



Canada-China Friendship Society®

Ottawa Chapter
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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The AGM meeting of the Ottawa chapter will take place on Thursday, November 23 starting at 7:00 p.m. at Library and Archives Canada, 395 Wellington Street, followed by a presentation by Mr. Martin Charron from Foreign Affairs and International Trade Canada on the new directions in Canada-China trade and economic relations. Mr. Charron is responsible for the coordination of trade and economic policy with China. He has served in Beijing, Hong Kong and Taipei, and recently visited several centres in Greater China.

Prime Minister Harper lauds accomplishments of Chinese Canadians – *A partial text of the PM's remarks to an assembly of Chinese Canadians in Vancouver on October 10, 2006*

“The outpouring of support that has followed in the wake of the head tax apology has been incredible and it has been exceptionally moving for all of us. I must say though that our government feels itself undeserving of such effusive response. Ours wasn't a brave decision or a difficult one. Apologizing for the head tax was simply the right thing to do and it was long overdue. We along with most Canadians recognized that this measure in our past represented a moral blemish on our country's soul. Therefore addressing it directly and honestly has been an issue that we felt strongly about, and that I felt strongly about for a long time. After all the Chinese Canadian community has contributed to this country over the years, you were deserving of nothing less. It is no exaggeration to say that the country we know and love today would simply not exist without your efforts, and whether newly arrived, or second, third and fourth generation, Chinese Canadians continue to help us build a stronger Canada for everyone.

“This is a Canada that knows what it believes in and where it stands, a country that cherishes its past while comfortably embracing its future. A country in which where you are going and what you have accomplished matter more than where you're from or who you know, a country that is strong, independent, united and free, and that's how we're going to keep it, my friends. I believe that the values held most strongly by our Chinese Canadians are truly Canadian values. These are the values that have and will make us a successful nation if they guide the decisions of your government, values like hard work and honesty, a willingness to take risks and embrace opportunities, a commitment to excellence in education, and an appreciation of the importance of family and community...

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“The family – of all the issues we face, none is more important than the family. What I want to share with you tonight is a portion of the head tax issue that has personally touched even our own family. My father-in-law grew up with a head tax payer. His name was Luc Yip. Mr. Yip like so many men of his generation came to Canada for opportunity and adventure, to the land the Chinese called “Gold Mountain”. Mr. Yip paid the head tax. It was an enormous burden in his day, but like so many who did so, he found that his trials and tribulations had only begun. He found life here far more difficult than he had imagined. He found himself alone in Alberta during the Depression, and faced frankly with widespread prejudice and discrimination that basically deprived him and many like him of even the means to survive. Under these circumstances, he was taken in by my in-laws, the Teskeys.

“I have to tell you this was not a popular decision among many of their neighbours, but the hard working Mr. Yip proved his worth. He worked wherever he was needed as a farm-hand, in the saw-mill, on odd jobs, even helping to raise the children. Luc came to be not just a farm-hand but a friend and a member of the family. I can tell you the Teskeys cherish his memory to this day, along with the few possessions he left behind. He had become a second father to the kids, and that was a good deal for both since the “Exclusion Act” effectively meant he lost his own children. One of my proudest moments as PM has been what I came to acknowledge, and address, the wrong that was done to Luc Yip and so many like him. And to make on behalf of the country, the same statement to all Chinese Canadians that my wife’s people made to Mr. Yip, you are all part of our family.

“Thank you for the contribution that your ancestors made in our past, and that you are making today to build this country, to build our relationship with China, and the contribution that I know your children will undoubtedly make in future.”

Talk on Chinese “Scholars’ Gardens”

On October 19, Society members and friends were treated to a talk by one of our own members, Ann Chudleigh, on traditional Chinese scholars’ gardens. Ann has professional fine arts experience and was part of the first delegation from Canada to negotiate a cultural agreement with China in 1982, when she made her first visit to Suzhou.

Chinese scholars’ gardens, unlike the imperial gardens of the Emperors, were relatively small, private residential gardens built by high-ranking government officials, wealthy merchants and landowners. The garden designers aimed to recreate in miniature the beauty and feeling of the natural scenery so the owners could get away from the crowds and commune with nature in their own gardens. There they also pursued cultural activities such as writing poetry, practising calligraphy and painting and growing flowers and penjing. The gardens also provided settings for meditation and for entertaining friends. The gardens were composed of four elements: rocks, water, plants and architecture.

