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No. 5 – June 2021



June meeting **Expats Living in Beijing**

Lynn & Joe Roberts

June 25



Lynn writes “We will contribute our experiences of the fast-paced Beijing life where we spent two years working and sightseeing as much as possible with two young kids in tow. Our family grew from 4 to 5 during our time in China, with the birth of our youngest child in Beijing United Family Hospital in late 2017.

Please join us and feel free to ask us any questions you may have regarding our experience of the Kiwi Expat community and general day to day life in the city of 21.54 million.”

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.

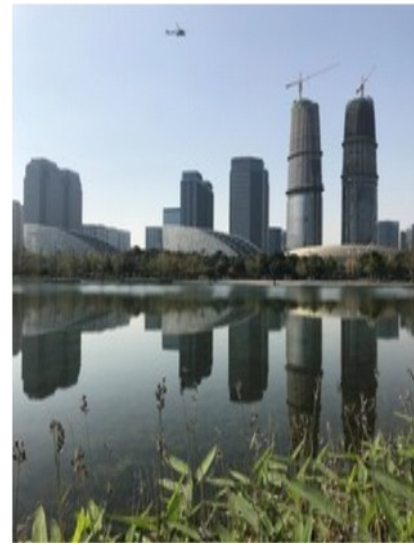
If you wish to have the catered meal it costs \$15. Pay cash at the meeting or by Internet banking to our new NZCFS Nelson account, 03-1354-0490726-00, use your name as reference, and contact Barbara Markland as below.

**To arrange catering, please contact Barbara Markland
 by Monday, June 21.
 ph. (03)544 4712 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz
 Please make sure she knows you are coming!**

May meeting report.

Alistair Crozier, South Island Director of Asia New Zealand Foundation came to Nelson on May 28 to speak to us. His address was called *'From New Zealand to China and Back Again, 1995 to 2018'*.

The first section was about his deployments to Chengdu to develop and maintain a NZ Consulate covering the provinces of Sichuan, Yunnan, Guizhou, and Chongqing (combined population 200 million). The goals were to increase New Zealand visibility and advance New Zealand interests in South Central China, and to provide a different window into a lower tier area of fast growth. It was about exports, investment promotion, tourism, education, trade, innovation, networking, and people-to-people connections. The Consulate guideline for establishing a connection with a city was that when a city got a 'Starbucks', this indicated that the GDP had reached a level that could warrant attention from New Zealand. Alistair and his family enjoyed their times in the region which has plenty of great outdoor areas to explore and a pleasant comfortable way of life with wonderful food, craft beers, and the pandas of course.



Since leaving the Diplomatic Service in 2018, Alistair has continued to help build connections with China through his work, including that as Business Director, South Island of the Asia New Zealand Foundation. The second part of Alistair's presentation covered the work of the Foundation with some emphasis on China. Asia warrants attention - 60% of world population, 11 of New Zealand's top 15 trade partners, 15% of New Zealanders identify as Asian. New Zealand is increasingly tied to Asia in economic, cultural, and social terms. The purpose of the foundation is to equip New Zealanders to thrive in Asia by growing awareness and knowledge, deepening connections and networks, building confidence, and inspiring curiosity. Five of the nine core programmes are: Business, Entrepreneurship, Leadership, Arts, and Education. Programmes to develop these areas involve a comprehensive portfolio of activities including exchanges, training workshops, scholarships, internships, mentors, networking, travel grants, and special promotion events in New Zealand and the Asian countries.

Our meeting was very appreciative of Alistair's presentation which gave us a great insight in the good work being done to develop and strengthen important links with China and other countries in our Near North which are vital to us in so many ways.

We presented Alistair with a copy of Elspeth Sandys' book 'A Communist in the Family'. He messaged to say he is reading it with interest and enjoyment. He also said he was pleased to see how active we are working for maintenance of China Friendship.



National Conference and Annual General Meeting

This year's conference and AGM, organised by Hawkes Bay Branch, was held in Havelock North, May 21-23. The theme of the Conference was "What it means to be a friend of China", 作为中国的朋友意味着什么 (zuo wei zhongguode pengyou yi wei zhe shenme).

Nelson President Barbara and Secretary Christine attended. They were impressed by the smooth organisation, the quality of the addresses and the shared enjoyment of the Conference day on Saturday.



In the morning there was a range of presentations, starting with Sir David Carter, who was formally voted in as the Patron of the Society. He introduced himself to the gathering. We immediately realised that he was an excellent choice. He spoke impressively about his life and three passions: agriculture, politics and China. He has visited China as Speaker of the House, as Agriculture Minister, and for private visits when his daughter was living there. He is very keen to participate in the Society.

