



*Holidays
go round
and round*



Christmas
Hello, friends!

Yule
I'm Holideichik!

Nice to meet you!

New Year

I'm responsible for the
Valentine's Day
people all over the world

not to forget about the holidays and
celebrate them on time!
Easter

Each Holiday is a part of
Mother's Day
and the Legacy of the country.

MayDay
I'll tell you some interesting facts
about well-known British holidays

Halloween
I'm sure it'll be greatest to learn
about the holidays together!

Come along with
Guy Fawkes Night



It's me again! If you want to be named "The Best Keeper of British Traditions", answer to the questions below:

What kind of a holiday is *Christmas* ?

What does abbreviation X-mas mean?

Whose idea was it to print greeting cards?

How much does the 1st Christmas greeting card cost those days and now?

What Christmas tradition was given by

the King George V and beginning in 1932?

Who is Santa Claus?

Where do children hope to find presents

from Santa?



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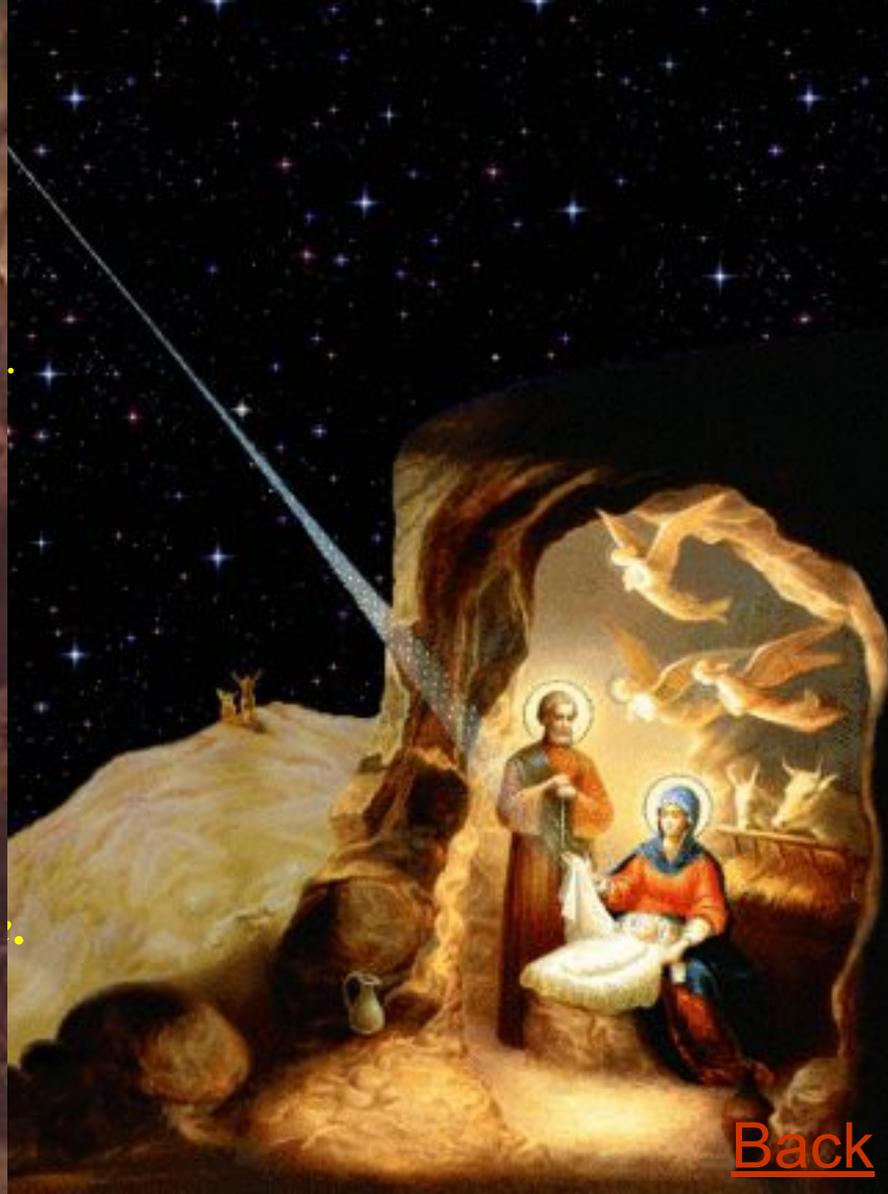
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Christmas



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HISTORY of a CHRISTMAS CARD

The average English family receives and sends about 60 CHRISTMAS Cards



November 26 in 2005 year on auction in the British city Wiltshire sold first in the world a Christmas card for 20 thousand pounds.

The first Christmas card has created in 1794 by English artist Dobson for his friend. The present serial card has appeared in 9 of December 1843. This card was drawn by the artist John Calcott Horsely by the order of the businessman of sir Henry Cole , which wanted to congratulate the grandmother.

On the card size 5x3 of inch represents Christmas dinner, in which three generations of family participate, it is possible the relatives of sir Henry. In total was printed of such 1 thousand cards, which were sold on 1 shilling. Till now was kept such 12 cards, one of them was sold for the record sum. [Back](#)



King George V

The Christmas Broadcast



The Christmas message was started by King George V. King George had reigned since 1910, but it was not until 1932 that he delivered his first Christmas message, which was then made possible by new radio technologies. That year had seen the beginning of the BBC's new Empire Service. The text of the first Christmas speech was written by poet and writer Rudyard Kipling. The king used a microphone encased in Australian walnut, while a thick cloth covered the table to cover the sound of rustling paper. From 1932 until the end of his reign, King George V continued to broadcast at Christmas. His last Christmas broadcast in 1935 came less than a month before his death. New King, Edward VIII, never delivered a Christmas Broadcast, as his reign came to an end before Christmas 1936. King George VI hadn't kept Christmas broadcast during 1936, 1938 years. But in 1939 connection with war having been declared some 3 months earlier, and with unease felt throughout the country and empire, the king decided to speak out to his people. He dressed in the uniform of the Admiral of the Fleet, sitting in front of two microphones on a table at Sandringham. It was to be a landmark speech and was to have a profound effect on the listening public.



