Australia-China Friendship Society
Victorian Branch (Inc).ABN 39 746 574 225
Newsletter
4th Floor, Ross House, 247-251 Flinders Lane, Melbourne VIC 3000
e-mail: secretary@acfs-vic.org web: www.acfs-vic.org
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October 2026

President's Report

As China celebrates its National Day, delightfully coinciding with the Harvest Moon festival, it is worth taking a moment to consider its position in the world. If we are to view the great powers, the United States is stymied in a war of aggression against Iran, whereas Russia has its own and similar problems with Ukraine. The United Kingdom, having been torn asunder from the emerging superpower of the European Union, is now limping its way back with the realisation that it made a terrible mistake, whereas the EU itself finds itself uncertain on which path to take as it is pulled by both forces of capitalism and its long-standing social welfare orientations. In South America, a succession of governments have fallen to divisive rhetoric and drastic cuts to social services and all are suffering as a result.

Among this international confusion and chaos, China stands a reliable partner. It has attempted, both in the Russia-Ukraine conflict and the US-Israel-Iran conflict to broker a peaceful resolution. It understands, apparently better than more bellicose powers that war, apart from the terrible and visceral human cost, it is a serious impediment to trade. China is not involved in any violent conflicts in the world, and instead has concentrated on economic development within its own country, and with furthering infrastructure in developing countries so that they too, one day, will have the standard of living where desperate poverty is a thing of the past. As a result, year-by-year, China edges closer to being the world's most successful nation. Nothing made that more clear that the recent meeting between Xi Jinping and Donald Trump, when President Xi – on two occasions, no less (Beijing summit May 2026, White House summit, September 2026) – reminded Trump of the "Thucydides Trap", where a declining power attempts to assert military authority over a rising power – and loses. President Xi argued that a conflict could be avoided, that peaceful coexistence could be obtained by regular military dialogue, expanded people-to-people exchanges (including inviting 100,000 young Americans to China), and an extended tariff truce.

In our own small way, the Australia-China Friendship Society (Victorian branch) is also making every effort to avoid the prospect of conflict. We have been particularly active in recent months, with our attendance at National Day celebrations and hosting our own small mooncake movie night, with the family-friendly classic, "Little Tiger Banban", a charming story of bravery, loyalty, and the environment, along with being a very early example of China's CGI industry. We held a very successful new office Yum Cha, that was well-attended with wonderful company and conversation. This month, we have representatives visiting China for the International Sister Cities Conference in Xi'an, followed by a Local Cooperation Dialogue on Green Development in Yulin, the a journey to inner Mongolia. On top of that, we have a 75th anniversary dinner coming up, with a figure no less than John Lander, who was part of the China section of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the lead-up to the recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1972 and several other occasions in the 1970s and 1980s, as well as deputy ambassador in Beijing 1974-76 (including a couple of stints as Chargé d'Affaires).

Not every story is a happy one, however. There is the very recent passing of Professor Colin Mackerras, one of the world's authorities on Chinese history, Chinese drama, national minorities of China, and Australian-Chinese relations. Professor Mackerras was a great friend, a life member and Patron

of the QLD branch of the ACFS for many decades, and he stands as an inspirational example and intellectual leader of the continuing and enduring friendship between Australia and China.

There is one lesson in particular I take from the Harvest Moon festival, mixed with the delightful tales of Chang'e, Hou Yi, and the Jade Rabbit – that we all live under the same moon, no matter where we are, and we are all part of the human family.

Lev Lafayette (President, Australia-China Friendship Society, Victoria)

Celebrating Chinese National Day and 77 Years of the People's Republic of China

Victorian Chinese Community came together to mark the 77th anniversary of the founding of the People's Republic of China and 54 years of Australia China diplomatic relations. The celebration drew 400 guests for an evening rich in culture and friendship, with performances spanning lion dancers from the Chinese Masonic Society, dance groups, singers, musicians and tai chi practitioners – a true showcase of the depth of talent within the community.

