

Christmas Sing On KYJC Tonight

The third annual "Christmas Sing With Bing," starring Bing Crosby and choral groups from all over the world, is scheduled for tonight at 9 o'clock over KYJC and the full CBS Radio network.

The program, which is rapidly becoming a Christmas Eve tradition, will feature Les Brown's Voice of Christmas; the chorus of the Insurance Company of North America; Choraliers from The Hague, Holland; YWCA Choir, Ballarat, Australia; YMCA Choir of Christian Arabs; Salt Lake City Tabernacle Choir; Vatican Choir, Rome; Bells of St. Peter's Cathedral, Rome; singing groups from American Armed Forces.

Backing up Crosby on the show will be Paul Weston's orchestra and the Norman Luboff choir.

A special feature of the broadcast will be "Silent German" as sung in the little German town where it was written.

Producers are Sam Pierce and Bill Morrow. Director is Murdo MacKenzie.

Family Members Here for Holidays

Guests of the H. C. Ingle family, 338 Bessie street, for Christmas week is their son-in-law and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. M. D. Richards, Los Angeles, and their three children.

DAR Chapter Holds Christmas Party

The annual Christmas party of Crater Lake chapter, Daughters of the American Revolution, was held at the home of Mrs. T. J. Gifford, Mrs. J. L. Houck and Mrs. V. J. Bolton were in charge of the program.

The story of a displaced family spending their first Christmas in a New England home was read, and appropriate music was sung.

Mrs. E. G. Randolph and Miss Florence Gifford were guests.

Assisting Mrs. Gifford were Mrs. E. M. Wilson, Mrs. Gay Garrett and Mrs. Glen F. Schneider.

In California

Mr. and Mrs. Robert Stacey and family and Mr. Stacey's mother, Mrs. Florence Stacey, Route 3, Box 157, Medford, are visiting relatives in the Los Angeles area over the Christmas holiday.

Medford Couple In California

Mr. and Mrs. Scott V. Davis left this morning for Orinda, Calif., to spend Christmas with Mr. Davis' daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. A. J. Wurts, former Medford residents. Other guests of the Wurts will be their two daughters and families, Mr. and Mrs. David Dorr, Ft. Lewis, Wash., Mr. and Mrs. Robert Lindsey and infant daughter, Susan, of Gilroy, Calif.

Mrs. Cyril Gay Is Club Hostess

Mrs. Cyril Gay entertained members of the Federated Grandmothers' club December 16 at her home, 1717 Stratford way, for a luncheon and Christmas party. The home was decorated in traditional holiday fashion.

Thirty-one members attended, and guests were Mrs. Ina Huston, Mrs. Charlotte Francis and Mrs. George Delimont, formerly of Kansas.

Four women celebrated their birthday, and Mrs. Fred L. Ryde gave a reading in their honor. Prizes went to Mrs. Grace Kurz and Mrs. Frank S. Chapman.

Mrs. Kurz, Mrs. Arthur Webster and Mrs. Eastwood assisted the hostess.

Next meeting of the club will be January 27 at the Webster home, 401 East Twelfth street, Medford.

Study Club Holds Christmas Party

Wednesday Study club held the annual Christmas party in the Girl's Community club December 18.

Mrs. R. T. Nichol, chairman of the good times committee, assisted by Mrs. O. H. Brennan, Mrs. Jack Swem and Mrs. Minnie G. Ball, had charge of the party, and the club room was very attractive in the Christmas theme decorations.

Mrs. Ball read the Christmas story.

Mrs. R. J. Miller is a new member of the club.

Miss Elizabeth Burr and Mrs. Melvin Dixon were guests.

Couple to Give Christmas Dinner

Mr. and Mrs. Edward C. Root will entertain Christmas day with a family dinner at their home, Three Pines, Jacksonville highway. Guests will be Dr. and Mrs. John P. Dickson and two sons, Johnny and Billy, Dr. Dickson's mother, Mrs. Hazel M. Dickson, A. M. Putney, Maurice Putney, Mr. and Mrs. Maynard Putney and their son, Arthur, who is home from Oregon State college for the holidays, and Mrs. Edna Pursel.

Potpourri

Potpourri has been observing Christmas for a long time now, and almost every year we learn something new about this religious and family festival. Last week end we read the little book "4,000 Years of Christmas" which came to us from Frances Bulkin by way of Evelyn Ousterhout and which has been considerably quoted recently. Written by Dr. Earl W. Count, who is the son of a missionary and an anthropologist of repute, the book explains why Christ's birthday has come to be observed on December 25, although actually the exact date of his birth is not known, and tells the origin of many of our familiar Christmas traditions and customs.

