

# Christmas customs are centuries old

Where did you get that Christmas custom? It could have come from Sweden. Or France. Even fourth century Turkey played its role. Some of the more ancient customs might seem strange to us today, but each had a hand in revealing and shaping many of the Christmas customs and traditions we now enjoy.

The delightful custom of "bussing" under the mistletoe actually came from the ancient Druids, who called it "all heal" in the belief that it had the power to cure disease.

In the 13th century, the "carol" signified a dance rather than a song. In fact, St. Francis of Assisi led villagers in joyous dancing around the Nativity scene.

And it was an eighth century Benedictine monk, St. Boniface, who probably trimmed the first Christmas tree when he convinced heathens to stop worshipping a sacred oak and adorn fir trees in the homes as a tribute to the Christ child.

A fourth-century bishop of Turkey, Saint Nicholas, was the real-life predecessor of Santa Claus. According to a legend, he dropped a bag of gold coins down a chimney into a stocking which a poor girl had hung by the fireplace to dry; hence our custom of hanging Christmas stockings.

And Santa wasn't always the fat, jolly man you recognize

today. He's gained plenty of weight since the Dutch called him Sinta Klaas, and he rode a skinny white horse, not reindeer.

Yet when his legend began, he was just as important to men and women, as children. According to researchers, Saint Nicholas was the patron saint of sailors.

The Swedes and Danes make a Christmas practice of baking a loaf in the shape of a boar-pig.

A French legend tells how the Christmas rose came into being. A little girl, accompanying the shepherds on their way to see the Christ Child, was sad because she had no gift to offer.

The angel Gabriel appeared and, taking pity on the child, caused a beautiful white rose to spring from the ground. Overjoyed, the little girl plucked the bloom, which she took as a gift to the Infant Jesus.

Called Noel by the French, Navidad by the Spanish, Natale by the Italians and Weihnachten by the Germans, Christmas in our part of the world is derived from the Old English term Cristes mæsse (Christ's Mass), a term first used in the 11th century.

One custom has it that, if the Yule log stays lit throughout the night, it's good luck. But watch out if a squinting person comes in while it's burning. That's bad luck.

The large part children play in Christmas is legendary. If he was lucky, the 16th century child got a ride on a huge Yule log when it was dragged into the manor house or castle. While caroling and feasting went on during Christmas eve, the youngsters played Snap-dragon, a game in which the players tried to snatch a raisin from a bowl of burning spices and spirits.

In this country at Christmas-time, it's a rare father who hasn't winced at his perennial Yuletide gift, the tie he doesn't like. Many families have overcome the problem of what to give Dad with imaginative gifts that range from a new pair of water skis to such tangy men's colognes as Old Spice.

While American youngsters are putting these gifts under trees, Slavic children go to sleep on a bed of straw and hay on Christmas eve, to share in Christ's humble birth.

One of our most recent customs, the exchanging of Christmas cards, began in England in the 1840s. Christmas cards were introduced in the United States by Louis Prang, a German immigrant. Often called the "Father of the American Christmas Card," Prang printed his first "Seasons Greetings" in 1873.

In many countries of Europe, people still believe that all trees break into blossom for a few moments at midnight on Christmas Eve. The most popular flowering plant is the poinsettia, brought to the United States more than 120 years ago from Mexico.

To put it briefly, Christmas is a holiday full of surprises... and they're not all found under the Christmas tree the morning of Dec. 25!



Linda Clovis (on knee) and Cathy Munnell perform at annual Christmas Concert held Sunday at Dallas Senior High School. In background is the Dallas High School chorale group, directed by Mrs. Sherwood.

photo by Saffian

## Beaumont

"Merry Christmas! God Bless us Everyone!"

The Clayton Cooks feel blessed to be able to share the twelve day Christmas Vacation with James and Tom McCauley who attend the Boys' Industrial School, Hershey, Pa.

James, who is the reporter for the Spartan (School Newspaper), was elected Chaplain of the Senior Senate. Tom's interests lean to sports, especially football where he made several touchdowns this past season.

The McCauley boys spent last summer vacation with the Cooks and wanted to come "home" for the holidays. Mrs. Ruth Mowry, who is a resident of the Baker Nursing

## winter fishing

A reminder to all fishermen in the area that Pennsylvania's winter Trout and Salmon fishing season opened Sunday, December 1, 1968 on lakes over 10 acres in size throughout the state. The daily creel limit is 3 fish (combined species) with a minimum size of 6". The season closes at midnight February 15, 1969.

During the period December 1, 1968 to March 14, 1969, minimum size of pickeral is 16". Daily creel limits are as follows: Bass (combined species) is 3, pickeral 3 and walleye 3.

A new regulation is in effect this year that limits the size of a hole bored or cut through the ice to a diameter of no more than 10".

Also, Daniel MacAvoy, Maureen McAllister, Patricia McMichael, Scott Miller Robert Moore, David P. Morgan, David Munnell, Sandra Nicely, Alexander O'Malia, Helen Orloski, William Ostrum, George Otto, Elizabeth Parkhurst, Karen Parry and Eugene Phillips.

Also, Georgia Phillips, Richard Pietricini, Ruth Porter, Karen Purvin, Chrisan Pyle, Elizabeth Raub, Kathy Reese, Carrie Roberts, Jenni Rodda, Brian Roddy, Mary Roman, Gary Ross and Paul Rubino.

Also, Jerry Scott, Grace Sheldon, Jane Sherman, Kathy

# Dallas Junior Honor Roll

John F. Rosser, principal, Dallas Junior High School, announces that the following students are on the Honor Roll for the Second Marking Period of the 1968-1969 year:

### 7TH GRADE

John Arnold, Patricia Beckham, Cynthia Beline, Robert Blase, Robert Bomberger, Gerald Brague, Doris Britt, Cynthia Bucan, Debra Bulford, Michael Caffrey, Robert Caselberry, Kevin Chadwick, Thomas Considine, Ann Crispell, Richard Crompton, Helen DeMarco, William Dierolf, Peter Eckman, Donald Engler, Karen Fedak, Cheryl Field, and Nancy Fink.

