



# AITECE Ltd (Australia)

Association for International Teaching Educational  
and Curriculum Exchange

## NEWSLETTER Issue 16, June 2010

### EDITORIAL



If love is as love does, Cyril Hally stood tall like a giant in the forest. Tributes from colleagues, students and admirers are testimony to his personality and influence over many years. Bishop Pat Power writes, "Cyril Hally without doubt was a modern-day prophet: a great advocate for the underdog, an upholder of the human dignity of every person, and someone who continually called us back to the person of Jesus. May Cyril's vision, courage and hope be an inspiration to us all in these challenging times." Sean McDonagh, a former student, has this memory, "Cyril expected missionaries to have opinions about a range of broad issues based on solid reflection and research."

Like the poet who reflected on 'the road not taken', Cyril must surely throughout his long life have given thought to the path that took him from his native New Zealand to distant lands and different spheres of action. So it is with those who were led at some stage of their life to follow 'a road taken' and to teach in China. One writes' ... To leave behind the supersaturated materialistic life in Australia and to enter China was a revelation and a gain for my soul and a growth for my spirit." and another recalls, " ... The relational bridges between teachers and their students are built solidly day-by-day by honest endeavour, understanding and a sense of humour: they persist in a way that surpasses understanding." As AITECE (Australia) embarks on its next decade, the memory and inspiration of Cyril Hally will be warmly embraced as a father-figure to be treasured.

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### Fr Cyril Hally

(9th February, 1920 - 18th May, 2010)

*Fr Cyril Hally was born in Temuka, New Zealand. At an early age he decided he wanted to be a missionary in China. He joined St Columban's Missionary Society which was called in Ireland the Maynooth Mission to China. He was ordained on 2nd July, 1939 at St Patrick's Cathedral in Melbourne.*

*He never went to China as a missionary; instead his missionary fields were Australia, Belgium, Ireland, Japan and New Zealand. He travelled to many countries giving lectures and workshops. As Director of the Pacific Mission Institute at St Columban's North Turrumurra he helped prepare people for cross-cultural mission. He touched the lives of hundreds of people and was an inspiration for many who needed a larger vision for the unfolding challenges of the Church in the world. Pope John XXIII challenged the Catholic Church to read the 'signs of the times' at the Second Vatican Council. Fr Cyril Hally heard the call and responded.*

*In 2006 when he moved to St Columban's Mission, Essendon, his life had come full circle. He spent the last few months of his life in Mercy Place, Parkville. He continued to read, attend meetings and keep up with the latest developments in the Church and the world.*

### AITECE Australia Teaching Program

**"Let not the opportunity pass, for it may not return". Kuai Tong, Western Han Dynasty**

The year 2010 has found 7 of our Australians presently teaching in the 4 corners of China. In the West is Maureen Eddynded at Sichuan International Studies University in Chongqing;

in the East, Margaret O'Connor at the Anglo-Chinese College, Fuzhou; Peter Downs is teaching in the North area at Changchun University, Jilin Province; and in the South in Guizhou are Greg McEnally and Greg McCann at Tongren University, Pat Lynch at Guizhou University for Nationalities in Guiyang, and our most recent new teacher, Louise DuVernet, began this semester at Zunyi Medical College, Zunyi. Louise's

experiences are shared with us in this issue of the Newsletter.

Our thoughts and gratitude are with these teachers as they continue to assist the young students in their efforts to master the English language. Of course within this process many other valuable facets and interactions between teacher and student occur, as former teachers well know and vividly recall.

When Hugh McMahon recently spent some of his time in Perth at a gathering of our former AITECE Western Australian teachers, the conversation was no doubt a lively one, rich with the memories of their teaching in China up to 20 years ago.

The teachers who returned last semester - Mel Couch from Fuzhou, Michael Dredge from Beijing, and Francis Cammiade from Nanchang, are to be thanked and congratulated for their contribution to the education of so many gifted Chinese tertiary students.

Our promotional program for recruiting from 'down under' of course continues. To further AITECE awareness in New Zealand, the Teacher Coordinator visited locations in the North Island in December 2009 and an AITECE contact person in Auckland, Leone McIndoe, has generously offered her services during this year. Other former NZ teachers are also most willing to help with spreading the AITECE word.

If anyone can help in any way please contact us for AITECE flyers or any promotional material. We also now have our own AITECE Australia website: [www.aitece.org.au](http://www.aitece.org.au) Please refer any interested parties to this. Many of us possibly heard about AITECE 'by chance' and look what happened as a result!

"Let not the opportunity pass"!

