

## Richmond Sister City Committee



## 2008 Year in Review & Three-Year Activity Plan and Budget



## Richmond Sister City Committee 2008 Year in Review

The Sister City Committee of Richmond has been recognized by the federal and provincial government as one of the most active and progressive committees of its kind in Canada. The activities of 2008 continued to support this well earned reputation and mark another major milestone in the activities of the Sister City Committee (SCC). Not only did Richmond celebrate a 35 year relationship with Wakayama, Japan but the City of Richmond also signed two new Friendship Agreements with the cities of Xiamen and Qingdao, China. The signing of these agreements in China culminated seven years of challenging intense background work that began in 2001 with a City Council directive that the Sister City Committee develop a relationship with a city in China. As it had been many years since any new formal relationships had been established the SCC first had to develop a framework and criteria in order to select the best city. The process that was established involved selecting Friendship Cities which would ultimately lead to the selection of a single Sister City in about 5 years.

In late 2007 City Council approved an updated SCC policy and procedures and new terms of reference along with a program budget based on activities and plans.

The SCC has had a very busy year in 2008 and continues to address some of the most challenging items which include finding the time to manage the program and report out on the wide variety of outcomes that each event or delegation provides. One main outcome that has become evident during the year is that the key role of the Committee must be one of building bridges and links between respective groups and organizations in order that they take over the management of their relationship. The key communication between us and our Asian Cities is with the International Affairs Office or Foreign Affairs Office (FAO). Both sides have recognized over the year that official communications are most effective when maintained through the FAO and the SCC. To support the broad base of activities of the SCC, the Committee has developed a number of sub-committees advising and assisting in the planning and hosting of delegations and activities, as well as encouraging the formation of Friendship Societies (Richmond residents who previously came from the City or are interested and related to each City).



*Christmas Card from Qingdao - Qingdao Foreign Affairs, with Christmas greeting, December 2008*

During the year we learned much about hosting a delegation and how to maximize the effectiveness and minimize the cost to SCC of any group visit. A sample of the SCC activities and plans is inserted following the listing of events of 2008, please find a copy of the agenda of the most recent delegation, the activities and a note on some of the outcomes of the visit dated Feb 27, 2009.

In speaking to various community groups about activities of the SCC the City of Richmond's relationship with Wakayama is more widely known than any other primarily through the many years of school exchanges. One of the more positive impacts on youth in the community is the home exchange program with another city and culture. While the glamour of touring and staying in hotels is appealing to many of our modern youth the SCC finds the more significant value of international relations is in the home/school exchange. In the last 3 years the Richmond/Wakayama student exchange program has been disrupted due to a number of internal and external factors. The discontinuance of the student exchange program is of major concern to SCC and educators and will require extraordinary attention in 2009 to reinvigorate this program.

Our 41 year relationship with Pierrefonds, Quebec has broadened to give us links to the City of Montreal. Through the amalgamation of the City of Pierrefonds as a borough of Montreal, Richmond is not only recognized by Pierrefonds but also the City of Montreal. Pierrefonds still maintains a Mayor and 4 member city council. The Mayor and one other councillor serves on the governance of the City of Montreal. The end of 2009 is an election year for Pierrefonds. Its current Mayor, Monique Worth, has maintained personal contact with the Vice Chair of the SCC. Last year's project to send two students from Pierrefonds to participate in the first Zenith Youth Conference was very successful and reported widely in Pierrefonds. Other features in Pierrefonds that impact on our future plans are: the street next to Pierrefonds City Hall is known as Rue Richmond, the gardens of City Hall are Jardin Richmond and the new library wing of City Hall is being named as "Richmond Hall" to thank us for our support in the development of the expansion of the library. The SCC plans to provide books on Richmond and BC in the new wing. To respond to Pierrefonds' public recognition of Richmond, another goal of the SCC is to create a naming of a street or other landmark after the City of Pierrefonds.



*Students from Pierrefonds with Francis Turneau of Sister City Committee*

**The Richmond Sister Cities Committee participated in the following events and visiting delegations during 2008:**

**January** – The year began with the recommendation to Council to sign a Friendship agreement with a second city in China. The City of Qingdao had already been approved by Council in late 2007. The City of Xiamen was chosen as the second City for the signing of a Friendship agreement.

