



O TANNENBAUM

The Christmas tree (tannenbaum) is a beautiful symbol of the holiday season. Several thousand years ago, they were burned as part of a ritual to make sure spring would arrive on time. In the 1400s, evergreens decorated with paper roses were used in Christmas parades and displays in northern Europe. By the mid-1500s, Christmas trees were in high demand in Germany. Laws limited how many trees could be cut down.

Early Christmas trees were small. The plain trees hung upside-down from the rafters or were placed on tabletops. Decorations became more popular after Queen Victoria's richly decorated trees appeared in newspapers and magazines.

In the 1850s, most Christmas tree decorations were homemade. Edible decorations included cookies, candies, marzipan, popcorn, dried fruits, and nuts. Paper chains, paper decorations, flags, stars, angels, and small toys were also popular. Families that could afford it bought metal tinsel and glass ornaments to hang on their trees. As the number of decorations grew, so did the demand for tall, free-standing Christmas trees.

Candles were also popular Christmas tree decorations but the risk of fire was high. In many homes the tree was decorated on Christmas Eve and unveiled once the candles were lit. The unveiling was a big event but it was brief. The candles had to be put out almost immediately for safety. In wealthy homes a servant might stand watch beside the tree with a bucket of water, just in case.



CHRISTMAS TREE INSTRUCTIONS



Craft kit materials:

- 2 pieces of green construction paper with tree pattern
- 1 strip of brown construction paper

You will also need:

- Scissors
- Tape

1. Carefully cut out the Christmas trees on both pieces of green construction paper.



2. Cut along the dotted line about half the length of the tree down from the top of one piece.



3. Cut along the dotted line about half the length of the tree up from the bottom on one piece.



4. Slot the two trees together and tape them into position.



5. Take the brown construction paper strip and form a loop that fits around the base of the standing tree.



6. Tape the ends of the loop together. Carefully tape the tree to the base. **TIP:** This will help the tree stand up.



Need a few pointers? Catch our instructional video on the **Museum @ Home** section of our website: www.heritagemuseum.ca

Lambton Heritage Museum wishes you a safe and happy holiday season!