

NEWSLETTER APRIL 2006  
**NZ CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY**  
**HAMILTON BRANCH**

**Thursday April 27th 2006**

**Venue WAIKATO INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Floor AMI Building corner London and Anglesea Streets**

**Time 7.30pm**  
**Speaker Peter Calvert**  
**Topic Teaching in Jilin**

Peter Calvert has recently returned from teaching in Jilin Province, Peter is our first guest speaker this year, and we look forward to hearing his impressions and experiences of the time spent in China. The capital city of Jilin province, Changchun,, is located northeast of Beijing. It is a Chinese version of a combination of Detroit and Hollywood. It has China's largest motor vehicle plant and its biggest film studio. Located in the center of the northeast plain, Changchun, meaning "eternal spring", was first settled more than 1,000 years ago. But it did not develop much until the turn of this century. The city grew enormously in the 1930s after it was made the capital of the Japanese puppet state, Manchukuo, during the Japanese military occupation of the area (1930--1945). Changchun has witnessed rapid development since the founding of the People's Republic in 1949, and has become a major industrial and cultural city in China. Make sure you and your friends join us next Thursday.

**EDITOR'S COMMENTS**

March proved to be a very busy month indeed with the Branch / Consulate Picnic at Raglan and then four days later the Kathleen Hall Fundraising dinner. Both events proved successful and the support of our members did much to ensure this.. The picnic turned out to be a great success. There was a strong contingent of ten from the Consulate led by Consul General Mr Ma and his wife Mrs Ma, and they, along with members and friends brought the numbers to twenty seven. The perfect weather, a great variety of delicious Chinese and Kiwi food, all went to make a memorable picnic luncheon. But more was to come.

Wainui Reserve is a perfect place for paragliding, and right there by our picnic spot, Butterfly Dave was in business providing tandem trips out over the beach, ocean, and hills. Our visitors took a great interest

in Dave and his equipment and his friendly explanations to their many queries. A little discussion about prices, an agreement, and first away was Cindy Gao the young daughter of Tom Gao the Education Consul. Her flight occasioned much excitement and laughter as she took off waving legs and arms at those below. Next to go up and away was Vice Consul Julia Ju sweeping and swerving out over the sea and our upturned faces. Then finally to everyone's surprise and delight our Consul General himself stepped forward, got helmet and harness adjusted, and striding forward with Dave, took off from the edge of the cliff. They were away for quite a while and during one of their passes as they sailed overhead, Mr Ma called out and waved to those below. , President Ian said to an excited Mrs Ma, " Did he shout 'Hello!' or 'Goodbye ! ?"

It was a great finish to a most enjoyable occasion with our many friends from the Consulate

Thursday evening March 23<sup>rd</sup> our Kathleen Hall Fundraising dinner took place at the Victoria Chinese restaurant. Twenty one members and friends participated, and enjoyed a delicious meal. Altogether a sum of \$250 was raised, and this money will be forwarded to Tom Mills, the NZCFS national treasurer

, On Sunday 26<sup>th</sup> National President Margaret Cooper visited Hamilton briefly with an Education delegation from Jiangsu. Following their visit to the Hamilton Gardens, Vice President Stan joined them for lunch at the Victoria Chinese Restaurant prior to them resuming their journey to Auckland.

On Monday March 26<sup>th</sup> Mme Lu Wan Ru, secretary to Rewi Alley for many years and deeply respected friend of many Society members, paid a brief visit to Hamilton , She is a seasoned traveller, and this was her seventh visit to New Zealand. She was accompanied on her visit to Hamilton by Cecil Fowler President of the Auckland Branch. On arrival they were joined by Anne and David Sayers and Robin and Jenevere Foreman. A visit to the Hamilton Gardens and a light lunch at the Garden Terrace Café was followed by a visit to the University to spend time with Dr. Dov Bing where he and Lu Wan Ru looked through Rewi Alley's personal papers and other material related to him and his work. It is hoped that these edited and collected papers will be published by Oxford Press towards the end of the year. The visit concluded with afternoon tea at Robin and Jeneveres' home, where the group were joined by President Ian and Vice Pres, Stan, In late afternoon Cecil and Madame Lu Wan Ru returned to Auckland after what had turned out to be a very full and busy visit.

#### PRESIDENT'S NOTEBOOK March 2006

Some of our branches have been fortunate to meet with Madame Lu Wan Ru and others attending the Rewi Alley unveiling in North Shore City.

