



Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

Newsletter

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February 2019



President's report

Hi everyone. I hope this Year of the Pig has begun well for you and continues to bring happiness and success.

We now have a new Chinese Consul-General to Victoria and Tasmania, Mr Long Zhou, who arrived in time to celebrate New Year. We attended the function at the Park Hyatt where the ballroom was packed with representatives from dozens of organisations, both Chinese and Australian. It was a fitting welcome and tribute.

Our sister-organisation, the Pacific China Friendship Association, had their AGM last November to ratify their Constitution and appoint a Board. We look forward to working closely together, with congratulations to John Breheny being appointed as one of the five Board Members, who had their first meeting in Brisbane early this month.

In conjunction with China Books and the Chinese Consulate, we held a reception and dinner for ten outstanding students of Chinese language and culture. The prize consisted of a beautiful plaque (with thanks as always to Vice President Tower!), a certificate and a cheque for \$1200 to each winner. Every student paraded their prowess in Chinese, in a couple of cases by video because of them actually being in China furthering their education. Their mastery of language and culture was extremely impressive and will hopefully encourage others in future.

Following on from the Language and Culture Awards, we will also be hosting an Achievement Award this year. This will be big, featuring someone in Victoria who has been exceptional in the promotion of friendship and understanding between the people of Australia and China. It is not a business award, but a recognition of people-to-people engagement and promotion of

goodwill. More details to come later, but if you know someone who could be eligible, let us know. They will have to submit a CV and be interviewed by a panel (who are yet to be chosen). I will publish the relevant rules and criteria once they have been set.

Finally, hopefully we will be able to hold our picnic in March, the one which was deferred from this month when it was so hot. Obviously it will be later in the month, but we will be in touch when we set a date.

Stay cool during this burst of hot weather and I look forward to seeing you at our picnic.

Anthony.

CONSULS-GENERAL MELBOURNE

On 16 January 2019, ACFS Victoria Branch was represented at the farewell function for the Consul-General in Melbourne for Victoria and Tasmania Mr Zhao Jian. Mr Zhao had served two years here and is departing to take up a new post in Chicago USA. The function at Park Hyatt, was attended by many Chinese community organisations, Members of Parliament and businesses.



*Mr Zhao Jian with the ACFS National President Robin Matthews
& Victorian President Anthony Leong*

The ACFS has a strong relationship with the People's Republic of China through the Officers of the Consulate and Consul-General Zhao was most generous in his support for our organization in providing the reception for the National ACFS Conference in May last year and the 2018 Language and Culture Awards.

At the reception marking the 69th Anniversary of the Founding of the People's Republic of China in September last year, of which ACFS was again invited, Consul-General Zhao, even though speaking on a broader state-wide scale, but none-the-less applicable to ACFS said "I'm confident that with joint effort, China-Victoria exchanges and cooperation will thrive with greater vigour and vitality".

The ACFS Victoria is grateful for the support of Consul-General Zhao and we wish him and his family all the best for the future.



Newly arrived Chinese Consul-General Mr Long Zhou

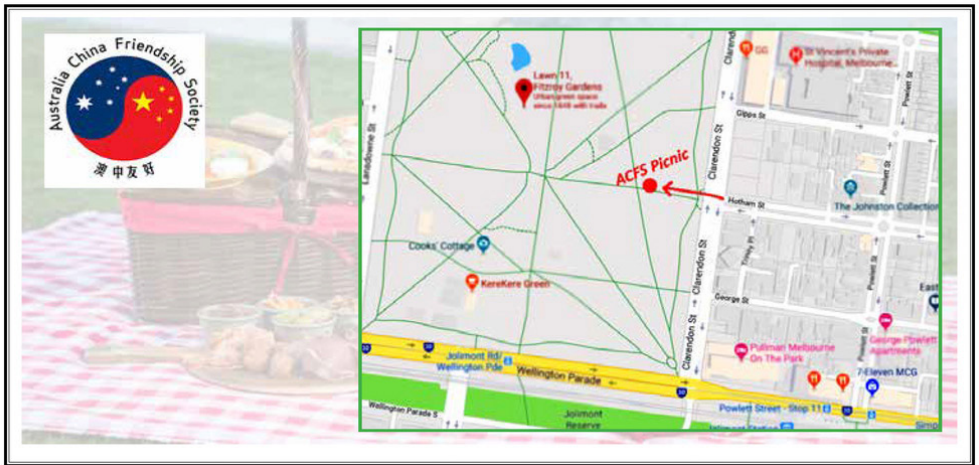
Earlier this month, we welcomed our new Consul-General, Mr LONG Zhou who commenced his new post on 10 February 2019, just in time to celebrate the Chinese New Year in Melbourne. We welcome him and his partner Ms CHU Wenrong to Melbourne and look forward to further developing a close and productive association.

