

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch Inc



澳中友好协会

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Bulletin

2023/5 May 2023

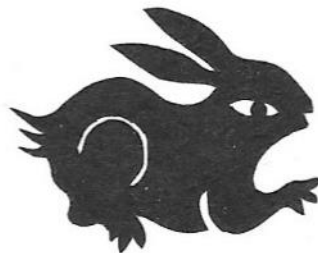
Coming events

Queanbeyan Chinese Heritage walk

14 May

Yum cha lunch

18 June



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Promoting friendship and understanding between the Australian and Chinese people

Hidden treasures: The First Chinese – a Walk in Queanbeyan, Sunday 14 May 2023

The Chinese Heritage walk will depart from the Thai Lime Leaves Restaurant, 20 Lowe St, Queanbeyan at 10.15am on Sunday 14 May. Please arrive a little early so we can start on time. Lunch will be at the restaurant at ~12.15pm and the cost will be \$25 pp for members and \$30 for non-members.

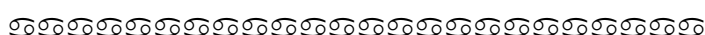
The walk will be a roughly 2 hour mostly urban walk of about 3.5km, with some hilly parts and unpaved sections in a cemetery.

If you are interested in coming on the walk and/or the lunch would you email acfsevent@gmail.com by 10 May. The cost will be a donation of approximately \$10 for members, \$15 for non-members, of which \$5 goes to the National Trust.

Tour information

The tour will cover the fascinating story of one of this area's earliest migrant populations, and visit some associated heritage sites.

Access to skilled and reliable labour was a problem in early New South Wales, and particularly so after convict transportation ended in 1840. A plan to contract Chinese mechanics and labourers was proposed as early as 1837. Some of those from the Canberra area that backed the plan were Charles Campbell, George Thomas Palmer, and Thomas McQuoid. Later, the gold rushes attracted thousands of Chinese miners. Inevitably, some Chinese men married European women, had children and settled down. They went on to run a network of gardens, stores, eating houses and boarding rooms essential to life in towns across the colony. Henry Lawson celebrated them, and Braidwood's Quong Tart became as well regarded as the Governor. One Chinese-European family became part of the commercial, journalistic and religious fabric of Queanbeyan and Canberra. The Tankey family story will illustrate the contributions of the early Chinese to the Queanbeyan district, one of whom became the business partner of a militant Canberran that led a national political party.



Yum cha lunch

Our function for June will be a yum cha lunch at Ginseng at the Hellenic Club in Woden. Plan to come out of the cold to enjoy a lunch on Sunday 18 June at 12.30, to cost \$30 for members, \$35 for non-members. The menu is:

- Har gow (Steamed prawn dumpling)
- Siu mai (Steamed prawn and pork dumpling)
- Fried seafood dumpling (aka Lobster dumpling)

Fast facts from the *Beijing Review*, May 2023

- The Chinese Government is promoting a more sustainable approach to food consumption. One measure was to urge venues offering lavish banquets to provide free containers for people to take home leftovers.
- The History Museum of China Aviation Industry was opened in Beijing in April. It is the only venue to provide a comprehensive display of China's 110-year aviation history.
- In the first quarter (Q1) of 2023 China's exports of passenger vehicles rose 83% year on year to 826,000 units, commercial vehicles rose 28% to 168,000 units. Of these 248,000 were new energy vehicles, more than double a year earlier.
- Some 632,000 electric car charging piles were added in Q1 2023. China now has over 5.84 million charging piles, up nearly 90% in a year.
- China-Europe freight train services surged 15% year on year to 4,186 trips in Q1 2023. The trains handle about 450,000 twenty-foot equivalent units in Q1 up 28% year on year.

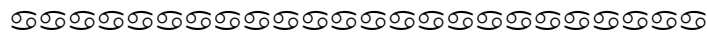
Thanks to Neil Birch for compiling these.

BBQ pork bun
Steamed vegetarian dumpling
Radish cake

Roast duck BBQ pork plate
soya egg noodle
Chinese broccoli and oyster sauce

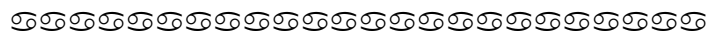
Egg tart/ red bean custard ball
Chinese tea

Please book by Thursday 15 June by emailing acfsevent@gmail.com.



Recycling your cans and bottles to help the Society

Please consider recycling your cans and bottles by taking them to a RETURN-IT depot. Detailed instruction were contained in the February and March *Bulletins* and further Information is available on the RETURN-IT website www.returnit.com.au/. We hope to have details on our website soon.



