

Candles light way for Christ Child

Although it had been said there was no candle to light the manger in the stable at Bethlehem, still from early times people have placed tapers in windows to light the way for the Christ Child and welcome Him.

In many countries, anyone coming to the door at Christmastime was invited to enter. For

some believed that Christ Himself would appear at a house with a candle, concealing his identity, to learn the extent of their kindness.

Inspiration
Candles have inspired men throughout the ages, linking their bright glow with the beauty of faith. Research by Hallmark candle expert John Sin-

jem reveals that candles were generally used at Christmastime as far back as the 11th Century. Until the 18th Century they were made primarily from tallow or beeswax. The latter was preferred, as an emblem of Mary's purity, for wax is the product of virgin bees. Many persons believed that bees came

from heaven, and it was not unusual for religious institutions to keep swarms of them. According to an early writer, the wax represented Christ's body; the wick, His soul; and the flame His divine nature.

The religious symbolism of the candle grew through the centuries after early Christians,

huddled in the damp chill catacombs of Rome, used lighted candles as a source of comfort.

Candles guide
The Irish place lighted candles in their windows on Christmas Eve as a guide and an invitation to all, who like Mary and Joseph, may be seeking shelter.



Sherri Mooney arranges some of the crafts and gifts in her newly-opened shop, The Treasure Chest, on Mill St. Ms. Mooney moved to Acton from Brampton in October and opened The Treasure Chest last Saturday.

Treasure Chest wealth of gifts

Stuck for Christmas ideas? The newly opened Treasure Chest on Mill Street could be the answer to your problems.

The Treasure Chest, officially opened last Saturday, is a gift and craft shop, selling everything from wicker to wall plaques.

"It's a little bit of everything," says owner and manager Sherri Mooney. She sells table mats, matching napkins, wind chimes, hand-

carved polish boxes, some of them musical, candles, exquisite Canadian-made jewelry of copper and brass, stuffed animals, Christmas decorations such as the stuffed candy cane wreath, pine shelves and mirrors, paper mache boxes, Italian porcelain, wicker baskets... the list goes on.

Ms Mooney and her partner bought the Mill Street home where the

shop is located in October, moving to Acton from Brampton.

She has also resided in Montreal after moving from her native England.

The Treasure Chest is her first venture in the hectic world of business, but she says, it's great.

"I enjoy talking to different people," she says. "I like Acton very much. I prefer to live in a small town more than a city any day. It is more relaxed."



Bill Somerville made the discovery of an autographed quilt which his relations had a hand in making on a bed display at the Halton Museum where members of the Esqueing Historical Society held their annual Yule party. Bill's forebears settled in Esqueing. The Halton Atlas of 1877 shows the Somerville (Summerville) name at Lot 24, Concession 5, just north of Limehouse. They later moved to the Dublin area, near Acton.

Society party at museum

Members of the Esqueing Historical Society and their guests held their annual Christmas party in an appropriate setting last Wednesday night—the Halton Museum. It was a social evening with a brief talk on Christmases past and present, rural and urban, by museum curator Eria Brittain, the only concession to business.

Members fraternized around the punch table and the cosy fireplace in the museum's main room and looked at exhibits of the early days in Halton.

Bill Somerville made an interesting discovery—an autographed quilt which was made in 1899 and contained the names of his uncles and aunts from the Dublin area, just west of Acton. Christmas carols were

sung with Bruce Harding at the piano.

Mrs. Brittain, introduced by George Henderson, told the gathering there was a tremendous difference between urban and rural Christmases in the early days of Halton. She illustrated her talk with artifacts' a porcelain doll, graceful skate which attached to a boot and an account of her own upbringing in the country.

She said the urban children had stockings provided for them to hang by the fireplace for St. Nick while the country kids had to use his own stocking, she said, because there was no money for such frivolity.

Mrs. Brittain noted it was amazing how soon citrus fruits were used

for stocking stuffers. "As early as you go back there was an orange in the heel and a Brazil nut in the toe."

One of the exhibits at the museum which the board is especially proud of is a saddle used by a woman who escaped from the United States during the American revolution, settling in Halton. The description with the saddle points out the escaping party was guided by a band of Mohawk Indians.

Perhaps members of the Esqueing Historical Society who travelled to the museum by bus didn't realize their bus driver who brought them through the snow storm was also a full blooded Mohawk. He's Clarence Hill, long resident of this area and originally from the Reserve at Deseronto.

Clarence is in demand to drive chartered buses. He also drives a school bus route near Milton in the mornings.

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