



# Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc). ABN 39 746 574 225

## Newsletter

4TH FLOOR, ROSS HOUSE, 247 FLINDERS LANE, MELBOURNE VIC 3000

MOBILE: 0411 322 808

E-MAIL: [ACFS.VIC@GMAIL.COM](mailto:ACFS.VIC@GMAIL.COM) WEB: [WWW.ACFS.COM.AU](http://WWW.ACFS.COM.AU)

**September 2019**



## President's Report

This time of year, with the Autumn Festival and Chinese National Day, is always busy, but it's been busy for the past couple of months.

VP Tower, Secretary Robin and I were invited to see the Melbourne Girls' School Chinese culture day show on 19 July. It was inspiring to see very young as well as older students singing and talking in Chinese as well as traditional dancing. Their teachers were extremely enthusiastic and this had an obviously positive effect on their students.

I was then invited to Government House on 24 July to help celebrate the Jiangsu-Victorian sister-state relationship, presided over by the Governor, Her Excellency Ms Linda Dessau. Again, this was a happy and great occasion to discuss the gains over the life of the relationship and what the future holds.

Several weeks later, we held our annual fundraiser, but this time a concert with Diva Shu Cheen Yu and her ensemble as choir on 17 August. This event was well attended and the program was a mix of Chinese songs, opera from around the world and the ever-popular "I still call Australia home". My thanks to all who worked tirelessly to make this happen and especially our performers.

I was invited to go to Guangzhou Diplomacy Week (20-25 August), to discuss how international relations and economic growth rely on each other. It was an extremely informative forum, and we had enough time to see some of the sights of old Canton, as it was about a century and a half ago.

Finally, the Museum of Chinese-Australian History had their Fundraising Dinner on 26 August in Tottenham. I had been rung by their Communications person to ensure our oldest (and Life) Members, Eunice and Maurice Leong, would be there, as they wished to celebrate Maurice's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday and give a gift.

The night was a great success and the ACFS was acknowledged by both the Museum and the Deputy Consul-General. We did well!

Further to this, the Museum is kindly hosting the formal celebration of Maurice Leong's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday celebration at the Museum itself on September 19. Family and friends from long ago will come together to celebrate this momentous event and the ACFS is proud to have such a long lineage.

Finally, I have been invited to Canberra for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of China's National Day and 47<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Australia's recognition of China. This will be on 23 September and people from all around Australia will be present. It is a great honour to be representing you all and I will give a full report on my return.

That's it for now and I wish you all a very happy Spring season.

Anthony.

## CHINESE CULTURE DAY

On Friday the 19<sup>th</sup> of July, we celebrated the 6<sup>th</sup> Chinese Culture Day at Melbourne Girls' College (MGC). Dignitaries were invited. Ms Robin Matthews, the National President of the Australia-China Friendship Society, Mr Anthony Leong and Mr Tower Liu, President and Vice-President of the Australia-China Friendship Society, Victorian Branch were present.

Mrs Karen Money, Principal of MGC made the opening speech. She highlighted the importance of studying foreign languages in an ever-changing world. Ms Chen, the Confucius Classroom Leader also stressed that in today's globalized world, the ability to communicate in more than one language is an indisputable advantage. With the rise of China, Chinese has become increasingly important in the business world.

At MGC, we not only run Chinese language classes, but also a great variety of cultural activities. This year, we celebrated the Chinese New Year in Term 1, the Dragon Boat Festival and the Year 7 Chinese Cultural Experience Incursion in Term 2 and the Chinese Culture Day in Term 3. The Chinese Culture Day, in particular, showcases how rich and ancient the culture is. It was a fun day full of excitement and vigour. Below are some extracts from student reflections:



'I really enjoyed the whole day, doing many different activities that relate back to China. It was very educational so I learnt a lot, but I was taught in an engaging and fun way.'

- Shasha Marriott, 10L2

'I really enjoyed being involved in the Lion Dance Movement. I thought it was a fun and interactive way to lead us into the Chinese culture.'

- Lorraine Sanares, 9D

'My favourite workshop were the Chinese Knotting and the Chinese Inventions. I enjoyed the bracelet knotting as it was very relaxing and the bracelets were pretty.'

- Rania Widjanarko 10M1

'This Chinese Culture Day was quite fun. I enjoyed watching all the performances. The rap was really good and the music was really nice to listen to. My favourite activity was learning the Lion Dance.'

- Julia Jessop, 9B

'I really enjoyed the entire day and thought it was extremely interesting.'

- Jen Mabanag 10 L1

The students have summed up the day's activities very well. We are so happy to hear that you really enjoyed the day. We hope to see you again at next year's Chinese Culture Day and all the other fun events.

Melbourne Girls' College  
The Confucius Classroom Team



# CULTURAL NOTES

Hello everyone,

I hope you have been able to catch some of the cultural activities on offer in the last couple of months including our very own fund raiser concert on August 17th, starring talented Shu Cheen-Yu with her wonderful choir and guest tenors. I loved every bit and sang along when I could. (see concert details elsewhere in this Newsletter). It was lovely to see so many people there.

