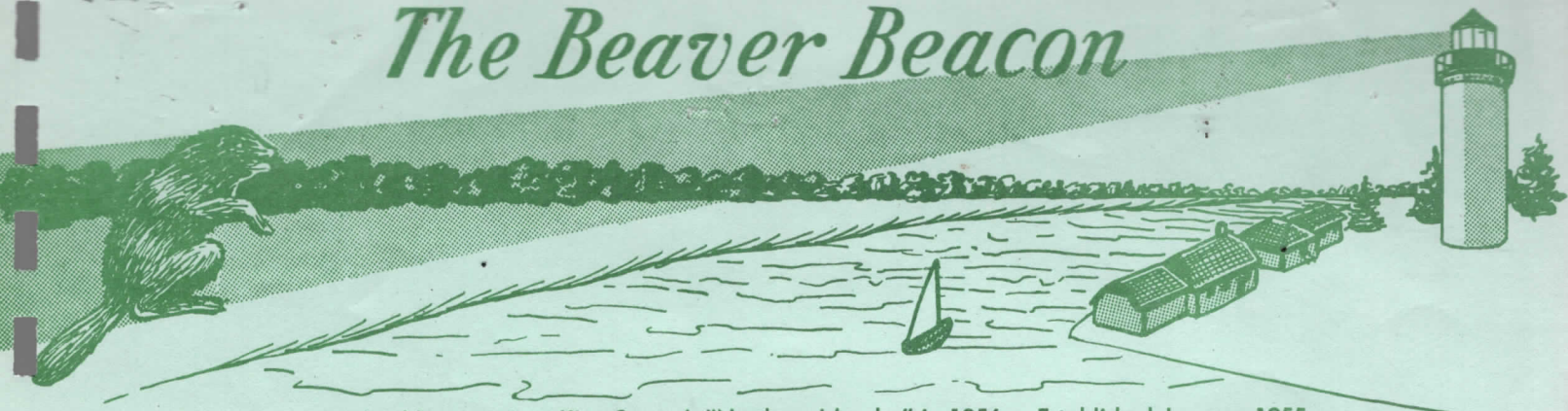


The Beaver Beacon



Only Island Publication since King Strang's "Northern Islander" in 1856 — Established January 1955

Dec.



MERRY CHRISTMAS
— AND —
HAPPY NEW YEAR!

This is our Holiday Issue -- All news of Beaver Island will appear in the January Issue.

A Special Gift

Here comes Christmas. Far off, I hear the jingle of sleigh bells and the deep tones of Ho-Ho-Ho! as softly falling snow whitens the rooftops. The smell of pine boughs in the living room, the steamy odor of turkey and candied yams and creamed onions pervades the kitchen. A small stable and statuettes are under the tree, surrounded by sleds and dolls and candy.

Christmas is wide-eyed joy. Away back at the turn of the century, a child named Virginia wrote to the editor of "The New York Sun" and asked if there really is a Santa. The Sun said that indeed there is a Santa, as real and living as the spirit of Christmas itself.

Editors are notorious cynics. This one knew that Kris Kringle is as alive as the Christ-child whose birthday it is. Those who look for Santa never see him. He is the spirit of the joy of giving, and spirits are shy about walking into the vision of wide-awake eyes.

I was 10 the last time I saw Santa, and I did not understand his words. What I knew was that my whole body cried out for that Flexible Flyer sled and that two-wheel bike. In the morning, I wrote a personal letter to him at the North Pole. I told him that I saw my gifts sticking out of his bag and I hoped he would not give them to someone else. I also asked him to please arrange for some snow Christmas morning.

The night before Christmas I was too excited to go to bed and my mother permitted me to stay up until 10 o'clock. We lived on the third floor of an apartment house and I could look down on the street lights and see the lazy flakes swirl around the beams and fall softly to the street.

I also saw Kitty O'Donnell hurrying back from the grocery store with a can of milk. Kitty was nine, a skinny pest of a girl who was always asking questions. Her parents were the janitors in the cellar. Everybody knew they were poor and her father was lame.

When we played marbles in the backyard, we used to shut up when Kitty approached because she was a girl, and none of us would let her in the game. On Christmas Eve, she hurried home with the milk and I saw her disappear into the cellar, where she belonged.

In the morning, I woke John up at six. We aroused our parents and asked permission to go into the living room to see what Santa had left. My father mumbled: "All right. Don't make any noise." The tree was beautiful, glittering with shiny colored ornaments.

Underneath, I saw the beautiful Flexible Flyer and the bicycle with the gleaming spikes. In an hour, I was downstairs running with the sled and belly-whopping down the street. After awhile, I wished the snow would go away so I could ride the bike.

Kitty O'Donnell came out of the cellar shyly saying "Merry Christmas." She didn't get any gifts. We all knew that she and her mother would go to the firehouse. There, the firemen gave food baskets to the poor and a stick of peppermint candy and a gift.

When she came back, our cheeks were red and our noses were running. Kitty cradled a plain rag doll in her arms. She looked glad. I asked where she was going and she said, "To Church." John and I took turns racing downhill with the sled.

When Kitty came back, her arms were empty. But her eyes were shining. I didn't say "Merry Christmas" to her. The next Sunday at church, Old Father Edward Kelly stood in the pulpit. He spoke of Christmas and said that he was surprised to find that someone had left a rag doll in the manger as a gift to the Christ-child. No one had ever done that before.

I never saw Santa after that. Years later, Kitty told me she saw him---real and alive---every Christmas Eve.....

Jim Bishop

What shall I give Him

Poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd

I'd give a lamb

If I were a wise man

I'd do my part

What shall I give Him?

Give --- my heart.

Rosetti

Merry Christmas And A Happy Healthful New Year

We are making a donation to the
Medical Center Building Fund instead
of sending cards this year

LaFreniere's Store
Dick & Jean

Greetings of the Season and Best Wishes for the New Year

All of us at McDonough's Store send a prayer at Christmas time -- that God will
always Bless you and those you love with lasting happiness.....Thank you for
your friendship.

McDonough's Store

To Faithful old Friends...

To cherished new Friends

Our Best Wishes for the New Year

We are making a donation to the
Medical Center Building Fund instead
of sending cards this year

Beachcomber Tavern
Pat & Jim

Membership Dues

That time has arrived again and membership dues should be paid. Many people have
already paid their dues, but if you have not done so, please fill in the form
below and return to: Beaver Beacon - St. James, Michigan 49782

Name _____
Address _____
City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Dues - \$4.00 per year - Remember the Beaver Beacon makes a wonderful gift, too.

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Holy Cross Church

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Isle Haven Tourist Court

Gillespie Sales & Service

Harbor View Tourist Court

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LaFreniere's Store

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Pebble Beach

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Beachcomber Bar

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Erin Motel

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Beaver Island Museum

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