

# Reflections on Christmas past

By SHIRLEY LAVERS

Many Christmas seasons gently flow through my mind as I think back through the years. Some come easily, others are elusive, not wanting to be brought back. Most are enjoyable to recapture, but there were disappointing ones and sorrowful ones along the way. Special toys not received and cherished persons no longer here to share the season with. My most memorable ones are of Christmases of childhood, secure in extended family surroundings, feeling the hope and innocence of only the very young.

These memorable holidays of youth were spent in a Maritime province. The storms of winter there did nothing to diminish the anticipation felt in a child's heart. The fierce wind which blew over the frozen harbor and through the tall trees meant that the special season was soon to be.

The first sign of Christmas would begin with the organizing of the concert at the local one room school, with all eight grades participating.

Pre-concert tension ran very high, but in the end, on the big night, we acted and sang well, much to the amusement of the whole community.

Another sign of the approaching season was the aroma in the air of the home baking being done in the kitchens around the small community. Upon approaching the home in the afternoon after school, one could detect what mother had baked that day to be stored away. Grandma's pantry held the epitome of untouchable delights.

About two weeks before the grant event, my brother and I set out to find the perfect Christmas tree. This was not a difficult hunt, there being a great availability in the area then. This had been our responsibility and pleasure from the time my brother could safely carry and use an axe. Sometimes our choice was not up to standards, and another trip was necessary. We didn't mind.

The woodlands were clean and safe then, inhabited only by small animals, an occasional deer breaking into flight at our approach, and many different birds. The acceptable tree would be carried home by hand or on a handsleigh, freshly cut, which would fill the house with another unique scent.

It was decorated with a variety of ornaments, some new ones ad-

ded to the old ones, which were retrieved from Grandma's storeroom.

As the grand day approached, parcels of mysterious shapes and sizes would be delivered by the mailman, from the mail-order catalogue, and more brought home from "town." The temptation to peek within was almost irresistible, to the point that sometimes there were corners of the parcels to be carefully tucked together as if inquisitive fingers had not been near them at all.

My brother and I shared a bedroom. After we were in bed, we would decide which carols we would serenade the younger family members with, and sing to them with our unsophisticated voices.

Our mother would listen and yet today she remembers it as one of her special Christmas recollections. During all this flurry of activity, our father observed the goings-on quietly, content at leaving most of it to mother. He was more concerned with which one of the biggest, fattest hens wandering around the henhouse should be chosen as Christmas dinner for his family.

Finally the big evening would arrive. My small gifts to the other family members were wrapped and tucked in amongst the boughs on the tree. Christmas Eve was always a ritual, with visits to Grandma's house which was close by. Then we would return home to prepare for Midnight Mass. It would not have been complete without it, one of the most important events of the whole season, at least to the

adults.

Then the anticipated morning would arrive.

Before breakfast the stockings were sorted out and emptied, with much relief, knowing that Santa had once again found our house. The gifts were unwrapped, inspected by everyone, and all greatly appreciated.

We would have our Christmas dinner around 1 p.m. and finally the "stored goodies" were ours after the weeks of waiting.

We always returned to Grandma's house in the late afternoon for another dinner with all the accompaniments. The evening was spent either visiting relatives, or with them coming to our house.

Sometimes if there was snow on the hills or ice on the harbor, we would try out our new skates or sleighs with our cousins or friends. We would usually wear our new but very itchy woolen snowsuits. By bedtime, exhaustion would have set in and sleep left no time for carols that night, but we usually slept quite happy with what the day had brought us.

Such are my favourite Christmas memories, intertwined with recollections of my holidays spent with my own children when they were young.

These latter ones were spent far from the scenes of my own youth.

Always, thoughts come to mind, especially on Christmas Eve, nostalgia, for another place and time and loneliness for dearly loved persons who lived in that era.

Reflections of Christmas, treasured memories.

**NEW YEAR'S DINNER**

COME AND ENJOY DINNER  
BEFORE YOUR  
NEW YEAR'S PARTY

Celebrate with a  
**4 COURSE DINNER**  
with a complimentary  
glass of Champagne

ALL FOR UNDER **\$30.** PER PERSON

From 5-10 p.m.

*The New Duke of York*

118 Guelph St. (Normandy Plaza)  
Georgetown **873-1409**

**IT'S ALL GOT TO GO!!!**

**80% OFF LISTED PRICE OF EVERYTHING\***

<b>BLUE JEANS</b> \$5.00	<b>RUNNING SHOES</b> \$2.00	<b>LADIES' KNIT SWEATERS</b> \$3.00	<b>LADIES' KNIT SKIRTS</b> \$3.00	<b>BOYS' UNDERWEAR</b> Reg. \$1.79 <b>36¢</b>	<b>SKI TURTLENECKS</b> Reg. \$27.99 NOW <b>\$5.60</b>	<b>LONG UNDERWEAR</b> TOPS ..... <b>82¢</b> BOTTOMS .. <b>82¢</b>
<b>JOGGING PANTS &amp; TOPS</b> \$2.00	<b>TOYS &amp; GIFTS</b> <b>80% OFF</b>	<b>MEN'S SHIRTS</b> \$2.00	<b>CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS</b> <b>80% OFF</b>	<b>KIDS' CLOTHES</b> <b>80% OFF</b>	<b>T SHIRTS</b> <b>\$4.99</b>	<b>SPORTS EQUIPMENT</b> <b>80% OFF</b>
<b>NEW YEAR'S PARTY GOODS</b>	<b>SWEAT SHIRTS</b> <b>\$7.99</b>	<b>SHORTS, TOPS, PANTS &amp; SHIRTS</b>	<b>TRACK SHOES</b> <b>\$5.00</b>	<b>CHILDREN'S CLOTHES</b>	<b>ALL GIFTS</b> <b>80% OFF</b>	<b>AND MUCH, MUCH MORE!</b>

**ALL FIXTURES MUST GO (TABLES, RACKS, DISPLAYS)**

SAVINGS YOU CAN'T AFFORD TO MISS!	NINTENDO \$10.00 OFF EVERY GAME	LOTS OF ITEMS TOO NUMEROUS TO MENTION	NINTENDO RENTALS FOR SALE!	HOUSEWARE ITEMS <b>80% OFF</b>
-----------------------------------	---------------------------------	---------------------------------------	----------------------------	--------------------------------

**DOORS OPEN THURSDAY AT 12:00 NOON**  
**CCP LIQUIDATORS ARE CLOSING THEIR RETAIL OPERATION!**

**1/2 PRICE OR LESS STORE**

**877-2979**

\*SOME ITEMS EXCLUDED

**MAIN ST. DOWNTOWN GEORGETOWN**

877-0109 • 877-0109 • 877-0109

**Simon Fraser**

CHARTERED ACCOUNTANT

★★★★

Phone:  
(416) 877-0109

132 Main Street South  
Georgetown, Ontario  
L7G 3E6

877-0109 • 877-0109 • 877-0109

FOR ASSISTANCE WITH ALL TYPES OF

**MORTGAGE FINANCING**

PRIME RESIDENTIAL:  
CONVENTIONAL & CMHC  
6 Months to 10 Years  
**12.25% - 12.75%**  
Rates Subject To Change Without Notice

(Residential & Commercial)  
Call **DAVE KRAUSE 873-4991**