King George VI died in February 1952. His eldest daughter became Queen Elizabeth II and that year she broadcast her first Christmas message. On Christmas Day at 3.00 in the afternoon the Queen makes a speech on radio and TV. It's ten minutes long. In it she talks to the people of the United Kingdom and the Commonwealth. The Commonwealth is a large group of countries. In the past they were all in the British Empire. Australia, India, Canada and New Zealand are among the 49 members. The Queen has given a Christmas Broadcast every year of her reign, with the exception of 1969. That year the film 'Royal Family' had been shown by the BBC and it was decided not to do a broadcast. The Queen released a written message to newspapers instead. However, the public voted with their pens and many letters were received by the palace by people upset at the fact that there had been no broadcast. The television audience for the previous year (1968) had been estimated at over 23 million in the UK alone. In 2005 was The Queen's 53 Christmas Broadcast. When this is added to the fourteen of her father and the four of her grandfather, it becomes clear what a tradition the Christmas Broadcast has become.



The Queen delivers the first Christmas broadcast of her reign



Christmas stockings



It is said that one day, he climbed the roof of a house and dropped a purse of money down the chimney. It landed in the stocking which a girl had put to dry by the fire! This may explain the belief that Father Christmas comes down the chimney and places gifts in children's stockings. Other legend has it that 3 young ladies of meager means were terribly distraught over the probability of their spinster hoods. They had no dowries and in those days no dowry meant no marriage. Somehow, word of their angst reached St. Nick. For 2 nights, he tossed bags of gold through their window. On the third night, however, all the windows and doors were locked. Not to be deterred, he climbed down the chimney and filled the stockings they hung near the hearth to dry.

and Christmas Fire



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Giving presents goes back to Roman Saturnalia when good luck gifts of fruit, pastry or gold were given to friends on New Year's Day.

Father Christmas is based on a real person, St. Nicholas, which explains his other name 'Santa Claus' which comes from the Dutch 'Sinterklaas'. Nicholas was a Christian leader from Myra (in modern-day Turkey) in the 4th century AD. He was

often seen, clad in red and white bishop's robes and riding on a donkey, handing out gifts to children. He was very shy, and wanted to give money to poor people without



White Christmas

England has only known seven white Christmases in the entire twentieth century. According to the records of the Meteorological Office in London, snow fell on Christmas Day only in 1938 and 1976. (The definition of a white Christmas in England is when one snowflake falls on the roof of the London Weather Centre.)



Father Christmas' reindeers are called **Rudolph** - the leader who lights the way with his bright red nose.



Christmas' reindeers are :

Rudolph, Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Donder, (also known as Donner), Blitzen, Cupid and Comet.

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Symbols of Christmas



The pure green colour of the stately fir tree remains green all year round, representing the everlasting hope of mankind, all the needles point heavenward, making it a symbol of man's thoughts turning toward heaven.



The wreath symbolizes the real nature of love. Real love never ceases, like Gods love which has no beginning or end.



The star was the heavenly sign of promises long ago. God promised a Saviors for the world, and the star was the sign of fulfillment of His promise.



The bell symbolizes guidance and return. It reminds us that we are all precious in the eyes of God.



The candle symbolizes that Christ is the light of the world, and when we see this great light we are reminded of Jesus who fills our lives with light.

The Christmas tree



The Christmas tree was popularized by Prince Albert, husband of Queen Victoria, who introduced one to the Royal Household in 1840. Since 1947, the country of Norway has presented Britain annually with a large Christmas tree which stands in Trafalgar Square in commemoration of Anglo-Norwegian cooperation during the Second World War. When Norway was invaded by German forces in 1940, King Haakon VII escaped to Britain and a Norwegian exile government was set up in London. To most Norwegians, London came to represent the spirit of freedom during those difficult years. From London, the latest war news was broadcast in Norwegian, along with a message and information network which became vital to the resistance movement and which gave the people in Norway inspiration and hope of liberation. The tree has become a symbol of the close and warm relationship between the people of Britain and Norway. The tree itself, a Norwegian spruce (*Picea abies*), is chosen with great care from the forests surrounding Oslo.



Christmas decorations are:



Holly



The Holly, from ancient times, was used by people in Britain to protect their homes from evil spirits. Witches and warlocks, are said to be deterred from entering by the holly's prickly leaves and also by its reputation for holiness (the word "holly" comes from holy). The holly plant represents immortality. It represents the crown of thorns worn by our Savior. The red holly represents the blood shed by Him.

ivy



Ancient people were fascinated by the way evergreens stayed green through all the bleak days of winter. It proved to them that these trees were still alive and reminded them that spring would come again.



Poinsettias are traditional Christmas plants. When people shop for turkeys, crackers and presents, they also pick up a poinsettia. Their vivid red bracts (leaves) have become associated with Santa's coat and robins' breasts.