As the lion dancers took their final bow, the banquet began, with guests seated at shared tables enjoying a generous spread of food throughout the evening. Speeches were delivered over the course of the meal, lending the occasion a warm, convivial atmosphere as much about connection over the table as it was about ceremony.

The event featured speeches from a distinguished line-up: Mr Fang Xinwen, Consul General of the People's Republic of China, Mr Meng Heang Tak MP, representing the Premier of Victoria, Cr Kevin Louey, representing the City of Melbourne, Dr Judy Tang OAM, Victorian Multicultural Commissioner, Mr Yun Guo Chen, Federation of Chinese Associations Victoria, Mr Arthur Wu, Chinese National Day Celebration Committee of Victoria, and our own Mr Lev Lafayette, President of the Australia China Friendship Society Victoria.

With the Mid-autumn Festival approaching guests exchanged warm well-wishes for the season, and Consul General Fang Xinwen raised a toast to friendship, unity and enduring ties between Australia and China.

What began as a modest picnic in a park has, through the generous support of its patrons and attendees over the years, grown into a landmark community event. This year's celebration was a reminder of the value of genuine friendship, understanding and connection, and a tribute to the tireless work of so many across the Chinese community and its friends.

Suzana Dewa



The 75th Anniversary Dinner of the Establishment of the Australia-China Friendship Society in Victoria
Australia-China Friendship Society 2026 Dinner

Guest Speaker: John Lander

"An independent Australian foreign policy towards China"

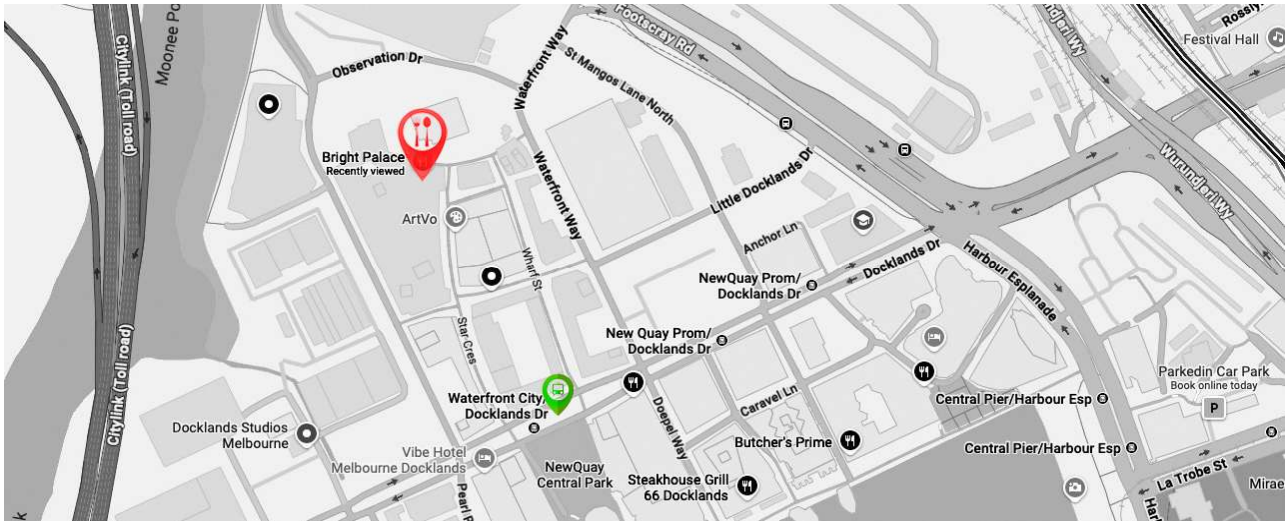


John Lander worked in the China section of the Department of Foreign Affairs in the lead-up to the recognition of the People's Republic of China in 1972 and several other occasions in the 1970s and 1980s. He was deputy ambassador in Beijing 1974-76 (including multiple periods as Chargé d'Affaires). He was heavily involved in negotiation of many aspects in the early development of Australia-China relations, especially student/teacher exchange, air traffic agreement and consular relations.

