

AUSTRALIA-CHINA
FRIENDSHIP SOCIETY NSW Inc. est 1952
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Bulletin No.489 February 2025

Happy Chinese New Year of the Snake!

What is Lunar New Year?

Lunar New Year, also known as Chinese New Year or Spring Festival, is a major festival celebrated at the beginning of the Chinese lunisolar calendar. Thought to have originated in ancient China around 3,500 years ago, it is one of the most important holidays in Chinese culture, marking the end of winter and the beginning of the new year.

The festival typically falls between 21 January and 20 February and is celebrated in the Sinosphere or the Sinic world (Chinese-speaking countries and regions, and countries and regions historically under Chinese influence), including mainland China, Taiwan, Hong Kong, Macau, Singapore, Vietnam, and Korea. Cultural traditions including chucheng (cleaning one's house to remove dust and bad luck), decorating with lucky red items such as lanterns, papercuts and spring couplets (chunlian 春聯), giving and receiving red envelopes known as hongbao and eating auspicious foods with family make the Lunar New Year a special time that's more than just celebration – the festival respects cultural heritage and unites families and communities in a spirit of renewal, optimism and hope for the future!



Members and friends at 'Fesivals Yum Cha' to celebrate Chinese New Year and Australia Day



PLEASE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP!
Renewal Form on back page! Donations Welcome!

President's Report

It has been a long time since I have written.

On Friday November 14, a number of members attended a reception and concert celebrating the 10th Anniversary of the China Cultural Centre, Sydney. We have always enjoyed the many events that the Centre has promoted and many of these were the subject of a photographic exhibition on display. The formal presentation was followed by a fine concert featuring both Chinese and Western instruments. After the concert, everyone mingled and enjoyed the generous supper that was provided.

Also in November, we received confirmation of our new link with the Liaoning Provincial Association for Friendship with Foreign Countries or Liaoning Youxie which has been established with the help of Dr. Michael Li.

I was invited to speak on December 16 at the Gallery Room of the NSW State Library where the Consul General of China in Sydney, Mr Wang Yu, was hosting a photographic exhibition in celebration of the 10th Anniversary of President Xi Jinping's visit to Australia and the establishment of the China-Australia Strategic Partnership. I was pleased to be able to exchange greetings with Mr Wang who was recently arrived in Sydney. Dozens of photos explored the history of the relationship between China and Australia over the last half century.

Then, on January 17, I was invited to the 2025 Chinese New Year Reception and Welcome Reception of H.E. Consul General WANG Yu. Consul General Wang addressed the large crowd and gave a succinct account of the position of China and Australia with an emphasis on the developing, positive relationship. NSW Governor, Margaret Beasley also spoke informing the audience of the individual links that many Asians, especially Chinese, have made over the course of Australia's history starting with trepang trade with the Makasans from about 1700. NSW was represented by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly, Greg Piper. After some music by a traditional Chinese Orchestra, a display of Tai Chi and Martial Arts there was a toast to the Year of the Snake and then plenty of good food and conversation.

On January 22, the Society hosted a "Festivals Lunch" which celebrated the New Year and the upcoming Australia Day as well as Chinese New Year. 41 members and friends gathered at the new Top Town Restaurant in Chatswood joined by Consul Han Zhang and Vice-Consul Annan Li from the Chinese Consulate. A lively time was had by all, chatting and eating and culminating in a classic ACFS raffle.

I am writing this on January 29 so the Year of the Snake is upon us; I wish everyone a healthy and prosperous 2025!

Peter Weitzel, President, ACFS NSW Inc. February 2025



FREE FILM NIGHT!

The Wandering Earth

Date: 21 Feb 2025 (Fri)

Time: 18:00-20:53 (173mins)

Venue: Level 1, 151 Castlereagh St,
Sydney NSW 2000

Information

Director: Guo Fan

Writers: Yang Zhixue/Gong
Ge'er/Guo Fan/ Ye Ruchang

Starring: Wu Jing/Andy Lau/Li
Xuejian/Shi Yi/ Ning Li

Genre: Sci-Fi/Adventure/ Disaster

Production: Mainland China

Language: Mandarin
Chinese/Russian/ English/ Hindi/
French/Portuguese/
Japanese/Korean/Thai/ Afrikaans

Release Date: January 22, 2023
(Mainland China)

Running Time: 173 minutes



MORE DETAILS NEXT PAGE!

Plot Introduction

Scientists have discovered that the expanding sun threatens to engulf the entire solar system within a few hundred years. Facing the dual crisis of an impending apocalypse and the survival of humanity, the United Earth Government (UEG) is formed to seek a way out.

