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Christmas hymns have long history 5th century versions were in Latin

Christmas caroling is almost as old as Christmas itself—though not in the form we know it. An early historian wrote that in the Second Century the bishop of Rome urged his people to sing "in celebration of our Lord." Christmas hymns go back to the Fifth Century, when most of them were written in Latin. St. Francis of Assisi is regarded as the father of caroling as we know it. In 1223, St. Francis placed a creche (miniature Nativity scene), in a hermitage in Greccio, Italy. After this many churches began displaying a Nativity scene at Christmas, and soon the

people began acting out the Christmas story. The actors composed carols to sing with their Nativity plays and after the plays they would stroll down the street, singing. In that way, street caroling was born. Joseph Mohr, a pastor in Oberndorf, Austria, composed "Stille Nacht," or "Silent Night," on Christmas Eve, 1818. Franz Gruber, the local schoolmaster and organist, composed the music the same day, and the hymn was sung for the first time at Midnight Mass that night. Charles Wesley, brother of John Wesley, wrote, "Hark! The

Herald Angels Sing!" in 1739. Phillips Brooks, a noted Boston clergyman, wrote "O Little Town of Bethlehem" in 1868 after visiting Bethlehem. Though not a carol, Handel's noble "Messiah" is a Christmas tradition. It first was performed in Dublin in 1742. "Joy to the World," written in the early 18th Century by Isaac Watts, was set to the music of a segment of the "Messiah." "While Shepherds Watched Their Flocks by Night," written in 1703 by Nahum Tate, was set to music taken from "Siroe," an opera by Handel.

No one knows who wrote "The First Noel." It first appeared in print in 1833 in a book called "Christmas Carols Ancient and Modern," and is believed to be very old. The author of "God Rest Ye Merry, Gentlemen," also is unknown, but he lived before Shakespeare.

So if you should go caroling this Christmas season, think of other carolers of years gone by, of the people of Charles Dickens' time in their beaver hats and cutaway coats, of English villagers in hose and jerkin, of good St. Francis, and of the priests of the time of the Christian Roman Empire who, before caroling as we know it existed, sang "in celebration of our Lord."

Emperors demanded Christmas gifts

Giving gifts during the Christmas season is a custom that most of us enjoy. Some of us even become reckless and spend more than we should for a particular gift merely because it seems the "perfect" item for a special individual. In ancient times and places, gift giving was sometimes compulsory. Roman emperors demanded Yuletide gifts of clothing, gold and silver from their subjects. So, it is said, did the kings and queens of medieval England.

Long before the birth of Christ, Romans exchanged gifts of laurel, olive and myrtle branches, in conjunction with the Saturnalia, a pagan festival which occurred about the same time as the present date of Christmas. The Druids of England and Northern Europe tied gifts on trees during the festival observing the winter solstice.

Gift giving today does not take the form of appeasement—it reflects the spirit of kindhearted generosity.



MILTON LIONS CLUB vice-president George Clements and lucky winner Dave Mogford look at Dave's winning ticket. Mr. Mogford was \$500 richer after winning the annual "200 Club" draw. (Staff Photo)

Snoopy, Red Baron winners in parade

Snoopy and the Red Baron went gunning for their third first prize Saturday, Dec. 14 in the Bramalea Christmas Parade. The Snoopy float, designed and built by commercial art students of Sheridan College, has already won two trophies and \$100 for its student creators. It took first place honors in the Oakville Christmas Parade, and joined Santa's entourage in Georgetown the same day to take a best float trophy. Both parades were held Saturday, Dec. 7.

Fifteen enthusiasts spent three weeks building the float. Participating were Dave Cox and Ernie Thomsen of Georgetown, Penny Houston of Bramalea, Pat Calvert and Dave Campbell of Brampton, Bob New of Oakville, Hope Osborne of Cooksville, Mary Douglas of Malton, Darlene McCleary and Bob Hopp, Toronto, Lynda Branson, London, Gil Coelho, Guelph, Peter Brunning, Niagara, and John Berry and Bob Wilson, Dunnville. Student-faculty co-ordinator on the project was Larry Weissmann.

Long life for gift plants

Your Christmas and holiday gift plants will live better and provide more lasting beauty and enjoyment if you observe a few easy care tips to insure their health. To guard them against over-watering and over-heating, it's essential to keep them in porous clay pots, used by leading professional growers and florists to insure that you receive plants of the highest quality, well fertilized and well rooted. If some have been shipped in light, thin walled, non porous containers, these should be switched to clay pots, in order to provide more satisfactory growing conditions.

Cut yourself? get cranberries

Cranberries, a traditional part of our Christmas menus, were used in many ways by the American Indians. "Pemmican" was a paste made from cranberries. Cranberry poultices were applied to cuts and wounds, and the juice of the berry yielded a red dye. The Indians called cranberries the "bitter berry." Early American Pilgrims, noting the fruit to be the favorite of cranes, began referring to them as cranberries, and eventually cranberries.

