



AITECE Ltd (Australia)

Association for International Teaching Educational and Curriculum Exchange

NEWSLETTER Issue 13, November 2008

Teacher Program 'Fulfill your wishes in your life'

(Li Bai)

Many times this year we have been reminded that AITECE was founded 20 years ago. Since 1988 more than 90 teachers from Australia and New Zealand have between them helped thousands of tertiary students throughout China to become competent and confident with the English language. Some of these students are now themselves English teachers. To honour the 20th Anniversary Ray O'Donoghue is enthusiastically collating a list of all AITECE teachers from 'Downunder'. Perhaps in the near future we might gather to recall and celebrate our China experiences.

Fortunately our representation in Chinese Universities is continuing. This issue of our Newsletter features stories and photos from our current teachers and friends in Fuzhou, Chongqing, Tongren and Nanchang where our most recent candidate, Sam O'Neill, has begun his contract at Nanchang University.

Of particular interest is the correspondence from the Director of the Intensive Language Training Centre at Sichuan University, Chengdu following our donation towards assistance for a particular student affected by the earthquake in Sichuan Province. Thanks to Michael Dredge and Pat Lynch, former teachers at ILTC, for facilitating this small gesture from AITECE(Australia).

As this year closes and another draws nigh we trust that many others may be inspired and motivated to become part of AITECE's contribution towards educating the vibrant and gifted young students in China. Our Committee's recent promotional drive in the publication and distribution of the new AITECE(Australia) flyers throughout the country will hopefully generate much interest and a good response.

Thank you to all for your personal efforts to spread the word of AITECE.

Margaret Walsh,
Teacher Coordinator
www.aitece.com



Lakeside Maureen Eddy
who writes on her visit to the
Grasslands

FROM HWA NAN WOMEN'S COLLEGE IN FUZHOU

Stan Cusack writes to a friend in Sydney:

It was great to receive your letter (28/9) yesterday. It was a little slow in coming but that was due to the fact that no mail was sorted in China during last week's National Holiday week, The Post Offices were open, of course. Chinese people work very hard and the Post Offices are open seven days. The cost is 6 yuan for airmail which is about one dollar Aus.

Schools here seem to operate seven days a week. The Primary classes seem to conclude about 4.30 pm and the Secondary about 5pm. However there is not all that much teaching on Sunday. We do not have many classes on Saturday and Sunday so many of the students go to another university on those days and do another Certificate (e.g. for becoming an interpreter).

You have probably guessed I am infinitely happy and calm in Fuzhou. The staff is very supportive, particularly the foreign teachers, and the students are a delight to teach.

LETTER FROM SICHUAN

Dear Mr Michael Dredge,

On behalf of ILTC Sichuan University, I would like to express our heartfelt appreciation to you and to the Committee of the Association for International Teaching Educational and Curriculum Exchange, Inc. for your kind donation of 2000 yuan in RMB to ILTC students who have been personally affected by the earthquake tragedy. Your decision to support an International aid organisation in their contribution to the earthquake relief effort is also greatly appreciated.

The Students' Affairs Office of ILTC is helping select the students who most need help. I will report to you in time about our decision.

Since the devastating earthquake occurred in Sichuan, help and assistance have been coming from all parts of China and all parts of the world. Sichuan people are deeply moved and greatly encouraged - we are not alone in overcoming the difficulties.

The whole world is with us.

Mr Michael Dredge, we cherish the close association that ILTC has enjoyed with AITECE. I remember you and Sheila Crowe very well. I remember how ILTC students enjoyed your teaching at ILTC and how ILTC colleagues enjoyed working with you. Patrick Lynch is now an AITECE member teaching at ILTC. He is very popular among our students, and our colleagues speak highly of him, too.

We are very grateful for all the help that the

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Committee of AITECE has provided over the past years and the thoughts and assistance you have given us at this time of tragedy. Please pass the regards of all at ILTC to the whole Committee of AITECE.

Sincerely yours,

**Xia Liping, Professor, Director of Intensive Language Training Centre
AND ITS SEQUEL**

Dear Michael,

I'm writing to inform you that we have given your kind donation of 2,000 yuan in RMB to a female ILTC student named Wu Lingling.

Wu Lingling is also a graduate student in Sichuan University. Her home-town is a small town in Dujiangyan City, one of the areas most severely affected by the Wenchuan Earthquake. Like most families in Dujiangyan, Wu Lingling's family was severely affected by the earthquake. Wu Lingling's mother is retired with a nominal pension. Her father has no job, and her 80-year-old grandmother (who has no pension) lives with them. Before the earthquake, in order to support the family, her father borrowed money from the bank and ran a small clinic. They just managed to pay off all the loans when the destructive earthquake occurred and severely damaged their property. Fortunately, Wu Lingling's parents and grandmother survived the earthquake (her other relatives were not so lucky - two of her cousins were killed). The disaster completely destroyed their lives. Now they live in tents, on Wu Lingling's mother's pension and government subsidy. Your donation is surely a big help to the whole family.

