



Australia-China Friendship Society

Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225

Newsletter

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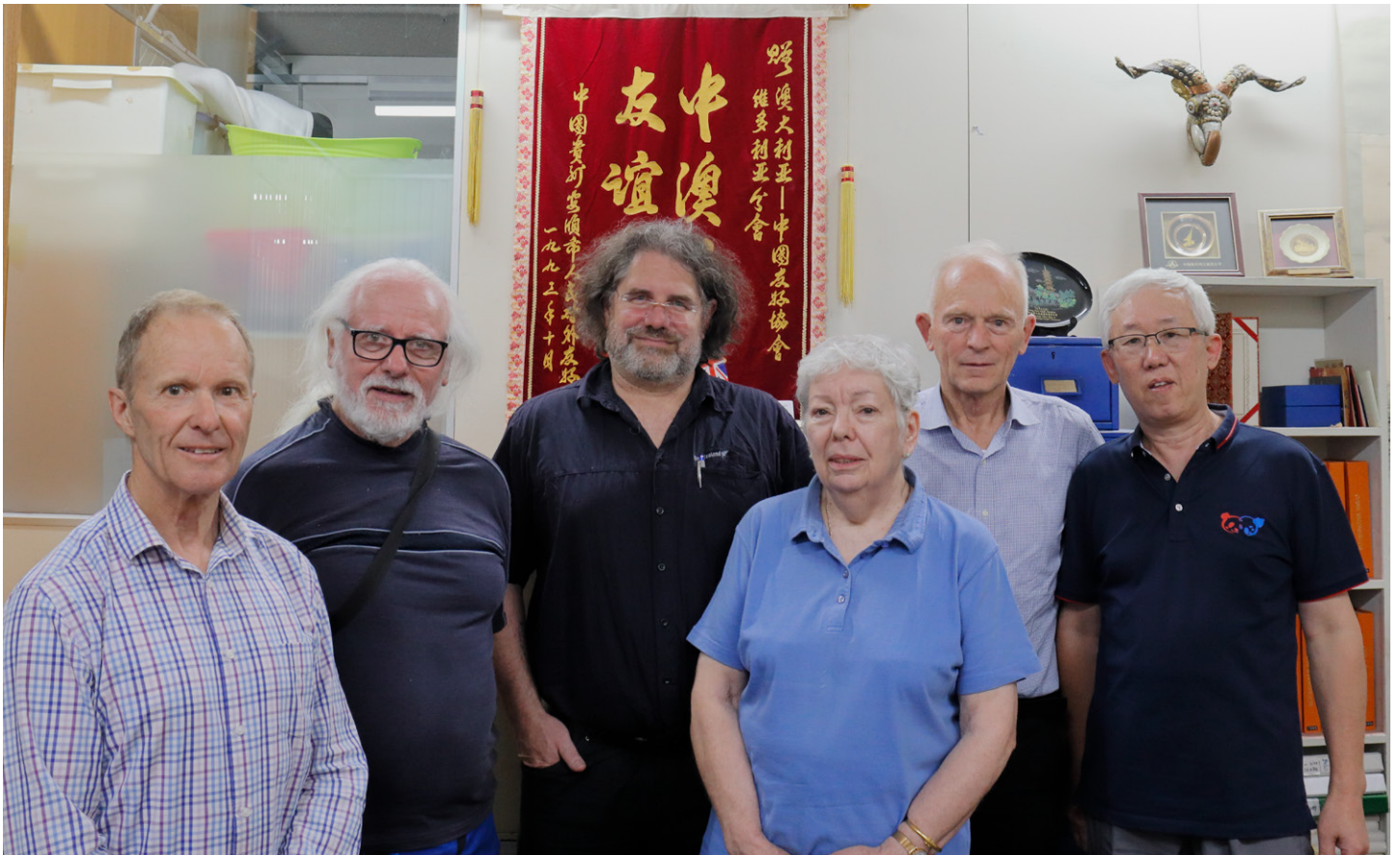
February 2024

President's Report

Sometimes events happen in one's life when your first reaction is "How on earth am I going to fit into these shoes?". This is certainly the case now where, a mere hour after the end of the AFCS(Victoria branch) meeting, I find myself putting finger to keyboard to compose an inaugural message for the newsletter in my new role as President of the organisation. Many pages of appreciation and thanks could be written about the immediate past President, Anthony Leong, which could border on the hagiographic. I will avoid that temptation and simply note that Anthony was truly committed to the organisation, to the principle of friendship between the people of Australia and China, and worked with dedication, diplomacy, and acumen to that end - as did our immediate past Secretary, Robin Matthews. Although neither Anthony nor Robin holds any official position in the ACFS (Vic), I am sure that they will be available to offer sage counsel for many months to come.

