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No. 4 – May 2021



## May meeting

# New Zealand to China and Back Again: Alistair Crozier's Stories

**Friday, May 28, 5:30 p.m.**

Alistair Crozier is with Asia New Zealand Foundation as South Island Business Director and Manager, based in Christchurch. He has had numerous diplomatic roles in his 20 year career in Foreign Affairs: NZ Consul General Chengdu, NZ Deputy Ambassador Vietnam, Deputy High Commissioner Papua New Guinea, NZ Education Counsellor China. Alistair is a member of the Christchurch-China Sister Cities Committee and has had roles with the Christchurch City Council. He is a professional level speaker of Chinese. Recently he has been tutoring migrants and refugees in Christchurch as well as continuing with his important work with NZ-Asia marketing and trade.

We are enormously privileged to have Alistair to address our May Branch meeting. He will speak personally about his experiences in China and on his present China-related work with the influential Asia New Zealand Foundation. We encourage members to advertise our meeting to others so we honour Alistair with a good audience.



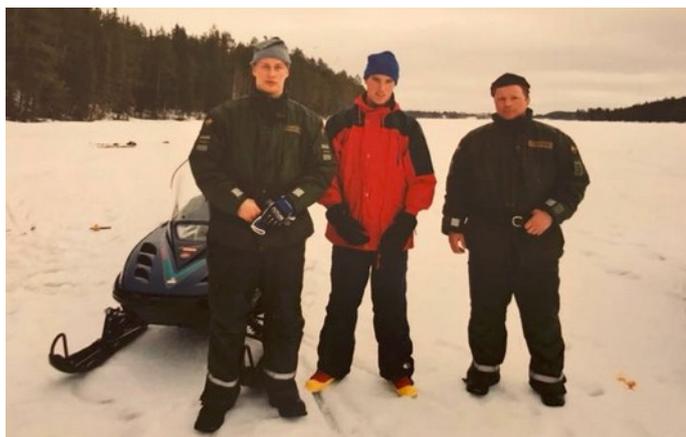
Please let Barbara know, when you register, if transport to meetings would be helpful. Also notify her of guests you invite.

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, May 24.  
ph. (03)544 4712 text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz  
Please make sure she knows you are coming!**

## Nelson Branch Meeting April 30



*Internationalisation Begins: Will (Centre) studies Geology in Finland!*

Our guest speaker in April was Will Tregidga, Head of International Development at Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology (NMIT). Will gave us a whirlwind tour of his youthful adventures on various exchanges and study scholarships around the world. He started off with a degree in Geography and Geology (from NZ and Finland) and then did a Post Graduate Diploma of Science (Environmental Science). Neither of these seemed to apply to his working life which was firstly Coordinator of Marketing and Recruitment at Massey University and then Regional Manager of International at Otago University, before undertaking his present role in International Development at NMIT.

Will's broad understanding of a variety of cultures is certainly a great fit for his involvement in the present-day 'Internationalisation' focus at NMIT. He talked about this focus being essential for its financial benefits, for the international opportunities available for Kiwi students, for the support and integration of international students and for the useful broadening of educational curricula in New Zealand.

We were admiring of Will's rapid career development which left some of us rather breathless and were appreciative too of the way he is using his broad knowledge and understanding to facilitate better outcomes for our polytechnic students in Nelson. He also had some helpful suggestions for us on how to extend our Branch connections with young Chinese studying in Nelson.

### Snippets from Nelson Executive

Nelson Executive met on May 10 at Eastern Cuisine Restaurant in Richmond, where we share a meal and continue discussions afterwards. Here are some items discussed:

- President Barbara's summary of Nelson Branch's responses to 'What does it mean to be a Friend of China?' - see text elsewhere.
- Procedures for AGM (May 23 in Havelock North) especially related to Constitution and Rule Changes.
- Plans for China Week and New Zealand Chinese Language Week in Nelson (Sept 23-Oct 2) replacing Sept Branch meeting - see elsewhere.
- Royden has developed a Privacy Statement for the Branch, to be published along with Subscription requests.
- Decision was made to circulate to National Executive, Nelson's Rules Amendment which had been rejected previously.
- Speakers and events for the rest of 2021 were planned.
- Possibility of Garden Party instead of regular meeting in November.
- Ideas for attracting membership and meeting attendance were scoped, especially how to encourage friendship with young Chinese in Nelson.
- Plans to arrange transport to meetings.



## **NZCFS Conference panel discussion introduction**

The conference theme this year is 'What does it mean to be a friend of China?'. Last year, Nelson Branch members were asked for their thoughts on this and we thank those who responded for their contribution. President Barbara has been asked to provide an introduction for the panel discussion at conference on the theme. Christine Ward has also been asked to be a member of the panel.

Here is Barbara Markland's introduction.

