

OPENING SPEECH

2011 AUSTRALIAN KUNG FU WUSHU DEMONSTRATION EVENT 28 MAY 2011 Melbourne

Delivered By :

**WALT MISSINGHAM
President AKWF Inc.
President Kung Fu Wu New South Wales Inc.
Senior Vice President Oceania Wushu Federation
Member IWUF Marketing Committee**

I would like firstly to extend a warm welcome and thanks to our honoured guests.

Mr. Shi Weiqiang, Consul General of the People's Republic of China in Melbourne ,

Mr. He Qing-Long, the Vice President of Chinese Wushu Association.

Mr Dana Wong President of Kung Fu Wushu Victoria

Mr Fred Ong President Kung Fu Wushu Western Australia

And Mr Glen Keith
Vice President International Wushu Federation, President Oceania Wushu Federation and President Kung Fu Wushu New Zealand.

and to the Chinese Wushu Association demonstration team, our spectators and our broader television and internet audience.

It is my first duty to publicly thank the Chinese Wushu Association for their tremendous support in providing the demonstration team for this Event as part of The Year of Chinese Culture.

The Year Of Chinese Culture is a concept that is long overdue in Australia.

Several years ago I was fascinated to learn that research into early Australian sporting events has uncovered some interesting facts about the first sporting contests to be held in Australia.

The French sport of Lacrosse is a sport played by relatively few people in Australia, but is one of the oldest established sports in the country, having been introduced in 1875.

In 1877 the first Rugby match in Australia was played at the Melbourne Cricket Ground.

The first Cricket match took place at Sydney's Hyde Park on June 17, 1865.

The first Kung Fu contests were held here in Victoria at Bendigo in 1856, these 'close door' events were very popular amongst the Chinese community members who were part of the large contingent of 'gold rush' miners.

They were also the first recorded sporting events in Australia.

I wonder how many Australians would realize this.

I have long been a believer that the martial arts provides a highly effective bridge between different cultures – this Event here tonight is proof of this.

I am both humbled and moved by the tremendous efforts and contribution of the Chinese Wushu Association and extend our sincere thanks and gratitude for this unprecedented level of support.