



Andy started his talk by asking us ‘Why do we do the things we do to celebrate Christmas?’

He went on to explain that many of our present day traditions were, in actual fact, taken from many old traditions going back even to BC! There are many similarities in history to our present idea of Christian Christmas. He spoke at length about how we came about dates, e.g. 25th December being date of Christmas Day, the Epiphany being the 6th January etc.

For a number of years Christmas was abolished by the Puritans.

Later on, Prince Albert restored the idea of Christmas being a family tradition and in 1840, introduced ideas which he brought from German culture of the Christmas Tree being brought into the house and decorated and around which the Children of the family opened



Christmas Presents.

Christmas Crackers were also invented around this time by Tom Smith and also Christmas Carols were brought about in the Victorian age, as were Christmas Cards. All these things

are now, of course, the traditions we celebrate now at Christmas.



Pantomimes have also been a tradition for hundreds of years depicting our tradition of females playing male roles and vice versa.

Andy presented his very knowledgeable and amusing talk suggesting that even if one didn't necessarily have religious feelings, and were a bit ‘bah humbug’ about the whole thing, then is there anything wrong in once a year we spend special time with our family and friends, exchanging gifts, putting on silly jumpers and eating and drinking merrily? Christmas of times gone by were a celebration of light and hope!

So, whatever you are doing this Christmas, have a good and merry one!

Rosemary Clarke