

Around the World – Backwards III  
Journal by Margareta Jonell  
September 9 – October 4, 2012

September 21, 2012

Wang Peng picked me up this morning to drive me to Qingdao. I went to pay my hotel bill and the receptionist refused payment. Mr. Liu had covered my expenses! They would not hear of me taking the bus or train to Qingdao – so they sent Wang Peng! They can't do enough for me, it seems.

It was great to connect with Lally! We haven't seen each other in a little over a year, so it was a sweet reunion. She is traveling in a group of 6, 7 with me. Of the travelers 5 of us are missionary kids from China, one is a granddaughter of one of the MK's, and then a 91 year old friend of Lally's who is probably the best walker among us!!! Of the MK's all of our parents worked in the same town in China, so the family ties go way back!! In fact, at age two, I was the flower girl at the wedding of Mariann's parents (Anna and Martin Jansson)– one of the women on the trip. Later the Jansson's were missionaries in Japan, so the history continued.

Qingdao is a very busy city of 7 million people. The traffic jams throughout the city are a minute-by-minute occurrence. Wang Peng drives with his hand on the horn! It's a noisy city. Our hotel is in the newer section of the city, just a few blocks away from the May 5 square and the site of the Olympic Sailing Venue. I took a walk around the hotel area and down to the ocean, but it is a cloudy rainy day today. We are on the 13<sup>th</sup> floor and we can hear the horns blaring even from here.

The head pastor of the Qingdao church whom we have known quite well, Mr. Dong, age 44, passed away just two weeks ago of lung cancer. On each of my trips here I have spent time with him. His older sister, who is also a pastor, invited our group to lunch today. She told about their church work. There are 60,000 Christians in Qingdao in 10 churches, with about 40 pastors and preachers. Each of the pastors speaks 25 – 30 times a month! Each year they baptize about 2000 new members. When they asked about Swedish church attendance, it really does put us to shame!

Bo Jun is a young man of about 30, who is seminary trained and is a “preacher” but not yet ordained. His grandmother was educated in our mission school. She is still living, but is in poor health in a nursing home. We've had contact with Bo Jun since he was 17. He is an amazing young man. He will be following our group around for the next week, so you will hear more about him in days to come. He is getting married to a Malaysian girl on Oct. 20.

September 22, 2012

Our group generally meets for a hotel breakfast around 7.30. The breakfast consists of all manner of baozu, jiaozu (potstickers), noodles, fried rice, other Chinese selections, millet and rice soup, many varieties of pickles, fruits and cut up vegetables. In addition there are some foreign selections such as eggs, toast and jam. We don't go hungry.



It was low tide so along the length of the beach hundreds of people were fishing and collecting shell fish. We took another cab to the Iltis Huk area beach, where our family had a summer home. We found a quaint beach side restaurant to eat at. Here we had to go inside and choose among non-refrigerated buckets of fish and vegetables, which were then cooked to order. Then, of course, a short walk on the beautiful sand.

In the evening we were invited to meet Yin Ying – the pastor from San Francisco who wrote the book about our mission school, and who is the person who commissioned the statue. Yin Ying introduced us to a 97-year-old woman who had attended our mission school. She was AMAZING – alert, stood straight and was very animated. She spends half the year in Taiwan and half here in Qingdao.



Lally, Yin Ying and 97-year-old lady from the old mission school.

Through Lally we learned all kinds of things about her!! She knew all of the missionaries, remembered their names, and remembered us kids! She said that Swedish people were not as attractive as US people!!! She thought that my grandparents were from the US – and were very handsome!!! She also thought that my mother and Anna Jansson were very beautiful – and were from America!!! She liked our family a lot – but she prefers boys – so she really liked Johnny (my brother!). We girls were nothing special!!! She talked about other old memories of the school and that era.

We were then taken to the apartment of her daughter where we enjoyed an amazing meal. (Yes, we're eating again!) But first she took us out to her garden and picked figs off the tree. The most delicious fig I've ever tasted!! It was supposed to be a meal of jiaozi – but she had prepared about 10 other dishes – vegetables grown in her own garden, crab, sea slugs, shrimp (three types), oysters, etc. When we were pretty full she came out with platters and platters of jiaozi, delicately made by her. Then she brought out fruit – dates, peanuts, sunflower seeds, melon – and tea!

Yin Ying told us about the books he has written – numbering about 17. He is a prolific author with most of his books published in Taiwan. For many years after Yin Ying left China – first to Taiwan, then to San Francisco – he was not allowed to return to China. He had served in the army under Chiang Kai Chek. Our hostess gave each of us a beautiful book from the Christ Church 100<sup>th</sup> year anniversary, celebrated two years ago. A very interesting evening!

September 23, 2012

At 8.15 this morning we took a couple of taxis to go to Christ Church. They have two services, one at 7 AM and one at 9.30. In order to get seats we got there by 8.30. For about an hour before the real service begins, they sing all the verses of all the hymns they will be using in the service. Announcements are made. By 9.30 there were no empty seats and about 1000 persons had gathered. If you come late you have to stay outside where you can hear the service on a loudspeaker. Lally was given a chance to give greetings. Everyone loves it when she speaks Chinese because her dialect is from the town where we grew up.

The choir processed in VERY slowly and sang a couple of songs. They have a well-trained music director. For the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary the Church purchased a new pipe organ from Germany. The pastor spoke for about 50 minutes. The Lord's prayer was recited loudly and with great feeling – the blessing was given – and the choir sang the Lutkin benediction.

We had already refused a lunch invitation by the pastor – but they would not hear of that! So---again we piled into cars and were taken to a jiaozi restaurant, where we enjoyed soup, jiaozi (three varieties), and a few side dishes. You may ask if we are getting tired of jiaozi yet!!! Well, no, not really! This part of China is known for these dumplings (potstickers) and they are prepared with many kinds of fillings. The most common would be ground pork, Chinese cabbage and onions. But we have had vegetarian ones, shrimp filled ones, and fish ones, as well. Then we waddled home to our hotel!!! This restaurant is right around the corner from our hotel, so I have a feeling we may go back there later this week!



Tomorrow we head back to Jiaozhou for three days where we will meet some more of our dear old friends!

Margareta