



# ALMA News

## June 2013

### From the President

I took over from Ian Maclean as ALMA President in January this year after Ian stepped down for family reasons. I would like to pay tribute to Ian's many years of service to ALMA, and his outstanding dedication to the CAECC and the cause of Mandarin education in Australia. Ian's tireless leadership is in no small way responsible for the fact that ALMA is in excellent financial shape – a significant achievement for an organisation with a million-dollar turnover run largely by volunteers – and has such a high profile amongst the multicultural and education communities in Canberra. This not only enables us to keep our fees to a competitive level but also allows us to continue to promote Mandarin learning through the Centre and other ALMA activities. I wish Ian and his family all the very best and hope that we may welcome him back to the leadership of the association in future.

ALMA was pleased to host Senator the Hon Kate Lundy, Minister for Multicultural Affairs, at the Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre in April. Senator Lundy was extremely supportive of the work we are doing in providing high-quality bilingual child care and clearly impressed with the contribution we are making to the Government's objectives in increasing Asia-literacy and Mandarin proficiency. She was also sympathetic to our arguments (put, so far unsuccessfully, to the ACT government) for an expansion of our Centre to separate our babies and toddlers, and thus enable us to take on more under-threes. This would help to alleviate the shortage in child care places for very young children and contribute further to laying the foundations of Mandarin proficiency in the next generation of Canberrans. We are continuing to pursue this with the ACT government, which owns the property that we operate from.

ALMA has also been hard at work with the Australian National University and the ACT Directorate of

Education and Training to organise a forum on Mandarin education in the ACT, scheduled for August 2013. We are hoping to bring together teachers, principals, academics, education administrators, parents and students, and anyone else with an interest in Chinese language education in the ACT to discuss how to improve the proficiency levels delivered by programs at all levels, from early childhood to tertiary. We are planning to hold a parents' seminar on Mandarin learning to get an idea of what parents would like from pre-school and school programs for their children prior to the forum to ensure that parents' views can be fed into the discussion.

I had the pleasure of meeting several CAECC parents at our working bee in March, and again when I indulged myself by accompanying the pre-schoolers on a very exciting excursion to the National Zoo and Aquarium earlier this month. I must say that both I and the Zoo staff were impressed by the excellent behaviour of our three- and four-year-olds, who were a credit to both their parents and our hard-working educators. I hope that others of you will be able to attend our parents' seminar on Mandarin learning, and my contact details are available at the Centre reception desk. I look forward to meeting more ALMA members in due course.

Janaline Oh  
(mother of Yassine/Xiu Li in the pre-school room)



### UPCOMING EVENTS 活动预告

Breaking news .....Watch this space .....

ALMA has been successful in acquiring a grant through the *Australian Centre on China in the World* to organise and run the day-long forum in August 2013 to develop ANU's links with schools, the community and other relevant organisations and groups to promote and improve Mandarin learning and teaching in the ACT region.

ALMA will be seeking volunteers and assistance to organise the Forum. Please let us know if you are willing to help by sending an email to [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com).



## REPORT ON ALMA ACTIVITIES



Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre (CAECC)

澳華幼兒中心新聞

### CAECC NEWS

We have had a very busy five months of 2013 commencing with many new children and their families joining the centre.

In February we held an information night for new and current families to come along and learn more about the programmes their children are involved in on a daily basis. This was followed by a working bee held on a Sunday in March to deal with outdoor work on the preschool garden and chook pen. We also hung some curtains in the rooms. This event provided a great opportunity to have families meet together and socialise.

Also in March the tooth fairy visited the centre – informing the children on how to look after their teeth and brush them daily. And we had a visit from ‘Little fox’ a performer who engaged the children in some wonderful drum playing experiences.

In April, our centre was honoured with a visit from Senator Kate Lundy, Minister of Multi-Cultural Affairs. The aim was to inform her of our plight to extend the size of the centre to accommodate a separate under 2’s room. Senator Lundy was enduring, taking time to sit and have a cup of tea and eat some yummy sandwiches while Committee members of ALMA explained and discussed the issues inhibiting the centre’s expansion.

Now it is May and the children have just spent a wonderful day visiting the Canberra Zoo. We caught a bus and travelled comfortably to the venue, where we were given a tour. The children had the opportunity to feed the emus & kangaroos; pat a spikey lizard and some friendly dingos. We ended the

day out with a picnic lunch before heading back to the centre.

On a sad note we said goodbye to a long standing educator who had dedicated 10years as a strong and passionate member of the team. We wish Yongmei all the very best for her new chosen career with the AFP.



### MANDARIN COMMUNITY TUTORING PROJECT

#### 义务辅导计划

Would you like to meet a volunteer tutor to help you improve and practice your Mandarin skills? Or are you a Mandarin speaker who would like to share your knowledge of Chinese language and culture and make new friends in the community?

