

'Twas THE NIGHT BEFORE CHRISTMAS By Little Petunia

'Twas the day before Easter in the year '68
And all was in readiness and no one was late.
The syrup was bottled with ease and with care
In hopes that a "Sweet Tooth" would maybe be there.
The Shanty was steaming; some people were too,
And visions of money for all were in view.
The pails and the kettles were covered with dust
And the old evaporator was eaten with rust.
Watt was there in his overalls and Mary was handy,
They were up to their ears in maple sugar candy!
Then all of a sudden the big moment arrived
And hundreds of people came just for the ride.
Mulveys from a distance, Fitches by the dozen,
Renwicks and Inglises and all their kissin' cousins.
The dough for the pancakes was fluffy and white,
The butter was cut up in squares and just right.
The splinters from planks tore everyone's clothes
And the smoke from the sausage plugged many a nose.
The sawdust was cold, we all froze our feetsies
And we all got tummy-ache from too many sweetsies!
But boy, we had fun, it was all in good cheer
And so we decided we'd do it next year.
So bigger and better it all came about,
We started a Pancake House and everyone turned out,
Knitting and sewing and some pretty posies,
Sweaters and scarves and colored tea cosies.
The ovens were busy with apple and rhubarb
And selling the pies sure was never too hard!
Step-dancers and fiddlers we brought from a distance
To add to local talent and offer assistance.
Never mind that the floor was unsteady,
When it came to good fun, we all were ready.
From our local talent we made some real stars
Who sang on TV - and even in bars!
Like some of the Busbys -- Denise Kennedy --
The step-dancing Sisters -- Doug Inglis -- and Me!!!
So it grew and it flourished and quickly became
A way to make money, a symbol of fame,
A place for old neighbors to meet and converse,
A place to catch colds -- sometimes even worse!
Where we stood in line for the john for an hour,
And sometimes forgot where we parked the car!
We paid for new ice, for a new roof as well,
We dressed up the arena until it looked swell.
The ball park and picnic grounds which once looked so rough,
Till some creep came and said it wasn't enough.
"It doesn't meet standards," he said with a smile.
Since when were HIS standards so doggone high???
"Take your choice - a new one or fix!"
And our people looked at him and said "Nix!"
But the answer was final, the orders direct,
And our dear old arena was about to be wrecked.
Down in a heap all the memories would fall
And with them a little part of us all.
But bigger and better the new one would be
And sweeter the syrup from the old maple tree.
Thinner the wallet but higher the head
For community pride is strong here, 'tis said.
Never mind if we go to bed starved,
It's "Together we conquer though the going be hard!"
Roses are red and violets are purple,
Who knew there were pennies in our maple syrple?
Who would have guessed, in 1968,
That its contribution would be half so great?
I'm glad to return and wish you good luck
And toward your cause I donate you a buck.
It's all that my piggy bank can afford at the minute
But a lot of good wishes are wrapped up in it.
Thank you for inviting me, Good Night and God Bless,
With your new arena I wish you success.
Together you'll conquer and it WILL be swell,
And those government lads can all go to Formosa!!!!

THE END!