

## Old-Fashioned Christmas in Historic Toxaway Home

By Linda Anders

The Transylvania Heritage Museum invites everyone to celebrate Christmas Old Toxaway-style on Saturday, December 12, from 4 to 7 pm. Treat your senses and get in the Christmas mood at the Ray Open House with the sight of the craftsman-style home decorated with antiques and twelve Christmas trees, the sound of carolers, and the smell and taste of hors-d'oeuvres and hot cider. The home has been decorated and graciously made available by Susan Breedlove of Susan Breedlove Properties, Inc. in Lake Toxaway. Tickets (\$10/single, \$15/couple, \$20/family) and directions are available at the Museum, 40 West Jordan Street, Brevard, or make reservations at 884-2347 and pay at the door.

W.W. Ray was originally from Waynesville, NC, but moved to Lake Toxaway to work for Southern Railroad as a conductor. Carrie Ray drew up the plans for the house and later boarded schoolteachers in it. Leo Case, a carpenter and neighbor, built the house in the early part of the 20th century, circa 1914.

The Ray House is a substantial 1-1/2 story framed bungalow and is characterized by its low hipped roof, four dormers and large engaged front porch with square posts and simple brackets. The rear porch has a blind balustrade.

Rumor tells the story of a woman named Fisher who made moonshine. W.W. transported her "white lightning" to Brevard, was caught by railroad officials and lost his job. But the Rays continued to reside in Toxaway, and their home was used during the summers as overflow accommodations when the Toxaway Inn was full. The Rays, like most people in the rural area, raised crops and livestock, also.

Bud Case, grandson of the builder, remembers that, as the trains came up to the resort, W.W. would wave a towel in greeting at his former fellow workers and they would wave back. Even after the original Lake Toxaway dam burst and the Inn closed, trains continued to run until 1954 to haul logs out of the area and bring coal to the residents.



Also during the Holiday Season, the Museum is excited to host the Aluminum Tree and Ornament Museum display of 50 vintage trees and thousands of ornaments from November 27 through December 19, during the normal Museum hours, Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10:00 am to 5:00 pm. As usual, admission is free although donations are suggested for this special exhibit of \$5 for adults and \$2 for youths aged 6-18 years.

Transylvania residents as well as visitors are encouraged to support the Museum by becoming members of the Transylvania Heritage Coalition, Inc., especially during the current annual membership drive. Now through December 19, a “Membership in a Bag” is being offered as a way to support the Museum while receiving special coupons and other items worth more than the cost of the membership, including a ticket to the Ray Open House as described above.

Another way to enjoy the Season while helping the Museum “Keep History Alive” is to shop at **Heritage Gifts**. Books by local authors, handmade wooden toys, paintings, quilted items, pottery, and much more by Transylvania artisans are available to share with your friends and loved ones.

For membership information, upcoming events or to make donations, please call 884-2347, visit the web site at [www.transylvaniaheritage.org](http://www.transylvaniaheritage.org), or drop by the Museum at 40 West Jordan Street in Brevard.