**April 7** – Hosted two doctors from Xiamen, Mr. Cui Cong Yun, Chair of Chinese Medical Doctor Association (CMDA) Xiamen branch, former Director of Bureau of Health, Xiamen; and Mr. Zhang Rui Liang, Secretary General of CMDA Xiamen, who attended the founding of the North American Federation of Iatrology Society in Richmond. The SCC invited key contacts such as Belinda Boyd of Richmond Hospital to meet with the delegates.

**April 16-23** – Mayor Brodie, Councillors Barnes and Chen, General Manager P. Carlyle with a delegation of 18 consisting of SCC members, and Barbara Tinson, President of the Richmond Chamber of Commerce travelled to sign official Friendship Agreements. Xiamen signed Friday April 18, 2008 and Qingdao signed Monday April 21, 2008. Both cities in China hosted signing ceremonies with their Mayors and senior civic leaders which were covered by media. Note that the majority of the SCC and business delegation travelled at their own cost, as well as sponsoring some group event costs while in China.

**April 30-May 3** – Visit by 35-member delegation from the City of Wakayama Mayor Ohashi, City Councillors, Dr. Iwahashi, long time and honoured Chair of Wakayama Sister City Committee, and other Wakayama Sister City Committee members along with members of Richmond Sister City Committee to celebrate 35th anniversary of our association. A celebration dinner was hosted by the Wakayama Kenjinkai, Steveston Judo, Kendo and Karate Clubs at the Steveston Martial Arts Center as well as having an official dinner hosted by the City of Richmond.. The delegation toured the Olympic Oval, BCIT Aerospace Campus, the Richmond Public Library, as well as tour and official ceremony at Richmond City Hall. Special guests included the Consul General of Japan.

**March 31** – Official tree planting ceremony sponsored by the Japan Consulate and the City of Richmond of Cherry trees and Maple trees on the airport side approach to the #2 Road Bridge to celebrate Japan and Canada's 80 years of relationship.



*Signing of Qingdao Friendship Agreement, April 21*



*Visit of Wakayama delegation. 35th Anniversary Celebration April 29, 2008*



*Cherry Tree Planting Ceremony, Japan Canada Relations 80th Anniversary March 31, 2008*



*Student visit May 14th from Wakayama*



*First student leadership conference – Zenith*



*Sister City Committee members with Pierrefonds’ Banner – Salmon Festival parade*



*Mayor Brodie and Xiamen Friendship Association – Salmon Festival parade*

**May** – Xiamen Friendship Society of Canada formed and Qingdao Friendship Society formed by community members formerly from Xiamen and Qingdao to support the friendship activities between Richmond and their home cities. Their goal is to support the activities of the SCC, including the raising of funds to sponsor events.

**May 14-19** – Visit to Richmond Schools, London-Steveston and McMath by students of Wakayama Junior High Schools. It was extremely difficult to find students to homestay host as Burnette Secondary withdrew from the SCC program and did not send anyone in the previous year, and London- Steveston also did not send anyone due to the construction and reorganization of the School. After meetings with school officials London-Steveston was able to take some students as well as McMath Secondary, with the funding provided by the SCC for some hosting and TOC support.

**May 14-19** – Pierrefonds City Council sponsored two university-aged students to attend the first student leadership conference called Zenith. On their return, students gave a very positive report back to Pierrefonds City Council.

**May 21** – Yangzhou - Parks staff visited and toured parks and cultural sites in Richmond.

**June 16** – Qingdao, a delegation from the Administrative College visited and met with Mark Mansfield, Economic Development and Barbara Duggan from Kwantlen Polytechnic University. The delegation was seeking an appropriate provider for a municipal professional development program.

**July 1** – Steveston Salmon Festival parade is the first official event that the Xiamen and Qingdao Friendship Society participate in with banners and community members walking. As in years past, Pierrefonds had a banner and this year Richmond received a Montreal Hockey Jersey and many small Quebec flags sent by Mayor Worth. Wakayama also had a banner, Taiko drummers, and Japanese dancers. There were many community members who walked in the parade.