ACFS Picnic - EVERYONE WELCOME!

When: 12:30PM onwards Saturday 16 March 2019

Where: Fitzroy Gardens Hotham St entry, opposite Hotham Street, East Melbourne. BYO to share with friends

RSVP: Mobile: 0411 285 488
email: robin@remconsult.com.au



CHINESE HISTORY TALK

On Tuesday March 19th at 11:00 am, our Cultural guru, Lia Cross will be giving a talk at Old Treasury Building Museum Spring Street Melbourne, about a petition that Chinese miners made to the Government of Victoria in the 1850's known as "*The Humble Petition*", which addressed the unfairness of the tax that was imposed on them at Melbourne Port and other issues on the goldfields. Members and friends are welcome to attend this talk generously provided by Lia.



Image: *Harvest of Endurance*. Acknowledgement to ACFS Ltd & Australian National Museum

CULTURAL NOTES: February 2019

Hello Everyone and a very Happy New year of the Pig!

I do hope you managed to catch some of the many cultural offerings during the New Year period. There was certainly plenty on offer starting with the MSO's spectacular Chinese New Year Concert on Wednesday 13th.

This year, not only did we have our favourite conductor Tan Dun on the podium but the popular "Hanggai Mongolian Rock Band" as well.

The combination of Symphony and rock was amazingly smooth under Tan Dun's baton and a good time was had by all with the audience being asked to participate with a special App of bird sounds in one instance. The Concert Hall "rocked" clapping, feet stamping and plenty of vocalization from the audience. My favourite piece was Tan Dun's own composition "Contrabass Concerto: Wolf Totem". Not only was the music evocative but the visuals of wolves in their natural habitat in the snow of Inner Mongolia with their calls imitated by the instruments was truly remarkable. A very memorable concert indeed which shall no doubt be remembered with nostalgia.



Maestro Tan Dun's Contrabass Concerto: "Wolf Totem"

Less grandiose but very beautiful and equally nostalgic was the Lunar New Year Concert: *Memories of Childhood* performed by the group Southern Cross Soloists at the Recital Centre the following Tuesday 19th. The artists were joined by special guests Christian Chong on piano, Li Wei Chin on cello (both young Australian Chinese musicians), and extra special guest George Gao on erhu. These artists not only played beautifully but they were invited to share their own special memories of Lunar New Year when they were growing up. The concert's theme was animals so, as well as enjoying Camille Saint-Saens "Carnival of the Animals" and Igor Stravinsky's "Firebird Suite", the appreciative audience was delighted to be offered a narrative piece accompanied by suitable musical sounds, of a selection from "Carnival of Chinese Animals" where each of the animals from the Chinese Zodiac was introduced finishing of course with THE PIG!

In case you missed out on these there's plenty more coming up soon violinist Lu Siqing joining the MSO for two concerts on March 15th and 16th at Hamer Hall.



Violinist Lu Siqing

And if you read your program right through for the 'Tan Dun Concert' you will have noticed that on July 4th Lang Lang will be in town for one night only (good luck getting tickets for that as it's almost sold out), and another Chinese musical genius, Jian Jiang will be here with his cello for two concerts on August 22nd and 24th both at the Concert Hall. Enjoy the music everyone!

