

# Tour of local homes reveals holiday decorating tips

By JOHN SOMMER  
Herald Special

Often, when I bicycle around Georgetown and Glen Williams, passing new and old houses, I wonder what they might look like inside. Therefore, when the "St. John's United Church Tour" of six houses was announced several weeks ago, I bought a ticket, and on Dec. 7, I was ready at 10 a.m. for what turned out to be a most delightful day.

The goal of the tour organizers was to raise money for the restoration of St. John's United Church here in Georgetown. Ms. Isobel Cruise, a professional decorator with her own business, called "Interiors", in town, donated her designs and ideas, and Ms. Jane Hoddinott helped her decorate the six homes for the Christmas season, and for the lucky tour participants, who had quickly purchased the limited amount of tickets.

I started at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Goodfellow in Glen Williams, a fine proportioned house built in 1850, with a modern addition in the back. The Goodfellows have a superb collection of Canadian pioneer furniture, as well as old carpenter tools, old household tools for spinning, cooking, and ironing, and old agricultural tools, displayed throughout the house. Even one Christmas tree in a bright, modern garden room was

decorated with well-made and well-used old tools. A wonderful idea. Another Christmas tree in the parlour was a grand and opulent affair in tune with the rich, colourful decorations all through the groundfloor rooms, even the kitchen.

The home of Mr. and Mrs. Fuller on Harold Street in Georgetown, was built in 1977, but is traditional in style. Inside, large pots of pink poinsettias and garlands of evergreens, festooned with pink ribbons, turned the cosy, small rooms into bowers of bliss. In the hall a truly beautiful ceramic nativity, consisting of many figures, and glowing in pale glazes, was created by the lady of the house. The den had a more masculine colour scheme with a large Christmas tree decorated in the colours of red and green.

The third home I visited was Pine Grove Cottage on Charles Street, the elegant 1887 house owned by Dr. and Ms. Hoddinott. This is a historic building of great distinction. The entrance hall is dramatic, and so is a huge, high-ceilinged drawing room, with a gleaming white marble fireplace as its focus. Ms. Hoddinott, like the painters of the baroque era, creates tableaus throughout her home, arrangements that dart at you and dazzle the eye. The special decorations in this house consisted of evergreens, gilded



Ideas and The Arts  
by John Sommer

hydrangea blooms and dark red ribbons. In the drawing room a very large tree decorated in white was surrounded by a collection of antique dolls. It's impossible to describe the profusion of decorative touches in this large house. Only the steady stare of the camera could catch all these deluxe items and freeze them for quiet contemplation.

Further south on Charles Street, the home of Mr. and Ms. Johnson came next on my list. One of the nicest and best preserved tin ceilings in town is in the dining room of this lovely old house built in 1880. Ms. Johnson collects family photographs, antique mirrors and evening bags, as well as antique jewellery. All these treasures were displayed imaginatively. Each piece of jewellery, for instance, was fastened to a white doily, decorated the Christmas tree in the parlour.

At the home of Mr. and Mrs. Scudder, next to the Johnson home, hot cider greeted the visitors, and from the kitchen the delicious scents of Christmas baking wafted through the festive house. It was built in 1918 and has large rooms and wide window sills. Pots of red poinsettias mingled with baskets of shiny apples, and a dollhouse of ample proportions was the centre of the dinner table.

Also on Charles Street, the last house on the tour was the home of Mr. and Ms. Davies, built in 1913. This roomy edifice had been decorated for children, with wonderful toys everywhere, letters to Santa on the coffee table, and paper chains of Santas

meandering along banisters, mantels, and the branches of the tree in the living room.

All these homes had their dining room tables set with the choicest china and crystal for a grand Christmas dinner, and in all of them, the fireplaces were going full blast. Bright decorations graced the lawns, porches and front doors.

I had a great time and I am sure that everybody else had. I thank the homeowners, the decorators, and the ladies from St. John's United Church for this treat, and I hope that we will have the privilege to see other fine homes in Christmas Seasons to come.

## Singer popularizes celtic music

By BOB SPENCE  
Thomson News Service

Warner Music, because of the runaway success of Loreena McKennitt's latest album, The Visit, is re-releasing three earlier albums by the Stratford-based singer/songwriter.

The Visit achieved gold record status just six weeks after it was released.

The McKennitt albums being re-issued (all originally released on her own Quinlan Road label)

are Elemental, To Drive The Cold Winter Away and Parallel Dreams.

Elemental, her debut album in 1985, and Parallel Dreams, released in 1989, both, like The Visit, blend traditional Celtic music with a variety of instruments and sounds.

To Drive The Cold Winter Away, first released in 1987, offers a different look at Christmas and winter, featuring little-known carols and seasonal songs.

Album is a word that is used very loosely these days, as I have done above. The McKennitt recordings are being released on cassette and compact disc.

In a number of music publications - and within the music industry - the word album is used over and over, even though gramophone record albums are a thing of the past.

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