



OCTOBER 2013

Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENT'S REPORT

With the Australia China Friendship Society's annual general meeting due in November 2013, this newsletter is the last for this year with the incumbent Executive and management committee.

I urge as many members of our Society to attend our AGM to enable active participation in the election of the new Executive and committee.

In September I had the honour of attending the annual China National Day dinner hosted by the Federation of Chinese Community organisations. I was able to meet and hold some preliminary discussions with Mr Yumin Song, the newly arrived Chinese Consul General to Melbourne as well as renew friendships with numerous representatives of the Victorian Chinese community bodies and State and local government politicians.

Also in September our Society was invited by the Melbourne Chinese Consulate to a reception to celebrate China's National Day and although I was not able to attend, other executive members represented the ACFS.

With the recent election of the new Federal Government we hope that progress will be made concerning Australia/China relations.

I look forward to seeing you all at our AGM.

Yours in Friendship

John D Breheny
President

Victorian Branch AGM

The Annual General Meeting of the Australia-China Friendship Society Victorian Branch Incorporated will be held on Wednesday 27th November 2013, 7pm at Ross House, 4th Floor, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne. Please bring a supper plate of finger food to share after the meeting.

Celebrating Chinese National Day

Diplomats, politicians and community leaders, along with the new Consul-General Mr Song Yumin and staff, celebrated the 64th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China.

Victorian ACFS Vice-Presidents Tower Liu and Anthony Leong and Secretary Robin Matthews were on hand to represent our Society. Our colleagues Michelle and John from Ballarat were also in attendance.

Consul-General Song, Victorian Attorney-General Robert Clarke MP representing the Premier, Opposition Leader Daniel Andrews MP's representative Robin Scott MP and Victorian Parliament Speaker and ACFS member Ken Smith MP, gave short speeches. Deputy Consul-General Huang was the host for the evening.

It was a pleasure to see such a mix of people coming together to celebrate the giant steps taken by the People's Republic in so few years. Every speaker mentioned the achievements of the Chinese Government and the wish for closer ties and exchanges. We all look forward to the continued celebration of the strong and developing co-operation between the two countries.

Anthony M Leong, Vic. Vice-President

64th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China & Welcoming the current Consul General Song Yumin

Date: 18 September 2013 Wednesday

Written by: *Wai Ching Chan and Lia Cross*

A wet Wednesday night did not stop a 400-strong crowd of who's who in Victoria's Chinese community from descending onto the ubiquitous Dragon Palace Restaurant for the annual Chinese National Day dinner celebration. This year's dinner commemorates 64 years since the founding of the People's Republic of China and also coincides with the arrival of the incoming Consul General – Mr Song Yumin. The evening kick-started with a boisterous lion dance by the Chinese Masonic Society Melbourne who showed the crowd how to have a good party with a pair of Chinese 'lions' dancing to the tune of cymbals and drums. Next, the national anthems of both China and Australia were sung to by the audience before a toast was made to start the evening formal.

Mr Arthur Wu, executive chair of the Chinese National Day celebration committee of Victoria welcomed all guests to the annual dinner. He also invited Mr Song Yumin, the current Consul General of People's Republic of China, to give a bilingual speech on fostering closer economic and cultural relationships between the two countries. A representative of the Premier of Victoria, Mr Craig Ondarchie, lauded the potential benefits of having a robust Australia-China relationship, citing that he eats both 'pasta' and 'rice' and is comfortable with the richness that cultural diversity brings to Australia. Finally Mr Chin Tan, Chairperson of the Victorian Multicultural Commission, welcomes the strong bonds that the Chinese community in Victoria share which serve them well in contributing to local public projects and building a more cohesive Australian society.

The glittery diners present culled from across Victoria's list of more than 150 Chinese commercial and cultural associations. From the traditional qipao dresses to the modern day evening gowns and suits, the well-attired guests were treated to a well-planned menu of seafood served stir fried, sautéed or blanched with different condiments of snap beans, spinach, rice and noodles. They were also treated to a fine selection of performances from a talented team

of volunteers; each of us were rapt by traditional Chinese Peking opera singers, classical Cantonese singers warbling tunes of brotherhood and love as well as a skillful erhu (two-stringed instrument) master. The ACFS members were privileged to sit at a table of media personalities from both the print and the internet which offers a rare opportunity for the guests to engage in debates on current Chinese social trends, news and gossips. Just like any other large Chinese dinner events, this year's 64th anniversary Chinese dinner was as noisy and rambunctious as any, and stretched out just as long, with plates of food served every twenty minutes over 12 courses. Finally, with the night stretching into the final hour, it was time for most of the crowd to bid farewell as they needed to work the following day. But it was almost certain that everyone looked forward to doing this all over again the following year, to update and share in the community bonds that such an event begets.

DRAGON BOAT BLESSING

On Saturday 31 August 2013, ACFS Victorian Vice President Anthony Leong and ACFS Victorian branch Secretary Robin Matthews attended the New



Dragon Boat Blessing at Ballarat. They carried with them a message of best wishes and goodwill on behalf of the Victorian Branch.

Promoting Friendship and Understanding Between the Australian and Chinese People



The Australian Chinese Cultural Society Ballarat and the Golden Dragon Boat Club hosted the event on what was a sunny but windy day on the shores of Lake Wendouree. A large crowd of well-wishers and guests from the local Council watched the proceedings.

After the blessing by Buddhist monks, the guests were entertained by enthusiastic lion dances, followed by refreshments.

