

Becky Brenton travels to Japan



Becky Brenton enjoyed a nights stay at a traditional Japanese inn while on seven day vacation to Japan in December. She is shown wearing traditional dress and sampling a traditional Japanese meal. (Submitted)

By Linda Harrington

Becky Brenton, Crowes Mills, has travelled to many exciting places during her 26 years as a travel agent but a recent trip to Japan ranks as one of the most enjoyable. Becky travelled on this week-long adventure in December, with 10 other Carlson Wagonlit Travel agents from across Canada; she was the only one from the Maritimes.

The purpose of the trip was to experience as much of the culture, scenery, tourist destinations and transportation system as possible to be better able to offer advice to clients who may wish to travel in Japan.

Becky says there was a lot packed into the 7 days and she thinks she experienced nearly every form of travel. "We flew into Tokyo, took airport transfers, buses, the high speed train and rural train, tour bus and taxis. Travel was extremely easy, with signs and announcements in both English and Japanese."

Most restaurants had English menus available or artificial plates of fake food for you to look at before ordering but Becky thought she would be adventurous and try ordering from a Japanese menu the first night. "I decided to order shrimp and using my translation book I asked if it was cooked. When the waitress brought the dish it was only the shrimp heads. I set this aside and decided to try a chicken shish kabob but it turned out to be just chicken skin on a stick. Once I caught on to reading the menus, the food was actually very delicious."

The group travelled

throughout central region of Japan. There were visits to a geisha house, a samurai house, beautiful gardens, temples and shrines, several World UNESCO Heritage Sights, including the Golden Pavilion -World Cultural Heritage Site, and much more. On the train ride to Takayama, weather permitted a clear view of Mount Fuji.

Becky was amazed on a bus ride to Kanazawa, which involved driving through mountain passes and tunnels as long as 11km. "On the way we made a must see stop at the Shirakawa World Unesco Heritage site (only living one - people live and work there still!) And it was fantastic. You felt like you walked into a storybook and gingerbread village. I am sure I will never be in another place quite like it anywhere else."

Tokyo Disney was a must see stop for Becky, also "It completed my 'hat trick' of Disney Parks," she says. "I can now say I have been to all five Disney Parks in the world."

The Japanese people were extremely polite and helpful, and no one ever complained if lines were long or if the trains were crowded. "On one bus ride there was a group of students on board and they immediately stood to give their seats to seniors as they boarded," says Becky. "Everyone was quiet and calm as they squished onto a crowded train at rush hour."

One night was spent at Hoshō Kaku Ryokan, a traditional Japanese inn. Guests slept on mats on a woven straw floor and no shoes were worn inside. They all wore traditional Japanese dress and were provided with a tradi-

tional Japanese supper and breakfast and an opportunity for a traditional Japanese bath was also offered.

Travellers need not worry about other bathroom facilities. "Western style toilets were available everywhere, in addition to the squatter Japanese style, even on the trains. They were actually deluxe models with heated toilet seats," laughs Becky.

Becky found Japan very neat, clean and organized. She never saw any garbage and noticed the leaves were even swept off the sidewalks every couple of days. It was quite a challenge to even find a garbage can as people just take their waste home with them or shopkeepers dispose of it.

She felt they really catered to the tourists in every way possible, including a user friendly system for transporting baggage from one hotel to another. This service was very affordable and made it much easier to travel by train. "You take a small carry-on with you and when you arrive at your destination your bulky luggage is there waiting, for a minimal charge of about \$12- 15." She says they seem to think of the little things that could make a trip more convenient, even a vending machine which dispensed clean shirts, ties and underwear.

Shopping was enjoyable on the trip as well, including a trip to the 100 Yen Store (which compared to our Dollar Stores).

Japan had not been a place Becky had ever thought of going to before but she says she would be excited to go back again soon. "Journey's of Discovery, a tour company for Carlson Wagonlit Travel, organized the tour and they did a fabulous job. They only thing I would suggest is to take more time as there is just so much to experience," says Becky. "CWT- Harvey's Travel is currently putting together a travel package for this fall and I would highly recommend this trip to anyone. It is only a ten hour flight from Vancouver and once you arrive there is an unlimited amount of beautiful scenery and a wealth of culture to experience."

For more information about travel to Japan, give Becky a call at CWT- Harvey's Travel (897-2699)

Debert Legion Notes

By Danny Martell

Happy Birthday wishes for January are passed along to Fred MacKinnon, Pamela Patton, Greg Slack, Dave Stewart, Samantha Higgins, Dave Murphy, Mike Totten, Bernice Kaulback, John Jessome,

Marion McDorman.