6:30pm, 21 November at "Bright Palace"

Level 1/10-11 Star Crescent, Docklands (The District, Shop CW F02-02a). For the tram route 70 from Flinders Street Station, or the tram route 86 from Bourke St, get off at final stop which Docklands. The routes are within the Free Tram Zone.

Then walk into the Shopping Centre, the restaurant is at the entrance of the big wheel. Please see indicated on the map.



Tickets are $60 for members and $70 for non-members and includes dinner, speech, and wine.

Tickets are available through direct deposit to the ACFS bank account. Please include your name as a reference.

BSB 063-019 Account 1004 0625

For any other information contact: secretary@acfs-vic.org

Pacific China Friendship Association Conference and 10th Anniversary

The PCFA conference was held from 21st-24th September in Shenzhen China. Over the last fifteen years, the PCFA has evolved from an idea between two visionary women, HRH Princess Pilolevu and Madam Li Xiaolin, into a regional platform uniting over 20 Pacific nations in friendship with China. From forums and humanitarian aid to youth exchanges and scientific partnerships, PCFA continues to embody the Pacific spirit of voyaging, mutual respect, and shared progress.

2010: Madam Li Xiaolin, President of the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries, visited Tonga to meet HRH Princess Pilolevu Tuita. Together they conceived the idea of a Pacific–China Friendship Forum.

2012: HRH attended the Friendship Forum in China, meeting leaders of regional Friendship Associations from New Zealand, Australia, Vanuatu, Māori, and Tahiti. Early discussions began on establishing a unified Pacific China Friendship Association.

2014: 5th Friendship Forum. HRH dispatched a Tonga China Friendship Association (TCFA) delegation, led by the Minister for Agriculture and Fisheries, to confirm PCFA's establishment with other Pacific Friendship Associations. Founding members agreed: Australia, New Zealand, Māori, Vanuatu, Tahiti, and Tonga.

2015: Preparatory meetings held in Tonga between ACFS and TCFA to finalize PCFA's registration and inaugural conference plans.

2016: Inaugural PCFA Conference convened in Tonga. HRH appointed Permanent Patron; Dr. Hiria Ottino (Tahiti) elected President; Mr. Anthony Leong (Australia) named Convenor. PCFA



A six-member delegation from China News Service, led by Wu Qingcai, Deputy Editor-in-Chief of CNS, arrived in Melbourne on the afternoon of 22 October. The delegation made a special visit to the Australian-China Friendship Society Victoria Branch, where Branch Vice President Tower Liu and Treasurer Ian Paker held discussions with the guests. The Chinese journalists spoke highly of the ACFS 's outstanding contributions to exchanges and friendship between Australia and China over its 75-year history.

China played a huge role in the progress of BRICS in India

Joe Montero



Last month, on 12–13 September, leaders of the BRICS nations met in India. There were those who dismissed the summit, as if it were of little consequence to world affairs. How could it be with the 11 members representing the world's fastest growing economies, 10 other Associate members, and the bulk of the total of 193 nations in existence are interested in some form of association. This occurred in the midst of other important international meetings that pulled the same way. Rather than recognise that the balance of forces is shifting from the West to the East and the Global South as a whole, the frightened try to obscure the fact.

BRICS nations unanimously adopted a 140-point declaration in India. At the core was agreement on the development of the Global South. But it was also much more than this. Unity through acceptance of diversity and focusing on the common interests for economic development, a peaceful environment, cooperation and striving for consensus took precedence. This countered the tendency for one big nation to impose its will on a smaller one. None were named for reasons of diplomacy. But There is no doubt that the finger pointed at the United States and Israel, as the key sources of violence and instability. The approach was not to turn to brinkmanship. Instead, the BRICs members understood that the future can only be built through a consensus of peoples and nations. The declaration made clear that it supported the right of nations have sovereignty and ability to make their own decisions without outside interference.

