



HASTINGS DISTRICT COUNCIL

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GUILIN - HASTINGS

INFORMATION PACK

Introduction:

The recent arrival of three persons **from** Guilin, Miss Amy Wang, Mr Deng Liansheng and Mr Gao Keyi; an interpreter and two horticultural graduates - as part of our exchange scheme - and two pending visits **to** Guilin by Hastings District Council representatives (in August and November 1992) to fulfil official Goodwill Delegation and International Tourist Festival invitations, bring our sister-district relationship very much to an active forefront.

The arrival of Amy Wang, an interpreter with the Guilin Foreign Affairs' Office, to work in our District Libraries and Visitor Information Centre for the next six months, heralds the first non-horticultural exchange placement.

Recently, I have spent a great deal of time sorting through and re-cataloguing all known Council records on Guilin, and have initiated a series of actions to further develop the bonds between Guilin and Hastings. Extensive, carefully researched reports, including a checklist of contacts and a chronology itemising developments have been sent to the Chinese Ambassador to New Zealand, Li Jinhua; the New Zealand Embassy in Beijing, and to local interest groups such as the Hawke's Bay Chinese Association and the Hawke's Bay Branch, New Zealand-China Friendship Society.

History:

The Hastings-Guilin relationship was the first-ever official sister-city protocol established between New Zealand and The People's Republic of China. When Mayors Liang Shan and J J O'Connor signed the protocol on 4 March 1981, they were creating history, and it is most satisfying to review the cautious but steady progress that has been made in the eleven years since.

In researching Council files (former Public Relations Officer, Murray Pinfold, kept every scrap of documentation), the immense contribution of the late Dr D W (Don) McKenzie (formerly a fruit research scientist at Goddards Lane, Havelock North) in initiating and developing the sister-city bond has become even more obvious to me. His unselfish and practical work in developing contact on many fronts, and the vision he had, will not be allowed to fade.

A Review of Sister-City Developments:

1. Mayor/Council goodwill delegation exchanges (11);
2. Horticultural experience and training scheme placements (11);
3. English-language teacher scheme placements (2/4 years' service);

4. Interschool links (artwork; pen pals; Hastings Boys' High School tour);
5. Provision of English-language texts (COSCO to assist in transshipping from Napier to Guangzhou);
6. Cultural Exhibitions to Guilin (Hawke's Bay Pottery 1992; Maori Artifacts 1993) - organised by the Hawke's Bay Cultural Trust;
7. Exchange of information/experience in local government management and development; agriculture; horticulture; industry; tourism and education;
8. Exploratory discussions on trade potential, and establishment of a wool dossier;
9. Promotion of sister-district awareness via education, local media, displays, provision of information, and a Library Section;
10. Active support from the Hawke's Bay Chinese Association and the Hawke's Bay Branch New Zealand-China Friendship Society;
11. Growing interest in group/individual tourist visits to Guilin;
12. Close liaison with Embassy staff of The People's Republic of China in Wellington;
13. Plant and seeds trials in Guilin via the Parks' Section of the Community Services Division.

Current Actions:

- (i) a Guilin Evening for Councillors, Managers and wives and host families is being held aimed at increasing awareness of sister-city developments, and fostering interest in the two invitations to Guilin this year;
- (ii) a community forum on sister-district developments is planned for July aimed at getting more direct involvement in a range of contacts;
- (iii) the Council is working toward putting exchanges on an official basis under the criteria of a Work and Cultural Exchange recognised by the New Zealand Immigration Service.

Mr Dwyer said he will be actively exploring other exchange options with the Hawke's Bay Polytechnic, Tourism Hawke's Bay, and horticultural interests following through on the work of Dr McKenzie with the Guangxi Botanical Research Institute in the Guilin Municipality. He also would like to see another English-language teacher go to Guilin, with the aim of two teachers there at any one time;

- (iv) a Guilin Information Brochure is being prepared for publication shortly - this will provide : a brief history of the sister-district connection; facts about Guilin, and an insight into the tourist attractions of Guilin.
- (v) a meeting has been held with the Hastings & District Chamber of Commerce with a view to more formally but tentatively exchanging information with its counterparts in Guilin;
- (vi) Mr Dwyer has also developed a "wool dossier" following Guilin's interest in looking at potential wool trade/joint venture arrangements with Hawke's Bay - and

the Chamber of Commerce will assist in supplying a Hawke's Bay data base for presentation to Guilin.

It may likely be a very long shot or long-term prospect, but I intend to culture the opportunity for both wool and commercial interests believing the medium term may produce some results.

A specific "trade fact-finding" visit to Guilin may be one shorter-term option.

Up until now, Havelock North schools have shown most interest in Guilin, with several involved in developing pen pals, sending artwork, or in donating textbooks. Mr Dwyer hopes other schools will show an interest too, and, whilst Amy Wang is here, use the opportunity to have her talk to classes about Guilin.

Mr Dwyer plays an active role in assisting with day-to-day surveillance of sister-district matters, and has just written an article for the New Zealand-China News - the official publication of the New Zealand-China Friendship Society of which he is also local Branch Patron.

His philosophy on the international bond is clear. Dr Don, he says, left a strong commitment and vision behind for others to carry forward. Former City Mayor, J J O'Connor, and former City Councillors have done the same. He believes that the success of any relationship comes through the quality and consistency of the effort put into it, and people at both the Guilin and Hastings end have invested both a depth of consistency and real friendship as well. The intent of the protocol signed 11 years ago should be honoured by deeds - nothing else. "My personal vision is of a growing global village awareness where New Zealand increasingly realises its future is linked, in large part, with the South Pacific and Pacific Rim. 'Sister-city' linkages can contribute positively to this future scenario - provided one is prepared to work at it, not just talk about it".

26 May, 1992