



Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

NEWSLETTER

December 2012

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Merry Christmas & Happy New Year

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

I am pleased to report that 2012 has been a huge year for our Society. Some of our activities this year have been:

On 25th February 2012 I, along with other Committee members accepted an invitation from the Melbourne Chinese Consulate to attend a theatrical performance of singers and dancers from Guizhou Province, at the Regent Theatre. This event was part of the Chinese Year of Culture.

On 11th March 2012 our Committee hosted a dinner and reception for a visiting delegation from Beijing's People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries (PAFFC). The delegation was led by Mr Wu Guangwei, the Secretary General of the Beijing PAFFC and comprised representatives from the Beijing Institute of Culture and History and 4 esteemed artists/painters from Beijing.

On 19th March 2012 I attended the Chinese Masonic Society's annual dinner as an invited guest.

On 24th March 2012, our Society arranged a Yum Cha for members, which was well attended and most successful.

In June 2012 I attended with vice president Anthony Leong and committee member Robin Matthews, the ACFS National Annual General Meeting in Perth. Many significant resolutions were passed and I was re-elected as the ACFS National President.

On 24th July 2012 Our Society arranged a reception to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic ties between Australia and the PRC and also the 60th Anniversary of the founding

of the ACFS. This reception was held at Queens Hall in the Victorian Parliament and was attended by Mr Chen Yuming the Chinese Ambassador to Australia, Mr Malcolm Fraser the former Australian Prime Minister, Mr Daniel Andrews, the Leader of the State Opposition (all of whom made detailed speeches), in addition to the Chinese Consul General to Victoria Mr Shi Weiquang and many other distinguished guests. This function was probably the most ambitious and significant event organised by our Society in recent years and was an excellent investment for our future, dividends from which we have already reaped and I have no doubt will continue to do so in 2013 and beyond.

From the 1st to the 13th September 2012 I led a National ACFS Tour of 30 members on a train trip travelling along the Silk Road from Urumqi in the far North-West of the PRC to Beijing.

In September 2012 vice president Anthony Leong and committee member Robin Matthews represented our State branch at the International Friendship Forum and Sister Cities Conference in China.

On 27th October 2012 we held another Yum Cha for members and supporters.

In November 2012 I led a national delegation for a trip to Shanghai at the invitation of the Shanghai PAFFC, and also attended the Queensland ACFS seminar and reception in Brisbane to celebrate 40 years of diplomatic relations between Australia and the PRC.

On the 12th December 2012 I attended a dinner at Parliament House, Canberra given by the Prime Minister to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of diplomatic relations. Speeches were made by the Prime Minister



and Andrew Robb (representing the Leader of the Opposition) and also by Her Excellency Madam Liu Yandong who represented the government of the P.R.C.

I was particularly impressed by Madam Liu's speech. She spoke of the history of relations between our 2 countries since 1972 and was at pains to stress the past and ongoing importance of people-to-people exchanges in areas of the arts, history, sport, education and the like. This reflected well on our Society's past and future activities.

At the table where I was seated with a number of Ambassadors, a lively discussion took place on whether China's success should be viewed with alarm by the international community. After much to-ing and fro-ing I pointed out that our Society believed that it is a misconstrued and incorrect assertion to equate a "great power" with a "super power". I asked my fellow diners if they could provide any evidence of China's territorial expansion, military bases in foreign countries or any other hallmark of an imperialist hegemonic power. No evidence was forthcoming!

Through these activities we have made very useful and valuable connections with various organisations and people in both Australia and the PRC and our Committee is already considering an ambitious program for 2013.

On a personal level I would like to thank all outgoing executive and committee members for their enthusiasm and hard work this year, and convey my New Year's greetings to all members and supporters. Onward to the Year of the Snake in 2013.

John D. Breheny

AUSTRALIA CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY VICTORIAN BRANCH 2012 AGM REPORT

The Victorian Branch held its Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 28 November 2012 at Ross House Melbourne.

