



City of Richmond

Sister City Advisory Committee 2023 Year in Review

2023 Summary:

The Sister City Advisory Committee (SCAC) manages the relationships with three official Sister Cities: Pierrefonds, Quebec (since 1967), Wakayama, Japan (since 1973), and Xiamen, China (since 2012), as well as one Friendship City: Qingdao, China (since 2008). Highlights from various SCAC activities are outlined in the following pages and the highlights report can be found on www.richmond.ca/sistercity.

2023 Committee Members:

Chair	Lisa MacNeil
Vice Chair, Pierrefonds	Charan Gill
Vice-Chair, Wakayama	Polly Tang
Vice-Chair, Xiamen	Sue Tian
Vice-Chair, Qingdao	Melissa Zhang
Members	Allen Chan Danny Chen Joan Page Karen Shigeno William Ying Jenny Zhang Mandy Zhao Victor Zhuo
Council Liaison	Councillor Andy Hobbs
School Board Liaison	David Yang Alice Wong (Alternate)

2023 Sister City Program Highlights

January

- The newly appointed SCAC members were introduced at the first meeting in January.
- The SCAC elected:
 - Chair
 - Vice Chair, Pierrefonds;
 - Vice Chair, Wakayama;
 - Vice Chair, Xiamen; and
 - Vice Chair, Qingdao.
- The City of Richmond sent Lunar New Year greetings to Xiamen and Qingdao.



Lunar New Year Greeting from Council (left) and Sister City Advisory Committee (right)

- As part of the preparations for the 50th milestone anniversary with Wakayama City, the SCAC reached out to advisory committees to participate in making senbazuru (paper cranes) as a gift from community group volunteers. The SCAC hosted a paper-folding social with the Richmond Seniors Advisory Committee and the Richmond Centre for Disability.



Paper Folding Social with the Seniors Advisory Committee and Richmond Centre for Disability

February

- To celebrate Valentine’s Day, 30 Richmond Kindergarten students continued the practice of creating Valentine’s Day greeting cards to send to seniors at Manoir Pierrefonds, a senior’s residence home in Pierrefonds, Quebec.

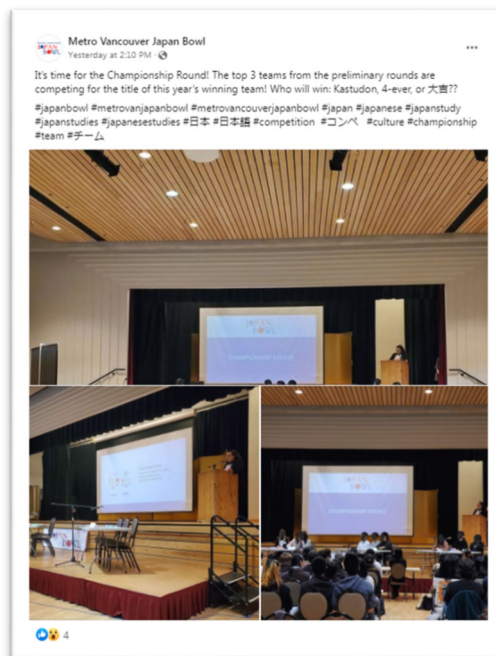


Valentines Greetings for seniors at Manoir Pierrefonds

- SCAC continued to work on digitizing documents and photos with assistance from the Richmond Archives as part of an ongoing project to preserve historical records leading up to the committee’s 50th anniversary in 2024.

