

New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

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No. 6 - September 2010

Next meeting

China - 25 Years On Eric Livingstone, National President



Eric Livingstone, National President of the NZCFS since 2008, will be our guest speaker at the next Branch meeting on Friday, 24 September.

Since 1983, Eric has been much involved in China affairs through his work as Managing Director of Guthrey Breeding Services Ltd, as an advisor to the Gansu Provincial Government on Animal Management Services, by his participation in 5 New Zealand trade delegations and through many visits to China.

He has been the leader of an official Christchurch City Delegation to Gansu, Leader of the NZCFS 2000 Silk Road Tour and Leader of the 2008 Prominent Persons and Leaders Tour. Last year, Eric represented the NZCFS at the 60th Anniversary Celebrations of the People's Republic of China.

With this background and knowledge of China, Eric's talk will be of great interest as he discusses China's development over the past 25 years and how he sees the Society's involvement with China in the future.

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 very welcome but please notify Isabelle when you contact her so that we have accurate names and numbers for the meal. She is also happy to accept these by email: isabelle@xnet.co.nz. Our thanks to Isabelle for taking on this task while Secretary Barbara is away.

Friday 24 September .. Hearing House .. 5:30 pm

To arrange catering please ring:

Isabelle Jones Ph. 547 3253 by Tuesday 21 September.

A friendly reminder: If, for any reason, you are unable to make it to the meeting after you have booked in for the meal, it would be very much appreciated if you could let the meal organiser know as soon as possible. Understandably, we need to provide numbers to the restaurant well in advance, and then pay them the \$12 per person on the night, so, unless we hear in time, we will need to ask you (nicely...) to pay for your meal.



LAST MEETING: Encouraged by Nisa Rose, Co-ordinator of Accommodation and Pastoral Care at NMIT, and President Christine, a panel of five students attending Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology gave members a very interesting insight into their lives as students in Nelson. We learnt of their home towns in China, their living arrangements here, matters which interested them and some of the part time jobs they do.

Perhaps most interesting of all was to learn of the many challenges which face them during the two or three years while they are studying for their degrees at the NMIT School of Business and Technology. On arrival it is necessary for them to spend several months at the School of English Language to raise their level of English before beginning their courses. Then they have to learn to completely change their way of studying so that they can do case studies and give presentations, be involved in group work and act as group leaders, all in their second language. The required study of New Zealand Commercial Law for their courses had been a particular challenge.

These five personable young people, with their perseverance and their determination to succeed were a credit to themselves. 🐯

CHRISTCHURCH EARTHQUAKE: Many of us will have been woken by the shake and will know family and/or friends living in Canterbury who have had to cope with damage to their homes, no power, water or sewage, possible evacuation, the continuing aftershocks and considerable trauma from the whole event. We were relieved to hear that members of the Christchurch Branch of the NZCFS were safe and we send our very best wishes from the Nelson Branch for a quick return to normal, everyday living. See the President's National Notebook for more. 🐯

GOODBYE TO LILLIAN LI AND IVAN KURTOVIC: At the end of August, Lillian and Ivan returned to Xi'an where their baby will be born in November. Both have been members of our Branch and on the Executive Committee since 2006 and have made a very valuable contribution with their thoughts and ideas. We extend our very best wishes to them and look forward to seeing the baby photos later in the year. 🐯

NEW PRC AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE: Mr Xu Jianguo, PRC Ambassador-Designate to New Zealand, arrived in Wellington on September 1, with a "Welcoming Party" from the Wellington Branch there to greet him at the airport. Mr Xu is married and has one son. He is a native of Zhejiang Province, was born in 1955 and graduated from Zhejiang University in 1982 with a degree in Materials Science.



Mr Xu was a teacher at Zhejiang University from 1986-91 and then studied at Syracuse University in the US, 1991-93. He held significant appointments in the Zhejiang Provincial Government 1993-2001, was Counsellor at the PRC Embassy in South Africa in 2001, Ambassador to Georgia from 2001-4, and a Deputy Director General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Beijing, 2004-5.

