

Christmas is a neighborly event at Anderson home

By **JOAN SHURLIFF**

Melville is a close knit community with many Christmas traditions. Lucille Anderson has lived in the community for fifty years and participated in many of the gatherings.

Besides Christmas Day church services and school programs, there are open houses and dances to spread the festive spirit.

School Christmas programs are always of interest. The Melville area at one time had four schools—Melville, Settlement, Basin, and Wheeler Butte. Lucille talked about how the Christmas program was handled in Melville for awhile.

"They all had their Christmas programs, with their Christmas tree and their Santa Claus. For several years, Melville used to go up to Allman Hall and have our program because it was larger. After that we would have a potluck supper and sometimes even dance."

The Tronrud Orchestra would play at many area dances. Mrs. Anderson said members included George Senior, his daughter, and Victor Tronrud played the banjo.

For a short time in the forties there were potluck dinners at the bar that Stanley Hanson built called the Stockman's Bar. Mrs. Anderson said, "It was short lived. It burned down about four years after it was built."

One of the most memorable Christmas programs at the Melville Lutheran church was the one presented last year. The students went to the Two Dot ranch with its old buildings and produced a slide production of the Christmas story that was presented at the school.

Most of the school Christmas programs were little plays and recitations. Lucille described one that stood out in her mind. "The teacher wasn't much on music, that wasn't her main thing. The plays were very good. I had never attend-

ed a Christmas program where they could sing all the songs on one note, but they did that year."

Christmas has been a family time for the Andersons. Lucille has had Christmas Eve observance in her home for 43 years for all the Andersons. She has had up to 70 people for a traditional Norwegian Christmas Eve dinner of lutefisk, lefsa, meatballs and potatoes, along with the Christmas tree, and then end the evening with singing.

The community used to have Church on Christmas morning, but it doesn't do that anymore. Everyone goes to church on Christmas Eve.

Lucille described the Christmas week activities of the past. "During the week we had one day that was for the kids. There would be a skating party and sloppy joes or something like that. Then the men would have one day of skating."

"In the evening, the Van Cleve's always had a party for everyone in the community. There would be a dinner and then we would roll up the rugs in their house and dance until dawn. Anyone that could play the piano or fiddle, Johnny Johnson played the fiddle, did and we would dance like anything."

"The Bose Ranch, now it's the Donald Ranch, always had an open house during the holidays. We all went there. Then when the bar was in Melville, one night there would be a potluck supper there and we'd dance until daylight. It was something going all the time."

Lucille concluded by saying, "It was a busy time and it was a fun time and it was an inexpensive time. We had a lot of fun just visiting with each other without it being too elaborate. It was just the fun of being with everybody."

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Where is Santa?

By **WANDA MYRSTOL**
Grade 8, Bridge School

Five days before Christmas, Santa got the flu. He was very sick. He was so ill he was hot on one side and cold on the other. He pulled a great handful of hair out of his beard. He kicked and hit his bed with his feet and waved his hands all the time.

Mrs. Claus got a little worried so she thought she would call Dr. Hoggroff, but decided to call Dr. Schmittenthammer instead. Dr. S. was a hair specialist, and Santa's beard looked worse than he did. Mrs. Claus called his office, but his secretary said he was on a cruise giving "cruise cuts" to the passengers. So Mrs. Claus sent a telegram to him. She sent it by Carrier Snowbird. The Dr. got the telegram right away. He read it to himself and then cried out, "Captain, we must turn back, Santa Claus is sick!"

So the captain turned back. They arrived at the harbor in record time. When Dr. S. got off the Ship he rented a car and drove as far as he could. He took a dog sled the rest of the way to Santa's house. When he knocked at the door, Mrs. Claus answered it. She asked him to come in and look at Santa. He examined Santa and said he had a case of Chrimassess. The Dr. said Santa had to stay in bed for 4 1/2 or 5 days. Santa looked sad, for he had to deliver presents in four days.

Then Santa asked Mrs. Claus if she would replace him this Christmas. "Me, me, why me. Can't you get someone else, please, please not me?" But Santa would not have anyone else but her. So Mrs. Claus didn't argue anymore. Time went by slowly for Santa. But then finally there were only two days till Christmas. Santa felt so much better he got up and went to the workshop. There was no one there, so he went up to the living room. There he found the elves watching TV.

"What's this may I ask?" said Santa. The elves looked up and shouted with joy. "Santa, you're not sick any more so there will be a

Christmas this year after all!" Santa looked up and asked, "Why wasn't there not going to be a Christmas this year?"

"Because Mrs. Claus got the flu too and we couldn't find anyone else to take her place." So the elves went back down to the workshop and got ready for Christmas. Soon they set off for that night was Christmas Eve.

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To Santa

By **BRIAN ENGLE**
Grade 6, Bridge School.

[Editor's Note: Mac is teacher Jane Grosfield]

I'm going to make you a seven Day Diary of how good I was.

Dec. 21, 1975

I knocked over the school Xmas tree when it was half way decorated and I never got to finish decorating the tree.

Dec. 22, 1975

It was one of the best days of December. I wouldn't say my lines right so I got in trouble and Mac blew her top.

Dec. 23, 1975

Tonight is the Xmas play I threw the masking tape at a girl and she got mad and started to chase me. We aren't supposed to run around in the schoolhouse. I got my head bashed in when she caught me, I had to stand in the corner for a half an hour.

Dec. 24, 1975

We had to clean up today. When I was taking the stage curtains I dropped them on the same girl as yesterday

The next year

Dec. 20, 1976

We put the Xmas tree up this morning and I dropped the tree lights on the floor. I broke the whole string except three.

Dec. 21, 1976

When I was putting stage lights up I put them on wrong and they burnt a big hole in one curtain. When I was putting them back up I fell off the ladder and fell on them and broke the wire. Tonight is our play and I'm mad.

Dec. 22, 1976

We had to clean up the schoolhouse after last night. There was a half a case of pop left over and I had to carry it out to the bus. I dumped it and all the cans broke.

I want a skateboard, some rollerskates, a unicycle, and a girlfriend

MeBe

P.S. My Granpa made me so nice and Mac blew her top every Day and if you don't find a girlfriend, forget it.

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