Traditional Colour to decorate with

Red and green are the traditional colour of Christmas. Green represents the continuance of life through the winter and the Christian belief in eternal life through Jesus. Red symbolizes the blood that Jesus shed at His Crucifixion.

mistletoe



The Druids, who lived in Britain in pre-Christian times, are responsible for the use of mistletoe at Christmas. They worshipped the oak tree and as mistletoe grew on oak trees they regarded it as a very special plant and thought it possessed magical qualities that kept the sleeping oak alive during the cold winter days.

Kissing under the Mistletoe

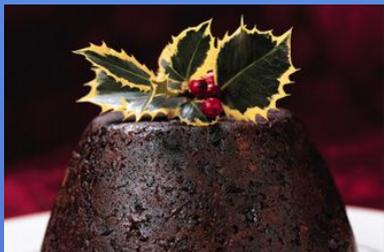
The Druids dedicated mistletoe to the Goddess of Love, which explains the kissing that goes on under it. Originally, when a boy kissed a girl, he plucked a berry from the cluster and presented it to her. When the berries were gone, so were the kisses.

A traditional rhyme about mistletoe is:
*'Pick a berry off the mistletoe
For every kiss that's given.
When the berries have all gone
There's an end to kissing.'*

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Christmas dinner

consists traditionally of a roast turkey, goose or chicken with stuffing and roast potatoes. This is followed by mince pies and Christmas pudding flaming with brandy, which might contain coins or lucky charms for children. (The pudding is usually prepared weeks beforehand and is customarily stirred by each member of the family as a wish is made.) Later in the day, a Christmas cake may be served - a rich baked fruit cake with marzipan, icing and sugar frosting.



Christmas pudding was first made as a kind of soup with raisins and wine in it.

Christmas Pudding originates from an old, Celtic dish known as 'frumenty'.

Candy canes

are a popular Christmas treat, and may double as a decoration

or Christmas ornament. The sugar cane represents the shepherd's crook. The crook helps to bring back lost sheep to the flock.



Christmas crackers were invented by Thomas Smith.

He had imported some French novelties to sell as Christmas gifts, but these were not popular until he wrapped them up and added a snapper.

The pulling of Christmas crackers often accompanies food on Christmas Day.

Invented by a London baker in 1846, a cracker is a brightly colored paper tube, twisted at both ends, which contains a party hat, riddle and toy or other trinket.

When it is pulled by two people it gives out a crack as its contents are

Yule
ancient Druid mid-winter festival



celebrated by burning
a large log of wood





Yule Winter Solstice

Celebrating around December 21.

This holiday represents the rebirth of light. Here, on the longest night of the year, the Goddess gives birth to the Sun God and hope for new light is reborn.

Yule is a time of awakening to new goals and leaving old regrets behind. Yule coincides closely with the Christian Christmas celebration. . The choice of December 25 was made by the Pope Julius I in the fourth century AD because this coincided with the pagan rituals of Winter Solstice, or Return of the Sun. The intent was to replace the pagan celebration with the Christian one.

The Christian tradition of a Christmas tree has its origins in the Pagan Yule celebration. Pagan families would bring a live tree into the home so the wood spirits would have a place to keep warm during the cold winter months. Bells were hung in the limbs so you could tell when a spirit was present.

Food and treats were hung on the branches for the spirits to eat and a five-pointed star, the pentagram, symbol of the five elements, was placed atop the tree.

The colors of the season, red and green, also are of Pagan origin, as is the custom of exchanging gifts.

Yule is celebrated by fire and the use of a Yule log. Many enjoy the practice of lighting the Yule Log. If you choose to burn one, select a proper log of oak or pine (never Elder). Carve or chalk upon it a figure of the Sun (a rayed disc) or the Horned God (a horned circle). Set it alight in the fireplace at dusk, on Yule. This is a graphic representation of the rebirth of the God within the sacred fire of the Mother Goddess. As the log burns, visualize the Sun shining within it and think of the coming warmer days. Traditionally, a portion of the Yule Log is saved to be used in lighting next year's log. This piece is kept throughout the year to protect the home.



Carol singing

The first Christmas hymns were written in the 5th century. Originally composed in Latin, they contained primarily theological topics. Carols (noels), songs with more human and personal subjects, appeared in the 1200's. During the Middle Ages (900-1400 AD) people

incorporated drama and plays into the celebration of Christmas. Carols became an integral part of these re-enactments. After the plays, carolers strolled down the street singing. Many of the traditional favorite Christmas carols, such as "O Come, All Ye Faithful" and "Silent Night", were written in the 1800's. The first instrument on which the carol "Silent Night" was played was a guitar.

Christmas songs such as "Jingle Bells" and "White Christmas" came later and reflect a more secular viewpoint of the holiday. Handel's Messiah, an oratorio (music drama without staging) first performed in 1742, is also a Christmas favorite. Musicologists agree that Christmas music is among the finest ever written in the world.



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Englishmen have special songs which they sing during the Christmas season. The songs are known as carols and they are about when Jesus was born.