Xu Jianguo comes to Wellington from the posting of Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005-10.
with thanks to the Wellington Branch newsletter "The Capital China Letter" 🐯

BEIJING TEACHER EXCHANGE: A pilot teacher exchange programme is being arranged between Nelson Intermediate School and Yongtai Primary School in Beijing. The Principal of this school has done some training in Christchurch and is keen for his teachers to experience New Zealand school life. Miss Huang Yuhua will be homestayng with the Wards and the Beatsons during her time in Nelson. Other members of our NZCFS branch will also contribute in various ways.



The photo shows Yuhua on the left with Christine and her school Principal, Yan Wei, when we met them in Nanjing during our recent trip. We expect Yuhua to be in Nelson for our November Branch meeting. 🐯

THE WRITTEN WORD: "... I thought of my former students in Fuling. Even in the English department, they had been assigned hours of practice in Chinese calligraphy; often I walked into the classroom and saw dozens of students hunched over their brushes, writing a single character over and over. They could tell me immediately who had the best calligraphy in the class, and who was second, third, fourth. And it had shocked them that my own English handwriting was so sloppy. They couldn't believe that somebody with my background - educated in literature at two universities - still couldn't write. In Fuling, my students had recognised some beauty in the written word that wasn't apparent to a Westerner like me."
from "Oracle Bones" by Peter Hessler 🐯

NELSON DELEGATION TO HUANGSHI FOR 60TH CELEBRATIONS: A fuller story of the few days spent recently by five Nelsonians as invited guests of the Huangshi Municipal Government will be provided at later meetings. In the meantime, here's a brief report of our amazing experience in Nelson's sister city.

The delegation was led by Bill Findlater (Nelson Regional Economic Development Agency) who was the official representative of our Mayor, and was therefore seated with other Very Very VIPs on official occasions. Dot Kettle (Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce) and three NZCFS officials (Kathy Beatson, Christine Ward and Bruce Ward) made up the rest of the delegation. We were all handsomely and wonderfully treated as high-level VIPs on all occasions with our own special host, Xu Zugui, and a small army of hostesses and translators.

We took gifts from our society to Huangshi's Mayor, Zugui, Nelson College for Girls' sister school, and Nelson's sister-hospital, Huangshi's Chinese Traditional Medicine Hospital. An accompanying photo shows Zugui with a Royce McGlashen pipi bowl containing a few other shells we collected from Rabbit Island (a favourite of Zugui's when he was working at the Nelson City Council a few years ago). Another photo



shows the calligraphy scroll done by the Principal of the sister school for us to present to Nelson College for Girls.

We were constantly reminded of the ground-breaking sister city connections forged by Robin and Beverley Brown. They are held in extremely high regard in Huangshi, as are Isabelle Jones and June Clark and other members of previous delegations. Dot Kettle and Bill Findlater often expressed their gratefulness to our branch of the NZCFS for accepting the invitation from

Huangshi and setting up the Nelson delegation. It proved to be extremely important in maintaining the sister-city relationship, and in looking forward to future connections.

We were part of a week of special activities celebrating 60 years since the city's founding and 3000 years of metallurgical innovation within the city boundaries, including discoveries of smelting, bronze and cement. The city was fabulously decorated for the occasion with trees lit up along the boulevards, and buildings illuminated. A photo shows a night view of the front of our hotel on the shores of the lake. There were untold millions of pot plants in every possible position along the roads and around public buildings. There were dragon dancers, musicians, fireworks, balloons, banners, flower-covered archways and special costumes everywhere. Of course we could write a book about the food and banquets. Morning, noon and night we were overwhelmed by the amazing array of beautifully presented and temptingly tasty delicacies.



Another photo shows Christine and Kathy outside 'The Diamond', a huge new sports stadium where eight thousand people attended the official anniversary conference. Bill sat on the stage with



the bigwigs from the city, central government and foreign dignitaries, and we were escorted to our individually-named, comfortable seats for the impressive ceremony.

That evening another highlight left us speechless with admiration: a forty minute fireworks display which we watched from a specially constructed pontoon in the lake. It was an incredible display of but one of the many ways in which China leads the world.

Opportunities in China

There are huge opportunities for Nelson businesses in the region's sister-city relationship with the Chinese city of Huangshi, says Economic Development Agency chief executive Bill Findlater.

Mr Findlater and Nelson Tasman Chamber of Commerce chief executive Dot Kettle represented Nelson at Huangshi's 60th anniversary celebrations last month. He said they were treated like royalty, and Huangshi's mayor was keen to do all he could to assist with business ties. Huangshi is home to about 2.5 million people but is located in a province of 30 million.

