

My Christmas Memories

By
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Dedication

This book is dedicated to my Grandfather, George Hayes, who went to be with the Lord on Tuesday, December 4, 2007. Some of the memories I share in this book will include my Grandpa Hayes. He was a very special Grandpa and I will miss him. Christmas was always a fun time for us kids and those fun times included times with my Grandpa and Grandma Hayes. I wanted to write these memories down as a way to record some family history to pass down to my own children. Thank you, Grandpa Hayes, for many years of memories! I love you!

Making Sugar Cookies With Grandpa Hayes

Every Christmas when I was little, Grandpa and Grandma Hayes would have us grandkids over to make sugar cookies. It was always so much fun! Grandpa tried to be patient with us, but it was hard. We would have frosting all over our fingers, all over the bottles of sprinkles, and all over the table. Grandpa kept telling us to quit licking our fingers, but we couldn't help it! When we were through, we had a bunch of yummy decorated sugar cookies stored in containers to eat up over the holidays. I think Grandpa kept telling himself each year that he "wasn't going to do that again"...but each year we did...and had a lot of fun!

The recipe for the sugar cookies that we LOVE is included in the Recipes section below!

Christmas at Grandpa and Grandma Hayes' Home

Every Christmas we rotated having Christmas Eve and Christmas Day at both of my grandparents' homes. When we had Christmas at Grandpa and Grandma Hayes' home, we always had LOTS of goodies to eat and a huge meal. If we celebrated on Christmas Day, we always had Grandpa's Christmas Bread for breakfast (see recipe below) after we opened our stockings.

After breakfast and cleanup and the lunch preparations were done, it was time for gift giving. We always started this time with reading the Christmas story out of Luke. Then Grandpa would play the organ while we sang some Christmas songs. One year Grandpa had all of us memorize a verse or two of

the Christmas story. When we came together that day we each recited our verse(s) in turn. It was neat.

After our time of singing we exchanged gifts. I don't know how other families do it, but I liked the way that our family did this. Usually some of us kids would help pass out the gifts. We all sat around in the living room and once the gifts were passed out, the opening began. We would go around the room, one person at a time, and open a gift. It was fun to see what everyone got and from whom. I never liked the idea of everyone opening all their gifts at the same time. I liked this way of opening gifts and it is the way we have done it in our home to this day! This process of gift opening took a long time and it was usually time to get lunch on the table when we were through.

One year Grandma got a white table cloth and had each of us write things on the table cloth as we ate our Christmas meal. It was fun to use this table cloth year after year...lots of fun memories were recorded.

For quite a few years my Great Aunt Edna would take the train and travel up to Oregon from California for the holidays. It was always fun to have Aunt Edna visit. She always brought her roasted almonds. She would have all kinds - honey roasted, smoked, candied, etc. Yummy! My Great Grandma Hayes also joined us for Christmas when I was really little. I remember Great Grandma telling us grandkids stories around the Christmas tree. She was a lot of fun. Both of these

wonderful Godly ladies have gone on to be with the Lord too. I miss them!

Grandpa and Grandma Hayes' Christmas Baking

Another memory of Christmas that I hold dear is the many baked goodies that Grandpa and Grandma Hayes made. They went all out! They would have huge popcorn tins of peppernuts, chex mix, Brunekake, Krumkake, sugar cookies, thumbprint cookies, peanut butter and chocolate fudge, and more! I have included all these recipes in the Recipes section below!

Every year my Grandpa also made a batch or two of Lefsa. If you have never had Lefsa you are missing out! Lefsa is kind of like a tortilla made with potatoes in the dough. We always had them warmed up with butter and cinnamon sugar on them, and then rolled up to eat. Yummy!

Another one of my Grandpa's "special" items he liked to cook around Christmas was oyster stew. I have to admit that I don't really remember how that tasted. I don't think I had much of that 😊.

