



# Library Lingo

Volume 3, Issue 2

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## Christmas and Heritage



Sharing memories is the heartbeat of the Christmas Season as it moves into the mode of anticipation for opening the curtains for the new year. It's the season when the words "do you remember..." become the chorus for recall and reflection. All of us collectively engage in remembering people, events and customs — in a nutshell, our personal and national heritage. And there is perhaps no better time than now to acknowledge how important the documentation of memories is to 'knowing



His massive collection includes photographs, manuscripts, films, video tapes and sound recordings of traditional music, songs, dances, stories. During his oral history field trip to Anguilla in 1962

he collected tapes and photographs of ring games, songs, and conversations with local culture bearers like the late Judge Gumbs and Arthur Lake. Through the courtesy of doctoral researcher, Don Walicek, at the University of Puerto Rico, copies of some of the Anguillian documentation from the



our story'.

The snapshots on this page of traditional life in Anguilla from the early 1960s come from a most prestigious collection of folklore, a lifelong labour of love over a span of sixty years by the legendary folklorist Alan Lomax. He made numerous trips across America and around the globe to places like Europe and the Caribbean after he left his position as head of the Archive of American Folk song at the Library of Congress in 1942.



Smithsonian Museum were presented to the local Library. The mission behind Lomax's work was the belief that folklore and grassroots expressions are essential to the dyna-

mism of human civilization and his life-long goal was to create a public platform for their continued use and enjoyment as well as for analytical research. He estab-



lished the Association for Cultural Equity (ACE), based in New York City, now directed by his daughter, Anna Lomax Wood. ACE continues to produce the Alan Lomax Collection, a compact-disc series, now available for sale through companies like Amazon.



Do give books - religious or otherwise - for Christmas. They're never fattening, seldom sinful, and permanently personal."  
*Lenore Hershey*



## Looking Back..... Christmas Anguilla Style

(based on excerpts from Anguilla Life, Vol 1, No.3, 1988-- interview with Dr M. Linda Banks)

**Anguilla Life:** When you think about “Christmas Anguilla Style” what really comes to mind?

**Linda Banks:** If you’d asked me that same question twenty-five years ago I would have had a lot to tell you about. I would have first told you though, that underlying everything was a sense of sharing. It seems as if everybody shared in celebrating Christmas-friends, families and neighbours. In fact, it seemed as if the whole island enjoyed Christmas together. There was no radio station, no television station and very few cars, but somehow, the island was united from Island Harbour to West End...

Groups of serenaders would tramp around from house to house, beginning several weeks before Christmas and going all the way to five o’clock Christmas morning...

People would hunt through the bushes on Christmas Eve to find a Christmas tree – what we call locally a “Five-Finger” tree, shape it and stand it in a bucket of sand and stone...

Then there were the Christmas Sports, masqueraders, the clowns, the mocka jumbies and the fellows who spread the latest gossip through what they called “neager business” – men with blackened faces, dirty clothes and a

Bible reciting the latest scandals with the names of the characters changed...

Christmas was a holy time and one of the two times of the year that everyone made sure to go to Church, (Easter being the other). Everyone shared in celebrating the birth of the Christ Child... There weren’t many gifts to choose from nor a lot of money going around, but generally children and adults gave and accepted gifts gladly in the true spirit of Christmas.

**Anguilla Life:** Have we still carried on those traditions or have we replaced them? What about the caroling-the serenading?

**Linda Banks:** Well, that still exists but in a very limited degree and in some groups the emphasis seems to have shifted more towards money making than to sharing.

**Anguilla Life:** What about the traditional Anguillian Five-Finger tree?

**Linda Banks:** Well, I believe that fresh newly cut smell has been replaced by the smell of imported pines or worse yet by the non-smell of artificial trees.

**Anguilla Life:** What about the Christmas Sports?

**Linda Banks:** I can’t say that I’ve seen any of the traditional masqueraders, clowns or mocko jumbies lately...

**Anguilla Life:** What about Church?

**Linda Banks:** Well, it seems that families are spending less time celebrating the real reason for Christmas by going to their church services. Younger people, in particular, are noticeably absent. All-night dances and partying have been substituted for worship.

