

Christmas Comes But Once A Year*



During their tour of duty in Ipoh, men of the 12th Infantry Regiment Workshop often visited the children at the Holy Infant Jesus orphanage and in 1956, ran a Christmas party for them at Gunung Panjang Camp.

The party started when an army aircraft flew low overhead trailing several streamers. Unknown to the children Santa Claus was on board and planned to parachute down and, as he eventually did, arrive at the party in a gaily coloured Willy's Jeep and trailer, disguised as a locomotive. But as Valerie Yeow remembers, something went wrong:

“At Christmas 1956, I had just turned six and remember a comical sight of a Santa Claus, stuck in a huge tree at the bottom of Seenivasagam Street.

The plane had missed its target! I lived on Green Lane at the time, and I remember all the children from Green Lane, Green Hill Drive, Seenivasagam Street and probably Cowan Street, rushing out to look at this most remarkable scene. For me, it has always been memorable as my first encounter with Santa Claus.”

*English Proverb

Photographs courtesy of www.ipohworld.org.