The purpose of the meeting was to receive the reports from the President and office bearers and elect new office bearers and Committee for 2013.

Mr John Breheny President, welcomed members and guests and gave a brief report of his activities. John's full report can be seen in the accompanying article.

An election for the 2013 office bearers and Committee took place with the following results:

President:	John Breheny
Vice President:	Anthony Leong
Vice President:	Tower Liu
Secretary:	Robin Matthews
Treasurer:	Dong Chen

Committee: Lou Clayton, Richard Lightfoot, Phil Parker, Lia Cross, and Wai Ching Chan.

Two committee members gave presentations of their recent visits to China as part of the Australian delegation. Anthony Leong Vice President, reported on his recent visit to Changchun where he attended the 2012 Friendship Forum. Anthony was impressed with the high degree of industrial and technical development in the Jilin Province. He also reported on the further developments of the inaugural South Pacific/ China Friendship Forum.

ACFS Victorian Branch New Committee with Chinese Deputy Consul General and Cultural Consul



Promoting Friendship and Understanding Between the Australian and Chinese People



Robin Matthews reported on the 2012 China International Friendship Cities Conference in Chengdu where she gave a presentation on City positioning and investment. Robin highlighted the importance of developing peace and goodwill amongst the friendship cities by fostering education and cultural exchanges and not to have them over-looked by economic development. She emphasized that by developing peace and goodwill amongst Sister Cities, is the best investment for a strong, peaceful and resilient future.

The highlight of the meeting was an address by the Deputy Consul General Mr Fengwen Huang. Mr Huang spoke of the anniversary celebrations that the Victorian branch had organised earlier in the year and the strong trade and economic links between Australia and China.

The meeting was pleased to welcome the presence of Mme Ta He, Cultural Consul.

At the conclusion of the formalities, members enjoyed refreshments and caught up with new and old friends.

REPORT ON SHANGHAI DELEGATION TRIP

Saturday 3 November & Sunday 4 November 2012

Amongst scores of other passengers, it was 3 bleary-eyed and sleep-deprived ACFS representatives who arrived at Shanghai Pudong airport at about midday on Sunday 4th November 2012. Myself, Graham Bennett (from S.A. ACFS) and Jan Everett (from TAS ACFS) were met by our old friend Mr. Wu Fei (Scott) and his young assistant Jiang Jiang (Maggie) from Shanghai PAFFC and taken to the Central Hotel Shanghai to check in.

There was some doubt about whether I would be able to take part in this delegation, having had right knee surgery a week before our departure, however that all seemed to settle down well by the 3rd November 2012. I have now discovered that sitting in a cramped airline seat for a total of 11 hours is not conducive to post operative recovery and by the time we arrived in Shanghai a man's knee was more than somewhat swollen and extremely painful. So I dose up on pain killers and anti-inflammatories and now seem to be okish.

After ensconcing ourselves in the hotel with the other Delegation members (Roz Hanley from W.A., Carol Beaver, from N.T, and Carol's husband Glenn Norris) we are then provided with an extensive sit-down lunch with Scott and Maggie, featuring Shanghianese specialties. The afternoon was spent resting (in my case with my right leg elevated to bring down the swelling) and in the evening we were taken to dine at the 250 metre plus high revolving restaurant at the famous Oriental Pearl T.V. tower – spectacular.

Even on the first day of our trip, we are overcome with our hosts' hospitality and friendship. I for one feel that when I travel to this amazing country I am indeed coming home. I was in bed asleep by 8.00pm.

Monday 5th November 2012

After breakfast our hosts Scott and Maggie had arranged for our group to visit the Daijing High School Affiliated to Shanghai International Studies University, about a 20 minute bus ride from our hotel and quite close to the Shanghai Expo site.

