

# Newsletter

December 2009

## Australia-China Friendship Society Victorian Branch Inc.

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## LOOKING FORWARD TO 2010

Since our last newsletter, I am pleased to report that we have successfully held the Society's AGM.

Our guest speaker was the Honourable Robert Smith MLC, President of the Legislative Council, who spoke about the Parliamentary Delegation to Jiangsu Province, which he led. The purpose of the visit was to mark the 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sister state relationship established between Jiangsu Province and Victoria in 1979. This was the President's first trip to China and it was wonderful to hear his enthusiastic and interesting account of his visit, and his astute impressions of China. A report of the visit appears elsewhere in this newsletter.

I would like to congratulate all members who were elected to the Executive and Committee, including new Vice President Anthony Leong and new committee member Robin Matthews. I would also like to thank Joe Montero, previous Vice President, for his contributions to the Society. Whilst Joe is no longer on the Executive, he will remain on the Committee.

At the AGM I was re-elected as President of the Victorian Branch of the ACFS. With the support of the Executive and Committee, I look forward to representing the Society over the next 12 months. I am confident that our Branch will continue the good work of the Society in furthering friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese peoples.

I am sorry to report that we have received notification from the Geelong Sub Branch that they will no longer continue as a branch in 2010, mainly due to lack of new membership and local support.

I would like to pay tribute to the branch for their many years of hard work in promoting friendship with China. Over the years they have been engaged in many different activities including:

- \* establishing stalls each year at the Pako Festa and three days each year at the Geelong Show;
- \* holding regular fundraising dinners, with members cooking and serving the food themselves;
- \* running a monthly bus service for students to the Footscray market; and
- \* hosting visiting Chinese delegations.

Each year around China's National day the Victorian Branch ran buses to take university students to Geelong where the Geelong Branch would provide lunch and hospitality.

Among their many activities in the early days, Geelong members would visit Chinese wheat ships, offering friendship and hospitality to the Chinese seamen and arranging day trips to the country. It was common also to have Chinese students from institutes and universities in Melbourne staying in their homes.

I would like to pay particular tribute to Geelong President Lein Kim, Secretary Christine Wicking and committee members Joyce and Joe Anderson for their long years of dedicated work. At various stages over the years, mainly in the 1980s and 1990s, these people were on our committee and travelled for many years by train to attend our branch meetings.

We do hope to continue our friendship with all members of the Geelong branch.

A key task for our Society for the forthcoming year will be to actively engage with the community and to attract new, young and enthusiastic members to assist us with our friendship work.

Finally, I wish all members and friends the compliments of the Season and a safe, happy and fulfilling 2010.

Louise Clayton  
President

## **Reflections on a Delegation to Jiangsu Province, China**

ACFS 2009 AGM Guest Speaker - the Honourable Robert Smith, President of the Legislative Council.

In February this year - the Honourable Robert Smith, President of the Legislative Council of Victoria led a delegation to China to celebrate the 30th Anniversary of Victoria's Sister State relationship with Jiangsu Province. The following article is based on his report of the visit.

### **Victoria and Jiangsu**

The late Honourable Sir Rupert Harrier MP, former Premier of Victoria, and His Excellency Xu

Jiatun Governor of Jiangsu Province, signed the Victoria-Jiangsu Sister State Agreement in 1979. It was one of the first Sister State relationships between Chinese and Australian States.

Jiangsu and Victoria's relationship has featured regular reciprocal visits by Senior Government Officials and Parliamentary Delegations from both Victoria and Jiangsu Province over the course of the Sister State Relationship.

Among the major gifts that have been exchanged between Victoria and Jiangsu is the Facing Heaven Archway, which is located in Cohen Place in Melbourne's Chinatown. The traditional archway is based on the design of Naning's palace gates. It was constructed in 1985 to celebrate the 5<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Victoria and Jiangsu's Sister State relationship.

The Honourable John Brumby MP, Premier of Victoria visited Jiangsu Province in his first year as Premier in 2008. During his visit to China Premier Brumby signed or witnessed major agreements between the Victorian and Chinese Governments, including a Refreshed Sister State Agreement with Jiangsu Province.

### **The Delegation's visit**

Accompanying The Hon. Robert Smith MLC President of the Legislative Council and leader of the Delegation, were Mr Damian Drum MLC, Mr Peter Kavanagh MLC, Mr John Vogels MLC, Mr Telmo Languiller MLA, Mr Wayne Tunnecliffe, Clerk of the Legislative Council, Ms Anna Jurkewicz, Executive Assistant to the President and Secretary to the Delegation.

