

MUSEUM MUSINGS FOR DECEMBER 2010

“Christmas is coming the geese are getting fat
Please put a penny in the old man’s hat
If you haven’t got a penny a ha’penny will do
If you haven’t got a ha’penny then God bless you
From an old English carol

A penny would hardly count in this day and age but the sentiment is the same. What was Christmas like in earlier times on Texada? I turned to Bill Thompson’s book and found a few reminiscences. One of them is by Eleanor Hoeg who had a cottage in Gillies bay and clearly loved to spend Christmas on Texada. Here is an excerpt from the Texada Lines, Winter 1990. “Its Robs candle lanterns marking stairs and pathways after dark.

Its Texada friends crowding into the small living room to sing carols and other songs to the accompaniment of guitars recorders and violin; the air of the room is fragrant with cedar boughs over windows and rafters, bayberry candles in the advent wreath and wall sconces, mulled apple juice and ‘glug’ on the stove. It’s a five foot Christmas tree, decorated but without lights, suspended from the roof near the front door. The tree sways gently just above our heads, the wire wound down the trunk well hidden by a double twist of tinsel rope.” Lovely images from gentler times. Another set of images has to do with the lighting of the Christmas tree lights at the old Ideal staff house behind the ball field in Van Anda. For about forty years Joe Kempe took it upon himself to make this happen. He kept the many small evergreen trees well trimmed and every year strung lights in them. All were welcome to come and see the lights lit and to enjoy hot chocolate with their friends and neighbours. Carols were sung and the spirit of Christmas could be felt. Our photo today is of the house which was the Palmer home built in about 1900.

Until next time take care of each other and remember to think and act green. Merry Christmas to you all.

Norm MacLean

