



August 2025

Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc). ABN 39 746 574 225

Newsletter

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President's Report

There is a recognition among most people that the world has shared problems both local and global, and that parochial differences between nations can be resolved with mutual respect. Sadly, weak individuals with small minds continue to engage in the politics of difference and the discrimination. They poison public discourse, weaken well-forged economic and cultural ties between nations, and further impoverish their livelihood and our communities. Such are the politics behind the anti-immigration "March for Australia", events on August 31st which included "remigration", the mass deportation of non-European peoples (ABC, August 28, 2025).

It is fortunate that such attitudes are rightly considered revolting by the overwhelming majority of Australians. As any scholar of modern history or politics will know, there is an progression from localised racism, to fascism, and very soon afterwards, to war. It is for good reason that Chinese communities in Australia and around the world are given recognition, in the name of peace and remembrance, to the 80th anniversary of the victory of the Chinese people against imperial Japan's invasion and the world defeat of fascism. With this in mind, we are very grateful to the Shenyang Conservatory of Music who invited members of the ACFS to attend a special fourteen-part concert at the Melbourne Recital Centre. At the reception before the concert, the former President of the Legislative Council, Bruce Atkinson, made the insightful point that the Second World War really started in 1931, with the invasion of Manchuria by the Empire of Japan.

For our own part, the ACFS remains absolutely steadfast in extending the hand of friendship between the people of China and Australia. To give substance to those words, we are proud to initiate an anti-racism survey that will follow with practical actions that is especially aimed toward younger people in Australia of Chinese heritage. More on these initiatives is detailed in this newsletter. Previous issues promised that we would undertake this action, and we are doing so.

Further, in the coming weeks the ACFS is very fortunate to have two groups of visitors. One is from Shenzhen, visiting on September 18 and the other from Beijing, visiting us on October 29. Both these groups are very interested in the prospect of artistic and cultural exchanges between Australia and China, and in particular their regions and that of Victoria. We are very much looking forward to providing the best possible experience for our esteemed visitors. With this in mind, the ACFS is also pleased to announce an upcoming concert with Shu-Cheen Yu and Lotus Wind Choir at St John's Anglican Church in Toorak in February. Further details can be found in this newsletter.

With these upcoming events, and with successful recent activities, it is fair to say that the ACFS is an active and vibrant organisation. I encourage all who read this to become members or even life members. We have been around since 1951 - we are going to be here for many more decades to come. That is the nature of a lasting friendship built on mutual respect.

Lev Lafayette President, ACFS (Victoria)

It makes sense for Australia to develop a positive relationship with China

By Joe Montero



Image by Don Lindsay/The West Australian

Why has the fear of China been promoted in recent times? It has no basis in reality. But this doesn't stop certain people, groups, and media organisations from spreading false stories. We get headlines about Chinese naval exercises against Australia. Some make it sound like the Chinese navy is about to invade. Stories claiming China is trying to damage to Australian economy through trade war on the one hand and buying up our land, and homes on the other, have been frequent in certain media outlets and social media. There is the one about Chinese authoritarianism and desire to take over the world. All is designed to create an unfavourable image of China and sow division.

These fictions have had an effect on some people. But because they bare little connection to reality, their hold is not very solid. China's progress is impossible to hide. A growing number of Australians are visiting that country and returning with what they see and hear. This spreads through social media. In addition Australia boasts a large Chinese community, where China's achievements are better known.

There has been some tension between Australia and China at the government level. Trade war was initiated from the Australia side. China responded calmy and in a measured way. Australia has been involved in military adventures aimed against China over Taiwan and the China Sea through Five Eyes, AUKUS, and more. It would have been easy to substitute imports from Australia by sourcing equivalents from other countries. Instead of this, the approach has been to work towards repairing the relationship. Undoubtedly, there is a strategic interest in encouraging Australia to be a little less dependent on the United States, which is the real architect of the tension, although the point has never been pushed.

This is the context within which Australia's Prime Minister, Anthony Albanesi, visited China last week and returned with agreements that should improve the trading relationship between the two countries. This may at least lead to a better trading relationship. It may even help to nurture better political understanding.

After all, it is in Australia's interest to build a positive relationship with our biggest trading partner. A positive relationship will help to build relationships across the Asian and Pacific regions, which happen to be in our part of the world. Asia is the emerging centre of economic growth, the future, and accelerated by the rise of the BRICS trading alliance, of which China is a central player.

