

Children's Bridge

INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION CONSULTANTS



making families happen

Homeland Tour 2013

Written by James Quinlan

INTRODUCTION

It was in 2007 when I first went back to Korea to experience my birth culture. I was six at the time, and back then I didn't fully recognize the meaning of the trip. Going back to my homeland at the start of summer this year enriched my knowledge of the lifestyle of Koreans, and I am so lucky to have the privilege to not only go back once, but twice to the place where I was born.

My most recent trip to Korea was extremely busy and fun, and it was the perfect assortment of cultural and recreational activities. Over the twelve day trip our tour group, which consisted of 4 kids and 6 adults (for most of the time) we went to an amusement park, visited tombs, climbed mountains, went shopping, ate a ton of food and much more!

Since the whole trip was amazing, it took a lot of time and thinking to come up with the 5 best parts of the trip.

5 - KOREAN FOLK VILLAGE

During our trip, one of the places that we visited was the largest Folk Village in Korea, which is located in Yongin. There were many different forms of traditional buildings and games, as well as cultural shows. The presentation that was my favorite was the drumming, where the drummers danced while they drummed traditional rhythms...

James, Jamie, John Lee and Maja
at the top of the mountain

4 - MOUNTAIN CLIMBING

We also went mountain climbing in Seoraksan National Park. We first took a gondola up to near the top of the mountain, and then we climbed up to the top. There were no safety rails or nets while we were climbing, which increased the challenge of it. At the peak, the view was astounding, and it was really fun getting up to the top. There was even a gift shop at the apex of the climb!

3 - SWS

Going to the SWS (Social Welfare Society) was really an eye-opening experience for me. We had a short tour around the facilities in Seoul, and after I got to meet my foster parents again. It was a very emotional experience for everyone, and it made me think about how lucky I am to be living in a wonderful place with my parents who adopted me...



James with his Foster Parents

The group at the Social Welfare Society



2 - THE FOOD

During our trip, the food was one of the things that helped me understand my culture more, and it was delicious at the same time. I loved the Korean BBQ where we got to grill the meat on a table stove, and also enjoyed Bibimbap, a dish that literally translates to mixed rice, which consists of many different ingredients.

1 - EVERLAND AMUSEMENT PARK

I absolutely love rollercoasters and amusement parks, and going to Everland, Korea's biggest theme park, was awesome! We got to Everland just when the park was just opening. Our group immediately rushed to the newest ride, which was a safari-themed bus that went through a huge land containing animals from all over the world. My favorite part was the giraffes that stuck their heads through the windows, and the bears that were standing up and catching food with their mouths. Some of us (including me) also rode the T-Express, a wooden rollercoaster that has the steepest drop of all wooden coasters. It was really hot, but there were misters all around the park that cooled you off. We spent just the right amount of time there, and it was a really fun day.

This trip couldn't have been possible without Children's Bridge and all of the other people that helped organize this trip. I would also like to thank our wonderful tour guide, Lara, who changed the schedule so that it would be a better experience for us, and our anonymous bus drivers who got us around South Korea.

I would highly recommend this trip to any adoptee from Korea wanting to experience their heritage. Thank you for managing to read through this whole article, my apologies if it's a bit long!

Kids at the SWS



The SNOW GLOBE

By Mike & Janey

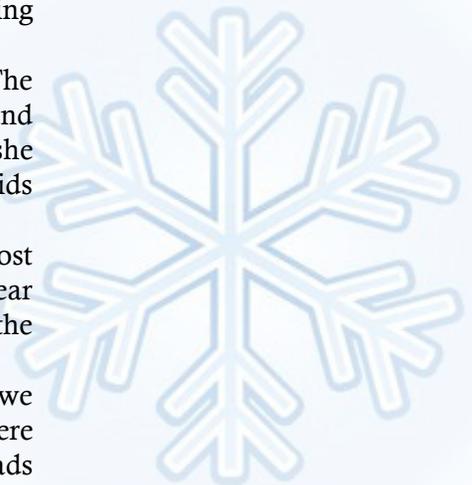
First, let me introduce ourselves. We are Mike and Janey and we live outside St. Marys, Ontario. We are proud parents of Amelia (8 yrs old) who is from Chongqing, China and now also Zoe (20 months) who is from Jiangxi, China.

As you can probably guess, we recently traveled to China to welcome Zoe into our family. Last October, the three of us loaded up and headed out on our adoption journey to China for Zoe. We had decided some time earlier to also make part of this trip into a homeland journey for Amelia, so we left the maximum allowed 3 days early so we could add on this important side trip for the three of us. While this part of our trip isn't really essential to the story I am telling here, I bring it up because I wanted to take the opportunity to say how wonderful our 8 year old daughter Amelia was throughout this difficult and demanding trip, and this is important to the story I'm telling. You see, this added on side trip meant that in the 25 hours after we were dropped off at Toronto airport, we had a whopping 8 hours spent in airports and a total of 17 hours on airplanes. Then, once we finally arrived in Chongqing (at 1 am local time!), we had time for 6 hours of sleep, then we were up for a 4 hour drive to Qianjiang, Amelia's home town. 36 hours after that, including another 4 hour drive, we were back in an airport again, heading to Jiangxi to begin the adoption part of our journey. Throughout all of this, we were over and over again impressed by Amelia's ability to handle the stress of it all, and were so proud of her for the amazing young person she has become.