From Buddhism to Beyond Meat

By Anthony William Donald, *Beijing Review* 0.18 MAY 4, 2023

One sunny spring day, I visited Longhua Temple in Shanghai, a historical Buddhist temple known for its stunning architecture and serene atmosphere. As I wandered through the temple's lush gardens and dazzlingly yellow-and-red-colored buildings, where young people were taking photos and older people were praying for good fortune, I could not help but feel a sense of peace. However, the highlight of my visit was eating their delicious vegan noodles. Packed with veggies, tofu and mushrooms and served in a savory, yet slightly sweet broth, it was the perfect way to end my temple trip. As a vegetarian of almost a decade, visiting temples and trying their meatless, cruelty-free dishes has become one of my favorite things to do in China.

Various forms of vegetarianism and veganism have been a part of Chinese culture for centuries, with Buddhist monks advocating a vegetarian diet as a way to show compassion for all living beings. Buddhism in China is thought to date back to the Han Dynasty (206 B.C.-A.D. 220), and gained popularity and prominence during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). During this time, cooking and food preparation techniques were developed that have had a huge influence on modern-day vegetarian and vegan cooking.

One example is suji, which literally translates to vegetarian chicken. Dating back to the Southern and Northern Dynasties (420-589), this dish is made by using soy protein to create a texture that resembles meat. It is often flavored with soy sauce, ginger and scallions. Compared to suya (or vegetarian duck), which is believed to originate from the Tang Dynasty, suji's modern-day popularity is stronger, in my subjective opinion. Today, a large portion of restaurants nationwide still serve suji, and it is mostly served as a side dish or as a supplement to a bowl of noodles.

Suji and suya were among the earliest "incarnations" of plant-based meat. In the West, plant-based meat has been growing in popularity. In 2022, the plant-based meat market in the United States was worth \$8 billion. Some of the biggest American

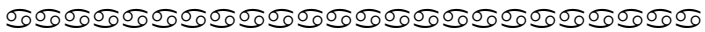
firms in this industry, such as Impossible Foods and Beyond Meat, use some of the same ingredients and techniques that were developed in Tang and Song (960-1279) dynasties in China. Beyond Meat has now set up a research and development center in Jiaxing Economic and Technological Development Zone near Shanghai to develop new products in the country that first invented plant-based meat.



Vegan noodles at Longhua Temple, Shanghai (COURTESY PHOTO)

In recent years, vegetarianism and veganism have become increasingly popular in China, with over 50 million people following a vegetarian diet by some estimates. This makes China home to the second largest number of non-meat eaters behind India. This spike in popularity is partly due to concerns about health and the environment, as well as a growing awareness of animal welfare issues. The rise in interest in animal-free diets in China has been accompanied by a growing number of businesses dedicated to filling this demand. For instance, Green Monday, a Hong Kong-headquartered plant-based food group, makes products more suited to the Chinese market. Whereas Beyond Meat and Impossible Foods' main products are alternatives to beef, Green Monday's primary products are alternatives to pork, the most consumed meat in China. There are also dozens of trendy vegetarian and vegan restaurants in large cities like Shanghai, mostly frequented by younger Chinese, expats and Buddhists alike.

Despite the level of sophistication vegetarian and vegan culture has reached in modern-day China, nothing quite beats the vegan food at Buddhist temples, which can be found nationwide. As I finished my bowl of noodles at Longhua Temple, a feeling of nourishment, both physically and spiritually, overwhelmed me. I could not help but reflect on the history of vegan cooking in China, which makes my choice of giving up meat more enjoyable. Next time you are in China, I hope you go to a local temple, eat a delicious bowl of vegan noodles, and reflect on the history that provided you with such a nutritious meal.



Pedal Power

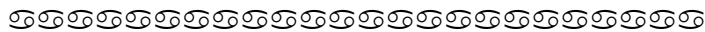
Beijing Review: NO.19 MAY 11, 2023

Once the dominant form of transportation in China in the 1980s and early 1990s, cycling has made a major comeback in recent years as a hot recreational trend among the country's young urbanites.

Compared to their parents, for whom bicycles were the only available means of daily commute, young cyclists nowadays have different types of bikes to choose from, a wide range of cycling routes on which to practice and advance their skills, and a dazzling array of bike accessories and gadgets to build their personal styles. To these young enthusiasts, cycling is no longer a necessity forced upon them, but an ultramodern lifestyle that integrates fitness, sustainability, social interaction and city tours.

The new cycling craze has transformed the physical appearance of the country's landscapes. Many of its major thoroughfares, including Chang'an Avenue in Beijing, an east-to-west street that runs through the centuries-old heart of the city, and Binjiang Avenue in Shanghai, a promenade that stretches along the Huangpu River, are now thronged with troupes of cyclists. Bicycle stores have been turned into city clubs, where cool urban bikers gather to shop bicycle gear, sip coffee and exchange the latest trends and news in the cycling world.

For this generation of young cyclists, the sport comes with a speed that is neither too fast nor too slow. At a medium speed, they can explore their surroundings, sometimes wander off the beaten tracks and enjoy a sense of control as well as a feeling of freedom.



