

Byers' Choice® Ltd.

Caroler Chronicle



Summer 1990

Pam Trauger, Editor

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❖ 1983 Boy with a Rocking Horse ❖

In 1982 Bob and Joyce discovered a rocking horse which seemed to be meant for a Byers' Choice® figurine. Three hundred horses were purchased for the special "Boy on a Rocking Horse" figure which was crafted in 1983. It was our first seated figure, so changes were necessary in the method of production. Rather than train others to work with the new form, Joyce chose to make all of them herself. The bottom of each rocking horse was signed, dated, and numbered. A record was kept as to which store each figure was shipped. Within four months Byers' Choice sold all of the figures for a price which was two and a half times the price of a regular caroling figure.



New For 1990



Seven years later another rocking horse and rider join the Byers' Choice line. This one reminds Joyce of a rocking horse which has been handed down through her family to the first child born in each generation for the past one hundred years. Our 1990's rider is a girl with blonde hair, wearing a deep red velveteen dress trimmed with lace and ribbons. She is taking her teddy bear for a ride. Fifteen thousand rocking horses have been purchased this time. They will remain a part of the line until all of them have been sold. We hope you will enjoy our newest addition. She should appear in your favorite shops late this summer.



EASTER CHILDREN



VALENTINE'S DAY CHILDREN



Leprechaun

A Bit of History

Spring of 1982 found us in our first real manufacturing building. We had 18,000 square feet of space with high hopes of someday being able to fill it with Caroling figurines. In the meantime, we found a tenant willing to lease half of the space, and we decided to make some other handcrafts to be sold year round to help our cash flow become less seasonal. The result was band boxes, bride's boxes, applehead figures, and tin as well as Spring figurines. The first four items were abandoned after the first year, but the Easter Children, Valentine's Day Children and Leprechauns remained through 1983.

The Valentine's Day Children and Easter Children were virtually identical, except for the objects they held. Both girls' dresses were white eyelet with blue satin bows and sashes and they wore straw bonnets. The Easter girl carried a basket filled with colored eggs and the Valentine's Day girl carried a large valentine. The boys were blue and white checked or all white shirts, navy knickers, black socks, and straw hats. The Easter boy carried a lamb and the Valentine's Day boy carried a red heart valentine hidden behind his back. These figures did not have open mouths.

The Leprechaun was dressed in a green jacket, white shirts, black knickers, hat, and socks. He had a large black bow at his neck and gold buckles on his hat and shoes. The first Leprechauns were made as special figures for Long's Jewelry Store in Boston. Those in this group had pots of gold with gold coins. A later edition carried a black bucket full of gold coins and a shamrock. We cut each shamrock by hand, and I must admit some of them looked a little lopsided.

By 1984, the demand for our Caroling figurines had increased to the degree that our tenant had to find other space as we spread into the second half of our building. It took all of our manpower and resources to fill the increasing demand for our Christmas figures. Consequently, Spring figures were discontinued until 1987 when we introduced our first Mother's Day piece.

We do not know how many of each of the Spring figurines were produced. This summer we hope to find an industrious student willing to dig through boxes of old invoices to compile numbers so that we can give our collectors more complete information.

CAROLER

We are pleased to present this complete, up-to-date listing of Byers' Choice Caroler Figurines. It is our hope that you are able to find answers to many of your questions in this chronological listing of Carolers and the year or years that they have been produced.



First Victorian Carolers 1982

Figurine	Years Produced
Traditional Adult Carolers	1978-Present
Santa (velvet)	1978-Present
Old World Santa	1978-1986
Traditional Children Carolers	1979-Present
Icabod	1982
Conductor	1982-Present
Drummer Boy	1982-Present
Display Drummer Boy	1982-1983, 1985-1986
Choir Children	1982-1986
Valentine Children	1982-1983
Easter Children	1982-1983
Santa in Sleigh (1st version)	1982-1983
Victorian Adult Carolers (1st version)	1982
Victorian Children Carolers (1st version)	1982
Display Santa	1982-1983
Leprechauns	1982
Victorian Adult Carolers (2nd version)	1983-Present
Victorian Children Carolers (2nd version)	1983-Present
Working Santa	1983-Present
Violin Player Man	1983-1984
Scrooge (1st edition)	1983

