

From the Board

Message from President Mayor Grant Smith



Kia ora and welcome to our second GCNZ newsletter for the year.

I want to acknowledge the past year, which has been one of 'reconnecting with the world', the theme of our recent conference in Blenheim, and how true is this.

Right around the country we are now seeing city delegations, trade missions, and international students starting to come back, along with tourists.

For the first few months of the year, getting our conference and awards underway was our No 1. priority. So, thank you to our hosts - Marlborough District Council who delivered a wonderful event, and there is more detail later in the newsletter on the conference and awards where the Christchurch Songpa-Gu Sister City committee took out the supreme award.

We also held our AGM meeting in Wellington recently at the Wellington City Council chambers, where it was good to see 20+ turn-up in person and another 30 online, from around the country. At the meeting, the Board reported on GCNZ business throughout the year, including; responding to members enquiries, Youth workshops, Government/MFAT and other ministries' enquiries, along with preparation for the GCNZ conference. There was also much interaction with the Diplomatic Corp, as well as attending National Days, numerous events and community festivals along with welcoming Trade and Business delegations. Financially the organisation survived solely on membership fees but cut its cloth with expenses, making a small loss of \$320. This is something we must address in the future, and the incoming Board will work hard seeking external funding from new extra members, as well as partnering with Ministries, agencies and international institutions.

Can I thank our voluntary Board: Wellington Deputy Mayor Laurie Foon (who is stepping down), returning members John Christie, Taylor Marston and Beth Knowles, and a big acknowledgment to our Emeritus President Hiromi Morris, as well as our hard-working administrator Sally Ho. This year we are joined by new Board members: Philip Coles (Cambridge), Deborah Dalliessi (Marlborough) and Danielle Caudwell (Whakatāne). Thank you all for putting your names forward.

Also want to acknowledging our sponsors/funders from the past year: Ministry for Ethnic Communities, Air New Zealand, CLAIR, and the Japanese Embassy.

Already the 2024 year feels better for internationalism, and the stories in this newsletter reflect that.

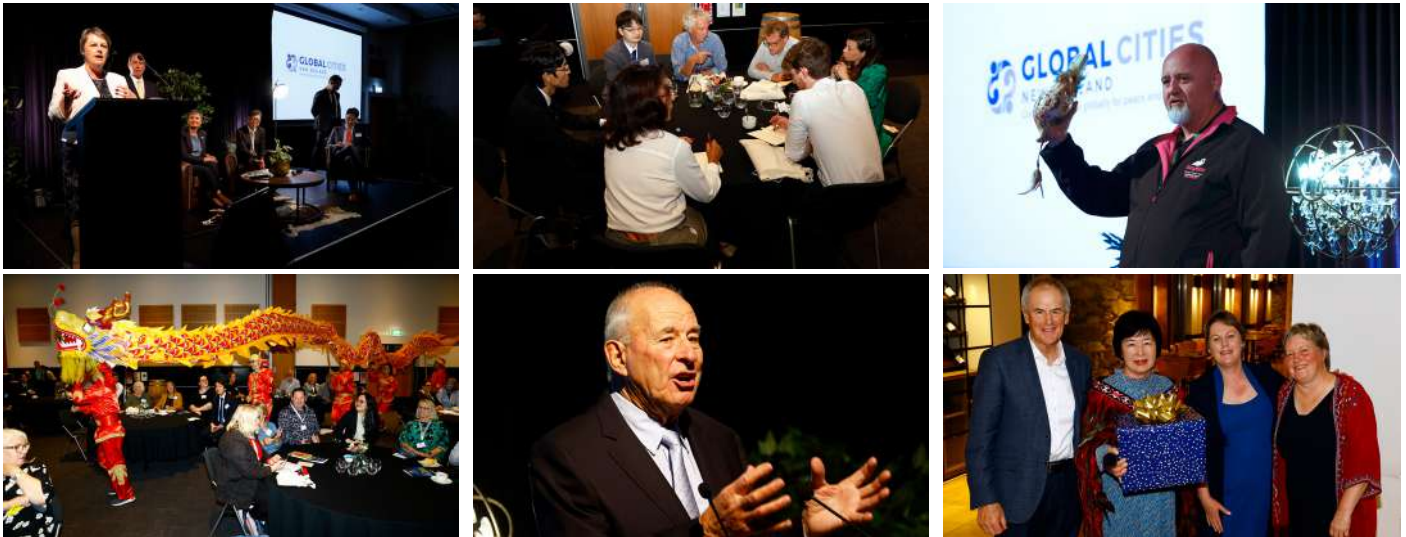
Our organisation GCNZ has a 40+ year heritage, an incredible network of Sister Cities, councils, community committees, schools, businesses and organisations with internationalism at the heart. Our status overseas, especially in Asia, is significant, often above our own Government, MPs and Ministries. But our challenge is to harness this and promote our organisation better. One way is better connection and networking between members and organisations that are working internationally, so the Board has initiated two one-day Regional Forums, in Christchurch (September) and Cambridge (November). Details are further in the newsletter and we hope as many of you as possible plus non-members can attend.

