

New Zealand China Friendship Society Inc. – Nelson Branch

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No. 5 - August, 2013

~ Next meeting ~

Mahjong Mania

or

A Night of Chattering Sparrows



There are few games whose history is shrouded in quite as much myth as Mahjong. Some contend that Mahjong, roughly translated as “chattering sparrow”, is over 2,500 years old, while others claim it only dates back to the mid nineteenth century.

Whether its 2,500 years or 150 years old, we will feature an evening of Mahjong Mania at our August meeting. This is an opportunity to be tutored, or tutor, in the ways of Mahjong. There will be many unseasoned and some seasoned and players among us. Learning and laughter and Chinese tea will be available to all. It is going to be an evening to remember, so please come and join in the fun.



If you have a set of tiles, please contact Kathy Beatson (ph 547 9940) or Lori Brudvik Lindner (ph 021 027 93563).

As usual, we will begin at 5.30 p.m. and then enjoy our buffet meal (cost \$12), at 6 p.m.. Our fun and games will begin about 7 p.m.. Friends and visitors are most welcome but please notify Barbara when you contact her so we have accurate numbers for the meal.

Friday 16 August .. Hearing House .. 5:30 pm



To arrange catering, please ring:

Barbara Markland ph. 544 4712 by Tuesday 13 August

text: 021 447 180 e-mail: erm@xtra.co.nz



NZCFS WEBSITE NOW IN CHINESE: Generously funded by the Society's Honorary Patron, Simon Deng, the NZCFS website is now available in Chinese and this has received a lot of publicity in the Chinese news:

see cn.nzchinasociety.org.nz and

nzchinasociety.org.nz/14029/nzcf-chinese-language-website-launched/

LAST MEETING: Richard Brudvik-Lindner provided us with a fascinating history of Chinese immigration to New Zealand, his thorough research having been completed for lessons in History and Social Studies at Nelson College. His talk covered many different aspects, including the reasons for early immigration (British imperialism and the opium trade, servitude and clan domination, famine and overcrowded cities), the interrelationships between Maori and Chinese cultures, Chinese inventions (e.g. the Sew Hoy gold dredge), jealousy of the Chinese (mostly caused by their success through their greater industriousness and their ability to rejuvenate the goldfields by following the European miners and extracting a lot more gold), and the purported rationale for the legal discrimination that continued for many years. He rightly pointed out that “Chinese people have played a role in shaping this nation from its early days, adding to its economic viability and to the richness of its social and cultural fabric. Has our nation ever truly acknowledged that and how could this be different in the future?” We are indebted to Richard for his remarkable insights.



MEMBER NEWS:

- Congratulations to **Gail Collingwood** on being awarded a Paul Harris fellowship by Rotary for her “service and commitment to the people of Nelson and the world by making it a better place”.
- **Pat Jones** recently represented Sister Cities NZ at a function at Government House where the Governor General acknowledged volunteers and the work they do. Pat says she felt very honoured to be included and enjoyed the ‘once in a lifetime experience’. The Governor General was very gracious and the volunteers were able to see through Government House.
- **Alvin Schroder** generously brought several bags of shelled walnuts along to the last meeting. All proceeds will go to the new Appo Hocton Scholarship at NMIT.
- **President Christine and Bruce Ward** arrived home last week from their European adventure and are immediately immersed in hosting another group of Chinese teachers from Beijing. We look forward to meeting these teachers at our next meeting.

FIRST APPO HOCTON SCHOLARS FROM HUANGSHI WELCOMED: In conjunction with Nelson Branch, and at our suggestion, NMIT has established the Appo Hocton Scholarship for students from our sister city, Huangshi, who come to study at NMIT. It was absolutely wonderful to welcome the first two Appo Hocton scholars to Nelson on Sunday - Gong Xiao Min (Sandie) and Sun Xue Qing (Suzy).



Gong Xiao Min has spent three years in Hubei Polytechnic University’s Bachelor degree programme, majoring in Visual Arts, and will complete a Bachelor of Arts and Media at NMIT. She enjoys sports, particularly volleyball.

Sun Xue Qing has gained a Bachelor of Financial Management at Hubei Polytechnic University and intends to complete a Bachelor of Commerce at NMIT. Her interests include music and singing so perhaps we will benefit from her talent at a function some time. Her sporting interests are swimming and hiking.

This will be a challenging time for them both as they adjust to a completely new environment - we wish them well in their studies and for their time in Nelson. Our Branch will be helping to support them in any way we can and we hope to see them along at our meetings.

PRC EMBASSY VISITOR: The newly-arrived Political Counsellor at the Chinese Embassy in Wellington, **Mr. Fang Qiu**, will be visiting Nelson on Friday 9 August. As well as talks with other local representatives, he will meet with President Christine and some of the Nelson Branch Committee that day.