Anthony and Robin were pleased to be able to maintain the links between the Victorian branch and the Ballarat groups. Later this year and early in 2014 there will be further Ballarat activities to which the ACFS has been invited and Anthony has indicated the Society will be more than happy to participate.



Renewing who we are:

Anthony Leong, 16 October 2013

For two years we wrestled with the problem of a Constitution out of date and no longer relevant to who we are now. We had many meetings, many discussions and countless drafts...then the government changed the law!

Although many say the change was long overdue, it still meant we had to re-do everything, which was disappointing. So we went back to basics and began again. This time, we highlighted what had to change and where we need our Constitution to be altered. That task is now complete, so next year we will have a team to compare our "wish list" of what we want changed, with Victorian law. By law, our Constitution must comply with the new legislation. So...

We want to hear from you, our members, as to what you want to see in the document that will define us. So far, we have changed rules about dry things like times for meetings and eye-glazing points about Grievance Procedures...but what do **you** want to see? What do you think we need as rules to make us run better, more efficiently? Do you want to see a change in the Committee makeup or how we do things? Do you want more of a say in decisions? Is there something we are not doing?

The new Constitution is a chance to realign ourselves and what we want to be. It's only with your help we can do this, so please have a think and contact a member of the Committee with your thoughts. Your comments can be as short or as long as you wish and you have the guarantee you will be listened to.

I know this may sound boring, but it's not every day **you** get to say how your Society should look and what you want from it. Please participate, because we value and respect your opinion.

Sylvia Lee Dow Obituary

Eunice Leong 17 October 2013

As a child, I had heard of Sylvia Lee Dow as a schoolteacher through my sister, also a teacher. However, it was to be many years before I finally got to meet her personally.

I met her as an adult about 35 years ago, but I had known her husband Roy before, I believe, as a member of the then-ACS. She was friend of a mutual friend Ting, who had participated in many Chinese student activities.

I have no idea exactly when Sylvia joined the ACS, but as she knew so many Chinese, it would have been a logical progression. She was a great friend of another founding member, Glad Grace. Although a member for possibly 40 years, she was never on the Committee to my knowledge, but her advice was always keenly sought after. Her depth of knowledge on China was invaluable.

She, with husband Roy, constantly addressed schools, organisations and small groups about their positive experiences in China. As an advocate, Sylvia's enthusiasm for China and her people was unstoppable.

She was always so welcoming & was delightful whenever we met, as we had a bond in universities, her son Kwong being an academic, whilst I lectured. We would discuss our travels and latest news from China, especially as it related to students, education and culture.

As a friend and sincere promoter of China and the ACFS, Sylvia will be missed for her kind heart, her knowledge and enthusiasm, her welcoming manner and her unshakeable belief in the linked destiny of our two countries.

Australia, China and their peoples have indeed lost a true friend.



Sylvia Lee Dow

Monday 16th September, 2013

*Memorial Speech by Ramona Chua -
President of Chinese Association of Victoria*

Many overseas students from the 1950s to the 70s knew Sylvia and her husband Roy as two loving and caring people. To students, Sylvia and Roy provided an Australian home for us to go, any time we felt homesick. Theirs was our Australian home when our own was thousands of miles away in Singapore, Malaysia, China and Hong Kong. After Roy passed away, Sylvia continued to welcome us into her home. For many years, all of us experienced the hospitality of the Lee Dow family, which included the hospitality of Kwong and Joanne Lee Dow. Sylvia often spoke fondly of the days when students congregated in her house to cook satay, curried chicken and Hainan chicken rice. With never a harsh word about anyone, 'Sylv' was all-inclusive and everyone felt comfortable in her house.

For my children, Sylvia was their Australian grandmother who had given them tons of love.

My family and I and all the students who had known Sylvia, will miss her very much. Many of the students are here today to say goodbye.

NOTICE OF ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING of AUSTRALIA-CHINA FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY, VICTORIAN BRANCH INCORPORATED

Notice is given that the Annual General Meeting of the Australia-China Friendship Society Victorian Branch Incorporated will be held on **Wednesday 27th November 2013**, at 7pm at Ross House, 4th Floor, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne.

The Ordinary Business of the meeting will be to confirm the minutes of the last AGM, to receive the financial statement and the reports for the last financial year and to elect the Officers and Committee members of the Society.

ACFS Victorian Branch NOMINATION FORM: 2013

All financial members of the Society are eligible to nominate for the office of President, Vice President (two positions), Treasurer, Secretary and Ordinary Committee members (up to six positions). Nominations must be in writing and must be signed by the candidate. If the number of nominations exceeds the number of vacancies a ballot will be held at the Annual General Meeting.

NAME of NOMINEE:

.....(Print)

POSITION:

President/ Vice President/ Treasurer/Secretary/Ordinary Committee Member (circle one only):

.....

SIGNATURE OF NOMINEE:

.....

CONTACT DETAILS:

Tel:..... Mobile:.....

EMAIL:.....

This nomination form must be delivered to: The Secretary, ACFS Vic Branch, Ross House, 247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne, 3000, not less than fourteen days before the date fixed for the Annual General Meeting.

All nominees are required to enclose a brief written introduction about themselves (maximum 150 words) with the nomination form. Note: The introduction will be circulated to members at the AGM.

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 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.

Pay directly into the ACFS Victoria Branch Account, BSB: 063-019, Account number: 10040625

Please put your name in the subject line & email REFERENCE to acfs.vic@gmail.com

You may send cheques to the Treasurer at the address in the left corner below and YOUR DONATION
WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

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If undelivered please return to ACFS Victorian,
4th Floor - Ross House
247 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000