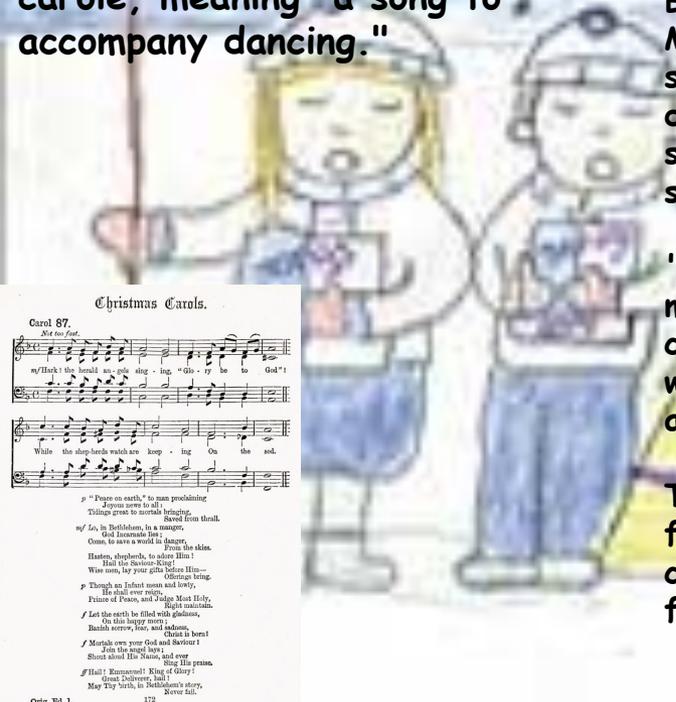
Caroling is one of the oldest customs in Great Britain, going back to the Middle Ages when beggars, seeking food, money, or drink, would wander the streets singing holiday songs.

Over the years, the word 'carol' changed its meaning, referring only to certain kinds of songs, the word carol became known as Christmas songs.

People go 'carol singing'. This is where people will go from house to house singing carols and collecting money for charity.



The traditional period to sing carols was from St Thomas's Day (December 21) until the morning of Christmas Day. The word comes from the ancient Greek choros, which means "dancing in a circle," and from the Old French word carole, meaning "a song to accompany dancing."



Christmas Carols.

Carol 87.



♪ Praise on earth, to man proclaiming
From heaven in all things
Things great to mortals bringing,
From the throne, God incarnate, true,
Come, to save a world in sin,
From the skies, Hail the Saviour-King!
Who came, by your gift bring
Offerings true.
♪ Though an infant most and lowly,
He shall ever reign,
Prince of Peace, and Judge Most Holy,
Right maintain.
♪ Let the earth be filled with goodness,
On this happy morn,
Baptist rivers, seas, and fountains,
Christ is born!
♪ Marvellous your God and Saviour!
Join the song here,
Shout aloud His Name, and ever
Sing His praise.
♪ Hail! Emmanuel! King of Glory!
Great Deliverer, hail!
May Thy birth, in Bethlehem's story,
Never fail.

Happy Boxing Day



5 steps for a good holiday:

1. Attend a sporting event. In England, horse racing, regattas, football games and the Brighton Swimming Club's annual dip into the icy English Channel are just some of the events that take place on Boxing Day.

Boxing Day is a holiday celebrated in Britain. It falls on December 26, which is also St. Stephen's Day. The date of a holiday begins with the Middle Ages (A.D. 400's-1500's), but the exact origin is unknown. It may have begun with the lords and ladies of England, who presented Christmas gifts in boxes to their servants on December 26. Or it may have begun with priests, who opened the church's alms (charity) boxes on the day after Christmas and distributed the contents to the poor.

2. Remember those who have provided a service to you during the year. The postal delivery person, the newspaper delivery person, and employees of your household or business should be remembered with a tip, bonus or gift basket.

3. Remember those in need. Tradition has it that on Boxing Day in Victorian England, the poor went from house to house bearing boxes that were filled by compassionate home owners with food, clothing and gifts. Give canned goods, clothing or your time to organizations that help the needy.

4. Go shopping. Shopping is a popular Boxing Day activity, and the malls are usually filled with people taking advantage of after-Christmas bargains.

Celebrate with friends. Provide food and drink, or organize a potluck get-together for friends and family. Make it low-key, as Boxing Day should be less hectic and more relaxing than Christmas Day.



New Year's Eve is a more important festival in Scotland than it is in England, and it even has a special name. It is not clear where the word '**Hogmanay**' comes from, but it is connected with the provision of food and drink for all visitors to your home on 31st December. It was believed that the first person to visit one's house on New Year's Day could bring good or bad luck. Therefore, people tried to arrange for the person or their own choice to be standing outside their houses ready to be let in the moment midnight had come. Usually a dark-complexioned man was chosen, and never a woman, for she would bring bad luck. The First-Footer, on crossing the threshold, greets the family with "A Gude New Year to ane and a'!" (Sc. A good New Year to one and all!) or simply "A Happy New Year!", and pours out a glass from the flask he carries. This must be drunk to the dregs by the head of the house, who, in turn, pours out a glass for each of his visitors. A popular toast is: "Your good health!"

The first footer was required to carry four articles: a **piece of coal** to wish warmth, a **piece of bread** to wish food, and a **silver coin** to wish wealth and the **greenery** to make sure that they had a long life.

*In midnight execute
hymn "Auld Lang
Syne", written
in 1700- by Scottish
poet Robert Burns*





Words adapted from a
traditional song by
Rabbie Burns (1759-1796)

Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And never brought to mind?
Should auld acquaintance be forgot,
And *auld lang syne*?

CHORUS:

For auld lang syne, my dear,
For auld lang syne,
We'll tak a cup of kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!
And surely ye'll be your *pint-stowp*,
And surely I'll be mine,
And we'll tak a cup o' kindness yet,
For auld lang syne!
We twa hae run about the braes,
And pou'd the gowans fine,
But we've wander'd monie a weary fit,
Sin auld lang syne.
We twa hae paidl'd in the burn
Frae morning sun till dine,
But seas between us braid hae roar'd
Sin auld lang syne.
And there's a hand my trusty *fiere*,
And gie's a hand o' thine,
And we'll tak a right guid-willie waught,
For auld lang syne

AULD LANG SYNE



AULD LANG SYNE

(собственный перевод)

Нам дружбу старую забыть?
К ней возвратимся вновь.
И память будоражит кровь
Как первая любовь!

