

New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

President: Christine Ward 23 Suter Street, Stoke, Nelson.
Phone: 03 538 0344 email: christine@brainward.com
Secretary: Barbara Markland 23 Polglase Street, Richmond.
Phone: 03 544 4712 email: erm@xtra.co.nz
Website: www.nzchinasociety.org.nz



No. 6 – October, 2014

~ Next meeting Friday 31 October ~

~~~ FIVE NELSONIANS FLY THE FLAG IN CHINA ~~~



For nine days in early September, five women from Nelson made up half of this year's Prominent Persons and Leaders Delegation from New Zealand to the International Friendship Forum in Guizhou. Then, on September 6, they represented New Zealand at the unveiling of a new Rewi Alley Statue in Shanghai.

Especially significant for us, two members of our delegation were 18 year-olds from Nelson Girls' and Nayland Colleges. Carla Lindley and Kristina Eddy, taking time-out from their studies, were selected and sponsored by Nelson City Council as Youth Ambassadors for this trip, and were by far the youngest PP&L representatives ever.

Join us to hear the girls' stories on Friday October 31, alongside those from Jeanette Jones (visiting China for the first time after years of studying its language and history) as well as fresh observations from our more seasoned China travellers, Barbara Markland and June Wild.

In the first part of the meeting (soon after 5.30) we will be watching the newly digitised version of 'Inside Red China' so we can compare the photographic views from the 1950's with those of our more recent visitors.

This will be followed by our usual buffet meal at 6 p.m. (\$12 per person). Contact Barbara for meals.

To arrange catering, please ring:  
 Barbara Markland ph. 544 4712 by Tuesday 28 October  
 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz

**Friday, 28 October .. Hearing House .. 5:30 p.m.**

## INSIDE RED CHINA DVD

As a recipient of a SIMON DENG LI AWARD this year, National Vice President George Andrews' project has been arranging for the digitisation of Rudall and Ramai Hayward's 1957 film, augmenting it with the recent story of the re-discovery of Chairman Mao's Maori Cloak which was displayed at Te Papa for several months last year. The DVD is an important historical document covering early NZCFS connections and celebrating the on-going diplomatic and friendship relationships which underlie the present status of the two countries.

## SHORT VISITS TO NELSON

We are expecting to host two Chinese artists in Nelson in November, and then in December, a small friendship delegation from Huangshi will be here for two days.

## NELSON'S MANDARIN LANGUAGE ASSISTANT EXTENDS HER WORKLOAD

Alicia Yang has two more school classes this term, adding Tahunanui Primary School to her list, and her night classes at NMIT have risen also, so that she is now doing three levels of Mandarin teaching. The Confucius Institute sponsorship is building a good base of Mandarin learning for both younger and older students here.

## ROXBURGH GIFTS

Alison and Jim have passed on many gifts to the society over the years. Recently we have some more books for the Library, a Chinese jacket of Jim's which we could auction or raffle for He Ming Qing funds, and a tape of Sharon Crosbie interviewing Rewi Alley in Beijing in 1981. Bruce Ward has converted the tape into a CD. A copy was taken to Shanghai to be placed with other Rewi Alley memorabilia at the unveiling of the statue on September 6. We can easily make more copies of this unique interview for anyone interested. Our grateful thanks go to Alison for passing on these special treasures.

## ALLI HOTEL GRAND OPENING from Jane Furkert



I attended the Grand Opening of the Alli International Hotel. 'Al li', the Chinese pronunciation of Alley, is named for Rewi Alley, and has been built in the new NZ sector of Shandan city. The hotel, an impressive 5 star complex, is close to Shandan Bailie School, such that it's spotlight radiates out across the school each night.

Drawn by colourful fireworks – at mid morning – I went to see the hotel. Every single day here, I hear fireworks, celebrating some building or other; during

the day, never at night time. The fireworks continued for more than 15 minutes, bursts of colour against the deep blue sky.

Inside the hotel are restaurants, meeting rooms, suites, all of a high standard. The Presidential Suites are on the lucky 8<sup>th</sup> floor. Lettuce leaves are strewn throughout to bring prosperity. A lunchtime banquet for about 300 people was delicious, dozens of dishes – the kitchen's preparation and timing to serve everyone at once was impressive. The managers circulated round each table, offering toasts to the success of the Hotel, and thanks to all those involved in it's construction.

In the evening there was a performance, various dancers and singers, with the lit-up Hotel as a backdrop.



**Jane has also reported on her first week:** I have just completed my first week as the foreign English Teacher at Shandan Bailie School. It is the first week of term for the students too – several thousand of them coming back to school after their summer holidays. About half the students board here, which means there is a great cafeteria, where I can eat with them.