Here is a little of the background on the visit and Memorial

Six Chinese nationals made a special visit to a North Shore City park on March 25 to honour social reformer, educator and writer Rewi Alley. They were at Rewi Alley Reserve in Trias Rd in Totaravale for the unveiling of a bronze bust of the New Zealander who dedicated 60 years of his life to his adopted country.

Before arriving in Auckland, the group of six - which included two of Rewi Alley's former secretaries, two of his foster sons and two members of the Chinese Friendship Society - visited his birthplace in Springfield, Canterbury.

They also spent time at Moeawatea, inland from Waverley, where he farmed for six years when he returned from the First World War.

During the battle against Japan he organised thousands of industrial co-operatives, and later was the pioneer of technical training schools, the most well known at Shandan in the Gobi Desert.

A New Zealand teacher is on staff at the school, thanks to Darfield High School exchange programme, and the New Zealand Chinese Friendship Society, for which Rewi Alley was the inspiration.

Also at the unveiling at Rewi Alley Reserve were members of his family, the Consul General of the People's Republic of China, Ma Chon Gren, and friendship society members.

Mayor George Wood also spoke on the day, and acting Takapuna Community Board chairman, Martin Lawes, was the master of ceremonies.

The reserve was named after Rewi Alley, following his death in 1987. It has a Chinese stroll park theme with paths winding through it and seats.

Sculptor Lu Bo, whose husband, Bangzhen Deng, was another foster child of Rewi Alley, has made the bronze bust. An artist himself, Bangzhen Deng has taught classes at Mairangi Arts Centre.

After the bust was unveiled, a ginkgo tree - an ancient species from China - was planted nearby.

National Conference June 23 – 25 Hastings.

Registration forms will be in the post to all branches shortly for our annual conference. The Hawkes Bay branch has prepared an exciting conference that includes workshops and interesting guest speakers.

Some of our committee members will be attending. Should you be interested registration forms will be available at our general meeting next Thursday

The Origins of China's Awareness of New Zealand 1624-1911 by William Tai Yuen.

This book has been recently published by the New Zealand Asia Institute and is proving very popular. It contains reproductions of original maps of the period and the subjects within the book are most interesting. Members of the New Zealand China Friendship Society can order the book through the New Zealand Asia Institute, The University of Auckland 09 373 7599 or [nzai@auckland.ac.nz](mailto:nzai@auckland.ac.nz) \$25 less 10%.

## **Newsletter Items of Interest**

In a recent newsletter we had an item of news supplied by Jenevere. I would be happy to receive similar items of news about China, particularly news about the activities of members overseas, or those engaged in activities in China.

Stan Boyle

Editor

email [stanzb@xtra.co.nz](mailto:stanzb@xtra.co.nz) i46 Ellicott Rd, Hamilton.

The following article on Kathleen Hall was compiled by Anne and David Sayers. I would like to thank them for this account of Kathleen Hall's work in China, here in New Zealand, and her connection with Waikato

## **News about members**

Dr. Edwin Hung although born and brought up in Hong Kong has lived in Hamilton over 30 years and has only recently retired from his senior lecturing post at Waikato University. Among other papers and dissertations, Edwin has recently published a book. Edwin was inaugural Chairman of the Chinese Garden Trust when it was formed in February 1988. Edwin was one of the principal fundraisers for the Trust, and played a major part in the concept and design of the garden. The Chinese Garden was the second of the traditional gardens completed at the Hamilton Gardens. Edwin is a long time member and supporter of both the Waikato Chinese Association, and the Hamilton Branch of the New Zealand Friendship Society and his support and wise counsel will be greatly missed. We wish him and Priscilla and daughter Estella (Su Wei) Bon Voyage and every good wish for the future.



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NEW ZEALAND CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY HAMILTON BRANCH

**NOTES ON THE LIFE OF KATHLEEN HALL** *prepared for the Kathleen Hall Memorial Fund dinner to be held on Thursday 23 March 2006 at Victoria Chinese Restaurant Hamilton*

A number of New Zealanders have had an association with China over a long period. Most well known of course was Rewi Alley. Another was Kathleen Hall.

