

*Property of
Kennedy Center
China Teacher's Program*

WAKING THE SLEEPING GIANT:

**A History of the China Teachers Program,
Brigham Young University David M. Kennedy Center for
International Studies**

**by Carol Clark Ottesen
With Collected Writings of China Teachers**

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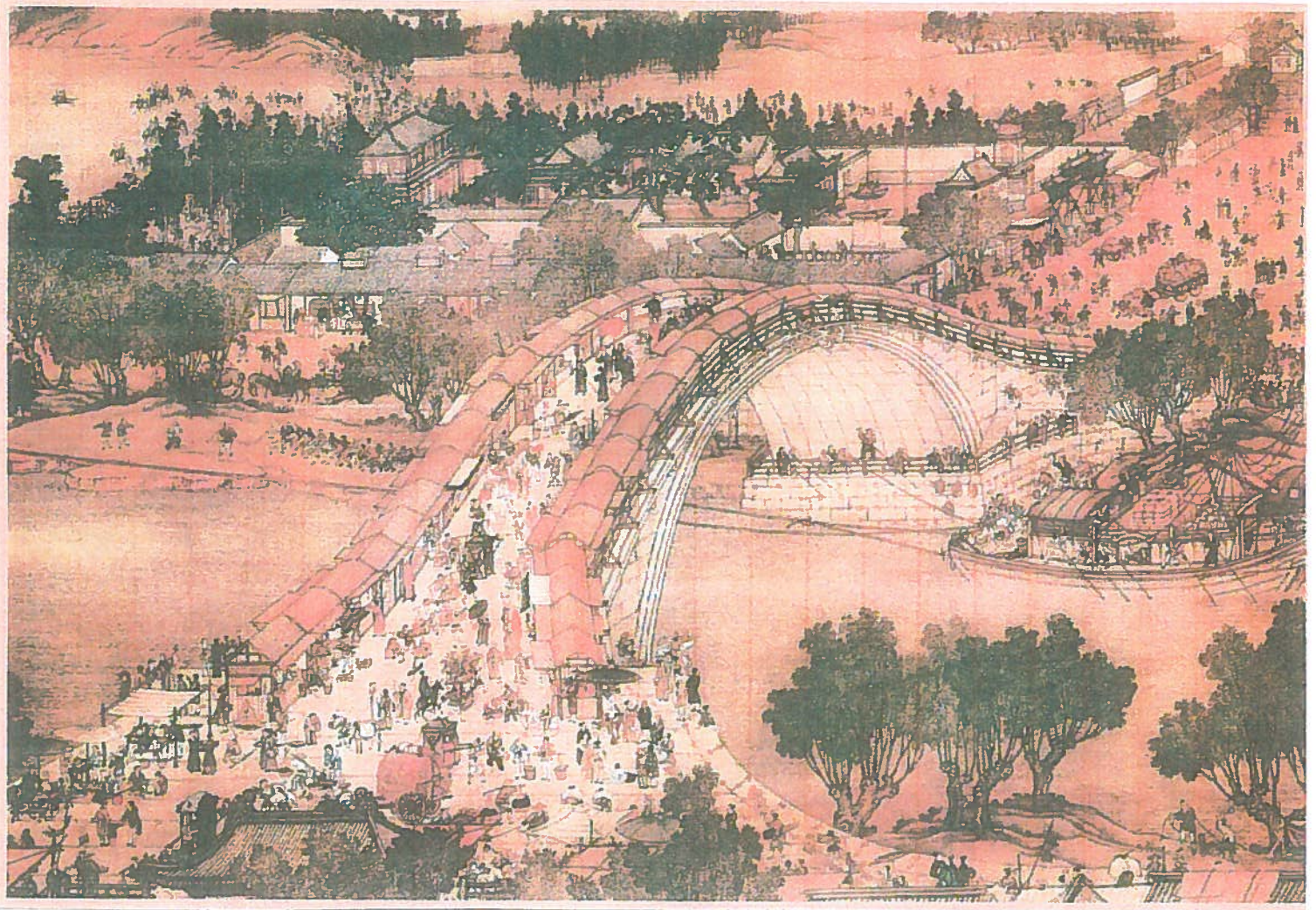
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Roster of China Teachers 2002
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Frontispiece: "Shang He Market on the Day of Perfect Brightness"

The Day of Perfect Brightness or *Qing Ming* Day is a Chinese Festival which falls on the fourth to the sixth of April according to the lunar calendar. This is the highlight of personal devotion to the dead; many flock to the graveyards to care for the tombs of their deceased. Sometimes food offerings are placed on the grave, incense lit and/or paper money burned, symbolizing continuing love and concern for the deceased's welfare. (Jankowiak 288)

Waking the Sleeping Giant: A History of the BYU China Teachers Program

by Carol Clark Ottesen

**“China? There lies a sleeping giant. Let him sleep!
For when he wakes he will move the world.”
Napoleon I**

Chapter I A Pre-History

The above quotation appears in the frontispiece of *Inside Red China* written in 1939 by Foreign Correspondent Helen Foster Snow. Snow, a former Utahn, lived in China from 1931 to 1940 and was a personal confidant of Mao Zedong. Following this quotation, Snow writes of her response to the Chinese:

The laboring classes of China have no peer. They ask less of life and give more than the people of any race. They are so intelligent of hand and brain, so capable of cheerful endurance and ceaseless struggle, so competent in any given field of work, that to know them is to admire them without question and to wish to see them rise to the stature to which sheer natural superiority entitles them. And these constitute nearly 90 percent of the population of China. Why then, is there weakness where there should be strength in China? How long can the irony of history mock this giant in his sleep? Not long, I think, for he is stirring and is being violently bestirred.

What does he lack—the incomparable Chinese farmer, the proverbial Chinese “coolie,” the boy apprentice whose handicraft art has amazed the world throughout centuries? Not brain. Not physical strength and tenacity. Not potential fighting spirit and the will to survive. . . I have decided that he lacks only one

thing--information. Tell him the truth and the truth will make him free. (ix)

China is stirring and being bestirred. The shackles of a closed China are broken; the information boundaries are challenged by the influence of the internet and the entrance of China into world affairs. China, indeed, wakes.

With that waking comes the need for learning English, the language of technology. This need, perceived early by both church leaders and academic Asia watchers, brought forth the conception, first, of professorial exchange and then of sending groups of teachers to universities in China, sponsored by Brigham Young University for an academic school year.

The observations of Helen Foster Snow ring true in the minds of many of these teachers who have lived and worked in contemporary China, especially nearly 600 teachers who have spent a year in China as representatives of the Brigham Young University David M. Kennedy Center, sponsors of the China Teachers Program. They can verify this Chinese thirst for information in a country whose Great Wall is a metaphor for isolation, a symbol of not only shutting out, but shutting in.

To attempt a history of the experiences of these 600 China teachers is a daunting project. The complete history lies only in the volumes of personal journals and letters of these teachers, and for some, only in the indelible impressions on mind and heart as a result of their encounter with the Chinese. Included in this history are excerpts from personal writings of some of these teachers.

19th and 20th Century Encounters With China With Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

*If you have not exhausted the scope of seeing and hearing,
How can you realize the wideness of the world?*

Po Chu-I . A.D. 815
Translated by Arthur Waley

One of the most remarkable aspects of Joseph Smith's macroscopic view of the new and struggling church was just how seriously he took the mandate of latter day scripture, "*The Lord God shall commence his work among all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, to bring about the restoration of his people upon the earth.*" (2 Nephi 30:8) And another of many with a similar message: "*There is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth. And the time cometh that he shall manifest himself unto all nations.*" (1 Nephi 12:41-42) This was not Joseph Smith's church, a New York church, nor an American church but the restored gospel of Jesus Christ that would go "*even unto the ends of the earth.*" (Ether 4:25)

The ends of the earth in the mid 1800's may have been thought of as China, India, Siam (Thailand), Ceylon (Sri Lanka), for in General Conference in October of 1852 LDS missionaries were called to these countries as well as to South Africa, West Indies, British Guiana, and Malta.

In 1853, regardless of the huge tasks the Saints faced in building new communities along the "Mormon corridor" few things were more urgent than the hope of spreading the gospel worldwide. In 1852, 159 missionaries were set apart and only 22 were assigned within the United States. Most converts during this period came from England and Scandinavia, however in April, 1852, the first elders arrived in India and in 1853 in Hong Kong.

Hosea Stout, a former police captain in Nauvoo along with Chapman Duncan and James Lewis arrived in Hong Kong, with plans to open a mission in China on April 27, 1853. The Taiping civil revolution was in full swing and the missionaries were compelled to remain in Hong Kong. Further antagonism against foreigners was exacerbated by foreign shipments of 80,000 chests of opium into China that year. Also the missionaries could find no one to teach them the native language and the reception they received from the English-speaking people was generally hostile. Shortly before his departure from China after only 56 days, Elder Stout wrote:

"We feel that we have done all that God or man can require of us in this place. We have preached publicly and privately as long as any one would hear and often tried when no one would hear. And thus it is this day we do not know of one person in this place to whome we can bear our testimony of the things of god or warn to flee the wrath to come" (Allen & Leonard, p. 280-281). (see footnote 1)

Roberts *Comprehensive History of the Church* records this event: "The inhabitants told them that they had no time to 'talka' religion and they returned to San Francisco in August of that same year" (Vol. 4. p.74).

(Footnote 1) David Whittaker, Curator of the L. Tom Perry Special Collections, Harold B. Lee Library at BYU said in the following email to the author from London January 31, 2000: "*The Hosea Stout journals, I believe, are in the Utah State Historical Society collections. They have been published in a two-volume format. Stout was in Hong Kong for such a short time, I have never considered this mission a real mission to China proper. The major sources are his letters while on this mission that were published in the "LDS Millennial Star."* (Copy in BYU library) *All the published information I am aware of was included in the long article I wrote on "Mormon Missiology: An Introduction and Guide to the Sources" which appeared in a volume honoring Richard Lloyd Anderson several years ago.*"

Pervasive Chinese Attitudes Toward Foreigners

Chinese resistance to “foreigners,” especially those with a religious agenda is long-standing and in many instances, justified. Long isolated from the rest of the world and essentially ignorant of other countries and peoples, China was ruled by emperors who regarded themselves as supreme rulers of “all under heaven,” and believed China was surrounded by “barbarians.”

As one of the oldest civilizations in the world, China has a written history of 4,000 years and a prehistory which stretches much further. Near the city of Xi'an is the Banpo village, which features the remains of a 7,000 year-old Neolithic matriarchal communal society. For thousands of years the Chinese have gloried in their history and considerable accomplishments, feeling little need for the “less civilized.” Modern Chinese tend to draw on their past glories to bolster self and ethnic identity; even today fierce remnants of national pride are prevalent.

Distrust of the first missionaries, the Jesuits in the 1500's, was ameliorated when the Chinese found them to be reputable scholars. But increasing Western encroachment after 1840 (the year Historian Su Kaiming names as “the starting Point of Modern Chinese History”) brought Chinese resistance and antagonism.

The first shipment of opium to China by the British occurred in the 1830's and importation increased from 4,000 in 1800 to over 40,000 chests in 1838 from Britain and the United States, causing the Chinese government to become alarmed not only by the effects of opium and the enormous drain of silver but also increasing western influence. The first Opium war began in 1840 when British troop carriers and men-of-war were dispatched to force open China's “closed door.” The war lasted for more than two years, ending with the defeat of the Chinese. Official Qi Ying signed the humiliating Treaty of Nanjing which included British occupation of Hong Kong and a huge indemnity of silver. Under this treaty, American ships were also allowed to visit China's ports, where American missionaries built churches and hospitals. The subsequent Treaty of Huangpu also secured for the west the right for the Roman Catholics to freely propagate their faith.

The Taiping revolution the LDS missionaries encountered (1851 to 1864), was fraught with the implication of resistance to foreign intrusion. Essentially, this was a democratic movement, a peasant revolt that started out from Guangxi south and swept “like a prairie fire” (Kaimeng. 39) across to Beijing and established Nanjing as capital of the “Heavenly Kingdom,” ruling millions of people for more than 11 years. Hong Xiuquan, the peasant leader, claimed to have had a “vision” that he was the second son of the true God, the younger brother of Jesus Christ whose mission was to overthrow the false “son of Heaven,” the Qing emperor. He tried to couple Christian morals with the equalitarian dream as did

early Christians, with “all things in common,” ruled by a Heavenly father with the family remaining as the basic unit of society, with 25 families forming a communal unit. From the beginning, the Taiping leader believed in friendship between nations, however, the British saw the Taipings as a threat to the status quo and resorted to intervention to suppress the Taipings, leading to the Second Opium War in 1856.

This war ended with more concessions by the Chinese to the victorious Western powers and the destruction by fire of the opulent Summer Palace by British and French troops. Part of the western demands again included the right of French Catholic missionaries to purchase land and build churches, thus giving the impression that war and the Bible went hand-in-hand and that Western powers “were intent on subduing China spiritually as well as militarily” (Su Kaiming, 36).

The Boxer Rebellion of 1899 is another conflict that has significant bearing on foreign interference, especially Christian missionaries. The Boxers, a group who practiced a type of martial arts adopted the slogan, “Support the Qing dynasty and exterminate the foreigners.” The movement began in Shandong Province with Germany’s seizure in 1898 of Qingdao and supposedly by the “misdeeds of some Christian missionaries and their Chinese converts.” Missionaries were accused of land-grabbing, and other misdeeds, including mistreatment of non-Christians which easily stirred the oppressed population who saw the missionaries as the main source of their sufferings.

By June 1900, the Boxers converged on Beijing, attacking Catholic and Protestant churches in the city. One incident in Shaanxi Province is documented in the journals of Protestant missionary, Eva Jane Price in *China Journals: 1889-1900* which reports events leading up to the “massacre” of fourteen missionaries in the Price group by a “fake” escort supposedly helping them to escape.

Ultimately, several western powers, including Britain, U.S.A., Germany, Russia, France, Japan, Italy and Austria-Hungary formed an international army and moved in to suppress the movement, burning, looting and slaughtering the Chinese. Kaiser Wilhelm instructed his troops to take no prisoners. In America, Mark Twain wrote of the Boxer Rebellion: “My sympathies are with the Chinese. . . I hope they will drive all foreigners out and keep them out for good” (Kaiming 71). The weight of this history is apparent in the appellation, “foreign devils” assigned to westerners and still widely used in the late 20th century.

Chapter 2

Subsequent Encounters in China Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints

“Go ye therefore, and teach all nations.” Matthew 28:19

After the disappointment of the 1853 LDS missionaries, the next LDS Church gesture toward China was in 1900, nearly fifty years later, when news came of a famine in China and the developing church Relief Society contributed a carload of flour to the Chinese (Allen 452). In the April 1907 session of general conference, President John R. Winder moved that the Church send twenty tons of flour to China. Andrew Jenson, in the same conference declared that “China’s spiritual famine would soon be alleviated by the restored gospel” and that the Saints now “had reason to expect that a successful missionary field will be opened in that land in the near future.” (Jenson from Conference Report, quoted in BYU Studies 181)

Alma O. Taylor’s Tour of China

Previously, in 1901, Heber J. Grant had been called as president of the first Japanese mission and took with him three missionaries, including young Alma O. Taylor. After two years in Japan, Elder Grant returned to America while Taylor subsequently translated the Book of Mormon into Japanese (1909) and served as president of the Japan Mission from 1905 to 1901. Taylor proposed to the First Presidency that at the conclusion of his mission he “visit China and Korea for the purpose of getting an idea of the conditions there. From all the reports I hear, these two countries afford opportunities for missionary work, equal with, if not superior to, those in Japan” (Taylor BYU Studies 40:1 2001 180).

The first Presidency supported Taylor’s request and suggested he take Elder Fred Caine with him. After fourteen days in Korea, the two missionaries spent forty-nine days in China, covering about 4,385 miles by land and water.

Taylor’s based his opinions on his own observations of manners and customs, and also on extensive interviews with Western missionaries, U.S. and foreign diplomats, newspaper editors, university personnel and business. He also read widely from other observers of the culture to compare them with his own, thus unflattering stereotypes typical of western attitudes toward China at the time found their way into his report. His conclusions recommended that the Church not send missionaries to China at that time. One of his reasons, that China was in “an uncertain transitional state” proved accurate when, in the following year Dr. Sun Yat-sen deposed the Qing dynasty and China was again in a state of political upheaval.

Taylor’s journal quotes the well-known Christian missionary Rev. Timothy Richard who he said was “very optimistic in his view and believed that the ‘Kingdom of God’ in China was

much larger than the Churches. He thinks abstract Christianity has millions of adherents whereas the concrete Christianity as seen in ceremonies and rights cannot boast of such a large number.” (Taylor, Journal, Feb. 21, 1910. quoted in BYU Studies) Taylor was not as optimistic, particularly with his knowledge of the financial limitations of the church in establishing an infrastructure in China.

Taylor’s thirty-two page report was the factual basis for the Church’s decision to postpone missionary work in China, in fact, missionary work was not to be formally established until 1949 in Hong Kong.

David O. McKay Tour

However, the Church’s interest in Asia persisted and in 1920-1921, David O. McKay of the Council of the Twelve traveled nearly 56,000 miles on a worldwide survey of missions, including China. Ironically, July of that same year, 1921, marked the official founding of the Communist Party of China; just two years previous the communist manifesto was issued. On this tour Elder McKay traveled in the company of Hugh J. Cannon to Beijing (Peking) and recorded the following in his diary:

January 9, 1921

“Elder Hugh J. Cannon and I have traveled continuously since last Tuesday with the sole purpose in mind to be here in Peking on this Sabbath day. Before we left home, President Grant suggested that when we were in China, if we felt so impressed, we were to set the land apart for the preaching of the gospel. As Peking is really the heart of China, we had concluded that this would be an appropriate place to perform this sacred and far-reaching duty. The sky was cloudless. The sun’s bright rays tempered the winter air to pleasantness. Every impression following our earnest prayers together and in secret seemed to confirm our conclusions arrived at last evening ;viz., that it seems that the time is near at hand when these teeming millions should at least be given a glimpse of the glorious light now shining among the children of men in other and more advanced nations.

“Accordingly, we strolled almost aimlessly, wondering where it would be possible to find a secluded spot for worship and prayer. We entered that part of the imperial city known as the Forbidden City, and walked by the famous old buildings formerly used as temples. On we walked until we came to a small grove of cypress trees on the edge of what appeared to have been an old moat running parallel with one of the walls. As we proceeded from east to west, we passed a tree with a large branch shooting out on the north side, and I distinctly received the prompting to choose that as the spot. However, we passed it and walked to the west end but returned again to the designated tree, realizing it to be the most suitable place in the grove.

“Under the century-old limbs and green leaves of this, one of God’s own temples, with uncovered heads, we supplicated our Father in heaven and by the authority of the Holy Melchizedek Priesthood, and in the name of the Only Begotten of the Father, turned the key that unlocked the door for the entrance into this benighted and



Site of David O. McKay's Dedicatory Prayer, Forbidden City Complex, Beijing, PRC
Wall of Forbidden City in background.

famine-stricken land of the authorized servants of God to preach the true and restored gospel of Jesus Christ.

“Brother Cannon, with well-chosen words and with a spirit of deep earnestness and humility, blessed the chosen spot as one of prayer and supplication to the Almighty. It was plainly evident that he was sincerely affected by the solemnity of the occasion” (Comp. Middlemiss. 47-48).

The following is an excerpt from the dedicatory prayer by David O. McKay:

“... By the authority of the Holy Apostleship I dedicate and consecrate and set apart the Chinese realm for the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ as restored in this dispensation through the Prophet Joseph Smith. By this act shall the key be turned that unlocks the door through which thy chosen servants shall enter, with the glad tidings of great joy of this ancient, cultural, though religiously misguided nation. . .

Break the bonds of superstition, and may the young men and the young women through upright, virtuous lives and prayerful study, be prepared and inclined to declare this message of salvation in their own tongue to their fellowmen. . .

“May the elders and sisters whom thou shalt call to this land as missionaries have keen insight into the mental and spiritual state of the Chinese mind. Give them special power and ability to approach this people in such a manner as will make the proper appeal to them. We beseech thee, O God, to reveal to Thy servants the best methods to adopt and the best plans to follow in establishing thy work among this ancient, tradition-steeped people. May the work prove joyous and a rich harvest of honest souls bring that peace to the workers’ heart which surpasseth all understanding. . . we implore Thee, and open the door for the preaching of Thy Gospel from one end of this realm to the other, and may Thy servants who declare this message be especially blessed and directed by Thee.

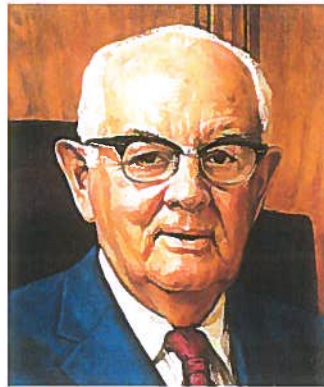
Another account by Elder McKay’s companion, Hugh J. Cannon published in *The Improvement Era*, (Vol. 24, pages 443-36) gives more detail of the occasion:

“Elder David O. McKay, of the Council of the Twelve, and the writer (Cannon) arrived in Peking, the chief city of China Saturday evening, January 8, 1932. The horde of ragged mendicants, grimy porters and insistent jinrikisha men, who fought noisily for possession of us as we emerged from the station, was not such as to inspire a feeling of affectionate brotherhood. However, we had gone to Peking to do the Lord’s will, as nearly as we could ascertain what it was. His inspiration rested upon his servant in charge, and Elder McKay decided that the land should be dedicated and set apart for the preaching of the gospel of the Master.

“It seemed most desirable that this should be done on the following day, as that was the only Sabbath we should be in Peking. But where, in the mist of that clamor and confusion, could a suitable spot be found? The city lies on a level, barren plain. There are no forests, and so far as we know, no groves nor even clumps of trees. We



David O. McKay 1951–1970



Spencer W. Kimball 1973–1985



Gordon B. Hinckley 1995–

were wholly unfamiliar with the city and had met no one who could enlighten us. If we went outside the surrounding walls, there was reason to believe no secluded spot could be found nor the ever-present crowd of supplicants avoided.

“January 9 dawned clear and cold. With no definite goal in mind, we left the hotel and walked through the legation quarter, under the shadow of dear old Glory, out into what is known as “The Forbidden City,” past the crumbling temples reared to an “Unknown God.” Directed, as we believe, by a High Power, we came to a grove of cypress trees, partially surrounded by a moat, and walked to its extreme northwest corner, then retraced our steps until we reached a tree with divided trunk which had attracted our attention when we first saw it.

“This is the spot,” said Elder McKay.

“A reposeful peace hovered over the place which seemed already hallowed; one felt it was almost a profanation to tread thereon with covered head and feet.

Two men were in sight, but they seemed oblivious to our presence, and they soon left the grove. There, in the heart of a city with a million inhabitants, we were entirely alone, except for the presence of a divinely sweet and comforting Spirit.

An act destined to affect the lives of four hundred and fifty millions of people now living, as of millions and perhaps billions yet unborn, calls forth feelings of profound solemnity, and that, too, despite the fact that the vast majority of those affected may die in ignorance of the event.

“After a prayer had been offered and the spot dedicated as the place of supplication and for the fulfillment of the object of our visit, Elder David O. McKay, in the authority of the holy apostleship, dedicated and set apart the Chinese realm for the preaching of the gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ, whenever the Church Authorities shall deem it advisable to send out missionaries for that purpose. Never was the power of his calling more apparent in his utterances. He blessed the land and its benighted people and supplicated the Almighty to acknowledge this blessing. He prayed that famine and pestilence might be stayed, and that the government might become stable, either through its own initiative, or by the intervention of other powers, and that superstition and error, which for ages have enveloped the people, might be discarded, and truth take their place. He supplicated the Lord to send to this land broad-minded and intelligent men and women, that upon them might rest the spirit of discernment and the power to comprehend the Chinese nature, so that in the souls of this people an appreciation of the glorious gospel might be awakened.

It was such a prayer and blessing as must be recognized in heaven, and though the effect may not be suddenly apparent, they will be nonetheless real.”

Brother Cannon ends the article with this observation:

“Though the morning was bitterly cold, we judged it to be zero weather, some of these people were nearly naked. The shreds of patches which only partially covered

their emaciated and shivering bodies might well feel complimented at being called rags. . .Notwithstanding her present pitiable inane condition, we have met some admirable Chinese people and cherish the sincere hope that at no very distant day the light of the gospel may penetrate the present overwhelming darkness” (Middlemiss 48-50).

But the chaos in China, the problems of the depression and then the onset of World War II, made it “impossible for the Church to open missionary work there until the war ended.” (Britsch 231) But other Christian churches continued to extend their influence in China, their history tending to parallel the political climate.

In 1925 Protestants had 8,148 missionaries and possibly as many Roman Catholics were there at the same time (Britsch 228). The Japanese war with China forced out many missionaries and when the Communists defeated the Kuomintang forces of Chiang K'ai-shek, Christianity was at great risk. By 1953, most all missionaries were out of the country. By then the missionaries left behind more than four million Chinese Christians. The comfort of belief and hope brought by some of the “foreign devil” missionaries had taken root among a suffering people.

Mission in Hong Kong

Still mindful of China, the church sent Matthew Cowley, then a member of the Council of the Twelve and president of the Asian and Pacific mission to Hong Kong where on July 14, 1949, he offered another dedicatory prayer at Victoria Peak. This prayer officially opened the Chinese Mission. As did Elder McKay, he “asked God to open up the way for the gospel to be brought to that great nation” (Britsch 231). However, “lack of access to the mainland made it impossible to work among the vast majority of the Chinese people.” (Allen 564) After the Communists took control of the mainland, the mission closed after only eighteen months. But during those eighteen months, much was accomplished by President Hilton A. Robertson, Elder Henry Wong Aki, Elders H. Grant Heaton and William K. Paalani and an additional six elders. They baptized three sisters, the first Chinese to be baptized in Hong Kong in a temporarily dammed stream at the bottom of a waterfall at Diamond Hill. In 1995, H. Grant Heaton was called to preside over a new mission, the Southern Far East Mission and began intensive missionary activity in Hong Kong. Under president Heaton, apartments were leased for the missionaries, three branches were organized and the church acquired the valuable property at #2 Cornwall St. in Kowloon-Tong which served as the mission home until the 1990's and then the site was used for the construction of the Hong Kong Temple. Also he headed a humanitarian project to help the Chinese Mormons improve their financial situations.

By 1959, membership in Hong Kong approached 1,500 and among these members were 188 college graduates, 3 former provincial governors and a significant number of other skilled people. Elder Chen Hsiao Hsin baptized 114 converts during his first year in the field.

Chapter 3

China Opens

...All men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden.
(2 Nephi 26-28)

After the death of Mao Zedong in 1976 and the subsequent rehabilitation of Deng Xiaoping as Premier in 1977, Deng made it clear he wished to “open” China to foreign trade and increase diplomatic ties. The period of “splendid isolation” was over; the leadership saw the errors in this mentality. In 1978 President Carter officially acknowledged China and diplomatic relations were established between China and the United States.

President Kimball’s Interest

Soon after, President Spencer Kimball asked Asia experts at Brigham Young University to investigate the possibility of opening missionary work in China. Even though the report was not encouraging President Kimball continued to emphasize the importance of China in a number of significant speeches.

In April 1979, in a talk to Regional Representatives, President Kimball said: “The door to China is starting to open. Rather than waiting to be asked, we should take affirmative action to obtain approval to enter” (*Church News*, 7 April 1979 “Door to China May Be Opening,” Dell Van Orden).

President Kimball’s message in the *Ensign* July 1979 “The Uttermost Parts of the Earth” fired the imagination of the church, as well as leaders at Brigham Young University. President Kimball began by emphasizing the last words of Christ before he left the earth, “Go ye into all the world” and preach the gospel to “every creature.” After specifying several third world countries, he spoke at length about China (*Ensign* 7).

And what of China, the third largest country in the world? Nearly one billion of our Father’s children live in China, one-fourth of the entire world’s population. Six hundred and sixty million of them speak Mandarin Chinese. How many of us speak Mandarin Chinese? We must prepare to teach these people. Of course, we face great barriers, including political barriers, in many of these parts of the world. Major changes are emerging within China today. The single most important drive in contemporary China is to become strong, independent and modern.

Of course, the Peoples Republic of China has no outward sign of religious belief. The consensus of most Chinese people is that “religion is not forbidden but it is not encouraged.” One of my relatives went on a

recent trip to China and reported that “the people are intelligent, hopeful, and courteous. They love children, are courteous to parents and women and honor their ancestors. Very like our gospel faithful, they are family-oriented and even in their communities live in individual family units although they are humble ones.”

One of our brethren recently spent some time in China and brought back a detailed report. He noted that the people were friendly and open. There seemed to be no animosity or tension at any time from the people, and very little of restriction or suspicion from government officials.

By comparison with the widespread breakdown of morality and discipline in the western world, the Chinese are a disciplined, industrious, frugal, closely knit people. Their moral standards are very high by modern western standards. Honesty is assumed in China as a matter of course. Crime is rare. Drug abuse and prostitution have been virtually eliminated. Premarital sex is heavily censured and is rare. Homosexuality and lesbianism are virtually unknown. Family life is strong, with old family members still given great respect and care.

In contrast with many other emerging nations, neatness and order characterize the Chinese cities and countryside. One sees no trash or garbage, no wretched hovels, no beggars. (1) People seem to take pride in their personal appearance and the appearance of their homes and surroundings. Flies have been virtually eliminated. Disease is controlled by a nationwide system of preventive medicine. Unfortunately, there is in China little of the freedom that is so essential to the growth of the gospel.

But things are changing. China is planning to send more than ten thousand college-age student overseas during the next two years. The doors are opening gradually. The Spirit of the Lord is brooding over these nations under a new regime that is certainly more open and more receptive to western ideas than ever before. Such cultural and educational interchanges will offer opportunities for exposure to the gospel. We must be prepared. The Lord is doing his part and is waiting for us to open the doors. (Ensign 1979).

(Footnote 1) Hovels, beggars and undisposed of trash are a part of life in the countryside and in some cities. The increasing influence of western culture has also infected China with changes in mores, especially toward sex and divorce. Generally, however, President Kimball's assessment of the Chinese is applicable.

Edward L. Kimball reports in the biography of his father that President Kimball “talked with as many people as he could who had lived in or had traveled in China or had connections there. He sought information and ideas useful in planning eventual missionary work among that huge population.” (Journal of SWK - e-mail Sept. 12, 2002 from Edward L. Kimball) One day, meeting with the General Authorities in the temple, President Kimball asked with a twinkle in his eye, “How are you doing in learning Mandarin Chinese?”

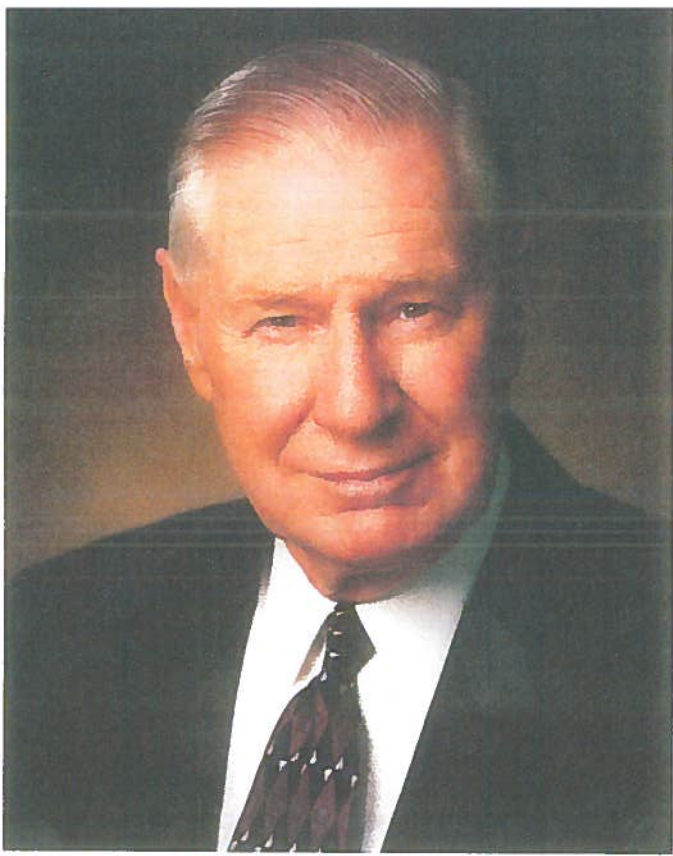
Elder Faust's Dedicatory Prayer

With the opening of the Peoples' Republic of China and the emphasis on Asia by President Kimball, Elder James E. Faust traveled to China. In the Pavilion of a Thousand Springs, July 4, 1979 near the site where President David O. McKay dedicated China in 1921, he offered the third dedicatory prayer, excerpted here:

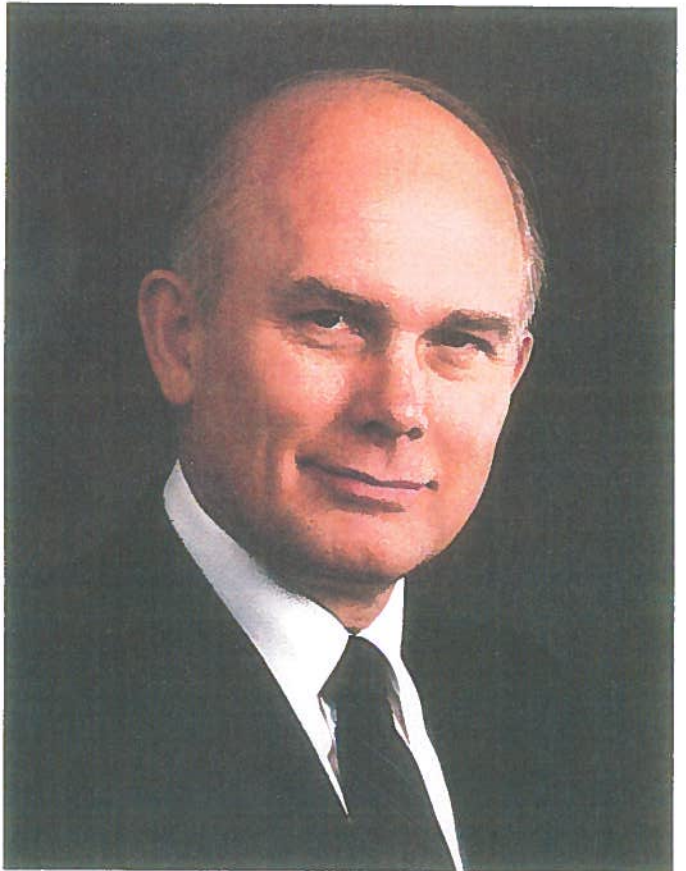
“We desire to ask thee to recognize and ratify the great dedicatory prayer given by President David O. McKay in January, 1921 when he came to a spot near here. We pray that thou wilt honor and recognize each of the great promises and blessings which he spoke for the future benefit of this people and this great land. Now Father, through the authority of the Holy Apostleship I rededicate the land of China for the purposes of a rich harvest unto thee, within this land and of its people. As was spoken of by President McKay when he was here, wilt thou pour these blessings out upon this noble people, we pray; and we thank thee for the many blessings which they have received in the elimination of hunger, and the progress that has been made in the elimination of want, disease, and pestilence. We pray humbly for these blessings, and for all those not mentioned, in the holy name of thy Son Jesus Christ. Amen.”

Even though the prospects for change in the Chinese political policy were grim many Asian experts such as Spencer Palmer of BYU's Asian Studies Program held fast to the scriptural promise that all men should partake of his goodness. “I don't have the slightest idea how we're going to get into India or China or some of the other nations. But it is absolutely guaranteed we will” (Palmer 1978). In 1993, Spencer Palmer taught a class in World Religions, the first to teach this subject at the Minorities College in Beijing. The university asked him to revise and publish a book from the syllabus he used which was published in Chinese that same year and is still used as a text (Shirley Palmer, interview February 12, 2003).

Meanwhile, in China, a group of 480 Chinese students was dispatched to 28 countries to study as “normalization talks with the United States moved into high gear, with most student requests to American universities.” (Spence in *Search for Modern China* 656) On January 1, 1979, the U.S. and China announced the opening of full diplomatic relations. Deng Xiaoping flew to Washington and was received enthusiastically by an eager press which Spence calls, “The first such media bonanza in China's history.” Deng Xiaoping, twice deposed by Mao Zedong became China's new hero. My first year of teaching, I taught below a giant portrait of Deng which Chinese students frequently pointed to as the man they admire most because “he opened China.”



James E. Faust



Dallin H. Oaks

With the promise of an open China, young intellectuals began to post their thoughts and poetry on a stretch of blank wall just to the west of the Forbidden City in Beijing--the area that became known as Democracy Wall. Banners carried by a small group of protestors bore such slogans as, "We want human rights and democracy." Arrests were made and these activities edged toward the category of treason, as the CCP again asserted its primacy. Though suppressed, the movement simmered and then emerged again ten years later in an event that impacted the emerging China Teachers program.

Forerunners: The Young Ambassadors

With the opening of China, BYU President Dallin Oaks who was present at the meeting where President Kimball asked how many members of the Church could speak Mandarin Chinese, thought of sending a BYU performing group to the PRC. Arrangements were made for this tour in July 1979, though physical arrangements were difficult and only a few appearances were scheduled. Before the tour was over, the Young Ambassadors had performed before 17,000 people of four cities and had given at least 45 impromptu performances at historic sites. This was likely the first "total show experience" to come from the United States" (Britsch 302). Knowing the physical and cultural deprivation of the Chinese people in the previous years, the impact of this group both in performances and in their ability to make friends was stunning. Even as late as 2001, Chinese students, having watched taped versions of the performances, talk animatedly about the Young Ambassadors from BYU.

Bruce L. Olsen, the senior university official on the tour gives this account: "Four days before the group departed, a telegram arrived from China which told us to bring only simple musical instruments. . .we had over 2,000 pounds of costumes and equipment. Despite the nature of the telegram, we prayerfully decided to move ahead with our plans. Upon arrival in Canton we met our guides, who called a meeting in the International Visitors' Lounge of the airport. I wish you could have seen that gathering. Surrounding a little round table were our tour leaders, Elder James E. Faust of the Council of the Twelve. . .and the two guides. "Just what do you expect from us? Miss Wong asked. I remember tightening my stomach muscles and saying, "We hope to do at least one major performance in each city." The guides then questioned us in minute detail about the performance—they wanted to see the music, the lyrics, know what the choreography to each number meant. As we moved through the show, Randy would call the students over to give their Chinese narrations or to sing their Chinese songs. Soon the balcony area of the airport was rimmed with Chinese watching. . .At the conclusion the guides announced we would perform the next morning at the Peking Minorities Institute. It was clear this was a test. The performance went well and by the end our Chinese hosts announced that we would be giving another performance in the Red Tower Theater, the most prestigious performance hall in Peking." This performance was the ultimate test with many important people in the audience. They were told not to expect anything but light, polite applause, however, "this audience demanded four encores and not only gave a standing ovation, but also held their hands high over their heads while clapping. It was the most enthusiastic response I have seen anywhere in the world. It was

obvious we had passed the test” (Oaks quoting Bruce Olsen, “Getting to Know China,” BYU Devotional Address, Tuesday 3/12/91).