The visit began in Beijing on Friday 27 February and visited Xuzhou, Nanjing, and Wuxi before concluding in Shanghai on Saturday 7 March 2009.

On arrival at Beijing Airport the delegation was met by Madame Qi Xinhua, Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress and Mr Xu Yajun, Project Officer/Interpreter, Jiangsu People's Provincial Congress

The Delegation was supported by Mme Qi and Mr Xu who accompanied the Delegation until completion of the trip in Shanghai. They were excellent hosts and were extremely welcoming, hospitable, organised and accommodating in their planning of arrangements.

The visit began with a meeting with the Ambassador to Australia, Dr Geoff Raby and Mr Charles Brent from the Victorian Government Business Unit.

The Ambassador highlighted that the relationship between Jiangsu Province and Victoria is excellent and more sophisticated than any other Australian State/China relationship. The Ambassador enforced that the current bilateral relationships between Jiangsu Province and Victoria is great and at its best -no more needs to be done to enhance or improve on the existing strength. Integration and information exchange is working well in key areas of business and that Victoria has structured superior relationships with China. It was discussed that there are many opportunities that Australian businesses and Chinese business could capitalise on. For example: auto works.

Australia is highly regarded for quality and safety along with trust, particularly in education. The urban middle class of China (approximately 23 million people) feel very strongly with these factors offered by Australia. Australia is deemed the best place to send a Chinese student for education; excellent level of education, closeness to China and a safe and fair place to live.

There is a historical remembrance that comes with the Chinese of today based on the days of Communism. The system in China works because of the many people with same-minded livelihood values: hard work, family and education - essential ingredients to political stability.

Furthermore, the Ambassador provided an insight into the manufacturing industry. The steel manufacturing industry is exploding and currently there is a contract in place from NSW to have 250 trains built in China. This will be done with very minimal human element; the manufacturing is handled by robots. Large projects of this grand scale are becoming more common place in China and are the main reason the cost of manufacturing is cheaper and therefore, more globally competitive.

30 per cent of China's water systems are polluted and the Ambassador highlighted quality opportunities for Australian businesses in sustainability, along with bio-technology.

#### **Other points raised:**

The one child policy: this is not so onerous and

there are exceptions. More of a choice for families with one or no child in the family. Internet freedom in China is greater than that in Singapore. There are over 700million peasants in China and tax has been abolished for them.

There are over 2000 universities in China with 100 million students which equates to approximately one per cent of the population. The Government is pouring considerable money into the universities because of the size of educational investment and in turn capital investment.

Charles Brent presented an overview of his role and activities in representing the Victorian Government Business Unit; his representation to the Government and to potential business and commercial activities. The Delegation was presented with a detailed report covering trade, investment, the Victorian Government's objectives in China, initiatives and key areas of advantage for Victoria within China. These included:

- \* Advanced manufacturing - auto, aviation and aerospace
- \* Biotechnology
- \* Education
- \* Energy
- \* Environment services
- \* Food and agribusiness (including wine)
- \* ICT
- \* Services: financial - banking, insurance and funds management
- \* Services - accounting and legal
- \* Tourism
- \* Urban design and construction

Mr Brent concluded that Australia is in a strong position in China. There is up to AUD1.8 billion worth of investment opportunities in China. Mr Brent is based in Shanghai and kindly travelled to Beijing for the joint meeting.

Over the next eight days the Delegation was involved in a broad range of meetings and visits, including:

- A tour of The Great Hall of the People, after which The President met with the Hon Mr Zha Peixin, Vice Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the National People's Congress who hosted a banquet dinner for the Delegation
- A meeting and banquet dinner hosted by the Honourable Li Quanlin, First Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of the Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress at the Jiangsu Plaza Building

