

MUSUQ CHASKI - El Mensajero Nuevo



ProjectsAbroad



The Official Newsletter of Projects Abroad Peru

June 2010

Issue No: 35



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Letter from the Editor

Welcome to June's edition of Musaq Chaski; the newsletter from Projects Abroad Peru bringing you all the news of our projects and volunteers.

We have had a busy month with festivals, Network Meetings for Partner Teachers, new discoveries on the Inca Project and the arrival of 35 new volunteers!

Students from Virgin de Fatima School in Calca presented their play 'Al Río le pica' in two schools in Pisac on Thursday 1st July. Students at Bernardo Tambohuacso in Pisac and Tahuantinsuyo Primary School in Cuyo Chico were treated to performances and learnt about the damage caused by polluting the river. A huge thank you to all our wonderful actors, volunteer Remi Lacoste for all of his help with the theatre project and to Director Ninoska Carbajal for all of her hard work with the children since February.



Care volunteers, y Deegan and Marjolein Beishuizen, have both made generous donations to their projects. Marjolein donated a slide, swings, educational toys, plants and fences for the garden for Marquesado Jardin in Yucay. Marjolein also invited friends and fellow volunteers Remi Lacoste, Thom Gray, Kim Allison, Eric McAdamis, Emma Byrne and Cherine Elfadel to give the whole school a very thorough and well-needed clean. Jenny made sure Cuna Jardin in Urubamba was well equipped with polystyrene floor puzzles, cleaning products, nappy rash cream, wet wipes etc. On behalf of all the children who will benefit from your generous donations, we thank you both very much.

Projects Abroad now has its very own Blog page up and running. Volunteers are welcome to post stories, photos and discussions on the blog and of course, you can read about news and events happening here in Peru and all other Projects Abroad destinations. To visit the blog visit: <http://www.mytripblog.org/>. We also have our very own Facebook page - 'Projects Abroad Peru – The Official Group' so if you have volunteered with us here in Peru in the past, you're with us in Peru now or you're thinking of coming in the future – please join!

As always, if you have any volunteer stories, photos or articles you want to be included in our newsletter, please send to tessaokell@projects-abroad.org. Also any comments or suggestions are always welcome. :)

All the best,

Tess

Peru Inside Out

Inti Raymi



Every year in June, Cusco celebrates the festival of Inti Raymi, an Incan celebration which honoured the Sun God. Inti Raymi was the most important festival of the Inca Empire Tawantinsuyo, which based its religion on the cult of the Sun. The 24th of June was when the Incas celebrated the beginning of the Sun's New Year.

The festival begins at the temple of Coricancha, passes through to the Plaza de Armas before going up to the archaeological complex of Sacsayhuamán, where crowds of people come together to witness more than

500 actors proudly bring the past alive. Most tourists buy tickets to sit in the grand stands, while locals fill the surrounding ruins to catch a glimpse of this famous performance.

To honour the Sun God, animals were sacrificed, though today during the ceremony there is a simulation of a sacrifice of a llama. Inca priests used to take out the guts of the llama through an opening on one side of the animal through which the priest also pulled out the heart still beating, and through the blood stains they could forecast the future for the Inca and the Empire. Volunteers should take the time to see this interesting celebration which is carried out in Quechua, the language of the Incas.



Project Updates



In **Care** this month volunteers have worked well in their placements and partner teachers are happy with their progress and the development of the children. On May 30th all the children from our kindergartens paraded in their towns for Día de la Educacion Inicial (Day of Elementary Education) and many volunteers marched with the children and their teachers took part in dances. Our volunteers are bringing materials from the office to their kindergartens and this is a very important part of the work of our volunteers as many of our placements are under-resourced. We hope this initiative of the volunteers continues and we are always here to help you if there is anything you are missing or if we can help in any way.



Our first **Teaching** network meeting of the year was held on 27th May in General Ollanta School in Urubamba. Kimmy Vuu presented a model class on 'Body Parts', Thom Gray on 'To BE in interrogative form' and Julie Curran gave a lesson on `present progressive`. The majority of partner teachers from schools in the Sacred Valley came to the Network Meeting and learned a lot from our Teaching volunteers. Schools finished their first semester of the year and many students took their end of semester exams.

As usual our **Inca project** has been very busy with clearing and mapping ruins in Cochapata and Lauramarca. Tim gave a lesson on 'The Quipus' and Yupana' and Jhon on 'Sacsayhuaman ruins' and 'Choquequirao'.

In El Establo volunteers have painted the oven area, prepared wooden stakes for maracuya area and completed the storeroom roof. During Director Tim's visit he gave a workshop to local teachers to give out materials such as paints, paper, jigsaws, pencils, balls and that kind of stuff. Volunteers also visited a local educational institute in this morning for activities with the kids. This will take place twice a month from now on. Volunteers are continuing with their weekly Quiz nights on the patio accompanied by the camp fire.



Social Activities

The monthly Social took place on Thursday 3rd June to coincide with Corpus Cristi festival in Cusco. Volunteers saw the procession of the saints in the main plaza.



