

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch Inc



澳中友好协会

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Bulletin

2023/2 February 2023

Coming events

Annual General Meeting

15 March

Queanbeyan Chinese Heritage walk

April

Memberships due

All memberships fall due on 1 January. Details of prices and bank transfer information is on the back page of this Bulletin.



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Promoting friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese people

Annual General Meeting

The Society's Annual General Meeting will be held on Wednesday 15 March at the Golden King Restaurant in Phillip at 7.00pm. The meeting will be short (about fifteen minutes) and will be followed by dinner at a cost of \$30 per person. Book by emailing acfsevent@gmail.com by 8 March.

Please consider attending and standing for the Committee. Meetings are once a month, at a restaurant, and are followed by dinner. New people and ideas always welcome!

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## New members

Welcome to new members Lyu Zhendong, Donna Priol, Robert and Norma Burne, Thuy and Tien Hoang and Noel Cock, Morgan McClure and Angelina Sharma and family.

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ANU Centre on China in the World Seminar

Going solo: China's 'singles economy' and the date-renting industry

By Pan Wang

Unpacking China's growing 'singles economy' through a case study of the date-renting industry in China

Date: Thursday 9 March 2023

Time: 4:00pm–5:30pm AEDT

Location: Online: **REGISTRATION ESSENTIAL**

China has witnessed a rising number of singles in recent years, including the unmarried, divorced and widowed. The number of people who live alone is also on the rise, especially in cosmopolitan cities and coastal areas. This rising single population gave rise to an emerging 'singles economy' (danshen jingji), marked by growing demand for mini-apartments for solo dwellers, appliances for one-person households, food delivery services tailored to 'singletons', tour packages for single men and women, companion pets, and boyfriend and girlfriend-renting services.

I will unpack China's growing 'singles economy' through a case study of the date-renting industry, which has become a thriving part of the Chinese economy. Through analysis of various date-renting websites and drawing on the theories that focused on the intersection of romance/emotions and the market/capitalism, I identify the logic of the date-renting industry and the gendered strategic presentation of 'date-traders' online. I argue that the boundary between emotions and capitalism has become increasingly blurred as these two seemingly opposing forces are converging, constituting a unique

Fast facts from the *Beijing Review*, February 2023

- In China today the private sector is responsible more than 50% of the country's tax revenue, 60% of its GDP, 70% of its technical innovation and 80% of urban jobs. President Xi Jinping recently said, "We will provide an enabling environment for private enterprises." This included protection of property rights and equal treatment of state-owned and private enterprises.
- This year's Spring Festival travel rush saw over 1.5 billion passenger trips by rail, road, water and air. This travel rush is a 40-day transport peak around the Chinese New Year which ended 15 February this year. Railway travel continued to rebound, recovering to 90% of pre-pandemic levels of 2019. Data from online ride-hailing company Didi also showed volumes over 90% of 2019 figures.
- China's luxury goods market is expected to grow to 816 billion yuan by 2025, that's about 25% of the global total according to accounting firm PwC China. The Asia-Pacific region has become an important growth engine for the global luxury market. Offshore duty-free shopping in Chinese island province of Hainan has boosted the market. It accounted for 13% of Chinese consumer spending on luxuries in 2021.

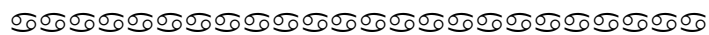
Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.

phenomenon in China's singles economy. This manifests as an economically moulded dating culture intertwined with new, intricate social and personal relations – a by-product of China's demographic shifts and rapidly growing market economy.



Pan Wang is Senior Lecturer in Chinese and Asian Studies, University of New South Wales, Sydney. She is author of *Love and Marriage in Globalizing China* (2015, Routledge). She currently serves as Convenor of Chinese studies, and teaches and researches in gender, love and marriage in China and Chinese media and communication. Her latest publications include "The Cultural Economy of Xiangqin: an analysis of PRC dating shows, date-renting, and matchmaking apps" (2022), *Continuum: Journal of Media & Cultural Studies* and "Love during the Cultural Revolution: Evidence from a couple's private letters 1968-1977" (2022), *The History of the Family*.