Wishing all members and potential members all the best for the second half of 2024.

Ngā mihi nui,
Mayor Grant Smith, JP, GCNZ President



Delegates at the 2024 GCNZ Conference – Blenheim, Marlborough



Recent GCNZ conference a success in Blenheim

By John Christie, GCNZ

On March 14-15 Marlborough District Council hosted the Global Cities conference. It was a great opportunity for members and invited guests to come together to exchange ideas and discuss their interactions with sister cities and other global connections.

A full two-day programme was prepared with an excellent keynote speech from Sir Don McKinnon followed by a range of diplomatic speakers from the Australian and British High Commissions, and Chinese, Korean, Japanese and United States Ambassadors.

There were good updates provided on youth exchanges, along with presentations on post-Covid activities from a range of sister cities. Marlborough District Council were excellent hosts and allowed plenty of networking

opportunities for attendees including a trip to Harling Park. This park showcases an example of the generosity of a partner city, having been designed and paid for by Blenheim's Japanese sister city Tendo.

The conference concluded with a wonderful night at Wither Hills winery, acknowledging entrants and winners of the Global Cities Awards, and a special presentation to Emeritus President Hiromi Morris.

It was great to be able to finally get back together as a network of cities interested in global connections, and to hear the examples of what communities are doing around the country. I highly commend attending these conferences as you get share some wonderful stories of activities happening through our global connections.



GCNZ 2024 Awards Celebrates Outstanding Initiatives

By Ray Wallace, GCNZ Awards Co-ordinator

The 2024 Global Cities New Zealand Conference concluded with the GCNZ Awards ceremony held at the fabulous Wither Hills Estate and Winery.

The packed-out awards dinner was a resounding success, honouring ten exceptional nominations that exemplify the strong bonds fostered through Sister City relationships. Among these remarkable initiatives, Christchurch's Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee emerged as the supreme winner. Their progress showcased the power of international collaboration, cultural exchange, and community involvement with the installation of a traditional Korean Pavilion to complement the Songpa-Gu Korean Park along with marking the 60th Anniversary of diplomatic ties.

Simon Oe, Deputy Chair of the Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee who accepted the award on behalf of the Committee said the Committee was honoured to have been chosen amongst some amazing nominations and that the project had been extremely fulfilling for the many people involved. It also further strengthened the relationship with the Songpa-Gu.

The Global Cities New Zealand Awards celebrates the efforts of communities dedicated to promoting understanding, cooperation, and friendship between cities around the world. This year's nominees demonstrated a remarkable commitment to fostering these principles, enriching their communities through diverse cultural exchanges, educational programmes, and collaborations.

The success of the 2024 Global Cities New Zealand Award is a testament to the dedication and passion of individuals and communities across New Zealand promoting better cultural understanding and cooperation. As GCNZ looks to the future, it is confident that these initiatives will



Dinner guests at Wither Hills.



(L to R) Ray Wallace (Awards Co-ordinator), Reuben Levermore (Air New Zealand), Simon Oe (Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee), Mayor Grant Smith (GCNZ).

continue to strengthen the bonds between NZ towns and cities and their international counterparts.

Start thinking about what project could be your nomination for the next GCNZ Awards.