There are two main challenges facing the ACFS (Vic) that I hope to address during this period, and both are sufficiently important that I must make an appeal to members and to readers of this newsletter to take action. The first refers to the rather dire financial state of the ACFS (Vic). We had a rough few years during the COVID-19 period where we were unable to run events, such as our annual dinner, which were critical for ensuring the organisation at least could break even each year. As such, we will be making an additional appeal for this year to encourage all to attend such events and give generously to ensure that we remain an ongoing concern. This also means making additional effort to increase our financial membership which has also declined over the years. If we each encourage one or two of our friends to participate it will make a world of difference.

The second challenge is wider than the ACFS (Vic) or even the national body, but rather it relates to the very principle on which the association was founded - the idea that there must be friendship between Australia and China. The sound of those who beat the drums of war and conflict has heightened in recent years, orchestrated by those who see ideological advantage in promoting the idea of conflict, and appealing to those with small and poisoned minds that are susceptible to manipulative demagoguery; 他们不明白 they do not understand.



*New Committee: Ian Parker, Joe Montero, Lev Lafayette, Edith Wilson
James Doery, Tower Liu, Lia Cross was an apologies absent.*

More sober and circumspect thinkers point out that any sort of trade or military conflict is extraordinarily harmful for all who participate. Differences in economic management and political systems can be expressed in a manner that is assertive but respectful, without engaging in unnecessary aggressiveness. This shouldn't be difficult to understand when one is discussing the country's largest trading partner. The fact is, however, that individuals and politicians always need to be constantly reminded that cooler heads should prevail. It will be in the continuing interest of Australia-China friendship that this organisation will, and indeed must, survive and thrive.

致敬, Respectfully yours,

Lev Lafayette

Consul General Fang Xinwen holds the 2024 Year of the Dragon New Year and arrival reception

On February 26, the new Consul General in Melbourne Fang Xinwen held a 2024 Year of the Dragon New Year and arrival reception with representatives from the Victorian Government and Opposition, Melbourne University, Various City Councils, China General Chamber of Commerce in Australia, and other well-known figures from local politics, business, culture and education. In all in excess of 100 people.



Consul General Fang extended New Year blessings for the Year of the Dragon and expressed his sincere gratitude and high respect to people from all walks of life who have long been committed to the development of China-Australia. Consul General Fang noted 2023 was the year Chinese people moved forward to realise Chinese-style modernization and to make solid progress in high-quality development. Despite heightened uncertainty in the external environment, China's economy still achieved medium-to-high growth of 5.2%, contributing more than 30% to the global economy.

Consul General Fang said that 2024 will be a year of 'fruitful results' for China's foreign relations and great strides forward in building a community with a shared future for mankind'. For example, the third "Belt and Road" International

Cooperation Summit Forum, and the three major initiatives of global development, global security and global civilisation. Pointing out the direction for China's diplomacy and the importance of guiding significance for the healthy and stable development of China-Australia relations.

Consul General Fang said that 2023 is a "year of exchanges, dialogue and improvement" for China-Australia relations. Prime Minister Albanese visited China in November last year. President Xi Jinping and Prime Minister Albanese conducted in-depth strategic communication on strategic, overall and directional issues related to the long-term development of China-Australia relations.



Consul General Fang emphasized that the consular districts of Victoria and Tasmania have long been at the forefront of Australia's relations with China. The Consulate General is willing to work with people from all walks of life in the consular district to continuously explore cooperation in emerging fields.

Mr. Paul Hamer MP, Parliamentary Secretary for Economic Development, representing the Victoria Government. Hon. John Pesutto MP, Shadow Minister for Multicultural Affairs, Leader of the Opposition. Professor Sarah Biddulph FAHA, Assistant Deputy Vice Chancellor of the University of Melbourne, Director of the Asian Law Centre, and Mr. Pan Yuansheng, Chairman of China Chamber of Commerce in Australia, Melbourne Branch delivered speeches successively.

At the reception, performances of Chinese and Western pipa, violin concerto "Jasmine" and Mongolian characteristic "bowl dance" won bursts of applause. The guests gathered together happily to talk about the friendship between China and Australia, and the atmosphere was festive and warm.

Educational Opportunities in China

The Chinese Government and Shanghai University are offering a range of educational opportunities for 2024. They range from post-secondary courses to Doctoral studies, titled SHUPL Foreign Students “One Belt and One Road” Scholarship.

