

Back in Time 50 years this holiday season

By **DICK SHEARER**

For half a century Edgar Williams entertained and informed residents of the North Penn Valley through his column *Talking Up*, which ran on *The Reporter's* editorial page or in the sports section depending on the subject matter.

Edgar – known as “the other Ted Williams” to his many friends – was a highly accomplished journalist whose day job was as a reporter and columnist for the *Philadelphia Inquirer*. But he was native Lansdale through and through so he worked out a deal that allowed him to write for both newspapers.

Noteworthy among Williams' work was his coverage of the spontaneous celebration that erupted in the streets of Lansdale on V-J Day, 1945. He was also the author of many magazine

articles and wrote two books on the Harlem Globetrotters.

Edgar Williams' armada of friends, associates and contacts spanned a wide spectrum from newsstand operators, people he met daily on the train and cops on the beat, to sports stars, media notables and the rich and famous. He was both an engaging conversationalist and a keen student of human nature.

One of Edgar's annual tasks was writing his annual Christmas carol to the North Penn community, which dominated *The Reporter's* pages on the eve of the holiday. Despite the fact that Lansdale was growing at a record pace, Williams sent best wishes to hundreds of people who touched his life during the previous year. His was a level of personalization never to be seen again.

Over the years, his Christmas column grew legs of its own. People waited in great anticipation to

see if they were included; if not, did they do something to sour Edgar's opinion of them?

Williams never tipped his hand, but he reveled in the excitement. And he would only give a sly blink of the eye when a suspicious cohort suggested that writing his annual “carol” might be a less costly undertaking than actually sending cards to these people. Again, a wink was all he would offer.

But now 50 years later this gives us a window to the past when everyone seemed to know everyone else without the benefit of Facebook, texting or cell phones. My goodness, how did we do it?

As our holiday gift, here is Edgar Williams' 1961 Christmas card to his readers. Many of those mentioned are long gone, but this is the season of reflection, so we hope some of these names will stir a memory or two.

Edgar's Christmas card: 1961

ONE MAN'S CHRISTMAS CAROL

By Edgar Williams

Merry Christmas, one and all,
including Joe Ruffo, Tommy Hughes,
young Clyde Smoll and Mike DiNunzio.

“Bon Noel” to Bobby Rahn,
Al DelPinto, Warren Spahn,
Thomas Leonard, Randy Park,
Marv Angstadt and Alvin Dark.

Happy times to Jimmy Snyder,
Harry Price, Herbert Krider,
Al Broadhag, Bob Tereshinski,
Jimmy Crawford and John Vinski.

For Jimmy Bergey, John Fonash,
Larry Gleuck and Floyd Cash
A wish for a Yuletide ever so bright.

That goes for you, too, Mary Ann Leight.

“Joyeux Noel” to Jim Gulick,
Ed Klavon, and Larry Glick;
To Sam McKeeman, Ted R. Boyer,
A. Kurtz King and Jerry Royer.

Good things to Charley Romanoski,
Roy H. Dungan, Leonard Broske,
David Livezey, Paul Kyack,
Walton Landes, Johnny Mack, Dick Wisneski,
Donald Bagin, Clayton Moyer,
Clayton Moyer and Frank Reagan.

The most of the best to Jack Bell,
Stu Montgomery, Reds Bagnell,
Bob Chiodi, Ziggy Shelly,
Bob Ehlinger and John Kelly.

Edgar Williams: Christmas Greetings

Cheers for Jack Dunn, Dr George Sands
And members of the Bux-Mont bands.
To Gerald H. Kriebel, Russell Keeler,
Carl Giuranna, C. Richard Wheeler,
Johnny Utz, Earl Druckenmiller,
A wish for a holiday that's a thriller.
May Bill Yeomans have a happy Yule,
That goes, too, for Leo McCool.

Fill up the good old wassail bowl
For Arthur Landis and Jim Knoll.
Sing out for Walt Yoder, Big Gene Kelly,
Red McCarthy, Tom Strickland, Jake Shelly.
The best to Bob Famous, Jim Fitzsimmons,
Don Beideman, Curtis Simmons,
Bob Fretz, Dick Heist, Bryon Roshong,
John Maskas, John Meyers and Jerry Long.

As these good wishes forward go,
A "Merry Xmas" to Jim Roe.
To Charley Weaver, E. Merton Crouthamel,
Barry Troster, Benjie Hammel,
Elmer Kulp, Greg Palmerio,
Broadway Bob Stuart, Lee Saverio
Go the heartiest of Xmas wishes.
(May John Solliday catch plenty of fishes.)

To Kenneth Mosser, Charley Park,
Steve Knight, Bill Boorse and George Clarke;
Earl Watson, Robert Stowe,
Maurice Foulke, Frank Vasso,
Chester Daly, William Wiley,
Charley Myers and Harold Riley
Go a carload of Yuletide smiles,
More of the same
Of Jack Smith and Bob Iles.

May the Christmas spirit stick
With Gordon Grant and Ed Holnick.
To Alan "Bud" Garner and H. Richard Eyer,
Ralph Smith, Harry Steeley and Roy McIntyre
To Otto Wolport, to John Weierman,
To every and each volunteer fireman.

