

New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

President: June Clark 10 Peppin Avenue, Richmond.
Phone/fax: 03 544 7834 email: juneclark@ts.co.nz
Secretary: Barbara Markland 23 Polglase Street, Richmond.
Phone: 03 544 4712 email: erm@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz



No. 7 - November 2009

~ Next Meeting ~

Evey McAuliffe "China at Full Speed"

Now returned from her recent trip to China as a member of the 2009 Prominent Persons and Leaders Tour, Evey will share her impressions and photographs of "an amazing trip" with us.

Having visited China in the mid-eighties, Evey was blown away by the changes. She feels that the tour was not only an education for her, but something she can share through her work as Coordinator of the Nelson Multicultural Council to promote positive race relations and cultural diversity.

Evey's enthusiasm for all she experiences will make this a fascinating last Branch meeting for 2009.



As usual, Branch business will be dealt with prior to our Chinese meal costing \$12. Our speaker will begin immediately after the meal. Friends and visitors are welcome but please notify Barbara when you ring so that we have accurate numbers for the meal.

Friday 13 November .. Hearing House .. 5:30 pm

To arrange catering please ring:

Barbara Markland Ph. 544 4712 by Tuesday 10 November.



NZCFS PROJECTS TOUR RETURNS: The highly successful Projects Tour, ably led by Dave Bromwich, has returned to New Zealand after three weeks visiting some of the projects that we support in Hebei, Shaanxi, Gansu and Guangxi Provinces.

For all the highlights we will have to wait until Kathy Beatson and Royden Smith report back early next year, but the group were thrilled to meet all three current He Ming Qing Scholars, spend time with Lu Wanru and Ma Baoru who have done so much for the NZCFS (and were presented with their Honorary Life Memberships), be at the opening of the new clinic that was reconstructed after the earthquake and partially funded by NZCFS, visit Kathleen Hall's village of Songjiazhuang, see Rewi Alley's cave house in Shuangshipu, visit several remote project villages, enjoy superb hospitality and meet so many wonderful people, especially in the Women's Federations.



HMQ Scholar, Shen Qianqian
with Kathy Beatson



LAST MEETING: Liu Guozhong, a Vice Principal of Shandan Baillie School, and his wife were welcomed to the September meeting which took the form of a pot luck lunch. It was great to have three family connections of Rewi Alley present in Phillipa Reynolds, Gladwen McIntyre and Bruce Ward.

Liu Guozhong is studying Agricommerce at Massey University at present, with a view to helping Chinese farmers market their product on a more global scale. We were told that the school Rewi Alley set up in the 1940's was very successful within 2-3 years, training technicians. The philosophy was to train hand and brain together but the school became more academic until Rewi took it back to basic animal husbandry, horticulture and agriculture.

Although there were no guaranteed jobs after the requisite 5 years study as in other schools, the Shandan Baillie School developed a very good reputation for producing good workers. Numbers dropped when farmers became reluctant for their children to continue farming. It had become difficult to obtain jobs in agriculture and many went to the cities looking for work and so other courses were developed - including mechanics and teacher training. The school now has about 2000 students and runs courses for adults at weekends.

From 1989 to the present the school has gone through several stages of development: Government money was put in to start student cooperatives which proved to be too demanding and so the project was unable to continue. Local people were trained to increase the capacity of local farms. This was run in conjunction with a Canadian cooperative association and was more successful. At another time the school became a base for projects linked to different districts.

In 2007 a cooperative law was introduced by the Chinese Government which required registration with the Industrial and Commercial Bureau. Again there was Canadian expertise and some financial support made available. It was not legal for small cooperatives to become large federations perhaps because of concerns about experiences of the 1960's. Progress is slow as pilots, and research, are necessary.

The average annual tuition fee is 2400 yuan (\$NZ480), plus another ¥2000 for food. ¥1500 is available from the government to allow students to attend a vocational school, and some girls are supported with a view to their education extending into their families.



It has proved difficult to change older people's views of cooperatives after their experiences with communes. Liu Guozhong believes the training of farmers, and financial backing, are of great importance if cooperatives are to be a success.