March

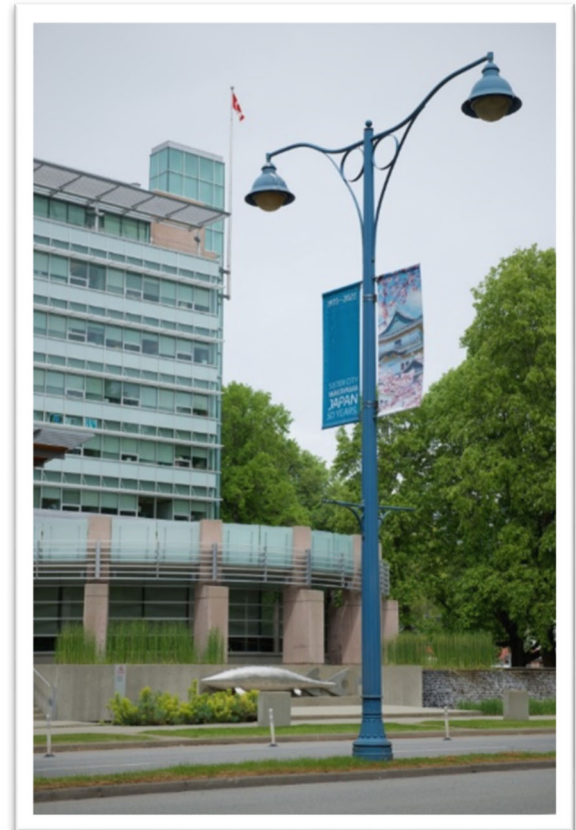
- On March 11, seven teams from Richmond high schools participated in the Japan Bowl® competition. The Japan Bowl is a Japanese language and culture competition for high school students who are studying Japanese sponsored in part by the Government of Japan, the Japan Embassy in Vancouver, and the Nikkei Centre. The final round consisted of three teams of which two were from Richmond ("4-ever" and "大吉" (Daikichi).) In the end, it was the non-Richmond team that won.



Japan Bowl Competition at Nikkei Centre

- In early 2022, the Sister City Program launched a street banner photo contest in Wakayama, similar to the photo contest held in Richmond. Wakayama resident, Izuru Matsubayashi's photo, titled "Cherry Blossoms at Wakayama Castle" was selected as the winner.

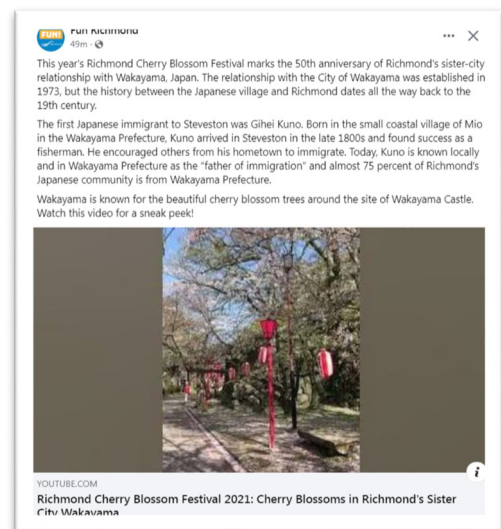
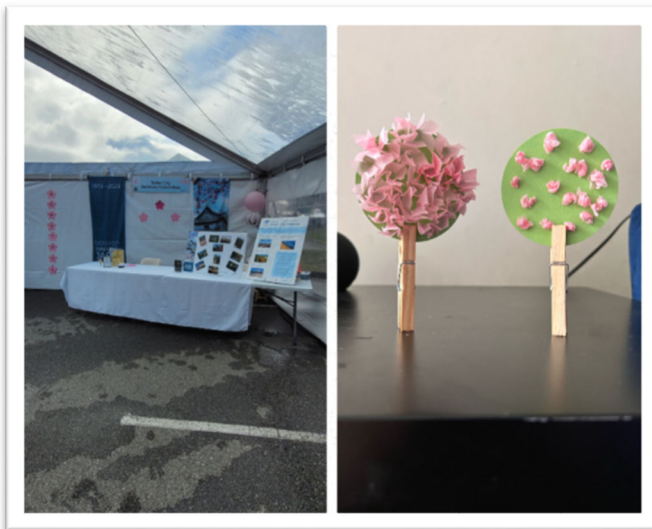
The “Look Up” street banner was created to celebrate the 50th milestone anniversary between the City of Richmond and the City of Wakayama. The cities twinned on July 16, 1973. Six street banners were installed on Granville Avenue between No. 3 Road and Minoru Boulevard, outside Richmond City Hall.



