



SISTER CITIES

NEW ZEALAND

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NEWSLETTER

October 2019



SISTER CITIES CONFERENCE Growing Cultural Diversity in Regions

Ashburton, 30 April – 2 May 2020

See sistercities.org.nz for more information

Investing in relationships - SCNZ Forum

By Toni Grace, SCNZ Director

This August SCNZ held a special working forum for SCNZ Council and Corporate members. The forum built on the 2019 conference theme of Prosperity through Partnership and enabled participants to delve further into the opportunity to increase the benefits of international relations.

A diverse group of around 25 participants represented a number of SCNZ members actively engaged in managing international relationships at a working level, particularly in international relations or economic development roles.

The group heard first from James Hogan, author of the recent NZIER report on the economic benefits of Sister City relations, about the best-practice models, opportunities and bottlenecks to progress that were identified in the findings.

Workshop questions identified some common themes and questions among SCNZ members, including:

- That local government international relations increasingly engage in activities beyond Sister Cities, including engagement with the diplomatic corps and other global strategic partnerships, and the opportunity to share our experiences and networks;
- How some Councils have managed to achieve multi-sector involvement in Sister City/region relationships, and the benefits that this brings;
- How to work together across regions and sectors to make the most of a comparative advantage or export market abroad;
- How do our Sister Cities view us and the benefit that partnership with NZ brings?

The forum also included time for sharing best practice case studies and models between members. The group heard from Wellington City Council about the Kurimoto pipeline project, from Marlborough District Council about

their developing viticulture relationship with Ningxia China, and from The Institute for Global Engagement about the NZ-China Youth Leadership Summit.

In the afternoon, Forum participants engaged with LGNZ and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade about a number of upcoming opportunities and events, including an update about plans for the 2020 New Zealand China Mayoral Forum (NZCMF). LGNZ confirmed the next NZCMF will be hosted by the city of Chengdu on 18 May 2020 and held a workshop to allow participants to give feedback on the draft agenda.

The group also heard more about the PacificTA programme, a local government technical assistance for Pacific Island Countries funded by MFAT and run by LGNZ, which provides technical exchanges and secondments between New Zealand and the Pacific.

The Forum wrapped up with a presentation about the 2020 SCNZ conference being held in Ashburton from 30 April – 2 May next year, and final closing remarks from LGNZ CEO Malcolm Alexander. Anyone keen to access presentations from the August SCNZ Forum can contact admin@sistercities.org.nz. SCNZ wishes to thank LGNZ for their support in providing the venue for this forum.



SCNZ Council and Corporate members attending the August 2019 Forum at the LGNZ Boardroom in Wellington



Mayor Tony Bonne, Whakatane District Council



Whakatane District Council staff members

CLAIR Staff Member's Internship at Whakatane DC

By Takanori Tanimoto

Assistant Director Takanori (Taka) Tanimoto from the Japan Local Government Centre (CLAIR, Sydney), visited Whakatane District Council for a 10-day internship programme from 5 to 14 August.

Whakatane District Council is located in the Bay of Plenty region, where many prosperous primary industries are based.

Taka is on a secondment to Sydney from the Kochi Prefectural Government. Kochi is well known in Japan for having rich forest resources, and Taka himself has a background in forestry. During his internship, Taka focused on learning about forestry in New Zealand, as well as learning about various projects, in particular, forestry related projects in Rotorua, Kawerau and Tauranga.

Taka also paid a courtesy call on Mayor Greg Brownless of Tauranga as it is a sister city of Susaki City in Kochi, and they talked about the Yosakoi Festival and its spread from Kochi to the world. During his internship, Taka was able to learn not only about the primary industries and local administration of New Zealand, but also various aspects of Maori culture. He was also delighted that he

was able to have first-hand understanding about ethnic diversity initiatives in New Zealand.