With all good wishes and my thanks to our Committee and all.

*Margaret Walsh, AITECE Australia Teacher Coordinator*

### *What brought me to China in the first place?*



It was 1986 and I was travelling to study overseas and had the chance for a stopover in China. Intrigued by our early mission under Br Patrick Harty, I tried to get to Wuhan. It seemed to me that the Holy Spirit had "unfinished business" for us Christian Brothers in China.

It was not possible in those days to be free of constant surveillance, and I was able to go only on a little guided tour. I chose to go to Guangzhou (Canton). I was assigned a "guide", who happened to be an English major at a local University. After a few pleasant days together seeing the sights like the Guilin Gorge, and sneaking into a Catholic Church, which was off the official tour itinerary, and avoiding what sounded like boring sightseeing we parted company back at a Guangzhou hotel. I was free for the night and went for a walk just before dark by myself, and sat in a beautiful public garden. There I met Wei Lei, a student who wanted to try out his English on a native speaker. We spent hours in the park and later inside my hotel talking slowly in English about China, life and religion. It was illegal at the time but we spent enough time

together for us to become friends. I had to send him away about 11pm, but not before he pressed me to visit his hometown of Beijing on my return. After over two year's study in New York, I did actually come home the way I went, so arrived in Beijing to be looked after by Wei Lei in his little house in the city.

By 1988 China was loosening up ("*Let a Thousand Flowers Bloom*") and the atmosphere was friendly to foreigners. Wei Lei helped me find a catholic church (Patriotic) one day, and there met a young man and his girlfriend visiting the church. The young man, Guo Tao, wanted to learn about the faith but had no one to teach him. We had a rushed morning meeting together the next day, and I explained my work was really for the poor. Wei Lei and Guo Tao insisted they were poor, however elite they appeared as university students. "Why?" "Because we have no one to teach us about spiritual things". That got me. It was true, and their appeal was genuine. My spirituality is very much one of trust in Providence, so I became convinced I had a call to the young people in China. I was getting old but still a teacher, and both these qualities are highly respected in China. I would call back as often as I could.

Edmund Rice's spirit was to be back in China. As a test I arranged a challenge to Guo Tao to organise a project for the poor, and with a grant of \$1,000 from the Provincial Council, he and a university friend went for their winter vacation to a poor rural village, and worked compassionately with the children, the teachers and the parents of these impoverished children to encourage their attendance at school. This was the beginning

of a chain of contacts from that day to this. Tragedy was to strike in 1989 with many of our young friends caught up in the Tiananmen Square massacre.

Our presence after that was restricted, under strict surveillance, and dangerous, not so much for us, as much as for the brave young people wanting to keep in touch. Some managed to get out of China, one of my friends was imprisoned and tortured, escaped and was rearrested. Others came under our influence in Australia as refugees, suddenly cut off from their families and homeland. As politics became more normalised, English teaching under the auspices of AITECE, gave Laurie Needham the opportunity to offer a more permanent presence in the lives of these young people. When Laurie was sick, Guo Tao, now Paul (a name he asked me to choose, and I explained the energetic Saint Paul to him), tended to Laurie in hospital, and honoured him as a special member of the family. The young people themselves brought others to meet us and join in activities of our "program" which rejoices in the grandiose title of "Institute of Ethical Leadership". What about now?

We are a sort of "gang" (a term that amuses Chinese youth, who understand the word in a special way). We promise to look after one another, together search for spiritual values in all we do, and work for a better world.

*Peter Hancock*

### *There is something special about Zunyi*



If someone told me, this time last year, that I would be happy and contented living in China in an apartment without an oven or a washing machine or a shower recess and having to walk up a steep hill to work and teach on the 5th level without a lift, I am not sure how I would react. Yet here I am teaching in Zunyi Medical College in the middle of the South Western Province of Guizhou.

I am a firm believer that 'you enjoy what you are doing, or don't do it.' I was in a wonderful position for 15 years but all of a sudden I lost the passion for the job and did not feel appreciated. Writing that now seems a little lame. I came to understand that as long as you know you are doing a great job you don't need anyone else to tell you, to feel satisfied. Yet, one year before retirement

age, I decided I did not want to do it anymore. I thought I was ready to retire, but I felt restless and empty.

When I was told That I should give teaching in China a try I was interested but wondered what I could really bring to a position teaching English conversation. My background was in Home Economics/Technology teaching and my PhD explored reconnecting the disconnected through textiles. AITECE has a very persuasive team, so before long, I was planning my trip to China. I have mastered the art of travelling light so that wasn't a problem.

