



Britain's 'Mr Christmas' gets credit crunched

英國「耶誕先生」財務吃緊

A British oddball who celebrates Christmas every single day said the **recession** had forced him to scale back the whirlwind of daily **festivities** this year.

Andy Park, who bills himself as Mr Christmas, said his weight had plunged after slashing his **mammoth** daily portions of mince pies, champagne, roast turkey and all the trimmings.

The divorced electrician from Melksham in southwest England used to blow £11,000 (NT\$574,000) a year on his daily Christmas knees-up but has trimmed his budget down to £5,000 (NT\$259,000) in 2009.

"Before the credit crunch I was eating a 14-pound (6.4kg) turkey, now I'm down to a four pounder (1.8kg). I've cut down from nine massive roast potatoes to four," Park said.

"I used to have 40 peas on my plate, now it's just a table-spoon. I now have to make a bottle of champagne last two days. From 40 mince pies a day I've gone to 12 and there's no double cream."

However, Park reckons he is benefiting from the global economic downturn.

"After all that, I feel 100 percent better and I look better too. I can go walking every day and take the dog out with no problems," he said, adding that he had cut his weight from 124kg to 102kg.

The electrician was feeling bored on July 14, 1994 and decided to get out the Christmas decorations to cheer himself up. It worked and Park **swears blind** he has celebrated Christmas every single day ever since.

His daily routine includes a hearty breakfast of mince pies and sherry, with a full roast turkey for lunch before settling down to watch a video of Queen Elizabeth II's traditional Christmas broadcast to the Commonwealth.

When he dies, Park says he wants to be buried in a **coffin** full of Brussels sprouts, with all mourners dressed as Santa Claus, and Christmas dinner to follow.

(AFP)

英國一個每天都慶祝耶誕節的怪人說，經濟衰退迫使他今年縮減每天的慶祝規模。

自封為「耶誕先生」的安迪·帕克說，自從大幅減少每天大啖的肉餡派、香檳、烤火雞和配菜的量後，體重驟減。

這名已離婚、住在英格蘭西南部梅爾克舍姆的電工，過去每年都花費一萬一千英鎊（約合新台幣五十七萬四千元）天天慶祝耶誕節，但二〇〇九年他的預算縮減至五千英鎊（新台幣二十五萬九千元）。

帕克說：「在這一波信用緊縮之前，我吃的是十四磅（六點四公斤）的火雞，現在則是吃四磅（一點八公斤）的。烤馬鈴薯也從九個減到四個。」

「我以前吃四十個豌豆，現在只吃一茶匙的量。我現在一瓶香

檳得分成兩天享用。每天吃的肉餡派從四十個減到十二個，而且也沒有特濃奶油了。」

然而，帕克認為全球經濟衰退讓他獲益良多。

他說：「經過這些後，我覺得自己百分之百健康多了，看起來也更好了。我每天可以去散步，溜起狗來也毫不費力。」他的體重從一百二十四公斤減到一百零二公斤。

一九九四年七月十四日，這名電工覺得生活索然無味，決定把耶誕節裝飾拿出來佈置，想讓自己心情好一點。結果這招奏效，帕克誓言此後天天都要慶祝耶誕節。

他的每日例行事務包括：享用肉餡派加雪利酒的豐盛早餐，午餐吃一隻烤全火雞，接著再舒舒服服地坐下來看一段英女王伊麗莎白二世的傳統耶誕節談話錄影。

帕克說，他希望死後安葬在裝滿球芽甘藍菜的棺木中，所有前來送他最後一程的親友可以穿著耶誕老人的服飾，之後再享用一頓耶誕大餐。

（法新社／翻譯：袁星塵）

Above: A man dressed up as Santa Claus looks round as his finishing medal gets caught up in his glasses during The Great Scottish Santa Run in Princes Street gardens in Edinburgh, Scotland, on Dec. 13, 2009.

PHOTO: REUTERS

上圖：十二月十三日，在蘇格蘭愛丁堡王子大道花園舉行的「蘇格蘭耶誕老人路跑」活動上，一個扮成「耶誕老人」的男子轉頭時，結業獎章正好卡到眼鏡。

照片：路透社

TODAY'S WORDS

今日單字

1. **recession** /rɪˈseʃən/ n.

衰退 (shuai1 tui4)

例： Sales have fallen sharply since the start of the recession.
(自從經濟一開始衰退，銷售就大幅下降。)

2. **festivity** /fɛˈstɪvəti/ n.

歡慶 (huan1 qing4)

例： The festivities included a lap of honor by the winning athletes.
(慶祝活動包括優勝運動員繞場一圈。)

3. **mammoth** /ˈmæməθ/ adj.

龐大的 (pang2 da4 de5)

例： Relocating to the new offices will be a mammoth task.
(搬到新公司將是一項非常浩大的工程。)

4. **coffin** /ˈkɒfɪn/ n.

棺材 (guan1 cai2)

例： The mourners filed past the coffin to pay their respects.
(哀悼者一個個經過棺木瞻仰弔唁。)

IDIOM POINT

重要片語

swear blind
發誓，信誓旦旦

If someone **swears blind** that something is true, they assert that it is the case. According to the article, Mr Park **swears blind** that he has celebrated Christmas every day since 1994.

Examples: "Jeff **swears blind** he had nothing to do with the fire in the basement," or "I **swear blind** I saw someone trying to break into the office last night."

若某人「**swear blind**」某事為真，就表示他們斷言這就是事實。上文中提到，帕克先生信誓旦旦表示，從一九九四年起他每天都慶祝耶誕節。

例如：「傑夫發誓地下室的火警絕對和他無關」，或是「我發誓我昨晚看到有人想要破門闖進公司」。