



PATTI McClure serves Mrs. Rose Hall, Guide and Brownie Commissioner at the Christmas party of the 2nd Acton Brownies held at the scout hall last week. Many mothers attended the special Christmas party.—(Staff Photo)

the painted box

By Wendy Thomson

The one thing I have to do today, December 23, is sit down and write out a list of what I would like for Christmas. All year long, I can think of all kinds of things, but darned if they'll come to mind, now.

Something I find myself wishing for, quite often, is Time, — and that, nobody can give me. Of course, maybe I can go to it from a different angle.

Take yesterday for example. I was in a rush to get to Guelph, but because it was so cold, it took a while to start the car. And because of the cold, I knew it would stop as soon as I took my foot off the gas to run down to the barn and let the cows out. Of course, I could have just turned it off and started all over again when I came back, but I'm partial to travelling in warm cars.

Law of leverage?
 Anyhow, for the next five minutes, I lay across the front seat with my legs hanging out the door, setting up an arrangement where my snow-boot (without my foot) was jammed with the toe under the brake pedal and the heel on the gas, then the handle of my purse was looped over the top of the boot with the rest of the purse hanging down over the other side of the hump on the car floor, (whatever it's for) at just the right angle to put the proper amount of pressure on the heel on the gas to keep it going. Come to think of it, maybe it was closer to ten minutes.

Sooner or later, I got it right, ran down to the barn and let the cows out (after climbing through a barbed wire fence in good coat and stockings). The point is, I could have had that five or ten minutes all to myself if we'd had a heated garage, — or any garage, for that matter.

Enjoying youngsters
 There's another kind of time that I lack; that nobody can provide. Maybe I should call it "instances" — instances when I really, truly, and wholeheartedly enjoy a moment with the youngsters, instead of just tolerating their fun.

There were two such times, this week. The first happened when I insisted that 12-year-old Jim help make the boys' bunk beds. He got in behind, and every time I flipped a sheet or blanket over to him, he coolly, calmly, and methodically pulled it completely over and shoved the whole thing under the mattress, then sat with an expectant look, waiting for the next one.

After many minutes of straightening and tug-of-warring, I collapsed on the bed with laughter and couldn't do any more till God came and carried Jim off.

Dog Germs!
 The next day Jim and Beth (14 years) got into one of their endless arguments. After countless "I did" and "You didn't!" comments, standing shoulder to shoulder and sneering, the two reached an impasse which was broken by Beth leaning over and planting a big smacky kiss on Jim.

And the look on his face! One of our favourite Charlie Brown cartoons is when Lucy gets kissed by Snoopy and runs off screaming "Dog germs!!!" Jim had the exact same look!

I suppose that what I really need in this case, is not time but patience. And that I never have much of.

I wouldn't mind a bit more time with my husband, but I think I'd be more apt to have my Christmas wishes filled if I asked for something a little more logical.

Like a bristly door mat because the geese found the last one and insisted on sleeping (and other things) on it. And two dog dishes so I can have my big roaster back, and two 4' by 8' sheets of 3/4" sheathing grade plywood to put on spots of unfinished wall in the house, and one six inch leg for the couch to replace the one that Jim took off and the dog ate, and a pressure cooker ring, and a green toilet seat, and a few Fresia bulbs, and . . .

Choir service Christmas eve

The annual Christmas Eve service at the United Church, presented by the choir, was again a delight this year.

The congregation joined in hymns and the choir presented a series of selections directed by Dr. George Elliott.

Reading the nine lessons were Bernie Harding of the Tyro boys, Patricia Collett of the Sunday School, Heather Reed for the C.G.I.T., Susan Shoemaker for the stewards; Kit Dowling for the Session, Marion Patterson for the U.C.W. and the Rev. Gordon Turner.

There was a good attendance in the candlelit church for the traditional service.



BROWNIES OF THE 2nd Acton Pack decorated a Christmas tree and then presented it to an elderly Acton couple as part of their activities at a Christmas meeting last Tuesday to which parents were invited.—(Staff Photo)

Free Press Personals

Mrs. Jack Greer is a patient in Guelph General Hospital.

Suffering from a fractured pelvis in a fall recently, Mrs. Bill Chisholm is a patient in Guelph General Hospital.