After the procession volunteers headed to a nearby restaurant in Plaza San Francisco for a traditional meal of Chiriuchu (a cold plate of guinea pig, chicken, corn fritter, corn, rocoto, seaweed and fish-eggs) which was greeted with mixed emotions...!

The next Social will be in Cusco for Inti Raymi on 24th June. We look forward to seeing you all there to watch a re-enactment of the Inca Sun Festival before heading out for lunch. You will receive an email of when and where we will meet nearer the time but as an advance warning, Cusco will be *very* busy (the busiest day of the year in Cusco) which can pose threats to your safety. Please take care of yourselves, your belongings and each other.

Here is a preview of what we will be seeing at the next Social, Inti Raymi....



Introducing... Anna Munro, Assistant Manager & Social Manager

Anna will be joining us from mid-June as part of the staff here in Urubamba. We are very much looking forward to working with Anna and on behalf of Projects Abroad Peru staff and volunteers we'd like to wish her a very warm welcome.



Since last year I had been hoping an opportunity would arise with Projects Abroad and finally I have the chance to come to Peru and take part as the Assistant Manager and Social Manager. In the last few weeks I have heard a lot about the Sacred Valley, the people and culture of Peru, the projects that you all take part in and I can't wait to come and get involved helping out the volunteers and the community.

Currently I am living in Spain where I have been teaching English and doing some volunteer work with Outward Bound, an organisation that helps people to discover more about themselves by providing challenges in the wilderness. Here I got a chance to take part in programmes involving trekking, kayaking, climbing and working as a team to overcome obstacles. Prior to that, three months ago, I was living in New Zealand, my hometown, working at Auckland University of Technology. There I coordinated a

Student Mentor Programme that helps new students integrate into university life and provides a way for current students to get involved and experience the satisfaction of helping new students to find their feet. It was a very rewarding role.

I love travelling, learning languages and meeting people from all around the world - perhaps as I was brought up in a family that always hosted language students from all corners of the world! I am very thankful to my parents for this wonderful experience that opens your mind to different cultures. This will be my second trip to South America as two years ago I spent a few months in Argentina - I will arrive with my very confused Spanish accent - partly Argentinean, partly Spanish, partly Italian - and now I hope to acquire some of the Peruvian way of speaking.

I love dancing to Latin music, so I'm hoping there will be a chance to take part in some salsa and other traditional Peruvian dances. I'm also a very curious person when it comes to trying new food - I have heard Peruvian cuisine is great. Perhaps I will even get the chance to improve some of the other languages that I have studied - Italian, Portuguese and Japanese. Most of all I can't wait to get involved in the projects with you all and help to make some changes in the community. I will see you all very soon in Urubamba!

Volunteer Stories

A Month in Urubamba

Patricia "Patti" Cooper-Smith, Teaching volunteer, USA

The Sacred Valley of Peru is a study in contrasts. On one side there is eye-popping, stunning beauty in the natural setting – the Andes, the rich farmland, the meandering curves of the Rio Urubamba, the Quechua and Inca heritage, the ruins of past greatness. On the other side there is grinding and relentless poverty. The romantic image of people closely connected to the land – young boys and girls tending their flocks of sheep and pigs, campesinos walking their heavily-loaded donkeys home from the fields at the end of the day, families harvesting potatoes and grains, men and women coming into town on market day to sell fruits and vegetables – comes with a price tag. People with minimal education don't get much of a break. There are few opportunities because there is no manufacturing.

I lived and taught in Urubamba, the market town of the Sacred Valley, for one month. At 63 years old, I am much older than most volunteers. Urubamba is not a tourist town and, after visits to Cusco, Pisac, and Ollantaytambo, this was refreshing. It was also sobering, because the poverty and lack of opportunity was front and centre every day. Simple doors often opened into squalid dirt floored courtyards and interior rooms where domestic animals lived alongside people. Many shops were in front of homes. A shopkeeper emerging from a back room gave glimpses of a life unknown to us from industrialized countries. There were also homes, like my home stay, that were simple and functional – cement floors, indoor plumbing, a refrigerator, and a washing machine. From Cusco to the Sacred Valley, the thin middle class and the larger lower class are dominant. If there is an upper class, it is mostly invisible.



I lived with Alfredo and Luzmilla Villena at the northern edge of Urubamba. The Villenas are middle-class Urubambas. Alfredo is a teacher; Luzmilla is a school administrator. Like educators in many parts of the world, including the United States, Alfredo and Luzmilla are undervalued and struggle to make ends meet. I do not believe they have ever owned a car, and probably never will. Hosting Projects Abroad volunteers year round is a way to broaden their experience base and supplement their income. They are intelligent, charming, helpful, and friendly people. I enjoyed every minute with them and their 11-year old son, Francisco "Paco." Alfredo is a gentle man and a master with Spanish grammar. Luzmilla is a good cook with a gregarious sense of humour.

I also shared the house with a zany and comedic Italian guy from Naples. Mauro spoke fluent Spanish to my halting attempts at the language, but we had fun with the family and its two dogs – Cachita and Beethoven.