The remainder of the trip went as a typical adoption trip to China does. The first week we spent in Jiangxi getting to know Zoe, seeing some local sights and doing a little shopping. Amelia quickly became the big sister we knew she would be, playing with Zoe and reading to her and just having fun like kids should.

The second week spent in Beijing was the part of the trip Amelia was most looking forward to, as it included the sightseeing trips to the places we all hear about, Forbidden City, Tiananmen square and, the highlight of it all for her, the Great Wall of China.

Now, our trip to the Great Wall, posed some challenges. The day before we arrived in Beijing, there had been a big, freak, snowstorm. On the day we were to visit the wall, we didn't think we were going to be able to go as the roads were still closed due to the snow, but had finally been cleared the night before. When we got to the wall, there was still a lot of snow on the ground, and the steps up the wall were covered in ice. If you've been to the wall with an adoption group, you'll know that the section of the wall they take us to is quite steep and a difficult climb, even on a nice day. With ice on the steps, it was very tough to make the climb up. Our adoption group was small, just us and another family, but out of the group of us, 4 adults, 2 babies, our guide Cissy, and Amelia, the only one who accompanied me up the wall to the guard tower, was Amelia.



CONTINUED ON PAGE 5



Welcome



SNOW GLOBE CONTINUED...

Janey had Zoe in the snuggly, so she wasn't able to make the climb safely on the icy steps. Amelia was so excited to finally be at the Great Wall, there was no way she was NOT going up to the tower. Of course, after her walk up the wall, we wanted to get her a souvenir so she could remember her accomplishment. She chose a snow globe.

Once our trip was over and it was time to come home, we made a huge error. When packing, we assumed this small snow globe was under the 100 ml limit and since it was breakable, we packed it in our carry-on luggage. At the airport in Beijing, the security guards pulled it out of our luggage and with one word, 'forbidden!' broke the heart of Amelia and gave her reason for her first and only melt down of the entire trip. She cried and sobbed uncontrollably for over half an hour and there was absolutely nothing we could do to make her feel better. We did make one promise to her though, some way, somehow, we would get her another snow globe.

As it turns out, this snow globe was not so easy to find. In the days of the internet, when one can find 'anything' online, I was unable to find this snow globe for sale anywhere. Finally, after reading a Children's Bridge Update on an upcoming group heading to China, I sent Darlene an e-mail asking her to forward Amelia's story on to the group in the hopes that someone would be willing to bring us back a snow globe. This is where a very kind hearted person, Tracey, stepped in and helped out a family from far away who she will probably never meet. Tracey was part of this group heading to China for her daughter, and she sent us a message and very kindly brought back the exact same snow globe for Amelia. Now Tracey is from Alberta, and we're in Ontario, but as luck would have it, our niece lives in Alberta also, only 10 minutes away from Tracey. She picked up the snow globe and brought it with her when she came home to visit, so we could finally reunite Amelia with her snow globe that she so deserves.

So here we are, over 9 months later, with one VERY happy 8 year old. This is extra special to her because she knows that this snow globe came from the exact same place as her original one. We are forever grateful to Tracey for her kindness in going out of her way to help someone she doesn't even know. It was so wonderful of her, during the challenging trip that many of us have experienced, to take the time to think of our daughter and bring home something that she will cherish for a long time.

CHINA

Arrived June 28, 2013 from the Synthetic Welfare Institute of Xuwen County, Guangdong Province

Jennifer Xu Elizabeth, born March 26, 2011, daughter to Tracy of Sherwood Park, Alberta

Arrived June 28, 2013 from the Social Welfare Institute of Maogang, District of Maoming City, Guangdong Province

Chloe Mou Xia, born May 26, 2011, daughter to Marvin and Sharon of Wallenstein, Ontario

Arrived June 28, 2013 from the Wuhan Children's Welfare Institute, Hubei Province

Maya Miaoyu, born September 30, 2011, daughter to Laura of West Hill, Ontario

THAILAND

Arrived on August 17, 2013 from Bangkok, Thailand

Kai Thomas Pawat born on August 18, 2010.

Son to Scott and Bernadette of Selwyn, Ontario

SOUTH KOREA

Arrived August 14, 2013 from Busan, South Korea

Dax Yi, born December 28, 2011

Son to Yi Dave and Sue of Toronto, Ontario

Arrived August 17, 2013 from Seoul, South Korea

Gabriel Yoseop, born September 5, 2011

Son to Jamie and Young of Toronto, Ontario

WC CHINA

Welcome home to Naomi, Qiu Qiao (*Guangdong Province*), daughter of Jerry and Leanne, Markham, Ontario

Welcome home to Sara, Qing Dan (*Shanxi Province*), daughter of Scott and Joanne, St. John's, Newfoundland

Recipes for foodies and those with ties to Korea

We hosted my son, Luka's, 12th birthday in May and he requested Korean food for he and his buddies. It was a hit with 6 of the 7 boys. Dean and I prepared Korean tacos (YUMMY!) and ordered chapchae which is a sweet potato starch noodle dish, mandu (pork dumplings, kimbap (korean sushi), and white radish kimchi.