BRICS provides stable protection and an alternative to the increasingly underperforming and unstable West, and it makes sense to bet on the stronger horse. Through increasing bullying diplomacy and imposing tariff war across the world, the Trump administration in Washington has raised the level of uncertainty to a new level. Drawing closer to China provides greater insurance against economic headwinds. Australia is not immune from this reality.

China leads the world in many areas of new technology now and therefore represents the economy of the future. Those who do not build a positive relationship with China will be left behind. An important part of this is that this technological leadership extends to leadership in sustainable energy and clean production methods overall.

There is a growing mistrust of our relationship with the United States among the Australian public. According to the United States Study Centre in Australia, what it calls anti-Americanism, has risen from 35 percent in 2021 to 71 percent in 2025. This is not an attitude against American people but against the political leadership in Washington and the power over decision making in Australia. This puts enormous pressure on our political leadership.

The situation is good for developing greater friendship between the peoples of our two nations.

China Leading the EV Charge

My first teaching trip to China was to Tongji University in Shanghai in 2002. We lived in an apartment on the corner of Dalian Road and Kongjian Road, over the road from the Shanghai Peace Park. It was about 2km to the University and on the first day we walked to work but I really could not be bothered walking so I purchased a bicycle and a lock from the local Carrefour. I thought this to be a great investment as it only cost me \$30 AUD. So, day one, out of the underground park below our apartment block where there were more bicycles parked than cars, without a helmet and a righthand turn into Dalian Road toward Siping Road. Then my first real taste of China, at the intersection of Dalian Road and Siping Road, a bicycle traffic jam. OMG bikes to the left of me, bikes to the right of me in front and behind. It took two changes of traffic lights for me to be able to execute a simple righthand turn towards Tongji Uni (remember the Chinese drive on the wrong side of the road!). At the end of my six-week stint I parked the bike in the garage with dozens of others and returned to Aus.

When I returned to Tongji 13 months later I retrieved my bike from the garage and headed off to work (I now have three bikes in various locations around China). For the first time I noticed these little scooters sailing past me at breakneck speed. This was my first introduction to e-bikes that apparently had been around for more than 10 years. My research tells me that China had been toying with the idea of electric bikes since the 60's but production didn't kick off till the late 80's (*Cherry 2017*). Albeit these early bikes used lead acid batteries, not ideal, but the best choice at the time.

I returned to China teaching 14 times and each time could not help but notice the proliferation of e-transport, including a variety of machines like the little three-wheeled delivery trucks. Well, not trucks as we know them, but vehicles about two metres long and a metre wide and by my guess, capable of carrying half a tonne of cargo. During my last teaching stint in 2013, I had the use of a little e-scooter and it was a brilliant way of getting around as long as you remembered to plug it in. I forgot once and had to resort to peddling when I ran out of juice halfway home. China had manufactured 10 million e-scooters by 2005 (*Cherry 2007*).

Fast forward to 2024, time to purchase a new car. I started to look at EVs available in Australia. Unfortunately, there were very few choices when my preference is for a mid-sized sedan as opposed to an SUV. The American options were, in my view, 'taking the mickey' when it came to design and so I

settled on a BYD. BYD is essentially a battery company that has ventured sideways into cars and is now among the top-selling EV manufacturers selling into the Australian market. Without baiting the deriders of EVs, I can vouch for them offering trouble free, inexpensive and reliable motoring.



Last month I returned to Nanjing after a nine-year gap to attend a conference. My perception of China's advances in terms of electric vehicles was largely driven by that which is available in Australia. At that time there were three Chinese choices, BYD, Geely and Chery, not as it turns out, a wide choice. More on this a little later.

So back to Nanjing and as part of the conference itinerary we toured an EV factory in Wuxi (a city about halfway between Nanjing and Shanghai). There I counted 15 different EV scooter brands and a couple of seriously good looking, what I perceived as motor bikes, and... an EV suitcase you can sit on and motor through those ridiculously large airports. When travelling to Wuxi it was on an electric bus and because I wasn't driving, I had time to look at the sites as we motored along. EVs in China

have a distinctive green number plate so they are not that difficult to spot. OMG there are EVs everywhere, albeit it some were undoubtedly hybrids. China has about eight recognisable brands of EVs, but in reality, it has some 17 of the 34 brands available worldwide. That does not include buses and trucks. I was told that around 51% of registered cars in Nanjing are EVs



and I support this with a pic of a random traffic queue at a Nanjing traffic light, three EVs in a row. Although not obvious in the pic, there were EVs behind the first three. Far from an unusual sight, EVs seemed to be everywhere I looked.