The Young Ambassadors were forerunners in a nation with which we have no common ancestry, a nation with barriers of culture and political hostilities. President Oaks noted, “Some of those barriers will drop when friendship is cultivated and trust is near. He quoted President Kimball, “If we could only make a small beginning in every nation, soon the converts among each kindred and tongue could step forth as light to their own people” (5).

The First Contacts

“Go ye into all the world, and preach the gospel to every creature.” Mark 16:15

During the 1980s there were “numerous visits and residencies in China by BYU faculty” including Robert Blair, linguistics, Alan Firmage (civil engineering), Douglas Smoot (chemical engineering), Paul Hyer (history) Spencer Palmer, religious studies, Gary Williams, Chinese literature, Howard Barnes, business management, Ray Hillam, political science, Curt Fawsom, education, Marshall Craig and Briant Jacobs, English and Bruce Beaman, languages (Hillam, A history, 4).

Hillam notes: “Our first institutional relationship with China was between the College of Humanities and Xi’an Foreign Language Institutes (now a university) negotiated in 1983 with Spencer Palmer and Gary Williams.

Two years later, a relationship with Nanjing University was established with Gary Williams as its first director and Paul Hyer, history. Chinese language and Chinese Studies faculty have rotated, taking approximately 20 students each year to Nanjing” (Hillam 4).

In 1985, Spencer and Richard Cracroft, Dean of the College of Humanities traveled to Beijing and Xi’an to reaffirm the College of Humanities 1982 agreement with Xi’an Foreign Language Institute.

A member of the church in the eastern United States became friends with a Chinese who opened the way for a BYU faculty member to teach a religion class at the National Minorities University. This news reached Elder Neal Maxwell who asked Paul Hyer and Spencer Palmer if they were willing to go to China in 1993 to teach a religion class at the National Minorities University. Spencer was the first to go and during the time he was in Beijing he wrote a text based on his syllabus which was translated into Chinese. Spencer and Shirley Palmer taught in Beijing in 1993, followed by in 1994 by Paul and Karen Hyer. (Hillam. Interview 9/30/03).

Paul Hyer relates the following:

Since . . . 1978, most religions have been growing with truly amazing rapidity, particularly underground Christianity in the Chinese countryside. Earlier the policy was suppression and restriction. But Chinese officials are more pragmatic these days and apparently feel “if religion cannot be destroyed it should be employed,” meaning given close supervision under the direction of party leadership.

From 1994 to 2000, I have enjoyed the rare experience of teaching religion to this select group of prospective officials at the Central University for Nationalities in Peking. Many of them are superior individuals selected from among the minorities of China such as Moslems, Mongols and Tibetans.

The Chairman of my department. . . has given me total support. . . they have been uncritical of my rather subjective interpretation showing historically that there is “revealed religion” and “man-made religion” that is a result of a developmental history. I determined priority should be given to Christianity, Buddhism and Islam, in that order—the major religions with which the students would have to deal as officials. The class by a vote concurred with this approach.

In a 1994 report of the Hyer’s teaching at the Central University for Nationalities he says:

The students report that our class has given them an entirely new view of religion, what it is or can be and its role in various societies. Some have said it has “opened or enlightened our mind,” or has “liberated our thinking” (Hyer, Personal Files, copy in possession of author).

In 1989, Robert Blair, with the assistance of Bruce Hawkins, a student, traveled to China and were able to find placement for China teachers. Bruce Hawkins, whose wife was a member of a Chinese ethnic minority, had influence with the State Nationalities Affairs commission. Hawkins also assisted Dr. Curtis Fawson in the development of a China library training program and the placement of LDS reference sets in 165 libraries in China. A few sets were placed just before the program was aborted due to the Tiananmen incident.

Further Ties Established

The church has since established many contacts among China’s highest officials. In 1980, President Hinckley, while an apostle traveled with the BYU performing group, the Young Ambassadors along with Elder Dallin Oaks. President Oaks recorded his impressions:

Virtually everyone we see in the morning on their way to work here wears a navy blue tunic much like the top of a pair of army fatigues . . . [T]he entire picture is one of sameness. . . Elder Hinckley characterized the hordes of bicycle riders as typical of the attitude in the country. Everyone pedals stolidly without any attempt to pass the person in front of them.



Paul Hyer, Asian Studies, BYU 2003

All is secure and steady with nothing competitive in evidence.

The BYU delegation was hosted throughout their tour by high-ranking officials of the Communist party. President Oaks found himself in an awkward position of garnering much of the attention because he was a university President. Uneasy that a member of the Twelve was being overlooked, President Oaks decided to introduce Elder Hinckley as “Chairman of the Committee of our University.” “There were many oohs and aahs at this point.” (Dew 373) President Oaks knew both ‘chairman’ and ‘committee’ would translate well in Chinese.

President Oaks also describes a “kind of street meeting” that occurred when the Young Ambassadors began to sing on a public street. Through an interpreter, Elder Hinckley expressed his gratitude for their hospitality and warmth, speaking in particular to an elderly man in the audience. President Oaks reported, “He is so skillful at interacting. . . he is ‘fascinated’ by the Asian people” (Dew 373).

While in China, Elder Hinckley also visited a Christian Church in Shanghai crowded with about 1500 people and was impressed at how many Christians had retained their faith. But when he asked a Communist party representative if missionaries from other countries were welcome in China, the man said, “Don’t they have enough to do at home?” Elder Hinckley observed later, “It will require a miracle to reinstitute the work in China, but I believe that [a] miracle will be forthcoming.” (Dew 374)

Elder Russell M. Nelson, before and since his call as an Apostle traveled to Shandong Medical University in Jinan by invitation of Professor Wu Ying-Kai who had become familiar with Elder Nelson’s work in Salt Lake City and was also aware of the needs at Shandong Medical University. Mr. Wu was serving in an influential governmental position at that time. Elder Nelson taught cardiac surgery at the university, having learned to speak proficient Mandarin Chinese. After additional visits in 1985 he received an honorary professorship at Shandong Medical University. That same year he was asked to perform cardiac surgery on their famous Peking Opera star with an excellent result, an event which inspired a Chinese TV film starring Howard Adams as Elder Nelson, shown widely throughout China.

While at Shandong Medical University as teachers, Sterling and Carol Ottesen reported the following: “Many times we felt we were riding on Elder Nelson’s coattails. One professor took us to dinner ‘because he thought so much of Dr. Nelson.’ Then shortly after we arrived in Jinan, a knock came on our apartment door and there stood a young Chinese woman who introduced herself as a teacher at the University. She needed to write a letter, she said and would like us to make sure the English was entirely correct. We agreed, and I sat down at the computer, she in a chair beside me to dictate a letter ‘to Dr. Nelson at the University of Utah. You probably know him and have his address.’ I said we did. It seems she had met him through her uncle who was an administrator at Shandong Medical University and had known Elder Nelson well. Her uncle had died and she wanted to inform Dr. Nelson because ‘they were good friends.’ She dictated to me as I sat at the computer, telling of her uncle’s death and expressed that ‘she knew he was in Heaven that he could look down at us now.’

Then she stopped and asked if I thought Elder Nelson would understand that. I tried not to smile, told her he certainly would and we finished the letter. Another day she came again and wanted to know something about a pamphlet that she found among her uncle's things—it had a picture of a young man with an angel appearing to him. 'I think this is possible,' she said. 'I believe this and want to know more about it.' Our reply was that we couldn't discuss this with her but wanted her to know we believe this too and we know God lives. 'I know, too and I try to pray in the only way I know how.' Many teachers may have experienced these times when you want so much to share and cannot do so. However, we remain in contact and she lives for the time she can learn more. Elder Nelson's influence in China extends way beyond what might have been calculated."

In addition, Humanitarian aid to China has been provided by the Church on several occasions. In February 1989 and August 1991, representatives of the Church, Elder Nelson and Elder Merlin R. Lybbert delivered checks for \$25,000 and \$25,600 to the Chinese government for aid to earthquake and flood victims.

Several Chinese ambassadors to the United States have accepted invitations to visit Church headquarters in Salt Lake City and Brigham Young University. In 1981 Chai Zemin, the Chinese ambassador spoke at BYU, toured the Church genealogical vaults and President Kimball lunched with him and accompanied him to the Tabernacle Choir broadcast.

The Chinese Ambassador to the United States, Quizen Zhu attended a dinner held in his honor, September 11, 2002 at the Joseph Smith Memorial Building, which took place in spite of the tragic events of that day. The Ambassador expressed his sincere admiration to the attendees that the dinner was still held. Elder Cree Koford spoke directly to him, "You know what we are interested in, but we want you to know we will never try to get in the back door. We want to abide by the law and we will wait until we have permission." The Ambassador was complimentary in his impression of President Hinckley, the Church and also BYU but made no promises nor did he predict what might happen in the future. The Chinese Minister of Education whose son has attended BYU was at this dinner (Ottesen, Notes of meeting).

Various other contacts have been made: BYU students have studied at the Chinese Language School at Nanjing University every spring since 1980 and other colleges within the university have sponsored field trips to China. Elder Chia Chu-jen, Area Authority and Tim Stratford, lawyer and Chief Counsel for General Motors in China have assisted in official contacts for the church in China. Many LDS business people and government employees have lived in various Chinese cities, mostly in Beijing, Shanghai, and Guangzhou where organized branches of the church service these expatriates. The Beijing branch has 150 to 200 people who attend, depending on the number of tourists; Shanghai has about 50 to 75, Guangzhou about 30 to 50. The China Teachers now organize in their assigned cities into groups of from four to approximately sixteen, with a group leader appointed by China International District leaders. The teachers fondly call these small groups "twigs."

Elder Oaks and Elder Neal A. Maxwell have made several trips to China to speak at such institutions as the Academy of Science, and to negotiate with Chinese officials and were

assured that religious freedom existed. However, Ray Hillam reports that “on closer examination they learned it would be necessary for the Church to follow the “three-self” policy: self-supporting, self-administered, and self-propagating. They were also told that the government did not keep records on religious affiliations and that there was no job discrimination because of religion” (Hillam 6).

The Church, however remained cautious and continued to seek legal status, accepting fully Chinese government policy prohibiting proselyting or teaching of religion. Chinese members were not allowed to meet with other Chinese members or in organized expatriate branches. In spite of attempts by LDS representatives to modify this position, the Chinese government remains firm in its policy against outside religions and teachers of religion.

However, in May, 2004 Chinese citizens who are church members have been given tacit approval to meet on their own in private homes. They are not supervised or financially supported by the church but just being able to meet is interpreted as significant progress.

Speaking about “an open China” in a 1991 devotional address at BYU, Elder Oaks the related his experience of accompanying the Young Ambassadors to China described earlier. He concluded his address with this admonition:

People sometimes ask me about what can be done to “open China.” In response, I state my belief that China is already “open”—it is we who are closed. We are closed because we expect the Orient to be the same as the West. . . We must understand their way of thinking, their aspirations and their accomplishments. . . we must deserve to be their friends. As we become friends of China, and as we learn from them, our Father in Heaven, who has made “all nations of men”. . . will bring His purposes to pass in that great nation “in his own time, and in his own way, and according to his own will” (D&C 88:68).

Chapter 4

The First Teachers from BYU Prior to Establishment of China Teachers Program

*“When the soul is strong an arrow can plunge into a rock;
One must not shrink from things because they are hard.”*

. . . Li Po, AD 701-762

Robert and Julia Blair

Robert Blair of the Linguistics Department was the first member of the BYU faculty to teach in China along with his wife Julia. I interviewed Julia in January, 2003 at their home in north Provo and the writings of Robert Blair have been integrated into the information from this interview.

Professor Blair became aware of teaching opportunities in China when he was in Boston attending a TESOL conference and signed a list of those who might be interested in learning more about this opportunity. To his amazement, he received a letter from the Chinese Foreign Experts Bureau saying he had been accepted to teach in the People's Republic of China. When he told Julia she said, "No, Bob! We're not going to China. No Way!" (Blair 1).

At the time he had several research projects, seven of 8 children living at home, the youngest was five, and had a sizeable mortgage hanging over his head. Julia, he says, "had read of the horrors of the Cultural Revolution. . .she'd read fiery anti-American propaganda put out by China. Why would anyone dare spend a year in a nation of extremists who hate us?" (Blair 2).

But after prayerful discussion, Robert was granted a year's leave from BYU and they decided to find out more. Bob was gone when Julia received the message from the Chinese Embassy. They had been accepted at Shandong University and could bring only one child. The older children convinced Julia they would take care of the younger children while we were gone and they would take the youngest.

Robert Blair records his advent in Jinan, China, Shandong University:

The China we came to in 1980 seemed dark and very foreign. Teachers and students, symbolically of allegiance to the revolution, all wore drab Mao uniforms. Classroom walls were decorated with photographs of Mao, Lenin, Marx, and Stalin. Hundreds of political slogans were emblazoned on signs prominently positioned on campus and throughout the city: *Long live Chairman Mao*, *Communism is the hope of the masses*, and scores of others, all intended to remind people that China was in revolution (Blair 2).

They arrived only a couple of days before the semester began and found there were no textbooks and no syllabus for any class. He said, "At that point what could we do but laugh? Suffice it to say that it took us both about one day to fall in love with our students." Far from being extremists or enemies, they found, as did many subsequent teachers, much to admire in these students.

Julia had some experience with drama so she incorporated drama into her teaching of English. When she suggested doing Shakespeare to the Dean of the College was very negative and said it was way beyond the students. That was only for the elite. But Julia said to her students that of course, they could do it. Primarily she turned it over to them



Julia Blair (center) with Chinese Students, 1980



Julia Blair with students, Shandong University, Jinan, Shandong 1980



Robert Blair with University Officials 1980

and they did a marvelous job-- improvised costumes, used Peking opera makeup, slaved over memorizations and presented an amazing *Romeo and Juliet*. The Dean, however, refused to come but the *Waiban* (director of the University Foreign Office) invited all foreign experts (teachers) in the area and they came in a whole bus load to see it. They did it again for the community with people standing at the windows watching because it was such an event at that time—probably unprecedented. After that the Dean wanted his daughter to come to BYU to talk on “Shakespeare in China”—from her little play he assumed the accolades.

Julia relates that their apartment was nicer than the President’s apartment. “We had heat and also a fan in the summer. We had a dining room with a few other teachers all to ourselves with several cooks for all our meals. Our students had all been Red Guards—it was amazing to hear their experiences.” When asked what surprised her most about China, Julia answered quickly, “How kind the Chinese people are. I had no idea. And they went crazy over our little daughter. Many had never seen a Caucasian child before. I was frightened at first but the fear left completely and a great love came over me for the Chinese people” (Julia Blair, Private Interview Jan. 26, 2003).

They became closely acquainted with students who came to talk with them privately in their own apartment. Roberts says, “(They) came to trust us and speak quite boldly of their lives, their hopes and dreams, their fears and their core beliefs. Also in some of their assigned writing, they opened up their hearts and bare their souls.” (Blair 3) Julia said 5 or 6 of their students eventually came to BYU and did well; four received Ph.D’s and are now professors in other universities.

Twenty years later, the Blairs went back to China and had an equally rewarding experience at Nankai University in Tianjin. Robert Blair, in an address to the China Teachers in August of 2002 asked, “What lasting good have we China Teachers done? What part have we played in leading China out of bondage? Has our service in China, the cumulative service of a tiny army of some 600 Kennedy Center teachers resulted in anything that is of lasting influence for good? I want to believe so. Scripture says, by small means the Lord can bring about great things. . . .I suspect that the experience of each of us with a teacher or teachers of our own in school or college has shown us that a teacher can touch the life of a student in ways far beyond what academics is about.

Our silent witness, shown in our genuine love for them as well as in our teaching and exemplifying our values, has impacted the lives of not a few. I remember a male student coming alone to my office, shutting the door, sitting close opposite me and leaning forward as he asked a burning question: “Mr. Blair, tell me,” he begged softly, lest his voice be heard through the wall, “is there life after death? Does our soul live on after we die?” I answered with testimony: “Yes, Cheng Shan, our soul lives on, it is true.” With explosive emotion, he said: ‘I knew it was true, it has to be true. They lied to us. They taught us there is no life after death. Oh Mr. Blair, my mother died a year ago, but I know she is somewhere. I have seen her in my dreams. She is somewhere, I know’ (Blair 4).”

**Robert and Julia Blair
Qingdao 1980**



Shakespeare in China, Julia Blair, 1980

Blair concludes his address: "I believe that in our teaching and being with our Chinese students, we have, more than we might guess, raised fundamental questions in the minds of some of our students, not through criticism or censure, but more through subtle example and wordless testimony" (Blair 5).

This testimony of the first teachers echoes in the experiences of hundreds of teachers who have sensed this call to be messengers of peace and true brotherhood. These experiences are unique in the history of the church and knowing these stories seems imperative not only to future China Teachers, but to all those who would partake of this experience vicariously in order to know the hearts and minds of our relatives at the "ends of the earth."

Continuing BYU Contacts

Through the Blairs and their *Waiban*, Yu Hua, other teachers were invited to teach in Jinan and Qingdao (a port city also in Shandong Province). Howard and Janet Barnes taught at Shandong University in 1981-82. In the ancient city of Xi'an, BYU's College of Humanities worked out an exchange with the Xi'an Foreign Language Institute beginning in 1982. This was the first institutional relationship between BYU and the Chinese. Marshall and Ruth Craig were the first couple to teach at Xi'an in 1982. The Craigs taught for two years and returned a few years later to teach at Nanjing University, followed by Briant and Barbara Jacobs, Josette B. Ashford and Charlotte D. Lofgren in 1984. Bruce and Helen Beaman taught in 1985-86 and Tim Richardson, 1986-1987 (Hillam. Interview 9/30/03).

Interviews with Early Teachers

Briant Jacobs, former BYU English Professor and his wife, Barbara told of their experience in Xi'an in an interview July 16, 2002 at their home in Provo, Utah. While I was there, they showed me a number of cherished art pieces and furnishings from China they had gathered and which are, as is the China experience, now an integral part of their lives.

"We had nice lodging, an apartment on the third floor, right on campus. The thing I liked best was that I had maid service twice a week, a front room, two bedrooms, kitchen and bath. The only bad thing-- we were always cold; we only had heat for two hours in the morning. But we bought padded clothes and dressed like they did. The second time we were an hour out of Shanghai, a school whose purpose was to teach students to be tour guides and hotel managers. So had a small hotel, still had maid service, ate meals in restaurant, delightful place. We stayed well most of the time."

Barbara taught freshman and Briant taught American literature to the teachers. All the students in China had at least three years of English, with emphasis on grammar but were weak in comprehension and in speaking, especially in front of their fellow students in class.

Professor Jacobs reports: "They read the big names in American literature and I had them write. I had texts for all my students. My students were older; many had experienced the

cultural revolution. Many experienced bad times, great poverty. One of my students came to BYU, Ma Ming Chen. He was very successful as a teacher of freshman English, in fact, he was selected as outstanding teacher at BYU.”

Barbara said, “I cried when I came home. I was very close to my students. They were affectionate and lovely to me. I gave them all American names, many after my children and grandchildren. One student would never speak to me directly, but would ask through his seat mate. Even at our house, he would defer to his friend. Our last night there, he came alone and brought a picture with the following poem on the back.”

Poem: To Mrs. Barbara

I Find It

She will go back to her motherland
 Perhaps never come back
 When could I meet her again. Perhaps never.
 She is my teacher and also my friend.
 we were born in different country
 but we have the common friendship of human
 What did she leave us?
 Fluent words, encouraging smile, a wise gesture
 what else Where on earth is it?
 I try my best to look for it but in vain
 I come into spring garden
 There is nothing but a lot of beautiful flowers
 I go up summer hills but there is nothing but fog in the distance
 I go into winter fields but there is nothing but white snow,
 I'm sure I can find it
 At last clever birds told me
 The thing is in my heart.
 My dear, can you guess what it is?

Barbara: “If I could have only brought one thing from China, I would have brought back this poem.”

Briant: “I think their interest is primarily in us as Americans, in fact, they are interested in everything in the world. They were curious; they wanted to know everything. We invited them to our home; we showed American movies. They still dressed in the Mao outfits, very drab. But the second time we went, they were patterning everything after the American style. Even the models in the store were blond with blue eyes.”

Barbara: “Our classes were about 20 or 25, sometimes smaller. They always asked what church we belonged to. We tried to answer their questions. We played American music, left tapes with them and they loved it. We celebrated American holidays. We had our children

send things over for the holidays and for events coming up. They loved it. We had Santa and a Christmas tree and sang carols, put on Christmas play, and dramatized an American story.

“We were the only ones in Xi’an in the church except for Charlotte Lofgren and we met together. Barbara bought three small stainless steel cups for the sacrament on a brass trivet. We cried the first time we passed the sacrament. In Shanghai the second time we went we met occasionally with expatriates about 10 in the branch and stayed in a hotel on the weekend. They asked us to stay another year and teach in Shanghai at the Shanghai Institute of Tourism. This was an experience we value highly, an affirmative experience to be cherished. I would recommend it to anyone.”

Bruce and Helen Beaman

Bruce Beaman, who was Coordinator of the Asian Studies Program at BYU from 1989-1992 and on the China committee at the David M. Kennedy Center taught in Xi’an at the Xi’an Institute of Foreign Language Studies in 1985 to 1986 with his wife, Helen. Dr. Beaman also assisted in the first workshops for the China Teachers and although Bruce is described as a “realist,” if not a “pessimist” about China, he and his wife were valiant pioneers in the early program. In a personal interview he said tongue in cheek, “Oh, you were hoodwinked into being a China Teacher by Hiram too—he’s sold on this program.”

As one of the early teachers Bruce Beaman and his family of three children, ages 10, 16 and 20 went to China at significant sacrifice of personal comfort. Dr. Beaman reports that China was a nice place to live “when everything worked” and when the hot water actually was available at the prescribed 1 to 2 hours in the evening. “One of our problems was that we were squelched in every request because our *waiban* was prejudiced against foreigners. It seems he sent his wife to France and she never came back so he had no use for foreigners. It was like camping out for a year.”

In a telephone interview, Dr. Beaman related that he believes the China Teachers Program needs more full time professional help at the Kennedy Center in order to function more efficiently. Further involvement by the Beamans in China came in 1999 when they were called on a mission to Hong Kong. In 1987, the Beamans were replaced in Xi’an by Tim and Ellen Richardson the following school year.

Smith and Katharine Broadbent

July 16, 2002, I went to the Provo home of Smith and Katharine Broadbent who were in the first group of China Teachers to arrive in 1989 after the incident at Tiananmen. An apricot tree loaded with fruit graced their front yard and Smith was there in his old clothes picking fruit for the neighbors. He came in when I arrived and sat in a lounge chair in their living room while Katy made him comfortable, obviously showing care and concern. They are 85



Katie and Smith Broadbent, October 2003
Teachers in 1989

years old now, but still bright-eyed and obviously eager to talk about China. I sat facing them, recorder on a small table.

Professor Smith said: “Ray Hillam was our home teacher and one night when he came he asked, ‘Have you people ever thought of going to China to teach?’ I was retired from BYU and we had planned to go on mission. I wanted to go and Katy supported me. Our children thought we were crazy.”

In August of 1989, we arrived in Beijing and were driven around the square by Tim Stratford, then third ranking officer in the Embassy and member of the church. No vestiges of the struggle were apparent. The monolithic Mao portrait above the Gate of Heavenly Peace appeared the same, benign and unperturbed as if nothing had disturbed his implacable presence, but it was clear that much had happened and every effort was made to erase evidence of bloodshed.

“We traveled to Qingdao in Shandong Province and taught at the Qingdao Institute of Chemical Technology. Qingdao was chosen by Germans as a way to begin a sphere of influence in China since the British controlled Hong Kong. The architecture still shows German influence in the many mansions of wealthy commercial German barons. But they lost it all after World War I with the treaty of Versailles. Then Qingdao became not just a fishing village but a major commercial port.”

Katy: “Living conditions were very poor. It took me a long time to forgive Ray Hillam for sending us over. We lived in a dorm, and there were six or seven different couples living there and our apartment was the worst. We were the first foreign teachers at this university and it was very primitive with concrete walls. They called it a “hotel” but it was a dorm for transient students who were there usually for only two weeks. We were placed at the end of the hall, next to the women’s quarters, with only a bedroom. We had no kitchen we washed our dishes in the bathtub. We ate lunch at school, and almost all evening meals at home in our so-called kitchen which consisted of a hotplate. Our toilet was only a hole in the floor but after a few weeks they put in a regular toilet with a booth around it and a key for us. Smith had to go into the women’s restroom in the cubicle to access.

Katy said she always fixed oatmeal for breakfast and they had the *waiban* tell them what to order in the dining room. “We didn’t lose weight,” said Katy. “We had terrible colds, but never a digestive upset. They spit everywhere in North China. In the dorm they hosed down the cement dorm, and it was awash with mucous. Put a hose and blast the water, just like it was a concrete box. When I asked about heat, they said, ‘Just put on more clothes, why should we heat up this whole box for you to be warm?’ It was hard to get up in the morning; the thermometer in our bedroom for two months was never above 55 degrees Fahrenheit. That was the hardest part—keeping warm. We suffered with cold more than I ever would have guessed. I taught with gloves, coat, hat on, muffler around my face. I took off my gloves to write on black board.”

Smith taught Chemistry, did a review of undergraduate curriculum and also did consulting in Beijing for the Chinese Government. He also taught a class called Foreign Trade and

Practical English and Katy taught conversational English. He reports the students were surprised he wasn't afraid to "lose face" when he told me that if he didn't know the answer, he'd tell them. Exams are everything. They don't consider cheating as cheating—it is only helping your friends. Smith went to the head of the department with two students who cheated, and told them they would fail. The Head of the department said flatly, "You cannot fail these students once they are in the university." Each student and person has a "dossier" that follows them the rest of their life. Chinese schools are very competitive—only 1 percent of Chinese students get to go to a university. But if they make it to study for an advanced degree, they are assured they will make it—they cannot fail.

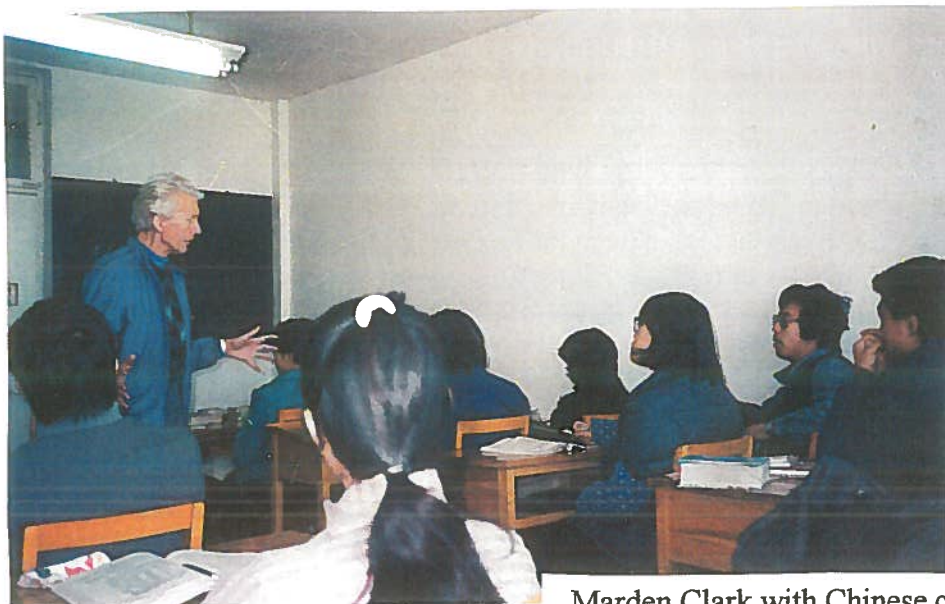
Katy said, "I was a mother, grandmother, a friend. I walked among students, up and down the aisle which was unusual; I made a point of letting them know I was no better than they were. I always went every Saturday night to their dances. They made a tape and sang to me when I left." One student expressed in his own way his affection for Katy, "As time passes the miss of you enlarges."

While lecturing to a class of English Teachers in Qingdao, Smith felt an attack of atrial fibrillation coming on, a problem he had had before. With remarkable aplomb, he simply lay down on the floor. He continued the lecture in this position, asking only that students get him a glass of water. The students were shocked and concerned, but Smith was calm and said it was nothing to worry about. He finished the lecture on the floor. Later he was told to stay in bed for a week and Katie cooked, carried the water jugs and taught his classes along with her own. Katy is sure that "in time they'll have a statue of Smith in front of the University, if only for this incident."

When asked how he would rate this experience in view of other life experiences, Smith responded using a Latin proverb: "Happiness is those things which are recalled with satisfaction." Then he added a quote from P.A. Christensen former chair of the BYU English Department, "A meal that bothers you at midnight is not a good meal, even though you enjoyed it at the time." "However," he added, "We both agree this was an outstanding experience in our lives. We would go back if our health and age would permit."

The Broadbents went back to SunYat Sen Medical College in Guangzhou after a year's interval in 1991-1992. Smith reported that "The Chinese are more advanced in Guangzhou. They have a saying "Heaven is high and the emperor is far away."

Smith Broadbent concluded the interview: "Shakespeare and the King James version of the Bible are the most influential books of modern English in China. I told my students that if you don't know something of these books, you don't know much about the language. I read from Luke the Christmas Story. After one of the teachers, Shao Lin, said with tears in her eyes, "I had such a wonderful feeling that you were telling me the truth."



Marden Clark with Chinese class, Qingdao



China Teachers, 1989

Marden and Bessie Clark

Marden: I'm a retired professor of English at BYU, having taught 30 years. Bessie has a master's degree in Educational Psychology. The Chinese students were obviously far more influenced by Bessie than by me. Seems I couldn't drop that formal professorial manner. Bessie had never developed that because she'd never taught before. Once we were on the campus walking home and when we came to the English building, students were hanging out the window on the third story yelling to Bessie, "Here comes *Tai Tai!* Here comes *Tai Tai!* I was 73 and she was 70. I'll be 87 this summer and Bessie keeps me on the grindstone. I have to be sharp to keep up with her.

Bess: Marden was the Bishop of BYU 29th ward when we decided to go to China and they released him in June so we could go. We heard about China from Briant and Barbara Jacobs who had been there and from Marshall and Ruth Craig who were there three years. Also we'd been to China as tourists early in 1989 and were intrigued with it. We spent the summer studying Chinese and about China so we could go teach in Qingdao.

We were surprised we got such a good apartment to live in; it was fairly new in an eight story building and we were on the 3rd floor. We had hot water, heat, maid service once a week and they brought our drinking water every morning in a thermos. We had a better apartment than the President of the University.

The students were excellent; they knew more English grammar than I did. Most of their previous English teachers came from England, so they had some trouble understanding me at first because I was an American. I had no texts but duplicated things from my own books and ran things off on their Xerox machine. You certainly get a sense of how bright they are. At first you think all Chinese are bright but then you find these kids have been chosen out of the top 1% and even then more selection before they got to us. They are wonderfully cooperative and congenial. See that scroll on the wall? One of my students translated one of my poems into Chinese and wrote it on that scroll. One of the sociology professors who taught in Qingdao and had studied all different races said to us definitively: "The Chinese are the brightest people on earth."

Bessie: I taught oral English. The brightest student I ever had was a girl named Jenny. She wrote the following to me:

There are a lot of differences between the Chinese and American. Of course, we live on the same earth at the same time but the way we live is quite different. Especially for the old people. I want to talk something about this questions. I've never been to America but we have an old couple that each English and I've learned something about old people through their behavior, their character and their dress. They are 70 or so to tell the truth they are not young. They still take on a very active life, they came to China to teach, they go to other countries on vacation. We can't imagine old people in China doing such a thing. Usually in China when a man or woman is over 70, they are thought too old to move about. The best and safest way is to stay at home. They stay at home because they are weak. Mr. and Mrs. Clark are humorous, they are always laughing and smiling. We feel happy when we are with

them. Mrs. Clark is beautiful woman, and much more wonderful when she dresses up. I remember she has a red coat. I think this kind of color is fit for her but we can't find even a single old woman in China who is in red. They wear blue or grey. The base of the substance is different so we can't wish wildly. We can have on earth only one time. Why don't we live more lightly? So I think we should work hard when we are young and we should be more happy when we are old." This student came to BYU, joined the church, married a Chinese and went back to China.

We met together as BYU China Teachers on Sunday for about 2 hours. The men administered the sacrament and gave the lesson. Katy Broadbent and I said, "We were the first Relief Society teachers ever in Qingdao. Then we'd usually eat a nice little picnic prepared by the ladies. The Broadbents apartment was not nearly as nice as ours. In theirs you could see the restroom under the stairwell and smell urine seeping through the walls.

Marden: You can't experience China without it changing your life. You have an intimate awareness of the people and students. You see the contradictions like when we drove to the kite festival in Weifang. I remember this sequence: first, we saw a tractor pulling a plow, then a team of oxen pulling a plow and a little further out in the country there were ten people pulling a plow! Also when Bess had to go to the hospital she was horrified. The corridors were lined with cots with sick people lying on them, so crowded, so dirty, it was impossible to have any kind of sanitation.

Yu Hua was our Waiban and we became very close to her—a chain-smoking communist who became our best friend. In her village, she was called "Big Foot" because when her feet were bound she kept taking the wrappings off. Finally her parents gave up and her feet were bigger than any other girls in the village. She was tough; she'd been through the famine and the Cultural Revolution. Her daughter lived in New York with her husband, and when she became pregnant, wanted to have an abortion. Yu Hua told her not to, but to have the child and bring it back to China and she would raise the child. So her daughter did but by then had become so bonded to the child that she kept her.

Bessie: I think we became aware that we're all human beings and that we have a common bond—an awareness that we shouldn't be fighting each other—we are all children of God. They were unbelievably gracious, inviting us to their homes and doing everything to make us comfortable.

Marshall and Ruth Craig

Marshall Craig: My field is English; I taught in the Department for 28 years over Freshman composition and later was Department chair. The last two or three years I worked with the faculty in every discipline that wanted help with publications. Rex Lee and Jeff Holland were my students, in the same class!

My wife Ruth, who trained teachers of the blind and handicapped and I were asked to go to X'ian and teach in 1982. When they asked me, I called my wife and said, "Are you sitting

down?" She asked, "Should I be?" And I said that I thought it would be better if she did. I told her they'd asked us to go to China. Now listen to this, her immediate response was, "Why don't you bring home a class schedule, maybe they're teaching a class we could take in Mandarin Chinese?" That's my wife!" She died two years ago.

The Chinese had told us the accommodations were primitive but not grim. When we arrived in the hallway of what was to be our apartment, there was a single bulb at the end of the hall. The floors were concrete, the walls were peeling paint and in desperate need of washing. My wife looked down that hall, turned to me and said "Grim." But we fixed it up. We put plastic over our windows to keep in the heat, got a woman on the street with a sewing machine to make lined curtains for us. My wife got flannel to cover cushions for our two little chairs, and we bought a colorful throw for the brown couch. We made it home. We had heat early in the morning, then a little late evening, but never for very long.

The man who officed with me that first year came to BYU and got a Ph.D in Education. He's now president of the University, Dr. Du Re Qing. I still hear from Du. The Chinese are not huggers, they don't even hug family members. But when we came back to visit X'ian from Nanjing and we having supper, he came in the room talking with a Chinese man and he left that Chinese man when he saw me and we met in the middle of the room. He was patting me on the back like a South American. The Chinese with us said, "You wouldn't have anybody in Nanjing who would greet you like that." I said I could name at least three. We got so close to those people.

The second year we were in X'ian it was quite different. We had a three-bedroom apartment and had hot and cold water. A young man, 27 years old came to our apartment and followed me into the kitchen to talk. He stopped short when he saw the kitchen and stared at the faucets. He said, "Why do you have two faucets?" I told him one for hot and one for cold. He was amazed. He said he had never had any faucet, but had to haul his water. Ultimately, this man came to the U.S. for graduate school and he's still in Massachusetts. He was from a little village, the first student ever to go to college from that village.

The second time we went we were allowed to let students come to our meeting if they asked. So we had five sometimes seven coming to our sacrament meeting. But when we went to Hong Kong, we were told that no Chinese could attend any meeting arranged by us. We had to be very careful. Three Christian women were teaching there, one young man was baptizing people in his bathtub. They were dismissed from the University.

We went to Nanjing, the third most prestigious university in China the second year, then five years later we went again to X'ian. So we were there three years. And I do think that the China Teachers' program is a great thing. It started with the Young Ambassadors, I think. One of my students who had seen them said that "those young people" said we were all brothers and sisters. Then she asked me if I thought that. I said, "Of course and I assumed you would think that." She was really astonished at this new idea. This is a great program.

Chapter 5

China Teachers Program Established

“For there is one God and one Shepherd over all the earth.” 1 Nephi 12:41

After assurances about religious freedom in China appeared in the Deseret News, 28 January 1989, the David M. Kennedy Center was encouraged to submit an English language teaching proposal to BYU's president Jeffery R. Holland. The proposal was viewed by President Holland and sent to Elder Dallin Oaks in January of 1989. On the 19th of January, Elder Oaks wrote a letter to President Holland, asking him to implement the program immediately so it could be in place to send teachers in the coming summer or fall, noting approval of the program by the First Presidency and the Board of Trustees. An *ad hoc* committee was established consisting of Ray Hillam, Chair, Robert Blair, Ray Graham and Bruce Beaman. Eventually, the management of the program was turned over to the Coordinator of Asian Studies, Bruce Beaman, with a budget for the program of forty-five thousand dollars.

According to Ray Hillam, the committee had five immediate challenges: (1) defining goals, (2) securing funding, (3) recruiting teachers, (4) training teachers, (5) placing teachers at Chinese institutions.

First, the opening of China to the “outside world” generated the need for a re-definition of BYU's professional and academic interest in China. Primarily, the Kennedy Center wanted to enhance its scholarship and provide opportunities for faculty and students.

Second was the problem of funding. The program at Xi'an had been a financial burden to the University. But if the Bureau of Foreign Experts and universities agreed to provide housing, pay at least half of the transportation and provide a modest stipend to the teachers, the program might be workable.