It is no secret that China played a pivotal role in what unfolded, which runs counter to the narrative of those who wish to attack and are prepared to make false accusations. China's foreign policy has long

been rooted in insistence on mutual respect, equality, and non-interference in relationships between nations. Given that China is now the world's biggest economy in real terms adds enough clout to open the door to new possibilities. The record shows that this is exercised responsibly, by not using it as a means to impose on others to their cost. Rising positive attitudes towards China is a result of this.

Discussion and decision making in India concerned economic cooperation through infrastructure and trade. The current circumstances, however, navigating the reality of existing conflicts, geopolitics, sanctions, and blockades. These problems inevitably found their way into the agenda. The response was to work for the future of humanity through cooperation, equality between nations, and the resolution of differences through dialogue and nor violence between nations.

Much of what was achieved was the result of multiple leader to leader meetings, aimed at overcoming difficulties and looking forward. Meetings between Xi Jinping stood out, especially that with Indian leader Narendra Modi. The thorny border issue between the two countries was put on the table and agreement on ensuring the difference would no longer be a dispute and handled accordingly was reached. Building ties and looking to the future was said to be far more important. Superb diplomatic effort ensured that India signed the joint declaration despite past reservations.

An important gateway was Xi's recognition that each country had to make its own decisions according to its own interests and no other had the right to tell others what to do. India's strategy to maintaining ties with the United States and Europe, while at the same time drawing closer to BRICS nations, including China, is legitimate and correct for India, according to Xi. There can be diversity within unity. Diplomatic effort led by the main players allowed agreement across three pillars: political and security affairs, economic and financial matters, and cultural and people-to-people ties.

Political and security affairs covered working on progress towards replacing unipolarity with multipolarity. This means a world dominated by one power being replaced by an order where all nations are equal. There is explicit opposition to the use of force through outright war or acts of terror for geopolitical purposes, and support for efforts to win just peace through diplomacy.

The most immediately practical part is agreement on the need to reform the United Nations to make it far more democratic and a reflection of the family of nations instead of big power politics. Unity was achieved on opposing attacks against Gaza and for ending the conflict with Iran and towards reopening the flow of oil and other vital products. This last part clearly pointed towards insisting a return to the MoU signed by the United States and Iran and insisting sticking to it this time.

Economic and financial matters concern the importance of cooperation for mutual benefit and an end to exploitative impositions of the stronger on the weaker. Building of infrastructure and other projects, more trade, and less dependence on the American Dollar alone for international trade were agreed on. Payments through the BRICS New Development Bank and cross-border payments though BRICS Pay as an alternative will be accelerated. The objective is not to destroy the current order of the International Monetary Fund, World Bank, and the SWIFT financial transactions system. It is to allow more options. This will lead to a fairer international trading system, free of coercion, sanctions, and blockades.

Recognition was given to the concept that one of the best ways to build trust and cooperation between nations is through more cultural exchanges. By raising the appreciation of the contributions of others, the benefits of diversity, and overcoming misconceptions through exchanges, people can see the truth for themselves. A good vehicle for exchange is to encourage tourism. People can then use their own eyes and experiences to learn and develop their empathy. Expect new agreements on this score.