Following her death on 3 April 1970, a funeral service was held at St Peter's Cathedral Hamilton to celebrate the life of Kathleen Hall. The service was conducted by her old friend Canon Huata and Rewi Alley wrote from Beijing expressing his sorrow at her passing. *So wonderful a woman and so great a friend of the Chinese people... She was a truly great New Zealander, great because of her capacity to sacrifice, great because of the love and warmth with which she worked with ordinary Chinese people at a time of chaos and bitterness...a real piece of working internationalism* and when Dr. Norman Bethune first met her caring for the Chinese people in a mountainous part of North China encircled by the Japanese, he wrote in his diary, *I have met an angel*. Her name was Kathleen Hall and she was from New Zealand. The Chinese called her *He Mingqing*, (Clear, Bright and Earnest)

In 1940, Bishop Ronald Hall of Hong Kong said, *many people in China today are proud to claim the same nationality as Kathleen Hall*. In 1960, Shirley Barton spoke of her as, *a gallant, intrepid little woman—a shrewd, tough little saint*.

A few years before he died, Rewi Alley said of Kathleen Hall, *if she had been a man she would have been famous*. Rewi recalled her great service to the Chinese people, caring for the wounded of the Eighth Route Army in the Wutai Mountain area and, at great personal risk, fetching much needed medical supplies from Beijing through the Japanese lines. At his urging, in 1989 Tom Newnham retraced her paths through the mountains of West Hebei and interviewed many of the villagers and veteran guerrillas who knew her well. To the Chinese people he found she was already famous. In 1990 Nie Rongzhen, former Marshall of the Peoples Liberation Army said of Kathleen Hall, *her deeds will go down in the annals of history*. Tom Newnham's book *He Mingqing, The Life of Kathleen Hall* was published by New World Press, Beijing China in 1991 and is well worth reading.

Tom Newnham went first to Baoding on the rail line that Kathleen Hall had often slipped across under noses of the Japanese and where guerrillas had stormed out of the hills to wreck sections of the track cutting the Japanese line of communications. He found that she was remembered by the Chinese by a large wooden plaque at the hospital in the County of Anguo where she had been matron for several years. At Quyang a number of old veterans had gathered to meet him and talk about all that Kathleen Hall had done. It was a four wheel drive fording rivers and following a very rough track to reach Songjiazhuang which had been a "border area" throughout the entire War of Resistance. This was the village where Nurse He worked with the Chinese people during the Japanese occupation. She was the first person to bring modern medicine to Songjiazhuang and the people felt safe and thankful. She bought the land and built the clinic and also had a school and fed the pupils. She came to peoples homes even at night-time to care for the sick and often took the very sick by donkey to Baoding and in some cases paid for operations to save their lives. Tom Newnham found that she was remembered with love and gratitude, not only by the local people but also by the surviving Eighth Route Army fighters. Her name was on the clinic and school.

Tom Newnham was aware that Kathleen Hall had been cremated and the Chinese people asked whether it would be possible for these to be returned to Songjiazhuang. He asked Anne Sayers to see if this could be arranged. The box of ashes was still at Newstead and she was able to obtain them. Tom Newnham took a delegation from New Zealand, including two members of the Hall family, to Zongjiazhuang for a special celebration of the life of Kathleen Hall and the unveiling of a memorial. A number of senior Government officials from Beijing as well as representatives of the New Zealand Embassy and the visit was recorded for television.

Kathleen Hall was born in Napier. In 1915 Kathleen Hall started her training as a nurse and worked at Auckland Hospital. She was appointed as a Sister at the hospital but her other interest was in the Society for the Propagation of the Gospel. Through this Society she learned of the need for missionary and nursing services in China. In 1922, she decided she wanted to take up this work but first she had to undergo midwifery training. She took a course at St Helen's Hospital, Christchurch and then she and a Maori nurse from Coromandel, Eunice Preece, sailed to China. There is a photograph in the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Khyber Pass Road of the two young nurses inscribed, *Our Own Missionaries*. There is also a memorial plaque commemorating the life work of Kathleen Hall in the Auckland Cathedral.

Kathleen Hall's association with Hamilton is through her parents who moved to Hamilton in the early 1930's. Two of her brothers were farmers at Okete near Raglan and had both married two sisters from the Peart family, Amy and Marion. Kathleen visited her mother while on furlough in 1934-5 before returning to China. In 1941, Kathleen who had been very ill in China returned to Hamilton to recuperate. After recovering, her intended return to China was made impossible by the closing of Pacific Sea routes after the Japanese bombed Pearl Harbour in December 1942. To care for her mother Kathleen bought a house in Epsom and they both moved to Auckland. She also took in six students from Epsom Girls High School. Her thoughts were always on returning to China but by the end of the war in 1945 her mother's dependence on her was so great that she could not leave her and she involved herself in the missions, the China Aid Council and Corso. She still longed to return to China but after her mother's death in 1948 she had no money to travel.

