



August 2024

Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

Newsletter

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President's Report

There has been a great deal of wringing of hands in recent months in Australia about China's changing property market. Ian Verrinder, writing for the ABC on July 23, claims that "Beijing quietly heads into economic oblivion". "Oblivion" in this context is an interesting word. According to China Briefing on July 17; "China's GDP in the first half of 2024 reached RMB 61.68 trillion (US\$8.49 trillion) according to data from the NBS. This represents an increase of 5 percent year-on-year." This represents a decline of 0.2% from 2023. A far cry from oblivion.

The real concern - and obviously it is not for the well-being of the Chinese - is that Australian iron ore exports in an environment where construction growth is slowing down is causing headaches for local corporations. Less home construction growth means less steel, which means lowered demand for iron ore, therefore the Chinese economy is heading toward "oblivion". In reality, Chinese home construction growth has declined for a very simple reason; China has built enough houses (you would think that would be an enviable position to be in) and as a result they've turned their attention else where. Of course, for a matter of comparative economics, housing affordability in Australia is in very rapid decline whether as rents or mortgages (ANZ CoreLogic Report, April 2024).

When it comes to the change in direction in China's economy, as I remarked in the April President's report, China has turned to environment infrastructure, electric vehicles and the like at a scale and pace that is almost beyond imagination, making up half of its GDP growth in 2023. Bloomberg reported on August 23 that China has already reached its aspirational renewable power target for 2030 - six years earlier than planned, building twice as much wind and solar products than the rest of the world combined (Power Engineering International, July 12 2024). It would truly be a wonder if the rest of the world could engage with the problem of mitigation against global climate change with such enthusiasm. Of course, no economy is perfect and China is not an exception in this regard. The increase in youth unemployment, even for graduates, in recent years is a real problem (Reuters, August 21) and the government has introduced incentives for firms to hire.

The main point being, whilst we are confronted with an onslaught of "doom and gloom" about the state of the Chinese economy, it is worth checking and double-checking the facts to see if they are grounded in reality and show some coherent economic reasoning. Unfortunately, it is far too common for articles to present themselves as providing information, when in reality the data doesn't support conclusion. In this regard, they are no better than the pseudo-science of astrology and probably more damaging to our national psyche. It is certainly difficult to make a realistic assessment about China when there are so many ill-informed opinions being published.

For our own part the ACFS (Victorian) branch has its own news. Starting with what is an unfortunate issue with timetables, we will be unable to conduct our concert this year. Nevertheless, work is underway to have a concert by early next year. Also, there was hope that we could provide news of a website in this issue. Whilst the site itself has been designed, including copies of our newsletter dating back to

2011. Unfortunately, we have hit a bug with our domain holder, which we hope to have resolved in the very near future - by the next newsletter at the latest.

There is good news as well. As mentioned previously, the former Speaker of the Victorian Legislative Assembly, Ken Smith has made an extraordinary donation of various Chinese artifacts and artworks etc, to the ACFS (Victoria), which we are selling to members, friends, and to the public in general. Vice-President of the association, Tower Liu, has done the amazing job of photographing and compiling all these items into a single publication and is now taking offers for items. A copy of this publication will be circulated.

In other good news, we have also received the benefit of a new young member, Charlotte Hall, who has generously offered their time to assist in the marketing of the organisation with a particular interest in recruiting younger people to the ACFS (Victoria). This is, of course, a very welcome event. A reality of contemporary society that we are so much more fragmented in “real life” even as we are far better connected than ever through social media. Even venerable societies such as our own have to adapt according to the times (明智的人会随机应变, Míngzhì de rén huì suíjīyìngbiàn, the wise adapt to circumstances).

Lev Lafayette, AFCS (Victoria) President

“Chinese Culture Day” event held in Whitehorse Town Hall

The “China Culture Day” event with the theme of “Ink Fantasy, Ancient Charm of Xi’an” was held at the Whitehorse City Hall in 25th July.



