

# New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

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## Nelson Branch Meeting for March 27 is cancelled.

As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, and the public health measures we are urged to implement, it has been decided that our March meeting should not go ahead.

A decision about the April meeting will be made after consideration of conditions that develop and recommendations about gatherings that may be advised at that time.

Please be aware of Ministry of Health recommendations.

Take care of yourselves and your friends.

We express sympathies to those whose families are overseas, or whose jobs are in jeopardy. We also express sympathy to our Chinese friends whose families have been suffering. They can be so proud of how China has handled the outbreak.



## **Something positive**

Jasmine Wayman of Nayland College is one of the students who were selected to go to Liyangang. Unfortunately, due to the situation in China, the exchange has had to be cancelled. This is a letter which Jasmine sent to the High School our students were to be visiting.

Dear fellow students, and the teachers of Guangdong Liangyang Senior High School.

This email is from the students from one of the colleges in Nelson called Nayland College. Nelson is a small city of 50,000 people and is also a sister city with your city.

Nelson is filled with beautiful reserves and parks. It's very close to three national parks, one of which is the Abel Tasman. Sometimes outdoor education groups from our school go there on camps and go kayaking and swimming. Nelson is also right next to the beach and the sun in the summer can be very hot.

Here in New Zealand we have seen on the news the terrible events of the coronavirus, and some of the students from Nayland College thought it would be a nice idea to write an email of support to our fellow students in our Sister City. We have been seeing on the news most nights, the horrible impact it has had on your communities. We came up with this idea after two students went to the China Friendship Society dinner, where the Chairperson said to show our care and support. We thought it would be a nice way to show the young person to young person support. We know it must be scary and horrible being kept inside that long and not being allowed to go to school. We hope that the conditions of the virus will soon improve and that the communities can go back to normal.

From all the students from Nayland College we offer our full support for our fellow students and everyone else in your communities. We hope that this email has been nice and supportive.

Here is the reply received from Guangdong Liangyang Senior High School in Yangjiang with comment from President Barbara – “I think it shows Jasmine’s message had real impact and is an excellent example of what we are trying to achieve with our sister-city relationships. Her message will go to 3500 students.”

It’s really nice and warm to have received the letter from the students in Nayland college, I immediately forwarded the letter to the group chat of our English teachers department, asking them to forward the letter to every student in our school. Also, after translating the letter into Chinese, I forward it to our headmaster as well as our dean of School Office, who will later share this letter and your care and support with all of the staff in our school.

While sharing the letter with our 2019 exchange students, they were really touched and happy and some of our students would like to reply to the letter, which was when I got the idea to hold an activity in which all of the students would get a chance to write back to students in Nayland College. Our headmaster couldn’t agree more and promised to provide awards to those who do well in this activity.

Today when I was giving a live lesson to my students online, I also shared this letter with them as a bonus as well as some wonderful experiences we had in Nelson in 2019. My students were thrilled and moved to know there are some people who are so concerned about us though we are far away from each other! We really appreciated the kindness and concern from students in Nayland College as well as the constant care and support from the China Friendship Society for all of us. With one letter, it enables our students to learn how people connect with each other and that we can be so close with love, care and support. Apart from that, our students also got this valuable and hands-on opportunity to practice using English, which is what learning English is about.

It will take a while for the students to write the reply email. I am thinking in one or two weeks when they will have finally finished their writing, I will include a few emails in my later emails for you. What do you think? Let me know.

With regards

Julia

## COVID-19

It should come as no surprise that COVID-19 is the big issue as this newsletter is being written. New Zealand now has confirmed cases, all international arrivals (except from the Pacific) are required to self-isolate for 14 days, and many events have already been cancelled or are very likely to be cancelled. Any international tourist who has no appropriate plans for self-isolation is to be deported.

In the U.S.A., the CDC (Centre for Disease Control) is recommending that for the next 8 weeks, organizers cancel or postpone in-person events that consist of 50 people or more. We should expect that similar recommendations will be made, or even required, in New Zealand.

Tony Li of Rotorua branch is currently in Hubei and has written for their branch newsletter.

Last month is an unforgettable month for China and the world. China, especially Hubei, has put a tremendous effort in order to control the coronavirus outbreak since late Jan. Up to today (8 March), over 43 thousands civil and military medical staff (nearly everyone is a CCP member) from all around countries has volunteered to come to Hubei and to support the local hospital system, and about 80% of them were sent to Wuhan. Within 10 days, two specialised hospital providing over 2300 beds were set up from nothing. And over 80% of daily travelling demand was controlled for over a month now.

About my personal life in Huangshi, I also have a lot to share with you. Since the lockdown, the local resident complex community collectively decided to put a brick wall on all vehicle entry point and stopped anyone from going out. Since two cases were found in an apartment building which is less than 100 meters from my home, my family became very nervous and sealed all windows facing that direction, and they put a plastic bag of water on top of each sink and drain hole to prevent the virus from coming out of sewage system. This was because there was a concentrated SARS infection incident in Hong Kong in 2003 and the virus was spread from the sewage system.

