

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch Inc



澳中友好协会

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Bulletin

2023/4 April 2023

Coming events

Queanbeyan Chinese Heritage walk

14 May

Yum cha lunch

18 June



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Promoting friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese people

Hidden treasures: The First Chinese – a Walk in Queanbeyan, Sunday 14 May 2023

The Chinese Heritage walk will depart from the Thai Lime Leaves Restaurant, 20 Lowe St, Queanbeyan at 10.15am on Sunday 14 May. Please arrive a little early so we can start on time. Lunch will be at the restaurant at ~12.15pm and the cost will be \$25 pp for members and \$30 for non-members.

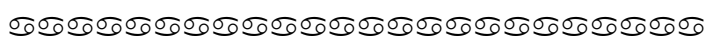
The walk will be a roughly 2 hour mostly urban walk of about 3.5km, with some hilly parts and unpaved sections in a cemetery.

If you are interested in coming on the walk and/or the lunch would you email acfsevent@gmail.com by 7 May. The cost will be a donation of approximately \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members, of which \$5 goes to the National Trust.

Tour information

The tour will cover the fascinating story of one of this area's earliest migrant populations, and visit some associated heritage sites.

Access to skilled and reliable labour was a problem in early New South Wales, and particularly so after convict transportation ended in 1840. A plan to contract Chinese mechanics and labourers was proposed as early as 1837. Some of those from the Canberra area that backed the plan were Charles Campbell, George Thomas Palmer, and Thomas McQuoid. Later, the gold rushes attracted thousands of Chinese miners. Inevitably, some Chinese men married European women, had children and settled down. They went on to run a network of gardens, stores, eating houses and boarding rooms essential to life in towns across the colony. Henry Lawson celebrated them, and Braidwood's Quong Tart became as well regarded as the Governor. One Chinese-European family became part of the commercial, journalistic and religious fabric of Queanbeyan and Canberra. The Tankey family story will illustrate the contributions of the early Chinese to the Queanbeyan district, one of whom became the business partner of a militant Canberran that led a national political party.



Yum cha lunch

Our function for June will be a yum cha lunch, venue to be decided. Plan to come out of the cold to enjoy a lunch on Sunday 18 June at 12.00, to cost \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. Watch this space for details.

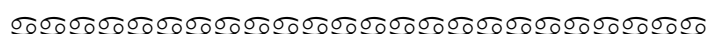
Fast facts from the *Beijing Review*, April 2023

- The Grand Canal, which connects northern and southern parts of China, has a history dating back to the 5th century B.C. Due to human activity and more recently climate change, some parts of the canal began drying up in the first half of the 20th century. Since 1 March, 191 million cubic meters of water were diverted into the canal; on 4 April the last dried out section of the canal was refilled with water. The Grand Canal is the world's oldest and longest man-made water way has been a World Heritage Site since 2014.
- According to a survey by China Youth Daily, many people have realised the harm of overuse of mobile phones. The survey showed 80% of participants were trying limit their mobile phone use, 62% had deleted unnecessary apps and 58% had reduced time on their phones. Only 23% used their phone less than 3 hours a day, about a third spent more than five hours a day on the phone. 88% admitted that overuse had caused them health issues.
- China's fuel cell vehicle (FCV) market has grown rapidly in recent years, with a compound annual growth of 32.3% during the 2016-22 period. In the period 10,300 vehicles were sold. FCVs are fuelled by hydrogen gas.

Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.

Recycling your cans and bottles to help the Society

Please consider recycling your cans and bottles by taking them to a RETURN-IT depot. Detailed instruction were contained in the February and March *Bulletins* and further Information is available on the RETURN-IT website www.returnit.com.au/. We hope to have details on our website soon.



Committee news– April 2023 meeting

Your committee held its first meeting following the 2023 Annual General Meeting (AGM) in the first week of April prior to Easter at the 'Beijing House' restaurant, Hawker shops.

Although it was only a small gathering with committee members either overseas or frantic with work commitments, those who could attend were able to push through a packed agenda. We were pleased to see many regular faces at the AGM in March and welcomed all to have the opportunity to catch up at dinner post the completion of the swearing in of the committee and official matters.