Holster and guest to officially opening Chinese culture day

Chinese Consul General in Melbourne Fang Xinwen attended the event and delivered a speech. Victorian Premier Jacinta Allen, Victorian Multicultural Minister Ingrid Stitt, Victorian Opposition Leader John Pesutto, as well as several Australian federal and Victorian MPs and local government officials attended the event. About 1,100 students from 27 primary and secondary schools in Victoria also participated in the event.



The Cultural Day activities were divided into two sessions, morning and afternoon. The cultural groups from the ancient Chinese capital of Xi'an and the cultural institutions in Melbourne, they joined the audience in a wonderful Tang Dynasty court dance, Mongolian Humming, Dai peacock dance and Tang tea performances. Guests and students actively participated in cultural experiences such as Tang tea ceremony, calligraphy, painting, round fan making, handmade sachets, Chinese musical instruments, Chinese traditional costumes and makeup, as well as interactive games such as pitching pots, rings, and copper coins, and fully interacted with artists from China.

The event was crowded with people, the atmosphere was warm, and there was constant laughter. Guests and students said that through this event, they further enhanced their knowledge and understanding of Chinese culture. They hoped to have the opportunity to visit China in the future and immerse themselves in China's splendid culture and beautiful scenery.

Tower LIU



CULTURAL NOTES

Hello everyone!

I hope you have been able to catch some of the Chinese films in the MIFF (Melbourne International Film Festival) in the past few weeks.

Some wonderful movies were presented and well attended by the Chinese community. These included: "Black Dog", "Some Rain Must Fall" and "Caught by the Tides". All very good and innovative films. The film festival ended last night with the last mentioned film showing to a packed Forum Theatre despite the miserable rainy evening!

There are other Chinese themed movies from the Chinese diaspora around. One of them "How to make millions before Grandma dies", is showing at the Nova cinema right NOW!

This delightful funny and sad story of a Chinese family in Thailand coping with Grandma's cancer diagnosis is not to be missed! Generational tensions, family politics and cultural practices are all present. And bring your tissues because you will need them! The afternoon I saw the film, sobs could be heard in the auditorium, including mine!

Other events coming up soon include the following- buy your tickets fast if you want to be there.

Wed. September 11th - "Tan Dun in Conversation", 6:30pm at Iwaki Auditorium, Hamer Hall.

Sat. September 14th - "Ta Dun in Concert", 7:30pm at Hamer Hall.

Tickets available from Arts Centre box office or online.

Thursday, Sept. 26th - "Chinese Opera Gala", at MRC 's Elisabeth Murdoch Hall. Tickets available from MRC box office, online or you can call the box office and book over the phone. This event is almost sold out so good luck getting tickets!

Sunday, Sept.15th - Mid-Autumn (Moon Festival) celebrations at Chinese Museum from 10:00am. Great fun for young and old, view MOON cakes making demonstrations and most important of all, eat some! Oh, and don't forget to view the FULL MOON on Tuesday 17th!

Lia Cross- ACFS cultural scout

CHINESE OPERA GALA

A night of enchantment with selected Chinese opera masterpieces

Experience the pinnacle of Chinese opera as the China National Opera and Dance Drama Theatre returns to Australia, presenting a captivating evening of art songs and opera excerpts. Enjoy beloved Chinese art songs inspired by classical poetry and excerpts from renowned operas like "The White-Haired Girl" and "Little Second Black Gets Married," accompanied by exquisite piano.

Join us for this spectacular event and be mesmerised by the essence of Chinese culture and opera

"Opportunities for Australian audiences to experience the rich tradition of Chinese opera are rare."