Wakayama Street Banner on Granville Ave

April

- On April 2, 2023, SCAC members hosted a booth at the Cherry Blossom Festival to promote the Sister City Program and 50th milestone anniversary with Wakayama, Japan to the community. The booth featured display boards with information about the Sister City Program. The community enjoyed the Take & Make craft project to make a cherry blossom tree.



Sister City Program Booth at Cherry Blossom Festival in Steveston and Take & Make Kit

- From April 3 to June 1, 2023, the SCAC hosted a Sister City Photo Exhibition to celebrate the 50th milestone anniversary with Wakayama, Japan and the 15th milestone anniversary with Qingdao, China. Photos were on display at the Richmond Cultural Centre – Minoru Hall Gallery with the theme of “2008 Olympic Legacy” showing the pictures of Qingdao in addition to the “Look Up” Street Banner Photo Contest Winner Izuru Matsubayashi’s photo.



Sister City Photo Exhibition – Wakayama and Qingdao

- The cities of Richmond and Qingdao celebrated their 15th milestone anniversary on April 22, 2023 with letters from both Mayors.

- On April 25, 2023, Xiamen City launched the “Friends of Xiamen” book club. This book club featured residents from Richmond, Canada; Xiamen, China (host); Baltimore and Sarasota, USA; Wellington, New Zealand; and Sunshine Coast and Sydney, Australia who read “Off The Wall How We Fell For China” by Professor William Brown. The book club concluded a month later with a virtual *Meet the Author* event.



Richmond Public Library display of “Friends of Xiamen” book club

May

- SCAC committee members unveiled the new committee logo to celebrate the upcoming 50th anniversary and to promote the committee’s establishment in 1974.



Sister City Advisory Committee new logos

- SCAC was featured in the Richmond Archives ArchiveNews Spring Newsletter:

Richmond Sister City Committee

The Richmond Sister City Advisory Committee (SCAC) has a lot to celebrate these days. In 2022, Richmond observed two milestones: 55 year Sister City anniversary with Pierrefonds, Quebec and 10 year anniversary with Xiamen, China. This year, the SCAC will be honouring the 50th anniversary milestone with Wakayama, Japan and 15 year anniversary with Friendship City Qingdao, China. Finally, in 2024, SCAC will itself be marking 50 years since Richmond Municipal Council formed the “Sister City Twinning Committee” on February 11, 1974. With all of these important events to observe, the SCAC, and in particular Chair Lisa MacNeil, have spent time at the City of Richmond Archives researching their records in our holdings. There is a significant amount of records to review as well: correspondence, minutes, newsletters, general and operational records, scrapbooks and photo albums.

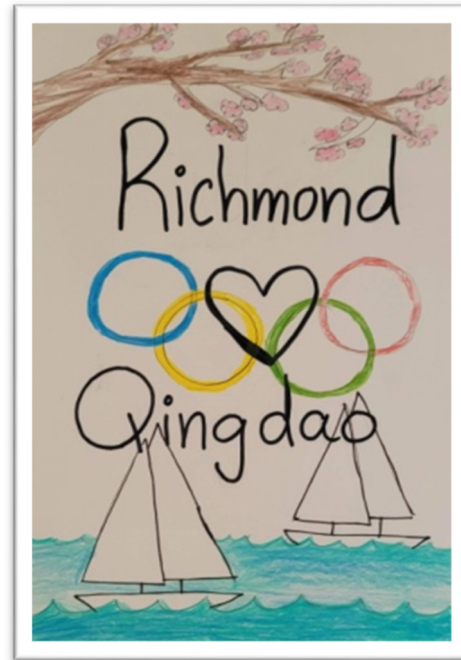
Richmond Archives ArchiveNews Spring Newsletter (Spring 2023 | Volume 28, Number 1)

- As the pandemic protocols and travel restrictions continued into 2023, the Richmond-Wakayama Student Exchange did not happen. The schools continue to engage in virtual activities and Richmond students also participated with the community volunteer groups in folding senbazuru (paper cranes) for the 50th anniversary with Wakayama.