We were welcomed by the Principal Miss Yao Xiao Hong, as well as other teachers and government Education Department Officials and Municipal Education Officers. We are then given a detailed briefing on the school and ancillary matters. The school caters for 800 odd High School students who are required to sit what is described as a "challenging" entrance exam to gain admission. What impressed me was the school's philosophy of offering students a comprehensive and eclectic range of subjects. As well as highlighting foreign languages including English, Japanese, German and French and "traditional" subjects like science, technology, research skills and art, electives are encouraged in choral singing, model making (as in boats, planes, etc) and sports including pistol and rifle shooting! We were taken to the technology gallery in the main school building and were shown the students' work. This looked like the MI5 research laboratory from a James Bond movie. We saw the most intricate and beautiful miniature models of locomotive engines, mechanical clocks, model ships and the like as well as a vast array of structures that demonstrated the laws of gravity, sine waves and other scientific phenomena. Apparently schools in the P.R.C compete in these activities and this school has won many awards. We are then taken to the pistol and rifle range in the converted basement of the building. A former Chinese Olympic champion was one of the instructors.



Talk about a well rounded education !! As this school has facilities to accommodate and house up to 40 visiting overseas students, discussions were held to build on a student exchange program.

After reading ad nauseum in the Australian and U.S media about the alleged deficiencies in the Chinese education system (an over-concentration on rote-learning, no subject variety or individual student subject choice, etc), this experience was a true eye-opener. I thought that a school like this (and I am informed that they are not uncommon at all) is one that students would not only love to gain admission to but would want to excel in. An exception to my above comments about the Australian mass media is an excellent article in the 3rd November 2012 Weekend Australian by Christopher Bantick on page 19. This is well worth reading.

A wonderful and stimulating experience.

After lunch, we were then taken to the M50 Creative Zone in an old industrial area on the Suzhou tributary of the Huangpu River. This is an artist's enclave and houses galleries for the creation and exhibition of sculpture, furniture making, painting, audio-visual and technological art. As good modern/avante gard art should be, this was a confronting, stimulating and surprising experience. Not being terribly au fait with this type of art, I wasn't sure what to think. Of outstanding interest was a gallery which exhibited electronic back projection images – this is not animation and not figurative but was a moving, breathing, pulsating I don't know what. It became rapidly apparent that our delegation was not well qualified in this area. Having said that, it was clear that great potential exists for an art based tour from Australia in the future. We learn later that each of Shanghai's 17 districts (suburbs) has an art enclave like the M50, each specialising in a different branch of artistic expression.

The evening program was a lavish dinner for our delegation hosted by Mr Wang Xiaoshu, the Executive Vice President of Shanghai PAFFC. Discussions took place on future activities in Australia and China between our two organisations. I had met Mr Wang in Australia on a visiting Shanghai delegation last year and it was terrific to renew our friendship. Many toasts were made and gifts were exchanged.

Tuesday 6th November 2012

This morning we travelled by bus for an hour or

so north of Shanghai to visit Fengjing Historic Town in the Jinshan District. This village is 1500 years old and this was an opportunity to visit a functioning rural community with both ancient and modern historical aspects. The original buildings and residences were all intact and operational and we wandered through a range of narrow cobble stoned lanes and walk ways, much to the interest of the locals. We also visited the site of the former People's Commune, air raid shelters from 1971 and inspected a Korean War vintage MIG 15 fighter plane. This aspect of our program was to show us the preservation and continued operation of an ancient village but to also show modern historical aspects like the People's Commune.

We were then taken to lunch at a nearby aquaculture farm. Our host was Madam Yu Lan from the Foreign Affairs office of the Shanghai People's Government. After discussions on future areas of co-operation, we discover from Madam Yu that next year a delegation from this area will visit Australia on a fact finding mission relating to beach volley ball!

We are told that the local Government views beach volley ball as an important sport in this district. Apparently, the coastline is only a few kilometres from Jinshan where there are beautiful white sand beaches. As one of our Victorian Committee members has good contacts with the Australian sporting administration, I extended an invitation to meet the Jinshan delegation and to assist them in any way we could.

