

# MUSUQ CHASKI - El Mensajero Nuevo



ProjectsAbroad



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## Focus on – Sacred Valley emergency

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### Update following the floods and landslides in the Sacred Valley.

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Following the disaster in the Sacred Valley, Projects Abroad staff and volunteers have been working to help those communities affected by floods and landslides. During the first weeks of February, Projects Abroad Urubamba office organised the distribution of fresh food like tomatoes, carrots, onions, eggs, oranges and limes to communities in Calca, Yucay, Lamay and Paucarbamba.



During these distribution days, Sports volunteers Pierre Simon, Pepe Koot and Gabrielle Girard showed themselves to be very enthusiastic helping families affected by the flood. Volunteers even helped them to prepare some food and to set up tents to protect the communal kitchens from the rain. We also have been helping with the clearing of Agropecuario secondary school in Calca.

Alongside the help with distributing food, volunteers also helped out with workshops for mothers and children affected by the disaster. With the expertise of two psychologists from Cusco and two interns, workshops aimed to offer psychological support for the most vulnerable groups. The psychologists asked us to make sure the children had a wide variety of active and/or creative activities in which they could participate whilst the psychologists worked with smaller groups for short periods. Our volunteers participated in and assisted with games, sports, clay model making and mask making. Volunteers are doing a great job on this on-going project. This is the time we really need our volunteers' help and assistance – a real opportunity to directly help those affected by this disaster.



### La Candelaria Festival, Puno



From February 1st to February 18th, the highland town of Puno, nestled on the shores of Lake Titicaca at an altitude of 3,870 metres, became the Folk Capital of the Americas, with the annual Candelaria Festival. The festival gathers more than 200 groups of musicians and dancers to celebrate the Mamacha Candelaria. For the first nine days, the mayordomos (those in charge of organizing the festivities), decorate the churches and pay for Mass, banquets and firework displays.

On the main day, February 2, the Virgin is led through the city in a colourful procession comprising of priests, altar boys, the faithful, Christians and pagans carefully maintaining the hierarchy. This is the moment when the troupes of musicians and dancers take the scene, performing and dancing throughout the city.



The festival is linked to the pre-Hispanic agricultural cycles of sowing and harvesting, as well as mining activities in the region. It is the result of a blend of respectful Aymara gaiety and ancestral Quechua seriousness.



The core of the festival is the musical expression dancística and organized by the Regional Federation of Folklore and Culture of Puno, calling the presence of more than 150 sets, between native dances that come from the communities and biases of Puno, and sets of dances organized in different districts of the City of Puno, mostly known as 'dances with costumes', which directly involved 50 thousand dancers and some 15 thousand musicians, adding to its indirect stake about 25 thousand people including directors, sponsorships, embroiderers, artisans in the making of masks,

boots and shoes, bells and other items.

The dance of the demons, or diablada, the main dance of the festival, was allegedly dreamed up by a group of miners trapped down a mine who, in their desperation, resigned their souls to the Virgen de la Candelaria. The dancers, blowing zampona pan-pipes and clad in spectacular costumes and outlandish masks, make their offerings to the earth goddess Pachamama. The most impressive masks, for their terrifying aspect, are those of the deer fitted with long twisted horns similar to the Devil, and Jacancho, the god of minerals. During the farewell, or cacharpari, the dancers who fill the streets finally head to the cemetery to render homage to the dead.



## Project Updates

### *What's New?*



**Inca** – Inca volunteers have been treated to a wide range of lessons including: Jorge's lesson on 'Andean culture'; and 'Inca Architecture', 'Archaeology: An Introduction' with Jhon.

Volunteers have trekked and explored Choquello, cleared the Inca Trail in Triunfo, cleared ruins in Sector 2 of Cochpata, visited Inkatambo, Huamanmarka and Capillayok, Volunteers will work 21<sup>st</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup> in Inkatambo with INC.

Volunteers worked on making Pentamino kits for schools. Football continues with local engineers and quiz night continues with corruption as girls taking sides to beat the boys. Volunteers also enjoyed a trip to Cocalmayo hot springs.

**Teaching** – Teacher Training continued in Cusco until 18<sup>th</sup> February with volunteers teaching in the mornings and using the afternoons to plan lessons for the following day. On Thursday afternoons, volunteers attended the Teaching Workshops to share and evaluate their work. The teachers are very happy and are learning a lot from the volunteers' teaching strategies and the materials they use.



