1943

Creating The Holiday Spirit

Joan Miller
Iowa State College

Follow this and additional works at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker

Part of the Home Economics Commons

Recommended Citation
Miller, Joan (1943) "Creating The Holiday Spirit," The Iowa Homemaker: Vol. 23 : No. 5 , Article 4.
Available at: http://lib.dr.iastate.edu/homemaker/vol23/iss5/4

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the Student Publications at Iowa State University Digital Repository. It has been accepted for inclusion in The Iowa Homemaker by an authorized editor of Iowa State University Digital Repository. For more information, please contact digirep@iastate.edu.
Inexpensive and natural decorations will be stressed this Christmas, reports Joan Miller

CHRISTMAS gaiety is still on the unrationed list and can be obtained by ingenuity and creativeness in decorations this year.

When the home economics student goes home for the Christmas holidays she will be anxious to aid in the decorating festivities and will be able to contribute original ideas gained from her courses in design and decorating. The use of natural materials will be stressed this year and the student who employs evergreen boughs to adorn the chandeliers, mirrors and the mantel will create a festive air throughout the house. If the boughs are supple enough they can even be twined around the bases of lamps.

Evergreens probably will be scarce this season, but if individual boughs aren't available, enough for decorating can be trimmed from the base of Christmas trees.

Prof. R. R. Rothacker, of the Landscape Architecture Department, suggests the use of native grasses, milkweed pods and novelty branchings of shrubs in Christmas arrangements. The marcel willow's graceful branches are particularly suited to this use. The branches are left in their natural colors or dipped in silver or white paint. Catkins from shrubs and pine cones have a variety of uses. By fastening several pine cones together, small turkeys can be made to form a novel centerpiece for the table.

The decorative treatment for the space above the mantel depends on the type of home. Evergreen wound round a polished cart wheel is perfect for the rustic home. If the family is musical, sheets of favorite carols may be hung over a bough of evergreen supported on each side by singing angels.

Mirrors over the fireplace in modern homes deserve special attention. Silver-papered angels and silver stars can easily be constructed by a student of applied art and will create an ethereal effect when pasted on the mirror. Children will want traditional white snowmen and red Santa Clauses.

Children will be delighted by eating at a table which they have decorated with the help of an art student. White paper nut cups resembling Santa can be made easily by a small child. A strip of white paper is fringed around the top and pasted to form a cylinder. The long fringe is turned down around the top for Santa's hair. Two red circles serve as eyes and a white mustache pasted partially over another red circle forms the mouth. A larger red circle serves as a base for the cup.

Another childhood favorite is an indoor snowman. The skeleton for this figure is fashioned from an up-ended bushel basket topped by an old overstuffed pillow case crowned by a basketball or some other round object of the same size. The whole structure is propped against a wall and covered with cotton batting. Black paper eyes and a mouth are pasted onto the face.

The exterior of a home offers numerous possibilities to the student who enjoys transforming the ordinary into original items of decoration. Flowerpots painted red or white and filled with evergreens will form a neat red border for the front steps. For the evergreen tree in the front yard, blown-glass ornaments are too delicate but victory gardeners will have excellent substitutes. Assorted sizes of small gourds when painted are suitable for the outdoor tree.

The front door may well come in for its share of decoration since it not only cheers the passers-by, but gives a special welcome to Christmas guests. Polished red apples with a touch of green may be suspended from the door knocker with red satin ribbon. Assorted packages wrapped in bright red oil cloth and silvered ribbons are another suggestion for adorning the front door.

Christmas cards are likely to overflow the normal mailbox at the height of the greeting season. A flat basket circled by a wreath solves this problem while it decorates the door. The Christmas cards also can be used for interior decoration. A white wallboard similar to a college bulletin board is an excellent place to display the cards and notes.

The usual Christmas tree ornaments will not be as plentiful this year as they have been previously, but painted gourds, popcorn balls, cranberry chains and small Christmas cookies can highlight the tree. The star and angel-shaped cookies should be baked with string loops in them for hanging purposes.

Although Christmas trees may not be available in some communities, the substitutes for this traditional decoration are plentiful. A chicken wire cone filled with green branches and with ornaments scattered throughout will brighten any room. Fortunate owners of shiny-leaved pepper plants with their small red peppers need only wrap the base in silver paper for the correct holiday effect. The college woman who favors the streamlined and possesses a large coiled spiral spring has the makings of a surrealistic tree.