NELSON CHINESE SOCIETY LAUNCHED: In a very exciting development, the Nelson Chinese Society was officially launched at a function in the Elma Turner Library on 30 July attended by the Chinese Consul General from Christchurch, Madam Tan Xiutian. Other speakers included Dr Weimin Jiang, Vice President of the new Nelson Chinese Society, Evey McAuliffe, Coordinator of the Nelson Multicultural Council, and our own President, Christine Ward.



In her speech, President Christine congratulated all who have committed themselves to getting the Nelson Chinese Society going.

“I bring you the very best of good wishes from the New Zealand China Friendship Society which has been standing for friendship here in Nelson for 22 years.

I also bring greetings from National President, Dave Bromwich and Immediate Past President, Eric Livingstone. New Zealand wide, our friendship society has been maintaining strong links between our

two nations for 60 years, following in the footsteps of that great New Zealander, Rewi Alley, who was a Chinese national treasure.

Of course, long before Rewi Alley went to China, Nelson became the home of the first naturalised Chinese New Zealander, Appo Hocton, whose descendants still live here. We are so happy to make his story available here and throughout New Zealand, as a symbol of the way our two cultures have been connected for over 150 years. Many others, including those here today, have followed in his footsteps, and chosen Nelson to be their home, and have become highly valued in our community in so many ways.



We, the members of the Nelson Branch of the New Zealand China Friendship Society, are delighted to be sharing this special occasion with the Nelson Chinese Society today.

We know this new venture will do a lot to keep Chinese cultural traditions, including language and dancing, strong.

Congratulations on the formation of the Nelson Chinese Society. May your combined energies, skills and beliefs be seen and appreciated in this city. May you be an inspiration to us all in this new land where you have chosen to bring your old history. Our community is truly a rich tapestry of many cultures and now the Chinese culture has greater strength and visibility in our lovely city. Stand strong and tall in your second home. Kia kaha.”

A 33 minute edited video of the ceremony is available on YouTube, with the dance about 17 minutes in: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3FR9Uno6EKc&feature=em-upload_owner



Those attending were also entertained by some of our young Chinese Nelsonians with a delightful dance.

CHINESE FOR CHILDREN: The Nelson Chinese Society has been very active already and classes where children can discover Chinese language and culture are starting this week. They are being held in the Elma Turner Library, from 3.30 p.m. till 4.30 p.m. on Mondays from 5 August. Cost \$30 per term. For more information, please contact Piri (ph 545 7477).

MENTORING CHINESE STUDENTS: The China Programme at the Nelson Marlborough Institute of Technology has developed a mentor programme for the Chinese students and are finding that they respond really well to the extra support. The mentoring involves a small group of Kiwi peer group students, interested community organisations and support staff from NMIT.

They are looking for some volunteers to help out for 1-2 hours each per week starting from the week after next. The students need help with a range of academic tasks, but mostly familiarisation with assignment expectations/requirements, English grammar and speaking/listening skills, etc.

If you are interesting in assisting some Chinese students at NMIT, please contact Nisa Rose, the China Project Coordinator, on 546 9175 ext 872 or email: nisa.rose@nmit.ac.nz

EARTHQUAKE IN GANSU PROVINCE: At least 94 people are confirmed dead in the wake of a powerful 6.6 quake on 22 July in China's remote Gansu Province. At least 1,000 people were injured and thousands of others have been left homeless with over 127,000 homes being damaged or destroyed.

There are some dramatic pictures at:

http://www.boston.com/bigpicture/2013/07/earthquake_in_gansu_province_c.html

National President Dave Bromwich emailed the Gansu Provincial Foreign Affairs Office:

Dear Lu Xinglai,

On behalf of the New Zealand China Friendship Society, I would like to express our deep commiserations to the people of Dingxi in Gansu who have suffered a devastating earthquake with loss of life and widespread damage.

As New Zealanders, we fully understand the broad impact these events can have on people's lives and communities. Can I please ask you to pass the sincere sympathy of the NZ China Friendship Society to those affected, and the people of Gansu.

*Kind regards,
Dave Bromwich,
National President*



Gansu Provincial Foreign Affairs Office responded:

Dear Dave Bromwich,

Thank you so much for your kind words and sympathy. Here, on behalf of all those affected, I really appreciate the sympathy and greetings from New Zealand China Friendship Society. We are all proud to have you as our best friend.

As you might learn, after the devastating earthquake, heavy and continuous rains ensued. Though we are facing daunting challenges, with the strong support of the central and provincial government, military service men and women, we put people first and have done quite well in disaster relief. Local farmers could seek shelter in the makeshift tents and have access to clean water and food. From the natural disaster will surely rise a resilient people and strong community.

*Best regards,
Lu Xinglai,
Deputy Director, Gansu Provincial Foreign Affairs Office*