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No. 7 – July 2022

July meeting is cancelled.

A number of members who normally assist with our meetings are unable to attend this meeting. As a consequence the committee have decided that it would be desirable to cancel the July meeting. We expect to hold the next meeting on Friday September 2. This will be nominally our August meeting and means the August meeting will be a week later, in September.

Last meeting: 'Behind Shanghai's Roller Doors' with Barbara Markland

When Barbara and Roy started in their roles as Co-Principals of Yew Chung Shanghai International School in 1996 they discovered a city in transformation. Then, there were still many aspects of old Shanghai still to be found and many of the old buildings and crafts were still in evidence. She introduced us to their early explorations and impressions in her talk, and showed us a range of artefacts which they discovered and brought back to New Zealand.

Not yet used to many tourists visiting, the Chinese people they met, both strangers and colleagues, helped them to begin to understand the currency and the ways of bargaining which were understood by local people. They needed to provide furniture for their small apartment, and had time free at weekends to cycle round and explore.

Many of the shops there had roller doors which they closed completely overnight so the many different items which were in them had to be discovered. Some shops had food items, but there were also many full to the brim with antiques and furniture. The programme 'Salvage Hunters' on Sky Living programme showing crowded British antique shops comes to my mind. Anything and everything might be there.

Barbara shared their delightful experiences of discovery, and showed us pictures of many items they had purchased, which they still have, also sharing the memories they invoked in her. She recalled cycling home followed by a cycle-plus-trailer carrying a large sofa, finding a heavy carved incense burner, covered in dust, retrieved from under a trestle table, and discovering wooden buckets of different designs, which they also saw still in use. Old crafts and unique designs predominated.

There was treasure to be found, and unique craftsmanship behind those roller doors.

NZ China Friendship Society Conference and Annual Meeting

President Barbara and Jane Lister attended and were pleased at what they saw and heard. Here are some links to conference speeches.

The Chinese Ambassador's speech:

http://nz.china-embassy.gov.cn/eng/zxgxs/202206/t20220620_10706151.html

Speech from John McKinnon of NZ China Council:

<https://nzchinacouncil.org.nz/2022/06/remarks-to-the-new-zealand-china-friendship-society-70th-anniversary-conference/>

Comment on China's democracy from Andy Boreham, a New Zealander who has been working for Shanghai Daily and is respected by the Chinese government:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W9gspYfdR2o&t=304s>