My apartment is on the school grounds, in an apartment block with other teachers. It looks out over the school running track and exercise area, so I watch the students in the morning – in formation, running around the track, then doing exercises. It's an interesting sight, I'm learning the routine before I join in next week. They don't do it in the rain – and it's rained twice since I've been here! A traditionally dry climate, means a heavy downpour was enough to flood the streets in town with pedestrians placing bricks to step on and try and balance above the water! By the next day it is sunny again and back to a balmy 28C.

In this week I taught 4 different classes, for two-hour lessons. My first one was at 8am on Monday morning – a challenge for me as well as the students, on their first day at school!

The goal is conversational English, so I think of many different ways to get them talking. I have only 2 boys, all the rest are girls, about 35 per class: apparently girls are more likely to use their English skills when they become primary school teachers. They range from 15-19 years old.

I have bought an old single-speed bicycle, so I am mobile – on the weekend I went to visit Nanhu Park, which my students had mentioned as one of their favourite places to go. The previous teacher, Natalie, is quite a lot taller than me. So I didn't have a hope of getting on her bicycle!

**There are more photos and other reports on the NZCFS website – [nzchinasociety.org.nz](http://nzchinasociety.org.nz)**

## REMEMBERING ROBIN BROWN

Robin Brown, a Life Member and past President of Nelson Branch, died on Sunday, September 7, aged 84. Although Robin had not been well for several years, his influence still ran very strongly through our branch as he was the major force behind the establishment of Huangshi as our Sister City and the early development of the Chinese Garden.

He capably led the Branch as President from 1994 - 2000 and had a major influence on the direction and success of the Branch through the generous use of his many skills and talents and always showed great enthusiasm for furthering friendship with the people of China.

Robin's commitment to the Nelson Branch progressed naturally to participation in the work of the Society at a national level. He attended National Conferences, initially as a branch delegate and was elected Vice President South Island in 1997 and continued in that role until 2002 when he accepted the position of National President for one year.

Always enthusiastic about travel, Robin ably led several national and local groups to China. He hosted many delegations from several parts of China, always preparing interesting itineraries and happily accompanying groups on their travels. Those lucky enough to travel with him remember him still, with considerable affection.

## 28th SEPTEMBER IN THE HUANGSHI CHINESE GARDEN

For three years now, we have celebrated spring in the Chinese Garden. This year, as well as being close to Mid-Autumn Festival, the Spring Equinox, and the beginning of daylight saving, the day was close to Chinese National Day, so it was fitting for us to sample some famous Chinese teas and cookies in our own little piece of China. We had some mooncakes too, which Barbara Markland had brought back from Shanghai earlier in the month.



At this time too, our thoughts had turned to commemorating Robin Brown's contribution to the development of the garden. Beverley and other family members were there, along with garden designer, Andrew Petheram, for planting a memorial tree. Isabelle Jones talked of Robin's passion for the Nelson-Huangshi relationship and for the garden project. As we gathered around the

site near the moongate, or looked on from the pavilion, Beverley and her family completed the planting of 'Robin's Tree'. It is the dove tree or handkerchief tree (*davideaceae*), a dogwood relative, and is the centrepiece of that part of the garden. We will watch it come into leaf and develop its large white hanging 'handkerchief' flowers in the early summer. Somebody said Robin would have been 'chuffed'.

## NEW CONSUL-GENERAL FOR CHRISTCHURCH CONSULATE

In August, Consul General Madam Tan Xiutian was farewelled. She was a good friend of our branch and we were sorry to see her go. The new Consul General is Mr. Jin Zhijian who took up the post in early September. We look forward to continued good relations with him and the Christchurch consulate.

## MEMBERS NEWS

We welcome **Brendon Burns** of Blenheim as a member. If you think the name is familiar – you would be right! Brendon has been editor of the Marlborough Express, later an M.P. For Christchurch Central, and is keen to improve links between Marlborough and China.

Welcome also to **Amanda Raine** who is working for Nelson City as Festivals Marketing Coordinator. She has spent some years in HongKong and has a real interest in NZ – China relations.

**Cole Milburn** has recently arrived in Nelson after some years of living in Japan and Korea and is intending to join us. He has visited China and Taiwan and is clearly interested in the area. Welcome, Cole.

We say farewell to **Anne Todd-Lambie** who has left to live in the Coromandel. She will be commuting to Papakura to work.

Congratulations to **Lillian Li** and **Ivan Kurtovic** who celebrated the birth of a son in August.

## CHINESE CULTURE IN NELSON ARTS FESTIVAL

On Friday 24 October, there will be a musical performance of an ancient Chinese tale.