Happy Anniversary wishes for January are passed along to Virginia (Silver Cross Mother) and Cyril Roberts, Phyllis and Harry Wilson, Helen and Fred MacMaster. Please say a prayer for our

Bass River Notes

By Joyce Starratt

Happy new year folks. I wonder what it will bring? I hope not as many disasters as last year. So many countries were practically destroyed by earthquakes, floods, etc. And early this year with floods in Australia, and Brazil, we appear to be off to a bad start. It must be terrible to live through something like that.

We extend our sympathy to the families of the late Bob Abbott and the late Gerald Starritt.

Rose Fulton had a lovely trip to BC to visit her son, Richard (Dick) and family. Dick has been trying to get his dad and mum to go to BC for a long time. Finally, Rose made the trip, had a lovely time and is glad to be back home.

A number of people have been sick with the flu - really sick. Perhaps it's a new strain.

Roy and Clara Galway were home for Christmas from Listowel, Ontario. Megan Faulkner spent Christmas with her parents, Roddi & Mi

troops in Afghanistan and their families.

Don't forget to thank a Veteran, it is because of their sacrifices that we are able to enjoy our freedom and our country.

Sorry for the short article, we've been in Ottawa (Greely) for most of December and January.

Faulkner. Barb Hood, Three Mile Plains spent Christmas with Brian and Linda MacDonald. Andrew and Doug were here for Christmas Eve.

The Christmas Eve service in Five Islands was well attended. The music was lovely. Heather and Myrna sang a beautiful duet, one of my favourites.

I had to have my little dog, Mi Mi put to sleep last week. She had cancer and she wouldn't get better. I miss her very much.

So long for now. Be talking to you next month.

MacCaull Villa Notes

By Hazel Hill

Helen Patriquin, Folly Mountain, spend a recent weekend with Dorothy, Phyllis and Darlene Jordan. On Boxing Day, Micheal, Jenny and Fiona Ruston visited Micheal's mother, Phyllis Rushton.

Faith Baptist Church delivered Myrtle's baskets again at Christmas to the folks in the

Villa. Many from here spent Christmas with families.

Shirley Ryan was at Tammy and Danny Garnham's in Little Dyke; Lydia Fisher was with George and Betty Hudson; Bernice Kaulback was with Bud and Linda Morrison and Sharon Roode spent a few days with her son and families in Bible Hill.

Others visiting families over the holiday season included: Harold Murray with his son and family in Masstown and Allen Roulston was away spending a few days with friends in Pugwash.

Shannon MacAloney was a dinner guest at Him Chipman's on New Year's Day. We wish to congratulate Shannon on winning an award for learning in her Adult Education studies.

Great Village Elementary Notes

By Linda Harrington

Welcome back to students and staff.

Thank you to community volunteers, Patsy Dodsworth, Faye Roode, Nellie Rhuland, Audrey Spencer, Barb Works, Brenda Blaire, and Melissa Rector for assisting with wrapping at the Christmas Bazaar. Through this activity \$264.00 was collected and will be donated to the IWK Telethon in the spring.

A huge thank you is extended to Dawn Specher and Heather Leggate for their leadership with decorating gingerbread houses, to Mandi MacRae for organizing Classroom Café and to all those who helped with the delicious turkey dinner and skating at West Colchester Arena. Volunteers are always greatly appreciated.

The winners of the prizes

drawn at the Christmas Concert, were as follows: Digital Camera (Burchell MacDougall Lawyers) - Rebecca Taylor; \$25.00 Coles Gift Cards (Balamore Farms) - Alice Pugsley and Shelly Shipley; Flat of Strawberries (Bowers' Farm) - Bernice Taylor; Smith's Rite Stop Gift Certificate - Cindy Smith; Blueberries and Blueberry Juice (Arthur & Alice Pugsley) - Pam Lindsey; Golf Putter (Spectra Premium) - Valerie Austin; Jewelry Box (Spectra Premium) - Denise Miller; Pies (Muffy & Mindy's Baking) - Robert Busk; Shoreline Journal Subscription - Carley Fielding. Thank you to the many businesses who donated these prizes. The funds raised will help support programming and special activities at the school.

64kg of food and \$10 in cash was donated to the Colchester Food Bank following the Christmas Concert.

Numerous activities are being planned for Friday, January 28th to mark Family Literacy Day (which is actually on Feb. 27th).


Students are enjoying a 'crazy' noon hour! The school has purchased crazy carpets and each day a different class goes coasting during the lunch break on "Penny's Hill" next to the school. It looks like everyone is having lots of fun.

"Peace Week" activities are going to be held the week off February 14-17 (this will be winter carnival activities with a peace theme).

Next month the school is holding a cheese sale, with the cheese ready for pick up on March 10 (Student Led Conference Day). Report cards will be sent home on March 7th.




Breath taking scenery and visits to Unesco Heritage sites were a few of the highlights of Becky Brenton's recent trip to Japan. (Submitted)



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