

THE CAPITAL CHINA LETTER

新中通訊



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NEW ZEALAND CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY WELLINGTON BRANCH NEWSLETTER

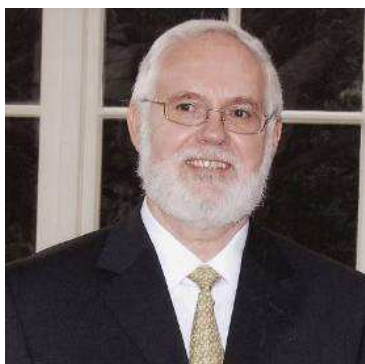
12 Colchester Cres, Newlands, Wellington 6037. Website: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz

NEXT BRANCH MEETING

His Excellency Mr Michel Legras

will speak on

"Some French Perceptions of China"



Mr Michel Legras, the Ambassador of France to New Zealand, has been a member of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs since 1975. He holds the distinctions of Officer of the National Order of Merit and Knight in the Order of La Legion d'Honneur. He has had postings in Beijing, Budapest, Hong Kong, Moscow, Sydney, Erevan (Armenia), as well as in Paris and Wellington.

In the **Dominion Post** of earlier this year, Ambassador Legras described his favourite travel destination as China in these words - "The more I visit it, the more I appreciate the diversity of the Chinese culture and way of life. When I was young, I could speak at length about it. Now that I am wiser – and older – I refrain from generalisations. China always provides me with the unexpected. And that was where I met my wife. One of my daughters was born in Beijing".

Ambassador Legras, a graduate of the National Institute of Oriental Languages and Civilisations in Paris, has as his spoken languages, English, Russian and Chinese. He first visited China in 1969, whilst on military service and this was later followed by significant China-related appointments as Third Secretary in Beijing (1975-1978), Cultural Attache in Hong Kong (1984-1988), and Ambassador in charge of the France-China exchange years (2002-2003). He was a member of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs' Inspection (2003-2007), before his posting to Wellington on 31 May 2007.

Ambassador Legras is writing a book on eminent Chinese people through the ages.

Wednesday, 15 September 2010, at 5.45 pm

Connolly Hall

Guildford Terrace, off Hill Street, Thorndon, Wellington.

(Car park up Guildford Tce beside Hall)

An optional Chinese buffet meal, supplied by the Fujiyama Café, will follow the meeting at 7 pm. **Orders for the \$10.00 meal (please pay at the door) will be taken up till 6 pm.** If you think you may be arriving late, please let the Secretary know in advance.

BRING A GUEST SPECIAL MEETING

To celebrate the arrival of Spring, a special "Bring A Guest" meeting is being planned for this month. The object of the evening is for as many members as possible to bring a guest (or guests) with them. Guests could be anyone who may be interested in the activities of the Society; hopefully a potential new member.

As well as the presentation from Ambassador Legras, we will be arranging special displays for the evening, membership application forms will be available and the Chinese Embassy is providing takeaway materials. There will be raffles for prizes of value (including a special prize from France).

It is expected that our numbers will be considerably more than usual. For this reason it will be necessary for members and their guests to be registered prior to the event. **To ensure a place for you and your guests(s) you will need to register by Saturday September 11 to Secretary Bruce Asher, either via email at bickleyasher@clear.net.nz or by phoning Bruce at home in the evening. Tel: 970 9952**



REPORT ON LAST MEETING – Greg Ford

We were privileged to have presentations from three groups on three very different but interesting topics.

Mary Busch, of the Wellington Xiamen Association, introduced four girls, representatives of the group of 12 from Samuel Marsden Collegiate School. The girls are all learning Mandarin and in April travelled to Wellington's sister cities, Beijing and Xiamen.

Shanella Nallaiah was delighted with the reception at First Middle School, where the hospitality was amazing. She also particularly enjoyed the trip to the Great Wall, where they were told: "You're not a real man till you've walked the Great Wall". Kimberley Low was very interested in the developing areas of China, the connection of past to present, and the progress that is being made. All of the girls agreed: "The best thing was the people, they were all so welcoming and friendly." They discovered how hard students in China study, from morning to night with very little free time for themselves. The scale of Xiamen's First Middle School was also an eye opener, with 5,000 students and 300 teachers. Alex Cliffe identified the great value of cultural exchanges such as the group from Marsden enjoyed. Amanda Cundy spoke of the girls' host sisters; the incredible hospitality. She brought back a shoe-box full of email addresses and maintains contact with all of them. She expressed gratitude to Mary Busch, the Xiamen Association, their teachers, and their chaperones.

Esther Fung, Secretary of the Wellington Chinese Garden Society, gave an excellent, illustrated presentation on the plans for a Chinese Garden in Frank Kitts Park. The selected design takes elements of old and new, East and West. The story of the Chinese community's history within, as well as their influence on, NZ is to be told through the park's design. We were shown artist's renditions of the proposed park, and had several of its features explained. There will be "Heaven's Well" which will tell of the original immigrants in the 1800s, a "Garden for Retelling the Past" which will incorporate more traditional Chinese elements, a "Chamber for Contemplating the Future" which will have a mix of native NZ and Chinese plants, a "Pavilion" and a "Pool of Still Waters".

