



Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

NEWSLETTER

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February 2014

Happy New Year



On behalf of the Committee, I wish everyone a very happy and successful 2014, the Year of the Horse. In early times, the Year of the Horse was thought to be about energy and self-improvement, so we as an organisation will follow suit and try to do better.

Late last year I unveiled my plans to modernise and to have a membership drive to grow. I also mentioned closer ties with all kinds of organisations and I am pleased to say we have had ongoing discussions recently about putting our words into action.

One of the major changes is that some members of the Committee will have tasks or portfolios to look after. This is to streamline our work so we avoid duplication of tasks or miscommunication between people. The portfolios will include membership, fundraising, cultural affairs and exchanges and sport, amongst others.



Knowing the competence of our Committee, I think we should very soon see the fruits of this arrangement.

Finally, I'd like to repeat my invitation to all of you – if you have an idea, I want to hear it. Feel free to email me or phone and I'll happily share a cup of tea to chat about what you want to see and do.

Again, very best wishes for this New Year.

Anthony M Leong - President

Annual Fundraiser Dinner - Quanjudé:

“May you live in interesting times” is a so-called Chinese curse*. But times here are interesting with trade, jobs and international relations, especially with China.



The Hon. John Brumby

We have the honour of former-Premier of Victoria and now Huawei Board Member, the Hon. John Brumby, address us at our annual dinner. Few are better placed to speak on the intricacies of both trade and international affairs. We are fortunate to have him share his thoughts, speaking on **“China and Australia – the Road Ahead”**.

The dinner will be on Tuesday 29 April, from 6.30pm, at famed Peking Duck restaurant Quanjudé, 299 Queen Street (cnr Latrobe St), Melbourne.

Tickets are limited - \$60 per head plus drinks at bar prices. Hear one of the most senior players speak on global trade and political relations. Don't miss this opportunity!

Spring Festival report

Mr Yumin Song, Consul General of the PR China in Melbourne hosted celebrations for the Chinese Spring Festival on 23 January 2014. Three Executive Members of the ACFS attended the function and watched the lion dance entertain the many guests from Chinese organisations across Melbourne.

Two new Vice Consuls General Huang Guobin and Lin Jing were welcomed to Melbourne and we look forward to having close dialogue with them on future ACFS activities.

In his address, Mr Song paid tribute to Mr Huang Fengwen, Deputy Consul General who has concluded his term of office in Melbourne and is returning to resume his diplomatic duties in Beijing. The ACFS sent a card to Mr Huang thanking him for his support of the ACFS and wishing him all the best for the future of his diplomatic career.



Departing Deputy Consul-General Mr Huang FENGWEN

The Road from Robe

(Edited A Leong – reproduced with kind permission of Charles Zhang)

In the mid-eighteen hundreds Chinese were forced to travel overland from South Australia, due to an immigration tax imposed on them by the Victorian Colonial Government concerned by the numbers of Chinese travelling to the goldfields, in an attempt to stop immigration from China.

On 15 December 2013, Charles Zhang and his son Oscar began retracing the footsteps of the Chinese from Robe. They and Bill Moy visited the Chinese Temple at Sovereign Hill first, to ask for permission and good fortune from their ancestors during their adventure. Charles, Oscar and Bill are members of the Chinese Australian Cultural Society of Ballarat

(CACSB). They represent different generations of Chinese immigrating to Ballarat. Bill's Ancestors came to Ballarat during the Gold Rush, while Charles and Oscar represent more recent arrivals.

The walk was to follow the route taken by the Chinese miners and to commemorate the contribution made by Chinese gold diggers on the Central Victoria Goldfields, while promoting rural Australian towns and cities.

Outside of Robe, the walkers met Lorraine Falkner, owner of Karatta Winery. She knew a lot of the history of Chinese walking past in the 1850s. She even knew the well dug by Chinese to drink fresh water when they stopped there.

Charles and Oscar met the Penola group led by Cr Robert Thomas and historian Evelynne Bowden, at Chinamans La., where the Charles Market Gardens supplied vegetables to Chinese travellers. Local paper *The Border Watch* has an article on Sat 8 Aug 1885 about Chinese gardener Tam Wan, when his cart ran away with his horse, or vice versa!

The boys made their way to Casterton, the "Birthplace of the Kelpie", in 38°C temperatures. Oscar described it as like walking through your oven.

The next day in Coleraine, Charles stopped to take a picture of a building. After talking to the local historical society, it turned out to be the building next to a Chinese fruit shop, which was demolished in 1985.



Louey Sing's Fruit shop. (Coleraine Historical Society)

By 24th December the trekkers reached Ararat, the only city in Australia founded by Chinese. Charles and Oscar visited the Gum San Chinese Heritage Centre, built on the site of the "Canton Lead". Discovered by Chinese travelling

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Oscar Entry to Ararat

to the Victorian Goldfields, the Canton Lead yielded over 3 tons of gold during the first 3 months of mining.

