



Sandra's visit March 2010

My Visit to Lao Wang's Orphanage with MiFan MaMa



Being on the committee of the Australian Women's Social Group (AWSG) gave me the opportunity to take part in MiFan MaMa's monthly trip to Anhui to visit and deliver rice, flour and "Boxes of Love" to Lao Wang and the Children of Lao Wang's Orphanage. In addition to delivering these monthly supplies there were other donated items including the industrial tofu maker that the AWSG donated.

On Saturday afternoon a group of us set out and drove approximately 5 hours before stopping for the night in Hefei. We woke at 6am the next morning to have breakfast and drive an additional 2 hours to Lao Wang's Orphanage in Fuyang.

This being my first visit to an orphanage I was completely unsure of what to expect. I had visions that there would be hundreds of babies and children that would be extremely sad, disabled, lonely and hungry. You could say I envisioned the worst and the thought of how I would react made me a little nervous. But the need to be part of something so selfless and giving outweighed my fears. As we approached the entrance of the orphanage I was amazed at the welcoming we received. There they were, the children standing at the gate entrance clapping and chanting as we drove in. They were so excited and thrilled to see us coming which was such an amazing feeling. I just loved that!

Meeting the children was my highlight. To begin with I found it a little overwhelming seeing all the babies and children and felt it hard not being able to speak or understand them. But after a while I realized it didn't matter as it was the children that knew what to do. Some children reached for my hand and wanted to walk with me or show me things, some wanted lots of cuddles while others just followed me, giggled, jumped up and down and clapped their hands.

Walking through the lanes and different parts of this old warehouse was heartbreaking. Seeing other children with severe disabilities that meant they were completely bed ridden. But through it all the Aiyis were the ones with the ability to make them smile for me, which gave me a sense that they were looked after and cared for.

My feelings are that the children are happy, look healthy, well fed and well dressed (even if it was to impress their visitors... I would do the same!). I noticed the children looked after each other extremely well and most importantly I got the sense that the Ayis, helpers and Lao Wang and his family do care.

I strongly believe the state of this orphanage is due to dedication, consistency and hard work that MiFan MaMa and regular volunteers tirelessly put in during their spare time. These visits do so much more than simply delivering and dropping off food and supplies. It's about checking up on all the children and defining what their medical needs are and where their health is at. It's making sure that donated items are in fact being utilized, as well as making time for discussions with Lao Wang on how to move forward. What a huge task!

Overall I think it's wonderful to know that these children are excited about MiFan MaMa's visits. I think it's fantastic that the children know what to expect each month and how thrilled they are when the lorry full of food, gifts and treats drives through the gate and into their home. But what is most awe-inspiring is how genuinely pure and selfless the hearts of both Julie and Tony are. Without fail they have devoted 12 months to Lao Wang and his children and I feel confident that this is something that will continue.

I understand now why Julie continues to return without fail and what I have taken away from this experience I will never forget! Thank God for people like you, MiFan MaMa xxx.

Sandra (AWSG) March 2010





