

The Spirit of the Holidays Alive at Royal Ground

By David Anderson

Fun. Friends. Care. Love. These are all words that we hope will resonate throughout the community this holiday season. They are also the words Annie Janes, owner of Royal Ground in Orinda, uses to describe the tree customers put up in her coffee shop. This tree is very unique and not like any other Christmas tree you may see during this Holiday season.

In fact, it is best described as a “Holiday tree, not just a Christmas tree”, as there is something special in its message. Annie adds, it’s “more than just a Christmas tree” because it represents the entire community, not just those who celebrate Christmas.

Everything on the tree (including the tree itself) has been donated by customers who frequent the coffee shop. The tree is decorated with a variety of ornaments that people in the community have either made or brought from home. These include carvings of bears and horses, a wooden cutout of Charlie Brown, Christmas lights and clusters of little bells. Nearly anything and everything is accepted as an ornament. There is even a coffee cup lid and a few decorations made from old coffee cups.

People of various faiths have also added to the tree in the spirit of community and the holidays. One such example is the six pointed Star of David that sits at the top of the tree.

According to Annie, the tree has helped bring people together. “Everyone is so busy [during the holidays] but they bring something [to put on the tree]” she says, adding that the customers who pitched in are “all from many different religions and many different countries with different beliefs. I’m very touched by all this.”

With the chaos of the season, it is refreshing to know there is a place in the community where people are willing to take a moment to stop, rest and come together in the spirit of the season.



Ornaments hanging on the Royal Ground's Christmastree

Photo David Anderson