

Australia China Friendship Society
ACT Branch Inc



澳中友好协会

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Bulletin

2021/1 January 2021

Coming events

Chinese New Year dinner

12 February

Lantern Festival

27 February

Memberships are now due. See the back page for details.

Committee

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Chinese New Year dinner

The first function for 2021 will be Chinese New Year dinner at the China Tea Club restaurant, North Lyneham, on Friday 12 February. The menu is as follows, and the cost is \$30 per person:

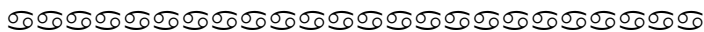
Spring Roll
Sang Choi Bow

Slow-Cooked Beef Brisket with Aniseed and Leek
Cantonese Style 'White Cut Chicken' with Ginger & Shallot Puree Sauce
Yu Yang Eggplant
Stir-Fried Mixed Chinese Vegetables with Garlic
Pork Chop with Peking Sauce
Sliced Fish Cake with Choy Sum

Boiled Rice
Singapore Noodle

Jasmine Tea

Please book by emailing acfsevent@gmail.com by 5 February.



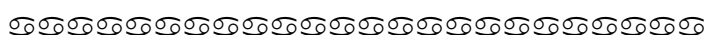
Lantern Festival: Help Needed

At the time of writing the Lantern Festival is scheduled to go ahead from 6-8.30pm on Saturday 27 February in the Canberra Beijing Garden. We have prepared a COVID-safe event plan and have contacted all the performers including 2 new groups.

We will need some extra hands this year to help with selling lanterns and the lantern parade. Lantern sales are the major source of our funds for Project Hope and with no sales last year we are hoping for a good turnout of attendees to buy our lanterns this year.

The Festival will start at 6pm and finish at around 8.30pm. If you have any free time on Saturday 27 February and would like to come and help set up (starting at 1.30pm) or during the evening – helping with lantern sales, registering lantern competition entrants, handing out programs, helping the lantern parade participants to be socially distanced – please email acfsevent@gmail.com

It is always a most rewarding evening so please come along and support us.



Fast facts from the *Beijing Review*, January 2021

- The Shaanxi Province has bred 32 giant pandas in captivity over the last 5 years. There are about 600 giant pandas in captivity in the world. Fewer than 2,000 giant pandas live in the wild mostly in Sichuan and Shaanxi.
- In the next 5 years about 100 billion yuan will be spent reinforcing water reservoirs. Many were damaged by severe floods in 2020. China has about 98,000 reservoirs, mostly built in the 1950s 60s and 70s, the vast majority are small. In recent years about 150 billion yuan was spent reinforcing 2,800 large and medium sized reservoirs and 69,000 small ones.
- Over 1,000 artefacts have been unearthed at a tomb site in Qinghai Province. The Xuewei No.1 Tomb is the most intact tomb unearthed on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. It is part of the Reshui Tombs discovered in 1982 and dates from the 6th to 8th centuries AD. The area was on the ancient Silk Road. The artefacts include silverware, glassware and textiles. The craftsmanship and design of some of the delicate artefacts have Central and West Asian ethnic features. The multi-chamber tomb is a wood and rock structure consisting of a ground and underground level.

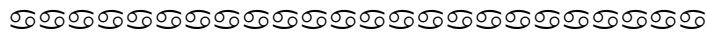
Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.

ANU Classical Chinese Music Ensemble

The ANU Classical Chinese Music Ensemble will perform for the City Renewal Authority's Lunchbox Acoustic program.

This is what was said about recent performances: " ... when the ANUCCME plays the audience is much more engaged and interested than with other groups."

Performances will be on the third Monday of each month until June in City Walk, near the Carousel, from 12.00 to 1.20pm. (Feb 15, Mar 15, Apr 19, May 17 and June 21.)



