



Face of Fillmore

By Sherry Shepard
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Christmas is a time of traditions. Beginning with the first Christmas in Bethlehem that brought this all about and continuing through a whole list of traditions that make this season so festive. Memories of Christmases past filled with gifts, carols, family dinners, amazing decorations and countless more are the reason the holidays are such a looked-forward-to time of year.

A few years back I was introduced to a tradition that was new to me - the Christmas elf. I don't know where I had been to miss that one for so long. One morning there was an elf on the tree. The grandchildren informed me that under no circumstances was I to touch that elf. I followed their instructions. The next day it had moved to another spot and it did so right up until Christmas morning. No one ever seemed to see it move or knew anyone who would dare touch it, but it was in a different spot each morning. Magic!



I couldn't help relating that to what happens in Fillmore (and other communities). One day, several years ago, I went on my usual rounds to the grocery store and post office. The stores all looked the same and the city workers had just hung the decorations on the light posts and around the city park. The very next day as I passed the stores, there were colorful pictures of Christmas scenes all along the street. Whimsical characters decorated most businesses and added a cheerful look.

Each year, I would wait with anticipation to see what new scenes would adorn the windows on Main Street and at a few others spots around town. The numbers seemed to grow each year and there were always new themes. This year is no exception. Today I spotted a group of snow children having a snowball fight, as well as a wrecker towing a giant Christmas wreath. One window had a trio of gnomes to greet visitors there, and one announced that the dentist is in.

The difference this year is that I found out who is doing the painting.

Connie Mortenson of Logandale, Nevada, and her daughters Cortnie Villezcas and Esther Jones are the artists. I watched as the pictures appeared quickly on the windows. With a small drawing near her for inspiration, Cortnie was soon putting the finishing touches on a large colorful version on the glass. I was truly amazed at how accurately the dimensions of the drawing matched the one sitting on the windowsill.

Connie owns the business – “Holiday Windows”. She says she had been at it for 31 years now. She began helping a friend who was doing it on a much smaller scale. Connie would help find customers who wanted pictures. Then she began painting and realized she was good at it.



Connie told me of the rewarding days they have as people are so grateful for what they do, how they bring the spirit of the season to our town and the good friends they have met along the way.

A great activity for an afternoon: Take your family to “drag Main” and enjoy the holiday storefront characters that look back at you.



The Chamber of Commerce contacted Connie several years back and encouraged her to come to Fillmore and paint. The business has expanded to include several towns near their Logandale homes, as well as much of Southern Utah, extending up past Richfield and across the mountain and down the full length of I-15 in Utah.

During the warm weather we have been experiencing, the days spent painting are quite enjoyable but snow, wind, and colder temperatures can make this a less pleasant project.