Christmas Day was spent on the road from Ararat to Buangor. Luckily Santa found them and brought some Christmas cheer. They were also able to use Buangor's hall so Charles and Oscar could enjoy a

family Christmas celebration.

The next day the walkers arrived at Beaufort. Walking against Boxing Day traffic and the largest climb so far, they were escorted into the town centre by the Mayor of Pyrenees Shire and the people of Beaufort, including 90 year old Dulcie.

The next day the people of Beaufort walked with Charles and Oscar to the outskirts of town and wished them well. They were met by City of Ballarat Cr Samantha McIntosh, who walked with them to Burrumbeet. They got to walk along the uncompleted extension of the Western Freeway. They quite liked the lack of cars.

The last day saw our friends complete their journey down the Avenue of Honour into Ballarat. Surrounded by many supporters, the boys were welcomed at the Town Hall and then completed their journey where it had begun, at Sovereign Hill. Well Done!



CHARLES OSCAR AND BILL BACK OUTSIDE SOVEREIGN HILL'S CHINESE TEMPLE. PHOTO - YVON DAVIS

“Cat-head shoes” are handmade cloth shoes for toddlers. They have stitched soles and a cat-head embroidered on the front of each shoe. These exquisite handicrafts, which embody the consummate skills of traditional Chinese needlework, are believed to be able to ward off both calamities and evil spirits. They are also believed to give the wearer good luck and help attain wealth. The shoes are on

the list of China's intangible cultural heritage. Skilled women create cat-head patterns for the shoes and even cut silkworm cocoons into the shapes of cats' eyes and noses and embroider those patterns onto the shoes. The elegant footwear looks so exquisite, the shoes can be considered works of art.

The Legend For over 800 years, residents of Central China's Henan Province have held that

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toddlers should wear cat-head shoes. They have long believed any baby who wears out at least three pairs of cat-head shoes will have good luck in his/her life.



Legend has it that long ago, the cat was king of the animals; he was held in high esteem by all animals because he was not only smart, but also treated everyone fairly. However, the tiger wanted to be king and he agreed to become the cat's apprentice to learn "martial arts." The cat taught the tiger almost all his skills, but as he gradually became arrogant, the tiger decided to get rid of the cat. One day, the tiger tried to attack the cat, but the cat made a narrow escape by climbing to the top of a tree (a trick he had not taught the large, evil-hearted animal). Ashamed, the tiger hid in the depths of a mountain.

Today, many in rural Henan Province keep cats as pets. Many parents put cat-head shoes on their babies' feet in the hope their kids will be as smart as the cat and that they will be able to turn calamities into blessings.

Superb Skills Hu Qiang, 96, lives in Fanzhai Village in Luohe, a city in Henan and has been making cat-head shoes for over 70 years. Despite her advanced age, she can still hear and see quite well.

Ms Hu watched her mother, grandmother and aunts make cat-head shoes when she was a little girl. When she turned 14, she could skilfully make the embroidered shoes. At that time, people were poor and almost every girl in the village had to study needlework. "In the past, a woman's needlework was an important standard when judging whether she was a good housewife," she said.

Making cat-head shoes is no easy task. It usually takes four or five days to make; the process involves pasting pieces of old cloth or rags together, stitching the soles, making the uppers and embroidering the cat-head pattern on the front of

the shoes. "Embroidering a cat's eyes, mouth, nose and ears on the shoes is quite an art, as it requires different colours of thread," she stresses. "If one fails to match the colours well, the cat will look ugly, with a snub nose and/or dull eyes."

Given her 70-plus years of experience in needlework, Ms Hu is a superb shoemaker. Before she turned 80, she could make more than 30 cat-head shoes a year. For dozens of years, she has given her neighbours handmade cat-head shoes as presents for their babies.

About seven years ago, she sold some of her shoes at a local fair; many gathered around and gasped when they saw her superb work. In a short time, she had sold all of her shoes and earned enough to support herself for the year.

"Now I'm getting old, I make shoes for my descendants, rather than sell them," Ms Hu says. "I am worried there will be few successors to carry forward the traditional handicraft, as young and middle-aged rural residents are too busy to learn the handicraft skills. Most of them go to urban areas to do manual work to support their families."

As people's living standards have improved markedly in recent years, Chinese consumers have had greater purchasing options. As a result, market demand for traditional handicraft articles, such as cat-head shoes, has dropped substantially. Luckily, some rural and laid-off women workers have learned in recent years how to make cat-head shoes. They have also made a lot of money by selling their products.

Fortunately, an increasing number of people have become aware of the lasting charm of cat-head shoes, which embody people's wisdom and hope, a good sign for the future.

