

Christmas



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Christmas is the most popular festival globally. Christmas is an occasion that celebrates the birth of Jesus Christ. The origin and the history of Christmas have pagan roots. It is said that the origin of Christmas began 2000 years ago when the birth of Christ took place. History mentions that Jesus was born to Joseph and Mary in a manger and it is said that a star guided the three Magi who traveled from the East to Jerusalem to shower gifts on baby Jesus. It is believed that Jesus was the Son of God and he came to the world to spread the message of God.

The New Testament is unable to provide any information regarding the date or year related to the birth of Jesus Christ. St. Mark, which is an ancient gospel written at the time of Christian era commences with the baptism of an adult Jesus Christ. Although the real date of Christ's birth is not known, 25th December is considered by all to be the day when Christ was born. However many people are of the thought that the customs and traditions affiliated with the festival of Christmas pre-date the birth of Christ. As a result of this the origin and history of Christmas got filled with controversies.

The day of Christ's birth is conceived by the Christians to be the most sacred day of the year. It is only the New Testament, which gives an account of the story of the birth of Christ. In 336 AD Emperor Constantine converted this pagan tradition to the 'Christian' holiday of Christmas. With the spread of Christianity, the Festival of Christmas also got spread over the world, and now it is celebrated with great pomp and vigour. Enjoy the origin and history of Christmas with Christmas Carnivals. During this time of the year we enjoy holidays symbols like decorations such as the mistletoe, lights and the famous christmas tree.

Not many people know how these traditions came to be. Christmas History Mistletoe sheds light on the role and significance of the evergreen mistletoe in Christmas festivities. It was believed in the ancient times, that the mistletoe tree could propagate from bird droppings. The Anglo-Saxon meaning of the name is dung on a twig. Mistletoe was believed to have magical powers of healing. The tree was sacred to the ancient Celtic Druids. The cutting of the mistletoe from the oak (mistletoes are parasites, though they can grow on their own) signified the emasculation of the old King by his successor.

Having the mistletoe decorated in the Christmas season, originated from the pagan customs. The famous axiom "kissing under the mistletoe" has its origin in the Norse mythology and Celtic rituals. From the Christmas history mistletoe we find, the plant has been treated as sacred. The use of evergreens symbolizes the hope of a glorious spring in the cold bleak winter. It was also the symbol of survival and hardiness. Besides mistletoe is also the mark of peace and goodwill. Mistletoe's are used in Christmas wreaths as well.

The Christmas history mistletoe sheds light on the fact that the early church stalwarts were against the use of mistletoe in the Christmas festivities. They favored holly. But with the passage of time, people started using mistletoe in all aspects of Christmas celebrations be it in the wreaths or home decoration or Christmas tree or gift-wrapping. There are quite a few myths connected with the mistletoe. One very pertinent legend is that the mistletoe wood was used to make Jesus Christ's crucifixion cross. Know more on the Christmas history mistletoe from Christmas Carnivals.

Christmas Lights History begins with the tradition of arranging dainty exquisite candlelights also known as fairy lights to illuminate the Christmas trees. The History of Christmas Lights dates back to the 17th century with Germany as the entrant. Candles were then prepared from melted wax and sequestered to the tree branches by wax or pins. Candleholders were first used in 1890 whereas other accessories like small lanterns and glass balls started to be used between 1902 and 1914. Very soon the inconvenience of candle lighting was felt as candles melted quickly and had to be replaced frequently.

This necessitated the use of electric lamps. In 1882 Charles Edison first lit up a Christmas tree by eighty electric bulbs. The red white and the blue bulbs of 6/8 of an inch in diameter were hand wired and wound round the trees like the beads of a string. Of course the Christmas trees looked more sparkling and scintillating with the electric light strands. Hence started the new era of electric lamp lighting. The first Christmas light set was launched in 1903 by the American Eveready Company. The connection could be made by screws in the bulbs and a plug for the socket.

Later the lightings were pulled from telephone switchboards and run by a battery. This type of electric lighting was expensive for the common people as services of wiremen were required to do the hand wiring. Moreover generators had to be installed for the people living in the city outskirts. The history of Christmas gifts gives us an idea of how the nature of gifts has changed through the ages. It is said that Christmas as it is celebrated today started during the Victorian era of the 1860's. Family members exchange gifts with each other.

