

## MID-AUTUMN FESTIVAL

The Mid-Autumn Festival (*Zhōngqiū Jié* - 中秋节) falls on the 15th day of the 8th month of the lunar calendar *nónglì* 农历, which this year is Thursday, 1st October. It is also known as the Moon Festival or Harvest Moon Festival for the wheat and rice harvested around this time.

The roundness of the full moon symbolises reunion and togetherness. Dense pastries called mooncakes *yuèbǐng* 月饼, traditionally made from lotus seed paste and salted duck egg yolk, are popular gifts for friends and family.



Osmanthus flowers are in full bloom during the Mid-Autumn Festival. Drinking wine infused with these flowers began over 2,000 years ago and signifies family reunion and happy life.

Of the many legends associated with this festival, the most famous is that of *Cháng'é* 嫦娥, Goddess of the Moon. Long ago, ten suns inflicted a terrible drought on the world. Archer *Hòu Yì* 后羿 shot down nine suns and received the elixir of immortality as a reward. He left the elixir with his beloved wife *Cháng'é*, as he did not want to live forever without her. However, *Cháng'é* drank the elixir to prevent *Hòu Yì*'s apprentice from taking it, and she flew up to live on the moon. In sadness, *Hòu Yì* displayed *Cháng'é*'s favourite fruits and cakes, and made sacrifices for her. Now, people place fruits and sweets on open-air altars for *Cháng'é* to bless. Mooncakes are often decorated with motifs of *Cháng'é* and her pet rabbit. Children are also encouraged to make and decorate lanterns.

ALMA  
NEWS  
SEPTEMBER  
2020

Association for  
Learning  
MANDARIN  
汉语  
in Australia Inc

澳大利亚学汉语协会

In another legend, a sick elderly couple lived with their daughter at the foot of South Mountain. One day the daughter found a melon while working in a nearby field. She cooked the melon for her dying parents, who amazingly recovered after eating it. They named it 'south melon' - *nánguā* 南瓜 - the Mandarin name for pumpkin. Now, pumpkin is eaten during the Mid-Autumn Festival for good health.



## NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Now is a wonderful time to be in Canberra, with the spring blossoms and our very strong COVID-19 status. Many of our scheduled activities are on hold, but our tutoring program is continuing as well as our involvement in the 30-minute bilingual radio program on 2XX Friday evenings from 7pm. More information on these two projects later in this issue.

Our highly respected and valued treasurer Syndy Marr has stepped down from her role to focus on her family. Syndy has been part of the ALMA family and committee for four years and we know she will remain close for another couple of years at least. Good luck Syndy and thank you for all your support!

Victor Yee has volunteered for the role of treasurer until the AGM. Victor has been part of the ALMA family for five years through the Chinese Australian Early Childhood Centre (CAECC). His support in finalising our budget is greatly appreciated.

The ALMA 2020 AGM will be held on Tuesday 20th October at 6pm. We are requesting RSVPs in advance to ensure we have a large enough venue and appropriate video conferencing in place to meet COVID-19 requirements. We welcome all who wish to attend and especially anyone who is interested in volunteering for the ALMA Committee. If you are interested in attending either in person or via video conference please email [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com) and put AGM RSVP as the subject. Remember to include the number of people who will be attending. RSVPs will close on 13th October.

Bilingual Schools Australia is conducting a survey to better understand the bilingual language needs of school aged children in Canberra. If you have time to complete the survey to communicate your language preferences, including Mandarin, for school options in Canberra, details can be found at: <https://bilingualschoolsaustralia.com.au/>

Stay well and safe,  
Kate Friend  
ALMA President

## CHINESE AUSTRALIAN EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTRE (CAECC)

### 澳华幼儿教育中心新闻

This year is moving along so fast. We are so glad to see the beginnings of spring which will enable the children to take part in more outdoor activities.

The children have participated in so many learning experiences during the past few months. The educators have introduced a project learning approach, which involves educating through motivating subjects based on children's interests and intentional teaching. This allows meaningful learning in all content areas while also supporting multiple areas of development. These projects can be viewed by current and prospective families in our foyer. Some of the projects the children and educators have undertaken were related to eggs, fruit and vegetables, shapes and colours, and National Tree day and Science Week.

In early August we planted a garden with local plants that the Ngunnawal people used. The children and educators now pay respects to the traditional custodians and owners of the land by taking part in a daily Acknowledgement of Country. This is part of the Centre's Quality Improvement Plan, continuing to embed indigenous culture into our educational program.

During Science Week the children had the opportunity to take part in many experiences: volcanoes, making dinosaur fossils, experimenting with colourful slimy and oily mixtures, static electricity and magnetism. Wow - how exciting - all this fun while learning Mandarin!

We are now preparing for our end of year concert. We cannot wait, as it encapsulates what the children have learnt this year at CAECC.

Annette Chemin  
CAECC Director

## ALMA ACTIVITIES

### New ALMA members

A warm welcome *huānyíng* 欢迎 to the following new members who joined ALMA in recent weeks:

- Robyn Brodie-Grant
- Alice Blucher and family
- Karen Collins and family
- Marjan Khalidi-Chami and family
- Wong Hua Yee and family
- Sarah Richardson and family
- Peter Row and family
- Amber Wilson and family
- Cassandra Estrin and family
- Josh Garretson and family
- Li Jie and family
- Michael Li and family
- Craig Martin and family
- Sophie-Jane Sithole and family

### Mandarin Community Tutoring Project

We have had a few more registrations for the project with the beginning of second semester at the ANU and increased possibilities for face-to-face meetings. The Australia-China Youth Association at the ANU has also been promoting the project among their members.

