

# Australia China Friendship Society

ACT Branch Inc

澳中友好协会

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## Bulletin

2024/7 August 2024

### Coming events

**Mandarin awards presentation ceremony**

**8 Sept**

**China Film Week, Hoyts Belconnen**

**12-16 Sept**

**Members' afternoon tea**

**15 Sept**

**ANU Classical Chinese Music Ensemble concert**

**6 October**



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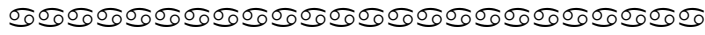
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Corinne Zhang

*Promoting friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese people*

## School awards

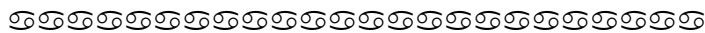
The presentation of school awards for students of Mandarin will take place on Sunday 8 September at the ANU China in the World Centre at 2.00pm. Members and friends are invited to witness the ceremony which is a joyous event for the students and their families. Please book by emailing [acfsevent@gmail.com](mailto:acfsevent@gmail.com) by 1 September.



## Afternoon Tea for members

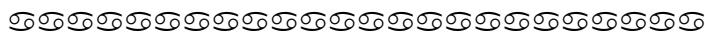
A complimentary afternoon tea will be held for members on Sunday 15 September in the Catchpole Room at the Jamison Southern Cross Club. The Society will be paying for members to attend this function, and guests may attend at a cost of \$21pp.

It will be a good chance for all our members to get together and enjoy a chat. Would you please let us know at [acfsevent@gmail.com](mailto:acfsevent@gmail.com), by 28 August if you would like to come to the afternoon tea as we need to have a minimum number for our booking. A reminder will be sent the week before. If you have special dietary requirements, please let us know when you book.



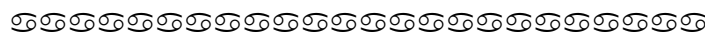
## ANU Classical Chinese Music Ensemble concert

The ANU Classical Chinese Music Ensemble will present its annual fund raising concert entitled 'Mountains, Waters and Harmony', on Sunday 6 October in the auditorium of the Australian Centre on China in the World, Fellows Lane, Acton at 2.00pm. Prices are adults, \$30; students/concessions \$20 (this includes ACFS members); under 18 years free. Booking information in a later *Bulletin*.



## China Film week, 12–16 Sept

Hoyts Belconnen is presenting a week of Chinese films from 12 to 16 September. There may be some complimentary tickets and if so an email will go out to members.



## ANU Centre on China in the World Events

### Exhibition | Cathy Zhang: Medium of wonders

Artist: Cathy Zhang

Curated by Lucy Chetcuti

9am – 5pm, 19 – 30 Aug | CIW Gallery

## Fast facts from the *Beijing Review*, August 2024

- Forty years ago at the Los Angeles Olympics, China won its first Gold Medal. China had 225 athletes competing in 16 sports. This year Team China has 405 athletes competing in 30 of the 32 sports. It is competing in 236 out of 329 medal events.
- China's national carbon trading market has seen strong vitality over the past 3 years, according to their Ministry of Ecology and Environment. By the end of June the market had a trading volume of 465 million tons of carbon emissions with a total turnover of 27 billion yuan. The carbon price has had a steady upward trend. The closing price on the markets launch date of 16 July 2021 was 48 yuan per ton. On 26 July 2024 the price was 91.6 yuan a rise of 90.8%
- The number of artificial intelligence (AI) patents in China reached 378,000 late last year, up over 40% in a year. This is about 1.4 times the global average. Last year the digital economy's core industries contributed 10% of GDP. By the end of 2023, 155,000 Chinese enterprises had patents related to the digital economy, an increase of 31,000 in a year.
- China's natural gas consumption is expected to rise by between 6.5 and 7.7% this year to 425 billion cubic meters this year. Natural gas is playing a pivotal role in China's energy transition, Last year it accounted for 8.5% of China's total primary energy.

**Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.**



## Committee News – 22 July 2024 meeting

Your committee held the mid-Winter meeting at their regular spot - the 'China Tea Club' restaurant in North Lyneham, with Alex our special guest and Carol at the helm – not on holidays after all. Unfortunately, Carol had been struck down with the lurgy a few weeks earlier and so she and Brian were unable to enjoy their well-earned holiday overseas. We were however happy to see that Carol was on the mend and so able to join us at the meeting and officially farewell Alex.