The garden will utilize the Chinese concept of "borrowed scenery", and has been carefully planned so as not to block the viewshafts to Wellington's existing scenery. It will utilize the natural backdrops of the waterfront, Mt Cook and Mt Victoria.

It is intended that the garden be free to the public, a functional space meant for use.

Jason Young, Lecturer in International Relations at Victoria University of Wellington and course coordinator for the VUW/China University of Political Science and Law (CUPL) exchange programme, introduced Chinese guests here in NZ on a three-week course, part of a year-by-year exchange between CUPL and VUW. Deputy Dean Mr Huaijung Yang first spoke, commenting on the warm reception in NZ, and the ever-strengthening ties between NZ and China. The students came to learn about politics and law, all of their classes and visits were conducted in English, and it is amazing the skill and tenacity with which they approach each challenge.

Mr Yang's translator, Dr Donfang Wang then spoke of her own experiences. She has been very impressed with the transparency of NZ politics, particularly enjoying 'Question Time' in Parliament. She felt this showed NZ's openness and respect for history, culture and individuality. One of the students, Ms Su Lu, spoke on China's good relationship with NZ. She particularly enjoyed the hospitality of the homestay. Mr Tim Lu expressed his love of everything NZ, especially the food, and even the Wellington winter! He commented on the very friendly and honest nature of people, willing to help a stranger on the street, and willing to say "Thanks" and "Sorry".

Past President Douglas Day thanked all of the Guest Speakers commenting, among other things: "It is remarkable to see how (the so-called) "Generations X and Y" are coping and behaving with culture and exchange."



CANTONESE OPERA

The Wellington Chinese Operatic Society Inc. is staging Cantonese Opera at Little Theatre, Lower Hutt on Monday 13th September 2010, 6.30pm. Ticket \$10 available at the door, or see attached flyer (email only).

MEETING DATES FOR REST OF 2010

October 20, Wednesday 5.45pm Stuart Fergusson, Chairman New Zealand-China Trade Association, "The Misconceptions of the Difficulties in Trading with China"

November 17, Wednesday 5.45pm Michael Powles, former New Zealand Ambassador to China and then to the United Nations, former New Zealand Human Rights Commissioner, "Perspectives on Human Rights in China"

MEETING DATES FOR EARLY IN 2011

Early/mid February, Sunday, 6.30pm Chinese New Year Dinner in the Year of the Rabbit (date and venue to be confirmed)

March 16, Wednesday, 5.45pm AGM with Guest Speaker US Ambassador David Huebner (Ambassador Huebner to be confirmed)

April 20, Wednesday, 5.45pm Associate Professor Val Lindsay, School of Marketing and International Business at Victoria University of Wellington, "Service Success in Asia: Spotlight on China"

AMBASSADOR-DESIGNATE XU JIANGUO ARRIVES IN WELLINGTON



Mr Xu Jianguo, Ambassador-designate to New Zealand, arrives in Wellington on September 1, when there will be a "Welcoming Party" from the Branch to greet him at the airport. 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 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 2001, Ambassador to Georgia 2001-04, and a Deputy Director General in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in Beijing, 2004-05.

Xu Jianguo comes to Wellington from the posting of Ambassador to the Federal Republic of Nigeria, 2005-10.

Mr Xu is married and has one son.

MANDARIN CORNER 汉语角 3.15pm - 4.30pm Saturdays during school terms

Victoria University of Wellington, Seminar Room, 20 Kelburn Parade. Gold coin donation. Open to all ages, all levels. One to one or small groups. Four sessions in September:

4 September - Cantonese Opera 粤剧 (A talk and demonstration by Stan Chan)

11 September - Three Character Classic 三字经 San Zi Jing

18 September - Moon Festival - Moon Cake Tasting 中秋节- 月饼品尝

25 September - Di Zi Gui 弟子规 - *Standards for being a Good Student and Child*

For more information phone Ellen Yang (04) 473-7558 or email mandarin.corner@gmail.com

CHINESE FEATURE FILM - Thursday 9 September

Documentary - *Created in China* at 7.00pm, film - *Where is my home* at 7.30pm (door closes at 7:15pm)

Committee Room No.1, Wellington City Council, 101 Wakefield St. *Gold coin entry.*

Where is my home? (我的家在哪里? Wo de jia zai li?)

Mrs Geng is a simple village mother who raised two children on her own. Her son made his way to the city and offers to have her to come live with him and his family. Despite the improved material conditions in the city, Mrs Geng cannot help feel isolated and lonely. It takes some time for her children to understand how she feels, but finally they rebuild their family's relationship. 该片讲述了含辛茹苦的耿老太太，将两个子女抚养成才后，子女应如何理解和善待老人的故事。

Director: He Misheng; starring Lu Yuan, Wang Fengbin.

