

A Brief History of the Maypole



In the Middle Ages, Maypoles were common & consisted of tall trees stripped of their branches

In 17th C, Puritans banned maypoles as encouraging 'drunkenness and other wickedness'

This painting by Peter Brueghel jr. c.1600 tends to support this claim!

First record of use of **ribbons** in England c.1750

Dancing with ribbons appealed to the Victorians and their fancy of the rural idyll and 'Merrie England'

John Ruskin did much to inspire the way we now celebrate May including election of a **May Queen**



Chelsea, 1858

Maypoles were linked with regeneration after winter & mystical ideas such as tree-worship but provided a good excuse for merry-making!