Also, Diane Fiske, Linda Flock, Laurel Gillis, Debra Gosart, Eugene Gilmartin, Barbara Griffith, Sherry Harding, Joann Harowica, Richard Harrison, James Higgs, Edward Johnson, Warren Koehl, Susan Laux, James Lavelle, Joseph Labatch, Judith Lewis and Mark Lusaitis.

Also, Daniel MacAvoy, Maureen McAllister, Patricia McMichael, Scott Miller Robert Moore, David P. Morgan, David Munnell, Sandra Nicely, Alexander O'Malia, Helen Orloski, William Ostrum, George Otto, Elizabeth Parkhurst, Karen Parry and Eugene Phillips.

Also, Georgia Phillips, Richard Pietricini, Ruth Porter, Karen Purvin, Chrisan Pyle, Elizabeth Raub, Kathy Reese, Carrie Roberts, Jenni Rodda, Brian Roddy, Mary Roman, Gary Ross and Paul Rubino.

Also, Jerry Scott, Grace Sheldon, Jane Sherman, Kathy

Skammer, Robert Sprau, Rebecca Stout, Maribeth Taylor Kathleen Thomas, Elaine Ward and Timothy Viccia.

### 8TH GRADE

Christin Banks, Bruce Becker, Wayne Evans, Sherril Fader, Linda Fink, Robi Fox, Jeanette Goeringer, Alan Gosart, Peggy Hacker, Joyce Hazletine, Ray Jacobs, Jenni Kapson, Karen Kauffman, Jack Kloeber, Kathy Kreidler, Gail Lacy, Diane Masoner and Nancy Mathers.

Also, Marleen Messnar, Marilyn Miller, Earl Monk, George Paars, Earl Phillips, Barbara Pichert, Pamela Porter, Carol Sipple, Diane Stredney, Cheryl Templin, Patticia Van Etten and Cynthia Witek.

### 9TH GRADE

Melanie Albert, Leslie Alexander, Carol Beline, Linda Brongo, Janice Culp, Michael Davis, Diane Dennis, Leslie Evans, Karen Fedock, Nancy Fleming, Kathy Futch, Robert Goeringer, Joan Havar, Cathy Heffner, Tom Hicks, Pricilla Kloeber and Sally Kuehnert.

Also, Gary Kostrobala, Jon Jay LaBerge, Patti Lewis, Barbara Long, Mary Alice Lumley, Judith MacAvoy, John Martin, William M. Hale, Jay Miller, Martha Miller, Debra Mitchell, Paulette Muscavage and Susan Neilson.

Also, Debbie Newberry, Donna Perry, Holly Phillips, Debra Philo, Nancy Pichert, Edward Riefenstahl, Paula Selingo, Debra Shook, Clark Turner, Linda Wentz, John Wojchick and Alexander Wozeter.

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SHAVERTOWN

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NOW OPEN FOR DINNER  
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Taking Reservations Now  
For A Gala New Year's Eve Party with A Four-Piece Band And All The Trimmings  
For Reservations—Call 674-9461  
Lake Highway, Dallas



Fred Welsh, 11 East Center Hill Road, Dallas, has been setting up a huge Christmas display for 42 years. Seventy little buildings are all lighted up, seven sets of trains go whizzing by, on a platform which takes up most of the living room. The Welshes move out most of the furniture right after Thanksgiving, to give plenty of room for the undertaking. In the days before the larger school jointure, Dallas Borough school children visited the display, class by class. This is no longer practical because of bus transportation.

Christmas tree lights blink on and off, trains whizz around the man-made miniature village at the home of Fred Welsh, who has been working on this project for over 40 years, where Christmas means starting on the tree the day after Thanksgiving. photo by Saffian

**BUICK BUICK**  
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4 Door Hard Top  
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The Wyoming National Bank of Wilkes-Barre  
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## Jaycee Christmas lighting contest

The Greater Wilkes-Barre Jaycees are once again sponsoring their annual "Christmas Lighting Contest" and are extending a special invitation to the Back Mountain area residents to enter the contest. Chairman of the contest, John Fields, Kingston, announced the contest is open to residents in the areas from Harveys Lake to Bear Creek, West Pittston to Nanticoke, and the greater Wilkes-Barre area.

Anyone may enter either of three categories: overall home display; overall commercial display; and home, doorway and/or window display. Mr. Field said each category will be judged separately and attractive plaques will be presented by the Wilkes-Barre Jaycees.

Judging will be based on artistic merit, originality, lighting techniques and ingenuity. To enter the contest, Back Mountain residents are asked to send a postcard to the Greater Wilkes-Barre Jaycees, care of Genetti Hotel, Wilkes-Barre, Pa.

The deadline for entering the contest is December 22, 1968. One may obtain entry blanks in person at the following stores:

Fowler, Dick and Walker, Pomeroy's, Wilkes-Barre, Rileighs, Kingston, and Pomeroy's, Midway Shopping Center, Wyoming. Only those

homes and businesses entered in the contest will be judged.

for Christmas Giving  
**TIMEX WATCHES**  
New Displays  
\$695 to 1795  
  
Mens Electric 39.95  
**EVAN'S DRUG STORE**  
"PRESCRIPTION PHARMACY"  
SHAVERTOWN  
675-3346 675-5121

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• NATURAL WREATHS  
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Open 10:30 A.M. - 7:30 P.M. Until Xmas  
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Christmas local gro...  
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\$35. Phone 6...  
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