

# New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

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No. 1 - January, 2012

## XIN NIAN KUAI LE      HAPPY NEW YEAR Best Wishes for the Auspicious Year of the Dragon



We hope you have had a relaxed and enjoyable holiday season with family and friends and are looking forward to a wonderful year ahead.

The **Year of the Dragon**, the mightiest symbol on the Chinese calendar, officially arrives on the 23rd of January, a little earlier than we have been used to celebrating with our Chinese New Year Banquet. We hope you will be here and able to join us for this auspicious occasion.

Let's start the New Year with a hiss and a roar!

**Monday 23 January .. Eastern Cuisine Restaurant .. 6:30 pm**

To book please ring:



**Barbara Markland ph. 544 4712 by Tuesday 17 January**  
**or e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz**



The Eastern Cuisine, 275 Queen Street, Richmond, is well-known for their great banquets, and they are giving us exclusive use of the restaurant, provided we have at least 40 people. With over 60 last year, we are hoping that won't be a problem! Your family members, friends, visitors, and guests are all most welcome to attend this wonderful celebration.

**The cost for the Banquet is \$30.** The usual beverages (juice, soft drinks, beer and wine) will be available for purchase from the restaurant and if you wish to bring your own wine, the corkage fee is just \$5.

To make things easier for the restaurant, members and their invited guests will pay for the banquet at the door - only by cheque or cash please. If you wish, you could pay beforehand, directly to our Branch bank account via internet banking - see details below.

Other payments, such as corkage and drinks, will be made directly to the restaurant.

You are also invited to make a **donation** towards the He Ming Qing Scholarships on the night - a donation tin will be available.

This year, Chinese New Year is a little too early to enable your committee to get everything ready for our usual AGM, so this has been postponed until our next Branch meeting at Hearing House on 24 February - details in our next newsletter.

If you prefer, you can pay directly via internet banking to the NZ China Friendship Society - Nelson Branch bank account 03-0703-0369680-00. Please make sure you enter your name as the reference and then email **both** Barbara Markland at erm@xtra.co.nz and Treasurer, Royden Smith, at royden@shangrila.net.nz who can then confirm your payment has been received.



## AMBASSADOR XU VISITS NELSON

It was a special privilege for Nelson Branch to host His Excellency, the Chinese Ambassador, on November 18 and 19, 2011. Due to flight cancellations, the bridge opening was later than planned, but the sun was shining and a good crowd welcomed His Excellency, Ambassador Xu Jianguo, his wife, Madame Li, the Cultural Attache, Olga Wang, and their Personal Assistant to the Chinese 'Friendship' Bridge.



The Ambassador presented a beautiful sculptured plate to Nelson City in honour of the occasion and described the significance of the pattern to Mayor Miccio. The bridge was blessed by Kaumatua Andy Joseph and the ribbon was cut to officially open the bridge.

The Ambassador and the Mayor walked together across the bridge, followed by the official party, including local MPs,

councillors, sister city officials and bridge designers and builders. Everybody was invited to afternoon tea at the Suter Cafe and this was followed by a guided walk through the Chinese Garden with the new map and its Chinese translation.



Our branch meeting in the evening was held in the City Council Chambers. The Ambassador was keen to meet local business people and his address focussed on business relationships between New Zealand and China.

The next morning, after making some purchases at Jens Hansen, and having a walk along South Street, the Ambassadorial party visited Kevin Symn's O2B at Wakatu for a look at a local 'China-friendly' small business.

A visit to Rutherford Memorial, a pottery, and a drive through the hills to the Woollaston Winery followed. The group enjoyed Phillip and Chan's guided tour of their winery, an alfresco lunch and the accompanying

educative wine tasting. The 'kiwi picnic lunch' with wine was a new experience for the Ambassadorial party, and they seemed well pleased with it!



The happy party travelled the coastal route back to Hogland Glass, WOW museum, Paddy's Knob, and some antique shops before returning to the airport. The Ambassador was a bit disappointed not to find Ming Dynasty china in any of our shops!

Nevertheless he did enjoy being an informal tourist for a day and returned happily to Wellington with his wine and a copy of "The Nelson Mail" - his photo on the front page.