Again, in advance of the critics raising the issue of infrastructure, in the car park of the hotel where I stayed in Hangzhou, I spotted charging stations at every hotel parking spot all plugged into cars (sorry no pic).

Globally over 1-in-5 (22%) of new cars sold were electric in 2024. This share was 92% in Norway, and in China, it was almost 50% (<https://ourworldindata.org/electric-car-sales>). I might be so bold as to suggest China is way ahead of the curve. In 2023, China sold 5.4 million EVs, 38% of sales compared to Australia's 87K EVs, 12% of sales (<https://worldpopulationreview.com/country-rankings/electric-car-use-by-country>). Caroline Wang, the China engagement lead at the independent think tank Climate Energy Finance, says that energy security in China was a driving force behind their green ambitions and EVs are no doubt a part of this strategy. China has also extended the tax exemption on new EVs until 2027. This is the equivalent of Australia dropping the GST on new EVs. Meanwhile, Australian government disincentives impose a tax on distance travelled in EVs to compensate for the loss of fuel excise and use of our roads. Perhaps Australia should consider less subsidies for the fossil fuel industry while lessening the taxes on EVs?

My final question, what is better than a BYD? Answer: Two, my partner now has a BYD.

Edited Ian Teasdale

80 Years On: It's Time Australia Thanked China for Helping Prevent Invasion

Len Hartnett

As the world commemorates the 80th anniversary of the defeat of Imperial Japan in 1945, all Australians join in reflecting on the sacrifices made to secure peace. But among the many commemorations, one truth remains too often overlooked — the pivotal role of China's resistance in shaping the outcome of the Pacific War and protecting Australia from a devastating direct Japanese invasion.

From the September 18 Incident in 1931 to the full-scale invasion that erupted in July 1937, China stood virtually alone for years as it bore the brunt of Japanese aggression. Cities such as Nanjing, Wuhan, and Chongqing suffered horrific bombing campaigns and occupation. Historian Rana Mitter, author of **Forgotten Ally: China's World War II, 1937–1945**, reminds us that China was the 'main theater in the East' during the world's anti-fascist war.

China's prolonged resistance — despite unimaginable suffering and lack of foreign support in the early years — tied down 1.5 to 2 million Japanese troops, draining Japan's resources and limiting its capacity to expand further into Southeast Asia and the Pacific.

At the heart of this resistance was the Chinese Communist Party (CPC), whose leadership and guerrilla warfare tactics mobilized millions across occupied territories. The CPC's military forces — the Eighth Route Army and the New Fourth Army, forerunners of today's People's Liberation Army (PLA) — waged relentless resistance deep behind enemy lines. They built a vast network of rural support, coordinated sabotage of Japanese supply chains, and provided hope to millions of Chinese civilians trapped under occupation.

The CPC's resistance strategy, rooted in mass mobilization and grassroots organization, was crucial in maintaining Chinese morale and sustaining long-term opposition to Japan. It is no exaggeration to say that the survival of Chinese resistance during some of the darkest years of the war depended on the political discipline and resilience of the Communist-led forces.

Alongside the CPC, the Nationalist Government under the Kuomintang (KMT) also fought valiantly in major conventional battles. While the KMT bore the brunt of early formal engagements with the Japanese army, their efforts were increasingly limited by internal challenges and retreat. Still, their contribution remains a part of the national wartime story and deserves enormous recognition.

As Japanese forces swept through Malaya, Singapore, and the Dutch East Indies in early 1942, Australia came under direct threat. Darwin was bombed. Invasion fears were real. But what is less often acknowledged is that Japan's eastern ambitions were overwhelmingly hampered by its quagmire in China.

Had China capitulated — a genuine possibility in 1938, according to Mitter — Japan might have redirected its full military might southward. Instead, the sustained and heroic Chinese resistance, led by the CPC and supported by the KMT, delayed, distracted, and ultimately diluted Japan's capacity to conduct large-scale operations elsewhere, including against Australia.

Despite China's enormous contribution to the Allied victory — over 14 million dead and hundreds of cities and villages razed — its role remains 'poorly understood in the West,' as Mitter points out. He notes that while Europeans remember the London Blitz, few are aware of the Japanese firebombing of Chongqing, which continued for six years.