National Gallery of Australia

XU ZHEN@: ETERNITY VS EVOLUTION

until 14 March 2021, free

Xu Zhen is one of China's most significant artists and activists. His recent work centres on sculptural installations, video and performances that challenge cultural assumptions, question social taboos and comment on the idea of art as a commodity. This is the artist's first solo exhibition in Australia.



ANU China in the World Centre

Blogs, News & Podcast

Stigmatising China connections: Problems with research on research collaborations

Yun Jiang, *China Story Blog*

"We should acknowledge the threats coming from China, take them seriously and respond appropriately in our national interest. But to stigmatise China connections, including mutually beneficial scientific collaboration, is contrary to the national interest."

Further read: Yun Jiang and Adam Ni's recommendation on [Australia's China policy](#).

What does the arrival of Covid vaccines mean for 2021?

Dominic Meagher, *The Interpreter*

The jab appeared in record time, but ending the pandemic will come down to politics as much as science.

Insights on China's 2021 white paper on international development cooperation

Anthea Mulakala and Hongbo Ji, *Devpolicy*

The 2021 white paper envisions China to assume significant global responsibilities, not only as a provider, but also as a promoter of new trends and modalities.

Workers and Change in China: A Conversation with Manfred Elfstrom

Ivan Franceschini and Manfred Elfstrom, *Made in China Journal*

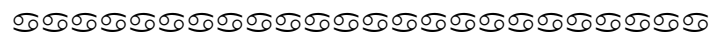
Why does the CCP seem to be addressing workers' grievances while simultaneously increasing repression? How do workers in China contribute to shaping government policy?

Little Red Podcast — Fandom Untamed: The Business of Boys' Love

Louisa Lim and Graeme Smith

Boys' love fiction is incredibly popular in China. But there's a quirk — the stories are often written by women for women.

Joined by **Angie Baecker** (Hong Kong University) and boys' love author **Huanxiang Zhenghuanzhe 幻想症患者**, this episode explores how BL fans have become an intimidating political and economic force, creating and destroying celebrities and the brands they endorse.



Letter from a Project Hope student

Dear honourable Aunties and Uncles from the ACFS Canberra,

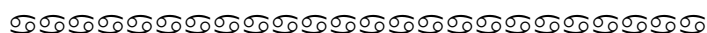
Thank you for your help. Because of your support, I had the opportunity to attend a local prestigious high school. Thank you for your continuous support that motivates me to work hard and achieve my goal. I am so honoured to be able to study in the Experiment Class in this local high school. Not only has it provided me with a vast knowledge, but also broaden my perspective on the world. I once again would like to say "thank you" to you all, thank you for giving me the support for my growth.

I would like to become one of you when I grow up to help people who are in need. I understand how it feels living in a difficult life as I have been through it. So I will do my best to help others and contribute positively to the society in the meantime. I also hope that I can make a positive impact on other people's life and motivate them to make a difference on their own surroundings. I will show them how knowledge can change one's life.

Last but not least, I wish you good health, good luck and much happiness throughout your life.

XU Bo
22 Dec 2020

Thanks to Corinne Ying Zhang for translating the letter.



Committee News - January 2021 meeting

The first Committee meeting for this year was held on 11 January 2021 at the Beijing House restaurant in Hawker.

Most time was spent discussing arrangements for the Lantern Festival to be held at Beijing Garden from 6pm on Saturday 27 February 2021.

This is the ACFS's largest public event of the year; the Lantern Festival marks the formal end of Chinese New Year celebrations and is held two

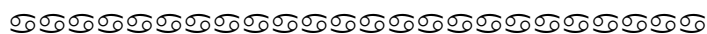
weeks after CNY. The Lantern Festival was cancelled last year due to Covid-19 restrictions. Although Covid-19 is still an issue in parts of Australia, there have been no active cases in Canberra for several months, hence the decision to proceed with the Lantern Festival this year.

