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NEWSLETTER

August 2018

Auckland Mayor Phil Goff's Japan visit

By Kimberley Wu, Adviser Global Partnerships and Strategy, Auckland Council

At the invitation by Mayor Soichiro Takashima of Fukuoka City, a sister city of Auckland, Mayor Phil Goff visited Japan from 29 July to 3 August and spoke at the 12th Asian-Pacific Cities Summit (APCS): Sustainable Cities and Communities.

It was a first reciprocal visit to Japan by the Mayor of Auckland since amalgamation. His programme in Tokyo and Fukuoka was well supported by the New Zealand Embassy in Tokyo and Fukuoka City.

Although there wasn't a formal mayoral delegation, the Chairman of the Independent Māori Statutory Board, David Taipari, the Tāmaki Makaurau Regional Manager of Te Puni Kōkiri, Marty Rogers, the Chief Executive of Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development, Nick Hill, and President of Sister Cities New Zealand, Hiromi Morris, were also in Japan to further strengthen bilateral linkages.

In Tokyo, the Mayor had a series of meetings with large Japanese corporations interested in investing in housing, hotel construction and public transport infrastructure in Auckland and relevant site visits. The Mayor also spoke at an official reception hosted by Ambassador Stephen Payton at the Embassy, attended by 110 corporate and civic visitors, to promote investment, tourism and international education in NZ and specifically Auckland.

In Shinagawa, a Special Ward of Tokyo, Mayor Goff and Mayor Takeshi Hamano signed a communique celebrating the 25th Anniversary of the Friendship City relationship.

At the APCS in Fukuoka, the Mayor was a speaker and panelist to contribute to and learn from the Summit attended by 37 cities from 18 countries, in particular in relation to dealing with the challenges of rapid urbanisation.

During his bilateral meeting with Mayor Takashima, the Mayor presented the 2018 Sister Cities New Zealand Awards

Certificates for the Fukuoka Garden project in recognition of the joint efforts in establishing the new garden.

The Mayor also took the opportunities to build relationships with leaders from other Asia-Pacific cities, having bilateral meetings with the Mayor of Guangzhou and the Vice Mayor of Busan (both are Auckland's partner cities) and the Mayor of Oita (the city in Kyushu which next year is the home host city at the Rugby World Cup for the All

Blacks), the Mayors of Vladivostok and Kathmandu and the Director of the Centre for Liveable Cities in Singapore.

The Mayor has reported that the full and useful programme in Japan was a valuable opportunity to connect with his counterparts in Japan and to promote Auckland and seek out potential investment for Auckland's infrastructure, housing and visitor and student economy.



The sake barrel opening ceremony at the Asian-Pacific Cities Summit in Fukuoka.



Mayor Phil Goff and Mr Takeshi Hamano (second left), joined by Mr Shinji Tamura Managing Director of Shinagawa-ku International Friendship Association, and Ms Cath Knell, Principal of Lynfield College, celebrated the 25th Anniversary of Friendship City agreement.



A model of the Shibuya Station during a site visit facilitated by Tokyu Corporation in Tokyo. New Zealand Ambassador to Japan, HE Stephen Payton (centre), and Mr Nick Hill (first left), Chief Executive, Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED) also attended.

Edgecumbe Drummers on a Roll

Matt Bryson, Whakatane District Sister Cities Association

My journey started about 10 years ago as a JET programme recipient, when one day I was sitting around a table with Konoura Kagura members and a flute was passed around the table for me to have a try. I made the perfect sound which was the key to kick starting this journey for me. I love everything about Japan and saw an opportunity to share my passion for Konoura Kagura and taiko drumming with some of the students in my Japanese class at Edgecumbe College.

In July the dream came true – I took four young men to Japan – they were Taupara Bignell-Koroheke, Daniel Renata, Arapeta Rimene and Penetito Murray-Rimene. We spent the first week staying in Kenji Furutate’s home in Tokyo where he acted as the perfect host and showed us the sites of the magnificent city. We also visited Kamagaya our Sister City where they had a full day of activities planned for us including drumming sessions and Kendo.