Christmas Decorating Night

Every year my Dad and Mom would choose a night the first part of December to decorate our home for Christmas. Dad would go get the Christmas tree and bring it home so that it was ready to decorate. Christmas music was played while we decorated the tree, put lights in the windows, and placed decorations throughout the house. It was always such a fun

time. After all the decorating was done, we would have a special dinner. Mom would buy some yummy snacky food like crackers and cheese, oysters, olives, summer sausage, chip and dip, sparkling cider, etc. We would all get our plates, turn all the lights out except the Christmas tree and window lights, and sit and eat our dinner. I so enjoyed this night every year.

Gift Making

Every year around September Dad and Mom would help each of us kids choose a Christmas gift for us to make for family. Once a project was selected, then we were responsible for working on our gifts in the evenings during the weeks leading up to Christmas. It was always fun to come up with some creative projects and our family always enjoyed receiving them too. This tradition is one that I have continued with my own children.

Advent Calendar

Part of our Christmas decorations was a homemade Advent Calendar made of felt. It hung on the wall and had a Christmas Tree at the top, with a December calendar on the bottom. There were 25 felt ornaments that had velcro that stuck them to the December calendar, and then stuck them to places on the Christmas Tree. Each day of December, us kids took turns taking an ornament from the calendar section and putting it on the Christmas Tree. The last ornament to be put up on Christmas Day was a star that was put on the top of the tree. We always had fun doing this. After I was married, my mom made me a beautiful Advent Calendar that looks like

a small quilt. It is a Christmas Tree with 25 buttons on it and 25 small ceramic buttons that you hang on the tree each day of December up until Christmas Day. I have included a picture to the right. We have enjoyed using Jesse Tree ornaments to decorate our real tree and I am considering making some mini Jesse Tree ornaments to hang on this Advent Calendar.



Christmas Caroling

I grew up in a pastor's home, and we always enjoyed going caroling each year. The first church my dad pastored was a small country church in Oregon. We always had a good group out all bundled up in coats, scarves, and gloves. Some brought sleigh bells and cow bells to use while we caroled. We would go around to some of the elderly in our church and sing Christmas songs to them. They always enjoyed the visit and the songs. Once we were finished caroling, we would head to someone's home for Christmas goodies, hot cocoa, and hot cider and eggnog. We had such good fellowship and fun during these times. We still enjoy going caroling to this day. It has made things a little harder having real little ones these past few years, but we go when we can. It is a true joy to remind others through song what the true meaning of Christmas is.

Grandpa Hayes' Christmas Bread

Whenever we had Christmas with my Grandpa and Grandma Hayes' side of the family, my Grandpa and Grandma always made Christmas Bread. As long as I can remember, this was a part of our Christmas morning. I have included the recipe below. I haven't tried to make this yet, but I think this year I will give it a try!

Christmas Music

Each year, right after Thanksgiving, Mom would start the Christmas music playing. We used to have a big stereo with a record player in it. Mom would stack up the Christmas records and they would play all day. I loved it! I remember doing things around the house, singing songs like Drummer Boy, Silent Night, It Came Upon a Midnight Clear and more. One record that us kids really liked was a Chipmunks Christmas record. I don't even remember what it was called, but it was so much fun to listen to. I appreciate Mom taking the initiative each day to get the Christmas music going. It kept our focus on Jesus during the Christmas season.

Christmas at Grandpa and Grandma Stoltenberg's Home

I have many fond memories of the times we spent at my Grandpa and Grandma's home during the holidays. Grandma always did a lot of baking. She had goodie plates of cookies, fudge, and hard candies. She also always fixed a HUGE meal. After we ate, we exchanged gifts. Now, gift opening at my Grandpa and Grandma's house was different...once the gifts were passed out everyone was free to open their gifts. Of course the kids (my cousins, not us!) ripped theirs open,

wrapping paper flying everywhere! It was fun, though, to spend time together with our family. The time always went too fast and it was time to go before we knew it.

