

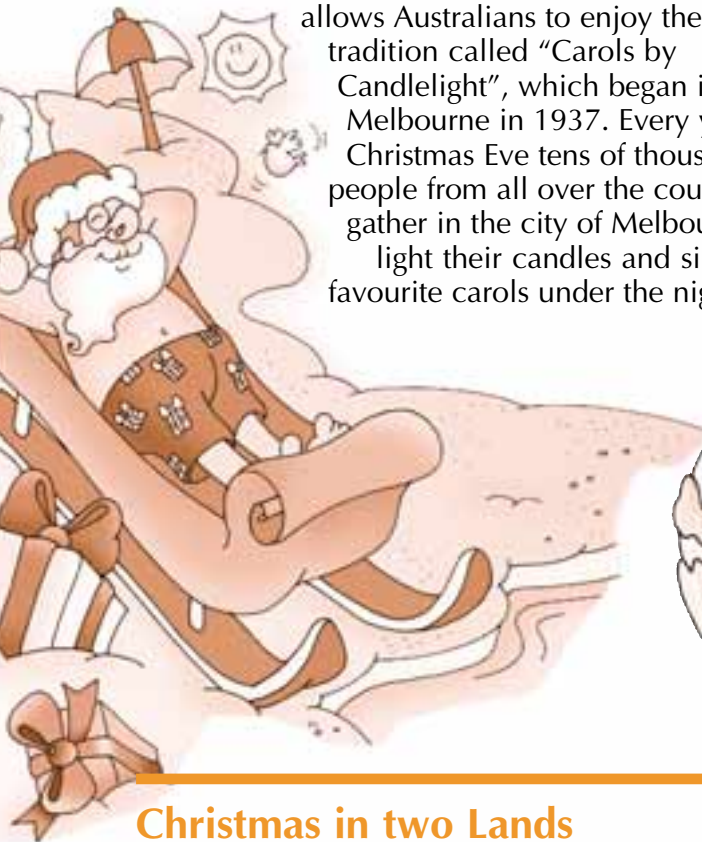
CHRISTMAS Down Under

Because Australia is located in the Southern Hemisphere, Christmas is in the middle of summer. As in other countries, it is a family occasion and people gather for the traditional meal which can include turkey, ham or pork. Often these dishes are cooked earlier and served cold together with salads and other food. Christmas dinner may be a picnic in the woods or on the beach. Many Australians in Sydney have their Christmas dinner on a local beach called Bondi Beach. The warm weather

allows Australians to enjoy the tradition called "Carols by Candlelight", which began in Melbourne in 1937. Every year on Christmas Eve tens of thousands of people from all over the country gather in the city of Melbourne to light their candles and sing their favourite carols under the night sky.



Houses and streets are brightly decorated with local plants and flowers. They are also surrounded with Christmas Bush, a native plant which has little red flowered leaves. Decorations range from traditional Victorian images to typical Australian images like kangaroos and koala bears. Santa Claus is often depicted in a swimsuit and arrives on a surfboard or by boat rather than down the chimney!



ACTIVITY

Introduce the following vocabulary:

- shorts • shirt • cap
- sandals • sunglasses
- trousers • coat • boots
- gloves • hat (cap).

Ask your pupils to fold a piece of paper and label the two sides, Santa in Australia and Santa in America. Ask the children to draw pictures of the two Santas and write descriptions of what they are wearing.

Example:

*In Australia
Santa has got
shorts.*

*In America
Santa has got
trousers.*



Christmas in two Lands

*There it is cold, or there is snow,
And holly, fires and mistletoe.
And carols sung out in the street
By children, walking through the sleet.
Church bells break the frozen air
Ringing loudly everywhere.
There is where white winter glory
Comes to tell the Christmas story.*

*Here it is hot, the sun is gold,
And turns tired when day is old.
Christmas carols are sung at night
Somewhere outside, by candlelight.
Church bells ring out in the heat
And call to people in the street.
The Christmas story here is told
In summer, when the sun is gold.*

Joan Mellings