Припев:

За дружбу старую налей
Нам доброго вина.
За дружбу славную мы пьём
И за любовь - до дна!

Давай о днях былых времён
Мы вспомним, милый друг:
Бездонно небо, а на нём -
Хмельного солнца круг.

Припев:

Там маргаритки на холмах
Сорвав, под нежный смех,
Мы искупали в ручейках
Невинный юный грех.

Припев:

Но время разлучило нас.
Как море бурное оно.
Преодолев преграды все,
За встречу пьём вино.

Припев:

И вот опять рука в руке
С тобой идём вдвоём.
О старом добром времени
Чуть с грустью мы поём.

Припев:

За дружбу старую налей
Нам доброго вина.
За дружбу прежнюю мы пьём
И за любовь - до дна!



Happy Valentine's Day!



Love is ... a tender feeling,
Love is ... a way of being,
Love is... just showing someone you care.

Love is ... helping with the dishes,
Love is ... feeding your pet fishes,
Love is ... just giving from your heart.
Love is so very simple,

It's not a mystery.

When you treat those around you
The very same way
You want them to treat you.

Love is ... your baby sister,
Love is ... playing with her
Love is ... holding with when she
cries.

Love is ... sharing your candy,
Love is ... being all that you can be,
Love is... lending a helping hand
What someone needs you.

Love is...
L-O-V-E

Love is
For you and me.

Oh! Love is the greatest thing in the world.



Legends of the Valentine's Day

The 1st version

Many historians, however, seem to trace it to an ancient Roman festival called Lupercalia. This was held on February 15 to honor Faunus, the god of animal life, hunting, herding, the patron of husbandry, and the guardian of the secret lore of nature. After Christianity spread, some think this pagan festival eventually became Valentine's Day.

The 2nd version

Other experts connect Valentine's Day with two saints of the early Christian church. According to one story, St. Valentine was a priest who would marry young couples against the orders of the Roman Emperor Claudius II, who believed that single young men made better soldiers. This story goes back to about A.D. 200.

The 3rd version

There also was another St. Valentine who was a good friend to children. Because he would not worship the gods decreed by the Roman emperor, he was put in prison. While he was imprisoned, the children that he had befriended missed him and brought him loving notes. Many of the notes expressed the thought that "absence makes the heart grow fonder." He was supposedly executed on February 14 in A.D. 270. Some people think this is why we exchange friendly and caring messages on this day.

The 4th

Others believe that the word valentine came from a Norman word galatine, which means a "gallant" or a "lover."

The 5th version

Some people connect the celebrating of Valentine's Day with an old English belief that birds choose their mates on February 14. This, too, is possible, since spring was less than a month away. The calendar used before 1582 was slightly different from the one we use now. Spring arrived on March 11 on the old calendar. Whatever the origin, Valentine's Day is celebrated in many parts of the world today and is a holiday for both young and old.

Lace symbolizes a net for catching one's heart. If you get a Valentine with a piece of a lace you may understand that the person who sent it must be crazy about you. A symbol should have several meanings, so some experts maintain that lace stands for a bridal veil. A ribbon means that the person is tired up.



Cupid

Cupid, the mischievous son of the Goddess of Love, Venus, is supposedly responsible for people falling in love. According to the myths, anyone being hit by Cupid's arrow falls in love with the first person he sees.



"Valentines" is a greeting card named after the notes that St. Valentine wrote from jail. Valentines can be sentimental, romantic, and heartfelt. They can be funny and friendly. If the sender is shy, valentines can be anonymous.



White roses are for true love and purity of the mind.

Red roses are for love and passion.

Yellow roses are for friendship.

Black roses mean farewell.

Pink roses mean friendship or sweetheart



Mothering Sunday

The early Christians in England celebrated the Mother's festival on the fourth Sunday of Lent (the 40 day period leading up to Easter) to honor Mary, the mother of Christ.

No one is absolutely certain exactly how the idea of Mothering Sunday began, but we know that on this day, about four hundred years ago, people who lived in little villages made a point of going not to their local church but to the nearest big church. To what was called the Mother Church. And some would go to the nearest city to worship in the cathedral - the 'mother church' of all other churches in that area or 'diocese'.

People who visited their mother church would say they had gone "a mothering."

It also became an occasion for family reunions.

Young English girls and boys 'in service' were only allowed one day to visit their family each year. This was usually Mothering Sunday. Often the housekeeper or cook would allow the maids to bake a cake to take home for their mother. Sometimes a gift of eggs; or flowers from the garden (or hothouse) was allowed.

Flowers were traditional, as the young girls and boys would have to walk home to their village, and could gather them on their way home through the meadows.

area or 'diocese'.

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It also became an occas

Young English girls and
family ea

cook w
Some

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their



Mother's Day



In 2007, Mothering Sunday falls on 18 March.

Today, the Mother's Day is a day when children give presents, flowers, and home made cards to their mothers to express their love. The fourth Sunday in Lent is still known as Simnel Sunday in some areas of England, because of the tradition of baking Simnel cakes.

'I'll to thee a Simnell bring
'Gainst thou go'st a mothering,
So that, when she blesseth thee,
Half that blessing thou'lt give to me.'

Robert Herrick 1648

Simnel Cake

The Simnel cake is a fruit cake. A flat layer of marzipan (sugar almond paste) is placed on top of and decorated with 11 marzipan balls representing the 12 apostles minus Judas, who betrayed Christ. The word simnel probably derived from the latin word 'simila', meaning fine, wheaten flour from which the cakes were made.