**Anguilla Life:** What about the sharing of food and gifts?

**Linda Banks:** Unfortunately with our development people now think more about the value of gifts. Children want all the toys they see on TV and in the stores. The mystique of Santa has lost its intrigue and people in general give less freely and less unconditionally. At the hospital gift giving continues for the residents of the Old Folks Home so there is still the sharing of Christmas joy as well as a Christmas morning service.

**Anguilla Life:** Is there anything we can do to recapture some of the unique qualities of Christmas Anguilla Style?

**Linda Banks:** Of course, there is. Begin in your home. Make Christmas a family experience of sharing... If somebody is needy in the community give them a gift or share a meal with them. Don’t leave worship out of your celebrations. If you or someone you know is a talented stilt dancer or masquerader, bring this talent into the open. Let’s help to keep Christmas that special time of sharing that it has traditionally been and have a **VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS – ANGUILLA STYLE!**

### Fishing for facts...



Axa Library reports...  
The global recession forced some Caribbean governments to adopt these measures :

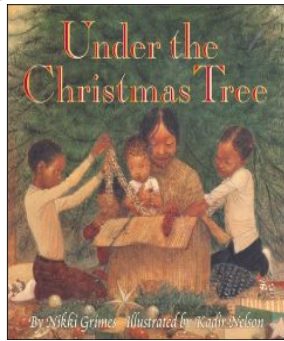
- Reductions in salaries/wages
- laying off employees
- freezing jobs
- borrowing funds to meet recurrent expenditure
- financial assistance to major businesses or industries

**Contact Us:**  
write, email or call us at..  
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The Valley, Anguilla  
Tel: 264-497-2441  
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Answers- Page # 4  
A Sponge, His Breath, N for November, N for Nine,  
Your Mom is their Aunt. You do all the work and the fat man  
in the suit gets all the credit



## Spreading the word.... *Under the Christmas Tree* by Nikki Grimes



This celebration of the sights, sounds and feelings of Christmas comes through the eyes of a six year old child in poems crafted by Coretta Scott King Award-winning poet, Nikki Grimes. The rich, warm illustrations of Kadir Nelson accompany the poems as they feature familiar experiences like family dinners, serenading, church going, busy streets, and putting up the lights.....

Like precious jewelry  
We stud the roof  
Bracelet the porch post  
Pearl the footpath

Then the mystery, wonder and excitement of Christmas ends when the child must obey her mother and

With unhappy hands  
Gather the pine needles  
In a brittle pile  
And sweep Christmas  
Out the door.

Children will easily relate to the moods of the season as reflected in these poems.

## Staff in the Spotlight

After five years of steady toiling and a strategic approach to her studies via the distance education facilities of the University of the West Indies, Senior Library Assistant, Ingrid Richardson, sailed in first at the finishing post with a first class honours in Management Studies. Undoubtedly the same passion she has for boat racing helped her to negotiate the turbulence along the journey into a satisfying landing space. Ingrid admits it has been a struggle sometimes, balancing the duties of work, studies and parenting and is deeply grateful for the support of family and friends, colleagues, the GOA and the Open Campus, Anguilla. She longs for the opportunity to apply her knowledge and skills in the finance sector and is keeping her eyes on the horizon for the lifting of the 'clouds' of recession.

As 2010 approaches  
she is hopeful that appropriate  
openings in the disciplines of her choice will appear.  
Well Done, Ingrid!

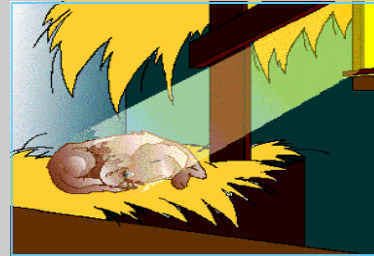


Customers and staff were loathe to say "good-bye" to upbeat Library Assistant, Anthea Roach as she began the first phase of her journey in pursuit of graduate qualifications at the University of Wales on a career path in the field of archives administration. The cold weather is making her very homesick but she's still smiling and looking forward to her first long vacation break by June, 2010. See you soon, Anthea !