This historical amnesia is unfortunate. Australia has never formally acknowledged how much it owes to China's endurance. The Chinese people did not fight for us — they fought for their own survival — but in doing so, they helped prevent catastrophe for us too.

The 80th anniversary of Japan's surrender should be more than a ritual of remembrance. It should also be a moment of recalibration, a time to correct the historical record and express overdue gratitude.

The sacrifices of Chinese civilians and soldiers — especially those under the leadership of the CPC - helped safeguard freedom far beyond their borders. Their suffering absorbed and exhausted Japanese imperial ambitions that might otherwise have engulfed the entire Pacific. For that, Australians owe sincere gratitude.

As we reflect on our own ANZAC heroes, let us also remember those who fought in distant cities, jungles, and mountains, and whose courage helped prevent the war from reaching our shores.

Thank you, China —. We remember.

Port of Darwin Australia's relationship with China has long been one of economic cooperation favouring mutual benefit. The leasing of Port Darwin to China's Landbridge Group in 2015 represented a great example of that tradition—a commercial transaction entered fully transparently, following rigorous due diligence and approval from relevant Australian defence and security agencies. One would think it is essential, both morally, legally and diplomatically, for Australia to respect this binding agreement and resist calls to unilaterally revoke or acquire the lease under political pressure.

The Port Darwin lease is not a “strategic error,” as some critics allege, but rather a sound economic arrangement. Landbridge has invested substantially in the port's infrastructure, delivering tangible benefits to Northern Territory trade and employment. No one suggests otherwise. The company's involvement is purely commercial, with not a scintilla of evidence of misuse or interference in military matters. Multiple Australian government reviews—including the 2021 Defence review—have confirmed there is no national security threat from the arrangement. Indeed, there was a further substantial review in 2023 with the same findings. This should have settled the matter definitively.

However, powerful outside voices, particularly from the United States, continue to exert pressure on Canberra to cancel the lease. It is vital to question the motivations behind this interference with our independence. The U.S. has its own strategic ambitions in the Indo-Pacific and would prefer to limit Chinese economic influence, even at the cost of undermining Australia's sovereignty in decision-making. Succumbing to such pressure risks Australia's reputation as an independent actor in international affairs. This great country of ours is much more than a lackey of a foreign power.

Revoking the lease would also send a terrible signal to foreign investors about the integrity and reliability of Australia's commercial commitments. At a time when Australia seeks to attract global capital to fund critical infrastructure and energy transitions, appearing willing to tear up agreements for political expediency could have long-term repercussions.