Taka is extremely thankful to Mayor Tony Bonne of Whakatane for kindly accepting his internship request, Ms Janie Storey at Whakatane District Council for planning a solid internship program, and Mr Andrew Illes, Chairperson of the Whakatane District Sister Cities Committee for kindly offering Taka homestay and accompanying him on visits to different organisations. Taka would also like to express his deep appreciation to everyone he met in New Zealand during his internship. He strives to become a bridge between New Zealand and Japan through this special experience he had in New Zealand.

Finally, Taka would like to express his sincere gratitude to SCNZ President Hiromi Morris for connecting him to Whakatane District Council. Without the kind assistance, Taka would not have been able to have the incredible experience he had at Whakatane District Council.

Tena koutou, Tena koutou, Tena koutou Katoa.



Sister Cities NZ Social Media channels

Those of you who follow the [@sistercitiesnz](#) Instagram will know that these past few weeks we've been focusing on the Japan connection a bit because of the Rugby World Cup.

Social media is a great way to reach a wider audience than you might otherwise reach through your standard newsletter type mechanism and to connect with other like-minded organisations by tagging them or sharing posts. Facebook allows us to directly share your content. Instagram does not. We can only share things that we know about or have. If you have anything you would like to share let us know by DM'ing (direct messaging) us through the Facebook page or through the Instagram.

Special thanks to the JET Programme participant in Beppu who allowed us to use her photos of Beppu Station's welcome display for the All Blacks in exchange for a few blocks of Whittaker's Home and Away chocolate.

Gansu Province Delegation Visits Canterbury

35th Anniversary of Christchurch Gansu Relationship

By Bernard Duncan, Christchurch China Sister City Committee Chair

2019 marks the 35th anniversary of the relationship between Christchurch and Gansu Province in North West China.

This connection was initiated and encouraged by Rewi Alley and in 1984 the then Mayor of Christchurch Hamish Hay signed an agreement with his Gansu counterpart.

During the course of this year there have been reciprocal visits between Christchurch and Gansu, the first of which saw past leaders of the committee including myself, visit Gansu to renew friendships, to discuss the evolution of Rewi Alley's legacy in China over the last 40 years and to reflect on how the relationship may develop in the future.

In September Christchurch hosted a delegation led by Gansu's most senior leader, Party Secretary Lin Duo. It was an honour to have such a senior leader come to Christchurch and reflected the great esteem in which Rewi Alley is still held in Gansu as well as the deep respect and friendship that exists between Christchurch and Gansu.



Christchurch Mayor Lianne Dalziel with Gansu Party Secretary Lin Duo

To mark the significance of the anniversary there was an exchange of gifts. Gansu presented the Mayor of Christchurch Lianne Dalziel with a large replica of the famous flying horse while Christchurch presented the Party Secretary with a feathered Korowai (Māori cloak) woven by Selwyn local Sue Tipene. Both are culturally very significant gifts and will be appropriately showcased as a way for people from both Christchurch and Gansu to learn more about the customs and culture of the other.

During his visit to Christchurch and Canterbury the Party Secretary was given a tour of the upper Canterbury Plains to learn about how water is allocated and utilised for sustainable food production. This was of great interest to the delegation given that Gansu is a very dry part of China.

Both visits showed that Rewi Alley's legacy and memory continues to be a powerful force for friendship between China and New Zealand.

Gansu Delegation Visits Selwyn District

By Allison Rosanowski, Selwyn Sister City Committee Chair

On 7th and 8th September, Christchurch City and Selwyn District Councils hosted a delegation from Gansu Province to celebrate Christchurch's 35 years of Sister City relationship with Gansu Province.

Selwyn also has a Sister City relationship with Shandan County in Gansu Province. The Mayor of Selwyn, Sam Broughton, and the Mayor of Shandan, Mr Lu Sidong signed an updated Memorandum of Understanding to focus future relationships on mutual sharing of information in the areas of education, agriculture and water, tourism and exchanges.

