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UP-091

(BETTY FORD)

WASHINGTON (UPI) -- A SMILING BETTY FORD DECORATED HER LAST WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS TREE TODAY AND SAID NEITHER SHE NOR HER HUSBAND IS RETIRING.

PINNING TWIN "BETTY" AND "JERRY" WHITE DOVE DECORATIONS ON THE CEILING-HIGH TREE IN THE BLUE ROOM, THE FIRST LADY GRINNED WHEN A REPORTER ASKED IF SHE WAS RETIRING WHEN PRESIDENT FORD LEAVES OFFICE JAN. 20.

"I'M NOT RETIRING AT ALL. NEITHER IS THE PRESIDENT. NOT AT ALL," SHE SAID.

"I WILL CONTINUE WORKING WITH MY VARIOUS PROJECTS AND THE PRESIDENT WILL BE BUSY," SHE SAID. WOMEN'S RIGHTS, SHE SAID, WILL BE AMONG HER POST-WHITE HOUSE PROJECTS.

WAS THIS LAST CHRISTMAS IN THE WHITE HOUSE A SAD TIME?

"NO," SHE SAID.

"IT IS NOT AT ALL SAD. WE'RE VERY HAPPY. FOR THE CHILDREN AND I ARE SO VERY HAPPY TO BE GETTING THE PRESIDENT BACK. BUT, YOU KNOW, WE PROBABLY WON'T BECAUSE HE'S GOING TO BE VERY BUSY," SHE SAID.

UPI 12-09 03:18 PES



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MRS. FORD-TREE

BY HARRY F. ROSENTHAL

WASHINGTON (AP) -- BETTY FORD SHOWED OFF HER FAMILYIE LAST WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS TREE THURSDAY AND PINNED ON IT TWO CLOTH DOVES TO SYMBOLIZE "THE SPIRIT OF PEACE AND THE SPIRIT OF LOVE."

THE FIRST LADY HAD WISHES OF GOOD WILL FOR PRESIDENTIELECT CARTER AND HIS FAMILY BECAUSE, SHE SAID, "THAT 7D QJO @ GGSTMAS IS ALL ABOUT."

SHE SAID THAT IT WASN'T A SAD CHRISTMAS FOR PRESIDENT FORD OR THEIR FAMILY.

"WE ARE VERY HAPPY. THE CHILDREN AND I ARE HAPPY TO HAVE THE PRESIDENT BACK AS A MEMBER OF THE FAMILY," T @. FORD SAID AS SHE SHOWED REPORTERS THE BICENTENNIAL CHRISTMAS TREE IN THE BLUE ROOM ON THE GROUND FLOOR OF THE WHITE HOUSE.

"I LOVE THE WHITE HOUSE," SHE SAID. "TR@ON T THINK ANY FIRST LADY CAN LIVE HERE WITHOUT LEARNING TO LOVE AND REVERE THE WHITE HOUSE. IT'S A SPECIAL HOUSE, W COUSE THAT BELONGS TO ALL THE PEOPLE."

SHE WAS ASKED IF SHE HAD A CHRISTMAS WISH.

"YES, I DO," SHE SAID QUIETLY. "THAT7 D O B@O O BB TO PUT THE TWO WHITE DOVES ON THE TREE. TD@GB OBOR THIS COUNTRY AND THE WORLD IS TO REMAIN WITH LOVE AND AT PEACE."

THE STATELY ROOMS OF THE WHITE HOUSE HAD THE FRAGRANCE OF PINE NEEDLES AS GREENERY WAS SPREAD IN SOME FORM THROUGH ALL THE ROOMS.

THE BANISTER OF THE STAIRWAY LEADING TO THE SECONDEZLOOR LIVING QUARTERS WAS LACED WITH EVERGREENS TIED WITH LARGE RED RIBBONS.

THE EAST ROOM, SCENE OF SO MANY GRAND WHITE HOUSE AFFAIRS, HAD AN 18TH-CENTURY ITALIAN CRECHE BANKED BY GREENERY. THE NATIVITY SCENE HAS 30 HAND-CARVED, BAROQUE FIGURES.

IN THE STATE DINNING ROOM WAS A HUGE GINGERBREAD HOUSE MADE BY THE WHITE HOUSE CHEF.

BUT THE CENTERPIECE OF IT ALL WAS THE -@-DOOT BALSAM FIR IN THE BLUE ROOM, DECORATED WITH MORE THAN 7500 OD1 AWDE FLOWERS, INCLUDING THE STATE FLOWERS OF ALL #0 ZL OBB.

UNDERNEATH IT, SOME OF THE THOUSANDS OF GIFTS FROM THE AMERICAN PEOPLE TO THE WHITE HOUSE WERE IN BOXES AND ON DISPLAY.

INCLUDED WERE DOLLS, STUFFED ANIMALS, WJGR@B/ OD CARVED BIRDS AND A MODEL OF THE ATTACK CARRIER U.ZLTD. ZTORRESTAL.