The afternoon was occupied with a visit to the "Birth Place of Modern Folk Art in China", the Jinshan Peasant Painting Academy. This was a polar opposite of the art that we saw in the M50 Creative Zone. On display were paintings of every day village and rural subjects. This style of painting (with vibrant colouring) is widespread in most rural areas of China and there were examples of this art from most of the provinces. I felt swamped and overwhelmed by the paintings, with their simplicity and strong impact.

After travelling back to central Shanghai, we are then taken to the Shanghai Urban Planning Exhibition Centre, located in the Arts Centre, opposite the Peoples Park. Here we are given a private tour of the exhibits showing the planning and future development of Shanghai. The first time I visited Shanghai in the 1990's, I thought I was on the set of a Jetson's cartoon program, so futuristic was the architecture. This time it seemed like visiting the set of the film "2001 – a



Space Odyssey”.

Plans have been made for the city 20 years in advance, including extensive road and rail tunnels under the Huangpu River, a 44 km bridge/roadway linking deep water shipping terminals with the shore, new airports and fast train stations etc. all of this with preservation of the old historical section of the city. I was thinking of a future delegation of Australian Architects and/or town planners. In the People's Park, to celebrate the Chinese Communist Party's 18th National Congress, we saw beautiful flower beds depicting the Chinese National Flag and the Hammer and Sickle Party Flag.

Wow! What a day! After a hot pot dinner at our hotel, I think that most of our delegation retired early.

Wednesday 7/11/2012

When our delegation was invited to visit Shanghai and its environs, we were told by Shanghai PAFFC that no itinerary had been set and we were requested to list areas and subjects that we are interested in seeing. In addition to education, art and ancient and modern history, we also nominated ecology, the natural environment and sustainable urban development. Today our wonderful hosts arranged for us to visit the Chongming Island area which is located on the delta of the Yangtze River, about 40 km north east of Shanghai. To get there we travel through and 8 km long underground road tunnel and then over a 8.5 km long bridge.

Our first stop was the Dongtun Wetland Natural Reservation Area where we were met by Mdme Yang Jun from the Foreign Affairs Office of the Chongming County People's Government. After being briefed on this wetland, Mdme Yang took us on an exploratory walk through the reservation. The wetlands area covers 240 km and as far as the eye can see there is lush bamboo and water grasses. This area is a bird, fish and animal sanctuary and is a major stopping point for migrating bird species on their way to and from China, Australia and New Zealand in February/March of each year. We saw many exotic birds like cranes, swans and the like. Major works have been carried out to eradicate noxious weeds and vermin. We spoke of perhaps a future bird watchers/photographers tour to this area. Magnificent and so close to Shanghai.

After lunch Mdme Yang took us to the Chongming Planning Exhibition Centre which showed

the Government's future planning for this area. We visited Yingdong village which is a new sustainable development. It is both a family resort for Shanghai people wishing to experience the natural environment and a functioning agricultural village based on organic sustainable development e.g. no pesticides or chemical fertilisers etc. Organic brown rice was strewn along the road ways to dry.

We learn from Mdm Yang that we are the first overseas delegation to visit this area and she was most eager for continuing contact and interaction. Again we were very impressed with the central Government's long term planning models based on the multifaceted principle of “economic ecologisation” and “ecologic economisation” (i.e. The economy must serve the ecology, the ecology must serve the economy), for the benefit of the people.

After all this, we are taken to the Dongping State Forest Park. This is a public man-made forest/recreational area comprising public performance amphitheatres, lakes, walking tracks and a grass skiing slope. The air was cool and redolent with the heady fragrance of the native pine trees. People are encouraged to camp over night here. This forest park is also part of the balanced development of the area.

After a long (the traffic!) drive back to Shanghai we ate with our Shanghai PAFFC friends (new and old) and spoke at length of our respective concerns over China's and Australia's future relationship.