From Tokyo we gave the boys the opportunity to experience the Bullet Train and sped to Kyoto which was experiencing temperatures of up to 40 degrees - man it

was hot. From there we moved on to Okayama where I lived for 10 months on a high school exchange. Kiyoko Maeda organised host families for us to stay with and had been with us on this journey from the beginning. Next we went to Hiroshima to see the Atomic Dome Museum and Miyajima Island, then headed back up to Konoura in Nikaho City, Akita prefecture, which is the birthplace of Konoura Kagura.

Konoura Kagura is a tradition of 200+ years and this was the first time that a group of foreigners performed Konoura Kagura back to the community. The experience was truly humbling and overwhelming with many tears of joy in the audience.

Konoura Kagura Members also ran a workshop for our Kagutai group to provide an opportunity to learn more about the Kagura style, to experience the true Japanese culture and hospitality by staying with five different Japanese families. My heartfelt thanks goes to everyone who embraced us while in Japan and for allowing the Edgecumbe Kagutai group into their lives and making the trip such a memorable one for all.



Above: Drumming Group and Kanoura Kagura Members

Below: Kendo at Kamagaya



Above: Miyajima Island

Whanganui's two sister cities – Toowoomba, Australia and Nagaizumi-cho, Japan

By Marianne Cavanagh, Whanganui District Council Principal Advisor – Corporate and International Relations

It is shaping up to be a year of reinforcing already-rich ties between Whanganui and its two sister cities – Toowoomba in Australia and Nagaizumi-cho in Japan.

As you read this, a seven-strong Whanganui District Council delegation, joined by an additional 11 members of the Whanganui community, will have winged their way to Japan to celebrate 30 years of social, cultural, sporting and educational links with Nagaizumi-cho.

The relationship with Nagaizumi-cho is very special, says Whanganui Mayor Hamish McDouall.

“And in this year alone, there have been more than three visits between the Council and Toowoomba Regional Council representatives – some here, some in Toowoomba – and relationships couldn't be better,” Mayor McDouall says.

Nagaizumi-cho in Shizuoka Prefecture was chosen as a sister city because of its demographic similarities to Whanganui, its rural nature and the opportunity for mutual opportunities.

“This significant celebration has allowed us to be positive ambassadors for Whanganui, to promote our district and to recognise the relationship's cultural, educational and economic benefits and investment,” Mayor McDouall says.

He honours and acknowledges the contribution of all those who have supported the relationship in the past 30 years, including the late Tomonobu Nakamura OBE, a Nagaizumi businessman and Rotarian, who encouraged honey exports and funded many exchanges over several years.

Each decade the relationship has been marked with an official visit. A Whanganui delegation attended the 10th anniversary celebrations in Nagaizumi in 1998 and a smaller group visited Japan in 2008 to mark the 20th anniversary. A 50-strong group from Nagaizumi is expected to attend next February's 30th anniversary of the New Zealand Masters Games in Whanganui.

School parties from both cities have also regularly participated in exchange visits. Last year a group of

Nagaizumi students was hosted in Whanganui by Rutherford Intermediate School. The students attended class, visited marae, experienced a hangi and also visited tourist attractions.

The visit to Japan, from 2-7 August, included the official celebration, town tours and meetings with Nagaizumi officials and coincided with Nagaizumi's annual Waku Waku Festival.

The sister city relationship with Toowoomba was forged 37 years ago.

“It's an enduring relationship. We have much in common and on their most recent visit here in June, they showed interest in several initiatives including Study Whanganui, Safer Whanganui and our digital strategy, which led to Whanganui having Smart City status – as one of the first New Zealand communities to roll-out ultra-fast broadband throughout the city,” says Mayor McDouall.

The relationship has sparked the possibility of a joint venture delivering freight to South East Asia.

“We are delighted that we are keeping in touch on a more regular basis.”

Toowoomba Mayor Paul Antonio, Chief Executive Officer Brian Pidgeon and Principal (Commercial Development) Bill Sankey were in the country to attend Access NZ, a gathering to discuss opportunities to link food, energy, resource, logistics

and tourism industries and spent a weekend in Whanganui.