A Covid Safe Plan has been drafted and submitted to the ACT Government. Additional volunteers will be required this year, specifically to man the various entry points. To minimise handling, only bottles of water will be offered for sale this year (not snacks, as in the past). Several performance groups have confirmed their participation, which will ensure an entertaining evening. The Festival will conclude with the Lantern parade along the shores of Lake Burley Griffin – always a highlight for children.

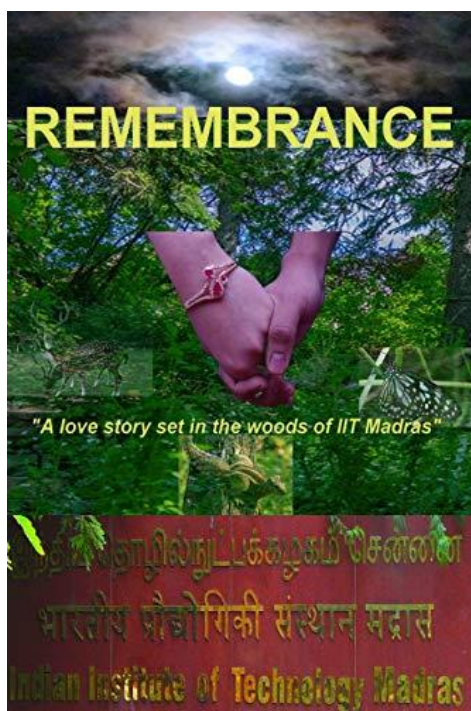
A publicity strategy was discussed, to start in mid-February. In the meantime we urge all our members to put this event in their diaries and inform your friends to come along – the more the merrier!

The Committee meeting ended with a meal – that old favourite ‘Sweet & Sour Pork’ was delicious.

Alex Olah (stand-in Secretary)



Member of the Society Dr Krishna Murthy Boyapati has written a memoir, recounting his time at the Indian Institute of Technology Madras. I was involved in helping to proofread the manuscript, and can recommend it as a fascinating insight into life in India and a moving story of love and loss The book is available as an ebook from amazon.com.au. (Jean Norman).



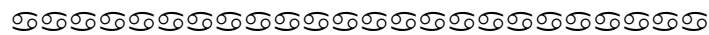
Remembrance - A love story set in the woods of IIT Madras: The greatest love story ever told! Kindle Edition

by Dr Krishna Murthy Boyapati

Remembrance at its heart is a simple and uncomplicated story. It is about remembering the author’s love for his classmate while he was studying for a Master of Technology during the early 1970s. It is set in the prestigious and beautiful woodlands of the campus of the Indian Institute of Technology Madras (IITM). It is an intense story and takes the reader through a roller coaster of emotions. The story tells of how the author meets his classmate and how he falls in love with her.

The end is heart-rending and the characters’ feelings in the conservative Indian social setting of the early 1970s are beautifully captured. It was a time when the genders were strictly segregated and the concept of falling in love was completely unknown in India. The author’s recounting of his falling in love is detailed, interesting, hilarious at times, and touching. It is a textbook case of how to fall in love and earn a spouse, which can be more important than earning a degree itself in the university! Although it is

set in the Indian context, the book has a universal appeal across all genders and races.



***Taijiquan*, an ancient Chinese martial art recently listed as a world intangible cultural heritage, builds both physical and mental strength**

By Yuan Yuan · 2021-01-05 · Source: *Beijing Review*, NO.1 JANUARY 7, 2021



People practice *Taijiquan* in Handan City, Hebei Province in north China, on December 16, 2020(XINHUA)

Upon receiving the news that *Taijiquan* was decorated with a world intangible cultural heritage accolade on December 17, 2020, Chen Ziqiang was teaching a *Taijiquan* class in his hometown.

The 43-year-old *Taijiquan* coach's phone was soon buzzing with congratulatory messages from his students all over the world. A gala was held at Wenxian County, Henan Province in central China in celebration of the event. Chen's hometown, Chenjiagou Village in this county, is reputed as a birthplace of *Taijiquan*.

