



# SISTER CITIES

## NEW ZEALAND

Connecting people globally for peace and prosperity

## NEWSLETTER

### September 2020

**PLEASE NOTE:** The 2021 Annual Conference to celebrate the 40<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of SCNZ's establishment will be held in Wellington 15<sup>th</sup>-16<sup>th</sup> April.

From the SCNZ board:

## 2020 AGM successfully navigates through COVID-19 restrictions

By Ray Wallace, SCNZ Vice-President

**The 2020 AGM was for the first time a mix of in-person attendees and Zoom attendees due to COVID-19 restrictions.**

Our thanks to Local Government New Zealand for allowing us to hold the AGM in their conference room in downtown Wellington.

The SCNZ Annual meeting this year consisted of the President's Report and the presenting of the Annual Accounts which were adopted by members. Election of Officers saw the re-election of Ray Wallace as Vice-President. Board members Marcus Boshier and Donna Favel retired from the Board after serving 5 and 3 years respectively. Jan Fitz-Gerald was elected as a new member of the Board with responsibilities for Youth Development. Luke Chin and Rex Cavil were reappointed as advisors to the Board and Kura Moeahu retired as Maori advisor.



AGM Virtual Attendees

There was a good deal of positive discussion around the SCNZ survey to members and the challenges and opportunities SCNZ faces going forward. A one-day forum will be held in Wellington on November 16<sup>th</sup> at Wellington City Council for all members to attend in person or by Zoom. The focus will be on preparing the organisation for the future, to look at challenges facing us as an organisation and what changes in structure might be needed to ensure SCNZ remains relevant and sustainable in the future.

We hope as many members as possible can join us in November.

## Farewell to Malcolm Alexander

By Hiromi Morris, SCNZ President

**Words can say very little to show our sincere appreciation to Malcolm Alexander who stepped down from the position of Local Government NZ Chief Executive at the end of August.**



I first met with Malcolm at the Mayoral Forum held at the Government House in 2015. During the Forum he came to talk to me and said: "It's so cool that a small bunch of volunteers can organise such a meaningful event".

Since then he has been a great advocate to support our activities

as a regular speaker at our annual conferences and workshops, providing an office space at their premises and letting us use their meeting rooms.

I also appreciate his regular advice to me over the last 5 years. We were so grateful for LGNZ's financial support, together with MFAT, for the launch of the NZIER review in 2019.

I trust that his understanding of our work and commitment has made a huge contribution to lift SCNZ's status to a next level. SCNZ is in a much better position due to Malcolm's involvement.

Thank you, Malcolm and all the very best wishes for your future.

## Sister Cities International Holds Virtual Annual Conference

By Carol Robertson Lopez – Chair, and Kevin O'Donnell – Young Professional Representative, Board of Directors, Sister Cities International

On 8 – 9 July 2020, Sister Cities International (SCI) hosted its first ever virtual Annual Meeting and Conference, “Reimagining Citizen Diplomacy: New Connections in a Virtual World,” reaching 2,900 attendees from 49 countries.

The conference program featured inspiring video messages from guest speakers, moving musical performances, relevant and engaging panel discussions, and a Member Roundtable session where sister cities peers interacted with each other on the topics of fundraising, partnering with city officials, and engaging NextGens.

Our 31 conference speakers included: Karen Pence, Second Lady of the United States of America; H.E. Shinsuke Sugiyama, Ambassador of Japan to the United States of America; and the heads of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), United Nations Human Settlements Programme (UN-HABITAT), and the National League of Cities.

One of our sessions focused on showcasing our global linkages, which included a heartfelt and meaningful greeting from Sister Cities New Zealand! Thank you so much to Hiromi, Ray, and Marcus for the wonderful message.

We were also grateful to the 16 talented artists and musicians who lent their works to our program, including Grammy Award-winning singer Dionne Warwick.

Our 4 panel discussions with 13 panelists from backgrounds

in government, business, academia, and the arts covered the topics of virtual exchanges, city diplomacy during COVID-19, harnessing arts and culture for diplomacy, and the future of NextGen involvement in the sister city movement.

You can find the agenda and a full list of speakers and panelists on our website. We hope to be able to connect with members of Sister Cities New Zealand in person, hopefully in the not-too-distant future! In the meantime, let's keep up the good work of citizen diplomacy together.



