

afraid of winter, I've heard it's cold," Akuyo added.

The unavoidable question about "Anne of Green Gables" came from my friend Jennifer, who wanted to know, "what is the appeal, exactly?" Akuyo noted that it is a hard question to answer sometimes, but pointed to the history of the novel in Japanese culture.

The original translator, Hanako Maraoko, had attended a Canadian college staffed by Canadian born teachers through the 1930s, and became absorbed in the culture, language and literature while there. "Anne" was one of the books she was introduced to and grew to love, as a keepsake of her happy times at the college. As World War II loomed, the Canadians left the country, but Hanako decided to secretly translate the book into Japanese. This was an extremely bold and dangerous undertaking since English had become, at that time, the language of the enemy. After the war, the book was published and, "really spread out over Japan . . . a dream for many young girls" during a rough period of history.

In fact, the name of the book is not "Anne of Green Gables" in Japan, but "Red-Haired Anne," Ayuko told us.

She also noted that the series is no longer considered simply a "very young girl's story" since the series follows Anne through to adulthood. Akuyo says that this progression towards maturity and independence is "charming for every woman in Japan."

The conversation, oddly, shifted to talking about various people and professors on campus. Akuyo was amused by this increasingly blatant display of Prince Edward Island gossip.

After our meal, I drove Akuyo back to her residence in Blanchard Hall. We had attempted to share a half-platter of nachos between us, but it was a daunting task that neither of us proved able to finish.

"There are such big portions here," Akuyo said, remarking that meals in Japan tend to be a large assortment of small dishes.

In November, Akuyo is hosting a small, traditional tea ceremony in her apartment. It will be another chance to exchange notes about Japan and learn more, ironically, about my own culture at the same time.

Wright Place at the Wright Time

by Stephan MacLEOD

Roger Waters' biggest complaint about Pink Floyd's *The Wall* is that the film failed to show the light-hearted side of the band. Leave it to Kingston, Ontario's Luther Wright and the Wrongs (Luther Wright — guitar, vocals, Dan Curtis — lead guitar, Cam Giroux — drums, Sean Kelly — bass, and Burke Carroll — pedal steel guitar) to fix everything by rebuilding *The Wall* on their latest album which reinterprets the number one selling record in the bluegrass style.

It all started with the song "Another Brick in The Wall". Luther Wright and the Wrongs could hear a country riff in the bass line of the song. This led them to "engineer the biggest country/bluegrass rescue operation in human history," as they describe it on their website, www.lutherwrightandthewrongs.com. It was not difficult fitting the rest of the songs into a bluegrass format since most of them have a G-C-D chord pattern common to country music. And the strong subject of individuality and independence throughout *The Wall* lends itself well to their rustic, southern interpretations of the songs. "Mother should I trust the government" could easily be mistaken for a country singer's lament as well as "We don't need no education" or "I need a dirty woman."

"I hope you fall flat and broke and become a K-Mart re-issue."

Luther delivers Pink Floyd's songs, as well as his originals, with his tongue firmly placed in cheek. He doesn't take things too seriously, has a quick sense of humour, and sings country music in an ironic style that borders on parody but also shows an appreciation for the music. His light treatment of the Pink Floyd songs has gained criticism from obsessive Floyd fans. During a show in Brockville, where the band was billed as a "Floyd



Luther Wright and the Wrongs at Baba's.

Tribute Band," someone in the audience dropped a piece of hate mail on stage during the band's third song. It said, "I hope you fall flat and broke and become a K-Mart re-issue." The band, however, took the note in stride and posted it to their website. Luther told me that he thinks anyone who is that passionate about something that's over twenty years old should be locked up — unless of course it's their twenty-year-old child or something.

Despite the occasional upset fanatic, Luther Wright and the Wrongs have been winning over audiences with their unique take on classic rock and country music. The Wrongs have been playing music together since 1997. Formed as a side project to Weeping Tile, they've had lots of time to make a name for themselves during the band's hiatus, while Sarah Harmer of Weeping Tile has received heavy radio air play across the country with her solo work. Harmer makes an appearance on *Rebuild the Wall* in a ball-breaking rendition of "Mother."

Audiences expecting to hear the band play nothing but Floyd covers during a show will be surprised by the amount of original songs the band has penned. So far they have two albums worth of original material and

an upcoming record that is sure to have problems making it to the shelves of Wal Mart. *Break My Fucking Heart* is the tentative title for the new album, and the band is already having trouble getting radio play. During a live session on a CBC radio program, The Wrongs kicked into the title track, "Break My Fucking Heart" and were immediately cut off by the shows producers.

The Wrongs may play hurtin' music and cover Pink Floyd songs, but they are really cow punks at heart. The energy and attitude of their live shows is fast and furious. And a song like "Break My Fucking Heart" does not seem out of place among their truck driving ballads and psychedelic roots music. Their fresh approach to country music - and the fact that they cover *The Wall* - makes them stand out in the growing alt country scene, which, as Luther points out, is popping up faster than letters filled with anthrax in the mail.

When asked if they plan on redoing Michael Jackson's hit album *Thriller*, Luther told me that there are no more conceptual tribute albums in the works. Expect to hear more original music from this whiskey-fed backwoods hillbilly group in the future.