



Christmas Facts and Trivia



A traditional Christmas dinner in early England was the head of a pig prepared with mustard.

According to a 1995 survey, 7 out of 10 British dogs get Christmas gifts from their doting owners.

Candy canes began as straight white sticks of sugar candy used to decorated the Christmas trees. A choirmaster at Cologne Cathedral decided have the ends bent to depict a shepherd's crook and he would pass them out to the children to keep them quiet during the services. It wasn't until about the 20th century that candy canes acquired their red stripes.

Christmas trees are known to have been popular in Germany as far back as the sixteenth century. In England, they became popular after Queen Victoria's husband Albert, who came from Germany, made a tree part of the celebrations at Windsor Castle. In the United States, the earliest known mention of a Christmas tree is in the diary of a German who settled in Pennsylvania.

In Britain, eating mince pies at Christmas dates back to the 16th century. It is still believed that to eat a mince pie on each of the Twelve Days of Christmas will bring 12 happy months in the year to follow.

It is estimated that 400,000 people become sick each year from eating tainted Christmas leftovers.

More diamonds are purchased at Christmas-time (31 percent) than during any other holiday or occasion during the year.

Santa's Reindeers are Dasher, Dancer, Prancer, Vixen, Comet, Cupid, Donner and Blitzen.

The Christmas turkey first appeared on English tables in the 16th century, but didn't immediately replace the traditional fare of goose, beef or boar's head in the rich households.

The custom of singing Christmas carols is very old - the earliest English collection was published in 1521.

The first Christmas card was created in England on December 9, 1842.



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Open House

Welcome to Open House, the Newsletter especially for Service Users. It's our way of letting you know what's happening right now - the latest news and event where you are.

I am delighted to start my Christmas message with congratulations to one of our service users on her 100 birthday this Saturday 1st December. Warmest best wishes from everyone at Home Choice Care Ltd – and we look forward to more celebrations for the future.

Meanwhile a very peaceful, happy and joyous Christmas to you all. Remember we will be right here for you over the Christmas period looking to support you if you need us.

Merry Christmas and A Happy New Year.
Justin Jewitt, Chairman, 07970 287743

Mini Survey Results

A special thank you to everyone who responded to the recent questionnaire sent with the last copy of your newsletter.

Just to remind you that the closing date for return was **30.11.07** and all entries received will be entered in to a prize draw, with the lucky winner receiving a Luxury box of chocolates. **Watch this space!**



I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

John Giffney, Care Director

Essex News by John Giffney



Thank you to those of you who have returned the Christmas grids, providing us with the details of the service that you currently require over the festive period. This will enable us to plan staff rota's in good time and provide you with our normal high quality service.

I am aware that in the lead up to Christmas that situations can change so please do not hesitate to update us with as much notice as possible so that we may respond appropriately. This applies equally if remaining at home or going out with family and friends.

I would like to wish 'Happy Birthday' to following members of the team that are celebrating this month.

**Anita Aske, Wendy Dockrill, Amy Doolan
Jenny Edler, Lynne Groves, Lynda Hooper
Jane Jarvis, Teresa Paoli-Burke,
Amanda Johnson, Samatha Walsh**



Best wishes from Home Choice Care

**01277 354111 Out of Hours
Telephone Number**

I would also like to reassure you all that its business as usual for Home Choice Care over the festive period, so please use the usual contact number of **01277 354111** should you need to speak to us.

The Office will be closed on Christmas Day, Boxing Day and New Years Day but as usual our dedicated Out of Hours support staff will be available to deal with any emergencies that may arise.



Your Care Worker Team

We are pleased to welcome to **Amy Doolan**, our new Field Care Supervisor plus I am pleased to announce that we have recruited several new Care Workers whom of which I am sure you will be meeting shortly. Please make them feel welcome.



Their names are Carlene Clarke, Phillip Brown, Elaine Rolton, Carie Secombe and Suzanne Griffiths.

Your feedback on the new staff has been very positive and I am sure that they will all continue to develop and grow in their roles, with your continued support and our commitment to their individual training and development needs.

All care workers are trained to meet the common induction standards and are continually developed with updated training sessions and regular supervisions.