Australia-China Friendship Society

CHONGQING

8 Days Wellness Tour

19-28 April 2027 | 10 Days Australia Return



HIGHLIGHTS

- **Tai Chi & Ba Duan Jin**
  Guided movement and meditation
- **Nanshan forest retreat**
  Two days of mindful relaxation
- **Chinese wellness & hot springs**
  Culture, tea and wellness experiences
- **Dazu & Wulong natural bridges**
  Remarkable heritage and landscapes
- **Hongyadong river cruise**
  Ciqikou Old Town and city discovery
- **Nourishing meals**
  Vegetarian dining and local flavours

EARLY BIRD
AUD$4,680*
(including tips)

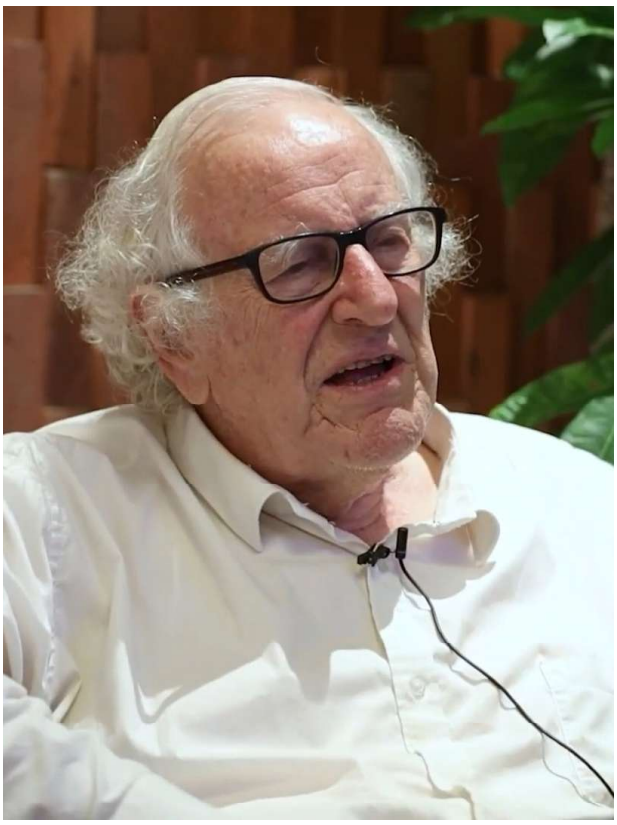
MEMBERSHIP STANDARD PRICE
AUD$5,380
(including tips)

Per person, twin share
Return international flights from Australia included

* Expression of interest by 15 November 2026
* AUD$500 deposit by 15 December 2026
* Full payment by 31 January 2027

Contact: Catherine Huang | Phone: 0401363118
Email: acfs.catherine@gmail.com

Vale Emeritus Professor Colin Mackerras AO FAHA.



One of Griffith University's founding academics and a scholar whose lifelong service to the University spanned more than 50 years.

Colin joined Griffith in 1974 as Foundation Professor of Modern Asian Studies, helping to establish what would become one of the University's defining strengths: a deep engagement with Asia and a commitment to international scholarship. For three decades, he taught, led and inspired generations of students while helping build Griffith's reputation as a leading centre for Asian studies and China scholarship.

Following his retirement in 2004, he remained an active and valued member of our community as Emeritus Professor, continuing to publish influential research, support colleagues, mentor students and contribute generously to academic life.

Internationally recognised as one of Australia's foremost scholars of China, Colin authored or edited more than 40 books and nearly 200 scholarly papers. His work on Chinese history, culture, theatre, ethnic minorities and Australia-China relations shaped understanding of China for audiences across Australia and around the world.

Few individuals have left such a lasting mark on Griffith University. From the University's earliest days to his final years, Colin embodied the values of scholarship, service and engagement. His legacy lives on through the thousands of students he taught, the colleagues he supported, the field of study he helped build, and the enduring place of Asian studies within Griffith.

We extend our sincere condolences to Colin's family, friends, former students and colleagues. He will be remembered with gratitude, admiration and great affection.

BIO

Professor Colin Mackerras 马克林 (Officer in the Order of Australia, Fellow of the Academy of the Humanities of Australia) is a specialist on Chinese history, musical theatre and ethnic minorities, as well as Australia-China relations and Western images of China, and has published widely on all those subjects. He has written or edited over 40 books and authored nearly 200 scholarly papers about China.