It was great to hear that Alex's talk for the July function, comparing the US and China in terms of economics, was such a success and stimulated a robust Q & A. Suggestions to encourage future discussions at events were made, with attendees showing interest in this aspect of an event.

We discussed logistics for the August event when we will show the film 'Sister', with dinner prior for those who can make it.

Alex was able to negotiate with the Jamieson Southern Cross Club for the Spring afternoon tea in mid-September, which is our opportunity to come together and celebrate you all as members. Details will be in the newsletter, and we hope to see you there.

We still need a volunteer to take on the organising of the annual Lantern Making workshop and storage of the workshop items from Jean – please contact us if you can help with all or part of this.

After several emails to and fro with the ACT Government regarding the Multicultural grant process, we are not hopeful of future attempts, however, will still put our hat in the ring when the opportunity arises.

We continue to consider possible celebrations for the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ACT Branch of the ACFS and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Beijing Gardens – keep your ears and eyes open for updates. In the meantime, we looking at options to purchase polo shirts with the society's logo for members and will also order commemorative pens.

Prior to enjoying our dinner, we thanked Alex for his work as the publicity officer and wished him and Vera a happy move to Queensland later in the year. Thank you, Alex!

Enjoyed a new dish as part of our dinner – the fabulously named Sound of Music, which is double cooked Tofu with Prawns, Mushrooms & Herbs in a shape of traditional Chinese instrument Pipa, with a homemade dipping sauce.

Hope you are all staying rugged up in this very icy Winter!

Your Secretary, Tanja

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## Isabel Crook, December 1915 – August 2023

I first met Isabel in the early 1980s when she and David visited Canberra. In 1994 I attended conference in Beijing on the Gung He movement and afterwards a small group of us, including Isabel and her son Michael, went to Shandan to visit Gung He co-operatives. This was a most enlightening trip for me and I remained friends with Isabel from this time on visiting her and her son Michael each time I went to China.



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The following is an excerpt from **a tribute** by her close friend of many decades, Dr. Jenny Clegg

## Early influences: the Rural Reconstruction Movement

Isabel was born in China, the daughter of Canadian missionary educators. Leaving for Canada to study, she was to graduate from the University of Toronto with a bachelors and then a masters degree, returning to China in 1939 aged 24 to do anthropological field research in the western province of Sichuan among the Yi, a slave owning society.

From this remote 'opium country', she moved nearer to the wartime capital of Chongqing in 1941 to take part in a year-long 'action research' project sponsored by the National Christian Council. Isabel was to carry out a survey of a small market town of 1,500 households. With the overwhelming majority of its families living in desperate poverty, Prosperity township was decidedly ill-named.

The Prosperity project sought to put goals into action, aiming to improve the lives of the township people, and Isabel's role was a dual one – researcher and reformer, making observations in the process of actively participating in social change.

These ideas of the rural reconstruction movement – building from the grass roots, valuing small scale cooperative enterprise and the researcher contributing meaningfully to society through policymaking – were to be a source of inspiration for Isabel throughout her life and work.

When David, who she met later in 1940, introduced Isabel to the ideas of socialism and communism, no doubt these, were to chime with those ideals of rural reconstruction. At the same time, Marxism provided Isabel with the conceptual tools to make sense of the trials she saw China undergoing.

The pair left China, moving to London where they married in 1942. Isabel signed up for the Canadian army and joined the British Communist Party; she also took work in a munitions factory where she set about organising the women workers in a union. After the war, David and Isabel were able to make contact with the CPC, a link which led to a life-changing invitation to visit to one of the liberated areas to carry out a study of land reform.

## Ten Mile Inn

David and Isabel arrived in Ten Mile Inn, a village of 100 households at the foot of the Taihang mountains in the Shansi-Hebei-Shandong-Henan Border Region at the end of November 1947. They were to stay for eight months, living in the local peoples' houses, getting to know the villagers and observing their daily lives.

From February to April 1948, the Crooks were able to closely follow the operations of a work team sent to guide the villagers in the implementation of the Agrarian Law through a 'Campaign for the Adjustment of Land Holdings and the Purification and Reorganisation of the Party'. From public and private interviews with villagers, leaders and work team members, the Crooks gathered extensive materials providing the basis of their classic study – *Ten Mile Inn: Mass Movement in a Chinese Village*.

The volume details the villagers' customs, patriarchal family relations, marriage arrangements and clan organisations, all set out together with an account of the socioeconomic conditions and structures of local power. This invaluable record was to become tremendously influential among new generations of scholars and students in the West wanting to understand how People's China had come about.



