

The July/August 2014 Newsletter of The GP-TCM Research Association



NEW Special feature

Treasurer's Travels

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I had planned to have a really enjoyable, unusually relatively slow-paced visit to various colleagues in southern China in July, culminating in the 4th Board of Directors' face-to-face meeting coinciding with the 3rd Annual Meeting of the GP-TCM RA and the 5th Annual Conference of the TCM Pharmaceutical Analysis Speciality Committee of the WFCMS in Nanjing. Because of pressure of work at King's College London, I could in the end only attend the Nanjing meeting but little did I know what was in store!

I flew KLM as I usually do, and duly took off from Amsterdam on Wednesday 16 July at 17.30 European time. After flying for nearly 5 hours (almost half way to Shanghai) the captain explained that the aircraft had developed a serious electrical problem and rather than land in a remote Siberian airport where it may not have been repairable, he had decided to go back to the Netherlands. So after

more than nine hours in the air, we landed again at Amsterdam. The airline put us up in an airport hotel (arriving at 4.30am on Thursday) and after a couple of hours' sleep, I went back to the airport to be told that I had been rebooked on a flight to Shanghai via Beijing. However it turned out that this had been overbooked but they said



'Do not worry' you are on the flight to Guangzhou. That also turned out to be overbooked as well so then they said 'You have a choice'. 'Choice?', I said, 'Sounds good'. The choice was to fly either to Tokyo or Osaka! Since Osaka was less flying time than to Tokyo, I chose Osaka. Bad decision! The plane was 2 hours delayed in taking off so I missed my connection once I arrived in Osaka. Eventually I arrived in Shanghai just before my bag (making its own unaccompanied way from Amsterdam). By then it was too late (it was quite late Friday evening by this time) to travel to Nanjing so I had to stay overnight in Shanghai – I went to the station to buy a ticket to Nanjing. No problem, except the trains were full so I had to wait a few more hours. I finally arrived at the meeting venue in time for tea on Saturday afternoon – about 40 hours late!

Everything worked well for my return on Monday night from Nanjing to Shanghai but on going through Immigration at Pu Dong Airport, the officer told me to wait in a room while they made more enquiries! It turned out that she did not like the look of one of my exit stamps from China (4 years ago), despite my having entered and exited China at least a dozen times since then (and having perfectly readable stamps to prove it).

Anyway they finally let me go. So after a 30,000km round trip, I was able to attend what I could think of a really enjoyable meeting with excellent organisation by De-an.

A journey to remember!

Your jet-lagged Treasurer.