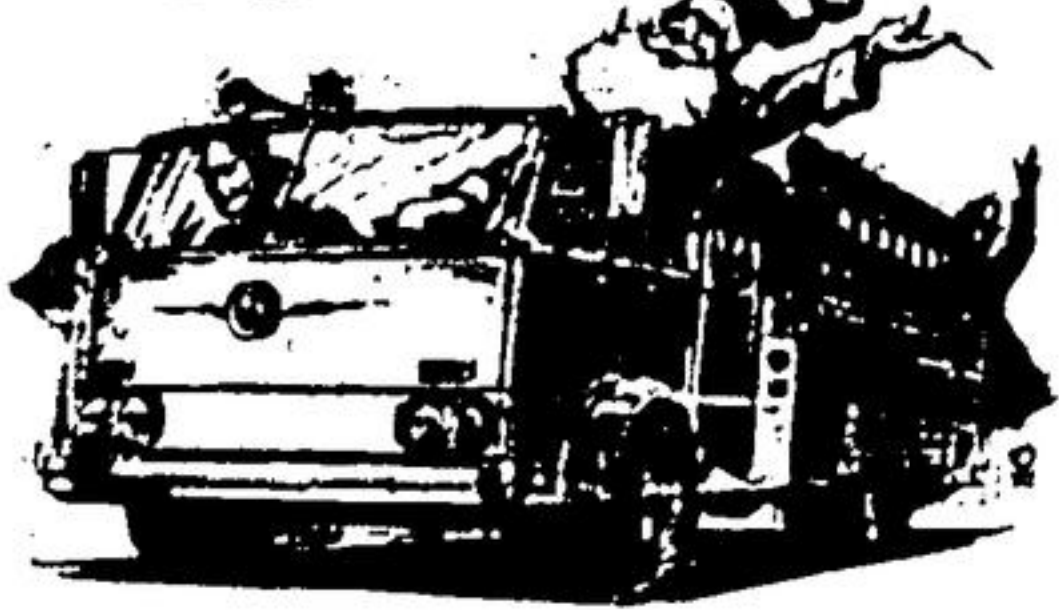


MAKE WAY FOR SANTA!



Help Salvation Army bring smiles to child, elderly

The smile of a child receiving a new toy and a stockingful of Christmas treats — provided through The Salvation Army because her parents could not afford them — is sweeter than any candy.

The light shining in the eyes of the ill and elderly — because The Salvation Army remembered them — is brighter than the lights twinkling on the tree.

The sincere "Merry Christmas and God bless you" of Salvation Army officers who open the doors of their centers to the lonely and homeless is a warmer welcome than the biggest holly wreath.

And, when all the decorations are packed away, the faith, hope and love that comes of sharing with others remains to strengthen us for the new year. You can share with the less fortunate of our community by supporting The Salvation Army so that it may continue to bring the joy and true meaning of Christmas to those in need.



CLOWNS AND SANTA amused young children attending the Ontario Steel Products employees' Christmas party at the U.A.W. Centre in Milton Saturday. Bill Taylor, John Wigglesworth and Bernie Taylor play the role as clowns while Bev and Connie Taylor admire them. — (Staff Photo)

Torchlit ski hills, hay on table, woman on broom are Christmas customs

Skiing down a mountain with a lighted torch in your hand — strewing hay on the floor of your home — knocking on neighbors' doors in a symbolic pilgrimage — these are some of the ways you might find yourself celebrating Christmas in other parts of the world.

In token of Christ's birth in a manger, Poles spread hay on the floor and Lithuanians have straw under the tablecloth at their festive Christmas Eve meal. The colorful Mexican posada or pilgrimage dramatizes the search which led Mary and Joseph to the stable. For each of the nine nights before Christmas, the couple dressed as Mary and Joseph go from house to house. Only at the last house are they and the parade of neighbors which is now following them invited in for supper.

An even more novel procession may be seen in the mountains of Austria. According to researchers, wood carvers in the little town of Oberammergau meet on Christmas Eve, and ski down the mountain slopes with flaming torches in their hands, singing as they go!

Just about every country which celebrates Christmas has its unique bit of seasonal folklore or ritual. In Sweden it's the feast of St. Lucia on December 13, ushering in the Christmas season. Each community chooses a lovely Lucia Queen to represent the young girl martyred for her religion centuries before in ancient Rome. In families with daughters, the prettiest plays the role of Lucia. Her privilege is to wait on everyone else for the day!

But even the standard holiday features, Christmas dinner, Christmas presents and Yuletide decorations, have picturesque local variations. Not only does Santa have numerous aliases, (He's Julemexen in Denmark, Pere Noel in France and the Abbot of Unreason in Scotland) but in Italy he is a she. Italian children place their trust in Befana, an old woman on a broomstick who brings gifts to good children and ashes to bad ones. In older versions of the legend, she ate the juvenile delinquents.

American gift-givers, spending more than \$27 billion for Christmas presents in recent years!

The bearded gent and his counterparts in other countries are kept very busy. The French exchange gifts on New Year's Day but the impatient young fry are visited by Pere Noel on Christmas Eve. While waiting for Befana to come on Jan. 6, Italian children and their elders draw small gifts on Christmas Eve from a jar called the urn of fate. And leave it to the systematic British to establish Dec. 26 as Boxing Day. On this day, servants and tradespeople are remembered with boxes of money.

The date of the Christmas dinner also varies around the world. Many countries have it on Christmas Eve, before or after midnight services. Our traditional turkey does not appear on many menus.

The French reveillon, a feast which occurs after midnight mass is apt to feature oysters and sausages. In the French province of Brittany, buckwheat cakes with sour cream are served.