Korean Taco recipe:

<http://www.ottawacitizen.com/life/food/What+This+Week+Korean+tacos/8358090/story.html>

Tips:

I doubled the marinade and used only 1/4 of the jalapeno as I wasn't sure how much heat Luka's friends were prepared to handle.

I also made my own coleslaw for a topping or side. This is Luka's favorite coleslaw recipe and I have to make it once a month: <http://allrecipes.com/Recipe/California-Cole-Slaw/>

I also offered Boston Lettuce Leaves as wraps (this is how they serve them in Korea) along with the corn tortilla wraps.

I also cooked some Thai Jasmine rice as a little of it is nice with the meat wrapped in the lettuce leaves.

I marinated the flank steak for 30 hours.

It was so good that my kids had left overs for breakfast on the following morning.

On this page you will find a yummy and easy recipe for Kimchi Pancakes.

I LOVE these. There is a Korean vendor at our local farmers market along Bryon (Ottawa) who sells tastes of Korea and gave out samples and recipes. She also runs a food truck downtown that serves Bibimbap (Korea rice bowl). She makes the best kimchi I've ever tasted outside of Korea and now I have a standing weekly order with her.

아주 맛있었어요.

a-ju ma-si-sseo-sseo-yo.

It was delicious!

Maria

KOREAN CUCUMBER KIMCHI

Recipe from: Lisa Brooks

Ingredients:

- 1/2 English Cucumber
- 1/2 tsp Kosher salt
- 1 TBS chopped red onion
- 1 tsp dark sesame oil
- 1 TBS rice vinegar
- 1 tsp honey
- 1/8 tsp red pepper flakes

Directions:

Slice your cucumber in half again, this time vertically so you have two long pieces. Use a spoon to scoop out the centre seeds. Thinly slice the cucumber into crescents.

Sprinkle the slices with kosher salt and mix well in a colander. Let the colander sit in the sink for 30 minutes to drain. Rinse the salt off then wrap in paper towels and squeeze out any water that's left.

Mix in onion, sesame oil, rice vinegar, honey and red pepper flakes. Cover and refrigerate until ready to serve.

KIMCHI BUCHIMGAE - KIMCHI PANCAKE

Recipe from: www.raonkitchen.com (Serves 4 as an appetizer - 15 min)

Ingredients:

- 210g all purpose flour
- 400g cold water
- 1 large egg
(or more 50g water)
- 250g coarsely chopped kimchi
- 80g shrimp
- 50g onion
- Vegetable oil for frying

Directions:

- 1- In a large bowl, combine the flour, water and egg.
 - 2- Add kimchi, shrimp, onion and mix well
 - 3- In a large heated frying pan, heat 15g oil. Ladle mixed batter into the pan and spread it out to desired size circle. Cook until the edges turn light brown and crispy. Flip it over, add a little bit of oil and cook the other side until it looks crispy.
- you can use pork or any kind of seafood such as squid instead of shrimp. Or a simply vegetarian version is wonderful too.

See if you can match the referral/earlier pictures of the children to the more recent photos!



1

2

3

4

5

A



If you'd like to participate in this "match the photo" page, send your photos to Jill at jimpeters@rogers.com. Include your child's first name and country of birth. Depending on the number we receive, your pictures may be used in a later issue.



Children's Bridge

ANSWERS:
 3A is Olivia, (China)
 5D is Xia, (China)
 1B is Gabrielle, (China)
 2E is Sonja, (China)
 4C is Angela, (China)

B



C



D



E



Korean Cultural Events

London, Ontario

- Fall 2013/Spring 2014

CULTURE TOGETHER

London Korean Christian Church (530 Topping Lane, London) is very pleased to offer the CULTURE TOGETHER Program.

Come and meet your friends and be exposed to the Korean Culture.

This Program is open to all families who have Korean adopted kids.

Two sessions a year (fall, spring).
Each session runs for 5 weeks (every Sunday 4pm to 6pm)

The fall session starts from September 22 to October 27.
(Thanksgiving break on Oct 13)

Parents Class: Learn how to cook Korean food; Jabchae, Bibimbap, Bulgogi, Songpyeon, etc.

Kids Class (preschool to teen): Enjoy several Korean activities: play traditional Korean games, learn Korean songs, learn about the **Korean hand drum called "sogo" and much more.**

Each class ends with dinner.
Cost: Free

Registration closes on September 9, 2013.

For details, contact: Pauline Lee by e-mail at: pajo649@gmail.com

For registration details go to: <http://www.childrensbridge.com/pages/generalevents.html>