As I have reflected back on these years growing up, I realize how precious these memories are...how much they are a part of me. My prayer is that you will read my "memories" and be inspired to begin making some memories of your own with your families. In all you do this Christmas, I pray that your focus will be on drawing closer to Jesus and sharing His love with others who so desperately need it.

Jesus truly is the "reason for the season"...begin today making memories that will last forever.

The next section will include some Christmas cookie recipes from my Grandpa and Grandma Hayes, as well as some of our family favorites.

Keep in mind that these "goodies" are not meant to be hoarded by your family...instead consider giving some away!

CHRISTMAS RECIPES

From
Grandpa &
Grandma Hayes

Krumkake (Scandinavian)

1 cup sugar

2 eggs

½ cup butter, melted

2/3 cup milk

1 1/3 cup flour

1 teaspoon crushed cardamon

Combine sugar, eggs, and butter. Use a whisk to beat in milk until smooth. Stir in flour until blended. Stir in cardamon. As you bake, if batter becomes thick, stir in 1 tablespoon water at a time. Bake about 1 minute each side in a Krumkake iron. Lift out Krumkake with a fork onto a dish towel, then roll around the dowel to set.

**Put burner on medium heat for Krumkake iron.

Note: This recipe uses a Krumkake iron. I don't know if you can find these irons around or not. I was given one by my Grandpa and Grandma Hayes.

Brunekake

Cream together:

1 cup margarine

1 cup sugar

Add:

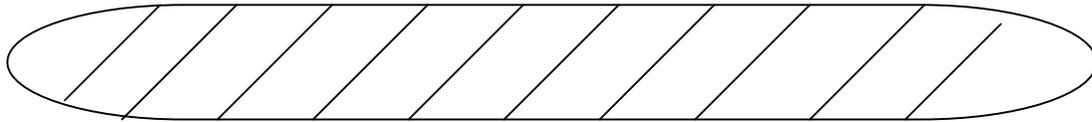
1 teas. vanillinsocker (vanilla powder)

2 Tblsp. Golden Corn Syrup

2 cups flour

1 teas. baking soda

Form 6 long rolls. Bake 2 at a time on ungreased cookie sheet at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Cut in diagonal pieces (see diagram below) while warm.



NOTE:

These Brunekake cookies were made by my grandparents every Christmas. Grandma always had a large tin FULL of them! I'm not sure where they got the recipe, but Christmas just isn't the same without making some of these! They are so easy to make and taste so good! They are great by themselves or dunked in coffee or tea! Enjoy!

Christmas Bread

SWEET DOUGH FOR CHRISTMAS BREAD:

Scald: ½ cup milk
Stir in: ½ cup sugar
 1 ½ teaspoon salt
 ¼ cup shortening

Cool to lukewarm.

Measure into a bowl: ½ cup warm (not hot) water

Sprinkle 2 packages (5 teaspoons) of yeast over the warm water. Stir until dissolved; then stir in lukewarm milk mixture.

Add: 2 eggs, beaten
 3 cups flour

Beat until smooth. Stir in an additional 2 cups flour.

Turn dough out on lightly floured board. Knead until smooth and elastic. Place in bowl, free from draft, until doubled in bulk, about 1 hour. Punch down and turn out onto floured board.

Roll into rectangle until quite thin. Spread with butter, sugar (or brown sugar), cinnamon, candied fruit, and nuts if you wish. Pull two upper corners to the center and down to within 2 inches of bottom, so they come nearly together in the middle.

Make slits in from the side and fold the slits down with a little twist, so the colored fruit shows. At the bottom, cut the dough just below where the two folds come together and roll each piece in to the middle, so the fruit shows again.

Let rise again and bake at 350 degrees until crust is light brown. Frost with powdered sugar frosting colored green.