Essay Contest

At Byers' Choice, some say that it is like Christmas 365 days a year. So we thought that we would give you a chance to relive some of your favorite Christmas memories, and share them with us. Just write a short essay, poem, or story about your favorite Christmas memories. Winners will be sent copies of Byers' Choice's *A Christmas Carol* signed by Bob and Joyce. All entries must be received before September 1, 1990 and mailed to Byers' Choice Ltd., Collector's Contest, P.O. Box 158, Chalfont, PA 18914



CHRONOLOGY

Boy on Rocking Horse	1983
Display Carolers	1983
Santa in Sleigh (2nd version)	1984-1985
Chimney Sweep	1984
Mrs. Cratchit (1st edition)	1984
Mrs. Santa Claus	1984-Present
Display Working Santa	1984-1985
Scrooge (2nd edition)	1984-Present
Horn Player	1985
Mrs. Cratchit (2nd edition)	1985-Present
Mrs. Fezziwig (1st edition)	1985
Mr. Fezziwig (1st edition)	1985
Pajama Kids	1985-1989
Display Old World Santa	1985
Display Children	1985-1987
Mrs. Fezziwig (2nd edition)	1986-Present
Mr. Fezziwig (2nd edition)	1986-Present
Traditional Grandparent Carolers	1986-Present
Victorian Girl with Violin	1986
Marley's Ghost (1st edition)	1986
Mrs. Claus on Rocker	1986
Victorian Santa	1986-1989
Singing Dogs	1986-Present
Display Adults	1986-1987
Marley's Ghost (2nd edition)	1987-Present
Spirit of Christmas Past (1st edition)	1987
Velvet Mrs. Claus	1987-Present
Angels	1987-Present
Black Angel	1987
Boy on Sled	1987
Caroler with Lamp	1987



Dickens Figures 1988

Spirit of Christmas Past (2nd edition)	1988-Present
Victorian Grandparent Carolers	1988-Present
Spirit of Christmas Present (1st edition)	1988
Saint Nicholas	1988-Present
Knecht Ruprecht	1988-1989
Shepherds	1988-Present
Children with Skates	1988-Present
Singing Cats	1988-Present
Mother's Day (Son)	1988
Mother's Day (Daughter)	1988
Traditional Mother Caroler with Baby	1988-Present
Spirit of Christmas Present (2nd edition)	1989-Present
Spirit of Christmas Future (1st edition)	1989
Russian Santa	1989
King Gasper	1989-Present
King Melchoir	1989-Present
King Balthasar	1989-Present
Newsboy with Bike	1989-Present
Girl with Hoop	1989-Present
Musician with Clarinet	1989
Mother's Day 1989	1989
Bob Cratchit & Tiny Tim	1990
Weihnachtsmann	1990
Holy Family	1990
Musician with Mandolin	1990
Postman	1990
Parson	1990
Display Santa—Red	1990
Display Santa—Bayberry	1990



Kids With Cards Keep Postman in Business

We're happy to introduce caroling kids who hold hand-written Christmas greetings ready for delivery to our postman figurine. Two or three of these children, gathered around the postman, with their seasonal missives outstretched in mittened hands would make a lovely holiday display sure to bring warm memories of full mailboxes.

Christmas cards grew out of the Victorian tradition of exchanging

written greetings at the start of a new year. Sending such messages more than a few miles was a difficult process as the postal system was unreliable. In 1843, Sir Henry Cole commissioned the first card (held by our postman), in order to save him time with his Christmas letters, and to prompt interest in the new English "penny post". This and other early English cards displayed convivial scenes and stressed charitable gifts to the poor. The first American card

did not appear until 1874, when a German lithographer, Louis Prang, printed Christmas cards in Roxbury, Mass. Today billions of cards are sent annually.

While the postman collects your caroling kids' Christmas greetings, beware of our wary bulldog. He seems to have gotten a hold of the last postman who wasn't truly in the holiday spirit! Ask for our kids with cards at your favorite gift shop.

CRATCHIT TRIVIA

In 1984 when we made the first Mrs. Cratchit's apron Joyce saved a few yards of the fabric to use for patches on Bob's trousers. She never dreamed that she would need so many patches. The few yards she saved patched only the first several thousand pairs of pants. So, if you're

really sharp, you just might find a Bob Cratchit whose pants are patched with the material from Mrs. Cratchit's original apron!

Bob Cratchit and Tiny Tim set an all time record as of May 15th for orders placed.



Byers' Choice® Ltd.

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BULK RATE
U.S. Postage Paid
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