



# ALMA NEWS SEPTEMBER 2018

Association for  
Learning  
**MANDARIN**  
**汉语**  
in Australia Inc

澳大利亞學漢語協會

## MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

Mid-Autumn Festival (中秋节, zhōngqiūjié) is also known as the "Harvest Festival" and the "Moon Festival".

The date of the Mid-Autumn Festival is the 15th of 8th Chinese lunar month (Chicken month). This is the night of the full moon since the new moon is the first day of a Chinese Lunar Month. In 2018, the Mid-Autumn Festival falls on Monday 24 September.

This is a day to worship the moon god. According to folk legend, this day is also the birthday of the earth god (T'u-ti Kung). This festival signals that the year's hard work in the fields will soon come to an end, with only the harvest left to attend to. People use this opportunity to express their gratitude to heaven (represented by the moon) and earth

(symbolized by the earth god) for the blessings they have enjoyed over the past year.

According to tradition, Chinese pray to the moon god for protection, family unity, and good fortune. The round "moon cakes" eaten on this festival are symbolic of family unity and closeness. Pomelos are also eaten on this day. Moon gazing is another essential part of this festival. On this day, the moon is at its roundest and brightest. This is also a time for lovers to trust and pray for togetherness, symbolized by the roundness of the moon.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### CANBERRA MOON FESTIVAL

Friday 21 September to Sunday 23 September  
Exhibition Park in Canberra (EPIC)  
Free entry and free parking.

All welcome to this multicultural celebration with a focus on Asia. Fun activities for all ages, including costume party and karaoke on Friday evening, lion and dragon boat dances and on-stage performances on Saturday, and talent contest on Sunday. There will also be bilingual story times in a range of Asian languages for young children and their families between 10.30am-3pm on both Saturday 22 September and Sunday 23 September.

For more details of the bilingual story times: <http://actbilingual.weebly.com/events.html>

For more information about the Festival: <http://www.canberramoonfestival.com.au>

### ART DECO DEPARTMENT STORES OF SHANGHAI

A talk by author Peter Hack organised by the ACT Branch of the Australia China Friendship Society

- Wednesday 19 September, 7:30 pm - 8:30 pm
- Catchpole Room, Jamison Southern Cross Club
- Cost: a \$2 donation for Project Hope (an organisation in China which helps to keep underprivileged children at school)

Shanghai's Nanjing Road is internationally famous for its iconic art deco department stores. These stores are not just about shopping. They are not just about selling modern goods from around the world. They are about entertainment and they are about pleasure! Come along to hear more about these stores and the Chinese-Australian merchants who were key-players in their establishment.

For further information: <http://acfs.org.au/events/> or email [acfsevent@gmail.com](mailto:acfsevent@gmail.com)

### SPRING THOUGHTS

A concert by the ANU Chinese Classical Music Ensemble. This group has been charming Canberra audiences with its exciting and beautiful performances for over ten years. They play

Chinese music from a wide range of genres across the 4,000-year-old history of Chinese music as well as 20th century film music.

- Sunday 7 October, 2:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- Larry Sitsky Room at the ANU School of Music
- Cost: Child (under10) \$5, Student \$10, Conc/member \$15, Adult \$20, Family \$35.

A portion of the proceeds will go to help support Project Hope

For further information: [anu.ccme@gmail.com](mailto:anu.ccme@gmail.com)

For tickets: <https://www.trybooking.com/417815>

### NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It has been another busy period for the ALMA Committee.

On behalf of the Committee, Vice-President Dr Mandy Scott and I met with Mawson Primary School (MPS) to discuss assisting the school with recruiting qualified Mandarin-speaking primary school teachers. As part of that process we introduced representatives from the Taipei Economic and Cultural Office in Australia (TECO) to MPS, to allow the school to collaborate with TECO on strategies to recruit Mandarin-speaking primary school teachers and other initiatives such as selecting appropriate text book resources for students in the proposed new Mandarin Immersion Program (MIP).

The Committee completed a very detailed and thorough analysis of the ALMA budget for the new financial year. I must extend my thanks to the ALMA Treasurer Kristyn Worner, the ALMA Secretary Amelia Tandy, and committee member Aurore Chow, who worked diligently with the CAECC Director and Assistant Director to develop a balanced budget for 2018-19, despite a decline in enrolments at the CAECC (consistent with trends reported in other childcare centres across the ACT). Whilst it was sad to see two long-serving staff members depart the CAECC, the centre is

now operating on a financially sustainable basis, and the impact of changes on the in-room experience of children has been minimized.

The Committee has started a social-media marketing campaign for the CAECC, and is now finalizing a search-engine optimization to allow the CAECC to attract more families at a lower cost than traditional advertising / marketing methods. Initial results from the social media marketing campaign are encouraging.

Finally, the CAECC Director has worked hard to get the ACT Property Group to perform essential maintenance and perform some upgrades to the CAECC at no cost to ALMA.