Third, BYU had to broaden the recruiting base to include faculty and teachers from other disciplines and from the LDS community as a whole. At first, most volunteers learned about the program from colleagues or friends. When a notice appeared in the Church News, the Kennedy Center was flooded with inquiries.

Fourth, the TESL experts at BYU were concerned about sending out teachers untrained in teaching English as a second language. The Kennedy Center argued that native English speakers are experts in China, but agreed that a workshop in TESL instruction would be a necessity.

The fifth challenge, finding positions for teachers was perhaps the greatest obstacle. The Beijing Foreign Experts Bureau wanted teachers for all parts of China. However, Elder Oaks encouraged the idea of placing groups strategically located in five cities: Beijing, Shanghai, Nanjing, X'ian and Guangzhou, to best benefit the Church membership, primarily returning Chinese students who had joined the Church in the U.S. Elder Oaks said at that time that the

Church had more than one hundred inquiries from Chinese students in the U.S. seeking an address for the church in China (Hillam 8).

Bruce Beaman, coordinator of Asian Studies, managed the first three years of the program. The first official year, 1989 to 1990, The Kennedy Center recruited and placed twenty-one teachers: Burnell and Lora McIntire at the Nanjing Institute of Chemistry, Ross and Maurine Allen at Liaoning Normal University, Marden and Bessie Clark in Qingdao, Marshall and Ruth Craig at X'ian Foreign Language University, Eliot and Maralyn Howe at Nanjing Forest University, Timothy and Helen Richardson at X'ian Foreign Language University (Tim delivered his child in their X'ian University apartment), Cynthia Rogers at Foreign Language Press, Gary and Jamie Evans and Todd and Suzanne Smithson, at the Institute of Management, Smith and Katie Broadbent in Qingdao. By early June 1989, most of the teachers had been recruited and a date set for the two week workshop. But the storm of events in China threatened to nearly "close the window."

Intervening Events

Triggered by the death of Hu Yaobang, the former party general secretary, student advocate and catalyst for change, Chinese students demonstrated for reform and democracy at Tiananmen Square. The unrest had been seething since December 20, 1986 when 30,000 students marched in Shanghai with banners like "Long Live Freedom," and "Give Us Democracy." The protest was discredited by the government calling it "A tiny number of people attempting to disrupt stability and unity" (Spence 725). A member of the Politburo forcefully defended the hard-liners' common stand: "The Chinese Communist Party is a great, glorious and politically correct party that has always retained its revolutionary vigor" (725).

So two days after Hu Yaobang's death on April 15, 1989, thousands of students from Peking universities and other universities marched on Tiananmen calling for the resignation of Deng Xiaoping. On May 17 and again the following day, the number of demonstrators increased to over one million. The *People's Daily* implied that all those supporters were subject to arrest and prosecution for their actions. But the rallies grew larger, and the students were joined by many of their teachers, journalists and citizens of Beijing. Nothing like this had been seen in China before. They were boisterous and angry, some went on hunger strikes. For two weeks the soldiers could not clear the square. A group of Peking art students constructed a thirty-foot-high white plaster and styrofoam statue of their version of Liberty, clasping in both her hands the torch of freedom and set it in the square.

But Deng Xiaopeng ordered each of the regional PLA commanders to send a certain number of their experienced troops to the capital and late at night on June 3, the army struck. They were armed with automatic weapons and they fired at random on the crowds in the streets. On June 4, after the troops blocked off all approaches to the Square, the demonstrators decided to leave. As they walked out, troops and tanks overran their encampments and crushed the "Goddess of Liberty."

Hospitals were overwhelmed by the dead and wounded. A Beijing doctor reported in a private conversation that all doctors at the Beijing Hospital were forbidden to treat any wounded, but merely piled them on each other in the basement of the hospital. Spence reports that “hundreds were dead and thousands more wounded. The callousness and randomness of the killings evoked memories of the worst episodes in China’s earlier civil wars and the Cultural Revolution. Foreign journalists were forbidden to take photographs or conduct interviews, and satellite links abroad were cut” (Spence 726). CNN, however, managed to record the startling images of the fall of the symbolic statue and a single student confronting a line of tanks.

Robin Stratford, whose husband then worked at the American Embassy in Beijing viewed the tanks coming in from her high rise apartment, yet she had little knowledge of the gravity of the conflict. She saw the tanks roll in and knew the students had defaced Mao’s portrait with paint, but in the morning, no remnants of the conflict remained. A new portrait hung in its place above the immaculate square in complete denial of the reign of death and horror of the night before. (Personal Interview. 3/14/01).

The fledgling China Teachers program was placed on hold by BYU’s Board of Trustees. The board consulted with government officials in both Washington and Beijing concerning the safety of the teachers, the issue of whether going to China would suggest indifference to the violation of human rights, how teachers would be received by the students, and if U.S. cultural exchanges such as the Fulbright Program would be terminated. A press release by President George Bush on June 5, 1989 concluded with the following:

It would be a tragedy for all if China were to pull back to its pre-1972 era of isolation and repression. Mindful of these complexities, and yet of the necessity to strongly and clearly express our condemnation of the events of recent days, I am ordering the following actions: suspension of all government-to-government sales and commercial exports of weapons, suspension of visits between U.S. and Chinese military leaders, sympathetic review of requests by Chinese students in the United States to extend their stay, and the offer of humanitarian and medical assistance through the Red Cross to those injured during the assault, and review of other aspects of our bilateral relationship as events in China continue to unfold.

After careful consideration, permission was given two weeks after the incident for the BYU China Projects Committee to proceed with plans to send teachers to China.

At the first workshop in July Elder Dallin Oaks gave a speech entitled “Present at the Creation,” described by Ray Hillam as “extraordinary.” Elder Oaks indicated to the China teachers that they were part of the creation of an initiative that would have important consequences for both the university and the church. Again, the admonition came to be law abiding and to abstain from any proselyting.

By the end of August 1989, 21 teachers were ready to go. Many of them had no on-site supervisors and primarily were on their own, “bonafide pioneers, exploring the unknown” (Hillam).

Chapter 6

China Teachers’ Program Goes Forward

Only where love and need are one,
And the work is play for mortal stakes,
Is the deed ever really done
For Heaven and the future’s sakes.

...Robert Frost from “Two Tramps in Mud Time”

Bruce Beaman, coordinator of Asian Studies, managed the first three years of the program. The second year, 17 teachers went to China, and the third group in 1991 consisted of 28 teachers.

In 1992, Jeff Ringer was appointed director of the China Teachers’ program. With a modest budget and only a part-time secretary he led out with clearer guidelines, upgraded the recruitment literature and strategy, renegotiated new agreements with the Chinese Bureau of Foreign Experts, developed constructive relationships with the Chinese Embassy and upgraded the quality of the two-week training sessions for teachers.

Jeff Ringer says of this experience: “Some really interesting groundwork had already been done—the hard part. Ray Hillam, Bruce Beaman, Robert Blair and others had contacted some initial universities. The program had not been institutionalized and we were essentially an unknown entity as an academic unit, the BYU Kennedy Center generally and the China Teachers’ Program specifically. We were just looking for contacts in China. They had had some tough going just finding places willing to take a chance on our teachers.

“People who went those first years were really pioneers. They didn’t know what they were getting into. We didn’t know how to work out contracts, and we didn’t have much of a name. Those first people went over out of the pioneering spirit and goodness of their hearts. I spent the next two years trying to professionalize the program, giving the program a home, standardizing procedures and developing standards for screening people” (Hillam).

In 1996, Jeff Ringer had couples called to serve Church Service Missions to assist with the program for two years and become part of his administrative staff. Ray Hillam, then retired, and his wife Carolyn were the first couple called, then Ted and Doris Warner (1997-2000), Morris and Donna Petersen (1999-2001), George and Diane Pace (2001 to February 2003) and the Petersens were appointed again in 2003.

The fourth group to go increased to thirty-two teachers; the fifth, 30 teachers, the sixth in 1994 consisted of 39 teachers. Jeff Ringer, along with a member of the Twelve, set up clearer guidelines for placement, increasing both the number of teachers and the cities they taught in. Group leaders were called in each city under the jurisdiction of the China District which covers the China mainland except for Hong Kong. Conferences for all China Teachers were organized each year in a workshop in Hong Kong during the Chinese New year which had not only been a helpful boost in the teaching year, but also a spiritual gathering and renewal time for the teachers who had primarily been “on their own” for months with new and formidable challenges.

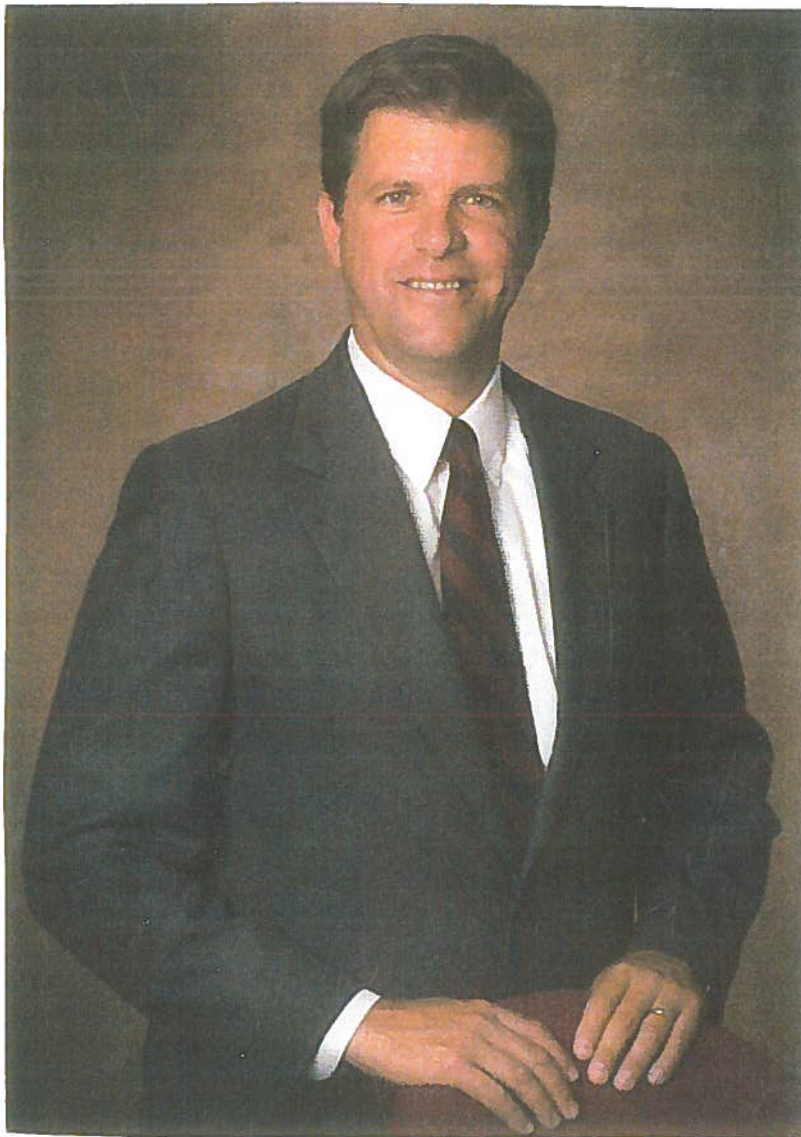
Ray Hillam reports that:

Early on, some branch members in Beijing felt our teachers were unprepared for such a vigorous and challenging experience. They felt that some of us were too old and that there was too little on-site supervision. These criticisms were not helpful. At the time, the Kennedy Center did not have the personnel or budget and had to feel its way in those formative years. Looking back at more than a decade, the strength of the program has been its mature couples and the very fact that they could cope with the challenges.

In recruiting, we soon found that not everyone is suited for teaching in China. Our successful teachers are a special breed. One has to be mature, courageous, adaptive, culturally sensitive, and a “happy camper.” Retired couples with these qualities have been the backbone of an extraordinarily successful program. Elder Oaks has characterized them as latter-day pioneers. One Church leader, addressing our teachers, who had gathered in Hong Kong for their mid-year workshop, advised that they return to the U.S. and go on a “real” mission. Some were offended, but they were mindful of the encouragement and praise of Elder Oaks, and later that of Elders Maxwell and Wirthlin (Hillam 12).

Ray Hillam, who at the time was Director of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies was a valuable resource to the church and was frequently consulted whenever dignitaries connected with Asia came to Church headquarters. Their visits almost always included a meeting with then Elder Hinckley. Ray Hillam describes the reaction of a leading Asian scholar who met with Elder Hinckley for almost an hour. After the interview, Hillam said the scholar turned to him and said, ‘Who was that guy? He has historical perspective. He has read the literature on Asia. Are all of your Church leaders that well informed?’” (Dew 288)

Paul Hyer and Spencer Palmer were perhaps the first to visit China during the post-Cultural Revolution period. In September 1976, Paul passed through Beijing during Mao’s funeral. He was in transit from Mongolia where he had attended an academic conference. A couple of years later, Spencer visited Beijing on a trip to visit the birth place of Confucius. In the early eighties both Spencer and Paul prepared reports that found their way to Salt Lake City. Over the years, both men, especially Spencer Palmer, consulted with Elder Hinckley.



Jeff Ringer
Director of David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies

Eric Hyer, Associate Professor of Political Science at BYU has associated with the BYU China Teachers Program from its early beginnings. First, as a Fulbright scholar at the Foreign Affairs College in Beijing (1995-1996), he had the opportunity to work with BYU Teachers and to make sure that BYU teachers were assigned to this elite college run by China's Foreign Ministry. Since that time, BYU teachers have been a constant feature at the Foreign Affairs College. Some of the students and teachers at FAC have gone on to assume important positions in China's foreign policy bureaucracy and as high-level diplomats serving around the world. Also every year, Hyer participates in the China Teachers' seminar to inform the outgoing teachers of the current political situation in China.

Chapter 7

Program Growth and Development

*"You have suddenly healed the pain of a traveller's heart,
And moved his brush to write a new song.*

. . . Chan Fang-Sheng, c. A.D. 400

The next part of this history is a collection of letters, e-mails, or told experiences from various China Teachers, representative of the approximately 560 teachers who have served since the inception of the program. At the 2001 reunion a request was issued for journals, stories or letters for this collection, however the response was not comprehensive.

I have included those entries sent to me as well as those within my power to contact, fully realizing this is a mere sampling. Primarily the experiences are positive but this does not imply the ease or physical comfort of these events. These are realizations that "out of my comfort zone" can frequently mean growth and significant change that can lead to the impulse, if not the need, to "write a new song."

A training program was set up for the couples and single sisters who would teach in China that was designed to brief teachers on Chinese history, language and culture, present practical methods and ideas for teaching English as a foreign language and to make available material resources and supplies. This training session, now a two-week seminar, has expanded to include hands on teacher training by Dr. Lynn Henrichsen of the Department of Linguistics at BYU and workshops with previous China Teachers.

One of the first teachers, Bernell McIntire and his wife, Lora in Nanjing, Jiangsu reported in 1990:

“I’ve been my usual healthy self. I’ve done a bit of slimming down since being here but that has been a plus. Lora isn’t incapacitated (she had an inner ear infection and sore knee from bicycling) but having had perfect health all her life, she is troubled by it. Eliot Howe and I administered to her.

“As far as personal security is concerned—we are as secure as the vault at Fort Knox and a lot less valuable” (Letter to China Teachers Program March 1990, Bruce Beaman).

The same year, Elliot and Maralyne Howe at Nanjing Forestry University said June 30, 1990, in a report to Kennedy Center:

“We are grateful for the opportunity we have had to teach English and to set an example of how Latter-day Saint people live. We feel that we have had substantial success in both phases of our assignment. Our students are kind, sincere, serious, dedicated and respectful.

“We have made many friends who want to come to America; we have suggested to many people that they will enjoy listening to the missionaries of our church if and when they are allowed to enter China.

“More contact with the church would have been helpful. We felt like pioneers who were out on their own. Thank you for the privilege of serving.”

The Howe’s included a paper from a student (Hong Xiao) excerpted here:

“I keep on speaking English everyday so I can improve my speaking skills. I also want to translate some English articles into Chinese in order to let my people understand other nations and people.

“Language expresses people’s emotion. All of the people in the world speak different languages, but they love each other. We learn foreign languages in order to communicate among us—sons of God.”

Other early pioneers of the program, George Bennion, of BYU Linguistics Department and his wife Joye taught in the English Department of at a University in Xi’an in 1990. After a year at home, they went back and taught for two more years at Shandong Teacher’s University, Jinan. George records in his history, *Glimpses of China* that “Altogether it was one of the richest experiences of our lives.”

As was the case with many teachers, the Bennion records: “contact with our students was the real prize. Our lives were touched profoundly. The warmth, the love, the heartache, the tragedy in [assigned student] papers is compelling and argues powerfully for respect, admiration and friendship between China and the U.S., which, of course, is more sensible on a personal basis than national.”

Bennion follows with a philosophical qualification of his observations: “But it does not follow from our experience with those college students that we understood all Chinese. Even those students, as they left the university and took up professional life, began to change, just as students here and in every society do. If we had collected essays from. . .[other groups of people]the glimpses would be somewhat different, probably less idealistic.

“When we began our time in China, those graduates were assigned work posts by the government—which had two noticeable effects: One, it encouraged parents with means or some other kind of influence to arrange jobs for their children. “The “backdoor” was in good working order. Two, these assignments might send a girl a thousand miles away from anyone she knew or post a dyed-in-the-wool city kid to teach in a remote village where his prospects for culture for himself and his future family were dim. Thus we heard profound wishes that China could let students choose their majors and choose their jobs. But by the time we left China, the government had pretty well backed out of the job-placement business and students reassessed of the safety net they had been complaining about. Their delight in greater choice generally was short-lived. Not all of them found jobs, and many who did found themselves surrounded by workers who had little interest in making space for the newcomer and her college degree, found the pay low and advancement hard to come by. However, homo sapiens is an adaptable creature and in time students will get used to this greater self-determination just as they have adapted to pushing and shoving to board the busses and trains.

“Even though freshmen were noticeably more idealistic and overtly patriotic than the seniors and graduate students, all of the people we became acquainted with were deeply patriotic, all intensely proud—of course with good reason—to be Chinese.

“One of the very great changes going on is improvement in the position of women. They ‘hold up half the sky.’ Not really, of course. As elsewhere, equal pay for equal work is not fully realized, nor are the other ideals suggested in that phrase. . .Now they hold responsible positions in government, schools, hospitals and business. They can make their own marriages, usually. . .Divorce has become a social reality. And children under the one-child policy, grow up as no earlier generation has. Moving between parents and grandparents, they surely experience unequal love and discipline, sometimes too little discipline, and so have been referred to in China as “little emperors.”

“When we were first there, everyone wore the dull Mao uniforms, but gradually that gave way to very colorful and beautiful clothing. . .At first it was startling to see a girl in a dazzlingly white skirt and lovely blouse emerge, on her way to work, from a hovel that had neither running water nor space for privacy. At first, we never saw girls smoking, only older country or inner-city women whose teeth hurt. At first we heard on every hand complaints about the encroachment of western decadence. Now there are discos and night clubs everywhere.

“At a time when Gandhi’s Non-Cooperation movement made it common for leaders of the movement to be jailed, Jawaharlal Nehru, writing from prison to his thirteen-year-old daughter Indira, said:

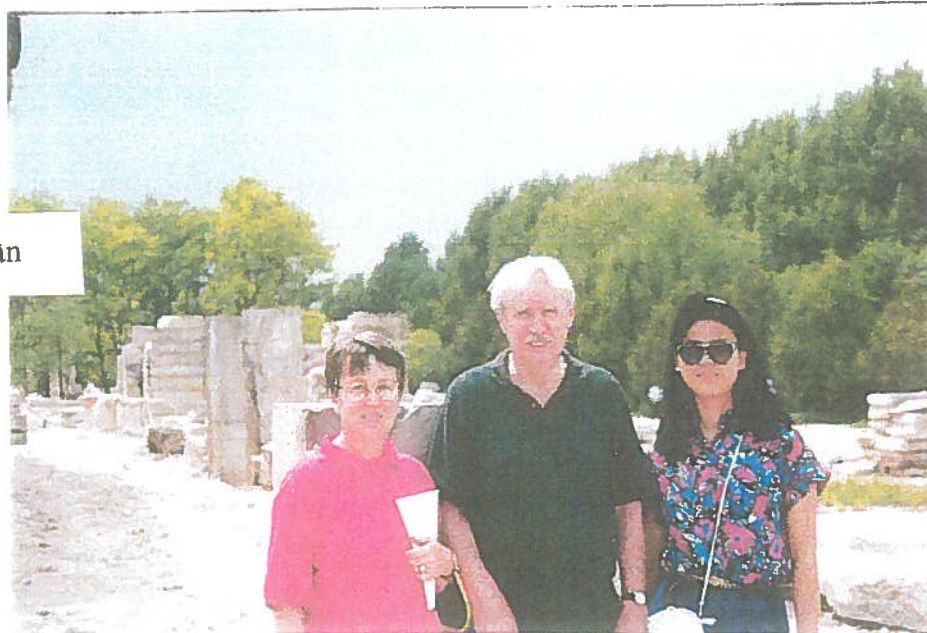


Lora McIntyre, 1990, Nanjing
with Canadian Teacher



Ray Hillam, Xi'an

Beijing
Ray and Carolyn Hillam with student, Xi'an





Joye and George Bennion

We cannot judge the past from the standards of the present. Everyone will willingly admit this. But not everyone will admit the equally absurd habit of judging the present by the standards of the past. The various religions have especially helped in petrifying old beliefs and faiths and customs, which may have had some use in the age and country of their birth, but which are singularly unsuitable in our present age.

“Few modern revolutionaries have expressed their views so eloquently, but almost all of them would have agreed wholeheartedly with the idea. Socialist revolutionaries in particular have found it advantageous to “wipe the slate clean.” Cultural revolution is a given. Unavoidably, such revolutions are only partially successful. China’s Cultural revolution, which imposed suffering on everyone and death on millions, destroyed enormous quantities of art, but left Chinese people unchanged in many ways.”

George’s wife, Joye, the mother of 10 children with limited professional experience became a legendary figure in the X’ian area as the initiator and the prime mover of the ongoing Shaanxi School Project. The following account, written by Joye is much more modest than the extent of her accomplishments and benevolent influence:

“In 1993, upon visiting a remote mountain area in Shaanxi Province, I saw the heroic efforts of the villagers there to provide an education for the children of that area. The school building was primitive, textbooks old, and supplies such as paper and pencils limited. I met a cheerful, pink-cheeked teacher there who had not been paid for four months but who was continuing to perform her duties. I determined I would return to the village and take some school supplies, which I did several times. What I was able to carry on the fifteen-hour train ride and two hour car ride up the mountain was grossly inadequate for their needs. Because of the caring and concern of those villagers for their children, the effort was worthwhile. It was probably one of the more rewarding times of my five years of teaching in China.

During this time I also became aware of the large number of children who were not in school because parents, living on less than two hundred dollars per year, could not afford the sixty dollars to pay their share of the enrollment fee.

After returning to the States, we formed an alumni group of China teachers and soon took on the project of assisting this little primary school. As a group we have been in existence for four years and the following accomplishments have been made by generous contributions from former teachers and others.

- (1) We have funded over 200 students to attend primary school for five years. This is usually long enough for them to become literate.
- (2) We have helped fund the construction of a new modern edition to the school.
- (3) In the spring of 2000, we started a library, making books available to every student.
- (4) Substantial changes have been made in the individual progress of the students, a greater number now qualify to attend the higher grades.

(5) We have established a one-thousand-dollar yearly scholarship at Xi'an Foreign Language University in the name of Professor Ray Hillam, a long time friend of the Chinese students. It is to be granted to impoverished, countryside students who qualify to enter the university.

As a result of these efforts, increased textbooks, new building and increased student enrollment, the school now qualifies as a "country school" rather than a "village school," giving it more consideration for benefits.

We see rapid changes occurring in China. We know that some of these students will become the leaders who bring about future changes. Brigham Young said, *"Education is the power to think clearly, the power to act well in the world's work, and the power to appreciate life."* This power is what we would like to provide to these disadvantaged children.

We intend to continue with our limited assistance to this remote area school. It is also our hope to help rebuild the old classroom building that was destroyed this past year because of flooding from spring rains. The school has also requested help with developing an English curriculum, obtaining some musical instruments and expanding their small library. Some time in the future we would like to help with computer skills.

Funds we provide the school are carefully monitored and we who visit the Shaanxi village do so at our own expense. We feel this is a worthy project that has produced remarkable results. We are humbled by the many people who have given so freely of their time and money.

When a journalist in Ankang became aware of our efforts, he decided if a group of foreigners were willing to lend assistance to these Chinese students, it was important for the Chinese people to lend assistance to their own people. He organized a group of retired professionals and put together a charity foundation to not only give assistance to students but to help relocate or rebuild people's homes that have been destroyed by floods or fire and create a workshop for disabled individuals to help them become self-sufficient. This side-effect alone has been worth our efforts.

Excerpts from an account of the Shaanxi trip with Joye Bennion's group from "Anxiously Engaged" by Diane C. Pace:

"Less than a week ago we were awakened by a variety of roosters crowing in the city of Langao, deep in the center of China. Upon arriving at the train station in the city of Ankang we were met by Langao's county governor and other dignitaries. Each of the men were dressed in modern China's unofficial uniform: dark suit, white shirt, and tie—they would prove to be extraordinary hosts. Our group of nine Americans, plus two student interpreters was distributed among several black official cars and a large van. Our caravan was hastily led through the city by a police car with lights flashing and siren blaring. Much to our surprise, as we left the city, our entourage never slackened its breakneck speed. The lights never ceased to flash, and we could hear an occasional burst of siren from the police car up ahead warning of our approach to peasants with their animals grazing on the roadside. "Shaanxi was a two hour drive from Langao and required winding up a rather treacherous dirt road, with a two hundred foot drop to the river on one side and rock cliffs rising on the other. . .

When Joye first went to this village she was disturbed by the extreme deprivation of the local primary school. She learned many of the children within the boundaries of the school were unable to attend regularly because their families could not afford the fifty dollars required annually for school fees. The buildings were in bad condition and school supplies were almost nonexistent. Joye left Shaanxi with a heavy heart and a deep concern for the children.

“During the remainder of her teaching year, Joye made her way back up to Shaanxi several times. The journey required a fourteen hour train ride to Ankang and another four hour automobile ride from there. Each trip she carried a few basic supplies and she marveled at the gratitude of the headmaster and teachers as she presented them with simple offerings of paper, pencils, and chalk.

“The needs of her little adopted school continued to call to Joye after she returned to Utah. She, along with Ray and Carolyn Hillam, decided to organize an alumni group of those who had participated in the China Teachers Program and proposed that this group would take on the primary school in the village of Shaanxi as a service project.

“Joye has returned to Shaanxi every year for the last six years. On each trip she is accompanied by a few friends who help carry additional supplies. She has also donated cash totaling nearly \$20,000. With the help of China Teachers Alumni, one hundred percent of the children within the boundaries of the school are now attending regularly. “So when we realized we would be in China as the facilitators of the China Teachers Program at the very time Joye and her group would make their journey, we asked to join them.

“When we arrived at Shaanxi village, we were met by all two hundred school children lining both sides of the road leading to the school gate. Their faces were framed with wire hoops wrapped in shiny strips of colored plastic that they swayed from left to right chanting, “Welcome! Welcome! in exaggerated English. A young boy with a notably earnest expression led a small marching band with a cut-off broomstick. They wore red and white school uniforms, playing drums, cymbals, horns that blared the same five notes over and over.

“Once inside the schoolyard we were seated at a long table in front of two large bulletin boards with pictures, newspaper articles and other information about Joye and the alumni project. One bulletin board was in English, the other in Chinese. We were saluted by the Young Pioneer leaders, the official Communist organization for youth, who tied the traditional red scarf around each of our necks.

“As the children from different age groups danced for us, I was struck by the familiarity of the scene. Within a few weeks we would be watching our own grandchildren dancing on the lawn of Wasatch Elementary School in Provo, Utah. We would see the same excitement on the children’s faces and sense the same eagerness to do their very best that was evidenced by the children before us. The outward appearance of these country children was different, but all else about them was remarkably the same as children everywhere. The dancing was followed by the entire group singing their national song and the villagers joining in—mothers with their babies, grandparents, along with a number of villagers with handicaps. Some looked like the

poorest of the poor but no one was excluded from this rich outpouring of mutual respect between foreigners and Chinese.

“We listened through an interpreter as the headmaster spoke in his worn dark suit. Each time Joye visits, he voluntarily reports on the use of the funds she presented during her last visit. We admired the beautiful new building behind him that was partially funded by the alumni group, but completed by the village. A library has also been established to accommodate the many books donated to the school by Joye and others. The village officials, school faculty and others have as a result of the incentives provided by these donations enjoyed an excitement and determination to raise their school standards and receive the ranking required for increased funding by the county government.

“The ceremony continued, and true to Chinese custom, gifts were presented to each of us with words of gratitude. We were given traditional wooden buckets freshly built and newly varnished like those balanced at either end of bamboo poles across the shoulders of millions of Chinese peasants and laborers. We also received beautifully woven baskets fashioned from tiny strips of a special bamboo. Each basket required two full days work by a village craftsman. Joye was presented with a lovely painting of local mountains. . . her acceptance was gracious and encouraging. . . ‘Become all you can become.’

“Then came the moment anticipated by all. Packages of new books were unwrapped. Boxes of sports equipment were spread along the table, soccer balls, basketballs, volleyballs. Shiny new jump ropes, table games, ping pong equipment had been determinedly carried, pushed, and pulled from Xi’an to train, from train to van, from van to the school. Joye then presented the headmaster with \$5,400 and suggested it be used to buy computers, establish a class, and train a teacher for the students. She rewarded the ten dedicated teachers by telling them that of the important people in the great nation of China, they, teachers, were the most important of all.

“I watched a sweet, dedicated Chinese headmaster through the lens of my video camera. He removed a rumpled hanky from the pocket of his worn suit. As he dabbed the tears from his eyes, my own blurred as I fumbled for a Kleenex. As for the image of Joye, so loved and appreciated by the beautiful Chinese people, it will grow vivid in my mind each time I read the scripture about being anxiously engaged in a good cause.

In 1992, Connie Blakemore (now Cook) of the BYU Physical Education Department who taught in Beijing records her encounter with an exceptional student:

“I met Michael, Chen Mao Gui, when I was teaching at Gon An Daxue, the police university in Beijing. Although he was not one of my students, he spent every spare minute with me as he was hungry to learn English. He was a good student, and from the beginning I knew he was different from the rest. He was very special, and we became fast friends. He asked me to give him an English name, and I chose Michael, the archangel. The name stuck and he is known in the U.S. as Michael Chen.

“Michael invited me to go home with him to the countryside for Spring Festival. One day he came home and said there was a Christian church in town and did I want to go there on Sunday morning. Of course, I jumped at the chance. We arrived in the morning at an old log rectangular building. Many people, mostly older and female, were sitting in groups singing and talking softly. All eyes were on us, although most with a sideward glance. The spirit was very strong. We sat down and the tears streamed down my cheeks. It wasn't long until he asked if we had to stay there. I think the feelings were so strong it made him uncomfortable. Soon we were on our way out, him pulling me one way and the congregation pulling the other.

“As we were hurrying away an old gentleman stopped us and offered his torn and tattered Bible to examine. He told us how much he liked Americans because they believed in Jesus. Michael was translating all this. As we hurried away, Michael asked, “Who is this Jesus?” I was caught off guard because even though I knew most Chinese didn't believe in Jesus, I assumed they knew who he was. I then began to discuss the Savior with simplicity and in accordance with directions we had been given by the Kennedy Center, and bore a humble testimony.

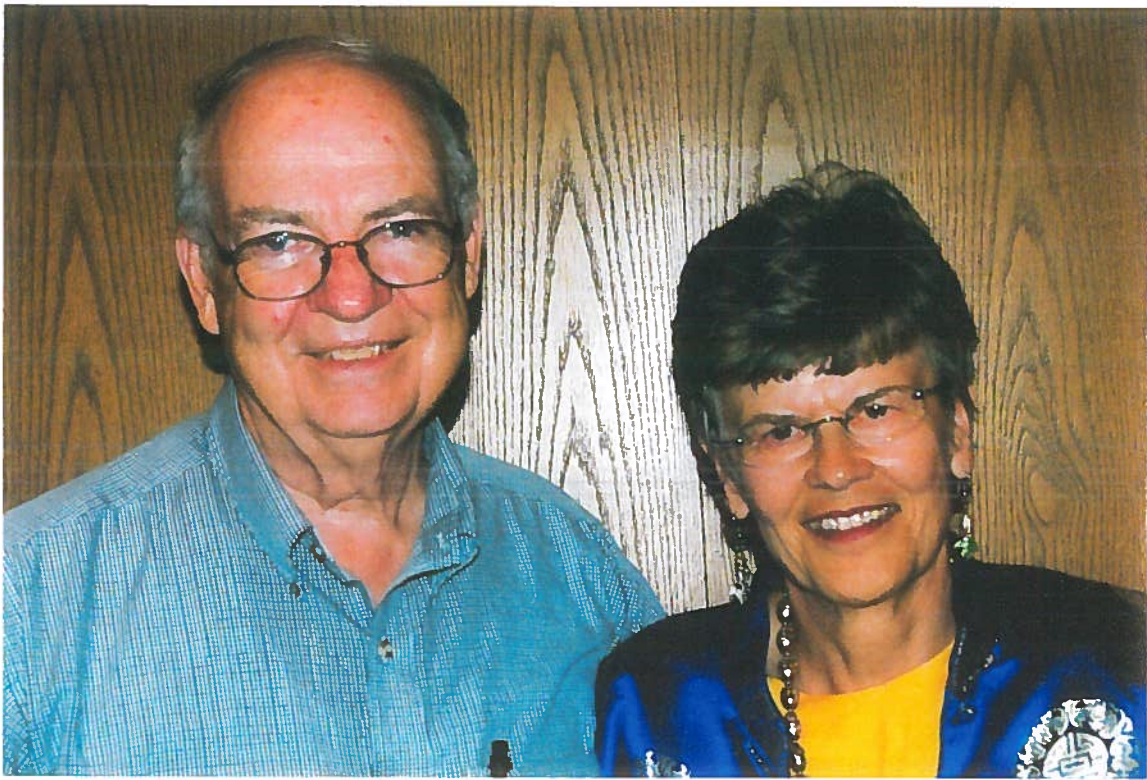
“This conversation resumed several weeks later back at school. Michael invited me to go for a bicycle ride with him so we could talk openly. He had gone to the library and gathered all the information he could find on Christians and Jesus Christ. I was amazed at what he knew. He had memorized it all and even had some facts I was not aware of. I was more surprised that he was able to get the information in the school library. This began what was often a silent observation of me and my religious ways.

“A new teacher came to Gon An the second semester. She and Michael promptly fell in love. Things moved slowly, but when she eventually went home after two years, she told him if they were to get married, it would have to be in the temple. That meant he could not smoke, drink tea and alcohol, or have another girl friend. As difficult as it was in this country, Michael was true to Linda.

“At this point several doors were opened up for Michael. He was able to get a nine day visa to go to Hong Kong where he visited the Hong Kong temple. He told me the minute he was inside the gate he felt the same spirit he had felt at the little Christian church in the countryside. He took the discussions and was baptized. He was one of the miracles of the mission.

“Michael went back into China and, of course, was not able to attend church. He had to hang on to the special feelings he had experienced. Eventually Linda came back and worked in the same town and they held their own church meetings. During this time, Michael had received his China law degree and worked for a law firm in China for a while. Linda found that BYU had a special program for international lawyers and ultimately Michael was accepted at BYU and able to get a study visa.

“Michael lived in my home for the first year he was in law school. I knew several of his professors, and they told me he was one of the brightest students they had ever had. He graduated in the Spring of 2002 from the BYU law school. This he did with his limited writing skills, bright intellect and burning desire to succeed. He and Linda have married in the temple.



Quentin Cook and Connie Blakemore Cook, October 2003



Corene Parker and Douglas Parker, China Teachers, 1995-1996

He has returned to Nanjing and is the founding dean of the new Law School at the Agricultural University. He also works for a law firm there.

"I know he and Linda will be a vital cog in the Gospel wheel when that vehicle gets moving in China. It all started when I was lying in a hospital bed reading the call for China teachers in the Church News. The prompting was so strong for me to go that I looked up and said, "You know I can't go now. It will have to wait until next year." Next year came and the prompting was just as strong. The Lord knows who will bring about his work as well as how and where."

Some experiences required more courage than others, particularly the tragedy of Don and Betty Johnson, teachers in Xi'an as reported by Jeff Ringer reported in a letter to the 1993 group of China Teachers:

"As you may have heard, Don Johnson (China Teacher in Xi'an) passed away. He died quietly in his sleep a little more than a week ago. Betty has since returned to the states. The funeral was held in Boise on Tuesday, November 30. Although it is a tragedy, Betty is grateful for their experience in China and reports that Don was happier and healthier than he had been in years. She believes that his death was unrelated to being in China and could have easily happened in Boise. S.O.S. and the U.S. Embassy were wonderfully supportive and helped Betty every step of the way" (China Teachers Program Files, December 3, 1993).

Ruth Holland, who taught at Shandong Teachers' University in 1994, and again in 1996 was a former Educational Administrator and teacher with an M.A. in Education. October 25 of 1993 she reported to the BYU Kennedy Center:

"I am teaching American Literature to 95 seniors mainly from the Norton Anthology which I brought. I brought videos, "The Last of the Mohicans," "The Scarlet Letter" and "Moby Dick" and I am able to Xerox poetry. Students do not have access to full text of the novels. I use Reader's Digests for outside reading. These young people know a great deal of English and they are serious students. They are wonderful, warm, helpful and sincere. They make the experience worth it all.

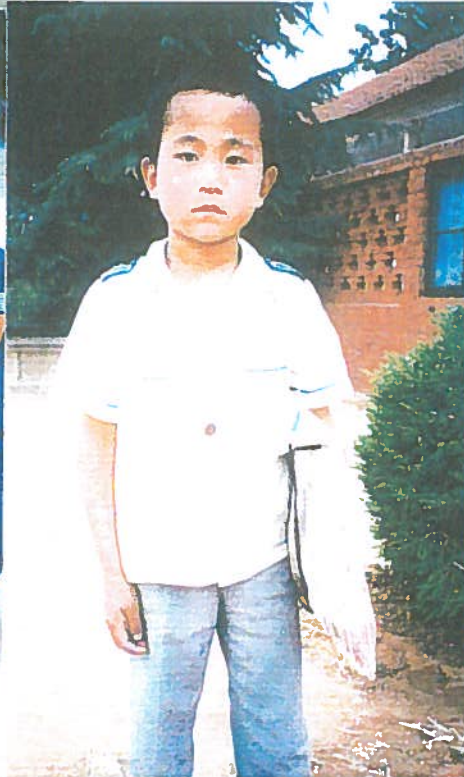
"The 1400 yuan is adequate to get by comfortably. I have picked up a job on the side totally by accident. I proofread scripts and I do readings for the local TV station. I won 2nd place in a mountain climbing contest and won 600 yuan!

