



A HECKLER was in the audience at Ballinafad concert. He had a difficult time with his moustache.



A TOWN COUNCIL OF the future at Ballinafad Community Concert, Friday, discussing a bud get deficit of six million dollars and saying they never balance the budget because back in '75 the township had told them they never do either. It was one of the night's highlights.

Dutch treat at Christmas

The real Dutch Christmas is celebrated on Dec. 5 and 6—with St. Nicolas (Sinterklaas) and his black servant "Black Peter" (Zwartepiet) as the central figures. According to legend, they arrive on their horse from Spain. They distribute gifts to

"good" children and use their switch on the "bad" ones. About two weeks before Dec. 5, when Canadian children are just beginning to turn their thoughts to Santa Claus, Dutch children put their shoes under the chimney, with a list of presents they desire, and with bread and straw for S. Nicolas' horse. The next morning the bread and straw are gone and the Christmas season is officially welcomed!

changed. In most cases the gifts are wrapped like surprise packages, and often hidden in far corners of the house. Each time someone gets a parcel, the doorbell is rung to signify that Sinterklaas and Zwartepiet have just passed by. Special "spiced" cakes and hot chocolate are served to conclude the happy occasion.

SAN FRANCISCO
San Francisco's first tree was made in 1850 from Douglas fir branches wired to a stick by a German wine proprietor.

"The" night
The night of Dec. 5 is "the" night in Holland! All generations of families gather together, and presents are ex-



WESTERN TRIO at Ballinafad concert Friday—Kathy and Maggie Hall and June Jensen (centre). The Given sisters have performed at Ballinafad hall since they were tots.

Let's talk about horses by Jennifer Barr



I don't care who you are! Get those darn reindeer out of my stable!

Our Christmas starts with a horseback trip to cut the tree. This tradition goes back many years in the days when Mack used to pull the children on a toboggan behind his mare. My mare was a light Thoroughbred and not up to such foolishness but Mack's big horse could form an entire logging team by herself.

I remember one year at the Rockwood farm Mack had the toboggan looped around the saddle horn and an enormous tree hung on the other side. There was no breastplate so by the time we reached the barn the saddle had slipped a couple of feet and was being held on by the mare's hind legs.

That same year I pulled the little tree with my flighty Thoroughbred (see previous paragraph). Having no horn on my English saddle I just used arm power, but the tree got hooked on a gate and the mare took off. I had the choice of letting go, falling off or becoming a split personality. I let go—very rapidly—and we made it to the barn several light years ahead of the others.

Ho Ho Ho
The first Christmas we spent in this house, the Junior Barrs had assorted viruses so it looked as if Mack would have to go alone until he recruited our neighbour, the "mad potter" John Secord. John had never ridden but bravely allowed himself to be hoisted into the saddle losing his handknitted toque several times in the process (when

leaping gaily behind her as she rocketed back to the barn. John's horse joined in the fun and jolted him laughing hysterically onto her neck as she pogoed after.

All this excitement necessitated the downing of quantities of scotch while I was told an increasingly horrific tale. When it was dark and John trundled home, Mack suddenly decided he was fed up with the whole thing and yanked the huge snow-covered tree into the house, hacking off bits as he went.

A strong discussion ensued. He accused me of ruining his tree when I insisted the spruce be cut to stand vertically in the living room; I accused him of flooding the house when the snow melted; we'd re-arranged most of the furniture; terrified the cats; and I'd begun to wonder just what was wrong with plastic trees anyway.

Needless to say we still have a real tree cut from a real wood covered with real snow.

A merry merry Christmas to you all from Mack, Jennifer, Pat and Erica

THE FIRST NOEL.
No one knows who wrote "The First Noel". It first appeared in print in 1883 in a book called "Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern", and is believed to be very old. The author of "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen" also is unknown but he lived before Shakespeare.



Merry Christmas

The best of hopes are extended to you for a warm, happy holiday with friends you hold near and dear.
DR. L. A. EMBRACK AND STAFF



GREETINGS for a Christmas filled with happy moments shared with loved ones. Thanks to all.
From Elsie at the
Blue Springs Flower Shop
Mill St. - Acton



Christmas GREETINGS
We hope you enjoy everything this wonderful season has to offer. Thank you, friends.
Management & Staff
130 Mill St. E.



Everybody's preparing for the big Day. Hope it's merry in every way. Our thanks.
FAMILY POOL SALES
45 MILL ST. E. ACTON
853-0769



RUSS-MAC BEAUTY SALON
4 Main St. S. - 853-2750



Christmas Wishes
We're hoping this will be a warm, happy holiday... filled with lots of cheer!
Our gratitude for your kind support.
Earl Van Norman - Electrician
Acton - 853-0560



May all the peace, happiness and blessings of this holy season be bestowed upon you and yours. A very Merry Christmas to one and all.
Staff of Simpsons - Sears



Merry Merry Christmas
As you and your loved ones share your joy we wish you cheer and good wishes at Christmas.
Rachlin Jewellers
Mill St. - Acton

Hydro announces 22 per cent hike

Ontario Hydro will increase wholesale power rates to its 353 municipal and 102 direct industrial customers by 22 per cent, effective January 1, 1976, the Corporation's Board of Directors announced Dec. 19.

A corresponding increase, adjusted to take account of retail costs, will be applied to customers of Hydro's rural system.

The new rates will increase retail rates to residential customers by approximately 13.9 per cent. Percentage increases at the municipal utility retail level will vary substantially because of differing levels of consumption, different effective dates for rate adjustments and rising municipal distribution costs.

Old Santa's stocking is full of our appreciation for our customers and friends.

ALL GOOD WISHES FOR A VERY MERRY CHRISTMAS

DENNY'S INSURANCE AGENCY
17 Mill St. W. Acton 853-0150
SAFECO INSURANCE

JOY TO THE WORLD
As you experience the transcendent joy of this Yuletide, may your blessings abound and bring you every happiness and fulfillment.

ACTON WELDING

GREETINGS
Here's wishing you the fulfillment of all your dreams for Christmas.
MANAGEMENT AND STAFF
BANK OF MONTREAL

Merry Christmas
Accept our wishes warm and hearty. Hope Santa styles your Christmas right, fills every hour with beauty bright. Thank you, most sincerely, for your loyal good will.

MARG'S BEAUTY SALON
12 Mill St. W. - 853-1733