

NEWSLETTER March 2007

**NZ CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY
HAMILTON BRANCH**

Thursday 22 March 2007

GENERAL MEETING

**Venue: Waikato Migrant Resource Centre
Claudelands Reserve, Boundary Road**

Please note our new venue !!!!!!!!!!!!!

Time: 7.30pm

Speaker: Information evening.

This evening we will be showing you what you are going to see when you join our tour to Changsha and Hunan Province. We have a great DVD of Zhang Jia Jie – one of China's most beautiful areas. Meryl will also show some of her slides and talk about all the interesting places you will visit. Bring along your friends and spread the word to anyone who might be interested.

The itinerary.

The 1st day: Arrival in Changsha, check-in at Furong Huatian Hotel, and the welcome banquet hosted by Hunan Provincial Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries

The 2nd day: Staying in Changsha for sightseeing at Hunan Provincial Museum, Yuelu Academy, Yuelu Mountain and etc.(Tianrong Hotel)

The 3rd day: Departure for Yueyang city by bus and sightseeing Yueyang Tower, Junshan Island and Zhangguying Village, then back to Changsha. (Tianrong Hotel)

The 4th day: Departure for Shaoshan by bus, visiting Mao Zedong's Birth place, and Huaminglou, Liu Shaoqi's Birthplace, then back to Changsha. (Tianrong Hotel)

The 5th day: Departure for Hengyang by bus, visiting Heng Mountain, and then back to Changsha. (Tianrong Hotel)

The 6th day □ Departure for sightseeing in Liuyang and Daweishan. (Forest Hotel in Daweishan)

The 7th day: Back to Changsha and have lunch in Changsha, then departure for Zhangjiajie city by bus. (Bibaxi Hotel in Zhangjiajie)

The 8th day: Sightseeing at Tianzi Mountain and Yuanjiajie. (Bibaxi Hotel in Zhangjiajie)

The 9th day: Sightseeing at Huangshizha and Jinbianxi. (Bibaxi Hotel in Zhangjiajie)

The 10th day: Sightseeing at Baofeng Lake and Huanglong Cave. (Bibaxi Hotel in Zhangjiajie)

The 11th day: Go to Fenghuang County by bus for visiting the Ancient Town (Fenghuang Hotel)

The 12th day: Visiting the Ancient South Great Wall, back to Zhangjiajie city, and then fly to Guangzhou.

Last meeting: Tracy Wilson gave us a very interesting talk about Chinese medicine and the importance of balancing yin and yang and treating the whole body. We learnt about hot and cold foods and what may be used for different diseases.

Stan sent this information about the Lantern Festival in China: This year's Lantern Festival falls on March 4 and it's one of the three major traditional festivals in Chinese folk (the other two are Spring Festival and Mid-autumn Festival). With a history of more than 2000 years, Lantern Festival is celebrated grandly. Its celebrative activities mainly consist of three parts: the daytime Huahui (lively and jolly celebrations), the nighttime Denghui (display of various lanterns) and eating Yuanxiao (sweet dumplings made of glutinous rice flour).

Huahui is held at daytime and mainly on famous streets or in big temples. It's made up of various entertainment activities including yangko opera, stilt walking, landboat rowing and the most fabulous lion dance which, accompanied by the clamors of gongs and drums, always gathers the most spotlight on the site.

Denghui is held at nighttime and it's where Lantern Festival gets its name from, a festival to appreciate various lanterns. Lanterns will be made into various shapes, the lotus flower, the aniseed, the dragon and so on. Beijing's best place to appreciate the lanterns may be Dengshikou (entrance to the lantern market) in Dongcheng District. Chaoyang Park (No.1, Nongzhanguan Nanlu, Chaoyang District) also holds annual lantern festivals.

Yuanxiao to Lantern Festival is the same as dumplings to Spring Festival, but different from dumplings which are considered as a kind of staple food, Yuanxiao is more like a kind of snack taken at late night. It is sweet dumpling made of glutinous rice flour. Traditional Yuanxiao stuffings mainly are hawthorn white sugar, white sugar sweet-scented osmanthus, mashed Chinese dates pine nut and sweet bean paste, which are enriched in modern society to include cream, chocolate and so on. Yuanxiao is available at various supermarkets. Long cherished Yuanxiao brands include Daoxiangcun, Gongyifu, Yixinfu and so on.

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Telephone - 07 8381100 - Email - john@uth.co.nz