

# New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

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No. 3 – April 2021



## April meeting China and NMIT

Will Tregidga

Friday, April 30



Will Tregidga started his international journey at the age of 17 when he left New Zealand for a year studying as an exchange student. This catalysed further international experiences which have led to his current role as Head of International Development at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT). Will has worked in international education since 2003, and has worked for the past 12 years with Massey University, the University of Otago and NMIT. He has been involved in the international education working groups for the new national institute, Te Pūkenga, and is the current chair of New Zealand's Institutes of Technology and Polytechnics International Directors and Heads Group.

This talk will give an update on international education, both nationally and within the context of NMIT, particularly focussing on NMIT's engagement with China.

The meeting will be at the usual place, Hearing House, 354 Trafalgar Square (next to Synagogue Lane). We start the meeting at 5:30, the meal arrives at 6p.m. and the guest speakers may begin after 6:45 p.m. Visitors are welcome.

If you wish to have the catered meal it costs \$15. Pay cash at the meeting or by Internet banking to our new NZCFS Nelson account, 03-1354-0490726-00, use your name as reference, and contact Barbara Markland as below.

**To arrange catering, please contact Barbara Markland  
by Monday, April 26.  
ph. (03)544 4712 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz  
Please make sure she knows you are coming!**

## March Meeting – A celebration of Nelson's Sister Cities

Sister City Account Summary from 2002 to 2020	
Total Money In	\$132,323.60
Total Money Out	\$111,436.90
Sister City Funds available	\$20,886.70



**Branch Treasurer Royden Smith**, began the Sister Cities Celebration by reminding us about the way Nelson City Council has, each year, provided funding for Sister City events such as delegations and exchanges, and Nelson's China Week. A Sister Cities Co-ordinating Group, previously chaired by Marilyn Gibbs and now chaired by Gail Collingwood records the progress of the projects.

**Isabelle Jones** told her story about the beginning of the connections between Nelson and Huangshi when she visited China with Barbara Harford. Isabelle joined NZCFS soon afterwards, and became involved with the enthusiasm of Robin and Beverley Brown for establishing connections with China. When Professor Bill Willmott (Christchurch) suggested Huangshi, near Wuhan (which was connected with Christchurch), the groundwork was set.

**Philip and Chan Woollaston** were in the first official delegation to Huangshi in 1994. Philip was Nelson's Mayor and signed an 'intention' document with the Mayor of Huangshi. Robin and Beverley Brown and Isabelle Jones were there also, and they were hosted with all the friendliness and ceremony that are hallmarks of visits to the city. In 1995, a new Mayor of Huangshi came to Nelson with a delegation to sign the Memorandum of Understanding that formally began the Sister City relationship.

**Robin and Beverley Brown** had many trips to Huangshi, and hosted delegations here as well. They formed a close connection with Xu Zugui who was in the Foreign Affairs Office of Huangshi Municipal Government. He did an internship at Nelson City Council. In 2005, June Clark led a Women's Friendship Delegation to Huangshi which included The Browns, Chris Mouter, and 5 other women from Nelson. We watched Arnold Clark's slide show of this.

**The Huangshi Chinese Garden** was the biggest NZCFS/NCC project. Under the presidency of June Clark, sponsorship was raised and plans developed in Huangshi with NCC's Andrew Petheram. It all came to fruition on opening day, November 14, 2007, when the two Mayors unveiled the plaque. We watched the story on a lovely presentation prepared by Aukje Both and Ferry Van Mansum.

**Branch Vice-President Bill Findlater** told us how he became immersed in Chinese Sister City Huangshi when deputising for Nelson Mayor at the 60th Anniversary of the formation of that city in 2010. Bill realised, that although the celebrations were spectacular, and the sights were mind-blowing, and the trade possibilities were enormous, most important was discovering the friendliness and openness of Chinese people. Bill was with Mayor Miccio when negotiations began to sign Yangjiang as our second Sister City.