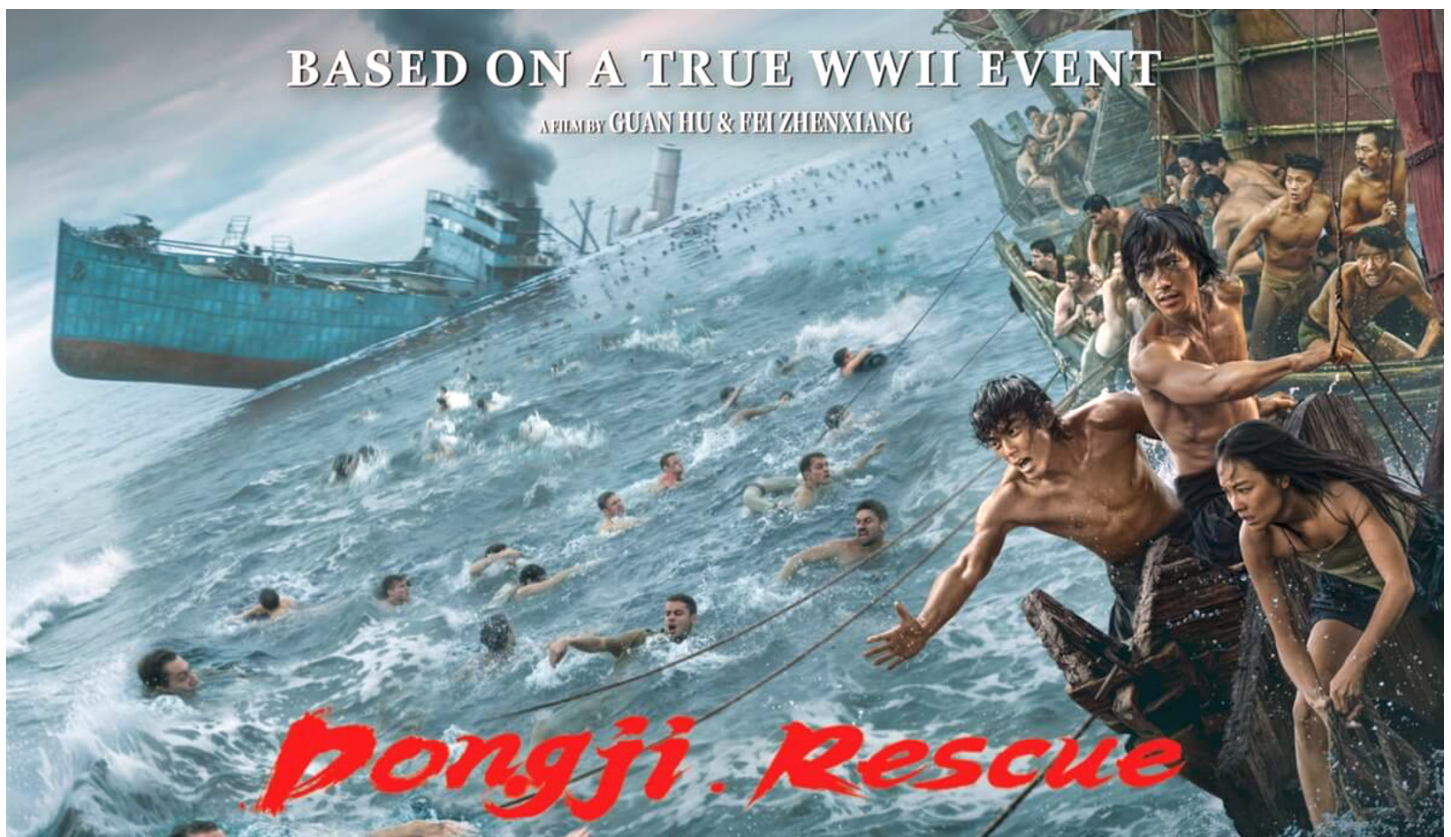
Finally, it must be stressed that China remains Australia's largest trading partner, underpinning sectors from agriculture to resources. Allowing anti-China sentiment or external lobbying to dictate policy risks unnecessary economic harm. Isn't it in Australia's national interest to pursue a balanced foreign policy that respects the rights of commercial entities and maintains constructive engagement with all major partners?

Australia must therefore stand firm against foreign interference, honour its agreements, and preserve the integrity of its business environment. Only through such independent policy-making can it safeguard its long-term sovereignty and prosperity.

Len Hartnett

《东极岛》 Dōng jí dǎo (English title: Dongji Rescue) – A Commemoration of Compassion and Courage.

The premiere of the film “Dongji Rescue” in Victoria was hosted on the 13th of August by the Consul General of the People’s Republic of China in Melbourne. The film, starring Chinese actors Zhu Yilong and Wu Lei alongside actress Ni Ni as lead roles, delivers a fictional retelling of the actual events that transpired during the historical sinking of the Lisbon Maru during World War II. Released in commemoration of the eightieth anniversary of the victory of the World Anti-Fascist War and the Chinese people’s War of Resistance against Japanese Aggression, the film combines breathtaking visuals of the ocean and the Dongji Island, with a moving plotline on compassion and the valuing of human-life, as Chinese fishermen risk their lives to save over three hundred British PoWs from the Japanese.



I was lucky to have been given the opportunity to attend the premiere and to take in this wonderfully done film on the big screen. Prior to watching it, I'd seen some clips online of the cast undergoing rigorous training to film underwater scenes and adopting special fitness regimens to suitably embody their characters, so I was excited to see the fruits of their hard work. As for the premise of the movie, the rescuing of British PoWs from the Lisbon Maru by Chinese fishermen, I hadn't heard much of it except for the officially published synopsis of the film.

