

新中友好協會

NZ China Friendship Soc.  
Hibiscus Coast Branch

# Friends News

朋友們消息

*péng yǒu men xiǎo xī*

August 2007



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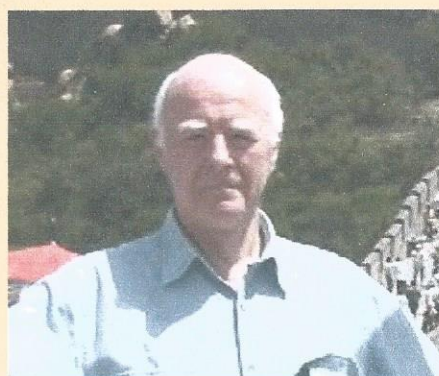
A copiously illustrated

Talk

by

Duncan France

(HBC Branch editor)



## Visiting China

An account of his 11 day trip to China, taking in:

**Beijing** (Great Wall, Forbidden City)

**Xian** (Terracotta Army)

**Chengdu** (Panda preservation)

**Shanghai** (modern developments)

and many other fascinating things

at

Whangaparaoa Library – Pohutokawa Room

2.00pm Thursday, August 30

Please bring as many friends and contacts as possible.

## CHOPSTICKS

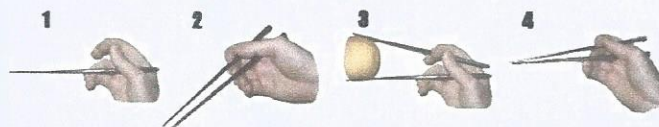
Chopsticks originated in ancient [China](#) and were widely used throughout [East Asia](#). Tools resembling chopsticks were also unearthed in the archaeological site [Megiddo](#) in [Israel](#), belonging to [Scythian](#) invaders of [Canaan](#). This discovery may reveal the existence of a trade relationship between the Middle East and Asia in early antiquity or may be an independent parallel development. Chopsticks were also common household items of civilized [Uyghurs](#) on the [Mongolian steppes](#) during the 6th–8th centuries.

The [Mandarin Chinese](#) word for chopsticks is *kuàizi* (筷子) or *kuài'er* (筷儿/筷兒). In Chinese, and also in some varieties of modern Chinese such as [Hokkien](#) or [Minnan](#), the old word for "chopsticks" was *zhù* (MC: djwo-) (箸). However, *zhù* became a taboo on ships because it sounded the same as



another word meaning "to stop" (住). Consequently, it was replaced by a word of opposite meaning, *kuài* (fast, quick). This gradually spread until it became the word for "chopsticks" in most varieties of modern Chinese. The character for this new meaning of "chopsticks" (筷) for *kuài* has the bamboo [radical](#) added to the character meaning "fast" *kuài* (快).

## Usage



Put one chopstick between the palm and the base of the thumb, using the ring finger (the fourth finger) to support the lower part of the stick. With the thumb, squeeze the stick down while the ring finger pushes it up. The stick should be stationary and very stable.

Use the tips of the thumb, index and middle fingers to hold the other stick like a pen. Make sure the tips of the two sticks line up.

Pivot the upper stick up and down towards the stationary lower stick. With this motion one can pick up food of surprising size.

With enough practice, the two sticks function like a pair of pincers.

**Tip:** Chopsticks generally should be held at the thicker end about a third along their length for balance and efficiency. For greater reach to pick up food further away, hold the chopsticks at the upper ends.

If the tips fail to line up, it will be difficult to hold things. Hold the chopsticks upright with one of the tips lightly touching the table, and gently push the chopsticks down or gently loosen your grip for a moment to let both tips become equal in length. You can also adjust your grip or holding position this way.

With practice, it is possible to perform step one and two simultaneously, on picking up the chopsticks with one hand, with a single fluid and seamless motion. Adjust your grip if necessary.

## Etiquette

It is important to note that the chopsticks are used in a large geographic area. While principles of etiquette are similar, the finer points may differ from region to region, and there is no single standard for the use of chopsticks. Generally, chopsticks etiquette is similar to general Western [etiquette](#) regarding eating utensils.

### Universal

In cultures that make use of chopsticks, the following practices are followed:

- Chopsticks are not used to make noise, to draw attention, or to gesticulate. Playing with chopsticks is considered bad mannered and vulgar (just as playing with cutlery in a Western environment would be deemed crass).
- Chopsticks are not used to move bowls or plates.
- Chopsticks are not used to toy with one's food or with dishes in common.
- Chopsticks are not used to pierce food, save in rare instances. Exceptions include tearing larger items apart such as vegetables. In informal use, small, difficult-to-pick-up items such as cherry tomatoes or fishballs may be stabbed, but this use is frowned upon by traditionalists.
- Chopsticks can be rested horizontally (except in Korea where they should be rested vertically) on one's plate or bowl to keep them off the table entirely. A [chopstick rest](#) can be used to keep the points off the table.
- Chopsticks should not be left standing vertically in a bowl of rice or other food. Any stick-like object pointed upward resembles the incense sticks that some Asians use as offerings to deceased family members; certain funerary rites designate offerings of food to the dead using standing chopsticks.