**Sept. 19- 21** – First Official visit of City of Xiamen delegation led by Mayor Liu Cigui and Mr. Xu Mingyao, Secretary General of Xiamen Municipal Government. Events included meetings with YVR, Tourism Richmond, Chamber of Commerce, Richmond School Board, Richmond Library, and official meeting at City Hall. Mayor Liu announced that since this was the first official exchange with Richmond, Xiamen would contribute a number of books for the Richmond Library. This donation has now been determined to be 120 books categories of which were discussed between Richmond’s Head Librarian and the FAO.



*Mayor of Xiamen signs the Richmond Olympic Oval guestbook during his first Official visit*

**Oct. 21-22** – Visit by 14 member delegation of the Yangzhou Goodwill and Economic Delegation led by Ms. Zhang Jingxia, Executive Vice Mayor, Yangzhou Municipal Peoples Government. Delegation requested that Richmond agree to Friendship Agreement, in some form if not as a City.



*Visit of Yangzhou Goodwill & Economic Delegation, October 22, 2008*

**Nov. 19-21** – One day official visit of Qingdao Volunteer delegation. Highlights of the visit were: delegation worked with youth at Steveston Community Centre including the youth coordinator and executive of Richmond Youth Foundation Centre, who discussed with Oval officials volunteer activities during Qingdao Olympic Sailing regatta, met with City Volunteer Coordinator and Volunteer Richmond, attended Christmas fund event; and had an official meeting at City Hall with Mayor Brodie and officials. Note: Qingdao is Sister City of Long Beach, California and on this visit signed an official Volunteer exchange agreement. See web site <http://www.lbqa.org/index.htm>.



*Mr. Chen Fei, Director, Qingdao Volunteer Association and Mayor Malcolm Brodie, November 20, 2008*

**November** – Visit to Vice-Director of Qingdao Municipal Foreign Affairs Office by Max Liu Vice Chair SCC 2009.

November and December 2008 – SCC Vice Chair Jim Kojima was in Japan and conducted meetings with Wakayama International Affairs Division, Dr. Iwahashi, and Mayor Ohashi, and members of Wakayama City Council. Requests were made to accommodate Japan Olympic Speed Skating team in Richmond. Jim Kojima received an Award of Merit for his long history of Sister City activities.

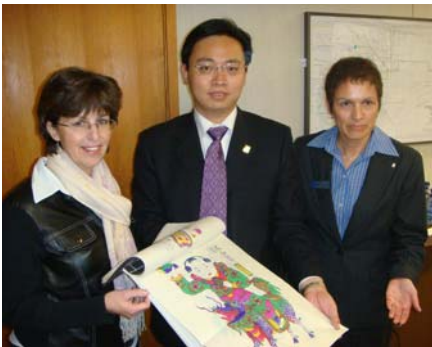
**Dec. 12** – Pierrefonds Mayor Worth sent a taped video message and a full-sized Pierrefonds’ City flag of Congratulations to Richmond on the Official Opening of Richmond Oval.



*Visit to Richmond Olympic Oval by Qingdao Volunteer Association delegation, November 20, 2008*



*Qingdao meets with Volunteer Richmond Board Chair Michael Chiu and Executive Director Elizabeth Specht and staff to discuss Olympic volunteer initiatives November 20*



*Qingdao Volunteer Association presents to Chair Linda McPhail and Vice Chair Donna Sargent, Richmond Board of Education, during visit on November 20*

While each visit or trip is 2 or 3 days maximum the preparation of the events above have required the SCC to meet frequently, often on a weekly basis or more. The variety of skills on the committee is tremendous and has given each and every SCC member an opportunity to contribute in many significant ways. All 14 members of the SCC actively contribute countless volunteer hours in acting on behalf of the City of Richmond.

As the Committee works as a team and all contribute we cannot single anyone out however there are a few exceptions of members who must be recognized to thank for their particular skill, Carol Zheng, Joe Greenholtz, and James Hseih are to be commended for providing expert translation services for our elected officials, staff and our community members.

