



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
VICTORIA

2025 CHINESE NEW YEAR EVENT

Friday 24 January 2025

Acknowledgments

Paul Hamer, representing the Honourable Jacinta Allan, Premier of Victoria

The Honourable Natalie Suleyman, Minister for Small Business and Employment, Minister for Veterans, Minister for Youth

The Honourable James Newbury, representing the Victorian Opposition

Fang Xinwen, Consul-General of the People's Republic of China

Members of the Legislative Council and Legislative Assembly of Victoria

Tim Kane, State Director, Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade

Brett Stevens, Victoria's Commissioner to Greater China

Senior Members of the Victorian Public Service

Steve Wood, President, Kooyong Lawn Tennis Club

Athletes

Distinguished Guests

I will acknowledge that we are meeting on the lands of the Wurundjeri people of the East Kulin Nations and pay my respects to their Elders, past and present.

Next week, Chinese New Year celebrations will be everywhere across Victoria – continuing a local tradition which is almost as old as the State of Victoria itself.

As early as 1858, The Argus reported on Chinese New Year celebrations on the goldfields in Castlemaine, telling readers:

“In many cases the Chinese have made presents to their European friends... requesting the favor of their company to supper.”

The article details the rich feasts enjoyed by the guests, and the really generous hospitality of the hosts.

By 1892, the first dragon processions – we've here seen an example of the lion dancing – but the first dragon processions were taking place on the goldfields in Bendigo.

The vibrant displays of Chinese culture occurred then and have marked pivotal moments in our State's history, including when Australia became Australia as a Federation in 1901.

As our cultures have grown closer together, these important Chinese traditions are not only known to many Victorians, but they are embraced as part of the celebrations of the year.

China and its people have played an important role in Victoria's history and continue to do so, contributing to the development of the community we know today.

Today, China is home to Victoria's oldest as well as its newest sister-state relationships with the provinces of Jiangsu and Sichuan.

Having undertaken – as you heard from the Consul-General – an Official Visit to China last year, I have seen firsthand the ways in which our communities grow closer.

Of course the cultural engagement that we're seeing here today – but also industry, sport, the arts and much more.

2025, as many of you know, is the year of the Snake – it turns out that's my year – symbolising wisdom, intuition and mystery.

As someone who was born in the year of the Snake, I'm advised that I may look forward to personal and professional growth this year – we can always keep that hope!

Something that we can all hope for as Victoria and China continue to pursue shared opportunities together.

I'd like to wish today's athletes good luck in their matches.

And to say this is really a wonderful example of us working together through sports and seeing the wonderful way it brings our communities together.

To everyone, I'll finish by saying, in my very poor Mandarin:

蛇年大吉

Great luck in the Year of the Snake.