Casual Companion

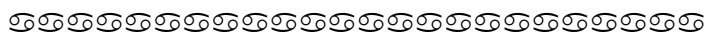
Beijing Review: NO.19 MAY 11, 2023

In the run-up to this year's May Day holiday, a five-day break from April 29 to May 3, Chinese social media platforms were inundated with posts looking for travel buddies. This quest was in fact not an isolated phenomenon, but part of a wider social trend called the *dazi* culture, or companion culture, which is about finding someone on the Internet to accompany an individual to a particular event.

This new type of companionship embodies a widely shared desire among the country's Gen Z for adventures and connections. Typically, through a brief exchange of messages, two strangers agree to meet at a specific destination, travel together and share all costs.

The fact these travel buddies are complete strangers adds an element of surprise to the travel experience. For many young travellers, finding a *dazi* is like opening a mystery box. At the end of the journey, they may proceed to become friends or simply drift apart without seeing each other ever again.

Either way, what these young Chinese are primarily seeking is not a deep emotional bond, but a physical and supportive presence that drives away the feeling of loneliness.



Desert town in China retains old India link

By Satarupa Bhattacharjya | *China Daily* | Updated: 2023-05-09 08:35



The Mogao Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, in Dunhuang. [Photo by Satarupa Bhattacharjya/China Daily]

A desert town is perhaps the most prominent among locations in China that still reflect its links with India in ancient times.

Dunhuang in today's Gansu province in northwestern China, where a trove of Buddhist artwork was created over centuries (fourth to 14th), tells that story.

The town, on the fringes of the Gobi Desert, shows other signs of the confluence of cultures, including Islamic. It was a military garrison during the Han Dynasty (206 BC-AD 220), with the Crescent Moon Lake — a blue-and-green patch amid the "singing dunes" of sand that appear beige or grey, depending on the time of day or night — serving as an oasis for trader caravans. Bactrian camels are sighted there as part of present-day tourism.

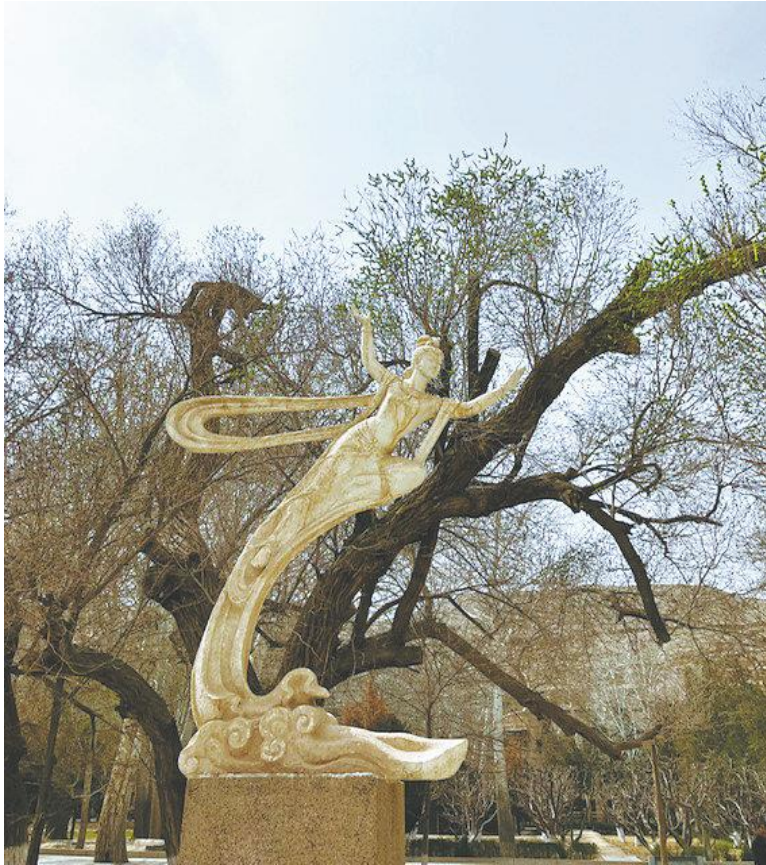
But the area's top draw, the Mogao Grottoes, a UNESCO World Heritage Site, built on mounds and painted with thousands of Buddha figures, including sculptures, in soft pigment and mineral colours across some 45,000 square meters of wall space, reveals the extent of the Indian connection.

The 492 preserved caves, once home to meditating monks, stretch 1,600 meters long by the dry Dachuan River.

The arrival of Buddhism in China from India is illustrated: One mural depicts Emperor Ashoka, who sent his emissaries to promote the religion in Asia, praying beside a stupa. The seventh-century artwork was given a touch-up during the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911), tour guide Li Yaping told me on a recent visit.

