

Mother Goose at Neverland (Christmas Eve Celebration)

Frank Cascio, autobiography, "My Friend Michael"

...The Christmas of 1993, was the first Christmas that my family spent with Michael.

Michael was raised as a Jehovah's Witness, which meant that when he was growing up his family had never celebrated birthdays or holidays. He'd enjoyed the Christmas experience before—at least once with Elizabeth Taylor—but as a guest of someone else's family, not as a member of his own. It was one of his fantasies to have a big family with whom he could share the Christmas tradition.

So this time my whole family flew to Neverland, which was quickly becoming my home away from home. The house was beautifully decorated with white Christmas lights outside, wreaths on the door, and garlands encircling the banisters. In the entrance hall there was a Santa hat on the butler statue. A big, beautiful tree dominated the living room.

On Christmas Eve, a woman dressed up as Mother Goose showed up at the house. We all sat around the fire, even my parents, drinking tea and eating cookies as Mother Goose read us nursery rhymes and sang to us. I know. Mother Goose—not exactly a perennial Christmas fixture. But she fit in perfectly at Neverland.