



# Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc). ABN 39 746 574 225

## Newsletter

March 2022

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## President's Report

Welcome and I hope you are feeling a little more normal due to lifting COVID-19 restrictions!

We are planning a line-up of events for 2022, including our belated ACFS 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary, a fundraising dinner and several yum chas. If you have an activity you would like to see happen (especially if you're a student of China or things Chinese), please drop us a line.

There have been 2 occurrences which have aroused interest: the tragic unfolding of events in Ukraine, sparked by the Russian invasion, and recent news about a proposed agreement between the Solomon Islands and China.

Ukraine and Taiwan have been mentioned as being similar in circumstance. They are not. In the article below (and my summary abstract), there are clear differences:

### Abstract:

*Taiwan and Ukraine situations are nothing similar. Ukraine is a recognised nation, Taiwan is not, and has been affirmed as part of the People's Republic of China since diplomatic recognition by the US in 1972 and later ratification by the UN. As part of the 1-China Policy, Taiwan is a territory which will become like Hong Kong, with "1 country, 2 systems" governance. Then US President Nixon promised to draw down bases and eventually withdraw from Taiwan, but this obviously has not been honoured. Unlike*

China, which does not meddle with internal matters of other states, the West has disapproved of the 'secession' of Donetsk and Luhansk, as it didn't align with their interests, yet support convenient secessionists in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong, exposing the double-standard. <https://socialistchina.org/2022/03/18/the-one-china-principle-sole-guarantee-for-stability-and-prosperity/>

As to the Solomon Islands, the West colonised, then discarded those colonies, whereas China has been trading with Islander nations and the west coast of Australia since the 15<sup>th</sup> century, well before the West even ventured there. The supposedly leaked document holds no surprises in terms of allies and friendly nations (e.g., the US & its Darwin base). It appears China has requested no such military facility, but rather permission to enter, and protection of its people. Further, it was China which has given aid to the Pacific over the past few decades, including vast support during the pandemic, while the West did little.

Insultingly, some commentators in Australia have compared China with Japan in the Solomon Islands during the Second World War, and ambitions regarding Australia. While this is patent, arrant nonsense driven by anti-China hawks, the inference is as offensive as it is fanciful. China battled the invading Japanese as well as internal traitors during WWII, enduring in addition the same brutal obscenities as the Jews. To make such an odious comparison between China and Japan shows arrogance, ignorance, and racism, and should be condemned as such.

While it would be far preferable to not have to refute idiotic theories and suggestions, I fear there are more to come. That is why we are here – to dispel misunderstandings and challenge untruths. It is only by giving a different, clear, and truthful viewpoint that we can foster friendship between our people, and counter the harm being done to peaceful relationships.

*Anthony Leong   President ACFS   Vic Branch*

# CHINESE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE AWARDS

Fifteen tertiary educated students received awards for their Chinese language proficiency and knowledge of Chinese culture at two events in February and March. The winners were selected by the Chinese Teachers Association who attended a range of Victorian universities.

The first event was the announcement of the winners and conducted via ZOOM with guest speakers from the Chinese Consulate for Victoria and Tasmania and President of ACFS Victorian Branch, Anthony Leong .

Finally, the Award recipients were able to meet one another and ACFS Committee members at a casual afternoon event earlier in March. Prizes consisted of a lap top computer, tablet or mobile phone.

The Committee looks forward to many of the recipients joining future ACFS activities to practice their language skills and share their knowledge and experiences of friendship.



*Some of the Award recipients with Victorian Branch President Anthony Leong*

# CULTURE REPORT

- Lia Cross

## Chinese New Year Concert

It seems like ages ago that I attended the Chinese New Year Concert to welcome in The Year of the Tiger at Hamer Hall, on Saturday 5th February.

The conductor for the evening was a Chinese gentleman, whose name is Joshua Tan from Singapore who did a wonderful job. The first part of the program consisted of some classical orchestral pieces from Western composers, with cellist Li-wei Qin who also featured in pieces from Mendelssohn and Mascagni's "Intermezzo" opera Cavalleria Rusticana, one of my very favourite pieces. The second part of the program included soprano Sharon Zhai and tenor Kang Wang, both Chinese singers from Australia, who entertained us with some excerpts from Puccini operas, including the duet from La Boheme, "Oh Soave Fanciulla", the soprano aria "Un Bel Di" from Madama Butterfly, and "Nessun Dorma" from Turandot.



*Celloist Li-wei Qin Perform at the MSO's 2022 Chinese New Year concert*

The last piece was a well-known joyful piece of Chinese music, normally performed at Chinese New Concert according to the Chinese gentleman sitting next to me!

All guest artists and orchestra were warmly received by a smaller than usual but very enthusiastic audience.

## Chinese Museum Initiative

On behalf of the Committee, I attended a series of three seminars followed by three workshops at the Chinese Museum on the topic “We are Stronger Together”, which addressed the topic of Racism in Australian society.

This initiative consisted of experts from various organisations eg. Dr. Judy Tang from Victorian Multicultural Commission; Isabel Zhang, psychologist; Molina Astana, National President of Asian-Australian Lawyers Association, all of who addressed the topic from the point of view of their respective fields and gave the audience an opportunity to bring up instances of racism that they had experienced.

The workshops, run by Sifu Damien Chauremootoo, Instructor and Director of “Empower Tactical”, addressed practical ways to deal with instances of racism when directed against you and also ways to protect oneself physically if you receive a physical racist attack! We all came away feeling much more confident in ourselves.

## Chinese Language and Culture Awards

An Awards presentation took place on Saturday, March 5th at an informal gathering at the wine bar “Life’s Too Short” at the Tribeca Building in East Melbourne. University students studying Chinese Language and Culture were presented with various Awards to encourage them in their endeavours.

It was lovely to talk with these very enthusiastic young people and hear their stories. Some had already visited China and others hoping to visit soon. A great time was had by all.





Edited version of message by

**Xiao Qian**

**Ambassador for the People's  
Republic of China to Australia**

26th January 2022

Australia is renowned for its vast territory, rich resources, diverse culture and unique landscape. Although separated by oceans, the friendly exchanges between China and Australia date back to long-time ago. Since the establishment of the diplomatic ties in 1972, we have witnessed frequent exchanges and fruitful cooperation outcomes in various fields.

A sound China-Australia relationship serves the fundamental interests of the two countries and two peoples. China and Australia differ in history, culture, social system and stage of development, but as long as we adopt a long-term and big-picture perspective, adhere to the principle of mutual respect, equality and mutual benefit, stay firm to the right direction of bilateral relations, the China-Australia relations will keep moving forward and make further progress.

The Chinese Embassy in Australia is committed to advancing the exchanges and cooperation in various fields between the two countries, and promoting the sound and steady development of the bilateral relations. I hope this website (message) serves as a window for friends from all walks of life to understand more about China and China-Australia relations and as a bridge to facilitate the exchanges and cooperation between our two countries.

Thank you for the interest in and support to the Chinese Embassy in Australia.

# 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  
Tower Liu

TREASURER: Ian Parker

COMMITTEE: Lia Cross, Darell Egan and Joe Montero

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)