When I was asked if I minded being positioned in one of the more remote areas of China, I didn't really know what that meant. Zunyi has everything I could ever need to live comfortably. It's just a long way from home. After the initial shock regarding unpleasant personal habits that are part of the Chinese culture in this area, I have found the locals to be kind, fun loving and caring, if not, a little too attentive. Every day brings a new experience to treasure.

I have only been in Zunyi for 10 days and I feel right at home. I have been blessed with an outgoing personality, which has been very useful. I am never backward in asking for help, and when you are in a foreign country that speaks another language, it is advisable to request help often. The help comes, if not right away, but it comes. This is a valuable lesson China can teach us. Sometimes "you just have to wait."

It also helps to have love as your primary emotion, and a desire to connect with people on whatever level you can. I have laughed more here in the last 10 days than I have laughed in years. The people are understanding and forgiving and tend to find me fascinating. I asked a young man if he could help me buy a shovel. At first he said he couldn't help and then he ran after me and said that I was the first foreigner who had spoken to him. His English was quite good and he was still in high school. Apparently his Chinese school teacher, who taught him English, had spent some time in New Zealand.

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The students are polite, appreciative and work very hard. They have a home room with their own desk, where they can keep their books, and the rooms are open for them seven days a week. On the public holiday today, for Ancestor Tomb Sweeping, our Easter Monday, there were students there studying. Some students live too far from home to get there over a long weekend, have a bit of quality time with family and get back - so they just stay at college till the end of semester.

I always knew the position wasn't about the money but I'm saving more here on a quarter of the income I was earning in Australia. There is a great variety of quality fresh fruit and vegetables at ridiculously low prices. I have mangoes, pineapples, strawberries, oranges and apples for the equivalent of \$5. I can buy the most beautiful lunch of chicken dumplings with cabbage, shallots and sprouts for approximately \$1.

The public transport is reliable and cheap. The taxis are reliable and cheap - approximately \$1 for two kilometres. I feel confident and safe walking in the markets and on buses. There are the people who stare, as there aren't too many Caucasians in this part of the world. So you get to feel what it is like to be a celebrity. I wonder how I will feel to be one of the masses back at home again. Already I'm feeling like 4 months here is not going to be long enough.

When I don't have an 8 am class, I dance with the local women at the end of my street at 6.30 am. They always want me out the front to lead the steps. We laugh and scream and jump for joy and then say goodbye till the next time. There is something special about Zunyi. Or is there something special about China?

**One lady brings the music and we welcome the new day with dancing at 6.30 am.**



*Louise DuVernet*

**Former AITECE Teachers in Perth with Hugh McMahon, AITECE HK Manager, March 2010**



**L to R: Ruth Waddington, Julia Crowley, Michael Crowley & Dorothy Johnston**

## FINANCIAL MATTERS

The Treasurer is always ready to accept \$50 for Annual Membership if you can afford this; otherwise a donation of any amount would be welcome.

His address is:

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### *Greg McEnally writes ...*

*During the May Day break, Greg McCann and I were asked by the University if we would be interested in helping a TV crew make a documentary, or at least a small part of one, at Fan Jing Shan.. This is a local tourist attraction, consisting of a mountain peak and a curiously shaped rock standing amidst very rugged terrain.*



Greg McCann dressed for shooting on location

*In due course we arrived by taxi at the town of Jiang Kou, where we were to change into the clothes we would be wearing for the afternoon's shooting. After some misunderstanding, we realised that costumes required were of the 1890's. ... So we were filmed, first one and then the other.*



Greg McCann in part of a group

## Information for Prospective Teachers

- ☐ Contracts with the Universities in China are available for six to twelve months (renewable)
- ☐ Teachers are placed in groups for company and support
- ☐ Visits from the office in Hong Kong are offered each semester
- ☐ Intakes are in February and late August/September each year
- ☐ Teaching in other subjects besides English language is also in demand eg Law, Business, Science
- ☐ TESOL Certificate is an advantage
- ☐ Adequate salaries, airfare allowance, medical bonus and free accommodation are usually provided by the Universities
- ☐ Personal expenses include insurance, visa, and medicals
- ☐ Initial interviews, preparation and orientation offered by the National Office in Australia
- ☐ An orientation program for new teachers is held in Hong Kong before teachers leave for China
- ☐ AITECE has a commitment to the poorer areas of China.

### For Information

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### For an Application Form

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*“There is no doubt that I see the world differently as a result of my experience in China. Just the ordinary things we do as human beings, because we care for one another, meant so much to the teachers and students.” (A former teacher)*