

From the Board

Message from President Mayor Grant Smith

Kia ora and welcome.

Hasn't the 2024 year flown by?

Reconnecting has been the theme of the year, and you can see from various articles and stories that this is now happening around New Zealand.

The board this year looked to reconnect with members too and set about organising a national conference in Blenheim in March, along with two one-day regional forums – a northern edition in Cambridge and a southern forum in Christchurch. Many thanks to the various hosts, organisers, speakers that shared their stories and those that attended.

As we enter the final weeks of 2024, I'd like to thank everyone involved in GCNZ, including our volunteer board (with a special welcome to new co-opted member Peter Cottrell from Christchurch), sponsors, Ministries and partners, and most of all our members – Councils and Sister Cities committees, educational institutions, international businesses and individual members.

Thank you all for continuing to promote internationalism.

Wishing you all a very Merry Christmas and a happy 2025 New Year.

Ngā mihi nui,

Mayor Grant Smith, JP, GCNZ President



Image: Rowan Simpson (Unsplash)

Introducing new board members



Danielle Caudwell (Whakatāne)

Danielle is a professional with a diverse background in business and law. As a qualified lawyer, she spent the majority of her career as a prosecutor for central government, honing her skills in advocacy and governance.

With a keen eye for strategic opportunities, Danielle is committed to fostering partnerships and engaging key stakeholders to drive innovation and sustainable development initiatives. Her forward-thinking approach and strategic mindset enable her to anticipate future challenges and opportunities, while leveraging diverse perspectives to achieve impactful outcomes.

Danielle is passionate about building a brighter future for communities, both locally and globally, through her leadership and dedication to making a positive difference.



Philip Coles (Waipa)

Philip is a 2nd term elected member on the Cambridge Ward of the Waipa District Council, after being an elected member of the Cambridge Community Board for 3 terms.

During this time he became involved with the local Sister Cities Committee growing relationships with Le Quesnoy in France and Bihoro in Japan and hosting delegations.

Philip has visited Bihoro as a Cambridge delegate and has grown a strong relationship with the Mayor of Bihoro. He has travelled the world extensively including Everest and both Antarctica and Arctic, travelling to embrace the local communities and go out of his way to experience different cultures and build a connection with them.

Philip lives on his beef and cropping farm on the outskirts of Cambridge, and is very active, enjoying exploring, planning outdoor adventures in NZ and internationally.

Introducing new board members



Deborah Dalliessi (Marlborough)

Deborah currently serves as a Councillor for the Marlborough District Council, sitting on the Sister Cities sub-committee and holding the Communities portfolio.

She is the nominated elected member representative on the MDC Welcoming Communities advisory group and the Refuges and Migrant group, the former Manager of the Marlborough Multicultural Centre and has a wealth of governance and facilitation experience plus a background in finance.

Deborah holds dual passports (NZ/Italian) and has a wide multicultural family having hosted homestays from around the world.

This appreciation for the benefit of cultural experience and the unification of peoples of all races is paramount to her commitment to Global cities at a National and regional level. She looks forward to promoting cultural understanding and forging strong relationships that stimulate economic development and exchanges of knowledge and culture between New Zealand and the world.



Peter Cottrell (Christchurch)

Peter is chair of the Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Committee. He undertakes these activities as a volunteer.

Peter is originally from Adelaide. He has lived in Canberra, California and Texas before moving to Christchurch in 1982. Peter accompanied the 200 university students who were welcomed into the University of Adelaide community in March 2011, following the devastating earthquake in Christchurch.

From 2013 to 2016 Peter was the College Director at UC International College, which facilitates pathways for international students to undergraduate degrees.

Peter has arranged the mayoral visits for the 45th (2017) and 50th (2022) anniversary celebrations for the Adelaide relationship. He was also instrumental in procuring an artwork in the Adelaide Garden at Halswell Quarry Park in Christchurch and the establishment of Te Mātāpuna Mātātahi Children's University in Canterbury. He has also worked with the Christchurch City Council in developing their International Relations Framework, ensuring an appropriate respect for the people to people interactions of the Sister Cities relationships.

Dunedin hosts Shanghai delegation

By James Hall, Enterprise Dunedin

Dunedin Mayor Jules Radich, mana whenua representatives, Councillors and senior DCC staff hosted a high-level delegation from Shanghai's Huangpu District in early July.

Led by Huangpu District Deputy Party Secretary Li Zhongxing, the delegation was hosted in the Municipal Chambers Shanghai Room, named in honour of the Sister City relationship that was formally recognised 30 years ago, in 1994.

Mr Radich says, "Our Sister City relationship with Shanghai is highly important, bringing major benefits in education, arts and culture, science and technology, business and trade.

