

# MUSEUM

## News

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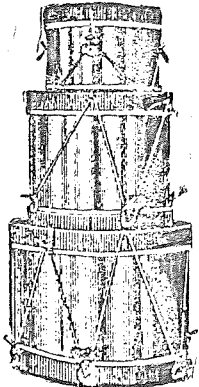
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### On Exhibit

On Display until January 31st at the Collier County Museum will be an exhibit by Penelope Taylor Photography: "Directions" with Paintings by Rob Storter.

The women involved in the "phototalk" exhibition by Penelope Taylor were selected from the many families who moved to Naples before 1945. Their long residency in this area gives them a unique perspective from which to view our present-day community and comment on the future of an area they have helped to settle.

Also on display will be the paintings by Rob Storter, an 88 year old lifetime resident. Rob Storter's primitive style of art depicts the life he lived and worked in this community. Storter has a book which is available at the Museum Gift Shop called "Cracker in the Glade". It is a portrait of Rob Storter, fisherman and his family and features illustrations by Storter.



Need some interesting and unique gifts for Christmas? Stop by the Museum's Gift Shop we have Everglades posters, reproductions of old maps of Florida and Caribbean suitable for framing, notecards, books for all interests, a coloring book of Colorful Naples, stocking stuffers of alligator clickers, arrowheads, doubloons and sharks tooth. Check it out, solve a problem gift.

### A PUNCH RECIPE TO ADD TO YOUR HOLIDAY CELEBRATING!

#### WASSAIL CHRISTMAS PUNCH THE DAY BEFORE

(Guaranteed to knock your socks off!!!)

2 qts. apple juice  
1 pt. cranberry juice  
3/4 c. white sugar  
1 tsp. aromatic bitters  
2 sticks cinnamon  
1 tsp. whole allspice  
1 small orange studded with whole cloves  
1 c. rum (optional)

Put all ingredients in crock pot. Cover and cook on high for 1 hour, then on low the rest of the day. (Can also be put in pan on stove, turn on lowest heat).

recipe of Patti Hartner's  
(Museum Clerk)



### Holiday Greetings!

A Special Thanks for the support, contributions and interest in the Collier County Museum, to all.

Merry Christmas and  
Happy New Year!



# Merry Christmas



## CHRISTMAS - THE UNTOLD STORY

by Ron D. Jamro



Ever wonder why people behave so strangely at this time of year? Why, for example would someone shell out perfectly good money to watch a tree with little Japanese bulbs slowly rot in the corner of their living room? Or what prompts even the most tight-fisted Scrooge to spend bucks as fast as Jackie O.? And who, pray tell, dreamt up all that mushy stuff about kissing under a sprig of parasitic plant, affectionately known as phoradendron flauscens? (Mistletoe to you and I)

Well, wonder no more! This Museum News exclusive report takes a daring look behind the yuletide schlock to expose everything you wanted to know about Christmas-but didn't think anyone would tell you.

In recent times a spruce or fir tree festooned with lights and assorted bric-a-brac forms the centerpiece of the Christmas celebration. But, did you know that the custom is believed to be German in origin? It reportedly began during the 18th century when the missionary St. Boniface urged a group of local pagan worshippers to dedicate a fir tree to the Holy Child. The idea caught on and by the mid-19th century, trees decorated with candles (to imitate the "starry skies of Bethlehem") were going up all over Europe. The practice was introduced to this country by German soldiers during the American Revolution, but Christmas trees did not receive national recognition until President Pierce decorated the White House with one in 1856. (Pretty interesting so far, huh?)



Another popular custom-the setting up of manger scenes of the Nativity-can be traced to Italy where, in 1223, St. Francis of Assisi assembled such a scene with a cast of live people and animals. This quaint custom eventually spread through southern Europe where, for a time, manger scenes stole the limelight from Christmas trees as the center of the holiday observance.

As you might have expected, the dreaded practice of Christmas shopping goes back a long, long way-to the Roman Saturnalia, in fact. Long before the dawn of video games, Romans were presenting their friends and countrymen with fruits, pastries, trinkets and even "lucky" twigs from sacred groves ("Gee, thanks! It's just what I wanted, Brutus!")

Another more modest form of gift giving is the annual exchange of Christmas cards. An Englishman, J.C. Horsley, is credited with designing the first Christmas card in 1843. The enterprising Briton presented his greetings on stiff cardboard and mailed over a thousand of them to his friends. And you thought your list was long!



