

# The night before Christmas

'Twas the night before Christmas, and all across town  
 Not a creature was stirring; the snow drifted down.  
 Stockings were hung by chimneys with little care  
 And no thought to a fire ever happening there.  
 Our family was nestled all snug in each bed,  
 With nothing to fill our minds with dread  
 Until, out on the street there arose such a clatter,  
 We sprang from our beds to see what was the matter.  
 Away to the window we flew like a flash,  
 Tore open the drapes, and threw up the sash.  
 The moon shining down on the new-fallen snow  
 Gave a lustre of midday to objects below.  
 When, what to our wondering eyes should appear,  
 But a Halton Hills fire truck, and six men in full gear.  
 With sirens wailing, and red lights flashing,  
 We caught only a glimpse of them in passing,  
 To the corner they sped, to the right made a turn,  
 And there before them was a house starting to burn.  
 The driver braked, the officer jumped out,  
 Looked over the situation, to his men gave a shout.  
 Having dressed quite quickly, to the fire we came,  
 In time to hear orders given each man by name  
 "Greig, to the hydrant. Tom, grab a line,  
 Mike, get a Scott-Pak, don't waste any time,  
 Bob, get a ladder, and a pike pole,  
 Gord, we need help, radio Control.  
 Tell him to call both Truck 2 and Truck 4,  
 When Two comes in, have them lay a line."  
 With a nod to the hydrant man, he turned around,  
 And away to the building he ran with a bound.  
 We stood on the sidewalk with fear in our eyes  
 For from inside came several frightened young cries.  
 Straight into the house Firefighter Mike went  
 And never came out until his air tank was spent,  
 Clutched in each arm was a small child,  
 The people outside, with happiness, went wild.  
 The firefighters worked hard in the flaming light,  
 It looked like it might be a long fight.  
 The other trucks arrived with men, ladders, and hose;  
 And soon from the building all that arose  
 Were wisps of smoke, and an occasional flame  
 This lucky family would celebrate Christmas again.  
 All the children's toys were lost in the blaze,  
 Dolls, guns, cars, and shiny new sleighs.

Mother and father had lost presents too,  
 But one important thing both of them knew  
 Was that Christmas without presents, turkey and chives  
 Was better than Christmas with children's lost lives.  
 All this was caused by one little wire  
 One worn light wire had caused this fire.  
 The firefighters cleaned up, to their trucks gave a leap  
 This time they were glad, for no one would weep.  
 The officer said, "Let's take 'em home, boys,  
 We want some time for our own Christmas joys."  
 But I heard them exclaim ere they drove out of sight,

"HAVE A FIRE-SAFE CHRISTMAS  
 AND TO ALL A GOOD NIGHT!"  
 Author Unknown



# Festive season brings threats

"Christmas brings temptations of many parents, while visiting with neighbors or completing last minute shopping, to leave small children unattended for short period," says Fire Chief Mick Holmes.  
 "At the same time, decorations, trees and wrapping paper bring an increased threat of fire danger unless constant care is exercised."  
 The Fire Chief urges all parents to recognize the fire danger of this season, and not to leave small children alone in the home even for a moment. He points out that the criminal code of Canada forbids such action when endangers the life or health of any child under the age of ten years.

Parents are further reminded that under certain conditions a Christmas tree can be ignited by a single match to burn furiously to charred wood in a few seconds. Care must be taken to keep butts of natural trees immersed in water and to ensure that the tree itself does not obstruct access to door or window. Families are also urged to review their home-escape plans for quick exit in an emergency.  
 Deputy Fire Chief Bob Hyde points out that tests

have proved that the safest tree is a tree with its but set in water. However, if a tree has dried out before it is set up, it cannot regain its safe moisture level.  
 Even artificial trees can be serious fire hazards. Metallic trees are conductors of electricity, and should not be decorated with strings of lights, but illuminated with floodlights. Some plastic trees, made from styrene materials, are flammable, unlike those made from polyvinylchloride.

Wishing you all  
 At his time of the year,  
 A plentiful measure of  
**YULETIDE CHEER**  
**RUSS-MAC BEAUTY SALON**  
 4 Main St., S. • 853-2750

## Christmas fire safety

Have yourself a Merry Little Christmas... But keep it safe from the fire danger of the season... Keep the tree fresh and green by standing it in water throughout its stay indoors. Keep cigarettes and matches at a safe distance. Switch the tree lights off at bedtime and before leaving home.

### DIVERT ATTENTION

The Hamilton Automobile Club is urging party-givers to be "First A Friend—Then A Host" this holiday season. The H.A.C. says that means assuring your driving guests a safe arrival home after the party by de-emphasizing liquor during the evening. Dancing, games and other activities will divert attention from the bar, and plenty of rich, starch foods will help reduce the effects of liquor.

Remembering friends, old and new, with warmth and appreciation and hoping the horn of plenty brings its bounty to your door!

**Royal Cafe**  
 10 Mill St. East, Acton

**GREETINGS**

Santa wheel-by laden with our warm wishes for a really festive holiday! Our thanks are tucked in his pack.

Merry Christmas from  
**Cargills Motor Homes & Gas Bar**  
 Queen St. East 653-0330

**MERRY CHRISTMAS**

Wishing you bright holidays as Christmas lights up the world. It's a pleasure to serve you.

**OLYMPIA DRIVE IN**  
 Queen St. East, Acton  
 853-1201

**CHRISTMAS GREETINGS**  
 to the people of Acton and area

**FOOD CLEARANCE**

**ACTON MEWS**  
 "in business to save you money"

Acton Distributors Wholesale/Retail

**A Christmas Wish**

We join those who sing out the many praises of this special season, and wish you and yours have a most memorable Christmas holiday!

**ACTON**  
**Toddlers to Teens**  
 DOWNTOWN ACTON

have a **HAPPY HAPPY CHRISTMAS**

Joining Santa in our wishes for a holiday full of gay spirits and happy surprises! Thanks.

**Jack Ridley Cartage Ltd.**  
 and Staff