"The City of San Antonio's Chief Diplomacy & Protocol Officer Sherry Dowlatshahi (left) moderates a panel of fellow protocol officers Mark Chandler from San Francisco, USA (second from left); Maria Dolores Hernandez Montoya from Guadalajara, Mexico (second from right); and Stéphanie Jecrois from Montreal, Canada (right), on city diplomacy during COVID-19"

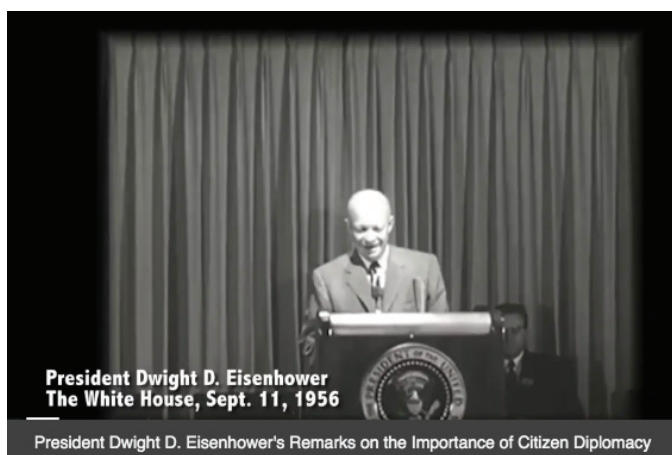
## Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial

**United States President and Founder of Sister Cities International, President Eisenhower's concept of citizen diplomacy launched in 1956, accelerated the sister city movement to become the vast network it is today.**

The Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial was opened recently in Washington, D.C. It was designed by world-renowned architect Frank Gehry in a four-acre urban park at the

base of Capitol Hill. This memorial has several statues and sculptures commemorating President Eisenhower and showing the trajectory of his life.

You may enjoy viewing the Sister Cities International video below created by SCI Vice Chair and Board Member, Peter Svarzbein, which includes remarks by President Eisenhower on the importance of citizen diplomacy.



[Click to watch video](#)



Dwight D. Eisenhower Memorial. Photo: ArchDaily.com



## Honour for Long Serving Committee Member

By Janie Storey, Governance Support Advisor, Whakatāne District Council

**Sister Cities is about people and relationships. Sammy Wilson has been a Member of the Whakatāne District Sister Committee since its inception 29 years ago, but unfortunately due to ill health Sammy has recently had to resign from the committee.**

As a mark of respect to Sammy and to recognise her valuable contribution and dedication to Sister Cities, she recently planted a Weeping Cherry tree at the Japanese Garden. Mayor Judy Turner spoke highly of Sammy and outlined the activities that she had been involved with during that time.

Deputy Mayor Andrew Iles commended Sammy for her dedication and support to the committee over the years and said that she was instrumental in securing the relationship with Kamagaya which was officially signed in November 1997. Sammy also made many lifelong friends by hosting a number of people from Kamagaya over the years and was able to meet up with them during two Mayoral delegation visits to Japan.

*Update: Sadly Sammy passed away on Saturday 5 September 2020. She will be missed.*



Mayor Judy Turner, Deputy Sister Cities Chairperson Julie Jukes, Sammy Wilson and Deputy Mayor and Sister Cities Chairperson Andrew Iles.



Whakatāne District Sister Cities Committee Members

## 25 Years of Hutt – Minoh Sister City Relationship Celebrated

By Ray Wallace, Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust Chairman

**The Hutt Minoh House Friendship Trust hosted a function to celebrate the 25-year celebration between the Hutt and Minoh City Japan.**

Everyone who had been involved in the relationship over the past 25 years was invited to attend the invite the small gathering.

Major public celebrations were unfortunately cancelled due to the COVID -19 restrictions.

The evening event held at the Dowse Museum in Lower Hutt was a wonderful success with Japanese singers performing. The history with a photo montage of the relationship played through the night and Minoh City members were present via Zoom. SCNZ President Hiromi Morris presented the Trust with a Certificate of Congratulations and presented a co-responding certificate to the people of Minoh City through Director of the Japan information & Cultural Centre Mr Kiyohiko

Hamada who attended the event.

Trust Chairman Ray Wallace said the relationship has been a strong one with many wonderful friendships being made over that time and many delegations visiting each other's cities and contributing to the local economy. The relationship has three sister school relationships and a Citizen to Citizen monthly Skype session additional to the Council to Council relationship.



# Gisborne Sister Cities Updates

By Jan Calder, Gisborne District Sister Cities Secretary

## 2020 Gisborne Gamagori Photo Competition – ‘Twentieth Year’

The theme for the Gisborne Gamagori Photo Competition 2020 is “Simply Green”.

The year started with great gusto – 47 entries were posted to Gamagori Japan for judging by the citizens of Gamagori City and the Gisborne District Sister Cities committee (GDSC) received 25 entries from our Gamagori Sister City.

