



## 7. SIX-MONTHLY REPORT FROM INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS SECTION

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Corporate Plan Output: International Relations, Civic and Ceremonial	

The purpose of this report is to inform the Council of the recent activities undertaken by the International Relations Section from October 1999 to March 2000, and of the Sister Cities New Zealand, Air New Zealand Award 2000, received 17 March 2000 for the 'Best Youth or Education Project'.

### INTRODUCTION

The International Relations Section handles three main areas which comprise Sister Cities, Visiting Delegations and Civic and Ceremonial. A review of the activities undertaken from September 1999 to March 2000 follows in three parts.

#### 1. OVERVIEW OF SISTER CITIES PROGRAMME

The Christchurch Sister Cities Programme continued to expand in the number and range of exchanges between Christchurch and its six Sister Cities in the last six months. Christchurch's Sister Cities are Adelaide, Australia; Christchurch, England; Gansu Province, China; Kurashiki, Japan; Seattle, United States of America and Songpa-Gu, Korea.

An exciting new initiative has been the joint sister cities projects that have been undertaken ...

#### **Joint Sister Cities Projects**

- *Sister Cities' Gardens at the Halswell Quarry Park, Kennedys Bush Road:* Visitors from Kurashiki, Songpa-Gu and Christchurch, England have all planted trees in their respective gardens. The commissioning of structures for each garden is being undertaken by each committee. The gardens will be officially opened in mid December by the Governor General.
- *'Art in the Park 2000' 1-20 February 2000:* Sculptors from Adelaide, Kurashiki and Songpa-Gu were among the 23 sculptors for this international sculpture symposium in North Hagley Park.
- *Children's Art Gallery 'ArtZone', COCA, 66 Gloucester Street:* New Zealand's first children's art gallery was opened on 18 February by Mayor Garry Moore. The first exhibition featured 100 artworks each from Songpa-Gu and local primary school children. Five other exhibitions this year will similarly feature 100 artworks from children of Christchurch's five other sister cities and from local children. The theme is what their environment will be like in 100 years.

## **Christchurch-Adelaide Sister City Committee**

- Warren Pringle, Community Arts Worker, home-hosted by the Adelaide-Christchurch Sister City Committee, undertook many meetings to further build links between the arts in Christchurch and Adelaide, while in Adelaide from 1-8 March. Among a number of initiatives, Warren laid the groundwork for the selection of a sculptor with funding for a piece for the Adelaide sister city garden and for a dedicated venue to display Christchurch arts products at the next Adelaide Festival 2002.
- Carla Potter, the Committee's youth delegate and Director of BRAT music organisation, visited Adelaide from 1-8 March to link the youth of each sister city through the international language of music. Home-hosting was arranged for Carla, who made an incredible number of contacts and is now working on a variety of resulting projects, including the airing of BRAT shows on Adelaide Student Radio 3D from 24 April; weekly exchanges between each city's local music publications of articles on local music in each city; and discussions with Aus Music, who are working towards the inclusion of a music business course in the New Zealand secondary schools curriculum.

Carla has been invited by the South Australian Music Industry Association (SAMIA) to present the following papers at the Adelaide Music Business Conference: the effect of the introduction of GST on the music industry in NZ, women in music and the NZ Music industry.

- Oaklands School celebrated the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of its link with sister school Direk, Adelaide when 14 students, two teachers, the Principal and three others were home-hosted by Direk School for 10 days.

## **Christchurch, England Sister City Committee**

- A group of 22 people from Christchurch, England visited on a Millennium Tour from 12-18 February, to celebrate both the start of the new millennium and the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sister city relationship. The visitors were home-hosted. A 'Millennium Shield' was gifted to the city, with the suggestion that Christchurch decide to whom it should be awarded annually. Mayor Garry Moore has left this decision to the sister city committee.
- A group of 18 students and three leaders from Linwood High School are to visit the UK and Europe from 1-26 April. They will visit Christchurch, England and be home-hosted by sister school Twynham Comprehensive School for two weeks. This came about from the 1998 visit of Twynham to Linwood High School.
- In October 1999 Christchurch presented Christchurch, England with a 'Fair Play' shield, which is to be awarded to a primary school which displays fair play in the city's inter-school sporting event.

### **Christchurch-Gansu Friendly Relations Committee**

- A goodwill delegation from Gansu visited Christchurch during January 2000. The visit included a meeting with Deputy Mayor, Councillor Lesley Keast, and a business meeting with representatives of both the Christchurch-Gansu Friendly Relations Committee and the Canterbury Development Corporation.
- Four students and a teacher visited Christchurch for four weeks during February. They were home-hosted by Burnside High School. As well as attending school, various activities were arranged for them, including a reception hosted by the Deputy Mayor. Four students and a teacher from Christchurch will reciprocate the visit in April 2000.

### **Christchurch-Kurashiki Sister City Committee**

- Fourteen fourth form students from various Christchurch high schools and two leaders visited Kurashiki, as part of the annual educational exchange programme.
- From Kurashiki, 33 Kurashiki residents, many of whom had previously home-hosted Christchurch delegation members, visited Christchurch for five days on a 'Christchurch Experience' tour from 21 to 24 October. Many opted to be home-hosted for two of the four nights. The visit was so successful it is to be repeated again this year.
- A Bitchu Kagura group of eight traditional musicians and performers and Kurashiki's International Relations Co-ordinator visited Christchurch for four days to perform at the Japan Festival 18-21 November. Their performance was absolutely stunning and proved to be a highlight of the festival.
- Formal sister school certificates were produced and exchanged between Mt Pleasant Primary School and Dai Yon Fukuda School. A teacher exchange is being investigated.

