

## **A Visit from St. Nicholas**

Members of the Wheelice and Ruby Wilson family have celebrated Christmas in Coppell for seventy years. The couple moved to town in 1945, shortly after Wheelice returned from service in World War II. Three children soon followed. Wheelice “Pete” Wilson Jr. (pictured playing in the snow) joined the family in 1947. Bill followed in 1953 and Janis, the youngest, arrived in 1957.

Pete recalls the holidays as sumptuous family affairs. Trips were taken to McKinney to visit his grandparents, former Coppell residents Mr. and Mrs. J. J. Harlin.

“Christmas feast was made up of fried chicken, ham, turkey and dressing, mashed potatoes, the inevitable green beans with crunchy onions on top, macaroni and cheese,” Wilson says, “all the staples that any normal kid should eat – plus pies! Cherry, apple, apricot, chocolate, lemon, and pumpkin.”

Christmas morning was spent in Coppell. Evidence of jolly, old St. Nick was everywhere. Gifts lay scattered about the living room. Stockings were stuffed with walnuts, oranges, and apples. One year, Pete swears he almost caught Santa at work.

“I remember one very early Christmas morning,” Wilson says, “It was still dark outside. I sneaked into the living room and I clearly saw Him flying away from our window. I still choose to believe that, had I walked in five minutes sooner, I could have given Santa a Christmas cookie.”

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