**SAMPLE AGENDA AND OUTCOMES OF A RECENT VISIT OF A HIGH RANKING DELEGATION TO RICHMOND FEB 26 – MARCH 1. Note local business arranged programs on Feb. 26, 28 and Mar. 1, 2009.**



RICHMOND SISTER CITY COMMITTEE

VISIT FROM  
XIAMEN, CHINA  
FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 27<sup>TH</sup>, 2009

**DELEGATION MEMBERS:**

**HEAD:**

Mr. Ouyang Jian Chairman, Xiamen Overseas Friendship Association

**OTHER DELEGATES:**

Mr. Chen Guorong Standing Member of Council, Xiamen Overseas Friendship Association  
Mr. Huang Xiaolin Standing Member of Council, Xiamen Overseas Friendship Association  
Mr. Lin Chongyang Vice President, Xiamen General Chamber of Commerce  
Mr. Huang Feng Division Director, Xiamen Foreign Affairs Office

**PURPOSE OF VISIT:**

To further discussions with the City of Richmond on economic cooperation, cultural exchanges, education and art, the China International Fair for Investment and Trade (CIFIT), and exchange visits for high school students from Richmond and Xiamen. To provide further information to the City on the industrial parks in Huli and Tong'an districts of Xiamen.

**ITINERARY: Friday Feb. 27, 2009**

- 7:45a.m. Breakfast meeting Max Liu with delegation at Sheraton to review schedule.
- 8:15a.m. Brighthouse Park - Bus to pick-up Sister City Committee and Staff.
- 8:30a.m. City bus to pick up delegation at Sheraton Four Points Hotel.
- 8:45-9:45a.m. Meeting with Sister City Committee at the River Rock Casino Resort, Lillouette Conference Room, 2nd Floor.  
City Councillor Linda Barnes, Sister City Liaison in attendance.  
Sister City Committee members touring with delegation:  
Sylvia Gwozd, Max Liu, Wei Liu, Francis Turmeau, Priscilla Bollo, James Hsieh, Richard Toda or Sue Mackie.  
Donalda Buie and Ben Branscombe to attend parts of day.
- 9:50-10:20a.m. Visit Blundell Seafood, fish wholesaler and processor on the river, 11351 River Road (River between Simpson and No. 5 Rd) Tour plant and short meeting. Contact Jeremy Law, 604-270-3300.
- 10:30-10:50a.m. Richmond 2010 Olympic Speed Skating Oval. Photo opportunity and short visit.
- 11:00-1:30p.m. Lunch hosted by the Richmond Chamber of Commerce at Quilchena Golf and Country Club, 6 spots reserved for Sister City and City of Richmond.
- 2:00-2:30p.m. Meet with Mayor Brodie at Richmond City Hall. SCC member Carol Zheng to act as translator for Mayor Brodie.
- 2:30-2:45p.m. Tour Richmond City Hall. Pictures from 8th floor.

- 3:00-4:00p.m. Tour BCIT Aerospace complex – on arrival at the campus, the group will go to Room #120 on the Main Floor and ask for Lenalda Sutherland. Mr. Jack Baryluk (reciprocating tour he took of Xiamen Aerospace University) to lead the tour which, at our request, will last a maximum of 1 hour.
- 4:00-4:45p.m. Tour Steveston Waterfront.
- 4:45-5:00p.m. Bus to take delegation back to hotel.
- 6:00p.m. City bus to pickup guests for dinner.  
Dinner at Neptune Sharkfin Seafood Restaurant, 100-110, 8171 Ackroyd Rd, (Ackroyd and No. 3 Rd) hosted by Richmond Sister City Committee. Others guests from Xiamen Friendship Society and business reps encouraged to attend at their cost.  
Delegation driven back to hotel after dinner.

**KEY CONTACTS:**

Sylvia Gwozd	Cell: 604-671-3222
Max Liu	Cell: 604-729-8369
Richard Toda	Cell: 604-516-9485
Sue Mackie	Cell: 770-231-1382
Kjeld Christensen (Bus Driver)	Cell: 604-516-9563

***Notes from SCC Chair Sylvia Gwozd to SCC after the visit:***

Our guests from Xiamen are visiting Vancouver Island today as the guests of Motic. I would like to pass on to you the numerous comments from the delegation of the warm welcome they felt from the Sister City Committee, City of Richmond's Mayor Brodie, Councillors Barnes, Steves and McNulty, and staff, in particular the organizing efforts of Richard Toda our staff liaison.

Thank you to all of you for your assistance.

Our Sister City Committee goal is to build bridges in business, culture, education etc. On each visit we gain more insight into our new friendship cities and their culture and it amazes me that on every visit we find unexpected connections and new opportunities from our relationships.