Norwegian Potato Lefsa

INGREDIENTS:

18 baking potatoes, scrubbed

½ cup heavy whipping cream

½ cup butter

1 tablespoon salt

1 tablespoon white sugar

4 cups all-purpose flour

DIRECTIONS:

Peel potatoes and place them in a large pot with a large amount of water. Bring water to a boil, and let the potatoes boil until soft. Drain and mash well.

In a large mixing bowl, combine 8 cups mashed potatoes, cream, butter, salt, and sugar. Cover potatoes and refrigerate over night.

Mix flour into the mashed potatoes and roll the mixture into balls about the size of tennis balls, or smaller depending on preference. Keep balls of dough on plate in the refrigerator.

Taking one ball out of the refrigerator at a time, roll dough balls out on a floured board. To keep the dough from sticking while rolling it out, it helps to have a rolling pin with a cotton rolling pin covers.

Fry the lefsa in a grill or in an iron skillet at very high heat. If lefsa brown too much, turn the heat down. After cooking each piece of lefsa place on a dishtowel. Fold towel over lefsa to keep warm. Stack lefsa on top of each other and keep covered to keep from drying out.

Serve warm. Sprinkle with cinnamon sugar and butter!

NOTE: My Grandpa would make Lefsa every Christmas. It was SO good warmed up with some butter and cinnamon sugar on it. I haven't ever made this myself. Maybe this is the year to give it a try!

Thumb Print Cookies

Mix together thoroughly:

½ cup shortening
1 egg yolk
1 cup brown sugar
½ teaspoon vanilla

Add:

1 cup flour
¼ teaspoon salt

Roll into 1-inch balls. Dip in slightly beaten egg whites. Roll in finely chopped nuts. Bake at 375 degrees for 5 minutes. Remove, quickly press thumb on top of each cookie; then bake 8 more minutes.

Jeweled Cookies

Beat to very light: 2 eggs

Add 1 cup sugar gradually

Sift together:

1 cup flour

1/8 teaspoon salt

Then gradually add to the egg and sugar mixture. Beat until smooth.

Add: 1 teaspoon vanilla

Stir in:

½ cup chopped nuts

½ cup coarsely cut gum drops (size of large peas) - use larger pieces for top decoration.

Spread ¼ inch thick on greased and floured pan.

Bake in 325 degree oven for 20-25 minutes. Cut while warm and remove from pan when cool.

Glazed Cookies

Cook 1 cup raisins in 1 cup water; set aside to cool some; then add ½ cup shortening, stirring until smooth.

Mix together:

1 cup sugar

1 teaspoon baking soda

1 teaspoon cinnamon

1 egg, beaten

2 cups flour

Pinch of cloves

Pinch of salt

Add this mix to the raisin mix. Then add: 1 cup chopped nuts.

Spread in a 12x18 cookie pan and bake in a moderate oven*.

While the cake is baking take: 1 cup sugar and ½ cup cream and boil without stirring to a soft ball stage, and set aside to cool some. Then add 1 teaspoon vanilla and spread on cake while both are a little warm. Let cool and cut in squares.

*I'm not sure how hot a "moderate oven" is. I would try 325 degrees and cook the cake until it tests done with a toothpick.

Snickerdoodles

Mix together:

1 cup soft shortening

1 ½ cups sugar

2 eggs

Sift together:

2 ¾ cup flour

2 teaspoons cream of tartar

1 teaspoon baking soda

½ teaspoon salt

1 teaspoon vanilla

Chill and roll in a ball, then roll in sugar. Bake at 400 degrees about 8 minutes.

Sugar Cookies

Cream together:

1 cup white sugar
1 cup powdered sugar
1 cup shortening
1 cup oil

Add: 2 eggs

Sift together:

4 ½ cups flour
1 teaspoon cream of tartar
1 teaspoon baking soda
½ teaspoon salt

Add to creamed mixture, then add:

1 teaspoon lemon
1 teaspoon vanilla

Roll into small balls. Press down with glass dipped in sugar.
Bake on ungreased sheet at 350 degrees for 10 minutes. Can
be decorated.