Both of these relationships developed because Rewi Alley, who was born in Springfield, worked in Gansu Province establishing schools and cooperatives. His philosophy of "hands and minds together" remains a key element in Shandan Bailie School which has a Sister School relationship with Darfield High School.

Gansu Province is located on the Silk Route and is bounded by Inner Mongolia and the Gobi Desert. It is an agricultural region with sheep, maize and sunflowers. Rewi Alley imported corriedale sheep from North Canterbury. Some of the delegation were able to visit the Sidey farm the source of these sheep and view rams ready for export to Uruguay.

The delegation was led by Mr Lin Duo, the Gansu Party Secretary General, who is the most important leader in the province. In Selwyn the group visited the Rewi Alley Memorial Park in Springfield and saw the site of the original Springfield School and school house where Rewi Alley was born. Mr Geoff Stevenson showed the visitors

the Sheffield CPW reservoir and the infrastructure of the scheme. At Fonterra, Ecan's input was highlighted by Mr John Sunkell. Ms Catherine Traught further explained the Central Plains irrigation scheme. Blake Ashton, last year's Gansu Fellow, who is Fonterra's Cream Cheese manager, was able to give the delegation a short factory tour. Cream cheese is added to coffee, along with cream and syrup: a new take on coffee in China.

After lunch hosted in a local home the group visited Paul and Ann Jarman's dairy farm. This was followed by a visit to Darfield High School to view some of the specialist facilities.

While the cold temperatures and showers on Sunday made some of the outdoors visits more difficult, the visitors left with an increased knowledge of the Selwyn district and Christchurch and renewed friendships.



Left: Selwyn & Shandan Mayors sign a MoU. Right: Members of the Gansu Working Delegation inspect Corriedale wool at the Sidey farm from where Rewi Alley imported sheep

Japan New Zealand Business Council (JNZBC) Annual Joint Conference

By Ian Kennedy, JNZBC NZ Chair

The Japan New Zealand Business Council (JNZBC) held its 46th Annual Joint Conference in Kashiwa-no-ha, Japan, on 18-19 September. Attended by over 140 participants, the conference was a great success.

Kashiwa-no-ha was an obvious venue as a 'smart city' and host to the All Blacks prior to the Rugby World Cup. The timing of the conference was ideal also with the New Zealand and Japanese Prime Ministers meeting for government-to-government consultations.

Under the theme '**Japan and New Zealand: Pathways to Progress**' the agenda addressed key issues to both sides, including infrastructure and investment; sustainable development, renewable energy and forestry; agriculture - functional foods; innovation and start-ups. Discussion of the Maori economy and tourism, and linkages through rugby, underlined the importance of cultural and sports exchanges in building the social infrastructure between the two countries - key to doing business.

Discussion on the current economic situation in both countries and the outlook for international trade underlined the key importance of the Comprehensive and Progressive Agreement for Trans-Pacific Partnership (CPTPP) and the negotiations underway on the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP) in providing a firm foundation bringing new opportunities for inclusive and sustainable growth.

The quality of the speakers was outstanding, and the industry tour of Kashiwa-no-ha showcasing the lead role of Mitsui Real Estate as developer coupled with visits to Tokyo and Chiba Universities, provided an excellent opportunity for delegates to take a first-hand look at the smart city concept focused on the environment, healthy living, creativity and communications.

The conference included good time also for informal business networking during the tea breaks and at the Welcome Reception and Farewell Dinner. With the conference taking place immediately before the Rugby World Cup, and in a country where relationships are key



Kashiwa-no-ha school children perform a haka

to doing business, it was great to see the power of sport in bringing New Zealand and Japan closer together. A robust haka performed by Kashiwa-no-ha school children at the Welcome Reception was testament to that, and it was no surprise to learn about the amazing number of 'likes' that AIG is getting in support of its advertisements featuring the All Blacks in Japan.