The gifts can be very simple things, the love and bonding which it fosters is the important idea. Sometimes the gifts are laid under the Christmas tree. Apart from the pleasure of getting gifts, the gaily and tastefully wrapped packages are a feast for the eyes. History of Christmas tree has an ancient origin. In the 7th century a monk from Crediton, Devon shire, went to Germany to preach Christian doctrines. It is said that he used the triangular shape of the Fir Tree to describe the Holy Trinity of God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit. From then on people began to honor Fir Tree as the Tree of God.

Seasonal celebrations in the ancient times were held during the Winter Solstice. The Romans in their Saturnalia festival, the German pagans in their Yule festival used evergreen boughs to decorate their homes and temples. To the Druids, sprigs of evergreen holly in the house meant eternal life; while to the Norsemen, they symbolized the revival of the sun god Balder. The tradition of Christmas trees was inherited from them. The first decorated tree appeared at Riga in Latvia, in 1510. Martin Luther, the 16th-century Protestant reformer, first added lighted candles to a tree.

The Christmas tree tradition came to United States with the Hessian Germans. But it was considered as a pagan mockery and remained unaccepted until the nineteenth century. The Cromwellian government used to penalize people if they were caught practicing Christmas customs. In 1846 the popular royals Queen Victoria and Prince Albert reintroduced the tradition of Christmas tree in England, by lavishly embellishing a Christmas tree on their palace. Almonds, candles, beads, tinsels, glass ornaments and snowflakes were used for decoration.

In 1882, Thomas Edison's assistant Edward Johnson developed the idea of Christmas tree lights that ran on electricity. This innovation made outdoor Christmas tree lights possible. By the 1890s Christmas ornaments were arriving from Germany and Christmas tree popularity was on the rise around the U. S. During this time of year we also enjoy other customs like gift giving or crooling. History of Christmas gifts makes us aware of the fact that there are particular times for giving gifts. Gifts are given on the Christmas day or Christmas Eve or on Saint Nicholas day.

Specially in Holland, Christmas is purely a religious festival, the gifts are given to the family and friends on Saint Nicholas day. German children are lucky, as they have two gifts giving days. The first one is on fifth December. The day is earmarked for small gifts. The main gift giving day is Christmas Eve. Hungary follows the same pattern, except for the fact that there the gift is given by Jesus instead of Santa Claus. Poland has two gift giving days, one on fifth December and the other on Christmas Eve. Spain has a tradition of giving gifts on Epiphany on sixth January.

The Russian tradition of gift giving day falls on the New Years Eve. It is apparent that all the countries where Christmas is the main socio-religious festival, the gift giving day varies according to local customs and traditions. The history of Christmas gifts enlightens us on these varied traditions. Christmas Carols unite the whole world during the festival of Christmas. All the festivals that are celebrated worldwide have a music of their own. Similarly Christmas has its own music, which is unique in itself. The History of Christmas Caroling goes back to the early days of Christianity.

Christmas songs which were sung or composed at the beginning of Christianity are considered to be Hymns or Chants. The original carols actually refers to a type of circle dance which was devoid of any song. At that time people were forbidden from singing carols inside the Church but could sing them outside the Church. The Nativity Carols, which were actually folk songs written by the people living in the countryside became quite popular. Saint Francis Assisi plays a major role in the history of Christmas Caroling, as he is the person who made Christmas Carols an important part of the church services.

It is said that Saint Francis Assisi introduced the carols in the church during a Christmas Midnight Mass in a Church in Greccio, in the province of Umbria in 1223 and the songs sung that night were more similar to carols rather than hymns. Carols gained more popularity when they were made a part of the mystery plays of the middle ages. Most of the carols tell us a story, it may be about the birth of Jesus Christ or about the tradition of gifts or any other story associated with Christmas.

But the common factor among them is that either their themes are related to the festivity of Christmas or they have a religious side to it. Christmas carols provide the opportunity to express the feeling of joy and happiness. So the carols are primarily of a joyful nature. Christmas carnivals offer information on the history of Christmas caroling and more information on Christmas music and traditions. Whether you celebrate the holidays with the same customs and traditions, or the holidays are not a big part of your year; it is always a time to relax and enjoy the merriment around. Merry Christmas and happy holidays.