS

Rewi Alley's exploits on behalf of the ordinary people were remembered when a Delegation arrived 1st

December in Christchurch from Hubei Province where he saved thousands from starvation during 1932, only five years after his arrival in China.

In Honghu City where this event occurred, the small guest house Rewi Alley stayed in for seven nights is preserved as a memorial, the city library is named after him as is a major school. Honghu City remembers Rewi Alley because of his successful efforts in shipping grain through warring armies when he came under fire, to save people facing a second annual famine and flood. At that time Rewi Alley was working as a fireman in Shanghai, donating half his leave time volunteering for flood relief work.

Rewi Alley's efforts in forming thousands of Chinese Industrial Co-operatives during the war and later the Bailie Schools are more widely known.

REGIONAL MEETING

What a full agenda the regional meeting of Lower North Island Branches had on 7 November. Congratulations to Chair Christine Strickland and Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Whanganui, and Wellington branches and their presidents on what must have been a great occasion ending with a Chinese meal.

Good discussions covered tours, projects, events from the last national Executive meeting and delegations plus updates on branch activities. The exchange of branch newsletters, fundraising, and having a well stocked branch library were among many topics covered.

2010 YEAR OF THE TIGER

All the best for the Chinese New Year of the Tiger

Seasons greetings to you and to your loved ones.
May you all enjoy memorable family times and restful holidays as we prepare for the New Year.

God bless,

Eric Livingston

Eric Livingstone, National President