Courtesy "Women of China" magazine © August 2013

Hamer Scholarships Round 1, 2014

Applications for the round 1 of the 2014 Victorian Government Hamer Scholarships program to China, Indonesia, Japan and Korea will open on 1 March, 2014. Victorian's will be offered the opportunity for intensive language study and cultural immersion for up to six months in either China, Indonesia, Japan or Korea. The scholarships are worth \$10,000 for China and Indonesia and \$15,000 for Japan and Korea. Information about the scholarships and how to apply can be found at www.dsdbi.vic.gov.au/hamerscholarships

ACFS TOUR -- MAJESTIC CHINA

Beijing, Datong, Xian, Optional Yangtze Cruise

Trip highlights: Yungang Grottoes, Hanging Temple, The Great Wall, Terracotta Warriors

ITINERARY:

20 Oct 2014 Mon Fly Melbourne / Beijing

Board your overnight flight bound for Beijing.

21 Oct 2014 Tue Arrive Beijing

Upon arrival, met & transferred to your hotel. Stay at Presidential Hotel for the next four nights. Rest of the day free at leisure to relax.

22 Oct 2014 Wed Beijing

Start at Tiananmen Square, take a stroll on this largest public square and visit Mao's Mausoleum. Explore the magnificent Forbidden City with hundreds of halls and galleries. Afternoon visit the National Museum of China. (B/L/D)

23 Oct 2014 Thu Beijing

Experience the highlight of your holiday as you climb the Great Wall, one of the seven wonders in the world. Afternoon visit the Ming Tombs and its exhibition halls. (B/L/D)

24 Oct 2014 Fri Beijing

Wander in the Summer Palace, the summer retreat for the Emperors, with the largest imperial garden. Explore the old residential areas, known as Hutong where rickshaws wind through the small alleys. (B/L/D)

25 Oct 2014 Sat Train Beijing - Datong

Morning tour the iconic Temple of Heaven, visit the Cultural Community Centre and School. After lunch transfer to the station and take the fast train to Datong. Transfer to Datong Hotel for 2 nights. (B/L)

26 Oct 2014 Sun Datong

Visit the Yungang Grottoes, a masterpiece of Chinese Buddhist Caves, tour the incredible Hanging Temple with a history more than 1,500 years, it features Buddhism, Taoism and Confucianism. (B/L/D)

27 Oct 2014 Mon Datong - Xian

Morning visit Yinxian Wooden Pagoda, then proceed to the station and board the overnight train to Xian. Overnight on board, 4 berth soft sleeper. (B/L/-)

28 Oct 2014 Tue Xian

Morning arrive in Xian, transfer to your hotel to fresh up, then continue to tour the iconic Wild Goose Pagoda and walk on the ancient city wall. Stay at Garden Hotel for two nights. (-/L/D)

29 Oct 2014 Wed Xian

Today marvel at the Terracotta Warriors, one of the greatest archaeological discoveries in 20th Century. Visit the Provincial Museum. Tonight enjoy the spectacular Tang Dynasty Dinner & Show. (B/L/D)

30 Oct 2014 Thu Fly Xian - Melbourne

Enjoy some free time at leisure until transfer to the airport for flight home. (B) **31 Oct 2014** Fri Arrive Melbourne.

BOOKING TERMS AND CONDITIONS APPLY.

WWW.TRAVMAN.COM.AU

TOLL FREE 1800 338 007

E-MAIL: WANG@TRAVMAN.COM.AU

Optional Extension - Yangtze River Cruise

30 Oct 2014 Thu Fly Xian - Yichang via Chengdu
Transfer to airport for flight to Yichang. Arrival transfer to your hotel for overnight stay. (B)

31 Oct - 3 Nov 2014 Fri - Mon

Free until transfer to board Victoria Cruises. Visit the Three Gorges Dam, sail through the breathtaking Three Gorges, tour the City of Ghosts. (B/L/D) (No lunch or dinner on 31 Oct)

4 Nov 2014 Mon Fly Chongqing - Guangzhou-Melbourne

Transfer to the airport for flight home. (B)

5 Nov 2014 Tue Arrive Melbourne

Prices are based on twin share:

Main Tour (Beijing - Xian): Group size 6-9 people: \$3,120 pp

Group size 10 people or more: \$2,880 pp

Single room supplement: \$450

Inclusions: Return airfares with taxes, domestic flights & train, twin share accommodation, sightseeing tours, entrance fees, local English speaking guides, daily breakfast, 8 lunches, 6 dinners, Chinese visa fee, local transport by air-conditioned coach. Land only: \$2,100 PP (Twin), international airfares are NOT included.

Yangtze River Extension (Yichang-Chongqing): \$1,200 per person (Minimum 2 people).

Inclusions: All transfers, shore excursion tours, 5 nights twin share accommodation, all meals on board, flight Xian-Yichang.

NOT INCLUDED: TRAVEL INSURANCE, TIPPING APPROX \$60 PER PERSON AND PERSONAL EXPENSES.

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 Anthony Leong

VICE PRESIDENT: John Breheny
Mr Tower Liu

SECRETARY: Ms Robin Matthews

TREASURER: Mr Dong Chen

COMMITTEE: Mr Neil Barker
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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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