The Japan New Zealand Business Council will hold its 47th Annual Joint Conference in Rotorua in October/November next year - final dates yet to be set. **Keep an eye on the JNZBC website www.jnzbc.com for details.**



Culture, Cuisine and Cherry Blossoms a Winner in Nelson

By Lyndal McMeeking, Nelson Miyazu Sister City Association

Nelson celebrated the coming of spring and the cherry blossom in its usual festive way recently with its annual Cherry Blossom Festival in the splendid Miyazu Gardens.

Mayor Rachel Reese was on hand to open the programme which included big brush calligraphy, song, dance, Japanese puppetry & displays of Japanese martial arts kendo and aikido. Mayor Reese commented:

"It was such a stunning day at Miyazu Gardens for the 17th annual Cherry Blossom Festival. Thank you to the Nelson Miyazu Sister City Association and the Nelson Japanese Society for a wonderful festival which was the coming together of cultures for an amazing celebration. Community events like this are such a great way to continue the relationship between our two cities of Nelson and Miyazu. We were fortunate to see some very talented artists and performers on display. Arigato gozaimasu!"

A feature of the programme was the 'Sakura Odori', a specially selected combination of three traditional Japanese dances performed en masse with the crowd invited to participate. The dances included Miyazu city's official dance 'Miyazu Bushi' which was enjoyed live online by members of a Miyazu-based English speaking group.



Photo: Nelson Japanese Society

Serendipity of Sister City relationships

By Amber Walters, Wellington City Council



In September, I was fortunate to represent Wellington at the eighth World Tourism Cities Federation (WTCF) summit in Helsinki, Finland.

Helsinki is elusive Santa's official gateway airport; home to Moomin, Sibelius and Marimekko; as well as the award winning and beautiful central Oodi library with state-of-the-art wooden architecture. It has no official sister cities but primarily works with capital cities.

The serendipity of attending this summit was the opportunity to meet Vice-Mayor Wang Hong, from our sister city Beijing. She was very interested to discuss our mutual sister city relationship and studied the pictures of Wellington at our booth diligently. She was most intrigued by our Zealandia photos of Tui and Kowhai which I explained were both unique to New Zealand and she expressed a desire to visit us in the near future!

It was a whirlwind week but great experience to connect Wellington globally as well as meet Mayors, Deputy Mayors and Council staff from cities all over the world.

Minoh Teachers Visit Sister City Lower Hutt

By Vesna West, Hutt City Council

In August this year two teachers from our sister city Minoh visited Lower Hutt. Lower Hutt and Minoh City in Japan have been sister cities for nearly 25 years. Next year they will be celebrating the 25th anniversary of their sister city relationship.

Over the years, the two cities have maintained strong links and developed different programmes that provide opportunities for local residents to learn about each other's culture, education and way of life. The teacher exchange programme started in 2016 when two Lower Hutt teachers visited Minoh and were hosted by their colleagues from Japan. The following year the Lower Hutt teachers had the opportunity to reciprocate hospitality.

For this year's exchange teachers, Anna Mukai and Hiroko Yabe, this was their first visit to New Zealand. Both Anna and Hiroko enjoyed their stay here. They appreciated the time spent at Lower Hutt schools and opportunities to interact with students, teach them Japanese language and origami, and talk to them about Minoh City and Japanese culture. Their most fun memories of New Zealand were of how outgoing and friendly the school children were, and how happy they were learning how to fold origami.

Anna and Hiroko found it interesting to observe teaching in New Zealand classrooms and activities during breaks. In Japan, school staffroom is set up as an office where, during the breaks between the classes, teachers mark students' work and prepare for upcoming classes. Their day often starts at 8am and finishes at 7pm-8pm. Anna and Hiroko were surprised to see that a staffroom here is more of a relaxing place where teachers have morning tea or lunch, talk and socialise. We learned that schools in Japan don't employ cleaners; much of the school cleaning is done by the children themselves. This is seen as children learning to respect their surroundings, be responsible and respectful.