In recognition of his dedicated involvement in the development of cooperatives and his huge contribution to relationships with the Society, Liu Guozhong was presented with Honorary Life membership of the NZCFS by Royden Smith, on behalf of our National Executive.

NATIONAL CONFERENCE 2010: The 2010 AGM and Conference will be hosted by the Hamilton Branch from 22 - 24 May, 2010. The draft programme is looking very exciting and it would be great to see a good contingent from Nelson there - perhaps you could combine it with a North Island Autumn holiday?

CHINA FRIENDSHIP AWARD TO NEW ZEALANDERS: Two New Zealanders, David (Dave) Feickert (read his report below) and Lewis (Lew) Dagger, received the prestigious China Friendship Award as part of the recent celebrations for the 60th Anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

At the impressive ceremony held in the Great Hall of the People, Beijing, on September 30, Vice Premier Zhang Dejiang presented the Award to the two New Zealand recipients among the 100 "foreign experts" from around the world honoured on this occasion.

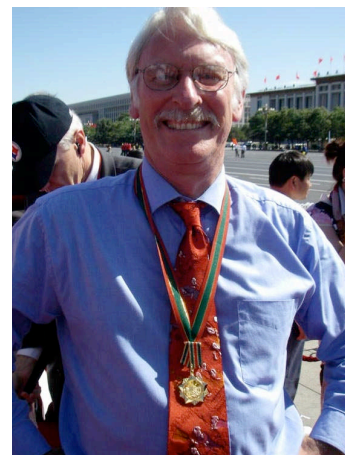
The tablet that is part of the Award, is inscribed with the words: "This Certificate of Friendship is Awarded in appreciation of your enthusiastic support for China's construction and your friendly co-operation". A gold medal was also presented. Dave received the Award for his work in coal mine safety programmes throughout China and Lew for his specialised involvement in the horticulture industry in Yunnan Province.

... by Douglas Day, Wellington Branch Newsletter

DAVE FEICKERT'S REPORT FROM TIAN'ANMEN SQUARE (Excerpts): The best anecdotes always involve national characteristics going on display. These normally bloom most in moments of crisis, ... but here are a few from a relatively calm series of events during Chinese National Day Celebrations in Tian'anmen Square.

We were gathered into the Foreign Experts' Hotel and each given an apartment - two bedrooms, a lounge and a kitchen plus bathroom and balcony, within view of the Olympics Birdsnest stadium...

My first conversation with one of the Americans was about the 'terrible smog' as he called the mixture of water vapour and pollution; but then miraculously the smog totally disappeared on National Day for the parade and we all got sunburned from the blazing orb in the sky. I don't think he worked out how the skies had cleared so easily, but old Beijing hands know very well that there are ways (making it rain in the early morning); also that there can be blue sky days if there is a nice breeze to blow the pollution away. His prejudices about the Chinese dated from the 1950's and would have been irritating if he had not been so completely predictable...



Vice-Premier Zhang Dejiang made an excellent job of shaking 100 hands, including that of a blind Austrian and a wheel-chair bound German. He also went out of his way to shake the hands of all the wives and the few husbands who were there. Next Premier, I would say, and a real 'ladies man' as the Welshman said.

Premier Wen made a very warm speech to us, without notes, but with translation, and indeed I can see why they appreciate all the talents which have been deployed in China - from South Africans helping with animal farming in dry parts of the country, to nuclear engineers and mine safety guys, to aerospace engineers and computer whiz-kids, early childhood education and human genome profs.....the list is quite long - chosen from 10,000 names submitted by ministries, provincial governments and the like. Apparently, there were 480,000 foreign experts in China last year, compared with only 10,000 in 1978. What is certainly the case is that our work on mine safety is greatly appreciated. I was interviewed by People's Daily online TV...

The parade itself was also rather memorable, not because of the military display, which was more of the 'don't mess with us' variety and defensive in my view, and commercial advertising to potential buyers in the developing world. China's army is on UN Peace Keeping missions, after all, not fighting vicious wars in Iraq or Afghanistan or deployed to military bases around the globe, like the US and UK, and half of the EU countries...