The ANU China Seminar Series is supported by the Australian Centre on China in the World at ANU College of Asia and the Pacific.



Committee News – February 2023 meeting

Your committee held its first meeting for 2023 on the warm evening of 20 February at the 'China Tea Club', North Lyneham.

We reviewed the Chinese New Year's celebratory dinner – all those we spoke with on the night really enjoyed the meal - and the Lunar New Year festivities in Dickson, organised through the ACT Government. The Lunar New Year festivities were a success with the volunteers on the day working hard to sell many lanterns and to promote the lantern making workshop on 29 January and the Lantern Festival on 4 February 2023.

A key agenda item was to review both the lantern making workshop and the Lantern Festival – in terms of what went well and what we could improve upon for the 2024 festivities. With over 450 attendees on such a chilly wind-swept evening we all agreed that Alex did a great job promoting the event to as many media outlets as possible – this also led to Carol providing at least 6 interviews and the ABC TV news team arriving on the night of the festival to interview Carol. All the volunteers at both events and performers at the festival can't be thanked enough for their efforts.

Assessment of the funds still available from the Technology grant we were awarded in 2022, has encouraged us to apply for a variation and to consider the purchase of a PA system with a Pre Amp. If it is possible to vary the grant agreement and to make this purchase, we know that further events, including the Lantern Festival, will be even more well received, considering the sound quality will improve.

We organized a date and venue for our AGM – 7pm on Wednesday 15 March 2023 at the 'Golden King' restaurant in Philip – this has become a favourite spot for us to host the AGM and we hope that you can make it.

The meal at the end of our meeting was very tasty – I particularly liked the mapo tofu.

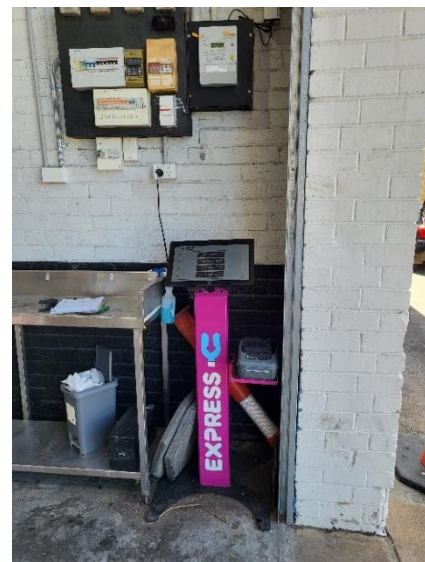
Stay cool over the last bit of Summer.

Your Secretary, Tanja

Recycling your cans and bottles to help the Society

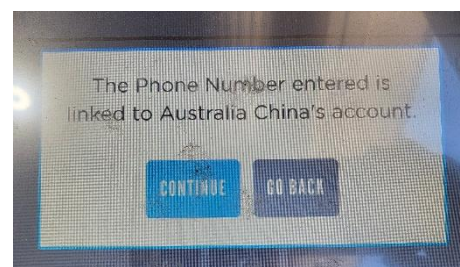
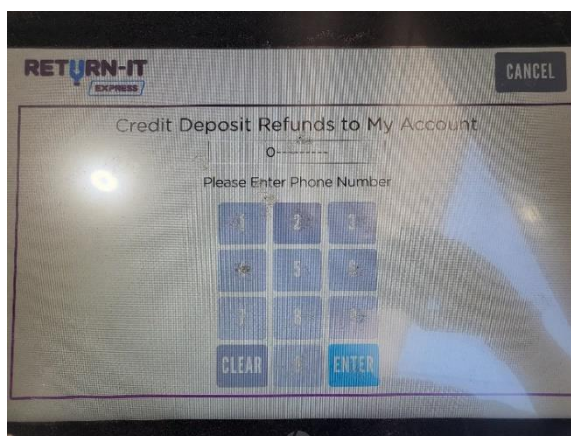
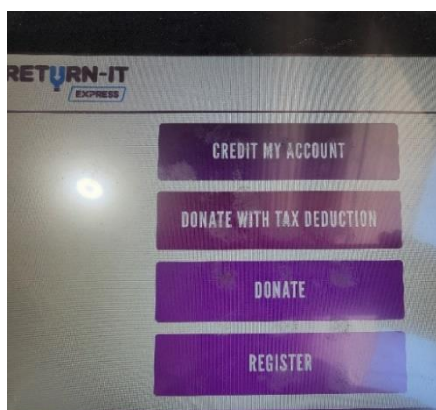
You can return your cans and bottles to either a RETURN-IT 'Depot' or an 'Express' site.

