



AITECE Ltd (Australia)

Association for International Teaching Educational
and Curriculum Exchange

NEWSLETTER Issue 18, November 2011

Editorial



When Laurie (*picture left*) submitted his Treasurer's Report at the Committee Meeting in May 2011, he was signing off from an active association with AITECE that covered more than twenty years. From 1992 - 1996, he taught in Beijing and Xiamen, using his formidable language-skills to benefit his students and to win their lasting friendship. On his return from China, he continued as a Committee member of AITECE as Publicity Officer and Treasurer despite the heavy administrative and pastoral cares that were the stuff of his daily life. He kept this commitment right up to two months before he died.

Laurie never lost his enthusiasm for China. Whenever his travel plans allowed, he would revisit former students in their hometown. When the 20th Anniversary of AITECE was celebrated in 2009, he undertook to research and to present the origins and on-going development of the Association in "A History of AITECE: one Australian's Memory".

An outstanding quality of Laurie's long life was his capacity to give full attention to the matter in hand no matter how unimportant it might seem to be. When the breadth of his involvement with people is considered, his influence extended from his personal family to his Religious family and beyond. We can imagine Laurie saying, "I am a man and I consider nothing that is human alien to me."

Brian Jeffers



*Brian Jeffers is interviewed by a reporter from Fuzhou, Wan Bao
(This translation was made by his student Julie Jiang, pictured below)*



He likes teaching in Fuzhou

Before Teachers' Day, a reporter visited Jeffers to interview him for a city newspaper after he had just begun his third year of teaching in China. Jeffers comes from Australia. He spent his vacation in his hometown Sydney. Ten days ago, he returned to Fuzhou and he told the journalist excitedly that he was eager to return to his students in the classroom.

Let students open their mouths to speak English

Sometimes, he brings Supermarket catalogues and gets the students to decide what to buy when they go shopping. In this way, he manages to get them willing to open their mouths. Jeffers feels very happy and satisfied when they understand what he has explained. He realises from their smiles that they are making progress in listening.

Fuzhou is his second hometown

Jeffers used to work as a teacher in Australia Three years ago, some of his friends who had been teaching in China suggested that he come to China to teach English. They told him that China was very short of Spoken English teachers. After some consideration he took their advice and came by himself to China. At first, his family didn't fully understand his decision for they were concerned about his safety and health. Just like other foreigners at the beginning, Jeffers found some difficulties in language, food and drink, and communication. Now he goes shopping using simple Chinese. He has a regular routine. Each day after his

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work, he visits the market to buy food for his meals which he cooks himself. Jeffers says that Fuzhou people are very friendly and helpful. Neighbours are extremely kind. Once he fell from his bicycle. He received only a slight scrape on his arm but someone whom he did not know came quickly to help him. He often sends e-mails to his family, assuring them that they do not need to worry about him. He says that Fuzhou is his second hometown.

The reporter asked him, "What would you be going in Australia if you had not come to Fuzhou?" He said that maybe he would be working on a farm or teaching English to migrants. At the end of the interview, Jeffers was pleased to tell the reporter that, earlier in the day, a student from ANGLO-CHINESE COLLEGE whom he had once taught rang him up from USA to wish him a Happy Teacher's Day. "I was thrilled that my student living so far away remembered me. I felt that he appreciated my lessons." He hoped to continue to teach in Fuzhou as long as his health remained good.



Margaret Walsh, AITECE Australia Teacher Coordinator, www.aitece.org.au, November 2011

AITECE Australia Teacher Program November 2011

Shanxiang, Zhou Dynasty- "Share joy and sorrow alike"

Shanxiang, Zhou Dynasty. Our teachers continue to successfully represent Australia in China. Pat Lynch returned to take up a placement at Sichuan International Studies' University, Chongqing. He is joined at SISU by Greg McEnally who completed his contract at Tongren University after 3 years. Peter Downs continues his teaching at Changchun, in Jilin Province. We have enjoyed the interesting tales and photos of Peter's travels and experiences in China. Ernest Cheung is into his second semester at Kunming University, Kunming. Presently two candidates are awaiting contracts for the February 2012 semester. Others have expressed interest. We welcome any new enquiries. Brochures are available on request. While we share the joy of our teachers in China and celebrate their achievements and dedication to the students they teach, we also share the sorrow of all on the death of Laurie Needham on August 1. As an outstanding member of the AITECE Committee in Sydney, Laurie contributed greatly as both Secretary and Treasurer. He was also a most hospitable host to all at our AITECE meetings and gatherings at Balmain. Laurie's love of and interest in China never wavered and he was always delighted to hear of any new teachers offering their time and talents to the service of AITECE. We paid our own special tribute to Laurie at our Committee meeting in August. May his wonderful and generous soul rest in peace. We trust that AITECE can continue its work of recruiting teachers for the Chinese Universities. In this issue of our Newsletter you will read of Robert and Kathy Crowe's experiences in Wuhan. Hopefully many can follow them. The AITECE Manager in Hong Kong, Hugh MacMahon, is grateful for the efforts the Australia National Office is making. Let's keep trying!



Robert and Cathy Crowe write from Wuhan



Our Semester of teaching at Hubei University was preceded by the orientation at Hong Kong. We had been given a good introduction to the practicalities of living and teaching in China. Our orientation sessions were given by very experienced and enthusiastic about their own experiences in this country.

On arrival at the central Chinese city of Wuhan, our first impression was that this is a city in total re-construction. New expressways, train stations, and entire new blocks of apartments resulted in a cloud of dust to add to normal city pollution. When we arrived at the university, we were given a pleasant reception by the three young ladies who have the task of helping the foreign teachers in the apartment block. Over the next few days we were accompanied to various shops, the bank, and a tour of the teaching buildings. A haze at first, but their cheerful help for the whole term was a real bonus.

