

Memories of Christmas with the Ebach's

Electronic mail message from Mary Ebach, Rugby, North Dakota

The pre-Christmas preparations were the responsibilities of our dear Mother. She had to do all the baking and the cooking. Her baking consisted mostly of making her fabulous bread with raisins, and those fantastic ammonia cookies. She got the baking ammonia from Baillies Drug Store and whenever she picked up the ammonia Dan would say "Cookie time again". I recall one Christmas I got a doll and that was the most special present. Other than that, we did not have a lot of presents. We did get a small bag that had an orange or apple in it along with nuts and candy. In later years, we did put up a real tree. We would eat a meatless meal, usually fried fish, since we could not eat meat on Christmas Eve, open our presents and get ready to go to Midnight Mass. The church was so beautiful all decorated with Christmas trees and crib and incense. After Mass, we went home and stuffed ourselves with a ham our mother had made, wrapped in dough to keep it moist and then baked, her vinegar and oil potato salad, Goladetz, head cheese and Kucha. I missed the most important part, before we ate, our mother passed around some home brewed Schnapps. Everyone got a drink out of the same glass and if you were fast enough, you would go around and stand in line a second time. Everyone was having a good time laughing and telling stories. Times have changed, our parents and older brothers are deceased, traditions cannot be observed as before and it seems going to Midnight Mass is too late and too cold. The Schnapps is not mixed anymore. But oh, those fantastic memories are as vivid and happy as if it were yesterday and we are so grateful that we came from a family that built those memories.