

This month, we remember ...

- Irene Mary Proops, mother to Norma Pettit, mother-in-law to Tony Pettit, and Nanna to Val Potter & TC Kendall, passed to the spirit world on December 2nd, 1990. She is remembered with love always, and with gratitude for the healing she continues to bring.

Healing @ SSB

Healing is available, by appointment, on the second and fourth Monday of each month. Appointments are available between 6.30 pm & 8.30 pm.

December Date:

14th December

January Dates:

9th January

23rd January

For an appointment, contact
MaryAnn Leonard: 905 332 9934

Who's On ...

December 2011

4th Addariah Susan Waugh
11th Kelly James
18th Peace on Earth Candlelight Service
25th NO SERVICE
28th WEDNESDAY 7:00 PM – Jana Hefferman

January 2011

1st NO SERVICE
8th Rev. James Kinnear
15th Rev. Patti Tomczyk
22nd Pamela Paterson & David Jones
29th Marilyn Mazzotta

Upcoming Events

- December 4th & 11th - *December Delights Bake Sale* - There will be a delectable selection of homemade delights available to purchase before and after the divine service.
- December 18th - *Peace on Earth Candlelight Service* - Come and join us for our annual celebration of love, light and peace on earth.

Please note that there will be NO divine service offered on Christmas Day or New Year's Day. In lieu of these two services, SSB will be hosting a service on Wed. Dec. 28th at 7:00 PM. Regular Sunday services will resume on January 8th, 2012.



Spiritualist Society of Burlington
Roseland Plaza, 3027 New Street, Burlington, ON
spiritualist@cogeco.ca

The Message

Issue: 3.1 December 2011

Two Years Already ... ?

Where has the time gone!

This is the second anniversary of our monthly newsletter and we are proud to say that it's still going strong. Over this time, we have covered a wide range of subjects that we hope have informed, entertained and enlightened you.

In many ways, the memorable issues have been those where you have contributed and shared your spiritual stories and experiences. These help make many of the ideas and experiences we all have relevant because many of them are the same. The sharing helps us know that it's not in our heads or just our imaginations, because these stories are from people who we know and trust. They have nothing to gain from sharing; it's us, the readers who gain.

Don't be shy. Why not share your story? We can even help you write it, but don't worry; we would never publish anything you were not happy with.

As always, we are continually looking for ways to strengthen and improve The Message, so if you have any comments or suggestions, or perhaps subjects you'd like to know more about, then please do not hesitate to let us know.

"Happy, happy Christmas, that can win us back to the delusions of our childish days; that can recall to the old man the pleasures of his youth; that can transport the sailor and the traveller, thousands of miles away, back to his own fire-side and his quiet home!"

Charles Dickens, The Pickwick Papers, 1836

Spiritualist Society of Burlington

Ah, 'Tis Christmas ...

As we're getting close to Christmas, we thought we would take a different approach to our usual articles and take a look at Christmas from a different perspective and see where the different elements that make up Christmas originated.

Christmas – The earliest reference to Christmas being marked on Dec. 25 comes from the second century after Jesus' birth. It is considered likely the first Christmas celebrations *were in reaction to the Roman Saturnalia*, a harvest festival that marked the winter solstice—the return of the sun—and honored Saturn, the god of sowing. Saturnalia was a rowdy time, *much opposed by the more austere leaders among the still-minority Christian sect*. Christmas developed, one scholar says, as a means of replacing worship of the *sun* with worship of the Son. By 529 A.D., after Christianity had become the official state religion of the Roman Empire, Emperor Justinian made Christmas a civic holiday. The celebration of Christmas reached its peak—some would say its worst moments—in the medieval period when it became a time for conspicuous consumption and unequalled revelry. *It could be suggested that not much has changed.*

Decorations – On the Roman New Year (January 1), houses were decorated with greenery and lights, and gifts were given to children and the poor. To these observances were added the German and Celtic Yule rites when the Teutonic tribes penetrated into Gaul, Britain, and central Europe. Food and good fellowship, the Yule log and Yule cakes, greenery and fir trees, gifts and greetings all commemorated different aspects of this festive season. Fires and lights, symbols of warmth and lasting life, have always been associated with the winter festival, both pagan and Christian.

Santa Claus – Santa Claus was originally known as Saint Nicholas, the patron of children and sailors, and was immortalized because of his generous and loving nature towards children. He was said to have brought joy to the poor by throwing gifts through their windows. The Dutch called him Sint Nikolass, which eventually evolved into Sinter Klaas. It wasn't until the Dutch began entering America that the colonials of New York began calling him Santa Claus.

Stockings – It was said that Santa Claus threw 3 coins down a chimney of the home of 3 poor sisters. Each of the coins landed inside separate stockings left on the fireplace to dry. It is now a modern tradition to hang stockings there in hopes that we might have the same good fortune.

Christmas Cards – The earliest known designer of a Christmas card was Sir Henry Cole, the first director of the Victoria and Albert Museum in London, England. It was both the Penny Post postal service in 1840 and the industrialization of the printing industry however, that led to the popularity of sending Christmas cards. By 1846, one thousand were sold at one shilling each. Cards in unsealed envelopes could be posted for half a penny. A German printer by the name of Louis Prang was designing and selling cards in Roxbury, Massachusetts in 1874. Ten years later his shop was selling more than 5 million cards a year.

Mistletoe – Mistletoe is rarely used in churches because it comes from the ancient Druid ceremony celebrating the winter solstice. This once pagan tradition started when a girl would stand beneath the hanging plant and a boy would walk up, pick a berry and then kiss her. When the berries were gone...no more kisses!

Yule Log – Yule Logs are supposed to be cut from red oak trees and burned all of Christmas Eve and into Christmas Day. It is unlucky to buy your own log and lucky ones usually come from your neighbor's woodpile. It is also customary to light the new log with a scrap of last year's log. The scrap is kept under the homeowners' bed to protect the home from fire and lightning during the next year.

Carols – The custom of singing Christmas carols is said to have come from 13th century Italy where St. Francis of Assisi led songs of praise. It is said to be very bad luck to send carolers away empty handed. It is customary to offer food, drink or even a little money. It is also said to be unlucky if you sing Christmas carols at any other time of the year besides the festive season.

Rudolph – The red-nosed reindeer was born in 1939 when a 34-year old writer for Montgomery Ward named Robert L. May was asked to invent a Christmas story. The company gave copies of the story to customers during the holiday season as a promotion for their stores.

Food for Thought ...

“Christmas is not a time nor a season, but a state of mind. To cherish peace and goodwill, to be plenteous in mercy, is to have the real spirit of Christmas

Calvin Coolidge