The serious side of my home stay was how disheartening it was to watch these educated people work so hard for so little. The local diet that is a diabetic's nightmare – starch, starch, and starch washed down with Coca Cola and Inca Kola. There appears to be no connection between starch and sugar, and diabetes and cataracts of which Alfredo suffers.



My school placement was General Ollanta Urubamba, a large colegio (high school). I worked with Elizabeth Velasquez – an experienced and professional teacher. Elizabeth was a joy to work with and I learned a lot from her. Hopefully, in return, I introduced her to some new ideas. General Ollanta is not a prep school. Elizabeth told me most of the students will end up as motor-taxi drivers, shopkeepers, labourers, or married young and pregnant. Yet, every day the students showed up cheerful and friendly in neat and clean uniforms. Having seen the kind of poverty some of these students came from, I was amazed and impressed.

English is often the third language for students in the Sacred Valley after Quechua and Spanish. Less than two hours of English a week does not make an English speaker (nor does it, from my own experience, make a Spanish speaker), yet in every class there were one or two students who “got it,” and many others had an enthusiasm and excitement about learning that was infectious.

I didn't expect to accomplish a lot in one month but I did make the students in my classes aware of the western United States and my state of Nevada. We talked about the west and Nevada and its deep Spanish roots in history, culture, and place names.



My four-day work week was good for touring and visiting places in and around the Sacred Valley. Public transportation is accessible and affordable. The collective taxis were great for quickly getting to Cusco even if seatbelts are not often an option. Making the Sign of the Cross at the beginning and end of a trip appears to be the functional equivalent of a seatbelt. It's a *vaya con Dios* world.

After my placement, I spent another month touring parts of South America with my husband. Now, at home in my familiar surroundings, I am a better person for my experiences in the Sacred Valley. The first day I drove, I was struck by the feeling of how privileged I was to have a car of my own to go wherever and whenever I wanted. By accident of birth, I live a life that few in this area of Peru will ever have. I am grateful.

Feliz Cumpleaños !!



We would like to wish a HUGE Happy Birthday to the following staff and volunteers who celebrated their birthday recently...

A very happy birthday to Medicine volunteer Lotte Ooms who celebrated her 21st birthday on 31st May. Many congratulations and we wish you all the best for the coming year.

Our very own Teaching Supervisor Elizabeth Velasquez celebrated her birthday on 4th June and a week later shared cake in the office with staff.

Our Medicine Supervisor Pati Davila celebrated her birthday on 12th June. Best wishes to Pati.

Medicine volunteer Hannah Oley celebrated her 20th birthday on 30th June. We hope you had a memorable birthday here in Peru!



Cocina Peruana

How to make ... Chiri uchu

Ingredients:

- 1 chicken
- 1 guinea pig
- Corn flour (toasted)
- Cheese
- Chalona (sun dried meat)
- Rocoto (hot pepper)
- Cochayuyo (seaweed)
- Canchita (toasted corn)
- Sausage
- 1 kilo of fish eggs
- 4 eggs
- Spring onion
- Pepper balls
- Aromatic spices



Preparation:

Skin and cube the guinea pig meat and season with salt, pepper and spices. Cook in the oven.

Boil the chicken and cut into cubes.

Mix the flour made from the toasted corn with 4 eggs, salt, a dash of water and finely chopped spring onion. Fry the mixture to make tortillas.

Leave the food to cool and then serve on a plate with the rest of the ingredients. Each plate should have: toasted corn (canchita), cochayuyo (seaweed), cheese, sausage, slices of hot pepper (rocoto), fish eggs, chalona (a red meat seasoned with salt and dried in the sun), guinea pig and chicken pieces.

What's happening in July?

Festival	Description	Place	Date
Virgen del Carmen	Four hours from Cusco, in the town of Paucartambo, thousands of devotees hold festivals in honour of the Virgen del Carmen, known locally as Mamacha Carmen, patron saint of the mestizo population. For five days, dance companies in various costumes (Doctorcitos, Waca Waca, Sajras) take to the streets to accompany the Mamacha throughout the entire procession through the main square, the church and the city streets. On the main day, the virgin is borne aloft in a procession to bless those present and scare away demons. The dancers take to the housetops, performing daring gymnastics. At the end of the procession, war is waged on the demons, from which the faithful emerge in triumph. Finally, the gathering ends up in the cemetery to render homage to the souls of the dead.	Paucartambo	The second week of July (15th – 16th)
Festival del Café	Jubilee week of the province of La Convención	Province of La Convención	20th - 30th July
Corpus de Santiago	Corpus of Santiago is a religious festivity where there is a mass with numerous and beautiful dances. The typical dish of the festivity is the "Chiriuchu". This is a dish with small portions of several typical dishes. It is celebrated in the square of Santiago.	Cusco	July 25th
Corpus de Santa Ana	Corpus of Santa Ana, is another religious celebration performed in the chapel of Santa Ana. The day before, a festive mass is celebrated with a procession, dances and musicians. The typical dish is also the "Chiriuchu."	Cusco	July 26th
Fiestas Patrias	Commemoration of the Independence of Peru. Parades and civic ceremonies are made all over the country. Public holidays.	Peru	July 28th & 29th