

1945

## Campus Traditions Herald Christmas Season

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# Campus Traditions

## *Herald Christmas Season*

*Iowa State students celebrate the Christmas season by taking part in campus festivities says Florence Nylin*

CHRISTMAS festivities at Iowa State link the past with the present through holiday traditions. Each year students celebrate the Christmas season in many ways: by purchasing Christmas seals, caroling, parties, candlelight church services, and by observing other college traditions.

Lighted this year for the first time since 1941 will be the giant pine tree on central campus, east of Beardshear Hall. Before the war, at each Christmas season the blaze of hundreds of red, blue, yellow and white lights twinkled from the branches of the old tree. The head electrician, official tree lighter, recalls wiring the tree 19 times.

Campus buildings, including the Memorial Union, the YWCA and all organized houses, display gaily decorated evergreen trees. This year members of the crafts group of the YWCA are making all the decorations for their tree, so that the ornaments will be original and unique.

Presentation of Handel's "Messiah" for 26 Christmas seasons has become a tradition at Iowa State. A 300 voice chorus is under the direction of Prof. Tolbert R. MacRae, head of the Department of Music. Soloists for "The Messiah" are vocalists from Ames and other nearby Iowa communities. In addition to campus concerts, recordings are being made of "The Messiah" and of carillon carols to be played over WOI during the holidays.

Christmas carols ring forth clarion-clear over the campus when Prof. Ira Schroeder of the Department of Music plays favorite carols on the carillon.

Many campus organizations go caroling each year. Sigma Alpha Iota and Phi Mu Epsilon, women's and men's honorary music fraternities, serenade their patrons and the music faculty the last Sunday evening of the fall quarter. Groups from clubs, churches, dormitories, sororities and fraternities also sing carols to shut-ins, faculty members and various residence groups during the week before Christmas.

Officially heralding Christmas in the women's dormitories is the traditional White Breakfast, given the Sunday before vacation begins. Before the candlelight breakfast, the women walk through the halls of their dormitories singing Christmas carols and wearing white dresses.

Each year the Iowa State fraternity men play Santa to children of Ames by giving a party and program for them. The YWCA also has planned a Christmas party this year, which they will hold in their lounge in Alumni Hall for a group of Ames children.

Because of the war several Christmas customs at Iowa State were discontinued, and have not been resumed this year. It was traditional for members of Phi Upsilon Omicron, women's professional honorary, to bake and sell fruitcakes. In 1941 400 pounds of fruitcakes were sold. As soon as sugar and other scarce supplies are more available the annual project will be revived.

The Girls Glee Club presents an annual concert of Christmas carols and hymns in a candlelight service which is broadcast over WOI. Last year poetry was included with the musical selections.

*Heralding the Christmas season early in December, Iowa State students gather to sing favorite carols to shut-ins, faculty members and various residence groups throughout the campus and city*

