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No. 4 - May 2017



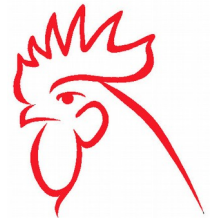
## May Meeting

# Helene Wong

Author of 'Being Chinese'

Friday, May 26, 5:30 p.m.

Jaycee Room, Founders Heritage Park



Helene Wong will speak to our membership and our community friends at Founders Park/Jaycee Room. She will share her compelling life story written in her book, "Being Chinese", which speaks to her dual personal experience - being of Chinese heritage and relating to the world as a New Zealand Kiwi; an interesting and relevant story indeed.

Helene was born in New Zealand in 1949, to parents whose families had emigrated from China one or two generations earlier. Preferring invisibility, she grew up resisting her Chinese identity. But in 1980 she travelled to her father's home village in southern China and came face to face with her ancestral past. What followed was a journey to come to terms with "being Chinese".

**NOTE: this meeting is *not* at Hearing House.** A Map and instructions on how to get to Jaycee Room are over the page.

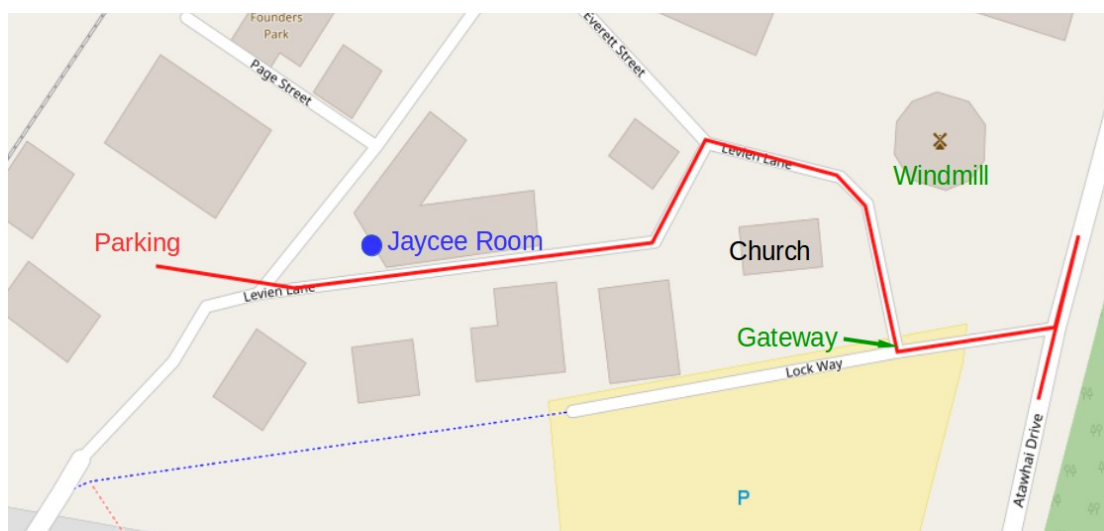
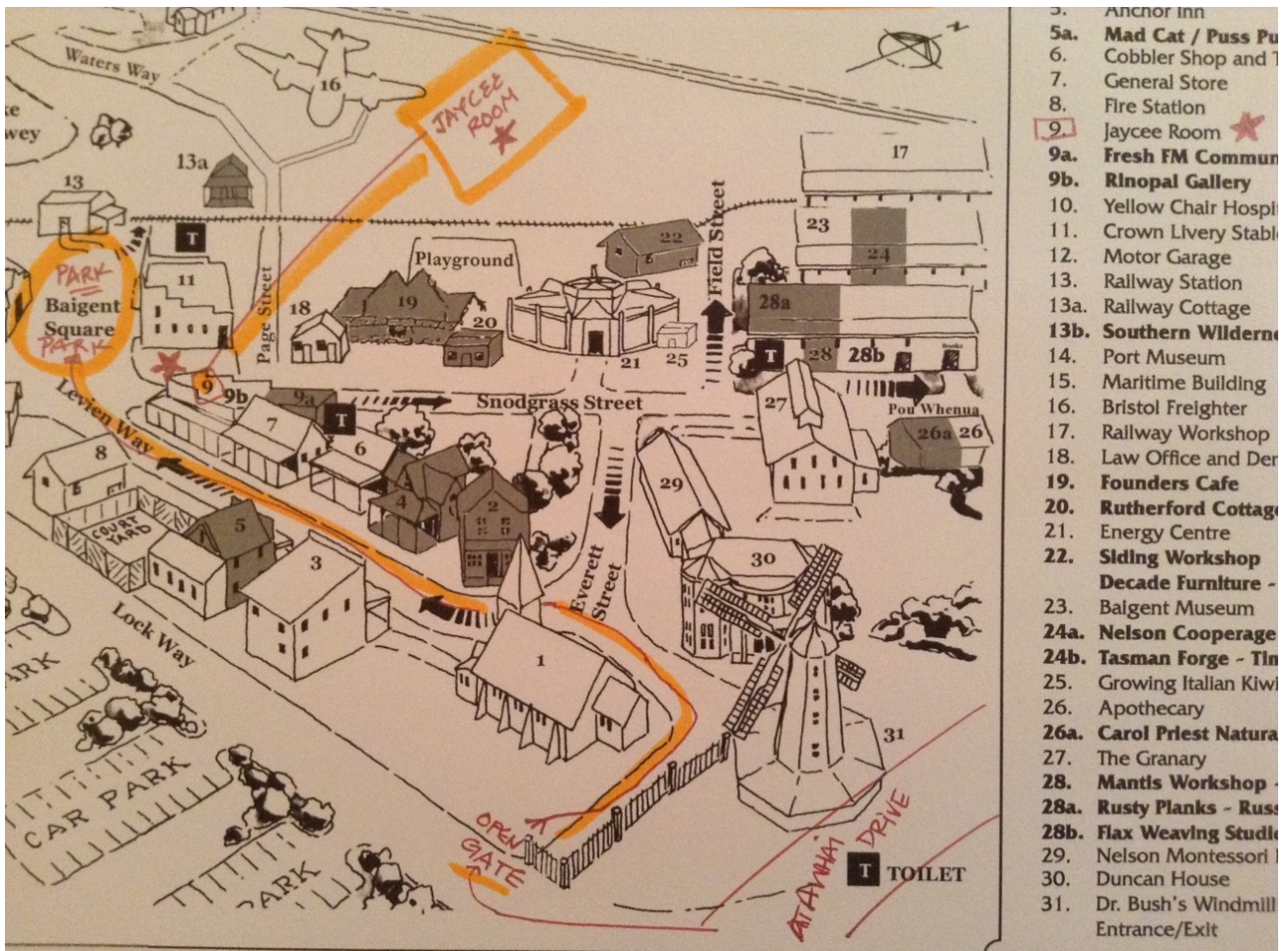
Although in a different venue, this talk will be preceded by our usual meeting and meal. Bring friends along, visitors are very welcome.