Thursday 8/11/2012

This is the last official day for our delegation program. After visiting the Golden (Buddhist) Temple (there was in fact a lot of gold and incense too) we travelled to the Shanghai PAFFC headquarters to meet with senior members of our host organisation to review the trip and make plans for future joint activities. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Xiao Chong, Executive Council Member and Director who was assisted by Ms Huang Yangbing (Council Member) and our friends/guides Mr Wu Fei and the redoubtable Ms Jiang Jiang. We spent over 2 hours in constructive review and discussion and I have undertaken to provide a detailed list of proposed activities and operational strategies before the end of this year.

After lunch we were given private admission to the new Shanghai Art Gallery which is housed in the magnificent Chinese upside-down pyramid



CHINESE CULTURE

Silk - From China to the World

building on the former 2010 EXPO site. This was truly amazing. Our group was taken on an escorted tour of the various galleries which displayed Chinese art ranging from traditional ink scrolls through to Great Leap Forward/Cultural Revolution art, 1960's cartoon animation art and ultra modern works. For mine, this Gallery should be world renowned, and we didn't even know it existed before today!

The last activity was a concert at the Shanghai Oriental Art Centre Performance Hall comprising, no less, the complete works of Beethoven Piano and Violin Sonatas performed by Xu Zhong (piano) and Alessandro Perpich (violin). I'm no classical music expert but I've never before heard such sublime, moving and intimate music. We were taken to this concert to better understand the range and quality of music and performance venues in China.

Emotional farewells were made to our hosts. We have cemented old friendships and made new ones and I have no doubt that the ACFS and other Australians will benefit from the work carried out by our delegation.

From the content of this report I hope that ACFS members and supporters do not think that our delegation only spent our time being wined/dined and entertained by our hosts. This did in fact happen but so much more did too. This delegation was so successful because of the active participation of every member and the diligence and enthusiasm of our hosts and our group.

I look forward to carrying out in 2013 the work that we have commenced.

John D. Breheny - Delegation Leader
National President, Australia China Friendship Society Limited
President, Australia China Friendship Society (Vic) Branch

We are always looking for interesting stories and articles to share with our members. Any members who have great stories to tell please contact ACFS office or e-mail to acf-svic@vicnet.net.au

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter do not always reflect those of the ACFS and its policies. Reliance upon information in this Newsletter requires independent verification of its accuracy or completeness

Silk is a symbol of China. Chinese silk is renowned for its high quality and exquisite patterns. Silk and knowledge about sericulture spread from China to other countries, including several in Europe. Chinese culture and civilization spread throughout the world with the spread of silk and silk-made costumes. Silk has been a carrier - and symbol - of Oriental culture for centuries.

Silk fabric originated in ancient China, in fact, some of the earliest examples of silk fabric date back to 3500 BC. According to legend, Leizu, one of China's Empresses, developed silk into a fabric.

Silk was initially reserved for the royal family but, over time, it became a highly desired commodity throughout the country. Eventually, it was a hot commodity that was traded throughout Asia and then the rest of the world.

Given its texture and lustre, silk rapidly became a popular luxury fabric in many regions that were accessible to Chinese merchants. Silk was in great demand, and became a staple of pre-industrial international trade in ancient China.

In July 2007, archaeologists discovered intricately woven and dyed silk textiles in a tomb in Jiangxi Province. The silk dated to the Eastern Zhou Dynasty roughly 2,500 years ago. The silk textiles were made with complicated techniques of weaving and dyeing.

The silk trade extended to the Indian subcontinent, the Middle East, Europe and North Africa. The silk trade was so extensive that the major trade routes between Europe and Asia came to be known as the Silk Road.

The knowledge of sericulture reached the Korean peninsula around 200 BC. By the first half of the first century AD, it had reached ancient Khotan. By AD 140, the practice had been established in India.

