

Ida's Notebook

Ida Risser



Some Christmas customs change and some remain the same.

No longer are candies lit on an evergreen tree as this practice is considered to be

too dangerous. No longer can the average citizen go out into his own meadow or fence-row and cut down an evergreen tree as my father did for us. Those red-cedar trees he brought us had sharp and needle-like leaves and were not pleasant to decorate. Now, even we have succumbed to buying a pine as our row of evergreens has grown too tall to "top" as we did in previous year.

But eating Christmas cookies is still in style and therefore a lot of time is spent in making an ample supply. In years past, we are told that they filled lard cans and hoped they would last

until Easter. Certain kinds of cookies are only made in the holiday season. Seldom are sand tarts and decorated animal cookies made in July. Our family usually makes a dozen or more kinds but they don't last past December.

As a child and a grownup, I've always been accustomed to a row of stockings to check on Christmas morning. The usual items found inside are English walnuts, hard candies and a big orange.

When our children were little a small toy was added to each stocking as a gift from Santa.

Here on our dairy farm we are surrounded by Amish families and each Christmas

we exchange gifts such as homemade bread, cookies or a freshly dressed duck. The Amish do not decorate their homes with Christmas trees although they do celebrate by enjoying a second Christmas. This holiday is spent visiting friends and

relatives in their boxlike family wagon.

And so, this year, as in many years spent, children will string popcorn and cranberries and make chains of brightly colored paper to decorate the tree in anticipation of Santa's visit.

Christmas trees

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special unique gift for a loved one or to satisfy your own fancy.

Jim, a student in business administration at Penn State, enjoys the landscaping.

Chuck, as he sat behind his desk, contided that he hoped to get Jim to share that same position. This would allow Chuck to be free of the desk work he left ten years ago.

Christmas Tree Hill is a family success story for the Charles Stauffer family. Lois summed up their philosophy by saying, "We believe big is not always beautiful."

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Season's Greetings



A season to sow, a season to reap Working the land held in our keep

With these words, the men and women of farming perform their varied activities throughout the changing seasons each year.

While their methods have been revolutionized from previous hard and tedious manual tasks to present modern mechanized efficiency, their role as keepers of the land remains largely unchanged. They prepare, care for and harvest the foundation of life itself.

Now is their season to plan for yet another season of rebirth of the land. As one year ends and another begins, let's remember these keepers of the land and the life-giving meaning they impart to the seasons.

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