

# CrossTalk

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter November, 2013

## A JAPANESE MOUNTAINEERING FEAT IN CANADA

Mount Alberta (3,619 m), located 80 kilometers southeast of the town of Jasper, is the sixth highest peak of the Canadian Rockies. To this day mountaineers regard this peak with considerable respect owing to major difficulties involving weather, loose and falling rock, and ice covered cliffs. The upper tier of cliffs offers no couloirs or gullies through it.

Mount Alberta was among the last of the major peaks in the Rockies to be climbed. Its first ascent in 1925 was conducted by six members of the Japanese Alpine Club with three Swiss guides. It was the first expedition by the club into mountains outside of Japan.

At first it seemed the expedition would not even get started because of forest fires burning in the Athabasca valley. Undeterred by this, the expedition left Jasper on July 11th with 9 climbers, 5 wranglers and 39 horses. As they approached the burn site, the wind changed direction allowing them to advance upstream despite being showered with ashes. Later that evening they got their first glimpse of the mountain which loomed through the smoky darkness like a gothic cathedral.



Gendarmes on Mt. Alberta

The crux of their climb was a 4-meter over-hanging cliff which required an unusual maneuver to get by. One climber was tied to the wall



Aerial view of Mt. Alberta from SSE

while another climbed up on his back and anchored his legs around the first climber's shoulders. Then a third climber climbed up the human ladder and stood on the second climber's shoulders in order to surmount the cliff. Even the skyline ridge would be no easy stroll. Here they encountered gendarmes which required great care and skill to get around and held back their arrival at the summit until 7:30 pm, 16 hours from base camp. A bivouac on the summit ridge was in order. On reaching the summit, the party ceremoniously planted an ice axe into the snow to be left as a monument to their efforts.

Over the years the legend of the embedded ice axe on the summit of Mt. Alberta grew in local lore. Some claimed it was made of solid silver; others said it belonged to the Japanese emperor, carried to the summit with his blessing. In time it was removed from the summit. The top half was taken to the U.S.A. in 1948 and the lower half to Japan in 1965. But in 1997, at a ceremony in Tokyo attended by the Japanese Prime Minister, 800 members of the Japanese Alpine Club, and representatives from the Alpine Club of Canada, the two halves were reunited.

Plans to carry the fabled axe back to the summit by a joint Canadian-Japanese expedition in the year 2000 were foiled by unfavorable conditions. Perhaps the 100th anniversary of its first ascent in 2025 will mark the occasion.

*Article by Kenneth*

### Net News

**NET LESSONS:** Are you too busy to come to CROSSROADS?...Try our *lessons on the Internet!*

**SITE OF THE MONTH:**

You can follow a group of climbers along the "Japanese Route" on Mt. Alberta in this video: [vimeo.com/66053376](http://vimeo.com/66053376)

# Some Thoughts for the Month



**Joshua Says:** This month we are going to have our End-of-Semester party. It will be held on the 30<sup>th</sup>. I hope many of our students will attend and enjoy the food and drinks. Our teachers will prepare some of their country's food specialties, but we invite everyone to bring along something special to share with everyone else. Invite your friends and families to join in with us. See you there!

**Junko Says:** How many of you have a "Face Book" account? Use "Twitter"? Log on to other social network services? I'd really like to hear about your experiences because I've been thinking of opening a Face Book account myself. In fact, I've had this idea for a long time, but I never seem to get the time to start. Perhaps with your encouragement, I might!



**Kenneth Says:** We recently drove to Ishizuchi-san via Kumakōgen, the Omogo valley and Omogokei. The fall colours were at their prime throughout the lower valley up to the gorge, but well beyond prime on the trail to Ishizuchi. With the summit enshrouded in mist we were content to hike partway to the mountaintop and savour the fresh perfume of cedar along the way.

**Adrienne Says:** I would like to continue talking about the book, "How to Improve Your Marriage Without Talking About It". The author states that wives should not expect their husbands to want to talk to them about their feelings the way that their girlfriends do. The truth is, according to Dr. Love, men do not feel closer and more connected to women by talking to them. Men will only talk to women AFTER they feel emotionally connected to women.



**Stephanie Dit:** Novembre est un mois déprimant en France car synonyme de pluie et de vent froid. De plus, la Toussaint est une fête peu joyeuse et la nuit tombe vite après le passage à l'heure d'hiver ! Ici, Novembre est le mois des érables rouges et du retour de la fraîcheur tant attendue après un long été. C'est agréable !

# NOTICE BOARD

## A report from our ex-Chinese student, Ren in Beijing – Part 3.

... CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH....

... I moved from the hotel I had been staying at in August to the university's dormitory at the beginning of September. My room is smaller than I had expected, so I had some problems when my luggage arrived: I couldn't get some of my luggage into my room. On September 9<sup>th</sup>, my university class started. The Chinese language course I take is very international. The students are from many countries such as America, England, Austria, Italy, Russia, France, Kazakhstan, Spain, Korea, Germany, Poland, Japan, and so on. Some of them are from countries I don't even know. My class's Chinese level is much higher than I'd expected. Actually I was even shocked! Other students can speak quite well. I'd heard we Japanese have an advantage because Chinese and Japanese use similar characters. But I didn't feel any of it after the university class started. I sometimes feel like being cornered when my teacher speaks to me in front of other students in the class, because I can't understand her Chinese. This university class pressures me to study hard!

Usually around rush hour, especially on weekends, there are so many people. A lot of people make a big queue in front of the train station. It made me exhausted! In spite of such conditions, I kept going on small trips to nearby parks.. ... TO BE CONTINUED



University students at break time



A park in the university's campus



People at the train station gate in rush hour

## THERE'S AN APPLE TREE IN MY GARDEN! By Yufuko Ooura

During the winter of two years ago, when I went into the garden for the first time, the tree had no leaves so I thought it was a cherry tree because the trunk was like a cherry tree. But when I went there again, I found a little apple under the tree, so I realized it was an apple tree! After that, I rented the house with the apple tree in the garden. At first I worried that the tree might be dead because it had no leaves and looked dry, but when spring came I saw a lot of beautiful green leaves on it and this made me very glad. Then it bloomed! There were a lot of pretty pink buds and white flowers. After the flowers fell, the tree had a lot of small fruits. It grew up little by little every day and when summer came, the tree became bigger and greener. In October, the apples became red and it was very cute! I felt happy and I loved it so much. I was able to pick 30 apples. I made jam and a cake with them. In winter, all of the leaves fell but I was not sad because I knew the tree would rise again when spring returned.

This spring, a lot of leaves appeared on the tree again, and it grew the same as last year. But I noticed the baby apples were larger than the year before. In October the tree was full of little red apples. I picked and counted them again. To my surprise, there were 200!! I boiled them with sugar and I will make many sweets from them during the winter.



\* The "End of Semester Party" will be held on Saturday, the 30<sup>th</sup> of this month. We start at around 7:00pm. Invite your families and friends to join us, and let's have some fun together!!!



Don't forget... Our SPECIAL 1+1 Campaign offer! Up to 50% off!!

See our notice board, or ask Junko in our office, for the details.