"China has made several attempts to list *Taijiquan* as a world intangible cultural heritage since 2008," Chen told *Beijing Review*. "We knew that we stood a good chance to make it this time."

A long history

"*Taijiquan* is a traditional physical practice characterized by relaxed, circular movements that works in concert with breath regulation and the cultivation of a righteous and neutral mind," thus reads the introduction of *Taijiquan* by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on its website.

Also referred to as Tai Chi or Chinese boxing, *Taijiquan* has been a well-known physical practice worldwide. Literally, tai means "supreme," ji means "ultimate" and quan means "fist." For a long time, different stories regarding the birthplace of *Taijiquan* have made the rounds, focusing mainly on two places—Wudang Mountain in Hubei Province, central China, and Wenxian County.

The tale about its Wudang root is legendary, which tells how a man named Zhang Sanfeng created *Taijiquan* about 1,000 years ago after witnessing a fight between a sparrow and a snake, drawing inspiration from the animals' movements. The Wudang Mountain is known as one of China's major Taoist landmarks. This oldest philosophy of China has had a great impact on *Taijiquan*.

The story about its Chenjiagou origin has some more "hard proof." In the mid-17th century, a retired general and village head named Chen Wangting combined his kungfu training with elements of Chinese philosophy to create Chen style Tai Chi. Popular belief holds that many modern styles of *Taijiquan* have been derived from the Chen style. Wenxian is listed as *Taijiquan's* birthplace on the UNESCO website.

Chenjiagou is one and a half hours drive from Shaolin Temple in Henan Province, central China, another magnetic place drawing kungfu practitioners. Different from Shaolin Kungfu's powerful approach, *Taijiquan* looks softer and slower. This soft yet powerful ethos runs through the veins of Chenjiagou, which has some 300 years of *Taijiquan* history.

The Chen style *Taijiquan* was passed down the generations. Chen Ziqiang is a direct offspring of Chen Wangting. His uncle Chen Xiaowang is now a world-renowned Tai Chi master and his father Chen Xiaoxing, a protagonist in the video that China submitted to the UNESCO when applying for the accolade, also has gained international fame.

"In my generation of the family, seven out of eight are professional Tai Chi practitioners now," Chen Ziqiang said. If it had not been for the novel coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic, he should have been teaching abroad right now, as he did in the past decade, when his schedule was almost packed year round with tours across Europe, Australia, and the U.S. as branches of *Taijiquan* schools were set up in more than 50 countries.

"Both my uncle and my father are retired now, and they spent most of time staying in the village. My generation took the baton to spread *Taijiquan*," he said.

In 2018 when China decided to apply for the inscription of *Taijiquan* on the UNESCO's intangible heritage list, he got involved in the application work. In China, *Taijiquan* was inscribed, among the first batch of items, as a national intangible cultural heritage in 2006.

Chenjiagou has evolved from a humble town to a famous Tai Chi center. Among the 3,000 plus residents, more than 100 are professional *Taijiquan*

coaches active in both China and abroad. *Taijiquan* has become a compulsory class for elementary and secondary schools in Wenxian County.

Heightened popularity

Taijiquan is not new to the world. This practice has spread to over 150 countries, with approximately more than 150 million practitioners worldwide, according to the organizing committee of the international *Taijiquan* tournaments held in Jiaozuo City of Henan.

At many major events, such as the opening ceremony of the 2008 Beijing Summer Olympics, *Taijiquan* has been staged to symbolize Chinese culture and fundamental features. Moreover, *Taijiquan* practitioners can be seen in almost every park across the country.

Shao Bingnian, a 99-year-old practitioner from Dalian, a coastal city in Liaoning Province in northeast China, has been practicing *Taijiquan* since he was a kid.

After retiring as a civil servant, he started to practice every day at the park and gradually set up a *Taijiquan* club, teaching and organizing activities for *Taijiquan* enthusiasts.

