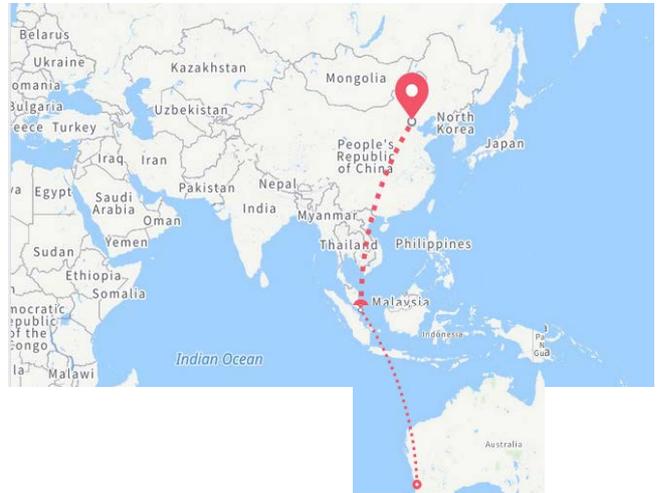


Journal of Quick Trip to Beijing, September 2019

This Blog is based on the Facebook posts I made in connection with our trip to Beijing 17 to 20-Sep-19, but in chronological order. Some of this was posted after we returned to Australia, as we had limited Internet access.

We travelled overnight to Beijing via Singapore (Singapore Airlines), arriving there at 7am on Tuesday, 17-Sep-19. Cici, our travel guide from iConnect China Travel (<https://www.iconnectchinatravel.com/>) met us at the airport and we proceeded immediately on a day's sightseeing in Beijing (checking into our hotel late in the afternoon).



Tuesday, 17-Sep-19:

Our first visit was to the much admired Lama Temple (a Tibetan Buddhist collection of temple buildings); here is the Gateway (this post did not seem to make it to Facebook at the time!), along with one of the larger temple buildings, and the huge sandalwood Buddha inside..



Thence we made our way to Beijing Zoo. We had just arrived at the Zoo to see the pandas, when I hit my head on the rear door of the van we were being driven in - a short sharp blow just above the temple. Bleeding profusely. The guide and driver insisted on having me properly treated, and we looked for a small local clinic without success, ending up at the Peking University People's Hospital (see phot of Emergency ward). They were actually pretty efficient, triageing me without delay and we didn't actually have to wait much before a doctor applied betadine and a dressing. He topped it off with a head-encasing stretch bandage, which certainly looked impressive. There was a lot of talk of me having a CT scan to check there was no bone damage: the only reason we didn't go ahead with that was they couldn't get my credit card to work. Anyway, we finally persuaded the doctor that we didn't need anything like that, and left. I felt fine the whole time - didn't pass out, didn't see double, didn't see stars, wasn't suffering from concussion, etc. I replaced the doctor's dressing with more betadine and a bandaid the next morning. It looked OK, complementing handsomely my red forehead from the Efudix treatment I'd been having!



We then made our way back to the Zoo, without incident, and went in to see the pandas, some indoors, some outdoors.



After the Lama Temple (then the hospital interlude), then the Pandas in Beijing Zoo, we went to the Summer Palace, comprising collections of buildings used as Summer residences by the emperor, scattered about a huge park with a great big lake in the middle (they were actually all burnt down during the Boxer Rebellion of 1900, but rebuilt afterwards). Walked along a wonderful collonade on the lake shore, then took a ferry across the lake, near the island with the amazing 17-arched bridge.



At the Summer Palace in the afternoon, we walked past this building, which was the residence of Dowager Empress Cixi at the time of the Boxer Rebellion in 1900, and is referenced in the biography of Thomas Cochrane by Andy Adam: “Thomas Cochrane and the Dragon Throne”

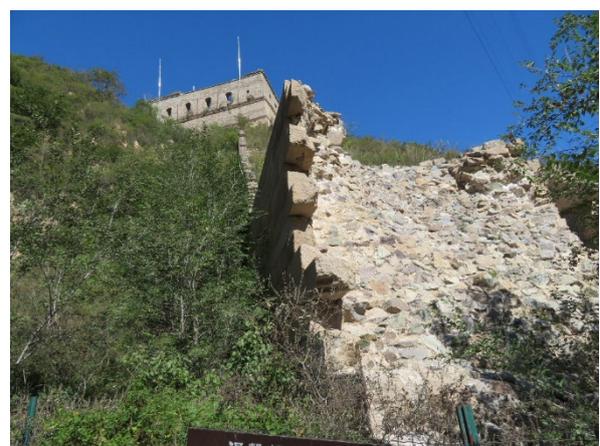
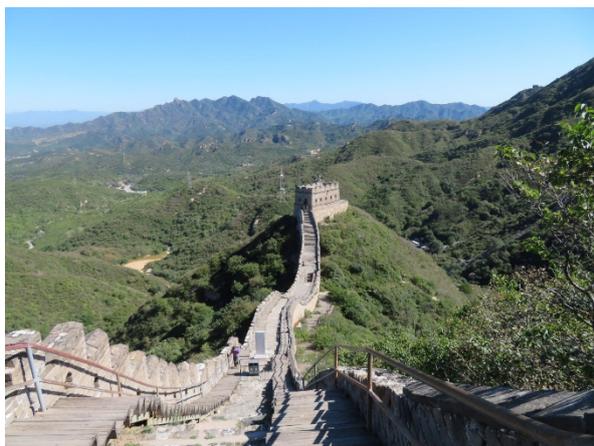
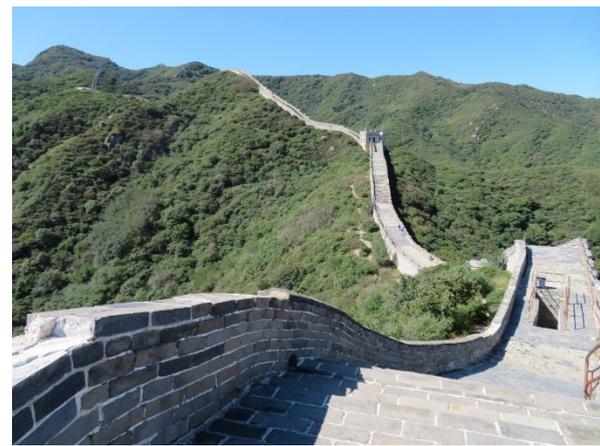
(https://www.amazon.co.uk/Thomas-Cochrane-Dragon-Throne-Confronting-ebook/dp/B07KFJRRJ9/ref=sr_1_7?keywords=thomas+cochrane&qid=1570774528&s=digital-text&sr=1-7). We became friends with Andy Adam on a cruise last year; he is the step-grandson of Cochrane, and he gave a wonderful lecture about him. Cochrane was a medical