### **Christchurch-Seattle Sister City Committee**

- A delegation visited Seattle during September 1999, with the aim of promoting opportunities for Canterbury within the greater Seattle region. It was composed of, amongst others, representatives of the Christchurch-Seattle Sister City Committee, the Canterbury Development Corporation and the Canterbury Employers' Chamber of Commerce.

Meetings were held with the University of Washington, the Seattle Trade Alliance, Washington Software Association and Mayor Paul Schell, plus meetings with many other organisations. The visit was a great success, and laid the groundwork for the Mayor's visit to Seattle in October this year.

- Three high school students visited Seattle in September/October 1999 for three weeks, as part of the annual Seattle Scholar programme. Amongst other activities they gave talks to groups in Seattle on life in Christchurch. During this time they were home hosted by the families of students who have already visited Christchurch under the same programme. They attended University Prep High School, 20 of whose students and two teachers visited Christchurch in January 1999.

- The next exhibition at the Children's Art Gallery, opening 1 April, will feature 100 artworks from Seattle children alongside 100 artworks from local primary school children.

### **Christchurch-Songpa-Gu Sister City Committee**

- Twelve students and two teachers from Aranui High School were hosted by their sister school Ogum High School, Songpa-Gu, from 28 September to 8 October.
- Aranui High School hosted a group of 16 students, three teachers and the Principal from Ogum High School from 14-23 February.
- Korea Day 2000 celebrations included the visit of a group of 38 performers from Songpa-Gu, including a group of professional drummers, from 1-6 March. Their incredible performances at Riccarton High School, Cathedral Square (at the conclusion of a street parade), the James Hay Theatre and the South Quad of the Art Centre were enthusiastically viewed.

The Director General of Songpa-Gu's General Affairs Bureau led the delegation, and was accompanied by four Songpa-Gu Office staff members.

- Songpa-Gu held a primary schools' children's art competition and the 100 best entries were sent to Christchurch to be exhibited in the first exhibition in the Children's Art Gallery.

### **Sister Cities New Zealand Air New Zealand Awards 2000**

After reaching the finals for the last two years, Christchurch's Kurashiki and Songpa-Gu Sister City Committees, supported by the Christchurch City Council, were delighted to be awarded the 'Best Youth or Education Project' in the Sister Cities Air New Zealand Awards 2000.

The award was presented in Timaru at the annual New Zealand Sister Cities Convention 17-19 March, by Mr Francis Mortimer, Inbound Tourism Development Manager, Air New Zealand. It included \$2500 of Air New Zealand travel and an award plaque, copies of which will be sent to Kurashiki and Songpa-Gu.

The winning entry (copy attached) was for the Sister Cities Youth Soccer Tournament in August 1999, when Christchurch hosted Under 17 representative teams from sister cities Kurashiki, Japan and Songpa-Gu, Korea. In 1998 the two committees had arranged and supported a Christchurch Under 17 representative team's tour to the two cities to play international games. The success of this tour was the inspiration for a youth soccer tournament in Christchurch involving the three sister cities.

## **Sister Cities Promotion**

To promote community awareness of our sister cities and their activities, a number of public displays and presentations to special interest groups have been undertaken and media opportunities are constantly being sought.

A colourful children's bookmark, displaying the national flags of Christchurch's sister cities and the website address for further information, has been produced and is to be distributed through the children's art gallery and the libraries.

A Communication Plan aimed at lifting the profile of sister cities throughout Christchurch, greater New Zealand, and within each of our sister cities has been written but is awaiting ratification. It outlines methods of communication to raise public awareness and understanding of Christchurch's sister city links and their activities, to achieve greater support from the community for events, home-hosting, sponsorship and involvement in projects.

## **2. INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS ACTIVITY**

A total of 40 delegations visited Christchurch City Council from September 1999 – March 2000. The delegations were all composed of councillors, mayors or senior local government officials and groups from within Christchurch. They visited the Council to learn how we handle such matters as recycling and composting, city planning, budgeting, and our policy regarding parks, keeping the city beautiful, gardening competitions and festivals, with a number just paying a courtesy visit. The visits included both in-house presentations and site visits.

These delegations ranged from one to 50 people, with a total of 412 people involved.

The breakdown of the visits, by country, is as follows:

<b>Country of Origin</b>	<b>Visits</b>
Australia ... ..	2
Japan ... ..	22
China ... ..	7
Denmark ... ..	1
<b>Total</b>	<b>32</b>

In addition, there were eight visits from groups within the city. These included language students from the Christchurch Polytechnic, migrants and refugees on PEETO courses and local language colleges, a total of 174 people.

### 3. CIVIC AND CEREMONIAL

#### **Citizenship Ceremonies**

Seven Citizenship Ceremonies were held at the Limes Room, Christchurch Town Hall, since September, involving around 1,500 new citizens. This compared to two ceremonies for the same period 1998-1999.

1 September	–	2 ceremonies
20 October	–	1 ceremony
8 December	–	2 ceremonies
16 February	–	2 ceremonies

#### **Civic Awards**

Thirty four people were nominated for Civic Awards, resulting in 25 awards.

- Recommendation:**
1. That the information be received.
  2. That letters of congratulations be sent to the Christchurch-Kurashiki and Christchurch-Songpa-Gu Sister City Committees for their successful award entry in the Sister Cities New Zealand Air New Zealand Awards 2000.

#### **Chairman's**

- Recommendation:**
1. That the above recommendation be adopted.
  2. That Sister Cities Chairpersons and Committees be thanked for their dedicated and valuable work in continuing to encourage business and networking friendships with other Sister Cities.