— The Age



AUSFENG澳丰文化、CPAA中演公司 Present

中国歌剧舞剧院澳洲巡演2024

金色时光

CHINESE OPERA 中国经典歌剧 GALA

演绎中国著名经典歌剧《白毛女》《小二黑结婚》《伤逝》《红河谷》《原野》等唱段和艺术歌曲



孙爽

杜庆彬

王佳韵

吴涛

赵小莹

刘博

郭煜

潘杭苇

王杨

初煦

孙尧

李大威

王娜

张英席

蒋宁

毋攀

杨琪

“ 澳大利亚观众能够亲身体验传统的中国歌剧，这是非常难得的机会。 ”

-The Age

悉尼 9月22日

Sydney Opera House

霍巴特 9月24日

Federation Concert Hall

墨尔本 9月26日

Melbourne Recital Centre

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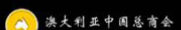
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Liao Changyong's Chinese Art Song Recital

with German pianist Hartmut Höll

Enjoy the renowned Chinese baritone **Liao Changyong** and brilliant German pianist **Hartmut Höll** perform in beautiful Chinese art songs based on poems stretching back to the time of the Tang Dynasty (617 - 907) to the present day.

Liao Changyong is regarded as China's leading baritone singer. His illustrious career has shone brightly on international opera and concert stages, and have played leading roles in numerous opera classics, including *The Barber of Seville*, *Rigoletto*, and *A Masked Ball*. In recent years, Liao has devoted himself to creating and performing original Chinese operas and art songs. Whether you are an art song enthusiast or captivated by Chinese culture, don't miss this wonderful concert.

上海音乐学院
SHANGHAI CONSERVATORY OF MUSIC

in association with AUSFENG Present

中国古典诗词与书画
廖昌永
与哈特穆特·霍尔
中国艺术歌曲独唱音乐会

Liao Changyong
Baritone

Hartmut Höll
Pianist

LIAO CHANGYONG

Chinese Art Song Recital

Australia and New Zealand Debut 2024

10 NOV SUN 8:30 PM SYDNEY Opera House Concert Hall	16 NOV SAT 7:30 PM MELBOURNE Recital Centre	19 NOV TUE 7:30 PM AUCKLAND Bruce Mason Centre
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QR codes for each location.

A New Era of Diplomacy: Chinese Premier Li Qiang's Visit to Australia

Strengthening Friendly Relations

The state visit by Chinese Premier Li Qiang has been hailed by all as a great success. It has achieved the highest levels of friendly relations with China since the election of the Albanese government. The last time Australia welcomed a Premier of China was in March 2017 when Li Keqiang was hosted by then Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull. It would be an understatement to say that many changes have occurred in the world since then.

Trade Contributions and Economic Impact

Reflecting on this historic visit all Australians understand the immense contributions made to the commonwealth of both countries through trade. In March alone this year, Australia exported \$13 billion worth of goods to China while importing \$5.9 billion from China. It is no understatement to say we are living now through the greatest trading conditions Australia has had in its history.

Post-COVID Recovery and Opportunities

The COVID-19 period and the immediate post-COVID transition have been difficult for the whole world, but circumstances are changing positively, slowly but surely. Australia's education industry and vast tourism industry will be among the major beneficiaries as we transition. We can and will return to the levels seen in 2019 when approximately 1.4 million Chinese tourists contributed \$12.4 billion to the Australian economy. In 2019, over 200,000 Chinese students were enrolled in Australian educational institutions, with their financial contribution from tuition fees and living expenses estimated at around \$12 billion.

Diplomatic and Regional Significance

Prime Minister Albanese's welcome to Premier Li Qiang reflects Australia's important position in Asia as a friend, partner, and participant in the prosperous and peaceful development of our region. This success will highlight what Chinese diplomacy refers to as advancing a "community of common destiny," a helpful and practical expression underpinning the PRC's desire to develop harmonious and beneficial relations with all countries.

Deepening Bilateral Friendship

In this context, Premier Li Qiang's visit has further deepened the longstanding friendship between our two countries and enabled significant agreements that will both promote and strengthen our trade partnership.