**To arrange catering, please contact Barbara Markland  
 by Monday, 23 May  
 ph. (03)544 4712 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz  
 Please make sure she knows you are coming!**

**Instructions for the meeting at Jaycee Room, Founders Park** – Turn off Atawhai Drive towards the Founders parking area. On the right is the gateway which allows vehicle access. Pass through the gateway, keep the church on the left and go LEFT at the junction, into Levien Way. At the end of this street, is an open area where we can park in front of the railway station, Baigent Square. You will have passed the Jaycee Room on the right, at the intersection of Levien Way and Snodgrass Street.

If you need help finding the building PLEASE call lori @ 021 027 93563 who will help you with directions.

**Important:** the gate will be shut at 7:15pm & opened again at 8pm. If you are only attending the 7:00pm presentation you will want to arrive 10-15 minutes early for parking and seating purposes.



If you would like to gain a larger sense of Helene's story prior to our meeting please find the internet link below, to a Radio NZ interview:  
<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/ninetonoon/audio/201812163/writer-helene-wong-on-growing-up-chinese-in-new-zealand>

**Book club** - We intend to host a book club discussion following Helene's presentation. The book club will be an early evening in July or August; details & logistics to follow in next month's newsletter. If you wish to join our winter discussion around Helene's book, "Being Chinese" you will find her book available at Page & Blackmore and easily purchased as an e-book.

**Last meeting** – A very interesting meeting as Deb Knapp informed us about the known history of Taoist style of Tai Chi and a visiting of local group of exponents demonstrated the first moves. A slower instruction session allowed us to see the moves and the transition between them. Of course this was the introduction to an opportunity for our members to participate and experience Tai Chi. As you can see, many enjoyed the opportunity to 'try it out'.



**Adventures in China blog** – Kirk McDowell, a member of Wellington NZCFS branch, is presently in China studying at a university in Xiamen. He has been writing about his background and experiences in a blog (abbreviation of *weblog*). Find it at <https://adventuresinchina23.wordpress.com/>.