For example in organizing a tour of BCIT in Richmond during this visit we found out that the Associate Dean of the BCIT Aerospace program and his colleague were in Xiamen last year to visit the Aerospace program at Xiamen University. They made some inroads and connections and said that our friendship relationship will be helpful in the further progress of these initiatives.

Our delegation made an unscheduled stop at the main Library and ran into head Librarian Greg Buss who showed the 60,000 piece collection of Chinese books which amazed our visitors and gave them a new enthusiasm as the City of Xiamen is working on a donation of 120 pieces to add to our collection.

Our work with the International Committee of the Chamber of Commerce in the organization of events such as the luncheon during our day, brought the following comment from the Chamber President -these joint efforts build on their goal to appeal to a broader membership base of business in Richmond.

We toured the operation of the Blundell Seafood Plant. There are a number of Richmond companies who conduct business on both sides of the Pacific such as Motic, manufacturers of Optical Lenses for Cancer Research, and Tri Star Seafoods who exports seafood to Xiamen. Both were involved in hosting during this visit as well as other Richmond-based companies who are connected. From the business sector viewpoint it is important to note, both through the Olympics and our friendship activities that we are now being included on travel itineraries with cities such as Houston, San Francisco, and Toronto and New York. It gives our local companies an opportunity to meet and make influential business connections for which they might not otherwise have an opportunity.

We met Ms Helen Chen Lee, Richmond resident, Lyric Spinto Soprano and Faculty and Student Recruitment Advisor at UBC School of Music, who is a personal friend with the conductor of the Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra, and who takes a group of students to perform each year in Xiamen and China. Her International credentials include Vienna and Berlin. Ms. Chen Lee was so inspired by our friendship relationship that she has expressed a desire to explore with City Cultural Staff ways in which she might contribute to the musical future of Richmond.



*Delegation to Qingdao*

Our City Councillors have commented on the deep positive impressions that the significant amount of public art found in our friendship cities and their network of transportation systems has had or will have in their approach to future decisions in Richmond.

I also must comment on the amount of pride that I find our efforts are building in our community and once again I had a comment from a businessman from another City at our dinner that he envies the progressive approach to international relations that the City of Richmond is taking through its Sister Cities Committee.

## Richmond Sister City

### Three-Year Activity Plan and Budget

#### 2009

#### Priorities

- Promote the 2010 Olympic Winter Games and the Richmond Olympic Oval to our Sister and Friendship Cities.
- Encourage Social networking by setting up Facebook account.
- Improve Sister Cities and Friendship Committees' presence on the City website and in various languages (French version for Pierrefonds, Japanese version for Wakayama, Chinese for Xiamen and Qingdao).
- Rejuvenate School exchange programs.
- Develop Archiving program and SCC promotional material
- Establish program for visits and delegations for next 3-5 years.
- Strengthen relations with Friendship Associations, Richmond Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Richmond and Foreign Affairs Offices – establish clear communication and organizing protocol headed by SCC for visiting delegations among the organizations mentioned.
- Establish SCC fund raising initiatives to develop the means to maintain, beyond the three year sister city government funding program, the activities of four sister/friendship cities.
- Commitment from Friendship City re: Cash – kind and expectations.
- Strengthen library resource material from our SC and FC, and we are working with them to provide cross-professional development opportunities.

#### Program

- a) Official Delegations (from or to city)
  - Host Xiamen Overseas business delegation in February.
  - Host 2-3 other delegations from Qingdao and Xiamen.
- b) Exchange visits
  - Vice-chair to visit Pierrefonds in March.
  - Vice-chair to visit Xiamen in April.
  - Invite all Sister/Friendship Cities representatives to attend the 2nd 2009 Global Zenith Citizenship Conference May 14 attended by Pierrefonds in 2008.
  - Vice chair to visit Qingdao in May-June.
  - Host Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra for concerts and visits October 2-4.
  - Student and teacher to Wakayama.

