

# Crossroads

CROSSROADS Language Studio's Newsletter December, 2013

## Christmas Stories



Christmas is a wonderful time for storytelling with many a tale, novel or poem for the festive season. Much of this literature complements the original story of Christmas itself in the birth of Jesus.

8 And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. 9 An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. 10 But the angel said to them, "Do not be afraid. I bring you good news that will cause great joy for all the people. 11 Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord. 12 This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger." [from Luke 2: 8-12, New Testament, NIV]

The story of the birth of Christ as retold in Christian churches around the world is depicted in several gospel passages, notably *Luke* 1:26-45, 2:1-20, *Matthew* 1:18-25, 2:1-23 and *John* 1:1-18). Parts of these passages together with the prophesies of the coming Messiah as foretold in *Isaiah*, *Haggai* and *Malachi* of the Old Testament comprise the choral text of the *Messiah*, an English oratorio composed in 1741 by George Frideric Handel.



Over the centuries, Christmas has inspired many stories about unselfish love, charity, friendship, forgiveness, and generosity. A favorite novel at this time of year is that of Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*, published in 1843.

"You don't believe in me," observed the Ghost.

"I don't," said Scrooge.

"What evidence would you have of my reality beyond that of your senses?"

"I don't know," said Scrooge.

"Why do you doubt your senses?"

[From Charles Dickens, *A Christmas Carol*, 1843]

In our house we always looked forward to a reading of the poem, *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, by my father on Christmas eve.

*I knew in a moment it must be St. Nick.  
More rapid than eagles his coursers  
they came,*

*And he whistled, and shouted,  
and called them by name;*

*"Now, Dasher! now, Dancer!  
now, Prancer and Vixen!*

*On, Comet! on, Cupid! on, Donder  
and Blitzen!*

[From Clement Clark Moore, *Twas the Night Before Christmas*, 1823]



Other favorites to consider: *The Fir-Tree* and *The Little Match Girl* (Andersen), *The Gift of the Magi* (O Henry), *The Wind in the Willows* (Grahame), *The Elves and the Shoemaker* (Brothers Grimm) and *Christmas Every Day* (Howells). *The Nutcracker and the Mouse King* (Hoffman) has become a popular two-act ballet (musical score, Tchaikovsky), often performed at Christmas. You might also enjoy *Amahl and the Night Visitors* (Menotti), an opera in one act first performed for television in New York City in 1951.

*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:**

Here's an interesting page about the history of Christmas Carols:  
[http://www.whychristmas.com/customs/carols\\_history.shtml](http://www.whychristmas.com/customs/carols_history.shtml)

# Some Thoughts for the Month



**Joshua Says:** I'd like to thank everyone who came to our end-of-semester party at the end of last month. It was one of our most enjoyable so far and I felt everyone who came enjoyed themselves. Our teachers prepared some delicious food from their home countries (and I even managed to create some converts to vegemite, this time!) All in all, a great night and I thank all who participated.

**Junko Says:** I am so impressed with the number of companies that are starting to encourage their staff to learn to speak in English. Ever here in Ehime, companies are getting serious about English and the need to communicate for international business. It has been a long time coming, but I feel now Japan has a real chance to get "back on top" with the way this new movement is developing.



**Kenneth Says:** Last Sunday (December 9<sup>th</sup>) we enjoyed a stage performance by children aged 4 to 6 of Rosario Youchien. The kids sang songs and reenacted in a play the pilgrimage of the three wise men to the scene of Christ's birth in Bethlehem. Events of the story were narrated before each of 6 or 7 acts, culminating in the presentation of gifts to the Christ child.

**Adrienne Says:** Dr. Love says that women often make a big mistake when they try to become close to their men by talking. She claims that love is not about communication; rather it is about CONNECTION. She says that there are only four ways that men can become emotionally connected to women: through touch, activities, and routine. Next time: the fear and shame dynamic.



**Cyril Dit:** *Ça y est! J'ai mon Amphinobi chromatique protéen puissance cachée feu! Je pense l'utiliser en set mixte: la majorité des EV en attaque spéciale (parce que c'est ce qu'il fait de mieux), une bonne rasade en attaque (pour l'effet de surprise, et pouvoir utiliser sheauriken!!), et maximiser la vitesse (godspeed). Il est tout simplement magnifique... Qui veut faire un combat?*

# NOTICE BOARD

## There's a few shots from our End-of-Semester Party



### A report from our ex-Chinese student, Ren in Beijing – Part 4.

CONTINUED FROM LAST MONTH.....

... Parks in Beijing are interesting and beautiful. First I went to Yuan Ming Yuan Ruins Park (see picture below) The park is famous for its many historical ruins. The complicated layout of these ruins reminded me of a labyrinth when I visited the site.

Secondly, I went to the Summer Palace. It's located in a huge park and was not able to walk around the whole area in one day, so I only visited the northern area. This area was large enough to enjoy and while there, I met a person who was doing calligraphy. His works were beautiful. Aside from him, there were some performers in the park: singers, dancers and flying kite performers. I will go sightseeing the other parts of the palace grounds on other days off.

In the first month here, I am left with the impression that Beijing has too many spots for sightseeing to take in in just one year. I have realized again how big China is.



Yuan Ming Yuan Ruins Park



Around an entrance of the Summer Palace in the north



Scenery from the main island in Summer Palace



Calligraphy artist in the Summer Palace



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