Student-made senbazuru (paper cranes)

- April is National Card Writing Month. Schools in Richmond and Qingdao created greeting cards to celebrate the 15th milestone friendship anniversary. These cards arrived in May.



Greetings from Qingdao elementary school students

- During May, Qingdao hosted a photo exhibition featuring Richmond at May Fourth Square Metro Station. May Fourth Square, also known as Wu Si Guang Chang, is a large public square in Qingdao's central business district. It is located between the new municipal government building and Fushan Bay and is composed of Shizhengting Square, the central square and the coastal park. Photos highlighted City of Richmond in celebration of the 15th milestone friendship anniversary.



Photo Exhibition on Richmond at May Fourth Square



Scan the QR code to view the video

- An outcome from last year's celebration of the 55th milestone anniversary of Pierrefonds and Richmond's Sister City relationship, delegations from Pierrefonds & Richmond met in Toronto, Ontario on May 26, 2023. The delegations were in Toronto to attend the Federation of Canadian Municipalities (FCM) conference.



From left to right: Councillor Benoît Langevin, Councillor Laura Gillanders, Mayor Jim Beis, Councillor Chahi (Sharkey) Tarakjian

June

- A delegation from Richmond met in Wakayama, Japan on June 17, 2023 for an official celebration. During this visit, delegation members participated in sightseeing around Wakayama, a Maple Tree Planting Ceremony at Tei Park in Nishiteikou, and meetings to discuss future plans. The overall sentiments were mutual in how to make the Sister City relationship stronger, reintroduce annual school visits, and explore virtual activities. Lots of appreciation for those before us for the work they put into this relationship and encouragement to continue the path for future generations to enjoy.



Official Delegation Group Photo

Richmond Participants

Mayor Malcolm Brodie
 Councillor Chak Au
 Councillor Bill McNulty
 Ms. Serena Lusk
 Mr. Mike Romas
 Ms. Lisa MacNeil
 Mr. Kevin Lainchbury

Wakayama Participants

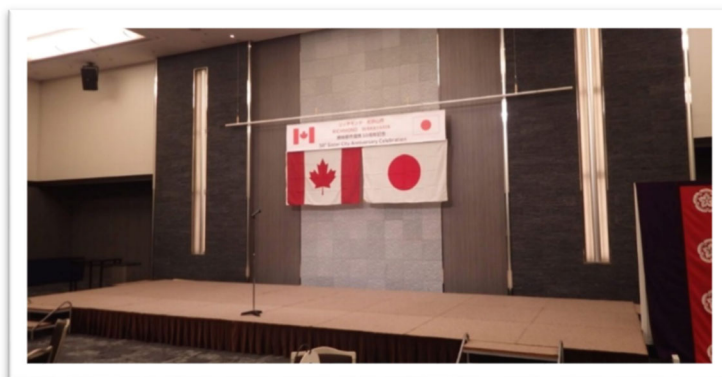
Mayor Masahiro Obana
 Councillor Niwa Naoko
 Councillor Yamanaka Toshio
 Dr. Nobutada Iwahashi
 Mr. Hayashi (Henry) Hideaki
 Ms. Yoshiko Kitagawa
 Mr. Hiroshi Agata
 Mr. Masahiko Honda
 Mr. Keiichiro Suzaki
 Mr. Akinobu Senzaki
 Mr. Yasuyoshi Takemoto
 Ms. Yutsuki Uchita
 Ms. Yu Yamamoto
 Mr. Shinya Bando
 Mr. Shingo Kawamura
 Ms. Miki Tashima
 Mr. Jacob Teichrib