Note: We made these the other night and they are VERY
good! We didn't use the lemon extract, just doubled the
vanilla. I also used butter in place of the shortening and oil.

Peppernuts

Bring the following to a boil and then cool to room

temperature: 4 cups sugar
3 cups honey
1 cup butter

Then add:

1 ½ cups cold strong coffee	2 teaspoons pepper
3 teaspoons baking soda	2 ½ teaspoons allspice
2 teaspoons baking powder	2 ½ teaspoons cloves
3 teaspoons salt	9 teaspoons Anise Extract
2 ½ teaspoons cinnamon	22 cups flour

Makes a medium stiff dough but not sticky. Roll to 1 inch thick and cut with donut hole cutter. Place on cookie sheets and bake at 375 degrees for 10-12 minutes.

While still warm, dunk peppernuts into a powdered sugar frosting mixture (make two colors - red and green). Dunk the peppernuts in the frosting mixture and allow to drip and dry on wire cooling racks. Once totally cool and frosting is dry, store in airtight container.

NOTE: This recipe makes a BUNCH of peppernuts! You can cut the recipe in half or quarter it to make a smaller batch. My grandparents always made these too every Christmas. They stored them in those big popcorn tins. I think these are actually better the longer they are stored. That Anise flavoring gets stronger the longer you store them. Enjoy!

Additional
CHRISTMAS
RECIPES
That We Enjoy

Sugar Cookies

1 ½ cups powdered sugar
1 cup margarine or butter, softened
1 teaspoon vanilla
½ teaspoon almond extract
1 egg
2 ½ cups flour
1 teaspoon baking soda
1 teaspoon cream of tartar

Mix powdered sugar, margarine, vanilla, almond extract and egg. Stir in remaining ingredients. Cover and refrigerate for at least 3 hours.

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Divide dough into halves. Roll each half 3/16 inch thick on lightly floured cloth-covered board. Cut into desired shapes. Place on lightly greased cookie sheet. Bake until edges are light brown, 7-8 minutes.

Once cookies are completely cool, frost and decorate! Decorating is the best part! Be creative! For decorating, once you have frosted the cookies, use mini marshmallows, mini M&M's, mini chocolate chips, as well as sprinkles to really decorate your cookies! Your kids will have the most fun - mine do!

Yield: About 5 dozen 2 ½-inch cookies.

Bon-Bons

Mix the following together:

½ cup butter, softened
1 cup peanut butter
2 cups powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla

Form into 1-inch balls.

Melt the following in a double boiler or small pan on low heat:

2 cups chocolate chips
2 Tablespoons paraffin

Roll dough balls in chocolate mixture to coat. Place chocolate covered balls on wax paper to set. Store in air-tight container.

Pumpkin Pie Bars (For Thanksgiving or Christmas)

Mix the following ingredients and pat into the bottom of a 9x13-inch pan:

1 package yellow cake mix (save out 1 cup for the topping!)
½ cup margarine, melted
1 egg

Next mix the following ingredients and pour over crust:

2 eggs	½ teaspoon salt
1 can (16 oz.) pumpkin	1 teaspoon cinnamon
¾ cup sugar	½ teaspoon ginger
½ teaspoon vanilla	1/8 teaspoon ground cloves
2/3 cup evaporated milk	

Cream together the following ingredients for the topping and spread over pumpkin mixture in pan:

1 cup cake mix (reserved)
¼ cup sugar
1 teaspoon cinnamon
¼ cup margarine

Optional: You can sprinkle chopped nuts on top if you wish.

Bake at 350 degrees for 45-50 minutes. Serve with ice-cream or whipped cream.

