

## Advance Publicity for “The Secret History of Santa Claus”

St. Nicholas was a real-life Greek bishop who lived on the coast of Turkey in the Second Century AD. This is the incredible story of how he transformed into the “Jolly Old Elf” who flies around the world on Christmas Eve, in a sleigh pulled by reindeer, delivering gifts to deserving children. We’ll look at Father Christmas in England, pagan customs that became Christian and the modern commercialization of our folk traditions in this absorbing and wide-ranging presentation.

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) the ‘real’ St. Nicholas, the Bishop of Myra in Turkey in the Second Century A.D., and (right) the modern image of St. Nicholas or Santa Claus flying on a sleigh pulled by eight reindeer and led by Rudolf, with his red nose lighting the way. How did this saintly man become a centerpiece of some of our annual Christmas customs? And would he even recognize the modern image of himself?