All was going smoothly with expectations of another successful year until COVID-19 struck.

During the 102 days at level one, GDSC were able to exhibit the Gamagori photos on the noticeboard of the HB Williams Memorial Library, Gisborne. Visitors to the library were invited to vote for the best five of their choice. Photos were then posted back to Gamagori.

While Gamagori was experiencing a second wave of COVID-19 Gamagori's Mayor Hisaaki Suzuki requested that his staff fill in for the public of Gamagori and cast their vote for their choice of the Gisborne photos. GDSC received our photos back end of August.

Although GDSC can now display the Gisborne photo entries and prize winners on the notice board at the Library, COVID-19 states we are to wait until Level one to present the prizes because of limited numbers at any gathering or in any space. So we wait.



Holly Murrell ticks all the boxes for her five top choices from the collection of Gamagori photos on display at the HB Williams Memorial Library. Photo: Liam Clayton, Gisborne Herald

## COVID -19 restrictions - effects on celebrating Sister City relationships

Mayor Rehette Stoltz, the Gisborne District Council, the Gisborne District Sister Cities Committee and the people of Gisborne wish to celebrate the following:

> A 30 year relationship with Nonoichi City, Japan which was signed on 30<sup>th</sup> March 1990.

Mayor Takaaki Awa (Nonoichi) was to lead a delegation visit to Gisborne in August consisting of officials, teachers, students, and friends in August 2020. In return, Mayor Rehette Stoltz (Gisborne) was to lead a similar delegation to Nonoichi in September 2020. A consistently active relationship, the delegation exchanges have included historical events, education, taiko, tourism, economic trade, rural industries and ability to form personal bonds.

That will now be on hold and a “ZOOM happening” is the current option.

> A 40 year relationship with Palm Desert City, California USA during 2021/2022

The relationship was signed in Gisborne October 1981

and Palm Desert October 1982.

This also has been a very active relationship involving many visiting delegations, exchanges that include; education, city council staff, art and craft, golf, and personal visits to enjoy many forms of local hospitality where bonds have been formed. Format for celebrating 40 years is uncertain.

Both relationships have been involved with developing gardens within the Gisborne Botanical Gardens.

Mayor Rehette Stoltz, Members of the Gisborne District Council and the Committee of Gisborne District Sister Cities look forward to reading in the newsletter and from the November Forum how the other Sister City groups in New Zealand are continuing their SC relationships on a practical basis, within the current restrictions.



# South West Festival of Japan in Western Australia

By Carol McDowall, Senior Officer International Engagement, City of Bunbury

**From 4 to 12 September the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual South West Festival of Japan was held in Bunbury Western Australia.**

The inaugural South West Festival of Japan was held three years ago as part of the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebrations with Bunbury's sister city of Setagaya, Japan.



Sponsored by the City of Bunbury, Regional Arts Western Australia, Simcoa, WAPRES, CLAIR (Japan Local Government Centre - Sydney), The Japan Foundation (Film Festival only) and Moshi Moshi Marketing, the event is well loved by the Bunbury community.

The aim of the festival is to allow people to interact with Japanese culture through arts, music, film, dance, craft and food. This year the 9-day festival combined several elements:

- Japanese Film Festival Satellite
- Hanami Picnic Days (held on consecutive Saturdays)
- Free workshops in kimono, calligraphy, origami, paper making and stamping
- Paid workshops in Manga, Japanese Sweets making and Taiko Drumming
- Virtual workshop series which included Doing business with Japan, Cooking, Haiku, Japanese teas, and travel writing and photography using elements of Japanese aesthetics
- Anime Movie screening by the South West Anime Community
- Japanese food trucks
- Karaoke Night at local pub
- Stamp Rally through the Bunbury CBD to local businesses

At the Hanami Picnic days the community was invited to come down to the Stirling Street Arts Centre next to Bunbury's Friendship park where the plum trees were blossoming. Here they could enjoy 'Hanami' while participating in Japanese arts and culture through the following performances and activities:

- Nyamaha Band (all girl cosplay Japanese tribute band)
- Bunbury Bel Canto Singers singing Sakura and the Sukiyaki song
- TIDA Dance Group - Okinawa drummers
- Subi Japanese Dance Group
- Japanese Tea Ceremony
- Taiko On drummers
- Treendale Primary School Taiko
- Karate demonstrations
- Kendo demonstrations
- Kyudo Demonstrations
- Kite flying and kite making
- Market and information stalls including: Cosplay, Bonsai South West, Ikebana from the Bunbury Flower Group, Japanese handicrafts, ANA info stall, Japan

Local Government Centre stall, Tokyo Underground (Japanese pop culture curios)

- Food trucks serving a range of Japanese foods

The virtual workshops were a new component of the festival this year drawing participants from Canada, California, Singapore, Italy and India as well as participants from all states in Australia and parts of New Zealand. These free events were moderated by Bunbury Sister & Friendship Cities and marketing on Eventbrite/Facebook and run through Zoom. During these difficult times, this was a great way to bring people of all cultures together to celebrate what they love about Japanese culture.