He attributes his longevity to the practice. "It looks simple and easy, but it combines movement with deeper philosophical meanings, an asset to both body and mind," Shao said. "It can be called meditation in motion."

Liu Chunhua, a 65-year-old woman in Beijing, goes to the park every morning together with her husband. She listed numerous benefits that *Taijiquan* has added to their lives. "Both of us had slipped discs 10 years ago, especially my husband, and the doctor suggested he undergo surgery," Liu said. "But even surgery couldn't guarantee a full recovery. Some friends then suggested we take up *Taijiquan* and so we decided to give it a try."

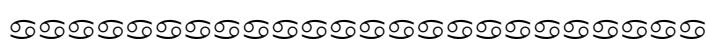
They started to feel the positive effects after practicing standing meditation for several months. "It doesn't involve any movement, you just stand there with fixed posture," Liu said. "After about three months, we felt getting stronger and the pain was subsiding."

Surprised by the effects, they went on to learn more sets of movements. For seven years now, they have not suffered any further discomfort. "It is a practice fitting people of all ages. Even people confined to a wheelchair can practice *Taijiquan*," Liu said.

David Ross, a practitioner for more 10 years from the U.S., has uncovered a deeper level of *Taijiquan*'s attraction, that is, it is a beautiful art form not only exercising the body but also the soul; moreover, with a calming effect on mind, it enables people to enjoy the beauty of life.

"Getting caught between jobs and family issues, we always overlook the fact that life should be beautiful. Beauty lies in the eye of the beholder, it doesn't matter what it looks like to others, it only matters what it feels like to you," Ross said. BR

Thanks to Teck Lee for the link to this article.



Laba porridge sweetens prelude of Chinese Lunar New Year chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2021-01-20 09:30



Chinese people start their preparations for the Spring Festival more than 20 days ahead. The 12th lunar month in Chinese is called la yue, so the eighth day of this lunar month is la yue chu ba, or laba. The day is also known as the Laba Rice Porridge Festival. The Laba this year falls on Jan 20.

Three major customs on Laba are ancestor worship, eating Laba rice porridge and making Laba garlic.

Ancestor worship: At the end of the year, working people get more free time to prepare for the sacrifice to the ancestors. The reason the 12th lunar month is called La Yue has a lot to do with the custom of sacrifice.

First, the worship of ancestors, called "腊" in Chinese, and the sacrifice for the gods, called "蜡", both frequently took place in the 12th month, which led to the traditional name of the month: la yue. Second, winter is the slack season for farmers so they have time to find things to burn in the sacrifice. The radical of "腊" represents the sacrifice of meat to one's ancestors ("月" symbolizes meat).

Laba rice porridge: There are several legends about the origin of porridge eating on Laba: Some claim it is of Buddhist origin; some say the porridge, made of red beans, can exorcize evil from children. Others say the porridge is in memory of a poor couple.

The custom of porridge eating has been well known throughout history, from the royal court to common people. The most "authentic" porridge was made in northern China, especially Beijing, today's Beijing.

The main ingredients of the Laba porridge are rice and sticky rice; people also add sugar, red dates, lotus seeds, walnuts, chestnuts, almonds, longans, hazelnuts, raisins, red beans, peanuts, water caltrops, roseleaf and other various materials to make the porridge special.

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch — membership application form

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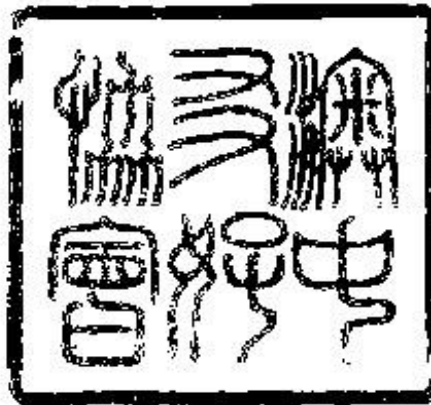
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