"Much like our Lan Yuan Dunedin Chinese Garden, which is an enduring symbol of the links between our two cities, our relationship continues to grow.

"Shanghai Yu Garden, under the management of Huangpu District, has

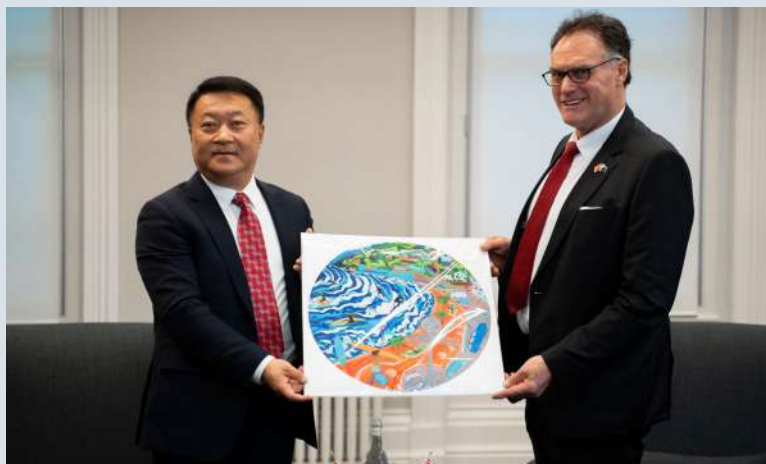
been our Lan Yuan sister garden for more than 10 years."

Mr Li Zhongxing promised to continue the cooperation between Yu Garden and Lan Yuan, including staff exchanges and organising more events between the two gardens.

In October, Huangpu District Tourism Bureau will lead a delegation to Dunedin.

A key purpose of the forthcoming visit will be to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Enterprise Dunedin for future tourism cooperation, having a photo exhibition in Lan Yuan to celebrate 30 years anniversary of our Sister City relationship, as well as offering expertise in maintaining Lan Yuan.

On 24 July the city also hosted the 58-member Shanghai Oriental Art Center Chorus (ages from 8 to 14) at Lan Yuan as another acknowledgement of the anniversary.



Mr Li Zhongxing with Mayor Jules Radich

GCNZ Northern Regional Forum – Cambridge

This one day forum took place in early November at Don Rowlands Centre at Lake Karapiro in Cambridge.

Home to several Sport NZ high performance centres including NZ Rowing at Lake Karapiro but also Cycling NZ's Velodrome in the Cambridge township.

Under the theme 'Reconnecting' over 40 attendees including 3 Mayors and visitors from Waikato, Auckland, BOP, Gisborne and Hawkes Bay heard speakers and presenters in four sessions.

On topics around 'Engaging Iwi & Expat Communities', NZ

Military historian Herb Farrant spoke about Cambridge's special connection with Le Quesnoy in northern France, with further sessions around 'Councils managing Global Partnerships' along with 'Trade & Agribusiness'. A final workshop session was facilitated by GCNZ board member Taylor Marston around the 'Future of managing Global Partnerships'.

It was a full day and our thanks to hosts Waipa District Council, Mayor Susan O'Regan and organisers. We now look forward to the Southern Forum in Christchurch (see below for last minute registration details).



Last minute registrations open



Southern Forum

TSB Space, Tūranga Central Library, Christchurch
 Saturday 14th December 2024, 10am - 4.30pm

Registrations open 9.30am. Lunch provided.

Members and non-members welcome

RSVP: Christchurch City Council - cirteam@ccc.govt.nz

Supported by Christchurch City Council & the Ministry for Ethnic Communities



Running and Learning Together: Wellington and Xiamen Strengthen Sister City Bonds in 2024

By Jennifer Zhou, Wellington City Council

From Marathons to MOU, Wellington's sports and educational relations with its Chinese sister city Xiamen continue to thrive.

In January, two passionate runners from the Wellington Scottish Athletics Club, Jamie and Nicolas, participated in the Xiamen Marathon with the support of the Xiamen Municipal Government and Wellington City Council. The marathon saw Wellington participants for the first time since COVID-19 pandemic. Wellington runners' comeback to Xiamen was welcomed as another opportunity to promote camaraderie and friendship between Wellington and Xiamen.

Held annually in Xiamen, the Xiamen Marathon is renowned for its scenic coastal route and high-quality organisation, attracting runners from around the world. The 2024 marathon is believed to have attracted more than 30,000 runners. Despite having already visited China, this was Jamie and Nicolas' first visit to Xiamen. They were impressed by the event's scale and quality. Aside from the marathon, they loved seeing the city, meeting friendly locals, and visiting Gulangyu Island. Having had such a positive experience, Jamie and Nicolas are keen to return and recommend the marathon to

others, saying, "Xiamen is a great city and a gateway to other regions of China."

