

Kris Kringle Craft Market

A VISIT FROM KRIS KRINGLE

**'Twas the night before Christmas
And all through the house
Not a creature was stirring,
Not even a mouse,
The stockings were hung
By the chimney with care,
In the hopes that Kris Kringle
Soon would be there.....**

**Who is Kris Kringle? Where does he come from?
When can I see him? Is he even for real?**

Sitting at my desk warm and snug, these questions lazily pervade through my head, all the while the falling snow dances in the wind outside. A knock at my door brings my wandering mind to a halt. "Come in!" I shout. There, upon my threshold, stands a tall elderly man, stout, with the jolliest red face, snowy white hair and beautiful bright blue eyes twinkling full of kindness and joy. He wears a hooded greatcoat made of the richest purple velvet, trimmed with lots of gold. Decorating the buttonhole is a sprig of Christmas greens and a cluster of hollies.

"Bless me, you can't remember me? So I'll reintroduce myself!" He extends his hand to me.

"How do you do? My name is Kris Kringle". The surprise must have registered on my face because my visitor let out a deep belly laugh.

"May I come in?" I respond with a nod of my assent.

He sits himself down in the big comfy armchair by the fireplace, draws an old meerschaum pipe from his pocket and commences to fill and light it. He takes great pleasure in drawing on his pipe and blowing out an immense cloud of fragrant smoke. He talks freely, "If I had come down this fireplace or had you caught me busy with your children's stockings or had you seen me riding over the chimney tops in my sleigh with my reindeer....you would have believed me to be Kris Kringle I'll bet!

However, because I walk in at the front door like anybody else, you don't believe I am Kris Kringle?"

I give him a quizzical look and remark with doubt in my voice, "Mmmm! You are right! How do you get around these days?", I ask, pressing that matter.

"Do you suppose that because I

have lived for several centuries that I am blind to the progress of the age? The great, wide chimneys and open fireplaces of the olden times were navigable, so to speak. But how could a stout old chap like me get down this narrow chimney or up through those holes in the floor which you call registers? Now I use the doors or the windows, whichever is the most convenient. As for my sleigh, I still need that in some countries. But here in Canada, the railroads enable me to travel faster."

"How is it that the children never detect your modern methods of entry?", I ask, thinking I had exposed him.

"Simple", he replies, "for all good children are all asleep". Questioned, he explains that he secures his toys from all over the world. The pride with which he says this is indescribable. He wields his pipe like a scepter and looks every inch the King. Yet he is ready, almost eager, to stress the fact that he is constantly challenged to keep up with change.

"Changes you see all the while, so my gifts must be changed too. What will suit a child this year won't the next. Often, I leave a boy with a bike and find him next year riding a motorbike. Or, I present a little girl with a Barbie doll and the next year she is crying for diamond earrings and long skirts."

I sympathize with him as he carries on. However, he brightens up when he tells me of a new plan to make his gift selection easier.

"You know," he speaks eagerly, "there is an old fashioned Kris Kringle Craft Market held at the Parkville Community Centre which is nestled in Kringle Town. I have checked this fair out in years past and it has some of the best silver & goldsmiths, functional potters, furry teddy bears makers, wooden toymakers and all types of woolen creations to warm hands and toes and everything in between", he laughs. There are always scrumptious truffle chocolates, fresh creamy fudges, delectable jams and jellies which make a delight in any stocking. I muse, as he rattles off more stocking stuffers ideas, realizing he is on Kringle role.

"There is even a Gingerbread Station for the children which has an amazing face painter and cookie decorating. Best of all, I attend so that Families can take photos with me!"

By this time he is in full cry, "What better way is there for parents to get into the Christmas spirit with over \$ 5,000 in door prizes, including a \$1000.00 Kris Kringle shopping spree at the fair? How about Free Carriage Rides with hot Cacao in

hand and daily roving Kringle entertainers for the young and young at heart."

He slaps his knee and leans forward.

"You know, I wouldn't mind being the winner of any of 3 Grand Resort prizes. My wife Karole and I haven't had a rest in centuries! We are always busy in the Kringle shop with Elves under foot. This year the Kringle Elves surprised and delighted us by singing the "Kringle Jingle", that Carrie Powell- Davidson wrote. Bless her sweet little heart, but I think she is in love with me or just plain Kringle Crazy!", as he gives a throaty chuckle.

Listening politely, I wonder why he does not more closely resemble any published sketches. This, he remarks, has bothered him longer than he cares to remember.

"Since very few artists have ever seen me, I cannot wonder at their failures", as he shakes his head sadly.

"However, there is one Artist who has captured my true likeness! That's Dan Kingsley from Parkville who will be at the fair with his many whimsical paintings. If you want to buy a Kringle Keepsake of me, you mustn't forget to stop and shop at his booth", with a wink at me from behind his spectacles.

He encourages me by making me aware of the dates, "Just follow your Heart to Kringleland this Nov. 24th through the 27th! You will you find me there!!"

For at least another hour, he tells of his experiences and views of toys, books and persons unwilling to cherish illusions. Then abruptly, he wishes me good-bye with a hearty, "Merry Christmas!" I am amazed as I hear no footsteps on the stairs, hear no closing of the door, and see no one pass out into the snowy street. Books and toys upon the table and notebooks on my desk are the only evidence that he has really been with me. The burning log in the grate falls smoldering into ashes as I sit down to write this full and true account of my visit with Kris Kringle. I can sincerely echo his parting benediction, "A Merry Kringle to you and to all!"

Be sure to check out,
www.kriskringle.ca, for more
Kringle fun!

**Ms. Veronica von Conruhds,
Event Coordinator**