The Norwegian Christmas dinner features a fish called lutskaf. At a Polish Christmas Eve dinner, the number of courses is fixed at seven, nine or 11. A Lithuanian Christmas feast must include 12 courses, one for each of the 12 disciples.

During the Christmas season, Germans and Rumanians bake long, thin cakes that symbolize the Christ Child wrapped in swaddling clothes. In the Ukrainian part of Russia, cattle are given the first taste of the Christmas supper, because animals were the first to behold Christ. In parts of rural Germany, this is carried one step further. Cattle and their owners both fast the day before Christmas, and eat well on Christmas Eve!

Witch on broom
It is on January 6, the Feast of Epiphany, and not on Christmas Eve that Italian children place their shoes by the fireplace. The shoes are placed in anticipation of the arrival of "Befana", the good witch, who comes down the chimney on a broom to fill the shoes left out for her — sweets for the good youngsters, coal in the shoes of the naughty.

Turk festival
Christmas in Turkey is a three day festival. Christian Turks observe the season by visiting and entertaining and coffee, sweet-meats, fruit and sometimes sour milk are holiday treats.

New Year message
The first cable across the Pacific, between San Francisco and Honolulu, 2,600 miles, was completed January 1, 1903, when the cable ship Silverton arrived in Honolulu. The first message was sent that day and the cable was open for public use four days later.

Pioneer Christmas feasts gastronomical nightmares

Canada's first Christmas celebration occurred as early as 1536 when Jacques Cartier wintered at Stadacona with his ill-fated little colony. But that gallant band of venturers had very little to celebrate — famine, illness, hostile Indians and cold combined to make that Christmas anything but merry.

The first Christmas worthy of the description "merry" was in 1606 in the colony of Fort Royal. Plagued by scurvy and with another long winter upon them, the Fort Royal colonists were struggling against extinction when Samuel de Champlain enlisted the art of gastronomy in the interests of good physical and mental health. He formed a dining club, "l'Ordre du Bon Temps." Each member took his turn being Grand Master for a day and it became a point of honor to fill the post of providing meals for the company with a flair.

As the result of this friendly competition of the table, Marc Lescarbot, one of the earliest historians of Canadian settlements, records that the "board groaned beneath all the luxuries of the winter forest — moose, caribou and deer, beaver, otter and hare; ducks, geese, grouse and plover; sturgeon too, and trout, and fish innumerable speared through the ice...."

Another account of an early seventeenth century Christmas feast in Quebec is enough to make a gourmand groan with indigestion:

"There were cakes of corn bread, great kettles of eels, salmon and beans all boiled together and served in bowls. This was followed by rich meat soups thickened with pounded nuts. Corn, peas and baked squash formed the next course. Then came great joints of roast venison, deep squirrel pies, baked wild pigeons, partridges, blackbirds and owls. For dessert there were cakes of maple sugar and a sweetmeat of nuts and sunflower seeds with a sauce made of dried berries and boiling water."

A Christmas meal at Fort Edmonton in 1847 included boiled buffalo meat — dried moose meat and buffalo tongue. Beavers' tails, roast wild goose and whitefish were also served, while the centre of the table was piled with potatoes, turnips and bread.

For the huge Christmas dinner

that took place about the same period at the home of a prosperous Toronto family, preparations had to be started well before dawn. It included three kinds of soup: oyster, chicken gumbo and mutton broth. There were four boiled dishes: beef, pork, mutton and turkey served with a sauce of melted butter. The vegetables were potatoes, carrots, turnips and onions. The main course consisted of seven different roasts: beef, pork, mutton, turkey, venison, chicken and goose. They neglected to mention what was for dessert, but after four courses like that, who could eat it?

Fortunately, for our stomachs' sakes as well as our general good health, we are more sensible about the amount and kind of food we eat nowadays. However, the Yuletide season is one time in the year when we enjoy those "Extra Special" meals, lovingly prepared and served to family and friends. We suspect the cold weather and the spirit of the season have something to do with it.

Joyous Christmas Greetings

Our wish is that you waken to a Christmas full of the best the season offers... the joy of loving friends, the peace of plenty. Have the Merriest Christmas of all!

JOYCE BEAUTY SALON
32 Cameron St. 853-1820

Glad Christmas Tidings

The time of peace and joy has come to men, the light of happiness sheds its glow over us all. It's Christmastide! Our wish is for you to share this joy... have a merry Christmas!

Management & Staff
ROYAL MILK STORE

GREETINGS

The beauty and spirit of the season brings to mind most wonderful gifts... friendship, loyalty and good will. We thank you for yours and wish you a Merry Christmas.

RYDER'S TV SALES & SERVICE
49 MAIN ST. N. — GEORGETOWN — 877-9796
"EARL AND ANDY"

Joy to the World

The message from the sacred manger brings hope and happiness anew. Merry Christmas!

THE MUTUAL LIFE Assurance Company of Canada
ROBERT S. HART, Agent
341 Orville Rd., Acton
Bus. 416-451-3460
Res. 519-853-1527

A Joyous Christmas

The story of Christmas lives anew, inspiring all with peace and joy. May many blessings be yours on this Christmas.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
Pete Masson Motors Limited
GEORGETOWN

MERRY Christmas

It's the season of joy and good will when friends gather together for happy times. May your Christmas Holiday be filled with many such moments.

WATSON'S RESTAURANT

May the blessings of Christmas be with you always

MAIN VARIETY & SMOKE SHOP

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Our sleigh is overflowing with holiday wishes and sincere thanks for one and all.

MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
NIELSEN'S CLOTHING

GREETINGS FOR Christmas

To you, sincere greetings and thanks... with every good wish that the joy and delight of the Yuletide will be yours. For All Men
Free Sprig of Heather for Hogmanay

Blue Springs Flower Shop
ELBIE BYRN