Logistics around finalising details for the April and May functions – a movie 'Phoenix' followed by a Queanbeyan Heritage walk were worked though, with key committee members travelling close to and at the time. The movie has come with good reviews, so we hope that members also enjoy it. We're particularly excited that there is a date set for the walk in May – we now need everyone to wish very hard for good weather. We are also looking at options for our June luncheon.

When talking about the functions, another matter was raised and agreed by the committee. That is to charge slightly more for non-members attending functions. This is already something which other organisations do.

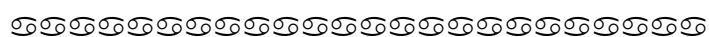
Our schools' coordinator, Amanda, reported back to the committee on her progress contacting the ACT Education Electorate to confirm schools teaching Chinese in 2023, who would therefore be eligible to participate in the Panda Competition and School Awards. Amanda will also be building in wording to explain how the Chinese language teaching and learning fits within the teaching curriculum.

We have received approval from the ACT Government to spend the funds still available to us from the Technology Grant we were awarded, on a PA system with a Pre-Amp. Any remaining funds will be used to purchase either an extra Square (an electronic payments device) or electrical cords. It is also time shortly for our Treasurer, Neil, to acquit the Multicultural Grant which had been received for the Lantern Festival.

With only four staying for dinner, we had a limited selection of dishes – my favourites of the three were the Yuxiang Eggplant and the shredded duck with noodles.

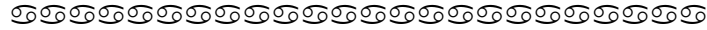
By the time you read this, Easter will have been and the Autumn leaves well coloured.

Your Secretary, Tanja



Film evening

The film evening that was to be held on 13 April was unfortunately cancelled due to lack of numbers. Apologies to all who were interested, we may re-schedule it in the future.



Australian Centre on China in the World

Double Witness | Public Programs

See more information about the exhibition on the Centre's website.

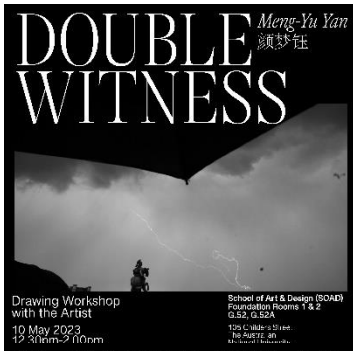


Celebration Evening / Exhibition Opening

Wed 10 May, 6:00 - 7:00pm AEST

CIW Foyer

Join us for a celebration evening and exhibition opening in the CIW Foyer. We will be joined by speaker, Oliver Giles who is a freelance journalist and editor specialising in writing about visual art and former executive editor of Tatler Hong Kong, where he was responsible for all content related to the city and oversaw art features for the seven Tatler titles across Asia.

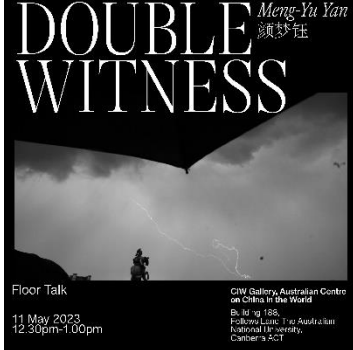


Drawing Workshop with the Artist

Wed 10 May, 12:30 - 2:00pm AEST

Foundation Rooms 1&2, G.52 and G.52A
ANU School of Art and Design

An opportunity to gain insights from the artist, Meng-Yu Yan 颜梦钰 in a workshop setting.



Floor Talk with the Artist

Thu 11 May, 12:30 - 1:00pm AEST

CIW Gallery

An opportunity to hear directly from Meng-Yu Yan 颜梦钰 about the exhibition in the CIW gallery.

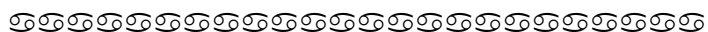


Film Screening with Q&A

Thu 11 May, 5:30 - 7:30pm AEST

CIW Seminar Room

Join us for a screening of *Love and Death in Montmartre* (蒙馬特之愛與死, Evans Chan, 2019) with an introduction by Professor Ari Heinrich.