Winners

Nominations for 2024 Best Project Community & Schools:

- Christchurch Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee (*Category Winner*)
- Creative Bay of Plenty (*Runner-Up*)
- Selwyn Sister City Committee
- Wellington Sakai Association
- Gisborne District Sister Cities

Nominations for 2024 Best Project Local Government:

- Enterprise Dunedin - Dunedin City Council (*Category Winner*)
- Nelson City Council (*Runner-Up*)
- Palmerston North City Council
- Cambridge Community Board
- Selwyn Sister City Committee

Supreme Winner

- Christchurch Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee



Cross-Pacific Game Jam wins GCNZ award

By James Hall, Enterprise Dunedin

Enterprise Dunedin was recently presented the Global Cities NZ award for Best Local Government Project for the 2023 Cross-Pacific Games Jam.

Enterprise Dunedin and Otago Polytechnic co-hosted of the inaugural Cross Pacific Game Jam last May, which saw local teen game enthusiasts team up with Japanese counterparts to create fully playable games in 48 hours.

Approximately 40 teenagers aged 16 to 17 from Dunedin and Tokyo learned to collaborate and create as they applied their emerging developer skills, while continuing to strengthen Dunedin's bilateral ties with Japanese students.

"The first Cross Pacific Game Jam represents an important step in a path that Dunedin is carving with international talent," Enterprise Dunedin Manager John Christie said.

"Dunedin has cultivated a special relationship with Japan,

and this student event is part of our fit-for-purpose, high-value education pathway to help supply the in-demand skills needed for digital game development.

"We brought together local and prospective offshore talent who can go on to contribute to Dunedin's niche and flourishing game industry – where game studios are in need of qualified people like programmers, 3D artists, game designers and 2D artists."

Dunedin is home to the New Zealand Centre of Digital Excellence (CODE) and represents an education hub where young people interested in a game development career can begin honing their skills at secondary school before heading into custom-made game development vocational pathways at the city's tertiary education providers, and eventually into employment.

The Game Jam was designed to be collaborative rather than competitive, with local and international mentors helping to guide the teenagers during the challenge, including local developers Stef Animal from Spookysoft Games, Anna Barham from Balancing Monkey Games and Mr Ken Kawashima from JP Games in Tokyo, with Otago Polytechnic Bachelor of IT and Bachelor of Design lecturers, Adon Moskal and Edwin McRae.

Japanese student numbers are among Dunedin's top 10 markets and an increasingly key target for New Zealand universities. The event was part-funded by Education New Zealand.

"Strategically designed events like this continue to build lasting value to the city. As the world reconnects, it's an exciting time for Dunedin as we take another step towards building a national and international hub of excellence in gaming technology, and we believe attracting international talent will help Dunedin achieve this ambitious goal," Mr Christie said.



Enterprise Dunedin Business Development Advisor Chanel O'Brien with pupils in Tokyo during the Cross Pacific Game Jam. Photo: DunedinNZ

Save the Date



Southern Forum

One Day

TSB Space, Tūranga Central Library, Christchurch

Monday 9th September 2024 *(start times, agenda TBC)*

Members and non-members welcome

Supported by Christchurch City Council & Ministry for Ethnic Communities

Selwyn celebrates Rewi Alley's 126th Anniversary

By Allison Rosanowski, Selwyn Sister City Chairperson

Rewi Alley, who was born in Springfield in Selwyn, Canterbury, lived and worked with the rural poor in China for sixty years.

His legacy has been the foundation for Sister City relationships between the Selwyn District Council and Shandan County in Gansu Province, Christchurch City Council and Gansu Province and Wuhan plus Hurunui District Council and Hong Hu. In all of these areas in China Rewi Alley worked to establish schools or do flood rescue work.

Prior to the 126th anniversary celebrations on the 2-3 December, a delegation from Shandan spent two days in Selwyn cementing aspects of the Memorandum of Understanding between the two Sister Cities. The delegation led by Wen Yong, Shandan's Head of Publicity visited four of the Malvern primary schools whose Principals visited Shandan in September and agreed to Sister School relationships with Shandan primary schools. They also visited Darfield High School which has had a Sister School relationship with Shandan Bailie Vocational College for 26 years. A further education visit to Rolleston College explored developing a relationship with Shandan Number One High School.

Other aspects of the MOU were explored including agribusiness and water management. Sheep milking for cheese making sparked interest as Rewi Alley imported sheep from Hurunui and sheep farming remains an important farming activity in Shandan. Water management for irrigation using scopes inserted into the soil and data relayed back to cellphones was demonstrated along with seed production. Making herbal products from an organic garden business showed the visitors a small-scale agribusiness.