- [Yuki Nakamura on doing Business in Japan](#)
- [Japanese Homestyle Cooking by Sam Bottegai](#)
- [Japanese Teas with Patsie of Nannup Tiny Tea Shop](#)
- [The Art of Haiku with Vahri McKenzie](#)
- Wabi Sabi and the wonder of the everyday with Will Yeoman ([link not available yet](#))

The Stamp Rally was held for the first time in 2019 and was such a success the event organiser brought it back this year. Instead of using actual stamps as the event did in 2019, they used virtual stamps. Participants could pick up a free map/passport and go into participating shops to scan a QR code and reveal a picture of something Japanese like 'Origami', 'Mt Fuji' or 'tea ceremony'. This would be written on their passport. When all virtual stamps had been collected the passport could be turned in and drawn to one of many Japanese hampers. These prizes were donated by sponsors and participating shops and included food, pop culture items, clothing, tea and more. Not only was this a fun activity for the community, but it encouraged people to frequent shops in the CBD and is highly valued by the business community in Bunbury. [You can watch how the stamp rally works here.](#)

This festival was a great way to leverage our relationship with Setagaya and to bring our two cities closer together through the arts and culture of Japan. The festival provides a vibrancy to the general Bunbury community as well as an economic benefit to the City of Bunbury through increased visitation from the region, including Perth. In addition, the Stamp Rally encouraged people to go through the CBD to discover new businesses and experience 'Japan' in the CBD. Several shops reported that on Hanami days they had the highest sales on record.



## New Zealand Chinese Language Week 2020 launches

New Zealand Chinese Language Week (NZCLW) is back, bigger, and better than ever.

The international environment is rather different, thanks to the global pandemic caused by COVID-19, but the spirit behind NZCLW is undimmed.

Now in its sixth year, the Kiwi-led initiative is to be held across New Zealand between 20 - 26 September this year, and the theme is A Taste of New Zealand - celebrating the food and drink links between our Chinese and New Zealand cultures. There is definitely lots to celebrate there.

A key part of the week will be Dumpling Day, on September 26, a chance to celebrate the delicious little food parcels and highlight some of the great producers of dumplings in New Zealand.

Event registration is now open, and 2020 is already shaping up to be the best Week yet.

Seeking to raise awareness of Chinese language and culture, NZCLW celebrates multilingualism in New Zealand and recognises the political, economic and social advantages of learning Chinese in our increasingly globalised community.

Mandarin SuperStars are selected to promote the language, from public nominations, and youth

ambassadors are honoured for their achievements.

Co-founder and Chair of the NZCLW Charitable Trust Jo Coughlan says that last year, New Zealand Chinese Language Week facilitated and promoted 200 events throughout Aotearoa.

"This year, we hope to help even more Kiwis 'give Chinese a go' by doubling the number of events. It's a great excuse to enjoy some good Chinese food made with great New Zealand products.

"While we aren't able to travel between New Zealand and China at the moment, there is lots of shared history and culture - particularly food culture - to celebrate within New Zealand. We encourage the public and local business community to get involved, host an event, and help inspire New Zealanders to better understand and connect with our Chinese friends and partners."

Anyone can organise an event for NZCLW. You may be a teacher, librarian, business owner or are simply keen to help New Zealanders grow their understanding of China. Your event may be held privately at your school or workplace or can be for the wider public. Learn more at



## Creativity flourished in lockdown for aspiring artists

With a new digital resource and outreach to our young ones in lockdown SCAPE Public Art's 2020 Re:ACTIVATE Aspiring Artists competition has three winning designs that will be exhibited in central Christchurch this spring.

The students will have their artworks produced and installed at Hack Circle, on the corner of Cashel and High streets, as part of the Season 2020.

[Read more online here.](#)

Winners from left: Yzza Batac, aged 11, Merrin School, Lewis Bradford Consulting Engineers Director Helen Trappitt, Mollie Shaw, aged 18, Rangitapu Girls' School and Annabelle Britt, aged 11, Selwyn House School.