Whanganui & Partners, which oversees the Council's economic development activity, organised a number of presentations for the Toowoomba visitors.

Other highlights included visiting NZ Glassworks, touring behind the scenes at Sarjeant on the Quay, strolling through the Saturday market and looking at some of Whanganui's heritage buildings. They also enjoyed a scenic flight, provided by the Whanganui-based New Zealand International Commercial Pilot Academy and visited several of Whanganui's cycling parks.



Toowoomba Mayor Paul Antonio (right) and Chief Executive Officer Brian Pidgeon admire the work at NZ Glassworks during their Whanganui visit. Image: Paul Kjoss

Continued from page 3... Whanganui & Partners general manager Philippa Ivory says, "It was wonderful to have the delegation here. We can learn a lot from this sister city about economic development and making the most of opportunities. They also took a lot away about the work

we're doing here. The Whanganui weather didn't let us down and they were genuinely impressed with what they saw and heard."

Whanganui District Council is also exploring the possibility of a sister city relationship with a Chinese city.



The Whanganui delegation in Nagaizumi-cho ready for the Waku Waku Festival. Image: Marianne Cavanagh



Nagaizumi-cho Mayor Osamu Ikeda and Whanganui Mayor Hamish McDouall gives the thumbs-up to their sister city relationship in Japan. Image: Marianne Cavanagh

Successful Tripartite Economic Alliance renewed for a further three years

By Pamela Jamieson, Global Partnerships and Strategy Advisor, Auckland Council

Auckland's Sister City relationships with Guangzhou and Los Angeles (LA) were leveraged to establish the Tripartite Economic Alliance (Tripartite) in November 2014. Since then, Tripartite Summits have been held annually on a rotational basis between Auckland, Guangzhou and Los Angeles. The Summits are intended to strengthen civic connections and align focus sectors between the three cities to increase business, trade and investment flows, while also fostering opportunities for cultural engagement.

At the November 2017 Tripartite Summit in Guangzhou, the three partner cities signed a Memorandum of Understanding renewing the strategic alliance for a further three years. Rather than hosting standalone annual summits, each city agreed to align Tripartite activities with established international events in their respective cities, on a rotational basis.

Los Angeles hosted this year's Tripartite activity and identified the 22-25 May 2018 Select LA Investment Summit (Select LA) as the key trade/innovation event that best supported tri-city activity in 2018.

Auckland's Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore led Auckland's Tripartite Business Delegation to LA to attend Select LA. The delegation included representatives from the creative, screen, social

enterprise, transport, health and education sectors. It was facilitated by the Council's Global Partnerships & Strategy team and Auckland Tourism, Events and Economic Development (ATEED). Strong support was received from the event hosts, the World Trade Centre LA, as well as the Office of LA Mayor Eric Garcetti, the NZ Consulate in LA and NZTE.

The Tripartite programme in LA opened doors to some of LA's key decision makers and facilitated connections for all the participants. A key success has been a NZ\$20m investment for New Zealand's HMI Technologies.

Meetings were held with LA's Mayor Eric Garcetti; LA's Deputy Mayor of International Affairs, Ambassador Nina Hachigian, and Guangzhou's Executive Vice Mayor CHEN Zhiying. All parties expressed their support for the Tripartite relationship and agreed the cooperation between the three cities was delivering results.

Deputy Mayor Cashmore also had productive discussions with officials from the Port of LA, TraPac Container Terminal, City of LA Street Services and LA Metro.

The LA visit demonstrated Auckland's ongoing political and economic support for the Tripartite and we have committed to hosting Tripartite-related



Tripartite collaboration between leaders: l-r Executive Vice Mayor of Guangzhou CHEN Zhiying, Mayor of LA Eric Garcetti and Auckland's Deputy Mayor Bill Cashmore

Gisborne Mayoral Delegation to Mahina Tahiti

By Gisborne Mayor Meng Foon

Mahina, our city sister put on awesome exceptional hospitality. It was a very spiritual visit as we visited many sacred sites of importance that connects us to Turanga, Uawa, and the Tairawhiti.