The retelling of this event in the film was staged around Ah' Bi and Ah' Dang, a pair of orphans rumoured to be descendants of pirates, who discover a British PoW who was blown off the Lisbon Maru into the ocean when a US submarine torpedoed the ship unaware that it was carrying over 1800 PoWs. The film follows the actions of the brothers to keep Thomas Newman (the British PoW) hidden from the fisherman-villagers and the Japanese that had control of Dongji Island, and the Japanese eventually taking Thomas Newman and some Chinese hostages back to the sinking ship and trapping them under the hatches of the ship to be marooned with the other PoWs in an attempt to bury their war crimes deep in the ocean. However, the rising tensions back on the island come

to a breaking point and the fisherman-villagers overthrow the Japanese guards, sailing out to sea on a compassionate mission to rescue the PoWs.

“Dongji Rescue” is not a documentary, but rather a cinematic adaptation of the actual historical events with fictional characters and a dramatized plotline to achieve the purposes of the movie; commemoration of the acts of compassion of the Chinese fishermen, and conveyed the theme of saving a life taking precedence over all else, regardless of the race, colour or identity of the person in danger. As such, I found it was very well done; it brought to attention an event that I hadn’t learned about before as a part of World War II history, and was a remarkable cinematic experience that had my heart racing at times and aching for the oppressed at others. The superb cinematography handled both the magnificent shots of the island and the more gruesome depictions of the violence of war quite well and made for good immersion into the film. The characters were also written splendidly and depicted as such to be nuanced and relatable in their emotions and actions. I appreciate that they weren’t written as ambitious heroes that sailed out at first sight but rather human beings with real emotions and real



mental conflicts to deal with. Wu Lei’s portrayal of Ah’ Dang was also especially interesting as his role as a young man old enough to have principles on the significance of human-life, yet young enough that he didn’t have to hesitate like his older brother and made decisions with his heart, seemed to embody the human spirit commendably well. “海里有难必救” (when someone is in peril out at sea, they must be saved), the fishermen’s motto that the islanders stayed true to also served to beautifully deliver the theme of human solidarity in “Dongji Rescue”. Moving forward, I hope we can all learn from the past to build a better future and establish the significance of humanity beyond cultural or racial differences to foster more relationships of goodwill and compassion.

Minuli Matheen

Minuli Matheen - For those who have yet had the pleasure of meeting Minuli, she is one of the 2024 Student Language Award winners. Minuli is currently studying at Monash University and has kindly put pen to paper, oops fingers to keyboard and provided us an excellent insight into the inspiring yet largely unknown part of WW2 history. Thank you to Minuli on behalf of the committee and ACFS members.

2025 Shanghai International Youth Interactive Friendship Camp



When I think back to my ten days trip to Shanghai. The part that feels the most memorable is the people. To be able to go to Shanghai in the first place is absolutely amazing, but to be able to connect with people from 20 other countries and experience a tight friendship whilst being in another culture, was something that is really special to me and close to my heart. I think it is amazing how I could start out knowing no one, not even from my own country, and end up becoming close friends with so many campers from so many different cultures and backgrounds, all without any judgment.

To add, our cohort from Australia was absolutely amazing. Shayla, Will and Hunter were so welcoming and relaxed, which made it much easier to feel comfortable with. Of course, our awesome chaperone, Lillian Zhou, was always there for us, for everything that we could possibly need, for which I am forever grateful for.

But aside from the friends made along the way, the camp itself was spectacular. Every single event, activity or place we visited or participated in was organised so well, and made it so much more enjoyable. This gave us that peace of mind that is so crucial whilst traveling.

During the middle of the camp, I was lucky enough to be able to stay with a host family for two nights. This experience was absolutely spectacular. It was so special to be able to live with such caring people and experience the life of their family. The host family I was residing with were absolutely amazing hosts. Pricilla and Brian had one of the nicest families, catering to my every need, and my host student Chris was so funny and excitable. It warmed my heart to see a family with such a lovely connection. During my stay in Songjiang, I was treated to all the sights, such as Sheshan mountain and Panlong Tiandi. As well as some shopping and delicious food, which I was looking forward to! I hope I was an acceptable guest, as my host family were certainly amazing.

Another memorable experience for me was the boat cruise on the Huangpu River. This experience was one of the best nights of the trip. The night life in Shanghai was spectacular, with the breathtaking view of the city, really contributing to the brilliant vibe. Once the party had started, the night was even better. Blasting music and dancing on the top deck of a yacht at night, in the heart of Shanghai, surrounded by such welcoming and fun people, was an experience I will never forget.