For more information about the project, or if you are interested in registering as either a volunteer tutor or as a student wishing to improve your Mandarin skills and knowledge of Chinese culture, please contact the project coordinator, Mandy Scott, on [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com).



### NEW ALMA MEMBERS

#### 欢迎新会员

ALMA warmly welcomes the following new members:

- Ziwei Hu
- Carl Trewin
- Nikita Dub
- Wilson Au Yeung
- Duy Anh Duc Doo
- El Penun and Richard Ploog
- Mohammed Qassar and Roud Alkaswnai
- Bismark and Marciel Lim
- Kate Llewellyn
- Faye Liu and Lucas Coch
- Wafong Elnour and Mugahid Eissa
- Merrilyn and Morgan Evans
- Wei Xian (Karen) Su and Matthew Huang
- Gao Xue Wu and Roger Howe
- Xueting Zhang
- Joon Hee Han
- Robert Fennell
- Susie and John Forrest

Laiju Philip and Sindhu Sebastian  
Dahlia Martin and Raymond Loi  
Bhartendu and Urvashi Rajput  
Milli and Kaven Wong  
Ping Yang  
Kristen Nunney and Yvonne Gonzalez  
Carsten Knorr  
Janet Jonhson  
Peter Carter  
Codie Bell



## MAWSON PRIMARY SCHOOL NEWS

Mawson Primary School started the 2013 school year with two one day classes for students in Kindergarten to Year 1. The teachers for these classes were Jia Zhu on KMIP and a new teacher to our school, Constance Chen, on Y1 MIP. At the start of term 2 Constance moved to Perth to join her husband, who had taken up a work position there. Another new teacher to our school, Qinfei Celeste, commenced teaching the Yr1 MIP class in week 2.

The two day MIP classes have continued for year 3-6 students and the teachers are Cissy Lu 3/4MIP and Jia Zhu 5/6MIP. Cissy and Jia work closely with their English language teaching colleagues to cover the curriculum. All other students at our school have 1-1.5 hours of Mandarin each week in the languages other than English (LOTE) setting.

Three of our teachers. Lily Ang, Jia Zhu and Cissy Lu, are trialling the DRAFT Australian Language (Chinese) curriculum that is an excellent professional learning opportunity for them, as well as making a contribution at national level to the development of the final curriculum document.

The school hosted eleven students and two teachers, plus a tour coordinator, from two schools in Xi'an, China, for 5 days in February. They arrived on Friday 15 February and spent the weekend with their host families, including a visit to Tidbinbilla Nature reserve. The students then attended school until Wednesday 20 February, where they spent time in classes and undertook intensive English classes with teacher, Dawn-Maree Dunn. It was a very rewarding opportunity for the Mawson school community to be able to share our wonderful city and school with the visiting students and teachers.

Last Friday 31 May, Minister Joy Burch, MLA, was met by several students from KMIP and 5/6MIP, who welcomed her to the school in English and Mandarin. Four students from 3/5MIP told Minister Burch the reasons why they were studying Mandarin language.

Mawson Primary School is currently taking 2014 enrolments for Mawson Preschool and Kindergarten classes, including the one day MIP class. Please contact the school on 62058033 or come into the school for information.

Amanda Andrews  
Principal



## MANDARIN LEARNING

### 'MANDARIN FOR FUN'

Playgroups and intensive classes aimed to teach Mandarin to young children (from around 18 months to 5 years old) and their carers so that they can go home and practice together.

For more information, contact [mandarinforfun@gmail.com](mailto:mandarinforfun@gmail.com).



### ACT SCHOOLS TEACHING MANDARIN

A full list of Canberra schools that teach Mandarin is available on the ALMA website: <http://learningmandarin.weebly.com/programs-for-children-in-act-area.html>



## OTHER NEWS AND VIEWS

### CANBERRA 2013 CHINESE CAMP - 30 SEPTEMBER-13 OCTOBER 2013

If you or your kids are between the ages of 6-23 and are interested in learning Chinese pinyin, traditional handicrafts, Chinese art, calligraphy, kung fu or Chinese traditional music and dance, then don't miss out on this year's Chinese camp in Canberra.

This is an activity supported by the Chinese government agencies in Beijing and Shandong Province who are sponsoring teachers from China to conduct all the teaching and activities.

**Early Bird Fees apply if you register before 30 June 2013.**

For more information or to register, contact the Australian School of Contemporary Chinese (ASCC) on Tel: (612) 6176 0528; 6255 7710; Email: [ascc@trilong.com.au](mailto:ascc@trilong.com.au); or visit the website: [www.standardchineseschool.act.edu.au](http://www.standardchineseschool.act.edu.au)

### CHINESE PAINTING CLASS

Learn how to paint a range of popular subjects using Traditional & Contemporary Chinese Brush Painting techniques. Projects gradually increase in difficulty, and feature such subjects as bamboo, wild orchids, roses, peonies, pandas, cats and more.