Nelson needed to take advantage of New Zealand being the first Western country to have a free-trade

agreement with China and there were benefits in forming a relationship with one district, Mr Findlater said. "There's no better introduction than through local government."

Huangshi was a "beautiful area" and its people had worked hard to recover the land after mining, Mr Findlater said.

One village that Mr Findlater sighted had solar panels on every roof. This presented opportunities for some Nelson firms, as did the large brewery in Huangshi, which uses hops in its production.

But Mr Findlater said the business ties needed to be nurtured and developed. "When you go into China, you don't go in to see. You need to build a relationship first."

Nelson Mail 7/9/10



RURAL REVOLUTION: China's farmers are possibly about to be sucked into the greatest financial revolution since the invention of the credit card. Some economists are having palpitations, others are ignoring the issue and everything is dependent on how much you read chatter from the China Banking Regulatory Commission and whether the financial enfranchisement of three quarters of a billion people strikes you as plausible.



Chinese farmland is owned collectively by all the farmers who work it. Hard done by and irritable, the ruralites are not allowed to use their land for purposes other than agriculture and, unlike their lucky urban counterparts, have no individual claim to the property. What they are absolutely not allowed to do is use their nominal land claims as loan collateral. Property rights were transferred to Chinese urbanites in the early 1990s - a reform that, arguably, created the economic miracle at which we tremble and gasp today.

But quietly and with minimal fuss, the government has been pilot-testing what would happen if it allowed farmers in a scattering of provinces to use their land as loan collateral. The effects have been remarkable. Given the opportunity, the farmers have borrowed twice as much as those still bound by the national law. If you are Beijing and you are trying to generate a consumer revolution, those are fairly enticing results.

When it published those loan numbers, the regulator said that "financial products designed for farmers and rural development will be offered across the country". Some think this means that the pilot scheme is going to go national by the end of this year. According to Glenn Maguire, Head of China Economics at Société Générale, if it does we may be looking at a monumental unleashing of rural consumerist power and potentially the biggest economic stimulus ever conducted. Anywhere.

Letting the farmers borrow against their land could give Beijing the elusive tools it needs to rebalance and conjure up a second economic miracle when the first hasn't even begun to lose its wow factor. - Leo Lewis in 'The Times'

see www.theaustralian.com.au/business/news/chinas-may-allow-farms-as-collateral/story-e6frg90o-1225915090727



ONE CHILD RULE MAY BE ON THE WAY OUT: Family planning authorities in China are considering the most sweeping liberalisation yet of their strict birth-control policies, and may relax rules in several provinces as early as next year.

Pilot projects would allow couples where one partner is an only child to have two children - a significant shift from the current "one couple, one child" policy, analysts said....

Since the birth-control policy was introduced 30 years ago, Liang [Zhongtang, a retired demography expert,] has warned that it would lead to a shortage of labour and an ageing population.

China's population has swollen to 1.3 billion, but officials say the restrictions introduced by Deng Xiaoping in 1980 can be credited with preventing 400 million births just as the impoverished nation began market reforms that have transformed it into the world's second largest economy.

Many exceptions to the one-child policy are already allowed. Farmers can have a second child if their first is a girl, and in most big cities couples who are both only children are encouraged to have two babies. Most ethnic minorities are also free to have as many children as they want.

He said fierce debate over the value of the one-child policy, given a widening gender imbalance, was under way among scholars... He said: "China now has a gender imbalance of 120 boys to every 100 girls and this is a very serious problem. It will have 40 million men who cannot find wives."

The demographer has long been an advocate of a more liberal policy. However, Liang cautioned that relaxing the policy would not solve the most pressing problem - that China's population will be the world's first to "grow old before it grows rich".

China's population is ageing rapidly - by 2020, 16% will be over 60, up from 9% today...

Zhang Erli, a retired director at the Family Planning Commission, said that the reform was essential because the government had promised to change its policies after 30 years - or about one generation.

"The essence of the family planning policy was to sacrifice one generation. Those parents have already made their sacrifice for the nation and it is time for the state to allow their children to receive something in return."

- Sunday Star Times, 12 September 2010, reprinted from the Times.