**Care** volunteers have continued working in the Summer Schools in Chinchero, Saclo and San Roman despite the problems due to the floods and landslides. The children will attend until the 18<sup>th</sup> February and on the 19<sup>th</sup> there will be a closing party. The children have enjoyed their Summer Schools and have been attending regularly. Following the Summer School programme, volunteers will help with workshops for kindergarten teachers and also will be assisting with workshops with psychologists in Calca for children affected by the disaster.

**Sports** – In February we still have Pierre, Pepe and Gabrielle helping in Apu Pituiray Sports School. In football, Pierre and Pepe are doing their best training kids for a tournament coming up soon in Ica. The level of the Team, thanks to our volunteers, help is high enough to think about getting into the Championship and bringing the cup this year.

Gabrielle, as a graduate from her university sports program, is providing new and very good ideas about how to improve the level of the volleyball team. Volleyball girls are focused to get into the championship of each tournament they will participate in, they think that Gaby's knowledge will be a good help to achieve this goal.

Thanks Gaby and keep doing your best!

**Medicine** – Thanks to Geraldine Herweijer for her generous donation to Centro de Salud Ttio where she worked on her Medical placement. This month saw our first Medicine volunteer of the year, Silvana Eposito, working in San Juan de Dios.

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## GETTING TO KNOW OUR STAFF

### Introducing staff from the office in Urubamba

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**Tim DeWinter - Director for Peru:** Tim was born in Belgium, proud father of Tali (9) and Tiago (7) and married to Pati. Although he has a master's degree in engineering and one in intercultural communication, he has been mainly involved with education & development projects since graduating from University. After working for 2 years for the Belgian Technical Cooperation he started working for UNICEF in Peru. He has now lived in the Sacred Valley for over 15 years.



**Irazema Arizabal - Office Manager:** Irazema is the person in charge when Tim is not around. Born and raised in Cusco, she is a pre-school teacher who has also studied business administration. Currently she is in charge of the finances and with more than four years working for Projects Abroad, she knows just about every aspect of our organisation in Peru.



**Yessika Espinoza - Care Supervisor:** Yessika joined Projects Abroad in December 2006 after previously working for an NGO and a bank. She enjoys being able to work with young children as part of her job. In her free time she likes spending time with her family in Cusco and socialising with the volunteers.



**Guillermina Sánchez – Desk Officer:** Guillermina has been living in the Cusco region for around 5 years. After working as a pre-school teacher she opened her own kindergarten about 2 years ago in the little town where she now lives. Guille joined Projects Abroad in January 2010 after deciding to have a rest from teaching, whilst remaining in a field still related to education. She has two small children and enjoys playing with them in her free time.



**Jorge Espinoza - Assistant Manager:** Jorge has a degree in Tourism Management from San Antonio Abad University in Cusco. Since graduating in 2006 he has worked on a cruise ship and as a guide on the Inca Trail. Jorge previously worked with volunteers on our Tourism Police extra-curricular teaching programme before joining the team as Assistant Manager.



**Tess Okell - Social Manager:** Tess first became involved with Projects Abroad in the summer of 2007 when she volunteered in Mexico on Teaching and Care programmes. It was such a rewarding experience that she decided she wanted to help promote volunteering abroad, thus she returned to Mexico to work with Projects Abroad as a member of staff. She is now working in Peru as our new Social Manager. Travelling and beaches are amongst Tess' favourite pastimes.

## Volunteer Stories

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### Peru for the first time – Preparation!

Aisha Brown Colpani

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I'm leaving in 2 weeks. 2 weeks. With a long list of things to do and stuff to get, I'm using this practical preparation time to make up for the fact that I'm pretty certain any attempt to mentally prepare for my months in Peru will prove useless as soon as I step off the plane at Cusco...I have no idea what's going to happen and I'm excited at the prospect of just abandoning myself to the world which will soon become my home, even if for the short-term. Every aspect of this trip presents a challenge; as my mum said, the journey to the project is like an adventure in itself. From my home city of London, I'm going to be in the air for approximately two days! The fact that I'm ok flying is definitely a bonus in this respect and, actually, I'm happily anticipating some kind of in-flight movie and time to think both about the existence I'll be temporarily leaving behind and the contrasting society awaiting...I have no issues with aeroplane meals either as I'm famously open when it comes to food, a fact which can only serve me well as I read that guinea pig, an animal which is a domestic pet in England, is actually a culinary delicacy in Peru...hmmm, I may approach that particular dish with caution.

