

Spanish Conversation - January meeting

Our January Zoom meeting took place 17th January (thanks to Bob) the topic was “a special Christmas memory”. There were just 3 of us, with apologies from 5 members, 2 who were happily skiing in Europe.

One special Christmas memory was that of a carol service in Salisbury cathedral, attended with her son and three grandchildren, one of who was dressed as an angel. During the service two donkeys, one of them carrying the Mother and Child and three camels walked around the church, their handlers, dressed in flowing multi coloured robes. The animals remained calm and dignified, undisturbed by the singing or audience. A magical event.

Another member recalled his first Christmas away from family in Almeria, Spain, when he witnessed the magic of Christmas in a different culture. It was the Epiphany, celebration of the arrival of the Three Kings. In Spain, children receive gifts from them and as it is a port, they of course arrived on a fishing boat. The children were very excited to see the boat with the elaborately dressed figures of the crowned Kings arrive, who then boarded three regal carriages pulled by motorised reindeer. These toured the town with the Kings throwing sweets for children, who carried bags to gather as many as possible. He felt sorry for the parents of younger children trying to get them to sleep through the excitement, a little like on Christmas Eve in England as children wait eagerly for Santa Claus to come down the chimney.

One had memories of Christmas with two very different sets of grandparents in Chesterfield; one home was staunchly Methodist and one Communist. The Communist household was bare with no decorations or music and any cards received were kept in a box. Whereas the Methodist household was full of cheer, warmth and singing, carrying on the Derbyshire tradition of Mummers plays at Christmas. You can guess where he liked to spend more time.

A very special memory for another is Christmas Eve, celebrated with a 12-course vegetarian meal, after which the family all gather around the Christmas tree and only by the light of candles, sing traditional Polish and English carols until it is time to open presents.

Our February 17th Zoom topic will be “my favourite relative”.

Stay safe and well

Lusia McAnna