Tupaia the Ariki of the time left with Cook from Matavai - Point of Venus in 1769 and arrived in Turanga - Gisborne in 1769 9th October. Hence through this whakapapa link we are sister cities.

Tavana (Mayor) Damas visited Gisborne in February 2018 and we have now made a return visit and cemented forever our closer bond. We thank the Gisborne sister cities committee for supporting the visit.

We had an unknown schedule of events with many surprises, being met at 1.30am in the morning by Tavana Damas, his wife and staff with leis of flowers. The weather was warmer than the Gisborne winter. We were homestayd in a lovely home overlooking Matavai. We were welcomed by the Mahina council, councillors, staff and community with presentation of leis of beautiful scents and colour.

This was my first visit to Mahina after about 15+ years as a sister city. Amongst us was Victor Walker, Shanan Gray of Uawa who play a huge part in the kawa and tikanga - protocols during our visit.

We visited Pt Venus, the departing place of Tupaea and Cook. In the park is a large light house built in 1867. That night we went to the Heiva i Tahiti in Pape'ete where the best of Tahitian culture was displayed. Heiva is a competition, similar to Matatini which has been going to 1894 to ensure the Tahitian culture is not lost - Tahitians speak Tahitian, French and some English. A group from Taputapuatea told the story of how Ra'iatea was named. My recollection of the story is that a prince and princess got married, however after a short time, he had to go to Tahiti, during her pregnancy, if they has a son they were to name it Atea, if a daughter the name was to be niui Ra'iatea - so a daughter was born.

We visited a the Pito (centre) of Tahiti - firstly a ceremonial ritual of bring seawater from Hikinui to Te Iwi Rau o Tokomaru, where permission was granted by Matua Apoa to Haururu the pito o Tahiti. The marae are different to the ones at home, all are a structure of a flat rectangle of stone, no walls, with a ceremonial area to place taonga, the pōwhiri of haramai and speeches, waiata are similar, with the tangata whenua standing in the marae and manuhiri outside standing in a row at the front. A hakari with traditional foods was enjoyed by all along with waiata and the ukulele.

We flew to Taputapuatea, Opoa the place of Tupaia, where were

hosted by Tavana Thomas - with Chinese roots of my parents, a very sacred ceremony was held with the Matua of Ra'iatea who welcomed us and spoke about the history of our connection to Aotearoa. This was the place of Pacific vaka gathering through the sea entrance of Awa Moa, we placed tonga at the Marae, Te Aturangi Nepia Clamp had carved a carving with E'reki and it sits there proudly represented Tupaia connection to the Tairawhiti. You can feel the mauri and wairua of this area, it connects Tupaia to Tairawhiti, he was a handsome man and attracted a lot of female attention wherever he went as the story was told. There were fierce battles in this area and family members as well as the enemy were sacrificed. Mr. Victor Walker parau (korero) whakapapa connected Tupaia to Uawa.

We were invited to have breakfast with the Tahitian President Édouard Fritch and some of his ministers and staff, this was a surprise honour that we had not expected. We arrived at Parliament House at 7am, were met personally by President Fritch at the entrance and escorted to have breakfast with him. We invited the President to Tairawhiti to celebrate with us in 2019, we asked if Uawa Kapa can perform at the Heiva i Tahiti in 2019 and his reply was "this is your home". As Tahiti and New Zealand cooperate in a number of portfolios, the team discussed educational opportunities for school exchanges. He was very interested in Gisborne Wastewater treatment plant as it was a natural system of low operating cost and no chemicals. After breakfast, to my surprise and honour he presented to me a Tahitian Tokotoko. Wow, what a honour - he taonga honore! The meeting cemented our relation further with Mahina as he now understands more about the relationship with Tupaia and the Tairawhiti and will further support Mahina. The President's comment on tourism was clear, he wants high value, high end tourism as