Lia Cross- Cultural scout for ACFS

UPDATE FROM SCHWARZMAN COLLEGE BEIJING

Bridget Barker

I am now half way through my Masters of Global Affairs course at Tsinghua University as part of the Schwarzman Scholars Program. Since I last updated you a lot has happened!

We have finished our first two modules of study, in which I took subjects such as 'Social changes and reforms in China', Chinese Language studies, 'Comparative Governance', 'Chinese History Culture and Values' as well as 'Leadership in versatile environments' plus more.



The class mates and professors from the 'social reforms and changes' subject

As well as our studies we are involved in many different activities that help us to get to know more about Tsinghua University and about China more broadly. In November we went on 'deep dive' experiences where the whole cohort of 135 people plus Schwarzman and Tsinghua Staff all split off in to different groups and spent a week in various parts of China to meet with local government officials, business leaders, community members, NGO's and many more. I was in a place called Baoji, a city in Shaanxi Province with a population of nearly four million people, but still considered small and in fact one of the less developed cities in China. I was really impressed with the amount of development that has occurred in Baoji in such a small time frame, it did not look or feel like a poor city. When we travelled a little further out from the city to meet smaller villages we saw a number of really successful poverty alleviation initiatives such as a bee keeping/honey making cooperative and a mushroom farm. Despite these great initiatives, one of the major challenges that remains for

some of the villagers is the lack of work in their regions. With such rapid urbanization in China, much of the well paid and reliable jobs have moved closer to the cities. We spoke to villagers who are having both positive and negative outcomes in the past 10 or so years with this urbanization trend.

We also visited an elderly persons retirement home (of which there are not a lot in China). Considering the strong culture and tradition of filial piety and, therefore of grandparents being cared for by family, there's not long been the desire or need for elderly care outside of the home. However, with the aforementioned urbanization and rapidly changing economic and employment circumstances, care for grandparents at home is not always possible. The elderly persons home was great and a really excellent facility supported by Government and by local business, yet it is only 50% built and at 15% capacity - it will be interesting to see how many more people take up the option of out of home care for their elderly parents.

Overall, the Baoji trip was fantastic to open our eyes to parts of China that aren't Beijing and to understand from people first-hand how issues such as urbanization and an ageing population are being tackled by Government and by communities in different parts of China. Upon return we had a number of assignments and did presentations to the whole cohort so I felt like I also learnt a lot about other people's Deep Dives in places such as Chengdu, Xiamen, Shenzhen and other places.

I have enjoyed learning mandarin more than I anticipated, it is difficult of course, but I am loving being able to practice with taxi drivers, shop owners, people on trains and in the city. I am still at such a basic level but feeling motivated to continue learning beyond the program so that I can use it in my next destination (which is going to be Singapore as I have secured a job post-graduation) and also back in Melbourne when my fiancée and I return to Australia.

We have had a month off from classes for the Spring Festival. I was in Australia for Chinese New Year itself (for my Sister's wedding which was great) and having been in Singapore for this past week I have experienced a lot of Chinese New Year festivities, including at my new work place where I attended a Lion Dance and also a Lo Hei one Friday afternoon.

I'm looking forward to the second half of the program and then some time to do more travel around China before I begin work in Singapore in September.

新年快乐 xīn nián kuài lè

I hope the New Year brings health and prosperity to all ACFS members, friends and families.

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,

Commonwealth Bank 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 ACFS office address

YOUR DONATION WOULD BE GRATEFULLY RECEIVED

Promoting Friendship and Understanding Between the
Australian and Chinese People

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.

The ACFS Victorian Branch

PRESIDENT: Anthony Leong

SECRETARY: Robin Matthews

VICE PRESIDENT: Damon Feng

TREASURER: Dong Chen

Tower Liu

COMMITTEE: Lia Cross

John Breheny

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 acfs.vic@gmail.com