#### **From Nelson Executive, May**

- October is the 175th anniversary of Appo Hocton's arrival in Nelson.
- Helene Wong and her husband will be spending a few days in Nelson around the time of our May meeting. Executive members will accompany them for some of their time here.
- China Week is to start November 6.
- We will explore the possibility of an art exhibition for China Week with artworks related to China by Nelson artists including children and NMIT students. RefineryArtspace to be checked for possible booking.
- Two of our MLAs, Amy and Julie, will be leaving in June and could be farewelled at the June meeting. Amy is intending to study in Singapore.
- Discussed ways to increase contact with the NMIT students from China.
- Consideration will be given to participating in a boot sale later in the year.
- There has been an approach about the possibility of a Huangshi school visit later this year.
- President Ferry, Sally Warren, and Royden Smith will be attending Conference and AGM. Linda and Karen, from Youxie, will also be there.

**From other branches** – Wellington branch newsletter reports on their meeting which featured Helene Wong. There has also been a fund-raising event for a proposed Chinese Garden – a Garden of Beneficence which is to be on the Wellington waterfront. The Chinese Embassy hosted a reception to commemorate the 90th Anniversary of Rewi Alley's first arrival in China.

The Wellington branch newsletter is at <http://nzchinasociety.org.nz/30075/nzcfs-wellington-branch-may-2017-newsletter/>

Christchurch newsletter includes material from Radio NZ about the possibility of protecting the site of Ashburton's Chinatown which was once the largest communal Chinese settlement in the South Island and was active in the mid 20th Century. The original Radio NZ item text is at <http://www.radionz.co.nz/news/national/327911/ashburton's-chinatown-could-live-again>

To hear the Checkpoint audio go to

<http://www.radionz.co.nz/national/programmes/checkpoint/audio/201838756/historic-chinatown-in-ashburton-to-be-preserved-for-the-future>.

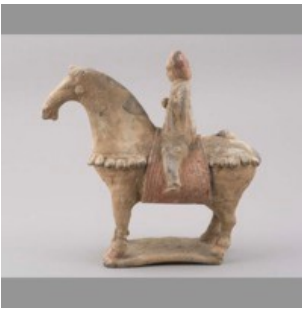
## Rewi Alley Memories of the Month



As our thoughts revolve around Rewi Alley's anniversaries this year, we have been showcasing Rewi Alley poetry. This month, however, as we look towards Nelson's China Week 2017, when we will be exhibiting China-related artworks by Nelsonians. Rewi Alley, as well as being a poet, writer, philosopher, engineer, teacher, farmer, peace activist, historian and more, was an art connoisseur and collector of antiquities. He sent many artworks and artifacts back to Christchurch with his family and other visitors, and brought some himself on his visits back home in the 1960s and 1970s. These collections were donated to Canterbury Museum which Rewi had enjoyed visiting in his schooldays. Many of the historic items came from the area around Shandan Bailie School where they had been found by students and locals during farming activities. In 1956, Canterbury Museum Director Roger Duff visited Shandan and brought back to Christchurch large crates of artworks and antiquities collected by Rewi. Later, in Beijing, Rewi negotiated exporting and licensing arrangements with the Chinese authorities who were keen to enhance cultural connections with New Zealand.



For many years some of the collection was displayed in drawers and cabinets, while the rest was in storage. Now, however, the whole collection of 1,378 items has been photographed and catalogued and is on line for all to admire: <http://www.rewialleyart.nz/items/browse>. There is a very wide range of items from neolithic to the twentieth century, including jade, ceramics, paintings, rubbings, snuff boxes, clothing, brass, jewellery, buckles, coins.



In the 1980s, a museum was built in Shandan to house a further 3,500 artefacts of the Rewi Alley collection.



Many visitors to the museum over the years have been fascinated by the collection of intricately decorated snuff boxes and bottles, which are wonderful works of art in themselves. The glass one pictured here, with its tiny internal-face painting, was one of 6 given to H.M Sievright of Timaru, when he took Corriedale sheep to Shandan Bailie School in 1947. The snuff bottles were passed on to the Museum in 1975 by Mrs A Sievright. What interesting snippets of history can be obtained from the museum website! Christine and Bruce Ward saw these bottles when visiting the museum with Christchurch NZCFS about 15 years ago; now we know the story.



This painting is one of the more recent items in the collection. The 'Boy and Water Buffalo' was presented to Rewi Alley in 1934 with a dedication from the famous twentieth century artist, Li Keran. The dedication reads: 'Mr Alley, the master. Please kindly point out my inadequacies. Respectfully presented by Keran'. It seems like Rewi may have had some standing as an artist himself. He certainly had an appreciation of a wide range of art and cultural collectables. We are lucky to be able to enjoy this part of Rewi Alley's legacy whether on-line, or by visiting Canterbury Museum.