

Heritage Newspaper – Christmas Memories 1996  
Cathy Stone

My most cherished Christmas memories didn't start out that way. In fact, it wasn't until years later that I fully appreciated the significance of that Christmas. My special Christmas occurred in the 1960's when I was a teenager. It took place at my grandparents' farm in Imlay City, Michigan.

As was our tradition, our large family (which included 24 aunts and uncles and 63 cousins) always tried to make it to "the farm" to celebrate Christmas. I don't know how many of them were that year, but I remember that the house was full of people.

My grandparents lived off their farm and had very limited means but they wanted to give their grandchildren something for Christmas. With 63 grandchildren, that was nearly impossible, but my grandparents found a way. They sold one of their cows, and gave each of their grandchildren one dollar and a bag of hard candy. Being a "city" girl, I wasn't very impressed at the time with this meager gift, but years later I realized that selling one of their cows meant a big sacrifice on their part. Because it represented the true spirit of love and giving, that \$1.00 Christmas present has become my most precious gift.

It had snowed all day that Christmas and when everyone started leaving for home, they discovered that the snow had drifted over the road and it was impassable. We were snowed in! All of us! The adults gave all the kids the beds and the living room. It was wall to wall kids, trying to go to sleep. The adults stayed up in the dining room playing cards all night because there was no place left for them to sleep. We kids had finally settled down to sleep, when my uncle (Martin) burst into the living room with flood lights and his movie camera. He said he just had to get this on film. Our family has remained close over the years, but that Christmas stays in my memory as my most special family Christmas.

Mrs. Cathy Stone  
Woodhaven, Michigan