## Later life: completing the Prosperity study

Invited by the CPC leadership to help out in foreign languages training, David and Isabel were soon to get caught up in the life of New China. A career in preparing students for the PRC's diplomatic service at the Foreign Languages Institute (later the Foreign Studies University), raising a family of three sons; taking an active part in political study with foreign comrades based at the Friendship Hotel and following Mao's mass campaigns, Isabel was fully occupied for the next three decades.

Retirement in 1981 saw her set out on new endeavours: the first, returning to her research materials on Prosperity township. These notes comprised thousands of pages of data. By 1994 Isabel had managed to put together a three-volume ethnography, consisting of 25 chapters totalling 457,000 words. This plus the notes, now archived in a library local to Prosperity Township, provide an invaluable source of material on what China was like under the KMT before the CPC took over political leadership.

To prepare all this for manageable publication, Isabel enlisted the help of China historian, Chris Gilmartin and she also was able to reconnect with her co-researcher on the original project, sociologist Yu Xiji.

*Prosperity's Predicament: Identity, Reform and Resistance in Wartime China* was published in 2013 – Isabel was 98. The volume provides fascinating details of day-to-day life in the township but of particular value is the exploration of how formal and informal power was exercised in the township – the linkages between the *Paoge* secret society, the landlords and the retired militia men on the one hand and the Nationalist government structures and the reform project itself on the other.

**Gong He**

Isabel was also to return to her passion for cooperatives through the work of the International Committee for the Promotion of Chinese Industrial Cooperatives (ICCIC also known as Gong He). The organisation, founded in 1939 on the initiative of New Zealander, Rewi Alley, had rallied international support for rural industrial cooperatives supplying China's resistance against Japan's aggression. It was suspended in 1952. However, seeing new opportunities as Deng Xiaoping's reforms unfolded, Alley revived the ICCIC in 1987 to promote genuine cooperatives in China and build bridges with the cooperative movement internationally.

As a member of the executive committee from 1993, Isabel was to participate actively in China's 'reform and opening up' process. With rural industrialisation taking off throughout the country in the 1990s, and reforms in ownership systems underway, interest in cooperatives was growing as a means of developing the public economy in new ways whilst restricting privatisation. Limited by the shortage of capital, local enterprises were encouraged to upgrade machinery through self-raised funds, paying off debts and providing employment while modernising work methods so as to adapt to the new environment of market competition.

As the ICCIC debated what makes a successful cooperative, whilst some emphasised the importance of efficiency and economic results, Isabel strongly advocated self-management and self-help: genuine cooperatives – following the Gong He 'work-together' spirit – with voluntary owner-member control and democratic management were to be seen as key to stimulating enthusiasm and providing incentives to produce.

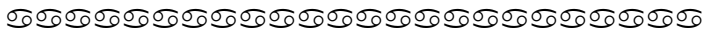
Isabel and ICCIC were also active in China's opening up process: not only was the organisation the first Chinese NGO with foreign members on the executive board, but it also broke new ground in NGO development when in 1998, with Isabel's encouragement, it took a decisive decision to cease reliance on government funding and become independent. Now with son Michael on board, ICCIC was to obtain a grant from the Canadian Cooperative Association (CCA).

With Isabel's participation, ICCIC underwent a transformation from an organisation of foreign friends of China and senior CPC officials into a space of lively research, experimentation, and debate on the cooperative economy with younger economists, academics and government researchers all involved.

**A not uncritical optimist**

Isabel was a witness to China's remarkable transformation from a war-torn land of beggars, bandits and people in rags under a corrupt KMT government, to one set on a path to prosperity, overcoming the problems of poverty, unemployment and instability, under Communist leadership.

**Carol Keil**



# Film night

About twenty members and their friends ventured out to the Jamison Southern Cross Club mid-August 2024 for the showing of the 2021 award winning movie 'My Sister' (我的姐姐) directed by Yin Ruoxi and written by You Xiaoying – with half enjoying dinner beforehand.

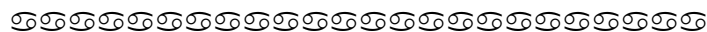
The movie was well received by the viewers, about 2 hours in length and quite heavy. The story revolved around the main character, An Ran (played by award winning actor, Zhang Zifeng) who, following the tragic death of both parents, was faced with the difficult decision of whether to pursue her personal ambitions or to raise her estranged 6 year old brother, as Chinese tradition would dictate – even in modern day China.