#### Short course

Duration : Two sessions, 3 hours per session in two different days.

Time: 9:30am-12:30pm, Saturdays.

Cost : \$150 (material included)

Venue: Art studio, 11a Beauchamp Street Deakin ACT Australia

This short course is for those who are new to the traditional Chinese brush painting.

The course starts with demonstration and detailed explanation of basic brush strokes of the free style Chinese painting. We then start to experiment techniques of using water, ink and colours on rice paper to draw plants and birds. At the end of this course, students will be able to produce their own pieces of creation.

#### Weekly Course

Duration : 2 hours per session per week.

Time: 6:30-8:30pm, Wednesdays

Cost : \$35 per session

Venue: The Artists Shed, 14 Foster Street, Queanbeyan NSW Australia

This course is for those who are more serious about learning traditional Chinese brush painting step by step and to develop their free style skills continuously.

Chinese language and calligraphy as cultural background will be taught in the class for building up a strong foundation.

Flowers, plants, animals such as birds and rocks are the topics to cover. Every lesson will start with a language lesson and a demonstration of the object that the students are learning, followed by students' own practise. Students are encouraged to practise the new skills at home, and to bring their work in for teacher's comment in the following lesson.

#### Registration

For a registration form, please contact Corinne by email at: [corinyingzhang@gmail.com](mailto:corinyingzhang@gmail.com)

\*Registration and payment must be made by the last business day before the class start date. Materials will be prepared for the student when payment is confirmed.

#### The Teacher's Profile

**Ying Zhang** is a young Australian contemporary artist. Her work illustrates the complex relationship between Chinese tradition and the evolution of the dominating modern western world. She is also a Mandarin teacher with more than 5 years of language teaching experience in Australia. Ying obtained a Bachelor degree in Education in Fine Art at the South China Normal University, and then completed a Master degree in painting at the Australian National University. She is extraordinarily enthusiastic about sharing her first-hand knowledge on Chinese language and arts with those who love Chinese culture. For more about the artist, visit:

<https://sites.google.com/site/corinyingzhang/home>



## ACT BILINGUAL EDUCATION ALLIANCE UPDATE

The ACTBEA May Update 2013 has details of:

1. The next ACTBEA event - a fun multi-lingual potluck lunch for all the family. Saturday 29 June, 11am – 1pm.
2. A traditional German lantern walk in Glebe Park on Sunday 16 June, 5-6.30pm, and
3. How to find out more about, and comment on, the draft Australian curriculum up to Year 10 in schools for Arabic, French, German, Indonesian, Japanese, Korean, Modern Greek, Spanish and Vietnamese, along with the draft Framework for Aboriginal Languages and Torres Strait Islander Languages.

For more details, visit

[http://actbilingual.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/9/1/4/491774/act\\_bilingual\\_education\\_alliance\\_update\\_may\\_2013.pdf](http://actbilingual.weebly.com/uploads/4/4/9/1/4/491774/act_bilingual_education_alliance_update_may_2013.pdf)

Please feel free to pass on the information to others who you think may be interested.

Best wishes

Mandy and Marina

ACTBEA



## CHINA – NEWS AND WEBSITES OF INTEREST

### *Do Chinese dialects have a future?*

The standardization of Mandarin and its promotion and enforcement as the national language has done much to break down language barriers within the PRC. In addition, the use of Pǔtōnghuà as a lingua franca has greatly helped China’s economic and social development. But this has come at a cost to various dialects, which are arguably an integral part of each region’s habits, culture, and unique characteristics.

A project has recently started to record and archive audio clips from a variety of areas in China to help preserve language for future generations. If you are interested in finding out more, or getting involved, have a look at the Phonemica website at <http://phonemica.net/>

## *Threatened closure of language programs at the University of Canberra*

Read all about this shock announcement by the University of Canberra Vice-Chancellor Professor Stephen Parker on 24 May 2013 at <http://canberralanguages.blogspot.com>

### *Some more bedtime reading.....*

Check out the following interesting websites:

**Asia Education Foundation**– Australian-based organisation with an excellent website that has links to other relevant sites <http://www.asiaeducation.edu.au/default.asp>

**China in the world** – the ANU College of Asia and the Pacific’s online news <http://ciw.anu.edu.au/>

China Business Spectator - an Australian publication on business and economic news about China <http://www.businessspectator.com.au/economy/china>

The Confucian Institute Online –the Institute is regarded as an arm of the PRC Government and an important part of its soft power policies in English-speaking countries. Bearing that cautionary note in mind, it has some interesting content relating to learning Mandarin <http://english.chinese.cn/>



## CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALMA NEWS AND UPDATES WELCOME

Please email [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com)

**NOTE: Decisions on publication remain at the discretion of the editor**

**For more information about ALMA and to see past ALMA newsletters visit our website at**

[www.learningmandarin.weebly.com](http://www.learningmandarin.weebly.com)