



The Roberts'



Brazil Update

December 2009

Dear Friends,

Happy New Year to you all! We hope that you've all had a great Christmas and a peaceful start to the New Year. So, put your feet up and have a rest from all those parties, and catch up on how things have gone with us over the Christmas period.

Oh, and for you temperature checker fans; a relatively mild -1C in York compared to a showery 29C in Olinda.



Only In Brazil (This Country!)

We're returning with a **Christmas special** for this month. I've always found Christmas here in Brazil a bit of a confusing time. Firstly, it's around 35C each day and so, after being brought up believing that Christmas should be cold, snowy, wrapped up by the fire etc... I find it hard to really get into the 'Christmas spirit.' My confusion is not helped by the fact that Christmas is celebrated pretty much in the same way as we do in the UK except that I'm in my shorts and flip flops looking at the decorations in the shopping centres, full of fake snow, reindeers, big fat santas etc... It's the 'culture shock' that confuses me, I don't understand why Brazil hasn't put a bit of Brazilian

flair into Christmas - most people here in the NE have never seen snow in their lives, they think that reindeers are flying cows and Santa would roast to death in that big red coat. I would like to see a Brazilian browned surfing Santa... although that would probably confuse me even more. But, perhaps the thing that confuses me most is in Church, where a few years ago someone thought that it would be a good idea to take the most popular English Christmas songs and put the tune to Christian words. You will perhaps fully understand my confusion when you stand next to me in Church, trying not to giggle, as you sing a Christmas worship song to the tune of 'Santa Claus is Coming to Town'. This Country.



With some of the boys (and Francesca) at the Christmas display

Brazil Life

December was kicked off with Rose's birthday when we managed to escape for a few days to the beach. We had a relaxing time and were able to celebrate Rose's birthday.

After that it was straight back into things with the busy run up to Christmas. We had a fantastic Christmas and New Year in the project (more

about that later) and it was all made possible by those generous donations that so many of you made. In total we received £1665! We were really humbled by the generosity shown; I have to admit that I was only expecting a couple of £100s at the most! Read on to find out how we spent that money, and if anyone would like the **full financial report** about how this money was spent then please do get in touch.



Celebrating Rose's birthday, listening to a guy play the saxophone from a boat as we watch the sunset...

This month Rose was involved in the 'group wedding' at Living Waters Church. This is where a few couples from the area all get married on the same day to save on the cost of a wedding etc... It's a great time to see many recent converts (some of which have lived together for a long time) committing to each other in this way. Rose was involved in preparing the brides and was one of the photographers!



The four blushing brides and their grooms...

Rose and I had an interesting Christmas; we had one of the project boys, Emerson, with us along with the English volunteers staying with us. The Brazilian side of the family joined us for Christmas Day and so we had a pretty full house! It all went well and I managed to cook us an English Christmas Dinner which went down well too. New Year was a lot quieter as we chose just to spend it together at home and then join the 1000s of others going to the beach after midnight.



Christmas Day with the Brazilian Family...

Things are looking promising on a new apartment - looks like we have two possibilities which is good. Although we are still facing a lot of bureaucracy as we try to register our marriage and renew my visa.

We have also launched a **new website** which explains a bit about us, our work, the project etc... Do check it out and pass it on to others who are interested in our work - www.andyandrose.yolasite.com

Youth 18+

Our weekly meetings are continuing to go well and it's great to see our group being challenged and growing in their faith. Please be praying for more people to come along (a lot can't make it due to work etc...) and for some evangelistic events being planned for the New Year.

One of our group, 'Gordo' has gone to Argentina for a month's mission trip - our prayers go with him and the team.



Some of the youth group...