### Chinese Chopsticks etiquette

- In [Chinese culture](#), it is normal to hold the rice bowl up to one's mouth and use chopsticks to push rice directly into the mouth.
- Chinese traditionally eat rice from a small [bowl](#) held in the left hand. The rice bowl is raised to the mouth and the rice pushed into the mouth using the chopsticks. Some Chinese find it offensive to scoop rice from the bowl using a spoon. If rice is served on a plate, as is more common in the West, it is acceptable and more practical to eat it with a [fork](#) or [spoon](#).
- The blunt end is sometimes used to transfer food from a common dish to a diner's plate or bowl.



- It is acceptable to transfer food to closely related people (e.g. grandparents, parents, spouse, children, or significant others) if they are having difficulty picking up the food. Also it is a sign of respect to pass food to the elderly first before the dinner starts (part of the [Confucian](#) tradition of respecting seniors).
- When communal chopsticks are supplied with shared plates of food, it is considered impolite and unhygienic to use chopsticks to pick up the food from the shared plate or eat using the communal chopsticks.

## Recent Events

**July 20, Friday**, Talk by Joan Campbell, M.B., ChB, Clin. Acup. (Nanjing), on **Acupuncture's place in Western medicine** (7pm, Orewa College Auditorium).

Dr Joan Campbell, despite having very recently left hospital, gave us a fascinating insight into the use of acupuncture and its place in a holistic approach to improving the well-being of the human body; in other words its use alongside herbal medicine and moxa\*\* burning. She also explained her efforts to improve confidence in acupuncturists in New Zealand in that she is involved in the setting up a scheme of certification.

**\*\* A candle made of powdered dried Mugwort herb.** Practitioners use moxa to warm regions and acupuncture points with the intention of stimulating circulation through the points and inducing a smoother flow of blood and qi.

**July 21, Saturday.** The first class on **Basic Mandarin**, by Shelley, wife of Simon Yang, started. The course is based on techniques used for Chinese children, which pleases all those who started the course!

## Membership News

Membership stands at 29 incl. 'additional' family members and 3 Corporate members.

### Why not learn to speak Mandarin?

**Tutor:** Shelley, wife of Simon Yang  
**Where?** Simon's Star Buffet Restaurant  
 Whangaparaoa Plaza  
**Cost:** \$5 per hour per person  
*If interested, ring Allen Crosby 09-427 4009*

### Confucius Institute

Level 4, 58 Symmonds Street, Auckland

- Prof. Chan Wan Yiu is presently running classes in **Chinese Calligraphy + Chinese Brush painting** – Saturday mornings
  - Join Confucius Institute (\$30 for life) to access their **excellent library**
- Contact 09 373 7599 ext. 84493, for details.

## Programme

**August 30, Thursday**, Illustrated talk by Duncan France, on his China trip, called **"Visiting China"**. (Whangaparaoa Library – Pohutokawa Room).

**October 5, Friday.** Celebration dinner during the week of the China National Day - 1st October (at Star Restaurant, Whangaparaoa Plaza). We will invite the China Consul general and his staff to share the celebrations, and we will contact Chinese students or others living locally via the language schools & colleges etc. Hopefully we will also have a couple of Chinese musical items.

## Forthcoming Events 最新動態

**(6th) New Zealand Chinese Arts Exhibition**  
 5 – 25 August 2007, 9:00am – 5:00pm  
*Opening Function: 5:00-7:00pm on 5 August.*

Art Gallery, level 4,  
 Aotea Centre, Auckland  
*Admission: Free*

**Bananas NZ Going Global – NZ Chinese Association International Conference**  
 18-19 August, at University of Auckland Business School, Grafton Road, Auckland.

It connects local and overseas personalities and stories to highlight the journeys and leadership of Chinese people in New Zealand and throughout the world. a chance to share reflections on the growth of the country's Chinese communities – and to explore the opportunities that may be presented as a result of China's exceptional and rapid rise as a leader on the world stage.

Contact Duncan France for a pamphlet, or [www.goingbananas.org.nz](http://www.goingbananas.org.nz), for more details

**(5th) Chinese film Festival in New Zealand**  
 September-October 2007

*Exact dates:* To be determined  
 Skycity, Auckland  
*Admission:* Tickets for Sale

**2008 First Night Auckland Celebration**  
 31 December 2007  
 6:00pm– 2:00am 1 January 2008  
 Aotea Centre, Auckland