### **What does it mean to be a friend of China?**

This is a very timely question as my personal feeling is that being a friend of China, at times, can be a very uncomfortable thing. What follows are ideas I have collated after wide ranging discussion during which all Nelson Branch committee members contributed their views, with also some thoughts from the wider branch. Most of us, if not all, have spent considerable time in China and returned with a wish to develop our understanding of China and Chinese people, and particularly wanted to show respect and repay the outstanding hospitality, friendship and kindness consistently shown to us in China.

The NZCFS aim is to promote friendship, understanding and goodwill. What 'China' means was questioned. Is it land, government, or people? For us, being friends with China means being friends with people from China, of all ethnicities, whether in China or New Zealand. This means creating mutual trust and support between New Zealanders and Chinese people through personal connections and creating relationships where we can enjoy each other's company, learn about each other, and do things together. As with any relationships, there will be people we like more than others - and this will be the case here too. An analogy was made with the US where many of us have friendships while not liking a lot about America. At a most personal level, friendship may mean simply offering help, information, understanding and support for Chinese people in our own communities. Part of this support should be addressing xenophobic and racist attitudes and facilitating tolerance and understanding, and, at times, questioning the image of China reflected in western media.

What the Chinese Government does is often necessary to keep things developing. We acknowledge that much has been achieved in China under recent regimes, but there are also things we cannot admire or support. Thus we want to emphasise friendship with 'people'. We do not believe it is the role of NZCFS to either support or oppose political decisions. It is already evident that politicising what is essentially a friendship group can result in alienation of, and disharmony among, valuable members. There is a huge risk of disconnection between NZCFS and our local communities because of varying viewpoints on political issues. We as a society need to:- encourage person to person interaction; encourage New Zealanders to be better informed about Chinese culture and history; encourage New Zealand Chinese to participate in New Zealand society. We believe more interaction will be to our personal, as well as New Zealand's, benefit.

As a branch we believe the best way to develop an understanding of China is to visit. To visit China is to realise what a wonderful country and culture it is and for this reason we greatly value student exchanges, and tours, as a way of developing mutual understanding. In Nelson we are fortunate in having two strong sister-city relationships, well-supported by Nelson City Council, but we must acknowledge that nothing will happen without the goodwill of the Chinese Government through local municipal governments and organisations such as Youxie.

We believe NZCFS has a key role in providing events and forums to facilitate interactions between New Zealanders and Chinese people, hopefully leading to a raft of strong personal friendships. NZCFS prides itself on its person-to-person relationships and, to Nelson Branch, that is what it means to be a friend of China.

## China Week/Chinese Language Week 2021 (Sept 30 - October 2)

This year, the Nelson City China Week will coincide with the national Chinese Language Week. Nelson NZCFS branch will be co-operating with Nelson City Council and Nelson-Marlborough Chinese Society to promote and assist with events.

The Trafalgar Centre will be available for events. A proposed schedule of events is:

*Thursday, 30 September:* Business seminars, evening opening function

*Friday, 1 October:* Exhibition of artefacts and art works, film/videos

Evening performance.(Chinese Society, fashion - qipao and ethnic costumes.)

*Saturday, 2 October:* Community Day, involving history, culture, food, language, crafts

## Privacy Statement

In future, the following privacy statement will be a part of the subscription form we publish and use each year. Since it is a statement of our current procedure, we publish it now for your information.

Your membership is for the current calendar year.

The information you provide to the Nelson Branch of the NZCFS will be held by us electronically in a Register of Members and will be used by us to tell you about member events and activities and to send you newsletters and notices of meetings.

Your information will be held securely by us and will only be shared within our Executive Committee and with our parent organisation, the NZ China Friendship Society Inc., as required for an Incorporated Society. It will not be disclosed to any other parties, except where required by law.

You can unsubscribe at any time by notifying the Membership Secretary.

## Mandarin Corner at NMIT



### *Nǐ huì shuō Zhōngwén ma?*

Are you a Mandarin speaker or learner?

Come and join us for friendly conversational Mandarin practice.

- ❖ Improve your Mandarin or improve your English while helping others!
- ❖ Where: NMIT Library downstairs, right side
- ❖ When: every Thursday 4.30pm–6.00pm

Jane Lister organises Mandarin Corner to bring learners and native speakers together.

## China in the news

A few recent news stories involving China.

Why the Chinese Communist Party is stronger than ever 100 years after its creation

<https://www.newstatesman.com/world/asia/2021/05/why-chinese-communist-party-stronger-ever-100-years-after-its-creation>

The China Challenge: NZ's values make differences with Beijing inevitable

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/china-and-nz/300303478/the-china-challenge-nzs-values-make-differences-with-beijing-inevitable>

China's Xinjiang policies 'poorly explained and ruthlessly executed'

<https://www.scmp.com/news/china/politics/article/3131953/chinas-xinjiang-policies-poorly-explained-and-ruthlessly>