Humans finally decided to implement the Wandering Earth Project to propel the Earth out of the solar system. However, the journey ahead is shrouded in uncertainty.

As humanity struggles to save itself, global political turmoil and infightings seem endless.

The solution to the crisis has become a crisis itself.



The Year of the Snake: unseen bogs; unbridled good-luck

By [Chek Ling](#); Jan 29, 2025

Amidst colourful lion dances and whatnots, many

Chinese community leaders will, once again, fete their white guardian angels at fanciful Chinese New Year banquets, at one venue or another, throughout this wide brown homeland of their heirs. These felicitous communions no doubt lend weight for many Aussie pollies to boast about ours being the most successful multicultural nation on earth.

If only.

Sadly, for the Chinese in Oz, many have yet to feel as if they have finally got to “Somewhere over the rainbow”. Instead, they often have cause to feel that they will never get out of their probationary status.

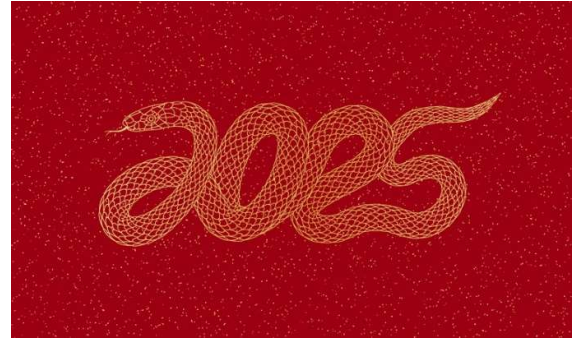
The Chinese, some 1.4 million, are bona fide citizens. A good half have come in the last 35 years or so, dominated by settlers from PRC, almost all have come since 1973.

When the Chinese first came as indentured labourers in 1848, their dream was to make wages and return in glory to Amoy which was beset by chronic famine. Few if any did. And they suffered terribly under the Master and Servants Act. The Chinese next came in huge numbers for the gold rushes, 1850s till 1900s. Among them a good half made it home, some with unimagined riches. But these gold seekers too suffered, unforgettably in the Lambing Flat Attack on 30 June 1861, which ended with 1,200 of them driven far from their diggings and severely beaten up, some with open scalps where their queues had been sliced off from the skull, camping in open paddock in James Roberts’ farm with nothing more than the clothes they had on. It was the dead of winter, and it rained heavily that first night. This historical event signposted the bumpy road to the White Australia Policy at Federation in 1901. By then, for a good half-century, the Chinese had been treated as vermin, to be got rid of by hook or by crook. Those who could had left.

At Federation, the remaining Chinese, about 30,000, were permitted to stay, by the grace of the Colonial Office in London, as tolerated aliens, at the pleasure of the Commonwealth of Australia.

But they were destined to die out, as under the infamous Dictation Test no more Chinese could come in, and as there were very few women amongst them.

Yet the remaining Chinese survived, doing work that White Aussies did not want. Some even prospered in hand-based agriculture. In time they were rehabilitated as reliable labourers, and accorded acceptance, provided they knew their place.



Then WWII brought about the end of the old European empires. Human rights became fashionable. In 1973 the White Australia Policy was buried, quietly. Yet despite the enactment of multicultural policies and continual carnivals for multiculturalism, the White Australia virus has erupted every time an existential threat could be politically re-birthed to awaken the darkest fear in the nation’s psyche – being swamped by the Yellow Peril. In 2020 Senator Eric Abetz, at an open Senate Committee hearing on the Issues facing diaspora communities in Australia, posed what he said was “not a difficult question”, entirely outside the terms of that Committee’s undertaking, to the three Chinese Australians appearing before the Committee:

“Can I ask each of the three witnesses to very briefly tell me whether they are willing to unconditionally condemn the Chinese Communist Party dictatorship?”
Osmond Chiu, one of the three “witnesses”, refused to answer the question.

In an opinion piece for the Sydney Morning Herald, this research fellow at the progressive think tank Per Capita said he was born in Australia and would not reply to Senator Abetz “because it was demeaning and I would not legitimise his tactic with an answer”. Sadly, the Chinese are usually hesitant about standing up to bullying and malicious salvos from the rearguards of White Australia – ideologues, opportunistic politicians, and entrepreneurial academics.
Chiu is exceptional.