Buy within budget evergreen rope

A rope of evergreens is easy enough to make, say the experts, and might go well over your door frame, mantle or along a stair rail.

Materials: rope long enough for your needs, short lengths of wire (15 to 18 inches), short sprays of evergreen (cedar is especially good), balls, bows, red berries or bells.

Place a bunch of evergreen against the rope and fasten in place with wire. Repeat length of rope. Drape as desired.

Locate places where additional decoration—berries, balls, bells—would be effective and wire on.

Fasten decorated rope in place with tape, tacks, corsage pins or small nails.

Wire lengths of evergreen together as a spray and decorate with bells, balls or ribbon.

Mushrooms natural Christmas delicacy

Mushrooms will be on many a Christmas shopping list many a time. Well, they should be for here is a delectable food that can be served in countless exotic ways during the festive season.

Thanks to the local growers who keep replenishing the carefully packed supply, mushrooms are readily available in the pink of condition. Freshness is an important quality in mushrooms, so much better that we buy them more often in quantities that can be quickly used than in larger amounts which means that some must be stored, well covered, in the refrigerator.

Here is a commendable point worth noting, particularly at this season when one indulges in more party-type meals than usual. Mushrooms have few calories, only about one calorie in a medium mushroom, or to put it in a more meaningful way, a whole pound of mushrooms broiled or sauteed with two tablespoons of butter adds up to only about 250 calories.

Stuffed Mushrooms
1 pound large mushrooms
1 cup fine bread, cracker or cereal crumbs
1/2 cup finely chopped nuts
Liquid-cream, milk, stock or sherry (about 2 tsp)
Remove stems from mushroom caps. Chop stems finely and combine (1/2 cup) with nuts and crumbs. Season with salt. Add only enough liquid to make mixture moist enough to hold together. Brush outside of caps with melted butter. Fill with stuffing mixture and bake at 375 for 15 mins. To broil: Brush caps with butter. Place, round side up, 3 to 4 inches from broiler. Broil 2 mins. then turn caps over and broil underside for 2 mins. Remove from heat, stuff and broil about 4 mins. until lightly brown. A whole gamut of equally good-tasting stuffings may be made by using the same amount of cheese, minced seafood, chicken, turkey or ham in place of the chopped nuts and adding grated onion, herbs or other suitable seasonings.

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Check these ten rules for trees, trimmings

Do not spoil the Holiday by the careless or thoughtless selection and handling of the Christmas tree and its trimmings. We ask you to follow these ten simple rules:

1. Select a fresh green tree. Avoid trees that have become dry through storage. Keep your tree outdoors until you are ready to put it up.
2. Keep the butt of the tree immersed in water.
3. Do not stand the tree near windows, doors or other exits or near a radiator or other source of heat.
4. Use fireproof ornaments such as metal and tinsel.
5. Check old tree lights for frayed wires and defects. Try them on the floor before putting them on the tree. If in any doubt get new lights.

6. When purchasing new lights look for the CSA label, the mark of approval of the Canadian Standards Association, your assurance that they are safe from fire and shock hazard.

7. It is vital that indoor lights be used only indoors and outdoor lights only outdoors.
8. Christmas gift wrappings are a source of greatest danger. They should be disposed of immediately after presents have been opened.
9. Do not leave children unattended, even for a moment. A Christmas tree can become a raging inferno and reduced to ashes in 18 seconds.
10. Dispose of the tree as soon as possible.

Remember, a safe, accident free Christmas is a Merry Christmas.