Born in Sydney, Australia, in 1939, he has visited China nearly 70 times. He worked at Griffith University from 1974 to 2004 and has been a professor Emeritus at the University since retirement. He taught first at the Beijing Foreign Studies University from 1964 to 1966 and has taught there many times since. He has also taught several times at the Renmin University of China in Beijing. He won a Friendship Award 友谊奖 from the Chinese government in 2014 and in 2016 a Special China Book Award中华图书特殊贡献奖, given to foreigners who have made outstanding

contributions in spreading Chinese culture through their writings.

His most important books include The Rise of the Peking Opera, 1770–1870 (Clarendon Press, Oxford, 1972); Chinese Drama, A Historical Survey (New World Press, Beijing, 1990); China's Minorities: Integration and Modernization in the Twentieth Century (Oxford University Press, Hong Kong, 1994); Western Images of China, Revised Edition (Oxford University Press, Hong Kong, 1999); China's Ethnic Minorities and Globalisation (RoutledgeCurzon, London, 2003); and我看中国1949年以来中国在西方的形象, translated by Zhang Yongxian 张勇先and Wu Di 吴迪 (Zhongguo Renmin University Press, Beijing, 2013). He has also attended numerous conferences on Asia, especially China, in Australia, China (including Hong Kong, Macau and Taiwan), the United States, the Netherlands, Canada, Switerland and the United Kingdom.

Vale & BIO from Griffith University

Ambassador Liu Jinsong Expresses Deep Condolences on the Passing of Australian Renowned Sinologist Prof. Colin Patrick Mackerras AO

On 8 October, the Australian renowned sinologist Prof. Colin Patrick Mackerras AO passed away in Brisbane. Ambassador Liu Jinsong wrote to the professor's family to express his deep condolences and sincere sympathies.

Ambassador Liu said that Prof. Mackerras had visited China more than 80 times and made outstanding contributions to enhancing mutual understanding and friendship between Chinese and Australian peoples. Having received the Chinese Government Friendship Award, Prof. Mackerras will always be remembered by the Chinese people.

Prof. Mackerras's family expressed their gratitude to Ambassador Liu, the Chinese Embassy in Australia and the Consulate-General of China in Brisbane for conveying their condolences at the earliest opportunity. They said Ambassador Liu's letter had brought consolation to the family and touched them deeply. Prof. Mackerras had a profound love for China and Chinese people and had devoted his life to promoting friendship between Australia and China, and he would be sorely missed by the peoples of both countries.

Message from the Pacific China Friendship Association

Dear Anthony and friends in Australia, please accept our heartfelt condolences on the passing of Professor Colin Mackerras.
His lifelong dedication to fostering friendship and understanding between Australia and China is a remarkable legacy. His invaluable contribution to cultural exchange and mutual understanding will continue to inspire future generations.
We join you in honouring his memory and expressing our deep gratitude for the bridges he built between our peoples.
Vale, Professor Colin Mackerras. He will be greatly missed and fondly remembered.

Dhana Tahutini-Brillant the Secretary General of the Pacific China Friendship Association

Dear friends, we in Australia and China have just lost a very dear and old friend, Professor Colin Mackerras. Throughout his academic life, Colin has dedicated himself to friendship between the countries of Australia and China and has traveled many times between the two countries, educating people and bringing us closer together. His knowledge and wisdom were boundless and we will be forever in his debt about bringing knowledge of China to a wider audience. Vale Professor Colin Mackerras.

Anthony Leong former Secretary General of the Pacific China Friendship Association

中国人民对外友好协会
THE CHINESE PEOPLE'S ASSOCIATION FOR
FRIENDSHIP WITH FOREIGN COUNTRIES

October 9, 2026

Letter of Condolences

Dear Family Members of Professor Colin Mackerras,

It is with profound grief that we learned of the passing of Professor Colin Mackerras, renowned Australian sinologist and Emeritus Professor at Griffith University. We are deeply saddened by this grievous news. We hereby express our deepest condolences and offer our most profound and sincere sympathy to you and your family.