Ann Chudleigh's presentation began with a guided tour of the Master-of-Nets Garden in Suzhou, a garden listed by UNESCO in 1977 as a World Cultural Heritage Site. The residential quarters comprised 50% of the 1 1/2 acre site. Corridors and paths connect the various pavilions which are scattered around a central pond. Rocks, trees and plants enhance the series of scenic spots or focal points which catch the visitor's attention as he moves around the garden. These focal points

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points could be rocks from Lake Tai, moongates, bridges, beds of flowers in season, pavement designs, reflections in the pond or against the walls, inscriptions by famous poets on decorative tablets or pavilions of varied designs for the scholar's activities.

Ann's presentation concluded with superb photographs of other Suzhou gardens illustrating garden design principles and the poetic names given to the pavilions in the gardens. As Tsin Van commented, "I thought the speaker was excellent. Not only did she know what she was talking about, she analyzed the subject with great detail relating an array of Chinese traditions from the Western point of view. The talk made me appreciate more the Chinese gardens that I have visited in the past."

Yes, it seems these gardens do speak the culture of an earlier China with valuable messages for us today.

- with thanks for a very special contribution from Ann Chudleigh

Coming Events in 2007!

- **January 11, 7:30 p.m.** at Library and Archives Canada, Room 156, a presentation by **Dr. Sen Wang, Privy Council Office, Liaison Secretariat for Macroeconomic Policy, on *China's economic growth and environmental challenges*.**
- ***Chinese New Year's Banquet to usher in the New Year of the Pig will be held at a date to be announced in mid-February at the Mandarin Ogilvie Restaurant.*** A notice with further details will be mailed to members in early January. Please stay tuned!

Chinese Minister Cai Wu speaks on *China's Peaceful Development and the World* at the Press Club's Newsmaker Breakfast, Oct. 23/06

Minister Cai Wu said that the Chinese government has been introducing reforms since the 1970s and as a result China has undergone dramatic changes. During the period from 1978 and 2005, its economy grew by an average of 9.6% per year, the highest of any country in the world. Consequently, the Chinese people are relatively well off today. At the same time, China's links and exchanges with the outside world have grown enormously and it is already the world's third largest trading partner. Nevertheless, the general level of development should not be overstated; it still has a way to go. One thing for sure: China is the largest developing country in the world.

Many new problems have arisen with the transformation of China from a planned to a market-driven economy, among the most obvious being the appearance of a widening gap or imbalances in urban and rural development, between the interior and coastal regions of China, and between social and economic development, that has led to social conflict. Other challenges include the

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high consumption of energy and other commodities associated with rapid development, and its effect on the environment. The economic structures of China must be further improved. It still has a long way to go to become a fully modernized country. In bringing about these changes, China will stick to its goal of *peaceful development to create a domestically harmonious society and an internationally harmonious world*.

A recent plenary meeting of the Communist Party of China passed a resolution affirming the goal of continued development of a harmonious socialist economy, essentially a people-oriented concept of development. The development path will be guided by scientific principles to yield improvements that will result in a resource-efficient and innovation-based economy. It is also necessary to have in mind the diversified nature of Chinese culture. The processes of reform and the opening up of China are now at a critical point. To maintain a harmonious society and achieve its goals, China will have to satisfy six basic requirements, among which are the maintenance and achievement of democracy, and the rule of law, together with stability and order.

As in other countries, the people of China have a number of immediate concerns. They relate to the imbalances cited earlier, to employment, health care and housing, etc. Other countries will take different approaches to confront these challenges reflecting a different culture or civilization. In any case, the dual goals of a harmonious society and a harmonious world order with the characteristics of peacefulness, openness, cooperation and creativity will determine China's policies throughout.