As two of the Shandan delegation worked for the magnificent Alley Memorial Museum in Shandan, the Glentunnel Museum volunteers introduced the group to

a locally run heritage museum - a museum on a different scale. The heritage displays incorporated into Te Ara Ātea, Selwyn Library, gave an insight into ways the changing displays can be made easily accessible to citizens.

This Shandan delegation stayed in local homestays and experienced local cuisine and family life.

2nd December is Rewi Alley's birthday and on this day the Shandan delegation was joined by Madam He, Christchurch Chinese Consul General, two delegations from Lanzhou Foreign affairs in Gansu Province (Christchurch's Sister City), leaders from the Beijing Bailie University, Hurunui Mayor Marie Black and Councillors and trustees of the Rewi Alley Foundation of New Zealand.

The programme began with a visit to ARA, the Christchurch campus of Te Pūkenga. ARA have hosted interpreters from both Christchurch and Selwyn for six month and three month English courses for several years. Beth Knowles, the International Manager, discussed English courses, nursing and architectural courses taught at the polytechnic.

The next visit was to Springfield, Rewi Alley's birthplace. Selwyn Mayor Sam Broughton and Wen Yong laid a wreath at the Rewi Alley Memorial statue, before hosting a gathering of over 90 people. Speakers included Bob White, one of the remaining local volunteers who assisted Lu Bao to construct the statue at the Rewi Alley Memorial Park. Lu Bao is the wife of Rewi's foster son. It was a privilege to hear recollections from Jocelyn Alley-Watkin, a Alley relative. Members of the Selwyn Sister City Committee along with Springfield residents served a welcome lunch to the gathering.

From Springfield the group travelled to Amberley. At the Hurunui District Council's headquarters, Mayor Marie Black introduced the district to all assembled. The Rewi Alley Foundation of New Zealand, led by Michael Hart and Jocelyn Alley-Watkin was formally launched before



Alley cousin Michael Duane, made a generous donation to the Foundation. Time pressure meant delegations did not have time to explore the Chinese garden and see the Alley home occupied by the Alley family while Rewi's father was headmaster of the local school.

The evening banquet was preceded by an outstanding display of photographs brought to New Zealand by the Shandan Alley Memorial Museum. Haeata College and Mairehau High School's kapa haka groups gave powerful performances for all the guests to enjoy. The Principals of both these schools were members of the Principals' delegation to China in September. While there they agreed to Sister School relationships in Lanzhou and Wuhan.

Sunday's programme allowed visitors to visit the Suffragette Statue in Christchurch, Rewi's mother was a Suffragette, before visiting the graves of Rewi's grandparents at St Paul's Papanui. This was followed by the official opening of the Chinese gate at the Lanzhou-Wuhan Chinese garden at the Halswell Quarry Park. The visit began with a powerful performance by the Mairehau High School kapa haka group. A BBQ lunch, in the hot sun, followed.

The two Lanzhou Sister City groups also managed to visit the Christchurch City Council, Tūranga (the central city library), meet with Fonterra officials and visit a dairy farm.

Canterbury Sister Cities can celebrate a successful anniversary visit and a strengthening of relationships with their Chinese counterparts.



Gisborne searching for new Taiko tutor

By Jan Calder, Gisborne Districts Sister Cities Committee

Gisborne District Sister Cities Committee are requesting the services of a regular Taiko drumming tutor.

This opportunity would suit a tutor who is a resident of Gisborne or an experienced Taiko drummer who visits Gisborne on a regular basis. The tutor would be interested in furthering the skills of a Taiko group 'Kai Kyo' numbering 35+ who include a nucleus of 15 very keen and regular attendees.

All drums are permanently onsite at the tutorial venue which is located within the city centre and includes three off-street parks. The venue is available for tutorials after 6pm some weekdays, after 12pm Saturday, and anytime Sunday.

Tutors would be recompensed at an agreed hourly rate. Please email secretary.gdsc@gmail.com for details.



Left: Visiting tutor Jessie Gibbs from 'Narukami Taiko' in Wellington. Right: Taiko drums are unloaded in 2013. The purchase was coordinated between Sister Cities Gamagori and Gisborne, and channeled through Juken Nissho associates in both cities. Photos: Ann Osler

First steps to friendly city status

By Melanie Crawford, Wellington City Council

In 2023, Wellington City Council voted to initiate friendly city link with Ramallah in Palestine.

