

CrossTalk

December CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter 2006

It's Christmas Time Again!

...And, Nick, our International **roving** Reporter, has been visiting many countries these past few years at Christmas time in order to **compile** this report for our newsletter. **Fermented** auks, horses skulls, table settings for the departed, **blatant** extortion!... Nick has seen it all! Here are his reports from:

IRAQ: In Christian homes children read stories from the Arabic Bible while family members hold candles and listen. When the story is finished, a bonfire of dried thorns is lit. If the thorns completely burn to ashes, the family believes it will have good fortune in the coming year. The family members also jump over the ashes after the fire has died out and make wishes.

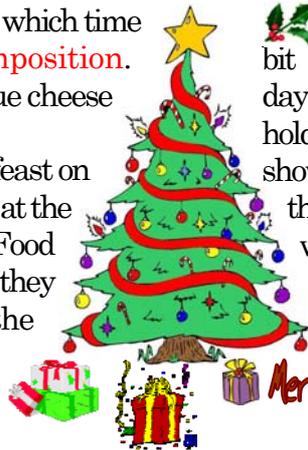
GREENLAND: Here's a **gastronomical** treat, if you're up for it! The Greenlanders bury the raw flesh of an auk (a black and white duck living in the North Sea) in sealskin and place it under a stone for several months. It is unearthed and served at Christmas, by which time it is in an advanced stage of **decomposition**. According to Nick, it smells like old blue cheese and tastes rather **pungent**!

PORTUGAL: At the "consoda" feast on Christmas morning, extra places are set at the dinner table for the souls of the dead. Food is offered to these souls in the hope that they will bring good luck to the family in the coming year.

WALES: Not only has Nick uncovered an unusual Christmas custom here, he has also found the roots of a common idiom in the English language! Good work Nick! Here's how it goes: At Christmas time in certain parts of Southern Wales, the Mari Llwyd, one of the local men, hides under a horse-hair sheet while carrying a horse's skull on a **pike**. He wanders the streets and if anyone is unfortunate enough to be given a bite with the horse's skull, he or she must pay some money to the Mari Llwyd. The idiom? To "put the bite on" someone, means to ask them for money!

YOGOSLAVIA: On the second Sunday before Christmas, children **creep** up on their mothers and tie their feet to a chair, shouting "Mother's Day, Mother's Day, what will you pay to get away?" A week later, they do the same thing to their fathers! On both occasions, Momma and Poppa will give the children presents!

THE YUCATAN, MEXICO: Here Christmas is a bit like Halloween! Every night during Advent (the 24 days leading up to Christmas) children go house-to-house holding branches and pictures of Mary. They put on a little show about Christmas, and sing songs. If the **occupant** of the house does not give them some coins, the kids can get, well, nasty! They play tricks and throw insults or lemons! Well, that's all we have space for this year, Nick. But, thanks for a great report and ...



Merry Xmas to you and all our students at Crossroads

Glossary

(These words are in colour in the story)

roving 移動

blatant ずうずうしい

pungent ピリットとする

compile 組み立てる

gastronomical 美食学的

pike 槍

fermented 腐敗した

decomposition 変質

occupant 住人

creep(up on) 忍び寄る

A Word From Us



Joshua Says: What a great “Performance Night” we had last month! Check out the photos on P3! My hardy congratulations to all students and teachers who participated. A great job, well done. I can hardly wait for March to come around so we can do it all over again! But for now though, may I wish everyone at Crossroads the very best for the holiday season. Take care of yourselves and let’s look forward to another great year next year!

Junko Says: “Fusaomakizaru” are a kind of monkey, about 40-45cm tall and weighing only about 3kgs on average. They live in the tropical woodlands of North-East Brazil, and like apes and man, they have learnt to use tools! The area they live in is dry and there is generally not enough food, so they have started to eat coconuts. But how do such little monkeys manage to crack open the hard shells? They each have their own personal stone (about a third of their own weight) and a place to work in. They hold their stone high with two hands and bring it crushing down on the coconut! They looked so human doing this, I had to laugh!