Concurrently, the Melbourne International Film Festival (MIFF) has been on with some remarkable films from China such as Xiaogang Gu's "Dwelling in the Fushun Mountains", Jie Liu's "Baby", Muye Wen's "Dying to Survive" and Pema Tsenden's Tibetan fable "Jinpa" to name a few. All were booked out by the time I tried to obtain tickets but I'm pleased to see Chinese Films so well patronised by our community.

Coming up in cinemas in September is the American-China award winning collaborative film "The Farewell"-don't miss it!

Meanwhile, the amazing exhibit "Terracotta Warriors and Cai Guo -qiang" is still showing at the NGV so if you haven't been, do hurry as it will end soon. The NGV is fund raising to purchase Guo-qiang's incredibly beautiful "Starlings Landscape" which was commissioned especially for this exhibition. Make a contribution if you can so we can keep it in Melbourne.

On the musical scene, I was fortunate to attend cellist Alvin Wong's "Chinese Diaspora" concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre recently and what a pleasure it was! A small but very appreciative audience gathered in the Centre's SALON and was treated to a magical feast. How Alvin managed to obtain sounds of the "qin" and Chinese zither from his cello I'll never know. But, his performance of "Seven Tunes heard in China" based on regional Chinese folk songs and Zhou Long's "Wild Grass", based on a poem by Lu Hsen (Lu Sun), left us all enchanted. No wonder people rushed to buy his CD after the performance!

Coming up, don't miss "Chinese superstar violinist"- (presently violinist in Residence with the MSO), Lu Siqing in Concert on October 18th at the MRC. He is giving a Master class with students from the Melbourne Conservatorium on Oct. 17th at the Iwaki Auditorium in Southbank which is also worth attending.

Ray Chen's "Mendelssohn 's Violin Concerto" at the Monash Centre is already sold out but some of you may have been fortunate to obtain tickets.

Last but not least, the Melbourne International Arts Festival is coming up in October and it begins with the exquisite "Rite of Spring" (fresh from New York), another contemporary dance from China's very own "peacock princess", the incomparable Yang Liping! Set to the immortal music of Igor Stravinsky, it's an event not to be missed! I've already booked my ticket and looking forward to it. Book now, don't miss out.

Lia Cross- ACFS Cultural scout

# STUDY IN CHINA

Dear all ACFS friends and family,

I am now writing to you as a graduate of Tsinghua University as part of the Schwarzman Scholars program. In early July the class of 2019, all 135 Schwarzman Scholars graduated with a Master of Global Affairs in Management Sciences. I was majoring in Public Policy and took Mandarin language classes throughout my studies as well. I have improved my mandarin comprehension ability a lot, and my speaking is certainly better than when I arrived, however I am still at a pretty basic level and want to continue learning in Singapore and eventually in Australia also. I was pretty excited when I first understood some people who were speaking Chinese in Australia when I visited in February and again when I was in Australia in July. Walking around China town, and parts of Melbourne with high Chinese influences I felt I had so much more context for the different shops, foods and could understand some characters, it was pretty exciting!

A highlight of my second half of the program occurred in the week and a half leading up to the Australian 2019 Federal election where Kevin Rudd stayed at the college and gave daily lectures at lunch time in the college pub. Kevin Rudd, as you would all know, is a good friend of China and speaks very impressive Chinese! He was speaking about many topics from the management of the Australian economy during the 2008 Global Financial Crisis, to climate change and of course the topic of the trade war between America and China. His insights were incredible and the Australians in the program along with me felt pretty amazed that we were spending this extended time with a former Prime Minister of Australia, and of course in the pub (we didn't drink alcohol in the day time of course, this was just a nice way for him to be more relaxed, which is a great Australian trait to not take yourself too



*Former Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd  
with Australian students in Schwarzman College, Tsinghua University*

seriously and be able to relax and chat!) Before he left the college, he did a public lecture and many people came from the broader Tsinghua community all of whom seemed very interested and many asking important questions about Australia and China's relationship, and about his current work at the Asia Society in New York.

Another element of the program we needed to satisfy was an internship. I completed my internship at the Australian Embassy in Beijing in the Public Affairs Division. I assisted the public affairs division with some Weibo content for women's sport, Australian Indigenous affairs, and AFL. I also assisted with some internal documents to build up the knowledge base of consulate staff (many of whom are local hires, aka Beijing people) about Indigenous Australia, as well as to do some research in to how the annual AFL game in Shanghai could be more community engagement focused to help build the people to people connections between China and Australia.

Overall, I am so grateful to the Schwarzman Scholars program for allowing me to spend a year in China, and no less at such a fantastic University like Tsinghua. I have learnt so much and grown significantly from the experience.

I look forward to seeing and speaking to many of you at future ACFS events, where now I have a small but also much more significant understanding of China. I am more than ever invested in continuing to build the connection and friendship between the peoples of Australia and China.

Bridget Barker

# 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](mailto: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](mailto:acfs.vic@gmail.com)