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Easter

Easter 2007 is on April 8 th



The name Easter comes from Eostre, the pagan goddess of spring worshipped in Northern Europe long before the advent of Christianity.

In England Easter doesn't fall on the same date every year, but rather on any Sunday from March 22nd to April 25th. Its celebration is a series of special days dedicated to the commemoration of the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

Holy Week is the last week of Lent and is the week before Easter Sunday. It starts on Palm Sunday and finishes with the celebration of Easter Sunday.

Holy Week is a special time for Christians. Although every day is important, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday and Easter Sunday are very special to Christians.

Many modern Easter symbols come from pagan time.

The egg was a fertility symbol long before the Christian era. In Christian times the egg took on a new meaning symbolizing the tomb from which Christ rose. The ancient custom of dyeing eggs at Easter time is still very popular. Egg is a symbol of new life and Easter time of the resurrection of life. Indeed many ancient cultures believed that the world began with a single egg.

The **Easter bunny** is also originated in pre-Christian fertility lore. The rabbit was the most fertile animal, so they selected it as a symbol of new life. The tradition of the Easter Hare or Easter Bunny comes from a Northern European legend, when hare supposedly brought Easter eggs in a fancy basket to children.

Today's **Easter baskets** are filled with eggs and sweets and decorated with ribbons, flowers and straw. The practice of decorating eggs was made even more famous by King Edward I of England who ordered 450 eggs to be gold-leafed and colored for Easter gifts in 1290. The custom soon became very popular but instead of precious eggs people began to give ordinary hard-boiled eggs which had been painted.





Easter

Lots of Flowers are associated with spring and Easter festivals.

Easter Lilies are often white and represent a sign of Purity and Goodness. These help Christians to remember that Jesus was pure and perfect when he died on the Cross.



Passion Flowers - Passion flowers have been given lots of different meanings for Easter over the years. These help Christians to remember Jesus dying on the Cross.

The three stamens represent the three nail wounds of Jesus or the Trinity of God, Jesus and the Holy Spirit

The circle of petals represent the crown of thorns that Jesus wore or as the flower has ten petals they can represent the ten disciples that did not deny or betray Christ.

The leaves represent the spear that went into the side of Jesus.

The passion flower normally last for three days and represents the three days Jesus spent in the tomb.

Lots of churches in Britain hold Flower Festivals at Easter when the whole church is filled with displays of spring flowers. Some are made into scenes from the Easter Story.



Hot Cross Buns with their combination of spicy, sweet and fruity flavours is an Easter tradition.

The pastry cross on top of the buns symbolises and reminds Christians of the cross that Jesus was killed on.

A Hot Cross Bun Ceremony takes place each Good Friday. In the early 19th century, a widow was expecting her sailor son back home for Easter, and placed a hot cross bun ready for him on Good Friday. The son never returned, but undaunted the widow left the bun waiting for him and added a new bun each year.

"Egg rolling" is an old Easter game, traditionally played on Easter Monday. Children roll eggs down a grassy slope and the first egg to reach the bottom without breaking is the winner. If the eggs reach the bottom without breaking it is said to bring good luck.





Easter



Each year the capital city of Britain greets the spring with a spectacular **Easter Parade** in Battersea Park. The great procession, or parade, begins at 3 p.m. The parade consists of many decorated floats. At the rear of the parade is usually the very beautiful float richly decorated with flowers. It is called the Jersey one because the spring flowers bloom early on the Island of Jersey.

During the Middle Ages, people in their new Easter clothes would take a long walk after attending church on Easter Sunday, and this tradition gradually evolved into Easter Parades and the wearing of "Easter Bonnets". **Easter bonnets** - "spring bonnets" decorate with spring flowers or ribbons. These are often amazing to look at, even if highly impractical to wear!



Queen Elizabeth II presenting Maundy coins, with some Maundy coins from various periods shown



Maundy Thursday Ceremony

In England today, the Queen follows a very traditional role of giving Maundy Money to a group of pensioners. The tradition of the Sovereign giving money to the poor dates from the 13th century.

Every year on this Easter day, the Queen attends a service in one of the many cathedrals through out the country.

A Yeomen of the Guard carries a golden tray of Maundy Money in white and red leather purses for the Queen. Everyone carries posies ("nosegays") of flowers - a traditional protection at the time of the Great Plague. (King Charles 1 distributed his Maundy coins in 1639 during an outbreak of the plague.)

The amount of Maundy Money handed out is equal to the age of the monarch. In 2006, marking Queen Elizabeth's 80th year, 80 men and 80 women received 80 pence in two special purses, a red purse and a white purse.

The Queen, accompanied by The Duke of Edinburgh, will attend the Royal Maundy Service at a Cathedral (not yet known) on Thursday, 5 April 2007.

Maundy coins are specially minted for the occasion and are legal tender and they are produced in limited numbers. A complete set of Maundy money consists of a groat (4p), a threepence (3p), a half-groat (2p) and a penny (1p) - totalling 10p.



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Interesting Fact:

The world record for tossing pancakes stands at 416 flips in two minutes. The world's biggest pancake was cooked in Rochdale in 1994. It was an amazing 15 metres in diameter, weighed three tonnes and had an estimated two million calories.

The Olney Pancake Race



Shrove Tuesday is celebrated in Olney England like nowhere else on earth!

Pancake races are thought to have begun in 1445 on Shrove Tuesday (Febr. 20th in 2007). The story goes that a woman had lost track of the time on Shrove Tuesday, and was busy cooking pancakes in her kitchen. Suddenly she heard the church bell ringing to call the faithful to church for confession. The woman raced out of her house and ran all the way to church; still holding her frying pan and wearing her apron.