"Now the bottom line. I am enjoying the experience immensely. Everyday is a new and challenging day in human relations and subject matter. I wouldn't miss this experience for the world."

Ruth has subsequently opened her Provo home to several of her Chinese students who have come to BYU and other schools in the United States.



Project Hope
Sishui County
Shandong Province
June, 1997



Don Ballentine and his wife Kit have had wide international teaching experience; he was principal of a number of International Schools including Kuwait, Japan and Germany. They taught four years with the China Teachers Program, first in Guangzhou at Guangdong University of Foreign Studies. Kit recorded the following in her journal:

“Guangzhou, once known as old Canton, was cosmopolitan. A famous world trade fair brought foreigners of all nationalities into the city. Chinese from Taiwan studied acupuncture and Chinese medicine at its universities. Contractors from Canada and the United States built luxury homes and office buildings. Some of these foreigners were Mormons. A private school in Penyu, a suburb, employed a Headmaster who was a member of the Church, as were his wife and two children. The young girls who taught English to the elementary students were recruited in Utah. Some Sundays seventy members attended Church meetings.

“Elder John H. Groberg of the First Quorum of the Seventies was serving in Hong Kong as Area President. We felt very humbled to have a General Authority and wife, Jean, visit us in Guangzhou. He met with the China Teachers group, and also met with many other Church members. Elder Groberg called Grant Pearce, a New Zealander who was part Maori as our Branch President. He called a Chinese from Taiwan named Ryan as First Counselor and Don Ballentine as Second Counselor.

“The United States Information Service arranged lectures for Guangzhou businessmen and women who spoke English. The lectures were well attended in the conference room at the Garden Hotel. One evening Don was the speaker and he asked the audience how they would answer a question a student had asked in his American Culture class. “America is only 200 years old; China has a history of 6,000 years. Why is America a great industrial nation and China a third world country?

“A business lady about age 40 suddenly shot her hand in the air as she stood up. ‘Have you read what Thomas Jefferson said in the Declaration of Independence? He said all men are created equal, with equal rights. No man, even a King, is better than another man!’ A teacher would never have said it better. The group went on to discuss how the Constitution and The Bill of Rights incorporate the principles that allow men to function in the best possible manner” (p. 19).

From her Jinan journal Kit records: “God has to have a great love for the Chinese people because he made so many of them. We understand God’s feelings, we love them too.

“We were accepted as English teachers at Shandong Teachers’ University in Jinan, the capital of Shandong Province known as the City of Springs. The 102 famous springs, however, have slowed to a little more than a trickle and because the city is industrial with skies that are never blue. Our two-room apartment with bath was built long ago by the Russians, the wall paper was moldy, the carpets were mopped every other day by the girl who brought boiled water to us in two thermos jugs each morning. A guard kept watch at the entrance gate; we felt safe and slept better on the hard Chinese bed than we expected. Before sleep came, I could hear rats scurrying up and down the outside walls. I prayed they couldn’t get inside.



Don Ballentine, Howard Adams (who portrayed Elder Nelson in Chinese Film made of his life) and Sterling Ottesen, 1998, Jinan, Shandong



Don Nuttall, Alice Clark, Carol Ottesen, Joyce Nuttall, Jinan 1997



Don and Kit Ballentine, Joyce and Don Nuttall, Jinan 1997

“A twenty-foot high statue of Mao with a huge outstretched arm greeted us every time we entered the campus every day. Many campus buildings were tired and without windows but the rooms, halls, auditoriums and stairwells burst with activity.

“Don and I worked together on lesson plans even though our students were different age groups. Each class began with a principle written on the board. Since we couldn’t use any religious material we modified the purpose of life into different wording which we called “Ballentine’s Theory.” “The purpose of life is to learn and grow through our experiences and to find peace and happiness by following correct principles.” We used this as a beginning and then wrote a different quotation on the board each week which we used for discussion as well as for writing assignments” (p. 2-3).

Kim Austin, former executive business woman and now in the administration of BYU Hawaii taught first at Shandong Teachers University, Jinan in 1996, then the Foreign Affairs College, Beijing; and in Qingdao. The following is an excerpt from her writings:

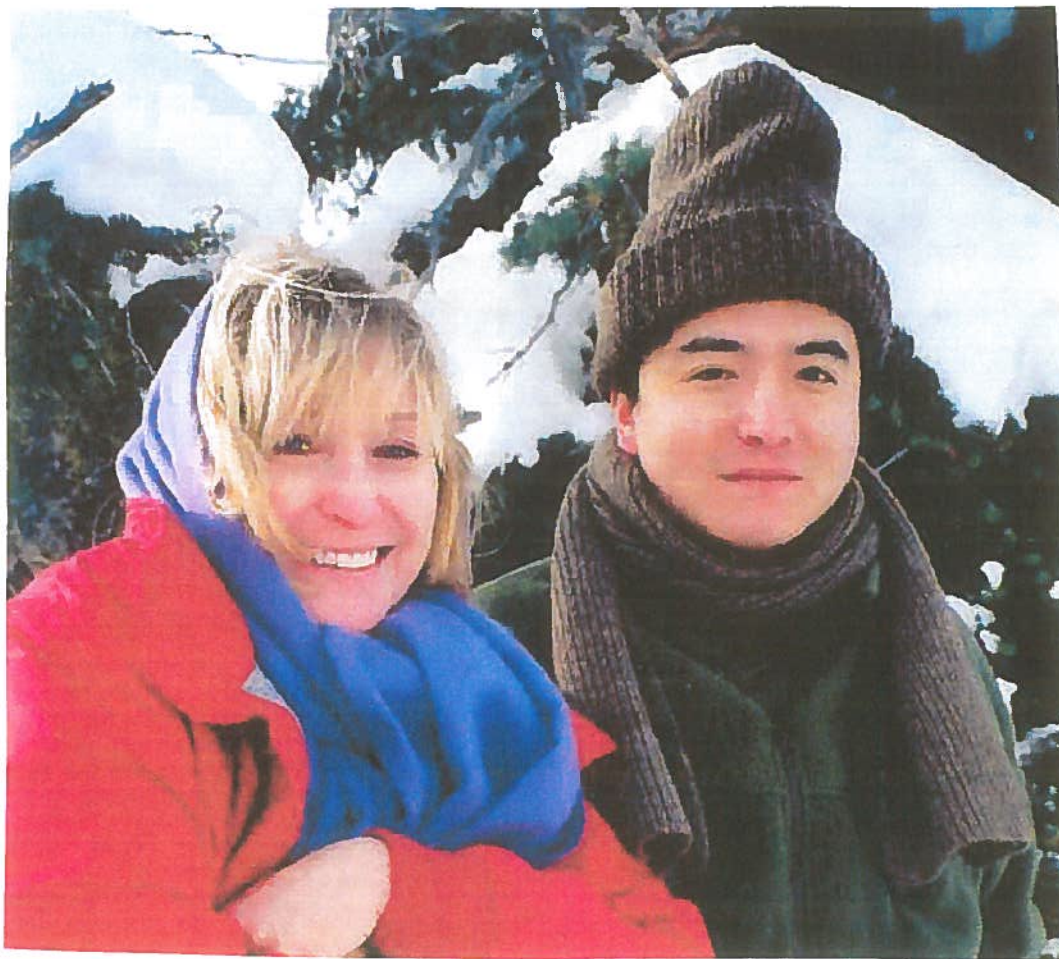
“I have no doubt that we can teach by example. Before I left to go to China, I wondered how much good I could really do. After two years there, I know the answer: a lot! For example, I was invited to dinner by three young women students. On the way, I mentioned that I didn’t drink alcohol, tea or coffee because of a health code associated with my religious beliefs. Before I could explain they said, “Oh, we already knew that. Then they explained they had been students of a BYU China Teacher named Ruth Holland who was a Mormon and didn’t drink alcohol, tea or coffee. These young women just idolized Ruth Holland and they knew I must be a Mormon too because I reminded them of Mrs. Holland. When we sat down for dinner that night, they brought out a container of Tang and said, ‘Tonight we will drink what you drink’.” (Austin report. p. 2 KC files)

Kim also told about Wu Yu (Marvin), the owner of a Shandong-based travel agency who usually arranges the tours for BYU teachers. One day during a long bus ride, Leo Hall and several other teachers engaged him in conversation. Leo asked why Marvin would come on the tour when he already had English-speaking tour guides accompanying the group. Marvin explained that through the years he had come to know many BYU teachers well and he enjoyed traveling with them. He said, “I know there is something more that you people all have that I don’t. I don’t know exactly what that is but whatever it is, I want it in my life. So I will take every opportunity I can to travel with you. Being with you China teachers has changed my life.”

Kim tells about studying a number of literary works that discussed death. Some of the writers had a sense of hopelessness about death while others felt death was followed by a life after this one. One day some of the students asked her which theory she thought was right. She told them she believes that there is life after death. Then she asked what they thought. One of the young men said, “Well, Professor, as you know, we are all Communists so we think death is the end.” She responded with, “I don’t know how I could bear to lose someone I loved if that was how I believed.” Then one of the young women said, “As Communists we may say we



Wu Yu (China Teacher's Travel Agent,) JoAn and Dean Thompson, 2002)



Kim Austin and Wu Yu, Provo, 2002.

believe this is the end, but we all hope your way is right and we are wrong.” Kim reported that the class laughed in response to that comment.

Before Kim left for China, she attended a stake conference in Texas where Elder Lance Wickman was presiding. Prior to the morning meeting, Elder Wickman came down from the stand and walked to Kim in the audience. He told her he had been impressed to give her a blessing before she embarked on the Lord’s errand so she met him immediately after the conference session. The blessing counseled her to continue to work on the Chinese language until she had mastered it as she would need it later for other purposes. He also gave her comfort and guidance in her role in this work. This call was in direct response to her patriarchal blessing which says, “You will go forth as a ray of light to the world.” She adds, “I am so grateful I was able to receive that blessing which has been a tremendous help to me. I know this program is preparing the way for greater things to come. I feel so privileged to be a part of that.” (Austin 6)

Brecken Swartz, a young woman with a MEd in Education taught at the Foreign Affairs College in Beijing, 1997-1998. Brecken’s experience teaching English courses for Japanese business men in Tokyo served her well. She documents the following experience of her adventure of taking the train from Beijing to Shanghai:

“Riding on a train in China, especially by yourself, is no trivial matter. First of all, you have to acquire tickets. Of course, you can’t call anywhere to reserve a ticket or even expect to get in a certain line somewhere to buy a ticket in a straightforward way. Buying tickets is a mystery and uninitiated foreigners learn quickly that it helps a great deal to have a Chinese person on your side. For me, it was a student who helped me get my ticket to Shanghai and the ticket could only be procured the day before departure, so I wasn’t sure until then whether I was really going or not. And in China you can’t buy a round-trip ticket, ever, so you have to worry about whether or not you will actually be able to get a ticket home!

“My student kindly decided to accompany me to the overnight express train to Shanghai he had booked for me on Thursday evening. He was obviously a bit embarrassed as we wound our way through hordes of dirty peasants thronging the smoky train station. In explanation, he muttered something about China “still being a developing country,” then warned me as seriously as he could: “Please be prepared to be a bit of a spectacle on the train. I’ve never seen a foreigner on a train before, so I think people may want to look at you.” I had only enough money to buy a hard seat as opposed to a hard or soft sleeper, which is the way other foreigners travel. The seat was not what I had pictured with rows of back to back seats that can be reclined for a bit of sleeping. No, on a Chinese train, you sit facing each other in little groups of ten, four facing seats on one side and six facing seats on the other side with little tables jutting out from under the windows to put your fruit or jars of tea on. My student was right about my being a spectacle. Everyone in the train car leaned over their seats to look at me as I got seated, and I overheard the word, *waiguoren* (foreigner) about a dozen times as people discussed my appearance, my clothes, the Chinese I was speaking with my student, etc.

(At this point, Brecken finds a group of university students who want to speak English with her. They share oranges and conversation and then she return to her assigned seat.)”As the night wore on, the lights dimmed a bit and people started to contort into positions for sleep. I couldn’t sleep at all, given the uncomfortable seat, cigarette smoke in the air, the constant motion of people walking around the train. At one point, an old woman stood up and started screaming that something was wrong with her husband, that he was very seriously ill and might die. No one came to help her, so she started dancing around the aisle, Shaman-style and zapping him with some kind of invisible energy. I watched this, fascinated, and as I started noticing how extremely pale and deathly he really did look, I started wondering if a priesthood blessing might be appropriate in this situation. Unable to do anything myself along these lines, I folded my arms and said an earnest prayer. The lady continued dancing and chanting for a little while longer, but soon the situation seemed to come under control, and everything settled down. I wish I knew what happened to him in the end.

After a long night of endurance, I was pleased when morning came and people started to sit. After the muzak started playing on the loudspeakers again, everyone made a bee-line for the rather squalid bathrooms. The restrooms are squatters (holes in the floor) that empty out directly onto the tracks below. This is messy but tolerable in restaurants and other stationary places, but on trains there is, understandably, a serious problem with hitting the hole in the floor which means every inch of floor is covered with spray.

“The most memorable part of the trip came last. We had been told ever since we got on the train that we would be provided with a nice breakfast in the morning, so I was kind of anxious to see what would come. The much-hyped breakfast turned out to be a kind of event. A cart came down the aisle and we were each handed a few brown, drippy hard boiled eggs which had been boiled in soy sauce and were already cracked a bit, then boiled, dried brown tofu, a flat package of fatty ham, a little packet of pickled vegetables; three slices of hard bread, butter, jam; and a cup with powdered milk in it that the conductor came by with a kettle to turn it into hot milk. I got up my courage and started making sandwiches out of the bread, eggs, and ham. . .

“The conductor came around offering boiled water to all the people who suddenly produced jars of tea leaves for the trip. There was obvious astonishment that I had brought no jar for tea, so people looked at me pitifully. The main conductor then walked up and down the aisle, delivering a long lecture for the next 15 minutes on exactly how people were to fold the little towels. Apparently, it was of vital importance that everyone’s towel be folded in exactly the same way, for reasons I don’t quite understand. The seats can be littered with garbage and the aisles strewn with discarded chicken feet, but towels must be folded the right way. Okay.

“Once dinner time came, I was handed one plastic container of rice and another containing some kind of dish in an oily sauce (chicken pieces, vegetables, squid tentacles and other things I couldn’t identify, along with a very short set of wooden chopsticks and was told this dinner had been purchased for me by some students a few seats away. After partaking of as much as I could of this thoughtful meal, I realized it was really quite tasty. Unattractive, but tasty. Even the hot milk turned out to be quite sweet and very pleasant.



Flag Bearers for Track and Field Day, Shandong Medical University, 1997



Freshman Class, 1997, Shandong Medical University

“So, I’m glad I took the train. I certainly feel like I’ve “touched,” breathed, tasted and survived a whole new part of China more representative than the elite diplomatic trains I see at school. It’s easier to empathize with a people after you’ve ridden a thousand miles on their trains” (Brecken Swartz journal, 19).

Doug Parker, retired BYU law professor and his wife Corene were the first teachers at prestigious Shandong Medical University, Jinan in 1996. The following documentation of their experience is from an interview by Scott Cameron from *Clark Memorandum*, “Encountering China.”

“When most people retire, they move to Sun City and buy a golf cart. Not Doug Parker. Instead he and his wife, Corene, accepted an invitation to spend a year teaching English to postgraduate medical doctors at Shandong Medical University in Jinan, a city of about four million and the capital of Shandong Province. Instead of a condominium patio off the ninth green, it was rice and garlic greens cooked on a two-burner hot plate in the bathroom of a 300-square-foot apartment. . . teaching in classrooms where the students and the teachers kept their parkas on throughout the winter to keep warm in unheated buildings with broken windows (Cameron 28).

“Living conditions in China were challenging and interesting, but adequate. Doug and Corene had only two hours of hot water a day, from 8:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Often they would keep their breakfast and lunch dishes in the bathtub to be washed when hot water was available. Some nights they were so exhausted from their day’s teaching that they wondered if they could delay going to bed until after the dishes had been done and they had taken a hot bath, particularly during the cold months of winter. At 10:30 pm all water, both hot and cold would be off until 6:00 a.m. But both Doug and Corene agreed, “These were small inconveniences compared to the joys associated with such lovely people who were so anxious for us to have a good experience and to love and enjoy China, which we most surely did” (Cameron 29).

Doug Parker wrote a short essay in his journal dated Jan. 22, 1996, “The Carp that Pursued Its Lips and Winked,” which is excerpted here: “Chinese meals are laden with many rules of etiquette: no one begins until the guest of honor eats the first spoonful; when toasts are made and glasses clicked you should not click your glass so that it is higher than the glass of the person being toasted. About five eighths of the way through the meal, after the first seventeen dishes have been served, a large carp is brought to the table and placed directly in front of the guest of honor, with the carp’s head pointing at the guest of honor. The carp has diagonal slice marks in parallel rows along its side to facilitate the diners in picking off slices with their chop sticks. But no one makes a move to eat the carp until after the guest of honor has taken a slice and eaten a bite.

“So it was at the lovely meal at the staff party on Friday, January 19. A large steaming carp was placed directly in front of Corene and me, its right eye looking at Corene and its left eye at me. We were about ready to take a slice when to our great surprise and disbelief, the carp pursed its lips and winked its eyes. Were we just imagining things? It pursed its lips again and

took a big resigned breath as though it knew it was a goner. Then again, and again, the carp tried to lift its head, perceptibly but in vain.

“Our Chinese hosts watched our surprise with surprise. Didn’t we know that the carp’s condition was the mark of a good chef? When a chef cooks a carp at a good restaurant, he always takes a live one out of a tank, then he wraps the head so he can hold it and dips only the body into the boiling water. Even when the carp is fully cooked, which doesn’t take long, the brain and breathing instinct are still alive. The poor thing has not yet surrendered the ghost. Its ancestors must still endure a brief wait before they greet him or her on the other side.” (Parker 157)

Near the end of their stay in China, Doug wrote in a letter to his children: “We did not come to China as a means of filling our conversation with others when we return. Our encounter with new students, friends, and colleagues whom we have come to love, is one that cannot be fully conveyed” (Cameron 30).

The experience was intense, immediate and personal—not distant, quiet and reflective. . . They had decided before they left that they would not compare China to the United States. Doug maintains: “The foreigner cannot avoid seeing everything comparatively, which only conveys to him or her what the country ‘is not,’ not what the country ‘is.’ . . . They avowed to avoid making comparisons. It was the process of shedding the skin of the foreigner that brought them so much joy (Cameron 30).

Doug describes his encounter with the culture: “Everything we have known and in which we have had faith has been examined from a new vantage point. We have looked at our life’s beliefs from a new hilltop, surrounded by new friends who possess and share none of the assumption that serve as the starting premises and starting foundations for proof and evidence for matter for which we have taken for granted as self-evident. Our hopes, expectations and convictions stand more deeply held by us based on a faith that we see and understand as faith, held, I believe, as God intended when he sent us to earth and wiped our memories clean” (Cameron 30).

In another letter to his children, Doug shared his feelings:

“As intense as our experiences with others have been, even more intense has been our experience with each other, as husband and wife, as sharing colleagues, as best friends, attempting to understand together the inexplicable revelation we are having of the feelings and thinking of Chinese people who have opened their feelings and thoughts to us. I have experienced competent, effective colleagues before, but never have I experienced and observed a colleague who prepares and teaches with the earnestness, intensity, and love as does Corene. I can’t express to you my admiration for her. . .she does not live for compliments, she does not seek recognition. . .Together we had daily, fervent prayers that we would be equal to their (the students) need and desire to learn, and have shared our love for our students and the privilege and inspiration it was to work with them. We know what is meant by. . .”tears of joy” (Cameron 30).

July 1, 1996 just before they went home, Corene recorded in her journal:

“We will long remember awakening to the sound of a Chinese flute playing a haunting melody reminiscent of American Indian music. It is still and quiet outside our large apartment complex where the foreign guest house is located. And yet, if one dresses quickly and goes out onto the campus there are Tai Chi exercise groups in the Central Garden, ballroom dancers on the tennis courts, sword dancers practicing in the ill kept ground of the Chemistry Building. The inconsistency between the gentle, thoughtful ways of our students and their bus manners and post office oppressiveness will ever be a puzzle.

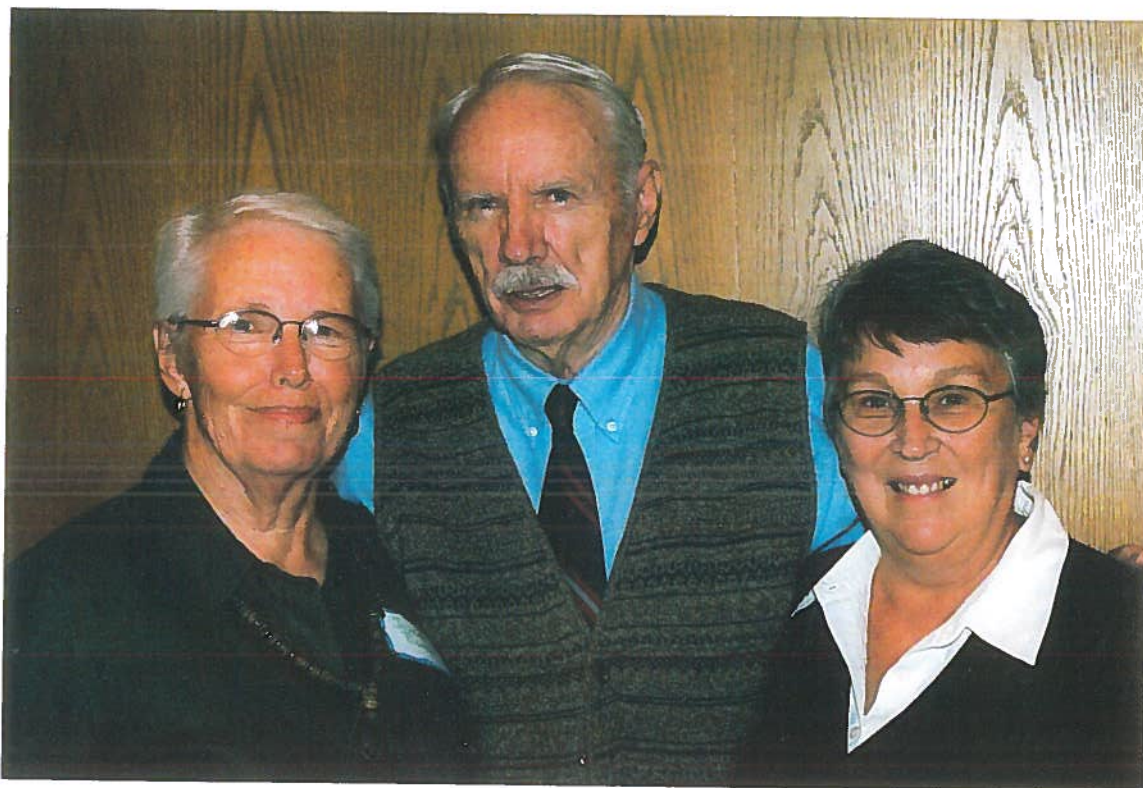
“At the beginning of our courses, diffidence and lack of confidence made our students unwilling to try their spoken English skills, and even less willing to ask questions or disagree. They are fresh, child-like and delightful in their lack of sophistication and worldly experience and yet extremely bright and perceptive in learning quickly and well. China is a teachers’ paradise because of the eagerness and desire to learn on the part of students. China is an experience in loving and being loved, giving and learning, working harder than you thought you could and gaining more than you gave in the process. In short, we have loved “our China” and will ever be grateful for the opportunity and privilege of serving there” (*China Journal*, Doug and Corene Parker 154).

Lowry and Marie Bishop, four-year veterans of the program, taught at Shandong Teachers’ University in 1992, 1994, 1995, 1999. Lowry holds taught English, Social Studies and coached in Fruita, Colorado and Marie taught Kindergarten for 13 years prior to teaching in China. The following was recorded in 1999:

“We are here again in the great land of China, teaching in the same university that we taught in three years ago. Shandong Teacher’s University’s main purpose is to teach, train and fully educate the young students to become teachers in Shandong Province. After receiving a four year degree in English the students will fill positions in large cities or return back to their towns and villages.

Carlos Amado said, “We must expand our vision and recognize that we have ties with God; we must lift our sights daily.” Here in China, our vision has expanded beyond belief. We daily feel ties with God as we teach, love and work with these beautiful Chinese students. They are filled with gratitude, goodness, love, kindness and purity. As we teach them we feel the presence of something eternal and divine. The innocence of our students, the beauty of their souls is so remarkable that as you work among them you feel such a positive influence and a celebration of humanity in its highest form.

“Many students have gone through great trials that most of us would find difficult to endure. Yet our students have thankful and joyful hearts for what they have. They are so grateful to be in the University and they make their studies first priority in their lives. Yet their life as students has unpleasant aspects. They must bring their own bowls and utensils to the dining



Joye Bennion with Ray and Carolyn Hillam, October 2003



Marie and Lowry Bishop
Teachers in 1002, 1994, 1994, 1999

hall. They must fetch hot water to drink and wash with. They wash their laundry by hand and dry it out of the dorm window. Sometimes they have only cold water to shower in but you never hear them complain. They emphasize gaining knowledge and working on the inner souls. They show tender care for their roommates, friends, parents, grandparents and even foreign teachers.

“Last week in my class, one of my students said in her talk, ‘Mrs. Bishop, I’m not supposed to be here today, because I was to be aborted before I was born. My father and mother already had a son, and the officials said my mother must have an abortion. My mother was seven months along with me and my parents would not allow this to happen so they fought very hard. They were punished and fined 500 yuan. It took everything my parents had, for we were very poor and we had to save for many years to pay the money to the officials. My mother always tells me I am a special gift from God. I will work very hard at this university so my parents will always feel I am worth the hardships they had to endure for having me.’

“Another student, a vibrant petite girl with shining eyes named Linda came to my apartment one evening and told me a touching story. Linda grew up in the countryside with poor parents who wanted to sacrifice all they had to help her become educated. Linda had a handsome friend, two years older and a top scholar, whom she regarded as her brother. When they were in middle school, they had to travel twenty miles on a bicycle on crude roads, made more difficult with Linda riding on the back. One day when the wind and mud were horrible, Linda begged her friend to let her pump him, but he refused saying it was a pleasure to help her. Linda ultimately contracted a severe viral illness that lasted for several months. The college entrance examination was only three months away but she was so ill she could hardly lift her head. She began to lose all hope for her life when her friend decided to come to study with her each day. He also carried her to the hospital which was two miles away so she could receive injections. He did this every day on his lunch hour. She felt she could never repay him for his goodness. Finally, Linda’s health improved and she took the college entrance exam and passed it. She was chosen to come to Shandong Teachers University to become an English teacher. Her friend also passed his college examination but his marks were not high, so he was sent to an Industrial University, not a superior university. Linda said, ‘I know it is because of me and the care and time he spent helped me to get to the hospital and saving my life that caused him not to do well on his examination. I will never forget him.’”

“Chinese students praise and honor their homeland. Most students would freely give their lives for their country. One thing we have come to experience here in China is the true brotherhood of mankind and its bonding love. Truly as Nephi says, “All are alike unto God.” The color of our eyes may vary, yet we still deeply feel the significant bonding that we are all truly brothers and sisters.

“So this great China experience has been another sacred journey of our souls. We have felt the touch of the “Master’s hand” as we work among the dark eyed and black-haired students that literally soak up the knowledge we prepare for them. They have such a Christ-like love, yet they know very little of the Man from Galilee—This China encounter is a very precious experience and we thank our Father in Heaven and the BYU Kennedy Program for this

Lucille Hansen, 1997, Anhui Province. Included here is a published article by Lucille in a magazine about how Anhui is perceived by foreigners titled, "Anhui in my eyes"



ANHUI IN MY EYES



露·汉森夫人在教学
Mrs. Lucille Hansen is teaching

China was a "blue" country 12 years ago when I came as a tourist. Everyone wore "blue" clothes and had "blue" expressions on their faces. Life was bleak. China was a slow boat. What has happened to the China of 12 years ago? It is nowhere to be found in Hefei, Anhui. It appears to me, an outsider, that some magical and miraculous things have taken place. The businessmen and politicians in Anhui had a revolutionary idea. They decided to move toward an incentive-based economy. People would get paid for what they produced. Foreign investors were invited to Anhui and told

they could hire, fire and train workers to fit their needs. Businessmen from around the world are flocking to Anhui. They are attracted to the Chinese high standards of honesty and hard work. Everyone wants a higher standard of living. People are willing to work hard to achieve their dreams. China and Anhui Province is changing to meet their dreams and demands. "Blue China" is gone. People are fashionably dressed and wear bright, positive expressions on their faces. The "slow boat" that everyone was on earlier now is soaring into the future at breakneck speed. (Note: Lucille Hansen is a teacher of English at University of Science and Technology of China. She has taught for 30 years and comes from Logan, Utah in USA.)

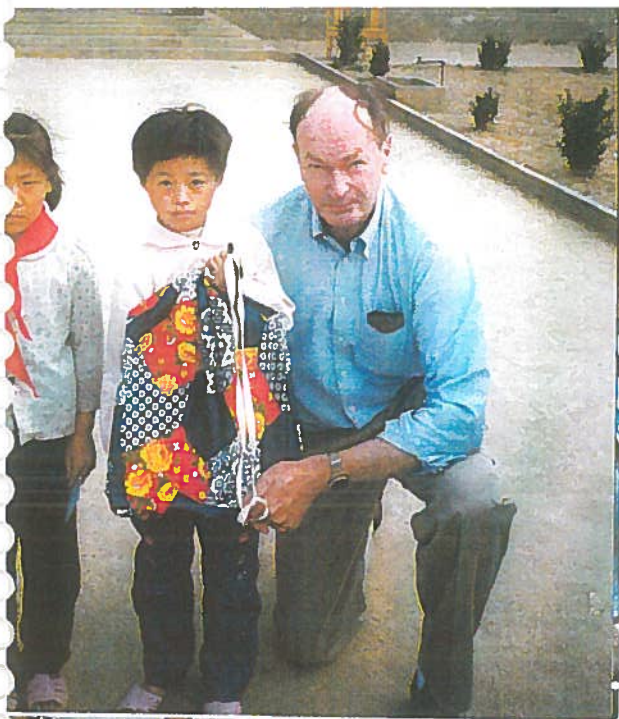
journey. We seek not for wealth or honors of men, but strength from God the Father and Jesus Christ to bless these students as they have blessed us with their worthy lives”

Stan and Barbara Shakespeare taught for three years at Qingdao University, 1996, 1997, 1998. Stan holds an M.A. in Education and Barbara was an experienced teacher with a B.S. in Elementary Education and English. Barbara records: “Stan’s students had been in a serious taxi accident. Stan arranged to be taken to the Navy Hospital to see them. On the second visit I decided to bring my ukelele along to cheer Charles (his student) up. As we entered the hospital and started down the corridors, I couldn’t help but look into the rooms we passed—rooms with single iron beds with a small nightstand lined each wall with a few backless chairs. Patients were attended by family members some with small children. There was no segregation according to sex, illness or injury. When we found Charles’s room, he was not there. Since he had suffered a severe head injury, he had been moved to another hospital that treated mental disorders. Walking back through the hospital and out into the courtyard, I had the strongest feeling that we should go back. Ignoring the prompting, we walked on down the drive. The feeling came again that I should return to the hospital, so strong that I stopped in my tracks.

“Stan, I don’t know why but we need to go back inside. I have a strong feeling I should go into the rooms and play my uke for the patients. I know this sounds crazy when we don’t know any of them.’ We turned and retraced our steps to the main corridor

“I stepped into a room, took out my uke and asked if I could play for them. Of course, no one spoke English. I played and sang for them as I walked around the room and looked into their eyes. Many had tears in them and nearly all had smiles on their faces and would clap along with the rhythm. The doorway and windows filled as others heard the music. I sang four of the songs and almost before I had finished, arms grabbed mine as mothers, wives and relatives attempted to drag me into different directions to sing for their loved ones. I wish I could express how I felt as I looked into the faces of those people, young, old, in-between. All were receptive and each had a look of innocence in their eyes. Maybe that’s what touched my heart the most. Even the toughest and scruffiest still had a little innocence. I wanted to put my arms around each one of them to tell them everything would be all right, that I was there and wouldn’t let anything happen to them. My life changed that Sunday afternoon.”

Sterling Ottesen, retired dentist and his wife Carol, former BYU instructor taught in 1997 at Shandong Medical University and in 1999 at Peking University. In a letter to their family, August 31, 1997, Carol records their arrival in China: “After a five hour train ride from Beijing we arrived at the train station in Jinan, a small city of 4 to 5 million people! Two men from the Foreign Affairs office met us in the official transportation of Shandong Medical University—an ambulance. As we struggled off the train with our bags I felt a strong hand grab the largest one and speak in a familiar voice with a New Zealand accent. It couldn’t be, I thought, as I turned around and there he was. Grant Pearse. All the way from Guangzhou. Tears sprang to my eyes at the at sight of big Grant, our dear friend we met in California; I thought I must be hallucinating after so many hours of travel. How? What? The questions rattled out. I knew he was in China but Guangzhou is as far away as New York is from Los Angeles. “I have ways,” he said. “I traveled on the hard sleeper 41 hours with no air



Morris and Donna Petersen
Feixian County
Shandong Province



conditioning to get here when you arrived. I couldn't miss your arrival." He came with us to our apartment and stayed two nights—cutting our way everywhere. We didn't even know where to get toilet paper. He speaks Mandarin, but no matter, he makes people laugh in any language. He set up our phone and generally introduced us to no-sweat living in China. This is the truest act of friendship I can imagine. I hated to see him go. [Grant Pearse was then Branch President of the Guangzhou Branch.]

Our first Sunday and the other 6 BYU teachers at Shan Shi Da haven't yet arrived. The *waiban* has left us pretty much on our own to stock our small cupboard and begin life in China. Everytime we go out children follow, all tittering, gathering more children as we walk, all laughing and looking at each in unbelief at these "foreign devils."

We decided to have our own Sunday Service with just the two of us. The apartment was sweltering; someone told us it was 40 degrees celsius, which is over 100 Fahrenheit. We sat in our living room side by side in our two chairs with a small table between us on which we placed a cup of boiled water and a plate with a small piece of bread. We selected a song we knew wouldn't be too sentimental, "Welcome, Welcome, Sabbath Morning." Nevertheless, we couldn't make it through without a lump in our throats and the sound was nearly inaudible as we finished, "now ye rest from every care/ Holy Sabbath, day of prayer." Sterling said a beautiful prayer, thanked the Lord that "Carol could come today," which made us laugh and cry at the same time. He blessed the sacrament and we partook. After, we began our scripture reading, each read a couple of chapters, then spoke a few words in an assessment of our time here and a statement of our purpose. We both feel strongly about the rightness of this decision and this gives us courage.

Peking University, October 20, 2000: "Hardly a day goes by that we don't marvel at something or other—for uniqueness this assignment can hardly be equaled. In our more introspective moments when we're walking or riding in a taxi we have to remind ourselves we are really here, that this is mainland China and this is actually Peking University and we are living in a building that they say the infamous "Gang of Four" were incarcerated! Merriam Rogers and I can make up all kinds of stories about the spots on the carpet.

We got a call this week from a Dr. Meng in the English Department here asking if he could bring over a manuscript for me to proofread. When he came he asked if we were in China for the first time and we told him we had taught in Jinan and he exclaimed that this was his home town. Then he asked where we were from. When we said Brigham Young University in Utah, he jumped right off the chair. "I can't believe it. I taught at BYU one year in the Asian Studies Department as a visiting scholar. Oh this is amazing. I was there in 1981, the first mainland Chinese at BYU since the revolution. The prophet wanted to talk to me, I think about sending missionaries to China. He got sick so we couldn't keep our appointment. But I know it was an honor to see the prophet!" We were as astounded as he was. And we do not know why he came to us above all other foreign teachers here at Peking University. Then he pulled out the manuscript—about five pounds of it, it seemed, a proposal from the City of Beijing to the IOC to host the 2008 Olympics which Dr. Meng will present to the IOC in April. Now can you actually believe this? "And," he said, "I will put your names on as authors with me. Right here, from BYU." So this is what I'll be doing in my spare time. I'll not make any



Chinese Scholar, Peking University, Beijing, 2000



Man in market place, Beijing, 2000

assumptions here except to say that I've noticed that while we're here, not much seems to happen without a reason."

From a journal entry dated April 16, 2001 Carol tells about initiating an essay contest at Peking University: "Today I met with the head of the English Department about the essay contest I suggested. He wants to expand it, in fact, he will require all English majors to write an essay as a final paper for the contest. What's more, he has arranged with Peking University Press to print a book of the winning essays. This is a first at Peking University and it will become an annual event. At last the students will have a voice and I sense an open feeling as I work with the publisher. Hurrah! As I walked home through the little park pathway following the ponds, I heard a few loud frogs and then as I rounded one of the bends in the path, a wall of sound hit me—the Frog Tabernacle Choir! I thought they must be as big as horses but I couldn't see a one—only the huge sound that seemed like a charming amen to my feelings of hurrah!

Don Nuttall, MBA in Business Administration and Joyce Nuttall, University English Instructor taught in Jinan, Shandong, 1997-98. The following is a journal excerpt from Joyce: "As I work with these young people who do not have knowledge about a loving God the Father or His son Jesus Christ, I am struck by the realization that all men have the Light of Christ that came with them from their eternal home. When my students cluster around me, spend hours in our apartment, seek out our company and yearn to know what makes us different, or plead to know about our faith, I know it is their light flickering a little brighter as they feel our light. I am deeply saddened when I cannot tell them about the gospel of Jesus Christ but have to be content to let them feel our testimony through our love for them. At least I know that they are awakening to the realization that there is something bright and beautiful that they desire but do not have. Perhaps, in some distant time, when a missionary knocks on their door or they meet a Latter Day Saint in a more open environment, they will remember the feeling and be drawn toward the light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"Since we have returned home, we have heard from our students about missionary contacts when they have been visiting scholars or attended schools in other countries. Three of them have been converted to the church and another two responded favorably to the missionary contact."

Gloria Gardner Murdock, who taught in Jinan, 1998-1999 was pulled into the program that ordinarily would not have accepted her until the following fall, because she was needed to replace a couple who became ill. She joined the training sessions two days after being asked and only three weeks before she departed for China to teach at Jinan Communications College. Gloria describes her "step into China" in a poetic booklet "Steep Steps of China," excerpted here.

