

# Holiday Tradition: Dundas House Tour

Photographs by Mike Davis Words by Gloria Hildebrandt





The vast living room of “the Mushroom House” invites a party for Christmas. An unusual 12-sided house built on a central supporting “stem,” it is now owned by Hugh Clark and Carolyn Williamson, art lovers and award-winning gardeners.

St. James’ Anglican Church in Dundas has organized a Christmas house tour for more than 35 years. Claimed as the original “holiday house tour,” the annual event raises funds for charity while giving visitors access to lovely, interesting Dundas houses decked out for Christmas entertaining.

Houses on the tour are not canvases for professional decorators, however. They are decorated by their owners, although skilful friends might help. The tour has become such a popular community tradition that homeowners ask to take part. Relative newcomer to Dundas, John Janisse jokes that he and his partner moved there in order to become part of the tour. Their house was included last year and is featured in the following pages. Here are views of the interiors of most of the houses that participated in last year’s tour. One of the six houses on the tour was unfortunately not available for us to photograph.

In addition to touring the houses, you can enjoy refreshments, music, an art display, and purchase special home-made food and gift items, all at St. James’ Anglican Church, 137 Melville St., Dundas. Proceeds of the tour support Dundas Community Services, the Primate’s World Relief and Development Fund, and St. Matthew’s House.



The fine elegance of the master bathroom in Arlene and John Drysdale’s house plays up a small Christmas tree. The Drysdales completely renovated and expanded a 1958 bungalow into an open-plan luxurious home, doing most of the work themselves.

A Georgian landmark house in the heart of old Dundas, this heritage house has a Mission interior that David Smith and Brenda Copps-Smith complement with cherished antiques and traditional décor. A few ornaments and seasonal linen napkins set the table for Christmas feasts.

**THIS YEAR’S TOUR WILL TAKE PLACE SATURDAY, DECEMBER 3, FROM NOON TO 5 P.M. TICKETS ARE \$20 AND ARE AVAILABLE BY CALLING ST. JAMES’ AT 905 627 1424.**

The great room of Scott and Marg Garner's house has 22-foot ceilings, a wood-burning fireplace and views from the Niagara Escarpment onto Dundas. Warren Booth of Booth Furniture in Dundas decorated the mantel, playing up the bronze colours in the room.





Black magic in the Garner house. A dark dining room lets the guests and the dishes shine.



Sibling English cocker spaniels Cody and Cailey perfectly match the décor of a bedroom in the Drysdale house.



A favourite twig stag, in the lit-up back yard of Chris Grabiec and John Janisse's house, looks at the festive patio table. John is happy to report seeing real deer in their front garden on occasion, even though they eat some plants.

**Traffic-stopping gift boxes!**  
Plexiglass cubes wrapped in ribbons and glowing with seasonal lights brighten up Chris and John's front garden.



Continued on page 26



The fine woodwork of the Smith house is highlighted by simple evergreens and key decorations.

Does your community hold a Christmas house tour we should know about? Write to us at [editor@EscarmentViews.ca](mailto:editor@EscarmentViews.ca) or 50 Ann St., Georgetown ON L7G 2V2, with some details. Perhaps we'll feature your tour next time!



In the Garners' kitchen, a cabinet that stores silver and black party ware year-round, only needs a few glorious baubles to become festive.

Continued from  
page 15

## Ideas Worth Copying!

**These Dundas homeowners abound in creativity. Here are some delightful ideas, both simple and elaborate, that are worth considering for your home.**

Very special Christmas teddy bears curl up to read *The Night Before Christmas* in the Smith house. The tag explains that the bears were created from the mink fur coat of a great grandmother. Initials on the feet commemorate Nora Louise, who passed away in 1992. "If she knew what happened to her fur coat, she'd roll in her grave!" fears her grandson David. Yet most would see this as a fine example of loving reuse.

Every year, Brenda Copps-Smith makes a unique set of Christmas tree ornaments by hand. Always searching for new ideas, each October she starts crafting about 10 pieces. The sets often represent something that happened during the year.

Fine cheese under glass, nestled among winter greens, invites nibbling and sipping wine in Chris Grabiec and John Janisse's elegant kitchen.

As the Drysdale family did, invite Mrs. Claus to bake a batch of cookies by preparing a counter for her. EV