What struck me about the parades was that they were predominantly young people, with many more in costumes than in uniforms or in tanks. These were amazingly colourful, not just the ethnic dress but also the uniforms of the women soldiers, airforce and navy marchers, with rather short skirts, with white or black knee length leather boots. Never seen anything like that anywhere in a puritan, Lutheran or Catholic country even, before! Even American cheerleaders look rather shabby by comparison and not as sexy, I have to say, and this was Red China!



But the piece de resistance of it all, of course, was the banquet in the Great Hall of the People. More than 5000 were filling the hall and the balconies in tables of 10 and, once again the Premier spoke very warmly about us as well as dealing with the future and the present. There were many older people there and quite a few foreigners. It was all over quite quickly, with the task of feeding us very well, completed with great efficiency by hundreds of young people from the countryside...

REWI ALLEY SCHOOL HONOURED: The Rewi Alley Chinese School in Christchurch has received a prestigious title of Model School from the Chinese Government. Only two schools in New Zealand, and only 50 in the world, received the title. Principal Lu Zhihong will travel to Chengdu to receive the award. Christchurch Branch takes pride in this award, as (they) have supported the school from the beginning, including an annual grant of \$500 for equipment and costumes.

... from Christchurch Branch Newsletter

PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA - CELEBRATIONS OF SIXTY YEARS 1949 - 2009: It was a great honour to represent you all in Beijing on 1 October for the sixty years celebrations of the establishment of the People's Republic of China. It started with a welcoming banquet by Madame Li Xiaolin, followed by a banquet for 4500 in the Great Hall of the People on 30 September that provided the warm up to the main events. On the 1st of October Beijing woke to the sounds of the military vehicle parade forming up and that morning invited guests (perhaps 25,000) watched a reported 100,000 participants parade.

Firstly came representatives of the various military units marching on foot in impeccable unison, followed by 30 different squadrons, usually of 18 vehicles each, from tanks, to missiles, to armoured cars, driven in the same precision as the marchers. Overhead flew groups (flocks?) of varying types of Chinese-made war planes from huge airlifters to helicopters. These were followed by 50 floats (or was it 60, for many things were of this number during the celebrations), representing areas of industry, agriculture, education, medicine and other areas of progress plus floats representing each province and region, including Taiwan.



The parade for the 60th anniversary of the founding of the PRC.

(AP Photo/Xinhua, Huang Jingwen)

See www.boston.com/bigpicture/2009/10/china_celebrates_60_years.html?s_campaign=8315 for more superb photos - definitely worth a look!

Then, after going back to our hotel for a late lunch, then an early evening meal less than three hours later, we witnessed the fireworks gala and dancing displays. I experienced sensory overloads with staggering fireworks displays rebounding on three sides, sky rockets roaring out of the 60 artificial pillars surrounding Tian'anmen Square, the shock waves of some of the explosions and the non-stop music and dancing.

One highlight was meeting our Wanganui Branch President, Dave Feickert, who had received (along with 99 other foreigners) a Friendship Award for his mine safety work in China. We were sitting about five metres apart watching the parade and were able to catch up during the gala evening as well. We all in the Society can be very proud of Dave's award for his work in safety in the coal mining industry and Wanganui Branch should be very proud to have Dave as their President. During the events, all around the Youxie-invited guests, were these honoured foreigners proudly wearing their awards.

Another highlight was being hosted by some of our friends from Youxie - Boming, Linda and Karen - on a visit to the Beijing Exhibition Hall the next day, and to find a key display was of two Kiwis receiving Honorary Ambassador Awards some years ago, namely our very own Past President and Life Member, Professor Bill Willmott, and our good friend Hiwi Tauroa of the NZ China Maori Friendship Association. That was a big surprise. And what a showcase of the developments in all areas of industry, commerce, agriculture, health and the countryside, was the exhibition. And hints of more to come in hydroponics, to nuclear power stations, to advances in crops and the lifestyle of the everyday villager.

BRANCH CELEBRATIONS AND BANQUETS: I have heard of many successful events held by Branches throughout the country commemorating the 60 year anniversary – a great time for us all to share in the celebrations.

Kind regards,

National President

More at: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz/news.html#National