National President: Eric Livingstone

National Secretary: Alistair Shaw

from National Notebooks, August/September, 2010

CANTERBURY EARTHQUAKE: Christchurch members appreciate the many messages from around New Zealand and from our friends in China enquiring about our well-being following our shocking earthquake. Most members experienced breakages within their houses, a frightening time and the occasional fallen chimney, plus a few who unfortunately experienced serious house foundation moving. Contacting those in the worst hit areas is hampered by their phones still being off and some have temporarily moved to live with family members or friends and are difficult to locate. Some have only now had their water reconnected and a few are without sewer still.

Those whose houses may need rebuilding we think may be a handful and they themselves still do not know if that is the case until further inspections have been made. Judy, Christchurch Branch President, and I went visiting one member's home this last weekend in the worst hit area, but no one was home (she may be overseas). The house was green-stickered, meaning it could be occupied, but a neighbour showed us his house, also so marked, that had completely split its foundation and his house may have to be rebuilt.

National Executive members, Di Madgin and Bill Willmott, live in an area badly affected, now have the water on, a green sticker but an uncertain house future. Di is coping with her school class reunion, a tennis tournament, her mother's rest home being closed, a daughter's scheduled operation and partially living at home and in other places while the sewer remains unconnected – she is of staunch Southland pioneering background.

The earthquake struck worst in a handful of specific localities, ranging from the countryside closer to the epicenter to patches in the suburbs, plus the older buildings in the city centre. Most Christchurch people spent time caring for each other, their friends and relatives, especially those living by themselves who find the continuous shakes most upsetting.

A 7.1 earthquake at night is like being tumbled in darkness in a washing machine riding a roller coaster with the noise of a few express trains. In darkness, rudely jolted awake into this nightmare ride, the choice of moving to your predetermined safety spot from the bucking bed, seemed madness - like trying to get to another roller coaster while both are going at full speed! We were amazed our house had so little damage after such an experience, but then we were not right on top of the fault line nor in one of the areas whose soil structure reacted badly to constant vibration. An Asian friend said he now knew New Zealand homes were very well built!

All the Society members we have been able to speak to or exchange emails, have their individual stories and this event will be a defining one in our city's history. Member Lubra Roth says (she and husband Eddie are fine but they have family members whose house is very much lopsided living with them), "By this morning, we've had exactly 365 aftershocks, one for each day of the year. Should stop now, but only God knows the answer. We are all exhausted from lack of sleep, anxious not knowing when the next aftershock is going to take place. Where? How deep? And how strong? Nothing one can do against mother nature!"

One of our Chinese members, a teacher, describes her experiences: "I have all the symptoms - anxious, can't concentrate, upset, can't sleep well, and the worst, I don't have insurance. I had experienced 6.4 and 7.3 GRT in Taiwan but not the landslip nor so many aftershocks. We have not got fresh water back yet, can't flush toilet. City Council checked the house yesterday - GREEN card. I thought I could not take further responsibility for the property fixed. John, an adult learner from the class, kindly offered to check the ceiling and under the floor."

Earthquake websites became our most important source of information, including geonet.org.nz which lists the aftershocks, plus maps.google.co.nz where you find the after-shocks shown in terrifying detail, to such a stage that we knew last Tuesday they were creeping closer to our home by the hour and going to bed with the last one only two kms away! Did we need to know! On Wednesday, sure enough, the epicentre of an aftershock was in the fields at the end of our short street only 200 metres away. Now I know a 3.5 aftershock close by is 100th less than 7.1 one miles away!

We will keep you informed of where help for individual members would be appreciated, but it could be sometime before we really know. Your offers are very much appreciated and reassuring as we calm down and normalise our lives.

SHANGHAI WORLD EXPO VISIT JULY: The World Expo Visit was more than our delegation of twelve Society members expected as the guests of the Shanghai Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries. We participated in the New Zealand Honour Day, saw a number of pavilions, and gained an understanding of the immensity of the Expo.

Our five days went very fast with sightseeing to a new Arts Gallery complex, the Jade Buddha Temple, the Bund and the World Expo. It was like visiting two Expos, with the numerous Chinese pavilions focusing on aspects of Better City, Better Life and their regions on one side of the river, and the rest of the world showcasing their countries and achievements on the other. Such a huge site with large crowds - up to 500,000 the days we were there.