"Instead of moving to Hood River, Oregon for marriage, I landed upside down in a hot and noisy land in the moist heat of August. American things started to fall out of me—both in the sense that Americanism is what I displayed by my presence, and in the sense that I had refused needing to be emptied.



Teaching Building 8, Shandong Medical University, 1998



Peking University Library, Spring 2000

"China hit me hard, despite the wonder of it all. As I peeled off layers of the onion to understand the culture I found tight whorls of China still locked in its obdurate past. My inner eye stung in the process and often cried out as spoken in Ecclesiastes: *That which is crooked cannot be made straight; and that which is wanting cannot be numbered* (1:15).

"I wanted, nonetheless, to be some lover who could conjoin West to East in our disparities, if only for my own transformation. What I found was cities with a lack-luster patina, their surface imbedded with rubble and grime. All around was construction and destruction. Walls of trees and brick and ignorance kept me from seeing the long view; steep steps kept me measuring America, China, humanity and my own worth. It took me three months of intense and noisy living before I began to comprehend the Chinese sense of harmony, to viscerally understand their art of communal living.

* * *

"I remember walking with Sun Wei through Black Tiger Springs last Fall, keeping from him how independent I felt at that moment: unencumbered. If someone were to guess, they'd see my gusto and think I had no children in the world. Then Sun Wei spoke, 'You have *six* children?' I turned away to muse from beneath my flash of tears, 'Have I not also new daughters and granddaughters?' I asked myself.

"I had no sleep Christmas night knowing that my children were carrying on without me (15 hours to the rear), doing that which I wanted to be experiencing with them. I stayed awake in marvel over the intimacy of lives lived together, intertwined even at this distance.

* * *

I go up or down between 6 and 32 flights of stairs daily, averaging about 24 flights per day, if I forget nothing in my room. I live on a fourth floor, I teach on a fourth floor, the lounge is two floors away. . . The stairs, I must say, have been good for my body; yet on weekends I head for mountains—without stairs—to free my soul. Here I hike with a friend into mountains only slightly higher than the haze of Jinan City. We look out at spumes from Coal-production towers that form a lowered nebula blanket covering the city's 5 million doctrinaire inhabitants who crouch beneath its weight. In those heights where the sun shines upon mountain leading into mountain, we've only chance upon three individuals in more than a dozen of our climbs. Farmers are thought to be lazy if they climb mountains instead of tending to the field. Students, though they have joined us on occasion, fear they will lose their way; but some, like Jing, nonetheless like it eventually. . .

"I've been climbing backbones of the Chinese mountains, the serpent with bones of a thousand thousand men inbred under its walkway—the Great Wall of China. For 10,000 kilometers (according to the Chinese book) this no-joke dragon sprawls in legs that seem to split and repeat themselves, that climb and slide in the high-up air of so many humps on its buckling spine. Imposing and exhilarating. Exomorphic. Hundred of people ant-crawl the long-reach steps. Gruesome yet majestic.

"'You are not a man until you have seen the Great Wall of China.' I'm woman with the woe of so many used up lives. . . the shame of death as men worked through the blasts of frigid wind. Our guide's moon face is now a face painted on silk; her mind vacates into remembering the

script as she floats her dark eyes to their defined corner. We hear of the woman who bid her husband goodbye to work on the wall. Days later, she took him warmer clothes only to find him dead. It is the tears of the women that broke down the wall, our guide explains. 'For 1800 years the emperors were the sons of heaven; when they say something others must obey. They will work on the wall until they die.'"

"What I have written reflects the formidable. I hope it also carries my love."

Boyd Bronson, taught Math, Science and Photography in high school for 35 years before he and his wife Merlene taught at Shandong Medical University in 1997-1998. In May of 1997 the Bronsons reported to Kennedy Center:

"Boyd has just had hernia surgery. The thought of doing this was a little scary, as you can imagine. We felt confident in the ability of the surgeons, and because of our previous experiences we felt that sufficient care and cleanliness would be exercised. The other option was coming home early, and we hated to do that because we felt an obligation to fulfill our contract, and besides, we love it here. Everything went well. Now all that is required is for him to recover. He is being well cared for. I also had a medical problem that required 10 days of IV treatments. When the doctor told me what the treatment would be, I almost walked out. I was really afraid if the needles would be sterile or not. My mind was quickly set at ease when I took the prescription to the pharmacy. I had to buy everything required for the treatments, IV solution, needles, tubing, medications, syringes. There was a bed reserved for me at the clinic and every day I received the treatment. Since I speak no Chinese and the nurses speak no English, there was a student or staff member with me all the time. It was pretty humbling to see the amount of care that was lavished on me, a stranger."

Dean Thompson, variously a high school biology teacher and standup comedian taught with his wife Joann at Shandong Medical University, 1998-1999. October 09, 1998 the following email records his experience with the heavy traffic of Jinan, Shandong.

"I got out of the hospital today after a one-week stay. A week ago I was sideswiped by a taxi while JoAnn and I were crossing a street. We didn't see the taxi because it was coming out of the university gate behind us as we started across the street, and then it made a left turn much too sharply, in effect it was driving down the wrong side of the street. Still, we should have looked to the right and behind us.

Somehow my right arm went through the rear side window. My right forearm was badly slashed, and an artery was severed. The cab driver came rushing up to me to help, and I pulled a handkerchief out of my pocket which he used to apply a tourniquet. Since he was forbidden by Chinese law to move his cab, he summoned another cab which took us to the hospital, less than a block away.

The ER doctor applied a compression bandage, and then had a nurse take me, blood soaked to x-ray and then to the lab. . . then to the operating room where I was for almost five hours. The next thing I remember was being in my hospital room with a man there to take care of me. I assumed he was a nurse, but he was a Chinese teacher from the English Department of



Elaine Marshall, Dean of BYU School of Nursing with former President Wang of Shandong Medical University, June 2001, Provo, Utah



Joe and Gloria Jensen with Dong Bei, Medical Student from Shandong Medical, August 2002 in Salt Lake City.



Foreground: Boyd and Merline Bronson, back, JoAnn and Dean Thompson, Doug Parker, all former China Teachers

Shandong Medical. From then until Sunday, the Chinese teachers took turns staying with me to act as interpreters. They were also in the operating room. The surgeon pulled a piece of glass four inches long out of my arm, and the artery was difficult to sew because it was cut on a diagonal. By noon the next day I was feeling good and asked when I would be able to go home. But they said I couldn't because my EKG did not look good.

JoAnn called some of our church friends and two of them came and administered to me. Sunday all ten of them came. Although it is definitely not "E.R.," Shandong Medical University Hospital is said to be the best one in the entire Shandong Province. I'm sure I had the best doctors they have. I was assigned a private room reserved for very important people; most other patients are six to a room. The kindness of the Chinese teachers was overwhelming. They brought flowers, fruit and moon cakes—many of my students came with flowers. And the police assigned the taxi driver to come and visit me as part of his penance. He came three or four times.

Dean Thompson was awarded Teacher of the Year in Shandong Province. An e-mail letter June 11, 1999 as he was winding up the school semester and preparing to leave China:

"Back at the apartment I read more journals. David, one of my best students, wrote about being "in charge of the Communist Youth League." Then he added, "Mr. Thompson, perhaps you never knew that I was a communist." I felt that this needed a response, and so I wrote the following in his journal: "I assumed that some of you are Communists. It is interesting that people can have ideological differences and still be friends. At home, I have strong ideological differences with some of my friends, but we still like each other."

"Many of them added an unsolicited piece telling me how much they have enjoyed my class and thanked me for what I have done for them. They said they were sorry I'm leaving and wished me well. What an enigma! What an emotional roller coaster! It will take me months to sort it out. I am just beginning to understand Dickens' famous line from *Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times. It was the worst of times."

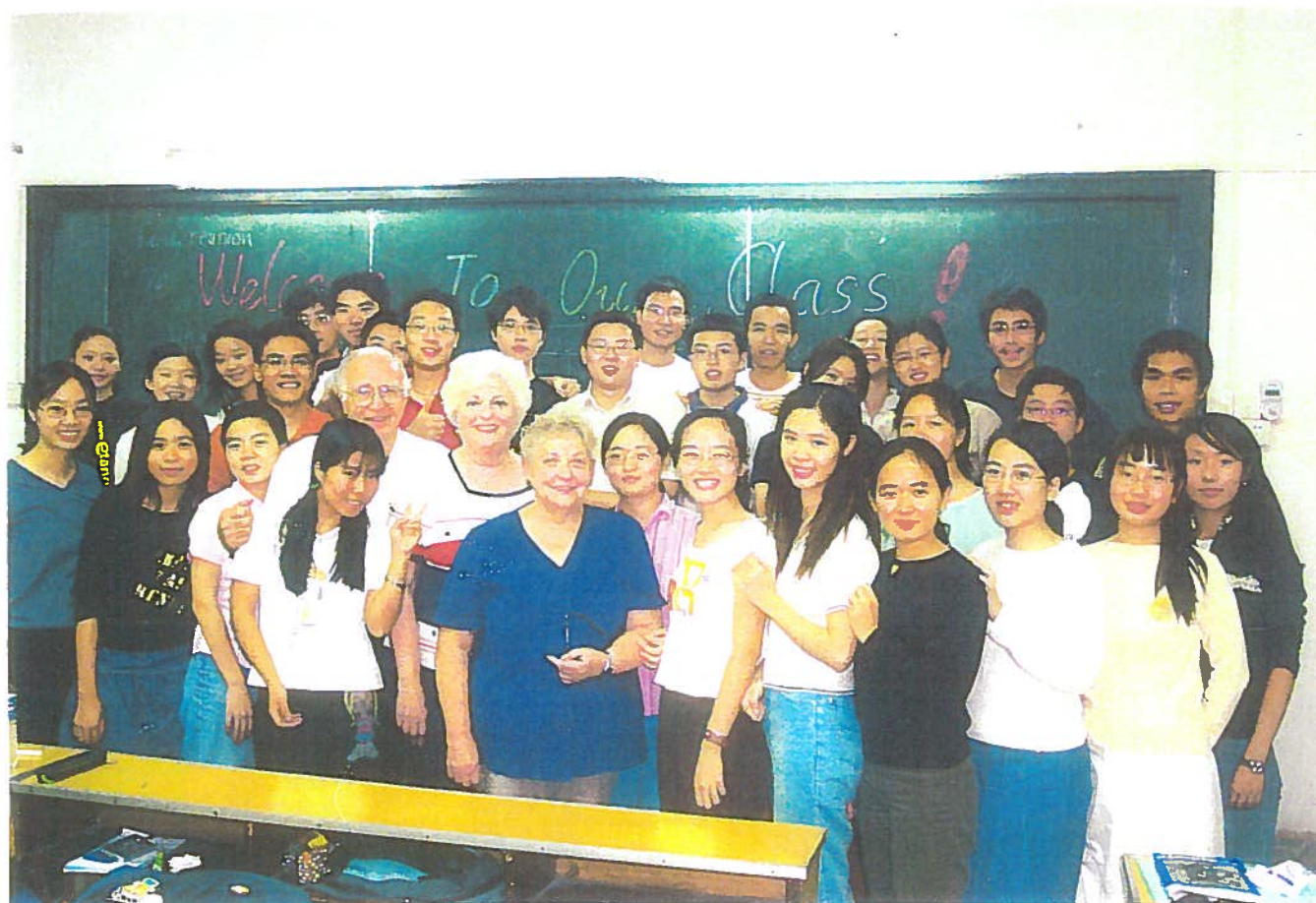
Linda Frost, teacher in Shanghai, 2000 and now working on PhD at BYU wrote an essay, "The Gourd," as symbolic of her China experience:

"My home here in China is decorated with an assortment of objects. Most are gifts from friends which make them meaningful to me but others I value for the lessons that have come with them. I don't like having a lot of things. In fact I'm trying to live life more simply without an overabundance of material possessions. However, to make a house a real home requires things of beauty and meaning. So, if you were to look to your left as you enter my apartment, you might notice a small round gourd.

"To be sure, it's an ordinary gourd, quite small in size, maybe the size of an average tangerine. It has a natural wood color but it is what's on it that taught me the lesson. The whole of the gourd is covered with an etching of the Great Wall of China. It is exquisitely done and precise in detail. But what makes it so amazing to me is that it is done on such a small surface. An



George and Diane Pace, Marlene and Arlin Berry
Linda Frost, Shanghai



Diane and George Pace with Carol Turley (China Teacher in Quangzhou) 2002

artisan has put some of himself into this creation. His pride shows in his workmanship and attention to detail.

"I found this artisan on the Great Wall when I visited in April. He didn't speak much English and I spoke even less Chinese but we managed through actions and a dictionary to communicate. He was the man who had done the work. The gourd had taken him many hours to finish in spite of its small size. He had a wife and a son and seemed to be about 50, though I couldn't tell that from his face or bearing. In ways, he was ageless. It was his hands that told another story. His fingers and nails carried the tell-a-tale signs of manual work. They were rough, gnarled, somewhat scarred, and stained with black ink that crept deep into the skin's crevasses and cracks and didn't wash off.

"He had a bag of gourds. Each was a slightly different shape with a slightly different scene. He patiently allowed me to examine each to find the one that spoke to me. He asked 40 yuan for his work. He said that was what my friends had paid him. I looked at him and saw that in spite of his poor clothing, there was a dignity about him. He obviously wanted and needed to sell his craft but he pushed me to buy nothing.

"Almost always the cost of buying something in China causes me grief. I do not do well and have never done well at bargaining. I know it is expected and yet I can't shake the feeling that I am cheating someone if I do it, or am being cheated if I don't do it: cultural conflict. However, I plunged into the cultural conflict offering him a much lower price until we settled on 30 not 40 yuan. I paid him the money, thanked him, and turned away feeling victorious. But the farther I walked from him, the more my elation faded until I couldn't take any enjoyment from the object in my hand.

"I held a work of art there. It may be a common object in China and not highly regarded but I thought of what it had required of the man and what he had produced and knew I had acquired something of value. I returned to him and handed him another 10 yuan. I don't know if he understood my poor explanation, I only know that the joy in the beauty of the gourd returned.

"Now some might say that I was cheated by paying 30 yuan and that paying another 10 was the height of lunacy and by Chinese standards, both are true. But there is more to it than that. It may have indeed been an outrageous price to pay but when I look at the gourd I see beauty and not money. The gourd reminds me that all people have dignity and talent, including myself and that to retain that dignity, I must honor it. The man had done right by himself. He had produced a simple but outstanding work of craftsmanship. I needed to respond in like manner by giving what I thought it was worth, even if, and maybe specifically because, the value I placed on it crossed cultural boundaries. Whether I was cheated or not, whether anyone agrees with me or not, is not the issue. The issue is that I responded to someone in what I considered to be a fair manner. And as a result I have not only a striking scene of the Great Wall, I have a visual reminder of the value of people. It is a lesson that is worth much, much more than 40 yuan. So, if you ever come to my home in China and look to the left, the small gourd on the bookshelf is really much, much more than just what you see."



Banquet given by Jinan Communications College for Max and Jean Beers. with Lynn Henrichsen and wife, and the Ottesens



Trip to Mt. Tai with Lynn Henricksen (Professor of Linguistics, BYU and teacher of China Teachers seminar) and wife.
Wang Ying Chun, Waiban, Shandong Medical University, 1998 (far right)

Tom Rogers, BYU Professor, linguist, writer, dramatist and former mission president in Russia, with his wife Merriam, former teacher, taught at Peking University, 2000-2001. In a memoir called "Love and Serendipity" Tom records:

"Merriam and I had returned to Peking University for the winter semester just a month after flying home for an emergency prostate operation-obviously, mine. Symptoms had emerged toward the end of the fall semester when I was advised that there were no Western-trained urologists available in the PRC. The need for an operation became so urgent that I had to leave Merriam behind to administer and correct both her own final semester exams and mine also. Fortunately, she was able to join me a week later in the states after I went under the knife.

"My healing had proceeded apace during the month-long vacation period that ensued, enabling us to resume teaching when classes reconvened in early February. The timing was ideal and all seemed to go well until one day in March, in the middle of a lesson, I was suddenly afflicted by a piercing pain in the abdomen. In mid-sentence, I paused, and without further thought, announced to the class that I would need to go immediately to a doctor, preferably to the Beijing United Family Hospital where I had received my original diagnosis in December.

"It was only then that I became aware of an unfamiliar face among this class's more than forty students. A tall, handsome gentleman (who later took the name of 'Jim') stood and announced that because of conflicts at work he had come to my class for the first time that very morning. He said he was a banker by profession and his car was parked just outside our building. Even though many of our students, all Ph.D. candidates were already engaged in a variety of professions, manager, editor, judge, research scientist, etc., few if any of them owned a car or had permission to bring it onto the campus.

"Jim and others assisted me down the stairs and Jim insisted on driving me to the hospital. (Normally I would have had to walk nearly a mile off campus to take a taxi to the hospital.) Meanwhile, another student Paul had run to Merriam's class and informed her that she must come with him quickly since Mr. Rogers was very sick and needed to go to the hospital. Jim, Merriam, Paul and I began our journey through the campus. Before we had even left the campus, Paul began to call the hospital with his cell phone so he would know the fastest route from our campus location.

"Circumventing Beijing's bustling traffic and racing across that immense city as efficiently as any ambulance, we arrived at the hospital within an hour. There much to my surprise, I was referred to a Western-trained urologist who, like Jim in my classroom, had just joined their staff that very day. Because of Dr. Shu's presence and expertise, I was correctly diagnosed as suffering from epididymitis, a severe complication that often occurs in the aftermath of prostate operations. My present condition, which masked appendicitis, might otherwise have been misconstrued by the hospital's general practitioners. As it turned out, I spent five days there under Dr. Shu's fine care—finally throwing off the highest fever and most extreme debilitation I had ever known, feeling closer then than I can ever recall to passing from this existence.



Merriam and Tom Rogers, Beijing with Carol Ottesen



Chinese Student, Beijing



Beijing Branch at Simitai, May 2002

“The total experience has left a number of indelible impressions, together with all kinds of questions. Why should both Jim and Dr. Shu have so exceptionally come into my presence on a day that proved my urgent need of them? Why were they and our other students so solicitous of my and Merriam’s welfare? Their concern and commiseration were also manifested by those in our other three graduate classes—a total of over 160—as well as by the ninety sophomores whom I additionally met with in two additional sections once each week for practice in English conversation.

“More than once our students had commented that, in China, a teacher is like a second parent and revered in the same way ever after. That alone amazed us: we had never experienced such uniform, heartfelt deference and respect from our students in America, even at BYU. Were they in part so magnanimous because we were Americans—icons of a foreign culture the Chinese just now both so admire and envy? I’m persuaded that, for whatever subconscious reasons, their response was also utterly sincere. But how could they all be so similarly disposed, so thoroughly conditioned to manifest such altruism? Is that the positive ‘flip side’ of the collectivist ethic—so unlike our own rampant ‘do-your-own-thing-ism?’

“We nevertheless discovered that our PKU students and the other Chinese we encountered that memorable year are, deep down, also distinct individuals—as much so as any of us—and just as fun loving. I vividly recall the day I attempted to start class with a group of law students. Most had not known each other before that semester. While waiting for me, they had begun to share jokes and were, when I arrived, so broken up with laughter that they could not contain themselves. But the wonderful comraderie this had brought about was so infectious and so beautiful to behold that I did not stop them and when they had finally quieted down, I even called it to their attention.

“Nor do Merriam and I any more think of the Chinese as we once may have—as inscrutable and physically indistinguishable. However, we will never forget what truly became, in most cases during only two contact hours per week, a veritable ‘love feast’ between ourselves and at first total strangers of another race, speaking an unintelligible language, with a markedly alien cultural, religious (often atheistic) and political (Marxist) orientation—indeed, as close a bonding as we had ever experienced with students in America (for 31 years at BYU and several years elsewhere) or with the wonderful missionaries we served with for three years in St. Petersburg, or even with some of our own kin.

“Such good will, such unbounded affection, such seeming innocence! (Because of our hard work with such a high student-teachers ratio, we nearly exhausted ourselves as we never had back home!) Even so, in this foreign setting people were as Edenic as anything we had ever encountered or could imagine this side of the veil.”

George Pace, BYU Assistant Professor of Religion and Diane C. Pace, mother of 12 children taught at Tongji University, Shanghai 1999-2000. George Pace records: “I taught Oral English at Tongji University to PhD candidates. There were a few women, but mostly men in their thirties and forties, all professional people, some very successful who had returned to the university to pursue their doctorate degrees.



Mao Zedong statue in front of Tonji University
Diane and George Pace (foreground)



Tonji University Gate, Shanghai

“It took some time and effort to help the students adjust to our Western style of teaching. More often their education had been stilted and sterile as they were fed information by rote and required to memorize and merely repeat what they heard and read. I learned they seldom received praise or appreciation. They anticipated criticism and harsh words from teachers and even parents in their educational experience.

“I decided to offer them encouragement and express appreciation often. I made a concerted effort to have one on one contact with each student. At the end of each class I stood by the door and shook each student’s hand, looked them in the eye and spoke their name. I assigned each student segments of the text book to prepare and present to the class. Then, as each finished the presentation, I tried something, with some reservation and discovered it was surprisingly effective. I taught the class a nursery song my wife had used in preschool. It went like this, ‘John, we love you. Thanks for all the things you do. John so kind and true, we love you.’ It was amazing how sincerely and vigorously those mature, bright intelligent adults would belt out that little song to each other. I was equally amazed at the response of the student to whom they were singing. Without exception he/she would stand before the class beaming with delight during the entire episode.

“When I was invited to join a group of other “foreigners” to travel to Tibet, my wife insisted that I go and offered to cover my classes during the week of my absence. When I left, I reminded her to not forget to have the class sing the ‘song’ when each student finished the presentation. She did this and the first student went back to his seat after the singing. The second student came up and just as she was about to conduct the song again, the first student spoke up with some firmness and said, ‘Mrs. Pace, when Professor Pace has us sing the song he holds us.’ Diane wasn’t certain what he meant, so he repeated the statement, ‘He holds us.’ She then realized that I always went up to the front of the room to stand next to the student with my arm around their shoulder as the song was sung. From that point on she never failed to go up and do the same.

“Often when I would stand by a student with my arm around his shoulder, he would turn to me at the end of the song and whisper, ‘I love you.’ Since returning to the U.S.A., I have received many email messages from my students and it is not unusual to have them end the message by writing, “Professor Pace, so kind and true. I love you.”

In 2001 to 2002, Joe and Gloria Jensen taught at Shandong Medical University. Joe came with a background of teaching Language Arts for 34 years in Glendale, California. An e-mail dated April 17, 2002 tells of a humorous experience of singing at a Christian Church in Jinan:

“Easter Sunday our Twig was once again invited to sing at the huge Chinese Christian Church. Joe accompanied our little choir on the piano. We sounded O.K., considering the ultra deep, rumbling, thundering sound coming from a “Chinese” Grand! Once back in our seats, Joe began trembling and emitting little gasps of air. I thought he might be having some sort of seizure—but then realized he was desperately trying to suppress his laughter. He was simply overcome. You see at our Twig meetings he plays on a little electric keyboard, and he realized that he had just played all our songs on the lower half of the piano. It was about then I noticed my dress



January 1998, China Teachers group at Stone Forest



China Teachers, 1999, Stone Forest

was on backwards! Now we both had the giggles again, and Joe said, When I can't find middle C and you can't find the front of your dress, it's time to go home!"

Wayne Owen, with a PhD in Social Psychology and his wife, Leah, B.A. in French/ Psychology taught at Ocean University in Qingdao. Their enthusiasm for the China Teaching experience is evident in this email of April 6, 2002 from Qingdao:

"We want to let everyone know about what has been a great experience for us and a bit of a success story too. We feel we've been richly rewarded for our efforts here in this wonderful, contradictory and exotic country. We want to tell you about a student in one of Leah's Junior writing classes.

"Last October, Li Jun came to Leah and said he had been asked by Ocean University to enter an English speech contest. It is a China-wide competition and takes place over a 6-7 months period all over the country. When he initially approached us Jason was in a state of mild panic and asked if we would please review his speech and make suggestions to improve it. He had only a few days before he had to submit a script and recording to Beijing, where the first round of the contest was being held. We were glad to help, and over the course of the next few days spent many hours helping him revise and rewrite his speech and practice his pronunciation and delivery.

"In a few weeks he learned he would compete at the regional level only his speech had to be shorter, so we helped him again. The semifinals were held in Shanghai and Jason was quite anxious and not very confident because of the competition. But as he revised, rewrote and practiced his speech, he began to feel a little more comfortable. We sent him off, telling him that we were confident in him and that he only needed to do his best. He took first place and was now eligible to participate in the nationwide finals to be held in Chengdu. He had to prepare an entirely new speech on a different topic and it needed to be longer. Again we worked with him, but a couple of days before he had to leave he told us his University would not approve his speech and he had to come up with a new one. In the next two days he wrote and rewrote, e-mailing us for our comments.

"He took second place and won a trip to London plus other perks. I don't know who was more thrilled, him or us. It has been almost as if he were one of our own children succeeding. Of course, in the manner typical of the Chinese, he denies any credit for his own skills and abilities and says he owes it all to good fortune and help from us. It has truly been a big pay day for us. But almost everyday we have an experience with one or two of our students which makes us feel like a million dollars. Not that we are so different than other teachers here, but the students have a way of helping us feel we are just about the best thing that has ever happened to them, when in reality, it is just the other way around."

The unique experience of Stephan and Kathleen Seable, 1999 teachers at the Foreign Affairs College, Beijing is described in an email to author, March 02, 2003. Stephan taught art in Jr. College and High School and is a professional sculptor; Kathleen taught Freshman English at BYU.

21st Century

CHINA DAILY

第440期 2002年4月4日 邮发代号1-193



Leah Owens, Qingdao, 2002 with student, Li Jun who won national speech contest and made the front page of the *China Daily*

"I am a retired school teacher with thirty-two years experience in public schools including high school, college and adult Ed—I loved it and felt fulfilled but our year in China eclipsed it all.

"We threw ourselves into extra duties at our College and mingled in the community and traveled with students and Chinese friends all over China. We tutored children and adults and enjoyed English corners and many cultural exchange opportunities. Kathleen and our daughter did voice overs for radio and worked at China TV. We loved the open markets, the incredible food, the finest in the world.

"I was so in love with my experience there I painted about twenty-five paintings of my impressions of China. We became good friends with a professor who was aware of my art interest and he came up with a project to paint a Western/Eastern dragon mural meeting in harmony and unity as part of the Chou Yung New Year celebration. I painted it with a young Chinese artist who was a student of Kathleen's. This played many times during Spring festival all over China and we were often greeted by people pointing and saying "CCTV." I've never had that kind of coverage on a project here.

"I also painted a mural for a new building for our school with a dragon hidden in the landscape that I titled, "The Slumbering Dragon Awakes."

"We were active in the marvelous Beijing Branch and I helped a young man with a mural for his Eagle Scout project which led to an art commission for the U.S. Embassy Preschool. We mingled with several outstanding Chinese artists and arranged for shows at the U.S. Embassy. We have kept contact with our friends and are working with local Galleries to sponsor a traveling show of about twenty outstanding artists. One of my wonderful Chinese students was assigned to work in Korea where she looked up the church and joined and later married a friend of ours from Australia who attended the Beijing branch. What a joyous story that is.

"We have many students who have gone abroad to study and we will meet with two of them we helped get into BYU Hawaii this month. Our teaching experience in China has changed and enriched our lives in a most wonderful way, as it has most of our friends who taught with us."

Sherrel Butler Rowe made a difficult decision to teach in Qingdao, 2000. In an interview June 19, 2003 in Provo, Utah she related that she was already to accompany her husband, former Dean of Admissions at BYU, who had been called as mission president to Jackson, Mississippi. However, before he was set apart he passed away of a stroke on March 10, 2000.

Sherri said, "With his sudden death, I was 'all dressed up with no where to go.' The last minute I was asked if I'd take the place of Anne Butler who couldn't go to Qingdao. So I went after only four days of the preparation seminar. The hardest thing was doing this alone—I had always depended on my husband to get around. The Sturgills helped me find my way because they'd been to China before and knew the campus of Ocean University. I had graduated with a BA in education and had some ESL teaching experience but nothing prepared me for China. And not having a husband to discuss things with or help me make decisions was a challenge.



Teachers in X'ian, 2002, courtesy Sherri Rowe (center)



Nanjing Institute of Posts and Communications

But I found I could be independent and that I could be happy—it isn't the same kind of happiness but I made the adjustment and I was happy. They've asked me to return again but because of family matters, I need to stay home. But I think someday I'll go back because I love the people.

You ask me why I was able to do this. Well, I think my pioneer ancestry was a factor. But commitment to the Gospel is all important, knowing that the Lord will always help you when you're doing his work. My father always said to me, "My baby can do anything." He repeated this many times and I never had a fear of trying new things. I taught classes I didn't know before hand I would have to teach—but who the Lord calls, he qualifies."

Lin and Susan Bothwell taught in Qingdao in 2000 and were the first teachers to be placed at prestigious Tsinghua University in Beijing 2001, 2002. Lin and Susan were newlyweds and came to China virtually as a honeymoon with the intent that, with a large blended family of children and grandchildren they were leaving, they would spend "only one year overseas." Fall of 2003 they began their fourth year in China. Lin, who holds a doctorate from Harvard, was named after the Chinese author Lin Yutang and Susan had three Chinese-American grandchildren—certainly significant reasons for their interest in China.

At Tsinghua University Lin taught in the School of Economics and Management and Susan taught English there and at Tsinghua Primary School. Susan, with Church teaching experience only says:

"I want to share some of my experience as I have put my trust in the Lord teaching university students in China. I found that if I added faith and patience to complete trust in the Lord I could do anything the Lord asked me to do. I knew with the help of the Holy Ghost, *we*, meaning the Lord and I together could do an excellent job.

I was excited to go to China but I had no idea what an impact we would make with the people we came in contact with. One morning early shortly after we arrived, I was walking across the basketball courts to my classroom talking to the Lord and the words came into my mind as clear and sweet as could be: "Teach them life's lessons; teach them how to live, teach them correct principles." So I would give them a thought for the day, a quote, or poem, then I had them write a personal journal. They literally drank in the weekly Life's lessons. Many said, "You have given a new way to think, a new way to live." They started thinking about what they wanted their lives to be and made goals. Many are so ready for the gospel and some begged us to know more about what we knew and why they felt such a feeling of peace around us. We ended up having to hide our scriptures and Church magazines in our bedroom."

"I'd like to relate a sacred experience I had this year. One of my students was watching her father die an agonizing death from cancer. Because she trusted me, she called me and through the spirit I was able to counsel her. I had told her to pray for understanding. She received peace and then asked me how many times she could pray! Tears came to my eyes realizing how little she knew. She wanted to know the proper way to pray and I told her I prayed as often as I needed to. We walked along the beach in Qingdao and I told her about my mother

who had passed away and that I knew where she was—in Heaven happy and without pain. She asked me how I knew and I asked her if she thought I would ever lie to her. She answered no and took my hand. I then said, “Trust me and when I can tell you, I will. I learned new meaning to the scripture *“Trust in the Lord with all thine heart and lean not unto thine own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he shall direct thy paths.”* (Proverbs 3:5)

Dick and JoAn Criddle were called to teach in Nanjing in 2002. Richard holds a PhD in Biophysical Chemistry and was a Professor/Researcher at UC Davis. JoAn has written Award winning books. They recorded some of the practical aspects of living in China in a September 9, 2002 email:

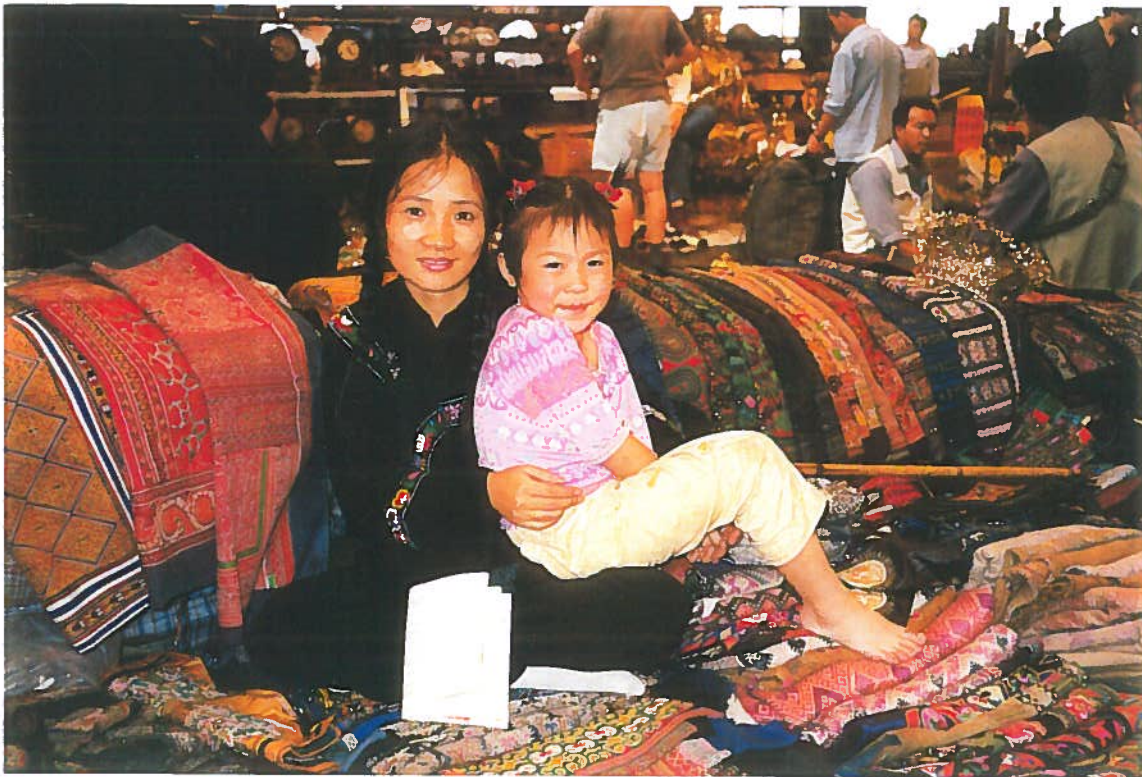
“Life here seems inexpensive. Lunch at a good restaurant costs about a dollar and a quarter for two people. JoAn bought a plastic kitchen stool for 84 cents and a broom for 50 cents. The rule of thumb is that you pay half of the asking price.

“JoAn has started her work in the English Department at Nanjing University of Technology. She teaches 12 hours of conversational English per week. Unfortunately, we are teaching on the new campus, which is about a 45 minute ride from our apartment. I guess I am learning a lesson known to many in this part of the world. It is hard to be married to a woman of the Chinese working class. However, about 1 in 10 men in the world have wives who are part of the Chinese working class. My teaching load will be 6 hours per week in Biochemistry, but I will have 430 students. When I was at the University of California, I was considered to be politically conservative. Upon moving to Cache Valley, I suddenly became a liberal, possibly even a Democrat, without any change in my politics. Now I am part of the Far Right while here in China, however this is again without any change in my politics.

“Many of our Church officials have hopes for an early entry here for our missionaries. Our goal is in large part to prepare the way for this event. However, I am not so hopeful for early success. Most people here are agnostic. This has resulted from years of living in a society in which religion was essentially banned. For many of the past 70 years the state religion began in the morning with the playing of the anthem ‘The East Is Red’ along with words from Mao. Mao was the nearest thing to God. His word held a lot more immediate authority than we can usually expect from God. Now that the original national anthem has returned and Mao has been discredited for many of his efforts, the people we meet do not seem to have moved appreciably toward religion. Mao is still recognized as the great savior of the country. Now without Mao, the country is improving rapidly, people are gaining rights and freedoms, though too slowly from our viewpoint. They are much better off than previously and they see this improvement continuing. All of this has been accomplished without a God. These are bright people who have been taught to think about practical matters of engineering, goods and transportation but not about social matters. That thinking is done for them. I believe it will be rather long before they once again learn to think about social and spiritual matters on their own. They really have no reason to seek after God until they see a reason or benefit from turning to God. This may take some time to occur on a large scale.”



Hauling Bricks from demolished *hutongs*, 2001



Vendor of Chinese Embroidery, mother and daughter, "Dirt Market," 2001

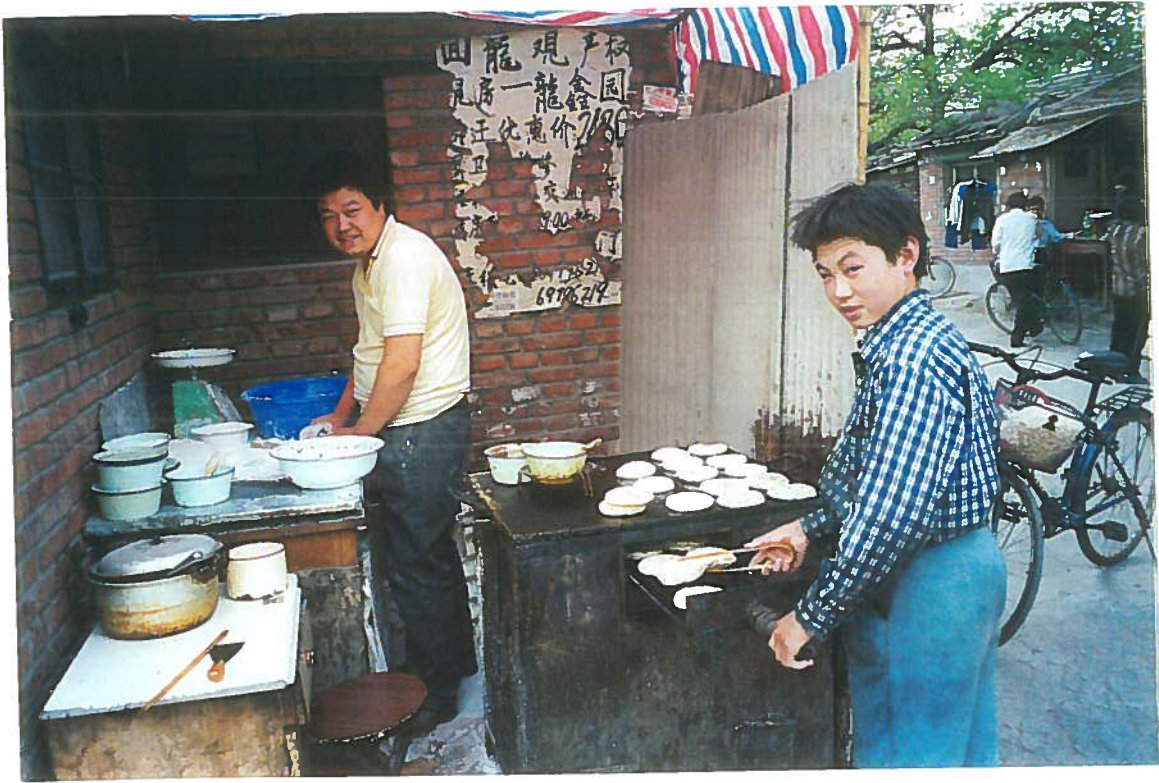
In addition to assigned teaching, most China Teachers report opportunities for additional teaching assignments in other institutions or organizations, although teachers are encouraged to not overload their time. Teachers report multiple chances to be on TV, or to help with recordings for language exams, with editing or other related assignments which can be diversionary but sometimes consume any leisure time. Travel takes place primarily during the break in January/February for the Chinese New Year. Many of the teachers plan trips together and incorporate travel to the China Teachers Seminar in Hong Kong as part of their itinerary. The Criddles in an email dated Sunday, December 29, 2002 tell of a trip with the Waiban to a Buddhist monastery.