The Olney race is now run from the Market Place to Church. when the large bronze 'Pancake Bell' is rung from the Church at 11.55 am. In race take part an unmarried woman, homewife from eighteen years old and have the constant house in Olney.

Competitors must wear a traditional housewife's costume (a skirt, an apron, head covering – scarf) and carry a frying pan containing a pancake. They race a distance of 415 yards (375-metre).

The pancakes must stay in the pans during the race. If they fall out, the racer must put the pancake back in the pan and resume running. Winner is the one who by first will reach church, not having dropped a pancake. After the winner crosses the finish line, she must toss her pancake into the air and catch it in the pan before being declared the winner. The winner is given a Prayer Book the Vicar. Then she gives her pancake to the bellringer, and is kissed by him. The prize is the Story of the Hymn, either given to the winner, or donated to the school, library. The winner's name is printed in an honorary volume of winners' names for all to see. Since 1950 Olney has competed with a town called Liberal in Kansas, which holds an identical race, to see which town can produce the fastest competitor. After the 2000 race, Liberal was leading with 26 wins to Olney's 24.



THE ORIGINS AND TRADITIONS OF MAYDAY

Merry Beltane!

1st May is a traditional celebration of the coming of spring, It is usually accompanied by sports contests, children's entertainments and games.

People maintain traditions and have a **maypole**. This is a tall pole with ribbons hanging from the top. Children dance round it, holding the ribbons.

The 1st of May has also to some extent retained its old significance Beltane - that of a pagan spring festival. In ancient times it used to be celebrated with garlands and flowers, dancing and games on the village green. The girls put on their best summer frocks, plaited flowers in their hair and round their waists and eagerly awaited the crowning of the May Queen.

The most beautiful girl was crowned with a garland of flowers. After this was dancing, often Morris dancing, with the dancers dressed in fancy costume, usually representing characters in the Robin Hood legend. May-Day games and sports were followed by refreshments in the open.



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Name Morris is a mystery. Some claim that it is a corruption of Moorish, indicating that the dances may have had their origins somewhere in Africa. Or it may simply refer to the dancers practice of blackening their faces with cork as a simple disguise. Or it may be derived from the Latin "moris", meaning custom or tradition. Or maybe it has something to do with some guy named Maurice. We have no idea.

Morris Dancing

Morris dance, rustic dance of the north of England that had its origin in country festivals, such as those of May Day and Whitsunday. This traditional ritual to welcome the return of spring is called morris dancing and it goes back at least to the fifteenth century. The spring dance is mentioned by Shakespeare in " All's Well that Ends Well", where he describes something as "as fit as a morris for May Day". The main dancers were called Robin Hood, Maid Marian, the hobbyhorse, and the bavian, or fool. Other characters such as the 'hobby horse' or a clown are often introduced to amuse the crowds. They were accompanied by a piper or laborer..

The set dances include handkerchief dances, stick dances and hand-clapping dances. There are a number of traditions that come under the general umbrella of the Morris. The men dress in white costumes, with brightly colored ribbons and bells on their legs. The intricate dances are performed waving handkerchiefs or hitting wooden batons together during the dance. An ambulatory dance, it was often performed from one village to another by the main dancers and six other dancers, three in a row. The dance steps and local traditions vary - not only from county to county - but even from village to village.





“Halloween” means “holly evening”.

In the year 835 AD the Roman Catholic Church made November 1st a church holiday to honour all the saints. The day is called All Saint's Day. It used to be also known as Hallowmas or All Hallows. Gradually, over the years, October 31st became known as All Hallow Even, eventually All Hallow's Eve and then as we know it today.

Halloween was sometimes called Nutcrack Night or Snap Apple Night, in England. Families would sit by the fire and tell stories while they ate apples and nuts.