In 1949, following the rout of the Nationalists, Mao Zedong founded the People's Republic of China and, because the NZ Government refused to recognize the new Chinese Government access to China was difficult. She decided to go to work in Hongkong. Still frustrated in her efforts she went to work in a Leprosy colony and after it was well established she returned to Hamilton in 1951 to join Canon Huata in Maori Missionary work based at Te Kuiti. After some years of this work, when she was sixty and eligible for the pension, she returned to Auckland to live where she could be near friends who shared her ties with China. She was very involved in the establishment of the China Friendship Groups in various cities and worked hard with several others to form a national body. In 1958 they were successful and Kathleen Hall was a member of the inaugural National Committee of the New Zealand China Friendship Society.

With her background she was an invaluable member of the society and she worked tirelessly giving talks to many groups throughout the country. In March 1960 Rewi Alley visited New Zealand and was able to spend a day with Kathleen Hall. A few months later Kathleen Hall and her friend Dean Chandler receive invitations to take part in the eleventh National Day celebrations in Beijing on 1 October 1960. After this they were able to go to the remote village of Shijiazhuang and Baoding where they visited the Cemetery of the Revolutionary Martyrs and scattered earth on the tomb of Dr Bethune. Kathleen Hall returned to live in her Weymouth cottage and continued her work in promoting friendship and understanding between New Zealand and China. Her brother Cecil who lived in Hamilton was her main support and with her increasing frailty in February 1968 he arranged for her to move into Bryant Village where she died just over two years later.

In the archives of the Hamilton Branch there was a copy of the invitation to a Reception in 1960 in the Banquet Room of the Peoples Great Hall in Peking signed by Zhou En-lai. There were at least three New Zealanders there - Charles Chandler, Rewi Alley and Kathleen Hall and the copy was autographed by Edgar Snow. The Hamilton Branch was founded in 1972 and the inaugural meeting was called by Dean Chandler and Dr. Lester Davey. Cecil Hall was involved in the formation of the branch and Vera McShane became the first secretary. In 1975 the branch hosted Rewi Alley and Hans Suen and they visited Waikato University. In 1976 Mary Hall, niece of Kathleen Hall, was secretary.

## **OBITUARY**

**Margaret Chester Nisbet 1923 – 2006**

**It is with considerable regret we report the death of long time Branch member Margaret. She died on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> April after a long illness. We extend our deepest sympathy to members of her family.**

**Margaret joined the Hamilton branch in 1980 and was an active, enthusiastic member, Over the years, Margaret and her late husband Lloyd, hosted many important Chinese officials and delegation members at her home in Wymer Terrace. In 1989 Margaret journeyed to China , along with Anne Sayers and Heather Donkin as the Branch delegation to Sister City Wuxi.. She will be greatly missed by her family and many friends.**

### **News From Nina in Beijing**

As you know, they don't celebrate Easter in China, but celebrate Labour Day and first week of May is going to be a public holiday. I'm really looking towards it as I'm feeling almost sick from all our studies, far too much, sometimes I don't know where to start and there is no end. I can see now, the more I learn the more I realize how much I still don't know. So frustrating sometimes. I just hope that one day it'll benefit me. In spite of all odds I love studying and teachers and students

are nice My Chinese has improved since I'm here, but not as much as I expected or may be I'm expecting too much? I have a Chinese friend who practices her English with me and I practice my Chinese, but it is still not enough. I found a good Judo club in Beijing with the help of my taxi driver friend. It is the best club in Beijing where the Beijing team is training, not the national team though. The sport-complex it truly impressive as so many other things in China and there are around 50! girls are training on the mat, I couldn't believe the number of people training. It took them a while to accept me, about two weeks, but finally they let me train with them and I'm so happy. They don't see any threat from me as they all are much stronger than I, but for me, I have a real challenge. The NZ trainings are nowhere near for a comparison. I've started training this week and tomorrow is my second one.

I'm glad, I'll have an opportunity to use my Chinese as no one there speak English. I've made a few friends here and very happy about it. During the Labour holidays I'm going to Xian with some of my German and Swedish friends as I haven't been there yet. Will be nice to go to Wuxi on some stage, may be during the summer break which starts in the middle of July. looking towards it.