Minister Wu said that despite the distance between our two countries represented by eleven hours of flying time, **the two countries have a strong history**. Twenty thousand Chinese labourers helped to build the first Canadian railway. During World War II, Chinese immigrants in Canada purchased bonds and joined the war effort. Norman Bethune demonstrated our common spiritual heritage remembered by the Chinese people. Over 35 years, there has been progress in all aspects of our diplomatic relations, including political consultations, while Canada has adhered to its one-China policy. The diversified Canadian culture is a good environment for the Chinese who come to live here. We have no historic disputes. Any differences which surface will be met by a call for more dialogue and more frequent exchanges. He indicated they would welcome more exchanges with the Canadian media.

During questions **Minister Wu specifically welcomed members of the Canadian government to come and visit China.**

Editor's note: This account of Minister Wu's presentation is based on notes taken during the interpretation of his speech into English and may not always agree exactly with the original Mandarin text. We trust the general thrust of his remarks is the same. It should also be noted that Minister Cai Wu is a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China and Minister responsible for the State Council Information Office, two very senior party and government positions.

A further note. The editor and the Executive Committee of CCFS would be pleased to receive comments on the selection of material that has appeared in the Newsletter over the past eighteen months. Suggestions for articles to be included in future would also be appreciated, indeed the submission of articles or material would be welcome on any subject the reader considers would be appropriate and interesting to members. KJM

Two recent visits by Chinese delegations: from Hubei Province

The Ottawa chapter received a friendship visit from a 6-member, senior level delegation from the province of Hubei on November 7-8. Headed by Mr. Chen Chunlin, Vice-Chairman, Hubei Chinese Political Consultative Conference, the delegation had a busy 20 hours in the nation's capital that included calls on Chinese Ambassador Lu Shumin and Senator Mac Harb. They subsequently stopped in Calgary and Banff where they were greeted and accompanied by Sheila Foster, president of the Calgary chapter.

In Ottawa, Ken Merklinger accompanied the delegation on a visit to the Centre Block of Parliament that included a view from the top of the Peace Tower, the Rotunda, Library of Parliament and the Senate. Later the delegation called on the Chinese Ambassador, after which they were guests of FCCFA for lunch at the newly opened Green Papaya Restaurant in Hull, together with several members of the Ottawa chapter and Ms. Li Caiyun from the Chinese Embassy, reciprocating the generous hospitality that the Federation delegation received in September during their visit to Wuhan and two other cities in Hubei.

After lunch, accompanied by Lolan Merklinger they paid a visit to the East Block office of Senator Mac Harb who represented the Ottawa Centretown community in the House of Commons for several years. He is a member of the Parliamentary Association for Friendship with China. Mr. Chen treated the Senator to a detailed report of developments in Wuhan Municipality, capital of Hubei, a region which is the industrial, commercial, scientific, and cultural hub of central China.

Later in the afternoon they were guests of Dr. Banseng Hoe, Asia Curator, for a guided tour of the Canadian Museum of Civilization.

...and Wuxi City, Jiangsu Province meeting with Health Canada

A delegation of six officials responsible for food safety in the Food and Drug Administration of Wuxi City, Jiangsu province visited Ottawa on November 1-2. The CCFS president made arrangements for the delegation, led by Mr. Qi Zhao, to visit the Food Directorate of Health Canada. CCFS members Dr. Huixin Yang of Health Canada, Pat Steele formerly with the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, and Lolan Merklinger accompanied the delegation.

Mme Claudette Dalpé, a consultant with Health Canada's Bureau of Food Regulatory, International and Interagency Affairs, made a 3-hour presentation on the Canadian food safety system and its legislative base. In Canada, the federal responsibility for food safety is shared by the Minister of Health (the Food Directorate) and the Minister of Agriculture and Agri-food (the Canadian Food Inspection Agency). Health Canada sets the policies, standards and regulations; the Agency inspects establishments and enforces the regulations. In turn, Health Canada assesses the effectiveness of CFIA's activities related to food safety, thus providing "checks and balances". The provinces are responsible for food safety at the municipal level (e.g. restaurants). When a food-borne illness occurs, federal and provincial authorities work together. Multiple bilateral, federal provincial and stakeholder committees are involved in the food safety system.

By contrast, the Food and Drug Administration in China is one comprehensive administrative department, which has responsibility at various government levels. The Wuxi delegation was quite interested in these differences.

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The presentation also focused on the Food and Drugs Act and the process of making regulations. The delegation asked frequent questions. For example, they wanted to know about “pre-market review”, the process whereby a manufacturer is required to submit data for approval before sale is permitted, e.g. in the case of a food additive or a baby formula. They clearly appreciated the presentation.