Courtesy Call on Mayors



Sugar Maple Tree Planting Ceremony



Welcome Event



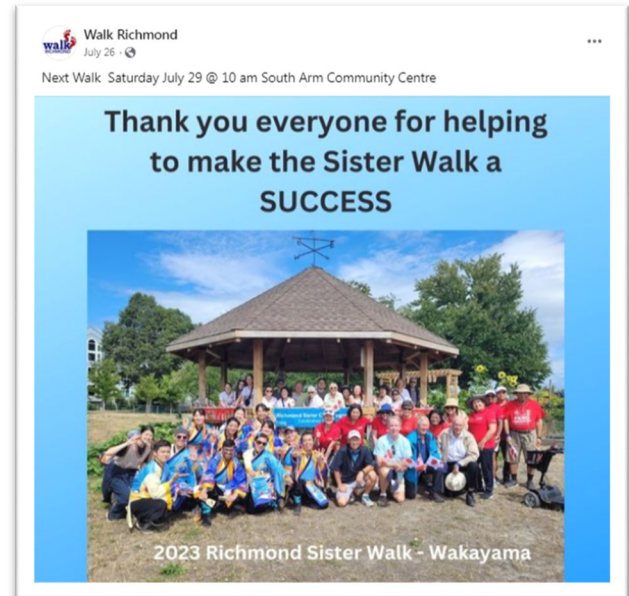
Sister City to Sister City Gift

July

- The Sister City Advisory Committee continued to celebrate the 50th milestone anniversary of Wakayama and Richmond’s Sister City relationship with activities in the community in July. The cities twinned on July 16, 1973.



Wakayama Sister City Exhibition

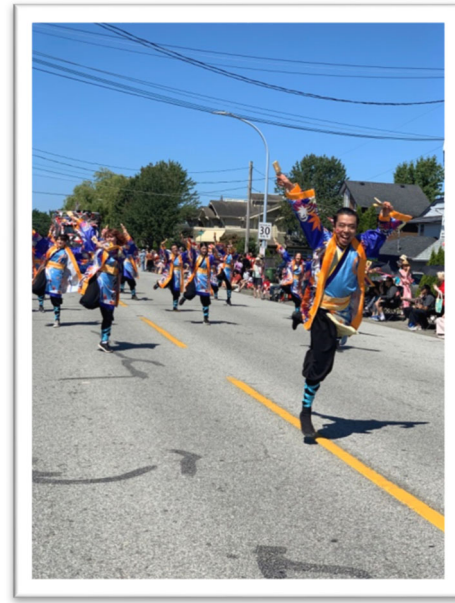


Walk Richmond – Sister City Walk

- On July 1, 2023, SCAC members participated in the Steveston Salmon Festival. Fifty volunteers participated in the parade entry including the Taiko 55 Drummers, Appare Yosakoi Dance Troupe, Japan Bowl competition students, and Richmond community volunteers.



Sister City Advisory Committee entry to the Steveston Salmon Festival Parade



Taiko 55 Drummers (left) and Appare Yosakoi Dance Troupe (right) in the SCAC entry to the Steveston Salmon Festival

- On July 4, 2023, 14 athletes, one coach, and two chaperones from the Richmond Islanders 2005 softball club visited Wakayama, Japan. The City of Richmond supported this trip as a SCP sport exchange activity. The athletes participated in an exchange of questions and answers about each other’s culture; a cooking class to learn how to make miso soup; and having lunch and an afternoon of folding paper cranes with students at Wakayama High School. The group was extremely impressed with the warm reception they received from Wakayama.

**Exchanges through cooking training, etc.
Canadian high school students visit Ichi
Wakayama High School**

2023/7/5 20:00



Sankei WEST | life life | Life region | Kinki Wakayama



Wakayama Municipal High School students and Richmond high school students making miso soup together = Wakayama City

Media Post of Softball Visit

September

- In celebration of the 15th Friendship City anniversary with Richmond, Qingdao donated books to residents of Richmond. This donation of 178 books is under the Nishan Book Corner Program, which is an initiative to donate books to residents in Qingdao's friendship cities with the goal of learning about China and Qingdao. In partnership with Richmond Public Library, SCAC accepted this donation.



