

Church Christmas concerts a part of growing up

By FLORENCE WILKINSON
Herald Special

Christmas is coming. So this is news. You have known that from the stores who put up Christmas decorations while they took down the hallowe'en ones: you have probably stood in the weather and watched the Santa Claus parade, and you may have received your first Christmas cards from friends across the miles.

However, now that December has arrived, Christmas is also being looked forward to in the Churches. Those congregations which light Advent candles have lit the first one: Christians have sung "O Come, O Come Emmanuel", and sanctuaries are decorated in preparation for the coming of Christ.

Perhaps, like me, many of the seniors will be remembering the Christmas concerts of old-those which demanded practising into the dark hours of the evenings. Where I grew up the Christmas concert was part of the Church life. I do not remember any school concert. It was when I moved West that I started remembering the concerts which were school centred, not church centred.

In my church there was a central platform with the pulpit and the

choir, and on each side of this chancel platform there were pews facing from the side to centre. Every Christmas the men would get out huge planks to put over the pews on one side so that the platform would continue from one side of the chancel platform as far as the wall. This extra space was sectioned off with the forest green Sunday School curtain dividers so that we had a dressing room and a back stage for the entrances and exits. And what entrances and exits they were! The girls in their white with tinsel around their hair and probably carrying a tinselled star as they performed their marches; the older classes as they put on their Christmas plays; or the choir which sang as a background to the building of the manger scene around Mary, Joseph and the baby in a manger (with real straw which had to be swept up later.)

There was a lot of variety in those concerts and a lot of talent which later has performed on many stages, but it was all done so that we could, as a congregation, celebrate the birth of Jesus, Son of God, Saviour.

In those days my home did not have electricity, so our tree never did see any lights. But there were many kinds of decorations, and,

even at the worst of times my father would whittle a top for each of us it there could be nothing else, and mother would scrimp and save so that she could make a Christmas cake, decorated with a cardboard Santa coming down the chimney.

Times have changed, and seniors may look back at the old days with nostalgia but I am sure they look forward to the kind of celebrating which is available for all of us today. Here are some

ways in which seniors might want to celebrate.

A COUNTRY CHRISTMAS at the Halton Region Museum, Saturday Dec. 7 and Sunday Dec. 8 from 1:00-5:00 p.m.

LIGHTING THE HOSPITAL CHRISTMAS TREE, 7:00-8:00 p.m. Dec. 12 outside the lobby of the hospital. Carolling and goodies afterward.

Dec. 12 at the Seniors Centre, Milton-a FORMAL DANCE 7:30-11:00 p.m. \$6.00 per person.

Dec. 17, at the Seniors Centre, Milton-TEA AND CAROL SING from 2:00-4:00 p.m.

SENIORS TOUR OF LIGHTS, sponsored by the Kinsmen Club of Georgetown-December 18, from 6:30-11:00 p.m. Buses will pick up seniors at various points. A tour of the Christmas lights will begin around 7:00 p.m. Afterwards there will be a reception at St. Andrews United Church with refreshments, door prizes, entertainment and a visit from Santa.

Herald honored

By J. M. ROWE
Esquesing Historical Society

The Halton Herald first published in the spring or early summer of 1866. Isaac Hunter, a former partner and the printer for The Canadian Champion, opened the paper to compete with his former employer. The paper served the North Halton market of Milton, Acton, Georgetown and surrounding areas.

Although the paper soon became a principally local paper, it retained the name until 1876 when the more apt. Georgetown Herald graced the masthead. This name served the paper for almost a century. With the introduction of regional government in 1974, the Herald again renewed its quest for a larger market by expanding into Acton. Consequently the name was again changed to reflect the area serviced. The paper adopted the name of the new political corporation, The Halton Hills Herald.

The paper has served Georgetown an area continuously. Although it did not print an

issue during the Christmas season, at one time, it has always published when it was expected to. Even after a disastrous fire in 1918, the paper came out as usual, thanks to the printing presses of The Acton Free Press.

Many people have owned and run the Herald and since the purchase of the paper by the Thomson chain many people have managed the operation.

The Esquesing Historical Society will honor The Herald on the occasion of its 125th year of publication at its December 11th meeting at Knox Presbyterian Church.

The public is invited to join us and hear about the papers stormy beginning, and its more recent past from guests which include Garfield McGilvray, Myles Gilson and Dave Hastings. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

If you wish to join our Christmas cookie exchange, bring two dozen baked goodies to trade. Refreshments will be served following the meeting. The Society requests your help in reducing garbage by bringing your own coffee mug.