Gisborne Delegation with Tahitian President Edouard Fritch and some Govt. Ministers and Staff. 2nd from left in 2nd row - Te Aturangi Nepia-Clamp (Trustee Te Ha 1769 Sestercentennial Trust). 1st row from left - Cr Honio (Edgar) Fritch, Mayoress Ying Foon, Mayor Meng Foon, President Edouard Fritch, Mahina Tavana (Mayor) Damas Teuiria, Victor Walker (Uawanui), Shanan Gray (Te Artanga-a-Hauti Centre of Excellence), Bill Burdett (GDC).

they know their environment cannot handle mass tourism due to the sensitive nature of the environment

We visited Moorea, swam with stingrays and sharks, such clear water hence the desire to have sustainable environmental management. We had a ceremony on the Vaka Faafaite which will sail to Tairawhiti in the month of May 2019 to be joined by about 8 other Vaka. We sat in the Kava ceremony and shared parau vaka, parau whakapapa.

We were there at the time of the international Waka Ama competitions and we saw Mareikura and Horouta compete. Mareikura was hosted at a primary school in Mahina.

Mahina Council runs the primary schools, local police, fire service and 300m of sea space from the shores of Mahina.

Most of their income comes from appropriations from central government.

About 100 Mahina people are coming to Gisborne and Uawa in October 2019. President Fritch is keen to come. Another group of 100 are following nga tapuwae o Tupaia (journeys) soon after. School exchanges are being organised, Uawa is in the Heiva, a lot of good work has been achieved. Ka nui te mihi ki a koutou katoa, mo to manaki ki a matau, koutou Tavana Damas ko to kaunihera, ko Mama Tirau, e kore matau e warewaretia - Piki mai kake mai Mahina ki Tupaia i Te Tairawhiti. Mahina your hospitality was awesome and we look forward to hosting you here in Gisborne. Ka mau te wehi!

Arts and cultural exchange with Nelson's sister city, Yangjiang in Guangdong province.

By Gail Collingwood, Sister Cities Coordinator Nelson

The Nelson branch of the New Zealand China Friendship Society strongly believes that creating awareness, understanding and friendship between the young people of New Zealand and China is an excellent way to further the aims of NZCFS. To this end they facilitated an arts and cultural exchange with Nelson's sister city, Yangjiang in Guangdong province. Six secondary school students from Nelson accompanied by two adults were hosted by Liangyang Senior High School in Yangjiang in April this year. This was the first foreign exchange ever hosted by that school.

The exchange was promoted to the 5 local secondary schools in Nelson/Richmond and students invited to apply. Six senior high school students were selected from applications with priority given to those with particular interests in the arts such as music, drama, dance or fine arts, with Mandarin language a consideration. Adaptability, curiosity and strength of character were also into account, as well prior knowledge of, or interest in Chinese culture. Most of selected students had little understanding of China and were provided with a thorough orientation over the preceding 2 months. This included preparing acts for the performance concert to be held as part of the cultural exchange activities.

The group travelled to Yangjiang, Guangdong province, China for 10 days in the April 2018 New Zealand school



Arrival at Liangyang Senior High School



Megan presenting on differences in schools

holidays. Liangyang Senior High School is a week-day boarding school and the group was accommodated in dormitories at the school on week days. For the weekend the group stayed in a hotel on nearby Hailing Island to facilitate visits to the Silk Road Maritime Museum, markets, fishing village and other attractions.

A highly active and sharing programme was followed. This included visits to 5 English classes each with a focus topic for sharing – differences between China and NZ education, interactive games, Yangjiang specialty foods, traditional festivals, ethnic cultures. Club activities enjoyed were Tai Chi, calligraphy, seal making, traditional dance, Lion Dancing and street dancing and making kites. Other activities included visits to an

ancient fishing village, lacquerware museum (a Yangjiang specialty), shopping mall and dinner at a teacher's house. These gave a wide and varied insight to Yangjiang life and education.

A particular highlight of the exchange was the Cultural Performance by the Nelson and Liangyang students to an audience of 500 students, staff, and Foreign Affairs Bureau representatives. The concert included a significant component of Maori culture including a mihi, waiata and hongi that were extremely well received. The Nelson group also learned and sang a song in Mandarin.

