

## Christmas Memories of Darlene Waldrop

Growing up in a rural area in White Lake Township had been a pleasure. I grew up on Ormond Road, which was gravel with very little traffic. Everybody in the area knew each other and also each others business, which was common in farm country.

Our school was located on White Lake and McKeachie Roads. The entire student body totaled 30 children. The only way to school in winter was to walk and in the summer we rode our bikes.

Holidays were huge events in the small one room school we attended. There was very little money and no community activities so the Christmas pageant was the social event of the year. We would have to learn songs and verses as every student had a part in putting the pageant together (unless one was older and knew most of the Christmas songs).

As we walked to school we would practice our parts and rehearse the songs. The stage was at the front of the classroom and the curtain was a bed sheet put on a wire across the stage with safety pins. The work that went into this play was similar to a Broadway production.

Everyone worked on their parts and made all of the props. There was only one teacher who had the patience of Job and the ability to get things done with little help and no funds. Money was always tight in the farm community so each family did what they had to do in order for the Christmas event to be successful. Some mothers sewed and dads built props with whatever they could muster up.

When it was over we were very excited because it was time for the freshly baked cookies and hot chocolate. We were proud to have a part in this great production. There was talk about next year's play, and who would be the star.

Winters were long and there was little to do except slide down the hill behind the school. We all had chores to do to help the school get through each day. Some had to carry water for the pit toilets and others carried wood for the stove. Winter was hard and cold. The memories of that little schoolhouse will never be forgotten. It is fun passing those memories on to our grandchildren.

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