Peony power

By G.P. Wilson, Beijing Review NO.16 APRIL 20, 2023



The Caozhou Peony Garden, the largest of its kind in Heze, Shandong Province, on April 7 (COURTESY PHOTO)

A cluster of tall buildings rising straight out of the wheat fields, at first glance, Heze differs little from any of the other small cities on the North China Plain. However, the city is gaining increasing recognition in China and internationally for its use of its traditional heritage as a resource for building prosperity.

Located in southwest Shandong Province, around 600 km south of Beijing, Heze has centuries of history as a centre for peony cultivation and is still a global powerhouse in the breeding and production of this much sought-after flower. Over recent years, the city's government, businesses and community have thrown their full force behind the diversification of the peony industry, using both scientific and cultural innovation to develop new products, create new demand and raise the fortunes of the city and its people.

Building on these successes, Heze is now looking beyond China's shores to share its peony culture internationally. In doing so, the city hopes not only to continue the expansion of its signature industry but also to contribute its famous peonies as a bridge for China's ongoing efforts in global community building and exchange.



A craftsperson in Heze creates peony-themed porcelain artworks (COURTESY PHOTO)

The King of Flowers

Heze is China's hotly disputed capital of peonies, with Luoyang in neighbouring Henan Province also pressing its claim on the title. Both cities can boast centuries of peony-producing history, but it is Luoyang that holds the claim as the original home of China's favourite flower.

Peonies have been used in traditional medicine throughout China for thousands of years, but those first cultivated as ornamental flowers in Luoyang rose to feverish levels of fame during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). Cultivated extensively in the Tang capitals of Luoyang in the east and Changan, now Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, in the west, the short period of their blooming drew such enormous crowds that Tang poet Liu Yuxi (772-842) described the season of their opening as "rocking the entire capital." Similarly, a poem by Liu's contemporary Bai Juyi read that in the 20 days from the flowers opening to them dropping, the entire city went mad.

So closely tied were peonies to the imperial family and nobility, that their centres of production changed with the changing of China's dynasties until Heze emerged as the final peony capital in the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644). Over the past 400 years, Heze has come to surpass all other cities in its production of peonies, being home to 1,280 cultivars—divided into nine colours and 10 shapes. Today, Heze continues to follow the centuries-old tradition of supplying the capital with peonies, with 80-90 percent of those grown in Beijing originating in Heze.

This long history of infatuation with peonies has imbued in them centuries of cultural meaning and inherent symbolism. Their long association with the nobility has conveyed a well-deserved nobility upon them, their supreme beauty has led to their use as a symbol of beauty and their cultivation over generations from wild stock is an achievement in the harmony between humans and nature. In these ways, and many others, peonies have come to symbolize the pinnacle of many traditional Chinese ideals, and their importance within literature and culture, combined with the nation's

love for them, has led to them becoming known by a second name, the King of Flowers.

Peonies for prosperity

Common prosperity has been a nationwide pursuit over the course of China's modern development. Having roots in traditional Chinese philosophy, the concept calls for increased economic and social equality, the promotion of a large middle class and the reduction of divides such as the rural-urban development gap. The central authorities have been empowering local governments to take charge of their own paths to common prosperity, making use of their distinctive local resources and advantages to create opportunities for balanced, people-centric growth. While, in terms of volume, Heze's grain production far outweighs its production of peonies, the distinctive nature of the city's relationship with the flowers and the position they hold within the nation's culture have made them a natural choice as a vehicle for innovation in the pursuit of prosperity.

Now, local peony art hangs above locally produced peony-patterned carpets and tiles in the halls of Heze's buildings. Peony-patterned bottled water stands in shops alongside peony-petal and peony-stamen teas, peony-shaped and peony-flavored ice creams, and peony cakes. Peony-themed amusement parks offer peony-themed souvenirs to peony-loving tourists. Also, peony-themed hotels serve peony-themed banquets on peony-patterned porcelain, washed down with peony-flavored baijiu, or Chinese distilled spirits.

Research has found that the consumption of peony-seed oil has cardiovascular and other health benefits, leading to developments such as the production of cooking oils and health foods, as well as the application of peonies in the production of skincare products, cosmetics and even toothpaste.

Heze has grasped its distinctive local advantage with both hands and now has more than 120 companies operating within peony-related industries, producing an annual output valued at 10 billion yuan (\$1.45 billion) and creating a demand for 25,000 tons of peonies each year. This demand is creating increased economic opportunities for peony growers and new forms of employment for Heze's residents.