The Qing era saw more repairs but not all followed the original colour schemes. The site's preservation is overseen by Dunhuang Academy over the past decades.

The Tang Dynasty (618-907), heyday of the arts and crafts in imperial China, backed the Sinicization of Buddhism. Mogao witnessed the changes, Li said.



The sculpture of a "flying apsara" or *feitian*, the modern-day cultural emblem of Dunhuang, Gansu province. [Photo by Satarupa Bhattacharjya/China Daily]

The statues of Buddha's prominent disciples, Kashyapa and Ananda, older and younger respectively, inside one cave have physical attributes that appear close to local people even while wearing dhoti, an Indian male garment. The Jataka tales on Buddha's reincarnations are mural motifs in some publicly open caves. "Flying apsaras", the celestial beings from Hindu and Buddhist mythologies, emerge elsewhere (Cave 296, for instance), and gradually become *feitian* (in Chinese), the modern-day cultural emblem of Dunhuang.

An exhibit at the nearby Dunhuang Museum of "eminent monks" who "came and went along the Silk Road" mentions Indian names, their travel years and work — the translation of sutras.

Chinese monk Xuanzang visited India over 17 years in the Tang era.

Other exhibits say the Han empire "started the early-stage exploration to Dunhuang by emigrating residents, establishing prefectures, counties and setting up a military defence system" at the westernmost end of the Hexi Corridor.

"The Confucianism culture in the Central Plains took root in Dunhuang, and the Indian Buddhist culture also spread to Dunhuang along the Silk Road," a museum document says.

Silk and paper were major export commodities from Dunhuang in the old trading days; major imports included woollen and linen fabrics, blood horses and rare birds (peacocks, for example), museum records show.

The grottoes house exquisite art and provide rich material to study politics (the rise and fall of dynasties and kingdoms), ethnic groups, society (a cave painting captures a prison scene) and folk customs. Dunhuang flourished under the Sui (581-618) and Tang dynasties, as well as the Five Dynasties and Ten Kingdoms (907-960), and saw the patronage of families that ruled the area from time to time. An artwork now used in Mogao merchandise portrays royal women of different ethnicities.

The caves contain paintings of 49 female donors (to art), including a Uygur princess, Li said.

According to the UNESCO website, "Dunhuang art is not only the amalgamation of Han Chinese artistic tradition and styles assimilated from ancient Indian and Gandharan customs, but also an integration of the arts of the Turks, ancient Tibetans, and other Chinese ethnic minorities."

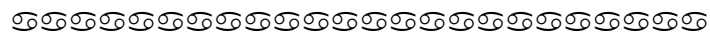
From the Northern Wei Dynasty (386-534) to the Mongol-led Yuan Dynasty (1271-1368), the caves of Mogao "played a decisive role in artistic exchanges between China, Central Asia and India".

Chinese, Tibetan, Sogdian, Khotan, Uygur and even Hebrew manuscripts were found within the caves, the website says.

The Library Cave, discovered in 1990, lodged tens of thousands of manuscripts.

A six-syllable mantra in ancient Tibetan characters etched on a black stone slate and a woodcut block with a rune in Sanskrit, both from the Yuan era, found later at other archaeological sites in China, are among relics displayed at Dunhuang Museum.

"The 'Mogao spirit' is hard to define," Li said.



Septuagenarian master passes on unique Yimeng calico handicraft

chinadaily.com.cn | Updated: 2023-05-08 19:27



Meticulous work: Zhang Mingjian engraves a block for colour printed calico. [Photo by Xing Ziqin for chinadaily.com.cn]

Septuagenarian Zhang Mingjian – from the Hedong district of Linyi city, in East China's Shandong province – is an inheritor, officially tasked with passing on the unique craft of producing Yimeng colour printed calico to future generations.

He is said to be the only folk craftsman currently that is equally adept at Yimeng calico plate making, plate engraving, colour mixing, printing and other techniques in the country.

Colour printed calico is a time-honoured folk handicraft, stretching back to the Qin dynasty (221-206 BC) and it was super prevalent during the Tang Dynasty (618-907). It features ornate handmade printed cloth with dazzling patterns on it.

Zhang, 75, began his career in colour printed calico in his youth, in the wake of three years of assiduous training. In that time, he has managed to recreate some of the old patterns and made a wealth of brilliant works on his own – including themes for the 12 zodiac symbols and mythological tales.

Master Zhang has carefully passed down the unique and precious craft to his son – to promote and improve it through national exhibitions. In addition, he has organized courses for colour printed calico enthusiasts, so that the ancient technique can be inherited.



The brightly hued and ornate cloth is seen as auspicious and it is used to wrap things during traditional weddings. [Photo by Xing Ziqin for chinadaily.com.cn]

Australia China Friendship Society ACT Branch — membership application form

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