**NZCFS APRIL PHOTOGRAPHY TOUR:** There are 14 people confirmed for this stunning tour, including two from Nelson. While this is an excellent number, there is room for one or two more if you would like to join them. We would particularly like a single male to share a room. For more details, see our website at: <http://nzchinasociety.org.nz/8133/nzcf-photographers-china-tour-april-2012> or contact Ann White (tangible@farmside.co.nz or ph 03 614 8944).



**THE YEAR OF THE DRAGON:** This is Year 4710 according to Chinese reckoning and the dragon is the only animal in the Chinese calendar that is legendary. Fifth in the cycle, the dragon signifies luck.

Chinese dragons are legendary creatures in Chinese mythology and folklore. In Chinese art, dragons are typically portrayed as long, scaled, serpentine creatures with four legs. In yin and yang terminology, a dragon is yang and complements a yin fenghuang ("Chinese phoenix").

The origin of the Chinese dragon is not certain. The presence of dragons within Chinese culture dates back several thousands of years with the discovery of a dragon statue dating back to the fifth millennium BC from the Yangshao culture in Henan, and jade badges of rank in coiled form have been excavated from the Hongshan culture, circa 4700-2900 BC.

In contrast to European dragons, which are considered evil, Chinese dragons traditionally symbolise potent and auspicious powers, particularly control over water, rainfall, hurricane, and floods. The dragon is also a symbol of power, strength, and good luck. With this, the Emperor of China usually used the dragon as a symbol of his imperial power.

In Chinese daily language, excellent and outstanding people are compared to the dragon.



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|--------------------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| <b>Dragon years are:</b> | <b>1904</b> | <b>1916</b> | <b>1928</b> | <b>1940</b> | <b>1952</b> |
|                          | <b>1964</b> | <b>1976</b> | <b>1988</b> | <b>2000</b> | <b>2012</b> |

**Famous Dragons include:** Martin Luther King, Salvador Dali, John Lennon, Jeffrey Archer, Michael Barrymore, Count Basie, Julie Christie, James Coburn, Bing Crosby, Neil Diamond, Placido Domingo, Michael Douglas, Marlene Dietrich, Tom Jones, Al Pacino, Elaine Paige, Gregory Peck, Cliff Richard, Martin Sheen, Ringo Starr, Sigmund Freud, Florence Nightingale and Shirley Temple.

A Dragon person is special and there is a certain aura about them, as befits a Dragon. They are powerful and wise and certainly not shy – they demand attention and respect. Dragons are born leaders and, because of this, every Chinese parent is hoping to have a Dragon child.

The Dragon is a symbol of power so the Dragon person tends to be a “doer” and achieve power by getting things done. The Dragon is gifted, intelligent, tenacious, willing and generous. They can do anything. No matter whether the Dragon chooses an artistic career, medical or political one, they are going to shine in it. They will be a success wherever they go.

Because they are larger than life themselves, Dragons like to do everything on a grand scale. They are egoistical and ambitious, and will stop at nothing to get what they want. They wear the crown of destiny, and are capable of great achievements if they know how to harness their tremendous energy and talent.

While these people enjoy being the centre of attention, they also have a brave and charitable side to their personality. If a friend faces a problem or dilemma, Dragons will be there to offer help, and when others leave the field of battle the Dragon person makes a step forward to solve the problem with authority and dignity.

These people are passionate, giving and totally partial when in love. They are blind to the faults of their loved ones and will shield the object of their affection against anyone or anything that could hurt or threaten their love. Along with their inner power these people have an impressive presence and they usually have a lot of admirers who are drawn by their charisma. But the over-developed egos of Dragons need constant attention and admiration from the opposite sex, and they will not hesitate to claim it if they feel they are not being sufficiently appreciated.

A dragon can breathe out fire so dragon people can be hotheads. Watch out if you make them angry!

However, the dragon has a soft underbelly and so the dragon person has a “soft spot” to them. They may get angry at someone who annoys them, but they also show great compassion towards people in need.

The Monkey, Snake and Rat are dream partners for the Dragon but it is worth remembering that the only sign that can fool the Dragon is the Monkey. The Boar and Ox cannot deal with his excesses. The Dragon should avoid the down-to-earth Dog, who is his opposite.