DVD 95 minutes; in Modern Standard Chinese with English subtitles.

CHINA LEAVES WORLD IN ITS WAKE

More than half the world's cranes are working in China. They've recently built underground railway systems in 35 cities and an 11,000 kilometre railway to Tibet – most of it over hostile territory higher than Mt Cook.

Chinese surgeons have reattached more hands than any other nation's.

They're spending US\$60 billion on irrigation, and last year planted 6 million hectares of trees. The place is undergoing an explosive transformation.

And so is science. Already China has some of the world's leading

mathematicians and their Nebula supercomputer is the second fastest in the world. China has developed 141 kinds of genetically-modified plants and released 65 of them on farms. China is the third country to put a man in space, is sending a probe to Mars next year and plans to put a man on the moon by 2020. It is a world leader in decoding DNA. Premier Wen Jiabao speaks of "making farsighted scientific arrangements" in new sources of energy, biotech, nanosciences, aerospace, oceanography and climate change. He is offering big perks to lure top Chinese scientists back to their homeland..... (Bob Brockie, writing in "The Dominion Post")



DELEGATION FROM SICHUAN Provincial Political Consultative Conference

On Sunday 5 September 2010 there will be a welcome dinner at the Grand Century Restaurant, Tory Street, at 6.30pm. Cost will be \$30.00 per head.

Please RSVP to Branch Secretary bickleyasher@clear.net.nz by **Friday 3 September 2010**.

CHINA NATIONAL DAY CELEBRATION Sunday 26 September 2010

This year the NZCFS will be joining with the other Chinese Associations in Wellington to hold a combined National Day Banquet at the Grand Century Restaurant, Tory Street, Wellington on Sunday 26 September. Tickets will be available shortly and members interested in attending should advise the Secretary bickleyasher@clear.net.nz as tickets will be limited. Following the final arrangements being made by the joint committee, cost (approx \$30.00 per head) and full details will be advised to those registering their interest.

NEW DAWN FOR CHINA

China cruised past Japan to become the world's No 2 economy on August 17, 2010, casually stripping its neighbour of the title that it has held for more than 40 years and remorselessly tipping the balance of Asian power towards Beijing. The shift became official when Japan issued a dismal reading of GDP for the second quarter of this year. Five years ago Japan's economy was twice that of China's.

China's advance to become the world's No 2 comes after a series of milestones over the last few years, accelerated by the global financial crisis. China overtook the US last year to become the world's biggest car market, and has already surpassed Germany as the biggest exporter. In most commodity markets China is already the largest buyer. (from "The Times")



FULL MOON FESTIVAL - presentations by Artists from the Chinese and Indian communities

The NZ Charitable Association and CATNZ - Communities Action Trust NZ invite you to the Full Moon Festival on Sunday, 5 September 2010, 3-5pm at the Soundings Theatre, Te Papa.

Artists from the Chinese and Indian communities come together at this event to present a series of music and dances to celebrate this festival. This is a free event and tickets may be obtained by contacting Alice Hang (alice@nzca.net) or Murali Kumar (murali.kumar@catnz.org.nz). You may also pick up the tickets at Te Papa reception.



LONG MARCH TO A WELFARE STATE

China is slowly embarking on creating a web of social support, reports Keith Richburg from Washington. Included will be an expanding range of programmes designed to help the sick, elderly, poor and unemployed.

In the last three decades, since China's great leap into capitalism, poor rural farmers scrimped by on society's margins – bypassed by China's growing prosperity and without the helping hand of the state. Lacking any social safety net, the rural poor relied on meagre savings and generosity of children, who often worked as migrant labourers in the towns.

President Hu Jintao and Premier Wen Jiabao, who came to office in 2003, have made the catchphrase of their tenure "social harmony", which most often means closing the yawning income gap between urban and rural areas, providing wider access to healthcare and education, and assisting those left behind by China's breakneck economic growth.

As part of that effort, the government has taken its first steps towards weaving together a social safety net that includes pensions and medical insurance covering 830 million farmers, expanding unemployment insurance and direct cash payments – known as "dibao" – for the very poorest. Last year, the government put US\$9bn into the dibao system, nearly a 70% increase over the previous year.

Economists and other experts said establishing a social safety net will become essential for China in the future because of the rapidly ageing population, fewer children to support their parents due to the "One Child" family planning policy, and the migration of younger Chinese to the cities. (from "The Washington Post")

BOOK CORNER (from Douglas Day)

This time, two books of non-fiction:

"China's Megatrends: The 8 Pillars Of A New Society", by John and Doris Naisbitt, Harper Collins, 2010. A remarkable book, providing an in-depth study of the fundamental changes in China's social, political and economic life, and their impact on the West. In my view it is a "must read" for the knowledgeable and the newly curious, offering fresh insights into the new China.

"The Lure Of China: Writers from Marco Polo to J G Ballard", by Frances Wood, Yale University Press, 2009. In this fascinating book Frances Wood, Curator of Chinese Collections at the British Library, describes the adventures of a diverse collection of travellers to China.

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