There are three categories of scholarship:

Name	Type	Content
Chinese Government Scholarship	Full scholarship	Covering tuition, Expenses of accommodation, Monthly living allowance, comprehensive medical treatment insurance premium
	Partial scholarship	One or more of the full scholarships
Shanghai Government Scholarship	A*	Covering tuition, Expenses of accommodation, Monthly living allowance, Comprehensive medical treatment insurance premium
	B*	Free of tuition, Comprehensive medical treatment insurance premium
One belt and one road scholarship	A*	Free of tuition, expenses of accommodation
	B*	Free of tuition

* Scholarships are divided into category A and category B.

Category A: including tuition, accommodation fee, living expenses and comprehensive medical insurance.

Category B: including tuition and comprehensive medical insurance.

Three programs are offered each in either Chinese or English:

Bachelor Programs				
College	Majors	Duration (Years)	Teaching Language	Tuition RMB Year
School of International Law	Science of Law (International Law)	4.0	Chinese	23000
School of Government	International Politics	4.0	Chinese	23000
			English	32000
School of Economics and Management	Business Administration	4.0	Chinese	23000
	Economics and Finance	4.0	Chinese	23000
	International Economy and Trade	4.0	Chinese	23000
	Electronic Commerce and Law	4.0	Chinese	23000
			English	32000
Shanghai Documentary Academy	Broadcast and Television Director	4.0	Chinese	42000
			English	60000
School of Languages and Cultures	International Chinese Education	4.0	Chinese	21500
	Business Chinese	4.0	Chinese	21500
	Intellectual Property	4.0	English	32000

Master Programs				
College	Majors	Duration (Years)	Teaching Language	Tuition/RMB/Year
School of International Law	International Law	3.0	Chinese	26000
			English	50000
School of Economic Law	Environment and Resources Protection Law	3.0	Chinese	26000
	Economic Law	3.0	Chinese	26000
Law School	Law Theory	3.0	Chinese	26000
School of Government	International Politics and International Rule of Law	3.0	Chinese	26000
School of Criminal Justice	Criminal Jurisprudence	3.0	English	50000
School of Economics and Management	International Business	2.0	Chinese	30000

Majors	Duration	Teaching Language	Tuition/RMB/Year
Chinese Language	2 Weeks	Chinese	1200
	4 Weeks	Chinese	2400
	0.5 Year	Chinese	9000
	1 Year	Chinese	18000

Selection conditions

1. Participating students must meet at least three of the following conditions:
 - a. Students should love China, be willing to comply with laws and regulations of China and exhibit good behaviour and health.
 - b. Students should have excellent academic record in the past or have some specialties.
 - c. Undergraduate students should hold a certificate of HSK5 or a certificate of HSK4.
 - d. Students should have made outstanding contributions or won the school level or above honour in sports, art and other competitions in social practice. Students should have received a third prize or above and obtained a certificate.
 - e. Students have been invited to participate in all kinds of academic forums and can provide related materials.
 - f. Students may have written an academic paper independently and had it published.
 - g. A scholar or student is likely to play a greater role in the development of foreign exchanges and friendly relations between China and other countries.
 - h. Outstanding students recommended by foreign government agencies or embassies.
 - i. The student is conducive to the development of the school after identification.
2. Students who have one of the following cannot participate in the selection process.
 - a. Have been punished by judicial and administrative organisation because of illegal behaviour or punished by school for violation of school rules.
 - b. Failed in the course.
 - c. There has been absent circumstances.
 - d. Make false declarations in the assessment process.
 - e. Have been officially registered in our school.
 - f. Have obtained the qualifications via other scholarships.

a Age and education

Students who apply for undergraduate, must have a high school degree or above and be not more than 25 years of age.

Students who apply for master, must have a bachelor's degree or above and be not more than 35 years of age.

Students who apply for Doctoral, must have a master's degree or above, have certain academic level, and be not more than 40 years of age.

Students who apply for the undergraduate studies, should have a high school

degree or above, obtain pre-admission notice of undergraduate colleges and be not more than 23 years of age.

b. Language competence

The applicant should at least reach a new level of HSK4 in general Chinese proficiency test. At the same time, the applicant should meet the requirements of the language of the enrolment college.

c. Applicants who receive awarding or funding of Chinese government or other organizations, can no longer apply for Shanghai Foreign Students Government Scholarship.

Prospective students should contact ACFS for further information.

Cultural China – Splendid Sichuan

Through a program of cultural activities including Sichuan cuisine, Sichuan Opera face mask changing, acrobats, kung fu tea art, puppetry and calligraphy were all on display to promote mutual learning and people to people friendship at a cultural evening in early December 23.