**Ian Lister** told us how he and Jane designed and led the first schools' delegation of 6 Nelson students to Yangjiang in 2018, and a reciprocal exchange of students to Nelson in 2019. The financial backing for these exchanges came from NZCFS Deng Fund, Nelson City Council, and personal contributions. Ian and Jane's passion for forging friendship connections between young people was the driving force. Their belief is that it is only through friendly cultural youth exchanges that understanding between people in our two countries will flourish. Students from China and NZ sharing their cultures and enjoying themselves together is a heart-warming sight for all who wish for international understanding.

### **Simon Draper, Executive Director of New Zealand Asia Foundation has written**

“We all need to understand China more, including the broader relationship New Zealand has with the Chinese people, society and culture. And we need more context on difficult issues and more perspectives on how to solve these. New Zealand’s views and values differ from China’s on key issues such as human rights, but we have nonetheless sought to discuss those differences respectfully. It’s important to continue to engage and to have honest conversations about our values and interests, no matter our size difference.”

### **Alison Roxburgh Memorial**

The (delayed) memorial service for Dame Alison is to be held at 2:30 p.m. on Saturday, April 24, at Old Saint Johns, 320 Hardy Street.

Alison and husband Jim were stalwarts of the Society from the early days. We miss her, as do many other community organisations with which she so generously shared her wide experience, knowledge, and understanding. Hers was a life well-lived with long and unstinting service in the Nelson community, as well as nationally and internationally.

### **Rewi Alley Chinese School**

The Rewi Alley Chinese School in Christchurch was established as a charitable trust in 1998, with the purpose of operating a Chinese language school for people of all cultures and to provide other support and assistance. It mainly operates on a Saturday, with hundreds of children on site learning Chinese language and culture, and it also provides bi-lingual holiday programmes and after-school care.

The school previously operated from its own premises located on the Wharenui School grounds, where Rewi Alley’s father was the headmaster. However, it had to relocate at the end of last year to allow Wharenui School to expand. It now leases an administration block and classrooms at the Dovedale Campus, University of Canterbury.

### **Other branches**

A Wellington branch recent meeting was addressed by the Acting Director of Confucius Institute at Victoria University of Wellington. Adele Bryant introduced the primary objective of the Confucius Institute as the promotion of Chinese language and culture, contributing to the building of New Zealanders’ China capability through a better understanding of the country, its people, language and culture. The Wellington Confucius Institute has also acted as national host to the Mandarin Language Programme.

Last year, approximately 150 Mandarin Language Assistants (MLAs) were due to arrive in New Zealand but were unfortunately unable to do so. This year the programme has also been curtailed but, with vaccinations underway, the programme is expected to resume in 2022.

### **China in the news**

John Sudworth, BBC correspondent in Beijing, on being pushed out of China:

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-56607815>

China’s attempts to stifle foreign media criticism:

<https://theconversation.com/why-chinas-attempts-to-stifle-foreign-media-criticism-are-likely-to-fail-158785>

China’s turnaround in the war against COVID:

<https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2021/04/12/dramatic-turnaround-china-has-started-lose-covid-cold-war/>

How China eradicated absolute poverty:

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202104/12/WS60738cc0a31024ad0bab4c0c.html>

Why Hong Kong electoral reform is a double-edged sword for Beijing:

<https://www.scmp.com/comment/opinion/article/3129791/why-hong-kong-electoral-reform-double-edged-sword-beijing>

Hong Kong, Its Elections Upended, Reconsiders Its Dream of Democracy:

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/03/20/world/asia/hong-kong-elections-democracy.html>

China says U.S. and Japan should stop colluding against China:

<https://newsaf.cgtn.com/news/2021-04-18/China-says-U-S-Japan-should-stop-colluding-against-China-ZxMgNH7cPu/index.html>

NZ Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nanaia Mahuta warns against economic overexposure to China:

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/mahuta-warns-against-economic-overexposure-to-china>

### Goodbye cheques!

You will not have missed the information that banks are deciding not to process cheques. It will not be long before it will not be possible to use one even to pay your NZCFS subscription.

Accordingly, Royden would like everyone to ensure that they have some other way of getting subscriptions to our account – preferably a direct deposit through online (Internet) banking. Details are on the subscription form below.

				
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