So, on to formal introductions: my name is Aisha, London born and London grown, motivated by a desire to do new things, learn new things and get away from the city before I probably go on to university. I admit, my decision to take a gap year sprang more from my lack of enthusiasm for formal education than any altruistic intentions; I was decided on going to South America after a recent trip to Brazil in which the people, and culture in general, offered a refreshing alternative to my ingrained metropolitan scepticism - if only for a few weeks. As I have tried to read up and absorb any useful literature regarding Peru, however, not only has it dawned on me that this country is a whole other reality, in no way comparable to Brazil or any culture that may pop into my head, I also realise that this trip can serve me as a huge wake-up call about the difficult daily challenges which many people face in developing countries. In the whirl-wind list of tasks to tick off that presently takes over my brain, I haven't much stopped to think about other people, more concerned with what clothes I need, what the weather will be like, what my host family will be like, what I will be able to do and see, how I will communicate and so on and so forth. And I guess this attitude sums up the aspects of my character which I hope will gain the most from this trip, that the disposition to focus on how a situation affects my world will develop into a larger concern for how my situation affects the rest of the world. Isn't that one of the main ideas behind volunteering as well? To set out to challenge yourself, to go without the usual comforts and to return maybe a more humble, more mature individual. Not that I am a complete brat in my present persona. I know that I am lucky to live in a country where the basic necessities are pretty much secured, where freedom of speech and expression are generally encouraged and where the opportunity to go to school, to live independently, is a viable option. At the same time, reading on the economic situation in Peru I have realised that I do take everything I have for granted and even as I sit and acknowledge the fact that I am so fortunate I can't seem to find satisfaction in this awareness- the reality represented in my guide book is one so unfamiliar that the description



of the hardship seems not to be enough to deeply impact me; I think I have to become part of the reality, even if temporarily, in order to truly appreciate the comforts which I barely think of in my present everyday; in other words, leave my regular comforts to educate myself about the world.

Everyone keeps telling me how lucky I am to have the opportunity to travel and witness such an enigmatic culture and I can only agree; this is going to be a memorable and important adventure no matter which path I choose. I imagine that everything I will encounter in Peru will be the antithesis of my life in London; I'll be living with people who I've never met, sharing the familiarity of meals and maybe even life stories with them, working in a school with little kids, in a country where not knowing the language is not really an option, in a different culture - basically a hugely challenging and engaging new reality. I've made the decision not to stress out but to take each day as it passes and embrace this as the chance that it is: from the reading I've been doing I have found out that Peruvian society is one of many separate branches, it is an eclectic mix of different attitudes and cultures which can't be generalized, a factor which doesn't really help as I attempt to piece together a picture of a society which remains completely alien to me...I have resolved, therefore, to throw myself into this with enthusiasm and an open mind.

Honestly, I don't know if this state of relaxation at the prospect of facing a situation which differs so dramatically from everything I have come to embrace in my routine reality is merely a false sense of security before an attack of nerves but I have only had one instance of doubt thus far. I have been in full preparation mode this week, going clothes shopping for the trip and actually being practical, buying things for the specific purpose of providing comfort as I imagine that I'll be running around after endlessly energetic kids and maybe even embarking on a few adventures in my free time. Shopping outings aside, as each day brings me closer to my leaving date I wonder what scenes and landscapes will welcome me each morning as a temporary Cusquena; will these months result in a trip captured then left aside in a picture album? I seriously doubt it...

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### Three months of campfires and rolling dice...

Max Nilssen (Inca Project)

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The Inca Project; at first I thought it would involve carving huge stones and drinking chicha (traditional fermented maize drink). But after three months in Peru I can now say that it is so much more!

I came to the project in Huyro on the 20th September after booking my stay just one month earlier. At first glance the thoughts that went through my head mainly involved the question how I was going to manage this for three whole months, a quarter of a year. But after just a couple of hours in the small town I totally changed my mind!

