

May Day



May Day has two claims to fame, as a modern public holiday honouring workers and a far older festival of rebirth and spring – an amalgam of the Celtic feast of *Beltane* and rejoicing associated with the goddess of flowers, *Flora*.

In the latter, the first day of May was a time for merrymaking and dancing around the **maypole** or sacred tree of fertility. May Day was designated a labour holiday at the International Work Congress in Paris in 1889, an idea later adopted by communist countries and other socialist governments