### OTHER NEWS

The Committee is continuing discussions with one of the local Chinese language schools about jointly providing Mandarin-focused after school care programs in and around the ACT for school-aged children.

The Committee is also investigating a number of other lines of business to potentially enter, including Chinese-language classes for school-aged children and adults, before and after-school care and other services.

Finally, as the end of my second year as President of ALMA approaches, as I flagged in the last ALMA newsletter, I am acutely aware of the need to ensure appropriate governance and oversight of ALMA's activities and the CAECC in particular. For the ALMA Committee to work it requires people with a range of skills, and who are prepared to work together as a team in the best interests of members.

Many of the current Committee members are nearing the time when their children will no longer attend the CAECC. As such, succession planning for the ALMA Committee is critical. What we need are new Committee members – ideally drawn from families with children in the infants and toddlers room at the CAECC or ALMA members who do not

have children attending the CAECC – to join the current Committee to ensure a smooth 'handover' period over the next year or two.

Being a Committee member can have its challenges, but is very rewarding. I have worked hard to ensure that all Committee members contribute, and that no one Committee Member is swamped with work. However, a Committee is not one person and hence I would like to ask you to consider becoming a part of the Committee. With the qualified accountant not standing next year, and the need to market the CAECC in the increasingly competitive childcare market, if you have accounting or bookkeeping, communications, marketing, advertising or publications relations skills or expertise I would strongly urge you to consider joining the Committee.

Regards

Jaan Murphy

President, ALMA

## ALMA ACTIVITIES

### ENRICHING CHINESE STUDIES IN CANBERRA SCHOOLS

ALMA continues to collaborate with the Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) at the ANU to organise and administer this project. Although the project has no end date, grant funds are getting low. So we have had to limit the number of visits that ANU mentors can make to ACT schools in Term 3 this year.

The project has been most successful over the three years it has been operating. It has enabled students at the ANU who have lived, worked or studied in China and/or are involved in Chinese language or China studies to share their experience and enthusiasm about Chinese language and culture with students at a number of ACT schools. In return, ANU mentors have received a small honorarium for each school visit

and the opportunity to develop their teaching skills and links to the local community.

Recent schools to have benefitted from the program include Mawson Primary, Canberra High and Telopea Park School.

For more details about this project, email [anuchinamentor@gmail.com](mailto:anuchinamentor@gmail.com)

### **BILINGUAL RADIO PROGRAM**

ALMA co-presents a Mandarin language program on community radio 2XX every Friday from 7pm - 7.30pm. The program aims to promote the use and learning of Mandarin in the ACT area and to inform the community, especially the Chinese speaking community, about local events and other information of interest. The program is presented bilingually, and includes a short children's story read in Mandarin and then discussed in both languages. We welcome recordings of children singing or speaking Mandarin for broadcast during the program. Hearing themselves on the radio acknowledges the value of what they are doing and can be a powerful motivator to continue learning Chinese.

You can hear the program on FM 98.3 or through the 'listen back' system on the 2XX website: <http://www.2xxfm.org.au/>.

Look for the program on the Program Guide page and click on 'Mandarin'. For more information, contact Mandy on [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com)

### **MANDARIN COMMUNITY TUTORING PROJECT**

This free community project has been coordinated by ALMA for many years. It brings together fluent speakers of Mandarin and learners of the language who wish to further develop their knowledge of Mandarin and/or understanding of Chinese culture. Mandarin speakers volunteer an hour or so a week to help learners improve their Chinese language skills. In return, the tutors can practice their English skills, make local friends, and learn more about

language teaching and learning. For more information about the project, or to register as a tutor or learner, please visit the tutoring page on the ALMA website.

## **WELCOME TO NEW ALMA MEMBERS**

We welcome the following new members:

Claire Lane, Michael Wijnen, Chaitanya Ravuri and family, Shruthi Bangalore and family, Julian Henschke and family

## **CHINESE AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE (CAECC)**

澳华幼儿教育中心新闻

**From the Director Ms. Bao Qin**

### **MANDARIN PROGRAMMING**

Both Rooms implement Mandarin programs in their room routines. Some special events have been held at the Centre.

In May the children made Mother's Day cards for their parents and learned the song "妈妈的眼睛 (Mother's eyes)" and some movements by following the rhythm of the song.

In June, the pre-schoolers celebrated the Dragon Boat Festival. We had 2 activities spread over different days. We first learned about the song called "五月五赛龙舟 (5 May, Dragon Boat Race)" and watched a video about the dragon boat race in China to introduce the source of the festival. The children liked the dragon boat and were excited to watch the racing.