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10/24/76

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Kaneohe, Hawaii

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Manlius, New York

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Glen Rock, New Jersey

Milbrook Garden Club
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Washington State Federation of Garden Clubs
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Zone XII Chairman, Garden Club of America
Hillsborough, California

Zone X - Garden Club of America
Dayton, Ohio
(Ohio, Indiana, Michigan)

Garden Club of North Carolina, Inc.
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Zone IX, Garden Club of America
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The Garden Club of Georgia, Inc.
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Garden Club of Lawrence
Lawrence, L.I., New York

First Grade of Immaculate Conception
School, Ithaca, New York (art class)

Patrick Henry High School
Asheville, North Carolina

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(Part of Phoenix House Drug Rehabilitation Center)
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Mrs. Sidney Johnson
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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary to Mrs. Ford

The love that is the spirit of Christmas is the inspiration behind this year's Christmas decorations at the White House. Mrs. Ford chose decorations to create the feeling and mood that Christmas is love.

The emphasis in the decorations is on the natural beauty of evergreens and berries. Throughout the Mansion, the mantles and tables are decorated with natural arrangements of holly, juniper, cedar, boxwood, bayberry, woods fern, spruce and pyracantha. Trees garlanded with greens, pine cones and red velvet braid also are used throughout the White House. Large wreaths of Noble fir adorned with red velvet ribbons hang in all the windows on the State Floor. The fragrance of the greens contributes to the Christmas atmosphere.

The White House Christmas tree in the Blue Room is a 20-foot Balsam Fir. (The tree was selected by Kenneth Guenther of Black River Falls, Wisconsin. He is this year's National Champion of the National Christmas Tree Growers Association.)

The tree is decorated with over 2500 handmade flowers, including the state flowers of all 50 states. Materials used include silk, felt, dried cornhusks, bamboo, seeds, beads, shells, ribbon, metal, porcelain and glass. Small baskets of assorted dried flowers also are hung on the tree, which is topped by a nosegay of flowers. Tiny white lights and baby's breath complete the trimmings.

The flowers were made by garden clubs, art classes, senior citizens groups and schools in all the states and the District of Columbia.

Under the tree, a few of the many gifts from the American people to the White House commemorate this Bicentennial year. Included are dolls, stuffed animals, quilts and carved birds. Wrapped packages in shades of blue and red complete the under-the-tree decorations.

Two porcelain doves in a cage are also in the Blue Room.

An 18th century Italian creche, banked by greenery, is on display in the East Room. The nativity scene has 30 hand-carved Baroque figures of the Holy Family, the Wise Men and attendants, the shepherds, angels and animals. The creche was donated in 1967 by Mr. and Mrs. Charles W. Engelhard Jr. of Far Hills, New Jersey.

More than 50 volunteers, primarily from the floral industry, helped put up the decorations. Jack Bangs, chief designer of the Gazebo of New York donated his services to coordinate the decorations. Joan Peck, designer from New York City, supervised decoration of the Christmas tree.

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WHITE HOUSE CHRISTMAS DECORATIONS

General

Natural arrangements of holly, juniper, cedar, boxwood, bayberry, woods fern, spruce and pyracantha adorn the mantles and tables throughout the State Floor.

Red candles replace white candles in the chandeliers on the State Floor, except in the Red Room.

Wreaths unless noted otherwise are Noble fir accented with large red velvet bows.

Garlands unless noted otherwise are Princess pine with red velvet braid.

All the windows on the State Floor have wreaths.

North Portico

Two large Douglas Fir with tiny white lights flank the outside of the main entrance.

On the door is a large wreath of Noble Fir with a single candle in the center.

Grand Foyer

Two Douglas Fir trimmed with a garland stand on either side of the main entrance.

The Grand Staircase is draped with a garland.

A painted wood antique Santa Claus stands on the landing overlooking the Cross Hall.

A small boxwood tree sits on the pine table on the lower landing of the Staircase.

The urns on the pier table on the west side of the foyer will be filled with the natural arrangement of greens and berries.

A garland will be draped across the arch between the foyer and the cross hall.

Cross Hall

Two Yew trees with garlands stand in the niches of the South wall.

A wreath of Noble Fir, Silver Fir, incense cedar and pine surrounds the Presidential Seal over the door to the Blue Room.

State Dining Room

The sconces and chandliers are garlanded.

On the table along the North Wall is an edible gingerbread house made by Hans Raffert.

On the dining table, the centerpiece and matching eipurns also will be filled with greens and berries.



Red Room

A cranberry tree is on the console table.

Blue Room

The Christmas tree decorated with hand-made flowers and lights stands in the center of the room surrounded by Bicentennial gifts to the White House from the American people.

The East Room

A wreath of Noble Fir, Douglas Fir, incense pine and cedar surrounds the Eagle plaque over the main door.

A garland of white pine leads from the wreath all around the crown moulding of the room.

Greenery, including blue spruce, Douglas Fir, holly, Scotch pine, and Yew, bank the creche. A juniper hedge is in front of the creche.

Diplomatic Floor

The rooms of the Diplomatic Floor also are decorated with wreaths and natural arrangements.

In the China Room, a pair of holly trees flank the fireplace.

In the Diplomatic Reception Room, two small yew trees stand in the small foyer.

In the Lower Hall, two yew trees with garlands stand on either side of the door to the Curator's Office.

Also in the Lower Hall, all four tables will have arrangements of red poinsettias and ivy.

Large natural arrangements decorate the tables flanking the door to the West Wing.

Two large Douglas Fir stand on either side of the main entrance. These trees have tiny white lights.

Balconies

The Truman Balcony has a wreath of Douglas Fir and a garland of White pine with fruit.

A similar garland adorns the railing leading to the State Floor balcony.