In May, Wellington Mayor Tory Whanau and Deputy Mayor Laurie Foon welcomed a delegation of twenty-four students and teachers from Xiamen Shuangshi Middle School at Wellington City Council. This is a follow-up to Mayor Whanau's business delegation's visit to the school last September. At the meeting, the Mayor saw the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for cultural exchange and educational partnership between Samuel Marsden Collegiate School and the Xiamen School, which represented another advancement in the educational exchanges between Wellington and Xiamen.

During their visit, Xiamen students were immersed in New Zealand culture and educational practices. They had the opportunity to take classes alongside local students, experience Te Reo Māori and Kapa Haka, intending to develop a deeper knowledge of one another's cultures and enduring friendships. The group also visited Victoria University of Wellington and attended a welcome event organised by the Wellington Xiamen Association and Wellington City Youth Council.



Articles on this page were originally published in the Minoh-Hutt Friendship Club Newsletter No.56

Minoh-Hutt Friendship Club members visit Japan

By Sue Lytollis

Over Golden Week this year myself and Liz Dutton, both instructors of Yoshinkan (Hutt) Kendo Club, went to Kyoto to attempt 7th and 6th dan respectively.

I, as a 6th dan, wanted to compete in the Butokoden Demonstration Matches in it's 120th year. As a young woman living in Kyoto I had visited this competition and admired the fights there. Forty years later my bucket list dream to be on the stage panned out. In between our gradings (sorry we did not pass) and the Kyoto Demonstration match, we had time to spend a day in Minoh City.

This was a grand reunion not only with Mayor Kazuhiko Ueshima and other very important officials, but also to catch up with friends from the Minoh-Hutt Friendship club. We enjoyed the excitement of talking about the upcoming 30th anniversary of Sister City relations with Minoh and what our prospective cities are planning.

After the meeting at the City Council building it was time, on a wet day, to make the most of Minoh so our lovely group went to the Minoh Beer Brewery which was also a 'bucket list' adventure. I particularly liked the use of the Saru in the designs, so a bit of merchandise was purchased in the spirit of contributing to the Minoh



economy.

Then off we went for an afternoon in Osaka. It was great sharing memories with the friendship team and I thank you all very much for showing us parts of Osaka I had never visit, including the well worn Dotonburi entertainment area and various market streets.

No visit is complete without a lovely meal and (more beer) with the group before a trip back to Kyoto.

We hope that some of the Minoh-Hutt Friendship Group might find the time to visit Lower Hutt in 2025, to help us celebrate this momentous occasion and we promise to share some interesting craft beer with you all.

Thank you again for your hospitality and ongoing friendship.

By Brady Dyer, City Wide Councilor, Hutt City



During my recent trip to Minoh, I had the honour of meeting with Mayor Kazuhiko Ueshima and Chairperson Shigechika Kamishiro at the Minoh City Council.

We discussed our cities' upcoming 30th anniversary and explored potential projects to celebrate this milestone. Our conversations re/affirmed the strong bond between our sister cities and highlighted the shared anticipation for the Osaka World Expo '25.

I also had productive discussions with Trees Neal and Noriko Ueno from the Cultural and International Affairs Division, focusing on the funding of sister city events and the collaborative relationship between Minoh City Council and the Hutt Friendship Club. Our visit to Katsuo-ji Temple and the new developments in Minoh, including a new train station and university, provided insights into the city's cultural and infrastructural growth.

A memorable evening was spent with the Hutt Friendship Club, where I experienced warm hospitality and engaging performances. The Mayor's attendance and the heartfelt speeches underscored the importance of our relationship.

Singing with Trees Neal was a delightful highlight.

The following day, the Waiwhetu Marae group joined us for a cultural exchange at Maple Hall. We participated in

the Waterfall Walk, a serene experience that facilitated meaningful conversations and a rare sighting of monkeys at the temples.

Our meeting with the Minoh Association For Global Awareness (MAFGA) was particularly fruitful. We discussed various ideas for the 30th anniversary, including school and art exchanges, virtual celebrations, and the creation of a Hutt City Garden in Minoh. The concept of a blended Japanese Torii and Maori Waharoa symbolising our cultural fusion was especially inspiring.

Concluding my visit, I enjoyed karaoke with the Hutt Friendship Club, explored Minoh CBD, and visited the Minoh Brewery. The idea of a beer collaboration for the anniversary was well received. My trip ended with a heartfelt farewell from my host family and the Hutt Friendship Club members.