Again, my great appreciation to you and all other members of AITECE.

Best wishes,
Xia Liping

A WEDDING IN CHINA



Here's some news from our end. Hugh is coming over to visit us in November. The College knows about it so arrangements have been made for him to meet President Lin and the de rigueur meal for him.

The welcome party for the Freshmen will be this coming Wednesday, the 29th. We, the foreign teachers, will do a song, Mo Li Hua - will send you photos later.

Speaking of photos, I'm sending some from Monica's wedding. Margaret and I went to the Wedding Banquet last night. The celebration was for the couple's friends here in Fuzhou. They had another one before in their hometown. I'd say there were about 50 people there. Monica was wearing a white wedding gown at the beginning and later on changed to a red one. She was looking very beautiful in both. It was a lovely gathering. Margaret and I were glad to be part of it. (Monica is a Chinese teacher at the College.)

Bernadette Nuque

GRASSLANDS



I've just returned from a wonderful visit to the Grasslands. You see I'm paying a short visit to see my good friend - Grace - with whom I taught ten years ago at the University of Iron and Steel. I'm so lucky that my classes at SISU do not begin until October 13. Colossal changes have taken place here, as there have all over China... construction of beautiful buildings/excellent roads/bridges / tunnels ... less of the old bicycles that I loved, however!

Yesterday, Grace's friend - the Chief of Police - invited us to the grasslands ... transportation with escort ... a visit to some places of historical interest ... off to a yurt for a

superb traditional meal and then ... the meeting with an ad being entertained by these beautiful Mongolian people ... with voices and dancing so full of joy and happiness that stretch to the blue, blue heavens!

The highlight for me - treated as I was as a VIP - was the offering of the wine-bowl. As the song ended, I then had to sprinkle a few drops to the heavens ... some to the earth and then on my forehead before consuming the rest ... 'gambey' (no wonder I felt a little tipsy!)

What surprised me most was the springing up of so many windmills ... positioned east / west / north / south so as to catch the winds. Also evident on the tops of so many new buildings are solar systems. This makes me very happy to see China's attention to new and alternative sources of energy which is being consumed by the bucketful!

The return journey was long but I will live with and cherish these memories for a long, long time.

Maureen Eddyned

TRAVELLING THROUGH GUIZHOU PROVINCE



Greg McEnally on his way to a wedding:

On Wednesday October 1, my friend Greg McCann and I boarded a bus for Kaili, some three hours away along a modern, fast highway. This was a surprise, as I had not been expecting such a good road in this poor province. The countryside is fascinating, lush green since it appears to rain hereabouts every three days out of four. I was particularly taken by villages where all the houses seem to be the same, all dark, with

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black slate roofs edged in white. The contrast is striking. These are Miao villages, one of the minority peoples who nevertheless are quite numerous in these parts. Another town is also worthy of observation. It is brand new, in fact still being constructed, but while it looks spick and span, there is a sameness about the buildings: all grey and all the same height, about ten storeys. And there is another oddity: it appears deserted. What is going on? Apparently it has been built for people displaced by the construction of a nearby dam, but while their houses are about to be drowned, the people do not want to move. Who can blame them?

NANCHANG UNIVERSITY

Sam O'Neill writes from Nanchang:



Not having any conception of what a rural regional university looks like, I thought that you might be interested in the photo (*left*). This is the view from my bedroom window out over part of the campus. There are 50,000 students here and you can see that the facilities are really quite good. I am up near the back of the Uni and you will see two soccer pitches on which most nights young people play. At last, I'm getting used to the humidity and the heat.

There is no social life for the foreign teachers and I would imagine that most look forward to the weekend. Classes start at 8.00 am and the last lecture is at 6.00pm.

EDITORIAL

The Year of the Rat was only three months old when the horror of the May earthquake struck Sichuan Province of China. The scale of the death-toll and the material damage was revealed in the pictures that flashed around the world. Our own Pat Lynch, who was in Chengdu at the time, has vivid memories of the impact and its aftermath. Three months later, Beijing became the focus of universal attention as the Olympic Games began, and images of a completely different character appeared on our screens. Today, China with the rest of the world, tries to cope with the financial crisis.

Against this dramatic backdrop, as it were, has been the work of foreign teachers of English. In a variety of locations and living conditions, they have held classes, engaged with their students and Chinese colleagues, gone shopping, visited temples, attended weddings, climbed mountains - in short, they have assimilated many elements of Oriental culture yet secure in their own national character. Indeed, being themselves is a vital part of their professional contribution. It is something that students value because it adds another dimension to their determined efforts to grapple with the mysteries of English.

In what has been a memorable year for China, the aims of AITECE remain the same, *viz.* to support the work of foreign teachers and to add to their number. Our thirteen teachers in Chongqing, Fuzhou, Nanchang and Guizhou take their place in the long line of 90 from Australia and New Zealand who over the past 20 years have accepted the challenge.

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The Editor

