Seasonal Festivities Warm Up the Campus in December

A Wintery, but Warm Tradition...

The traditional Columbia Yule Log Ceremony—which predates the Revolutionary War, in the first decades of Columbia's founding as King's College—took place on Thursday, Dec. 4, in the John Jay Lounge. While the tradition was dropped for a while, it was revived in 1910 by University President Nicholas Murray Butler to provide holiday cheer for students who could not go home to their families.

The Yule Log Ceremony is steeped in Columbia history: The poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas," penned by Clement Clarke Moore (class of 1798) is read every year. The Yule Log Heralds, dressed in traditional Revolutionary War uniforms, carry the log throughout the campus in order to officially announce the festive season has again arrived.

Above, President Lee C. Bollinger presides over the ceremony.

Dancing to a Klezmer Beat...

The Strauss-Warschauer Duo and the Columbia Klezmer Band livened up the Kraft Center with a performance and dance party on Monday, Dec. 8. Emceed by Jeremy Dauber, Atran Assistant Professor of Yiddish Language, the event promoted Jewish arts programming at Columbia/Barnard Hillel. The concert was a multi-generational affair drawing more than 200 alumni, parents, faculty, administrators, students, neighbors and friends.

The Columbia Klezmer Band is a group of student musicians, under the sponsorship of Columbia/Barnard Hillel, who perform throughout the Northeast at festivals, concerts and other celebrations.

The Columbia Klezmer Band & Dance Party was the first collaboration between the Program in Yiddish Studies at Columbia and Columbia/Barnard Hillel.

The Kraft Center for Jewish Student Life, which opened in 2000, is home to 50 student groups, where more than 2,500 students congregate over the course of the year in programs ranging from the Kraft Clothing Pantry, to Wednesday Night Learning, SuperBowl Parties, sushi-making, holiday festivals, Shabbat dinners and Onegs.