Alice Says: Season’s greetings everyone! This is such a wonderful time of the year, pretty lights and decorations everywhere, parties to attend and best of all- festive food to eat! We have been busy in the cooking classes preparing a very traditional recipe, Christmas Pudding. It contains lots of dried fruit, spices and alcohol! When the mixture is ready, the whole family should stir it in a clockwise direction and make a wish for the next year – but they must keep it a secret – if you reveal what you wished for it won’t come true!

Iain Says: I don’t consider myself a religious person, but I really do like Christmas. I love to get together with friends and family to eat turkey and cranberry sauce. We exchange gifts and sing songs. It’s really good for the soul!



Greg Says: Well 2006 is drawing to a close and once again I won’t be here to enjoy the Christmas festivities and the New Year celebrations in Matsuyama. I will be enjoying a warm summer Christmas in Australia at the beach with my dear daughter. I hope you all have a wonderful Christmas and a safe and happy New Year. If there is one wish I could have granted, it is the wish that everyone who reads this stays healthy and achieves all their dreams throughout 2007.

Adrienne Says: It isn’t funny. The news about Iraq is very bad. I feel very embarrassed as an American because America is responsible for the civil war that is going on in Iraq. These days, even President Bush seems to understand that the situation is serious: he is not grinning anymore!



Dean Says: I read some interesting news recently from New Zealand that is creating a lot of interest. Two icebergs, one that is 500 meters long, 60 meters wide and 60 meters high, the other 300 meters long, 60 meters wide and 100 meters high are drifting off the east coast. They are the first icebergs to come near New Zealand for 75 years. Certainly an interesting sight for the beginning of summer! Enjoy your Christmas and the New Year’s season.

William Says: Christmas and Yew Year are the busiest times of the year. There are parties, family gatherings and giving and receiving gifts. It all keeps us very busy. I hope you have a wonderful holiday season with peace and good times a-plenty.



Yuka Says: At the beginning of this year, I made up my mind to “eat less, sleep more and keep fit.” Have I carried out this simple resolution? I can’t say “yes!” What I’ve done is to “eat lots of sweets, sleep less than 6 hours and do little exercise.” But luckily, I have had a healthy and happy life. So, I’ve decided not to make any New Year’s resolutions next year. I wish everyone has happy holidays!

A Word From You

Notice Board

Some shots from Performance Night, Nov. 2006



Adrienne and her two very talented Cosmopolitan Piano students, Yumeko (top) and Ayuka



"The Alice and Adrienne Duet" in performance



Iain and the "gang"



"The Banana Boat" - A play written, produced and performed by m(A)1



Cosmopolitan Guitar student Shima with some encouragement from William



A great performance from the Cosmopolitan Singing students - Yumiko, Riko and Katsumi



William and Alice belting out a fine tune



A little Magic from Iain and his Cosmopolitan Magic students, Katsumi and Chigiku



Some of the "brave ones" who stayed on to the end

Net News

NET LESSONS:

Are you too busy to come to CROSSROADS to study? Try our *lessons on the internet* -- It's CROSSROADS in your home or office! You get CROSSROADS' great teachers, teaching programs, even classmates, *all on-line!* Call for details.

NET SITE OF THE MONTH:

You'll find some interesting facts and information about Xmas at: <http://eldrbary.net/mous/saint/eldrxmas.htm>

NET NOTEBOOK: Don't forget to take a look at the Internet activity notebook in our open-house. You'll find games, news and English learning sites.

Courses you can take at CROSSROADS

GENERAL COURSES:

- 2 x's 60mins / week
- 1 x's 90mins / week
- Private 1 x / week
- Semi-Private 1 x / week

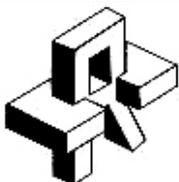
- MOTHER & CHILD, group or private
- KIDS, group or private

COSMOPOLITAN COURSES:

- "Singing in English" with Alice
- Yoga with Dean
- Guitar with William
- "Cooking in English" with Alice
- "Magic English" with Iain
- Piano with Adrienne
- Acting with Alice

- FRENCH with Natacha
- SPANISH with Patricio
- RUSSIAN with Natasha
- GERMAN with Marita & Matthias
- CHINESE with Noriko
- KOREAN with Kim

NETLESSONS:
group or private



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