*Gao Shan Liu Shui* (High Mountain Flowing Water) is an ancient tale of the unlikely yet profound friendship between a master player of the guqin (the most ancient of Chinese string instruments) and an untutored woodcutter who understands his music like no other. When the master musician makes his annual pilgrimage to play for his friend and discovers him dead he smashes his guqin and breaks its strings, never to play again. For who else in the world could so understand his music?

For whom do I play the guqin? is a question that haunts all musicians. Masters in their chosen instruments, pianist and composer Gao Ping, and guqin virtuoso Wu Na, collaborate for the first time in this unique performance combining their innovative approaches to music-making. Joining forces with Kunqu opera star Dong Fei, visual designer Jon He and acclaimed director Sara Brodie, the musical contemporaries bring to life the shared spirit of understanding that is *Gao Shan Liu Shui*.

Presented with support from the Confucius Institute at Victoria University of Wellington, New Zealand with generous assistance from Orient Express, Ministry of Culture, China.

This performance is at Theatre Royal, Rutherford Street, at 7:30 p.m. Tickets are available from the theatre or Arts Festival site.



Some of our members enjoyed another Chinese performance at the Theatre Royal on Sunday 19 October. *Sheng Dong: A Moving Sound* involved a singer/dancer with an amazing range of vocal skills, and four instrumentalists. The haunting sounds of the erhu, and the balalaika-like zhong ruan were given added excitement by some powerful drumming, providing music that was both creative and passionate. Sadly, there was a very small audience for this new type of musical art incorporating traditional Chinese styles, as well as some that were uniquely modern and original. The performance was sponsored by the Asia New Zealand Foundation.

## **NZCFS NATIONAL CONFERENCE IN NELSON, MAY 2015**

Nelson Branch last hosted national conference in 2007, and now it is our turn again. The venue will be the Muritai Centre at Tahunanui School, to ensure plenty of handy accommodation, and easy access to the airport. The Branch committee, joined by Gail Collingwood, forms the basis of the conference organising committee, but we will need to call on other members to help with various planning jobs and on-the-ground duties for the weekend.

The following letter has been sent to all branches outlining the conference theme and inviting them to contribute to the conference, following-up on the goal-setting discussions at this year's conference.

### **A MESSAGE FROM NELSON BRANCH**

#### **2015 CONFERENCE AND AGM TIMELINE:**

Here, our branch is making plans for Conference 2015 to be held in Nelson May 22, 23, 24. We have a timeline which involves getting approvals from National Executive for delivery of the AGM and Conference programme at their meetings in November (22nd) and February. We are planning to circulate registration information in February and ask for Early Bird registrations by April 24th. This will enable registrants to book for early airfares, and also help our forward planning. After April 24th the registration fee will considerably increase.

#### **CONFERENCE 2015 THEME:**

After the inspiration of the Hawkes Bay Conference, we thought that some follow-up on the outcomes of the survey and workshop was appropriate. For 2015, Nelson would like to focus on ways NZCFS membership is working at converting goals into actions. Our constitution contains our general goals, and this year's Action Plan presents some practical strategies for Branches and members to select and apply to their activities.

The Conference theme we have chosen to recommend comes from Rewi Alley. When confronted with negative reactions, 'mei-yo banfa', (no way) Rewi turned people towards positivity with 'yo banfa' (there is a way). So our suggestion for a Conference theme is:

**有办法 YO BANFA: There is a way!**

We are planning to ask speakers to address this motivational theme, and for Branches and Committees to make presentations, should they wish, on how they are finding 'a way' to convert NZCFS goals into action.

#### **BRANCH AND COMMITTEE REPORTING 2015:**

While written reports (limited to one page) will be circulated as usual, we are hoping Branches and Committees will offer to present to Conference, some inspirational activity in which they are engaging. We urge Branches, if you have not already done so, to develop an action plan which addresses some society goal or goals, and prepare to report on this at the Nelson Conference on the Saturday. Some branches have, we know, already embarked, or even completed, goal-focused activities which can be shared productively in the context of our annual Conference. For others, your regional Vice President or Executive members will be ready with help and guidance if needed.

Suitable projects could be small or larger activities: some may be completed before May, or some may be in progress, or even 'just starting'. Interesting, entertaining and helpful presentations could involve young people, or those who have been involved with DENG or RAPE projects, or film/video, dance, drama, music, artwork. The aim, in general, is for the membership to share some fresh way they are pursuing or interpreting NZCFS goals.

So, you are invited to contribute your interpretation of 'There is a Way' at Conference 2015. We would appreciate some non-binding notification of your intention to participate before 15 November. We will send out a reminder the week prior to help our reporting to National Executive.

Kind regards and good wishes for pursuing 'your way in your own way',

Christine Ward,

Nelson Branch President