

## Advance Publicity for “Christmas and New Year Traditions”

How did our earliest Canadian pioneer families celebrate Christmas? How did the tradition of the Christmas tree come to Canada? What was the significance to our Scottish settlers of their first visitor of the New Year? And where did Santa Claus originally come from anyway? These questions and many others will be answered as we explore the rich history of our Canadian Christmas and New Year Traditions. We actually draw them from many cultures and some of the connections we will make might surprise you!

Richard Jordan is a former President of the Etobicoke Historical Society and a former **Toronto Star** local history columnist. His feature articles on historical subjects have also appeared in the **Saturday Star** and the **Sunday Star**.

The pictures below show (left) a family from Victorian times celebrating Christmas with that new-fangled invention, the Christmas tree and (right) children out Christmas caroling. Many Christmas carols date back to the Middle Ages but only became popular after Victorian carol books were published. And the tradition of Christmas caroling door to door originally came from a pagan practice called wassailing that involved communal drinking!