The fact that almost all of these customs had their origin in pagan celebrations which pre-dated Christ's birth still disturb many people. Dr. Count's book explains this away in part. "Christmas is a spontaneous drama of the common people, a prayer, a hymn," he declares in the epilogue. In essence, Dr. Count believes that Christmas is what it is today because it fills a need of the common people. "The life-blood of a people is its traditions, and Christmas has become great because men and women have given to it their deepest and most enduring selves," Dr. Count wrote.

Earlier in the book Dr. Count explained that December 25 came to be celebrated as the birthday of Christ apparently because this was the time the ancient Romans celebrated the festival of Saturnalia. This was the day, as the Romans calculated, when the sun was at its lowest ebb, ready to increase again and impart its strength to the growing things of the earth. The Roman festival, in turn, was patterned on even more ancient observances.

He explains how the customs and ideas from the Mediterranean coastlands gradually were combined with those from the northern countries of Europe into the winter festival of Christmas now widely observed throughout various parts of the world. The early Christian church fathers attempted at first to stamp out the pagan Saturnalia and similar observances, Dr. Count relates, but were unable to do so. And the writer feels that "taking the merriment, the greenery, the lights and the gifts from Saturn and giving them to the Babe of Bethlehem" was not merely a clever trick. Since in the early Christian days the most important thing that ever happened in the world was the coming of Christ, "to them, it was all one big event, the beginning of a new era. They celebrated this event during that long interval between the dying of the old year and the birth of the new and on into the spring; an old, old habit of centuries, but now richer and different in meaning."

Dr. Count also traces the history of St. Nicholas or Santa Claus, and explains the Christmas calendar—"Christ's Mass" which covers 12 days. Although there is some disagreement, this is roughly the Christmas calendar in all countries:

November 11 is St. Martin's day, and calls for special bonfires. About this time occurs the first of four Advent Sundays—looking to the "advent" of the Babe at midnight of Christmas eve. December 6 is St. Nicholas' day, the time when the old saint makes ready for the Master's coming. In Europe St. Nicholas visits the houses, leaving presents for the good children and switches for the bad. December 24 is Christmas eve, December 25 is Christmas day, December 28 is Holy Innocents, a day "commemorating the infant boys whom Herod slaughtered in his vain attempt to include the new-born King of the Jews."

January 1 is New Year's day, January 6 is Epiphany, the day when the Magi visited the manger. By this day the "twelve days of Christmas" are over and the tree should be down. The meaning of the tree is also an interesting story, and Dr. Count believes that mainly it springs from the "the devil-defying greenery with which long-standing tradition of the Northland had decorated house and barn at New Year's."

In some countries the tree originally was hung upside down, unadorned; in other nations the greens take the form of a treep-tip hung from the rafters.

There is always a Christmas tree in Potpourri's home, and yet we always feel guilty about cutting down so beautiful an object as a growing tree and wonder, uneasily, how much lumber it would produce if left to grow, and feel somewhat sad that the trees cannot be left in their original beauty in the green forests.

Some observe the pleasant custom of buying a rooted tree, and planting it after the holidays are over. Mr. and Mrs. Angus Bower of Ashland have observed this custom for several years past. The Bowers' home stands on a hillside, and since it needs additional trees, the couple adds a new one each year at Christmas time.

The custom of sending evergreens as gifts is more and more observed, since in some sections of the country the evergreens are not to be found. The Tom Gerety's of Medford shipped Oregon evergreen boughs to the island of Guam in order that Mrs. Gerety's sister and her husband, First Lt. Richard Friese, might have proper greenery for their Christmas decorations.

And Pal Peg almost sneaked one over on Potpourri in a story for Sunday. She wrote that a visitor had come for the "holidays," a phrase which the two of us rather like.

Food, of course, is one of the most important parts of the holiday traditions. Medford housewives will be assembling a long list of holiday fare including turkey, ham or chicken, all sorts of fruits and vegetables and a variety of sweets. But however lavish it is, it won't begin to compare with the food which the Duke of Buckingham ordered way back in 1508. The Duke, a legend says, invited 459 guests to share his festal board for Christmas that year. There wasn't a single turkey or goose on the Duke's menu. He ordered three swans, one salt sturgeon, two herons, four dogfish, one-half of a fresh conger eel, a barrel of oysters and three cranes. Even so, that doesn't sound like enough food for 459 guests, unless eels are larger than we think they are.

With this, Potpourri bids you all a Merry Christmas!—O.S.

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