In 2020, a “national roundtable” was convened, online, to talk about how we have been picked on in public places and at work for being Chinese, after Prime Minister Morrison’s public bugling for an international inquiry into the origin of Covid19. But nothing came out of it, other than victimhood stories. A lone voice asking for an appointment with the Prime Minister to demand an apology for the conduct of the unrepentant Eric Abetz was not given air time by the convenor. This, despite Eric Abetz having been condemned in the media for his McCarthy-like interrogation of the three Chinese Australians.

A second roundtable followed, but the request to do something positive and practical did not even make it to the agenda.

So why do the Chinese feel as though they have been cut off at the knees?

The colonised mindset of the huayi, descendants of generations of Chinese compradors to their White colonial masters in Nanyang, the Southern Oceans, is likely to have played a significant part. Hear no evil, do no evil, speak no evil. Put your head down, make money, and climb up the social ladder without stepping on anyone's toes.

As for the PRC settlers, they are a lot more confident about exercising their rights in Australia. Many however have inadequate acculturation to be effective spokespersons for Chinese Australians, having grown up in a confident well-fed post-Deng authoritarian China and not having been here very long. There are a few wonderful exceptions. It has been said that they were active in social media and were instrumental in losing the Liberal Party six seats in the 2022 Federal Elections. Aye, at last, we have the political muscle to do something iconoclastic, for the homeland of our heirs!

The primary votes for the two old Parties are falling, falling, with Labor inching towards the 30% mark. The Albanese Labor government needs only to lose three seats to herald the predicted hung parliament later this year. The Chinese could easily grasp this moment: revolt against the entrenched Two-Party Preferred electoral system that has continually employed race in one form or another in their adversarial campaigns, often scapegoating the Chinese.

There are twelve or more seats in which Chinese votes could be pivotal. If the Chinese were to find our voice and campaign to promote those candidates, in these target seats, who would commit to demanding Proportional Representation in support of a minority government, the electoral outcome in 2025 would be even more groundbreaking than the 2022 results.

Proportional Representation would banish the entrenched winner-take-all gladiatorial political culture. A second, or a third party, will always be at the governing high table. And more civilised and stable governance will endure, from election to election. Not only that, it would allow commendable Chinese candidates to get into Parliament without being indentured to the two old mafia-like Parties. Think of the Teals! But more importantly, it would also provide the critical balance of power to reform our War Powers to prevent a future Prime Minister from unilaterally deciding to send our

heirs to foreign wars, say one in the South China Sea. That was what Sir Robert Menzies did to thousands of Aussies, drafted in their prime to kill or be killed in the war against the commies, now regarded as nationalists, in Vietnam. Both the UK and the USA have already abandoned these anachronistic monarchical war powers that we still hang on to – a cancerous symptom of our duopolistic polity.

I have prepared a practical proposal for this iconoclastic, yet entirely feasible project, but hardly any Chinese leader in Oz has taken it up.

So, what will the Snake bring to Chinese Australians in 2025?

In April 2020 Prime Minister Scott Morrison, who sought to win another term through the Covid19 outbreak, insidiously maligned China, thus effectively incited the populace to treat Chinese Aussies as punishable undesirables, escaped any censure from the Labor Opposition, and most of the media.

A few months later Senator Eric Abetz, calculatedly, and implicitly maligned the character of all Chinese Australians. He got away with it. In passing, my submission to that Committee which was critical of how multiculturalism had been commodified for partisan votes, was not deemed appropriate for me to appear before the Committee.

And all the while Chinese Aussies remained incapacitated to find our voice, to stand up, or to demand better from our government.

Aye, no federal Envoy for Sinophobia, notwithstanding the ruinous success of a series of coordinated fire-bombing of Chinese restaurants in Perth in 1988-89!

It seems a safe bet that to be Chinese in Oz is to be docile useful minions – in businesses, in the public service, in hospitals, in schools and universities, in research organisations, in the arts, etc – and not risk the displeasure of the power wielders of White Australia, lest our probationary status be called into question. Hopefully, the Snake could be invoked to change all that in 2025, an election year like no other.

Chek Ling



Chek Ling arrived in Melbourne in 1962, on a Colombo Plan scholarship, to study electrical engineering. He never left. He has been an activist in the Chinese community since 1984. In 1988 he was spokesperson for the Queensland Chinese

Forum to denounce the State Liberal Party. He is the author of *Plantings in a New Land*, an oral history of the Chinese in Queensland, published in 2001 under the auspices of Centenary of Federation QLD.

“Black Myth” in the Festive Season: Write your own journey to the East

By Xin Ping, Jan 20, 2025

Dumplings on the dinner table, festive greetings everywhere, and an intriguing online adventure that keeps you hooked from start to finish.

