



Christmas fun with kindergarten cut-ups



IT'S SERIOUS STUFF for Kevin McClaren.



IT'S A DAINTY dab of glue for Donald Weaver



IT'S ALL IN THE WAY you hold your tongue for Sherry Hallatay.



EUKKK!! What a qucky mess for a lady like Wendy Brown.



THE OBJECT WAS SANTA FACES in Miss Sinclair's kindergarten class at Robert Little, and the results were as varied as the methods of construction

Spirit of Christmas Rules In Community Celebrations

It's Christmas time! Everywhere, glad sights and sounds reflect the spirit of the season as this community celebrates the joyous holiday.

The spirit of Christmas is seen in gaily decorated streets and stores in homes aglow with light and festive with evergreens, in churches where the manger scene tells anew the wonderful old story of a holy Babe who was born in Bethlehem, nearly two thousand years ago.

The spirit of Christmas is heard in bells ringing out from street corner to street corner, in happy voices singing all the songs of the season, from old familiar carols to the more solemn, but at the same time joyful, anthems, cantatas and oratorios.

The spirit of Christmas is felt as last minute preparations for the big celebration are made. There are always, it seems, some packages still to be wrapped, some final trimmings to be put on the tree, some part of the Christmas pageant or choral program that needs just one more rehearsal, some extra touches to make the Christmas feast absolutely perfect.

In the midst of the hustle and bustle, the spirit of Christmas shines through in all its many meanings.

The spirit of Christmas means laughter and joy — best expressed, perhaps, by the faces of children, eager and smiling as they wait for Santa, full of reverent wonder as they hear the Christmas story and see the manger scene.

The spirit of Christmas means giving, with love wrapped into every package. And it means sharing, the riches of thoughtful consideration and genuine interest, as well as time and money — with the aged, the ill, the needy and unfortunate.

The spirit of Christmas means a warm renewal of family ties and close friendships, and an enjoyment of traditions treasured through the years — the special customs each family creates for itself, as well as the traditions garnered from the lore and legends of Christmas.

Naming the Day
As a holy day and a holiday, Christmas means both prayerful worship and festive merry-making. The holy meaning of the day is expressed in its name.

The French "Noel" has several possible meanings — news, birthday or a "shout of joy." Whatever the exact origin, there's no question that Noel now means Christmas.

How the Tree Grew
When the German prince Alfred married Queen Victoria,

he carried the custom of the Yule tree to England, and from there it spread by imitation and immigration to the United States and Canada.

The German origin is appropriate, since it was in Germany that the English missionary St. Boniface, formerly a monk named Winfrid, first instituted the decorated fir tree, as a replacement for the sacrifices made to the oak, which was sacred to the pagan god Odin.

When Caroling Began
With the joyful strains of "Silent Night," "The First Noel" and other beloved carols, today's carolers carry on a meaningful Christmas custom that originated centuries ago.

As early as the fourth century A. D., a musical poem was

sung in honor of St. Basil and his victory in the field for Christianity.

The first real Christmas carols, however, were probably sung in the Italian mountain village of Greccio when St. Francis of Assisi created the last manger scene in 1223. He and his brethren led the villagers in singing hymns of praise to the Christ Child.

Source of Living
Giving gifts at the Yuletide season has many precedents. In the years before Christ, Romans gave branches of laurel, olive and myrtle to each other at the Saturnalia, a pagan festival that occurred about the same time as the present date of Christmas. In England and Northern Europe, Druid worshippers tied gifts on trees during the Yule festival held at the winter solstice.

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PEACE AND JOY

May the Star that blazed in the heavens on the night of His birth shine upon you and yours at Christmas, bringing you a full measure of peace, joy and happiness. To all our friends we send our warmest greetings for a happy holiday season filled with laughter, good times and good cheer.

from
the staff
of

The Acton Free Press