We then had a dragon boat racing activity in our playground. We had two boats, each consisting of a cloth with 4 holes. The child in the first hole was the leader who guided the other three in the 'boat' to move forward. Each team needed to move



forward at the same time (the most important thing was to keep pace so that the boat could move smoothly and fast). During the race, lots of interest was recorded. Some children's shoes came off and the whole team was forced to stop. Some children ran to the end together easily. Some teams couldn't run fast because the children didn't keep pace with each other. But, the important thing was to participate, and they all enjoyed this game. (Reference from our Storypark 6 June 2018)

We will be continuing to introduce other festivals from different cultures around the world. This will help the children to see both the similarities and difference between cultures.

Currently, the Preschool Room educator Haiying develops Mandarin learning lessons for each week by using Powerpoint presentations. The Mandarin lessons include keywords, key sentences and relevant songs. It is now possible for all parents to access the Mandarin lessons on Storypark.

The Mandarin lessons are also designed for families who have no Mandarin background who want to learn Mandarin. The parents can practice the lessons at home with their children. The Mandarin lessons include basic greetings, named occupations, family members, colors, numbers, weather, days of the week, names of animals and relevant measure words and verbs.

The following are some activities in our daily learning journey:

#### Chinese word matching game

- Based on words the children already know from the stories 风跟我玩 fēng gēn wǒ wán (I play with the wind) and 雨伞 yǔsǎn (Umbrella) to expand their learning through pictures to match the Chinese characters.

#### Music lessons

- The Pre-schoolers learn and practice playing 葫芦丝 húlu sī (a type of Chinese traditional musical instrument)

- The Pre-schoolers learn Chinese Fan dancing “好一朵美丽的茉莉花 Hǎo yī duǒ měilì de mò lì huā (what a beautiful flower Jasmine is)”
- Dance “数星星 Shù xīngxīng (counting stars)”

#### Chinese lessons (June- July)

- 小象的好朋友 Xiǎo xiàng de hǎo péngyǒu (A baby elephant's good friend)
- 捉蝴蝶 Zhuō húdié (Catch butterflies)
- 青蛙在哪里 Qīngwā zài nǎlǐ (Where is the frog?)
- 小蝌蚪找妈妈 Xiǎo kēdǒu zhǎo māmā (The tadpoles looking for their mother)

#### Our programming links to the local community

- The Pre-schoolers had a great excursion to watch the bus wash on 26 July.
- Kowala visited the Centre on 10 August
- On Wednesday 22 August, Rachel (a CAECC parent) took a special guest to Mawson Primary School: Dr Jane Orton, from the University of Melbourne. Dr Orton spoke to teachers and parents about the importance of Mandarin immersion language programs. Dr Orton had a one hour space in her program (between 3:30 - 4:30pm) that afternoon and came to the CAECC to see the work we do here.

#### Physical environment development at the CAECC

ACT Property Group has agreed to fund some upgrades at the centre. Over the coming weeks they will be laying new carpets, updating the bathrooms, replacing the reverse-cycle air-conditioning units and doing a few other odd jobs.

## OTHER NEWS

### CHINESE CONVERSATION CLASS

If you have more than a beginning level of Chinese and would like to join others to chat in Mandarin please drop in and meet us on Fridays 12:30pm at Woden Library. BYO lunch if necessary. Native

speakers welcome. No fees or commitment required. This is a grass-roots casual class targeting improving your fluency.

Phone Claire for more information 0412 305 538

### **UPCOMING TALKS AT THE ANU THAT MIGHT BE OF INTEREST**

#### **ANU China Seminar Series**

Dates: 20 Sep, 04 Oct, 17 Oct, 18 Oct, 01 Nov

Time: 3:30 pm-5:30 pm

Venue: Seminar Room A, China in the World Building (188), Fellows Lane, ANU

For more information about CIW events:  
<http://ciw.anu.edu.au/events/>

### **WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN ALMA'S ACTIVITIES?**

ALMA is a local non-profit community organisation which relies on its volunteer committee to operate the Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre (CAECC) and to promote the learning of Mandarin

and knowledge of Chinese culture and heritage more generally.

We welcome all ALMA supporters to become more actively involved in the Association by joining the Association or ensuring your membership is up to date. Membership is free for families at the CAECC while there is a small annual fee for others. Renewal forms and Applications for ALMA membership can be downloaded from the Membership page of the ALMA website. If you are unsure of your membership status, please email [membershipsalma@gmail.com](mailto:membershipsalma@gmail.com)

We also invite you all to attend the ALMA AGM in October. You can meet the outgoing committee and other ALMA members, and hear what ALMA has achieved over the past year and our plans for the future. Copies of the Presidents' reports for previous years can be downloaded from the Home page of the ALMA website. If you would like to consider joining the committee, please contact us at any time to find out more. You can reach us at [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com).

## **CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALMA NEWS 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 <https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/>

## **INFORMATION**

The ALMA website provides information about formal and informal Mandarin learning opportunities for both adults and children. ALMA's quarterly newsletter also lets members know about ALMA activities, other Chinese-related events, particularly in the ACT, and opportunities to learn more about Chinese culture and to hear and use Mandarin.