missionary in China and ended up (miraculously) in favour with Empress Cixi who sponsored his establishing the first Western medical school in China.

Wednesday, 18-Sep-19:

Wow! What a great day to visit the Great Wall of China, not far from Beijing. We went to a section known as Badaling, specifically Badalingzhen (which is off the most-trodden tourist path). As you can see, very few other people there. The first pic shows 2 towers and section of wall winding off to the Left - I walked that whole section. We started at Shixia Pass, where King Chuang broke through the wall, just below the first tower - you can see the breach. The last pic is actually of the Juyongguan section of the wall, which we passed on our way to Badaling (it's the most accessible part of the wall, 60 mins (on a good day) from down-town Beijing).





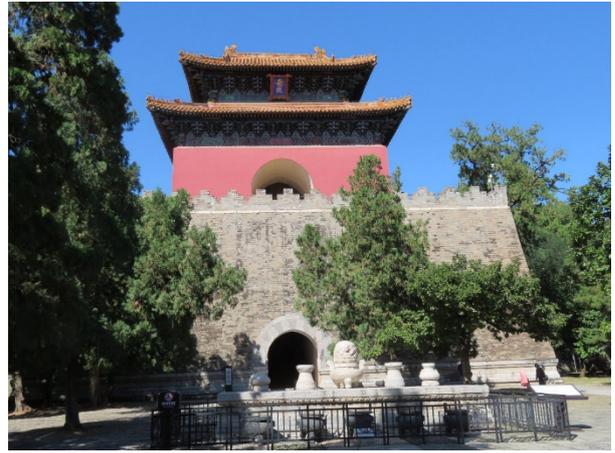
When visited the Great Wall of China, on the way to the section we visited (Badalingzhen) we passed through the Juyongguan Pass about 50km from Beijing, where there is a nice section of wall, but very busy. Also there, is the Cloud Platform built in the Yuan Dynasty in 1342, which I saw as we drove past, constructed of white marble: it originally had 3 pagodas on top, but they were destroyed before the start of the Ming Dynasty. Had I known about this at the time, I would have asked to stop there and look. Fancy the Chinese building a Cloud Platform as long ago as 1342! AARNet has recently built its own Cloud Platform, namely CloudStor - <https://support.aarnet.edu.au/hc/en-us/categories/200217608-CloudStor>.



In Badaling, waiting to visit the Great Wall, I came across this Hummingbird Hawk Moth, just hovering like a hummingbird while it partook of the nectar in this petunia.



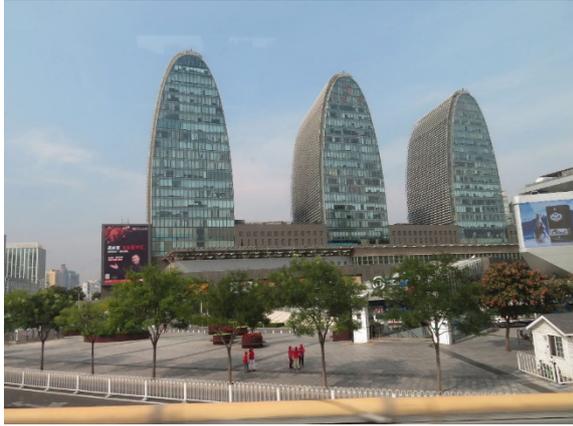
After visiting the Great Wall, we travelled a short distance towards Beijing to visit one of the Ming Emperor Tombs. All the Ming Emperor tombs are in the same general area, but each distinct. We visited that of the 3rd emperor, Cheng Zu, which has never been excavated (he's buried somewhere under the mountain); the buildings, etc were impressive, rather like many of the temples we've seen - courtyard after courtyard, with the tall memorial at the end. Afterwards, we walked along the "Spiritual Road", along which the funeral procession of each emperor would travel to the appropriate burial site. The road is lined with stone statues of various people and animals, including some fictional ones like the Xiezihi.



Finally from Beijing, we had lunch in a Hot Pot (or Steamboat) restaurant. The pot of bubbling liquid (one side strewn with chillis, the other relatively mild) sits in the middle of the table, a burner underneath, and you hold a piece of lamb or beef or vegetables in the liquid (with your chopsticks) while it cooked. It was wonderful and very tasty. Here is Helen and our guide Cici.



Finally, some scenes of buildings, our hotel (Beijing Friendship Hotel, the venue for the Conference), and some street scenes...





Beijing Friendship Hotel



Warning sign in the Hotel gardens!



Interesting forms of transport

