

# THE KAVANAUGH REPORT

## Do You Recognize?



Candy Cane Lane (Hollywood Boulevard) December 1947



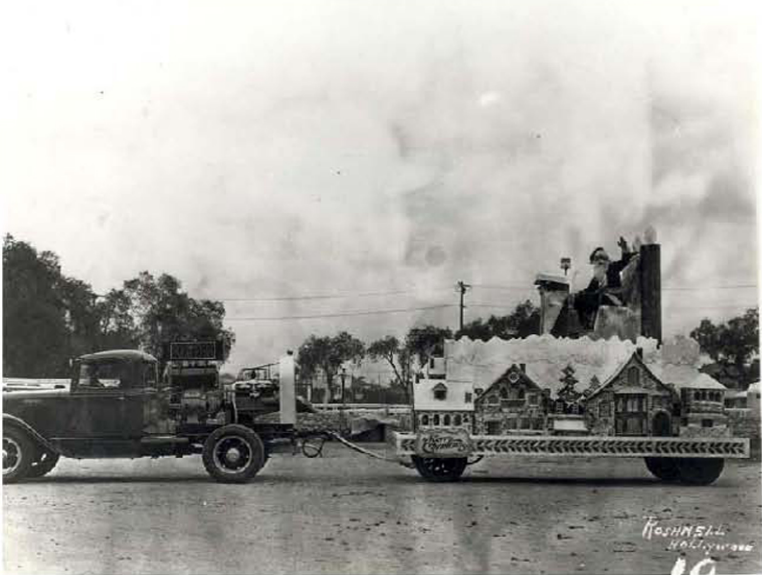
Hollywood Parade Santa Float 1949



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Throughout the decades of the 50s, 60s and 70s the parade was a major event. Actually, in 1978 local TV KTLA did a live broadcast and continued to do this for many years. The parade grew from a Santa Claus truck to an attraction supported by famous stars, an official tree lighting, marching bands and real floats. Johnny Grant, known as “The Honorary Mayor of Hollywood”, helped to make this event successful and prominent. It was during this time that the parade changed from being the night before Thanksgiving to the Sunday after Thanksgiving and in 1978 the parade was renamed and became known as the “Hollywood Christmas Parade”.

By 2000 the parade’s allure was quickly fading and the star studded event was not being supported by the Hollywood community. In 2007 the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce made a difficult decision to disband the Hollywood Christmas Parade, as it had been a tremendous financial loss. Picking up the pieces, the City of Los Angeles created the “Hollywood Santa Parade,” which was held on the weekend after Thanksgiving. Bob Barker was the first Grand Marshall and participation was only by invitation.



Santa Float 1931

## Here Comes the Parade!

We all look forward to sitting back and watching The Hollywood Christmas Parade... most certainly a nostalgic tradition and a glimpse of Hollywood celebrating the holiday season in sunny California. It dates back to 1928, when the Hollywood Chamber of Commerce, in an effort to promote holiday shopping, decided to have a parade on Hollywood Boulevard and called it the “Santa Claus Lane Parade”. In its’ inception it was simply Santa Claus and Jeanette Loff, a then famous actress, who waved at people as they made their way down that landmark street.

The parade grew as it gathered momentum from the business and Hollywood communities. In 1931 the parade launched its’ first, official float. Picture Santa Claus riding in without Dancer and Prancer, but on a float pulled by a truck. Additionally there was a drum line, bugle corps and a color guard marching from the American Legion Post 43. What a sight that must have been!

World War II was being waged and the Parade and its festivities were silenced from 1942-1944. The glee of the holiday season was on hold until a happier time. In 1945 the parade began once again, as people tried to celebrate “a most wonderful time of the year” and came out in record attendance to make their holidays bright. By 1946 the parade had grown in scope and even Gene Autry rode down Hollywood Boulevard on his famous horse. The story goes that as he rode the parade route, the children lined the street and shouted at him as he passed: “Here comes Santa Claus. Here comes Santa Claus”. With that a song was born, as he was prompted to write the renowned song by the same title.

KTLA aired this new parade and a new era was born. The stars came out in support and by 2009 MyNetworkTV telecast the parade in prime time slots and the parade’s name, “Hollywood Christmas Parade” was restored. In ensuing years Associated Television International became the producer. Thankfully a piece of old Hollywood tradition has been preserved.

So, as you stroll down “Candy Cane Lane” and see the festive decorations, hear the laughter of children anxiously awaiting those famous stars, enjoy the sights and sounds of marching bands, delight in the vibrant, blazing colors, and, of course, welcome Santa Claus and his famous reindeer; just remember how fortunate we are to be steeped in a history so unique and precious. Take a moment to treasure our heritage and know how lucky we are to be celebrating the holidays in this wonderful community.

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Santa Float 1940

*Leslie Kavanaugh:*  
*“People and Properties are my Profession and my Passion”*