“We went to a restaurant in the country that specializes in game foods. Thus, for the first time we were served venison, pigeon, sparrow and dog. The dog was not bad, kind of a sweet-tasting meat. The sparrow was young and several of them were skewered together on each shish kabob-like stick and grilled. People ate them, bone, crunchy cranium, beak and all. I thought they were a little rubbery. The venison was not any part of a deer that I recognized. JoAn insists that it was stuffed intestine. I kind of hoped that the dog was not a Golden Retriever, since it is becoming a family tradition to have these as pets, not dinner. I’m afraid I will look a little askance at the next person I hear say of their pet that he is such a sweet little dog.

“This was our first dinner where children were in attendance. We were anxious to see if children enjoyed the special party food or whether an appetite for these strange things was a learned response of adults. The children enjoy it. As the steamed fish was making its way around the lazy-Susan turntable toward a 12 year old boy, he was out of his chair hopping from one foot to the other worrying that his favorite part would be taken before it got to him. He loves to eat the eyeballs. When it got to him intact, his mother broke off the whole head and gave it to the boy. All that was left when he finished was a shiny white skull bone. The ten-year old girl next to him was busily eating shrimp. Start at the tail and chew. When you get to the head, suck out the juices and all the other good stuff and sometimes spit out the rest of the head. One host told us that the shrimp should be dipped in a vinegar sauce before eating because sometimes they don’t smell very good and the sauce covers the smell. If we were born here, we too could be hopping from foot to foot to get a chance at the eyeballs.

“The children of urban China and parts of rural China are under tremendous pressure from parents and other family members to succeed. The definition of success here is commonly framed simply in terms of good job and large salary. The pressure starts very early. The definition of success here is commonly framed simply in terms of good job and large salary. Children in primary school are required to work very hard at their studies because they face an examination at age 12 that determines what middle school they are accepted into. If they are not accepted into one of the better middle schools they have very little chance of passing the next level of examinations for getting into a university. If they are not accepted into a university, they don’t get a good job. Thus, at age 12, examinations are encountered that determine their future.

“Virtually nothing is expected of school children except to do well in school. A while ago I passed a boy of about 12 returning from the market with a sack of vegetables. It took a few



Breakfast in *Hutong* (alley way). Beijing, 2001



Strawberries and bananas for sale, Beijing, 2001

moments before I analyzed what was different about that scene. This was the only time in China that I have seen a city child on the academic track do anything in the way of contributing to the family work load. They do nothing but school. They generally do not study efficiently, but make up for this by excessively long hours.”

On Spring Festival trip (during the Chinese New Year) Dick Criddle vividly describes southern China in an email to Kathryn Gardner, Tuesday, Feb.11, 2003

“When painters draw this area, their pictures look imaginary or allegorical. You have all seen scroll paintings of the sharp peaks and rice terraces and rivers and fishermen on bamboo boats working cormorants. The first response is often a feeling that no landscape can really look like that, but it does. It is difficult to find a more beautiful place in the world.

“As tourists, we can never really enter into such a Chinese country scene. Though we ride through valley after valley and stop and stare, no painter would ever include us in his representation of the Yangshuo area. At best, in our pedaling from picture to picture, we have one foot and possibly a camera sticking into the picture, while the rest of us is on the outside. Even in our fantasies of joining this peaceful, quiet life, we will always remain locked out of the picture.

“Ping, [our guide] is an attractive, but not beautiful girl in her early twenties. She has the slim build of young Chinese women but her broad shoulders, sturdy legs, and lumbering walk make apparent her origin and early years in a peasant family where she participated long hours in the manual labor of the farm. She is not a soft, city girl. As farmers, the family had a right under the one child policy to additional children in order to get a son. Still, because he was the fourth child, they had to pay for the privilege. Ping is obviously bright, since she learned a little English in middle school and picked up the rest on the streets of the town. She has a better command of the English language than many of JoAn’s second year college English majors with 8 to 10 years of English Study. As soon as she could, she left home, moved to Yangshuo to do service work in hotels and eventually gained enough experience to freelance in the tourist business. She visits home occasionally, but prefers to stay in town because of the travel time to work and because at home her mother insists that she help cook and clean and wash. Ping was raised in a small farm house with no heating, no indoor plumbing, cement floors, most cooking done in an outdoor shed over charcoal or a single gas burner, shared sleeping quarters, dirt, animals, mud and rain.

“Ping wants out. She has seen glimpses of the outside through books and television and most tellingly, the tourists she guides. She wants to join us in being on the outside. People have told her that her valley is a beautiful area. That may be so, but how can she really know until she has seen something else. Thus, Ping has one foot out of the pictures, just as we have one foot in. The difference is that we can get out, but never really in. She feels trapped at the interface between the picture and the outside, pushing to get out and not wanting to fall back in. As she stands now, no painter would include her in a painting of Yangshuo anymore than they would include us.”



Freshman Class, Peking University 2001, Beijing



Peking University Campus, Beijing

In an email March 20, 2003 from Shanghai, Mike and Camille Nielsen speak of their teaching experience:

“I have two classes of Judicial Court Judges this semester. Boy, are they a sober bunch—it’s a challenge to get them to smile. Their English is terrible—they are older and haven’t spoken English in years.

“On the other hand, I have my Hong Kong freshman class again. I love these kids—they are like my children. Today I had personal “interviews” with each of them and I had Mike go with me. We asked them questions about present, past and future things and had them do a pronunciation exercise. We gave them instant feedback on how they can improve their English. Amazing that they had very few problems. They are very advanced speakers. I am falling in love with them.

“I taught my American Culture class today about the differences in eating meals in US and China. None of them had ever heard about Cheerios or Corn Flakes, never heard of a bagel, pancakes, turkey, steak, spaghetti, tacos. So I had my freshman class over to our apartment and we had an American lunch.—sloppy joes on buns, potato salad, Jello (brought from home) potato chips, banana bread and Kool-aid. None of them had ever eaten any of these foods. They really loved everything. One girl tried to pick up a whole hamburger with chopsticks and I told her hands were O.K.—they have never eaten with a knife and fork

“Right before class started, one of my students, his name is Jim, asked us to come to his house for dinner. It was one of those special China experience that you don’t get if you only come for a vacation. His Dad did most of the cooking—he had Chinese dumplings prepared and showed us how to make them. They use a wrapper like an egg roll and put different fillings inside like ground pork, egg and greens. There is a special way to fold and pinch them. They were so delicious and we had such a good time even though they did not speak any English at all. Their home was so humble. No heat at all—we wore our coats the whole time. It had a tiny kitchen, little living room and 2 small bedrooms. Jim’s dad showed us two beautiful pieces of antique hard mahogany wood furniture that his father had hidden and saved from the red guards during the Cultural Revolution. These people’s lives are so fascinating.

“Just when I thought I’ve eaten every part of an animal imaginable something happens to surprise me. They brought out a large platter of different looking “things,” and we made the mistake of asking what they were. They were sliced pork tongue, pig stomach, slices of pig ear, intestines and chopped up pig feet. I remember someone saying that in China they eat everything from a pig except the squeal.”

Gary Henderson and his wife, Karen taught at Shandong Teachers University in 2002-2003. Gary was a Business Consultant with a B.A. in French and Political Science and Karen, a former teacher and Travel Consultant. The following is an e-mail from Karen, March 29, 2003

“We had an interesting experience today at a village where they are doing an archeological dig about a 35 minute bus ride out of Jinan. When the bus dropped us off, we walked down

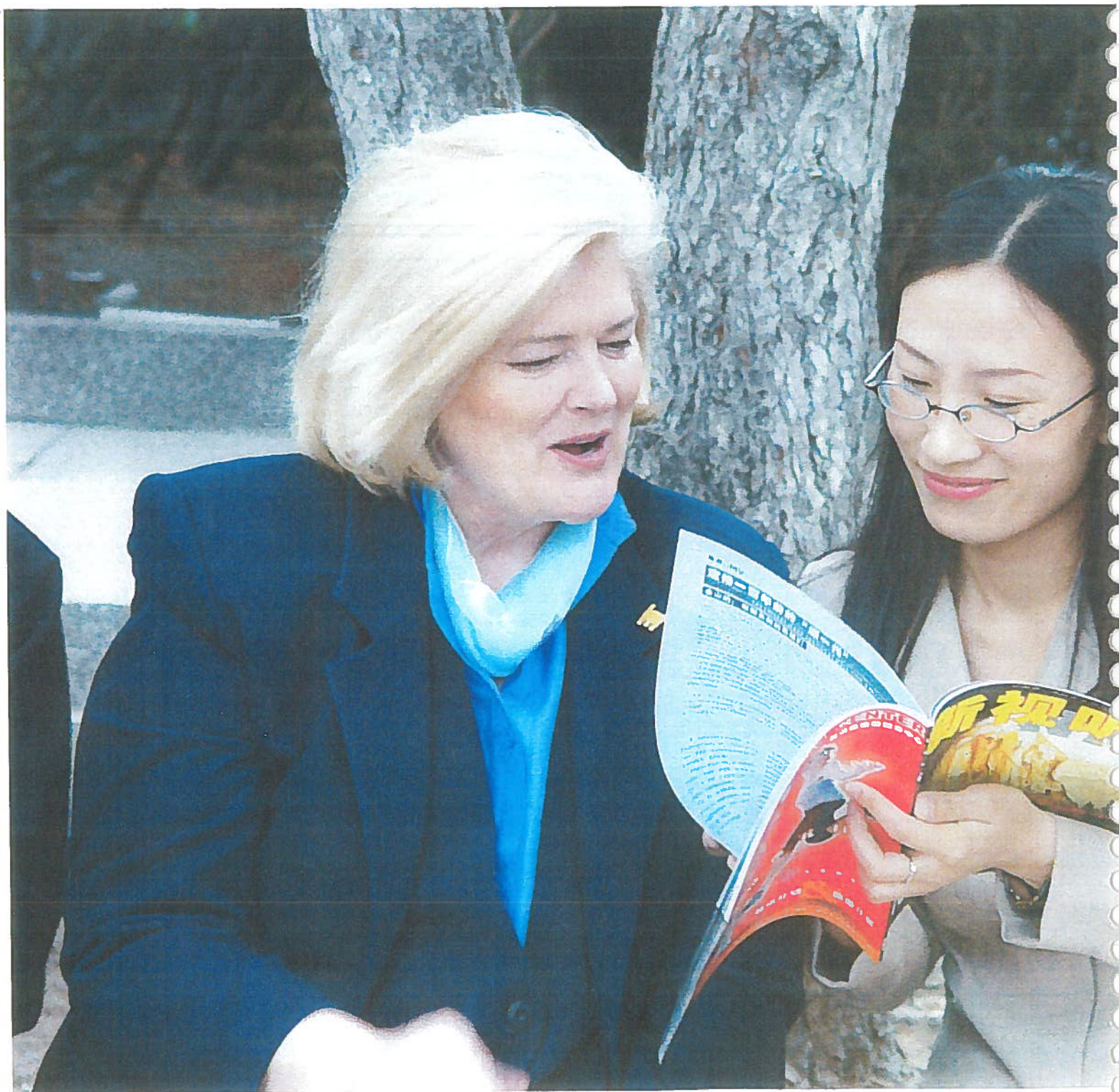
through the main street of a village where the wind blew us along. We wore hats, scarves, glasses, and hooded jackets to protect our eyes, noses and lungs from the debris. We walked the length of the village on foot which took about 20 minutes. Some of the houses seemed larger and quite nice. There were few trees, no grass, lots of piles of garbage but as we came out of the village there were rows of rye grass, burned corn patches, and even some green tops of new lettuce and spinach. We passed a duck pen covered with sticks and branches. A short distance across the open fields we saw headstones on the opposite ditch bank that extended the length of about three of our city blocks—just miscellaneous headstone jutting up out of the side of the elevated mound in the middle of the field. The water was streaming in at one end where the fresh green tops were growing. The village kids followed us along the path, some boys riding by us on bicycles. They beat us to the spot. It never ceases to amaze me how much of a novelty we are.

“The director of the dig is a man who spent last year at Harvard and spoke English very well. We walked all around and he handed us fragments of pottery that were from the Han dynasty, 2,000 years ago. In this same dig, they have found artifacts from the Shang Dynasty, nearly 3,000 years ago. We had a delightful and memorable experience.”

Gary in May, 2003 wrote a charming piece he titles “I Receive My New Chinese Name.”

“When I arrived in China and began teaching my class to all Masters and Doctoral candidates, I asked them during the first class to give me their names in Chinese and also in English. I found out that I was the first foreign teacher that any of them had ever had and discovered that many of them did not have English names. Many of them asked me if I would give them an English name right there in class. I gave out many English names and explained that it would only be fair if they, in turn, gave me a Chinese name. I received absolutely no response. The following week I again told them that I would like to receive a Chinese name and if any of them had any ideas we could write them on the blackboard and decide by a vote which one they liked best. There was no response, not even one name given in any of my 6 classes. I finally decided that perhaps it was inappropriate for me to have a Chinese name and that maybe I had overstepped some cultural boundary. In the third week, I made no such suggestion and simply dropped the matter altogether. During the middle of the fourth week, a beautiful young lady raised her hand right in the middle of my lecture. That was a surprising gesture in and of its self. “I know your Chinese name,” she said. “Oh good,” I responded, “Please come and write it on the blackboard for all of us to see.” She came to the board and wrote a name in Chinese characters and started back to her seat. I said, “If you don’t write that in pinyin, I will never know what my name is.” The class roared their satisfaction in that statement. She returned to the board and wrote Zhang Desen. Then she gave the most amazing explanation. She said, “Zhang is a very characteristic and noble Chinese family name and ‘De’ means morality and virtue. ‘Sen’ means forest or trees. Your morality and virtue are wider than the forest and higher than the trees.” “Oh,” I said, “I love that name!” The class clapped enthusiastically to show their approval.

It was a very powerful moment for me. I told the story to my wife, Karen, that evening with tears in my eyes, because I had come to realize that in a few weeks time this girl had been able



Karen Henderson with student, Jinan, Shandong Teachers University, 2002

to capture the essence of my life and all that I had tried to be. For the remainder of my teaching experience there I signed all of my class handouts with my name and my new Chinese name.”

Gary and Beverly Adair spent three years in Qingdao. 1999-2000, Qingdao University of Science and Technology, Ocean University 2000, and 2002-2003 at Qingdao University again. June 20, 2003. Gary was a High School Counselor and language teacher; Beverly holds a Master’s degree in Educational Leadership. Gary describes the Chinese shopping experience in the following journal entry:

“The other day we needed some eggs and I had heard there was a Farmer’s Market nearby, so I went looking for it. Wow, did I find it. It was a block long road with little shops on each side and vendor stands in the middle. I first came to vendors with live fish and clams in little pools just swimming and spitting water in the air, then lots of fruits and vegetables. Meat was hanging from the back of the stands and other meat was being cooked. I saw some little quail sized birds cooked with heads on. About two-thirds of the way up the block, I came upon the eggs, baskets full of them. In my best American hand signals, I told the lady I needed 10 eggs by holding up my two hands and 10 fingers. She confirmed my request by holding up the right hand in a fist which is 10 in Chinese. I shook my head yes and again showed my 10 fingers. I looked around while she was putting the eggs in a sack on the scales. When I looked back she had over forty eggs in the sack. By my finger demonstration she probably thought I wanted 50 eggs. I motioned for her to stop and paid about \$2.00 for 45 eggs. Did we have eggs! I carried the eggs back very carefully in the plastic bag. People must have thought I was going to have a big omelet.”

Wayne and Leah Owens, who were in Qingdao at Ocean University in 2001 opted to go back to China Fall 2003 to teach at the Foreign Affairs University in Beijing. The following is an excerpt from an e-mail dated September 14, 2003.

“Leah was assigned to teach 7 oral English classes (which was what she had expected and was happy to have). Wayne was assigned to teach 2 classes of topical discussion (which he had been told ahead of time he would have) and three classes of writing. Everyone dislikes teaching the writing classes because there is so much work involved in correcting papers, but hopefully there won’t be 50 or 60 students in the writing classes. The other classes are fairly small, with only 20-25 students in a class. Both of us have undergraduates, which is a big change for Wayne who really enjoyed his graduate students 2 years ago in Qingdao.

“Our apartment is very nice, among the very best living quarters in the BYU China Teachers Program universities. (See picture) The International Exchange Center where we live is like a 10 story hotel where all foreign faculty and visitors are housed. Fortunately we are on the second floor, so things are quite convenient. We have 5 rooms, a combined living/dining room, two bedrooms (one for an office), a nice comfortable bathroom, fully “Western,” and a rather small but adequate kitchen with running hot water, a big improvement over Qingdao. Leah really likes the apartment, but Wayne is missing some of the ‘character’ of our place in Qingdao.



Apartments at Foreign Affairs University, Beijing for Foreign Teachers

Our university is small with a student body of approximately 1500. It is connected with the Chinese Foreign Ministry and is used as a training ground for the Chinese Foreign Service and Embassy personnel. Because of this connection, the university is able to choose which students attend and only those with the very highest academic achievements and credentials are admitted. They are very bright, and some may have a little bit of an 'attitude' of being better than others. Most of the students have quite good English and are not hesitant about using it.

Last Wednesday was the university's opening ceremonies and all the foreign teachers were given prime seats on the front row. The visiting dignitaries were from the China Foreign Ministry here in Beijing and the main speaker was the Foreign Minister. Afterwards he came and shook hands with us all and exchanged a few words. When Leah and I spoke to him and told him we were from BYU, he was eager to tell us that he had many friends at BYU and had spoken there on one or two previous occasions. The next day, students in one of Wayne's classes said that they had seen him on TV shaking hands with the Foreign Minister. Of course, foreign teachers are often 'paraded' out for a good impression."

Melvin Ward, a former Teacher in the San Juan School District and U.S.A.F. pilot and his wife Kay, B.S. Secondary Education taught in Jinan in 2003. The affection of the Chinese Students is reiterated by Melvin and Kay Ward, Jinan, Shandong from an email dated September 22, 2003:

"Kay taught her first class yesterday, and was a smashing success. We couldn't believe the sweetness and innocence of the entire class of 87 boys and girls. What a charming, accepting and responsive group. Two girls came up to her after the first hour and said, "Mrs. Ward, we love you." Talk about melting your heart! Wow! I can see already the most difficult day will be the day we leave China.

"We were met at the airport by four very excited students who rushed us to our apartment, after a hair-raising ride, carried everything upstairs and were gone in a flash. I didn't realize that in highly regulated China, traffic laws are actually only suggestions. Kay was in a state of near apoplexy by the time we screeched to a halt at our apartment. Wow! And if we survive this year, we will be expert Jay walkers.

"We went dancing the other night at the campus gym. Great crowd and good music. Kay and I began a little jitterbug step we often do. Suddenly the floor cleared; the students crowded the edges of the floor to cheer and applaud as we danced. They treated us like Fred Astaire and Ginger Rogers in the spotlight."

Many additional accounts are extant and it is recommended they be added to this history as they are found and collected. The next chapter contains statements by the "China Facilitators," that is, those couples called as missionaries to head the China Teachers' Program.

Chapter 8 China Facilitators

"The risky peak presents a boundless splendid view. . . Mao Zedong, Sept. 9, 1961 from poem, "The Immortal's Cave" (111)

The first "professional volunteers" known now as China Facilitators were appointed to administer the China Teachers Program in 1995. Appropriately, Ray Hillam, BYU professor emeritus, Fulbright Scholar and Director of the David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies for six years, was called, along with his wife Carolyn. Ray and Carolyn, who taught at Beijing Foreign Affairs College in 1991, were to supervise the calling, placing and administration of the China Teachers Program under Jeff Ringer, director of the program. Professor Hillam, as one of the initiators of the program, brought a wide range of experience and wisdom to the appointment, assisted ably by his wife.

Professor Hillam reports: "The teachers have impacted directly the values of thousands of students. Their lifestyle and ideas have touched the lives of many, as evidenced by their aspirations for freedom, prosperity, and clean living. Our teachers have been impressed with the pride and humility of their students. Our teachers have been on the receiving end as well. 'I will never be the same' is a common expression of those who have been asked to summarize their China experience.

"Approximately five hundred teachers have returned to their communities. . . many return to their communities as 'experts' on China, and through their China Teachers alumni association, remain active in helping others in 'getting to know China.' The China Teachers Alumni Association is registered with the State of Utah and meets annually to promote good relations with China.

"Many engage in humanitarian service which strengthens Sino-American friendship. Joye Bennion, largely at her own initiative, has raised more than fifty thousand dollars for scholarships for elementary school students and university students. In addition, she has, with the support of LDS Charities, sent books and school kits to a remote village in China. Every year she takes a small group, at their own expense, on a 'pilgrimage' of humanitarian service to a remote mountain village where they have built a classroom.

"While most of the teachers are retired, there are some who are students and mid-career professionals. Their China experience has enhanced the career and professional opportunities of many. **Brecken Swartz** felt that a year at the Foreign Affairs College would enhance her qualifications for doctoral study. **Suzanne Geyer, Ann Killian, and Gloria Munns**, who were mid-career teachers, saw a year in China as a desirable sabbatical. **Chris McInnes** wanted a break from his engineering career. **Susan Broberg** believed that teaching for a year in China strengthened her application to law school. **Tim Richardson** is teaching English at Snow College, thanks in part to his year in China. **Grant Pearse**, who taught at the Guangzhou University of Traditional Medicine, interned there, and after three years with our program, is now practicing Chinese Traditional Medicine in Hamilton, New Zealand.

“Sending professionals and people of high moral character is good PR for our culture and country. The Chinese Ambassador to the United States has praised our teaching program. We have had members of the Bureau of Religious Affairs visit campus as well as meet with Church leaders in Salt Lake City and Washington, D.C. The original intention of the Kennedy Center was to take advantage of the new opportunities in China and to help in getting things “underway” for the university and the Church. From the stand point of both parties, the program has been a remarkable success.” (Hillam 14-15)

Professor Hillam composed the following Profile of 1997-1998 China Teachers:

Profile of 1997-98 Teachers		
Gender and Age	Professions	Academic Credentials
Average age..... 56	Professors..... 10	PhD..... 6
Married couples 20	Secondary..... 9	Professional degrees
Single Women..... 9	Elementary..... 10	(JD, DDS, MBA, etc) 9
Single men..... 4	Nurses..... 3	MAs..... 16
	Dentist 1	BAs 14
	Doctor..... 1	Spouses without
	Lawyer..... 1	degrees 7
	Retired Navy Captain..... 1	
	Bioengineer 1	
	Business women 1	
	Professional Clown 1	
	Student..... 2	

In 1997, Ted and Doris Warner replaced the Hillams as China Facilitators. Dr. Ted Warner is retired from Brigham Young University as a Professor of History, also Chairman of the History Department, Director of International Programs and Associate Dean of Family, Home and Social Sciences. Dr. Doris Warner is a retired adjunct lecturer in Food Science and Nutrition, and also taught at Nauvoo, Joseph Smith Academy, four semesters in Human Development. They taught at Shandong Teachers' University in 1995-1996 and were appointed Facilitators of the China Teachers Program 1997-1999. Dr. Warner writes:

“We were involved with the China Teacher's Program during its pivotal years, the last three years of the century. The broad changes which occurred during that time were largely due to the creation and expansion of world internet facilities. As part of the largest group sent by the Kennedy Center in 1995, we were aware of the difficulties experienced by many who served in remote areas without group support and saw the frustrations of all foreign teachers with lack of resources. The changes that occurred were dramatic.

1. Teachers were concentrated in fewer cities with groups large enough to have a functioning priesthood authority set apart by the area president where there was no organized branch of the Church.

2. With the help of Steve Tam, Branch President of the Tianjin Branch, three of China's top universities were added to the program.
3. The August workshop gave an extra hour in the day for Dr. Lynn Henrichsen to allow all teachers to present mini lessons, giving greater confidence and cohesion to the group as well as increasing their curriculum materials.
4. Doris took ESL classes and sent ideas frequently to the designated person with email in each city. We searched for material when teachers asked, but it soon became apparent that the resource library they envisioned in each city would not materialize.
5. Doris' supreme contribution, according to many teachers was her waterproof, dirt proof, indestructible "black bag" which she made and distributed to the teachers, making grocery shopping more efficient. That black bag went everywhere.
6. Dialogue with the Ministry of Religious Affairs in Beijing resulted in their making several visits to Salt Lake City. Relations with the Chinese ambassador in Washington were favorable. The Church gained in awareness and respect in China.
7. Progress was made in relating to the Foreign Affairs people in the universities who became outspoken in their expectations of our teachers. The majority preferred a lively class atmosphere with students required to participate orally in contrast to teacher lectures. Spouses of professional teachers were often more successful than the professors.
8. Judging by the fact that around 20% of the teachers returned for a second year, improvements occurred in many areas, housing included.

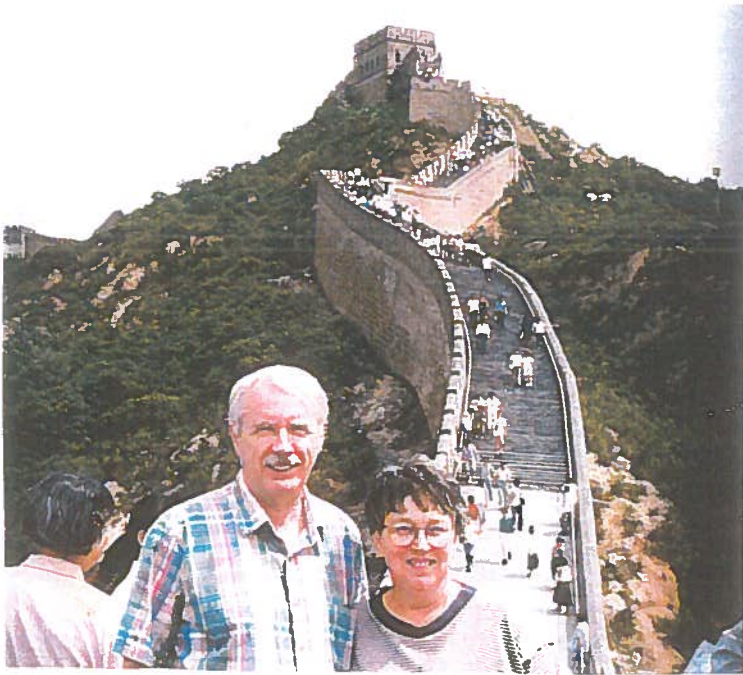
My year of teaching in China was no different than that of other teachers in most respects. Everything I encountered was the opposite of my academic experience at BYU where I was never called "revered professor." I experienced the initial culture shock, tempered the following day by a sea of beautiful people who seemed genuinely glad I was there. I was honored with the "Qilu Friendship Award to the foreigner with outstanding service to Shandong Province in the PRC's 50th year.

One individual became a very important part of my life. His name is Cheng Biao, my "boss" in that he represented Shandong Teachers' University's Foreign Affairs Office, called a "waiban." We called him that, although he said it was like saying the post office is a person. He did everything for us. We soon recognized his academic brilliance and excellent people skills and we encouraged him to think seriously about graduate study at BYU.

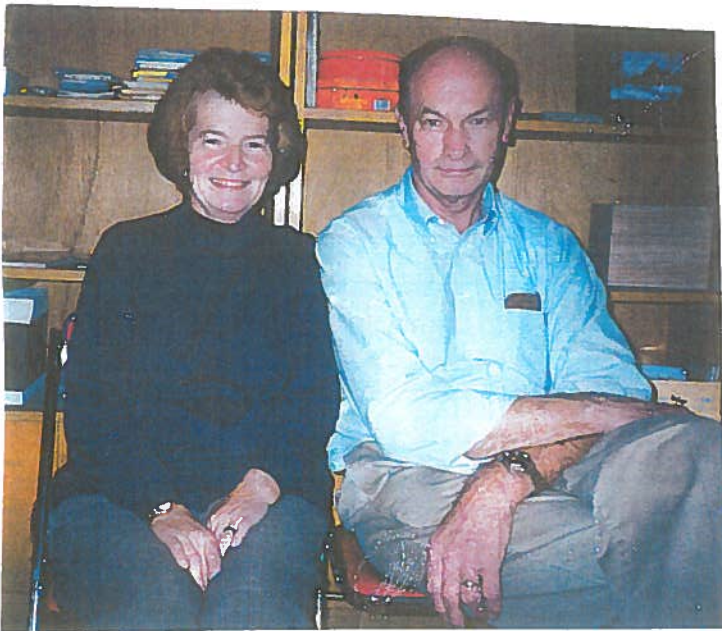
Like many of the professionals we met in China, Cheng Biao was in a process of evolution. It began the first time he saw American students, the BYU Young Ambassadors in an oft-repeated TV film of their first visit to China. They were nothing like he expected. Their fresh clean faces were not enemy faces. He would learn that many teachings of his youth simply were not true. We were pleased that he was admitted to graduate school and he and his wife lived in our home that first year. We are proud of his record: master's degree, doctoral program finished and now teaching statistical research methods. Some day he will hold a very important position in his country's educational system. He will be the Colonel Kane of China, "the friend of the Mormons."

Doris Warner, journal entry 1996: Tai Mountain, the holiest of China's three holy mountains rises from the valley floor approximately the same as our Timpanogos. On a good day when

China Facilitators



Ray and Carolyn Hiram, 1996-1998



**Morris and Donna Petersen,
1999-2001, 2003-**



Ted and Doris Warner, 1997-1999



George and Diane Pace, 2001-2003

the sun is not obscured by clouds, the mountain is viewed by hundreds, sometimes thousands who have climbed four abreast all night up the stone staircase built by the ancients for their emperor to be carried up to worship each year by relays of litter bearers. A small village with a large temple is built at the top, each stone carried by hand up the staircase. Only recently have they engineered modern trams. On a beautiful May weekend we walked up Tai Mountain to seek the rising sun.

Our guide had been very efficient in getting us the best seats for the one hour train ride to Tian and she moved us right up to the front of every line for the bus and tram. When we asked how she did it, she admitted that she told them we were very old and decrepit, and she was worried we might suffer sunstroke if we had to wait. She rented full length green padded army coats for us and woke us at 3:00 am to follow her flashlight to the edge where we could sit with our feet hanging over and wait for the sunrise. We discovered a photographer had roped off the area and was charging a dollar for anyone to sit there. The charge was actually for a Polaroid picture he took of each of us holding the big red sun in our hand as it rose above the mist over the Yellow Sea.

When dawn came we were astounded by the thousands who were clinging like birds all over the side of the mountain. I can never forget the sound of all those people when the first sliver appeared on the horizon. AHHHH.

In 1999 Morris and Donna Petersen were appointed as China Facilitators. Dr. Petersen is professor emeritus of Geology at BYU also taught with his wife in 1996 at Shandong Teachers' University. They were called again as Facilitators in 2003. Their significant contributions to the China Teachers Program are evident in two successful administrations.

The following is a report written by Morris Petersen while he was in Jinan, Shandong to their ward in Provo.

"We have been in China two weeks now, and we feel like it is home. We are doing very well in our living arrangements, and things in general are just fine. In fact, I cannot think of any great problems in our life here in Jinan, Shandong, PRC. Aside from a small bout of "stomach upset" which we each have suffered, we have had no problems. We wouldn't have had that if we hadn't dined out on the street last Sunday afternoon. Everybody else was eating the food and it looked good, so why couldn't we? Well, we are obviously not everybody else, and we got a good reminder of that.

"We have become skilled at shopping for all manner of goods while remaining entirely mute throughout the entire process. We point, draw pictures, and try to find the wanted item by ourselves, and with all of that we have been able to do and get everything we have desired. China is exploding in new business construction, both on their own and with other countries.

“Our work here is delightful. I teach 88 Senior English Majors. Donna teaches adults ten years into their professions. Her students include several medical doctors, lawyers and import-export business men. All are in school to improve their language skills. All of Donna’s students have plans, or hopes of going to America. There is no doubt about the country and people the Chinese people admire—America and Americans. Donna seems really into her work. She carries all kinds of stuff to class and returns full of excitement about the success of her day. She gave a lecture to 150 students on birding and the birds of China. I give a lecture tonight and I will talk about my favorite subject, rocks.

“The food here is wonderful. We have eaten out in many restaurants, cooked a bit in our apartment, and attended three elegant banquets where the buffet food table was 40 feet long with 20 different kinds of Chinese dishes.

“Of all our experiences here the most profound have to do with our interaction with the people. I have never seen such people. The students, for example, are very bright and dress in beautiful modern clothes. You never see a messy person in school. Their respect for their teachers is unique to my experience. The same pattern of politeness can be seen on the streets as the thousands of people walk or ride their bikes by.”

In 2001, George and Diane Pace were appointed China Facilitators. George is a retired BYU Professor of Religion and author of a number of church-related books. Diane is the mother of 12 children. They taught in Shanghai in 2000 and Diane, never having had much professional teaching experience, Diane approached her assignment prayerfully:

“Two weeks into the fall semester I was asked be one of four English teachers for a group of faculty and administrators to improve their English skills. Most of them were PhD’s and the best in their fields. I was the only English speaker among the four teachers; the others were Chinese.

During the first class period in which I was to assist them with their English presentations, I was working with one of the professors on his written paper. I became aware that all of the other class members were speaking rather excitedly and loudly in Chinese. I looked up from our work and the professor informed me that his classmates didn’t want me to spend an entire class period working on presentations. They would prefer to listen to me speak. I was somewhat startled and perplexed, but I agreed to limit time spent on presentations if they would help me decide what to talk about. As we left the class two of the women drew me aside and were anxious to explain their request to listen to me speak. She said this was the first time they had had a native English teachers and as one said to me, ‘You are a treasure, a precious treasure.’

“I need to explain that although this was not an official mission call, both my husband and I had experienced a strong spiritual confirmation that going to China was what we should do. We never had a moment’s doubt that there was a purpose in the Lord’s agenda for us to have this experience, which gave me confidence as I faced the challenge of this VIP class.

“Nevertheless, I soon began questioning my ability to pull it off. ‘What am I doing here? I’m just a Mormon “mom of many” from Utah who has no training in what I am expected to do. I don’t even have a college degree.’ I did major in Speech during my two years at BYU which helped me speak clearly and seemed appreciated by my students. Other than that I was facing a task totally beyond me.

“I realized I was in the same predicament I had heard missionaries speak of when they bore their testimonies of the Lord’s intervention in their behalf. I began to speak with the Lord. I worked hard, planned and prepared. My faith taught me that we were on the Lord’s errand to ‘plow the ground’ and ‘plant the seeds’ for a great work that will be accomplished in the land of China one day. I prayed for His Spirit to be with me.

“A miracle occurred. In the weeks that followed I listened to brilliant Chinese scientists and accomplished scholars make oral presentations that made no sense until I deciphered the mispronounced words and concepts into comprehensible English. An understanding of what each person was saying would suddenly become clear in my mind and I could correct the pronunciation of terminology I don’t remember having heard before. It was pure inspiration coming into my mind day after day.

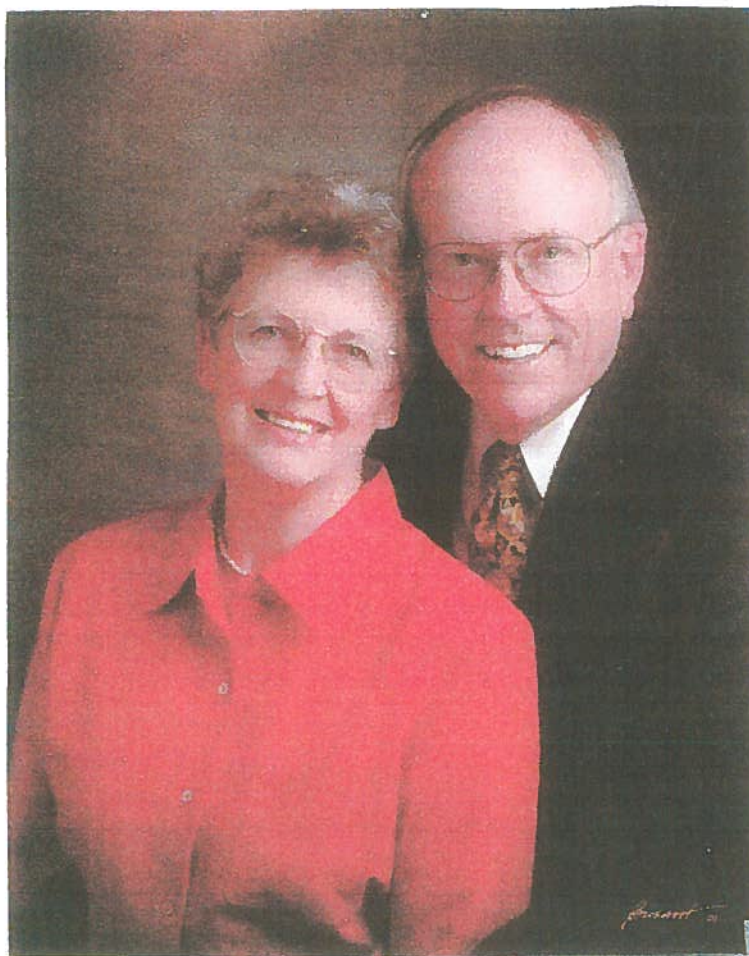
“Towards the end of the semester I met the Dean of the English Department. She mentioned the VIP class and said that several class members remarked that they were enjoying it very much. Then she said something that stunned me. She said they told her I was ‘very knowledgeable.’ Well. . . I am *not* knowledgeable. The Lord is knowledgeable and he had worked with me in a miraculous way.”