Towards the end of the camp, the feeling of excitement began to shift to sadness. After being selected to host the Closing Ceremony, which was terrific, the reality that the camp was about to end really set in. With everyone saying their goodbyes to the friends we had made forever. I am not ashamed to say I was extremely tearful at leaving all the spectacular people and memories in Shanghai. But knowing that there was an end to the trip made it even more special.

This trip was something that is really a once-in-a-lifetime experience, and to be one of the students to be selected to travel to this trip is something I am ridiculously grateful for. From getting up each morning and going for a run in the school, to playing soccer at midnight, to galivanting on Nanjing road. I can say with certainty that this trip was one of the most amazing experiences of my life, and it is something that I will never forget.

Ashton Bedoya



Camp reflection

By *Hunter Gill*

Being able to participate in the 2025 SIYIFC was an invaluable experience which generated lifelong memories for me. Throughout the ten days the Australian delegation was present for, we interacted with students from across the world, seeing the beauty in our similarities and differences and realising the importance of international dialogue.

At first, the setting of the camp was somewhat intimidating. With so many students from so many countries all mixed together, it was easy to feel a sense of division between groups. Despite this, as time went on, campers were able to break this ice and get to know one another. Although being from different countries made it difficult to start conversations, each one was incredibly rewarding, transforming a simple bus ride or meal in the cafeteria into a valuable opportunity for cultural exchange. For me personally, this also provided a chance to practice speaking Chinese in everyday situations, and experience forming relationships in a different language, under different cultural conditions.

These experiences were furthered in what was, for me, the most valuable part of the camp – the homestay. This offered campers the chance to understand in-depth the nature of life in Shanghai and the way in which it differs from life in their home countries. For me, this provided an opportunity to practice Chinese and make invaluable friendships.

For all campers, the SIYIFC was a valuable opportunity to experience the diversity of culture across the world and gain an appreciation for the benefits and challenges of international cooperation. I fully recommend any students to apply and meet friends from all over the world!

Before setting off on this journey, I had no idea what to expect. I was nervous, excited, and curious all at once—travelling to a new country with a group of people I had never met, representing Australia on an international stage. I hoped to learn, connect, and step outside my comfort zone, but I could never have imagined just how transformative the next 10 days would be.

On the 15th of July, I flew to Shanghai alongside Ms Zhou, Ashton, Hunter, and Will—none of whom I had met before that Tuesday. From the moment we arrived, we were greeted with intense heat and humidity, with the weather averaging around 36°C each day. Despite the challenging climate, the trip turned out to be an incredible experience from start to finish.

Representing Australia was such an honour. Over the first few days, we took part in team-building activities, toured museums, and even participated in a mini world expo where we had the chance to showcase our culture. During that time, the boys and I grew very close, which made the entire experience even more special.

After four days, we moved in with our host families. I stayed with a lovely girl named Reah, who was 16 years old. She and her family were so kind and welcoming. During the homestay, we went shopping, enjoyed bubble tea, took a beautiful river cruise, and even planned to see a movie (weather permitting). Reah made me feel at home, and I'll always be grateful for that part of the journey.



Throughout the trip, we also made some great friends from Colombia, and connecting with them added another layer of richness to the experience. After the homestay, we returned to school, explored iconic places like the Yuyan Gardens, the Bund, and the Pearl Tower, and continued learning more about Chinese culture.

One of the most memorable moments was the night river cruise. Not only did we enjoy the best burgers I've ever had, but Ashton managed to sneak a speaker onto the boat, and we danced, sang, and laughed the entire time. I even painted nails with a cheap polish Sarah and I bought—Will gave it a go on mine too!

Later in the week, we took part in a Mini World Cup (though we didn't perform quite as well as Honduras or Switzerland!) and had a hands-on session exploring traditional Chinese medicine. My favourite station was definitely the cupping experience.

As the trip came to a close, we headed to Jiaxing, Zhejiang Province, where we stayed at a university and participated in more cultural activities. These final days were the most emotional. After the closing ceremony, we had one last goodbye party, which was both joyful and bittersweet. Saying goodbye to my roommate Mackenzie was especially difficult.

Now, looking back, I realise how much I've grown from this experience—not just in my understanding of another culture, but in my ability to connect with people, adapt to new environments, and embrace the unfamiliar. I'm coming home with so many memories, inside jokes, stories, and friendships that I'll carry with me for years to come.

This trip reminded me how big and diverse the world truly is, and how, despite our different languages and traditions, there's so much we share as people. I'm incredibly thankful to everyone who made this experience possible—it's something I'll never forget.