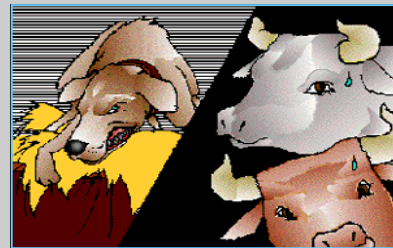
### *The Dog in the Manger*

*Illustrated by Edwin Fong*

A Dog, looking out for its afternoon nap, jumped into the Manger of an Ox and lay there cosily upon the straw. But soon the Ox, returning from its afternoon work, came up to the Manger and wanted to eat some of the straw.



The Dog in a rage, being awakened from its slumber, stood up and barked at the Ox, and whenever it came near attempted to bite it.



At last the Ox had to give up the hope of getting at the straw, and went away muttering...



People often grudge others what they cannot enjoy themselves.

## Tickle Your Mind....

### Christmas

W S D N E I R F P U W F Y E K R U T  
X M F I V E F I N G E R T R E E F O  
Q F K I Q T M Y B L A C K C A K E D  
T G S E D A R E U Q S A M T Y I Z I  
X L V M M C A R O L S O P N U E S C  
G R Q P O T A T O P U D D I N G S X  
I S R E D A N E R E S A D N V T U J  
F S R I B B O N S M M A U B Y S F Q  
T S F J L E T Q P B U F T Q O A F E  
S X T E H B S Y O T W W P H U E M E  
S C Z R B A K I N G S K Z K B F O P  
T E L L E K T D E C O R A T I O N S  
Z C X I F C X Y U E R R H K M O R M  
V M V G I R N Y A D G N T A E L W I  
L H I H J X J O B Y E C F S S Y O F  
O R Q T J B M G C F A M I L Y G J A  
V C R S L W F K H H Y L L U F Y O J  
E P I A X W S K A B A M K O Z M N I

BAKING, BLACKCAKE, CAROLING, CONCERTS, DECORATIONS, FAMILY, FEAST, FIVEFINGER TREE, FRIENDS, GIFTS, JOYFUL, LIGHTS, LOVE, MASQUERADES, MAUBY, POTATO PUDDING, RIBBONS, SERENADERS, TOYS, TURKEY

## Brain Teasers

What is full of holes but still holds water?

• • •

What is light as a feather, but even the strongest man cannot hold it for more than a few minutes?

• • •



What letter is next in this sequence?  
M, A, M, J, J, A, S, O\_

• • •

What letter is next in this sequence?  
O, T, T, F, F, S, S, E\_

• • •

How could all of your cousins have an aunt who is not your aunt?

• • •

Why is Christmas just like any other day at the office?

• • •

Answers on page 2

"May peace be more than a season,  
may it be a way of life"

## Tongue Clapper Say.....

Well sir, so much loudspeaker 'round de place meking so much noise ah could hardly hear mi own tongue dese days. Da good, nobody could say I say and put mi in some ah dem handcuffs de police dem get from somebody. Doan mind me tongue does run plenty ah smarter dan every Tom, Dick and Harry and ah keeping outa 'dem say.' Right now Chrismus coming, ah feel de Chrismus breeze and ah tekking a break from politics. Mi tongue watery for all di ham, puddin', black cake, tart and mauby. But ah still looking through dem ole newspaper de Libry get from di ole valise. Ah notice in Anguilla first newspaper de Beacon 40 years ago di people was lamenting over no lights for Chrismus. Same way de recession tekking 'way some a de pretty lights dis year. Ah tell you ah hope tings change cause we need plenty light to lift di spirit. And we need light to expose dem mosquitos. Lawd, dem big like flies. One itching mi skin right now, Lawd have mercy. Quick, lemme articulate a little toast for di season:

*Tongue Clapper wish all aya Happy, Happy Chrismus and secession from de recession in 2010, ah gone...*