We welcome new participants. If you are learning Chinese – or have learned the language in the past and would like to keep up your skills – the project provides a chance to practice informally with a native speaker. If you are a fluent speaker of Mandarin, it is an opportunity to make more local contacts, share your knowledge, gain tutoring skills and/or practise English. Please note, all participants in this project are volunteers and there is no payment involved.

For more information, visit the Mandarin Community Tutoring page on the ALMA website:  
<https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/>

### Mandarin radio program

Want a chance to listen to children's stories and songs in Chinese, and learn about the vocabulary at the same time? Want to hear some local community announcements presented bilingually? Tune into the weekly Mandarin language program that ALMA helps to present on community radio 2XX.

The program is broadcast every Friday evening from 7pm to 7.30pm on radio FM98.3. Alternatively you can listen online at <http://www.2xxfm.org.au/> or hear past programs by clicking 'on demand' and looking for the Mandarin program in the program guide. For more information and links to videos and/or words to some of the songs you may hear, visit the '[Weekly radio show](#)' page on the ALMA website.

### Opportunities to learn and practice Mandarin in the ACT region

The ALMA website has details and links to many courses and programs to learn and develop Mandarin language skills for children and adults.

For more information, see:

<https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/learning-mandarin-in-australia.html>

If you know of other programs or find that some of those listed are out of date, please let us know at [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com) so we can update our webpages.

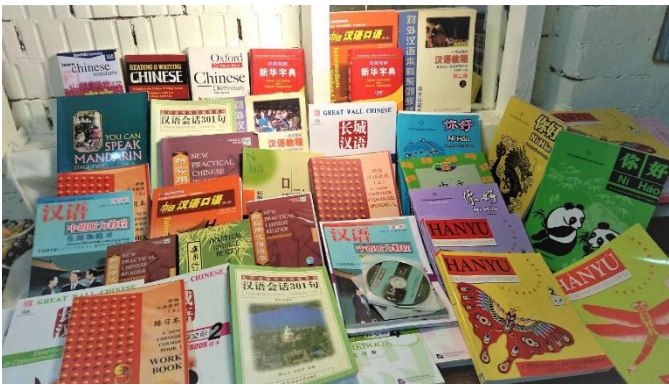


Association for Learning Mandarin in Australia Inc (ALMA) 50 Ainsworth St, Mawson, ACT 2607  
 A non-profit community organization "Helping Australian to learn Mandarin" ABN: 99 625 121 550  
 Website: <https://www.learningmandarincanberra.org/>

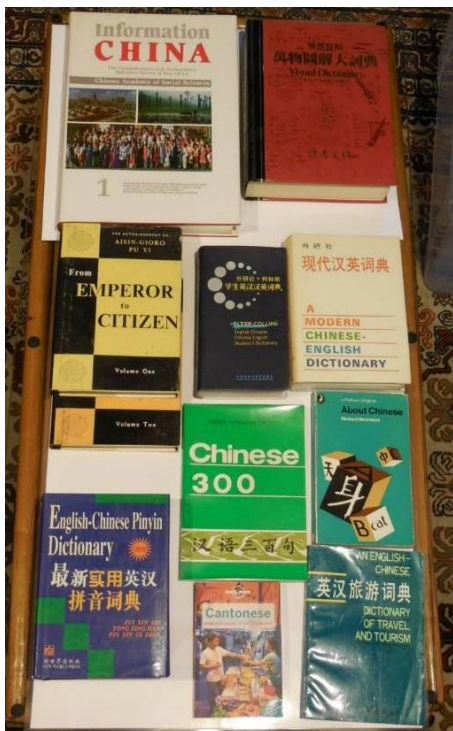


## Chinese books available for free

ALMA has a collection of books purchased or donated in the past to assist Mandarin learners and tutors. Most are designed for adults, but a few are more suitable for children. Some are shown in the photo below. If you could use them in your learning or teaching, please contact Mandy on 0408 089 235. We are happy to donate them to any ALMA member.



The Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch also has some donated books that are looking for a new home. They have provided the photo below. If you would like any of these titles please contact Carol Keil at [cjkeil@proforte.com.au](mailto:cjkeil@proforte.com.au). All are in excellent condition.



## OTHER NEWS

### Australia-China Youth Association ANU

ACYA ANU provides professional, academic and social opportunities to help create an inclusive community and the next generation of Australia-China leaders. While focusing on the ANU, others with an interest in Australia and China are welcome to participate in their activities.

ACYA ANU is hosting a weekly Virtual Language Exchange on Tuesdays during Semester 2. For more details and to keep up to date with their other activities follow their Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/ACYAANU/>



### China in the World (CIW) at the ANU

The Australian Centre on China in the World (CIW) at the ANU (中华全球研究中心) brings together a wide range of scholars from various disciplines to help further knowledge and understanding of the Chinese world — the People's Republic of China, Taiwan and the Chinese diaspora — addressing both its traditions and contemporary developments in a rapidly changing world.

For interesting talks, discussions, news and commentary about all things Chinese, keep an eye on the CIW website at <http://ciw.anu.edu.au/>

## CONTRIBUTIONS TO ALMA NEWS

Please email items for the next newsletter to [canberraalma@gmail.com](mailto:canberraalma@gmail.com) by 15 November 2020.

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