*HOLIDAYS IN RUSSIA*

There are many national holidays in Russia, when people all over the country do not ,Twork and have special celebrations.

The major holidays are: New Year's Day, Women's Day, May Day, Victory Day, and Independence Day.

The first holiday of the year is New Year's Day. People see the new year in at midnight on the 31st of December. They greet the new year with champagne and listen to the Kremlin chimes beating 12 o'clock.

There are lots of New Year traditions in Russia. In every home there is a New Year tree glittering with coloured lights and decorations. Children always wait for Father Frost to come and give them a present. Many people consider New Year's Day to be a family holiday. But the young prefer to have New Year parties of their own.

A renewed holiday in our country is Christmas. It is celebrated on the 7th of January. It's a religious holiday and a lot of people go to church services on that day.

On the 8th of March we celebrate Women's Day when men are supposed to do everything about the house and cook all the meals.

The greatest national holiday in our country is Victory Day. On the 9th of May, 1945, the Soviet Army and its allies completely defeated the German fascists and the Second World War and the Great Patriotic War ended. This year we celebrated the 54th anniversary(ãîäîâùèíà) of this great event. A magnificent memorial on Poklonnaya Gora has been built to commemorate the Victory. Many veterans took part in the military parade and laid wreaths on the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. All stood in silence for a minute. Radio and television broadcast popular war songs all day long. A lot of guests from different countries of the world came to Moscow to participate in the celebrations.

Independence Day is a new holiday in our country. On the 12th of June, 1992, the first President of Russia was elected.

We also celebrate Day of the Defender of Motherland on the 23d of February, Easter, Day of Knowledge and lots of professional holidays which are not public holidays and banks, offices and schools do not close.