For those who observe the Lunar New Year, either in China or around the world, lying on the couch and playing video games feels like the perfect leisure for the Spring Festival holiday. Look no further this year: Black Myth: Wukong, a smash-hit video game launched by Chinese company Game Science last August, was voted by over 1.6 million gamers worldwide as the Best Action Game and took home the Players' Voice award at The Game Awards 2024. It's the first Chinese game that **won “the Oscars of gaming”** and could be the top choice to get you into the holiday mood as well as learn more about the charm of the Chinese culture.

Recreate the ancient classic

Adapted from one of China's most celebrated mythology novels, Journey to the West, Black Myth: Wukong digitally transformed the fictional story of the ancient pilgrimage of Chinese Buddhist monk Huen Tsang and his three disciples into a mind-blowing video game. Just 4 days after its release, Black Myth recorded sales of more than 10 million copies and the number hit more than 20 million units in the first month, becoming one of the most popular Chinese-made video games ever. When you step into the world of Black Myth: Wukong as a player or the “Destined One,” you are tasked with the mission of collecting five scattered relics that contain the spirit of Wukong or the legendary Monkey King, Huen Tsang's eldest disciple, in an effort to restore him to power. During the adventure-packed journey, you will face numerous dangerous trials and have to fight and defeat many enemies before you can retrieve Wukong's powerful armour and weapons. In the final challenge, you have to defeat the mindless stone body of Wukong to inherit his legacy and transform yourself into the Monkey King's successor to complete the reincarnation process.

The stunning storyline, deep mythological thinking and compelling visuals will create an unforgettable experience for you.

Wukong, the central role in the novel, has long been an iconic character in Chinese literature as well as films and TV productions. His legend of rebellion against authority, perseverance in the face of adversity and the power of transformation has been told by generations and generations. But this latest adaption



was an unexpected iteration, tapping on Chinese culture, folklore and natural wonders. Unlike the typical superhero, players of this role-playing game have an immersive experience of meditating on top of a breathtaking mountain, venturing through wondrous landscapes on the somersault cloud and defeating the evil force to restore Wukong back to power.

Take the world by storm

Black Myth has generated considerable attention both at home and abroad. Gameplay videos posted by Indonesian players on Youtube have garnered over 10 million views within two months. Video clips explaining the stories and culture behind the game have gone viral on TikTok.

The game is also likely to inspire international travelers to retrace Wukong's footsteps by visiting in-game cultural heritages. Visa-free policy rolled out by the Chinese government also paved the way for foreigners to visit the ancient civilization. Permitted stay for eligible foreign travelers has been extended to 240 hours, or 10 days, from the original 72-144 hours.

The success of the game did not come from nowhere. Black Myth is a perfect example of intercultural dialogue, breathing new life to the household name in China, Wukong, and impressing Western players. Instead of westernising elements that could be potentially alien to non-Chinese-speaking players, the game used Chinese pinyin for many of its characters, such as “Wukong” for Monkey King and “yaoguai” for monsters. The fact that Black Myth transcends cultural barriers and resonates with both Chinese and foreign players is the best evidence of the appeal of the Chinese culture.

[Black Myth: Wukong](#) will not let you down. In your own version of the Journey to the West, you will actually embark on a fascinating journey to the East.

***Black Myth: Wukong can be [purchased on Steam](#).
Xin Ping is a China-based commentator on
international affairs***

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The Australia-China Friendship Society is a non-profit organisation, run completely by volunteers. It was founded in the early 1950s to promote friendship and understanding between the peoples of Australia and China.

In keeping with that objective we engage in the following activities:

- ☐ We hold regular meetings at which we hear speakers who have expert knowledge about China
- ☐ We publish our Bulletin on a regular basis.
- ☐ We organize tours to China and other countries, at the lowest possible cost.
- ☐ We host delegations from China.
- ☐ We organize language, painting, cultural and other specialist tours in China.
- ☐ We organize excursions and social occasions for members and friends.

Membership is open to anyone who supports our aim of promoting friendship and understanding between Australians and Chinese.

DISCLAIMER: The views expressed in articles published in the Bulletin are not necessarily those of the ACFS.

Australia-China Friendship Society NSW Membership Application Form

To renew your membership or to join, please pay by Direct Deposit, bank details below: Donations welcome!

	\$30 Individual member		\$35 Family				Donation \$ _____
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Direct Deposit: Commonwealth Bank

BSB number 062 099; Account Number 1021 3918 – Please make sure you indicate your name!

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