Going global

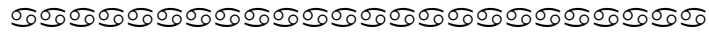
The short time the peonies are in bloom makes mid-spring a busy time in Heze, and early April has seen the city launch the 32nd Heze International Peony Cultural Tourism Festival on April 7, host the 2023 World Peony Conference on April 8-10 and inaugurate the Heze Peony International Communication Forum on April 9. Held to find new ways to share peony-related culture internationally, the forum welcomed the next phase in the city's ongoing cultural and economic development. Internationalizing peony culture and encouraging the appreciation of China's unofficial national flower will not only create new opportunities for Heze's products but also contribute to China's efforts in international cultural engagement and exchange.

Lu Cairong, Vice President of China International Communications Group, told the forum via video link that peonies have been a vivid example of cultural exchange and integration between China and other countries for centuries, but that as times change and new technologies develop, it is necessary to innovate the methods of international communication surrounding the flower to spur on industrial development and further cultural exchange. Lu said peony-related

international communication should not only be diverse but also localized and should go hand in hand with the building of well-known peony-related intellectual property and culture.

Speaking on the power of peonies for cultural engagement overseas, Xi Yanchun, Director of the Information Office of the provincial government, told the forum that work must be done to share the story of Heze's peony-related development with international audiences and create a culture of mutual learning around peonies.

Heze's innovative use of peonies for economic and cultural development has become a prominent national example of the pursuit of common prosperity. Through innovations in international communication, this example can also be of value to overseas communities pursuing development and prosperity. By sowing the (peony) seeds of cultural sharing, people can reap the increased understanding that is currently so needed among nations.



24 Solar Terms: 5 things you may not know about Grain Rain

chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2023-04-20 06:00



Grain Rain [Photo/chinadaily.com.cn]

The traditional Chinese lunar calendar divides the year into 24 solar terms. Grain Rain (Chinese: 谷雨), as the last term in spring, starts on April 20 and ends on May 5.

Grain Rain originates from the old saying, "Rain brings up the growth of hundreds of grains," which shows that this period of rainfall is extremely important for the growth of crops. The Grain Rain signals the end of cold weather and a rapid rise in temperature. Here are five things that you may not know about the Grain Rain.



Key time for agriculture

Grain Rain brings a marked increase in temperature and rainfall and the grains grow faster and stronger. It's a key time to protect the crops from insect pests. [Photo/Xinhua]



Sandstorms occur

Grain Rain falls between the end of spring and the beginning of summer, with infrequent cold air moving to the south and lingering cold air in the north. From the end of April to the beginning of May, the temperature rises much higher than it does in March. With dry soil, an unsteady atmosphere and heavy winds, gales and sandstorms become more frequent. [Photo/Xinhua.com]



Drinking tea

There is an old custom in southern China that people drink tea on the day of Grain Rain. Spring tea during Grain Rain is rich in vitamins and amino acids, which can help to remove heat from the body and is good for the eyes. It is also said that drinking tea on this day would prevent bad luck. [Photo/Xinhua]



Eating *toona sinensis*

People in northern China have the tradition to eat the vegetable *toona sinensis* during Grain Rain. An old Chinese saying goes "*toona sinensis* before the rain is as tender as silk". The vegetable is nutritious and can help to strengthen the immune system. It is also good for the stomach and skin. [Photo/File photo]



Grain Rain Festival

The Grain Rain festival is celebrated by fishing villages in the coastal areas of northern China. Grain Rain marks the start of the fishermen's first voyage of the year. The custom dates back more than 2,000 years ago, when people believed they owed a good harvest to the gods, who protected them from the stormy seas. People would worship the sea and stage sacrifice rites on the Grain Rain festival, praying for a bountiful harvest and a safe voyage for their loved ones. [Photo/shandong.sdchina.com]

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch — membership application form

Annual subscriptions are due on 1 January and are current until 31 December of the same year. The monthly Bulletin is included in the subscription and is distributed by email.

Subscription rates, payable to **the Treasurer, PO Box 530, Civic Square ACT 2608** are:
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