Depots are located at Fyshwick and Mitchell and process on the spot. You do not have to pre-sort your items but must take lids off.



The process at 20 Barrier St, Fyshwick is as follows:

The building has 2 sections. Go to the lefthand side and just inside on the right is a screen:



Click **Credit my account** **Enter.**

*Enter the number **417041148** and press*

Press '**Continue**' and the next screen will ask how many bags you have. Put in the number and press **Enter** and labels will print.

Take your labels to the right hand building and join the queue.



When you get to the front press the 'Start' button and wait for the attendant to come and scan the label. When your label has been scanned start feeding your items through.

When you have finished press '**End**' or '**Finish**' and a receipt will print showing how many items and the amount to be credited to the Society account.

Express

There are a number of express sites and the list is on the website www.returnit.com.au

What do I need to do to be set up to receive a digital refund?

Firstly, you need to pre-register at www.returnit.com.au/ on the sign-up page and provide both a login profile and a personal account profile including address and bank details .

The Society's Bank Account details are:

Name: Beyond Bank
A/c Name: ACFS ACT Branch Inc
A/c BSB.: 325-185
A/c No.: 03411481

Once you have registered you simply need your mobile phone as an account identifier to initiate the recycling drop off process each time you go to a Return-It Express Stand

What type of bag do I need for Express "Bag, Drop and Go"?

Place your eligible containers into durable slightly see-through bags, like the regular kitchen tidy bags you can buy from the shops. Make sure your bag securely tied and will not break or fall apart. Your containers need to remain in your labelled bag with your personal barcode in order for the depot to do the container count and provide your electronic refund. Plastic bags are necessary so that when the containers are sent to the recycling depot, they can be identified as belonging to you, which ensure you receive the correct refund.

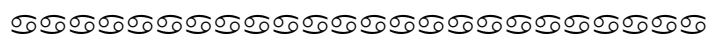
If you prefer to avoid plastic bags you can take containers directly to the depots at Mitchell and Fyshwick where they can be processed on the spot. You can also receive the refund in cash at Mitchell and Fyshwick.

Return-It will recycle ALL bags that come in through the scheme.

Kitchen tidy bags that you can buy at any grocery store are fine, staff just need to be able to see what's in them.

Further Information is available on the RETURN-IT website www.returnit.com.au/

Carol Keil



Lunar New Year at Dickson, 21 January 2023

A celebration of Lunar New Year in Dickson was organized by the City Renewal Authority. Expressions of interest were requested by late November and we submitted one for an information stall selling Chinese lanterns and decorations. There was both a lack of communication followed by mis-communication with the Authority and it was not until a week before that we were informed we could have a stall at no charge. Your committee rallied around and prepared posters, decorations and items for sale. The main purpose of the day was to advertise the Lantern workshop and festival and we gave out hundreds of fliers. We also had fliers for the Panda competition.

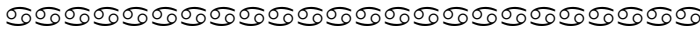
Carol, Brian, John and Jean took all the supplies and the stall was set up by 11am. We had large and medium sized lanterns for





sale as well as Chinese decorations left over from the Panda competition and everything we took we sold! The profits from the sales will fund at least 5 of our Project Hope students. We also acquired one new member and an old member re-joined. Thanks to Jean, John, Corinne, Neil and Brian for all their help.

Carol Keil



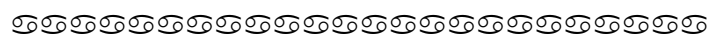
Lantern-making Workshop, 29 January 2023

Some 27 people enjoyed the Lantern-making Workshop at Cook on Sunday 29 January 2023. It was a rainy afternoon but inside the room all was bustle and cheer.