The days in Huyro were spent doing all kinds of interesting and exciting activities. We usually spent the morning on the mountain doing work with the numerous ruins located there. These activities involved exploring, mapping, clearing etc. I also got to see some great work being done by the INC (Instituto at a local site called Capillayok which we visited many times over the three months I spent in Peru. To be able to see that your work actually contributes to something greater really makes it worth while!

But the archaeological work was just a part of our daily routine. We also had the agricultural work that had to be done at Establo, where we lived, as they were working on becoming self-sufficient! This work could include planting various fruits and vegetables, weeding the existing plants and working on the corn. This is one of the parts that impressed me the most during my stay in Peru; how everyone was totally committed to making this whole thing work!

The social life in and outside of Establo was also one of the things I remember the most. Because of the fact that we lived so close to each other all the time, we became really good friends and got to know each other in a way not possible otherwise. We did a lot of fun things together; we played football, had campfires and had a lot of fun doing quizzes and playing games!



I don't think that my stay in Peru would have been as rewarding and enjoyable if it hadn't had been for the total commitment of the whole staff from Projects Abroad and the people at Establo, including Isa, Americo, Dan and everyone else and I would like to thank all of them for making these three months some of the best in my life!

If anyone who is reading this has thoughts about going to the Inca project, don't wait another second, just go! You won't regret it!

Max, Sweden, September - December, 2009.

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## Volunteer Social Activities

Tessa Okell

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The January Social was on 22<sup>nd</sup> January in Cusco where volunteers had a one hour Salsa class in Inka Team followed by pizza in a nearby restaurant. This was a chance for many volunteers to meet each other for the first time and the ice was certainly broken with the rotating dance partner technique of the Salsa teacher!



The Pub Quiz continues (after a week's break due to the emergency) and is attended well by volunteers from Cusco, Pisac, Calca and Urubamba. Thanks to our various quizmasters over the past month for some fantastic brain-teasers!

## Feliz Cumpleaños !!



**Congratulations and many happy returns of the day to the following staff members who celebrated their birthdays...**

- Felicidades to Danilo Tapia our guardian on our Inca project in Huyro who celebrated his birthday on 3<sup>rd</sup> February.
- Happy birthday to Director Tim DeWinter who enjoyed a birthday party at his home with friends and family on 14<sup>th</sup> February.

## Cocina Peruana

### A little bit of history...

This dish is traditionally associated with Carnavales in Cusco and is also known as Puchero or Sancochado. It is eaten on the main day of the festival, which this year fell on February 2<sup>nd</sup>.

### How to make ... T'impu

Serves 4 people

Ingredients:

- ❖ ½ kg beef
- ❖ ½ kg lamb
- ❖ 2 white onions
- ❖ ½ kg potatoes
- ❖ 1 medium sized cabbage
- ❖ 2 carrots
- ❖ 100g rice
- ❖ Garbanzo beans
- ❖ 1 yuca
- ❖ 1 sweet potato
- ❖ 4 peaches
- ❖ 4 pears
- ❖ 1 corn on the cob
- ❖ Salt



PREPARATION:

- Chop the meats, carrots and yuca into large pieces.
- Boil the meats, onions, carrots and cabbage in a saucepan for about half an hour. Then place the other ingredients in a second saucepan to boil. Take out of the oven and leave for ten minutes before cutting into portions.
- Then place the cooked ingredients on a plate to serve. The cooked sauce from the second saucepan is used as a soup with the rice, and the rest is eaten as the second course.

Festival	Description	Place	Date
<b>Semana Santa</b>	<p>The biggest festival during March and April is that of Semana Santa, which is celebrated throughout Peru, though perhaps with the most fervour, in Ayacucho. Typically, on Domingo de Ramos (Easter Sunday) Jesús enters on a donkey with the devoted hundreds kneeling as he passes the palms and branches of olive trees. On the Wednesday a procession leaves the cathedral with images of the Virgin and Saint John to meet with the Nazarene in the Plaza de Armas. On Good Friday the Señor del Santo Sepulcro passes silently along the streets accompanied by the faithful dressed in black and carry large candles. On Sabado de Gloria (Easter Saturday) night many people fill the Plaza de Armas with the intention of seeing the dawn of Easter Sunday when the image of the resurrection of Christ leaves the cathedral and passes around the Plaza de Armas accompanied by colourful fireworks and the sound of bells.</p>	<b>29<sup>th</sup> March – 4<sup>th</sup> April.</b>	<b>Peru</b>