We received a lot of practical advice from the more experienced foreign teachers from various countries. Our regular Sunday night meals were a great way to learn about the various countries, including South Africa, USA and Brazil. This network became more important as the term went on, as the university seems to assume that the foreign teachers.

During our semester we had the chance to do some independent travel to other cities, in our case Nanjing and Suzhou. We also were treated to a trip to Enshi, a mountainous area of Hubei, organised by the foreign teachers by our Weiban, Minnie. It is a remote town where people see very few foreigners, resulting in lots of stares and requests for photos, etc. All good fun, of course. Just living in Wuhan gave us an insight into how the local people live in China. Whilst we found some of the local habits a bit difficult, we were often surprised at how polite the ordinary people are on buses, etc, especially when we found ourselves lost or confused.

Our Sunday attendances at the Holy Family parish were a real eye-opener. There is



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a very vibrant gathering of young people at the "English Mass", from various countries in Africa, Asia and South America. The choir was highly organised, and gave a real African flavour to traditional hymns. Many of these young people are studying at local Wuhan universities, in courses for Medicine, Engineering, etc. We had regular encounters with the local Columbans who assist at the Parish in many ways.

Finally, I should mention the students. I was given eight classes, with moderate numbers. The foreign teachers tried to give some benefit to all the students, including those less interested and sitting at the back of the class. I found that I had to make up from scratch just about all the material for the oral conversations. It was a good training in using my imagination. Not everything worked well, but by the second half the lessons were smoother, and I found some rapport with even the more difficult students. Most importantly, I found these young people of China to be very pleasant, and I tried to give them an appreciation of their own country plus a perspective of the world out there. The informal English classes were a good way to help students to think of further study in other countries, something that this university encourages. Like me, I suspect all the teachers have fond memories of many of their students. Our time in China was a fascinating experience.



Goodbyes, Sydney Airport
L to R: Margaret Walsh, Cathy & Robert Crowe, Brian Jeffers, Pat Lynch



Greg McEnnally writes from Hangzhou



On Tuesday we went to meet Luin (*picture L to R: Greg McEnnally, Tina & Luin*) at West Lake in Hangzhou. It took us a while to get there, after making two mistakes in getting buses, and then it was difficult to find Luin. It was just so crowded - unpleasantly so. When we finally did locate each other, after much use of the handy mobile, I hardly recognised her as she has changed her appearance. She is soon to sit for her IELTS so that she can study at UTS in Sydney for a Nursing Degree. Her sister lives in Sydney.

The next day, we visited the Wetlands, some 6 km from the centre of the city. The area is extensive, covering 11.5 sq km, and consisting of a whole network of waterways. The major areas set aside for tourism carry fanciful Chinese names such as Dancing Autumn Reeds, Melodies Appreciation at Hezu and Seeking Plums along Husui. Among the many fruit-trees here, plum, apple and persimmon predominate. We thoroughly enjoyed walking along the paths, causeways and bridges, all made of stone slabs, of course: you won't find many dirt tracks in China's national parks.

There is an old village there, called Xixi, which has been turned into a tourist hub, so you can buy the usual tourist souvenirs and sample many different kinds of food. There is a three-storey pagoda in the centre, which one can climb to get an overall view. There was a bridal party here which was enjoying being the centre of attention, while in a nearby temple an operatic performance was being staged.



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Peter Downs describes some aspects of travel

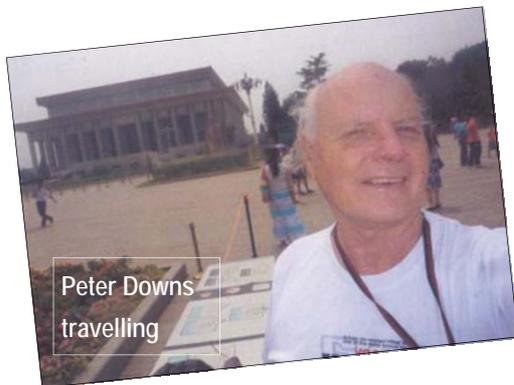


A Chinese railway waiting-room (*picture left*). All the seats are taken, but not all have bodies on them. Many people stretch out, turning three or four seats into a support for their luggage. The majority of people in the room are sitting on the floor, or sitting on their bags on the floor. There are just two very pervasive and very deep Chinese cultural norms: 1. If you have space ... you keep it. 2. If you see space, you take it. Some people occupy a number of seats - 3 or 4 to sleep on and the rest for their luggage.

Once you've occupied that space, you keep it, no matter who comes later. The rest of the people sit on the edges, on the floor, or wherever. No one asks anyone if they could move a bag so that they might sit down.

food and reading matter - Australian lamingtons are on sale at a McDonald's outlet inside the railway station. Eventually, you're on

the Very Fast Train (*picture below*).



Cecily Gaudry writes of a friendship that began in Chongqing

In 1998 and 1999, I was teaching at SISU, Chongqing. One student who went by the name of Eric was particularly enthusiastic, and very anxious to learn English. He was keen on Geography and did qualify to be a tour guide in China. In the ensuing years we corresponded spasmodically and he sent beautiful Chinese cards for special occasions. After a lapse of three years, I recently received an e-mail from him, saying he was now married, and was coming to Sydney with his wife and intended to settle here.

He arrived in July (2010) and contacted me. He is temporarily staying in Hurstville, just half an hour train trip to where I live in Bondi Junction. He and his wife came to lunch and we had an enjoyable visit (*picture below*), recalling his student days and discussing his dreams for the future. He even thought of doing a course in Tourism, and perhaps guiding Chinese visitors. Eric has not lost his enthusiasm for life.



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.

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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)