Shayla Madin



Shanghai reflection

My trip to Shanghai for the International Youth Interactive Friendship Camp was an unforgettable experience. We stayed at Datong High School, and it quickly became our home during the camp. There, we met students from about 20 different countries, and I was surprised by how fast we all became close friends. Sharing our languages, traditions, and stories really opened my eyes to how connected the world is.

During the trip, we visited some incredible places, like the WorldSkills Museum, where I learned about innovation and skills development, and the Natural History Museum, which gave me a deeper appreciation of science and history. Another highlight was the two-night homestay in a Shanghai apartment. Living with a local family gave me the chance to experience daily life in China, something I couldn't get just from sightseeing.

One of the most memorable moments was the Huangpu River cruise at night. The lights of Shanghai's skyline were breathtaking and really showed the energy of the city. Along with these activities, we also joined in games, and group discussions, which helped us build strong friendships that I hope will last a long time.

Overall, the camp gave me amazing memories and helped me learn more about Shanghai, Chinese

culture, and the importance of international friendships. It was not just a trip, but an experience that will influence how I see the world in the future.

William Poole



The Consul Hachins D'Souza Australian Consulate General in Shanghai with 2025 Shanghai International Youth Interactive Friendship Camp Australian Delegation at the Closing Ceremony

Anti-Racism Survey

The continuing presence of racism against people of Chinese heritage is a reality that Australia must address.

The Australia-China Friendship Society has initiated an anti-racism survey where individuals may report their experiences of racism, whether overt in terms of threats, disparaging remarks, and hurtful assumptions, or covert structures and assumptions that prevent Chinese people from fully participating in Australian society as equals.

The survey will follow on from previous studies, such as those conducted by the Chinese community survey led by Dr Anne Pang and Dr Wesa Chau in 2022 and will contribute to the continuing work of to inform the Anti-Racism Strategy, an initiative of the Victorian Government Anti-Racism Taskforce, in conjunction with the Victorian Department of Family Fairness and Housing.

The survey may be filled in via the following URL or by scanning the QR code.

<https://acfs-vic.org/2025Racism/2025Racism.html>



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WITH CHINA****THE 2025 HUGH
ANDERSON LECTURE****by distinguished historian** ***Marilyn Lake AO***

In National Life and Character: A Forecast (1893)
Charles Pearson wrote the future would see China take 'its inevitable place as one of the great powers of the world'. Pearson's influential forecast shaped our foundational policy of White Australia: the 'great white walls' were erected to keep the Asiatic threat at bay.

From the 1960s, however, Australians began to forge new ties with China. Under the Whitlam government full diplomatic relations were established with Beijing.

By the end of the 1970s, Hugh and Dawn Anderson had embarked on the first of their numerous trips to China. Hosted by the Chinese Writers Association, their deep cultural engagement with Chinese authors and literature was a key feature of Australian rapprochement with China.

**Tuesday 9 September 5:30pm
at Royal Historical Society of Victoria,
239 A'Beckett St Melbourne**

**For ticketing & other information
03 9326 9288 / info@historyvictoria.org.au
www.historyvictoria.org.au/rhsv-events/**



Shu Cheen Yu and Lotus Wind Choir in Concert



Acclaimed Chinese-Australian opera singer Shu-Cheen Yu and the Lotus Wind Choir will be in concert on Saturday, February 28, at St John's Anglican Church, Toorak. The concert will run from 2pm to 5pm.

Shu-Cheen Yu has released five albums; "Lotus Moon" was nominated at the ARIA Music Awards of 2001 for Best Classical Album.

In addition to the concert, refreshments will be available.

Proceeds will go to the Australia-China Friendship Society (Victoria).

Date:

Saturday 28 February 2026 2:00 PM - 5:00 PM (UTC+10)

Address:

St John's Anglican Church
86 Clendon Rd, Toorak VIC 3142

Tickets are \$40 for non-members and \$30 for members,
available via the ACFS or

<https://www.trybooking.com/DFFGF>



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, Charlotte Hall

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

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Family Name (Mr/Mrs/Ms) Given Names

Address P/code

Phone Email

VICTORIAN MEMBERSHIP RATES

Family \$40.00 Single \$30.00 Concession \$15.00

Life Membership Single \$300 Life Membership Household \$400

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 secretary@acfs-vic.org

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