In ancient times, silk from China was the most lucrative and sought-after luxury item traded



in Europe and Asia. Many civilizations, including the ancient Persians, benefited economically from the trade.

In China, the top four silk-producing areas are Suzhou, in Jiangsu Province; Nanchong, in Sichuan Province; and Huzhou and Hangzhou, both in Zhejiang Province.



ABOUT CHINESE TEA

Chinese tea falls into four categories: green, oolong, black and scented tea. These four types are distinguishable by their place of origin and genus, but more importantly, by their method of baking. Green tea retains its green colour after baking, and the tea made from it is of a fresh green shade, making it a suitably refreshing drink for the summer. Oolong tealeaves are dark brown at the edges, and the tea has a more pronounced flavour. Fujian Province is a major producer of this tea, and the local people are partial to it. Black tea is baked until it is dark all over, and its flavour is still more distinct. It is a winter beverage, preferred by older people. Scented tea is baked together with various aromatic flowers. The people in northern China, where tea is not produced, have a special liking for this type of tea.

Longjing is the best of all green teas, and is produced by four villages in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, and therefore comes in four types Mei (Jiawu), Shi (Feng), Yun (Qi), and Hu (Pao), named after the place of origin. These four kinds now have

a total acreage of 3,200 mu (1 mu=1/15 hectare), of which, Meijiwu accounts for 1,200 mu.

The tea leaves picked before the Pure Brightness Festival make the best Longjing tea, and have particular requirements as to colour, aroma, taste and shape, flat, even leaves being preferred. When making Longjing tea, boiling water at a temperature of 80 degrees Centigrade should be added, and the amount of tealeaves used varies according to the drinker's individual taste.

First Marriage Insurance for Chinese Women

“Red Rose” Insurance, the first marriage insurance for women in China, was introduced to the market recently. The insurance is being sold by three of China's largest insurance companies - Sino Life Insurance Co. Ltd., Datong Insurance Sales and Service Co. Ltd. (Datong), and General Reinsurance Corporation.

“For the first time in China's history, women's sense of security and happiness have been improved, through insurance,” says Zhao Yizhou, Datong's vice-president. Chen Zhihua, Datong's chief insurance actuarial and one of the major designers of “Red Rose,” adds, “We developed the insurance, based on our careful studies on pressure women face in society and their families, to protect their marital rights and interests.”

“Red Rose” is meant to encourage lasting marriages; the longer one stays married, the greater the insurance fee is returned to her. Moreover, the insurance ensures that women are the beneficiaries. Even if a woman insurant gets divorced, the surrender value should belong to her rather than be shared by her and her ex-husband.

THE AUSTRALIA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY'S AIMS

Cultivate friendly relations with the people of China by fostering the study of China's history, language, culture, social and political structure.

Promote mutual understanding through friendly exchanges between the people of China and Australia. Strengthening ties with travel, the exchange of ideas, information and trade between the two countries.

To seek to clarify misunderstandings between the peoples of China and Australia, which may arise from the misrepresentation of information.

PRESIDENT: Mr John Breheny

VICE PRESIDENT: Mr Anthony Leong
Mr Tower Liu

SECRETARY: Ms Robin Matthews

TREASURER: Mr Dong Chen

COMMITTEE: Ms Louise Clayton
Mr Richard Lightfoot
Mr Neil Barker
Mr Phil Parker
Ms Lia Cross
Miss Wai Ching Chan

ACFS (VICTORIA) Inc. A0038007M ABN NO. 39 746 574 225

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Family Name (Mr /Mrs/Ms/Other)..... Given Names

Address..... P/code.....

Phone Fax Email.....

VICTORIAN MEMBERSHIP RATES

Family \$40.00 Single \$30.00 Concession \$15.00 Corporate on Application

I/We support the Society's aims:Signature/s
I/We enclose the sum of \$ for my/our membership subscription.

YOUR DONATION WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED
Please forward cheques to the Treasurer at the address in the left corner below



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