

# A Look at the History of Santa Claus Parades in Newmarket Through Vintage Ads and Articles

# The first Eaton's Santa Claus Parade was held in 1905.

When the T. Eaton Company of Toronto staged their first Santa Claus parade, the Cane firm built a log cabin for them. The parade began at Cane's factory and upon this miniature structure sat Santa Claus beside the chimney, ruddy and smiling, waving to the delighted spectators as the cortege moved south along Yonge Street. Their products may well be described as "homemade," when for their production magnificent trees had been felled and hauled to the factory by their own workmen and converted into the finest of lumber.

Source: History of the Town of Newmarket by Ethel Trewhella

# Headline: The Santa Claus Parade in Toronto Turns 100: The Early Days

The parades from 1910 to 1912 were the longest both in distance travelled and duration. "The little procession came jingling all the way down the muddy road from Newmarket to Toronto. It consisted of one float – a tally-ho on a sleigh – a band, and six or seven people". Source: Archives of Ontario

# Vintage ad: Newmarket Era, November 24, 1911





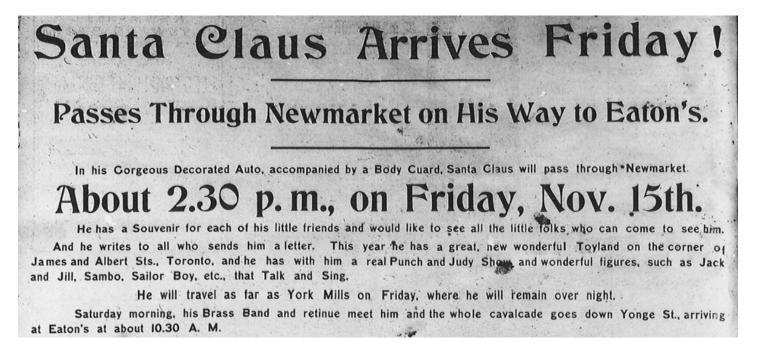
### Article from December 1, 1911 Headline: Old Santa Claus

On Friday of last week, Old Santa Claus that is to say, the Eaton sample – paraded the streets of Newmarket, to the very great delight and pleasure of the school children of the town, followed by two or three guardians in an auto car. Perched on the top of his snow clad cabin, dressed in winter wraps, and surrounded by numerous musicians and attendants, he first paid a visit to the public school and from hence up Main St. to the North End, followed by an excited throng of young folk.

The log cabin was constructed at Cane's Factory and was about 7x10 feet with walls 6 feet high surmounted on a 4-ton auto truck. It looked like the real thing.

### Vintage Ad: Newmarket Era November 15, 1912

In 1912, Santa arrived in a "gorgeous decorated auto" accompanied by a body guard. Writing letters to Santa has been a tradition for over 100 years!





### Vintage Ad: Newmarket Era November 14, 1913

In 1913, Santa Claus arrived in a gorgeous car of silver and white with four real live reindeer from Grenfell Mission, Labrador. Brass Bands and reindeers arriving with Santa Claus has been another long tradition.





TORONTO,

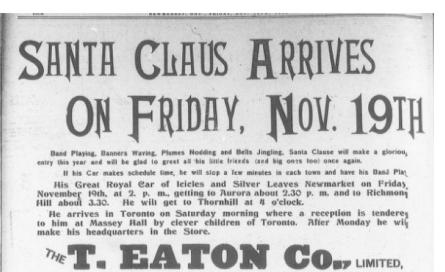


CANADA

### The Newmarket Era, November 12, 1915

#### Santa Claus Coming.

For the third year in succession the T. Eaton Co. of Toronto are sending Santa Claus and his retinue to Newmarket by way of introducing the Christmas Season. Each year the display excells the previous one, so do not let the kiddies miss this annual treat. The Icicle Car and Band will proceed along Main Street on Friday, Nov. 19th, at 2 p.m., and Aurora at 2.30. See ad. on page i for further particulars.



TORONTO

### Articles from the Newmarket Era

**December 16, 1927** the Newmarket Era reported that the Town Band was putting on a Santa Parade the next Saturday afternoon to inspire the spirit of Christmas among citizens. The parade, consisting of school children, headed by the band and accompanied by Santa Claus and two or three uniformed assistants was to start at Cane's Factory at 2p.m. and proceed to the Town Hall by way of Huron (Davis Dr.), Main and Timothy Streets with the band proving a one hour program of music to be followed by Santa Claus distributing gifts to the children. Subscriptions were received towards the purchase of 1,000 pounds of candy, as well as other donations. Acting Mayor Lundy will give Santa Claus a civic welcome.

**Saturday, December 23, 1927** The Town Band was congratulated on the success of their community effort on behalf of the children of the Town. The sidewalks were lined with people. The band was driven in a sleigh; three clowns were reported to have caused much laughter and were followed by a Christmas float on runners. School boys and automobiles made up the end of the parade.