The Premier's visit to Australia marks a significant milestone in the bilateral relationship between the two nations, promising a future of enhanced cooperation, mutual benefits, and strengthened ties in various sectors.

Len Hartnett

The Difference Between Chinese and Western Science

This month we are going to compare China's and the West's approach to science. We will look at great inventions in Ancient and Modern China and great inventions in Ancient and modern western countries.

Science, any system of knowledge that is concerned with the physical world and its phenomena and that entails unbiased observations and systematic experimentation. In general, a science involves a pursuit of knowledge covering general truths or the operations of fundamental laws (Britannica 2019)

Branches of Science include:

- Physics
- Astronomy
- Chemistry
- Biology
- Medicine
- Anthropology



Modern science arose in Western Europe during the Renaissance and developed mostly in Europe before becoming a worldwide pursuit in the 20th century (Memmi 2019). Many other civilisations had achieved high levels of theoretical knowledge but had not taken the next leap and developed a systematic approach. At some point scientific theories and mythology parted company and new ways of observing nature grew. There is no clear dividing line between classical science

and contemporary science, but rather a slow and contentious shift into new territories while grappling with previously unsolved problems (Memmi 2019)

As we have already discovered: Western culture is derived from Greek and Biblical reasoning Eastern culture is derived from Confucianism, Taoism and Buddhism. This division also extends to science. Joseph Needham in the 1940's suggested the strange mix of biblical beliefs and Plato's philosophy proved to be a favorable breeding ground for scientific study. On the other hand, the organic and holistic outlook of Eastern culture did not encourage the analysis of physical reality into basic components. Further Eastern conceptions were more complex and intellectually advanced than the analytic approach of Western science. Maybe the difference arises because westerners are always looking for an abstract reality and easterners tend to look at surface phenomena.

Some of the great inventions to come from ancient China include: paper money 9th Century CE in fact paper has existed in China since 105 CE, row crop farming 6th Century CE, Silk 4000-

3000 BCE, alcohol 2000-1600 BCE, petroleum as fuel 1000-750 BCE, astronomical observations 364 BCE, the Seismometer 132 CE, dental amalgam 618-907CE, mechanical Clock 735 CE, movable type printing 960-1279 CE, gunpowder 1000 CE, the compass 1100 CE.



China has also been responsible for some interesting “technological” achievements: the abacus 1107-1077, the handgun 288, snow gauge 1247, post windmill with grinding machinery in mill housing 1588, bristle toothbrush 1948, Synthetic bovine insulin 1965, non-invasive prenatal diagnostic testing for Down Syndrome 2008, carbon aerogel 2013, Zhejiang University created a carbon aerogel weighing in at 0.16 mg/cc breaking the record for the world’s lightest substance.



Eniac took up a whole room and was less powerful than today’s smart phones

Some of the great inventions from ancient western countries include: 5000-3000 BCE Iron, Egypt, the wheel 4th Century BCE, bronze Serbia 4500 BCE, number system and geometry Ancient Egypt 3000 BCE, quadratic equations Babylonians 2100 BC, the catapult Ancient Greece 400 BCE. A more modern list includes some but not all: Quantum theory (M. Planck) 1900, Transatlantic telegraph signal (G. Marconi) 1901, Airplane flight (Wright brothers) 1903, Theory of relativity (A. Einstein) 1905, 1923 Television camera (V. Zworykin), 1935 Nylon and plastics, 1942 Controlled nuclear reaction (E. Fermi), 1945 Electronic computer, 1947 Transistor (W. Shockley)

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Ian Parker

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: Lev Lafayette
VICE PRESIDENT: Tower Liu
SECRETARY: Edith Wilson
TREASURER: Ian Parker
COMMITTEE: Lia Cross, Joe Montero, James Doery

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 secretary@acfs-vic.org

ACFS (VICTORIA) Inc. A0038007M ABN NO. 39 746 574 225

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Promoting Friendship and Understanding Between the Australian and Chinese People