The Project

Christmas in the project was a hectic time. The boys had their end of year exams, which most managed to pass ok. Using the money from the Christmas Fund we managed to put on a great Christmas for the boys. New clothes are the big thing here and so we were able to buy a new outfit for each of the boys. This year, we decided to take the boys with us to the shopping centre, so that they could choose their clothes and shoes etc... We took them in two groups over the two days and it's fair to say that it was a bit of a hectic and funny challenge to control 5 or 6 very excited street boys. For some, it was the first time that they had ever set foot in a shopping centre. I just pity those poor shop assistants who were trying to meet the boy's each wish as they changed their mind every two seconds and destroyed their shop. It was also a fantastic time and wonderful to see the boys so happy.



After the chaos and waiting to pay...

Now that the boys had their new clothes we needed a good excuse to wear them! So, we put on a Christmas Party for them and for a few friends from School. The boys were told that they could invite **one** friend from school, but as usual here, on the day three or four friends for each boy turned up along with some of their extended family. It was a bit of a logistical nightmare but, thankfully we had planned for such an event, and the party was a great success! It was wonderful to see the boys proudly showing their friends the project and having a great time together as we organized games in the pool, a secret santa, lots of food and our boys finished things off with a little devotional for everyone.



The boys and their friends for the Christmas Party

We were also able to buy a few extra little presents for the boys - a stocking each, which they received before they went home for Christmas. Each boy went to some kind of family over Christmas and again for the New Year which meant that we were able to give a few days rest to the workers.



We are now in the holiday month of January, the boys are off school, and so we're planning on some trips to keep the boys occupied. We still have some money left over from the Christmas Fund and so this will be able to fund some trips for the boys over the holiday period.

As some of you re-think your finances for this coming year, may I encourage you to ponder about giving regularly to the project. Just £25 per month, given through our UK based Charity, goes a long way to covering the running costs of the project. We thank all of you for your generous support of this work.



A well earned 'Happy Meal' after shopping...

Things I miss about England

#321 - Woolly Jumpers - Christmas just isn't Christmas without one.

Things I love about Brazil

#57 - 'Open House Attitude' - Our doorbell didn't stop ringing over Christmas and the New Year as people dropped in, mostly to eat our food, and to hang out. It's quite normal to do this, I like the hospitality and openness, but you have to remember to cook more food!

So Long and Thanks

This month we said so long to Val, from Lincoln, who has spent the past 10 months with us in the project. She built up a great relationship with the boys, despite the fact that she didn't learn much Portuguese! She will be missed.

We also say thanks to Michael and Francesca Boden who spent the past two months with us. Their help around the house and the work that they did with the boys will be missed as well. Thanks guys!



'Pastor Renato' addresses the party...

Prayer Points

1. Pray for guidance this New Year as we think about how to improve/change the project.
2. Help Rose and I as we learn to live and work together. Let the Lord guide us in what he has for us to do.
3. Pray for the boys and the staff at the project, for strength and all that we need to work and run things here.
4. Please pray for the financial situation of the project. That more regular monthly income will be committed to the project so that we can cover our running costs and look to expand out work.
5. Please pray for the leadership of the project especially for the directors. Pray that we might have wisdom about how to tackle the leadership problems and issues.

Thanks again guys for all the prayer and support that you are showing us and the project.

Please do keep in touch with how you're doing and what you're up to.

Prayers.

Andy and Rose ☺

Contact Details and Useful Info

I thought it might be worth adding these details on the end... they might come in useful!

Project Address –

Casa de Meu Pai
Av. Ministro Marcus Freire 5615
Rio Doce
Olinda – PE
53130540
Brazil

Our apartment's address –

Apt. 303
Edf. Brinco de Princesa
Rua Jose Cipriano Silva 1084
Rio Doce
Olinda PE
53040 - 140
Brazil

Phone Numbers –

You can call me for 2p/min from an English landline using the following number 08444621621 then just dial one of the following numbers.

Project – 00558134928883
Our apartment - 00558134322814
My Cell – 00558191962959
Rose's Cell - 00558191596058

Bank Details

Project's Charity Account –
Service of Hope Charity
For info please contact Roger Atkinson on
koinonia115@ntlworld.com

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