All agreed that the acting by An Ran and the young boy who played her brother was outstanding. The movie touched on several topics – including, the juxtaposition between modern day ways, still tortured by tradition; gambling, in this instance mahjong, and how it clouds the decision making of the individual and impacts those close to them; family and class dynamics.

At the end of the movie, Alex proposed that people could gather to talk through the movie a little, which most did. It was interesting to hear the experiences of some regarding the importance of a male child compared with a female child, including the tradition of 'carrying on the family name'. Things seem to be changing, but very slowly.

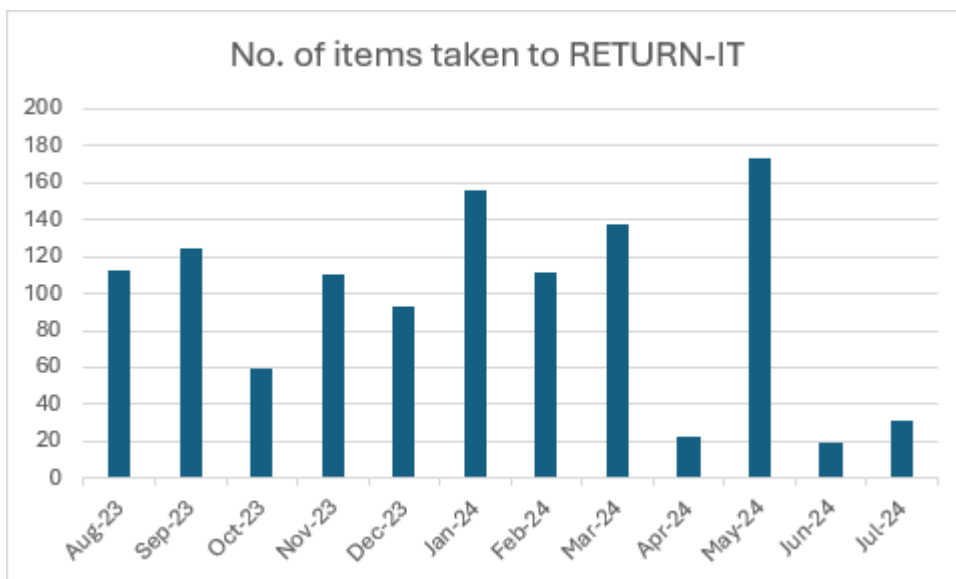
This is definitely a movie to recommend.

**Tanja Naehar**

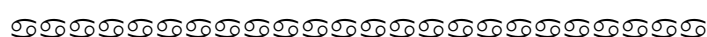


# Recycling of cans and bottles

Many thanks to those members who have taken their cans and bottles to the RETURN-IT recycling centres and chosen to donate the refund to ACFS.



Instructions on how to credit deposits to our account are now on our website [www.acfs.org.au](http://www.acfs.org.au) under the tab 'Contribute to the Society'.



# Stuffed pumpkin with garlic and fermented soy bean

By Grace Choy | chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2024-08-02 14:25

## Ingredients

- 1 whole pumpkin (approx. 900g)
- 1 tbsp minced garlic
- 1/2 tbsp grated ginger
- 1 tbsp fermented soy bean paste
- 2 tbsps fermented soy bean (whole pc and rinsed)
- 1 tbsp shaoxing wine
- 2 tbsps light soy sauce
- 1 tbsp scallion (chopped, optional)

## Seasonings

- 2 tbsps light soy sauce
- 2 tbsps oyster sauce
- 2 tsps light brown sugar
- 1 tsp salt
- 200ml hot water

## Instructions

1. Rinse the pumpkin, cut and reserve a cap of 5 to 6 cm in diameter from top, remove the seeds.
2. Carve out the meat from inside the pumpkin with a paring knife and spoon. Cut the meat into bite size cubes and set aside.
3. Heat up cooking oil in a wok on high heat and saute the minced garlic, grated ginger and soy bean paste for 1 min.
4. Then add the pumpkin meat. Pour shaoxing wine and add the seasonings. Stir briefly for another 1 min.
5. Add 100ml of hot water. Cook uncovered for 5 mins, stirring intermittently.
6. After 5 mins, add the remaining hot water and fermented soy bean and stir well. Cook uncovered for another 6-8 mins.
7. Finally transfer the pumpkin meat into the pumpkin bowl and serve. Enjoy!





# 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 are

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

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