Alvin and Barbara Price

The China experience, as reported by many teachers is one of continual surprise. Perhaps this happens because of limited experience with the language or because the cultural disparities, or because limited expectations of the teachers or simply because of the Chinese reaction to “foreigners.” The Chinese, do, however, seem to generally react strongly, perhaps with excess by western standards, and with great ceremony and panache. Alvin and Barbara Price, teachers in Beijing, April 28, 2003, and also China Teachers’ Facilitators appointed in 2004 describe such an event. (Excerpted from a letter to family and friends.)

“I just had the experience of a lifetime! It is Saturday morning April 26, 2003. I went out this morning about 10:00 am and saw lots of official looking people in front of Building 2. I wondered if we had a case of SARS in this building but no one was wearing masks. All of the official people looked like security –dark glasses and dark suits. One hour later I was looking out our living room window across the lily pond and noticed a security car stopped by the pond waiting for someone to come onto campus (this I supposed). I thought, I will just watch and see what or who is coming. About ten minutes lapsed and with the wave of the hand from a man in the security car, a bunch of black fancy autos and police cars came by. I called Barbara Rowberry and said, come quick something big is happening. She came down but they had so much security it appeared they would not let us through but we went through anyway. We

asked a few students what was going on. They said that Premier Wen Jiabao was in the South wing of the building. He is China's #2 leader, under the President. He is a warm, hands on leader who is always going out and about to see what is really happening. Barbara and I decided to stand there and get a good look at him when he came out of the building. He came out a few minutes later followed by camera men and security. He caught my eye and came straight to me and shook my hand. Barbara Rowberry stepped back as she was in her pajama bottoms. The Premier spoke to me for what seemed like a long time, maybe 3-4 minutes. He thanked me for staying and for all I was doing to help fight SARS. I told him that the University was taking all possible measure to protect the students and faculty. My Chinese is limited but he luckily had an interpreter next to him. I then stepped back and a few students stepped forward to shake his hand. The leaders then lined up to take a picture and invited me to be in the photo. There were several people who I recognized from watching TV news. I was carefully placed next to Premier Wen Jiabao. He is pretty short, so I placed my arm around his back and we all smiled for photos. A lady stepped up to me and asked what I did here and where I was from. I told her I was from America and was a teacher in a program from Brigham Young University. Another man with a tape recorder asked my name. The Premier and his group then got in the black cars and drove off. As they drove off he waved, I caught his eye again and waved at him."



Alvin and Barbara Price
China Facilitators 2004

Chapter 9

Sample Responses of Foreign Affairs Officers (*Waiban*) to China Teachers Program

*There is no speech nor language, where their voice (the heavens) is not heard.
Psalms 19:3*

Li Hui wrote from Xi'an Aug. 5, 2001: "BYU teachers are among the best ones we have on our campus. They are the best because each of them is totally devoted to their teaching mission in XFLU. They work and get along well with their Chinese colleagues; therefore they are respected and loved by Chinese faculty. They are conscientious about their assignments and teach not only with passion but also with skills; therefore, they win students' trust and hearts and their courses are certainly popular with students. They are better prepared for living and teaching in China. The students' general comment on BYU teachers is: they are the nicest people and the most conscientious teachers they have ever met."

The Foreign Affairs officer from Qingdao: "All of the teachers (no exception!) are wonderful people. They are friendly to the Chinese people, loving to the students and always willing to help. They have established a "collective image" which is characterized by honesty, sincerity, chastity, warm-heartedness and devotion to family. A friend of mine once commented: 'We have always been proud of our own cultural and ethical traditions. But unfortunately we are losing those traditions. These people (China Teachers) seem to exemplify all of our ethical values—they are more Chinese than many of our own people.'

"They are conscientious teachers, too. Not all of them have high credentials in terms of teaching, but they all turn out to be good teachers because of their devotion, hard work and love for the students. It is not uncommon to see them sacrifice their own time and money in order to provide the students with more opportunity to learn.

"They are pleasant to work with. They do not complain, although there are a lot of reasons for complaints. I have worked with more than 50 foreign teachers as a *waiban*, and the CTP teachers are the easiest to work with.

I understand that all the CTP teachers are members of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. They are not supposed to proselytize, but they have earned for the church good opinion among the Chinese people. 'Since they are good people, the church must be a good church.'"

From Tongji University in Shanghai, July 27, 2001: "We really appreciate the support given by the BYU Kennedy Center. The BYU teachers are hard working and dedicated, which is of great benefit to our teaching program. We value their help greatly."

From Jinan Communications College, Sam C. Yang Dong, August 3, 2001: "The BYU teachers you kindly sent to us are qualified, hard-working teachers. Our students love them and are pleased with their instructions. They are an asset to our teaching program and improve



Carol and Sterling Ottesen with Cheng Biao



Provo, Utah 2003, home of Doris and Ted Warner, Morris and Donna Petersen, Marie Bishop, Ruth Holland, Carol Ottesen, Joye Bennion, Cheng Biao and wife, Tina

the English level of the students and teachers as well. We wonder if you could send more teachers to our college this term.”

Other Foreign Affairs Officers have voiced similar responses about the program. Cheng Biao of Jinan, Shandong Teachers University Foreign Affairs officer was profoundly influenced by groups of teachers in his charge, among them, Ted and Doris Warner, in particular who encouraged him to apply to Brigham Young University for graduate work, which he did and came to BYU in 2001, first living with the Warners and when his wife was able to join him he lived in Wymount. He was well-known among China teachers for conducting tours during Spring Festival and highly rated among Foreign Affairs officers in China.

Chapter 10

A Collection of Comments from China Teachers about the Program (Assembled for Report on the Program by Leaders)

“Dear fellow-creature, praise our God of Love
that we are so admonished, that no day
of conscious trial be a wasted day.”

. . . W.H. Auden from “Canzone”

1. I never realized the profound effect of the Light of Christ on a people, individually and collectively, until my year in China. I had experienced the Gift of the Holy Ghost on numerous occasions and had a firm testimony of the power available to members of the Church, but the reality of what we know as the Light of Christ, “that light that lighteth every man that cometh into the world,” is there. It is a very real power, working a mighty work in the hearts and mind of the Chinese people. You will see it and feel it, especially among the students.
2. A student told me, “I don’t think a mean man or anyone would be able to hurt you, because of what I feel ‘radiating’ from you. I think it is love.” I am sure that what they feel is the Spirit of the Holy Ghost. They feel the sincere love I have for them. All of my students commented on this.
3. I talked about my family and showed pictures of my large family. One assignment I asked them to write about was what their “passionate goal” is in life. I was surprised and pleased to find that 41 out of 45 wrote that they wanted to find the “right person to marry, establish a home, and have their child.”
4. A constant request is to explain our beliefs and our religion which indicated that they were being influenced far beyond the learning of English. While we were unable to teach about our religion, we were happy to tell them it was our religion that gave our lives meaning and was the very thing that had brought us in contact with them.

5. In teaching English there are numerous opportunities to teach basic gospel and moral principles without ever mentioning religion. The students perceived that we were different and were continually curious as to the values and principles that motivated us.

6. In a letter home to my family I wrote: "So many choice experiences are happening that we can only relate to you when we get home. We do know these people are hungry for a set of values or any kind of knowledge of a transcendent being or a life after this one. One student asked me privately after class if I believe that man has a spirit. When I said yes, tears came to her eyes and she said, "But it is not popular to believe that here and sometimes I am lonely. I know it so strongly. It is something I have felt and no rational thought can take that away." I assured her that I knew that if she was true to that feeling, she would have a happier life. Our conversation was necessarily brief but touching for both of us and we embraced and parted, each enriched from that sharing.

7. Though we can never speak of religion, I always write on the board on the first day of class that I am from the Brigham Young University sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints and locate Utah on my U.S. map for them. So I think they have some sense that we adhere to Christian values and sometimes seem very curious about it. This week a girl came up to me after class and asked me directly, "Do you believe in prayer?" I replied that I do. She then asked if I prayed every day and what I prayed for. I said that I prayed at least twice a day and I prayed that I would be a good teacher and prayed for my family at home. Her eyes became big and she said, "Does it work?" When I nodded, she said, "O.K. I'm going to try it."

8. To be frank with you, the Story of Life moved me greatly especially when I read: "If someone hurts you, betrays you, or breaks your heart, forgive them, for they have helped you learn about trust and the importance of being cautious when you open your heart. If someone loves you, love them back unconditionally, not because they love you but because they are teaching you to love and open your heart to the really important things of life." Thank you for your edification and your guide for our lives in the future.

8. I can feel peace from your words. It seems that the God is telling me the most important things about life. I am not permitted to believe God, for I am a member of CPC, but I often find peace from God when I am bothered or nervous. I will remember your words forever, even if I would forget what you told me on how to learn English.

Chapter 11

A Sampling of Papers and Notes Written By Chinese Students

"Behold, hath the Lord commanded any that they should not partake of his goodness? Behold I say unto you, Nay; but all men are privileged the one like unto the other, and none are forbidden." 2nd Nephi 26:28

1. I was moved deeply when I received your email. You have given me a deep impression about Americans. You are honest, you are kind, you are real good people. Although you never talk about your religion, I can still feel the power of the God. You are real Christian! It is from you that I changed my opinion about Christ.
2. Your understanding and inspiration have been an unfailing support to me. On our parting I want to thank you for the friendship that never fails. I want to thank you for the joy you shower on me. Thank you for caring so much.
3. You have greatly changed my attitude to life. I will always remember my class in which you told us to smile, and everyday when we got up to practice being pro-active in whatever happens to us.
4. You not only gave me chances to speak English, but also gave me truth on how to live, how to set up good relationships with other people, and how to be an effective and successful man. I believe I will benefit from this experience forever. I am grateful to you, a navigator in my life.
5. I always feel from you a broad love, love to spouse, parents, brothers, friends and to everyone of us. I think we will be benefited from this love. I know what it is. When I write my grandparents and my parents, my tears on the face like a stream, I miss them so very much.
6. I could perceive your meticulous preparation before every class, the respect for your work and the responsibility for your students. And what I should learn from you first is the attitude to the life. You taught us to be kind to anyone and say hello to everyone. You taught us to be faithful to our spouse and family and appreciate them.
7. I believe it is God that sends you to this ancient country with 5,000 year history. I believe you are the angel who enlightens our life. I believe you are destined to be our teachers. I also believe that one day we will meet again.
8. It is incredible how much you love each other, how much you know each other and, above all, how much you trust each other. . .it must be God's blessing that you have such a wonderful family, because of your kindness and goodness.

9. I can't imagine why an American is willing to do so much things for Chinese people. I find I am so selfish. I think maybe it's your religion or your belief that makes you have such a golden heart. So I want to read the Bible and find something that can help me.
10. Before I entered university, I had hardly met any foreigners since I came from a small town. I'd known a lot about America: it is the richest and most powerful country in the world; it has the most famous universities; it has the most advanced science and technology; the people there are selfish and care more for money than for bloodship and friendship; the Hollywood produces many films filled with murder and violence and it is an overbearing country. But when I met the Bronsons, I changed my mind. I didn't think Americans were all bad any longer. They stand for ordinary American people who are very kind. I was moved by the word of Mrs. Bronson when I talked with her. Oh, what a beautiful and kind American Lady! How wonderful if we'll meet again!
11. When I said you taught me far more than English, you should know how seriously I meant it. When cloud is above me you point out the way and show me the light. Sometimes I think it is God who sends you to me and this makes me believe He is there guiding me and when I am lost he let you give me the direction. Yes, China is a muddy lake, but one thing I do know is that this is an absolutely kind and intelligent people. Though it is dark now, I know that if people can be forced to be evil, they can be persuaded to do good. I keep looking for the way and for good principles. I know I have gifts like you told me but that means I have responsibility too and never will I ever give up hope.
12. To be frank with you, the Story of Life moved me greatly especially when I read: "If someone hurts you, betrays you, or breaks your heart, forgive them, for they have helped you learn about trust and the importance of being cautious when you open your heart. If someone loves you, love them back unconditionally, not because they love you but because they are teaching you to love and open your heart to the really important things of life." Thank you for your edification and your guide for our lives in the future.
13. I can feel peace from your words. It seems that the God is telling me the most important things about life. I am not permitted to believe God, for I am a member of CPC, but I often find peace from God when I am bothered or nervous. I will remember your words forever, even if I would forget what you told me on how to learn English.

The Silk painting about Fuxi and Nuwa:

This painting is from the Tang Dynasty. It is 168cm high 82—117cm wide, painted in red, white, black, and yellow colors with line and common methods. Nuwa holds a compass in the right hand and Fuxi holds a ruler in the left hand. Both of them are the first ancestors of mankind in our legend, with a human's head and snake's body. There is an old saying about circumference, which states that circumference would not be formed without a square and compass, symbolizing the creation of the world.



Contributed by Gary Henderson, 2002, who noticed in this Chinese art symbols similar to those in Mormonism

Excerpts from Class Papers by Chinese Students

A graduate medical student about 35 years old wrote:

"Please don't have me read this in class. I was adopted when I was a child because my parents could not afford to care for me, but I don't want anyone to know. When I was young my parents got a beautiful new style flower dress for me for Chinese New Year. It was so large, my mother had to sew a part up to make it shorter. I dressed in it and went around everywhere. I was surprised when my mother ordered me to take it off and put it in the case. Next New Year's I put it on again. I did this every year for five years. Then it came to high school graduation and it appeared again but I had to add materials so it was long enough."

One graduate student described leaving his grandmother who had raised him when he came from the country to medical school:

"I climbed into the wooden cart and she gave me some good advice and kissed me goodbye. Then she ran after the cart crying until she could run no longer on her little feet which had been bound when she was a child. She called my name until I could hear her no more."

Zou DeHong wrote an essay on education:

"I have suffered so many unspeakable sorrows and embarrassments because I feel poverty terrible. But poverty of thought is more terrible than living in poverty. When I was accepted in this university and came from the country to the gate of Shandong Medical University, the guards would not let me in because they thought I was a beggar. So I had to show them proof. My mother told me that "Only through education can you rise in this world." I know that developing China does need the sort of mother who desperately encourage her sons and daughters to get an education."

Mei Li writes of her childhood:

"Twenty years ago when I was only a little girl, my family was very poor. One Sunday morning, Mother said she was going to town to get some medicine for my sick grandfather. I asked her to take me and promised that I wouldn't ask her to buy me anything. I begged again and again. At last, Mother agreed. Mother had no money, so she took 20 eggs with her and planned to sell the eggs so she could afford the medicine

After selling the eggs, we went to the chemist's shop. Suddenly, I caught sight of a man selling books on the roadside. I broke away from mother and ran towards him.

'Oh, what a lovely dictionary!'

Since all my classmates had dictionaries, I dreamed that one day I would have one. I begged, "Mother, would you please buy it for me? I do like and need it." She hesitated. Finally she shook her head and said nothing. If we bought the dictionary, we wouldn't have the money for the medicine. Although I knew that, I was so disappointed that I couldn't hold back my tears. Mother sighed, putting her hand on my head. She said gently,

'You're a good child. I will make a dictionary for you.'

'Really?'

'Yes, I will.'

On that Sunday night, Mother took out a dictionary which was handed down to my father from my grandfather. It was so old that its cover and a few pages were lost. After a day's walking, I was so tired that I went to bed just after supper. The next morning when I woke up, I found a wonderful dictionary beside my pillow. Mother spent the whole night making a beautiful cover with colored paper and had completed the lost pages. Today I own several dictionaries but my first dictionary like an ugly duck, gives me warmth and courage. Perhaps one day I may hand it down to my child and tell him the old story.

A student with the English name of Susan wrote the following:

"Twenty years ago I often picked out pieces of broken glass in the garbage so I could get money, as everyone was very poor. To save bus fare, I volunteered to pick my little sister up at nursery school and carry her home on my back when I was four years old. I did that for several years. Now I often make fun of her that I am so short because of her heavy weight on my back."

Wang Xue Wei wrote of his father:

"Many years ago when I was a child, I had a very bad fracture in the arm. Since we lived in the countryside, my father and I had to walk into the town. We set out very early because it was a long distance. It took us two hours to get to the bus station and then it took a half hour to get to the clinic. We were tired and thirsty. We weren't finished until late afternoon and there was no bus.

"Son, do you mind if we walk back home?" said my father

"Of course not," I replied. "I feel much better now"

It was a clear sky and the fields were silent. Occasionally we met one or two peasants. It grew dark. Little stars were twinkling in the sky. We walked slowly, hand in hand.

"Son, how beautiful the countryside is. There are many beautiful things in the world. However, people who work from morning to evening do not find them. And people who are always sad never find them either. When you are in the world you should pay more attention to the beautiful things and think about them. Then you'll be happy that you are truly living in the colorful world."

"When I was young, I knew nothing about this. But now I say, 'Thank you, Dad. I am very happy now in the colorful world.'"

The title of this essay from one of George Bennion's classes is "I Have Grown Up."

My mother used to beat me badly when I was a child. So I used to hate her bitterly. Once I was told that when one is grown up, he would never be beaten any more. I desired to Grow, as tall as a giant, as strong a horse, with strength in every nerve. But my mother always reminded me by beating me that I was still a child.

One day I had a plan to revenge myself on her. I found a piece of paper on which I made a mark every time she beat me. This was a secret remedy. The pain and tears retreat as I wrote down the mark. But my mother seemed to care nothing about this. She kept doing the terrible thing.

On a sunny afternoon, I came back from school, singing merrily. As you know, a child always forgets his misery whenever it is possible and he is unable to predict the misfortune before him. As soon as I entered the room, I met with an angry sight and a little disappointment in it. It was my mother's eyes. Experience told me misfortune was coming. I retreated, peering at the stick with which she usually beat me.

"Come," she said sharply. I retreated again, which provoked her. She raised the stick. I stopped and buried my head in my arms, waiting for the pain. I began to cry desperately before the beating began.

But it never came. I stopped, wondering what happened. I looked up. What I saw puzzled me greatly. My mother was sobbing bitterly with her shoulders trembling violently. I was scared. Her crying made me more frightened than her anger. I felt at a loss.

My neighbor heard me. She came and consoled my mother and then brought me to her home. My neighbor wiped my tears. Then she said, "Your father is sick. Your mother has difficulty in curing him. You are so little that you make more difficulties. She is annoyed. Understand?"

I didn't understand, but at that moment I became sympathetic for her. When I was escorted home, my mother was preparing some medicine for my father. She came to me and patted me on the head gently. But she said nothing. But I never again wanted to revenge myself on her. Never. Never. I grew up. My mother never beat me from then on."

This essay drawn from personal experience by Fiona Zhang won first prize in English Department contest and is entitled, "The Rickshaw."

The hands of the clock were pointing to half past eleven when I woke up beside the desk. I rubbed my drowsy eyes and looked into the soft, impenetrable darkness outside.

The rain was still coming down. All was quiet, unusually quite in the rhythmic rustling of the rain. And Pa hadn't come back.

We were having a hard time making ends meet, so Pa drove a rickshaw every other night when he had no work, even though that was obviously too tough for a man of nearly fifty. Sometimes he came back so late that I had to promise, or rather threaten to wait for him.

I made no noise pouring myself some water to drink. Mum, sitting in bed, was already nodding then.

I tried to be patient and turned my eyes on the TV around midnight—invariably soap stuff and meaningless. But I decided to challenge my tolerance, just to pass time. I could see flitting figures, I could hear babblings, but my mind was not working.

Why it's 12 o'clock, Pa should be back now. I put down the glass, yet the little noise woke up Mum. She thought Pa had come back.

"What's the time now?" Mum's voice was sleepy with fatigue. Her daytime job wasn't easy either.

"Twelve sharp."

"Go to bed now, It's too late. Don't wait for him."

"I'm not sleep at all." I protested immediately. "I want to watch. It's so fascinating."

The last word was so unnaturally emphasized that even I could feel it.

"Mum, you need some rest. I'll wait for him."

Neither of us said a word for a while, nor did we go to sleep. The tick-tock of the clock sounded too loud to be true.

"It's raining heavier now." Mum said.

Yeah. When there is rain, Pa's business is hopefully better.

"That's why he is still lingering in the streets tonight."

"But Pa has been working ten hours today! He should care more about his health."

Mum sighed, "Go and reheat the noodles on the gas. It must be cold now."

"O.K. I'll take care of that, Mum, you go and rest now." I got up. Doing something for my Mama and Papa always makes me feel good.

When I returned, Mum had fallen asleep and turned down the TV.

Drowsiness overcame me until I felt the chill of the midnight air. It must be freezing outside, but Pa had only one sweater one. "Pa, can't you feel it's so cold? Don't you know it is so late? I almost began to resent him then.

An indescribable anxiety and fear suddenly crept into my back. What had happened to Pa? Why didn't he come back?

Twelve ten.

Twelve fifteen.

Twelve seventeen.

Time seemed to go on much slower. I repeatedly assured myself that Pa would be O.K. But this only added to my nervousness.

Pa usually handled the rickshaw very well, a most cautious and skillful driver indeed. When he was still a novice we usually to worry but now that was no problem.

Yet it was so dark, the path home wasn't smooth at all. Besides, heavy rain must have turned it to slush. Should I bring him a flashlight and wait on his route home?

Maybe he just wanted to take another passenger. It was like him to wait for hours even when the street were virtually deserted, and probably in vain.

Anyway, he should have been back hours before.

I sat nervously in the chair. Once or twice I would stand up, determined to go out and meet Pa myself, and then for fear of upsetting Mum, I would reluctantly sit down again.

Several times I thought I heard Pa's footsteps on the stairs and my heart leaped, yet they proved to be only an illusion.

Pa, please come home. I prayed with silent fervency. My heart was already beating fast.

The small house was chilly with uncertainty and unease, as if some danger was hidden in a dark corner and ready to jump on me any moment.

Mum heated the noodles again. Her heavy sigh fell like a massive stone crushing my heart. I knew how we would wish to comfort one another, yet neither of us spoke for speaking of speaking out our fears. I prayed and promised thousands of times in my heart that if I could work one day, I would never ever let Pa drive a rickshaw.

When the familiar cling clang of the rickshaw at last came from downstairs, this time for sure, the house seemed to come to life again. I rushed to open the door for Pa, and Mum began filling a bowl of noodles.

Safe and sound Pa appeared at the doorway and all fears were gone. Nothing is important, as long as Pa is back home.

The following story is related by Heidi about her great-grandmother who was sold as a child bride when she was nine years old.

"I remember once she told me a story. On May 1945 when the Japanese crossed the Changjiang River, it was raining hard and a Japanese troop was approaching. All the villagers shrank into the mountains the whole village was abandoned. On great-grandmother's way to the mountains, she ran into a woman who had just given birth to a baby, lying beside the road and breathing hard. Without hesitation, great-grandmother carried her back home and dressed her with dry clothes. It was cold and a fire was badly needed. But the smoke might expose them to the invaders. What should she do? Seeing that the woman's life was in great danger, great-grandmother did not think any further. She made a fire, boiled some water and tried her best to warm the woman. At the cost of risking her own life, she saved the woman from death.

When my great-grandmother grew old, her hearing was so poor we had to shout when speaking to her and sometimes got quite impatient. But she just smiled and answered gently. I never saw her get angry or be unkind to anyone. My whole family is this way—they have gone through so much difficulty and adversity without ever losing two priceless possessions—hope and charity."

A paper written by Liu Jia in Qingdao from teacher Kit Ballentine:

Everybody has a dream in their heart. It varies from one to the other. In my heart, I want to make the members of my family happy every day. My parents and my two elder sisters love me very much. I am always feeling that I am the happiest girl in the world. We are not rich, but we are a loving family.

When I went to high school, I knew that my parents had to sacrifice, and now I am at Qingdao University, they sacrifice even more for me. They pay so much for me to get an education out of their love and kindness for me. I am thinking why my parents do this for me. I even asked my father and mother this question. My Mother said, "We do it for you because it brings us

happiness to see you get an education. We did not have the chance because of the Cultural Revolution." At that time I wept tears.

My parents are over 50, they are getting old. They are not as strong as before. More grey hairs are among their black hairs. More wrinkles are carved into their faces. They both work from sunrise to sundown in the fields. I owe them so much.

I will take care of them forever. I will succeed for them and make every effort to make their lives easier when I come back home to teach English in our village school.

Chapter 12

Related Issues

The Hong Kong Temple

Plans to build a temple in Hong Kong were announced at General Conference October 3, 1992. In July, President Gordon B. Hinckley, first Counselor in the First Presidency had visited Hong Kong for the purpose of finding a temple site. After a long day of visits to ten potential sites, President Hinckley went to bed and awoke between two and three o'clock in the morning with the clear impression that the temple should be built at #2 Cornwall Street. That night he sketched a plan, something he had never done with any other temples that would incorporate a temple and a mission home in the same building. At the ground breaking for the Temple on January 22, 1995, Elder John K. Carmack said, "We break ground today as an act of faith and confidence in the future" (Britsch 297).

The church moved ahead with faith, even with the uncertainty about the possible change in the political climate in Hong Kong after its return to the jurisdiction of the People's Republic of China. Political policy on the mainland restricts religious activities of all Chinese citizens and missionaries but to this date, Hong Kong remains, even after the withdrawal of British supervision, open to missionary activity. The church has continued to grow steadily in Hong Kong; among converts are a high rate (perhaps 40%) of women from the Philippines who come to work for the wealthy in Hong Kong and send money home to their families.

Dedicatory sessions for the Hong Kong temple were held May 26 and 27, 1996 with approximately five thousand Church members from many nations attending. A past mission president commented optimistically, "This has got to be the biggest reunion we'll ever have until we meet for the dedication of the Beijing Temple" (Britsch 299).

After the Dedication, President Hinckley and his wife traveled by bus to Shenzhen to the Chinese Folk Village, patterned after the Polynesian Cultural Center in Hawaii, possibly the first visit of a President of the Church to mainland China. They received the red carpet treatment and were warmly received.

The Encyclopedia of LDS History, written in 2000 comments: “The church has never had much presence in China before or since Communist rule, but the situation is changing.” (Garr, et al 201) District leaders report that the process of obtaining permission for Chinese Nationals to attend LDS meeting, though now outlawed, is in process and in at least one unnamed city attendance is now allowed. Again, the Encyclopedia reports that “Chinese officials have acknowledged that the LDS Church is seen as a legitimate religion, not as an undesirable cult.” (202)

Additional Chinese-speaking Missions: Taiwan

After the Communist takeover in 1949, Taiwan, a small island of 13,808 square miles, became home to one million soldiers and civilians of mainland China who fled to escape the new government. Though the Japanese controlled Taiwan at the time, Taiwan was, for two centuries a part of mainland China, a fact mainland Chinese use as justification for the right to govern Taiwan. The present fervor in mainland China for a “united China” cannot be underestimated; hardly a day passes without media reference to the annexation of Taiwan.

The first missionaries arrived in Taiwan in 1956 at a time when the “crusade to return to the mainland was so encompassing that the people hardly had time to think about other matters” (Britsch 253). But because of the LDS servicemen and families stationed in Taipei, the branch grew to a regular attendance of 35 people. By the end of 1957, the elders had baptized more than 50 Chinese. By 1977 Taiwan had 7,933 members of the church. (Britsch 264).

The Taipei Taiwan temple was dedicated November 17 1984 by President Gordon B. Hinckley and in 1995 the number of recommend holders in Taiwan had grown to 1,331. By 1996 church membership numbered twenty-two thousand in a nation of twenty-one million (Stamps 204). In 2002 there were seven stakes in Taiwan and three missions.

Elder H. Bryan Richards in the fall of 2002 said in an address at the China District Conference at the David M. Kennedy Center: “The church has been in Taiwan 40 years and we are beginning to see second and third generations of Chinese in the church. Many of these people have connections in China. When China opens, the gateway will be through Taiwan. The Lord has preserved those people in China for centuries and there are not many nations in the world that do not have a nucleus of Chinese. Rest assured that when China opens, the Lord will already have in place many Chinese members” (Richards, H.B. China District Conference. Ottesen).

For a more detailed review of the progress of the church in Taiwan refer to *From the East: The History of the Latter-day Saints in Asia, 1851-1996* by R. Lanier Britsch, former director of BYU’s David M. Kennedy Center for International Studies and currently BYU professor of history.

Also, within the United States a number of Chinese-speaking missions and branches have been established, many of them in the Atlantic and Pacific coastal areas such as San Francisco and New York City.



Hong Kong Temple, 2002



Mongolian Sisters singing "I Am A Child of God," Hong Kong, Apartment of Richard Cook and his wife

Opening of the Mission to Mongolia

Dr. Paul Hyer, professor emeritus of history at BYU has documented the chronology related to the opening of the mission in Mongolia in which he was a major player. His interest in this part of the world began with his experience in the US Navy working with faithful Japanese converts in Hawaii. This contact later inspired him to serve a mission to Japan. While completing graduate work at Berkeley, he became friends with a number of Mongolian leaders, in fact, the Japanese occupation of Mongolia was the subject of his master's thesis there. Several other opportunities arose when he lived in Japan where several hundred important Mongols that were evacuated now lived.

He first visited Mongolia in 1971 for one month to attend the World Congress of Mongolists followed by a visit of several months at the University of Inner Mongolia in Hohhot where he did more interviews and research on Mongolian history. Dr. Hyer says, "It is no surprise that through all the foregoing experiences, I became very focused on Mongolia and the Mongols both emotionally and intellectually."

With the collapse of the Soviet Union, Mongolia ceased to be a satellite in the Russian system and normalized relations began with the United States in 1988 set up my Mr. Nyamdoo, Mongolian ambassador. In 1990 when Jon M. Huntsman, Jr, then an official of the U.S. Department of Commerce lectured at the Kennedy Center, he mentioned he was on a committee dealing with US-Mongolian trade. Professor Hyer asked Huntsman to informally inquire of Mongolia's ambassador if he would accept an invitation to lecture at BYU. In February 1991, Ambassador Nyamdoo accepted the invitation and spoke March 20, 1991 at BYU, the first Mongolian to do so.

The ambassador also had an audience with Presidents Hinckley and Monson and Elder Neal Maxwell of the Quorum of Twelve Apostles who was assigned over the Asian Area. According to Hyer, "There were no profound negotiations but mainly pleasant conversation and best wishes by the Brethren for the future development of Mongolia." He did make it clear that the new Mongolia was democratic and would welcome representatives of the Church and BYU.

In June 1991, Asia Area President Merlin Lybbert was informed of this Mongolian contact and in a meeting of the Area Presidency along with Paul Hyer, told him that Elder Maxwell had approved a visit to Mongolia by one or more of the Area Presidency to make further contacts.

In October of that same year the Asia Area President informed Paul Hyer that he was "authorized to travel to Washington, D.C. for the purpose of meeting with the Ambassador of the Mongolian People's Republic and if possible, secure an invitation for two members of the Asia Area Presidency to visit appropriate officials of Mongolia." (Hyer 3) The Mongolian ambassador, in a letter to Paul Hyer in November gave assurance that, in spite of the restrictions in China, Mongolia has "No such situation, no such restrictions in the Mongolian People's Republic."

By December, the invitation had not been received, thus in January the Asia Area Presidency suggested going through Timothy Stratford, an LDS person currently head of of Commercial Section at the Embassy in Peking. Stratford had visited Ulanbataar and had good connections there in official circles. Finally, after some negotiation, Lanier Britsch, then Director of the Kennedy Center at BYU wrote to Elder Maxwell reporting a breakthrough on the Mongolia initiative and that the Mongolian Ministry of External Affairs had sent an invitation signed by their ambassador for Church representatives to visit Mongolia.

In July 1992 three couples were prepared to go to Mongolia along with Elder Brough as mediator for arrangements there. He met with the U.S. Ambassador in Ulanbataar, with officials of the Department of Education and with five heads of universities and institutes in the capitol, discussing issues relating to registration in Mongolia for humanitarian service, educational assistance, scholarships, consulting in business or law (Hyer, Private Interview, 5 June 2003).

One university rector asked Elder Brough for clarification of the Church's intent in sending couples to teach English. The rector asked: "You are going to send these couples and they will teach us English. They will teach us business. They will teach us medicine. They will teach us education. They come at their own expense. My question is why do they do that?" Elder Brough replied, "We all have the same Heavenly Father, . . . we are brothers and sisters, and it's because of our love of Heavenly Father's children, . . . that people are willing to do this" (Harper 29. April 15, 1993, Elder Neal A. Maxwell, "in the power and authority of the Holy Apostleship," dedicated Mongolia for the teaching of the restored gospel (Harper. *BYU Studies*, Vol. 42, #1, 2003, pg. 35). "Elder Maxwell prayed that the winds of freedom would ever blow in Mongolia and that her independence might not be compromised regardless of power struggles elsewhere."

On September 17, 1992, Donna and Kenneth Beesley arrived in Mongolia and several months later four more couples arrived. Shortly after the dedication of Mongolia in 1992, Gendenjamts Davaajargal, the first Mongolian woman to join the Church was baptized. (Harper 33) The church was granted official registration in Mongolia November 1994, followed by the appointment of Richard Cook to preside over the Mongolia Ulaanbaatar Mission. The first Church-owned meetinghouse, a remodeled theater was acquired in 1996 further established the Church's identity in Mongolia.

As of April 2, 2003 there were 4,356 members in Mongolia with 89 Mongolian elders and 73 Mongolian sisters serving full-time missions around the world (Harper 43).

The Effects of the Falun Gong on PRC Attitudes Toward Religion in China

China is still not an open society in the democratic sense but continues to be a dictatorship with one party rule. They are, however, accommodating toward a more open economic system. Leaders still fear organizations, such as the Falun Gong, that seem to be gathering

power and influence. Bruce Beaman stated in late 2002 that when he last saw Elder Chia, he visited with him in private and asked him how close China is to being open. He said that it would be already if it weren't for the Falun Gong.

Certainly the Falun Gong, which denies being a religion or a sect has had a negative influence on the Chinese government's policy toward religion. Outlawed in China on July 22, 1999, the Falun Gong says it is "a network for transmitting information and practices, primarily breathing exercises known as *qigong* which aims to refine the body and mind through exercise and meditation. This group incorporates both Buddhist and Taoist principles, placing emphasis on the physical as well as the moral character.

The government accuses "the sect" of leading more than 1,600 followers to their deaths by encouraging them to eschew modern medical care and fostering suicidal acts (cnn.com. 7/24/02 p. 1 "Falun Gong: a brief but turbulent history"). On July 29, Chinese authorities issued an arrest warrant for founder, Li Hung-zhi, now living in the United States. Falun Gong claims to have a membership of 70 million in China and 30 million in 40 other countries. The organization claims tens of thousands of practitioners were arrested, beaten up, detained, or sent to psychiatric wards, labor camps and prison. The Chinese government has called the Falun Gong "a notorious cult with an evil political will," a "reactionary political force" that should be destroyed (2).

In the Beijing railway station in May 2001, my husband and I saw two groups of approximately 75 people, sitting cross legged on the cement, handcuffed with hands behind their backs, armed guards standing over them. The groups were well-dressed and orderly, far from looking like criminals. When we asked an official at the station, we were told they were Falun Gong members on their way to detention. We were also told by a member of the university faculty that her friend, secretly a member of Falun Gong, had been found out and disappeared one day, never to be heard from again (Ottesen, Private Journal Account May, 2001).

The popularity of Falun Gong may be symptomatic of the spiritual vacuum in China, caused primarily by Chinese disillusionment with Communism. Other influential factors include high unemployment, the rise of Capitalism without a parallel value system, and the comfort and meaning engendered by religious belief.

The Beijing, Guangzhou and Shanghai Branches

Beijing

BYU China Teachers contribute significantly not only the population of the three organized branches of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in China, but also serve in various capacities in the branches while they reside in China. No Chinese citizens attend meetings or branch activities and members are cautioned to not discuss the gospel with Chinese acquaintances or give out any religious literature, in order to comply with China's religious laws.



View of Chapel in Newly-acquired Facility for Beijing Branch

10/6/2003

The Beijing Branch now has a regular attendance of around 250 people, including church members from a number of countries living, working or studying in China and those who are traveling through Beijing and wish to attend services. The first meetings were held in private homes until a larger facility was needed to accommodate membership. Under Branch President Kent Watson, the branch rented a suite of rooms in the Capital Mansion where they have met for approximately eight years. The rental was for Sunday only and frequently other activities pre-empted the branch meetings. Because of the increase in branch membership, a new location that met at least four criteria: transportation access, size, cost, and privacy. On January 19, 2003, a special fast took place that a new location might be found. President Lewis, on a tip from his driver went to a new building called Golden Tower which seemed to fit all criteria. He met with President Stratford and President Perkins and they decided to proceed "through the front door." President Stratford and Elder Chia have spent years establishing a good relationship with government officials on the national and municipal level and are sincere in adhering to the law.

Many obstacles have been miraculously overcome in the process of acquisition of this property and an open house of the new meeting facility was held September 27, 2003.

An e-mail from teachers, Lin and Susan Bothwell, October 6, 2003 relates:

We occupy half of the fourth floor of Beijing's newest office tower called Golden Towers. After President Lewis's history of the miracles in Sacramento meeting last Sunday we weren't surprised that there was a large sign on the building that said, "MIRACLE" with an arrow pointing to the fourth floor. The foyer has a library, a clerk's office, a bulletin board, a Branch President's office with a tithing receipt holder outside the door. The chapel seats three hundred, has an organ, a sacrament table, a moveable podium. . . a marvelous sound system, nursery, classrooms and a huge Relief Society room.

The building is ours to use 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, a big improvement over our last leased space where we were frequently displaced. (See picture)

We were all standing and staring in wonder, when one of the sisters walked into the chapel and burst into tears. Then we all lost it. I'm just not sure, unless you've been here, that you know what a truly remarkable miracle this is. We will have a special meeting November 2 in which China District President Tim Stratford will offer a special prayer of thanksgiving and consecration (we cannot have a formal dedicatory prayer, as it is a leased facility) and this meeting will be attended by high government officials from the Ministry of Religion and the Public Security Bureau."

Shanghai

The branch president in Shanghai, 2003 is Nelson Hsia. The branch of approximately 200 members meets in a leased home in a residential complex.

Guangzhou

The Guangzhou Branch in 1995, as described by Grant Pearse, was held in the White Swan Hotel apartment in the home of Gregory and Jane Hulka. This was luxury with a view, air conditioning, a good kitchen and a soft carpet. The branch consisted of the Hulkas, Barbara and I, Ruthie Hsu, Wendy Liao, Ryan and Willow Hsueh, who were medical students from Taiwan and one or two others. Gregory Hulka as branch president is described by Grant as a “spectacular man” who worked for the US Consulate. He was “understated, witty, bright, kind, caring and loving.” It was he who carried on the traditions of the branch such as the annual lychee picking festival and a communal lunch after our Sunday services.” Unfortunately, Hulka was killed in 2002 in a tragic car accident in the Ukraine, along with his daughter Abbey.