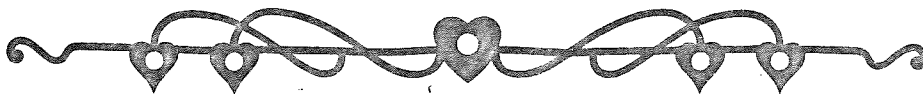


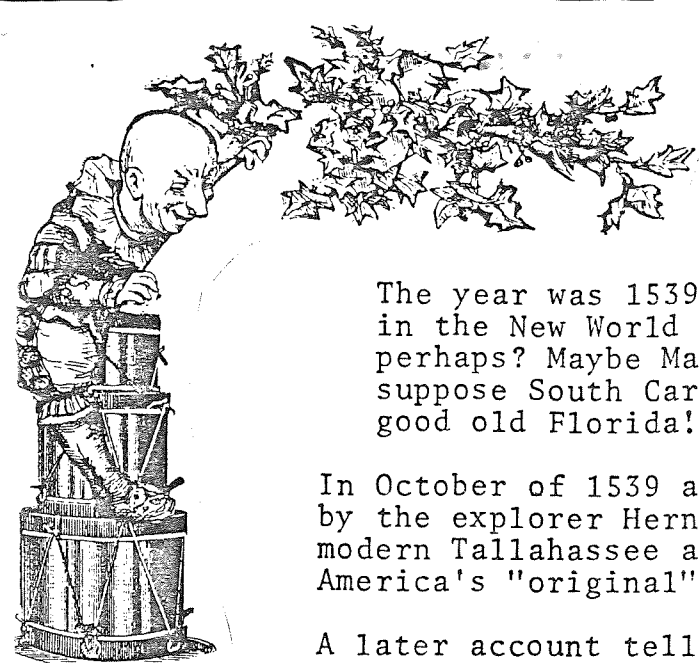
Holiday greenery-ivy, evergreens, holly and the like-has long been associated with the holiday season. Mistletoe is probably the most distinguished of all Christmas decorations and can trace its roots back to ancient times. It is said that Roman enemies made up their quarrels when they met under the mistletoe-hence the bit about kissing. The somewhat less romantic Teutonic people believed that evergreens like holly, rosemary or laurel possessed magical powers to ward off sickness, evil spirits...and the Romans. The practice of using boughs of greenery just kind of "grew" and by 1444, greenery was used on the streets of London as Christmas decorations.

The truth about Santa Claus is just as startling. Believe it or not, that rather rotund denizen of the department store is descended from an actual person, St. Nicholas, a Bishop who lived in Asia Minor during the 4th century. Nick was famous for his generosity and made a habit of throwing bags of money through people's windows. Naturally, everybody was eager to get in on the action, and before long hordes of St. "Nicoli" began popping up all over Europe. In Spain, Santa is known as "Balthasar" and is into filling kid's shoes with gifts(needless to say, not many Spanish kids get air hockey games for Christmas). In Denmark, good little girls and boys anxiously await "Jule-Nissen", a gnome who does the present bit, while in Italy a female Santa named "Befana" makes the rounds on Christmas Eve.

There's a lot of interesting superstitions about Christmas too, which people here and there feel obliged to observe. The list includes old sayings such as;"A windy Christmas is a sign of good fortune; A cricket chirping at Christmas brings good luck; and if one opens the doors as the clock strikes midnight on Christmas Eve, the house will be rid of evil spirits"(and get pretty cold too!) Finally, for the young lady who wishes to improve her love life, sleeping on a piece of Christmas cake is said to do the trick.

The REAL Christmas then, as we have seen, is a pretty complex and baffling affair a bewildering tangle of legend, history, superstition and nonsense. But whatever your personal yuletide beliefs and customs-whether you like your Christmas traditional or kinky-may your holiday be the BEST ever!





## THE FIRST CHRISTMAS IN AMERICA

The year was 1539. In which state (or colony if you prefer) in the New World was Christmas first celebrated? Pennsylvania perhaps? Maybe Maine? Nope. Very likely Virginia, or do you suppose South Carolina? Wrong again. It was right here in good old Florida!

In October of 1539 a band of Spanish soldiers and priests, led by the explorer Hernando DeSoto, camped just southwest of modern Tallahassee and remained there long enough to celebrate America's "original" Christmas ceremony.

A later account tells of a Christmas observance at St. Augustine in 1565, presided over by Father Francisco Lopez de Mondoza Grajales at the Mission of Nombre de Dios. The Saint Augustine settlement was, as we all know, the first permanent colony established by Europeans in what was to become the United States.



For those of you who can't wait until New Year's Eve, here's an interesting bit of trivia, fresh from our trivia archives!

The use of cork as a bottle stopper was discovered by the same man who invented champagne, a French Benedictine monk named Dom Perignon. He made these discoveries about 300 years ago.



We hope you have enjoyed this special Christmas issue of Museum News. If you would like to be placed on our mailing list to receive copies, please complete the following and mail to:

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