

Christchurch Branch Newsletter

September 2012

In this Issue

- National Day Banquet
- Member News
- The Moon Festival
- National Conference
- The 3rd New Zealand Chinese Character Calligraphy Competition

Please Note: There will be no monthly meeting in September. We will have National Day Banquet on the 30th September!
To book please fill in attached booking form or book online
<https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/viewform?fromEmail=true&formkey=dGpUOHEtNWJHbmdjVklMQiVTWkIDWIE6MQ>

National Day Banquet



IMPORTANT: Please note, there will be no monthly meeting in September, because we have the National Day Banquet on Sunday 30 September (see booking form on the next page). And speaking of the banquet, by a happy co-incidence 30 September is the day of the Moon Festival, which is also called the Mid-Autumn Festival. Thank you to Dr Hong Hu, Deputy Director of the Confucius Institute, for the article in this newsletter on the background to the festival. Needless to say the Confucius Institute has already booked two tables for our banquet!!

About Us

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Member News

- **Ailsa Dodge** left on 29 August as part of the society's 26-day 60th birthday tour of China. One of the highlights will be celebrations in Shandan, Gansu Province, on September 12, combining the 70th anniversary of the Shandan Bailie School (SBS) and our 60th. The tour group will represent NZCFS, and the SBS is organizing VIPs from Shandan, Zhangye City and Gansu Provincial level dignitaries. Bailie Old Boys' Secretary-General Yang Chunlin indicates there will be up to 100 old boys also coming. We look forward to hearing all the news of this amazing tour on Ailsa's return!
- **Eric and Judy Livingstone** headed off to China on 5 September for just over three weeks. Every year the society sends ten people to China; five leaders and five prominent persons. Each branch can nominate someone for each category. Both our nominations this year were successful; Natasha Barnett as a leader and Janine Morrell-Gunn as a prominent person. Janine went with the group in 2010 and only got as far as Shanghai when she had to come home because of the earthquake; she's hoping for better luck this time! This year the group will be accompanied by four people from the national sister cities movement and three from the Maori Friendship Association. They will go first to Changchun for a friendship conference, which will have 100 delegates from North America and Oceania. The theme will be *Understanding and Sharing; Win/Win*. From there they head to Chengdu to take part in the 2012 China International Friendship Cities meeting, the theme of which is *Happy Cities, Green Life*. This conference will attract 600 delegates from all over the world. Following on from that, a small group comprising Eric and Judy, Manawatu branch President Maurice Alley and his wife Dorothy, and Bernard Duncan, Chair of the Christchurch China Sister Cities Committee, will go to Lanzhou, capital of in Gansu Province, to celebrate Rewi Alley's founding of the Bailie School in Lanzhou. Sounds like they're in for a great trip!

New Members

A welcome to our new members!

- Mike Gaudin
- Joanna Mackenzie

The Moon festival

The History and Legendary Stories of the Moon Festival

The Chinese *Moon Festival*, which is also called the *Mid-Autumn Festival (Zhong Qiu Jie)*, is celebrated on the fifteenth day of the eighth month of the lunar calendar, when the moon is at its fullest and brightest. This year, the celebration falls on September 30 in the Western calendar. The *Moon Festival* is one of the two most important holidays in the Chinese calendar, the other one being the *Chinese Lunar New Year*, also known as the *Spring Festival*. During the *Moon Festival*, families generally gather together to admire the full moon and eat pomelos and moon cakes, which are an inherent part of creating the right festival mood. Upon this occasion, various legendary stories are often told to

children.

Legend of Chang Er, the lady on the moon

A long time ago, the earth was being circled by ten suns, with each one illuminating the earth for a certain time. One day, all ten suns appeared together, scorching the earth with their heat. A tyrannical archer named Hou Yi saved the earth by shooting down nine of the suns. Another time, Hou Yi stole a bottle of the magical elixir of immortality from a goddess. Hou's beautiful wife, Chang Er, found the potion and drank it in order to save the people from her husband's tyrannical rule. After drinking it, she found herself floating all the way to the moon, where she was stranded.



Hou Yi loved his divinely beautiful wife so much that he did not shoot down the moon. During the harvest celebration, when the moon illuminates the skies with its bright light, the beautiful Chang-er can still be seen dancing away. Once a year, on the 15th day of the full moon, Yi visits his wife. That is why the moon is full and beautiful on that night.

Legend of Wu Gang, the man on the moon

Wu Gang was a shiftless fellow who changed apprenticeships all the time. One day he decided that he wanted to be an immortal. Wu Kang then went to live in the mountains where he importuned an immortal to teach him. First the immortal taught him about the herbs used to cure sickness, but after three days Wu's characteristic restlessness returned, and he asked the immortal to teach him something else. So the immortal began to teach him chess, but after a short while Wu Kang's enthusiasm again waned. Then Wu Kang was given the books of immortality to study. Of course, Wu Kang became bored within a few days and asked if they could travel to some new and exciting place. Angered with Wu Kang's impatience, the master banished him to the Moon Palace, telling him that he must cut down a huge cassia tree before he could return to earth. Though Wu Kang chopped day and night, the magical tree restored itself with each blow, and thus he is up there chopping still.

Legend of the Jade Rabbit on the Moon

In this legend, three fairy sages transformed themselves into pitiful old men and begged for something to eat from a fox, a monkey and a rabbit. The fox and the monkey both had food to give to the old men, but the rabbit, empty-handed, offered his own flesh instead, jumping into a blazing fire to cook himself. The sages were so touched by the rabbit's sacrifice that they let him live in the Moon Palace where he became the "Jade Rabbit."

2013 National Conference Update

We are delighted to announce we have been able to locate a suitable venue for our society's national conference next year, which our branch is hosting. We have also been able to set the dates. With the

loss of a number of facilities since the earthquakes, this was always going to be a challenge for us.

The conference will be held 24-26 May 2013 at the University of Canterbury, where the Confucius Institute has kindly arranged suitable rooms for us. We thank them most warmly.

The 3rd New Zealand Chinese Character Calligraphy Competition 2012

The upcoming Chinese Character Calligraphy Competition will take place at the end of **October** this year. The competition is available for all enrolled students at NZ schools/institutions. There are mainly three age groups: primary school students, secondary school students and students of tertiary institutions. Please forward this information on to your children, grandchildren, etc, etc, or any other young people whom you think could be interested. For further information they can have a look at <http://www.ci.canterbury.ac.nz/> or contact Yun Cheng yun.cheng@canterbury.ac.nz

This competition is sponsored by the Confucius Institute.

Do you want to go to China for \$5?

We still have some tickets left in this raffle. Are you feeling lucky? Only \$5 for the chance to win two return air tickets to China!! Deadline 20 September. Ask a committee member.