To Ned Linta, Jim Murphy and Magistrate Zepp,
Go greetings delivered with plenty of pep.
The best to the Baughers, Erle and Pat,
To Lloyd "Scoop" Hoagey, a tip of the hat.

Much joy to Jack Miller, Ernest E. Cope,
Lou Alaman and Lloyd Hope.
Cheers for Bill Keeny, Joe Iacone,
Bill Danny Drissel and Tony Crone.
Cheers for John Culbreath, Max Micsion,
Art Bustard, Bob Linden and Carl Erickson

Let's send a bunch of Xmas holly
To Carl Schuler and Thompson (Bolly)
May both Jim Hacketts, father and son,
Enjoy a holiday brimming with fun.
To Lee Walrath, Al Cantello,
Ernie Brenneman, Tony Covello,
Steve Jarinko, Herman Ahrens,
Chuck Bednarik, Richard Berens,
Season's Greetings done up in style,
Greetings to you also Jack Pyle.

Good cheer to the Shantz, Shirley and Bob,
The best to the Robertses, Mary and Rob.
The same to the Koffels, Jesse and Fran,
To Eddie Gottlieb, Art Mahan,
Corky Cuthbert, Mike Jarmoluk,
Both the Brennans, Donald and Tuck,
Dobbie Weaver, Johnny Cathers,
Thomas Cash, John C. Mathers.

May the Yule get better and better
For John Gutekunst, Dewey Goetter,
Raymond Snyder, Al Spangler,
For each and every fishing angler,
For Buzz Cressman, John McVan,
Burton Weaver and every sports fan,
For Meade J. Palmer, Joe Astroth,
Dick Geesaman and Carl Groth.

May Buddy Krum and Donald Hock,
Find lots of presents in each sock.
May the Day brothers, Dr. Jim and Joe,
Ed Burns and Dick Battavio
Find presents galore in Santa's pack;
There'll be presents for you, too, Ralph Plack.
May there be joy all around the hearth
For Dalphus Smoot and John Barth.

For both the Sawyers, Eddie and Polly,
Give voice to a greeting ever go jolly.
May Rip and Eleanor Polite

Edgar Williams: Christmas Greetings

Enjoy a Yuletide that is bright.
For Raymond Cash, Aaron Coblentz,
Johnny Minnucci, William Wentz,
Mickey Falco and Bob Meese
A wish for joys that never cease.

Xmas cookies (not too much starch)
For Harold Wolf, Bill March,;
For Thomas Walsh, Guy Claire, Bill Denner,
Glenn Gillinger and Thomas Renner;
For Vic Alderfer, Bunker Hill,
Donald Farley and Joseph Mill;
For Don Gerhart, John Patanay,
Buddy Gordon and Patrolman Day.

To Victor Frederick and Chick Anderson,
A hope that this Yule will be fun by the ton.
To Charlie "Point Make" Hottenstein
A wish for a Yuletide ever so fine.
To Pat Whitman, Ed Stewart and George Patton,
As well as Bruce Fearn and Johnny Stratton,
Go wishes for a holiday swell;
And let's not forget Alex Bell.

As these greetings onward go,
Good things to the Moyers, Dr. David and Jo;
To the Kratz brothers, Jerry and Ken;
To both of the Landises, Gertrude and Ben;
To Tom O'Connor, Fred Behringer,
George Knipe, Howard Berky, Don
Gehringer,
Cal Craig, Brett Sauers and Dan Atkinson
Go wishes for a Yule that'll be lots of fun.

Let everyone a roundelay sing

For Jack Gillespie, John Quinn and George King.
Don Ryan, Ralph "Hoagie" Fellman,
Bud Hollenbach and G. Wayne Helman,
Hicks Weingartner, Gunner Back,
Bud Fry and Frank Krystiniak,
Florence Chadwick, Lou Guiliano,
Robert Coale and Skeets Mariano.

The season's best to Russell Snyder,
Irv Todd, Don Young and Bones Schneider;
Bobby Marshman, Roy Nuss, Dick Wright,
Jerry Wycoff and Irene White,
Bill Coyle, Bill Smith, Bobby Dyer,
Ernie Beitler and Jack Meyer;
Al Clarke, George Burgess, Tony Sandone,
Steven Lacher and Carmen Falcone

Keeping up this lyric flow,
Good things to Frank Novak, Sal Riccio,
Gene Zawoiski, Wilt Chamberlain,
Dave Zinkoff, Reds Greisemer and Bob Finn;
Henry Kulik, Abe Saperstein,
Dick Bartholomew and Dallas Green;
Bob Hinkle, Jim Armstrong and Mike Devalentino,
To Roland Doane, Clark Wonderland,
And Abington's tremendous band,
To Kenneth Poust and Bill Magee
Happy times around the tree.

**A happy Christmas each of you;
On Monday make you merry.
Forget the bill that will come due
The second of January.**

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Edgar Williams died in 1999

If he was still alive
one could only imagine how many names
would be included on his Christmas letter today.

Best wishes for the holiday season from the
Lansdale Historical Society