Grant relates, “When the Hulkas were transferred to Honduras, I was called to be Branch President and the following year our branch grew to about twenty, some of the members traveled one to two hours on a hot crowded bus to get to our meetings.” During the four years I was in the branch, we had regular visitors both from Salt Lake City and people in and out of Guangzhou for business or employment. Our first child was blessed in the Guangzhou branch with all the priesthood members participating, a singular event in the branch. They were as close to us as family.

“I remember our first baptism of Nancy and Thelmo Torrealb’s son, Thelmo. We went to a place way out of town on the banks of the Pearl River on a little jetty where we witnessed our branch’s first baptism. Since no Mormon event is complete without food, we had the usual picnic afterward and then headed home.

“Our first priesthood activity for the school year of 1997 was supposed be a tour to the tombs museum but some people thought the activity would probably be boring. So I had it in my head to take every one to the massage parlor. As we loaded up the taxis in front of the luxurious White Swan Hotel, the brethren were all nervous, and very worried about what this Kiwi guy was going to do with them. Many had the fear I was leading them on the path straight down to Satan and his minions. It got worse as the taxis pulled up to the alley leading to many of the massage parlors in the area. What these guys didn’t know was that these are all blind masseurs and that you leave your clothes on and that it is all very legitimate with no funny business. They loved it and wanted to go back again and again. This had to go down as a first for the church--Elders quorum activity down to the massage parlors.”

Grant taught with the China Teachers program for three years and now resides in New Zealand with his wife, Barbara and three children where he has a practice in Chinese Traditional Medicine.

Other Christian Activity in China

Beijing has been conciliatory with the state-monitored Christian church but churches with foreign sponsors or any connections outside of China are illegal. The communist party remains unwaveringly atheist and materialistic and, according to Britsch “expect the withering away of religion at some future time” (Britsch 350).

Article 36 of the Constitution of China states that “The state protects *normal* religious activities. No one may make use of religion to engage in activities that disrupt public order, impair the health of citizens or interfere with the educational system of the state. Religious bodies and religious affairs are not subject to any foreign domination” (Xianfa quoted in Britsch 353).

The reality of religious life in China, according to Britsch is that State security takes priority over freedom of religious belief. That is, party leaders may take action against any individuals or groups if necessary for the public good. Any religious influence from outside China is “vigorously rejected.” Foreign missionaries are not allowed. Any law is subject to change if someone in power decides to do so; China is ruled by men more than law. A state-appointed “Catholic bishop” maintains that “there is no religious persecution in China.” His statement came just days after the arrests of nearly 200 Christians, including three Americans who were deported (TIMEasia.com 9/18/2000, 1).

The Chinese people have increasingly explored Christianity as a way to fill a spiritual void. When we were invited to a Christian Church in Jinan, we had not expected to see the church, shaped somewhat like a small tabernacle, to be filled to overflowing. I asked our Chinese friends about it and they said, “It’s always crowded. Some are curious. Some are members.” After the meeting, an older Chinese woman pushing a walker came up to my husband and I and explained that she was the former pastor of this church as our student translated. Then she said in broken English, her arthritic finger pointing at us, “Brudder, Seester.” Her hand then pointed up, “One fadder,” she said, her eyes glistening” (Ottesen journal).

An unofficial estimate of Chinese Christian converts now runs to 50 million, most of whom have had no contact with foreigners. Catholics and Protestants operate a broad network of “underground” organizations that operate outside government control” (TIMEasia.com, “Positioning Missionaries” Feb. 19, 2001, vol. 157 #7 p. 2). Robert Cheeley, a leader of Christian development in southern China, says that, “The amount of personal freedom that people have to practice religion is magnitudes greater than 10 years ago.”

One student heard the BYU teachers were going to sing on the Easter program at the Jinan Christian Church and walked for three miles one way to be there, primarily out of curiosity. After, I asked her what she thought of it, and she said, “It was very boring.” I remarked to her that if it was boring in her native language, how much more it would be to those of us who didn’t understand Chinese. She laughed and said she just didn’t get what it was all about or why there were so many people there.

One China teacher in 2001 reports that “Foreign Christians teaching at our University held Bible Study meetings on the campus and alluded frequently to additional underground meetings. They also passed out tracts openly to students. We felt at times the need to distance ourselves so we would not be implicated with the proselyting Christians” (Private Interview May, 2001).

Time magazine reports that “hundreds of Southern Baptists remain in China undercover, running house churches” (TIME.asia.com 4). Yunnan province has become a Christian center, mainly because here Christians have been allowed to establish a Christian School and have greatly improved the condition of an orphanage in the city of Kunming. Again, as with the early 1600s advent of the Jesuits, to the religious zeal after the “opening of China,” Christians again seem to be in a kind of marathon race for the souls of the Chinese.

Chapter 13

Future of the China Teachers Program

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God.” (Ephesians 2:19)

The future of the China Teachers Program will be primarily influenced, as in the past, by the political and economic history of China. If this climate is positive, the program should continue to be beneficial to China and to the participating teachers as well as contributing to the prestige of Brigham Young University.

Gordon Chang of Shanghai in his book *The Coming Collapse of China* predicts an economic collapse in the PRC brought on mainly by the burden of failing state-owned enterprises and the unrest of a vast and poverty-stricken peasantry who see China’s progress through mass media and say, “Look, when is my turn?” Chang quotes a headline in *China Daily*, CHINA IS AN UNSTOPPABLE FORCE, but, he says, this is not true. “It is the *Chinese people* who are unstoppable” (Chang 249).

Whether or not Chang’s prediction of a “collapse” is accurate, change is inevitable as China moves into the world economic milieu and as the power of internet information works in the minds of the Chinese masses. Also in today’s China, fear of the “Long Nose” abides and resentment of outsiders is still strong, though these feelings are manifest rarely in teacher-student relationships among China Teachers.

In the spring of 2003, the SARS epidemic threatened any kind of foreign program in mainland China. When it became apparent that the number of cases were much higher than originally reported, the executive decision was made to inform China teachers and their universities in China that a policy of “voluntary evacuation” would be in place. Most of the teachers elected to remain. However, the reports of the disease became more alarming. Some students were being restricted to the campus and a dramatic drop in class attendance occurred. Some overseas flights were being cancelled and if anyone contracted the disease,

they were not allowed to leave China. Jeff Ringer decided that, under the circumstances, he should ask the teachers to leave China as soon as possible and return to the United States. By the first two weeks in May 2003, all teachers had returned. Most teachers expressed their keen disappointment about leaving their students so abruptly. The universities were hard hit to cover for classes left by BYU teachers, however, each of the university officials contacted seemed understanding, given the situation. However, China Teacher Facilitators, Morris and Donna Petersen moved forward with the decline of SARS cases and in the of fall 2003, resumed placement of nearly 70 teachers in Chinese universities.

The Kennedy Center has financial and staffing limits that will keep the number of teachers going to China to around 65 people, very few considering the need for these teachers and the immensity of the population. But the growth of this small seed should not be underestimated. In a poll taken in 2000, the number of students taught by *each* China teacher each year ranged from 300 to 1,000 students in addition to faculty and community contacts. Each teacher gives 500 to 900 business cards (totaling approximately 140,000) to students and other contacts through lectures and “English Corners” which identify them with Brigham Young University and its sponsorship by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

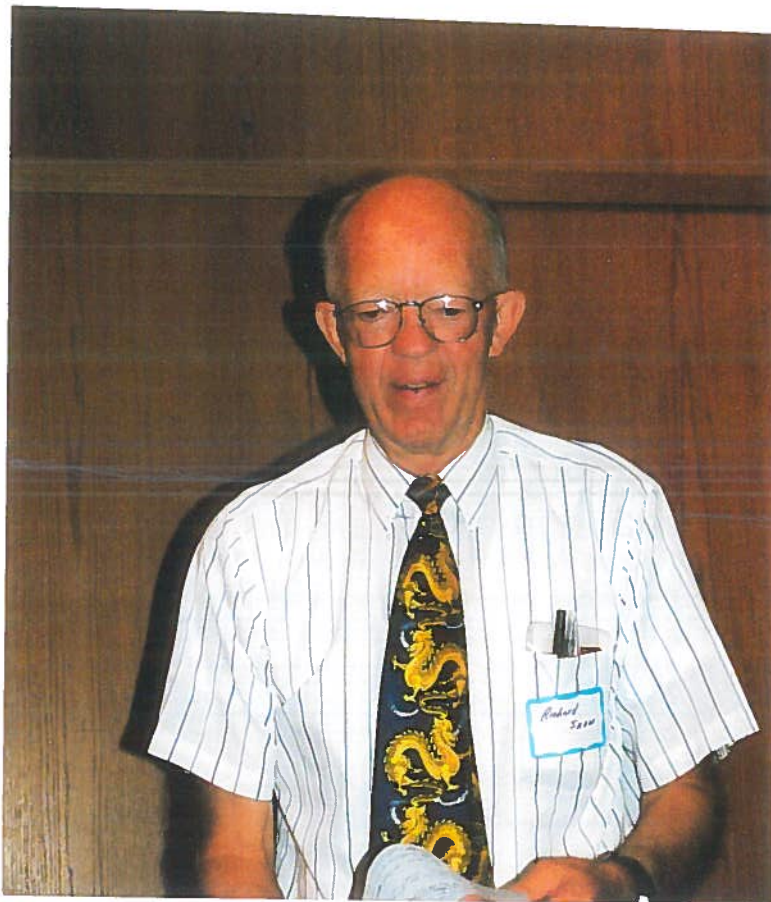
Program Impact on Chinese Higher Education

The impact of Western teaching styles and administration techniques cannot help but influence the direction of higher education in China. Dr. Du of Xi'an Foreign Languages University and graduate of BYU points out the substantial achievement of Chinese higher education in the 1990's. He also points out significant problems that still exist. Among them are the management of administrative power, lack of efficiency and sufficient funding, the drain of qualified faculty into China's industrial sector, and the loss of many promising faculty members who study in other countries and remain there for professional or personal reasons.

In the 1990's approximately 48 percent of university faculty who remained in China were under the age of 35. The influx of foreign teachers with alternative teaching styles representing a number of institutions of higher learning has had an impact on these teachers. Many BYU China teachers have been asked to teach faculty classes and also have had faculty members “sit in” on their classes to observe Western teaching styles. This influence, along with the economic and political reforms, will ultimately, along with faculty trained abroad, act as a leaven to Chinese higher education to build a system commensurate with the most progressive Western programs with, however, “in official parlance, Chinese characteristics” (Du. Handbook. 31).

Humanitarian and Professional Service Opportunities

The humanitarian services rendered by **Joye Bennion** and the China Teachers Alumni organization has been documented earlier and remains an ongoing major project in Shaanxi



Richard Snow, President of China Teachers Alumni Association
1999 to present



Joyce Bennion speaking to China Teachers, October 2003

Province. A number of other teachers have contributed and will contribute in noble ways, both in humanitarian efforts and in voluntary professional services.

Project Hope, a Chinese organization which collects donations for the education of poor children of rural areas who otherwise would not be able to go to school has been widely supported by China Teachers. Around \$50.00 supports one child and many have given money as well as backpacks and school supplies. **Joann Thompson** attached pictures of her 14 grandchildren with a short description of them in each book bag. She and her husband, **Dean** then traveled to the small village where they would present the gifts to the children. Dean records: "We saw that both sides of the street were lined with kids standing about four feet apart chanting something in unison. They had been well coached. We couldn't believe all of this was for us. . . When we entered the schoolyard we saw they had brought benches out of the classrooms and the entire student body and faculty were there. . . with Mary translating they told us how much they appreciated our coming all the way from the United States to help seven of their students. . . each girl received their bag and supplies and we had our pictures taken with the girls and the school officials. The parents gave us gifts—very touching because these people have little to give. One gift was a bag of apples, another walnuts or little bags of vegetables from their gardens. . . it was difficult for us to keep from crying during all of this. We aren't used to this kind of attention, and that certainly wasn't why we donated the money. Mary said the reason for the attention was the size of the gift because it is seldom anyone sponsors more than one girl" (Thompson Journal 1999. See article in Appendix).

Many teachers tell similar stories about their contributions to Project Hope; many other teachers also gave whenever and wherever they encountered a special need. Volunteer service includes editing, recording of teaching materials, participation in Chinese community projects on radio and TV.

In 1991, one of China teachers contributed most of his personal library to the Beijing Foreign Affairs College. This amounted to about 2,000 books, 38 videos and 12 tapes that deal with government, foreign policy and world affairs.

A variety of medical textbooks were obtained from LDS Humanitarian services and sent to Shandong Medical University for their library in 1998. In 2002, two China teachers took over 200 pounds of textbooks to Shandong Nursing School donated by the BYU School of Nursing. The sincere gratitude of the faculty for these gifts seemed to supercede the giving.

Kim Austin records a unique opportunity: "Last Fall, the United Nations Human Rights Commission visited Beijing and met with the government leaders there. A representative from the Chinese Foreign Ministry called and asked me to record a speech for a high-ranking government official. Although this official could speak English, he needed help with proper intonation and word emphasis and wanted a native English speaker to follow as an example. At the time I recorded it, I did not know exactly who was giving the speech—only that it was high ranking official. A few days later the full text of the speech I had recorded was printed in the paper. I was surprised to learn that the vice-president of China had delivered the address."

Also when the International Olympic Committee made its final inspection visit to Beijing in April, Kim was also asked to revise the presentation to the IOC committee which they felt was “too Chinese and not western enough.” She revised it and also was asked to coach the presenters. She also worked on the PowerPoint materials and even advised them on the choice of clothes to wear for the presentations. She states, “I was thrilled when Beijing was awarded the 2008 Olympics. I felt like I had a personal stake in it!” (Austin 4)

Loren Crane, Shandong University in 2003 and former Professor of Communication with a specialty in public speaking was asked to coach a Chinese student competing in the National English Speaking Competition. Two years previous a student from Shandong came in 13th and this was a big deal for them. Crane worked with “Robbie” and he was selected as one of 24 in a field of 500 students. At the finals in Nanjing, this student took 5th place. The people at Shandong University were delighted and as a result, Loren Crane was asked to teach public speaking in every course he taught the second semester.

Utah State Judge, **Pat Brian** taught two courses on Criminal Trial Law in the school of Law at Fudan University in Shanghai. His courses were based on the Rule of Law as practiced in the United States. He has also been invited to participate with the Shanghai Arbitration Commission while he is there and, last year, he lectured to the High Court of Judge in Nanjing as well as many legal groups in the Shanghai area.

Many other teachers had similar opportunities for service such as **Gordon Auguson** who edited a scholarly article for a Chinese counterpart. Frequently teachers are asked to be “judges” for university contests, primarily for English speech competitions. Still others were asked to give lectures on American Culture or subjects of their choice before large audiences. “Christmas programs” were also popular and though usually planned strictly for classes, were requested also for faculty and school assemblies. Interviews of China Teachers by TV stations are quite common as are other media opportunities. **Max and Jean Beers** responded to opportunities to share their singing and instrumental abilities as did others with similar talents. **Jason Grygla**, formerly a professional clown, was a popular volunteer performer.

Alice Clark received a number of outstanding teacher awards in Shandong Province where she taught for two years at Shandong Teachers University.

At Peking University, **Carol C. Ottesen** was asked to edit and revise a handbook to be given to all Olympic visitors and participants. She was also asked to edit and revise a new English text to be used in teaching English to all Chinese High School students. At her suggestion a yearly English essay contest was permanently established at the university with winners appearing in a book published by Peking University Press.

In an unusual request, **Spencer Palmer** and **Paul Hyer** both taught World Religions in the philosophy department of the Central University of Minorities. Palmer’s text is still in use there. **Karen Hyer**, who has also participated as a China Teacher, has been active in Women’s Studies as a teacher and forum speaker in Beijing. She also brought a well-known Chinese scholar to speak at Brigham Young University.

Dr. Wayne Kearney at Nanjing University received the “Merit Award for Excellent Teaching.” He and his wife were the first teachers since the Craigs taught in 1982 to teach at Nanjing University and were invited to a small dinner with the University President and other dignitaries. During the course of the meal they were asked if it was true that they were “Mormons.” This was followed by a series of sincere and well-directed questions about the Church. The Kearneys felt it appropriate, under the circumstances, to answer. They were well received and more of our teachers have been invited to that University.

Economist **Del Gardner** co-authored with Chinese scholar, Chu Guangyou, a book on development and free market economics. **Scott Hammond** has co-authored articles with a Chinese foreign affairs staff member, and presented papers at professional meetings in China and the U.S. **Randy Jones** has conducted computer-assisted language workshops in China. **Robert Blair**, **Mel Luthy**, and **Lynn Henrichsen** have conducted linguistic and TESL workshops in China. **Ralph Barney**, **Cynthia Rogers** and **Richard Harris** have edited government documents for the Beijing Foreign Language Press. (Hillam 13).

Former China Teacher, **Richard L. Snow** serves as President of the China Teachers Alumni Association which supports the Project at Shaanxi elementary school and the Ray C. Hillam scholarships at Xi'an Foreign Language University. The China Teachers reunion is held every year on the first Friday in October preceding General Conference. Former China teacher, **Leo Folsom** was first president of this association.

Workshop instructors **Maizie Lee** (Chinese), **Lynn Henrichsen** (Teaching English as a Second Language), **Tessa Santiago** (writing), **Kim Austin** (Computers), **Eric Hyer** (Politics), **Richard Cracroft**, **Carol Ottesen** (literature), **Cheng Biao** (Waiban) and others in the areas of health, insurance, travel have given many hours of service to outgoing teachers.

Morris and Donna Petersen had one of their students from Jinan in their home for a year. She was designated as a visiting scholar, the daughter of a well-placed government official. **Ted and Doris Warner** opened their home to Cheng Biao of the Foreign Affairs office at the Shandong Teachers University.

In addition the teachers have made thousands of friends for themselves, the university, and the community. Ray Hillam records:

A personal friendship with a Chinese is almost like a contract in western societies. It is enduring because of the respect they have for their teachers. Sue Ge, a fellow at the Foreign Affairs College and Du Ruiqing, president of Xi'an Foreign Language University have doctorates from BYU and have recently received BYU's distinguished alumni. Su Ge's daughter received the Helen Foster Snow scholarship as a student at BYU. BYU's acceptance of the Helen Foster Snow papers has led to the establishment of a private school and an exhibit in Xi'an. BYU has produced a PBS documentary of Snow's association with and chronicling of several communist leaders (Hillam 12).

Conclusion

Program Director Jeff Ringer and Facilitators George and Diane Pace wrote the following report of the China Teachers Program June 2003:

“Over the past 13 years nearly 600 teachers have been a part of the China Teachers Program. They have, conservatively, taught and influenced over 100,000 of the brightest and most capable students in China. They have been careful not to proselyte or discuss their religious beliefs, however, they have consistently incorporated values and universal truths in their efforts to improve the language skills of their students. They have also made it known that they, and BYU are sponsored by the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints. The name of the church is also printed on the 500 name cards they distribute to students, faculty and staff, as well as the many friends they meet while in China.

“We have experienced the intervention of the Lord in resolving problems that have surfaced on occasions and believe He is pleased with what *has happened* and *is happening* with this effort.”

Timothy Stratford, who came to Beijing in 1982 to work in the American Embassy and former mission president in Taiwan, spoke at the China District Conference (encompasses all of China except for Hong Kong) in the fall of 2002 about the importance of extending influence through the power of faith, hope and charity. “Faith gives us confidence, hope gives us peace and charity helps us love people in ways they’ve never known before.” He recalled asking the Lord when he was in Taiwan how He could love so many different people. The Lord answered, “How can I not?” He counseled the China Teachers in particular, “One of the great gifts of the spirit is the ability to show love.” He added, referring to China, “The Spirit of the Lord broods over that land” (Stratford. China District Conference Aug. 11, 2002. Ottesen notes).

China teachers have testified of such spiritual experiences and bear witness of love given and overwhelmingly returned by the people of China. Also many undocumented acts of charity by China Teachers and Administrators including those known only to the giver, the receiver and God are anonymous and treasured by those whose names do not appear in this collection. This short history could easily be expanded to volumes of stories, journals, collections of student papers and correspondence with students that is ongoing. Also many of the times of disappointment and sacrifice are only inferred and ultimately submerged into the larger experience.

The approach to China was suggested by Ray Hillam in the August workshop in a 1948 quote from George Albert Smith:

We have not come to take away from you the truth and virtue you possess. We have not come to find fault with you or to criticize you. We have not come here to berate you because of the things you have not done; but we have come here as your friends and to say to you: keep all the good that you have, and let us bring to you more good, in order that you may happier.

The implication is that the expansiveness of this program is and should be motivated not by judgment, imposition, or condescension but an all-encompassing Christ-like love, acquired only by the submission to the spirit and will of God.

Dallin H. Oaks, in a letter dated October 9, 2003 said of the Program:

I am very appreciative of what has been done under the China Teachers Program. I believe its impact has been very positive in the lives of all of the participants (students as well as teachers), and that a future history will credit this work as one of the most significant in the Church's growing relationship with China.

One young observer remarked, "These China Teachers are a special breed. When we traveled with them during Spring Festival, I thought perhaps I'd have to make my own fun with all these "older people," but I was justly humbled as they taught me the meaning of living life to its fullest-- these people are courageous as they reach out of their comfort zone, and are energized by service and the giving to others of their life experience" (Private Interview with fellow traveler 2001).

For these adventurers, the giving is reciprocal. China Teachers may go to China primarily propelled by the impulse that they, in their fortunate circumstances, must "give to those less fortunate;" however, the commonality of response from these teachers is that they received much more than they gave. Though they cannot, as Helen Foster Snow advised "tell them the truth and the truth will make them free," they can be examples of hopefulness and purveyors of love.

In the words of Gerald Manley Hopkins, many China teachers have found that "The world is charged with the grandeur of God/ It will flame out" and cannot be eliminated by any decree. These Teachers, as they magnify the light of Christ, stand and have stood as witnesses that "the Holy Ghost over the bent/ world broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings." They have received in return a surprising love that comes when it does not seem fully merited, and the confirming recognition that Father of Lights is present and operative among the teachable, gracious and capable Chinese.



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I would like to credit the China Teachers who shared with me their journals and writings and responded in personal interviews and others who so generously contributed to this history. Transcripts and copies in possession of author/compiler.

Ray and Carolyn Hillam
Robert and Julia Blair
Katie and Smith Broadbent
Briant and Barbara Jacobs
Marden and Bessie Clark
Bruce and Helen Seaman
Marshall Craig
Jeff Ringer
George and Joye Bennion
Diane and George Pace
Ted and Doris Warner
Donna and Morris Peterson
Lowry and Marie Bishop
Ruth Holland
Kim Austin
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Brecken Swartz
Don and Kit Ballentine
Tom and Merriam Rogers
Gary and Karen Hendersen
Kathleen and Stephan Seable
Joe and Gloria Jensen
Alvin and Barbara Price
Gloria Gardner Murdoch
Dean and Joan Thompson
Del and Kathryn Gardner
Stan and Barbara Shakespeare
Doug and Corene Parker
Boyd and Merlene Bronson
Don and Joyce Nuttall
Lin and Susan Bothwell
Wayne and Leah Owens
Mike and Camille Nielsen
Dick and Joanne Criddle
Sherri Rowe
Russell M. Nelson
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My Education in China Robert W. Blair

It began with a letter that came to my Linguistics Department mailbox in January 1980. The letter was in a small, plain envelope with no return address. I had no idea that the letter inside that innocent-looking envelope would change the life and horizons of my family and myself in innumerable ways. I opened it and read: Dear Robert Blair, your application to teach English in China has been accepted. The letter, signed by Third Secretary of the Embassy of the Peoples Republic of China in Washington D.C. then instructed me to call an embassy phone number for further information.

I called my wife and said, "Honey, are you sitting down?" She hesitated a moment and then answered with concern in her voice: "Yes?" "Let me read you a letter I just got. It's a pencilled letter from the Chinese embassy in Washington. "Yes?" she responded in disbelief. I continued: it says: "Dear Robert Blair, your application to teach English in China has been accepted." I don't exactly recall what Julia said at that point, but it was on the order of "NO, Bob! We're not going to China! No way!"

I had to explain to her how it was that the letter referred to my application to teach in China. It was almost exactly a year before when I was in Boston attending a TESOL conference. At one hour of the conference I found no session of particular interest, so I drifted into a session in which a presenter I knew, Tom Scovel, was to give a report on the teaching of English in China. At the end of his report he said: "I have nothing to do with recruiting people to go to China to teach English, but I do know the address of the Foreign Experts Bureau in Beijing. If by any chance any of you would be interested in finding out more, write your name and address on this sheet of paper. I'll mail it to the Foreign Experts Bureau, and who knows?, maybe they will send you further information.

Without thinking, I wrote my name and address on the sheet and passed it on. I don't believe I ever thought about receiving further information, and I didn't even tell Julia of my unthinking folly. It was simply forgotten. That is, until the invitation came out of the blue a year later tucked in a small sealed envelope with no return address.

"Let me just call the number at the Chinese Embassy, okay? I'm curious to know more."
Well I called and got the Third Secretary on the phone. I asked him who had invited me. "Just a minute," he said in heavily accented English. I guess he went into another room and opened a file cabinet and pulled out a file on me. Anyway, he returned 2 or 3 minutes later and said:

"Shandong University."

"Where is that?" I asked.

"Just a minute," he said. I conjecture that he went into another room and consulted a map of China. Anyway, he returned a couple of minutes later and said that Shandong is a province in the east of China. (Such, I figured, was the level of sophistication of political appointees back then. I can imagine a Chinese asking a foreign service officer in a U.S. embassy where New York was, Shandong being the second most populous province in China.) After getting a couple more questions answered, I told the embassy officer I would give an answer within a few days.

Now I was becoming more curious. What in the world would it be like to take a year's leave of absence from BYU, leave behind my exciting research projects, and go to China to teach English? Julia was not curious at all. The thought of it becoming real never entered her mind. At that time we had seven of our eight children living at home. Our youngest was five. The others were in school or at the university. A sizable mortgage hung over our head. This was

January, and although I had not yet received my contract renewal, I knew I was expected to teach full time at BYU the next school year. I was 49 years old and diligently pursuing two big projects for which I had invested years of scholarly preparation.

You have to understand Julia's fears. She had read of the horrors of the Cultural Revolution, the Chinese people's worship of the all-powerful dictator and tyrant Mao Zedong, the inhuman depredations of the communist revolution. She had been horrified at the fanatical brutality and meanness of and toward citizens of Red China. And she'd read fiery anti-American propaganda put out by China. How would any Americans dare to spend a year in a nation of extremists who hate us, ridicule our economic system, despise our institutions, a people whose basic values clash most sharply with ours? How could we make friends with such people?

After vigorous discussion with Julia, and gaining some assurance that things in China were not what they had been in the 1970s, we finally decided to find out more. If we were to accept the invitation, how many of our children could we take? We were told five. What classes would we teach, and what materials should we bring? We would have to wait until we got there to find out.

To make a long story short, after further prayerful discussion, and after my being granted a year's leave from BYU, we finally committed ourselves accept the invitation. Spring semester of 1980 I directed a field project in Guatemala. While I was there, and out of contact with home for several days, Julia received a call from the Chinese Embassy. The message: Shandong University would allow us to bring only one child. Would we still go? They could wait only a day for the answer. Well, that put a whole new complexion on the matter. I had no employment at BYU for the coming year, having been replaced by a visiting professor and I was beyond reach by telephone. Julia had to make the decision. It was our older children who convinced her that they would take care of the younger children while we were gone. She called the Embassy: Yes, we would go. Several days after that I was able to call home and got the message.

We arrived in Jinan only a couple of days before fall semester began. Still we had no idea of what classes we were to teach. The evening before classes were to begin, the English Department chairman came to our apartment. Without a wink or a smile, he asked us what classes we planned to teach. We answered: Whatever you have planned for us. He then laid out several classes we might teach, and asked us which one of us would like to teach which classes. Unfortunately, there were no textbooks and no syllabus for any class. And the copy center required six weeks in advance to do copies. At that point what could we do but laugh? I won't take time to relate how we went about that night preparing for our first classes. Suffice it to say that it took us both about one day to fall in love with our students and with our work at Shandong Daxue. I believe you've all had that experience. Of course it immediately became clear that our students were not rabid extremists or revolutionaries, nor were they our adversaries or enemies. It was apparent that they had been brought up to accept a world view very different from my own, but I found much to admire in those young, bright Chinese students. I'm sure you found the same.

The China we came to in 1980 seemed dark and very foreign. Teachers and students, symbolically of allegiance to the revolution, all wore drab Mao-uniforms. Blouses, skirts and dresses were not seen. Classrooms walls were decorated with photographs of Red China's heroes, Mao, Lenin, Marx and Stalin in particular. Hundreds of political slogans were emblazoned on signs prominently positioned on campus and throughout the city: Long live Chairman Mao. Communism is the hope of the masses, and scores of others, all intended to remind people that China was in revolution.

By some minor miracle, that year (not the year before or the year after) visitors were free to come by invitation to our apartment without having to sign in at the gate. That meant our students could talk with us privately in our home. So it was there that we became more closely acquainted with a small number of our Chinese students who in time came to trust us and speak quite boldly of their lives, their hopes and dreams, their fears and their core beliefs. Also in some of their assigned writing, some of them opened up their hearts and bared their souls. I'm sure all of you have been privy to similar revelations.

1980 was when the Gang of Four was prosecuted in Beijing. As you know, blame was heaped on these scapegoats for policies and atrocities that they were not alone in initiating or backing. The period of their trial was a time of catharsis for the students on our campus, as I suppose it may have been on other college campuses. Our students spoke of the members of the Gang of Four with bitter hatred. Of course none of them blamed The Great Helmsman for anything. He remained the unassailable Father of the Country, worthy of highest veneration if perhaps no longer worship.

Well, 22 years have passed since then. In 1999-2000, Julia and I had an equally rewarding experience teaching at Nankai University in Tianjin. And again earlier this year we had the opportunity of working several months in China, this time in Beijing. I look back now in wonder at how my brief sojourns in China, spanning 22 years, has broadened my horizons. I ask myself what have I learned about human kind? About human societies? About government? About myself?

For one thing, I have pondered the sources of man's goodness, as well as man's evil to man. Jesus speaks of evil in the heart of men: From within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lasciviousness, pride... All these evil things come from within & defile the man.

I have pondered somewhat the nature of societies, the ideal of community, joined in heartfelt loyalty to an all-wise leader pursuing a just cause, all members at peace and in harmony with one another and mutually supportive. Some scriptures in particular enjoin such community: What did Peter mean when he said Be ye all of one mind.? Here is what he wrote: Be ye all of one mind, having compassion one for another, be courteous, not rendering evil for evil. What did Paul mean when he wrote to the saints in Corinth: Be perfectly joined together in the same mind. What did the Savior mean when he said: If ye are not one, ye are not mine.

It seems that nothing short of revolutionary change in man's nature could hope to see an ideal community develop in which a genuine unity of heart and mind prevails. Marx advanced the idea of evolutionary change in human societies, resulting ultimately in the perfect society, communism, a "millennial society" in which man's nature would ultimately be changed. In Russia, Lenin promoted and implemented the idea that violent revolution was necessary to propel that evolution. Lenin said:

We reject all morality that proceeds from supernatural ideas. Morality is entirely subordinate to the interests of class war. Everything is moral that is necessary for the annihilation of the old social order and for uniting the proletariat.

Mao Zedong added simply and coldly: Revolution proceeds out of the barrel of a gun.

This satanic philosophy is clear: Whatever action brings about for the perpetrator a desirable consequence is good, is right and is justified! The end justifies the means! The crucial question of

good or evil, of course, comes in when one asks for whom the sought after consequences are desirable. Are they uniformly desirable for the great majority or only for a tiny minority. And who is to judge? For a power-thirsty tyrant without moral values, if he and those who join with him reason that the world would be a better place without Jews, or Mormons, or infidels, they can find in this philosophy all the justification they need for seeking the persecution and banishment of these, if not also their extermination by force. They see that the only way to remake the world into what they want it to be is through force, through intimidation, through violence – whatever form it may take, without limit and without mercy.

In our lifetime alone that satanic philosophy has provided justification for several attempts at violent revolution aimed at capturing the heart and mind of a people, a nation, and eventually the whole world, while destroying or neutralizing opposition -- always, of course, with the aim of empowering one ambitious tyrant's political or religious philosophy. Stalin, Hitler, Mao, Ceausescu, Kim Il Sung, Pol Pot, Khomeini, Saddam Hussein, Osama bin Laden... the list of evil tyrants who have spread their self-serving poison with horrifying effect goes on and on.

In order to capture the hearts & minds & souls of people, tyrants such as these covet absolute power, absolute control over the levers of government, over the education of children and over information through all channels of the media. In order to gain and maintain power, they restrict freedom, they foment hatred and persecution against all who dare resist their philosophy or fail to show allegiance to their cause; they dehumanize their enemies, they resort to deception, persecution, oppression, intimidation, torture and murder – employing any means to force compliance, conformity, obedience, unity; they require signs of loyalty: zeig heil or waving the little red book of Mao's quotations. They do whatever they see necessary to instill fear and exercise control over the lives and minds and hearts of people. Hitler proposed "The Ultimate Solution" and his loyalists dutifully carried out satanic orders. Osama bin Ladin's solution is the same today, only it is based in his reading of the Koran: "Kill the infidels." Once the infidels have been exterminated, then the blessed community of fundamentalist shi'ite muslims loyal to their leader can all be at peace. Then finally there will be unity! Unity and peace, at a price!

History is witness to the fulfillment of Satan's vengeful threat to raise up armies and navies, false priests who oppress and tyrants who destroy and to reign with blood and horror on the earth.

A question I keep asking is: How could Hitler have won the loyalty of so many Germans? Nazi Germany achieved unity, pretty much, didn't it? How could Stalin have won the souls of so many Russians? The Soviet Union achieved unity, pretty much, didn't it? How could Mao have won the utter devotion of so many Chinese? Communist China has achieved unity, pretty much, hasn't it? Or has it? I cringe when I pass Tian An Men and see Mao's picture displayed there as the Father of Modern China. Nationalism has removed the pictures of Stalin and Marx that in 1980 hung there along side Mao's. I predict that one day Mao's picture will also be removed, and China will move toward a more benign kind of unity.

Aware of the events of the past century of world history arising from the evil in the hearts of men, and realizing that a considerable portion of the earth's population see us now as their enemy, one might draw a completely cynical picture of the human condition or the condition of Man in Society. I have to ask myself the question: What lasting good have we China Teachers done? What part have we played in the leading China out of bondage? Has our service in China, the cumulative service of a tiny army of some 600 Kennedy Center teachers resulted in anything that is of lasting influence for good? I want to believe so. Scripture says: By small means the Lord can bring about great things.

Speaking again of revolution aimed at bringing about change in the nature of Man and Human Society, I believe we have been, and are yet, very much a part of The Quiet Revolution. One Christmas carol in particular beautifully announces the unobtrusive coming, so quiet the world scarcely knows the promise this revolution holds. Not with intimidation, not with sword, not with enslavement, not with killer force, but with the redemptive light of God's love for his children comes this revolution upon the world. In this carol we celebrate it:

O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie.
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep The silent stars go by;
Yet in thy dark streets shineth The everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years Are met in thee tonight.

O morning stars together Proclaim the holy birth,
And praises sing to God the King, And peace to men on earth.

How silently, how silently The wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts The blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; But in this world of sin,
Where meek souls will receive him, still The dear Christ enters in.

How different this gentle, unobtrusive, compassionate revolution is from the violent, self-serving, revolutions in which tyrants set out to demand loyalty under penalty of death or imprisonment, and set about to change by force the nature of Man and Society. Yet we believe it is this quiet revolution alone which has the power ultimately to truly change Man and Society. How many of us found opportunity to tell our students that where we come from, Christmas is far more than secular carols, colored lights, and Christmas presents? Or that Easter is about more than bunnies, colored eggs and a celebration of a season change? Or that Thanksgiving Day celebration is about more than turkey, cornucopias and football.

I suspect that the experience of each of us with a teacher or teachers of our own in school or college has shown us that a teacher can touch the life of a student in ways far beyond what academics is about.

I believe that underlying every effect there is a cause, or a chain of causes. I smile at the whimsical claim someone put forth that a butterfly unfolding its wings in China can ultimately affect the American stock market, but I grant that a cause or chain of causes behind an effect may be hidden, or untrace-able. Looking at an effect after the fact, we may see no other explanation than that the hand of the Lord was the agent. We will not have the chance to observe the long-term effects of the time we spent in China.

On a very small but I think not insignificant scale, our being our students' teachers and friends in China has, I believe, contributed in a small way to China's redemption. Our silent witness, shown in our genuine love for them as well as in our teaching and exemplifying our values, has impacted the lives of not a few. I remember a male student coming alone to my office, shutting the door, sitting close opposite me and leaning forward as he asked a burning question: "Mr. Blair, tell me," he begged softly, lest his voice be heard through the wall, "is there life after death? Does our soul live on after we die?" I answered with testimony: "Yes, Cheng Shan, our soul lives on, it is true." With explosive emotion, he said: "I knew it was true, It has to be true. They lied to us. They taught us there is no life after death. O Mr. Blair, my mother died a year ago, but I know she is somewhere. I have seen her in my dreams. She is somewhere, I know."

I am sure each of you can tell of similar things, wonderful things, where on a personal one-to-one level, or in notes penned for your eyes only, students have responded to your love, your teaching and your example with touching revelations of themselves and with appreciation for your impact on their life. I believe that in our teaching and being with our Chinese students, we have, more than we might guess, raised fundamental questions in the minds of some of our students, not through criticism or censure, but more through subtle example and wordless testimony. The questions I hope we have raised include: HOW ARE WE TO GOVERN OURSELVES, INDIVIDUALLY AND COLLECTIVELY? Is this not among the most fundamental questions of all? Then the equally fundamental question: IS THERE LIFE AFTER DEATH? AND IF SO, WHAT DOES OUR LIFE ON THIS EARTH HAVE TO DO WITH OUR LIFE AFTER DEATH?

Truly we have been welcome messengers of peace and good will. We have cut through the bonds of ethnicity, and we have woven bonds of trust and friendship. Where before we didn't know them and they didn't know us, now we sense a closeness, a brotherhood. We are part of their life. We have a stake in their life. And through this, we have come closer to seeing Man, our precious brothers and sisters on this earth, as God must see us all, shorn of skin color or ethnicity or nationality.

Perhaps with me, you will catch something of this sense of our oneness with mankind in John Donne's words, with which I will conclude:

No man is an island, entire of itself.
Every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.
If a clod be washed away by the sea, Europe is the less,
As well as if a promontory were,
as well as if a manor of thy friend's,
or of thine own were.
Any man's death diminishes me,
Because I am involved in mankind.
Therefore never send to know for whom the bell tolls.
It tolls for thee.