Thanks to all who helped out: Carol, Neil, Tanja, Nathan, John, Angela, Corinne, John C, Alex and Vera, Jean B.

Jean Norman, photos from Corinne Zhang





Lantern Festival 2023

The day could not have been much worse – 35km/hr winds and an apparent temperature of 10 degrees. We gathered at 12.30 at the Canberra Beijing Garden, which had just been freshly mowed so was in a good state, to unload our cars and Neil’s trailer. There was quite a distance to carry everything as we were unable to use the entrance we have used in the past due to ACT government restrictions. The pavilion, where all the tables are located, seemed to be acting as a wind-tunnel, making it very cold. The first task was to string up the lights and lanterns in the pavilion and at the performance area. As the wind was so fierce, to stop the lanterns being blown off the lights, we secured them with fishing line but were thwarted in the end as the wire in the lanterns broke and they nearly all blew off! Whilst this was going on a team at the pavilion were preparing lanterns for sale. Despite the awful conditions we completed most of the set-up by 3.45pm. We could only put up a few decorations in the trees as the wind was so strong so they and the display of lanterns for sale were put up last. The laminated signs for the sale prices were being blown horizontal as the wind had not abated one scrap.



The program started right on time and after an intro and legend on the origins of the Festival, Minister Sun from the Embassy made a short speech and we then had a very colourful and entertaining program of music, martial arts, dancing and a cheongsam show provided by the ANU Chinese Classical Music Ensemble, the Australia Guangxi Friendship Association, the Federation of the Canberra Chinese Community, ACT



Chinese Australia Association, the Australia School of Contemporary Chinese, the Australia Chinese Culture Exchange and Promotion Association, Jin Ju Wushu Academy. This was interspersed with the ringing of the peace bell and a reading of the poem but the wind made it difficult to hear the bell toll.

The hand-made lantern competition had 27 entries with most from children aged 7-10. Michael, Jean and Minister Sun were the judges and the prizes were presented by Mr Sun.



The final performance for the evening was a lion dance by the Yut Hung Kung Fu Academy and the timing was perfect as it was now dark and the wind had dropped, making the conditions ideal for the lantern parade which was led by the Academy's dragon.

Despite the trying conditions we had around 500+ attendees from many sectors of the Canberra community and sold over 200 lanterns which will help with funding our 10 Project Hope students.

We received very good publicity: I was interviewed twice on 2CC, three times on the ABC, once on ABC TV and we appeared several times in print media and also on-line and in social media. Thanks to Alex for an excellent effort.

The day could not have happened without the generous help of Michael, Brian, John W, John C, Vincent, Neil, Angela Jean, Amanda, Tori, Vera, Alex, Ghislaine, Penny, Gavin, Geoff, Eliza and Mark, and Corinne. Special thanks to Tanja for organising all the performers both before and during the event and to Richard for looking after the sound. The Chinese Embassy also generously donated prizes, lantern kits and free books.

Carol Keil, photos by Brian Keil



The History of Chinese Lanterns

Chinese paper lanterns originated during the Eastern Han Dynasty (25–220), when they were used as lamp shades or covers in ancient China.

At first, paper lanterns were used to worship Buddha in temples. Mingdi (reign 57–75 AD), the Eastern Han emperor who is credited with Buddhism's early spread in China, ordered the people of the imperial palace to light lanterns to worship Buddha on the 15th day of the first lunar month, which later became the Lantern Festival.



During the Tang Dynasty (618–907), people began to use paper lanterns more secularly to celebrate their peaceful life and the power of their country, which made lanterns more and more popular throughout China.

Features of Chinese Lanterns

In ancient China, the art of making lanterns was a collection of crafts, including Chinese painting, paper-cutting, and needlework. The materials used for lantern frames include bamboo, wood, wheat straw, and metal. Paper and silk are traditionally the major materials. Popular illustrations on lanterns include landscapes, portraits of great people, dragon and phoenix designs, birds, and fish.

Types of Ancient Chinese Lanterns

There are three main ancient types of lanterns: the palace lantern, gauze lantern, and the shadow-picture lantern. The palace lantern was the most-used type.