Mrs. Nellie Merkley of Toronto spent the holiday here with relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Bert Halladay, Bruce and Brian of Guelph were holiday visitors.

Mr. George Harrap spent Christmas with his sister and family in Toronto.

Mr. and Mrs. Warren Wood and Steven of Toronto visited Acton relatives.

Mr. and Mrs. Ted Footitt, Kelly and Michael, Toronto, visited relatives and friends.

Mr. and Mrs. A. M. Macpherson spent Christmas in Guelph with Mr. and Mrs. Ross Gordon.

Mr. Frank Browning of Toronto, who has spent Christmas in Acton with relatives for many years, missed it this year. He's recuperating after an operation in East General Hospital, Toronto.

Mrs. David Lidken and Tasha and Mrs. Edgar Lidken visited with Mr. Lidken at St. Joseph's Extended Care Hospital, Guelph, on Christmas Day. Mr. Randy Lidken, Owen Sound, also visited with his father and then took Mrs. Lidken back to Owen Sound to visit with the family until Sunday afternoon.

Miss Madeleine Gibbons and Mr. Tom Gibbons hosted a Christmas Day dinner attended by Mr. and Mrs. Neil Gibbons and Denis of Acton and Mr. and Mrs. Bill Martin and Pauline of Kitchener.

Tom Engel is seeing daylight during the Christmas holidays. He's home with his parents, Rev. and Mrs. Dwight Engel, Judy and Miriam in Orillia, and they all stopped off briefly en route to a family gathering in Kitchener. Tom is working with an oil drilling crew in the far north, and where he works there will be total darkness till mid-February.

Home for Christmas with Mr. and Mrs. G. Landsborough were Mr. and Mrs. Bob Landsborough, Christopher and Paul of Newmarket, Mr. and Mrs. Mac Sinclair, Gina and Ian of Ottawa, Miss Joanne Landsborough from Montreal. Joanne returns to University of Waterloo the beginning of January.

A Christmas Sunday phone call from their daughter in Africa was a thrill for Mr. and Mrs. C. L. Roggvoldson. They were visiting in Elliott Lake with their daughter, Janet, husband Robert Taylor and baby Michelle, when the exciting call came through. Gerard and Nansi Cougard are living now in Monrovia, Liberia, and along with best wishes for the holiday and New Year they relayed the information they had been swimming Christmas morning, and played tennis in the afternoon. In between: the traditional turkey dinner. They had a tree from Norway for their Christmas so far from their family homes in Paris and Acton.

Here's an unusual feature for Christmas Day—a family hockey match! The Withers and Coxes formed pick-up teams of relatives and friends, and went to Milton arena for the friendly game, arranged by brother-in-law Larry Arbie, manager of Milton arena. Beating up the team were visitors from the States, back seeing a flock of family members and friends here and in Milton. Mr. and Mrs. Mike Cox, Linda and Danny are here from San Diego, California. Mr. and Mrs. Bob Cox and three sons, Shane, Craig and Stacey are here from Tucson, Arizona, where there has already been an unusual amount of snow this year. They flew up Thursday, December 23 and are returning home Sunday, January 2. The men and boys are hockey players and coaches back home and brought their skates with them. They've also been skating on the pond here.



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Mr. and Mrs. Ronald Carter, Arla and Wayne of Neenah, Wisconsin have been visiting her sister, Mrs. Stella Brunelle and family. Other holiday guests included Mrs. Mary Swaniek, Brent and Janet, Toronto; Mrs. Gladys Murray, Toronto; Larry Colero, Islington; Mr. and Mrs. Roly Benoit, Don Mills, Mrs. Benoit, Ottawa; Mrs. Marie Bellamy and Mary-Ellen, Aurora; Mr. and Mrs. Karl Rosenquist, Kara and Christopher, Montreal. Miss Bev Brunelle is home from Perth-Huron School of Nursing, Stratford, and Miss Chris Brunelle from the University of Guelph.

Mr. and Mrs. C. Landsborough, Joanne, Bill and Ralph visited with Mr. and Mrs. Gordon Park and family of Petrolia and Mr. and Mrs. Dave Syer and Angela on Sunday and Monday.

Mrs. F. H. McCutcheon accompanied Mr. and Mrs. Jack McCutcheon as far as London where she spent Christmas with her son, Mr. Harvey McCutcheon, and family.

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