- Being the first Delegation from the Parliament of Victoria to visit Xuzhou. Xuzhou is the 4<sup>th</sup> largest city in Jiangsu Province and is one of the major traditional hubs in China with road and rail links connecting directly to the provinces of Henan and Shandong, the neighboring city of Lianyungang, as well as the economic hub of Shanghai
  - Xuzhou is in industrial city aiming to create eco friendly environments in its surrounds. Industrialization and the use of coal as fuel have brought remarkable pollution to the city's air and environment. The municipal government has made tough environmental policies and spent significant funds to protect the air and environment
  - It is the most ancient city in the Province and home of the first Emperor, Liu Bang, of the Han Dynasty
- A meeting and lunch banquet hosted by the Mayor of Xuzhou, Mr Cao Xinping. Sister City to the Greater City of Dandenong, the Mayor indicated that Delegations from Xuzhou to visit Dandenong and Victoria during the course of the year were being planned. The President invited each Delegation to visit Parliament
- Visiting the Nanjing People's Congress and meeting with Mine Zhang Yan, Vice Chairman of the Standing Committee of Jiangsu Provincial People's Congress
  - The President and Mme Zhang drew on the strength of the Sister-State Relationship and discussed the involvement of its impact and success. Both reflected on the similarity of their previous union involvement outside of politics recognizing each other's contributions. Mme Zhang was one of the first leading women to head a union in the nu'ning sector and in the city of Xuzhou
- A dinner hosted by Mme Lu Sujie and members of the Foreign Affairs Standing Committee of Jiangsu Province People's Congress followed by a boat cruise on Qinhuai Fiver in the Confucius Temple Area; old downtown and notable tourist attraction in Nanjing
- A visit to Caulfield Grammar School Nanjing Campus
  - The school's Internationalism Program provides around 300 Year 9 students each year with the unique experience of living and learning in another country for five weeks
  - The Nanjing Campus, which opened in 1998, was the first international campus for an Australian school
  - The belief of this program is that the most effective means for preparing students to meet the challenges of life is through the intensive study of another Language and culture, including a period of immersion in that culture
  - In establishing the campus in China, Caulfield Grammar School chose a partner country, which would have a profound influence on the evolution of the global community in the coming century - politically, culturally and, particularly, economically. Caulfield Grammar School is proud to be part of the conceptual re-positioning and engagement of Australia within the Asian region
- Visiting the headquarters and administrative section of the New Wuxi District led by Mr Huang Shenping, Chairman of the Wuxi District Headquarters
  - Mr Huang briefed the delegation over a model replica of the 'new city'. The city is well-developed and offers a diversified transportation systems supplying easy access to both domestic and overseas markets. Wuxi New District is located in the most industrialized area in China complemented by qualified suppliers and adequate work force found locally
  - Since its foundation in 1992, the district has evolved to be one of the major industrial parks in China. Approximately 1200 enterprises had been registered by the end of 2006. These manufacturers range from operations with as few as 10 people to 77 Global 500 companies
  - Some of the countries with operations include: Belgium, Canada, France, Finland, Germany, India, Israel, Italy, Japan, Korea, Netherlands, Norway, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK and USA.
  - Some of the companies represented: Agfa, Caterpillar Machinery Components, GE Water Technology, Linatex, Bartin Scrap Steel recycling, Volvo Penta, Stork Textile Systems, Allen Group Limited.
- A meeting and banquet hosted by Mr Zhou Jie Qing, Chairman of The Standing Committee of Wuxi People's Congress.

- Mr Zhou praised the success of the Sister-State Relationship between Jiangsu and Victoria and indicated to the President his desire to form a Sister-City Relationship with one of the municipalities in Melbourne. He felt that this was something missing for Wuxi given the commercial and trade growth not only in Wuxi but in all of the south-eastern area of China. The President agreed and promised to investigate such an opportunity on his return
- Since arriving back in Australia, the President has facilitated introductions between the City of Frankston, Mayor Cr Cohn Hampton and Mr Zhou. The Mayor felt the two cities would be a good fit and was very keen to establish a Sister-City relationship for the City of Frankston

### **The presentation to the ACFS AGM by the Honourable Robert Smith, President of the Legislative Council**

Mr Smith began his talk by stating that in the past he had had little desire to travel to China and that he had a number of concerns regarding Communism. His talk touched on the experiences outlined above and he indicated that the Delegation visit had changed his opinion of China. He was warm in his praise about what China and its people have achieved and enthusiastic about the warmth and courtesy shown by the people he met.

The Society appreciates his time in speaking to the AGM. A full copy of his Report can be found on the online service of Victoria State Library.

#### **Robert ('Bob') Smith, MLC**

Member of the Legislative Council from 1999  
President of the Legislative Council from 2006

Bob Smith was elected 19th President of the Legislative Council of Victoria on 19<sup>th</sup> December 2006.

Bob was born in South Shields, England on 22 May 1948

Prior to entering Parliament, He served in the Royal Australian Navy for fifteen years, as a plant operator for a steel mill for nine years and as

an official for the Australian Workers' Union for nine years.

He was educated at St Brendan's Primary School and Salisbury High School in Brisbane. He accepted a Harvard University Trade Union Program Scholarship in 1994.