Overall, this trip significantly strengthened the bonds between our cities, and I am excited for the collaborative projects and cultural exchanges planned for the future.



Nelson trees show off Sister Cities relationship

By Gail Collingwood, Nelson City Council

Nelson City, like many other places in New Zealand has Sister City relationships with China.

The first of these was Huangshi in Hubei province. Discussions and visits started in 1992 and a sister city agreement signed in 1995. The second with Jangjiang City was formalised following a mayoral visit in 2014.

Recently when a 1956 obituary for Senior Forest Ranger Arthur (Dick) Wastney was being transcribed it was noted that Nelson was the home of Dawn Redwood (Metasequoia Glyptostroboidea) trees grown from seed collected in central China Szuchuan in the 1940's.

Dick was gifted seven seeds by the Arnold Arboretum, Harvard University who sent them around the world for propagation in order to ensure this species continued. Referred to as a "living fossil"

Two years later on Arbour Day 1951 three, two-foot-tall specimens were planted around Nelson city.

Today the most notable tree is the gorgeous specimen on the Hardy Street side of the Queens Gardens, the only surviving specimen of the three. It is prominently identified by two plaques commemorating the planting and the background of the tree.

This tree is NCC long time employee Peter Grundy's favourite tree in Nelson and is ranked in the top four NZ trees.

The second tree was gifted to the Cawthron Institute, the other to Professor J. S Tennant, educationalist of Nelson.

Brad Cadwallader of Nelmac says Nelson city has two other trees from the same seed raised and planted by Cawthron botanist Frank Cobeldick. These are listed on The NZ Trees Register www.notabletrees.org.nz

These first generation Dawn Redwood trees called Shui-sa, Shui meaning water and Sa, pine or spruce are just one of the Nelsons special connections with China. Your city may have a Dawn Redwood trees raised from the same historic seeds?



The Nelson relationship with China is long varied - from the 1842 arrival of Appo Hocton - Wong Ah Poo Hoc Ting New Zealand's first Chinese Immigrant, Nelson resident for many years to saving endangered trees along with the rest of the world.

Thanks to: Peter Grundy (Nelson City Council), Bard Cadwallader (Nelmac), Thursday Project Group, Nelson Branch NZ Genealogists Society.

Refer to www.theprow.org.nz for further details.

GCNZ Board 2024 – 2025

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30 Years of Friendship Between Palmerston North and Kunshan Celebrated with Agritech Research Agreement

By Gabrielle Loga, Palmerston North City Council

FoodHQ in Palmerston North and the East China Agricultural Science and Technology Centre in Kunshan have signed a significant agreement on 17 June 2024 to collaborate on groundbreaking initiatives in food innovation and technology.

This Memorandum of Understanding between the two leading research and development centers aims to foster bilateral cooperation in modern agriculture, smart farming, and talent cultivation for companies, entrepreneurs, and research institutes in both countries.

The agreement resulted from a visit by Mayor Grant Smith and a small delegation to China earlier this year, celebrating 30 years of friendship between Palmerston North and Kunshan city. During the visit, in-depth discussions explored potential collaborations in the AgriTech and food science sectors. These discussions led to FoodHQ CEO Dr. Victoria Hatton traveling to Kunshan in April 2024 to finalize the agreement.

A delegation from Kunshan visited Palmerston North from 17-19 June 2024 to attend the E Tipu Boma Agri Summit and the formal signing ceremony at the Palmerston North City Council. The delegates also visited Massey University, New Zealand Plant and Food Research, The Factory, and Goodman Fielder in Longburn to explore business opportunities in the city.

Mayor Grant Smith emphasized the importance of Palmerston North's international relationships in driving

trade and economic development. "Partnerships like this show how frequent interactions can lead to enduring friendship and fruitful collaboration. This initiative will bring Palmy and Kunshan's brightest minds together to collaborate on areas of mutual interest in agricultural technology, food safety, and sustainable agriculture."

He added that the agreement aims to identify joint research projects focusing on practical solutions to real-world problems related to climate change and food security. "Palmerston North spearheads food innovation nationally with more than 3000 scientists and researchers, the majority working in this crucial export sector for New Zealand. With the highest concentration of food research and development in the Southern Hemisphere, sharing knowledge and facilities with another economic and scientific powerhouse will enhance our capabilities and deliver cutting-edge products to the global market."

Mayor Smith concluded, "This agreement will put Palmerston North on the global map for bold, innovative ideas and tangible benefits, not just for our educational institutes but for our growers, manufacturers, and the service industries that support them. Working together toward better outcomes for our people and communities embodies the 30-year friendship between Palmerston North and Kunshan city. It will be exciting to see what the top minds of these two forward-thinking cities can achieve together in the future!"