Dragon-and-phoenix patterns were the main elements on palace lanterns, which represented royal status or upper-class society. Dragons were seen as the symbol of emperors in ancient China. They carried the meaning of wisdom, prosperity, great power, and strength. Lanterns decorated with dragons could only be used in royal family premises in ancient China.



A palace lantern

Beautiful mountain or river illustrations on red lanterns expressed (wishes for) harmony and balance in nature, the elements, or families.

Riddle lanterns hanging on gates with riddles written on them were used to welcome guests, who liked to guess the answers to the riddles.

Meanings of Chinese Lantern Colours

In Chinese culture, the colours of lanterns express different meanings. They are used for different occasions.

Red Lanterns

Red paper lanterns are symbols of wealth, fame, and prosperity. Red lanterns are used to celebrate occasions of joy and harmony, such as weddings, opening a business, family reunions, as well as the celebration of some festivals.

Yellow Lanterns

Yellow lanterns were mostly used in palaces in imperial times in China. Yellow was the emperors' colour in ancient China, so they were not permitted for use by the general public. It is now said that yellow lanterns can bring good luck to young students in school.

White Lanterns

In Chinese culture, white is related to death or funerals. So, white bamboo lanterns were often used at funerals in China.

Green Lanterns

Green lanterns are often seen during temple fairs or the Lantern Festival. Green has meanings of health, prosperity, and harmony. Green lanterns are becoming more and more popular nowadays.

The Lantern Festival

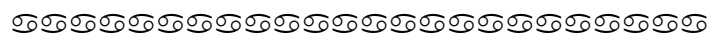
The Lantern Festival is one of the best days to view Chinese lanterns. The custom of viewing lantern displays on the evening of the Lantern Festival has a history of almost 2,000 years, since the Han Dynasty. It was a great event traditionally.

Guessing lantern riddles is one of the most interesting activities of the Lantern Festival. People gather under the hanging lanterns to compete to be the one who figures out the most lantern riddle answers.



Source: <https://www.chinahighlights.com/travelguide/culture/lanterns.htm>

Thanks to Carol Keil for the link to this article.



Longquan Swords

By LU ZHU

COMPARED to sabers, rapiers or cutlasses that are more commonly seen in the West, Chinese swords are distinct in their look, and more importantly, rich connotation of culture.

In ancient China, people carried swords for self-defense, but also for displaying their social status and fondness of errantry. In modern times, sometimes swords are hung at home or office to ward off "evil" things. It is said that swords with a "soul" could alarm their masters when dangers approach or sinister things intrude. Therefore Chinese always called the sword baojian, meaning treasured sword.

The most famous sword in China is undoubtedly the Longquan Sword. According to historical records, it was the first iron sword, forged about 2,600 years ago by master smith Ou Yezi. Prior to that, swords had been made of bronze, while Ou was the person that figured out the method of smelting pig iron and forging it into a sword. The place of origin was hence named Longquan County, now in Zhejiang Province. Longquan later became a geographical indication; swords produced here are all called Longquan Swords.

Beyond a Weapon

Swords are one of the earliest cold weapons in Chinese history. In the seventh century they were gradually replaced by new weapons and arms in the battlefield, and then began to bear more cultural connotations.

In ancient China two objects were regarded as the emblem of power – seals and swords.

Due to strict hierarchy at that time, it was seen as a privilege to carry swords, which represented social status, rank, and taste. The rules for wearing swords were also clear and obeyed rigorously. In the Warring States Period (475-221 BC), for example, kings could start to carry swords at the age of 20, magistrates at 30, aristocrats at 40, while commoners could be armed with swords only on occasions of utmost necessity.

The sword has always been seen as a symbol of masculinity. In the Chinese martial art culture, swords are the physical manifestation of many notions of chivalry – pride, freedom, justice, strength, among many others. A chivalrous hero defended justice by a sword, not by a saber or a gun – through a sword the hero was able to remove any obstacles in the path to a new world. In this context, swords were thought of having souls, like faithful friends of their masters. Therefore, many scholars and poets also wore swords, and the most famous ones are Confucius (551-479 BC) and Li Bai (701-762), the Tang Dynasty poet.