Representing the ACFS, Anthony Leong and Robin Matthews attended the cultural evening at the invitation of the People's Government of Sichuan Province and Consulate General in Melbourne along with the Sichuan Overseas Friendship Association and Sichuan Federation of Trade Unions.

The cultural performances followed a series of speeches by the hosts and MP for Clarinda Mr Meng Heang Tak. The final part of the evening was a delicious meal featuring Sichuan cuisine (and yes there were a lot of chillies) produced by world renowned Sichuan chefs brought to Melbourne for the special occasion.

Robin Matthews

The Difference between Chinese and Western Mythology

(中西文化比较)

Introduction

Mythology, also known as myth, is a word originating from ancient Greek, which refers to stories and legends about gods, goddesses and heroes based on popular beliefs, (Yao 2019). Myths and legends were often used by people to explain things they could not understand, for example, the origin of the universe as we know it. Ultimately science came along and explained much of what we did not know, thus dispelling many myths and legends. Yan (2020) suggests Mythology has existed since the beginning of human civilisation. Human beings interpreted and got know about themselves through creating myths. Mythology always involves exciting stories full of fantastic people and beings, the use of magical powers, often taking place in an exotic mythological place or time (Wikipedia).

The birthplace of Myths and Legends

China is the birthplace of oriental civilisation and culture, and Greek plays the same role in western civilisation and culture. The cultural differences in Chinese and Western cultures and myths exist because Chinese civilisation and Western civilisation existed in different ages and areas. In both cases they appear to reflect the cultural expectations and behaviours of people within the culture. As with other aspects of culture itself, differences between the East and West mythology are significant. Eastern mythologies are understood to represent the ideology of the individual, while in the West, or the Middle East, mythologies are regarded as record of literal, (external) history. Mentioned in a previous article here, in the East, the focus is on society and the individual's role within that society; in the West, priority is given to the individual, his uniqueness and his limited freedom from any ideology.



Some examples of the differences

In Chinese mythology, legend has it that NÜ Wa (女娲), the most influential god in Chinese civilisation after creating things on earth, created human beings in accordance with her own image. In the Western religion, God created the heavens and earth and then created Adam and created Eve from Adam. According to Greek mythology, the world started from Chaos. And the first goddess is Gaia, the creator of the world, who gave birth to other goddesses in the world with her eldest son Uranus. The along came science and Stephen Hawking who, using a scientific approach said everything was created as a result of "The Big Bang billions of years ago", for which we can now see evidence.

Chinese mythology that has been passed down through teachings or recorded in literature and includes many varied myths from regional and cultural traditions. China boasts a large system of mythology, and Chinese myths are inseparable from Chinese history, (Yan 2020). Like many mythologies, Chinese mythology seems to have been, at least in part, a factual recording of history. Along with Chinese folklore, Chinese mythology forms an important part of 'Chinese Folk Religion' (Wikipedia)

Western mythology is not as easy to explain because there are myths from: Northern, Southern and Western Africa, Oceania, Northern, Southern, Eastern and Western Europe and the Americas, Northern and Southern. Plus, mythology from different time periods: The Bronze

age, Iron age and late antiquity. In the west we have Greek, Roman English and many, many others.

Some events of the distant past have a double tradition: one which tells a story in terms of an historical event one which presents a more mythological version.

We cannot possibly finish without talking about Dragons



The Chinese dragon is considered to be like a giant snake, made up of different animal parts: The tail of a fish the scales of a carp, the neck of a snake, the belly of a clam, the head of a camel, the claws of an eagle, the paws of a tiger, the ears of a cow, the eyes of a demon, the beard of a goat, and the horns of a stag. Though most Chinese dragons are wingless, male dragons possess the power to fly. Emperors in ancient China were identified as the sons of dragons. In Chinese mythology, dragons could control

the weather and the seasons. Chinese also believe that dragons could bring fortune and good luck.

In much of Western culture and legend, the dragon is usually portrayed very differently. Instead of bringing rain and good fortune, the Western dragon is a fire-breathing monster. Western Dragons are depicted with large wings like those of a bat, scales like a lizard, and the ability to breathe fire. They also usually have a tail with some sort of weapon-like tip. The associations with the Western dragon are generally negative. Saint George is honored as heroic and valiant for slaying a vicious dragon. Also, medieval knights could obtain honor, property, amazing power, and the hearts of women by hunting dragons.



There are numerous (far too many) mythical creatures and other reputations to cover in this newsletter. I encourage you to, at worst, to consult Professor Google as there is no shortage of detail. Good hunting, back again next newsletter.

Ian Parker (帕克伊安)

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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: 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 acfs.vic@gmail.com