Meanwhile, local social workers were organising farmers to deliver food to our community on a weekly bases, and grouped us up to bulk-buy vegetables and meat. For the first two weeks, food prices were about 7-10 times the usual price on average and I saw one Chinese cabbage which should be about ¥3-5/ea sold for ¥75 (~\$18NZ). After price controls, food prices became about 2-3 times the normal price but we were living in a Soviet Union lifestyle where everything needed to be long life items.. There was once our community received some vegetable donations from a neighbouring province and it was the first time that I went outdoors after staying at home for over 3 weeks. That event was managed very inefficiently and we had to rush up in order to get a fair share. But it was definitely better than nothing. Local supermarkets also provided some deliverable bundles which covered raw food, FMCGs and even some snacks and soft drinks.

The Hong Kong newspaper, South China Morning Post, has currently a number of articles relating to the pandemic, including a report that Beijing has just implemented controls on incoming international passengers, very much like those announced by New Zealand over the weekend. International travellers landing in Beijing will be quarantined for 14 days at their own expense.

Another report is titled '*South Korea's coronavirus response is the opposite of China and Italy – and it's working*'. From that article:

As countries ranging from the United States to Italy and Iran struggle to manage the virus, Seoul's handling of the outbreak – involving a highly coordinated government response that has emphasised transparency and relied heavily on public cooperation in place of hardline measures such as lockdowns – is increasingly viewed by public health experts as a model to emulate for authorities desperate to keep the virus under control.

Whereas China, where the virus originated, and more recently Italy, have placed millions of their citizens on lockdown, South Korea has not restricted people's movements – not even in Daegu, the southeastern city at the centre of the country's outbreak.

Instead, authorities have focused mandatory quarantine on infected patients and those with whom they have come into close contact, while advising the public to stay indoors, avoid public events, wear masks and practise good hygiene.

From another source ([www.propublica.org/article/how-south-korea-scaled-coronavirus-testing-while-the-us-fell-dangerously-behind](http://www.propublica.org/article/how-south-korea-scaled-coronavirus-testing-while-the-us-fell-dangerously-behind)) comes the information that South Korea has been successful because of its bad experience with MERS (Middle East Respiratory Syndrome). After that outbreak, it was found that a lack of tests for the disease had prompted ill people to go from hospital to hospital looking for a

diagnosis, and so infecting the hospitals as they went. This resulted in a key reform allowing the government to give near-instantaneous approval to testing systems in an emergency.

Within weeks of the current outbreak in Wuhan, China, four Korean companies had manufactured tests from a World Health Organization recipe and, as a result, the country quickly had a system that could assess 10,000 people a day, partly in drive-through testing stations. Then the government posted the precise movements (without names) of everyone who tested positive — everything from the seat numbers they occupied in movie theatres to the restaurants where they stopped for lunch. In this way they can identify the localities where the infection risk is greatest, and concentrate on those.

### New Year Banquet and A.G.M.

Our annual banquet celebrating the Chinese Lunar New Year was held in early February, although the official New Year start was January 25. While there may not have been as many present as in some years, there was not a lot of space left at Eastern Cuisine in Richmond. Official guests this year included National President Dave Bromwich, from Hawkes Bay, and South Island Vice President Craig Ashby, from Christchurch.

The result of the Annual Meeting election of officers was:

President: Barbara Markland

Vice President: Bill Findlater

Secretary: Christine Ward

Treasurer: Royden Smith

Committee: Jifang Black, Nigel

Hucklesby, Jingjing Jackson, Ian Lister,  
Jane Lister, Susie Su, Bruce Ward, Sally  
Warren.

We are very pleased to welcome Jingjing to the committee.

Dave Bromwich addressed the meeting for a few minutes before we 'tucked in' to the usual sumptuous banquet.



### Chinese Community and Friends

Jingjing Jackson (and friends) have organised some events for the local Chinese community and invited our members. The latest was 'Cuppa Connect Corner with Qi Gong, Calligraphy & Singing', held on a Saturday morning in the Huangshi Chinese Garden.

There was a selection of Chinese teas for tasting, Gregg Wagstaff demonstrated some Qi Gong and then led some attendees in a small practice session. Some also tried their hands at creating some Chinese calligraphy.

From Wikipedia – “Qi Gong is a centuries-old system of co-ordinated body posture, movement, breathing, and meditation, used for the purposes of health, spirituality, and martial arts training.”

That same day, it turned out, was Nigel Hucklesby's birthday. Born on February 29, he is still a teenager and will have to wait another 4 years for his next birthday!

### Postponement

The memorial service for Dame Alison Roxburgh has been postponed indefinitely.

Something which made some stressed newsletter editors laugh this week:

*Vital papers will demonstrate their vitality by spontaneously moving from where you left them to where you can't find them.*