

FLUORIDE

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Photograph by Xue Shirley Li, Multimedia Gallery, <http://gallery.hd.org>

Figure. The Great Wall of China at Ju Yong Pass, north of Beijing.

Ju Yong Pass is situated 50 km northwest of Beijing in a valley 15 km in length. The Great Wall was first built in the Qin Dynasty, 222–206 BC. Ju Yong Pass is at a strategic point along the wall and is noted for its beautiful scenery. In the Jin Dynasty, 1115–1234 AD, it was listed one of the eight best scenic attractions in Beijing. The gate in the center of the pass is built of finely carved marble and called Cloud Terrace or Guojie (crossing-street) in Chinese. This building was originally the base of three towers and was built in 1345. It is nearly 10 m high, with a base measuring 27 × 15 m. Originally, three towers stood on the top of Cloud Terrace but they were destroyed by an earthquake in the early Ming Dynasty leaving only the terrace. The arch gateway underneath the terrace, 7 m high and 6 m wide, allowed the passage of horse drawn carriages. The sides of the arched gateway are decorated with carvings of Buddhas, four Celestial Kings, and the text of a Buddhist Sutra in Chinese, Tibetan, Sanskrit, and three other minority languages. In 1644, the troops of the peasant uprising led by the peasant general Li Zicheng entered the city from here to take it over. Later that year Li Zicheng overthrew the Ming Dynasty. At that time the area of the pass had a large population but later, as transport improved, fewer people stayed there overnight, and the area gradually became relatively deserted.

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The International Society for Fluoride Research was founded in 1966, at a meeting in Detroit of the American Society for Fluoride Research, to promote the sharing of scientific information on all aspects of inorganic and organic fluorides. This is done by the publication of a quarterly journal *Fluoride* and the hosting of international conferences. The first ISFR conference was held in Frankfurt, Germany in 1967. Conferences have also been held in Spain, Austria, the Netherlands, England, the United States of America, Switzerland, India, Japan, Hungary, China, Poland, and New Zealand. The next conference, the XXVIIth, will be hosted by Professor Guifan Sun, with the assistance of Dr Dianjun Sun, in Beijing, People's Republic of China, October 9–12, 2007 (See announcements, *Fluoride* 2006;39(4):247-51, 2007;40(1):1-3, and in this issue, p. 93). The XXVIIIth conference will be hosted by Dr JD Sharma in Jaipur, India in 2009. Subscription to *Fluoride*, membership in the ISFR (for fluoride researchers), and attendance at the conferences are welcomed.

The Society does not hold an official position on issues such as water fluoridation but encourages, through its conferences and the publication of papers, commentaries, and letters to the editor, a critical examination of the scientific basis of the views which are held by individuals and organizations.

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