Visiting New Zealand classrooms and interacting with teachers and students made Anna and Hiroko reflect on

their own practices. One of the things they noticed here is that teachers encourage children to think independently and use imagination. Anna and Hiroko would now like to set up more classes focused less on textbooks, and more on encouraging students' creativity and independent thinking.

One great thing about these exchanges is that teachers can compare the systems, learn new things and take back ideas they like. They also stay with local families, experience the local way of life, food and hospitality. Hosting schools benefit from learning about how things work in a different country and students have the opportunity to learn new skills. Schools that hosted Anna and Hiroko enjoyed having them around and sharing experiences.

Next year, two Lower Hutt teachers will have the opportunity to visit Minoh, learn about the Japanese education system and explore the area. They will be hosted by Japanese families. Expressions of interest for the programme will be sought early next year.

Top: Anna and Hiroko in the Wairarapa

Bottom left: Anna and Hiroko with Deputy Mayor David Bassett at the welcome function

Bottom right: Cooking Japanese food for the host family



Sister Cities Australia Forum: Engage – Inform – Entertain

By Mike Jakins, Sister Cities Australia National Secretary

On September 19 and 20 the city of Perth, Western Australia was the host for the 2019 SCA Forum and AGM, the culmination of almost six months of planning.

SCA received amazing help and assistance from the following: the cities of Belmont, Bunbury, Busselton, Rockingham and Perth, plus from the Hyogo Prefectural Government Cultural Centre. SCA also received generous support from the Parmelia Hilton hotel, the venue for the Nations Awards Dinner and also the post-Forum reception. Without all this kind support and generosity, along with welcome sponsorship from CLAIR, Sydney, the Forum could not have been the success it was.

Along with delegates from fourteen councils, plus organisations, consuls and government departments within WA, we also had people from all across Australia – from the Northern Territory, Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria and Tasmania. There was also an overseas component with four delegates from the Chinese People's Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries in Beijing attending, the former Chair of the Board of Directors of Sister Cities International, Mr Tim Quigley, from the USA, and we also welcomed the President of Sister Cities New Zealand, Mrs Hiromi Morris. In all there were about 70 delegates and special guests.

A special 'invitation only' session was held at the City of Perth Council Chambers on Thursday afternoon to allow delegates to discuss four important topics in a roundtable setting. Members of the SCA Executive were facilitators at each table and all delegates had the opportunity to talk about all four topics, which were:

- Funding for sister cities programs.
- Overcoming a negative media image.
- Working within politically charged countries.
- How do you 'withdraw gracefully' from a sister city relationship?

On Thursday evening, the 2019 SCA National Awards were presented by the Awards Coordinator, Mrs Jan Teasdale, and SCA President, Mr Bill Wilson during a dinner function at the Parmelia Hilton. A warm welcome to all was provided by President, Bill Wilson, and an address was given by the Hon Martin Pritchard, MLC, representing the Premier of Western Australia. He

strongly emphasised that sister city relationships could be strengthened, where applicable, by connecting with and building off of existing sister state relationships.

Following the address the awards and trophies (including a replica trophy for the winners' sister cities) were given in four categories to the following cities:

Category 1 – Community Involvement. Blacktown, NSW – Drought Relief Initiatives

Category 2 – Youth Project. Blacktown, NSW – International Youth Connect Project (IYCP)

Category 4 – Trade and Tourism Project. Bundaberg, Queensland – Economic Development Trade and Tourism Delegation to Nanning, China

Category 5 – Overall Program. Bundaberg, Qld – 20th Anniversary Celebrations: Nanning and Port Stephens, NSW – Strengthening community partnerships with sister cities of Port Stephens

A brief address was given by Mr Hiroto Akaiwa, Executive Director, CLAIR, to encourage us to Japan for the Rugby World Cup (2019), the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games, and the World Masters games, 2021, in Kansai. SCA sincerely thanks CLAIR for their very kind sponsorship of the Forum.