The Town Hall was overfilled with people as Acting Mayor Lundy gave a big welcome to Santa Claus. The Band played several selections and the children sang Jingle Bells with great delight. Candy was distributed to small children and larger children received lead pencils made in Newmarket as souvenirs of the occasion. It was reported in the Era that 231lbs of candy were distributed to 880 boys and girls, also 300 lead pencils and 300 suckers.

**In 1930-31,** in order to stimulate a Santa Claus parade in Town, members of Newmarket's First Bugle Band borrowed eight bugles and four drums.



CANADA

## December 19, 1930 Headline: Greet Santa in Town Hall Saturday

Santy is going to bring Amos and Andy with him in their fresh-air taxi. Children had written in to the paper asking if the Wooden Soldiers, the big white bear, the lame rabbit, Felix the Cat and Puss-in Boots would be back in the parade again.

### December 26, 1930 Headline: Santa Claus Procession Draws a Big Crowd As Good as a Circus for the Kiddies

Main Street was almost entirely free of snow, and no one could imagine St. Nick's reindeer lugging his heavy sleigh, not to mention the equally heavy load of presents, over that long stretch of snowless pavement Old St. Nicholas arose to the occasion though, and he and his army of followers, resurrected a four wheeled coach and decorated it with a Christmas tree. And then with his red coated Wooden Soldiers hastily playing, "Hail Hail, the Gang's All Here", Santa and his animal troops proceeded into Town. Directly behind them followed the "Fresh Air Taxicab" with Amos 'n Andy in person, coaxing the dilapidated and rattling old piece up the hill. Trailing along behind Santa and harnessed (?) in on either side by the Town Fire Brigade, were St. Nick's animal friends, including the Big Bear and Little Bear, the Bunny and many more and a few of his Toymakers. The Newmarket Citizens Band brought up the rear of the procession.

# December 23, 1932 Headline: Santa Claus Parade, Like Children's Day at Toronto Ex.

Local writer, Golden Glow, reported in her article that Main St. looked like an auto-show or something; motor cars parked on both sides of the street, and all along the side-streets and plenty more up and down – all with children inside, watching eagerly for Santa. The Post Office was full to the doors with children there to keep warm. The Bugle Band was heard and all the folks rushed out of the shops. Over the hill on Main Street came Santa with his escort and the cheering began. The Town Band headed the parade then came Santa Claus on a dray – wonderfully bedecked. Behind the dray was the \*R.S.A. Bugle Band. They all looked their part dressed as wooden soldiers. Felix the Cat, Mickey Mouse and the Lion and the Tiger delighted the youngsters.

The Band led the children to the Metropolitan Car Barn where members of the Lions Club and the Town Council, with Santa Claus handed each child a bag filled with two apples, lollipops, and a Dixon lead pencil. The Lions provided 1500 bags and ran short.

\*R.S.A. (Rhinehart, Andrews and Smith).

# December 13, 1934 Headline: Lions Would Appreciate Christmas Help, Santa Claus Parade Saturday

The Firemen and Amos 'n' Andy Club will treat the youngsters with candy (1500 bunches of suckers) as the parade winds up at the town hall. The Lions Club will also help with the day's entertainment. The Citizens' Band will lead the parade. Santa Claus will follow in state in a Bell Telephone truck made available through the courtesy of C.W. Holmes, manager. There will be 20 costumes in the parade.



As a result of reduced funds this year, the Lions Club are planning to send baskets to 238 children, compared with 367 last year. While the heads of many families were unemployed last year are working this year, there will be a lot of hardship this Christmas and many children in the vicinity of Newmarket who will not have a bountiful Christmas.

## November 27, 1947 Headline: Santa Claus to Visit Newmarket Dec. 13

A Santa Claus parade will be held in Newmarket Saturday, Dec. 13, under the sponsorship of the Newmarket Lions club. The decision followed a discussion at the club meeting Monday night.

Main Street merchants and the industries will be canvassed in the next few days for financial support and a strong response is anticipated. Already offers of floats for the parade have been received and the committee is out to make this year's parade the biggest and bestest ever.

The Lions also have under discussion the possibility of supervising the proposed outdoor arena at Fairy Lake; a minstrel show and an ice show.

## December 7, 1950 Headline: Santa Parade Despite Icy Rain, Cold Wind 5,000 Line the Streets

Over 5,000 Newmarket and district parents and children witnessed the Santa Claus parade in Newmarket on Saturday morning despite the drenching rain and sleet which for a time, threatened to wash out the parade entirely.

The parade was sponsored by the merchants of Newmarket as a treat for town and district children, and was directed by the editors of The Era and Express. The parade was financed by contributions from Main St. businessmen.

Close to 2,000 children walked by Santa Claus in the town hall following the parade. Each received a gift of a bunch of suckers, a candy cane and an orange. Participating in the parade were the two town bands, the Citizens' Band and the Newmarket Trumpet Band.