Extracts from student feedback are below.

“It was well planned and organised so as to give us students enough independence to explore the culture, yet still enough structure to keep us engaged in activities. I enjoyed that the trip allowed plenty of opportunities to interact with our Chinese peers.

The positive attention we were paid by the people of Yangjiang surprised me most. As a foreigner, I expected most students to be apathetic towards us, or even avoid us, because of how I have seen foreigners treated in New Zealand. Much to the contrary, we were treated like celebrities, with the utmost respect. I was very humbled by the enthusiasm we were greeted by, and hope that New Zealanders can learn from their example.

I enjoyed any activities where we were speaking, socialising, or otherwise interacting with the Yangjiang students. These interactions gave me an insight into culture and life in China, in a way that textbooks or museums never could.

We were so well prepared enough for this trip, that our biggest point of contention was which t-shirts we should wear. I think that the trust and respect given to us by Jane and Ian allowed preparation to proceed quickly and painlessly. The fact that the exchange went off without a hitch speaks for the preparation and planning that went on behind the scenes. Thanks for the unforgettable experience.”

~

“It was a lot of fun and I really enjoyed myself there. I was really surprised about the school days the students there have, starting early in the morning and going to school until 10pm. My favourite parts of the trip were the time we spent on Hailing Island and wandering around Zhapo and also hanging out with the students at the school.”

~

“I was incredibly impressed by the level of organisation from Jane and Ian as well as the school itself. I always felt informed of what was happening so I never felt unsure or uneasy about being in Yangjiang. The trip exceeded my expectations because of the high quality of hospitality we received as well as the experiences we had that I never would've had as an ordinary tourist, for example being at the school or going to the teacher's house. The way the school welcomed us was surreal because I'd never been surrounded by so many people who wanted to get to know me. Overall the exchange was a once in a lifetime experience that I wish more people could experience, I feel very fortunate to have been selected.

Before arriving at the school I expected a few teachers from the school to greet us and I thought some students might

stare at us because we look different but I never expected them to surround us and talk to us as much as they did. We have lots of exchange students in Nelson so we don't think twice about them being in our schools but being over there made me realise how diverse our schools are and how uncommon it was for them to have international students.

As well as being at the school and getting to know the students, my favourite part of the trip was the weekend on Hailing Island where we got to explore some of the older, less fancy parts of China. Although there was a lot of dried fish, I loved walking around the streets and going over to the fishing bay to see where the locals spend their time because I feel like this was the real China that we got to see. Another highlight was KTV because I feel like that is something that you would only truly experience in an Asian country so I'm glad we got to go. Other highlights include seeing Yangjiang at night, taking part in the clubs at the school and seeing the old Chinese village.

I feel like we had just the right amount of meetings before the trip so we were prepared enough without it taking up too much of our time (because we're all busy people) There was good communication and we got to know each other a bit before going on the trip which meant we could really bond while we were away.

The exchange was an incredible opportunity for us, as students, to experience a taste of what life is like for the students is like in China. The trip exceeded every expectation I had so I don't think there was much you could improve on. I really hope there will be future exchanges so more students will be able to experience what we did because it was truly a once in a lifetime experience.”

~

The exchange visit to Yangjiang was eye opening and indeed, life changing for both the Nelson students and the Liangyang Senior High School students who had previously only had very limited opportunities to mix with foreigners. The sharing of personal and cultural experiences has created mutually positive impressions

and lasting friendships and contacts between these young adults. These have been shared by the New Zealand students with their peers, families, schools and the wider public through presentations, local media and most importantly, enthusiastically re-telling stories of the trip.

Based on the success of the initial exchange to Yangjiang, it is now proposed that a group of 10 students and teachers from Liangyang visit Nelson in March 2019. It is believed this will lead to a stronger sister city relationship with Yangjiang.



