

Blog 14 – Xi An



Everyday when I enter the school doors, I see a statue in the shape of a Chinese warrior. I soon discovered that this figure came all the way from Xian - The Terracotta Army. The Moon Festival was coming up and NIS gave all the students a week long “vacation” to celebrate and my family decided to visit the home of the terracotta army.



On a March day in 1974, four men were digging a well and unexpectedly uncovered an underground army ---- The Terracotta Warriors. 2,000 years ago, during the Qin Dynasty, the emperor believed in the after-world. He ordered an army of people, horses and cars to “die” with him so that he could relive in the after-world with many preparations. In his army, there are thousands and thousands of soldiers, horses and cars. When you look closely, every figure has its own unique feature. Every one of them looked different and they were all very detailed. You could even see the outlines of the thin strands of hair, their expressions and the artifacts on their clothing.

Because of the long history and how the discovery amazed the world, the Terracotta Army was named one of the World’s Eight Greatest Wonders¹ . Right now, the soldiers stand in the pits colored in grey and covered in dust, but I was told that every one of these soldiers were very rich in color when they were first dug out of the ground. But when exposed to oxygen, the colors on the sculptures almost suddenly fade away in a short amount of time. How short? According to the tour guide, it’s just 5 minutes. Like taking a vividly colored picture and magically saving it into black and white. It’s really unbelievable... I can only imagine the colorful Terracotta Army warriors based on a couple of pictures taken at the moment they were taken out. One pit (out of the three) still hasn’t been dug up, so that the people in the future can have a chance to take a look at the “colorful” Terracotta Army. I wish that someday a scientist can use their magic minds to come up with a mysterious invention to let the color stay on the sculpture forever.



Have you ever ridden a bike on a wall? I have! I rode a bike on Xian City wall. The Xian city wall is 14 kilometers long and 12-14 meters wide. That's 2-3 times the width of the Great Wall of China! City walls were a part of every city's defense system to keep the intruders out; this was very popular in ancient China, but Xian's city wall is the only one kept complete and in good condition over 600 years. To ride the bike throughout the whole 14 kilometers of the wall, would take 2-3 hours, so my dad and I only rode a 1 hour round trip. Even though we didn't ride far, my butt still felt a little numb because of the bumpy and uneven brick road. ☺ Today, the Xian city wall has been transformed into a park and you can enjoy the view of the city of Xian. If you have any chance to take a trip to Xian, you should definitely visit this "one of a kind wall". I guarantee you it'll be worth it!



¹ http://www.chinaculture.org/gb/en_artqa/2003-09/24/content_39719.htm