- c) Base Program Activities (non-visit)
- First Anniversary celebration of Xiamen and Qingdao signings in April. Link with Friendship Associations.
  - Library recognition event to acknowledge City of Xiamen book donations.
  - July 1st Salmon Festival Parade. Sister Cities and Friendship Associations to join in the annual Sister City Committee entry in the parade.
  - Host Xiamen Philharmonic Orchestra for concerts and visits October 2-4.
  - Richmond to donate books to Pierrefonds Library. Link with Steveston Community Society, Richmond Public Library and Gulf of Georgia Cannery Society for book donations.
  - Annual state of the city letter from Mayor and City’s annual report and any new significant city plans from CAO/Senior staff to be sent out.
  - Facilitate the development of Qingdao Friendship group.
  - Committee members to be speakers to attend community meetings. Chair to be keynote at one Sorority’s event.
  - Show Pierrefonds’ promotional video at various events including The Seniors’ Games.
  - Donate Maple trees to a park in Qingdao where a house is being built from Canadian lumber.

**Estimated Program Costs – 2009**

Wakayama Visit	\$ 7,000.00
Qingdao Tree Program	\$ 2,000.00
Library Initiatives	\$ 5,000.00
Delegations	<u>\$ 6,000.00</u>
	\$20,000.00

**2010**

**Priorities**

- Enhance Sister and Friendship City relations – develop close working ties with local friendship city associations such as the Richmond Xiamen Friendship Chamber of Commerce and Qingdao Friendship Association. Involve and utilize these organizations to assist and coordinate visiting delegations from those cities. Approach local businesses and cultural associations for sponsorship monies to support trade/cultural visits to China and Japan.
- Lead Trade and Cultural delegations to China and Japan.

- Review our status with Xiamen and Qingdao as friendship cities and determine if there is substantive basis to graduate either or both cities into full-fledged sister city status. As well, continue to maintain close relations with Yangzhou to assess if there is value in developing official status with SSC.
- Develop relations with post secondary institutions in Richmond. Link with Kwantlen University, Trinity University and BCIT.
- Continue to develop School exchange programs.
- Establish program for visits and delegations for next 3-5 years.

**Program**

- a) Official Delegations (from or to city)
  - Host numerous delegations during the 2010 Winter Olympics. Sister City to send out invitations.
  - Lead a Trade and Cultural delegation to Shanghai, China and Wakayama, Japan. Host Richmond Day at the Canada Pavilion, Shanghai Expo 2010 and in Wakayama, Japan. Invite both Qingdao and Xiamen delegations. Link with Chamber of Commerce, Tourism Richmond and Government of Canada.
- b) Exchange visits
  - Qingdao Judo Club to visit Richmond in Fall 2010. Link with Steveston Judo Club.
  - Propose to host the Wakayama Children’s Choir. Link with the Richmond Community Orchestra and Choir.
  - Invite Pierrefonds Council to join Shanghai Expo trip.
- c) Base Program Activities (non-visit)
  - July 1st Salmon Festival Parade. Sister City Committee and Sister Cities as well as Friendship Cities to be involved.
  - Annual state of the city letter from Mayor and City’s annual report and any new significant city plans from CAO/Senior staff to be sent out.

**Estimated Program Costs – 2010**

Host Delegations	\$20,000.00
China Trip	\$30,000.00
Wakayama Trip	\$20,000.00
Other Program Costs	<u>\$10,000.00</u>
	\$80,000.00

## 2011

### Priorities

- Promote Richmond post 2010 Olympic Winter Games. Focus our expectations: Trade, Cultural, Education, etc.
- Establish program for visits and delegations for next 3-5 years.
- Plan for 45th Anniversary with Pierrefonds in 2012 and 40th Anniversary with Wakayama in 2013.

### Program

- a) Official Delegations (from or to city)
- b) Exchange visits
  - Host delegations from Friendship and Sister Cities.
  - Investigate the possibilities of forming Sister Cities with other countries eg: India/East Coast of Canada.
- c) Base Program Activities (non-visit)
  - July 1st Salmon Festival Parade.
  - Annual state of the city letter from Mayor, City's annual report and any new significant city plans from CAO/Senior staff to be sent out.

### Estimated Program Costs – 2011

Delegations	\$30,000.00
Other Program	<u>\$20,000.00</u>
	\$50,000.00

### Estimated Budget 3 year Program Costs\*

Estimated Costs 2009	\$ 20,000.00
Estimated Costs 2010	\$ 80,000.00
Estimated Costs 2011	<u>\$ 50,000.00</u>
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$150,000.00</b>