Book Display at Richmond Public Library

October

- On October 2, 2023, Pierrefonds City Council met in their Council Chambers as usual; in the background were the street banners that were gifted from the City of Richmond to the City of Pierrefonds. These were the street banners that were displayed along Granville Avenue in 2022 recognizing our 55th anniversary with City of Pierrefonds. Pierrefonds is looking into displaying the street banner on Richmond Street in 2024 before filing in the Pierrefonds Archives.



55th Anniversary Street Banners in Pierrefonds Council Chambers

- The 50th English Recitation Contest held in Wakayama for junior high students provides an opportunity for students to practice delivering a passage from a book in English. Wakayama requested Richmond to participate in honour of our 50th anniversary. Mayor Brodie provided a welcome message to all the competitors and SCAC sourced out awards for first, second, and third place winners.



Welcome Message by Mayor Brodie



Coin Awards

November

- From November 13-20, 2023, eight students and six coaches from the Wakayama Judo Club travelled to Richmond, Canada. The City of Richmond supported this trip as a SCP sport exchange activity. The Judo group participated in Judo training sessions and tournaments.



Wakayama Judo Club visit to Richmond

- On November 16, 2023, a ceremony was held to dedicate three Japanese black pines to the Wakayama Sister City Garden located at Richmond City Hall. The Japanese black pines, more commonly known as Kuromatsu in Japan, were planted to symbolize the strong relationship between Richmond and Wakayama. The event was attended by Mayor Malcolm Brodie, the Consul-General of Japan in Vancouver, Kohei Maruyama, members of Council, representatives of Richmond's Sister City Advisory Committee, and a member from Wakayama's Sister City Committee. In addition, a delegation of athletes and coaches from the Wakayama Judo Club attended the ceremony.

The ceremony included speeches and a ribbon cutting. The event was held exactly five months after the tree planting ceremony in Wakayama, Japan, highlighting the close relationship between the two cities.



Japanese Black Pine Tree Dedication Ceremony

- On November 23, 2023, 27 Grade 4/5 students from Lord Byng elementary school participated in an art workshop with Wakayama artist, Hisayuki Doi. The students learned 2D painting. This was an activity in partnership with Richmond Art Coalition. Their artwork will be featured in an online exhibition launching in January 2024.



Wakayama Artist Hisayuki Doi leads workshop with Richmond students

December

- The SCAC scored each of the Sister/Friendship cities participation over the past year. All cities achieved a highly engaged score on the Sister City Program's annual relationship scorecard.
- The committee members continued to work on Project 2024, a project to future-proof SCAC's legacy and set up processes for the future. The work includes:
 - Writing governance documents for the digital files and photo management started in with consultation with Richmond Archives;
 - Creating a membership list of all appointment committee members from 1974 to 2024; and
 - Building a robust assets inventory.



2023 Sister City Advisory Committee

2023 Acknowledgements

City Council Appointed Advisory Boards

- Public Library Board
- Seniors Advisory Committee

City of Richmond Partners

- Arts Services
- Corporate Communications
- Development Applications
- Economic Development
- Events and Film
- Museum & Heritage Services
- Production Centre
- Richmond Archives
- Sports & Community Events

Community Partners

- Japan Exchange and Teaching Alumni of BC (JETAABC)
- Metro Vancouver Japan Bowl
- Nikkei National Museum & Cultural Centre - Education Program
- Richmond Art Coalition
- Richmond Arts Centre
- Richmond Art Gallery
- Richmond Centre for Disability
- Richmond Museum
- Richmond Public Library
- Richmond School Board
- Sister City Advisory Committee Alumni
- Textile Arts Guild of Richmond (TAGOR)
- Tourism Richmond
- Walk Richmond

Special Thank You

- Mayor Malcolm Brodie
- Councillor Chak Au
- Councillor Carol Day
- Councillor Laura Gillanders
- Councillor Kash Heed
- Councillor Andy Hobbs
- Councillor Alexa Loo
- Councillor Bill McNulty
- Councillor Michael Wolfe

Thank You to

City of Pierrefonds, Wakayama City, City of Xiamen, and City of Qingdao