For the next day a full program was prepared for the Forum delegates and was commenced with a Welcome to Country performed by one of Perth's most respected Aboriginal elders, Mr Barry McGuire. Following welcomes from the State Opposition Deputy Leader, the Hon Bill Marmion, MLA, and SCA's own Bill Wilson the opening speaker, Ms Hayley Winchcombe, enthralled all by sharing a little of her own journey that started with a student exchange to her home city's sister city. After Hayley we heard from Mr Tim Quigley, from SCI, about the topic of 'citizen diplomacy' and how this is the cornerstone of all relationships and relationship building – key components of any meaningful sister city relationship.

In a change from normal forum or conference practice, the succeeding five sessions were 'PowerPoint-free' and designed to encourage the speakers to initiate conversation and discussion so that the delegates also had an opportunity to contribute to each topic. All five



Left: forum attendees. Right: Bundaberg, QLD project winners



From left: Opening speaker Hayley Winchcombe; Tim Quigley (SCI); Hirotoimo Akaiwa (CLAIR); Hiromi Morris, Jan Teasdale & Mike Jakins

sessions were facilitated admirably by Mr Adam Penn our MC, were well received and there were many questions and comments from delegates during each. The session topics were chosen to stimulate debate, be thought provoking, and to address issues that seemed to be common to many councils and sister city committees. Briefly, the sessions were:

Mayors for Peace – A very interactive panel discussion led by Fremantle City (Adrian Glamorgan and Elizabeth PO) and Erin and Casper Adson from Busselton. This was to coincide with International Day of Peace on September 21.

Session 1, Setting up, managing and promoting a Sister City Relationship. SCA discussed ‘generic’ considerations for setting up a relationship, led by Mike Jakins, and putting them into practice, led by Jan Teasdale. Hiromi Morris then presented an SCNZ point of view.

Session 2, Leveraging with like-minded organisations to enhance relationships, e.g. Arts and Culture. Pauline Vukelic (Busselton) and Maggie Jiang (Confucius Institute) discussed ways of engaging with other organisations that can benefit sister city relationships.

Session 3, Relationships and identifying economic benefits. Barry Sammels (Rockingham) was on the panel with Carol McDowall (Bunbury) and Steven McDougall (Perth) to look at how economic benefits can flow from relationships.

Session 4, Engaging youth and getting someone aged under-25 on your committee. Lead by Gordon Allen (Blacktown) who eloquently described his city’s excellent youth initiatives, plus Hayley Winchcombe (Busselton)

and Bryce Hellmrich (Belmont) shared their stories and how we might engage more with young people like themselves.

Between Session 2 and Session 3, SCA held its AGM which had three main parts: the President’s report; the Treasurer’s report; and the election for all positions on the Executive Committee. One of the committee members, Mrs Jan Teasdale, did not stand for re-election and has taken her leave of SCA Executive after almost 30 years of remarkable service. She will be sorely missed! The remaining five members were re-elected, with one positional change, for the next two years but unfortunately there were no additional nominations to fill Jan’s vacancy.

Therefore, the SCA Executive Committee for 2019/21 is: President: Mr Bill Wilson, Vice-President: Mrs Christina Despoteris, National Treasurer: Mr Caisley Graham, National Secretary: Mr Mike Jakins, Executive Member: Mrs Sim Hayward

To conclude the Forum delegates were invited to join the SCA Committee for an informal reception.

Did we achieve the aims of the Forum theme?

ENGAGE - Engage with colleagues and discuss important topics that affect all those involved in sister city relationships. YES!

INFORM - Inform yourself on the current state of sister cities in Australia, best practice, innovation and successful projects. YES!

ENTERTAIN - Be entertained and motivated by an array of engaging speakers. YES!

[> Please click here to read the full story](#)



2019/21 SCA Executive Committee - from left to right: Sim Hayward, Christina Despoteris, Jan Teasdale, Bill Wilson, Caisley Graham, Mike Jakins