Sailors told stories of scrumptious cake

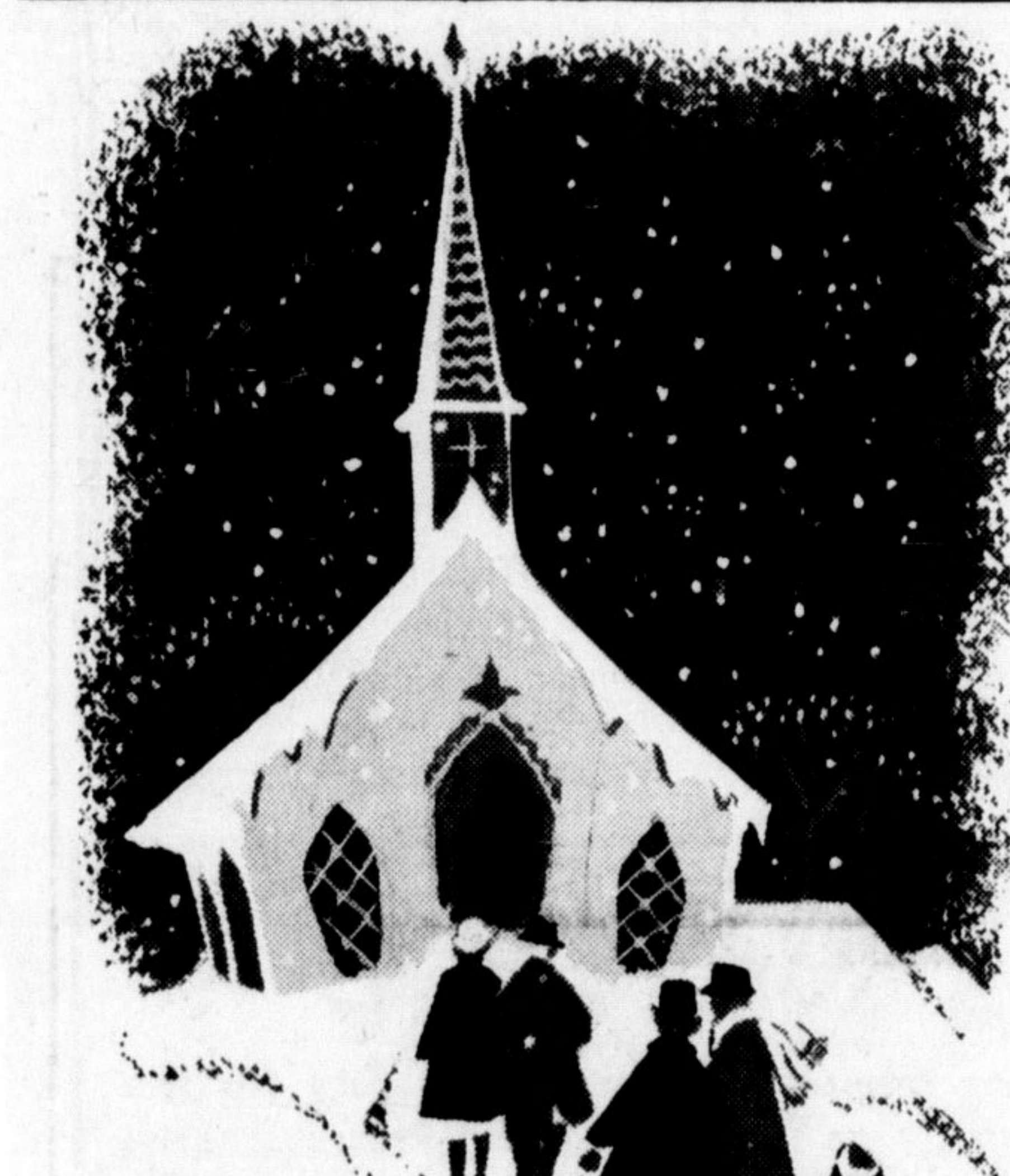
British sailors of the early days who travelled in the Orient and other foreign ports returned with stories of the cakes made of fruit and brought back the ingredients with them. From Greece and Turkey they obtained currants and raisins, from Italy, citrus peel preserved in honey; from Spain, almonds; and from the Orient, strange seeds and barks of trees when pounded in a mortar gave a pleasant spiciness to cake. The first record we have of glace fruit dates back to the time of Marco Polo in China when the Chinese extracted sugar syrup from sugar cane or bamboo and soaked their ginger and

kumquats and other oriental plants in the syrup.

The English seafarers used these ingredients to make money for more expeditions. British bakers, on seeing the fruits and spices and hearing the tales of aromatic cakes, soon learned to make them and they became famous for their heavily laden fruit cakes. Recipes for the cakes were jealously guarded and handed down from one generation of bakers to the next, as they are to some extent today, and when they migrated to North America the bakers brought their prized recipes with them.

at CHRISTMAS
May your holiday be happy and your blessings many.
DURANTE'S ESSO

merry christmas
We wish you, one and all a joyous, fun-filled holiday season.
BAILEY FUELS
BASE LINE MILTON



Christmas Greetings

We offer best wishes and sincere appreciation to all our friends on this Blessed Christmas.

FROM ALL OF US AT
Crest HARDWARE
136 Main St. Milton 878-6011



Peace and Joy

May you enjoy the fulfillment of all your hopes and prayers, bringing you peace and contentment this Christmas season and always.

CLEMENT
PAINT AND WALLPAPER
MILTON

Greetings
We hope that Santa is bringing good things your way. Thank you for your loyal patronage.
McPHAIL ELECTRIC LTD.
AND STAFF

NOEL
The Christmas bells peal loud and clear. As you hear their message, may your heart be filled with joy.
Fredrick's
PHONE 878-3302
THE MAN'S SHOP
222 MAIN STREET - MILTON ONT

NOEL
A long time ago the first Adoration was in a manger. Now, we add our voice to the joy of the world... to all men, and especially you, our heartfelt wish for happiness on this Noel.
DAVIS JEWELLERS
JOHNSON OPTOMETRISTS
189 MAIN ST. MILTON