

Eulogy for Ian Howat, from Dave Bromwich

I'm Dave Bromwich, National President of NZCFS. I first met Ian through his role on National Executive, about 20 years ago. It is specifically because of Ian that I am here today. He, or Hamilton Branch, although I suspect it was Ian, nominated me for National Exec when I was hardly known, and I haven't left. Thanks Ian for that.

Ian Howat was an exceptional man. He served on National executive for at least 15 years. When I first began my path on National exec all those 20 years ago, he was the one clear voice to listen to. When he contributed it was his clear and concise comments to the discussion that very often directed the path to be taken. We looked for his wisdom, and missed it when he retired from National Executive.

Ian had a passion for China that was quite exceptional. He expressed this in various ways, from studying Chinese language through to his deep interest in food. I recall being with Ian on several tours in China, and delighted in his recording of almost all the dishes, and marvelling at his capacity to identify the ingredients. When there was something unusual, he asked for detail!

Most of all though, it was the sincerity of his friendship with Chinese people that stands out. Last year on tour with several members from Hamilton Branch, Ian's companionship was frequently remembered from earlier occasions when he lead tours. " He is more Chinese than we are"

Ian was a very decent man. He was a humble man, who did not like receiving acclamation. I am sure he must have been aware of the high level of respect with which he was held. In National Executive, I place Hamilton Branch at the top end of what a branch should be. Engaging, exploring, experiencing, and enjoying fellowship. The foundation of this stands with the people who have gone before, and Ian was a very significant part of a very strong leadership that includes Stan, and others who are with us today. I know Ian would not wish to be singled out here and it is out of deference to Ian's humility that I include all who worked with him in this effort.

Hamilton Branch, you have been very lucky to have had people like Ian, who have attracted people like Miao.