

Today I am very honoured to represent NZCFS on this occasion in Shandan to jointly celebrate Shandan Bailie School's 70th and our own 60th anniversaries. From inception in 1952, the first twenty years of our existence, NZCFS played a significant role as a key link between NZ and China, and in 1972 one important objective was achieved with the formal establishment of diplomatic relations, NZ being one of the first Western Countries to recognise China. So this year we also celebrate 40 years of NZ-China relations.

The foundation for all this recent history can be largely accredited to Rewi Alley.

On the occasion of their 70th anniversary, I would like to congratulate SBS on the role they play in vocational education in Zhangye. Today, the Bailie education system with its create and analyse, hands and minds together approach, continues to have an important role to play in Chinese education system, with the need for training of skilled people. As the oldest Bailie school in China, SBS can adequately serve as a model for Bailie education approaches in China.

Today, we continue with our objectives of promoting friendship and relationships, and encouraging true understanding between the people of both countries. Shandan and SBS has always been a most important relationship for NZCFS, from support in the early days, and then again since re-establishment in 1984.

NZCFS has sent over 15 teachers to SBS. With us today is Nyarene Masson, who was here in the late 1940s for several years, and Karen Wilson, who served three years in the early 1990s, and current teacher Andrew Knight.

In recent years, the partnership between SBS and NZCFS has further developed, with a programme of rural development training, focusing on promoting cooperatives. In this activity, SBS and NZCFS have incorporated a further legacy left by Rewi Alley, in Gong He. I would also like to acknowledge the support that the New Zealand government has given to this programme, both through the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, and through the New Zealand Embassy.

The Rural Development Training Programme for cooperative promotion established at SBS, with collaboration from SCF and project funding support from NZ, has capacity to contribute to rural economic development, not only in this region but also in the rest of Gansu and other province of West China. I hope that in the future this programme can gain a high degree of credibility in assisting with rural development, and would like to encourage extensive use and support for the cooperative promotion programme by local government to assist with achieving their goals of rural economic development.

Looking forward to the next 60 years, I would like to introduce PhD student Parley Reynolds as a young NZCFS member coming to Shandan to do some field research in the role cooperatives play in rural communities. I hope you can support him while he is here, and accept him as a symbol of the future and ongoing NZCFS/Shandan relationship. On behalf of Parley I would like to extend my sincere gratitude to all people involved.

Thank you.

Dave Bromwich