



Geoff hanging the many, many decorations. Photo: Paul Davey, SWNS.



Filming at Driftwood.

Geoff's international Christmas

From hand-carved wooden nutcrackers to scrumptious stollen, there are many German Christmas traditions which have been around for centuries. The German Christmas season officially begins with the first Sunday of Advent, which was 27th November this year. Almost as early as our garden writer, Geoff Stonebanks's Christmas! He will, however be adopting a German feel to his festivities this season. You may ask why?

By **Peter Lindsey**

Regular readers will be aware that our garden features writer's other passion is Christmas!

Over the years his amazing collection, some going back to the 1930's, has garnered much media attention in the UK. From the Christmas Eve coverage in the *Daily Mail*, back in 2017, through to national TV appearances on *This Morning* with Philip and Holly and a Christmas programme on *Channel 5*.

This year though, something a little different! He's going international. ZDF, the national German Broadcaster have been in touch with a proposition.

Alina Nahler from ZDF's London office contacted him in early November, having discovered his back catalogue of Christmas media coverage online. Alina said "ZDF would be very interested in doing a story about you and your Christmas decorations. We would come to your place, film with you and interview you showing the setting up and finished Christmas displays."

Alina went on to say "we would come by when you're setting up and then another time when you're done. So, whenever you start setting up the lights and then again in December, so we have the report ready for Christmas season."

Advent calendar

Needless to say, Geoff's response was a definite yes. He's been checking his collection to try and emphasise a German feel. Thankfully, he already has a small collection of nutcrackers. Another German invention is the Advent calendar that was originally designed to involve children in the festivities leading up to Christmas. Geoff has had a new one every year since childhood and his 2022 purchase is quite special.

One of the most important Christmas traditions by far, is the decorated Christmas tree. This custom of an indoor tree was introduced into Britain by Prince Albert who came from Germany.

Over 30 Christmas trees

This year Geoff will have over 30 decorated trees of varying sizes on display for the film cameras to capture.

At time of writing, Geoff has also been approached by the *Channel 4* daytime programme, *Steph's Packed Lunch*, but nothing definite has been confirmed.

You can follow all that takes place this festive season on his website: www.geoffschristmas.co.uk



Hand-carved wooden nutcrackers.



Geoff's 2022 Advent calendar.



Photo: Paul Davey, SWNS.