



Port Huron High School Class Of 1963

Hello Classmate,

18 December 2016

Merry CHRISTmas to you all. I hope that the season is going well with you all. I know some may have everything they want, others are so-so, and yet others may be saddened by the loss of a close person in our life. I don't pretend to have a magic answer but I do know that I have found an old Baptist gospel song that always brightens my outlook. It goes, "Count your blessings, name the one by one, count your blessings see what God has done." And when I took the time to count the blessings, and in particular naming them, I found that, "Truly I am blessed!" And with the CHRISTmas season, it is a particularly good time to count the blessings.

I don't expect that all of you check the web page very often but I thought I would pass along a web link that I recently added to the favorite web links list. It is called PORT HURON HIGH SCHOOL DIGITAL MUSEUM. The website has a lot of interesting items to look at, including all the yearbooks, logo, a large collection of LIGHTHOUSE school newspapers, photos, etc. The web site can be found at: <http://phhshistory.com/yearbooks/>

Allows me to share a couple of timely articles I found in a December 1962 Lighthouse. The following articles were taken directly from the newspaper. I hope they peak your interest in visiting the web site and finding your own stories and memories.

WHAT IS CHRISTMAS LIKE ABROAD?

Christmas With Cici

By MARTHA ANNERMAN

A typical German Christmas was described to me last week as I interviewed Cici Ruebig in her American home. She told me about "St. Niklaus Day" which falls on December 6. The young German children set their boots or shoes near the windows or doors for St. Niklaus to fill them with little candies, cookies, etc. The bad children who are lazy and don't do what they are told get a bunch of switches to be beaten with. Adults dress as St. Niklaus and attend to the children's parties. The small children sing the St. Niklaus hymns after receiving their gifts.

Cici described the Christmas tree as having very simple decorations. Silver icicles, silver Christmas balls, pine cones, and artificial snow are often used. A star or an angel is usually put on top. Some people do use lights, but Cici prefers the wax candles on the tree. Chocolate candies and angel hair can be used, too. The Nativity scene is very frequently seen under the German Christmas tree.

The main Christmas day is "Holy Eve", December 24. On this day, everyone attends church in the late afternoon. Upon returning home, they light the tree and exchange the presents. Many times they may open the celebration by reading of the holy birth from the Bible and then sing songs before exchanging gifts. Very exquisite dinners of turkey, deer or something similar are served on this day.

Collections for the poor in both East and West Germany help to make the occasion gay for needy families. This is a season for great charity in Germany.

Whether Santa is coming down the chimney or St. Niklaus is sliding through the key hole, the families are all the same with mother's homemade cookies and cakes and the hustle and bustle of this special time of year.

CHRISTMAS WITH PETE

By CHERYL DAVIS

Peter Ferdinand, another German exchange student at P.H.H.S., who will be many miles from home at Christmas time is nevertheless looking forward to a happy season. "The family with whom I am living have made me feel so much at home that while I know some pangs of loneliness are inevitable. I anticipate a wonderful Christmas." Peter commented.

Four Sundays before Christmas Eve has been set apart for centuries as a time for devotional preparation known as the Advent season. A large Advent wreath with a red candle is hung on the first Sunday; each succeeding until Christmas Eve Sunday another candle is added and a paper star is added each day. Often children memorize Biblical passages written on these stars.

Christmas bazaars in fairs begin on December 6, St. Nicholas Day. Gaily decorated booth sell candies, toys, and trees. Many German cookies are well known in this county; Pfeffernusse (gingerbread nuts), Sprengerle, and Lebkuchen are favorites.

Music, one of the greatest tributes to Christmas, owes much to German composers. Americans, too, know and love such music as George Frederick Handel's "Messiah", carols like "Tannenbaum", and "Stille Nacht", ("Silent Night").

"Christmas in Germany is a season of gayety and color with great emphasis on traditional home and church ceremonies." Peter concluded.

Christmas With Mai

By MARY HILL

I a recent interview with Mai Alvenger, senior exchange student from Sweden, I learned about the traditions of the Christmas season in Sweden.

The Christmas season, Mai told me, begins on December 13, which is called Santa Lucia Day. The girls of each family get up about 4 a.m. and don "Santa Lucia" dresses. With candles in their hair, they welcome the Christmas season by serving their parents coffee, cookies and other baked goods prepared especially for the occasion. Later in the day each class from high school visits a teacher and serve them in much the same way as the parents were.

"Santa Lucia Day" is comparable to you Homecoming," Mai explained. She said that each school elects a Santa Lucia queen chosen from the senior class. There are two girls from each grade on the court, but the queen is the only one who wears candles in her hair.

Santa Lucia Day is a very gala occasion at school; there are no classes held on that day. Various activities include singing and organized snake dances.

On Christmas Eve, Jultomten, who is the Swedish counterpart of our Santa Claus, comes to each house with a large sack of gifts. The presents are on placed under the Christmas tree.

Also on Christmas Eve, before Jultomten and the gifts arrive, the whole family gathers for Christmas dinner. This traditional meal, called smorgasbord, includes porridge and a whole ham.

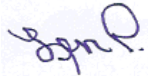
From December 17 to about January 14 there is no school. During this time, most of the young people have jobs.

On December 25 and 26, holy days are observed. For 13 days after Christmas the Swedes observe the fact that, as Mai puts it, "Christmas is over."

The home decorations for the holiday are set before the fireplaces. These are cotton for snow, a church with a light inside and a Bethlehem scene. During the Advent season, wreaths are hung in windows of the Swedish homes. On the wreaths are four candles, each one a symbol of the four Sundays in December which precede Christmas day. One candle is burned on each of these Sundays. In the predawn hours, the candles can be seen shining in the windows.

Merry CHISTMAS to you all.

Blessings,



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