Professor Mackerras was a distinguished sinologist and envoy of people-to-people and cultural exchange, highly respected and renowned both in China and Australia. He was also a staunch supporter and active promoter of the cause of China-Australia friendship. With China in his heart and unwavering dedication, he devoted his entire life to spreading Chinese culture and enhancing mutual understanding between the Chinese and Australian peoples. He poured his life's efforts into people-to-people and cultural exchanges and friendly relations between
China and Australia, making great contributions.

As an active promoter of China-Australia people-to-people and cultural exchanges, Professor Mackerras began learning Chinese in the late 1950s, first went to China to teach in 1964, and visited China more than 80 times over the following half century. He authored and edited more than 40 books on China and published over 100 academic papers, providing valuable perspectives for the world to understand China. In 2014, he received the Chinese Government Friendship Award and was praised by President Xi for having "built a bridge of mutual understanding and affinity between the two peoples through unremitting efforts and sincere passion." He was a long-time member of the Australia-China Friendship Association and attended many of its important events, offering advice and suggestions for enhancing friendship between the two peoples.

Professor Mackerras has passed away, but his noble character will live on. We will forever remember his achievements, carry forward his commitment to friendship and cooperation, and, together with the Australia-China Friendship Association and friends from all walks of life, continue to deepen the cause of friendly exchanges between the Chinese and Australian peoples.

Again we send our condolences and hope that you will take care of yourselves in this time of grief.

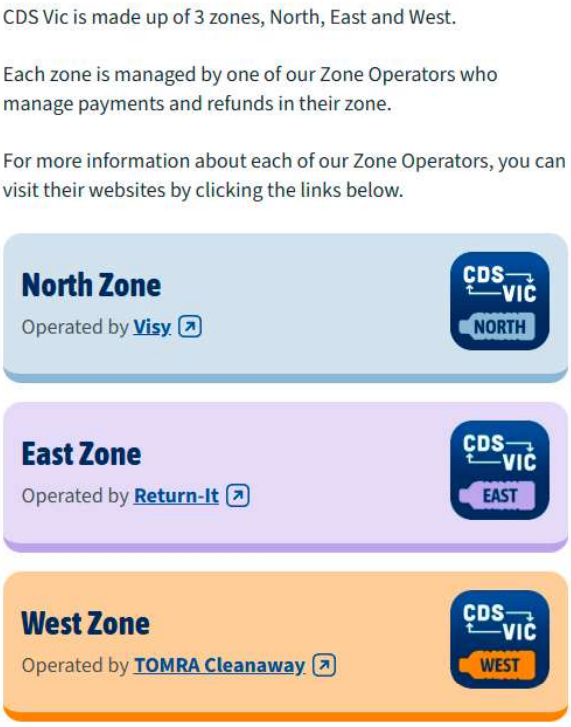
The Chinese People's Association
for Friendship with Foreign Countries

ACFS need your help

We have set up a charity within CDS Victoria for recycling of cans and bottles. This will allow you to direct your refund to The Australia China Friendship Society.

It is rather a simple process:

1. If you haven't already downloaded the CDS Victoria app to your trusty mobile phone.
2. Locate your nearest return centre at this location https://cdsvic.org.au/locations. There are three zones in Victoria East North and West.





3. Take your cans etc. to the centre, open the app on your phone and scan the barcode at the return machines. Make sure your phone is on the brightest setting so the machine can see the barcode.
4. When you have finished, tap the "Bank Transfer" button and search Charities, Select donation, and search for Australia China friendship Society Victorian Branch Inc,
5. Choose to transfer your refund to this account.
6. Easy as that.

Thank you very much for your support

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:	Joe Montero, James Doery, Suzana Dewa, Ethan Dattiulo

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