Sam telling about his Maori culture



Yangjiang food speciality class

Otaru Youth Delegation to Dunedin

By Yoshi Isoyama, Vice President, Dunedin-Otaru Sister City Society

A youth delegation from Otaru, Dunedin's sister city in Japan, came to stay in Dunedin for five days from the 2nd to the 6th August this year.

The group consisted of 2 boys and 10 girls from various junior high schools in Otaru, who were escorted by two chaperones (one of them was a junior high school teacher and the other was an Otaru City Office staff member).

They attended and visited some events and tourist spots around our city, while learning first-hand about a slice of the Kiwi life through home stay.

The delegates visited the Dunedin City Council (including meeting with the Mayor), walked Baldwin Street (world's steepest street), took a tour of Forsyth Barr Stadium (including the Highlanders'/the All Blacks' changing room and the pitch) and the Otago Museum (including the new Science Centre), as well as experiencing Otago Farmers Market and Taieri Gorge Railway.

They also attended the International Students Welcome function held by the Dunedin City Council and the Hiroshima Day event.

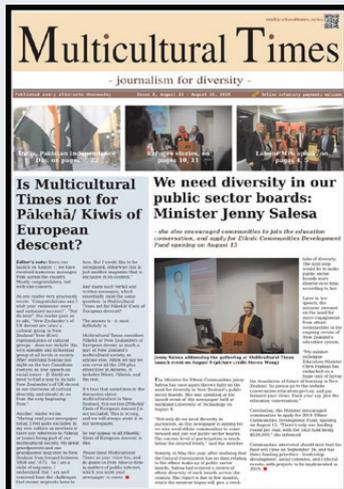
I hope that some of the delegates will come back to Dunedin in the future and will experience more of what the city has to offer.

It was the thirteenth visit by the Otaru Youth Delegation. It takes place approximately biennially, and it will be Dunedin's turn next time to send a group of young representatives of the city to Otaru.



Photo: The Otaru Youth Delegation in front of the Dunedin Railway Station. (Left: Chaperone Tomohiro Kanazawa, Matsugae Junior High School; Right: Chaperone Iroha Saito, Otaru City Office)

Photo: Yoshi Isoyama



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Taupō Museum and Suzhou – Faith and Life

By Katy Glenie, Communications Advisor, Taupō District Council

Preparations continue at Taupō Museum for the upcoming Suzhou – Faith and Life exhibition, which opens on August 31. The exhibition features treasures valued at over \$4.5m from the Tang and Song dynasties, dating back to 618 AD. It is the first time an exhibition of this age and significance has been hosted by Taupō Museum, and has come about through the town's relationship with Chinese sister city Suzhou.

In June delegates Mr Liu Ming and Ms Yao Yao from Suzhou Museum visited to check on preparations. Due to the age and significance of the artefacts, humidity control and security measures are vitally important.