Recently the two Mayors met online, the first formal engagement between the two city mayors. Over the course of the meeting, Mayor Issa Kassis and Mayor Tory Whanau discussed ways in which the two cities can strengthen connections on the journey towards becoming friendly cities.

Located about 16km from Jerusalem in the heart of the West Bank in Palestine, Ramallah is the administrative city of the Palestinian Authority and home to approximately 75,000 residents. Considered one of the most attractive places for living and working for the residents of the West Bank, it is also home to a burgeoning cultural and arts scene, and in 2019 became a UNESCO City of Music.

Ramallah also holds city to city relationships with Bordeaux, Johannesburg, Dublin, and Oxford amongst others.

The meeting was positive, with both sides learning about each other, sharing key information and ideas and discussing what tangible things we can do to build the connection.

Of particular interest was innovation and enterprise, especially supporting young people in social enterprise and start-ups. Sustainability and resilience were also topics of interest with Mayor Kassis sharing the efforts Ramallah is undertaking through its resilience strategy, which uses an integrated approach to realising sustainable development in the city.

It is hoped that the two cities will continue to learn and share from each other and look to increase opportunities for exchange and cooperation on a number of initiatives, including arts and culture, local government, enterprise and innovation, youth and education.



Left: Issa Kassis, Mayor of Ramallah. Right: Face to face, Mayors from Wellington and Ramallah meet online. Photos: Damon Keen, WCC

Save the Date


GLOBAL CITIES
NEW ZEALAND

Northern Forum

One Day

Lake Karapiro Events Centre, Cambridge

Friday 8th November 2024 (start times, agenda TBC)

Members and non-members welcome

Supported by Waipa District Council & Ministry for Ethnic Communities

Palmy features at Smart City Summit in Taipei

By Kunal Chonkar, Palmerston North City Council

Leaders from around the world engaged in in-depth dialogues on smart city and net zero initiatives, bringing together innovative solutions and strategies aimed at helping cities create more sustainable and livable urban environments.

Mayors representing 27 cities gathered at the Net Zero City Leaders Conclave during the 11th Smart City Summit and Expo (SCSE) 2024 in Taipei on March 19, uniting in a collaborative effort to explore and advance smart city and net-zero initiatives. Leaders from diverse cities engaged in comprehensive dialogues, sharing insights, and exchanging best practices to tackle the urgent challenges of urbanization, green technology, smart governance, and environmental sustainability.

The conclave provided a platform for mayors and city leaders to spotlight innovative solutions and strategies aimed at fostering more sustainable and livable urban environments. Discussions revolved around harnessing technology, data-driven insights, and community engagement to drive positive change and nurture inclusive growth.

A pivotal theme of the summit was the imperative of embracing smart city technologies to bolster urban resilience and efficiency. Mayor Grant Smith of Palmerston North exemplified this in his presentation, showcasing how his city deploys smart infrastructure, including IoT sensors and digital platforms, to enhance service delivery, optimize resource utilization, and bolster public safety. Notable initiatives highlighted by Mayor Smith included Palmy's deployment of computer vision traffic monitoring systems, establishment of a low-carbon internal investment fund, and proactive

partnerships with local education providers to foster new open-source models and public value.

Palmerston North's notable contributions, particularly its status as New Zealand's leading contributor to 85 percent renewable energy generation, garnered recognition from international attendees. Applause also echoed for the city's achievement as the first in New Zealand to attain full 5G access for mobile and broadband, along with boasting the nation's sole fleet of fully electric-powered public buses.

Presentations from mayors across the United States, United Arab Emirates, and beyond underscored the imperative of combating climate change and curtailing greenhouse gas emissions. City leaders exchanged insights on implementing renewable energy projects, enhancing energy efficiency in buildings and transportation, and promoting sustainable urban planning practices.

Collaboration emerged as a central theme throughout the summit, with mayors underscoring the importance of partnerships with the private sector, academia, and civil society in propelling smart city and net-zero initiatives forward. By fostering collective expertise and resources, cities can accelerate progress towards shared sustainability objectives.

The Mayoral Summit provided an invaluable opportunity for global leaders to convene, share knowledge, and co-create solutions to the multifaceted challenges confronting urban areas. Through a dedication to innovation, collaboration, and sustainability, cities can chart a course towards a more resilient and inclusive future.

