

Annual Christmas Assembly Features 'Cy'anta, 'Murk's' Monologue, Choir

For many years now the Service Club has sponsored the traditional Christmas Assembly.

For the past ten years Mr. C. M. Edson, principal has presented his "Cy"anta Claus act for both students and teachers at Senior High. His act first originated on radio WEED where he was a part-time announcer. The radio station needed a Christmas program so Mr. Edson devised one in which he reads letters from children of Rocky Mount. He has been doing so since 1935. Later, he began giving the same program at school. Mr. Edson portrays Santa Claus, two elves; Pinky and Pudgy, and several of Santa's helpers from the chilly North Pole.

The request for gifts which "Cy"anta reads in school are from students of the creative writing classes. Mr. Edson said that he "changed them around some to make them more humorous."

Miss Alma Murchison, English teacher, is also a part of the traditional activities as she weaves a heart-warming monologue centered around the Christmas spirit.

Miss Murchison said that her stories have been received with much enthusiasm since she gave her first school performance in 1953.

Having been a professional actress at one time truly qualifies Miss Murchison for the "readings" she gives. Not only

does she tell stories for Senior High but she also has performed for almost every civic club in Rocky Mount.

Miss Murchison does not use, nor has she ever used another person or prop of any kind to aid her during her performance.

"I enjoy giving "readings" and hope the students enjoy them, too. They (the students) have always been a wonderful audience." Miss Murchison went further to say that she enjoyed doing "readings" for students more than for any other group.

Along with Mr. Edson and Miss Murchison, the choir has long been on the agenda for the Christmas program. The choir, under the direction of Mr. Harold Parry has been singing for the special assembly for about 25 years. Mr. Parry said that the choir, along with the other Christmas songs they sing, they always sing at least one reminding people to buy Christmas Seals.

Tinsel

Tinsel on the Christmas tree began, so legend says, when spiders covered with webs a tree that had been decorated by a mother for her many children.

To reward the woman for her goodness to her children, the Christ Child changed the spider webs to gleaming silver.

Several Students, Alumni Perform To Many In Band "Nightbeats"

What are they? They are the Fabulous Nighbeats that have played for the Homecoming Dance and will be playing for the Christmas Dance, December 14.

The Nighbeats, which is a jazz band composed of students and alumni from Senior High, was organized January 14, 1962 by Walter Jones.

Walter Jones, who is a junior at Senior High, received a set of drums last Christmas and toyed around with the idea of starting a band. He discussed the idea with Wayne Smith, a former Senior High student, who played the lead guitar. Wayne invited Jimmy Drake, a graduate of Senior High, who plays the saxophone to join them in the discussion. After much discussion, pro and con, they agreed to organize. At first the name Trebletones was used by the boys until they discovered that another group had the same name. It was then changed to their present name--Nighbeats. Soon the three boys felt the need for a singer, so Dickie Pridgen, who is a junior at Senior High was asked to join them. Dickie found that singing with a band was quite a job and encountered some difficulty at first. But through practice and more practice he soon took the swing of things. Pretty soon, many more players were invited to join the band.

Those that were later added are Jay Daughtridge, who is a senior, playing the organ; Clifton Nelms, a graduate of Senior High, handling the bass guitar; and Ronnie Mitchell, a former Senior

High student, who joined the group as a singer.

Handling the many engagements each week is manager Jules Walker. Not only does Jules handle the engagements but he looks after the band's trailer, instruments, uniforms, and financial matters.

The Nighbeats have played for several clubs and civic organizations and have future engagements with some Rocky Mount firms, and Seymour Johnson Air Force Base.

Favorite Teacher

By Wanda Wise

I have a dedicated teacher
As strict as she can be
But I love her very much
For all she's done for me.

Others, too, are thankful
For this outstanding leader.
If ever you get the chance
I'd like for you to meet her.

The state reward that she received
Was credit that was due,
When you complete a class of hers
You've really earned it, too!

Mrs. VanBuskirk we'll remember
When we get to college,
Because in the field of biology
We'll be well equipped with knowledge.

Future plans include branching out and playing for other cities, cutting a record, and appearing on the T. V. March of Dimes Telethon.

When the band was first organized their uniforms consisted of a blue shirt and white pants but now have changed to white pants and a gold shirt.

Feasts

Many foods for Christmas feasting have been traditional since early days of Yule merry-making, although roast peacock, the feature of the feast in medieval England, is rarely, if ever, seen today!

Mince pie, with its spices and fruits, is said to symbolize the riches of the East, from which the wise men came.

Legend says plum pudding began when an English king and his men were lost in a forest on Christmas Eve. The cook used foods he had on hand, including part of a stag, plums, eggs, flour, to make a single dish all could share.

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