

1944

GREETINGS BAREFEET - AND CLUBFEET !

Clubfeet being, of course, the members of our select circle but not charter Barefoots. Well...here it is Christmas again and our thoughts go out to you all over the earth. We could get very serious on the subject of Peace on Earth, Good Will, and all that sort of stuff but - the truth is - we feel kinda foolish trying to tell you ANYTHING. Sooo, lets be silly instead. But first, we had to pass up the idea of personal messages this year because too many people pleaded for space in the Xmas Bulletin, and, after all, Mrs. Reamer only has two hands. Lets wish HER a Merry Christmas! So heres the story.

We're sure of it - heres why Because
Will Hammell made the cover FREE,
The printer said, well so would HE.
The man who made the plate was SWEIL.
(He made us say we wouldnt tell)
The envelopes were given, too,
By some one Billy Hammell knew
We thought you'd want to know
Because
It proves there is a Santa Claus!!!

Here in Red Bank we are getting ready for what is known as a "good old fashioned Christmas." For years and years we have been trying to figure that one out, we STILL dont know what it means. Boy, oh, boy, the family reunion can be a mixed blessing if you ask us. Speaking as one matriarch, this is how it looks to us. First, you spend the whole year trying to remember the payments on your Xmas Club. Then, before you know it, you've spent twice that much on presents - and then some, Next comes the wrapping and the battle of the Post Office. Bloody but unbowed you begin on brightning up the corner where you are - known as the ancestral home. Then plans for the dinner...yum yum and hotcha...mince meat (where to get the brandy) salt the nuts (you burn 'em) the turkey (oh my gosh, its TOO SMALL) the cranberry jelly won't jell. clean silver. make up beds, unwrap packages, start all over again, bake, answer bells, above all BE FULL OF CHRISTMAS SPIRIT. (spirits?) the darn tree wont fit in the stand. WHERE the heck is the ax? Am I joyful by this time! The folks arrive carrying very small gifts - (maybe I was too generous.) They all take baths just as Christmas Eve suppor is ready; the tree lights blow out the fuse! The electrician wont come. Three people come bearing gifts of mince pies (why didnt the dopes TELL us and save us the trouble?) Ah ... the peace of dining with ones family Kmas Eve. .. we begin to glow (a little) then they all go off to candle light service and leave us with the dishes. UNGLOW. We get through that and are creeping up the stairs to bed (midnight) when all our drinking neighbors barge in ringing sleigh bells to serenade us with something about Silent Night. We hit the hay at 1:45. Up at seven and at the turkey. Callers. More callers. More and MORE callers! Nobody gets up for breakfast so we cant start on those tricky table decorations. We now reach the weeping stage, but somehow it all works out and we have what is known as a good old fashioned Christmas! Thats all, brother.

We would like to quote something about friendship from "The Prophet" by Kahlil Gibran, as our Xmas wish from your editors, K.L. and M. It goes like this:

"Your friend is your needs answered,

He is your field which you sow with love and reap with thanksgiving.

And he is your board and your fireside for you come to him with your hunger
and you seek him for peace.When your friend speaks his mind you fear not
the "nay" in your own mind, nor do you withhold the "aye."

And when he is silent, your heart ceases not to listen to his heart; For without words, in frienship, all thoughts, all desires, all expectations are born and shared, with joy that is unacclaimed.

When you part from your friend, you grieve not;

For that which you love most in him may be clearer in his absence, as the mountain to the climber is clearer from the plain.

And let there be no purpose in friendship same the deepening of the spirit.

For love that seeks aught but aught but the disclosure of its own mystery is not love but a net cast forth; and only the unprofitable is caught.

And let your best be for your friend.

If he must know the ebb of your tide, let him know its flood also. For what is your friend that you should seek him with hours to kill? Seek him always with hours to live.

For it is his to fibl your need, and not your emptiness.

And in the sweetness of friendship, let there be laughter and the sharing of pleasures.

For in the dew of little things the heart finds its morning and is refreshed."

By request we are repeating our last years Christmas message:

"We dont want to sound too serious, but with Christmas in the air and so many changes in all of our lives, we MIGHT begin to feel a little sorry for ourselves. At the day dawns and we cant ward off that empty feeling any longer, lets TRY to be sensible and remind ourselves that we cant hang on to childhood too long - in peace or in war. It seems to us that much that is written to cheer the men in service would do exactly the opposite. We feel homesick sitting right in the home so what must it do to you?

So here's our suggestion for that gone with the wind feeling; when we run into foul weather, we simply chuck the cargo overboard for the ship is what counts. We are not children any more; we have had to grow up with a bang both in your generation and ours (this is our second war, remember) but we CAN be deeply grateful for our full, delicious childhood with its bed rock foundation. No gang ever had a brighter start or such a wealth of memories. You will come back untarnished because you have had such a happy time, and there will be no place for bitterness in your lives. That is our fervent wish for you...no bitterness. It warps the soulc and upsets the stomach!

That just about covers everything we feel about the gang and the merry times we've had together. And we DO wish you a Merry Christmas because we KNOW that whenever three or four Americans get-together, they can have a good laugh. Its almost the best thing about us. And be sure to let us know how the holidays went for you so we can pass it on and laugh it off - along with that "old fashioned Christmas" we told you about. 1945 isnt hatched yet, but Father Time SURE LAID AN EGG in 1944. We suggest the treatment our neighbors, the Schencks, are giving their flock of chickens for 1945. Every day they carry the ax down, show it to the hens and say, with great ceremony, "Now listen, girls, lay us an egg today and YOU'D BETTER MAKE IT GOOD OR ELSE" so Happy New Year, too, and a world of good wishes from all of us to all of you.

Be thinking of you Christmas!