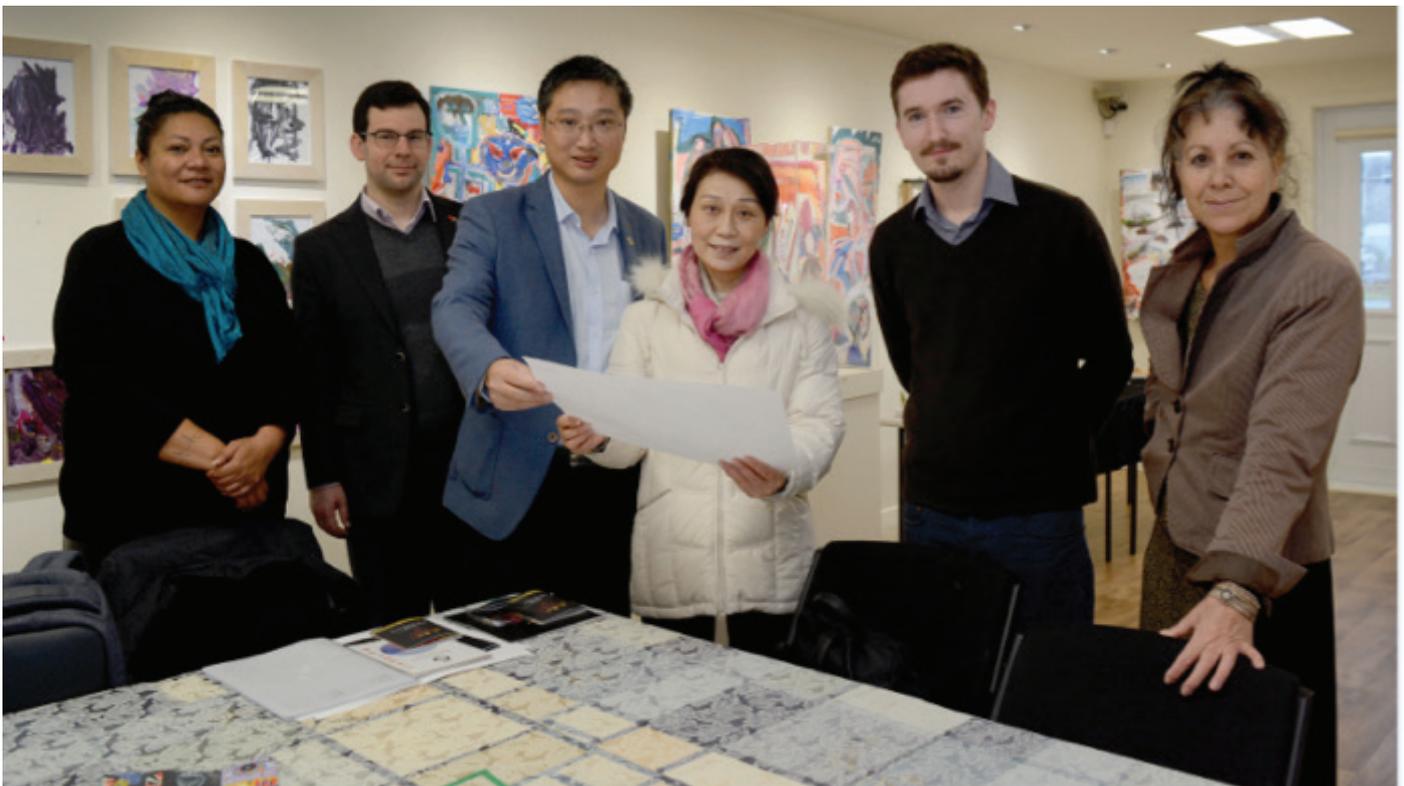
Library and museum manager Luisa Haines said Mr Ming and Ms Yao were very happy with the arrangements in place. "Suzhou Museum is one of the great international museums, and we are fortunate to have this unprecedented opportunity to share these ancient artefacts with our district. We are expecting visitors from all over New Zealand."

Museum displays officer Jon Primer said visitors to the exhibition will have a glimpse of a fascinating world of faith and life over 1000 years old. "This is the first time these artefacts have been shown in New Zealand. There

are some incredible pieces, including a replica Pearl Pillar (a Buddhist holy relic), precious tomb items and beautiful celadon and porcelain pottery. The exhibits range from holy pieces to everyday objects."

Taupō District Mayor David Trewavas said it was a privilege to meet Mr Ming and Ms Yao. "The Faith and Life exhibition is part of a broader celebration of Taupō's 10-year sister city relationship with Suzhou. These relationships give us the opportunity to bring world-class events like this to Taupō."

Suzhou - Faith and Life is part of a number of activities celebrating Taupō's sister city relationship with Suzhou. These include the installation of a ceremonial archway in the Tongariro Domain (a gift from Suzhou) and a series of events at Taupō's Winter Festival in July.



Left to right: Bernise Williams – Taupō Museum Collection Curator, Mr Simon Appleton – CEO Eastern Bridge Ltd., Mr Liu Ming – Head of Security, Suzhou Museum, Ms. Yao Yao – Head of Conservation, Suzhou Museum (looking over plans for the exhibition), Jon Primmer – Taupō Museum Displays Officer, Luisa Haines – Taupō District Council Library and Museum Manager