

Christmas Decorating Ideas Numerous

By ESTHER KIRMIS

Is your home all decorated for Christmas now?

You might be surprised that decorating for Christmas is a custom of heathen origin—an offering of winter hospitality to the spirits and fairies who haunted the leafless woods.

Jessalee Mallalieu, OSC recreation specialist, has come up with the following on Christmas customs:

Even before the Christian era, foundations were laid for our acceptance of Christmas symbols. Ancients believed that evergreens were symbols of eternal life and worshipped them as such. Each tree was believed to be the home of a god or goddess. Firs were especially revered because their always green needles proved to the superstitious that even the sun loved evergreens best, as he never turned his face from them to make them die.

The ancient poet Virgil describes the decoration of a fir with gifts which were intended as prayers to the god. Early Egyptians also had a winter festival when they brought small palm trees into the houses and decorated them.

Trimming the home and church with evergreens reminded man of Christ's Godliness and that the Child born at Bethlehem was both God and man, "who would spring up like a tender plant, should always be green and flourishing and live forever more." Today this custom is still with us!

The holly, with its sharp prickles and blood-red berry, remains a symbol of joy and peace. Early beliefs gave the holly mysterious powers. It could bring good luck, ward off witches, and protect occupants from severe weather, thunder and lightning. Poets of days gone by have often praised the holly.

Use of mistletoe at Christmas time dates back to the old pagan customs, for mistletoe holds for them all sorts of miraculous virtues. One legend, from Scandinavian folklore, says that mistletoe was so sacred that if enemies met casually beneath the mistletoe in the forest, they laid down their arms and maintained a truce until the following day.

That's why families hang mistletoe in doorways. Passing underneath implies a pledge of peace and friendship, and is sealed by a friendly greeting or kiss. Long live the mistletoe cus-

tom!

Lighted candles, now universally used as a yuletide decoration, are a tradition that dates back to the time before Christ. Pagans fastened candles to trees to denote the sun's return to the earth. The Christian use of the candle, symbolic of Christ as the light of the world, is said to be a combination of Roman and Hebrew customs.

Bayberry candles, with their delicate odor, are popular at Christmas and are said to bring good luck to a home. Story goes that if sweethearts are separated at Christmas, scent of lighted bayberry candles will be wafted from one to the other, across the world, if they are truly in love. May candles always burn at Christmas.

Use of the evergreen, a symbol of immortality, dates back to early primitive tribes who revered nature. Today nearly two-thirds of U S families center their holiday gaiety around the lighted Christmas tree. This tree, which we are most familiar, is

credited to Martin Luther. Since his time it has become an established custom for the tree to take a large place in the Christmas celebration.

In times past Christmas was celebrated for 12 days, ending on January 6. Traditionally this night was set aside for the religious observances of the arrival of the Magi at the manger in Bethlehem.

In England and France, particularly, these twelve days became a time of feasting and games with a final party on the Twelfth Night presided over in England by the "Lord of Misrule" and in France by the "Bean King". Along with this gay last fling of the holiday season people believed that all the evergreens and holly, the homes of the woodland spirits, must be burned. Huge bonfires of all the decorations became the central point of the Twelfth Night celebration.



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Monument News

Mr and Mrs Mike Ogle were chivvaried Tuesday evening at the home of her folks the Wayne Leathers. The Ogles were married last week in Portland, they came here a few days, then left for a visit in Texas with relatives. They leave soon for Germany to make their home while Mike is on duty there.

The M M M club held their yearly Christmas dinner and party Thursday at the home of Doris and George Capon. There were 24 there in all. After the dinner there were games and an exchange of presents. Everyone reported they had a swell time.

Mrs Chuck Van Detta and Mrs Harry Scott were in John Day Wednesday.

Harold Roberts of Pendleton was in town Wednesday on business.

Mr and Mrs Van Richards and daughter drove to Heppner Friday on business.

Mrs June Hutchison and Roberta Croker went to John Day Tuesday.

Aubrey Crum, Mr and Mrs Ivan Glenger and two children and Ruby Glenger drove to John Day Saturday on business.



CHRISTMAS SEASON

We cherish the happiness our old and new friends have given us, and at this joyous and heartwarming season extend our sincerest wishes for Christmas Happiness.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR FRIENDLINESS AND PATRONAGE THIS PAST YEAR.

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May this season be a happy one for you. We cherish this opportunity to thank you for your past favors and wish you the very best for Christmas and the days to come.

Best Wishes From Everyone At
CENTRAL MEAT MARKET

the Songs of Christmas

Once again we hear the music of the carolers announcing that Christmas is here. Songs of silent nights, and angels singing, songs of Yule logs and jingling snow bells. Each and every family finds again the joys of being together at this special season.

We hope your Christmas is a happy one, with the songs of Christmas telling again the story of peace and happiness in your home.



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