King of Swords

For aristocrats and officials, a sword was an important accessory that should match its master's status. This explained why Longquan Swords have been popular throughout history for their high quality, design, and fame. They were offered to emperors and high-ranking officials as tributes and given as gifts among friends. Longquan also appeared in poems, synonymous with the sword. Li Bai once wrote: commoner like me, carry Longquan at the waist. The verse expressed his resolution of serving the country and deterring enemies.

Longquan Swords are known for their hard texture and sharp blade, which are attributed to the forging technique. As early as the fifth century BC, Chinese were trying to make the iron harder by carburizing the heated iron and forging it repeatedly. As an old saying goes, a hundred times of forging turn iron to steel. Repeated heating, folding, and forging can remove impurities from the pig iron, and eventually turn it to steel with a firm and dense texture. The texture could be seen on the surface of the blade, which in fact indicates the times of folding and forging. Normally, to make a one-kilogram blade for the Longquan Sword, it requires tens of thousands of times of hammering pig iron weighing three to five kilograms.

Restricted by the ancient technology, the carbon content of steel remained low back then, so quenching is imperative to improve the blade's rigidity, hardness, tenacity, and resistance to abrasion. The steel at 750-800 degrees centigrade should be put in water with an appropriate temperature to cool down. The temperature of the water is vital – as it determines whether all efforts come to a success or nothing. In other words, the moment when steel goes into the water is decisive – and discerns masters from ordinary smiths.

This explains why generations of ironsmiths were so eager to find "magic water," which, in modern scientific perspective, contains special microelements prone to causing chemical reaction. Water in Longquan County is rich in specific minerals, making it ideal for quenching. But folk tales attribute Longquan's success to a mysterious oracle – it is said that close to where Ou Yezi forged the first Longquan

Sword, there were seven wells aligning like the Big Dipper stars, and then Ou carved the seven stars on his sword.

Traditionally it takes more than 20 processes to make a Longquan Sword, many of which hinge on the experience of sword smiths. Take hand grinding for example. A good grinding can make the blade sharper, texture look smoother, and the connection to the hilt sit firmly. A kind of stone in Longquan County, called "light stone," is found perfect for grinding. The whole process of hand grinding takes several days to months, as it is divided to coarse grinding, fine sharpening, and polishing.

History Stands Witness

Longquan Sword, as the first iron sword in Chinese history, has long represented the pinnacle of metal smelting technique. In the Qin and Han dynasties (221 BC-AD 220), Longquan County was the sword supplier for imperial families. The smith trade here hence boomed and ushered in its heyday in the 10th century when sword smithies and shops were seen everywhere with a street named Sword Shop Street. In the following several centuries, the Longquan Sword prevailed across the country along with the spread of Taoism and Buddhism. Taoists used swords at religious ceremonies, while Buddhist monks advocated practicing martial arts, both boosting the demands for swords.

Longquan smiths took pains in enriching their products' cultural connotation, packaging, and identity. For centuries, Longquan Swords have been preferred by not only kungfu practitioners but also art connoisseurs. In 1978, on a national crafts fair, a Longquan Sword was used to cut a stack of six copper coins in half, with the blade intact. In Wanjian Shanzhuang, a sword museum in Hong Kong, three Longquan Sword made in the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911) are among its collections.

In June 2006, the forging technique of Longquan Swords was listed as a national intangible cultural heritage. The 130-year-old Shen Guanglong Sword Smithy was nominated the protector of the technique, and its fourth generation owner, Shen Xinpei, the representative heir. Longquan Swords have been presented as the state gift to foreign dignitaries such as former U.S. President Nixon and Russian President Putin. The swords of the Honor Guard of the three services of the People's Liberation Army are also made in Longquan technique.

The sword is of great significance in Chinese culture – it is the symbol of supreme rule, and consolidates the glory that generals pursue; it is the weapon of warriors, but also epitomizes the world of adventure that roving knights long for. It is the heritage that generations of smiths protected for centuries.

(Compiled by China Today)

Thanks to Carol Keil for this item.

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:

Single \$20 Family \$35 Centrelink Concession Holder: Individual \$15 and Family \$25

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Renewal New Member

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Australia China Friendship Society
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ACT Branch Bulletin