We were very grateful for the excellent arrangements, the sightseeing and the special banquet with Shanghai Youxie Vice President Wang Xiao Shu at the Shanghai Mansions. What a special occasion that was for us with the excellent food and the delightful discussions, followed by the roof top view of the lights of the Bund.

LANZHOU CITY UNIVERSITY: After home hosting President Kong of Lanzhou City University eighteen months ago, two of us accepted an opportunity to visit the University for a very busy week as their guests in Gansu.

Our Society has had a long association with this University as one of its three campuses was the Lanzhou Bailie Oil School, established after the disastrous earthquake in Shandan in 1954, and it still operates under Rewi Alley's philosophy with subjects including urban planning, environment, civil engineering, and horticulture.

SHANDAN BAILIE SCHOOL: Our visit here was all too short and the new Principal was very complimentary about our Society's efforts and the work done by Dave Bromwich and the current teacher, John Kirby. They were also very pleased to be involved in the Gung Ho 'Training of Trainers' programme arranged by Dave.

We were briefed on a soon to be built teaching building costing \$2 million and that 29% of students, all from poor families, receive free tuition. They advised they are maintaining the Rewi Alley Philosophy of 'Hands and Minds Together'.

PROMINENT PERSONS & LEADERS DELEGATION 2010: What an excellent team we have in this delegation that has five of our own Society members, including leader Past President Bill Willmott, and five excellent media and community people - a TV producer from Christchurch, journalist from Auckland, media person from Hibiscus Coast, a Civic Affairs and Chinese Exchanges Co-ordinator from Hamilton and an Instep Programme Manager from Tauranga. They headed out to Shanghai and the Friendly and Sister Cities two-yearly Conference and other special events and visits on 6 September. We are pleased to hear they are enjoying themselves, although that cannot be easy for Bill Willmott who left home a day after the earthquake struck.

TOUR LEADERS FOR 2011 WANTED: With two great tours planned for next year, one to Tibet and one to Shanxi and Henan, expressions of interest are invited from suitably experienced members knowledgeable about China who would like to be considered as leaders. Contact Vice President Trevor Linyard: linaryards@actrix.co.nz

SMALL TREES IN HUNAN: Well known author and poet, Owen Marshall of Timaru, was on the Society's Prominent Persons & Leaders Delegation in 2008 that visited Hunan. In his latest book of published poems, is:

*We boat in the Yellow Dragon cave, listen
To speeches of friendship in translation.
We see hand-crafted silver, ethnic dancers
Translucent porcelain, and a swollen short-
Haired dog in the canal. We are accorded
Banquets with duck, turtle and bullfrog, and
Watch toffee being pulled on an iron hook.

But the memory that chooses me, that persists
Outside actuality and photograph, is of the
Small trees at dusk on Hunan's hills.
Whole slopes green with citrus trees holding
Lamps of mandarin among their darkening leaves.*



from "Sleepwalking in Antarctica & Other Poems" by Owen Marshall, published by Canterbury University Press.

JAMES BERTRAM SCHOLARSHIP: Great news – Victoria University of Wellington has established a scholarship in memory of James Bertram, former Professor of English and first chair of our Wellington Branch. Jim, a Rhodes Scholar from Otago, was the China reporter for the London Telegraph in the 1930s and his interview of Chairman Mao Zedong at Yan'an, became the only piece in Mao's collected works not written by Mao. This scholarship was announced in July in Beijing by Prime Minister John Key, and provides for a Masters of Arts degree in International Relations at Victoria University and a MA in Public Policy at Beijing University, including six months study of Chinese Language. See our website (www.nzchinasociety.org.nz) under "What's New" for more information.

TEACHER URGENTLY REQUIRED - SHANDAN: Available to start as soon as possible, or late February, 2011. Conversational English, 14 to 16 hours per week for students aged 17 to 20. A teaching qualification or degree required, age limit 65. Salary 3000 yuan per month, air fares support, travel within China and an apartment provided. Contact Dave Bromwich with a brief CV: dbchinz@xtra.co.nz

Regards,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Eric Livingstone". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style with a long horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Eric Livingstone
National President

More at: <http://www.nzchinasociety.org.nz/news/national-notebook>