HALLOWEEN



HALLOWEEN



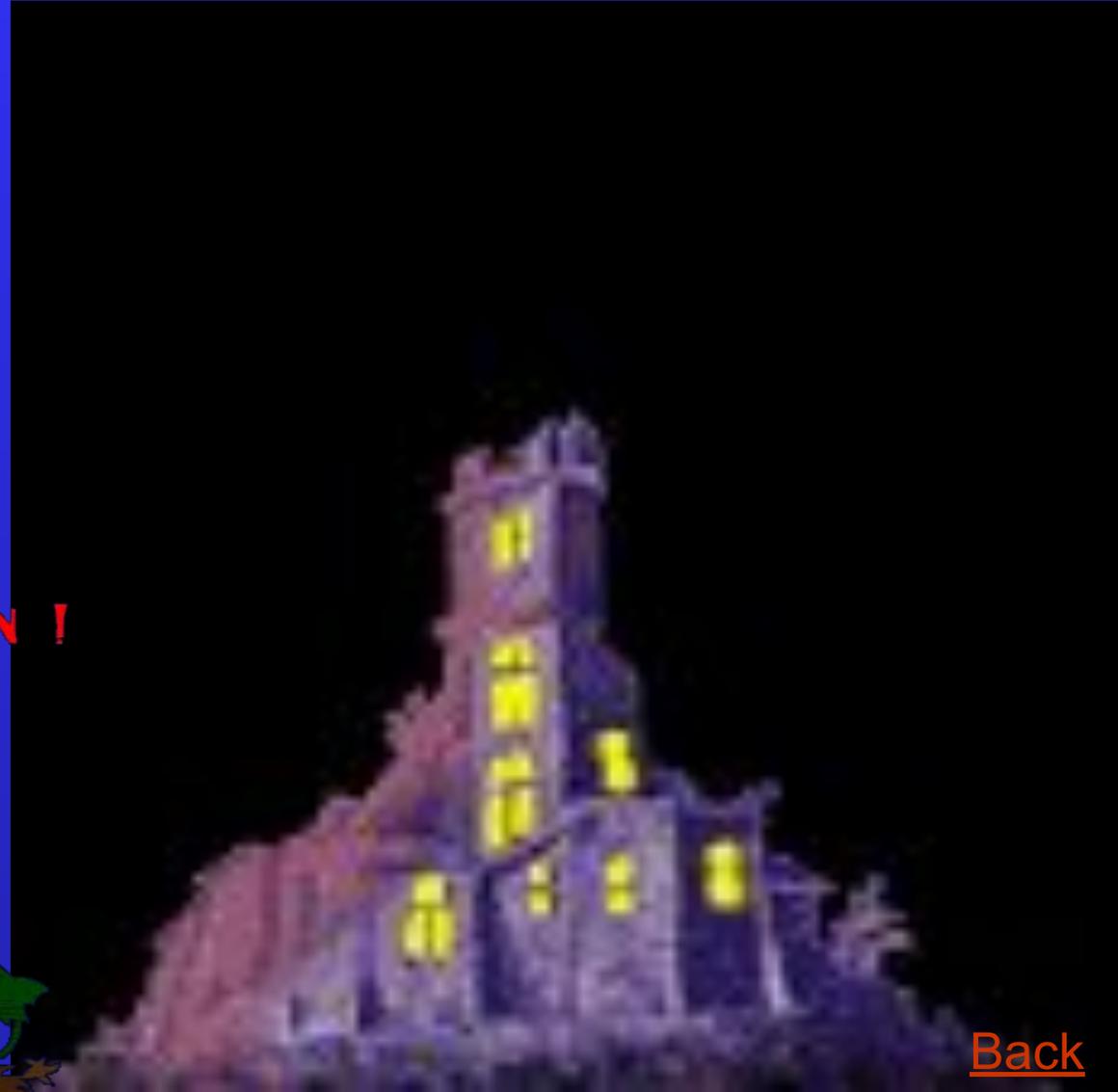
- The word "**Halloween**" comes from a contracted corruption of All Hallows Eve. November 1, "All Hollows Day" (or "All Saints Day"), is a Catholic day of observance in honor of saints. But, in the 5th century BC, in Celtic Ireland, summer officially ended on October 31. The holiday was called **Samhain** (sow-en), the Celtic New year.
- **One story** says that, on that day, the spirits of all those who had died throughout the preceding year would come back in search of living bodies to possess for the next year. It was believed to be their only hope for the afterlife.
- Naturally, the still-living did not want to be possessed. So on the night of October 31, villagers would extinguish the fires in their homes, to make them cold and undesirable. They would then dress up in all manner of ghoulish costumes and noisily paraded around the neighborhood, being as destructive as possible in order to frighten away spirits looking for bodies to possess.
- **The other story** says that Samhain was celebrations of some of the other Roman traditions that took place in October, such as their day to honor Pomona, the Roman goddess of fruit and trees. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, which might explain the origin of our modern tradition of bobbing for apples on Halloween.

Halloween is also a good time to find out the future. Want to find out who you will marry? Here are two ways you might try to find out:

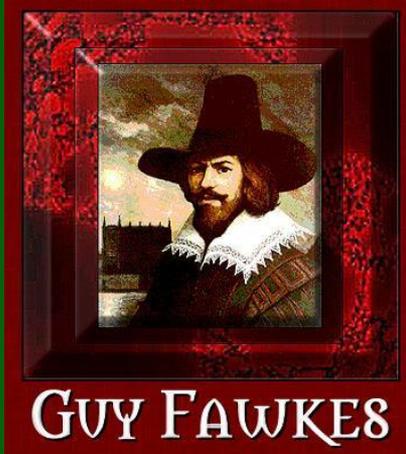
Apple-bobbing - Float a number of apples in a bowl of water, and try to catch one using only your teeth. When you have caught one, peel it in one unbroken strip, and throw the strip of peel over your left shoulder. The letter the peel forms is the initial of your future husband or wife.

Nut-cracking - Place two nuts on a fire. Give the nuts the names of two possible lovers and the one that cracks first will be the one.

WISHING you
a bright & Happy HALLOWEEN !



Guy Fawkes Night



Guy Fawkes Day is celebrated on November 5 in Britain. All over the country people build wood fires or bonfires in their gardens. On top of each bonfire is a guy, that's a figure of Guy Fawkes. People make guys with straw or clothes and newspapers. The story behind this day about four hundred years ago, in 1605. A man named Guy Fawkes tried to blow up a government building "The Houses of Parliament". He was hoping to kill King James I and all the King's leaders. Guy Fawkes was one of a group of men, who felt that the government was treating Roman Catholics unfairly. On the November 5 the king and his leaders were about to meet. So, Guy Fawkes men placed barrels of gunpowder in one of the cellars beneath the building where the king was having his meeting. Guy Fawkes was to light the fuse that would set off the explosion. But the plot was discovered before he had a chance to do this. The king was saved, and Guy Fawkes was hanged. Every year we have traditionally celebrated his failure by letting off fireworks and burning an effigy of "Guy". Other names of this holiday are Bonfire Night and Day of the Gunpowder Plot.



Holidays go round and round

Holiday stories tell us:



**Holideichik –
Mezitov Anton**