Eastern Star donation

Members of the Peace Rose Chapter of the Order of the Eastern Star, (back row, left to right) Dorothy Pyatt, PM; Christine Wild, PDDGM; Joan Lovegrove, WM; May McDonald, PM and (front, right) Jeannette Thompson, IPM, presented a cheque for \$1068.92 to Rud Whiting Thursday who

accepted it on behalf of the Heart and Stroke Foundation. The Eastern Star organization chooses a charity each year to raise money for and chose the Heart and Stroke Foundation this year. The money was raised through craft tables, raffles, and donations. (Herald Photo)

ATTENTION ACTON RESIDENTS

To better serve our community
the HERALD is pleased to announce
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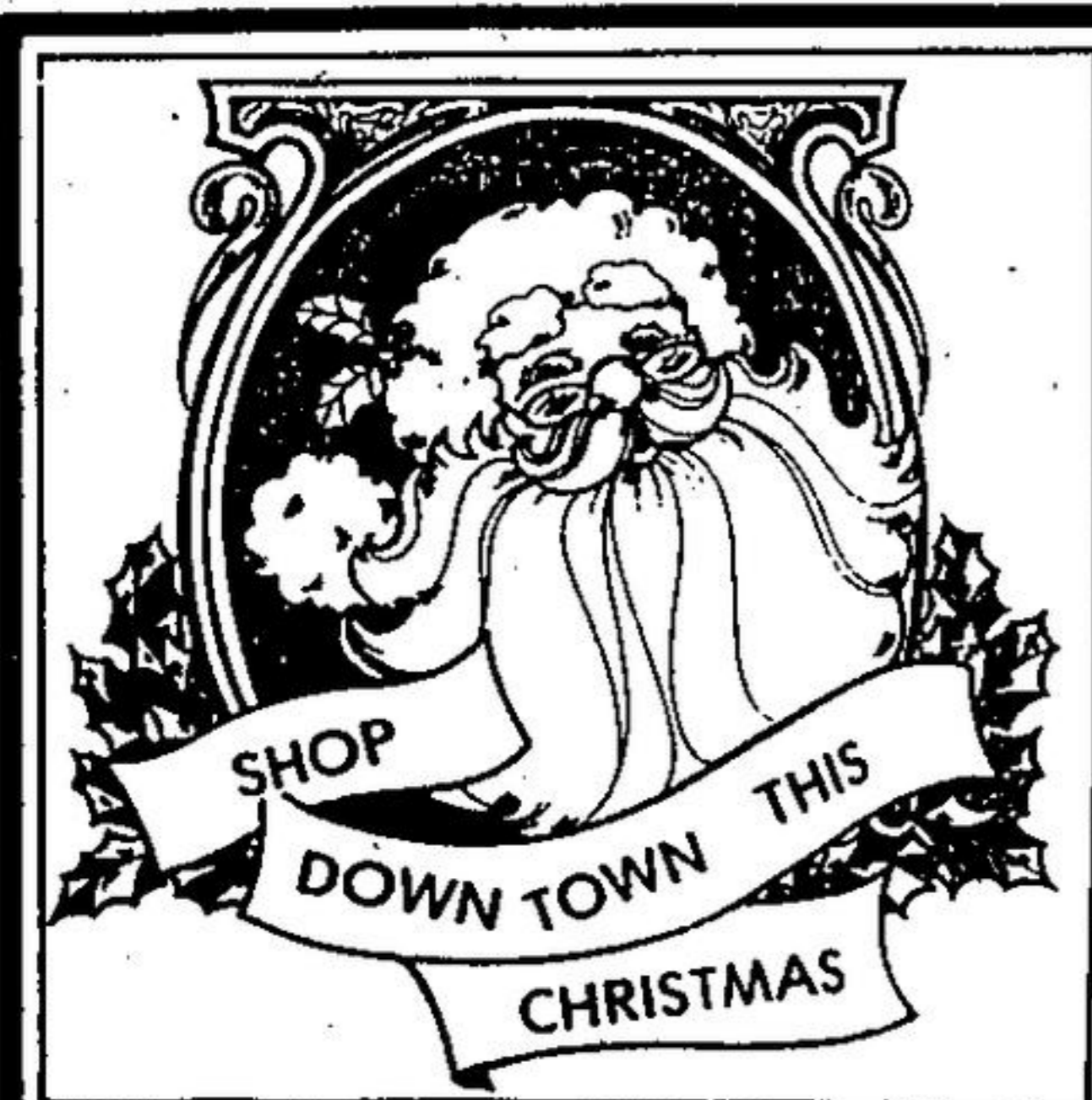
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For Information On How To Place Your Classifieds In
The Herald, Call 877-2201 or 877-8822

Joan or Barb will be pleased to help you.

DEADLINES: Copy is necessary Monday by 3 p.m. for Wednesday's Herald,
Thursday by 10 a.m. for Sunday's Herald



**DOWNTOWN
GEORGETOWN**

CHRISTMAS HOURS:
Mon.-Fri. 9:30 a.m.-9:00 p.m.
Saturday 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.
Christmas Eve 9:00 a.m.-6:00 p.m.

**FREE
PARKING
AT METERS**

December 2-7: Final Week of Christmas Shopping Spree

DECEMBER 7: PHOTO WITH SANTA

— A Project of The Open Door, Georgetown —
Time: 9:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. Place: Union Gas, Main St. S.
Cost: \$3.00 per picture. All proceeds to Open Door.
Plus see Santa wandering Downtown every Thurs. Fri. & Sat.