In September 1999, Bob was elected as a Member of Parliament to represent the Electoral Province of Chelsea in the Legislative Council.

## **Australian in China**

CHIRNSIDE Park's Jason Matthews can walk around his local shopping centre without once being asked for a signature or receiving a hug from a stranger.

But for the 21-year-old, the story in China is a lot different.

The Melbourne University student shot to celebrity stardom in China after coming second in a television show competition on the country's most popular entertainment channel.

Earlier this year Matthews, who studies Chinese at university, won a place on a Chinese television competition, called the Chinese Bridge Competition, for students studying the language overseas.

After winning the Australian semi-final, Matthews was flown to China to take part in a number of challenges against 112 contestants from 62 countries around the world.

Challenges were based in Chinese culture with contestants required to act, sing dance, recite and perform in Chinese.

The former Oxley College student became the show's most popular contestant, taking out found the popularity award as voted by the public.

But in dramatic circumstances, Matthews finished second in the competition after coming down with a full-body rash in the second last round of the competition.

"The worst part about the second part of the grand final was I woke up that morning and I had a

huge rash over my whole body, my face was swollen and I ran straight down to the hospital,” Matthews said.

“I didn’t have any time to rehearse, I went back to the tv station and was in the make-up room just lying down with ice all over me trying to get the swelling down.

“Just before I went out on stage they packed all this make-up on me. Because I was so red they put a lot of green powder on me to cancel it out and make me look a little more white.”

Four hundred million people turned into the final show, Matthews said.

A Chinese language blog that the university student started before the show to practice his skills jumped from 1000 hits to 100,000 hits in three months.

Being a high-profile star was hard to comprehend, but easy to enjoy, Matthews said.

“Walking out on the street, people would recognise who I am, shout out my Chinese name and ask for hugs,” he said.

“I wrote on my blog one day about how much I love the watermelon in China and Chinese girl from another city somehow found the hotel I was staying at and waited in the lobby for several hours for me to return from the TV station with a fresh watermelon from her hometown.”

After the whirlwind tour, Matthews said getting back to uni felt a little like waking up. “It feels like I’ve crashed back down to earth,” he said.

“Back to uni, I’ve got two weeks to catch up on with plenty of lectures to go through, back to commitments and normal life style.”

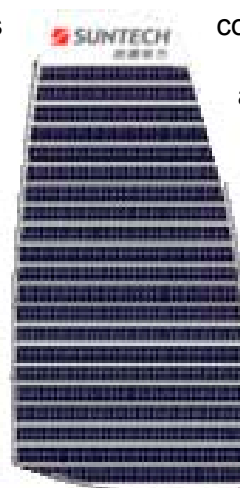
From: The Leader Newspaper Group

## Australian Solar Yatch At The Shanghai World Expo.

Australian solar yatch builders Solar Sailor have been confirmed as the successful contractor for the construction of a solar yatch for solar products company Suntech.

Solar Sailor has announced the signing of for the Suntech VIP World expo tourist vessel. a highly visible sight in Shanghai following the May 2010.

Robert Dane, CEO of Solar Sailor “This is the third generation of solarsail we the improvements and lessons we have learnt vessel and research & development. It will be allow it to sail better to all points of the wind, have responsive, be able to be bolted on the vessel as boats and it will include lightweight solar panels the largest date.”



a construction contract for a solarsail The revolutionary new vessel will be launch in time for World Expo in

commented with the following: have developed and includes all through our prototypes, Sydney a single sail only, the shape will more intelligence to make it more a single unit or retro fitted to other the latest highest efficiency from Suntech. It will also be solar sail we have built to



# Culture Exchange

*Uygur woman's solo dance: Atush*

Performer: Rana Abdukirm



Organised by China International Culture Exchange Association, Foreign Culture Exchange Association of Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region and 3CW Chinese Radio, the Xinjiang Songs & Dance Ensemble successfully performed in Palms Crown Tower on 9 December.

As part of a comprehensive foreign culture programme the performance included 50 artists, including 13 national 1<sup>st</sup> grade artists. The show displayed national folk art from Uygur, Kazak, Tajik, Ghijek and Kirgiz.

## 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.

**PRESIDENT:** Ms. Louise Clayton  
**VICE PRESIDENT:** Mr. Anthony Leong  
Mr. Tower Liu  
**SECRETARY:** Mr. Neil Barker  
**TREASURER:** Mr. Dong Chen  
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#### VICTORIAN MEMBERSHIP RATES

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