- article contributed by Pat Steele

George Sapounidis’ China Tour 2006

George Sapounidis, one of our musically talented CCFS members who performed at the 2006 Chinese New Year Banquet, is again on tour in China. The official release on his 2006 Tour says: “Canadian Ottawa-based rock band 'Chairman George and the Ministers' led by George Sapounidis will be in Beijing for a special one night concert October 30 at the Yugong Yishan Club, an award winning venue in Chaoyang District, before their invited guest appearance at the famous Nanning International Folksongs Festival in Guangxi Province. The dynamic four-piece band performs Chinese folk pop and Greek bouzouki blues.” The band also performed in sunny Shenzhen while Sapounidis appeared solo at the Shanghai Baoshan International Folk Arts Festival where he represented Canada and was sponsored by the Canadian Consulate General in Shanghai. In Guangxi, the band performed seven times over three days on outdoor stages in various districts and counties around the city of Nanning to an average audience of 10,000 including many children, an unforgettable experience for the band and George. They appeared on both Nanning and Guangxi television to enthusiastic applause. George is backed up by top Canadian musicians including Fred Guignon on electric guitar and lap steel, Stuart Watkins on bass with backing vocals, and Johnny Poptart on drums.

An item in the *Toronto Star* gives some background: “George was already performing in several languages when with his multicultural band he translated the songs of Bob Dylan and Led Zeppelin into Greek and recorded an album. One night, when entertaining friends at home, he was asked to sing in Mandarin. Intrigued, and with help from his Chinese girlfriend (herself an acclaimed poet) he learned a traditional Chinese folk song over the next few weeks, working his way through it phonetically. He was hooked.

‘I was enthralled,’ he recalls. ‘The language and the music were not familiar in any way but I found that I could render the melodic structure – which was very Eastern – musically, with just a few garden variety chords on the guitar which were similar to folk songs in the West. Here I was performing in a language that most (Westerners) find mysterious and impenetrable. I was excited at the challenge.’

“Sapounidis worked on refining his pronunciation. He went a step further and enrolled in Mandarin classes. ‘These songs became like a porthole into this completely different world,’ he says, ‘one where there is no alphabet, a world of pictographs. Where they use art for communication. The songs have a timelessness. Those desolate, lonely grasslands – it doesn’t matter if it’s Mongolia or Saskatchewan or Scotland. There is a commonality in the feelings and the poetry and the images.’

“The turning point for Sapounidis was a concert he gave at the National Library Auditorium in 2000 called ‘East Meets West’. He invited Chinese and Greek diplomats. A few weeks later the Chinese embassy invited him to perform at two international arts festivals in China.”

A big warm welcome for new member, Ms. Neuczki Mathurin!

Membership Fees: Members are reminded that the expiry date of their membership is printed on the envelopes that convey the Newsletter and other Society materials to you. Fees may be mailed to the Society's postal box noted in the letterhead or given to a member of the Executive. All are encouraged to keep their fees up-to-date: individual \$20, family \$25; full-time student \$12, student family \$17.

STOP PRESS! The Federation of Ottawa Chinese Community Organizations (FOCCO) is organizing a New Year Celebration Variety Show on Saturday, January 6, 2007 at 7:00 p.m. at the Centrepointe Theatre. The best performing arts talent from the Ottawa-Asian community will be featured including Chinese fan dance, Korean and Thai dances, and a demonstration of Taikuan dao. The multicultural nature of the show is further demonstrated by the participation of Venezuelan folk dancers. Tickets: \$20, \$15, \$10. For further information call 613-580-2700 or Winnie at 613-737-4877.

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You can access the Ottawa webpage at www.fccfa.ca/Ottawa where previous issues of the Newsletter, information about forthcoming events, and Membership Application Forms are located. Both the FCCFA web site and webpages for the chapters are developed and maintained by Steve Hagopian.

A nice compliment from Paul Evans, Co-CEO of the Asia Pacific Foundation of Canada, who wrote about the Society's letter: "You do an excellent newsletter and project the right note of historical continuity and positive agenda."

Kenneth Merklinger, Editor

