A Season of Merriment and Melody
Holidays at The White House 2004

East Room

A spectacular forest of snowflakes, icicles and snow-covered trees creates a winter wonderland. More of our favorite songs are celebrated in scenes on each mantel: "Frosty the Snowman," (words by Steve Nelson and Jack Rollins); "Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer," (words by Johnny Marks); "Toyland," (words by Glen MacDonough); and "Marshmallow World," (words by Carl Sigman). Yes, those are real marshmallows!

The traditional crèche has been displayed in the East Room during the holidays for more than thirty years. Made in Italy in the 18th century, the figures representing the Christmas story are made of carved wood and terra cotta.

Green Room

Holiday finery brightens the Green Room in the form of splendid topiaries of iced Della Robbia fruit. A bountiful garland of the same fruit surrounds the fireplace. The prized portrait of Benjamin Franklin by David Martin is the centerpiece of the room's collection of antique furnishings from the 1800s.

Blue Room

Every holiday season the Blue Room is the site of the official White House Christmas Tree. This year's 18-foot 6-inch Noble fir was presented to President and Mrs. Bush by John and Carol Tillman and their children, Tyler and Rachel, of Northwest Plantations in Rochester, Washington. The Tillmans won this honor by being named the 2004 National Grand Champion Growers by the National Christmas Tree Association.

A symphony of musical instruments hand-painted by members of the Society of Decorative Painters adorns the tree.

Red Room

The Red Room is ready for the holidays all year long! Adding to its vibrant colors are gold topiaries in vermeil containers on the north wall and a cranberry topiary on an antique marble-top table. The mantel is draped with a garland of red glass ornaments etched in gold and surrounded by golden leaves.

State Dining Room

This gracious room, site of the formal dinners and glittering receptions given by Presidents and First Ladies since the earliest days of our country, is dressed for the holidays in embossed red velvet and taffeta. A stunning arrangement of white flowers in a large vermeil vase complements the gilded candelabra, chandelier and wall sconces. The famous portrait of Abraham Lincoln occupies a place of honor as the only painting in the room.

Welcome to a Season of Merriment and Melody at the White House!

Throughout the world, the holiday season is greeted by joyful music that brightens hearts and evokes wonderful memories. This year's theme brings to the White House the magic of holiday songs that have been favorites for generations of Americans.

The grand halls and splendid rooms of America's house are decorated with delightful vignettes illustrating many of the best-loved songs of the season. We are grateful to the members of the White House Executive Residence staff who have created these marvelous scenes. Our thanks go also to the many florists from across the country who give their time, talent and boundless energy to transform the White House into a wonderland of beauty and song.

Enjoy your holiday visit, and sing along!

George Bush Laura Bush

East Wing

Miniature carolers who "Wish You a Merry Christmas" on behalf of everyone at the White House greet you as you enter. This traditional English carol dates from the 16th century.

Snow-covered trees decked with tinsel and icicles line the east colonnade, and the lovely arched windows are accented with wreaths covered with iced Della Robbia fruit.

Official Christmas cards from the permanent White House collection—including the first, sent by President and Mrs. Dwight Eisenhower in 1953, and continuing through the 2004 card, sent by President and Mrs. George W. Bush—are displayed in the East Foyer, along with the original oil painting used for the 2004 card. The painting, by Texas artist Cindi Holt, depicts a scene from the Red Room of the White House.

On the easel is original artwork by Elise Primavera, the New Jersey artist whose charming illustrations decorate this souvenir program. Ms. Primavera is the author and illustrator of *Auntie Claus* and *Auntie Claus and the Key to Christmas*. She has illustrated many other children's books including *Raising Dragons*, winner of a Christopher Award, an Irma S. and James H. Black Award for Excellence in Children's Literature, and an Oppenheim Toy Portfolio Platinum Award.

Ground Floor Corridor

Official portraits of former First Ladies grace the walls of the Ground Floor Corridor of the Executive Residence. Under the portrait of Hillary Clinton, "Here Comes Santa Claus" to pay a call to every girl and boy in the sleepy village below. This all-time favorite was written by Gene Autry and Oakley Haldeman.

Barbara Bush presides over the scene depicting Tommie Connor's classic, "I Saw Mommy Kissing Santa Claus."

The words Don Gardner wrote in "All I Want for Christmas is My Two Front Teeth" are depicted in a delightful vignette beneath the portrait of Rosalynn Carter.

Under the portrait of Betty Ford, Santa is "Up on the Housetop" and about to head down yet another chimney on his gift-giving rounds. This Christmas favorite was penned by Benjamin Russell Hanby.

And below the portrait of Mamie Eisenhower, the vignette of "Blue Christmas" reminds us of this 1950s hit by Billy Hayes and Jay Johnson.

The highlight of the State Dining Room every holiday season is the enchanting and unique gingerbread White House. Weeks of work, sheets and sheets of gingerbread, pounds of chocolate and mountains of sugar go into the creation of this edible masterpiece by the White House chefs. Each year's rendition is different. This year, chocolate Marine Band members line the roof to welcome Barney and Willie with a medley of favorite Christmas songs. And along the way our four-legged friends will find miniature vignettes of many of these beloved tunes.

Cross Hall and Entrance Hall

The unforgettable words to James Pierpont's "Jingle Bells" are represented in a vignette of a splendid horse-drawn sleigh taking a happy couple on a fun-filled ride through the snow.

On a pier table at the other end of the Cross Hall, a much more modern couple is "Rockin' Around the Christmas Tree" in fine 50s style, singing the words of Johnny Marks!

And finally, in the Entrance Hall is a wonderful depiction of Irving Berlin's most familiar and loved American Christmas song, "White Christmas."

We hope you have enjoyed the White House at its holiday best. May all your holiday season be filled with music to gladden the heart!

The White House Visitor Center

The Visitor Center is open from 7:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. every day except Thanksgiving, Christmas and New Year's Day. You will find interesting exhibits, tourist information, and helpful Park Rangers to answer your questions, as well as miniature versions of two of our vignettes, "Toyland" and "We Wish You a Merry Christmas."

In Appreciation

The White House is grateful to award-winning illustrator Elise Primavera for creating the artwork for this program.

"White Christmas" by Irving Berlin

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