No-Bake Cookies

1 stick margarine
½ cup cocoa
2 cups sugar
½ cup milk
½ cup peanut butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
3 cups quick oats

Cook margarine, cocoa, sugar and milk until bubbles form around the side. Remove from heat and add peanut butter, vanilla, and quick oats. Mix well.

Drop by spoonfuls onto waxed paper and cool.

Puppy Chow

1 package chocolate chips
½ cup butter or margarine
½ cup creamy peanut butter
½ teaspoon ground cinnamon
8 cups round roasted oat cereal
2 to 3 cups powdered sugar

Stirring constantly, melt chocolate chips and butter in a medium saucepan over medium heat. Add peanut butter and cinnamon; stir until smooth. Place cereal in a large bowl. Pour chocolate mixture over cereal; stir until evenly coated. Pour powdered sugar into a large paper bag; add chocolate coated cereal. Gently shake bag until mixture is evenly coated with powdered sugar. Spread onto waxed paper; allow to cool completely. Store in an airtight container.

Yield: About 13 cups snack mix

Spice Sugar Cookies

½ cup shortening
¼ cup margarine
½ cup sugar
½ cup brown sugar
2 eggs
2 teaspoon vanilla
2 ½ cups flour
1 teaspoon baking powder
¾ teaspoon cinnamon

Cream together shortening, margarine, sugar, and brown sugar till fluffy. Add egg and vanilla. Mix in dry ingredients until smooth. Chill at least 1 hour. Roll out to ¼ inch thick and cut shapes. Bake on ungreased sheet at 350 degrees for 6-8 minutes.

Makes 4 dozen cookies.

Shortbread Cookies

1 ¼ cup flour

3 tablespoons sugar

½ cup butter

Milk (optional)

In medium mixing bowl, stir together flour and sugar. Cut in butter till mixture resembles fine crumbs and starts to cling. Form the mixture into a ball. Knead in the bowl one minute or till smooth. On lightly floured surface, roll dough to ¼ inch thickness. Using cutters, cut shapes. Use milk if desired and brush cutouts with milk and sprinkle with sugar. Arrange on ungreased cookie sheet. Bake in 325 degree oven for 14-16 minutes or till bottoms just start to brown. Cool on wire rack.

Makes 12-14 cookies.

Ginger Snaps

1 ½ cups shortening
2 cups granulated sugar
½ cup Grandma's molasses
2 eggs
4 cups flour
4 teaspoons baking soda
1 teaspoon salt
2 teaspoons cinnamon
2 teaspoons ground cloves
2 teaspoons ground ginger

Heat oven to 375 degrees. Blend together shortening, sugar, molasses, and eggs. Stir in remaining ingredients. Roll in balls and dip in sugar. Bake 8-10 minutes.

Yield: About 8 dozen cookies

Reindeer Droppings

1 package white almond bark (20-24 oz.)

1 cup peanut butter (either style)

1 ½ cup mini marshmallows

1 ½ cup crisp rice cereal

In large microwave-safe bowl, melt almond bark. This will take 5-8 minutes at ½ power. Stir in peanut butter to melt and mix. Stir in marshmallows and cereal to coat. Pour into wax paper lined 9x13 pan. (You can also spoon into nut cups for gift giving). Chill. Remove from pan and cut into square. Store in closed container in refrigerator.

Yield: 2 pounds

Yummy Toffee Candy

On a baking sheet, spread out:

1 sleeve of Saltine crackers

In a small saucepan over medium-heat, melt:

1 stick butter

1 cup brown sugar

Once the mixture is gooey, pour evenly over crackers. Bake at 350 degrees for five minutes, until bubbly. Remove from oven, and sprinkle on top:

2 cups chocolate chips

As the chocolate melts, spread it evenly around. Pop into the refrigerator until set, then cut apart the candy and put into gift containers.

I hope you have enjoyed this little booklet of Christmas Memories. May you and your family be blessed with traditions of your own that not only create memories but draw you closer to Jesus!

Merry Christmas!

In Christ,
Sheri