

Christmas is a time for ...

By Mike Trippitt

Christmas is coming. It is that time of year when we are beguiled by increasingly seductive TV advertising and charmed into parting with ever-increasing sums of cash.

Across the town parents ask their little ones, and older children ask themselves: "What will we buy mum?" or "What will be buy Dad?" Perhaps, "What will they buy me?" is a thought we all have.

Buy indeed. Is Christmas now about buying, instead of about giving? Is the cost of a gift a measure of its value? And has the effort and care involved in the purchase of a present been reduced to a few clicks of a mouse or a few words to Alexa or Siri?

In times now long gone, our most loved things at Christmas were the cake and pudding that mums made, the go-karts and dolls houses that Dads made, and the jumpers and cardigans that grandmothers knitted.

Earlier this year I met Suffolk artist Serena Hall. She looks back on a very happy childhood. Her late father was a co-author of the *Readers' Digest Family Book Of Things To Make And Do*.

"It was my all-time favourite book," Serena says. "At Christmas we would make things for people. At a young age I cannot remember buying things. It would always be 'So what are we going to make this year?' It would be something we could make together."

Mike Trippitt is a freelance writer living in St Ives. His blog is at www.miketrippitt.com and you can follow him on Facebook.

Perhaps we would all benefit from delving into this wonderful old book.

Christmas should be about giving, not about buying. A gift that is made with love can have so much more value than the cost. Why not make something for someone this Christmas.



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