Naisi Chen, Labour List MP and the only Chinese in the present government was also present at the conference. She is a whirlwind of youthful enthusiasm. She referred to her visit to Nelson in November, when some of us had tea with her in the Chinese Garden.



The Hawkes Bay Youth Orchestra presented a concert and some of the members talked about their experiences in China on NZCFS assisted exchanges.

The programme also included a video address from The Chinese Ambassador, Her Excellency Madam Wu Xi, and an interactive Zoom presentation from Madam Zhang Qian, Executive Vice President of the Beijing People's Association of Friendship with Foreign Countries (Youxie).

Miao Fan, President of Hamilton Branch, presented the story of their production of a video about the life of Kathleen Hall (He Ming Qing), the New Zealand missionary nurse who became a hero in China for her

work during the Japanese War. Branches were given a copy of the video and its accompanying book.

In the afternoon, the theme of the conference, 'What does it mean to be a friend of China?' was addressed. This took the form of a panel discussion, with contributions from every branch, along with wide-ranging comments. Although there was no 'conclusion', the general feeling indicated that most favoured a focus on people-to-people friendship, while acknowledging that we need to find ways to work with the Chinese Government and its agencies in order to accomplish our goals.

The Annual General Meeting on Sunday morning involved the election of officers, voting on rule changes, and presentation of reports. Dave Bromwich was returned as President, with Miao Fan as Northern VP, Chris Lipscombe as Central VP, and Christine Ward as Southern VP. The executive had been working on rule changes since last August. Each suggested rule change needed a 75% vote to be passed. All the changes that had been suggested by Nelson Branch were passed.

Both the Conference and the AGM were very well-run, with a friendly cooperative feeling, a sense of purpose, and on-going hopes for the future.

From other branches

A recent Christchurch branch meeting heard from member Brent Robinson, his family story of adopting and raising two girls from China. He mentioned the enrichment of their lives from becoming a multi-cultural family, opening doors to friendships with ordinary Chinese people, and witnessing first hand the phenomenal changes in China.

Wellington Branch heard from Dee McDowell who grew up in Xinjiang (far west) and went to University in Xiamen (east). After graduating, she went teaching and then to postgraduate study, where she applied for the Mandarin Language Assistant programme. Dee went to Wellington teaching Mandarin to primary school students for two years, where she met Kirk McDowell who was President of Wellington Branch. Kirk followed Dee back to Xiamen for a whole year of Chinese language study while Dee was completing her master's degree at Xiamen University.

Waiguoren Pengyou

Nelson Branch of NZ China Friendship Society have started a new project to give Chinese students in Nelson the chance to experience New Zealand family, cultural and sporting activities. The project is called *Waiguoren Pengyou* (loosely translated as Foreign Friend). The idea is for NZCFS Nelson to facilitate opportunities in an informal and flexible way that is comfortable for both the Kiwi hosts and the Chinese students. Hosted activities could include shared meals, half or day trips to the beach or national parks, NZ cultural celebrations such as a shared Christmas dinner or sporting events such as a Mako rugby or Giants basketball game. For the more active, perhaps a game of golf, fishing, or a bike ride would be appropriate.

The driving force for this project is our commitment and desire to enhance cultural tolerance and understanding through friendships with Chinese people and developing strong relationships with Chinese people in the Nelson community. While some students live in home-stay arrangements, many do not and have little chance to enjoy typical Kiwi experiences. To ensure that these interactions are socially safe and comfortable for everyone concerned, we require that groups comprise at least two hosts and two students.

Waiguoren Pengyou hosting is open to anyone with an interest in China, a desire to learn more about Chinese culture or simply wanting to help young Chinese people have a great experience in Nelson. Arrangements will be made on a one-off basis with no future commitments although it is strongly hoped that these will happen where friendships are made but recognises that this is very personal. Waiguoren Pengyou is being coordinated for Nelson CFS by Ian and Jane Lister and Chong Wang (Maxine). If you are interested in participating either as a host or a student, please email ilister@xtra.co.nz

China in the news

China Wants to Boost Births. But It's Wary of Losing Control.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/12/business/china-births-limits.html>

UK politicians unfit to discuss HK democracy

<http://www.chinadaily.com.cn/a/202106/11/WS60c33a60a31024ad0bac66a3.html>

Uygur imams targeted in China's Xinjiang crackdown

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-asia-china-56986057>

Opponents of China's one-party rule are the 'real enemies of Hong Kong', says Beijing's chief in city
<https://www.scmp.com/news/hong-kong/politics/article/3137054/opponents-chinas-one-party-rule-are-real-enemies-hong-kong>

How China went from celebrating ethnic diversity to suppressing it

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2021/jun/10/china-celebrating-diversity-suppressing-xinjiang-communist-party>